

# *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*, by Jim Walsh

From *Hobbies Magazine*, 1942-1976

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Presented by the National Recording Preservation Board  
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## **Introduction**

*Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* was written by Ulysses "Jim" Walsh for *Hobbies* magazine between 1942 and 1985. Walsh's early interest in the popular music of the acoustic era (1888-1925) was unusual when collectors of historical records focused primarily on classical and jazz, and these articles remain important sources in the history of commercial sound recording. Walsh's personal papers and record collection can be found in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound (MBRS) division of the Library of Congress.

## **Editor's Note**

*Hobbies* featured several other regular columns and articles about record collecting and music. We chose to omit those from this volume to focus on Walsh's vision and keep the resulting file at a manageable size. Some installments of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* are written by guest contributors rather than Walsh, and these have been included. Inversely, Walsh wrote a few articles for *Hobbies* apart from the *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* series, and these have been omitted. We believe the edition at hand faithfully represents Walsh's vision for a body of literature about the pioneer recording artists and the acoustic era of recording history.

This edition also omits the final nine years of the column, which are not yet public domain. These may be found in some libraries.





Jim Walsh and his pet cat "Professor" Plum Duff Walsh, at Walsh's Vinton, Virginia home, ca. 1976

**Biographical subject index (arranged alphabetically by name)**

George Alexander	Sept.-Oct. 1956
American Quartet (Premier Quartet)	Feb.-Mar. 1970
Vernon Archibald	Apr.-May 1972
Sam Ash	Mar. 1971
John Yorke Atlee	Dec. 1959
George Atwood	Apr.-May 1970
Harriet Atwood	Apr.-May 1970
Gene Austin	Feb.-Mar. 1957
Harry Anthony	July-Sept. 1957
George Wilton Ballard	Apr. 1960
Joe Belmont	Mar. 1948
Albert Benzler	Jan. 1954
Al Bernard	Mar.-Dec. 1974
John Bieling	July-Aug. 1942
Ralph Bingham	Apr. 1964
James Brockman	Oct. 1967
Albert Edmond Brown	June-July 1952
Harry C. Browne	Jan. 1958
Henry Burr	Apr.-June 1943 ; June 1956
Albert Campbell	Sept.-Oct. 1942
Arthur C. Clough	June-July 1968 ; May 1969
Arthur Collins	Nov. 1942 - Jan. 1943
Dolly Connolly	June-July 1973
Frank Coombs	May 1951
Frank Croxton	Mar.-Apr. 1961
Frank Crumit	Sept.-Dec. 1953
Charles D'Almaine	Nov. 1957 – Jan. 1958 ; Nov. 1959
Vernon Dalhart	May-Dec. 1960
Edgar L. Davenport	Aug.-Sept. 1967 ; Dec. 1967
Peter Dawson	Jan.-June 1962
Vaughn De Leath	Apr. 1958
Guido Deiro	Aug.-Sept. 1954
Pietro Deiro	Aug.-Sept. 1954
Will F. Denny	Oct.-Nov. 1961
Audley F. Dudley	Feb. 1953
George N. Dudley	Feb. 1953
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Marguerite Farrell	Mar. 1960
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Harold Jarvis	May-July 1961
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"No Girl" Quartet	Feb. 1973
George O'Connor	Jan.-Mar. 1955
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John Ryan	Dec. 1972
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Grace Spencer	Apr.-May 1948
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"That Girl" Quartet	Jan. 1973
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Ray Walker	Nov. 1958
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John Barnes Wells	May-Aug. 1964
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Making doubles out of singles	July 1969
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Notes from early Victor catalogs	Dec. 1949 - Jan. 1950
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Performers who remade two-minute Edison cylinders	Sept. - Oct. 1965
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Phonoscope, jottings from	Dec. 1962
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## Date Index

### 1942

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March	Edward M. Favor
Apr.-June	Billy Murray
July-Aug.	John Bieling
Sept.-Oct.	Albert Campbell
Nov.-Dec.	Arthur Collins

### 1943

Jan.	Arthur Collins (concluded)
Feb.-March	Byron G. Harlan
Apr.-June	Henry Burr
July	Steve Porter
Aug.-Sept.	N/A
Oct.	Steve Porter (concluded)
Nov.-Dec.	Harry Macdonough

### 1944

Jan.-Feb.	S.H. Dudley
March	William F. Hooley
April	Bob Roberts
May	"Artists who used more than one name"
June	Billy Golden
July	J.W. Myers
Aug.	"Some Minor Artists"
Sept.	George W. Johnson
Oct.	George J. Gaskin
Nov. – Dec.	Russell Hunting

### 1945

Jan.-Feb.	Russell Hunting (concluded)
Mar.-May	Dan W. Quinn
June	"The Supreme Fifteen"
July-Sept.	Harry Anthony, James F. Harrison (John Young & Frederick Wheeler)
Oct. – Dec.	Collectors Vote on the Supreme Fifteen



## 1946

Jan.	Collectors vote on Supreme Fifteen (cont.)
Feb.-Apr.	Edward Warren Meeker
May	More About S.H. Dudley
June-Dec.	Ada Jones

## 1947

Jan.	Ada Jones (concluded)
Feb.	"John Bieling Gives a Party"
Mar. – Aug.	Len Spencer
Sept.	Sad News about S.H. Dudley
Oct. – Nov.	Eugene C. Rose
Dec.	"The Cheapest Talking Machine"

## 1948

Jan.	"Another John Bieling Party"
Feb.	Gilbert Girard
Mar.	Joe Belmont
Apr.-May	Grace Spencer
June	"Death of John Bieling"
July	Frederic C. Freemantel
Aug.	Reinald Werrenrath
Sept. – Nov.	Vess L. Ossman
Dec.	"Another Memorable John Bieling Day"

## 1949

Jan.-Feb.	Vess L. Ossman (concluded)
Mar.-Oct.	Frank C. Stanley
Nov.	Will Oakland
Dec.	Notes from Early Victor Catalogs

## 1950

Jan.	"Notes from Early Victor Catalogs" (concluded)
Feb.	Billy Whitlock

Mar.-May	Richard Jose
June-July	Fred Duprez
Aug.	Harry Lauder
Sept.-Nov.	Bert Williams
Dec.	"The Best John Bieling Day"

## 1951

Jan.-Apr.	Cal Stewart
May	Frank Coombs & W.H. Thompson
June	Nat M. Wills
July	Manuel Romain
Aug. – Sept.	Elizabeth Spencer
Oct.	Charles Harrison & Beulah Gaylord Young
Nov. – Dec.	Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scanlan)

## 1952

Jan.	Walter Van Brunt (concluded)
March	Charles Harrison & Beulah Gaylord Young (revised correction)
April	Estella Louise Mann
May	Review of First Ten Years of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists
June-July	Albert Edmond Brown, Frederic Martin & W. Francis Firth
Aug.	The Phonograph's 75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
Sept. – Nov.	Eddie Morton
Dec.	Charles Adams Prince

## 1953

Jan.	Charles A. Prince (concluded)
Feb.	George N. & Audley F. Dudley
March	Peter & Daniel Wyper, Alexander Prince
Apr.-May	"Early Days of the Phonograph"
June-Aug.	Arthur Fields
Sept.-Dec.	Frank Crumit

## 1954

Jan.	Albert Benzler
Feb. –Mar.	Albert Spalding
Apr.-May	Helen Trix
June-July	"Ada Jones & The Shannon Four Give a Concert in Roanoke VA"
Aug.-Sept.	Guido & Pietro Deiro

Oct.-Nov.	Pietro Frosini
Dec.	"More About the History of the Phonograph"

## 1955

Jan.-Mar.	George O'Connor
April	"Jottings from Old Record Catalogs"
May-June	Ed Smalle
July-Aug.	Silas Leachman
Sept.	Vivian & Rosetta Duncan
Oct.	Lewis James
Nov.-Dec.	Morton Harvey

## 1956

Jan.-Apr.	Fred Van Eps
May	Murry K. Hill
June	"Henry Burr, the Champion Duet Singer"
July-Aug.	Taurino Parvis
Sept.-Oct.	George Alexander
Nov.-Dec.	Mary Jordan

## 1957

Jan.	George Robey
Feb. – Mar.	Gene Austin
Apr. – May	"The Record Makers Give a Concert in Pulaski VA"
June-July	Gene Green
Aug.	Harvey Hindermeyer
Sept.	Art Gillham
Oct.	Edwin M. Whitney
Nov. – Dec.	Charles D'Almaine

## 1958

Jan.	Charles D'Almaine (concluded) ; Harry C. Browne
Feb.	John J. Kimmel
March	Reed Miller
April	Vaughn De Leath
May	Billy Williams
June	Harry Tally, Harry Mayo
July – Oct.	"Len Spencer as his Daughter Recalls Him"

Nov.	"Ray Walker Recalls Entertaining Troops"
Dec.	Charles Hart

## 1959

Jan.	Charles Hart (concluded)
Feb.	Walter B. Rogers, Jules Levy
Mar.-Aug.	Billy Jones, Ernest Hare
Sept. – Oct.	Lambert Murphy
Nov.	"More About Charles D'Almaine & Taurino Parvis"
Dec.	John Yorke Atlee, Dan Kelly

## 1960

Jan.	Polk Miller
Feb.	Geoffrey O'Hara
March	Marguerite Farrell
April	George Wilton Ballard
May-Dec.	Vernon Dalhart

## 1961

Jan.	"Song Writers who Made Records"
Feb.	Elise Stevenson
Mar.-Apr.	Frank Croxton
May-July	Harold Jarvis
Aug.-Sept.	Elizabeth & William Wheeler
Oct.-Nov.	Joe Natus, Will F. Denny
Dec.	"Directory of Births & Deaths"

## 1962

Jan.-June	Peter Dawson
July	"Revised Births & Deaths"
Aug.-Sept.	"How it Felt to Make Records in the Early Days"
Oct.	"Pioneer Recording Groups"
Nov.	"Artists who Used More Than One Name" (revision)
Dec.	"More Jottings from 'The Phonoscope'"

## 1963

Jan. – Apr.	Elida Morris
Apr.-May	Clarice Vance
May-June	Josie Sadler
June-July	May Irwin
Aug.-Sept.	Marion Harris
Oct.-Dec.	Aileen Stanley

## 1964

Jan.	Aileen Stanley
Feb. - Mar.	Marie Narelle and Berrick Von Norden
April	Ralph Bingham
May-Aug.	Grace Kerns & John Barnes Wells
Sept. – Dec.	Hands Across the Seas! Major H.H. Annand of Hillingdon, Middlesex, England Visits Jim Walsh, of Vinton, VA

## 1965

Jan.	"Hands Across the Seas!" (conc.)
Feb. - Mar.	Three Memorable Days In and Near Washington (DC)
Apr.-July	A Quiz on the Phonograph's Early Days
Aug.	Some Mysterious Edison Diamond Discs
Sept. - Oct.	Performers who Remade Two-Minute Edison Cylinders
Nov. - Dec.	Victor Double-Faced Records that were Remade

## 1966

Jan., Mar.-Apr.	Early Zon-O-Phone Record Catalogs
Feb.	A Last Loving Tribute to "The Peerless Roger" (Walsh's pet cat)
May-July	Edna White (pts. 2-3 written by Frederick Summerill)
Aug.-Oct.	A 1900 Account of the Phonograph
Nov.-Dec.	A March 1901 Catalog of Edison "Concert" Cylinders

## 1967

Jan.	A March 1901 Catalog of Edison "Concert" Cylinders (cont.)
Feb.-Mar.	The English "Supreme Fifteen"
Apr.-May	The 24 Best Columbia Records
June-July	Re-coupled Victor Records
Aug.-Sept.	Edgar L. Davenport
Oct.	James Brockman
Nov.	The Greatest Quartet Basso
Dec.	Edgar L. Davenport

## 1968

Jan.-May	Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs
June-July	Arthur C. Clough
Aug.-Sept.	The Eldridge R. Johnson Museum and Some Berliner, Victor and Edison History
Oct.-Dec.	How to Tell when Victor Records were made

## 1969

Jan.	A Last Loving Tribute to Peter Dawson Walsh (a pet cat)
Feb.-Apr.	How to Tell when Victor Records Were Made (Cont.)
May	Arthur Clough, Lawyer / Death of Edwin Smalle
June	Arthur Walsh
July	Making Doubles out of Singles
Aug.	Artists Who Sang in Choruses of Edison Amberol Cylinders
Sept.-Oct.	A Meeting with Tiny Tim
Nov.	Ferdinand Himmelreich: "The Blind Pianist"
Dec.	History of the Peerless Quartet

## 1970

Jan.	A Monumental Catalog of Edison Cylinders
Feb.-Mar .	The (Premier) American Quartet
Apr.-May	Harriet & George Atwood <sup>1</sup>
June	Real Names of Edison Cylinder Performers
July	A Matter of Identification
Aug.-Sept.	Chauncey Olcott
Oct.-Dec.	Seven Bygone Edison Singers

## 1971

Jan.-Feb .	In Justice to George Washington Johnson
March	Sam Ash
Apr.-May	Assisting Artists in Edison Cylinders
June	Victor Record Sales (From 1901 to 1942)
July-Sept.	Corinne Morgan
Oct.-Nov.	My Last Words Concerning the Controversial McKinley Record
Dec.	Baseball Recordings

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<sup>1</sup> "pt. 1" in text, but article is not continued

## 1972

Jan.-Feb.	The Facts About "The Only Recording of Mr. Edison's Voice"
March	Monroe "Mike" Silver
Apr.-May	Vernon Archibald
June	Ada Jones Sings in Marion, Virginia
July	More About Baseball Recordings and The National Baseball Museum
Aug.	John H. Meyer
Sept.	Theo Karle
Oct.-Nov.	Joseph A. Phillips
Dec.	Arthur Hall, John Ryan and the Manhattan Quartet

## 1973

Jan.	"That Girl" Quartet and Other Women's Groups
Feb.	The Homestead Trio and "No Girl" Quartet
March	Joe White, "The Silver-Masked Tenor"
Apr.-May	Theodore Morse, A Centenary Tribute
June-July	Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich
Aug.-Sept.	Edison's Obscure Cylinder Makers
Oct.	Royalty and Recorded Sound
Nov.-Dec.	Rudy Wiedoft and Other Saxophone Players

## 1974

Jan.-Feb.	"Come Take a Trip in my Airship" (Seventy Years of Aviation Songs)
Mar.-Dec.	Al Bernard

## 1975

Jan.-Feb.	Al Bernard (concluded)
Mar.-June	An Evening in Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory
July-Sept.	William J. Halley (Judge William Joseph Hanley, Sr.)
Oct.-Dec.	Alan Turner

## 1976

Jan.-Mar.	Alan Turner (concluded)
Apr.-Sept.	"Cowboy Song" Recordings
Oct.-Dec.	Addison Dashiell Madeira

*Note – articles published 1977 and later were not included in this edition for copyright reasons.*

## 1977

Jan.-Mar.	An Enchanted Evening at Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory
Apr.-June	Indian Songs on Edison Cylinders
July-Sept.	More About The Dann Trio and Rudy Wiedoft
Oct.-Dec.	Recordings of Songs about "Alice"

## 1978

Jan.	Recordings of Songs about "Alice"
Feb.-June	Edison Miscellany
July-Aug.	The 1910 Catalog of 500 Slow-Selling Edison Cylinders
Sept.-Dec.	The Tollefson Trio

## 1979

Jan.-Feb.	The World's Greatest Whistler (Guido Giladini)
Mar.-Apr.	Records and Songs about Red-Heads
May-Aug.	Charley Case
Sept.-Nov.	Advertising in Early Records
Dec.	Fewer Biographical Sketches (A Letter to Readers)

## 1980

Jan.-Mar.	The Preacher and the Bear
Apr.-May	"Ghost Voice" Recordings
June-Aug.	"Movie Songs" on Records
Sept.-Nov.	"Funny Paper" Phonographs & Records
Dec.	May(m) Kelso

## 1981

Jan.	May(m) Kelso (concluded)
Feb.-Apr.	Six Honest Serving Men
May-Sept.	Thomas Chalmers, American Baritone
Oct.-Dec.	Len Spencer's 1894 Cylinder Catalog

## 1982

Jan.	Len Spencer's 1894 Cylinder Catalog (concluded)
Feb.-Nov.	Thomas A. Edison's Colorful Correspondence
Dec.	"Alexander's" Musical History



### 1983

Jan.-Feb.	"Alexander's" Musical History (concluded)
Mar.-June	"Oh! You Circus day" Songs & Skits About the Legendary "Big Top"
July-Oct.	Songs with Titles Taken from Books
Nov.-Dec.	Parodies on Bygone Popular Songs

### 1984

Jan.-Aug.	Parodies on Bygone Popular Songs (concluded)
Sept., Nov-Dec.	Ways in Which Comedians Changed the Words of Songs

### 1985

Jan.-Mar.	Some "Classic" Columbia Couplings
Apr.-May	Victor Records of Historical and Personal Interest

singing here, especially for a man of fifty-five, although the ending is bad. Personally, however, I don't care for Mr. Hyde; neither his voice nor his style appeals to me. As the lyrical Dr. Jekyll Battistini is unique, when he becomes Mr. Hyde he is very near to being just another roughneck baritone.

"Zampa" was issued here a long time ago as 92004 and is something of a rarity. "Macbeth" is now issued in America for the first time. IRCC #202 — 12 inch. Price \$2.25.

### A NOTE ON THE 5000 SERIES

There seems to be some confusion regarding the black label records of Victor's early 5000 series. Part of a later series of domestically recorded black label Victors was also numbered in a 5000 series, but this group of records has nothing to do with the 5000 series we are trying to complete, which was composed of records pressed from imported matrices. Unless it has the "angel back" imprint of The Gramophone & Typewriter Co., Ltd., no black label Victor has any connection with *THE* 5000 series. At least, that is what is indicated by all the evidence we now have. — *Stephen Fasset*.

### SPECIAL COLLECTORS' ISSUES

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### WANTED

**BOOKS:** Biographies of famous musicians, especially singers.  
**CATALOGS:** Victors before 1930; Columbias before 1930; Foreign catalogs of any year, Aeolian-Vocalion; Brunswick; Okeh; Odeon; Pathe; BERLINER; BETTINI; ZONOPHONE and many other makes. ALSO pamphlets; monthly supplements; advertisements of phonographs, gramophones, talking machines, cylinder and disc records before 1905.

**RECORDS:** Plancon; Zonophones; Bettinis; G&T's; Victor 5018. Any record by Edouard Lankow. Lillian Blauvelt Columbias: 30124 Romeo, A-5078 Barber of Seville, A-5119 Ouvre/When Celia Sings, A-5120 Rodellinda/Norwegian Song.

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## "THE CONEY ISLAND CROWD"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**H**OBBIES' DECISION to publish articles, now and then for collectors of old-time "popular" records is particularly gratifying to me since I was more or less the pioneer prophet of this now well-established cult. Shortly after the record collectors' section had been originated by my Chicago friend, Bert Wehling, I wrote in the December, 1935, issue: "... The many men and the fewer women who made reputations as recorders of popular songs and humorous sketches from, say, 1895 to 1920, were as brilliant a group as the Red Seal galaxy. . . . If Caruso, Melba and Plancon are immortal, so, in their equally expert way, should be Billy Murray, Ada Jones and Len Spencer. . . . I am sure the merits of the 'once-despised' 'popular' artists. . . . will yet be recognized, and the true record collector will be as proud of his early Dan Quinns, Henry Burrs, Frank Stanleys and Arthur Collinses as he is now of his rare Albanis, de Reszkes, Suzanne Adamses or Joseph Jeffers-sons."

This prediction met with several derisive hoots, but there are indications that interest in the type of record which peculiarly fascinates me has grown with remarkable rapidity during the past two or three years. "The Coney Island Crowd," as a heading for this article seems appropriate because Victor Black Label artists years ago fell into the habit of so terming themselves because of a chance remark of a recording official.

One interesting fact to which I would call attention is the fact that the collector of recorded Americana as a rule delves farther back into phonograph history than does either the Red Seal specialist or the hot jazz and swing devotee. The recorded productions by operatic and concert songbirds worthy of mention before the 1902 Red Seal series are so rare as to be almost non-existent as far as the average collector is concerned, and the jazz era seems to have officially begun with issuance of the first Original Dixieland Jazz Band discs in 1917.

But 1917 sounds shockingly nouveau riche and ultra-modern to those who look for genuinely ancient "populars." To the true believer, phonograph history begins as far back as 1889 or 1890 when the Columbia Company, then having headquarters in Washington, D. C., began issuing a few records for home use (before that time the unfortunately fragile wax cylinders had been supplied only to traveling exhibitors and slot machine parlors) and engaged the great Leonard Garfield Spencer, then a youth of

about twenty to sing for them. Len, who became acquainted with Columbia because his parents operated a Washington business college and sent him to the phonograph company's studios for blank dictating machine cylinders, would sing into the horns of half a dozen phonographs placed on top of a piano and be given ten cents for each accepted record. He eventually came to enjoy a world-wide fame and a handsome income, and remained a favorite until his death in 1914.

Columbia at that time had no commercial record competition from Edison, and as long as it retained its Washington headquarters its list of artists was rather limited. One popular contributor to its catalog was John York Att Lee, a civil service employe by day and a remarkable whistler by night. He nearly drove his neighbors frantic by making records of "Listen to the Mocking Bird" at his home evening after evening. (There were no master records then, so the same selection had to be done over and over.) Another prolific recorder was W. O. Beckenbaugh, "the Leather-Lunged Auctioneer," who turned out many cylinders of his work-day auctioning spiels. Billy Golden, an obscure minstrel, soon began to do his "Turkey in the Straw" coon skit, and Cal Stewart came along with "Uncle Josh." And of course there were frequent engagements of Sousa's and the United States Marine Bands, as well as of a group of fairly well-known instrumentalists.

I have never seen a record by Att Lee (his piano accompaniments were played by Fred Gaisberg, then a boy in his teens, who later went to England and became one of the Gramophone Company's recording officials), but am hoping to be spared to discover one. Beckenbaugh is represented in my collection by only one record — a seven-inch Berliner disc.

There isn't room to write more this

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month about those very earliest days, but perhaps if connoisseurs of "old populars" rally around and make their interest known we shall be able to get more space later on and run down a great many interesting "angles."

Meanwhile, if any collector in the vicinity of San Francisco should run across a wax cylinder by "Mrs. Thomas A. Edison," let him not be deceived. Mrs. Edison never sang for records, but in the mid-Nineties the demand for cylinders was so great in the East that the Edison plant at Orange, N. J., could not supply the West. The Edison distributor in San Francisco consequently recorded his own cylinders and hit on the bright idea of engaging some girl with a soprano voice to sing as "Mrs. Edison" in the accurate assumption that records by the great inventor's wife would sell well and that what they didn't know in New Jersey wouldn't hurt them.

Frank Gloldt of Chicago will be interested to know they even had his idol, Billy Murray, sing "The Holy City" in Frisco. But of that more later!

### CLASSICAL RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:**—Classical records, catalogues.—The Half Price Record Shop, 101 West 53rd Street, New York City. **je12633**

**WANTED:**—Authentic cylinder records, Jenny Lind, Campanini, other famous people; playing on wrong machine destroys records, inquire. Zonophone, Zonofono, other early recordings celebrities. Catalogs, phonograph literature before 1905. Highest prices.—Cully, Eleven Broad, New York. **my6004**

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## THE JUNK PILE

By ROBERT B. SALES

**JOHNNY**, stick a new needle in the vic and throw that beat-up platter out the window; Professor Bob will proceed to call the class to order for this month's lecture on how to be a hep-cat.

At the last meeting of dear old Jive U. we discussed the bibliography of Jazz. We are now ready to delve slightly into the field of records, and my discourse today will deal with the special label items issued for the collector of Le Hot.

Of course, in the period before Jazz became a hobby, and was merely a way of playing music, (1917-1935) jazz records were made by commercial firms as a part of their regular output, and were designed for sale to the general public. With the advent of the record collector, along came certain hardy and jazz-loving souls who issued hot jazz recordings for the collector alone, and Uncle Bob is gonna taint the Junk Pile with a little commercialism and pay a well-deserved tribute to these boys.

First and foremost of the special label groups is the Commodore Music Shop of New York City. This enterprising firm, headed by Milt Gabler, a man with a real appreciation for jazz, has issued an impressive catalog of re-issues of rare and famous hot records, and was the first company, if my memory serves me rightly, to issue *original* jazz records made by pick-up bands, assembled especially for recording purposes by Bro. Gabler. At this time Commodore leads the field in extensiveness of output, both in the re-issue line and in original releases.

Second only in point of time and length of catalog to Commodore is the Hot Record Shop, also of New York. Headed by Steve Smith, a collector of pioneer days, the H.R.S. was not far behind in re-issuing rare items for the delectation of us hot fans. Of late H.R.S. has been venturing into the original recording line, and has released some twelve-inch recordings that rank among the best in jam session work.

Solo-Art recordings (which were mentioned at great length in my September JUNK PILE) are issued by Dan Qualey of New York City. Solo-Art issues nothing but piano solos—boogie woogie at that—and more power to 'em says Bob. Somehow or other Dan manages to get twelve-inch playing time out of a ten-inch platter, and that, as we quaintly express it, ain't hay.

Blue Note, another N.Y.C. company, also specializes in piano solos of the blues and boogie variety, and in small combos of noted instrumen-

talists. They have issued such out-of-the-way stuff as boogie solos by Meade Lux Lewis on (wal I swan) the celeste and harpsichord.

Bob Thiele of Long Island fathered a short-lived label yclept Signature Records, which put out some eight discs, including one boogie reissue. I haven't heard them, but from all reports the last releases, four sides by Bud Jacobson's Jungle Kings, are really, to quote M. Pannassie, "les noix." The stock and masters of Signature Records have been taken over by Commodore.

Ben Lincoln of Milwaukee, Wis., has issued two records by Mel Henke under the Collectors' Item label. All four sides are piano solos. We have not been advised as to the present or future status of this label, but want to put in our bid for its use if Ben decides to quit the game.

The magazine JAZZ INFORMATION (see December's JUNK PILE) has entered the re-issue business, and has announced ten records (all of which are re-recordings, or dubbings as they are commonly mis-called) for present and future release under its Limited Edition label.

Heywood Hale Broun, Jr. went down to New Orleans and recorded a pick-up band of old-timers playing traditional jazz numbers. He issued these in an album of four records under the Delta label. I had the pleasure of listening to these before they were issued. The album was released through H.R.S.

I believe I've covered the private labels in full. No omissions were intended—if I have left out anyone, just write and I'll catch you later.

Now that these enterprising indi-

### MISCELLANEOUS

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## "The Coney Island Crowd"

EDWARD M. FAVOR

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

NO doubt about it, the family name of the comedian who steps out of the Coney Island Crowd for consideration this month gives me an opportunity to make an outrageous pun by saying I am writing about him partly as a favor to Steve Fasset!

Steve, who began to get interested in old-time popular song singers and comedians not so long ago, took good-natured umbrage when I remarked to him that when I was six or seven years old, Ed Favor was my favorite singer, on the strength of his Edison cylinder, "I Think I Hear a Woodpecker Tapping At My Family Tree," until I heard my first Billy Murray record and then Mr. Favor departed to the purgatory of discarded idols. How, the connoisseur from Woodmere wanted to know, could I possibly have developed such bad taste at the age of six as to prefer B. M. to E. F.? "Nothing Murray has ever done has amused me half so much as Favor's record of 'How Can They Tell That I'm Irish,'" he declared.

When it comes to preferring Edward Favor to Billy Murray, I'm afraid our friend Steve is in considerable of a minority, but his hero has claims of his own to favorable consideration. The salient facts of his earlier career may be copied verbatim from an Edison Blue Amberol record catalog of April, 1941:

"EDWARD M. FAVOR. This well known comic opera comedian was born in New York City. He first sprang into prominence as a principal under the management of the late J. M. Hill. The long run of E. E. Rice's '1942' at Wallack's Theater, New York, made him famous as a Broadway comedian. He has starred in musical comedies with his wife, Edith Sinclair, and the team is a well-known 'head-liner' in vaudeville. He has been principal comedian with Klaw and Erlanger, the Shuberts and other prominent managers. Mr. Favor was the first professional to sing in a phonograph. His record was put on exhibition in the lobby of the Park Theater, Boston, during the long run there of 'Ship Ahoy!' and attracted wide-spread attention."

As far as I know, all the statements made above are true, except for there being doubt as to whether Favor was the first "professional" to make records. I have seen the same distinction claimed for Billy Golden, the blackface comedian, and my old friend, the late Dan W. Quinn.

However that may be, by the middle

Nineties, Favor was well established as one of the most popular recording artists. He made them at a dollar a "round" between periods of filling vaudeville engagements.

Billy Murray recalls that the first time he ever saw a record made was in 1896 at the headquarters of Bocigalupi Brothers, Edison wholesale distributors, in San Francisco. When he entered the "studio" Favor, who was also appearing at the Orpheum Theater, was singing into eight cylinder phonographs lined up before him and keeping his hands cupped behind his ears to determine whether "the tone was hitting the horns straight in the center." Incidentally, although the wax cylinders remained the most popular form of record for 30 years after Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, they are no longer manufactured anywhere in the world, except for dictating machine use.

Oh yes, they are! Angus Joss of Joliet, Ill., still makes a batch of them occasionally for home recording use with old-fashioned machines.

Favor had a high, piping, typically Irish voice, and his records were restricted chiefly to Irish songs and nonsense ditties, the latter usually in the form of limericks. Probably his most popular record was "Fol-the-Rol-Lol," an English importation, which he sang for all the pioneer companies. As an Edison cylinder it was No. 9142 in two-minute size. Its popularity was proved by the fact that when Edison began making four-minute Amberol records in 1908, "Fol-the-Rol-Lol" was No. 14 in the first list. Said the catalog:

"As a two-minute record this has always been a famous seller because of the excruciatingly funny situations described in the verses and the strikingly 'different' chorus. It is nonsense, of course, but the cleverest kind of nonsense that is an A-1 mirth-maker. The present record," the catalog proudly added, "gives 18 verses while the old-style record gives only 8."

Favor was what I term a "lone wolf" in that he seldom or never teamed up with other singers. He had the assistance of the American Quartet in Victor record No. 16728, "The Dublin Rag," but that was an exception to the rule. He sang impartially for all companies, and I hope I shall yet be privileged to obtain a copy of an opus of his listed in an old United States cylinder record catalog. The cylinder contained two songs:



Edward M. Favor, comedian, who recorded in the '90's. He died in 1936 at the age of 80.

(a) "Will You Please Pass the Salt?" and (b) "Now We Can Both Laugh Together." What an irresistible combination!

The high-voiced comedian was such a pioneer that his vogue waned before double-faced records were introduced, and he made only a few after 1908. His last two records, issued on Edison Blue Amberol cylinders just before the World War, were "My Best Girl and Me" from the musical comedy, "My Best Girl," and "If They'd Only Move Old Ireland Over Here," from Blanche Ring's great success, "When Claudia Smiles." He continued active in theatrical work until only a few years before his death, at the age of 80, in the spring of 1936, and made a great hit with his impersonation of Amos Gashwiler, the country storekeeper, in the Broadway production of "Merton of the Movies."

Reproduced with this article is a photograph of Favor taken March 19, 1904, at the height of his career. It was presented by him to Walter A. Forbush, for more than a generation a Columbia recording engineer, and was given to me by Mr. Forbush.

Next month I expect to fill numerous requests that I write about Billy Murray — a job which it will probably take at least two months' columns to do properly!

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by great artists of the past can be bought at  
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of each lot after the sale. Write for lists. mh24

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important to jazz as Jelly Roll is made out to be, but — *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*.

An error which can hardly be ascribed to the authors, since the source is to be found in Hot Discography and the mistake was further propagated by Commodore, is to be found on pages 169-170. In conversation with Jimmy McPartland recently, he informed me that Teschemacher made no records with the Wolverines. Furthermore, Dick Voyow assembled an entirely different group of musicians for the recordings of "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," "Dear Old

Southland," and "He, She and Me," and Dick was the only "original" Wolverine to play on them — no McPartland, no Glenn Miller. The clarinetist was most probably Bercov, in answer to the query propounded by the book.

In closing, may I simply state that The Jazz Record Book is a most welcome addition to my own book-shelf, for its wealth of historical data. To a new collector, it should serve as a second Hot Discography, and I sincerely hope that its commercial success will be such as to spur its authors on to further publications in their (our) metier.

## "The Coney Island Crowd"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

TRYING to do justice to Billy Murray, subject of this month's Coney Island Crowd Sketch, is like trying to compress the Encyclopaedia Britannica into a Little Blue Book. This column could devote itself for a year to narrating the remarkable achievements and describing the fascinating personality of the most famous and best loved of all pioneer phonograph singers, and still barely scratch the surface.

There is no 100 percent unanimity in any field of human endeavor, but among all collectors of old-time popular song and comic skit records there appears to be overwhelming agreement that Billy not only is far and away the greatest American comedian recorded music has known but that, of all phonograph singers, he is the most likely to be classic and eagerly collected humorist of the next generation.

Already, some dealers in second-hand discs and cylinders have gained the impression that Murray records are in a class to themselves and are — confound them! — holding supplies of his productions back in the hope of obtaining an extra "premium."

Not only that, but Billy is the only old-time recording artist possessed of such perennial vitality of appeal that he is still in demand as both a radio and recording performer and, in the opinion of many of his admirers, is today, after more than 40 years before the public, doing the best singing of his career.

This oddly modest and self-deprecating genius was born in Philadelphia. His father, Patrick Murray, a blacksmith, and his mother, Julia Kelleher Murray, both came to the United States from County Kerry, Ireland. From his father, Billy, a man of less than medium height, probably inherits his remarkable vitality and strength, which have been enhanced by a lifelong passion for walking, baseball and

other forms of athletics, and a routine of clean living.

When Billy was a baby his parents moved to Denver. He became something of a "problem child," who narrowly escaped drowning on a number of occasions and once was mired in a bog and remained three hours, with the sand creeping up to his neck, before he was rescued. A little later he ran away from home and school, hoping to become a jockey, and stayed at Overland Park near Denver a month as an "exercise boy" before being found by his mother and taken home.

The second time little William Thomas Murray ran away was to become an actor. Harry Leavitt, notorious road show impresario, blew into Denver with a production called Leavitt's High Rollers. When it left town Billy went with it. Business wasn't too good and, from Salt Lake City on, the troupe "bummed" its way to its various one-night stands, walking, riding in freight trains or perched on top of baggage cars. Leavitt never gave his half-grown performers money but would sometimes buy them clothing, which they swapped among themselves. Three other members of the troupe were Matt Keefe of Leadville, Colo., later famous as a yodeler, Billy Brown of Pueblo and Harry O'Brien of Denver. With Murray, they formed a male quartet which left Leavitt and obtained a few engagements.

Billy sang in honky-tonks, medicine shows and small-time vaudeville, frequently with Keefe as his partner. One day they showed up in San Francisco and decided to get a job, singing for those new-fangled phonographs. They went to the headquarters of Bocigalupi Brothers, Edison's West Coast distributors, and saw Ed Favor singing into a row of cylinder instruments, perched on a piano. Murray and Keefe were gladly given a trial

and a hearing of their first record, a duet version of "The Lass From the County Mayo," showed their voices recorded well.

For some time Billy did a raft of phonograph work. In his "brothy" boy's voice he not only sang "coon songs" and sentimental ballads, but such "classics" as "The Holy City." The demand for Edison cylinders was so great in the East that the factory at Orange was unable to supply them to Western dealers, and the Bocigalupi issued their own recordings, which, however, were unknown at the Main Edison plant. The consequence was that Billy Murray, before the twentieth century arrived, was a well-known phonograph singer on the West Coast, in Hawaii and even in China and Japan, whereas nobody east of the Rockies had heard of him.

It appeared for a time, though, as if the youngster in his teens wouldn't live long to do any sort of singing. What near-drowning and quicksand hadn't accomplished, an apparent combination of tuberculosis and Bright's disease seemed likely to do. Frequently, after singing at a honky-tonk, he was so weak it was almost impossible for him to creep to his lodging house where a kind-hearted elderly landlady would wrap him up warmly and tuck him in bed. Eventually, deciding that if he were going to die he would meet death with his boots on, he resorted to a regimen of cold baths and — imagine it! — mountain climbing. The treatment worked and within a few years he was, what he still is, a miracle of endurance.

The Alaska gold rush came along and Billy decided to go to the Frozen North. Something happened to keep him from taking the boat, and he was later glad of it when he learned the vessel had sunk, drowning everybody on board. Then Al G. Fields' minstrels visited California, and "Mr. William Murray, eccentric singer and dancer," became a member of the troupe, singing "Under the Bamboo Tree" and "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?" It was Fields who pronounced William Thomas Murray to be "one hell of a name for a comedian" and shortened Wm. Thos. to Billy.

When the troupe went East, in 1903, Billy Murray's greatest recording career was about to begin in earnest. In next month's "Coney Island Crowd" the story of his many years as the biggest-selling recording artist of all time will be told.

(To Be Continued.)

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## "The Coney Island Crowd"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

IN 1903, a black-haired, slenderly-built, but not tall young fellow showed up at the headquarters of the different phonograph companies in and near New York. He had letters of introduction testifying that his Edison cylinders, made in San Francisco, had been a genuine hit and that he was a "natural" recording artist.

There were plenty of good voices in those days, but only a few recorded well, so Edison, Victor, Columbia, Zonophone, Leeds and the other phonograph companies were glad to give Billy Murray a trial. For Victor, his first record seems to have been a Victor Herbert song, "Absinthe Frappe." One of his earliest for Columbia and Edison was "Meet Me in St. Louis, Louise," a panegyric of the World's Fair of 1904. "It Takes the Irish to Beat the Dutch" and "Ain't It Funny What a Difference Just a Few Hours Make?" were others which he sang impartially for all comers.

Although "Ragtime Bob" Roberts warned him to stay away from Columbia, saying, "I do all the comic business around here!" Bob soon relented and joined Billy in duet work. So did the high and mighty Len Spencer, who had an ambition to become Billy's business manager — an ambition he never quite attained.

The Murray records at once became phenomenal sellers for that day, when the number of phonographs in use was only a fraction of what it would be later. Everybody said Billy Murray's records were the only ones so clear you could catch every word on first hearing. This was partly because there was a certain "ping" to his voice that cut sharp into the wax and he was also smart enough to nasalize certain syllables — exactly as printers use *Italic* type — to make important words and phrases stand out. (Incidentally, this nasal quality of Murray records is unpleasant, if they are not played exactly at the right speed. An old record by him, at from 72 to 75 revolutions a minute, sounds all wrong electrically reproduced at 78 or 80.)

By 1905, Victor was advertising that Billy's record of "The Yankee Doodle Boy" was the biggest seller in its history. By June, 1906, "You're a Grand Old Flag," another George M. Cohan song, took first place. "Cheyenne" came along in the latter year and was another record-breaker. (It was considered a marvel of recording because of the realism of its cowboy yells and sounds of horses' hoofs.) "Everybody Works But Father" set the nation laughing. Any record by Murray was sure of moving across the counter in great quantities.



Billy Murray

In 1907, Murray began making duets with Ada Jones, most popular of all women recording artists, and the popularity of both singers bounded to new heights. Three years later, Billy made his best selling record — one which may have been the biggest seller of all time. It was "Casey Jones," sung by him for both Victor and Edison, in both cases with the assistance of the newly organized American Quartet, consisting, besides himself, of John Bieling, first tenor; Steve Porter, baritone; and William F. Hooley, bass. This organization, with various changes of personnel made necessary because of death or retirement, continued to make records until 1925. The Heidelberg Quintet was identical, except that Will Oakland, the counter-tenor, was added as "top tenor."

Some time around this period, The Record Maker Troupe (better known later as the Eight Famous Victor Artists) was organized. In its pioneer days it consisted of Henry Burr, who was its business manager, Murray, Albert Campbell, John Meyer, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Vess Ossman ("The Banjo King") and Teddy Morse, song writer and pianist. It was an established favorite in vaudeville and on the concert stage for many years.

So the years passed pleasantly enough. Billy recorded, yelled himself hoarse at baseball games, and frequently went on trips with the New York Yankees. On spring training trips he sometimes played right field for the Yanks. In 1909, he signed a "joint contract" by which he recorded only for Victor and Edison. In 1920, he signed up exclusively with Victor — an arrangement which held good until 1928.

By that time radio microphones had

made possible the rise of such "crooners" as Gene Austin, Jack Smith and Bing Crosby and Billy was obliged to realize that, for the time, his vogue had waned, and he was no longer the comedian who entertained, through his records, "a larger audience than any other singer who has ever lived," to quote the old Victor catalogs.

## Hobbies in Wartime

From an editorial in the Dayton, Ohio, Journal

With headlines marching across American breakfast tables in type increasingly blacker and bigger, with the message of those headlines etching little crow's feet around American eyes, an harassed citizenry is turning more and more to hobbies as relaxation.

They are finding in stamp collecting, woodworking, or any of the thousand and one other avocations their needed relaxation. For a brief moment they can turn from war and production lines to something of the simple joy of craftsmanship, or the gratification of the possessive instinct.

In the case of collections, the reason for the hobby is obvious: Gratification of the ages-old instinct of possession. The item, as in cases of elephants or matchbox covers, may be valueless in the eyes of the world; nevertheless to the collector each piece has a highly personalized value \* \* \*

This all has a very important bearing upon America's war effort. The tense worker is the one who will make the mistakes; mistakes that may be costly in terms of lives these days. And if he can ease his tenseness, and at the same time gratify his creative instincts, he may have made more than a minor contribution to the war effort.

## HOBBIES SAVED HIS LIFE

Hobbies serve in another way! The glamor of railroads intrigued John F. Boose of La Grange, Ill., at an early age. As a result, he has a collection of 5,000 photographs of engines. He states that his knowledge of trains and train schedules, which he credited to his hobby, was once instrumental in saving his life. It was in 1935 when he was driving a hearse on a foggy morning in Indiana. He noticed freight trains standing on the siding in two towns and explained to his driving companion that this was because a certain fast train was due to pass. A detour was required that led to a crossing without gates. Mr. Boose stopped in the fog to investigate before crossing and a moment later the flyer zipped by. Mr. Boose surprised his companion by naming the engine, its speed, and its time schedule; whereas there might have been an unhappy ending.



Billy Murray, Ulysses Walsh and Jimmy Martindale

## "The Coney Island Crowd"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

### Billy Murray

AS FAR AS long established phonograph artists, such as Billy Murray, were concerned, 1925 brought two great changes: the advent of electrical recording and the rise of "crooners."

Many tenor voices, such as Billy's, suffered severely from the pioneer electric recording. It gave them a husky, raspy edge of a spurious baritone quality. One of Billy's early electric records was his only duet with Henry Burr, "I Wonder Where My Baby is Tonight." After hearing it I wondered if he had lost his voice completely. It sounded like anybody but the man whom I had idolized since my early boyhood.

Tommy Lyman, Gene Austin, Jack Smith, Bing Crosby (who came along somewhat later), Art Gillham and the others set a new style of singing with whispering effects which couldn't have been recorded except through a microphone. All at once the public became wild about this sort of vocalization, and the old school of singing began to be ignored.

Billy suspected the end was near late in 1925 when he returned from a tour with the Eight Famous Victor Artists and was told by Eddie King, the Victor recording manager, to sing "Roll 'Em, Girls" in crooner fashion.

"Heck," or words to that effect, he retorted, "I'm no crooner!" Nevertheless, Eddie insisted, and Billy did his best. Once more his admirers wondered what had happened to his voice.

By 1928 the crooner vogue had so taken the field that Billy, after 25 years of singing for Victor, was washed up with that company, aside from singing an occasional refrain to a dance record or taking part in a minstrel sketch. The exclusive contract he had enjoyed for eight years was not renewed, and he was once more a free lance. In England they were just beginning to rave over his duets, such as "Bridget O'Flynn," with Aileen Stanley, but that was too late to do him any good over here. Meanwhile, theatres were being wired throughout the nation for sound, and Henry Burr, manager of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, decided it

was no longer profitable to keep that brilliant troupe on the road.

Billy was not through as a recording artist, though. His old friends at Edison were glad to get him back, even if Edison's days in the record business were numbered and were to end a year later. He and Walter Scanlan struck up a partnership and did a great deal of work for Edison, Brunswick, Pathe, Crown and a few other minor companies. They made a duet, "Oh Baby! What a Night!" for Victor in 1929. Their recording activities did not end until 1932, when the depression was at its worst.

For a year or so Murray and Scanlan did well as radio singers. When Walter decided to open a talent booking agency, Billy kept active in several ways. He sang old-time popular songs for the movies in such productions as the "Bouncing Ball" comedies. He even imitated animals for the talkies and became well known as a radio actor, playing character parts in the Parker Family series and other popular air shows.

Unable to content himself with being a retired and respected resident of Freeport, Long Island, he nevertheless doubted that his services would ever again be in demand as a recording artist. His enthusiastic admirers, however, refused to admit any such thing. He still had a voice and a sense of humor. Those who had their hearts particularly set on a comeback for their idol included Jimmy Martindale of Brooklyn, who probably has the largest collection of Billy Murray records in the world, besides being Billy's most intimate friend, and myself, runner-up to Jimmy in the Murray collecting business. Frank Glodd of Chicago, who collects virtually nothing but Murray records, probably is third.

Our faith was rewarded when, in the spring of 1940, Len Joy, in charge of Victor's New York recording studios, asked Billy to make a record of "It's the Same Old Shillelagh." This, issued on a Bluebird record, was so successful that Len decided there would be a good demand for others by the one-time most popular singer of all time. In October, 1940, Jimmy

(Continued on page 23)

### I WANT TO BUY

RECORDS (either disc or cylinder, but VOCAL only) in good condition of the following old popular songs:

"At a Georgia Campmeeting"  
"Everyone is in Slumberland but You and Me"  
"I'd Leave My Happy Home for You"  
"Just One Girl"  
"Let Me See You Smile"  
"Making Eyes"  
"My Gal's a High Born Lady"  
"My Hannah Lady, Whose Black Baby is You?"  
"Put Me Off at Buffalo"

I ALSO want old record catalogs and monthly supplements, phonograph magazines such as The Phonogram or the Talking Machine World, portraits of old-time popular recording artists, and any literature dealing with talking machines. AM ALSO always interested in obtaining books ABOUT (not by) CHARLES DICKENS. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. mhp

WRITE, giving prices to

JIM WALSH

316 West Watauga Avenue  
Johnson City, Tennessee

### I Wish to Announce

that, due to my induction into the United States Army on April 9, 1942, I am forced to suspend all activities in the record business for the duration of the war. If physically possible, I plan to resume my dealing in jazz recordings upon my return from military service. May I take this opportunity of thanking each and every individual who has ordered records from me during the two year period in which I have been in business. My association with a great many of you has ripened into a warm friendship which I shall long cherish. All offers, solicitations, and quotations contained in previous advertisements are hereby cancelled. jex

ROBERT B. SALES

607 Marion E. Taylor Bldg., Louisville, Ky.

For some devotees of the circus, the greatest thrill is witnessing the first performance of a new season when new paint and new costumes are everywhere. That is why Joe E. Ward, Texas civil engineer, always finds it convenient to be in New York City when Fred Bradna's whistle inaugurates the initial performance of the Madison Square Garden season. And Joe is always in the middle of proceedings, for he has an odd hobby of collecting comedy wardrobe, which he drapes on his own figure and joins the joeys in their arena antics. Last year, he took part in so many performances as an amateur clown that his name appeared in the route book roster of the show.

Another who gets itchy feet when spring rolls around is Frank (Doc) Stuart, Oklahoma poster-plant operator, who once did a cycle of seasons as a circus press agent. And Doc takes a plane to Cole Brothers Circus opening as regularly as the years come and go. Stuart's hobby is collecting interesting tales about troupers he has known through the years, which he puts into his striking stories.

When the show is on the lot, it is not unusual to find Harrison Waite, Texas banker, sitting in the door of the red ticket wagon. For the red wagon is the show's office, and while Mr. Waite likes circuses generally, his particular and peculiar delight is seeing firsthand how the multitudinous details of keeping a circus running are carried out from the executive desk.

Across the midway is the sideshow and there other circus fans loiter — often forgetting to pass through the marquee to see the big show. W. Fulton White, Maine realtor, is one of them. The freaks and midgets in particular appeal to him. His collection of circusions is devoted to miniature figures of animals and sideshow freaks. And you should see those realistic hand-carved Ubangi savages and Siamese twins in his exhibit.

The menagerie catches the eye of other circus fans. John Sheppard, retired Chicago miller, spends long hours in the animal tent. For Sheppard's hobby is carving animal figures with simple hand tools, and he has a miniature menagerie which runs into hundreds of animals, carved in numerous lifelike positions.

Out in the circus backyard, nearly every day there are circus fans on hand, gathering items for their collections from their personal friends of the show world, or indulging in their favorite diversions.

In the blacksmith tent, one may find all the horseshoers on their knees, scrutinizing the remarkable circus

blacksmith shop in miniature, carved by Jerry Booker, son of a Fort Sill, Okla., army officer, who spent three years taking measurements and building the tiny forges, anvils and other equipment, including the wagon into which all the hundreds of pieces pack.

If there is a contortionist on the program, at his trunk in the dressing room, you will find Burns M. Kattenburg, if the show is within 100 miles of his Ohio home. Kattenburg has a remarkable collection of photographs and information about bend-ers, along with properties used by various famous contortionists of other days.

Clown alley always attracts several fellows for whom clowning is a sideline to their collecting hobby. Harper Joy, the Washington investment banker, spends his annual vacation clowning. Albert Marx, Texas coffee salesman, never misses a chance to gather additional wardrobe to fill his mammoth trunk, and you'll often find him explaining one of his new gags to a veteran joey in the dressing tent, or in the shade of a baggage wagon.

Other circus hobbyists' fervor runs to oddities in the collector's realm. Stan Rogers, an art director for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios, spends his spare time devoting his artistic skill to drawing maps showing the routes of various circuses each season, or placing dots on other maps showing every city and town in the United States in which a circus played last year, or drawing up charts giving facts and figures about all the principal circuses in the country for a century.

Karl Kae Knecht, cartoonist for the Evansville, Ind., Courier, never fails to draw a circus cartoon for his paper when the big show comes to town; and a comic little figure of an elephant always accompanies his signature on his daily cartoon dealing with politics, current events and Evansville topics. Knecht is such an ardent circus hobbyist that when Evansville zoo bought an elephant, it was named Kae in his honor.

Benjamin F. Perkins, Massachusetts manufacturer, has a big hobby, indeed. For collecting calliopes, both the steam and the air varieties, is his diversion. He has a host of these instruments which he furnishes for parades and one is used for radio broadcasts advertising his products.

And circus historians, like Colonel C. G. Sturtevant, retired army officer, and C. E. Duple, Indiana musician, find inspiration for their well-kept records of every phase of circus lore talking to veteran hostlers, canvasmen, eight-horse drivers — in fact any old-timer they find on the lot, whose reminiscences provide valuable circus history.

Thus the circus, from front door to the cook-house, from the moment the first wagon rolls down the runs until the show train speeds away into the night, has a special significance and allure for circus collectors, whose hobbies are as numerous as the 1,001 animals — count 'em — advertised on the gaudy posters.

## "THE CONEY ISLAND CROWD"

(Continued from page 21)

and I went with Billy to the recording studio, where he sang "There Must Have Been Egyptians Long Ago" and "When Paddy McGinty Plays the Harp." This went over even bigger.

For several months afterward, Billy had regular recording engagements — and never was he told to "croon." Then tragedy apparently struck. The veteran comedian had a long siege of streptococcal sore throat and, when he went to make four records in August last year, was so hoarse his efforts were a flat failure. It looked as if his singing days might be over.

After several throat specialists had been consulted, however, the trouble began to clear up, and Billy was asked to become a featured guest artist on the National Barn Dance. He has since spent about half his time in Chicago, where the program originates, and has made one of the biggest hits of any guest the Barn Dance has had in years. My hunch is that popular clamor will result in his becoming a permanent addition to the cast.

For several months after his streptococcal experience, Billy refused to try to make more records. "Wait till my voice is back where it used to be!" he insisted. As this is written, however, he is preparing to resume regular recording engagements and some of his new Bluebird records probably will be on sale before this is printed.

I have devoted three months' space to writing about Billy Murray, but I could not express my admiration and love for this truly great artist and lovable man in 30 months. As a very small boy I played his records incessantly and he was almost never out of my mind. I even dreamed about him. The greatest evening of my life was the one on which I saw him appear with the Eight.

Years later, my cup was filled to overflowing when he and Jimmy Martindale came to Johnson City, Tenn., to visit me. That was in October, 1938. Two years later to the month I spent a happy fortnight with Billy, running around New York, what time I wasn't eating and sleeping at his beautiful home in Freeport. A lifetime of devotion could not repay him for the happiness he has brought into my life. To me he is truly one of the great men of his time, who will be recognized a generation from now as even greater than he appears to his admirers today.



through the underbrush, that the singer's talents are most vividly displayed. Dating back to 1911, this is perhaps her outstanding record, and like most of hers, it is extremely well recorded, giving a thrilling impression of a gorgeous voice. IRCC #73 belongs to that select group of old vocal records whose attributes include, aside from mere historical importance, actual qualities of performance that cannot be matched in our day.

(Twelve-inch disc. IRCC #73)

\* \* \*

### Priorities Interrupt IRCC'S Repressing Activities

William H. Seltsam, founder and secretary of The International Record Collectors Club, has been informed that owing to the shellac shortage, RCA-Victor will no longer be able to press records for IRCC. This not unexpected news will come as a sad blow to the numerous collectors who for the past ten years have been privileged to buy at reasonable prices repressings and re-recordings of out-of-print records of the greatest historical and musical importance that would have been well-nigh impossible to obtain had it not been for IRCC. Fortunately, all the records announced to date have been pressed and many back issues are in stock. When present editions are exhausted, no more pressings and re-recordings of out-of-the-war — or until a satisfactory substitute for shellac is found.

\* \* \*

### Two Recommended Books

MEMORIES OF OPERA by Giulio Gatti-Casazza (Scribners).

JOHN MCCORMACK — The Story of a Singer — by L. A. G. Strong (Macmillan).

Both of these books were published late in 1941. Both cover the period when many of the great singers whose records we now seek were alive and flourishing. Gatti's memories naturally go back further and centralize around different parts of the world of music than do most of McCormack's, and viewed as a pair the two books supplement and complement one another admirably.

As director of Italy's famous La Scala opera house and then, beginning in 1907, of our own Metropolitan for twenty-seven years, Gatti came into contact with a host of fine artists and the opinions of this dignified, self-respecting Italian gentleman can be read with pleasure and profit. His account of Tamagno, for instance, is in itself enough to make you curse fate for not having had you born into an earlier generation.

L. A. G. Strong is a novelist, a music lover and a friendly but by no means abject admirer of the subject

of his story. So often it is a case of either a dead biography of a living person or a living biography of a dead person. This time, however, we have a book that is as alive as John McCormack himself. Much of the story is told in the singer's own words, which is to say that humor and keen observations are everywhere. There are appendices listing and commenting upon some of the records of many of McCormack's contemporaries, including a list of most of McCormack's own worthwhile recordings. What with these and the many references to records in the main body of the text, collectors should give this book a place of honor on their shelves.

### Paul Reimers Dead

The death of that delightful concert singer, Paul Reimers, on April 14th, was sad news for the many collectors who admire his splendid records. Mr. Reimers once commented upon a program of his records for me as part of my Great Singers Series of broadcasts over station WQXR, New York City, and my association with this charming man left me with such pleasant memories of him that I feel impelled to write for next month's issue a short article about the man, his career and his records.

## "The Coney Island Crowd"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

### JOHN BIELING I

IN writing biographical sketches of artists who have long since retired or died, it is, unfortunately, easy to make purely inadvertent mistakes. Information obtained at second, third or fourth hand, even though coming from apparently the most trustworthy sources, sometimes turns out to be wrong.

I am therefore glad that in writing about John Bieling I have his own written statements to guide me. As one of the oldest living recording artists, this ethereal-voiced tenor furnishes as good a subject for a biographical sketch as could be wished for.

Newcomers to the field of recording collecting may ask, "Who is John Bieling?" but no old-timer will. Veterans recall him as one of the most famous singers-into-a-horn of the Golden Age, 30 to 40 years ago, and as the mainstay first tenor of the male voiced foursomes which sang under the names of the Haydn and American Quartets for Victor and as the Edison and Premier Quartets on cylinders.

Most old-timers also believe Mr. Bieling was the only phonograph singer to win fame throughout the English-speaking world without ever making a solo disc or cylinder, but this is not precisely true. The tenor remembers making a few solos for the old United States Phonograph Company, including one called "Japanese Baby" but pronounced "Japan-easy." He recorded, too, many duets with the late Harry MacDonough; a few around 1900 for Edison with May Kelso, contralto; and a handful in 1911 with Walter Van Brunt, who is known nowadays as Walter Scanlan;

but otherwise his career seems to have been restricted to quartet work.

All these long-standing admirers of the singer described by MacDonough as having "a voice in a million, to stand up under the work it did," and by Billy Murray as "The Canary" ("because," Billy said, "he never blasted!") will be glad to know he is in good health and enjoying life at his Hempstead, Long Island, home, although he reached his 73rd birthday on March 18 this year.

And now let's let Mr. Bieling tell his own story:

"The very first quartet that ever made a recording on any kind of record was the Manhanset Quartet, which was composed of John Bieling, first tenor; George Gaskin, second



THE HAYDN QUARTET

Comprised of John H. Bieling, Harry MacDonough, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hootley. Their records are now collectors' items.

tenor; Joe Riley, baritone; and Jim Cherry, bass. Cherry sang only a couple of recording dates with us before being replaced by Walter Snow, who remained with the quartet for some time.

"When I speak of first record making I mean, of course, for commercial purposes; they were made by the United States Phonograph Company in Newark, N. J., and the man who did the recording was Victor Emerson, later recording expert for the Columbia Company and, in 1916, founder of the Emerson Phonograph Company. The recording was done with Edison machines, run by storage batteries placed on shelves. They were grouped so that the horns into which we sang would focus as nearly as possible to a center on the opposite side of the rack. There were usually seven horns into which we sang. The cylinders, of course, were wax ones, made by the Edison Company.

"In those days—the '90's and the early 1900's—there were dozens of record companies, some of which lasted only a few weeks. The Manhanset Quartet and its successor

sang for most or all of these, including United States around 1893 or 1894; Columbia; Berliner, the first discs (these had so much surface noise and were so terrible in general, we were ashamed to take the money from the inventor, Emile Berliner, who was then recording in a garret); Zonophone discs, with John English in charge of recording; Reed and Miller; Isaac Norcross (who made "Jumbo" six-inch cylinders for Howley and Haviland in the Attila Building on 37th Street, New York); and Leeds and Catlin, who started with cylinders and afterwards made discs.

"At that time Edison had not yet started to record for a commercial purpose; however, when they saw the possibilities of a great demand for records, they began to organize a talent bureau. Around 1896, the Manhanset Quartet broke up, Gaskin going exclusively with Columbia at 28th Street and Broadway. Jim Cherry was then on the road, Riley returned to his steamfitting company, and yours truly went back to his stained-glass trade. Of course, the demand for records was slowly creeping along; then it suddenly took a jump upward and there was a call for various kinds of talent."

"When I first went into the record business, there were only the following artists recording: Gaskin, solos and quartets; Dan Quinn, comic songs; Len Spencer, 'coon songs'; Vess Ossman, banjo; and a monologist whose name I have forgotten. (This may have been George Graham, a street-corner medicine spieler who made some of his monologs as a side line.) Neither the Edison nor the Victor companies had yet arrived on the scene. I forgot to mention that the Manhanset did make a trial date for Walter Miller, who was doing the experimenting for Edison (Miller, who died about a year ago, remained with the Edison organization to the end of his life, although the company's phonograph activities ended in 1929), but of course when Gaskin signed up with Columbia, that busted up the Manhanset outfit.

"Then it was that Sam Rous (known on records as S. H. Dudley), William F. Hooley, a fellow named Jim Reynard and Roger Harding organized a quartet and started to sing for Edison. This quartet was using the selections that the Manhanset had used for the United States Phonograph Company.

"The new quartet didn't seem to click with Mr. Miller, and he suggested that they get Bieling for Roger Harding and Jere Mahoney for Reynard. That then became the Edison Quartet which lasted for quite a while, until good old Jere Mahoney got a bad dose of inflammatory rheuma-

tism, and he never sang with us again. He was replaced by John MacDonald (whose records appeared under the name of Harry MacDonough) and he was an excellent asset to the organization. This aggregation became Haydn, American and, of course, Edison Quartets."

(To be continued)

## CLASSICAL RECORDS WANTED

EXCHANGING: Thousands rare vocal instrumental—1895-1935. Want cornet trombone early—Bing Crosby, Paul Whiteman, others.—Ernest Fox, 418½ East Islay St., St. Barbara, Calif. jly1001

## MISCELLANEOUS

COLLECTORS send for list of obsolete operatic and specialty records.—Symphony Music Shop, 251 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. jly2061

REGINA MUSIC BOX with 47 disc, \$75.00. Swiss type music box, 8 tunes, \$50.00. Both in good condition.—T. Kelleher, 925 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, Mass. jly1521

## SHEET MUSIC WANTED

ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE COVERS — Sheet music relating to old automobile days with picture covers. Describe fully with price.—James Melton, Box 8, Westport, Conn. d16672

WANTED—SHEET MUSIC before 1910. Must concern the telephone in some manner. No other music wanted. State title, copyright year, and your price.—C. H. Swower, 1497 South 4th St., Columbus, Ohio. jly169

## RECORDS FOR SALE

HOT JAZZ RECORDS — Collectors' items. Semi-monthly mail auctions. The fascinating way to build your collection. Send for current list.—Records, P. O. Box 511, Manhattan Beach, Calif. au6055

CLASSICAL RECORDS — Reasonable. Send stamped envelope for lists.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City, N. J. s112065

RECORDS, SHEET MUSIC—List, 10c.—Fore's, (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver, Colo. ja12513

PHONOGRAPH RECORD ALBUMS—Sturdy construction, loose leaf Tally Ring binders, hold 12 records. Covered in beautiful simulated leather. Black, Brown, Green or Red. 12-inch \$2.25, 10-inch \$1.75. Send for booklet.—Matchless Album Co., Dept. H, Long Branch, N. J. jly1002

WOODYMAY RECORD CO., 77 Maywood St., Roxbury, Boston, Mass. Specializing in Edison cylinder and diamond disc records. Send us your Edison reproducers and \$6.50. We will ship you a Woodymay Pickup, that is the collectors' joy. jly1002

## ANCIENT EUROPEAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

An organological study of the musical instruments in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Covers the years 1460 to about 1850. Gives history, typology, acoustical properties, construction details and tunings of all the instruments plus appendices and indices and bibliography. 536 pages, 89 illustrations. Send \$10.00 for your copy to:—

HOBBIES MAGAZINE  
2810 South Michigan Avenue - Chicago, Illinois

## WANTED

BOOKS: Biographies of famous singers.

CATALOGS: BERLINER, BETTINI, EDISON, ZONOPHONE, ODEON, Okeh, BRUNSWICK Aeolian-Vocalion, PATHE, VICTOR & COLUMBIA before 1930 only. Foreign catalogs of any years. Supplements to catalogs of all makes. Advertisements of phonographs, gramophones, talking machines of all types as well as cylinder and disc records. Complete runs of supplements (listing and describing records) of recent years—Victor, Columbia, etc. of recent years.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Old time singers.

RECORDS: Red Seal single faced Victors bearing MONARCH and DE LUXE labels. "PATTI" and TAMAGNO records. MELBA records, but in 94,000 and 95,000 series only. BETTINI cylinders. EDISON GRAND OPERA CYLINDERS. COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORDS. PATHE 14" center start discs by Albers, Note, etc.—must be operatic. ZONOPHONE records by Plancon, Caruso, Calve and others. Any record by Edouard Lankow, Lillian Blauvelt Columbias: 30124 Romeo, A-5078 Barber of Seville, A-5119 Ouvrez/When Celia Sings, A-5120 Rodellinda/Norwegian Song.

EDISON GRAND OPERA CYLINDERS such as are listed in this month's issue; also cylinders by SARAH BERNHARDT.

BERLINER GRAMOPHONE discs by CHAUNCEY DEPEW, ADA REHAN, JESSIE BARTLETT DAVIS, JOSEPH JEFFERSON, DWIGHT MOODY, Rev. TALMAGE, MAGGIE MITCHELL, Mme. JANAUSCHEK, ROBERT INGERSOLL, W. H. CRANE, MARSHALL P. WILDER and other celebrities of the nineties.

PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR OR OFFER POPULAR RECORDS OR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. I AM INTERESTED ONLY IN RECORDS BY THE GREAT OPERA AND CONCERT (CLASSICAL) SINGERS & FAMOUS SPEAKERS.

NO LISTS OF RECORDS WANTED OR FOR SALE AVAILABLE.

STEPHEN FASSETT

944 Monroe Lane  
Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.

out every chance you get and rescue from the melting pot as many records of the great singers of the past as you possibly can. Could there be a better way of paying homage to the great ones of the past, or of doing yourself a favor?

### Plans for complete numerical lists of the Columbia-Fonotipia Series -- Help Wanted!!

Back in 1908 or thereabouts, when Columbia was beginning its policy of pressing records from the imported masters of the allied Fonotipia and Odeon companies, the labels for the domestic editions were printed with the original Fonotipia and Odeon numbers only. These Columbia-Fonotipias, as they are known to collectors, were all double-faced and apparently it was not until after the labels were printed that the Columbia officials realized what a nuisance it would be to classify them under the original numbers, which would naturally be different on both sides of the discs; so new double-faced numbers (same on both sides) were assigned, to keep the catalog clear and understandable. Instead of printing new labels, Columbia merely rubber-stamped the new numbers onto the labels in red ink. Thus we have the "B" and "T" series of Columbia-Fonotipia "Double-Disc" records. Now, I have in my possession a couple of commercial catalogs which list most of these records *by their double-faced "T" and "B" numbers only*, but it seems to me that a numerical list of this series would have much more value to HOBBIES' readers if it included the original numbers as well. Therefore I am asking collectors to examine their Columbia-Fonotipias and send me both the double and single numbers, so that a complete list can be published in a future issue of HOBBIES. Here is what I believe to be the simplest method of writing down the information. Suppose you have F5, which happens to be Anselmi singing arias from "Don Giovanni" (62167) and "Don Pasquale" (62183), just send me a card saying: F5: Don Giovanni — 62167; Don Pasquale — 62183. That's all; it's not even necessary to give the name of the artist. If all of you who have Columbia-Fonotipias will list them for me in this way we'll soon be able to enjoy the combined fruit of our individual labors. So please help if you can.

#### "EVERYDAY THINGS IN AMERICAN LIFE"

1607 - 1776

353 pages — Illustrated

Contents: Shelters and first houses; The fireplace, center of the home; In Dutch New York; Penn's Quaker City; Handwork at Ephrata; At Moravian Bethlehem; Scotch-Irish in the mountains; Georgian mansions; 18th Century furniture; Pewter; Silversmiths and silverware; Colonial glass; etc. . . . \$3.00.

HOBBIES MAGAZINE  
2810 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, Ill.

## "The Coney Island Crowd"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

### Pioneer Phonograph Singers

#### John Bieling, II.

LAST month's installment relating to the career of John Bieling, as told by himself, left off with Harry Macdonough replacing Jere Mahoney as second tenor of the Edison Quartet. That must have occurred in 1899, since Macdonough's first recording engagement with Edison was in October, 1898.

Now we pick up Mr. Bieling's recollections:

"Later on, Macdonough went with the Victor Company in charge of their New York laboratory. The name, 'American Quartet,' which had been used in Victor's earliest days, was revived in 1910, and Billy Murray became second tenor in Macdonough's place. Steve Porter took the baritone part, succeeding S. H. Dudley, who had become Victor catalog editor. The American Quartet thus was the same as the Haydn, with the exception of these changes. It comprised Murray, Bieling, Porter and Hooley. However, the Haydn remained for several years longer, because we sang under that name exclusively for Victor. This Quartet sang together as the Haydn for about 18 years — not a bad record for continued harmony and good fellowship.

"Now, while I am still on the subject of recording, I might add that I believe that I am the oldest living person who recorded commercially. Gaskin, Spencer, Ossman and Quinn, who died about two years ago, are all gone. Dan Quinn, had he still lived, would have out-ranked me by about two weeks. After he passed away, that left me all alone to sit and think of the good old days we all had together and the fine fellowship we used to enjoy in each other's company.

"You no doubt know that Macdonough and Hooley are dead. I don't know for sure whether old Sam Rous (Dudley) is also gone. He went to France many years ago. He was almost blind when he left. He was a few years older than I, so that would make him around 76 or 77, if he is still alive. I would give much to see him again, if only for an hour, just to reminisce."

At this point I shall cease quoting from the handsome, brown-eyed gentleman of Hempstead who looks so much younger than his years, and carry on the story of the male quartets in which he was so valuable a member.

The Haydn, obviously named in

memory of the great Austrian composer, was for many years the premier male voice ensemble in the United States. Its popularity spread throughout the world, wherever English was understood, and became so great that in the spring of 1902 the singers were obliged to take several months off and go to England, where they made scads of records for the Gramophone and other English companies. I have been fortunate enough to obtain a few of their Gramophone records in excellent condition.

They continued singing as the Edison Quartet for several years more, but eventually, as the Haydn, became exclusive to Victor, when Macdonough and Dudley became directors of Victor recording departments. About 1912, the spelling of the quartet's name was changed to "Hayden," to conform with the way the general public had always insisted on pronouncing it. The idea of calling it the "High-dn" Quartet never did go well with the average record buyer.

When the American became an offshoot of the Hayden, it was able to record (under the name of the Premier Quartet) for Edison as well as Victor, owing to the fact that Billy Murray, star of the American, had a joint Victor-Edison contract. The Hayden, however, continued to be exclusive to Victor until it disbanded in 1914, after pressure of department duties made it more and more difficult for Macdonough and Dudley to find time to sing.

I believe the Hayden's last two records, issued in April, 1914, were "The Woman Thou Gavest Me" and "Cross the Great Divide I'll Wait For You." From the standpoint of balance and harmony, they were two of the organization's finest. Many Hayden records stayed in the Victor catalog until 1925, the year that saw the death of the horn process of recording, and two or three stuck it out a few years later. "In the Sweet By and By" and "Lead, Kindly Light" were the last to go, being listed in the 1930 catalog. They had been recorded nearly 30 years before.

Prior to this there was, for several years, a tendency to replace Hayden records with newly-recorded versions, but bearing the same catalog numbers, by the Peerless, Criterion and Shannon Quartets. This was not because of any fault in the Hayden's singing but because later recording methods allowed of technical improvements or the original Hayden masters



had been damaged from much handling.

Just when Mr. Bieling had trouble with his voice and dropped out of the American Quartet is a matter of uncertainty. He believes it was 1914; but the actual time may have been 1918 or 1919, for his photo was carried in the catalog as the quartet's top tenor until the latter date. Incidentally, it is not generally known that the Heidleberg Quintet was exactly the same ensemble as the American Quartet, except that Will Oakland, the counter-tenor, was added as the star.

Bill Hooley, the remarkable basso, died around 1919 and was replaced by Donald Chalmers, who was also the bass of the Criterion Quartet and the Harmony Four. Upon Mr. Bieling's resignation, John Young, concert tenor, who was also a Criterion Quartet member, succeeded to his place. (The Criterion became the Roxy Quartet, which sang so long at the Roxy Theater in New York.) Murray and Steve Porter remained as the two original American Quartet members.

After Murray became an exclusive

Victor artist in 1921, Edison continued to use the Premier Quartet name for a year or two, but the singers were Porter, Billy Jones, Charles Hart and Harry Donaghy, who sang for other companies as the Harmonizers. The American Quartet made records occasionally for Victor until mid-1925. By that time, however, more changes had been made and the quartet was the same as the Peerless, except that Murray took Henry Burr's place as the "lead."

Sam Rous, mentioned so affectionately by Mr. Bieling, is probably still alive. He recovered his eyesight after going to France and became one of the most fascinating letter writers I have ever known. In 1933 he and his wife returned to this country and went to live in California, where they still were at last report. I hope they are living and will be well and happy for many years to come.

That last most emphatically goes, too, for John Bieling, who must be glad to know how many people today admire him for the fine work he did for so many years and are wishing him the best of luck, now and always!

## "Talking Machine" Lore

C.D. Collins of Georges Mills, N.H., owned one of the first "talking machines" in New England. It was called "Berliner's Gramophone," and had a horn for concerts and ear tubes for private use. In recalling memories of this era, Mr. Collins says, "I have to laugh even now when I think how this machine astonished the old folks. They were very much surprised to hear a machine talk." Among the records which Mr. Collins used to listen to in the early days of the "talking machine" was one sent free to advertise the machine. It started off by saying: "I am known to everyone as Berliner's Gramophone, and as a 'talking machine.' I'm standing quite alone." Mr. Collins exhibited his "talking machine" at church socials charging 5c per person. He had six tubes; thus, he took in 30c per record. The proceeds, of course, went to the church. In one town, the minister, who had an eye for business, teamed up with Mr. Collins and gave a lecture while Mr. Collins furnished the "Gramophone Concert."

*This George II inlaid walnut spinet, made by Charles Slade, London, in 1734, brought \$475 at an auction conducted recently by the Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, N. Y. It bears the inscription, "Carolus Slade, Londini, Fecit 1734." Its length is six feet, three inches, and height 18½ inches.*

—Courtesy Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc.



### The Latin Point of View

— An Extract from a letter by  
Frank Garcia Montes —

NOTE: A Cuban, Frank Garcia Montes is one of the world's outstanding record collectors. His collection was begun long before the first World War and is still increasing both in quality and quantity. A man of comprehensive culture and musicianship, Dr. Montes has heard an enormous amount of opera on both sides of the Atlantic, and thus his attitude toward record collecting is much broader and more inclusive than that of collectors with more limited experience. The following was prompted by a question of mine regarding Rosina Storchio whose records fail, in my opinion, to reflect the greatness mentioned with such appreciation by Gatti Casazza in his "Memories of Opera."

"All that Gatti has said of Rosina Storchio in his book is true. I had the privilege of hearing her, past her prime, when she sang here (Havana) in 1921. She was then 45 years old but she looked as if she were 60. On days when no opera was given, she liked to go to wrestling matches, which were new to her, accompanied by Schipa, his wife Antoinette (now divorced), Titta Ruffo and myself. She walked very slowly and with some trouble and Schipa and I helped her along. Yet when she was acting she looked young and moved about the stage with agility. She did not have much voice left then, but in certain passages she rose to great heights. The expression, the accent given to the music, and her acting left everybody spellbound. All this is what made her a great artist, not beauty of voice nor the production of it. Singers of this kind have to be heard and seen at the same time; therefore the records alone will not make anybody enthusiastic.

"I have all the Fonotipia records she made in 1905, all the others she made for that company in 1908, as well as one of her G&T "Siberia" records of 1904. Her best records are "Boheme" (Leoncavallo)—*Mimi perison la bandinetta* and *Ei domani* from "Fra Diavolo." Her voice sounds prettier in the "Siberia" G&T, but none of her records is a convincing proof of her art. She did not excel in the arias and duets where singers with beautiful voices or great technical ability did. Her big moments were achieved in small phrases or in scenes that nobody else could make much of. I am speaking, of course, of the singer as I heard her. In "Manon" the *Je suis encore toute etourdie* and *Voyons Manon* were sung well enough, but in the St. Sulpice duet,

when she began the phrase *N'est-ce plus ma main*, the audience was completely won and when the phrase *C'est ne plus Manon* came, everything and everybody else were forgotten and only Storchio was there. The same thing happened when she sang "Traviata." The big arias received but little enthusiasm, but in the second act, at the phrase *Amami Alfredo*, the public was at her feet and nobody else counted, only Storchio. It is noteworthy that in both operas she was singing with an artist who could have held his own among the giants

of the past, that master of bel canto, Tito Schipa.

"I believe that the reputation of certain singers in Italy and in all Latin American countries cannot be judged by their records alone, because they were more actor-singers than true exponents of bel canto. In opera, Latins prefer a singer who is capable of conveying great enthusiasm to his public by impassioned singing or acting, to one who concentrates only on perfect voice production. The latter type, they feel, should sing only in concert, and I think they are right."

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

*Albert Campbell*

THE subject of this sketch was not only one of the first men to make a career of singing for phonograph records, he is also one of the most distinguished of that specialized brotherhood and belongs in anybody's list of the dozen greatest pioneer recording artists. Moreover, he is one of the most amiable and genial gentlemen I have ever known, and my several meetings with him remain among the imperishable memories of my one visit to New York, a couple of years ago.

As a rule, I would take anyone named Campbell to be of Scotch descent, but this tenor with the remarkably sweet "lyric" voice comes from a line of Irishmen. He was born in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn on August 17, 1872. Although music always had an irresistible attraction for him, as a boy and very young man he was employed in the Corning Glass Works. At the same bench worked a cousin with whom Al frequently discussed his theatrical aspirations.

Finally, the cousin said: "Oh, Al, to --- with this glass business! Let's go on the stage!"

They did. The youngsters signed up with a number of traveling troupes, and Al sang "leading roles" in "The Chimes of Normandy" and other musical comedies and light operas popular in the late '80's and early '90's. Most of their trouping ended in disaster, however, and they came to know from sad experience what it meant to tramp back home over the railroad tracks.

By this time, though, Thomas Edison's new-fangled invention, the phonograph, was becoming a popular means of nickel-in-the-slot entertainment, and fragile wax cylinders were actually being heard in some homes. Returning to New York, young Mr. Campbell associated himself with three other fellows — Steve Porter, who became as great a recording

celebrity as Al himself, James K. Reynard (mentioned in the sketches about John Bieling as being a member of the first quartet to make Edison cylinders) and Will C. (Bill) Jones. They called themselves the Diamond Comedy Four and began making records for the song publishing firm operated by Edward B. Marks and Joe Stern. In his book, "They All Sang," Marks, recalling those long-gone days, said:

"It was a 'plug' that Joe Stern and I saw the phonograph... We opened our own recording studio in a loft at 21 East Twentieth Street, a couple doors west of our publishing office.

"The first offering for the month was a series of records by the Diamond Quartet: A. C. Campbell, S. C. Porter, J. K. Reynard and Will C. Jones. They did an 'Imitation Medley' with 'imitations of the' nightingale, pigs, baby cry, crows, etc., concluding with a most amusing cat fight.' Their other numbers included 'The Cornfield Medley' with 'steamboat imitation, bells, whistles, banjos, etc.'"

Since the manufacturers of blank cylinders didn't look with favor upon the Marks-Stern enterprise, which was designed to "plug" exclusively the songs the firm published, the business of singing in the loft at 75 cents or a dollar a "round" didn't last long. But Al Campbell wasn't worried. He had discovered he had a natural recording voice, and by 1896 he was making solo five and one-half inch discs for Emile Berliner, then experimenting with records which had an abominably noisy surface and compared most unfavorably with the more popular cylinders. Mr. Campbell presented me with one of the Berliners by himself, "The Boy Guessed Right," during my New York stay.

Concurrently, he was also doing what was probably the first recorded advertising job. A man named Ike



*Al Campbell as he appeared in 1892*  
Norcross for a time made "Jumbo" cylinders, six inches long. His recording studios were on 37th Street.

Among other things, these cylinders praised Quaker Oats and were distributed as advertising novelties by the breakfast food company. At the beginning an announcer would say, "Good morning, madam. Mr. Albert Campbell will now entertain you with a song." After Al had sung "The School Playground" or some other ditty of the day, the record would be concluded with a suave, "Thank you, madam. Remember, Quaker Oats are good for children."

The Columbia company had also moved from Washington and was making cylinders at 27th Street and Broadway. When it began making discs in 1902, separate studios on 26th Street were used. Edison, too, got into the commercial recording business around 1896, and two or three years later Campbell was one of the strong favorites of its catalog. An Edison list dated November 20, 1899, mentions two Campbell records, No. 7296, "For All Eternity," and 7297, "Mandy Lee." Both songs are well known today. The tenor is prominently shown in the front row of a group of 40 popular Edison recording artists, photographed in 1900. He is smiling quizzically and looking very boyish. Oddly, although the Victor company was directly "descended" from Berliner's early disc activities, Campbell does not appear to have sung for "His Master's Voice" until around 1907.

Although Al made many solo records, both in the earliest days when he sang by "rounds" and later when permanent "masters" came into use, he was destined to be best known as the first tenor of male quartets. In the beginning days, Columbia es-

pecially went in for this type of record, which usually appeared under the title of "The Columbia Quartet." Campbell was always a member of the ensemble, and was associated at various times with such other singers as Porter; Joe Belmont, best known as a whistler and today proprietor of a bird store in Radio City; George Gaskin; "Big Tom" Daniels and Henry Burr. One of the quartets consisted of Campbell, Daniels, Porter and Burr.

Then the late Stanley Grinstead ("Frank C. Stanley") organized the Peerless Quartet, and Al Campbell's greatest days began.

(To be Continued)

## Notes on Old Ballads

THE word ballad is of Italian origin (ballate), and meant originally a dance-song, being derived from the middle Latin "ballare," corresponding to the Greek "ballizein," to dance. The ballad is a kind of a poem which it is very difficult to characterize. In the course of centuries it has undergone various transformations, and the name has been transferred to pieces which in extent, subject, and character have no longer anything in common with the primitive ballad. The confusion of ideas was rendered still worse from the circumstance that poems of exactly the same nature were styled sometimes romances, sometimes ballads, sometimes epic or lyric-epic, or poetic narratives; so that it was left to the caprice of the poet which of these generic names he would give to his production.

As early as the 12th century, the Italians gave the title of ballads to short, purely lyrical pieces, allied to the sonnet or still more to the madrigal, and which generally had love-sorrows for their subject. Dante has such "ballate." Akin to these are those French ballads which Moliere set himself against, and which fell into disuse. The earliest ballads, as the word is now understood, are those of England and Scotland, beginning about the 14th century. Such were these "Reliques of ancient English Poetry," which Selden collected, Pepys preserved, and Percy published. Ritson, the great English poetical antiquary, says that few are older than the reign of James I. The more ancient songs of the people perished by having been printed in single sheets, and by their humbler purchasers having no other library to preserve them than the walls on which they pasted them. Those we have consist of a succeeding race of ballads chiefly revived or written by Richard Johnson, the author of the romance of the Seven Champions, and Delony, the writer of Jack of Newbury's life. One Martin Parker was a most no-

torious ballad-scribbler in the reign of Charles I and Cromwell.

The home of the real ballad was the North of England and the South of Scotland. The martial spirit constantly kept up and exercised near the frontier of the two kingdoms inspired the inhabitants of the adjacent counties on both sides with the powers of poetry. The old minstrel ballads are in the northern dialect and abound with antique words and phrases. They are extremely incorrect and run into the utmost license of metre. They have also a romantic wildness and are in the true spirit of chivalry. The later type of the Stuart period are written in exacter measure, have a low or subordinate correctness, sometimes bordering on the insipid, yet often well adapted to the pathetic. These are generally in the southern dialect and exhibit a more modern phraseology, and are commonly descriptive of more modern manners.

The manner in which the older ballads have come down to us baffles any attempt at chronological arrangement. Some are derived solely from tradition in districts where they have been orally transmitted from generation to generation, time out of mind; some from broadsides that have escaped the march of time, yet in spite of their age these broadsides can never be relied upon as clues to the date of authorship; others have come from manuscripts, written at different periods, and presenting different versions of the same original.

"London Lackpenny" is curious for its record of the street cries and trades of London toward the close of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th century. The subject of which it treats was a frequent theme with the poets of the period.

"Sir Patrick Spens" was long admitted to be one of the earliest specimens of Scottish ballad poetry extant, but during the 19th century there was a considerable amount of discussion on the subject. It is now understood by many, on what is supposed to be reliable evidence, to have been written by Elizabeth Halkett, Lady Wardlaw, authoress of the ballad of "Hardyknute," the antiquity of which was also questioned for a time; but this point is still open to dispute. The ballad details the circumstances of the expedition to Norway, which sailed, by command to Alexander III, in 1281, for the purpose of conveying thither Margaret, his daughter, who was espoused to Eric, King of Norway. On the return of the fleet the catastrophe of the ballad occurred, and among others, Sir Patrick Spens, the presumed head of the expedition was drowned.

*By Raymond J. Walker*

(To be Continued)

to the Edison discs, but as they were pressed on a very hard material they had a sort of whistling surface noise that was disturbing. But I liked many of their artists and their band records had a very brilliant quality. But all in all, Victor was really the class of the field."

After reading the foregoing, I wonder how many HOBBIES readers will share with me the feeling that Mr. Harding should have hung on to his records, or at least to those of such notably unsurpassable vocal quality as to be premanently immune to obsolescence. A large part of his collection could gradually have been replaced with modern recordings, infinitely superior to the old, mechanically, and artistically as good or better. But to the hundreds of records which, from a standpoint of vocal performance, were the cream of the crop he should have remained loyal, as they were examples of great singing that could not be equalled in our day. This, mind you, is looking at the question from a purely realistic view-

point, excluding the often important factor of sentiment. To this select group of recordings Mr. Harding, a man who is obviously thorough in all things, could have listened today with more satisfaction than ever before, owing to the vastly superior reproduction now available to all who will take the trouble to search it out from the mass of poor equipment that is still discouragingly prevalent. And then, to take care of a musical taste that had expanded far beyond the narrow limits of the phonograph as it was before the competition of the radio opened up vast new tone worlds (almost killing it in the process) Mr. Harding would have found a tremendously comprehensive repertoire of an extent undreamed of thirty years ago. The cult of beautiful singing on old records could no longer have filled his entire musical horizon, as it once did and as it still does with many readers of this page, but at least it would have provided him with a continuously beautiful sunset to his musical days.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Albert Campbell -- II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

WHEN Frank C. Stanley brought the Peerless Quartet into being he put together a male voice foursome that many lovers of old records consider the greatest ever assembled. In the beginning it consisted of Stanley as leader (he nearly always sang the solo parts in spite of being the basso); Albert Campbell, first tenor; Henry Burr, then a boy who had not reached the age of 21, second tenor; and Arthur Collins, baritone. All four singers were famous soloists, and all are usually listed as among the most popular and outstanding recordings of their day. My own private list of "the twelve greatest" includes them all.

The quartet began singing together in, or about 1905, and continued unchanged until Stanley's death in December, 1910. It was known as the Peerless on most records, but made a few as "The Invincible Four," and as long as Stanley lived was "The Columbia Quartet" on that company's records. It began calling itself the Peerless also on Columbia, however, after Burr assumed the management and obtained John H. Meyer, a prominent New York church basso, to take Stanley's place. Thereafter nearly all the solo work was done by Burr, but Campbell's sweet harmony was one of the chief charms of the quartet's work.

A most accomplished business man,

as well as a consummate artist, Burr obtained regular recording engagements for the Peerless with all American recording companies. To give greater variety, he and Campbell began making in 1909, a long series of recorded duets, and in 1916 came the Sterling Trio, which was the same as the quartet except that Collins, the baritone, was not used. Collins was replaced by Frank Croxton in 1917, and the personnel then remained unchanged until 1925. But that is getting ahead of the story.

Because of the delicate lyric quality of his voice, Mr. Campbell decided around 1908 to do no more solo work but to confine himself to ensemble singing. In the meantime, though, his Columbia records of "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," "Dreaming" and "School Days" had sold enormously, as had his Victor of "Love Me and the World is Mine." As far as I know, his only solo work after 1908 consisted of a few records made for a short-lived phonograph company organized by Burr in 1915 — while Henry was still making dozens of records a month for other companies as a free-lance. Burr's company made seven-inch Par-O-Ket and ten-inch Phonotype records, of vertical cut, like Edison and Pathé discs. Not many machines of that day would play them and they were soon discontinued. Mr. Campbell gave me a copy of his rendition of "Kate O'Don-

## Genesis

In the beginning were the cylinders to entertain the world. The true collector will not be without them, for they will prove to be more glamorous than discs.

### WOODYMAY RECORD CO.

77 Maywood Street  
Roxbury, Boston, Mass.

## MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE. "Imperial Symphonion" Music Box with 15 No. 10 discs. Perfect running order. Price \$25. — W. P. Kesel, 50 - 7th St., Valley Stream, L. I., N. Y. o1521

WANTED. Don't sacrifice your old classical and operatic phonograph records for junk! Highest prices paid for old cylinders or discs. Send list to—G. H. Smith, 843 Middle St., Portsmouth, N. H. mh7024

## SHEET MUSIC WANTED

ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE COVERS — Sheet music relating to old automobile days with picture covers. Describe fully with price.—James Melton, Box 8, Westport, Conn. d1672

WANTED. SHEET MUSIC before 1910. Must concern the telephone in some manner. No other music wanted. State title, copyright year, and your price.—C. H. Swoyer, 1497 South 4th St., Columbus, O. n3373

## RECORDS FOR SALE

COLLECTORS send for list of rare operatic and specialty records. — Symphony Music Shop, 251 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Mass. n2081

RECORDS, SHEET MUSIC—List, 10c. —Fore's, (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver, Colo. jal2513

OLD CYLINDER RECORDS, 20 for \$1.00. — E. Sheppard, Catskill, N. Y. o156

DISPOSING OF OVER 2000 rare, old records at auction. Complete list, 50c (refunded with purchase). — E. O. Brown, 133 Kendalia, San Antonio, Tex. n2032

STELLA MUSIC DISKS, one hundred and sixty, all different, in lot or ten for seven dollars. — Hill Top Hotel, Harpers Ferry, W. Va. o1511

WOODYMAY RECORD CO., 77 Maywood St., Roxbury, Boston, Mass. In the time of our grandparents cylinder records were the medium of home entertainment and the records issued in their heyday now prove to be most interesting. For real Americana, the collector should turn to cylinders. Electrically reproduced with the Woodymay Pickup, cylinders outshine all discs made before 1920. o1003

## CLASSIFIED AD RATES

● WANTED TO BUY—3c per word for 1 month; 6 months for the price of four; 12 months for the price of seven.

● FOR SALE—5c per word for 1 month; 6 months for the price of four; 12 months for the price of seven.



ohue" on a Par-O-Ket after I recalled his singing that song on the one occasion when I heard Burr's concert troupe, the Eight Victor Artists, in person.

Late in 1920, the Peerless, which had made thousands of records during its long "sing for everybody" career, signed up exclusively with Victor and for the next five years Al Campbell's singing career was less strenuous, since it was confined to his duets with Burr and work with the Sterling and Peerless ensembles for Victor alone — in addition, of course, to the long concert tours made by the immortal Eight. His associates in the latter troupe recall him with great affection as "one of the finest little fellows in the world — a chap you could always get along with, who always said plainly what he thought about anything and let it go at that."

In 1925 Burr decided to change the Peerless personnel, and Campbell, Meyer and Croxton gave way to Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman and James Stanley — a group which stayed together about three years before changing theatrical conditions caused the disbanding of the troupe. Although regretting to leave the Peerless, Al was glad enough of the opportunity to spend more time at his home in Flushing. He struck up a partnership with Jack Kaufman, brother of Irving Kaufman, of recording and radio fame, and they did well for two years or so, making duet records for most of the minor and some of the larger recording firms. Then Kaufman decided to return to vaudeville with his brother, and the Campbell — Kaufman team "split." Al received a good offer from one of the large minstrel companies to travel with it as a special attraction and spent two or three seasons as a featured ballad singer on the road.

At length, again tired of traveling, he returned to New York, where today he is the prosperous operator of a talent booking agency. Last winter, he tells me, he headed a Gay Nineties unit, featuring a male trio with himself as tenor soloist, which was kept busy, playing all the R.K.O. and Loew vaudeville houses in New York, Brooklyn, and vicinity. He still has the same sweet, high tenor voice which endeared him to millions of buyers of records and, as I said in the article published last month, is one of the most genial and entertaining of companions. I should also have paid tribute to his memory of everything concerned with the old recording days. It is almost miraculous in its accuracy and capacity to assemble masses of more or less related detail.

Today Al Campbell is in good health and enjoying life, although he has passed 70. In appearance, he is

a small fellow — probably not more than five feet and six inches in height — with twinkling Irish-blue eyes, and a thick mass of black hair, only lightly touched with gray. It has been just within the last half dozen years that any gray has crept in at all. He has the suppleness of an acrobat and, in the words of one of his cronies, "Al Campbell can turn handsprings all over the place today, any time he wants to."

On the last day of my New York stay, Al took me to meet three notable recording artists — Aileen Stanley (whom we didn't find in her office), John Meyer and the late Billy Jones, of the famous Jones-Hare radio team. We parted at the door of Jack Caidin's second-hand record store and as we shook hands, Al smilingly asked: "Did you ever hear any Zon-o-phone records by Frank Howard?"

"Yes," I replied, "and I never have been able to find out who he was."

"Frank Howard," my friend returned, "was a fellow named Albert Campbell, singing in disguise. I used that name only for Zon-o-phone and I never made records under any other assumed name."

It was characteristic of Al Campbell that at the last moment he should tell me something I badly wanted to know. He is, and always will be, one of my "favorite people," and I am hoping that I shall yet be privileged to have many more meetings and meals at Lindy's with the veteran tenor to whom I am wishing all the luck in the world — and then some!

## Notes on OLD BALLADS

By R. J. WALKER

The "Water O' Wearie's Well" is the Scotch version of the tradition preserved in the English ballad of "The Outlandish Knight." The story is also common to Denmark and Germany, with variations of the catastrophe. The locality assigned to the tradition by Chambers is a wild part of the coast of Carrick. Carlton Castle is pointed out as the residence of the false knight, and Gamesloup, a high rock overlooking the sea, as the place where the Scotch Bluebeard was in the habit of drowning his wives. The heroine of the ballad is said to have been a member of the family of Kennedy of Colzean, later represented by the Earls of Cassilis. Dixon, in his collection for the Percy Society, transfers the scene to Balwearie Castle, in Fifeshire.

"Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale" was originally published by Ritson from a black-letter copy in the collection of Major Pearson. It exhibits Robin Hood in one of his most attractive aspects, affording help to a distressed

lover. Percy printed "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne." Percy also published "The Dragon of Wantley," a humorous song which is to old metrical romances and ballads of chivalry, what "Don Quixote" is to prose narratives of that kind — a lively satire on their extravagant fictions. It was probably written early in the 17th century. Percy obtained his version from one in Roman letters in the Pepys collection.

"Barbara Allen's Cruelty" is given by Percy, with some corrections, from an old black-letter copy entitled, "Barbara Allen's Cruelty, or the young man's tragedy." Brewer says this ballad was by Allen Ramsay (1724) but Pepys has a lady friend who signs herself "Barbara Allen." The tale is that Sir John Grehme was dying out of love of Barbara Allen. Barbara went to see him, and, drawing aside the curtain, said, "Young man, I think ye're dyan." She then left him; but had not gone above a mile or so when she heard the death-bell "knellin." She had a change of heart and went home and died of grief.

There are many other ballads and there have been many collections of both English and Scotch ballads. In these collections the ballads most often appearing are versions of "Adam Bell," "The Douglas Tragedy," "Edom o' Gordon," "Fair Rosamond," "Gil Morice," "Hardyknute," "King Arthur's Death," "The Nut-Brown Maid," "Patient Grissell," "Sweet William's Ghost," and "The Wee Wee Man."

Few men of letters have not read the collections which have been made of those charming "Chansionettes," to which French poetry owes a great share of its fame among foreigners. These treasures of wit and gaiety, which for many years have been in the mouths of Frenchmen, are rapidly being forgotten and are being buried in the dust of libraries. Then there are the old French "Vaudevilles," formerly sung at meals by the company. They were originally invented by a fuller of Vaud de Vire, or the valley of the river Vire, and were sung by his men to amuse themselves as they spread their cloths on the banks of the river. At first these gay playful effusions were called the songs of Vau de Vire, till they became known as "Vaudevilles."

### "EVERYDAY THINGS IN AMERICAN LIFE"

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HOBBIES MAGAZINE

2810 S. Michigan Ave.,

Chicago, Illinois



From Societa Italian di Fonotipia—Milan, Italy." On the back is a purple label, the same size as the one on the front, which reads in gold letters: "At great expense we have secured the right to offer to the American public recordings made in Europe by the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, an organization formed to perpetuate the performances of celebrated artists. This record is pressed in the United States by the General Phonograph Corporation, makers of the famous Okeh record—the record of quality—etc., etc. The facsimile signature on the label is that of the original artist."

Perhaps the record is not at all unusual, but it is the only one like it I have ever seen.

Very truly yours,  
Maynard Pappenfort.

—o—

Dear Mr. Pappenfort:

Thank you very much for taking the trouble to send in the correction of my misstatement in the "Outline for a De Gogorza Discography." I hope other collectors owning black seal Victors by De Gogorza (under this, his own name) will list them for us.

The famous Societa Italiana di Fonotipia of Milan, Italy, flourished in Europe for many years, issuing a great many fine records. It began, I believe, in 1904 but of its more recent history I can tell you little. It was part of a big combine which included, in Europe, Odeon and Parlophone. About 1908, American Columbia began issuing Fonotipia records, a numerical list of which will soon be printed in this magazine, but after five or six years this policy was abandoned and the records dropped from the catalog. However, about 1921, The General Phonograph Corporation, makers of the Okeh record, secured a license to manufacture and distribute in the U. S. A. Fonotipia and Odeon records, of which your Stracciari is one. The actual date of recording of many of these discs was 10 years or more prior to their appearance under the Okeh seal, but mechanically they were so fine that I doubt if the public ever suspected they were not the latest thing. Incidentally, the Okeh pressings were far smoother and clearer, in my opinion, than the earlier ones by Columbia—or the Fonotipia society itself. Other Odeon and Fonotipia artists who appeared on Okeh records included: Amato, McCormack, Hempel, Erb, Ivogun, Jadlowker, Slezak, Destinn, Didur, Kubelik, Dux, Bonci, Corradetti, Piccaver, D'Albert, Zenatello, Jeritz, Piccaluga, Russ, Tauber, Lauri-Volpi. An extremely distinguished roster, yet for some reason

these records, which included some magnificent performances, never achieved the circulation here that they deserved. This is not to say that, judged purely as collectors' items, they are rarities of the first water. But on the other hand, they are none too easy to find and I, for one, wish I had a lot more of them.

Sincerely yours,  
Stephen Fasset.

### The Twentieth Century Graphophone

Extract from a Letter by  
Angus Joss

"In your 'Historical Records' section of the September HOBBIES, you refer to the Twentieth Century Graphophone, stating that you had never seen one and knew of no collector who had a machine of this kind. I have owned a model B. C. of this type for a number of years and recently bought a B. F. model. I have only one of the six and one-eighth inch cylinders for which the Twentieth Century Graphophone was especially designed and unfortunately it is not in good condition. I know of only three others in the United States and there is a reason

for their scarcity. One collector has two of the records in good condition.

"The model B. C. is probably the most unique machine ever manufactured. It was designed for large volume and had a four-inch diaphragm. A long transmission containing a leather shoe rides over a slowly revolving amber reel, thus creating a tension on the diaphragm and giving a deeper tone than any other phonograph of the period. Although I have experimented with this model extensively, I have never been able to get any real volume out of it, although I understand that when working properly it could be heard half a mile away."

Mr. Joss adds that in his opinion the Twentieth Century cylinders were discontinued by Columbia in 1908, their unusual length apparently making them particularly liable to breakage and hence impractical for public use. And so the subject rests—temporarily, I hope.

### Pasquale Amato Dead

Next month I hope to offer a brief survey of the recordings of this famous baritone who died in August.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Arthur Collins, I

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

SOME months ago, in writing of John Bieling, I mentioned the difficulty I experienced in obtaining, at third or fourth hand, reliable information concerning the men and women who made records many years ago.

When I decided to sketch the career of Arthur Collins, who is the favorite pioneer recording comedian of a large number of collectors—including, to name only a few, Charlie Sniffin of New York, John L. Norton, Sr., of Massachusetts, and Cecil C. Smith of Minnesota—I found it particularly vexatious to obtain the facts.

For instance, an English publication, the Talking Machine News, in its June, 1907, issue, said Mr. Collins was "born on the bosom of the broad Atlantic in the memorable gale of '68, aboard his father's clipper, 'The Walter Pharo,' long engaged in Atlantic coast trade." On the other hand, a 1914 Edison cylinder record catalog said the comedian was born in Philadelphia, of Quaker descent.

What to do? Since Mr. Collins is usually ranked as one of the half dozen most popular singers of the phonograph, I wanted to be as accurate as possible. Finally, I wrote to the singer's widow, who before her marriage was Miss Anna Leah Cen-

nolly, and asked her to help me. In reply, I received two charming letters, full of facts I needed, and this biographical tribute to a great artist may therefore be depended upon as authentic, the more especially since much of it will be in Mrs. Collins' own words. Incidentally, her opening remarks place her in the long-mem-



Harlan and Collins, popular artists of their day. Their records are now collectors' items.

oried class of Albert Campbell, who, when he first met me in New York, apologized for not having replied to a letter I had written to him 10 years before, but which he had mislaid. Says Mrs. Collins:

"Before answering the questions in regard to Arthur's birthplace, etc., would like to tell you that it was only about two weeks ago I was going over some of the old papers, letters, etc., in my file here, and came across your letter to Arthur, dated August 29, 1931. We had read the letter many times, and Arthur said 'he must be a fine young man' and he did want to answer it, but as he was not so well . . . we never got to it . . . I always wanted to reply to that nice letter and now that you have given me the opportunity, I will do so to the best of my ability, and do all I can to give you the correct dates in regard to Arthur's life."

The singer's widow says that his full name was Arthur Francis Collins. His given names were after those of his father and mother.

"Arthur," Mrs. Collins continues, "was born on February 7, 1864, in the home of his grandfather, the Reverend Joseph Perry (chaplain in the U.S. Navy) on Gerard Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa. His father was Captain Arthur Collins, a devout Quaker. When Arthur was about 14 his father retired from the sea and bought a home in Barnegat, N. J., where he opened a big country store. Arthur often told of his trips during vacation on his father's three-masted schooner and how he furling his first sail at 12 years of age and also how he was 'lashed to the mast' several times during hurricanes and tropical storms off the Florida coast on the way from South America."

Mrs. Collins doesn't mention it, but the Edison publication, "Along Broadway," told in 1919 of how on one occasion Arthur fell overboard, came within an inch or two of drowning, but managed to tie a coil of halyard which his father threw him around his waist, was drawn to deck and given a sound thrashing for getting his clothes wet! This is reminiscent of Billy Murray's youthful experiences of getting caught in quicksand and almost drowning a couple of times. The early paths of the destined great appear to be beset with dangers!

But let us return to Mrs. Collins' narrative:

"Arthur never took to commercial life, so he joined the life-saving station on the Jersey coast and could tell many wonderful stories of rescues of people shipwrecked off the coast. At 17 he sang at church festivals and concerts and people began to know he had a wonderful voice. His folks sent him to Philadelphia to study voice culture and he had a good training with Brilla and other

teachers. While walking one day past the Opera House, he noticed a sign, 'Singers Wanted,' and he turned in at the stage door, went over to a man seated at the piano and said, 'I have a voice and would like to sing for you.' He had no music with him but said he would sing 'The Bridge.' When he finished everyone applauded and he was told to come round the next day for rehearsal.

"It was the Old King Company, which was a failure on the road. He then joined a company, starring Fay Templeton, which was another failure. He then sang in summer operas out in St. Louis, and played parts. Next he went with Francis Wilson in 'Merry Monarch' and was with him for ten years.

"Then we met. We sang together, but when he became famous I 'backed upstage,' as one singer in a family was enough. No one ever appreciated Arthur's beautiful voice more than I did. We were married in 1895 by a curate of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, West 57th Street, New York City. We had one son, Arthur Perry Collins. He was in the World War, and he and his son were called in the last draft."

Arthur, who was the oldest of 10 children — eight sons and two daughters, of whom six are still living — eventually decided, Mrs. Collins relates, that he wanted to retire from the stage and settle down to private life, so he studied shorthand, typewriting and bookkeeping, and went to work for a cigar company.

Fortunately for him, however, "in about six months his right arm became lame and painful, so he had to give the job up. When he recovered he went with the De Wolf Hopper Company. While with them, he received a letter from the Edison Phonograph Company, asking him to come to Orange, N. J., and make a trial.

"He went at the earliest opportunity, and Mr. Edison was very much pleased. So Arthur began his phonograph career on May 16, 1898. He sang and announced for the Edison Company exclusively for five years. After that he sang for all the companies." (Author's note. — Mrs. Collins appears in error about her husband singing exclusively for Edison from 1898 to 1903. He made some of the early small Berliner discs, and I have many Victor, Columbia and Zonophone records made by him in 1901 and 1902.)

"About 1900 Byron G. Harlan joined the Edison company and it was then that the great singing team of Collins and Harlan started. The world knows the result. Their slogan was 'laugh and the world laughs with you.'"

Here I shall end this month's quotations from Mrs. Collins. It should be pointed out, however, that before the

immortal team of Collins and Harlan came into being, Mr. Collins had a somewhat similar, but brief-lived, partnership with the late Joe Natus. I have several records by them, including "Whoa, Bill!" and "I Got Mine." (To be continued)

NOTE. Since "The Coney Island Crowd," a catchy but ambiguous title for this department, has given way to "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," several collectors have asked me to explain the meaning of the former heading. That is easily done. A banquet was held by the Victor company a good many years ago at which officials, dealers and recording artists were present. One of the officials made a talk in which he urged the dealers to concentrate on selling Red Seal records and "wean people away from 'the Coney Island stuff.'"

While the recorders of popular music were feeling embarrassed and a bit hurt, Eldridge R. Johnson, president of Victor, arose and said he felt it due to "our Black Label artists" to point out that their records, selling in millions, made it possible to issue Red Seal records, "because the profits we make from them more than absorb our Red Seal losses."

In joking reference to the Coney Island phrase, the popular recorders fell into the habit of calling themselves "the Coney Island Crowd," a phrase which I adopted when my articles first began appearing in HOBBIES.—U. W.

## Guy Saulsbury Spicer, Minn.

MUSIC	
Regina music box, 12 discs	\$25.00
Swiss music box, lg., perfect	50.00
Concert organ, 50 rolls	10.00
Edison 2 & 4 minute machine, 50 records	7.50
Musical alarm clock	12.50

LAMPS	
Hanging lamp with 32 prisms, pretty	\$ 7.50
Parlor lamps, \$5.00 to	7.50
Carriage lamps, pr.	5.00
Street lamps	17.50
Red Overlay Hand lamp	8.50
Amber and frosted hanging lamp with prisms	15.00

HORSE AND BUGGY ITEMS	
Surrey buggy	45.00
Driving harness	15.00
Buggy foot warmer	2.50
Sleighbells, \$2.50 to	7.50
Flowing blue plate, 7 1/4 inch, Lavenport	3.00
Fine fur robe	35.00

SCANDINAVIAN ITEMS	
Copper tea kettle	\$ 5.00
Dowry chest, dated 1835	15.00
Wooden painted sewing box, attractive	6.00
Old carved pipe	3.50
Set of 6 fine matched chimebells	6.00
Swedish snuff box brass	2.00
Glass pint flask, flint, raised crown	7.50

MOUNTED ANIMALS AND BIRDS	
Elk head	\$25.00
Badger	10.00
Grouse	7.50
Pheasant	6.00
Pair wood duck	12.50
Pair deer horns	2.50
Pair elk horns	5.00

INDIAN RELICS	
Grooved stone hammers	\$ 2.00
Shirt covered with elk teeth and bone carvings	50.00
10 fine arrowheads	1.00

RELICS	
Iron tea kettle	\$2.50
Iron kettle with legs	2.00
Stilliard scale	2.00
French 75 brass shell	3.00

his singing in his later years was as hollow and dead as it had been brilliant and alive when he was in his prime.

"Getting back to the question of the records, I do not say that they falsify his essential qualities. The scale is there; so is the compass; so is the bold and vital sound of the tone, and there are clear suggestions of plenty of volume. The faults, such as an occasional bleating, a certain hint of throatiness and recurring suggestions of strain, may be magnified in the recordings, but certainly they were actually in the singing. The period in which these records were made was, as you know, a considerably later one than that in which various tricks were resorted to, to prevent blasting in the recording. It was that earlier period which falsified even the basic sound of many voices, making basses sound like tenors, baritones like tenors, and sopranos like nothing that was ever heard on earth."

Mr. Thompson's letter gives such a complete picture of Amato and his records that there is little for me to do beyond outlining the facts of his career and adding a few details concerning his recording activities. Amato was born in Naples, Italy, on March 21, 1878, and died in Jackson Heights, N. Y., on August 12, 1942. He made his debut at the Bellini Theatre in 1900, as Germont, and after that toured Italy, Germany, England, Egypt and South America. In Buenos Aires he met Toscanini and an engagement at La Scala was the result. He became a great favorite there, but when Toscanini and Gatti-Casazza came to New York Amato soon followed, making his Metropolitan debut, as Germont, on November 20, 1908. He established himself quickly as an exceptionally fine singing actor and appeared again and again in casts directed by Toscanini. Cursed with ill health from his early days, Amato was forced to retire from the Metropolitan in 1921 and although he appeared now and then in later years, as Mr. Thompson says, there was little of the old Amato voice to be heard. In recent years he had been professor of voice at the Louisiana State University. Those who want a more comprehensive story of Amato's career will have little trouble in finding it, in *Musical America* for September, for example.

In Italy, Amato sang for Fonotipia in 1907, 1908 and 1909 and some of these records were pressed in the U. S. A. in the Columbia-Fonotipia series. I'm not familiar with enough of them to express an opinion of their merit. His first Victors appeared in 1912 and while he recorded for a comparatively short period of a few years, his records sold well and,

for the most part, kept their place in the catalog until the end of the acoustic period. Mr. Thompson's recommendations are invaluable, since they come from an authority who actually heard Amato in person many times. To my ears, it sometimes seems that Victor occasionally thinned the quality of Amato's vigorous baritone, and as sheer sound his recorded tones may not always please as much as those of other favorite baritones. But for all his vigor, Amato was not, like so many baritones, all brawn and no brains, and his dramatic intelligence and arresting personality make all of his recorded interpretations worthwhile. Listen, for instance, to his Rigoletto on 88340/41 (doubled on 6041). Of all the inter-

pretations of the "Largo al factotum" in my collection, his is one of my very favorites, by reason of its irresistibly spontaneous comedy (88329 or 6039). Later in his career Amato made at least one record for Columbia, a little-known collectors' item that was listed on page 11 of the March, 1942, *HOBBIES*.

Many collectors may find themselves somewhat in disagreement with Mr. Thompson's condemnation of the recording of the earliest 1900's, since most of us who have studied them, comparing with later versions, feel that they are like the little girl with the curl in the middle of her forehead.... when they're good, they're very, very good and when they're bad they're horrid!

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### ARTHUR COLLINS II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

ARTHUR Collins' success, when he began making records in 1898, was immediate and overwhelming, and he was destined to remain a favorite for more than 25 years.

From the very beginning he was especially identified with what were known as "coon songs"—catchy, syn-copated ditties which treated, humorously or with mock pathos the sentimental and economic problems of the nation's negroes. His facility with dialect made him perhaps the greatest of all interpreters of this type of composition, but Mrs. Collins says:

"Arthur never liked the term, 'coon singer.' Several papers out West billed him as 'The King of Ragtime Songs,' which he thought was better. He particularly loved to sing the old plantation-type of music, especially the Foster songs. 'Old Black Joe' was his masterpiece and audiences all over the country demanded it always."

Mrs. Collins' success was also due in part to other factors. There probably has never been a sweeter, more naturally musical baritone voice than his. It was beautifully trained and he never tired of practicing in his efforts to improve it. I have heard, I am sure, more than a thousand records in which the comedian took part and have yet to hear one in which the singing could be described as careless or bad. Always he gave the impression of complete competence and impeccable craftsmanship.

Then, too, Arthur Collins managed invariably to get into the wax the impression of a warm, lovable person-

ality. The unctuous sound of his chuckles in dialect work is unfailingly charming. His negro heroes usually were in hard luck, but they bore up bravely and saw the funny side of their own misfortunes. The Victor catalogs used to phrase it well when they said: "Mr. Collins is one of the most successful singers of 'coon songs.' His success in this particular type of song is quite unique and is due in a large measure to the sympathetic, human way in which his own delightful personality reveals itself through his records. In addition he has a splendid voice and a wonderful faculty for making the words sound clear and understandable, which is no easy task in dialect songs."

An Edison monthly supplement is-



Mrs. Arthur Collins, wife of the late recording artist featured in this series. Mrs. Collins recalls the history of her husband's career in this series.



sued late in 1899 shows clearly how the comedian climbed into popularity in little more than a year. In this one supplement alone the following new records are listed by him: 7317, "All Coons Look Alike to Me" (I have a copy of this); 7316, "Camp-in' on de Ole Swanee;" 7318, "De Possum Chase;" 7243, "I Ain't Seen No Messenger Boy;" 7278, "I'd Leave My Happy Home for You" (how Henry Hamblen, of Nashville, would like to find an unplayed copy of that!) and 7240, "I've Just Received a Telegram from Baby." Nearly all had accompaniments by Vess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King." Collins' name is also one of the most prominent in the 1902 and 1903 Edison cylinder record catalogs.

When the Collins and Harlan partnership began, early in the 20th century, phonograph history was made. Harlan had an exquisite tenor voice and was unsurpassable in his impersonations of amorous colored women as Collins was in taking the male role. Together they constituted what was probably the most popular team of comedians in the history of the phonograph. Only Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, who came along many years later, might have been able, at the height of their careers, to dispute the claim.

Although Collins and Harlan were preeminently identified with negro dialect work, their earliest association was largely in what might be called "rube stuff." Both were great in their impersonations of the stage conceptions of our bucolic element, and such duet records as "Closing Time in a Country Grocery," "The Farmer and the Dude," "The Cat and the Fly Paper" and "Two Rubes in a Tavern" were widely popular. The "coon songs" proved, however, to have the more lasting appeal. Soon the comedians were best known for their duet work, although Collins continued to record many solos, as did Harlan, who specialized in singing tearful ballads about lonely little children who usually died and went to heaven in the second verse.

Mrs. Collins expresses belief that Arthur's two-minute Edison cylinder No. 7404, "Mandy Lee," was the record which had the most lasting hold on the affections of his admirers. "He received letters from all over the world," she says, "thanking him for that record."

There is no doubt, however, that sales figures would show the crowning point of the comedian's career came in 1905, when he recorded "The Preacher and the Bear" for every American company. My belief is that more copies of this song have been sold than of any other record ever made by anybody. I have found that, in something like nine cases out of ten, when people learn I have a

large collection of old-time records, they ask, "Have you got 'The Preacher and the Bear?'" and add, "That's the first record I can remember ever hearing. My grandfather used to have it on an old Edison machine."

It would be interesting if we could know how many millions of copies of that record, which told, to a catchy tune, about a colored preacher's going hunting on Sunday and being treed by a grizzly bear, have been sold. As new phonograph companies sprang up, Mr. Collins was called upon to record it for them. He made new records of it within two or three years of his retirement from professional singing. Victor, Columbia and Edison all had him remake their records in later years, presumably for the benefit of improved orchestration. On the one occasion I heard him sing on the stage, he was called on for it and gave it, with the assistance of the other eight Victor Artists in the chorus. No doubt he sang Joe Arzonias's comic masterpiece whenever and wherever he went.

Around 1905 or 1906, Collins and Harlan teamed forces with Billy Murray and Steve Porter, and the result was a male quartet which sang at many club dinners and other social events in New York. They also called themselves the Rambler Minstrel Company and made many black-face records in which Porter was the interlocutor, and either Murray or Collins took the star solo singing parts. Two or three years later the organization, which later became known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists, began to make concert tours, and Collins and Harlan were among the most popular members of the troupe. Both were large men, weighing well over 200 pounds each, and Murray, as master of ceremonies, sometimes introduced them as "the Half Ton Duo." They were also great favorites of Sam Rous, who wrote the Victor catalog record descriptions, and he had many pet names for them, such as "The Klassical Koon Komedie Kouple," "The Pleasant, Portly and Popular Comedians," "The Comedy Twins," "The Black-face Brothers," and so on.

From 1912 on, Mr. Collins was frequently referred to by his fellow troupers as "Old Joe, the Pirate." This affectionate title was applied in fun because of his large stature, his swarthy complexion and his early sea experiences. The "Joe" came from one of his most popular records, "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag on His Old Banjo."

For more than 10 years the baritone was a member of the Peerless Quartet, in which he always took the lead when negro songs were sung. In 1917, however, he was succeeded by Frank Croxton, and shortly after the World War ended Collins and

Harlan signed a contract with Edison by which they traveled extensively, doing "tone test" work and restricting their recording largely to the Edison Company. It was this engagement which resulted in Collins' receiving grave injuries that for a time endangered his life.

(To be Continued.)

## CIRCUSIANA

(Continued from page 14)

too, are covered with autographed pictures, and two large tables with drawers hold hundreds of collection pieces "and other stuff that a circus fan would keep to pore over during the cold winter months when the shows are in quarters preparing for another season."

Among the many posters on the walls of Ken Amadon's circus room in Manchester, N. H., is a large poster bearing the words "Amadon Brothers Three-Ring Circus." The circus is mythical, of course, and the poster is hand-drawn, but it gives Mr. Amadon a thrill to imagine how his name might appear emblazoned on buildings should he have a real circus en tour.

On his desk is a model circus band wagon of the shell type, which went out of circulation with the old-time street parade. He has, near his desk, a record player, and a collection of records made by Merle Evans' Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus band, calliope selections, and other circusy marches and galops that have been recorded by various bands.

On a table in one corner he has model cages and baggage wagons on display, along with a model marquee. And among his relics of show days of the past is a broken piece of a quarter pole from the Sells-Floto circus, left on the lot after a rainy night in his home town back in 1931.

Nothing pleases such fans as Howland, Braathen, Hoy and Amadon more than to have another circus fan or troupier as his guest for an evening, and it is not unusual for such gatherings to last well into the wee hours of the morning, as the conversation "puts and takes down" big top after big top through the years.

Most circusiana collectors carry on correspondence with a dozen or so acquaintances, often in as many different states, in exchanging desired pieces of circusiana for their respective collections, and a circus room or den is almost a prerequisite for carrying on a well-ordered collection.

A circus room need not be large or elaborate. But the collector who covets his assemblage of pictures, posters, books and programs enjoys them best when he has them at finger tips, rather than stored in the attic or some other inaccessible place.

the student of phonograph lore, it is disappointing only in that it does not attempt to be a real history of the subject. For example, the steps leading from what was apparently the collapse, in America, of the Berliner Gramophone Company to the foundation of the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1901 are not fully traced or clarified. Nor can this reader find anything that sheds much light on the Zonophone mystery. But such omissions will trouble only those who, like myself, would be satisfied with nothing less than a complete encyclopedia of Gaisberg's experiences and impressions. In the hasty reading which time limitations made

necessary, I occasionally had the feeling that not all the dates were accurately given, and it was disappointing to find a man like Gaisberg handing down the old untruth that Caruso was originally a baritone (actually he was at first a "short" tenor), but these are minor imperfections in a book that is anything but a mere collection of facts. As it stands, it is a fascinating and worthwhile volume, of special interest to collectors of historical records, and as such I cannot recommend it too warmly. I only wish we could be sure of having more slices from Mr. Gaisberg's gramophone cake — which is guaranteed never to grow stale.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### *Arthur Collins -- III*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**T**RAGEDY entered Arthur Collins' life on the evening of October 20, 1921, at the Princess Theater, Medina, Ohio.

He and his partner, Byron G. Harlan, were doing "tone test" work for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., and, in the words of the Edison Diamond Disc catalogs, proving that Edison recording "re-created their voices with literal fidelity and in a way that baffles the keenest ear in the effort to detect the voice from the Edison record."

Probably many readers will remember these tests, the only ones of their kind ever given by any phonograph company, and so completely convincing that many collectors still consider the Edison acoustic records to have been the best ever made anywhere from the standpoint of absolute fidelity. The singers stood beside an "Official Laboratory Model" and blended their voices with the machine's tone. Only by watching the artists' lips could the audience tell when they stopped singing and the phonograph took up the job. At one point the audience was told the lights would be turned off and they were to try to guess when the change occurred in the dark. The singer left the stage, unsuspected by the audience, which invariably accepted the phonograph's voice as his own.

And this last stunt was what caused Collins' mishap. "Someone," his wife says, "had left a trap-door open on the stage and, in the dark scene, Arthur walked into it and was very badly hurt. It took him nearly two years to really recover, but he was never the same."

Friends of Collins and Harlan have given me a graphic description of what happened in the theater that night. They say that Harlan was supposed to stand beside the machine, while Collins walked off in the dark-

ness. When the lights were turned on and no Collins was there, Harlan wondered what had happened but tried to keep the show going. When, after a short wait, Collins still didn't come Harlan asked that an investigation be made. The trap-door was found open, and poor Collins was seen climbing up an iron ladder which led from the basement to the stage. He was reeling dizzily, was fearfully bloody and was obviously out of his head, but the trooper's instinct that "the show must go on" was uppermost, and he was dazedly — almost instinctively — making his way back to the stage.

For the duration of Collins' illness the Collins-Harlan partnership was broken up, just as it was in 1912 when Harlan had an appalling attack of typhoid fever. Harlan made a few solo records and teamed up in comic sketches with such artists as Steve Porter, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, making records mostly for the smaller companies.

By mid-1923, Arthur Collins had sufficiently recovered to leave his home in New Jersey, where he specialized in breeding fancy horses and cattle, and take to the road again. He and Mr. Harlan made a long tour of the West. A feature of their act was the introduction of recording apparatus on the stage, with selected members of the audience being allowed to try their voices at recording.

Collins and Harlan records — some new and some made years before — continued to appear in Edison supplements during 1923 and 1924. One of the funniest records they ever made, "I Want a Jazzy Kiss," came out in 1922. Their last Edisons, issued late in 1924, were "Go Long, Mule" (a solo by Collins) doubled with "Sister Hasn't Got a Chance Since Mother Bobbed Her Hair," and "Liver and Bacon," combined with "Any Way

the Wind Blows My Sweetie Goes." Taking in their entire careers, perhaps their most popular duet was "Niggah Loves His Possum," a Paul Dresser song, which they first sang in 1906. Of their thousands of other records, such great hits as "Bake Dat Chicken Pie," "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner," "Down On the Brandywine," "Down Among the Sugar Cane" and "Down in Jungle Town" may be mentioned. The last is one of a series of "jungle songs" written by the late Theodore Morse, which Collins and Harlan appeared particularly to enjoy singing.

Mr. Collins never did recover completely from his accident in the Ohio theater, so in 1926 he and Mrs. Collins moved from New Jersey to Tice, Fla. In her words, "Arthur enjoyed seven wonderful years here under the orange trees which he loved."

"On August 3, 1933," she continues, "we were sitting on a bench under the trees, talking about a recent trip I had just returned from, when he put his head on my shoulder and quietly passed away."

"I had been warned by my brother (Dr. Richard N. Connolly, chief of the Board of Health of Newark, N. J., for 45 years) that Arthur would go quickly when the time came, on account of the condition of his heart. That had prepared me for the great shock and the passing of a wonderful personality. He had given his best to the world of his great talent."

"His voice was wonderful and mellow up to the last. The people in Fort Myers will always remember his natural voice, as he sang for their clubs here but could not face a stage audience."

With that statement of Mrs. Collins' I am in full accord. Despite his having met with such a terrible accident, there is absolutely no trace of vocal impairment in Mr. Collins' last Edison records, which no hearer would suspect were made by a man of 60.

Mrs. Collins, still in good health, remains in the home she and the distinguished comedian purchased in Tice. She is usually referred to by her old friends of the phonograph days as "Tommy." "That name," she says, "was given to me by a prima donna in Wilson's company because I had eyes like an old sweetheart of hers named Tom. In later years Arthur always called me 'Dollie,' which I liked much better."

All the "Coney Island Crowd" I have met speak in terms of high admiration for the ability Mrs. Collins displayed through many years as an accomplished business woman. They believe the fact that Arthur Collins died in independent circumstances was due, at least in part, to this

(Continued on page 19)



ing consensus of opinion on essential points.

The day is past when the individual expert can attempt to cover all American art. This is a day of specialists who know a single period or a few artists, but know them thoroughly. There are now a number of such experts in the museum field and outside. However, they have been handicapped by lack of research assistance, of laboratory facilities, and of public understanding of their work. Museums, on the other hand, have not known to whom to turn for reliable information. Research of the thorough kind that is needed cannot be done single-handed and the whole problem of authenticity has grown beyond the individual expert's control.

In February, 1942, the Whitney Museum of American Art proposed that the museums of the country, acting in cooperation, should sponsor a central agency for research in American art, in particular relation to problems of authenticity. At a meeting at the Whitney Museum on April 11, 1942, the matter was discussed by 15 directors and representatives of museums, and it was agreed that such an agency should be established under the name of the American Art Research Council. For the present the offices are in the Whitney Museum. The Museum's Director, Juliana Force, was appointed Chairman of the Council and the Museum's Research Curator, Lloyd Goodrich, and Curator, Hermon More, were appointed respectively director and associate director of the Council. An advisory committee was formed, comprised of curators

and directors of many of the leading galleries of the country.

The Whitney Museum is contributing the offices, the clerical assistance, and the services of Mr. Goodrich and Mr. More, who will devote half their time to the Council. The Brooklyn Museum is contributing the services of its laboratory expert, Sheldon Keck, and the use of the museum's laboratory. Financial contributions have been made by many of the interested institutions.

With the co-operation of museums and of experts outside of museums, the Council will compile records of the works of leading American artists. These records will include photographs, X-rays if necessary, information as to medium, size, signature, date, history, owners, exhibitions, reproductions and auction sales. As a beginning, about 50 of the most prominent artists will be selected for recording. There are a number of important artists, particularly in the later 19th century, on whom no expert opinion is available. Many of these have been extensively forged. A vast mass of documentation exists on these artists, but it has never been systematically studied. The Council has selected some of the leading figures of this period and will do original research on them. It will start with works reproduced, exhibited, or sold at auction during the artists' lifetimes, or otherwise having unimpeachable histories, and will trace these pictures to their present owners, and secure photographs and other data on them. In this way the Council will build up a nucleus of reliable information on these artists, which can

later be used for more specialized study.

Member museums will be asked to co-operate by supplying information and photographs of works by these selected artists in their collections or those lent to them at any time. In this way there will be built up a complete inventory of works by leading American artists in public collections. Later, the same information will be gathered from private collections. If a museum has on its staff an authority on any particular artist or period, the Council will request the museum to allow him to assist in gathering data. When a museum has assembled a noteworthy exhibition in the American field, it will be asked to make the research data available.

It is well known that the Frick Art Reference Library has been building a photographic collection for a good many years. No attempt will be made by the Council to duplicate their photographic records, but rather to gather material which will supplement them. The Council's field will be more limited, but it will cover that field intensively; and emphasis will be on research and authentication.

The Council will give opinions as to authenticity on American works of art of the period in which they are conducting research to any museums which submit them, including works which they own or are considering for acquisition. Opinions will not be given to anyone outside of the museum field. The Council will submit the works to the best qualified experts, and if desired will assist them with laboratory examination and X-rays.

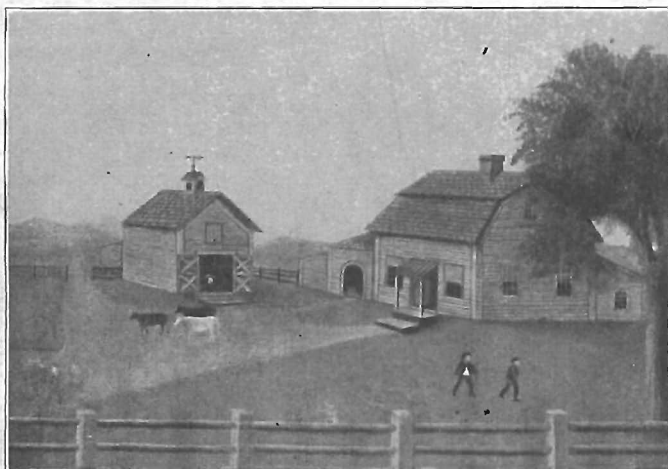
The program for the first year will take into consideration the facilities available at present. The Council will not try to cover too much ground, but will undertake definite, limited projects which can be completed within the initial period and will form permanent contributions to the knowledge of American art. At the same time, the groundwork will be laid for any possible future expansion of the Council beyond its present connection with the Whitney Museum.

## MUSIC

(Continued from page 13)

"business head" of his wife. Her letters have given me so much pleasure I am happy at the opportunity of sharing them with readers of *HOBBIES*, all of whom, I am sure, join me in thanking her and wishing for her many more years of happy life in the pleasant surroundings which she and her husband loved so well.

It has also been a pleasure to express my admiration of many years' standing for the brilliant phonograph career of Arthur Collins and to express the opinion that his fame will be enduring.



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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Byron G. Harlan—I

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

FOR a comedian who was destined to become world-famed because of his inimitable impersonation of colored mamies and other negro women, Byron G. Harlan picked an odd place in which to be born. This splendid artist made his arrival in Lynn, Kans., at a time when it could be rightly described as a part of the Far West.

I don't know the exact day, month and year in which the tenor of the illustrious Collins-Harlan comedy duo came into the world, but when he died on September 11, 1936, the newspapers gave his age as 75. My own belief is that he was a few years younger than the published age, but Mrs. Arthur Collins says he was slightly older than her husband, who died in 1933 at the age of 69.

However that may be, although Harlan was born in Lynn somewhere around the early Civil War years, his parents didn't stay there. The elder Harlan, who had been running a brick-yard, traded it for five head of horses and two prairie schooners and soon afterward took up his abode in Canton, S. Dak.

The West really was wild in those days. On one occasion, when Byron, as a young man, was on a trading trip on which he swapped dogs to the Indians for moccasins, beads and blankets, a group of cowboys, bad men and Indians gathered around him and invited him to drink. When he declined, because he wasn't a drinking man, they began to shoot in a ring around him. Instead of being flustered, Harlan produced his own pistol, did some even fancier shooting and completely won the hearts of his would-be tormentors.

At the age of 20, Byron, who even then showed signs of the portly figure he was to develop in later years, decided he would go East, but stopped at Sioux Falls, where he became a hotel clerk. Occasionally he sang in the hotel "parlor" to the boarders, who told him, truthfully, that his voice was good enough for the stage.

Going to Chicago, the silver-voiced young tenor became a member of the cast of a four-act drama called "Lost in London." "I was the villain of the piece," he used to recall, adding, "I sang ballads between the acts." Then the company acquired a boat with a built-on stage and made regular trips up and down the Tallahassee River in Florida, where, according to the singer, "We played often to no-

body but Seminole Indians and swamp squatters."

All this sounds like unpromising preparation for a career of making records, but no doubt Harlan's showboat travels aided him to learn the ways and wiles of the negroes, whom he was afterwards to imitate more accurately than he could have in any other way.

Eventually there was an end to the "Lost in London" troupe, so Harlan and a group of friends formed a company of their own and toured the East in sentimental dramas. In one he sang a pathetic ballad called "Please, Mr. Conductor, Don't Put Me Off the Train," a forerunner of the sad, sad "child ballads," which he specialized in recording during the early part of his approaching recording career. They stood at the farthest possible remove from the boisterous comedy in which he undoubtedly grew to feel most at home.

One night Walter Miller, Edison's recording manager, who had the reputation of "discovering" more afterwards-famous recording artists than any other recording director, heard the show. When it was over he invited Harlan to come to the Edison studios at Orange, N. J., for a "voice test."

This the tenor was glad enough to do. But he insisted upon having an orchestra accompany him, and always believed he was the first vocalist to record with such an accompaniment instead of the customary tin-panny piano.

Byron Harlan was an immediate success as a recording artist, but in his beginning days he was not known as a comedian. Instead, he was called upon to sing the sentimental ballads which delighted the hearts of thousands of listeners, while at the same time they made others feel more or less ill. It would be interesting to know how they affected the singer himself.

His work as a soloist continued for two or three years, but in 1901 or 1902 he struck up his recording partnership with Arthur Collins, whose life story has already been told in this department. At first they specialized in "rube," rather than black-face comedy. (Sam Rous, the Victor catalog editor, once explained Byron's facility for rustic humor by saying, "Harlan is just a natural-born rube, anyway.") Their first duet for Victor, which no doubt they also made

for all the other companies of that day, was 1723, "First Rehearsal for the Huskin' Bee." Then came such master works as "Two Rubes in a Tavern," and other records mentioned in the Collins articles. Apparently the first Collins-Harlan "coon skit" made by Victor was "The Stuttering Coon," issued in 1904.

Since the Collins-Harlan partnership has already been the subject of several articles, there is little reason to discuss it extensively now. Throughout the years up to the World War, and for two or three years afterward, the comedians were in demand by every American phonograph company. They free-lanced, indefatigably, enthusiastically and impartially. Billy Murray has said that they and Henry Burr possessed an uncanny nose for business. "Start a recording company down in Tennessee today," he said, "and Collins and Harlan and Burr would smell it somehow and be down there tomorrow. And by the time they got through making records there wouldn't be any money left to pay any other talent that might come along later!"

In 1911, however, just after the team had made a smashing hit with their Victor and Columbia records of "Alexander's Ragtime Band," something tragic happened.

Mr. Harlan, who had married a few years before and been given by Thomas A. Edison a wedding present of a cylinder machine playing both two- and four-minute records, saw his wife and little daughter to the train on their way to a visit in the country. He gaily assured them he would "get along all right" in their absence.

Then he went home and became violently ill — so ill that he was delirious and raving for several days before neighbors, alarmed at not seeing him emerge in his normal manner, investigated and found him suffering from an attack of typhoid fever that, as Rous said, "would have killed 99 men out of a hundred."

For weeks — even months — little hope was held for the tenor's recovery, and it seemed almost certain that the famous Collins and Harlan duo, which had given so much pleasure to millions of record buyers and concert-goers, had been prematurely terminated.

(To be continued)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Byron G. Harlan — II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**B**YRON HARLAN'S recovery from the typhoid that laid him low in 1911 was a slow and painful process. When he was finally able to get about, after several months in bed, his weight of 200-plus had dropped to less than 100 pounds, and he bore no resemblance to the cheery gentleman whose impersonation of Santa Claus was for years a treat enjoyed by the children of Orange, N. J., as they assembled around the community Christmas tree.

Fortunately, as he regained his weight his voice returned, unimpaired. Meanwhile, Collins had got along as best he could in recording without his partner. On Victor he sang solos, with banjo accompaniments by his old friend, Vess Ossman, who had played with him in the '90's. Columbia teamed him with Albert Campbell, whose high tenor voice proved a good substitute for Harlan's.

The big comedian's naturally cheery, optimistic attitude returned in full force as he regained his health. Billy Murray likes to tell of the fun Harlan had when on tour with the Eight Famous Victor Artists. He would go with Billy and other members of the troupe into a restaurant and begin to spout orders to the waiter in a meaningless gibberish that sounded exactly like some foreign language. When the waiter couldn't understand what he was talking about he would pretend to be so provoked that the head waiter would be called. He couldn't make sense of the gabbling, either. And Byron would go on, pretending to be more and more irate, until Billy would grab him by his collar, push him through the front door and rush him up against the nearest lamp-post. Harlan would then stand, leaning against the post, shouting with laughter that could be heard for blocks.

On a different occasion he used his facility to imitate foreign tongues in another way. While rehearsing with Robert Gayler, Edison studio pianist, he began singing in mock operatic style, taking all sorts of ultra-high tones and playing every imaginable trick with the scale. For the fun of it Gayler accompanied him, or tried to, and had the bogus aria recorded. This was later played over for some of the company's executives, who were all excited over the belief that they had discovered one of the greatest operatic tenors of all time. Their disgust was great when they learned it was only Harlan up to one of his pranks. With his vast sense of

humor, the tenor must have relished a remark made in the Edison publication, "Along Broadway." To me it remains as one of the funniest "cut lines" I have ever read. Beneath a photo of Harlan at work in his kitchen, the magazine commented: "Even great singers must have athletic exercise to keep fit. Mr. Harlan frying an egg."

Billy also recalled that Harlan, although an accomplished sight reader of music, had a wretched memory for the words. On one occasion he was in a theater singing "Two Little Baby Shoes" (one of his famous "sob songs") to the accompaniment of Albert Benzler's piano. To make sure of the words he had them printed in large letters on a piece of cardboard which was propped behind the piano. Suddenly Benzler decided to open the piano top. When he did so, the cardboard was pushed against the footlights and burst into flame. The horror-stricken tenor couldn't remember a word and stood helpless, until his cronies backstage quit laughing long enough to troop forth in a body and sing the chorus for him.

Although Mr. Harlan is best remembered as a comedian, his largest selling solo records were probably those in a more lyrical vein—simple songs of sentiment, such as "School Days," which stayed in the Victor catalog for 20 years, "Why Don't They Play With Me?" "Two Little Baby Shoes," "Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold" (a great favorite on both Edison cylinders and Columbia discs), "Would You Care?" and "When the Harvest Moon is Shining on the River."

In comedy, his most successful solos were those of the "rube" type. One of his very best was "They Gotta Quit Kickin' My Dawg Aroun'." Other excellent efforts of this genre were the classic "Wal, I Swan," "Way Down East Where I Belong," and, after the World War, "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm?"

It also should be mentioned that Mr. Harlan did not confine himself in his duet work exclusively to his partnership with Arthur Collins. He and Steve Porter teamed up in many vaudeville skits of the "rube" variety, such as "The Old-Time Street Medicine Faker" and "Down on Jasper's Farm," and in the years before Frank Stanley adopted Henry Burr as his tenor protege, Harlan sang many standard duets with the great basso. They particularly specialized in patriotic songs, such as "Dixie" and "Marching Through Georgia." But

their other repertoire ranged from records of "The Palms" to "The Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee." And—rarity of rarities! — I have a very old Columbia single-face in which the famous Irish sketch, "Backyard Conversation Between Two Jealous Irish Washerwomen," was recorded by Harlan and Len Spencer. A few years later this opus was associated entirely with Steve Porter, who re-recorded it and made it his own.

Just as Harlan's long illness made carrying on difficult for Collins, so the injuries the baritone sustained in an Ohio theater in 1921 provided his associate with a problem for a year or two. He made a few solo records for the minor companies and, since Cal Stewart was now dead, even recorded a number of "Uncle Josh" monologs. In some records he had the assistance of new-comers, such as Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. As has already been related, however, Collins and Harlan returned to recording and vaudeville tours in 1923, and continued together for almost two years more. Mr. Collins' failing health then compelled him to retire in Florida.

Mr. Harlan continued to live in Orange, where he was a valued friend and neighbor of Thomas Edison (Billy Murray used to introduce him to audiences as "the only member of our troupe who could call Mr. Edison 'Tom' without getting thrown out!") and he, too, lived his remaining years in virtual retirement. In 1931, Harry Mack, an announcer at radio station W O R, became enthusiastic about his still great abilities as a comedian, and wrote a series of programs in which he was featured; but they were soon dropped.

On September 11, 1936, Mr. Harlan died of a heart attack in the bath-tub at his home in Orange. The metropolitan newspapers were generous in their accounts of his career and his former celebrity as one of the greatest of recording artists. He was survived by his wife and daughter, Mrs. Frank Lucas, of Essex Falls, N. J., both of whom are still living.

The permanent appeal of the Collins and Harlan records is shown by the fact that hundreds of collectors consider them authentic Americana and enthusiastically acquire them as among the finest "period pieces" of their time. I make the prediction that "the portly, pleasant and popular Comedy Kings" will not be forgotten for generations to come — that somewhere in the land there will be machines playing "The Preacher and the Bear" and "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner."

They should not be forgotten. They were truly accomplished artists who excelled in the difficult field of dialect and were never satisfied to make anything but an admirable job of whatever they undertook.



seph Schwarz, Urlus, Edyth Walker and Herman Weill!!!

#### Description of Label

The most common type of Opera Disc label (spelled Disc on the label, Disc in the catalog) has a black background. Titles, etc., are printed in black ink on a blue medallion, above which is the trade mark: a nude (almost) female figure playing a lyre, and the words "Musica G D." A vaguely flesh colored ink is used for the nude and for the words *Opera Disc Company Incorporated* which appear on the top curve of the label. Last spring, however, I picked up an interesting variation, on Sammarco's "O solo mio." Underneath a badly centered Opera Disc label of somewhat similar design to the one just described, dark maroon in color with gold lettering, there was visible the edge of another label, typically HMV salmon in color. When the top label was steamed off, the underneath label turned out to be not actually an HMV label, as I had thought, but a shameless imitation of one, both in color and in general layout. Even the famous "His Master's Voice" trademark is suggested: the dog is missing but the old-fashioned gramophone is there and at first glance it has fooled more than one collector! Across the top curve of this label are the familiar words "GRAMOPHONE RECORD." No mention of Opera Disc is made, but "Musica G D" does appear, very inconspicuously. It was with this label that the record was circulated in Germany, I surmise.

#### Contents of the Catalog

To save me time and trouble, a friend kindly photostated the most interesting pages of this catalog so

that I might share them with our followers. These will be printed in this department, and we introduce our first installment in this issue. Because of the extreme familiarity of the titles, the Opera Disc records of many artists will not be listed here. For example, no less than three pagesides of Caruso solos, duos, trios, etc. will be skipped, as well as most of the records of Alda, Amato, Farrar, Gadske, Gluck, Goritz, Homer, Melba, Ruffo, and Schumann-Heink, all of whom are more or less liberally represented. Nor will the pages devoted to the instrumental numbers be given space.

AN APOLOGY is due Charles Merwin Sniffin, whose comment on his choice of Patti's "Pur dicesti" as a Remarkable Coloratura Record (cf. bottom of page 11 in the February issue) was submitted as "because of the marvelous *trills*" but inadvertently published as "because of the marvelous *thrills*."

For some time now it has been known that *Leopoldo Signoretto*, one of the great bel canto tenors of the 19th century, recorded for the International Zonophone Company. Not long ago Francisco Garcia Montes of Habana, Cuba, had the good fortune to find the first Signoretto Zonophone

ever reported and Dr. Montes' many American friends rejoice with him at the discovery of a rarity which he is better equipped to appreciate than any of us. The aria is *Solingo, errante e misero* from "Ernani" and the number of the record, which has a black label with gold lettering, is X1814. Dr. Montes has not yet succeeded in locating many important details of Signoretto's life but has nevertheless gathered an impressive amount of information about his career. As early as 1877 he was singing "I Lombardi," "Il Trovatore," "Benvenuto Cellini," and "La Favorita" in Genoa. By 1888 he was active at the famous "La Scala" in Milan, receiving there warm admiration for his work in "La Juive." His repertoire was enormous and varied to an unusual degree. Signoretto was not gifted with a great voice but the use he made of it marked him as a great artist and a true master of the art of singing. The record found by Dr. Montes must have been made in the early nineteen hundreds and while the voice it reveals is not a beautiful one the scale is equalized, the outstanding qualities of the performance being the long phrasing, splendid breath control, and the aristocratic delivery of the recitative.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Henry Burr—I

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

IT is no exaggeration to say that millions of admirers mourned when they learned Henry Burr, known in his later years as "the Dean of Ballad Singers," had died on April 6, 1941, at the age of 56. It is also no exaggeration to say that collectors of Burr records have insisted for months that his brilliant career be recorded here.

There has been good reason for this insistence. Many believe the silvery-voiced tenor, who probably participated in more records than any other singer, to have been the greatest "popular" artist in the history of the phonograph. Many others place him on a par with, or just below, Billy Murray. Unmistakably, he was the most popular ballad singer recorded music has ever known, and towered above other artists in the sentimental branch of recording just as Murray was the greatest favorite among comedians.

Even as a small boy I recognized this fact. I imagined the whole world of music to lie beyond the folding doors of a large old-style Victrola, and depicted Billy Murray and Henry Burr standing guard on each side of the doors — the one representing

comedy and the other sentiment. And that is likely to be the way in which



Henry Burr in his later years.

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future historians will regard them—as the dominant figures of the early recording era.

The comedian and the ballad singer had somewhat similar starts in life. Billy cannot remember a time when he was not singing, and Burr was a child wonder at the age of five. On the other hand, while Murray never acquired formal musical training and to this day can't read a note, Burr had the benefit of careful vocal instruction and was a highly educated man of exceptionally wide cultural interests. Many of the songs he sang have been described as "tripe," or worse, but his voice was of so beautiful a quality and was so exquisitely managed that ultra-fastidious listeners who ordinarily despised popular music heard him with pleasure. I doubt if the art of tone production has ever been brought to a more nearly perfect standard than was attained by Burr, especially in his 30 to 45-year-old life span.

Henry Burr was born at St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada, on January 15, 1885. His real name was Harry H. McClaskey, and he was a son of Alfred McClaskey, a candy and tobacco dealer. Starting to sing as a very small boy, he gained fame as a child prodigy so rapidly that in 1898, at the age of 13, he was a boy soprano with the St. John, N. B., military band. A year later his father offered to give him "a fine gold watch" on condition that he refrain from singing during the voice changing period. Little Harry agreed, and duly received the watch.

Then, a year or so later, Giuseppe Campanari, a famous Metropolitan Opera star who was one of the first Victor Red Seal artists, came to Canada, met young McClaskey and discovered that he was gifted with a phenomenally beautiful voice. The great Italian insisted that Harry go to New York for musical training. He did. First he studied with the noted voice coach, John D. Meehan, and then with Miss Ellen Burr. He took the lady's last name when he began to sing for records.

While still a student, McClaskey became tenor soloist with the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church choir of New York. Soon afterward, as Henry Burr, he was making Columbia records. His recording career may have begun as early as 1902, when he was 17, or not have started until a year or two later. I have seen Columbia records by him whose master numbers indicated they were made in 1902, but they may have been remakes of numbers originally sung by someone else. His name does not appear in the 1902 or 1903 Edison catalogs, but, by 1905, he was well established under the alias of Irving Gillette. Edison never made records carrying the otherwise familiar name

of Henry Burr. His first Victor record, of Behrend's song, "Daddy," was made in 1904. He also sang for all the other phonograph companies of that early day — Leeds, Criterion, Talk-o-phone, Zon-o-phone, Imperial, American—the list could be extended almost indefinitely. The young fellow who didn't become 21 until 1906 was an immediate and overwhelming success. As early as 1905, the Talking Machine News, of London, praising one of his renditions of gospel hymns (a type of record which he specialized in making in those days) remarked, "We count Mr. Burr one of the foremost recorders of today."

In later years Burr said he believed he was the first singer to receive a signed contract from the phonograph companies, instead of merely working by the "round" or special engagement. He was probably wrong in this belief, however, because Frederick Wheeler (better known as "James F. Harrison") told me he signed a contract with the old Universal Talking Machine Company as long ago as 1901, by which he received \$1,400 per year.

Whatever his working arrangements with the recording firms, Burr long evinced a financial acumen that was the despair of less business-like competitors. It was odd that so thorough-going an artist should possess one of the most severely practical of business heads, but the tenor was famed among his associates for exactly that quality. He insisted upon remuneration that was in keeping with his popularity and high artistic standards, and he received it. For the first 16 years or so of his recording life he free-lanced, singing impartially for every company able to pay him — and his services were so much in demand they all managed to raise the money for one or two engagements, at least. In 1915, however, a financial disagreement caused "Irving Gillette" records to cease to appear on the Edison list, and he never sang for the great inventor's firm again.

Burr does not appear to have begun to sing under his real name until 1912 when a few Harry McClaskey records made their appearance on Victor and Columbia lists. They were generally of a slightly more pretentious nature than those with which the names of Burr and Gillette (he never used the latter for Victor, although Gillette records soon became fairly frequent on Columbia lists) were associated.

Here it may be mentioned that the tenor occasionally used at least two other names. He told Angus Joss, of Chicago, that one Pathe monthly supplement contained records by him under no less than five names—Burr, McClaskey, Gillette, A. L. Alexander (his grandfather's name) and Robert

Bruce. (The latter name probably was chosen because during the first few years of his recording career he was particularly famed for his singing of old Scotch songs, such as "Scots Wha' Hae' Wi' Wallace Bled.") I do not recall any Pathe records by A. L. Alexander, but there was one of "Memories," by "Alfred Alexander," which was probably the one Burr was thinking of. Burr, incidentally, was a dear friend of Egbert Van Alstyne, composer of "Memories," and recorded that beautiful ballad for Columbia (using the name of McClaskey) from the original manuscript.

The friendship with Van Alstyne may have been caused by the resounding success of Burr's Victor and Edison records, in 1905, of "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," Van Alstyne's biggest ballad success, which a group of song writers voted some years ago to have been "the greatest song ever written in Tin Pan Alley," a tribute gratifying to the present writer since it happens to be his favorite sentimental ditty. It stayed in the Victor catalog 20 years and must have sold several million copies.

(To be continued)

## RECORDS

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## MISCELLANEOUS

RECORDS, Sheet Music, Lists 10c. — Fore's, (Dept. O) 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. au6041

WANTED: Victor Supplements from 1904 through 1915; Victor catalogs before 1912, including May 1913. — Robert B. Julian, 5203 California St., Omaha, Nebr. s6253

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Henry Burr II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**H**ENRY BURR'S association with the Peerless Quartet appears to have begun in 1906 or 1907, when he was hardly more than old enough to vote. His ensemble associates were all considerably older. Frank Stanley, the basso and manager, was 39 in 1907; Al Campbell, top tenor, was 35; and Arthur Collins, baritone, 43. Apparently, the Quartet had a predecessor called the Invincible Quartet, with the same personnel except that Byron Harlan was second tenor in place of Burr. In years to come, the Peerless made some records — mostly for Pathé — under the name of the Invincible Four, but they were relatively few.

In that early day, Burr's voice, despite his great popularity, was not altogether so fine and well controlled as it became when he reached full maturity. Possibly owing in part to the crude recording apparatus of the time, it occasionally sounded baritone and strident. His technique, however, continued to improve until it reached the point where people said he had "a perfect vocal chord" and further betterment was almost out of the question.

When the tenor first began to sing with the Peerless, he had no particular opportunity to shine or star. Stanley, as the manager, dominated the group and usually took the solo

parts, despite his being a bass. In the large number of Stanley and Burr duets, he likewise also dominated. Obviously, he regarded the much younger singer as one of his proteges and felt that the leadership should rest in his capable and experienced hands. As long as Stanley lived, Burr was "kept down."

The great basso's life, however, was destined to be a short one. He died of pneumonia late in 1910, a few months after Burr had married Cecilia Niles, a concert singer, who survives him and is living in Chicago. They had no children, and Burr's stepdaughter by his wife's first marriage died some years ago.

Upon Stanley's passing, Burr, although the "young man" of the group, took charge of the Peerless and was ever afterwards its business manager. The Stanley and Burr duets were replaced by the beautiful tenor duos of Campbell and Burr, who undoubtedly became the most popular male combination singing sentimental songs that the phonograph has yet known. Their first Victor record as a pair came out in 1912, but as early as 1909 they had sung one Columbia disc together, No. A-573, "While the Old Mill Wheel Is Turning," oddly coupled with the "coon shout," "Sisseretta's Visit to the North," by the inimitable Billy Golden. also sang duets with some of Stanley's other proteges, such as Elise Stevenson, the soprano, who was Mrs. Woods in private life. Ill health put an end to her recording career.

The last Victor record made by the Peerless under Stanley's leadership was a single-faced, unaccompanied one, called "Sweetness." The first with John H. Meyer as bass was "Emmaline Lee." Soon afterward the Quartet recorded "In the Golden Afterwhile," a ballad written by Stanley shortly before his death. Meyer, who had been a member of the same church choir in which Burr sang, stayed with the Quartet until 1925. He was a florist before devoting his full time to recording work, and he returned to work with flowers, as chief designer for Thorley's in New York, when the record-making business became bad.

Burr's head was full of money-making ideas, most of them sound. It was he who managed the Record Maker Troupe, later known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists, which probably had more three-star talent concentrated in its membership than any other eight-man organization ever assembled. Ordinarily, the troupe

played the smaller communities and medium-sized cities, but it made a memorable success when it appeared on Broadway in the later years of its existence. Wherever it went, it, in the words of Variety, "topped the show on all bills and stopped it on most."

One of the first Eights was composed of Burr, Campbell, Meyer and Collins as the Peerless Quartet (without Collins, the first three were the Sterling Trio); Byron Harlan, Billy Murray, as singer of comic songs and genial master of ceremonies; Vess Ossman, the veteran "Banjo King," and Teddy Morse, pianist and composer of many of the nation's favorite popular songs.

In May, 1915, Burr began to organize a phonograph company of his own. Like some even earlier recording artists, he dreamed of acquiring the manufacturer's slice of the profits, even though he continued to sing for every other company who wanted him. He called his firm the Paroquette Record Manufacturing Co., Inc., and made a seven-inch hill-and-dale cut, double-faced record, which was called the Par-o-ket. Mrs. Burr believes a 10-inch record called the Phonotype—played like the Par-o-ket, with a sapphire ball—was also made. Al Campbell still has the contract he signed to sing for Burr's organization, which, probably owing to the scarcity of machines equipped to play vertical cut records, was not a success and soon suspended operations.

A few years later, when Fred Van Eps succeeded Ossman as banjoist of the Eight, Burr and Van Eps owned a banjo factory, which secured large contracts from Lyons and Healy and some other music dealers. The tenor also invested heavily in real estate.

Like many other great artists, Burr was a man of curiously complex personality. He was a poor public speaker, dreaded personal appearances and usually spent the time before an evening's engagement alone in his hotel room, worrying about the condition of his voice. He was frequently the butt of his associate's practical jokes, as on the occasion when they formed a "secret society" called The Order of Beards, and pretended to blackball him when he demanded membership. At the same time he had a wonderful sense of humor and performed any number of stunts that never failed to make the other troupers shout with mirth. One of his specialties was giving an imitation of a pompous after-dinner speaker, suffering from a particularly virulent form of indigestion. Another was lying down on a depot platform just before the train was to leave, and giving a remarkably accurate impersonation of a "drunk." Just as a cop would come bustling up to take him into custody, he would

(Continued on page 21)

## WANTED

COLUMBIA  
GRAND OPERA RECORDS

By the Following Singers:

Marcella Sembrich  
Edouard de Reszke  
Schumann-Heink  
Campanari

Suzanne Adams

Antonio Scotti

Charles Gilibert

Ten-inch, single-faced records  
with red and gold or black and  
silver labels.

ALSO catalogs, supplements, pamphlets and old advertisements of records and phonographs.

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RECORD CATALOGS  
OF MANY COMPANIES  
A LARGE ASSORTMENT  
OF VICTOR SUPPLEMENTS

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944 Monroe Lane

Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.

1917 and a bell for 1918. California earlier used a cast numeral aluminum tag without the year being displayed.

In Ohio, the same tag was used during 1909 and 1910, and the year did not appear on it. In fact, many of the states, when they first started to use the tags, issued them on a perpetual basis without the year being displayed. Maine used a perpetual tag from 1905 until 1911; Massachusetts used a perpetual tag from 1903 until 1908; Oregon, from 1905 until 1911, etc. New York had a red and white porcelain enameled tag without the year; it is really a thing of beauty.

Gradually many of the states began to use a slogan or a figure to advertise their state or some commemorative occasion. Each year, New York state advertised its World's Fair. In 1938, Ohio advertised its centenary of the settling of the Northwest Territory. The ox-team and wagon design was embossed in the tag. Louisiana has used is pelican; Massachusetts a cod-fish, and Texas a star, as a part of the tag. Maine has advertised its vacation land, South Carolina has advertised its iodine. Possibly the most ambitious state is that of Georgia; it has used a decalcomania picture of a red-cheeked peach and on the tag there has been used millions of small glass beads which reflect light from the tag. Pennsylvania, Tennessee and a number of the states have used the outline of the state on their tags. Formerly, many of the states, used a special seal on the corner of the tag; the different designs were very distinctive.

When the tags got too wide with all of their different numbers the complicated systems of letters and numerals were used so that they could control the length of the tag. A number of states have used special insignia for trucks, trailers, truck capacity, legislative and judicial officers. Some of them have used a code to show the county in which the car is located.

Most states have continued to use both front and rear tags, although some states are only using one tag. Florida was one of the earliest to do this, and New York one of the latest.

Many colors have been used. Pennsylvania and New York, are among those states that alternate the background color from year to year. Some states have been unfortunate in using a poor type of enamel or varnish and their tags have deteriorated.

Our records for 1943 indicate that only seven states are issuing new tags. The majority of the states are using their already issued tags, with the addition of little metal or fibre clips to be attached to the corner of the tags to show that they have been renewed. One or two states are using fibre or composition, although it will

certainly be a real test of the ability of such a tag to stand up, to last throughout the year and hold its enamel as it should. License tags stand tremendous punishment.

There are certain garages which have a complete run of their dealers' plates, and certain collectors who have gotten complete runs. On my own collection of antique automobiles I have tried to place the actual license tag for the original year of manufacture of the car. In my Museum I have used swinging panels, measuring six by nine feet in size, and I am trying to get together a complete run of tags from each state and province, and tags from all over the world. We have tags from the Philippines, Guam, Italy, Belgium, England, Germany, China, Mexico, Czechoslovakia, etc. Many of these, especially from the Mexican States, are made with mirror reflecting background and numerals and are very elaborate. Usually in foreign countries a number is assigned to the car when it is new, which stays with that car as long as it survives, being renewed by a sort of annual seal.

### COLLECTORS' LUCK

(Continued from page 9)

Such a combination was known as a peg-lamp.

The early 1860's saw the widespread use of kerosene as a lamp fluid, to say nothing of those crowning achievements of lamp design — the glass chimney and the flat wick with notched wheel for regulating its height. It is this type of lamp that is now so highly desired for use in decorative lighting. Oil lamps in Dresden china, glass and brass are equally in demand. Little attention has been paid by collectors to the gas-light fixtures that also began to come in around 1860. It was not until the invention of the Welsbach burner in 1880 that such gas light came to replace oil in reading lamps. This in turn gave way to the electric bulb.

Today there is even a call for the G W T W oil parlor lamps, to say nothing of other late varieties such as student lamps. But I see no collector picking up the old gas fixtures, many of them as obsolete and rare as the Betty lamp. Many of the shapes are very pleasing, and some are enhanced by crystal ornaments. Look around your attic and see if you have an old gas fixture that could be made into an attractive lamp.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 15)

spring up and guffawingly board the train.

Moreover, no one could talk any more directly to the point on business manners. On one occasion, when he felt he was being given too many

"dogs" (unsuccessful songs) to sing by the Victor Artist and Repertoire Department, he went to Eldridge R. Johnson, president of the company, with such a forceful complaint that Johnson himself ordered, "Give Henry good songs to record."

Most record buyers and concert-goers had the impression Burr was much older than his actual years. His long and active career as a recording artist was partly responsible for this tendency, and the fact that his hair turned gray in early life and was afterwards snow-white increased it. When the tenor was only 50 one former recording company official insisted on adding 20 years to his age, and told me in strong terms that "Henry Burr is 70 years old, if he's a day!" The gray hair and his massive figure—he was not tall but weighed considerably more than 200 pounds—added, however, to the effectiveness of such impersonations as that of the after-dinner speaker.

(To Be Continued)

### HERE and THERE

... Growing demand for Temple University's hobby courses, Philadelphia, Pa., was reported recently by Charles E. Metzger, director of the evening extension division.

"Nervous tension has increased since America's entrance into the war," he said. "As one means of relieving this tension, men and women of all ages are going in strongly for hobbies."

—o—

Chief Ben De Jaeger of Moline, Ill., was pictured recently with a collection of "crooked" dice which he has assembled in nearly a quarter of a century. The collection contains one dice with two deuces, two fours and two sixes.

—o—

According to the Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution: "About 2,000 old manuscripts and scrolls were discovered by Quentin Roosevelt, grandson of the former President, who explored the Chinese interior and Tibet in search for relics of the ancient Nashi tribes. He believes the manuscripts may prove a missing link between present Asiatic civilization and that of 700 B. C."

—o—

A recent program of The Doll Collectors of America, Inc., was given over to the topic, "Some Famous Doll Houses." Mrs. Louis T. Golding was the program chairman.

—o—

The State Y.M.C.A. of Pennsylvania has issued a very interesting manual for grade-school girls in which hobby activities are given very interesting leads. The booklet is intelligently edited by Lela R. Ford.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Henry Burr—III

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

LATE in 1917, Burr, as manager, made several changes in the Eight Famous Victor Artists. He engaged the noted concert and oratorio basso, Frank Croxton, to replace Arthur Collins in the Peerless Quartet. Teddy Morse, as pianist, was replaced by Frank Banta; Vess Ossman, the banjoist, by his famous rival, Fred Van Eps, and Byron Harlan by Monroe Silver, the noted narrator of "Cohen" monologs. Burr, Campbell, Meyer and Murray remained as original members of the troupe.

The distinguished tenor's fortunes were at a high point during the next 10 years. He continued to make innumerable solo records for all American phonograph companies, except Edison and Brunswick (the latter of which was not organized until shortly before he signed an exclusive contract with Victor), and Sterling Trio, Peerless Quartet and Campbell and Burr duets continued to appear by the hundreds — all ingeniously arranged, beautifully harmonized and impeccably sung. By way of variety, Burr also made duets with Meyer and Croxton, in addition to Helen Clark and a good many other women singers. His list of Columbia duets was particularly noteworthy, and even included (under the name of Irving Gillette) a few comic specialties with Ada Jones. How he could possibly find time to do so much singing for records, in addition to taking long concert tours, is a thing I have never been able to understand. The sheer physical exertion must have been appalling.

Probably it was a relief when he negotiated an exclusive Victor contract for the Eight in 1920. More time was left for traveling engagements, and there obviously was much less work involved in singing for one phonograph company than for 18 or 20. But the hard work of those 16 years of free-lancing was reflected in Burr's participation in 12,000 or so records, or twice as many as any other singer has ever made.

Soon after radio began to show signs of popularity, Burr suspected it boded no good for the record business, and jumped aboard the band wagon. The Eight were starred for

a year or so on the Goodrich Zippers program, and the tenor was also in charge for two and a half years of the Cities Service broadcast.

In 1925, when the record business, thanks to electrical recording was just emerging from the slump into which radio had sent it, Burr drastically reorganized the Peerless. Campbell, Meyer (he had made the Quartet's harmony arrangements and was a skilled pianist who sometimes played duets with Banta in concerts) and Croxton were replaced by three newcomers — Carl Mathieu, an excellent tenor and comedian, who was one of Ray Knight's original "Cuckoos"; Stanley Baughman, baritone, and James Stanley, bass. The Quartet stayed together in its latter form a couple of years, and ended its career, as it had begun, with a Stanley as its "foundation."

The Eight disbanded in 1928, after Victor decided not to renew the exclusive contract. Burr made a few more Victor, Columbia, Harmony and Brunswick records, but, realizing that his phonograph career was virtually at a close, despite the grip he still had on the affections of uncountable admirers, he accepted an appointment as program director of the newly organized Columbia Broadcasting Company. In the executive work, which was not much to his liking, he was assisted by L. M. Mountcastle, who had been the Eight's booking agent virtually throughout its existence.

When his work as program director ended, Burr returned to the radio field. He became one of the most popular members of the National Barn Dance troupe, broadcasting every Saturday evening on an NBC network from the stage of the Eighth Street theater in Chicago. The old-time Burr fans were overjoyed to hear him again, and he was soon one of the Barn Dance's greatest features, with his beautiful renditions of "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and "When You and I Were Young, Maggie" (songs with which he had long been especially identified); "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" (one of his biggest selling Victor records) and others loved by the average middle-aged or elderly radio listener. Occasionally, too, he sang "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night," which, made by him on a Columbia record, sold more than 3,000,000 copies — partly, perhaps, because it was issued as one side of a sample record distributed for a quarter instead of the usual 65 cent price. "Kathleen" was the last

song he sang on the Barn Dance, about six weeks before his death.

Those five years with the radio show must, aside from great pain, which he suffered with increasing frequency, have been happy. He cultivated his hobbies of automobiling and collecting fine old clocks. He was frequently seen at baseball games, and anybody who praised "swing" music could always be sure of an argument from "the Dean of Ballad

(Continued on page 129)

#### WANTED

WANTED: Antique Musical instruments, brass horns, String instruments all types Clavichord, books. — Wm. J. Kugler, 727 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, Minn. je1001

OLD MUSIC INSTRUMENTS and Sheet Music wanted. Only objects before 1800. — Albert Hess, Plainfield, Vermont. je106

RECORDS WANTED: Emma Trentini, Beddoe, Gerald Griffen, Vanhoose. — Johnston, 1120 North Hicks, Los Angeles, California. je106

#### FOR SALE

WOODEN FLUTE, \$2.00; "Sweet Potato" marked, \$2.00. Lap Organ, 184-. Original label and case, \$15.00. Chautauqua Roller Organ, 20 rolls, \$20.00. Old Violin, \$10.00. — Tryphosa Bassett House, Den nisport, Mass. je1051

RARE OLD VIENNA VIOLIN, 1780, dog's head column. Enclose stamp for reply. — Little White House, Walpole, New Hampshire. je1211

AUTOGRAPHS: 44 Singers, Composers, Musicians, etc., the lot \$5. We have installed our autograph collection in Hobbies Museum and have left over the above lot. — O. C. Lightner, c/o Hobbies Magazine. jex

REGINA MUSIC BOX (25) twenty-five discs. Plays by inserting penny in slot. Concert Roller Organ, (28) twenty-eight rolls. Real old Hopf Violin. Walnut head, five string Banjo. — B. D. Owens, Petoskey, Michigan. je1081

## WANTED

### COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORDS

By the Following Singers:

Marcella Sembrich

Edouard de Reszke

Schumann-Heink

Campanari

Suzanne Adams

Antonio Scotti

Charles Glibert

Ten-inch, single-faced records with red and gold or black and silver labels.

ALSO catalogs, supplements, pamphlets and old advertisements of records and phonographs.

- FOR SALE -  
RECORD CATALOGS  
OF MANY COMPANIES  
A LARGE ASSORTMENT  
OF VICTOR SUPPLEMENTS

STEPHEN FASSETT  
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Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.

### MONTHLY RECORD SALES

RARE AND OBSOLETE VOCAL RECORDINGS by great artists of the past can be bought at YOUR OWN PRICE at our Mail Auctions. All bidders receive Free of Charge the selling price of each lot after the sale. Write for lists jly34

### DIXIE RECORD CLUB

Congress Building Miami, Florida

## CIRCUS MUSIC OF OTHER DAYS

(Continued from page 29)

bell front altos were replaced by up-rights.

As the circus spread from one ring to three and the big top expanded to seat thousands instead of hundreds of spectators, the instrumentation of bands increased. Prior to the 80's, the average big show band consisted of 10 to 15 men, but this number was increased to from 20 to 30.

During the years when parades were a part of the daily routine of the circus, musicians were numerous among the personnel. Some five or six bands participated in the parade, riding atop tableau wagons. The regular circus band was divided into three or four units with performers filling in on drums and other instruments.

Clowns were required to double in brass, for a clown band always appeared in the parade lineup and frequently in the big show program as well. Other parade bands were recruited from among the ticket sellers, the ushers and other departments.

In 1895, Ringling Brothers Circus offered an innovation in circus music. Prior to that year, it had been customary for the regular circus band to play an hour's concert of overtures preceding each performance from a ring in the arena. The Ringling show had a 25-piece band directed by William F. Weldon. But the Ringling Brothers employed A. Liberati, famous cornet soloist and conductor, and 25 concert musicians, to augment the regular band.

The concert band then consisted of 50 pieces, including 22 reeds, three E-flat basses and three B-flat basses, in addition to the usual instrumentation of the regular band. The concert musicians did not play the performance, but participated only in the concert preceding the show.

The most famous of modern circus bands is the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey aggregation, directed for 25 consecutive seasons by Merle Evans. Evans uses 25 musicians and his 1943 instrumentation includes: Six B-flat cornets, two French horns, four B-flat clarinets, four B-flat slide trombones, one piccolo, two baritones or euphoniums, two brass BB-flat brasses or Sousaphones, one snare and trap drum, one brass drum and cymbal, and an air calliope.

Actually the Evans band is two bands, spelling each other. Each section is divided equally. One-half of each section plays while the other half rests. Only the reed and percussion instruments, as well as the air calliope, keep at it continually. And well it is that the band is so divided, for in addition to a 30-minute concert preceding the show, the band plays continuously for nearly three

hours during a performance, during which it changes cues 160 to 175 times.

Circus music is distinctive from any other in that there is brassy ta-t-a-a, quick tempo, and a canvas sounding board that does things to big top tunes. But there is one instrument that is inseparably associated with the circus—the steam calliope!

Invented in 1854, the steam piano was first used on showboats and on railroad locomotives, but in 1857, Sands, Nathan & Company introduced it to the circus parade. Since that time, the steam piano has always brought up the rear of a street procession, and since the death of the parade, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus has used a calliope in its grand entree of the performance.

Numerous other types of mechanical instruments mounted on wagons made their appearance with circuses soon after the invention of the calliope, most of them having been described here in a previous article. However, none survived.

The air calliope is an adaptation of the steam calliope principle. But whereas, a steam calliope cannot be tuned because of the constant expanding and contracting of the pipes caused by the steam used in producing the sound, the air calliope is used extensively as band accompaniment, adding volume and a distinctive circus tone to the music of the big tops.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

Singers." Just before his final illness he composed words and music of a Prayer for Peace, which were sung on the first program after his death. He had previously done little in the creative musical way, but in 1921 he wrote the words of a song, "Stand Up and Sing for Your Father an Old-Time Tune," which humorously denounced jazz. Ray Perkins wrote the words, and the song was recorded for Victor by Billy Murray and the American Quartet.

It is pitiable that the life of so great an artist ended in tragedy. Almost no one who heard Burr's beautiful singing during his final months with the Barn Dance dreamed the truth — that he was suffering torments from cancer and knew the end of his life was near. He bore the agony as long as he could, however, and continued to make personal appearances in addition to filling his radio engagements. And his nine-room apartment on the "Gold Coast" of Chicago continued to be the scene of delightful, kind-hearted, open-handed hospitality.

Burr, as mentioned in the first article of this series, died on April 6, 1941. He was buried three days later at Kensico, N. Y. Monroe Silver,

Frank Banta and Sammy Hermany, the xylophonist (who replaced Rudy Wiedoeft, the saxophonist, with the Eight, after Wiedoeft in turn had taken the place of Van Eps) were the only ones of his old associates who knew of his death in time to attend the funeral, or were able to be on hand. But grief at his untimely passing was general among all who had been associated with him.

If variety, as well as high quality, of achievement is a criterion of greatness, Harry McClaskey (or Henry Burr, if you prefer) was one of the truly great artists of his day. He was great both as singer and as executive. His records were so many and so good that in all probability he will become one of the legendary figures of the next generation. Few will question his right to rank among the half dozen greatest recording artists, and almost everyone will concede his right to a rating among the top two or three.

## Books Received

*Button Hand Book.* By Florence Zacharie Ellis Nicholls, 114 Overlook Rd., Ithaca, New York. Price \$2.85.

The hobby of button collecting moves forward with another book. This latest edition, "Button Hand Book," emphasizes again the broad field of research and study which the hobby affords. Mrs. Nicholls, like all other authors of button books, was confronted with the problem of choosing her specimens from thousands of desirable collectors' specimens, no small task, and she pictures and lists more than 1,000 buttons. Her 30 plates include the following classifications:

De Luxe . . . Cats' Heads . . . Cats . . . Children, Babies, Horses, Dogs, Monkeys, Stag . . . Cows, Bulls, Buffaloes and Water Buffaloes . . . Hands and Flowers . . . Heads, Famous Men and Women . . . Lovers, Musicians, Skater, Rare Duel . . . Liverpool Transfers and Enamel . . . Miscellaneous, Silver, Ivory, Historical . . . Paperweights, Two-Piece and Other Similar Glass . . . Pearls, Cameos, Carved, Australian . . . Rabbits and Dogs . . . Rats, Mice, Pied Piper, Puss in Boots and Beavers . . . Tapestry, Enamels, Glass, Lithographs, Mosaics, Porcelains, Silver . . . Wedgwood.

The compiler of these paragraphs has perused, intently, the cat buttons. Mr. and Mrs. Feline are pictured in various poses, about 80 of them, on three different plates, including such inimitables as "The Cat and the Fiddle," and "Dick Whittington's" cat. My special delight in the book was the cat illustrations, but others will choose the musicians or the hands and flowers for his or her own special interest.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Steve Porter — I

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**S**TEVE PORTER, a native son of Buffalo, N. Y., where he was born in 1864, was one of the most versatile of all phonograph recording artists and had one of the longest careers before the horn and "mike." His experience as a record maker began no later than 1897, and after electric recording came in, in 1925, he was called upon to re-make for Victor his famous Irish specialties of "Clancy's Wooden Wedding" and "Christmas Morning at Clancy's."

Few singers have had such wide variety of experience as fell to the lot of Steve. His early career was that of a typical vaudeville comedian, specializing in telling anecdotes in the guise of his favorite character, "Flanagan." These same monologs were soon to be used as the basis of an almost interminable and highly popular series of "comic talking records." When he had a chance to make records, he jumped at the opportunity.

In the article about Albert Campbell it was told how Campbell and Porter were members of the Diamond Comedy Four, a male quartet which made records in the '90's for Marks and Stern, the music publishers. That was probably the start of Porter's long career as an accomplished quartet baritone. It was also the beginning of his specialty of writing "descriptive" records, such as the "Steamboat" and "Cornfield" medleys, which were standard sellers for many years.

Not long afterward, Porter also began to discover other phonograph "talent." He met S. H. Dudley at the stage door of a theater and inaugurated him on his career as baritone of the Edison and Haydn Quartets. To anticipate a little, when the original American Quartet began making records for Victor in 1900 or 1901, it was composed of Campbell, Porter, Dudley and an Englishman named Lea. Steve was also baritone of the first Columbia Quartet.

Oddly enough, for a comedian with so strongly marked a strain of Irish humor, Porter's first solo cylinders and discs (the latter were the seven-inch type made for Emile Berliner) consisted almost entirely of hymns and sentimental ballads. It may come as something of a shock to imagine the originator of Flanagan singing "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Rock of Ages," but he did. He also sang "On the Banks of the Wabash" and "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," as well as many other popular ballads of the '90's. I haven't heard any of

these records, but presumably they were done without his Irish accent. Charlie Hodgdon, of Salisbury, Mass., has been trying for years to find copies of them.

Porter ranks, I should say, next to Len Spencer as "the great originator" of the phonograph, and, by 1898, he had become a member of the great Len's "Spencer Trio," which made a great many comic sketches, such as "The Mocking Bird Medley" and "In Front of the Old Cabin Door." The Trio's personnel didn't exactly stay put, but always included Spencer and Porter. Other artists might be Billy Golden, the "coon shouter"; Joe Belmont, the whistler, or George Watson, the yodeler, depending on what type of selection was to be recorded.

Steve had so many ideas and was such a good business man that I imagine he was responsible for organization of the American Phonograph Company at some time around 1900, although I believe William F. Hooley was listed as the president, and S. H. Dudley as secretary. Porter was vice-president. This was a company formed by recording artists with the idea of selling cylinder records direct to the consumer. Among its novel ideas was one of having the Haydn Quartet make a record specially-to-order for the individual purchaser of any number not regularly listed in the catalog. There was also a long list of tenor solos by Harry Macdonough; a special series of street piano numbers by an Italian organ grinder, and even a fairly long list of "classical" baritone offerings by "Signor Francisco," who was really young Emilio deGogorza.

"Artists," as Byron Harlan once remarked in a letter to me, "need a manager, for they are seldom capable of managing themselves." The American Phonograph Company soon gave up the struggle of competing with the large, well-financed record companies, and the Haydn Quartet went to England, to make hundreds of records for companies there. Steve must have crossed over at about the same time.

The quartet came home after a few months spent in England, but the versatile Steve, ever avid for new experiences, remained. He not only made a great many records for the British phonograph firms, he also took a job as recording manager for the Nicole Company. Nicole was a Swiss music box manufacturer who decided to get a share of record making profits in

England and other European companies. The records were single-faced, red in color and semi-flexible. Although considerably heavier, they somewhat resembled the Hit-of-the-Week "durium" discs, which were widely sold in this country around 1929 and 1930.

Just why the popular recording comedian, who then wore a bushy mustache which he discarded in later years, cast in his lot with Nicole is uncertain. Perhaps the introduction of gold moulded records with permanent "masters" had convinced him that the money-making days of recording artists were over in the United States. Edward B. Marks, in "They All Sang," tells of Steve's chagrin when he went to the Columbia studios, all primed to sing many "rounds" of his favorite numbers, only to learn that a couple of masters were enough and there would be no more warbling at a dollar

### HEADQUARTERS

For Edison Cylinder and Diamond Disc  
Phonographs, Records and Repair Parts Jlyp

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RARE AND OBSOLETE VOCAL RECORDINGS  
by great artists of the past can be bought at  
YOUR OWN PRICE at our Mail Auctions. All  
bidders receive Free of Charge the selling price  
of each lot after the sale. Write for lists Jly34

**DIXIE RECORD CLUB**

Congress Building Miami, Florida

## WANTED

COLUMBIA  
GRAND OPERA RECORDS

By the Following Singers:

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Edouard de Reszke  
Schumann-Heink  
Campanari  
Suzanne Adams  
Antonio Scotti  
Charles Gilibert

Ten-inch, single-faced records  
with red and gold or black and  
silver labels.

ALSO catalogs, supplements, pamphlets and old advertisements of records and phonographs.

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A LARGE ASSORTMENT  
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**STEPHEN FASSETT**

944 Monroe Lane  
Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.



or so a round. But, adds Marks, Steve got his revenge, for he never afterwards sang for Columbia for less than five dollars!

At any rate, while with Nicole, the genial Mr. Porter sang many English music hall songs, in addition to the currently popular American ditties. He even recorded English folk tunes such as "Varmer Giles." That's one I'd like to hear, to find out just how closely he approximated the English bucolic accent.

Nicole's recording activities didn't last long. Its master records were bought by the British Sonogram Company, an ill-fated concern whose activities had a life only of months, and Steve was without a job.

But not for long. He talked with officials of the "His Master's Voice" Company (the British equivalent of Victor) and was soon on his way to Calcutta, to be recording director for the H. M. V. plant in India.

After a few years in India, Steve felt the call of the homeland, so returned to the United States, primed with both old and new stories about Flanagan, Finnegan, O'Reilly, Clancy and McGuire, and ready and willing

to give every recording company the benefit of his services. He received a cordial reception and, when the American Quartet was reorganized in 1910, with Billy Murray as the star, Porter became its baritone. The other members were John Bieling, first tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass.

In the very first year of the new quartet's existence, it made one of the biggest selling records of all time, "Casey Jones." After a few thousand copies of the first version had been pressed, however, the Victor officials decided the quartet's support of Murray, who sang the solo lead, was too weak, and dispatched telegrams to the "boys" to come back to Camden and do it over. Murray, Bieling and Hooley promptly arrived, but Porter didn't get his telegram and failed to show up. After a long wait, Walter B. Rogers, the Victor recording director, said, "Well, I can sing a little baritone in a pinch," and so pinch-hit for the absent Steve. Thus it came about the quartet version which sold several million copies was the only early American Quartet record in which Steve Porter was not heard.

(To be Continued)

## OUR PATRIOTIC MUSIC

### *Foreword*

By KENNETH ROSE

WHEN the drums of war beat out their compelling call to arms, and the rolling diapason of a nation's cry rises in just wrath and irresistible might to quicken the pulses of its people, neglected and forgotten loyalties become the treasured possessions of each citizen. The spiritual forces of all are quickened to an articulate urgency that only music, literature, and drama can adequately express. It is from such a compelling need that patriotic music is born, and practically all national ballads, regardless of their origin, have this common motivation.

Today in America we can look back upon a proud tradition of national song—a tradition that stems from the sacrifices and triumphs of the American Revolution, and extends to the present great conflict, World War II. Today millions are turning to the proven songs of the past for inspiration, fortitude, and solace; and today, as in the past, new and appreciated music is being written that will bring to unborn generations an equal measure of good. It is the purpose of this article to trace some of the background of our national music, to link it up with the events that brought about its composition or adoption, and

to describe briefly a number of the most important songs and ballads.

It must not be thought that all patriotic music played or sung during a war period is necessarily a product of the conflict, or primarily the result of inspiration and formal composition. On the contrary tunes entirely unrelated to strife or national impulse have frequently been used, because of an inherent and spontaneous vitality that in some manner voiced a universal need; witness "I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land"; "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight;" and "Tipperary." Because these is no fixed precedent, our national song literature is rich in quality and adequate for all needs. We can justly claim a proud musical inheritance.

For purposes of convenience and clarity, it is advisable to divide this paper into three periods; first, that covering the Revolutionary War, the War with Tripoli, and the War of 1812; next that of the Mexican War and Civil War; and finally the period of the Spanish American War and World War I. Due to the fact that too little time has elapsed to give us a proper perspective, no attempt will be made to comment on music used in the present conflict.

## *Songs of the American Revolution 1768-1783*

SECULAR and patriotic music, altho extremely rare, were not unknown in America during the middle of the 18th century. We find recorded a number of songs issued in broadsides and contemporary periodicals that warrant us in assuming that even then our people were not musically sterile. Music was rarely printed in these early days. It was customary to indicate the tune to be used; and one familiar to all and easily sung was of necessity selected.

For example, in the early Colonial period military heroes were memorialized in song and story. The seething patriotic impulses of the colonies found an outlet in impassioned verse, which was occasionally set to music. We note "Brave Wolfe," dedicated to the general who lost his life on the Fields of Abraham; "The Liberty Song," written by John Dickinson, which appeared in 1768; "The Liberty Tree," by Thomas Paine, written in 1775; Francis Hopkinson's "Liberty Call," of the same year; "Americans to Arms," an anonymous broadside of 1775; and "Breed's Hill" or "The Burning of Charleston," attributed to Joel Barlow.

Of these, the "Liberty Song" is far away the most important, in that it was our first patriotic song to be written and published. The publishers were Mein and Fleming of Boston, and the tune used was the familiar "Hearts of Oak." No copy of this edition has been located, and its discovery would be an event of historical importance.

And so, as we approach the American Revolution, which lasted from 1776-1783, we observe a certain preparatory musical background that must have affected the actual war years. It is true that this output of topical and war songs was limited, and that few, if any, music stores existed. Secular music publishing was not to be known until 1787, when Thomas Dobson of Philadelphia is-

### KENNETH ROSE

Kenneth Rose, a frequent contributor to *HOBBIES*, is director of the violin department at Ward-Belmont School, Nashville, Tenn. As artist and teacher, he has won wide recognition in his professional field, and in recent years has devoted considerable attention to the subject of *Musica Americana*. His collection of American imprints, numbering over 15,000 items, is one of the largest in the South, and is especially strong in Confederate material. At present, in his leisure moments, Mr. Rose is busily engaged in compiling a history of music in Nashville, extending to the Civil War period.



## Two Famous Contraltos Recently Dead

Sigrid Onegin and Maria Gay

On June 18, in Magliaso, Switzerland, Sigrid Onegin, famous German-Swedish contralto, died at the age of 52. This brilliantly gifted singer recorded extensively for Polydor in the early Twenties. Her first American records were listed in the 1923 Brunswick catalog and her first association with that company lasted through the early days of electrical recording. In 1928, Onegin became a Victor-Gramophone Company artist, recording in the U.S.A., England and Germany for some years.

Maria Gay Zenatello died in New York City on July 29. She was 64 years old. The voice and style of this famous Carmen may be studied on records made over a long period. Bauer lists black G&T and Favorite discs recorded in Paris, 1903-05. There was a series of Gramophone discs that originated in London, 1908, of which two numbers from "Carmen" were pressed here by Victor. To American collectors Maria Gay is best known through her Columbia records of 1911 and later. In November, 1930, a little known Victor electrical recording was released, a duet from Carmen, sung with her husband Zenatello, on 7314.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Steve Porter — II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

THROUGHOUT its career, the American Quartet, although it sang many popular sentimental songs, specialized in ragtime and comedy numbers. With Billy Murray and Steve Porter as two of its members, that was no doubt inevitable. The Victor catalog declared that "in popular songs of the day and humorous specialties, they are unequaled," and anybody hearing their records of "That Mysterious Rag," "That Hypnotizing Man," "The Skeleton Rag," and dozens of others of the same genre must agree that when it came to intricate comedy singing the foursome had no serious competition.

On the other hand, I don't believe a better example of perfect quartet singing of the old school has ever been made than the Edison Diamond Disc of "Moonlight Bay," sung by the Premier (Edison name for American) Quartet.

Many of the biggest selling records of the 10-year period from 1910 to 1920 were made by the American. Early in the quartet's career, Steve dusted off the old favorite "Night

Trip to Buffalo" sketch (as a cylinder, it was the first record I ever heard) and the American remade it, with a change whereby the Irish hero was going to the "Boof-a-lo convention," to be nominated by the Democrats for the Presidency. Coupled with the cowboy song, "Denver Town," it went well.

When "Oh, You Beautiful Doll" came along, the American recorded it. A month or so after it had been placed on the market, a famous poet wrote a letter in which he declared, "I can't bring myself to address you as either gentlemen or men," and indignantly inquired how "four such singers could bring yourselves to sing such appalling trash." The Quartet replied that the record had already sold more than a million copies and was still going strong; consequently, their sense of artistry was not too greatly outraged. In a sense, time has made a mockery of the poet, for, despite the silly words of "Beautiful Doll," its irresistible tune has already sent it well on its way to being an American folk classic.

I have already mentioned typical ragtime numbers as sung by the American. One of their big hits of 1913 was "Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay." Another was "And the Green Grass Grew All Around." In 1914 there were such masterpieces as "Do You Take This Woman for Your Lawful Wife?" "Chinatown, My Chinatown" and "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary." Steve was still making comic talking records on occasion, but singing with the quartet took up most of his time and energy.

The ensemble held together in its original form until 1918 or 1919, when Bill Hooley died and Donald Chalmers became the bass "foundation." When Murray's joint Victor-Edison contract expired in 1919 and he decided to free-lance for a time, the American sang for virtually all the phonograph companies of the day. Sometimes it called itself the American Quartet; sometimes, the Premier; sometimes, the Premier-American, and, on one occasion at least, the Murray Quartet.

In 1920 a new male quartet, the Harmonizers, came into being, with Steve as its baritone. The other members were Charles Hart, Billy Jones and Harry Donaghy. It free-lanced exclusively, but lasted only a couple of years. Murray by this time had signed an exclusive Victor contract, and Porter was still the American

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Quartet baritone. In 1924 Murray and Ed Smalle made a record of "What Does the Pussy Cat Mean When She Says Meow?" in which the versatile Steve did the voices of both the "dog" and "cat."

Meanwhile, Edison and some of the small companies, such as Grey Gull, continued to issue such monologs as "Flanagan's Real Estate Deal" and "Flanagan in a Restaurant." For Edison, Steve teamed up with Ernie Hare and made a new recording of Len Spencer's immortal comic sketch, "The Arkansas Traveler." He also made a number of sketches, of rural rather than Irish humor, with Billy Jones, just as he had done with Byron Harlan years before.

Here I may as well say that Steve Porter's recording activities were so vast and so varied it has been next to impossible to touch on them all. I have not, for instance, mentioned as yet the comic sketches, such as "The Joke-smiths," which he made with Len Spencer, or such rapid-fire dialogs as "Irish Wit," done with Murray's assistance. Nor have I spoken of the Rambler Minstrel Company, composed of himself, Murray, Collins and Har-

lan, which made many personal appearances as well as a series of recordings for all the companies. In at least one instance he introduced to record fans a performer otherwise entirely unknown to collectors—"Miss Emma Forbes," a sweet-voiced woman who assisted him in "Mrs. Hiram Offen Discharges Bridget O'Sullivan." Once or twice he helped Cal Stewart in "Uncle Josh" records.

During his later years, when he had turned gray but still had bushy black eyebrows, Steve was not dependent upon phonograph or theatrical work for his income. Many of his admirers will be surprised to learn that he became wealthy through an invention, but that is the truth. His mother-in-law was deaf, so ingenious Mr. Porter set out to aid her. He designed a hearing device which he called the Port-o-phone. It was named after himself, of course, although the name bears more than a little resemblance to the old Zon-o-phone phonograph name. It worked so well for the mother-in-law that he placed it on the market and was still selling it in large quantities at the time of his death.

Steve Porter's passing came suddenly. One spring day in 1936 he had left his New York office and was walking down the street when he had a heart attack. He fell, striking his head against the curb. The head injury would have been serious in itself, but he was dead from the seizure by the time a physician could be summoned. He was 72 years years of age. Billy Murray, Walter Scanlan and many others of his old phonograph friends sadly attended the services at Frank Campbell's funeral parlors.

From every standpoint Steve Porter was a great artist, as popular standards go. He was not merely a brilliant Irish comedian, he was such an accomplished singer that the American Quartet wouldn't have seemed the same without him. His recording career extended over 30 years, and he was as good when he appeared before the microphone for the last time as he was the first time he saw a recording horn. As the collecting of old "popular" records grows apace, so is his fame likely to increase and to become permanent and enduring.

Peace to his ashes!

## RECORDS

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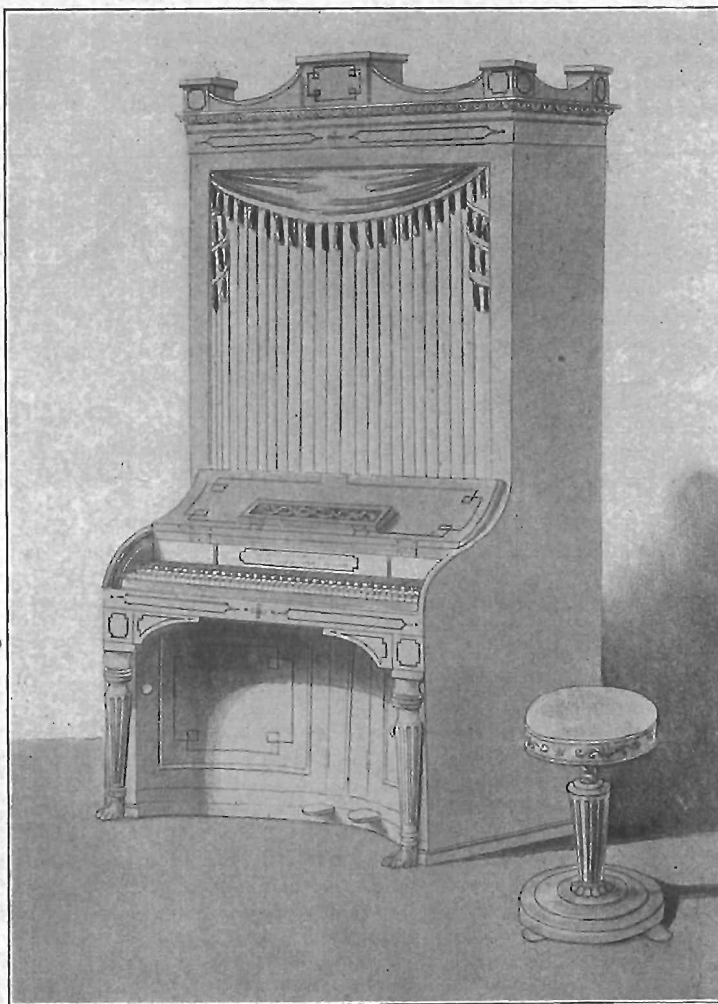
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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Harry Macdonough I

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

"HARRY Macdonough" was the name under which the late J. S. Macdonald, one of the most talented and popular of all singers for the phonograph, was known throughout his entire recording career, but it was an alias which came to him unsought and eventually caused him serious embarrassment.

For a year or so before his death Mr. Macdonald wrote me occasional letters in which he related many highly interesting facts concerning his career—surely one of the most varied, colorful and important in the history of the talking machine. Beginning as a singer at 75 cents a "round," he eventually became, first with the Victor company and then with Columbia, among the most outstanding of recording organization officials.

But perhaps it would be well to let this great tenor tell as much of his story as possible in his own way. We shall begin then by saying that he was born in Canada, of Scotch descent, in 1868, and received a sufficiently good musical training to allow him to be an accomplished church soloist, although he never appeared in concert or upon the stage.

On October 17, 1898, at the age of 30, he filled a test engagement at the Edison laboratories in West Orange, N. J. Prior to that eventful afternoon, he had made only a few records—cylinders, of course—for the Michigan Electric Company in Detroit. "These records," he explained to me, "were not sold but merely used in their 'phonograph parlor' on the slot machines in use at that time."

Although Russell Hunting is usually identified with the once popular series of "Casey" monologs, a man by the name of John Kaiser was making them in Spanish-American war days for Edison. It was he who first interested Walter Miller, the pioneer company's recording manager, in young

Macdonald's exquisite lyric voice.

"At my first session," said the singer, "I made 12 selections, for which I received \$9.00. The regular rate at that time was \$1 per song, but being a beginner I was supposed to be satisfied with anything they chose to pay me and, as a matter-of-fact, I was. That \$9 seemed pretty big for the afternoon, and I had no complaint. However, shortly after that they paid me the regular rate of \$1 per 'round,' as it was described in those days.

"Each morning or afternoon session consisted of 30 'rounds' of five or six songs, selected from the repertoire on the list in proportion to their selling qualities. Sometimes it would be 'The Holy City' ten times; 'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia' five times, with the other 15 divided up among the songs of which they needed additional masters.

"At that time they made five masters at each performance of a song and from each master they could make from 25 to 75 duplicates before the master wore out. 'The Holy City' was the outstanding seller and had to be done over more than any other selection. It paid my rent for many years."

I pause here to say that "The Holy City" was something of a burden throughout Mr. Macdonald's singing career—a tiresome burden, it must have been, despite its rent-paying qualities. It took two Victor single-faced records—No. 2815 and 2816—for him to sing it in its entirety—and another record by him, called "The Sabbath Morn," consisted of "part of 'The Holy City' with chimes." He also took the solo part of a Haydn Quartet rendition of Stephen Adams' famous composition. Evidence that the thing came to be an annoyance was given in the June, 1927, issue of the now defunct Phonograph Monthly Review, in an article by Mr. Macdonald, in which he said he was glad that the phonograph had progressed to the point that complete recordings of symphonies were being issued, and "The Holy City" is no longer the height of recorded art."

Walter Miller and a typographical error must share the responsibility for the young tenor's becoming known as Harry Macdonough. Miller, who apparently had a mild mania for naming tenors Harry, objected to Macdonald's first name of "John" as not being "romantic enough." "You're Harry Macdonald from now on," he said, but when the first cylinder by the new singer came out the last

name was mistakenly given as "Macdonough."

"That didn't matter, because I was completely indifferent to what they called me. I thought then that record-making was a sort of lowdown business, anyway," the singer whimsically commented.

But then came embarrassment. By one of those stranger-than-fiction coincidences, there was at that time a veteran theatrical comedian who had been calling himself Harry Macdonough for many years. Despite the fact that he had appeared with Lillian Russell and other famous stars, the new "Harry Macdonough" had never heard of him before. The veteran, however, soon found out somebody was using his name on records by being annoyed with requests to sing ballads every time he made a stage appearance. When he began making an investigation, the chest-fallen Macdonald wrote him a letter of apology.

"That was the hardest thing I ever did," he told me, "for I felt that if I told him the truth, that I had never heard of him before I appropriated his name, I would only be adding insult to injury." A friendly understanding was affected, however, and the tenor and the comedian had no trouble with each other after that, except that, as a rule, each received the other's mail instead of his own.

Young Macdonald was now well started on his successful recording career. He continued to call himself Harry Macdonough, although he said he made a few records for a minor company whose name he couldn't recall, under the disguise of "Ralph Raymond."

The Edison Quartet was then composed of John Bieling, first tenor; Jere Mahoney, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone, and William F. Hookey, bass. Mahoney became ill with inflammatory rheumatism, and Macdonough took his place. "The new combination," he said, "stuck together for about 20 years, being known as the Haydn Quartet when singing for the Berliner Gramophone Company, which later became the Victor Company."

After the formation of the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1901, the Quartet, as an ensemble and as individuals, signed a contract which permitted work to be continued for the Edison organization, although the bulk of its efforts were for Victor. Macdonough is also said to have made a few Columbia records, although I have never seen one. He likewise sang many records for the American Phonograph Company, a short-lived cylinder manufacturing concern operated by some of the prominent re-

(Continued on Page 129)

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"And they're mine. I own 'em. Nobody can take 'em away from me.

"I've got a little money coming in, regularly. Not much—but enough. And I tell you, when you can go to bed every night with nothing on your mind except the fun you're going to have tomorrow—that's as near Heaven as a man gets on this earth!

"It wasn't always so.

"Back in '43—that was our second year of war, when we were really getting into it—I needed cash. Taxes were tough, and then Ellen got sick.

Like most everybody else, I was buying War Bonds through the Payroll Plan—and I figured on cashing some of them in. But sick as she was, it was Ellen who talked me out of it.

" 'Don't do it, John!' she said. 'Please don't! For the first time in our lives, we're really saving money. It's wonderful to know that every single payday we have more money put aside! John, if we can only keep up this saving, think what it can mean! Maybe someday you won't have to work. Maybe we can own a home. And oh, how good it would feel to know that we need never worry about money when we're old!'

"Well, even after she got better, I stayed away from the weekly poker game—I was dropping a little cash at the hot spots now and then—gave up some of the things a man feels he has a right to. We made clothes do—cut out fancy foods. We didn't have as much fun for a while but we paid our taxes and the doctor and—we didn't touch the War Bonds.

"We didn't touch the War Bonds then, or any other time. And I know this: The world wouldn't be such a swell place today if we had!'

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## HOBBIES MAGAZINE

### CORRECTION

Two months ago we published a warning regarding F. Russell, after evidence of a check written on a Boston bank which was returned marked "no account." In order that no injustice be done, we wish to clear Mr. Russell upon receipt of a letter from his bank stating that he has an account there. It is and shall remain the policy of HOBBIES to issue warnings when irrefutable evidence is submitted to us of this type. In our field nearly all our readers are buying, selling and trading, and checks that are sent out for merchandise and are returned marked "no account" naturally call for protection

to other readers. We do not know what happened between Mr. Russell and the bank and certainly regret it if any injustice has been committed against Mr. Russell. We hope by this notice that our readers will cancel anything against him. The bank's advices, however, are still in our possession and it looks as if Mr. Russell has a humdinger of a lawsuit against his bank.

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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORD- ING ARTISTS

*(Continued from Page 34)*

cording artists, and went with the other members of the Quartet to England in 1902, where their fame had preceded them to such an extent that they reaped a rich harvest making records for the European companies.

Soon after their return, Macdonough, by this time unquestionably the most popular recording tenor of his day, signed an exclusive contract with Victor and became its assistant recording director, in charge of the New York studios. Here he not only continued to sing the latest ballads by the score and to take part in an almost incredible amount of ensemble work with Haydn and many other groups, but to supervise all Victor recording activities outside those at the Camden laboratories. There was plenty of work, but he seemed to thrive on it!

*(To be continued)*

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Harry Macdonough, II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**D**URING THE early 1900's and, to a less extent during the decade from 1910 to 1920, Harry Macdonough's name remained one of the most familiar on Victor records, in spite of his being actively in charge of the company's New York recording laboratory.

He continued to make tenor solos of the popular ballads of the day; standard songs, such as "My Old Kentucky Home," "Home, Sweet Home" and "Then You'll Remember Me"; hymns, and favorite operatic arias, sung in English. His rank as the most popular tenor on records outside the Red Seal classification was not challenged until another Canadian known as Henry Burr came along and, around 1912, stepped firmly into the lead as the best loved singer of sentimental songs in all the phonograph's history.

Mr. Macdonough continued as the star of the Haydn Quartet until the pressure of executive duties reduced the amount of time he had for singing, and the Quartet disbanded in 1914. Nevertheless, he kept on as second tenor of the Orpheus Quartet, whose other members were Lambert Murphy, tenor, who called himself Raymond Dixon on many of his records; Reinald Werrenrath, also known as Edward Hamilton, baritone, and the omnipresent William F. Hooley, bass. It is worthy of note that Murphy and Werrenrath eventually became Red Seal singers, although they were no better than Macdonough and Hooley, who "stayed on the Blacks."

Then there was the Lyric Quartet which, when first founded in 1909, consisted of Macdonough as tenor, Frank C. Stanley as bass, Elise Stevenson, soprano, and Corinne Morgan, contralto. Stanley died in 1910, and the ladies, who were proteges of his, soon ceased to record. The Quartet then became Macdonough; Hooley, bass; Olive Kline, soprano, and Elsie Baker, contralto. It made records for a great many years.

The artists with whom Macdonough sang duets constitute almost the entire Victor "popular" list. He teamed up with Bieling, Dudley, Hooley, Stanley, a mysterious Miss Walton, who was probably Elise Stevenson, Miss Stevenson, Miss Morgan, Elizabeth Wheeler, Olive Kline (their 12-inch duet of the Miserere from "Trovatore" was long one of the

most popular records in the Victor catalog), Miss Baker, and others entirely too numerous to mention. He and George P. Watson, the German yodler, even joined forces to record "The Bavarian Yodel." The Schubert Trio, which made one or two records of religious compositions around 1906, appears to have been composed of him, Stanley and Mrs. Wheeler. He was also the tenor of the Lyric Trio (the other members probably were Hooley and Elizabeth Spencer, with whom Macdonough made a few duets), which sang a few records, such as "When I Was a Lad," from "Pinafore," in 1901 and 1902. Few singers can have had a busier career. When one considers the vast amount of supervisory work the tenor was doing at the same time, amazement grows as to how he ever did it.

Yet Macdonough retained his keen sense of humor and always found time to "kid" other recording artists along and to relate the newest anecdote. He and Olive Kline used to engage in some tall story-telling matches, with each trying to top the other's yarn.

Macdonough's solo records became fewer in number after 1916. The last, No. 18516, "It's Never Too Late to be Sorry," came out in February, 1919, and had "Don't Cry, Little Girl, Don't Cry," by his arch rival, and good friend, Henry Burr, on the other side. His final appearance on records, however, appears to have come in February, 1920, when he sang the vocal refrain of a dance record, "Peggy," by Joseph C. Smith's orchestra.

Mr. Macdonough summed up his later phonograph years by saying: "My personal connection with the Victor Company continued until 1925. For many years I sang solos, duets, trios, quartet and ensemble records with the Victor Male Chorus, the Trinity Choir, the Victor Mixed Chorus and the Victor Light Opera Company. In fact, I was mixed up with almost every combination in the catalog, besides picking artists and selections for them to do.

"Eventually I was made Sales Manager of the Company and continued in this work until 1922 when I returned to the Artist Department with my dear friend, Calvin G. Child, who had been at the head of the Department since the formation of the Victor Company. On his retirement

in October, 1923, I was made Manager of the Artist and Repertoire Department and continued there until October, 1925, when I left to become Director of Recording Studios of the Columbia Company."

The latter position was the one John S. Macdonald—the erstwhile "Harry Macdonough"—held when he succumbed to a heart attack on September 26, 1931, at the age of 63. His death was the cause of much comment in newspapers and trade publications generally, but it was ironic that the latter made some outstanding errors in writing of his achievements. The Radio and Talking Machine Weekly declared him to have been the tenor of "the original Peerless Quartet," while the Talking Machine World identified him as the leader of the American Quartet. Both were thinking of the Haydn, but got the name mixed up with the organizations led by Henry Burr and Billy Murray, respectively.

For several years before his death, Victor extensively remade Macdonough's records, having them recorded by newer singers, either because the original matrices had been damaged or to get the benefit of improved orchestration. The tenor's renditions, however, were regarded as models for other artists to pattern by, and the catalog continued to list many records in which he participated. It spoke truthfully when it said that Macdonough's "correct method of singing and the clearness of his diction have supplied excellent model records in various classes," and added, "he has many friends, being known to the music-loving public in every quarter of the globe."

Mr. Macdonough was survived by his wife and a son, "Jack," with whom I kept up a friendly correspondence for some time, but of whom I eventually lost track, although I heard he became engaged in business in South America.

As one looks back upon the remarkable 33-year career of Harry Macdonough in the phonograph world, it seems impossible to doubt that he was one of the most significant musical figures of his time. From a beginning as a singer for slot machine records to the most popular solo and quartet tenor of his day, through the enormous mass of his miscellaneous recording work, to becoming recording director, Victor sales manager, and, finally, Columbia's recording director—his record is one of great accomplishments. Why a man of such predominantly musical instincts should ever have been made a sales manager is more than I can understand, but the fact that he was only lends point to the great variety of his achievements.



over from Paris and he kept the transfer equipment in his home. Not even the officials of the American company were allowed to see it, with the result that the mystery surrounding this secret process, which surpassed all other methods of dubbing, has remained unsolved to this day.

Angus Joss, of Joliet, Ill., writes that there was an *Actuelle* machine that played both vertical and lateral cut records. The sound travelled over a rod from the needle to an amplifying cone, producing a mellow tone free from directional qualities. This machine, says Mr. Joss, "was a large and elaborate affair, equipped with an electric motor and housed in a huge cabinet with handsome trimmings." Which prompts me to suggest that if collectors owning unusual types of phonographs and gramophones would send us photographs we might find them satisfactory for reproducing on these pages.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

*S. H. Dudley, I*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

IN SOME ways, the recording careers of Harry Macdonough, second tenor of the Edison and Haydn Quartets, and S. H. Dudley, the baritone, were curiously parallel. Both began singing by the "round" and worked themselves up to high positions as Victor Talking Machine Company officials. And, as will be seen later, Dudley, like Macdonough, used for recording purposes a name that was also the property of someone else, with confusion and embarrassment resulting.

"S. H. Dudley was given the name of Samuel Holland Rous when he was born some 78 years ago. In 1931 he wrote me about some of the highlights of his interesting career, in which he said:

"I must have begun to acquire a taste for travel at the age of six months, when my father, resigning his professorship in Asbury College . . . left my native town of Greencastle, Ind., to become one of those poor peripatetic superintendents of county schools, who were always at the mercy of petty politics in the local school boards. . . . Before I was thirteen we had lived in Vevay, Irvington, Attica, Thorntown, Stockwell, Dayton, Frankfort, Rushville and Indianapolis . . .

"At age thirteen the future 'Dudley' was removed in his first year in high school to do his bit toward the family income . . . . When I was 20 I began to think of some way to utilize my very fair but untaught natural baritone voice — other than giving it free in church choirs. Chance brought me an opportunity to play 'small parts' in a company giving a summer season of operetta in Montreal, and I jumped at it.

"Little did I imagine that during the next 13 years I would sing roles in 72 different operas with 34 opera companies! Or that I would travel a quarter million miles in Pullmans, day coaches, freight trains, cabooses, carriages, burros and farm wagons — not to mention Shank's Mare—in the U. S., Canada and Mexico . . .

"After a few seasons of comic opera I drifted into the grand opera section and then the fun began! Several years with the Boston Ideal Opera Company were comparatively uneventful, but those of 'Grand Opera in English' with several companies (one of them featuring Emma Juch, who was among the very first Victor Red Seal artists) were not . . .

"I was with the first company to give Grand Opera in English in

Mexico, and the first to present Wagner's works. Tannhauser, Flying Dutchman, Lohengrin and Walkure were given . . . . On April 29, 1891, we played at Guanajuato. The costumes and scenery had to be carried from the station three miles up a twisty canyon on a tram line; and when they arrived it was discovered that Faust costumes had been brought instead of the needed Tannhauser ones. It was then 11 o'clock and the audience, which had been waiting three hours, was restive, to put it mildly. So we played Tannhauser with Faust costumes and the curtain went down at 2:30 on a highly satisfied audience.

"Although only a bad baritone, I was occasionally called upon for bass and even tenor roles. During the Mexican tours I was forced to sing Sparafucile in Rigoletto. And do the Mexicans know their Rigoletto? I'll say so! Every time I dodged that low F in the first act (because I couldn't hit it) there were fervent hisses from all over the house! . . .

"Again, the time was November 14, 1890, and the place the Grand Opera House, Philadelphia. The Flying Dutchman was billed, with a large sale, and the money was badly needed. The singer booked for Daland became ill at five o'clock and no one else knew the important part. But a German who shall be nameless actually made a stab at it with the score in his left hand every minute he was on the stage. Imagine the feelings of the large audience, watching that fat German trying to sing the score from the book in English with a thick dialect, making appropriate gestures with his right hand! It was one of the funniest things I ever saw."

Dudley spent 13 years in opera and afterwards appeared in drama as one of Charles Frohman's forces. He and his wife, a Miss Holland (who, as Sofia Romani, had sung soprano roles with most of the opera companies in which her husband appeared) became sick and tired of trouping, and he began to look about for some business that would allow him to maintain a home.

"Then," says the genial baritone, "like manna from heaven came along my old friend, Steve Porter, waiting for me one night at the stage door.

"Hello, Sam. Do you want to sing second tenor in a male quartet job?"

"Steve, I'll sing anything from basso-profundo to soprano, if there is any real money in it!"

"Well, it was a job making male

quartet records for Mr. Thomas Edison in West Orange, and we received \$15 each for our afternoon's work. Simple old-fashioned stuff — Old Oaken Bucket; Hail, Jerusalem — but the singing position was decidedly cramping, as the crude methods of recording made it necessary for us to bump our heads close together.

"But it looked like easy money, and I asked Walter Miller (recording manager for Edison then and for 30 years afterward) if he wanted any solos. 'Let's have a specimen,' said Walter; so I picked up the first song that came to hand, which happened to be a refined ditty entitled 'The Chili Widow,' with a refrain like this:

'She was the Chili Widow, the widow who couldn't get warm—'

"When Walter heard the record he figuratively fell on my neck, as I happened to have a voice and an enunciation which just fitted the old-time recording process . . . In a year or so I was making at the rate of about \$12,000 a year, which was real money in 1900!

"But, boy, it was hard work! We singers of that period would come home at night, with our voices all but gone; not daring to speak above a whisper to our families for fear of wasting those precious vocal cords. I have made as many as 85 records in one day. A bad cold usually cost a singer about \$500.

"Those were the good old days when only about 25 duplicates could be made from one 'master,' the average being much smaller, and not only that but for a long time after the introduction of the 'concert' record — that huge cylinder which was supposed to be the last word in 'tone' — they were recorded one at a time and could not be duplicated. Think of that for a royalty; for every record sold the singer received 75 cents, the standard price at the time.

"But it was too good to last — a long comes Mr. Edison with his 'gold moulded' process, which enabled him to make a million records out of each master. That, of course, jumped the price of the singers' services, until it was fixed at \$40 for each number. Then Victor began to bid for our services, along with other companies that were starting in the game, but in 1902 the business began to fall off because many new singers became available when recording improvements made it possible to use all kinds of voices. So our male quartet . . . began to look toward London as a promising field. In June, 1902, we sailed for the other side and during the summer made hundreds of records—quartets, solos by Macdonough, Hooley and Dudley, duets, etc. Plantation and darky numbers were particularly appreciated by the British."

(To be continued.)

## PATRIOTIC MUSIC

### Part III

By KENNETH ROSE

#### THE WAR OF 1812 THROUGH THE MEXICAN WAR — 1846

THE period from 1812-1815, the years of our second war with England, were rich in valor and replete with a new consciousness of the meaning of our national integrity. They yielded a rich harvest of musical expression. Nearly every major victory of the War of 1812 was celebrated in song, and the list is long and honorable.

#### THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER 1814

Our National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner," must always be given precedence over all other patriotic songs. Its story is so thrilling, its later history so engrossing, that it merits an analytical description all its own.

"The Star Spangled Banner" was born of shot and shell and of the tragedy of war. It was written by Francis Scott Key of Baltimore on board a British man-of-war, under circumstances that were intensely dramatic.

A leading physician of Maryland, a friend of Key, was captured and held prisoner by the British. In an effort to secure his release, Key, while operating under a flag of truce, met with the British admiral on the deck of the English flagship. Before all details could be arranged the British forces made a night attack on Fort McHenry, which was being defended by the Americans. After feverishly waiting the result of the night's bombardment, Key at the break of dawn discovered the dim outline of the flag still waving triumphantly over the ramparts of the fort. Despair yielded to ecstatic joy; and transported by the rapture of this soul-stirring sight, he hastily penned the verses that were to become known to us as "The Star Spangled Banner."

The next day, with his mission completed, Key had a Baltimore printer strike off the song on hand bills. This was on September 14, 1814. It appeared in a Baltimore paper the following week. The verses were set to the well known tune, "To Anacreon in Heaven."

"Anacreon in Heaven" is attributed to an English composer, John Stafford

Smith, who wrote it as a drinking song for the London Anacreonic Society. It had a great vogue with many similar organizations in England and reached the United States in the late 1780's. It had previously been used as the musical setting for "Adams and Liberty," "Freedom Triumphant," "The Pillar of Glory," "When Death's Gloomy Angel Was Bending His Bow," and for sundry Masonic purposes, before it was adapted by Key. Undoubtedly he was familiar with this tune and had it in mind when falling so naturally into the somewhat involved metre of the "Star Spangled Banner."

The first edition of our National Anthem was published by Thomas Carr in Baltimore in 1814 and is a rarity of major importance. Only eight or nine copies are known to exist today. These are all distinguished by the omission of the letter "R" in the word "patriotic," and by the fact that this was the first publication in any form of the song under the title of "The Star Spangled Banner." It had been known originally as "The Fall of Fort McHenry." It has run into many editions, and any printing before 1830 is a collector's treasure.

Other songs written during the War of 1812 of patriotic importance are "The Battle of the Wabash," containing a very early imprint of the "Star Spangled Banner;" "The Hunters of Kentucky;" "Decatur's Victory;" "Erie and Champlain;" "Hull's Victory;" "Lawrence the Brave;" "The Death of Commodore Perry;" and "Columbia, the Land of the Brave."

—o—

This national outpouring of song was so widespread that several periodicals carried song sheets as supplements. Those found in the Portfolio Magazine are collector's items and deserve a place in this list. Among the best known are "The Pillar of Glory;" "Rise Columbia, Brave and Free;" and "Charge the Can Merrily." Each has its place in history, and copies are not easily found.

#### AMERICA—1831

Although it can be truly said that "The Star Spangled Banner" is our greatest National Anthem, a recognition brought about by popular usage and confirmed by law, it may be stated as emphatically that "America" is beyond question our greatest National Hymn. Its stately and noble verse



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

*S. H. Dudley, II*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH



I CLOSED last month's installment with the Haydn Quartet going to London in June, 1902, and making hundreds of records for the European companies. Some of these—including two Dudley solos, "Up Came Johnny With His Camera" (a rather risqué offering for that day) and "The Whistling Bowery Boy"—have been sent to me by such English collectors as P. G. Hurst and John Barnett.

Now to resume the narrative in the singer's own words:

"Thoroughly tired out with four years of almost continuous singing, I decided to play hookey, and my wife and I went to France and Switzerland for a good rest. But there seemed to be 'no rest for the wicked,' for I soon got a cable from Cal Child, director of the Victor recording department, offering me the position of assistant director. As it had been about 17 years since I had held down what might be termed a steady job I hesitated, but finally accepted, reserving the right to sing for Edison. They had a very long list of Dudley records, which had to be remade from time to time, as slight improvements were made, and I did not like to handicap them.

"But a year later the Victor purchased my exclusive services—and some services they were, though I say it! In a few years I was far too busy to sing any more.

"All I had to do was to select each month 50 or 100 numbers for the monthly bulletin; see that artists were engaged to sing them; keep them in good humor; write the notes for the bulletins; compile the Victor's monumental Alphabetical Record Catalog; write and revise annually the Book of the Opera; write several hundred letters a month to record fans; test all the new records which were made, sometimes 500 a month; scout for new singers and novelties, etc. Mr. Child was by that time too busy with his huge list of celebrity singers to bother with the common or garden variety of records."

During all these active years, it should be mentioned, Mr. Dudley was noted for the rigorous manner in which he excluded objectionable material from Victor lists and refused to allow the trashier types of popular songs to be recorded.

"By 1919," he continues, "I decided that 13 years of opera and 17 of records was enough for one lifetime, so my wife and I jumped into

our little Scripps-Booth. And since then we have kept going.

"We spent a winter in Hawaii, and while there a new volcano eruption broke out, and Mrs. 'Dudley' was kind enough to break through a crust of lava and sink to her waist! . . . We traveled over the old Spanish trail . . . were lost in the desert several times, fording one stream 14 times in one day; had a broken axle in the middle

of a New Mexico desert; dodged Louisiana floods by loading the car on a leaky barge for a 20 mile bayou trip; were caught in a forest fire in Florida; stuck in the middle of Fish Creek, Arizona, all night, with mountain lions roaming about; mired in a 'dry' lake in Utah—no wonder Mrs. Rous said, 'I thought you retired from business to get a rest!'

"Then to Europe, where we have been ever since. We spend six months in our little apartment in Monaco and in the summer explore the mountain passes in our trusty Renault, now seven years old and going strong. . . . In 1927 a trip around the world broke the monotony—and another book could be written about some adventures while trying to see something of the virgin jungles of Sumatra."



*Jim Walsh, Virginia, placing a record on an old-time Edison cylinder machine. In the background may be seen some of his autographed photos of recording artists and composers. Walsh, one of the outstanding authorities and record collectors of the country, besides his writing activities, broadcasts from WDBJ, Roanoke, Va., at 5:30 each Saturday afternoon. His program comes in at about 96 on the dial, and consists of playing old records and giving information about the old-time recording artists.*



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And here I conclude my quotations from the man whom Harry Macdonough described as "the most interesting letter writer I have ever known."

These quotations, it should be remembered, were written more than a decade ago, several years before the beginning of the second World War. In 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Rous, having, as he expressed it, "no desire to leave our old bones in Europe," returned to this country and, before I lost track of them, were living happily in California, where he was also writing a book to be called, "One Hundred Ways of Making Money in a Depression." As far as I know, they are both still alive. I certainly hope they are. It would be a pleasure to resume communication, but I would hesitate to inflict correspondence upon Mr. Rous at his advanced age. If he is still living, he and Russell Hunting, who made the "Casey" monologs, must be about the oldest surviving recording artists. Both, I think, are 78.

It will be observed that the tone of these excerpts is one of buoyant happiness. That is all the more striking when it is remembered that for years after "Dudley's" retirement the phonograph world was full of rumors that he had gone blind and was "down and out." This was written to me by the late, S. E. Levy, of Shanghai, China, perhaps the world's foremost authority in his day on old-time records, and was also told to me, in all good faith, by Edwin M. Whitney, of the Whitney Brothers Quartet and for many years a studio director for the National Broadcasting Company. When I mentioned these reports to their subject, he replied, "I did have some trouble with eye strain—too much Victor proofreading, probably—but I can now see a beetle on the side of a mountain several miles away." As for the "down and out" idea, he said, "I once amused myself by figuring that if I had held on to the Victor stock I used to own, I would now be worth three million dollars. However, I sold it and invested in a comfortable annuity, and I can truthfully say I don't want to be a millionaire."

Despite his operatic training, most of Dudley's solo records were of a humorous nature, in which his skill as a whistler usually was given scope. He was noted for his rendition of "The Whistling Coon," which he made for Victor both as a solo

(Continued on page 23)

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WANTED: PICTURES published by Currier and Ives. Especially Winter Scenes. Large or small.—A. R. Davison, East Aurora, N. Y. jly6023

### FOR SALE

MAGNUS ILLUSTRATED letter sheets. Write for free list. Colored Civil War patriotic song sheets, ten different \$1.50.—E. N. Sampson, 420 Allyndale Drive, Stratford, Conn. mh2003

A FEW COPIES OF "Lee and His Generals" in color by G. B. Matthews. \$4.00 each. — Mrs. Georgia F. Knight, Livingston, Tenn. my12429

CURRIER & IVES Specialist's Price List. Send 25 cents for latest list, to—Paul Voorhees, 41-28 Little Neck Parkway, Little Neck, L. I., New York. sl22901

COLOR PRINTS: Flowers, fruits, birds, costumes. Wholesale and retail. Wanted: Fine old lace paper Valentines. — K. Gregory, 222 E. 71st St., New York, N. Y. f128001

RUSSELLS, WESTERN ACTION, Colored Prints, 55c, five for \$2.—DuBois, 236 West Second, Los Angeles, Calif. jly12276

ANTIQUE COLORED prints \$1 each. Kurz and Allison Civil War lithographs. Large, fine condition. — Schwarz, 1806 Chestnut, Philadelphia, Pa. au1897

OLD VIEWS of cities and towns. Announcing an unusual collection of woodcuts, engravings and etchings, all hand colored, all warranted to be from fifty to one hundred years old, covering scenes in all parts of the United States and Alaska. These are neatly mounted and protected by cellophane. If you are interested in old prints of your city or village we may have it. Prices from \$2 to \$5.—Old Prints, 525 E. Argonne Drive, Kirkwood, Mo. je68481

CURRIER & IVES copies, beautifully colored, size 11x16", assorted scenes. 12 for \$1.50, postpaid (marked reprints).—S. Fischel, 5234 Dorchester, Chicago. je6405

CURRIER & IVES: Fox Hunting, "The Death" (age spotted), \$14.50. Large folio. "The First Test of the Season," poor condition, \$25. Large folio, "The Retreat," Bufford, \$15.—Providence Antiques, 732 Westminster, Providence, R. I. f1402

500 THOMAS NAST CARTOONS for \$50, 10x14 in. and 14x20 in. — Hobby Service, Hanover, N. H. f109

## AUTOGRAPHS

(Continued from page 14)

telegraph the head of the White House domestic *menage*, rather imperatively:

New York,  
December 6, 1863.

Edward McManus, Executive Mansion:

Let me know immediately exactly how Mr. Lincoln and Tad die are.

Mrs. Lincoln.

Metropolitan Hotel.

To which not McManus, but the President, replied: "All doing well (!) Tad confidently expects you tonight. When will you come? A Lincoln."

It is worth noting that the Lincoln National Life Foundation has given in "Lincoln Lore" a master list of all Lincoln's letters.

—O—

## CIRCUSIANA

(Continued from page 15)

Charles Bernard; "Ins and Outs of the Circus," John H. Glenroy; "Circus Memoirs," George Middleton; and "Show Life in America," William Lambert.

Readers should realize that this list does not include all of the fine books that have been written on circus subjects. These recommendations merely give the novice some basis on which to begin the building of a worthy collection of circus books. Some of these have long been out of print. Some were limited editions of from 100 to 300 copies, privately distributed. But others are current volumes that may be bought in most any book store.

One thing is certain. The circus fan who reads a dozen or so of the books listed in this article, will have a better understanding of the circus and its folk, and fans are indeed indebted to these authors for the many hours of fine entertainment they have contributed.

—O—

## MUSIC

(Continued from page 21)

and as a duet with Billy Murray. His ballad duets with Harry Macdonough, such as "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down," were widely popular, and their record of "Red Wing," coupled with the Murray-Haydn Quartet rendition of another Indian song, "Rainbow," must have been one of the biggest sellers ever made.

Many of the Dudley records appeared on Victor under the name of Frank Kernell. They were considered of a less dignified nature than the regular Dudley repertoire, but, recalling such titles as "Not By a Dam Site," the baritone professed himself unable to believe that customers

considered Dudley to be a particularly dignified personage, either!

Just as Macdonough had trouble with a comedian who called himself Harry Macdonough, so Dudley's mail frequently became confused with that of a Negro named S. H. Dudley, who had a minstrel show and also operated a chain of theaters. The confusion was frequently exasperating, but there seemed nothing in particular that could be done about it. Another coincidence is that the singer's middle name was Holland and as has already been mentioned, that was his wife's maiden name. And I might mention that the mail carrier who used to bring me Mr. Rous' letters, mailed in distant Monte Carlo, was named Samuel H. Rouse!

Considering the manner in which he made records for 18 years or so; wrote the Victor monthly supplements from 1902 or 1903 through 1916; originated the huge Victor catalog, which was generally held to be the best ever issued by any musical firm; wrote the Victor Book of the Opera and also labored so efficiently as assistant recording director for 17 years—considering all this, there can be little doubt that few men have done as much as S. H. Dudley did to make recorded music one of the most popular forms of home entertainment ever devised. He was truly a benefactor to his generation, and to the generations to come.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

*William F. Hooley*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

I REMEMBER with especial vividness two opinions expressed by Sam Rous ("S. H. Dudley"), Haydn Quartet baritone and Victor catalog editor, during our formerly extensive correspondence. "Billy Murray," Mr. Rous said, "is, and always has been, the king of comic song singers" and "Bill Hooley was the king of quartet bassos."

Since the three other members of the Haydn Quartet—Bieling, Dudley and Macdonough—have already been written about in this department, it seems only fair that Hooley should be next in line, although I have few details of his life as compared with those I have given of his associates.

Mr. Hooley probably was in his 60's when he died shortly after filling his last recording engagement at the Victor studios on August 1, 1918. Albert Campbell, perhaps with a pardonable touch of exaggeration, once said to me that "Bill Hooley was an old man when I first started making records back in the mid-Nineties." Probably to a stripling, hardly more than old enough to vote, the already well established bass did appear "old," even though he was just entering middle-age. However, photographs of the Haydn Quartet, taken before 1900, do not give the impression that Mr. Hooley was as young as his associates, and it is interesting to scan the photographs of the American Quartet, which appeared in Victor catalogs from 1912 to 1919. Billy Murray looks like a college boy; John Bieling and Steve Porter appear to be in their thirties or early forties, but "Bill" Hooley is bespectacled, rather cadaverous of feature and apparently in late middle age.

As previous articles have shown, Hooley was one of the original members of the Haydn (Edison) Quartet. This ensemble recorded first for Edison, in 1895 or 1896, then made disc records for Emile Berliner, and afterward became one of the most popular features the Victor catalog ever boasted. Some Zon-o-phone records also were made by the group, but it does not appear ever to have sung for Columbia, nor, as far as I know, did Hooley do any solo work for the latter company. He was president of the short-lived American Phonograph Company, already mentioned in these pages, by which the Haydn Quartet members established a recording business of their own.

An 1899 record catalog issued by

Babson Brothers, of Chicago, listed a few cylinders by "the Original Lyric Trio," consisting of two now forgotten singers, John Havens, tenor, and Estelle L. Mann, soprano (who must have been one of the very first women to make records), in addition to Hooley. Victor issued a few Lyric Trio records in 1901 and 1902, but Harry Macdonough was the tenor, and the soprano probably was Elizabeth Spencer, whose later recording career was confined almost entirely to work for Edison.

Hooley's right to the honorary title of "King of the Quartet Bassos" rests on more substantial grounds than is generally realized. He was not only the "foundation" for the Haydn and American Quartets (and, by the way, Harry Macdonough remarked to me that "as a foundation for a quartet I have never known Bill Hooley's equal"), but he also became the bass of the Lyric Mixed Quartet, following the death of its original basso, Frank Stanley, organizer and leader of the Peerless Quartet. He was likewise the bass of the Orpheus Quartet (Macdonough, Murphy, Werrenrath and Hooley) and the Heidelberg Quintet, and was also a mainstay of the Victor Male and Mixed Choruses, the Victor Male Quartet, the Trinity Choir, the Victor Light Opera Company, and perhaps one or two other ensembles. In other words, whenever Victor wanted a competent bass to take part in all types of concerted work, Bill Hooley almost automatically got the call.

He was good as a soloist, too. Many collectors, such as Charlie Hodgdon, of Salisbury, Mass., who has a strong admiration for Hooley, treasure his records of "The Rolling Stone" and "When the Rainbow Shines Bright at Morn," sung with the help of a male chorus. I have always had a fondness for his eight-inch record of "Let Erin Remember the Days of Old." He also sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "The Larboard Watch" and other numbers of the standard bass repertoire. Always his voice was deep, mellow and beautifully controlled.

I have never seen a full-length photograph of Bill Hooley, but his pictures unmistakably give the impression he was a small man with a big voice. Of his antecedents I know little or nothing, except that the old friends who survive him jokingly refer to him as "a flannel-mouthed

Mick," meaning he was unmistakably Irish.

Billy Murray likes to tell of the time when the Empire Vaudeville Company, an organization of Edison artists specializing in recording comic skits, was making a record in which a fire was supposedly being extinguished. They tried the thing over and over, for an entire working day, with something going wrong every time. Finally, the skit was perfected to the point where it seemed an acceptable "take" might be made.

Everything went well until the record was nearly done. Hooley, as one of the imaginary firemen, had been assigned the line, "throw on more water!" But what he said, in a stentorian bellow, was "throw on more smoke!" The session broke up in hysterics, and that record wasn't made that day.

On another occasion, Billy, of unmistakable Irish descent, engaged in an argument with Alma Gluck and her husband, Efrem Zimbalist, both Jewish, as to the date on which a Jewish holiday would fall. Everybody who was called upon to settle the dispute gave a different date, and even the two distinguished Red Seal artists finally admitted they weren't sure.

Then somebody said, "Get Bill Hooley! He'll be able to tell you."

Zimbalist incredulously asked, "What does an Irishman like Hooley know about a Hebrew holiday?" but the answer was, "he knows everything about 'em!" and so it proved. Hooley was called out of another room and unhesitatingly gave a date which turned out to be correct.

The explanation was that, in addition to his recording work, he was also a highly paid church soloist. Part of his time was devoted to singing for a large Catholic church; another part to being bass soloist at a leading New York Jewish synagogue. Though Irish through and through, he knew his Jewish religious festivals!

Bill Hooley's solo work was not sufficient in quantity to give him a place among the very most popular singers of pioneer phonograph days, but there was nothing the matter with its quality. No matter whether he sang comic songs, ragtime, hymns, ballads or excerpts from opera, whatever he did was done as it should be. Throughout the years to come he will remain, for many loyal admirers, what Sam Rous termed him, "the King of Quartet Bassos."

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

ONE OF THE most distinctive names ever used by a recording artist, undoubtedly was that of the genial comedian who, in the early 1900's, was known to his friends and record buyers generally as "Ragtime Bob" Roberts.

Probably most of his admirers thought the name was assumed, but it was actually his own. He was given the name of Robert Roberts when he was born in Cincinnati in 1879.

On January 22, 1930, when he had been out of the public eye for many years, the Cincinnati Enquirer published a photo and death notice of Roberts. Since it gives a bird's-eye view of his career, I shall quote it,

### RECORDS

**WANTED:** Don't sacrifice your old classical and operatic phonograph records for junk! Highest prices paid for old cylinders or discs. Send list to—G. H. Smith, 843 Middle St., Portsmouth, N. H. ap12698

**WANTED:** Victor supplements, 1904 through 1915. Columbia supplements, August, September, 1923. Victor catalogues before 1912.—Robert B. Julian, 5203 California Street, Omaha, Nebraska. au6363

**FINE RECORDS:** Old and unusual records for sale or trade. Discs and cylinders bought. What do you want?—Deiano, 203 E. 11th St., Rolla, Mo. au6006

**RECORDS. SHEET MUSIC, Lists 10c.**—Fore's Music Exchange (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. s12234

**WANTED CLASSICAL RECORDS:** Leonid Sobinoff, Sergei Lemeshoff, Boninsega, Aino Ackte, Maria Labia, Rosina Storcio, Eva Turner, Aristodemo Giorgini. —Stephen Mullen, 50 Western Ave., Saugus, Mass. my2002

**WANTED: IRCC and HRS Records** Send list, showing condition and prices, to E. P. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco, 15, California. n12885

**HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER** sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. —E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12283

**OPERATIC RECORDS**—Not an auction. Send for list.—H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colo. ap1201

**RECORDS** of all types bought. I pay express. Classics preferred.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City, New Jersey. ja12235

**FALKENER BROS.** Record Shop, Antiques, 383 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. s6042

**FOR SALE:** Edison Disc Records. Large stock unused, \$1.25 each postpaid in continental U. S. Edison cylinder non-operatic unused. Send requests to Otto K. Paulus, First National Bldg., Salem, Oregon. ap1081

**RARE-FIRST.** Music Box recording; 10" disc, 7½ minutes of music played by, the Packard musical alarm watch; a Breguet et Fils musical watch; a musical letter-seal; a Piquet et Meylan musical watch; and a \$5,000 music box (medley of songs). \$5.00 postpaid well-packed and insured.—Roy Mosoriak, 624 Shroyer Road, Dayton, 9, Ohio. ap1813

then tell more of his phonograph activities:

"Death came suddenly to Robert Roberts, veteran vaudeville performer, at his home, 3671 Vine street, yesterday morning. Roberts was a member of a team which had impersonated 'Adolph and Otto' over WCKY. He went to the radio station Monday night as usual, but complained of pains in his chest, and was unable to give his performance.

"Roberts hurried to his home and took medicine, but a few minutes later his wife heard him fall over a chair. She called her daughter, Mrs. Horace Herring, 3693 Vine street, but Roberts died shortly after her arrival.

"For more than 25 years Roberts had been engaged in the show business. He made many phonograph records of Negro melodies and comic selections. Roberts was a son of the late Nicholas Roberts, veteran showman, who was proprietor of the Nick Roberts' Pantomime Company, and once had an interest in the old Standard Theater at Canal and Vine streets. Nick Roberts won national fame with his character 'Humpty Dumpty.' He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Katherine Roberts, and his daughter, Mrs.

Herring, who was married only a month ago.

"Born in Cincinnati 51 years ago, Roberts spent most of his life in this neighborhood, although he traveled extensively with shows. Physicians said his death was due to a heart attack." \* \* \*

Although the Enquirer article touches only lightly on Roberts' recording experiences, it was as a singing comedian that he won his real fame. His voice was an excellent baritone, similar in quality to, but somewhat higher than, Arthur Collins', and he sang the same sort of music in which Collins excelled. One of his first big hits was "Ain't Dat a Shame?" made for Columbia in 1902. He began making Victor records about that time (Henry Hamblen will agree that one of his best is the catchy and amusing "Woodchuck Song" made in 1904), but his name does not appear in the 1903 Edison catalog.

Whenever the name of Bob Roberts is mentioned, I think of a bald-headed man walking rapidly. The reason must be that the comedian's photos, taken in his early 20's, show him to be prematurely bald, and the fact that his greatest record hit, made in 1906, was "He Walked Right In, Turned Around and Walked Right Out Again." The pace of this rapid-fire comic gem is so swift that it somehow gives the impression of the singer walking swiftly back and forth across the stage.

"Ragtime Bob" had a great run of

### MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED TO BUY: SYMPHONION** music box and disc-type records.—Mosoriak, 624 Shroyer Road, Dayton, 9, Ohio. ap125

**BAUER CATALOG OF HISTORICAL** Records. Complete 35mm. Microfilm copy (296 Pages) \$3.00.—A. L. Kalman, 4817 N. Fairfield, Chicago. ap1411

**FOR SALE:** Sheet music, fine private collection. For particulars write—C. de Windt, 140 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. ap6023

**WANTED:** Music Boxes, every description. Meerscham Pipes, Steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. je6654

**OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS,** classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged. —American Record Collectors' Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. ja12414

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc-type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

**WANTED:** Old sheet music, before 1900. Must be in fine condition. State title and authors. Also bound volumes old theatrical magazines. —S. Coslow, 9171 Hazen Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif. ap1611

**WANTED:** Belliniana: Biographies, pictures, etc. of Vincenzo Bellini. Decca's complete recording of Bellini's opera Norma. —Marguerite Pickett, 1315 So. First, Louisville, Ky. ap188

**FOR SALE:** 125 15½ in. Regina Music Box discs in good condition, mostly classicals. Strauss, Mendelssohn, etc. \$1.25 each. —Old Schoolhouse Antique Shop, Pavilion, New York. ap1441

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silver labels.

Zonophones by Eugenia Mantelli, especially the Carmen arias on 40075 / Columbia 40361 - La Juvla Cavatino, sung by Hesch.

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Also want Edison Grand Opera Cylinders.

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hits around the 1905-1908 period. Many collectors will tell you his "I'd Rather Be on the Outside Lookin' In Than on the Inside Lookin' Out" is a scream. So is "Nothin' From Nothin' Leaves You," in which the composer, Ted Snyder, appears to have reduced the kindly process of being insulting to its lowest common denominator. It is a Negro song in which the dusky lady tells her no-'count husband exactly where he gets off.

Roberts seldom did duet work, but did make a few records with Billy Murray, whom he had warned, when Billy first came East, not to try to get engagements at Columbia, "because I do all the comedy around there." He and Al Campbell also made several humorous Irish skits concerning Patrolman Clancy. (That may have been the cause of Al's getting the nickname of "Clancy," by which Billy still addresses him.) Not all his work was of the comic song variety, for he sang a few plantation-type numbers, such as "Old Black Joe."

From 1908 to 1912 Roberts did little or no recording. I don't know just what he was occupied with in those days, but in 1912 he returned to the studios and came through with one of the biggest hits of his career, "Ragtime Cowboy Joe." His last Victor record, and one of his most amusing, was "Fables," in which he declares that "some folks call 'em fables, but they ain't nothin' but dog-gone lies!"

After that, Roberts disappears completely from the recording scene, as far as Victor, Columbia and Edison are concerned. Osborne H. Parker, of San Francisco, wrote to me a few years ago that he had found a Rex hill-and-dale record, apparently made in 1914, containing a duet by Roberts and Elida Morris—a combination I have never heard of on any other brand. It may be that the comedian was persuaded to sign up exclusively with this short-lived company, and found no niche for himself with the other companies when it ceased to operate.

However that may be, he dropped from sight so completely that, when I wrote to the late Frank Dorian, a Columbia company official, and asked him if he knew of Bob Roberts' whereabouts, he replied that "not even Bob's most intimate friends know what has become of him." Later he told me that Henry Burr had run into Roberts in St. Louis. That was a few months before the comedian, who had been living in his home in Cincinnati, died.

No collector who likes good comedy will make a mistake in going for the records of Bob Roberts, who was one of the great favorites from 30 to 40 years ago. He had few peers in putting over a ragtime or Negro song,

and there is invariably a brisk, refreshing quality about his manner of singing. For years he has been one of my prime favorites, and I only wish his recording career, like his life, had not been so comparatively short.

—O—

## CIRCUSIANA

(Continued from page 20)

ing much the same effect as electrically played bells of modern times. Circus fans generally, marveled at the nimble fingers and musicianship of these artists.

Hand bells have been employed in other capacities in the circus program. In Oriental spectacles, where the entire performing personnel of the circus dons costumes and parades around the hippodrome track, groups of bellringers at intervals in the line

of march contribute to the musical sounds which fill the arena.

Bells are popular props in trained animal acts. Elephants have been trained to ring big dinner bells curled in their trunks as a part of such routines as call for the big pachyderms to simulate eating a meal. Monkeys are also often taught to ring bells as a part of their arctic antics.

Bells attached to leather straps are often used in the circus. Sometimes they are seen on the ankles of elephants. They are often made a part of the handsome leather rigging for liberty horses. They are worn around the neck by dogs and other small animals. And they are

(Continued on page 30)

# The Curious History of Music Boxes

ETUDE MAGAZINE SAYS:

"Your reviewer doesn't know enough about music boxes to determine what the musicological and antiquarian significance of Roy Mosoriak's 'The Curious History of Music Boxes' really is. Moreover, he does not care, because the author obviously has gone to very great lengths to secure accurate and minute details that smell of scholarly research. What Mr. Mosoriak has done, in addition, is to bring together all sorts of facts about these mechanical instruments which have given lively pleasure to people who enjoy their tinkling sounds.

"The writer recollects an ornate Paillard box which was once the pride and joy of his great grandfather. It had to be wound with great care, but once set loose, its shiny brass cylinder could play melodies from 'Norma,' 'The Daughter of the Regiment,' 'I Puritani,' and other favorite operatic tunes. The possession of a fine music box was considered as much a mark of culture and social standing as the wax flowers under the glass dome or the singular set of mirrors which extended from a front window. This contrivance is known as a thorscope or 'busy body,' and with its aid one might keep track of the doings of the neighbors.

"The list of makers of music boxes is a long one. Most of them were watch or clock makers at the start. The writer was amazed to note the number of music box makers in England, the United States, Germany, Austria, and Italy, as he had thought that this was an industry confined to

Switzerland and France, where indeed most of the fine boxes were made.

"Many of the smaller music boxes were concealed in watches, clocks, opera glasses, brooches, jewel boxes, fans, umbrella handles, smelling salts, bottles, walking sticks, seals, watch keys, rings, pistols, snuff boxes, chairs, and various domestic utensils.

"Automatic music has been traced to very ancient Grecian sources. The modern music box possibly began with the English invention (1676) of a device for striking the time in a clock. The musical mechanism of a steel comb with a series of steel reeds is attributed to Antide Janvier in 1776. The place of the invention was in the Vallee de Joux, Switzerland. From this start came a long series of the most complex mechanisms, playing music and operating puppets. One watch, for instance, had, on the case, a dog which barked in faint grunts the hours of day and night.

"Libraries and collectors will find this book a 'must item.' The work is finely illustrated."

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Performers Who "Doubled Up"

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

ONE OF THE most fascinating features of collecting old "popular" records is tracking down the activities of artists—mostly singers—who made discs or cylinders under more than one name. I have had so many requests for information from collectors curious to learn more about performers whose records were issued under the "doubling up" method that I have decided to interrupt temporarily the continuity of the biographical sketches I have been writing and give an alphabetically arranged list of the "alias artists."

To the best of my knowledge, no other such list has ever before been compiled and published. I do not, however, maintain that my list is complete or 100 per cent accurate. In a few cases where I believe identification to be probable but not altogether certain I have placed (?) after the names. I have made no effort to include dance orchestras, for their activities are rather outside my range of interest, but a few Red Seal singers, who made "popular" records under assumed names have been included. I have also listed a handful of English artists whose records were popular in this country.

I shall be glad to learn of any "aliases" not listed here. Meanwhile, the late Billy Jones, who recorded for all companies impartially, appears assured of recognition as the champion user of assumed names. I should explain that, to conserve space, I have listed each performer only under the name by which he or she is best known, regardless of whether that is the individual's legal name and that, as a rule, I have not specified the record brands on which the assumed names were used. Now for the list:

ALEXANDER, GEORGE. This long-dead baritone, a native of Baltimore, probably never recorded under any other name, but his real name was Clifford Wiley.

AMERICAN QUARTET — Premier Quartet; Premier-American Quartet; Murray Quartet.

ASH, SAM—Will C. Robbins (?)

AUSTIN, GENE—Charles Keene.

BAKER, ELSIE—Edna Brown.

BALLARD, GEORGE WILTON—George Wilton.

BERNARD, AL—John Bennett; Jack Clare; "Skeeter" Simms; "Uncle Joe." Bernard and J. Russell Robinson were "the Dixie Stars" and he, Frank Kampain and Sam H. Sept were "the Record Boys."

BLUFF, HARRY—Billy Whitlock. (Bluff made comic sketches and bell and xylophone solos for English companies under both names.)

BURR, HENRY—Harry H. McClaskey (his real name); Irving Gillette; Alfred Alexander; Harry Barr; Shamus McClaskey. Mr. Burr told Angus Joss, of Joliet, Ill., that he made Pathé records under the name of Robert Bruce, but the

only Bruce records I have heard were obviously by Lewis James.

CAMPBELL, ALBERT—Frank Howard. Campbell and Burr duets, made from American record company matrices, appeared in the Scala record catalog (England) as by "Bellwood and Burr."

COLUMBIA STELLAR QUARTET—Broadway Quartet.

CHALMERS, THOMAS—Lawrence E. Gilbert. (?)

DADMUN, ROYAL—Ralph Crane.

DALHART, VERNON—Mack Allen; Jeff Calhoun; Jimmy Cannon; Al Craver; Joseph Elliott; David Harris; Harry Harris; Fred King; Tobe Little; Bob White; Robert White.

DAWSON, PETER—Hector Grant.

DE GOGORZA, EMILIO—Carlos Francisco; E. Francisco; Ed Franklin; Herbert Goddard.

DEIRO, PIETRO—"Pietro."

DE KYZER, MARIE—Marie Kaiser (her real name).

DE LEATH, VAUGHN—Gloria Geer; Angelina De Marco.

DUDLEY, S. H. (Real name, Samuel Holland Rous)—Frank Kernell.

FIELDS, ARTHUR—Donald Baker; Arthur Baldwin; Andy Britt; Harry Crane; Walter H. Dale; George French; Arthur Mack; "Mr. X." A few Grey Gull records by Fields were listed as by "Bob Thomas," but this name was usually reserved for Ernest Hare. Fields also made many Grey Gulls as "Vel Veteran," but this name also was sometimes used for other singers.

FREER, MARCIA—Margaret A. Freer.

HALL, ARTHUR—Adolph J. Hahl.

HANSHAW, ANNETTE—Gay Ellis.

HARE, ERNEST—Wallace Daniels; David Harris; Henry Jones; Robert Judson; Frank Mann; "Radio Joe"; Ernie Spencer; Bob Thomas; Allen Turner (not Alan Turner, the English baritone!). Billy Jones and Ernest Hare of course made hundreds of records as "the Happiness Boys" and a few under such names as "the Romeo Boys."

HARRIS, DAVID—This was a "blanket name" used by National Music Lovers for various artists. I have come across Harris records by Vernon Dalhart, Ernest Hare and Billy Jones, and the name probably was used for still other artists.

HARRISON, CHARLES—Hugh Donovan; Billy Burton; Charles Hilton.

HART, CHARLES—Charles Cinway; Charles Warren.

HEIDELBERG QUINTETTE—This was the American Quartet plus Will Oakland.

HEMUS, PERCY—Charles Gordon.

HINDERMEYER, HARVEY—Harvey Wilson.

HUNTING, RUSSELL—Michael Casey.

JAMES, LEWIS—Robert Lewis; Robert Bruce.

JOCKERS BROTHERS (Al and Monroe)—Josephs Brothers.

JONES BILLY—Harry Blake; Billy De Rex; Eugene Harold; David Harris; Reese Jones; Willy Jones; John Kelly; Dennis O'Malley; William Reese; Victor Roberts; Bertram Smith; Bob Thompson; Joe White (this conflicts with the name of Joe White, the "Silver-Masked Tenor"); Billy West; William West; Carlton Williams; Frank Williams. Jones and Hare made Phantasia records (issued by the Lyraphone company of Newark, N. J.) as "Dooley and Shea" and (in Yiddish) mail-order company records as "Reed and Griffin." One Cameo record by them gave label credit to a mythical "Ruby Norton."

KAUFMAN, IRVING—George Beaver; George Bronson; Billy Clarke; Charles Dickson; Henry Irving; Happy Jim Parsons; Harry Smith. Kaufman and his brother, Jack, made a few duet records as "Dooley and Shea" and (in Yiddish) as Gus and Jay Goldstein. With Arthur Fields, they were "The Three Kauffields" on Emerson records.

KAUFMAN, JACK—Jack Dalton; Happy Martin; Jack Shea.

KLINE, OLIVE—Alice Green.

MARSH, LUCY ISABELLE—Anna Howard.

MARVIN, FRANKIE—Frankie Wallace.

# The Curious History of Music Boxes

By Mosorik & Heckert

The story of automatic musical instruments, from their earliest conception down through the years to the invention of the phonograph, is authentically traced in this unusual book, that contains the description and interesting historical background of music boxes of all types, and illustrates many of the rarest examples. Some of these took strange shapes, such as the butterfly music box, or the musical pistol, and many others, and are pictured for the first time in this limited edition, which also includes a section on

## THE CARE AND REPAIR OF MUSIC BOXES

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242 PAGES—133 ILLUSTRATIONS

\$5 POSTPAID—INSURED

"... Obviously I was thrilled when you informed me, an ardent record collector with more than 16,000 discs in my recorded library, that you had made a phonograph record of musical watches and the 'Ruggles' music box. Your book on 'Curious History of Music Boxes,' now in my library, is certainly the outstanding contribution to reproduced sound, and represents a high-light in research, and is a marvel of efficiency and completeness, — invaluable to all sound-reproducing enthusiasts." — Geo. C. A. Hantelman, Secretary-manager, The Cleveland Engineering Society.

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MARVIN, JOHNNY—"Honey Duke and His Uke."  
 MEADOR, GEORGE—Grant Stephens.  
 MEYER, JOHN H. — John Wilbur.  
 MIDDLETON, ARTHUR—Edw. Allen.  
 MILLER, BOB—Bob Ferguson.  
 MILLER, REED—James Reed.  
 MOELLER, HENRY—(in duets with John Meyer) Henry Fairbank.  
 MORGAN, CORINNE—Grace Nelson.  
 MUNN, FRANK—Paul Oliver.  
 MURPHY, LAMBERT—Raymond Dixon.  
 MURRAY, BILLY—William Murray; Cy Pitkin (on one Edison record); Dan Hughes. Murray and Walter Scanlan made duets as "Saunders and White" on some electrically recorded "off-brands."  
 O'CONNELL, M. J.—Billy Watkins (?)  
 O'MORE, COLIN—Arthur Burns.  
 PEERLESS QUARTET — Columbia Quartet; Invincible Four; Prince's Male Quartet (English Columbia).  
 PIKE, ERNEST—Herbert Payne.  
 PORTER, STEVE—S. C. Porter.  
 PRINCE, CHARLES A.—The veteran musical director for Columbia made bell and celesta solos under the name of Charles Adams.  
 RADIO ACES—Gerald Macy and Ed Smalle.  
 RADIO FRANKS—Frank Bessinger and Frank Wright.  
 REA, VIRGINIA—Olive Palmer.  
 RICE, GLADYS—Rachel Grant; Bettina Bergere.  
 ROBISON, CARSON — Joe Billings; Charley Wells.  
 RYAN, JOHN—Jack Rhan.  
 SARTO, ANDREA—Edgar Stoddard.  
 SHANNON FOUR—Shannon Quartet; the Revellers; the Merry Makers; the Singing Sophomores; Lyric Male Quartet.  
 SPENCER, LEN—Garry Allen (on a few very old cylinders).  
 STANLEY, FRANK C.—H. C. Parker (English Columbia).  
 STEVENSON, ELISE—Miss Walton (?)  
 STEWART, CAL—"Uncle Josh"  
 STUART, HERBERT—I have been told

Stuart was Albert Wiederhold, but believe this baritone was probably Frank Croxton.  
 TERRELL, LOUISE—Louise Ferrell.  
 VAN BRUNT, WALTER—Walter Scanlan; Herbert Scott (on American-recorded discs issued by English Columbia).  
 WADSWORTH, F. WHEELER—Fred W. Wadsworth.  
 WELLS, JOHN BARNES—De Los Becker; William Barnes.  
 WERRENATH, REINALD—Edward Hamilton. (Somebody else using the name of Edward Hamilton made Emerson and Puritan records. Werrenath used it only when singing for Victor, to which company he was under exclusive contract nearly all his recording career.)  
 WHEELER, FREDERICK J. (his real name)—James F. Harrison.  
 WHITE, JOE—Joseph M. White; J. Malachy White; the Silver-Masked Tenor.  
 WILLIAMS, EVAN — Henry Evans; William T. Evans.  
 YOUNG, JOHN (his real name)—Harry Anthony.  
 So ends a list to which no doubt innumerable additions could be made. For instance, John Norton, Sr., of the Woody-may Record Company, tells me he has a Federal cylinder unmistakably sung by Arthur Collins, but listed as by "Hawley." As I have previously said, I'll be glad to receive additions which may be printed later. Meanwhile, I hope the present list will prove reasonably accurate and valuable for reference.

AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC. List 10c.  
 —Fore's (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. s12234

"STRADIUS" VIOLIN. Made, 1734.  
 What's your offer?—James T. Dagley, LaFollette, Tenn. o6882

WANTED: Music Boxes, every description. Meerschmump Pipes, Steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. je6654

OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. ja12414

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc-type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

FOR SALE: 20 15½ in. Regina discs.—Virginia Henderson, 8509 Octavia, Jennings 21, Mo. my187

SWISS MUSIC BOX plays 30 Viennese tunes — 3 cylinders in perfect condition, walnut inlaid case. \$125.00. Address Mrs. O. B. James, Homewood Apts., Baltimore, Md. my1231

FOR SALE: Columbia graphophone, about 50 years old, 42 inch brass horn and stand, 26 - 5 inch cylinder records, four of them never used. A-1 running condition. Best offer takes lot. — Arthur C. Fritz, 818 Progress Ave., Hamilton, Ohio. my1003

WANTED TO BUY OR TRADE Operatic programs. Any date, any place. Also want to buy operatic records and photographs of singers.—H. A. Jansen, 105-14 217th Lane, Queens Village, 9, N. Y. o6273

WANTED: SWISS TYPE music boxes or other unusual mechanical music devices. Have for sale 40 Stella Disc records, 15½" in diameter.—Brown County Ridgecrafters, Nashville, Indiana. o6426

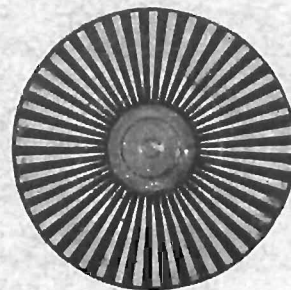
#### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

● WANTED TO BUY—4c per word for 1 month; 6 months for the price of four; 12 months for the price of seven.

● FOR SALE—6c per word for 1 month; 6 months for the price of four; 12 months for the price of seven.

● In figuring the cost count each word and initial as a word. No checking copies furnished on classified. Cash must accompany order. Please TYPE your copy if possible, or WRITE LEGIBLY.

#### Stroboscope



60-CYCLE STROBOSCOPE DISC for ascertaining the correct speed at which Edison Gold Moulded Standard, Amberol and Blue Amberol cylinders should revolve. DIRECTIONS FOR USE: Cut out the above disc and glue it on the end of the mandrel of your cylinder machine. (The mandrel is that part of the phonograph which rotates the cylinder.) Then place the machine under an electric light bulb operating on standard 60-cycle current in such a way that the light shines on the stroboscope disc. Play a cylinder in the usual way and adjust speed until the radial lines on the stroboscope appear stationary, at which point the record will be revolving at the correct speed of 160 r. p. m.—S. F.

## WANTED

COLUMBIA  
 GRAND OPERA RECORDS

By the Following Singers:

Marcella Sembrich  
 Edouard de Reszke  
 Schumann-Heink  
 Campanari  
 Suzanne Adams  
 Antonio Scotti  
 Charles Gilibert  
 Ten-inch, single-faced records  
 with red and gold or black and  
 silver labels.

Zonophones by Eugenia Mantelli, especially the Carmen arias on 40075 / Columbia 40361 - La Juvie Cavatine, sung by Hesch.

ALSO catalogs, supplements, pamphlets and old advertisements of records and phonographs.

Also want Edison Grand Opera Cylinders.

- FOR SALE -  
 RECORD CATALOGS  
 OF MANY COMPANIES  
 A LARGE ASSORTMENT  
 OF VICTOR SUPPLEMENTS  
 STEPHEN FASSETT  
 944 Monroe Lane  
 Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.

Persons offering material not specified above, or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

Please mention HOBBIES when  
 replying to advertisements

#### RECORDS

PHONOGRAPH RECORDS wanted. Top prices paid for vocal operatic and concert. Write for free list.—Douglas P. Ball, 505A Congress Bldg., Miami, Fla. o6863

WANTED: Victor supplements, 1904 through 1915. Columbia supplements, August-September, 1923. Victor catalogues before 1912.—Robert B. Julian, 5203 California Street, Omaha, Nebraska. au6863

FINE RECORDS: Old and unusual records for sale or trade. Discs and cylinders bought. What do you want?—De-lano, 203 E. 11th St., Rolla, Mo. au6006

WANTED: Language recordings. See ad in Mart. — H. Hogan, 533 Belmont, Chicago 14, Illinois. my148

WANTED CLASSICAL RECORDS: Leonid Sobinoff, Sergei Lemeschhoff, Bon-Insega, Aino Akte, Maria Labia, Rosina Storcio, Eva Turner, Aristodemio Giorgini. — Stephen Mullen, 50 Western Ave., Saugus, Mass. my2002

WANTED: IRCC and HRS Records Send list, showing condition and prices, to E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco, 15, California. n12836

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12283

RECORDS of all types bought. I pay express. Classics preferred.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City, New Jersey. ja12235

FALKENER BROS. Record Shop, Antiques, 383 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. s6042

#### MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: MUSIC BOX, 18 in. long, inlaid case, 11 in. cylinder, 102 teeth, none missing, \$22. Another with 8 tunes, 8 in. cylinder \$18. No others, act quickly — Mansfield, Box 132, Rockland, Mass. my1471



## A Record Tragedy of Not So Long Ago

About five years ago the well known Dutch collector, Leo Riemens, sent W. H. Seltsam a package of cylinders to be re-recorded onto discs and issued by IRCC. By far the rarest of the lot were two Pathe cylinders by Felia Litvinne and Jean Lassalle. As luck would have it, these were the only two that were broken in transit. It was ever thus.

—o—  
**Who Was**

### Enrico de Franceschi

Albert Wolf of New York has this baritone on Parlophone X1607, singing *Lo vedremo* from *Ernani* and *Sei vendicata* from *Dinorah*, and would like to know something about him.

### FIGNER DISCOVERIES

I HAVE recently learned of the existence of two records by the celebrated Russian tenor Nicolai N. Figner that are not listed in Robert Bauer's *Historical Records*. Oddly enough, the same aria is recorded on both discs, one being 10 inches in size and the other 12. They are red G&T's recorded in St. Petersburg about 1903 and, needless to say, they are great rarities. The aria is *Bianca al par di neve Alpina* from *The Huguenots*. The 10-inch version, number 22594, is the property of Geoffrey Lyon of New York; the 12-inch version, number 022000, was reported by R. J. Nathan of Brooklyn.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### BILLY GOLDEN

By ULYSSES ("Jim") Walsh

"**S**HOEMAKER, stick to your last" is an admonition that has the sanction of immemorial usage, and Billy Golden is one recording artist who guided himself in strict accordance with its tenets. He is the only popular performer I can think of off-hand who never deviated in the slightest from the type of work with which he was first identified. It is possible that this brilliant black-faced comedian made a record or so that was not done in Negro dialect so perfect many hearers refused to believe he could be a white man, but I cannot recall any such.

Billy Golden, like "Ragtime Bob" Roberts, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. I don't know the year of his birth, but deduce, from evidence to be presented later, that it was somewhere around 1856. When he was a small child his family moved to St. Louis, where he grew up and became a butcher boy at the Union market.

In 1874 Golden abandoned butchering for the black-face vaudeville act, with which he was ever afterwards identified. It seems logical to suppose he was at least 18 when he made the change, which would put his birth around the already mentioned year of 1856. However that may be, it seems odd to think that the man whose reproduced voice still has a familiar ring to millions of persons who have heard his records was in the show business 68 years ago.

After four years as a solo act, Golden formed a partnership with John Merritt, and they were known to variety fans by the team name of Merritt and Golden. Around this time, the stocky little comedian originated his famous "cane pat" as an accessory to buck-and-wing dancing. It was taken up by virtually every other song and dance comedian.

As the cylinder phonograph gradual-

## Attention! Edison Disc Collectors

An early and very rare Edison Diamond Disc is 82503, on which is recorded *Mi Chiamano Mimi* (*Bohème*) by an unidentified soprano. It seems to be a choice between Lucrezia Bori, Maria Labia and Carmen Melis. If any collector has succeeded in making a positive identification, I'd very much like to hear from him. Comparing the disc with Bori's Edison cylinder or Victor disc of the aria might prove helpful.

## More Wakefield Records

On page 16 of our March issue was listed Henrietta Wakefield's *Habanera* from *Carmen*, (on a 10-inch Oriole number 194), coupled with *Hinky Dinky Parley Voo*. The same coupling, reports R. J. Nathan of Brooklyn, is to be found on Olympic 19101. And J. W. C. Hesser, Iowa, writes of this singer's *Flower Song* from *Faust* on Olympic 19105 (same number on matrix). Just to thicken up the plot a bit more, John L. Norton, Sr., of Boston, informs me that Wakefield's *Carmen* aria (matrix 19102) also exists on a Nadsco Disc, coupled with *Home to our mountains* (*Trovatore*) sung by Louise Terrell and Charles Harrison. Mr. Norton feels that this was pressed from a Grey Gull master. This is all very confusing. Can anyone straighten us out?

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242 PAGES—133 ILLUSTRATIONS  
\$5 POSTPAID—INSURED

"... Thank you for your work on music boxes. The book is marvelous and a valued addition to my collection of books on clocks, watches and allied matters."—William B. Dall, Long Island, New York.

"I have a copy of the book. I am greatly interested in it and think it will be a lasting contribution to interested ones who follow. So many musical instruments have run their course in the past and there are very few guides for those who wish to revive them."—W. B. Parkinson, Parkinson System, Iowa.

"Just a note to let you know how much I enjoyed the book. A very fine work. Fond of restoring antique mechanical contrivances, I arrived at music boxes by way of an old Gem Roller Organ, then an Edison Talking Machine. It is music boxes from here on out. The section on Repairing aided me a great deal. Thanks again for a most fascinating book."—J. H. Baird, Tulsa 5, Okla.

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Chicago 16, Illinois

ly came into popularity it occurred to Golden that some of his comic sketches might be good recording material. The late Frank Dorian, who was associated with the Columbia company for some 40 years, said he believed Golden first made Columbia records around 1893, "and looked to be nearer 40 than 35." Mr. Dorian's opinion ties in very well with my guess about 1856.

If Billy Golden really was, and looked to be, about 40 when he first started recording, he must not have aged appreciably afterwards, for in 1919 Ray Cummings, an Edison supplement writer, said, "Golden tells me he has been in vaudeville for more years than you would think he had lived, to look at him."

The first "coon shouts," as they were called, sung by Billy, were an enormous success. As the Victor catalogs used to say, "no other Negro specialty records have ever approached the popularity of those by Billy Golden. They are so real the listener forgets all about Golden and hears only a jolly old darky with an infectious laugh." That statement is literally true. As perfect representations of "before de wah" darky types, it seems impossible that Golden's work could be excelled.

Five of the comedian's solo records are particularly outstanding. They all were sung hundreds of times by the "round" before master records came in, and were "Rabbit Hash," "Yaller Gal," "Bye Bye, My Honey,"

"Roll On de Ground" and, above all, "Turkey in the Straw." Nearly everybody has heard a Billy Golden record of the latter infectious masterpiece. He sang it for all the companies, and so many millions of copies were sold that it ranks as one of the four great phonograph humorous masterpieces of the pre-electric era. The others were Collins' "Preacher and the Bear; Murray's "Casey Jones," and Spencer's "Arkansaw Traveler."

Until around 1908 Billy did practically nothing but solo work, although he did record at least one Negro skit with George Graham, a patent medicine salesman who made records as a sideline, on a Berliner disc back in the '90's. But about the time double-faced records came in Golden associated himself with another, brilliant black-face comedian and his popularity rose to new heights.

His new partner was something of a man of mystery in one respect. His last name was Hughes, but the recording companies couldn't agree on his first one. Victor called him John Hughes; Columbia, William, and Edison, Joe. At any rate, "John William Joe" Hughes was born in Chicago and learned to be a house and sign painter and paper hanger before going with Haverly's Minstrels in 1882. Later he starred in a solo act on the Keith and Proctor vaudeville circuits.

Golden and Hughes were popular in vaudeville for many years, but it is by their records they are best remembered today. Who hasn't heard

"Clamy Green," "My Uncle's Farm," "Whistling Pete" "Bears' Oil" and the dozens of other hilariously—even uproariously—funny records they made as a team? Sales were enormous, and every once in a while Victor would print their photos in a monthly supplement to prove they actually were white men.

After eight years or so together, Mr. Hughes temporarily retired to follow his hobby of scientific farming at his home in Milford, Mass. Golden then worked for several years with two other accomplished comedians, Billy Heins (it would be interesting to know how many comedians have been named, or called themselves, Billy!) and Jim Marlowe.

Obviously, the man who made "Turkey in the Straw" world-famous was getting along in years. He must have been as much as 60 before the United States entered the World War, but

### MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES, any kind. —C. A. Ramsey, Marengo, Ohio. n6061

HISTORIC Hound-head Violin, Vienna maker, for sale. — Little White House, Walpole, New Hampshire. je166

GIVE US YOUR PRICE on your duplicate vocal, classical and operatic records. We buy collections. Send full details.—Clark Music Co., Syracuse 2, N. Y. je169

AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC. List 10c. —Fore's (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. s12234

"STRADIUS" VIOLIN. Made, 1734. What's your offer? —James T. Dagley, LaFollette, Tenn. o6882

WANTED: Music Boxes, every description. Meerscham Pipes, Steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. je6654

OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. ja12414

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc-type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

SIX HAND CARVED Violins, double violin case, alligator hide; three old violins, also antiques and music boxes. Write.—Mrs. Viola Marti, Box 34, Pieron, Illinois. n6346

WANTED TO BUY OR TRADE Operatic programs. Any date, any place. Also want to buy operatic records and photographs of singers.—H. A. Jansen, 105-14 217th Lane, Queens Village, 9, N. Y. o6273

WANTED: SWISS TYPE music boxes or other unusual mechanical music devices. Have for sale 40 Stella Disc records, 15 1/2" in diameter.—Brown County Ridgecrafters, Nashville, Indiana. o6426

EDISON CYLINDER playing phonograph. Perfect running condition. 50 cylinder 4 minute records. Spirituals, comics, popular. Postpaid anywhere, \$17.50 complete.—Robert Mabie, Camden, New York. je1441

### PIPE ORGAN

WANTED! Pipe organ recordings. Classical-popular; foreign-domestic. Especially Reginald Foot. Al Carney, Quentin MacLean, L. G. Pattman, Reginald Dixon, Dunstedter, Fred Feibel, etc. Highest prices paid. Send titles to M. H. Doner, J. R. Watkins Company, Winona, Minn. jex

## WANTED

COLUMBIA  
GRAND OPERA RECORDS

By the Following Singers:

Marcella Sembrich  
Edouard de Reszke  
Schumann-Heink  
Campanari  
Suzanne Adams  
Antonio Scotti  
Charles Gilibert

Ten-inch, single-faced records  
with red and gold or black and  
silver labels.

Zonophones by Eugenia Mantelli, especially the  
Carmon arias on 40075 / Columbia 40361 - La  
Juive Cavatine, sung by Hesch.

ALSO catalogs, supplements, pamphlets  
and old advertisements of  
records and phonographs.

Also want Edison Grand Opera Cylinders.

- FOR SALE -

RECORD CATALOGS  
OF MANY COMPANIES  
A LARGE ASSORTMENT  
OF VICTOR SUPPLEMENTS  
STEPHEN FASSETT

944 Monroe Lane  
Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.

Persons offering material not specified above, or  
seeking information, are requested to enclose a  
stamped envelope for reply.

### RECORDS

PHONOGRAPH RECORDS wanted. Top  
prices paid for vocal operatic and concert.  
Write for free list.—Douglas F. Ball,  
505A Congress Bldg., Miami, Fla. o6863

WANTED: Victor supplements, 1904  
through 1915. Columbia supplements, August,  
September, 1923. Victor catalogues before  
1912.—Robert B. Julian, 5203 California  
Street, Omaha, Nebraska. au6863

FINE RECORDS: Old and unusual records  
for sale or trade. Discs and cylinders  
bought. What do you want?—De-  
lano, 203 E. 11th St., Rolla, Mo. au6006

JAZZ COLLECTORS Attention: All  
types of jazz and popular records, for  
exchange or sell, also auctions; enclose  
dime for lists. Refunded on first order.  
—Ralph Damelio, Oyster Bay, New York. je1081

PHONOGRAPH RECORDS Bought.—E.  
Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City, 6,  
New Jersey. s4291

WANTED: IRCC and HRS Records  
Send list, showing condition and prices.  
to E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San  
Francisco, 15, California. n12385

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER sells duplicates  
of rare collection. Special low  
prices. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan  
Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12283

RECORDS of all types bought. I pay  
express. Classics preferred.—E. Hirsch-  
mann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City, New  
Jersey. ja12235

FALKENER BROS. Record Shop, Antiques,  
383 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. s6042

he kept right on stepping with pep. His laugh was as uproarious and his style as funny as ever. Some people thought he erred on the side of boisterousness, and I well remember that, as a small boy, I was playing "Yaller Gal" on the Victrola one day when I saw the Methodist preacher approaching. Suspecting he wouldn't approve my taste in music, I snatched the record off, and by the time he neared the house the recorded voices of Anthony and Harrison were wailing, "Looking This Way," a tried-and-true Gospel hymn.

Billy made a new version of "Turkey in the Straw," with the assistance of the Empire Vaudeville Company, for Edison as late as 1917. (He played a pullman porter.) He and his associates also made several records dealing humorously with the World War. In 1921 he made "A Scene on the Old Plantation" for Edison. It was largely his old "Rabbit Hash" skit, revised to mention prohibition. And in 1922 he and J. W. J. Hughes were back together and did a couple of skits for Columbia. My brother saw him in vaudeville with some more old-timers a year or two later, and reported his agility at buck-and-winged was marvelous to behold.

I have heard Golden is dead, but don't know the year of his passing. If by any chance he is still alive he is a very old man. He was certainly one of the greatest of recording comedians, and I have lately been consumed with desire to find a cylinder record of his about which Johnny Norton, Jr., of Roxbury, Mass., told me. It is one of his almost forgotten efforts, called "A Mixed Ale Party." Johnny says the brown wax cylinder is "the craziest record ever made. Golden must have had plenty of ale, or else forgot the words. He starts out in the middle of a line, then stops, starts again and forgets himself half way in the record, and from then on he makes the stuff up himself!"

—o—

## DOLLS

(Continued from page 21)

"The Mason and Taylor dolls were made only in one size, approximately 12 inches long. We made them once a year, for several consecutive years for the Christmas trade. We made some novelty dolls and a few negroes, and we also made the so-called "Witch and Wizard" doll which had an ingeniously contrived neck joint of metal gears which permitted the dolls to be 'beheaded' with a knife without the head coming off. A metal knife wrapped in paper accompanied each doll."

Mr. Taylor's reminiscences should serve to clear up much of the confusion that exists in the minds of collectors on the subject of the post-Ellis Springfield dolls. Most of this confusion has arisen because of the

number of patents for doll parts granted to Springfield men, Martin, Sanders, Mason and Taylor and Johnson, between the years 1879 and 1882. It was at first thought that each of these patents represented a different doll-making enterprise and a different type of doll.

Mr. Taylor says that he has no recollection of any dolls having been made in Springfield other than the Joel Ellis and the Mason and Taylor dolls. This is confirmed by the finding by Mrs. Enid Pierce, a close student of existing Springfield dolls, of two Mason and Taylor dolls in their original wrappings, each of which wears around its waist a black paper band on which is printed the dates of all of the various patents. All Mason and Taylor dolls still show traces of having had a similar band around their waists.

The "Martin doll" which is the rarest of all the Springfield dolls—only very, very few of them have come to light—is unquestionably the first product of the Mason and Taylor enterprise. It is identical with the other Mason and Taylor dolls in materials, proportions and workmanship and must have been made on the same machines—which Mr. Taylor tells us were made by his father, Luke Taylor. They differ chiefly in having the hemispherical joints patented by Frank D. Martin of Springfield, April 29, 1879. This patent says: "The upper part or top end of the arms fitting into the socket of the shoulder is held in position by means of an elastic or spiral spring passing transversely through the top of the trunk from shoulder to shoulder." A "pattern doll" 17½ inches tall owned in Springfield, Vt., has the steel spring but the specimen owned by this writer, which is entirely in original condition, is 12 inches tall and has the elastic. Mason and Taylor controlled this patent as is shown by the fact that its date appears with the others on the paper waist-bands.

The Martin dolls have the metal feet and hands similar to the Ellis dolls and like those of the Ellis doll, the feet are black. These dolls have immovable papier mache heads, 6½ inches in circumference which is a half-inch more than the later Johnson head used on the later Mason and Taylor dolls. Mr. Henry Taylor has said that they "may have used some papier mache and china heads in the beginning." None with china heads have so far come to light.

In the 1943 Supplement to Doll Collectors of America's AMERICAN MADE DOLLS AND FIGURINES, there is pictured a colored Springfield doll owned by Mrs. Winifred Harding of Woodstock, Vt., which is described as representing "a native of India" and as having been "made in 1874 by the H. H. Mason Co." In the light

of Mr. Taylor's first hand information, both maker and date of this doll now have to be revised. This is the doll shown on the left of our illustration.

There is no record to show that H. H. Mason ever had anything to do with the manufacture of dolls earlier than 1879, when, as a partner in the firm of Smith, Mason and Co., he brought the doll design to Luke Taylor with the question: "Can we make this doll?"

Mrs. Harding's doll has all the patented features of the Mason and Taylor doll—Sanders joint, Johnson head and the moveable neck joint patented by Mason and Taylor (probably invented by Luke Taylor.) On the black band around its waist is printed:

"Improved joint patented April 29, 1879."

This is the *Martin* patent date so the doll could not have been made any earlier and since it was the Sanders and not the Martin joint that was used on it, it must have been made later than that date. Moreover it was, clearly, made on the machines which had been made and installed by Luke Taylor. It would therefore seem to be one of the "novelty dolls" and one of the "negro dolls" which Mr. Taylor says were made by Mason and Taylor.

On the testimony of the sons of Springfield's two great doll makers (and two of the three sons, Hartley Ellis and Henry E. Taylor, actually worked on the dolls), it seems that all wooden dolls made at Springfield may be classified as either "Joel Ellis" or "Mason and Taylor." This certainly simplifies a complicated question and solves a heretofore dark mystery. The solution is a rather simple one too—going back to original sources while those who can speak with authority on the subject are still in our midst.

—o—

## The World of Dolldom

Mrs. C. C. Clodfelter, North Carolina doll hobbyist, presented a military doll wedding at her home recently. The principals were Roberta, doll favorite in the Clodfelter household and another favorite member of the doll group, a doll dressed in a military uniform, and designated as Private Joseph Cheek. Mrs. Clodfelter often displays her dolls for local benefits.

—o—

Rose O'Neill, artist-creator of the Kewpie doll, died at her home in Springfield, Mo., on April 6.

The Kewpie doll, which originated in 1909, brought its creator a fortune estimated at more than \$1,000,000.

In addition to the Kewpie doll, Miss O'Neill delighted a generation of both children and grown-ups with rhymed stories and sketches of the Kewpies.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

*John W. Myers*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH



*The late John W. Myers, baritone, most popular recording artist of 40 years ago, as he appeared in 1898.*

**F**ORTY YEARS or more ago, the most popular singer making phonograph records in America probably was John W. Myers, the baritone, whose name was almost invariably given on records, with his initials only, as J. W. Myers. Today it has been so long since he made records that many collectors, hearing his name, would say:

"Myers? Oh yes, he's that cracker-jack bass who took Frank Stanley's place in the Peerless Quartet, wasn't he?" Others might confuse him with the Reverend J. A. Myers, the colored baritone who led the Fisk Jubilee Singers for so many years.

But J. W. Myers wasn't a colored minister and he wasn't John H. Meyer who bassoed so many years for the Peerless and is now chief designer for the Fifth Avenue florist, Thorley's, in New York. He was a singer with a voice and a style of his own, whose popularity in the early recording days was extremely great and whose cylinders and discs are coming to be cherished by many collectors.

In view of my own lack of intimate knowledge concerning the life of Mr. Myers, who has been dead for many years, I shall quote from an article published in the January, 1905, issue of the Talking Machine News, of London. Headed, "An American Baritone Who Makes Records," and subtitled "A Few Facts About Mr. J. W. Myers," the article says:

"A great deal of interest has been

manifested in this country as to the personality of J. W. Myers, who has been introduced to tens of thousands through the talking machine. His voice is so resonant and rich in quality and his enunciation so distinct that his records are universally popular. Many persons who have listened to his records through the talking machine have felt the acquaintance grow and ripen as time went by and new selections sung by their favorite baritone were added to their collection, and yet they knew nothing of the man himself, whether young or old, tall or short, and were equally ignorant of his tastes, his history and his musical associations.

"It will come as a surprise to many to learn that J. W. Myers was born in Wales, of Welsh parents, and thus comes naturally by his heritage of song. He went to America at the age of 12 to earn his living, for from that time he was thrown on his own resources. Beginning in a humble capacity, he gradually worked his way up in various occupations, till he became a theatrical manager, a post he held for a number of years. In that position he made a wide circle of acquaintances among the profession. He always possessed a good voice and during his younger days was frequently called upon to contribute to the entertainment of his companions by singing in concerts and at private gatherings. While he was still a theatrical manager in New York he was engaged to sing for the phonograph companies, and his services were so much in demand that the various companies alternately gave him exclusive engagements to make records only for them.

"In 1895 he gave up his managerial position to go on the road with an opera company. He toured extensively over the United States, but tiring of the life after about a year, he gave it up and returned to New York, devoting himself exclusively to concert work and to singing for talkers. For the past two years he has given his services exclusively to the Columbia company for record making work and is still under contract to them.

"Mr. Myers has a fund of dry humor, and in his droll manner will get off the most laughable witticisms, without himself cracking a smile and with every appearance of being seriously in earnest. He is universally popular with the record makers and whenever he is booked to sing the experts are always pleased, because his

voice is such a good one for recording, and his long experience at the work has given him an intimate knowledge of all the wrinkles that must be observed when singing into the machines. He gives very little trouble, makes exceedingly few false starts or breaks during a song, and accomplishes a maximum of work in a minimum of time.

"He has a characteristic mannerism whenever he does make a mistake during the singing of any of his songs. Instead of blustering and making a great fuss about the error, he simply stops singing and quietly walks away from the horn, and it frequently happens that the operator behind the machine has no intimation of trouble for some considerable time, when he will perhaps be startled to see Mr. Myers standing beside him.

"Mr. Myers is about 40 years of age, of average height, medium build but stocky in figure. He is married and has quite a family living in the vicinity of New York City. He is perhaps the best paid of all the regular staff of singers and musicians regularly retained by the great phonograph companies, and makes a comfortable living from this part of his work, which requires only a portion of his time, leaving the rest free for his numerous other engagements."

In the same magazine, for February 15, 1906, a writer signing himself "Sirius," writing on "The Influence of the Talking Machine," shows that Myers' records, like those of other American singers, were widely popular in England, by saying:

"The newsboys of London and New York whistle the same tunes, whether they are 'Navajo,' 'My Irish Molly O,' 'Bedelia' or 'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree,' because the talker has made them known on both sides of the ocean. . . . If George Alexander or Henry Burr or J. W. Myers were to advertise a concert in the Albert Hall next month, nine-tenths of their audience would be talking machine users."

Mr. Myers' vogue continued until about the time double-faced records came out, some 35 years ago. He then dropped out of the recording picture for years, but made a brief comeback with Columbia in 1914 and 1915, and made one or two records for Pathe about the same time. His death occurred a few years later, but I have been unable to learn the date.

The article which I have quoted mentioned the baritone's habit of stopping when he made a mistake. On one occasion, however, he did not and the result became famous. While making a cylinder he sneezed stentorianly in the middle, but instead of "quietly walking away," he kept on singing and the record was issued, to the great glee of thousands of subsequent purchasers.

In making Columbia records—he



also sang at one time or another for all the pioneer American companies—Myers usually spoke his own preliminary announcements. He had a characteristic way of slightly emphasizing the name of the song, then allowing his voice to drop when he gave his name, almost as if he were overcome by a sudden accession of modesty. As a very small boy his record of "Where the Silvery Colorado Winds Its Way" was a great favorite of mine, and I remember getting up early on the morning that I went to school for the first time in my life, to have time to play that and a few

other favorite discs. I was also a great baseball fan, and pleased myself with imagining that J. W. was "Chief" Myers, the famous Indian Big League catcher.

As the photograph shows, Mr. Myers was short and stocky and, with his black mustache, looked something like a Tammany politician of the old school. His was a brilliant career, beginning in almost the earliest days of cylinder recording, and many collectors who still enjoy hearing his mellow voice wish it had been of considerably longer duration.

## Recordings of *Pipe Organ Music*

By M. H. DONER

**M**Y INTEREST in pipe organ recordings as a hobby includes both the concert or cathedral organ and the theater or cinema organ. No attempt was made to develop a library until 1942, a poor time to start such an undertaking! Apart from the standard Victor, Columbia and Musicraft albums of Schweitzer, Bonnet, Carl Weinrich, E. Power Biggs and Courboin and single discs, little else was available in the record shops. This fact initiated a diligent search through many thousands of used discs that had accumulated in record shops, second-hand stores and dealers in out-of-print records.

### RECORDS

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** wanted. Top prices paid for vocal operatic and concert. Write for free list.—Douglas P. Ball, 505A Congress Bldg., Miami, Fla. o6863

**WANTED:** Victor supplements, 1904 through 1915. Columbia supplements, August, September, 1923. Victor catalogues before 1912.—Robert B. Julian, 5203 California Street, Omaha, Nebraska. au6863

**FINE RECORDS:** Old and unusual records for sale or trade. Discs and cylinders bought. What do you want?—Deiano, 203 E. 11th St., Rolla, Mo. au6006

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City, 6, New Jersey. s4291

**WANTED:** IRCC and HRS Records. Send list, showing condition and prices, to E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco, 15, California. n12885

**HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER** sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12283

**RECORDS** of all types bought. I pay express. Classics preferred.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City, New Jersey. ja12235

**FALKNER BROS.** Record Shop, Antiques, 383 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. s6042

**FOR SALE:** Diamond disc console Edison phonograph and 65 thick Edison discs. Any reasonable offer accepted. Also, many prize red and purple seal Victors, Schuman-Heink, McCormack, etc. All letters answered.—Ann Lundy, 643 Edgewood, River Forest, Illinois. jly1822

The result of this search, conducted in the major cities throughout the United States, was indeed gratifying. It included the 74 Victor recordings of Jessie Crawford, 33 of Lew White and 13 by Eddie Dunstetter on the Brunswick label, and 14 by Milton Charles on Columbia. Besides, numerous other records on a wide variety of labels (Autograph, Banner, Broadway, Cameo, Diva, Harmony, Melotone, Conqueror, Domino, Edison, Gennett, Paramount, Romeo, Silver-tone, Regal, etc.) were found, bearing the names of such organists as Edmund Cromwell, Franklyn Ferris, Henri Keates, Jean de Payne, Lee Wilson, Richard Jordan, George Epstein, Marsch McCurdy, Howard Peterson, F. Feibel, Al Carney, others.

The Dunstetter series well recorded the delightful style of this one ace theater organist. Similarly, the long Crawford series prove why he was once called the "Poet of the Organ." While the very early records were acoustically made and further marred by the frequent use of accessory instruments as in the Lew White series, or a vocalist, nevertheless, they are interesting and serve to illustrate the varying styles of organ playing.

An investigation into the English-made recordings of cinema organists proved a veritable gold mine. Most of these were obtained from Canadian record dealers. The large series by Reginald Foort on Victor are gems, particularly the later numbers of the series that were recorded using the huge Moller organ. Other outstanding discs are those by Quentin MacLean on Columbia (who excels in such numbers as "Ballet Egyptien" by Luicini, selections by Ketelby, etc.), Reginald Dixon and Horace Finch on Rex, the incomparable Sidney Torch on Columbia and Decca and finally, H. Robinson Cleav-

er on Parlophone. All of these recordings have exceptionally high fidelity, presumably due to the non-absorbent walls of the studio. The organists themselves appear to have been given considerably more freedom in the performance of their numbers with the result that their recordings stand in sharp contrast to those of American production.

In the field of the classics, American concert organists have made excellent contributions to the recording of the music of the masters. The late recordings of Virgil Fox are noteworthy. But here again we must turn to England. Unfortunately, many of the fine recordings of such masters of the console as Marcel Dupre, Sir W. G. Alcock, G. D. Cunningham, R. Goss-Custard, and numerous others, are in the "cut-out" list and are very difficult to obtain. Their recordings reveal the organ at its best—those gigantic cathedral organs at Notre Dame, Lyons, France, etc.—and clearly prove the organ to be the "King of Instruments."

### MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED: MUSIC BOXES**, any kind.—C. A. Ramsey, Marengo, Ohio. n6061

**AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC.** List 10c.—Fore's (Dept. O), 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. s12234

**"STRAUDIOUS" VIOLIN.** Made, 1734. What's your offer?—James T. Dagley, LaFollette, Tenn. o6382

**OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS**, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. ja12414

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

**SIX HAND CARVED VIOLINS**, double violin case, alligator hide; three old violins, also antiques and music boxes. Write.—Mrs. Viola Marti, Box 34, Pieron, Illinois. n6346

**WANTED** to buy or trade operatic programs. Any date, any place. Also want to buy operatic records and photographs of singers.—H. A. Jansen, 105-14 217th Lane, Queens Village, 9, N. Y. o6273

**WANTED:** Swiss type music boxes or other unusual mechanical music devices. Have for sale 40 Stella Disc records, 15 1/2" in diameter.—Brown County Ridgecrafters, Nashville, Indiana. o6426

**FOR SALE:** Melodeon, small table type, original Jones and Burdett, prior to Estey. Three and one half octave. Needs tuning. Otherwise good condition. Write.—Helen Vaughan, Bethel, Conn. jly1471

**FOR SALE:** Over 100 music rolls for Angelus or Symphony. Ranging from William Tell to Under the Bamboo Tree. Fine condition. Rare lot. \$25. fob.—Gary Thompson, Box 46, Asheville, North Carolina. jly1c

**ALBUM 14.** 12 in. Victor red seal, Caruso, Tetrassini, etc. \$25. Cylinder Edison and 50 records \$12.50.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. jly1021

**MUSICAL** revolving cake plate. White enamel. Plays wedding march, 15 to 20 minutes. Will hold cake weighing up to 30 lbs. Perfect cond. \$22.50. Express extra.—Gertrude Robertson, 4615 N. E. Sandy Blvd., Portland, 13, Ore. jly1522



## Eugenia Mantelli

U. S. A. Zonophone, circa 1906

- 10":  
 11012 Carmen: Seguidilla ..... Bizet  
 11017 Ninon ..... Tosti  
 12568 Gioconda: Voce di donna (IRCC 5008) ..... Ponchielli  
 12572 Favorita: Ah! l'alto ardor (w. Parvis) ..... Donizetti  
 12573 Don Giovanni: La ci darem la mano (w. Parvis) .... Mozart  
 12574 Mignon: Duetto della Rondinella (w. Parvis) ..... Thomas  
 12575 Barbiere: Dunque io son (w. Parvis) ..... Rossini  
 12587 Lucrezia Borgia: Il segreto (Brindisi) ..... Donizetti  
 12613 Serenata ..... Braga  
 12614 La Cenerentola: Nacqui all' affano ..... Rossini  
 12615 La Cenerentola: Non piu mesta (IRCC 77) ..... Rossini  
 12616 Carmen: Chanson Boheme (40075-A) ..... Bizet  
 12617 Faust: La parlate d'amour (IRCC 5008) ..... Gounod  
 12618 Cavalleria Rusticana: Ave Maria (intermezzo) .... Mascagni  
 12620 Dopo ..... Tosti  
 12621 Good Bye ..... Tosti  
 12":  
 13272 Los Ojos Negros ..... Alvarez  
 13272 Me llaman la primorosa ..... Nieto y Caballero  
 Titles reported, numbers wanted:  
 Carmen: Habanera (40075-B) ..... Bizet  
 Samson et Dalila: Mon coeur: ..... Saint-Saens  
 Samson et Dalila: Printemps qui commence ..... Saint-Saens  
 Gli Ugonotti: Canzone paggio ..... Meyerbeer  
 Romeo et Juliet: Chanson Stephano ..... Gounod  
 Pur dicesti o bocca bocca bella ..... Lotti

The above list of recordings by the great contralto Eugenia Mantelli was compiled by W. R. Moran, California, with the assistance of more collectors than I have space to mention, for his forthcoming revision of Robert Bauer's famous catalog, *Histori-*

*cal Records*. If you can supply any of the missing numbers, please do so. The numbers at the left, of course, apply to the single-faced editions. More double-faced numbers, like those in parenthesis at the right, would be appreciated.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Miscellaneous Notes

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**O**CCASIONALLY, I shall supplement my biographical sketches of pioneer recording artists by publishing notes I have made about other record makers who are not likely to be included in the full-length biographical series for some time, if at all. These brief references will serve to answer some of the inquiries which I frequently receive.

**ARTISTS WHO "DOUBLED UP."** A number of additions to the list published in the May, 1944, issue, of recording artists who used "nom de disques" have been received, mostly from Joseph Portgang, 18-year-old New York City record collector, and Bill Moran, of California. Incidentally, the original article contained a misprint in the paragraph devoted to Bill Jones. The reference should have read: "Jones and Hare made Phantasic records (issued by the Lyrphone company of Newark, N. J.) as 'Lyons and Hellman,' and mail-order company records as 'Reed and Griffin.' The confusion was caused by a line about Irving and Jack Kaufman making Yiddish records being inserted in error under the Billy Jones heading.

To the May list should be added the information that Henry Burr made Emerson records as Robert Rice; Arthur Fields, in addition to names previously listed, was called Jim Andrews and Robert Wood on Harmony records. Arthur

Wynne and Charles Lewis on the Dandy brand, and Lee Knight, on Domino. Lewis James was Lou Haynes on Regal records; Jones and Hare appeared on Cameo as Gale and Fisher; Irving Kaufman as Frank Harris on Columbia records, "Buzzin' Bob" on the Banner brand and Marvin Young on Harmony, and Gladys Rice made Phantasic records as Victoria Marden. Bill Moran reminded me that Emilio de Gogorza also recorded for Victor as M. Fernand and Mons. Francisco, and that, although he made Zon-o-phone records as "Ed Franklin," not all Ed Franklin records are by de Gogorza! Apparently this was a stock name for Zono, just as "David Harris" was many years later for National Music Lovers and "Vel Veteran" for Grey Gull.

**ASH, SAM.** This sweet-voiced tenor, who made records for practically all American record companies except Victor, has been in Hollywood for several years, playing character roles in films, among them the latest Mae West and Laurel and Hardy productions.

**D'ALMAINE, CHARLES.** Fred Hager, who is still alive, appears to have been the first violinist to make solo records, back in the '90's. The next was Charles D'Almaine, who remained active 20 years or so and was at one time concert-master for the Victor and Edison orchestras. He was a chiropractor in his later years and lived in a house adjoining the Ocean Grove, N. J., post office. The Rev. Damian Smith, of St. Mary's Abbey, Newark, N. J., told me a year or so ago that D'Almaine had died about

three years before. Old Edison catalogs list the violinist as having been born in Hull, England, but the Rev. Mr. Smith said former Edison officials insisted he was a French-Canadian.

**FAVOR, MRS. EDWARD M.** wife of the first pioneer recording artist to be the subject of one of my biographical sketches (in the February, 1942, issue) died in Brooklyn, November 27, 1942, aged 86. Edith Sinclair Favor had been on the stage since 1861 and had appeared with Lillian Russell, besides being often seen in vaudeville with her husband, with whom she made at least one Edison cylinder record.

**HARRIS, MARION.** who was very popular more than 20 years ago as a recording comedienne for, successively, Victor, Columbia and Brunswick, was burned to death on the night of April 23 in her room in the Hotel Le Marquis, New York. Her real name was Mary Ellen Harrison. She was a native of Kentucky and a grand-niece of President Benjamin Harrison. In private life, Miss Harris was Mrs. Leonard Urry, wife of a London theatrical agent, whom she married on a tour abroad. She had returned to the United States for treatment of a nervous condition. The New York papers and theatrical magazines gave her age as 38—an obvious mistake, since she was making Victor records in 1916—28 years ago. During all her career, she seems to have made only one duet record—"I Wonder Why," with Billy Murray, in 1917.

**HEMUS, PERCY.** This favorite baritone of the early recording days died December 22, 1943, aged 65, in the National Broadcasting company's first aid dispensary in New York, after being stricken with a heart attack a few minutes before he was to appear on a radio program. Mr. Hemus, a native of

## The Curious History of Music Boxes

By Mosoriak &amp; Heckert

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New Zealand, came to this country at the age of seven. He made Columbia records in 1906 under the name of Charles Gordon. After this, he sang for Victor under his real name for several years, and ended his recording career with Pathe.

**HILL, MURRY K.** Joseph T. Pope died in Chicago on October 22, 1942, at the advanced age of 77. This news will mean more to record collectors when they realize that Pope was "Murry K. Hill," who made comic monologs for practically every American recording company from 1909 to 1911. Hill was one of the funniest of comedians, with a wealth of breathless, original patter, splendidly displayed in such records as "A Bunch of Nonsense," "A Talk on Married Life," and "How Columbus Discovered America." He continued in Vaudeville until 1930.

**HINDERMEYER, HARVEY.** Mr. Hindermeier began making records around 1908. He usually sang sentimental ballads and concert numbers, although he recorded "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" for Columbia—a record I have just acquired from Albert R. (Jack) Via, Jr., of South Boston, Va. How many record collectors know that Hindermeier, who lives at Garden City, N. Y., was one of the first famous radio performers? He and Earl Tuckerman were "Goldy" and "Dusty," the "Gold Dust Twins," who unearthed and sang much early American folk music. Although Mr. Hindermeier is of Pennsylvania Dutch descent, he called himself Harvey Wilson during the first World War because many people thought Hindermeier sounded German!

**KING, CHARLES E.** died in London January 11, 1944, of pneumonia contracted aboard ship en route from New York to England to entertain soldiers. Mr. King went into vaudeville in his teens and he and his partner, Elizabeth Brice, were one of the most popular pairs in stage history. They made several Victor records in 1911 and later recorded for Columbia. He was very popular in "Broadway Melody" and other early talkies.

**MORTON, EDDIE.** one of my favorites among recording comedians, began making records in 1908. He had been a New York police officer and was known in vaudeville as "the Singing Policeman." Does anyone know where he is now? Jimmy Martindale, of Brooklyn, told me a few years ago he had heard Morton was in retirement, living on a farm in New England. Jimmy also said he had learned the real name of William J. Halley, a popular recording comedian from 1913-16, was William Hanley, and that Halley quit vaudeville to enter politics in New Jersey.

**RUBSAM, EDWARD F.** well known in the early 1900's for his Columbia records of orchestra bells and xylophone solos, died April 26, 1943, in Newark Memorial hospital, Newark, N. J. He was 71, and in recent years had been a member of the orchestras in the Proctor's and Paramount theaters, Newark.

**TALLY, HARRY.** I have been frequently asked if Harry Tally, the sweet-voiced tenor who made many records from 1903 through 1916, is still alive. I'm afraid not. Paul Denis, of the Billboard, tells me that Irving Cooper is the only surviving member of the Empire City Four, famous vaudeville quartet in which Tally starred. On the other hand, Joe Laurie, Jr., says Tally was living in California a few years and may still be there.

**VAN BRUNT, WALTER,** who began making records in 1908, when he was in his teens, has been known for many years as Walter Scanlan—the name under which he appeared in Victor Herbert light operas—and has done much radio work. For the past year he has been having some form of throat trouble and is now working in the National Broadcasting company production department.

**WILLS, NAT M.** It was a surprise to read in Variety that the widow of this great comedian is still alive and appearing at the Bluebird Inn, N. Y. Variety reported her as recovering after having been robbed and beaten by three unidentified men. Nat Wills, whose "No News, or What Killed the Dog," was one of the biggest selling records ever made, was born in Fredericksburg, Va., in 1873, and died in 1917. His recording career began in 1908.

## PATRIOTIC MUSIC

(Continued)

By KENNETH ROSE

### Marching Through Georgia—1865

NO SONG of the war has been so bitterly excoriated in the South as "Marching Through Georgia," and for understandable reasons that do not concern us here. Nevertheless it has throughout the rest of the nation been recognized as a true national ballad and its popularity is deep rooted. It commemorates Sherman's March to the Sea.

Henry C. Work, the writer of the song, was an Easterner. He was born in Middleton, Conn., in 1832. By inheritance, birth, and conviction he was an ardent Unionist, whose principles were strengthened by the imprisonment of his father for giving aid and comfort to a group of escaped slaves.

Work came to Chicago in 1855 and made an early association with George Root, who befriended him throughout his career. His compositions are many and varied, and include several deathless war ballads. Among them may be listed "Lilly Dale," "Kingdom Coming," "Babylon is Fallen," "Grafted into the Army," "Brave Boys are They," "Wake Nicodemus," "My Grandfather's Clock," and "Marching Through Georgia."

—o—

### Music of the Confederacy

Music of the Confederacy may be defined as that published in a Confederate state during the period of the war. Over 6,000 titles are known. These include ballads, marches, polkas, schottisches, patriotic and minstrel numbers of American and English background. Many were written by Northerners and were by force of circumstances adopted by the South and made its very own.

Scores of martial tunes and sentimental ballads caught the fancy of soldiers and civilians alike. Among the best known are "I Wish I was in Dixie's Land," "The Conquered Banner," "All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight," "Maryland, My Maryland," "My Wife and Child," "The Southern Marsellaise," "The Southern Cross," "Alabama," "Song of the South," "Here's Your Mule," "God Save the South," "The Bonnie Blue Flag," "Stonewall Jackson's Way," and "Lorena."

Of all these stirring tunes, only two may be defined as national ballads in the patriotic sense. In fact "Dixie," "Maryland, My Maryland," together

with the Northern "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," stand head and shoulders over any other musical product of the war, and are the only ones that survive as authentic national music comparable with "Hail Columbia" and "The Star Spangled Banner."

—o—

### I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land—1859

Next to the "Star Spangled Banner" this is the most important song in our patriotic literature. It was written in November, 1859, by Daniel Decatur Emmett, a well known minstrel comedian. Emmett, who was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, composed "Dixie" as a "Walk Around" for his minstrel company, with little thought that it would ever prove more than a routine minstrel tune. It was first sung in New Orleans just before the outbreak of the war, where it was introduced into a burlesque by Mrs. John Wood. Its immediate popularity was tremendous. So lilting and vital was its melody, so appropriate its sentiment to the Southern ideal, it soon spread over the entire Southland and became the rallying song of the Confederacy.

The derivation of the term "Dixie" has offered certain perplexities to historians. The most commonly accepted definition is that found on the title page of another Emmett tune, where it states that a certain Mr. Dixie of New York, a wealthy slave owner, was one who was at the same time considerate of his responsibility to his charges. Due to financial losses he sold many of his slaves into the deep South. There, far from home, their thoughts turned in nostalgic longing to the land of their homes and fondest memories, the "Dixie's Land" of their dreams.

Still another possible origin of the term is noted in the old custom of the Citizen's Bank of Louisiana, located in New Orleans, in issuing notes

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I am planning to make a list of all acoustic Pathe Needle Cut, Actuelle and Perfect discs by the great opera and concert singers. I would appreciate the loan of catalogs, supplements and other material listing such records. Even if you have no catalogs or supplements to loan, you can help by sending me lists, giving type of label, name of singer, title or selection and number of record, of any discs of this category that you happen to have or to know about. Once my list is completed, the results will be published for the benefit of all.

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Herodiade: Vision fugitive (Eng. HMV D 851 or Fr. HMV W 115)  
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Rigoletto: Cortigiani (V 88341 or 6041)  
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THE END

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### George Washington Johnson

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

GEORGE WASHINGTON JOHNSON holds a distinctive place among pioneer recording artists in at least three respects.

He was the first Negro to become widely known because of his recordings; he had the most limited repertoire of any famous record maker and, as far as I know, he was the only one of the "Old Brigade" to meet a violent end at the hands of the law.

The latter fact is especially ironic, since Johnson, judging him on the basis of his records, was one of the best-natured and most carefree of men. No doubt he was genial and light-hearted under normal conditions.

Frank Dorian, pioneer Columbia official who died in 1939, told me that Johnson was born in slavery (from his tendency to use broad A's, I suspect his owner's plantation was somewhere around the James river section of Virginia, where that type of accent is common), and when he attracted the Columbia company's attention in the early '90's was picking up a living by roaming the streets of Washington, "singing and whistling and passing the hat." Somebody in the Columbia organization, whose headquarters then were in Washington, decided Johnson's specialties would be good sellers on records and

he was engaged to sing and whistle, making the old-fashioned brown wax cylinders by the "round."

Apparently, the burly Negro was able to perform just four numbers, and these he sang over and over (there being no master records then), day in and day out, to supply the demand. Laughing records have a world-wide appeal and even the natives of Africa (some of whom may have been his kinsmen) heard and enjoyed George W. Johnson's uproarious mirth.

The four numbers in his repertoire were the Laughing Song, his most famous specialty; the Whistling Coon, which was almost equally popular; the Laughing Coon and the Whistling Girl.

By 1896 these four records were a prominent feature of the Columbia cylinder catalog, in which it was said: "Mr. Johnson is the original laughing and whistling coon. His whistling is loud and clear and his laugh is simply irresistible."

He also took part in minstrel specialties. Another note said: "The Imperial Minstrels have been engaged exclusively to entertain Columbia patrons. A veritable carnival of mirth and melody, these records embrace the combined efforts of the Columbia Orchestra and The Greater New York

Quartette, together with Len Spencer's humorisms and George W. Johnson's hearty laughter."

Occasionally, too, George was called on to assist other artists, such as the ubiquitous Mr. Spencer, who could write a sketch to fit anybody's personality. In 1906, for instance, Len made a record called "The Merry Postman," in which Johnson supplied the laughing "effects."

George Johnson seems to have been an artist with a proper pride in his work. In the Talking Machine News (a no longer published English periodical which I find invaluable in doing research for these biographical sketches) I came upon a brief article, entitled "Laughing for a Living—the Jolly John Nash of the States," which refers to Johnson. It appeared in the December 1, 1906, issue, as follows:

"One of the most unique characters in the talking machine world, says the 'Music Trades' (New York) is George Johnson, who is now working for all the companies, doing 'laughing songs.' Johnson is said to be the most infectious laughter in the country. He is described by the talking machine men as the original 'haw-haw' man, and practically every laughing song heard on the phonograph is sung by him. He even figures in some songs, which have only a few bars of laughing chorus or a laughing line. Johnson is a Negro who has been making a living by his exuberance for years. In the old days, it is said, he once sang the same song 56 times in one day, and his laugh had as much merriment in it at the conclusion as when he started.

"A talking machine man tells of Johnson that he was in a Western city one day in a gallery at the theater. A black comedian came out and did a laughing song. Johnson snorted after the first chorus. He moved about restlessly and at the end of the second verse shouted a protest.

"'You ain't singing dat song right!' he cried.

"'What's the reason I ain't?' declared the singer from the stage, angrily. 'P'raps you can sing it better!'

"'I sure can,' declared Johnson.

"'Well, come down then and try it.'

"Johnson left the gallery, slipped into the stage entrance and took up the dare. He scored his usual success."

(Parenthetically, I may remark that I doubt that Johnson shouted, "You ain't singing dat song right!" As I have already said, he used broad A's and his accent as a whole was rather cultured, sounding as if he had picked up a certain amount of education.)

When the phonograph companies quit having performers sing by the



round, after the system of making master records was developed, the change must have been a painful one, financially, to Johnson with his restricted repertoire. He continued to sing for the phonograph companies, however, all through 1906 and perhaps a year or so later.

Then tragedy entered the laughing man's life. My statement that Johnson died at the hands of the law is based on an assertion in Fred Gaisberg's book, "The Music Goes Round." Gaisberg, who began his professional career as a piano player for Columbia in 1890 but later went to England, where he has been for many years a Gramophone company official, used to play the accompaniments for Johnson. He says that, some years after he went to England, he learned that Johnson had thrown his wife out of a window

while he was in a state of drunken insanity. The woman died, and the Negro comedian was hanged for murder.

Perhaps it was because of this shocking occurrence that his records, once so popular, disappeared from the catalogs. Victor and Edison discontinued them all. Columbia dropped all the Johnson numbers except "The Whistling Coon," which it had Billy Murray remake in Johnson's place. Victor also listed the same number by Billy and S. H. Dudley.

Though gone, Johnson, however, was not entirely forgotten. In 1917 Edison revived "The Whistling Coon," with the late Edward Meeker doing the whistling. It was an elaborate sketch in which Meeker, as the "coon," gave his whistling specialty for the benefit of a group of service men, who joined him in the final chorus.

That same year, Edison also revived "The Laughing Song," with Meeker again doing the singing and whistling. Because of an Edison idiosyncrasy for holding records for years before issuing them, it was not put on the market until 1921. This is another elaborate sketch, in which the sponsors of an amateur minstrel show are at their wit's end because they can't find anybody to sing Johnson's Laughing Song. "It won't be a regular minstrel show," Billy Murray, as one of the amateurs, declares. Then somebody remembers Meeker's ability to sing the number and he is called down from "the billiards room" to oblige.

Taken as a whole, George Washington Johnson's life, which began in slavery and ended at the rope's end, was no laughing matter, but his records reflect an essentially simple, lovable personality and are well worth hearing today.

## ILLUSTRATION

This photograph, taken in 1900, shows a group of pioneer Edison recording artists assembled at the Edison laboratories in Orange, New Jersey. Many of the 42 are now almost forgotten, and the majority must be dead. I have placed an asterisk in front of the names of those whom I definitely know have died, but some of the others probably also have passed on.

A great many other prominent recorders of the turn of the century are not shown here, since they were either under exclusive contract to another company or for some other reason were not present. Among the missing were Billy Murray, then doing recording work on the Pacific coast; Steve Porter, Billy Golden, Len Spencer, Minnie Emmett, Vess L. Ossman, George J. Gaskin, Cal Stewart and Russell Hunting. Others, such as Ada Jones, Bob Roberts, James F. Harrison and Henry Burr, though destined to be famous a little later, had not yet begun to make records.

The persons in the photograph are numbered as follows:

1. Joe Belmont, whistler, now proprietor of a bird store in Radio City, New York; 2. Nick Scholl, trombone; 3. A. Zimmerman, cornet; 4. L. W. Lipp, yodler; 5. Byron G. Harlan, tenor; 6. Frederick W. Hager, violin; 7. \*Arthur F. Collins, baritone; 8. S. H. Dudley, baritone; 9. W. C. Densing, baritone; 10. M. Guarini, tenor; 11. \*William Tuson, clarinet; 12. Will N. Steele, recitations; 13. Jim White, recitations; 14. \*Walter H. Miller, manager of recording department; 15. \*George Broderick, bass; 16. Frank Kennedy, Dutch comedian; 17. Al Sweet, cornet; 18. B. Russell Throckmorton, recitations; 19. Harvey N. Emmons, chimes and recording expert; 20. Ruby R. Brooks, banjo; 21. Samuel Siegel, mandolin; 22. \*Albert Benzler, piano; 23. Senorita Godoy, Spanish songs; 24. \*Joe Natus, tenor; 25. \*William F. Hooley, bass; 26. May Kelso, contralto; 27. \*J. J. Fisher, baritone; 28. \*Will F. Denny, tenor; 29. John Bieling, tenor; 30. \*Marguerite Newton (Mrs. George P. Watson), soprano; 31. Fred Bachman, piano; 32. \*George Washington Johnson, "the Whistling Coon"; 33. A. D. Madeira, baritone; 34. Frank S. Mazzotta, piccolo; 35. \*Frank P. Banta, piano (his son, Frank E. Banta, was for years a famous recording star and is now regularly heard as a pianist on NBC radio programs); 36. \*Charles D'Almaine, violin; 37. George P. Watson, yodler; 38. \*Dan W. Quinn, tenor; 39. \*Harry Macdonough, tenor; 40. \*Edward M. Favor, tenor; 41. Albert Charles Campbell, tenor; 42. Jere Mahoney, original second tenor of the Haydn Quartet.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

George J. Gaskin

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

- 84 Boninsegna—Loreley: Lascia per  
che libera (1917) (G...)/Boninseg-  
na & Bolis — Guarany: Sento una  
forza (1917) (G...)
- 85 Calve—Carmen: Card Scene/In ques-  
ta tomba oscura (RR from Pathe  
discs)
- 86 Campanari — Masked Ball: Eri tu  
(V85001) / Africana: Admastro (V-  
85027)
- 87 Nordica—Hunyada Laszlo: Ah rebe-  
ges (Col. 30144) / Serenade (Strauss)  
(Eng. Col. 74029)
- 88 Delna, Marie—Vivandiere: Viens avec  
nous (RR) / Delna & Alvarez: Favor-  
ite: duo (RR) (Pathe)
- 89 Marchesi, Blanche—Dido: When I am  
laid in earth (G) (E)/Sicilian Cart  
Driver's Song (G) (E) 1936
- 90 Eames — Chanson des Baisers (V88-  
133)/Cavalleria: Voi lo sapete (V88-  
037)
- 91 Kurt — Walkure: Die Manner Sippe/  
Kurt, Urlus, & Knupfer — Fidelio:  
Euch werde (G...)
- 92 Galvany—Linda di Chamounix: O luce  
(G53549)/Fado Portuguez
- 93 Schumann-Heink—Sapho: O ma lyre  
(V88212) / Prophete: Prison Scene,  
part 2 (V88094)
- 94 Plancon—Mignon: Del suo cor (V85-  
126)/(a) Le Lazzarone (b) Le Flibus-  
tier (V85066)
- 95 Nordica — Walkure: Ho-Yo-To-Ho  
(RR from unpublished Columbia  
test)
- 96 McCormack—Traviata: Dei miei bol-  
lenti/McCormack & Sammarco—Bar-  
ber: Numero quindici
- 97 Marchesi, Blanche—L'Ete (G33593)  
RR/Queen Anne Boleyn in Prison  
Arr. Dolmetsch (1936) E
- 98 Adams, Suzanne—Romeo: Valse (V-  
5007)/Coquette (V5005) RR  
(To be continued)

### The Curious History of Music Boxes

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THE NAME of "the Silver-voiced Irish Tenor," as George J. Gaskin styled himself, was a potent one in the very earliest days of the phonograph's career as a home entertainer. During the '90's his cylinder records were among the best sellers, but his vogue ended in the early 1900's, shortly after disc records were introduced. Today he has been dead so long and his records have so completely passed out of general circulation that I have been able to obtain only the most meager information about the man himself.

I do not know when and where Gaskin was born or how long he has been dead, although his former associates think it must have been about 25 years since his passing. My own collection contains only two disc records by him, both Columbias made around 1903, entitled "The Bassoon" and "Little Alabama Coon." The latter does not contain his name on the label but has a spoken introduction in which his name is given. I have no cylinders by him and probably only a few of the old fragile wax productions have survived. A year or two ago I read that a New York collector who goes in for cylinders regarded Gaskin's 1893 version of "The Side-walks of New York" as the oldest record he owned and treasured the nearly worn-out thing so much he seldom, if ever, played it.

A paragraph in an article by Fred Gaisberg, veteran official of the Gramophone Company of England, gives the definite impression that the pioneer tenor was a personality with idiosyncrasies of his own. Gaisberg, writing in the Gramophone for April, 1928, said:

"George J. Gaskin, who styled himself 'The Silver-voiced Irish Tenor,' possessed a repertoire that ranged from the sacred and soulful song to the popular vaudeville ditty. Recording at a fee of £2 per round, he earned an income of £5,000 a year. It was a positive education to observe the facility with which he could switch over from the religious emotion he displayed during 10 rounds of a hymn to 20 hilarious rounds of 'Maggie Murphy's Home.' Secrets will out, and we discovered that the success of this transformation was mainly due to a quiet glass of lager imbibed off-stage."

The period about which Gaisberg was writing was that of the early 1890's when Gaisberg, a native of Washington and then only in his teens, served as a piano accompanist

for the pioneer Columbia company and grew to know intimately all the popular artists of that day. Later, Gaisberg became associated with Emile Berliner in promoting the sale of disc records and was sent to England, where he remained.

An even more picturesque account of George Gaskin's recording oddities was given to me by Albert Campbell, who recalled George as perhaps the only singer who chewed tobacco while making records. Gaskin explained to Campbell that he "chewed" because fine shavings from the recording apparatus were blown into the room and irritated his throat. Ridding himself of surplus juice was no problem. He simply let it fly accurately into the throat of the recording horn! That hardly seems a sanitary process or one conducive to artistic singing. Some critics insist, in fact, that Gaskin's voice was predominantly "tinny" and was suited only for work with crude recording apparatus. When methods improved he naturally, they say, was relegated to the background and soon passed out of the picture. However, there is no question that he pleased the record buying public of an earlier day.

The Columbia cylinder record catalog for 1896 contains proof of Gaskin's popularity in the form of 41 records, numbered consecutively from 2001 to 2041. Such hits of the time as "Sweet Marie," "Two Little Girls in Blue," "Plain Molly O," "My Pearl is a Bowery Girl," "Say Au Revoir But Not Goodbye," "The Fatal Wedding," "The Sunshine of Parade Alley," "She May Have Seen Better Days," and "I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard" are included. There are also "comics" like "Dr. Piecrust" and "And Her Golden Hair Was Hanging Down Her Back," and "standards" such as "Ben Bolt," but I don't find any trace of the hymns concerning which Gaisberg wrote.

In 1897 the list by Gaskin had dwindled to 14. Since there were no permanent "masters" in those days and the records had to be made by "rounds," Gaskin must not have been in Washington much of the time. He continued a favorite, however, for several years longer.

When Columbia introduced a permanent moulded master cylinder record in 1902, a group of then popular artists were photographed at the Bridgeport factory, where they had gone to look at the new miracle. I have a copy of the photo with Gaskin, portly and prosperous appearing.



## RECORDS

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in the group. It was not a happy occasion, for the singers suspected that, with the "round" system abolished and only one satisfactory rendition of a song necessary, their earnings would greatly decrease. In some cases they did, but other artists, given generous royalty contracts, made far more money than the pioneers dreamed about.

After 1904 or so, Gaskin dropped completely from sight. He made no more records for many years, although a double-faced one by him was issued by Pathé around 1916. He must have died soon afterward.

Two amusing anecdotes, both concerning Gaskin as well as the famous Len Spencer, come to mind. In the early days the Columbia Company's "talent" would get paid off on Friday, and frequently a poker game was started that lasted till Monday morning.

Late one Sunday night, sleep, or the need for it, was getting the best of Spencer. He picked up a perfect hand that would entitle him to the "pot," but fell back in his chair, asleep, and dropped his cards to the table. The "boys" almost fainted at sight of what he held. Then Gaskin suggested that they reshuffle the cards, deal fresh hands and wake Spencer. This was done, and the great comedian sighed heavily as he looked drowsily around.

"Gosh, boys," he said, "I wish you had let me sleep. I dreamed I had just been dealt a perfect hand that would take everything in sight—and then you had to go and wake me up!"

On another occasion a game was in progress, when Gaskin, by prearrangement, got up and snapped off the light. Spencer was looking at his cards at the time. The others kept on talking as if they were still playing, and finally professed to become impatient with Len. "Hurry up! You're holding up the game!" they said.

Then up spoke Spencer, with terror in his voice. "My gosh, boys," he said. "I hate to tell you but I've gone suddenly blind! I can't see a thing!"

Some time afterward Len was threatened with blindness in one eye. Those who knew his fondness for practical jokes of every description have no doubt that he "got hunk" with Gaskin.

I should add, perhaps, that S. E. Levy, of Shanghai, China, who died in 1931 and was the foremost authority of his time on old records, believed "the Silver-Masked Tenor," who sang with the Goodrich Silvertown Orchestra during the early days of radio, was Gaskin making a comeback. Actually, however, the voice was that of my New York friend, Joseph M. White, who is still active. Gaskin today is one of the most obscure of formerly popular recording artists.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Russell Hunting, Sr.

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

"GENIUS" IS A word that should be used with discriminating reserve, but it seems to me no less a term can accurately describe Russell Hunting, Sr., who died so recently as February 20, 1943, and is buried in Westchester, N. Y.

In the variety of his achievements as comedian, recording director and executive, Mr. Hunting stands virtually alone among Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. Among other things, he is the only one I can think of who had a phonograph company named for himself and whose career included brilliant achievements in the United States, England and nearly every other civilized nation in the world. The man who first became known on wax cylinders as the maker of "Casey" monologues came to count American presidents and foreign rulers among his warm admirers and friends and to be a notable figure on a world-wide scale.

The "bare essentials" of this genuinely great man's career may be summed up briefly:

Russell Hunting, Sr., was born in West Roxbury, Mass., on May 8, 1864, so lacked only a few months of being 79 years of age when he died. On March 19, 1888, he married Mary Ann Lawrence, who was born in New York City on August 17, 1867, and who survives him. They had three children: Bessie Marie Hunting, who was born July 4, 1889, and died in September, 1889; Henry (Harry) Lawrence Hunting, born February 13, 1892, and Russell Emerson Hunting, Jr., born May 24, 1897. Mrs. Hunting now makes her home in Yonkers, N. Y., with her son, Harry, who has taken a great deal of trouble to help me with the material for this account of his father's life.

After becoming an actor at an extremely early age, Mr. Hunting began making phonograph records in the early '90's and, as the teller of the "Michael Casey" series of comic Irish sketches, was soon famous wherever records were heard. In 1898 he went to England, where he became recording manager of the pioneer Edison Bell company, operated by the picturesquely gruff and sardonic but warm-hearted "Laddie from Lancashire," James E. Hough. A few years later, he and another American, Louis Sterling, founded the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd., and did a large business.

Still later, Mr. Hunting became the director general of the recording departments of the Pathé Freres com-

pany, of Paris, France, and in that capacity traveled throughout the world. He came back to the United States in 1914 to establish the American branch of Pathé and remained here for several years before returning to Paris, where he supervised the French recording activities of Pathé, which by that time was Columbia-controlled. A few years ago, when his health failed, he returned to his native country.

Such a skeleton outline as the foregoing, however, cannot pretend to tell the real story of Russell Hunting, Sr., a story which is one of the most fascinating in the phonograph industry's history. Especially absorbing are the circumstances of the founding of the Russell Hunting Record company in the days when the cylinder record was more popular than the disc and, as "the working man's record," seemed likely to dominate the market for years to come. The rise and decline of Sterling and Hunting and their "Sterling" record is the essence of the decline and death of the cylinder record which has not been manufactured, except for dictating machine use, anywhere in the world since 1929.

As good a start as any in beginning a detailed story of Russell Hunting's life may be made by referring to the first issue of the Talking Machine News, which began publication in London in May, 1903, and continued to be issued for more than 30 years. It will be extensively quoted in this series.

On page 35 of that first issue is an article entitled "The Career of 'Casey' (Mr. Russell Hunting)," whom a sub-head calls, "A Man of Many Records." The article, written by Leonard W. Lillingston, founder and editor of the TMN, who died in 1911, begins:

"There are, of course, many masters of humorous dialogue, but only one 'Mike Casey.' The reason is not far to seek; Casey was not only one of the first to tell funny stories to the phonograph, but he was, in fact, one of the first to talk into the phonograph at all. It is not too much to say that the Casey records have echoed round the world, and that they have contributed to the gaiety of nations. Wherever the phonograph has gone, they have gone. And in what part of the globe at the present time, whether civilized or uncivilized, can it be said with certainty that the talking machine is unknown?"

"The author and originator of the famous Casey records is Mr. Russell Hunting, of the Edison Bell company. He was born at West Roxbury, a small township in the United States. He is in the prime of life, just 39 years old, and looking younger. You write him down a son of Theophrastus at a glance. As a matter of fact, before he was 21 he not only toured the States, but crossed the Herring Pond. His first professional ap-

pearance was with the celebrated American actor, Edwin Booth, at that time playing 'The Taming of the Shrew,' at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York. He was a member of the Boston Theatre Company for nine years, and for three years was its stage manager. By-the-way, it is an interesting fact that, whilst Mr. Hunting's records are chiefly humorous, he always appeared on the boards in serious parts. (Note by U. W.—I may add that Mr. Hunting wears a serious expression in practically all the photographs I have seen of him. I suspect that, like many other men noted for their humorous depictions, his disposition was naturally grave.)

"Mr. Hunting," continued the Talking Machine News, "is richly endowed as a record maker. In the first place his voice lends itself to reproduction as few others do, in the second he is thoroughly acquainted with the paces of every type of talking machine, and in the third he is a past master in the art of mimetic expression. I will cite only one instance of his voice capacity. He once laid a wager with a fellow-actor that he would make a whisper record which should be audible even among the gods at the Boston Theatre. The Boston Theatre is a large house, but he won his wager; his whisper record was distinctly heard even in the back row of the gallery."

"As to his mimetic ability, Edison himself declared that the Casey steamboat record was the best he had ever heard. There were no less than ten different characters in this record and eight mechanical effects, all of them pro-

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duced by Mr. Hunting. First the bell on the forward deck clangs loudly, then the little bell on the look-out-house puts in its turn. 'Get in that gangplank there; hurrah now; pull her in, boys; pull her out!' shouts the mate in a voice which drowns even the snorts of the engine at work. Thump, thump go the bales of cotton and boxes of merchandise on deck. 'Look heah, honey, doan you forgit to send me a letter so I gets it at St. Louis,' shouts a Negro deck hand to his dusky sweetheart, waving him a last adieu from the land. Puff, puff, puff goes the engine, and sh-sh-sh sings the escape valve. The heavy chain rattles against the capstan, and as the sound dies away a dozen of the deck hands strike up the melody: 'Farewell, my love, farewell.'

'And Mr. Hunting would tell you, as he told me—for he makes no secret about it—that all that went to make that record was his own voice, a bell, a couple of bottles, and a piece of sandpaper. Only that and nothing more; or has he left one thing out, and that—a consummate knowledge of the art of record-making? I think so.'

The following quotations conclude the article by Leonard W. Lillingston, in the May, 1903, issue of the Talking Machine News, outlining the recording achievements, to that time, of Russell Hunting, Sr.:

'It is a dramatic entertainment of the highest order to listen to Mr. Hunting

talking into the horn; now two Irishmen are engaged in a dispute; now a German and a Chinaman, now an Englishman and a Yankee. The peculiar idioms; the racy phrases; the characteristic inflections, each and all are faithfully rendered. I wonder how many records Mr. Hunting has made? He was under contract at one time to produce not far short of 7,000 for one phono firm alone, and that is a good while since. As for the records which he has assisted in making they must be long past counting. For he is concerned, on behalf of the Edison Bell Co., in making records not only all day long, but every day. He is their stage manager, and as our readers by this time know, there is a good deal of stage management in getting out a really successful record.

'That well-known Edison Bell record, "The Departure of the Troopship," which came into vogue during the war (the Boer War—U. W.), and which still retains a high measure of popularity, must have meant a deal of clever stage management. It was Mr. Hunting's fertile brain which gave it birth, he it was who superintended its production throughout. I will not recapitulate here the tale of the troopship's departure as told by the record. It has to be heard to be appreciated. It is said that during the war time and since, more than one auditor has been moved to tears on hearing it for the first time. I can well believe it. As the record tells its story, that leavetaking, never to be forgotten, is acted over again; and memories of the hero—husband, lover or brother—now sleeping his last, long sleep beneath the South African veldt, come to life again.

'It is but one step from the sublime to the practical side of things. The series of incidents in "The Departure of the Troopship" are enacted on the phonograph in two minutes and a fifteenth. You will understand by that what is meant by stage management in record making. For if on the one hand, a record like this, properly made, appeals to the most sacred feelings of the human heart, on the other hand if badly made it will be nothing less than farcical. There is, of course, another essential, it must be taken from the life. Mr. Hunting's method in the making of records of this description is to go down and study the scenes at first hand. He saturates himself so to speak with the atmosphere; he lives for a while in the drama which is being enacted. In this way only can the highest form of record be created.

'It goes without saying that the subject of this sketch took to the phono early. He did not, of course, acquire his present reputation directly he started handling the machine. He had to practice. Given his special qualifications, with incessant practice, and there you have the secret of his success.

'Until you come to record for the phonograph,' said he to me, 'you fail to realize how much hearing depends upon the eyes, as well as the ears. You watch a man's face, and you know what he has said, though he has spoken ever so indistinctly. That is the secret of the oral instruction of the deaf and dumb—teaching them to see speech instead of hear it. Some wonderful results have been obtained that way, as you know. When you talk into a phono, the first thing to realize is that you must talk as though you were speaking to a blind man, who depends entirely upon sound, unaided by sight.'

'Are there any words,' I asked, 'which present greater difficulties than others?'

'There are lots. But two only will serve to prove my point. Just notice how the ordinary man enunciates "truth" and "teeth." You know what he says, because you are watching his face. But let him talk into the trumpet. And what do you hear when you switch on the reproducer? "Truth" becomes merely an "oo" sound, teeth an "ee" sound; it is impossible to recognize them as words.'

'Mr. Hunting considers the English instrumentalist the finest in the world. By-the-way, the band records, produced under his superintendence, are made by the London Regimental Band, a particularly strong combination of well-known instrumentalists. Mr. Hunting has been four years with the Edison Bell Co. and Edisonia, Ltd., as superintendent of their Record Department.

'Here is the outline of a new Casey

story to end up with,' said he, as I rose to go. 'I call it "Casey on the Bench." Casey fines a prisoner twenty shillings for picking pockets. The prisoner declares he has only fifteen shillings in the world. "Where did ye get it from?" asks Casey. The prisoner says he got it out of the pockets of the crowd, whilst he was waiting for his turn. "Put him back in the crowd, officer," says Casey, "sure he may get the other five shillings."

'Any more Casey stories?'

'Well, there's "Casey in the Barber's Shop." The barber asks him why he hasn't painted his pole for him, as he promised to do. "Deed," says Casey, "but I would have done it if I could. Haven't I been all over town this day, trying to buy some striped paint?"

'One more story.'

'By-the-way,' says Mr. Hunting, with a humorous twinkle of the eye, 'I had a laughable experience myself the other day. Man came up here, professional, offered to make Casey records. I asked him, did he know Russell Hunting. He said, "Yes, knew him quite well; as a matter of fact Hunting got all his ideas from him." I asked him if he knew whether he was in London. He said he believed he was. "Well," I said, "I'd like to get him up here to make me records; think you could manage it for me?" Said he thought he could; any way, he'd try. So I suppose I'll have that fellow Hunting along one of these days.'

I have quoted this rather long article in its entirety, not only because it throws an interesting light upon Russell Hunting, Sr.'s, younger days, but because of the incidental information it gives concerning recording practices in the pioneer era. When "Casey" was under contract to make 7,000 records for one company, he, of course, was working by the "round" and was not recording that many different titles.

## CORRECTION

Our apologies to Louis Bullaro of San Francisco whose name should have appeared above his list of Favorite Baritones at the top of page 27 of the September issue.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Russell Hunting, Sr. II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH



Russell Hunting, Sr., "Michael Casey," as photographed in Italy, about 1910.

AS HAS already been said in a preceding installment, Russell Hunting, Sr., began recording his "Casey" monologs in the early 1890's. By 1898, when he decided to go to England and become associated with the Edison Bell company, he was recognized wherever records were played as one of the leading American exponents of the art of talking, singing or playing into a horn.

For instance, his name was prominent among the recording celebrities who on May 1, 1898, signed an agreement to give their services exclusively to the Columbia company for the ensuing year, and on page 30 of that year's catalog his photograph was published, under the heading: "Talking Records. The Famous Casey Series as Recorded by the Originator, Russell Hunting."

Beneath the photograph is a list of the Casey records, preceded by the admonition: "Our patrons are warned against purchasing imitations of these famous records. The original Casey records are made by Mr. Russell Hunting and are so announced."

Here are the Casey records then available from Columbia: 9601, Casey Exhibiting the Panorama; 9602, Casey at Denby Murphy's Wake; 9603, Casey Joins the Masons; 9605, Casey Taking the Census; 9609, Casey as the Dude in a Street Car; 9615, Casey as Judge; 9616, Casey as Hotel Clerk; 9617, Casey Departing by Railroad; 9618, Casey at the Telephone (perhaps a forerunner of the later famous "Cohen at the Telephone"); 9619, Casey in Court; 9636, Casey's Political Speech; 9637, Casey Listening to a Hand Organ; 9641, Casey Addressing the G. A. R.; 9642, Casey's Description of the Discovery of America; 9644, Casey's Plans for Freeing Ireland; 9647, Casey and His Gang of Laborers; 9648, Casey Departing by Steamboat; 9649, Casey at the Bat (recitation); 9653, Casey's Visit to the Hospital; 9655, Casey Digging on the Klondike, and 9656, Casey as a Fortune Teller.

The Edison catalog dated October, 1899, contains a similar list of Casey records, concerning which it comments: "The Casey records are perhaps the best known and most popular of all talking records made for the phonograph." The

name of the artist is not given, but "Bill" Hays, a veteran Edison recording expert, told John L. Norton, Sr., of the Woodymay Record Company, that the Edison list was made by "Jim" White, a friend of Hunting's, by special permission of the "Casey" originator.

Another evidence of Mr. Hunting's popularity in the late '90's is found in the 1899 catalog of the Talking Machine Company, then at 98-107 Madison Street, Chicago. Hunting, as one of the best known recording artists, was asked for his opinion of the Polyphone, a cylinder machine with two reproducers, and replied:

"I consider that it gives three times the volume of tone that could be originally attained from any other reproducing medium. The tone it produces is marvelous."

"I never realized how wonderful the talking machine was until I heard your Polyphone."

The testimonial is embellished with a photo of Mr. Hunting, wearing a derby hat, and a caricature of Casey. Beneath it is a testimonial from Len Spencer, another of the great pioneers.

Then "Michael Casey" went to England. By 1902, the Edison catalog contained only three Casey records, "At the Telephone," "Courting His Girl" and "Taking the Census," all listed as being by James H. White, the same "Jim" White, of whom more will be heard later. A year later, Mr. White had added "Casey and His Gang of Irish Laborers" to the series, and the same four records were still being marketed in 1907. By 1903, however, although they remained available, they had been remade by John Kaiser. The Kaiser series continued to be listed until the Edison company discontinued making two-minute wax records after a disastrous factory fire in 1914.

What happened to Mr. Hunting's original Casey series on the Columbia cylinders I don't know, but presumably, since he left for England before the master record was invented, the records were dropped from the catalog as soon as stocks became exhausted.

Meanwhile, as I have already shown, Mr. Hunting was doing very well in England, and his Edison Bell "Casey" records won the approval of so exalted a personage as King Edward VII himself. That same May, 1903, issue of the Talking Machine News from which I have already quoted, reveals that on a visit made by the King to Portugal, the Edison Bell Company supplied him with a special phonograph, playing the large concert-size records, to be used on the Royal yacht, the Victoria and Albert. Among the 48 concert records taken by the King were "Casey Riding a Bicycle," "Crossing the Channel," "As a Magistrate," "Taking the Census" and "As a C. I. V."—whatever the latter may be.

In the same number appears an interview with James E. Hough, Edison Bell manager, quoting him as saying: "By the way, perhaps you are not aware that we have on our staff perhaps the most prominent of all phonograph artists and experts? You have heard of the Casey records? Well, I can introduce you to Michael Casey himself."

"Whereupon," the reviewer continued, "I was introduced to Michael Casey, otherwise Mr. Russell Hunting. Mr. Hunting gave us a specimen record of a selection of the pipers and drummers of the second battalion of His Majesty's Scotch Guard. It was only a trial trip, for this record was but just made, but it promised well."

"Casey," incidentally, was not the only American to go to England as a recording expert. Steve Porter, famous also for Irish monologs, was in England for a time contemporaneously with Mr.

Hunting, and in the April, 1904, T. M. N., there was an interview with Louis Sterling, then the manager of the British Zonophone company. Mr. Sterling was quoted as saying the International Zonophone company had been founded three years before and that he had "come over from the United States about a year ago after studying the talking machine from a technical and commercial point of view."

Mr. Hunting continued to make records, not all of them concerning Casey. In the July, 1904, T. M. N., a reviewer, commenting on Edison Bell records for the month, says: "The first record we tried, 'The Crazy Musician' (6329), is in Russell Hunting's happiest vein. It represents a German giving imitations of a trombone, cornet, piccolo, etc., at a music hall, the performance being punctuated by the usual comments from the 'gods' in the gallery. The whole makes a record effective as well as technically good."

By October, 1904, Hunting was also making disc records for Zonophone. Two seven-inch ones were listed, "Casey at a Wake" and "Casey Taking the Census," of which the reviewer said: "These are capital Casey records and will be duly appreciated by the admirers of that popular entertainer, Russell Hunting." Mr. Hunting about this time also made some H. M. V. records, some of which were imported and sold in this country under Victor labels.

"The shape of things to come" was dimly foreshadowed by a paragraph in the November, 1904, Talking Machine News:

"Mr. Louis Sterling has resigned his position as manager of the British Zonophone Company. We understand that Mr. Sterling has not yet absolutely decided whether to launch out in another direction or to continue his services to the talking machine trade."

Changes were occurring, too, in the Edison Bell organization, with which Russell Hunting, Sr., had now been connected for six years. "Casey" was still on the job, and his old friend, Gilbert Girard, whose specialty was making records in which animals were imitated, had come to England and joined him in making a series of "descriptive records," some of them nursery rhymes with appropriate noises, but Tom and Arthur Hough, sons of the Edison Bell manager, had withdrawn from the parent firm, taking with them William Ditcham, noted as a player of the piano, bells and xylophone as well as a recording expert. They began marketing their own brand of cylinder, the Electric, whose title anticipated the development of electrical methods of recording two decades later. The cylinder continued to be more popular than the disc, but competition for the British record buyers' shillings was becoming more spirited.

More trade rivalry was ahead for Edison Bell and the National Phonograph Company, which distributed Thomas A. Edison's cylinders in England. I quote from the February, 1905, Talking Machine News:

"The Sterling Record Co., of which Mr. Louis S. Sterling is managing director, have taken extensive premises for the manufacture of gold moulded records at Bishops Road, Cambridge Heath, E. The factory will have a ground space of 24,000 square feet. Mr. Percy Smithurst will be the factory superintendent, with an able corps of assistants. The recording rooms and offices of the company will be at 81, City Road. The recording department will be under the management of Mr. Russell Hunting. . . . Mr. Charles Stroh, well known as the inventor and proprietor of the Stroh violin, has joined the board."

Thus it will be seen that Mr. Sterling had decided to stay in the record business and that "Casey" had left Edison Bell in order to join him.

From the April, 1905, T. M. N.:

"The Sterling Record Co. has changed its name to the Russell Hunting Record Co., Limited, but the new gold moulded record will be known as the Sterling Record. It is anticipated that a good



catalog of records will be ready some time in May. The factory at Bishop's Road, Cambridge Heath, is fast approaching completion."

So it was that Russell Hunting became the first—and, as far as I can recall—the only recording artist to have a company named after himself!

The Russell Hunting Record Company published its first advertisement of Sterling records in May, 1905. Stars included the late Florrie Forde (who might be called "the English Ada Jones"), Hamilton Hill, and "a number of new 'Casey' records by the original Casey." Others on the list were Eli Hudson, the famous piccolo virtuoso; Charles Draper, one of the greatest clarinet players; Alfred Oakley, trombone; W. E. Bates, cornet; Victor Opferman, violin, the London Military Band and the Sterling Orchestra. "We are busily engaged," the company said, "on new descriptive band records similar to 'The Departure of the Troopship.'"

In the same issue, A. O. Limb, of the Edison Bell Company, commenting on King Edward's taste in records, said: "He enjoyed the Casey records in particular." The article was headed, "Teddy's Taste in Records," showing that the English king, like the American president, Theodore Roosevelt, was affectionately known to his countrymen as "Teddy."

The July, 1905, Talking Machine News, showed a photograph of the new record company's headquarters. The large building's front contained a sign saying in huge letters: Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd. "Sterling Records" appeared in smaller letters. It was announced that the company had facilities for making 200,000 cylinders a week. In August the information was given that "every Sterling master is recorded by Russell Hunting (the Original Casey), the well known recording expert," and there was a mention in September of Hunting's Concert Band," the organization conducted by Mr. Hunting at the recent Talking Machine Trades dinner."

A Sterling record ad, of the month said: "Mr. Hunting has returned from his trip through the provinces. The result of his observations will be found in 'At New Brighton,' which has been composed by him especially for our Lancashire friends; and 'Down at Tyne-mouth,' written for our Northern friends. These two songs are sung by Miss Florrie Forde, with orchestral accompaniment." "One million Sterling records," a January, 1906, advertisement said, "have been sold in 22 weeks." In April, it was stated that dealers had been added in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

The new company was getting on swimmingly, and its heads were alert to the value of publicity. In June, 1906, the T. M. N. carried a photo of a large balloon, containing 43,000 cubic feet of gas, in which Mr. Smithurst, the factory manager, and three other men had ascended 7,500 feet. As an effective advertising scheme, the balloon was lettered with the name of the Russell Hunting company and the aeronauts

dropped coupons entitling the finders to obtain sample Sterling records without cost.

In spite of surface prosperity, however, the cylinder record was losing ground to the more convenient disc. This became especially true as the disc manufacturers lowered their prices. Then, in 1904, the German manufacturers of Odeon discs had introduced the double-faced record—another great forward step. The first Odeon advertisements appeared in August, 1906. The manufacturers, Ch. and J. Ullmann, Inc., emphasized that the records, 10½ inches in diameter, were made of blue "Empe-dite." This same material was used in "American" records, manufactured in the United States by arrangement with the Odeon organization.

The August 13 T. M. N. announced that the selling rights for Odeon and Fonotopia records (the latter was a famous Italian brand manufactured by a firm allied with the Ullmanns) had been transferred to the Russell Hunting concern. It was also revealed that "Mr. Louis Sterling is to be the managing director of the new Sterling and Hunting Company, Ltd. We understand the capital of the Russell Hunting Record Company will be increased by five thousand pounds, which will be devoted not only to the furthering of the business of the new company but to the old one besides. An entirely new building will be specially erected in City Road to house the two companies, so that they may be under one roof."

Truly, Sterling and Hunting were branching out!

(To be continued)

## RECORDS

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20 THOUSAND historical records. Opera, instrumental, popular, blues and swing. Send "wanted" list to—John Sicignano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6825

PATHE PHONOGRAPH Records and catalogs wanted.—Jamison R. Harrison, Bedford, Mass. d144

BING CROSBY. Private collector will buy a representative collection of Crosby recordings in good condition. Send me record numbers and price asked for entire lot.—Frank A. Ritz, 150 Sampson St., Garfield, N. J. d1051

## MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE: Regina Music Box and cabinet, 60 steel records. Excellent condition.—Horace A. Soper, American Foundry, Bloomington, Illinois. d1411

EDISON FAMILY Phonograph, #2670, wax records slightly damaged.—E. R. Jefferies, Beach Haven, N. J. d1001

EDISON CYLINDER type phonograph and records, separate horn; without horn will ship for \$10, with horn \$3 extra. Edison with inside horn, 25 cylinder records \$30. Old Graphophone with records and horn \$10, \$3 extra for shipping horn.—Laura E. Justi, 27 E. Chestnut Ave., Merchantville, N. J. d1492

FOR SALE: Meyer system wooden flute with silver keys, made by August Damm, Boston, about 1855. Good condition. Original case.—Mrs. R. A. Rhodes, 1107 S. Henderson, Fort Worth, Texas. d1081

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main St. 12, Los Angeles, Calif. s12036

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC. List 10c. Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colo. o12024

WANTED: 13½ in Stella Swiss music box tune discs.—Catherine Dofelmier, 1219 18th North, Seattle, 2, Wash. f6652

WANTED: SWISS music box, with extra cylinder. Good condition.—Raymond F. Marsolek, 1082 Redondo Ave., Long Beach, California. mh6882

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES in playing or damaged condition. Will pay highest market prices. Write—Lee Boddy, Iowa Falls, Iowa. my6003

FOR SALE: ROSEWOOD J. Estey cottage organ, flat top, refinished. Good playing condition. Will box.—A. E. Murrills, Portage, Wis. d1311

FOR SALE: EDISON Graphophone and seventy cylinder records. Make offer.—G. M. Frost, 328 N. Cannon Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland. d1521

COLLECTOR WANTS unusual vocal operatic records in excellent condition.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. n12235

RECORDINGS. 500 Crosby, 500 Goodman, thousands every Nameband. Thousands greatest classic singers, 1900-1940. Clarke, Pryor, Sousa specialist. Itemize wants. Exchanges.—Josephine Mayer, St. Barbara, Calif. my6446

FOR SALE: "The Music of the Modern World," 27 parts, 2 missing. D. Appleton & Co., Publishers, 1895. Good condition with fine illustrations and music. Make offer.—The Beaver Hat, Middleberg, Va. d1002

SHEET MUSIC. "Serenade on Adria's Sea," Barcarolle, autographed by Jenny Lind. Daguerreotype picture on front. Collector's item. Good condition. Make offer. Stamp.—Edwin Timmerman, 2031 Cullen, Dallas, Texas. d1861

CYLINDER EDISON and 50 records \$12.50.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer Minn. d106

WANTED TO BUY: Coin operated, nickel-in-the-slot Regina, with discs. Priced for resale.—Antique Inn, Mexico, Missouri. d126

REGINA FIFTEEN IN. steel records, good condition.—Walsh Antique Shop, 411 W. Lexington Ave., Elkhart, Ind. d169

LARGE MIRA Music Box, solid mahogany case, size 30x23x15. 68 steel music sheets, size 18½ in. All in perfect condition.—Bertha E. Magersuppe, Beaverbrook Heights, Danbury, Conn. d1001

## Use Wanted-to-Buy Ads

If you, as a dealer, have difficulty getting enough gasoline to permit you to make buying trips to replenish your stock, run "wanted-to-buy" ads in HOBBIES. Besides going to regular subscribers and dealers, HOBBIES reaches the hundreds of scouts, runners and pickers who search their own neighborhoods and make it a practice to sell thru "wanted-to-buy" ads in HOBBIES. If the gasoline rationing is stringent where you live, this may be the means of regularly replenishing your stock.

## The IRRC List

(continued)

## Key to Abbreviations

- 1st—first edition  
 Amer.—American  
 Col.—Columbia  
 E—Electrical recording  
 Ed.—Edison  
 Eng.—English  
 Fono—Fonotopia  
 G.—Gramophone  
 RR—Re-Recording  
 V—Victor  
 Zono—Zonophone
- 196 Calve—Figard: Mon coeur soupire RR / Amadis de Gaule: Amour RR (Pathe 0288)  
 197 Gay, Maria — Don Giovanni: Vedrai carino (G) / Carmen: Chanson Boheme (G) 1909  
 198 Muratore—Manon: Ah, fuyez (Pathé 54001) / Romeo: Ah, leve-toi (54008) RR's  
 199 Lankow, Edward—Juive: Si la rigueur (G.E.) / Magic Flute: Isis (G. E.) RR's  
 200 Delna, Marie — Les Troyens: Chers Tyriens (Pathe) RR / Litvinne—Les Troyens: Adieu, fiere cite (Pathe) RR  
 201 Galski & Reuss-Belce — Lohengrin: Act 2 duo (Mapleson cylinders) RR / Galski & Anthes—Lohengrin: Mein Held; Act 2 (Mapleson Cylinders) RR  
 202 Battistini — Zampa: Perche tremar (V92004) / Macbeth: Pieta (G)  
 203 Raisa, Rosa—Gioconda: Suicidio (G) E / Cavalleria: Voi lo sapete (G) E  
 204 Lehmann, Lilli — Die Lorelei (Bungert (Odeon 50433) RR / Lehmann & Heibig—Crucifix (Faure) (Odeon 50-355) RR  
 205 Clement—Manon, Ah, fuyez (Odeon 56001) RR / Romeo Ah, leve-toi (Od. 56000)  
 206 Urlus, Jacques—Siegfried: Nothung (Pathé 60023) RR / Siegfried: Heiss ward (60028)  
 207 Farrar — Legend of the Dogwood Tree/Little Christmas Donkey(1st's) E  
 208 Gerhardt—Ich hab' ein kleines Lied erdacht (Bungert) (G2-43180) / Gerhardt a) wir sollten (Strauss)b) Neue Liebe (Rubinstein) (G2-43171)  
 209 Cahier, Mme. Charles—Sym. No. 2: Urlicht/Ich bin der Welt (Mahler) RR from U.I. 30371/2  
 210 De Lucia—Pagliacci: Vesti/No, Pagliaccio, non son (RR's from Phonotype)  
 211 Easton, Florence—Auf dem Kirchhofe & Therese (Brahms) / Nussbaum & Widmung (Schumann)  
 212 Easton—In dem Schatten & Auch kleine Dinge (Wolf)/Easton — Ich schwebe & Du meines Herzens Knelein (Strauss)  
 213 Easton — Orpheus with his Lute (Sullivan)/Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht (Brahms). Note: #211, 212, & 213 RR's from off-the-air recordings made July 13, 1939.  
 214 Kaschmann, Giu — Hamlet: Brindisi (G052038) / Ernani: O del verd'anni (G052032) RR's  
 215 Farrar—Caro mio ben (G53430) / Liebe Augustin (V87134)  
 216 Ternina—Tosca: Finale & Eames—ditto (Mapleson cylinders) RR / Ternina & De Reszke, Jean — Tristan: Part of Love Duo (Map. cyl.) RR  
 217 McCormack—Sospiri, miei (V64333) / O del mio amato ben (G. D. A. 627)  
 218 Boninsegna—Lucrezia Borgia: Com'e bello / Mefistofele: Spunta (Pathe's RR)  
 219 Patti, Adelina — Manon Lescaut: Bourbonnaise (RR from 1895 cyl.) / Nordica—a) Tristan: Liebestod and Walkure: Ho-yo-to-ho (Map.) RR  
 220 Renaud, Maurice — Carmen: Toreador/Damnation de Faust: Voici des roses (Pathe's) RR  
 221 Walker, Edythe—Rheingold: Erda's Warning (G043093) / Tannhauser: Gebet (G) RR's  
 222 Gulbranson, Ellen — Swedish Folksongs, Ack Warmeland / Om Dagen (RR's of 1914 orig's)  
 223 Bellincioni—Otello: Ave Maria/Tra-viata: Ah fors (RR's of Pathe discs)

224 Kiurina, Berta—Norma: Casta Diva/ Part 2) (RR from 1919 Polyphone)

## ADDITIONAL NUMBERED EDITIONS

- 5000 Rehan, Ada—Selections from Taming of the Shrew and The Country Girl. 10" RR from Berliner disc of 1899.  
 5001 De Lucia, Fernando — Sulla bocca amorosa (V87048) / Serenamente (G2-52772)  
 5002 Melba—Huguenots: A ce mot (Map. cyl. RR) single-faced  
 5003 De Lucia, Fernando — Ideale (V-5027) / Era di maggio (V66003)  
 5004 Muratore, Lucien — Monna Vanna: Elle est a moi / Fortunio Maison grise (Pathé RR)  
 5005 Lehmann, Lilli—Erikonig (RR from 12" original Odeon) Single  
 5006 Popular selection issued privately  
 5007 Van Dyck, Ernest—Werther: Pourquoi / Walkure: Liebeslied (in Fr.) (Odeon RL)  
 5008 Mantelli, Eugenia—Gioconda: Voce (Zono) RR / Faust: Parlate d'amor (Zono) RR  
 5009 Bressier-Gianoli—Carmen: Chanson Boheme/Air des cartes (Odeon LR)  
 5010 Allen, Viola & Skinner, Otis, with assisting cast supervised by Daniel Frohman — Merchant of Venice: Trial Scene (2 parts) E  
 5011 Litvinne, Felia—Samson: Mon coeur/Favorite: O mon Fernand (Od. RL)  
 5012 Destinn, Emmy — Wiegenlied (Mozart) (V87246) / Wiegenlied (Schubert) (V87214)  
 5013 Why, Foster — Down Deep Within the Cellar(E)/I'm a roamer bold(E)  
 5014 Allen, Viola—Excerpts from Twelfth Night/and Winter's Tale (E)  
 5015 Why, Foster — Le Caid: Air du Tambour-Major (E) Single  
 5016 Bernhardt, Sarah — Phedre: Oui, Prince (Ed35008) / Bouffons: Lesouffle (Ed35011) RR

THE END

## UN-NUMBERED EDITIONS

Adini, Ada—Herodiade: Il est doux/Ackte — Si j'avais vos ailes (Od/Fono)  
 Anselmi, Giuseppe — Gioconda: Cielo e

mar/Boheme: Che gelida (Fono 74-029/32)  
 Barnum, P. T. — 10" RR from Edison cylinder made in 1890  
 Bonci — Puritani: A te, o cara/Elisir: Una furtiva (Fono 39084/83)  
 Barrientos — Fra Diavolo: Or son sola/Gia per la danza (Fono 39538/39)  
 Clement — Dame Blanche: Grand air / Maurel—A year Ago (Odeon/Fono)  
 De Lucia—Mignon: Addio, Mignon (G05-2111) / Galvany & Giorgini — Elisir: Chiedi all'aura (G054110)  
 De Macchi, Maria — Lucrezia Borgia: Com'e bello/Poliuto: di quai (Fono 59135/36)  
 Destinn — Bartered Bride: Marie's aria / Figaro: Heil'ge Quelle (Odeon)  
 Destinn—Robert der Teufel: Two arias (Odeon/Fonotopia 64837/855)  
 Krusceniski — Loreley: Da che tutta / Madam Butterfly: Un bel di (Fono 92939/40)  
 Galvany—Lucia: Splendon le sacri faci (G)/Romeo: Valse (G053163)  
 Kurz & Demuth—Magic Flute: Bei Mannern (G2-44495) / Krutz—Mignon: Styrienne (G)  
 Lehmann, Lilli—Du bist die Ruh (Odeon 50432) / Intermezzo (Schumann) (Od. 50372)  
 Lehmann, Lilli—Du bist die Ruh (Odeon / Freudvoll und Leidvoll (Schubert) 50390)  
 Lehmann, Lilli—Josua: O hatt'ich Jubals Hart / Walkure: Du bist der Lenz (Odeon)  
 Lehmann, Lilli — Auf dem Wasser zu singen/Freudvoll und Leidvoll (Bee-thoven) (Od.)  
 Lehmann, Lilli — Robert der Teufel: Gnadenarie (Odeon 80009) single-faced.  
 Litvinne, Felia—Cavalleria: Voi lo sapete (F39052) / Aida: Grace, piti e (F392-17)  
 Litvinne, Felia — Lohengrin: Reve d'Elsa (F39182) / Africaine: Air du sommeil (F)  
 Maurel, Victor — Mandolinata (F39245) / Rondel de l'Adieu (De Lara) (F39246)  
 Nightingale, F.—10" RR from Edison cylinder of 1890.  
 Storchio, Rosina—Don Pasquale: Quel guardo/So anch'io la virtu (F39490/01)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Russell Hunting, Sr. - III

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

RUSSELL Hunting, Sr., must have been an extremely busy man after Sterling and Hunting acquired the selling rights to Odeon and Fonotopia discs, in addition to carrying on their own cylinder record manufacturing business. In September, 1906, the company announced that "Odeon records are now recorded under the personal supervision of Mr. Russell Hunting, and the Sterling exclusive talking machine artists are now being added to the Odeon catalog." These included Harry Dearth, bass; Eli Hudson, piccolo; Scott Skinner, the Scotch violinist; Alan Turner, baritone, and such music hall favorites as Ella Retford and Fred Vernon. Odeon records by Emmy Destinn were offered at five shillings each.

The first advertisement of Fonotopia records in the same month listed discs by the Royal Italian Marines Band, of 90 performers: Destinn, the La Scala Chorus, Barrientos, Bonci, O. Luppi, Victor Maurel, Sammarco, Stracciari, Zenatello, "magnificent violin records by Jan Kubelik," and pianoforte solos by Madame Roger-Miclos. Fonotopias, like Odeons, were 10 1/2 inches in diameter. They cost six shillings each.

Besides these two famous brands, the new company had also acquired the selling rights to Linguaphone language courses in French, German, Italian and Spanish—then made on cylinders! John McCormack was listed as a Sterling artist in October, 1906. The record was "God Save Ireland." The then very young tenor was also making records for Edison Bell, Edison and Gramophone and receiving about \$25 each for them. The days when his royalties would amount to several hundred thousand dollars a year were still some time distant.

Some idea of the progress the Russell Hunting Record Company had made was given in an advertisement in the October issue of the Talking Machine News. Headed "An Allegory to Begin With," the advertisement recited that the company began operations in February, 1905, with a capital of 5,000 pounds, but this had been increased to 25,000 pounds. It was selling 100,000 records a week and expected to double its output. Cash dividends of 16 per cent on the first year's investment and 150 per cent bonus in new shares had been declared. In March, 1907, the company announced that it was now supplying disc machines known as the "Discodisc," and in its April 1 issue the T. M. N. published a cut of "the new premises of the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd." Two men are shown standing on top of the roof. Their faces are indistinct, but one is wearing a derby hat and is probably Mr. Hunting. The other I take to be Mr. Sterling.

July, 1907, was an eventful month in the English cylinder record business. An advertisement told of "Victory of the Sterling Record. . . . Placed on the market in July, 1905. . . . Sales first year over two million records. Sales sec-

★  
**EDISON RECORDS**  
 ★  
**Woodymay Record Co.**  
 73 Roxbury Street - Boston (19) Mass.



and year over three million records. We will sell in the coming year over four million records."

The same issue carried, however, the announcement that the National Phonograph Company had reduced the price of its cylinders from a shilling and sixpence to one shilling.

Rumors that the American-controlled company, handling "the genuine Thomas A. Edison records," would cut its prices to meet competition offered by the lower-priced British brands had been current for more than a year. The Talking Machine News in its February, 1906, issue, had mentioned a report that a "well-known firm" would reduce its prices. Edison records were not mentioned by name, but the irascible Edison management, forever engaged in law suits and litigation, immediately sued the magazine for even touching upon the rumor. The suit, like most Edison-instituted legal action, came to nothing, but Edison refused to advertise in the T. M. N. for several years afterward.

The National company's reluctant decision to "engage in the shilling handicap" resulted in two of the most amusing advertisements I have ever read—so amusing to me that I feel I must pass them on to HOBBIES' readers. One indignant English dealer published the following commentary in the Talking Machine News:

"A Dealer's Lament and Appeal to a Sympathetic, Compliant and Generous Public. I wish to sell a large and extensive stock (for a dealer) of about 5,000 Edison Records. A general average mixed stock, old and new, ancient and modern, which must be sold without reserve, on or before August 8th next, at 1s. 6d. each, otherwise I shall suffer a most serious loss.

"A notice having been issued by the agents of the manufacturers without consulting me that after the said 8th

August all Edison Records will be reduced to one shilling each, until that day I have the gracious privilege (made under rigid legal penalties) to sell the same records at one-sixth each.

"Therein lies my opportunity and chance of salvation, and I now make a strong appeal (in which all my brother dealers join) to the Generous and Discriminating Public to Rush at Once to Our Relief. It does not matter whether they want the records or not. I can only rely on them to buy before the fatal day.

"But, whatever you do—Hurry Up! Buy now—Buy Quickly—Buy Freely—Before the Reduction. Waste No Time Or You May Save Your Money.

"And I faithfully promise that once clear of this depreciated stock I have finished with 'em. W. J. Winslow, Swindon and Reading."

The gleeful Mr. Hough, whose Edison Bell company had also been engaged in suing, and being sued by, the National organization, published an advertisement in the shape of a tombstone. It was headed: "To the Memory of One and Six" and added:

"He shuffled off

Existence here.

Still joyful, he roams

Another (hemis)phere

Where Cents of Duty Guard Him.

#### GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

He suffered long through lacking the sense

To know he couldn't sell here for eighteen pence.

In the land of dollars he still may sell—

Import duty protects him from Edison Bell."

Despite Mr. Hough's apparent assumption that only a high tariff wall made it possible for Edison records to go on selling in the United States, there was a widespread impression that "the great inventor's own records" were bound to be better than others. This was as true in Britain as the United States, and when the price of Edison cylinders was cut by a third it presaged a knock-down and drag-out battle for control of the English market. New companies were about to appear in the field. Some already established ones now retired from competition or, like Pathé, foresaw the eventual triumph of the disc and gave up making cylinders, although Pathé continued to issue cylinders in France and most other European countries except England for several years longer.

In August, 1907, it was announced that Gilbert Girard, Mr. Hunting's animal-imitating American friend, "is now exclusively engaged by the Russell Hunting company for both cylinders and discs.

He made records 12 years ago in America, an engagement brought about by Mr. Russell Hunting, or 'Casey,' as Mr. Girard likes to call him."

A decade or more after this notice appeared, Messrs. Hunting and Girard again collaborated and produced many amusing disc records for Pathé.

That is anticipating, however. The October 1, 1907, Talking Machine News reported that the Russell Hunting Company by then had "recording facilities in France, Spain, Holland and Denmark.

We paid a visit to the recording department, where we found Mr. Russell Hunting. He had an excellent record to show by Mr. Albert Whelan. I have indeed no hesitation in saying that it is one of the best, if not actually the best, recitative records I have ever heard; every inflection of the voice is rendered with wonderful fidelity. It is taken from David Copperfield—the passage where the old man receives Em'ly's letter telling of her flight from home. Mr. Hunting, by the way, has dropped across a new idea for the recording of choruses. One used to hear one or two voices of the choruses only whilst the others might be said to merely give out a blare. By the new method, as I gathered, this is removed, and you have a pure, clear, full strong chorus. It is interesting to note that, with this month, the Russell Hunting Co. will have completed the whole of Gilbert & Sullivan's Pinafore

on the cylinder. This, I was given to understand, is the first time this has been done by a cylinder company."

In the same issue there appeared an interview with William Ditcham, the recording expert who, it will be remembered, had joined the Hough brothers in leaving Edison Bell and setting up the company manufacturing Electric cylinders. A disastrous fire had helped put Electric out of business, and Ditcham had joined the Russell Hunting organization. He had just returned from an 11-months trip to South Africa where he had made cylinder records of native music, to be sold as part of the company's export trade.

(To be continued)

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**MELODEONS FOR SALE:** both octagon leg and folding melodeons. These are completely refinished and in good playing condition. Description and prices sent on request.—Joseph Leighton, 16 Montclair St., Springfield 4, Mass. ja1291

**WANTED:** Music boxes, every description. Meerscham pipes, steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. jly12235

**FOR SALE:** Upright, spinet type, French piano, rosewood case, dated 1849, with maker's name.—John R. Vail, 57 E. Oak St., Chicago 11, Ill. ja1441

**200 REGINA DISCS, 20%," \$1.25, special price for lot.**—Mrs. Ivanoff, 2000 Washington, Waukegan, Illinois. ja109

**FOR SALE:** Autophone with 6 records. Some notes not in tune \$35; Clarion with one roll \$15; Gem roller organ, 10 rolls \$20. Records for Autophone, Herophone or Ariston, grind organs \$1 to \$2 each.—Fred S. Smith, 5640 Guilford Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana. ja1033

**OLD POPULAR MUSIC.** I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main St. 12, Los Angeles, Calif. s12036

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, 20 Lawson Rd., Egypt, Mass. ja122901

**AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC.** List 10c. Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colo. o12024

**WANTED:** 13½ in Stella Swiss music box tune discs.—Catherine Dofelmier, 1219 18th North, Seattle, 2, Wash. f6662

**WANTED:** SWISS music box, with extra cylinder. Good condition.—Raymond P. Marsolek, 1082 Redondo Ave., Long Beach, California. mh6382

**WANTED:** MUSIC BOXES in playing or damaged condition. Will pay highest market prices. Write—Lee Boddy, Iowa Falls, Iowa. my6003

**REGINA AND Criterian music boxes** in first class condition. Stamp for reply.—Walsh Antique Shop, 411 W. Lexington Ave., Elkhart, Ind. ja1621

**COLLECTOR WANTS unusual vocal operatic records** in excellent condition.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. n12235

**RECORDINGS.** 500 Crosby, 500 Goodman, thousands every Nameband. Thousands greatest classic singers, 1900-1940. Clarke, Pryor, Sousa specialist. Itemize wants. Exchanges.—Josephine Mayer, St. Barbara, Calif. my6446

**EDISON BLUE Amberola cylinder** phonograph and 40 records \$6.—Norris Dullum, Colfax, N. D. ja148

#### RECORDS

**HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER** sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12283

**RECORDS of all types bought.** I pay express. Classics preferred.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City, New Jersey. ja12235

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. s12633

**CLASSICAL RECORDS** for sale. Send for list.—H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colo. ja6023

**OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS,** classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged.—American Record Collectors Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. ja12414

**FALKNER BROS.** Record Shop, Antiques, 333 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. ja106

**20 THOUSAND** historical records. Opera, instrumental, popular, blues and swing. Send "wanted" list to—John Sicignano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6325

**SALE:** 300 duplicates; vocal operatic records. Private collector. Send for returnable list.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. f2462

**FOR SALE:** 25 tune discs for Regina music box, 15½", \$1 ea., or \$20 for lot.—Mary H. Bowlin, 707 24th St., South Bend, Indiana. ja1201

**WANTED:** O'KEH Red Label records by Gerald Griffin, also Emmet O'Mara.—Nicholas Kilroy, 1129 North Rowan, Los Angeles 33, California. ja108

**FOR SALE:** 50 15½" Regina discs \$1.25 each.—Virginia Henderson, 3509 Octavia, Jennings 21, Mo. ja1001

## 12" Records:

- 24015 (reported as a "contralto"; music and singer unknown.  
Might not be from this set.)
- 24017 Aida: Celeste Aida. Cosentino, tenor
- 24019 Aida: Ritorna vincitor. Teresa Chelotti, soprano
- 24021 Aida: O ciel azurri. Teresa Chelotti, soprano (labeled "Part 14, act 3, # 2")
- 24022 Aida: Fuggiam gli adori. E. Magliulo & O. Cosentino ("Part 18, act 3, # 6")
- 24023 Aida: Si, fuggiam. E. Magliulo, O. Cosentino, G. Novelli
- 24034 Aida: Scena del giudizio. V. Colombati, A. Brondi, & Cho.
- 24025 Aida: O terra addio! E. Magliulo, O. Cosentino, & V. Colombati
- 24032 (reported as a "trio with Soprano, Tenor & Bass"; music & singers unknown)
- 10" Records:
- 12644 Aida: Si corre voce. O. Cosentino & A. Brondi (Part 1, Act 1, # 1)
- 12671 Aida: Quest assisa. E. Magliulo & G. Novelli
- 12674 Aida: Rivedrai la foreste. G. Novelli & T. Chelotti (Part 15, Act 3, # 3)
- 12676 Aida: Nile duet (reported as soprano and tenor.  
Which soprano I don't know. Tenor is undoubtedly Cosentino)
- 12677 Aida: L'aborrita rivale. Mme. V. Colombati (Part 2, Act 4, # 1) (Something wrong about that "Part 2" but that is the way it was reported)

## JOHN McCORMACK ODEONS

In a list of over fifty titles of records made for Odeon by John McCormack, the following gaps appear. Can anyone fill them?

57509	57585	57589	84209	84228
57584	57586	57592	84227	84232

Also it has been reported that McCormack recorded Believe me, if all those endearing Young charms, for Odeon. Does anyone have the number for this?

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Russell Hunting, Sr. - III

(Continued from the January issue)

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

Also in October, 1907, the Premier Manufacturing Co., Ltd., announced that it would enter the cylinder competition with the Clarion record, to be sold for ninepence. The trade was becoming more and more of the cut-throat variety, with hardly any margin of profit. Clarion, however, stayed in business, manufacturing discs as well as cylinders, long after most cylinder companies had given up the struggle, and did not pass out of the arena until 1924 or later.

In December, 1907, a complete set of Pinafore was issued on Odeon discs, as it had been on Sterling cylinders. The album set, selling for 50 shillings, contained photos of the artists and a copy of "The Odeon Waltz," written by Johann Strauss. (The Waltz King.)

A month later the company advertised: "Still Another Advance! Mr. Russell Hunting, the world-famous recorder of Sterling Records, has perfected a new system of recording, which means a remarkable advance in the natural reproduction of records. If there is one record . . . in which this improvement is more marked, it is perhaps 'Cheer Up, Mary,' by Herbert Payne." ("Payne" was Ernest Pike, often described in those days as "King Edward's favorite tenor.")

March brought an advertisement which proclaimed that "three great tenors—Walter Hyde, John McCormack and Ernest Pike"—all were available on Sterling records at a shilling each. McCormack was now being described as "The British Caruso." The Sterling ad. referred to the young tenor's "Italian tone" and made the curious claim that "the only phonograph records by Mr. John McCormack which contain this Italian tone are Sterling Records."

In May, 1908, T. M. N. contained the announcement that "Sterling and Hunting, Ltd., are shortly moving to 59, City Road, where they have taken larger and more commodious premises, owing to the increased demand for Odeon and Fonotopia records and Odeon machines. They are no longer connected in any way with the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd."

Just what had happened is not altogether clear, but one thing is certain—1908 was a bad business year in England, and it hit the overcrowded record industry hard. The Neophone company, which anticipated Pathé in putting out a hill-and-dale disc played with a sapphire ball, had gone out of business. So had the short-lived British Sonogram Company. As for the cylinder makers, the mortality was fearful. One of those going under was the General Phonograph Company, manufacturing "White" cylinders. The head of this organization was "Jim" White, Mr. Hunting's old friend, who had been given special per-

mission to make "Casey" records for Edison in the United States.

When the National Phonograph Company decided to establish a British branch, White was sent to London to take charge. He remained for several years but left the company after a circular issued by him (probably under American instructions) had involved the company in a law suit with Edison Bell. The circular, intended to frighten dealers from buying Edison Bell goods, was headed, "Misuse of the Name, Edison," and declared that any person handling records or phonographs containing Edison's name but not manufactured by the National Phonograph Company would be prosecuted. Since Hough and his associates had paid \$200,000 for the right to use Edison patents and Thomas A. Edison himself had stipulated that his name must be used as part of the firm's name, this was more than they could stand and they accordingly brought successful court action. White, after leaving the American organization, founded his own record company, thus bringing more competition to an already overcrowded field.

No Sterling records advertisement appeared in July, 1908, and in August it was announced that Barnett Samuel and Sons (from whom the present English company making Decca records is "descended") had taken over the Odeon and Fonotopia sales agency.

Meanwhile, what of Russell Hunting, Sr.? Well, always resourceful, when the company bearing his name passed out of existence after a few years of great success, he formed an association which continued almost the remainder of his life. In October, 1908, the Talking Machine News said:

"Mr. Russell Hunting, who as everyone knows is now in charge of the recording department at Pathé Freres, with Mr. W. Ditcham as his assistant, has been over to Paris, conferring with the heads of the firm. Mr. Hunting is shortly bringing out a new 11-inch Pathé record. Orders for Pathé machines are, by-the-way, coming in faster than they can be filled. . . . Mr. Hunting was at Paris appointed Directeur General de l'Enregistrement de la Compagnie de Pathé Freres) Director General of the Recording Departments of Pathé Freres) throughout the world. Pathé's have recording rooms in Paris, London, Milan, Brussels, Amsterdam, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa and Rostoff. It will be part of Mr. Hunting's duties to visit these cities in turn and he is immediately proceeding to reorganize them all and install an entirely different system of recording. As Pathé's have a large cylinder business, as well as disc, this, too, will be supervised, on the manu-

facturing side, by Mr. Hunting. He leaves for Vienna in a few days, going on from there to Amsterdam. Mr. Hunting is to be congratulated on his appointment, which he has won on his merits. His unique experience of the technical side of the trade on both sides of the Atlantic eminently fits him to fill the post with entire satisfaction to his firm and himself."

While Russell Hunting, Sr., was busily engaged in supervising Pathé recording activities throughout the world, his erstwhile partner, Louis Sterling, was also active. The December 1, 1908, Talking Machine News said: "The attractive and easily-remembered name of Rena Double-Record has been given to a new double-sided 10-inch disc just placed on the British market by Mr. Louis Sterling, managing director of the Rena Manufacturing Co., Ltd."

The Rena Company lasted several years before being consolidated with Columbia. Mr. Sterling must have been a convincing talker to persuade the Columbia firm to make the deal by which it allowed him to sell Columbia records under the Rena label for two shillings and sixpence, whereas the same records under their rightful Columbia title retailed for three shillings. The quality of the records was identical, but the couplings were different and the artists' names were changed in some instances. After the consolidation the records were known for a time as Columbia-Rena. Mr. Sterling has been associated with the English Columbia organization ever since and served for many years as its president.

To return to December, 1908: The T. M. N. published an advertisement by Holmes and Bowron, of 24 Shepherdess Walk, City Road, E. C., saying a court order had been entered for compulsory winding up of the Russell Hunting Record Company's affairs, and offering "the whole remaining stock of Sterling records at startling prices."

Yet, although Mr. Hunting was now wholly engaged in Pathé recording activities, his name continued to persist as that of a record company. The Talking Machine News said in January, 1909:

"The Sterling record, manufactured by Russell Hunting & Co., is the latest comer in the field. By a paradox, this cylinder is new and old at the same time. We, so to speak, were acquainted with its ancestor, and while the Sterling of the new company will retain the best of its old characteristics, it will, we are informed, have the extra advantage of being moulded under entirely new and improved methods."

The new firm advertised in the same issue that "we have no connection whatever with other parties handling the accumulated old stock of the late Com-

## MUSIC BOXES

All Kinds For Sale - Repairs

LLOYD G. KELLEY

P. O. Box 342

Broadway and Rt. 3 Hanover, Mass.

d54

## HARRY DICHTER

5458 Montgomery Ave., Phila. 31, Penna.

Foremost Dealer in Early American Sheet Music  
Particularly want, and will pay top prices for  
bound folios before and about 1890.

Also songsters, and song collections before 1850.

Printed WANT LIST sent on request.

ap45

## MONTHLY RECORD SALES

RARE AND OBSOLETE VOCAL RECORDINGS  
by great artists of the past can be bought at  
YOUR OWN PRICE at our Mail Auctions. All  
bidders receive Free of Charge the selling price  
of each lot after the sale. Write for lists.

ap54c

## DIXIE RECORD CLUB

Congress Building Miami, Florida



pany, which stock has been removed from our premises." By August, control of Russell Hunting & Co. had passed to Edison Bell, still making cylinders, in the face of ever fiercer competition from its old enemy, the National Phonograph Company, which had "scooped" the cylinder market in 1908 by bringing out a four-minute record. Within a few years, Edison Bell dropped cylinders altogether for discs, this step being hastened by a fire which virtually wiped out its cylinder moulding plant.

It is now possible to skip more than three years and come to July, 1912, when the Talking Machine News published its final word on the subject of Messrs. Sterling and Hunting's cylinder record venture. Under the heading, "The Last of a Famous Company," it said:

"In the matter of the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd., a further summary of liquidators' accounts covering the period from July 27th, 1911, to January 26th, 1912, has just been issued by the Board of Trade. . . . The position of affairs will be placed before creditors at a meeting to be convened in a few weeks' time, and we understand that the final wind-up of this company will then soon follow. Reflection carries us back to the palmy days of the 1905-6 season when, if memory serves us aright, the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd., was incorporated. The prime movers were Mr. Louis Sterling, now British manager of the Columbia Phonograph Co., Gen'l., and Mr. Russell Hunting, whose sphere of activity is mainly on the continent as chief recording director for Messrs. Pathé Freres, Ltd. As a cylinder record, the Sterling, as it was named, from the start made a pronounced success, and during the first two years of the company's existence handsome dividends were paid. Following the reduction of the Edison record from one-sixth to one-???, and the introduction of 9d. cylinder records, business declined so appreciably that the company was forced to consult their creditors."

The remainder of Russell Hunting, Sr.'s career has already been sufficiently touched upon in earlier installments of this series to make it unnecessary to go into extensive detail concerning his later years. In his capacity as director of Pathé recording he traveled all over the world for several years and was generally regarded as the greatest expert in his line. He must have been delighted when Emile Pathé, president of the French firm, decided to open an American branch in New York city in 1914. Pathé and Hunting then came to the United States, together, where Mr. Hunting settled down to supervise the making of the splendid hill-and-dale Pathé records. How the master records were first "taken" on cylinders, then transferred to discs, was one of the phonograph industry's most closely guarded secrets.

"Mighty Casey" was by no means forgotten, and Mr. Hunting recorded a number of monologs concerning his world famous Irish character. He was still recognized as a master of stage and sound effects, and when the United States entered the World War in 1917, he revived, and revised, his "Departure of the Troopship" specialty, which had been so popular on cylinder records during Boer war days. In its new form it was called, "Departure of the First U. S. Troops for France."

Under the heading: "A Truly Remarkable Record—A Phonographic Sensation," the American Pathé record supplement for September, 1917, thus describes the record, made by Mr. Hunting with the assistance of a chorus and band:

"As a distinct novelty of present day importance and interest, the descriptive episode, entitled 'Departure of the First U. S. Troops for France,' . . . stands pre-eminent in its vivid and powerful characterization, full of compelling human interest. In the hearing one does not listen to a reproduction, for immediately you feel the spirit and touch of living reality. You become emerged (sic) in the vast crowds of humanity who await the arrival of the troops. As they march down the avenue to the inspiring

music of their regimental bands on the day of their departure for France, you become one of the spectators and see the mounted police forcing the crowd back and giving hurried orders here and there. Suddenly vast cheers break forth and sounds of a band playing 'Good-bye, Little Girl, Good-bye' is heard in the distance.

"Here they come! Banners wave, thousands of hands clap and the air resounds with cheers. Fathers, mothers and sweethearts bid farewell to their dear ones—you feel the fast beating of their hearts. Other regiments follow to renewed enthusiasm. Then down to the dock they and you proceed. The transport vessel's bell rings, hurrying the embarkation, and finally the gangplanks are hoisted. The ship's band bursts forth with 'The Star Spangled Banner'—the whistles blow, the engines start, and the huge ship departs while wild cheers and enthusiasm of the multitude prevail.

"Twilight comes and the moon glimmers on the water. The crowds still watch and fainter grows the sound of music—the last blow of the ship's whistle is heard as she leaves the shores of home and liberty—eyes moisten with tears and reluctantly the crowd slowly disperses. This record is an inspiration and a gigantic achievement in phonographic artistry, recorded by, and under the general direction of, Mr. Russell Hunting, Sr., who is a past master in such creative art."

Obviously, Old Master Hunting succeeded in crowding an amazing amount of detail into some two and a half minutes on a ten-inch record.

Mr. Hunting remained in the United States for several years, during which he renewed warm friendships with many of the nation's most distinguished citizens, among them President Warren G. Harding, as well as forming many others. In 1922, however, Pathé ceased to issue sapphire-cut records in this country, replacing them with the cheaper, and inferior, Actuelle and Perfect needle-cut discs, which first appeared in 1920. The company passed into Columbia control, and Mr. Hunting returned to Paris as head of Pathé's European recording activities. As has already been told, he remained there until a few years ago when he retired, advanced in years and in poor health, he came back to New York, where he remained until his death in 1943.

Although practically all the Hunting records sold in this country—his Pathés excepted—since the turn of the century were made abroad and are not so easily found as those by performers who remained in the United States, the Casey monologues are not forgotten, nor are they likely to be. (Incidentally, it is odd that the several imported Casey records issued in this country on Columbia discs do not bear Mr. Hunting's name, but the artist is listed as "Michael Casey.") In 1943, for instance, Billy Murray and Monroe Silver accomplished something unusual by combining the Casey and Cohen traditions in one double-faced Beacon record, which they called "Casey and Cohen in the Army." Billy's Casey stemmed directly from the great Hunting original, while "Mike" Silver, of course, has long been THE Cohen.

One thing is certain—No confirmed collector of the best work of the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists will ever pass up a good Casey record or anything else recorded by Russell Hunting, Sr.! It has been a pleasure to chronicle this distinguished creative artist—executive's career at a length which is unlikely to be allotted to any other recording performer. This has been done partly for the sake of touching upon the fascinating story of the rise and fall of the cylinder record in England, but mostly because I have felt it a duty to make good use of the wealth of information available to me concerning that truly versatile and accomplished genius who will long be remembered as the "Great Casey."

THE END

## RECORDS

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. n12288

COLLECTOR WANTS unusual vocal operatic records in excellent condition. — E. F. Prescott, 3046 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. n12235

PHONOGRAPH RECORDS bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. s12633

PATHE PHONOGRAPH records and catalogs wanted.—Jamison R. Harrison, Bedford, Mass. mh3231

CLASSICAL RECORDS for sale. Send for list.—H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colo. ap3031

WANTED: LAKESIDE and Everlasting cylinder records. — Norris Dullum, Colfax, N. D. f166

20 THOUSAND historical records. Opera, instrumental, popular, blues and swing. Send "wanted" list to—John Sici-gnano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6825

SALE: 300 duplicates; vocal operatic records. Private collector. Send for returnable list.—E. F. Prescott, 3046 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. f2462

OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged.—American Record Collectors Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. jai2069

## MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. jai22361

WANTED: Music boxes, every description. Meerscham pipes, steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. jly12235

NICE SWISS Music Box in rosewood case, plays 10 tunes \$50.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. f108

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade — Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main St. 12, Los Angeles, Calif. s12036

AMERICAN SHEET MUSIC. List 10c. —Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colo. o12024

WANTED: 1 1/2 in Stella Swiss music box tune discs. — Catherine Dofelmier, 1219 18th North, Seattle, 2, Wash. f6652

WANTED: SWISS music box, with extra cylinder. Good condition.—Raymond P. Marsolek, 1082 Redondo Ave., Long Beach, California. mh6882

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES in playing or damaged condition. Will pay highest market prices. Write—Lee Boddy, Iowa Falls, Iowa. my6003

RECORDINGS. 500 Crosby, 500 Goodman, thousands every Nameband. Thousands greatest classic singers, 1900-1940. Clarke, Pryor, Sousa specialist. Itemize wants. Exchanges.—Josephine Mayer, St. Barbara, Calif. my6446

CLASSIFIED AD RATES  
6c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 7. (Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)

This rate applies to both For Sale and Wanted to Buy classified ads in this department.

## RECORDS

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey mh12800

COLLECTOR WANTS unusual vocal operatic records in excellent condition. — E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. n12235

PHONOGRAPH Records bought. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f12234

PATHE PHONOGRAPH records and catalogs wanted. — Jamison R. Harrison, Bedford, Mass. mh3231

CLASSICAL RECORDS for sale. Send for list. — H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colo. ap3081

20 THOUSAND historical records. Opera, instrumental, popular, blues and swing. Send "wanted" list to — John Siojgnano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6825

SALE: 300 duplicates; vocal operatic records. Private collector. Send for returnable list. — E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson St., San Francisco 15, Calif. mh2462

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FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. ja122361

WANTED: Music boxes, every description. Meerschmum pipes, steins. Will sell my duplicates. — Herbert H. Meyer, Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. jly12235

SHEET MUSIC, Operatic Records. Lists 10c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. oi2024

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade — Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main St. 12, Los Angeles, Calif. sl2036

WANTED: DISC records, popular 1900 to 1920 lists exchanged. — Charles Clark, 100 John, Wellington, Ohio. mh109

VIOLINS. CLOSING out entire collection (Hobby). Some very old. \$15.00 up. — Mrs. G. A. Runyon, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. mh1201

WANTED: SWISS music box, with extra cylinder. Good condition. — Raymond P. Marsolek, 1082 Redondo Ave., Long Beach, California. mh6882

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES in playing or damaged condition. Will pay highest market prices. Write — Lee Boddy, Iowa Falls, Iowa. my6003

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This rate applies to both For Sale and Wanted to Buy classified ads in this department.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Dan W. Quinn I

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

TWICE during the years that I have been exchanging letters with many of the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists I have been notified that my friend by correspondence had died between the writing of his last letter to me and the arrival of my reply.

One of these sad occasions was when I received a letter from Harry Macdonough's son, Jack, telling me of his father's sudden death from heart disease. The other was when Dan W. Quinn's son, Ritchie, returned an envelope which I had addressed to his father, marked, "Died November 7, 1938." A letter which followed from the younger Quinn explained that the well loved veteran comedian had succumbed to intestinal cancer, as Henry Burr did less than three years later.

Sorry as I was to learn of Mr. Macdonough's passing, the death of Mr. Quinn, at the advanced age of 79, was an even greater shock, because, although my correspondence with him had been considerably more extended and of a more intimate nature than that I enjoyed with the sweet-voiced second tenor of the Haydn Quartet, he had never even hinted at his fatal ailment.

Dan Quinn was one of the very earliest singers to make records. In fact, a biographical notice in The Billboard described him as a "famous vocalist of the '90's era and the first singer to experiment with Edison in phonograph recording." More conservative and probably more accurate was an article in the November 8, 1938, New York Herald Tribune, which said:

"Dan W. Quinn, vaudeville actor and tenor, died yesterday at his home, 312 West Twentieth street. Mr. Quinn was 79 years old. He was one of the first persons to have his voice recorded on the wax cylinder phonograph records. He retired from vaudeville in 1916. Surviving are three sons: Dan W. Jr., Ritchie and Frank Quinn, and two daughters, Mrs. Herbert Hunaberger, of Collingswood, N. J., and Mrs. Norman Manderson."

There, in brief, we have the career of Dan W. Quinn. It is fortunate, however, that in writing a detailed account of his recording activities, I have the benefit of an excellent character analysis by my dear friend, the late Frank Dorian, who gave me much valuable information about the pioneer recording performers with whom he was intimately associated for so many years, as well as extremely interesting reminiscences from Mr. Quinn himself.

First I shall quote Mr. Dorian, who said:

"When I hear the phrase, 'old-time recording artist,' I always think of Dan Quinn. He was one of the finest men I have ever known, not a prig or prudish in any respect, but one of the cleanest, hardest-working, most self-respecting of artists. I haven't seen the old boy in more than 20 years and I understand he's now a great-grandfather, but the last time I ran into him he was still stepping along with all the vigor of youth, though he must then have been over 50. It's good to know that he's comfortably well off. He and Billy Murray are outstanding among the limited number of old-time recording artists who have taken care of their money and become men of prominence and influence in their communities."

Mr. Dorian's mention of Dan Quinn's clean living is borne out by the active part the singer took for many years in New York temperance movements. Some of the old-time recording artists were heavy drinkers, but few, if any, of the alcohol addicts retained their voices and good health as long as Mr. Quinn. The rule that "no booze-fighter ever won a decision" has panned out well in this field of artistic endeavor.

And now for some first-hand reminiscing by my departed friend, whom I was never privileged to meet face to face:

"In January, 1892, I was engaged to entertain a political club in Hoboken. One of the features was a man who gave a phonograph exhibition and invited everyone to make a voice test. Many folks got up and sang a song or recited something and he reproduced the result. The phonograph was a great novelty at the time, and these records created a lot of amusement, though most of them were terrible. I was loath to make an attempt, but they all begged me and finally I did. I was lucky enough to have a voice and style of singing that were just 'made' for recording, so I may say without egotism that I was a veritable 'riot.' I don't know what it was about my voice that made it 'go' as I always sang quietly. There must have been some latent penetrating power. Anyway, the operator urged me to go to one of the laboratories and make a real test.

"In a short time I went to the New York Company, located at 257 Fifth Avenue. Richard Townley Haines was the manager and he was so much taken by my singing that I did a lot of

work for him. I'll never forget one of the first records I made. It was 'Down Went McGinty.' I was singing from memory and when I reached the chorus I forgot my lines and exclaimed: 'Oh Lord, I forgot it!' This record was treasured by the Company for a long time.

"In a little while I began to hear of other phonograph companies, so I graduated to the New Jersey Company at Newark. (These, of course, were the very early pioneer days when various phonograph companies, domiciled in different states, leased the rights to use Edison's patents. Practically all these organizations were short-lived.—U. W.)

"Here is where I began to spread out. I was new, and my fund of material interested them greatly. The manager, Victor Emerson, (later chief recording expert for Columbia and the founder, in 1916, of the Emerson Phonograph Company) was a marvel. He was not only a past master in his mechanical line, but a showman of the first water—a wizard. When anything went wrong, all the rest of the boys would paw around frantically, trying to find out the trouble. Then Vic would quietly take charge and soon everything would be working admirably.

"It was while working for Vic Emerson that I began to work like a good fellow and went after all the latest songs. I learned everything whether it naturally suited my style or not. The good singers—I mean fellows like John W. Myers and George Gaskin—were slow getting up their stuff, and I, being a sight reader, just couldn't keep from learning every new number. I sang the hits of 'The Geisha,' 'San Toy,' 'The Runaway Girl' and every other Broadway success then in vogue. I was the first to make records of 'Sweet Rosie O'Grady,' 'Daisy Bell,' 'Little Annie Rooney,' 'The Bowery' and 'The Cat Came Back.' This latter song was so popular Mr. Emerson told me: 'Dan, I wish it were possible for you to stand there and sing that song a thousand times.'

"But I didn't stick altogether to comic, sentimental and topical numbers. Mr. Emerson and Mr. Tewksbury, his assistant, wouldn't allow anyone else to sing the Moody and Sankey hymns, such as 'I Need Thee Every Hour' and 'Throw Out the Life Line.' I loved to sing them. It took me back to my boyhood days when I was a boy soprano in an Episcopal choir. I made my living in the frivolous field, but my heart was in the other."

Here we temporarily interrupt Mr. Quinn's reminiscences. Next month's installment will tell of his later career.

(To be continued)

## OLD PRINTS

(Continued from page 13)

Francisco consumed an average of 300 days. The coming of the streamlined Clipper Ship reduced the time to as low as 89 days.

There were "Extreme Clippers" and "Medium Clippers." Probably there were "Ordinary Clippers," but the owners forgot to call them that. The "Extreme A-1 Clipper" was built on racing lines, sharp of prow, narrow of beam, carrying a prodigious stretch of sail. She was a crack ship, expected to make the run from New York to San Francisco in no more than a hundred days. That was par for the course.

The "Medium A-1 Clipper" was built on more generous lines, could carry more cargo and accommodate more passengers. She usually loafed into San Francisco Bay after a voyage of 120 days.

Passengers on a Clipper Ship experienced about as much pleasure and comfort as a man on horseback for the first time. They were huddled in the cabin during most of the voyage, for the ship's deck was almost constantly swept by the ocean waves. But nothing mattered; gold was just across the horizon and could supposedly be had for the asking.

Some made fortunes but the great majority were doomed to disappointment and failure. It is these "Clipper Ship Sailing Cards" that bring back a glorious era when Gold was King, and the Clipper Ship was Queen of the seas. And besides they picture graphically the good and bad art work of their time.

—O—

## AUTOGRAPHS

(Continued from page 14)

wasted his time largely in scribbling; his parents became paupers, and he himself was compelled to apply for relief to the parish.

"My study of Clare leads me to the belief that he was capable only of a very mild effusion of poesy. I do not know whether it is worth while to reproduce my manuscript poem of his—but I will try two or three stanzas at all events:

### SLEEP OF SPRING

"O for that sweet, untroubled rest  
That poets oft have sung,  
The babe upon its mother's breast,  
The bird upon its young,  
The heart asleep, without a pain,  
When shall I know that sleep again.

"I love the weeds along the fen,  
More sweet than garden flowers,  
Freedom haunts the humble glen,  
That blest my happiest hours,  
Here prisons injure health & me  
I love sweet freedom & the free.

"Then toil itself was even play  
'Twas pleasure e'en to weep,  
'Twas joy to think of dreams by day,  
The beautiful of sleep.  
When shall I see the wood & plain  
& dream those happy dreams again.  
To Mary Howitt  
Northampton, July 16, 1844

"I am at a loss to understand how stuff of this sort could ever be accepted as evidence of poetic capacity. The poet's corner of an ordinary country newspaper will give us better results.

"There is a good deal of likeness between those two great masters of the short story, Bret Harte and Rudyard Kipling. While Kipling is easily the superior, Bret Harte really anticipated him, in his own peculiar style, by thirty years, and did for California what his wonderful successor has done for India. Kipling writes:

"April 2, 1896

SIR,—I 'ave received yourn o' the 23th March an the pamphlick likewise, an' am 'ighly pleased to think you as an ex-jolly consider my verses suitable an' instructive to the core, for which I 'ave always 'ad an' ever shall 'old the 'ighest respect. At the same time I takes my pen to deny emphatic, same as Peter, that ever I spoke even quassi-contempshus of the core in anything I ever done; an' the Boston paper don't know anything about it. When I alluded to them as 'bleached,' I meant them as swings their 'ammicks on the lower deck under the electric which makes 'em pale an' like fish-bellies—same as torpedo men & engine room arificers. This is my explanation an' affidavit an' I am

Most respectfully yours to command,  
Rudyard Kipling

"May Bret Harte be considered to be so great that he might as well not be living? He has been absent so long that he seems almost one of the immortal dead, and I may again violate my rule. Nearly a generation has passed since his star rose suddenly out of the West. Unfortunately, his vein was not deep, and he soon exhausted it, while Kipling is able to open new mines in new directions, and abandons the old lodes without a moment's hesitation. Bret Harte's first Eastern publisher was our old friend Carleton, and most of us remember that first edition of the 'Condensed Novels,' with Carleton's cabalistic sign on the title-page. Then came the 'Heathen Chinees' and the 'Luck of Roaring Camp,' and the star blazed all over the firmament. About that time Harte evidently began to think that he had outgrown Carleton and the queer symbol, and even New York, then but a way station on the Grand Trunk Railway, which had its terminus in the modern Athens, on the shores of Back Bay. He hastened to seek the sacred shrine there established in the domains of James R. Osgood & Co., and this is one of his letters to them:

"San Francisco, Jan. 1st, '71  
GENTLEMEN,—Pray accept my thanks for the dozen presentation copies of the

(Continued on page 119)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Dan W. Quinn II

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

THE following continues the late Dan W. Quinn's recollections of his recording career

"I'll never forget how happy I was to go to Washington in September, 1894, and make records for the Columbia Company, which in those days had its headquarters in the Capitol City. I arrived pretty early in the day, tired and begrimed with car smoke. When I reached the place on Pennsylvania Avenue the very first one to greet me was none other than our good friend, Mr. Dorian. My engagement was for a week, singing every day. . . . One happening I remember with particular vividness. Mr. Child (Calvin C. Child, who died in retirement a year or so ago after having been for many years the director of Victor's Red Seal recording department), was then taking records at Columbia, and after a few tests I started in and made several rounds of songs. He took five records off the machine and left me for quite a while. After he returned we went right on with the work and nothing more was said of the incident. One day, after I had run my total of rounds up to 200 for the week, Mr. Child asked if I remembered his going out with the five records. He then told me he had suspected I was lying down on the job because I sang with so little effort, but on taking those samples down to the basement and playing them he had found them all good and loud.

"While I was singing for Columbia on the Washington trip I did considerable work for Mr. Emile Berliner. He had a place a little farther down Pennsylvania avenue. Here was another fine man. It was a treat to see him working on his disc 'gramophone.' I used to make records for him—mostly tests—after I was through with Columbia, and he would turn the old crank round and round and say to me, 'Dan, isn't that fine?' Really and truly, it wasn't so good, but it was his baby and he could foresee wonderful progress. And think what he finally did do with the gramophone and then consider the state of perfection to which he developed the microphone! I'd sing 'Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill!' and when I came to the chorus he'd take a big stick and bang it over a barrel to get the effect of a dynamite explosion. Gee, Ulysses, it was funny!"

Mr. Quinn was right. That "explosion" does sound funny. I have a very old 3,000-series Monarch record of this selection, sung by Mr. Quinn, in which the "realistic" explosion occurs, and it is amusing rather than terrifying. Incidentally, two of the first 10 seven-inch single-faced records made by Victor after Eldridge R. Johnson acquired Berliner's patents were sung by Mr. Quinn. They were the now forgotten "King Gilhooley" and the still remembered, "Strike Up the Band (Here Comes a Sailor)."

The singer again reminisces: "After finishing that September engagement with Columbia, I returned to New York on Saturday, suffering with a cold—and had to leave immediately for Boston. I had arranged to sing a special list of 200 songs for the New England Company, and my engagement began on Tuesday morning. With my cold the outlook was not very promising, but I tackled the job and put in 50 songs right off the reel. I kept getting better and sang my cold out by the time I was ready to go home on Friday afternoon. I had sung 50 songs each day for four days, to the amazement of the New

England crew. I had done 400 songs during the two weeks in Washington and Bristol besides the experimental work with Mr. Berliner.

"Roughly speaking, during my more than 20 years of recording experience, I sang 2,500 titles. I couldn't begin to guess how many millions of copies of my records were sold. During my active days I recorded for practically all American companies: Edison, Victor, Columbia, United States, New Jersey, Chicago, Ohio, Boston, Gramophone, Gennett, Leeds-Catlin, and a number of others. All the phonograph people I came into contact with treated me royally, being kind and courteous to a fault.

"It is a pleasure to recall my former days, now that I am lapsing into the serene and yellow. My wife often went with me on my swings around the circuit, and the memories are beautiful to both of us. On May 5, 1933, we celebrated our fiftieth anniversary. We have five children, all married except our youngest boy, Frank Banta Quinn. We have eight grandchildren and one great-granddaughter." (Note by U. W.—Frank Banta Quinn was named for Mr. Quinn's former accompanist and Edison staff pianist, Frank P. Banta, who died in 1904 at the early age of 33. His son, Frank E. Banta, one of the most brilliant of ragtime and jazz pianists, toured with the Eight Famous Victor Artists for 10 years and is now frequently heard on radio).

"I mentioned the Leeds and Catlin Company. They had only a small plant but it did a land office business for a long while. Ira D. Sankey, the evangelist, worked there every day. He had a Mason and Hamlin melodeon, and put in full time singing all his repertoire of hymns, 'The Ninety and Nine' and all the rest. He turned out thousands of records and they took 'em all.

"But, with all his plugging away, Sankey never equalled my record. Neither did anyone else, so far as I know. A few years ago our booking agency put on a program for the Ediphone Company at the Pennsylvania Hotel. On the program were our old friends, Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, also Ed Meeker, who used to be an Edison staff comedian and the 'announcer' for the old cylinder records. (It's sad to realize that Jones, Hare, Meeker and Mr. Quinn now are all gone.—U. W.) The boys started to have a heated argument regarding a recording session I once had at the Edison works. Ed had worked that day behind the racks, assisting Walter Miller, the recording manager, and of course was supposed to know what he was talking about. He did, but on this occasion he exaggerated terribly. He maintained that I sang 125 songs at one session.

"When I came in I was asked to settle the argument, and Ed was broken-hearted when I told the Happiness Boys, truthfully, that the number was only 74. Even so, the tradition is that this is the best record ever accomplished in the game. It was done without a stop from 10 a. m. to 1:30 p. m., and Mr. Miller is authority that my last 20 rounds were the clearest and best."

Here end the quotations from Mr. Quinn, who, within a year or so after beginning his recording career, was



Dan W. Quinn, New York City, 1933

one of the outstanding favorites on the brown wax cylinders. An interesting souvenir of those old days is a catalog issued in 1899 by the Talking Machine Company (later known as the Babson Brothers, of Chicago), which had placed on the market a cylinder machine known as the "Polyphone." It had two reproducers and was supposed to give twice the volume of sound of ordinary machines. It is said to have sounded pretty good—on the infrequent occasions when the two reproducers tracked together.

At any rate, one of the catalog pages shows a photograph of Mr. Quinn, who had spiky black hair-brushed straight back. In a note addressed to "My dear Douglass" (Leon F. Douglass, one of the officials of the company), he declares that after hearing the Polyphone, "I was not only surprised but delighted with the magnificent reproduction."

Evidently Dan Quinn's endorsement was worth a lot in those days!

(To be continued)

### LINCOLNIANA

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

*Dan W. Quinn III*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

**D**URING MOST of his recording career, Dan W. Quinn was a free-lance, singing for any company which had the price, but in at least one twelve-month period, when the nation was preoccupied with the Spanish-American war, he was under exclusive contract to Columbia.

In a catalogue of cylinder records issued by Columbia in 1899, appears an agreement dated May 1, 1898, which reads:

"To the Columbia Phonograph Co. —We hereby accept the proposition you have made us to give our exclusive services as makers of talking machine records to the Columbia Phonograph Company during the ensuing year." Signers were Vess L. Ossman, ("the Banjo King"), George J. Gaskin, Len Spencer, J. W. Myers, Russell Hunting, Dan W. Quinn, Miss Minnie Emmett, Will F. Denny, George Schweinfest, George W. Johnson, Billy Golden, Steve Porter, J. J. Fisher, the Gilmore Brass Quartette, the Columbia Orchestra, directed by Tom Clark, the Imperial Minstrels and the Spencer Trio (Spencer, Golden and Porter.)

### RECORDS

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**OUT-OF-PRINT RECORDINGS**, classical, operatic, 1800-1940, bought, sold, exchanged.—American Record Collectors Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City, 19. jal2069

**WANTED: MUSIC BOXES** in playing or damaged condition. Will pay highest market prices. Write—Lee Boddy, Iowa Falls, Iowa. my6003

**RECORDINGS**. 500 Crosby, 500 Goodman, thousands every Nameband. Thousands greatest classic singers, 1900-1940. Clarke, Pryor, Sousa specialist. Itemize wants. Exchanges.—Josephine Mayer, St. Barbara, Calif. my6446

This exclusive arrangement apparently lasted only a year. From 1900 on, Mr. Quinn recorded indefatigably for Victor as well as Edison, which already had a long list of cylinders by him. From 1892 to 1902, he enjoyed great popularity and a handsome income, resulting from the grueling work of singing by the "round."

Then master records were found feasible for cylinders, as well as for discs, and the invention filled the recording artists with apprehension. What, they wondered, was to become of their large incomes if it were possible to make a million records or so from one master and the tiresome, but remunerative, job of singing the same songs over and over by the round were done away with? The prospect of a permanent master was particularly vexatious to men with limited repertoires, such as George W. Johnson, "the Whistling Coon," and Billy Golden, who at that time chiefly depended on singing "Turkey in the Straw" over and over to keep going.

With Mr. Quinn, the situation was somewhat different. He was a facile sight reader and would never run out of recording material as long as new songs were written, but he didn't like the idea of singing them only once for a stated fee.

I have a faded photo, taken at the turn of the century, when the Columbia Company brought out its first master cylinders and had some of its

artists make a special trip to the Bridgeport factory for a demonstration. Quinn, Porter, Ossman, Gaskin, Spencer, George Graham and Schweinfest, the piccolo virtuoso, are in the picture and most are looking glum. They could not visualize the future royalty system of paying record makers which caused performers' earnings to soar to heights undreamed of in 1900.

Mr. Quinn continued to make records for several years afterward, although he retired from facing the horn just before the advent of the double-faced record, which made a craze of the phonograph. He was largely a "lone wolf," seldom singing with other artists and apparently never doing quartet work, but he participated in a number of minstrel records and also did some duets with Helen Trix, a Brooklyn girl who later went to England and was an established music hall favorite for more than 30 years. Since the war, she has returned to this country and was living in New York the last time I heard from her. I hope to see her the next time I go to New York.

After giving up record making, Mr. Quinn continued to do some vaudeville work and also operated a theatrical booking agency, which he continued to run until almost the day of his death. He made no double-faced records, so far as I can learn, until they had been on the American market for almost eight years.

But in 1916 Dan Quinn made a brief recording comeback. The Victor "popular" list for April, 1916, was headed by a double-faced Quinn record, containing two songs so appropriately titled that I suspect they must have been written especially for him. They were, "Hello, Boys, I'm Back Again" and "At the Fountain

*Ulysses ("Jim") Walsh, author of the "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" department, and announcer, Dorothy Jennings Turner, giving the "Jim Walsh's Wax Works" radio program from Station WDBJ, Roanoke, Va. The program, heard at 5:30 each Saturday afternoon, consists of playing records from Walsh's large collection, accompanied by factual information concerning recording companies and artists, and frequent ad lib comments by Wax Works host and hostess. This photo was taken without notice during a moment of ad libbing.*



of Youth." He made no more for Victor, but Columbia issued his "Hello, Boys" and "I Can Dance With Everybody But My Wife." Unless he worked for some of the minor companies, he made no more records until 1918 when he appeared on half a dozen Gennett hill-and-dale records. "Oh Frenchy" and other songs of the first World War were among the Gennett titles. They concluded his return as a phonograph singer.

Dan Quinn's last years appear to have been happy—he seems to have possessed a peculiarly intimate quality of radiating a good cheer all his own—although they were saddened by the death of his wife, affectionately known to a generation of vaudevillians as "Mother Quinn," a year or two before his own passing, and the eventual knowledge that he was suffering from an incurable malady. He and I hoped that we should some day be privileged to shake hands at 312 West Twentieth street, and have a "knock down and drag out" chat, or series of chats, about the early recording days, but I was never about to visit New York before he left us. The best I could do was have two or three friends call upon him, bearing messages of greeting from me and receiving good wishes in return.

One of my cherished possessions is an autographed photo sent to me by Mr. Quinn in 1933. By that time he was 74 years of age and his face bore little resemblance to that of the young man who had "endorsed" the Polyphone and signed up exclusively with Columbia back in 1898. Undoubtedly, it looked still less like that of the seven-year-old boy who in 1866 had started going to school in San Francisco, his birthplace. Referring to his venerable years, Mr. Quinn jokingly spoke of himself as: "Dan Quinn, that ancient gent who keeps going on, forever and forever."

An "ancient gent" he may have been, but the white-haired, bespectacled old gentleman of 1933 was a better looking man than the much younger one of 1898. Increasing age only refined his features and brought out his nobility of character. Looking at his photograph as an old man, one realizes that growth was a constant, never-ending process with Dan Quinn, and that he was, at the end of his life, an improvement on what he had been in his prime.

In the worth repeating words of Frank Dorian, he was:

"One of the finest men I have ever known . . . one of the cleanest, hardest-working, most self-respecting of artists."

If any of the pioneer recording artists deserve to be remembered with deep affection—and most of them do—then Dan W. Quinn belongs, on every count, well near the top, with the finest and best of his brethren!



# BELLS



## THE BELL HOBBY

By JAMES F. COOPER

One of my unusual bells is a black clay bell from Oaxaca City, Oaxaca, Mexico. The four mouths and tongues form a cross—really four bells in one. It has a metallic ring. My friend Henry Clements, retired railway postal clerk of Sacramento, got it for me when he was on a vacation trip in Mexico.

Another unique bell is a handmade Basque sheep bell, made in France. The leather strap fastened it to the sheep's neck. It has a bulge and air chamber five inches across, and tapers down to a three inch mouth with a bone clapper. It is six inches high and has a long distance carrying sound because of the air chamber, and a peculiar sound because of the bone clapper.

One Basque sheep herder, when asked to sell one of these bells, refused, as it is the only bell which will keep the coyotes from eating his lambs. He agreed, however, to sell a sheep (which had a bell strapped on its neck) for \$3. The bell was secured and the sheep turned loose after the transaction.

oOo

Another historic bell is one I had polished and especially inscribed as a souvenir of the round trip between San Francisco and Pacific Grove on August 4, 1941, when the first Highway Post Office west of the Mississippi and the third in the U. S. A. was inaugurated. I signed the trip report as co-clerk-in-charge, an honorary position for the trip. There were nine officials and clerks aboard. I also was given a reception at the San Leandro Post Office when the distributing bus passed through. This honorary trip and reception was because I offered the first resolution in the Railway Mail Association that such a service be established; this was 14 years previous. The bell was my idea of a souvenir and was rung at each post office visited enroute.

### BELL MART

UNUSUAL SCANDINAVIAN bells, etc. List for stamp.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. s12264

WANTED: BELLS of all kinds. Send description and price.—Wilson's Old Mexico Shop, 554 W. Mission Dr., San Gabriel, California. my6023

CHILDREN'S VICTORY Bells of America 50c; Victory Bell playlet 18c, plus postage.—Edith Iredale, National Chairman, Altadena, California. my6084

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### BELLS

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Are These the "Supreme Fifteen"?

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

"Whom do you consider the 10 or 12 most outstanding pioneer recording artists?"

That is a question which several enthusiasts have asked me, and it is one I have found so interesting that I have decided to devote one of my HOBBIES articles to discussing it.

Of course, it is understood that personal taste inevitably plays a part in the making of any such selection. However, I have not been seriously guided by my own preferences. For instance, I find most of Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" monologs rather boring, but I cannot blink the fact that he was one of the prime favorites of millions of record buyers. There are also women recording artists whose voices and style I prefer to those of Ada Jones, but anyone who knows the history of the early recording days must bow in tribute to Ada's great versatility and her popularity, which was far greater than any other woman record maker has ever enjoyed.

In compiling this list I have taken into consideration chiefly the various artists' ability; their popularity at the height of their careers; the length of those careers and the extent to which their records find favor among present-day collectors. Having done this, I am partly amused and partly chagrined to find that, instead of selecting "the Supreme Twelve," as I had intended, I have been unable to narrow my list down to fewer than fifteen and have been obliged to put two artists in tying position in each of the three top slots.

For what it is worth, here is my choice of The Supreme Fifteen:

1. Billy Murray—Henry Burr
2. Ada Jones—Len Spencer.
3. Arthur Collins—Byron G. Harlan.
4. Harry MacDonald.
5. Albert Campbell.
6. Frank C. Stanley.
7. Steve Porter.
8. Billy Golden.
9. S. H. Dudley.
10. William F. Hooley.
11. Dan W. Quinn.
12. Cal Stewart.

Perhaps a few notes concerning my selections will be interesting, so here goes:

Billy Murray and Henry Burr: My own personal preference was strongly for letting Billy Murray occupy the No. 1 position alone. Ever since I was six or seven years old he has been my favorite recording artist and today he is one of my dearest friends. No other pioneer has been able to match his record of making records as long ago as 1896 and as recently as 1942. When he was at the peak of his career, his records were the most popular ever made by any singer. The erstwhile "Denver Nightingale," known nowadays to his pals as "The Boss," is certainly one of the greatest names in the history of popular recorded music.

On the other hand, his long-time friend and associate, "Hank" Burr, was the most popular of all ballad singers. During the approximately 30 years in which he recorded, most of the time as a freelance singer for virtually all companies, he probably made twice as many records as any other singer. His fame also is

holding up well and there are probably almost as many collectors who specialize in Burr records as there are Murray fans. It seems only fair, therefore, to put the most popular recording comedian and the best loved ballad singer together on top.

Ada Jones and Len Spencer. Here again was a problem. Len Spencer was the first world-famed recording artist, beginning in 1889 or 1890, and he remained popular until he died in 1914. As an original genius who had mastered all dialects and wrote hundreds of sketches for use by himself and other recording artists, he was unequalled. Yet Ada Jones, one of his discoveries, acquired in a few years a fame that eclipsed his own and, to millions of record buyers, was THE woman singer. I must give them equal prominence.

Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. The recording careers of these one-time enormously popular singers of "coon songs" were so nearly coeval and they were so closely associated for more than 20 years that it would be invidious to give either rank over the other. My own feeling is that Collins, if anything, was the more versatile and accomplished singer and comedian, but that is a mere personal preference.

Harry MacDonald. After the first three places have been filled, making decisions concerning the others becomes progressively more difficult. I think, however, that Harry MacDonald, in view of the fact that he was for many years the second most popular recording ballad singer, second only to Burr, and was also the star of the Haydn, Edison and Orpheus Quartets, is entitled to fourth place. Nor should his later career as head of the Victor artist and repertoire department and recording director for Columbia be forgotten. As a versatile

artist and executive, MacDonald, I think, belongs fourth.

Albert Campbell. Here again, personal acquaintance and strong friendship perhaps should be discounted, but I believe that my friend, Al Campbell, whose recording career began in the mid-90's and extended more than 30 years into the electric era, chiefly as first tenor in the later years of the Peerless Quartet, belongs fifth.

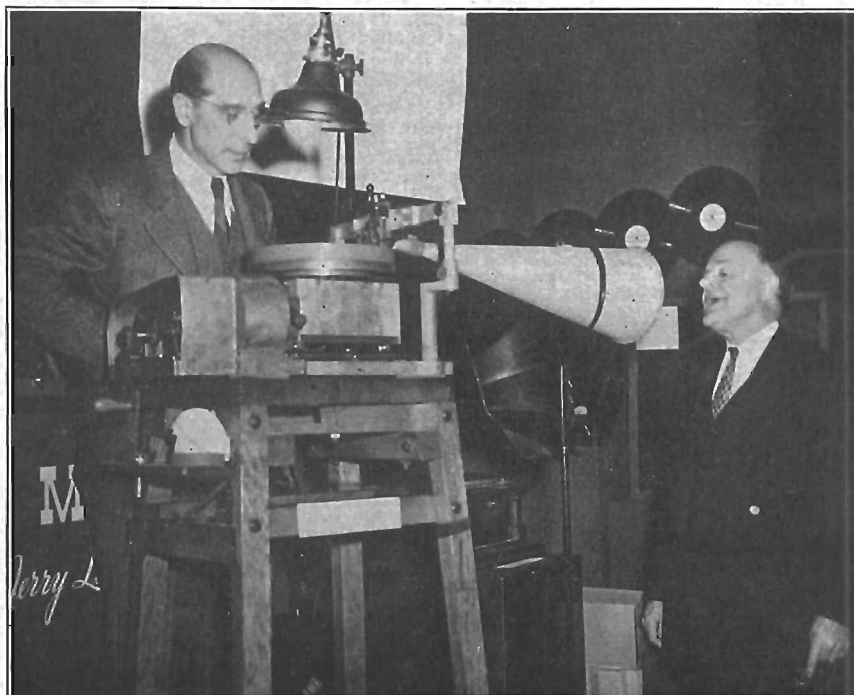
Frank C. Stanley. Of all the artists considered here, Frank Stanley had the shortest career—from 1898 until his death in 1910. His genius as a composer of songs, writer of sketches and developer of the talent of other artists was so great, however, that had he lived longer I think he would rank even higher than sixth. Perhaps his crowning achievement was forming the Peerless Quartet, but after playing over scores of his records I have about decided that he had the greatest natural vocal gifts of any of the pioneers.

Steve Porter. From now on, choice of place becomes ever harder, and I admit that the "standings" from here down have been shuffled more than once. Steve Porter, however, as the writer and recorder of innumerable hilarious Irish sketches and the accomplished baritone of the American, Premier and Harmonizers Quartets appears to belong no lower than seventh.

Billy Golden. As the perpetrator of "Turkey in de Straw," "Rabbit Hash" and such seemingly immortal "coon specialties," Billy Golden takes high rank. I can't remember ever hearing a recorded word by him that wasn't spoken or sung in Negro dialect, but millions of people relished his inimitable performances.

S. H. Dudley. Because of his long popularity as a recorder of comic songs and as baritone of the Haydn and Edison Quartets, S. H. Dudley would deserve a place among the immortals. But when we consider that he was also for many years the Victor catalog editor, that he wrote the first editions of the Victor Book of the Opera and was a long time in charge of Victor's popular recording activities, it is hard to see how he can be placed lower than ninth. If he hadn't quit recording in 1914,

Billy Murray, considered by many collectors to be the greatest pioneer recording artist, is shown here as a guest artist on Jerry Lawrence's Wax Museum radio program, demonstrating how disc records were made in the acoustic recording era. Standing behind the recording horn is Freddie Mesch, veteran Victor recording engineer. This photo was made in 1943, when Lawrence's program was on WOR, New York. It is now heard from WMCA.



sombody higher up probably would have to make room for him.

William F. Hooley. "Bill" Hooley began making records in the '90's and kept at it until 1918, when he died. As the "foundation" for the Haydn, American, Premier, Orpheus, Lyric and other quartets, this great basso is entitled, I think, to rank with the first ten.

Dan W. Quinn. Dannie Quinn was one of the most popular recorders from around 1894 to 1907 or 1908. Almost a decade later he made a brief comeback. The "spottiness" of his career in his later years is my reason for placing this lovable Irish gentleman no higher than eleventh.

Cal Stewart. Certainly, the creator of "Uncle Josh," who made his famous "Punkin Center" records more than 20 years before his death in 1920, is entitled to recognition. He created a whole village, whose mythical inhabitants were as familiar to the average record buyer as their relatives and friends.

So there they are—my choice of the Supreme 15. It is a wrench to leave out such beloved names as genial John Biebling, who was first tenor in the Haydn, American and Edison Quartets for so many years; Russell Hunting, Sr., who was arbitrarily removed from consideration because during the overwhelmingly greater part of his career he worked abroad; Vess L. Ossman, "the Banjo King"; John W. Myers; Charles D'Almaine, pioneer violinist; Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison, the gospel song singers; Edward M. Favor; "Ragtime Bob" Roberts, one of my own prime favorites; Harry Tally; Will F. Denny; Joe Natus; George P. Watson, and Corinne Morgan, the only woman pioneer recorder, aside from Ada Jones, who could possibly be considered for inclusion in my list.

An interesting fact is that, of all the fifteen I have chosen, only Burr, who began making records in 1902 or 1903, and Ada Jones, who started in 1904, were not recording before 1900. Only three are alive as I write—Murray, Campbell and Dudley. Billy is in his 60's; Al in his 70's and S. H. in his robust 80's. All used their real names for recording purposes, excepting Burr, who was really Harry H. McClaskey; Macdonough (John S. Macdonald); Stanley (Frank Stanley Grinstead, and Dudley (Sam H. Rous).

Now let's hear from John L. Norton, Sr., Jimmy Martindale, Jack Via, Henry Hamblen, Angus Joss, Frank Gloodt, Walter McDonald, "Mac" McKee, Charles Clark, Allan Debus, Joe Fortgang, Cecil Smith, Charlie Hodgdon and all the other lovers of the pioneers. I'd like to see how closely their lists agree or disagree with mine. If I get enough, perhaps I can compile a symposium and publish the result.



# BELLS



## Bell Memory of World War I

By WM. A. BARNHILL

**D**URING WORLD War One, as an officer in the U. S. Army, I was stationed at Fort Kaiser Alexander in Germany after the armistice. This fort is situated just outside the city of Coblenz on a hill near the junction of the Rhine and the Moselle Rivers. According to Baedeker's Rhine guide book, before the fort was established here it was a Carthusian Monastery for about 150 years.

While exploring the long passageways under the fort one day I glanced up and noticed a small bell fastened to the high vaulted ceiling, just discernible in the faint light of the tunnel. My interest as a collector was aroused. I went back a few days later with one of my men and we managed to detach the bell from the ceiling. It was fastened to a broad flat spring with a wire attached, which we traced to the outside wall where it had a handle attached to it. Upon pulling the handle the bell would jangle. No doubt it was used as a signal or alarm for the men in the fort.

After getting the bell down, and into the daylight, I was more than thrilled to find it made of bronze, with a raised crucifix on the face and the number 16 on the back. The size of

the bell is five inches in diameter by five inches high overall. The tone is high pitched and the bell gives off tone vibrations for a full minute after it has been struck with a tapper. Unfortunately there is no identifying mark or date on the bell.

I have always wanted to trace the history of the bell. I believe it must be one of the smaller bells of a set of chimes. There were some chimes in the clock tower of the main barracks building at the fort that struck the hours. It did not occur to me at the time to explore this tower. Perhaps the chimes were the spoils of war and were taken from some church or it may be that they descended from the monastery. Who knows?

## A Bell Designed From Temple

**M**OST TYPES of Javanese bells are in the shape of Borobudur temples which are located about 20 miles from Djokjaharta. The idea of the dragon is to protect the deity. The men who are standing are the guards. The temples of Borobudur have hundreds of bells that are in the temples, decorated with dragons and guards.

### BELL MART

UNUSUAL SCANDINAVIAN bells, etc. List for stamp.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. s12264

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison. I.

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH



This is the first time in the more than three years that I have been writing these biographical sketches that I have combined an account of the activities of two pioneer recording artists. It is appropriate to do so in this instance, however, because to the disc and cylinder buyers of a generation ago, "Harry Anthony" and "James F. Harrison" seemed virtually one personality, as nearly inseparable as ham and eggs, pork and beans, Mutt and Jeff or the Katzenjammer Kids.

On second thought, these comparisons may be poorly chosen, for they suggest humor, whereas the recorded work of Anthony and Harrison was always serious. This accomplished tenor and baritone were known almost entirely, during the less than a decade in which they sang regularly together, as specialists in the rendering of gospel hymns. As concert artists, they were also skilled and cultivated singers, under their own names, of higher types of music, but on "platters" and "oatmeal boxes" their reputation was based almost entirely on excellent duet versions of such familiar tunes as "Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown?" and "When the Mists Have Rolled Away." Unlike most recording artists of that period, they never essayed comedy.

The ultra-devoutness of their work won them high esteem, especially in what has been called the Southern "Bible Belt." This I learned while still a small boy, hardly more than out of rompers, but already reading and absorbing everything I could find on the subject of phonographs and records.

One fine fall day I strolled into a drug store where cylinder records were on display. Soon, a farmer who had just sold his crop of tobacco pushed open the front door and loudly announced that "the old woman and the kids" had asked him to fetch home a few "pieces" for the graphophone. He was explicit concerning the kind of cylinders he wanted, in spite of the fact that he obviously had been swallowing strong waters and was unsteady on his legs.

"I don't," said the red-faced agriculturist, "hold with these here ragtime reels. What I want is some good old-time pieces like the songs I learned at my mother's knee. I want some good hymn tunes by this here Anthony an' Harrison. They sing good pious pieces, an' ef I held with gamblin'—which I don't—I'd lay they was godly men."

Here the infant Walsh piped up. "I ain't so sure," he said to the farmer, that Anthony and Harrison are such godly men. They've changed their names to John Young and Frederick J. Wheeler, so maybe that means the police are after 'em!"

This intently funny remark met with no favor. Disdainfully glaring at the precocious youngster, the rustic snappishly retorted:

"Is that so? Well, young'un, it don't matter to me if they calls themselves Adam an' Eve! I believe Anthony an' Harrison are godly men, an' I cotton to their pieces a heap mo'n I do to these here cussed ragtime reels!"

So saying, he chose "Tarry With Me," "Softly Now the Light of Day," "When the Mists Have Rolled Away" and a few other Anthony and Harrison duets, and after having insultingly spurned a proposal that he add "Uncle Josh Keeps House" to his collection, vibrated out of the store. If I had been a betting tot, which I wasn't, I would have laid five to one that he dropped and smashed those fragile cylinders before he reached his wagon. But I didn't follow him to find out. I stayed in the drug store to listen entranced to the latest Billy Murray record.

In thinking that Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison had discarded their established names in favor of new ones, I had the facts reversed. Their real names actually were John Young and Frederick J. Wheeler. Both had well-deserved reputations for excellent church, concert and oratorio singing and had thought it advisable to use fictitious names for their recording activities until the standard of reproduction improved to the point where they considered no harm would be done to their professional reputations by its being known that they sang into the old-fashioned horn. As records improved, a reputation for making good ones became one of a singer's greatest assets. Recognizing this, the duetists ceased, for the most part, calling themselves "Anthony and Harrison" and stepped forth as Young and Wheeler, although the earlier team is the one by which they are best remembered nowadays.

I think both Mr. Young and Mr. Wheeler are still alive, although I have not heard from either for several years. In the days when I corresponded with Mr. Wheeler, he lived at 159 Radford Street, Yonkers, N. Y., but my friend, Harry Hunting, son of Russell Hunting, Sr., about whom I wrote in this department some months ago, recently made a special trip to the Radford street address in the hope of finding out something for me about the baritone, and was told he had not lived there for years and no information was available concerning his present whereabouts. When I was in New York late in 1940, however, several recording artists told me Mr. Wheeler was still alive.

Unfortunately, I lost the few letters I received from Mr. Young and am obliged to depend upon my memory for recollections of what he told me about his recording activities. When we corresponded, he was living in New York City and was a member of the once-famous Roxy Quartet.

Neither singer seemed to be certain just when he began to make records. Young said he remembered making cylinders, "and think I may have made some of the old two-minute wax ones," but had no idea of the year in which his career as a recording artist started. He was certainly recording as long ago as 1903 or 1904, for I have a Leeds record by "Harry Anthony" which goes back to that period, a year or so before

he formed his memorable association with Mr. Wheeler. His name does not, however, appear in the 1903 catalog of Edison cylinder records.

Before taking up singing as a profession, Mr. Wheeler (who, like Young, was a native New Yorker), worked briefly as a reporter on a Utica newspaper. Then, after receiving recognition as an accomplished church singer, he came to the attention of the old Universal Talking Machine Company, which made Zonophone records before Victor bought out the Zonophone business in 1903.

And now I shall quote from one of Mr. Wheeler's letters:

"Looking back upon the happy days spent in the recording laboratories during many years seems indeed quite like a dream. I still have some of my old records to remind me.

"If my memory serves me correctly, my first recording was for the old Universal Talking Machine Co. I remember that at that time I was struggling to 'make both ends' meet, so to speak, and when a year's contract was offered me by this company for the grand total of \$1,400, I immediately experienced the feeling of what financial relief means. Well, the funny thing about that year's work was that shortly after signing the contract something happened at the recording laboratory and work was soon suspended. I made only four or five records during the whole year, but I collected just the same.

"It was shortly after that contract expired when the opportunity to join the Edison forces occurred. I remember going to the laboratory at Orange, N. J., for my first 'date' and it was an exciting day, I assure you. That first record was 'Old Jim's Christmas Hymn' and was sung as a duet, my teammate being 'Al' Campbell, who has also been a popular recording artist all these years. For some reason, we did not continue our team work. I can't recall why, and it was soon after that when the team of 'Anthony and Harrison' was formed for the recording of sacred hymns. I think I can safely say that they scored a great success and were always counted as among 'the big sellers.'"

Here I shall stop quoting Mr. Wheeler long enough to say that the Campbell-Harrison duet of "Old Jim's Christmas Hymn" was issued, rather out of season, in June, 1904, with the number of 8708. Campbell and Harrison also sang together on two other Edison cylinders, 8734, "My Old New Hampshire Home," which has interest as being the first big hit ever written (in 1899) by the famous song writing team of Andrew B. Sterling and Harry Von Tilzer, and 8839, "Rock of Ages." The "Hampshire" record was issued in the July, 1904, supplement, and the hymn in November. The supplement commented: "Ever since 'Old Jim's Christmas Hymn' we have had many requests . . . to have these artists make a complete record of 'Rock of Ages,' a part of which is given in 'Old Jim's Christmas Hymn.' . . . The music was specially arranged for this record, the second verse being differently sung from the first, although Dr. Hastings' old familiar tune is retained throughout. This is one of the best religious records that we have ever put out."

Already, although "Anthony and Harrison," had not struck up their partnership, the name of "James F. Harrison" was being associated with hymns.

To be continued

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison. II.

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

THE FIRST Anthony and Harrison duet record appears to have been made for Edison, the company with which the singers were most closely associated for the greater part of their careers. It appeared in the May, 1905, record list and, rather oddly, was not a "sacred song," in the strict sense of the term. Instead, it was a musical setting of Longfellow's famous poem, "Excelsior."

In those days Edison published a little monthly magazine, "The New Phonogram," devoted to giving descriptions of records and answering questions about recording artists. Of "Excelsior," the Phonogram said:

"This famous musical setting by M. W. Balfe of Longfellow's poem introduces a new team of duettists in Anthony and Harrison, who sing tenor and baritone respectively. . . . The singers are accompanied by the orchestra. . . . The record is one that will be wanted by every lover of high class music."

The singers' true gospel hymn note was struck in October, 1905, when a two-minute cylinder 9105, "When the Mists Have Rolled Away," was issued and had a huge sale. Said the New Phonogram:

"A sacred selection, the words of which were written by Annie Herbert and the music by Ira D. Sankey. It makes a splendid duet record. As Messrs. Anthony and Harrison are both choir singers in one of the principal New York churches they are able to give the hymn a perfect interpretation."

The team appears to have made no Columbia records until two cylinders, 33034 and 33035, were issued in December, 1906. The selections were "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning" and "Over the Line." In ensuing months, these hymns were also offered on discs, and Anthony and Harrison discs and cylinders appeared almost every month.

For some reason, the now prosperous and popular tenor and baritone did not make a Victor connection until 1910. On page 4 of Victor's July record supplement of that year, under the heading, "The First Anthony-Harrison Duet," the following appeared:

"5780. 'See the Pale Moon' . . . The Victor announces with pleasure the engagement of these well-known singers for a series of duets, both secular and sacred. The first of these is a smooth and perfectly balanced rendition of Fabio Campana's famous duet, which many great singers have been pleased to include in their repertoire."

"The fact that these duettists have been singing together for a long time will be quite evident to those who hear this beautiful record. The perfect sympathy which exists between the artists is a delight to the listener."

During the next two years, the tenor and baritone sang several hymns for Victor, but since their work for that company began comparatively late, their Victor list never attained the proportions of their Edison and Columbia titles.

About this time, Mr. Wheeler made one or two Columbia records under the name of Frederick Wheeler, and John Young records appeared in both Victor and Columbia lists.

The May, 1912, complete Victor record catalog carried a biographical sketch of Mr. Young, accompanied by a photograph of the tenor, who in those days disguised his youthful appearance by wearing a mustache. It read:

"John Young is one of America's representative concert tenors and has won great popularity because of his fine voice, the intelligence and good taste of his singing, his unusually good enunciation and agreeable personality."

"Mr. Young has filled engagements with some of the foremost musical societies and festivals, including the New York Oratorio Society, Brooklyn Institute, Albany Musical Association, Troy

Choral Club, Syracuse Liederkrantz, Choral Club of St. Paul, etc., and at the Annual Festivals in Nashua, Manchester and Macon."

The tenor also told me that he had sung as soloist with many of the large symphony orchestras and in concert with some of the most famous operatic stars—all of which is evidence that he possessed vocal ability far in excess of that required to sing hymns of the sort popular in country churches. Although his voice was too light for "heroic" roles, he occasionally made operatic records in English, a notable one being the *Miserere* from *Trovatore*, with Elise Stevenson as the soprano, sung for Columbia.

Mr. Young was exceptionally careful to make sure that no harm befell his voice. Billy Murray laughingly told me that, on a number of occasions when he and Young went out together in the evenings, his friend would walk with a handkerchief placed over his mouth as a precaution against taking cold. This extreme caution was puzzling to the immortal Billy, who trained for recording engagements by going to baseball games or six-day bicycle races and yelling his head off.

During this period, Mr. Wheeler also was successful in concert work, besides making records for all the companies then putting out discs and cylinders in America. He appears to have acquired the sobriquet of "the Golden Voiced Baritone," judging by an item in the March, 1911, issue of the *Talking Machine News*, of London:

"James F. Harrison, known throughout our colonies as the Golden Voiced Baritone, who recently finished his American tour with Sembrich, the great operatic singer, was everywhere voted an enormous success. Edison Amberol record No. 680, 'Tell Mother I'll Be There,' is recorded by this famous artist."

"Of course," Mr. Wheeler remarked, in writing to me, "Mr. Young and myself were not confined to the recording of duets. We both made solo records, sang with such quartets as the Edison Mixed Quartet, the Knickerbocker Male Quartet and in various kinds of chorus work, etc."

Since little is known nowadays concerning the organizations mentioned by Mr. Wheeler, I may say that the Edison Mixed Quartet, formed in the early 1900's, was at first composed of a Miss Chapel (her first name seems never to have been printed), soprano; Corinne Morgan (who, under her real name of Corinne Welsh, sang in the same church choir with Young and Wheeler), contralto; George M. Stricklett, tenor, and Frank C. Stanley, one of the greatest of all pioneer recording artists, bass. Anthony and Harrison came into it after Stanley's death in 1910. The Knickerbocker Quartet, formed in 1908, was originally Stricklett, second tenor; Anthony, first tenor; Harrison, baritone, and Gus Reed, bass. After Diamond Discs began to take place of Edison cylinders, Harvey Hindermeyer became second tenor and Donald Chalmers, bass.

Anthony and Harrison, or Young and Wheeler, as they were by this time better known, did little work together after 1912, when Mr. Young signed an exclusive Edison contract, while Mr. Wheeler elected to go on free-lancing and formed associations with other popular recording artists. Among these was the contralto, Elsie Baker, with whom he sang for both Victor and Columbia until Miss Baker, who later became a Victor Red Seal Star, signed an exclusive contract with that company. On popular song records they called themselves Edna Brown and James F. Harrison. In concert numbers, they were Baker and Wheeler.

## Autographs

### Meditations of an Autograph Collector

IN RECENT ISSUES we have quoted from a book written more than 42 years ago by an autograph collector, Adrian H. Joline, for Harper and Brothers. The book was well named. Joline showed a fine knowledge of books and of history, a knowledge which he had enriched with his hobby. We quote briefly again from his comments and his letters.

"Even that cold-hearted, unimaginative person who sees in an autograph letter only a fragment of faded paper with irregular tracings of ink, and cannot comprehend the sensations of the collector when he realizes that he has before him the actual handiwork of the great man who made those tracings, will sometimes grant us the concession that there is a merit about a book which has 'associations.' I cannot explain why this is so; perhaps he thinks he could write a better letter himself, whereas he knows that he could not make a book, and the book has a tangible quality, a sort of solid reality about it which appeals to his materialistic nature. I find that I can always arouse a gleam of intelligence when I show this person such a book, while he will turn a dull, lack-lustre eye upon a precious letter of John Keats, or one of Alexander Pope, or even a page of Dean Swift or Samuel Johnson. In my own few volumes of this kind, there is a field

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Her next public appearance was in 1895 at the Teatro Lirico, Milan, where she was engaged by Sonzogno to sing the title role in the premiere of Coronaro's new opera, *Claudia*. She was a resounding success. Even Sonzogno's powerful rival, Ricordi, wrote her name in his "Golden Book," while Sonzogno himself gave her the privilege of singing exclusively whatever role she might choose for the next season. Santuzza (*Cavalleria Rusticana*) was her choice and the following year she sang it repeatedly, appearing in other roles as well.

Then she was prevailed upon to interrupt her well-launched career and return to Philadelphia. Stopping off at Paris en route from Milan, she found that in agreeing to return to America she had spoiled a great opportunity. Sbriglia, the famous singing teacher with whom she had consulted before going to Milan, had persuaded Massenet to reserve for her the leading role in his forthcoming opera, *Sapho*. What young soprano could ask for more than to create such a colorful and important part? Nevertheless, because she had promised to go home, home she went. To make things still worse, when she arrived in Philadelphia, she found she had been imposed upon. Immediately resuming her career, she joined Colonel Mapleson's company for the season of 1896-97, and sang in some of the first American performances of *Andrea Chenier*. Her interpretation of the heroine was warmly praised by the Boston and Philadelphia critics.

The next year Maurice Grau engaged her for the Metropolitan where she made her debut as Santuzza on December 17, 1898. Later she toured the United States with the Damrosch-Ellis Opera Company for 18 weeks, alternating with Melba and Gadski. Other members of the company included De Lussan, Olitzka, Ceppi, Dippel, Pandolfini and Van Hoose.

(To be continued)



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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists *Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison. III.*

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

AFTER Mr. Young became an exclusive Edison artist, he also became first tenor of the Criterion Quartet, whose members gave "tone tests," demonstrating that no difference could be detected between the ensemble's actual singing and the New Edison's reproduction of their work, and filled hundreds of other concert engagements throughout the country. The quartet's personnel changed considerably through the years, but at the height of its popularity it consisted of Young, first tenor; Harvey Hindermeyer, second tenor; George W. Reardon, baritone, and Donald Chalmers, an Edison staff artist, bass. After radio came in and the Roxy theater, from which the popular "Roxy's Gang" program emanated in New York, was built, the quartet changed its name to the Roxy Quartet and was extremely popular for years.

Incidentally, the Criterion Quartet was formed, in 1903 or 1904, by the still active baritone, Reinald Werrenrath, then only about 20 years old. Other members were Robert R. Rainey, first tenor; William A. Washburn, second tenor, and Walter A. Downie, bass, none of whom were still singing in the foursome by the time Mr. Young joined it. The first Criterion Quartet made records for Edison, Columbia and Leeds, but never rivaled in popularity the established recording quartets of that day.

A short-lived Edison organization in which Young sang from 1917 to 1919 was the Harmony Four, consisting, besides himself, of Gladys Rice, soprano; George Wilton Ballard, second tenor, and Chalmers, bass. He also made some later duets with Helen Clark for the Gennett "Art-Tone" series, in which he was rather frivolously listed as "Jack" Young.

Meanwhile, as has already been mentioned, Mr. Wheeler was beginning his long series of baritone-contralto duets with the young and charming Elsie Baker. He continued to sing Edison duets with Mr. Young, but in 1915 struck up a recording partnership for other com-

panies with Reed Miller, a distinguished concert tenor who died in 1923. They were very successful for several years, but did not sing hymns.

"For popular songs and duets we always used the nom de plume of James Reed and James F. Harrison," Mr. Wheeler wrote. For more pretentious singing, the pair called themselves by their real names.

"I suppose," the baritone commented, "the idea was to give varied names for the catalogs and monthly lists of records, although when I first started recording for the Edison company most singers used other than their own names. Young aspiring concert singers thought at that time that to use their own names for the so-called 'canned music' would be unwise. But my phonograph experience through many years is among the most cherished recollections of my career as a concert, church and opera singer."

After several years as an exclusive Edison singer, Mr. Young returned to his former free-lance status. When John Bieling dropped out of the American Quartet in 1918, after the death of William F. Hooley, the quartet bass, Young took Bieling's place as first tenor and the organization consisted for the next few years of Young; Billy Murray, second tenor and star; Steve Porter, baritone; and Donald Chalmers, bass. Young and Chalmers likewise continued to sing in the Criterion Quartet. Still later the tenor became more interested in radio than recording work and devoted most of his time to appearances with the Roxy Gang.

Meanwhile, although they were no longer working actively together, the friendship between the erstwhile "Anthony and Harrison" continued. After Victor Emerson, one of the pioneer recording experts, left the Columbia company in 1916 to found the Emerson Phonograph company, he must have recalled how fast the Anthony-Harrison gospel hymn duets had sold, for in 1922 Emerson issued a double-faced record by

## EDISON DIAMOND DISC LIST

### Part 4

- DELNA, Marie  
83036 Jocelyn—Berceuse (1914)  
83019 Prophete—Ah, mon fils (1914)  
83024 Samson—Mon coeur (1914)
- DEL VALLE, Loretto  
82279 Magic Flute—Der holle Rache/RAPPOLD & URLUS (1922)
- DESTINN, Emmy  
82527 Butterfly—Un bel di (1914)  
82525 Gioconda—Suicidio (1913)  
82531 Tosca—Vissi d'arte (1914)
- DE TREVILLE, Yvonne  
80296 Chanson provencale/WHY (1915)  
82334 Lakme—Bél Song/HOWARD (1925)
- DE VERE, Clementine  
82057 Coeur et la Main—Bolero (1914)  
82057 Grand Mogul—Valse des Serpents (1914)  
83033 Maritana—Scenes that are brightest (1917)
- DORRIAN, William  
80195 Pearl Fishers—Mi par d'udire (1915)
- DUCHENE, Maria  
80766 Prophete—Ah, mon fils (1923)  
80766 Trovatore—Stride la vampa (1923)
- DUFAULT, Paul  
74011 Amadis—Bois epais (This artist also recorded a number of French songs in the 74,000 series)
- EASTON, Florence  
82355 Lohengrin—Elsa's Traum (1929)  
82355 Tannhauser—Gebet (1929)
- EDISON, T. A.  
50509 Let us not forget (A message to the American people) (1918)
- ERROLLE, Ralph  
82560 Roi d'Ys—Vainement (1918)
- FERRARI-FONTANA, Edoardo  
82555 Inno di Garibaldi (1918)  
83057 Tosca—E lucevan (1917)

the two singers in their old familiar style, although under their rightful names of John Young and Frederick J. Wheeler.

Nor was that all. Veteran Columbia record buyers must have rubbed their eyes when, late in 1926, electrically recorded double-faced record No. 611-D appeared. It was sung by "Anthony and Harrison" precisely as they would have sung it twenty years before and without the slightest falling off in the quality of their excellent voices. One side was "Almost Persuaded"; the other, "Softly and Tenderly." The accompaniment was by violin, cello and organ, a fact which irked a rather snooty reviewer who wrote in the Phonograph Monthly Review:

"Beware of this suspicious combination of instruments. This particular record almost drives me to profanity."

By 1926, the phonograph was appealing to a more musically cultured and sophisticated audience than had patronized it years before. This duo was not followed by others and, as far as I have been able to learn, it represents the last recorded work of the once highly popular tenor and baritone. I have long wondered how it happened that the "boys" teamed up for that 1926 offering and went back to their old Anthony-Harrison designation instead of calling themselves Young and Wheeler.

In listing their various accomplishments, neither Mr. Young nor Mr. Wheeler mentioned that they had appeared in the pioneer talkies, but their voices were recorded in Thomas A. Edison's first "talking pictures" (silent films synchronized with Edison records, somewhat on the Vitaphone principle), which were shown in theaters throughout the country in 1913 and 1914.

Discussing his latter-day activities, Mr. Wheeler, writing at the height of the pre-war depression, said:

"We so-called old-time singers have been badly hit by the radio and talkies. It seems that the new and young singers are the ones in demand now."

"Concert work has also been affected greatly, and the light opera game sorely hit. I am doing but little, outside of church work, but still have hopes of breaking in on the radio some fine day."

I don't know whether Mr. Wheeler is still singing, but if he is, I am certain he has far more of genuine musical ability and vocal equipment than the average younger singer of the present day, and the same thing is true of Mr. Young.

Both singers were asked for their photographs. Mr. Young replied that he was sorry he did not have a suitable one, but Mr. Wheeler sent me a picture which I still cherish. Whether disguising themselves as Anthony and Harrison or using the names which rightfully belonged to them, they were splendid artists, and I hope they are still in our midst, enjoying good health and happiness.

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## The Curious History of Music Boxes

By Mosorik & Heckert

*The story of automatic musical instruments, from their earliest conception down through the years to the invention of the phonograph, is authentically traced in this unusual book, that contains the description and interesting historical background of music boxes of all types, and illustrates many of the rarest examples. Some of these took strange shapes, such as the butterfly music box, or the musical pistol, and many others, and are pictured for the first time in this limited edition, which also includes a section on*

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Eugenia Mantelli: Any Zonophones by this artist, especially her Carmen arias on 40075.

Phonograph Record Catalogs, Monthly supplements, etc.

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The following issues of VOICE OF THE VICTOR a trade magazine published by Victor: Anything prior to No. 8, Vol. VII, Sept. 1912 AND 1913: May, June, Sept., Oct. and Dec.; 1918: Jan.; 1917: March, Oct. and Dec.; 1918: Jan., April, June-to-Dec.; 1919: Jan. to June and Nov.; 1922: Jan., March and Oct.; 1925: Oct. Anything after "Late Fall," 1930.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### Collectors' Vote on "The Supreme Fifteen."

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

**B**ILLY MURRAY is the collectors' choice for the title of Greatest Pioneer Recording Artist.

So, at least, I judge on the basis of comments which have been mailed to me since my article, "Are These the Supreme Fifteen?" appeared in the June issue of HOBBIES. As you may remember, I not only gave my choice for the top 15, but invited other collectors to vote, keeping in my mind not so much personal preference for a given artist's work as the necessity of evaluating the performer on the basis of popularity, length of career and lasting quality of his or her reputation. As an example of the attitude I meant, I said that my own preference was strongly for putting Billy Murray in first place by himself, but I had decided it would be only fair to give Henry Burr, the most popular of recording ballad singers, equal rank with the great comedian.

My other choices were: For second place—Ada Jones and Len Spencer; third—Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan; fourth—Harry Macdonough; fifth—Albert Campbell; sixth—Frank C. Stanley; seventh—Steve Porter; eighth—Billy Golden; ninth—S. H. Dudley; tenth—William F. Hooley; eleventh—Dan W. Quinn, and twelfth—Cal Stewart.

I had given a great deal of thought to my selections and it turns out that I hit the average collector's taste pretty well. Fourteen of my choices finished among the first 15 after all the "returns" had been tabulated. Hooley, however, was nosed out by "Ragtime Bob" Roberts, one of my own prime favorites, whose records I enjoy much more than some of the artists who appeared on my personal list.

Before I give the results of my tabulation, I should explain that I had some difficulty in deciding just how the results should be recorded. Although I had intended the voting to

apply only to pioneer recording artists—those who had established their reputations before double-faced disc records and four-minute cylinders became popular in 1909—a few collectors included votes for some who came into vogue later. I tabulated these, although strictly, they did not belong in the balloting.

Each time an artist was voted to be the collector's favorite for the No. 1 spot, I credited him with 15 points. One listed for second place got 14; third place, 13, and so on down until the one placing 15th got only one point. In the case of one collector who sent a list of 20 favorites, I decided to give the final six one point each. A few collectors did not give a complete list of 15. In such a case, I gave the first choice 15 points, and the others followed downward until the points "ran out." Where a collector indicated a tie for first place or any other, I gave both contenders the full value of their votes. If this seems a bit unfair, I can only say I think it fairer to credit two singers listed in a first place tie with 15 points each, than to give them 7½ points each and let the second place entrant have 14.

And now, here is the composite result of the voting of HOBBIES' readers. The figure after the artist's name indicates the number of votes he or she received, according to the "point system":

1. Billy Murray, 173.
2. Henry Burr, 129.
3. Arthur Collins, 110.
4. Byron G. Harlan, 101.
5. Frank C. Stanley, 90.
6. Ada Jones, 83.
7. Harry Macdonough, 79.
8. Len Spencer, 78.
9. Albert Campbell, 64.
10. Billy Golden—Steve Porter, 58.
11. Dan W. Quinn, 47.
12. S. H. Dudley, 39.
13. Cal Stewart, 33.
14. Bob Roberts & Nora Bayes, 26.

Those, on the basis of the comments that reached me, are the Supreme 15. Other artists who received votes were: Harry Tally, 24; J. W. Myers, 23; Marion Harris, 21; William F. Hooley, 18; Eddie Morton, 17; James F. Harrison, 16; Will F. Denny, 14; Edward M. Favor, 14; Jack Norworth, 13; Aileen Stanley, 13; Frances White, 11; J. Aldrich Libbey, 11; Bert Williams, John Biebling, Johnny Marvin, Arthur Fields and Al Bernard, 10 each; Sam Ash and A. D. Madeira, 9; Harry Anthonny, Joe Hughes, Jim Marlowe, Joseph Natus and Walter Van Brunt, 8; Nat M. Wills, 4; Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, 3; Helen Trix, Corinne Morgan, Gus Van and Joe Schenk, 2; Manuel Romain, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, George Gaskin, Elise Stevenson, Eliz-

abeth Brice and Charles King, 1.

And now let's have some comments from the collectors. The first letter to reach me was from Allen G. Debus, of Glenview, Ill. Allen is only about 20, but his fervent interest in old records and the artists who made them shows that today's youngsters are able to appreciate music other than "swing" when they are given the chance.

Allen took the time and trouble to make three lists—the first, which I tabulated, containing his honest efforts to list the performers in the relative order of their importance, without regard to his own preferences; the second, a "purely personal" tabulation, and the third classifying the artists according to the number of records he has by each.

In the "unprejudiced" list, Debus lined them up as follows: 1—Murray; 2—Collins; 3—Harlan; 4—Burr—Campbell; 5—Spencer; 6—Bert Williams; 7—Ada Jones; 8—Macdonough; 9—Porter; 10—Quinn; 11—Stanley; 12—Golden; 13—Dudley; 14—Stewart. His list contained the same names as my original one, although not in the same order, except that he dropped Hooley to make room for Bert Williams, the famous Negro comedian whom it had not occurred to me to think of as a pioneer recording artist at all. However, since Williams made records with his partner, George Walker, for Victor as long ago as 1901, he has a right to be on the list.

"I seriously believe," Allen remarked, "that Bert Williams should be given a high place on any list of the great recorders. He certainly made some of the most entertaining records I have ever listened to. Perhaps Sir Harry Lauder should be given a place in the top 15 also." To the latter remark, I would reply that Lauder should rank near the head of any list of the great pioneer British recording artists, but the Hobbies voting was intended to apply only to Americans.

Allen's second list, based on his personal prejudices, again puts Billy Murray at the top. (The "election," incidentally, was virtually a first-place landslide for the erstwhile "Denver Nightingale." He was on every list. Sixth place was the lowest anyone rated him, and only one other collector placed him as low as third.) Others are: 2—Collins; 3—Harlan; 4—Spencer; 5—Williams; 6—Dave Montgomery and Fred Stone—7—Ada Jones; 8—Quinn; 9—Joe Weber and Lew Fields; 10—Roberts; 11—Myers; 12—Norworth; 13—Blanche Ring; 14—Bayes; 15—Favor. Artists with most titles in Debus' record collection are: Murray, 88; Collins, 68, and Harlan, 66.

Allen's listing of Nora Bayes in his "personal preference" grouping, which was not included in the tabulation, reminds me of something I had previously overlooked—that Miss Bayes actually tied Bob Roberts for last place on the Supreme 15 classification. Both got 26 points. Strictly speaking, however, she was not a pioneer recording artist and does not belong on the list.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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omissions—hundreds of omissions—many of which were records whose existence was unknown when Bauer's book was published. For the present revision, therefore, I am concentrating my efforts on Bauer's original work. The revised edition will attempt to list ALL THE RECORDS OF THE LATERAL-CUT DISC TYPE MADE BY IMPORTANT VOCAL ARTISTS BEFORE Jan. 1, 1910. As it is not a commercial enterprise, the revision will be sold at only enough above the actual cost to reimburse me for the expense incurred.

"HOW CAN YOU HELP? This book will be for the use and benefit of all collectors. It is a cooperative enterprise and only if all collectors take time out to help can it be a real success. I would like to urge all of you who own or have access to a copy of Bauer's original Historical Records to list for me all records which fall within the scope of the present revision and which are not in Historical Records. When listing, be sure to include (1) catalog number; (2) title, artist and composer; (3) serial number; (4) type of label. Those of you who are not familiar with Bauer's book can help by sending lists of all vocal (classical, not popular) Zonophones, early Black and Silver Columbias, Berliner, Pre-Dog Victors and any other unusual record which might fall within the scope of the book. This applies to foreign as well as domestic issues.

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Columbia Grand Opera by the following singers: Suzanne Adams, Campanari, Edouard de Reszke, Charles Gilbert, Scotti, Schumann-Heink & Sembrich. (Ten-inch size only)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### COLLECTORS' VOTE ON "THE SUPREME FIFTEEN"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

(Continued from the October Issue)

The second letter was from Angus Joss, of Joliet, Ill., and it was so well reasoned and interesting I wish I had space to quote it in full. Angus came closer to agreeing with my placement of artists than did any one else. He, too, gave a tie to first place, letting Billy Murray and Henry Burr share the honor. "It would be very hard," Joss said, "for me to decide between these two. I feel I know Billy best of the two and in his field I could not concede his place to anyone. Harry holds a place in my heart that I never can give to any other ballad singer. I have heard of more Burr than Murray fans and, if possible, they are more rabid."

Angus also gave Jones and Spencer a tie for second place. "I believe," he wrote, "Ada was the best woman singer whom I have ever heard. Operatic warblers sink into oblivion beside her matchless voice. . . . Spencer I regard as a genius of monolog and dialog."

Like me, Joss tied Collins and Harlan in third, remarking: "I prefer Collins to Harlan in performance, but if these two were separated into a Supreme 15 I would rate Harlan right beside Collins. . . . I care little for Harlan's solo work but his duologs and monologs place him in a class with Spencer."

Joss disagreed in my choice of Macdonough for fourth place. "I like Macdonough very much," he said, "but would interchange him with either your fifth or sixth choice." This remark gave Campbell and Stanley a tie for fourth, according to Joss. Of Campbell he said: "Al's solo work doesn't appeal so much to me, but his duet, trio and quartet work rank as high as Billy Murray's multiple hook-ups." Of Stanley: "Stanley is reduced in rank with me only because I have so few titles by him as compared with his predecessors in the list. . . . As a soloist alone he is very close to Billy, even in his comic ditties."

Choosing Porter for seventh place, Angus wrote: "I never could consider Porter a great singer, except in duet or quartet work. As a comedian he surely belongs in the seventh choice and I agree with you fully in this decision."

Joss also agreed with my placement of Billy Golden, saying: "Golden as a singer and comedian in Negro dialect has no peer. I believe he is even a shade ahead of Billy Murray in this field, but Golden is not a versatile artist like Billy, so I could not place him higher than eighth."

I had listed S. H. Dudley ninth, and Joss concurred. "Dudley's quartet work, aside from his solo work," he said, "places him at least in ninth place. His resonant voice adds luster

to any multiple work. His quality of voice in comic solos does not approach Billy Murray's, but it is fine nevertheless."

Tenth place was given by Joss to Hooley, the unfortunate bass who was the only one of my choices to be pushed out of the ranks of the elect. "Hooley's scarce solos," he said, "make him a baritone favorite with me. His quartet work is very fine, even on a par with Porter's. What a firm foundation he was to any quartet! He is very close to Stanley in this respect, also."

Dan Quinn holds down eleventh place on Angus' list. "I haven't," he wrote, "enough of Quinn's solos to have become intensely fond of him. He was a fine comedian, but I agree with you that he can't rate a notch higher as things stand."

Angus also placed Stewart at the bottom of his list, saying: "I am fond of his monologs, but don't play them very often, as I want to regard him as a genius, and too constant playing might cause a slight boredom. I have nearly all his records."

(To be continued)

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By Mosoriak & Heckert

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## COLLECTORS' VOTE ON "THE SUPREME FIFTEEN"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

(Continued from the November issue)

IT WAS NOT in the least a surprise to me that Billy Murray was voted by HOBBIES readers to be the greatest pioneer recording artist. Frankly, I should have regarded any other outcome of the tabulation as an upset. I was surprised, however, when Jimmy Martindale, of Brooklyn, who is one of Billy's most intimate friends and probably owns more Murray records than any other collector, decided not to place the beloved "Boss" alone on a pedestal, as I had anticipated, but to make a three-way tie of first place by letting Henry Burr and Ada Jones stand there with him.

"I think," Jimmy wrote, "your decision to tie Billy and Hank for first place is perfectly considered, but Ada Jones belongs there, too. Not only did Ada come into her greatest popularity at the time she teamed up with the Boss, but Billy, in my estimation, achieved his most marked public recognition as Ada's singing partner. . . . Ada and Billy seem to have supplemented each other in a perfect manner and their careers interlocked at a time when the public was most phonograph conscious. . . . Like yourself, I would personally have liked to have given the top role to the Boss all by 'hissself.' However, I do feel that he must share it not only with Hank but dear little Ada."

Jimmy's other choices are: 2—Collins and Harlan; 3—Macdonough; 4—Spencer; 5—Porter; 6—Stanley; 7—Stewart; 8—Walter Van Brunt; 9—Golden; 10—Quinn; 11—Campbell; 12—Bob Roberts.

"I think," he wrote, "that Walter is deserving of the No. 8 position. His recording rise was very rapid and he built up an extremely strong following." My own feeling is that Walter Van Brunt (known nowadays as Walter Scanlan) came along just a little too late to be considered a pioneer recording artist, and I had not therefore considered this good friend of mine for my list. I emphatically hold, however, that Walter belongs high on any list of the greatest *all-time* popular recording artists.

If I was surprised to find Jimmy Martindale making a three-way tie of first place, there was no surprise whatever in learning that Frank Glootd, of Chicago, placed the distinguished Mr. Murray in first place all to himself. Frank has a huge Murray collection—in fact, I doubt that he is strongly interested in any other recording artist—and if I were called on to name the most unqualifiedly enthusiastic Billy Murray admirer in the world, I'd even have to pass by Jimmy Martindale and myself shout the name of Frank Glootd.

"Billy Murray," the Chicagoan wrote, "is my choice for first place because, ever since my childhood and primary school days, he has been my favorite recording artist. I can never forget when I first heard his clear, golden tenor voice sing such popular songs as 'Honey Boy,' 'Cheyenne,' 'Casey Jones,' 'I Remember You,' and 'Meet Me in St. Louis, Louis,'

just to name a few old items as reminders. I doubt if ever any other artist will equal Murray's career, making records dating from 1896 to 1942. . . . Murray was just a natural-born singer, and at no time in his early recording days did he two-time his name on record labels to fool the public, as some artists have done for income's sake. I see no reason why Billy Murray should not occupy No. 1 position on the Supreme 15."

Glootd's other choices are: 2—Ada Jones; 3—Collins and Harlan; 4—Burr; 5—Harry Tally; 6—Stanley; 7—J. W. Myers; 8—Campbell; 9—Golden; 10—Macdonough; 11—Dudley and Quinn; 12—Spencer and Stewart.

A. R. (Jack) Via, Jr., of South Boston, Va., is a jeweler, and he resorted to the language of his profession in explaining why he gave first place to—you've guessed it—Billy Murray.

"I nominate Billy for first place," Jack said. "He is unchallenged. He dominates the field as a diamond surpasses other gems. He is more versatile than any of the others and, I believe, would go over swell today."

Arthur Collins is the Virginian's choice for second place. "I place comedy ahead of ballads," Via explained, adding: "I like the 'coon songs' and their situations. I like the timbre of Collins' voice, his interpretations and his style. I do not especially care for Byron G. Harlan, except as an assistant to help Collins put over his songs, but they belong together."

"I give third place, almost ahead of Collins," Jack said. "To Billy Golden. He is one of my prime favorites. I guess I smile every time I think of him."

"Let's give fourth place to Bob Roberts," Jack continued. "I don't have so many records by him, but those I have are masterpieces. Eddie Norton should come along in here somewhere, so let's tie him with Roberts for fourth place."

"Let's give a lady a break. I think Ada Jones should come in fifth place. She seems to have attained Billy Murray's enunciation and interpretation, or 'styling,' maybe I should say."

"Although Uncle Josh laughed too much at his own stories," Via wrote, "I guess he was doing no more than the present applause system does for the radio gag man. I put him sixth."

"Len Spencer seems to fit in seventh place. The word 'versatile' should be used again for him, because he could take a variety of parts—speeches, recitations, descriptives and comedy."

Jack said he placed Harry Macdonough in eighth place as his first choice of ballad singers; Frank C. Stanley in ninth, and Henry Burr, tenth. Concerning his "low-rating" Burr, he said: "Placing him tenth probably will disgust lots of collectors. I know he is one of the tops, but I just don't like his solo voice. It needs vibrato. However, I think he is swell in duets and quartets." He listed Albert Campbell in eleventh place and Steve Porter in twelfth.

Joseph Fortgang, of New York, is, like Allen Debus, a record collector barely old enough to vote, if that. He has a program called "Vaudeville Isn't

Dead," which he gives under the name of Joe Franklin from radio station WNEW, New York, at 6:35 each Sunday evening, playing old records of the types he collects. An ardent admirer of Henry Burr, he gives him a first place tie with Murray. His other choices are: 2—Collins; 3—Stanley (who, by the way, showed surprising strength, appearing on every list—certainly a striking proof of the permanent appeal of the great basso who has been dead 35 years); 4—Jones; 5—Harlan; 6—Spencer; 7—Porter; 8—Macdonough; 9—Harison; 10—Quinn; 11—Morton; 12—Roberts; 13—Campbell; 14—Tally.

Joe also said that if he were not required to stick to the pioneers, his all-time list would be: 1—Burr, Murray, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare; 2—Collins; 3—Sam Ash and Lewis James; 4—Irving Kaufman and Walter Scanlan; 5—Al Jolson; 6—George M. Cohan; 7—Ada Jones and Vaughn De Leath; 8—Stanley; 9—M. J. O'Connell and Elliott Shaw; 10—William J. Halley.

William A. Dyer, Jr., general manager of the Indianapolis Star, sent only a partial list. "I am enthusiastically for Billy Murray as No. 1," he said, "and would pair him with no one except, possibly, Ada Jones,"

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 114)

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**PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

for their, to me, immortal skits and duets. I base my choice of Billy Murray not so much because of his long and singular record as because of a peculiar freshness in his voice, which, combined with his wit and versatility, made everything that he did—dialect or straight—good. He really knew how to put over a song. Eddie Cantor has a touch of the same genius, without the voice and without the variety."

Bill said he voted for Henry Burr for No. 2 spot, "on the record, though I'm not over-fond of ballads." He tied Collins and Harlan for third place; gave Len Spencer fourth, and wound up after listing Stanley, Porter and Dudley, fifth, sixth and seventh.

John L. Norton, Sr., the "Wizard of Woodymay," of Boston, admitted that he cast his vote largely on the basis of preferences acquired when he listened, as a small boy, to wax cylinder records in the '90's. For this reason, the names of some of his choices will be unfamiliar to many present-day collectors. This is especially true of his fourth place entry, J. Aldrich Libbey, who famous for singing "After the Ball" in vaudeville 50 years ago, and A. D. Madeira, in seventh place, who made no records after the very early 1900's.

"There is nothing," Mr. Norton said, "for me to add to your 15 popular artists. As far as John Q. Public was concerned, you are 100 per cent correct, but that ain't the way I heard them. Remember that I heard them in the 'early earlies.' Billy Murray wasn't on any soft wax records, but most of my favorites were."

This is Mr. Norton's list: 1—Collins; 2—Will F. Denny and Ed. Favor; 3—Dan Quinn; 4—Libbey; 5—Murray; 6—Madeira; 7—Joe Natus; 8—Stanley; 9—Golden; 10—Dudley; 11—Hooley; 12—Helen Trix; 13—Roberts; 14—Manuel Romain.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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all the Phonodiscs, and in the duets the first names of all the singers are abbreviated. But, in the solos, the first names are given in full in the case of every singer with the single exception of E. Tetrassini, who remains just that. This I consider suspicious, to say the least! But perhaps the strongest argument of all is this: why should Eva Tetrassini, a famous star in comfortable circumstances and the wife of Cleofonte Campanini, a popular conductor, make records for a small, second-rate company like Phonodisc whose artists, with the exception of Burzio, were all good but minor singers. Also, why should she make her duets with such perfect naughts as Acerbi, Baldassari, Santini and so on? Furthermore, why is it that, while Eva was a dramatic soprano, all the selections recorded by 'E. Tetrassini' belong to the lyric-colorature repertoire? (As far as can be ascertained, not one of the operas associated with Eva's career is among those represented on the E. Tetrassini discs.) This is a point that caused comment among record collectors even before Elvira was heard of.

"But somehow I feel sure Eva must have recorded. Perhaps she will turn up on Zonophone some day. More definite, however, is the Fonotipia advertisement, which Guy Ferrant showed me in Paris in 1939, listing Eva Tetrassini's name in full. Thus I feel sure Eva must have recorded. Nevertheless, with a heavy heart, I am scratching out her name at the head of my lists of Phonodisc and Columbia records and substituting that of Elvira. And remember that I was the first to draw attention to the Phonodiscs of 'E. Tetrassini' in the Gramophone (a magazine published in England) about 1936, at which time I attributed them to Eva, and naturally it goes against the grain a bit to admit my mistake. Yet in the face of the information which has recently come to light, I must declare myself definitely in favor of Elvira."

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### COLLECTORS' VOTE ON "THE SUPREME FIFTEEN"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

(Continued from the December issue)

Henry Hamblen, of Nashville, belongs with Mr. Norton as the only collector who put Billy Murray any lower than a tie for first place. "I would unhesitatingly vote Billy the No. 1 place but for one thing," he wrote. "That very thing is what, no doubt, makes him the idol of so many. He will be singing right along melodiously and drop into talk, which I despise." Henry listed 20 artists, as follows:

1—Burr; 2—J. W. Myers; 3—Murray; 4—Macdonough; 5—Harry Talley; 6—Campbell; 7—James F. Harrison; 8—Harry Anthony; 9—Quinn; 10—Ada Jones; 11—Spencer; 12—Stanley; 13—Corinne Morgan; 14—Dudley; 15—Roberts; 16—Collins; 17—Harlan; 18—Lucy Marsh; 19—George Gaskin; 20—Elise Stevenson.

Charles B. Clark, a retired vaudeville performer, of Wellington, Ohio, sent an interesting list, but, not clearly understanding the "pioneer" stipulation, included a good many artists beyond the time period which I had intended.

He wrote: "I should name Billy Murray as No. 1 on my entertainment list, and others as follows: 2—Nora Bayes; 3—Jack Norworth; 4—Henry Burr; 5—Frances White; 6—Arthur Fields and Al Bernard; 7—Sam Ash; 8—Billy Golden, Joe Hughes and Jim Marlowe; 9—Marion Harris; 10—Steve Porter; 11—Frank C. Stanley; 12—Nat M. Wills; 13—Billy Jones and Ernie Hare; 14—Gus Van and Joe Schenk; 15—Elizabeth Brice and Charles King."

Ray Matschullat, of Omaha, did not give a complete list, but said: "Without a doubt my favorite recording artist is Billy Murray. When I was little my parents had several of his records. In one form or another, I have over 200 of his records. With the poor methods they had of recording in those days, his voice always came through with flying colors."

"My favorite woman singer of those days," Matschullat said, "is Marion Harris. To my way of thinking, she had a voice in a million."

"Next to Billy Murray and Marion Harris, my favorites are Aileen Stanley, Nora Bayes, Collins and Harlan and Johnny Marvin."

Charlie Hodgdon, of Salisbury, Mass., got his list to me a few days before I was ready to begin writing this article. Knowing his great fondness for the records of Harry Macdonough, Steve Porter and Bill Hooley, I imagined he would choose one of them for first place, but he, too, picked Billy Murray, saying: "Billy is my choice because of his many successful years before the public, even as late as the jitterbug era, without one ounce of criticism. Never have I heard anyone say he didn't like Billy Murray's singing."

The following are excerpts from Charlie's comments on his other choices: "2. Harry Macdonough—This great tenor of the Hayden and Orpheus Quartets ranks No. 2 with me. I have never heard finer diction than Mr. Macdonough's. He was an excellent singer of ballads, standard songs and light opera."

"3. Henry Burr—to many people he was tops in ballad singing. He was also be-

fore the public for a long number of years, and a great favorite with all. I especially like his duet singing with Al Campbell."

"4. Steve Porter—My own favorite. If he had included a few popular songs and ballads, I believe he would have had a great many more fans. He was a finished musician, master of dialects, versatile singer and a good pinch-hitter on any team."

"5. Byron G. Harlan—This sweet-voiced tenor is my choice for No. 5. His 'rube' sketches were tops, reminding me more of the old New England Yankee than any other recorder."

"6. John Bieling—Without any doubt the sweetest voice I have ever heard on records. His fine work in the Hayden and American Quartets and duets with Varn Brunt and Macdonough are enough to rate him No. 6."

"7. Albert Campbell—His fine work in the Peerless Quartet and Sterling Trio and the Campbell-Burr duets rate Al No. 7, not to mention his fine personality, which all of his comrades praise. I'm glad he is alive and still going strong."

"8. William F. Hooley—Basso of the Hayden, American, Orpheus, Lyric and other leading quartets. What more need be said of old Bill, the King of Quartet Basses?"

"9. S. H. Dudley—For years the editor of the Victor record catalog and very capable baritone of the Hayden Quartet. Old Sam rates No. 9."

"10. F. C. Stanley—No one before the public so short a time ever made a better impression than Mr. Stanley. As organizer of the Peerless Quartet and maker of fine duets with leading singers of his day, he rates No. 10."

"11—Billy Golden; 12—Cal Stewart; 13—Bob Roberts; 14—Ada Jones; 15—Arthur Collins."

And so ends the fan mail occasioned by my "Are These the Supreme Fifteen?" article. I hope, and believe, the results will prove interesting to HOBBIES readers. If I had received hundreds, or thousands, of letters instead of a dozen or so, the result might have been different, but I doubt it. I imagine this small cross-section gives a good idea of what collectors think of the old-time recording artists. At any rate, I have tabulated the figures as accurately as possible and reported them honestly.

### HARRY DICHTER

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## Andre Bauge Still Alive

In his article in the December 1945 issue of HOBBIES, Leo Riemens reported that this fine French baritone had been killed in an air raid. More recently, however, Leo was informed by Aline Vallandri, the Pathé soprano, that Bauge had not been killed after all, though his house in Paris was destroyed. Bauge, incidentally, is the son of the operetta star, Tariol-Baugé, whose records are known to American collectors. André himself recorded accoustically for HMV and later made a series of electrics for Pathé. Like his mother, he has appeared in operetta, but has sung also at the Opera Comique. During the first world war he was decorated for bravery in action, and was later elected President of the *Société des Artistes Ancien Combattants*. Some years ago, one of Bauge's Pathé's won a prize and was later issued here by Columbia: *Plaisir d'Amour* (Martin) and *Romance du Bard* from *Ariodante* (Mehul), number P-9155-M. This recording reveals a light voice of considerable charm and, while his rendition of *Plaisir d'Amour* is not on a par with Giliert's it is nevertheless very good. In the lovely *Ariodante* air, he is heard to better advantage, for unfamiliar music and sensitive singing combine to make this an extremely attractive recording.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists Edward Warren Meeker. I.

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

Although Edward Warren Meeker won just fame as a Favorite Pioneer Recording Artist, his recorded voice also was heard by millions of people who had no idea who he was.

Mr. Meeker, who died aged 63, on April 19, 1937, at his home in Orange, N. J., had several other distinctions, but in this respect of being a "mystery man" whose voice was heard throughout the world he was almost unique.

The mystery, however, is easily explained. Besides an accomplished comedian, specialization in Irish comic songs and Negro dialect specialties and making many records under his own name, Mr. Meeker was for years the Edison company's "announcer."

From the beginning of the phonograph business until 1908 or 1909, it was the custom of most companies to have a recorded musical selection prefaced by a spoken announcement, like this:

"'Rainbow.' Indian Love Song. Sung by Ada Jones and Billy Murray. Ed-i-SON rec-CORD!" It was Ed Meeker who, during the last several years of the announcement custom, gave the preliminary information on many hundreds of records, regardless of by whom the Edison cylinder was sung or played.

Even after the announcements, which had been originally used to prevent unscrupulous persons from duplicating and re-selling standard brands of records had been done away with, Meeker remained for many years as an Edison staff artist, whose versatility, ingenuity and powers of mimicry were greatly appreciated.

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EDWARD MEEKER

During his entire career, the comedian's activities were restricted, to an almost unparalleled extent, in favor of just one recording career—Edison. In 1909, he made one Victor record, an amusing rendition of Jean Havez's "coon song," "Broke," which appeared on the back of a Billy Murray rendition of "Gee, I Wish I Had a Girl." The number was 16291. Aside from that solitary exception, Meeker never, so far as I have been able to learn, sang for any company but Edison, and I have long wondered how it happened that he made that one lone Victor record.

How did Ed Meeker get his start with Edison in the first place? According to what "Bill" Hays, a veteran Edison recording expert who is still on the job for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., told John L. Norton, Sr., of the Woodymay Record Company, Meeker's engagement as an announcer was caused by the discovery that he had a robust voice which did not in the least live up to his inappropriate last name. To quote Mr. Norton's account of what Mr. Hays told him:

"Ed Meeker was a workman at the Edison plant. One day he was painting window casings near the recording room and carrying on a conversation with another workman in a very loud voice. They needed someone for an announcer, as Collins (Arthur Collins, the 'Preacher and the Bear' singer who had been doing announcing for Edison) wasn't always available, so they brought Meeker in, gave him a few tests and his laborious days were over. Meeker died . . . of ulcers of the stomach."

A brief summary of Mr. Meeker's career, printed in a New York newspaper on the day after his death, may be quoted here. It incorrectly gives his first name as Edwin:

"Edwin Warren Meeker, announcer whose voice was familiar in thousands of American homes long before the

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### STEPHEN FASSETT

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dawn of radio, died yesterday at his home, 195 Main Street, Orange. He was 63.

"Phonograph records made by the Edison Co. were his medium. It was his voice, when recording was in its infancy, that spoke the closing words of each disc: 'This is an Edison record.'"

"A Spanish-American War veteran and a former minstrel trouper, Mr. Meeker was associated with the Edison Co. for 35 years, both as a singer and an announcer.

"A native of Orange, he was the son of Enoch Meeker, noted in that city as the tallest policeman in its history.

"Mr. Meeker made his stage debut with Miller's Twentieth Century Minstrels and later toured with Hoyt's Minstrels. In the World War he was an entertainer at Camp Dix.

"His greatest thrill, he once said, was the privilege of giving a song recital before Thomas A. Edison on the inventor's 75th birthday.

"Recently, he had appeared as a singer and entertainer in night clubs.

"Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Margaret T. Meeker; a son, Frank, and a daughter, Mrs. Madeline Brown, all of Orange.

"Funeral service will be held today at 10 a. m. in St. John's Roman Catholic Church. Burial will be in St. John's Cemetery, Orange."

The foregoing newspaper "story" contains some inaccuracies. Announcements, which were finally done away with because customers complained, with little justification, that they took up too much space which might be devoted to music, were not made on Edison discs, but on cylinders, and

they were at the beginning, instead of the end, of the record. The announcer did not say, "This is an Edison record."

Mrs. Meeker, who says her husband was born January 22, 1874, told me he was associated with Edison as an announcer and singer for 32 years, retiring only because of poor health.

He may have been used as an announcer for a considerable time before his talents were utilized as a recording artist, but the first yearly Edison record catalog I have in which Meeker records are listed is one issued in April, 1907.

Judging by the numbers of the comparatively few Meeker records on sale in 1907, the announcer-comedian's first solo cylinder was 9234, "What's the Use of Knocking When a Man is Down?" This must have been made early in 1906.

Other Meeker solos were: 9526, "Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, Do"; 9310, "Good-Bye, Mr. Greenback"; and 9402, "Song of the Nations," in which he announced "Wacht am Rhein," "Wearing of the Green," and "The Red, White and Blue," whistled by Joe Belmont.

In addition, he participated in one vocal trio record made early in 1907, No. 9471, "Whistle It" from Victor Herbert's sensationally successful operetta, "The Red Mill." Billy Murray and Helen Trix were the other trio members.

This reminds me of the fact that Meeker was something of a "lone wolf" during his recording career. Except in descriptive specialties, he was seldom called on to team up with other artists. I can think of only one duet in which he took part—"Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean," which he and Steve Porter sang on Edison discs and cylinders in 1922. It was a much better interpretation than the one sung for Victor by the original Gallagher and Shean themselves.

The first record I ever heard by Edward Meeker was listened to when I was a very small boy indeed and was an Edison cylinder rendition of Raymond Brown's one-time well-known "coon shout," "I Wish't I Was in Heaven Sittin' Down." The ditty told of the colored hero's desire to be where he would be perfectly happy, "with old St. Peter handin' me a crown," and I was charmed with the singer's gusto and ability to be highly amusing.

MUSIC BOXES and singing birds. Due to the termination of the war my full time is required in my regular business, therefore I will in the future take care of my regular customers only as my time to repair music boxes will be limited.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. mh120621

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PLAYER ORGAN records, 100 classical. (Wilcox & White Co.)—Mark Markle, Box 474, Ojai, California. my4642

REGINA, AUTOMATIC, music box wanted; A1 condition, reasonably priced.—Box 224, McPherson, Kansas. f127

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Edward Warren Meeker. II.

(Continued from the February issue)

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

That was always the secret of Meeker's success (humor). He had an excellent baritone voice, sonorous and resonant, but it was his highly developed sense of humor and knack of making people laugh that won him recognition as one of the prime favorites among Edison staff artists. As for Meeker's sense of humor, I believe I told in the biographical sketch of Dan W. Quinn how Ed, in the latter days of the Edison company, roguishly tried to convince the late Billy Jones and Ernie Hare that Mr. Quinn had made 150 or so cylinder records at one engagement — a clearly impossible feat. Mr. Quinn told me of the incident with great glee. It is sad to think that Meeker, Quinn, Jones and Hare are now all gone.

One of Edward Meeker's outstanding characteristics was his facility in dialect work and his acting ability, which made him the principal figure of many of the vaudeville sketches recorded for Edison by the staff organization which was known as the Empire Vaudeville Company.

Some months ago I outlined the career of George Washington Johnson, the first Negro recording artist, and told how his records were dropped from the various companies' catalogs after he had been hanged for the murder of his wife.

In 1917, however, Edison decided to reinstate Johnson's famous "Laughing Song," and Meeker was chosen to take the principal part in the new recording. The record begins with the members of an amateur minstrel troupe in despair because they have no one to sing the Laughing Song. Then someone remembers that "Meeker is in the billiards" room and he is called down. To me, he does a much better job of singing this hilarious ditty than poor Johnson himself did. Another famous Johnson number

was the "The Whistling Coon." This also was revived by Edison at about the same time as the Laughing Song. The record begins with a group of soldiers singing and swapping jokes. Suddenly a nondescript Negro (Meeker) appears and when asked his name bashfully says he is known as "Whistling Pete." He is called on for a song and finally, after vain protests, sings and whistles "The Whistling Coon," being joined by the other member of the cast at the end. As "Whistling Pete" shuffles away, a bugler softly plays "Reveille." No doubt, Meeker's Spanish-American War and Camp Dix experiences were reflected in this arrangement.

It was not only in Negro dialect, however, that Edward Meeker, the ex-minstrel, was proficient. Some of his best Edison records were in Irish brogue. Two which have given me great pleasure are "The A. O. H.'s of the U. S. A." and "He's Living the Life of Reilley." In the busy war days, I told Mayor Earl Riley, of Portland, Oregon, about having the latter record. He was greatly amused and said that if he should again find himself in Roanoke he hoped I would play it on my radio program from Station WDBJ especially for him. His Honor indicated that, as mayor of the Pacific Coast's most congested defense area, the life he was living was by no means that of Reilley!

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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### CORRECTIONS

In the Historical Record Reviews that appeared in the February issue, there were three typographical errors which require correction:

1. The correct number of Marianne Brandt's Pathe cylinder of the Trinklied from Lucrezia Borgia is 19261 not 1926.
2. Heinrich Hensel was, of course, born in 1874, not 1847.
3. The Columbia originals of the Boninsegna arias were recorded in 1910, not 1919.

### RECORDS

COLLECTOR HAS 4000 choice vocal operatic records for sale. Send for free list.—Louis Bullaro, 2432 Washington St., San Francisco 15, Calif. my3042

I HAVE duplicate operatic records for sale. This is the only time in 1946 that I make this offer. Write.—Thomas McMillan, 179 Spring Street, Rochester 8, New York. mh1402

WANTED: ANY cylinder record catalogs or Edison catalogs during cylinder era.—Lt. H. D. Holt, Camp McCain, Miss. mh3612

HIGH SCHOOL teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. ap128001

OUT-OF-PRINT recordings, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged.—American Record Collectors Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City 19, N. Y. ja12069

WANTED: 11 1/2" DISC records for Olympia Music Box.—John Dixon, 23 Mason Drive, New Britain, Conn. mh169

WANTED: REGINA 27" discs, Mira 15 1/2" discs.—George Schait, 8 Walnut Ave., Cranford, N. J. mh3291

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Edward Warren Meeker. III.

(Continued from the March issue)

By ULYSSES ("JIM") WALSH

Still another masterly Edison record, not in dialect, by Meeker, is "The Argentines, the Portugese and the Greeks," by far the best interpretation of that classic comic number I have ever heard.

"He's Living the Life of Reilley" was the last Meeker record, numerically speaking, issued by the Edison company. It came out in 1923, but the song itself had been recorded several years before and kept in the files because of a peculiar Edison flair for recording a number at the height of its popularity, then holding it out of circulation until most of the demand had died. Actually, his last record, based on date of recording, seems to have been 50970, "Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean," already mentioned, coupled with a Meeker solo, "Who Tied the Can on the Old Dog's Tail?" in which his ability to imitate animals is well shown.

I mentioned in the first installment how Edward Meeker's voice, in his announcer days, was heard by millions of Edison patrons, few of whom had any idea who was doing the speaking. He also took part in many other discs and cylinders on which his name does not appear, and in which his participation will be detected only by a confirmed student of old records.

For instance, in 1919, Harry Raderman, the jazz band leader, originated a mirthful specialty in which he made his trombone "laugh." On at least two Edison records I have, Meeker gives a convincing laughing trombone imitation. One is the Rachel Grant-Billy Murray duets of "When My Baby Smiles at Me"; the other, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan's sidesplitting "I Want a Jazzy Kiss" one of the funniest records ever made.

In Billy Golden and Joe Hughes' blackface skit, "Bear's Oil," Meeker is a tramp who appears near the end of the record and helps the other comedians sing "Haul That Woodpile Down." He is also a tramp in Gilbert Girard's hilarious sketch, "Day-break at Calamity Farm." In Fred Duprez's classic, "Desperate Desmond (Rehearsing the Orchestra)," Meeker takes the part of "Mr. Leader," to whom Fred addresses his mock-serious complaints concerning the poor performance of the ensemble.

The Edison record of "Cohen on His Honeymoon" begins with Meeker and John Burckhardt, Edison staff pianist, trying out "She May Have Seen Better Days." My good friend, Monroe ("Mike") Silver, then enters as "Cohen," says the song reminds him of his wife and tells with great gusto of his honeymoon—an imaginary one, since "Mike" has always been a bachelor.

John Orren and Lillian Drew, described as "vaudeville's favorite mimics," made an Edison record in which they imitated everything from a saw-mill to a dog fight. It was Meeker who said at the beginning: "I take pleasure in introducing to you vaudeville's favorite mimics, Orren and Drew. The imitations produced on this record are done by the human voice alone, without the aid of any mechanical device whatsoever."

No doubt many other examples could be found of Ed Meeker's unsung but effective work in earning for Edison "descriptive" records the well-deserved reputation of being the best ever made. He was a great performer, and I believe his association with the Edison company continued, in some capacity, until the company finally quit the record business in the fall of 1929. As long as record collectors exist, his achievements and recorded specimens of his best work will not pass out of existence.

Before closing this sketch, I must thank the singer's widow, Mrs. Margaret Meeker for lending me the only photograph she possesses of her husband in order that it might be reproduced for HOBBIES' readers. This deed of kindness to one of whom she knew nothing, except from his written assurance that he was a long-time admirer of Edward Meeker, is most sincerely appreciated.

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COLLECTOR wants old classical vocal records in fine condition.—Mitchell S. Jean, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colo. je3291

AUCTION of classical records. Send for list.—Warren Becker, 1674 LaFayette Rd., Los Angeles, Calif. ap148

WANTED: Symphonion 7½ & Olympia 15½ records.—C. A. Ramsey, Marengo, Ohio. je3651

HIGH SCHOOL teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. ap128001

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CLASSICAL RECORDS for sale. Send for list.—H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colo. ap3291

100 4 MINUTE unbreakable cylinder records \$10.—Norris Dullum, Colfax, No. Dak. ap187

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## More About S. H. Dudley

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH.

A biographical sketch of Samuel Holland Rous, known as a recording artist under the pseudonym of S. H. Dudley, appeared in the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists department for January and February, 1944. After recounting Mr. Rous' achievements as baritone of the Haydn Quartet, Victor record catalog editor and author of *The Victor Book of the Opera*, I said that, as far as I knew, he was still alive and added:

"It would be a pleasure to resume communication, but I would hesitate to inflict correspondence upon Mr. Rous at his advanced age." I also mentioned that the tone of letters I had received from him several years

before was "one of buoyant happiness."

Since that article was written, I have heard again from Mr. Rous and am glad to say that his buoyant spirit is still in evidence, at the age of four score. Seeing an article in the *Victor Record Review*, in which he was mentioned as the originator of the *Book of the Opera* series, I inquired if the magazine's editor had Mr. Rous' address. Told that he was living in Los Angeles, I wrote, inquiring if he remembered our bygone correspondence. The reply I promptly received was so interesting that I am sure admirers of the once famous baritone, who also made whistling records under the name of Frank Kernell, will be delighted to read the following excerpts:

"Friend Walsh: Forget you? Impossible! Are you not the most irrepressible, indefatigable, enthusiastic, painstaking and successful Old Record Crank in U. S. A.? How your wife, if any (note by U. W.—I don't have one!), manages to keep house in the midst of files overflowing with 10,000 ancient records we know not! . . .

"Well, the Old Codger has just turned 80 and still going strong. Consulting an oculist the other day about a possible cataract operation, the rather crusty old specialist said, 'How old are you?' 'Eighty,' says I. 'Well, how long are you going to live?' 'Ten years.' 'All right, then, I'll do it; but if you will be kicking off in a year or two, it's not worth while!'

"That ten years, so glibly predicted, is quite a probability. The family record is magnificent; none of the parents, grandfathers or g.g.'s ever thought of dying before at least 80, and several reached the 90s. I have two cousins in Southern Indiana over 100. And Sam Rous is apparently in excellent health.

"I had 30 or 40 bosses during the 13 years I was barnstorming with opera

companies. Not to mention several jobs in the dry goods line in Indianapolis and Cincinnati.

"The curious thing about my 'career' is that it was all based on 'bluff.' To start with, I never even went through high school, but was forced to get a job at 13 when my father lost his hearing and could no longer teach. Then I jumped into opera without ever having a single voice lesson! Opera must have wanted recruits badly in those days. Of course I never attempted real singing roles, except when I was forced to do such parts as Toreador, Mephistopheles or Sylvio in emergencies. My line was that of utility buffo—bandits, such as Sparfucile, Devilshoof, Dancalro; comedy baritones like Pooch Bah, Zuniga, Fernando. In the 13 years I did about 100 roles in 72 operas. In all 3,742 performances—U. S. A., 3,375; Canada, 240; Mexico, 127. Carmen, 308; Faust, 224; Trovatore, 206; Pagliacci, 205, etc. And 200,000 miles.

"From opera I plunged into record making, and became the 'Bing Crosby of 1900'—that is, more records were sold of Dudley, Kernell, duets, quartets, than of any other singer of the time. Too bad the days of royalties had not arrived! But, as you know, in 1902 the duplicating process spelled doom for big earnings; so when the Victor sent me a wire, (I was vacationing in Switzerland after that strenuous summer in England making records for British companies) offering to make me assistant manager of the record department, plus the privilege of singing for Edison, plus a small royalty on records sold, I leaped at it. . . . After another year, they bought off my Edison privilege. . . . Then the 50 shares of stock given to each laboratory executive (for the duration of his job) began to pay those monumental Victor dividends—during several years dividends were \$5 per cent a year! . . .

"All this time I was being paid for being a musical expert. . . . The fact was—and is—that I know practically nothing about music. I can identify the keys of F, G and E-flat, but am not sure about the rest. However, I had a good ear and knew good music when I heard it. And I refused to let anything go into the catalog unless it was as perfect as the process would permit. I had many an argument with singers who thought a record was 'good enough,' rather than go to the trouble to remake it. . . .

"The early editions of the *Book of the Opera* were easily gathered from history, librettos and press notices of old performances, put into as simple language as I could manage, because record buyers of the time knew little of music, especially opera. Present editions seem to me to be a bit too highbrow. This book is now well on its way to the 600,000 mark, which certainly breaks all records for a musical work. . . .

"The only thing I am really proud of is that marvelous (though I say it) catalogue. You will remember what a job it was to find anything when the double-faced records came along. I well recollect the consternation in a directors' meeting when the estimates of its cost were read. The project was almost rejected when President Johnson backed up my contention that this book would be the sensation of the record world and would put the Victor so far in front that our rivals would never catch up. . . .

"The Victor people were never afraid to 'gamble' with some new idea. Do you remember the time they put out a specially good (for the period) record of mine, a classic called 'Put Me Off at Buffalo'? The company was almost down to its last dollar, but they offered one of these records free to every owner of a disc machine in the U. S. and Canada. If I remember right, they sent out 100,000 of these, and were down to the last cent when the returns began to come in. This, of course, was long before I joined the laboratory staff. During this period Johnson was struggling to improve his product while keeping his financial head above water. He frequently could not raise money to pay the boys in his machine shop, and gave them part of it in stock of the infant company. Lucky boys! . . .

"Well, after 17 years of bringing out that supplement, exactly on a certain day

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in the month. . . I got so I hated the calendar with a consuming hate and threw down an ultimatum to the directors as follows: "Gentlemen, I've had enough!" They expressed sorrow and offered me a pension on the condition that I did not join any of their rivals. I leaped at that, sold my house, jumped into the car and have been going ever since! . . .

"You may imagine that Mrs. Rous and I were much interested in the liberation of Paris, where we have been 21 times. And our 22nd visit will occur just as soon as passports and ships are available. Mrs. Rous being a Hollander, is quite pleased to see Holland set free."

And so ends that part of Mr. Rous' letter which is of general interest to students of careers of the pioneer recording artists. I am sure that friends and admirers of this splendid gentleman, who was voted a place in the ranks of "The Supreme Fifteen," hope that he erred on the conservative side in telling the eye specialist that he would live another ten years. We all, I know, wish him a much more extended life span and hope that every minute will be filled with the high spirit and zest for living that seem to be an inherent part of his charming personality.

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**PHONOGRAPH** Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f12675

**RECORD COLLECTOR** with several hundred duplicates, desires exchange. Lists promptly forwarded upon receipt of yours.—Sims, P. O. Box 741, So. Miami, Fla. au6255

**500 EDISON** cylinder records for sale, 25c ea. Random lots, \$1.25. Any specified title.—W. B. Mollard Jr., Westfield, N. Y. my3803

**WANTED:** DISCS for largest size "Mira" music box. Give titles, prices.—J. B. Williams, 608 Susquehanna Ave., W. Pittston, Pa. jly3822

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**WANTED:** SAXOPHONE; antique oboes, clarinets, flutes.—Flodine, Stephenson, Mich. je3441

**PLAYER ORGAN** records, 100 classical. (Wilcox & White Co.)—Mark Markle, Box 474, Ojai, California. my4642

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f122781

**FOR SALE:** Regina automatic music box, plays 12 3 ft. records automatically. Is in perfect working condition.—George Schait, 8 Walnut Ave., Cranford, N. J. my3672

**FOR SALE:** Edison Phonographs: Home model, 2 miniature, small brass horn, \$10. Standard model, 2 & 4 min., large horn, \$10. Both include 15 records. Have few extra horns, \$2-\$3.50. Express collect.—Peter Grattelo, 1523 W. Stover St., Freeport, Ill. my1002

**WANTED:** OLD MUSIC boxes beyond repair. All types wanted for spare parts.—A. Boraand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. jai2468

**FOR SALE:** Edison Phonograph Model A. Excellent condition. 99 records. \$25 prepaid.—Robert Thompson, 605 Anderson St., Greencastle, Ind. je3612

**WANTED:** CYLINDER records, phonographs. Parts. Music boxes. Discs, mechanical birds.—Nugent, 101 No. Third, Richmond, Va. jly3291

**FOR SALE:** VIOLIN, marked inside, Antonius Stradiuarius, Faciebat Anno 1721. Crack, bridge missing. Offers.—A. Halsey Brown, East Marion, L. I., N. Y. my1441

**TEN MUSIC** boxes, \$50 to \$500. Mahogany Regina Corona, Super Deluxe, superior in design, detail to coin slot type. Send description what wanted, 25c for photo. 400 day brass clock under dome, \$35, needs cleaning.—W. B. Mollard, Westfield, N. Y. my3654

**MUSIC BOXES:** I am still accepting a limited amount of repair work on music boxes and other mechanical pieces. I also have choice music boxes for sale; all types.—Geo. A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. je3024

**MUSIC BOX** collection for sale, including following: Oak cabinet Symphonion with 15 records 13½", excellent condition, \$90. Regina, cherry cabinet with 15 records, 15½", fine buy, \$100. Mahogany cabinet, same, 1 tooth out, 15 records, 15½", \$95. Regina, oak cabinet, needs refinishing, with 15 records, 12", \$60. Swiss music box with bells, 8 airs, nicely inlaid cabinet, good shape, \$75. Swiss box, 6 airs, with Jacot safety check, nice inlaid cabinet, \$85. Reed Pipe Clarion with 20 player rolls, over 100 tunes, \$40. Edison Triumph Phonograph with large horn and 20 cylinder records, good shape, \$30. Other values in music boxes which need repair.—H. F. Sanderson, P.O. Box 414, Evansville, Ind. my1666

**FOR SALE:** Edison Ambrola Phono. Cylinder, oak cabinet model. Drawers to hold up to 80 records. 40 records, crated \$35. Excellent playing shape: Edison diamond disc phono. Chippendale console. Cost \$350 when new. Walnut veneer. Needs refinishing. \$50 crated. Express extra on above articles.—Peter Grattelo, 1523 W. Stover St., Freeport, Ill. my1523

**FOR SALE:** Famous composers & their works. Paine, Thomas, Klausner, Millet 1911. Volumes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12. Good, fair condition. The Story of A Musical Life. Root, Church 1891. Good condition. Tramp, Tramp, Tramp. Root. Nims-Knight 1890. Used, fair.—B. Kassal, 1444 S. 15th St., Omaha 9, Neb. my1061

## BOOKS RECEIVED

For those who want to bind books as a handicraft hobby, we can recommend the new book—"General Book Binding" by Chris Groneman. Every process is illustrated so that a novice can follow instructions and bind different types of books, including permanent binders for magazine volumes and rebinding old books.

It is published by McKnight & McKnight, Bloomington, Ill.

Now that the crippled veterans are with us, there will be renewed interest in leather handicraft as a hobby. A book that covers this subject is "General Leather Craft" by Raymond Cherry. All the different leathers are illustrated and described, and minute instruction given for carrying on the work step by step. Not only the making of leather novelties is taught, but more standard material such as ladies purses, belts, etc., that are always saleable.

The book is published by McKnight and McKnight of Bloomington, Illinois.

## Cigar Band Club

The International Cigar Band Society announces its new officers for the ensuing year, as follows: President, Richard Stolt, Chicago; Vice President, Grover Greasby, Wisconsin; Treasurer, Thomas Lamberson, Indiana; Secretary, Norman Bobel, New Jersey; Publicity and Advertising Chairman, Arthur Abrahams, New York.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Ada Jones. I

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH



Ada Jones

FORTY YEARS ago, Ada Jones was probably the most popular phonograph singer in the world.

In those days she was still a comparative newcomer, who had begun her record-making career only in 1904, but her progress into popularity had been nothing less than astonishing and she was already becoming the subject of more rumors and legends than ever attached themselves to the name of any other pioneer recording artist.

Because of her mastery of Negro dialect, some record buyers insisted that Ada Jones was a Negress. She was equally good at mimicking other dialects, so that still other admirers believed her to be Irish, German or virtually any nationality that might be named. Lighthouse keepers in Australia and diamond miners in Africa fell in love with the reproduced voice that caroled to them from the morning glory horns of old-fashioned phonographs, and wrote her proposals of marriage. And, periodically, the English-speaking world was swept with rumors, which originated nobody

knew where, that "Ada Jones, the best singer in the world," was dead. Usually, these reports were specific enough to include the date of her fictitious death and the name of the fatal malady.

Today, Ada Jones has been dead almost a quarter of a century, but a fragrance still clings to the memory of her once magical name and thousands of collectors cherish her old discs and cylinders.

Even so, many details of her life are exasperatingly obscure, and I have met with almost insuperable difficulties in searching out material for a series of articles dealing with her personality and achievements.

For instance, although we have Miss Jones' word for it that she was born in Manchester, England, where her mother was "a famous singer," I have not been able to ascertain the date of her birth or the names of her parents.

Letters to the theatrical weeklies, *Billboard* and *Variety*, failed to bring the information I needed. The New York Public Library's theatrical department had only a few unimportant references to Ada Jones in its files. The newspaper published at Huntington Station, Long Island, where the singer lived during most of her recording career, took a friendly interest in my project but had no precise biographical information. I was disappointed to learn that even the *New York Times* had not published an account of her death in 1922.

Billy Murray, Miss Jones' loyal friend and recording associate for 15 years, also could not supply the data I sought. The Rocky Mount, N. C., physician who attended her in her last illness did not know her exact age, but said the singer's business manager told him she was 40. My own belief is that she was probably somewhat older, since her career as a public entertainer demonstrably extended as far back as 1891—31 years before her death.

The search was made the more difficult because Ada Jones' husband died a few years ago and her one child, a daughter, is also dead. Apparently, she has no immediate surviving relatives.

But, in spite of these drawbacks, the facts about Miss Jones' recording career are sufficiently well established for me to present what I believe will prove to be one of the most interesting of all the series I have written about Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. It will also be the first I have written about a woman singer. As is well known, few women's voices recorded well in the old days and all the other most popular phonograph performers were men.

Here it might be well to refute an-

other "Ada Jones legend"—the occasionally heard assertion that hers was the first woman's voice ever recorded. That is by no means the truth. Numerous women had preceded her to the recording horn. Names of some, such as Minnie Emmett, Marguerite Newton, Estelle L. Mann, Seniorita Godoy, Elizabeth Spencer, May Kelso and Corinne Morgan are more or less familiar to specialists in collecting old "popular" records.

Ada Jones was, however, the first woman whose records had a world-wide vogue and who, for a few years, may have been more popular than any rival masculine artist. As will be remembered, she was the only feminine singer whom readers of *HOBBIES* voted into the ranks of "The Supreme Fifteen."

I am fortunate that I shall be able to quote, in a succeeding installment, from an article written by Ada Jones herself, telling of her beginning and subsequent career as a recording artist. Also available is a magazine interview in which she told other things about herself, and I have had the advantage of the personal recollections of Billy Murray, who believes that he was to a considerable extent responsible for the "discovery" of his long-time singing associate.

But, before I begin to trace the details of Ada Jones' 18-year recording career, it might be well to quote what the phonograph companies said about the buxom, blonde, blue-eyed woman, with a figure like the Metropolitan Opera sopranos of two generations ago, in those days when she was the "dream girl" of thousands of men who had never seen her in the substantial flesh.

Here is what Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley) wrote in the May, 1912, Victor record catalogue:

"ADA JONES, Comedienne. No series of records in the entire Victor catalogue has given more innocent pleasure to the public than the clever solos in various dialects by Miss Jones, the quaint German, Irish and other dialect specialties of Jones and Spencer, and

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This laudatory critique, it will be observed, gave no biographical information concerning the most popular woman singer who ever made records. The Columbia catalogue for November, 1914, was no more explicit. It said:

"ADA JONES, Soprano. Miss Jones is without question the cleverest singer of soubrette songs, popular child ballads and popular ragtime hits adapted for the soprano voice now recording for any company. She is also in general ways one of the most popular singers in the record field and her records have been heard in all quarters of the globe. Her duet records with Mr. Van Brunt, unique and entertaining as they are, have also come in for unlimited popular approval. At least one record in which Miss Jones has sung appears on the Columbia list each month."

(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Ada Jones. II.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Billy Murray, who has had a longer career than any other pioneer recording artist and whose long-range popularity has exceeded that of all the rest, once wrote an article for the Edison company's house magazine, in which he related how Ada Jones first came to his attention.

"I am no Christopher Columbus," Billy wrote, "but I have made one discovery that I am proud of. I was down on Fourteenth street in New York, looking for amusement, and I happened to wander into a little museum. It was crammed full of marvels, but the greatest marvel to me was the voice of a girl who was singing there. She had what is known as 'pep' in these days. I think it was labeled 'ginger' or 'tobasco' at that time. Anyway, it was some spice. I simply couldn't forget her voice and manner."

"Some time after, I was making a record with Len Spencer. It was a duet for a male and female voice. Sure! I was supposed to be the female voice. I can get away with some pretty high notes, but there were a couple in that song that I couldn't reach on tiptoes. I couldn't have raised my voice that high with a fifty-ton crane. So I told the director about the girl I had heard in the Fourteenth street museum and suggested that she be given a try-out. He told me to bring her around. I did, and she made just as big a hit with everybody else as she did with me. Ada Jones was her name. Did you ever hear of her?"

"Some one," Billy added, "has spread the impression that Ada Jones is, in pri-

vate life, Mrs. Billy Murray. We are married but not to each other."

As Billy personally related to me his discovery of Ada, he and Len Spencer were doing what used to be known as a "coon sketch." Len was saying something like, "Does you love me, honey bunch?" and Billy was replying, "You knows I does, sugar chile!" when Victor Emerson, the manager of the Columbia studios, in which they were filling a recording engagement, came in.

"Oh, for Pete's sake!" Emerson snorted in disgust. "If you've got to do that sort of thing, why don't you get a woman for the woman's part, Len, instead of having another man try to do it?"

Murray then spoke up. "Victor," he said, "I heard a little woman singing not long ago at Huber's museum, down on Fourteenth street, that I believe would be fine in this kind of work. Her name is Ada Jones." Both Spencer and Emerson expressed interest, and this, Billy said, resulted in Ada Jones' becoming not only Len Spencer's partner in descriptive sketches but also winning instantaneous popularity as a solo singer.

Under the heading of "Singing to the World," Ada Jones wrote, in the February, 1917, issue of the Edison Amberola Monthly, an account of her recording experiences that is well worth reproducing in its entirety. It is especially interesting to me because of the able defense the beloved singer made of her decision to sing popular music as a career. She points out a fact, which is often overlooked, that as much "popular" as "classical" music proves to be of permanent value and survives. I came across a good illustration of this fact a few days ago while reading an advertisement published in an 1880 number of Scribner's magazine. Of the then popular songs offered for sale by one publisher, at least half are still fairly well remembered and sung occasionally or, in a few cases, frequently. Since the list contains about 200 titles, this seems an astonishingly high percentage of survival, and disposes of the contention that all popular music is necessarily ephemeral.

Here is Ada Jones' own article:

"I have been asked to write a little story of my phonograph career, I suppose because I am one of the best known phonograph singers in the world."

"It was thirteen years ago that I started singing for the phonograph and I have been at it ever since. That is a long time but there is not a single moment of

it that I regret. Indeed, rather I am thankful that circumstances gave me the opportunity to enter this field and that such talents as I may possess enabled me to be as successful as I am. I often pause and wonder just how many people, at the particular moment, are listening to my voice. I don't believe that there is a single singer for the phonograph who does not have this thought at times. It may seem to you that a singer like myself, who sings the everyday songs for everyday people, may not have a highly appreciative audience, but I believe that it would be hard to find people more grateful than those comprising the invisible audience to which I sing. Unable to indicate their approval by applause, they express it by letters. I have hundreds of these, received from all parts of the world and all kinds of people."

"I have one from a lighthouse keeper in Australia, telling me that he would go insane in his isolation if he did not have a phonograph to keep his mind occupied. He might better have expressed his gratitude to Thomas A. Edison than to myself, but I received the letter because he happened to be very fond of my records. Another letter that I prize is one from the captain of a little trading vessel that plies, or used to ply, among the Fiji Islands. I have one from a prospector in Alaska and still another from a shift boss in a diamond mine in the Kimberley fields in South Africa. During the Spanish-American War, I received many letters from boys at the front."

"My work has brought me a profound respect for my profession. I have come to take a delight in interpreting the songs that are born of the people and sung by the people. They express the real sentiments of the times with far greater fidelity than the productions of cultured and educated musicians who look to other countries and other times for their themes and inspirations. And I believe that the world is enriched by the melodies and sentiments that come from the masses. Only a fragmentary portion of either classical or popular music becomes immortal, and fully as much 'popular' music survives as does the classical. I like ragtime because I feel that it is typically American. It is alive, virile, dashing and stimulating. It reflects the dominant qualities of the American race. It would not have found its origin here if the sentiments it expresses were not those of the people, and it would not have captivated public fancy so thoroughly if it did not have some real merit. Victor Herbert once remarked that he was equally sorry for the person who couldn't enjoy ragtime as he was for the person who couldn't enjoy opera."

"Although it may seem simple, making a record is not an easy task, and I always am 'all in' after I have finished. It is the nervous strain of knowing that you must not make a single mistake, that wears on you. On the vaudeville stage a false note or a slight slip in your pronunciation makes no difference. On the phonograph stage the slightest error is not admissible. To make one means that you must make the record over again. The first record I made was a duet with the late Len Spencer. It was a rendition of the once popular song called 'Pals', and was one of the famous 'Jimmie and Maggie' series of records. My first solo was 'My Carolina Lady,' a song that swept the country when 'coon' songs were in vogue. My introduction to my profession was brought about by Len Spencer and Billy Murray, both of whom I met in New York. Previous to that time I had had an abundance of experience on the stage, both legitimate and variety. When I was born in Manchester, England, I seemed destined to a theatrical career. My mother was a famous singer and I was brought up in the atmosphere of the stage."

"As I sit quietly at home with my family at Huntington, L. I., and think that every day my voice is being heard the world over, I feel a deep sense of appreciation to the man who invented the phonograph and gave me the opportunity to sing to all the world through the medium of his marvelous invention."

Two points occur to me in connection with Miss Jones' article. Her reference to receiving "many letters from boys at the front" in the Span-

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ish-American war is puzzling, since the war was fought in 1898 and her recording career did not begin until six years later. She may have been thinking of troops who were stationed in Hawaii, the Philippines, etc., after her records had begun to gain a world-wide vogue.

The singer referred also to the nervous strain of making records. Perhaps this was the cause of her frequently having attacks of epilepsy while she was filling recording engagements. Only a few persons, aside from her most intimate associates, knew that she was subject to epileptic fits, but the seizures were a factor

that frequently complicated her work.

"Any number of times," Billy Murray said to me, "we'd be recording duets. I'd hear a'plop' and look around, and there would be poor little Ada, writhing on the floor. We'd have to wait until she got over the spell, then try again to make a satisfactory record."

As may easily be imagined, this epileptic tendency seriously interfered with Ada Jones' career as a public entertainer, at least in her earlier years. She appears to have been less susceptible later.

(To be continued)

## EDISON DIAMOND DISC LIST—Part 13

URLUS, Jacques

- 83033 Africana—O Paradies (1914)
- 82016 Cavalleria—Siciliana (German)/MILLER (1913)
- 82252 Die Allmacht (Schubert) (1922)
- 83030 Fidelio—Gott! welch' Dunkel hier (1914)
- 57017 Flying Dutchman—Willst jenes (1925)
- 83028 Freischütz—Durch die Walder (1914)
- 82260 La Juive—Rachel (German) (1922)
- 82277 Lohengrin—In fernem Land (1922)
- 83017 Lohengrin—Mein lieber Schwan (2891) (1913)
- 83017 Lohengrin—Mein lieber Schwan (3602)
- 82514 Lohengrin—Mein lieber Schwan (1913)
- 82260 Magic Flute—Dies Bildnis (1922)
- 57017 Magic Flute—Wie stark is nicht (1925)
- 82278 Martha—Ach, so fromm/MIDDLETON (1922)
- 83083 Messe Solennelle—Panis Angelicus (Franck)/RAPPOLO & PARVIS (1918)
- 83011 Meistersinger—Prize song (1913)
- 82276 Meistersinger—Preislied/MATZENAUER (1922)
- 83021 Marmelades Luftchen (Jensen) (1913)
- 73008 O schone Zeit (Gotze)/MITTELSTADT (1922)
- 82269 Rienzi—Allmacht'ger Vater/HEMPPEL (1922)
- 82275 Rienzi—Erstehe, hohe Roma/RAPPOLO (1922)
- 83020 Sehnsucht (Rubinstein) (1913)
- 73005 Sehnsucht (Rubinstein)/SCHUMANN (1924)
- 83040 Siegfried—Schmiedlied (1914)
- 83082 Stabat Mater—Cujus animam/VERLET & MATZENAUER (1918)
- 82514 Standchen (Strauss) (1913)
- 82254 Still wie die Nacht (Bohm) (1919)
- 82252 Traum durch die Dammerung (Strauss) (1922)
- 82246 Walkure—Ein Schwert (1922)
- 82246 Walkure—Siegmund's Liebeslied (1922)
- 83019 Zauberslied (Meyer-Helmund) (1913)
- 82280 Zauberslied (Meyer-Helmund)/MIDDLETON (1922)

VAN GORDON, Cyrena (Songs not listed)

- 82180 Favorita—O mio Fernando (1920)
- 82180 Trovatore—Stride la vampa (1920)

VERGERI, Emilia

- 76003 Carmen—Habanera (1917)
- 76003 Cavalleria—Voi lo sapete (Spanish) (1917)

VERLET, Alice

- 83057 Boheme—O soave fanciulla, with ZENATELLO (1917)
- 83039 Bonnie sweet Bessie (1921)
- 82561 Carmen (Wilson) (1918)
- 83070 Carnival of Venice, 2 parts (1917)
- 82178 Chanson d'amour (Hollman)/TIFFANY & LAURENTI (1920)
- 83060 Chanson de Florian (Godard) (1917)
- 83039 Coming through the rye (1921)
- 83065 Crucifix, with LANGEVIN/MIDDLETON (1917)

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

**Ada Jones. III**

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Three years after Ada Jones wrote her "Singing for the World" article for the Edison Amberola Monthly, Lawton Mackall, an enthusiastic phonograph fan, obtained an interview with her which was published in Farm and Fireside Magazine. Although it appeared toward the last of the comedienne's career, I shall reprint it here, out of chronological

order, because it clearly reveals some aspects of the singer's personality, and also relates a somewhat different account of her introduction to the profession of phonograph singing than was given in Billy Murray's reminiscences and in what Ada Jones herself wrote.

I shall discuss these discrepancies after quoting from Mr. Mackall's article, which was illustrated with a cut of "Ada Jones sending a joke by wireless." This picture would surprise admirers of Ada, familiar only with her photos in the old record catalogs. Instead of having the mass of long hair always in evidence in her earlier pictures, she appears to be sporting a boyish bob, although the picture was made before bobbed hair was popular. She may have been "sending a joke by wireless," but she is holding a receiver to her ear and it is more likely that she was listening to a radio program through a primitive receiving set.

Here is what Lawton Mackall wrote:

"To make people smile who cannot see you is considerable of an art. Ada Jones has been doing that for twenty years; in fact, hers was the first woman's voice ever successfully recorded on the phonograph. She has a droll personality hiding behind phonograph records.

"I wonder if Charlie Chaplin or Fatty Arbuckle would be funny if we could do more than hear them? No telling. But I fancy that Charlie without the help of his famous feet and his jaunty cane and his twitching mustache would be pretty nearly a crippled comedian; and if rotund Roscoe had no means of exhibiting his fatness and grinning his well-known grin, he would fare badly. Ada Jones is able to amuse us through her voice alone. She makes us see the characters she sings.

"Having chuckled over many a record of hers—Irish character songs, Negro dialect numbers, rural skits, and so forth—I was filled with curiosity to know what sort of person she was in real life. So I took a train out to Huntington, Long Island, where she lives. As the train drew up at the little station, there was the usual scene that occurs when the mid-afternoon train arrives from the city—folks getting off and being greeted by their relatives, and general excitement. The quietest, most serious-looking person in sight was a woman whose features resembled photographs I'd seen.

"Are you—?"

"Yes, I'm Ada Jones," she said quietly. "Nobody ever believes I am when they meet me; but I am!

Was this the rollicking comedienne?

"People expect me to look funny, I guess," she continued almost apologetically as we walked the short distance up the hill lane to her house. "When I was out in Ohio on a concert tour, a little boy about eight years old stared at me

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as I was waiting on the railroad station platform, and I heard him say, "She Ada Jones? Naw, yuh can't fool me!" Sometimes even grown folks doubt me, so frequently I use a phonograph as an introducer—have it play one of my records, and then I come in and sing. People in the audience nod their heads and admit, "Well, well, it's her, sure enough!" (She mimicked the tone of voice).

"When you come down to it, why should a professional funmaker be expected to look comical and clown around continuously? When someone says to you, 'This is my friend, Dr. Poulitice,' you don't expect the doc to grab your pulse or sound your chest. If you met Jack Dempsey, you wouldn't expect him to knock you down just to be consistent. When the waiter asks Caruso what he'll have for breakfast, he hardly looks for a reply of 'Soft-boiled eggs and coffee!' sung in high C. Yet, for some reason, comedians are expected to be in a mad, mad mood day in and day out. Alas, the only person who fills that requirement is the smart guy at the village store—who isn't half as funny as he thinks he is'.

Ada Jones' quite, matter-of-fact manner is like the magician's sedate-looking silk hat from which he produces astonishing surprises when he wants to. The sleight-of-hand man's equipment, although varied, is limited to what he happens to have up his sleeve, but Ada Jones can bring forth, without preparation, most anything you ask for.

"In personal appearance Miss Jones is of medium height and what the poets call 'buxom.' The saying, 'laugh and grow plump,' is true of most comedians. Old Cal Stewart had a build like Santa Claus, and Collins and Harlan can each cast a pretty substantial shadow; even Billy Murray—with whom Miss Jones has sung many a record—is no bean pole. Ada Jones, while by far from being a Marie Dressler, has the cheerful proportions of the true funmaker. When her usually serious face lights up with drollery, there is a sudden glint of white teeth and a sparkle of dancing eyes.

"As she sat there on the front of her house, rocking casually, she answered a question about dialects by giving me an astonishing demonstration of voice magic. She would speak a few words in broad Irish brogue, then shift suddenly to darkey intonations; then as instantaneously to Bowery lingo. Her impersonations were so real that if my back had been turned I veritably should have thought that the characters she thus conjured up were there on the porch. She had me seeing things! If she chose to be a spiritualistic medium she would fool anybody. The truth is, she is a lightning-change artist without the aid of make-up.

"Where did I learn how to take off different kinds of people? Oh, just by watching and noticing. Some women can take one good look at a dress in a store window and go home and make one like it. I can't do that; but I can watch and listen to somebody on a street car or in a restaurant and go home and take them off. It's a matter of habit and training. You see, I've been mimicking ever since I was a baby.

"When I was a kid I found that taking off people was more fun than any other game. All children when they play imitate grown-ups. You watch any little girl teaching her dolls to behave. She talks to them just the way her mother talks to her—same words, same tone of voice, or so nearly the same as to sound absurd coming from a little tot.

"I was such a little mimic that my father would show me off before friends. I was too young to feel self-conscious or scared; it was just play to me. When I was five I took part in a concert, and sang a song all alone. I had an unusually strong voice for a child, and a good memory, so that I could pick up most any song I heard. At entertainments I would watch the other performers, and then come out and imitate them. Father used to say I could 'steal anybody's act.' If I hadn't been so young, they might have got at my nervousness, but as it was, they let me pass as a sort of curiosity.

"When I had made some success in 'variety' and comic opera, my stepmother who was my manager, took me to the old North American Phonograph Company which Thomas A. Edison had started not long before, and there I tried singing into the horn. It is a fact that mine was the

first woman's voice ever successfully recorded by a phonograph. That was twenty years ago, before the modern disc had been invented or the cylinder perfected."

Some of the statements in this interview are puzzling because they appear to contradict what Miss Jones had already said about her career. I have shown in a preceding installment that hers was not the first woman's voice to be successfully recorded. Since her first records did not appear until late in 1904 or early in 1905, it had not been 20 years since the beginning of her recording career. The reference to "the old North American Phonograph Company" I take to be slip of Mr. Mackall's pen for the National Phonograph Company, the name under which Thomas A. Edison Inc., originally carried on phonograph activities.

I suppose there is a possibility that Ada's stepmother went with her to the Edison studios and had her make test recordings several years before any of her records were actually placed on the market, but this is not at all certain. Perhaps Mr. Mackall in writing his interview had an inaccurate recollection of what Miss Jones actually had said.

However that may be, we have now arrived at the point where her career may be considered from its beginning in 1904 to her death in a small town in North Carolina, when she was on tour, 18 years later.

(to be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ADA JONES. IV.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

If Ada Jones actually was only 40 years of age at the time of her death, she cannot have been more than 22 when she began her career as a recording artist.

I have already indicated that I believe the age given on her death certificate is erroneous. The photographs of her which the recording companies published within a year or so after her records first appeared seem to me to be those of a woman of considerably more maturity than the early twenties would suggest. On the other hand, a present-day student of such things must allow for the aging effect of the types of hair styling and costumes that were popular in the early 1900's, and made young women look middle-aged by our standards.

The 1914 Edison catalog said that Miss Jones sang "Killarney" in public in Philadelphia at the age of seven—two years after her father had moved from England to the United States.

Can it be that she was a "star" two years later, at the age of nine? The New York Public Library's theatrical collection includes the following items about her:

"ADA JONES—She starred in 'A Knotty Affair,' by H. Hall Winslow (opening May 18, 1891) and other light comedies. In 1897, she was awarded a verdict for \$315 against John C. Rice for services rendered by her in 'Court of Love,' by John J. McNally (opening December 29, 1896)."

Obviously, if the comedienne was only 22 in 1904, she was just nine in 1891, and 15 when she was awarded the \$315 verdict six years later!

I should like to know, too, how it happened that a former "musical comedy star" was singing years later in a dime museum. Perhaps the attacks of epilepsy were less bothersome to a singer in Huber's Museum than they would be in more pretentious productions.

Putting to one side this somewhat unchivalrous consideration of Miss Jones' age, there can no doubt that she was extremely fortunate in making her phonograph debut under the guidance of Leonard Garfield Spencer.

Len Spencer, who was the first recording artist to win fame throughout the English-speaking world, was a man with his share of faults, but he was also a genius—the greatest creative genius who has ever earned a handsome income primarily through the phonograph. His originality, ingenuity and capacity for taking pains were unequalled by any of his contemporaries. If he were alive and at the top of his form today, he would undoubtedly be one of the best known and highly paid of radio writers and performers. As has been well said, he was "the Orson Welles of the early 1900's."

Because a series of articles dealing with Len Spencer's career will follow these about Ada Jones, it is not my plan to write extensively now concerning his mastery of dialects and his uncanny ability to squeeze complete dramatic sketches into the

compass of a two-minute cylinder. Naturally, however, since he had been making records for 15 years before the "discovery" of the museum singer, he was the ideal man to teach her the tricks of recording and bring her natural gifts of mimicry to the remarkably high level that was so well displayed in her records.

It will be remembered that Miss Jones wrote that the first record she made was "Pals," a duet with Spencer. She also said that her first solo record was "My Carolina Lady." Presumably, since she was writing for an Edison publication, she was referring to her Edison records and excluding others, yet I can find nothing to indicate that Edison ever issued the first "Pals" Bowery sketch, which made Jones and Spencer a famous duet team, until a four-minute version was listed in August, 1910. On second thought, I should have said "Pals" made "Spencer and Jones" famous, because Len was not the type of genius who shirks the limelight and his name preceded Miss Jones' on their first records.

"My Carolina Lady"—a historic recording that I alas! have never had the pleasure of hearing—appeared in the Edison wax cylinder list for March, 1905. In those days, Edison issued a monthly fan magazine. The New Phonogram, which was supposed to sell for two cents a copy but was usually distributed free by dealers. Here is what it said of Ada Jones' first record:

"8948. My Carolina Lady. This record serves as an introduction to the phonograph public of another new singer in Miss Jones, who has a charming contralto voice. Miss Jones sings this selection in a style all her own, with a dainty coon dialect and expression that claim your interested attention at once. The music of this song was written by Andrew B. Sterling."

Judging by the serial number, the first descriptive specialty made by Jones and Spencer for Edison was "Heinie," which appeared in May, 1905. It was thus described: "A Dutch vaudeville specialty, introducing the song 'Heinie.' The scene is in the theater, with orchestra, and all the incidental effects are reproduced realistically. The music of this song was written by Ted Snyder and the words by Edward Rose. The record is cleverly made by Miss Jones and Mr. Spencer and cannot fail to achieve wide popularity."

That concluding statement about "Heinie," whose number was 8982, was something of a masterpiece of understatement. The June issue of the Phonogram listed another Jones—Spencer duet, "Every Little Bit Helps," a "coon skit" which was also an enormous hit. In describing the new record, the editor revealed incidentally that "Heinie" was the biggest selling record Edison had made up to that time:

"9016. Every Little Bit Helps. A realistic portrayal of a vaudeville act, introducing the theater surroundings, audience, orchestra and everything incidental

to as bright and amusing a little act with a story to it as one would see or hear in a first-class vaudeville house. The record in the May list made by these artists broke all records for the sale of a single selection, and this one will probably be quite as popular. Fred Fischer wrote the music of this composition and George Whiting, the words."

As will be seen, the first Jones and Spencer records introduced a popular song of the day, with a playlet built around and illustrating the theme of the song. Later, Spencer more often wrote completely original skits.

Meanwhile, the phonograph's brilliant new star and her distinguished associate and mentor were not confining themselves to recording for Edison. I suspect, in fact, that their first work together was done for Columbia, since it was Victor Emerson who had insisted that Spencer should use a woman to play feminine roles in his skits and brought Billy Murray's suggestion that "the little woman at Huber's Museum" be tried.

As best as I can ascertain, the first Columbia record on which Ada Jones' name appeared was issued in February, 1905—a month before her first for Edison. It was listed as both a cylinder, No. 32623, and a disc, 3050. (Columbia was then the only company making both disc and cylinder records.) The record was "The Hand of Fate," described in a sub-title as "A Burlesque Mellow-drama," which was "full of the dramatic thrills so dear to the hearts of the gallery gods." The artists were "Len Spencer, Henry Spencer and Miss Ada Jones." It is interesting as the only record to my knowledge in which Len Spencer's twin brother, Harry, took part in a Jones and Spencer sketch, and one of the very few of any sort in which he ever participated, aside from sometimes being used by Columbia to make preliminary announcements.

Both Jones and Spencer were missing from the April, 1905, list, but they were back in May with "Mr. and Mrs. Murphy," an Irish sketch, which introduced Albert Von Tilzer's song, "Murphy." In June, Ada's first solo Columbia record made its appearance. It was cylinder No. 32731, "My Carolina Lady," the same "coon song" with which she had made her Edison debut. The Columbia Record described it "a refined coon song sweetly sung by Miss Ada Jones."

Also in June appeared two Jones—Spencer specialties: "Ev'ry Little Bit Helps," which Edison issued in the same month, on cylinder 32730, and "Pals," introducing Gus Edwards' song, "He's Me Pal," on disc 3148. Possibly this is the record of "Pals" which Miss Jones said was the first she ever made. It had a piano accompaniment instead of an orchestral one, which may indicate it had been recorded for several months before it was issued.

I am not sure when Ada Jones' first Victor record was issued, but it was No. 4231, a solo, "Mandy: Will You Be My Lady Love?" Eleven numbers down the list, on 4242, she and Len teamed up in "The Hand of Fate." Their next Victor was 4304, "Reuben and Cynthia." Miss Jones finally got around to singing "My Carolina Lady" for Victor on 4430.

(To be continued)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

By ULYSSES (Jim) WALSH

## ADA JONES. V.

Here's a coincidence: On the day after I wrote the installment of this series in which I mentioned that "Heine" and "The Hand of Fate" were among the first descriptive specialites recorded by Ada Jones and Len Spencer, I received a letter from that enthusiastic young collector, Allen Debus, of Glenview, Ill., saying he had found those very records. He did not know I was writing about Ada Jones, so it is particularly interesting to learn that he has come across her very earliest records—which I have never heard.

Obviously, it is inadvisable and unnecessary to try to give a complete account of all the work done by the Jones and Spencer partnership from the beginning of their association until Spencer's death in 1914. I shall mention, however, that their Victor version of the famous "Bowery specialty," "Pals," was No. 4363, and that in 1906 they recorded "Peaches and Cream," an even more famous skit of the same type, for all the American phonograph companies.

It was not long before the glamorous recorded voice of the comedienne began to give her a popularity greater than that of the veteran comedian whose protegee she had become, and the editor of Edison's Phonogram magazine was flooded with requests for information about her. Many correspondents were particularly anxious to know if she were married. Some undoubtedly hoped she was not and longed for an opportunity to become "Mr. Ada Jones."

Commercial curiosity, however, was uppermost in the mind of E. S. B., of St. Paul, Minn., who asked in March, 1906: "How much do Miss Jones and Mr. Spencer receive for making a vaudeville record?" He was briefly told: "We cannot supply this information."

In November, 1906, the Columbia Record published, under the heading of "A Talented Pair," a photograph of Jones and Spencer, with the following comment:

"We print above pictures of two of the most famous record makers in the world. Mr. Spencer has long taken high rank as a Negro impersonator and his recitations and 'team' work with Miss Jones are exceedingly popular. Miss Jones, who was one of the first of the women record makers, is an artiste of the greatest versatility and in nothing is this more effectively shown than in her very clever imitations of Vesta Victoria and the way in which she renders the very popular songs 'Waiting at the Church' and 'It's All Right in the Summer Time.' Had Miss Jones done nothing but sing these songs she would have won a place in the front rank of graphophone record makers, but this line of work is only one of dozens in which she has been equally successful. Thus it happens that Len Spencer with his great abundance of talent and Miss Jones with her long experience and distinct ability are, taken together, one of the most forceful and entertaining pairs that have ever engaged in the work of making talking machine records which are always popular and in lively demand."

The Phonogram for July, 1907, contained this communication from

A.A.A., of Kansas City, Mo.: "I heard from one of your jobbers last week that Ada Jones and Len Spencer were married to each other. If so, will you give me date of same?" The reply; "Both Ada Jones and Len Spencer are married, but not to each other."

I have been unable to ascertain the date of Ada Jones' marriage, but it probably took place before her recording career began. Her husband was Hughey Flaherty, a vaudeville performer whose fame never approached hers. He survived her by nearly twenty years. Not only was she frequently rumored to be the wife of Len Spencer but, later, was commonly believed to be married to Billy Murray.

And now we come to an event that, to the true old record enthusiast, is of even more historical interest than the beginning of the Jones and Spencer partnership. I refer to Miss Jones' singing association with Billy Murray, which began in 1907 and was not altogether severed until her death. The Jones—Murray duets undoubtedly were the most popular ever made for the phonograph by any singing pair, with the possible exception of those of Collins and Harlan and Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. Ada and Billy reached their greatest popularity after their partnership began.

Their first duet for Edison was issued in October, 1907. It was No. 9659, "Will You Be My Teddy Bear?" (a sufficiently silly title) and received this comment in the Phonogram: "This song was Anna Held's greatest hit in 'The Parisian Model' and is one of the biggest successes of recent years. Always up to date, the New York musical stage seized on the prevailing Teddy Bear fad and the result is this bright little song with its pretty refrain. Max Hoffman composed the music and Vincent Bryan wrote the words."

The first duet by Jones and Murray came out about the same time and bore the long and dignified title, "You Can't Give Your Heart to Somebody Else and Still Hold Hands With Me." It was No. 4891. As early as March, 1907, the pair had recorded this same number on Columbia XP Cylinder 33088, and in April had joined with Frank C. Stanley in singing, "Whistle It" from "The Red Mill." Their first association therefore appears to have been for Columbia.

Despite the apparent triviality of the first songs they sang together, the duets of Ada Jones and Billy Murray at once became a reigning fad and eclipsed the Jones—Spencer specialties, although the latter continued to be profusely recorded and to sell well. Ada and Billy were the first team to sing in what was termed a "conversational style," and their free-and-easy, down-to-earth manner apparently could not be imitated with complete success by anybody else. Many years later Bing Crosby said that when he and Mary Martin

recorded a series of duets for Decca, they got out some old Jones and Murray records and tried to imitate them. I confess that I have never been able to see the slightest resemblance between Mr. Crosby's vocalizing and anything that Billy Murray did, but Bing showed that he at least knew a good model to pattern after.

The Phonogram had published in October, 1905, an unflattering photo of Miss Jones, which made her look middle-aged and gave the impression that her face was composed mostly of a large nose and an uncountable collection of oversized teeth. A better picture was used in February, 1908, accompanied by this note: "It is with much pleasure that we print in this issue a new photograph of Ada Jones. We have had many requests from her hosts of admirers to re-publish her picture but have refrained from doing so until we could get a better photograph than the one published in October, 1905. This one was taken recently and is a faithful likeness. Of all women now singing for the Phonograph or any other talking machine, Miss Jones is unquestionably the most popular."

In May, 1908, when a Jones—Murray duet of "When the Song of Love is Heard" was issued, the Phonogram said: "Miss Jones and Mr. Murray have each acquired an added vogue with these duet selections, for each new record of their making is more in demand than the previous one."

The question of Ada's marriage continued to preoccupy many readers. In December, 1908, B. A., of Trinity, Texas, wanted to know the marital status of both Jones and Murray. He, or she, asked: "Is Billy Murray married, and what state is he a native of? Who is Ada Jones married to—that is, is she married to any of your singers?" The answers: "Billy Murray is not married. He was born in Colorado. (This was a mistake, since Billy was born in Philadelphia.) Ada Jones is married, but not to any of our singers."

For the first two years of their association, "Miss Jones and Mr. Murray," as the Victor labels then listed them, without including their first names, sang together for all the American companies. In 1909, however, Billy signed a "joint contract," which restricted his services to Victor and Edison, and Miss Jones was obliged to find other partners when singing for other concerns. For several years she and Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scanlan) were associated on Columbia records, and their duets had much of the Jones—Murray flavor. Their team-work stopped when Walter became an exclusive Edison artist in 1914, and she then sang with several other partners. Henry Burr, using the name of Irving Gillette, appeared with her on several Columbia records, but his voice and style did not adapt very successfully to hers. She also sang with one Will C. Robbins, who may possibly have been Sam Ash, and did a few duets with M. J. O'Connell for Columbia and Pathé.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ADA JONES VI.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

I smiled when I copied that quotation from The Columbia Record in which Ada Jones, whose recording career had begun only two years before, was referred to as "one of the first women record makers." Even in so short a time, the comedienne had become a classic and her fame was as firmly established as if she had been the first person to sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" into Edison's original tinfoil phonograph in 1877.

Something of the same attitude is shown in the June, 1907, issue of the Edison Phonograph Monthly, in which, under the head of "Pushing Grand Opera Records," Edison dealers were told: "A customer coming in for Ada Jones' latest will not accept the beautiful 'Flower Song' from Gounod's 'Faust,' even if it is sung by Madame Jacoby, by way of substitution; for her, there is nothing 'just as good.' But it is quite as likely that among your customers, or among the musically cultured of your town, there are those who would buy the Edison Grand Opera Records if they were persistently brought to their notice."

In October 1910, Edison issued the four-minute wax Amberol record No. 576, a duet by Jones and Murray of Percy Wenrich's famous Indian song, "Silver Bell," which immediately became the biggest selling record the

company had made, up to that time.

A month later, the Phonogram found it necessary to deny one of those rumors, which were circulated periodically, that Ada Jones was dead. Under the heading of "A False Rumor," the editor wrote:

"Some unscrupulous individual (or individuals), whose identity or object we are unable to ascertain, has circulated the rumor that Miss Ada Jones is dead. The persistency with which the report makes its appearance is exceedingly annoying to Miss Jones, and we are also bothered by frequent requests for contradiction or confirmation of it.

"Miss Jones is very much alive, of course, as her monthly contributions to the Edison catalogue attest, and moreover is enjoying excellent health. As it is out of the realms of possibility to offer her many friends throughout the world more tangible proof of her entity than her records, she has suggested that we contradict this malicious rumor through the columns of the Phonogram so as to give the denial the widest possible circulation."

I doubt that the rumors were "malicious." The fact is that, in those days without radio and talking films, phonograph singers like Ada Jones, whose voices were heard over and over in the homes, particularly in small towns and the country, had the status of legendary figures, and the wildest rumors were circulated about them simply because they were living legends. This was particularly true of Ada Jones, who occupied a spot all to herself as the one outstanding feminine recorder, outside the ranks of operatic stars.

The November, 1910, denial of Miss Jones' death had been preceded by this question in the May, 1909, Phonogram from J. S. R., of Ellenburg, Washington: "Some one informed me that Ada Jones is dead. Is she?" The answer of course, was "Miss Jones is still living."

Two of Ada Jones' most popular solo records came out within a month of each other in 1909. In October was listed her four-minute version of "The Bird on Nellie's Hat," which had originally been made several years before by Helen Trix on a two-minute record, and in November came "Just Plain Folks." The latter was taken over into the Blue Amberol list and was a steady seller as long as Edison stayed in the record business. Probably more copies were sold of it than of any other Ada Jones solo record. The lyrics told the pathetic story of how an old couple from the country were coldly received when they went to see their son who lived in a city mansion "fine and grand" and left him, after deciding they were "out of place here, 'cause we're just plain folks." It is easy to dismiss such a naive composition as "trash," but such songs had, and have, a strong appeal to unsophisticated listeners, and Ada Jones was as much a mistress of this obvious type of sentiment as she was of comic dialects. She was not only a comedienne but a ballad singer of the type the plain people love.

In the November, 1909, Phonogram, C. D. B., of Yarbrough, Arkansas,

bluntly asked: "If Ada Jones is married, why is she called Miss?" He was told: "For the same reason that induces all female singers and actresses, with few exceptions, to retain their maiden names—custom."

As a rule, the inquiries about Ada Jones and other singers came from small places, but in January, 1910, W. J. R., of Pittsburgh Pa., wanted to know: "Who did Ada Jones marry?" He was put off with, "We prefer not to answer this question."

In February, M. G. McK., of Meridian, Miss., asked: "What is Ada Jones' real name?" If this was another attempt to learn whom she married, it failed, for the answer was: "Ada Jones."

Mrs. H. L. P., Waterville, Maine, apparently hoped Miss Jones was someone she had known, for in June, 1910, she asked: "Was Ada Jones born in China, Maine? If she is married, is her real name Ada Jones?" She was told that Ada was not born in China and that "Ada Jones is her stage name; her married name is not of public interest."

This lady probably was the most persistent question asker the Phonogram ever encountered, because she made a host of inquiries, the answers

## MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES, every description. Meerschaum pipes, steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, 2911 Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. d12219

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. n3832

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f122781

WANTED: OLD MUSIC boxes beyond repair. All types wanted for spare parts.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. ja12468

CERTIFICATE and expert opinion on old violins. Fee \$5. Violins sent will receive prompt & careful attention.—Isador Berger (Violin Connoisseur), 165 E. Ohio St., Chicago, Ill. au126541

WANTED: CYLINDER records, phonographs. Parts. Music boxes. Discs, mechanical birds.—Nugent, 101 No. Third, Richmond, Va. ja3422

EDISON CYLINDER, home or standard, 30 assorted records, all for \$15.—Peter H. Loeper, Ashland, Pa. d3612

REGINA MUSIC BOX, Mahogany cabinet with 14, 15 1/2" disc. Excellent condition. First \$100.—S. O. Figliand, 4103-2nd, Des Moines, Iowa. n1041

FOR SALE: Scarce phonograph & radio parts. Victor records, single & double-faced. Columbia records, rare acoustics & electrics.—Leroy Hughbanks, Osborne, Kansas. j3223

MIRA console music box for sale, 22, 15 1/2" disc, plain oak case, good lines, 36" high x 25" x 19". Very good condition, \$150.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n1302

CELLO, old, German; one fine old Italian, one German violin, reasonable.—Phipps, 1756 Clybourn, Chicago. n1501

## RECORDS

WANTED: Cylinder records; Edison, Columbia.—Leroy Hughbanks, Osborne, Kansas. ja3621

HIGH SCHOOL teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. ap12069

OUT-OF-PRINT recordings, classical, operatic, 1900-1940, bought, sold, exchanged.—American Record Collectors Exchange, 1329 Sixth Avenue, New York City 19, N. Y. ja12069

MUSIC BOX DISCS available in various sizes for the Mira, Regina, Stella, Criterion, Olympia & Symphonion music boxes. Send for list, giving size desired.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n1422

PHONOGRAPH Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f12675

CLASSICAL RECORDS for sale. Send for list.—H. P. Silverman, 216 Denham Bldg., Denver 2, Colorado d3012

SEND 3c STAMP for list of collectors' items to—2315 So. Flower St., Apt. 201, Los Angeles, Calif. ja6405

FOR SALE: Edison Diamond Disc Phonograph with 30 cylinder, unbreakable records, as good as new, for \$15.—Peter H. Loeper, Ashland, Penn. City, 6, N. J. ap12069

FOR SALE: Music Box records: Regina 20 3/4", Regina 27", Mira 15 1/2", Criterion 15 1/2", Stella 17 1/4".—George Schait, 8 Walnut Ave., Cranford, N. J. ja3223



to which should interest record collectors today. Below are given her other questions, with the answers in parentheses:

"Is Byron G. Harlan a nom de plume; if so what is his real name? (No.) Is he married? (Yes.) In what year did he first sing on the stage? (Unable to say.) Was he born in Canton, Lincoln county, S. D.? (No, in Kansas. He formerly lived in Canton.) Why doesn't he sing with any ladies? (There is no particular reason why he does not sing with ladies.) Is Arthur Collins married? (Yes.) In what city did he formerly live? (In different cities, among them Orange and Newark, N. J.) What is the name of the manager of the singers? (Walter H. Miller.) Who sings bass in Record No. 8850, and who says 'I will' in the same record? (George H. Bemus.) Does Billy Murray play in a band or orchestra; if so, what instrument does he play? (No.) Where was he born? (In Philadelphia.) Is Manuel Romain a nom de plume? (No.) Are Golden and Hughes colored gentlemen? (No.)"

In December, 1910, Mrs. Carrie N. Doane, of Derry, New Hampshire, contributed to the Phonogram a poem in praise of the famous singer. Entitled "To Ada," it was no worse than the average amateur effort:

"You are singing as sweetly today, Ada Jones, as you did in the days gone by; You have sung your way into hearts and our homes without ever having to try. Your laugh is as merry today, Ada Jones, as it was in the 'Huskin' Bee,' And you've woven yourself right into our lives; that you belong to us, all will agree.

You are cheering our hearts today, Ada Jones, and time does but make you more dear;

For never is sorrow in song of your, Or drear winter in your year.

You've intertwined yourself 'round our hearts, Ada Jones, while you've gone on your way with your song,

And the heart that has heard you can never forget, and to us you will always belong.

You are singing as merry and light, Ada Jones, as you may in the by and by, While you coax the mirth to our saddened hearts, and never give room for a sigh.

You are singing more sweetly today, Ada Jones—what's the charm and where does it lie?

The vocal stars met in your horoscope, and we love you, dear Ada, that's why."

When this verse appeared, Ada Jones was perhaps at the height of her fame, and the New Hampshire woman's tribute probably was one of the most sincere and appreciated she ever received. It, too, however, bears the impress of the feeling that Ada had been singing for time immemorial, instead of making records for a mere half a dozen years. After all, considering that her recording career had begun so short a time before, there was no reason for wonder that she was still singing as well as she did "in the days gone by!"

(To be continued.)

#### WANTED

WANTED: Oil Paintings, 17-18-19 Century and works of art wanted for cash.—Lasslow, 959 Madison Ave., New York. my12463

WANTED: OLD American paintings—landscapes, portraits, clipperships. Send description.—C. K. Johnson, Hurler, New York. mh6084

WANTED: AMERICAN Historical and Primitive paintings. Old Tavern signs, historical items. High cash paid. You write, describe, we call.—The Stuyvesant Shop, 654 Stuyvesant Ave., Trenton, N. J. ja3293

WANTED: Paintings in oil or watercolor of clipperships, steamboats, side-wheelers. Give name of ship and artist when writing.—Harry Stone, 555 Madison Ave., New York City 22. o126941

Water-Colors

Pastels

# PAINTINGS

## Paintings at Auction

Selections from a recent sale conducted by the Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, N. Y.

*Alma Tadema, R. A., Sir Lawrence.* British: 1836-1912. The Picture Gallery. In a Roman gallery are several figures examining a painting on an easel. In the foreground a reclining maiden reads from a scroll. A youth reads another scroll to three connoisseurs. Signed. Panel: 30¼x23¼ inches. Brought \$1,000.

*Knaus, Ludwig.* German: 1829-1910. A German Village Fete. In a wide village green are seen numerous gay figures, dancing and conversing. Signed, and dated 1881. 41x58 inches. Brought \$2,500.

*Breton, Jules.* French: 1827-1906. The Rainbow: Coast of Brittany. A peasant girl riding a donkey is followed by a bare-footed lad pointing backward. The landscape is barren, but the arch of a rainbow can be seen at the left. Signed, and dated 1883. 43½x61 inches. Brought \$900.

*Roybet, Ferdinand Victor Leon.* French: 1840-1920. A Musical Party. A group of five cavaliers in seventeenth century costume surround a lady seated at a table before sheets of music. A page stands in the background. Signed, and dated 1879. 57½x47½ inches. Brought \$3,100.

## FOR SALE

MORELAND: Watercolor (7"9") \$25.—Providence Antiques, 732 Westminster, Providence 3, R. I. n107



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ZENATELLO

Lucia di Lammermoor—Tu che a Dio (Edison 83018)  
Rigoletto—La donna e mobile (Edison 83013)  
La Forza del Destino—O tu che in seno (V6000)  
Manon—Le Reve (Edison 82556)  
Manon Lescaut—Donna non vidi mai (Edison 82210)  
Die Allmacht (Schubert) (Edison 82252)  
Die Walkure—Ein schwert (Edison 82246)  
Stabat Mater—Cujus Animam (Edison 83082)  
Faust—Salve Dimora (Edison 82238)  
Requiem—Ingemisco (Edison 82214)

JOE PICKAR, New Jersey

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DAVIDOFF  
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MARCONI  
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SMIRNOFF  
SOBINOFF

Lyric Performances  
Tosca—E lucevan le stelle (Pathe)  
Pearl Fishers—Mi par (Opera Disc)  
Pojellei (Pathe)  
Puritani—A te, o cara (V948)  
Barcarolle "Masaniello" (Opera Disc)  
Mefistofele—Dai campi (G&T)  
Ernani—Come rugiada (V64514 or 737)  
Weisse Dame—Komm o holde Dame (IRCC 99)  
Barber of Seville—Ecco ridente (HMV)  
Pearl Fishers—Mi par (HMV)

CARUSO  
John O'SULLIVAN  
John O'SULLIVAN  
SCAMPINI  
SCHMEDES  
SLEZAK  
TACCANI  
TAMAGNO  
VIGNAS  
ZEROLA

Dramatic Performances  
Le Cid—O Souverain (V88554 or 6013)  
Trovatore—Di quella pira (Col.)  
Otello—Ore e per sempre addio (Col.)  
Samson and Dalilah—Aria (Pathe)  
Otello—Dio mi potevi (G&T)  
Otello—Death (Odeon)  
Manon Lescaut—Guardate passo son (Fono)  
Andrea Chenier—Un di (HMV DS101)  
Profeta—Sopra Berta (Fono. or HRS)  
Pagliacci—No, Pagliaccio non son (Victor)

R. B. STONE, New York

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CARUSO  
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McCORMACK  
McCORMACK  
MURATORE  
SLEZAK  
ZEROLA

La Juive Quand du seigneur (V88625 6001)  
Boheme: Che gelida manina (V8302)  
Cantique de Noel (V8302)  
Pagliacci: No, Pagliaccio non son (V88279)  
Trovatore Di quella pira (V87001)  
Don Giovanni: Il mio tesoro (V74484 6204)  
Lakme Vien al contento profondo (V87063 64171 775)  
Monna Vanna: Elle est a moi (IRCC and Pathe)  
Konigin von Saba: Magische Tone (V64115)  
Andrea Chenier: Improvviso (V88243 74216)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### ADA JONES VII

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

For perhaps a dozen years after Ada Jones first sang into a recording horn, her popularity remained near its peak. It survived the death of her associate, Len Spencer, whose vogue had largely passed by the time he suffered his fatal heart attack in December, 1914. She continued to make many solo records and to be in demand for duet work with Billy Murray and other male singers.

After 1917, however, her phonograph activity declined considerably. Most probably, this was because the nation was engaged in World War I, and the type of war song that dominated the popular music field was not well suited to Miss Jones' style. Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, who specialized in blackface comedy work, lost their Victor and Columbia contracts for a similar reason—unsuitability of material and style to the changing themes of the time.

From 1918 on, Miss Jones did little solo work, and appeared only occasionally in the Victor and Columbia lists. In the former, for instance, she was represented by a duet with Billy Murray, "I'll Take You Back to Italy," in the spring of 1918, but did not reappear on a Victor record until the fall of 1919 when she assisted Cal Stewart in "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove."

She recorded oftener for Edison and some of the smaller companies, but even Edison largely ceased to assign her to duets with Billy Murray. From 1917, he sang much oftener with his veteran partner. After Billy returned to free-lancing in 1919, at the expiration of his joint Victor-Edison contract, he and Miss Rice also sang together for Victor, Aeolian-Vocalion and some minor manufacturers.

Perhaps a factor in Miss Jones' appearing less often on records was her increasing activity as a concert singer. She traveled in 1918 with a troupe consisting, besides herself, of George L. Thompson, the comedian, and the original Shannon Four quartet, whose members then were Charles Hart, first tenor; Harvey Hindermeyer, second tenor; Elliott Shaw, baritone, and Wilfred Glenn, bass. Her personal appearances with Cal Stewart, in the "Pumpkin Center" specialties, probably came a little later.

During this period, incidentally, the demand from buyers of Edison cylinder records for Blue Amberol versions of descriptive specialties that Ada Jones and Len Spencer had recorded on wax Amberol records ten years or so before was so great that several were reissued. In addition, Ada and Steve Porter made Diamond Discs of several of the original Jones-Spencer skits.

We are now approaching the end of Ada Jones' career and of her life. Late in 1921, she made her last records. For Edison she sang with Billy Jones, in the absence of Billy Murray who had signed an exclusive Victor contract the year before a double-faced record of "On a Little Side Street" and "When Francis Dances With Me"—two of the best numbers she ever did, in which her voice and style were unimpaired. About the same time she sang the "Francis" song for Victor, with Billy Murray as her partner. It was issued a month or so after the Edison version and was probably the last recording she ever did.

Then Miss Jones took to the road, as the head of a small concert company. The other members were "Armstrong, the Magician," a boyish-looking-young fellow with a mustache, who seems to have been her business

### MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES, every description. Meerschmump pipes, steins. Will sell my duplicates.—Herbert H. Meyer, 2911 Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa. d12219

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. f3753

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f122781

WANTED: old music boxes beyond repair. All types wanted for spare parts.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, New York. ja12468

CERTIFICATE and expert opinion on old violins. Fee \$5. Violins sent will receive prompt and careful attention.—Isador Berger (Violin Connoisseur), 165 E. Ohio St., Chicago, Ill. au126541

WANTED: Cylinder records, phonographs, Parts. Music boxes. Discs, mechanical birds.—Nugent, 101 N. Third, Richmond, Va. ja3422

EDISON CYLINDER, home or standard, 30 assorted records, all for, \$15.—Peter H. Loeper, Ashland, Pa. d13612

DISCS FOR OLYMPIA Music Box. 8 3/4" wanted.—Genevieve Keim, 319 Walnut, St., Columbia, Pa. d1501

FOR SALE: Scarce phonograph and radio parts. Victor records, single and double-faced. Columbia records, rare acoustics and electrics.—Leroy Hughbanks, Osborne, Kansas. j3223

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manager; Mabel Loomis, soprano and pianist, and Beth Hamilton, violinist. The two young ladies sang and played a higher type of music than their more famous star.

Since Ada Jones' following was always greatest and most enthusiastic in the smaller communities, that was chiefly the sort of place in which the troupe appeared. In February, 1922, for instance, it gave a performance in the little town of Marion, Virginia, where I then lived, and I was fortunate enough to be among those present in the Court Square Theater on what seemed to me a historic night. I was not a particularly observant boy, but I had a feeling that Ada Jones, although she sang as well as she ever had, was very tired, and I felt depressed as I left the theater.

Less than three months later, she died in Rocky Mount, N. C., after collapsing at the end of her recital in a theater there. It was difficult, after I decided to write this series, to obtain accurate information about the singer's final illness. A letter to the Billboard merely brought the suggestion that I consult the New York Public Library for information. The Library replied its record showed only that Ada Jones died May 2, 1922.

I wrote to the New York Times, and received this reply: "We are sorry that we can find no record in our files of Ada Jones (Mrs. Hugh Flaherty). The New York Times apparently carried no notice of her death nor does our morgue contain any file on her career." To me it appears strange that the nation's greatest newspaper should have completely overlooked the death of one of the most popular singers of her time.

*Variety* sent me a copy of its notice in the issue of May 5, 1922. It said briefly: "Ada Jones, heading her own road company under the management of O. E. Wee, died suddenly May 2 from uremia in Rocky Mount, N. C. The musical comedy star gave a performance Saturday night and was removed to a local hospital immediately after, where little chance for her recovery was looked for from the start. Following the death of Miss Jones the company, which included several musical features, was brought back to New York to be disbanded. Her remains will be taken to Huntington, L. I., for burial."

It seems rather unusual that *Variety* should have referred to Ada Jones as a musical comedy star, which she was not, and not have mentioned her phonograph career. The sketch was remarkable, too, for lack of any information concerning her age, surviving relatives and biographical data generally.

Determined to get more detailed information, I wrote to the Rocky Mount Evening Telegram, asking for a copy of the news story it must have carried about Ada's death, but received a reply from Miss Maud A. Battle, acting managing editor, that the 1922 file had not been preserved. She added:

"I checked with the Rocky Mount Sanitarium. They, likewise, have record trouble, for the hospital was run

by the Catholic church at that time and when the Sisters left they took their records with them. However, I was told that Ada Jones was a patient of Dr. D. L. Knowles at that time, and you might get some additional information by writing to him."

Thanks to Miss Battle's suggestion, I wrote to Dr. Knowles and received a reply that was as courteous and comprehensive as he could make it. He wrote:

"I remember very well the short illness and death of Miss Ada Jones, but I do not recall any special incidents. What information I have for you I got from the death certificate. All records at the hospital have been lost or misplaced.

"I was called to see Miss Jones, early morning of May 1, 1922. She was at the Ricks Hotel and was traveling with her manager and a maid. When I saw her that morning she was practically unconscious. I had her moved to the hospital where she died next morning at 10:20. She never came out of her coma and delirium. Her blood pressure was extremely high and her kidneys were shot. I signed her death certificate, 'acute uremia due to nephritis and

hypertension.' Her body was shipped to New York City and burial was supposed to have been May 5, 1922.

"The informant was W. J. Armstrong, traveling with Miss Jones as her manager (I think that is correct). He did not know so much about her past and did not know who her father and mother were—so here goes the certificate:

"Ada Jones Flaherty, age 40, phonograph and concert singer. Born in England, no date; father and mother, don't know, and don't know birthplace.

"Duration of illness, May 1-2, 1922. Died 10:20 a.m., May 2, 1922. No autopsy.

"Diagnosis: Acute uremia and nephritis. R. R. Gay, mortician, Rocky Mount, N. C. Body shipped to New York. Informant: W. J. Armstrong, no address. Husband's name given as Huly Flaherty.

"This is all I can give you and I hope you will find some use for it in your unique and interesting hobby. If I can help you further, call on me," was the way Dr. Knowles concluded his most appreciated letter. "Huly" as Mr. Flaherty's first name, of course, was a misunderstanding of Hughey, his correct given name.

(To be continued.)



#### STARS AND THEIR HOBBIES

Lily Pons shows off her collection of "snuff boxes" to her conductor-husband, Andre Kostelanetz.



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ADA JONES VIII

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Doubting that 40 was Ada Jones' correct age at the time of her death, I continued my inquiries by writing to the City of New York's Department of Health and asking if its bureau of records had the information I needed, but was told by Thomas J. Duffield, director of the bureau, that it lacked any record of the singer's birth or death. He suggested that I might obtain the information from the Bureau of Vital Statistics, State Department of Health, Raleigh, N. C. This was useless, however, since the Raleigh bureau's records would have been based on information provided by Dr. Knowles.

Then Jimmy Martindale sent me a copy of the Suffolk County Watchman, a weekly paper published at Huntington Station, where Miss Jones had lived. My Brooklyn friend had suspected I would be interested by an article, "Ada Jones Recalled in WABC Broadcast," and I was. I copy it here from the August 3 issue:

"Old residents of Huntington Station who happened to listen to an early morning WABC broadcast Wednesday had their memories refreshed when the commentator recalled the singing stars of the little Edison phonograph records of some thirty years ago. One of the favorites of that time was Ada Jones, who made her home on Douglas Court, and commuted to the city where she made records of sentimental ballads and popular songs.

"Miss Jones had a disposition bubbling over with good nature, the spirit of which she put into her art. Her records were among the best sellers of those almost forgotten Edison celluloids. An announcer would recite the name of the piece, gave the name of the composer, lyric writer and songster and then warn the listener that the music would follow immediately. Of course, the technique of introducing a musical piece on the air has changed with the time, but it is refreshing to know that Ada Jones is still remembered as one of the pioneers in the broadcasting of vocal entertainers."

There are a few easily seen slips in that article. The announcer did not give the name of the composer and lyric writer, nor did he "warn" that the music would begin immediately. But that is of little consequence. Hoping that the Watchman would find information in its back files about Miss Jones' death and funeral, I sent an inquiry, but Edward Dobson, a contributing editor, said the paper had little exact information about her. He suggested that I consult Len Spencer for further details, not knowing that Len had been dead for more than 30 years.

"Ada Jones," Mr. Dodson said, "never appeared in vaudeville, but went on small town tours, which probably accounts for so little being actually known about her. Her immediate family is dead, and those here who knew her had little information but what one gets about a neighbor. The fact seems to be that she is the first woman who had her voice recorded in her comedy skits and topical songs. I knew (her) as a very jovial and good-natured woman in middle age."

In its issue of August 31, the Suffolk County paper gave prominent "play" to an article featuring the letter of inquiry I had written. It had the caption of "Ada Jones First Woman to Have Voice Recorded on Old Cylinder Transcripts—Station Artist Sang for Early Victor Record" and read:

"The story recalling Ada Jones, the first woman whose voice was recorded for the phonograph, and who made her home in Douglas Court, Huntington Station, interested Jim Walsh on the editorial staff of the Roanoke World-News of Roanoke, Virginia. His hobby is collecting information about pioneer recording artists for use in his 'Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists' department in HOBBIES Magazine and for a book upon which he is working.

"Mr. Walsh desired more facts about Miss Jones than were contained in the brief news article published in The Watchman in the August 3 issue. In his letter he said that her singing partner, Billy Murray, still lives at Freeport, Nassau County, and recently appeared on an old-timers broadcast.

"Miss Jones, whose married name was Mrs. Hugh Flaherty, bought one of the first homes built in Douglas Court by the late Walter Seay, pioneer builder at Huntington Station. The Seay family lived next door and it was there that friends and neighbors enjoyed many pleasant evenings listening to her stories and songs. She made tours through the country with comedy sketches and popular ballads and it was on one of these tours that she was stricken and died at Rocky Mount, N. C., on May 2, 1922. Her husband died about four years ago and their daughter, Sheila, also is dead.

"When the first Victor cylindrical records were first made her contralto voice and comedy style won her the honor of having her voice recorded as the first woman to break into the field of entertainment. Another of her partners was Len Spencer, while a third partner made up a popular quartet on tour. 'She was really a great artist and I'd like to do her justice when I write about her,' Mr. Walsh said.

"Among the youngsters who listened to Miss Jones in the Seay home was Frances, the young daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Seay. She had red hair and was very pretty. The singer took quite a fancy to her and undoubtedly inspired her to go on the stage. In her late teens she appeared with Eddie Cantor in the Winter Garden in Manhattan in a song and dance routine for two seasons. She

is now Mrs. George Verme of Huntington, and possesses a rare collection of the old Ada Jones records.

"Mr. Seay died in 1939. Mrs. Lillian V. Seay, whose home is at 14 May Street, Huntington Station, has been spending her winters between Newport News, Va., and Florida. She recalls vividly her relations with Ada Jones and the many happy times they had together as neighbors on Douglas Court."

In view of the cordial tone of this article, I perhaps should refrain from pointing out that Victor never made "cylindrical recordings" and insisting once more that Ada Jones was NOT the first woman to have her voice recorded.

Since beginning this series, it has occurred to me that municipal authorities of Manchester, England, where Miss Jones was born, might be able to let me have additional details, such as the full names of her parents and her exact birth date. If I succeed in getting such knowledge, I shall pass it on in due time to readers of HOBBIES.

Ada Jones died when the average American was just beginning to hear of radio, but before it had ousted the phonograph as the most popular medium of musical entertainment. Electrical recording was not introduced until three years after her death. If she were alive today she would be at least somewhere in her sixties, and probably would long since have settled down to placid retirement.

Styles in entertainment change, of course, and Miss Jones' way of singing must appear dated to the youngsters of today, who probably would apply to it that charitable, all-embracing term of "corny." The fact remains, however, that she was not only the most popular woman who ever made records but was an artist of remarkable talents, who probably would be able to adapt herself to any modifications of style, either in singing or humorous delineation. Her records still charm thousands of collectors. I'd be willing to wager that, a generation from now, they will be in far more demand than will be the discs of such for the moment up-to-date singers as Dinah Shore and Hildegarde, who have only to keep at it long enough to be themselves branded as "corny!"

Certainly, Ada Jones' merits entitle her to be affectionately remembered.



Two varying types of the Columbia Grand Opera Disc Record label



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## A Visit With John Bieling

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

A dream came true last September when I spent two evenings and a day in the hospitable home of John Bieling at Hempstead, Long Island.

Few readers of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists will need to be told who John Bieling is. You know him to have been the first tenor of the Manhasset Male Quartet, the first vocal ensemble ever to make wax cylinder records in the early 1890's and, until his retirement in 1914, top tenor of the Hayden (Edison) and American (Premier) Quartets.

The name of "The Canary," as his associates used to call Mr. Bieling because he had a high, sweet voice that never blasted when he sang into the old-fashioned recording horn, has been familiar to me almost ever since I can remember, but he has seemed to me almost as legendary a figure as King Arthur or Robin Hood, and I had never really believed that I should some day be privileged to shake his hand and enter his home. There were times when I amused myself by suspecting that John had never existed and that I had only "dreamed him up."

This feeling was so strong that when Bryant Burke, my host during my stay at Hempstead, took me to Mr. Bieling's home immediately after I arrived in the Long Island town, and the famous tenor came to the door, I

asked him to let me stand and look at him for a minute before I undertook to greet him.

"I just want to make sure you really exist!" I said.

John laughed, and assured me he was a substantial reality. He will be 78 years of age by the time this article appears, but is still active and mentally alert and as lovable a personality as anyone is likely to meet.

That first evening in the Bieling home was a memorable experience. I not only met John himself, but his sons, Harry and George, and Harry's daughter, Magdalen Margaret, who is best known to her friends as "Bo-Bo," a nickname her grandfather gave her when she was a tot. John also 'phoned to Billy Murray, who lives at Freeport, only five miles away, and we obtained Billy's agreement to join us the next day. There was one real disappointment, when we learned that Billy's inseparable pal, Jimmy Martindale, would not be able to join the party.

After several hours of lively conversation and listening to John's reminiscences, Bryant and I left, looking forward to resuming the get-together the next morning. And so we did, taking only time enough out for me to hear a representative sampling of some of Bryant's many amazingly

rare and interesting old discs and cylinders.

When we returned to our happy rendezvous, I met Mrs. Bieling for the first time. Like "Bo-Bo," she is blessed with a charming personality and, like everybody in the Bieling menage, has a gift for making visitors feel welcome and perfectly at home.

Bryant and I had been on hand for only a few minutes when Billy Murray came over. It was a great pleasure to me to find "The Boss" looking so well and in superlative spirits. Billy suffered an attack of coronary thrombosis early in 1944 that had his friends badly worried, but he seems to have recovered completely and to be in excellent health.

What a time there was when the two surviving members of the American Quartet (Steve Porter, the baritone, and William F. Hooley, the bass, have been dead a considerable time) began to swap yarns about the old recording days! The enjoyment was increased when Jim Van Demark, a Cohoes, N. Y., collector, who had learned of my arrival, dropped in to join us. Jim, an enthusiastic collector of old "popular" records, is a friend of Billy and John's former associates, Will Oakland and Walter Scanlan.

While the five of us were going great guns, conversationally speaking, Milton Platnick, a photographer who makes pictures for many New York City and Long Island papers, dropped in and took the group "shot" which appears with this article. It was published, with an accompanying feature story, in the Nassau Daily Review-Star. Billy and John are shown listening to the American Quartet's 1910 Victor record of "Play That Barbershop Chord," reproduced by the Bieling's Victrola. Unfortunately, Harry Jansen, of Queen's Village, another admirer of the pioneer recording artists, arrived too late to get into the picture.

Mrs. Bieling served an excellent luncheon, and eating and conversing were impartially relished. For hours after the meal was cleared away we remained at the table, the collectors chiefly occupied in listening while Billy and John recalled incident after incident of the "old days." John, incidentally, showed his agreement with readers of Hobbies, who voted Billy the No. 1 pioneer recording artist, by remarking:

"I'm not saying it just because he's here, but I'd say it behind his back as well as to his face—Billy Murray is the greatest artist who ever made our kind of record! When it came to clear enunciation and knowing just how to put a song over, Billy," he added, "you were absolutely in a class by yourself!"

It was a wrench when Billy had to leave, about 5 o'clock, but we consoled ourselves with the belief that we'd all get together next year. Then the rest of us made a pilgrimage of a few blocks to see a house in which the late Arthur Collins, famous for his rendi-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

**PIONEERS AND THEIR ADMIRERS MEET**—This photo was taken in John Bieling's home at Hempstead, L. I., during a happy get-together of two pioneer recording artists and three of their collector-admirers. In the foreground, John Bieling (left) and Billy Murray (right), listen to a Victrola rendition of one of their 1910 records. In the background, left to right, are Bryant Burke, Hempstead, N. Y., "Jim" Walsh, of Vinton, Va., writer of the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists department in HOBBIES, who is working upon a book of biographical sketches of early recording artists, and Jim Van Demark, of Cohoes, N. Y.



Photo by Milton Platnick, Hempstead, N. Y.

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## MUSIC

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22)

tion of the immortal "Preacher and the Bear," lived before he retired and moved to Florida. Oddly enough, the owner, a Mr. McGrath, who proved most cordial when he learned why we were taking pictures of his home, said he used to be a great admirer of Collins but had never before known that "Sir Arthur" at one time owned the place.

Jim Van Demark reluctantly left us, and Bryant, Harry and I ate a hasty supper in a restaurant. Jansen suggested that I should compile a list of every record made by Henry Burr. When I pleaded lack of time and said it would be a virtual impossibility to prepare anything resembling a complete list, Harry said he would undertake the job himself if collectors would send lists of Burr records to him. Those who would like to see such a list prepared should get in touch with Mr. Jansen.

Back to the Bieling home, where Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Rose joined us. 'Gene was for years the Edison company's flute soloist, and many collectors of Edison cylinders treasure his ocarina solo of "The Genevieve Waltz Medley," issued in 1905. Mr. Rose, who is now 80 but in good health, left the Edison company around the time the Diamond Discs were introduced, but in the ensuing years played with the orchestras of about a score of record companies. Both he and John were much interested in my hope of completing within the next year a book of biographical sketches of artists who made records from 1877 to 1909 and gave me considerable valuable information.

It was about 11:30 before Bryant and I could make up our minds to leave the Bieling family and return to our rooms, so that I could get some sleep, in preparation for leaving the next morning to visit my dear friends, J. L. Norton, senior and junior, of the Woodmay Record Company, of Boston. Even after we had gone about half a block up the street, the warm-hearted John joined us, to shake hands again and to express the hope that we'd have many more future meetings.

We heartily echoed his sentiments. And today, although weeks have passed, I still find it hard to believe that I have actually fulfilled a lifelong dream and met John Bieling himself!

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## LEN SPENCER. I.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

More than a year ago readers of HOBBIES elected a group of pioneer recording artists to membership in the mystical "Supreme Fifteen." Twelve of those so honored have already been the subject of biographical sketches.

Three—Len Spencer, Frank C. Stanley and Cal Stewart—remain for consideration. All have something in common besides possessing last names beginning with S and having been dead a quarter of a century or more. Each was an artist of considerable interpretative skill in his own specialized field and each also had far more than the ordinary amount of creative ability.

Particularly was this true of Leonard Garfield Spencer. I am convinced that, in the 70 years since the phonograph was invented, no other recording artist has equalled him as an original thinker, author and performer.

Len Spencer was a genius and, I believe, a man born in advance of his rightful age. Someone has called him "the Orson Welles of the early 1900's." If he were alive today, at the peak of his powers, he probably would be one of the dominant figures of radio and television, as actor, producer, script writer or all.

Spencer, had he survived to the present day, would be an old man, past 79 years of age. The following brief biographical sketch of him appeared in a catalog of Edison Blue Amberol records dated April, 1914:

"LEONARD G. SPENCER, CHARACTER SINGER—

Familiarly known to his intimates and thousands of admirers in the phonograph world as 'Len.' This artist was born in Washington, D. C., January 12, 1867. When a mere lad, young Spencer became an associate instructor with his father in the Spencerian Business College in Washington. Business demands brought him in close association with the Edison Company, where the remarkable recording quality of his voice was immediately discovered. The wonderful flexibility of his voice; his powers of differentiating in his character portrayals, and his marvelous dialectic ability are some of the causes that have made him so popular."

This is a good thumbnail sketch of the once world-famous native son of Washington, D. C., although, as will appear later, the Edison Company had nothing to do with the discovery of Len's abilities as a recording artist. The Columbia company's headquarters were in Washington in the late 1880's and early '90's and Spencer was making Columbia records by the "round" years before Edison entered the business.

Before beginning to trace in detail Len's 25-year span as one of the

most popular makers of records, it may be well to set down something of his family background and to devote especial attention to his remarkable mother, Sara Andrew Spencer. Some of Len's still well remembered traits undoubtedly were derived from her, one of the notable women of a bygone generation.

Mrs. Spencer died in 1910. Two years previously, the 1908 edition of "Who's Who in America" listed her as still being principal of the Spencerian business college in Washington. She was born in Savona, New York, in 1837, and in 1864 she married Henry C. Spencer, who died in 1890, about the time his famous son's recording career was beginning.

Young Mrs. Spencer proved herself an ardent advocate of woman suffrage. In 1871, when Len was four years old, she joined 72 other women in an effort to register and vote. Refused, she brought suit, which resulted in the Supreme Court's 1874 ruling that women were citizens but could not vote without local enabling legislation.

"Votes for women" constituted only one of Mrs. Spencer's interests. She strongly supported measures to reform "fallen women" and was given credit for defeating bills to license red light districts in Washington. During the '70's she secured passage of legislation there for "the rescue of outcast girls." She was secretary of the National Woman Suffrage Association from 1874 to 1881; president of the Woman Franchise Association of the District of Columbia

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

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For a Goose," "Coming to the Point" and "Just in Fun," from paintings by W. S. Mont, are more important. Another well-known American artist, Felix O. C. Darley, did a series of "American Farm Scenes," lithographed by the German, Furrh, in 1860, and the Berlin publisher, E. Sala, issued a set of "American Hunting Scenes" in the same tradition.

Across the English channel, British lithographers were almost as numerous, and just as well-equipped, as those of France. Ackermann, the great London print house, was publishing lithographs as early as 1819. N. M. Hanhart & Co., founded by a

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partner of Englemann of Paris, Day & Haghe, Louis Haghe a Belgian who came to London in 1823, later Day & Son, and, after 1860, Vincent Brooks, Day & Son, and the later Yates & Co. all made fine prints, some of American interest. However, while albums were also an English fashion, topped by John Gould's forty-odd volumes of "Birds of the World," started in 1832, no American ones appeared. Vincent Brooks, Day & Son did a series of Indian scenes in the Mississippi Valley about 1860, "Buffalo Creek Near Fort Riley, Kansas," "Great Bend of Arkansas River" and others, and Day & Son several ship prints, "New York Packet Ship," "Clipper Ship Swiftsure" and U. S. Frigate St. Lawrence," which might be classed as a series. Yates & Co. did two splendid prints, "Midnight Race on the Mississippi" and "American Express Trains Leaving the Junction" possibly for the American market. And, more important, Ackermann published Hanhart's large "San Francisco" of 1851.

There are many other important American views from European presses. De Roy and Le Breton did early views of San Francisco, and there is a surprising "Cincinnati, Vue Generale Prise Derriere Newport" by the Cincinnati artist and lithographer Forbrider, lithographed by Le Mercier. New York views include Deroy's "View of New York Taken from Weehawk," with title also in French, German and Latin, one, "New York von den see Seite aus Gesehen" by Folger of Berlin, about 1850, and a number by W. & J. Turgis of New York and Paris.

Finally, the chromolithographs of 1865-1900 have to be considered. Technically, many of these are superb color prints, and, in a number of cases, they reproduce the work of competent painters. But, in the taste of the period, the great majority show European views or genre scenes in European backgrounds. Many of the publishers, too, are of European origin, and one, at least, Raphael Tuck & Co. who published lithographs in New York during the nineties, was a branch of the well-known London house, which probably printed their output. However, the imprints on chromos are rarely detailed, and we can only guess that the prints of E. S. & L. Restein of Philadelphia, Edmund Foerster & Co., Max, Jacoby & Zeller F. Tuchfather of New York and others of the period were printed abroad.

#### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

from 1871 to 1876; secretary of the district auxiliary association of the American Red Cross from 1877 to 1882, and was active and distinguished in other ways.

Later, she wrote two books, "The Woman Question" and "Thirty Lessons in the English Language."

Not a great deal is known to me of Len Spencer's short-lived father. He was a son of the inventor of the Spencerian style of penmanship,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

## OLD AMERICAN TOWN VIEWS



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larger tents, more seats and other equipment. Also vying with each other to produce the most elaborate parades, circus owners paid particular attention to matching teams to draw their parade wagons, and up to 40 horses, driven two or four abreast, were used.

When baggage stock was in greatest use with the largest of all circuses, Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus, in the early 20's, some 350 head of stock constituted the department.

The show traveled on four trains of 22 to 25 cars each, the first three sections carrying wagons and the fourth section made up entirely of stock cars and coaches. There were four to five cars of baggage stock in each of the first three sections, the horses being loaded 25 to 30 to a car with harness on.

When the unloading process started at the railroad runs, pull-over teams of two horses were hooked on the wagons on the flat cars, and pulled them to the end of the train, where they were eased down the runs by trainmen. As soon as they were clear of the train, pull-away teams whisked them down the street, out of the way of the next wagon, and then the four, six or eight horse teams took them to the lot.

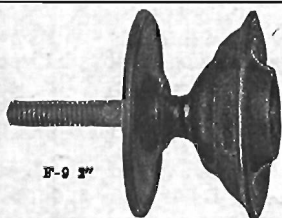
At night, the wagons were hauled back to the train by teams, the number of animals being determined by the weight of the wagon. Pull-up teams pulled them up the runs to the flat cars, and pull-over teams moved them down the string of flat cars to their proper places.

Typical of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey lineup of baggage stock were 14 eight-horse teams, 24 sixes, 16 fours, 14 twos and half a dozen saddle horses for bosses.

During rainy weather, there was extra duty for the baggage stock, when hook rope teams were needed to move exceptionally heavy wagons in the mud. On such an occasion, as many as five eight-horse teams might be hooked to a single wagon, with an elephant or two pushing, to move a wagon to its proper place on the lot, or to get it back to the street.

But now, tractors have been put into service in place of pull-over, pull-away and pull-up teams, and large trucks and tractors haul the wagons to the lot, sometimes with three or four wagons hooked together as trailers.

So has passed into history, a colorful phase of the circus scene of yesterday.



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

which used to be the most popular of "muscular method" handwriting systems. It was taught not only at the Spencers' business college, but to millions of students in public schools. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer operated their college at Ninth and D streets, Washington, and for several years also lived in the building, which later became the Lincoln, and then the Herzog, theater. It burned while known as the Herzog and a movie theater now occupies the site.

Len and his twin brother, Harry, were, I believe, the Spencer's only children. The brothers were closely associated as long as Len lived, although Harry never became so famous as Len. I have not been able to ascertain positively whether he is still alive.

Len Spencer's middle name, Garfield, was given to him in honor of Senator James A. Garfield, of Ohio, who was one of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer's intimate friends for years before he became president. Harry, christened Henry after his father, was always known by the nickname.

From the beginning, the Spencer boys followed, probably at their mother's insistence, the rule that twins must look, dress and act alike. Some years ago, Odell Whipple, a Washington man who attended the business college about 60 years ago, recalled:

"Not even the other students could tell Len and Harry apart. They

*This type of "Juke Box" was popular in the Gay '90's. You dropped a penny in the slot and, through the ear tubes, listened to a wax cylinder playing "The Sidewalks of New York." Such records can now be played electrically, with fine results. This photo was found in a discarded family album in an Iowa second-hand store. Nothing could be learned of the identity of the earnest young listeners. The machine shown here was a forerunner of the farmer's machine with morning glory horn. This was the type of cylinder phonograph used when Len Spencer began making records in 1889.*



would go to the blackboard and go through a regular drill, making the same strokes together. My father . . . sent me to the college in the hope that I would overcome my unfortunate left-handedness. Mrs. Spencer was also trying to cure Len of this 'vicious' habit . . . In Len's case the desired result was obtained, for he afterwards wrote in the beautiful flowing hand of his family."

(To be continued)



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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## LEN SPENCER. II

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH



ELLEN BEACH YAW

(From the 1914 KEEN-O-PHONE catalog)

### MISCELLANEOUS

**MUSIC BOXES:** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. apx

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342, f128732

**WANTED:** Old phonographs, cylinder records, music boxes, discs, parts. Catalogs and other books on same.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. ap3492

**CERTIFICATE** and expert opinion on old violins. Fee \$5. Violins sent will receive prompt and careful attention.—Isador Berger (Violin Connoisseur), 165 E. Ohio St., Chicago, Ill. au126541

**AUCTION:** Classical records. Other kinds for sale. What do you want?—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Penna. jly6844

**WANT** 5" paper rolls for Symphonia organ.—123 W. State St., Geneva, Ill. je3372

**BOOKS FOR SALE:** "Talking Wax," story of the phonograph with bibliography, \$2.50; "You Can Make Records," hand book for recordist, \$1.—Leroy Hughbanks, Osborne, Kans. ap3053

**WANTED** for my collection. Music boxes either cylinder or tin disc type any size or condition as I can use the parts. Also for sale, Edison cylinder records, any amount.—Lewis J. Kerstein, 32 South St., Freehold, N. J. my4917

**FOR SALE:** Mira, 15½" and 13" disc; Regina, 20½" disc; Criterion, 15½" disc; Stella, 17½" disc; Regina, 27" disc; Capital Cuff music box; cylinder records; Symphonion A-B-C 13½" for 3 record playing box.—George Schait, 8 Walnut Ave., Cranford, N. J. ap3475

**WANTED.** Music boxes, singing birds, and other musical mechanical items for my collection. Also interested in rare or historical phonograph records. Describe completely and state price.—Urban Thielmann, 3001 Queensbury Drive, Los Angeles 34, California. je3094

**FOR SALE:** Swiss Music Box, "The Grand Model," takes 14" records; handsome, moulded & carved, solid mahogany case; in fine condition.—J. Shaw, 135 Cumberland Road, Lowell, Mass. ap1861

After Len and Harry Spencer grew up, people probably had less difficulty in telling the twin brothers apart. Len had a cleft chin and wore his hair in a pompadour style that gave him at least a superficial resemblance to portraits of Beethoven. I have never seen a picture of Harry, but, even if he adopted the same mode of hair dressing, he can hardly have had one of Len's striking facial characteristics.

This, according to Fred Gaisberg's book, "The Music Goes Round," was a long knife scar down one side of his face, which he acquired in a fight that followed a gambling game—probably poker, a pastime of which he was extremely fond. The scar does not appear in any photos of Len that I have seen, but Gaisberg, who was an accompanist at the Columbia studios during Spencer's early recording career, and for many years has been a Gramophone company official in England says it "marred Len's handsome features." There is no doubt that, at the beginning of his career and for some years afterward, the brilliant comedian was, in spite of mother's example and precepts, what used to be called "a wild young man."

To return, however, to the Spencer business college as it was in the days when Len and Harry's mother was its supreme ruler: W. E. Shea, assistant to Mark Sullivan, the political commentator, and his sister, Miss Mabel Shea (Mr. Sullivan's secretary) were among its students. Rather surprisingly, Mr. Shea recalls Mrs. Spencer as "the original bobbed-hair woman" and as having turned on amazing powers of sarcasm when a pupil's work displeased her. Miss Shea admits having been "scared to death" of Sara Andrew.

When Len had been cured of his natural tendency to write with his left hand, he became, in his late teens, an assistant instructor in the Spencer business college. He was not above earning pocket money by writing handsome visiting cards for callers.

And now we come to the beginning of Len Spencer's brilliant career as a recording artist. In the late '80's there was revived interest in the possibilities of the cylinder phonograph, which Thomas A. Edison had invented in 1877. Edison himself had been too busy, experimenting with electric lighting problems, to pay much attention to questions of sound reproduction, but Charles Sumner Tainter and Chichester Bell, two Washington experimenters, developed a system of recording on wax, instead of tinfoil, which Edison had used. The result was the American Graphophone company, with the Columbia Phonograph company as its sales agent.

My lamented friend, the late Frank Dorian, who was associated with Columbia almost from its beginning and

remained with it most of his next 40 years, recalled shortly before his death in 1939 that "The Columbia company started business in January, 1889, in two rooms in the Gunton building on Louisiana avenue, facing Fifth street. Some time in the summer of the same year it rented the four story and basement brownstone front building at 627 E street. It remained there until some time in 1893, at which time it moved to 919 Pennsylvania avenue, a large building which had formerly housed a dry goods store. . . It was at 919 Pennsylvania avenue that Columbia opened the first slot-machine parlor."

Mr. Dorian also recollected that the Spencer college became one of "the first users of the office graphophone (the instrument now better known as the dictaphone), and included a course in its operation as a supplement to its regular shorthand instruction.

"As a junior instructor in the college Len sometimes had to run errands for his father or mother, and in that capacity he visited our office quite frequently to get information, service parts, cylinders, or on similar

### RECORDS

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**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS:** Phonograph records cheap. Catalogue. Paramount, H-313 East Market, Wilkes-Barre, Penna. je3041

**PHONOGRAPH** Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f128001

**RARE AND OLD** operatics and other and other acoustic and electrical out-of-print classical vocals and instrumentals bought, sold, exchanged.—The Record Hunter, 1194 Lexington Ave., (81st), New York 28, N. Y. mh126371

**WANTED:** Discs for Olympia Music box 8½.—Genevieve Klein, 319 Walnut St., Columbia, Penna. je3012

**EDISONS,** music boxes, records. Free list.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. mh12066

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600 (Approx.) carefully chosen Edison disk records with \$235 diamond point player. The best offer takes.—Lincoln Library Company, 2203 Walnut St., Philadelphia 3. Tel. RI 6-8223 my3766

**WANTED:** Jaroff Don Cossack recordings made in Europe. Give titles, price wanted.—John Barrett, R. F. D. No. 2, Freeport, Illinois. ap1412

errands. It was during one of those visits that he expressed a desire to do a record of his own voice and was accommodated, with the result that we discovered he had a rich baritone voice, a good style and the ability to put his character into a song. (That was either late in 1889 or early in 1890.)

"It did not take long to reach a bargain with Len, especially as he wanted to supplement his meager income and whatever money he could pick up in his spare time was additional pocket change. We set Spencer down in front of a piano (he could play his own accompaniments), set three or four phonographs on top of the piano with the horns directed as nearly as possible on a level with his mouth, and Spencer would sing and play until he was tired—or until he had made as many records as we could afford to buy at one time. We paid him at the rate of ten cents for each record which passed our tests and was accepted as saleable. That was the beginning of Spencer's career as a recording artist."

Here is an amusing incident which Mr. Dorian recalled concerning Len's earliest recording experiences:

"A feature writer by the name of Rene Bache, connected with the Evening Star . . . was a rather frequent visitor to our show rooms. As he occasionally gave us a little free advertising in his newspaper stories, and publicity of that sort was a very valuable asset to a struggling industry, we were entirely willing to entertain him. . . On one of his visits he heard Spencer's record of 'Sadie Ray,' a sentimental ditty, and was so enamoured of it he had it repeated several times. As he listened through the ear-tubes his repetition of the selection did not disturb the quiet of the show room, and he was allowed to go as far as he liked."

Bache decided to try to sing with the record and, said Mr. Dorian: "Whether he lacked a sense of tone or merely because, his ears being plugged by the tubes, he could not hear his own voice, I do not know, but his efforts to repeat the words and music on the record were so completely off-key and he emitted such a series of remarkably discordant sounds that I had a pretty hard job to maintain order in the business staff. . . 'Sadie Ray' stands out in my memory as one of Spencer's most successful sentimental efforts, which nearly created a riot in an orderly business establishment."

Mr. Dorian's description makes Rene Bache seem a figure of comedy, but in the long run he was anything else. On April 19, 1933, Washington newspapers published a brief news story, relating that "Rene Bache, 72 years old, a writer on popular scientific subjects and said to be the last male descendant of Benjamin Franklin, died last night from an overdose of sleeping powder. Magruder MacDonald, acting coroner, issued a verdict of suicide. Bache, a resident of Washington for 45 years, had been ill

# OLD • SILVER

## Pioneers of the American Silver Plate Industry

By LARRY FREEMAN

On this, the one hundredth anniversary of Rogers 1847 and the first successful commercial appreciation of electro-plating to table silver, our thoughts turn to forebears of a great American industry. These forebears were not silversmiths in the proper sense of the term, but rather makers of pewter, Britannia and German Silver substitutes for the more costly solid silverware. These men saw in the infant electroplating process of the early 19th century a means of reaching the mass market with a superior product. How well they succeeded is attested by the fact that today America leads the world in plated silverware.

In 1834 a young Yankee of Scotch-English descent, Robert Wallace, was shown a spoon made of German (nickel) silver. At that time he was engaged in making spoons of the softer Britannia alloy. The better product fired his imagination, and within a year he was making the first German silver spoons in America and laying the foundation for the great Wallace Manufacturing Company that even today makes plated silver hollow ware and table flatware. Two other great present silver plate firms owe their origin to this same period, namely, Reed and Barton and The International (Rogers 1847) Silver Company.

Rogers 1847 was the first successful application of electro-plate to table flatware. The company was later bought by the Meriden Britannia Company of Meriden, Connecticut, and even later (1898) consolidated with other silver plate firms of the Connecticut valley to form the International Silver Company.

The first successful electro-silver plating on hollow ware, such as teapots and pitchers, was achieved by Samuel Simpson in 1848, but leadership in this field quickly fell to Reed and Barton of Taunton, Mass. This was an organization dating back to 1824, the year Isaac Babbitt perfected

for several years and was said to be facing total blindness."

There is nothing to indicate that Len Spencer ever considered suicide, but in the early 1900's, he, like Bache, suffered from failing eyesight. At first it appeared he would completely lose the use of his left eye, but its condition gradually improved.

Not long after Len Spencer's record of "Sadie Ray" exerted such a powerful fascination upon Rene Bache, the accomplished young baritone was well on his way to becoming famous wherever the English language was spoken.

(To be continued)

a while metal formula that could be easily worked into hollow shapes suited for table needs. This white metal was very much the Britannia alloy that was rapidly replacing pewter in the low price field. It was found that Britannia and white metal could be readily electro-silver plated, and by 1850, Reed and Barton had a number of beautiful plated tea sets on the market in open competition with the more costly solid silver and Sheffield (fused) silver plate. Other American Britannia makers, notably the Meriden Company, quickly followed suit. Soon there was a great quantity of silver plated hollow ware and table flatware on the market. Competition and the low price of bar silver quickly drove prices down. It became the fashion for each newly married couple to receive a plated silver tea set for a wedding present. This is the original source of much of the old silver plate that is today having a rebirth and vogue. Unlike glassware, which was easily broken during its years of neglect, the early American plate silver can still be restored to its pristine beauty. That is why there is now a concentrated demand for pieces to match up parts of sets lost over the period of years. Markings and numbers aid in easy identification, and by persistent searching, many a collector can acquire an authentic tea set made by the pioneers of a great American industry, one hundred years old today.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## LEN SPENCER. III

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

For more than a decade after Len Spencer's career began no method of making "master" cylinder records was known, and artists were compelled to sing the same numbers over and over by the wearisome "round." Spencer, however, had iron lungs, ample endurance and unlimited versatility.

Though he was primarily known in his later years as a comedian, Len at one time or another did all sorts of recording work. When he first visited the Columbia studios he not only sang popular ballads such as "Sadie Ray," but also recorded many hymns. (As will appear later, there was a deeply religious strain in his nature.) He was particularly esteemed for his abbreviated versions of speeches by famous men. For his ordinary "coon songs" and other popular productions he used the short and simple name of Len Spencer. The elocutionary efforts were usually represented, in a slightly more dignified way, as being by Leonard G. Spencer. After he married, he made a few records under the name of Garry Allen—Garry being short for Garfield and Allen being taken from his wife's maiden name. I have never seen a "Garry Allen" record and doubt that any are still in existence.

Making records became a profitable profession for the handful of artists whose voices recorded well in the 1890's and Len soon ceased to

work at the Spencer business college. It is said that he offended his masterful mother by eloping with Miss Elizabeth Allen, a student at the college, when Mrs. Spencer considered him to be still too young to undertake the responsibilities of marriage.

Not only did Spencer sing and recite for Columbia, but he also did most of the "announcing." It was his voice which informed the listener at the beginning of each cylinder what the name of the selection was, by whom it was made and that the manufacturer was the Columbia Phonograph company of Washington and Paris. He, as well as his brother Harry, also did announcing for a few years after Columbia began to make disc records. I have a 1903 Columbia disc made by the great Polish baritone, Eduard de Reszke, in which the announcement unmistakably is made by Len Spencer.

Harry Spencer, incidentally, appears to have made only one solo record during his career—an Edison two-minute cylinder of "The Mad Ravings of John McCullough," which purported to reproduce the ravings of McCullough, a famous Shakespearean actor, after he had been confined in the Bloomingdale insane asylum. For the sake of greater realism the announcement was omitted! A number of elocutionists before Harry had also tried their voices on the "ravings." He likewise assisted Len and Ada Jones in one Columbia record, a burlesque on old-time melodramas called "The Hand of Fate."

When Emile Berliner began experimenting with his first crude disc records in Washington, Len became a Berliner artist. Columbia moved its headquarters to New York in 1896 or 1897, and Len went along. By this time Edison also was in the cylinder record business and he soon won recognition as one of the most popular Edison artists.

On May 1, 1898, however, Len signed an exclusive contract with

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12617,	12618,	12620,	12621,	12622,	12622,
12623,	24001,	40072,	40073,		

### WHAT WE NEED:

Any Mantelli Zonophone number not on the  
above list, and especially numbers and matrix  
numbers of the following titles:

- Der Asra (Rubinstein)
- Samson—Printemps qui commence
- Romeo et Juliette—Chanson de Stephano

Since the publication of W. R. Moran's list of  
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issue of this magazine, considerable progress  
has been made towards completion of my discography.  
If you can possibly help, please do so.

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Columbia. By this time he was branching out. Besides making solo records he was doing a great deal of recording in which the banjo accompaniment of L. Ossman, "The Banjo King," received equal prominence. He had organized the Len Spencer Trio, with Steve Porter and Billy Golden as his associates (occasionally George P. Watson, the German yodler, was used in the place of Porter or Golden) and was the organizer and leader of a recording group known as the Imperial Minstrels. George W. Johnson, "the Whistling Coon," was one of the Imperials, whose personnel also included the Greater New York Quartet. Who these gentlemen were nobody seems to know now, but Spencer and Porter probably were half the ensemble and the tenors may have been Dan Quinn and George Gaskin.

The exclusive contract arrangement appears to have lasted only a year. When Victor acquired the Berliner patent rights and began issuing records in 1901, Len was right on the job. He also recorded for Zonophone, Leeds and all the other early disc manufacturers as well as the various cylinder companies that flourished briefly.

In addition to his regular recording work, which had all the charm of infinite variety, the inimitable Mr. Spencer soon began to write comic sketches which he sold to other recording artists, and sometimes undertook some unusual promotional "stunts."

I have a two-minute Edison cylinder which apparently was made after Mr. Edison developed his "gold moulded" process of making permanent master records in 1902. On this record, Spencer, who appears to have been speaking at a convention of Edison jobbers, highly lauds the inventor's genius and says that "this record of pure gold" is being presented to Mr. Edison by his loyal dealers and admirers. I surmise that a gold-plated indestructible copy of the fulsome address was presented to Thomas A. Edison and that the jobbers were given ordinary wax copies as souvenirs of the occasion.

Another oddity in my collection is a double-faced Victor record, issued, judging by the label, no later than 1903. It is a sales demonstration record, designed to attract boys and girls and make them clamor for their parents to purchase a "Victor talking machine." Spencer is the benevolent master of ceremonies on both sides. This record is of particular interest in view of the commonly held belief that Victor issued no double-faced records before 1909. The company almost certainly disposed of no "doubles" through regular retail channels prior to that year, but there is every reason to believe that this double-faced demonstration record was in dealers' hands before the Odeon company, of Germany, put double-faced discs on the market in 1904, and—so it has been generally held—inaugurated the double-faced trend that eventually made single-faced records obsolete.

Still another oddity of Spencer's early recording career was his recitation of President McKinley's speech at the Buffalo exposition in 1901. Victor issued the record with Spencer's name on the label, but Columbia and Edison made no mention of the artist's identity. As Frank Dorian, the late Columbia executive, once remarked to me: "We didn't tell people the record was by McKinley, but we were interested in sales and we didn't mind in the least if the buyer thought it was by the president instead of Spencer." McKinley, who was mortally wounded by an assassin a few days after his appearance at Buffalo, certainly had no opportunity to make a record, but since Spencer's name was omitted, many owners of the Columbia and Edison records refuse to this day to believe that their copies do not contain the voice of "the martyr president" himself. However, it was Len Spencer who recorded it, just as he did Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech, the Rev. Mr. Talmage's animadversions on infidelity and many other similar productions.

"To be continued")

#### MUSIC BOXES

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. s6868

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**MUSIC BOX** melodies now reproduced on modern phonograph records. 3 albums available \$5.25 each.—Bornand Music Box Record Co., 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. jly3223

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**MUSIC BOX,** 30x9x11", cylindrical in-laid box, 6 tunes, rich tone, excellent condition. Make offer.—Mayer, 1033 Clarence Ave., Oak Park, Ill. my1161

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**FOR SALE:** Swiss music box, Case 15x37x17", 4 cylinders 2½x13", 6 tunes each. Drawer holds 4 cylinders, mechanism perfect, Burl walnut, rosewood case, sandle wood and mother of pearl inlay, \$350.—Lubbock Antique Shop, Lubbock, Texas. my1492

**WANTED** for my collection. Music boxes either cylinder or tin disc type any size or condition as I can use the parts. Also for sale, Edison cylinder records, any amount.—Lewis J. Kerstein, 32 South St., Freehold, N. J. my4917

**WANTED.** Music boxes, singing birds, and other musical mechanical items for my collection. Also interested in rare or historical phonograph records. Describe completely and state price.—Urban Thielmann, 3001 Queensbury Drive, Los Angeles 34, California. j63094

**CLASSICAL, Operatic, Red Seal Victor, Columbia, other records;** great singers of Long Ago. No lists, write wants.—Lloyd Bailey, 721 E. 11th St., Kansas City, Mo. jly3463

**EDISON Phonographs—Gem, Standard, Homes, Triumph, one has hand painted flowered horn. Glass enclosed coin slot Columbia phonograph;** Columbia machine like one pictured on page 23 of March Hobbies, has tin horn instead of listening tubes, All reasonably priced.—Peter Grattelo, 1523 W. Stover St., Freeport, Illinois. my1053

## Death of Old Timer Recorder

Widely known as a soprano before her retirement in 1930, Mrs. Ella Kavel Loeser, Chicago, passed away last month at her home in Chicago. Mrs. Loeser began her singing career in 1893 under the name of Mme. Ella Kavel. A pupil of the late Daniel Protheroe, she specialized in German classics. She sang in some of the leading theatres of the country during the heyday of her career. She also recorded for Columbia and sang in vaudeville. Mrs. Loeser had been blind since the age of 19.

#### RECORDS

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**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS:** Phonograph records cheap. Catalogue. Paramount, H-313 East Market, Wilkes-Barre, Penna. j63041

**PHONOGRAPH Records bought.**—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f128001

**RARE AND OLD** operatics and other acoustic and electrical out-of-print classical vocals and instrumentals bought, sold, exchanged.—The Record Hunter, 1194 Lexington Ave., (81st), New York 28, N. Y. mhl26371

**WANTED:** Discs for Olympia Music box 8¼.—Genevieve Keim, 319 Walnut St., Columbia, Penna. j63012

**EDISONS,** music boxes, records. Free list.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. mhl2066

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** for sale: Classical, jazz, cylinders, operatic. Lists. What do you want? Delano, 349 Lindenwald, Ambler, Penna. S6235

**600 (Approx.)** carefully chosen Edison disk records with \$285 diamond point player. The best offer takes.—Lincoln Library Company, 2203 Walnut St., Philadelphia 3, Tel. RI 6-8228 my3766

**REGINAS, CRITERIONS, Stellas, Symphonium Music Box records** for sale.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, New York. my1211

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

LEN SPENCER. IV

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Busy and successful as Len Spencer was in the first 15 years of his recording career, his greatest triumph began in 1905 when Ada Jones became his recording associate. According to Dan W. Quinn, Spencer "hot-footed it down to Huber's museum" and obtained Miss Jones' services just a day before Quinn made her a similar offer.

The career of Ada Jones has already been dealt with in a series of articles, which told much of her partnership with Spencer. Although their Bowerly sketches, such as "Pals," "Peaches and Cream" and "Jimmy and Maggie at the Hippodrome" were perhaps the most lastingly popular, they also did many "coon" skits, of which "Jim Jackson's Affinity is a good example; "rube" numbers like "Reuben and Rachel"; Jewish specialties of "The Original Cohens" variety; Irish character sketches, such as "Sweet Peggy Magee"—the list could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

During all this busy period, however, Len found time to do other types of recorded work. He revived a series of "auctioneer" records, of which "Auction Sale of Household Goods" is typical, which had been first recorded by W. O. Beckenbaugh, of Washington, D. C., who had been known on Berliner discs as "the Leather-Lunged Auctioneer." In "Auction Sale of a Music Store" he had the assistance of Parke Hunter, who played several musical instruments, but invariably performed "Hiawatha," to Len's apparent disgust. Several records featuring animal imitations, such as "A Barnyard Serenade," "Krausmeyer and His Dog Schneider" and "Daybreak at Calamity Farm," were widely popular. The imitations were entrusted to the capable mouths of the late Gilbert Girard and Al S. Holt. Some people almost went crazy at having to listen to their neighbors play the Spencer-Girard record of "A Scene at a Dog Fight" over and over. Len was also Billy Murray's first recording partner after Billy left California for the East in 1902.

I even have a Columbia single-faced disc, No. 19, issued in 1902, on which Spencer, assisted, so the announcement says, by George Schweinfest, dared to commit the sacrilege of recording "Uncle Josh's Huskin' Bee." It must have been while Cal Stewart, the original Uncle Josh, was on a world tour and unavailable for recording work. What part Schweinfest had in the record is not clear. He is dimly remembered nowadays as a piccolo player, and he certainly does not speak on the record. Somebody saws a fiddle,

though, so perhaps Schweinfest, the Piccolo virtuoso, displayed his versatility by playing the violin for the "huskin' bee dance"!

I have no way of knowing what Stewart thought of Spencer's daring to record an Uncle Josh sketch, if he ever knew of it, but he may have considered that he obtained his revenge by making a Zon-o-phone record of "The Arkansas Traveller," a comic sketch which Spencer introduced in the 90's and was undoubtedly the most popular one-man record he ever did. It would also be interesting to learn, if we could, what Len

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 Establish confidence absolutely  
 Realize profits substantially  
 Save disappointment always



*That Len Spencer also believed in advertising is attested by this card which  
 was distributed to advertise his various activities.*

thought of Cal's presumption in treading on his own private territory. I have never heard this record, but J. W. C. Hesser, an Iowa collector, told me some years ago that he owned a copy.

By October, 1906, the new partnership of Len Spencer and Ada Jones (most of their early records gave the comedian's name precedence over his feminine associate) was already famous wherever records were bought. Disc and cylinder enthusiasts in England demanded to know something about the pair, so the Talking Machine News published a biographical sketch, most of which I shall reprint here, although it is not too accurate in some respects. The reference to Spencer's "modesty" especially may be discounted, since veteran phonograph people remember perfectly well that he had a high opinion of himself, though perhaps not an unduly exalted one in view of his genuinely great abilities. Said the T. M. N.:

"The author of character sketches, writer of songs and vaudeville artist who is too modest to write a biographical sketch of himself is a rare bird. But such a man is Mr. Len Spencer. Although Mr. Spencer for many years has been the possessor of a splendid voice with which he has made countless hits through the talking machine and on the vaudeville stage, he has never submitted to the wiles of a press agent or given any biography of any kind. Mr. Spencer's popularity has recently caused him to engage an entire floor in Twenty-Eighth Street, in the heart of the theatrical district of New York. His suite is known as The Home of Mirth, Melody and Ideas. . . .

"His work in dialect has been much enjoyed, more especially in recent years with his partner, Miss Ada Jones. Mr. Spencer's original dialect work was a feature of the Columbia exhibit at the St. Louis exposition (in 1904), where he made souvenir records that were greatly appreciated by the visitors. Before the Business Educators' Association of America, assembled at St. Louis, he also demonstrated the business practicability of the commercial graphophone.

"When Mr. Spencer strikes the trail of a fit subject for a dialect sketch he is as relentless as Sherlock Holmes. He has been known to follow such a 'lead' for miles, whether German, Irish, Italian or Negro—and he is a master of them all. One striking feature of Mr. Spencer's work is that it is provocative of mirth or tears, to suit the occasion. He reads extensively, making careful research in the field of comedy, and has every facility for creating sketches for his own needs as well as supplying material for many other artists.

"Mark Twain has said there are only six original jokes in the world, but Mr. Spencer seems to have found 600 different ways of treating each of them. He has in his files perhaps 20,000 laugh points. . . . Mr. Spencer first introduced the graphophone into minstrel work and has successfully managed several notable amusement enterprises, among them the Len Spencer minstrels and the Elite Vaudevilles, who toured the principal eastern towns. The team of Spencer and Jones has been offered more vaudeville engagements than it can take care of."

Not that this article says Len and Ada were "offered" vaudeville engagements. I don't think they ever appeared together in variety. Her tendency to epilepsy alone would have made such an undertaking impractical, not to mention Spencer's lacking the time to spare from his numerous other activities.

Just what the "Len Spencer minstrels and the Elite Vaudevilles" were I don't know, but the latter may have been the forerunner of the recording artists' concert troupe which later became known as the Record Maker Troupe and the Eight Famous Victor Artists. The minstrels may have been the "Columbia Minstrels," a novelty originated by Len. This consisted of lifelike models of popular recording comedians sitting on the stage in a typical black-face semicircle. Behind each dummy, but concealed by a screen, was a phonograph. The music appeared to come from the "dummies," but was recorded. (To be continued.)

**"The World is Small"**

In looking through March HOBBIES, I discovered on page 23 a picture of my elder brother and his pal listening to an old recorder. Under the circumstances it seemed only right that I should inform whoever owns the picture, of which there were only three made at the time, who these young fellows were and how they happened to be smoking at their age as it was an unheard thing in the "best families". I was born and raised in Iowa.—Mrs. F. S. Barr.

—O—

**The Housing Problem**

Of the many perplexing problems that confront the avid collector each day, there is none so acute, none so omnipresent as that of housing the collection. Each day's acquisition for the collection brings its own specialized problem, but in a general way the question remains, looming ominously on the otherwise bright horizon of the true collector's tomorrow. Especially prized or newly acquired specimens offer no serious problem as the collector is rather certain to want them out where he can gloat over them, and, in consequence, they usually end up in a position of prominent display about the house. The mantel, the more prominent tables, an important window shelf: these are the usual vantage points on which the newest and choicest of the collection are found.

A small discriminating collection of some one item could be comfortably confined to the shelves of a pine dresser. The arrangement on shelves to be made with an eye to color and utility, plus availability, rather than for any homogeneity of specimens. Yet, there are many small, beginning collections sprawled uncomfortably over many rooms of a home which would gain immeasurably in stature were they brought together on the shelves of a cabinet of this nature.

Blown glass would appear to be the best advantage on a pine cupboard, especially since the environment would be contemporary with the pieces. In clear, a coat of apricot or lettuce-green paint inside the shelves would display the glass best.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## LEN SPENCER. V

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

The Talking Machine News article, previously quoted, said Len Spencer's "Home of Mirth, Melody and Ideas" was on Twenty-Eighth street, New York. Later, however, it was at 46 East Fourteenth street (Union Square), and still later at 245 West Forty-Second street.

Joe Fortgang, young New York

record collector who, as "Joe Franklin," has made a brilliant success with his "Vaudeville Isn't Dead" radio program based on old recordings, some time ago sent me some post cards which were mailed from "Len Spencer's Lyceum, the Booking Agency on the Square." One, mailed on February 25, 1913, to "Mr. Max Backhaus, 303 E. 79th St., City," says: "Don't forget to come to our party Sat. eve. at 421 E. 52nd St. Come early, don't disappoint your friend, Harry S."

The card, which shows traces of the Spencerian style of penmanship, must have been written by Len's brother, Harry, who was associated with him in the operation of the Lyceum, or booking agency. The other side shows a pompadoured gentleman, unmistakably Len Spencer himself, talking into a phone. In the lower right hand corner is another gentleman who looks like the original of "Cohen on the Telephone." According to the card, Len was then "furnishing the services of thoroughly competent and reliable vocalists, drummers, pianists, instrumentalists, violinists, operators, dramatic lecturers, vaudeville acts, etc., latest and best song slides, band and orchestra musicians."

We are getting ahead of the story, however. Spencer concentrated on being a booking agent and sketch writer for other vaudeville and recording artists after his own popularity had waned. For several years after his association with Ada Jones began his vogue remained at its peak. It was not at first seriously impaired by Ada's beginning to make duets with Billy Murray in 1907, although after

a year or so the Jones-Murray combination became the most popular duet team in phonograph history and the Jones-Spencer sketches were pushed into the background.

In 1908, while Jones and Spencer dialect numbers were still selling as fast as the factories could turn them out, Len introduced a new partner, one "Mozarto," who had, or was represented to have, the unusual ability to play two musical instruments at once. "Mozarto" might easily have been a figment of Len's imagination — Frank Dorian could not recall him and said he suspected that he was — but he was represented by Victor and Edison to be a noted European music hall performer, so perhaps he actually existed.

The June, 1908, issue of the Phonogram contained the following description of Edison cylinder 9852, "Krausmeyer's Birthday Party": Although humorous in itself this vaudeville sketch is more noteworthy for the clever instrumental selections by Mozarto, a well-known vaudeville artist. These include a one-string violin playing a Hungarian Rhapsody, a one-string violin and an ocarina playing a selection from 'Faust' and a clarinet duet. Mozarto actually plays all the instrumental features. In the violin and ocarina duet the ocarina is played by means of a rubber tube leading from his mouth to

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12617,	12618,	12620,	12621,	12622,	12623.
12624,	24001,	40072,	40075.		

#### WHAT WE NEED:

Any Mantelli Zonophone number not on the  
above list, and especially numbers and matrix  
numbers of the following titles:

- Der Asra (Rubinstein)
- Samson—Printemps qui commence
- Romeo et Juliette—Chanson de Stephano

Since the publication of W. R. Moran's list of  
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the ocarina, which is fastened to the violin. He plays the two clarinets at the same time, one in each side of his mouth."

"Sim and Sam, the Musical Coons," another original sketch by Spencer, was issued in September, 1908. The number was 9929. It was thus described:

"A racy vaudeville sketch. Sam and Sim are a pair of vivacious 'coons' who get back at one another with a lot of witty ragtime repartee leading up to some clever musical stunts. The latter are done by Mozarto, the European vaudeville performer. He plays about every known type of instrument, his strong point being taking them two-at-a-time. We are treated to saxophone duet, 'Sycamore Tree'; to 'Swanee River' on a one-string violin and ocarina, and to a clarinet duet, 'Jamaica Two-Step,' Mozarto being the sole performer in all three duets."

The Spencer—Mozarto partnership lasted for only a few records. When Edison introduced four-minute cylinders late in 1908, Len's inventiveness was given a fillip. With twice as much recording time available as on the two-minute records, he was able to do his creative gifts justice and some of the Amberol cylinders are among the best things that he and Ada Jones ever did. I am inclined to give the palm among all their records to "Little Arrow and Big Chief Greasepaint," a burlesque on the old-time "Wild West" show that I consider one of the funniest things ever cut into wax. Years after his death, this sketch, as well as several other Jones-Spencer specialties, was transferred to indestructible Blue Amberol records and stayed in the catalog until Edison went out of the record business in 1929.

The advertising card mentioned the ability of Spencer's Lyceum to supply "song slides," which were used in the old days of vaudeville to illustrate the words of popular songs as they were rendered on the vaudeville

stage. Len wrote and recorded at least one sketch based on the song slide idea. In October, 1910, Edison issued Amberol record No. 529, "Mamma's Boy," which revived a song that had been popular five years before. Described as an "illustrated song idea," it was divided into two scenes.

In the first, a group of boys were playing soldiers. "Mamma's Boy," portrayed by one "Miss Myrtle Spencer," proposed the game and wanted to be captain. Mickey Finn, acted by Clarence Rockefeller, wouldn't allow him to play but pulled his Little Lord Fauntleroy curls and velvet trousers and called him "a mamma's boy." Mamma's Boy's mother called him in and he sobbingly told her of his troubles. His mother (Ada Jones) then sang the chorus of the "Mamma's Boy" song, beginning, "Don't you mind what they call you, darling."

The second scene supposedly occurred 30 years later, and was described by the Edison ad. writer as follows: "After the battle, return of reconnoitering squad reporting to captain. Captain congratulates men on glorious victory. Soldiers give all credit to captain. Captain refers to order from General to sail home within a week. Sergeant tells of Captain and

himself being soldiers thirty years. Captain recognizes Sergeant as Mickey Finn, playmate of boyhood days. The Captain acknowledges, good naturedly, that he was called 'Mamma's Boy.' Soldiers join in singing chorus of song, and Taps and good-nights clear the record, which was arranged entirely by Len Spencer."

In the second half Len himself was the former "Mamma's Boy," Steve Porter was the sergeant and the Premier Quartet took the part of soldiers. I wonder who Myrtle Spencer was? She may have been Harry Spencer's daughter. Len's children were named Ethel, Michael and Clare. Clarence Rockefeller also is an unknown but presumably was not a son or grandson of John D.

Another unusual Spencer-inspired record of those days was the Entrance of Topsy scene from "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Len was St. Claire; Ethel Harboro (I suspect this was his daughter Ethel) was Aunt Ophelia; Myrtle Spencer was "Little Eva"; Spencer was also Uncle Tom; Ada Jones was Topsy, and a two-banjo accompaniment was furnished by Vess L. Ossman and a gentleman named Dudley — who, whoever he was, WASN'T S. H. Dudley! I have that information from S. H. himself.

(To be concluded)

## THE COMBS AND PINS OF A MUSIC BOX

By G. P. HECKERT

The comb is the most visible part of the essential mechanism of a music box. However, the condition of the tiny pins on the cylinder are just as important.

Since the publication of the "Curious History of Music Boxes" several years ago I have received letters from all parts of the country asking me to furnish new combs and to restore the cylinders. I have had music boxes in all sorts of conditions shipped to me and brought into my store, some from great distances, many of which had to be turned down because there was no factory or dealer from which to obtain the necessary replacements. What a pity, for the owners were unusually nice people you would like to please.

In the 34 years I have been in business there has not been one new music box made so far as I know. Whatever material for doing the repairs has become scarcer each year and today you will see in the advertising columns of HOBBIES requests for ruined music boxes from the few repairers still in existence. This is done in the hope of replenishing their stock of spare parts. And there are many parts not to be had. Take the medium sized pinions for the governors and the worm or fan staff for example. They are very seldom obtainable, nor even fair substitutes. Music boxes, like Swiss watches, come in such unlimited variety that I have almost never seen two alike. Therefore in essential parts it is usually necessary to put in "the nearest thing you can get".

A little booklet written in 1890 by one of the leading importing firms states that, "In order to avoid useless correspondence we will state here that no comb or cylinder can be duplicated even by the manufacturer unless the whole box is sent to the factory, which would generally cost more than a new one. If the pins are damaged we can replace them but for cheap boxes this is hardly worthwhile as the cost of such repairs would almost equal the value of the box."

Now let us take several examples. One of my close friends has a music box with three interchangeable cylinders. Each cylinder is about 14" long with almost eight airs on each. All pins are perfect and the case and movement in mint condition except that some mischievous person or child picked 17 teeth out of the comb in a row — treble teeth in a fine two comb box of the 90's. With the finest modern grinding wheel I hoped to cut a strip of new teeth from another comb, neatly insert them and tune them. So my friends far and wide joined in the search — time or cost of no consideration. Did we find it? Apparently so, but the Rockwell test showed a difference in hardness. The result of this was that he wrecked the box, gave me the combs for future reference and put the cylinders away hopefully.

In time he bought an oak box of the same size and about the same de-

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## LEN SPENCER.—VI

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Although Len Spencer's ability to write, produce and act recorded vaudeville sketches appeared inexhaustible, the popularity of this type of record declined after 1910, with Ada Jones devoting most of her time to singing duets with other artists, especially Billy Murray. The last of the Jones and Spencer sketches may have been a twelve-inch record of "A Race for a Wife," issued by Victor in 1913.

Len went his prosperous way, however, as a sketch writer and booking agent. One of his great ambitions, nevertheless, was not realized. It was that of being Billy Murray's business agent.

Spencer had a formal, slightly drawing way of speaking, something like that of the old-time tragedians he sometimes impersonated, and he always addressed Billy as "Wil-yam." (Anyone who has the Spencer-Hunter record of "Auction Sale of a Music Store" can get a good idea of how he pronounced the word, for the

versatile musician in that sketch is referred to repeatedly as Will-yam.)

"Will-yam," Len would say, "you are too easy-going. You are not receiving the stipend to which your great abilities entitle you. Make me your business agent, Will-yam, at a mere fifteen per cent of your earnings, and I guarantee to increase your honorarium most substantially."

"Sure, Len!" the good-natured Billy would agree. Out of range of Spencer's impressive personality, however, he would see the matter in a different light. "Why," he would ask himself, "should I pay Len fifteen per cent to be my booking agent when I've already got all the work I can possibly do?" So he would 'phone to Spencer and say: "I've been thinking it over, Len, and I don't believe I want to go ahead with that agent's proposition of yours."

"Very well, Will-yam!" Len would reply, with unruffled dignity. "It shall be as you wish. But I give you fair warning—you'll live to regret your lack of business acumen!"

Len Spencer's last record was "Uncle Fritz and the Children's Orchestra," a sketch which he made on Edison discs and cylinders in time for the December, 1914, Christmas trade. This was the only Diamond

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Disc he was ever to make. In it he portrayed the role of a benevolent old German uncle who brought gifts to his little nieces and nephews and led them in playing a "Christmas Symphony" on toy instruments.

His death occurred on December 16, 1914, only a week after the greater part of Edison's phonograph and record manufacturing plant at Orange, New Jersey, had been destroyed by fire. The February, 1915, issue of the Edison Phonograph Monthly, under the heading of "Len G. Spencer's Funeral," contained the following article:

"For years Len G. Spencer has delighted Edison audiences. His songs with Ada Jones and others were equally well known. His voice was a powerful baritone with a quality well fitted for record making.

"He passed away on December 16, 1914, at his home, 150 East Forty-eighth street, New York. Funeral services were held at the 'Funeral Church' at the undertaking establishment of Frank A. Campbell, West Twenty-third street, New York. Friends were notified, but were not apprised as to the character of the services, which came as a surprise to those present. They consisted simply of two phonograph selections in Mr. Spencer's own voice, made some years ago on Edison records and specially kept for this funeral service. In one Mr. Spencer's voice was heard to repeat the Lord's Prayer, in a deep, slow, solemn tone. Then followed in the same voice, but in a somewhat higher tone, the Twenty-third Psalm. The unexpectedness of these records was a surprise to all except the immediate family. The body was afterwards cremated and the ashes buried at the family plot in Washington, D. C.

"Mr. Spencer was 46 years old. He left a will in which are a number of \$500 bequests to charitable institutions. The will also contained a provision that the records are to be preserved and next used at the tenth

anniversary of his death. Many of Len Spencer's records still have a wide popularity and a steady sale."

Len Spencer may have been the first person in all history whose recorded voice was heard reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Twenty-third Psalm (which he had also recorded for Victor and Columbia, as well as Edison) at his own funeral. It would be interesting to know what gave him the idea of having the records played at his death. Perhaps it was suggested by a paragraph in the April, 1906, issue of the Columbia Record, Columbia house organ, which said: "At the funeral of Miss Minnie Nelson, a Chicago music teacher, a record of her own voice was recently reproduced. The selection was 'Nearer My God to Thee,' and it was so beautifully rendered that it added greatly to the impressiveness of the ceremony."

Or he may have read, in the May, 1906, issue of the Phonogram: "A feature of a funeral service recently held in Sullivan county, New York, was a phonograph selection. When the religious ceremony was over a phonograph was placed on the casket and the assembled mourners listened to the dead man singing one of his favorite hymns."

Ada Jones, who attended the funeral, told Billy Murray that when she heard Len Spencer's living voice she was so overcome she twisted her handkerchief into knots, trying to keep from screaming because of the emotional strain induced by the unexpected event.

Frank Dorian told me that Spencer's death occurred as he was at his desk, signing a letter in the beautiful flowing Spencerian hand he had learned at his parents' business college—the same hand he had used in 1898 when he placed his signature to a testimonial saying that the Polyphone, a cylinder phonograph with two horns and two reproducers reproduced his voice "as naturally as I sing." As he affixed his signature, the pen paused in the middle of his name and rolled from his hand. Members of his family found him dead of a heart attack.

I have not been able to ascertain definitely whether Len Spencer's wife and his three children are still alive, but I hope they are and that the record of his voice was played on the tenth, twentieth and thirtieth anniversaries of his death, and will be played into the indeterminate future.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## SAD NEWS ABOUT S. H. DUDLEY

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Regular readers of this department are familiar with the name of S. H. Dudley. They know him as the baritone of the Hayden Quartet, the first male voice ensemble to become internationally famous by its phonograph records; as the Victor catalog editor from 1902 to 1916 and as the author of the first editions of the Victor Book of the Opera. Biographical information about the singer, whose real name was Samuel Holland Rous and who was voted by HOBBIES readers to be one of the fifteen greatest pioneer recording artists, appeared in the January and February, 1944, and May, 1946, issues.

When I last heard from Mr. Rous, about four years ago, he had "just turned eighty" but was in excellent health and confidently expecting to live to be 90, if not 100. Since he came from an exceptionally long-lived family, there were good grounds for his optimism. Now, however, I am grieved to say that I have learned not only of his death, but of that of Mrs. Rous, who survived him by only a day. Mrs. Rous, who had been paralyzed for several years, was well

known in the 1890's as a concert and opera singer under the name of Sofia Romani.

News of this fine couple's passing came from Miss Nellie G. Flynn, of Los Angeles, in a letter that deeply touched me. Miss Flynn, a nurse, waited on both Mr. and Mrs. Rous during their illnesses and injured her own health in doing so. She called Mr. Rous "Dad" and his wife, "Mom."

I shall quote most of her letter as a document of more than ordinary human interest:

"Los Angeles, Cal., June 16, 1947. Mr. Walsh: I am Miss Flynn. I have been nursing Mrs. S. H. Rous for the past 6½ years. I wanted to write you the sad news. Mr. Rous talked to me of you a lot.

"On June 6 at 20 to 11 a. m. I lost Mr. Rous. He was a sick boy for a month or more, became quite ill on Wednesday. We took him to the hospital, and he took hemorrhages of the stomach. They were not quite sure just what it was.

"Well, my poor old Dad passed away. He was a fine person — the best God ever put on earth. Then Mrs. Rous passed away on Saturday . . . just 23 hours after him. I had a double funeral for them on June 9 at 2 o'clock.

"I had 25 months with Mom. She was bedfast, had a stroke, completely

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The late S. H. Dudley (Samuel Holland Rous), baritone of Haydn quartet, Victor catalog editor until 1916 and author of first Victor "Book of the Opera."

paralyzed. I lifted her in and out of bed as you would a three-year-old child . . . Mom was over 180 pounds, and I lifted her six to ten times a day. I fed her all her meals. I loved these people as if they were my very own . . . God was so good to those two through life and did not part them in death. He died at 20 to 11 and she at that very minute went into a coma. See what a beautiful ending. They both had a very happy death.

"My memory is so full of happiness while here with them. The beautiful thought of them will forever go through life with me. Thanks be to God for that. I have tried to let his (Mr. Rous') friends know of his death. If you know any of them please let them know . . . I will be here at the apartment till the last of June, then I will have to go to the hospital. I ruptured my side lifting Mother, so will have that taken care of . . . I tried so hard to fill their empty life and I think I did a good job of it. They both loved me.

"Dad's property goes to her nieces and his sister and niece . . . Am having mass said for them. Please add Mom and Father Rous in your prayers. They need us more now than ever."

I don't think anyone could read the foregoing without being impressed by the loving care and kindness Miss Flynn, of whom I had never heard until her letter arrived, bestowed upon the venerable couple for whom she did so much in their last years. Mr. Rous was 83; his wife, probably a year or two younger.

Unfortunately, I never met Mr. Rous, but his letters breathed such a spirit of confidence and vitality that it's difficult indeed to realize he's gone. I know the news will be a grievous shock to his old friend, John Bieling, of Hempstead, Long Island, the only surviving member of the Hayden Quartet.

I remember that when I was in New York in October, 1940, Albert

Campbell and I took a walk on the last day of my stay. As we passed one place — just where, I can't recall now — Al remarked: "That's where Sam Rous' brother used to have a phonograph company." The firm name was Rous and Burke. I have never been able to get much information about this long-gone pioneer recording concern, and probably never shall know much about it now, for, like Sam Rous, poor Al Campbell also is gone. "Clancy," as Billy Murray always called him, died on January 25 this year. To lose two such great old-timers as Albert Campbell and "S. H. Dudley" in one year is indeed a tragedy to those of us who love the pioneer recording artists and the great work they did. However, as long as collectors treasure their records, they will not be entirely forgotten, and that is a consoling thought.

Meanwhile, goodbye, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Rous! We're all sorry that you had to leave us.

Before becoming a recording artist, S. H. Dudley had considerable experience in opera, touring with the Emma Juch and Marie Tavary Grand Opera Companies in the United States, Canada and Mexico. This old poster was issued by the Tavary Grand English Opera company in the season of 1895.

Complete names of the artists are: Marie Tavary, Sofia Romani (Mrs. S. H. Dudley) and Marie Van Cauteren, sopranos; Helena Von Doenhoff, Leonara Herding and Sarra Carr, contraltos; Payne Clarke, William Stephans and Charles O. Bassett, tenors; Emil Steger, S. H. Dudley and Arthur R. Seaton, baritones; and Conrad Behrens, Pietro Mascotte and Thomas S. Guise, basses.

## THE ANTIQUES OF PIANO LORE

By FRANK FARRINGTON

The cycle has been completed. A speaker at a London exhibition in 1851 declared that in the then recent years one of the greatest changes in social life had been the change from dependence upon amusement in public, outside of the home, to the enjoyment of entertainment and amusement in the home. And he declared the prime factor in bringing about this change had been the development of the piano.

But now amusement and entertainment in the home have given away before the attractions of motoring, roadhouse dining and dancing and the pleasure of going places, and we are back again to one hundred years ago. In so far as the piano is concerned, it has hopped from the pianissimo of the home to the fortissimo of the dance hall.

Perhaps there is something to be said in favor of the end of the strumming and "chop-sticks" that made peace in the home something less than ideal through the long period when every girl's parents thought she ought to learn to play the piano. There were many pianos that were neighborhood nuisances, but after all, the piano through half a dozen decades was the center of much social gayety. Perhaps it will come back into its own, minus the "chop-sticks!"

A writer in "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," back in 1879, was saying, "Possibly the time may come when the rage for the antique, now expending itself upon pottery, will bring out the old pianos and give them a market value." Possibly. Very early pianos and their contemporaries and predecessors in the form of spinets, harpsichords and virginals are today attracting the attention of collectors of antiques.

The earliest musical instruments were, of course, stringed instruments, played by plucking the strings as with the harp and "Play on your

harp, little David" was the keynote. It was the beginning of the use of the hammer method of securing a tone that led to the piano.

The clavicitherium came into use about 1325 and it appeared as an oblong box within which strings of catgut were stretched, varying in length from the longest, reaching the full length of the box, to the shortest, enough shorter to give the highest desired note. These strings were operated by striking a key which caused a so-called plectrum to strike the string. This was an elementary form of the hammer method of making a sound. Incidentally, it has been discovered that catgut strings known to be 3,000 years old will still give out a sound. Catgut would seem to have more lives than the cat.

Today we need to know very little of this six-syllable, 14th century ancestor of the piano. It belongs in the realm of things that were antiques before there were any antiques. But it did represent the beginning of the piano type of musical tone production.

When the tone was first produced by striking the strings instead of by picking them, it was made with a quill fastened to a piece of wood operated by keys resembling the piano keyboard. It failed to satisfy in tone old Dr. Burney (author of "The General History of Music," London, 1776) who described the tone as "a scratch with a sound at the end of it."

Somewhat later came the clavichord which, too, was an oblong box with strings and keys for three octaves. The keys, when struck, caused the brass strings to be hit by brass hammers rather than by quills. Mozart made a clavichord a part of his regular equipment.

The earliest approach to the piano as we know it today, was the virginal, and almost contemporary with it were the spinet and the harp-

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

took a few years ago under the supervision of Queena Mario. But perhaps a few words about the career of Jeanne Jomelli will not be amiss. She was born in Amsterdam in 1879 and made her debut at the Royal Opera house there at the age of 16, as Juliette. Her vocal teacher was Stockhausen with whom she studied at Frankfort-am-Mein. A world wide tour soon followed. In Paris she was coached by Massenet. In New York she appeared with the Manhattan Opera Company (1906), and in the United States she later sang with the Boston Symphony, and on December 28, 1913, she gave a recital at Carnegie Hall in New York. She died in 1932. Her recording activities seem to have been very limited and the only titles I know of were listed in the July, 1911, TALKING MACHINE NEWS—ten-inch, needle-cut Edison Bell discs:

1085 Traviata: Ah fors, part 1

1086 Traviata: Ah fors, part 2

1087 Louise: Depuis le jour

1088 Annie Laurie

1089 Ave Maria (Gounod)

I have a vague recollection that Keith Moyer (Washington) once reported the *Traviata* on a Phono-disc, or some obscure make, and a blurred memory of Edison cylinders, but my information files are far away as I write these lines and I am unable to check the facts.



One of the newer innovations on the market in the form of music books is a Play-by-Color book issued by Lenore and Sid Wolfe, 986 Sanford Ave., Irvington 11, N. J. There are editions for the beginner and advanced student, at the price of \$1.50 each. The chart furnished with the edition is simple enough and we imagine that by following the rules one could gain the desired effects in a reasonably short time.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## EUGENE C. ROSE. I

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

In Freeport, N. Y., thrice sacred to collectors of ancient phonograph records as the home of Billy Murray, there also lived, until a few months ago, a vigorous gentleman, now 81, whose association with recorded music goes even farther back than Billy's.

Eugene C. Rose, who moved not long ago from Freeport to Oceanside, N. Y., made cylinders as long ago as 1889 — 58 years ago. Veteran record collectors will remember him as a member in the pioneer days of the Edison company's bands and orchestras, in which he played the flute, and as one of the three skilled musicians who composed the Edison Venetian Trio of violin, flute and harp.

I had the pleasure of meeting the active and alert Mr. Rose in September, 1946, at John Bieling's home in Hempstead, Long Island. Until about a month before my arrival, the two old cronies hadn't met in 25 years and neither was sure the other was still around, although they lived only five miles apart. Their reunion came about through a Nassau Daily Review-Star article featuring Mr. Rose. Afterwards, on August 2, 1946, the paper carried a story headed "Friendship of Rose and Bieling Revived Through the Review-Star," the first few paragraphs of which are:

"Last Saturday the Nassau Daily Review-Star carried a story on Eugene C. Rose, of Freeport, retired flautist who once played with great orchestras and was member 45 years ago of the Edison Phonograph company recording orchestra. He celebrated his 80th birthday Saturday.

"John H. Bieling, of Hempstead, now in his 78th year, picked up the paper and read the story. Bieling, one of the country's first recording artists, had known the Freeport musician when he was singing with Edison back in the late 1890's.

"He had not seen Rose for 25 years, had lost all trace of Rose since the day Rose walked into his Victor agency shop on Front street, Hempstead. In the meantime, the two had been living only about five miles apart.

"The veteran Hempstead recording artist, who today recalled that he was preceded by only five people in the country as a recording artist, in the days when barbershop quartets made famous such old-timers as 'Sweet Adeline,' 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game' and 'Side-walks of New York,' immediately made plans to get in touch with his old friend. He did this yesterday, contacting Mr. Rose's wife on the telephone and making a date later in the day for a good 'old-timer's' session, recalling their days together with the Edison Phonograph Company."

By the time I visited in Hempstead, the reunion mentioned in the foregoing article had already occurred, and Mr. Rose came over again from Freeport for a chat about the old phonograph days.

Mr. Rose told me that he was born in Danzig, Germany on July 26, 1866. He came to the United States at an early age and by 1889 was already well known as a flute virtuoso. In that year, when the phonograph was only twelve years old, Thomas A.



An early picture of Eugene C. Rose

Edison decided to have its wonders displayed at the Paris exposition, held in observance of the completion of the Eiffel tower, so the great inventor went to Paris, taking several cases of records which had been made especially to be played at the exposition.

"These," Mr. Rose says, "were made by prominent instrumentalists and singers of that time. Of all the records he took with him, I only know for sure of three I could mention. Maud Powell played a violin solo; Theodore Hoch played a cornet solo; and a trio by Beethoven for two concert flutes and alto flute was made with Carl Wehner and Gustav Gast playing the concert flutes and myself the alto."

Mr. Rose describes the records with which Mr. Edison astonished the exhibition-goers as "the old white wax cylinders."

In 1900, the veteran flautist—who, of course, wasn't a veteran then — went with John Philip Sousa and his band to the Paris Exposition, and in 1901 they played at the Glasgow Exposition. During their concert tour in England, Mr. Sousa received a Royal Command letter to give a concert at the Royal Palace in Sandringham before King Edward VII. The occasion, Mr. Rose recalls, was Queen Alexandra's birthday.

Upon his return to the United States, the genial "Gene" Rose established himself as a member of the various Edison house bands and orchestras, besides playing occasional solos and appearing in duet and trio combinations. He played several flute and violin duets with Eugene A. Jaudas, for many years an Edison orchestra director, and in August, 1914, the Edison record list contained "Will o' the Wisp Polka," played as a piccolo duet by Rose and Henry Heidelberg.

This was the description given of the record: "Henry Heidelberg and Eugene C. Rose are both proficient piccolo players. Mr. Heidelberg was piccolo soloist with the Innes Band for eleven years and was with Sousa

## RECORDS

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**PHONOGRAPH** Records cheap. Catalog.—Paramount, HB-313 East Market, Wilkes-Barre, Penna. d3041

for five years. Mr. Rose was a member of the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra and was for a number of years solo flutist of the Edison Concert Band."

Since Mr. Rose says his association with the Edison Company ended at about the time the Diamond Disc was introduced, this record probably had been made some years previously as a wax cylinder and was being re-catalogued in Blue Amberol form.

Records, such as "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer," by the Edison Venetian Trio, composed of Charles Scheutze, harp, and Jaudas, violin, in addition to Mr. Rose, were popular from around 1905 to 1910. However, Mr. Rose's biggest seller probably was "The Genevieve Waltz Medley," played by him on the ocarina, and listed by Edison in February, 1906. Here is what the New Phonogram said about the cylinder which 'Gene recalls it took three days of hard work to make:

"This is a record by the ocarina and the first solo of its kind made for our catalogue. A bit played by the ocarina, which was introduced into 'The Musical Yankee'... led to numerous requests for an entire record of this unique instrument. This specially arranged waltz solo, with orchestra accompaniment, is the result. The ocarina makes an unusually loud and clear record, and this selection will undoubtedly be much in demand. It introduces 'On the Banks of the Rhine With a Stein', 'I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming', 'Sweet Genevieve' and 'Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie'."

"When I was introduced to Mr. Rose, I gave a poor impersonation of Edward Meeker's "announcement" at the beginning of that "Genevieve" record and then asked its maker if he remembered it. He said he certainly did, and told me of how much trouble it had been to record properly."

I then recalled that Walter Rouse, a Canadian collector, had sought for something like twenty years for a copy of that old wax cylinder, which he remembered hearing as a boy, and that I gave him mine several years ago. Luckily, I have since been able to replace it.

(To be concluded.)

## MISCELLANEOUS

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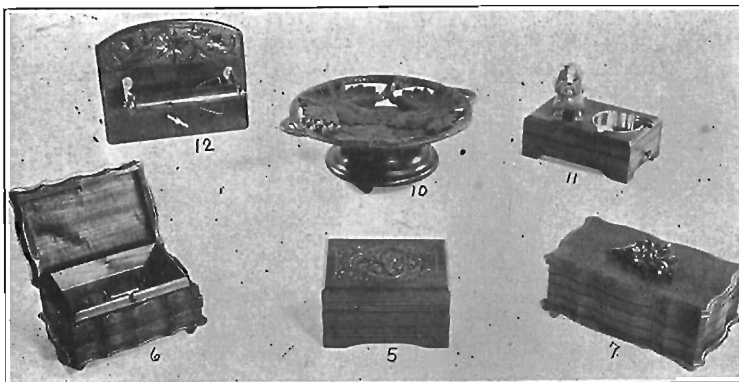
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**DONT MISS SEEING** the A. V. Bornand collection of rare antique music boxes when visiting in the East this summer. No. 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y., (just outside of New York City). o3264

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**CLASSICAL,** Operatic, Red Seal Victor, Columbia, other records; great singers of Long Ago. No lists, write wants.—Lloyd Bailey, 721 E. 11th St., Kansas City, Mo. o3053

**SQUARE GRAND PIANO,** over 100 yrs. old, restrung, playing condition, original ivories and finish (could be redone). Beautiful Crotch Mahog., interesting history. Crating, shipping extra. Details on request. \$400.—R. F. Thomas, Norris Lane, Box 119, Baltimore 21, Md. 01662



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### EUGENE C. ROSE. II

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Eugene Rose, the accomplished virtuoso of flute, piccolo and ocarina, was, he says, "a real phonograph enthusiast" in the days when he was playing for the Edison company. When a son was born to him and Mrs. Rose at 6 A. M., September 21, 1906, the proud father got out his big Edison Concert cylinder machine as soon as the nurse brought the baby in for him to see. Then he put on a recording blank and "immortalized" the youngster's first cries. That done, he took the record down to the Edison laboratories and boasted that he had discovered a new singer!

Besides doing all sorts of recorded orchestral work, Mr. Rose helped to play musical accompaniments for the talking pictures which Thomas A. Edison introduced, through a combination of phonograph and film, around 1912. He says it was an ordeal performing for those primitive talkies in blistering summer weather with 36 big arc lights burning overhead, and is full of amusing anecdotes of the difficulties experienced in making the films and records synchronize. Sometimes, for instance, a dog would be barking, but the barking sound wouldn't be heard until a little later.

Mr. Rose played in the Metropolitan Opera orchestra from 1911 to 1917, and with all of Fred Stone's shows at the Globe theatre in New York, beginning in 1914 with "Chin-Chin," and continuing through 1929 with "Three Cheers." In the latter, he recalls, Will Rogers "pinch hit" for Stone, who had been hurt in an airplane accident. Rogers, himself, was killed in a plane crash in 1935.

After the flautist, or flutist, if you prefer, left Edison, he played as a free-lance in the orchestras of perhaps a score of other phonograph companies. During recent years he

has done considerable teaching.

And now we come to a really unusual incident. In October last year, a month or so after I saw Mr. Rose at John Bielings's home, L. Brevort Odell, of Brooklyn, who has one of the largest collections in the world of cylinder phonographs and records, announced in the New York Daily News that he would like to give three of the instruments to persons who would appreciate them and would present a hundred records with each.

Mr. Rose's son, Robert V. Rose, of Freeport, was one of those who applied to benefit by Mr. Odell's generosity. He received the following interesting postal card, which Mr. Rose has given me permission to quote:

"Dear Mr. Rose: It will be a pleasure to give you one of the phonographs we offered through the News, and I am sure there is at least one solo by Eugene Rose among the records. This is a preliminary note and shall write you soon to

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A late picture of Eugene C. Rose.

make arrangements. Please tell your father his playing has given us pleasure for many years."

The card was written on October 19. On October 21 Mr. Odell wrote the following equally interesting letter:

"Dear Mr. Rose: Hundreds of letters were received in response to our offer in the News and I wish it had been possible to give to many seemingly worthy applicants. We increased the number of outfits to five, but at present that is the limit.

"Your letter especially interested me, for so many of the instrumentalists have been forgotten. Everyone remembers Billy Murray, Jones, Collins, etc., but apparently the band men just represent a cornet, a fiddle, a piano, etc., and few collectors regard their records at all. In my case, I have always taken my greatest pleasure from instrumental music, so to hear about Eugene Rose was a pleasant surprise.

"Just a few days ago, my good friend, John Norton, who runs the unique Woodymay Record company, in Boston, and ourselves were mentioning Mr. Rose's flute solo, 'La Traviata Concert Waltz,' as being one of the best such recordings ever made.

"I presume you know your dad also played the 'musical sweet potato.' Well, you'll hear him get really sweet music out of the ocarina!

"Please let me know when you can call for the machine. . . Another outfit is going to the son of Dan Quinn, the singer, and another to Billy 'Musical' Huehn, old-time troupier and associate of early recording artists.

"John Young, who sang as 'Harry Anthony,' often visits us and hears his fine recordings."

The "sweet potato" record to which the generous Mr. Odell referred of course was the "Genevieve Waltz Medley" mentioned in last month's installment. The younger Rose took the instrument to Freeport and played "Genevieve" for his father — and 'Gene in turn called John Bieling on

the 'phone and played the record for him.

The Odell letter brings out one interesting point. As he says, the old-time instrumentalists have been largely overshadowed by the fame of the singers who made records at the same time. Of course, it was easier for a voice to convey the individual artist's personality in those days than it was for a flute or a cornet to make a similarly indelible impression. It happens that Eugene Rose is the first instrumentalist of whom I have written a biographical sketch during the nearly six years that I have been doing the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists series for HOBBIES. Others, such as Vess Ossman, "the Banjo King," and Charles D'Almaine, the violinist, will be dealt with later, but Mr. Rose breaks the ice for the instrumentalists, just as Ada Jones did for the women singers.

And I'm very glad indeed that I've had the opportunity of paying tribute to a fine musician, who has vigor and alertness that would do credit to a man twenty or thirty years his junior. Eugene Rose is a most attractive and likable gentleman. As I write this sketch on a warm night in July, I'm hoping that I shall be going to New York about two months from now, and that while I'm on Long Island, I shall meet Mr. Rose again and hear more of his inimitable reminiscences of the old days when the cylinder phonograph with the morning glory horn was the ultimate in home entertainment.

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### The "Cheapest Talking Machine"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

My being a writer about the pioneer days of the recording industry has caused me to receive a great many interesting questions concerning what might be termed "the odds and ends of the phonograph."

Among these questions are: "What was the largest record ever made?" and "What was the smallest?"

The largest records ever made for ordinary commercial sale appear to have been the products of Pathé Freres and the Neophone company. Pathé was originally a French firm with branches throughout the world, and Neophone was formed in England in 1904 by Dr. A. Michaelis, a Swiss scientist. It was in existence only a few years, but was the first company to make a hill-and-dale disc record to be played with a sapphire point. Pathé followed suit in 1906 with an improved record of the same type.

Both Neophone and Pathé made 20-inch discs, consisting of operatic arias or overtures. I have never seen any of these records, but since they were four inches larger in size than present-day 16-inch radio transcriptions they certainly must have had the appearance of giants. Because of their "coarse" cut, with the grooves much wider apart than in ordinary records, their playing duration was not in keeping with their size. It was, I believe, about ten minutes to a side.

The smallest records I know of that were made for ordinary sale were the Little Wonder single-faced variety, on the American market from 1915 to 1920. They were 5½ inches in diameter and were made by the Columbia company. I suspect they were dubbed from Columbia records, but their playing time was only about half that of a Columbia 10-inch disc, and their volume was considerably less. Names of the artists were

not given on the tiny labels.

I believe Jack Norworth, the famous comedian and song writer and perhaps the nation's foremost collector of miniature objects, has a playable record of his song, "Shine On, Harvest Moon," made especially for him, which is only a half-inch in diameter. But that of course could not be considered in the class of records offered for public sale.

Many families used to pride themselves on owning a single-faced Victor record of the Lucia Sextette sung by Caruso and other famous artists. Since the disc cost \$7, having it to show to astonished visitors was considered something of a mark of distinction. That may have been the most expensive single-faced record, but I believe Columbia for a brief time offered a double-faced one at \$7.50. The Little Wonder records sold for ten cents, about as low a price as anyone could expect to pay, but in the early 1930's the Woolworth five-and-ten cent stores also sold double-faced Madison records,

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## DIAMOND DISC OPERATIC SELECTIONS

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made by the Grey Gull company, for a dime.

The most expensive acoustic phonograph ever produced for sale by dealers probably was a "Gothic" model of the New Edison Diamond Disc, which was listed in a 1920 Edison catalogue. To obtain one you were asked to pay a mere \$6,000. I have never seen one of these extraordinary instruments, but judging from the picture it must have been about the size of an ordinary house.

And, by a process of reversion, that brings up the question, "What was the cheapest phonograph?" and leads us to the subject of the present article.

Not long ago, William A. Dyer, Jr., general manager of the *Indianapolis Star*, was looking through files of old correspondence, when he came upon a letter which had been written to the *Star* on May 28, 1915, by the Excello Novelty Company, Inc., "manufacturers of advertising novelties, toys, metal specialties, etc., 1427 to 1433 Catherine Street, Philadelphia, Pa."

The letter suggested that the *Star* might be interested in obtaining a supply of the firm's Excello Talking Machine, "described in the enclosed circular," for distribution as a premium with subscriptions. The price was given as 65 cents each, F. O. B. Philadelphia.

Thinking I would be interested in this glimpse of one phase of the phonograph's picturesque past, Mr. Dyer sent me the circular, which is reproduced herewith. On the margin of the letter from the Excello company, someone had written: "Mr. Payne: It looks like a fake to me. Did you ever see one?"

As it happened, this device, which came close to being the least expensive phonograph ever made, was not a fake. It was one of several machines of similar type then being produced in and around Philadelphia, and possibly all being made in the same factory. About a year ago I had an opportunity of examining bound volumes of the *Philadelphia Press* for 1915 and 1916, and found a large number of advertisements of "talking machines" of this kind.

There was something of a price war going on while the sale of the toy instruments lasted. This same Excello machine was being advertised for 50 cents plus 15 cents for postage — a better price than the "65 cents F. O. B. Philadelphia," which had been quoted to the *Star*.

A phonograph was being offered at the same price by the Standard Talking Machine Company, of 845 Broad street, Newark, while the Manifone Talking Machine company, of 434 Market street, Philadelphia, wanted \$1 for one. If you were am-

bitious to get up into the "higher brackets," the Concertphone Talking Machine company, 134 South Ninth Street, Philadelphia, would sell you one for \$6, described as "the lowest-priced talking machine with high quality tone," and as being the equal of instruments exorbitantly priced at from \$15 to \$25. You also could pay \$6 for a record player from the Lincoln Talking Machine company, of Pleasantville, N. J. The advertisers boasted it was capable of playing a 12-inch record without rewinding.

The American talking machine, offered by the Husted Manufacturing company, of 1039 South Seventeenth Street, Philadelphia, was in the same price range as the Excello, but the real rock-bottom price must have been offered by the Ford Talking Machine company, of 2805 Germantown, Philadelphia, whose price was only 45 cents plus 15 cents postage. Surely, no one could expect to buy a good "graphophone" for much less than that. Anybody who would have balked at that price probably would have objected to paying one cent a share for stock of the Amalgamated Oil company, of Oklahoma City, which was running some fervent full-page ads in the *Press*!

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 36)

## RECORDS

HIGH SCHOOL teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. ap12086

FOR SALE. Certified old violins. \$65 up. Desc. catalog with article on "The Last of the Cremonas" will be sent postpaid for \$1. — Berger, 165 E. Ohio, Chicago, Ill. d124261

VOCAL COLLECTORS! Send us your want list. Hard-to-get desirable items individually offered at set prices. Write Record Collectors Service, Room 1108, 8 W. 40th St., New York 18, N. Y. my6698

PHONOGRAPH Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. f123001

RARE AND OLD operatics and other acoustic and electrical out-of-print classical vocals and instrumentals bought, sold exchanged.—The Record Hunter, 1194 Lexington Ave., (81st), New York 28, N. Y. mh126371

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RECORD COLLECTORS: Rare operatic, vocal, classical for sale reasonably priced. Send want lists. Cylinders, jazz, popular.—Delano, 349 Lindenwood Ambler, Penna. mh6885

PHONOGRAPH Records cheap. Catalog.—Paramount, HB-313 East Market, Wilkes-Barre, Penna. d3041

SPECIAL OFFER—Eleven 10" John McCormack records \$15.—Franklin, 14 Beverly Place, Little Rock, Ark. d1501

ACOUSTIC vocal operatic records for sale at set and reasonable prices. For lists write.—Milt Weiss, 715 Dickinson, Memphis, Tenn. ja3082

## MISCELLANEOUS

MUSIC BOXES: Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. d3463

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Cal. d3832

LESSER MASTERS With Tone. Inexpensive and tonally good hand-made fiddles. Books on the violin invaluable for technique, general fiddle knowledge and connoisseurship. Antique musical instruments. Lists free.—Houghton Music Co., 42 New Bridge St., Newcastle-on-Tyne, England. s124812

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342, f128782

BACK POPULAR MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Rags, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, H-3151 High., Denver 5, Colo. my12048

WANTED: Old phonographs, cylinder records, music boxes, discs, parts. Catalogs and other books on same.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. je120011

COLLECTORS' Recordings obtainable.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York City. je12276

SHEET MUSIC with color covers: "The Bloomer Schottisch," 1851, Sarony & Major, pretty woman demonstrating bloomer costume, \$4.50. "Pride Polka," 1850, Sarony & Co., with beautiful peacock on a wall \$2.50; "Hook & Ladder Polka," Duval's Steam Press, 1852, colored picture "Empire" hook & ladder truck with firemen, mended tear across lower part of cover \$2.25. "Three Polkas," B. W. Thayer & Co., picture young man and woman and little girl, undated \$1.90. "Fast Young Folks Schottische," Sinclair Litho., 1866, young couple driving "spanking" team fast \$2.50. Concert Roller Organ, fine tone, nice case, played with hand crank, perfect condition, 29 music rolls \$35.—Elizabeth Farrington, Greenlawn Antiques, Delhi, N. Y. d3077

FOR SALE: Rare Old Violin, Collector's item. Russian model, labeled Nikolaus Kittle, St. Petersburg 1867. \$75.—Ernest A. Frier, 12 Lyon Ave., Menands, Albany, New York. d1571

CYLINDER phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, parts, bought, sold, exchanged. 50 cents for list. Returnable on first order.—A. Nugent, Jr., 100 N. Third St., Richmond, Va. f3463

OLD MUSIC BOX Melodies now reproduced on standard modern phonograph records. New Christmas album RB 4 containing 2 plastic records (4 sides) now ready \$3.50.—Bornard Music Box Record Co., 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. d1542

WANTED. Music boxes, singing birds, and other musical mechanical items for my collection. Also interested in rare or historical phonograph records. Describe completely and state price.—Urban Thielmann, 3001 Queensbury Drive, Los Angeles 34, California. f3094

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REGINA MUSIC BOXES with 15 1/2" discs, \$75 to \$200. Regina 27" discs, \$3 ea. Musical child's chair, black walnut with satinwood inlay, two tunes, \$75.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d1832

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**COLLECTION** Class Dolls of all types. Send stamp for list. Will buy small collections.—Mrs. Lloyd Hollister, 285 Goshen Rd., North Little Rock, Arkansas. f3043

**DOLL COSTUMES** and bodies made to order. Stamp for reply. — Olive Kline, Box 21, Farina, Ill. my6844

**XMAS GIFT** Suggestion—Lobster claw made into head of various characters. Hang in playroom or children's room. 50c each. — Ericko, West Springfield, Mass. d1161

**DANISH NATIONAL** and Character Dolls. Authentic, made in Denmark. Price \$5 to \$7 each. Stamp for reply.—The Wayside Shop, 167 Purchase St., Rye, N. Y. d1071

**DOLL STANDS.** Send for descriptive circular of a complete new line of doll stands.—Ideal Doll Stand Co., P. O. Box 194, Mound, Minn. dx

**Famous Berwyn Doll Collector's** Collection of American and Foreign Dolls.—Koepeke, 1824 So. Ridgeland, Berwyn, Ill. d1061

**THE DOLL LADY**, Reed City, Mich. Cuts patterns for any type costume, any period. Also costumes all types of dolls and makes old fashioned hats & accessories. Books on dolls, all kinds of dolls for sale. Stamp please. d1662

**PEDDLER DOLLS AGAIN!** Those appealing old lady dolls, 8½" tall, tray full of miniature household needs more interesting and detailed than ever. Description on request. Stand included, \$5 postpaid.—Madelon Lyle, 521 Giffin Ave., Pittsburgh 10, Pa. f3003

**LOVELY BISQUE HEAD** restrung, jointed dolls. Some with new wigs. Several kid body dolls. One very large one. Most need only dresses. State needs. Stamp.—Lucille Manchester, 188 W. Genesee, Auburn, N. Y. d1422

**DOLLS**—All kinds, \$2 to \$300. Write desires. Also doll stands and books on dolls.—Claudia Davenport, Monroe City, Missouri. d1041

**12½"**, BISQUE HEAD, sleeps, imitation kid jointed body, new dressmaker clothes, \$12.—Mrs. Lovett, McPherson, Kansas. d1201

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"THE MOST UNUSUAL DOLLS IN AMERICA" For December we offer our Russia Ballet Doll, ANNA PAVLOVA in her Swan costume. White spangled feathers, etc., 10". Mounted \$3.00. From Peru an imported doll. Native hand made, male or female, 11" tall. Hand-loomed fabric costumed, embroidered, \$5.00. dc

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## Pioneer Recording Artists

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32)

Some years ago, I knew a man who had bought and kept one of the Excello machines. He let me try it, and the results were surprisingly good, chiefly because the construction was scientifically correct, with the cardboard horn fitting directly into the sound box. This was the principal of the first Victor instruments, which some old-timers insist were among the best acoustic phonographs ever produced. There was no mainspring to wind, and it required a certain knack to turn the crank, protruding through the spindle hole, so that the music came out steadily and not in jerks. But once this was done the results were not at all bad. In fact, the Excello sounded so much better than a \$50 machine with internal horn which we played beside it that there was really no comparison.

Maybe the Star would have done well to offer it as a subscription premium, after all.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### John Bieling Gives Another Party

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

A year ago I told readers of *HOBBIES* about a party which John Bieling gave for a few of his fellow recording artists and record collector friends at his home in Hempstead, Long Island. Now I have the pleasure of reporting my latest trip to New York, in September, which was featured by an even bigger and better party given by John, with the sympathetic and generous cooperation of Mrs. Bieling and the entire Bieling family. I shall also touch briefly upon my other activities during that never to be forgotten week.

Leaving Roanoke, Virginia, on the evening of Saturday, September 6th, I arrived in Newark early the next morning and went straight to Orange, N. J. After a few hours sleep in my suburban hotel room, I called on Mrs. Elizabeth Repelow, daughter of the late Frank C. Stanley, one of the best loved of all the pioneer recording artists, at her apartment in West Orange. Her sister, Mrs. Elaine Powell, was also present, as were Mr. Repelow and Mr. and Mrs. Repelow's daughter. They told me many interesting things about their father, to be used in a Frank Stanley series which will appear in *HOBBIES*. They also gave me a handsome poster of pictures of old-time Victor Red Seal artists, which had once belonged to their father; a booklet listing the program of the concert which other recording artists presented as a tribute to him shortly after his death; sheet music which had belonged to his recording associates, Corinne Morgan and George Seymour Lenox; and a blotter with the signatures of Thomas A. Edison and the inventor's son Charles, formerly governor of Jersey.

That evening I had a most pleasant visit with Mrs. Ethel Van Horn Harlan, widow of Byron G. Harlan, one of the most famous of all old-time recording artists. Mrs. Harlan was a 19-year-old school teacher when she first met Mr. Harlan in an Orange boarding house. She recalled that when she entered the dining room she tripped and fell flat, and the comedian ever afterwards maintained that she fell hard for him the first time she saw him! They were married on June 22, 1904, with Mrs. Harlan believing that her husband was ten years older than she. Afterwards she learned that he was born in Paris, Kansas, on August 29, 1861, and was really twenty years her senior. Mr. Edison gave them a handsome Edison cylinder phonograph for a wedding present, and when their daughter was graduated from high school he signaled the occasion by presenting her with a New Edison Diamond Disc instrument.

Mrs. Harlan was the first woman in the United States to be the president of a city board of education. I saw a silver trowel which read: "This trowel was used by Mrs. Byron

G. Harlan in laying the corner stone of the high school building on Northfield road, West Orange, October 20, 1923." She was also secretary and vice president of the West Orange Community League, of which Mrs. Edison was president. During the war Mrs. Harlan was State director (for New Jersey) of the Office of Government Reports, originally called the National Emergency Council, which developed into the Office of War Information.

Most of Monday was spent at the Edison laboratories in West Orange, New Jersey, where Norman Speiden, the curator, and "Bill" Hayes, manager of the repair department, most painstakingly made sure that I saw everything of interest. I also had a half-hour chat with Arthur L. Walsh, former senator from New Jersey, the vice president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc. We are not related, but that doesn't keep us from calling each other "Cousin Arthur" and "Cousin Ulysses." I had lunch with Mr. Speiden and two Edison veterans — Andy Weber and "Skeets" Warner. Mr. Warner got his nickname from the fact that he used to make moving pictures of the private lives of mosquitoes, in furtherance of one of Mr. Edison's experiments.

I left Orange late Monday afternoon and went to Hempstead, where I had a happy reunion with Bryant Burke, who had obtained a room for me, and all the Bieling family. Tuesday was mostly devoted to my being interviewed by a staff writer for the *New Yorker* magazine, in the expectation that an article will be published about me and my record collecting activities.

Wednesday, September 10th, was the date of John Bieling's party, and, aside from being extremely warm, it was a perfect day for the occasion. Early in the morning the Hempstead radio station, WHLI, carried a news announcement that John was having a party for his fellow recording artists, and our host was so exhilarated he danced a brief jig! Before long the artists and collectors began arriving. Billy Murray came, then Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Rose, Will Oakland, Irving Kaufman and Walter Scanlan — whom you may know better as Walter Van Brunt. Harvey Hindermeyer wasn't able to make it until late in the afternoon, but spent the evening. John Young (Harry Anthony) had planned to be present but was detained at the last moment. Charles Harrison would have joined us, but wasn't sure of the day the party was to be given.

What a wonderful time the gang had, listening to old discs and cylinders by the distinguished artists who were there in the flesh, or dividing into small groups and "talking up a storm." The Edison Company sent over Fred Rabenstein, who used to write the artists' talent checks, to extend greetings and distribute med-

als recently struck, commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the immortal inventor. I had charge of the publicity and was kept busy giving information to reporters and photographers. The *New Yorker* staff writer joined us for two or three hours and seemed to have a great time.

And what a wonderful meal it was that Mrs. Bieling and the other ladies of the family prepared for the thirty or more friends who enjoyed their hospitality! I don't know words strong enough to express my appreciation of the trouble and hard work they went to in making certain that everybody had plenty of the most delicious foods.

We all agreed that a similar event — which I think, adopting a suggestion of John L. Norton, Sr., should be called "John Bieling Day" — must be held every year. At the same time, it's obvious that the party has outgrown the stage of being held in a home — not to mention the great amount of trouble it necessarily must be to the Bieling family. Mr. Speiden, the Edison curator, has indicated that we would be welcome to get together annually in the Edison laboratory. There is also sentiment for holding the get-together in a hotel on Long Island and pro rating the expense of obtaining a room and a meal, so that the cost will be slight for everybody concerned. I personally favor a two-day meeting, which would provide a greater opportunity for having good long talks with all the artists whom we admire so much, and their collector admirers. There is also talk of forming an association of artists and collectors. At any rate, I want to assure the readers of *HOBBIES* that admirers of the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists will be welcomed at the next meeting, whenever and wherever it is held, and that further information concerning our plans will be given here. We are trying to "round up" a much larger number of pioneers to be on hand for the fun next year. For instance, I have just learned that John Hazel, who played the cornet many years ago in the Edison orchestra, is now living in Monsourville, Pa., and have written to him. I have also written to Fred Van Eps and Fred Hager and shall try to get in touch, through theatrical magazines and correspondence with many others.

But, above all things, we must never forget that John Bieling originated the idea of having an annual party, and that if others are held, arrangements should be made for him and his family to attend as honor guests!

The remainder of my trip must be briefly summarized. On Thursday I went back to Orange, accompanied by George Bieling (John's son, and one of the most thoughtful and considerate sons any father ever had); John Norton, senior and junior, of the famous Woodmay Record Company in Boston, and Quentin Riggs, a 17-year old record collector who came by plane from Oklahoma City to meet the artists whom he so deeply admires. Again there was a wonder-



### Old Time Recording Artists Get Together

Five famous recording artists sing with an Edison cylinder phonograph at John Bieling's party. Left to right: Mr. Bieling, Walter Scanlan, Will Oakland and Billy Murray. In front of machine, Irving Kaufman.

On the wall is an 1896 photograph of the Edison quartet: John Bieling, first tenor; Jerry Mahoney, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone, and William F. Hooley, bass.

ful trip through the Edison laboratories. After parting from George and the two Johns, Quentin and I called on Mrs. Harlan.

On Friday, Quentin and I met Abel Green, the editor of *Variety*, at his office. We also had a talk with Joe Laurie, Jr., at the Lambs, and regretfully declined an invitation to attend his "Can You Top This?" radio program the next night. After lunch at Lindy's with Irving Kaufman and Irving's lovely blonde wife, Belle, we took a Fifth Avenue bus to East 66th street in the hope of finding P. G. Wodehouse, the famous English humorist and creator of "Jeeves," at home. He wasn't, but we had a most enjoyable meeting with Mrs. Wodehouse. That night we went to Brooklyn and were guests of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Odell, who have more than nine thousand cylinder records — some so old they completely baffle me — and a score or more of cylinder phonographs.

Saturday was marked by lunch at Lindy's with Billy Murray, Jimmy Martindale and Mr. Wodehouse. That afternoon, Quentin and I went to Joe Belmont's bird store in Radio City and had a long talk with the genial Joe, who began making whistling records in 1894. He'll be at the party next year. In the evening, we visited Mr. and Mrs. Walter Scanlan, but left early enough to get back to Hempstead and spend a couple of hours with John. The next day we left for our homes — Quentin by plane and I by train.

Truly, a wonderful and memorable trip! I'm hoping for another like it in September, 1948.

### RECORDS

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RECORD COLLECTORS: Rare operatic, vocal, classical for sale reasonably priced. Send want lists. Cylinders, jazz, popular. — Delano, 349 Lindenwold Ambler, Penna. mh6885

REDUCED Price Sale—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City, N. Y. je12276

ACCOUSTIC vocal operatic records for sale at set and reasonable prices. For lists write. — Milt Weiss, 715 Dickinson, Memphis, Tenn. ja3082

WANTED — Classical vocal records, especially electric cut-outs. — Warren Becker, 1674 La Fayette Road, Los Angeles, Calif. ja189

### MISCELLANEOUS

VARIOUS MUSIC BOX discs for sale. Harry Brody, 1972 72nd Street, Brooklyn, New York. f3691

SQUARE GRAND PIANO, beautiful rosewood case, excellent playing condition. Original ivory. Picture. — Mrs. Julius Kingdom, 819 Spruce Street, Boulder, Colo. f3803

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FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f128782

BACK POPULAR MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Rags, everything. List 10c—Fore's. H-3151 High., Denver 6, Colo. my12048

WANTED: Old phonographs, cylinder records, music boxes, discs, parts. Catalogs and other books on same. — Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. je120011

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CYLINDER phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, parts, bought, sold, exchanged 50 cents for list. Returnable on first order. — A. Nugent, Jr., 100 N. Third St., Richmond, Va. f3463

WANTED. Music boxes, singing birds, and other musical mechanical items for my collection. Also interested in rare or historical phonograph records. Describe completely and state price. — Urban Thielmann, 3001 Queensbury Drive, Los Angeles 34, California. f3094

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EUGENIA MANTELLI:

Cenerentola — Naccqui all'affanne and Non piu mesta IRCC 3015.

AMADEO BASSI:

Fedora—Amor ti vieta and Siberia—T' incontrai. IRCC 3016.

CLAUDIA MUZIO:

Aida—O Patria mia and Otello—Ave Maria. IRCC 3019.

CORRECTION: The following record was erroneously omitted from the recent discography of the Mary Garden recordings compiled by Howard Barnes, Jr.: Columbia A-5289 Jongleur de Notre Dame — Liberte and Herodiade—Il est doux, il est bon.

(THE END)

## RECORDS

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WANTED: Old phonographs, cylinder records, music boxes, discs, parts. Catalogs and other books on same.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. je120011

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## GILBERT GIRARD

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Taken as a whole, the pioneer recording artists were a colorful crew. And one of the most picturesque certainly was Gilbert Girard, who won wide popularity throughout the United States and the British Empire solely because of his ability to mimic the sounds made by wild and domestic animals and birds. This peculiar talent virtually gave Girard a niche of his own in the Phonograph Hall of Fame, since he had only one rival, the late Al S. Holt, who eventually went to England, where he died in 1924.

Two names that are almost impossible to keep out of any article dealing with the old-time recording days are those of Russell Hunting, "The Original Michael Casey," and Len Spencer, who had the greatest creative gifts of any recording artists of their time. Both will appear in this sketch. It was Hunting who first introduced Girard to the mysteries of recording as long ago as 1895, but it was some years later, as a partner of the ever-resourceful Len in making comic sketches, that he became best known.

Gilbert Girard was of French-Canadian descent, but was born about 80 years ago in San Francisco, where he spent his boyhood. As a youngster, he was fond of imitating the lowing of cows, neighing of horses and the cries and songs of birds. In fact, he could mimic anything. He also became locally well known as he grew up for having a fine baritone voice.

The details of Girard's early career are confusing, to say the least. Few men surely can have crowded so

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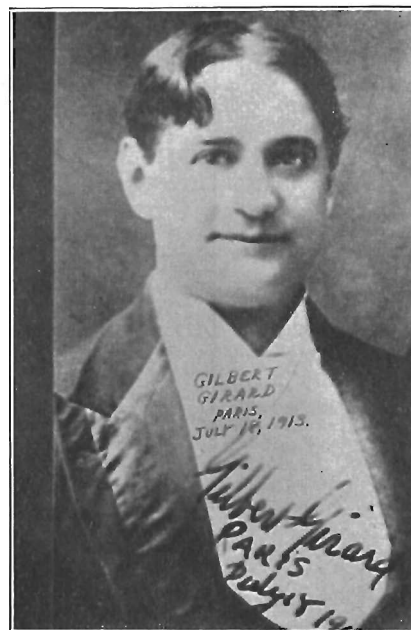
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Gilbert Girard, Paris, July 18, 1913

much into a few years. He got his start on the stage in San Francisco, acting in a melodrama. Engagements in musical comedy followed. Having now reached the mature age of twenty, he decided he was tired of the stage, so he went, looking for gold in the California mines. Not finding it, he returned to theatricals and became the partner of a once famous actor, McKee Rankin. A little later he was a trapeze performer in a circus, and after that he became a successful circus clown.

The lure of the gold fields beckoned again, but this time the versatile actor decided not to hunt for the metal himself but to take a theatrical troupe to Alaska. When the group arrived, they were told theirs was the first aggregation of entertainers to visit the frozen North. The trip was a huge success, financially, for the miners willingly paid from five to 25 dollars for tickets to the performances.

On returning to the United States, the restless but genial Gilbert went to Seattle, where he tried to operate a vaudeville theater but without success. So he quit the profession again and became a newsdealer. Of course he grew tired of that and returned to the show world. When the vaudeville performers staged their famous "White Rats" strike against theater owners and agents, Girard was one of the leaders. By this time he had not only long since made his first brown wax cylinders as a partner of Russell Hunting, but had teamed up with Len Spencer for a series of their well-remembered sketches. The most popular of these

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## Edison

### DIAMOND DISC OPERATIC SELECTIONS

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undoubtedly was "A Scene at a Dog Fight," which they made for all the phonograph companies in business around 1901 and 1902. This record was both remarkably popular and painfully realistic — so much that some phonograph owners drove their nervous neighbors well-nigh frantic by playing it over and over. Witness this heartbroken protest which one man wrote to a newspaper in 1905, after "Scene at a Dog Fight" had been on the market for several years:

"A dozen times a day a dog fight in its most realistic form is performed, apparently to the unalloyed delight of my neighbors. A hoarse-voiced 'tough' announces the terms of the fight in tones only possessed by the variety of mankind of which he is a representative. 'Stop that dog, please!' he calls out again and again, as his eloquence is interrupted by the barking and yelping of the dogs, and the crowd he is addressing yells its impatience for the fight to begin. At last the fight is on, and if you were actually assisting at it, in defiance of the penal code, you could hardly get a more realistic sense of the elevating amusement. The talking machine tells the whole story. If the dog fight was actually taking place on the lawn, and the refuse of humanity had gathered there to see it, the proceedings would hardly be more real than they seem in this machine reproduction. I have never had the privilege of witnessing a dog fight, but from repeated hearings of that phonograph I feel as if I had now subjected myself to criminal arrest for violating the law by sneaking into that sort of thing."

Concerning this pitiful complaint, the Talking Machine News, which reprinted the letter, remarked: "This, the well-known Dog Fight Record, used to be a very popular one and a great seller, and though its vogue has fallen off it is still in some demand in the States. Needless to say it is a 'faked' record: the doggy imitations are, however, extremely good."

Another highly popular sketch, written by Spencer, who did all the talking with Girard providing the animal imitations, was "Daybreak at Calamity Farm." Less known, but one of their most amusing, is Columbia single-faced disc No. 922, "Imitation Chinese Song," which Spencer and Girard made in 1902. They not only pretend to sing in Chinese, but Girard, assisted by the "house band," gives side-splitting imitations of a Chinese orchestra. But the most remarkable thing about the record is that Spencer, who makes the "Announcement," puts Girard's name ahead of his own!

"Michael Casey" Hunting had gone to England in 1899 and become recording manager for the Edison Bell company. Later he and Louis—now Sir Louis Sterling—organized the Russell Hunting Record Company and made Sterling cylinders. It was probably at "Casey's" suggestion that Girard went to England in 1902 and stayed there for five years. He soon became a favorite in the London variety halls, and his services were eagerly sought by the English record firms. He made some specialties for Nicole Freres, who turned out a reddish-brown semi-flexible cardboard record around 1903 and 1904, and also worked for the Gramophone Company and Edison Bell. Then he signed up exclusively with Russell Hunting to make Sterling cylinders and Odeon discs.

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While in England, he was a partner of the famous Australian comedian, Albert Whelan, who is still going strong, playing the variety theatres. They preceded the present-day vogue for children's records by making a series of nursery rhymes in which Girard delighted the tots with his animal imitations. And he really could imitate them! At some time during his crowded career, he made a tour of South Africa, and while he was staying in a hotel at Johannesburg he sat up one night, imitating the roars of a lion and scaring the other hotel residents into fits with the fear that a hungry Leo was camping just outside the front door.

That was characteristic of Girard's sense of fun. As Harry Hunting, "Casey's" son, commented to me: "That incident about Girard and the lion in Africa was typical of old Gil. Once I was riding with him in a bus. By ventriloquism, he had a dog yelping under the bus, as though it had been run over, and we were both amused, watching everyone (including Gil and myself) looking under the bus for the unfortunate canine. He was a clever entertainer and always very jolly, even though he suffered from some sort of a serious intestinal ailment, which might have been the cause of his death. He and my father were great pals."

Girard was also an accomplished linguist, with an excellent command of French and German. When the management of the Alhambra theater in London entertained the French fleet 40-odd years ago, the American comedian was engaged to impersonate the distinguished French clown, Pascal. His accent and mannerisms completely fooled everybody, including the sailors.

During Girard's stay abroad, the resourceful Mr. Spencer had called on Al Holt whenever he wanted to make a descriptive sketch, such as "The Barnyard Serenade." But Girard returned home in 1907, and the Edison record list in December of that year contained a cylinder of "Old Dog Sport" with the comment: "This descriptive recitation by Len Spencer, with farmyard and canine effects by Gilbert Girard, excellently recorded, is full of real kindly sentiment." The pair also recorded the saga of Sport for the other companies and did several more sketches together.

Then Girard disappeared again from the American phonograph picture. In 1913 he was in Paris with his friend, Hunting, who was by that time the recording manager for Pathé Freres. But with the outbreak of the World War he returned

to the United States and reappeared in the Victor list in October, 1915, by doing the animal imitations in "Circus Day in Dixie," sung by the American Quartet. Len Spencer died in December, 1914, so Girard and Steve Porter teamed up to make a few of the old Spencer-Girard specialties, such as "The Dog Fight" and "Daybreak at Calamity Farm," for Edison's Diamond Discs. Russell Hunting was by this time recording director for Pathé's American branch. He and Girard worked together in a few records and revived the old Nursery Rhymes series.

In December, 1920, Victor listed a twelve-inch record by Girard: "Santa Claus Tells About His Toy Shop" and "Santa Claus Gives Away His Toys." The catalog editor commented: "Older Victrola lovers know Girard. He is coming back, full of Christmas cheer, after a long absence, for two of the most wonderful children's records ever made." A year later there was another twelve-inch record, "Santa Claus Visits the Children" and in December, 1922, a ten-inch disc was devoted to the two-parts of "Santa Claus Tells of Mother Goose Land" — a revamping of the old nursery rhymes idea.

The last record I have been able to find in which Girard took part is a fox-trot, "The Duck's Quack," recorded by Edison in 1923, with the comedian impersonating — what the title would suggest. I have been told that he spent his later years in retirement on a farm in upstate New York.

Just when Gilbert Girard died I don't know. I am not even absolutely certain that he has passed on, but Harry Hunting says he has heard from several sources that his father's old friend is gone. At any rate, he was a most talented impersonator — and I think there can be no doubt that the handsome, black-haired actor, who parted his hair in the middle and let a "bang" droop down above one eye, was a most colorful character!

—O—

## THE SIREN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26)

galia of the knights, incrusting liturgical bibelots — all gold. Sometimes the gold stands alone; sometimes it is smothered in jewels.

The Cleveland Museum gathered the 300 objects from institutions and collectors of America and Canada, but their origins take one to much more remote places, and to times before the memory of man.

The Siren, attributed to Benvenuto Cellini, was given by a Medici prince to an Indian Mughal Emperor. Captured in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, for years it was in the Rothschild family. A Latin motto on the Siren's tail says "Deceiveth Both Aspect and Soul of the Siren".

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do not think of her as a Carmen, her singing of the two arias (in German, by the way) reveals understanding and temperament. Excellent.

*To son l'umile uncetta* is an exceptionally lovely aria and one not sung as often as it deserves to be. Kruseniski sings it very well, but even so she does not efface the memory of Claudia Muzio's melting performance on an Edison disc that also ought to be re-issued. *Poveri fiori* is a less appealing bit of music, but the Russian soprano delivers it in the emotional style of a born Italian. Kruseniski was a fine artist whose records are rather rare.

As recorded, Burzio's soprano was expressive, but shrill at times. Her discs display much of the temperament and extreme emotion for which she was famous. She must have been an unusually dramatic Desdemona, judging from these samples which I would like more if the singing were sweeter-toned.

A grand basso was Arimondi, big in body, voice and style. The *Porter Song* discloses his brilliant tones at their best; certainly it is one of his most successful records. His conception of *Mephisto's Serenade* is effective and forceful, in a tradition very different from that followed by Plancon and Journet, but striking in its own way.

Didur is thrilling. A great voice and a wonderfully vital and dramatic way of singing; his personality emerges vividly, too. These Freischütz arias are relatively unfamiliar and worth knowing, especially as sung in this highly enjoyable recording.

Bassi, I am told, was a pleasing singer. But vocal charm is just what I find most lacking in the few records of his that I have heard, and this one is no exception. *Amor ti vieta* must be sung with a melting voice and I'm sorry to report that Bassi's doesn't melt me. The brief *Siberia* excerpt is not particularly effective as heard here.

—O—

### Missing Zonophone Numbers

If you have any domestic Zonophone records with the following numbers, would you please list for me name of artist and selection?

11010	11015
11011	12589
12619	

These numbers in all probability should belong to recordings by Eugenia Mantelli as yet unlisted, but they may possibly belong to the baritone Taurino Parvis. In any case, if you have a Zonophone record bearing any of these numbers, please do not keep quiet about it!

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### JOE BELMONT, "The Human Bird"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

If the name at the head of this article were Joseph Walter Fulton, it probably would mean nothing to most readers of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. Yet that is the real name of an accomplished artist whose recording experience probably goes back as far as that of any other man alive, and who is the best known performer who ever won phonograph popularity by making brilliant whistling solos that usually included imitations of bird warblers. In fact, he was frequently called "The Human Bird."

Thousands of collectors of early cylinders and discs think of the subject of this month's sketch as Joe Belmont, and that is what he calls himself. His son, Walter Joseph — Not Joseph Walter! — who helps his father operate a bird store in Radio City, also uses the name of Belmont. But the world-famous whistler was given the name of Joseph Walter Fulton when he was born in Shamokin, Pennsylvania, on July 22, 1876. He simply took the name of Belmont for stage purposes and has used it ever since, both in the theatre and in business.

If you were to do as Quentin Riggs, the Oklahoma City boy, and I did in September, 1947, after we attended John Bieling's party for his fellow veteran recording artists, you would enter Rockefeller Center and wander wearily around for an hour or more until you finally found the Belmont Bird and kennel shop in the concourse of Radio City. Then, if you had the good luck we did, you would enter the store and find, facing you across the counter, a tall, slender, courteous gentleman, with an alert but kindly look, whose youthful bearing makes him appear to carry far less than the weight of his actual years. You would find him so friendly and so full of valuable reminiscences that you probably would term him, as Quentin and I did, one of the nicest persons you'd met during your stay in New York.

Thumbing through the little green notebook in which I hastily scribbled while we were talking with Joe, I find that he told us his parents moved when he was eight from Shamokin to Charlestown (not Charleston), West Virginia, and that it was while living there that he learned to play the piano and to whistle and imitate birds. Young Mr. Fulton was 16 when, as he says, "A man came along and heard me whistling and playing the piano. He got me started on the stage."

Two years later — in 1894, when Joseph W. Fulton had faded out in favor of Joe Belmont — the young whistling virtuoso made his first records for the old Columbia company, which then had its headquarters in Washington. He was not the first performer to make whistling solos. That distinction probably goes to John York Attlee, a Federal

government employee, who began making Columbia cylinders in his spare time at home in 1889 or 1890. George Washington Johnson, "the Whistling Coon," also may have been making records by the time Belmont started. Probably Billy Golden, the black-faced comedian, who was also a brilliant whistler, had already begun. But Joe Belmont's fame as a whistler soon overshadowed that of anybody else. He worked for the various companies as they came into existence — during his entire career he sang and whistled for at least 42 recording firms — and was soon particularly famous for his "Mocking Bird" specialty. Joe says, though, that by far the biggest selling record he ever made was his own composition, "Beautiful Birds, Sing On."

By 1900, Belmont was established as one of the most popular of all recording artists. Since he was neither a "straight" singer nor an instrumentalist, his records were classified in a niche of their own. In that year, the Edison company had a group photograph made of 42 of its popular artists (it was reproduced in one of the 1944 issues of Hobbies), and Joe Belmont is labeled No. 1. He is shown wearing a mustache, which makes him look much older than the 24 that he actually was. He soon got rid of the mustache, he says, and has never worn one since. Of all the persons shown in that group photo, I know of only two besides Belmont who are alive as I write. They are John Bieling and Fred Hager. Some of the more obscure performers may still be alive but have dropped out of sight.

It probably will be news to most admirers of Joe Belmont that he was the baritone of the original Columbia Quartette. The group consisted, in addition to Belmont, of Albert Campbell, Jim Reynard and Joe Majors. And one thing in which the genial Joe takes pride is the fact that he spotted young Harry McClaskey — better known to collectors as Henry Burr — as a potential recording star.

"Back in 1902," Joe says, "I was in the old Columbia building at Twenty-seventh and Broadway, talking with George Emerson, one of the recording managers. It was a Saturday afternoon, and George was about ready to go home. While we talked, in walked a stout young fellow with red cheeks, who asked if some test records he had made a few days before had been listened to. After he went out, I told Emerson that he should add young McClaskey to the Columbia Lists — that he had an excellent voice and would be particularly good at singing hymns. Emerson tried the records over, agreed with me, put the boy — he was not over 20 — to work, making cylinders and discs of hymns — and that was how 'Henry Burr' got his start. Of course, he later became the most popular ballad singer the phono-

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graph has ever known." And, Joe said, Burr was made second tenor of the Columbia Quartet, in the place of Reynard, who was an employee of the Columbia company.

Mr. Belmont is so full of fascinating reminiscences that it took a real effort of the will for Quentin and me to tear ourselves away, after we had made an unsuccessful effort to take some snapshots of him. He told us, for instance, that Harry Spencer, brother of the famous Len Spencer, was living in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, about twenty years ago, and was working as a train announcer. Joe wasn't sure whether Spencer, who made some records, including "The Mad Ravings of John McCullough," is still alive. He mentioned, too, that Will F. Denny, a once popular recording comedian, died at the end of a performance in a Seattle, Washington, theatre. Denny bowed to his audience, walked off stage and dropped dead.

He also told us that a briefly popular male quartet some 40-odd years ago was the Big Four, composed of Arthur Collins, Byron Harlan, A. D. Madeira and Joe Natus. Madeira was a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota. George Gaskin, we learned, was a native of Ireland. And a very rare record that certainly would be worth having was one of "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," made for Columbia by Belmont, Harlan, Frank C. Stanley and the three original Florida Girls. Joe likewise recalled that he, Harlan, Campbell and Dan W. Quinn worked on top of a 15 or 16-story building, making a record and movie of "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground," which was shown in Keith vaudeville theatres as one of the pioneer talking picture efforts. One of his favorite later records, "Whistle While You Walk," was written by Belmont after he and Billy Murray were walking along Broadway together, and Billy began softly whistling to himself. Their singing and whistling duet was a big hit when Victor issued it in 1915.

Besides making records in a phonograph career that extended over more than thirty years, Joe Belmont has appeared on the stage in virtually every country in the world — "everywhere," he says, "from the Fiji Islands to Australia." He spent several years in Europe and made many records for English and German companies. In 1908 he made ten records at one session for the Favorite company, one of the many German organizations that tried to capture the British record market prior to the first World war. He did this after the manager, whose name he doesn't recall, but who was probably Karl Harth, had agreed to pay him thirty guineas for the day's work. At first the German said he didn't believe whistling records would sell well in Germany. "But, of course," he added, "if we had something as good as 'Beautiful Birds, Sing On,' we'd be glad to use it." Belmont then broke the astonishing news that he was the composer and singer of that celebrated number — so "Beautiful Birds" was one of the

numbers he recorded for Favorite. Jumbo, which used a picture of an elephant as a trademark, was another German company for which he sang.

As late as 1929, Joe made a Columbia record, with the assistance of his Chorus of Feathered Songsters — in other words, his canaries. And today his Radio City Store has its own brand of records, to be used in teaching canaries how to sing.

The veteran whistler was much impressed by the amount of study I've given to old-time records and the artists who made them and said that my lifetime of devotion to my hobby entitles me to be considered "a remarkable man." That encomium was pronounced after I told him I

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had deduced before we met that his real name was Fulton, since the composer of his whistling specialties was nearly always listed on record labels as J. W. Fulton. He was also extremely sorry that he hadn't known of John Bieling's party, so that he could be present. Well, Joe, if everything works out right, there's going to be another get-together on "John Bieling Day" in September, 1948, and your admirers are happy to know that you and your pal, Fred Hager, the song writer (who was the first musician to make violin records for commercial use), are planning to be there. So we'll be seein' you!

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### A COLLECTION OF SHOES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

leather, embroidered with figures, in different colored silks which surround crescents that are embroidered in silver.

#### CHINA AND JAPAN

22. Man's shoe of Chinese make, of violet silk with a border of black satin.

23. Small shoe for woman, with a white satin sole and red silk upper with a little butterfly embroidered upon the toe.

24. Man's shoe made in Hong Kong, mounted upon a high patten of wood painted black. This patten is covered with a strip of red varnished leather which incloses the feet.

25. A shoe of Chinese fabrication for lady with small feet, having a white heel, and a black satin upper trimmed with white.

#### INDIA

26. Shoe from British India, embroidered with flutings of the upper of the shoe, the portion turned over being red in color.

27. Patten shoe from India, raised upon a high leather sole, rounded in front, in the form of an epaulet, and trimmed with different colored satins; bands are provided for holding the shoe to the foot.

28. This shoe was made in the Punjab in British India; it is long in shape and laden with embroidery work in silver.

29. Wooden patten shoe from India, very peculiar in shape, and covered with engraved ornaments.

#### AMERICA

30. Ancient war moccasin of the North American Indians, made of one piece of skin with designs embroidered upon it in red.

31. Very old moccasin for a child, North America; the skin is folded in Plaits in front.

32. Moccasin for woman, of yellow skin, embroidered with designs in different colored silks, having a strip of blue cotton cloth around the upper of the shoe, to which are attached orange leather thongs to protect the legs.

—O—

### THE ANTIQUES OF OLD BARN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

are typical of their time and are fitting reminders of Whittier's well known poem, "Telling the Bees."

The farmer has always been efficient in the possession of sharp cutting tools, as any boy with farm experience at the grindstone can testify, looking back at the times when he had to turn the crank while a sour faced hired man sharpened an axe with nicked edge. Scythes and sickles were not as bad, but much depended upon the mood of the men putting the pressure on the stone.

One may well admire the smooth polish on the big timbers of the barn, located where rubbed by use. There was the "big beam," over which the hay had to be pitched into the mow or "bay" year after year, and the rungs of the stationary ladders to be climbed to reach the filled mows. Old hardwood worn to a polish by the use of hands and feet for years. I wonder whether builders ever take advantage of that polished surface to get desirable effects.

Perhaps people who have no background knowledge about early farm customs are to be commiserated for that lack. There are old farm scenes and practices that have made a lasting impression upon those who knew them. For example, threshing out grain by hand with flails, three men working together would make a lively rhythm, but four men, when the tempo of their strokes became adjusted, would give the barn floor a roll of sound like drumbeat. It would remind one of the time he saw four or five circus roustabouts driving a tent stake with a fluid flow of strokes that sent the stake sinking rapidly into the ground in continuous motion.



# CORRECTION FOR THE MARY GARDEN LIST

We've had rather hard luck with the Mary Garden listings printed during the past six months. The most recent misprint to come to my attention was reported by my friend Joe Mazzitelli, New York. It occurred in the paragraph headed Mary Garden Addenda on page 30 of the December HOBBIES. The recording date of the disc coupling My Ship and The Swing printed in the third line from the end of the paragraph reads November 3, 1947. The year should have been 1927, not 1947.

oOo

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## GRACE SPENCER, "First Lady of the Phonograph"

### I.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

For a long time, collectors of old records have been puzzled as to the identity of the "Miss Spencer" who sang duets with Harry Macdonough on cylinders and discs made in 1900, or within a few years of that date. Some have believed her to be Elizabeth Spencer, who many years later was one of the favorite Edison stars. Others have held out for Janet Spencer, who made some Victor Red Seal records, despite the fact that the mysterious Miss Spencer was a soprano and Janet Spencer a contralto. But nobody seemed to know anything definite. The records had been made so long ago and were so vague, with their omission of the singer's first name, that the search seemed almost hopeless — especially to collectors like myself who were born after the soprano's recording career ended.

But about a year ago I came upon a 1900 Edison cylinder catalog, containing names of a few records by "the Original Lyric Trio," whose members were listed as Miss Grace Spencer, soprano; Harry Macdonough, tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass. There were likewise a few Spencer-Macdonough duets. Well, that at least gave Miss Spencer's first name, but I had no other information concerning her. Now, though, I am delighted to say that the uncertainty no longer exists. The former Miss Grace Spencer, who was one of the first concert singers ever to make records professionally and who apparently was the first woman to have her voice reproduced on a Victor disc, is still alive and living in New York. In all probability, her recording experience goes back to an earlier time than that of any other surviving woman. That's why I have given her the honorary title of "First Lady of the Phonograph."

I learned of Miss Spencer's whereabouts and was able to communicate with her because of an unusual happening. It began when my friend, Charles Clark, a Wellington, Ohio, dealer in old records, received the following letter from Mrs. George D. Royster, of 45 Wyllys Street, Hartford, Connecticut:

"I am trying to locate some recordings made on cylindrical records by my mother during the years 1895-1900. My mother was a concert and oratorio singer of some note in this country at that time. Her professional name was Miss Grace Preston, and it is known to us that she did make recordings. I have written the Edison Company and the Columbia Company, but their catalogs do not go back that far. My mother passed away this summer, and since the early records made at the height of her career are the only ones she made, I am most anxious to find them, if possible. I would appreciate any information you can give me."

Mrs. Royster's letter was sent to me by Mr. Clark, in the hope that I might have information about the

records. I wrote to her, saying that I had never heard of records by any singer named Grace Preston, but also asking if the artist might have used the name of Grace Spencer for recording purposes. I mentioned, too, that I had a couple of Grace Spencer records. Mrs. Royster replied that Grace Preston and Grace Spencer were not the same, but that they had been intimate friends. She said Miss Spencer was still living in New York City. Meanwhile, she wrote to her friend, Mrs. Lewis M. Wilson, of New York, that I had records by Grace Spencer (Mrs. Wilson's mother sent me a note, asking what I would charge for them).

Naturally, I was glad to give her the records, so I shipped them immediately. Both were duets with Macdonough — a nine-inch Zonophone, made around 1900, of "I Will Magnify Thee, O God!" and Victor Monarch No. 1359, "Life's Dream is O'er," recorded, as a date scratched upon the label showed, on April 16, 1902. When I sent the records, I also asked Mrs. Wilson for some information concerning her mother. She not only graciously gave me what help she could, but also had the "First Lady of the Phonograph" write to me, with the result that I shall be able to quote most of the soprano's extremely interesting letter concerning her career.

Miss Spencer, who in 1903 married Dr. Willard Foster Doolittle, a relative of General "Jimmy" Doolittle, wrote:

"Yes, I think I was the first woman artist to record, which came about through my father's friendship with Thomas Edison. My father, General Bird W. Spencer, of Passaic, New Jersey, was a prominent and wealthy man and much opposed to a professional career for me. I studied with Jacques Bouhy in Paris for many years and was finished for concert and oratorio work. I sang as soloist in many of the New York and Brooklyn churches and concerts in Carnegie Hall and elsewhere. Yet my career was uphill work. If you write the Passaic Daily News they may be able to send you a copy of the account of my debut concert there for the benefit of the Passaic General Hospital, in which my father was interested, just after my lengthy studies and travels in Europe.

"Upon returning home with Mr. and Mrs. Gallaud, of Paris, aboard the first Champlain of the French Line, we were wrecked for 15 days off the coast of Newfoundland. The whole town was out to greet us and, overnight, I became a seven days' wonder. Mr. Gallaud's sister married Jean Gounod, the great composer Gounod's son, and they persuaded my father to allow me to finish my education abroad under their guidance. As I was just 18 at the time, this gave me an entree into those artistic and musical circles that few students had. Emma Eames; her husband, Julian Story; the great Massenet, Bemberg, Chaminade — all, and many more, I have met at Madame Gounod's where I was privileged to sing. My voice was a dramatic soprano with a range of two octaves, many said comparable to Emmy Destinn, then at the Metropolitan Opera. I spoke French fluently, of course, and studied

diligently, making good progress. My father was delighted with my debut concert, all of which the Passaic Daily News of that day tells most dramatically.

"He was a warm personal friend of Thomas Edison, and when I was approached by the Victor and Edison companies to make some records of my voice, he drove me over to West Orange and presented me to Mr. Edison, who immediately recognized those qualities in my voice which would record well. And so I began my career. I had all the work my voice could stand with those two companies, church and concert work. The opera which Mr. Bouhy hoped I would reach I never did, owing to family objections. I returned to Europe several times to see my dear friends, the Gallauds, and to coach again with Mr. Bouhy, but five years after I married my dear husband, who was a successful physician here, I stopped singing altogether and have never sung since, for to be a truly great artist one must devote one's life to it.

"As for my records, there were many—solos, duets and trios. The list was a long one, and I regret now I did not keep some of them, as there are few today who remember me. My career was short and memory soon dies when one becomes only half great, for I had constant opposition toward my becoming a great artist. I had the voice, education and the ambition to succeed, but I lacked backing. Remember, if you are old enough—let us say 50 years ago—a young woman was lost, socially and

morally, who entered a professional career. It was just not done by a well brought up girl, and my father had other plans for me, hence the complete oblivion and 'mystery' as you call it, surrounding my musical career. We obeyed our parents in those days much better than the present day trend—and is the world any better, can we say, for the entire lack of respect and control for the better things in life? Tradition is a great heritage, few realize today.

"Somewhere I shall try to find you an old photograph, if you will return it surely, when I was a bridesmaid for Alice Coard of Plainfield, a pupil of the great Theodor Leschetizky, of Vienna, whom I knew abroad. . . . I do not seem to remember Grace Preston making any records. She had a rare and beautiful contralto voice and sang with much musical intelligence. I don't think she studied abroad. I met her in this country after my return."

Now I cease quoting from Mrs. Doolittle's letter to say that Mrs. Royster tells me she still hopes to find wax cylinders by her mother and will appreciate help from any source. That is why I have given her address near the beginning of this article.

(To be concluded)

—O—

## Death of Arthur L. Walsh

Arthur L. Walsh, 57, executive vice president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., died recently, in a New York hospital.

Mr. Walsh first became associated with the late inventor at the age of 19 when he was engaged to play his violin in direct comparison with the New Edison phonograph, to demonstrate that the tone quality of the reproduced music was identical with that of the original. His keen business sense soon attracted Mr. Edison's attention, and Walsh was made the company's advertising and music manager. For several years he selected all the numbers that were recorded by Edison. His promotion to executive vice president followed. After Edison's son Charles became governor of New Jersey, he appointed Mr. Walsh in 1943 to fill W. Warren Barbour's unexpired term in the U. S. Senate. In 1934-35, Walsh was New Jersey State director of the Federal Housing Administration. He also served as a commissioner of the Port of New York Authority.

Walsh gave up his musical career after becoming an Edison executive, but for pastime wrote a number of popular song successes, including

"The Prisoner's Sweetheart" and "As a Porcupine Pines for Its Pork." At Mr. Edison's funeral in 1931, he played a violin solo of the inventor's favorite song, "I'll take You Home Again, Kathleen."

—O—

## Folk Song Collection of John Lomax

Carried on by U. S.

John A. Lomax, noted collector of songs and ballads, died recently at the age of 80. His work of collecting is being carried on at the Library of Congress by Duncan B. M. Emrich, chief of the folk lore section.

The collection includes about 40,000 songs on 10,000 records, all stored in the Library. There are songs by American cowboys, southern Negroes, deep sea sailors, hard rock miners, lumberjacks, and in fact, songs of persons in practically all walks of life.

John A. Lomax was assisted in his hobby by his son, Alan. They caused thousands of records to be made to record the songs. With portable recording machines they made the records just as the songs were sung, where the singers had been performing for the amusement of their friends and themselves. The Library of Congress plans to continue this project and is being assisted by such Universities as Wisconsin, Wayne in Detroit, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Utah and Indiana. The collection is being expanded to include tales, legends, herb medicine formulas and traditional cooking recipes, sectional dialect recordings, etc.

In explaining the services of the Library there has been issued 11 albums of folk songs for public purchase at cost. Shortly ten more will be put out. Catalogs may be obtained by writing to the recording laboratory, Library of Congress, Washington.

It is learned from Librarian Emrich that there are at least 50 different versions of "Oh, Susanna," by Stephen Foster. It is pointed out that every ship's company and overland party heading for the California gold fields composed its own verses.

—O—

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desire of the purchaser. Unlike the Selma Kurz discs of the same vintage, they were not re-issued with new numbers."

oOo

### C.R.S. Historical Re-Recordings Numbers 21 through 29

In my review of these eight C. R. S. releases, on page 34 of the March HOBBIES, I explained that their volume level was considerably below normal owing to an error in the re-recording process. Word has just reached me that Jack L. Caidin, sponsor of C. R. S. records, has decided to do over all sixteen sides. Moreover, he will replace any or all of the records free of charge to those who are willing to turn in the old re-recordings for the new ones. It is not necessary to return the entire disc, incidentally, just break out the portion carrying the label and send it to him c/o of C. R. S. Historical Recordings, 2060 First Avenue, New York 29, N. Y. Please note that replacements cannot be secured through dealers stocking C. R. S. records, but only through Mr. Caidin himself at the address already given.

—o—

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### GRACE SPENCER, "First Lady of the Phonograph" II

By ULYSSES (JIM WALSH)

The letter which I quoted last month from Grace Spencer gave most of the salient facts concerning the career of this gifted singer, who appears to be the first woman ever to make a Victor record and one of the first feminine singers for the phonograph. It is a coincidence that both she and Elizabeth Spencer whose recording career began about ten years after Grace Spencer's had closed, studied with Jacques Bouhy, the distinguished Belgian baritone, in Paris. Artists of the name of Spencer, incidentally, played more than their proportionate part in the early history of the phonograph. Leonard Garfield Spencer (presumably no relation to the others) became the first world-famous recording comedian shortly after the Columbia company went into business in Washington, D. C., in 1889. His brother, Harry, also made a few records. Janet Spencer, the contralto, was well known for her few, but popular, Victor Red Seal records: Elizabeth Spencer, from 1911 to 1926, was one of the most popular singers Edison ever had—and upon Grace Spencer I have already conferred the title of "First Lady of the Phonograph." (I might mention in passing that Elizabeth Spencer was not born into a Spencer family, but married a man named Spencer and continued to use that last name for professional purposes after they were divorced.)

Mrs. Doolittle admits she isn't sure of the dates when she first began making records under her maiden name of Grace Spencer. However, an 1899 Edison record catalog lists the Original Lyric Trio as being composed of Estella L. Mann, soprano; John Havens, tenor, and W. F. Hooley, bass. As we have already seen, the 1900 catalog gives the trio's personnel as Miss Spencer, Harry Macdonough and Hooley, so that seems to indicate the young lady began making records in 1899 or 1900. Macdonough told me years ago that he made his first Edison cylinders in October, 1898, so he and Miss Spencer must have "cut their recording eyeteeth" at pretty nearly the same time. I have not yet been able to find out anything about Miss Mann and Havens, their forerunners in the trio.

Miss Grace Spencer probably made

other Zonophone records in addition to the one I sent her daughter, and no doubt she sang on some of the seven-inch Victors, that preceded the 10-inch Monarch issue, besides also singing with Macdonough and the Lyric Trio for Edison. In addition, she says, she made many solos.

It's more than likely that she also made Monarchs in the 5,000 series—the first ten-inch records sold by Victor before the dog trademark was adopted in 1903—but I am unable to find any listed in a mimeographed catalog which the company sent me some years ago of all the single-faced Black Label masters then preserved in the company's files. (Nearly all of these, I have been told, have since been destroyed—presumably so that more space can be available for storing the precious masters of hot jazz and boogie-woogie!)

There are, however, three ten-inch Spencer-Macdonough duets: No. 1359, "Life's Dream Is O'er," which I have already mentioned; 1360, "Home to Our Mountains" (how did it happen that this familiar Trovatore number was sung as a duet for tenor and soprano?) and 1362, "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," the lilting air from Floradora, which was one of the biggest sellers of those long-gone days. The Victor master list also contains No. 4282, "Elegie," mentioned simply as sung by "Spencer," but Miss Spencer says she originally recorded it. Many popular records of a "standard" nature were later re-made by other singers, after the original artists were no longer available, to take advantage of improvements in recording methods, so "Elegie" afterwards was sung by Elise Stevenson and still later by Elizabeth Spencer, with the same master number being retained. In 1908 or earlier, the "Pretty Maiden" duet was re-made for the same reason, with Miss Stevenson as soprano.

It has already been mentioned that Miss Spencer married Dr. Willard F. Doolittle in 1903. She has only one child, Mrs. Lewis M. Wilson, of New York, who was born ten years after her marriage. Mrs. Doolittle lives at 170 West 73rd street, New York City. Her husband died in June, 1944.

Only a few soprano voices would record satisfactorily around the turn of the century, but it is easy to tell, even from the somewhat worn discs which I sent to Mrs. Wilson, that the former's Spencer's tones had a beautifully clear, pure quality. I suspect that she also sings in two even more worn Victors which I still have: No. 90, "When I Was a Lad" (from "Pinafore"), by the Lyric Trio, on which the scratch is so virulent as to make it almost impossible to understand the words; and the Floradora Sextet, sung by an unidentified mixed chorus. Of course, we have already seen that this was likewise made as a Spencer-Macdonough duet.

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It has been a source of genuinely great pleasure to me to learn that Grace Spencer, concerning whose identity I puzzled for so many years, is still living, and I know that all lovers of the old records and admirers of the gifted men and women who made them wish her the best of health and happiness.

Miss Spencer may be sure that when the pioneer recording artists and their record collectors friends have their annual get-together somewhere in or near New York in September, we'd feel honored by the presence of the First Lady of Phonograph. Consequently, it makes me proud indeed to quote the following excerpt from her letter, which I have saved for the last:

"I shall be very happy to attend your reunion, with my daughter, in September — and please be good enough to send me a copy of the sketch you insert in the magazine." (That I shall certainly do!) And the former Miss Spencer teases me a bit about my inquiry as to whether I might print the date of her birth by saying:

"As to my age, shall I just tell you I am pushing 70, or must I tell you on which side — the sunny or the shady? I leave you to judge that when I meet you. Thank you for your interest and goodness. Very sincerely yours, Grace Spencer Doolittle."

And thank you, Mrs. Doolittle, for providing me with the "materials" for what I'm sure HOBBIES readers will agree has been a most interesting sketch. From the looks of things, as I write this on the evening of December 18, 1947, there will be a large and enthusiastic turn-out of collectors and recording artists ready to pay you homage at that eagerly awaited meeting next September!

**!! Now Ready !!**

## The New Catalogue of Historical Recordings

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### The Death of John Bieling

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

On the morning of Wednesday, March 31, I went to my front door and found a Negro man waiting to hand me a telegram. When I read it, I received news that shocked but didn't exactly surprise me. The message was from George Bieling and said that George's father, John Bieling, the famous pioneer recording artist, had died the day before in his home at 102 Lafayette Avenue, Hempstead, Long Island, N. Y.

Although I knew that John had heart disease and, in an often heard expression, "might go at any time," the news of his passing hit me hard. I still haven't been able to comprehend fully that I shall never see again the lovable old gentleman whom I considered one of my dearest friends. It was made doubly hard to realize because only a week before I had received one of John's genially chatty letters, telling me that he had enjoyed a happy 79th birthday on March 18th — just 12 days before his death — and that he was eagerly looking forward to "John Bieling Day" next September.

Mr. Bieling's death temporarily disrupted plans for observing the Day, when record collectors expected to entertain John and other old-time recording artists with a party. The date had been set for September 10, and the Georgian room of the Garden City Hotel had been reserved, so that John, who lived only a short distance from Garden City, would be able to attend as our special guest of honor. The party was to be an outgrowth of similar events he had given at his home in September, 1946, and 1947, for a group of intimate friends. Because of the great interest in the affair and the considerable burden it imposed upon the ladies of the Bieling family, the collectors had agreed that hereafter they would hold John Bieling Day in some place accommodating a larger crowd and that the expense would be divided among those attending. The artists, of course, would come as non-paying guests.

So a few days after John's death, there was uncertainty about what to do. There was some sentiment in favor of dropping the plans, at least for this year, although most of us felt that our old friend would want us to go ahead and meet in his honor, just as if he were there. There was also serious discussion of transferring the "party" to the Thomas A. Edison laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey. However, this would have been inconvenient to some of the artists who want to attend. So I'm glad to say that it's been decided to go ahead with the Garden City hotel arrangements. During the next several months I shall be busy, writing to a long list

of pioneer artists and urging them to attend. Collectors are planning to come from all parts of the country, and anyone who admires the early artists and their work is invited to join us.

There will be a reservation fee — probably of \$5.50 — payable by each collector, to help defray the expense of engaging the room, which seats 400 persons and is equipped with a piano, and of serving a meal. Tickets will be mailed by Harry Selinger, 9 Clark Avenue, Oceanside, Long Island, New York, to whom correspondence about the party should be addressed. If you plan to attend, write Mr. Selinger a postal card — not a letter — telling him so and mentioning whether you are a collector. But don't send any money until you are notified. Children under 18 will not be eligible. Persons coming from a considerable distance would do well to reserve rooms in New York City hotels. The Garden City Hotel's rates are from four to eight dollars a day, and rooms must be engaged at least 60 days in advance.

Now, back to Mr. Bieling's death. Biographical sketches of this fine artist appeared in the July and August, 1942, issues of *HOBBIES*. However, a large number of readers interested in old records have been added in the past half dozen years. For their benefit I'll touch briefly upon his career.

John Henry Bieling was born on March 18, 1869, in New York City's Fourteenth Ward, and he frequently referred humorously to himself as "just an old Fourteenth Ward boy." His father was a carpenter, of German descent. John had to leave school as a youngster to help his father support a large family, and he didn't get a great deal of formal education. But he had an alert, acquisitive mind, which he improved by reading good books (histories were his favorites) and studying at home. As a very young man, he painted stained glass for Tiffany's, but he had become well known as the possessor of a beautiful "top tenor" voice. In 1894 he and three other young fellows — George Gaskin, second tenor; Joe Riley, baritone, and Jim Cherry, bass — formed the Manhasset Quartet, the first male voice ensemble ever to make a record. They sang for the old United States Phonograph Company, in Newark. The quartet worked for about all the pioneer recording firms of the time, but didn't stay together very long. In 1896, it was succeeded by the Edison Quartet, consisting of Bieling, first tenor; Jere Mahoney, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone, and William F. Hooley, bass. Mahoney's health failed and he was succeeded in 1899 by Harry Macdonough. This was the first recording quartet to win world-wide fame, and



This picture of John H. Bieling was taken in London, August 4, 1902 by Russell Hunting of "Casey Record Fame".

it became even better known on disc records as the Haydn or Hayden, Quartet. In 1910, the American Quartet was organized. Its members were Bieling and Hooley; Billy Murray, second tenor, and Steve Porter, baritone. The Hayden Quartet disbanded in 1914, when Mr. Bieling had to leave it because of voice trouble, but John Young took his place in the American (which was known as the Premier Quartet on Edison records), and it continued in existence, with various changes of personnel, until 1925. John told me that he believed his voice trouble started because of the large amount of "yipping" he had to do, impersonating a cowboy, in a 1910 Edison record of "A Cowboy's Romance," made by the inexhaustibly inventive Len Spencer, with the help of Ada Jones and the quartet. He could barely speak for several weeks after that cylinder was recorded.

Although he stopped singing, John Bieling was still interested in the phonograph. In 1918 he was a traveling representative of the New York Talking Machine Company, calling on Victor dealers in New Jersey. Two years later he moved to Hempstead from Elmhurst, where he had lived for 16 years, and opened a Victrola shop. He retired from business in 1926. It's interesting to know that, before he lost his voice, John occasionally sang at the Metropolitan Opera, as a supernumerary. Among the operas in which he appeared were *Aida* and *Tosca*. He greatly amused me by telling of the time when he was acting an archbishop and had a terrible time keeping his outlandish looking hat from falling off.

John Bieling was unique among recording artists because of the fact that he won fame solely on the strength of his quartet work and his duets with other singers — chiefly Macdonough. In the late 1890's he made Edison cylinders with a contralto, the late May Kelso, and they may have been the first male and female team to do recorded work. After his very earliest days as a record maker, he never had a solo record in any company's catalog. His nearest approach to that proba-

bly was Victor 4655, "Let Me Write What I Never Dared to Tell," listed as by "Bieling and Haydn Quartet." Although the obituary notices in New York papers said that Mr. Bieling's recording work was chiefly for Victor and Columbia, the truth is that he sang comparatively little for the latter and that he was known almost entirely as a Victor and Edison artist. One virtually unknown fact about his career, however, is that in the middle 1890's he and George Gaskin made duets for Columbia under the team name of "Gaskin and Livingston."

I met John Bieling for the first time in September, 1946, when I went to Hempstead to attend the first of his parties, but we had been friends by correspondence since 1942. When I first saw John I found it hard to reconcile him, as a small, thin, elderly man, with the pictures the old record catalogs used to contain of a handsome, husky looking young fellow. During his last few years, John gradually lost his appetite and ate so little that he had an almost emaciated appearance. But his blue eyes retained their sparkle, his mind was clear and he kept his sense of humor. His intimate friends, such as his Hempstead neighbor, Bryant Burke, were much afraid that he wouldn't be able to have his party last September or that, if he did, the excitement would tell upon his weak heart, but John had a great time and came through in fine style. During recent months, he had been living in anticipation of next September 10, when his friends would once more be gathered around him.

That was not to be. But he had a foretaste on his birthday of what John Bieling Day would have been. I had sent him a small gift, and he wrote to me on March 23: "My dear Jim: Thanks for the beautiful card and book which you so kindly sent to me for my birthday . . . I must say I had a very fine birthday and wish you could have been here with us. Billy Murray, Bryant, Harry Selinger, all came in and we listened to some of the old records. Harry Selinger very kindly brought his portable machine over. Then I had my whole family with me for the

day and, all in all, it sure was very pleasant . . . Bryant and Harry seem to be going along with the affair for September the 10th quite well and I only hope and pray my health is all right, for some days I don't feel as well as others, but of course when you are in your eightieth year you can't ask for too much."

Just a week later John Bieling was dead. He became ill on Monday night and died at about 7 o'clock Tuesday morning. The funeral was held at 8 p. m., Friday, April 2, in the Cronk Funeral Home at Garden City. Burial was in Cedar Grove Cemetery at Flushing, L. I. Mr. Bieling is survived by his second wife, Mrs. Meta Von Oesen Bieling; three sons — Harry F., George B. and Fred W. Bieling; and three daughters — Mrs. Magdalen Meyran, Mrs. Nellie Michener and Mrs. Charlotte Conlin. The service was in charge of a noted record collector and admirer of Mr. Bieling, the Rev. Edward Vesper. Flowers were received from friends and admirers of the singer living in widely scattered places.

I mourn John Bieling's death most sincerely. But I like to recall something he said to me one evening last September, while we sat together in the twilight on his cool front porch. Speaking whimsically but most evidently in earnest, John said: "One

of these days that Death Angel is going to tap me on the shoulder and say, 'Come along with me, Bieling! You've been fooling around here long enough!' Then, Jim," he continued,  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

### MISCELLANEOUS

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**FOR SALE:** Regina, disc type, music box and extra records. Cabinet and machine in perfect condition.—Tom Perrin, Augusta Herald, Augusta, Ga. au3803

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**FOR SALE:** One boxed Graphophone, 11" sq. and 7" high, with horn, and 35 good records dated around 1901. "Josh Billings", etc., Graphophone like new. Please offer.—O. B. Seay, 16 Johnson Building, Augusta, Ga. jcl2335

**FOR SALE:** Very old violin made in Cremona 1622. Write — Mrs. Bessie K. Andrews, Duke Power Company, Salisbury, N. C. jcl3662

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**HIGH SCHOOL** teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. au128711

**RARE OLD RECORDS:** Vocal operatic, popular, Edisons, jazz, for sale reasonably priced. Send your want list.—Delano, 349 Lindenwolde, Ambler, Pa. s6885

**REDUCED Price Sale**—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City, N. Y. jcl2276

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover Mass. P. O. Box 342, f128782

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**REGINA** 20½" metal discs wanted.—George Francis Schait, D. C., 3 Springfield Ave., Cranford, N. J. au3023

Two fine Swiss boxes for sale.

See our ad, Page No. 5.

**THE CONKLINS**

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**PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS**

TO BE HELD IN NEW YORK CITY.

Full details in the July issue.

Germany, Russia, North Africa and most of North America, gathering material for his drawings. Theodore Roosevelt's enthusiasm for his work helped to open the eyes of the public to his worth. Though many call him an illustrator (just as Hogarth and Rembrandt were labeled at one time), rather than a painter, his pictures are vital and picturesque portrayals, as are his sculptures. Besides these accomplishments, he wrote fresh vigorous prose and among the books he published a few are *Pony Tracks* (1895); *Crooked Trails* (1898); *Stories of Peace and War* (1899); *Men With The Bark On* (1900); and *The Way Of An Indian* (1906). He was determined to have all details accurate and had at his home in New Rochelle a huge collection of cowboy outfits, Indian trappings, and army equipment, besides his canvases, bronzes, and sketches. This collection and some of his own work is now in the Remington Art Memorial at Ogdensburg and there at the public library, one will find his library of western history. Some of his work is also in the New York Public Library.

He died very suddenly of pneumonia on December 26, 1909, and was buried at Canton, N. Y. As his epitaph he wanted "He knew the Horse."

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35)

"I'd like to think that when I pass over Jordan I'll start walking up the hill, but before I've gone far I'll see old Bill Hooley coming down. And Bill will say in that deep bass voice of his: 'Why, here's Bieling! Where've you been all this time? The old gang's been looking for you for years! Harry Macdonough and Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley) are right around the corner, and Walter Miller (for many years Edison's recording director) is with them. Walter wants wants us to do twenty rounds of 'The Holy City' and a dozen of 'The Cornfield Medley.' So hurry up and let's get started!"

"And so, Jim," John summed up, "I'll try out my voice and it'll be better than it ever was on earth. And the four of us old Hayden Quartet boys will get our heads together in front of that recording horn, and we'll sing and sing — sing a lot better than we ever did down here! To tell you the truth, I think that would be my idea of Heaven — to have my voice back and go on singing, forever and ever!"

John had tears in his eyes, and I felt them in my own as he drew that fanciful picture. "The Canary," as Billy Murray used to call him, because he never "blasted" when singing into a recording horn, was one of the most lovable of men. If John Bieling Day is held this September, as I hope it will be, those of us who are left will try to have the good time that we know our beloved friend would wish for us, but we'll sadly deplore the loss of him in whose honor the event has been named.



### P. O. Box 1097 Providence, Rhode Island

A rare early Windsor arm chair, with a bow back, and unusually comfortable seat, all re-finished in rich natural maple and ready to use. A fine heirloom, early and solid. \$80.00

An unusual nodding bisque kitten. She sits up and begs, and she is a lovely, with grey head, back and tail, while her feet are black. She wears a baby blue ribbon around her neck, and her head nods. Approx. 5" tall. Very cute. \$21.00

Very beautiful, very small mahogany chest of drawers with delicate scalloped apron and line of satinwood inlay on all drawers and apron. A piece so small it could be used for a lamp table, with darling french feet. It is 32" tall, 17½" deep, and 22" across the front. Has 4 full length drawers. Perfect condition, a beauty! \$32.00

A Gibson Girl calendar plate, year 1909. Lovely girl's head in center rich coloring, and in excellent condition. \$7.50

A tiny adorable little cream pitcher with rose buds and blue ribbon garland, and wide little spout. It is 2½" tall. An old one. \$5.50

An extremely fine old Staffordshire trinket box. It is an old square piano, and the music is open on the music rack, and the coloring is rich, and it is in perfect condition. The

piano is rosewood and back of the music rack is more music in pink and blue covers. It is 4" long, 3" tall and 2½" deep. \$15.00

Another of those large hinged top old iron match boxes that hang on the wall or sit on a table as preferred. This one has a handsome dog heavily embossed on cover. Big enough for cigarettes. \$7.50

A deep handsome walnut frame with a gold liner all in perfect condition. Measures outside 40" long, by 28" wide. Inside opening 34" long by 23" wide. Grand for mirror. Very rich. \$16.00

Sweet old china salt shaker, with seascape painted on it, sailing ships, a rock coast and castle. Lovely colors. 4" tall. \$4.00

Unusually lacy iron trivet, round, with 5 little paw feet. Measures 5½" across. A nice one and old. \$4.50

Beautiful deep blue plate, early Staffordshire, perfect condition. Allover color, fruit and flowers. A honey! \$10.00

Original print by Baillie "The Life and Ago of Man". Unusually brilliant colors. Perfect condition, appropriately framed in old pine frame refinished. Overall measurements 17 by 13". Fascinating picture showing stages man's life from cradle to grave. Quaint and amusing. \$9.00

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

FREDERIC C. FREEMANTEL

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH



So many of the early recording artists are no longer with us that it's especially pleasant to write about one still alive, in excellent voice and carrying on his professional activities with a vigor and enthusiasm that would be noteworthy in a man half his age.

I haven't yet met Frederic C. Freemantel, but I hope that he will be one of the welcome guests at the meeting of recording artists and record collectors to be held next September in the Garden City hotel on Long Island, New York. Even without the pleasure of personal acquaintance, it has been easy to deduce from correspondence and printed matter that, as well as being a fine singer and teacher, Mr. Freemantel is a remarkable man in other ways. He is also probably unique among Pioneer Recording Artists for being a member of a family listed in "Burke's Peerage" as among the British nobility.

This distinguished tenor's family name actually is Freemantle and is pronounced "free-mantle," as it is spelled. The singer explains, however, that during his entire professional career he has spelled the name as Freemantel and pronounced it "freeman-TELL," because the latter pronunciation "seems to lend itself to a more professional accent."

Frederick Charles Freemantel was born in England some 75 years ago. In 1881 he began his musical career as a choir boy in St. Bennett and All Saints Church, London. While still a child he sang at many of the Choir Festivals in Westminster Abbey and

St. Paul's Cathedral, under the training of Sir Joseph Barnby, and was one of the choristers especially chosen to sing at the great Jubilee celebrations held in St. Paul's for Queen Victoria. Later, he became interested in band and orchestral music and learned to play the cornet, trumpet and other brass instruments. After his voice changed, he resumed his studies with a succession of English and continental teachers and, while in his early twenties, made a series of concert and oratorio appearances, from 1896 to 1900, in Canada and the United States. After engaging in special studies at Western University in Pittsburgh, he was appointed director and conductor of the University Glee Club, the Carnegie Glee Club and the Apollo Club. He also appeared as soloist with the Pittsburgh Orchestra, conducted by Victor Herbert.

Soon afterward, Mr. Freemantel was appointed tenor soloist at the Madison Avenue Baptist church, New York, and served for five seasons as chorus master and assistant musical director of the Ocean Grove (N. J.) music festivals. During the festivals he appeared frequently as tenor soloist on the same platform with operatic notables, including Caruso, Sembrich, Schumann-Heink, Nordica, Edward Johnson and Herbert Witherspoon. He was the first tenor to essay a role in the Philadelphia Operatic Society, now the Philadelphia Opera Company. He sang Rhadames in "Aida" and "Raoul" in "The Huguenots" and had the leading part in an opera, "Hoshi San," written by John Luther Long, the librettist of "Madam Butterfly," with music by the Russian composer, Wassili Leps.

The recording experience of Mr. Freemantel — or Dr. Freemantel, as he is more generally known — began in 1907 when he was engaged by Victor to make a series of discs. Despite his extensive operatic and oratorio experience, he was not much called upon for that type of music, but instead his recording work was largely composed of hymn singing. His photograph appeared in the September, 1908, Victor catalog, with the following comment:

"Dr. Freemantel is an educated and experienced musician, and has a voice of rich quality and great range. He is the tenor soloist of the Cathedral in Philadelphia and is assistant director of the musical festivals at Ocean Grove."

All the Victor records then listed by Dr. Freemantel were single-faced. Three were 12-inch: 31691, "Ave Maria" (Franz Abt), sung in Latin; 31629, an Easter hymn, "The Resurrection" (Holden); and 31627, "Then You'll Remember Me," from Balfe's "Bohemian Girl." His 10-inch records

consisted of 5068, "La donna é Mobile," from "Rigoletto," sung in Italian; and the following hymns: 5104, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" (Gould); 5141, "My Mother's Prayer" (Weeden); 5194, "Over the Line" (Phelps); 5261, "Shall You? Shall I?" (McGranahan); 5142, "Softly and Tenderly" (Thompson), and 5341, "The Ninety and Nine" (Sankey.)

After Victor introduced its double-faced records late in 1908, some of Dr. Freemantel's earlier discs were reissued in the double form, as were a few new numbers. Included in the double-faced list were: 16007, "My Jesus, I Love Thee," coupled with "Jesus, I am Resting," by Harold Jarvis; 16009, "Lord, I'm Coming Home," with "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," by Frank C. Stanley; 16532, "The Ninety and Nine," with "In the Sweet Bye and Bye," Hayden Quartet; 16533, "My Mother's Prayer," with "Lead, Kindly Light," Trinity Choir; 16742, "Jesus, Saviour Pilot Me," with "Nearer, My God to Thee," Hayden Quartet; 16743, "Softly and Tenderly," with "The Old-Time Religion," Hayden Quartet; and 35048 (12-inch), "Then You'll Remember Me," with "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby," by Harry Macdonough.

The first, and apparently only, two-minute Edison cylinder made by Dr. Freemantel was issued in October, 1908, about the time Victor was including some of his numbers in its first 160000 double-faced list. The Edison was No. 9962, "Ah! So Pure!" from "Martha," and was thus described: "A new singer in an old, old favorite. Mr. Freemantel has a sympathetic tenor of remarkable range, his tones in the upper register being especially pure and well sustained. His interpretation of Flotow's classic is masterly, to say the least."

When I asked Dr. Freemantel for some reminiscences of his recording experiences, he wrote:

"I did, as you say, record for the old Edison people on those cylinders, but not too much. I objected to the speed with which they wanted us to sing the things. The Victor folks were more reasonable. The Victor recording was done at that time in Camden, in one of the small cottages which then comprised the plant. And, believe me, it meant that you had to sing if you wanted your voice to record. It was nothing like these days of 'crooning.' . . . Really, I didn't know much in those days. At least it seems so today, but, of course, we thought we knew it all. That seems to be a part of the 'tenor get-up.' I know some youngsters today who think they are on top, but they will wake up some day."

Dr. Freemantel says his only appearance in opera in New York was in scenes from Meyerbeers's "Le Prophète." After several successful years as a singer and teacher in the East, he returned to London for study and research. Although his Victor list was not a long one, the



numbers he had recorded were so much of the "standard" type as to let him keep his rank for years among the favorite artists. But during his long stay abroad, defects apparently developed in the matrices of his records, for they were re-made by Henry Burr and were reissued, at first under Burr's real name of Harry McClaskey and, a year or two later, with the more familiar Burr nom de disque.

The Freemantel recordings give no idea of the tenor's greatest musical interest, the little known songs of Beethoven, concerning which he long ago established himself as probably the world's foremost authority. He has given several recitals of Beethoven songs in New York, and they have won praise from eminent critics. In recent years, Dr. Freemantel has been most active as a vocal teacher, both in person and by correspondence. Many readers will recall seeing his advertisements in the New York Times and other publications. Within the past year or so he has published a book, "High Tones and How to Sing Them" and has kindly sent me an autographed copy. One of his latest achievements is a course on public speaking, illustrated by twelve 12-inch vinylite Victor records. Concerning the new course and its accompanying records, the veteran tenor wrote to me:

"I have just had the most thrilling experience of my life. I have just completed recording twelve 12-inch records for another course of mine . . . and to my mind they are wonderful records. If my voice, years ago, was half as good as it sounds on these records today, I should have been one of those 'Red Seal' boys you speak of. When they are pressed I should like to send you one or two, and then — you can compare with my old records . . . I'm more active than I've ever been in my life, and my voice is in supreme condition . . . The spirit of youth is reflected in everything that I am doing, so I can say from the bottom of my heart, 'Thank God for America.'"

As he had said he would, Dr. Freemantel sent me two of the records to be used in his public speaking course. I can echo his statements about the quality and condition of his voice. It's unfair, of course, to compare modern, electrically-amplified recording with the "horn method" used more than 40 years ago, but the voice quality of his latest discs is remarkably fine for a man more than 70, and sounds much more rounded and sonorous than on his old records. Frederick Freemantel still has a voice and knows how to use it. I have had room to touch only upon the more outstanding features of this fine artist's long career, but I'm sure all the readers of HOBBIES will join me in wishing him many more, active years of full achievement. I know that those who plan to take part in this year's observance of "John Bieling Day" will be hoping to meet him at Garden City.

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**PHONOGRAPH** Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. au12276

**REGINA 20 3/4"** metal discs wanted.—George Francis Schall, D. C., 3 Springfield Ave., Cranford, N. J. au3023

**REDUCED PRICE SALE—** Recordings 39c.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City, N. Y. jcl2487

**WANTED 20 3/4"** and 27" Regina discs "When You and I Were Young, Maggie", "Silver Threads Among the Gold", "The Band Played On." What titles have you?—Harry Happer, Pleasant Plains, Ill. s3604

## MISCELLANEOUS

**LESSER MASTERS** With Tone. Inexpensive and tonally good hand-made fiddles. Books on the violin invaluable for technique, general fiddle knowledge and connoisseurship. Antique musical instruments. Lists free.—Houghton Music Co., 42 New Bridge St., Newcastle-on-Tyne, England. s124812

**2000 UNSORTED** cylinder records and Edison machine. All from old estate: operatics, vocals, etc. Best offer takes all. Cash or stamp collection.—Aztec Supply Co., Rock Island, Ill. jv1181

**OLD POPULAR MUSIC.** I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. s3832

**FOR SALE:** Edison Diamond Disk phonograph in excellent condition and 50 records, \$25 express collect.—Robert C. Moon, 812 Washington St., Tallahassee, Florida. s3223

**COLLECTION OF 66** old and classical records, single-faced, to the highest bidder. List on request, stamp please.—Mrs. Eugene Loe, Beardstown, Ill. jly1161

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**FOR SALE:** Weber sq. piano, carved legs, usable condition \$150, crated — Mary W. Greene, Clinton, Wis. s3422

**WANTED —** Melodian Music Rack, state width.—A. A. Houston, 754 Grain Exchange, Minneapolis, Minn. jly119

## A Famous Violin

Ole Bull, the famed Norwegian violinist, owned one of the rare Stradivarius violins. The violin, made in 1687, was one of eight inlaid violins made by the master, Stradivarius.

When Ole Bull came to America on a concert tour after the Civil War he brought with him the violin. During one entire winter he lived at Cambridge, Mass., a neighbor of Longfellow's. At that time the poet was writing "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and Ole Bull was included in the group as "the Musician." Longfellow undoubtedly heard Mr. Bull play many times as this reference in his famous work indicates:

"The instrument on which he played  
Was in Cremona's workshop made  
By a great master of the past,  
Ere yet was lost the art divine.  
Fashioned of maple and of pine  
That in Tyrolian's forests vast  
Has rocked and wrestled in the blast,  
Exquisite was it in design,  
Perfect in each minutest part,  
A marvel of the luteist's art:  
And in its hollow chamber, that,  
The maker from whose hands it came  
Had written his unrivaled name:  
'Antonius Stradivarius.'"

From Ole Bull's hands the violin passed to John Hart, a well known London collector, then to the collections of Charles Plowden and C. Oldman. At the death of Mr. Oldman it was bequeathed to the British Museum, but Ysaye, Sauret, Wilhelmj and other violinists urged that this beautiful instrument should be restored to the musical world. Not long after its withdrawal from the British Museum, Mr. Kochanski, attracted by its tone and beauty, purchased it for his own use.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### REINALD WERRENRATH

My chest expanded a couple of inches when I read a letter in which Reinald Werrenrath, the distinguished former baritone of the Metropolitan Opera, said that he is planning to attend the John Bieling Day party in the Garden City, Long Island, hotel on Friday, September 10th. Because Mr. Werrenrath undoubtedly is one of the most outstanding singers who means to attend the first large-scale meeting of pioneer recording artists and their admirers, I think it will be well to insert this article in advance of the party.

Reinald Werrenrath was born in Brooklyn on August 7, 1883. His father was George Werrenrath, a native of Copenhagen, Denmark, who was famous in Europe as a tenor.

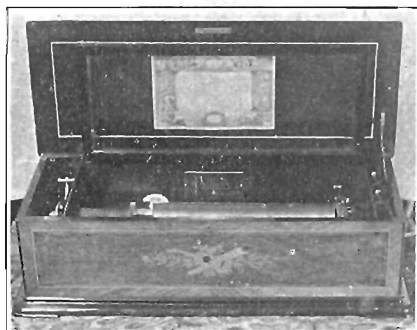
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A. BORNAND

333 Fifth Ave., Pelham 65, N.Y.

He appeared in the principal opera houses of Scandinavia, Germany, Italy and England, before coming to the United States in 1875 to sing at Plymouth church, Brooklyn, where Henry Ward Beecher was pastor. Henry Camp, a well-known American basso, was the church's choir-master. George Werrenrath obtained living quarters in Camp's home, and fell in love with the choir-master's third oldest daughter, an accomplished soprano. They were married, and became the parents of Reinald.

The baritone attended public schools in Brooklyn, and was graduated from Boys High School in 1901. In 1905 he was graduated from New York University. The university gave him the degree of Doctor of Music in 1932 and in 1945 he received the alumni award for meritorious service. While at N. Y. U., Werrenrath was leader of the glee club for three years, before being succeeded by his former room-mate, Deems Taylor. He resumed leadership of the glee club in 1906 and 1907. The baritone had already been singing in Brooklyn churches and male quartets since 1899, and has a clipping from the Brooklyn Eagle of May 10, 1899, terming him "a singer of great promise." He made his "big time" debut at the Worcester, Mass., Festival of September, 1907, when he appeared in a Wagnerian program with Ernestine Schumann-Heink, George Hamlin, Emilio de Gogorza and other famous opera and concert stars. He was re-engaged for the season of 1908 to create the title role in the American premiere of Sir Edward "Caractacus," and then filled engagements in New England and other Eastern States. In the spring of 1909 he was the soloist on tour with the Chicago Symphony, and in 1915-16 he toured for three months with Geraldine Farrar. Mr. Werrenrath (or Dr. Werrenrath, as his degree entitles him to be called) made his debut at the Metropolitan as Silvio in "Pagliacci," with Caruso, Easton and Scotti on February 19, 1919, and sang a total of six weeks during the following two seasons. Besides Silvio, his favorite roles were Valentine in "Faust," Amonasro in "Aida" and Escamillo in "Carmen."

Mr. Werrenrath has sung with every major symphony orchestra in the United States, has appeared many times at virtually every important music festival, and has made more than 3,500 concert appearances—probably more than any other living American artist. He made a European tour in 1913, with Frank LaForge as his accompanist, and also toured Europe in 1920, 1921, 1924 and 1928.

In more recent years, the baritone, who lives in New York City, has been kept extremely busy, teach-



REINALD WERRENRATH

ing and conducting in four cities and traveling almost 900 miles a week, in addition to appearing in recitals. His main studio is at Carnegie Hall, but he teaches weekly at the Washington, D. C., Musical institute, and the Conservatories in Albany and Troy, N. Y. He says that he has been a conductor about as long as he has been singing and is "very happy as director of the famous Mendelssohn Club of Albany and the National Press Club Chorus of Washington."

Mr. Werrenrath made his first Edison records in 1903, when he was 20, as the baritone of the Criterion Male Quartet. However, the first Criterion Quartet record wasn't issued by Edison until January, 1905. It was 8866, "Little Tommy Went a-Fishing." Members of the Criterion, besides Werrenrath, were Robert R. Rainey, first tenor; William A. Washburn, second tenor; and Walter A. Downie, basso. As time went on, the quartet's personnel changed completely. During its best-known period it was composed of John Young, Horatio Rench, George W. Reardon and Donald Chalmers. John Young, who is also coming to the Garden City party, told me some years ago that the then existing Criterion Quartet was descended from the one founded by "the famous baritone, Mr. Reinald Werrenrath." Besides making a few Edison records, the early Criterion also did some singing for Zonophone and Columbia. Dr. Werrenrath recalls, too, that he made Zonos with another male quartet, of which Geoffrey O'Hara, the song writer, was second tenor.

In August, 1907, Edison issued the first solo record by Werrenrath. It was 9604, "My Dear," a sentimental song with words by Dave Reed, Jr., and music by the leading ballad writer of the period, Ernest R. Ball. Said the catalog: "Mr. Werrenrath makes his first appearance as one of our soloists in this song, and it is safe to prophesy that he will soon become a prime favorite. He starts off well with his first song, for 'My

'Dear' will be as popular as its composers' great success, 'Love Me and the World is Mine.' . . . The melody is very tuneful, and Mr. Werrenrath's sympathetic, full baritone voice is admirably suited to the charming sentiments of the words."

The young singer recorded for Edison for two or three years and made some four-minute Amberol records, later incorporated into the unbreakable Blue Amberol series. He also sang baritone occasionally in the Knickerbocker Quartet, whose personnel varied according to whatever singers were available when a quartet record was scheduled. For instance, "The Old Oaken Bucket" was by Young, Werrenrath, Harvey Hindermeyer and William F. Hooley. Hooley is dead, but the other members of this group are all expected to be on hand for John Bieling Day.

But it was with Victor that Werrenrath was longest and most intimately associated. He says that, after the Worcester Festival, deGorza arranged for him to have a Victor audition, which resulted in his singing for the company from 1908 to 1929. His first Victor solo was listed in the supplement for July, 1909, and was No. 31738, a twelve-inch, single-faced record of "Danny Deever," a number with which he has been identified since almost the beginning of his career. The catalog editor, Sam Rous, wrote: 'It is with pleasure that the Victor announces an arrangement which enables it to present records by this well-known baritone. Mr. Werrenrath has chosen for his first number Damrosch's well-known setting of the famous Barrack Room Ballad of Kipling's, which he delivers in a highly dramatic way; giving one of the most graphic and realistic renditions which has ever been heard on the concert stage.'

The baritone's long and prosperous association with Victor was now well under way. He soon became an exclusive Victor artist. But here is something he wrote me which I hadn't suspected and which will come as a surprise to practically all record collectors, especially those who cherish Hayden Quartet discs: "The name of Johnny Bieling evokes some of my best and oldest memories. You may not know that in my earliest days with the Victor Company, Sam Rous, the baritone of the Hayden Quartet, was made editor of the catalog. Finding his new job was a busy one, I was made the baritone, with Johnny, Jack Macdonald (Harry Macdonough) and Bill Hooley, and sang with them for several years. This makes me the sole survivor, as Sam is gone." The Victor company never announced to the public that the quartet personnel had been changed, and the picture in the catalog always showed "Dudley" as the Hayden baritone. However, several records, such as "Dear Delightful Women," "The Orange and Black" and "Old Nassau," were issued as by Werrenrath and the Hayden Quartet, and I have a few records, listed only as being by the quartet,

in which Werrenrath takes the lead. But I had always assumed that, through some slip-up, he wasn't given label credit, and hadn't supposed that he was actually the Hayden's baritone for several years. This information comes as a real collector's item! In those early days, Werrenrath was also the duet partner of that excellent tenor, the late Reed Miller.

Singing with the Hayden was only a small part of the concerted work Mr. Werrenrath did for Victor. For 15 years he was the baritone of the Victor Light Opera and Opera Companies (or the "Uproar Companies," as Olive Kline, another member, jokingly refers to them.) He was also the baritone of the Orpheus Quartet, whose other members were Lambert Murphy, Macdonough and Hooley. He sang in the Trinity Choir and in the Lyric Quartet (Macdonough, Werrenrath, Kline and Elsie Baker.) And he is the only artist who started on the lowest-priced Black Label records, and worked his way up through the single-faced Purple and double-faced Blue Labels to the dignity of being a Red Seal star. It's worthy of mention, too, that for a good many years a Werrenrath record was the last to appear in the Victor's alphabetical catalog. This was a German version of a Hugo Wolf song, "Zur Ruh", "Zuh Ruh", whose title was translated as "To Rest."

The baritone's first Blue Label record was issued in August, 1915. It was sung in Italian and, like many of Werrenrath's records of that period, was intended especially for educational use in public schools. Previously, however, he had appeared on a Red Seal record—a version of the Rigoletto Quartet, issued in November, 1914. The other artists were Lucrezia Bori, soprano; Josephine Jacoby, mezzo-soprano, and John McCormack, tenor. Incidentally, Mr. Werrenrath says he was told that, among the higher-priced records, his sold second only to McCormack's.

For four years Mr. Werrenrath's records appeared in the Blue Label series, although he occasionally made a Black Label offering under the *nom de disque* of Edward Hamilton. Then in December, 1919, he became one of the glamorous Red Seal galaxy, when his single-faced record of "Molly," an Irish love song by

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 37)

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**FOR SALE:** Regina, disc type, music box and extra records. Cabinet and machine in perfect condition.—Tom Perrin, Augusta Herald, Augusta, Ga. au3808

**FOR SALE:** Knabe-Gayle Piano, over hundred years old; solid rosewood case. Make me offer.—Ms. W. F. A. Rash, Statesville, N. C., Rt. 7, Box 480. au1091

**MUSIC BOX COMBS** repaired by expert. New teeth properly installed and tuned. Cylinders entirely repinned.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. o3223

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**For Sale—10 electric coin-operated piano orchestras** and Virtuosos. Also 1,500 new Edison disc records at 10c each in quantities. Would like to buy extra music rolls for the above pianos and music boxes. — Lewis J. Kerstein, 32 South St., Freehold, New Jersey. o3048



An old toadstone ring.

in 1569, says—"There is to be found in the heads of old and great toads a stone they call borax or stelon;" and he adds—"They, being used as rings, give forewarning against venom." Their composition is not actually known; by some they are thought to be a stone—by others, a shell; but of whatever they may be formed, there is to be seen in them, as may be noticed in the engraving, a figure resembling that of a toad, but whether produced accidentally or by artificial means is not known, though, according to Albertus Magnus, the stone always bore the figure on its surface, at the time it was taken out of the toad's head. Lupton, in his "1000 Notable

Things," says—"A toadstone, called crepudina, touching any part envenomed, hurt, or stung with rat, spider, wasp, or any other venomous beast, ceases the pain or swelling thereof." The well known lines in Shakespeare are doubtless in allusion to the virtue which Lupton says it possesses:—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
Which like a toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

Ben Jonson also in the *Fox*, has,—

"Were you enamoured on his copper rings,  
His saffron jewel, with the toadstone in't?"

and Lyly, in his *Euphues*—

"The foule toad hath a faire stone in his head."

The ring pictured here is a work of the 15th century, and is considered to be a very perfect specimen.—From an *Old Book of Wonders*

—o—

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10. Marquis type rose diamond, 14-K cluster ring, 5/8" across top. 17 Rose diamonds forming clusters. Size 4 36.00
11. Oval shaped, 10-K solid gold rose diamond cluster ring. Large rose diamond, 3/16" diam. in center surrounded by 12 small rose diamonds 36.00
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3. Heavyweight grape shears, sterling silver entirely, chased handle, 6" long. 12.00
4. Late heavyweight candy dish in sterling silver, leaf shaped with 9 large scallops around dish. Can be used as large ash tray. 6 1/4 x 4" 9.00
5. Pie knives, New Southern rose pattern by Manchester, ornate floral sterling handles, chrome over steel flat blades. Each 4.25
6. Tea caddy spoons, all old, unusual and attractive, heavyweight sterling silver. Each 5.00
7. Sterling silver thimbles, size 7. Each .60
8. Sterling silver pierced, late salt spoons. Each .90
9. 4 Piece tea set: teapot, coffee pot, sugar and creamer, late, plain, perfect condition, silver plate on copper, no initials. Will put in matching tray, plain, 24x12" (nick on edge of tray). All for 36.00

All of the following are old sterling silver flatware patterns, reconditioned and have no initials.

10. POINTED ANTIQUE pattern by Reed and Barton, 12 teaspoons, ea. \$2; 12 demitasse spoons, ea. 1.80
11. IRIS pattern by Durgin, 6 ice cream spoons with Tines, ea. 2.00
12. REPOUSSE pattern by Kirk, large steak set, knife and fork, pr. 9.00
13. ROSE pattern by Steiff, 6 salad forks, ea. \$3.95; 1 teaspoon 2.00
14. VIRGINIA CARVEL by Towle; 3 dessert spoons, ea. \$3; 1 pickle fork 3.00
15. LADY CONSTANCE by Towle; 6 knives, ea. \$3; 4 luncheon forks, ea. \$3; 4 dessert spoons, ea. \$3; 8 teaspoons \$1.50; 1 sugar shell \$3; 1 butter knife \$3; 1 butter spreader 2.50
16. PRISCILLA ALDEN by Watson, large pierced tomato server 3.00
17. ORLEANS pattern by Watson, 12 spoons 3.95
18. WASHINGTON pattern by R. Wallace and Son, 6 butter spreaders, ea. 3.00
19. FURITAN pattern by Wallace, 1 luncheon fork 3.00
20. VIOLET pattern by Wallace; sugar shell \$3; 2 dessert spoons, ea. \$3; 6 teaspoons, ea. 2.00
21. LOUIS XV by Whiting Division of Gorham; 1 butter knife \$3.50; 1 fish fork \$3.50; 1 old style pie server, 9" long 9.00
22. LILY OF THE VALLEY by Whiting, 1 teaspoon 2.00
23. BERRY patt. by Whiting, 4 teaspoons, ea. 2.00
24. BUTTERCUP pattern by Gorham; 1 dinner knife \$3.95; 1 dinner fork \$3.95; 1 table serving spoon \$4.50; 2 dessert spoons \$3; 1 cream soup \$3.50; 2 teaspoons, ea. 1.80
25. IMPERIAL CHRYSANTHEMUM by Gorham; 6 heavyweight dessert spoons \$3.50; 2 teaspoons, ea. \$2; 1 jam or small berry server 8.00
26. PLYMOUTH pattern by Gorham; 1 cream ladle \$3.95; 6 butter spreaders, ea. 3.00
27. VERSAILLE pattern by Gorham, 1 luncheon fork 3.95
28. FAIRFAX pattern by Gorham; 1 spread line serving fork, 6" long \$5; 6 tea knives, ea. \$3; 1 sugar shell \$3; 12 salad forks, Old English "L" engraved, ea. \$3; 1 large cold meat fork, 9" long 9.00
29. VIRGINIANA by Gorham; 7 luncheon forks, ea. \$3.95; 1 small 3 tined fork, 6" long 5.00
30. OLD COLONIAL by Towle; 6 luncheon forks, ea. \$3.95; 4 dinner knives, ea. \$3.95; 1 cream soup spoon \$4.50; 2 teaspoons, ea. 2.00

Many other odd pieces in sterling silver old patterns. Write your wants. Sterling silver souvenir spoons in teaspoon. Five o'clock teaspoon and demitasse size, each \$1.50.

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## SILVER

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35)

cause it had been founded by the independent Quakers it had a character of its own, and copied old world ideas less than any other early large city.

It was the Philadelphia of Benjamin Franklin, when it was the capitol, of Robert Morris, of Aaron Burr, and often visited by Lafayette.

To serve tea was as fashionable as to give cocktails to one's friends to-day.

Helen S. Foote, assistant curator of decorative arts of The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland authority on silver, says that the teapot would be known anywhere as a piece of Philadelphia silver by the little pierced gallery railing which goes around the top of the pot. Early American silver of no other locality has this feature.

According to tradition, when Dr. Edwards was an old widower, he lived with a family named Robertson who had come to Philadelphia from Scotland, had been naturalized and was connected with the U. S. Mint. At Dr. Edward's death he bequeathed his teapot to the Robertson family. It was from a direct descendant that The Cleveland Museum purchased it.

You can see it in the Museum, (any day but Mondays) in the northeast alcove of Gallery I, where are quantities of fine silver pieces of the Museum's collections.

—o—

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

Rida Johnson Young and Victor Herbert, came out. And he remained one of the most popular Red Seal singers during the remainder of his recording career. Several other singers, including Kline, Baker, Murphy and Lucy Isabelle Marsh, also appeared on Red Seal records as well as on Black and Blue labels, but became Red Seal artists only after the Blue Label had been discontinued. Werrenrath was the only one to work his way up in the manner of an Alger hero while all types of labels were still in use.

With all his achievements, Reinald Werrenrath is a modest man. He humorously says that he has "the typical old gaffer's love of reminiscing," and adds that he "certainly got all the breaks, and was more or less a pet of Cal Childs," who was for many years the head of Victor's Red Seal recording activities. His career has been one of the most interesting and outstanding of any American singer of his time, and I'm earnestly hoping that nothing occurs at the last minute to deprive me — and many of his other admirers — of the pleasure of having him with us at Garden City.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## SYLVESTER LOUIS OSSMAN, "THE BANJO KING" I

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

When the biography of Eugene Carl Rose appeared, I remarked that, in the early days of the phonograph, instrumentalists as a rule didn't arouse the same personal feeling as makers of vocal records. For every disc or cylinder buyer who concerned himself with the identity of a flute virtuoso, a trombone player or a xylophonist, there probably were a hundred who thought of their favorite comedians and ballad singers as treasured friends. That, I think, was largely true because the human voice is a so much more intimate thing than any musical instrument can be, no matter how well it is played. Not only that, but vocal records ordinarily came out better on the old-time machines than the instrumentals.

But Sylvester Louis Ossman, Sr., was an exception to this rule. And here I'm pausing long enough to imagine the bewilderment the average collector of old records will feel when he sees Mr. Ossman's name printed as I have given it at the head of this article. Throughout his career, the "Banjo King" called himself by the shortened form of Vess L. Ossman, and probably few of his admirers have suspected that wasn't the name he was christened with.

Name changes aside, however, for more than half a generation, beginning in the 1890's, the banjo was not only the most popular recording instrument, but Vess Ossman was the best selling maker of instrumental records and one of the top recording performers of his time. He was so popular and such an accomplished artist, in fact, that if I were now compiling a list of the "Supreme Fifteen" pioneer record makers, such as I published in HOBBIES a few years ago, I'd probably drop one of the names I included then and include Ossman. When the banjo was mentioned during Vess's heyday, the average record buyer thought, as a matter of course, of the brilliant player who was known to his fellow artists by the expressive nickname of "Plunks." A good many years later, after he provided the accompaniment to Arthur Collin's record of "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo," he was also sometimes referred to as "Uncle Vess." But "Plunks" was his more popular nickname, and one of his early Victor records, No. 1664, which I'd very much like to find, was called "Old 'Plunks' New Coon Song Medley."

It wasn't that Mr. Ossman lacked competition. I'm not certain that he was the first musician to make banjo records for commercial use. While the old Columbia company still had its headquarters in Washington, D. C., it issued a cylinder record catalog for 1896, in which 15 Vess Ossman records were listed with the comment: "Mr. Ossman is without doubt one of the finest banjoists in the world. His records are wonderfully loud. They all have the true banjo tone." But at the same time Columbia was also making banjo duets by two well known Washington players, Cullen and Collins. And I have seen a seven-inch Berliner disc, dated October 18, 1896, on which one Steph Clement gives a banjo rendition of "Mittoam Gallop." After 1900, too, a young fellow named Fred Van Epps (that was the way his name appears to have been spelled at first, but it was soon shortened to Van Eps) pushed himself forward as one of the leading banjoists and record makers. Also in the running was Ruby Brooks, who made Edison cylinders until his death in 1906.

And the English phonograph companies of the early 1900's likewise had a banjoist whom they sometimes termed the world's greatest. He was Olly Oakley, whose recording career lasted longer than either Ossman's or Van Eps's, and who may still be alive and making an occasional record. Other well-known English banjo players were Joe Morley, Charlie Rogers, Alfred Cammayner, Emile Grimshaw, John Pidoux and Burt Earle. Except among "hill-billy" players, the banjo has been almost obsolete in the United States in recent years, but it's good to note that, thanks to Harry Reser's Apollo record of "Banjo Boogie," and Art Mooney's version of "I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover," it's now making a comeback. From 35 to 50 years ago, it was certainly the most popular instrument, aside from the piano, in both the United States and England.

In view of his formerly great popularity, which has made him a prominent figure in phonograph folk lore, it's surprising how long it took me to learn the important facts of Vess Ossman's life story. Not until I recently entered into correspondence with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Vess L. Ossman, Jr., of St. Louis, and his daughter, Mrs. Annadele Mulligan, of San Pedro, California, was I able to obtain such vital statistics as the date of the "Banjo King's" birth and death. Both Mrs. Helen Ossman and Mrs. Mulligan have been most kind about helping me to write a more comprehensive sketch of Mr. Ossman than would otherwise have been pos-

sible, and I deeply appreciate their aid.

Until a few weeks ago, the nearest I had come to a biographical sketch of the "Banjo King" appeared in the Columbia Record, the Columbia Company's "house organ," for June, 1904. It was accompanied by a photograph, and read:

"We present, herewith, a picture of Mr. Vess L. Ossman, whose banjo records have won fame for him wherever the graphophone is used. He is, no doubt, one of the finest, fastest and most accurate players the world has ever known. With him banjo playing is an art, and no one, whose knowledge of banjo music is confined to hearing some unskilled amateur's tum-tumming, has any conception of the amount and quality of music—real music—which Mr. Ossman produces on his favorite instrument.

"A London critic, himself a banjoist, once said to Mr. Ossman that when he heard him playing he felt inclined to go home and burn his banjo. Mr. Ossman promptly replied, 'When I hear a better player than myself I work all the harder.' No doubt hard work and infinite patience form the basis of the masterly skill acquired by Mr. Ossman, and which has secured for him the distinction of being called upon to entertain President Roosevelt, King Edward VII, President Henry of Battenburg, Senator Chauncy M. Depew, the Duchess of Lanchester, and many other prominent people. No collection of graphophone records is complete without one or more of Mr. Ossman's wonderful banjo records. They are so clean, so full of harmony, and so far superior to the average player's work, that hearing one inspires a desire for more of them."

A highly complimentary statement—but it says nothing about Mr. Ossman's birth date, birthplace, or nationality—information which, after a great deal of investigation, I am now able to give. First, I shall quote from the letter written to me by his daughter, Mrs. Mulligan:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I shall be happy to give you what little information I can regarding my father, but as I was his youngest daughter and he died when I was fifteen, there is very little I remember. However, he was born on August 21, 1868, in Hudson, New York, son of Frederick and Anna Ossman. My mother was born in Hyde Park, New York, on March 8, 1871. Her maiden name was Eunice Smith." The letter then gives some information concerning Mr. Ossman's musical associates, which I shall refer to later. Mrs. Ossman died in San Pedro about 19 years ago.

Mrs. Mulligan's letter may be supplemented by these notes from Mrs. Vess Ossman, junior:

"Mr. Ossman has been dead for 25 years . . . He died December 8, 1923, and is buried in Valhalla cemetery, St. Louis, Mo. . . He collapsed

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Giuseppi Gaspare, 1517,  
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Owner R. C. ADAMS  
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while playing an extra show for charity at a theatre in Minneapolis, Minn., and died one week later.

"I know from my husband, Vess, Jr., that Mr. Ossman played two command performances for the King of England in 1903 or 1904 . . . He started playing banjo at the age of twelve. Why he took up the banjo I do not know, but a sister also played. She died at the age of sixteen. His father owned a bakery, raised a large family, and was of German extraction.

"The children of Mr. Ossman were Vess, Jr., Raymond and Annadele, and three who died in infancy. Grandchildren: Vess III, Felicity Carol and Helen Frances, children of Vess, Jr.; Eunice, Raymond, Jr., Nadine and Ethel, children of Raymond; and Glorian, Timothy and Rosemary, children of Annadele. Raymond has three grandchildren."

Mrs. Ossman adds: "We have several of Mr. Ossman's records, and I have tried many times to find more for my children, without success." She assures me that she would be very grateful if readers of HOBBIERS, who have duplicate Vess Ossman records, or others by him that they can spare, would send them to her, to be included with the family collection. Her address is:

Mrs. Helen Ossman, 5365 St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis 20, Missouri.

Next month I shall begin tracing the Banjo King's career in detail.

(To be continued.)

### MISCELLANEOUS

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**MELODEONS**—Reed Organs. Bought, sold, repaired.—C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond Ave., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. my12219

**SMALL SWISS Music Box (new)** with 15 discs \$30. Additional tunes, 60c each. Regina tune discs, 15 1/2", 20 3/4" 27"; Mira 18 1/2", Criterion 20 3/4". Piano rolls, 65 note (1891 to 1906), also 88 note and Welte-Mignon. Wanted any lateral cut recordings of "Silent Night", also Mira 18 1/2" discs. Will exchange No. 1 lists of Regina, 15 1/2" tune discs for other original lists, any make, any size.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3526

## Old Walking Sticks

From an old BOOK OF WONDERS

It would seem that at the present time the fashion of carrying walking-sticks has to a considerable extent "gone out". So great is the bustle in our city thoroughfares, that the use of a staff, except by those who are lame, is seldom adopted by business people. Professional men still affect the custom, however; and your City man, although he may repudiate the use of a walking-stick in town, straps a good sapling to his portmanteau whenever he has a chance of getting amongst the woods and green fields. About a century and a-half ago everybody carried a cane. Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and a host of others, considered a good stick as necessary as a coat; and a collection of these staves would, if they could be had at the present day, be valuable, not only as relics, but also as an indication of the characters of the owners, perhaps.

In former times, a golden-mounted stick or staff was commonly used by both the male and female heads of families. Queen Elizabeth carried one of these towards the end of her life. They were then more frequently used, however, as a sign of authority than for any other purpose.

The staff was a weapon long before flint-headed arrows and such-like instruments were invented. Sheriffs, and others high in authority, have wands or staffs borne before them on important occasions; the bishops' pastoral staff is as old as episcopal authority.

**THE LAST** of the Cremonas. Booklet listing thirty violins and their makers. Postpaid \$1.—Isador Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 165 E. Ohio, Chicago, Ill. d124431

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6216

**MUSIC BOX COMBS** repaired by expert. New teeth properly installed and tuned. Cylinders entirely reprinted.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n3863

**FOR SALE,** cylinder phonographs with horns, old record catalogues.—Charles Clark, Wellington, Ohio. s1401

**MUSIC BOX COMBS** repaired by expert. New teeth properly installed and tuned. Cylinders entirely reprinted.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. o3223

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. d6388

**SWISS MUSICAL UNITS** \$3. Musical Albums, Boxes.—131 West 42nd, New York 18, N. Y. n3281

**FOR SALE:** Weber sq. piano, carved legs, usable condition \$150, crated — Mary W. Greene, Clinton, Wis. s3422

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, disc, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. 16616

**For Sale**—10 electric coin-operated piano orchestras and Virtuosos. Also 1,500 new Edison disc records at 10c each in quantities. Would like to buy extra music rolls for the above pianos and music boxes.—Lewis J. Kerstein, 32 South St., Freehold, New Jersey. o3048

In former times the running footmen, who, in a body of half-a-dozen, on each side of a carriage ran to alarm robbers and to assist the lumbering vehicle out of the ruts, were well armed with stout staves. At the present time they are still carried by the Plush family, although the use of them is not so clear. In the royal state processions, the footmen with their staves walk as in former days, and we should be sorry were these little bits of ceremony dispensed with, inasmuch as they bring to recollection a former condition of things, which makes us feel comfortable by comparison.

Monstrous sticks have been preserved by dealers in London, and put as a sort of sign at the doors of umbrella and walking-stick dealers. These were, however, a century ago, common enough, and might have been seen by the hundred together, borne by tall footmen behind ladies dressed in the old hooped dresses which we are trying now to imitate. At that time there was also a taste for various kinds of monsters, in China, wood, and other materials. Monkeys and pug-dogs were made pets of, and the sticks of the footmen fashioned into such ugly forms as no modern bogey ever dreamed of.

Many clubs, sticks, maces, or whatever they be called, were about six feet high, and were in parts painted and gilt. One illustration we have seen is an elm-sapling, and the natural bumps have been taken advantage of by the artist to model a sort of Moorish head, with ornamental covering; lower down, the knobs are fashioned into terrible heads, in which are mounted glass eyes of various and impossible colours.

No doubt before long these staves, which might be necessary for the protection of the ladies from the "Mohawks" of the time, will have disappeared and people will look with curiosity at Hogarth's representation of them. Perhaps good specimens of such objects, which have passed out of use, would be worthy of a place in our national museum.

—O—

## Bank Book

"A Handbook of old Mechanical Banks" has just been brought out by John D. Meyer, retired Pennsylvania banker, who has "hobbed" along this line for many years.

His book does not go into the equation of values but does list, pictures and describe the various types of novelties in this fascinating pursuit of 100 years ago.

He gives a never-before published list of hear-say banks that have never been located and are put down as a waste-of-time lure to the collector.

There are also pictures of the factories where the banks were made as well as complete illustrations of all the known specimens. It will find a welcome niche in every collectors' library because the author covers his subject in authoritative and entertaining style.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## SYLVESTER LOUIS OSSMAN, "The Banjo King" II.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH



Sylvester Louis Ossman, "The Banjo King," at the height of his career.

How long ago Sylvester Louis ("Vess") Ossman began making records and whether he acquired the designation of "the Banjo King" before or after first appearing on cylinders is a matter of conjecture. It's certain that by 1898 he was established as one of the handful of pioneer recording artists whose work had already gained wide popularity, and that his services were eagerly sought. In keeping with the prevailing taste of the period, he recorded mostly negro songs, lively ragtime ditties and marches, but what he played was performed with true artistry. Probably his banjo solos of the late '90's and early 1900's express the go-ahead optimism and accelerated tempo of the American

life of those days as effectively as anything could.

Ossman was one of a group of artists who signed exclusive contracts with Columbia in October, 1898. The late Dan W. Quinn lent me a faded photograph, showing the performers standing, with the three Emerson Brothers, who were recording experts, in front of the company's Bridgeport factory. In the first row are Clyde Emerson, George Graham, Len Spencer, Mr. Ossman, Mr. Quinn and George Emerson. George J. Gaskin is sitting above them on a platform. Behind Gaskin are George Schweinfest and Victor H. Emerson, and to Gaskin's right are Steve Porter and Russell Hunting. The exclusive contract lasted only a year or two—probably two, because Ossman was not included in a group photo of Edison artists made in 1900. Quinn, however, is in the Edison picture.

Besides cylinders, Ossman made Berliner discs and was one of the first Victor artists. I have said that the Banjo King is a prominent part of phonograph folk lore. His latest appearance in this role was made in October, 1946, when the Victor company held elaborate ceremonies to commemorate the passing of its one billionth record. An R. C. A.-Victor advertisement in *Life* for October 26, 1946, said: "The oldest master record in R. C. A.-Victor's huge library was made on January 21, 1901. It is a banjo solo, played by Vess Ossman, 'Tell Me, Pretty Maiden.'"

A few weeks later the *New Yorker* gave a gently satirical account of the celebration. The one billionth record was supposed to be a coupling of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and "Semper Fidelis" marches, played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. The record was to be presented to the U. S. Marine Corps, because John Philip Sousa, composer of the marches, led the U. S. Marines band from 1880 to 1892. But, according to the *New Yorker*, a mistake was made which caused the wrong label and master to be brought out for the "Stars and

Stripes Forever" side, so that what actually was pressed was Ossman's "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," already mentioned as the first 10-inch instrumental number recorded by Victor. The following is quoted from the *New Yorker*:

"Why, that's by Vess Ossman, the old Banjo King!" Mr. Fink (one of the pressing machine operators) exclaimed. One of the other pressers said: 'Somebody's made an awful mistake. Too late to change things now, though. Anyhow, they're going to gold-plate the record, and once it's been gold-plated it can't be played. The Marines'll never know the difference!'"

As early as 1899, Vess Ossman had made a working agreement with Arthur Collins and played the accompaniment for some of Collins' negro songs recordings. One of the best known was the Edison cylinder of "All Coons Look Alike to Me," which had this announcement by Collins: "'All Coons Look Alike to Me.' Sung by Arthur Collins, with banjo accompaniment by Mr. Vess L. Ossman. Edison record." More than a decade later, Collins' partner, Byron G. Harlan, was dangerously ill of typhoid fever, Collins made several solos for Victor, with Ossman's banjo substituting for the lack of Harlan.

Another of Ossman's early associates was Len Spencer. The amazingly ingenious and versatile Len wrote a series of comic dialect sketches in which he did the talking and singing while Ossman played the banjo. Some of these, recorded on both seven and ten-inch discs, were "Banjo Lize," "Hot Times on the Levee" and "The Nigger and the Bee." In those days, Negroes were considered fair game for ridicule, good natured or otherwise, and their sensibilities lacked the protection they are justly given today when such terms as "nigger," "coon" and even "darky" are not permitted on radio networks.

Mr. Ossman also made a number of duets with another of Spencer's associates, Parke Hunter, a versatile musician who seems to have been able not only to play the banjo but almost any other instrument. Still another of Vess's duet partners was William ("Bill") Farmer.

By the early 1900's, Vess Ossman's fame was world-wide. In 1903 he made his second concert tour of England, after having previously been over in 1900. In those days, a New York musical instruments dealer, John A. Haley, was proud that the Banjo King bought his strings from him. He issued a circular quoting extracts from several of Ossman's letters, such as: "New York City, September 12, 1899. Dear Sir: The Banjo Strings received, and they have proved satisfactory in every particular. Sincerely yours, Vess L. Ossman, Banjoist. Banjo Studio, 121 West 125th St."

On April 24, 1900, Ossman wrote to Haley: "I sail for London May 2, to play at the Big Concert. Send my order of strings at once, also two dozen of your J. A. H. Banjo

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Bass Strings. Sincerely, Vess L. Ossman."

On June 27, 1900, Ossman wrote another letter to Haley: "Have returned from London. I was a 'big hit' there. I distributed some of your strings to players on the other side, and they were all as much pleased with them as I was. Undoubtedly, your strings are the best strings I ever put on my banjo. I do not know of any strings that can compare with them, and I have used all kinds. Sincerely yours, Vess L. Ossman, Banjoist, Banjo Studio, Room 52, A. B. C. Building, 67-69 West 125th Street."

To these letters, Mr. Haley added the following note: "Mr. Vess L. Ossman is undoubtedly the greatest and most popular Banjoist in the world. He was selected as the representative Banjo Soloist of America at National Export Exposition, Philadelphia, Pa., Nov 29th, 1899. He also received the greatest reception ever accorded an American in

### RECORDS

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** in various makes and sizes. Wanted Mira, 1 1/2" and Regina 20 1/4" discs.—Insley C. Looker, So. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. o1002

**VOCAL COLLECTORS!** Send us your want list. Hard-to-get desirable items individually offered at set prices. Write Record Collectors Service, Room 1108, 8 W. 40th St., New York 18, N. Y. n6698

**RARE OLD RECORDS:** Vocal operatic, popular, Edisons, jazz, for sale reasonably priced. Send your want list.—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Pa. mh6276

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lionel G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover Mass. P. O. Box 342. n28783

**REDUCED PRICE SALE—Recordings 89c.**—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City, N. Y. je12487

**HIGH SCHOOL** teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. s120821

**PHONOGRAPH** Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. s12407

**CYLINDERS WANTED.** Pathe, Edison, Columbia. Operatic and classic only; 2 minutes, 4 minute wax and amberols. Edison, Pathe, Columbia catalogs.—Henry Herrold, 8778 111th St., Richmond Hill 18, N. Y. o3604

**AUCTION AND SALE** of opera records. Send for free list. Used opera records wanted.—Sigmund Luzinas, 3229 S. Wallace St., Chicago 16, Ill. o3253

**UNUSED EDISON** disc records, 50 different \$7.50, random selection.—A. E. Larsen, 1213 W. 63rd St., Chicago, Ill. o3252

**CYLINDER RECORDS** bought for my personal collection. 500 duplicates to exchange.—Benj. Franklin, Haynesville, Virginia. o3012

**Wanted:** Records of John McCormack on the following labels: G&T, Odeon, Columbia, Columbia-Fontopia, Okeh and Regal Zonophone or Pathe. Also have for exchange many domestic and foreign rarities and Victor catalogues from 1909.—H. McCann, 1229 Dean St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. o1825

London, May 10th to 12th, 1900."

The circular likewise contained a testimonial from Fred F. Van Epps, who was just beginning to be known as a recording artist and who was to become Ossman's foremost rival for the title of the greatest banjo player. Van Epps (or Van Eps, as he is now) lived in Plainfield, New Jersey, where today he is a prosperous manufacturer of radio equipment. He wrote: Dear Sir: Strings received, and after giving them a good test I find them to be just the kind that I have been looking for to use for my Phonograph and Concert playing. Now, as I know your special strings are strong and also have a good clear tone, I will use them exclusively. Very truly yours, Fred F. Van Epps, Banjoist. Studio, 60 Westervelt Avenue."

Still another player who said kind things about Haley's strings was Joseph Cullen, described as "the famous teacher and soloist of Washington, D. C." Cullen was a member of the duet team of Cullen and Collins, whom I have already mentioned as makers of Columbia cylinders fifty years or more ago.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** HAND ORGAN paper rolls, all sizes.—George Francis Schait, Chiropractic, 3 Springfield Ave., Cranford, N. J. o3832

**Swiss music movements, assorted tunes \$2.30.** Direct from manufacturers agent.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y. n3063

**ELEVEN THOUSAND** different vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 15, Calif. s126351

**NOW AVAILABLE** for the collector. A new history of the phonograph; prepared by a graduate assistant in the history department of Indiana University. In pamphlet form 55c postpaid. Send money order or stamps to—Allen G. Debus, 846 Wagner Rd., Glenview, Ill. o1633

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin** appraised for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 58 S. W. 27th St., Coral Gables, Florida. jly120041

**BACK SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Bal-lads, rags, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. my12998

**MELODEONS—Reed Organs.** Bought, sold, repaired.—C. Sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond Ave., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. my12219

**"CHINAMAN BELL BOX"** for sale: Antique Swiss music box, exquisitely inlaid rosewood case 27" long; set of 6 bells struck by 3 Chinese figures. Plays 10 tunes. Restored to perfect condition.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham 65, New York. d3046

**FOR SALE.** A C. Fairbanks mandolin and leather carrying case, excellent condition; price \$25.—C. E. Holbrook, R.F.D. 4, Attleboro, Mass. o1861

**WANTED:** Music Rolls for mechanical orchestra player manufactured by Western Electric Piano Company. These rolls were manufactured by the Clark Orchestra Roll Co. of De Kalb, Illinois, now out of business.—Harry Homeyer, Deckers Resort, Deckers, Colo., via Sedalia. d3235

**WANTED:** Player piano rolls; standard 88-note, classical only; and RCA-Victor Long Playing "Program Transcription" records; 33 1/3 RPM. Write—F. K. MacCallum, 1815 E. Rio Grande, El Paso, Texas. d3422

On the following page I shall tell something about Vess Ossman's visit to England in 1903 and quote the more interesting portions of a long article about him which appeared in an English magazine.

**THE LAST** of the Cremonas. Booklet listing thirty violins and their makers. Postpaid \$1.—Isador Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 165 E. Ohio, Chicago, Ill. d124431

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6215

**MUSIC BOX COMBS** repaired by expert. New teeth properly installed and tuned. Cylinders entirely reprinted.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n3863

**MUSIC BOX COMBS** repaired by expert. New teeth properly installed and tuned. Cylinders entirely reprinted.—A. Bornand, 333 5th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. o3223

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. d6368

**SWISS MUSICAL UNITS \$3.** Musical Albums, Boxes.—131 West 42nd, New York 18, N. Y. n3281

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, disc, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. f6616

**For Sale—10 electric coin-operated** piano orchestras and Virtuosos. Also 1,500 new Edison disc records at 10c each in quantities. Would like to buy extra music rolls for the above pianos and music boxes.—Lewis J. Kerstein, 32 South St., Freehold, New Jersey. o3048

**HOUGHTON MUSIC CO.,** 42 New Bridge St., Newcastle-on-Tyne 2 England. Antique instruments of Music, old violins, etc., books on the violin, invaluable for technique, general fiddle knowledge and connoisseurship, music for violin, viola, cello; chamber music for strings. Prints and portraits of musicians. Min. scores. Catalog free. s128632

I have some very rare music boxes. One is a large box with a singing bird in its nest, in view. Plays 6 airs; a museum piece. Other boxes with from 1 to 10 cylinders, with or without organ. Matching tables. Also a Violano Virtuoso, self-playing violin; 48 airs. Singing birds in cages and boxes. Whistling figures. Every item perfect.—J. Poelman, 78 W. 103rd St., New York. d30861

## "The Curious History of Music Boxes"

By Mosorjak & Heckert

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When Vess Ossman went to England in 1903, the trip was made at the request of Clifford Essex, a well known musical instrument dealer and publisher of instruction books. In October of that year, Essex brought out the first issue of a monthly magazine which he called "B. M. G. — a Journal Devoted to the Banjo, Mandoline and Guitar." The feature of the first issue was a long interview with the American Banjo King, written by the editor, Home Gordon. The style is downright irritating, with its frequent unnecessary use of capital letters and Gordon's insistence upon giving Ossman's conversation a pronounced British flavor. Some parts of the article are of no particular interest now, but I shall quote the more readable sections, omitting Mr. Gordon's eccentricities of type:

"There was no hesitation as to whom should be asked to furnish the subject of the first interview of B. M. G., for Mr. Vess Ossman, the finest banjoist of America, and the warm friend of Mr. Clifford Essex and myself, was in London. There could be no other who would furnish a conversation fraught with so many topics that will interest our readers, and no one else that we have so much delight to honor. . . . It is to be our business to provide absolutely the most interesting topics for our readers, and we can conceive none to surpass a talk with Mr. Vess Ossman. By now his name is a household word to musicians on both sides of the Atlantic, but all the value of his experience and knowledge has not previously been published.

"Mr. Vess Ossman strikes you as every inch a man. There is grit, determination, and power in his handsome, good-humored features. Clean shaven, with hair waving over a high, broad forehead, eyes brown, honest and returning your gaze frankly, twinkling humor as some funny story arouses his sense of fun, a sensitive mouth and a frank, open countenance, he is one in a thousand. He talks admirably, with a quick laugh, throwing up his head a trifle the while. Of medium height, above rather than below the average standard, quietly dressed, you know him to be an American gentleman, literally one of the best. . . . Frankly, one more loyal or considerate, one better to deal with, one more willing to give than to receive, a shrewder, better, more cheery, more honourable as friend, comrade, and fellow-musician, it is impossible to mention. If this seems a eulogy, it is thoroughly justified, and I take this, the sole possible public occasion, for putting on record how tremendously Mr. Vess Ossman is appreciated in England. I venture to quote the description I wrote in June, 1900, of his first concert appearance in this country:

"The visit of this great American banjoist is solely due to an invitation from Mr. Clifford Essex, and the guest of the night met with a cordial welcome from all parts of the house when he stepped onto the platform. The first bars he enunciated proved the hand of a master, and undoubtedly he is one of the grandest players ever heard. He started with a spirited performance of Moszkowski's "Bolero" and, despite the pace and difficulty of the piece, he performed it to perfection. Then came his own "Ragtime Medley," the most captivating composition conceivable. Bristling with fresh effects, and with octave passages and syncopation in every line, Mr. Vess Ossman was nothing less than superb. He brought down the house, in a fashion unparalleled in St. James's Hall, and the encore was absolutely irresistible. It is no exaggeration to say that the characteristic piece which was named "Whistling Rufus" added to the enthusiasm. The audience thundered out applause, and after four recalls, Mr. Vess Ossman had to yield once more and give another

quaint negro melody called "Smoky Mokes." Still his welcome was not over, and twice more he had to come forward before he was reluctantly allowed to finally retire. . . .

"The crowded audience at Kensington Town Hall last May, at Mr. Clifford Essex's enormously successful concert, enthusiastically endorsed the verdict of three years ago; indeed, the general impression was that Mr. Vess Ossman played better than ever. Perhaps the finest exposition he gave was at a cheery little evening gathering at Clifford Essex's studio. . . . To a select coterie of experts Mr. Ossman played in a manner which defied description. He told us that for days he had been making phonographic records at a big salary. But it was the general opinion that if the machine could have received his playing on that evening, it would have permanently preserved some record playing. It is, however, high time to clear the way for Mr. Vess Ossman, himself, and to let him talk. . . .

"Oh, I'll talk! Where shall I start?"  
 "Birth and education."  
 "Former, on Hudson river, 1868; latter, the best I could reach — really started learning after my education was finished."

"Like a good many more of us. Banjo?"

"Practice does it. Ten hours a day for three years. Four hours a day pretty nearly all the year round even now. Tell your readers to practice. Scales are the foundations of music, and, in addition, they are the foundation of dexterity on the banjo. So let no one, teachers or pupils, neglect them."

"Any special reasons to give for your own playing?"

"Well, when I was fairly big at the banjo I signed on for three years to the Columbia Phonographic Company (this, of course, should be Columbia Phonograph Company—U. W.) to give them one hundred records a week. You have to pick hard and keep the same volume of tone all through a piece, combined with absolute accuracy. That makes a superb foundation on which to put light and shade for concert work and fairly kills nervousness. . . . Most players prefer the keys of G and C; I do not. My favorite is F, and I always like to play in flats — they are not only softer, but higher, and he ran through the scale of six flats at a tempo presto. I also always like to employ octaves freely — of course, avoiding consecutive octaves in my harmonical progressions."

"Do you elevate your bass strings?"

"Absolutely never. After reasonable practice it is just as easy to play octaves on a bass string tuned to C as to D, though I grant that the opinion of many of the best players differs from mine on this point. . . . I have one habit which is in direct violation with conventional tenets. . . . I make notes on the fifth string. I mean to say, I will play A, B, C above the clef and higher notes on the high G string. I am also addicted to grace notes and appoggiatura, and for these, when I can, I like to use the fifth string. The snap comes especially clean from it, because it is technically so taut."

"Do you go in for double fingering?"

"I think it is imperative," and he played me a scale in three flats, in which this method was used throughout. . . . I have something to say about other peoples' ways, and my grumble is at their neglect of the metronome. It is the playing of marches, two-steps, cake walks, etc., in unsuitable time which makes them sound ridiculous. Such a splendid player as Joe Morley, for example, may be instanced. He picked up "The Favorite March" and made nothing of it, though note perfect. . . . because he did not play it with the strongly marked accent and rhythm characteristic of two-step time."

"How do you find the banjo over here?"

"I have played several dates at the Palace, Tivoli and Alhambra, three magnificent halls, and at each I have had a wonderful reception. Everybody I come across appreciates the banjo. Since I was here last I should say the banjo has made big strides in England. In fact, you are on the eve of a banjo boom, and all that is needed is something to centralize banjoists in England."

"More banjo clubs are needed. In them the merest tyro and finest performer can all take a share, and it means the raising of the standard of playing, the diffusion of music, and general increase of enthusiasm."

"How does the status of the banjo in England compare with it in America?"

"Better than ever before. In some ways the banjo is not so well off in America as over here. Farland, in his way, is a wonderful player, but he has gone near killing the banjo on the concert stage, and today you don't hear much concerted banjo music in public." (Note: This reference is to Alfred A. Farland, a veteran American banjoist, who tried to adapt the instrument to classical music. He made one Edison Diamond Disc — a transcription of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 57)



This photo taken at Jim Walsh's home in Vinton, Virginia, shows the writer of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" all set to give his "Walsh's Wax Works" program, heard from WSLs, Roanoke, each Monday at 9 P. M. (The WSLs wave length is 610). Photo by Pearsall Studio, Roanoke, Va.

# MARIE HULL

**MARBLE HALL GRAND ISLAND, N. Y.**

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At last we are moved to Marble Hall and I must confess a little lazy about getting our large collection unpacked and ready for the fall trade. We find ourselves wanting to do nothing but sit on the wide veranda and gaze at the river as it flows past our front door. It is so beautiful out here on the Island, it is almost unbelievable, but come and see for yourself . . . It is worth a trip to Buffalo just to see Marble Hall.

We hope to be unpacked by October first. We have a complete line of fine old china, porcelain, lamps, vases, brass, iron, authentic pattern glass early flint glass, genuine Waterford cut crystal, fine furniture, etc. We sell no reproductions.

When you make that trip to Niagara Falls this fall, do not fail to visit Marble Hall as it is one of the show places of the Niagara frontier.

Sorry, owing to our many duties, we will be forced to show our collection only by appointment. Please call Grand Island 16, or write Marie Hull, Marble Hall, Grand Island, N. Y. Collectors and Dealers Welcome.

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Pavonia: etched tumbler; 2 plain wines, each	3.50
Double Spear creamer \$4; Actress jam jar	12.50
Plates: Wh. and Barley, 8 1/2" \$7.50; Festoon, 8 1/2" \$5.50; Dia. Medallion 10" \$6; M. G. Three Kitten	5.00
Classic: Creamer \$18; cov. butter	18.50
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M. G. cakestand, floral	10.50
Blue B&D Canoe, Lee 169	17.50
8 Cut Glass 2 1/2" whiskeys, each	3.00
Caramel Slag T.I.P. hold	4.50
Pair Mercury tobacco, 4"	6.50
2 Early store hanging lamps, tin shades, brass founts, burnished. Pine ones, each	30.00
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6. Pr. blue Jasperware plaques, 4 1/2" dia. Ea.	5.50
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10. Jasperware plaque, 7 1/2" diameter. Head of Indian	6.50
11. Majolica plate, 9 1/2"; large green leaves and grapes	3.75
12. Bennington mug, 3 1/2" high. Exceptionally nice one	4.50
13. Wooden coffee grinder lamp, refinished, complete with nice shade	7.50
14. Milk glass cake stand, 9". Nice floral dec.	10.50
15. Swirled Milk glass bottle, nice original stopper, some gold, 10" high	5.50
16. Bavarian tea set: teapot, cov. sugar, creamer. Nice rose garlands, touches of gold	12.50
17. Seven Haviland Limoges plates, 7 1/2". Lovely rose pattern. Each	1.25
18. Theo. Haviland Limoges. Raised ribbon border; violets and green fern dec. Gold ribbon handles: 6 plates 10", oval cov. veg., round cov. veg., 3 platters, 9 1/2", 14", 19", gray. All perfect but 19" platter has chip	30.00
19. Lovely large Haviland cov. soup tureen, same pattern as above; 3 qt. capacity	12.50
20. Pitcher, 8", white Ironstone. Md. Dresden	4.50
21. 6 Chelsea plates, 8", each	1.00
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Three piece green Wedgwood tea set, tiny chip on rim of pot \$45.  
Two prs. of blue Lacy Sandwich curtain tie-backs, \$8.50 pair.

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Buttons: "Gardens at Karmak", brass, each 1.25 00

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 38)

"Carnival of Venice."—U.W.)

"What, then, are the recent American developments?"

"There are more private engagements than ever I previously recollect among the best people. . . I played a few months back before our President. Sat down and pulled out 'Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.' Now, that is Roosevelt's own pet tune. He chuckled, and the rest cheered, and we were all on good terms in five minutes. A London experience was on the same lines. I went with Essex, Morley, and young Charlie Rogers to play at the Carlton Hotel at the big 'send-off' banquet for Sir Thomas Lipton, given by Mr. George Wilson and some prominent Americans in London. We sat down and gave them 'Whistling Rufus,' when some one immediately said, 'Ah, that sounds like home.' Then our host asked for 'Mr. Dooley,' and we reeled that off. . . The footmen produced bones and tamborines, which were handed round to the company assembled, irrespective of sex. Away we went, tune on tune, and they keeping the time and adding immensely to the effect, as well. The guests loved it; so did we. It lasted until two in the morning, and they had us half a dozen times more this season."

"What is this I've heard about the banjo being introduced at dances?"

"At all our smart dances now they have the band to play waltzes, and they have three or four banjos playing with a piano to do the polkas and two-steps, which are the rage. It is thought that the banjos give the marked rhythm better, and it is quite usual at the end of a good dance for the guests to loudly applaud the banjos. . . The American market is quite as good as it ever was for published music. Half the women and a quarter of the men in all grades of society can play the banjo. It's the concert work over there that flags. Writing music, making records, and also the reading matter all flourish. . . There are no new players in America or Canada of the first rank. Certainly, no one coming on like Charlie Rogers. Is not that boy a marvel? He was a promising lad three years ago when I was over. Then he seems to have adopted me as his model, and I give you my word he is almost up to me. We've had many grand times over here. Mind you, I say I am coming again next year. . . Meanwhile, you'll have to mail me fifty copies at least of each issue (of B. M. G.) for my friends in the States."

The editor's interview concluded:

"So, with cordial friendship, let me take leave of a prince of good fellows and a master of his art." And let me say that I suspect Mr Ossman was misquoted in that statement about half the American women and a fourth of American men being able to play the banjo. There never has been a time when so large a percentage of the American people play any instrument. The first woman I know of to have made a banjo record was Shirley Spaulding, who played a few numbers for Edison in the early 1920's.

(To be continued.)

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do not feel that Mr. Debus has omitted anything really essential to an elementary work of this kind. His is a straightforward, factual outline of the history of the phonograph and the phonograph industry from Edison's original invention of 1877 up to and slightly beyond the advent of electrical recording in 1925. The sources of information are given in a 2½ page bibliography, so that any one interested in going more thoroughly into the subject will find an excellent reading list to help him on his way. (Note—This pamphlet may be obtained from the author for the sum of 50c. Address Allen G. Debus, c/o Modern Boxes Inc., 4949 North Pulaski Road, Chicago, Illinois.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## SYLVESTER LOUIS OSSMAN, "The Banjo King" III

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

The 1903 issue of *B. M. G.*, the English musical magazine from which I quoted last month, contained the music of Vess L. Ossman's famous "Dixie Medley." Oddly enough, when Ossman recorded the composition for Victor two years later, it was called "Turkey in the Straw Medley," and probably was the great banjoist's best selling record. On the other hand, when Fred Van Eps made records of the same number for many other companies, he called it "Dixie Medley," as "The Banjo King" had done in the beginning.

A few other items in *B. M. G.* are of enough interest to be touched on here. Despite Vess Ossman's fame as a banjo player, he is seldom thought of as a composer, but Clifford Essex advertised several of Vess's original numbers, including "Favorite March," "Dixie Medley," "Cupid's Arrow (Polka de Concert)," "Leisure Moments (Gavotte de Concert)," "Hot Foot Sue," "Wheelmen's March," "White Huzzars Two-Step" and "Honolulu Cakewalk." Also included were advertisements of several mandolin solos written by the famous early American recording artist, Samuel Siegel; Siegel's "Book of Special Mandolin Studies," and a book of banjo studies by Ossman's associate, Parke Hunter.

Two other notes concerned Mr. Ossman's triumphal visit. One said, "Mr. Vess Ossman has long ago landed in New York. His appearance before His Majesty the King was a grand finale to his English visit." And under the head of "B. M. G. Clubs and Orchestras," the magazine's publisher, Clifford Essex, wrote: "When Vess Ossman was over here we had two or three banjo evenings at my studio, and nothing was more appreciated than what Vess called 'the club,' which consisted of about eight or ten banjos, including Charlie Rogers, Joe Morley, Burt Earle, myself, and Ossman. The latter had a wonderful way of binding the whole together by a rhythmical marking of the bass string. Needless to say we did not play 'classics,' but I can answer for such numbers as 'Smoky Mokes,' 'Whistling Rufus,' 'Mosquito Parade,' 'Rolf's Two-Step,' 'Dixie Medley,' 'Favorite March,' etc., for any who care to try the experiment."

I have already quoted from the June, 1904, issue of the *Columbia Record*. In October, 1904, the same magazine published an article, "No Reproduction Better Than That of the Banjo," in which this comment was made: "It is generally conceded that no instrument comes out a graphophone better than the banjo. Mr. Vess L. Ossman, whose records are

known wherever the graphophone is used, is no doubt one of the finest and most accomplished players in the world. An accomplished London banjoist once said, after hearing Mr. Ossman play, that he was sorely tempted to give up trying to play the banjo, and that he thought seriously of going home and burning up his instrument. No collection of graphophone records is complete without a few specimens of Mr. Ossman's wonderful records. Try 'Rag Time Medley'—cylinder No. 3830—or 'Tell Me, Pretty Maiden'—disc No. 255—and you will be certain to order others. They are the best banjo records—all of them—that have ever been and are a surprise to those who haven't heard them." And in June, 1905, this house organ said: "Vess L. Ossman's banjo records have made him famous from one end of the world to the other. Ossman is the greatest banjo soloist who has ever played for talking machine." These quotations help to explain the great popularity the Banjo King enjoyed. The banjo was not only an enormously popular instrument, but it recorded so well that something of the player's individuality and personal traits could be detected by the casual listener.

Meanwhile, in 1904, Mr. Ossman, who was a hard worker as well as an accomplished artist, not satisfied with doing solo work and playing accompaniments for singers, had formed the Ossman Banjo Trio. (He had already made duets with Parke Hunter.) Here is the comment of the *New Phonogram* on the trio's first Edison cylinder, "I've Got a Feelin' For You": "Another novel feature of the November-December list. It is a banjo trio played by Messrs. Ossman, Hunter and Farmer. Beyond question this is one of the best banjo records ever made. Even those who do not ordinarily care for the music of this instrument cannot fail to like this record." As an owner of that ancient Edison cylinder, I can endorse this statement!

Then came that all-time Ossman best-seller which I have already mentioned, Victor 4424, "Turkey in the Straw Medley." It included Vess's arrangement of "Dixie," "Arkansaw Traveler," "Sailor's Hornpipe" and "Turkey in the Straw," and created a sensation, although in the original recording the sound of the banjo was considerably impaired by the too loud orchestral accompaniment. When Victor brought out double faced records, the medley was re-made with a piano accompaniment and listed as No. 16390. It stayed in the catalog, selling consistently, until after electric recording was introduced. Several other early Ossman records, such as the tuneless



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"Peter Piper," also were re-made with piano support.

In 1906, Vess came through with another innovation—the Ossman-Dudley Trio, consisting of himself as banjoist, and two other talented players, one a master of the mandolin and the other of the harpguitar. The guitar player may have been Roy Butin or it could have been Parke Hunter, who could play just about anything. The mandolinist must have been named Dudley, but I've never been able to find out WHAT Dudley. At one time I suspected the late S. H. Dudley, the Hayden Quartet baritone, but he assured me it wasn't he. That there was a "Mr. Dudley" is shown by the Edison cylinder list for December, 1910, in which "The Entrance of Topsy" scene from "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is listed by Len Spencer and Company. The cast of characters includes "Messrs. Ossman and Dudley" as banjo players. I asked Mrs. Mulligan, Mr. Ossman's daughter, if she knew anything about Dudley, and she replied: "I recall Pop speaking of 'Dudley,' but remember nothing about him, nor can I help you with any additional information about Parke Hunter."

The Ossman-Dudley Trio made several catchy records, the most popular of which was their Victor of "St. Louis Tickle"—certainly one of the most captivating bits of ragtime ever put on wax. Other good sellers were "Chicken Chowder," "Dixie Girl" and "Koontown Kaffee Klatsch." The Victor record catalog for September, 1908, commented on the trio's records:

"A novel feature of our instrumental list, which has been a most successful one. Trios by banjo, mandolin and harp-guitar—very loud, yet without a suspicion of harshness. Mr. Ossman, whose ability as a banjoist is well known, has associated himself with two famous players of string instruments, and the combination has

made some extremely pleasing records. The harp-guitar gives a support to the other instruments which is decidedly effective." The same catalog mentions Roy Butin as "the best American player on the harp-guitar," which makes me believe Ossman would naturally have sought him for the trio. Also in the 1908 catalog is a photo of Ossman, with the cut lines: "Mr. Ossman is one of the finest banjoists in America, and has been justly called the 'Banjo King.' His performance on this popular instrument is little short of marvelous in its precision and the ease with which he masters the most difficult passages."

A statement to the same effect was made in the catalog issued in 1912 by the short-lived United States Record Company, which made an excellent indestructible cylinder for a couple of years:

"Vess L. Ossman (is) familiarly known as 'The Czar of the Banjo.' He played three seasons at the Daly Theater, New York. Mr. Ossman conducts a lyceum, where he engages talent for the leading clubs and festivals. He has also become very prominent as a teacher of the banjo."

It's amusing to note that the United States company "promoted" Mr. Ossman from being the "King" to the rank of "Banjo Czar." And it should not be overlooked that when Frank C. Stanley's fellow recording artists gave a memorial concert as a tribute to their departed comrade early in 1911, Ossman was the only instrumentalist who was called on for a solo.

(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Another Memorable "John Bieling Day"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH



Grace Spencer winds an Edison cylinder phonograph displayed by Bryant Burke, of Hempstead, at the "John Bieling Day" recording artists' party. Eugene Rosa and Billy Murray are looking on.

The Vess Ossman series will be resumed next month. It has been interrupted so that I may give this account of the third annual John H. Bieling Day party, at which record collectors joined in honoring the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists who were our guests for the occasion. As had been planned, the party was given on Friday, September 10, in the Garden City Hotel at Garden City, Long Island, New York. In spite of the handicap of a rainy day, which undoubtedly kept some collectors and artists at home, everyone present seemed to feel that this first get-together on a large scale was a great success.

No doubt you recall that John Bieling, the first tenor of the famous Edison, Hayden and American male quartets, gave a party at his home in Hempstead, Long Island, on September 10, 1946, for a few of his fellow pioneer recording artists and collector friends. There was an even larger party in 1947. When it became apparent that the yearly meeting was becoming too large to go on being held in the Bieling home, some of the collectors agreed to have this year's party in the Garden City Hotel and to call it "John Bieling Day" in honor of their friend who originated the custom. Mr. Bieling died last March 30, but his friends felt that he would want the party to be held, and an arrangements committee was set

up. It consisted of Bryant Burke, of Hempstead; Harry Selinger, of Oceanside; the Rev. Edward Vesper, of Queen's Village; and the writer of this article. The Long Island group handled the almost countless on-the-spot arrangements that had to be made in connection with the party, while I wrote letters of invitation to artists and sent publicity to newspapers and magazines. The New Yorkers received invaluable aid from Mr. Bieling's wife, Mrs. Meta Bieling; his son, George, and other members of the Bieling family. Anyone not directly connected with the party can have little conception of the amount of hard work that was required to make it the success it turned out to be.

Of course, there were some disappointments. The rainy weather prevented many snapshots from being taken, other than those which Al Debus, a young Glenview, Illinois, collector, made by using flash bulbs. John Young ("Harry Anthony"), the tenor of the old-time "Anthony and Harrison" duet combination, had promised to come, but the death of a nephew kept him away. His former partner, Frederick Wheeler, ("James F. Harrison") also couldn't be present. Others who had been expected but found at the last moment that they couldn't make it were Charles

Harrison, Fred Van Eps, Harry Reser, Harry C. Browne and George Wilton Ballard. We hope that they can be at next year's party, which probably also will be held at Garden City, and that a good many other artists — including Wilfred Glenn, John H. Meyer, Frank Croxton, Emilio De Gogorza, Elise Stevenson, Lambert Murphy and Charles Hart — who "missed out" this time will join us in September, 1949. I was disappointed, too, that my old friend Joe Franklin, who gave the party valuable publicity on his "Antique Record Shop" program from WMCA, New York, couldn't be there.

But there was certainly reason for gratification at the number of artists who were on hand, and the considerable trouble and effort some of them went to, in order to join us. Here is the list — and I sincerely hope that I haven't overlooked anyone:

**ELSIE BAKER**, for many years the most popular Victor contralto.

**FRANK E. BANTA**, distinguished radio pianist, formerly with the Eight Famous Victor Artists, whose father, Frank P. Banta, was one of the first accompanists and orchestra conductors for the pioneer phonograph companies. The senior Banta died in 1904.

**JOE BELMONT**, whose recording career as a whistler goes back to 1894.

**AL BERNARD**, one of the greatest of blackface comedians and writer of many big song hits.

**FREDERIC C. FREEMANTEL**, famous concert tenor and teacher, and Mrs. FreemanTEL.

**FRED HAGER**, first man to make a commercial violin record; one of the earliest conductors of recording artists, and composer of many songs and descriptive specialties.

**ARTHUR HALL**, one of the most popular "free lance" recording artists of the 1920's and Mrs. Hall.

**EDITH HELENA**, former star of the Aborn Opera Company. This coloratura soprano with the marvelous voice range made Berliner records in 1898.

**HARVEY HINDERMEYER**, one of Edison's most popular tenors.

**IRVING KAUFMAN**, among the most prolific recording artists, who is still popular as a radio and night club entertainer.

**OLIVE KLINE**, formerly Elsie Baker's duet partner and for many years among the most popular Victor sopranos. She was accompanied by her husband, J. W. Houlihan.

**LUCY ISABELLE MARSH**, another of the top-ranking Victor sopranos with her husband, Dr. W. C. Gordon.

**BOB MILLER**, native Tennessean and music publisher, who wrote and recorded many of the biggest folk tune hits, such as "Eleven Cent Cotton."

**BILLY MURRAY**, for almost a

generation the most popular and biggest selling recording artist.

WILL OAKLAND, the great vaudeville and minstrel counter-tenor, who still has a wonderfully clear, sweet voice.

DICK ROBERTSON, one of the best present-day singers of popular songs and a writer of many hits.

CARSON ROBISON, former partner of the late Vernon Dalhart in recording folk tunes, and one of the outstanding writers and singers of topical and Western type songs. He was accompanied by Mrs. Robison.

EUGENE C. ROSE, the flute virtuoso, was present, with Mrs. Rose. "Gene" made experimental records for Edison in 1889.

WALTER SCANLAN (better known to many collectors of old records as Walter Van Brunt), now a production manager at ABC, but from 1908 to the early 1930's one of the most popular of recording tenors.

GRACE SPENCER, (Mrs. Willard Foster Doolittle), who made cylinder records for Edison in 1897 and is believed to have been the first woman to sing for Victor. She was accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. Lewis M. Wilson.

AILEEN STANLEY, famous star of the Keith vaudeville circuit, who began making records in 1920 and became Billy Murray's duet partner in 1922. Her husband and business manager, Robert N. Battenuth, and her protegee, a beautiful teen-age blonde, Aileen Stanley, Jr., came with her.

REINALD WERRENATH, distinguished concert baritone and teacher, who formerly sang with the Metropolitan Opera. Mr. and Mrs. Werrenrath made a long and fatiguing drive from their summer home at Ellenburg Depot, N. Y., and arrived at the party after having had almost no time to rest. I hope that the appreciation of the collectors was sufficient to reward them and Mr. and Mrs. Houlihan, who had a similar long drive from their summer quarters on Lake George.

In addition to the artists, Mrs. Byron G. Harlan, widow of the famous comedian, honored us with her presence, and Harry Hunting, accompanied by Mrs. Hunting, was on hand. Harry's father, the late Russell Hunting, was one of the first recording artists, and his early cylinders of "Casey" monologues were among the biggest sellers of their day. Russell Hunting was also one of the foremost recording experts and frequently had his son's assistant in his work. Harry showed me what is probably the oldest record catalog in existence — one which had belonged to his father — as well as much other material which I wish I could have spent hours in studying. But I was kept so busy, giving information to newspaper people and handling publicity, that I didn't have a chance to talk with anyone as much as I would have liked. Fred Hager, too, showed me a collection of catalogs that made my mouth water.

Also among those present were the recording manager of MGM records, Frank Walker, and Mrs. Walker, who came with Mr. and Mrs. Carson Robison and three veterans of the Thomas A. Edison organization — Bill Hays, Fred Rabenstein and Andy Weber. Mrs. Bieling, of course, was with us, as were John Bieling's several sons and daughters, a number of grandchildren, and other members of the Bieling family.

On the morning of that historic September 10, Bryant Burke, Harry Selinger and I reached the hotel shortly after 9 o'clock. For the first few minutes nothing much happened, but then the collectors and artists began arriving in such numbers that we were kept busy trying to meet them all. Bryant and I had planned to have breakfast in the hotel, but once the excitement was under way there wasn't a chance of that.

I believe the first collector to report was Charlie Hodgdon, who, with his wife, Mary, came from Newburyport, Mass. Several others appeared soon afterward. I think Mrs. Doolittle was the first artist I met. Madame Helena came a few minutes later. She was accompanied by her friend, Mrs. Grace Tully, who learned of the party through Danton Walker's column in the New York Daily News and wrote to me for information. Mrs. Tully gave me some home recordings of Madame Helena's voice, and they reveal her to be still an accomplished singer, as well as a woman of charming personality. But that praise about having a charming personality could be extended to all the artists. It would be hard to find their equal among any other group of celebrities for cordiality and genuine, unaffected friendship. For instance, Frank Banta, Al Bernard and Harvey Hindermeyer were all thoughtful enough to bring me photographs of themselves.

One amusing incident occurred when Elsie Baker pretended not to recognize Reinald Werrenrath, and jokingly inquired: "You're not the man who was coming all the way from California to meet me, are you?" Whereupon, Dale Miller, who had driven from Long Beach, California, for the party, and had all sorts of trouble on the way, overheard remark and spoke up. "No," he said, "I'm the man from California." And Dr. Werrenrath exclaimed, "A perfect cue!"

Eventually, the Rev. Mr. Vesper took the stage as master of ceremonies and gave a brief explanation of the origin of John Bieling Day.

He then said that records made by the guest artists would next be played, in approximately chronological order, based on the years in which the performers first recorded. That gave Eugene Rose the honor of leading off, with an excellently recorded flute solo. Joe Belmont was next with a whistling specialty, and, after it had been played, Joe came forward and gave an interesting talk on his early recording experiences. Fred Hager, Billy Murray, Grace Spencer,

Edith Helena, Reinald Werrenrath and Harvey Hindermeyer were also heard from in recorded form, before the announcement was made that luncheon was ready. Since the party was running behind schedule, the record playing wasn't resumed after the meal. My own opinion is that it would be better to drop the recorded part of the program in future years. There isn't time enough, as we learned, to include something by each artist, and I believe that it would be better to get together and talk about our common interests than to spend part of the time listening to records.

During luncheon, Ed Vesper told me that he was tired and asked if I would take over as master of ceremonies after we had eaten. I agreed, but before I could go into action, I was told that James Thrasher, a reporter for the NEA Feature Service, wanted to see me. I had to go talk with Mr. Thrasher, who wrote a feature story that was sent to 750 newspapers, and Ed then pulled a stroke of genius. He asked Irving Kaufman to do the M. C.'ing job, and Irving, with his accustomed ability, obliged. And that brilliant humorist was a hundred times more effective than I could possibly have been. He seated himself at the piano and gave us a performance typical of those he does in the New York night club at which he and his wife, Belle, star. I'm sure that no one who was there can forget Irving's side-splitting rendition of "Mo, the Schmo" or his impersonation of Frank Sinatra.

Irving also called on his fellow artists, and out of pure friendship they gave us a performance that in itself was worth far more than the \$5.50 registration fee which the collectors had paid, to meet the expense of engaging the hotel's Georgian room and serving the meal. I'm sure all of us deeply appreciated the opportunity of being present at such a remarkable good will offering. Frank Banta, one of the most congenial, likable fellows I've ever met (and I'd been wanting to meet him for many years) not only gave us some piano solos but was untiring in accompanying the singers. I can't list all the details of the program, because I was constantly being called out of the room and probably saw less of it than almost anyone else, but Al Bernard gave a couple of blackface numbers, including his Edison Diamond Disc classic, "My Dawg." Arthur Hall, who is as unaffected friendly and agreeable as anybody I know, chose a number that couldn't have been any more appropriate — Ernest R. Ball's beautiful ballad, "Here's Love and Success to You." Carson Robison sent the crowd into hysterics with his rendition of his own composition, which is a best selling MGM record, "Life Gets Teejus, Don't It?" He gave me an autographed copy of the disc. Aileen Stanley sang "Gotta Get a Girl" with the freshness and youthful vocal quality of a girl of 20, and

Aileen, Jr., who has been trained to sing in authentic Aileen Stanley manner, captivated us with her rendition of several classic Aileen successes, including "Let It Rain — I'll Be in Virginia in the Morning." Irving asked Billy Murray to join Aileen in one of their old-time duets, but "The Boss," who was having trouble with low blood pressure and wasn't feeling up to par, explained that, under doctor's orders, he was "in drydock," and couldn't sing. But he did walk up to the platform for a reunion with Aileen. Many of those present considered it to be the high spot of the party when Aileen threw her arms around Billy and kissed him. I had to miss it. I had just been called out of the room to talk with somebody! But Al Debus took a flash exposure of the preliminary stage of the embrace, and has sent me a print of it. Bob-Buttenuth played fine piano accompaniments for both Aileens.

It was unfortunate that some of the artists had to leave early. Doctor Freemantel, whose snow-white hair and white mustache won him many nominations for being the most distinguished looking man at the party, explained that he and Mrs. Freemantel were obliged to return to their school of vocal instruction in New York. I wish he could have stayed long enough to sing for us. Walter Scanlan also had to hurry back to his ABC job immediately after lunch. We were also disappointed that Will Oakland and Dick Robertson couldn't stay for the entire program, because we had hoped to hear them sing.

One of the outstanding events of the afternoon was a long and amusing talk by Reinald Werrenrath on various musical subjects. He reminisced about his friendship with John Bieling and his associations with the Hayden Quartet. He also paid his not too respectful respects to what he called the "lousy" present-day popular songs and the even worse "artists" who make moaning, gargling noises when they allegedly sing them.

And one of the most gratifying features of the day was the hit made by my friend Willie DuPree, who works with me at radio station WSLs, in Roanoke, Virginia, when he isn't attending Howard University. Willie is an 18-year-old Negro boy whose beautiful tenor voice has won him wide popularity in Southwest Virginia. I believed that if he went to New York and sang for the artists attending the party, he might receive some encouragement and good advice. And he did. Willie sang the familiar ballad, "Homing," and acquitted himself well, though he told me afterwards that he was almost overcome by the honor of being accompanied by Frank Banta. "Mr. Banta played so brilliantly," he remarked, "that I felt that I ought to stand there and listen to him, instead of trying to sing." He was also naturally a bit self-conscious about being heard after so many famous artists entertained. Reinald Werren-

rath, who had been about to leave, stayed especially to hear the young fellow sing. The former Metropolitan Opera star told Willie that he has a naturally sweet voice and a true feeling for singing and, with proper training, should go far as a concert artist. Several other artists also gave him similar encouragement and advice, as did the editor of the American Record Guide, Peter Hugh Reed. Incidentally, Willie had a great time when the Rev. Mr. Vesper and the "Woodymay Wizards," John L. Norton, senior and junior, took him with them to West Orange, New Jersey, for a visit to the Edison laboratory. Being thoroughly tired out, I decided to skip my scheduled visit to Edison.

The party had broken up late in the afternoon and I was just about to leave the Garden City Hotel when I was told that I was wanted on the phone. To my surprise, the person calling me was Taylor Grant, the well-known newscaster for the American Broadcasting Company. Taylor had learned of the party from Walter Scanlan, and wanted to know if I would talk about it on a network television program the following Saturday night. I agreed, and Dale Miller, George Bieling and I drove to Radio City the next afternoon, taking with us an Edison Standard cylinder phonograph which its owner, Bryant Burke, had displayed at the party. I played Billy Murray's 1906 record of "You're a Grand Old Rag" and was interviewed by Mr. Grant about the party. So my face was seen by television from Boston to Richmond.

I only hope that it didn't look as exhausted as the rest of me felt. I was already tired before I left Virginia, and by the time I returned home that I set a new record for myself by sleeping 25½ hours at a stretch. But it was a great vacation trip and a great party — and I'm sure that we'll have an even bigger and better meeting in September, 1949!

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(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## SYLVESTER LOUIS OSSMAN, "The Banjo King." IV.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Vess Ossman dominated the list of American recording banjoists for a good many years, but his name began to appear in the phonograph companies' monthly supplements less frequently after 1910. From that time on, his great rival, Fred Van Eps, forged steadily to the front. Fred made a few Edison cylinders around the turn of the century, but his Victor debut didn't occur until 1910, and he began to play for Columbia at about the same time. Perhaps Mr. Ossman began to devote more of his time to his lyceum and teaching. Possibly he resumed his foreign travels. Mrs. Vess Ossman, Jr., has sent me a photograph of "Ossman's Singing and Playing Orchestra," with a note saying that the picture was made around 1912. This may be another good explanation of Vess's largely dropping out of recording activities for a number of years. The organization consisted of the senior Ossman; his son, Vess, junior, who had also become an expert banjoist; and unidentified violinist, 'cellist and drummer, and a pianist. Mr. Ossman's daughter, Mrs. Mulligan, has identified the latter as "a Jewish fellow named Max Lichenstein. He was a wonderful musician and a very kind and likable young man."

At any rate, and whatever the reasons may have been, Mr. Ossman made only a few records from 1911 to 1916. Van Eps, who used a steel-backed instrument to throw the banjo tone strongly into the recording horn, was much the more active of the two in the phonograph field. Today, if you want to get a lively argument started at any gathering of collectors of old-time popular records, all you have to do is say that Ossman was a better banjoist than Van Eps, or vice versa. The Van Eps partisans insist that their man's playing, reinforced by his steel-backed instrument and his use of a pick, was more "brilliant" than Ossman's. Vess's supporters come back that his performance sound more like "a real banjo" and that no other player has ever exceeded his technical skill.

When such a controversy arises, I maintain a benevolent neutrality, and content myself with saying that I think both Vess and Fred were about as fine in their way as it's possible for anybody to be. But as a small boy I was a fanatical Ossman adherent and wouldn't even admit that Van Eps was good. Banjo music (which I love to this day) seemed the highest expression of rhythm, and Vess L. Ossman was my ideal of the greatest musician alive. When I founded, or imagined I did, the Walsh Talking Machine Company and pretended that I was the world's greatest manufacturer of records, the catalog which I wrote by long hand

in a five-cent pencil tablet contained no banjo playing other than that of my hero, Vess.

In 1913 Victor listed one or two Ossman records, including the appropriately titled "A Little Bit of Everything Medley," but his name was absent from the 1914 and 1915 monthly supplements of all the leading companies. However, in 1916, Vess was back in the field where he had been supreme, making records for Victor, Columbia and Edison. The supposition that he had been out of the country for a part of the time is favored by Victor's comment on his record of "Good Scout—One-Step" and "Universal Fox-Trot," which came out in March, 1916: "Two new renditions by this skilled banjoist, who has played all over the world. Two lively new compositions have been selected for Mr. Ossman's reappearance with the Victor, and both can be used for dancing if desired."

At about the same time, Ossman entered the recorded dance music field by bringing forward his Banjo Orchestra. A photograph published in an Edison booklet shows that this was not the same group as Ossman's Singing and Playing Orchestra. There are only five players instead of six and the second obviously is not Vess, junior, but is a stout, apparently middle-aged man. Max Lichenstein is still the pianist and the drummer remains, but the violinist and 'cellist have given way to a saxophone player. Van Eps also had a banjo orchestra, which made records for a couple of years before Ossman's came into the picture, and Burt Earle recorded with a similar group for Pathé. There was also the Sisty and Seitz Banjo Orchestra, which made a couple of Edison records.

Just when Mr. Ossman's association with the Record Maker Troupe (later the Eight Famous Victor Artists) began I don't know, but he was appearing with the aggregation in April, 1917, as a clipping sent to me by his daughter-in-law shows. The troupe, managed by Henry Burr, then had this remarkable collection of talent: Billy Murray, tenor comedian; Burr, Albert Campbell and Byron G. Harlan, tenors; Arthur Collins, baritone comedian; John H. Meyers, bass; Ossman, banjo; and Theodore Morse, composer of innumerable popular songs, piano accompanist. A man who heard the eight give a concert says he was impressed by Ossman's youthful appearance, despite the fact that he was almost 49 years old and had been making records for more than twenty years. The Southern audience of which my informant was a part, loved banjo music, and when Vess struck up the favorite "Turkey in the Straw Medley," the masculine



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portion of the crowd rose to its feet and gave "rebel yells." The Banjo King took about a dozen bows and had to play several encores. His part of the program was the biggest hit of the evening.

Ossman played the banjo accompaniment in the 1917 Edison record of "The Laughing Song," by Edward Meeker and the Empire Vaudeville Company, but he seems to have made no records after that year. He probably left the troupe late in 1917, when Collins and Harlan also ceased to be members. Van Eps took his place and remained with the group for several years, before being succeeded by probably the greatest of all saxophone players, the late Rudy Wiedoeft.

This seems to be a good place to insert a quotation from one of Mrs. Vess Ossman, junior's letters:

"Mr. Ossman lived in New York City for many years and had bands at many of the leading hotels. In later years, when I first met him, he had come to Indianapolis, Indiana, and Dayton, Ohio, for Mr. Bennett Gates (owner of hotels in those cities), for a season's engagement and remained five years at the Severin Hotel, Indianapolis, and the Miami, Dayton. He had just returned to vaudeville for a short time when he passed on."

As early as 1917, Victor had begun to re-make many of its older re-

cords—because defects had developed in the masters or to get the benefit of better accompaniments. This was particularly true of those by the Hayden Quartet, which had disbanded when John Biehling, its first tenor, quit singing in 1914. As time went on, most of the records that remained in the catalog by such favorites as the quartet and its second tenor, Harry Macdonough, were done over by other singers — although Macdonough for several years was head of the company's artist and repertoire department. He probably just didn't want to sing any more. Perhaps the most surprising re-make was one of the twelve-inch record No. 35095, "Medley of Foster Songs," by the Peerless Quartet. In 1923 when the Peerless was still the most popular male quartet and was under exclusive Victor contract, this number was done over by the Criterion Quartet — most likely the Peerless was away on one of the Eight's three-month concert trips.

Ossman's records soon began to fare like those of the pioneer vocalists. The 1920 Victor catalog contained several of his favorites, such as "Turkey in the Straw Medley" and "A Bunch of Rags" (he had originally made the latter in 1902), played by Van Eps. Undoubtedly this was because Ossman was at that time settled in the Middle West and was not conveniently available for re-makes if anything went wrong with the original. Probably, too, the fact that the Record Makers had changed their name to the Eight Famous Victor Artists with Van Eps as one of their stars made Victor want to give Fred as long a list as possible. However, Columbia also had most of its Ossman records done over by Van Eps. In 1924, the Victor catalog contained only one Ossman record, "The Buffalo Rag." It was dropped in 1925, the year that electric recording began and after the Banjo King had died. The decline of the banjo's popularity had already begun, although Van Eps made a few electrically recorded numbers, and tenor banjo solos by a newcomer, the agile-fingered Harry Reser, sold well for years. Just a few months ago Reser made his first banjo record in 14 years — his Apollo disc of "Banjo Boogie." Another popular tenor banjo soloist was Eddie Peabody — who sometimes called himself "the Banjo King"!

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## SYLVESTER LOUIS OSSMAN, "The Banjo King"

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Mr. Vess L. Ossman, junior's letter, already quoted, shows that Mr. Ossman returned to the stage in 1923, after five years of leading dance bands for hotels in Indianapolis and Dayton. He and Vess, junior, then went into vaudeville as a Banjo duet team, where they were highly successful for several months. But then came tragedy, when the elder Ossman suffered a severe heart attack while the pair was playing an engagement for a Minneapolis, Minnesota, theatre.

Under the heading of "Musician's Contribution to Charity Nearly Cost His Life; Son 'Carries On,' Hiding Heartache Under Smiles," a Minneapolis paper in November, 1923, printed the following:

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"The two Ossmans, father and son, appearing at a local theatre during the week, had volunteered their services for the evening — their contribution to charity. Skilled players on the banjo, their music was added to that of the orchestra. Some way, the music these two musicians played that night was a trifle different than that which throughout the week drew the applause of the theater-going public. Strains of pure musical beauty, as well as the "jazz" chords suitable for dancing, issued from their instruments.

"Suddenly the figure of the elder Ossman was seen to grow limp. Faintness seized him, and he was unable to continue. In a moment he had become seriously ill. He was taken to a local hospital where his condition was announced as critical. The next night, theatre-goers heard but one artist play where two had performed before. With his father dangerously ill, Vess Ossman, jr., alone 'put over the act.' None in the audience guessed the near heartbreak behind the smiles with which he received their applause. Skilled fingers produced music; his thoughts were with his father.

"Thanksgiving day held a peculiar significance for the two Ossmans, for that day Mr. Ossman, Sr., was released from the hospital, weak but out of danger. He will be able to resume work next week. And Thanksgiving night, patrons of a local theatre were enthralled by the playing of the younger Ossman."

But it turned out that the newspaper's reference to the elder Ossman being out of danger, was sadly ironic. He had another heart attack and died a few days after his return to the stage. Here is the death notice published in a Hudson, New York, paper, shortly after The Banjo King's death on December 8, 1923:

"Banjoist Vess Ossman is dead. Succumbs to heart attack while on tour — was native of Hudson. — Word has been received here of the death of Vess Osman, Sr., 55, former leader of the Ossman's orchestra at the Miami Hotel, Dayton, Ohio, who died Thursday night at 11 o'clock at Fairmount, Minnesota. His death followed an attack of heart disease.

"Mr. Ossman died shortly after taking part in the performance in a B. F. Keith's vaudeville house in Fairmount, where he was billed with his son, Vess Ossman, Jr., in a musical act.

"Mr. Ossman and his son left Dayton about six months ago to fill a

contract with the B. F. Keith western vaudeville circuit for the season. For the last four years he had been engaged by the Miami hotel, conducting a dance orchestra in the grill room.

"Mr. Ossman was born in Hudson, N. Y., and lived here until he was 12 years old. His musical career started in his early days when he traveled the country with musical shows, playing the banjo. He has followed the musical profession all of his life, playing in several different countries in the last twenty-five years. Several years before going to Dayton he played before King George of England and royalty of other countries.

"During the early stages of the talking machines, Mr. Ossman was noted for making the first banjo record in New York for the Victor Co. While making the vaudeville tour with his son, his wife, Mrs. Eunice Ossman, and daughter, Annadele, made their home in Dayton, in the Riverside apartments.

"Vess Ossman developed his talents as a musician and banjoist in early youth, taking his first lesson from Fidell Wise, of this city. He soon became recognized as a leader in the playing of this instrument, and he was generous in playing at many entertainments and gatherings about Hudson in his youth. His talent soon called him to New York City, where he made his home until moving to Dayton. Several times he came back to Hudson for concert engagements, playing one season at the Hudson fair, and at the Y. M. C. A., in a concert with Mrs. J. Bartlett Hydorn, of Albany. His last appearance was when he was brought to Hudson by Rogers Hose Co., along with several prominent names on phonograph records. He is survived by his wife,

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four children, and a sister, Mrs. John T. Arkinson, of Mamoroneck, N. Y. A few month ago, Augustus, an elder brother of Vess, died, Gus being for many years the chief train dispatcher in the New York Central terminal."

As has already been related, Mr. Ossman was buried in Valhalla Cemetery, St. Louis, Missouri, the city in which his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Vess Ossman, Junior, still lives. The program of the Missouri theater of St. Louis announced on December 8, 1923 (the day the banjoist died) that he and his son would play there Christmas week. Through an error, they were listed as "V. L. Ossman and Brother," instead of Son.

Vess Ossman's last appearance in a record list came in 1926, when he had been dead almost three years. Edison, which had made a wax Amberol cylinder of a "Banjo Medley" (No. 250) by him in 1909, re-issued it 17 years later as Blue Amberol No. 5377. I'm still looking for a copy of the Blue Amberol version.

His son, Vess, junior, like his father, was not destined to a long life. After the elder Ossman's death, the young man continued to be well known for several years as a banjoist, but he eventually went to St. Louis, where he died on January 22, 1942. He, too, was a victim of a heart attack. On February 7, 1942, The Billboard published the following notice of his death:

"Vess Ossman, 49, until eight months ago, operator of the Missouri Theatrical Agency, St. Louis, (died) in the St. John's Hospital, that city, January 22, of heart disease. He was previously a musician in musical comedy and vaudeville. Services, January 24, at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, St. Louis. Survived by his widow, Helen, and two daughters."

Actually, the younger Ossman was survived by a son, Vess III, in addition to his daughters. And it will be noticed that The Billboard entirely omitted any mention of his father, who, a generation before, had been one of the best known and most popular musicians in the world.

However, record collectors are not so oblivious of a great artist's brilliant achievements as was "The Bible of the Show Business." There must be hundreds of admirers of the one-time Banjo King who never miss an opportunity to acquire a good copy of one of his records. And I hope that — thanks again to Mrs. Vess Ossman, junior, and the banjoist's daughter, Mrs. Mulligan — these sketches have succeeded in demonstrating that Sylvester Louis Ossman, senior, was one of the most important and colorful of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists.

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## THE ARISTOCRACY OF THE CIRCUS

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)

was featured in the aerial ballet; Ortans and five of her brothers took part in a top-flight teeterboard acrobatic act, and Lucio was featured with his brothers, and wife, June, in the family bareback riding act, the greatest in circus history, many critics agree.

Half dozen years ago, Uncle Pietro's branch of the family appeared in Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus, with a revival of the leaps over elephants and other objects, led by Adolfe, outstanding tumbler. That year, there were 22 performing Cristianis in the personnel of the show.

Now this branch of the Cristiani family, joined by members of "Papa" Ernesto's brood, are the star performers of King Brothers Circus. The Cristianis brothers perform their leaps over elephants and other objects, Cosetta and Chita Cristiani, appear in bareback riding acts, and the members of the families join for a featured teeterboard acrobatic act.

The Cristianis make their home in Sarasota, Florida, where they own seven houses. But only "Papa" Ernesto's name appears in the telephone directory, for he remains the nominal head of the family.

Few are the popular nationally circulated magazines which have not featured articles on the colorful Cristiani family, and hundreds of photographs of these remarkable artists performing their sensational feats have appeared in the public prints.

Lucio is the only bareback rider to accomplish some of his outstanding feats, such as turning a somersault from one horse to another, and immediately going into a second somersault to a third horse. The Cristianis perfected an unparalleled feat, when five of the brothers race across the ring, and leaping into the air at the same time, mount a cantering horse.

Ortans Cristiano mounts a four-high somersault from a teeterboard with such exquisite artistry, critics rave about her accomplishment, and Daviso's wife, known as La Louisa, is one of the most talented high trapeze performers, ever seen in an American arena, the closest rival to the late Lillian Leitzel, the circus world has known.

There is every reason to believe that the circus tradition will be carried on in America for many years by the Cristianis. Of Ernesto's and Pietro's 17 children, all but one, a lawyer in Italy, are circus performers in America, and naturalized citizens. Furthermore the in-laws are circus performers, too, and at present there are 12 grand-children, all of whom are being groomed to be acrobats, aerialists and bareback riders.

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United States. These include a recording of *Vesti la giubba* by Pertile from Italian HMV (DB1118) released on Victor as 9794, coupled with *Un di all' azzurro spazio* from *Andrea Chenier*; *Di quella pira* from *Il Trovatore* by Pertile, Nessi & Lattuada and *Ah si ben mio* from the same opera by Pertile were issued in Chile on Victor 9795, from HMV DB 1198. The *Rigoletto* finale and *Dunque io son* from *Il Barbiere* by Dal Monte and Montesanto are available on Victor 13901. The two sides were coupled differently as DB 2124 and DB 2125. Incidentally, DB 2124 was released by Victor in Brazil as 11-8516, while DB 2125 was released in the Argentine as 15921. It is too bad that these records were never made available in the United States. I was disappointed to find that the fabulous electrical recording of the finale to *Carmen* by Maria Gay and Giovanni Zenatello (this was recorded at Camden) on Victor 7314 has been withdrawn. Incidentally, this record was listed in the local catalogs and on some labels as by Maria GRAY instead of Maria Gay! One copy which I found was thus mis-labeled.

The one day I had left to visit Valparaiso turned out to be a holiday with all shops closed, so I did not have the opportunity to test the potentialities of this coastal city. My one day in Lima, Peru, was only partially fruitful. Peru does not have its own record plants, and depends on imports from the United States for all classical records. In the old days, special Latin American catalogs in Spanish were available from the U. S. Export division of Victor and Columbia, but today those countries which do not have their own factories order from the domestic U. S. catalogs.

Thus you will see that my trip home was fairly exciting from the record collecting standpoint, but there is still one catch. The amount of red-tape involved in exporting from the Latin American countries is something terrific. The records which I purchased in Buenos Aires over one year ago are still awaiting a myriad of papers before they can leave the country, and those shipped from Chile have still to be heard from, so I will not accept congratulations on my South American "finds" until they are safely in California!

N. B.: Mr. Moran's account of his visit with red seal artist Cristina Soro will appear in an early issue of HOBBIES.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## FRANK C. STANLEY. I.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

More than once, in publishing these biographical sketches of pioneer recording artists, I have made clear my regret that much of my information ordinarily must be collected at second, third or fourth hand. No matter how good my intentions, it remains hard to keep inaccurate statements from slipping in. However, now that I am undertaking the life story of one of the greatest of the "popular" recording artists — a man whose name belongs on anybody's list of the 15 or 20 most accomplished performers who ever sang into a recording horn — I am happy that I shall not have to depend upon indirect and possibly erroneous sources. In gathering material about the late Frank C. Stanley, I have had the gracious assistance of his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth A. Grinstead, of Wickford, Rhode Island, and his daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth G. Repelow and Mrs. Elaine Powell, who still lives in "the Oranges," the New Jersey community in which their father was born and in which he made his home for his nearly 42 years of life.

Some eighteen months ago I began work on a series about Frank Stanley, which I submitted for checking to Mrs. Repelow and she passed on to her mother. The articles were based on published material, but they proved to contain so many unintentionally wrong statements that I decided to begin all over, and asked Mrs. Grinstead and her daughters to provide additional aid. This they have so generously done — especially Mrs. Grinstead, for her daughters were only small children when their father died in 1910 — that I expect this to be the most accurate and complete series that has yet come from my typewriter. It will also be more extended than any that will follow, for no other pioneer of Frank Stanley's stature remains to be considered. Of the old-time recording artists whom readers of HOBBIES elected a few years ago to the ranks of "the Supreme Fifteen," only Stanley and Cal Stewart, the beloved "Uncle Josh," remain for consideration. There is plenty of interest to be told concerning Calvin Edward Stewart, but his story will hardly occupy as much space as that I plan to allot to Frank Stanley. In passing, I may say that I shall quote from some of the published articles in which Mr. Grinstead's wife and daughters found mistakes, but when I do I shall carefully point out the wrong statements.

Perhaps, in order to give a bird's-eye view of the life and achievements of the artist whose real name was William Stanley Grinstead, but who was known throughout his singing career as Frank C. Stanley, (I'll explain later how that name was chosen for recording purposes), I can't



Frank C. Stanley, (age 38), as he appeared in March 1907, at the peak of his career.

do better than quote the death notice which appeared in the Newark Evening News for December 13, 1910. Under the heading of W. S. GRINSTED, NOTED SINGER," with the sub-heads, "Orange Alderman Dead of Pneumonia After Illness of Only Six Days" and "Sang in Waldorf Last Week," the Newark paper said.

"Alderman William Stanley Grinstead, of Orange, who was one of the best known bass singers in this section of the country, died at his home, 199 High Street, last night, after an illness of less than a week. Last Tuesday night (December 6) he was the leading soloist at a concert given in the Waldorf Astoria, and when he returned home he complained of a severe cold. His condition became so serious that it was necessary to call Dr. J. Hammond Bradshaw early the next morning. Later in the day the physician found that Mr. Grinstead was suffering with pleurisy and pneumonia.

"During the latter part of the week Mr. Grinstead's condition gradually grew worse, and on Saturday night his relatives began to lose hope for his recovery. On Sunday afternoon, however, he seemed to revive somewhat, and was able to secure some sleep on that night. Yesterday afternoon peritonitis developed, and the end came five minutes before midnight.

"Alderman Grinstead was the son of the late Augustus T. Grinstead, who for many years was president of the Orange Board of Education. Like his father, he was deeply interested in the Orange school system and other public affairs. He was elected a school commissioner in 1906, and served one term. Last year he was elected a member of the Common Council on the Democratic ticket, securing the largest majority ever given any candidate in the Fifth Ward of Orange. Although a loyal Democrat, Mr. Grinstead was absolutely fearless in advancing his opinions or in taking a stand on any public question.

Mr. Grinstead was perhaps best known as a professional singer. Possessing a deep bass voice of remarkable range and power, which was carefully trained during his boyhood, he devoted his whole life to music. For several years he was the bass soloist in the Central Presby-



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terian Church, New York, and under the name of Frank C. Stanley he was known all over the world as a singer for phonograph records. Wherever phonographs are used the records having the bass and tenor duets by Mr. Grinsted and Byron G. Harlan are in popular demand. During the delirium of his illness he frequently sang.

"At various times during his professional career as a bass soloist, Mr. Grinsted sang in Brick Presbyterian and Calvary Methodist churches, East Orange, as well in a number of New York and Brooklyn churches.

"A special meeting of the Orange City Democratic Committee will be held tomorrow night to take action on Mr. Grinsted's death.

"Mr. Grinsted was born in Orange, and if he had lived until December 29, would have been forty-two years old. Shortly after his graduation from the Orange High School in 1886 he secured a position as clerk in the Second National Bank of Orange. His position was advanced until he became paying teller, and he resigned this position in 1902 to devote all his time to music. He married Miss Elizabeth A. Griffing, of Orange, who survives him with two sons and two daughters. His children are: W. Stanley Grinsted, Jr., Elizabeth Grinsted, Allen Grinsted and Elaine Grinsted. One brother, C. Burr Grinsted, also survives him.

"In 1904 Mr. Grinsted became a member of Corinthian Lodge, No. 57, F. & A. M., and has since been an active Free Mason. He was a Knight Templar, having been a member of a New York Commandery. He was also a member of Orange Lodge, No. 135, B. P. O. Elks.

"Mayor Arthur B. Seymour has issued a call for a special meeting of the Common Council for tonight to take action on Mr. Grinsted's death. The Mayor also had the flag at Military Common placed at half-mast, and has issued instructions to have the public buildings draped in mourning for thirty days. All the city offices in Orange will be closed during the funeral services.

"The services will be held in the First Presbyterian Church, Orange, on Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and will be conducted by the pastor, Rev. Dr. Charles Townsend. The interment will be in Rosedale Cemetery. On account of the death of Alderman Grinsted the testimonial banquet which was to have been given Alderman William A. Calhoun and Joseph A. Birkholz, the re-

tiring members in the Common Council, on Saturday night, has been indefinitely postponed."

The Newark paper commented editorially that same day: "In the death of Stanley Grinsted, Orange loses a valuable citizen, and many individuals lose a true friend. He had a wide circle of acquaintances in the Oranges, where he was born and had always lived, and his popularity was of the genuine kind. As a public official, in the Common Council, he was aggressive and active, and earnest in the public interest. His death is sincerely regretted, and the expressions of sympathy for his family are general and genuine."

These two articles show unmistakably the admiration and warmth of feeling which the people of Orange felt for their distinguished singer-citizen — and today, in spite of the fact that more than 37 years have passed since his death, thousands of collectors have the same warm sentiments for the basso whom many of them consider to have had the greatest vocal gifts of any pioneer recording artist. I have yet to meet anyone who does not like Frank Stanley's reproduced voice. On the strength of natural equipment and interpretative gifts, including an almost amazing versatility, he deserved to rank with the great singers of his time. As more than one connoisseur of operatic music has remarked to me: "Frank Stanley ought to have been up there with the Red Seal crowd." And that leads me to remark that one of my treasured possessions is a rare old poster, about forty years old, showing photos of 19 Victor Red Seal artists, which once belonged to Frank Stanley. His daughter, Mrs. Repelow, presented it to me when I spent an afternoon at her home in September, 1947.

(To be continued).

**Notes on Music Boxes and Their History**

By **GEORGE A. BIDDEN**

Music boxes were first invented around 1750. The first mechanisms were tiny creations and set in items like watches, ornate boxes, bottles, seals, etc. They played one tune and later two tunes. These first music boxes had individual teeth tuned to a single scale and were set in an arc. A disc with steel pins revolved, the pins contracted the teeth and thus music was produced. The first of the small type music boxes with the cylinder appeared around 1790. These had cylinders from two and one half to three inches in length and the combs were made in sections. First the combs were made up of individual teeth, each held in place on its brass base by an individual screw. Later the combs were in sections of from four to five teeth to the section and usually fourteen sections to the comb. The mechanical detail of these miniature pieces is most exacting and each part was individually made, pinned and screwed into place.

Around 1820 the combs were made of one piece of steel mounted on a brass base. These machines usually

played two tunes. The tunes were changed by moving a lever on the front of the box. The cases to these miniatures were made of a variety of materials. Some had lithographed tin cases, others were of bone, tortoise shell, ivory and a type of hard rubber. Many had curved transparent covers entirely enclosing the works. Some had lithographed views of village scenes, battle scenes, etc. Others were embossed with floral designs, masonic insignia, some were made of carved ivory and bone and a few were dated. Many had the maker's name stamped into the bed plate, while others had a mark stamped on the comb or bed plate and this mark tells who made the piece, if one is familiar enough with the various marks, etc. I have more than thirty of these early miniatures in my collection.

The later type miniatures playing up to six and eight tunes changed tunes automatically. This was made possible with the invention of the star wheel. During this period the trend of casing the mechanisms changed and they were installed in

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

FRANK C. STANLEY II

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

When I set about writing this series, I asked the reference department of the New York Public Library what material its files contained about Frank C. Stanley, and received the following paragraph, which may be used to supplement the already quoted death notice from the New-Ark Evening News:

"Frank C. Stanley, whose real name was W. Stanley Grinstead, was born in 1868 and died on December 13, 1910. (This date should be December 12.—U. W.) He had a baritone voice and sang in public for many years. He was among the first to sing into the Edison phonograph and in his later years made that his main work. At the time he began singing in public, Stanley was a teller in the Second National Bank of Orange, New Jersey, but he gave that up to devote himself wholly to music. He did much recording for the Victor company in widely different ways, standard and sacred songs, popular songs, Yankee comedy and with the Peerless Quartet, of which he was the organizer and basso. He was married and had four children."

Mrs. Grinstead points out that singing for "the Edison phonograph" was not her husband's main work, since he was a free-lance throughout his recording career and sang for virtually all American talking machine companies. As a matter of fact, he sang much more for Victor and Columbia than for Edison, and once quit the latter company altogether for a considerable period after a financial disagreement.

The Victor company was the first to announce the death of one of its most popular and gifted staff members. In the February, 1911, record supplement, under the heading of "A New Ballad By the Peerless," the late Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley), the catalog editor, revealed the news of Stanley's death, while incidentally

commenting on single-faced record No. 5817 "Sweetness," composed by Creamer and Lemonier:

"As this record is being prepared for the February Bulletin, the sad news has come to the editor of the death of Stanley Grinstead, or as he was known to the Victor public, Frank Stanley. Mr. Stanley was one of the best known and most popular of record makers, his fine voice and genial disposition making him a favorite with all; and his death is a sad blow to his family and his associates. Mr. Stanley was the organizer and basso of the Peerless Quartet, and this record represents almost the last work of the organization before his fatal illness."

Edison's announcement didn't appear until the April issue of the New Phonograph, but it constitutes an excellent brief biographical sketch:

"W. Stanley Grinstead, known professionally as 'Frank C. Stanley,' died at Orange, N. J., on December 12th, 1910, of pleuro-pneumonia, the result of a cold contracted at a recital in the Waldorf Astoria, New York City. Mr. Grinstead was forty-one years of age, and is survived by a wife and four children. At the time of his death he held the position of Choirmaster of the Central Presby-

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terian Church, 57th Street, New York City. Mr. Grinstead was one of the first singers for the Edison catalog, to which he contributed freely from his abundant repertoire. In the April list are two numbers in which he sang — one of them the occasion of his last appearance in our Recording Laboratory. One of the most popular of the Edison artists, the many records of his magnificent voice in solo, duet and quartet will be treasured in thousands of homes throughout the world for many years to come." (This prediction has assuredly been fulfilled!)

The "last appearance" record to which the Phonogram referred was No. 643, "Somewhere," a Charles K. Harris composition sung by Irving Gillette (Henry Burr), with the Peerless Quartet, consisting of Stanley, Burr, Albert Campbell and Arthur Collins, joining in the refrain. The supplement annotation remarked that "A pathetic feature of the record is the fact that in it the late Frank C. Stanley sang the bass part, this being the last work he did at our recording laboratory."

Before the Edison supplement appeared, Stanley Grinstead had been the subject of a remarkable tribute paid by his fellow recording artists, when virtually every famous "name" of the time joined in presenting an all-star concert, honoring his memory. The concert will be described in detail near the end of the series. Meanwhile, I think it is time to start at the beginning of his life story and, with Mrs. Grinstead's help, to trace the stages of his progress until he died after having crowded more into 41 years than most men do in twice that time. After considering the remarkable extent and variety of his professional achievements, it appears amazing that he could ever have found time for eating and sleeping, much less for serving as an alderman and public school commissioner of Orange, New Jersey. He was one of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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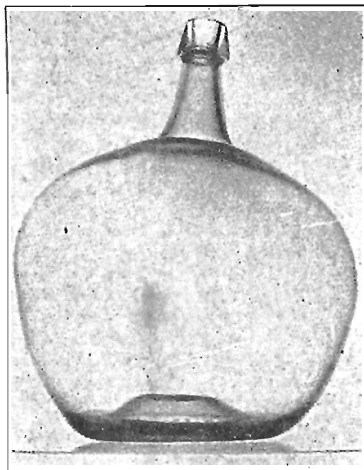
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## PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30)

a group of pioneer recording artists, including Len Spencer, Russell Hunting and Henry Burr, who had a seemingly unlimited capacity for hard work and a gift for being active in many widely differing fields of activity.

The following information is taken from a letter written to me by Mrs. Grinstead:

William Stanley Grinstead was born in Orange on December 29, 1868. He was graduated from Orange High School in 1886, by which time he had already won considerable local popularity as a banjo player. Young Grinstead in those days would carry his banjo to school in a paper bag. At recess the boys would cluster around and watch him play, and sometimes all would sing. When he was 19 he entered a banjo contest in Newark and won the amateur championship of New Jersey, and a \$75 banjo given as first prize.

When the Grinstead family had company he was always asked to play. On occasion, a guest would ask him to sing as well as play but his father, with a strange lack of appreciation of one of the finest voices destined to be immortalized by phonograph records, usually would say, "He can't sing!" — a pronouncement that later was over-ruled by the verdict of millions of buyers of discs and cylinders.

While he was still a youth, a man who was a skilled organist met him in a trolley car, and said, "Grinstead, why don't you have your voice trained?" He answered, "Why, I haven't a good voice." The man replied, "I think you have," and suggested that Stanley go to a couple of teachers whom he named and ask them what they thought. He did. Both advised him to take vocal lessons.

The young man also went to the music teacher of the Orange public schools, and the teacher said: "Stanley, many a time I have wished I could train your voice, but your father was the president of the board of education, and I was afraid he as well as other people would say I was trying to get on the right side of the old man, because I was hired by the board." However, Grinstead later received singing lessons from Frederick G. Handel, his only vocal teacher.

When the Second National Bank of Orange opened, Mr. Grinstead went to work for it. That was in 1890 or 1891. In 1894 he married. Between then and 1901 he made some records in his spare time for the Edison company. Some of these were vocal solos. But in the beginning he made — and this will be a complete surprise to most of his present-day admirers — only banjo records. And he made them under the name of — George S. Williams! Yes, the mysterious Mr. Williams, who played accompaniments for Arthur Collins and other singers, but whose identity no one had ever been able to ferret, was none other than the later-world-famous basso, Frank C. Stanley!

(To be continued.)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

FRANK C. STANLEY III.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Stanley Grinsted, working out of banking hours, made Edison banjo records—as "George S. Williams"—for several years, but after he began to record vocal solos (mostly hymns and military numbers, in the beginning) he gave up the banjo. In 1901, after his records had already become well known, he left the bank to devote his whole time to music. He was soloist in several Brooklyn and New York churches, among them Holy Trinity in Brooklyn, which was the second largest Episcopal church in Greater New York. He also sang in Madison Avenue Baptist and Central Presbyterian churches in New York City, besides doing considerable work in recital.

Mrs. Grinsted recalls an amusing anecdote of that period. She writes: "One day a well known East Orange business man called Mr. Grinsted up and said, 'My wife is giving an afternoon tea and wants to know what you would charge to sing two solos.' He answered, 'Twenty-five dollars for me and five dollars for my accompanist.' The man said, 'Why, my wife didn't count on paying over \$5! Why, she could get a singer from New York for that!' Mr. Grinsted said: 'If I sang at a tea in New York I would get \$50.'"

Here is Mrs. Grinsted's explanation of how William Stanley Grinsted came to call himself Frank C. Stanley when singing for phonographs:

"Some phonograph singers then were as bad as some radio singers today, and the churches did not like having it known that their highly paid soloists were singing for phonographs.

"So, most of the trained singers took other names. Mr. Grinsted's church suggested that he do so. Frank Banta was a piano accompanist at Edison's. Mr. Grinsted and he

were talking about it, and Frank said: 'Combine our two names—Frank Stanley' and someone else said, 'Put C. in for a middle name.' So it was decided. Frank Banta has been dead many years (he died in 1904), but his son is the Frank Banta who plays on the radio." While Frank Banta is being mentioned, I shall "meander" long enough to report that old-timers like Bill Hayes at the Edison laboratory still get a laugh out of the fact that when Edison engaged an accompanist, it inversely happened that his last name almost automatically began with a B. Included were Banta; Albert Benzler; Fred Bachman; C. H. H. Booth and John F. Burckhardt!

At any rate, that's how the name of Frank C. Stanley was originated. And by 1899 it was well known. The Edison record list for November 20th of that year included cylinder No. 7322, "If You Love As I Love," and No. 7284, "That Lovely Land," both sung by "F. C. Stanley." The complete Edison cylinder record catalog of that year also shows that Stanley had been given a numerical series of his own. Records with numbers from 5000 to 5199 had been made, or were to be made, by him. For the first two or three years, the Edison company didn't number its records in consecutive order, but listed them in categories, as follows:

No. 1 to 500, bands; 501 to 1000, orchestras; 1001 to 1500, comedians, such as Edward M. Favor and S. H. Dudley; 1501 to 2000, tenors (Harry Macdonough, Jere Mahoney, Albert Campbell, etc.); 2001, Edison Male Quartet; 2401, cornet solos by A. L. Sweet; 2601, banjo records by Vess L. Ossman and Ruby Brooks; 2701, banjo duets by Farmer and Curry; 2801, piccolo solos by Frank S. Mazziotto; 3001, xylophone solos; 3201, church chimes; 3401, brass quartets; 3601, clarinet solos, by William Tuson; 3801, comic talking specialties—"Casey," "Schultz" and "Uncle Josh"; 3901, children's records and recitations; 4001, "coon" sketches by Billy Golden, Arthur Collins and George W. Johnson and yodeling by George P. Watson; 4201, songs in foreign languages; 4601, soprano solos by Marguerite Newton; 4701, minstrels by Arthur Collins, S. H. Dudley and the Ancient City Four; 4801, the Lyric Trio (Estella Mann, John Havens and William F. Hooley); 4901, miscellaneous bass solos; 5001, Frank C. Stanley; 5201, Collins; 5301, drum and fife; 5401, Collins again; 5501, Irish songs by Edward Clarence, whoever he may have been!; 5601, trombone solos by Nick Scholl; 5701, Albert Campbell; 5801, Jere Mahoney; 6101, comic songs by E. M. Favor; 6301, solos in Russian; 6401, contralto solos by Anna Barthold; 6501, tenor solos by Harry Macdonough; 6701, violin solos by Fred Hager; 6901, comic songs by Dan W. Quinn; 7001, baritone solos by J. J. Fisher; and 7101, comic songs by Will F. Denny.

By the time the November 20th list came out, this complex system of numbering was dropped and records were being listed in consecutive order, beginning with 7113. About half the original numbers were never used. The consecutive numbering system continued until the 10,000 series had been reached before manufacture of

two-minute wax cylinders was discontinued by the Edison company in 1912.

And now, suppose we jump forward a few years to 1907, when Frank C. Stanley was established at the height of his popularity and quote a biographical sketch published in the Talking Machine News, of London. Several errors contained in the article will be pointed out at the end of the quotation:

"FRANK C. STANLEY, AMERICAN BARITONE . . . Christmas, 1868, at Orange, New Jersey, marked most auspiciously the birth of a gifted baritone singer now widely known to fame as Frank C. Stanley, whose home for ten years was located in the Orange depot of the Lackawanna Railroad, of which his father was a prominent official. Here the lad was brought into daily inter-

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course with the quaint original village characters, many of whom are amusingly featured in his clever series of thirteen "rube" dialogues and duets, which he successfully recorded with the well-known tenor, Byron G. Harlan. It is interesting to know that these characters and names actually existed in Morris county, New Jersey, and the record series just mentioned therefore embodies true-to-life reflections of human nature exactly as found in the rural neighborhoods where the scenes are laid. Frank's youthful accomplishments were unmistakably displayed in the Orange high school, from which he graduated with high honors, his valedictory essay dwelling upon "The Power of Music."

"He first found employment in the Orange post office, then in a coal and lumber yard, subsequently becoming teller of the Orange bank, where he frequently handled vouchers representing the large amounts earned by talent engaged in the art of record making. Not long after, in '98, Frank Stanley's baritone was perhaps the most highly prized of all artists then engaged in the ranks of those singing to the talking machine. Through this means Mr. Stanley's work speedily became world famous, especially by his ringing versions of the favorite national airs of England and America, in which he particularly excels, giving these grand songs a natural patriotic interpretation that is rarely equaled, as may also be said of his splendid sacred numbers, fervid in their intensity as they are eloquent in their appeal to true religious sentiment. It is a noteworthy coincidence that Frank C. Stanley is a recognized pseudonym for the leading sacred soloist in one of New York's foremost Fifth Avenue churches.

"Frank C" Stanley is famous throughout the north and Middle West of America by reason of his frequent successful tours in those vicinities, equally as much for his gramophone records which, considered from every standpoint—tone, volume, execution and delivery—are well-nigh perfect. Mr. Stanley's solos are rich, ringing and resonant. His vocal duets with Miss Corinne Morgan, as with Miss Alice Stevenson (both contraltos) are always clear, distinct and irresistible. Their success is largely due to Mr. Stanley's own arrangement of them specially for the talking machine, bringing into relief the contrast between the contralto and the baritone in a manner which is unrivalled. The same charm pervades his magnificent duets with Mr. Henry Burr, the well-known tenor. Mr. Stanley organized and still conducts the Invincible Male Vocal Quartet, the Lotus Glee Club, the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (which is Mr. Stanley's own organization) and the Metropolitan Trio, the personnel of which are directly under his own supervision."

Concerning this article, Mrs. Grinsted says: "The story that Mr. Grinsted got his jokes, etc., from hanging around the Orange railroad station is not true. We always went on a farm in the summer. He picked up some there and in his travels, and Byron Harlan told of some from out West, where he came from." She also says: "He did not organize the Lotus Glee Club. They were not a phonograph organization. Frank A. Smith was manager, and Minnie Marshall Smith, reader. They traveled all over the country." Miss Stevenson's first name was Elise (pronounced A-lease), not Alice, and she was a soprano instead of a contralto. She still lives in East Orange.

Mrs. Grinsted also points out that the basso was born on December 29th, not Christmas Day. She says he was not the valedictorian of his class, and that he never lived in the Orange railroad station after she first knew him, when he was sixteen. However, she adds, he lived there as a small boy. It was the East Orange—not Orange—post office in which he worked for a time.

(To be continued)

## DEATHS OF RECORDING ARTISTS

Deaths of several recording artists, or persons otherwise intimately associated with the early days of the phonograph industry, have occurred in recent weeks.

Michele Rinaldi, former cornet soloist for Victor, died January 29 in the Atlantic City (N. J.) Hospital. Rinaldi came to this country in 1908 from Italy and became first trumpet in the Victor orchestra. He also toured the country with Ellery's and Vessella's Concert Bands and some of his records were made with accompaniments by the Vessella group. During recent years he was a member of the Ocean City (N. J.) Orchestra. Rinaldi was buried in Atlantic City on February 1. Probably his most popular Victor records were Brahms' "Cradle Song" and Nevin's "The Rosary."

Fred Brown, 55, who was a member of the famous Brown Brothers Saxophone Sextet of a generation ago, died February 9 in Chicago. His brother, Williams, died about three years ago. Three of the Brown Brothers—Tom, Alex and Vern—are still living. The sextet's name was misleading, since its members actually were the five Brown Brothers and a sixth player Harry Finkelstein.

Joseph Cawthorn, 81, veteran stage and screen comedian, died January 21 at his home in Beverly Hills, California. Despite his considerable fame, Cawthorn made only a few records—

"You Can't Play Every Instrument in the Band," for Victor in 1913, and a double-faced Victor, "It's a Small World" and "I Can Dance With Everybody But My Wife" in 1916. He also took part in a special Actors' Equity record issued by Vocalion in 1922.

John C. ("Happy Jack") Turner, 50, well-known as a singer of hill-billy records, died in Denver on January 19. He was a member of the entertainment staff of radio station KOA.

George C. Botsford, 74, noted popular song writer, died in New York on February 1. Among his best known compositions were "The Grizzly Bear," for which Irving Berlin wrote the words; "Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay"; "Black and White Rag"; "Pride of the Prairie"; "Honeymoon Bells," and "Back to Dixie Land." Botsford is of particular interest to record collectors because of the fact that he made most of the arrangements used by male quartets of the early days. He recently recalled in a magazine article that he did arrangements for the American, Peerless and Shannon Quartets, as well as for the Heidelberg Quintet.

F. Wallis Armstrong, 78, died Feb. 19, 1949.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 33)

### MISCELLANEOUS

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin appraised** for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 58 S. W. 27th St., Coral Gables, Florida. jly120041

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**STEPHEN FASSETT**318 W. 102nd St., New York 25, N. Y. UFX**Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists****FRANK C. STANLEY. IV.**By **JIM WALSH**

The variety and extent of Frank Stanley's achievements as a recording artist from the time he gave up his job in an Orange, N. J., bank in 1901, until his death less than ten years later, appear almost incredible. In checking back through old phonograph record catalogs and trade publications, I have found myself constantly wondering, as I remarked in an earlier article of this series, how he could possibly have found time to sing regularly in church and concert, take part in thousands of records and still be one of the important public officials of his home town. Remember, he was never an exclusive recording artist, unless he worked only for Edison in his beginning days. He sang for all the companies that wanted his services — and they all did. The late Campbell told me that, after the Peerless Quartet was organized, its efforts were so much in demand that the group frequently had to "work three shifts a day" to get in all its recording "dates." It was strenuous work, but as the twinkly-eyed Al whimsically remarked, "We just couldn't turn down all that money."

By 1902, Stanley had struck up his duet partnership with Byron Harlan, the tenor, who also lived in Orange. In their earlier association they specialized in singing ballads, but they occasionally essayed a hymn, of which their Columbia record of "The Palms" is a good example, although their names don't appear on the label. Later, they were particularly successful in "rube" sketches and duet

versions of old patriotic numbers, such as "Dixie" and "The Battle Cry of Freedom." But, after a few years, Harlan and Stanley sang together only infrequently. Instead, the basso usually worked with Henry Burr when he was singing for Columbia and with Harry Macdonough for Victor. However, in the last year or so of his life he and Harlan again made a good many duets — mostly for Edison. Mrs. Grinstead says that the type of song largely determined which tenor sang with her husband. By 1902, Stanley also had acquired his famous feminine duet partner, Corinne Morgan, the contralto, of whom more will be said later. It was probably in the same year that he sang the bass part of the Edison cylinder of the Floradora Sextet and, as Joe Belmont recalls, joined Belmont and Harlan in making a Columbia record of the same famous sextet, with the assistance of the three original Floradora girls. According to the December, 1904, issue of The Columbia Record, the demand for this Sextet offering was so great, at one time, that it was seriously suggested that work on everything else should be suspended and the full record making plant of the factory concentrated . . . until the accumulation of orders for it could be filled. After a most remarkable run this record is still in great demand — disc No. 647, cylinder No. 31604."

But here is a particularly amusing tribute to the popularity that Frank Stanley had won in the earlier part of his career. The basso's voice, so strong, resonant and musical, was perfectly adapted for singing into a recording horn, but although he did all sorts of phonograph work in his time, I imagine he was either taken aback or laughed heartily if he read

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an article by W. J. Killea in the Edison company's Phonogram for May, 1902. The earnest author discussed the possibility of using "The Phonograph for Calling Out Railroad Stations" and listed Stanley as a singer whose voice would be admirably adapted for train calling. The temptation to quote part of the article is irresistible:

"The New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company have been experimenting with the phonograph, with the view to the establishment of an innovation which will undoubtedly prove of inestimable value to the traveling public. . . . On December 9 a monster phonograph was placed in position in the main waiting room (at Albany), and for three hours announced the departure of trains. . . . The machine fulfilled all requirements. One fact was especially demonstrated: While the door-tender's articulation, with constant repetition of a set of words, tends to grow into a confused and careless jargon, the phonograph was always the same; each repetition was the same; and the voice was that of a well trained elocutionist — a pleasure to listen to. It seems wonderful that no one has thought of this use for the phonograph before now. Just think of the voices of some fine elocutionists, as Frank Stanley and William F. Hooley, being employed as a medium for the announcement of train departures. Strong and resonant, far above the voice of the average railroad door-tender, the difference is apparent at once. Of course," Mr. Killea hastily added, "it is not always possible for a railroad company to get men with such voices and training; men with such gifts do not descend to such menial positions. But with the aid of the phonograph the railroads are enabled to employ a well-trained elocutionist and at a cost which, when the talent is considered, is insignificant."

Although Frank Stanley was born into a "railroad family," there is no reason to believe he ever would have consented to becoming a train caller by proxy or otherwise. (However, it's interesting to recall that Len Spencer's brother, Harry, who made a few elocution records, when last heard from was a train caller at Lancaster, Pennsylvania.) Nevertheless, two odd assignments which Stanley undertook during his recording career may as well be mentioned now. In November, 1906, Sir Thomas Lipton, the English tea magnate, whose racing ships were forever losing matches with American vessels, paid a visit to the Columbia factory at Bridgeport. For Sir Thomas' special benefit, Stanley (with some sort of assistance by George Schweinfest, the piccolo virtuoso, who could also play the piano) recorded a parody on Kipling's "Tommy Atkins" poem. It was called "Tommy, Tommy Lipton."

Shortly after Columbia began to specialize in double-faced records in 1908 (it had previously listed a few in 1904), the company issued a "sample" disc, selling for 25 cents and especially designed to acquaint the public with the beauties of Columbia recording. One side contained "Kentucky Babe," sung by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet. On the reverse face was a racy sales talk by Stanley, in which he read a statement saying that Columbia records were "double-faced, double-value, double-quality" and, although costing only 65 cents, would "unfailingly outwear any other record on the market."

He admonished his hearers: "Don't spend your record money for any other!" In spite of this, his widow says she believes that Victor was his favorite company of the scores for which he sang.

Getting back to consideration of the basso's early recording work, the duets in which he took part were remarkable for the fact that he almost always sang the lead. With practically all other duet teams, the rule was that the tenor voice took the solo lines and that it was supported by the baritone or bass. But that was not the case with Frank Stanley's duets. No matter what partner he had, he sang the lead and the partner harmonized. After the Peerless Quartet was organized, with the brilliant young star, Henry Burr, for its second tenor, Stanley not only managed the quartet, which he had founded, but was the soloist in nine-tenths of its records. When the Peer-

less made a long series of minstrel specialties, his deep tones served admirably for those of the interlocutor. Anyone listening carefully to Stanley's recorded work is bound to believe that his was a masterful, as well as magnetic, character. As the late Frank Dorian, for so many years a Columbia official, phrased it to me: "You are quite right in surmising that Frank Stanley was a brilliant man of striking personality. He was highly esteemed by all who knew him."

But just what did Frank Stanley look like in the heyday of his career? And what of the surviving members of his family? Those, no doubt, are questions which many readers find themselves asking. And they are fair queries. So, before I trace the details of his later recording carefully, I shall answer them in the next installment.

(To be continued)

## The Television of Yesteryear

When television was first introduced some said that the sets were too expensive to ever make them popular. But all of that has been refuted, and we see installations, in both low and high prices. So it was with the fine, old music boxes of yesteryear. Some of the famous Mermod boxes are said to have cost in the thousands, and strangely enough they remind us of the modern television set.

One of the foremost collectors of old music boxes is Armand Duval of Switzerland and America whose collection was recently placed on display in the Museum of Science, New York City.

This collection, which traces the history of the Swiss Music Box, the first automatic musical instrument of wide use, include outstanding specimens of the 1870-1899 period, during which the Swiss Music Box attained its peak of perfection. These music boxes are really fascinating.

One, "My Darling Merry-Go-Round," is a brilliantly lighted Carousel going round and round with its colorful horses, etc., while a Monkey cranks the Hurdy-Gurdy, and two lovely Swiss girls actually dance.

Another, "My Swiss Chalet," in which four Chinese Gong Men play bells, drums and castanets, while four colorful dancing girls actually perform their dances.

Still another, "Figaro's Ballet," represents an old barber shop where Figaro's favorite customer lapses off into a snooze and sees in his dream the six lovely ballet girls actually dancing.

Many others of equal interest are included in this fabulous collection, among which are: "Les Belles de Montreux," "Fiesta in St. Moritz," "Clo-Clo and his Sisters," as well as the Praxinoscope, probably one of the rarest in Armand Duval's collection, which was exhibited and won the Silver Medal, at the Paris Exposition of

1879, and is one of the first devices invented to reproduce animated cartoons.

The A. V. Bornands, Pelham, New York, friends of Mr. Duval asked about the origin of the collection and were rewarded by the following, which we are privileged to quote:

"You have asked me about my collection and its origin. Although it is difficult for a collector to tell very much about his own discoveries, his own researches and his own successes, not to mention his own failures, here is the best I can do.

"My 'hobby' started when I was still a little boy. One day my mother gave me a rather small music box with two dancing dolls. I had been very sick and was recuperating in a little village in the mountains of Switzerland. I was confined to my bed and each day I would listen to the exquisite music box melodies and watch the graceful dancing of the dolls and admire their lovely costumes.

"The tinkling of the beautiful music kept lingering in my ears, so that in later years I found myself looking for the same things that so intrigued me in my youth, and that is how I started my collection.

"Travelling back and forth in Europe, I made many purchases, and by the process of elimination and exchanges I finally succeeded after many years in getting together seventeen beautiful specimens of dancing dolls each one more enchanting and more intriguing than the other.

"In your own beautiful collection, Mrs. Bornand, you have several that have very interesting stories behind them—one, I understand, was owned by the Czar of Russia. The Russian Royal Family and entourage appreciated music boxes and they had acquired a number of them at the end of the eighteenth century.

"I, myself, have one which they previously owned. It is an extremely beautiful Empire cabinet with moving



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

FRANK C. STANLEY V.

By JIM WALSH

Not only was Frank Stanley a man of magnetic personality, he must also have been one of handsome appearance. His widow says that he had brown hair and hazel eyes (but she adds, "I used to tell him they were green, in fun"), and that he was six feet and one inch tall and weighed about 185 pounds in his later years — an appropriately athletic build for a singer who worked so hard and intensively.

Mr. and Mrs. William Stanley Grinsted were married, as you already know, in 1894, to be exact, on June 11, in the First Presbyterian church of Orange. Mrs. Grinsted was Miss Elizabeth A. Griffing. She was born in Newark, but moved to Orange when she was nine years of age. At the time of her marriage she was a school teacher. After her husband's unexpected and lamentable death she returned to teaching and continued to be a member of the Orange public school system until she reached the retirement age of 70 in 1941. Elizabeth Griffing married a remarkable man, but I hope she will forgive me for saying that I believe "Frank Stanley" also chose for his wife a woman of fine mind and outstanding qualities of moral and physical stamina. She has written not a word in self-praise, but from her children's comments it's easy to appreciate that hers has been a life of courageous service, of which it would be hard to speak in too high terms. Today, in her late seventies, she is still the same firm and self-reliant

mistress of herself that she has been all her life.

The basso and his wife had four children. Three are still alive. The oldest, William Stanley Grinsted, Jr., died in 1938. Next is Mrs. Elizabeth Griffing Repelow (Mrs. B. A. Repelow), of West Orange. Then come Dr. Alan Douglas Grinsted, now professor of psychology in North Carolina State College, and Mrs. Elaine Marguerite (H. F.) Powell, of West Orange. Their only grandson is named Frank Stanley, from his grandfather's "phonograph name" and is the child of the dead son. Mrs. Repelow has one daughter, Anita Elizabeth, and Dr. Grinsted recently adopted a three-year old boy. He also has an adopted daughter now seven years of age. Mrs. Powell has no children. Mr. Grinsted's one brother died a few years ago.

Readers who are familiar with old phonograph catalogs will recall that the one photo of Frank Stanley which was used over and over showed him wearing a mustache. In all the early Peerless Quartet pictures, for instance, this likeness is used. But Mrs. Grinsted says he was smooth shaven in his later years and that she imagines he discarded the mustache around 1900. "I know," she comments, "it was before he left the bank in 1901."

In connection with the singer's membership in Corinthian Lodge No. 57, F. & A. M., at Orange, it is interesting to know that his father and

grandfather had also belonged to the same lodge.

Stanley Grinsted, Jr., began his business career in the Farmers' Loan bank in New York City. Later, he went to the New York Federal Reserve bank and was there for 21 years. When he died on July 20, 1938, he was head of the government bond division.

Before going to North Carolina State college, Dr. Alan D. Grinsted was professor of psychology at Rhode Island State College. He served for five years during the war in the U. S. Naval Reserve, and was commander at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, when he was discharged. As long as he was in Rhode Island, his mother lived with him, but since he has moved to North Carolina, she has preferred to stay on in Wickford, although she admits the children worry about the distance — some 200 miles — separating her from her daughters.

Concerning the surviving children, Mrs. Repelow says: "My sister was only three when Father died and has no recollections of life with him, but I was older and have happy memories of a wonderful man."

Now, let's go back to the early 1900's and resume our survey of Stanley Grinsted's recording career under the name of Frank C. Stanley. I have already mentioned his partnership with Byron G. Harlan in the recording of "rube" numbers, such as "Waiting for the Dinner Horn to Blow" (one of the funniest talking records I have ever heard), "Closing Time in a Country Grocery," "Two Rubes in an Eating House," "The Rube and the Country Doctor" and "Scene in a Country Blacksmith Shop." In a few of their 1904 Edison wax cylinders they had the assistance of a "soubrette," one Miss Daisy Boulais, of whom Mrs. Grinsted says she can't remember having ever heard. But in 1904 the soubrette and comedians joined their talents in what the New Phonogram for July, 1904, described as "one of the most ambitious records ever made." It was No. 8736, "Two Rubes at the Vaudeville," and the Edison publication gave this impressive annotation:

"A descriptive selection introducing a scene at a vaudeville theater. In making it Messrs. Harlan and Stanley had the assistance of Daisy Boulais, a serio-comic artiste, and the orchestra. This is

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one of the most ambitious records ever made, although it may not appear so to the ordinary listener. The scene opens with the Rubes at the ticket office asking for seats. They are told that there is standing room only. A ticket speculator induces them to buy two seats 'way up front' and they enter the theatre. While they are buying their tickets the orchestra is heard playing on the inside. As the door opens to admit them, the full volume of the orchestra is heard. The seats 'way up front' prove to be in the last row. The soubrette on the stage begins to sing the popular song, 'Blue Bell.' The loud talking of the two Rubes interrupts her until finally she refuses to sing until the noise is stopped. The crowd remonstrates and the Rubes are suppressed for the moment, only to again begin talking when the soubrette continues her song. She then gives it up in disgust, saying that if they are so smart they can sing it themselves. They then take the stage, get the orchestra to play, and sing 'Don't Get Weary.'"

I had coveted that cylinder ever since I read the description so it was a happy day for me when I obtained an excellent copy from Russell Poley, of Denver. I now keep it on a penny-in-the-slot "juke box" made back in the 90's, to entertain friends who always want to insert the two long tubes into their ears and hear a performance by the old-time machine.

Although Harlan collaborated in recording these comic sketches, they were all written by Stanley, and displayed the same sort of keen sense of humor and quick eye for the foibles of human behavior that characterized Len Spencer's more varied dialect work. It is really astonishing to find a trained concert singer with a voice of operatic caliber being able to do such a good job of sizing up and impersonating the typical rustic characters of from 40 to 50 years ago. But versatility was one of Stanley's most pronounced traits—as was the remarkable range of his voice. He could sing anything from "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," requiring a real basso profundo, to numbers with a tenor range. Occasionally, in his recitals, he would astonish his audiences by singing extremely bass notes, then giving a tenor solo for an encore. Which reminds me that Lou Stevens, of Hollywood, who says, "I have yet to hear a voice to equal Frank Stanley's," has just called my attention to the fact that, in the Victor record of "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," by Stanley and Macdonough, the basso's voice soars to a tenor level.

Early in his career, before he organized the Peerless Quartet, which became the most popular group ever to make records, Frank Stanley sang baritone in the Columbia Male Quartet, with "Big Tom" Daniels as bass. I believe Albert Campbell was first tenor, but am not sure who was second. Mrs. Grinstead thinks the second tenor was Henry Burr.

And by 1904 Stanley was the leader of several other organizations. One was the Invincible Quartet, forerunner of the Peerless, which was composed, on Edison records, of Harlan, first tenor; George Seymour Lenox, second tenor; Collins, baritone, and Stanley, bass. When the Invincible sang for other companies, Campbell—if I can trust my ears—took Len-

ox's place. After Stanley's death, when the Peerless Quartet had John H. Meyers as its bass, it sometimes called itself the Invincible Four.

The Columbia list for January, 1904, contained a record of "Praise Ye" from Verde's "Attila," by the Metropolitan Mixed Trio. Shortly afterward, the same group was singing for Edison. On Edison cylinders, the members were Corrinne Morgan, contralto; Lenox, tenor, and Stanley, bass. On Columbia, Henry Burr probably sang instead of Lenox. Still later, the trio also made Victor records, and Miss Morgan was dropped, with the singers being Stanley, Burr, and Elise Stevenson, the soprano. Sometimes Edison called this latter group the Edison trio and they also made a few four-minute Edison cylinders under the name of the Manhattan Trio. A somewhat similar ensemble—the Schubert Trio—made one Victor single-faced record, "Praise Ye." Stanley and Harry Macdonough are two of the members,

but I'm not sure of the soprano. She was probably either Miss Stevenson or Elizabeth Wheeler.

Then, in 1904, on Edison records there was the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, whose members were "Miss Chappel" (really Edith Chapman, a well known church soprano, who later made records under her own name); Miss Morgan contralto, George Morgan Stricklett, tenor, and Stanley, bass. The Edison Mixed Quartet was the same, except that Lenox was the tenor. Edison also made records by the Lotus Quartet—Lenox and Stricklett, tenors! Charles Lewis, baritone, and Stanley. This quartet was an offshoot of the Lotus Glee Club, which consisted of the singers just mentioned; Frank Smith, pianist and manager, and his wife, Minnie Marshall Smith, reader. The glee club traveled as far west as South Dakota, giving concerts.

(To be continued.)

## DEATHS OF THREE RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

The deaths of three well known recording artists have been reported within recent weeks.

John H. Meyers, 71, noted for many years as the basso of the world-famous Peerless Quartet, which made more records than any other male voice ensemble, died on Tuesday, May 3, at his home, 160-03 Sanford Avenue, Flushing, Long Island, New York.

Mr. Meyers was born in New York and lived in the vicinity of the city nearly all his life. He left home when he was 16 to become pianist and arranger of a 72-man band that toured the country. Later, he inherited a floral business from his uncle, John Wilbur, and on a few Victor duet and minstrel records he called himself John Wilbur as a tribute to his uncle.

For 15 years Mr. Meyers was bass soloist for the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, 209 Madison Avenue, New York. After the death of Frank C. Stanley in December, 1910, Henry Burr became manager of the Peerless Quartet and asked Mr. Meyers to take Stanley's place. This he did, serving in that capacity until 1917, when Frank Croxton became the quartet bass and Meyers changed to singing baritone. In 1916 the Sterling Trio was organized. It consisted of Albert Campbell, first tenor; Burr, second tenor, and Meyers, bass. All are now dead.

From 1915 to 1925 Mr. Meyers toured the country with the concert group first known as the Record Makers and later as the Eight Famous Victor Artists. Originally it consisted, besides Campbell, Burr and Meyers, of Billy Murray, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, comedians; Vess L. Ossman, banjoist, and Theodore Morse, song writer and pianist. Only Billy Murray now survives of the original Eight. Mr. Meyers was

a skilled pianist and served as the musical arranger for the troupe. He likewise made most of the arrangements for the Peerless Quartet and Sterling Trio records.

John Meyers did little solo work as a recording artist, but a few records by him appeared in the Columbia catalog around 1911 and 1912. He also made a number of solos for the Par-o-ket hill-and-dale records issued by a company headed by Henry Burr from 1915 to 1918. Occasionally he sang the lead in the Peerless Quartet, and he made hundreds of duets with Burr for Aeolian-Vocalion, Emerson, Pathé and some of the other minor record companies of thirty years and more ago. Oddly enough, Meyers and Burr never sang as a duet team for Victor and Columbia. In all, he took part in thousands of records. After he left the Peerless in 1925 he did a bit more recording as the bass of a duet team. The tenor was Henry Moeller, who sang with Meyers under the name of Henry Fairbank. Mr. Meyers later returned to the floral business and remained in it until his death. He was considered one of the most expert floral designers in New York.

The bass singer was tall and slender and became bald in early life. When I met him in 1940 he looked no older than he did in the photos of himself published 35 years ago. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Minnie Meyers; a daughter, Mrs. Adelaide Steinkamp; a granddaughter and a great-grandson.

oOo

A distinguished violinist—Armand Vecsey, 70—died at his home in New York on March 31. Vecsey, also well known as a composer, was leader of the orchestra at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, New York, from 1910 to 1944. Prior to that, he had conducted the

orchestra at the Savoy Hotel, London. Mr. Vecsey, who wrote a book, "The Fiddler at the Ritz," about his musical experiences, was noted for his arrangements of large symphonic works for small orchestras. He composed several operettas, including "The Nightingale," with libretto and lyrics by P. G. Wodehouse and Guy Bolton, "Rose of China" and "Hotel Mouse." His recording activity appears to have been confined to making Edison Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinders. Mr. Vecsey is survived by his wife, two sons, a daughter, two brothers and a sister.

oOo

Richard R. Czerwony, 62, head of the violin and orchestral department of the De Paul University School of Music and like Vecsey, noted as a

violinist, died April 16 at his home in Chicago. Mr. Czerwony was born in Germany and came to the United States in 1907 to be assistant concert master of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. From 1909 until 1918 he was concertmaster and assistant conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony. During this period he made a few Edison records and also played for a few of the minor recording companies, such as Paramount and Puritan. In 1918 he moved to Chicago to head the violin department of the Bush Conservatory of Music and went to De Paul 17 years later. For twenty years he was conductor of the Chicago Philharmonic Orchestra. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Hildgard Czerwony, a daughter and two sons.

## A Memorial Tribute to John L. Norton, Sr.

By JIM WALSH

Like hundreds of other friends throughout the English-speaking countries, I am mourning the death of one of the best known and most popular of American record collectors, John Leo Norton, Sr., 63, founder of the famous Woodymay Record Company in Boston, who died at 10:45 A. M., Sunday, April 17, in the Boston General Hospital after an illness of four days. Physicians said that Mr. Norton had been suffering for three years, from an internal injury that caused his death.

John Norton had been fascinated by phonographs and records since he was a small boy and probably had been a record collector longer than anyone else now alive. He was born, October 26, 1885, on Shirley street in the Roxbury section of Boston, where his record store was situated many years afterward, at 73 Roxbury street. When he was twelve, his parents bought a Columbia cylinder phonograph, which played the brown wax records then in vogue. In 1898 they acquired a battery-operated Edison North American instrument, and from then until his death more than fifty years later John Norton's love for phonographs and records never flagged.

In 1912 Mr. Norton became the sole clock mechanic for all the public schools of Boston. Despite the strain that this occupation must have been to his eyes, he was never obliged to wear glasses for reading or working. Later, he was employed by the Conduit Electrical Manufacturing Company (now the Allis Chalmers Company) at South Boston, where he invented the N. switch for generators. Having acquired a large stock of Edison cylinders and Diamond Discs, he began business in 1938 with his son,

J. L. Norton, Jr. (affectionately known as "Jack"). They called themselves the Woodymay Record Company. At first Woodymay advertised principally in farm papers, selling cylinder records to residents of rural sections who still had old-style Edison phonographs. Mr. Norton invented the Woodymay pick-up, for playing Edison records electrically, in 1939. Woodymay's first HOBBIES advertising appeared in December, 1940, and the company has consistently advertised in this magazine ever since.

John Norton liked most types of music—opera, symphony, jazz and the popular tunes of the "Gay Nineties," but disliked hill-billy and Hawaiian performances. His favorites among the pioneer recording artists were mostly those whom he had admired as a boy. He once listed them as Arthur Collins, Will F. Denny, Edward M. FAVOR, Dan W. Quinn, J. Aldrich Libbey, Billy Murray, A. D. Madeira, Joe Natus, Frank C. Stanley, Billy Golden, S. H. Dudley, William F. Hooley, Helen Trix, Bob Roberts and Manuel Romain.

Surviving Mr. Norton are two sisters, Miss Helen Norton and Mrs. Caroline Logan; a brother, Robert Norton; and his son, who has had a lifelong devotion to records of the type his father loved. However, the father and son didn't see eye to eye in their preferences, and each had his separate record collection. Another survivor who undoubtedly will miss him sorely is "Ginger," the beautiful big brown cat who was a friend of all callers at the Woodymay store. Mr. Norton's wife died when Jack was a small boy, and the devotion between father and son became one of the closest and most beautiful I have ever known. They were inseparable companions and "pals" in the finest sense

of the term. Jack intends to give up the Woodymay store, but will continue to make dubbings of disc and cylinder records at his home.

John Norton was of medium height and stocky build. He had twinkling brown eyes and an impish sense of humor. Had the circumstances of his life been different, he might have become a great humorist, for some of his letters are among the funniest things I have ever read. He was also an inveterate prankster and played dozens of harmless practical jokes upon his friends—especially me. But he never intentionally did anything to hurt anyone. He was sometimes called "Old Man Woodymay," although he by no means gave the impression of being old. Several years ago he and Jack copyrighted the slogan, "Knights of the Turn Table," to describe their business, but in more recent days they took delight in using the term I had bestowed upon them—"The Wharf Rats of Woodymay." I had planned to visit them this September, and it is a sad reflection indeed that I shall never again see the cordial, great-hearted veteran record collector whom I shall always regard as one of the dearest friends I have ever known.

### RECORDS

RARE OLD RECORDS for sale: Vocal operatic, popular, collectors items, reasonably priced. Ask for lists.—Delano, 349 Lindenwolde, Ambler, Pa. mh120821

FOR SALE: Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f126942

HIGH SCHOOL teacher sells duplicates of rare collection. Special low prices.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. s120821

PHONOGRAPH Records bought.—E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan, Jersey City 6, New Jersey. s12407

ELEVEN THOUSAND different vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 15, Calif. n126351

FINE CLASSICAL RECORDS: Auction: Imported instrumentals, largely cutouts. Unusual collectors opportunity. Write: Delano, 349 Lindenwolde, Ambler, Penna. s3272

RECORD CATALOGUE: Evaluate your old records, over 1500 titles priced recently at auctions, \$4.50—Arts-Conn., Box 2121, Hartford 1, Conn. s3082

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## FRANK C. STANLEY. VI.

By JIM WALSH

In 1893, before he became noted as "Frank C. Stanley," the phonograph artist, Stanley Grinsted had begun his career as a church and concert singer. During the years while he was still working in the Orange bank, he had made records for all the pioneer companies, including Edison (then known as the National Phonograph Company), Columbia, Victor, Universal (which made Zonophone records before Victor took over the Zonophone line in 1903), and others. Mrs. Grinsted writes that he also "sang for Norcross (an experimenter, I think), some company in Brooklyn, someone in Washington, and another in Chicago. Somewhere along the line was someone named Palmer. I think his records were pink celluloid. When he died he was singing for nine different companies. One was in Boston."

The Norcross referred to by Mrs. Grinsted was "Ike" Norcross, who made cylinders for a short time in the '90's. The Brooklyn firm may have been Burke and Rous. The Washington concern probably was the Berliner Gramophone company, and the Chicago company, most likely was Lambert, which in the early 1900's made an indestructible pink, or red, cylinder. I would guess that the Boston concern for which Mr. Grinsted sang in later years was the Phono-Cut Record Company, which issued a hill-and-dale, sapphire-played disc, on the order of the Pathé. Other companies for which he recorded included Leeds, Talkophone, Indestructible (of Auburn, New York) and American. They were put out of business in 1907, when they were found guilty of infringing Victor patents.

By 1904, Frank C. Stanley was at the peak of his powers. In September he sang for the manager of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the manager wrote the following letter on September 15th to George F. Daniels, of Boston, who was considering engaging the basso for concert work:

"My dear Mr. Daniels: On Tuesday afternoon I heard Mr. W. Stanley Grinsted, basso, sing, and I was very much interested in his work. I think it will be well worth your while to hear him sing while you are here in New York the last week in September, and if you have the time I shall be glad to arrange with Mr. Grinsted to be heard by you either in New York or Brooklyn. Or possibly you would prefer to communicate with him direct and arrange for a rehearsal in New York with other artists whom you are to hear. His address is 199 High Street, Orange, N. J.

"Mr. Grinsted has a true basso voice; has a large range; remarkably fine quality, and is very artistic in his rendering. After hearing him sing for more than half an hour, I am compelled to say that I could find no fault of any kind with his singing, and that is saying a good deal. His positive qualities are a natural voice; thorough training; excellent artistic ability, and a good stage presence.

The room in which I heard him sing was not a very large one, but I have no reason to think that he would not sing to advantage in a very large hall. He sang 'It Is Enough' from 'Elijah' as an example of his oratorio work, with a great deal of force and feeling."

Unfortunately, the carbon copy which Mrs. Grinsted has preserved of this letter is unsigned and she doesn't recall the name of the writer.

In October, 1904, Edison printed some statistics concerning its new record catalog, which listed the "huge" number of 1,150 cylinders. A breakdown by artists showed that Frank C. Stanley was one of the company's most prolific and popular vocalists, with 22 solos to his credit. The only singers ahead of him were Harry Macdonough, with 55; Arthur Collins, 53; Byron G. Harlan, 47; the Edison Male Quartet, 44, and William H. Thompson, 30. Besides the solos, there were 30 duets by Harlan and Stanley; 11 by Miss Morgan and Mr. Stanley, and the indicated numbers by these organizations in which Stanley sang: Metropolitan Mixed Trio, one; Invincible Quartet, eight; Lotus Quartet, two; Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, seven; and Edison Sextet, one.

In June, 1905, Columbia issued a record of Charles Dennee's lullaby, "Sleep, Little Baby of Mine," sung by William Fredericks, an unidentified baritone who was probably Frank Stanley. I haven't heard the record for many years, but I recall "Frederick's" voice quality as being identical with that of the better known singer. Quentin Riggs, of Oklahoma City, has also found a couple of Clico records by the mysterious Mr. Fredericks.

A reader of the New Phonogram asked in February, 1906, who the members of the Edison Sextet, singers of the Floradora Sextet, were. He was told the ensemble consisted of Corinne Morgan, Ada Jones, Grace Nelson, George Seymour Lenox, Bob Roberts and Frank C. Stanley. The record had obviously been remade since first being issued in 1902 or earlier, for several of these singers would not have been available for the first version, in which Stanley no doubt took part. Incidentally, it has just occurred to me that it's odd he does not appear in the group photo of 42 Edison artists taken in 1900. But that was while he was still working in the bank, and it may not have been convenient for him to get away.

It was in 1906, as best as I can deduce, that the partnership between Stanley and the talented, but temperamental, Corinne Morgan came to an end, after several years during which they had made many fine duets. Some of the most popular were "Deed I Do," a comic Negro dialect number rather unlike their usual type of work; "Listen to the Mocking Bird," "The Moon Has His Eyes On

You," "Just My Style" and "The Tale of a Stroll." Their parting resulted from a recording engagement they were doing in New York. Walter Miller, manager of Edison's recording department, got Stanley to one side and said: "Tell Corinne she's 'flattering.'"

Mrs. Grinsted says that her husband did as he was asked, remarking, "Corinne, Walter says you're flattering," and Miss Morgan stormed into Miller's office, demanding to know if he had made that assertion. Miller answered "No," and she returned in a towering rage and accused Grinsted of being a liar. That ended their association, in which he had also acted as her business manager. According to Mrs. Grinsted, the basso asked Miller why he had denied making the remark that caused all the trouble, and he said: "Well, I didn't want her raising a racket in here."

Later, it appears, Miss Morgan—who, judging by her early photos, was an attractive, vivacious brunette—regretted the "split" and wrote to Grinsted, saying she would like to resume her work with him, but he had by that time engaged other women singers in her place.

Miss Morgan died a few years ago. Another example of her ability to become thoroughly angry is recalled by Mrs. Grinsted. One night, the contralto and a Russian-born singer took part in a concert. The lady received more applause than the Russian, and he became furious. As she left the stage after an encore, he stood just outside and hissed: "You were rotten—rotten!" And then Miss Morgan swung around and gave him a resounding slap across the face. The other artists who witnessed the encounter, or heard of it, said they were glad she did.

Mrs. Grinsted believes that Miss Morgan, whose real name was Corinne Welsh and who later became Mrs. C. W. Dumont; John Young ("Harry Anthony"); Frederick Wheeler ("James F. Harrison") and Cecilia Niles (later Mrs. Henry Burr), all sang at the same time in the choir of the Marble Collegiate church in New York.

For a short time after "Morgan and Stanley" dissolved partnership, Grinsted continued to make contralto-baritone duets with the assistance of Grace Nelson. Miss Nelson was really Grace Hornby, a well known Brooklyn singer, who was contralto soloist in Flatbush Memorial church when Mr. Grinsted also sang there. They began working together in 1906 and the association lasted until 1908. In the January, 1908, supplement of the Indestructible Record Company, of Albany, New York, a firm that preceded Edison by several years in making unbreakable cylinders, appeared two Stanley-Nelson (his name is given first) duets: "Sambo and Dinah" and the favorite "'Deed I Do," which Stanley had recorded as long ago as 1902 for other companies, with Miss Morgan as his partner. The following comment was made: "Mr. Stanley and Miss Nelson have made phono-



graph records before, but never have their voices been recorded with such faithful accuracy and clearness."

The first part statement was probably the year's greatest understatement, as far as it applied to Frank C. Stanley. He had made records before—lots of them!

(To be continued)

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## Death of Mrs. Arthur Collins

Mrs. Anna L. Collins, 81, widow of the famous recording artist, Arthur Collins, died May 14 at her home on Prospect Avenue, Fort Myers, Fla. The funeral was held May 20 in the Leo W. Engelhardt funeral home. Burial was in the Fort Myers cemetery. Survivors include a son, Arthur Perry Collins, of New York City, and a brother, Dr. Richard N. Connolly, of Newark, N. J.

Mrs. Collins was a singer as a young woman, but retired after her marriage in 1895. She was born May 18, 1867, in Ireland. Although she was never engaged as a professional recording artist, she and Mr. Collins made a few test duets for Edison in the wax cylinder days. One of these, a version of "Swanee River," was found by Otis B. Zirkle, of Brownston, W. Va., about a year ago. Her husband, who died in 1933, for many years was one of the most popular recording artists, and it is probable that more copies were sold of the records of "The Preacher and the Bear," which he made for all the pioneer companies than of any other recording of the acoustic era. Mrs. Collins had planned to attend the John Bieling Day party held last September 10 at Garden City, N. Y., but gave up the trip on the advice of her physician, because of the distance between New York and Fort Myers, where she had lived for 23 years. Before Arthur Collins retired, they made their home at Hempstead, L. I., a few blocks from John Bieling's residence.

—o—

## Death of Noted Male Quartet Basso

Recently I wrote of the death of basso of the world-famous Peerless Quartet. Now I must record the passing of Harry J. Donaghy, bass of the Harmonizers Quartet, which made records during the late acoustic and early electric eras.

The Harmonizers began recording in 1920. Besides Donaghy, the outfit consisted of Charles Hart, first tenor; the late Billy Jones, second tenor; and the late Steve Porter, baritone. For several years they sang, on a free lance basis, for most of the record companies. Sometimes the Harmonizers were called the Premier Quartet on Edison records (this was after the original Premier organization headed by Billy Murray had ceased to record for Edison), and still later they made Edison discs and cylinders under the name of the National Male

Quartet. On at least one of Pathé's Actuelle records ("Casey Jones") they were the County Harmonizers. I met Mr. Donaghy in New York in 1940 and was told that the Edison record of "Oh By Jingy" was the Harmonizers' first. It was one of the Premier Quartet series.

The basso died June 1, aged 56. He was director of public relations for H. C. Bohack Co., Inc. In 1923, as a member of the Chiclet Quartet, he was with the first group that obtained a commercial radio contract. This was with WEAF in New York. In 1927 he appeared in Ziegfeld's "Rosalie" and, during the World's Fair of 1939-40, he sang the leading bass role in the first full-length opera broadcasts on television. These included "The Pirates of Penzance" and "H. M. S. Pinafore." As a radio artist for 25 years, Donaghy sang with the National Light Opera and Grand Opera Companies and appeared on such famous programs as the Cliquot Club Eskimos, the Dutch Masters Minstrels, and the General Electric and Cities Service hours.

—o—

## No John Bieling Day Party This September

The sponsors of the annual John Bieling Day party for pioneer recording artists and their collector admirers have reluctantly decided not to hold a get-together in the Garden City Hotel on September 10, as had been planned. Last year's party was a great success, and the sponsors have every hope of reviving the affair in 1950. The decision to call it off this year has been occasioned by the death of a collector who was to provide part of the financial backing; the poor health at present of Jim Walsh, another of the sponsors; and several other temporary handicaps.

## Records and Record Catalogs For Sale

I have a number of classical vocal records, mostly acoustics, to dispose of, but no time to list. Please send me your want lists. Collectors living in the New York City area may telephone (Riverside 9-1574) between 10 A. M. and 10 P. M. to arrange appointment for inspection of records and catalogs.

### ALSO FOR SALE THE OSCAR SAENGER COURSE IN VOCAL TRAINING

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by Robert Bauer.

Contains 494 pages listing vocal recordings issued in the United States and Europe from 1898 to 1908/09. Remit \$9.75 to me by check or money order and your copy will be mailed to you direct from England. Note: Have a few copies of the original 1938 edition for sale at \$3.50 each, postpaid.

**STEPHEN FASSETT**  
West Falmouth, Mass.

## THE MARIMBA

By FRANK K. MAC CALLUM

The marimba is a musical instrument of unusual interest. How many people know that it was developed in the New World? Imported from Africa, it remained in primitive form until about 1895. At that time Sebastian Hurtado of Guatemala adapted it for European music enlarging its compass from about 20 hardwood bars to 67, and using for resonators angular wooden boxes with pointed ends instead of the hollow gourds formerly used. The bars are sounded by mallets held in the musicians' hands.

The new instrument's popularity spread quickly over Central America, no doubt due to the love Latin Americans have for music. Hurtado's sons formed the celebrated "Hurtado Brothers' Royal Marimba Band of Guatemala" and won world-wide fame.

The Central American marimba has the compass and versatility of the piano. This is due to the special bulb-shaped resonators. Each one has a hole near the lower pointed end covered with cured pigs gut. This membrane vibrates when the bars are struck, giving a loud humming sound which is the characteristic stringlike tone of the marimba. This feature, and the short length afforded by the resonator's shape, makes possible six or seven octave marimbas. Though they may be eight feet long, the marimbas are light and portable. The framework of the marimba is an example of artistic wood carving; and the whole instrument is a triumph of native handicraft and patience.

Many records have been made of the Hurtado Brothers' playing and of other marimba bands. Unlike most musical instruments, the marimba recorded very faithfully (especially in the bass), and its possibilities are shown in the Hurtados' Victor records "Selections from Aida" and "Cavalleria Rusticana"—among others. Such records should not be neglected by collectors since their equal is not to be found in contemporary catalogs.

The marimba is undoubtedly the most singular contribution of the New World to music. It has increased in popularity and now attracts the interest of many modern composers.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## FRANK C. STANLEY VII.

By ULYSSES (JIM) WALSH

Frank Stanley's recording association with Elise Stevenson, the soprano who was his principal feminine co-worker during the last years of his career, appears to have begun late in 1906. Miss Stevenson (Mrs. Rusling Wood) was the soprano soloist in the Madison Avenue Baptist church, of New York, when Grinsted was its basso. He then sang in the Central Presbyterian church on Fifty-seventh street, where Edith Chapman (who made records as "Miss Chappel") was the soprano.

Victor and Columbia issued "Stevenson-Stanley" records in 1907, but their first duet for Edison didn't come out until February, 1909—presumably because they had begun singing together during the period when the basso's disagreement with the Edison company was still in effect. The record was four-minute wax Amberol No. 79, "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and it was an elaborate undertaking for those days. Here is the New Phonogram's description:

'A remarkably fine presentation of Julia Ward Howe's stirring national anthem. Mr. Stanley, baritone, sings the first verse; Miss Stevenson, soprano, the second verse; Mr. Stanley and Mr. Anthony, the third verse, and Miss Stevenson and Mr. Anthony, the fourth verse. The choruses between the verses are sung by the Mixed Quartet. The singers are accompanied by the New York Military Band. It will be strange indeed if this does not prove one of the largest selling records ever made for the Edison Phonograph.'

Mrs. Grinsted says Miss Stevenson was largely responsible for ending Stanley's disagreement with the Edison company. She recalls that Edison "wanted Miss Stevenson to sing for them, and she told them Mr. Grinsted was her manager and they would have to deal with him. The outcome was they had Mr. Grinsted sing for them again at twice the amount they had argued about. It was a great feather in Miss Stevenson's cap." She adds: "Mr. Grinsted sang in several Victor combinations. I know he sang in the Victor Light Opera Company some times." He was also a member of the original Lyric Quartet, consisting of himself, Miss Morgan, Miss Stevenson and Harry Macdonough which sang only for Victor. Later, the Lyric members were Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Macdonough and W. F. Hooley.

While we're mentioning these former associates of Stanley, I may record that Byron Harlan told Mrs. Grinsted he had learned that George Seymour Lenox, the tenor, died after moving to California. Mrs. Grinsted's daughter, Mrs. Repelow, says: "Mr. Lenox, the tenor, died after moving to California. Mrs. Grinsted's daughter, Mrs. Repelow, says: "Mr. Lenox wanted us (the Grinsted children) to call him 'Uncle Seymour.' I remem-

ber him distinctly, a nice looking, jolly gentleman who was in our home more than any other of the singers—probably the only one to stay overnight." When I called on her, Mrs. Repelow gave me some sheet music that had once belonged to Corinne Morgan and to Mr. Lenox. It goes without saying that I prize it.

George M. Stricklett made Edison records for several years, but moved to Florida after marrying a wealthy woman from Orange.

Truly, the years from 1906 until his death in 1910 were crowded ones for Stanley Grinsted. He seems to have done a little of almost everything in the phonograph way, but probably "L. O. K.," of Marion, Illinois, who asked in the December, 1907 issue of the New Phonogram, "Do Harlan and Stanley play in the Edison Military Band?" was disappointed when he was told they didn't.

Mrs. Grinsted recalls that during this period she and her husband made a practice of going to first nights of comic operas and musical comedies to select new songs for recordings. When the "Merry Widow" was first produced in New York, the basso bought the entire score and trained his singers in the music. Then he went to the phonograph companies and offered to put the whole score on records, with himself and Miss Stevenson in the featured roles. Some companies accepted. Victor was one. And Indestructible issued a special supplement in February, 1908, containing eight "Merry Widow" records. Three of these were band arrangements of the principal airs, but the others were sung as solos or duets by Miss Stevenson and Mr. Stanley, except that the famous "Women!" number was done by the Peerless Quartet, which he had just organized. "Women!" incidentally was the Peerless' first Victor record. It was issued, with four other "Merry Widow" selections, in April, 1908. The same procedure was followed with Oscar Strauss' "Waltz Dream."

The Peerless Quartet didn't appear on Edison records until 1909. It was not called the Peerless on Columbia records until after Stanley's death, but carried on the long-established name of the Columbia Quartet. Indestructible called it simply "The Quartet." But, oddly enough, Indestructible was also cataloging records by the Peerless Trio, which seems to have been the group known on Victor records as the Victor Vaudeville Company—Billy Murray, Steve Porter and Harlan. I have never seen the Peerless Trio listed as such anywhere else.

All these varied activities shows that Frank Stanley was not only a fine artist, but had an excellent business head. Mrs. Grinsted relates that after her husband's passing, Victor Emerson, the recording

manager for the Columbia company, told her that most phonograph singers were poor business men, but that Mr. Grinsted was the exact opposite. "In fact," Emerson said, "he seemed to know instinctively what the public likes and wants, and I relied on his judgment a great deal."

But that is anticipating. The three years after he organized the Peerless Quartet until he died probably were the most action-filled of Frank Stanley's too brief life. The quartet was soon working for all the phonograph companies. It not only sang the latest popular songs, but also recorded old standard songs and hymns as well as comic specialties and descriptive sketches. Some of these were written by Stanley; a few, such as "A Call to Arms" and "A Rescue By the Lifeboat Crew" were by the first tenor, Albert Campbell—while at least two of the sketches, "A Possum Supper at Darktown Church" and "A Meeting of the Hen Roost Club," were written by Cal Stewart, the famous impersonator of "Uncle Josh." "Sweetheart Town," the first Harlan-Stanley duet in several years, was issued by Edison in February, 1909, and the pair continued to sing together until Stanley's death less than two years later. However, he was also making duets for Victor with Harry Macdonough and for all the companies with Henry Burr, who called himself Irving Gillette on Edison. And, of course, he was also singing with the Metropolitan Trio, the Lyric Quartet and with the Victor Light Opera Company. The more his career is examined, the more amazing it appears that the singer could ever have spared time to serve his home town of Orange as an alderman.

Frank Stanley's popularity during the last year of his life was at its height. In March, 1910, Edison issued a four-minute version by Harlan and Stanley of one of the "rube" sketches, "The Rube and the Country Doctor," in which they had specialized half a dozen years before. Several years after Stanley's death, this was re-listed as No. 1875 in the Blue Amberol series. Even earlier, in time for the 1909 Independence Day business, they had made "Fourth of July in Jayville" for Victor.

Two months later, Edison issued a four-minute Peerless Quartet record, "Characteristic Negro Medley" (later renumbered 1863 as a Blue Amberol), which is remarkable for the fact that it is probably the only Peerless record ever made in which Henry Burr didn't sing second tenor. For the occasion, he gave way to Billy Murray, whose style was more suited to Negro dialect work. In July was listed the quartet record of a favorite old hymn, "Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping," a song of resignation to death. That seems almost prophetic, in view of the fact that the leader of the Peerless—little as he suspected it then—had only a few months left to live.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

FRANK C. STANLEY VIII

Frank Stanley's last Edison solo record was an Ernest R. Ball composition, "Boy O'Mine," which was put on the market in October, 1910. It was the first solo he had sung for Edison since his two-minute cylinder of "Sister," made in 1906. "Boy O'Mine," a four-minute record, appears to have been his last solo for any company, but in the same month Victor issued a Stanley-Burr duet, "My Prairie Song Bird," followed in November by two Peerless Quartet recordings, "The Railroad Section Gang" and the vastly popular Indian song, "Silver Bell." In November, Edison announced two records in which the basso took part, "O Morning Land," a duet with "Irving Gillette," and Al Campbell's sketch, "Shipwreck and Rescue," described as "reproducing with startling realism the terrors of a storm at sea and the thrill of a subsequent rescue by the life-saving crew."

Then came December, the month of Frank Stanley's death from pneumonia. Victor issued no records that month in which he took part, but Edison had a two-minute cylinder of "Sweetness" by the Peerless — the same number which Victor was to catalog in February, 1911, accompanied by the announcement of Stanley's passing. News that the popular basso was gone came as an almost unbelievable shock to his friends, aside from the few who knew he was desperately ill. John Bieling recalled that he talked with Stanley for a few moments on the very night that he was stricken with pneumonia, had no idea he was unwell and "just couldn't believe it at first" when he heard a week later that his old friend was dead.

No record in which the dead singer took part was listed by Edison in the month after his death, but Victor had one Peerless Quartet offering, "Without You," and Minstrels No. 17, by the Victor Minstrel Company — which was what the quartet called itself in making minstrel records. In February, Victor announced his death, and Edison issued a Stanley-Gillette duet of "Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes." A month later, Victor cataloged its last record in

which Stanley sang No. 16712, the duet of "Norine Maureen," which he had sung with Burr.

It was in this month that the leading recording artists of the time united in what was called "the Frank C. Stanley Testimonial Concert," presented as a tribute in memory of the man who had been recognized for so many years as one of the most accomplished leaders of his profession. Mr. Grinstead's daughters have generously given me a copy of the program. The concert took place on the night of March 8, 1911, but I find no information within the program as to where it was presented, although I know it was somewhere in New York.

All the phonograph companies took advertising space in the program, and the National Phonograph Company also published a tribute to the man whose work had done so much to make Edison cylinders popular. It is worth quoting, after first pointing out that the W. in the singer's name should be placed before "Stanley" rather than after it:

"This seems a fitting opportunity to say a few words in appreciation of the services rendered the Edison Phonograph by Stanley W. Grinstead (Frank C. Stanley), during his long connection with this Company. At the time of his death he was one of a few artists who had made Edison Records continuously for nearly fifteen years.

"His connection began before the organization of the National Phonograph Co., for when the present Edison Phonograph was still in the experimental stage he made records for it, working in the Edison Laboratory under the direction of Mr. Edison and his assistants. Besides having a splendid baritone voice, Mr. Grinstead was in those days a banjo player of the first rank—a fact that most of his friends either do not know or have forgotten, so well known in recent years has he become known as a singer. In the Laboratory days, he made both vocal and banjo records, more because of the novelty and pleasure than for gain.

"After the organization of the National Phonograph Co. in 1896, he took up record making in a serious manner, and continued in the work until his death in December. The last Edison record which he sang was Amberol No. 643, 'Somewhere.' In this he sang bass in the chorus. This record will appear on March 25th. His latest duet record was Amberol No. 615, 'Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes,' in which he sang with Irving Gillette. His last solo record was 'Boy O' Mine', No. 521.

"When Mr. Grinstead began his career as a professional record maker, he was engaged in concert work and was active as a singer in church choirs. In those days it detracted from a singer's standing to be known as a singer for Phonograph records, and Mr. Grinstead was compelled to assume the nom de plume of Frank C. Stanley. It was by this name that his reputation became world wide. After the prejudice against the Phonograph had changed, he would have been glad to have continued in his own name but his nom de plume had become so well known that a change was deemed inadvisable.

"Mr. Grinstead was not the only Edison artist of long standing or who has made many Edison records, but probably no other singer has made more records than he. His name does not appear so often in the catalogues as some others but he took part in the making of hundreds of duets, trios, quartettes, choruses, rube sketches, vaudeville

sketches, etc. Several of the clever rube sketches made by him and Mr. Harlan were written by Mr. Grinstead.

"Mr. Grinstead took more than an ordinary interest in record making. He was always conscientious and painstaking in it. He was as anxious to get the best results as were those whom he sought to please. He was also interested in the success of Edison products. In the earlier days he rendered valuable assistance in securing new singers and instrumentalists. He was active in forming and training quartettes. He was the guiding hand when others sang with him in duets or trios.

"No man now occupies a place that cannot be filled by another, but Mr. Grinstead will be keenly missed by his associates and others with whom he came in contact. His superb voice, however, will be with us for years to come, probably as long as any present type of Phonograph and talking machine remains in existence. When he has been forgotten by all but a few his records will continue to entertain and amuse. Thousands, aye millions, will

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 31)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin appraised** for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 444 Surf St., Chicago, Ill. **je120041**

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. **d80441**

**Swiss Music Movements, assorted** tunes, \$1.90. Direct from manufacturers agent.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. **n3084**

**SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming** single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. **ja124301**

**SWISS MUSICAL UNITS \$2.75.**—Music Boxes, 131 West 42nd, New York 18, N. Y. **n3061**

**WANTED:** Victor or Edison catalogs and supplements, 1912 or earlier.—L. E. Mack, 1157 Penniman, Plymouth, Mich. **mh05**

**YOUR REED organ and melodeon** problems analyzed. State make, describe symptoms thoroughly. If I help, send two dollars. Bellows cloth, other parts for sale.—Wylie York, The Organ Shop, 3134 Harlandale, Dallas, Texas. **f64201**

**FOR SALE:** Records, Grand Opera, Golden Age Ballads and Jazz, 1900-1945. Mail your wants. — Cath. V. O'Brien, First Ave., Newtown Sq., Pa. **o6006**

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1860 for sale. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. **mx122511**

**Wanted:** Coin-operated, automatic musical instruments and music rolls for Seeburg Pianos, Mills Violin Virtuosos, etc.—Wm. S. Allen, 616 First National Bank Bldg. Santa Ana, Calif. **mh60621**

**TWO BLUE AMBEROL** Model 30 Editions; never used; in original crates, ea. \$24.75. 250 Cylinder records, 20 for \$3.75. Fine Regina music box. Write for picture.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. **olx**  
(See page 101 for other Music ads)

## RECORDS

**FINE CLASSICAL RECORDS:** Auction: Imported instrumentals, largely cutouts. Unusual collectors opportunity. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwood, Ambler, Penna. **mh6445**

**PATHE** records for sale. Operatic selections, songs and instrumental pieces. Send for list.—Mrs. May B. Oxx, 147 N. Fulton Ave., Mount Vernon, N. Y. **o1002**

**100,000 OPERATIC RECORDS**, for sale. G&T, HMV, Fonotipias, Victor, Columbia, etc. Send want list to—John Scigiano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. **mh6007**

(See page 101 for other Records ads)

## MELODEON

Beautiful rosewood melodeon. Octagon legs. Completely restored. \$160.00 crated.

Expert repairing service.

C-sharp HOBBY SHOP

415 S. Diamond Ave., Grand Rapids 6, Mich.

Many fine old records, including  
Lauder, Caruso, McCormack.

Write me of your interests.

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whalers loaded with stones to be sunk in the harbors of Charleston and Savannah to prevent blockade-running during the Civil War. W. H. Rease of Philadelphia contributed "Whaling, The Conflict", and there is also a good chrome, "Whales Caught in the Ice" published by William Bradford of Boston without date. Even the views of New Bedford include whalers. An engraved one by J. W. Hill has one in the foreground with a boat out, and Lane & Scott's "View of New Bedford", shows the "Tarterne" and the "Drazimbo".

### PRINTS FOR SALE

**CURTIS FLOWER** prints, original hand coloring, each bearing date of over 120 years ago, size 5½x9", \$5 dozen, postpaid. Framed in gold leaf frame with French lined mats, \$7.50 a pair, express collect. For dealers: An assortment of 25 dated flower, costume and other prints for \$12.50. Express collect.—Old Prints, 526 E. Argonne Dr., Kirkwood 22, Mo. n122173

**I HAVE SOME** good Currier & Ives prints to sell at attractive prices.—Earl Romey, 209 Jersey, Bluffton, Ind. o126121

**WHY GUESS** at the value of your Currier & Ives prints? Book listing 1202 prints and their present day values, only \$1.—Earl Romey, 209 Jersey, Bluffton, Indiana. o122971

**FOR YOUR Family History.** Costume prints; Baronial Manors; Scottish Highlands. All with coats-of-Arms. Early American portraits and places. Maps.—Mabel Louise Keech—"At the Sign of the Crest", North Shore Hotel, Evanston, Illinois. tfr

**ORIGINAL Antique Colored Godey, fashion prints (1858-72)** fine condition, \$1.25 each. Antique English and French colored fashion prints (1810-1876), 50c ea.—Blackford, 2002 North 4th St., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. n5069

**PRINTS, ENGRAVINGS** Cleaned: Age, water stains removed. Work guaranteed. Lithographs bought, sold, exchanged.—Stuart Gast, 3421 Center Street, Washington 10, D. C. j6120821

**CURRIER & IVES** Prints, send stamp for list, large and small folios.—Frank W. Mathews, Scottsville, N. Y. j6128001

**CURRIER & IVES, Godeys, Petersons, Sarony, etc.** Write your wants or will send list for 10 cents.—Fairfax Lentz, 166 Fir Hill, Akron Ohio. d6867

**SELLING OUT:** Beautiful collection colored prints, 120 assorted; miniature to 14x18, \$10. Regimental Highlanders, 9x12; 12 subjects \$2.50. Grevedon's Miniatures, hand colored; 6 subjects \$1. Send cash. We pay postage. No C.O.D.—Zima, 1477 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 7, Calif. d68041

**OLD VIEWS OF CITIES.** Early prints, hand-colored, of your native town are interesting Americana. These are neatly mounted and protected by cellophane. Prices from \$3 to \$10. Hand-painted Coats of Arms authentically prepared to order; family name only requirement. Framed in gold, 12½x11". English, with solid color mat, \$20; Scottish, with hand-painted Tartan mat, \$25.—Old Prints, 526 E. Argonne Dr., Kirkwood, St. Louis 22, Mo. aul20844

**AUTHENTICATED Old Prints:** Original American and English prints. No restrikes. Delightful and decorative selection. Send for price list, 9c in stamps which will be deducted from cost of first print purchased. Prices to fit your pocketbook, 15c to \$50. We have flower prints, bird prints, American scenes and many others. Collectors, Dealers and Decorators will surely find interest here.—Parnassos Antiquariat, Post Office Box 286, Bronxville, N. Y. n38801

**COLLECTION:** C. & I. prints, rurals, horses, ships, miscellaneous subjects. Reasonable. Send stamp for list.—E. F. Thayer, Lynnfield Center, Mass. mh6276

**AUCTION,** unique Audubon proof prints! See advertisement, Antiques Dept., page 51. o 127

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

continue to derive the pleasure from his voice that always comes with the hearing of a good song well sung, and as many more will forget their cares while listening to the rendition of his humorous selections."

That testimonial concert must have been a memorial event, both to the audience fortunate enough to hear it and to the celebrities taking part. It was arranged in minstrel show form, with Steve Porter as the interlocutor. The musical directors were Charles A. Prince, leader of the Columbia bands and orchestras; Ernest R. Ball, writer of many famous song hits; Walter B. Rogers, Victor band and orchestra leader, and Albert Benzler and Eugene Jaudas, of the U. S. Everlasting and Edison organizations. The program follows:

Overture (selected), Orchestra; Opening Chorus, Entree Company; "Dreams, Just Dreams," Harvey Hindermeyer; "Stuttering Dick," Edward Meeker; "All Aboard for Blanket Bay," Walter Van Brunt; "A Little Talk," Monroe Silver; "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," William H. Thompson; Soprano solo, Elizabeth Spencer; "Below the Mason-Dixon Line," Jim Sweeney; "I Love the Name of Mary," Albert Campbell; "Excelsior," Anthony and Harrison; Banjo Solo, Vess L. Ossman; "Winter," That Girl Quartette; "Good-bye, My Love, Good-bye," Frank Coombs; "His Day's Work Was Done," Jim Devins; "Any Old Port in a Storm," Wm. F. Hooley; "Mother, Boy and Home," Manuel Romahn; "Down Among the Sugar Cane," Johnny Forsman; "I'm the Only Star That Twinkles on Broadway," Ada Jones; "A Bit of Nonsense," Murry K. Hill; "In the Garden of My Heart," Henry Burr; "Down Where the Big Bananas Grow," Collins and Harlan; "Silver Threads Among the Gold," Will Oakland; "On San Francisco Bay," Billy Murray; "Sextet From Lucia," Victor Light Opera Co. (Lucy Marsh, Marguerite Dunlap, Harry Macdonough, Wm. Wheeler, Reinald Werrenrath and Wm. F. Hooley) and Closing Chorus, the Company. John Bieling recalled that, somewhere during the program, the American Quartet, not listed here, sang "Play That Barber Shop Chord."

Arrangements for the concert were in charge of the Stanley Memorial Committee, of which John Kaiser, who made "Casey" records for Edison after Russell Hunting went to England and also did announcing on Zonophone records, was treasurer. At the time of the concert he was an official of the United States company. Walter Miller, of Edison, was committee chairman. Other members were: Calvin G. Child, of Victor; Victor H. Emerson, Columbia; E. Lyman Bill, publisher of the Talking Machine World; Ernst R. Ball, representing the music publishers, and R. B. Caldwell, for the talking machine jobbers. Ushers were: George J. Werner, Frank Evans, Fred C. Burt, Andrew Weber, Harvey Emmons, Harry Getcliffe, George B. Ward, E. J. Lee, W. A. Knoop, H. L. Marker, C. D. Emerson, G. A. Forbush, Clifford J. Werner, John A. Loesch, James Henderson, Louis Reinhardt, Geo. Denkinger and Louis Silverman. The booklet contained a special notice: "Owing to the length of the programme, the audience is earnestly requested not to insist upon more than one encore." Two of the artists taking part—Jim Sweeney and Johnny Forsman—are completely unknown to me. They probably were "song pluggers" for some of the music publishers.

As the Edison contribution to the program had said, the Irving Gillette record of "Somewhere," with Stanley singing bass in the chorus, was issued in April. It was transferred a couple of years later to the Blue Amberol series. And in May, Victor marketed its first record by the reorganized Peerless Quartet,

with John H. Meyer singing bass in Stanley's place. Meyer had been singing in the same church choir with Henry Burr, who had become manager of the Peerless. Under Burr's direction, it was to remain the most popular recording quartet for almost another 20 years, but with occasional changes of personnel.

In December, 1911, the Peerless record of a ballad, "In the Golden Afterwhile," which Stanley Grinstead had written a short time before his death, was issued by Victor. During the basso's later years he had somehow found time to write a good many songs, the original music of some of which is still in his daughters' possession. One of the songs, whose exact title I have forgotten, contains the given name of his youngest daughter, Elaine. I believe that "In the Golden Afterwhile" was the only one of Stanley's original compositions which has been published. Edison also issued it, and the companies paid the royalties directly to Mrs. Grinstead during the several years the records remained in their catalogs.

Here is a final interesting reminiscence from Mrs. Grinstead: "One might not long after Mr. Grinstead's death a lady telephoned and said she was a great admirer of his singing, and asked if she might call. She was a short, dark woman, very business like, and I thought she was a reporter. She was a Christian Science practitioner in Cleveland, Ohio. She said that when she went to a new city or town, she always went around, trying to find Stanley records. She would buy five or six of her favorites, so when one got broken she would have some left. She ended, 'I must have around 500 of his records.' After that she always came to see me when she came to New York. She usually sent me a Christmas present, and when my daughters married, she sent them each a half dozen sterling silver teaspoons. She died about three or four years ago, and I received word she had left me all her Stanley records. I received 79. Twenty-nine were solos. The rest were duets, trios, quartets, etc., in which he sang. I was very glad to get them, even though it was not 500."

The year, 1910, in which Frank Stanley died now seems a remote era to us. That was four years before the first World war began—before any city had been bombed from the air or the atomic bomb was more than dreamed of. Frank Stanley never heard of electric recording or even saw an Edison Diamond Disc phonograph. The "talkies," aside from the primitive type with which Edison experimented, were unknown to him. If he could return to earth today, he would be amazed at first by radio and television and would find the world he knew changed almost beyond recognition—in many ways, for the worse. Yet that Christian Science practitioner who so zealously collected his records has her counterpart today in hundreds—probably thousands—of lovers of the old-time records, who believe that the subject of these sketches was one of the finest artists who ever sang into a horn and treasure his discs and cylinders accordingly. Thanks to these collectors, he is not likely ever to be entirely forgotten. And, as a lifetime admirer, it has been both a pleasure and a privilege for me to pay this extended tribute to the memory of William Stanley Grinstead. (THE END)



- Peer Gynt—Solveig's Song  
733 Cavalleria—Voi lo sapete  
Ave Maria (Bach-Gounod), with violin, piano and saxophone accompaniment  
NOTE—Numbers 731 & 733 are 11-inch records

- BURRIAN, Carl (Tenor)  
2686 Walkure—Siegmunds Liebeslied  
Freischütz—Durch die Walder  
2687 Bajazzo—Lache Bajazzo  
Werther—Was bin ich aufgewacht  
BURZIO, Eugenia (Soprano)  
2598 Aida—O Patria mia  
Trovatore—D'Amor sul ali rosee  
2607 Peer Gynt—Chanson de Solveig  
Madrigale (Simonetta)  
2608 Visione (Tosti)  
Torna (Tosti)  
2761 Favorita—rietosa al par d'un Nume  
Masked Ball—Morro ma prima in grazia  
2762 Norma—Deh! non voleri vittime  
Norma—Casta Diva

- CARELLI, Emma (Soprano)  
2609 Cavalleria—Voi lo sapete  
Zaza—Dir che ci sono al mondo  
CARUSO, Enrico (Tenor)  
2610 Tu non mi vuoi piu bene (Pini-Corsi)  
Tosca—E lucevan le stelle  
2611 Tu non mi vuoi piu bene (Pini-Corsi)  
Ugonotti—Qui sotto il ciel  
2061\* Lohengrin's Bridal Song  
Lohengrin's Farewell  
2019 'Tis the Day (Leoncavallo)  
Gondoliers—Take a pair of Sparkling Eyes  
2039 I Love Thee, (Grieg)  
For a Dream's Sake (Cowan)  
2041 Creation—In Native Worth  
Judas Maccabaeus—Sound an Alarm  
2046\*\* Come into the Garden, Maud (Balfé)  
At the Mid Hour of Night (Cowan)  
2056 Take, oh take those lips away (Parry)  
Blow thou winter wind (Quilter)  
\* Same titles also available on 11-inch disc No. 271  
\*\* Same titles also available on 11-inch disc No. 0271

- CONSTANTINO, Florencio (Tenor)  
2613 Cavalleria—Siciliana  
Barber—Ecco ridente  
2614 Favorita—Una vergine  
Iris—April la tua finestra  
2615 Manon Lescaut—Donna nonvidi ma  
Pearl Fishers—Mi par d'udire ancora  
COSTA, Alfredo (Baritone)  
2616 Pagliacci—Prologue  
Zaza—Zaza, piccola zingara  
2617 Tosca—Se la giurata fede  
Barber—Cavatina  
2618 Rigoletto—Cortiglano  
Otello—Credo  
2619 Faust—Dio Possente  
Andrea Chenier—Un di m'era gioia  
CROSSLEY, Ada (Contralto)  
11-inch discs  
254 St. Paul—But the Lord Is Mindful of His Own  
Out on the Rocks (Dolby)  
255 The Lost Chord (Sullivan)  
Nearer, My God, to Thee (Carey)  
(TO BE Continued)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists WILL OAKLAND

By JIM WALSH

Within the past two or three years I have probably had more requests for a biographical sketch of Will Oakland than for one about any other still living pioneer recording artist. I consider Will, who has probably been the most popular countertenor singer of all time, one of my best friends, so I am especially glad to relate here some details of his long and colorful career.

I'm happy, too, that Will is still husky and hearty. His blue eyes are bright; his ample dark brown hair is only sparsely touched with gray, and he looks twenty years younger than his age. As I write, he is engaged in a tour of twenty-eight thousand miles, entertaining disabled service men at Veterans camp shows throughout the United States. I had the pleasure of hearing him when he was at the Roanoke V-A Hospital on July 25 and 26, and can testify that his voice is as sweet and powerful as in the days when he was one of the ranking phonograph singers.

But let's start at the beginning of the singer's career—with his birth. Probably not many of Will Oakland's admirers suspect that he uses a stage name, but the truth is that when he was christened shortly after being born in Jersey City, New Jersey, on January 15, 1880, he was given the name of Herman Hinrichs (pronounced Hine-riks). His father, Bernhardt Hinrichs, a wholesale poultry dealer, was born in Hamburg, Germany. His mother, who had been Miss Louise Seilaff before her marriage, also was German and was a native of Hanover. Mr. and Mrs. Hinrichs did not meet until they came to the United States.

Herman—or Will, as we may now begin to call him—was the youngest child of the family of five boys and one girl. As a boy, his home life was unhappy. He describes his father as the arrogant, high-tempered, domineering type of German—one who kept his wife and family in complete subjection. About the only lighter side to the elder Hinrich's character was a love for the stage. It was his practice, as soon as his sons grew old enough to "talk back" and resent his harshness, to show them to the door and thrust them into the world to make their own living. This was something that they all did with marked success.

After Will grew into his teens, his mother separated from her husband and returned for a time to Germany. Will, too, left the Hinrichs home on Whiten street in the Lafayette section of Jersey City. He got himself a job as a Western Union messenger, carrying telegrams to men returning from the Spanish-American war. Then he likewise went into military service and was assigned to Troop D of the

44th U. S. Cavalry at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Eventually, Will had enough of military life and obtained his discharge. On his way back East he visited the World's Fair in St. Louis and heard John McCormack, then virtually unknown in this country, sing in "The Irish Village." "That," Will told me, "was my inspiration. I decided that if I could come even fairly close to McCormack, singing was the career for me." Actually, Will had already been a featured singer with army bands while he was still in uniform. He was blessed with that rarest of male voices—the countertenor (or contra-tenor, as he prefers to call it), which produces the highest tones possible to a masculine singer and is the equivalent of the feminine contralto. Will says that really his voice never changed from the boy quality.

The young fellow with the phenomenally high voice came on to New York, and his professional career got under way when he was engaged to sing at the Kenmore Hotel in Albany. Before long, the famous minstrel impresario, George Primrose, heard him and hired him to take the place of "Blackface" Eddie Leonard, who had just quit the Primrose show. It was Primrose who gave the singer his stage name of Will Oakland—a happy choice because it is musical, rhythmic and somehow suggests the flavor of the sentimental ballads in which Will excelled—songs such as "When the Robins Nest Again" and "When the Autumn Moon is Creeping Thro' the Woodlands." "Oakland" came from Fred Oakland, a once famous singer who died before Will Oakland's day on the stage.

As a member of the Dockstader troupe, Will had a variety of experiences. He likes to tell about the time he heard a young fellow singing in a theater in Little Rock, Arkansas. Will quickly decided that the young man would be a valuable member of the company and got the boss to give him a job. The promising youngster didn't stay in minstrelsy long, but went on to the heights of show business. And thus did Will Oakland discover Al Jolson.

Will was the second countertenor to win fame as a phonograph singer. Richard José, who had begun making Victor records in 1903, was the first. Oakland became a recording artist because Thomas A. Edison heard him one night and personally engaged him to sing for cylinders. Will had been under the impression for many years that his first Edison recording was "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and he was surprised when I told him that his initial offering was a song I have already mentioned—Alfred Solman and Monroe H. Rosenfeld's ballad, "When the Autumn

### MISCELLANEOUS

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin appraised** for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 444 Surf St., Chicago, Ill. jcl20041

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. d80441

**Swiss Music Movements, assorted** tunes, \$1.90. Direct from manufacturers agent.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. n3084

**SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming** single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. jcl24201

**SWISS MUSICAL UNITS \$2.75.**—Music Boxes, 131 West 42nd, New York 18, N. Y. n3061

**WANTED:** Victor or Edison catalogs and supplements, 1912 or earlier.—L. B. Mack, 1157 Penniman, Plymouth, Mich. mh06

**YOUR REED organ and melodeon** problems analyzed. State make, describe symptoms thoroughly. If I help, send two dollars. Bellows cloth, other parts for sale.—Wyle York, The Organ Shop, 3134 Harlandale, Dallas, Texas. f64201

**BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850** for sale. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. my122511

**Wanted:** Coin-operated, automatic musical instruments and music rolls for Seeburg Pianos, Mills Violin Virtuosos, etc.—Wm. S. Allen, 616 First National Bank Bldg. Santa Ana, Calif. mh60621

**FINE ROSEWOOD MELODEON,** perfect, and perfect playing condition. Top 38x50", height 32", about 78 keys, 150 years, write.—Edith Blair, 1500 Langdon, Alton, Ill. np1802

**FOR SALE,** rare antique Clementi grand piano.—Anna M. McKechnie, Canandaigua, N. Y. d3761

**OLD POPULAR MUSIC,** I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3272

**MELODEON PEDALS made to order,** \$12.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. d3042

**"SMALL GRAND DULCIMER,** refined, 4 octaves, key board like a piano, 32" wide, 33" long, 33" high, \$150. Gem roller organ, walnut case, all in good condition, 10 rolls, \$25. Lovely Swiss music box, inlaid rosewood case, 14" cylinder, comb perfect, 7 bells with bee strikers, also a drum, plays 8 tunes, write for photo and price.—Ray Albertson, Atlantic, Iowa. n1884

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1006 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.

Moon is Creeping Thro' the Woodlands." The cylinder was issued in August, 1908, with the following comment: "This record introduces a new Edison artist, Will Oakland. He has a countertenor voice of bell-like sweetness, which is heard to excellent advantage in this pretty, romantic ballad. Many of our Edison friends have expressed a desire to hear a good countertenor or falsetto singer, and Mr. Oakland can rest assured of a flattering reception."

Three months later, Oakland's record of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," a song with which he has always been intimately associated, was issued. It's possible that "Maggie" was recorded before the other, but was held for a later release date, because it was a "standard," which would always be in demand, instead of a transiently popular song.

With his first cylinders, Will Oakland stepped into the front rank of Edison artists. His phenomenally high voice was a sensation. This was true throughout the English-speaking world, for Edison records were sold everywhere.

The grown-up boy soprano's following soon became even greater, for his first Victor record, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," appeared in April, 1909, and many others followed. These also were listed abroad in the catalogs of Victor's foreign affiliates, and I'm intrigued by the fact that some of the Oakland records continued to be sold by the Zonophone company in Australia and New Zealand years after they had been cut out by the American maker. Will's Columbia records began to appear in 1910, and they also had a strong sale in Great Britain and the British dominions. Columbia and Regal catalogs in those countries used the descriptive term, "sweet-voiced Will Oakland," and some of his acoustic discs were sold overseas for several years after the era of electric recording began.

Although Will sang many of the popular ballads of the day, his specialty was the sentimental songs of the Eighties and Nineties, such as "Only a Pansy Blossom" and "White Wings"; "tear-jerkers" of an even earlier period, of which "Stick to Your Mother, Tom" is a good example; and Civil War ballads, of which "Just Before the Battle, Mother" (recorded by Edison with elaborate sound effects) and "Who Will Care for Mother Now?" were typical. Songs about Mother always had a prominent part in the Oakland repertoire, and one of his biggest hits was "As I Sat Upon My Dear Old Mother's Knee." In 1915 he made an unusual Victor record in which he sang the refrains of five old-time ballads. The record was called "Old-Time Song Medley" and introduced "When the Robins Nest Again," "My Mother's Old Red Shawl," "White Wings," "Stick to Your Mother, Tom" and "Wait Till the Clouds Roll By." Such numbers are the kind that win the hearts of the plain people, and

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Will Oakland at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Roanoke, Va. With him is Eula Christian, well-known Tennessee, writer, who came to Roanoke to meet her favorite singer, and hear him render the song she likes best, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen."

there is no question that Will Oakland won them completely.

During his first years as a record maker, Oakland did little duet work, although he teamed up with a baritone, William H. Thompson, in several Edison and United States Everlasting cylinders. Meanwhile, he had left Primrose and, for the season of 1909-10, was with the Cohan and Harris Minstrel Troupe. In May, 1911, Edison issued a two-minute cylinder of

"On Mobile Bay," by the Oakland Quartet, which today is a mystery to Will. He says he simply can't recall having any quartet named for himself and doesn't remember who the other singers were. The Edison supplement said all the quartet members were well-known recording artists, and my guess is that the other three were John Bieling, Steve Porter and William F. Hooley.

Later that year, Will became the star of another ensemble that was destined to become famous. It was the Heidelberg Quintet—in effect, the American Quartet (Billy Murray, Bieling, Porter and Hooley), with Oakland added to give harmonizing top tenor effects. The quintet's arrangements were mostly written by the late George Botsford and were especially designed to make the counter-tenor tones stand out against the well-balanced work of the other singers. Virtually all the Victor records by the quintet emphasized the fact that Oakland was starred by saying: "Heidelberg Quintet (with Will Oakland)."

Probably most collectors of old records have wondered how the Heidelberg Quintet got its name. Will says that the group began its recorded work with a 12-inch faced Victor called "A Night at the Club." Both sides were devoted to carrying on a

sort of running story set to music. The second ended with an announcement that "The Heidelberg Stein Song" will now be sung by our Heidelberg Quintet." The boys thought the record would be a sensation, but—sad to say!—Victor's board of review decided it would have only a limited sale and wouldn't permit its release. However, the name of the Heidelberg Quintet stuck and was used afterwards for all the Victor and Edison records by the five. The quintet's biggest seller most likely was Victor 17141, "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee."

The quintet made records for about three years. Will doesn't remember just why it ceased to function as a unit. One reason may have been John Bieling's retirement. Another perhaps was the fact that Oakland had quit minstrel work and begun to make

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coast-to-coast tours in vaudeville. Meanwhile, in 1914 Will also sang with an ensemble known as the Lyric Trio. This consisted of himself as countertenor; Albert Campbell, first tenor, and Henry Burr, second tenor. In its way this was the most remarkable vocal organization I know of—the only trio or quartet ever to come to my attention in which there was neither a baritone nor a bass. All the voices were high. Burr, however, stuck to his lower range in singing the lead. The trio worked together only a short time, but made some beautiful Victor and Columbia discs.

Oakland and Billy Murray also struck up a duet partnership in 1914, and turned out some splendid Victors. (Murray, of course, was the duet partner of practically every popular singer at one time or other). Particularly outstanding, I think, is their version of "Just for Tonight," a 1914 composition that has had a revised vogue within the past year. With Billy singing the melody and Will producing high-toned harmony, it is one of the loveliest "popular" records that I have heard.

For several years, Will Oakland sang as a headliner attraction in Keith theaters throughout the country. Then in the early 1920's along came radio, and the erstwhile minstrel man became as popular on the air waves as he had been on the stage and records. In 1926 the New York Evening World sponsored a contest to determine the most popular radio singer. Will received a half million votes, taking first prize and being awarded a Packard automobile. However the advent of radio meant his recording career had virtually ended, for he says the leading phonograph companies were extremely hostile in those days to the new-fangled wireless entertainment, and told him that if he sang into a radio "mike" he couldn't go on singing into a recording horn. Will smiled as he told me: "I decided that if they felt that way about it, I had made enough records, anyway, so I just said, 'O. K., it'll be radio from now on.'" He made only one or two electric records, among them a Harmony of his latter-day theme song, "Let's Grow Old Together, Honey," which he composed himself.

As evidence of the genial Will's radio popularity, the *New York Herald Tribune* published the following, somewhere around 1926 or 1927:

*"Oakland claims record for remote broadcasts. Veteran Broadway entertainer on three stations. Will Oakland, widely known radio entertainer, claims to hold the record for regular broadcasting from a remote point over a single station. The veteran minstrel and musical comedy entertainer has been featured on WHN for six full years, his programs being picked up from various Broadway locations. In addition to still being featured on that transmitter, Oakland is also heard over WMCA and WOR each week. Oakland reached the stage by early performances with . . . minstrel shows. His prominence*

*dates back to the days when he toured the country with Lew Dockstader. His last musical comedy appearance was in a Shubert show at the Winter Garden, called 'The Spice of 1922.'"*

In 1927, the versatile Mr. Oakland went to Europe on a pleasure trip. He visited the British Broadcasting Company headquarters in London, and was asked to appear on the opening program of the new B. B. C. station, 2-LO, which he did. Then he was booked for a week at the Palladium variety house and made a big success.

Meanwhile, Oakland had become one of Broadway's leading night club operators. In 1922 he opened Will Oakland's Chateau. Radio was just getting under way, so Will installed "remote" facilities for broadcasting from the club through WHN. He did his own announcing. Five years later, after his return from Europe, he opened Will Oakland's Terrace at 51st street and Broadway, and stayed in business there until 1933. In 1928, he opened a summer place in Westchester, Hunter's Island, and continued to operate it for the next two or three years. Unlike most other night clubs, Will Oakland's establishments didn't violate the prohibition laws by selling liquor, and he won an appreciated compliment in Walter Winchell's column. Winchell said that Oakland operated the cleanest place on Broadway, and added: "That's one reason you seldom see me there. Not enough dirt."

The last few years before the depression of 1929 were the height of Will Oakland's prosperity. His radio popularity brought him vaudeville engagements at \$2,500 a week, and his night club holdings and other interests made him more than a millionaire. He had a show place home at Great Neck, owned a 49-foot cabin cruiser, and was planning to expand his night club activities. Then came October, 1929, the country barged into one of its most disastrous panics, and the depression hit Will an almost mortal blow.

Even so, he managed to remain a leading Broadway figure, noted for his charity and liberality (he always fed five hundred hungry persons on Thanksgiving Day) as well as for his irreproachably clean life. But then came March 4, 1933, and the nation's banks were closed in a dramatic gesture by incoming President Roosevelt. That happened to be the date that Will had selected for opening a new night club, the Chateau International, at 12 East 53rd street. What happened after the banks' closing is thus tersely summarized by Will: "Nobody had cash. Everybody was scared stiff. I kept going for three months—then the smash. I lost two hundred thousand dollars, when three banks with my money in them folded." In the crack-up he lost his clubs, his home and most of his other possessions.

But Will Oakland still had, as he yet has, his wonderful voice, and instead of continuing as a night club operator, he became a night club singer—the profession he has followed

most of the time in the years since 1933. Then, early this year, he was offered the opportunity of becoming master of ceremonies for a so-called "Gay Nineties unit" entertaining the men in Veterans Hospitals. He accepted and has been having a wonderful time—if on occasion, a depressing one—by bringing a bit of music and comedy into the lives of thousands of unfortunates whose minds and bodies have been impaired by war. Besides himself, the troupe consists of "Grandma" Darling, a spry 68-year-old dancer; Della Ray, a little red-headed lady who produces music by ringing cow bells; Lillian Ashton, a veteran English comedienne; Edna White, noted trumpet player who made Edison and Columbia records; Willie Solar, a comedian with much motion picture experience; and a pianist, string bass player and guitarist.

I have purposely confined this account of Will Oakland's career to one installment, rather than have it extend over several issues, as in the case of a number of other artists. The reason is that while he was in Roanoke, he and I spent as much time together as possible, while I took notes of many phases of his life story not mentioned here. We believe that some of the larger magazines would be interested in publishing an Oakland series, and some of the movie companies have also hinted that they'd like to produce a film based on his exploits. That's a possibility which Will plans to investigate thoroughly when he goes to Hollywood on his tour. He and I hope to get together later for more work on his biography, supplementing the notes I made during the parts of two days we were together. The result, we hope, will be a magazine series that can be expanded into a book, which in turn will form the basis of the movie.

However those plans may work out, you may take my word for it that Will Oakland is not only a fine artist but a lovable fellow. But that's something which anyone who knows him doesn't need to be told!

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## Notes From Early Victor Catalogues I

By JIM WALSH

In September, 1948, I visited the offices of the R. C. A. - Victor Company in Camden, New Jersey, and through the kind permission of the record sales manager, Mr. E. C. Forman, was privileged to spend several happy hours making notes from Victor record catalogs and supplements ranging from 1902 through 1909. On re-reading these notes, they have struck me as so interesting that I feel they should be shared with other collectors, even though they refer in passing to many pioneer recording artists instead of providing the nucleus of a single biographical sketch.

Beginning with the complete catalogue of Victor (7-inch) and Monarch (10-inch) single-faced records, dated February, 1902, it's startling to observe the amount of recording that the fledgling company had accomplished since it began making 10-inch records in 1901. The recording studios must have worked day and night. Sousa's Band, for instance, had more than 100 records to its credit, and many were listed in both sizes. Incidentally, John Philip Sousa, who had a vast contempt for recorded tunes and is sometimes said to have originated the contemptuous term, "canned music," didn't conduct his band when it was playing for Victor. Here is an interesting quotation from the 1902 catalog: "All our Sousa Band Records are made under the personal direction of Arthur Pryor, assistant conductor of Sousa's Band, by special permission from John Philip Sousa. Sousa's Marches are played in every part of the civilized world, and are reproduced on every known mechanical device, but genuine records played by Sousa's Own Band are made only in our laboratory.

"At enormous expense, our entire list of 'Victor' Records, with very few exceptions, has been remade. No greater proof of the advance we are making in recording sound could be given than the marked improvements in our new records of the old 7-inch 'Victor' lists of Sousa's Band and D'Almaine and Siegel's Violin and Mandolin Solos."

The 1902 catalog contained 11 piccolo and 10 flute solos by George Schweinfest, who was later to be associated almost entirely with the Columbia Company. Mr. Schweinfest died in June this year at his home in Newark, aged 87. He was probably the oldest of all the surviving pioneer recording artists.

Also in the 1902 catalogue is a

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brief mention of the death of the monologist, Roger Harding, who was one of the first men to sing as a member of a recording male quartet: "Note—Mr. Harding died very suddenly and we will only be able to furnish a limited quantity of his records." This statement is rather puzzling, since Victor had permanent masters and should have been able to make as many matrices and "mothers" as it wished from the Harding originals. I can't see what his death had to do with furnishing supplies of his records.

Moving up to the December, 1902, supplement, there is a mention of the American Band of Providence: "This celebrated military band is now in its 65th year, having been organized in 1837, a history without a parallel in this country. For more than 30 years, with the late D. W. REEVES as conductor, it has held a prominent place among the military bands of America, and is now, under the able leadership of Herbert L. Clarke, in the height of its success."

Also issued in December, 1902, were two trombone solos by one Mr. Claude Spary, whose fame is totally unknown to the present generation of record collectors. They were: 1762, "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?" (Hughey Cannon) and 1756, "At the Bottom of the Deep Blue Sea." (H. W. Petrie.) I wonder if even one copy of either of these "trombone smears" exists today. How I'd like to find Mr. Spary's version of "Bill Bailey"!

Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan were just beginning their phenomenally successful comedy partnership in 1902. The December list contained no less than seven of their offerings, beginning with No. 1719, "I Never Trouble Trouble Until Trouble Troubles Me."

One of the now almost forgotten early recording artists—Silas Leachman—was mentioned: "Mr. Leachman is a native of Kentucky, and his imitation of the 'darkies' style of singing is perfect in every detail. His 'coon songs' are the most distinct and pleasing dialect records we have ever made." (Perhaps some Chicago reader of HOBBIES can tell us whether Mr. Leachman is still alive and living in the Windy City? He was, some 15 years ago.)

In February, 1903 were issued what must have been among the first records ever made by a quartet of women. Who today has a disc by the Paloma Quartet, or has even heard of that ensemble? Here is the catalogue editor's proud comment: "Although the record of a quartet of women's voices has long been regarded as an impossibility, we have succeeded in producing some pleasing records—not loud but very good quality." They were, 1887, "La Paloma"; 1889, "Medley of Popular

Songs"; and 1890, German Song, "The Waterfall."

Here's another mention of Silas Leachman: "New selections and old ones made better by 'Little Silas,' the favorite singer of coon songs. When it comes to a coon song no one can equal Silas. His jolly laugh and side speeches are in the true Negro vein and the enunciation is perfect."

In March, 1903, Victor Herbert's Orchestra played a 12-inch version (No. 31121) of "The Rosary", and Hobart Smock, baritone, had three of the big discs: 31064, "An Old Sacred Lullaby" (Corner); 31065, "Lend Me Your Aid" (Gounod); and 31125, Recessional (De Koven). As far as I could ascertain, these were Mr. Smock's only contributions.

In June, 1903, seven 7-inch and 10-inch "Casey" records by Russell Hunting were listed with this comment: "Real Casey records at last! Imitations have occasionally been put on sale in America, but no genuine Casey records have been made here since Mr. Hunting's departure for Europe in 1898. These records were made in London by Gramophone and Typewriter, Ltd, specially for us and are certainly the most mirth provoking series we have catalogued. Mr. Hunting's inimitable character of Casey is unapproachable and never fails to provoke shouts of laughter."

Jean de Reszke, the legendary operatic tenor, gave a testimonial to Victor tone qualities in July, 1903: "I consider the Victor Talking Machine a really marvelous instrument, reproducing the human voice to perfection." There were similar testimonials from Yvette Guilbert and Coquelin.

Most collectors, who associate baritone George Alexander exclusively with early Columbia records, will be surprised to find him having two numbers in Victor's September, 1903, list. "Mr. Alexander," we are told, "is a well known concert singer and robust baritone who sings with intelligence and taste." The records were 2414, "Thy Beaming Eyes" (MacDowell) and 2415, "Under the Rose" (Hawley). Alexander's real name was Clifford Wiley. He was a native of Baltimore, who died a few years after his recording career began, but some of his versions of hymns and patriotic songs remained in the Columbia catalogue for many years after his death.

Collectors who attended the September, 1948, John Bieling Day party at the Garden City Hotel will remember the charming soprano, Edith Helena, who won the hearts of everyone because of her friendliness and charming personality. Miss Helena is thus mentioned in the September, 1903, Victor list: "Soprano solos by Edith Helena. Miss Helena's voice is a clear soprano with an extremely wide range, and she sings F in alt with ease, a difficult feat which few of the great prima donne have ever been able to accomplish." The records: 2389, "Last Rose of Summer"; 2396, "Ah! non giunge—Somnambula" (Bellini);

and 2388, "Melba Waltz (Se Seran Rose)" (Arditi).

In November, 1903, occurred an event which, in the world of popular recorded music, was roughly comparable to Columbus' discovery of America — for Billy Murray was introduced to Victor audiences! But observe the modesty of the comment which the premier all-time recording comedian was accorded: "A new singer of coon songs whose records are unusually clear, every word can be distinctly heard." Here are the first historic Murray records, with Catalog Editor Sam Rous' incidental comments: 2452, "I Never Could Love Like That" (it was too expensive); 2454, "My Little 'Rang Outang" (a very funny burlesque on the prevailing "jungle song"); 2455, "Under a Panama" (the lady didn't want any cocoanut tree); 2453, "Up in a Cocoanut Tree" (tale of a

spoony babboon). (The "babboon" spelling is copied from the original).

The January, 1904, supplement announced the death of the great cornet virtuoso, Jules Levy. In February, 1904, the "Banjo King," Vess L. Ossman, came through with a 12-inch solo, "Mississippi Bubble."

Several records by the late W. H. Thompson, a baritone later unknown to Victor lists, were issued in 1903 and 1904. Thompson, who sang for a time in concert with Schumann-Heink, was for several years a popular Edison cylinder singer.

The pioneer violinist, Charles D'Almaine, appeared in June, 1904, with what was termed a viol-horn solo, No. 2770, "Donkey and Driver";

"An entirely new instrument, the first one of which has just been brought to this country by us. The tone of the viol-horn is very like that which would be produced by a blend of violin and oboe." This "viol-horn" probably was the Stroh violin invented by an Englishman, Charles Stroh, and fitted with a small metal amplified to throw the sound into the recording horn. In later lists the "viol-horn" designation was dropped, and D'Almaine's records were simply described as violin solos. Perhaps they were remade. Ed Forman told me that D'Almaine's son came to the Victor offices a couple of years ago and inquired if any of the masters of his father's records had been preserved. He was informed that all had been destroyed.

James McCool, a fairly popular recording tenor of the early days, had a solo (M2732, "The Face in the Firelight") in the June, 1904, supplement. "Sung by Mr. McCool with great success in DuMont's Minstrels."

The late Emilio de Gogorza, then a Black Label artist, was represented in August by a two-record version of the Pagliacci Prologue. They were M2822 and M2823.

A set of records very much out of the ordinary and which I should dearly love to find also came out that month. They were Iroquois Indian Songs by Ho-nu-ses ("Long House"), a native Iroquoise. These records of Iroquois songs have aroused much interest among scientific men who are interested in anthropology. Professor Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago, who has made a special study of the Iroquois tribes, has secured a set of the records for the Department of Anthropology, where they will, during future centuries, be of inestimable value to students of Indian languages. These songs are sung for the most part at dances of a religious character. They are accompanied by a small drum or by some kind of a rattle. Quite often the words have no meaning; in some cases the words are true words but are archaic and the meaning now forgotten. In others, the words convey some real idea. There were more than a dozen of the Iroquois records, all 7-inch.

Harry Tally, who was to become a Victor favorite, appears for the first time in the September, 1904, list: "It is with pleasure that we intro-

duce a new tenor to our great Victor family. Mr. Tally's records will speak for themselves." They were, 2955, "All Aboard for Dreamland" and 2956, "I've Got a Feeling for You."

Elvira Frencelli appeared in the October, 1904, supplement, with a soprano rendition of The Arditi Waltz (2985). There was also another mention of Billy Murray: "Mr. Murray's popularity continues to increase, and with good reason, as his clear-cut pronunciation brings out every syllable. And whether it is a

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)

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**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

**VOCAL COLLECTORS!** Hard-to-get records, individually offered. Lists issued according to singers. Please state "wants". Write or visit—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. ja6829

**RARE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Vocal operatic, popular, collectors' items, reasonably priced. Ask for lists.—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Pa. mh120821

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f126942

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. 13253

**MY COLLECTION 6,000 RARE EUROPEAN RECORDS.** Sobinoff, Spani, Leider, Schlusnus, Cortis, Smirnoff, Caruso. Reasonable prices.—Topalian, 348 - 40th St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f3483

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin appraised** for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 444 Surf St., Chicago, Ill. je120041

**MUSIC BOXES;** Specializing in the repair of musical boxes of all types including the repair of singing bird pieces, etc. Choice music boxes for sale.—George A. Bidden, Barrington, R. I. d80441

**MELODEONS** for sale. Both octagon leg and lyre end type, all in good playing condition. Descriptions and prices sent on request.—Joseph Leighton, 2626 Westfield St., West Springfield, Mass. f3464

**SWISS MUSICAL Movements,** charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

**SWISS MUSICAL UNITS \$2.75.**—Music Boxes, 131 West 42nd, New York City 18, N. Y. f3061

**WANTED:** Victor or Edison catalogs and supplements, 1912 or earlier.—L. E. Mack, 1157 Penniman, Plymouth, Mich. mh05

**YOUR REED organ and melodeon** problems analyzed. State make, describe symptoms thoroughly. If I help, send two dollars. Bellows cloth, other parts for sale.—Wylie York, The Organ Shop, 3134 Harlandale, Dallas, Texas. f64201

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850 for sale. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. my122511

**Wanted:** Coin-operated, automatic musical instruments and music rolls for Seeburg Pianos, Mills Violin Virtuosos, etc.—Wm. S. Allen, 616 First National Bank Bldg. Santa Ana, Calif. mh60621

**FOR SALE,** rare antique Clementi grand piano.—Anna M. McKechnie, Canandaigua, N. Y. d3761

**OLD POPULAR MUSIC,** I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3272

**MELODEON PEDALS** made to order, \$12. — C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. d3042

**PAILLARD** antique musicbox, 3 cylinders, 24 selections. Brilliant tone, beautifully inlaid case. Also Paillard musicbox with 6 cylinders, 48 selections, drum bells, castagnette, 24 note organ. Both with matching tables.—J. Poelman, 78 West 103rd St., New York. d1882

**MERMOD MUSIC BOX** with 3 cylinders, 14 1/2" long, 6 airs each, exceptional fine tone. Also a "Heller" Voix-Celestes musicbox, with organ, plays 10 airs. 2 singing birds, in gilded cage. Whistling figure, plays "Pony Boy". Musicbox discs for regina Criterion Symphonian in various sizes.—J. Poelman, 78 W. 103 St., New York. dx

## MUSIC

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

descriptive ballad, a comic or coon song, the selection is always sung in an accomplished manner." That same month, a Miss Quinn and Mr. Thompson of the Whitney Opera company gave a scene from the musical play, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." It was called "Swanee River" and depicted a "proud Southern beauty" singing the old Foster song in her room while a lover serenaded her with another blending melody. This may have been the first recorded scene from a musical production.

In November, 1904, Frank Kernell (S. H. Dudley) sang what certainly was one of the earliest motoring songs—"My Gasoline Automobile" (from "The Maid and the Mummy").

A rather surprising offer was made in December, 1904, when record No. M4093, "Amateur Night on the Bowery," was listed by the Spencer Trio: "Note:—The Spencer Trio has just made for us new versions of the (1947) 'Alpine Specialty'; M1948, Old Cabin Door; and 1946, 'Mocking Bird Medley,' which are very fine records. Those who possess old records of these new selections can exchange them for the new records under the exchange plan now in effect." (Wonder what that exchange plan was?)

Also in 1904 were listed some "rube" specialties by Byron G. Harlan and Frank C. Stanley: "Quaint and amusing scenes of rural life with descriptive effects. They are so natural that you seem to be on the spot listening to the Squire, the Deacon and the Country Blacksmith. These sketches are written by Mr. Stanley and the characters are drawn from life. Harlan's portrayal of the squeaky voiced little deacon is very comical and contrasts effectively with Stanley's deep drawl."

Two of the all-time greats—Len Spencer and Billy Murray—were introduced as a duet team in January, 1905. The record was a "coon song," "Shame On You." Said the supplement: "A new combination which has commenced with some very original and amusing records. A tale of a colored preacher (Mr. Spencer) who was seen in possession of a fat pullet at 2 a. m. and was denounced in meeting by the deacon (Mr. Murray). Very funny."

Important history also was made in March, 1905, when Henry Burr's first Victor records were announced. Probably Victor didn't suspect that the youngster in his early twenties was to become the company's most popular ballad singer, for the announcement was conservative: "Mr. Burr is a singer new to our lists, and we think his records will meet with favor." The first two were M4239, "Daddy," and M4240, "Loch Lomond."

What a month March, 1905, was! It also brought Ada Jones into the Victor fold for the first time, with M4231, "Mandy, Will You Be My Lady Love" (Perrin): "Miss Jones' clear and pleasant voice is shown here to advantage. Every word of this quaint darky song is distinctly spoken."

Also listed in March, 1906 were several records by the Old Homestead Double Quartet, with the explanation that "this is the first time Mr. Denman Thompson has permitted the ensemble to sing for talking machines."

And Edith Helena was again mentioned: "Immediately upon Miss Helena's return from Europe, where she has been delighting French, German, Spanish and English audiences, we hastened to secure her exclusive services for her brief stay in America."

Finally, there was the following intriguing note: "Every Victor Record a Good Record. Every buyer of records has been fully aware that the above statement has been true for some time . . . every record in our monthly lists being of the highest possible quality. It is now possible to make this announcement apply to every catalogue issued by the Victor company. To enable us to do this we began more than a year ago to remake or withdraw every record in our catalogue which failed to come up to the new standard. This work, which has cost us more than \$100,000, is now completed and record buyers can today order any selection from a Victor catalogue and be sure that it is the best record of that selection which can be made."

The announcement went on to say that Victor was constantly becoming more prosperous, but it hinted that other talking machine and record manufacturers were growing increasingly hard up.

(To be continued)

—O—

## PRINTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

of taste, so elegant in the drawing, so graceful in every attitude, and at the same time marked with such manly expression, that if I were obliged to fix upon any print as an example of all the beauties, of which single figures are capable of receiving, I should be tempted to give the preference to this; tho' at the same time it must be owned, that some of them give you too much the idea of marble.

The most striking instances of fine drawing are seen in the principal figure; in the legs of the figure that supports him; and in those of the figure dancing with the pipes; in the man and woman behind the centaur; in the figure in the clouds, with his right hand over his knee; in the Apollo; and particularly in that bold, foreshortened figure of the sign Capricorn.

Instances of expression we have in the unyieldiness of SILENUS. He appears so dead a weight, so totally unelastic, that every part of him, which

is not supported, sinks with its own gravity. The sensibility too with which his bloated body, like a quagmire, feels every touch, is strongly expressed in his countenance. The figure, which supports him, expresses in every muscle the labour of the action. The dancing figures, if we except that with the thyrsus, are all strongly characterized. The pushing figures in the sky are marked with great expression; and above all the threatening Capricorn, who is represented in the act of drawing a bow.

With regard to *grace*, every figure, at least every capital one, is agreeable; if we except only that figure, which lies kicking its legs upon the ground. But we have the strongest instances of grace in the figure dancing with the pipes, in the man and woman behind the centaur, (which, it is not improbable, might be designed for BACCHUS and ARIADNE) and in the boy lying on the ground.

With regard to *execution*, we rarely see an instance of it in greater perfection. Every head, every muscle, and every extremity is touched with infinite spirit. The very appendages are fine; and the stone-pines, which adorn the back-ground, are marked with such taste and precision, as if landscape had been this artist's only study.

oOo

## SMITH'S PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF SHOMBERG, FROM KNELLER

KNELLER, even when he laid himself out to excel, was often but a tawdry painter. His equestrian portrait of king WILLIAM, at Hampton-court, is a very unmasterly performance: the composition is bad; the colouring gaudy; the whole is void of effect, and there is scarce a good figure in it.—The composition before us is more pleasing, tho' the effect is little better. An equestrian figure, at best, is an awkward subject. The legs of a horse are great imbrances in grouping. VANDYKE indeed has managed king CHARLES the First on horse-back with great judgment; and RUBENS too, at Hampton-court, has made a noble picture of the duke of ALVA, tho' his horse is very ill-drawn.—In the print before us the figure sits with grace and dignity; but the horse is no Bucephalus: its character is only that of a managed-pad. The bush, growing by the duke's truncheon, is a trifling circumstance; and helps to break into more parts, a composition already too much broken.—The *execution* is throughout excellent; and tho' the parts are rather too small for met-zotinto, yet SMITH has given them all their force.

## Group of "WASHINGTON" Steel Engravings

All framed in walnut box frames with gold leaf liners.

The Courtship of Washington, 18x24"; Frame 20¼x26¼". Washington and His Mother, 18x24"; Frame 21¼x27". Martha Washington, 21½x29½"; Frame 26x34. Gen. Washington (on Battle Field at Trenton), 20x28¼"; Frame 24½x32¾". The Home of Washington, 22x32¾"; Frame 25½x35". Washington and His Family, 21x27"; Frame 25x30¾". All engravings have a very few brown age or water spots.

Complete Group \$60 Plus Transportation — Not Sold Singly.

SCHOENFELD'S ANTIQUE SHOP

248 Main Street,

Saugerties, New York

dp

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## NOTES FROM EARLY VICTOR CATALOGUES. II.

By JIM WALSH

The return of the popular minstrel tenor, JOE NATUS, as a Victor artist was announced in the July, 1905, supplement. The following note appeared with the listing of Record M4361, "By-Gone Days in Dixie": "Admirers of Mr. Natus will be glad to see that he is once more with us after many months of serious illness. It will be noticed that his voice did not suffer by the confinement, and in this ballad

of Dixie Land his clear tenor and crisp enunciation are the same as of old." But Natus' comeback was short, and he soon dropped entirely out of the recording picture.

A photograph of BYRON G. HARLAN also appeared in the July supplement. Apparently it was the first published by Victor of any "popular" artist. The cut-lines read: "Mr. Harlan, whose pleasant countenance is shown here to gratify the curiosity of many admirers of his voice, is a most versatile gentleman, as his sweetly sung ballads, his characteristic imitations of the squeaky voiced deacon in the 'rube' records and his funny comedy work in the Collins and Harlan duets will show." The August record list continued the portrait series, with pictures of ARTHUR COLLINS and BOB ROBERTS.

Three memorable records, with consecutive numbers, were listed in September. The first was 4430, "My Carolina Lady," by ADA JONES. Then came two by Collins—4431, "The Preacher and the Bear," probably the most famous of all acoustically recorded popular songs, and perhaps an even more clever "coon song"—4432, "What You Gonna Do When the Rent Comes 'Round?" The latter is better known as "Rufus Rastus Johnson Brown."

FRANK C. STANLEY's photo, accompanied by the following comment, appeared in September: "Mr. Stanley is one of our most valued singers, his fine voice being admirably adapted to the work of record making. A glance at our catalogue will show that he is represented there in widely different ways—in standard and sacred songs, basso profundo solos, popular songs and Yankee comedy. All of his work is extremely well done and we are sure that his numerous admirers will be pleased to see his frank and genial countenance exhibited here." There was a picture, too, of JAMES MCCOOL's "pleasant face."

In October, one of the most famous automobile songs, "In My Merry Oldsmobile," was listed by BILLY MURRAY. Two months later, in December, the supplement contained the likeness of the German tenor, EMIL MUENCH, whose career as a recording artist began in very early days and continued into the electric era. And there was likewise a photo of GEORGE W. JOHNSON: "If anyone who has ever enjoyed Mr. Johnson's inimitable laugh and whistling songs doubts that they are made by a real 'black man,' this picture of the familiar 'Whistling Coon' will remove those doubts. George is just as jolly as this photograph indicates and so thoroughly enjoys making these records that his laughs are real ones and not forced." (A few years later Johnson was hanged for murdering his wife.)

Record buyers were given good news in the January, 1906, supple-

ment. The price of seven-inch records was dropped from 50 cents to 35, and that of ten-inch ones from \$1 to 60 cents. The reduction of course was attributed to constantly increasing demand and larger output.

Under the heading of "THE VICTOR ORCHESTRA—WALTER B. ROGERS, CONDUCTOR," an unusually interesting note appeared in February:

"The Victor Company, in 1903, began to make its vocal and instrumental solos and duets with orchestra accompaniment. It soon became dissatisfied, however, with the plan usually followed by record making laboratories of engaging musicians as individuals whenever they were needed. Even though the best available players were used, it was found that really artistic work could not be done in this way. In 1904, therefore, the Company conceived the idea of establishing a permanent orchestra which should give its exclusive time to the making of Victor records. From a

### RECORDS

**FINE CLASSICAL RECORDS:** Auction: Imported instrumentals, largely cutouts. Unusual collectors opportunity. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Penna. mh6446

**100,000 OPERATIC RECORDS,** for sale. G&T, HMV, Fonotipia, Victor, Columbia, etc. Send want list to—John Slegnano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6007

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought. —E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o 126121

**EIGHT THOUSAND** different selections; vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 15, Calif. d126351

**WILL BUY** used records, or collections. —Jacob S. Schneider, 128 West 66th St., New York City 23, N. Y. mh3882

**FINE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Classical, vocal, operatic, violin, piano, vaudeville, jazz, popular, Lauder, McCormack, reasonably priced. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3084

**VOCAL COLLECTORS!** Hard-to-get records, individually offered. Lists issued according to singers. Please state "wants". Write or visit—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. ja6829

**RARE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Vocal operatic, popular, collectors items, reasonably priced. Ask for lists.—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Pa. mh120821

**FOR SALE:** Swiss music boxes, Regina disc type music boxes and extra records for all sizes of Regina music boxes and many other old mechanical items.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Rt. 3, Hanover, Mass. P. O. Box 342. f126942

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. 13253

**100 EDISON** cylinder records \$10: Edison Diamond Disc machines, with 50 records.—John J. Loeper, 935 Center St., Ashland, Pennsylvania. ja1061

**MY COLLECTION** 6,000 RARE EUROPEAN RECORDS. Sobinoff, Spani, Leider, Schlusnus, Cortis, Smirnoff, Caruso. Reasonable prices.—Topalian, 348 - 40th St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f3483

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. —"Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. mh3c

### MISCELLANEOUS

**FOR SALE:** Beautiful old fashioned organ in solid walnut, high top, bevel plate mirror, "Estey" make; perfect condition. Make an offer. Also some some low type organs in good condition and other articles too numerous to mention. Two antique pipes with china bowls.—Mrs. H. E. Carlson, Franklin, Nebraska. ja1843

**HAVE YOUR OLD violin appraised** for insurance or closing an estate. You may own a masterpiece. Fee \$5.—Berger, Violin Connoisseur, 444 Surf St., Chicago, Ill. ja120041

**WANTED:** Hurdy-Gurdy organ. State size, price, condition.—G. Robinson, 2073 Holmes Dr., Mobile, Ala. ja1021

**MELODEONS** for sale. Both octagon leg and lyre end type, all in good playing condition. Descriptions and prices sent on request.—Joseph Leighton, 2626 Westfield St., West Springfield, Mass. f3464

**SWISS MUSICAL** Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95, Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. —Wagner, 1433 York Ave. N. Y. C. ja124201

**SWISS MUSICAL** UNITS \$2.75.—Music Boxes, 131 West 42nd, New York City 18, N. Y. f3061

**WANTED:** Victor or Edison catalogues and supplements, 1912 or earlier.—L. E. Mack, 1157 Penniman, Plymouth, Mich. mh05

**YOUR REED** organ and melodeon problems analyzed. State make, describe symptoms thoroughly. If I help, send two dollars. Bellows cloth, other parts for sale.—Wylie York, The Organ Shop, 3134 Harlandale, Dallas, Texas. f64201

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1950 for sale. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. my122511

**Wanted:** Coin-operated, automatic musical instruments and music rolls for Seeburg Pianos, Mills Violin Virtuosos, etc.—Wm. S. Allen, 616 First National Bank Bldg. Santa Ana, Calif. mh60621

**MILLS VIOLINO** — Virtuoso, coin operated piano. —Harry Ludwig, 1515 Southeast 35th, Portland 15, Ore. f3691

**RARE SWISS MUSIC BOX** "Forte-Piano", plays 8 airs with 9 bells. Beautifully inlaid case. Other music boxes, large and small. Also singing bird in tortoise shell box. Excellent condition. —J. Poelman, 78 West 103 St., New York. ja1272



list of the very best instrumentalists of America were chosen the players composing the Victor orchestras and it is an indisputable fact that this is one of the most remarkable bodies of musicians in the world. Although the cost of this exclusive Victor feature has been very great, the expenditure has been fully justified, as Victor records soon became famous for their artistic accompaniments and are now in a class by themselves, no other records even approaching them in general excellence."

In March, 1906, it was announced that RICHARD JOSE's record of "Silver Threads Among the Gold," issued in 1903, was the biggest seller up to that time. Three months later, to anticipate a little, this honor was taken over by Billy Murray's version of "You're a Grand Old Rag"—or "Flag"! The March supplement also said that Victor was the first to issue duets by two tenors—HARRY MAC DONOUGH and JOHN BIELING. That month the duo sang No. 4606, "Pal o' Mine"—(Nathan) and 4610, "Saved by Grace" (Stebbins). In April there was "a new portrait of genial Billy Murray, one of the Victor's most popular singers."

Eight-inch records were introduced about this time, to take the place of the seven-inch variety, and the May supplement remarked that the eight-inchers were much superior to the smaller ones, "owing to the larger circle of sound waves. Our seven-inch list will now be gradually withdrawn or made over in the eight-inch size." In August, it was revealed that the best selling HAYDN QUARTET record was No. 109, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

A famous theatrical personality, DE WOLF HOPPER, made his Victor debut in September, 1906, with his ever-green recitation of "Casey at the Bat." And listen to this: "Mr. Hooper is so much pleased with this record that he has willingly agreed never at any time to make this selection for any other company than the Victor!"

In October, CORINNE MORGAN, the

contralto, was represented with a record, No. 4835, of "Flee As a Bird." "Miss Morgan, who has been in Europe during the summer, has returned in fine voice and has given us a splendid record of Dana's well known sacred number."

Moving up to February, 1907, the "Uncle Josh" man, CAL STEWART, returned as a Victor artist, and the annotator wrote: "Everyone will be glad to know that genial Cal Stewart has returned after extensive travels which took him over a great part of the world." Oddly enough, almost these words were used in the September, 1915, supplement to greet Stewart's return after an absence of several years from Victor lists.

As far as I can learn, the only duet ever made by CORINNE MORGAN and ELSIE STEVENSON appeared in May, 1907. It is No. 31628, an exceedingly scarce twelve-inch record—"Holy Mother, Guide His Footsteps," from Wallace's "Maritana."

In October, 1907, the first Victor record was listed by one of the finest, but one of the most neglected, of early phonograph comedians—EDDIE MORTON. I quote: "Eddie Morton is one of the best coon song singers in America, and during the past summer was a feature of the Madison Square Roof production, 'Maid and the Millionaire,' where he was obliged to respond to numerous encores. The Victor has secured the exclusive services of this popular singer and now offers two of his greatest successes." The records were 5220, "Mariutch (Do the Hootch-a-ma-Cootch)," on the label of which the comedian's name appeared as EDWARD MORTON, and 31661, "That's Gratitude."

The December, 1907, issue presents a real puzzle. It lists a record of the then reigning ballad, "Love Me and the World is Mine." The record was sung by WILLIAM T. EVANS, and it has long been understood by collectors that William T. Evans and HENRY EVANS were both *nom de disques* of the famous Red Seal tenor, EVAN WILLIAMS. Yet a photo of WILLIAM T. EVANS is reproduced, showing him as a hatchet-faced man with a black mustache. A few issues later, the chubby-faced, smooth-shaven picture of Evan Williams, which used to be a feature of Victor record catalogues, was shown. There is certainly no resemblance between the features of William T. Evans and Evan Williams, although the voices seem to be identical. Perhaps the "photo of W. T. was a 'phony' deliberately inserted to throw curiosity seekers off the track.

The back page of the May, 1908, supplement contained another out-of-the-ordinary item. It was a photo of GERALDINE FARRAR, listening to a Victor record. And the record was CLARICE VANCE's rendition of "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark."

In February, 1909, the given names of the members of the famous WHITNEY BROTHERS QUARTET were published. There were Alvin M., William

F., Edwin M. and Yale B. Incidentally, EDWIN M. WHITNEY was the first recording artist I ever met.

The first supplement containing double-faced records was the issue of March, 1909. The listings began with No. 16113. In May, a separate supplement was issued, listing all double-faced records up to that time. There must also have been an earlier one containing the list from 16000 through 16112.

An important announcement was made in the April, 1909, issue. BILLY MURRAY had signed up exclusively with Victor for disc record work, although he continued to make Edison cylinders. As a matter of fact, he also continued to make Zon-o-phone discs, which were rather surreptitiously issued by Victor at 65 cents, to compete with the Columbia price range. Victor double-faced records, at 75 cents, were ten cents higher than Columbia.

The May, 1909, supplement contained three outstanding announcements. One was that the AMERICAN QUARTET, which had just been organized, would sing exclusively for Victor. (It was the PREMIER QUARTET on Edison cylinders). Then there was WILL OAKLAND's first Victor record, "Silver Threads Among the Gold." The supplement remarked that "this singer takes high F with ease."

And also in May appeared the first Victor record by the soprano, LUCY ISABELLE MARSH, who had previously made a few discs for Columbia. Miss Marsh, who later appeared on Purple and Blue Label lists before graduating to Red Seals, began as a Black Label artist. Her first record was 35075, "Angels Ever Bright and Fair." She was described as a member of the choir of the Madison Avenue Reformed Church in New York.

In August, 1909, there was a photo of the mandolin player, EUGENE W. PAGE, who made duets with a guitarist by the name of Ramseyer. (I have never known Mr. Ramseyer's given name, but for some reason have long imagined it to be Hugo.) And that same month, DE WOLF HOPPER came through with a new version of "Casey at the Bat," described as "very much better and clearer than the old one." In December, ARTHUR CLOUGH appeared as a Victor artist,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

**LLOYD G. KELLEY**  
Successor to



**REGINA**  
MUSIC BOX CO.

Christmas tunes for the 15 1/4" Regina, special, \$2.50 each. No. 3028 White Christmas; 3029 Jingle Bells, 3030 The First Noel; 3031 Hark the Herald Angels Sing; 3032 Santa Claus is Coming to Town; 3036 Come Hither Ye Children; 1028 Still Night, Holy Night; 1029 O Sanctissima; 1423 O, Christmas Tree.

Complete line of reconditioned antique music boxes for sale. *tf*

**P. O. Box 342**  
**Hanover, Massachusetts**

**SAPPHIRE NEEDLES**

Pathé Type — \$5.00 each  
Edison Type — \$5.00 each

These special sapphire needles are made for playing Pathé and Edison type disc records on modern electric phonographs. Simply insert in place of your regular needle.

Woodymay Pickups Available  
**JAMISON R. HARRISON**  
Bedford, Mass.

jax

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

singing, with the assistance of the HAYDN QUARTET, "The Red, Red Rose."

This is as far as I carried my researches into old Victor record supplements and catalogues during my stay in Camden. I hope these random notes will be of some interest and value to other collectors. But I can't say farewell to the Victor offices without recalling something. Sales Manager Ed Forman showed me—a photostatic copy of a letter which Thomas A. Edison had written to "Frank Foell, Esq., 510 Second St., Philadelphia, Pa.," on December 29, 1877—the year that the phonograph was invented. Mr. Foell apparently had suggested some improvement, for this is what Mr. Edison wrote to him from Menlo Park:

"Dear Sir: Your letter and sketch received. Am much obliged for the suggestion and it would be valuable, but owing to the inconvenience of placing the paper on the cylinder I had to adopt a revolving plate with a volute spiral and have one now working satisfactorily. The reproduction of the voices is now absolutely perfect. Yours, Thomas A. Edison."

The copy of this letter which I saw was presented to Mr. Forman by a son of Mr. Foell. It's interesting, and amusing, to observe that the claim of "perfect reproduction" was being made by Mr. Edison in 1877, a few months after he produced his first crude phonograph, just as it always has been, and is still being made, by succeeding generations of manufacturers.

## Do You Remember?

By E. E. MEREDITH

When a haircut cost 15 cents?  
When our daddies cut our hair?  
When cemeteries were known as "graveyards"?  
When a doctor's sign was called a "shingle"?  
When girls played "Chop Sticks" on the piano?  
When men wore long linen dusters when traveling?  
When men wore paper collars when they were "dressed up"?  
When women wore broom-like skirts which swept the streets?  
When hymn books had advertisements both in the front and back?  
When waste baskets were decorated with silk ribbons and a big bow?  
When goose quill pens were used to write with ink made from maple bark?  
When snuff came to the store in large jars which were afterward used for churns?  
When gold caps on the front teeth, which flashed when the owner smiled, were fashioned?  
When a big fat "doctor book" was found in nearly every home and was frequently consulted?

Among the spinets, lutes and other outmoded instruments in the music gallery at the Metropolitan Museum of Art one comes upon evidence that to indefatigable Ben Franklin another and comparatively unknown accomplishment must be credited. In this instance his talents were engaged not with diplomacy or philosophy, printing or wise saws, love-making or electricity, but with the designing of a musical instrument whose tones he found "incomparably sweet, beyond those of any other."

Franklin could play the harp, guitar and violin sufficiently well to give pleasure not only to himself but also to his friends.

During a protracted stay in London he chanced, about the year 1760, to hear an instrument new to him called a "glasharmonica." The inventor was an Irishman named Puckeridge. When the rims were rubbed by a moist finger they emitted the notes of the scale. Franklin was enchanted by the mellifluous quality of the tone. But no sooner had he heard and been charmed than he began to see ways and means of improving the arrangement of the glasses, of increasing the number of the notes and making the whole instrument more compact.

The amiable doctor described his improvement and dwelt with enthusiasm upon their success in a letter dated London, July 13, 1762, and addressed to his friend the Rev. John-Baptist Beccaria, then living in Turin, Italy. The largest glass had a diameter of nine inches, the smallest three inches. The intermediate sizes varied a quarter of an inch in diameter one from the other. On the glasses were indicated the notes they represented. They were tuned by grinding down the thickness of any that gave out too sharp a note in the scale. As Franklin observed, this instrument, once tuned, "never again wants tuning." "In honor of your musical language," he wrote his clerical friend, "I have borrowed from it the name of this instrument, calling it the armonica."

As soon as his new toy was delivered to him he began practicing tunes upon it, and before long was giving recitals for his friends at Number 7 Craven Street, near the Strand, where he was comfortably quartered in the house of Mrs. Stevenson and her sprightly daughter Polly.

To anyone that showed interest in his well-loved armonica, which he kept always with him wherever he went from that time on, he would readily impart the finer points of its manipulation. He cautioned the use of rain water for moistening the rims of the revolving glasses ("spring water is generally too hard, and produces a harsh tone"). We have his word for it that, "all directions observed, the tone comes forth finely with the slightest pressure of the fingers imaginable, and you swell it

at pleasure by adding a little more pressure, no instrument affording more shades, if one may so speak, of the forte piano."

Franklin's favorite French song was "Les Petits Oiseaux," a naive air that he was wont to play for his friend Madame Brillion, whom he often visited while living at Passy, near Paris, when he was representing the United States in France. One of the scores of notes and letters she sent him refers to a promised visit: "Father Pagin," she wrote, "will play 'God of Love' on his violin, I the march on the piano, and you 'Little Birds' on the armonica."—M.G.L.

THE MENTOR, June 1928

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more to say in a moment. Goritz was a famous "character" baritone at the Metropolitan for many years. Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* was one of his most famous roles. In this drinking song from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, an extraordinary convincing atmosphere of unrestrained Teutonic bibulousness is conveyed. Urlus, of course, was one of the finest lyric-dramatic tenors of his day and well deserves honoring in this way. Marie Rappold was a warmly admired soprano in her time and is represented on very few standard-cut recordings.

oOo

### IRCC Activities

Meanwhile, The International Record Collector's Club, 318 Reservoir Avenue, Bridgeport 6, Connecticut, continues merrily on its way, issuing re-recordings four at a time, once every other month. Among the artists represented on recent IRCC discs are the following: Lucrezia Bori, Gertrude Kappel, Frieda Hempel, Felicie Kaschowska, Frederick Jagel, Antonio Scotti, Giuseppe Campanari, Emma Carelli, Lilli Lehmann, Alessandro Bonci and, in a performance of the *Bohème* quartet, Adeline Stehle, Maria Camporelli, Edoardo Garbin and Mario Sammarco. Mr. W. H. Seltman, secretary of IRCC, will be glad to furnish numbers, titles and prices upon request.

oOo

### Claudia Muzio on LP

Esoteric Records, a new name in the repressing field, has brought out a Long Playing "Microgroove" disc containing eight arias sung by the late Claudia Muzio. These have been dubbed from Edison Diamond Discs with considerable skill. The voice quality is bright and forward, if perhaps not quite as pure and round as on some of the best 78-RPM re-recordings of these records. Accompaniments sound vague and shadowy, of course, but that's something collectors of old recordings are accustomed to. Mme. Muzio's exquisite soprano, with its warm, velvety tones, is heard in the following arias: *I Lomardi-Se vano, se vano e il pregare; Loreley-dove son?; Herodiade-Egli e bel come il Ciel; I Vespri Siciliani-Merce, dillette amici; Rinaldo-Lascia ch'io pianga; Eugene Onegin-Sei forse l'angelo fedele; L'Africana-Figlio del sol; and Carmen-Micaela's Air*. If your local dealer doesn't have it, you may order direct from Greenwich Music Shop, 75 Greenwich Avenue, New York 14, N. Y. Price, \$5.95, including packing and mailing charges.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

BILLY WHITLOCK

By JIM WALSH

This is the first sketch I have written about an English recording artist. Up to now I have dealt exclusively with performers whose discs and cylinders were chiefly, if not altogether, made in the United States—for the reason that such men and women are better known to American collectors than their contemporaries in other countries. But Billy Whitlock is an exception to the rule, and when such a tempting subject comes along there is nothing the biographer can do but yield to temptation and urge the editor to insert his article in the earliest possible issue.

Unless you are a veteran collector of ancient recordings, the name of Billy Whitlock may mean nothing to you. However, collectors who know something about the pioneer English artists, as well as the American, will recognize the genial Billy as one of the earliest recorders of laughing songs, who probably also ranks among the world's finest players of the xylophone and orchestra bells. And millions of persons who have been patting their feet during recent months to the lilting rhythm of a catchy tune variously known as "Hot Scotch" or "Hop Scotch Polka" should be interested to know that it was composed by Billy Whitlock and was first recorded by him as a bells solo some 45 years ago. Not only

that, but it has brought its composer, who was born in Cheltenham, England, in July, 1874, out of the obscurity of a night watchman's job back into the limelight where he belongs. Thinking it over, I feel that Prof. Walter B. Pitkin, author of "Life Begins At Forty," should be writing this article, perhaps under the title of "Life Begins All Over At 75!" However that may be, I am proud of the fact that I have had something to do, as I shall explain later, with publicizing Billy Whitlock's comeback, and that he and I have struck up a warm friendship by correspondence. We are planning to get together in England in 1952 when, I hope, I shall attend the fiftieth annual meeting of the Dickens Fellowship — but Billy intends to come to the United States before long for a vaudeville tour. If he does, we may be able to meet long before 1952.

I can write the life story of Billy Whitlock largely by quoting from interviews with him which appeared almost 45 years apart; giving excerpts from letters written to me by

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Billy Whitlock and Charles Penrose as "The Two Old Sports."

Mr. Whitlock and his son-in-law (who is also his business manager), Percy Harris, and mentioning briefly some articles I have contributed to the "the Bible of show business," *Variety*.

In my invaluable file of bound volumes of the *Talking Machine News*, formerly published in London, I find the following in the issue for May, 1905, under the heading of "THE REAL ADVENTURES OF BILLY WHITLOCK" (By Our Own Interviewer)—spelling and punctuation as in the original:

These are the Real Adventures of Billy Whitlock, as distinguished from those imaginary ones of which he has made so many successful records. I remember not long since assisting at a children's party, and the hit of the evening was unquestionably the record of Billy Whitlock at the Zoo. It convulsed the juvenile audience and, indeed, many of the oldsters besides—that is those who had not outlived the ability to indulge in a good hearty laugh. I had not yet seen the man who made the record, but a few months afterwards I chanced to drop into the Brighton Aquarium and saw him in the flesh. I do not think I exaggerate here again when I say that from out of the exceedingly capable troupe of minstrels, of which he was one of the leading performers, he again came out as the popular favorite. His unctuous humor was delightful. The spirit of humor was in him; there was no forcing the note of fun; it was free, natural and spontaneous. By-the-way, I ought perhaps to mention here that this was by no means his first introduction to "burnt cork"; he was, in fact, some time with the Moore and Burgess Minstrels.

Some months later I happened to be in the recording room of the then Electric Phonograph Co., Ltd., now the British Phonograph Industries, Ltd., in Bowling Green Walk. A stout gentleman was laughing "fit to bust himself," as Mr. Weller put it, into the mouth of the recording horn. "Billy Whitlock making a laughing song," remarked someone. And so, when he had finished, and taken a slight rest after his exertions—for making a laughing record is no joke, I can assure you, however much it may seem so at the first blush—I was introduced in due form; and that is how this account of the real adventures of Billy Whitlock comes to be written.

"Let me see," said he, "I began life as an apprentice on board ship. I got as far as Calcutta, and there I ran away—I had more than enough of that way of going to sea. At Calcutta I joined the Stanley Operatic Company. I was with the Company four years and then I got tired of that. So I 'verted to

a Skating Rink as instructor, though at the time I did I did not know how to skate myself. However, I happened later on to win the Long Distance Skating Championship.

"My engagement with the Rink terminated—the Rink closed, and I was out of employment. The Stanley Opera Company was in Bombay, and I was in Calcutta without a penny to bless myself with by this time. I thought I had better rejoin my old friends, but how was I to get there? I loitered around the station for a while, and there I struck up a friendship with an engine driver. Good man! He not only took me 200 miles on my way for nothing—where his route ended—but he passed me on to a pal of his, who passed me on to another pal, and so on, until I got to my destination. Alas, when I got to Bombay, I found the Company was by that time performing at Allahabad. I thought that, failing any better way, I could not do better than travel as I had done before. So I sought out the man who had so kindly dumped me down in Bombay, and I was once more passed along to Allahabad. Not quite so good as a 'Director's pass' perhaps, but quite as effective in covering the required distance.

"I had another good time with the Stanley Company, and then I received advices from England that I had come into some money. I asked the lawyers for fifty pounds on account to take me home. They sent it, but I am sorry to say I did not succeed in getting home with it. It would not go far enough—so I sent for another fifty. They sent that also, and they sent a third also, but with a polite intimation that they would send no more. So I got 'aboard the 'lugger' at last.

"When I got home I went into partnership in a minstrel show, but the profits somehow failed to materialize. Then I deserted the profession for a while and went into commerce and lost a thousand pounds in less than no time. My next experience was with the cinematograph and here I first grew to have a practical acquaintance with the phonograph, and the animated picture firm with which I was associated were among those houses who hired out talkers to exhibitors. They did not sell them. As you know, the policy formerly—a short-sighted policy, too—was to hire, not to sell. Then, I got a guinea for making a record, and that led to other guineas and other records. There followed a contract for a year. The rest you know, and everyone who is in the business knows. Yes!! my selections on the lists are all of them composed 'out of my own head.' I never, by-the-way, had a lesson in orchestration in my life."

"You come of a musical stock?" I surmised.

"Yes, maybe that has something to do with it. My father was a musical director in the States in the 'fifties,' and my aunt a vocalist in grand opera."

"Do you play?"

"Yes, I can manage to coax a tune out of almost any instrument that is set before me."

As a composer, it remains to be said that Mr. Whitlock is responsible for the well-known *Electric March* which he wrote specially for the British Phonograph Industries, Ltd.

Billy Whitlock's special forte is laughing songs. His favorite motto is, laugh and grow fat. There seems some truth in it, for, as he tells me, he is growing fatter every day. . .

That interview, remember, appeared almost 45 years ago. During the years that followed, Billy Whitlock became as noted for his bells and xylophone recordings as for his laughing songs. He made discs and cylinders for most of the English phonograph organizations, and some of them were reissued in the United States by companies, such as Columbia and Vocalion, which had British affiliations. However, his association was especially close with the pioneer Edison Bell company, the first English firm to make records, and he played regularly as a member of the E-B orchestra. And Billy not only made records and appeared with minstrel troupes, he also formed a music hall partnership with another famous singer of laughing songs, Charles Penrose. In the February, 1923, issue of the *Talking Machine News* appeared a review of a Pathé record on which Whitlock played two of his own compositions, "Lonesome Frolics" and "Grasshopper Barn Dance." Said the reviewer:

"Dear old Billy Whitlock seems to be coming to the front again with his bells and xylophone. Of course, everybody knows that he and Charlie Penrose have been doing a music hall sketch for some time, entitled 'two Old Sports,' and that, naturally, has kept Billy to a certain extent out of the record world; however, when he has the opportunity he is back again at the old game and is just as good as ever."

But, as the years rolled on, the "talkies" virtually killed the Whitlock and Penrose act, and things went from bad to worse for the formerly carefree Billy. Then came his 1949 Decca record of "Scotch Hot" (issued in this country under the London label), and 75-year-old Mr. Whitlock suddenly found himself famous and in the money again. The story of his sudden change of fortune is well told in an interview with him, written by J. Stubbs Walker, which appeared on the front page of the *London Daily Mail* for Saturday, October 15, 1949. It had the headings, "They Put His 1904 Song On For Fun" and "WATCHMAN OF 75 BACK WITH SMASH HIT":

"Old Bill," 75-year-old Brixton night watchman with the well-kept hands and the cultured voice, has written New York's latest song hit.

Bald, well-built and cheerful, Billy Whitlock, once a 100-pound a week music-hall star, sat in his bed-sitting-room at a Brixton boarding house yesterday and chuckled his way through contracts that show him as a potential earner of thousands of dollars. All because a very old gramophone record which he made in 1904 was played as a joke on an ultra-modern radiogram at a New York cocktail party.

Billy has been plodding along on his old-age pension and odd night-watchman jobs in South London for years.



In a few months the sprightly old man who used to make recordings for the original Edison Bell company will be back in the money. The record they played at the New York cocktail party was heard by dance-band maestro Guy Lombardo. It was recorded again, and sold fast. The Decca company cabled London to see whether the original Billy Whitlock were still alive — and swept him down to the studios to make another record of the song hit.

"It's like a dream," Old Billy said last night. "There I was, just pottering along, getting by as well as I could

on any job that offered, and here I am with pockets stuffed with contracts." The records of his song, a rollicking, old-fashioned polka called "Scotch Hot" — now renamed "Hop Scotch Polka" — are selling at the rate of 15,000 a week in America. The song has already been broadcast in England and the records are just coming on to the market. . . . "Looking on the dreary side," one of Old Billy's new musical agents said last night, "he'll be worth three thousand pounds in the next few months. He just can't help it. The number is just a natural hit."

Billy told me: "It's wonderful to feel that I'm back in the swing of things — seeing publishers, making records, talking 'shop' and meeting people again. Four more songs of mine, some marches I've written — good old Sousa stuff — and several oddments are being published in America."

His life story is complicated. Son of a musician, he has been sailor, skating rink instructor, gramophone-recording mechanic, cinema operator, grocer and tobacconist, orchestrator and arranger, truck driver and night watchman. But most of his life he has been "in the money" on the stage, part of a double comedy act that used to earn him eighty pounds a week, plus another twenty pounds for gramophone recording fees. The cinema killed his act. . . .

"I never saved money when I was earning it," he said. "I lived. Hotels, cars—I've owned 13 in my time—parties, expensive friends and good clothes; the money went as fast as I earned it."

Two things he is most famous for; he was the first man who started making the "Laughing" records—the kind of things you have to chuckle at whether you are a Chinese coolie or a Welsh clergyman—and his bells. Bill's bells were heard in about a couple hundred different old-style gramophone records. Now he has bought a second-hand set of bells.

"I'm going to get myself a piano, too," he told me, "and work like I used to." And he is moving from his small room into two bigger rooms in the same house.

This is how my hands-across-the-sea friendship with Billy Whitlock began: As soon as his London record of "Scotch Hot" was issued the Billboard and Variety gave it warm praise. Then both printed accounts of a new firm, Cromwell Music, being set up to publish the number-in-sheet music form. Delighted at seeing a great old-timer making such a fine come-back, I wrote an article for Variety in which I said that Whitlock and Peter Dawson probably had been making records longer than any other artists now before the public and speculated as to how old the veteran bells player might be. I estimated that he might be anywhere up to 100, mentioning the Talking Machine News interview in which he said that his father was musical director in this country in the "Fifties." I argued that if his father were 35 in 1855, that would mean he was born in 1820 and would be 129 if he were still alive. Assuming that he was 30 at the birth of his son, that would make our friend Billy 99. However, I also said that the picture which accompanied the T. M. N. article appeared to be that of a man about 35.

As soon as my whimsical article appeared, Gene Rayburn, a disc jockey at WNEW, New York, wrote to me to say that he and his partner, Dee Finch, were responsible for the "Scotch Hot" record (the other side is "Two of Irish") being issued. I quote from his letter:

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 31)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**FOR SALE:** Beautiful old fashioned organ in solid walnut, high top, bevel plate mirror, "Estey" make; perfect condition. Make an offer. Also some some low type organs in good condition and other articles too numerous to mention. Two antique pipes with china bowls.—Mrs. H. E. Carlson, Franklin, Nebraska. ja1843

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**WANTED:** Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo records. — Gerhardt, 4318 Ridgeview, Cincinnati 5, Ohio. jly 6483

from China. It is of highly polished brass and is about two and one-half inches at the base. The handle, which is about six inches high, has the three "no evil" monkeys on the end.

Another Chinese bell in beautifully finished brass stands about six inches high and is three inches across the bottom. The handle is knurled and ends in four widespread, upturned sharp claws.

The expression "crystal clear" comes to life when one rings another bell. Made of clear crystal glass, it is about six inches high and four inches across the bowl. It was made for Miss Price, and around the bottom is a handcut leaf design and on the side the letters M. B. P., also are etched.

From far away Java comes a big handmade brass animal bell that looks like an inverted dugout canoe.

A unique door bell is Japanese. Suspended from the end of a long piece of spring steel is a little brass bell. The spring is so sensitive that the least movement of the door causes the bell to ring.

Still another Chinese bell is made of a rectangular brass hood with a hollow brass tube suspended from each corner. The knocker is hung from the center of the hood.

Fashioned in pewter, the Price family's old dinner bell is also a prize. The bell is very plain. It is round and shallow, mounted on a wooden stand. Projecting from the sides are two arms on which to rest the knocker.

The most colorful set of bells are Russian saddle bells. One can imagine a dashing Cossack galloping across the scene, giving forth a merry jingle with every movement of his horse. There are four bells to the set, three on top and one below. Those on top have six clappers to each bell, all mounted on the outside. The bell below has three clappers which strike from the inside.

A clay figurine presented to Miss Price by a former student, was made by a little Mexican girl. It has a surprisingly sweet tone for such a bell.

### BELLS WANTED

WANTED: Bells.—Mrs. Tilden Patton, Lexington, Ill. d12844

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OLD BELLS LIST FREE.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. d12216

### TRAVEL SEARCH FOR BELLS

By A. C. Meyer — \$2.50 postpaid

In the last 10 years, semi-retired, Mr. Meyer and his wife, also a bell enthusiast, indulged their hobby of bell collecting, which has taken them to many parts of the world. In every city and virtually every crossroads, they added interesting specimens to their collection. Mr. Meyer has summarized it all in a down-to-earth story.

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Miss Price finds collecting bells not only interesting and satisfying but also closely related to her teaching field.

How many hobbyists collect bells? Miss Price says, about 300. They are known as the American Bell Association and they will hold their next annual convention at New York in June.

If you are looking for a hobby, here is one that rings the bell!

—O—

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

"WNEW was throwing out a stack of old records, among them the Edison Bell recording of 'Scotch Hot,' with Whitlock at the bells. We played the record three or four times during the course of one week and began to get response on it from our listeners. . . . We put the record aside temporarily and began an investigation through London Records to find out who owned the master. Tutti Camarata of London Records informed us that the firm did not own the master. . . . but Whitlock was still around and willing to re-record it. We sent them an acetate dubbing from the original Edison Bell and suggested that they do it with the same instrumentation and arrangement. . . . An American publication had been arranged for the tune, so we wrote to the publisher suggesting a lyric based on the familiar children's game which is universally known as Hop Scotch. . . . The publisher turned the whole thing over to Carl Sigman, who liked the idea, and in two days came up with an engaging, refreshing lyric. . . . Guy Lombardo heard it, liked it, recorded it, used it on his network remotes. The Three Suns recorded it. Art Mooney recorded it, and Martin Block picked Mooney's version as the record of the week for the first week in August. Bill Gale has waxed it for the Columbia label. . . . My sidekick, Dee Finch, and I would be pleased to learn what the listener reaction is around Roanoke with 'Scotch Hot' when given the Walsh's Wax Works treatment."

Mr Rayburn told me he believed Billy Whitlock was 80. Then Billy himself happened to see the first Variety article I wrote about him, and at once sent me a letter of thanks in which he said: "To settle the age question, I was 75 last month (July), but I have always kept up my practice on bells and xylophone, so when the Decca company found me a month or so ago, I rattled off four solos and have another session shortly in view. Should you care to have my life story I should be pleased to forward it on. It might raise a small laugh. I think you are correct in saying that Peter Dawson and myself must be two of the oldest gramophone artists, and this bit of luck in the U. S. A. has come as a very pleasant surprise to me, especially since in these last years, things have not been quite so bright."

I was ill with a severe virus ailment when Mr. Whitlock's letter arrived, but I sent him an air mail postal saying I would write at more length as soon as I was able. Judge of my amazement and delight, when less than a week later, I received a cablegram from Billy, saying he hoped I would soon be well. That was the first time my health had been a matter of international concern!!!

A couple of weeks later I received another letter from the veteran mu-

sician-comedian, in which he humorously remarked:

"I'm having a — of a time here over the song — interviews, letters, phone messages, etc. Last Saturday it was on television. I didn't see it myself, but was told it was O. K. They made it into a sort of a sketch — girls in kilts doing it and so on, about a ten-minute show. Various bands and singers are doing it now, and it will be in all the pantomimes this year. Tomorrow a copy is being sent to the Queen for approval. I shall probably get about ten years for that, but so long as I have a piano in the cell I shall be O. K. I think my son-in-law and manager is writing you with further particulars, so I'll dry up. We must meet in 1952, if not before, all being well. Yours, till I play a harp instead of bells, Billy."

Then, in two or three days more, came a most interesting letter from Mr. Whitlock's son-in-law, Percy Harris. Here are some quotations:

"Billy Whitlock has asked me to let you know a few odds and ends about his past life. I am doing the business side of this last 'upheaval' of his. Believe me, I have never struck anything like it. Reporters by the dozen, photographers, scroungers (we Americans would call them 'panhandlers')—J. W., members of Parliament, old friends and now autographs; it's sending me crazy. But it is an experience that I would not have missed for anything."

"As you know by now, Billy is 75, but I would add, a very young 75, and he is game for anything. . . . I am trying to give you a picture of him not as an old man of a hundred or so, as your press suggested, but rather as a good old comedian. He has been working the halls and clubs with his bells and he has two acts, one as a fiery old colonel and another as a tramp, both of which are very popular."

"His past history is a little varied. . . . he started off when he was young by joining the Salvation Army because he wanted to play the drums and soon got tied up with it and went to sea. He got as far as Bombay, went ashore and went for a long walk up country. Whether he had learnt to play the drums or not I don't know, but he certainly did not like the sea. He joined an Opera Company in India and toured the country for about five years and then came home to join a troupe of Pierrots. He was by that time a good all-around musician and began writing his own music. That was in the year 1903 and in the following year he joined the Moore and Burgess Mohawk Minstrels as a 'corner man.' His numbers were successful and he started recording for Edison Bell. He did so many that he had to use other names, and I can remember my own father arguing with my uncle upon the merits of Madame Paule, Dudley Roy and Billy Whitlock as bell soloists. It was only last week that I found out that Billy did all of them. He also recorded for Beka and Clarion. About this time he teamed up with Charles Penrose and they toured the halls as a top line act as 'The Two Old Sports.' When the talkies came they separated and Billy continued as a single act. Things got worse and worse and he started to drive a truck for a friend, but that was not a success and I gave him a job in my warehouse as a night watchman, as I wanted him to start writing music again. He always wrote his music at night, and then a few weeks ago you played his old record, 'Scotch Hot,' which started Billy on the road to fame once again. (Actually, of course, it was Gene Rayburn who first played the record.—J. W.).

"Last night we sorted out some old photographs and amongst them was one which I think will interest you. It is a photo of the orchestra that played the old Edison Bell records. Billy is with them."

I am having copies made and will send you one as I am sure you will enjoy it, if only for the old-fashioned instruments that they are holding. . . . You may wonder how I know so much about Billy. I married his daughter. So that is my alibi."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

I am eagerly looking forward to receiving the photo of the Edison Bell Orchestra and hope that we can reproduce it later in HOBBIES.

It occurs to me that I can end this article appropriately by quoting from a letter written by Billy Whitlock to the editor of Variety. Abel Green (sometimes referred to as "The Uncrowned King of Broadway" because of the influence exercised by Variety in the theatrical world), and from Mr. Green's gracefully humorous reply. Said Billy:

"I would be more than obliged if you could possibly send me a copy of your August 10th article, which I believe started 'Disker Billy Whitlock' and any other article you may have published, as I find it impossible to obtain any back numbers in this country. . . I plead guilty to being 75, and on my 110th birthday you shall have the finest candle off the cake."

To which Abel Green replied:

"Am enclosing a tear sheet of the August 10th story, as per your request. It would appear that you're a 'Boy Scout' of 75, instead of a middle-aged man of 110, as might have been suspected."

That seems to sum Billy Whitlock up. He may be 75, but in spirit and enthusiasm he's a Boy Scout. If he lives to be 110, I'm sure he'll feel no more than middle-aged. I'm confident, too, that all the readers of HOBBIES will join me in hoping that he will live to be 110 and then some; that "Scotch Hot" will be followed by many more big hits from his pen or on his xylophone and bells; and that he'll fulfill his long-standing ambition to visit the United States, which so far he has never seen.

Come to see us, Billy! We Yanks love you!! It would be fine if you could attend the 1950 "John Bieling Day" party next September.

—o—

## Death of Alice Lloyd

### Pioneer Recording Comedienne

Alice Lloyd, one of the most popular of the older generation of English music hall stars and variety artists, died November 17 in Banstead, England, aged 76. Miss Lloyd was the sister of the even more famous Marie Lloyd and was known in her American vaudeville performances as "The Bonnie Belle of Scotland." She and her sister Grace also appeared as "The Sisters Lloyd." At one time she won a newspaper contest as the most popular English artist on the American stage.

The comedienne made at least four Victor records when she appeared in this country in 1907-08. The most popular was "You Splash Me and I'll Splash You," originally listed as a single-faced disc, No. 5225, and later coupled with "Don't Argify," by May Irwin, as double-faced No. 16058.

Three other single-faced records were 31646, "Never Introduce Your Bloke to Your Lady Friend"; 5158, "May, May, May," and 5159, "Young Men Lodgers." The 1909 Victor catalog said: "This charming English comedienne has made a very great success in America. Her attractive personality, bright and humorous style, and her amusing songs, which are absolutely free from anything objectionable, have captured her audiences everywhere."

Alice Lloyd's clean and innocent songs were in contrast to the frequently vulgar and suggestive ones of her sister Marie. Incidentally, her husband, Tom McNaughton, made the monolog of "The Three Trees (There! There! There!)" which, coupled with Nat Wills' "No News, or What Killed the Dog," was for many years one of the most popular records in the Victor catalog. When electric recording came in, it was remade by Frank Crumit.

—o—

## Death of Joe Belmont

Joe Belmont, one of the most popular of pioneer recording artists, died August 28th, aged 73. Mr. Belmont was noted throughout the world as a whistler. In recent years he and his son, Walter, have operated the Belmont Bird Store in Radio City.

A biographical sketch of Mr. Belmont appeared in the March, 1948, issue of HOBBIES. He is the second artist who attended the September, 1948, "John Bieling Day" party to have died. Al Bernard was the first. Mr. Belmont is survived by his son and a daughter.

I have also heard that Frank Croxton, noted concert singer and bass of the Peerless Quartet from 1917 through 1925, died recently, but have not obtained any details.—J. W.

—o—

## LINCOLNIANA IN 1949

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

article is written in journalistic style without any pretense to having been developed out of painstaking research. The only evaluation given it, then, is that the lay reader can understand and enjoy the story. One cannot escape being influenced to admire Carl Sandburg and accept him as the fine American that he is.

Other good magazine articles are *Lincoln's Cabinet* by Helen Nicolay, *Jefferson* and *Lincoln* by Dumas Malone, and *Lincoln's Great Declaration Of Faith* by J. C. Randall.

### The Magazine Article of 1949

Lincoln students frequently concur in their choice of the best Lincoln book of the year, but hardly ever agree on the magazine article. Because of the wide variety of interests of readers and a lack of objective standards by which to judge magazine articles, we have many different opinions as to what constitutes the one article that is superior to all others. Moreover, the reviewer usually has not seen some of the contributions.

In the opinion of the writer, *Lincoln's Cabinet* by Helen Nicolay and *Mary Lincoln: Judgment Appealed* by Ruth Painter Randall stand well at the top of the list. These two ladies have taken over in 1949 and have asked the men to stand aside for a time. Personally, I like McCorison's *The Great Lincoln Collections And What Became Of Them*, but Mrs. Randall and Miss Nicolay deal more directly with the Lincoln family and, therefore, should be entitled to careful consideration from that standpoint alone.

With the Lincoln Lore sheet No. 1067 before them, the advisory group of The Lincoln Foundation will practically be compelled to name, *Mary Lincoln: Judgment Appealed*, as the magazine article of the year. It probably is the best in many respects, consequently the writer names *Mary Lincoln* as the best Lincoln article of the year. Other articles, while possessing many good features, do not quite have the appeal in them that is to be found in Ruth Painter Randall's writing.

### Other Lincoln Events of 1949

Herbert Wells Fay, former custodian of Lincoln's Tomb, died October 25 at the Lincoln Lodge near the tomb. This fine gentleman, Lincoln scholar, and collector will be greatly missed by his friends and those who make frequent visits to the tomb. His son, Earl Fay, is now acting custodian.

The most important Lincoln ceremony of the year was the unveiling of a large Lincoln Statue on the campus of Lincoln Memorial University. This fine piece of art came from the hands of C. S. Paolo and depicts Lincoln as a lawyer. The event took place on February 12. Many visitors from various parts of the country came to the University and took part in the colorful dedication of the prized addition to the university's Lincoln collection. This is the first Lincoln statue to be unveiled in a confederate state and does to some extent exemplify the increasing appreciation for Lincoln in the South. Miss Margaret Johnson Patterson of Greenville, Tennessee, great granddaughter of Andrew Johnson, unveiled the statue.

The Golden Anniversary of the Illinois State Historical Society was held in Springfield, Illinois, October 7-8. Included in this colorful program and meeting was a trip to New Salem in chartered buses. The New Salem visit gave an opportunity for all to inspect the reconstructed village and finally to assemble in front of the museum to hear Fern Nance Pond tell of New Salem and then hear Carl Sandburg speak and sing with his own guitar as the accompanying musical instrument.

The annual pilgrimage to Lincoln's Tomb by the American Legion was conducted again in 1949. Sangamon Post No. 32 of Springfield, Illinois was the local sponsor for this important event. As is customary, all of the important officers of the Legion, State and National, were in attend-

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## RICHARD J. JOSÉ I

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE. — In preparing this biographical sketch of Richard José (pronounced Hoh-ZAY), I have had the help of several officials of the State of California, by which Mr. José was employed for many years before his death. I should like to thank the following for their courteous assistance: Governor Earl Warren; John J. Fisher, the executive officer of the State personnel board; D. D. Watson, commissioner of the State Division of Real Estate; R. S. Davis, assistant commissioner at the Sacramento office; and Gaylord K. Nye, supervising deputy at San Francisco. Especially warm thanks go to Mr. José's widow, who has remarried and is now Mrs. Therese José Hamlin, for her valuable assistance in piecing together many of the details of her late husband's career.)

The Final Curtain Department of the November 1, 1941, issue of the theatrical magazine, *The Billboard*, contained the following brief death notice: "Richard S. José, 71, ballad singer who helped popularize 'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' (died) at his home in San Francisco October 20. Born in England, he came to this country as a boy soprano at the age of eight. He later appeared with the San Francisco and Lew Dockstader minstrels and also appeared for many years in 'Old Homestead' and at the Old Academy of Music, San Francisco. Survived by his widow, Therese."

That item contains at least two errors. Mr. José's middle initial was not S., but J., and his wife's name is Therese. Too, there seems to be considerable doubt as to the age at which the singer left England for the United States, although he certainly was only a small boy when he arrived in our Far West. But if *The Billboard's* curt obituary had been filled with the details which I shall give, its readers would have learned that Richard José had one of the most colorfully romantic careers of any theatrical notable of his generation.

Since record collectors are particularly interested in the singing done by Mr. José before the old-time horn, let's go back 38 years from that 1941 death notice—all the way back to 1903. In that year the fledgling

Victor Talking Machine Company felt proud because it had just signed the most popular minstrel and vaudeville singer of the day for a series of records. These appear not to have been the first records Dick José had made. The late Frank Dorian, who was associated with the Columbia company for the greater part of his more than 40 years as a business executive, told me that José "made a couple of Columbia cylinders many years ago." They probably were issued in the 1890's, but I don't know what they were and have never seen them listed. It's fairly probable, too, that the young singer also did some recording for other cylinder companies that have long been out of existence, but I can't say definitely that he did.

To signalize José's signing an exclusive contract, Victor issued a small, four-page folder, on which the company's address is given as "Philadelphia, Pa., U. S. A.," instead of Camden. That is puzzling, but I assume that Victor had business offices in Philadelphia for a short time, while its factories were at Camden, across the Delaware river. The folder contains a front page picture of Mr. José, and is entitled, "Special List of Monarch and De Luxe Records by Richard José, the Famous Contra-Tenor." The front page also reveals that 10-inch, single-faced black label Victor records (then known as Monarchs) sold for \$1 each, and the 12-inch De Luxe size at \$1.50. The back page shows a Victor talking machine with a large metal horn and a cabinet adorned with too much gingerbread carving and the company gets in a plug for its new Red Seal records, saying: "Red Seal Records are heard to the best advantage when played on the NEW TAPERING ARM MACHINE—the height of mechanical perfection."

Turning to page two, we find the following interesting biographical sketch:

"A big-framed, big hearted, blue-eyed boy with the voice of an angel; he will never be anything else to his friends and they are glad of it — such is Richard José, the most successful ballad singer in the world. Besides his superb voice and the personal qualities which have made him so popular, Mr. José has a history which is interesting and romantic.

"Twenty-nine years ago in Cornwall, England, young José's voice was first heard. Even in his infancy he was set down as one who, in the figurative language of the peasants, was 'born with a bird in his throat.' At the age of six, Richard was the wonder of the village in which he lived because of his beautiful voice. When young José was twelve years old, his father died and the boy was sent to his uncle in Nevada. After a

frightful voyage, ending in the wreck of the vessel in which he had taken passage, he arrived at his uncle's home only to find him gone, no one knew where.

"Young Richard, with his plucky spirit, determined to make his own way and became an apprentice to a blacksmith at Reno, where he remained several years, building up the strong frame and deep chest which were to help make him famous. But his wonderful voice was soon discovered and he became a member of Reed's Minstrels in San Francisco, at twelve dollars a week. So great was the sensation he created that in less than five months he was sent for by Dockstader and given a salary of seventy-five dollars. The rest is familiar history; suffice to say that he now draws the largest salary paid to any ballad singer in the world. Our patrons will doubtless appreciate the opportunity offered them of obtaining these splendid records at the regular prices for ten and twelve-inch, and we anticipate an enormous sale for them."

Victor's anticipations were realized. The José records had "an enormous sale," by the standards of that day. One of those listed in the folder was No. 2556, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," the ballad with which the counter-tenor (a word I like better than "contra-tenor") was most prominently identified. The March, 1906, Victor record supplement said that "Silver Threads" was the biggest seller the company had issued up to then—although by June the honor had passed to Billy Murray's version of the great George M. Cohan hit, "You're a Grand Old Rag."

This first 1903 list contains two ten-inch records by José and one twelve-inch disc. The ten-inch were 2554, "Belle Brandon," concisely described as "an old favorite"; and the already mentioned "Silver Threads Among the Gold," of which the annotator said: "One of José's greatest successes and sung by him for many years, it still is demanded by his audiences and moves them to tears just as it did in the old days." The twelve-inch disc was "When I'm Away from You"—"a charming ballad just added by Mr. José to his repertoire."

There are a few discrepancies, of the type that seem inevitable when gathering information about pioneer recording artists, in *The Billboard* death notice and the Victor biographical sketch which had been published more than a generation before. *The Billboard* gave José's age as 71 at his death. Victor said the singer was 29 in 1903, which would have made him 67 when he died 38 years later. Edward LeRoy Rice, in his book, "Monarchs of Minstrelsy," gives the birth date as June 5, 1869. But the records of the State of California Division of Real Estate list it as June 5, 1872, and the singer's widow says this is correct—which means that when José died he was a few months past 69. *The Billboard* also said he came to

### ~~~~~ Have 200 Pathe records at \$1 ea.

Name your choice or will sell all as lot for \$150.000

No lists for single order, but will send list of records to those desiring to purchase the lot.

P. F. LUPO

1314 N. Wells St., Chicago 10, Ill.

mhc



this country at the age of eight; Victor said his ocean voyage was made when he was twelve, and another source yet to be quoted puts the young traveler's age at ten.

It seems surprising that anyone with a Spanish name such as José should have been born in England, but the counter-tenor's birthplace was Lanner, a village near the town of Red Ruth in Cornwall. José's father was of Spanish descent, and his grandfather was a full-blooded Spaniard. His mother (whose maiden name was Elizabeth Francis) was English. The singer's baptismal name was Ricardo Juan José, but after he came to America he modi-

fied it to Richard J. José. It would be interesting to know how the Spanish José family happened to settle in Cornwall, the locale of Gilbert and Sullivan's immortal opera, "Pirates of Penzance."

Richard José married Miss Therese Shrieve, of Carson City, Nevada, on July 20, 1898. He was at the peak of his career when he made his first Victor records some five years later. I think this would be a good place to quote from a letter written to me years ago by another vaudeville favorite and pioneer recording artist who knew José well and loved him—the late Dan W. Quinn. To an extent, the lives of the two singers parallel, since José crossed the Atlantic as a boy, hoping to live with an uncle in the Far West, and Quinn, at an even earlier age, came from San Francisco to make his home with his grandmother in New York. Here is what Dan Quinn wrote:

"Dick José... was a counter-tenor and, in my estimation, the finest ballad singer this country ever had. He came into great prominence singing 'With All Her Faults I Love Her Still.' I never did hear anyone (else) even try to sing it, and you may rest assured no one ever could. This song he owned 'body and soul.' This is not taking one iota from his ability in rendering other songs. He had an appealing voice, so full of love and heartbreak, and would bring the tears to anyone's eyes who had a soul within him.

"I can see him now in my mind's eye—Dick José singing 'My Gal Sal', and seated at the piano no less a personage than the author, Paul Dresser, one of nature's noblemen. Paul would accompany him on the piano, and how Dick would render this beautiful ballad, and Paul sitting there, crying like a child, the tears rolling down his cheeks at the beautiful rendition. This is the gospel truth. He, Paul Dresser, was a great big good-hearted fellow who loved everybody and who was in return beloved by all who knew him, and when he wrote a song he put more human interest in it than any man alive. To hear Dick sing 'Where Is My Wandering Boy?' was a rare treat indeed. He sang for a long while in 'The Old Homestead' at the old Star Theater, corner of Broadway and Thirteenth street, New York City, and one of the songs he sang was 'Day after Day,' which was worth going miles to hear. I used to meet him at the Victor laboratory in Camden. Either I'd follow him or he would follow me with our list of songs, also around at the different publishing houses."

Doesn't that quotation bring the theatrical days of more than a generation ago vividly to life? The  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 33)

## RECORDS

**FINE CLASSICAL RECORDS:** Auction: Imported instrumentals, largely cutouts. Unusual collectors opportunity. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Penna. mh8446

**100,000 OPERATIC RECORDS**, for sale. G&T, HMV, Fonotipias, Victor, Columbia, etc. Send want list to—John Sligiano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, N. J. mh6007

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**FINE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Classical, vocal, operatic, violin, piano, vaudeville, jazz, popular, Lauder, McCormack, reasonably priced. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3084

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**RARE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Vocal operatic, popular, collectors items, reasonably priced. Ask for lists.—Delano, 349 Lindenwold, Ambler, Pa. mh120821

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**COLLECTORS' GUIDE** to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. f124201

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. au6084

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. —"Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. mh3c

**MONTHLY AUCTION** thousands classical vocal records. Free list. —S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colorado. je6446

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**WANTED:** Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo records. —Gerhardt, 4316 Ridgeview, Cincinnati 5, Ohio. jly 6483

## MUSIC — REPAIR

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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**CAN SUPPLY PARTS** for disc and cylinder phonographs? —Leroy Hughbanks, Osborne, Kans. ap3638

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**OLD POPULAR** sheet music. 6 for \$1.00.—P. C. Hillebrant, 147 Bartlett St., Rochester, N. Y. mh1021

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

days when those big men, Richard José and Paul Dresser, were at the top of their respective fields—Dresser as the reigning dean of the popular song writing world and José as one of its best loved singers. However, the period of "My Gal Sal" was a time of sorrow for both. Through a series of misfortunes, Dresser had lost all his money when he wrote "My Gal Sal" in 1905, and lacked funds with which to promote the number which, after his death, was to become one of his greatest hits. He died, broken-hearted, about a year later without knowing that "Sal" was to rank with "On the Banks of the Wabash" as one of his most enduring songs—a true classic.

And the former Mrs. José says that the singer also was a victim of bad luck in 1905. He was appearing at one of the Percy Williams vaudeville houses in Brooklyn, when a heavy iron-bound "drop" fell from the flies and struck him on the head. The accident didn't cause him to lose his voice permanently, but Mrs. Hamlin says that many stitches were taken in his head, which was bandaged for many weeks. His hair had been jet-black, but when the bandages were removed it was snow white. Next month I shall reproduce a photograph of the singer sent to me by Mrs. Hamlin. It was taken after the tenor had recovered and shows him with a mass of white hair. It is precisely like the picture reproduced by Victor in the 1903 folder except that his hair is black in the latter and that he is wearing a different necktie and collar. But, aside from the change in hair color, the singer's features look precisely the same in both pictures, taken many years apart.

I have a vivid recollection of reading a newspaper item about José's misfortune long after it occurred. It formerly was the custom of many Negro families in the South to cover the walls of their homes with old newspapers instead of plaster or wall paper. On one occasion, as a small boy, I went into a vacant house formerly occupied by a Negro family and saw on the wall a piece of paper with the name of Richard José prominently displayed. Being even then very much concerned with anything about an artist who was well known for his records, I read the story. It told of José's suing the management of the theatre in which his accident occurred, and said that when he had finished telling of how for a time he was unable to speak above a whisper and his hair turned white, just about everybody in the courtroom, the judge included, was in tears. I have always remembered the date of that old newspaper as 1917, but if that is right, the damage suit either had been long postponed or had dragged through a protracted period.

Apparently, Victor had recorded a considerable number of José songs before his accident occurred, for they continued to be issued regularly. In

1904 the first of his several records of sacred music was announced. The April supplement said: "Those who have never heard Mr. José sing anything but the popular ballads of the day will no doubt be surprised at his beautiful rendering of sacred songs and hymns. Organ accompaniment is used for all Mr. José's sacred selections." The number issued that month was M2669, "Sun of My Soul." In June, 1906, one of the tenor's lesser-known numbers, a 12-inch version of "The Blind Boy," was issued. It is hard to find, but I have been lucky enough to get a copy. The supplement said: "A famous dramatic song with which Mr. José made a great success some years ago. He has sung it for the Victor in response to many requests from those who heard it at the time when it formed part of Mr. José's repertoire." "The Blind Boy" owed its popularity to its introduction in England by the late G. H. Chirgwin, a music hall performer who wore a white patch over one eye and was known as "The White-Eyed Kaffir." He accompanied himself on the violin, and an even more famous number of his was "My Fiddle is My Sweetheart."

I doubt that Mr. José did any recording after his accident. His last Victor record was issued in 1907, although two of his most popular selections, "Abide With Me" and "Belle Brandon," were taken over into the double-faced list, which began in 1909. Several of the single-faced numbers also remained in the catalog for many years. Meanwhile, he had sung all the favorite numbers in his repertoire. These included, besides those already mentioned, "Dear Old Girl," "With All Her Faults," "Killarney," "When You and I Were Young," "Ben Bolt," "Home, Sweet Home" and "We've Been Chums for Fifty Years." What I hope is a complete list of the José records will be given at the end of this series.

(To be continued)

## MECHANICAL ANTIQUES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

able static electric machine, an electric spark, and several models of houses to demonstrate the effectiveness of lighting rods. One, called a "thunder house," contained a small charge of gun-powder to illustrate what would happen when a house was not properly protected with rods.

Euriometers, devices for showing the effect of combining gases, appear in the chemistry part of the exhibit. One such instrument, used by the third Hollis professor in the early 19th century, is believed to be the oldest surviving piece of chemical apparatus at Harvard. Other exhibits in this field are a chemical slide rule, and instruments for investigating steam and gases.

Specimens from Professor Peck's collection of dried fishes, the oldest surviving biological exhibits in the University, highlight the displays in the biological field. One of three fish on view is labelled "common sucker from the Charles River, 1790."

The oldest geological or mineralogical specimens in Harvard University appear in the section of the exhibition devoted to these fields. They consist of a specimen of barite from Saxony, part of a gift from the Committee of Safety of the French Republic to Harvard in 1795, and the Bowdoin Marbles, a panel of 44 examples of polished European marble. The marbles are a portion of a gift from James Bowdoin to Harvard College in 1796.

—O—

## CIRCUSIANA

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

everything from candy floss to chameleons for the circus spectators, operating a diner and two stands on the midway, a back yard lunch stand, and several stands in the menagerie tents, as well as working in the seats. Seven others sell souvenir programs.

To look after the business of the show, with offices in compartments of the ticket wagons, in addition to the executives, are the legal adjuster and two assistants, who handle complaints, three timekeepers and the secretaries to executives.

In the backyard, occupying tent or office wagons, are such important individuals as the circus physician and his assistant, a mail agent, a purchasing agent, forage agent, two commissary men, and three operators of personnel buses. There are five chauffeurs, a laundry and dry cleaning department with six employees, a sanitation crew of four, an iceman, and a police chief, with two midway watchmen and eight in the backyard. A mechanical department numbers eight persons.

To look after the comfort of executives and performers on the sleeping cars are 36 porters and maids.

Thus we have, generally speaking, the personnel of the "biggest show on earth." There are a few additional utility men on the staff as a rule and forces in various departments are supplemented with recruited town labor to meet various emergencies and to maintain train schedules when long runs are required.

The circus is a city within itself and this is exemplified by the Ringling circus. Many of the performers or attaches double in other capacities to furnish services to their fellow employees, such as barber and beauty shop work, chiropractic treatments, sale of theatrical magazines and there are loan agents among the thrifty.

One of the biggest jobs is that of the interpreters, who are required to keep a family happy that speaks from 18 to 24 languages.

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the autumn of 1921-22 she was a guest star at the Berlin State Opera and achieved splendid notices. "A wonderful voice of rare beauty in tone and color." (Nov., 1921) "Her Countess in *Figaro* is a well-considered, distinguished creation." (Nov. 1921) "We have never yet heard so sweet and beautiful a Euridice." (Jan. 1922) "Her Pamina was outstanding. Not since the heyday of Claire Dux have we heard such glorious Mozart singing in Berlin." (Jan. 1922).

Many details of Rethberg's early career are contained in the book *Elisabeth Rethberg's Ihr Leben und Kunstlerium* published in 1928 at Schwarzenberg, from which I have drawn freely for this article. It is available at the New York Public Library. The authors, Horst Henschel and Friedrich, assert that Rethberg sang 106 parts at Dresden but do not list them. They do, however, give the following list of her characterizations at Dresden in 1921: Agathe, Aida, Anna (*Hans Heiling*), Butterfly, Elisabeth, Elsa, Euryanthe, Evchen, Countess, Ilia (*Idomeneus*), Inez, Kaiserin, Konstanze, Leonora (*Il Trovatore*), Marie (*Bartered Bride*), Mimi, Micaela, Nedda, Octavian, Pamina, Saffi, Sophie and Tosca. A most imposing array and a great tribute to her versatility! During Rethberg's seven years' stay at Dresden Richard Tauber was her colleague and must have partnered her quite often, but apart from their collaboration in *Zigeunerbaron*, no details are given either in the Rethberg biography mentioned above or in the recent excellent book written about Tauber by his wife.

In 1922 Rethberg sailed for the U. S. A. which she henceforth made her permanent home. She did return to Dresden from time to time, however, for a series of Lieder recitals and operatic performances in 1925 and 1927, to create the title role of Richard Strauss' *Aegyptian Helen* at the world premiere in 1928, and for a special "Rethberg Week" at the Dresden Opera in 1930 when honorary membership of all the state theatres in Saxony was conferred on her.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

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### RICHARD J. JOSÉ II

By JIM WALSH

When next we hear of Richard José, it is 1915. The man with the marvelous counter-tenor voice, the highest kind a male singer can have, is now 42, prematurely white haired because of the accident in the Brooklyn theater, but once more in good health. He has also starred in a motion picture—a silent one, of course—for the K. and R. Film Company, of 126-132 West 46th Street, New York. The picture is named for the song, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," with which the singer is inseparably identified, and when it is shown in the larger cinema houses, José goes along and sings several numbers, including, of course, "Silver Threads."

I have a copy of *The Kanr Journal*, a publication issued in July, 1915, by the makers of the film, which was written and produced by Pierce Kingsley. It is devoted almost entirely to blurbs for the picture and to much information, written in a richly sentimental vein, about Richard José's career. There is a picture of the Madison Square Garden of that day, which had been transformed from a sports arena into a film house and was described as "the largest motion picture playhouse in the world, seating 12,000 people." We are further told that the screen, or "sheet," was 26 by 34 feet (also the largest in the world), and that the "throw" from the projection booth to screen was 315 feet. "Silver Threads Among the Gold" was the first film to be shown at the Garden. It appears to have been a rustic drama, mingling humor and pathos, of "The Old Homestead" type, as witness this comment from the *Moving Picture World*: "This is something more than a picture. It is the simple old rural romance told again freshly and truly. The story runs along smoothly and convincingly." And the *New York Dramatic Mirror* remarked: "The Picture has a really stirring hold upon the tender feelings of its audiences. It harks back to the elemental surprisingly well. It is astounding how much the picture does get under the skin. They register a big heart punch." A hand bill which advertised the picture said that "America's Sweetest Contra-Tenor

will positively appear in person and sing at each performance. His wonderful golden voice has thrilled the hearts of millions of song-loving people. He made immortal 'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie,' 'Belle Brandon' and scores of other undying gems. Mr. José will sing a selected program in conjunction with the beautiful, thrilling, laughing, heart throbbing photo drama in which he also appears—'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' the 'Way Down East' of the screen. In six parts, with 250 people and 210 scenes of wondrous beauty and surpassing realism never before seen in filmdom."

The most interesting thing about the *Kanr Journal* is "The Life Story of Richard J. José," sub-titled "The Sweet Singer Who Made 'Silver Threads Among the Gold' famous." I shall now quote from the article:

Richard J. José was born in Cornwall, England. . . . When Dick José was hardly able to toddle, his father would sit at the organ with the baby Dick on his knee, and play and sing, so that almost the first words lisped by little Dick were the words of a church hymn. Before he was three years of age he could sing 'Will You Meet Me at the Fountain?' At the age of eight, he was known as the phenomenal boy soprano. His fame spread all over the country and he was taken to London, where he sang before the crowned heads, after which the boy was heard all through the provinces.

Owing to a sudden attack of illness of his father's, from which he never recovered, the boy's tour ceased. The mother, who was an invalid, was left along with little Dick, two other sons and two daughters of tender years. The father had a brother . . . in a mining camp at Virginia City, Nevada, who

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after hearing from his sister-in-law, sent her money and persuaded her to allow little Dick to visit him, as he was the oldest of the children. So at the age of ten, the little lad left Cornwall with a tag sewed to the lapel of his coat, bearing the address of his uncle. . . He made the entire trip alone. When the boy reached his long journey's end he found that his uncle had died while the lad was on the ocean, so at that tender age when a child needs the guidance of a parent most, little Dick found himself homeless and alone in a strange land and in one of the wildest mining camps of America at that time, and often he was forced to sleep with but the sky for a blanket.

One night, hungry and weary, he found himself peering through the window of a concert hall and gambling house, where the roughest element of the mining camp gathered nightly. The boy was cold, his sock-

less feet were lacerated from his well-worn and broken shoes. As he listened to the ribald song accompanied by a piano, he was clutched from behind by powerful hands, which shook him until his teeth chattered and a harsh voice rang in his ears, demanding to know what he was doing there. Little Dick, not knowing what to say to the man, muttered "I can sing, mister." The man laughed and took Dick by the hand and led him into the gambling house and calling the proprietor said, "Hey, Doc, here's a kid that sez he kin sing," and with that he pushed the boy toward the owner of the place. The latter ordered little Dick to get out and pointed to the door. Dick, in a trembling voice, while big tears began to flow, told the proprietor that he could sing. Several of the players were then attracted to the scene by this time, and as the boss grabbed the boy to throw him out they intercepted and put the lad up on the little stage and told him to sing. While hunger pains gnawed at his little body he sang in a sweet plaintive tone "Silver Threads Among the Gold." The place was soon hushed in silence, the roulette wheel stopped, the clinking of the chips and coins were silent and from that gathering of fearless gamblers not a sound came, while most of them were actually crying. When the song was finished and the tension was at the breaking point, someone said, "Do you know any more songs, Bub?" Dick nodded and started to sing the hymn he loved the best, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Men who had not seen the inside of a church for years removed their hats and fell to their knees on the floor. The boy was forced to sing this hymn three times. All gambling was suspended for the night, and the boy's presence threatened to put the place out of business. They gave him food and offered him drink. The latter the boy refused, and up to the present day, with "Silver Threads" above his own brow, Richard José has never known the taste of liquor in any form.

After the episode in the gambling house, the news spread about the camp how the boy's singing stopped the game. It was heralded to the ears of a kindly minister, who was the parson of a little church. . . He took Dick to his home and cared for him. The following Sunday he took him to church and during the singing of a hymn that little Dick had learned in far away England, he joined in and sang with all his heart in the melody. Before it was half over the boy realized that he was the only one in the whole congregation that was singing. Tears dimmed the eyes of all. In a few words the minister told his congregation Dick's sad story. After the services almost everyone in the congregation wanted to adopt the boy. The choice went to a kindly blacksmith's wife. Soon Dick started bravely to learn the blacksmith business under W. J. Luke and his good wife, who were all that fond

parents could be to little Dick. . . The minister was at the head of a select school for girls that held three classes each day, including a night class. To this latter class Dick was admitted as the only boy in the entire school. After his day's work in the blacksmith shop, he attended school from 7 p. m. to 9 p. m., and to this kindly minister Mr. José owes his education, which has been a thorough one in every respect, and if ever a man followed the Golden Rule that man is Richard José.

I pause here long enough to note another discrepancy. What, I wonder, is the truth about young José's uncle? Had he gone away, "no one knew where," as the Victor folder said, or had he died, as related in the *Kanr Journal*? And no doubt you have noticed that the latter says the boy left England at the age of ten, whereas *The Billboard* fixed his age at eight and the Victor circular at twelve. Now, back to the *Journal*, which continued, under the head of "Mr. José's Theatrical Career":

Mr. José's fame as a sweet singer spread from Virginia City throughout the country and he was known everywhere as the "Singing Blacksmith." He was induced to join the San Francisco minstrels . . . where he made a sensation which was soon heralded to New York. At that time Lew Dockstader was forming his minstrel company to open on Broadway near 29 Street, which was afterwards known as the Princess Theater. Mr. José was engaged as the premier ballad singer for this company. While singing there, the late and dearly beloved Denman Thompson heard him sing. He was so impressed with José's sweet voice that he started negotiations to secure his services for "The Old Homestead," and Mr. José opened in this time-honored play at the Academy of Music in New York, where it ran a straight year and came back time after time. A strong affiliation sprang up between Mr. Thompson and Mr. José, which continued up to Mr. Thompson's demise.

Mr. José toured for eight years with "The Old Homestead" and became known and revered by theater-goers the land over. During his engagement with "The Old Homestead" there was one song that Mr.

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José sang alone and which Mr. Thompson listened to at every performance. It was called "Day After Day." A stage hand with the company would place a chair in the entrance near to José's position on the stage, and Denman Thompson would sit there and listen to the singer render this pathetic ballad to the dear old lady character in the play. Many and many a time has dear old "Uncle Josh's" handkerchief wiped away a tear. When the song was ended Mr. Thompson would rise from his chair and go to his dressing room apparently in deep thought. . .

As Mr. José's fame spread he had many offers to star in his own company, so during the last season with the "Old Homestead," Mr. Kith of the famous vaudeville circuit induced Mr. José to sign a contract. When Mr. José informed Mr. Thompson, the latter said, "You won't leave me until the end of the season, will you, Dick?" and Mr. José said, "No, indeed, Governor, I'll be with you until your season ends." The following year Mr. José and Mr. Thompson met and both were on their way to play in Pittsburgh. During the conversation Mr. Thompson said, "Well, Dick, I ain't heard the old song, 'Day After Day,' since you left us, and some evening during the week I want you to sing it for me."

"Why, Governor," Dick replied, "you have a fine quartet and fine singers. Why don't you let one of them sing it? You know that you are welcome to use my song."

Denman Thompson shook his head and said, "No, Dick, I don't want to hear anyone but you sing that song, and when you left my company the song went with you."

It will be remembered that Dan Quinn, in the letter quoted in the first installment of this series, mentioned José's singing of the song, "Day After Day," as being worth going miles to hear. He and Denman Thompson, the "Uncle Josh Whitcomb" from whom Cal Stewart got his idea of "Uncle Josh Weathersby," certainly appear to have been in agreement on that point.

Getting back to the *Kanr Journal*, we find a touching account of "Mr. José's Return to His Native Village":

Twelve years after his arrival in America he sailed for Cornwall, England, to pay a visit to his mother, brothers and sisters. News of his coming was heralded about among the miners and villagers who had known him as a child. During his long absence Dick never forgot the dear old invalid mother and his brothers and sisters, and a good portion of his earnings always

found its way to the dear ones at home. His mother's joy knew no bounds when the good news reached her that Dick was coming home and she was under the impression that Dick was coming home for good, and the other children did not spoil the illusion, but they knew that their brother's home was in America with his wife and his other interests. Mr. José arrived at the Cornwall station, which was about two and one-half miles from the old home. He was met by his brother. It was a beautiful moonlight night and Dick wanted a good talk with his brother before entering the home, so prevailed on him to walk the distance, which they did.

As they passed along the way, Mr. José noticed in the window of every house tallow candles had been placed. At first he did not give it serious attention, but as the lighted candles appeared more numerous

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 33)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

Dick stopped and looked from house to house. . . "Brother," said Dick, "what's going on here? Why so many candles burning in windows?" The brother shook his head and intimated that he did not know, leaving Dick perplexed. As they reached an old stone arch which was the gateway to the village proper, Dick was amazed to see the top of the arch literally covered with burning tallow dips and not a soul about. Dick said, "What is this for?" pointing at the lights, and looked searchingly at his brother. The latter looked up with a smile on his face and a tear in his eye and said, "I guess it's for you, Dick. The folks want to show you how welcome you are at home." This simple honest tribute to the wanderer's return unnerved him completely and he sobbed in his brother's arms in gratitude to the kind hearts and appreciation of their sincere welcome. As they passed through the arch, on each side of the street every window held flaming candles. Soon the brothers reached the gate of the old home. Not a light of any description was seen about the house. Dick's heart almost stopped beating. He grasped his brother's arm with but one thought, "Mother, is she—" The brother assured him that mother was all right. "But why is there no light about the house?" The brother took Dick's arm and entered the gate. Instead of entering the front door, he walked Dick around to the garden at the back of the house. The brother spoke quite loud, "Welcome home, Dick," and, as if by magic, lights sprang up from candles, lanterns and rushes, and over a hundred voices started to sing, "We Shall Meet at the Fountain," the hymn made famous in Cornwall by little baby Dick José. . .

During the two summer months that Dick remained in Cornwall he was lionized by all. Night after night meetings were arranged, and Dick was forced to do more singing in his two months visit than he ever had to do in two years in America, and today it is one of the most pleasant memories of his old home. As the time drew near for Mr. José to leave for America to fulfill his theatrical engagements, he did not know how to break the news to his mother, and Dick's brother pleaded for him to say nothing. The last night, ere his departure for America, he and his mother sat side by side at the fireplace, with no light but the glow from the fire upon their faces, while Dick's sister sat on the floor at one side and the brother on the other, and Dick sang "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and other songs to them. In reality Dick was saying a last good-bye to the dear soul. After he had kissed her good night and she had retired to sleep, the brothers sat in almost silence until two in

the morning, when Dick tip-toed to his mother's bedroom door for a look at the dear one, and then silently stole from the house.

A strange coincidence regarding the above episode in producing the photoplay, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," was that the author knew nothing of the parting scene described here, and in fact did not even have in his manuscript the last scene of "Silver Threads" as it now stands. It came as an inspiration. Mr. José did not mention a word in regard to the scene, but after the photoplay was finished and projected on the screen at a private showing, when the last scene came on, in which he sings to his wife in the play and the boy and girl, Mr. José's head dropped forward and he saw no more of the picture that day. The lights went up and the spectators were congratulating the producers. Someone walked over to Mr. José, who still sat with lowered head, and said, "Well, Dick, it's a fine picture." Mr. José did not answer. He was in tears. The following day he said to the author and producer of the story, "Some power was hovering over you when you put that scene in the play." That is how the writer learned of Mr. José's last good-bye to his mother.

The biographical information concerning Mr. José in the *Karr Journal* ends with the following statement:

Every line written here regarding Mr. José's life is absolutely honest and sincere facts, and came direct from the lips of this truly great artist. . . Mr. José is still a young man, scarcely 43 years old. Two years ago his silvery hair was as black as a raven's wing. He was playing an engagement in a New York theater when a heavy iron-bound drop fell from the "flies" of the theater, hitting him on the head and laying it open from the brow to the back. After it was sewed up by the doctor and the bandages placed on it, he was taken to a hospital, where he lay between life and death for many weeks. When the bandages were taken off Mr. José's hair was silver white.

Since the publication from which the foregoing was quoted was issued in 1915, it would appear that the accident from which the great counter-tenor suffered so much occurred in 1913, "two years ago." However, Mr. José's widow says he was injured in 1905, and she certainly ought to know. She also says that all his brothers and sisters are dead.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

## THE SEVEN SEAS

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Oriental and other foreign items from a traveler's collection. Send 3-cent stamp for each of following lists, and inquire for wanted, but unlisted articles: Ivories, jades, snuff bottles, Cloisonne, Satsuma, Pill, and miscellaneous boxes, cameos, garnets, Oriental jewelry, embroideries, elephants, carvings. Prices from \$2 to \$200.

## Detroit Record Club Forming

All collectors who are interested in the vocal artists of the past, preferably operatic, who live in the Detroit, Flint, Lansing and Ann Arbor area are cordially invited to get in touch with Wilfred Thompson, 18517 Saint Louis, Detroit 34, Michigan. Mr. Thompson may be reached by phone before 11:30 A. M. calling Tw. 1-7351. It is proposed that the club shall meet once a month to discuss the singers whose records will be played.— S. F.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### RICHARD J. JOSÉ III

By JIM WALSH

By 1920, Richard José's theatrical career had ended. Records of the California State government show that on February 1 that year he became a field deputy in the Division of Real Estate. He was promoted to senior investigator on May 13, 1936, and held that position until his death on October 20, 1941.

Although many years had passed since he sang for Victor, several of the counter-tenor's records remained in the catalog and were good sellers through 1919. These included the double-faced listing of "Abide With Me" and the twelve-inch, single-faced "Home, Sweet Home," "I Cannot Sing the Old Songs," "Silver Threads Among the Gold," "We've Been Chums for Fifty Years" and "When You and I Were Young, Maggie." But, beginning with the 1920 catalog, Victor discontinued all single-faced Black Label records, which left "Abide With Me" as José's only listing. And it was discontinued in 1923.

Nearly all acoustically recorded discs were stricken from the catalog after electrical methods were introduced in 1925. But there was a persistent demand for many fine old-style records. This led Victor to issue in 1927 a Special Catalog of Victor Records of Historical and Personal Interest. A foreword explained: "This catalog extends the music-lover's range of choice in selecting Victor records by relisting a number of records removed from time to time from the Victor Company's general catalogs, but now restored to the public by the public's own demand. . . Their musical, historic or personal interest has proven so great that buyers, lovers and students will not permit us to discontinue them. . . As with old books, their interest will not diminish but grow with time."

Several José records were included in this historical catalog. Rather surprisingly, the double-faced version of "Belle Brandon," which had been discontinued in 1913 was again made available, but "Abide With Me," which had been kept on the list nearly ten years longer, was not revived. Others which received a new lease of life were the twelve-inch "Silver Threads," "When You and I Were Young," "I Cannot Sing the Old Songs," "Ben Bolt" and "We've Been Chums."

And now we come to another phase of Richard José's life story—his success as a radio singer. While the popular countertenor was living in San Francisco and working for the State Division of Real Estate, radio became the most popular medium of home entertainment. For several years José's voice was not heard by means of the air. Then what happened may best be related by quoting parts of an article, "Back to the Days of Yesteryears," by

Walter W. Cribbins, which appeared in a 1931 issue of *Advertising Age*:

About a month ago Hugh Barrett Dobbs, better known as "Dobbsie, Captain of the Shell Oil Company's Shell Ship of Joy," was broadcasting his regular morning Happy Time program over a Pacific Coast network of radio stations. Dobbsie was going through his routine program with no idea of who might be "listening in."

Richard José (pronounced Dick Ho-say) walked into the studio. A jazz orchestra was playing one of the modern "Hot Mamma" numbers. It was supposed to be music, but that may be questioned.

Dobbsie said: "Gee! I'm glad to see you, Dick. You're looking fine. Honestly, Dick, you don't look a day older than you did forty years ago when I paid my dime for a seat in nigger heaven where I listened to you sing. Those were wonderful old days, weren't they, Dick?" . . .

"Gosh, Dick, old fellow, I'd give my right arm if you'd sing for the folks that are listening in. Dick, a lot of the folks that are listening to that violin solo I've just played are sick in hospitals. Men and women in all walks of life are listening, and I know you can make this Shell Happy Time one of the happiest I have ever provided for 'shut-ins.' Dick, be a good scout—Will Hancock will play for you—sing 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie'—will you? Whaddaya say?"

"All right." Dick waved his hands. "I just dropped in to look on, but if you want me to sing to the 'shut-ins' I'll do it."

When Dobbsie went back to the microphone and announced that he was making an unexpected change in the program, his voice was quivering. The "listeners-in" must have sensed it and wondered what had happened. Then Dobbsie told the story of the man who had just dropped into the studio to look on.

"Richard José," he said, "has been singing from behind the footlights for more than half a century. The years have been piling up on him, and although it has been a long time since he sang in public, he is going to sing for you this morning. It is a happy privilege to introduce Dick José. He is going to sing 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie,' one of his oldest songs."

Richard José stood before the microphone. He closed his eyes. . . He seemed to be picturing in his memory some great audience. He seemed to be living over again one of his immense concerts of long years ago. . . . At the right instant, like an old fire horse that had responded to thousands of fires, Dick José opened

his mouth and the song rolled out into the unknown. When he had finished Dobbsie pleaded with him to sing again.

"Dick, an elderly man has telephoned in requesting you to sing 'Silver Threads Among the Gold.' He said that he and little Mother were celebrating their golden wedding anniversary today."

"Glad to do it," Dick said, and nodded to Will Hancock to start playing. He sang a third song and when he had finished he said, "Now I'm going to listen to you fellows."

During the next twenty-four hours, hundreds of telegrams were received at the radio stations that had been connected up with KPO, expressing the most kindly thoughts and words of encouragement to Dick José. And the Shell Oil Company received thousands of letters, every one of which conveyed the thought, "Thank you—and won't you please have Mr. José sing again?"

Fire Departments and Police Departments sent letters and telegrams. Men and women were inspired to write poetry such as the following:

Back to the days of yesteryears  
We go with you, my friend.  
Our golden-voiced tenor,  
Who to our day-dreams lend  
Your music and your happiness  
To give hearts that are sad  
Sweet moments of forgetfulness  
And to make them once more glad.  
And so I send my greetings here—  
God keep your heart still young  
And bring you once again to us  
With songs you oft have sung.

An attorney added this postscript to his letter: "I just finished the above letter when Dick started 'Silver Threads.' My wife is weeping silently out of pure happiness. Funny how women will cry when they ought to do the reverse. Don't give it away, but I feel a little moist myself."

A Seattle realtor wrote: "My wife and I listened to you sing this beautiful spring morning, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Those songs carried us back and made it possible for us to live again the days of forty years ago when my wife and I started down the trail together. Your songs brought tears to our eyes, but a greater joy to our hearts."

An old trooper living at Stockton wrote: "If you don't sing the old songs that my mother used to sing to me at least once more, I'm going to be the most disappointed man on earth, and if you do—I'm due for a big bawl. Anyway, Dick, give an old trooper both barrels."

Never in all of his experience has this writer seen such letters and so many of them. Judging from the tremendous quantity of mail and telegrams, there must have been an audience of several hundred thousand people listening to Dick José on the never-to-be-forgotten morning. . . .

Dick José has proven that precious and priceless hours can be brought back. And he has demonstrated that a surprisingly large number of people will respond to an

emotional appeal when they will not respond to any other kind. The sentimental appeal as a general rule, no doubt, is dangerous, because men don't know where to begin and when to stop. They "slop over" with insincerity. But when one can discover a Dick José and allow him to be himself, it is a simple matter to create the impression that he is typical of the organization he represents.

After that extremely successful initial broadcast, the almost legendary counter-tenor did much other radio singing that made him a prime favorite on the Pacific Coast and many other sections of the West. He was still in good voice at the time of his death, which occurred about 18 months after he underwent a prostate gland operation. The singer is buried in Mt. Olivet Memorial Park, San Francisco.

Several readers of Hobbies have asked me to write this series of articles about Mr. José. One of them is Osborne H. Parker, of San Francisco, who knew the singer and who has given me this vivid account of a meeting with José in his late years:

"I met Richard J. José when he was an old man and only a short time before his death in 1941. . . I am sorry you were not writing this series then, for I am sure the old man would have been overjoyed to give you a full history of his life and career. When I met him in 1939 he was quite heavy—a tall man to begin with and he was quite stout and must have weighed 250 pounds or more. When he got up from his massive arm chair he had to propel himself with his arms and I am sure he was top-heavy on his feet. Somewhere I have a list . . . where I typed, as I recall, 29 of his records with numbers that I could identify and he made notations of his favorites. He told me that it was either 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie' or 'Silver Threads Among the Gold' that he had introduced to American audiences and which he had to sing as an encore at every recital. (NOTE—This, of course, was 'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' which Mr. José, more than any other singer, made into a sentimental classic, but since it was published in 1873, when he was only one year old, he can hardly be said to have introduced it.—J. W.) When I asked José about copies of his records, he said he had not played one of them in years and that he had a complete set of them wrapped and packed away somewhere. He remarked that he had a brother living in England . . . who had never heard any of his records, so I gave him about a dozen duplicates I owned and he seemed very grateful and said he would send them off at once. About that time the war started (September, 1939), and I never saw the old man after that visit, so I doubt if the records ever reached England. . . Do you have his 12-inch 'Home, Sweet Home'? I have always liked that record, as he sings it with feeling and clear diction and then, too, it is unusual to find such a selection sung by a man."

In concluding this series, it seems fitting to give some biographical information about the former Miss

Therese Shreve, whom Mr. José married in 1898. Miss Shreve's father died when she was a baby, and her mother married Oliver Roberts. In her early womanhood she was a noted equestrienne, called "the last of the fast-riding side-saddlers." The former belle of St. Helena, California, was well known for her rides all over Napa county in the days when she first knew Richard José. She had three saddle horses, Nellie, Walker and Model. The latter was her favorite and she started riding him when he was a two-year-old colt. She says that her best record was five miles in 20 minutes, from the Schram ranch to the Villa Parrott. She was due home to dinner at 5 p. m., when she noticed the time was already 4:40. Says the former Mrs. José: "No other horse I ever rode could have made it. When I arrived home, which was the direction Model always liked to go, he was literally covered with froth. Joseph, the stable man, who thought I'd been chased by bandits, put a blanket on him so he wouldn't catch cold, but I never did it again." In those days Miss Shreve also had 32 dogs, all styles and breeds, which would follow her and Model across the fields and down the country roads. And Model was so intelligent that if she dropped her crop, he would pick it up with his

teeth and proudly turn his head to give it to her.

After Mr. José's death, his wife married Herbert S. Hamlin, the editor and publisher of the *Pony Express Magazine*, of which she is associate editor. Mr. Hamlin for many years was historian of the State of Nevada and has himself written a biography of José, which will later appear in the *Pony Express*. The magazine contains a great deal of historical material dealing with the old pony express days and a general history of the early West in all its ramifications.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 32)

## RECORDS

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought. — E. Hirschmann, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o 126121

**EIGHT THOUSAND** different selections; vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—El. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 15, Calif. d126351

**FINE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Classical, vocal, operatic, violin, piano, vaudeville, jazz, popular, Lauder, McCormack, reasonably priced. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. je3084

**AUCTION SALE:** Unusual vocal Pathe, G&T, Odeon, Victor, Columbia records; Albers, Albani, Caruso, Delmas, Dornay, Morisson, Galvany, Rousseliere, etc.—Collectors' Haven, 907 N. Y. Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. BU 4-5470. jly3004

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. au6407

**COLLECTORS' GUIDE** to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. f124201

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. au6084

**MONTHLY AUCTION** thousands classical vocal records. Free list. S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colorado. je6446

**WANTED:** U. S. and Everlasting 4-minute cylinder records. All answered. — N. Dullum, Colfax, N. D. my1821

**WANTED:** Phonograph records of cornet solos.—Steve Gilman, 66 Sims, Newport, R. I. my1001

**WANTED:** Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo records. — Gerhardt, 4316 Ridgeview, Cincinnati 5, Ohio. jly 6483

**FOR SALE:** 3 small Seeburg pianos, 6 Mills Violin boxes, 2 Orchestra pianos, 1 Tangley Calliope; all coin-operated, in good mechanical condition. Contact — O. L. Cooper, 3605 Gundry Ave., Long Beach, California. je3825

**SWISS MUSICAL** Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. jly3084

**"OLD MUSIC BOX MELODIES"** recorded from rare old music boxes on standard 10" plastic records: No. 301, Home Sweet Home — On a Sunday Afternoon. No. 302, Mocking Bird — Love's Old Sweet Song. No. 303, Silver Threads Among the Gold — In the Gloaming. No. 2, Brahms's Cradle Song — Rockabye Baby. No. 3, Sweet and Low — Gounod's Sing, Smile, Slumber, \$1.15 each postpaid. — Bornand Music Box Record Co., 333 Fifth Ave., Pelham 66, N. Y. au32701

**FOR SALE:** My record collection. Operatic, Caruso, Plancon, Era. List available. Will accept bids on individual records.—Mrs. Bradford Crocker, Palm Court, Bradenton, Fla. my1x

## MISCELLANEOUS

**SWISS MUSICAL** Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

**"THE LAST** of the Cremonas", booklet listing 30 other luthiers will be sent post paid for \$1.—Berger, 5800 S. W. 27th St., Coral Gables, Fla. je120041

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850 for sale. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. List 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. my122511

**FLUTE,** Baxter, beautiful condition, all silver, \$35. Also a five pedal harp.—C. E. H. Whitlock, 15 Broadway, New Haven, Conn. je3882

**MODERN MUSICAL BOXES** (Swiss chalets, trays, powder and cigarette boxes). Musical Banjos. Many tunes available. Information free.—Shonback, P. O. Box: 989, San Francisco 1, Calif. jly3633

**FOR SALE:** Regina Music Box, oak, double comb, 20 discs, 15 1/2"; good condition. \$80.—Onan Short, Luray, Va. my1821

**VIOLINS, HANDMADE,** master toned, inquire. Violin wood on approval. Scrolls, chin rests.—O. Nedvidek, 8635 S. E. 30th St., Portland 2, Ore. my1253

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. je3614

**FOR SALE:** Collectors Prize: Tangley Calliope with blower, refinished, completely restored, \$750. Coin operated player piano as is, \$175. Deagan Triple Octave Chimes restored, \$350. 65 note piano rolls. Expert repair service on above.—Lee, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Texas. my3426

**A GENUINE** David Hopf violin; perfect condition, excellent tone. \$800.00.—Little Eva's Antique Shop, 3032 Delesea Drive, Glassboro, N. J. jly3003

**OLD POPULAR MUSIC.** I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. jly3272

## MUSIC — REPAIR

**MELODEONS** restored like new. We buy, sell, repair.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. je6215



# BELLS



## Bell Collectors Meeting in New York City

The American Bell Association will hold its annual convention at the Hotel Statler, New York, N. Y., June 29 and 30.

The program is announced as follows:

### PROGRAM:

Thursday, June 29, 1950

Registration (\$5.00) and meeting fellow members 10-12 noon in The Keystone Room of the Statler.

2-4:30 P. M. Business Meeting in The Keystone Room.

6:30-9 P. M. Japanese meal in Japanese restaurant.

Friday, June 30, 1950

9-12 noon Open House at Mr. S. S. Sarna's Shop, Room 629, 225 Fifth Avenue.

2-4 P. M. Visit the Carillon of Riverside Church.

6:30 P. M. - 10 P. M. Indian Meal at Indian restaurant. Mr. Sarna will be in costume to talk about bells. There will be Indian Music. Mr. Sarna will present special souvenir bells of the convention.

Officers of the club for this year are: President: Paul Mellinger, Los Angeles, Calif.; Vice-President: Gladys L. Gage, Hartford, Conn.; Secretary: Edna M. Bailey, Cleveland Heights, Ohio; Treasurer: L. W. Sorowfree, Davenport, Iowa; Editor of the Bell Tower: Mrs. Alter Collins, Tarentum, Pennsylvania.

## BELLS WANTED

**WANTED: Bells.**—Mrs. Tilden Patton, Lexington, Ill. d12844

**WANTED: Old and unusual glass and metal bells.**—Mrs. E. N. Hamlin, 4937 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. au6446

**Bells Wanted: Old, odd, interesting.**—C. F. Ziegler, 48 Woodland Lane, Arcadia, Calif. au4218

## FOR SALE

**FARM BELLS, complete, each \$10.** Dealers discounts. — Patricia, Marion, Ohio. ap12046

**OLD BELLS LIST FREE.**—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. d12216

**BELLS: Ceramic, dainty floral designs, "Mother" under glaze; suitable Mother Day gift, \$1 each, postpaid.**—Irene Irvine, 6339 Hillen Drive, Oakland 19, California. my1081

## TRAVEL SEARCH FOR BELLS

By A. C. Meyer — \$2.50 postpaid

In the last 10 years, semi-retired, Mr. Meyer and his wife, also a bell enthusiast, indulged their hobby of bell collecting, which has taken them to many parts of the world. In every city and virtually every crossroads, they added interesting specimens to their collection. Mr. Meyer has summarized it all in a down-to-earth story.

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## A Church Bell

Of interest to bell collectors and readers of this page, we think the following notes on the history of a church and its original steeple bell will add enjoyment to those old and new in the field.

"The Quincy Point Congregational Church Bell was cast in the year 1845. The bell carried the inscription: 'Cast by George H. Holbrook, East Medway, Mass., 1845.' The bell measured 34 inches at its opening diameter and weighed 1,024 pounds. The bell's tongue or clapper was made of hand wrought iron.

"The Quincy Point Church was dedicated on July 19, 1838, in Quincy Point, as a Methodist-Episcopal Church. Although a tower was built at that time, the bell was not purchased until seven years later in 1845.

"The original church was of one story. In 1884, when it was felt that more room was needed for Church activities, the building was raised approximately 10 feet and a vestry, kitchen, parlor, office, etc. constructed underneath. At the same time the Church dropped its affiliation with the Methodist Church and joined the local Congregational Association. When the building was raised 10 feet the bell was heard at a much greater distance, since its tones were able to clear nearby residences.

"The Church stood on the corner of South and Washington streets for 111 years. On May 2, 1949, construction started on a new building at the corner of Abbey Road and Washington street, one-half mile nearer the center of the City from the old site.

"On June 27, 1949, the old Church Sanctuary was moved up Washington street to the new site, where it was incorporated as part of the new Church building. The old Sanctuary was lowered to its original foundation; the vestry beneath, that had been erected in 1884, being eliminated, the bell was removed with a crane as the tower had to be removed in order to allow the building to clear the high tension wires on this main thoroughfare. The moving process of this building, 67 feet long, 42 feet wide, and 35 feet high, took 20 hours for the half-mile route, although the lowering of the building and then raising it on to its new foundation made the entire moving an eight week process.

"The original bell was sent to Bevin Brothers Bell Company in East Hampton, Connecticut, where it was melted down into small Tea Bells to be used as Souvenirs of the Quincy Point Congregational Church, Quincy, Mass."

## MUSIC

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

The publishers maintain in connection with it a Pony Express Museum. Mr. and Mrs. Hamlin live at 500 Virginia Avenue, San Mateo, California. They come through on occasion with editorials vigorously attacking what they consider to be the iniquities of the Roosevelt New Deal and the Truman administration. It is obvious that both are absorbed in the historically valuable work that they are doing. And I sincerely hope that they will like this biographical sketch of Richard José, who was a truly fine artist, occupying an important niche in the history of the American theater and recorded music.

—O—

## Deaths of Franklin Baur and E. Robert Schmitz

Franklin Baur, one of the popular recording tenors of the 1920's, died February 24, at his home in his birthplace, Brooklyn, New York. He was 46.

Mr. Baur was only 20 when his first Victor record was issued in March, 1924, but he was already well known as a church and concert singer. For a few years Baur did extensive free-lance recording, but after a time restricted his work to Victor, Columbia and Brunswick and finally became an exclusive Victor artist for solo work. In 1924, when Charles Hart retired from the Shanon Four to go to Germany and study for opera, Baur took his place, and remained with the organization when its name was changed to The Revelers. He was with the ensemble when it toured Europe in 1927. A year or so later, Baur was succeeded by James Walton. Baur also sang in the Ziegfield Follies of 1927 and 1928 and was the original "Voice of Firestone" on a network radio program from 1929 to 1931. He retired in the mid-1930's. The tenor was unmarried and made his home with his sister, Mrs. Marie Kuhlman.

E. Robert Schmitz, a famous French-born pianist, who made a number of Edison records and afterwards recorded for Victor, died last September 5 in a San Francisco hospital after being taken ill at his home. He was 60. Mr. Schmitz, who first gained fame in 1910 when he won first prize in piano at the Paris International Conservatory, is survived by his wife, Mrs. Germaine Schmitz; a daughter, Mrs. Jean Leduc, and a granddaughter.

J. W.

## BELLS, U. S. and FOREIGN

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THE NORTHWOODS WORKSHOP  
Minocqua, Wisconsin

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## FRED DUPREZ I

By JIM WALSH

During the nearly ten years in which have been writing for *HOBBIES*, I have gathered information about the pioneer recording artists in many different ways. But now, as I set about narrating the life story of that brilliant comedian, Fred Duprez (pronounced Du-Pree), it occurs to me that this is the first time I have had the privilege of reading an artist's own press books and copying from them to suit my purpose.

I am able to do this because of the kindness of the comedian's brother, Charles Duprez, a noted photographer of Bellerose, New York, who has sent me two scrapbooks which Fred kept when he was appearing with stock companies and in vaudeville from January, 1905, to October, 1911. In these inexpensive volumes the comedian pasted every reference to himself that appeared in newspapers and theatrical magazines. Oddly enough, although Duprez began to make records within a few years after the start of his vaudeville career, I haven't been able to find any mention in the press books of his recording activities. Nevertheless, they are fascinating reading because of the information they contain about the man who won a world-wide reputation as a monologist and singer of comic songs before his untimely death in 1938 at the age of 54.

Perhaps the best article in Fred Duprez's scrapbook has the title, "Fred Duprez a Winner Last Week at the Alhambra." It appeared in the *New York Morning Telegraph* for Sunday, February 11, 1911, and was written by Carolyn Lowrey. Since it gives a good condensed account of the comedian's career up to that time, I shall quote:

"... Fred Duprez was born in Detroit. His father was Paul Duprez, one of the most noted German character actors of his day. He also had his own German company. Fred Duprez also had a noted mother. She was Martha Wedemeyer, who was one of the most prominent of German stock women of her time. ... Fred Duprez is possessed of that inexplicable, indefinable quality which, for want of a better name, is known as magnetism. He has the sort of magnetism which gets over the footlights. It's infectious or contagious, whichever you want to call it. I observed the audience. Fred Duprez held it in his hand. His clever monolog was punctuated by the bursts of applause from the audience. There was no straining of voice. There was no horseplay. In fact, his methods are marked by perfect ease of manner, delightful poise and material that is good. I knew forth-while why Fred Duprez is a favorite. ...

"I found during the interview that one of Mr. Duprez's chief charms was an absolute frankness that one seldom expects and more seldom receives outside of childhood. Mr. Duprez said that he went on the stage as a little boy, playing boy parts, such as the son in 'William Tell,' but his father wanted him to go in for a business career. He at that time, he told me, wanted to go to sea.

"Such high-class literature as 'Diamond Dick' was at that time my delight, and so at the age of fifteen I

worked my way in the clean capacity of coal pusher on a steamer to Europe. I did after that really serve one year as a sailor. Rolling up his sleeve, he showed me the emblems of anchor, star, butterfly and an almost dagger.

"He said when he left home for this trip he had exactly ten cents, ... and a second-hand valise. He spent five cents to get to New York from Brooklyn, three cents for the ferry to Hoboken and two cents for tobacco. When he arrived in Germany they paid him four dollars for his services and that he took to get him to Berlin.

"Then his uncle received him and put him in a business college. When his college career was finished he returned home and entered a business office, but stayed only three weeks. An advertisement in the paper for a supernumerary in a show was too much for him and started the old longing to which through birth he had a perfect right.

"I took the super position at ten per week with Kyrle Bellew in 'The Gentleman of France,' he said. After a season with Mr. Bellew in the same capacity, I joined a stock company in Brooklyn, from which I was fired in two weeks. I thought then that it was because the stage manager was jealous of my ability. I then put in two seasons with a one-night stand company with a play written by the Biddle Brothers.

"I then joined repertoire companies and came home that season about six times on the tail of a freight car. At each break I would get another job at an advanced salary and would then get my trunk from the last town with that money. ... After this I became a member of better repertoires and stock companies and used to play comedy roles, as well as other roles, giving a specialty between the acts. It was during this time that the hypnotist, Prescelle, who had his show there, offered me the big sum of five dollars more a week to go with him and do a specialty between acts. I accepted, and learned through this engagement that I was able to hold my audience alone, and so determined at least to try. By accident I caught a Sunday night about four years ago. I am grateful to be able to say that I was fortunate enough to make a hit, and the answer is that I have been working in the same way ever since."

"I halted Mr. Duprez long enough to learn that it was while playing the spy in 'The Spy to the Czar' that his fine work and excellent make-up attracted general attention. His work in changing from comedy roles to the serious part of the spy and doing it so splendidly is a great tribute to his remarkable versatility.

"Continuing, he said: 'I have been going to Europe every summer for a rest, but I am glad to say that this year I am going over to work. Open Tivoli, London, July 3.' ... One of these days some wise manager will strave in and discover that Fred Duprez is just the man for a musical comedy production. When that time comes, as it surely will, the manager will be open to congratulations, as Mr. Duprez is sure to make a hit."

As will be seen later, the *Telegraph's* Miss Lowry had the gift of prophecy.

The foregoing article puts us ahead of the beginning of Fred Duprez's vaudeville and recording career. Still another clipping explains that his parents, not wanting him to go on the stage, sent him to live with his grandparents in Brooklyn. As has already been shown, the result of the youngster's being shipped to Brooklyn was his starting out,

possessed of one thin dime, to see the world.

This appears to be a good place at which to use some of his brother Charlie's reminiscences about Fred. Charles tells me that the Comedian's full name was Frederick August Duprez and that he was born on September 6, 1884. My photographer friend writes:

"Mother and Father were always on the German stage, and at home we always spoke German. At five years of age I couldn't speak anything else. Father was born in France, but his parents on one side were more German than French. He did speak French — that I know.

"Fred's eyes," Charles Duprez continues, "were brown. He had black hair, which in later years was quite scarce. As a boy of eleven he shipped on a Pan American steamer, the *Advantage*, going to Colon, South America, as a cabin boy. All his early adventures were through his being an addict of reading lurid dime novels, which he passed on to me, and while I did not follow in his footsteps I gave these books the credit for the many travels and adventures I had throughout the West.

"The first trip Fred took at 14 (he always looked older than he was), the boat was the *Barbarossa*, a North German Lloyd liner. He worked as a coal passer, and arrived in Germany looking like a first class bum. When he presented himself before my relatives over there, who were very wealthy people, they quickly rushed him off to a bath and to the tailor's for a complete transformation before presenting him to the rest of his relatives.

"The name of the stock company he first tried for and was engaged with was the *Elite*, at the Gotham in Brooklyn. He was sore because at the opening of the season he was omitted from the opening play, a melodrama called 'The Octoroon.' He was used then as a soldier in 'Under Two Flags,' where all he had to do was dash in and yell something about the enemy's closing in. The following week he was fired. Then he tried to do a single blackface in a small community at the seaside place called Canarsie. He went on and the manager said he was lousy, gave him a quarter and told him to get out—which didn't discourage him a bit, as was shown in the years that followed. One of the companies he joined in Massachusetts was called 'The Village Grocer.' This didn't last the week, so he came back on a freight car. Another time he was stranded with a show out West somewhere and to get enough money to return home, he organized a vaudeville show from the remaining cast and they made enough to eat and land back in New York. He worked as a drug clerk in his uncle's store and broke so many bottles his uncle had to fire him, too.

"His first successful vaudeville performance was at the New Brighton Theatre, where he had the opportunity of filling in for an act that had to be cancelled on a Sunday night. ... I can still remember when he came into our bedroom (we always slept together) and he lit the light and was dancing around, and said: 'Kid, I sure went over big! Did twenty minutes and they hollered for more!' From there he really went places."

I'll use more of Charles Duprez's reminiscences later. But now I turn to Fred's first press book and find that that the initial clipping is of a program which a stock company was giving at the Howard Theatre in Chicago during the week of January 22, 1905. The play was "Me and Mother," by Joseph Clifton, and Fred had the part of Harry Hammond, described as "an ex-telegraph operator." A few weeks later the company produced an adaptation of Dickens' "Oliver Twist," with Fred

as The Artful Dodger — a role in which he should have been admirable. Later, he was with the Fenburg and Maude Hillman stock companies, and still later, as the *Telegraph* interview recounted, with Prescelle, the Magician. Here is an excerpt from a newspaper review of the latter period: "The specialties last evening again met with approval, especially Fred Duprez, who with the local touch to his jokes and originality, has caught Newport by storm."

By December 10, 1906, Duprez, after several vaudeville appearances, was at the Passaic Theatre, where he was described as a "parodist-comedian" and called "The Phunny Phellow." From this time on he was almost unvaryingly successful. In March, 1907, he was at Young's Pier Theatre, Atlantic City. Here is a newspaper review of his act:

"Fred Duprez, the clever monolog artist and singer of parodies. . . is one of the most prolific song writers in the country. He never uses anything in the nature of a parody that has been written by others, for the reason that he can do a great deal better work for himself, and in addition he saves that outlay of money. He never fails to get a few points from somebody on going into a new place, and he immediately sits down and writes a verse or two with the local flavor in it and has it ready to sing at the first performance he gives. The parodies which he is singing this week are among the best that have ever been sung at the shore, and he is making a hit with every one."

By the time he appeared at the Unique Theatre in Minneapolis the week of July 22, 1907, Fred had quit calling himself "The Phunny Phellow" and had become known as "The Ezra Kendall of Varieties." Ezra Kendall was a then famous comedian, now almost forgotten, whose dry humor was considered a model for monologists. The Evansville, Indiana, *Courier* commented: "What Ezra Kendall is to the winter theatre, Fred Duprez, parodist of Kendall, is to the vaudeville stage. . . His jokes are not a re-hash of Kendall's. Duprez has his own original quips and philosophy and makes them worth hearing by adopting the manner that Kendall would take were he on the vaudeville stage."

The *Telegraph* interview rather gave the impression that Duprez had never, during his visits to Europe, appeared on the stage in England, but that is not true. One of the programs in his first press book shows him to have performed at the Bedford Palace of Varieties in London during the week of August 3, 1908.

Turning now to the green-covered book, which begins with the program at the Colosseum Theatre in Newark on Sunday, October 4, 1908, I am impressed by the almost uniformly favorable comment on Duprez's series of vaudeville acts. The nearest thing to a bad notice I have found was written by a newspaper critic who saw the comedian's performance at Poli's Theatre in Hartford, Conn., during the week of January 10, 1910:

"Fred Duprez in the short time that he appears on the stage pushes out a lot of nonsense and some of it decidedly spicily and which might well be omitted.

Some of the jokes are fair, others were in evidence when father was a boy and should have been laid away to rest as having outlived their usefulness. But as Marshall Wilder once said, when at Poli's, 'It all depends on how the jokes are told.' Duprez gets away with it and the house laughs."

Much more typical were the remarks of a writer who saw Duprez at Poli's Theatre in Springfield, Mass., the following week:

"Fred Duprez (is) a really excellent monologist. His parodies are funny without being vulgar, and his stories—most of them, at least—have a modern flavor. His manner, however, is his chief claim to commendation, as he has a quiet, droll, dry voice that strikes center every time. The best thing is the parody of 'You're as Welcome as the Flowers in May,' sung to the accompaniment of burlesque burglar music. It is decidedly funny."

After Duprez began his vaudeville career he used a lighted cigar as part of his act. It was something of a trademark and he was known as "The Man With the Cigar." This accessory didn't meet with the approval of a Milwaukee critic, who wrote, when Fred was appearing there at the Majestic Theatre in January, 1911:

"Fred Duprez, monologist, in his attempt at originality of methods, . . . offends against good taste by smoking a cigar throughout the act. A straight monolog is too directly addressed to the audience to make such a breach excusable, especially when the monologist takes occasion to say, 'I'm talking to you, girls.'"

The *Telegraph* article mentioned Duprez's adept use of make-up in "The Spy and the Czar," but grease paint was one thing that the comedian prided himself on not needing in vaudeville. Witness this clipping from the Johnstown, Pa., *Democrat*, for October 20, 1909:

"Of peculiar interest in connection with Fred Duprez, parodist comedian at the Majestic this week, is the fact that he is 'the man without make-up,' self."

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dom if ever using grease paints. He can justly claim that he has the least preparation of anyone on the variety stage.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

necessary in portraying some characters, but I am only an entertainer. It's my work, not my make-up, that draws my envelope each week," he says. Hardly five minutes are necessary for Mr. Duprez to get ready for his act. His sack coat is changed for a long one and a "stove pipe" replaces a derby. Then, with a lighted cigar, he is ready to take his turn at entertaining. "How do the people know that the trousers I wear during my act are part of the suit I wear on the street? They give little attention to such incidentals. There would be no difference if I took the time to make a complete change. My success is due not to dress or to make-up, but to the parodies and jokes I offer."

Unlike many vaudevillians, who used the same act without change for years, Duprez prided on making frequent revisions of his material and interpolating references to current events. In fact, he changed his act every sixty days (oftener, he sometimes remarked, than some men changed their socks!)—and he had not one monolog but several, as is shown by the following, from the *Baltimore Star* for Thursday, May 27, 1909:

"... I have seven monologs that I use, for I try to have one to suit my audience. When I first go out on the stage I study the audience to see just what they want, and then I use the monolog that I think will suit them best. An actor must study the audience to see what will please them if he wishes his act to be a success; it is surprising that a line of work that will please in Washington will not take in Baltimore and so it is up to the actor to study his audience and try to please them."

Duprez wrote much of his material himself. But he also bought the "budgets" of James Madison, a well-known comedy writer, and one of the clippings tells of his paying his fellow vaudevillian, J. C. Nugent, a thousand dollars to write a new 15-minute monolog. This occurred when they were playing at the Temple in Detroit in 1911. Nugent wrote the act in little more than 24 hours and immediately received Duprez's check. It's interesting, too, to find that the comedian worked in front of a back drop purporting to be a "song fac-

tory," in which his many parodies supposedly were turned out by machinery.

Duprez was almost unique among monologists in one respect. He was an accomplished linguist — a gift that may be attributed partly to his habit of spending every summer abroad, sometimes for relaxation and at other times combining work with pleasure. And, of course, he had learned German from his parents. Here's a clipping which appeared in an Omaha paper while Fred was appearing at the Orpheum Theatre in November, 1910:

"Fred Duprez, monologist, read the election returns in the Orpheum Tuesday evening and created a stir when he announced that China had gone Democratic. Fred says there is humor even in a pickle. He gives his act in German when in Germany and in French when in France. He now threatens to invade China, for he spends much of his time studying the Chinese language."

Another critic remarked that Duprez used exceptionally good English. So he did—in spite of a peculiar fondness for accenting many words strongly on the first syllable, when most speakers would place the emphasis somewhere else. I base this comment on careful listening to his records. And now it's time to lay down the press books and pay attention to Fred Duprez's career as a recording artist.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## CIRCUSIANA

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

more prosaic types of wearing apparel would be disposed of.

And yet, most of this wardrobe is stored in trunks in attics because there has been no demand for it from the circusiana collectors' ranks.

We have reason to believe that should a project be started to preserve wardrobe that would show the trend in circus costuming as well as maintain the costumes worn by the great and near-great of circusdom, that such a collection could be gotten together with the cooperation of a great number of people over the country who have these items.

Many, undoubtedly, would be donated to the cause, while others might be held for varying prices by their possessors. But whether the budget for such a collection be large or small, a fairly representative number of pieces of wearing apparel could be assembled and would be the beginning of what might eventually be one of the most interesting of all circusiana collections in this country.

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(Actual pen signatures)

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J. O. Wicklin	10.00
W. Duenwin ?	40.00
James Madigan	40.00
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W. A. Donawan	30.00
Edwin Croneste	75.00
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Frank Lee	25.00
J. Metrenges ?	15.00
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Geo. W. Hood	10.00
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Jno. Kenna	15.00
Geo. W. P. Avery	8.00
G. Howard	8.00
H. Forest	20.00
J. H. Madigan, by S.	50.00
G. B. Sent ?	75.00
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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists FRED DUPREZ II

By JIM WALSH

Fred Duprez's first disc record, made for Columbia in 1909, was A633, "A Vaudeville Rehearsal" (coupled with "The Sweetest Gal in Town," by Collins and Harlan), and in it he sang the "burglar parody" which several newspaper writers had considered funny. This "Vaudeville Rehearsal" was one of Fred's favorite stunts, which he frequently revised. He would pretend that he was running through the music for a "new drama," but would have all sorts of trouble with the orchestra, which would either play the wrong tune or sound off in a ludicrously inappropriate way. In an improved form, "A Vaudeville Rehearsal" became one of his best specialties, "Desperate Desmond" (the title was taken from a comic strip by Harry Hershfield), which he did for both Columbia and Edison. The Edison record, because of its greater length and superior recording, is much the better.

The parody on "You're As Welcome as the Flowers in May" used the old theme of the maiden ladies who suspected there was a burglar in the room, but were charmed rather than frightened by the prospect. The chorus quotes one spinster as saying to the other:

"He's as welcome as the flowers in May!  
Lock the door so he can't get away!  
We've been waiting for him day by day —  
He's as welcome as the flowers in May!"

Duprez's next Columbia, No. A643, "Make a Noise Like a Hoop and Roll Away," was doubled with Billy Murray's "Yankiana Rag," and has been one of my favorite records since my earliest recollection. The music of the Murray side was written by an American entertainer, the late Melville C. Gideon, who, like Duprez himself, later went to England to live and became a theatrical favorite in his adopted country. "Make a Noise" gave the comedian his first real introduction to Columbia audiences as a singer with a pleasant baritone voice. He does no talking in this record, but the song, by J. Fred Helf, is almost a

glossary of the American slang of the early 1900's.

The next three Columbia solo records by Duprez also were singing numbers. They were A726, "How Did the Bird Know That?" (coupled with "I'll Be There With Bells On," by Ada Jones); A844, "When You Marry a Girl for Looks" (with "The Grizzly Bear," by Arthur Collins); and A824, "I'm On My Way to Reno" (with "Oh, You Blondy," by Ada Jones).

Meanwhile, Duprez had teamed up with "Ragtime Bob" Roberts to make A758, "Blitz and Blatz in an Aeroplane," which had "Then We'll All Go Home," by one of the most talented but generally overlooked phonograph comedians, Eddie Morton, on the other side. The "Blitz and Blatz" record was a comedy number in German dialect, somewhat on the order of Weber and Fields' once highly popular sketches. Several months later the comedian did another monolog on Columbia record No. A1085, "The 11:69 Express"—doubled with "Darktown Poets," by Golden and Hughes. "The 11:69 Express" is a rather far-fetched recitation about a train wreck, done in farcical style with burlesque sound effects by the orchestra. To me it isn't so amusing as most other Duprez records. The name of the author is given as William S. Robinson.

Somewhere about this time Duprez began making records for the Indestructible Company, whose unbreakable cylinders were brought out five years before Edison introduced his Blue Amberols. The Indestructible firm, which later changed its name to Federal, had an agreement, after Columbia stopped making wax cylinders in October, 1909, by which Indestructibles were sold for a couple of years under the Columbia name. Charlie Duprez says that the Indestructible company at that time was in business on Livingston street in Brooklyn. Later its headquarters was in Albany. He also says that Fred's greatest pal was the concern's recording manager, Con Schoenefeld, who is still living, but has been a cripple, unable to walk, for more than a decade.

I don't have an Indestructible cat-

alog for the period during which Duprez was making cylinders, but he appears to have turned out many more records for that company than he did for Columbia. There were several of the "Blitz and Blatz" series, of which I have two—1160, "Blitz and Blatz at the Seashore" and 1183, "Blitz and Blatz's Discussion." In both, Fred is assisted by Bob Roberts. There were others in which Steve Porter was Blatz. Byron G. Harlan helped him in "The Actor and the Rube." Duprez's solos for Indestructible, or Federal, included "What's the Matter With Father?" "A Little Bit Is a Whole Lot Better Than Nothing at All," "Keep Your Foot on the Soft Pedal" (this appears to have been his theme song in vaudeville at one time), "My Girl," and "Father Is a Judge." He also made a few U. S. Everlasting cylinders, including "You'll Do the Same Thing Over Again."

One of Duprez's most amusing records was the Indestructible of a composition with the unpromising title of "Thomaschefskey." It set forth the joy of a Yiddish gentleman whose sister had done something even more breathtaking than if she had married Caruso. She had become the wife of Thomaschefskey! A year or so ago I learned from an article by George Jessel in *Variety* that Mr. Thomaschefskey was noted a generation since as the owner of a famous theater of New York's East side. Up to then I hadn't understood that the song was written about a living personage.

Charlie Duprez also recalls that his brother, Fred, made a German record

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for Indestructible. It was called "Immer an der Wand Entlang," meaning "Always Along the Wall."

Now we'll go back to Duprez's green press book and examine two or three items bearing on the trip that he made to Europe in 1911. Under the heading of "Vaudeville Notes," Ben Barnett wrote, in an unidentified publication: "There is one vaudeville artist who is going to Europe this season simply for the pleasure of the trip. He is Fred Duprez, the monologist, and he sails on May 28. Duprez is an example of the thrifty and enterprising artist. He has been working steadily since last summer and has saved enough money to pay his way abroad and enjoy all the comforts of a millionaire's traveling for his health. 'I do this every year,' Duprez told me the other day. 'You see I need a rest after a hard and strenuous season, and I might as well blow in my money in this manner as to put it over the bar, making a reputation as a good fellow.'"

Another news item said: "Fred Duprez, who is up at the Bronx Theatre this week, has designs on Europe. He will sail for foreign lands on the Campania May 17, and will go to London for two days. He will then go direct to Berlin, spending the balance of May and June in that city. He opens July 3 at the Tivoli, Strand, London. Mr. Duprez is no stranger to London. He appeared there a couple of years ago, and London liked him so well that his present bookings at the Tivoli are the result."

Fred did go abroad and appear at the Tivoli for the week beginning July 3. He returned to New York on July 18, aboard the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*. One of his clippings said that he would begin a 36 weeks vaudeville tour, "on United time," on August 21, and would then go to Australia. It added: "The Australian engagement followed Mr. Duprez's showing in London a few weeks ago, where he scored an unmistakable hit."

And here's an intriguing paragraph, which should have been quoted a bit earlier: "VAUDEVILLE NOTES. When Fred Duprez sailed for Europe last week he was almost the last one aboard, he was so busy talking to friends; then, just as he was about to board the steamer, a young lady rushed frantically up the pier and kissed Fred on the gangplank." This note doesn't clear just what part of a comedian's person a gangplank may be—but I can't keep from wondering who the young lady was!

Unfortunately, I haven't seen any of Duprez's press books, covering his travels in Australia and other remote lands. However, in reply to one of my questions, Charlie Duprez wrote: "Yes, Fred went to Australia, and spent about six months playing many houses in South Africa. There he was a big favorite. In fact, in one house he remained on the stage all alone for a full hour. He told me he gave them about every gag he could ever remember."

The comedian also visited these countries in later years. His brother has sent me a letter which Fred wrote to him from Benoni, South Africa, on November 2, 1927. He described Benoni as being "something like an old-time Western mining town—one main street and, standing on any corner of aforesaid main street, you can look on to green fields on either side. The richest gold mines in the world, however, are here. Hence the town."

The letter continues: "The theater

here is a pip; reminds me of some of the old-time nickelodeons. But they pay fancy prices to come in and, with me here, the prices have gone up 50 per cent. A couple of reels, one feature film, vintage 1923, myself and one other act. SOME show. I have to do about forty minutes. Boy, I relate everything I ever heard. All the white people from the reef come in and for miles around. As they change the picture three times a week, I also change my stuff as many times as the same gang comes in. Cleaned up here but can't send you a notice as this burg doesn't boast a paper. They get all the news from the Johannesburg paper. Well, I got an offer to go to Australia from here for ten weeks. Am now fighting about the money. It takes four weeks to get from here to Melbourne, my opening point, and then six weeks to get back to England unless I come back by way of the Pacific to Frisco. This would mean a trip clean around the world. . . I am not crazy to go as I wanna go home but if I do go, I sail Dec. 17 from Cape Town on the 'Runic.'"

Going back now to Duprez's earlier career, his travels seem to have kept him from making many records for American companies from 1911 to 1914. But in June of the latter year,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

### MISCELLANEOUS

SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. jyl24201

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OLD CYLINDER phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. au6407

COLLECTORS' GUIDE to American Recordings, 1895, 1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. C. f124201

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. au6084

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WANTED: Colored Currier and Ives lithographs. For one dollar we will send you a list of 1800 Currier and Ives prints with the Prices We Pay. This catalog is an essential for any one that attends sales or who is unfamiliar with the actual values of Currier and Ives prints.—A. R. Davison, East Aurora, New York. o 64281

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FOR YOUR Family History. Costume prints; Baronial Manors; Scottish Highlands. All with coats-of-Arms. Early American portraits and places. Maps.—Mabel Louise Keech—"At the Sign of the Crest": 2522 Thayer St., Evanston, Illinois. Phone: University 4-5789. tfx

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COLOR. PRINTS. Flowers, fruits, birds, views, costumes. Fine old lace paper Valentines. Wholesale and retail.—K. Gregory, 222 East 71st St., New York 21, N. Y. f126351

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

shortly before the beginning of the First World War, he was back in this country and appeared for the first time in several years in a Columbia monthly supplement. His record was A1516, "Happy Tho' Married," coupled with Joe Hayman's historic version of "Cohen on the Telephone"—apparently the first of the "Cohen" records to be issued in this country. Hayman was an America, but his record was made in London. The supplement said:

"AN AMUSING PAIR OF MONOLOGS. Undoubtedly two of the funniest recordings ever issued—a laugh every moment. The first presents the troubles of a Mr. Cohen when, in using the telephone for the first time, he tries to inform his landlord of certain damage done to his property by a storm. His efforts to make himself intelligible result in a record that is irresistibly droll. Mr. Duprez on the other side of the disc gives us another of his famous dissertations upon the felicities of married life, the good natured pessimism of which is not likely on the whole to have any markedly deleterious effect upon marriage statistics."

George Clarence Jell has told me that this record, which sold more than two million copies, was issued almost by accident. Mr. Jell, who was manager of the Columbia artist and repertoire department for many years, recalled that he thought he had completed his list of records to be issued in June, 1914, when he discovered that he was still one short. Almost in desperation, he decided to take a chance on the Cohen skit, the matricies of which had been imported from England, and to combine it with Duprez's monolog. To his surprise, it became one of the biggest sellers Columbia ever had and resulted in a long series of Cohen monologs by Hayman and other comedians.

Two months later, in August, the Edison company listed its first Blue Amberol cylinder by Duprez. It was No. 2373—and again it was "Happy Tho' Married." The *Edison Phonograph Monthly* remarked:

"Mr. Duprez started in the theatrical world when only five years of age. Since then he has had a varied experience in Stock Companies, musical comedies and as a headliner in vaudeville. His specialty is monologs of course. The one he gives on this record is original with him—an old theme, but sufficiently new to be amusing by the twist he gives it. This same monolog has been given by him in theaters all over the world, and has been heard and laughed at by millions. One of the

CURRIER & IVES lithographs, Gould birds, fruits, flowers, fashions, etc. All original.—Ruth Farra Manting, 809 Broadway, Santa Monica, Calif. n6046

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reasons for Mr. Duprez's success is his perfectly serious manner of speaking; even while he is saying the most ridiculous things, by his intonation you would think it the wisdom of Solomon."

Nearly a year passed before Edison issued a second Blue Amberol by Duprez—No. 2636, "Desperate Desmond," in July, 1915. About the same time Diamond Disc No. 50254 was marketed, combining these two monologs. It at once became widely popular and was listed in a 1925 booklet, "Edison Records of Music That Lives," as one of the three hundred most popular Edison discs. The write-up of the record contained this biographical information:

"Fred Duprez was born in Detroit, Mich. . . At the age of fifteen he went on the stage as a 'supe' with Kyrle Bellew, in 'A Gentleman of France.' Then he secured an understudy part to George Morton, eventually taking the latter's place. After over five years of dramatic work he entered vaudeville, and toured nearly every English speaking country in the world, including America, England, Ireland, Scotland, South Africa and Australia. Duprez is well-known on the vaudeville stage of the United States, and his droll monologs have really 'caught on.' These monologs he originates himself; in addition he has written several successful vaudeville sketches."

From this point my information concerning Fred Duprez's career is less detailed. I don't know just when he decided to settle in England, but his brother says:

"Pierce and Roslyn, or some other well known vaudeville team, induced him to try England. He went over and was an instant hit. He liked it over there so well and was such a favorite he became known as 'Mr. Manhattan.' Incidentally, he toured many seasons in a musical comedy called 'Manhattan Follies,' in which he was the star. In England, the jumps around the provinces are so situated that Fred could always be at home on Sunday—not as in the States, where his jumps sometimes were a thousand miles apart. When he left New York he wouldn't get home until the end of the season. Tacking onto that, he made bigger money over there—so there you are. But Fred always kept his American citizenship. "He married an Australian actress named Florence Mathews, and she played with him in the various musical comedies he was in. 'Love and Oh Baby' was another he toured in. Florence was Fred's second wife. He first married Graze Hazard, a top-liner in vaudeville, known as 'Five Feet of Comic Opera.'" (The second Mrs. Duprez returned to Australia after her husband's death and fell dead from a heart attack while walking down a street).

Mr. and Mrs. Duprez had two children—a son, Charles Manhattan Duprez, and a daughter, June. The son's first name was in honor of Fred's brother, Charlie, who has given me so much help with this series, and his middle name came from the part of "Mr. Manhattan," which his father played in "The Manhattan Follies." He also is an actor, living in England and occupying a home which his father bought years ago. The daughter, June, now in this country, became an actress over her parents' opposition (just as Fred had gone on the stage against the wishes of his father and mother) and has had considerable success in films and legitimate drama. She was a star in British pictures before coming to this country in 1940. And that reminds me that her father

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)



ish Priests ordered it silenced forever.

Chamber's Journal of 11-29-1884, tells of an exhibition on Oct. 2, 1884, of bell-ringing at the village of Drayton near Abingdon, Berkshire, England of a peal of 8 church bells. The clerical ringers were all members of the Ancient Society of College Youth of London and the Oxford University Society of change-ringers, both societies being well known for their skill in the art. The peal was of 5,050 Stedman Triples true and complete, and the exhibition which took 3 hours to complete, was conducted by the Rev. F. E. Robinson, ringing bell No. 7.

A writer in Gentlemen's Magazine in 1875 says, "A bell was the common prize, a little golden bell was the reward of victory in 1607 at the races near York, whence came the proverb, 'To Bear the Bell.'"

On shipboard the bell marks time. The 12 hours on a day is divided into 3 watches. Each 30 minutes is marked by a stroke of a bell. Thus, beginning at midnight, one bell is 12:30 and 8 bells, 4 o'clock, then 1 bell, 4:30 and 8 bells, 8 o'clock.

The Liberty Bell which first rang out celebrating the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress, July 4, 1776, was brought from England in 1752. It was tolled annually on July 4th, until it cracked July 8, 1835 while being tolled in memory of Chief Justice Marshall.

It is said that when the Rev. W. D. Hutton, retired engineer of the Southern Ry., dedicated the New Valley Grove Baptist Church at Maynardville, Tenn., he discovered the bell to be from his old railway locomotive, No. 448.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23)

also appeared in films. I recall seeing him more than ten years ago in a production starring Jessie Matthews, but can't recall the title. I also remember getting the impression that he was extremely stout, but his brother says he never weighed more than 190. June Duprez was formerly married to a London physician, but is now the wife of a New York socialite, George Moffett, Jr.

During his years abroad Fred did considerable recording for English Columbia. And here is an interesting item from the Talking Machine News of London, for April, 1923. It concerns a program given by the City of Leeds Gramophone and Phonograph Society: "Twenty-four items in all were given. Perhaps not least... was our genial secretary's contribution in the shape of a 16-minute World Record by Fred Duprez, which created a constant stream of merriment and is wonderfully well recorded." World records played at a slow speed and, although not commercially successful, were the forerunners of the present-day long playing discs.

Fred Duprez's death was tragically sudden. The *New York Times* for October 29, 1938, carried the following account of his passing:

"LONDON — Fred Duprez, American comedian, died aboard the liner President Harding. It was reported today from the liner, which is at sea and which is due at Southampton next Thursday. He was hurrying to London to see the first rush sequence on Alexander Korda's film, 'Four Feathers,' in which his daughter, June, is making her film debut. His age was 54. For 30 years the comedian, with a cigar as his only prop, had been a headliner in British vaudeville and one of the earliest broadcasters. He had a card index of 10,000 jokes, enabling him to raise a laugh in any type of audience. His daughter is the wife of Dr. Guy Beauchamp, London specialist.

"Mr. Duprez, born in Detroit in 1884, left medical school to go on the stage. His first appearance was in 1899. In 1902 he made his New York debut at Wallack's Theater as a page in 'A Gentleman of France.' After five years in stock and repertory he turned to vaudeville and traveled widely in this country and Europe. In 1915 Mr. Duprez left vaudeville and joined the touring company of 'The Passing Show.' In 1914 he toured as 'Mr. Manhattan' in the play of that name with the Grossmith and Laurillard company. Other plays in which he appeared were 'Smile,' 'My Soldier Boy,' 'The Music Box Revue,' 'The Lollies Bergere,' 'The Cocoanuts,' 'Lucky Boy,' of which he was co-author, and 'Lend Me Your Wife.' His wife, the former Florence Mathews, is aboard the liner Bremen bound for Europe. It is due one day later than the President Harding."

And here is a final reminiscence from Charlie Duprez, whom I thank most heartily for his interest and help in this series:

"The last time I saw Fred was about six days before he died. He was over here and was at a house party of some of our friends and he seemed tired out. Little did I know it was to be the final farewell. He was to stay here with us for a week, but a wireless from London made it imperative to return on the first boat to open on the radio for the Kraft Cheese program. I wasn't even able to see him off, which I regret to this day. Then a few days after the boat left I got the wireless from the ship's captain that he had been found dead in his stateroom... When the news of Fred's death reached England all radios were shut down for 60 seconds in his honor, so he must have been quite a favorite over there."

I have no doubt that Fred Duprez was a great favorite in England, just as he had been for years among American lovers of vaudeville and phonograph records. If there are any collectors of old discs and cylinders who don't know Duprez's recorded art, I would urge them not to miss an opportunity of acquiring any of his productions. The man with the stovepipe hat and the big cigar, who owed his start in the world to the "edifying" qualities of dime novels, was a really accomplished comedian, and all his records are well worth having. Certainly, as long as there are thousands of collectors with his records in their possession, Frederick August Duprez will not be forgotten.



## A Collector's Show Piece

In over fifty years of avid collecting, the owner of this lovely old music box has never found even a near duplicate. Fashioned as a combination table and music box, the piece bears no name or date but is believed to be of Swiss origin, probably a hundred years or more in age.

The nine music rolls are a "find" in themselves, each having five pieces of music to play, making a total of forty-five selections for the delight of music lovers.

It would interest the collector, Mr. George Eyster, if any of HOBBIES' readers have ever spied another music box of this rare and beautiful design during their antiquer's wanderings. The dimensions given are: table, 30" high, 48" across, 28" deep; music box, 10" high, 38" across, 14" deep, gold finished handles.



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## RECORDS

(Continued from Page 19)

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MONTHLY AUCTION thousands classical vocal records. Prec list. — S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colorado. s3272

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"OLD MUSIC BOX MELODIES" recorded from rare old music boxes on standard 10" plastic records: No. 301, Home Sweet Home - On a Sunday Afternoon. No. 302, Mocking Bird - Love's Old Sweet Song. No. 303, Silver Threads Among the Gold - In the Gloaming. No. 2, Brahms's Cradle Song - Rockabye Baby. No. 3, Sweet and Low - Gounod's Sing, Smile, Slumber. \$1.15 each postpaid. — Bornand Music Box Record Co., 333 Fifth Ave., Pelham 65, N. Y. au32701

RARE OLD RECORDS: Monthly sales list. Classical, vocal, popular, collector's items. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwood, Ambler, Penna. s6446

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening"; large, varied stock. Please state "wants", write or visit—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. n6829

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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BACK POPULAR sheet music. Catalog 10c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. je12407

PHONOGRAPHS: Edison upright disc mahogany case; extra good; 25 records; cost new, \$225; \$25. Upright cylinder, oak case, refinished, 25 records, 4 min. machine, \$25. Other Edisons when in stock. Write your wants. Exp. Collect. —Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. au1213

RECORD COLLECTORS: Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d6238

SWISS MUSIC Movements, assorted tunes, \$1.80. Direct from Importer. Stamped with year of manufacture, "1950".—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y. s4652

FOR SALE: Collectors Prizes. Electric bar room type player pianos, with roll music. Circus air calliopes, with electric blowers, handplayed or automatic (roll music). These instruments restored, retuned to like new condition.—Lee Company, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Texas. s3426

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## SIR HARRY LAUDER

By JIM WALSH

One of the greatest theatrical careers of the last half century came to its inevitable end when Sir Harry Lauder died on Sunday, February 26, at his home in Strathaven, Scotland. Only rarely does any artist have so long a career as that of Harry Lauder, who would have been 80 if he had lived to next August 4, and seldom does any performer enjoy such phenomenal success as the sturdy, bald little Scot who, in the days before radio, was probably the most famous comedian in the world.

Of few singers can it be truly said that their fame is world-wide, but Lauder was one of the few. He appeared before thousands of large audiences in every English-speaking country, and his recorded voice was known wherever the phonograph went. I have seen photographs of naked natives in the heart of Africa laughing fit to kill at one of Lauder's recorded specialties, such as "Stop Your Tickling, Jock," in which laughter by the singer also plays a leading part. The laughing song is the one type of vocal music that can be enjoyed by listeners anywhere without regard to language, and Lauder's humor consequently was enjoyed by both civilized men and savages.

Harry Lauder's life was darkened by tragedy as well as made brilliant by shining success, but he was an outstanding example of the poor boy who wins recognition in the face of obstacles. The diminutive genius who has ranked for nearly fifty years as Scotland's favorite son was born in 1870 in Portobello, a dingy suburb of Edinburgh, which he "immortalized" in one of his songs, "The Portobello Lass." He was christened Harry MacLennan Lauder. His father, a trainer of athletes, married a girl from the so-called Black Isle, Ross-shire. Harry, eldest of a family of seven children, was only eleven when his father died, and had to get a job in a flax-mill at Arbroath, Pofarshire, where he was paid two shillings a week for working half-time. What education he received was provided by a schoolmaster whom he always afterwards referred to as "Stumpy Bill."

Later, the over-worked, under-fed youth, who can have had no precocious idea that King George V would one day confer knighthood upon him, worked in a coal mine at Hamilton, where he had charge of the pathetic blind pit-ponies used in mine operations. As a miner he sometimes stood up to his hips in water, swinging a pick at the coal above his head. He liked to sing, and the other miners talked so much about his powers as an entertainer that he was offered five shillings a performance to take part in local concerts. After a time, he joined a concert party at Lanark,

and had his first engagement as a "single turn" at Belfast, where he sang, not one of the Scotch songs that he later made famous, but an Irish comic number, "Calligan, Call Again."

Meanwhile, in 1890 he had married Annie Vallance, and the marriage proved ideal. Lauder considered it the turning point of his life. His wife was the inspiration of many of his most popular songs, including "Nannie, I Never Loved Another Lass but You," "I Love a Lassie," "She Is Ma Daisy," and the most popular of all, "Roamin' in the Gloamin'." Mrs. Lauder played the piano, and accompanied her husband in his first recitals.

Thirty-year-old Harry Lauder placed his feet squarely on the path to better things when he went to London and made his first metropolitan appearance at Gatti's Theatre of Varieties on Westminster Bridge Road. Soon afterwards he was heard at the old Tivoli Music Hall, and Bransby Williams, the veteran impersonator of Dickens characters, who was on the same bill, recalls that "the audience positively went frantic about him."

There was now no stopping Harry Lauder. He soon became not only the most popular comedian in Great Britain, but the most imitated. A host of other Scotchmen, or men who represented themselves as Scotch, trudged in the reflected glory of the busy little man who appeared on the stage, wearing the kilt and twirling a knobby stick almost as large as himself. Judging by their records, some of the imitators were as good, or better, singers than Lauder, but lacked a certain spark that made audiences wild about the great original, who was also one of the greatest masters of pantomime, and who, for publicity reasons, shrewdly traded on the age-old reputation of the Scotch for practicing extreme thrift.

Obviously, the idol of the music halls couldn't long escape making records. Since there was good money in singing for phonographs, Harry wouldn't have wanted to escape, anyway. But his mellow baritone was ideal for recording and his records were fast sellers from the beginning. This, I suspect, was because of the invariably simple, catchy melodies to which his "character songs" were set rather than his patter. I imagine Lauder was much funnier on the stage, where his subtle mannerisms and tricks of character delineation could be observed, than he strikes me as being on records. While I like his singing, his spoken comedy has always seemed tiresome to me. For this reason, I prefer his 10-inch records to his 12-inch—just because there is less talking and chuckling. On records, all the characters he impersonates seem to be cut from one pattern—the half-witted. This purely personal impres-



This picture of Sir Harry Lauder in his last years is copied from a photo sent by the comedian to Quentin Riggs, well-known record collector of Oklahoma City.

sion may be caused by my lack of familiarity with Scottish peculiarities and brogue, as well as from my being of a different generation than Lauder's. Styles in comedy change more rapidly and completely than in any other form of art. The next generation may not even find the works of P. G. Wodehouse funny.

The first Harry Lauder records that I have been able to trace were issued by the Gramophone Company of England in January, 1905, but there is reason to think that he had previously recorded. These "His Master's Voice" discs were seven-inch, single-faced versions of "A Trip to Inverary," and, rather surprisingly, "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," Lauder's singing of which appears to have been very popular. In February there were 10-inch discs of "The Wedding of Lauchie McGraw," "Inverary," "Rising Early in the Morning," and "Stop Your Tickling, Jock." The latter was with "full military band accompaniment." "Stop Your Tickling" hardly seems a woman's type of song, but a year or so later, Helen Trix, the charming comedienne who is still living in New York, made a Zonophone record of "Jock," which I find more attractive than Lauder's. And, while nobody would be likely to think of Billy Murray as a singer of Lauder songs, Billy also helped to meet the demand for Harry's numbers in this country by singing "Sound Advice" for Zonophone. During most of Lauder's career, his records were issued in England by both the Gramophone and Zonophone companies. Renditions considered best were reserved for "H. M. V." use, while Zonophone pressings were made from second masters.

In March, 1905, Pathe advertised Lauder records. The heading was "Back to the Fold," which seems to indicate that he had sung for Pathe before. Included were "Inverary," "Stop Your Tickling, Jock"; "Waddin' o' Lauchie McGraw"; "Harry Lauder in a Snatch From His Famous 'Tober-

mory,' Introducing 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep,'" (what a title!) and one that I have never seen mentioned anywhere else, "Tattie Soup." In May came "She's Ma Daisy" and "Fu' the Noo," also known as "I've Something in the Bottle for the Morning." After the Pathe people went into the disc business in 1906, they also issued flat records by Lauder. Since all Pathe masters were made on large cylinders it was easy to dub discs from the original cylinder recordings.

The first Zonophone record I have been able to find by Lauder came out in October, 1905, a seven-inch of "Stop Your Tickling." In August, Zonophone had begun distributing a five-inch record, playing a minute and a half and selling for ninepence, but I have been unable to find that any of Lauder's numbers were recorded on these midgets. In October, too, H. M. V. issued one of the comedian's lesser known records, "Tickling Geordie," with this description: "An original laughing song. To hear Mr. Harry Lauder in a new song does not fall to our lot every day. 'Tickling Geordie' is Mr. Harry Lauder's own name for a song which between us we made up in our laboratory, taking the tune from an old American plantation song. This is the first time Mr. Harry Lauder has been heard in a laughing song"—an obvious misstatement since the same company, as well as Zonophone and Pathe, had already issued "Jock."

Here it may be well to mention that throughout his long career, during which many millions of his records were sold, Lauder was almost entirely a "lone wolf." I can think of only two records in which he performed with other artists. One is "Sandy Macpherson's Cauld," marketed by the British Zonophone Company in February, 1906, in which Lauder and Russell Hunting, famed for his "Michael Casey" monologues, went partners. Some years later, there was also a record called "Harry Lauder Visits Will Evans," another popular H. M. V. comedian. Throughout his recording days, too, Lauder stuck almost entirely to Scotch character songs, although he occasionally sang a "straight" interpretation of a sentimental ballad, of which an example is "Mary of Argyll." And, in 1911, he shattered precedent by doing a number called "Bertie, the Clerk," in Cockney dialect. It didn't meet with a favorable reception, and the experiment wasn't repeated. Many of the Lauder records which were sold in England were never issued in the United States.

In 1907, the first year he sang in this country, Lauder gave an interviewer an entertaining account of some of his early theatrical and recording experiences. He said that when he first began singing in music halls he had a hard time. In his own words: "It was a heartbreaking business, for I was either first or last on all the programs, and many a night when occupying the latter position I came out and sang my three songs to an audience consisting of the orchestra—minus the conductor—the check-

ers and the backs of people hurrying out as fast as they could from the building."

But such things seemed funny a few years later when Lauder's fame was unbounded. The singer recalled the time that a crowd had formed in Parliament street and was being held back by police. A big Scotchman passing by asked, "What's wrong wi' the crowd here?" and was told, "The Prince of Wales is coming." The Scot turned away, disappointedly muttering: "Prince o' Wales! I thought it must be Harry Lauder!"

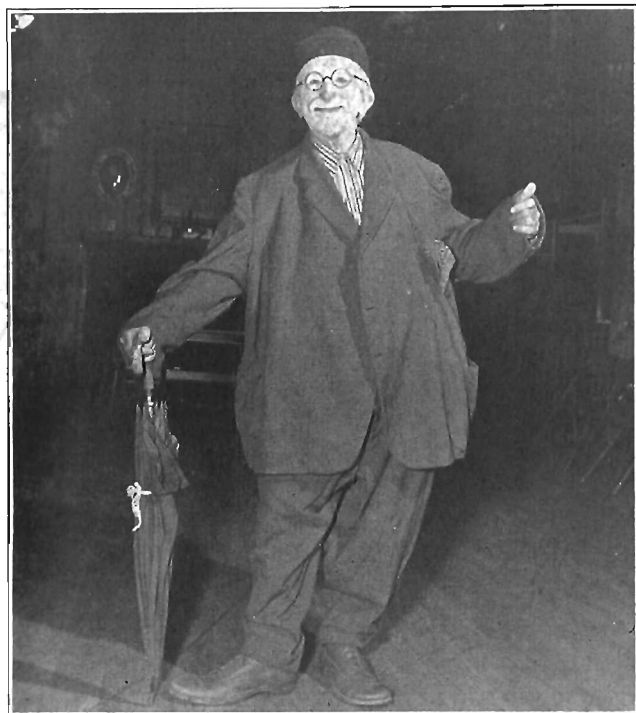
Lauder said that the first time he tried to make a record he was "placed in front of an enormous receiver. . . I managed the first verse all right and then sprang my first 'gag,' but I forgot where I was and waited for the applause. Deep silence still reigned supreme! I couldn't help it—I burst out laughing and fell off the stool on which I had been placed to bring my mouth to the receiver. The operator rushed out from his box and the musicians screamed with merriment—and the record was spoiled.

"This is the daftest thing I ever did," I remarked, on scrambling to my feet. "Fancy singin' a song into a big tin tube! Look here," I said to the manager, who was holding his sides, "how much am I to get for this?—for there's nae use o' bein' daft if ye are no to be well paid for 't!" There was more laughter all around, and then I was told that my fee would be—well, the figure was all right, mind I'm tellin' ye! "Ca' away," I said, "I'm yer man!"

Cynics may perhaps say that the only thing that doesn't ring true about that anecdote is the idea of Lauder's beginning to make a record before he knew precisely what he would be paid!

By the time the interview appeared, Harry's records were already being extensively imitated. One of the cleverest copycats was "Hector Grant," who recorded Lauder's entire repertoire for some of the smaller English companies with such remarkable fidelity to Lauder's style that even Harry could hardly tell the imitator's records from his own. The doughty Scot became furious and swore he would do all sorts of unpleasant things to Hector Grant if he ever caught him. But when he finally met "Grant" he merely growled: "So ye're the feller that's been singin' my songs? Weel, you ha' a dom'd fine voice!" "Grant" was really the Australian bass-baritone, Peter Dawson, then in his early twenties. Dawson, who began making records in 1904 and is still at it, undoubtedly holds the world's championship for consistent recording over a period of many years. Another exceptionally good imitator was Sandy Shaw, who sang for Columbia. Outstanding, too, beginning around 1915, was Glen Ellison, a baritone who sang Lauder songs for Edison, but didn't try too hard to give a close imitation of Harry's patter. Both he and Dawson had better voices and were more finished singers than the genius they imitated. Then there

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Here is Herman Joseph in the rustic comedy role he created after people of Jewish faith had expressed their resentment of the caricaturing of the race in the circus arena. Joseph's Jewish comedy role had been copied by clowns in all principal circuses.

by following the midget fire trucks afoot, carrying a bundle of clothes and a large sign reading "Fire Sale."

He introduced comedy to the wild west concert of the circus for the first time in 1914. Retaining his exaggerated Jewish characteristics in burlesque cowboy attire, and riding a stubborn donkey, Joseph imitated the cowboys in their rope spinning and rough riding stunts.

When the Volstead act was passed by congress, the Jewish clown came out with his "Home Brew and Hebrew" gag, parading the hippodrome track carrying a beer mug overflowing with suds.

With the end of the war, Jerome and Joseph resumed

their partnership and in 1919 joined Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus the first season the two shows combined. In 1920 and 1922, they went with Sells-Floto Circus because of a flattering offer for their services. But in 1922, Charles Ringling induced them to return to the Ringling fold, and Joseph remained there until he quit the circus in 1933.

It was during the last season that Joseph took his cue for his greatest clown creation from newspaper headlines of the period.

The very popularity of the Jewish character he had created in the circus, caused its discard. With every rival circus producing numbers similar to those Joseph concocted and employing clowns in Hebrew makeup, there came a flood of letters of protest to circus managements from people of the Jewish faith, resentful of the caricaturing of the race in the arena.

So when Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus opened its annual engagement in Madison Square Garden, New York, in April, 1933, one clown stood out so sharply from the horde that his picture appeared in the newspapers and he was interviewed by many reporters.

The clown was none other than Herman Joseph, made up like and garbed in the well known wardrobe of Mohatma Gandhi, and leading a goat around the arena. The stunt captured the crowds' fancy with the clever burlesquing of the great Indian leader, and Joseph received the long delayed recognition as one of the outstanding artists of his profession.

Unsettled financial conditions at the depth of the depression caused Joseph to leave the Ringling show at the end of the 1933 season, with every intention of returning to the big tops ere long. His partner, Paul Jerome, remained, and still is a fixture in the show's clown alley with his clever neon-lighted heart and nose.

Going to his home in Goldsboro, the cigar company he has since represented, was quick to offer Joseph employment in public relations work and for 17 years he has remained there.

Since discarding his Hebrew character role, Joseph has made up as a comic rustic with linen duster and facial makeup somewhat reminiscent of the Dutch comedians of the old days of the burlesque show.

"I didn't intend to stay away when I left the circus," Joseph muses. "I hear from many circus fans throughout the country hoping I may go back some day."

And there is a peculiar glint in the veteran clown's eye as he reflects on the old days of trouping with the "rag bags."

Maybe, some day. . . . .

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were Evan Davies, Jock Lorimer, Jock Mills, Jock McGraw — a jocular group! Much later, another noted Scotch comedian, the late Will Fyffe, came along, but he was a man of original methods, who wrote his own songs instead of depending on Lauder's.

Harry Lauder's vogue in this country didn't begin on records until 1908, when Victor issued imported Black Label discs of seven of the comedian's favorite numbers. These, made from H. M. V. matrices, were so poorly recorded that within a few years Lauder remade them all. Victor's original announcement of the Lauder records said:

"The success of this popular Scotch comedian in America has been phenomenal, and he is declared to be one of the greatest entertainers now before the public. . . . The Victor now offers seven of his best numbers, including the famous laughing song, 'Stop Your Tickling, Jock'; the 'Bottle in the Morning,' with an extremely funny drunken speech, and a melodious little song about a bonnie Scotch lassie." In 1910, introducing a new series of Lauder records, Victor said: "Every one of these records is en-

tirely new, being recently made by Mr. Lauder at the Victor's Camden Laboratory, and are so much superior to the old records that the hearer will be simply astonished. Every word and whisper which Lauder utters is absolutely distinct, and in his shivering rendition of 'Wearing Kilts,' you can even hear his teeth chatter!" The new records were Purple Label, instead of Black, and sold for 75 cents or \$1.25, depending on size. In 1914, when Lauder, as "the highest salaried entertainer in the world," was receiving \$5,000 a week, Victor commented: "Perhaps the best evidence of Lauder's value as an entertainer is the fact that he is, in vaudeville language, 'booked solid' for the next eight years! Every week of the 416 is positively contracted for at a salary which, previous to Lauder's entry, was never dreamed of by a vaudeville performer."

Edison also issued in 1908 a series of two-minute Lauder cylinders, recorded in London. One of the titles was the "Calligan" song which he used at the beginning of his career. A little later, the comedian made many four-minute Edison Amberol cylinders. In June, 1910, The New Phonogram said: "Harry Lauder records cannot be approached in quality of reproduction by any other records in our catalog. His voice lends itself so readily to phonograph reproduction and his enunciation is so delightfully distinct that not a syllable is misunderstood. Not one of those nice little inflections of tone for which he is famous, and which conveys a world of significance, is

lost upon the listener." (Despite Lauder's distinct enunciation, Victor for years published in its catalogs a glossary of the Scotch words he used, so that the records would be more easily understood by the average American listener.) Lauder's Edison contract expired in April, 1912, and from then on his services appear to have been exclusive to Victor in this country and the Gramophone and Zonophone labels in England. A minor mystery is provided by a 1915 Edison Diamond Disc, on which one Alick Lauder sings two Scotch dialect numbers. Alick's photo looks exactly like Harry Lauder, but I have heard that he was Harry's brother. The songs, "Dingle Dangle" and "I Wish I Was," seem not to have been a part of Harry's repertoire.

In 1910, the *Talking Machine News* conducted a competition to determine the most popular recording artists of the day. Since the voting was restricted almost entirely to British record buyers, the popular American stars were not represented in the final results. An extremely popular tenor, the late Ernest Pike, took first place. Peter Dawson was second, and Lauder came third. The next thirteen in order were Billy Williams, Florrie Forde, Will Evans, Harry Fay, Stan-

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Bicycle Factory. The Schwinn family, starting with Ignatz Schwinn, had been collecting bicycles for nearly a century. It is housed in a large hall and is open to the public by invitation. Mr. Frank Schwinn has been very gracious in lending the originals and models for public events such as parades, exhibits and the Chicago Railroad Fair of 1948 and 49. He also has a fine collection of cyclana.

Walter Nilsson, the unicycle star of "Hells a Poppin," screen and television actor, has probably the largest private bicycle collection in the world. The number of bicycles has been estimated as over 5,000. A whole building at Closter, New Jersey, was required to house his collection. He has recently moved to Los Angeles where his equipment is available for the motion picture studios. One of the unique wheels in this collection is the Diamond Jim Brady-Lillian Russell tandem. It is gold plated and was studded with gems. Diamond Jim had this machine specially built for his bicycle queen and they rode it together down Broadway in New York.

Small bicycle collections are to be found in most historical museums throughout the United States. The Carson City, Nevada, Museum has some interesting bicycle items on display. In New York, a few old bicycles are on display at the Museum of the City of New York, at the New York Historical Society and the Richmond Museum in Staten Island.

Foremost among European bicycle museums is the Bartleet Museum in England. H. W. Bartleet, known as "Sammy," was one of England's racing high wheel cyclists. He had a complete collection of every type of bicycle made in England. The story of his unique museum has been published in the 186 page "Bartleet's Bicycle Book" by Ed. J. Burrow and Company, Ltd., of London. The volume is out of print but it may be had from book dealers. During the war the museum was moved to Coventry for safety.

The Science Museum at South Kensington, England, has 37 bicycles and 42 bicycle parts in its collection. It has an original "Hobby Horse" as patented in France by Baron von Drais in 1818. Although made of heavy iron and wood it only had a wheelbase of 39 inches and weighed but 38 pounds. It was lighter in weight and shorter than the standard American bicycle of today. Above this machine is an original old print dated 1819 showing the machine in action, traveling ten miles an hour. (Many of our heavyweight modern bicycles cannot keep up this speed.) The 1851 velocipede was used by H. R. H. Prince Consort and donated by H. M. King Edward VII in 1901. The 1881 Otto Dicycle was used by the Viscountess Sherbrooke and presented to the museum in 1901. The original 1885 Rover bicycle, invented by J. K. Starley, the first safety, was presented by Mr. J. K. Starley. Among the parts exhibits is the original Dunlop pneumatic tire lent by the inventor, Mr. J. B. Dunlop, in 1888. Collier's

Two Speed gear, invented in 1899, and the Sturmey-Archer Three Speed, invented and used in 1906, are on exhibit. This should settle the argument that speed gears for cycles are a new invention. Every collector should have a copy of the Catalog of the Collections in the Science Museum—Land Transport I, printed in London by His Majesty's Stationery Office.

Among German museums the Deutsches Museum in Munich stands out. Here in Room 94 (Before World War II) were found a complete story of the evolution of the bicycle in Germany starting with the original Baron Karl von Drais hobby horse. The writer spent a day in this museum in 1929. It was unique in that all the models could be worked and thus more readily understood.

In France one of the leading cycle collections is to be found in the Conservatoire National des Artes et Metiers at 292 Rue Saint-Martin in Paris. Post cards of every model may be secured by addressing the curator of the Cycle Collection.

For those who do not have room to collect bicycles, they may concentrate on photographs, books, catalogs and old prints from these museums.

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ley Kirkby, Harry Dearth, Harry Thornton, John McCormack, John Harrison, Fred Vernon, Billy Whitlock, Edna Thornton and Evan Williams. Had such a contest been held in this country, Billy Murray and Ada Jones probably would have far outdistanced all opposition, but it's likely that Harry Lauder would have finished among the top twelve or so.

The Edison Phonograph Monthly for June, 1913, contains some interesting observations about Lauder, whose four-minute records were being reissued as Blue Amberols:

"One must go back to the days of Albert Chevalier and his coster songs to find a parallel to the phenomenal success which Lauder has achieved. He started his career as a boy in a coal-pit and has won his way to the top of the ladder by sheer grit and talent. In September, 1908, he appeared before King Edward. . . In London he is, and has been for several years, the popular idol, and can fill two or three theaters in a single evening by merely appearing for 15 or 20 minutes in each. His vogue in the United States is hardly less marked. He has appeared in this country several times and has left the public humming his tuneful ditties with a warm spot in their hearts for 'the greatest living character singer.' His recent performances are said to constitute his farewell trip in America, for he has decided to retire from the stage."

Lauder's frequent "farewell appearances" became a standing theatrical joke. Only last year, at the age of 78, before he was stricken by the heart malady that eventually proved fatal, he was meditating one more "farewell trip."

The first World War, which began in 1914, brought about one of the greatest tragedies of Lauder's life. He was devoted to his only child, John, who helped write "Trixie From Dixie" and a few of the other Lauder songs. Captain John Lauder was killed in ac-

tion in 1917. When Victor issued a new Lauder record, "I Love to Be a Sailor," in January, 1918, it was accompanied with this touching description:

"There is a new Harry Lauder come into our midst. Not less lovable than the old Harry Lauder, but touched by the finger of Destiny, so that he makes us to weep as well as to laugh. Ever since the loss of his son on the battle line in Flanders, Harry Lauder has been a changed man. His recent tour through this country proved this, and the invaluable work he has done in raising money for the Red Cross, Liberty Loan and similar funds is not less valuable than that he has done in bringing closer home to us the human side of the war—the personal loss, the personal sacrifice without which the war cannot be won. 'All the money in the world,' said Harry Lauder, speaking in aid of the Liberty Loan, 'would not bring my boy back home, and when I learned that he had been killed I sold every security I had and turned every dollar I possessed over to my government. And now you must be prepared to give your all if you want your boys to come back safe.' And when you listen to this record, you will reflect that Harry Lauder has himself given everything, and there can be no come-back for him—except the tears and laughter and gratitude of a million hearts. 'I Love to Be a Sailor' has all the old lilt and gaiety of Harry Lauder's best, but the humor is purer, richer, more human."

Until the war ended, Lauder worked tirelessly, entertaining troops and seeking to forget the heartbreak that had come to him and his idolized "Nannie." He wrote a book called "A Minstrel in France," which tells of his war-time experiences. King George knighted him for his services and he was probably the best loved man in the British Empire, although a few die-hard critics insisted that his character studies were "an insult to the Scottish race," and there was a bit of snobbish complaint about a "mere music hall comedian" having the right to be called Sir.

Then, in 1927, ten years after the death of his son, Lauder suffered perhaps a greater loss. His life story, "Roamin' in the Gloamin'," had just begun to appear in the Saturday Evening Post when Lady Lauder died. She had grown, probably from grief over the death of her son, to look much older than Harry, despite his baldness, which had begun early in life. The grief-stricken humorist, whose admirers insisted that "humanist" would better describe him, at first said that he could never sing again. But, in the spirit of one of his great favorites, "Keep On to the End of the Road," he thought it over and decided that he could best bear his loneliness by continuing to sing as long as his admirers wanted to hear him. A few years later he starred in a film depicting the story of his life.

It's doubtful, though, that his heart ever again was fully in his work, for he appears to have become careless and forgetful as the years went on. Some time around 1938, the following unsympathetic account of one of his appearances at a London music hall was written by a staff critic of *Variety*:

"Harry Lauder followed. . . No doubt Lauder is on the decline. His type of humor no longer appeals to moderns."

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## Whaling Lore

"Stories of Whaling Adventures" were told recently by Miss Harriet Dorman, New York State, before the meeting of the Rochester Folklore Society at the Rochester, N. Y., Museum of Arts and Sciences.

Whaling stories which were handed down by an ancestor who was a captain on a whaling ship and have never been published were retold by Miss Dorman. She illustrated her stories with whaling treasures collected by the captain.

This interesting program was arranged by Mrs. Gladys Reid Holton, Rochester Museum historian, who invited visitors to bring their own collections of whaling treasures for this open meeting.

## Briefs

The New York State Historical Association will hold its annual meeting in Rochester on September 7-9. Registration will be at the Sheraton Hotel on East Avenue.

The Genesee Country Historical Federation Bulletin reflects an active organization, alert to state-wide interest as well as local.

Dr. Blake McKelvey, historian of Rochester, N. Y., and Harold Rand, Rochester Commissioner of Commerce, have a Sunday afternoon program called "Know Your Rochester," which is on the air on Sunday afternoons from 5:15 to 5:30.

Gunston Hall, near Mount Vernon, Va., was opened as a state historic site recently. The property has a mansion built in 1758 by George Mason, author of the Virginia Bill of Rights. The property includes 550 acres of land, including colonial gardens. The late owner, Louis D. Hertle, who willed the property to the state, had extensively improved the house and grounds. The site is administered by the Colonial Dames of America.

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, has scheduled an Institute for Local Historical Societies to be held in Madison on July 6-8. The institute will have sessions on collecting local historical materials.

Frank O. Spinney, for three years director of the Manchester, New Hampshire Historical Association, has been appointed curator of Old Sturbridge, Village Museum and Crafts Center, Sturbridge, Mass. The appointment fills the post left vacant two years ago by Malcolm Watkins, now associate curator in the department of ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution.

The University Museum, Philadelphia, has opened an exhibit, 4000 Years of Music, showing ancient and historical musical instruments. The instruments were selected from more than 5,000 items collected over many

years from different parts of the world.

The Nelson Dewey House, home of the first governor of Wisconsin, Cassville, has been opened as a historic house museum, recently. The house has been partially restored by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the State Conservation Department.

A fire recently damaged the birthplace of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Portland, Maine. The dilapidated three story structure has long been the center of controversy. Citizens of Portland have demanded that the building be razed as they insist that it is only an eyesore in the downtown waterfront district. Longfellow admirers have asked that it be renovated as a shrine to the noted poet. The damage to the house was not estimated and the cause of the fire has not been determined.

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

Idea of stage waits while he changes into his next character is shunned by present-day vaudeville habitués, and at a less sympathetic house he might have gotten the razz. Here the audience stood it very well. Lauder has acquired a habit of forgetting his lines, which also does not help. Had plenty of trouble with the orchestra, mostly his fault, as an act of his calibre should carry its own leader. Understood to be getting \$2,000 per week and is in for two weeks, which is plenty."

Despite the *Variety* man's jeering attitude, Harry Lauder was by no means through. His type of humor still appealed to many "moderns," as was proved when the Second World War began. Once more the comedian, who had made another large fortune, forsook his palatial home at Strat-haven, where his niece, Miss Greta Lauder, kept house for him. Again he entertained the men in service, as he had done a quarter of a century before. And he always got a big response to his comic and sentimental songs, with their irresistible rolling rhythms. Assisted by his niece, he also organized shows and played in Scottish towns for the benefit of churches, schools, hospitals, clubs and community projects. He wanted to keep on entertaining even after he had his first serious heart attack. When the doctors told him to give up active work, he sadly remarked: "I suppose a man can't go on forever—though I'd be perfectly willing to." His condition became so bad that he was unconscious for weeks and was expected to die at any moment. However, a few months before his death, he improved remarkably and was believed to be almost well. Then his fatal relapse occurred.

A glance at the Victor and "His Master's Voice" catalogs seems to show that the popularity of Lauder's recorded work has held up better of recent years in the United States than abroad. The Victor list of his electrical recordings is fairly long, but the new 1949 H. M. V. catalog contains only two double-faced Lauder

discs. One couples "To the End of the Road" and "The Road to the Isles" and the other is a medley of the refrains of his most popular songs. It may be that most of his British records are now on the cheaper Regal-Zonophone label—if it is still in existence.

Harry Lauder had one quality in common with such diverse personalities as Thomas A. Edison, Henry Ford, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Bernard Shaw, all of whom made such a deep impress on their times that while they were living one had it hard to imagine a world without them. Yet of this group only Shaw is still alive.

As for Harry MacLennan Lauder, few men can have given more wholesome pleasure to millions of other humans over a longer period than he, and few have served their fellow men more unselfishly and devotedly when there was need. The droll little Scot was one of the great personalities of his time. As long as his discs and cylinders survive, that warmly vibrant baritone voice and hearty chuckle will not be forgotten, and the one-time mill boy and mine drudge will be held in affectionate remembrance by a multitude of admirers who are grateful for the vast good he has done.

Farewell and sweet rest, Sir Harry Lauder!

## Montgomery County, Pa., Dealers Form Club

A recent release tells of the banding together of the antiques dealers of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The present membership of the organization consists of thirty-seven dealers. The following members have been elected to serve the organization for the coming year:

President, A. H. Rihl, Trappe, Pa.; Vice President, Howard D. Finkle, North Wales, Pa.; Secretary, Miss Irma Schultz, Worcester, Pa.; Treasurer, Mrs. Ambra Buck, Skippack, Pa. Directors: Norman H. Detweiler, Lansdale, Pa.; Mrs. E. Renee Shourds, Whitmarsh, Pa.; Mrs. Hazel R. Schubert, Roslyn, Pa.

Monthly meetings will be held in order to help promote the antiques business in this vicinity.

## Do You Remember?

By E. E. MEREDITH

When we saved "rennet" from the stomachs of calves and beeves when butchering and it was used to curdle milk for home-made cheese?

When we attended the county fair and paid 10 cents to hear a wax phonograph record through a runner hose which was attached to our cars?

When all sorts of herbs were tied to the rafters of the cabin to dry, including of course, boneset, pennyroyal, and hops to make yeast and hot poultices?

equipment for "microgroove" recording on long playing discs is far more expensive, far more difficult to operate and had best be left to professionals. With a good tape recorder one can make faithful copies of standard disc records. Since tape does not become worn through repeated plays, as all discs do, and since it requires so little storage space, it may well become the standard reproducing medium, supplanting even the LP disc. In any case, tape may prove to be the ideal way to preserve for the future the performances of the past which we now treasure in disc form. It is probably too soon to consider transferring one's entire disc collection to tape, but perhaps the time is not far off. Whether it be from tape or from some other method of recording sound for home reproduction, however, we may be sure that in the future we'll still be able to hear the voice of Caruso or the conducting of Toscanini.

What, then, is to become of our originals? Since, as has been pointed out, fewer people will be interested in them, their cash value is likely to decline, and hence their eventual fate is uncertain. It is my hope that they will be collected in huge quantities, by public libraries or by commercial organizations which could lend, rent or sell tape or some other kind of copy of any desired original recording to any interested person. It takes little imagination to see how greatly the boundaries of historical record collecting could be extended in this way. What an enormously rich and wide range of material there would be to choose from! So, if it's the music and/or the performance that you value, you have little to fear from the future and much to hope for. If, on the other hand, it's the record itself or its label that means most to you, well, what's to stop you from tacking it up on the wall just as you probably do now? If the walls crumble, and with them your records, you can always find something else equally satisfactory to collect. Who knows, maybe it'll even be reels of recorded tape!

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### BERT WILLIAMS, A Thwarted Genius I

By JIM WALSH

"Bert Williams is a tremendous asset to the Negro race. The fact of his success aids the Negro many times more than he could have helped the race by merely contenting himself to whine about racial difficulties. The fact is that the American people are ready to honor any man who does something worth while, irrespective of color."

—Booker T. Washington.

The great Negro educator, the late Booker T. Washington, was born into slavery at Hale's Forge, in Franklin county, Virginia, 50 miles or so south of Roanoke, where the writer of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists lives. Dr. Washington made a distinguished name for himself in the face of vast difficulties and had the esteem of white and black alike. Under such circumstances, it was natural for him to take an optimistic view of American treatment of the Negro. And it probably was equally natural for the founder of Tuskegee Institute to assume that Bert Williams, one of the best known colored theatrical personalities of a generation ago, had been blessed with a rich and satisfying career. But that wasn't the way Williams himself felt about it.

True, the gravel-voiced comedian made plenty of money, and his popularity was undiminished during the more than a quarter of a century in which he appeared on the stage. But this brilliant performer, for whom I think "genius" is not too strong a term, felt thwarted in his higher ambitions. Tales about famous com-

edians who have longed to play Hamlet are centuries old. An equally long roster could be compiled of tragedians or opera singers who wished they could shine in comedy. As a rule, no matter how great an artist's success, he longs for the chance to reveal what he believes to be his even greater talents in some exactly opposite field of endeavor. Bert Williams may never have felt the urge to play Hamlet or even Othello, but he did believe that he could achieve a higher type of characterization than he was ever allowed to assay, and he thought that his being a Negro was used unfairly to keep him from realizing his full potentialities. The six-foot, two hundred pound comedian didn't talk much about his frustrated ambitions, and the crowds who applauded the tall man in his blackface make-up, or who faithfully bought the latest Bert Williams records, didn't suspect the way he felt. But, as will be shown, the comedian was unhappy because his having a small percentage of Negro blood restricted him to what he considered a lower form of entertainment. Conditions have changed somewhat for the better since Williams died in 1922, but it is still largely true that Negro entertainers are "typed," regardless of their own wishes.

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Eugenia Mantelli: Any Zonophone by this artist, especially her Carmen arias on 40075.

Also catalogs, supplements, pamphlets and old advertisements of records and phonographs.

**STEPHEN FASSETT**  
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Persons offering material not specified above, or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

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## RECORDS

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**VICTOR RED SEAL Records**, 10", 60c each, 12" 75c each. Complete selections by Kreisler, Zimbalist, Elman, Heifitz, Powell, Paderewski, McCormack, Gluck, Williams, Homer, Jeritza, Schipa, Werrenrath, Farrar, Gigli, Martinelli, Garrison, Zanelli, Johnson, Culp, Aida, Degoria, Schumannheink, Duets, others.—Martin, 11 Dooley, Brooklyn 35, N. Y. s3276

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**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3483

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**COLLECTORS' GUIDE** to American Recordings, 1895, 1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. f124201

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**FOR SALE:** Record collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 15 first Ave., Newton Square, Penna. au122741

**REGINA 15½"** discs, \$2 each, 1 free with purchase of 10.—Music Exchange, Sears Court, New Bedford, Mass. o 3882

In beginning the story of Bert Williams' theatrical and recording career, I'd like to make it clear that he was not an American-born Negro. Instead, the comedian, whose full name was Egbert Austin Williams (a name which he shortened with good reason for stage purposes), was born some time during 1876 at New Providence in the Bahama Islands. He was of mixed African and Spanish descent, with the white element predominating, and was so light of complexion that he used burnt cork for blackface make-up, as a white comedian would. His parents were Frederick and Sarah Williams. One of his grandfathers was white but had married an octoroon — an action that set the stage for the essential tragedy of his grandson's life.

When Bert was a small boy, his parents moved to California, where he attended Riverside High School. The elder Williams had great educational ambitions for his son, but the boy ended them by joining Martin and Seig's Mastodon Minstrels at the age of 17. That was in 1893. The troupe toured mining and lumber camps for two years.

In 1895 theatrical history was made when 19-year-old Bert met George W. Walker in San Francisco. Walker had been a song and dance man with a medicine show. Like Williams, he was a brilliant comedian. They formed a partnership and went into small-time vaudeville with an

**RARE RECORDS!** Unplayed mint electrical imports and cut-outs. Polydors, Telefunken, Swiss and Italian records. Little known discs by Erb, Supervia, Elizabeth Schumann, Huseh, Schusmus, Lehmann, Gerhardt, Schiatz, Bjorling, Kraus, Joyce, Capsir, Pagliughi, Pertile, Favero, Cigna, Merli, Tauber, etc. 2327 Arthurs St., Los Angeles 65, Calif. o 30801

## MISCELLANEOUS

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**SWISS MUSIC Movements**, assorted tunes, \$1.80. Direct from importer. Stamped with year of manufacture, "1950".—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y. s4652

**FOR SALE:** Collectors' Prizes. Electric bar room type player pianos, with roll music. Circus air calliopes, with electric blowers, handplayed or automatic (roll music). These instruments restored, returned to like new condition.—Lee Company, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Texas. s3426

**MUST SELL,** moving. Regina auto, 21x27", \$250. Auto, playing banjo, \$125. Two singing birds in cage, \$100. Melodeon, 2 keyboards, \$75. Violina, \$75. Piano & organ combined, \$150. Sell all much less, make your offer on any.—B. L. Williams, 8000 Coun Ave., Chevy Chase, Maryland, Close to Wash., Pa. s1234

**MELODEONS** and Melodeon-Organs restored like new. Also buy, sell.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. n3882

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS**, assorted tunes, \$1.80 direct from importer.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. d4654

act that set the pattern for Moran and Mack, "The Two Black Crows" of a generation later, and many other blackface teams. Williams was, for stage purposes, slow and drawing and seemed a monstrosity of bewildered stupidity. As his straight man foil, Walker was sophisticated and alert — essentially he used the same formula that is followed today by Amos'n'Andy.

The young fellows drifted about California and other parts of the United States for a year, but by 1896 they were in New York. Their early career oddly patterned that of Billy Murray, who at the same time was wandering about the West with road shows and minstrel troupes and gaining the experience that was to help make him eventually the most popular of pioneer recording artists, Billy made his first cylinder records for Bacigalupi Brothers of San Francisco in 1898, the year that Williams and Walker came East.

The story of how the Negro Comedians were engaged to appear in Victor Herbert's operetta, "The Gold Bug," in the Casino Theatre of New York, is interesting. "The Gold Bug" was produced by Thomas Canary and George W. Lederer. While Canary was on holiday at French Lick Springs, Ind., he stopped to listen to a pair of comedians going through a routine in the hotel lobby. They were Williams and Walker. The next day he engaged them to go to New York and instructed Lederer to put them into the production as a specialty act. Their success was so great that Williams on occasion had to take twenty encores for his song, "Go 'Way Back and Sit Down." They were then booked for Koster and Bial's famous music hall, where they made many songs popular. Among these was "Good Morning, Carrie," which they were later to make as what has become one of the rarest of all old Victor records.

Within a comparatively short time, Williams and Walker were earning \$40,000 a year — which probably would be equal to \$150,000 today. After big successes in vaudeville, they were able to produce their own musical comedy, "In Dahomey," with words and music by Negro authors and composers, and in which all the players were Negroes. It was a big hit on Broadway and was taken to London, where it opened on May 16, 1903, at the Shaftesbury Theatre, and had a long run. On June 27, 1904, a

## "The Curious History of Music Boxes"

By Mosorik & Heckert

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command performance was given for King Edward VII at Buckingham Palace. The players were lavishly entertained by English admirers, but when they tried to present a shortened version of "In Dahomey" in the Deep South of the United States they ran into trouble.

But I've got a bit ahead of my story. Even before "In Dahomey" was produced, Bert Williams and George Walker had made their debut as recording artists. In the catalog of Victor (then seven-inch) and Monarch (10-inch) single-faced records issued by Eldridge R. Johnson in February, 1902, appears the announcement of the first Williams and Walker records. As I shall show, the records were already several months old and there must have been an even earlier announcement, but I haven't found it. Incidentally, since Victor began making 10-inch records only late in 1900 or early in 1901, it's astonishing that so large a catalog could have been compiled in such a short time. Sousa's Band alone had made more than 100 records, most of which could be had in either the seven or ten-inch style. The band was not conducted for recording engagements by its leader, John Phillip Sousa, but by his assistant, Arthur Pryor, who founded in 1904 an equally popular organization of his own. The Sousa band men, like the Haydn Quartet, must have worked day and night to build up such a large list.

The Williams and Walker series was short, was never added to and, for some reason, didn't stay in the catalog long. But it was announced with a splurge. On page 43, under the heading, "Williams and Walker," the following description appeared:

"The most popular songs of the day are the 'Rag Time' or 'Coon Songs.' The greatest recommendation a song of this kind can have is that it is sung by Williams & Walker, the 'Two Real Coons.' Their selections are always from the brightest and best songs with the most catchy and pleasing melodies.

"Although Williams & Walker have been engaged to make Records exclusively for us at the highest price ever paid in the history of the Talking Machine business, and although their Records are the finest thing ever produced, being absolutely the real thing, we add them to our regular Record list with no advance in price."

The discs cost 50 cents each for the seven-inch size and \$1 for the 10-inch. They were made before the world-famous Victor dog was adopted as a trademark.

The list included three duets — "I Don't Like That Face You Wear," "My Little Zulu Babe" and the team's biggest hit, "Good Morning, Carrie," of which the catalog editor said: "William's side remarks and exclamations make this one of the funniest records we have ever produced."

Williams, as the acknowledged more popular member of the team, had the longer list of solos. They included: "If You Love Your Baby," "In My Castle on the River Nile," "The Phrenologist Coon," "Where Was Moses When the Light Went Out?" ("finishing with a very funny talk by Mr. Williams"); "All Going

Out and Nothing Coming In" ("the cleverest coon song ever written"); "The Ghost of a Coon"; "The Fortune Telling Man"; and "She's Getting More Like the White Folks Every Day."

There were three solos by Walker — as far as I know, the only ones he ever made: "Junie," "Good Afternoon, Mr. Jenkins," and "Her Name's Miss Dinah Fair."

These were the only Williams and Walker records issued by Victor. And today they are among the rarest of the rare. Some—perhaps all—were originally listed in the 3,000 Monarch series (Victor's first 10-inch records), but after a few months the numbers were changed. Number 3616, "If You Love Your Baby," must be the rarest of all because it had already been discontinued when the numbers were changed. However, all these records are so scarce that I have never seen one and don't know of any other collector who has. Up to a decade or so ago, the master records of some were preserved in the Victor vaults at Camden, but they have probably been destroyed since. When I visited the RCA-Victor plant in September, 1948, the genial manager of record sales, Ed Forman, told me that "only a very few" masters of early Black Label records have been kept, and even many Red Seal masters have been destroyed.

Williams seems to have made a few cylinder records for English companies while he and Walker were appearing in London. During 1904-05, the British branches of the Columbia, Edison and Lambert companies issued cylinders by a comedian named Bert Williams. Judging by the titles — "It Wasn't His Turn to Laugh," "Bill's Whistle" and "Bertie in Love" — they were of an English type of comedy, different from anything he recorded in the States. At the conclusion of this series, I shall append what I hope is an approximately complete list of all the records made by Bert Williams, in the United States and abroad. Obviously, there's a remote possibility that he sang for some of the minor American companies before his 1901 engagement with Victor — possibly not under his own name. But it would be next to impossible to trace such records now.

With the success of "In Dahomey," Williams and Walker's career was clearly chartered. No matter how much they may have wanted to do other types of comedy, or even serious stage work, they settled into a well-paid but cramping groove as black-face comedians. There is abundant evidence that both wearied of their familiar roles. Walker, more outspoken than the quiet, studious and modest Williams, said something in an interview a few years before his death that hinted at his inward discontentment: "The one hope of the colored performer must be in making a radical departure from the old 'darker' style of singing and dancing . . . There is an artistic side to the black race, and if it could be properly developed on the stage I believe the

theatergoing public would profit much by it." He also said: "My idea has always been to impersonate my race just as they are. The colored man has never successfully taken off his own humorous characteristics, and the white impersonator often overdoes the matter."

Williams and Walker were always careful not to stir antagonism against their people, but they were self-respecting performers and pioneers in the effort to obtain fair treatment for Negroes in the theatre. In 1909, when Walter C. Kelly, "The Virginian Judge," was featured in vaudeville in an act modeled on the police court sessions that the famous Judge John J. Crutchfield held for many years in Richmond, he refused to appear at Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre on the same bill with the comedians. Walker sensibly and moderately observed: "The man is foolish. The day is past that sort of thing. Both white men and black have a right to earn a living at whatever manner they find most congenial, provided they injure no one else."

But again we're getting ahead of the story. After Williams and Walker returned from London, they appeared in other all-Negro productions, such as "Abyssinia," "The Policy Players" and "Bandanna Land." These were written by a noted Negro composer, Will Marion Cook, who became almost as famous as the comedians.

It was while they were starring in "Abyssinia," the musical comedy into which Williams introduced his best known song, "Nobody," that Williams and Walker became exclusive Columbia recording artists. They did so, presumably, for fees far above those they had collected from Victor five years previously, even though, as we have seen, the earlier amounts were represented to be "the highest price ever paid in the history of the talking machine business" up to that time. Walker, whose voice probably didn't record well, soon dropped out of the Columbia picture, but Williams remained an exclusive artist until his death. However, I have an Edison Diamond Disc (No. 50976) of "Save a Little Dram for Me," sung by one Duke Rogers. It was made in 1920, but in accordance with Edison's peculiar policy of frequently holding records for long periods before putting them on the market, wasn't issued until late in 1922, after Williams had died. The style is so much like that of Bert Williams (with a few minor changes that might have been made purposely to throw investigators off the scent) that I have often wondered whether Williams, wanting to know how his voice would sound as recorded by Edison, made that one Diamond Disc under an assumed name. No other Edison record was listed by "Duke Rogers," who was certainly a marvelous imitator of Williams, if he wasn't the comedian himself.

Bert Williams's first Columbia record appears in the July, 1906, list, and is thus described:

"The Ethiopian baritone, Bert Williams, sings his big hit, Nobody —

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 36)



## FLAX AND THE LOOM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

patterns were wrought in blue and white.

"Well have the botanists chosen for flax the scientific name *Linum usitatissimum*, which means, 'most useful.' As a source and aid to human progress it must be enumerated among the half dozen most important plants in all the world. Fortunately for mankind it seems to thrive under very wide variations of climate and is successfully grown from the tropics to well toward the northern limits of agriculture in Scandinavia and Manitoba. It is in the cooler climates, however, that it attains the highest quality of fiber. Its use is one of the old, old discoveries of the race. The Swiss Lake Dwellers passed so long ago that no archaeologist ventures to set their date in history; but dredging on the site of their homes brings up fragments of their fishing nets, and skilled microscopists establish the fact that these were made of the indispensable flax.

"The Mediterranean Basin was the cradle of civilization and there the flax plant everywhere found a home. It furnished the winding sheet for the kings of the men who piled up the pyramids, and the Assyrian and the Greek went clad in the same universal fiber that made the shirt and the kirtle of the American pioneer.

"Flax is the premier textile plant of the world. Other cheaper and far inferior vegetable fibers have very largely displaced it for the commonplace uses of life; but when men want strength and durability, when they want beauty, as in table linen and in altar cloths, then they turn back again to this imperial plant.

"Flax fiber when first prepared and spun and woven may be of varying colors, but always some soft and lovely shade of gray. Our grandmothers bleached it in the sun until it became almost white, practically without loss of strength. Modern bleaching with boiling and chemicals attains an almost snowy, gleaming whiteness but at the cost of durability. Compared with flax, cotton is at best weak and short-lived. Cotton fabrics grow rotten and weak with the passing years but linen literally survives the centuries. For sheer strength a slender thread of twisted flax fibers is incomparable. Woven alone and made into shirt or dress or sheet it made a fabric well-nigh indestructible — literally an heirloom to be handed down through the years. Used as warp to protect and hold the honest woolen woof, it made clothing that kept out the cold or bedding beneath which the pioneer in his rude cabin home might at least lie warm o' nights. Some day a great poet will arise who will be worthy to sing the Saga of the Flax.

"Less readily than wool did flax adapt itself to machine methods. The manufacture of wool slowly and by degrees passed out of the home to the factory, but in our state at least the handling of flax and the weaving of linen always remained a

household handicraft and passed away with the coming of the machine age. So it has come at last that a crop, an art, a handicraft which less than a century ago, was well-nigh universal is today as forgotten as the quill pen or the tinder-box and flint and steel."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

10-in. disc No. 3423 — in an extremely funny way, the haunting melody being supported by the trombone and orchestra."

"Nobody" was issued as a cylinder in October. Also in July appeared the only Columbia duet record by Williams and Walker that I have found listed—No. 3410, "Pretty Desdamone." Columbia referred to the team as "The Ebony Emperors, William and Walker, whose typical coon harmony . . . is truly delectable," and added that both numbers "are selections from Williams and Walker's recent musical production, 'Abysinia,' which had a six week's run at the Majestic Theatre in New York. These Negro artists sing exclusively for the Columbia Phonograph Company."

In September, Williams was back with two more records. Their description:

"Here It Comes Again—10-in. disc. No. 3454—by the chief of Ethiopian comedians, who is now featuring it in 'Abysinia,' at the Grand Opera House, New York. A characteristic coon oddity, with orchestra accompaniment, unique and entertaining. Mr. Williams makes a tuneful plea for good old home cookery. In his song, 'I'm Tired of Eating in a Restaurant' — cylinder No. 32990 — with orchestra accompaniment. Both of these songs are original, being the compositions of this celebrated comedian and recorded by him exclusively for the Columbia Phonograph Company."

Williams was now an established Columbia favorite. The restaurant song (whose correct title was "I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants") appeared in disc form in December, 1906. At the same time one of the comedian's biggest hits, the catchy and comical "Let It Alone," which, like "Nobody," is still popular today, was listed three ways — as a disc; a two-minute cylinder; and as a longer playing six-inch cylinder made especially for use on a highly touted Columbia machine invented by Daniel Higham, of Boston. This device, called the Twentieth Century Sound Magnifying Graphophone, used an amber flywheel to exert pressure and amplify sound so that it could be heard a mile or more. Comparatively few of these stentorian instruments appear to be in existence now, although my friend, Harry Spencer, of Danville, Va., has one, and the six-inch cylinders, which couldn't be played on ordinary machines, are equally hard to find.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## AUTOMOBILE CARTOON COLLECTION

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

the title: "Making the 8:20 Local," shows a well-to-do commuter seated in his luxurious car which is being driven by a chauffeur while his cook is on a little platform in the rear making flapjacks. He is serenely eating his breakfast and evidently enjoying the sight of some fellow commuters hurrying on foot to catch the local. Under this cartoon appeared the caption, "The Suburbanite — There's nothing like having an inventive turn of mind. NOW I can enjoy my breakfast leisurely every morning." This cartoon was published in Puck on June 29, 1906.

The famous comic artist, F. Oppen, creator of Happy Hooligan, whose cartoons appeared in American publications over a period of more than half a century, comes up with a cartoon in Puck on October 26, 1897, entitled, "Electric," which he evidently believed to be the zenith in imaginary motoring. He pictured a number of incidents which he probably deemed to be humorous because they were so impossible — at that date. Yet all these incidents could and most of them have happened in the intervening years and are considered commonplace today.

There is a funeral, for instance, in which the mourners ride in electric driven "horseless buggies." Horses have long ago disappeared from our funeral processions. A keg-laden beer truck powered by electricity carries the daddy of today's front bumper pushing a slow wagon out of its path. The "brewer's big horses" have long ago passed into limbo — with the exception of a few show teams, and the brewer's big trucks are common sights on the streets today. A policeman taking a drunk to jail or the hospital in an electric driven "Police Ambulance Corps" car. A king passing in review in an electric brougham. Even an organ grinder and monkey on a motored car. About the only incident in the cartoon that was a bit far fetched was one showing a stage coach with electric motor power being attacked by Indians on bicycles. Today's motored bus would be the nearest thing to the stage coach, but Indians of the present era do not ride bicycles. Many of them ride big shiny convertibles purchased with some of their oil well profits.

There are of course the cartoons showing the horse rearing back in fear as a car speeds by, and the momentous advent of the "balloon tire." Many others could be listed were space to permit. The collection is one that would make a strong appeal to every motor car owner and driver in the country, together with the many thousands of persons who are interested in early Americana. They would get a big kick out of seeing the early contraptions that were the daddies of the Buick, Packard, Ford, Studebaker and other well-known makes of today, and would recall many familiar

STROM listed in the foregoing.  
WEIL, Hermann  
(Baritone)

2570 Tannhauser—Lied an den Abend-  
stern  
Bajazzo—Prolog

X..., Mme  
Soprano of the Grand Opera, Paris  
2572 Hamlet—Air de la folie  
Romeo—Valse  
2573 Huguenots—O beau pays  
Rigoletto—Air de Gilda

THE END

NOTE: All discs 14-inch size unless  
otherwise specified.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### BERT WILLIAMS, *A Thwarted Genius, II*

By JIM WALSH

Except for a few double-faced records issued experimentally in 1904, all Columbia discs played on only one side until late in 1908. Then Columbia decided to issue its "popular" records in double-faced form, and Victor soon followed the Columbia example. When the double-faced catalog was inaugurated, several of Bert Williams' earlier recordings were given new numbers and included in the two-sided list. "I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants" was numbered A298 and paired with "The Yankee Doodle Boy," by Billy Murray; "Nobody" (A302) was coupled with "You Will Have to Read the Answer in the Stars," by Bob Roberts; and A305 was "Let It Alone," with "The Streets of New York"—Billy Murray again. In the twelve-inch list, "All In, and Down" (I've long wondered why Williams sang the song that way instead of in the more familiar version of "All In, Down and Out") was coupled with Billy Golden's immortal "Turkey in the Straw."

Some months later, the single-faced "Mississippi Stoker" was doubled with Collins and Harlan's "That Mesmerizing Mendelssohn Tune" to become A801. On A862, "Ragtime Bob" Roberts was again William's playmate, the latter singing "He's a Cousin of Mine," and Bob, "I Don't Know Where I'm Goin' But I'm On My Way."

In January, 1909, Columbia issued its last list of wax cylinders, although the unbreakable Indestructible cylinders were later sold for a time under the Columbia name.

Although "Nobody" was Williams' biggest hit and the song most closely associated with him, record A302 was dropped after being in the catalog a few months — possibly because the recording was none too good. It was issued in a re-made version in 1912, coupled with the comedian's recording of his famous Ziegfeld Follies number, "My Landlady." Williams had begun a new Columbia series in 1911 with A915, "Constantly" and



BERT WILLIAMS

"I'll Lend You Everything I've Got except My Wife," and from that time on, his records were not coupled with those of any other artist. By this time, too, his style was so unmistakable and so well established as to serve in effect as a trademark. One critic has said that Williams' songs were sung in "a rich, lugubrious bass." Actually, they weren't sung at all, but were half-spoken in a rasping, husky tone. They were more recitations than songs. My own belief is that if Williams had sung occasionally, instead of sticking to a rather monotonous recitative, his records would have been more consistently entertaining. In vocal equipment, he was by no means the equal of the late Harry Frankel, ("Singin' Sam"), who had a voice of similar quality and who often sang to excellent effect songs primarily identified with Bert Williams. And, as a singer, Bert was far below the standard of the "Boy From New Orleans," Al Bernard (like "Singin' Sam," a white man), who has a tenor voice of really beautiful quality.

At any rate, the pattern was now set for Williams' performances. For the rest of his life he was to pretend to be a stupid, lazy, melancholy victim of hard luck — bad luck too overwhelming for him to understand or to struggle against.

Just when Williams' talented partner, George Walker, died is a matter of uncertainty. Percy Hammond, writing in a New York newspaper shortly after Williams' death, said that Walker passed on in 1907 — an obvious misstatement since we have already seen that in 1909 Walter C. Kelly refused to appear on the same vaudeville bill with Williams and Walker. The Dictionary of American

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Biography gives his death year as 1909, and that again is probably wrong, since in that year his biggest hit, "Bon Bon Buddy (The Chocolate Drop)" was a sensation. The 1909 Victor catalog lists a record of this song by Billy Murray, with the comment: "One of Walker's inimitable songs, from the great Williams and Walker production, Bandanna Land. Murray's imitation of Walker in this song is very clever."

Douglas Gilbert's book, "American Vaudeville: Its Life and Times," says Walker died in 1911, and that is probably correct, since I find no mention of him in record catalogs after that year. (He was not then making records, but there was occasional comment about other artists singing in his style.) Unlike the quiet and rather retiring Williams, Walker lived up to his conception of what a Broadway star should be by wearing diamond rings and flamboyant clothing and having his bedroom decorated in pale-blue satin. He died of paralysis, and had been ill about two years before his death.

Without his partner, Williams continued his brilliant success. But he still had occasional trouble because he was partly Negro. Florenz Ziegfeld engaged him for The Follies of

1910 and ordered that a feature part be written for him, but when the cast learned that a Negro was being included they threatened to strike. As a compromise, Ziegfeld took out the feature part Williams was to have had and substituted the comedian's vaudeville specialty. Bert was such a hit he stopped the show—and the cast consented to the feature act being restored. Theatrical people are usually extremely tolerant in matters of race and religion — so much so that it is surprising that anyone in the Follies should have objected to appearing with so distinguished a performer as Bert Williams. For the most part, the comedian was highly respected both as a man and as a performer, and he is said to have been the only Negro that the Keith circuit could book on a white bill in Washington, where "Jim Crow" practices have long been a sore spot.

(To be Continued)

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cellence. The electrically recorded discs which followed—solos and some superb duets with Rethberg, Gigli, Martinelli, etc.—are perhaps not all quite so perfect vocally, but most are superb. If the voice occasionally sounds a little muffled and obscured, probably the microphone was to blame.

It is worth noting that in our HOBBIES Favorite Baritone contest, confined to acoustic recordings, De Luca received more votes than any of his rivals (I speak, perforce, from memory), with his *Puritani* among the most popular baritone discs. His arias from *Don Carlos*, *William Tell*, *Favorita* and *Benvenuto Cellini* are outstanding, too. Great as these operatic interpretations are, however, it is in such songs as *Pastorale*, *Ultima Rose*, *Nuttata e Sentimento* (especially this!) and even in *God Bless You My Dear* (in spite of the song) and the gay *Marietta* that De Luca's most individual and endearing vocalism be heard. Will any other baritone ever sing with such memorable beauty?

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## BERT WILLIAMS, A Thwarted Genius, III

By JIM WALSH

Working as a "single," Williams continued to use blackface make-up, and he relied entirely on his songs and on pantomime with which he illustrated his stories. (For several summers he went to Europe and studied with the great pantomime specialist, Pietro, who, Williams said, "taught me that the entire aim of art in the theater is to achieve simplicity.") In this type of work, he was considered without an equal. Here is a typical snatch of Williams monolog — unfortunately without the accompanying pantomime:

"Where I'm living now is a nice place, but you have to go along a road between two graveyards to get to it. One night last week I was coming home kind of late, and I got about halfway home when I happened to look over my shoulder and saw a ghost following me. I started to run. I run till I was 'most ready to drop. And then I looked around. But I didn't see no ghost, so I sat down on the curb stone to rest. Then out of the corner of my eye I could see something white, and when I turned square around, there was that ghost sitting along side of me. The ghost says: 'That was a fine run we had. It was the best running I ever saw.' I says, 'Yes. And as soon as I get my breath you're going to see some more.'"

One of the most famous of these pantomime specialties was Williams' pretended playing of a poker game. The stage would be dark, with only a spot light focused on his head and shoulders. He would hold a poker hand near his face, while by gestures he went through the gamut of emotions felt by winners and losers alike. A noted Williams song was "The Darktown Poker Club," and I believe that this was the basis of a moving picture in which the comedian starred in 1916. Phil Harris, the dance band leader and radio star, who is perhaps the best-known of the latter-day imitators of Bert Williams, has recorded several Williams numbers, including "The Darktown Poker Club." When the Harris record was reviewed in *Variety*, the reviewer, a young man who apparently knew little or nothing about Williams, said in effect that the record was "disgusting" and that he was embarrassed at having played it before his Negro maid. The critic probably was one of those persons who consider all dialect work to be malicious, but the truth is that there is nothing about "The Darktown Poker Club" which should offend any sensible person, white or black. The reviewer also said he had the impression that Williams was a servile type of Negro. Such an impression is completely wrong. Bert Williams didn't carry a chip on his shoulder, but he was a self-respecting artist who made his way on his own merits. As has already been indicated, he felt a certain sense of frustration because of being compelled to go on doing the same sort of act season after season and, as will be seen later, he did sometimes

refer thoughtfully, when talking intimately with friends, to the racial discrimination he experienced.

Although he occasionally appeared in vaudeville, Williams was chiefly active from 1910 to 1918 as the featured comedian of the Follies and received a salary running high into four figures. During this period he popularized many songs, such as "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew," "You're Gwine to Get Some-thin' What You Don't Expect," "The Jonah Man" and "That's Harmony." The famous producer, David Belasco, is said to have decided that Williams' greatest gifts, for character delineation not of the slapstick variety, weren't being used, and to have offered to star him, but the comedian refused, saying that he owed Ziegfeld a debt of gratitude and didn't think he should leave the Follies. Throughout this period his Columbia records kept appearing at fairly regular intervals.

But eventually Williams did give up appearing in the Ziegfeld shows. In 1919 and 1920 he starred in a production called the Broadway Brevities. After that he toured in what is said to have been one of his best shows, "Under the Bamboo Tree." He must have been inwardly dissatisfied, for he still spoke occasionally of his ambition "to stop doing piffle and interpret the REAL Negro on the stage." That ambition was never to be gratified, for he died after being stricken with pneumonia. There is something of uncertainty about the place of his death—just as there is about the year in which George Walker died. The Dictionary of American Biography says he died in New York City; "American Vaudeville" that he took pneumonia while in Detroit, on tour with "Under the Bamboo Tree," and died there. At any rate, the date of his death was March 4, 1922. He was survived by his wife, Charlotte Williams, a Negro performer whom he had married in 1900.

For several days after Bert Williams' death, the New York papers contained a great deal of comment about this life, personality and achievements. The *Evening Post* expressed regret that Williams had been subject to "the upswell of the tide of jazz in these later years" and remarked that "his admirable art was not for the orgiastic jazz, but for the plaintive humor of the blues that is now coming to the front."

And the late Percy Hammond, one of the foremost critics of the day, penned a revealing personality sketch which shows that Williams was essentially what I have called him—a thwarted genius. Here is an excerpt from the Hammond article:

"A reticent fellow, Mr. Williams seldom talked of himself save in modest



reference to his work as a comedian. Yet he was the repository of a secret sorrow.

"There he was, unquestionably once a comic artist of the first rank, doomed for the rest of his career to an environment of songs and dances, with the doors of advancement closed against him. . . He could not with success aspire to make his genius an instrument of characterization in the more eminent realms of the theater. He humbly proceeded along his antic pathway, exciting the ephemeral admiration of the knowing, and remaining, in the delicate and not descriptive phraseology of the press agent, a 'distinguished colored comedian.'

"It was intimated above that Mr. Williams nursed this distressful circumstance as a private woe and was mute concerning it. While he did not give expression to his thwarted esthetic yearnings, he did at times hint his mild resentment at what he termed 'an American phase.' You may be surprised to hear that Mr. Williams described the frontier between him and his audience as 'an American phase,' yet those are the words he employed one evening in a somewhat reluctant exposition of his emotions in the matter. He talked well. Said he: 'This may sound snobbish, though it isn't. I am not a native of the United States, but a West Indian, and I must take solace from my philosophy as long as I earn my livelihood in this country. The rebellion is all out of me, for I know that it is up to me and that this is the only civilization in the world where a man's color makes a difference, other matters being regarded as equal. And you must admit that there's food for thought, not necessarily bitter, in the fact that in London I may sit in open lodge with a premier of Great Britain and be entertained in the home of a distinguished novelist, while here in the United States, which fought four years for certain principles, I am often treated with an air of personal condescension by the gentleman who sweeps out my dressing room or the gentleman whose duty it is to turn the spot light on me if the stage directions call upon him to do so.'

A story told by the noted New York specialist in old recordings, Joe Franklin, goes hand in hand with the foregoing quotations from Williams' own remarks. According to Joe, the Negro comedian once appeared in a benefit performance with Eddie Car-

tor, but had previously been refused admittance to the front entrance of the hotel where they were to appear. After the show, Williams is said to have remarked to Cantor: "You know, Eddie, nobody in the audience seemed to notice whether I was white or black when they applauded. They made me come out for seven encores."

Writing at about the same time as Percy Hammond, the late Heywood Broun made some interesting comments about Bert Williams in the *New World World*:

"Bert Williams found prosperity and success in the theater, but his high talents were largely wasted. His death merely marks the end of the tragedy. Color was a factor but not the only one in the circumstances which led to his downfall. There was much more white blood than black in Williams, but the Caucasian of America is customarily modest in such cases and by some illogical process has decided that any discernable strain, however slight, of Negro blood extraction outweighs all other lines. And so Bert Williams was a Negro.

"It would be quite fair to say that the theater discriminated against him on this account. Audiences applauded him generously and laughed heartily the moment he came before the footlights. There was only one restriction which limited him. Since he was a Negro, he must be a funny man. It did not seem to us that Williams was a great comedian and certainly he was not a great clown, but it was the role to which he was assigned season after season. Every round of laughter bound him more securely to his state as a merryman. Even indifferent work during the last few seasons was of no aid in freeing him from the thrall. Somehow or other laughing at Bert Williams came to be tied up in people's minds with liberalism, charity and the Thirteenth Amendment.

"To our mind Williams did have a gift in which he was supreme but was not exactly comic. No man in the theatre of our day could tell a story as well. He had in his repertoire at one time a story about a Negro parson and a haunted house. This was the story built about the refrain, 'We can't do

nothin' till Martin comes.' You may remember that it was said by the first cat which came out of the fireplace and paused to eat the live coals. It was a little friendly cat. The next cat was the size of a St. Bernard dog, and after it had dined and spit out the sparks it asked, 'When are we gwine to begin?' 'We can't do nothin' till Martin comes,' was the reply of the first cat.

"The next one was as big as a Shetland pony and, like the others, it ate fire and inquired plaintively, 'When are we gwine begin?' and the answer came chorally, 'We can't do nothin' till Martin comes.'

"It was at this point that the Negro preacher rose (in the story, as we remember it, he was the father of Bert Williams) and said, 'When Martin comes you tell him I was here, but I'se GONE!'

"For all the humorous fantasy of instrument and the whiplike finish, Williams did not tell the story as a comic anecdote. By voice and pantomime he lifted it to the stature of a true ghost story. We could see the old Negro feverishly turning the pages of the Bible, the cats from the fireplace taking form before our eyes. Sparks dropped from their jaws and the wind howled outside the cabin. All this was built for us by a tall man, his face clownishly blackened with burnt cork, who stood still in the center of the stage and used no gesture which traveled more than six inches.

"The memory of the happening remains with us so vividly that sleeping in a haunted house is one of the all too numerous things which we are afraid to do. Of course we laughed at the message which was left for him, but it was more or less defensive laughter, because we knew in our hearts that the preacher in the story had outstayed us by at least one cat."

Mr. Broun's recollection of the classical Williams story was reasonably accurate, although in the comedian's record of it the cats come down the stairs, not out of the fireplace (but they do jump into the fire to wash with live coals); the second cat was the size of a Newfoundland dog, instead of a St. Bernard; the preacher is not identified as the narrator's father, and the catch phrase is "You Can't Do Nothin' Till Martin Gets Here!"

Columbia did not issue its mirth-provoking record of "You Can't Do Nothin' Till Martin Gets Here," which I consider one of the finest talking records ever made, until September, 1922—about six months after the comedian's death. It was coupled with another side-splitting monolog, "How? Fried!" which relates how an old Negro slave's miraculous memory kept him from becoming the property of the devil. The record ap-

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parently was not a good seller for it stayed in the catalog only a short time and is hard to find. I obtained my copy from a man in Roanoke who found it in a stack of old records in the basement of his home, and I had the good luck to get a duplicate for a confirmed Bert Williams admirer—Jack Via, of South Boston, Va.—from Russell Polay, of Denver. Williams made one other twelve-inch talking record that was a big seller, "Elder Eatmore's Sermon on Generosity" and "Elder Eatmore's Sermon on Throwing Stones." The latter side was electrically recorded by Charles E. Mack, one of the famous "Two Black Crows."

As electric recording took the place of acoustic, Bert Williams' records gradually disappeared from the Columbia catalog. But in 1940, when the comedian had been dead 18 years, some of them made a comeback. An album was issued, containing eight of the numbers he had recorded between 1919 and 1922. It proved popular and is still on sale. The orchestra accompaniments sound louder and clearer than on the original Blue Label issues, and give the impression of having been played by a larger ensemble. Possibly new accompaniments were dubbed in, as Victor has done in the case of some Red Seal records; or more likely the old records were subjected to some electrical amplification before being reissued. At any rate, they sound well by modern standards and are richly worth having as a souvenir of a man whom, in spite of Brown's dissent, I shall venture to term a great comedian.

And, although Bert Williams' life closed on a note of frustration, it might have been a comfort to him if he could have known that, nearly a generation later, he is still by no means forgotten; that some of his records still sell and that he is to this day one of the most imitated of comedians.

He also would have been gratified if he, could have foreseen an honor which was to come to him, as related in this excerpt from the July 5, 1944, issue of *Variety*:

The "Bert Williams," a Liberty ship named for the famed Negro comedian who died in 1922, will be built with Harlem war-bond subscriptions, it was announced by the Harlem Women's Division of the Fifth War Loan Drive. Williams, who was one of the top comedians and pantomimists at the turn of the century, starred in many Ziegfeld shows, being identified with such songs as "Nobody," "Woodman, Spare That Tree" and "We're Not Going to Play This Game According to Hoyle, We're Going to Play It According to Me." (This latter song was really "The Dark-town Poker Club."—J. W.)

Such things might have helped to reconcile Williams to his fate as a blackface antic, even though he might still have felt that sense of frustration at never having the chance of doing the higher type of art to which he believed his gifts entitled him.

### Records by Bert A. Williams and George W. Walker

Victor and Monarch, issued in 1901. All these single-faced records were made in both 7-inch and 10-inch

size, except M998, which was 10-inch only.

#### Bert Williams Solos

- 3616 If You Love Your Baby  
3614 (reissued as 991) In My Castle on the River Nile  
992 The Phrenologist Coon  
993 Where Was Moses When the Light Went Out?  
994 All Going Out and Nothing Coming In  
M998 The Ghost of a Coon  
1083 The Fortune Telling Man  
1085 She's Getting More Like the White Folks Every Day

#### RECORDS

FINE OLD RECORDS for sale: Classical, vocal, operatic, violin, piano, vaudeville, jazz, popular, Lauder, McCormack, reasonably priced. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. d3084

MUSIC BOX DISCS bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d3483

RARE OLD RECORDS: Monthly sales list. Classical, vocal, popular, collector's items. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwood, Ambler, Penna. mh6446

WANTED: Record catalogues, supplements, pamphlets, 1900-1939. Old phonograph and record advertisements; other phonographic material. State price and condition. — D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. ja3614

EIGHT THOUSAND different selections; vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 16, Calif. d12681

OLD CYLINDER phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. n3253

COLLECTORS' GUIDE to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75. American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York f124201

MONTHLY AUCTION SALE: Old vocal operatic records. Free list.—Collectors' Haven, 148 Hancock St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3272

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 45 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o122741

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs. — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening"; large, varied stock. Please state "wants", write or visit—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. n6829

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. ja3084

ASTOUNDING LISTS. Rareties. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan, Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

PHONOGRAPHS: Victor & Edison disc. Edison cylinder with flowered morning glory horn, like new. Others in fine condition. One table model disc with horn, Pat. 1901. One and James, 25 records, \$15. One Edison 4 min. cylinder, built in horn, \$12.50. 25 records with old machines. Write us your wants.—Karr Museum, Stanbury, Mo. n1234

#### George Walker Solos

- 995 Juni  
996 Good Afternoon, Mr. Jenkins  
3618 (999) Her Name's Miss Dinah Fair  
Williams and Walker Duets

- 3619 (987) I Don't Like That Face You Wear  
1086 My Little Zulu Babe  
3617 (997) Good Morning, Carrie

Bert Williams Solos Made in England (Issued on cylinders in 1904-05)

Columbia 200986—It Wasn't His Turn to Laugh  
Columbia 261030—Bill's Whistle  
Lambert 5176—Bill's Whistle  
Edison 13166—Bertie in Love

Columbia Records, made while Williams was under exclusive Columbia contract, from 1906 to 1922. Single-faced discs and cylinders:

- 3423 Nobody (10-inch disc)  
33011 Nobody (two-minute cylinder)  
3410 Pretty Desdamone (10-inch disc. Duet by Williams and Walker. All the following records are Williams solos).

#### MISCELLANEOUS

SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

BACK POPULAR sheet music. Catalog 10c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 6, Colo. je12407

RECORD COLLECTORS: Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d6238

MELODEON ORGAN: Walnut. Action, case, completely restored, cleaned, re-finished. New leather hinges, valves, felts, etc., \$400.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. d3483

FOR SALE: Music rolls for National Automatic Piano. Over 100 American tunes available. Send for list. Also want music rolls of all descriptions.—Russell Miller, 3274 Adriatic Ave., Long Beach 10, Calif. mh62511

FOR SALE: Music Box discs, Stella, 17 1/4 and Symphonion, 14 1/4.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. d3272

MELODEONS and Melodeon-Organ restored like new. Also buy, sell. — C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. n3882

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, \$1.80 direct from importer. — Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. d4684

WANTED: Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues. — Elmer Moore, 1172 Franklin Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d3422

BRASS SOLOS by Krvl. Levy, Clarke, etc. Send for free auction list. Also several pamphlets on history of phonograph for sale.—Allen Debus, 4949 Pulaski, Chicago 30, Ill. n1422

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Dean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. ja3272

For Sale: Regina Music Box, oak cabinet, 30 new 15 1/2" records, mostly old familiar hymns. First \$150 buys box and records. All in A-1 condition.—Dean M. Goode, Bloomfield, Iowa. n1063

#### RECORDS—JAZZ

I HAVE 100,000 JAZZ and sweet records, collectors items. Send me your wants. I will also buy phonograph record collections, any size.—Jacob S. Schneider, 128 West 66th St., N. Y. C., New York. f6069

- 3454 Here It Comes Again  
 32990 I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants (two-minute cylinder)  
 3515 I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants (disc)  
 3504 Let It Alone (disc)  
 BC85086 Let It Alone (Premier six-inch cylinder)  
 33025 Let It Alone (two-minute cylinder)  
 3526 He's a Cousin of Mine (disc)  
 33053 He's a Cousin of Mine (two-minute cylinder)  
 30039 All In, Out and Down (12-inch disc)  
 3557 Mississippi Stoker (disc)  
 3575 I've Such a Funny Feeling When I Look at You (disc)  
 3593 Fare Thee! On Ma Way! Jes' Gone (disc)

### Double-Faced Columbia Solo Records by Bert Williams

- A298 I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants with Yankee Doodle Boy (Billy Murray)  
 A302 Nobody with You WHL Have to Read the Answer in the Stars (Bob Roberts)  
 A305 Let It Alone with The Streets of New York—from The Red Mill (Billy Murray)  
 A801 Mississippi Stoker with That Mesmerizing Mendelssohn Tune (Collins and Harlan)  
 A862 He's a Cousin of Mine with I Don't Know Where I'm Goin' But I'm On My Way (Bob Roberts)  
 A5031 (12-inch) All In, Out and Down with Turkey in the Straw (Billy Golden)  
 (All the following records are 10-inch, double-faced Columbias, with solos by Williams on both sides)  
 A915 Constantly and I'll Lend You Anything I've Got Except My Wife  
 A929 Play That Barber Shop Chord and Something You Don't Expect  
 A1289 Nobody (a re-make of the original) and My Landlady  
 A1321 Woodman, Spare That Tree and I Certainly Was Going Some  
 A1354 On the Right Road and Borrow From Me  
 A1504 Darktown Poker Club and You Can't Get Away From It  
 A1817 I'm Neutral and Indoor Sports  
 A1853 Never Mo' and Purposos  
 A1909 Everybody and Samuel  
 A2078 The Lee Family and I'm Gone Before I Go  
 A2438 Twenty Years and No Place Like Home  
 A2652 O Death, Where is Thy Sting? and When I Return  
 A2710 Bring Back Those Wonderful Days and Oh! Lawdy (Something's Done Got Between Ebacaneer and Me)  
 A2750 Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar and It's Nobody's Business But My Own  
 A2849 Moon Shines on the Moonshine and Somebody  
 A2877 Checkers (It's Your Move Now) and I'm Sorry I Aint Got It—You Could Have It If I Had It  
 A2941 Ten Little Bottles and Unlucky Blues  
 A2979 Save a Little Dram for Me and Lonesome Alimony Blues  
 A3305 I Want to Know Where Tosti Went When He Said Goodby and Get Up!  
 A3339 Eve Cost Adam Just one Bone and You'll Never Need a Doctor No Mo'  
 A3356 I'm Gonna Quit Saturday and My Last Dollar  
 A3508 Brother Low Down and Unexpectedly  
 A3589 Not Lately and You Can't Trust Nobody

- Twelve-inch double-face Columbias  
 A6141 Elder Eatmore's Sermon on Throwing Stones and Generosity  
 A6216 You Can't Do Nothin' Till Martin Gets Here and How? Fried!

- Ten-inch records still available (Columbia Album Set C-25)  
 35590 Moon Shines on the Moonshine and O Death, Where is Thy Sting?  
 35591 Bring Back Those Wonderful Days and Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar  
 35592 Brother Low Down and Unlucky Blues  
 35593 It's Getting So You Can't Trust Nobody and It's Nobody's Business But My Own

## An Inexpensive Method of Storing Cylinder Records

By JIM WALSH

Many collectors believe there is no satisfactory way of cataloguing and storing cylinder records, aside from keeping them in cabinets or on specially built shelves. For their benefit I'd like to pass on briefly an idea which occurred to me when I noticed that the openings in wooden cases designed to hold 24 standard-sized soft drink bottles are just large enough to accommodate the boxes in which cylinders were always packed.

By placing a cylinder in each compartment, it is possible to store 24 records in one crate that takes up little space. "Unbreakable" cylinders, such as Edison Blue Amberol, Federal and U. S. Everlasting, will fit nicely into the individual slots regardless of whether they are in boxes. The fragile wax cylinders, however, should have the added protection of a box. It isn't hard to fit a box for a four-minute Edison Amberol record into the opening, but the two-minute boxes are larger and thicker and require a bit of squeezing and manipulating before they will go in. Once in, the two-minute boxes can't be removed by anything short of an Act of Congress. I learned by experience that, after you have compelled several hundred two-minute boxes to fit, the palms of your hands are good and sore. Some soft drink cases, such as those for 7-Up, have slightly smaller openings into which two-minute boxes won't go. It's best to reserve such cases for indestructible records.

And here's a word of caution. The cases, if wired or nailed together and given some means of support, can be stacked from baseboard to ceiling. Attractively painted, they look virtually the same as built-in shelves. But don't make the mistake that I made, of stacking one on top the other, to a considerable height, without having some means of holding them in place. Shortly after I thought my arrangements were complete, I discovered that I had omitted to put a Cal Stewart record in its right place. I stooped and pulled out the box into which the record should go. This caused the case on top of the stack—one which contained 24 Ada Jones records—to sway, then fall, striking me on the head and raising a large knot. I suppose I was lucky that my skull wasn't fractured. Although I have long admired the recorded work of Ada Jones, I had never before been so strongly impressed by it as when that box of records fell, smashing three or four rare wax cylinders and almost breaking my head.

Cost of the cases is little or nothing. Most bottling plants have large quantities of old ones which they are glad to give away or sell for a few cents each. Collectors who keep a card index of their cylinders will find they will never have to change a record's location. Each case should be given a number, and of course its

slots are numbered from 1 to 24. Thus, if the record you are indexing is No. 18 in the fifth case, you would mark the card, 5-18, put a similar marking on the record box and have no trouble finding it. But collectors who, like the writer, prefer to keep their cylinders arranged alphabetically by artists will find it necessary to do periodic re-arranging as new records are added.

One more word of caution. Don't insert the box with a wax cylinder in it. First wedge the box into place; then insert the record with a gentle rotary motion until it goes all the way down. Finally, affix the top of the box. In removing a wax record, take it out in the same gentle, careful way. Sometimes it will be found that the box fits so tightly into its slot that its inside cloth wrapping must be removed before the cylinder will go down. Great care must be taken in inserting the "waxes" or some will be broken. I, myself broke several—in every instance, of course, something that I particularly treasured!

## Two More Deaths of Recording Artists

Two more deaths of popular recording artists must be chronicled, even at this late date.

Mrs. Marie de Kyzer Cumming, known on Edison discs and cylinders as Marie Kaiser and Marie de Kyzer (she changed her recording name during World War I) died on January 23 in New York, aged 63. Her husband and two daughters survive.

The Edison Phonograph Monthly for December, 1914, carried Miss Kaiser's photo on the cover, with this comment on an inside page: "A Western girl, being born in the State of Kansas of Holland Dutch parentage, she is well known throughout the West, having sung in concerts in all the States clear to the coast. She first studied with Mrs. Jennie Schultz, of Kansas City, the best known singing teacher in the West. She is prominent also as an oratorio singer, having worked in this branch with Charles Baker of New York and Emil Mellenhauer, the eminent and well-known conductor and coach of Boston, Mass. In addition, Miss Kaiser is a soloist in the choir of Temple Bethel of New York, and of the Calvary Methodist Church of East Orange, N. J."

Miss Kaiser's recording activities ended shortly after the first World War, but she was also a pioneer radio singer and toured with the Boston and Minneapolis Symphony Orchestras.

Lee Roy ("Lasses") White, one of the best-known minstrel and vaudeville blackface comedians, died December 16 in Hollywood, of a blood ailment. He had been ill six months. White was born in Wills Point, Texas, and had toured with the Neil O'Brien, Al G. Field and other leading minstrel shows. He was particularly well known for his song, "Sweet Mama, Tree-Top Tall," which he recorded for Columbia in the early 1920's. Columbia also issued several records

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## "The Best John Bieling Days"

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: Since I don't have the time for sending individual letters to record collectors and other readers of *HOBBIES* who have asked me to "write and tell all about the party," I hope that this article will serve the same purpose, especially as I shall mention briefly a few of the other features of my recent visit to New York.—J. W.)

"The best John Bieling Day yet!"

That's what just about everybody is saying who attended the fifth annual get-together of pioneer recording artists and record collectors held Saturday, September 9, in the Elks Lodge at Hempstead, Long Island, New York. From the standpoints of spontaneity, warmth and mingling of artists with collectors, the party was an improvement even on the one in September, 1948, at the Garden City Hotel. And, of course, from the viewpoint of permitting a larger number of collectors to meet the singers and musicians whose recorded work has given them so much pleasure, it was better than the smaller affairs held in 1946, 1947 and 1949 in the home of the Bieling family—as delightful as were the coziness and intimacy of these restricted assemblies.

For reasons that I shall explain later, the number of collectors attending the 1950 party was smaller than that of two years before, but from the point of view of everybody having a good time the latest in the series of get-togethers originated by the late John H. Bieling set a standard that it will be hard for any future party to surpass. I doubt that any of the approximately 70 persons who were present will dispute that statement! . . . And now I'll do a "flashback," as the story writers call it, and tell a few of the incidents of my "trip North" that occurred before the party itself.

When I went to bed on Tuesday night, September 5, I followed my usual practice of scorning an alarm clock, and simply told myself to wake at half past four the next morning. Promptly at 4:35 I opened my sleepy eyes and groaningly prepared to take

a bus from Vinton, Virginia, where I live, to Roanoke, three miles distant. I reached the Norfolk and Western passenger station just a few minutes before the 6:02 train pulled out, bound for Washington—but I was in time to get a seat.

My first act on arriving late that afternoon at the Pennsylvania station in New York was to dial the telephone number of Gladys Rice, one of my favorite recording sopranos and commediennes from whom I had received an attractive photograph only the day before. When a charming voice answered I was sure that I was speaking to Miss Rice herself. I thanked her for the photo and said I was sorry she couldn't come to the party and bring Rachael Grant with her. (Rachael Grant was one of the names used by Miss Rice in making records. I should also have mentioned her other recording name of Bettina Bergere!) She replied she would "give anything" to be present and meet many of her old friends whom she hadn't seen in years, but that she had to rehearse for a television program and simply would be unable to make it. Next year, though, Miss Rice said, she hoped it would be different.

A second phone call was to my old friend, Frazier Dickson, who works on the city desk of the New York Times. Frazier had attended a convention of the Elbeetian Legion of former Lone Scouts in Roanoke a few days before, and had asked me to come to see him while I was in New York. I walked to the Times building, where "Dick" arranged for me to be given a tour of the huge establishment in company with a likeable and painstaking young chap whom I recall only as "Al."

I was particularly interested in the Times' reference department and the huge "morgue," where innumerable drawers are full of information about persons and places all over the world. Some of the workers in that department learned that I was a record collector and was on my way to the John Bieling Day party. They urged me to stay in New York until midnight and appear on "Big Joe"

Rosenfield's program from WINS, to tell about the party and record collecting in general. This suggestion I reluctantly turned down, because I was tired out after a hard day's travel and didn't feel that I could keep awake that long.

I was told that every issue of the New York Times has been photographed on microfilm and was shown an enlarged view of the first page of the initial number. I was also told to name any well known person, and the appropriate reference envelope would be brought out of the morgue. Since I have long wanted to do a *HOBBIES* series on the soprano, Elizabeth Spencer, but need some additional information, I mentioned her. Unfortunately, we drew a blank, both under her professional name and her married name of Mrs. E. B. Southworth. Then I tried Billy Murray, and was surprised to find that the envelope contained only one clipping—an article published by *Time* in 1941 when Billy was making a comeback as a Bluebird recording artist. There was a laugh when I mentioned that I sold the article to *Time*!

I walked back to Penn station and was just in time to take a Long Island train to Hempstead, where Bryant Burke, president of Pioneer Recording Artists and Admirers, the non-profit organization that sponsors the annual party, had obtained a room for me in the home of one of his neighbors, a cheerful, active elderly lady, Mrs. Carrie Lefferts. The remainder of the evening was spent in a happy reunion with Bryant and members of the Bieling family.

Outstanding on my unplanned "agenda" for Thursday was the visit Bryant and I paid to a home which my friend had been passing for years, seeing an Edison Diamond Disc phonograph on a side porch and wondering what treasures, if any, the stack of records beside it contained. Although he had tried repeatedly, he never got anybody to the door. But this time luck was with us. We saw an old man working in a barn, and he and his son-in-law took us into the house where they brought out a bewildering display of old sheet music and many records—Edison discs and cylinders, a few Pathes and lots of lateral-cuts. Bryant was delighted to get the music to go with his 1894 brown wax cylinder of "Henrietta, Have You Met Her?" The cylinders were so badly spotted with mildew that they were worthless, and the discs were "run-of-the-mine." But at least our curiosity was satisfied, we bought a few records, and were told that there were more cylinders somewhere upstairs. Bryant is going back one of these days, hoping the other cylinders are in better condition, for he has reasons, best known to himself, for believing the house contains a copy of Cal Stewart's almost mythical 1899 Edison record, "Uncle Sam to George."

Friday morning, I took an early train from Hempstead to New York, where I went to the Taft Hotel and met Ed Manning, program director of CKCR, Kitchener, Ontario, Cana-



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da, and his pretty wife, Edith. Ed is secretary of Pioneer Recording Artists and Admirers and had the responsible job this year of writing to the artists and asking them to attend the party. (Other officers are Harry Selinger, of Oceanside, Long Island, vice-president, and George Bieling, of Hempstead, one of John Bieling's sons, treasurer. Without title, but always lending a helping hand and taking care of thousands of details are Mrs. John Bieling and her sister, Mrs. Katherine Moore.)

I had never seen Ed before, but I took a liking to him at first sight and was glad that he wanted to go with me to West Orange, New Jersey, to visit the Thomas A. Edison laboratory and meet my old friends there—Norman Speiden, the curator; Bill Hayes, veteran Edison recording expert; and Fred Rabenstein, an accountant who wrote the talent checks for artists in the days when Edison was making disc and cylinder records. I had been at the laboratory before, but Ed hadn't, and he was fascinated by the innumerable mementoes of the great inventor who used to perform so many miracles there. We even saw Edison's original 1877 phonograph.

Friday evening was spent pleasantly with the Bieling family. Charlie Hodgdon, of Newburyport, Mass., and his wife, Mary, who had come down for the next day's party, dropped in, and Charlie handed me a box of records he had got together for me. Several were rarities that I was very glad to get. This was also true of a box that Jimmy Martindale, of Brooklyn, brought me the next day.

And then came Saturday—the Big Day itself! In 1948, we were beset by heavy, persistent rain—the first that had fallen in six weeks—but this time the weather was perfect. As Bryant, Ed and I entered the beautiful Elks Lodge, I found myself wishing that more collectors could be present, instead of the restricted number we were expecting. Total attendance of both artists and collectors was around 70, as against more than 100 two years ago.

This is the reason for the decrease: It had at first been planned to give this year's party in the Garden City Hotel, but when the committee tried to reserve a room it found that the hotel was "booked solid" for September. The Elks Lodge was then chosen next best bet, but the committee was given to understand that only about 60 persons could be accommodated in the available space. That made it necessary to restrict collector attendance, as far as possible, to those who had taken part in the 1948 event, and that is why no advance publicity was given in HOBBIES or other publications. Actually, the room could have comfortably sheltered more persons than were present, but by the time this was found out it was too late to do anything about it. The room had splendid acoustics and was of convenient size, and this somehow added to the feeling of warmth and intimacy that characterized the party almost from the very first.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

## RECORDS

**FINE OLD RECORDS** for sale: Classical, vocal, operatic, violin, piano, vaudeville, jazz, popular, Lauder, McCormack, reasonably priced. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. d3084

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d3483

**RARE OLD RECORDS:** Monthly sales list. Classical, vocal, popular, collector's items. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwald, Ambler, Penna. mh6445

**WANTED:** Record catalogues, supplements, pamphlets, 1900-1939. Old phonograph and record advertisements; other phonographic material. State price and condition. — D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. ja3614

**EIGHT THOUSAND** different selections; vocal operatic acoustical and electrical discs. 160 record catalogs. Monthly auction lists.—E. F. Prescott, 3045 Jackson, San Francisco 15, Calif. d126351

**COLLECTORS' GUIDE** to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. f124201

**MONTHLY AUCTION SALE:** Old vocal operatic records. Free list.—Collectors' Haven, 118 Hancock St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3272

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 15 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o122741

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

**SWISS MUSICAL Movements**, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid.—Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. ja3084

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan, Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp, please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d6238

**MELODEON ORGAN:** Walnut. Action, case, completely restored, cleaned, re-finished. New leather hinges, valves, felts, etc., \$400.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. d3483

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**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, \$1.80 direct from importer. —Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. d4654

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues. — Elmer Moore, 1172 Franklin Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d3422

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face. The final correction of the edge of the gong was done by a workman who sat on the ground and used two hammers with short handles, one to strike with and other as an anvil. When he completed his work, another man took the gong, placed it on an anvil about eight inches square in the face, and with a round-faced short-handled hammer, which weighed about a pound, passed over the surface, systematically commencing at the center and proceeding by concentric rings to the outer edge. Traces of this last series of blows are generally apparent in the finished gongs although before leaving the factory they were scraped with steel tools, the scraping always moved from the center to the circle indicated.

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—I. G.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23)

I believe the first artist to arrive was Fred Hager. Fred had a long and distinguished career in the phonograph world. He was the first man to make a commercial violin record, was the conductor of bands and orchestras for virtually all the pioneer companies and, still later, was a recording director for several others, including Keen-o-phone, Rex and Okeh. Fred had brought with him a batch of rare record catalogs that made my mouth water, as well as a dubbing of the first disc made for the Columbia company—a band record which Fred himself conducted.

It was amusing to hear Fred relate the efforts of Okeh and Gennett to break Victor's monopoly on the patents for making lateral cut records—an effort that succeeded in 1919. "Hill-and-Dale records," Fred said, "are better than lateral—there's no doubt about it. Our vertical cut Okeh record was better than the lateral record we turned out afterwards, but there was no use in making a better record without phonographs to play it. The majority of machines would play only lateral records, so we had to break Victor's stranglehold to stay in business. After our suit succeeded, there was a grand scramble of nearly all the companies which had been compelled to make only hill-and-dale records to get on the lateral band wagon. Only Edison stayed out."

Fred had hoped to discuss with me some ideas for a series of magazine articles, but as the tempo of the gathering stepped up there just wasn't time. Soon, as Long Island trains arrived, other artists were coming in—handsome Charles Harrison, the tenor, whom I hadn't seen since a visit to New York in October, 1940; Fred Van Eps, the banjoist whom I had never seen before, and meeting him was one of the big thrills of the party; John Young, the tenor ("Harry Anthony" of the famous old gospel hymn team of "Anthony and Harrison"), about whom the same thing may be said; jovial, radiantly happy Elsie Baker; Edna White, famous trumpet player; Billy Murray, with his inseparable pal, who is one of my best loved friends, Jimmy Martindale; Arthur Hall; Will Oakland; Harvey Hindermeyer; Grace Spencer, "The First Lady of the Phonograph," and her daughter, Mrs. Lewis M. Wilson—the procession soon became bewildering, and Ed Manning and Bryant Burke were kept busy operating a "shuttle service" with Ed's car to bring newly arrived artists from the Hempstead station to the Elks Lodge.

Soon, Harvey Aronson, an extremely friendly and likable reporter, arrived to get a story both for his paper, the Hempstead Newsday, and for the Associated Press. A photographer for the AP took several pictures, including one of Bryant Burke, George Bieling and me gathered around Bryant's famous Edison

cylinder machine that serves as a photographic "prop" on every John Bieling day. George and Bryant look perfectly natural in the print, but I was caught just as I was turning to say something to Bryant and don't appear to advantage. The Associated Press story was printed the following Sunday morning in many newspapers throughout the United States and should prove valuable publicity for future John Bieling Days. It has brought me letters from Duluth, Minnesota, to Pascagoula, Mississippi.

I was soon having a hard time keeping up with all that was going on. Joe Laurie, Jr., the foremost authority on the history of vaudeville and one of the stars of the popular "Can You Top This?" radio program, arrived, complete with beaming smile and big cigar. Someone came up to me and I called him "Charlie," thinking I was speaking to Charles Harrison, with whom I had been talking only a few minutes before. I was smilingly informed that I was in the presence of my old friend, Al Frank, with whom I have been corresponding for more than twenty years and who has been operating a record importing business, the International Records Agency, for most of that time. Al has not been well, but he was looking fine and didn't seem a day older than when I had last met him ten years before. He said the same thing was true of me, except that he accused me of putting on weight—whereas I have lost a great deal during the past year.

I hustled about, taking photographs of artists. Ross Keegan, of Freeport, L. I., was doing the same thing, and Brevoort and Florence Odell, of Brooklyn, owners of probably the world's largest collection of cylinder phonographs and records, were equally busy, immortalizing the great pioneers on movie film. I tried to get autographs for a few of my collector friends, but soon had to give it up because there were too many other demands on my time. While all this was going on, records by famous artists, living and dead, were played on an electric phonograph provided by the Rev. Edward Vesper.

One of the high spots of the morning occurred when a man came in from the Elks Lodge office and said there was a long distance telephone call for Miss Elsie Baker, Mr. Jim Walsh or both. Elsie and I hurried to take the call, racking our brains in wonderment as to who would be calling us both, and why. The call proved to be from Dale Miller, a Long Beach, California, collector, who attended the 1948 party at Garden City and confidently expected to be at this one. Unfortunately, his plans had to be changed almost at the last minute and he couldn't come. But Dale just had to know how the party was going, and so he had asked for Miss Baker and me. We three had an animated conversation that I hope was some consolation to poor Dale, three thousand miles distant from the place where his heart was.

By the time lunch was served—

and a delicious lunch it was—many more artists had arrived. I should have mentioned before now that 84-year-old Eugene Rose, and Mrs. Rose, were among the early arrivals. Frank Banta—may the Lord bless that boy for all the hard work he willingly put in at the piano!—had a joyous reunion with his old pal, Fred Van Eps. (Frank was for years Fred's accompanist and also played in the Van Eps Trio.) Jolly Walter Scanlan (some collectors prefer to call him by his earlier recording name—which happens to be his real name—of Walter Van Brunt) showed up with the good news that his voice was coming back, after a period of several years during which he has hardly been able to speak above a whisper. And also right on top, looking like the life of the party, although he's been something of an invalid for the past year because of a heart condition, was Irving Kaufman, one of the most magnetic personalities that the show business has known. The Edison laboratory's warm feeling for the party was shown by the fact that Norman Speiden, Bill Hayes and Fred Rabenstein were there, too, apparently having a wonderful time. Also very much among those present was Harry Hunting, son of the late Russell Hunting, Sr., who used to record the "Coney" monologs and later was a recording expert for phonograph companies in the United States, France and England. Harry frequently assisted his father when the elder Hunting was in charge of Pathe's American recording activities. Another notable personality was Wally Butterworth, who presents the popular program of old classical recordings, "Voices That Live," on the ABC network.

During the lunch, I sat at a table with Al Frank and two enthusiastic young record collectors from Syracuse, New York—Robert Engel and Mr. Gainsback. It was a treat to talk with Al, for he and I have had a great deal in common throughout the many years that we have been warm friends by correspondence. The discussion veered into the topic of why present-day electrical recording of the human voice is less faithful to the original than the best examples of acoustic recording. The boys from Syracuse listened with great interest as Al gave a technical explanation of how "peaks" of distortion occur regularly in electrical reproduction, whereas the best acoustic recording was without distortion throughout its range. Then, too, he pointed out, the sound engineers can play any sort of trick to make a weak voice sound like a strong one or change the characteristic tone quality of a voice into something that may sound better but is not necessarily like the original. I quoted one of John Bieling's favorite remarks, which I had also mentioned to the AP reporter: "In the old days nothing came out of that horn that we didn't put into it. Nowadays what an artist sounds like on the record may not have anything to do with the way he sounds in person."

I believe it was Wally Butterworth who remarked—but it may have been Al Frank—that people nowadays have acquired "a radio ear." In other words, the sound of the human voice, as it comes from the average radio, is false and inflated. It lacks the human quality that characterized the best acoustic recording. But because it's what the public is accustomed to, the average record buyer automatically looks for "radio tone," even though it is frequently a travesty of the real thing.

My impression had been that either Irving Kaufman, who did such a wonderful job as master of ceremonies two years ago, would emcee the afternoon program, or that Joe Laurie, Jr., would take over. But Irving said he didn't feel well enough, and Joe argued he didn't know enough about the artists, since he has always been primarily a vaudevillian and radio comedian instead of a recording artist. When Bryant Burke asked me if I would do the honors, I accepted only after I had tried to get either Joe or Irving, and Wally Butterworth also had refused because his specialty is Red Seal records and he didn't feel that he knew the popular artists well enough to introduce them. My only qualm about officiating was the fear that my "corn pone an' 'lasses" Virginia accent might be difficult for some of the listeners. But, as it turned out, nobody seemed to have any trouble understanding me. I prefaced my opening remarks with the statement that, although the assemblage looked something like a meeting of the United Nations, my name wasn't Malik. However, I added, an interpreter might be needed before I had talked very long. But, as it turned out, nobody seemed to have any trouble "translating" what I said.

Before I made my bow as "emcee," Wally Butterworth gave a talk that held his audience rapt. He praised the idea of having a get-together of recording artists and collectors once a year, and said he hoped the committee would give thought to his suggestion that the major recording companies should be asked to become sponsors of the event. Wally envisioned an annual party somewhere in New York City, at which present-day artists would mingle with the great pioneers. However, he made it clear that he prefers the vocal standards of the older artists to those of the present-day group, and remarked that, with the connivance of the microphone, the human voice nowadays is often made to sound anything but human.

He then introduced me as master of ceremonies. The first person on whom I called was Joe Laurie, Jr., because Joe had said that he would have to leave early. The dapper little gentleman kept his hearers in an uproar as he told humorous stories and expressed his pleasure at being able to attend the party. And Joe didn't leave early, after all. He stayed until every artist had been heard, and he had a good time, or I was badly fooled.

After Joe had spoken, I introduced

the artists mostly in chronological order, depending on the year in which they first made records. Pride of place went to Eugene Rose, the veteran flute virtuoso, who made experimental records for Edison in 1889. "Gene" didn't play his flute, although he still teaches, and he pretended that he had stage fright, but nobody could have told it, as the spry young man of 84 recalled some of his early experiences.

Grace Spencer (Mrs. Willard Foster Doolittle) was next. This gifted soprano told of the days when she recorded under Thomas A. Edison's supervision, but explained that she said farewell to her musical career after her marriage. She showed deep emotion as she thanked those who had worked hard to stage the party and give artists and collectors an opportunity to enjoy one another's companionships.

An outstanding moment came when I later introduced Billy Murray, and "The Boss," after one of his characteristically witty talks, surprised everybody by announcing that, in honor of such a special occasion, he would do the first singing he had attempted since his severe heart attack of several years ago. His choice of a song, "'Twas Only an Irishman's Dream," is a number that he recorded for Bluebird in 1941. Frank Banta, who was seated in the audience, was addressed by Billy as "Junior," and asked to come up on the stage. This started Frank off on a series of trips to and from the "platform," as I occasionally called it, that lasted the remainder of the afternoon. Billy didn't have the music of the song, but Frank asked, "What key?" and was told "B flat." Then "Junior" (so called, because his father, Frank P. Banta, was an accompanist for all the phonograph companies prior to his death in 1904) began playing the introduction, and Billy sang sweetly in that incisive, sympathetic voice that used to make his records sell by the millions.

Perhaps his most thrilled hearers were Charlie and Mary Hodgdon. They had hoped fervently that Billy would sing, but I had told them there wasn't a chance of that. Charlie remarked afterwards that when Billy began the song "there was a lump in my throat as big as a duck egg." "The Denver Nightingale" was given an ovation as he left the stage.

Another great moment was when Fred Van Eps walked up, equipped with his faithful banjo, to do a couple of numbers. Fred said that, after more than 40 years of playing with one technique, he has changed his fingering method. It was a bit too technical for me to understand, but, whatever system he is using now, he is still the Fred Van Eps who was one of the greatest banjoists that ever lived. He had brought the music of two of his old-time favorites, "Infanta March" and "Coconut Dance," and, assisted by "Junior," played them to everybody's satisfaction. That was the last time Frank was to have the benefit of music, but give that Banta wizard the key in which a number is to be sung or played and

he can go right along. Apparently he knows every song that has ever been written.

There were some interesting and entertaining reminiscences from Fred Hager, but when I called for John Young I was sorry to learn that he became ill after the luncheon and had decided to return home. Will Oakland told of the great pleasure he felt at attending the party, and sang one of his favorite numbers, "The Sunshine of Your Smile." Those who heard it felt that, they were listening to the same incomparable counter-tenor voice that was engraved on so many millions of records in the heyday of acoustic recording. Actually, Will's voice has more mellowness and depth now than in the days from 30 to 40 years ago when he was one of the most popular phonograph artists. He recalled in his spoken remarks that hearing John McCormack at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 was an important factor in turning him to a singing career.

One notable aspect of the program was the generosity of the artists in paying tribute to others who had helped them. Walter Scanlan recalled some interesting phases of his recording career, more especially the manner in which he happened to make his most popular Edison record, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," but since I hope to write a HOBBIES article about Walter for publication next year I shall not quote him in detail. He told of Billy Murray's aid in getting him off to a good start as a recording artist and thanked Billy for having made him the recording partner of Ada Jones on records other than Victor and Edison.

Edna White, generally regarded as the foremost woman trumpet player, gave a dazzling rendition of "Carnival of Venice," spangled with bewildering variations. Miss White, who was making her first appearance at a John Bieling Day get-together, also told some amusing stories. She related how the Japanese found an old photograph showing her recording for the Edison company by the acoustic horn method and circulated it during World War II as evidence of the low scientific standards prevailing in America. In Japan, said the propaganda, all recording had been done for years with the latest electrical equipment, but in the benighted United States the old-fashioned horn system still prevailed!

Elsie Baker, probably the most popular contralto who ever recorded for the Victor black and blue labels, didn't sing, but spoke most entertainingly about her recording career. She mentioned that she was hardly more than a teen-age girl when she began making records for several companies. (On U. S. Indestructible cylinders she was always called by her full name—Miss Elsie West Baker.) One month she made \$800 by free-lance recording and thought that she was on her way to becoming a millionaire. But Calvin Child, the director of Victor's artist and repertoire department, convinced her that she should sign up

exclusively with Victor, and she never regretted the decision.

Harvey Hindermeyer, one of Edison's leading tenors, who also made records occasionally for several other companies, proved that the sweetness and charm of his voice are still there by singing "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms." Irving Kaufman had the onlookers in stitches as he gave me instructions in various dialects to move the piano half a dozen ways at once, so he could play his own accompaniment as he sang "Peg of My Heart." Irving mentioned that when he was a boy in Syracuse he listened to Will Oakland's records for hours at a time and wished that he could someday be as fine a singer as Will. Similarly, Fred Van Eps told me that he learned to play the banjo as a boy by buying and studying Vess Ossman's brown wax cylinders.

Another accomplished guest who didn't sing was Charles Harrison, but this fine artist gave a most graceful talk and promised that his lyric tenor notes will be heard on John Bieling Day next year. He introduced one of his pupils, Charles Pinto, who won a big hand for his excellent rendition of Toselli's "Serenade."

By this time Frank Banta, who had performed such yeoman service, was becoming a bit concerned. He whispered to me that he needed to get away as soon as possible to appear on a radio program in New York at 8 o'clock. However, there was still Arthur Hall to be heard from, and everybody was looking forward to hearing that favorite tenor of the old days sing a number which has almost come to be identified as his trade mark or theme song—Ernest R. Ball's beautiful ballad, "Here's Love and Success to You." Arthur said he was particularly glad to sing that number because it was a favorite of Mrs. Bieling's.

After Arthur had given us "Love and Success" in his own inimitable style, Frank started to leave. But as he prepared to step down from the stage, there went up a cry of "Solo! Solo!" So Frank said he would tarry just long enough to play "Nola." "Jim has reminded me," he told the audience, "that when I made a record of 'Nola' I played it 24 times before I turned out a master that Victor would accept. I had to go back three times before they got a satisfactory record—and then I played a wrong note at the very end of the accepted version!"

Frank concluded his solo and waved goodbye. Irving Kaufman called to me: "Jim, I think Frank deserves a round of applause!" I replied that he deserved a dozen rounds, and he really got a wonderful demonstration of appreciation for his unselfish work. I wished I could fire a salvo of cannon in his honor.

It was now almost 6 o'clock, and the party had been officially scheduled to end at 5. However, nobody seemed to mind having been kept overtime for such fine entertainment, and Grace Spencer suggested that we hear from the Edison representatives. But when I called out the names of Bill Hayes, Fred Rabenstein and Norman Speiden,

I learned that they had already started back to West Orange. I regretted afterwards that I didn't call on the committee who arranged the party to take a bow for their fine work, but it was so late I thought I should bring the program to a close. If I'm master of ceremonies again I'll make sure that the committee members get recognition by introducing them at the very beginning.

After the party proper broke up, many of the artists and collectors gathered at the Bieling home for several hours of reminiscing and good food of the kind that never fails to characterize a Bieling get-together. We were joined by two Newsway reporters—Harvey Aronson, who wrote the Associated Press story, and an attractive young lady, Beryl Howell, who had written a colorful before-the-party article the day before. When she left, Miss Howell said she had found the entire occasion so fascinating that she was going to become a record collector.

Of course, as in any affair of this sort, there were disappointments. One was my receiving a telegram from Madame Edith Helena, who was a general favorite in 1948, regretting that at the last minute she could not make the trip to be with us. We also missed several other artists who honored us with their presence two years ago—Frederic C. Freemantel, Olive Kline, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Bob Miller, Dick Robertson, Carson Robison, Aileen Stanley and Reinald Werren-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 38)

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Photo by L. B. Odell

Will Oakland (left) shakes hands with Jim Walsh at fifth annual John Bieling Day party. In the background are Jimmy Martindale and Billy Murray.



Photo by L. B. Odell

A group of pioneer recording artists and record collectors at the fifth annual John Bieling Day party. Standing: Will Oakland, Harry Hunting, Charles Harrison, Jimmy Martindale, Billy Murray, Edna White, Elsie Baker, Harvey Hindermeyer, Eugene Rose, Fred Hager and Irving Kaufman. Stopping beside Bryant Burke's famous Edison cylinder phonograph: Fred Van Eps, John Young and Arthur and Arthur Hall.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

rath. (Aileen, her husband, Bob Butenuth, and their protege, Aileen, Jr., had to go to Hollywood on a business trip just before the party.) We were likewise sorry that Mrs. Byron G. Harlan, who had planned to be present, was prevented from doing so. A good many other artists who had been invited also couldn't come. But in spite of those shortcomings, it was a wonderful occasion which amply repaid me for the long, hard trip I had made. I'm sure that Ed and Edith Manning, who had come much farther, felt the same way.

As for the artists, I think Eugene Rose summed up their sentiments when he remarked to Grace Spencer: "Isn't it nice to know that the older we get the more our friends think of us?"

The phonograph's First Lady agreed that indeed it was nice.

Early the next afternoon I checked my baggage at the Hempstead station, said goodbye to Bryant and Ed, and boarded the Long Island train for New York, on my way home to Virginia. Still on my agenda was a stop at Newark, to fill a supper date with Will Oakland.

As I stepped aboard the train, two phrases rang in my mind. One was the remark of my landlady, Mrs. Leferts, as we shook hands in parting. "You can tell everybody," she smilingly exclaimed, "that I said you've been a mighty good boy while you've stayed with me!" The other was the comment from dozens of artists and collectors: "This is the best party we've had yet!" Or, as Elsie Baker phrased it in a letter to me: "Didn't we all have a grand time? I was beaming all day Sunday!"

And truly I think the fifth annual John Bieling Day was the best of all, up to now. But we hope, and expect, to have an even better one in September, 1951.

## GREETINGS

To All Collectors  
of Records

and All Recording

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**STEPHEN FASSETT & JIM WALSH**

A Very Merry Christmas to All of You

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## CAL STEWART I

By JIM WALSH

Five years ago I listed in HOBBIES the pioneer recording artists whom I considered "the Supreme Fifteen." Biographical sketches of all 15 have now appeared, excepting one — Cal Stewart, who was famous as "Uncle Josh Weathersby," leading citizen of the mythical "Way down East" village of "Pumpkin Center." Several readers have complained because of my seeming reluctance to chronicle their favorite comedian's life story.

However, the late appearance of the Stewart series doesn't indicate that I think his records lack interest or that I have no admiration for the humorist whose droll monologs were favorites from the middle 1890's until electric recording was introduced a generation later, in 1925. The truth is that I have long wanted to write about "Uncle Josh," but have been determined to do an accurate, painstaking job. Unfortunately, I have met with more obstacles in seeking out the story of his life than in checking on the careers of any of the other members of the Supreme Fifteen.

Even now, although I know that Stewart was born in my native state of Virginia in 1856 and was 63 years of age when he died in Chicago on December 7, 1919, I have not learned just where in Virginia his birth occurred nor the exact date. The Virginia State Department of Health has twice checked its birth records for me without finding any mention of Calvin Edward Stewart.

A short time ago I thought the mystery was solved. I was standing on a street corner when a man came up and said, "Jim, I bought something the other day that you'd like

It is hard to believe that records can be so old and still be in such good shape. Send to me for oldies that you cannot get elsewhere. Watch for different lists of artists each month.

AL McREA, Sr.

Box 182, Westville, New Jersey

to see. It was an old cylinder phonograph, with a lot of wax records by 'Uncle Josh' and the other old-timers."

"That's interesting," I replied. "I'm going to write a series for HOBBIES about 'Uncle Josh,' and I've been trying, off and on, for years to find out where he was born. I know it was somewhere in Virginia, but that's as far as I've been able to get."

Another man joined in. "I can tell you," he said. "Cal Stewart was born at, or near, Charlotte Court House. I've heard my grandfather mention it many a time."

It looked as if fate had brought us three together to give up at last its stubbornly held secret. But when I wrote to the county clerk at Charlotte Court House, the clerk, H. B. Cherm-side, replied that he was unable to find Stewart's name in his books or any record of his birth. However, vital statistics dating as far back as 1856 are meager in Virginia, and since Stewart himself said that he was born on a farm, it may well be that he came from the Charlotte Court House area and that his birth was never recorded. On the other hand, a reader of HOBBIES tells me that she remembers hearing her grandfather speak of Stewart and thinks he said the comedian was from Dinwiddie county in Eastern Virginia.

I have a photostatic copy of Stewart's death certificate, courteously sent to me by Michael J. Flynn, county clerk of Cook County, Illinois. It gives his father's name as William Stewart; his mother's maiden name as Helen Douglas, and says that William and Helen were natives of Scotland. The certificate also records Cal Stewart's age as 63 and gives his birthplace merely as Virginia. Since this information was obtained from Cal's widow, the late Rossini Waugh Stewart, it appears that not even she knew the precise day and place of her husband's birth.

The monologist wrote a brief autobiography, which appears in a collection of "Uncle Josh's Punkin Centre (sic) Stories," "by Cal Stewart, 'The Talking Machine Story Teller,'" published in 1903 by the Charles C. Thompson Company, of Chicago. The copyright of the book is now owned by a good friend of mine who was also one of Stewart's closest friends and business associates — Frederick W. Hager, of Northport, New York, one of the earliest conductors of phonograph bands and orchestras and the first professional musician to make commercial violin records. Mr. Hager, who controls the literary, radio, television, motion picture and theatrical rights to all of Stewart's original material, has kindly given me permission to quote from the comedian's book. It begins with this brief preface:

"To the Reader. The one particular object in writing this book is to furnish you with an occasional laugh, and the writer with an occasional dollar. If you get the laugh you have your equivalent, and the writer has his. In Uncle Josh Weathersby you have a purely imaginary character, yet one true to life. A character chuck full of sunshine and rural simplicity. Take him as you find him, and in his experiences you will observe there is a bright side to everything. Sincerely yours, Cal Stewart."

Next comes the "Life Sketch of Author":

"The author was born in Virginia, on a little patch of land, so poor we had to fertilize it to make brick. Our family, while having cast their fortunes with the South, was not a family ruined by the war; we did not have anything when the war commenced, and so we held our own. I secured a common school education, and at the age of twelve I left home, or rather home left me—things just petered out. I was slush cook on an Ohio River packet; check clerk in a stove and heading camp in the knobs of Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia; I helped lay the track of the M. K. & T. R. R. and was chambermaid in a livery stable. Made my first appearance on the stage at the National Theatre in Cincinnati, Ohio, and have since then chopped cord wood, worked in a coal mine, made cross ties (and walked them), worked on a farm, taught a district school (made love to the big girls), fed the machine and ran the engine. Have been a freight and passenger brakeman, fired and ran a locomotive; also a freight train conductor and check clerk in a freight house; worked on the section; have been a shot gun messenger for the Wells, Fargo Company. Have been with a circus, minstrels, farce comedy, burlesque and dramatic productions; have been with good shows, bad shows, medicine shows, and worse, and some shows where we had landlords singing in the chorus. Have played variety houses and vaudeville houses; have slept in a box car one night, and a swell hotel the next; have been a travelling salesman (could spin as many yarns as any of them.) For the past four years have



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A. V. BORNAND CO.

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jac

made the Uncle Josh stories for the talking machine. The Lord only knows what next!"

Being omniscient, the Lord presumably knew, even while Cal was writing, that the comedian's days of job experimentation were over, and that making records and filling theatrical engagements in the guise of Uncle Josh Weathersby would occupy the remainder of Cal Stewart's days.

The rest of the book is taken up with poems of a rustic flavor and with Punkin Center (I refuse to spell it Centre!) stories, such as "Uncle Josh in a Chinese Laundry" and "Uncle Josh on a Fifth Avenue Bus," which had already become comedy classics before the volume was printed. There are also some scattered bits of "Punkin Center Philosophy," which show that Uncle Josh, for all his seeming naivete and gullibility, was a shrewd observer of human nature. By permission of Mr. Hager, the following sayings are quoted:

"ADVICE — Advice is something the other fellow can't use, so he gives it to you."

"AMBITION—Something that has made one man a senator and another a convict."

"PARADOX—I can't describe it, but it looks to me like a tramp who once told me how to succeed in life."

"SUSPICION—Consisting mainly in thinking what we would do if we was in the other fellow's place."

"PROSPERITY—Consisting principally of contentment; for the man who is contented is prosperous, in his own way of thinking, though his neighbor may have a different opinion."

The following is quoted from a sketch concerning Stewart prepared by Fred Hager. It reveals some aspects of the colorful career of the Virginia-born impersonator of "Down East Yankees" that will surprise most of the comedian's admirers:

"CAL STEWART—what memories of youthful days the name brings up! Cal Stewart's stories have made millions laugh, for his phonograph records were among the best sellers year in and year out. It was said that where there was a library of but fifty records two of them were Cal Stewart's. A Virginian by birth, Cal Stewart spent his entire life making people forget their worries and care and enjoy a good laugh. In the farm houses of the country, in the palaces of the wealthy, out on the ranches, over in the army camps in France during the First World War, on the deserts and on the high seas, Uncle Josh has amused people, for his material was not buffoonery, but wholesome entertainment with goodly philosophy.

"After two years abroad for the Baldwin Locomotive Company, Mr. Stewart returned to the United States, and Thomas Edison asked him to go to Continental Europe and the Orient, to establish laboratories for sound recording. Through his interpreters, Mr. Stewart explained the process of recording and procured many valuable and interesting records, among them being Pope Leo the Thirteenth's Benediction to the

## RECORDS

VICTOR RED SEAL records, 50c each. Thousands by Heifetz, Elman, Kreisler, Paderewski, Powell, Gluck, Homer, Alda, Wernanrath, Williams, Whitehill, Garrison, McCormack, others. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 628 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3065

MUSIC BOX DISCS bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. mh3004

RARE OLD RECORDS: Monthly sales list. Classical, vocal, popular, collector's items. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwald, Ambler, Penna. mh6445

WANTED: Record catalogues, supplements, pamphlets, 1900-1939. Old phonograph and record advertisements; other phonographic material. State price and condition. — D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. ja2614

COLLECTORS' GUIDE to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. f124201

MONTHLY AUCTION SALE: Old vocal operatic records. Free list.—Collectors' Haven, 148 Hancock St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3272

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-46. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 15 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o122741

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs. — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. ja3084

ASTOUNDING LISTS. Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan, Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

Record treasures of the World's great artists. Original G&Ts, Fonotipias, Zonophones, etc., Akte, Bellinioni, Boninsegna, Caruso, Carelli, De Lucia, Escalais, Fabbri, Giraldoni, Kurz, Litvinne, Pinto, Plancon, Figner, and other unique records of the greatest rarity. Send for auction lists, special lists. All correspondence confidential.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. f34431

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit —Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

OLD CYLINDER phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. f3253

Elizabeth Schumann Acoustics wanted. Also her Edisons. — 2327 Arthur St., Los Angeles 65, Calif. mh3063

## MISCELLANEOUS

SWISS MUSICAL Movements, charming single tunes \$1.95. Double tunes \$2.95. Postpaid. — Wagner, 1433 York Ave., N. Y. C. ja124201

FOR SALE: Music rolls for National Automatic Piano. Over 100 American tunes available. Send for list. Also want music rolls of all descriptions.—Russell Miller, 3274 Adriatic Ave., Long Beach 10, Calif. mh62511

BACK POPULAR sheet music. Catalog 10c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. je12407

OLD POPULAR MUSIC. I buy, sell, trade.—Jean Snyder, 102 So. Main St., Los Angeles 12, Calif. ja3272

WANTED: Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues. — Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. mh3422

RECORD COLLECTORS: Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

Edison and 20 cylinder records, \$12.50. Criterion records, Roller Organ.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. ja1201

FOR SALE: Stella Music Box discs, 14".—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. ja1021

TABLE MODEL VICTROLA, built-in horn, lid missing, \$8.50. Another complete, with record cabinet, holds 52 records, \$17.50, 26 records each machine. Edison disc, large cabinet, walnut finish, \$25. Only a limited number of Edison cylinder machines left, one Columbia. —Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. ja1253

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, \$1.80 direct from importer. —Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York 7, New York. mh3

## RECORDS—JAZZ

I HAVE 100,000 JAZZ and sweet records, collectors items. Send me your wants. I will also buy phonograph record collections, any size.—Jacob S. Schneider, 128 West 66th St., N. Y. C., New York. f6069

### FOR SALE

Swiss music box, dated 1816, in excellent playing condition, with 3 changeable 20" steel rolls, each playing approx. 12 tunes, has fast and slow lever with 3 dancing dolls and flying butterfly that are in working condition. Mahogany case with inlay lines, front has tulip and heart inlay. Case is 40" long, 18" deep, and 10 1/2" high, and a rare type in excellent condition. Very good tone. \$475. Collector's item.

Symphony (Regina type) with approx. 12 13 1/2" steel discs, in excellent playing condition. 17" deep, 19" long, and 12" high. \$475.00.

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My name and address is:

Catholic People. . . . Opera records were made and Chinese stories, which sometimes took eight hundred records to complete, and it was a rich man indeed who owned a complete story.

"In London he was the guest of King Edward. He was also the guest of the Kaiser of Germany, the Czar of Russia, Khedive of Egypt, Shah of Persia, at Teheran, Prince of Siam at Bangkok, Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria, and the Empress Ti Ann invited him to the Imperial Seventh Garden, also the Grandee at Delhi, Calcutta and Rangoon.

"Many gifts were bestowed upon Mr. Stewart by Crowned Heads, but he valued them less than the vest given him by Denman Thompson, whom he understudied in 'The Old Homestead.' Mr. Thompson wore the vest and then presented it to his understudy, who always used it for his monologs. It was at a performance of 'The Old Homestead' that Thomas Edison, admiring Cal's voice, asked him to come to the laboratory and try a recording. Success was immediate, and soon after he made records for the Victor, Columbia and smaller companies, all on a royalty basis. His pen was prolific and his material inexhaustible.

"Mark Twain was an old friend and, later in life, Will Rogers. Uncle Josh's philosophy told in his own words was 'I'd sooner tell Pete on the last day about the laffs I've given folks on earth, than try to explain about giving them heart akes.' His name was a household word wherever the English language was spoken, and his life was a sublime example of what the world gives to the man who can do one thing supremely well. The world expressed grief that finis was written to a life that had given so much pleasure to others.

"Cal Stewart was the greatest humorist of his time."

The statement that Cal Stewart went abroad at the request of Mr. Edison to establish recording laboratories is open to question. Veteran employees of the Edison laboratory cannot recall Stewart's serving in that capacity. They say that Edison's foreign recording studios were set up by William A. ("Bill") Hayes, who is still living and is in charge of the company's repair department at West Orange. It may be that Stewart's work overseas was done for Columbia instead of Edison, since the comedian became an exclusive Columbia artist in the early 1900's and remained so until about 1907. Certainly, the record of Pope Leo the Thirteenth's Benediction to the Catholic People, made when the Pope was 93 (a fact which perhaps gives him the distinction of being the oldest recording artist in history), was issued by Columbia.

As a matter of historical interest, the Columbia Company's monthly magazine, *The Columbia Record*, for June, 1903, contains a photograph of the Pope and a description of his two recordings—one the Benediction and the other the Ave Maria. Stewart is not mentioned in the article, which says: "These records were made, at

the Vatican, on February 5th, 1903, in the presence of his (Pope Leo's) nephew, Cardinal Pecci. . . . Though nothing remains of the great Pontiff, save an undying memory, his voice lives and he will continue to convey his benediction to thousands upon thousands, through the medium of the graphophone and these priceless records. . . . In confiding his benediction to a graphophone record, the Holy Father expressed a wish that he might be heard throughout the world, and that the faithful of even the most distant countries should hear his voice and receive his benediction. After hearing the reproduction he was so pleased with the distinct and natural tones that he intoned the Ave Maria also, his idea being that those who heard it, after he had passed away, would recite the beautiful prayer with him." The Pope died about five months after he made the records. They were available only on cylinders which sold for two dollars each and since the aged prelate's voice was low and indistinct, the sale was disappointingly small and they were soon discontinued.

Returning to Mr. Hager's statement, it is of course possible that his memory is perfectly accurate and that Stewart worked in other countries for Edison before his exclusive Columbia contract took effect.

Under the heading of "An Interview With Uncle Josh," the *Portland (Maine) Advertiser* published an interesting article in its issue of April 5, 1904, from which the following quotations are taken:

"By Mr. Cal Stewart, Columbia Record' are words which every person who has ever listened to a graphophone has heard spoken in a clear tone as the wax cylinder on the machine started on its whirl and turned out joke after joke. After the announcement that 'Mr. Cal Stewart' is to say something, everybody listens, and then follows that drawling, droll, measured voice known to millions in America, carrying with it a rollicking laugh, a fund of good nature and an irresistible humor.

"Millions have listened to Mr. Stewart's voice from a graphophone record, thousands have listened to it in the theatres of the country, and now patrons of The Portland in this little city in Maine are privileged to hear this emperor of rural comedians. . . . He might be taken for a farmer, even off the stage. Large framed, fleshy, fat-faced, good natured, with a big black felt hat surmounting these essential characteristics of the 'rube' comedian, Mr. Stewart presented a picture of the typical New England farmer. His conversational voice did not show that he was an impersonator of rural characters, but aside from the New England twang he had all the other ear marks which distinguished his act on the stage.

"I suppose I have talked into more records and had my voice repeated more times than any other man in the world," said Mr. Stewart, in opening the conversation. "When I last heard there had been 750,000 cylin-

ders made with my stories; this number has since reached a million. . . . I've made private records for President McKinley, President Roosevelt and Secretary Shaw, besides other public men.' . . .

"Mr. Stewart gave a brief history of his start on the stage. 'You see, I was born in Virginia, and lived there during the earlier part of my life. I had always been a mimic, imitating all kinds of characters, and everything else. I made my first appearance in public when I was seven years old in a little pickaninny part in the Hidden Hand, then playing at the old Front street theater in Baltimore. I did black face for a little time in this way, and later impersonated every other kind of a dialectic character. Rural characters I particularly liked, and there used to be a lot of good men on the stage playing these parts. John E. Owens in Solon Shingle particularly appealed to me, so I resolved to devote my time in the future to farmer parts, and have now been doing them for over 20 years.

"I left Virginia in 1872, and in 1875 began my really professional career with B. F. McCauley, who was playing Uncle Daniel in The Messenger from Jarvis Section. I was the Village Boy, but understudied Mr. McCauley for several years. I have since devoted my time to old age characters and like them the best.

"During my life I have traveled over every part of the U.S. and seen and studied every kind of a farmer type, from the New Englander to the Westerner, but like the New Englander the best. Out in Indiana I found every type; some characters had a part of them all in one. Out there you can hear 'I reckon,' 'I calculate,' 'I suppose,' and all the other expressions of the farmer.

"The vaudeville life is an agreeable one," said Mr. Stewart. "The stage is much better than it used to be. The actors have improved, the theaters have grown larger and better, the expenses have increased, but so have the salaries. A man has to have brains to succeed on the stage nowadays. Sometimes it is hard work, but a performer has good wages, he sees all the world, has steady employment and acquires an invaluable experience." (Those, be it remembered, were the palmy days of vaudeville.)

And now, from the December, 1906, issue of the *Columbia Record*, I quote, for the sake of the picture it gives of the comedian's working methods, an account of a visit paid by Cal Stewart to a Columbia store in Indianapolis, Indiana. Incidentally, Stewart lived on a farm near Indianapolis during his later years:

"Recently Mr. Cal Stewart, of Uncle Josh fame, visited Indianapolis, where he was booked to appear in comedy parts at one of the theaters. Those who know him well know that it would be just about as hard for Mr. Stewart to visit a town in which there was a Columbia store and not visit that store, as it would be for 'Jim Lawson' to confine his potatoes

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)



known in business for his accomplishments as President of the Dayton Tool and Engineering Company, which established records during the war for high production and worker participation in community projects. He is a member of the National Board of Americans for Democratic Action.

As Assistant Director, Burton Cumming will bring to the Federation a Harvard graduate school training in the fine arts plus experience as a teacher of art at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y. For over a year he worked at the Albany Institute of History and Art as an assistant director. In Milwaukee where he has been as Director of the Art Institute for five years, four of them since the war, Mr. Cumming has gained a reputation for winning the support and sponsorship of art exhibitions by business and industry. He organized one national conference on "Business and Art" in 1948 and another on "Industrial Design" in 1950. In accepting the position Cumming stated that "this is the best opportunity in the field of American art today."

The American Federation of Arts was founded in 1909 as a nonprofit national art association and has a continuous history of over forty years growth through the voluntary services of art leaders, institutions, and philanthropic foundations in all parts of the country. Early leaders of the organization were the Hon. Elihu Root; Charles L. Hutchinson, president of the Art Institute of Chicago; Robert W. de Forest, president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and more recently, Juliana Force, the Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Today the Federation, with offices in Washington and New York, numbers approximately 500 Chapter and institutional members consisting of the major art museums and associations, university art departments and schools, as well as art clubs and groups in smaller cities and towns. It has over 13,000 individual members and subscribers. Its Board of Trustees, is at present composed of men and women prominent in many professions and regions of the country. Included among the thirty names are ten art museum directors and officials, two lawyers, three heads of university art departments, three artists, one architect, two authors, two department store executives, one movie actor, one Wall Street broker, and the head of one national foundation. All are avid collectors of art. The present Officers and Trustees of the American Federation of Arts are: Philip R. Adams; Lee A. Ault; Richard F. Bach, First Vice-President; Alfred H. Barr, Jr.; Sidney Berkowitz; Robert Woods Bliss, Honorary President; Leslie Cheek, Jr.; Ralph Colin; Russell Cowles; Sumner McK. Crosby; Daniel S. Defenbacher; Rene d'Harnoncourt; Lloyd Goodrich; Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr.; Henry R. Hope; Earle Ludgin; H. Stanley Marcus; Grace L. McCann Morley, Second Vice-President; William M. Milliken; Elizabeth S. Navas; Roy R. Neuberger, Treasurer; Vincent Price; Thomas Brown Rudd; Charles H. Sawyer; Eloise Spaeth, Third Vice-President; L. M. C. Smith,

President; James Thrall Soby; Francis H. Taylor; Emily Hall Tremain and Hudson D. Walker.

The Federation has built up a number of activities over the years and is now engaged in offering them as major services in the cause of art in America.

—o—

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22)

to the town pump. . . . It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Mr. Stewart was not long in the Hoosier capital before he found his way into our Indianapolis store, and, while there, sent away customer after customer, supremely happy in the possession of a real, live, genuine Uncle Josh record, such as Cal Stewart, and Cal Stewart only, knows how to make. Commenting on record making by Mr. Stewart, the manager of our Indianapolis store says: 'Mr. Stewart worked in his shirt sleeves. Between records he enjoyed a dry smoke. We were prepared to see him make records easily, even to giving them the necessary touch of local color without effort, but his ability to extemporize, which he did delightfully on several occasions, was nothing short of a revelation to us.'

Observant readers may have detected a number of discrepancies in these several quotations. They will be considered later. Meanwhile, it is time to consider the beginning of Cal Stewart's recording career.

(To be Continued)

—o—

## Death of Frederic C. Freemantle

I have learned belatedly of the death of the distinguished tenor, Frederic Charles Freemantle.

The sad news comes from the singer's widow, who wrote, to thank me for a note I had sent to Dr. Freemantle, saying that the December issue of HOBBIES would be mailed to him so that he could read about the recent John Bieling Day observance at Hempstead, N. Y. She wrote:

"Your card to Dr. Freemantle was very thoughtful and I will be most happy to receive the HOBBIES article. You will be surprised to learn that my beloved husband passed on suddenly November 21, 1949. I am carrying on the business with a very capable staff, but the loss is great and sometimes seems more than I can endure."

Mrs. Freemantle, who prefers to spell the name in its original form, also sent me a copy of the November 27, 1949, bulletin of the Salem Reformed Church of Campbelltown, Pa., near which she and her husband had their summer home. I quote the following:

"Dr. Frederic C. Freemantle of New York City was laid to rest in Salem Cemetery on Friday, November 25. Dr. Freemantle was known in musical circles as 'The Favorite Pioneer Recording Artist.' In con-

nection with his musical career he had traveled all over the world as tenor soloist in cathedrals and churches. For many years Dr. Freemantle served as chorus master and musical director of the Ocean Grove, N. J., Music Festivals. He was interested in religious music and his chief interest was in hymn singing. He had deep appreciation for the life and works of Beethoven.

Dr. Freemantle was born in London, England, April 20, 1873, and passed away November 21, 1949. He is survived by his widow, the former Miss Lillian Gingrich, of this community."

Mr. and Mrs. Freemantle attended the John Bieling Day party held September 10, 1948, at Garden City, New York, where his genial manner and handsome appearance evoked deep interest. Many of those present termed him the most striking personality of all in attendance. He is the third artist who attended the Garden City party to die, having been preceded by Al Bernard and Joe Belmont. A biographical sketch of Dr. Freemantle appeared in the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists department for July, 1948.

—J. W.

—o—

## Music Box Collectors 2nd Annual Meeting

The recently formed club, Musical Box Hobbyists, met in Indianapolis, Indiana, at the home of Perry Ghere for their second annual affair. This organization was formed last year primarily for the perpetuation of rare old music boxes, and to disseminate knowledge about existing music boxes, and the long lost craft of their manufacture.

Enthusiastic collectors attended from all parts of the United States, and this year several inquiries were received from European collectors also. Mr. Perry Ghere's private collection is one of the most outstanding in this country, consisting of one of almost every disc box ever made, and a large number of the Swiss boxes, organ boxes of all types, and a great many mechanical pieces.

Other members spoke of interesting items in their own collections, and several papers were read about the history of music boxes, their repair, and their care.

Officers for the current year were elected. Dr. Byron P. Merrick of Berlin Heights, Ohio, is acting as President for a second term; Lloyd G. Kelley of Hanover, Mass., is Vice-President for a second term, Mrs. Adrian V. Bornand of Pelham, N. Y. is Secretary, and Mr. Clarence Fabel of Lockport, N. Y., was elected Treasurer.

The Swiss Watchmaker's Association, and other Swiss agencies, have expressed approval of and interest in the aims and purposes of the Musical Box Hobbyists. In this country, the organization of Watch and Clock Collectors has offered kindly encouragement, as these two fields have a similar purpose and objective.

ant musical performances that will probably never be transferred to LP. I repeat, my article was not an attack on the 78-RPM disc; it was written to point out the dangers the future may hold in store for 78-RPM discs and to make collectors think of ways and means to preserve the performances on 78's so that no matter what happens to the records themselves the music thereon will not become inaccessible or entirely lost.

Incidentally, since my article was written a trend has started in the phonograph equipment industry that should do much for the cause of the 78-RPM disc, particularly those made in the early years of this century. I refer to turntable motors that will not merely run at any one or all of the three current speeds, but at any speed from 10 to 100. Zenith's new "Cobra-matic" record changer, for example, can easily and quickly be adjusted to run anywhere from 10 to 85 RPM, a feature which puts this company's machines ahead of all others for those who like to reproduce their old vocals at the correct pitch and tempo . . . those old discs which require speeds ranging from 70 or lower to well over 80. Unfortunately the "Cobra-matic" changer is not available as a separate unit, but perhaps it will be soon. For those who can afford it, Rek-O Kut has a new motor and turntable unit of the highest quality which will operate at not only the three current speeds but also anywhere from 25 to 100 RPM . . . the answer to a collectors dream.

*Please mention HOBBIES when replying to advertisements*

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### CAL STEWART II

By JIM WALSH

Just as I don't know exactly when and where Cal Stewart was born, I haven't learned precisely when his first records were made. In his Pun-kin Center book, Stewart said he had been telling stories into the phonograph for the preceding four years. Since the book was copyrighted in 1903, that would seem to indicate his beginning year as 1899, but the manuscript may have been, and probably was, written several years before it was printed. The comedian's recording activities certainly were under way well prior to 1899.

A few years before the death of one of the earliest artists to make records, Dan W. Quinn, I asked for any information he had about Stewart. Dan replied: "Seems to me that Cal Stewart started over in Jersey along about 1893 or '94, then when we all went over to Columbia. . . . Cal made records right along and they sure did sell." (This "migration" to Columbia occurred a year or so before 1900—probably in 1898—when the competing company in New Jersey went out of business.)

The firm making records "over in Jersey" was the United States phonograph Company, whose laboratories were at 87-91 Orange street, in Newark. It turned out "New Jersey" cylinders, and the manager was Victor H. Emerson, who later became a

Columbia recording expert. In 1916 he founded the Emerson Phonograph Company. The United States catalog dated March 1, 1894, contains long lists of records by Quinn and several other artists, but Stewart is not represented. Those were the days before permanent masters, and it may be that Cal had already done some recording but had left on one of his trips and the supply had run out before the catalog was printed. This statement likewise should be noted: "In addition to the records listed in this catalog, we can also furnish an endless variety of vocal, instrumental and miscellaneous records, of which no catalog can be made." Possibly, but not probably, some of the Uncle Josh cylinders were included in this "catch-all." Russell Hunting's "Casey" records are the only monologs offered in the 1894 United States list.

Stewart is not included in the complete Columbia catalog for 1896, and he is still missing in 1897. But the 1898 Columbia list includes ten of the "Uncle Josh Weathersby Series," described as "Laughing Stories by Cal Stewart." Most of the names will be familiar to collectors who have seen them on records of later issue. They are numbered from 14000 to 14010, with 14006 omitted, and the titles are: Uncle Josh's Arrival at New York; Uncle Josh on a Street Car; Uncle Josh at the Opera; Uncle Josh at Coney Island; Uncle Josh in a Department Store; Uncle Josh at a Baseball Game; Uncle Josh's Troubles at a Hotel; Uncle Josh on a Fifth Avenue Bus; Uncle Josh at the Stock Exchange, and Uncle Josh's Invitation to Visit Him On His Farm.

The 1898 Edison cylinder catalog went Columbia five better. It contained 15 "Funny Talks, by the Popular Yankee Comedian, Mr. Cal Stewart." Numbered consecutively from 3875, they included: Uncle Josh's Arrival in New York; Uncle Josh in a Street Car; Uncle Josh at the Opera; Uncle Josh's Trip to Coney Island; Uncle Josh's Visit to a Department Store; Uncle Josh's Trip Home to His Farm; Uncle Josh Playing a Game of Baseball; Uncle Josh on the Signs of New York; Uncle Josh rides on a Bus on Fifth Avenue, New York (a long-winded way of listing the favorite record usually known as Uncle Josh on a Fifth Avenue Bus); Uncle Josh at a "Raines Law" Hotel; Uncle Josh's Trip to Boston; Uncle Josh's Troubles in a Hotel; and Uncle Josh at the Stock Exchange.

The Fifth Avenue Bus record seems to have been particularly well liked. The late Rex Beach, in his novel, "Goin' Some," which was dramatized and became a hit on the stage, chose for the locale of the story a ranch of the 1890's. The greatest pride of the cowboys was an "Echo" phonograph, playing wax cylinders which were

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"Clear As a Bell" and were announced as being made for "The Echo Phonograph Company, of New York and Paris." This was a thin disguise for the old Columbia cylinders, which (after the company moved its headquarters from Washington, D. C.) carried the New York and Paris announcement, and were represented to be "as clear as a bell." (This is a claim that was made for Sonora phonographs many years later.) One of the cowboy's favorite records was "Silas On a Fifth Avenue Bus," which introduced some foolery about a woman who "opened her valise and took out her purse and opened her purse and closed her purse," that always convulsed the ranchmen. "Silas," of course, is Uncle Josh, and the lines about the purse being opened and closed are used in the "Fifth Avenue Bus" record.

Cal was soon recording for all the companies, and if he always worked on a royalty basis, he was probably the first recording artist to have such a contract. He made seven-inch discs for Emile Berliner, as well as improved records of the same size for Eldridge R. Johnson, and the February, 1902, Victor catalog contains 14 of his specialties. These include some titles not already mentioned, such as A Meeting of the School House Directors, Jim Lawson's "Hoss Trade" With Deacon Witherspoon, Daily paper at Pumpkin Center, and the laughing song, "I'm Old But I'm Awfully Tough," which gives some biographical information concerning Uncle Josh. "Uncle Josh" recorded for Zonophone, too, and sometimes not in his Punkin (or Pumpkin) Center capa-

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Cal Stewart, as "Uncle Josh," the "Cracker Barrel Philosopher," in front of the Punkin Center General Store. Reproduced by permission of the copyright owner, Fred W. Hager.

city. An Iowa record collector has told me of finding a Zonophone record of "The Arkansaw Traveler," a comic monolog usually considered sacred to Len Spencer, but which in this instance was recorded by Cal Stewart. More recently, a Maine collector has obtained a brown wax Columbia cylinder of the "Traveler" monolog, spoken by Len's brother, Harry, who seems to have made a good many more records than I believed when I was writing the Len Spencer series. (Incidentally, I was wrong when I said that Harry and Len were twins. Len was the elder.) But the great Leonard Garfield Spencer more or less evened things up when he made a Columbia record in 1902 of "Uncle Josh's Huskin' Bee." Perhaps Stewart was out of the country on one of his trips abroad when the impish Len engaged in this act of *lese majesty*.

The Stewart record list had grown to 31 by the time the Edison catalog, dated October, 1899, came out. Most

of the titles are still familiar, but one, "There Ain't A Word," is now unknown—at least to me.

Cal had two more offerings in the Edison list for November 20, 1899. One was "The Daily Paper at Pumpkin Center." (Whether the name was spelled pumpkin or Punkin appears to have depended on the preference of the individual company.) The other, which sounds particularly interesting, although I've never heard it, was "Uncle Sam to George." Here is the description: "The sailors of Admiral Dewey's fleet were entertained Saturday night, September 30, at a 'smoker' at the Waldorf-Astoria. The Admiral was there. Cal Stewart delivered this stirring patriotic poem in his quaint Yankee dialect." The cylinder soon disappeared from the catalog, and I don't know of anyone who has a copy. However, the fact that Stewart was called on to entertain at the testimonial dinner to the hero of the Spanish-American War shows that he

had already made for himself a wide reputation and gained a large following.

Even before the new century arrived, the comedian, whose nasal back country drawl and hearty laugh are unjustly dismissed by many present-day listeners as "corny" and "crude," had duplicated, on a minor scale, the feats of Shakespeare and Dickens in creating imaginary worlds of their own. The boy with his first recollections centering around a poverty-stricken farm somewhere in Virginia had grown up to become recognized as the archetype of the "hayseed" from the stony and sterile farms of New England.

Record buyers in other English-speaking countries were not certain what part of the United States the garrulous Uncle Joshua Weathersby hailed from. A writer in an English publication, the *Talking Machine News*, referred to his "quaint Western drawl." It is true that Stewart was fascinated by the rural types of the Middle West, particularly those of Indiana, where he made his home for some years before his death, but evidence can be adduced to prove that he always conceived of Uncle Josh and the other Punkin Center folks as New Englanders. Even so, a friend of mine in Decatur, Illinois, has told me that a certain outlying area there is known as "Punkin Center," because of the resemblance of its farm types to those in the Stewart records.

I think there is no doubt that our Uncle Josh was suggested by Uncle Josh Whitcomb, the beloved character whom Denman Thompson portrayed for so many years in "The Old Homestead." There is the similarity of names, for one thing, and, for another, the fact that Stewart gained valuable experience as Thompson's understudy. Thanks to a letter from Frank E. Hatch, of Boston, in a 1932 issue of *The Billboard*, we can trace the genesis of Thompson's original Uncle Josh. Wrote Mr. Hatch:

"It is related that on one occasion when Denman Thompson played Uncle Josh in a rural New Hampshire town, the audience demanded their money back because the character was one they could see every day without paying anything. It may be of interest to know that the character of Uncle Josh was the prototype of one Joshua Holbrook, a farmer who lived in West Swanzy, New Hampshire, where Denman Thompson was brought up and where he maintained a home up to the time of his death." So Joshua Holbrook became Joshua Whitcomb and Joshua Whitcomb in turn was transformed into Joshua Weathersby!

Cal Stewart was not the only member of the "Old Homestead" troupe to make records. I don't believe that Thompson ever did, but, as has already been told in HOBBIES, Richard José, the countertenor, was with the Homesteaders for several seasons, and afterwards became a popular Victor artist. The Old Homestead Double Quartet made several Victor records in 1904, and the late Fred East, who sang in that ensemble for three years, was engaged by Edison as a bass soloist many years later.

The Virginia-born Stewart did not



slavishly imitate New Hampshire's Denman Thompson. Rather, through his powers of imagination, observation and impersonation, he gradually made the buyers of fragile wax cylinders and scratchy discs familiar with a host of men and women who existed only in his mind, but seemed living beings, so typical were they of the New England country characters of that now remote era.

This appears to be a good point at which to quote some comments made by Stanley L. Johnston, of Lansing, Michigan. Mr. Johnston, a HOBBIES reader and Uncle Josh enthusiast, has been of unwearied help to me in trying to track down—unfortunately, without complete success—some of the more obscure details of Stewart's life. He has also made a thorough study of the Punkin Center series, as witness these thoughtful observations, taken from his letters to me:

"Herein lives my interest in Cal Stewart: The early phonograph was ignored by big name artists. Less known entertainers accepted the small fees offered and endeavored to make good records. In proportion to their success, plus mechanical improvements in both phonograph and recording, the phonograph gained popularity. Better known artists appeared and competed with the earlier artists. Some fell by the way, unable to hold out against superior talent. A few held on—people like Billy Murray and Henry Burr. Through the years, starting on early wax cylinders and with mediocre artists' competition, Cal Stewart held his own, even when the world's greatest artists were on records, with fortunes spent to advertise their names.

"His records provide a history of the recording art. First, the fuzzy, blurred wax cylinders, also the rough surfaced discs and, continuing through to the last, you will find a good study in mechanical improvements in record making. I don't pretend to like all his records, but I think many were fine.

"I think it would have to be conceded that Stewart never attempted anything beyond giving his hearers some laughs. His talks were short. If drawn out they might have been monotonous. They were short, amusing interludes, designed as a change from the more serious offerings. Stewart never stooped to drag in smut nor told sexy stories. His favorite by word was 'by gosh!' His strongest exclamation was 'thunderation!' In some earlier records 'Josh' was often foolish to the point of being a half-wit, but gradually this element disappeared and he became a fun-loving character, unlearned but not a fool. (This same transformation of character is revealed gradually in the hero of Dickens' 'Pickwick Papers,' the initially gullible but finally lovable Samuel Pickwick.—J. W.) He sometimes pokes fun at religious demonstrations, yet in 'Christmas at Punkin Center' he himself joins with the Peerless Quartet to sing 'Ring the Bells of Heaven,' doing a passable job, too."

Mr. Johnston calls attention to some seeming discrepancies in Stewart's

account of his life in the book and interviews already quoted—discrepancies which probably can never be reconciled, since Mrs. Stewart is dead, the couple had no children, and none of the members of the comedian's family are living.

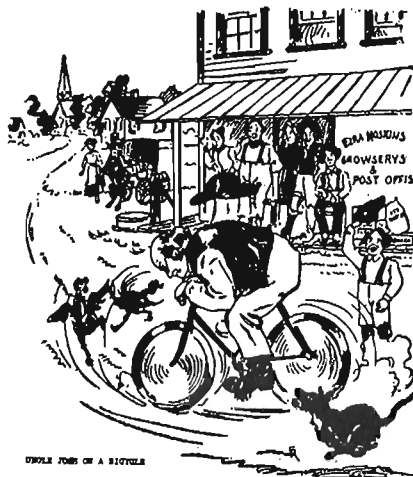
"If," says Mr. Johnston, "Stewart was 63 when he died it follows he must have been born about 1856. Stewart says he first appeared in 'The Hidden Hand' when he was seven years old. The only play by the name of 'The Hidden Hand' that I have found any record of was rewritten from a French play and first appeared in England in 1867. Stewart says he was born in Virginia and when he was 12 years old he left home, yet at 7 he was in Baltimore playing in 'The Hidden Hand.' Perhaps that 7 should be 17!

"Again," says Stewart, 'made my first appearance on the stage at the National Theater in Cincinnati, Ohio.' After that he had many different jobs. The statements seem to clash."

Stanley Johnston rather wistfully continues:

"If there was one time, like 1870, '80 or '90 that you could pin him down and definitely know he lived at such and such a place, it would be fairly simple to get something on him. The census bureau could furnish a copy, for a fee, of any census report prior to 1900. (For a copy of a census report later than 1900, you must be a very close relative of the person you are interested in.) The Civil War would ruin chances of finding him in the 1860 census, plus the fact that it is necessary to furnish the exact place of residence at the time the census was taken. That is also true of 1870-80-90.

"Stewart says he helped lay steel on the M., K. and T. Railroad. The first 786 miles of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas lines were built during the years 1869 to 1873. Many miles were added in later years, and it now has 3,188. It seems likely he worked at a later date—still, he may have started work young."



A cartoonist's conception of one of the most popular Cal Stewart records, "Uncle Josh on a Bicycle." Reproduced by permission of the copyright owner, Fred W. Hager.

Mr. Johnston tried to check on Cal's statement that he had been an express messenger in the Far West, by writing to Miss Irene Simpson, historian in the Museum of the Wells, Fargo Bank in San Francisco. She replied that records of the early period of the company's history had been destroyed by fire, but added: "As a rule, a Wells, Fargo messenger sat beside the driver, shotgun in hand, to guard the shipment of gold bullion being sent by the express company."

The Michigan investigator comments: "It is hard to think of the fun-making Stewart in this capacity, isn't it." And he sums up his perplexity by saying: "I am beginning to think Uncle Josh is the reality and Stewart the fantasy. I know more about Josh than I do of Cal!"

That mysterious production of "The Hidden Hand" receives mention in the following paragraph which appeared in the Columbia record supplement for September, 1919:

"Cal Stewart is a native of Virginia. His father and mother were Scotch (which accounts for his real name, Calvin). Stewart's first professional appearance was in a Baltimore theater as a pickaninny servant character in a play called 'The Hidden Hand.' Stewart once remarked he had had what he called a Huckleberry Finn career. He has been a stage coach driver, a locomotive engineer, a minstrel star and an express company messenger."

Somewhat similar statements were made in Columbia's supplement for December, 1919, the month in which Stewart died:

"Cal Stewart, the author and maker of the 'Uncle Josh Punkin Center' stories, is a native of Virginia and descended from good old Scotch ancestors. His early career was connected with the old minstrels, the school which produced many of our best loved comedians. Stewart's knowledge of life, which he so humorously portrays in his Columbia records, comes from his various experiences as a stage coach driver, a locomotive engineer and an actor. 'Cal', as he is familiarly known to his thousands of admirers from coast to coast, writes as well as recites his own monologs and, naturally, records his own Columbia records."

Since beginning this series, I have played many of my Uncle Josh records. It would be fairly easy to compile from them a "Spoon River Anthology" of the population of Punkin Center. And there would be a resemblance to Cal Stewart's own life story in the fact that the details do not always hang together.

From "I'm Old But I'm Awfully Tough" we learn that Uncle Josh considers himself "a jolly old fellow from back in New England, where apples and peaches and punkins do grow." He admits that he likes to wink at "the purty gals" and gives his age as "near 73"—somewhat older than I have imagined him, but Cal certainly should have known how long his hero had been around. Uncle Josh also admits having an eye for the girls when, in "The County Fair at Punkin Center," he tells of attending a side show featuring "the Dance of the Seven Veils," in which the lovely performers appeared to have absent-mindedly forgotten most of their gossamer.

Joshua shows his naive qualities on his visits to New York. He tries to

mail a letter in a fire alarm box, then sees a postman opening a mail box, takes him for a thief and struggles to arrest him, only to learn that he has assaulted "one of the postmasters of New York City." In this record Josh reveals that he was formerly postmaster of Punkin Center. Naivete is shown again when he says that he always stays at the Astor House because he likes "Mrs. Astor's" cooking. At home, he keeps on the mantel a "gold brick" that some sharper sold him, and he was "buncoed" by a lightning rod agent.

When the Punkin Center series begins, Uncle Josh is a widower, but we have no information concerning his late wife. As far as I have been able to determine, Uncle Josh, as was Cal Stewart himself, is without children but is well supplied with nieces and nephews. He begins to show more than a casual interest in the much-married "Aunt Nancy Smith," who had accompanied him on a sight-seeing trip to New York and become frightened when she saw a man's wagon running without any horses. Aunt Nancy is a widow, and one record is devoted to the old couple's courtship.

In the records made during the early 1900's the part of Aunt Nancy is taken by Mrs. Cal Stewart herself. Mrs. Stewart was a Tipton, Indiana, girl, Rossini Waugh, who is described by Fred Hager as a talented violinist. She traveled with the troupe which Stewart formed to give entertainments based on the Punkin Center characters. Her brother, James W. Waugh, was also a member of the group, which Mr. Hager says was a great favorite in the Middle West.

Mrs. Stewart's conception of Aunt Nancy was that of a cheerful, rather foolish old lady who giggled incessantly, just as Uncle Josh was addicted to constant explosions of mirth as he told his anecdotes. Some listeners criticize this recurring chuckle on the ground that Stewart is "laughing at his own jokes," but I think the criticism is unjustified. Anybody who has watched an old-fashioned story teller knows that it is part of his technique to interrupt his yarn regularly with hearty laughs, usually slapping his legs as he does so. When Stewart laughs he is only giving added fidelity to his portrayal of the typical rustic. On the other hand, I agree that the incessant laughing of such comedians as Harry Lauder and Billy Williams, the old-time English music hall comedian, is unnecessary and irritating.

After Ada Jones came into popularity, Mrs. Stewart ceased to take part in the records probably because Ada's versatility and powers of mimicry were greater than her own. In the famous comedienne's capable hands, Aunt Nancy develops an acidulous streak absent from Mrs. Stewart's depiction. Some collectors have the impression that records labeled as by "Mr. and Mrs. Cal Stewart" were actually made by Stewart and Ada Jones, and even that they were married to each other, but this is wrong. However, I have been told

that Cal and Ada did fill some Chautauqua engagements, in which they portrayed Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy.

The record of "Uncle Josh at the Chautauqua" may have been suggested by some of their experiences.

"Uncle Josh's Courtship" was followed, in 1907, by "The Wedding of Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy." In the Victor record Mr. and Mrs. Stewart have the assistance of the Haydn Quartet; in the Columbia, the Peerless, with Bill Hooley and Frank Stanley, respectively, taking the part of the officiating minister. The quartet, referred to as "the Punkin Center Sympathy Quartet" ("it has the sympathy of the hull village when it tries to sing") is asked to render something appropriate and obliges with "She May Have Seen Better Days." Uncle Josh remarks that he doesn't think "that's too doggone appropriate," and the minister shows his sentiments by waiving the privilege of kissing the bride. Uncle Josh tries to find out how many times Aunt Nancy has been married previously, but doesn't succeed.

However, in one of the best of the sketches, "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," made a few months before Stewart's death, Josh remarks that Nancy doesn't need a stove, "because all the cookin' you know how to do, you can do on a fire-place." Nancy replies that "I cooked for three dif'rent men before I married you!" and this elicits the retort: "Yes, and they're all dead now!" Then Nancy says something that justifies our suspecting Uncle Josh, like many New Englanders, is "a leetle closefisted." She snaps: "I know another one that's dead, only he's too stingy to have a funeral!"

Mr. Johnston remarks that Mr. Weathersby's strongest expression was "thunderaton!" but he must have forgotten "Uncle Josh's New Year's Pledge." Of course Stewart didn't use profanity on records, but in this one he tells of how Joshua took a pledge to "quit cussin'" only to break it when he fell down the cellar stairs. I can't recall that Uncle Josh smoked or drank anything harder than cider, but in "Uncle Josh Keeps House" a series of calamities included his dropping his chewing tobacco into the chubn

It is true that Josh poked good-natured fun at some aspects of backwoods religion. In "Uncle Josh at a Camp Meeting" his imitation of the pious brother who intoned "Yea, verily!" is a masterpiece of unctuous humor. But devotions at bedtime appear to have been a regular part of life in Uncle Josh's home. Mr. Johnston called attention to the singing of "Ring the Bells of Heaven" in "Christmas Time at Punkin Center." He might have mentioned that in the Columbia record of "Evening Times at Punkin Center," made in 1903, Uncle Josh leads the family circle in singing "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand." This record was discontinued some years later, but was re-made and reissued under a new number in 1919. In the later, improved version the concluding hymn is "Sweet

Hour of Prayer." A touch of topicality resulting from World War One is given by a mention that "Reuben" (apparently one of Aunt Nancy's children by a former husband) is in France and has never seen his baby son. I may mention here that when Columbia cut out an Uncle Josh record, Cal usually re-made it a few years later and saw it acquire renewed popularity. He does not seem to have followed this re-making process with any other company.

We don't know the population of Punkin Center, but it had a newspaper, the weekly *Bugle*. (There was also a short-lived daily.) When a touring chiropractor (in "Train Time at Punkin Center") asks what is the population, Uncle Josh answers, "Principally fruit." Told that the visitor wants to know how many persons live there, Josh replies: "Git out an' count 'em! They're all here at train time!" In another record, it is said that a train comes to Punkin Center only once a week. No wonder Uncle Josh referred to himself in one of his songs as "a durned old rube from a high-grass town!"

Since Stewart was born on a Virginia farm and grew up there in reconstruction days, he probably was a Democrat, if his early environment counted for much. He looked so much like William Jennings Bryan that he was frequently mistaken for the Democrats' perennial presidential nominee. However, Punkin Center was staunchly Republican. We learn, by hearing the Edison cylinder, "Uncle Josh's Letter From Home" that there were only ten voters in the village and that Punkin Center would have gone Republican by a majority of ten if Ezra Hoskins hadn't been cross-eyed and mistakenly placed his mark in the Democratic part of the ballot.

This same record mentions the only death I can recall of a Punkin Center character, but Uncle Josh doesn't seem to expect us to take it seriously. He says that Reuben Hendricks was on the top floor of the rubber factory when it caught fire. To save himself, Reuben encased his person in so much rubber that he started bouncing when he jumped and hit the sidewalk. He bounced for four days, "and then we had to shoot the durn fool to keep him from starvin' to death." Of course, nobody really believes this whopper, which Josh also tells Aunt Nancy in "Uncle Josh's Courtship." Anyway, what would Punkin Center be doing with a rubber factory?

Ranking next to Josh and Nancy probably is Jim Lawson, a wooden-legged Civil War veteran, who seems to be the hamlet's official sot, liar and horse trader. Even so, Jim has his better qualities. He must have been gifted with a good voice, for ordinarily he sang in the church choir. His singing ended for a while after he had a misadventure with a skunk, which is related in the 1903 Columbia record, "Ground Hog Day at Punkin Center." As Uncle Josh hilariously tells it: "We used to give Jim a dollar a Sunday to sing in the choir down to the church but now they're givin' him a dollar every Sunday to stay

away!" At best, Mr. Lawson's spiritual development was low. In "The Revival at Punkin Center," Uncle Josh quotes the revivalist as saying that hell's full of champagne, fast-stepping race horses and beautiful women, and the rapturous exclamation that Jim shouted broke up the meeting.

On one occasion, Uncle Josh was summoned to the county seat as a court witness, and Jim went with him. They stayed in a hotel known as the Bug House, because it was operated by a man named Bug. At the end, when Josh is ready to go home, after being rejected as a witness on the ground that he had "just got out of the bug house," the sheriff has Jim in tow and says that, judging by the

way Mr. Lawson has been carrying on, he intends to keep him "in the bug house."

Other well known Punkin Center folks, in addition to many minor characters, are Si Pettingill, the grocer; Lige Willitt; Deacon Witherspoon; Ezra Hoskins, the tavern keeper; Hank Weaver and Cynthia Lawson, Jim's wife. All are portrayed in a way that makes their personalities and peculiarities easily understood, even though we usually see them only through the eyes of Uncle Josh. Summed up, the Punkin Center records constitute a truthful picture of the humorous side of the typical Yankee village of two or three generations ago.

(To be Continued)

## What to Look for When Purchasing a Music Box

By GLENN P. HECKERT

Music boxes were made in a good many different grades, and the case is often a good guide to the quality of the works. The earliest boxes were in plain walnut, mahogany, or any other wood cases, without any inside cover glass, and were key wound. Although the tunes were not chosen for American trade, the arrangement was good. Later the cases had inlaid covers and stained or grained boxes.

The Program Card is of considerable value because the memory of some of the older titles has almost entirely disappeared. The selection of the airs was often a strange combination of popular classics, hymns, patriotic, operas, etc. These features, combined with the grade and condition of the works, determines its value to the ultimate owner.

It is necessary to balance these features, one against another, when deciding whether or not to purchase a box. The use a box has had determines the cost of restoring it. So it is necessary to examine the works from that standpoint. A box may be worn out from constant use. Some have had lots of oil put in, usually in the wrong place and on top of the dirt. I refer to the pinion leaves, pivots, and worm of the governor. Almost never do you find oil in the mainspring. If the owner has oiled the cylinder pins, he has usually preserved the most vital part, although the cylinder in this case is usually black with hardened oil and dust. There is a way to clean this all off without injury — except verdigris spots. Also, this type of dirt gathers under the points of the teeth and deadens the tone. After prolonged soaking, this dirt can all be cleaned away and the clear ringing tone that is found only in a music box, will be restored. But if the box has had lots of use and no oil on the pins, the pins become rounded on the ends. Also, the points of the teeth become rounded and the dampers break off, too.

Since the pins do not wear down evenly, it is necessary to grind the tops down in a lathe enough to even them up. This gets rid of the clicking

and snapping noise. So when you examine a box, examine the condition of the pins first. If there are many bent and broken, it is a long, slow job to straighten up the bent ones and replace the broken ones. This must be done before grinding the pins. Also, the points of the teeth must be lapped on a surface plate until all roundness disappears, the dampers reshaped and the broken ones replaced. Like the cylinder pins, the comb points do not wear down evenly. The most active ones become shortest. Particularly this is true of the bass notes which are stiffer.

If there are too many broken points and teeth, I would not advise anyone to buy it because it indicates general misuse. With modern wafer-thin grinding wheels, the broken points of teeth can be replaced. The disk makes a perfect slot without first detempering the tooth. Great care must be used in setting the points and finishing them up. The replacement of a tooth is a slow, painstaking job. We see very few new teeth that have been put into a comb that are well finished and properly tuned. Look for missing dampers and see that the lead weights under the lower teeth are not corroded and eaten away from exposure to dampness. If they are reduced in weight, the tone will be high and tinny. The weights must be replaced with ones that are too heavy by soldering on new ones. Of course, if they are not too far gone, they can be cleaned and some soft solder added until they are properly tuned. It is quite an art to tune a whole comb. But it is not so serious to retune an individual tooth here and there.

If the box will run, listen how it plays. Other points to consider are the mainspring and ratched pawls and ratched wheels. Cautiously try the winding for this. Look to see if the stop works are broken or missing. See if the governor turns freely. If not, this is usually an indication of wear in the pivots, escape wheel, and thread of the screw. It requires great care and practice to regrind or polish a cut worm. The jewel may be cut, too. These I usually replace with flat back garnets, taken from an old garnet

brooch. The pivot holes frequently need bushing. The barrel arbor bearings frequently need to be polished and the barrel holes bushed. Frequently, the mainsprings are found to be too strong and will run the box too fast. Weaker springs should be put in to run the box at the proper speed and to save wear. Worn wheel teeth can be recut, or the wheel should be replaced.

Sometimes a music box has stopped from some minor cause or obscure factory error, and has been set away in an attic or cellar for many years. These boxes are seldom worn and will often restore like new. Sometimes boxes have been tinkered with by an inexperienced person. You must be alert about this, for music boxes are often sold after someone has made a futile attempt to repair them and the damage does not show.

I own a box, the case of which is practically ruined from rotting at the bottom, but the works are good. Some day, I expect to find a good case into which these works will fit.

Cut up screw slots indicate tinkering, so examine the box well for hidden defects. If the box has been exposed to heat, the cement in the cylinder may all be on one side. In this condition, the cylinder will not slide on its shaft. If so, recementing is necessary. Ruined boxes are not worth restoring, but can often be bought cheaply and kept for parts for repairing other boxes. The screws are all metric, and any replacements of screws must either be hand made or taken from old boxes. Considering that most boxes have never been thoroughly cleaned, 60 or 70 years of dirt is quite a matter to remove. The mainspring should be removed, cleaned, and coated with coarse graphite flakes in vaseline. Large boxes often can be purchased at proportionally more reasonable prices than small boxes because the modern homes do not allow room to display them. Fine quality small or medium size boxes are rare today, because there weren't many of them made. There are many cheap boxes in stained cases on the market, but the selection of tunes and the playing is not too good, and the workmanship in concealed places is poor and rough. In the miniature boxes, about the same rule applies.

## LINCOLNIANA IN 1950

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

Reluctant Contemporary, Abraham Lincoln,"

A committee appointed by Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois is trying to raise funds for the purchase of the Barrett collection of Lincolniana to be presented to the Illinois Historical Society. Much progress has been made, but more contributions are needed. Please send them to George Bettinghaus, Treasurer, Marine Bank, Springfield, Illinois.

The Fellowship Groups are active throughout the country. Washington

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

rangements for a hearing of this record.

12620 DOPO (Tosti). (40123A) 10", orch. acc. Interpretation very much in keeping with the spirit of the song. Sincerely done.

12621 GOOD-BYE (TOSTI). 10", orch. acc., in English. The singer is apparently uncomfortable in the English text and the performance suffers accordingly. Also unwarranted liberties are taken with the melodic line.

12622 MIGNON: STYRIENNE. 10", orch. acc. This record, which is labelled "Yo conosco un garzonel", gives us good proof that Mantelli—when the occasion demanded it—could display dark mezzo tones of the finest timbre. The interpretations seems to lack sparkle and lightness, although the laughing passage, since unforced, sounds natural.

13272 ME LLAMAM LA PRIMOROSA (Nieto y Ciminez). (d/s 24002). 12", orch. acc. This difficult piece gives Mantelli ample opportunity to show to advantage the extent of her technical resources, despite the fact that at times the voice now sounds well worn.

13273 LOS OJOS NEGROS (Alvarez), (d/s 24001). 12", orch. acc. This selection reveals the suggestion that Mantelli's voice was not always free from a strident, even acid, quality. Obviously recorded during this singer's vocal decline.

ROMEO ET JULIETTE: CANZONE STEPHANO. 12", orch. acc. Only a white label test of this record has been reported and heard. The voice is light and well under control.

SAMSON ET DALILA: PRINTEMPS QUI COMMENCE. 10". Writer unable to make arrangements for a hearing of this record. No number, no details have been reported. But it is certain the record was made and issued.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

### CAL STEWART III

By JIM WALSH

After nearly a decade of free-lancing, Cal Stewart became one of the few pioneer recording artists under contract to only one company when he signed up exclusively with Columbia late in 1903. The February, 1904, issue of *Columbia Record* said: "Mr. Cal Stewart has . . . entered into an exclusive contract with the Columbia Company. His unique work is held in high esteem by record users everywhere. There is nothing more entertaining than Uncle Josh's monologs. Mr. Stewart's quiet humor and infectious laugh are as a ray of sunshine on a dismal day."

An unusual record in which Stewart took part soon after his exclusive contract began was the cylinder of "Deacon Coopley's Chicken Raid," in which he joined forces with Len Spencer and Bob Roberts. Spencer's name came first, then Stewart's, with Roberts' last. As might be expected, the sketch was written by the unfailingly ingenious Mr. Spencer. The brief supplement description was: "Dark night, everything still, Deacon Coopley and Brother Pinch on the raid—all asleep except Towser. Farmer Skinner finds 'not a feather left.'"

Stewart himself sometimes wrote sketches, and even songs, that were recorded by other artists. In July,

1905, Columbia issued a cylinder sung by Bob Roberts of a song I have never heard, which was obviously a "plug" for the Columbia machine. Its title was "I want a Graphophone." The description says that it was "composed by Cal Stewart (Uncle Josh Weathersby) and termed it 'a decided hit, sure to please all owners of graphophones or other talking machines.'"

Stewart also wrote a Negro dialect sketch, "A Meeting of the Hen Roost Club," which the Peerless Quartet recorded for virtually all the companies. He likewise was responsible for the 12 inch Columbia disc of "A 'Possum Supper at Darktown Church." The record label says that the artists are "Cal Stewart and Company," but I cannot detect a voice that can be identified as Cal's.

Even as late as 1919, when Stewart and his business associate, Fred Hager, were operating a music publishing company, he turned out a presumably serious ballad, "Where the Wabash Waters Flow." This was recorded by the Peerless for Columbia, but was never issued.

Victor, with its permanent metal disc masters, was not greatly inconvenienced by Stewart's becoming an exclusive Columbia Artist. It continued to list the records he had already made, but of course could not offer the comedian's new songs and sketches. Edison's problem was different. By the gold moulded system of making cylinders, the master record was destroyed in preparing working moulds. A large number of moulds could be stored, from which many thousand of commercial records were taken, but eventually the moulds wore out. That meant that if the original artist was no longer working for Edison the records either had to be discontinued or remade by somebody else.

For a while, after mould defects were found, Edison ceased to list Uncle Josh records. But in December, 1905, the company offered a recording of "I'm Old But I'm Awfully Tough," by a newcomer, Andrew Keefe, with this explanation:

"Since circumstances made it impossible to supply the trade with this record and later made it necessary to eliminate it from our catalog, we have probably had more requests for this selection than any other. In making it over, we shall, beyond question, be pleasing thousands of present and prospective owners of phonographs, and we anticipate that until the trade is again supplied there will be a great demand for it. In Mr. Keefe we have found an artist who has done this song full justice and we believe that this record of it will equal in popularity any one previously made."

Keefe had another imitation of Stewart, "Uncle Josh in a Department Store," in the Edison list for February, 1906. Even before the

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. Works cleaned and polished, squeaks eliminated, broken tips and teeth replaced in combs, cases refinished, parts in stock and made to order.

Choice music boxes of all types for sale including machines playing up to 60 selections. Others have dancing dolls, organs, drums, bells and castanets, etc. Every item offered rebuilt like new throughout.

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### "Uncle Josh" Objects to Imitators

Most conclusive proof of the popularity of the "Uncle Josh Weathersby" series of cylinder records is that competitors of the Columbia Phonograph Company are endeavoring to imitate them. Cal Stewart, the originator of all the "Uncle Josh" records, is under exclusive contract with the Columbia Phonograph Company. The "Uncle Josh" records are original, unique, clean and wholesome. Insist on getting the genuine, to be had ONLY from COLUMBIA AGENCIES and duly authorized dealers. In this connection, an open letter to the trade, signed by Cal Stewart, Uncle Josh is interesting.

#### To all Dealers in Talking Machine Goods:

**I am under exclusive contract with the Columbia Phonograph Company, for my services in the making of the "Uncle Josh Weathersby" series of records. Other records bearing the title of Uncle Josh or sold as Uncle Josh records are not genuine as I am the originator of all the "Uncle Josh Weathersby" records.**

Sincerely yours,

**CAL STEWART.**

Cal Stewart did not like imitators, as this broadside indicates.

first of these records appeared, Stewart must have got wind of his impersonator's engagement, for the September, 1905, *Columbia Record* contained photographs of the Pumpkin Center originator, both as himself and as Uncle Josh, followed by a large heading which read, "Uncle Josh Objects to Imitators," and the statement:

"Most conclusive proof of the popularity of the 'Uncle Josh Weathersby' series of cylinder records is that competitors of the Columbia Phonograph Company are endeavoring to imitate them. Cal Stewart, the originator of all the 'Uncle Josh' records are original, unique, clean and wholesome. Insist on getting the genuine, to be had ONLY from COLUMBIA AGENCIES and duly authorized dealers." Then followed a letter from Stewart:

"To all Dealers in Talking Ma-

chine Goods. I am under exclusive contract with the Columbia Phonograph Company for my services in the making of the 'Uncle Josh Weathersby' series of records. Other records bearing the title of Uncle Josh or sold as Uncle Josh records are not genuine, as I am the originator of all the 'Uncle Josh Weathersby' records. Sincerely yours, Cal Stewart."

Stewart may have had reason to be annoyed, but there was no cause to be alarmed, by the prospect of competition from Andrew Keefe. The reason for this is explained in a letter from a veteran Edison employee, who prefers not to be identified but has been with the company almost 50 years and overflows with reminiscences of the early recording days:

"I came here about 1902, but it seemed Cal had got sore about something and would not record for

Edison. It was quite a few years before he came around again. We tried to get somebody else to do 'rube' dialect stories, but no good results.

"There was a fellow came in from Albany and he could imitate Cal's voice on the records, but he was hard to make understand what was needed. Once he started to do the Chinese Laundry record of Cal's. I wrote it out on the typewriter, and in places where the Chinaman answered Uncle Josh, I could not write Chinese and wrote in, 'Fake Chinese talk.' The imitator, when he got to this line, always said, 'Fake Chinese talk.' Frank Cronkhite, the recording director, tried to explain by voice what was required, but the fellow always went back to his 'Fake Chinese talk.' Well, he went back to Albany with no regrets. He did make a record or two, I can't recall if they were ever listed. They were cylinders, made between 1904 and 1908."

This quotation doesn't do absolute justice to Keefe, since, in spite of being slow about learning to "fake Chinese talk," he did eventually succeed in recording that particular skit. His third, and last, cylinder, "Uncle Josh in a Chinese Laundry," appeared in the Edison list for February, 1907.

Andrew Keefe must have been a character. He was the subject of the following article, which probably was not especially accurate, in the *Talking Machine News* for October 15, 1906:

"LAUGHING SONGS — SOMETHING ABOUT THE MAN WHO MAKES THEM IN THE STATES.—Ha, ha, ha, ha,—a, ha, ha, ha,—I am old but I'm awfully tough! To sing this and other laughing songs, the selling agent for talking machines hunted high and low, over the whole United States. There may have been another man capable of singing these songs, but after a search of months and after trying some of the most talented performers on the vaudeville stage, the right man was found in the person of Andrew Keefe, once a junk dealer, and now conducting a retail stove store. Possessing a hearty laugh that is infectious; a voice that is musical and versatile, capable of imitating the female voice, from contralto to soprano range, or the male from baritone to tenor, Mr. Keefe also tells 'Casey' stories into the phonograph. The discovery of Keefe was quite accidental. While a phonograph traveling man was visiting a talking machine store . . . Keefe came strolling in. 'Say, I want to make a phonograph record for you,' said Keefe. At the time a record was being played, sung by Miss Ada Jones. 'Say,' said Keefe, 'I can sing like that.'

"Now, to anybody acquainted with the phonograph, this sounded like a boast, for he it known that Miss Jones is simply in a class by herself. However, Keefe sprang a surprise. Twisting his mouth into a peculiar shape, he started in on 'Just Plain Folks.' It was Miss Jones' voice almost perfect.

"However, it was in his own natural laughing songs that Keefe made his hit. He was instructed to sing in his own way a song accompanied by a piano. The experts agreed that they had found a star performer. Keefe was told to return to the laboratory three days later, when they would start making some of his records, with band accompaniment.

"He did not know what was in store for him when he arrived at the laboratory at the time specified to begin making his records for the largest audience a singer can ever have — the phonograph audience. Andy Keefe's songs, when he sung then and there in the

phonograph, are now being sung through that instrument in over a million homes."

As a means of romanticizing and glamourizing the erstwhile junk dealer, that article does a pretty good job, but I doubt that there are many grains of truth in it. Keefe may have had facile powers of imitation, but his slowness to understand instructions cut short his career as an imitator of "Uncle Josh." And incidentally, I don't think he made any "Casey" records. The *Talking Machine News* writer must have confused him with John Kaiser, who carried on Edison's "Casey" series which had been started by Russell Hunting. Kaiser was the original announcer for the Zonophone Company.

Although they do not strictly belong in this place, my Edison friend gave some other side lights on Cal Stewart's personality and working methods which perhaps I may as well quote now:

"I remember a show Cal appeared in at the Orange Opera House years ago. It was some special performance and mostly Edison artists appeared. Cal was in a skit. I don't recall the plot but it was a steamboat scene, and Cal was supposed to dive or jump over the rail—I think, to rescue someone—and land on a mattress or heavy padding, and a stage hand was to splash water to make it realistic. Well, Cal dived, but somebody had moved the mattress and instead of a splash there was a sound of BUMP! with some loud words. Cal was not badly hurt, but he was sore, bodily and mentally. The culprit was not revealed, but legend blamed Arthur Collins.

"When Cal came in to record he usually had the stories written in long hand, each enough for about 20 minutes. Cal would go over it and when he had cut it properly for a four-minute record, I would typewrite it for him. He asked me once what I thought of one of the stories and I told him it didn't sound like much. He agreed, but added that when he put his personality in the material it would sound better. IT DID.

"I believe it was in May or June the year Cal died, he was in the recording studio and was telling me of the special car he had bought. It belonged to some magician and was on a siding at Asbury Park. Cal was going to use it for traveling about on his tours, but he did not live to do it. I looked up the car when I was at Asbury, and it was a fine one. If I remember, it had a back platform with an awning."

The veteran Edisonian comments as follows on Stewart's singing ability, or—to be frank—his lack of ability to vocalize:

"Someone wrote in, saying he doubted that Cal made singing records, but Cal did make a laughing song, 'I'm Old But I'm awfully Tough,' and several rube songs. You might call it singing, but not according to operatic standards. In fact, I recall he made a record of a song about Skowhegan, Maine, and he got a letter from a record buyer. The man said he wouldn't want to

## RECORDS

**VICTOR RED SEAL** records, 50c each. Thousands by Helfetz, Elman, Kreisler, Paderewski, Powell, Gluck, Homer, Alda, Werranath, Williams, Whitehill, Garrison, McCormack, others. Write wants or visit—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3065

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. mh3004

**RARE OLD RECORDS:** Monthly sales list. Classical, vocal, popular, collector's items. Write:—Delano, 349 Lindenwald, Ambler, Penna. mh6445

**MONTHLY AUCTION SALE:** Old vocal operatic records. Free list.—Collectors' Haven, 148 Hancock St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ap3882

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 10 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o12741

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6084

**REGULAR AUCTIONS** classical vocal records. Free lists.—S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colo. ap3422

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rareties. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

**Rare Records! Our March catalogue** features Batistini, Caruso, McCormack, Slezak, Ivogun, Galvany, Kurz, Boninsegna, Zenatello, Patti, 200 others! Bargain Prices! Reserve your copy now! —2327 Arthur St., Los Angeles 65, Calif. my3027

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. my3084

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit —Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

**OLD CYLINDER** phonographs, records, music boxes, discs, mechanical birds, organs, parts, catalogues, literature, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 100 North Third, Richmond, Va. my3252

**Elizabeth Schumann Acoustics** wanted. Also her Edisons. —2327 Arthur St., Los Angeles 65, Calif. mh3063

**WANTED: YVETTE GUILBERT** records (except domestic Columbias) —Edward Jahes, 1617 Jaynes St., Berkeley 3, California. mh1211

**COLLECTORS' GUIDE** to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (Moses). Price \$3.75.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, New York. my3253

**FOREIGN DELETIONS:** Ansseau, Chaliapin, Cortis, Hislop, Lilli Lehmann, Gerhardt, Husch, Panzera, others, for sale.—Rosaria Parisi, 1433 South 7th St., Philadelphia 47, Penna. mh1002

**WILL BUY** used phonograph records, collections or dealer's stock, any amount, made before 1940, \$15 to \$30 per hundred.—Jacob S. Schneider, 128 W. 66th St., New York 23, New York. au68801

## MISCELLANEOUS

**FOR SALE:** Music rolls for National Automatic Piano. Over 100 American tunes available. Send for list. Also want music rolls of all descriptions.—Russell Miller, 3274 Adriatic Ave., Long Beach 10, Calif. mh62511

**EDISON CYLINDER** phonographs for sale. One table model disc machine.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. mh1211

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues. —Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. mh3422

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please. —"Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

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know Cal and become a friend of his, because 'you might insist on singing at my funeral and that would be too much to suffer'."

Among Stewart's other "singing" records were "Monkey on a String," "Ticklish Reuben," "And Then I Laughed," and "I Laughed at the Wrong Time." One of his four-minute Edison cylinders combined the inevitable "I'm Old" with "Three Little Owls and the Naughty Little Mice," the only record I know in which the comedian tries to sing with the Scotch accent of his forefathers, pronouncing "barn" as "bar-run" and "warm" as "war-rum." The catchy little tune sounds as if it may be a traditional Scotch song, which Stewart learned as a tot at his Virginia farm home from his Scottish parents. The combination of Yankee dialect with a pseudo-Scotch accent is genuinely amusing.

Returning now to Stewart's career as an exclusive Columbia artist, that company's 1906 disc record catalog contains 37 of his specialties, and the cylinder catalog probably listed at least that many. One which is not well known today is "A Political Meeting at Pumpkin Center," in which "Joshua Weathersby of Pumpkin Center is presented as a candidate for the legislature. The County Band renders stirring national airs in honor of the occasion, which is also graced by the Pumpkin Center Glee Club." I regret that I am without information as to whether Uncle Josh was elected.

After a few years, the "Pumpkin Center Man" must have decided that it would be more profitable to record his specialties for all the companies than to restrict himself to Columbia. The February, 1907, Victor supplement announced that Stewart was once more a Victor artist by saying: "Everyone will be glad to know that genial Cal Stewart has returned after extensive travels that took him over a great part of this world." It looks as if the supplement writer were trying to give the impression that Stewart's absence from the Victor lists for the past several years had been caused by his being abroad rather than by his having an exclusive Columbia contract. Presumably the travels referred to are those he had taken several years before, as related in the first installment of this series.

Stewart's first records, after returning to Victor, were 4979, "Uncle Josh and the Labor Unions," and 4980, "Uncle Josh's Second Visit to the Metropolis." These were soon followed by 4999, "Ground Hog Day at Punkin Center," which was already a favorite on Columbia. Within a few months Mr and Mrs. Stewart, with the assistance of the Hayden Quartet, had made the record of "The Wedding of Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy," already mentioned, as well as a follow-up, "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Go to Housekeeping."

If Cal really was "mad with Edison," that feeling doesn't seem to have been shared by the editor of the company little monthly magazine,

*The New Phonogram*. Probably the humorist's long absence from the Edison lists had caused the impression in many places that he was dead. The issue for November, 1904, contained an inquiry from "J. B.," in remote New South Wales, as to whether Stewart was still living, and it elicited this reply: "We are glad to say that Mr. Stewart is living and, so far as we know, enjoying good health."

Whatever the comedian's former sentiments may have been, he was represented in the Edison record list for December, 1908, with two new two-minute offerings, "Uncle Josh's Arrival in New York City" and "The Last Day of School at Punkin Center," as well as a four-minute Amberol, "The County Fair at Punkin Center."

"Uncle Josh's New Year Pledge" was issued in January, 1909, and a picture of Stewart was published in that month's issue of the *Phonogram*. Edison's comment on the comedian's "home coming" was downright jubilant: "Now that the inimitable Cal Stewart has returned to the ranks of Edison artists there will be no let-up until every selection in his repertoire has been reproduced on Edison records . . . It is with much pleasure that we print the photograph of the genial Cal Stewart. His return to the ranks of Edison artists has been received with great delight by thousands of phonograph owners. There is but one Cal Stewart and his Uncle Josh records will probably never be any more successfully imitated than was Joseph Jefferson's 'Rip Van Winkle.' We shall continue to issue Mr. Stewart's records every month." (That remark about the possibility of imitating Stewart may have been a backhanded slap at poor Mr. Andrew Keefe!)

In May, 1909, Edison issued "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's," with Len Spencer taking the part of the tooth-drawer. A little later the pair teamed up in "Uncle Josh at Coney Island." Len also assisted Stewart in recording the dentist sketch for Columbia and appears to have done so on the Victor version, although he gets no catalog or label credit. (A flagrant example of *lese majesty*, indeed!) Shortly before he died, Cal remade his Columbia record, with Harry C. Browne taking the dentist role.

During this period, Stewart also was making U. S. Everlasting cylinders. The catalog of this company, founded by Albert Benzlar and other artists and officials who left Edison to start their own business, said of the comedian that "His famous 'Uncle Josh' sketches have made the whole world laugh. His best impersonations are found on U. S. records. They are without doubt among the best talking records ever put out." Among these were a coupling of "I'm Old" and "The Three Little Owls" and a monolog that no other company seems to have recorded, "Uncle Josh and the Osteopath." Mrs. Stewart, who hadn't made records for several years, joined Cal in "Uncle Josh and Nancy's Courtship."

The cheery old gentleman from Punkin Center even was represented in the barely more than mythical hill-and-dale records, played with a sapphire point, which the fledgling Sonora company advertised in 1910-11. I have never seen one of these records, and don't know anyone who has, but they were probably manufactured in minute quantities for Sonora by the Keen-o-Phone (later, Rex) Record Company of Philadelphia, with which Fred Hager was for a time associated. The trademark showed three cherubs, one playing a violin. Although the records were double-faced, each side had its separate number. No. 5003, "Uncle Josh in a Chinese Laundry," Again, on 5005, there was "Uncle Josh in a Department Store," with 5009, "Uncle Josh's Second Visit to New York." On 5010 we have "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's," by (can this be possible?) "Stewart and Alexander," doubled with 5007 "Uncle Josh and the Sailor."

It is almost unbelievable, but "Stewart and Alexander" seems to indicate that in making the Sonora record of Uncle Josh's trials with the dentist, Stewart had the assistance of the fabulous George Alexander, who is best remembered today by his recordings of patriotic songs, hymns and standard concert numbers for Columbia, although he sang a little at one time or other for Victor, Edison and Zonophone. Nowhere else have I seen any indication that Alexander ever undertook a comedy role. And until this record came to my attention I had believed, because of a statement once made to me by a Columbia official, that Alexander died some time around 1908, just before double-faced records became a permanent feature of the Columbia catalog. He remains a "mystery man"—just as it is still a mystery how Cal Stewart, born on an impoverished Virginia farm, could have been taking "pickaninny parts" on the stage in Baltimore at the age of seven!

Alexander also appears in the 1912 U. S. Everlasting catalog, so the report of his earlier death must have been "exaggerated."

In issuing "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's," the Edison company took the drastic step of rating Stewart a notch above his partner for the occasion, Len Spencer, in the making of comic records. The heretical supplement annotation—surely one of the most flagrant examples of *lese majesty* in the history of recorded music was:

"Another of Mr. Stewart's original Rube sketches. Mr. Stewart has no rival in records of this kind, but Mr. Spencer is a close second in making successful talking records. Together they made a great combination."

One wonders if Leonard Garfield Spencer ever read those three sentences, and, if so, what he thought and said. Since "The First Genius of the Phonograph" wasn't in the habit of considering himself second to anybody in any kind of recorded work, his remarks probably would have been

more stimulating than edifying. Probably he didn't read the supplement, for he kept on making Edison records.

It's unlikely that those flattering phases had anything to do with Stewart's decision to give up free-lancing and once more become an exclusive artist—this time for Edison. In the *New Phonogram* for November, 1911, was listed a four-minute record of "I Laughed at the Wrong Time," and Edison patrons were given this glad news:

"From now on, Cal Stewart ('Uncle Josh Weathersby') will make records too the Edison Company exclusively. His friends, who are legion, will be glad to learn that he is to be with us regularly. This month he sings an original laughing song reminiscent of his boyhood days. His recital of the bitter experiences which resulted from his propensity to break forth into mirthful laughter at the most inopportune moments must be heard to be appreciated. His laugh, which is introduced all through the Record, is simply irresistible."

A separate note says:

"CAL STEWART NOW EXCLUSIVE. Cal Stewart, known all over the civilized world as 'Uncle Josh Weathersby', has signed a contract with the Edison Company for the exclusive use of his talents in record-making over a period of five years. His record of 'I Laughed at the Wrong Time,' . . . is the first under the new contract and will be eagerly bought by his host of friends."

The April, 1914, catalog of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders listed twelve records, with this comment:

"There is but one Uncle Josh and his fame is eternal. Cal Stewart, as the originator of this clever series of stories, has gained a world-wide reputation as a character comedian and dispenser of hearty laughs. The rustic gentleman has been found in almost every conceivable predicament, but his experiences never fail to produce some new cause for mirth. 'Uncle Josh's hearty laugh is always contagious, his characterizations flawless, and his originality limitless."

If the exclusive Edison contract actually ran for five years, it must have been signed considerably before Stewart was represented in the Victor supplement for September, 1915, with one of his most popular records, "War Talk at Punkin Center" and "Uncle Josh in a Barber Shop." Mystifying, Catalog Editor Sam Rous began with almost exactly the same statement that he had made eight years before, when the comedian's Columbia contract expired:

"Everyone will be glad to note that genial Cal Stewart has returned after extensive travels that took him over a great portion of the world. He brings back a new stock of Yankee stories, two of which are now offered—a timely talk on a subject much in the public eye, which has now all been settled by the 'arm-chair strategists' in the Punkin Center grocery; and an amusing account of Uncle Josh's experience with a talkative barber. 'Uncle Josh' is certain of a warm welcome from the great Victor family."

Perhaps Stewart had been out of the country, and had purposely signed up exclusively with Edison, knowing it would be a long time before he would again be available to make his free-lancing rounds. Yet the fact that virtually the same explanation of his

previous absence was given in 1907 as in 1915 seems to indicate that "out of the country" was Victor's stock explanation for issuing no Stewart records while he was "sewed up" by another company.

I wonder if, while making his "War Talk" record, Cal thought about having made a cylinder of "Uncle Josh's Remarks on the Spanish Question," dealing with the Spanish-American War, 17 years before? Whether he did or not, "War Talk at Punkin Center," with its hilarious little song, "Gosh, I Wish I Was a Belgian!" is one of Stewart's best records.

In November, 1915, Victor issued what may have been the biggest selling Cal Stewart record. It combined "The Village Gossips," by Stewart and Byron G. Harlan (a skit which he had previously done for Edison with Steve Porter) with "Uncle Josh Buys an Automobile." My copy of this record is a 26-Q pressing, which indicates that about half a million copies had been made at the time this one was turned out.

(To Be Concluded)

## Another Record by Bert Williams

Allen G. Debus, of Bloomington, Ind., calls attention to one record that was inadvertently omitted from the Bert Williams list in the November issue of HOBBIES. It is Columbia No. A303, "He's a Cousin of Mine," coupled with "McGinty at the Living Pictures," by Edward M. Favor. After being in the catalog only a little more than a year, this record was discontinued but the Williams half was reissued as one side of No. A862.

I might also point out the likelihood that some of the Columbia records made by Williams from 1915 to 1920 or a little later may have been dubbed onto the single-face, 5½ inch Little Wonder records that were sold for ten cents each. Only the first half of a standard sized record was used in making Little Wonders, but most of the popular Columbia records of their period were copied for the smaller discs. For instance, I have "Back to the Carolina You Love," sung by Al Jolson on a Little Wonder.

It should also be borne in mind that Columbias were issued under many other labels, such as United, Standard, Royal, Harmony, Aretino and Consolidated. The numbers and couplings were the same as on the regular Columbia records, but names of artists were frequently omitted and sometimes changed. For instance, Prince's Band became "Standard Band" and the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet was "Standard Male Quartet." Climax records, on which artists were seldom, if ever, identified, also were made by Columbia, but with different couplings and numbers. Thus some of Williams' records may be found on these off-brands, perhaps with his identity hidden under the generic term of "Baritone."

—J. W.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## CAL STEWART IV

By JIM WALSH

Cal Stewart seems to have made no records during the two years, 1917-18, that the United States was directly involved in the first World War. I am not certain whether Stewart kept up his theatrical work, or whether, being of independent means, he simply "sat it out for the duration" on the farm he owned near Tipton, Indiana, but although there were no new Uncle Josh records, the old ones, as Fred Hager has pointed out, continued to entertain not only the ordinary Americans at home but the fighting men in uniforms.

While the war was going on, the phonograph companies were handicapped, as they were in World War Two, by a shortage of materials. In addition, their plants were partly converted to making war equipment. Most of the "popular" records of the time were war songs. But when something like normal conditions returned, Victor, Columbia, Edison, Pathé, Emerson and others were glad to add new Uncle Josh offerings to their catalogs, and it was not long before Stewart once more was paying his welcome visits to virtually all the recordings concerns.

Most of the companies recorded him so extensively they acquired a backlog of masters that allowed them to go on issuing new Punkin Center records for several years after his death.

In October, 1919, Victor announced one of its best known Uncle Josh discs: No. 18595, "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," by Stewart and Ada Jones, and "Train Time at Pun'kin Centre," by Cal and the American Quartet. (Both the needless apostrophe and "Centre" were Victor's own system of punctuation and spelling!) Here is the supplement description by Victor's catalog editor of that period, James Edward Richardson, who was widely recognized before his death in 1928 as one of the most graceful and entertaining writers of his era.

"Everybody by this time knows the Pun'kin Centre folks. The whole population turns out to see that the train gets in and out of town; it is left wondering at the occupation of the chiropractor who gets off to stretch his legs and to bandy words with the town wit. After the train whistle dies out, hear Aunt Nancy sing. She is carolling away cheerfully of Jordan's strand, when Uncle Josh decides to go fishing. He is induced to put up the kitchen stove—which operation calls for three hands on the part of Aunt Nancy—one to steady the ladder, one to hold the stove-pipe and a third to hand up the hammer. She, Uncle Josh and the stove pipe descend together."

Both these numbers were extensively recorded by other companies, although Columbia apparently didn't make "Train Time" and its version of the kitchen stove catastrophe wasn't placed on sale until December, 1920 . . . almost a year after Stewart's death. A 1920 Edison release combined "Train Time" with

"A Darcy's Oration on Women," a blackface sketch by Billy Golden and James Marlowe. (The second side was an old one, for Marlowe had died in January, 1917.) The "Kitchen Stove" teamed up with the mirth-provoking "Uncle Josh and the Honey Bees." Here is the Edison description of "Train Time," obviously written after Stewart's death:

"Cal Stewart wore the mantle of Denman Thompson as a master of rural characterization. In 'Train Time' at Punkin Center, he gave us another prize of 'hayseed humor.' The scene is the railroad station, where all the town gathers to see what is going on and hear the news. Uncle Josh, played by Cal Stewart, is the leading citizen of Punkin Center, and his wit keeps the villagers (and us) in a state of hilarity. Steve Porter plays the part of Jim Lawson, Josh's particular friend. Billy Murray is Ezra Hoskins and Edward Meeker is the tourist who wants to know ins and outs. The Premier Quartet furnishes the harmony." (The Premier Quartet, of course, was the same group that sang for Victor as the American Quartet. When it assisted Stewart on his Pathé record of "Train Time," it was called the Premier-American Quartet.

In the guise of Uncle Josh, Stewart wrote the following remarks to go with his disc of "Kitchen Stove" and "Honey Bees."

"When I told you folks about me and Nancy puttin' up the kitchen stove, I didn't suppose you folks was goin' to play it on your Re-Creation machine and let the hull world know about it. But Nancy says she is right glad of it, 'cause now everyone will know just what a shiftless, no 'count old critter I am. I told Nancy it wa'n't nothin' to be ashamed of, givin' people a good, hearty laff, and that was why I told you folks the story in the first place, and that I'd sooner tell Peter on the last Day about the laffs I had given folks on Earth than try to explain to him about givin' them heart akes. Yoors Trooly, (Signed) Cal Stewart."

As for the honey bees:

"Now, folks, the moral of this story is, in all bizness transactions with bees and mules—conduct them at the head end. Deacon Witherspoon says when you lose a bee's confidence, he won't ever trust you again. I lost my bees' confidence. I tried crossin' my bees like Jim Lawson said he did his'n. And it worked first rate. They was the crossiest bees I ever seen the last time I seen them—just afore I jumped into the river. I haint seen them since. Gosh, they won't let me git close enuff to see them. I've talked kindly to them, I've carried honeysuckle to them and tried to give them sweetened water but they won't have a darn thing to do with me. Say, folks, I'm a-wondering if they ain't Bull-sheviki bees. Yoors trooly, (signed) Cal Stewart."

Billy Murray told me some years ago of a pathetic incident associated with "Train Time at Punkin Center." Billy said that Stewart and the quartet were recording the sketch for one of the companies . . . he thought it was Victor, but wasn't sure . . . when he saw that Cal looked ill. He nudged the quartet basso, Donald Chalmers, as a signal to watch Cal, and they were on the alert when "the old man," as Billy referred to him,

lost his balance and lurched forward. Murray and Chambers caught him just in time to keep him from toppling against the recording horn. They learned later that Stewart had suffered a light stroke of paralysis. But, after lying down for a while, he returned to the studio, and a successful record was made. This was the foreshadowing of the illness that took his life a few months later.

Seeking more details concerning this incident, Stanley Johnston, of Lansing, Michigan, my fellow research worker in preparing this series, wrote to John Young, who, except for Billy Murray, is the only surviving member of the 1919 American Quartet, and asked what he remembered about the happening. Mr. Young replied that he couldn't ever recall having ever made records with Stewart . . . that, in fact, he couldn't even remember having heard the comedian's name.

I imagine the solution is this: Young was no comedian, so his place in the quartet was taken for the Uncle Josh series by somebody accustomed to humorous roles. Edward Meeker was the traveling chiropractor in the Edison record, and the character sounds almost precisely the same in the Victor. "Meek," as an Edison staff employee, was supposed to work for only that company, but since he was not identified on the label, he may have been allowed to help make the sketch for other companies.

Just a few days before Stewart's death, and while he was lying hopelessly ill in a hospital, Columbia issued its re-made versions, mentioned in an earlier installment, of "Christmas Time" and "Evening Time at Punkin Center," by Stewart, Ada Jones and the Peerless Quartet. Then, on December 7th, the well-loved originator of Uncle Josh and the other Punkin Center characters, died after an illness of several weeks. Probably only a few of his friends knew he was ill, so the shock and sadness of his going must have been great.

The theatrical department of the New York Public Library has only meager information in its files concerning Stewart, but was kind enough to copy for me a brief obituary notice which appeared in the January 9, 1920, issue of *Variety*. The notice said that Stewart died on December 7, 1919, in the County Hospital, and that when he died he had been connected with the stage about 40 years, first playing pickaninny parts at the old Ford Theater at the age of 15. It also said that for many years he ran an engine on the Wabash Road, being known as the youngest engineer in the West, and known as "Darl Devil Cal" among his associates.

Here we run into more discrepancies. *Variety* has Stewart taking pickaninny parts at the old Ford Theatre (presumably the one in Washington, where Abraham Lincoln was shot) at the age of fifteen, instead of the Front Street Theater in Baltimore when he was seven. And

considering all the varied activities he crowded into his 63 years, he could not, as "Dare Devil Cal," have run an engine "for many years" on the Wabash railroad.

This *Variety* "obit" not only baffled me but set me off on more than one wrong trail. I assumed that the County Hospital must be in, or near, New York City. Otherwise *Variety* would have said WHAT county. So I wrote to the *New York Times* and asked for a copy of Stewart's death notice, but was told that the paper hadn't published one. I paid to have the records of the City of New York Department checked for the humorist's death certificate, only to be notified that there was nothing in the files concerning him.

Finally, I mentioned my perplexity in a letter to Fred Hager, whose address I obtained from Mrs. Byron G. Harlan, and who, as you will remember, was Stewart's partner in a music publishing venture and today owns the performing rights to all the "Uncle Josh" material. Mr. Hager has high hopes that, with rural themes returning to favor, the Punkin Center folks will yet entertain large numbers of movie and television watchers. He helped me wonderfully when he revealed that Stewart died in Chicago. He was unable, however, to give me Stewart's birth date or reveal just where in Virginia the comedian was born. The genial Mr. Hager wrote:

"I have been trying for over a year to get the age of Cal from the executor of his estate, but up to date have not been able to get any response on this. His wife, Rossini W. Stewart, . . . passed away in New York City, November 25, 1943.

"I understand that Cal was on his way from Montana to his home, Dipton, Indiana, where he is buried. He was taken sick on the train and was moved to Cook County Hospital, Chicago, where he passed away. He had no living relatives except his wife. His mother, father and only sister had died before him."

It now became evident that *Variety* had either omitted "Cook" from the name of the hospital, through a typographical error, or that the New York Public Library had done so in copying the death notice. I thought that I was at last on my way to ascertain the hitherto elusive facts. My hopes were high when I wrote to the Cook County Hospital, but those hopes fell when I received this letter, dated November 15, 1949, from Miss Stella Ford Walker, of the hospital's medical record library:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: With reference to your letter of November 8th, I wish to inform you that all of our records before the year 1925 have been destroyed by fire; therefore, our information on Calvin Stewart is very limited. Mr. Stewart was admitted to Cook County Hospital on November 6, 1919, and died here on December 7, 1919. He was 63 years of age. The address given was Briggs House, Chicago, and occupation was listed as 'performer.' He was transferred here from the American Hospital, Chicago, Illinois."

I then wrote to the American Hospital, with the result that I received some charmingly friendly and painstaking letters from the Records Librarian, Miss Alberta Cannon. On November 22, Miss Cannon wrote:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I am terribly sorry

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to disappoint you in reference to the place of birth or any of the living relatives of Calvin Stewart. Mr. Stewart entered the American Hospital on October the 14th, 1921, and was discharged to the County Hospital November 4, 1921. He came to the hospital suffering from an incurable brain disease, and was operated on by Dr. Max Thorek to alleviate his suffering, but this was only temporarily successful. Mr. Stewart lived at that time in New York City. No doubt he was here only on business when he was stricken. The hospital records give his complete address as Cal Stewart, Briggs House, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York. There is nothing to indicate whether or not he has any relatives or where he was born. This, I feel sure, was because he was very critically ill and for the most part delirious.

"Dr. Max Thorek, who founded this hospital, first named it the Actor's Hospital. He is still the Surgeon in Chief and it is very easy to understand why Calvin Edward Stewart would be one of his patients. 'A Surgeon's World,' written by Dr. Thorek, gives many amusing and tragic incidents of the lives of some of our older artists of the legitimate stage. These incidents deal mostly on their hospitalization here. I searched this book for mention of Calvin Stewart but was unable to find his name. So, I repeat, I am truly sorry that I have nothing more to offer."

A day or so later I had another letter from Miss Cannon, correcting the statement that Stewart was admitted to the hospital and died there in 1921 . . . instead of 1919, the correct year. And here I should point out that the hospital records from which she quoted are confused. They give his New York address as the Briggs Hotel, 79 Fifth Avenue. Actually, the Briggs Hotel was the place at which his wife stayed in Chicago during Stewart's fatal illness, and 79 Fifth Avenue was the address of the Edison Company's New York recording studios. That looks as if Cal had not only long since overcome his ancient grudge against Edison but was using its New York headquarters for his business address while he traveled.

A gratifying upshot of my friendly correspondence with Miss Cannon was her having Dr. Thorek send me an autographed copy of his fascinating book of reminiscences. The distinguished surgeon has an engaging and entertaining style all his own, as well as one of the most distinctive handwritings I have ever been privileged to see.

Meanwhile, Fred Hager has recalled that two members of Mrs. Stewart's family are still living . . . her sister, Marjorie, and her younger brother, James W. Waugh, who used to travel with the "Uncle Josh" troupe. Mr. Hager suggested that I write to Waugh at Tipton. He said that Cal and the younger man had roomed together on their tours and that Stewart might have mentioned to his brother-in-law just when and where he was born. So I wrote, but the Tipton post office returned the letter with a notation that Mr. Waugh had moved without leaving a forwarding address.

About this time I received a copy of Stewart's death certificate from the Cook County Bureau of Vital Statistics. My hopes took another tumble when I read the photostat. It said Stewart was survived by his wife, Rossini Stewart; that the date of his

birth was unknown but he was 68 and an actor; that he was born in Virginia, but without locality being specified; that his parents were William and Helen Douglas Stewart, natives of Scotland; and Mr. Stewart's address was given as the Briggs House, at Randolph and Wells Street. The cause of death was recorded as a brain tumor, which had been detected through an ophthalmic examination. The name of the undertaker was J. W. Bradley, and the date of burial, December 8. The certificate was signed by Dr. P. W. Whiteley, of the Cook County Hospital Staff.

At this point I virtually gave up. Obviously, if Mrs. Stewart hadn't known her husband's exact birth date and place of birth, there was no need of seeking further to question her brother.

But there was one possibility left. Although Virginia's birth records for the years before the Civil War are meager, there was a faint chance that the Virginia State Department of Health might find something in its files concerning Stewart. So I wrote to the State Registrar, Miss Estelle Marks. On February 10, 1950, she replied:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: We have your letter of January 30th in reference to the marriage record and birth record of Calvin Edward Stewart. Our records have been carefully checked and rechecked for the years 1853 through 1869, but we find no record for this birth. We are sorry we cannot help you locate the birth record."

At that point, I decided that further effort was useless . . . until, as I related in the first installment, I talked with the man who said that he had been told that Stewart was born in, or near, Charlotte Court House, Virginia. But that "lead" also got me nowhere. Today, there seems little reason to believe that we shall ever know the exact date and place of Cal Stewart's birth.

In the early months of 1950, my voluntary research assistant, Stanley Johnston, sought new light on Stewart through a variety of approaches. He went to the Michigan State Library in Lansing and searched the December, 1919 files of the *Chicago Tribune*, but the self-styled "World's Greatest Newspaper" appears to have paid no attention to the comedian's passing.

Mr. Johnston wrote to the American Actors' Equity Guild, but was told that Stewart never was an equity member. A letter to the Congressional Library brought a reply that the library had no information on the creator of Uncle Josh. My Michigan friend told me something I hadn't previously known—that the Walter H. Baker Company of Boston, published a book of Punkin Center stories, containing different material than the one from which I have quoted. The book includes a play called "Fiddled Out of House and Home," apparently written just after the end of fighting in World War One. Its leading woman plays a violin, and Uncle Josh is the postmaster. In sorting letters, he finds one from a soldier who has been in a

hospital "ever since the war." And Josh remarks: "Any mail cummin' from our boys is going to be special delivery in this post office. We're not goin' to forget 'em and what they done for us, if your uncle has his way." This seems to indicate that Stewart and his troupe may have done theatrical performances with a topical flavor both during and after the war. Mr. Johnston wrote to the Baker Company, but it replied that it had no personal knowledge of Stewart. A letter to George C. D. O'Dell, author and compiler of "Annals of the New York Stage," arrived, ironically, the day after Mr. O'Dell's death.

At the State Library, Johnston examined encyclopedias, sets of biographical information and books dealing with the stage and music, but without finding a mention of Stewart. A letter to a collector of old show bills brought no results. Mr. Johnston had hoped that F. J. Williams, who operated a theater in Lansing in the 1890's, might have first-hand knowledge of Stewart, but the result again was failure. The Michiganian wrote to Dr. N. Bryllion Fagin, director of the Playshop at Baltimore's John Hopkins University, asking for information on "The Hidden Hand," but Dr. Fagin replied: "From the enclosed clipping you will know that I have not been able to give you the information you need. I gave your letter to the drama critic of the *Baltimore Sun*, but he wasn't anymore successful than I. Finally, he printed your request in his Sunday column. So far, no answer. Sorry."

I admit to feeling depressed, knowing that in spite of the best efforts of Stanley Johnston and myself, the gaps in jovial Cal Stewart's life story probably will remain unbridged . . . and even more saddened at the thought of the fun-maker, whose mission was to give his fellow humans "laffs instead of heart akes," spending his last weeks in the throes of an agonizing, incurable brain malady.

That said, about all that remains to be done before bringing the story of Cal Stewart's life to its close is to mention the Uncle Josh records that were issued after his death.

Columbia appears to have had a larger reserve of posthumously issued "Josh" recordings than any other company . . . nearly all, reissues of sketches that had already appeared in the Columbia catalog. In February, 1920, were announced re-makes of two old favorites: "Uncle Josh and the Fire Department," by Stewart alone, and "The Courtship of Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy," with Ada Jones.

The April Columbia supplement included a picture of the portly comedian making a record, and reissues of "Uncle Josh in a Cafeteria" and "Uncle Josh and the Sailor." The annotator said:

"Nothing 'Uncle Josh' ever says is anything but funny. Cal Stewart was a man who could not only create the natural, spontaneous humor of his own sketches, but could 'give' them as no other character actor on any stage. It is the clean, natural fun of all the Uncle Josh records that make them so widely enjoyed."

In July came re-makes of "Ticklish

Reuben" and "I Laughed at the Wrong Time," and in December were announced "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's," in a new version by Stewart and Harry C. Browne, and the classic "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," with Ada Jones.

In April, 1922, "Josh's" fans were given new versions of "The Opera at Pumpkin Center" and "Uncle Josh Buys an Automobile," said the catalog editor, who probably was George Clarence Jell:

"Uncle Josh" is a character dearly loved by all phonograph owners. The comedy of Cal Stewart in his role of the bluff, hearty country squire, with his laughter-provoking stories, has always been clean and wholesome. Mr. Stewart has passed on. His records remain as a fitting memorial to continue his work of spreading the gospel of sunshine and good cheer."

September brought new records of "A Camp Meeting at Pumpkin Center" and "Last Day of School at Pumpkin Center," with this comment:

"Everyone knows 'Uncle Josh,' the lovable rural character created by Cal Stewart. Everyone has laughed times without number when he has pictured the difficulties attached to putting up the kitchen stove or trying to run his new automobile. His home is in Pumpkin Center, but his humorous shots and his hearty laughter are heard 'round the world."

Stewart's Columbia series ended in February, 1924, with new versions of "Ground Hog Day at Pumpkin Center," which the comedian had first made for Columbia in 1903, and "Uncle Josh at the Circus." The supplement remarked:

"Laugh and the world laughs with you" is the key to Cal Stewart's grip on the hearts of fun lovers the world over. . . . worries in a good, old-fashioned chortle."

Victor issued only two double-faced "Josh" records after Stewart's death. The supplement for February, 1921, showed a photograph of Cal, perhaps made after his paralytic stroke, for he looks elderly and carries a cane. The titles were "Uncle Josh in a Cafeteria" and "Uncle Josh and the Honey Bees." Editor James Richardson penned a bit of discerning character analysis when he said:

"Even to the last, the late Cal Stewart could laugh with his audiences. And in every laugh there was an immense charity for the foibles and the weaknesses of humanity. If there was one thing more than another, though, which ought to entitle 'Uncle Josh,' as a character, to a high place among surviving mortals, it was his power to laugh at himself. It takes a pretty big man to do that. As a rule, the joke has to be on the other fellow."

In the October issue (which devoted a two-page spread to announcing the death of Enrico Caruso), appeared a record Stewart obviously wasn't asked to make for any other company, "Uncle Josh Buys a Victrola," coupled with "Opera at Pumpkin Centre." Mr. Richardson wrote:

"Uncle Josh, with excellent good sense, buys a 'Victrola-Victrol,' and the first side of the record recites its adventures at Pumpkin Centre. Neighbors crowd in, hear themselves and wonder—all except Cynthia Lawson, who gets madder than a wet hen. Tears and laughter are mingled in the record, as

they are mingled about its history, for of the jovial old comedian, now passed into the Great Beyond, there remains nothing but a voice and a memory."

Edison also had a reserve of Uncle Josh records, issued between 1919 and 1925. Those not already mentioned, in the order of their appearance, were 50581, "Opera at Punkin Center" and "Uncle Josh in a Cafeteria"; 50689 "Ragtime at Punkin Center" and "Uncle Josh's Birthday"; 50719, "Uncle Josh and the Soldier," doubled with "Dinnie Donohue on Prohibition," by William Cahill; 50844, "Uncle Josh at the Chautauqua," with "The Laughing Girl Has Her Picture Took," by Ethel C. Olson; 50876, "Uncle Josh Takes the Census," with a comic Irish song, "Clancy's Wooden Wedding," by Edward Meeker; 50896, "County Fair at Punkin Center," with "The Life Insurance Policy," by Billy Golden and Joe Hughes; 50942, "Uncle Josh and the Sailor" and "The Larson Kids Go Bathing," another by Miss Olson, a talented singer who also told laughing stories in a Norwegian accent. Finally came 51448, "Moving Day at Punkin Center," with "Sister Sorrowful Entertains the Minister," an amusing monolog by another successful impersonator of "Down East" characters, Charles Ross Taggart. The coupling of "Uncle Josh's Birthday" and "Ragtime at Punkin Center" shows that Uncle Josh's village was becoming more modern. Besides doing the old square dances, the younger generation "walked the dog" and "balled the jack." And the hamlet was so ragtime crazy that when Jim Lawson, who was a skilled pianist as well as a choir singer, played a wedding march he beat it out in ragtime. The school children even marched to and from classes to a tune called "The Education Rag."

The last six Uncle Josh records issued by Edison give a convincing picture of Stewart's enduring popularity after his death. All after 50689 contain one side by Stewart and another by other artists—an obvious effort to stretch the supply of "Josh" records as far as possible. The company must have believed that any record would sell backed with something by Cal Stewart.

Further evidence of Stewart's continuing appeal was contained in an attractive booklet, "Edison Records of Music That Lives," issued around 1924 or 1925. It contained a description of the 300 most popular Edison Diamond Discs. Nine of Stewart's specialties were included among the best selling titles—"Uncle Josh Takes the Census"; "Uncle Josh and Aunt

Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove" and "Uncle Josh and the Honey Bees" (doubled on one record); "Uncle Josh in a Barber Shop" and "Uncle Josh Buys an Automobile" (doubled); and "The Village Gossips," by Stewart and Porter, and "Fourth of July at Punkin Center"—also on one record. It seems the Edison patrons preferred double helpings when it came to Uncle Josh!

Emerson also listed some posthumous Stewart records. And not only that, but one list makes the astonishing statement that both sides of Emerson record No. 10291, combining "Uncle Josh's Birthday" and "The Mocking Bird—Whistling Specialty" were made by—Billy Golden! I have never seen or heard this record, but I think something is wrong here. It is even harder to imagine Billy Golden, who always did blackface comedy, trying to imitate the nasal Yankee tones of Uncle Josh than it is to depict George Alexander helping out in the ubiquitous "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's." I imagine the first side was by Stewart, with Golden following in his famous whistling performance, and that Cal's name was left out of the listing by mistake.

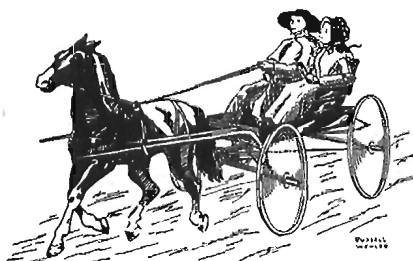
In 1922, the late Byron G. Harlan, best known as the singing partner of Arthur Collins, began to make Uncle Josh records for some of the companies whose catalogs did not contain Stewart's offerings. Brunswick was just preparing to go into the record business when Stewart became ill, so he didn't record for it. Harlan made at least two double-faced Uncle Josh records for Brunswick: "Uncle Josh at the Circus" and "Uncle Josh Buys an Automobile," for one, and another combining a new monolog, probably written by Fred Hager, "Uncle Josh on the Aeroplane," and "Uncle Josh Playing Golf." Harlan, like Stewart, was a business associate of Hager's, and the latter recalls:

"Byron Harlan was a great character. I have some very good records of him on Columbia. Victor, Okeh and others that he made of my novelty songs and skits and some good publicity that I had Andy White write on Byron's work he made a record of 'Uncle Josh on the Radio' for me, as well as a few other Uncle Josh records."

Mr. Hager was at that time a recording expert for Okeh, and some of the Harlan records of Uncle Josh material were issued by that company. One was "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's" (again!) in which Harlan had the assistance of Ernest Hare—probably the only time they ever worked together.

Byron Harlan was a great comedian, but he was not a successful impersonator of Uncle Josh. He made no effort to sound like Cal Stewart, but used the high-pitched falsetto tones and cackling laugh that had served him in making one or two Edison cylinders under the assumed name of "Cyrus Pippin." Through his voice, Uncle Josh took on a half-witted air, and there was nothing of the warmth and geniality that made lovable the great original.

A record that puzzles me is "Uncle





Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove" and "Uncle Josh at the Cafeteria," issued on the Super-Tone brand sold in the 1920's by Sears, Roebuck and probably made by Gennett. Names of the artists on the first side are given as "Holland and Wolf," while the second is by "Byron Holland." "Holland," of course, is a transparent disguise for Harlan. The voice is unmistakably his. But I can't identify "Wolf," the woman who takes the part of Aunt Nancy. Ada Jones died before this record was made, and the voice isn't at all like hers. In fact, it doesn't sound like that of any other feminine recording artist with whose work I am familiar.

Another puzzler is "Duncan Jones," who made several Josh monologs on the cheap Grey Gull and Radiex records. I have the Dentist (!) skit by "Jones" and an unidentified man with a deeper voice. If this record actually is by someone impersonating Stewart, the resemblance to the Old Master's tones and inflections is uncanny. (surely Andrew Keefe could not have been resurrected and called back into action under another name!) I wonder if "Duncan Jones" could have been Billy Jones, doing an amazingly successful impersonation, with his partner, Ernest Hare, helping out. I doubt it. Or had Grey Gull obtained some genuine Cal Stewart masters from a bankrupt record company or through some other source, and issued them under a false name? I doubt that we shall ever know the answer to this mystery, either. I do know that the voice of Duncan Jones sounds exactly like that of the authentic Uncle Josh.

And I know, too—or at least I am reasonably sure—that as long as human nature remains unchanged, the amusing aspect of life in Punkin Center, "corny" and dated as it may seem to sophisticates, will have a certain charm for anyone willing to listen carefully to Cal Stewart's records and give them a fair trial. I have no doubt that this appeal would be equally strong in the films, on radio and in television. A public that grows increasingly fond of "hill-billy" music and square dancing would hardly be immune to the appeal of Stewart's homey comedy. Fred Hager may yet discover that in the Punkin Center material he owns a gold mine.

Cal Stewart did vast good, both during his lifetime and after it, and, in his individual way, he was a great artist. And now that we have come to the end of his life story, I feel that we cannot bid farewell to our old friend more appropriately than by quoting this paraphrase of Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem, "The Boys," which appeared in the Columbia record list for September, 1922:

"You hear old Josh laughing— you think he's all fun;  
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;  
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,  
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all."

## Deaths of Marguerite Farrell and Eddie Morton "The Singing Policeman"

I had been hoping to get in touch with the charming comedienne, Marguerite E. Farrell, and invite her to attend next September's John Bieling Day party, but was unable to learn where she was living. Consequently, it was a shock when I discovered that the singer died January 26 in Buffalo, New York.

Miss Farrell, who was 62. in private life was Mrs. Marguerite Wheeler. She was a woman of culture as well as an accomplished singer and dancer. As a very young performer she appeared in "The Rogers Brothers in Ireland" and in vaudeville with the "Four College Girls" act. After singing in 29 operas produced by Oscar Hammerstein in one season, she decided that she preferred musical comedy and sang in "Miss Princess," "American Maid" and "Step This Way." Later, she was a vaudeville partner of Clara Inge. Miss Farrell retired after marrying, but went to work for the Erie County Social Welfare Bureau in Buffalo after the death of her husband four years ago. Her last musical comedy appearance was in "Up She Goes," produced in the 1920's. She had also acted in Shakespearean productions.

Marguerite Farrell made a large number of Victor and Columbia records in 1916 and 1917, of which "If I Knock the L Out of Kelly," "Come On Baby Me" and "Naughty, Naughty, Naughty" were especially popular. In 1921-22 she recorded for Edison, and made some remarkably clever comedy records, including "I Certainly Must Be In Love," "To the Strains of That Wedding March," and "I've Got the Traveling Choo-Choo Blues." She is survived by a daughter and a sister, Mrs. Marie Farrell Schmidt.

I am now able to reveal that the mystery of what had become of Eddie Morton, "The Singing Policeman," who was a popular recording artist from 1907 through 1915, is a mystery no longer. It is with sadness that I report I have learned that Morton, to my perception one of the finest comedians who ever made records, died in his home city of Philadelphia on April 11, 1938. Details of his later days are obscure, but I hope to get enough information to write a biographical sketch about him for HOBBIES at some future date.

—J. W.

## Refinishing Music Boxes

By MARGUERITE FABEL

The first consideration in refinishing a music box cabinet is, how much needs to be done? Oftentimes the case is in fair condition, but the lid isn't, so you can just refinish the lid, in such cases. You will find refinishing much easier if you take the cabinet apart, remove hinges, locks and handles, and, of course, the musical unit.

In refinishing it is important to have a clean surface, some cases are veneered and have inlays, others are just a "grained" case. The veneered are the nicest to do, the graining is rather difficult; for these I developed a method that I prefer and will explain it later.

The first step in refinishing is to take off the old finish, and to do this use paint and varnish remover; the paste form is better, in case you only want to do a certain surface, the paste form stays where you put it, the liquid runs where it shouldn't. Apply remover according to directions, or if you prefer, you can use a scraper and scrape off the finish. After finish is removed, wipe with turpentine to kill action of remover, and sand lightly.

Now, if any inlay or veneer is missing, fit this in. This type of material can be obtained from: Albert Constantine & Son, Inc., 797 E. 135th St., New York, 54, N. Y.; they have a catalogue which lists all types of wood and inlays, the price of the catalogue is 25c, and it contains many helpful hints.

The missing inlay or veneer can be glued to the cabinet with a good grade of glue, duco cement or weldwood glue, and clamps applied to the piece until it is set; overnight is long enough. I usually make a paper pattern if the part is intricate, and soften the wood in water before attempting to cut it out—use a sharp knife for cutting out inlay. If you don't want to fit in wood, you can put in plastic wood, and color it with oil colors; this works very well, but does not sand down as nicely as the wood. In replacing brass inlay, you can buy strip brass from most any large wholesale hardware, the thickness varies, but .025 is a good average thickness. Cut the brass into strips, or if a design, saw out with a jeweler's saw, and finish off with small Swiss Pattern Files. I usually make a paper pattern for the brass inlays. Cement the brass in place with duco cement, and clamp overnight.

When the repair work is completed, sand surface, then soak the surface with boiled linseed oil and turpentine; apply this with a rag or brush; until the wood will not absorb any more of the mixture. No special proportion is required, but half and half is good, the turpentine drives the oil into the wood. This mixture will bring the color back into the wood; we had one box that was a light tan, and we thought it was rosewood—after I applied the linseed oil, it



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

FRANK COOMBS AND WILLIAM H. THOMPSON

By JIM WALSH

A few months before my first HOBBIES article appeared in January, 1942, I received a letter from Keith Moyer, a well-known record collector of Everett, Washington. Mr. Moyer wrote that he had become acquainted with Frank Coombs, an accomplished countertenor who was a popular recording artist for several years, beginning in 1910. He gave me considerable information about the then elderly singer who had become known to Pacific Coast radio audiences as "Uncle Frank."

I replied, telling Mr. Moyer that Coombs had been one of my favorite singers during my childhood, and recalling that when my brother Chad—now Dr. Chad Walsh, associate professor of English at Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin—was four or five years of age he had an invariable bedtime ritual. After he was tucked in, he would insist on my playing half a dozen record sides for him. A Victor record combined "Wanted—A Harp Like the Angels Play," by Henry Burr, with "It's Time to Close Your Drowsy Eyes and Sleep," by Walter Van Brunt and John Bieling. The remaining favorites were four Coombs solos on double-faced Uniteds, made by Columbia: "Hard Times, Come Again No More" and "Chiming Bells of Long Ago" on one, and "I Used to Believe in Fairies" and "The Cottage By the Sea" on the other. Hearing these, my younger brother would go contentedly to sleep.

After receiving my letter, Mr. Moyer paid a second visit to Coombs, but was obliged to write me the sad news that the tenor died only three days after this meeting. He also sent me newspaper clippings giving some of the facts of Coombs' life, but omitting any reference to his having been a popular recording artist. Having this material available, ever since my HOBBIES series began I have intended doing an article about Coombs, but have postponed it because, in spite of his merits as a singer, there were many other performers whose careers on discs and cylinders were longer and whose popularity was greater and more enduring. Now, however, since he has been dead almost ten years, I feel that the time has come to pay a tribute to "Uncle Frank," combining with it some information concerning William H. Thompson, a baritone with whom he made a fairly large number of duets. Coombs and Thompson are

alike in the respect that they were accomplished artists, but are rather infrequently mentioned by collectors today. Too, I cannot recall hearing any of my recording friends speak of knowing them, although the late Albert Campbell made a number of duets with Thompson, as did the still living Will Oakland.

I quote now from Keith Moyer's letter of September 21, 1941:

"I believe you would be interested in knowing about my visit with Frank Coombs yesterday. . . . He has been on the radio in Seattle for 15 years. He is not well now and is only able to handle the 'children's hour' on Saturday afternoons. When he is not able to get there his wife substitutes. He is known to everybody as 'Uncle Frank.'"

"I happened to be driving yesterday up in the mountains and while passing around Lake Roesiger, I noticed the name 'Uncle Frank' on a sign in front of his summer home. I noticed smoke pouring from the chimney and thought I would make myself acquainted. He was standing on the porch with a cane in his hand. . . . He invited me in and I met his charming wife who was a former actress."

"Coombs was born in Bedford, Iowa, on July 26, 1871. He was not very talkative and it was only through his wife that I got any information. . . . I think he is well off, as he has his Seattle home as well as this lovely summer home."

"Mrs. Coombs told me he never studied singing, but while serving as a Seattle postman obtained a leave of absence to try out with a minstrel company in Illinois. If he failed, he could have his job back, but he stayed with the minstrels and went with other companies. She named a long list of shows he appeared in, including, I believe, 'The Only Girl,' 'Going Up,' and some very lavish productions in New York. She also told me about his engagement with Oscar Hammerstein's last season in New York. She said he sang *opera-buffo* roles and was the only member of the company not an opera singer."

"When she married Frank they toured together in Keith-Orpheum vaudeville from coast to coast. She did not sing, as they put on some sort of skit. He does not possess any of his records, and does not even have a scrapbook of his career. He still can sing a little, though he cannot reach the higher notes that he was so famous for. One of his biggest successes was his imitation of Caruso in 'Pagliacci' in one of the big shows."

"I did not get much dope on his recordings, but he said he made his first records, cylinders, around 1900 for slot machines. He said he made

many records, but did not make Edisons. He toured in a show with Ernest Aldwell one season, and made duets with Aldwell for Columbia. Aldwell died in 1917, aged 27."

After receiving my letter, Mr. Moyer wrote on November 9, 1941, about his second visit to Mr and Mrs. Coombs:

"When I went to the door Mrs. Coombs . . . invited me in, and Mr. Coombs was sitting in a corner of the living room with the blinds down."

. . . I found your letter of such interest that I took the liberty to show it to him. He seemed very pleased and chuckled when he read your mention of the song, 'I Used to Believe in Fairies.' He suffered very much from his illness but never complained, and his voice had that kind, sympathetic quality that one finds in his records. He recollected about his recording experiences during his sessions with Columbia in 1911 when (Mary) Garden and (Lillian) Nordica were making records. He said he would come down to the studio from his Long Island home and Nordica would be making records. She had so much trouble recording that she would hold down the studio for days, and he would go home and come back the next day and hang around and Nordica would still be trying to make records. He said she had trouble due to her singing off-key and the fact that she used her full voice, as on the stage."

"Coombs never recorded under any other name than his own and had only one session with Victor. He said he made more than the two published records but they probably were never issued. He said he also made disc records with William Thompson, but that Thompson's baritone voice was too heavy for his light tenor. . . . He also made Emersons. I think they were seven-inch."

"He went upstairs and brought down a picture of himself in 'Hans, the Flute Player,' with the leading feminine star. . . . A photo of Coombs in this very same costume can be found in a group picture in Theater magazine on page 138, Vol XI, 1910. I asked to see a photo of Mrs. Coombs, and she brought her only picture down. . . . It was a most stunning picture of her when she was a leading actress. They said they had so many pictures taken during their careers that they were not interested enough to have any more made. They left them all back in New York. Mr. Coombs was too old and feeble to write, but I have a written note from him that I enclose for you, which is at least a memento of him."

"Now for the sad news. Frank Coombs is dead! I took your lovely letter down to him on Tuesday and on Friday he was dead. It was the strangest coincidence that he should read your letter and realize that he was not forgotten, then pass on. I first heard of his death in a broadcast news item. He was to give his 'children's program' the following Saturday and everything had been ar-

## WANTED:

Old hymn books with music dated anywhere from 1760 to 1840.

State binding, condition, and date.

J. D. HARTZLER — Wellman, Iowa

Jlyc

ranged, but in its place an announcer gave a tribute to Mr. Coombs' memory. The people on KJR said they never realized in all his eleven years with them that he had such a distinguished career. He was always so modest that he never spoke of his career. He was in the original production of (Victor) Herbert's "The Only Girl."

"I went down to his funeral the Tuesday after I visited with him. A large crowd attended, but I don't think the theatrical world was represented, as it seemed to consist mostly of Spanish War veterans and many children. I sent flowers, and only wish I had come to know them much sooner than I did."

Mr. Moyer sent me clippings from two Seattle newspapers, telling of Frank Coombs' death. Unfortunately, the clippings are not identified so that I can give proper credit. One, headed "UNCLE FRANK COOMBS, RADIO FAVORITE DIES," appeared the day after the tenor's death on October 31, 1941:

"Frank M. Coombs, who saw the passing of one era of entertainment and the birth of another, and found success in both is dead.

"In the halcyon days of vaudeville he worked with many of vaudeville's greatest name—Weber and Fields, Lew Dockstader, the Primrose Minstrels. He appeared in Victor Herbert's productions and knew the great composer well. And in his later years he returned to his home town of Seattle and found happiness in working in the new field—radio. For fifteen years he has been broadcasting a weekly show of child talent—Uncle Frank's Children's Matinee—four years over KOL and for the past eleven years over KJR.

"Mr. Coombs, 70, died in Columbia Hospital two hours after he was taken there. Funeral services for him will be at 1 o'clock Tuesday in Butterworth's Chapel. Burial in Washelli Cemetery will be under the auspices of Fortson-Thygesen Camp No. 2 of the Spanish War Veterans, of which he was a past commander.

"Mrs. Coombs said yesterday that among the songs introduced by her

## RECORDS

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**FOR SALE:** 1 DUBOIS & Stodart piano (spinnet) circa 1824; rosewood, curly maple, crotch mahogany. Pure ivory keyboard, iron pin block for greater strength; keymaker's name written on one key; 2 folding music racks, 1 inside of piano when opened. Price, \$450. One Aster and Horwood dainty spinet piano, circa 1813. Price, \$350. Both are collectors' items. More information concerning these items if so desired. Write:—Mrs. Henry Lokel, The Five Antique Shop, 347 Amsterdam Ave., New York 23, N. Y. my36501

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**MRS WESLEY STEPPAN,** 322 N. W. 1st Street, Fairbault, Minn.—60 old time dance orchestra tunes (all parts). Whistling Rufus, two step; They go Wild, Simply Wild Over Me; Rustling Silks; Pretzel Pete; Happy Heinie; Moon Winks, 3 step; After the Ball & Annie Rooney, etc.; Buffalo Gals, quadrille; Chicken Reel. Others, similar, sell for 25c per copy. Ebony Boehm system flute, silver keys, morocco covered case, marked H. Bettoney, Boston. Ed. Worlitzer. Price \$50. my1825

**WANTED TO BUY:** A small Mathushak piano.—Everett Sulzberger, Ottawa, Ill. je3002

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues.—Elmer Moore, 1036 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. se844

**WANTED:** Edison phonographs, Opera model, battery type, Concert (large diameter cylinder). Also cylindrical Nipper-elodeons, especially Multiphone, cylinder phonograph catalogues, literature. State price, condition.—Ted Bowers, 6039 W. 76th St., Los Angeles 45, Calif. jly3674

**FOR SALE:** Grand Piano; reasonable.—Baptist Hill Antiques, Fox Lake, Wis. my188

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## HOBBIES MAGAZINE

1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago 6, Illinois

husband were such famous ones as 'In My Merry Oldsmobile,' 'Love Me and the World is Mine' and 'Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?'"

"August Twellner, who served with him in the Philippines, related yesterday that Mr. Coombs came to Seattle in 1889, after the Seattle fire, and became one of the city's first letter carriers. He was interested in the early operas here and in bicycle racing. He served in the Philippines as a sergeant, returned later to letter carrying in Seattle and later entered vaudeville. Surviving, besides Mrs. Coombs, is a brother, Lafe, of Seattle, and nieces and nephews."

Another newspaper story said, in part:

"Mr. Coombs. . . . had been in poor health for several years. Yesterday he felt ill when he arrived at his home, 175 West 58th Street. He was taken to Columbia Hospital at 8:30 o'clock last night and died two hours later.

"Mr. Coombs born in the Midwest, felt the lure of Broadway while still a youngster. He went to New York in 1902 and from then until 1926 had a varied experience in minstrels, vaudeville, musical comedy and opera.

The veteran entertainer's stage experience included a season with Oscar Hammerstein at the Manhattan Opera House; a season under Victor Herbert in the musical comedy, 'The Only Girl'; three seasons on the road in the same production; five seasons with Lew Dockstader and other famous minstrels, and many seasons with Keith-Orpheum and other vaudeville circuits. Mr. Coombs had played in every large city in the United States, as well as in most cities of Japan, the Philippine Islands and Hawaii.

"Mr. Coombs was a former commander of Fortson-Thygesen Camp No. 2, United Spanish War Veterans. He once won a medal as 'the best drilled soldier in the State of Washington.' Mr. Coombs had made his home in Seattle the past 52 years. He was a sergeant in Company D, First Washington Volunteer Infantry, during the Spanish-American War. He also was a member of the Friars Club, New York City."

The "souvenir," in Mr. Coombs handwriting, which Mr. Moyer sent me, reads: "Lake Roesiger, Sept. 21, 1941. A nice visit from two nice boys, Keith Moyer and Al Blackmore. Come again some time. Yours, Frank Coombs, 'Uncle Frank,' KOMO-KJR." The writing is shaky and is evidently that of an infirm elderly man, but I prize it as a memento of a fine artist with whom I unfortunately never had any direct association.

Frank Coombs' recording career is not one that need be covered in extensive detail. To begin, I have no information about the cylinder records that he told Keith Moyer he made around 1900. I have never seen any old cylinders listed under the name of Frank Coombs, but if he is quoted as saying he never used any other name. We also have his statement that he never recorded for Edison. The cylinders

probably were made for some small, short-lived concern that specialized in supplying slot machines.

I also have found no trace of the records that Coombs said he made for Emerson. Victor Emerson, one of Columbia's top recording experts left Columbia in 1916 to found the Emerson Phonograph Company, which began by making double-faced seven-inch records that sold for 25 cents each. They were unusual in that they could be played either laterally or vertically. They sounded better in the lateral position, but were pretty bad either way. Emerson also had for a short time a five-inch, single-faced record that sold for only 10 cents—a rival to Columbia's "Little Wonder." Many Columbia artists went with Emerson to his new company, but I found no Coombs records in a 1917 Emerson catalog. Neither does his name appear in any list I have seen of nine or ten-inch Emersons. The records may have been made but never issued.

As far as present-day collectors are concerned, Frank Coombs' recording career began in 1910 when he made his first Columbia—a double-faced disc, No. A885, combining "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and "Nellie Was a Lady." This was also the most popular record he ever made, and for many years was one of the standard Columbia best "sellers." His sweet high counter-tenor voice—perhaps a bit higher than Richard Jose's, but not quite so high as Will Oakland's—was ideally suited to these songs. As a matter of fact, "Silver Threads" was, and is, a sure-fire number for counter-tenor voice. Jose's 1903 version was the most popular Victor record for several years, and Oakland's renditions for the different companies were always in strong demand.

There is an interesting comment in the November, 1913, Columbia catalog: "FRANK COOMBS, counter-tenor. Another of the singers first introduced to the record-buying public by the Columbia is Mr. Frank Coombs, the counter-tenor, well known as having 'the sweetest voice in vaudeville.' All of Mr. Coombs' Columbia records are extremely popular, his 'Silver Threads Among the Gold' especially so."

Coombs' Columbia list at that time included twenty solos; two numbers done with the assistance of the Brunswick quartet, and five duets with William H. Thompson. Current popular music was unrepresented in the solos, unless "I Used to Believe in Fairies" from the Chauncey Olcott production, "Ragged Robbin," be considered in that classification. (Incidentally, Coombs pronounced "fairies" as "fay-ries"). The duets with Thompson, however, were all "popular," the titles being "Driving Home the Cows From Pasture," "Harbor of Love," "The Hour That Gave Me You," "In All My Dreams I Dream of You" and "Mine." The solos included, besides titles already mentioned, such sentimental, old-time favorites as "Bell Brandon," "Ben Bolt," "Do They Think of Me at Home?" "Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still." "Lor-

ena," "Mollie Darling" and "The Vacant Chair." One or two, among them "I Know the Place Where We Will Rest" and "No One to Love," are less familiar to present-day listeners. In his recording, Coombs stuck closely and wisely, to the good old-fashioned minstrel counter-tenor repertoire. His Columbia list was not materially added to after 1913, but his famous version of "Caroline" was issued in July, 1914, and his two duets with Ernest Aldwell, "Sweet Kentucky Lady, Dry Your Eyes" and "There's a Little Spark of Love Still Burning," came out in March and April, 1915, respectively.

The only Coombs records ever issued under the Victor imprint were announced in December, 1912. One was a twelve-inch version of an old-time ballad, "Beautiful Isle of the Sea," coupled with an excellent rendition of "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," by the English baritone, Alan Turner. The supplement comment was brief: "To accompany the Turner solo, a pleasing record of an old ballad favorite is offered, sung by that popular minstrel tenor, Frank Coombs."

Also listed was a ten-inch record "Afterwards," coupled with "By the Old Cathedral Door," by the Peerless Quartet. Again Coombs drew the "B" side, and the comment: "On the reverse is the second record by that sweet-voiced tenor, Frank Coombs, who revives a familiar song of bygone years."

Coombs is most often thought of as a Columbia artist, but he probably made more records, from 1910 to 1913, for the U. S. Everlasting Record Company than he did for Columbia. These consisted mostly of solos, but there were also a fairly large number of duets with Thompson, the baritone. The U. S. concern, operated by Albert Benzler and other musicians and recording experts who had left Edison to found their own company, considered Coombs and Thompson among its leading stars.

The May, 1911, issue of the *Talking Machine World* contains photos and brief "blurbs" for both. The same treatment was given in that advertisement to Cal Stewart and Murry (misspelled Murray) K. Hill, two of the leading monologists of the day. Until U. S. Records ceased to be issued, Coombs contributed steadily to both the two and four-minute cylinder lists. It is rather remarkable, considering the popularity of counter-tenor records, that he did not sing for Edison. But Edison, as well as Victor, may have considered that Will Oakland filled all counter-tenor needs. Victor also seems to have considered Coombs only a "tenor."

And now we come to Frank Coombs' singing associate, WILLIAM H. THOMPSON, the baritone whose voice Coombs considered to heavy for his own light counter-tenor. Like Coombs, Thompson was primarily a ballad singer, but one whose vocal gifts sometimes brought him into association with notables of opera. Just as Coombs had a tenor role in "Hans, the Flute Player," so Thomp-



son sang for a considerable time with the distinguished contralto, Ernestine Schumann-Heink.

Unfortunately, I have been able to obtain only meager biographical details of Will Thompson. The following appeared in a 1945 issue of *Variety*:

"William H. Thompson, 72, former musical comedy and vaudeville singer, died, July 24, in Chicago following a heart attack. For 12 years he and his wife, Jean, and his son, William H., Jr., appeared in vaudeville as Thompson and Berri. Among the musical comedies in which Thompson played before retiring in 1925 were 'The Tenderfoot' & 'Coming Through the Rye.'"

The foregoing makes it appear that Thompson was born in 1873, but gives no information concerning his birthplace. His career as a recording artist began around the turn of the century, possibly in the days of brown wax cylinders, and by the end of 1902 he was well established as one of the Edison group. In the list for July, 1902, issued shortly after gold moulded cylinders were introduced, the baritone was represented by the following: 8037, "Sadie, Say You Won't Say Nay"; 8044, "In the Moonlight With the Girl You Love"; 8050, "The Meaning of U. S. A.," and 8052, Sir Arthur Sullivan's "Let Me Dream Again" a number that Thompson seems to have particularly liked.

During the next several months, Thompson sang many other now forgotten sentimental and serio-comic songs. However, these records for July, 1902, are the earliest I have been able to trace and they may mark the beginning of his Edison career. He appears to have been well liked by record buyers because of his pleasant baritone voice and clear enunciation, although there seems to have been nothing particularly distinctive or outstanding about his style. In 1903 he also made several discs for Victor, including "Let Me Dream Again." As far as I know, he did not record for Columbia or Zon-o-phone in this early period, and I have not found his name in any Edison list prior to 1902.

An interesting item appeared in Edison's *New Phonogram* for January, 1905:

"8875. 'Sweet Thoughts of Home.' Written by Stanislaus Stange and Julian Edwards and sung by Madame Schumann-Heink in 'Love's Lottery.' This is perhaps the most enjoyed musical number sung by the Madame in this successful comic opera. Mr. Thompson, who sings it for our record, is a member of the 'Love's Lottery' company, playing one of the principal parts. Listening to this song nightly Mr. Thompson has caught the secret of Madame Schumann-Heink's irresistible rendition and has placed it upon our record in a manner second only to that of the great singer herself." ("The Madame" herself, as the annotator had elegantly called Schumann-Heink, meanwhile had recorded "Sweet Thoughts of Home" on Victor Red Seal record No. 85092.)

The October, 1904, Victor supple-

ment contained a record by a Miss Quinn and a Mr. Thompson of the Whitney Opera Company, giving a scene from the musical production, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." It was called "Swanee River," and depicted "a proud Southern beauty" singing the old Foster song in her room while a lover with an agreeable baritone voice stood beneath her window, serenading her with a blending melody. As I have previously remarked in HOBBIES, this may have been the first recorded scene from a musical play. I have no idea who Miss Quinn was, but imagine (for no reason!) her name to have been Frances. "Thompson" sounds like William H. Thompson, but it seems unlikely that he would have been playing leading roles concurrently in "Love's Lottery" and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." (Sometimes I wish the ancient supplement writers hadn't striven so gently to avoid the use of first names in listing recording "talent.")

After this, Thompson's name ceases to appear in Victor lists, and there was a fairly long period during which he was not singing for Edison. Occasionally a reader would write to the *New Phonogram* and ask "Will William H. Thompson sing for you again?" and receive a reply like "We do not know" or "impossible to say." His two-minute cylinder, No. 9560, of "It's a Long Way Back to Dear Old Mother's Knee," was issued in May, 1907, after which he seems to have been unheard of in Edison circles until April, 1910. Perhaps he was too busy with stage work during these years to take time to record; perhaps, like many other artists, he had his occasional salary disputes with Edison.

But in April, 1910, the following annotation appeared: "Amberol, 409, 'My Love is Greater Than the World.' Mr. Thompson's return to Edison ranks will be welcomed by the thousands of Edison owners who recall the pleasure his splendid baritone voice gave them a few years ago. Among his contributions at present in our catalog are 'The Rosary' (No. 8214) and 'Handful of Earth From Mother's Grave.' (No. 8531) . . . . Mr. Thompson not only possesses a fine voice, but he knows how to use it artistically, and his enunciation is refreshingly clear."

Thompson's word received more praise in succeeding issues. The number for July, 1910, contained his photograph and this description of his two-minute record of "Just One Word From you": "Charming sentiment is breathed in the lines of this exquisite little gem of melody and it finds a suitable vehicle in Mr. Thompson's pure and finely modulated voice. He sings the number simply and naturally, as it should be rendered, without the labored attempt to gain 'expression' which so frequently mars the rendition of sentimental ballads."

In December, 1910, Edison issued a counter-tenor and baritone duet of the ever popular "My Wild Irish Rose" by Oakland and Thompson, with the statement: "The success of the first

record made by these two artists was so instantaneous and emphatic as to leave no room for doubt that the public would welcome more of the same character." (The preceding Oakland-Thompson number was 503, "If This Rose Told You All It Knows," a pretty ballad by Theodore Morse.) In July, 1911, Thompson renewed the partnership he had formed with Albert Campbell more than eight years before, and they recorded a duet version of "a charming love song of a refined type," "The Vale of Dreams." One duet by Campbell and Thompson, "It's the Man in the Soldier Suit," had been listed in the April, 1903, Edison catalog of two-minute cylinders, and several others were issued the same year. They did not sing together long, however, and apparently their partnership came to a final end with "The Vale of Dreams."

Thompson's Edison duets with Oakland probably were made because Coombs did not work for the great inventor's company. However, the baritone made duets with Oakland, as well as Coombs, for U. S. Everlasting. He also recorded a large number of solos for the U. S. company. I can trace only four Columbia solos by Thompson. They were issued in 1910 on two double-faced records. No. 938 combined "Sweet Thoughts of Home," the Schumann-Heink song which he had sung five years before for Edison, with "Love Dreams." On No. 955 he sang, and sang well, two popular ballads, "All That I Ask of Love" and "You Are the Ideal of My Dreams."

The baritone's recording career seems to have ended abruptly after 1912 or 1913. He does not appear to have made any Edison Blue Amberol cylinders nor were any of his wax Amberols carried over into the Blue Amberol list. He also made no Edison Diamond Discs—at least none was issued. In fact, the wind-up of the U. S. Company in 1913 appears to have marked the end of Thompson's career as a recording artist. He probably was too busy with his stage appearances to cultivate recording work as intensively as did those singers who made phonograph activity their profession and, like Frank Coombs, he gradually drifted away from it.

But, while we may concede that there is a certain something lacking about the recorded performances of Coombs and Thompson that give unending glamour to such vivid personalities as Ada Jones, Len Spencer, Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, the fact remains that they were both accomplished, sincere artists whose abilities won them the esteem of myriads of record buyers. If not in the foremost rank of popularity, they nevertheless have a secure niche of their own in the galaxy of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. To Coombs especially I shall always be grateful for the manner in which his dulcet rendition of "I Used to Believe in Fairies" would put my wide-awake "kid brother" to sleep after all other measures, remedies and stratagems failed!

Next Month — MANUEL ROMAIN

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## NAT M. WILLS, "The Happy Tramp"

By JIM WALSH



Nat M. Wills, in his famous vaudeville of "The Happy Tramp"

The winter of 1917-18 has become legendary in the Eastern United States as perhaps the coldest within living memory. Sunday, December 9, was especially cold. If it had not been, Nat M. Wills, the dapper and popular little "Happy Tramp" comedian of vaudeville, musical comedy and recording fame, might still be alive instead of having met a tragic accidental death at the early age of 44.

Wherever actors gathered on Broadway on December 10, 1917, there was a buzz of conversation in which excitement and shock were mingled, as the discussion centered on an article that appeared on page 15 of that morning's *New York Times*. The headline read "NAT M. WILLIS DIES IN GAS ACCIDENT," and the sub-heads continued the story: "Dazed by Fumes in His Garage, Actor Succumbs in Effort to Escape. Had Been Fixing His Auto. Wife and Neighbor Batter Down Locked Door and Find His Body."

Here is the news story that caused so much concern:

"Nat M. Wills, at whose stage presentations of the comic side of tramp life a generation and more of theatergoers had laughed, was found dead yesterday. Penned in his own garage. Mr. Wills was overcome by the fumes of gas from the running engine of his automobile and was dead when his wife and neighbors battered down the doors. Mrs. Wills was near collapse as the result of her experience and was in hysterics last night at the family home, 2 Thirty-first Street, Woodcliff, N. J.

"Mr. and Mrs. Wills were to have attended a dinner party in Manhattan last night. Wills, whose hobby was automobiles and gas engines, went to the garage back of his home in the afternoon to tinker the engine of his car. Two weeks ago thieves who broke into

the garage smashed two top bolts which held the heavy doors shut when they were not held by the ordinary patent lock. Because of the cold, Wills locked himself in the garage so the doors would stay shut while he worked. He lifted the hood of the car, started the engine racing idly and crawled underneath to make adjustments.

"The tight little garage soon began to fill with the deadly fumes of partially consumed gasoline. Wills must have realized the danger, for he crawled from under the car and, not even stopping to halt the engine, struggled to the doors. If he cried out, no one heard him.

"In the house, Mrs. Wills, well knowing her husband's fondness for fussing with his car, paid little attention to his absence till the time came to start for New York. Then she sent the maid to remind him they should be off. The maid came back to say she could hear the car running, but had knocked on the door and got no answer from the actor.

"Only faintly alarmed, Mrs. Wills herself went to the garage. Her efforts, too, were vain. The two women shook and rattled the heavy doors. The engine ran on, and there was no answer from within. Thoroughly aroused now, Mrs. Wills called Marcus Donnelly, a neighbor. With whatever came to hand, the three battered at the big doors till at last they crashed in. The lifeless body of Wills tumbled out, the key of the door still clutched in his hand. The three carried the body into the house and sent calls for the police and for neighboring physicians. The comedian had been dead some time.

"Wills' present wife was May Day, an actress when he married her. The couple have one daughter, Natalie 3 years old. He was married four times. His first two wives died. His third, the equestrienne known on the stage as La Belle Titcomb, divorced him, and the two had much litigation over alimony.

"Wills, whose real name is said to have been Louis Magrath Wills, was born in Fredericksburg, Va., on July 11, 1873. His first stage appearance was at the historic Ford's Opera House in Washington with Minnie Palmer in a play called 'My Sweetheart'. It was by accident that he first assumed the role of a tramp. He was playing the part of a juvenile with a stock company at the old Globe Theatre, Washington. In the play, 'A Block Game' one of the principal characters was that of a tramp. At the dress rehearsal, a drop fell from the 'fly gallery' seriously injuring the actor who had been playing the hobo role. Wills stepped into the breach with such success that tramp parts became his dramatic allotment from that time on. For eight years he was a vaudeville attraction in the B. F. Keith and Orpheum circuit of theaters, and was a member of Ziegfeld's Follies for one season.

"For the past three seasons he had been under the management of Charles Dillingham at the Hippodrome."

And that is the *New York Times'* account of the tragic death of Nat M. Wills. Three days later, on December 13, the *Times* published the following brief account of the comedian's funeral:

"Funeral services for Nat M. Wills were held yesterday morning at Campbell Funeral Home, Broadway and Sixty-sixth Street, and later in the day the body was taken to a mausoleum in Woodlawn Cemetery. The services at the Funeral Church were attended by many well-known theatrical people, among whom were delegations from the Lambs, Friars,

Players and Green Rooms clubs and from the Hippodrome.

"A Masonic service, read by the Right Worshipful George Loesch, was held under the auspices of St. Cecile Lodge, and a brief eulogy was spoken by Fred Niblo."

When I decided to write a biographical sketch of Wills, I was eager to get as much background information as possible, not only because he has long been one of my favorite comedians but because he, like me, was a Virginian by birth. However, my efforts have not been successful. The county clerk's office at Fredericksburg reports that it had no record of his birth or the names of his parents, and a similar reply was obtained when I asked for information from the vital statistics bureau of the Virginia State Department of Health.

Even so, there appears no reason to doubt that Wills was born in Fredericksburg. The following biographical sketch in an Edison Blue Amberol record catalog for 1914 substantiates some of the statements made in the already quoted obituary notice:

"NAT M. WILLIS. . . . This well-known and very popular comedian was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on July 11, 1873. He first appeared on the stage when a child, with Nell Burgess in a play called 'Vim.' (There is a contradiction here with the *Times* statement that Wills first appeared with Minnie Palmer in 'My Sweetheart.'—J. W.) He secured a good theatrical training as a member of the stock company at the famous Grand Opera House of San Francisco, which was afterwards destroyed by the earthquake. About this time Mr. Wills originated the tramp character that he has since made famous the world over. As this 'gentlemanly tramp,' he starred in three plays, 'A Son of Rest,' 'The Duke of Duluth' and 'A Lucky Dog.' He then entered vaudeville as a headliner, playing all the leading houses of the United States."

Some old-timers, who cherish unfading memories of Wills' vaudeville "turn," insist that he had the funniest opening ever used by any act. The curtain went up, showing a store front, and a "clerk" came out and rolled down the awning. Then, to everybody's howling delight, Wills, attired in his rumpled, ragged tramp costume, tumbled out of the awning in which he presumably had spent the night, and proceeded to tell funny stories and sing parodies in a loud, penetrating voice—some of his jealous rivals called it a "bellow"—that no one else could successfully imitate. He was acknowledged the greatest master of parody writing and singing of his day.

Aside from what I have already quoted, little seems to be on record concerning Nat Wills' earlier life. It is known that during the 1890's he was end man of the Ideal Minstrels in Washington, but by 1900 he was well established as a vaudeville favorite. Although a born comedian, Wills was a man with a serious streak. When vaudeville performers, tired of being cheated and otherwise ill-treated by many theater managers and booking agents, organized a protective union, the White Rats of America, in 1900, the 27-year-old Wills was one of the leaders. He delivered a fiery address at an overflow meeting in a fraternal

hall situated above Koster and Bail's museum. After he spoke, the air was filled with the shout of "One for All and All for One!" which has been for so many years the shibboleth of Equity, the theatrical organization that stems from the original White Rats.

Some interesting statements about Wills' career are made in the late Douglas Gilbert's fascinating book, "American Vaudeville." Gilbert described Wills' tramp as "a happy bum, a genial outwitting character, in high favor with audiences." His costume, says Gilbert, was the usual thing for a "tramp get-up"—patches, blacked-out teeth and a scrubby beard. The book pays the comedian a compliment by saying he was "an honest worker, who bought his gags." It also says that at the beginning of his vaudeville career Wills worked with a partner, an "unbelievably thin" man known as "Bony Dave Halpin," in an act called "The Tramp and the Policeman." Wills ended the partnership around 1900, and began doing his tramp "single" in which he kept abreast of current events and made topical references. For several years he hired the song writer, Vincent Bryan to write special material, paying Bryan \$100 a week.

According to Gilbert, Wills appeared for a time in vaudeville with his first wife, "Madame Loretto," and after her death he married May Harrison, who died in 1909. A year after that he married "La Belle Titcomb," whose real name was Nellie McNierney, although she was billed as a Frenchwoman, when she came over from Europe to do an act at Hammerstein's, in which she rode a white horse and sang grand opera arias. Wills took her into his act, but legend has it that they didn't get along too well, and that on one occasion the statuesque "La Belle" picked up the comparatively fragile Nat and hurled him through the door of his dressing room. The legend further continues that somebody passed by just in time to see Nat rub his head and mutter, "I should have married the horse!" However, the story is suspected to be apocryphal, although Wills sometimes used a line about "marrying the horse" in his act. As we have already seen from the *New York Times* quotation, "La Belle Titcomb" divorced Wills and they had alimony squabbles.

And now we have arrived at the time when Nat (or Louis Magrath) Wills began his highly successful, if comparatively brief, career as a recording comedian, using excerpts

from his material that had been so successful on the stage.

Wills appears to have recorded first for Victor, and his initial batch of records came out in 1909. The first was No. 5612, "No News," or "What Killed the Dog." It was also the most popular record he ever made, and undoubtedly one of the most consistently popular talking numbers ever recorded by anybody. The monologue details, with a wealth of dry humor, the sad story of an ailing rich man who was ordered to go away from home for a rest. When he returned, he asked his tactful Negro servant for the news and was told there wasn't any, "except yo' dawg done died." Further questioning revealed that the dog died from eating burnt horseflesh, that all the rich man's horses and cows died in a fire that destroyed his barn; the barn caught fire from sparks of the conflagration that leveled his home; the fire in the home was caused by candles around a coffin setting fire to curtains; the coffin contained the body of his mother-in-law; and the mother-in-law had died of shock because the man's wife had run away with his chauffeur. "But outside ub dat, sir," the servant summed up in a peculiarly unctuous tone, "dere ain't no news!"

Some years ago, my brother, Dr. Chad Walsh, who is a professor at Beloit College in Wisconsin, discovered that Wills' "No News" story apparently was lifted from an anecdote at which ancient Greeks laughed thousands of years ago. A book of Greek stories which my brother happened to read contained one that was almost identical in structure with "No News," and some of the details were the same. There is no knowing whether Wills had heard of the Greek story or just happened to strike on a similar idea, but the resemblance is so marked that coincidence must have been working overtime if he really did not simply take the old "yarn" and transpose it to a modern setting.

Regardless of that, "No News" was a remarkable record for longevity. After four successful years in single-face, it was combined in 1913 as double-faced record No. 17221 with "The Three Trees," a diverting monologue recited by Tom McNaughton, who was a member of "The Spring Maids" musical comedy cast. McNaughton was also the husband of Alice Lloyd, the veteran English hall comedienne who died in 1950. The double-faced record stayed in the Victor catalogue until 1927, when it was remade by the electric process with the late Frank Crumit doing both sides. It then remained a popular seller for several additional years.

Here is how Victor announced its engagement of Wills:

"No entertainer on the American stage today is more popular with the public than Nat Wills. His familiar impersonation of a tramp is unique and always amusing, without a touch of offensiveness or vulgarity. His stories and monologues are witty and laugh-compelling that one suspects they are written, like his parodies, by himself—and he never fails to make the most of them.

"The Victor, with its usual enterprise, has secured the exclusive services of

Mr. Wills for this work, and will present each month one or more of his delightfully funny talks and parodies. The fact that such fine records by so celebrated an entertainer are to be offered to the public at regular prices should be highly gratifying to record-buyers."

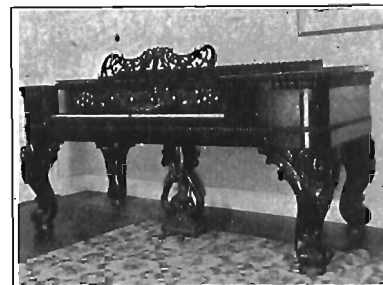
Another of Wills' early Victor records was 5613, "Are You Sincere?"—Parody, in which he begins by commenting on a foot race that had recently occurred in London, at which "a young fellow named Hayes," an American, had been the winner. Then follows a crack or two at William Jennings Bryan, who shortly before had made his third unsuccessful try for the presidency. After that, Wills sings a parody on the then popular song, "Are You Sincere?" which he twists around to fit the case of a policeman who suspects burglars were up to no good in a bank. Being afraid to enter, he called the burglars up on the phone and tremblingly asked, "Are youse in here?" They replied that they were not, and so, his conscience relieved, the far from intrepid officer went away satisfied.

Wills' third ten-inch Victor record, "B. P. O. E.—The Elks' Song" was thus described by the Victor supplement editor, Sam Rous—our S. H. Dudley, as record collectors prefer to call him:

"Many thousands of theater-goers have enjoyed this amusing and good-natured fling at the Brotherhood of Elks, especially the Elks themselves. The first verse soberly and correctly tells of the great order and the good it has done; but in the second and the third the order is exposed in a most shameless fashion, especially when it is considered that Mr. Wills is supposed to be a good Elk himself!"

Also included in Wills' first batch of Victors were a comic song, "Our Boarding House," which is best appreciated by listeners with strong stomachs, for the comedian's description of the boarding house's lack of sanitation could be revolting under certain conditions, and a twelve-inch "burlesque military ballad," "The Flag He Loved So Well."

In July, 1909, two more Wills records were issued, a twelve-inch humorous monologue, "Reformed Love," which I have never heard, and a ten-inch mock ballad, "Saving Up Cou-



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pons for Mother," which I am inclined to consider the funniest of all the comedian's efforts.

Here is Mr. Rous' comment: "The 'Happy Tramp' gives us this month two very funny numbers—the first being a rambling talk on various matters delivered in the dry manner which makes Wills' monologues so amusing; and the second a burlesque ballad, which takes for its theme the present day craze for the collection of trading stamps and coupons of various kinds. The tale of the coupon-collecting little boy is most pathetically told by Mr. Wills, but there is no danger of anyone shedding tears—except perhaps through an excess of laughter!"

To the foregoing I might add that "Saving Up Coupons" is a strong sermon against the tobacco habit, because Wills' pathetic boy hero smoked himself to death trying to get enough coupons "to purchase a tombstone for pa." His last words were "Tell mother I died like a hero while smoking a Cremo cigar!" Wills apparently took the tune for this touching composition from Paul Dresser's old "tear-jerker, "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me." The record really is a hilarious affair, but it must not have been popular (or perhaps the tobacco companies complained against the satire), for it stayed in the catalog only a couple of years.

Victor's announcement said that Wills had been engaged exclusively, but this must have meant exclusive only to disc records, for he appeared in the Edison list for August, 1909. Victor and Edison seem to have agreed quite often to an arrangement whereby artists under exclusive contract to the one company's discs were allowed to make the other's cylinders and vice versa. Billy Murray and Sousa's Band were among those having this "joint contract."

The August, 1909, issue of Edison's publication, *The New Phonogram*, contained a photo of Wills in tramp garb, and the following description of his first record, No. 10178, Parody on "Down in Jungle Town":

"In making his initial appearance in the ranks of Edison record-makers, Mr. Wills has chosen for his first selection a parody on 'Down in Jungle Town.' The words, however, treat of the (Theodore) Roosevelt hunting trip to Africa in a facetious way. Mr. Wills is one of the best known artists on the vaudeville stage. He makes an unusually clear record and in this role will make as great a hit as he does upon the stage." The same supplement also contained a four-minute Wills cylinder, No. 176, *Flag He Loved So Well*, which had already been issued by Victor, in addition to the following brief sketch:

"Few stars on the vaudeville stage are better known and more popular than Nat M. Wills. He is the headline attraction of every performance in which he takes part. His tramp sketch is everywhere hailed with delight. He gains the attention of his audience at once and keeps them in laughter to the close of the act. Mr. Wills is not only a clever vaudeville performer, but he also makes a splendid record. As a rule, people successful in vaudeville are not equally successful in making talking machine records. Mr. Wills is an exception, for his voice reproduces as perfectly as any one who had been making records for years. We offer his records to the public with the full belief that they will score a great success."

The peculiar adaptability of Wills strong, rather strident, voice was commented on in the Victor catalog for November, 1914, in which Editor Rous wrote:

"Mr. Wills may be said to have a voice created for record-making, so powerful and resonant is his rich baritone; and the distinctness with which he gives every syllable of his talks and songs is of course known to everyone. The records which we offer are remarkable in every respect, and so natural that it would be impossible to distinguish between the reproduction and his actual voice."

The foregoing statement is "remarkable" for being probably the first time in which an unqualified "no difference" claim was made for any artist's recording. Conceivably, this gave Thomas A. Edison the idea of having his artists sing in public with the Edison Diamond Disc, to prove that even the most musically cultured listeners couldn't distinguish between the actual tones and those that were reproduced. Victor made no such public comparison with Wills or any other artist, and after Edison began to give successful demonstrations of what it called "the acid test of direct comparison," the Victor claim that Wills' voice was reproduced perfectly disappeared from the catalogue, just as Columbia ceased to "guarantee" that no other record sold at any price had better tone quality than Columbia's.

All the Edison cylinders by Wills were issued in 1909, but two, "Burlesque Opera" and "B. P. O. E.," were reissued several years later in the unbreakable Blue Amberol form. (Incidentally, what is hoped to be an approximately complete list of Wills' records is included with this article.) Oddly, he didn't record "No News" for Edison.

In 1910, Victor issued two more Wills records—"Old Oaken Bucket" Parody, in which the comedian, still in his guise of a tramp, told how he managed to hornswoggle a bartender into giving him an oversized glass of whisky for three cents, and "The Song of the English Chappie," in which he demonstrated change of pace by pretending to be an English "willie-boy."

Wills must have been "on the road" pretty steadily for the next three years, for there were no new Victor records by him until December, 1913—a year which some commentators, including Douglas Gilbert, believe marked a permanent downward trend in the humorist's career. As I shall show, I think this idea is completely erroneous. At any rate, the December Victor supplement showed a photo of Wills as a Broadway habitue instead of a tramp, and announced two new numbers from the Ziegfeld "Follies of 1913," in which he was then appearing. The songs were "If a Table at Rector's Could Talk" and "New York, What's the Matter With You?" Said the supplement:

"The greatest success Mr. Wills has achieved in years has been with the new Ziegfeld production of 'Follies of 1913,' in which he temporarily for-

sakes his tramp garb and appears as a dapper man-about-town, singing a number of effective songs. Two of the best of these have been recorded by the comedian for the Victor. No one who is familiar with Mr. Wills' other Victor numbers needs to be told what a fine record he makes."

Notice that the Victor writer says Wills was then, in 1913, making his greatest success in years. Yet there is a legend that his "heart was broken" because of something that happened that same year, before his Ziegfeld engagement, on a program at the historic Palace Theater. As Douglas Gilbert tells it, the Palace had only recently been opened. Wills followed the immortal French actress, Sarah Bernhardt, who had received great applause at her curtain call and "finally was forced by weariness to return to her dressing room." Wills then entered to a big hand. As he stood bowing, an usher came down the aisle with an enormous bouquet for Bernhardt, and somebody in a stage box yelled, "Give 'em to Wills—he's dying!"

We are asked to believe that Wills was crushed by this bit of wise-crackery, and there have even been whispers that he brooded over the taunt so much that his death in that fumed-filled garage was not inadvertent. Even Gilbert's "American Theater" says: "Four years later he did die of carbon monoxide poisoning in his New Jersey garage. That Palace crack at Wills unnerved him so he was scarcely able to go on. He never felt that he was precisely through—but performers worry."

To me this whole business seems far-fetched and silly. Wills may have been momentarily put out, but there is nothing to show he felt that he was in a decline or that his "future had passed." And there is certainly nothing to indicate that his death was other than accidental.

It was in 1913, too, that Wills made his first Columbia record. The double-faced disc appeared in the September, 1913, supplement under the heading of "NAT M. WILLS RECORDS TWO OF HIS FUNNIEST NUMBERS." The titles were "The Drink Cure" and "Comic Medley Song" (why, I wonder, wasn't it "Comic Song Medley"?), and the annotator remarked:

"If any other American comedian has made more people laugh than Nat M. Wills, the 'Musical Tramp,' it is probably because he has been longer on the stage. Wills' mission in life is frankly to give people enough genial nonsense of one kind or another to make them forget their troubles at least temporarily, and in this he has few superiors. He has appeared all over the world as a vaudeville and variety star and his name on a program invariably fills the house. On one side of his new Columbia disc Wills tells a story of a man whose trip on the water wagon ended in a manner as unexpected as it was ludicrous. On the other side is a song that is a little bit of everything, with comedy in every line."

Wills' only other Columbia appearance was in July, 1915, when he favored Victor's great rival with his familiar version of the famous "No News" and on the other side told



"Two Darcy Stories: (a) The Head Waiter (b) The Colored Social Club." The editor remarked that "Nat M. Wills, the most popular 'tramp' on the American stage, tells some of the best present day jokes in that peculiarly biased voice, which makes the best of a joke by refusing to admit it as a joke. All lovers of laughter will want this record." Today, 36 years later, "No News" remains as fresh and amusing as the day it was spoken, but although the other side may have been emanant to be genially amusing, there appears an overtone of venom in the stories that Wills tells about Negroes that spoil them for me. If such a record were issued today it would draw a concerted protest from Members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Wills, who little suspected that he had less than two years of life remaining, was back in the Victor list for January, 1916. One side of his new double-faced record contained "Parody on Eight Familiar Songs," virtually the same thing as his Columbia "Comic Medley Song" of three years before. It is a screamingly funny story of rambling adventures, set to the tunes of well known songs. On the other side, entitled "A Father of Thirty Six," was "the funny talk he used to give his vaudeville audiences when they insisted on more encores. At the end of this speech Mr. Wills tells one of his best stories, 'A Father of Thirty-Six,' which always brings down the house." A few months later Victor issued "A New Cure for Drinking," the same rather gruesome but funny story which Wills had recited for Columbia the year before. It was coupled with a parody on "Asleep in the Deep," sung by the late Al Jolson, who had been an exclusive Columbia artist since 1913. Victor must have had the master record for several years before deciding to put this mediocre Jolson offering on the market.

Wills made his appearance in a new record company's list in 1916. This occurred when a Columbia recording expert, Victor H. Emerson, left Columbia to found his own Emerson company, which started out by making double-faced seven-inch records to sell for a quarter, and single-faced six-inch ones for a dime. Any Columbia artists followed Emerson into his new business, and Wills was among them. Once more he dusted off "No News" and gave a condensed version of "Hortense at the Skating Rink," a monologue that had been popular on a twelve-inch Victor.

The last Nat M. Wills record to be issued by anybody appeared in Victor's list for February, 1917, and by one of those ironies with which our life is filled it was an "Automobile Parody." Just ten months later Wills was to die because of those fumes from his own automobile, but there was no note of impending doom in the rib-tickling account he gave of his imaginary adventures in a motor vehicle. The other side was a rural monologue, "The Pineville School Board," by Charles Ross Taggart, a comedian who specialized in imper-

sonations of "Down East" characters. Edward Richardson, who by this time had succeeded Sam Rous as the Victor catalog annotator, remarked concerning Wills' side of the disc:

"Nat M. Wills has a little automobile dream all to himself in which he travels with miscellaneous adventures through parodies of "Toreador Song"—"Marching Through Georgia"—"Dixie"—"Ben Bolt"—"Out on the Deep"—"Reuben Reuben"—"Rosary"—"John Brown's Body"—"Auld Lang Syne." The Rosary parody is particularly touching: 'Each bolt, each nut, each screw, each tack, I took them out, I put them back' are lines that will surely evoke painful memories in every car-owner." Today they also appear painfully prophetic of the way in which Wills was to meet his death, but no one thinks much of that when the Automobile Parody is played. It is one big laugh throughout.

And now we have reached the end of Nat Wills' life. But there is one final, bitter taste of irony remaining before the story is closed—the pathetic fate of his beautiful young widow, May, who was only 23 when the comedian was found dead in 1917. May Wills lived until 1944, when she died at the early age of 50. One of the issues of *Variety* for that year told of her having been brutally beaten in a night club. Not long afterward, the "Bible of Show Business" contained an article by Ed Barry, headed "NAT M. WILLS' WIDOW DIES A SHABBY END." Here are some excerpts from the pathetic story related by Barry in *Variety's* typical journalese:

"When death claimed May Wills, 50, widow of the late Nat M. Wills . . . it was the culmination of a precarious existence the former 'Ziegfield Follies' beauty had suffered for practically a double decade after the death of her comedian husband in 1917, three years after their marriage. Death pointed to a cerebral hemorrhage, shown by subsequent coroner's autopsy, in a 'borrowed flop' in the room of a friend, Richard Kennedy, who said he took her into his room in a midtown hotel after she had told him she hadn't had a place to sleep for days. Kennedy told police he had left the former Broadway butterfly in his room Saturday night and upon arriving home Sunday morning had found her in semi-conscious condition lying on the floor. He summoned police, who called an ambulance, but she was dead upon arrival at the Roosevelt hospital. . .

"It was an ignominious finish for the former May Day, who had been a toast of the town in the 1913 edition of the 'Follies' at the age of 19. Her remarkable brunette beauty . . . intrigued Nat Wills, star of the show. . . Marriage followed shortly afterward. She left the show the following season, to bear their only daughter, Natalie, named after her father.

"Wills, who had earned top salaries as, vaudeville headliner prior to the 'Follies,' was in the \$2,000—\$3,000 weekly category as 'The Happy Tramp' over a period of years. . . He had left his widow and daughter comfortably fixed. In addition to special trust funds for his infant daughter he had left his widow around \$100,000 in liquid assets in addition to insurance for a like sum.

"Close friends of the former beauty say the money went to her head and that she dissipated her fortune through lavish entertaining and other squandering on Broadway leeches who knew her when; but didn't want to know her when she was rubbing shoulders with advers-

ity. She spent her inheritance within five years after getting it. Her daughter had been away through most of these years, being educated from her inheritance money, and getting the principal after reaching her majority in 1932. After graduating from college the daughter was appointed to a Government position in Washington, where she . . . married. . .

"The daughter had provided for her mother throughout the years of adversity, but most of it went for pub spending, according to those who knew her well. Despite this, the girl, who loved her mother, forgave her frailties and had been taking care of her at time of death. Upon the shabbily dressed remains of Mrs. Wills was a letter from her daughter, couched in affectionate terms and the usual 'P. S.—Enclosed find check.' . . . She planned to New York and took charge of burial. Services were held at Walter B. Cooke funeral chapel, with remains interred with her late husband. Few of the fair weather friends came to pay their respects, for she had not been able to entertain them for years."

So ends the sad story not only of Nat Wills, but of his unfortunate once-young wife—a story brightened only in part by the devotion of the couple's daughter to her mother. It is well that "The Happy Tramp" could not foresee the end to which his wife would come as he struggled to free himself from the garage that had been turned into a death trap. But, had he been capable of coherent thought, there might have been some consolation to the tortured man in the knowledge that he would be remembered for more than a generation as one of the greatest entertainers of his time, and that his songs and humor would still be enjoyed by thousands of record lovers for many years after the body of Nat M. Wills had been committed back to earth.

Next Month — MANUEL ROMAIN

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## Records by Nat M. Wills

- 10-Inch Victor single-faced (1909-1910)  
5612 "No News" or "What Killed the Dog?"  
5613 Are You Sincere?—Parody  
5614 B. P. O. E.—Elks' Song.  
.616 Our Boarding House  
5695 Jungle Town Parody  
5700 Saving Up Coupons for Mother — Mock Ballad  
5725 Traveling Man  
12-Inch Victor single-faced (1909)  
31720 The Flag He Loved So Well (burlesque military ballad)  
3 736 Reformed Love (humorous monologue)  
10-Inch Victor double-faced (1910-1916)  
16661 Old Oaken Bucket—Parody with The Darcy and the Boys (Edwin M. Whitney)  
16687 Song of the English Chapple with Stop! Stop! Stop! (Bilda Morris)  
17222 "No News" with The Three Trees (Tom McNaughton)  
17461 New York, What's the Matter With You? with If a Table at Rector's Could Talk.  
17768 Too Much Dog with Darcy Stories (comic monologues)  
17894 Parodies on Eight Familiar Songs with A Father of 36  
17915 A New Cure for Drinking with Asleep in the Deep—Parody (Al Jolson)  
12-Inch Victor double-faced (1909-1917)  
35079 At the Comic Opera with That's the Doctor, Bill! (Eddie Morton)  
35093 Hortense at Sea with the Tale of the Cheese (Murray K. Hill)  
35156 Hortense at the Skating Rink with Uncle Josh Keeps House (Cal Stewart)  
35601 Automobile Parody with Pineville

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**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. au3023

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit.—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

**WILL BUY** used phonograph records, collections or dealer's stock, any amount, made before 1940, \$15 to \$30 per hundred.—Jacob S. Schneider, 128 W. 66th St., New York 23, New York. au68401

**Record treasures of the World's great artists.** Original G&Ts, Fonotipias, Zonophones, etc., Akte, Bellinioni, Boninsegna, Caruso, Carelli, De Lucia, Escalais, Fabbri, Giraldoni, Kurz, Litvinne, Pinto, Plancon, Figner, and other unique records of the greatest rarity. Send for auction lists, special lists. All correspondence confidential.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. je34431

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

**ENGLISH AND EUROPEAN** records and books on music, etc. Current and cut-out collector's rarities. Lists free. Inquiries welcomed. — Renton, Maldon Road, Tiptree, Colchester, Essex, England. je3004

School Board (Charles Ross Taggart)

Edison two-minute cylinders (1909)  
10178 Parody on "Down in Jungle Town"  
10211 Parody on "There Never Was a Girl Like You"  
10227 Parody on "The Old Oaken Bucket"  
Edison four-minute cylinders (1909)  
176 The Flag He Loved So Well  
212 Our Boarding House  
223 B. P. O. E.—Elks' Song  
236 Burlesque Opera  
Edison Blue Amberol cylinders  
2099 Burlesque Opera  
2320 B. P. O. E.—Elks' Song  
Double-faced 10-inch Columbia records (1913-1915)  
A1352 Comic Medley Song with Drink Cure  
A1765 Two Dinky Stories—Colored Social Club and The Head Waiter with No News, or What Killed the Dog?  
Double-faced seven-inch Emerson records (1916)  
7171 No News, or What Killed the Dog? with The Tale of the Goat (Joe Browning and Joe Hughes)  
7193 Hortense at the Skating Rink with To Europe on a Cattle Boat

## MISCELLANEOUS

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

**WANTED:** Vaudeville and Opera Programs prior 1925. Record catalogs prior 1915.—Ronald Slaughter, 3919 Gibson St., Los Angeles 34, Calif. jly3603

**WANTED:** music rolls for a Mills Company violana virtuoso (two violins and piano combination)—and a western coin-operated electric piano. Box Z. L. M. c/o HOBBIES. aux.

**BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. je12407

**I HAVE JUST** bought absolutely new condition old Victor & Columbia records including Columbia demonstration records by Henry Burr and others. These include Billy Murrays, Ada Jones, Cal Stewarts, Munroe Silver, Joe Hayman, Al Jolson, Noah Bayes, Bert Williams Van & Schenk, Avon Comedy Four, and others. Also red seal instrumental and vocals. Send for lists and I will mail.—Al McRea, Sr. Rare Phonograph Records, P. O. Box 182, Westville, New Jersey. je1065c

**MEL DEONS,** Melodeon organs. Beautiful restored instruments for sale. Will buy instruments needing repairs. Expert repairing service. C-sharp Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich.

**ROSEWOOD MUSIC BOX** in fine condition. Cabinet, 20x27", 37" high. 169 174" German silver discs. Brevete, SGOG, British patent. D. R. Patente, H. G. Muster, Swiss made, \$700. Shipping extra.—Hempstead Trading Post, 1024 Front St., Hempstead N. Y. je3066

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, \$1.80 direct from importer, 41 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y. jly3272

**OLD TIME RECORDS.** Operatic, instrumental, popular. All your favorite artists represented. Priced reasonably. Records bought. Write wants or visit.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. jly3844

**MRS WESLEY STEPPAN,** 322 N. W. 1st Street, Fairbault, Minn.—60 old time dance orchestra tunes (all parts). Whistling Rufus, two step; They go Wild, Simply Wild Over Me; Rustling Silks; Pretzel Pete; Happy Heinie; Moon Winks, 3 step; after the Ball & Annie Rooney, etc.; Buffalo Gals, quadrille; Chicken Reel. Others, similar, sell for 25c per copy. Ebony Boehm system flute, silver keys, morocco covered case, marked H. Bettoney, Boston. Ed. Worlitzer. Price \$50. my1825

**WANTED TO BUY:** A small Mathushek piano.—Everett Sulzberger, Ottawa, Ill. je3002

Information Wanted  
About  
William F. Myers

Arthur Hand, of Route 2, Robinson, Ill., is an ardent admirer of William F. Myers, who sang "Asleep in the Deep" as one side of Edison Diamond Disc—No. 50300, one of the 300 most popular Edison records. Mr. Hand would like to know whether Myers ever recorded for any other company, and the names of any other records by him. I have never heard of any.

The Edison catalog said that Myers was known as "the American Basso Profundo Extraordinaire," and was born in California in 1888. It added: "He studied principally in Germany, and is perhaps even better known abroad than in his native country. After hearing him sing 'Asleep in the Deep,' you will probably agree that whoever gave him his descriptive title was at least conservative."

By some research of his own, Mr. Hand discovered the following obituary notice in the *San Francisco Chronicle* of March 5, 1922:

"William F. Myers, the young basso of this city, who died on February 22 after an illness of three days, was one of the most gifted and promising vocalists that California has produced. He was born in Placerville and received his early musical education in this state. With the encouragement of Paul Steindorff, he went to Europe for training, studying with King Clark in Berlin for five years. He had been engaged to sing the roles of Fafnir in *Siegfried* and Hunding in *Die Walkure* at Bayreuth, when the outbreak of the war interrupted his career. Returning to New York, he

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues. — Elmer Moore, 1035 15th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. s8844

**WANTED:** Edison phonographs, Opera model, battery type, Concert (large diameter cylinder). Also cylindrical Nick-elodeons, especially Multiphone, cylinder phonograph catalogues, literature. State price, condition.—Ted Bowers, 8039 W. 76th St., Los Angeles 45, Calif. jly3674

**Wanted:** Miniature pianos and organs. — Mrs. Tufts, 9051 Riverview Road, Washington 20, D. C. au3633

**MUST PART** with 100 year's old family heirloom. Diminutive rosewood Dann-reuther upright piano. Carved mahogany trim, ivory keys, graceful brass candle holders above music rack. Easily restored to playing condition. Principal piano displayed Wisconsin Centennial Exhibition, Milwaukee. Best offer. — Mrs. Carl Schenk, Potosi, Wis. je1253

**PHONOGRAPHS:** Only one Victor with horn left, \$15, Edison cylinder and discs at all times.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Missouri. je1251

**SWISS MUSIC BOX,** in family 65 to 70 years, 17" long, 7½" wide, 5½" high, 10 tunes. Absolutely perfect condition. —Mrs. A. P. Kissinger, 420 Wrightwood Ave., Apt. 216, Chicago 14, Ill. Phone: Diversey 8-4800. je1462

**REGINA MUSIC BOX** and cylinder Edison phonograph. — Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. jex

45 15½" REGINA RECORDS, each \$2. —Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. jex

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## MANUEL ROMAIN

By JIM WALSH

Some years ago, when I lived in Marion, Virginia, I met a man, now dead, named James D. Winne. Mr. Winne, known to his friends as "Cousin Jim," had been a drummer with the Ringling Brothers Circus Band and had also played in the orchestras of several large minstrel shows. He said he was proud to count such men as Will Oakland and Al Jolson, with whom he had traveled, as among his friends. But his greatest love was the fabulous minstrel tenor, Manuel Romain, and when he learned that my collection contained many recordings by Romain he came to see me.

With Mr. Winne at ease in my living room, I went into an adjoining room and put Romain's Edison Diamond Disc of "My Sunshine Jane" on the phonograph. As soon as the first notes of the singer's voice were heard, the emotional "Cousin Jim" burst into tears. "Yes, that's him—that's Mannie!" he exclaimed. A little later, he added: "If you hadn't told me it was a machine, I'd have sworn you had Mannie himself in there singing to me—if I didn't know he was dead!"

When "Sunshine Jane" ended, I played another Diamond Disc, "I Wish I Had My Old Gal Back Again." Mr. Winne spoke up. "This record," he said, "was made several years before the one you just played. I can tell the difference in Mannie's voice!" "No," I replied, "Sunshine Jane" was made in 1917, and this one not until 1926." "Then," said Cousin Jim, "he was feeling better the day he made this record than he did when he sang 'Sunshine Jane.' Just listen to how much stronger his voice is."

"Oh," I explained, "that's because I put the phonograph cover down when I played the first record and left it up for the second. As far as I can tell, Romain's voice never changed in the least at any time during his career."

A few minutes later I started one of Romain's Columbia records, but Mr. Winne, a man of strong likes and dislikes, would have none of it. "That," he said, "positively, is not Mannie singing. It's just some other fellow trying to sound like him!" I insisted that the singing actually had been done by Manuel Romain, but Cousin Jim wanted nothing to do with Columbia's recording of his favorite tenor's voice. He paid a tribute to the amazing fidelity of the Edison method by insisting on hearing nothing but Diamond Discs, and we went through "Mannie's" entire Edison repertoire. As he left, he said, "I just can't get over Mannie's sounding so clear and strong in those last records he made. He sounded just like he did when I knew him back around 1906."

Had I known then what I have since

learned, I could have surprised and affected Mr. Winne even more by telling him that Romain's 1926 records were made during the last months of the tenor's life, when he was a desperately ill man, suffering from acute anemia and an internal cancer. How a man in such a condition could produce such ringing high notes and record perfectly without benefit of microphone is something almost impossible to understand.

Manuel Romain died on December 22, 1926, in a Quincy, Massachusetts, hospital, but although he has been gone virtually a quarter of a century the memory of his superb balladry is still treasured by millions of old-time minstrel and vaudeville patrons, as well as by thousands of record collectors, many of whom place him near the top, or at the very top, of their list of favorite singers. For years I have been requested to do an article on Romain, and I have at length decided to oblige, even though some of the details of the singer's earlier life are obscure. However, the circumstances of his recording career can be set down without much trouble, and it may be that I shall later discover more information concerning his younger days.

The tenor was born in 1870, but just where seems a debatable question. One informant says he was born in Boston, and it is true that he made his home there or in nearby Quincy for most of his life. Another maintains he was a native of Gibraltar, while Spain also is mentioned as his birthplace. He obviously was of Spanish extraction, and old-timers at the Thomas A. Edison laboratory still talk about the way his black eyes would flash if anything went wrong during a recording session and how fluently he expressed himself in the most colloquial hair-raising Spanish.

In April, 1946, my friend Glen H. ("Curly") Crossett, of Flint, Mich-

igan, who has made a study of the life of Romain, wrote me an interest-letter, from which I quote:

"My own personal opinion of Manuel Romain is that he was, without doubt, the sweetest singer of sentimental songs this world has ever known. . . I have got a lot of help from an old-timer who was an intimate friend of Manuel's fifty years ago, and who sent me a picture of Romain on an old sheet of music, entitled 'Ever the Same,' published in 1898. Romain at that time was with Primrose and Dockstader's Minstrels and looks much the same as in his later years. He died at Quincy on December 22, 1926, at the age of 56 years. Death was caused by hemorrhage and acute anemia from cancer of the bladder."

"Manuel was born in Spain but came to this country at an early age, and worked in a jewelry shop until he discovered that he had a voice. He started singing at the old Palace Theater (a dime show), then joined up with Primrose and Dockstader's Minstrels. He sang for some time under the name of Jerry Severe, later changing to Romaine, and made a big hit as a ballad singer. He was not a versatile singer but as a singer of sentimental songs he had no equal and soon became a favorite with all who heard his grand voice."

In November, 1946, "Curly" Crossett wrote:

"Did I tell you that Romain's family name was Xavier? He was Spanish. Romain was in vaudeville as well as in minstrel shows. He had a production called 'Down in Music Row' that met with great success for about two years in vaudeville."

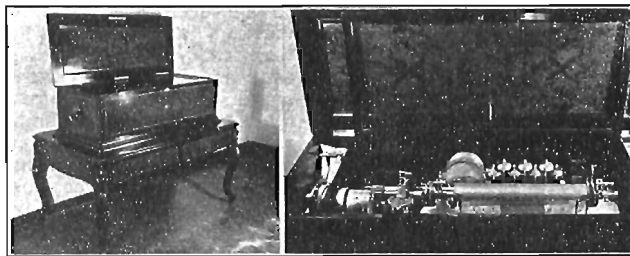
Notice that Mr. Crossett's letter gives the impression that Romain was a name assumed for stage purposes. Yet here we run into another contradiction, for a reader of Edison's *New Phonogram* asked in the June, 1910 issue, "Is Manuel Romain a *nom de plume*?" and received "No," as the answer.

The January 5, 1927, issue of *Variety* contained a notice of Romain's death. The typewritten copy which Editor Abel Green had made for me is headed "ROMAINE, MANUELO," and Romain is spelled throughout with a final "e":

"Manuel Romaine, 56, singer, phonograph recorder and minstrel, died in a Quincy, Mass., hospital last week after a long illness."

"For many years Romaine was featured with minstrel shows, including Primrose and Dockstader's. Since 1908 he had been in vaudeville. Owing to ill health his only professional work in 1926 was recording for the Edison Phonograph Phonograph."

"Romaine's first professional appearance was as featured soloist at Keith's theatre, Boston, more than 30 years ago,



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48x20", 15" high; table, 58x31", 28" high. Four rolls, 10 pieces to each roll. Automatic change 1 to 10. Drums, bells, castanets, nickleled throughout. Very fine working condition. Made by C. Paillard & Company, Switzerland, London, and New York.

Price: \$1200.00 — F.O.B. St. Louis

J. GOLD

4239 Olive Street,

St. Louis, Missouri

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he having been signed for the engagement by the late Sam K. Hodgdon.

"His widow, Mrs. Johanna Hutchinson Romain, and two sons survive.

This information may be supplemented by the following, from the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* of April, 1916:

"Until 1893 Mr. Romain confined himself to church and concert work, while studying assiduously under Professor H. T. Metz. Then he went into the minstrel field, appearing with Primrose and West, W. S. Cleveland, Primrose and Dockstader's Minstrels — covering in all fifteen seasons. In 1906 he made his vaudeville debut and scored a tremendous 'hit' with some of his original compositions. He is known to Edison owners chiefly as a singer of sentimental ballads, and in that capacity has made himself a great favorite." A 1914 Edison catalog termed him "a boy tenor" who made good. The average infant phenomenon," it added, "Passes gently into oblivion in a short time, but a genuine love of music and a real vocal ability enabled Manuel Romain to escape the usual fate and to forge steadily ahead."

In the hope of doing away with some of the mystery surrounding Romain's birthplace, family name and early career I wrote to all the Boston newspapers, asking for copies of their death notices concerning him, but those that replied said their files contained nothing about the tenor. Two letters to the *Quincy Patriot-Ledger* brought no response. Hence, being stalemated for the time being, perhaps we may as well advance to consideration of Romain's recording career, even though we must stifle a sigh of regret at not knowing something about those "original compositions" as well as his experiences as an "infant phenomenon."

Unless he had recorded earlier under another name, Romain's first record was a two-minute Edison cylinder, No. 9628, "When the Blue Birds Nest Again, Sweet Nellie Gray," issued in September, 1907, when he was 37. The Edison supplement termed it "a descriptive song of the kind that is always liked. It is sung by a new tenor who has not before made a record for us. We predict that he will become a great favorite on account of his clear, rich voice, which is heard to great advantage in his first selection."

That first song struck the keynote of the work that Romain did throughout his recording career. Perhaps there never was a singer who stayed more consistently in one groove. His strong point, as he well knew, was the old-fashioned sentimental ballad, characterized by nostalgia for happy days of the past and hope for better times to be. Usually the hero hoped to wed the girl of his choice at some sweetly poetic future time, such as "When the Bloom is on the Cotton, Dixie Lee" or "When the Evening Bells are Chiming Songs of Auld Lang Syne." "When" was an important word in the Romain musical vocabulary, as was "you." In the "You" songs the singer dreamed of some lovely lady or assured her that she had attained a state of perfection somewhat higher than that of the angels. Unfortunately, as was the wont of most of the love songs of that earlier day, the hero's hopes usually were blighted because the girl died in the second stanza. Or if he

married her, as in "She Was Bred in Old Kentucky," she died before the end of the song and left him mourning his past felicity.

It is interesting to run down the alphabet list of Manuel Romain's two-cylinders in the August, 1909, Edison catalog and observe the titles that he had recorded in a little less than two years. Included were "I Lost My Heart When I Saw Your Eyes," "I'm Starving for One Sight of You," "I Wish I Had a Girl" (a record about which I shall have an interesting story to tell when I write the biography of Walter Van Brunt), "Just One Sweet Girl," "Just Someone," "Let Me Crown You Queen of May With Orange Blossoms," "Meet Me, Sweet Kathleen, in Honeysuckle Time," "No One Knows," "Only an Old-Fashioned Cottage," "Somebody Just like You," "Somebody That I Know and You Know, Too," "What Might Have Been," "When Darling Bess First Whispered Yes," "When It's Moonlight, Mary Darling, 'Neath the Old Grape Arbor Shade," "When Summer Tells Autumn Goodbye," "When the Blue Birds Nest Again," "When the Sheep Are in the Fold, Jennie Dear," "When the Springtime Brings the Roses, Jessie Dear," "When We Listened to the Chiming of the Old Church Bell," "Won't You Even say Hello?" and "You Have Changed the Winter in My Heart to Glad Springtime." (You probably have observed the unusual length of many of the Romain titles, as well as the recurring pattern involving hoped-for marriage to "Sweet Kathleen," "Mary Darling," "Jennie Dear" or "Jessie Dear"!)

The four-minute Amberol cylinders had been on the market for only a few months when this catalog was issued, but Romain was represented with "Ask Mammy" (a song in Negro dialect—something that he seldom attempted), "As the Years Roll On," "Belle Brandon," "If You've Won the Only One in All the World You Want to Win," "Just to Remind You," "Roses Bring Dreams of You" and "To the End of the World With You."

Throughout his recording career, Romain was more intimately associated with Edison than with any other company, and during the nearly twenty years in which he made records he adhered to the same type of material. As Mr. Crossett remarked, although a fine artist, he was not versatile. I don't think he ever made a duet with any other singer and he never took part in male quartet or other ensemble work. It was a rarity when he had the assistance of a male or mixed chorus, although most other popular Edison singers were "backed" by such groups on four-minute cylinders and Diamond Discs more often than not. Perhaps his style was considered too distinctive to blend well with that of anyone else. At any rate, Romain was, like another popular tenor, Richard José, emphatically a recording "lone wolf" — not meaning the term, of course, in an uncomplimentary sense.

This may be a good place, too, for

mentioning some of the peculiarities of Romain's singing style and enunciation. He did not "sound like a foreigner," but a careful listener detects oddities of pronunciation. "Day," for instance, sounds more like "die" when he sings it, and "way" almost becomes "Y." Words such as "years" receive a final "uh" sound, much like "yuhs" or, in the case of "tears," "tyuhs." He also had a characteristic habit of "pinching" the long e sound and slightly nasalizing it. Thus "Seem," a word that occurred repeatedly in his songs, receives a treatment from him unlike that from any other singer I can think of, and so does "dreams," and other words of a similar type. Yet the overall effect of these individual mannerisms goes far to give him what the Edison supplement writer once called "incomparable tenderness of expression." I can't recall any other singer of popular music who infused his style with quite so much seemingly sincere ardor.

Something of this apparent sincerity seems to have overflowed into his private life. I remember Mr. Winne's describing "Mannie" as a quietly companionable fellow, who was happiest when "sitting around in the hotel lobbies and swapping yarns after the show."

It's interesting to read of the references to Romain in Edison publications, as the tenor consistently gained popularity with the millions of persons throughout the world who were cylinder record buyers forty-odd years ago. When Edison made a splurge with the first four-minute Amberola, Romain was the first singer to be honored. Number 1 was "William Tell Overture," by the Edison Concert Band. On its heels came Romain's rendition of the Herbert Ingraham ballad, "Roses Bring Dreams of You," described as:

"An exquisite love ballad. The Amberol record makes it possible for Mr. Romain to sing with the utmost freedom of expression, just as he would do on the stage. The singer's host of admirers will agree he has never been heard to such good advantage."

The accompanying thumbnail cut showed the tenor to be a handsome, black-haired, dark-eyed young man, wearing a high white collar and a black bow tie.

Amberol No. 27 was "Belle Brandon":

"There are traces of tears in Romain's voice as he sings of 'Little Beauty, Belle Brandon, who sleeps 'neath the old arbor tree.' He is simply immense in this grand old love ballad. Admirers of the sweet-singing minstrel tenor who fail to secure this record will miss the best song that Mr. Romain has yet given us."

When the two-minute cylinder of "I Wish I Had a Girl" came out in February, 1909, the supplement remarked:

"Mr. Romain, who by the way has become one of the best selling Edison artists and therefore one of the most popular, sings the selection in a very attractive manner."

Here we find another oddity. Romain undoubtedly was one of the most popular Edison artists. Yet when the company issued, on September 15, 1910, a special list of 500



"slow selling" cylinders, which dealers were allowed to dispose of for 20 cents each to clear them out of stock, a far higher percentage of the slow movers were by Romain than by any other singer. Probably the explanation is that most of his records sold well when first issued, but that the public tended to neglect his older numbers as newer, sweetly sentimental effusions were brought out. The poor selling records were all discontinued on September 15, 1911 — about a year before Edison quit making wax cylinders to concentrate on Blue Amberols.

In April, 1909, "J. G. P." of Augusta, Kansas, asked three questions: "Where does Manuel Romain live? Is he a native of this country? Isn't he considered your best tenor?" The reply:

"His city of residence is Boston, Mass. He is a native of the United States. We would not attempt to say which of our tenors are the best. It is a question largely of individual preference. Some artists excel in one kind of work, others in another. To try and compare them is like comparing apples and pears."

This same set of questions, through some mix-up, was reprinted in the November *New Phonograph*, with the answer to the third given in a slightly different form: "We would not attempt to say which one of our tenors is the best. It is a matter of individual preference, which each must decide for himself."

In the September Phonogram, F. W. Moore, of Aledo, Illinois, wrote:

"In a number of your descriptions . . . of Manuel Romain's records you mention that he was Dockstader's leading tenor. I have witnessed Dockstader's Minstrels a number of times, but did not find Romain's name in the program. Reese Prosser was his leading tenor on those occasions. I have a number of Romain's records and his voice is very similar to that of Prosser's. I think they are one and the same. Will you kindly tell me if I am right?" The answer was: "Manuel Romain had been Dockstader's leading tenor for several years, but since the season of 1908 he has branched out in vaudeville. Mr. Prosser is not the same party." (Prosser, by the way, was one of Jim Winne's great admirations. He died a few years ago, without, I believe, ever making records).

These published comments may now be appropriately supplemented by the reminiscences of one of my faithful friends at the Edison laboratory:

"I knew Manuel Romain, but he was not a frequent visitor to the studio. He was away on the road most of the time and after he completed one of the circuits he would arrange to record — that is, if he had a lay-off period. He lived around Boston . . . and after a trip he was always anxious to get home again. He was a very popular singer with us. Musicians remarked that he didn't sing according to the rules and that he did what they called 'scooping' the notes, but they added that it was this habit that put the proper pathos in some of the 'sob-songs' he recorded. . . We would have done more recording by him except for the conditions above explained."

"Romain was in the studio just before his death. He mentioned that he wasn't feeling too good and thought when he got back home he would take a good rest and maybe get a check-up from the doctor. It was only a short time afterward that Mr. Cronkhite (the late Frank Cronkhite, Edison recording director) received word that Romain had been operated on and had passed away. He usu-

ally spoke very little about anything except some experience on the road or some old minstrel man he had met who had known Mr. Cronkhite in the old days. I believe Cronkhite got acquainted with Romain in the minstrel days. They used to reminisce about Dick José, J. Aldrich Libby, etc., when they got together."

"In one of his vaudeville skits Romain used an Edison disc phonograph. The scene was a music store and someone would come on the scene and ask for Mr. Romain. The clerk explained he had just stepped out for a few minutes. The customer said he was disappointed as he would have liked to hear Romain sing. Then the clerk suggested they could play a recording of his voice. A record was put on and Romain's voice was heard. When played about half through the clerk saw Romain coming in the door. Romain then picked up the song and the clerk shut off the phonograph. Then the customer showed surprise when Romain appeared before them, singing. It was really on the order of the 'Tone Tests.' After using this skit for a couple of years he changed it. The machine had been loaned to him by the Edison Company and was specially made for the act. It was a table model, mahogany, and it had a 'belt' drive."

Up to late 1909 Manuel Romain had made records only for Edison, but then he recorded the first of the only three discs ever sung by him for Victor. It was a pretty J. Fred Helf ballad, "When We Listened to the Chiming of the Old Church Bell," coupled with Walter Van Brunt's rendition of "When I Dream in the Gloaming of You," a song with an almost startling resemblance to "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now," which came out about the same time. Several months later, Victor's second Romain record, "When the Sheep Are in the Fold, Jennie Dear," was issued, with "Where the Ivy's Cling Dearie 'Round an Old Oak Tree, by the Haydn Quartet, on the other side."

The third Victor record by Romain is so scarce and so little known that most collectors believe he made only the two already mentioned. However, he also sang a twelve-inch version, No. 35083, of a song with an Irish flavor, "I Long to See the Girl I Left Behind." (Incidentally, one of the tenor's enunciation peculiarities is that he makes the word "girl" sound almost like "gal" or "gel"). It was coupled with a pathetic recitation, "The Blind Boy in the Gallery," by the noted actor, Digby Bell, who died in 1917, and—perhaps because most listeners didn't care for the Bell side—was a poor seller and stayed in the catalog only about a year. The recording of all the Victor Romain records is very good with the twelve-inch perhaps the best. Their chief defect is the somewhat mechanical quality that seems inseparable from all lateral cut acoustic recording, and the fact that, perhaps because of a deficiency in overtones, Romain sounds like an elderly man instead of one just approaching forty. The voice lacks the youthful freshness and vibrance captured by vertical recording, but the quality nevertheless is good — better than in any of Romain's later Columbia records that I have heard. Romain's may have been one of the voices that simply could not be recorded with complete adequacy on needle-out discs. Elizabeth Spencer's was one of this type, and Christine

Miller has never concealed her opinion that her lateral-cut records are bad. The prize example, however, is the late George Wilton Ballard, an accomplished singer with a notably beautiful tenor voice on Edison records but who sounded so terrible on other kinds that it's a wonder he ever agreed to their being issued.

After singing the three songs for Victor, Romain signed a contract making him an exclusive Edison artist. In January, 1910, he revived James L. Thornton's charming ballad, "When You Were Sweet Sixteen," which was a big hit when it was introduced in 1898 and has been almost a greater one during the past half dozen years. The catalog editor described it as "a number that requires for its proper rendition a voice of unusual sweetness, range and power, such a nature has favored Mr. Romain with." That same month, Romain was the contributor of a two-minute cylinder, "Sweetheart's a Pretty Name When It is Y-O-U," and the annotator commented:

"Sentimental ballads are the particular forte of this famous singer, and the popularity of his records is due to the fact that they are distinguished for volume, clearness of enunciation and sweetness of tone. This selection is meritorious in composition and tuneably pleasing, while Romain gives it the full benefit of his remarkable voice and artistic style." "Mannie" also sang "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now" in the same list.

If the most typical Romain record had to be chosen it probably would be "When the Bloom is On the Cotton, Dixie Lee," another of the ballads that J. Fred Helf turned out profusely in those days. Issued in February, 1910, the Amberol cylinder received this rather touching critique:

"Sentimental, with a note of sadness, is this pretty ballad, which tells of farewells spoken and lovers' vows plighted under the romantic spell of a Southern twilight, and of their failure or consummation because of the death of 'Dixie Lee.' The air harmonizes pleasingly with the theme, and Mr. Romain sings the ballad with incomparable tenderness of expression." The tenor's two-minute cylinder for February was "When I Dream in the Gloaming of You." In that issue of the Phonogram someone in Meridian, Mississippi, asked if Romain were married and was told "yes."

In May, 1910, Romain sang two songs, for which Irving Berlin has probably forgotten that he wrote the words while Ted Snyder did the music. One was Amberol No. 414, "I Wish That You Was My Gal, Molly," in which "a rough but manly young fellow voices his regret that the girl whom he loves has given her heart to another. The style of composition and melody are a little different from those of the usual sentimental ballad — sufficiently so to give the song a certain distinctiveness which is pleasing." Romain's two-minute record was "Christmas Time Seems Years and Years Away." Its theme was "the impatience of an ardent lover because the day which will mark the consummation of his happiness 'seems years and years away.'"

A month later, Romain sang "a live-

ly march song of a patriotic character," "Molly Lee." Among the two-minute Standard records was a harp solo of "Annie Lauri," by Roxy P. La Rocca, "who," said the supplement note, "is at present associated with Manuel Romain in vaudeville as his accompanist. This is Mr. La Rocca's first record for the Edison phonograph." The June *Phonogram* also contained a list of ten special Amberol cylinders not offered for sale to the public but given as a bonus to Edison owners who bought an attachment that enabled their machines to play both two and four-minute records. One of the gift numbers was a characteristic Romain solo, which again was a composition of Fred Helf's: "If I Must Say Farewell, Kate, let Me Kiss Your Lips Goodbye."

Romain was described for the first time as an exclusive Edison artist in the *Phonogram* for September, 1910, when he sang "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine." Under the heading, "You Are Never 'Forty-Five Minutes from Broadway' if You Own an Edison Phonograph," the statement was made that: "Marie Delna, Carme Melis, Marguerite Sylva, Stella Mayhew, Marie Dressler, Marie Narelle, Murray K. Hill, Sophie Tucker, Manuel Romain and Victor Herbert . . . can be heard only on Edison records. They are absolutely under exclusive contract to sing only for the Edison Phonograph." (This statement certainly was not true of Hill, who was then merrily recording comic monologs for every American company).

In October, 1910, La Rocca made another harp solo — "The Mocking Bird" — while Romain had another Helf ballad listed in a special classification — a list of 24 records not for general sale, which would be given to Edison owners who persuaded their friends to buy phonographs. The title was the number which the Hayden Quartet had sung on the back of one of his Victors: "Where the Ivy's Clinging, Dearie, 'Round an Old Oak Tree." The tenor sang "When the Autumn Turns the Forest Leaves to Gold" for the November list, and Edison owners were told: "Songs of this type are the particular forte of this famous minstrel tenor whose sweet voice can be heard on none but Edison records."

This statement, however, soon ceased to hold true. When he returned in 1911 from a Western vaudeville tour, Romain also began to make Columbia records and he may never again have been an exclusive Edison singer. If that is true,

it did not impair his association with Edison. The Columbia catalogs for several years carried this brief description: "Mr. Romain is one of America's best counter-tenors, and one of the most popular singers on the Columbia list. His records of popular ballads, periodically issued, are at all times sure of an extensive welcome and sale."

Just why Columbia considered Romain a counter-tenor I have never understood. His voice actually was a rather deep, "chesty" tenor, nearer the baritone range than it was to counter-tenor. At any rate, during the next five years or so, Romain made a large number of Columbia records. Occasionally he was coupled with some other artist, but more often both sides were by "Mannie." His first Columbia was No. A1192, "Let's Grow Old Together, Honey" on one side, with "I Love the Girl My Father Loved" on the other. He introduced Columbia patrons to many "hits," including "The Curse of an Aching Heart," "Daddy Has a Sweetheart," "I Miss You Most of All," "That's How I Need You," "When I Lost You," "What a Wonderful Mother You'd Be" and "When It's Orange Blossom Time in Loveland." His last Columbia, "The Ashes of My Heart," was issued late in 1916. I have not heard all his Columbia records, but the recording in those I do know strikes me as mediocre and doesn't give a true reflection on the genuine beauty of Romain's voice. One of his records, "She's the Daughter of Mother Machree," coupled with Henry Burr's "Dear Old-Fashioned Irish Songs My Mother Sang to Me" (No. A1951) stayed in the catalog until the early 1930's and was renumbered and issued in a special Irish series.

Returning to the tenor's Edison associations, his popularity most likely touched its highest point after the indestructible Blue Amberol cylinders were introduced in 1912. For years, Romain was one of the most prolific contributors to the four-minute cylinder list. Twenty-nine solos by him were listed in the 1919 Blue Amberol catalog and others had been previously cut out. In only three — "The Little House Upon the Hill," "Under Southern Skies" and "When the Old Folks Were Young Folks" — is he assisted by a chorus.

Edison Diamond Discs also came out in 1912 and for the first time made it possible to hear a perfect reproduction of a singer's voice. (That's a statement that some of my collector friends, who prefer the cylinders to the "Recreations," will dispute, but I insist I'm right. The Blue Amberols could not sustain a direct comparison "tone-test," such as was given the discs). But for some reason, Romain did not appear on discs until 1915, and many of his popular cylinders never were published in "platter" form. His first Diamond Disc, No. 50230, contained two highly popular ballads, "That's an Irish Lullaby" and "When I Dream of Old Erin." (This Spanish-descended tenor seems to have had a musical soft spot for Ire-

land!) Then, although he contributed steadily to the Blue Amberol list, he didn't have another disc until 1917 when he came through with a charming rendition of "Mammy's Little Coal Black Rose," coupled with "If I Had All the World and Its Gold." He followed through a month or so later with "My Sunshine Jane." In 1918, Edison coupled two Romain ballad "hits" — "It's Never Too Late to be Sorry" and "A Little Birch Canoe and you." And in 1919 came "Did You mean All You Told Me Last Night?"

After this, Romain seems to have done no more recording for Edison or any other company until 1926. However, in 1922, Edison issued his Diamond Disc of the English music hall ballad, "A Broken Doll," which he had recorded six years before. I have owned pressings of this record made from two different masters, and was struck by an oddity, that the words of the final refrain differ in the two versions. "A Broken Doll" apparently was Romain's least popular Diamond Disc, for it was catalogued only two or three years. Its coupling, a soprano solo by Margaret A. Hellar of a weak song, "Happy 'Happy Li'l Sal," may have handicapped it.

Two more Romain Diamond Disc offerings were combined in 1924 on No. 51231. One, "I Will Love You When the Silver Threads Are Shining 'Mong the Gold," was recorded in 1915, but had been shelved in keeping with Edison's peculiar custom of frequently not publishing a record until the song's popularity was past. Romain's cylinder of "I Will Love You," made in 1910, was always one of his best sellers. The other side of the disc was "Why Don't You Come Back Home Again? (We're Too Old to Go to You)," a pathetic plaint of aged parents who had been deserted by their son. It was made in 1916.

As a youngster I felt, as I still feel, a great admiration for Manuel Romain, and I distinctly remember a vivid dream I had in 1926. I had been wondering why Romain was no longer making records and worrying a bit as to what had become of him. Then, in the dream, I heard a Diamond Disc on which he sang "I'm Afraid of You," a ballad he had made popular on a 1910 cylinder. Still dreaming, I exclaimed joyfully, "The old boy is as good as ever!"

A day or two later I went to see my Edison dealer and found that "the old boy" actually was back on the job, although he hadn't again recorded "I'm Afraid of you." And indeed he was as good as he had ever been. His new record was the one that I played years later for Jim Winne. One side was "I Wish I Had My Old Gal Back Again" and the other was "Am I Wasting My Time On You?" The songs were tunelessly inconsequential, but the singing ranked well with the best that the 56-year-old "Mannie" had ever done. I rejoiced mightily at his return to phonograph activity—but how upset I would have been had I known that the man whose full-

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throated tones were thrilling me was even then wasting away from anemia and cancer! The fact remains that Romain's type of son~ as well as his singing style, remained unchanged, is shown by his having made a cylinder of a number called "I Wish I Had My Old Girl Back Again," in 1911. It was a different composition from the 1926 number, in which "Gal" was substituted in the title.

A couple of months later came the next to the last record that Manuel Romain was to make for Edison or anybody else. It was 51786, a ballad with what now seems the sadly prophetic title of "Gone!" On the other side Arthur Fields sang "My Dream of the Big Parade." Romain's last Edison record came out in November, 1926, just a month before his death. It coupled two James Thornton songs of the 1890's, "My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon" and "She May Have Seen Better Days." It would be interesting to know how many unissued records by him Edison, out of the phonograph business since 1929, still has on file.

The story of Manuel Romain, sweet-voiced minstrel and vaudeville tenor, is almost told. But I have not yet mentioned the records that he made for Emerson in 1916-17, after his friend, Victor Emerson, the veteran Columbia recording expert, left Columbia to start his own company. Romain was one of many Columbia artists who let friendship with Emerson lead them into what must have proved a disappointing business association. Emerson began by producing single-faced six-inch records selling for a dime and double-faced seven-inch ones for a quarter, but in 1918 switched to making, first nine-inch, then ten and twelve-inch discs.

I have my heart set on finding two of the seven-inch Emersons, which are almost never seen anymore. One is the famous "Barbershop Monolog," by Jim Thornton, the several times mentioned composer of "When You Were Sweet Sixteen." The other is No. 7117, "The Hippodrome Minstrel Medley," called "a descriptive medley with effects by orchestra." On this, Romain apparently sang the refrains of nine old-time popular songs, some of them entirely out of his usual groove. Included were "A Hot Time in the Old Town," "Hear Dem Bells," "Lazy Moon," "Little Alabama Coon," "Hello, My Baby," "Oh I Don't Know, You Ain't So Warm," "Oh, Dem Golden Slippers," "Under the Bamboo Tree," and "Oh, Didn't He Ramble!" Don't ask me how all that could be squeezed onto one side of a seven-inch record! The other side was devoted to his famous interpretation of the great 1904 ballad hit, "Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold."

Also of reminiscent interest were No. 7115, on which Romain sang two favorite old Dave Graham Songs, "My Dad's Dinner Pail" and "Paddy Duffys' Cart," to an unusual accompaniment of cornet, xylophone and piano, and 757, containing his version of Paul Dresser's 1905 classic, "My Gal Sal," doubled with "Arrah

Go On, I'm Gonna Go Back to Oregon," by Samuel Ash

Two other 1917 Emerson records by Romain were No. 759, "The Old Flag Never Touched the Ground" (with "I've Got the Army Blues," by Morton Harvey") and 765, "The Trail to Sunset Valley" doubled with "Rackety-Coo," by Grace Nash (Grace Kerns) and Samuel Ash. In the same year Romain also sang "My Own Iona" on a vertical-cut Starr record. Starr records were the forerunners of Gennetts. If he made more for Starr or other little known companies, I have not heard of them. As far as I know, he never sang after 1917 for any company except Edison, but the infrequent and irregular appearance of his records suggests that he was not under contract and that he was devoting nearly all his time to stage appearances.

So here we take leave of Manuel Romain, a gallant trouper of the old school who, in spite of incurable illness and the depression his physical condition must have made him feel, kept his courage high and retained his glorious voice unto the last. As long as there are collectors of Edison cylinders and discs, and their number steadily increases, the name of Manuel Romain will remain not only one of the most glamorous of the minstrel and vaudeville history of his day, but he also will rank among the outstanding contributors to the popular repertoire of the old-fashioned phonograph. "Mannie's" himself has long been gone, but much of the good that his life's work accomplished still lives, and will live.

Since the foregoing was written, Raymond Walker, the song writer, has called my attention to references which Edward B. Marks made to Romain in his book, "They All Sang." The veteran music publisher declared that "to plant a song with Dick José or Manuel Romain was tantamount to having a nation-wide hit, because the minstrel tenors never missed. They had a practiced quaver in their high, pure, almost soprano voices that served them for years. They carried their audience in their pockets." Marks also recalled that Romain introduced "Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold." I might mention that my friend Ray Walker composed the music of Romain's first Columbia offering "Let's Grow Old Together, Honey," which was also a success on a 1911 Blue Amberol.

I have likewise received the following letter from Hattiemay Thomas, the city clerk of Quincy, Massachusetts, in reply to one from me, asking for a copy of Romain's death certificate:

"According to our records, Manuel A. Romain died in Quincy on December 22, 1926. Cause of death: Acute anemic hemorrhage—carcinoma of bladder. His birthplace is given as Spain and he was about 56 years old at the time of death. He was buried in the New Calvary Cemetery in Boston, Mass. We have no in-

formation concerning surviving relatives."

Miss Thomas' letter does little except confirm the statement that the tenor was born in Spain and seems to indicate that Romain was his real name instead of one assumed for the stage. The absence of a birth date is especially disappointing. Of course, it does reveal his middle initial to be A.—but we don't know what the A. stands for!

Next Month — ELIZABETH SPENCER

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ELIZABETH SPENCER

By JIM WALSH



A 1915 photograph of ELIZABETH SPENCER

Sometimes I am asked what I shall write about for HOBBIES when I have run out of recording artists. The answer is, I shan't run out. A set of books the size of the Encyclopaedia Britannica would be required to publish an exhaustive account of all the American performers who made rec-

ords at some time from Edison's invention of the phonograph in 1877 to the advent of electric recording in 1925. This would leave the task of setting forth the exploits of "crooners" and swing bands to more willing hands than mine and would also bequeath the operatic stars and other "celebrity artists" to more capable commentators than I. And if my writing were extended to chronicling the achievements of the pioneer British artists another group of volumes almost of Britannica scope would become necessary.

It is often said that only a handful of artists could be recorded with reasonable fidelity in the acoustic era, but that is true of only the earlier years. When I wake in the middle of the night one of the things I worry about is the disconcerting knowledge that I could turn out an article a month for the next hundred years and still have left artists worth writing about at the end of my century of exertion. In other words, life is too short. But, since there's nothing much we can do about that, let's consider now the career of one of the most glamorous and popular of women record makers—the late Elizabeth Spencer, who was probably Thomas A. Edison's favorite soprano, just as Walter Van Burnt, with whom she frequently sang, was his best liked tenor.

This accomplished lady's career as a phonograph singer was comparatively brief. Her name first appeared in the Edison cylinder list for February, 1911, and she does not appear to have made records after suffering a nervous breakdown in 1926. But in those fifteen years she won great popularity and a loyal following that few other singers enjoyed.

Probably the first mention of Elizabeth Spencer as a singer for records appeared in the *Talking Machine World* for December 15, 1910, in an article headed "New Edison Artists":

"Among the artists recently secured for the domestic catalog, the one of whom the most is expected by the company is Elizabeth Spencer, the well-known mezzo-soprano. Miss Spencer, who has hosts of admirers among the patrons of vaudeville, also enjoys a splendid reputation in concert circles, and will be a regular contributor to the Edison catalogs, beginning with the February lists. Her voice is a rich, full mezzo-soprano of an unusually sympathetic quality, her vocal style is pleasing in the extreme, and her enunciation is delightfully distinct; all of which equips her in an unusual manner for record making. The National experts are delighted with her work and regard her as a rare 'find'—so much so that they have secured her for a number of years under an exclusive contract to sing only for Edison records. Frank Ormsby, tenor, who is associated with Miss Spencer in duet work on the concert platform, is another artist who has recently identified himself with the Edison catalog."

Before going on to consideration of Miss Spencer's first records, perhaps

it would be well to give brief consideration to her personal background. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Dickerson and she was born in St. Louis, but I have not ascertained her birthdate. When I asked the registrar of the New Jersey State Department of Health at Trenton to let me have a copy of her death certificate, the request was curtly declined on the ground that I had no legal right to the information it contained. That was the only such refusal I have ever had in all my research work. I think we may assume that since Elizabeth Spencer's son, Allen B. Spencer, was with an engineering corps in the first World War, she was probably between 35 and 40 when her first records appeared. According to an obituary notice in the *Denver Post* for Tuesday, April 22, 1930, she was "born to the purple," and "her social traditions were linked to the French aristocracy of St. Louis through her mother" who married Captain John Dickerson, an officer of the Confederate Army. After Dickerson's death, his widow married William Gilpin, who became in 1861 the first governor of the Territory of Colorado. The *Post* article continues that the singer "as a child, with her sister, Lu and Louise, and her brother Sidney, was brought to Colorado, to live in the log house then known as the Gubernatorial Mansion."

That last statement gives me pause. Gilpin was territorial governor for only one year, being succeeded by J. Evans in 1862. If Elizabeth Spencer actually lived in the Colorado governor's "mansion" she must have been more than 50 when she began making records. Pending further evidence, I shall prefer to believe that Mrs. Dickerson's marriage to William Gilpin took place some years after the latter's brief experience as governor.

Quoting further from the *Post* obituary:

"She attended Loretta Convent and Eastern schools. Endowed with natural gifts, she became an accomplished linguist, played the violin and piano like a virtuoso, and possessed a singing voice of such loveliness that impresarios did not wait for her to seek them out, but they came vainly (to impress) on Mrs. Gilpin her duty to permit her daughter to make opera her career. Steeped in convention, the mother declined to permit her daughter to enter upon a career, so she crooned lullabies instead of singing arias. As years passed and her splendid gifts attracted more and more attention, she accepted an offer from Thomas A. Edison Recording Company, and her voice, a dramatic soprano, has added to the happiness of thousands of homes."

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Later, I shall quote again from the *Denver Post*. But now I should like to fill in a few details omitted in that article, written by Frances Wayne. A 1914 Edison Blue Amberol catalog said:

"Miss Spencer was born in St. Louis, but has spent the greater part of her time in Denver. After studying under Bouny in Paris, Miss Spencer embarked upon the professional career which has proven such a success. She has toured the country in musical comedies. Her great popularity among music lovers is due to her superb voice, which is unquestionably one of the purest and sweetest sopranos which the phonograph has recorded. To the rare quality of her voice Miss Spencer adds a wonderful technique, singing with perfect poise and ease under all conditions." It is perhaps worth mentioning here that another Spencer — Grace Spencer, who was probably the first woman to make records professionally — also studied with the distinguished Belgian baritone, Jacques Bouhy. And Grace Spencer's parents also objected to her having a career in opera, so she gave up her dreams of acclaim at the Metropolitan in favor of marriage, as did Elizabeth Dickerson, whose first marriage was to a Denver man, Otis Spencer. Elizabeth Spencer's first vocal instructor was Hattie Sims, of Denver, who had been a pupil of Blanche Marchesi.

One of my faithful friends at the Edison laboratory, learning that I contemplated an article on Elizabeth Spencer, kindly volunteered the following comments:

"We knew very little of Miss Spencer's background. Just before she became an Edison artist she was singing at Churchill's restaurant, a very well known, high class place, and Elizabeth was a star performer there. She was a very likable person, a willing worker and tried to accommodate herself to the vagaries of horn recording. She never showed an 'artistic temperament.' She married Southworth after she had started on her record career, and moved to Montclair. Southworth was a broker in cotton, or so I understood.

"One time the Edison Mixed Quartet, of which Miss Spencer was a member, was trying to record the old gospel hymn, 'Bringing in the Sheaves,' but after a long session the best they could bring in was 'Cheese.' No matter how they tried to pronounce it the record played back 'cheese' and it was given up for the time, as the quartet was all in. I suppose it was the horn that caused it.

"Another time and another song, Elizabeth was to sing a solo and had trouble getting a word to sound right. I think it was 'neck' and it sounded like 'ke-neck.' Miss Spencer finally got to laughing so much she quit, but after practicing the thing she came back later and recorded it O. K.

"The only time I remember Elizabeth Spencer really mad was not because of recording but of something done to her car. She told us that she had an afternoon engagement to sing at the Montclair High School. She had taken her new car and parked in front of the school. When she came out she found the car covered with chalk marks. It was around Halloween and some kids had written on the car. While the chalk could be wiped off, the scratches still stayed on the paint. . . . Dave Kaplan was a member of the orchestra at Churchill's for three years, and was an admirer of her singing ability and character. Once in a while Elizabeth would make a remark about something she learned at a private school. Occasionally she might refer to some happening at home that struck her as funny and tell us about it."

From other sources I have learned that a delightful sense of humor was one of Elizabeth Spencer's engaging characteristics. This was amusingly exemplified when Thomas A. Edison thought that he had discovered a

means of doing away with tremolo in his recording artists' voices. "The Old Man" hated wobbly tones worse than anything else, and he decided that this could best be remedied by tightly strapping the singer's upper chest with adhesive tape before a recording session began. The veteran Edison employee, Andy Webber, was much embarrassed when he was told that he had been assigned to approaching the women artists and getting their permission to do experimental taping. But he finally reflected, my informant says, that "Lizzie Spencer has told me all the best jokes I know," and decided that she wouldn't be offended. She wasn't. She laughed heartily and said she was willing to make the "sacrifice" for her art. However, a process of trial and error

proved that adhesive tape didn't cure excessive vibrato and to Andy's intense relief the idea was abandoned.

Now let's go back to the beginning of Miss Spencer's recording career. Photographs of the soprano and her duet partner, Mr. Ormsby, appeared in the February issue of Edison's *New Phonogram*, and their first record was a four-minute Amberol of "Alma, Where Do You Live?" a waltz song from the musical comedy, "Alma." "The number," we read, "is presented exactly as in the show, Miss Spencer singing the solo parts, with the chorus rendered as a conversational duet. . . This is the first Edison record made by these artists, who are well known in church and concert circles as accomplished duettists, and it will be seen at once that they are a decided acquisition to the Edison catalog."

## RECORDS

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PHONOGRAPH RECORDS wanted: Highest prices paid for vocal operatic and concert songs. Send for free buying list.—Ball, 1135 DuPont, Miami, Fla. d6257

(To be Concluded)

## MISCELLANEOUS

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 617 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

WANTED: music rolls for a Mills Company violana virtuoso (two violins and piano combination)—and a western coin-operated electric piano. Box Z. L. M. c/o HOBBIES. aux.

MELODEONS, Melodeon organs. Beautiful restored instruments for sale. Will buy instruments needing repairs. Expert repairing service.—C-sharp Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich.

OLD TIME RECORDS. Operatic, instrumental, popular. All your favorite artists represented. Priced reasonably. Records bought. Write wants or visit.—Heyman, 628 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. d3844

WANTED: Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues.—Elmer Moore, 1085 14th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. s6844

Wanted: Miniature pianos and organs.—Mrs. Tufts, 9051 Riverview Road, Washington 20, D. C. au3633

FOR SALE: 90 Ampico player piano rolls by outstanding recording artists.—Dr. Herman L. Kretschmer, 200 East Pearson Street, Chicago, Ill. s3882

Rosewood square piano; Mathushek. Circa 1862. Excellent condition. Make offer. Write.—Raymond Devenport, R. R. 2, Madison, Mo. s3234

Rare Vocal Recordings, including imports. Free lists.—Music Den, 826 Irving Street, San Francisco, Calif. d6276

FOR SALE: One Nelson & Wiggins automatic player in walnut case. Contains piano unit, 2 drums, xylophone, castanet, tambourine, cymbals, etc. Has 10 tune perforated roll. New rolls currently available. Excellent condition. Send 25c for photograph and particulars.—H. R. Quinn, 105 Westmoreland, Montgomery 6, Alabama. o40001

HAMMOND ORGAN, Model B, 4 leg spinet type with speaker, \$1,950.—Lee, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Tex. au1002

OLD SMALL HOHNER accordion. Made in Germany.—Mrs. A. E. Clauss, P. O. Box 313, El Cajon, Calif. au1441

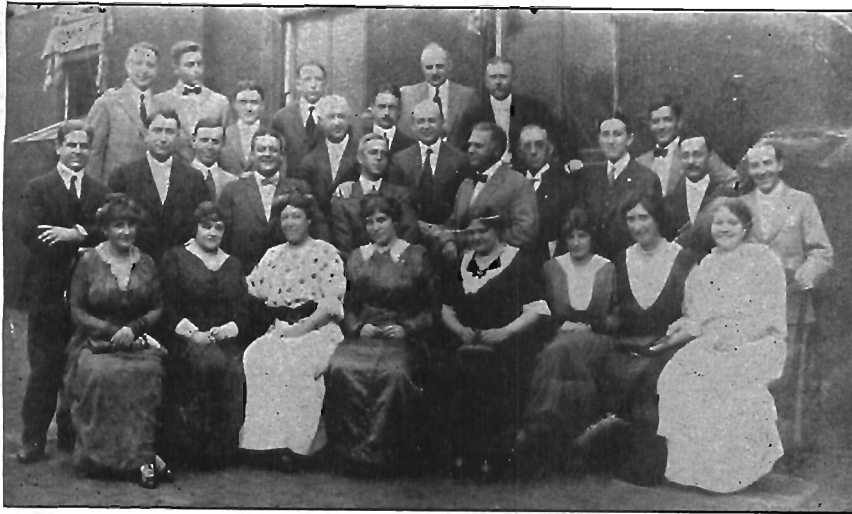
BACK POPULAR sheet music. Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 6, Colo. jly12867

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ELIZABETH SPENCER

(Continued from the August Issue)

By JIM WALSH



Elizabeth Spencer is one of this group of Edison artists, photographed in September, 1914. The picture was recently found by Fred J. Rabenstein at the Edison laboratory. Mr. Rabenstein thinks the artists and technicians probably were assembled to record a medley of airs from a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. In the front row, the second, fourth and fifth women, reading left to right, are not yet identified. The first is Marie Kaiser, soprano; third, Elizabeth Spencer; fifth, Helen Clark, mezzo-soprano; sixth, E. Eleanor Patterson, contralto; and seventh, Charlotte Kirwan, soprano. Second row: Albert Farrington, baritone; Edward Meeker, comedian; Frederick Wheeler, baritone (Wheeler's duet partner, John Young, tenor, is just behind him); Harvey Hindermeyer, tenor; Harvey N. Emmons, recording expert; Royal Fish, tenor; William F. Hooley, bass; Vernon Archibald, baritone; John F. Burckhardt, pianist; and Emory B. Randolph, tenor. Fred Rabenstein is behind Archibald and Burckhardt. The three men standing behind Emmons are: Walter H. Miller, Edison recording manager; H. Voorhis, technician, and W. H. A. Cronkhite, recording director. In the rear row are: Donald Chalmers, bass; Andy Weber, of the Edison staff; George Agnew, technician; Robert A. Gayler, pianist; and Eugene A. Jaudas, violinist and leader of Jaudas' Society Orchestra.

beth Spencer's being a hit. In March, she was represented by a four-minute solo, "The Songs My Mother Used to Sing." She and another well known soprano, Inez Barbour, also sang "Hear Me, Norma," from Bellini's opera, "Norma," on an Amberol record, and Miss Spencer contributed a solo; "Just a-Wearyin' for You," to the two-minute list. Thus, at the very beginning of her Edison association, the accomplished artist was giving proof of her remarkable versatility, which helped her to sing well all types of music from the frankest of "popular" tunes (she even did a duet or two with that happy-go-lucky, ragtime specialist, Billy Murray) to exacting operatic arias. But she was best loved in old-fashioned heart songs of the kind particularly dear to Mr. Edison, and which his company issued in more profusion than any other. Though she seldom essayed comedy, singing with Walter Van Brunt in 1912 she took part in a version of the catchy "Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee," which is remarkable for the "hard-boiled" manner in which she sings some of the lines. Her "buzz aroun', buzz aroun', buddy, keep a-buzzin' 'roun'" is exactly in the style of Mae West's "Come up and see me some time!" that became familiar nearly a generation later.

Going back to 1911, Edison's enthusiasm for the new soprano was well shown when a four-minute cylinder containing two songs, "Thy Beaming Eyes" and "Mighty Lak' a Rose," was offered in April. Said the supplement writer:

"In her treatment of these charming numbers Miss Spencer again displays vocal timbre and artistry of the highest order, and once again justifies our action in securing her exclusive services for the Edison catalog. The many compliments that reach us from Edison owners on Miss Spencer's records confirm us in our belief that she is without question one of the most valuable acquisitions we have ever secured in the way of talent." (In the same list, Miss

The other day I answered an ad offering \$5.00 for Jos. C. Smith Victor record #18661. "Left Alone Again Blues" and found I had 3 copies. This goes to show that I have records not found elsewhere. I sold it to this man for \$1.00 and have thousands of others like this. Let me know your wants.

AL McREA, SR.  
Box 182, Westville, N. J.

"Rolls now available for SEEBURG and other 65-note automatic pianos. Old and new standard and popular songs. Rolls also for MILLS VIOLIN VIRTUOSO and other odd types. WRITE FOR LISTS, ETC.

J. LAWRENCE COOK  
824 E. 165th St., New York, N. Y.  
JL 250c

Miss Spencer also made a two-minute solo, "In Dear Old Tennessee," for the February list, as did Mr. Ormsby, whose title was "A Rose Fable." Of the soprano's offering the supplement said:

"A pretty dainty melody with an unusually catchy refrain in which a dainty's wistful musing opens up a charming vista of the Tennessee cotton fields. In her treatment of this melodious fragment Miss Spencer, who here makes her first solo record for the Edison catalog, displays an abundance of the wealth of voice and expression which have won her an enviable reputation in musical comedy and vaudeville circles."

Frank Ormsby made a few more records, but his singing doesn't seem to have been particularly attractive to Edison patrons, and his name soon ceased to appear in the monthly lists. But there was no doubt about Eliza-

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. Works cleaned and polished, squeaks eliminated, broken tips and teeth replaced in combs, cases refinished, parts in stock and made to order.

Choice music boxes of all types for sale including machines playing up to 60 selections. Others have dancing dolls, organs, drums, bells and castanets, etc. Every item offered rebuilt like new throughout.

Rare bird boxes in enamel, gold, silver, tortoise shell, etc.

Music box organ bellows, and bellows from bird boxes, and bird in cage pieces rebuilt like new. Birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

LLOYD G. KELLEY  
Successor to



MUSIC BOX COMPANY

Complete line of old Swiss and disc type music boxes. Christmas tunes available for 15 1/2" Regina at \$2.50 ea. Over 200 other tunes to select from.

Special: a new 30 note 4 1/2" diameter disc music box with 20 discs, \$25.00. Choice of Christmas music, children's tunes, operatic tunes, etc. Machine 6 1/2" long, 5" wide, 2 1/4" high, and discs sold separately for installation in your own box — easily installed. Machine, \$10.00. Discs 50c each.

Swiss musical movements for sale playing one to four tunes. Also Swiss musical movements in shells for stuffed toys. Send for catalogue and prices. Sole manufacturers of patented Minuet Dancing Doll. Send for catalogue and price.

P. O. Box 342

Hanover,

Massachusetts

Spencer and Ormsby sang "Swing Me High, Swing Me Low" from The Follies of 1910."

A month later, Miss Spencer was one of the artists taking part in an unusual Amberol cylinder at first listed as "Mother Goose Days" but later re-named "Jack and Jill Medley." Made especially for children, it included three verses of "Jack and Jill" sung by Billy Murray and William F. Hooley; "Humpty Dumpty," by Ada Jones; "Little Boy Blue," by Harry Anthony (John Young); "Hark! Hark! The Dogs Do Bark," by the Premier (American) Quartet; three verses of "Little Bo Peep," by Miss Spencer; "Little Tommy Tucker," by Ada Jones; "Hey, Diddle Diddle," Murray; "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep," the quartet again; and "Dickory Dickory Dock," Miss Spencer, Mr. Anthony and the quartet.

Obviously, it is out of the question to trace in detail the activities of so prolific a recorder, but the November, 1911, Edison list is unusually interesting from the standpoint of Elizabeth Spencer recordings. It also contains a photograph of her in one of the "hour glass" costumes then fashionable, one that well displayed her tall and stately figure. The soprano is represented by the old ballad, "Dream Faces," in which she was assisted by an all-star male quartet including Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scanlan), Harry Anthony, James F. Harrison (Frederick Wheeler) and Bill Hooley. She also sang a soprano obbligato to Van Brunt's record of a now completely forgotten song, "The Old Town is Looking Mighty Good Tonight," and took part in a medley of airs from "Pinafore" and the "Anvil Chorus" from "Trovatore" by the Edison Light Opera Company. In after years Miss Spencer sang obligatos to many tenor solos by Edison artists, especially Van Brunt. One of these, "On the Banks of the Brandywine," coupled on Diamond Disc 80160 with Van Brunt's "I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen," became the biggest selling record Edison ever made. Virtually every Edison owner had a copy of this record, partly, it may be, because dealers were always eager to point out that "Kathleen" was "Mr. Edison's favorite song."

In 1912 Miss Spencer made several duets with Charles W. Harrison, who, like the soprano, was just beginning his brilliant recording career. Their August offering was "A Night in Venice," issued with this comment:

"It is most delightful to hear artists whose singing is unquestionably done with consummate ease. It is immediately the case with Miss Spencer and Mr. Harrison, both of whom are singers of rare ability. Their clear, pure tones harmonize perfectly in this familiar duet, the graceful easy swing of which is suggestive of the quiet waters of the canals, and the silently gliding gondolas."

Other singers with whom Miss Spencer made duets from 1911 to 1914 were Irving Gillette (Henry Burr), John Young, Fred Wheeler, E. Eleanor Patterson and Harvey Hindermeyer.

The remarkable Edison Blue Amberol indestructible cylinders and the

even more remarkable Diamond Discs were introduced late in 1912. With the Diamond Discs it became possible for the first time to hear not merely an approximation of a singer's voice but the real thing so perfectly recorded that listeners couldn't tell any difference between the actual tones and their reproduced version, when the artist sang in direct comparison on the stage with the New Edison phonograph. The first Edison disc I ever heard at close range was Elizabeth Spencer's duet with the baritone, Vernon Archibald, of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling." I was rather appalled at the amount of surface noise on an unusually scratchy pressing, but I realized that the blending of the

## RECORDS

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. S6008

**REGULAR AUCTIONS** classical vocal records. Free lists.—S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colo. o 3652

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 15 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o122741

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought.—E. Hirschenman, 100 Duncan, Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

**WE BUY** contents of homes, furniture, and Victrola records and sell them.—Curlo Shop, 106A Court St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Phone - TR 5-2186 n60201

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit.—Record Collectors Service, 602 East 88th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please.—"Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3004

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** wanted: Highest prices paid for vocal operatic and concert songs. Send for free buying list.—Ball, 1135 DuPont, Miami, Fla. d6257

**Rare Vocal Recordings, including imports.** Free lists.—Music Den, 825 Irving Street, San Francisco, Calif. d6276

**Records — Out-of-print, Dixieland, swing, sweet, vocals, blues, personalities.** Want lists and inquiries receive prompt attention.—Les Zeiger, 1056 Sherman Ave., Bronx 56, N. Y. s1003

**RECORDS:** 50 15½" Regina records, each \$2.—Guy Saulsbury, Spicer, Minn. sp

**HAVE DUPLICATE** Record Catalogs to exchange with other collectors.—G. Moran, Lodi, Wis. s1001

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**BACK POPULAR** sheet music. Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. jly12867

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, \$1.80. Direct from importer.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York City 7, N. Y. ja3306

**REGINAPHONE** music box with attachment for playing Victrola records also. One doz. 15" discs and some Victrola records. Write.—Lillian Shull, 1918 E. Colorado, Pasadena 8, Calif. sp

**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** I buy and sell, trade. Send 12c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. n3023

**JEWETT AND GOODMAN,** Melodeon type organ; rosewood case, refinished, and in excellent condition. Will send photo if interested. Zither, \$20, never been used. Ukelin, \$35, perfect.—Leda Williams, Smith Center, Kans. s1842

**TANGLEY,** 43 whistle calliope, restored to like new condition. Automatic or hand played. Complete.—Lee, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Tex. s1291

**DULCIMER.** Perfect tone, beautiful case, \$150.—Blanche E. Watson, Geneva, Illinois. s188

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6215

**EDISON CYLINDER** Phonograph, morning glory horn, stand. 25 records, \$25. Express Collect.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. s1821

**ANTIQUE ROSEWOOD** square grand piano, large octagon legs, in perfect condition and a beautiful tone, over 100 years old.—Mrs. Ralph K. Duryea, 716 S. Main St., Reading, Mich. s1802

voices and the way in which each singer maintained a separate individuality was something I had never heard equalled before in reproduced music. The other side was "A Perfect Day," by the Metropolitan Quartet, in which Miss Spencer frequently sang, and in this the way in which it was possible to trace the individual contribution of the four voices to a harmonious ensemble was even more astounding.

That was a good many years after the discs made their debut. Meanwhile, Miss Spencer's career as a recording artist reached its height when she became one of Edison's tone test singers, traveling from coast to coast and proving by what the Edison people called "the acid test of direct comparison" that the human ear was incapable of detecting any difference between her own voice and its recorded facsimile—as long, of course, as she restrained herself to the phonograph's volume level. Early in 1915, Miss Spencer gave a demonstration in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and a newspaper critic wrote:

"The Edison Diamond Disc recital, with Miss Elizabeth Spencer as soloist, and singing in unison with the instrument, demonstrated the distinctly superior qualities of the transmitting features of the Edison phonograph.

"Miss Spencer alternated in phrases with the instrument, and when the phonograph supplanted the singer not a suspicion was aroused of the break from the real voice. This test was satisfying to those of musical understanding, and indicative of the marvelous progress Mr. Edison has produced in rendering true tones, colorings, accent and expression, in all that makes musical artistry."

The singer's home-town paper, the *Denver Post*, from which part of her death notice has already been quoted, published the following news story on March 4, 1916, under the heading of "Soloist Will Sing Duet with Record of Her Own Voice":

"A new field of music will be opened to Denver people Monday night at Trinity church when Miss Elizabeth Spencer, popular New York soprano, will compare her living voice to a re-action of her tones made in the laboratory of Thomas A. Edison. Miss Spencer will sing duets with the Edison records of her songs. She will take the contralto parts with her living voice, the tones blending exquisitely with the soprano of her record. Comparison of the living voice with its record, showing the exact reproduction made of the tones of the singer, forms the basis of a set of tone tests which have startled music lovers in the East and will revolutionize methods of teaching vocal music.

"Miss Spencer's musical ability is widely known in Denver, her home city.

"Until ten years ago Miss Spencer made her home in this city, receiving her early musical training here. She will be in Denver only for Monday night, being on her way from New York to San Francisco. Her tone test brings out the genius of Edison supreme. Music's recreation is the great inventor's latest and favorite invention. The tone test is as daring acid-testing a demonstration as any to which an invention has ever been submitted. If two singers were on the stage, singing simultaneously, the effect could not be more perfect than that obtained by the record and the voice of the singer.

"It will be a society event, the section of Denver society which cultivates a taste for music and art having been invited. The musicians and music critics of the city will gather to hear the great musical phenomena. Nowhere in the West has there before been a serious test of voice tones by the new

method. The vaudeville stage, however, has embraced the new invention, the living voice and the record so similar they cannot be distinguished making the bases for a jest on the part of those who tread the vaudeville boards."

During the first years of the Diamond Disc, Elizabeth Spencer achieved permanent prestige as one of the foremost Edison artists. A book, "Edison Records of Music That Lives," listing the 300 most popular discs, was published a few years later, and her name appears in it repeatedly. Under the heading of "heart songs," she is mentioned as singing with Van Brunt in "On the Banks of the Brandywine" and with Hindermeyer in "In the Evening By the Moonlight, Dear Louise." Also listed are her solos of "Call Me Your Darling, Again," "Silver Threads Among the Gold," "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother," "Whisper and I Shall Hear," "I Hear You Calling Me," "O Promise Me" and "Love's Old Sweet Song." More popular duets are "Ever of Thee I'm Fondly Dreaming," with Archibald; "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" (Archibald); "Silver Sands of Love" (Charles Hart) and "The Mocking Bird" (Van Brunt.) The Metropolitan Quartet and Homestead Trio, in which she sang, are also well represented.

The list of best-selling sacred songs is full of Metropolitan Quartet records. Also extremely popular was "Silent Night," originally sung by Miss Spencer, Young and Wheeler; then remade by Spencer, Young and Archibald; and, in 1924, made again, with Hart taking Young's place. Highly popular, too, was the beautiful duet of "Abide With Me" with Thomas Chalmers.

In concert and operatic songs, Miss Spencer was represented by a double-faced coupling of "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice" from "Samson et Delilah," and "The King of the Shades" from "Ballo in Maschera." Edison had the peculiar custom of listing some artists in various price classifications, according to the type of music. Thus this record cost \$2; most of the "heart songs" were in the \$1.50 class, and ordinary popular songs by Miss Spencer were \$1.) She also sang in a record of the Rigoletto Quartet, the other artists being Odette Le Fontenay, Max Bloch and Arthur Middleton. Turning to less serious music, the soprano took part in medleys from "The Mikado" and "Pinafore." Certainly an impressive list! Incidentally, since her voice extended to the contralto range, she sang contralto in the Rigoletto Quartet. Her remarkable range was referred to in the catalog description of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling": "Miss Spencer's voice, a soprano so flexible and of so great a range, that in this rendition it sounds almost like a true contralto—a characteristic that makes it especially suitable for this quiet, beautiful melody."

Elizabeth Spencer had become so prominently associated in the public mind with Edison that it was a shock to many Diamond Disc dealers and buyers of Edison records when the May, 1917, Victor supplement an-

nounced that she had signed an exclusive agreement with that company. Probably a higher paid contract and the opportunity of singing for a larger segment of the record-buying public were the considerations that persuaded the soprano to desert her first love.

Victor no doubt felt considerable exultation at having won the artist who had done so much to demonstrate the New Edison's unmatched realism. An entire page of the supplement was devoted to a photograph of "Elibabeth Spencer, who now makes records exclusively for the Victor." On the opposite page was a description of the first Spencer record, No. 18250, which combined "A Perfect Day" and "Love's Dream After the Ball." In part, it said:

"'A Perfect Day' has won its way into favor perhaps more quickly than any other high-class song of sentiment of the day. . . . Elizabeth Spencer, a talented young American singer, has chosen it for one of her first Victor records and she sings it with great tenderness, and a very beautiful 'cello obbligato makes the record additionally attractive. 'Love's Dream After the Ball' is an old familiar melody set to words. . . . As a waltz the melody has brought moments of delicious happiness to two or more generations of dancers and still retains its charm."

Edison displayed considerable ingenuity when it sought a way of combatting the loss of prestige involved in Miss Spencer's change of recording companies. Instead of adopting a hush-hush policy, the Diamond Disc people urged their dealers to play the Victor and Edison Spencer records one after the other and let music lovers decide for themselves which was best. The same procedure was adopted in 1920 when the pianist, Sergei Rachmaninoff, left Edison for Victor. Instead of trying to hide the fact, Edison advertised that "we are very glad to announce that Rachmaninoff has also made records for one of the standard talking machines. We invite comparison." To this Victor retorted that the pianist-composer became an exclusive Victor artist "only after a thorough test of other sound-reproducing media."

Elizabeth Spencer's name was not mentioned in an article "The Deadly Parallel," that appeared in the May, 1917, issue of Edison's publication, *Diamond Points*, but there was no mistaking who was meant:

Regrets have been expressed in some quarters over the subsidizing by a talking machine company of a certain singer of popular songs. Blessings often come in disguise. It is now apparent that no finer demonstration of the superiority of the New Edison over this particular talking machine can be staged than a comparison of an Edison Re-Creation of this singer's voice and one of her new talking machine records.

"Writes an Edison enthusiast of this singer's talking machine record: 'It does not sound like the Miss \*\*\*\*\* I know. She was very kind in selecting for her first record one she had sung for the New Edison. I played these two records in comparison and the result is fierce. If she will only sing more of the same songs for the talking machine that she has sung for the New Edison, I think it will mean money for the Edison dealer.'"

(None of these comments about the comparative results obtained in the



long-ago days of the abandoned system of acoustic recording should be interpreted as reflecting on the present-day output of RCA Victor and other companies. After all, Edison has been out of the record business since 1929, and the lateral cut system although technically inferior to Edison's hill-and-dale has completely supplanted vertical recording except that the vertical process is used in making the finest radio transcriptions. It is a scarcely questioned fact that Edison recording in its day was better than that offered by any competitor, but the science of recording has made many strides since then.)

An unbiased listener can determine for himself that what the Edison company maintained was true. No more devastating demonstration of the superiority of hill-and-dale acoustic recording over the lateral type can be given than is afforded by playing Miss Spencer's Edison and Victor records of "Love's Dream After the Ball" together, or one immediately after the other. The Edison record is the pure, undistorted human voice—of course with a background of scratch. The Victor has a mechanical, ground-out sound, is deficient in overtones, and with few indications of the gorgeous opulence of voice for which Elizabeth Spencer was famous. Victor recording of her tones later improved but never approached the Edison quality.

Thus it came about that Edison dealers enjoyed nothing better than using Spencer records to make what was known as a "turn-table test." In this picturesque demonstration, four phonographs of approximately the same size and price were placed on a large turn-table that could be revolved into any position. One of the instruments was an Official Laboratory Model Edison. Another always was a Victrola, because this was the most widely advertised and highly touted "talking machine." The others could be chosen from the Brunswick, Aeolian-Vocalion, Sonora, Columbia, Starr or any other well known makes. The dealer would play a record by Miss Spencer or some other well-known artist on each of the needle using machines, then swing the Edison into the same position and play an Edison record. It was a convincing demonstration—so convincing that it badly annoyed talking machine salesmen and in some cities Victor dealers tried to fight it by advertising: "Don't Have Your Victrola Demonstrated By A Dealer Who Wants to Sell You Another Make of Machine!" Not only that, but one of the makers of lateral cut records is said to have paid free-lance recording artists a double fee not to sing for Edison any numbers that they had made for the lateral records. If the performer had already made an Edison record of a song, the competing company allegedly chose some other artist to do its version. This eventually put a stop to the turn-table comparisons because Edison wanted to use up-to-the-minute records and could not get them done by the artists who

were also recording for the other firm.

"Love's Dream After the Ball" was the only song that Miss Spencer recorded for both Victor and Edison, except that she remade "Love's Old Sweet Song," on a Victor that had previously been sung by Corinne Morgan. She also remade Miss Morgan's old record of "In the Gloaming" and Elise Stevenson's "Elegie." Because both singers had the initials E. S. there was some suspicion that Elizabeth Spencer and Elise Stevenson were the same soprano, but it was unfounded. Miss Stevenson (Mrs. Rusling Wood) is still living in East Orange, New Jersey.

Miss Spencer remained with Victor only three years. Her last Victor record—a duet with Charles Hart of "Let the Rest of the World Go By"—was probably her most popular. It must have been after leaving Victor that she made a few needle-cut records of old favorite songs—"Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," "Old Black Joe," "My Old Kentucky Home" and "Home, Sweet Home"—that appeared under the Emerson, Regal and Banner labels. While under Victor contract during the First World War, she did much singing for men in Army Camps and was a favorite with the troops, in 1921, the soprano was back on the Edison list and probably was happy at returning to her original "stamping grounds." *The Edison Amberola Monthly* for May thus announced this important event:

"EVERYBODY LOVES ELIZABETH SPENCER. Dealers may have noticed lately that Elizabeth Spencer is again making records for us after a period of silence. On the March Amberola list, she appeared as the singer of 'Son-of-Mine,' and on the May list she is programmed for a duet, 'Good-bye,' with Lewis James.

"Several years' silence has not dimmed the beauty of the soprano voice which Mr. Edison once declared he thought to be the finest in the United States. Her tones are just as pure and true as ever. The popularity of Elizabeth Spencer may be judged from the fact that, when after an absence of four years from the concert stage, it was announced that she was to make an extensive tour for the Edison Recital Department next fall, many Edison dealers clamored for her appearance in their respective towns. For some months prior to signing her up, the Recital Department had been deluged with applications from dealers for Miss Spencer's artistic services, but our own Elizabeth was loath to leave her beautiful home in Montclair, New Jersey, for a 'Pullman Car Vacation.' At last, however, she was persuaded that it was really her duty to the great American public to 'hit the trail' once more, and she consented to go on another Edison concert tour. There is not a shadow of doubt that her concerts will duplicate her extraordinary successes of former years. . . . At 9 a. m. on April 11, the Recital Department received a signed contract from Miss Spencer. At 1 p. m. of the same day her entire fall season was booked! We wonder if any other American concert artist has ever equalled this rapid-engagement feat?"

So once more Elizabeth Spencer took to the road, singing in comparison with the New Edison and proving that her reproduced voice was identical with her living tones. The *Amberola Monthly* for September, 1921, contained a full-page photo of the Homestead Trio, a popular Edison group composed of Miss Spencer and

Betsy Lane Shepherd, sopranos, and Amy Ellerman, contralto. Of Miss Spencer it commented: "Her voice possesses the unusual quality which enables her to sing equally well in soprano, mezzo soprano and contralto regions." Also included was the following verse written by Miss Ellerman to accompany the picture:

"There were three crows sat on a wall,  
They could not sing at all, at all.  
The Homestead Trio sat on a fence—  
And some folks think they sing immense.  
They love to sing, they love to chaff,  
But, most of all, they love to laugh."

Poetess Ellerman also wrote a jingle paying tribute to Mrs. Southworth's skill as a coffee maker:

"You think we mind prohibition?  
Not so, say we,  
When Elizabeth makes such coffee  
As she served us three."

Four or five years more as a recording artist and concert recitalist were left to Elizabeth Spencer. Then, in 1926, she had a nervous breakdown from which she never recovered, followed in April, 1930, by her death. Here are some quotations from the *Denver Post* obituary:

"How is mother?"

"Across miles of space through the darkness of midnight, Monday, Allen E. Spencer asked the question of his sister, Mrs. Abbott Overdorfer, at their mother's home, 33 Aubrey Road, Montclair, New Jersey.

"There was a brief pause, broken by a sob, and the answer, 'As your call came over the phone mother passed away.'"

"Thus, followed by the love of her children, one in the East, one in the West, Mrs. Elizabeth Dickerson Spencer Southworth died as the result of a lingering illness. Mrs. Southworth was better known in Denver as Mrs. Otis E. Spencer. . . . and for years the best known vocalist in the West. Thomas A. Edison once described her as 'the woman with the perfect recording voice.'"

"The close bond existing between mother and son was revealed during the early hours Monday evening. Spencer, regarded as one of the cleverest young men in the publicity business, was engaged with two associates preparing a skit for the Gridiron Club dinner given Tuesday evening for the Press Club. He had received no alarming news from his mother, but again and again he rose from the table where he was working, walked to the window and returned, started to work, and finally at midnight rushed to the telephone and put in a call for Montclair, New Jersey, with a request for quick service. 'I was sure something was wrong,' was his only comment when he hung up the receiver.

"The West has produced no more vivid personality than that of Elizabeth Spencer Southworth. . . . Following her divorce from Spencer, she became the wife of E. B. Southworth, Jr., in 1912, and has made her home in Montclair, with occasional concert tours under the auspices of the Edison Company. On her last visit to Denver in 1926, Mrs. Southworth appeared in two concerts, and during her visit here suffered a nervous breakdown from which she failed to recover. Surviving Mrs. Southworth are her husband her daughter and son; a sister, Mrs. Louise Sherevon, of Washington, D. C., and a half sister, Mrs. J. E. Dodson, formerly 'Polly' Gilpin, of New York City."

An obituary notice in the *Newark News* of Wednesday, April 23, 1930, gave the name of Mrs. Southworth's daughter as Oberndorfer, instead of Ovendorfer; her son's name as Allen B., instead of Allen E., Spencer, and

the sister in Washington as Mrs. Louise Taylor. It said:

"Mrs. Edward B. Southworth, Jr., died yesterday at her home, 33 Aubrey Road, Montclair. Mrs. Southworth had been in ill health the past four years and seriously ill the past six months. Born in St. Louis, Mrs. Southworth had lived in Montclair since 1916. She was formerly a singer in the Watchung Avenue Congregational Church of this town, and was also well known as Elizabeth Spencer. . . . Funeral services will be conducted at the home Friday at 3 p. m., by Rev. Dr. Thomas Travis, pastor of the Watchung Church. Burial will be in Mt. Hebron Cemetery."

And so ends the story of one of the most glamorous ladies of the phonograph—one whose memory is cherished by thousands of record collectors, many of whom have requested this biographical sketch. I wish I could include more precise details of her life and that I knew what has become of her son, Allen Spencer—whether, in fact, he is still living. A letter I wrote to him was returned by the Denver postmaster as undeliverable, with the explanation that his name had not been listed in any fairly recent Denver directory. But it is fortunate that lovers of beautiful singing may still hear Elizabeth Spencer's reproduced voice in all its luscious, velvety perfection and judge for themselves the accuracy of Mr. Edison's pronouncement that she was one of the most highly endowed sopranos of her time. As long as the means exist for reproducing her old Edison and Victor records, Elizabeth Spencer, now dead more than 21 years, will not lack admirers.

Next Month:

MR. & MRS. CHARLES HARRISON

### Copy of HOBBIES Buried with Records in Roanoke's New Municipal Health Center

When a copper-lined steel vault in the wall of the new Roanoke, Va., municipal health center is opened 50 years from now, a copy of the April, 1943, issue of HOBBIES will be among the contents.

The HOBBIES was contributed by Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," together with a number of phonograph records, old and new. City Manager Arthur S. Owens had asked that citizens give family letters, photographs, newspaper clippings and other material of historical interest, to be sealed up in the wall of the center, and not removed until the year 2001. Walsh gave his only duplicate issue of HOBBIES. He also presented several currently popular records by such artists as Patti Paige and Arthur Godfrey, to give the Roanokers of half a century hence an idea of what 1951 popular music is like, as well as several old-time discs and cylinders, including Arthur Collins' perennial classic, "The Preacher and the Bear." Included also were two Edison Diamond Discs, part of a batch recently rescued from the Roanoke city dump. Walsh learned that a man had intended to give him some 50 dis-

carded Edison records, but his wife, not knowing his wishes, sent the records to the dump. When Walsh heard this, the records had been covered by several feet of miscellaneous rubbish, but at his urgent request they were finally "unearthed." More than half had been broken by striking on rocks, and others had been badly damaged by heavy rains. Walsh already had good copies of those still in playing condition, so he decided it would be appropriate to let a couple of them be preserved in the health center wall.

### No John Bieling Day Party This September

It has been found necessary to abandon the plan of holding a John Bieling Day gathering of recording artists and record collectors this September. Various things, such as illness and lack of time, have served to handicap the New York collectors who in past years have made most of the arrangements.

Tentative plans called for holding the party on Saturday, September 8, and interest among both collectors and artists has seemed higher than ever before. Consequently, it is a source of regret to everybody that, this year at least, there will be no formal observance of John Bieling Day.

### Musical Box Hobbyists Convention Plans

The third annual meeting of the Musical Box Hobbyists group will be held in Philadelphia, October 13 and 14, at the home of Herbert H. Meyer, 223 Virginia Avenue. Saturday, October 13, will be devoted to the regular business meeting of the organization, and Sunday, October 14, will be for the exhibition, discussions and social activities. Music box and clock collectors and non-members of the group are cordially invited to attend the Sunday, October 14, session. The aims of the organization are to perpetuate existing examples of this lost art, acquaint collectors with rare and unusual types, and place those instruments in their proper sphere in the world of arts and antiques.—R. C. Bornand, Secretary, Pelham, 65, N.Y.

### New York Public Library Demonstrates Old Records & Early Model Phonographs

The New York Public Library gave a demonstration of early phonographs and records on the night of May 23, with about 100 invited guests attending. The occasion honored the memory of Emile Berliner, inventor of the lateral cut system of disc recording.

Phillip L. Miller, of the library music division, played recordings on a large number of ancient machines, including the first Berliner horn model, of the type made familiar by the Victor "His Master's Voice" trademark. Several Victor instruments were included, as were a primitive French cylinder machine, Edison Diamond

Disc, Edison Amberola, and the Aeolian-Vocalion. After this came a demonstration of present-day electrical equipment.

Berliner's great rival, Thomas A. Edison, inventor of the phonograph, was not forgotten. Norman R. Speiden, curator of the Edison laboratory at West Orange, N. J., and Mrs. Speiden were present. An honor guest was the distinguished operatic soprano, Frieda Hempel.

The occasion was also the birthday of the foremost pioneer recording comedian, Billy Murray. Learning of this, Mr. Miller invited Murray to attend the party, but the veteran singer was unable to be present. Jim Walsh, writer of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists, also was invited, but could not make the trip from his home in Virginia. Murray's 43-year-old record of "Rainbow" was played in honor of his birthday.

The Library expects to give other programs of this nature.

### Deaths of W. H. Berry, Lucy Gates, Dan Hornsby and Fannie B. Hard

W. H. Berry, one of the pioneer English recording artists, died May 2 at his home in Herne Bay, aged 81. Berry's career as a comedian began in 1890. When the *Talking Machine News* published its first issue in May, 1903, the first article it contained was an account by Berry of his record-making experiences. His recording career extended well into the electric era, and he appeared in more than 40 big London hits. He was offered the part of Micawber in the Hollywood film of "David Copperfield," but declined because of the illness of his wife. The part then went to W. C. Fields.

Mrs. Emma Lucy Gates Bowen, 70, known professionally as Lucy Gates, died April 30 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Lucy Gates' Columbia records were popular for several years prior to electric recording. She specialized in singing "heart songs" that peculiarly suited her pure, sweet soprano voice. The singer was a granddaughter of Brigham Young, second president of the Mormon Church. She studied voice at the Berlin Royal Conservatory of Music and at the age of 17 sang in the Royal Opera House. The soprano was one of the founders of the Society of American Singers.

Dan Hornsby, 51, died May 18 in Atlanta, Ga. Hornsby was one of the first entertainers to become popular over radio station WSB, and for several years in the late 1920's was a popular Columbia recording artist. He and his Trio and Quartet specialized in old-time comic songs, such as "Oh By Jingo," "Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?" and "Cubanola Glide."

Fannie B. Hard, concert soprano, died April 5 at her home in Woodstock, N. Y. I am not positive, but believe she was Mrs. R. B. Hard, who made Columbia record A648 (1909), "Sleep, Little Baby of Mine." —J. W.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

CHARLES W. HARRISON & BEULAH GAYLORD YOUNG

By JIM WALSH



Recording the "Lucia Sextet" for an Edison talking picture of 1912. From left to right, Charles Harrison, tenor; Mary Jordan, contralto; Agnes Kimball, soprano; Royal Fish, tenor; Frederick Wheeler, baritone, and Donald Chalmers, bass. Mr. Harrison, who supplied this photo, believes he may be the only still living member of the group. Wheeler died August 7, 1950, and Miss Kimball and Chalmers had died several years earlier. Harrison says Miss Jordan "married an oil man and moved to Texas," and that he thinks, but is not certain, that Fish died a few years ago. Sound for the early Edison talkies was recorded on concert cylinders five inches in diameter. The large recording horn was so sensitive it could pick up sound from 30 feet away and was kept out of sight. Films were made at the same time as records. When an exhibit was given, the phonograph was synchronized, by wires and gears to the projection machine.

This article was originally scheduled for the September issue, but had to be postponed a month because of the Elizabeth Spencer biography appearing in two parts instead of one, as first planned. September would have been the most appropriate time for paying tribute to the recording accomplishments of Charles W. Harrison, because it is the month in which

"Rolls now available for SEEBURG and other 65-note automatic pianos. Old and new standard and popular songs. Rolls also for MILLS VIOLIN VIRTUOSO and other odd types. WRITE FOR LISTS, ETC.

J. LAWRENCE COOK  
824 E. 165th St., New York, N. Y.  
Jly25c

he first tried out his lungs and proved by his infant cries that he had the makings of a lyric tenor. But, regardless of birth dates, it is a particular pleasure to set down some of the achievements of Charlie Harrison's career because I not only admire his singing but, in spite of having met him only twice, regard him as a dear friend. When to this is added my being able to say something about his wife, the former Beulah Gaylord Young, who was a charming recording soprano in her own right, my gratification is great indeed.

I met Charles Harrison for the second time in September, 1950, at the annual John Bieling Day party

for recording artists. Our first meeting had been almost exactly ten years before, in October, 1940, when Billy Murray and Jimmy Martindale had taken me, during my first visit to New York City, to a room in West 47th street where a group of performers were rehearsing a radio minstrel show. Among them were Gus Van, Joe White, the late Harry Donaghy, Everett Clarke, the late Frank Croxton — and Charles Harrison, who still looked like a matinee idol, although his recording career had begun, when he was a very young man, 29 years before. I was at once attracted by the handsome, slightly-built, blue-eyed and brown haired Harrison and was glad of the chance to talk with him when the rehearsal ended. We went down together in the elevator, and I remember that I asked him the name of the first record he made. He was wearing a Willkie button, and I complimented him for being on what I considered "the right side." He replied that he believed every other man in the rehearsal group was also for Willkie, although some ordinarily were Democrats. (It turned out, of course, that their combined influence wasn't enough to keep Mr. Roosevelt from getting a third term). I took a liking that day to Charles Harrison, and the liking has grown with time and the continuation of our friendship by mail. And now that this personal note has been intruded, let's get down to biographical business and consider the details of our subject's life.

Charles William Harrison was born on September 11, year not specified, in Jersey City, New Jersey. His middle name comes from both his grandfathers being named William. He was musically inclined from boyhood and when he was 17 began taking vocal instruction from a well known teacher, Leo Koeffler, of New

LLOYD G. KELLEY

Successor to



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Complete line of old Swiss and disc type music boxes. Christmas tunes available for 15 1/2" Regina at \$2.50 ea. Over 200 other tunes to select from.

Special: a new 30 note 4 1/2" diameter disc music box with 20 discs, \$25.00. Choice of Christmas music, children's tunes, operatic tunes, etc. Machine 6 1/2" long, 5" wide, 2 1/4" high, and discs sold separately for installation in your own box — easily installed. Machine, \$10.00. Discs 50c each.

Swiss musical movements for sale playing one to four tunes. Also Swiss musical movements in shells for stuffed toys. Send for catalogue and prices. Sole manufacturers of patented Minuet Dancing Doll. Send for catalogue and price.

P. O. Box 342

Hanover, Massachusetts

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. Works cleaned and polished, squeaks eliminated, broken tips and teeth replaced in combs, cases refinished, parts in stock and made to order.

Choice music boxes of all types for sale including machines playing up to 60 selections. Others have dancing dolls, organs, drums, bells and castanets, etc. Every item offered rebuilt like new throughout.

Rare bird boxes in enamel, gold, silver, tortoise shell, etc.

Music box organ bellows, and bellows from bird boxes, and bird in cage pieces rebuilt like new. Birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

York. However, he was earning his living as an office worker and singing "on the side" with an amateur male quartet when he received his first chance as a recording artist. Mr. Harrison recalls the date of this as January, 1912, but it must have been a year earlier, because his first record, "Cujus Animam," appears in the Columbia list for May, 1911. It is No. A5275, coupled with the "Inflammatus" from "Stabat Mater," by a soprano, Anna Grant Fugitt. Later it was renumbered 5833, and combined with the "Inflammatus," sung by the Columbia Oratorio Chorus.

Here is how the singer himself recalls it:

"The lead tenor of our quartet knew the manager of the Columbia laboratory, so we made some 'test' recordings. During the session he spoke about a test of his own solo voice, and I for once put on a bold front and said I would also like to make a test. Of course the manager did not know me, but he said they were looking for a tenor who could sing a high D flat. The other fellow said that I could do it and they need look no further, so after a confab I was booked for a test of the 'Cujus Animam' from Rossini's 'Stabat Mater,' sung in English with piano, as I did not know Latin! The test came out well enough for them to book me with orchestra for the same selection in Latin. I had a friend in the office where I was manager (and a youngster, at that), whose brother was a priest, so he gave me the phonetic pronunciation, and I went to it. When this came through the processing I was handed a contract for six months.

"Right away, as my records began to come out, Victor and Edison got on my trail, but I was tied up, so could do nothing. Nearing the end of the six months, I demanded a raise in the fee or a new contract, but found that I had unwittingly signed for an additional year at the same rates. I at once refused to continue, as I apparently had been duped, so went to both Victor and Edison on a non-exclusive basis, designed to keep me at least with 'the big three.' After another year or so, I got raises, and more raises, then began free-lancing.

"In 1919-20, I was recording for 18 laboratories, working every day in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Montreal, etc. I think I can claim, without bragging or making any mis-

statements, to have made more recordings from 1912 to 1925 or so than any other singer, as I was in quartets, choruses and light opera groups, as well as duets and trios. I sang under several names besides my own, only two of which I recall — Hugh Donovan and Billy Burton. Some of these independent recording outfits sold master records to mail order and fly-by-night sales concerns. As I had been paid outright for my work, there was no way to restrain them or collect royalties. In 1925 I began radio work, singing on the first commercial programs over WEA and WJZ."

Because of his beautiful lyric tenor voice and his clear enunciation, Charles Harrison's first Columbia records sung in English were immediate successes and, as he has indicated, caused him to be sought by the two other large recording companies. His first popular song disc was A1141, "Take Me Back to the Garden of Love," in which he was assisted by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet. Then followed the old Irish song, "Come back to Erin," sung as a straight solo.

Then Charlie Harrison, in returning thanks for the "wonderful time" he said he'd had at the John Bieling

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)

## RECORDS

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d6008

**REGULAR AUCTIONS** classical vocal records. Free lists.—S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colo. o 3652

**FOR SALE.** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 1 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o122741

**ASTOUNDING LISTS.** Rarities. All types. Lowly priced. Collections bought.—E. Hirschenman, 100 Duncan, Ave., Jersey City 6, N. J. o126121

**WE BUY** contents of homes, furniture, and Victrola records and sell them.—Curio Shop, 106A Court St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Phone - TR 6-2136 n60201

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

## MISSING

**SWISS MUSIC BOX.** Serial No. 28973, approximate size, 6x6x15", six melodies. Case is imitation rosewood with elaborate escutcheon in bone or ivory. Liberal reward for recovery.

**BOX No. BHP**

c/o HOBBIES, 1006 S. Mich., Chicago 5

**Record Collection.** Around 4900 records, (used condition) covering 40 years or more, mostly Victor & Columbia, some others, about 500 12". Will sell all. Collectors only. Stamp for reply.

H. E. ENGLISH  
026 Mill St., S. W. Portland, Ore. op

## CORRECTION

The third annual meeting of the **MUSICAL BOX HOBBYISTS** will be held at the home of **HERBERT H. MEYER**  
223 Virginia Ave.  
PITTSBURGH, PA.  
October 13 & 14

The September issue stated erroneously that it would be held in Philadelphia.

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit —Record Collectors Service, 502 East 84th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please. — "Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** wanted: Highest prices paid for vocal operatic and concert songs. Send for free buying list.—Ball, 1135 DuPont, Miami, Fla. d6257

**Rare Vocal Recordings, including imports.** Free lists.—Music Den, 825 Irving Street, San Francisco, Calif. d6276

**Rent LP's!** Complete plays, operas, by mail. Write for details. Wakefield Record Library, Earlysville, Va. d3x

## MISCELLANEOUS

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

**MELODEONS,** Melodeon organs. Beautiful restored instruments for sale. Will buy instruments needing repairs. Expert repairing service.—C-sharp Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich.

**OLD TIME RECORDS.** Operatic, instrumental, popular. All your favorite artists represented. Priced reasonably. Records bought. Write wants or visit.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. d3844

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues.—Elmer Moore, 1085 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. n6844

**WANTED OLD Vaudeville and Theatrical posters, programs, records.**—Ronald Slaughter, 8919 Gibson St., Los Angeles 34, Calif. d3042

**FOR SALE:** One Nelson & Wiggins automatic player in walnut case. Contains piano unit, 2 drums, xylophone, castanet, tambourine, cymbals, etc. Has 10 tune perforated roll. New rolls currently available. Excellent condition. Send 25c for photograph and particulars.—H. R. Quinn, 105 Westmoreland, Montgomery 6, Alabama. o40001

**BACK POPULAR sheet music.** Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. jly12867

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, \$1.80. Direct from importer.—Jules Wolff, 41 Park Row, New York City 7, N. Y. ja3806

**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** 1 buy and sell, trade. Send 12c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. n3023

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6215

**ANTIQUE HARDMAN PIANO,** harp shape, 3 leg. Beautiful rosewood, excellent mechanical condition, price \$600. Cartage extra, photo on request.—Florence Alston, Carson, Ia. o1461

**MUSIC BOX, 18 discs; also Ladies' Books, Godey, Petersen, Graham with colored plates.** For details write:—S. Michaelis, 525 DeWitt St., Syracuse, New York. o 1002

**WANTED:** Supervia Spanish songs (Odeon). Also her Parlophone P051, R020193, R020344.—John Fryer, 903 Rio Grande Blvd., Albuquerque, New Mex. o 1021

**PIANO, COIN OPERATED** barroom type. Restored like new with rolls, \$295. Wanted all kinds rolls.—Lee, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Tex. o1002

(See other ads on page 109)

## THE GREAT CARUSO

I have the Lucia Sextette, Rigoletto quartette Pagliacci, La Boheme, Aida, Cavalleria, Il Trovatore numbers with Enrico Caruso just as he sang them himself without benefit of amplification and just as natural as if they were there in your living room in person. Also John McCormack, Scotti, Amato, Journet and other great male stars. Galli-Curci, Sombri, Aida, Chick, Farrar, Shumann Heink. Mostly in excellent condition and most reasonable.

**AL McREA, SR.**

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Melodeons. Pipe and Reed Organs. Coin Operated Pianos, Calliopes, and other smaller items.

Welte-Mignon Automatic Player  
Concert Grand with 300 classical rolls.

— Expert Repairing —

WRITE

**ESTHER SKERRITT SANDERS**  
Deansboro, New York

tr



## MUSIC

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

Day party, asked if he might bring his wife next time, because she too had been a recording artist. "She made records," he casually wrote, "under the names of Beulah Gaylord Young and Molly Ames." (He might also have mentioned if he had thought of it that they made a Pathé record of "Georgia Moon" in 1916 under the team name of Charles Harrison and Beulah Gaylord). Perhaps you can imagine my "exhilaration when I realized that the mystery of "Molly Ames" was a mystery no longer!

I looked eagerly forward to the prospect of seeing not only my friend Charlie again but "Molly Ames" as well in September, 1951. Unfortunately, it turned out that there was no Bieling Day party this year, and I have still to meet "Pretty Molly." Perhaps it will be different next year. I certainly hope so!

Next month: WALTER VAN BRUNT

## WILCOXEN'S BROOKVILLE, MAINE

6 PINK LUSTRE plates, 6", ea.	5.00
D. & B. THUMBPRINT amber tumbler	4.50
AMBER HONEYCOMB goblet	7.00
AMBER CRUET, Block & Daisy	12.50
RED BLOCK covered butter	12.00
RED BLOCK covered sugar	9.00
RUBY THUMBPRINT cheese dish base	5.00
BLOWN TUMBLER, elec. blue, decor.	5.00
CARNIVAL GLASS, water pitcher, 6	
matching tumblers, raised grape design,	
6 similar tumblers, lot	8.50
MIN. GREEN NUTMEG GLOW LAMP	4.00
PRINCESS FEATHER LAMP, CLEAR,	
9 1/2"	8.50
GOTHIC WHALE OIL LAMP, 10 1/2"	15.00
FRINGED NAPKINS, Turkey red, 8, Ea.	1.25
HANGING BOOT MATCH HOLDER, fine	
cut	4.50
AMETHYST JERSEY BLOWN VASE, 9"	8.50
STAFFORDSHIRE CHILDREN'S MUGS,	
5, each	2.50
5 EARLY CHINA BONE DISHES, floral	5.00
The following items in early ironstone,	
wide copper lustre trim:	
8 9" plates, ten sided, ea.	2.00
4 10 1/2" plates, ten sided, ea.	2.00
2 coffee pots, one w. bud finial, one	
with copper lustre finial, ea.	10.00
Milk pitcher	4.00
Open oval vegetable dish	3.00
Bowl, 5 1/2" diam., 3 1/2" high	3.00
Open gravy	5.00
Cov. sugar bowl, copper lustre fin.	8.00
MAPLE SALAD BOWL, 17" diam., pol-	
ished	9.00
COFFEE MILLS, pine, one drawer, refin.	5.00
POST LANTERN GLOBE, blown, 13" hl.,	
6 1/2" bottom diam., 12" top diam.	8.00
6 SANDWICH CUP PLATES, #339, Lot	7.00
WHITE MARSEILLES BED SPREAD	8.00
VASA MURRHINA VASE, yellow, 8 1/2" hl.	20.00
CALENDAR PLATES, 1914, Maine wood,	
7"	1.50
OLD IVORY #11, footed c/s	9.00
ROSE BOWL, turquoise blue with silver	
flecking, 6" diam.	20.00
IRONSTONE, cov. sugar, Lily of Valley	
SLANT TOP CHINA CHEESE DISH,	
floral	5.00
ROUND BRASS WALL SCONCE, 13x17"	
deep, beveled mirror, two candle arms	10.00
Photos of items below, 10c each.	
PR. FRENCH DESIGNED BRONZE URN	
LAMPS	15.00
BRASS ANDIRONE, 19" high	28.00
EARLY CHINESE VASE in burnt orange	
on white, birds & flowers, 14 1/2" hl.	Write
SMALL WALNUT MELODEON, lyre ends,	
bellows need attention	45.00
ROUND MAHOG. LIBRARY TABLE, 33x	
29" hl.	28.00
MAPLE SWING LEG BREAKFAST	
TABLE, 40x42", some good striping,	
sat. fin.	50.00
WINDSOR SIDE CHAIR, 5 spindles,	
bamboo turnings, original finish	15.00
SHERATON MAHOG. CARD TABLE	85.00
PINE COMMODE, lift top, refinished	20.00
PR. WALNUT EARLY VIC. HANGING	
WEAT NOTS, mirror in center and 5	
small shelves on each, 47" long, 31"	
wide, pair	45.00
PINE CUPBOARD, glass doors, 4 shelves	
with drawers and doors below, 74 1/2"	
hl., 34" w., 18" deep, fine finish	100.00

## Death of Frederick James Wheeler Famous Recording and Concert Baritone

By JIM WALSH

One of the most famous pioneer recording artists — Frederick J. Wheeler, baritone of the famous "Anthony and Harrison" duet team—died in Yonkers, New York, on Tuesday, August 7, aged 73.

Mr. Wheeler was born on October 10, 1877, in Boonville, New York. His father was Harrison Wheeler and his mother's maiden name was Margaret Evans. As a youth he worked as a reporter for a Utica newspaper, before deciding on a musical career. The young baritone studied with Theodore Toedt and other prominent teachers, and in 1901, at the age of 23, was engaged by the old Universal Talking Machine Company to make Zon-o-phone records. His contract was for \$1,200 a year. In 1903 he began making Edison cylinders as a duet partner of Albert Campbell, with whom he sang such famous songs as "Old Jim's Christmas Hymn," "Sweet Adeline" and "My Old New Hampshire Home." For Zon-o-phone he made some duets with the contralto, Corinne Morgan. In all his early recording he used the pseudonym of James F. Harrison, a name which he arrived at by reversing his Christian names and taking his father's given name of Harrison for the "surname."

The baritone's greatest advance in popularity came in 1905 when he and the tenor, John Young, began to record gospel hymns under the assumed names of "Harry Anthony" and "James F. Harrison." Their Edison and Columbia records were immediately and enormously popular, especially with phonograph owners in the rural areas, and they sang so many hymns that Billy Murray gave them the good-natured nickname of "The Come-to-Jesus Twins" — descriptive tag that stuck for years. They did not sing duets for Victor until 1910.

When Edison introduced his Diamond Discs, Mr. Young, who is still living and will observe his 81st birthday in October of this year, became an exclusive Edison artist. The two continued to sing duets for Edison, but for other companies, Mr. Wheeler formed a partnership with the South Carolina tenor, Reed Miller, who died in 1923. Meanwhile, in 1912 he had also become the recording partner of the charming young contralto, Elsie

Baker, and they worked together for several years. I have Miss Baker's word that there was a sentimental as well as a business attachment between the two and that they were "sweethearts" for the duration of their partnership. However, the romance did not end in marriage. Miller called himself "James Reed" when singing with "Harrison" and Miss Baker was "Edna Brown."

During these busy years, Fred Wheeler not only made hundreds of records — solos as well as duets — but also sang with Mr. Young; George M. Strickett, second tenor, and Gus Reed, bass, as a member of Edison's Knickerbocker quartet. He and Young were also members of the Metropolitan Mixed Quartet. He sang in prominent church choirs; took part in many oratorio productions; toured with Walter Damrosch and Victor Herbert's Orchestras, and appeared in concert with Marcella Sembrich, as "The Golden Voiced Baritone." He also sang and acted in Thomas A. Edison's experimental talking pictures of 1912-13.

After Mr. Young's exclusive Edison contract ended, he and the baritone sang a few hymns for Emerson, and in 1926 Columbia received their old "Anthony and Harrison" name for a few electrically recorded discs. Mr. Wheeler retired in 1930. During late years he lived in the Yonkers Y. M. C. A. at Riverdale Avenue and Hudson Street.

The coroner's certificate says that the cause of death probably was cardiovascular disease, although there was no previous history of the singer's having a heart ailment. It also said that he was a widower, and that his late wife's unmarried name was Henrietta Schmidt. He has a daughter, Mrs. Ethel W. Jones, living in Yonkers. Cremation took place at Ferncliff Crematory on August 9.

I never met Mr. Wheeler, but corresponded with him occasionally for a good many years. The sponsors of the September, 1950, John Bieling Day were disappointed that he could not be present for a reunion with his old friend, John Young. In declining the invitation, Mr. Wheeler wrote to me:

"I received your letter upon my return from the country today. Well, it seems we just cannot get together . . . and I assure you it is with deep regret that I have to say this. I am leaving for a month at Utica, N. Y., my old home city (many years back, and let's forget time) this week, and so will be unable to join you and the old friends. I find myself going here and there, passing the time away as pleasantly as possible. As I have retired for the rest of my days, I plan my time day to day, try to keep moving and not become stale. Kindly remember me to any of my old associates who may be present at this reunion, and may I thank you for your kindly interest in me and again express my regrets at not being able to join you."

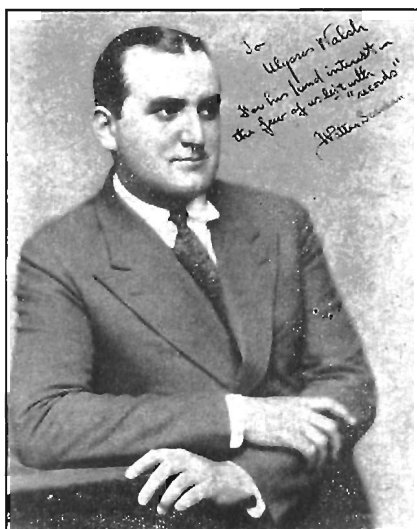
My last communication from Mr. Wheeler was a Christmas card, thanking me for sending him the December issue of HOBBIES with my account of the Bieling Day. *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* for July, August and September, 1945, was devoted to an account of the careers of "Anthony and Harrison."

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Main St., U. S. 60, Olive Hill, Ky.  
Delt blue & white diamond shaped tall teapot, handle and spout on corners, Davis, Victor, \$18. Large matching sugar bowl, lift on lid cemented, \$14. Set of 6 Carlsbad portrait plates, write. Lovely big crack-cr jar, aqua, wine scrolls and l.p. flowers. Chinese marks, \$10. Beautifully enameled cranberry paneled spooner or large tumbler, \$10. Big pear-shaped pewter covered sugar, \$8. List 3 ready Oct. 1, with many nice Christmas items. Carriage extra. Stamp, please. 00

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## WALTER VAN BRUNT (WALTER SCANLAN) I

By JIM WALSH



WALTER VAN BRUNT

At an early age I fell in love with both records and books. Before I was old enough to go to school, my father bought me a second reader (the book store was out of primers), and in some way I have never understood I taught myself to spell and understand its words. Before long I read so well that I was making the rounds of the local record dealers, asking for the latest monthly supplements, and boys in the third and fourth grades brought be their Sunday funny papers to have me explain the hard parts of the Katzenjammer Kids' German dialect.

I'm pretty sure that the first full-length novel I read, still before my school days, was a grief-laden homily,

"The Wide, Wide World," written by a New York spinster, Susan Warner, and published in 1850 or 1851. This sad depiction of the physical sufferings and spiritual tribulations of teenage Ellen Montgomery was lent to—or, rather, forced upon—my mother by an old lady in her seventies, who thought it the greatest book ever written.

My mother hated books. She groaned her way through it to please the old lady, but I finished "The Wide, Wide World" much sooner than my mother did. Although I was enthralled by the amateurish story from the beginning, my interest reached its peak when Ellen went to live with her crotchety Aunt Fortune Emerson at Thirgwall in upstate New York, and it was revealed that the Dutchman who managed Miss Fortune's farm was named Brum (a corruption of Abram) Van Brunt. Brum at once became my favorite character. I was fascinated by the chance that he might be an ancestor, perhaps the grandfather, of one of my idols, Walter Van Brunt, who had then scarcely outgrown his distinction of being the "Boy Wonder" of American recording studios.

That was a good many years ago, but to this day I have never learned whether there was any kinship between Walter and Brum. I've never even remembered to mention the matter to Walter. But the admiration I felt for Van Brunt's singing when I was a very small child has only increased with time, and I am proud of the fact that today, a generation after I first read "The Wide, Wide World," I call Walter Van Brunt my friend.

From his youth to early middle age, Walter Van Brunt was one of the most popular singers on records. Today, although the formerly "golden-voiced tenor" (the late John Bieling's term for him) is still hearty and active, the name of Van Brunt is seldom heard. If you were to go to the New York headquarters of the American Broadcasting Company in Radio City and ask for "Mr. Van Brunt," it's doubtful that the receptionist would know whom you meant. But an inquiry for Walter Scanlan would bring a smile of recognition. That's because the singer, who became famous at the start of his career as the youngest professional recording artist, changed his name, for stage and record making purposes, to Scanlan some 34 years ago.

The name, however, isn't important. Whether as Van Brunt or Scanlan, the tenor was considered by millions of record buyers one of the most accomplished artists whose voice went forth into the world on discs and cylinders. Probably "Walt" had as

large a percentage of admirers and as small a proportion of detractors as anyone who has ever sung for the phonograph.

Nor was this musical popularity confined to the mythical Man in the Street. The average citizen's verdict had the backing of genius. Thomas A. Edison felt no hesitation in terming Van Brunt his favorite tenor. Victor Herbert "adopted" Walter as his protege, wrote Irish light operas designed to bring out the beauty of his lyric tenor voice, and was responsible for "the Boy Wonder" changing his name from Van Brunt to Scanlan. This he did on the ground that Van Brunt was one heck—or words to that effect—name for an Irish tenor. The change was so successfully made that most of the theatergoers who heard Walter as Scanlan and knew nothing of the Van Brunt phase of his career, unhesitatingly accepted him as a true son of the Emerald Isle. So, as I shall show later, did critics who reviewed his singing.

Let's imagine that you are being introduced to Walter Scanlan—or Van Brunt, if you prefer the older name—as he is today. You will meet a stoutly built, blue-eyed gentleman, who has lost some of his brown hair. He is about five feet ten inches in height and appears to weigh around two hundred. His handshake is hearty and his manner warm and friendly. And, whether or not you realize it, you are standing in the presence of one of the most versatile and accomplished men in the history of "show business." Walter has been a star on records and radio, in vaudeville, musical comedy, light opera, and on the legitimate stage. He has operated a booking agency. And he has written many successful songs. Probably, even with this impressive enumeration, I'm forgetting some of the things he has done. For one thing, I haven't even said that he's now a production manager at ABC.

However, sad to say, Van Brunt is no longer the golden voiced tenor of whom John Bieling loved to speak.

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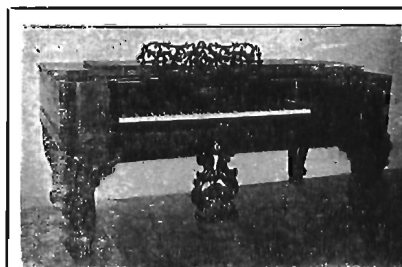
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nd

Several years ago, overwork during a "quickie" recording session impaired his voice and he no longer sings. For a long time after his throat mishap, Walter found it hard to speak above a whisper, but when I last talked with him, at the 1950 John Bieling Day party in Hempstead, New York, he told me that his voice was coming back. Here's hoping it plays a complete return engagement.

Meanwhile, regardless of whether he ever sings again, thousands of record collectors prize the tenor's huge output of Edison discs and cylinders (for some reason, his numerous later-al-cut records are in less demand) and feel for him a personal affection that they seem to have for almost no other singer. In the palmy days of Edison Diamond Discs, Van Brunt and Billy Murray, with whom Walter's life story has been curiously intertwined, probably shared honors as the most popular Edison artists; one specializing in sentimental songs and the other in comedy. They had longer record lists than any other Edison singers and, although Walter's voice displayed the greater range (the incurably modest Billy avers that "Walter always had a million dollars worth of voice compared to anything I ever had") their middle tones are so similar that in duet records it is frequently hard to tell one from the other. Recognizing this, Billy sometimes affected a deeper, chesty second as a comedy contrast to Scanlan's pure lyric tenor — and this deliberate lowering of pitch led some of Murray's admirers such as the late John L. Norton, Sr. — to believe

mistakenly that his voice had changed from tenor to baritone!

Walter John Van Brunt was born in Brooklyn, New York, on April 22, 1892. As his name indicates, he is of old New York Dutch descent. His early life was not much different from that of the average boy in a large city, except that he was gifted with marked ability for music. He learned to play the piano and at the age of thirteen was boy soprano at Trinity and St. John's Churches, in New York City. Little Walter also was a phonograph enthusiast with a particular admiration for Billy Murray. He dreamed of growing up to be a recording star with a fame rivaling that of Billy, then the king of popular record makers.

Billy himself likes to recall the first time he met the youngster, upon whose subsequent career the great comedian was to have so much influence.

"It must have been around 1907," says Billy, "that I went to a minstrel show given by the Bayridge Athletic Club in honor of a district political leader. After the show, I was told, 'There's a kid here who wants to meet you. He says he's crazy about your records and does his best to sing

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

## RECORDS

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list, offering above average prices.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d6008

**REGULAR AUCTIONS** classical vocal records. Free lists.—S. J. Mitchell, 1280 Raleigh St., Denver 4, Colo. ja3652

**WE BUY** contents of homes, furniture, and Victrola records and sell them.—Curio Shop, 106A Court St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Phone - TR 5-2186 n60201

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

**ZONOFONO RECORDS** by Caruso, others. G&T's Caruso, De Lucia, Sammarco, Boninsegna, others. Fonotipias. 50,000 records, operatic, oldtime, Americana, Hot Jazz. Want list to:—John Sicignano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley, New Jersey. mh60601

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., New Town Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

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**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 98th St., N. Y. 28, New York. n126581

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Thousands, earliest to present day recordings. All makes for sale. Specify wants. No lists. Stamp please.—"Pastonow" Records, 211 N. Market St., Rockville, Ind. d124461

**PHONOGRAPH RECORDS** wanted: Highest prices paid for vocal operatic and concert songs. Send for free buying list.—Ball, 1135 DuPont, Miami, Fla. d6257

**Rare Vocal Recordings, including imports.** Free lists.—Music Den, 825 Irving Street, San Francisco, Calif. d6276

**Rent LP's! Complete plays, operas, by mail.** Write for details. Wakefield Record Library, Earlysville, Va. d8x

## MISCELLANEOUS

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

**MELODEONS,** Melodeon organs. Beautiful restored instruments for sale. Will buy instruments needing repairs. Expert repairing service.—C-sharp Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. f126351

**OLD TIME RECORDS.** Operatic, instrumental, popular. All your favorite artists represented. Priced reasonably. Records bought. Write wants or visit.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. d3844

**WANTED** OLD Vaudeville and Theatrical posters, programs, records.—Ronald Slaughter, 8919 Gibson St., Los Angeles 34, Calif. d3042

**FOR SALE:** One Nelson & Wiggins automatic player in walnut case. Contains piano unit, 2 drums, xylophone, castanet, tambourine, cymbals, etc. Has 10 tune perforated roll. New rolls currently available. Excellent condition. Send 25c for photograph and particulars.—H. K. Quinn, 105 Westmoreland, Montgomery 6, Alabama. o40001

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music. Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. jly12867

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**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** I buy and sell, trade. Send 12c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. n3023

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f6215

**PIANO, COIN OPERATED** barroom type. Restored like new with rolls, \$295. Wanted all kinds rolls.—Lee, 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Tex. o1002

**WANTED:** Player piano rolls, standard 88-note, classical; and Deagan catalogs, 1905-1920 showing big Marimbas with U-shaped tubes; other pictures of same. Who has such a Marimba? Write—F. K. MacCallum, 1815 E. Rio Grande, El Paso, Texas. d3806

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80161 Carmen-Arie der Micaela (81059) (8005)  
80165 Zauberfloete-Ach ich fuehle (81061)  
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Carmen and Madame Butterfly duets with **RICHARD TAUBER**

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Box 285, West Falmouth, Mass.  
Persons offering material not specified above, or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

with them and make himself sound like you.'

"The kid," Billy recalls, "was wearing short pants. He said his name was Walter Van Brunt, he lived in Brooklyn and would like to do recording." As Billy remembers it, he told the eager youngster to wait until his voice changed before trying to make money at singing for phonographs. But he gave Walter some tips on what recording company officials he should talk with later on, told him how to stand in front of the horn and touched on technical tricks that were useful in those days of acoustic performance.

"A year or two later," Murray carries on the story, "I had a recording date at Edison. When I went in there were playing a record of 'I Wish I Had a Girl' that sounded almost exactly like the one I had made for Victor. I said, 'Say who made that record?' and somebody laughed and said, 'You did!'"

"I knew better than that. 'Don't kid me,' I said. 'I did that song for Victor, but Mannie Romaine made it for you.' Then they told me that a boy named Van Brunt had sung 'I Wish I Had a Girl' on a home recorded cylinder, copied my style to the letter and submitted it as a sample of his work. The imitation was so good that it came close to fooling even me!"

This ingenious stunt did not, however, immediately win Walter an Edison engagement. He received his first trial with the Indestructible Record Company, which had been organized in 1907 to make unbreakable cylinders that preceded Edison's Blue Amberols by five years. Walter's clear, sweet tenor voice made an immediate hit with the Indestructible firm, which later changed its name to Federal, and he signed a contract to make 100 cylinders for \$4,000 a year. That doesn't seem a large sum now, but it looked like plenty of money to the "Boy Wonder," particularly since the contract was not exclusive but left him privileged to sing for any other company.

Working for Indestructible, Walter sang mostly ballads but he occasionally did a comedy number, such as "Let George Do It," in which the Murray influence was apparent. Among those early cylinders was the only four-minute record I have heard of my favorite sentimental song, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree." This Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne classic had come out in 1905, so the fact that Van Brunt was called on to record it several years later was a tribute to its enduring appeal. The second stanza, never sung, I believe, on any other record, seems to confirm a story I have heard that the author and composer intended "The Apple Tree" to be a satire on the mournful ballads of that era and were surprised when it was taken seriously. The words of the second stanza

certainly sound like an attempt at satire or burlesque.

The young tenor's first Victor recording session soon followed. His initial offering for Victor was issued, judging by its number, 16304, in April or May, 1909. Van Brunt occupied the "B" side with a tuneless George W. Meyer ballad, "Summer Reminds Me of You." On the other side, Harry Macdonough, the popular manager of Victor's New York recording studios and second tenor of the Haydn — later, Hayden — Quartet, sang a Harry Von Tilzer composition, "Just One Girl." Both numbers were pretty and catchy, in keeping with the sentimental standards of the day, but the record didn't strike the public fancy and stayed in the catalog only a couple of years.

Even the most experienced singers make records that turn out to be "dogs," so Victor wasn't discouraged by young Van Brunt's initial lack of success. Within a few months he had two other selections on the market, and they did well. The first was No. 16363, "When I Dream in the Gloaming of You," and it was paired with one of Manuel Romaine's three Victors, "When We Listened to the Chiming of the Old Church Bell." Walter's next Victor, "It's Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Goodbye," was not a hit in its own right, but it was lucky enough to be paired, on No. 16377, with the Haydn Quartet's version of that all-time classic, "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet." That assured its holding its place in the Victor list for many years.

Rather strangely, after the success of those last two songs, there were no more Victor records by Van Brunt until June, 1911, when he returned with two. One was "My Yiddish Colleen," combined with "Adventures in a Department Store," by Murry K. Hill; the other, a Halsey K. Mohr ballad, "Give Your Smiles to All the Boys But Keep Your Heart for Me," oddly combined with "Rag Pickin'," a banjo solo by Fred Van Eps. In July, Walter was on hand with one of the most appealing numbers Harry Von Tilzer ever wrote, the lullaby, "All Aboard for Blanket Bay," which he had sung at the Frank C. Stanley Memorial Concert on March 8, 1911. From then on, as long as he free-lanced, the name of Walter Van Brunt cropped up regularly in Victor lists. During this same year, he recorded three duets with John Bieling — "It's Time to Close Your Drowsy Eyes and Sleep," "The Owl in the Old Oak Tree" and "Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still." The voices of the 19-year-old Van Brunt and the 42-year-old Bieling blended well. Presumably the records were made as a substitute for the formerly popular Macdonough and Bieling duets. Harry Macdonough had become so busy as a Victor executive he was having increasingly less time for singing.

Young Walter's popularity steadily increased. The Victor catalog for May, 1912, commented:

Mr. Van Brunt has become in a very short time one of the most popular bal-

lad tenors who make records for the Victor. His sweet tenor, remarkable enunciation and talking style are much in evidence in the series of reproductions listed below. As will be seen, Mr. Van Brunt not only sings ballads extremely well, but essays a comedy selection now and then, which is always cleverly rendered — as a hearing of this singer's "Railroad Rag" or "Society Bear" will show.

"That Society Bear," a now forgotten Irving Berlin song, was combined with one of Al Jolson's first records, "Brass Band Ephraim Jones." The paragraph just quoted was accompanied by a thumbnail photo of Van Brunt. His hair was brushed back pompadour-style and he looked boyish.

Van Brunt began his recording career at an auspicious time. About the time his first Victor records appeared, Billy Murray had signed a contract restricting the Murray services to Victor for discs and Edison for cylinders. Murray's duets with Ada Jones were the most popular records of the time, and his "desertion" left Ada in a bad way when she wanted to make duets for Columbia. Indestructible and any other companies other than Victor and Edison. As Walter recalled at last year's Bieling Day party, Billy suggested that she team up with Van Brunt, whose voice and comedy style were so much like his own.

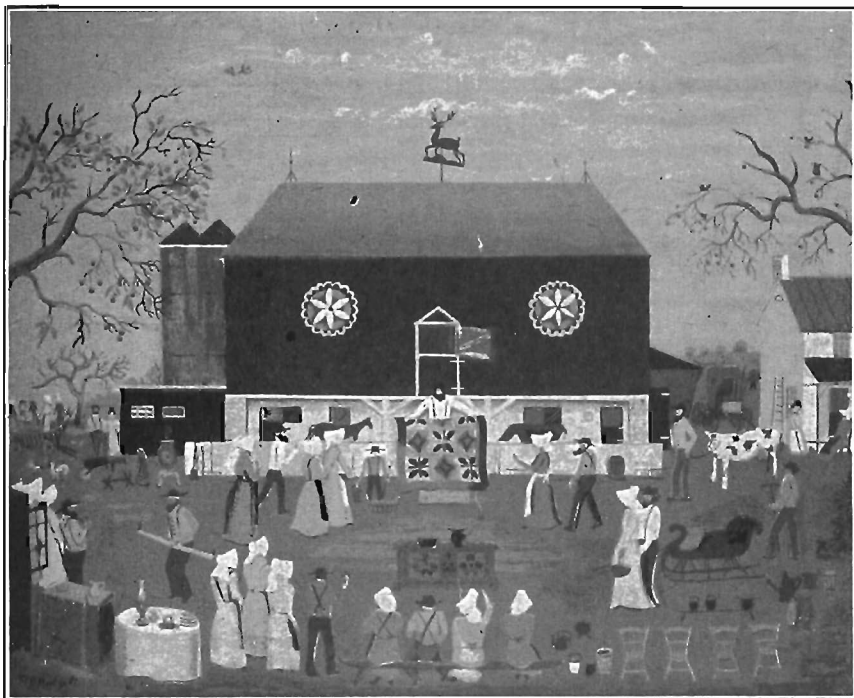
This was done. The team of Jones and Van Brunt never worked for Victor and Edison, but they made many records for competing concerns. (The Jones and Murry duets continued on Zon-o-phone, which was under Victor control). Walter's first appearance in the 1909 Columbia list was his duet with Miss Jones on No. A668, "I'm Looking for a Sweetheart and I Think You'll Do." It was completed with Bob Roberts and Chorus singing "Shine On, Harvest Moon," and it's a record I want but haven't found. The next duet was A782, "I'm Glad I'm a Boy—I'm Glad I'm a Girl," doubled with "Irish Blood," by Ada alone. Meanwhile, Walter had made his first Columbia solo, A725, "You've Got Me Goin', Kid," combined with "I'm Wait - Wait - Waitin'," by Yolande Noble, an English comedienne whose sister Nan, married the Australian basso, Peter Dawson.

By this time, Van Brunt had formed a partnership for comedy records with Maurice Burkhart, a tenor with an amusing, thin, piping voice. They sang together for both Columbia and Victor and made some entertaining duets. He also teamed up with Helen Clark, who was only a year or two older than he, and the young singers did scores of records together. They sang off and on as a duet pair for almost twenty years. Probably their last team work was the Diamond Disk of "A Precious Little Thing Called Love" and "When the World is at Rest," issued shortly before Edison went out of the record business in 1929.

I was recently surprised to dis-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)





Courtesy of the New York Graphic Society

## "The Country Auction"

A PRINT from the painting of that name by David Ellinger is now available for collectors.

The print is done by the silk screen process which simulates oils or water colors, and the bright, original colors, are fully portrayed — the gayest of red barns, green grass, colorful costumes of the country auction devotees, etc.

Those who love the American countryside, and "grass roots," of

## AMERICANA

will be warmed day in and day out by it, be the days light or shadowful.

The print is available unframed, at \$18 and comes in one size only, 22x26 3/4". It's a natural for the collector's home.

**Write: COUNTRY AUCTION**

**c/o HOBBIES Magazine — 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.**

umes of prints which included subjects after Watteau, Teniers, Van Ostade, Boucher, Chardin, and several Dutch and Flemish artists. Engravers of the plates were, among others, Aveline, Flipart, Cochin, Sornique, and even Basan himself.

An engraver of that time was Jean George Wille who, though born in Prussia, became a Frenchman by choice and one of the great collectors of his day. In his youth he was trained in a gunsmith's shop to engrave the mounts which decorated the firearms. Urged by his love of art Wille went to Paris where he became well-known in the fashionable world, and dealers and patrons of art and artists were his friends and frequent visitors. He was an ardent collector and constant attendant at sales,

and even during the Revolution and to the end of his life he added to and retained his collection of coins and medals. The catalogue of his own sale is now an interesting rarity. His best works are "Les Musiciens ambulants" after Dietrich, his engraved portraits of "Marquis de Marigny" and "Comte de Saint Florentin" after Tocque, while the most spirited portrait which he engraved was that of Marechal de Saxe, after Rigaud. Many of his pupils became excellent engravers, among whom were Massard, Tardieu, Avril, and Bervic (whose real name was Balvay) engraved "Louis XVI," after Callet, which is called one of the glories of the French School and about the best of the French royal portraits, and is in great demand always by collectors.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

cover that Walter also sang at least one duet with the legendary, almost fabulous, Elida Morris. They appeared in the Indestructible list for February, 1911, with something called "I've Got Your Number." I'm not sure whether Walter did any other singing with Elida, but I'd like to question him about his recollections of this fascinating "sex appeal specialist" and find out if he knows whether she's still alive. He likewise made a Columbia duet, "Hannah, Smile A-while On Me," with Elise Stevenson.

Within two or three years after he made his first records, Van Brunt was singing for virtually every phonograph company in the United States. A Massachusetts millionaire, Henry M. Whitney, was persuaded to put up the money to finance the Boston Talking Machine Company which made Phono-Cut records. Because of patent restrictions, Phono-Cuts were vertical, as their name indicates, and played with a sapphire point, like the Pathé discs later introduced to this country. Fred Hager, the recording manager, had Walter come to Boston and sing for Phono-Cut several dozen of his most popular numbers in the Victor and Edison catalogs. But Phono-Cut didn't stay in business long. Fred explains: "We made a good record, but there just weren't enough hill-and-dale machines in the country for us to sell our discs."

Van Brunt's popularity as a record maker soon brought him vaudeville offers. Billy Murray recalls meeting the boy of 17 or 18 one day, on Broadway, just after he had come back from a vaudeville tour with Fred Hillebrand, a comedian still living who himself won some success singing into the recording horn. Billy laughingly says that Walter, elated at being a hit on both records and in variety, was "the cockiest kid I ever saw." "After he told me of how he and Fred had been 'knocking them dead,'" Billy chuckles, "he also told me of the recording dates he had lined up. When I left him he was doing a snappy little dance on the pavement.

"Walter," Billy continues, "always did have more life and pep in the way he sang or did anything else than just about any artist I can think of. He could take a song that other tenors, good in their way, would make sound flat or dead and liven it up so that it seemed something entirely different and better. Nobody else could sing his own song. 'Tho I Had a Bit of the Devil in Me,' the way he did it."

The association between Van Brunt and Murray was particularly close around 1911-12. It's not telling tales out of school to record that in those carefree years of great popularity, Billy was sometimes a bit forgetful about filling recording engagements. He was so devoted to baseball that he might be at the ball park, yelling for the Highlanders, who later be-

came known as the Yankees, instead of being on the job at Victor or Edison. He might have slipped off on a spring training trip with his diamond heroes. Or possibly he was in a garage, working on somebody's car for the unpaid fun of tinkering with machinery.

Whenever something like this happened, Victor was likely to put Van Brunt into service as a Murray substitute. A few of the American Quartet records were made with Van Brunt, instead of Murray, singing the lead. A good example is 16992, "I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl That Married Dear Old Dad." (Incidentally, Harry Macdonough takes the lead in the quartet's record, No. 17397, of "On the Banks of the Wabash.") Walter also substituted for Billy in one or two of the Heidelberg Quintet records. John Bieling told me that Billy's amiable inclination to forget both recording and personal appearance agreements was so well known to the other members of the quartet that Bieling, Steve Porter, and Bill Hooley had an agreement with Walter to be on hand whenever the ensemble was scheduled to sing. If Billy didn't show up, Walter took his place and got his share of the talent fee. If "The Denver Nightingale" did come, the other three "cut in" Van Brunt for a slice of their own earnings.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of the close ties between Murray and Van Brunt occurred in a 1913 Victor record, No. 17244, of "Beautiful Doll, Goodbye," an answer to "Oh You Beautiful Doll," which the group had earlier recorded with great success. In the chorus, a high note occurs at the end of the line, "Oh, my beautiful doll, goodbye-e-e!" When the American began trying to record the number, Billy simply couldn't go that far upstairs — not that day, anyway. So Walter, who had probably been asked to stick around the studio, took the top note for his pal Bill. If you own that record, play it and listen closely. You'll hear that Billy begins the "goodbye" each time the chorus is sung, but that Walter takes the last syllable so smoothly that hardly anyone would suspect two voices were involved. This is also true of other lines ending "don't cry." The substitution, or addition, was possible because of the great similarity of their range. It's interesting to note that Walter never sang as a regular member of any recording quartet, although many years after his American Quartet experiences he was "lead" with a radio foursome.

One of the companies for which he worked in 1911-12 was U. S. Everlasting, which, like Indestructible, marketed an almost unbreakable cylinder. The 1912 U. S. catalog called him "undoubtedly the youngest performer that has met with marked success in the phonograph sphere." His age was given as 19, and he was said to be "lately a choir boy in Trinity and St. John's Chapel. He entered vaudeville

with Billy Murray as a clever comedian as well as a fine singer."

The latter statement I am sure is a mistake. Murray's only stage appearances in those years were with the troupe that became known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists, and I have no idea that he and Van Brunt were ever a vaudeville duo. The "Eight" began making concert appearances in 1912. Regardless of whether he teamed with Billy, Walter continued in vaudeville for several years, part of the time as the partner of a noted song writer, Halsey K. Mohr, already mentioned as the composer of "Give Your Smiles to All the Boys."

Even though his "sample" of "I Wish I Had a Girl" must have been submitted in 1909, Van Brunt's first record for Edison, the company with which he was to be longest and most intimately identified, was not issued until September, 1911. It contained another song by the "Apple Tree" writers, Williams and Van Alstyne, but the new number, "I'm Just Pining for You," was not so big a hit. However, it received a cordial review in the *Talking Machine News*, an English publication usually not overly partial to American singers:

This is sung by a new tenor who promises to be a great favorite. Further than this, the song is of a new kind. It speaks of a sorrowful lover who because he has been flirting has been jilted by his true lady-love, and the song is an appeal to her to "make up again." For clearness and enunciation of tone we have never heard a more successful record, and though the song is essentially American doubtless it will win great popularity over here.

It is interesting to note that the English Columbia-Rena Company by this time had begun to import matrices of Columbia Van Brunt records from the United States and to issue them with the tenor's name given as "Herbert Scott." He became well known to disc and cylinder buyers throughout the British Empire.

"I'm Just Pining for You" was a four-minute record. Van Brunt's first two-minute cylinder was published in February, 1912, only eight months before Edison gave up wax cylinders for the unbreakable Blue Amberols. The two-minute "roller" was another song by George W. Meyer, for whose compositions Walter seems to have had a liking, and the title was "There's a Dixie Girl Who's Longing for a Yankee Doodle Boy." Said the monthly supplement: "For Mr. Van Brunt's first Standard record we have asked him to sing this new march song which was listed last month as Amberol No. 885. It fits his voice admirably and we predict much enthusiasm for it."

The Van Brunt records gained steadily in popularity, and the Edison Blue Amberol catalog for April, 1914, included a photo of the tenor, in which he looked somewhat older than in the picture Victor used, although he was only 22 when the catalog appeared. And in June there was an important announcement in Edison's house organ, the *Edison Phonograph*

*Monthly*. The front cover displays a large photograph of Van Brunt, in which his eyes look black instead of their natural blue, and the statement is made that he is "now under exclusive Edison contract." On page 80, this comment appears:

Mr. Van Brunt hails from Brooklyn, N. Y., where he was born April, 1892. He was boy soprano at Trinity and St. John's Churches, New York, when thirteen years of age, and was induced by his success to devote all his time to music. He has appeared in many musical entertainments in and around New York, always carrying off more than his share of the honors. Touring in vaudeville with Halsey Moore (a misspelling for Mohr—J. W.) he has popularized a number of "hits," his clear voice and delightful personality making him a great favorite.

It is unnecessary to tell those who have heard his records how great a favorite he has become with Edison audiences. He handles his fine tenor voice with such ease and sings so artistically that he cannot help be the admiration of all who like a versatile and gifted singer.

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(To be Continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## WALTER VAN BRUNT (WALTER SCANLAN) I

By JIM WALSH

It would be hard to say just when Thomas A. Edison decided that Walter Van Brunt was his favorite tenor, but probably it was not more than a year or so after the singer made his Edison debut. However, the inventor's enthusiasm for the young man's style and technique must have been an important factor in Van Brunt's agreement to give up his well-paid career as a free-lance and sing only for Edison. About this time, too, the aging inventor adopted "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" as his favorite song, with an important effect on Walter's career. The remainder of this installment must be devoted to chronicling the saga of "Kathleen."

Mr. Edison liked for his company to make records of songs popular when he was a boy or young man. Most were so-called "heart songs" of the old-fashioned sentimental order. Others were old-time minstrel tunes or song-and-dance specialists. Edison's taste was close enough to that of the average middle-class American for some of the resurrections to sell well, but many selections personally chosen by the Wizard had little appeal for the ordinary record buyer. This caused Edison to get the reputation of issuing a larger number of hard to sell records than any other company.

A legend goes that Edison bought old sheet music by the hundreds of pounds, looking for suitable numbers to record. In publishers' basements stacked high with obsolete sheet music, he found much rubbish. But, says the legend, he also found "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen." The touching story told by the rather poetic lyric set to a haunting melody fascinated "The Old Man" (who must also have heard the song when it first came out a year or so before he in-

vented the phonograph) and in 1914 he suggested that Van Brunt should record it.

Mr. Edison's "suggestions" were commands to the laboratory staff. Nevertheless, Van Brunt was reluctant to sing "Kathleen," for he didn't think much of the song. Remember, he was only 22 and, no doubt, like most singers of popular music, he preferred to devote his talents to something currently popular instead of an old-fashioned "tear jerker," dating back 40 years. So he evaded making the record until he was told: "The Old Man's getting impatient. He says for you to quit stalling and make that record of 'I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen.' He says it'll be a big seller—and you know whatever the Old Man sets his head on has got to be done."

So Walter sang the antique tune. Even so, he was not the first Edison artist to record it. A fine Blue Amberol by Will Oakland had been issued in October, 1913. Will had used the song while singing for minstrel shows, an indication that the number had not been entirely forgotten before Mr. Edison's cellar "discovery." Oakland's Edison contract at that time called only for making cylinders, but Van Brunt was singing for both record types.

The disc of "Kathleen," sung with the help of a mixed chorus, met with immediate and amazing popularity, bearing in mind that Edison had been issuing the thick hill-and-dale records for only two years when it appeared. The tenor's voice was sweet and youthful, and the theme of the kindly husband promising that "when the fields are fresh and green" he would take his sorrowing wife back to her old home struck a responsive note in the American heart. Edison dealers learned that the record was "the Old Man's" favorite and they plugged it with enthusiasm. Everybody who came in to hear Diamond Discs was asked to listen to "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," and nearly every customer bought it. Dealers said that Mr. Edison had signed Van Brunt as an exclusive artist to make sure he wouldn't sing that song for any other company. As long as Edison made records it was hard to find a New Edison owner who didn't have a "Kathleen" record. It was part of an orthodox Edisonian's pride of possession.

However, the records didn't necessarily sound alike. "Uncle Thomas" was so fond of "Kathleen" that Walter says he was obliged to make, at various times throughout his Edison association, some fifteen different sets of masters. These were done to give improvements in orchestration or to incorporate some other change that seemed desirable to Mr. Edison.

The serial number printed on the label remained 3087, but the letter denoting the "take" varied. A number followed by A, B or C indicates an original 1914 recording. A higher letter, such as F, G or H, indicates a later re-make. The subsequent records were better than the first, because the singer's voice gained in strength as he became more mature and his style showed consistent improvement.

Billy Murray recalls seeing Walter being made the hero, or victim, of one of the immortal inventor's recording stunts. Some singers were troubled by the roar of the orchestra pounding their ears while they caroled into the horn. This led "the Old Man" to construct a soundproof arrangement, much like a telephone booth, with which he experimented by having Van Brunt stand inside to sing without hearing the accompaniment, which was going into the horn from another room. When Billy gleefully observed his pal, Walter was almost perishing from heat and lack of air while doing his darndest to put the right expression and emotion into one of the perennial re-makes of "Kathleen." (Writing the first draft of this article on the sizzling hot night of June 25, with the thermometer seemingly glued to the 90's and not a breath of air stirring, I can thoroughly sympathize with Walter's long gone sufferings!) Van Brunt was unmercifully kidded by Murray and other artists about the uncomfortable things that happened to "the Old Man's pet." The experiment proved unsatisfactory and was abandoned. Walter wasn't sorry.

"Kathleen" became the most popular record in the Edison catalog, and Walter says more than one and half million copies were sold — a huge total for a vertical cut record that couldn't be played on an ordinary phonograph without an attachment. The 1925 booklet, "Edison Records of Music That Lives," contains the following elaborate description:

Thomas P. Westendorf, who wrote "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," was a professor of music in a Kentucky College. In the years gone by he composed a great many songs, but until "Kathleen" came along he received very little recognition, and the success of "Kathleen" is largely due to Mr. Thomas A. Edison. More than ten years ago Mr. Edison purchased a lot of old music which he found stored in the cellars of music publishers. He bought this music by the ton and among it he found "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen." The melody was so unusual and exquisite

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that Mr. Edison ordered that it be recorded immediately and predicted at that time it would be one of the most popular vocal records in the Edison catalog. This prediction has come true to an extent where this record is the biggest selling Edison record, and the demand for it continues about the same every year, despite the fact that it has been on the market more than ten years.

None of the other songs composed by Westendorf even approached "Kathleen" in popularity. Apparently they were just composed, while "Kathleen" was written in a moment of inspiration, just a glorious invention pulled out of the skies. You see, the name of Westendorf's wife was Kathleen. She was born in Germany and during her sojourn in America she had a continuous desire to return to her old home in Germany. It was Westendorf's wife, Kathleen, therefore, who inspired this tender ballad.

Some years ago Westendorf took his wife Kathleen back to Germany to see her old home, but as her old home was really a fairy-tale home, built up by her imagination, the reality was a great disappointment to Kathleen. She stated that she was now satisfied and wished to return immediately to her American home. A few years later, Kathleen died and passed on to her final home somewhere in the vast universe. This charming ballad remains as a perpetual monument to her memory, and is a source of consolation to her husband, who is still living.

On the reverse side of the disc is a typical love song ("On the Banks of the Brandywine") of the popular variety. It has a fine flowing melody that quickly "catches on" and a lyric that suits the music admirably. A feature of the recording here is the vocal obligato by Elizabeth Spencer. This obligato is just prominent enough to be beautiful without detracting from the main melody sung by Walter Van Brunt.

This seems a suitable place to say that "Brandywine" reveals one of the few oddities of Van Brunt's enunciation. Like Billy Murray, every word

he pronounced was crystal clear, but in his earlier days as a singer Walter had a habit (I understand it's shared by many other natives of metropolitan New York) of inserting "h's" in some words where they didn't belong and leaving them out of others. He sings "Brandywine" as if it were "Brandywhine." And sometimes a word like "wheels" or "while" comes out as "weels" or "wile." He also occasionally pronounced "new" as "noo," as in "I'm Just a Ragged Newsboy But My Heart's True Blue." Of course, this may have been done in keeping with the normal accent of the "hero" of the song. Such exceptions aside, his enunciation and pronunciation were irreproachable, and the regional characteristics were less conspicuous in his later recordings.

Edison's successful promotion of the Westendorf ballad probably induced Victor to get on Kathleen's band wagon, for the Camden company soon issued a Red Seal version of the number by the Metropolitan Opera basso, Clarence Whitehill. This was not a big seller, but when Henry Burr and the Peerless Quartet recorded "Kathleen" in 1921 and coupled it with "When the Corn is Waving, Annie Dear," the double became one of the biggest sellers of Burr's entire career and was remade after electrical recording came in.

Columbia had needed no Edison impetus. In January, 1914, before the Van Brunt record came out, it had published "Kathleen," sung by an English tenor, William Thomas, and coupled with "The Better Land" by a noted British contralto, Carrie Herwin. Still later, a more popular Columbia was made of "Kathleen" by the Tennessee baritone, Oscar Seagle, and coupled with "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia." As long as Diamond Discs were made, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" held top place as the Edison record and a sort of Van Brunt trademark. Today, the song, now at least 76 years old, is becoming so much of a legend it's hard to separate fact from fiction. I have seen it called "an old Irish folk song" and, perhaps because of the romantic associations that song writers like to weave around Erin's Isle, most listeners seem to take it for granted that Kathleen was an Irish colleen, perhaps a descendant or namesake of Kathleen Mavourneen, yearning to return to the Ould Sod.

Actually, although the story in the Edison booklet is pathetic and pretty, it is doubtful that it's true. In his "History of Popular Music," "the Tune Detective," Sigmond Spaeth, says that Thomas Paine Westendorf was a Virginian who wrote both the words and melody of Kathleen, "under circumstances which have only recently been established by the researches of Richard S. Hill, of the Library of Congress."

Spaeth relates that the song was written in 1875 and in Plainfield, Indiana, not Louisville, Kentucky, as has been frequently claimed. He adds that "the sentimental story of Mrs. Westendorf's illness and unhappiness

over the death of a son" has been found to be untrue. Instead, according to the Spaeth version, she merely wanted to go back to visit her home in Ogensberg, New York, shortly after their marriage while Westendorf stuck to his school-teaching job in Plainfield.

Dr. Spaeth also says that "Kathleen" was suggested by another song, "Barney, Take Me Home," written by Arthur W. French and George W. Persley, whose real name was George W. Brown. While his wife was away from home, Westendorf — again according to Spaeth — composed an answer to "Barney," but substituted Kathleen for his wife's real name of Jennie and took the liberty of placing her home "across the sea" for romantic effect. The Tune Detective goes on to say that the song was introduced at the Plainfield Town Hall and was published in July, 1876, by John Church and Company. It was popular in Great Britain as well as the United States, and was never entirely forgotten, as witness the imported Columbia record by the English tenor.

One or two more mentions of "Kathleen" and that heroine will be dismissed. The September, 1915, issue of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* contains a brief article headed, "The Author of 'I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen' Receives a Check for \$250 From Mr. Edison":

Forty-two years ago, just after he had been married, Thomas P. Westendorf, of the Shelby County Industrial Training School, wrote the words and music of the song, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen."

Although nearly half a century old, the song has gained in popularity each year. It is one of the few selections of the present day which has reached the honored distinction of being "a new old song."

Early in August this year Mr. Edison wrote to Mr. Westendorf: "Your song is the most popular song in the United States. I felt like stealing when I used it, so I am sending you a little check by way of royalty."

In these days when the authors of many popular songs have difficulty in defending their copyrights and frequently receive nothing whatever in the way of royalty, it is refreshing to find one publisher or manufacturer cherishing such a fine sense of fair play.

(Possibly it should be explained that phonograph manufacturers were not required to pay royalties for using songs published before 1909, when the benefits of copyright or recorded music were extended by Congress to publishers and song writers. Mr. Edison's "little check" was a gesture of good will and not a legal obligation).

Westendorf himself was heard from in November, 1915, when the *Monthly* published the following, headed, "Presents the Cylinder to the Disc!":

The author of "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," who recently received a "royalty" of \$250 from Mr. Edison for the song, writes as follows:

"For the past two months I have been trying to make up my mind that I ought to get an Edison Disc, but, listen! Do you know I really prefer my Edison Cylinder that I have become so at-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

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suggestion by the rhythmical arrangement of lights and the darks, of swirling movement of dancing figures. Again we see in "The Storm" the swift movement of the galloping horse with its rider racing before the fury of the tempest as achieved by the lines that seem to bring the road towards us, away from the dark cloud-burst behind the horseman.

Zorn was a master of form without the use of line in the pure sense, for he presented through planes, by which through their carefully studied lost and found edges he suggested contour, close observation of movement, and intricacies of light and shadow on the texture of flesh and objects. In some of his plates the composition is brought together with long diagonal lines, and they at times seem to be constructed so as to suggest a work of greater size and importance than the actual dimensions of the plates.

Though his water colors and oil paintings won him medals and the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor, it is as an etcher that we think of Anders Zorn in spite of the fact that he said etching and carving were his diversions. He was fortunate in having his work become famous while he was alive. And the etchings made from his acclaimed paintings became more famous than the original paintings so that his work was

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)

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## THE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19)

tached to the past two years. I admit the Disc has its good points (including the Diamond Disc point), but the Edison Cylinder also has the same good point... and it has become such a fixed habit to play the cylinder that I think I will stick to it, and so I am really going to buy now one of your new Edison Cylinder instruments in preference to the Diamond Disc."

Mr. Westendorf presumably is now dead, but I have no information concerning his later years. The Edison publication said his song was 42 years old in 1915. That would mean it was written in 1873, but I think the 1875 date given by Spaeth is right. There is a Shelby county in Indiana and a reform school for boys is situated there, but the town of Plainfield mentioned by Spaeth is in Hendricks county, some distance northwest of Shelby. The Edison assertion that "Kathleen" had become more popular every year since publication seems to throw an unintended damper on the claim that it had been forgotten only to be rediscovered and reviewed by Mr. Edison.

Several years after "Kathleen" became a hit, Edison issued a record of another Westendorf song, "Could I See My Boy Again," sung by a contralto, Elizabeth Lennox, but it never rivaled the Van Brunt classic in popularity. In 1929, Columbia catalogued a "cute" duet version of Vernon Dalhart and Adelyn Hood singing "The Frog Song" a Westendorf composition for children. Spaeth lists among Westendorf's other songs "Garfield Now Will Guide the Nation," published during the presidential campaign of 1880, and one in Negro dialect, "Dey All Put on de Blue."

And now let's get back to Walter Van Brunt, who was soon to display ability as a song writer as well as a singer.

(To be Continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## WALTER VAN BRUNT (WALTER SCANLAN) II

By JIM WALSH



Walter Van Brunt (Scanlan) in 1932 with his three daughters and his wife's mother, Mrs. William A. Young. From left to right, the girls are Ruthie, Patsy and Mary Jane.

Walter Van Brunt's decision in 1914 to become an exclusive Edison artist was an inconvenience to his free-lance duet partner, Ada Jones, just as Billy Murray's signing a joint Victor-Edison contract had been five years before. Once more the popular comedienne had to find a new tenor with whom to sing. As successor to Van Brunt, she chose Henry Burr, who made a fairly large number of Columbia duets with her under that name, and one or two as Irving Gillette. They also sang "In the Heart of the City That Has No Heart," a maudlin "sob song," on an Edison Blue Amberol. But the combination

wasn't especially successful. Burr's style was too serious to blend well with Miss Jones' serio-comic "conversational technique."

The most popular woman singer of her day also made a few Columbia duets with a vaudeville tenor. Billy Watkins, as well as with M. J. O'Connell, George Wilton Ballard and Will C. Robbins. I suspect Robbins of being Sam Ash, because their voices are similar and they came into the Columbia catalog about the same time. Robbin's first record, "He'd Keep On Saying Goodnight," a duet with Miss Jones, appeared in March, 1915. In April they had two more duets, "She Used to be the Slowest Girl in Town" (composed by my friend, Ray Walker) and "Wrap Me in a Bundle and Take Me Home With You." Ash made his debut likewise in April with "Goodbye, Virginia" and "I'm Not Ashamed of You, Molly." Next month, Jones and Robbins sang another Ray Walker song, "That Southern Hospitality."

The following appeared in the complete Columbia record catalog dated November, 1914:

Walter Van Brunt's peculiar faculty for singing a popular song in a manner the public particularly likes has won him both fame and money, not only in the making of records but more latterly on the most important vaudeville circuits of the country. Mr. Van Brunt is in the first place a real singer and his records are excellent from a vocal point of view apart from anything else. Outside of this, his grasp of the humorous points of a popular song and his ability to put his personality into a record have made him one of the most liked and most valuable of those who entertain the great Columbia public.

The foregoing was published several months after Van Brunt had stopped singing for Columbia. His last solo record on the "Magic Notes" label was A1407, "Where Did You Get That Girl?" The last Jones-Van Brunt duet was A1425, "He Wants Someone to Call Him Papa." His final Victor record as Van Brunt appeared in October, 1914, and was a duet with Helen Clark, No. 17621, "Where the Red, Red Roses Grow." Since his exclusive Edison contract had been announced in June, the record obviously was given a belated release.

A year later, Walter Van Brunt ceased to be "The Youngest Edison Artist" when the soprano, Gladys Rice, began to make "Re-Creations." Miss Rice, a native of Philadelphia, was only 19 when her recording career began late in 1915. Van Brunt was then 23. Miss Rice's first record, "Auf Wiedersehn," was a Sigmond Romberg song from "The Blue Paradise," which she sang with a musical comedy tenor, Burton Lenihan, who came from Saginaw, Michigan. The Blue Amberol version was issued in January, 1916, and the Diamond Disc shortly after.

The soprano also made several duets with Irving Kaufman, but soon began to sing with Van Brunt. Their first work together included the Jerome Kern classic, "They Didn't Believe Me," and the 1916 Ernest B. Ball hit, "Goodbye, Good Luck, God Bless You." About a year later she adopted the name of Rachel Grant for serio-comic work and largely took the place of Ada Jones as Billy Murray's Edison duet associate.

Gladys Rice's father was a famous actor in the Nineties. He and his wife starred in vaudeville as John Rice and Sally Cohen, and he was the manager of a troupe with which Ada Jones, as an "infant phenomenon," gained some theatrical experience. In 1896 he and May Irwin acted in "The Kiss," the first motion picture in which a kissing scene was screened for the benefit of a pleasantly horrified or stimulated public. Today, Gladys Rice, still blessed with a beautiful voice and charming personality, is active in radio and television.

Speaking of Van Brunt's duets, it seems odd that he didn't team up for Edison with any male singer until he and his old pal, Billy Murray, formed their partnership in 1928. We already know that he had sung for Victor with John Bieling and with Maurice Burkhardt for both Victor and Columbia, but his Edison partners were all women—usually Miss Rice, Miss Clark or Elizabeth Spencer. Betsy Lane Shepherd sang an obligato on his 1923 record of "Marcheta." Charlotte Bergh and Helen Clark sang soprano and contralto, respectively, with him in "Madeira," and in "Pal of My Cradle Days" he had the help of the Homestead Trio—Spencer, Shepherd and Amy Ellerman. The Metropolitan Quartet of mixed voices chimed in on his record of "Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" and many other Van Brunt numbers contained sup-

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port by groups of male or mixed voices. But his Edison duets were all with women until he and Billy got together.

It was also in 1915 that Van Brunt began to display another side of his exceptionally gifted personality. The last record in the Blue Amberol list for May, 1915 (last because the list was arranged alphabetically) was No. 2596, "You're Plenty Up to Date for Me," which must have been recorded shortly after the disastrous fire that burned out the Edison plant in December, 1914. The following description was given:

Edison owners are familiar with Walter Van Brunt as a singer, for he is a tremendously popular artist. This record is a novelty, however, as it presents him not only as singer, but also as writer of both words and music of the song. The lyric is written around a very pretty sentiment and is skillfully handled. The melody is fascinating.

I have a copy of this record. There is nothing outstanding about the song, except what now appears to be its naivete. The hero compared his shy sweetheart favorably to the 1915 variety of "wild girls." Walter probably shocked his original listeners by saying that some girls preferred "a wine glass to a kiss." We are assured that our modest heroine would "never take a stronger drink than tea." The tune is pretty and, of course, the record, which was never issued on a disc, is well sung. In the same supplement, Walter and Helen Clark joined voices in a ballad that became a favorite, "When I'm Gone You'll Soon Forget." Some of the veterans at the Edison laboratory believe this was one of several numbers, including "As We Parted at the Gate," submitted to Mr. Edison in manuscript by a Massachusetts song writer, E. Clinton Keithley.

Having broken the ice with "You're Plenty Up to Date," Walter devoted considerable effort to song writing for a year or two. It was also during this period that he became a protege of the great Victor Herbert, the most successful light opera composer of the time, who suggested that Van

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Brunt sing the leading tenor role for an Irish musical show that Herbert had in mind. Thus was born "Eileen," which a Victor supplement described as "taking New York by storm."

Song writing and his friendship with Herbert, who persuaded him to change his name to Scanlan for stage use, must have caused Walter to lose interest in record making. The familiar Van Brunt names continues to appear regularly in the Edison lists through 1916, but thereafter it disappears, as far as recording new songs is concerned, even though an occasional Van Brunt disc or cylinder was still issued occasionally from a back log of older numbers. From 1917 to 1919, the "sensational new Irish tenor" appears to have been a stranger to the recording studios. It's possible that he had some disagreement with Edison, but that seems unlikely, for the Edison trade publications referred to his theatrical activities in an admiring way. Probably he merely wanted to be free of conflicting responsibilities so that he could concentrate on song writing and the stage.

The young singer-turned-song-writer was fortunate in having Harry Von Tilzer to set music to his lyrics and publish their combined efforts. Von Tilzer was then "The Dean of Tin Pan Alley" and was the most successful writer of popular melodies, with the exception of Irving Berlin. I believe the first Van Brunt Von Tilzer song to be recorded was "Tho' I Had a Bit O' the Devil in Me," which was prominent in the Victor list for January, 1917. It was sung by Reed Miller, under the assumed name of James Reed. An Edison Blue Amberol was by another tenor, George McFadden. A baritone, Wallace Cox, sang it for Pathé. Recalling Billy Murray's observation that nobody else was ever able to sing this lively and "devilish" composition with the swing and swagger that Walter himself gave, it's a pity that we have no Van Brunt recording.

Two months later, while Van Brunt, changed into Scanlan, was singing in "Eileen," Victor issued another of his songs, "Yukaloo (My Pretty South Sea Lady)," sung by the Sterling Trio. The catalog editor said it was "a little different from the general run of Hawaiian songs. Sousa once confessed that he put a barbaric touch in his marches 'to please the ladies' and evidently Harry Von Tilzer . . . has caught the same trick."

Still another Van Brunt-Von Tilzer offering came out in the April, 1917, Victor list, giving the pair a total of three numbers to receive Victor recognition in four months. It was "Love Will Find the Way," this time sung by Miller under his own name. He also recorded it for Edison.

"Love Will Find the Way" seems to have brought the Van Brunt-Von Tilzer collaboration to a close: at least I cannot trace records of any other of their joint efforts. In July, 1917, Victor issued several records of songs from "Eileen." Two were

sung by John McCormack and others by Scott Welsh and Greek Evans, members of the cast. It seems a pity that no effort was made by Edison or Victor to have Van Brunt record some of the numbers Herbert had written for him.

For the next few years, Walter's interest appears to have been wholly taken with Irish plays. And it's quite likely that long before he knew Victor Herbert it had occurred to Van Brunt that his voice was peculiarly adapted to Irish singing roles such as those that had been made famous by a long succession of other tenors. As long ago as June, 1913, Edison issued a Blue Amberol of him singing a five-song medley, "Famous Songs in Irish Plays." He made a new record of the same medley for the Diamond Discs in 1915, but the record was withheld from the market until 1921, when Walter Van Brunt for years had been swallowed up in Walter Scanlan.

The medley includes the refrains of "Why Wild Irish Rose," "Killarney, My Home Over the Sea," "Mother Machree," "Sweet Inniscarra" and "Plain Molly O." There is an introduction, in which the singer says he will "try to bring a memory of the good old days gone by, when singers sang the songs that live and never die." He mentions Chauncey Olcott, Andrew Mack and Bill Scanlan as typical Irish minstrels. Probably he "borrowed" his own stage name from the latter.

In 1929 Edison issued another similar record, "Walter Scanlan's Irish Medley," displaying his ringing high notes at their best. I think it as fine a bit of singing as he ever did.

"Famous Songs in Irish Plays" was coupled with "For Love," by Rachel Grant and Billy Murray, but I have an unorthodox copy on which it is combined with a fox trot (No. 50824-R). "Just Because," played by Earl Fuller's New York Orchestra. It's hard to see how this mixed up pressing got past the inspector.

Of course, before his Victor Herbert association began, Van Brunt had sung many popular songs with an Irish theme. He had recorded "Mother Machree" and "My Wild Irish Rose" on one double-faced Edison; and "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "Where the River Shannon Flows" on another. He had sung "Killarney, My Home Over the Sea" for Victor in 1912. His 1913 record of "When I Dream of Old Erin" stayed in the Columbia catalog until the early 1930's, after being renumbered, doubled with "Where the River Shannon Flows," by Henry Burr, and reissued in the extensive Columbia Irish series. However, the Edison medley seems to be the first indication of his serious concern with Irish plays — a field in which he was to star both as singer and composer.

As Walter Scanlan stepped upon the stage, Walter Van Brunt vanished into the wings. I have already said that Edison continued to issue some of his old records after he quit making new ones. One of these was a

real oddity, No. 51002, combining "Where the Silvery Colorado Winds Its Way" and "The Humoreske Song," the latter a mixture of Dvorak's "Humoreske" and Foster's "Old Folks at Home." The oddity is that both sides had previously been listed in combination with other numbers but cut out of the catalog. Reissued as one double-faced disc, they became one of the 300 biggest selling Edison records, and the Humoreske side was termed "one of the most beautiful records ever listed."

"Whispering Hope," by Van Brunt and Helen Clark, also salvaged from the back files, likewise made the best seller list. Other Van Brunt, or Scanlan, records not already mentioned that were accorded the same distinction included "Climbing Up de Golden Stairs," "When You and I Were Young, Maggie"; "Wait Till the Clouds Roll By"; "Grandfather's Clock" (duet with Clark); "With All Her Faults I Love Her Still"; "Mocking Bird" (with Elizabeth Spencer), and "My Mother's Rosary." The exhumed records were issued, aside from one or two exceptions, with the name of Van Brunt instead of Scanlan on the label. However, in 1924 the rapid ballad, "I'm Just a Ragged Newsboy But My Heart's True Blue," recorded nine years earlier, was brought out as the companion to Billy Jones' version of "The Sidewalks of New York," and on this, in spite of the low serial number, the singer was called Scanlan. By that time the adopted name was far better known to the general public than the one with which Walter had begun both life and his phonograph career, while living in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn.

Van Brunt ended his exile from the recording studios in the fall of 1919. He became an exclusive Emerson artist, and his picture was published on the supplement cover, together with a drawing illustrating the theme of one of his first Emerson records, "Little Grey Home in the West." These Emerson discs were the first to appear under the name of Scanlan, and he was touted as a sensational Emerson discovery. Nothing was said about his having been for years one of the most popular recording stars under his real name of Van Brunt. The supplement also mentioned his appearing in Victor Herbert's "Eileen," "which, in fact, was written especially for him."

During the next two years Emerson issued a long list of Scanlan records, many with a modern Hibernian flavor but also including "old standard" Irish numbers and ordinary popular songs. Admirers were invited to send in lists of old-timers they'd like to have Scanlan record between touring engagements.

As for the records themselves, they were unfailingly well sung but technically, they ranged, in my judgment, from fairly good to lamentable. I never have considered Emerson recording more than mediocre, even by acoustic lateral-cut standards, and when compared to Van Brunt's Edisons — well, they just don't sound



like the same golden voice. In fact, the average man, hearing an Edison record by the tenor and then listening to an Emerson, would find it hard to believe the same man made both.

Walter admits that his signing with Emerson was a mistake, but he tried to make the best of it. He was by this time widely accepted as "the real McCoy" among Irish tenors, and the *Phonograph and Talking Machine Weekly* for May 5, 1920, contained this item:

The Clark Music Company, of Baltimore, Emerson distributors for Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia, recently entertained dealers at a banquet and "dinner show." Eddie Canter and Walter Scanlan, brilliant Irish tenor who performs so successfully in "Somebody's Sweetheart" and who is now accounting for capacity audiences at "Always You," were the guests of honor.

Note that the trade paper seemed to accept Walter's Irish status without question.

Both Scanlan and Canter at that time were under exclusive Emerson contract. So were Irving and Jack Kaufman, Arthur Fields, the Six Brown Brothers, Sanford's Band and other famous artists. Scanlan and Irving Kaufman got together a troupe of Emerson performers, intended to rival Henry Burr's Eight Famous Victor Artists, and took to the road. But the venture was unsuccessful, for the Emerson name lacked the prestige that Victor had built up in the public mind through many years. The artists were first class, but the crowds stayed away. Becoming tired of losing money, Scanlan and Kaufman called it quits, and Walter returned to Irish plays.

The 1920 depression was hard on some of the smaller phonograph companies. Emerson didn't go out of business, but it got into difficulties and was glad to unload its expensive contracts. In 1921, presumably with a sigh of relief, Walter ended his Emerson association and returned to his old stamping grounds at Edison. Here, too, however, he sang as Scanlan instead of Van Brunt, who was regarded as practically dead and buried. His first Diamond Disc under his new contract was 50836, which coupled two songs from "Irish Eyes" in which he was then appearing. One was "Mavourneen," with words by John T. McDonough and music by Scanlan himself, and the other was the hauntingly pretty "My Galway Rose," by George A. Kershaw and Scanlan. In his days with Von Tilzer, Walter had written the words to Harry's music, but now he executed a switch by letting the other fellows do the lyrics while he composed the tunes. A little later he recorded "Judy," also from "Irish Eyes," with words by Kershaw, and in 1924 he made records of two songs for which he wrote both words and music. They were "Kitty" and "A Bit o' Pink and White," from "The Blarney Stone." I have just learned that the musical director of this production for a season "on the road" was Matt McNally, who describes Walter as "a good actor and a great singer;—a wonderful man to get along with."

Song Writer Ray Walker, from whom this information comes, says that McNally is an enthusiastic reader of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists."

While we're on an Irish theme, it's worth mentioning that many listeners consider Scanlan's 1923 Diamond Disc to be the finest interpretation ever recorded of "The Wearin' o' the Green." As one enthusiast remarked: "Scanlan may be a Dutchman, but he sings that thing like a regular Mick!"

The "new tenor," Scanlan, received a warm welcome from Edison audiences, in spite of many listeners having no idea he was their old favorite, Van Brunt, back with a new name. Others insisted the two tenors couldn't be the same man. They pointed out voice differences, real and imaginary. Such variances as there were came from the contrast between youth and maturity, and Scanlan's having more of a "professional Irish" air than the Dutch-descended Van Brunt. Skeptics wouldn't believe the truth when it was pointed out that Van Brunt's picture disappeared from the Edison catalog as Scanlan's came in. Nor did comparing the likeness of the two and making the obvious claim that Van Brunt's face was just a younger edition of Scanlan's serve at first to persuade those whose minds were made up the other way.

Edison discs, not yet affected by radio competition, were at the peak of their popularity when Walter made his comeback, and Blue Amberols still sold fairly well in small towns and the country. So the Scanlan records went across dealers' counters in large quantities, with of course the perennial "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," still listed as by Van Brunt, continuing to lead the procession. Besides keeping on singing as an Irish tenor, Walter also did some Edison tone test work. A 1924 supplement showed him singing in a Washington theatre in "direct comparison" with an Official Laboratory model Edison.

The *Edison Amberola Monthly* for November, 1921, contained an interesting article, "Walter Scanlan in 'Irish Eyes'" which I'd like to quote for the light it gives on his activities just thirty years ago:

Since the days of the lamented Billy Scanlan, few singing actors have met with such popular approval as young Walter Scanlan received last season on his first starring tour in an Irish melody-play. Continuing his success of last year, Walter Scanlan is appearing in "Irish Eyes" at present, a play that gives him every opportunity to display his engaging personality, his histrionic ability and his rich lyric tenor voice.

"Irish Eyes" is the work of an American author, Edward E. Rose. Of course, it is a romantic comedy. Its action takes place on both sides of the Atlantic—in Galway, Ireland, and in New York City. Unlike most Irish comedies of this nature, there is an air of mystery surrounding the characters until the final curtain.

Theatrical stars may come and go, but the Irish singing star is in perpetual favor. Time has failed to dull his popularity. He is dearly loved by the Irish born and their descendants in America. The Irish song-play has also stood the test of time, and is an appealing form of entertainment for all lovers of humor and melody. It may be noted in passing that the Irish song-play never has had to

resort to questionable themes or risque situations to maintain its popularity.

Supporters of the Irish song-play usually emotional and dramatic and quick to discern the true and gifted artist. The instantaneous success of Walter Scanlan proves conclusively that he filled all the requirements. Indeed, his success astounded the prophets and critics of Broadway who thought that he was going to have a long, uphill flight to fame. The Edison Record of "My Galway Rose" (No. 4376), which appears on the November Supplement, is intensely realistic, and brings to mind vividly the hero singing to his sweetheart in "Irish Eyes."

In December the *Monthly* not only published Scanlan's photo on the cover, showing him as a good looking young man of 29 who wore his hair parted in the middle, but also featured an interview. It was called "Irish Ballads—How to Sing Them," and had the sub-title, Walter Scanlan, Whose 'Mavourneen' Is On the December List, Tells Us Something About His Art." It too is worth quoting because it reveals that Walter was a thoughtful student of his art and had carefully analyzed and striven to perfect the work he was doing:

We saw him between the acts of "Irish Eyes," an Irish-melody play, which Walter Scanlan is starring in this winter. Many admirers of Walter Scanlan consider him the equal of the famous John McCormack. He has the voice, personality, the stage presence, the physique, the gift of expression and the feeling so essential to become one of the really great artists of the stage.

"Tell us something about the essentials of singing as you do?" we inquired blandly.

"Well," answered Mr. Scanlan, thoughtfully, "for the successful rendition of any ballad, no matter whether it is Irish or of any other nationality, several qualifications on the part of the singer are necessary. The first and most important one is a distinct enunciation of every word of the text with a reading that will show its meaning to the audience. Words can be rattled off in a manner that will convey very little of the meaning of the poem to the audience, or they can be delivered in a way that will drive the sentiment of the song home to everyone who hears them. This is what is known on the stage as 'putting a song across the footlights,' and is the secret of the success of many singers."

The singer paused in his speech to sing a line for us to illustrate the point he was making. We noted that he brought out the tiniest syllable in his delivery.

"The second requisite for a good rendition of a ballad is a smooth delivery of the melody," resumed Mr. Scanlan. "While the melody should be subservient to the text, it is still a most important part of the song and should be given in a manner that will impress it upon the minds of the audience and give the greatest pleasure. The sentiment of the song is what makes it popular in most cases, though now and then a melody with a wonderful rhythm, such as 'There'll Be a Hot Time' and 'Over There' catch the public ear, even though the tune conveys no particular sentiment. Nevertheless, there are a great many tunes that, robbed of the sentiment behind them, would never awaken the enthusiasm now aroused by their rendition. Our 'America' and 'Star Spangled Banner' have but little in the melodies of great musical merit and, were it not for the national interest in the text, would be forgotten long ago. The same might be said of the national hymns of many other nations. This applies equally well to many of the love songs and other ballads. The text is most important and the first duty of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

invaluable material to our research facilities in the development of American agriculture and industry. We anticipate wide and fruitful use of this remarkable collection by scholars from all over the country."

President Fred of the University commented: "Acquisition of the McCormick collection by our sister institution, the State Historical Society, is a major milestone in Wisconsin's progress as a national site for research and learning. At few places in the country could the McCormick collection be so fully utilized as at Wisconsin. Here, are located a University remarkable for the number of fields brought together on one campus and the facilities of the American History Research Center of the State Historical Society. We share the gratitude of the State Historical Society that this outstanding collection of Americana will come to Wisconsin."

The Virginia materials in the McCormick collection supplement effectively the State Historical Society's famous Draper manuscripts, a collection of reminiscences and manuscripts of the pioneers of the trans-Allegheny West including Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clarke, Robertson, Sevier and the King's Mountain Boys. The models and replicas of the original reaper and other farm machinery in the collection will play an important part in the collections of the farm museum the University and State Historical Society are gathering for the campus area at Madison.

The assembly of this wealth of material is the result of an effort to gather every existing record pertaining to the ideas, interests, and activities of the Cyrus Hall McCormick family, descendants of Thomas McCormick who came to this country from Ireland and settled in Pennsylvania in 1734. His son, Robert F. McCormick, grandfather of Cyrus, went to Rockbridge County, Virginia, in 1779, where Cyrus was born in 1809, and invented his reaper in 1831.

A great deal of supplementary data and source material has been added to set this family against its natural background in American life. As a result, the richness and depth of the collection has been greatly augmented and its research utility greatly enlarged.

The collection will be housed in the Society's building in Madison and will be available for study and research as soon as it is shelved and arranged. The University of Wisconsin is the residual beneficiary in case the State Historical Society ever ceases to exist or moves from the campus area at Madison.

Dr. Herbert A. Kellar was named coordinator of the collection. Dr. Kellar has been curator of the McCormick collection since 1915, and under his leadership it has grown from 10,000 manuscripts to more than 1,000,000.

## Household Appliances in New Jersey Exhibition

Nearly 200 household appliances and farm tools of a century or more ago are featured in a new exhibition at The New Jersey Historical Society, in Newark. Included in the exhibit are the forerunners of many present-day home mechanical devices such as the equivalent of today's waffle iron, a 17th century substitute for an electric blanket, and the "better mousetrap" of the early 19th century.

Of particular interest to the housewife of today is that part of the gallery devoted to the story of spinning and weaving. Here is shown the long process by which the early homemaker produced clothes and other materials for the family. The instruments and tools used in this work are on view and their operation will be demonstrated to groups on request.

It is believed that this exhibit, the first in a series of educational exhibits to be put on by the Society, will be of special value to school groups who are studying early American life. The appeal of the exhibit is increased by the fact that most of the items on display are in working order and can be demonstrated in their original uses.

## Do You Remember?

By E. E. MEREDITH

When grapes sold at a dollar a bushel?  
When restaurants cut pies in four pieces?  
When children wrote on slates when at school?  
When we had a cellar instead of a rumpus room?  
When most motion pictures had a happy ending?  
When bulldog shoes and pegtop trousers were the rage?  
When we could visit a cider mill and drink all we wanted free?  
When sons of the household had to break in a new pair of boots each autumn?  
When one could place a dime on a carnival number and win a ham or a side of bacon?  
When willow and birch proved a fine remedy for children when applied by both parents and teachers?  
When grandma's work basket contained a red silk strawberry filled with emery dust to keep her needles sharp?  
When children venturing out on the street were cautioned to watch for runaway horses and people riding bicycles?  
When an accepted sign of affluence was having a barrel of big, red apples in the cellar when cold weather came around?  
When people wore flannel night shirts, wool robes and bed socks in order to be comfortable in unheated rooms on winter nights?  
When lingerie was called "under muslins?"

When writers put their risque phrases in French?

When "boughten" bread was looked upon as a rare treat by youngsters?

When lace curtains at the parlor windows marked you as one of the elite?

When the slogan of the Jackson automobile was "No hill too steep, no sand too deep?"

When shopping was done in the central business areas of towns and cities and not along the road?

When no mention of a blessed event was made in the public press until the babe appeared on the scene?

When a young man suggested to his sweetheart when the horse and buggy brought them to the crowded bridge — "Give me a buss?"

When a horseshoe, heated redhot, was dropped in a churn when the cream was too cold?

When a dime's worth of soup vegetables bought at the grocery store was often the largest bundle in the market basket?

When we were reluctant to play kissing games at parties but only because we were afraid our parents would disapprove?

When kids wore long jersey leggings with dozens of buttons down the side?

When a morning duty was to wipe the smoky lamp chimneys all over the house?

When big music boxes played flat circular metal records about three feet in diameter?

When a big red enamel coffee mill was found in every grocery store, its wheel operated by a crank?

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23)

the student of ballad singing should be to learn the art of distinct enunciation, then the smooth rendition of the melody. This should also be practiced as though the voice were an instrument and the melody were all that the audience is to hear.

"The Irish melodies are often trying to the singer trained in the more modern school, on account of the peculiar intervals in the scale used. Flat sevenths and augmented thirds are difficult of rendition to the ear trained to present day modes, but they can be learned by constant practice and correctly given. The native singer of Irish melodies is brought up to them from childhood and knows them well and to him there is no difficulty in singing them."

"How do you cultivate the sentimental side of singing?" we interrupted.

"The art of infusing pathos and other emotions in the voice while rendering a song or ballad is a gift given to but few singers. A certain amount of it can be learned or acquired by a careful study of the lines of the text of the ballads and then reading them as though they were expressing your own emotions. This is something that all singers should do, as ballad singing is really the reading of a poem in a musical way and the emotions should be suitably expressed in the rendition."

In addition to the foregoing, the November issue of the Edison "fan magazine," "Along Broadway," showed a cover photo of Scanlan, costumed as an Irish harper.

(To be Continued)

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| 70644 | Tannhauser—Als du in kühnem Sange<br>(Tosca aria sung by T. PATTIERA—see Part III of this list)                 | J22030 |
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| 70658 | Der Freund (Wolf)   | B2029  |
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| 65458 | Maskenball—Ja, du warst's<br>Undine—O kehr' zuruck  | B2056  |
| 35486 | Barbier von Sevilla—Ich bin das Faktotum<br>Rigoletto—Gleich sind wir beide                                     | B2057  |
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## Surprise!—EDISON TALKING RECORDS

by John Charles Thomas and  
a "North Pole" Lecture by Dr. Cook

By JIM WALSH

The surprising discovery has been made that the noted baritone, John Charles Thomas, made three Edison Diamond Disc talking records at the beginning of his career 36 years ago.

This startling fact was unearthed when Henry M. Shaw, of North Carver, Mass., wrote to me to ask if Nat M. Wills, "The Tramp Comedian," had recorded explanatory talks on the back of Edison operatic records. Mr. Shaw said he had a copy of Edison record No. 82541, "Ai Nostri Monti," from "Il Trovatore," sung by Julia Henrich and Guido Ciccolini, with an explanatory talk on the reverse side and that the voice of the unnamed speaker sounded like Wills'. Whoever it was, Mr. Shaw said, he was positive it wasn't Harry E. Humphry, who ordinarily gave the "explanations."

I replied I was equally positive the speaker wasn't Wills, but that I would ask Fred Rabenstein, of the Edison laboratory, to check into the Edison company's files. Mr. Rabenstein came up with the information that in September, 1915, the company paid one J. C. Thomas to record three explanatory talks, but no information was available as to the serial numbers or titles of the records with

which the songs were coupled. He said, however that the three probably were numbered consecutively, so that it was likely the three would be 4141 (the serial number of Mr. Shaw's record), 4142 and 4143. (If any reader of HOBBIES has Edison discs with the latter two serial numbers, will he please notify either Mr. Shaw or Jim Walsh, Box 131, Vinton, Virginia)?

Mr. Rabenstein also revealed that Thomas made a singing record, "By the Dreamy Susquehanna" (serial No. 3254) on August 26, 1914. He did not identify J. C. Thomas as the concert baritone, but I immediately assumed that the singer and speaker must have been John Charles Thomas. Both Mr. Shaw and I wrote to the baritone and received the information that it was he who made the recordings—which he has never heard. The song, incidentally, though recorded, was never issued.

This discovery of John Charles Thomas as an Edison operatic spokesman is one of the most surprising bits of information to be turned up in a long time, but Bryant Burke, well known Hempstead, Long Island, record collector, has provided an

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 30)

Please mention HOBBIES when  
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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## WALTER VAN BRUNT (WALTER SCANLAN) III

(Continued from the January Issue)

By JIM WALSH

All music lovers familiar with Walter Scanlan's records can testify that he put his high ideals of ballad singing into practice.

As long as Edison stayed in the record business, no name was more familiar in the Diamond Disc and Blue Amberol catalog than that of Scanlan. He sang scores of the latest popular successes, in addition to many Irish and standard songs. But I have an idea it was at the personal "request" of Thomas A. Edison himself that he recorded a large number of popular tunes of an earlier day. I have already mentioned typical examples, such as "Whispering Hope," "The Mocking Bird," "Grandfather's Clock" and "With All Her Faults I Love Her Still." Here are other examples: A 1923 disc coupled two hits of the Nineties, "When You Were Sweet Sixteen" and "She Was Bred in Old Kentucky." In 1926 came two others of the same period, "The Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee" and Harry Von Tilzer's first hit, "My Old New Hampshire Home." "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "When the Harvest Moon is Shining On the River" was a double of 1927. Another was "Red Wing" and "I'll Be With You When the Roses Bloom Again."

Then, in 1928, Billy Murray's contract as an exclusive Victor artist expired, and he and his old friend, Walter, formed a singing partnership. Walter by this time had obtained a release from his exclusive Edison arrangement, and the Murray-Scanlan team began to freelance with considerable success. Their records in effect were miniature vaudeville sketches and included talking as well as singing. As I have already said, Billy sometimes affected a husky, rough-and-ready comedy voice as a foil to Scanlan's lyric tenor. Their first Edison, issued in November, 1928, combined "My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now" with "The Twelve O'Clock Waltz" and both sides were extremely good.

Many others followed during the less than a year that Edison remained in the record business. When the company yielded to the trend of the times and introduced a needle-cut record, just ten weeks before deciding to quit the "game" altogether, Murray and Scanlan made several lateral-cut duets. One of these, "Sergeant Flagg and Sergeant Quirk," was such a hit with Edison recording officials that the company offered to pay the pair a retainer fee of six thousand dollars a year each, on condition that Edison would be given the opportunity to record all similar sketches before they were submitted to any other company. Murray was both funny and pathetic

in his role of the very baritonish top sergeant trying to conceal his attachment to his less robust pal.

The two tenors also sang together for many of the smaller companies, as well as doing a set of four double-faced records for Brunswick, all of which were excellent. One of the Brunswicks contained something of an innovation. The pair carried on a conversation supposed to be between a postman (Murray) and a bashful swain, (Scanlan), then sang "That's My Idea of Heaven." On the other side, the same characters appeared, but by this time "Walt" was engaged, to Billy's disgust (he feared he'd lose his best horseshoe pitching partner), and they wound up singing "Building a Nest for Mary." The other Brunswicks were paired as follows: "My Wife is On a Diet" with "Icky, the Lollipop Song"; "Last Night, Honey" with "The Whoopee Hat Brigade;" and the generally funny "Shut the Door, They're Coming Through the Window" with "Sergeant Flagg and Sergeant Quirk."

The pair did not work together for Columbia, but in the summer of 1929, Victor issued one record by them, "Oh Baby, What a Night!" which they had already sung for Edison. Scanlan's name was spelled as Scanlon on the label of this, his first Victor record in 15 years. The other side contained the last Billy Murray-Aileen Stanley duet, "Katie, Keep Your Feet On the Ground."

During these years of recording partnership, the old cronies occasionally had good-natured disagreements over technique. Both Billy and Walter have laughingly told me of the time when they were disputing over how a record should be made, and Billy snapped: "Oh, shut up. Walter! I was making records before you were born!" To which Walter gleefully replied: "O. K., brother, that's ALL I wanted to know!" Actually, Billy exaggerated a bit. Walter was all of five years old when the Murray recording career began.

Edison's going out of business and the onset of the 1929 depression played havoc with the activities of Murray and Scanlan and most other recording artists. However, they continued to work for some of the smaller firms, such as Banner, Crown and Cameo. Cameo records also were made for the Kress five-and-ten cent stores under the Romeo label and on them the singers were called "Saunders and White," despite being identified as Billy and Walt in the spoken parts.

A year or so ago I found one of the most surprising records in which they took part. It was a Romeo called simply "Minstrel Show," and it was made by an aggregation of talent

that I think never worked together on any other record. James Stanley, basso of the Peerless Quartet in its final form, was the interlocutor. Billy Murray and Irving Kaufman's brother, Jack, were end men. Al Campbell, who left the Peerless as Stanley joined it, also took part. The feature of the first side is Murray's singing "Goodbye, Eliza Jane." But the real surprise comes in part two when Stanley announces that "the golden voiced tenor, Mr. Walter Van Brunt, will sing 'Dear Old Girl.'" This announcement almost bowled me over the first time I heard it, and I'm still wondering why Van Brunt, a name that Walter hadn't used since 1916, was chosen for this record made in 1929.

More recently, I have discovered another Romeo record on which Van Brunt, singing alone, is disguised as John O'Brien. To complete the list of "aliases," the late John L. Norton, Sr., used to have a Federal cylinder on which the tenor was called "Ely."

In the early 1930's the record business was so badly damaged the competition of radio and the effects of the depression that even Victor seriously considered following Edison's example and calling it quits. At the same time, road shows were almost exterminated by the talkies. Naturally, the team of Murray and Scanlan turned its attention to broadcast work. They became associated with a comedienne, Marcella Shields, whose singing style resembled Aileen Stanley's and whose conversational mannerisms had a touch of Gracie Allen. For a considerable time the three were featured on an NBC network program sponsored by Dutch Masters cigars.

Later, in 1932, the trio became an attraction on WOR, with Horton's ice cream as the sponsor. I have a clipping from an unidentified publication, which is headed "Scanlan, Murray and Shields on WOR," and which reads:

The program of Murray, Scanlan and Shields, which was presented over station WOR for the first time last Friday, will continue to be a weekly feature. The entertainment consists for the most part of comical dialogue and songs, with Roger Bower as master of ceremonies.

Marcella Shields made her stage debut at the age of five and has appeared in nearly every vaudeville house in the country. She has played with De Wolfe Hopper, Gallagher and Shean, Fay Bainter and others equally well-known. Miss Shields has been in radio since 1928, when she was asked by the Ever Ready Company to play the part of Dixie Dugan in the first of a series of broadcasts they were presenting. She was heard with them for a whole season and followed their program with a leading part in the Fleischmann Yeast program with Phil Cook, Ben Pollock and Graham MacNamee before Rudy Vallee was even thought of. Miss Shields has done vaudeville work whenever she has been able to find time for it, and she also appears quite frequently at private benefits.

Walter Scanlan was discovered by his partner, Billy Murray, more than twenty years ago while playing in a minstrel show in Brooklyn. After his minstrel days he toured the country on the old Keith Circuit and in 1917 played the leading role in Victor Herbert's operetta, "Eileen." He then appeared in several Arthur Hammerstein productions, and



later organized his own road show for Irish romantic comedies.

Here I'll comment that the story of Murray's finding Scanlan in a minstrel show appears to be a garbled account of their first meeting, which I described last month. You may remember that the meeting took place at a minstrel, given in Brooklyn by the Bay Ridge Athletic Club. I don't believe that Miss Shields made records.

After 1933, the trio split up, with Murray dropping out, but Miss Shields and Scanlan continued to work together, off and on, for a year or two later. Finally, though, the lady decided it was too much trouble making the trips from Washington where her husband was an assistant to General Hugh Johnson, administrator of the National Recovery Act, and she left Walter to go to it alone. He then became a member of a popular comedy program. "Ray Knight's Cuckoos." Two other members of the troupe were Carl Mathieu and Jim Stanley, first tenor and bass, respectively, of the final edition of the Peerless Quartet. In this same period Walter also sang with a radio male quartet. The ensemble was engaged to go to Washington and entertain at a party given by Vice President Garner for President Roosevelt. Will Rogers also was there. Walter obtained Garner and Rogers' signatures for the autograph album of his eldest daughter, Mary Jane, but when he thought of seeking FDR's his courage failed him and he went back to New York without it. (Or so I was told by his wife!)

My own friendship with the Scanlan family began at about this time. I wrote a letter to Walter, expressing my long standing admiration for his records and radio performances and asking for an autographed photo. I signed the latter as Ulysses Walsh, because I hadn't then acquired the nickname of "Jim," which has made my own given name almost as obsolete as Scanlan has made Van Brunt. In return I was sent a fine picture, which I hope will be reproduced in HOBBIES. I also received a long, cordial handwritten letter, signed "Walter Scanlan," which I highly appreciated.

The correspondence continued, but finally Mrs. Scanlan's conscience began troubling her — or so she said — and she made a "confession." She said that Walter was always glad to hear from his admirers and enjoyed learning they enjoyed his art, but that that, like many other singers, he had an incurable aversion to letter writing and left all the correspondence to her. Consequently, the letters which I treasured as being from Walter Scanlan himself were really penned by his wife, the former Miss Ruth Young, whom he had married in 1919. As consolation, she assured me that Walt had come to think of me as his "Number One fan."

Mrs. Scanlan went on to explain she had decided she couldn't keep on fooling me because she regarded me as "home folks." At that time I

lived in the Southwestern Virginia town of Marion, about 100 miles west of my present home of Vinton, and Ruth herself had been born in Radford, half way between Marion and Roanoke. She had a grandmother living at Elk Creek, in Grayson County, and herself had spent several summers in Roanoke as the guest of relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur A. Slusher. (After I moved to Roanoke in 1943, Mr. and Mrs. Slusher became my warm friends, and I was shocked, while writing this article on June 29th to read in the morning paper of Mrs. Slusher's death). Because of this warm "home folksy" feeling, Ruth Scanlan felt that she had to "level" with me about her well-meant "forgery" of Walter's correspondence.

I have since found out that this practice isn't uncommon in the families of singers. I had several letters from Irving Kaufman which I later learned were written by his wife, Belle, and Billy Murray usually turns over any letter that he feels must be answered to his crony, Jimmy Martindale. A gift for music and a disinclination for letter writing seem to go hand in glove.

The "revelation" didn't at all interfere with my friendship for Walter and Ruth, who had been a member of the cast of one of his productions before their marriage. I learned all about them and their daughters, Mary Jane, "Ruthie" and "Patsy" ((Patricia)). In turn, they learned most of what there was to be known about me.

Our first meeting occurred when I was visiting Billy Murray at his home in Freeport, Long Island, in October, 1940. He took me to Walter's office, and as soon as we entered, Walt burst into a hearty laugh and said to Billy: "You don't have to tell me who this fellow is! I recognize him from his pictures!" Well, I also recognized him by his pictures. He looked just like the snapshots Ruth had sent me.

"I suppose," Walter smilingly added to me, "You still don't smoke or drink! You see I know all about your vices — or lack of vices!"

Walter took me that afternoon to the NBC studios to see a rehearsal of a program called "Harlem Quiz." Among the performers were Irving Kaufman and the late Al Bernard, both of whom became my dear friends from that meeting, and "the Silver-Masked Tenor," Joe White. A couple of evenings later I visited in the Scanlan home. There, for the first time, I met my fellow Southwest Virginian, Mrs. Scanlan, and the three girls. Mary Jane was then 20, and one of the loveliest blondes I have ever seen. She was a quiet, serious, sweet girl, working as a secretary in a radio office. Ruthie was 16 and Patsy 13. The visit was made more memorable by Walter and one of the younger girls — I believe it was Patsy — singing several duets of songs he had written: It was a thrill to know that the erstwhile "Boy Wonder" idol of the "Wide, Wide World" period of my childhood was

singing for me alone. It was an equally great delight when he presented me with an autographed copy of a book, "Songtime in Erin," containing Irish songs written by himself. I returned to Virginia with a feeling of affection and admiration not only for Walter but the whole Scanlan family.

For a few years after our meeting Walter continued to do radio singing. I have saved two clippings from *The Billboard*, in which Eugene Burr, frequently the most merciless of critics, comments on some of Scanlan's work. The first appeared in 1941 when Scanlan was giving the "Songs of Ireland" program from WOR:

"Walter Scanlan, who in his 30th year in the show business has been in minstrel shows, vaudeville and practically every other amusement field, offers a pleasant quarter-hour on WOR, singing old melodies of Ireland. He acts as his own announcer, and . . . sells the songs with a sure knowledge of practically every trick in the trade. Program caught included, among others, "Kathleen Mavourneen," "Kitty" and "By Killarney's Lakes and Fells." Only suggestion would be to include some of the more stirring Irish ballads . . . Scanlan asks his listeners for requests. "Kevin Barry" and "Wrap the Green Flag Round Me, Boys," among others of their ilk, are hereby requested."

Probably you have remarked that even the knowing Mr. Burr accepted Scanlan without question as an authentic Irish tenor instead of the Dutch-descended New Yorker he actually is!

The second *Billboard* review appeared in 1942, when Scanlan was master of ceremonies on "Tintypes," a program from WMCA, New York: "Tintypes," a musical journey back to the 1890's, is a thoroughly pleasant session for anyone who likes the lilt and lift of the old ballads—and, quite possibly, for a number of people who think they don't. As played by Joe Rivers and his excellent musical crew and sung by Walter Scanlan and an unbilled male quartet, surprising number of the musical old-timers shape up as potential hit tunes of today. There was a flair and a verve about them, an unabashed sweep of melodic line that few modern tunesmiths seem able to equal — and that are guaranteed to tear down any house anywhere, when properly delivered.

The session is given form by Scanlan flipping through an imaginary family album, lighting on pictures of old-time songwriters and performers, and introducing the melodies. On the show caught he and the quartet did "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," "Love Me and The World is Mine," and others. He has a very Irish tenor and is inclined to dip too deeply into the schmaltz on some of the oldies, trying to kid the sillier ones instead of letting them kid themselves. But on the whole he does a pleasing job. The quartet is excellent and Rien's crew offers outstanding work. . . . There's life in the old songs yet!"

Then, half a dozen years ago, while he was still singing in top form, came the loss of Scanlan's voice — that golden voice which he now has reason to think may return, although he probably has no idea of resuming a singing career. In fact, Walter has said to me that the loss of his voice may have been a "blessing," since it compelled him to concentrate on his position as producing manager with the American Broadcasting Company — a job which he says is exactly to his liking.

Within the past three years, two

other losses, more serious than that of his voice, have saddened the life of Walter Scanlan. In September, 1947, he was living in Forest Hills, Long Island, where his home still is, and I paid another visit to the Scanlan home in company with the Oklahoma City record collector, Quentin Riggs. There I renewed my acquaintance with Mrs. Scanlan. Mary Jane by this time was married and, as Mrs. R. C. Rowley, was living in another part of Forest Hills. Ruthie had become Mrs. Frank Kerekes, of Magnolia, Ohio. Only Patsy, who was employed by a telephone company, was still living at home, and Quentin and I had to leave, much to her mother's distress, before Patsy returned from work. We were assured she had developed into a very lovely girl. The photographs that Ruth showed me seemed to prove it!

A few months later, I was saddened to learn from my Roanoke friends, Mr. and Mrs. Slusher, that Ruth Scanlan had died on February 27, 1948, of a cerebral hemorrhage, after injuring herself in a fall. And a few months later I was again distressed to learn that the lovely Mary Jane had died with equal suddenness following an unexpected heart attack. Besides her husband, she left a small son.

Truly, the loss of a devoted wife and daughter must have been very hard for Walter Scanlan to bear with fortitude. But he has had the consolation of his work, and there must be easement, too, in the knowledge that his talents have given pleasure to millions of persons since he began his professional career as a "boy wonder" forty-odd years ago. I hope with all my heart, and I'm sure you also do, that he has many years of productive activity ahead of him and that these years will be happy. And wouldn't it be wonderful if his voice should regain its former pristine beauty and we could again have more Walter Scanlan records! Or do you suppose that if he decided to begin another singing career he'd prefer to start from scratch (no reflection intended on the surface of some of his old-time records!) and be known again as Walter Van Brunt?

THE END

### MISCELLANEOUS

Wanted: Catalogs, operators' manuals, etc., and any information on the automatic coin operated pianos, nickelodeons, band organs, etc. Also wanted: piano rolls for the above.—Ed. Zelinsky, 11 Jordan Ave., San Francisco 18, Calif. f3618

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FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1896-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. my6046

WANTED: Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street Santa Monica, Calif. je6844

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. f3084

THREE RARE MUSIC BOXES to be sold on the second day of H. O. Boyd antique shop auction, Markle, Ind., Feb. 11, 12, 13. Regina, Console upright (3x7) 15 25" records. Automatic. Regina round cabinet (3½" hi.) 45 15" records. Automatic. Regina Corona, console, mahogany case (3x6") 12 27" records. Automatic. All in playing order. For particulars, write — S. E. Leonardson, Sales Mgr., Decatur, Ind. f1825

EDISON CYLINDER HOME phonograph; nice record case. 72 records. Brass rimmed horn; nickel individual stand. Extra nice, \$50. Others without stand; not so good condition, 25 records, \$30 and \$35.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. f1272

FOR SALE: Old songs, musical post cards, books, operas, librettos & others.—B. Kassal, 1222 N. E. Tillamook, Portland, Ore. f1061

1901 MODEL portable Edison phonograph in good playing condition. Also 65 roller type records, \$25.—Guy Eccles, Underwood, Wash. f1251

For Sale: Lovely antique square grand piano, completely restrung and refinished. Reasonable.—Tom Bishop, 234 Western Ave., Benton Harbor, Mich. f1042

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We make no wild claims, but leading collectors concede we have the greatest collection of records in America, to draw from. We have supplied real record treasures to professional people, businessmen and bankers, records they never dreamed of ever possessing; also to beginners and advanced collectors. We invite you to write for lists. All mail will receive personal attention. —Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. mh30861

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Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Jones, Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, etc. Fine condition. Price 50c each. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3426

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OUR NEW recording service offers the great voices of the past and present in their best recorded interpretations cut to your order on top quality blanks at either standard or LP speeds. Send for our free list of hundreds of items from which to choose at low prices.—Milt Weiss, 715 Dickinson St., Memphis, Tenn. mh3088

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 46, N. Y. C., N. Y. je6463



## BELL NOTES

By D. TUDOR HARRELL

Sometimes with secure delight,  
The upland hamlets will invite;  
When the merry bells ring round,  
And the jocund rebecks sound;  
To many a youth and many a maid;  
Dancing in the chequered shade;  
And young and old come forth to play,  
On a sunshine holiday

—JOHN MILTON

In the year A. D. 400 came the custom of hanging bells in towers. To Paulinus, The Bishop of Nola, goes the credit for this idea. They were first used in churches about A. D. 900.

oOo

Bede, English historian of the 7th century tells us that church bells were first brought from Italy into England, and have been more closely identified with church services more than any other instrument.

oOo

About the 8th century, the first peal of bells was hung in an English belfry and a decree issued that any Saxon peasant who owned 500 acres of land, and had on his estate a

### BELLS WANTED

WANTED: Bells. I give bell talks. —  
Mrs. Tilden Patton, Lexington, Illinois.  
dl2407

### FOR SALE

Get FROM INDIA: Elephant bell, Worship bell, cowbell, any, \$2.—Motiwala, Third Bhoiwada 38H, Bombay 2. f3652

## TRAVEL SEARCH FOR BELLS

By A. C. MEYER — \$2.50 Ppd.

In the last 10 years, semi-retired, Mr. Meyer and his wife, also a bell enthusiast, indulged their hobby of bell collecting, which has taken them to many parts of the world. In every city and virtually every cross-roads, they added interesting specimens to their collection. Mr. Meyer has summarized it all in a down-to-earth story.

■ ■ ■

**LIGHTNER PUBLISHING CORPORATION**

1006 So. Michigan Ave.,  
Chicago 5, Ill.

church with a bell tower, could become a freeman.

oOo

The earliest Christian bells were metal, riveted together into a four-sided shape, similar to our cowbell. The clapper swung from the upper inside of the bell, and the figures which struck it were called "Jacks."

oOo

In England every bell had its story and every note recalled tradition. The Sermon Bell, The Pardon or Angelus bell, so-called because of indulgence formerly bestowed for reciting the angelus, the Pudding bell, the Pancake bell, a shriving-bell rung on Shrove Tuesday as a signal for housewives to prepare their pancakes, the Holy bell, the Evening bell, the Storm bell, the Harvest or Seeding bell, the Fair bell, and Owen bell. Fritter's bell rang at 4 A. M. to begin Lent.

oOo

The story goes that Henry VIII, who was as fickle about bells as he was wives, lost four "Jesus" bells to Sir M. Partridge at cards, the bet being 100 pounds and one of the belfries in London containing four of the largest bells. Cynical bells rang out as he led his wives to the altar.

oOo

The tide of the Reformation returned with Elizabeth and the most common bell ornaments were, the cross, the fleur-de-lis, the crown, the lion's head, Tudor badges, and heads of kings.

oOo

Many pretty things have been said as to the power of ancient bells. Collectors, at great cost, set up carillons of their own, and a good bell, when struck, yielded one note so true that a person with an ear for music could identify it.

oOo

The Romans put bells on their horses and sheep to locate them.

oOo

In the book of Exodus we find reference to bells, made of gold and fastened to the blue vestment the high priest wore.

OoO

There is an old legend connected with the church of St. Andrew near Romford, England. It is said that on this spot bells may be heard on St. Andrew's Day.

oOo

Also, that centuries ago, an earthquake swallowed up a village, leaving a valley near Raleigh, Nottinghamshire, England, and it is said people assembled here on Christmas Day to hear the church bells, their ears close to the ground.

Paul Revere was an early American bell-maker, his foundry in Boston casting some 200 bells.

oOo

In 1819 a church was built in Eatonton, Ga., which was the Union Church. It belonged to four denominations, who used it successively. On the 5th Sunday, it was used by the Masons. It was abandoned by the Methodists in 1857, and by the others in 1897, torn down and removed.

oOo

The silver tone of its old bell, furnished the inspiration for a poem entitled "The Old Church Bell," written by Col. Wm. H. Spars, a native of Putnam Co., Georgia.

Ring on, ring on, Sweet Sabbath Bell,  
Thy mellow tones, I love to hear—

—o—

## EDISON TALKING RECORDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

equally intriguing one. Mr. Burke recently found in a New York store a copy of Victor Black Label record No. 31755, "Discovery of the North Pole," by Dr. Frederick Cook. This record is so rare almost no one except Burke seems to own a copy or to have heard of it, and it appears not to be listed in any Victor catalog. It obviously was made late in 1909 or early in 1910, when Cook was acclaimed as the discoverer of the North Pole and before the controversy arose which caused the explorer to be denounced, rightly or wrongly as an impostor. Public opinion veered to Lt. Robert E. Peary as the true discoverer, and by November, 1910, Victor had issued Purple Label Record No. 70012, by Peary, under the same title as that of the Cook record, which must have been hurriedly withdrawn from circulation after only a few copies were made.

Mr. Rabenstein has also obligingly looked up the identities of artists in several organizations or other groups that have puzzled collectors. The Weary Willie Trio, which made "Sons of Mother Earth" (Diamond Disc No. 50329), was composed of Billy Murray, Edward Meeker and Donald Chalmers. "We Girls Quartet," singers of "Goodbye, My Baby" (50944) consisted of Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd, Marion Evelyn Cox and Amy Ellerman. And the "Laughing Record" — Henry's Music Lesson" (No. 51063) on which no artists were named was made by Edward Meeker and Sallie Stembler, the latter known in vaudeville as "The Laughing Girl," with burlesque cornet playing by A. Fantelli. Miss Stembler was a well known entertainer, who made a "Laughing Son" record for Victor in 1904 and "Everything's Funny to Me" on a two-minute Edison cylinder in 1906. In October, 1918, Edison issued a Blue Amberol of the same selection, and Miss Stembler's photo appeared that month on the cover of the Edison Amberola Monthly.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

CHARLES W. HARRISON & BEULAH GAYLORD YOUNG

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE—This article originally appeared in the October, 1951, issue of *HOBBIES*, but through an unfortunate error only a small portion of the manuscript was published. Because of many requests from admirers of Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, the sketch is being reprinted substantially in its first complete form.)

It is a particular pleasure to set down some of the achievements of Charles Harrison's career, because I not only admire his singing but regard him as a dear friend. When to this is added the privilege of saying something about his wife, the former Beulah Gaylord Young, who was a charming recording soprano in her own right, my gratification is great.

Charles William Harrison was born on September 11, year not specified, in Jersey City, New Jersey. His middle name comes from the fact that both his grandfathers were named William. He was musically inclined from an early age and when he was 17 began taking voice instruction from a well known teacher, Leo Koefler, of New York. However, he was earning his living as an office worker and singing "on the side" with an amateur male quartet when he received his first chance as a recording artist. Mr. Harrison recalls the date of this as January, 1912, but it must have been a year earlier, because his first record, "Cujas Animam," appears in the Columbia list for May, 1911. It is No. A5275, coupled with the "Inflammatus" from "Stabat Mater," by a soprano, Anna Grant Fugitt. Later it was renumbered A5833, and combined with the "Inflammatus," sung by the Columbia Oratorio Chorus.

The singer recalls:

"The lead tenor of our quartet knew the manager of the Columbia laboratory, so we made some 'test' recordings. During the session he spoke about a test of his own solo voice, and I for once put on a bold front and said I would also like to make a test. Of course the manager did not know me, but he said they were looking for a tenor who could sing a high D flat. The other fellow said that I could do it and that they need look no further, so after a confab I was booked for a test of the 'Cujas Animam' from Rossini's 'Stabat Mater,' sung in English, with piano, as I did not know Latin! The test came out well enough for them to book me with orchestra for the same selection in Latin. I had a friend in the office where I was manager (and a youngster, at that), whose brother was a priest, so he gave me the phonetic pronunciation, and I went to it. When this came through the processing I was handed a contract for six months.

"Right away, as my records began to come out, Victor and Edison got on my trail, but I was tied up, so could do nothing. Nearing the end of the six months, I demanded a raise in the fee or a new contract, but found that I had unwittingly signed for an additional year at the same rates. I at once refused to continue, as I apparently had been duped, so went to both Victor and Ed-

son on a non-exclusive basis, designed to keep me at least with 'the big three.' After another year or so, I got raises, and more raises, then began free-lancing.

"In 1919-20, I was recording for 18 laboratories, working every day in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Montreal, etc. I think I can claim, without bragging or making any misstatements, to have made more recordings from 1912 to 1925 or so than any other singer, as I was in quartets, choruses and light opera groups, as well as duets and trios. I sang under several names besides my own, only two of which I recall — Hugh Donovan and Billy Burton. Some of these independent recording outfits sold master records to mail order and fliv-ver-night sales concerns. As I had been paid outright for my work, there was no way to restrain them or collect royalties. In 1925 I began radio work, singing on the first commercial programs over WEAF and WJZ."

Because of his beautiful lyric tenor voice and clear enunciation, Charles Harrison's first Columbia records sung in English were immediate successes and, as he says, caused him to be sought by the two other large recording companies. His first popular song disc was A1141, "Take Me Back to the Garden of Love," in which he was assisted by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet. Then follow the old Irish song, "Come Back to Erin," sung as a straight solo.

The young tenor's first Edison cylinders were issued in July, 1912. The initial offering was a four-minute Amherst, No. 1045, a duet of "Absent," with Edison's favorite soprano, Elizabeth Spencer. Harrison's first Edison solo was No. 1057, an English version of "All Hail, Thou Dwelling Lowly," from Faust. The monthly supplement said:

"Famous in itself, the great Cavatina from the garden scene of Gounod's 'Faust' has been the goal of many a tenor. Mr. Harrison, who recently left Calvary Church of East Orange, New Jersey, to become tenor soloist for the Brick Presbyterian Church, New York, has made a remarkably clear record, while the orchestra shades its beautiful accompaniment from violin obbligato to full rich chords."

This seems the best place to remark that Charlie Harrison credits his obtaining the New York church singing job to the influence of a fine singer with whom he was intimately associated for many years — that distinguished basso, the late Frank Croton. He says: "Frank put me on the track of the big church job in New York — Fifth Avenue Brick Presbyterian Church. Acting on his tip, I crashed the gate and got the job, which I held for four years, until my recording and concert work necessitated resigning."

In August, 1912, Harrison showed his versatility by making an Edison cylinder of Louis A. Hirsch's catchy "Oriental Rose" from "The Winter Garden."

"The New York Winter Garden," said the supplement, "is usually associated with ragtime 'hits,' but the fact that

this exquisite melody is one of the greatest successes of the show proves that the idea is mistaken. For this is a beautiful love song of tenderest sentiment, placed in a truly Oriental musical setting. . . . Mr. Harrison is in fine voice, his beautifully shaded tones and the graceful ease of his performance adding greatly to the charm of the enchanting air."

Until he had a disagreement with Mr. Edison several years later, Charles Harrison was one of the outstanding Edison artists. His name did not appear in a Victor list until May, 1913, when record No. 17317 coupled his rendition of "When I Met You Last Night in Dreamland" with a Harry Macdonough version of an all-time hit, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." Speaking of the Harrison side, the monthly supplement termed it "a pleasing ballad which introduces another new tenor to Victor audiences. Mr. Harrison's clear tenor and good enunciation will be much appreciated by our customers." This brief description was accompanied by a photograph of the singer.

The same photograph appeared in June, with a listing of what must have been one of the biggest selling Harrison records, combining two ballads that had been made famous by John McCormack, "I Hear You Calling Me" and "A Dream." The catalog editor commented:

"Two of the greatest favorites among modern concert songs are now issued for the first time in double-faced form, and the combination seems a most happy one. Mr. Harrison has given these two highly popular songs in a most effective manner."

This record, No. 17321, established Charles Harrison as a Victor favorite. It also caused him to incur the displeasure of Mr. McCormack. As Charlie himself says:

"When I began recording for Victor, they wanted a tenor who could make McCormack records on a cheaper disc — someone with a voice and appeal that he had — so I was told to do some of these McCormack songs. The first two were 'I Hear You Calling Me' and 'A Dream,' then 'Mother Machree' and 'A Little Bit of Heaven.' A few months after these were released I was switched to other ballads and songs, and when I inquired about this was told by the recording manager that McCormack had raised h—— because Harrison records were cutting into his royalties."

Meanwhile, Harrison was being extensively used by Columbia, for whom he did more singing than for any other company. The Columbia recording manager decided that the company needed a male quartet, composed of four artists, each of whom would be a star soloist but capable of finished harmonious team work. The new quartet was to record music of a less ephemeral type than the popular songs in which the Peerless Quartet had a virtual Columbia monopoly, and to specialize in numbers that could be sung without accompaniment. Thus originated the Columbia Stellar Quartet — Stellar meaning that each member was a star in his own right.

"The Stellar Quartet was organized by the recording manager, George Jell, and Charles A. Prince was delegated to rehearse us. I had done up to this time, all a capella (without accompaniment)



work and was one of the group who wanted to try it out on records, so that is why we began, or experimented, with these numbers without any kind of accompaniment. It was a complete success, and Prince was instrumental in arranging and conducting us in subsequent recording work. If my memory does not fail me the first of these numbers to be recorded was 'Absent,' and it so deeply struck the vice president of Columbia that he ordered a series of 'a capella' numbers. Whether this was one of the first to be released, I do not know. . . . Incidentally, Leo Koefler was the choirmaster who coached me on breathing and sight reading in his choir at Old St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway and Fulton Street, New York. Later, after I had progressed in church solo work, I went to Frederick Bristol, an old singing master, who did the finishing touches on my voice production. Up to that time I had been a 'natural' and required no real instruction. (You see how lucky I was). He wanted me for opera, but I turned down contracts for the Metropolitan and two free trips of three years each in Europe, which I did not want."

Now, back to the Stellar Quartet.

The new quartet's first published record, No. A1440, was issued in January, 1914, and consisted of "Sally in Our Alley" and "The Girl I Left Behind Me." The supplement termed them "superb male quartet numbers . . . an introduction par excellence for our new quartet, made up of four of the best concert voices now heard in the United States." The singers were Harrison, first tenor; John Barnes Wells, lead; Andrea Sarto, baritone; and the already mentioned Frank Croxton, bass. In April, the quartet sang "Annie Laurie," doubled with "Meet Me By Moonlight," by the Columbia Mixed Quartet, in which Harrison also was heard. "Absent" did not appear until February, 1916.

Other members of the mixed quartet — all dead now — were Grace Kerns, soprano; Mildred Potter, contralto, and Croxton. Its personnel later changed, and Harrison recalls that "the Columbia Mixed Quartet — Beulah Gaylord Young, soprano; Rose Bryant, contralto; Croxton, bass, and myself tenor — did a lot of club and concert work at about the 1918-19 period." The original mixed quartet was the nucleus of a group that recorded a double-faced combination of the Rigoletto Quartet and the Lucia Sextet, sung in English and issued in the October, 1915, Columbia list. The quartet was sung by Kearns, Potter, Harrison and Albert Wiederhold, baritone; and the Sextet by Kearns, Potter, Harrison, Croxton, Wiederhold and another tenor, Reed Miller. On occasion, Clara Moister sang contralto in the mixed quartet, and Wiederhold took the place of Croxton.

After Wells had been used for only a few records, he dropped out of the Stellar Quartet. Henry Burr served briefly, but also soon gave it up — probably because he was so busy with his solo and duet recordings and leading the Peerless Quartet. Reed Miller then became the second tenor, and there were no further personnel changes, other than that other tenors sometimes filled in for Miller when he went on long concert tours and oratorio engagements. When I talked

with Lewis James a few months ago, Mr. James, now program director at Radio Station WGN, Chicago, recalled that he sometimes sang with the Stellars in Miller's place. The quartet disbanded after Miller's death in 1923.

Columbia gave the Stellar Quartet the following glowing description in record catalogs published while the ensemble was at the height of its popularity:

"The admirers of the four-part singing of the Columbia Stellar Quartet are so many that a short personal introduction to the individual members of this unexcelled ensemble will be of real interest. This quartet sings together only for the Columbia Company and each new record is a veritable sensation.

"Charles Harrison, first tenor, whose clear voice is so often heard brilliantly carrying the air, is a New Jersey man. He commenced voice culture at the age of 17 under Leo Koefler and has been tenor at the New York Fifth Avenue Church . . . until he entered the concert field. He has been forced to give up a professional career at the call of public admirers of his musical ability.

"Reed Miller, second tenor, is a native of the South. Miller came to New York with nothing in his pocket but ability. With a voice no less than a gift, he has achieved fame as one of the greatest oratorio soloists the country has ever known. From coast to coast he has been called to sing in chorus productions.

"Andrea Sarto, baritone, is above all a singer. From a boy he sang for himself and his friends. In 1910 he left his church position to step up on the concert and operatic stage. Conried, of operatic fame, selected Sarto for baritone work at the Metropolitan, and from that time he has grown in popular esteem throughout the country as a concert singer of rare excellence and sterling character.

"Frank Croxton, bass, was born in Kentucky and was educated at the Kentucky University. At the youthful age of six his remarkable voice was developing under the tutelage of his father. At twenty-one he came to New York and built up a reputation as soloist with orchestras and choral societies throughout the United States. The outstanding quality of Croxton's voice is an unusual clearness seldom found in a voice of such low bass register. In his solo passages this clarity is particularly noticeable."

Reading the foregoing, Columbia patrons must have felt that the Stellar Quartet was the finest group of its kind in the world. A 1919 article attributed much of the credit for the quartet's success to Charles Prince:

"Practically the only conductor who has spent his entire career in the recording field, Prince has unquestionably been one of the moving spirits which have made Columbia records what they are today. The Stellar Quartet . . . is another of Prince's musical children. His remarkable pianism enables Prince to go over selections and instruct the perfect interpretation before artists stand before the horn. This he does over and over with tireless interest — his one aim being a perfect record."

Like many other popular recording groups, the Columbia Quartet used more than one name. In singing popular music it was known as the Broadway Quartet, and I suspect it may also have been, on Columbia records, the Knickerbocker Quartet a different group from the Edison organization of the same name. Sarto sometimes called himself Edgar Stoddard, and Harrison and Albert Wiederhold made duets as Billy Burton and Herbert Stuart. As has already been brought out, Hugh Dono-

van was another disguise for Harrison, and some of his Columbia solos were issued in the 1920's under the Harmony and Velvetone labels and credited to "Charles Hilton." I have a National Music Lover's record (made, I believe, by Grey Gull), of an operatic aria sung in English by "Hugo Donivetti!"

Once, discussing various Columbia artists in a letter to me, the veteran Columbia executive, Frank Dorian, who died in 1939, remarked:

"Charles Harrison was a tenor soloist on records long before the Stellar Quartet was organized. His repertoire was almost unlimited, but he specialized in ballads and grand opera arias. In his heyday he was probably one of the largest selling recording artists in the world." Mr. Dorian said he thought Harrison belonged on any list of the greatest popular recorders.

As a member of the Edison recording staff, the blue-eyed, brown-haired, slightly-built Charles Harrison had the supervision of Thomas A. Edison himself. He was the subject of this flattering description in a 1914 Edison Blue Amberol record catalog:

"Up to the past year his work has been confined principally to church singing, but in the short time which he has devoted to concerts and recitals he has gained a pronounced and well-deserved success. His voice is notable for its freshness and vivaciousness of tone. It has life and is absolutely free from the deadly monotony of so many tenor voices. It responds perfectly to his sympathetic touch. His voice has power, tonal purity and sweetness."

Equally flattering were the newspaper comments on Harrison's recitals. A typical example is the following from a 1916 issue of the Sedalia (Mo.) Democrat:

"Charles Harrison fulfilled every expectation and surpassed any tenor Sedalia ever heard. His voice is beautiful, even and sympathetic, with never a harsh tone—and his wonderful artistry made every song a gem."

There were plenty of unusual experiences in Charlie Harrison's recital career. He was called on to sing for a few days with the Eight Famous Victor Artists, while the troupe was touring Texas, because of Henry Burr's being summoned home, owing to the death of his wife's daughter by a former marriage. He says, "Henry Burr was a fine fellow and thought a lot of his stepdaughter." Almost the same remark was made to me by Burr's widow, Mrs. Cecelia McClaskey, in a telephone conversation I had with her during my visit to Chicago last October. She said, "He was a wonderful man. I was a widow when he married me, and nobody could have been better to my daughter than he was."

Harrison says that he ran into every sort of weather, but mostly bad, during his travels as a recitalist. "I recall," he writes, "going through all kinds of snow and stuff one winter while concertizing; again, while in Houston, Texas, one spring, the floods were so bad I had to go in and out of a back door, then 'float' to the other side of the street in a

boat, to get to the Auditorium and back the same way. The house was packed for the recital! I think I still prefer Maine in summer and winter, for I've experienced every month there and like them all. Maybe if I live long enough I'll end my days there."

In the late 1920's Harrison sang briefly with the famous radio and recording ensemble, the Revelers. He also organized for radio work the Eveready Mixed Quartet, consisting of Beulah Gaylord Young, soprano; Rose Bryant, contralto; himself, tenor; Wilfred Glenn (founder of the Revelers), bass, and Tom Griselle, pianist. (Griselle won a \$10,000 prize for a symphony that took first place in a contest sponsored in 1927 by the Victor Talking Machine Company). The tenor also sang in a male ensemble consisting of himself; Arnold Morgan, lead; Theodore Webb, baritone; Ellsworth Sliker, bass, and Stuart Ross, pianist.

But, getting back to the days of acoustic recording, some of the most picturesque experiences of Charles Harrison's career were those he had with the great, but crotchety, inventor, Thomas A. Edison. "The Old Man" had brought out his wonderful Diamond Disc phonograph, which perfectly "re-created" the exact quality of a singer's voice and couldn't be detected, in direct comparison, from the living tones as long as the singer was careful to sing exactly as loud as the phonograph and not to use his full power. In other words, while the quality of the reproduction was precisely like the real thing, the singers, in making records, didn't sing as loud as they would naturally do when appearing before a huge audience in a large concert hall. Obviously, this meant, that in giving "tone tests," they couldn't cut loose with all the strength of their lungs, but had to keep on "the phonograph level." It was this compulsory restraint that caused envious dealers for other makes of phonographs to insist that singers "imitated" the Edison instrument. In 1926 Edison brought out the Edisonic soundbox which gave a louder reproduction than the original light-weight equipment.

Now I shall let Charlie Harrison tell in his own words the story of his misadventures with Mr. Edison, which removed him for a time from the roster of Edison artists:

"I was making tone tests at the Orange 'cage' each week, and at the same time was recording operatic arias in English. The 'cage' was the glass room which 'the old man' had in his Orange laboratory. I used to go there one hour a week to sing vocal exercises and anything he might ask me to do. This was a separate arrangement from my recording contract."

"Well, Mr. Edison criticized one of my opera arias and laboratory workers kidded me about it, so I foolishly made the remark that he couldn't hear, anyway, so why should he be the judge as to whether it was suitable for the Metropolitan but not on his record? After the report of my criticism got to the old man, I went to Orange for my weekly testing period, and after waiting for almost the full hour, motioned to his secretary that I wanted an audience. He finally got Mr. Edison to call me in;

and what a surprise I got! He told me to sit down, and when I did he put his hand to his ear and asked me, 'What was it you said about my being deaf and couldn't hear your record?' I was quite at my wits' end for a reply and before I could think up what to say he told me I was through making records and to go on home! My guarantee was paid each month for the full year or more it ran. When I was asked to sing for one of their big banquets and shows in Orange I thought it strange, but went to it, sang 'Celeste Aida' on the stage where the banquet tables were set, and at the conclusion Walter Miller, the Edison recording manager, came to me and said Mr. Edison wanted me to sing that again, and to stand beside him. After I had finished he took my hand and told me I was improving. A short time later I resumed Edison recording."

Apparently, Harrison did not record "Celeste Aida" for Edison, or if he did it wasn't issued, but he did sing the tenor part in an English version of the *Misere* from *Trovatore*; Diamond Disc No. 82516. This record had a checkered career. It was first sung by Agnes Kimball, soprano, and John Young, tenor. A few years later it was remade by the late Mrs. Kimball with Harrison, and in 1923 was done over still again by Esther Nelson and Charles Hart. Remaking disc records was a common practice with Edison; and sometimes the artists were changed when the original singers, for one reason or another, were not available.

The tenor reminisces concerning his "tone testing" experiences:

"That Edison 'tone test' business, which was carried on throughout the country at one time, was quite a trick. Fortunately, I could hold my voice volume down without losing the quality of tone. It was used in churches principally, though I did them for stores where the records were sold, and in clubs where special meetings were held. My last one was in Newark, at I think, the Centenary Church, where I had been engaged for a recital. I had sung there on numerous occasions and they were familiar with my voice. After the demonstration of the tone test, I was asked to sing a group of songs, and although I tried to hold my voice in check, so to speak, the pastor interrupted to ask why I did not sing out and give my full voice to the listeners. As I was in this instance being paid by the church and not by Edison, I had to comply, and of course everyone noticed the difference. The fellows who came there with the machine and records of mine were disgusted and left early, so I was 'bounced' from this work and never did any more of it."

When a performer has made many thousands of records, as Charles Harrison did, it is virtually impossible to pick out a few and say they are his finest. But, like every other artist I have known who sang for all the companies, he considers Edison recording the best of its period. His comment is, "Edison records were the nearest to the real thing that I've ever heard." Among his acoustically recorded Diamond Discs, "Funiculi, Funicula" and "Love Me and the World is Mine" are particularly good. However, I believe that the Edison electric recordings which he sang in 1928 and 1929 are the most admirable of his entire career. Take, for instance, a trivial song called "Momsy," which he did with a fine male chorus. The words and music are cheap, but the voice quality is gorgeous. "Love's First Kiss" is beautifully sung, and Harrison is the only artist I can re-

call who made "Sonny Boy" sound like respectable music instead of trash. To compare his recording with that of Al Jolson or Ruth Etting is to realize the vast difference between his dignified restraint and their wallowing in pathos. John McCormack also recorded "Sonny Boy," but I — no McCormack admirer at any time — consider his effort poor beside Harrison's.

The tenor was under contract to Edison for two records a month when the inventor's company went out of the phonograph and record business in October, 1929. By that time he had organized a fine male quartet, much on the order of the Columbia Stellars, which, while under contract to Edison, also recorded by the electric method for Victor and Columbia. The new group was known as the American Singers. At first it consisted of Harrison as top tenor; the Canadian, Redferne Hollinshead, who made Edison records in 1915, second tenor; Vernon Archibald, another Edison artist, baritone; and our old friend, Frank Croxton, bass. Hollinshead was soon replaced by Lambert Murphy, who previously had been an exclusive Victor artist from the beginning of his recording career in 1911. (Mr. Murphy is still living, and delighted me a few years ago by letting me know that he regularly reads *Favorite Recording Artists*).

I have an undated newspaper clipping which contains a blurry cut of Harrison, Murphy, Archibald and Croxton. It says that they "comprise the Old Company Singers, who with Dr. Sigmond Spaeth broadcast every Sunday at 7 P. M. over WEA and associated stations." The article gives this amusing thumbnail sketch of the idiosyncrasies of the four singers:

"Charles Harrison spends his idle hours at his home in Summit, N. J., with a can of weed killer in one hand and a book on horticulture in the other. Lambert Murphy spends as much time as he can on his New Hampshire farm, with his collection of firearms (he's planning to visit Chicago) and his prize-winning bird dog. Vernon Archibald is hailed as the perfect disciple of Izaak Walton. He went two weeks without a bite and never gave vent to profanity. And Frank Croxton is still trying to equal the 84 he made on the links way back in 1905."

Concerning the American Singers, Harrison wrote to me in 1948:

"We serviced Columbia Broadcasting System the first year of its life, contracting for ten hours of broadcasting per week at a very handsome salary for each one of us, and two women to make a sextet. We then free-lanced and then did a four-year stretch for Lehigh or Old Company Coal and various other spot commercials. The war ended all that, and so it ended me for radio, too, as I would not hang around the offices looking for a job. I took to business, as did Lambert Murphy."

A few months earlier he had written:

"I would love to do some recording work, as my voice is still youthful, but for radio only glamour is wanted. Voice and musical ability come second."

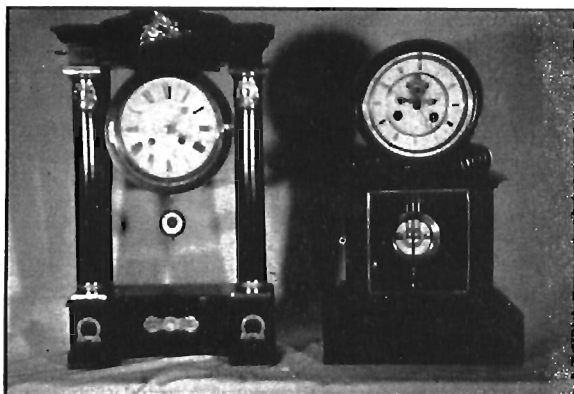
Last year, in a reminiscent mood, he said: "You know, Jim, it's difficult for me to try to recall some of the artists who recorded with me, as I used various names, and I know

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 24)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23)

some of them did also. I did record duets with Sarto, Wiederhold, Croxton, James, Miller, Glenn, Clifford Cairns and Reinald Werrenrath; also Helen Clark, Elizabeth Spencer, Nanette Flack, Grace Kerns, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Elsie Baker, Margaret Woodrow Wilson (daughter of President Wilson) Lucy Gates, and others." Charlie might have added another tenor, Everett Clarke, to this list of duet partners. I don't question his statement that he recorded with all these singers but in some instances the records may not have been issued. Off-hand, I can't recall any published duets with Werrenrath, Margaret Wilson and Lucy Gates. And he seems to be one of the few Victor singers who never did a duet with Billy Murray! Of course, Harrison has never tried to be a comedian, and his style and that of "The Denver Nightingale" are poles apart.

Charles Harrison, the "tenor with a voice in a million" (as the Victor supplement writer termed him in commenting on his 1917 record of "Any Place is Heaven if You are Near Me" and "When I Found the Way to Your Heart") is now back in the music business. Since December, 1947, he has been teaching voice for the Newark Conservatory of Music, which specializes in musical training for former service men and women. He teaches five days a week and does church singing on Sundays. Those who had the good fortune to attend the September, 1950, John Bieling Day will remember that Harrison brought with him one of his pupils,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 58)



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

Charles Pinto, who gave an excellent rendition of Toselli's "Serenade."

The tenor explains his fondness for Maine, and makes clear the pleasure he finds in his present home at 49 Fairview Avenue, New Providence Township, New Jersey, in the following:

"I followed my teacher, Bristol, with quite a few of his other pupils, to Maine for summer study and was sold on the idea. This was 1917. I purchased a 'camp' in Harrison, which I had made over into a cottage with two cabins, and from which I commuted to New York and Camden for recording work, and then radio programs. When my wife and I were married we carried on a summer school of instruction, to which students and teachers came for refresher courses. The war ended all that, so in 1946 I sold the place, as we could not spend summers there any more. Back in 1928 I purchased a 'show place' in Summit, New Jersey, but it was too much for me to carry, what with caretakers, etc., so that was sold and we came to New Providence Township in 1942. Not liking that neighborhood, we finally located our present home, which I bought, and we moved in on December 17, 1946, the most comfortable and satisfactory bungalow we've ever been in. We hope we are set for the rest of our lives, as we can go to Maine each summer for a short stay in another camp."

On this buoyantly optimistic note let's dismiss the brilliant tenor and lovable gentleman, Charles Harrison, and pay our respects to the distaff side of the family. Though few record collectors suspect it, Mrs. Harrison was for several years a recording artist of considerable distinction. She was in fact, Beulah Gaylord Young, who has already been mentioned more than once in this article.

The lady with the beautiful high soprano voice recalls that she had an audition with Columbia in 1911 and made some solo numbers. Like nearly everybody else who worked for Columbia, she sang with the Peerless Quartet and did duets with Henry Burr. She was top soprano of the Victoria Ladies' Quartet when she began her recording activities, and during an audition the recording manager asked if she would like to do some solo work. She would — and did.

Then Beulah Gaylord Young heard Charles Harrison's first record. She admired his voice and decided she wanted to meet him. That record of "Cujas Animam" was an historic disc in more than one respect, for it not only launched Charles Harrison's recording career, but also resulted, eventually, in the marriage of Soprano Young and Tenor Harrison in 1925. Prior to that, however, they had done much singing together on records and in recitals throughout the East.

During her active Columbia period, Mrs. Harrison was the soprano of the Columbia Mixed Quartet, usually with Clara Moister, Harrison and Wiederhold as the other members. These singers also were the soloists in the Columbia Light Opera Company, together with another soprano, Idelle Patterson, Frank Croxton and Reed Miller. A charming duet by "Young and Harrison" is the 1912 Columbia record of "Are You Going to Dance?"

from "The Count of Luxembourg" with "Where the Edelweiss is Blooming," from "Hanky Panky," sung by the soprano, with Henry Burr as her partner, on the other side.

Although Mrs. Harrison recorded mostly for Columbia, she was represented in the February, 1914, Edison Blue Amberol list with cylinder No. 2218, "My Chain of Memories," written by Mrs. Herbert Ingraham in memory of her husband, who had won prominence during his short life as a composer of song hits. The February Edison Phonograph Monthly Review contained the soprano's photo, one that showed her smiling happily, and a biographical note:

"Beulah Gaylord Young, for three seasons of the Victoria Ladies' Quartet, is well known in club, concert and church work. She sang for nearly ten years in Summit, New Jersey, at the Methodist Episcopal Church; at present she is soloist at the 33rd Street Collegian Baptist Church, New York City. Her voice is of beautiful quality, perfectly placed, and her songs are always exquisitely rendered. That her records are bound to become favorites seems already assured, although she is a newcomer to the ranks of Edison artists."

I have one association concerning Mrs. Harrison, whom I have yet to meet in person, with which this sketch may close. For a good many years one of my favorite records has been a Columbia of a 1912 Irving Berlin success, "Run Home and Tell Your Mother." It is sung by Molly Ames, soprano, with the Peerless Quartet in the refrain. The soprano's voice is so fresh, youthful and attractive that on first hearing the record I wondered who the mysterious Molly Ames could be. In my imagination I gave her the nickname of "Pretty Molly," because I imagined her to be an extremely pretty girl. "Molly Ames" made only one record, and I decided that she probably was a now forgotten vaudeville singer who had experimented briefly with recording. I remember asking the late Albert Campbell, the top tenor of the Peerless Quartet, who Molly Ames was, and he replied that he couldn't remember working with anybody by such a name.

Then Charlie Harrison, in returning thanks for the "wonderful time" he said he'd had at the John Bieling Day party, asked if he might bring his wife next time, because she too had been a recording artist. "She made records," he casually wrote, "under the names of Beulah Gaylord Young and Molly Ames." (He might also have mentioned, if he had thought of it, that they made a Pathé record of "Georgia Moon" in 1916 under the team name of Charles Harrison and Beulah Gaylord — probably the last record they sang together). Perhaps you can imagine my glee when I realized that the mystery of "Molly Ames" was a mystery no longer!

I eagerly looked forward to the prospect of seeing not only my friend Charlie again, but "Molly Ames" as well, in September, 1951. Unfortunately, it turned out that there was no Bieling Day party last year, and I have still to meet "Pretty Molly." Perhaps I shall have that privilege in 1952. I certainly hope so!



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

## ESTELLA LOUISE MANN

### (And Some "Forgotten Woman" Singers)

By JIM WALSH

For the past twenty years talk about "the Forgotten Man" has been a commonplace of American politics. But anyone studying the record catalogs of the early phonograph companies is likely to think more about "the Forgotten Woman." Most men who made records in the 1890's and early 1900's are still well remembered, but their feminine counterparts are a forlorn, forgotten group, whose names mean little to music lovers today.

Fifty years or so ago the soprano voice was so difficult to record that it nearly always emerged from the phonograph as a blasting, squawking travesty of the real thing. The Edison Company did not claim complete success in its efforts to remove the "blast" from soprano cylinders until it began to issue records in September, 1905, by an accomplished Australian singer, Marie Narelle. Her renditions of "Killarney" and "Silver Threads Among the Gold" were widely praised as "the first perfect soprano records."

Contraltos usually fared somewhat, if not a great deal better, with the result that most of the brown wax cylinders by feminine artists were the work of ladies esteemed for their deep, chesty tones. Top notes of tenors also came out often as a screech and caused baritone recordings to be preferred. Even so, it was not so hard to make decent tenor records as it was to avoid caricaturing the soaring tones of soprano. Yet, in spite of all handicaps, reasonably satisfactory soprano records sometimes were achieved.

I imagine that few, if any, readers of HOBBIES own solo records by Estella Louise Mann, whose phonograph career began in 1896 and ended around 1900, when the brown wax cylinder, although still the dominant medium of recording and reproduction, was soon to give way to the black gold-moulded cylinder and the scratchy, but much less fragile, disc.

Perhaps a few of the cylinders in which Miss Mann sang as a member of the once noted Lyric Trio have escaped destruction, but it's doubtful that any of her unassisted efforts have survived. As veteran collectors know, the "brownwaxes," besides being easy to break, lacked volume and easily fell victims to fungus growths that destroyed the sound even if the cylinders remained intact.

So it happens that Estella Mann has become such a "forgotten woman" that her name is recognized by few record specialists today. Instead of being, by current standards, a "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artist," she



This illustration shows Estella Louise Mann, the first and perhaps the only woman to own a record company, as she sings into a group of horns.

is the most obscure singer about whom I have written during the ten years in which this department has appeared. But it should not be forgotten that Miss Mann, who died so recently as 1947, was a favorite with the comparatively small number of persons who bought cylinders for home use in the Spanish-American War period, and the much larger number who listened through ear-tubes in "slot machine parlors."

Estella Mann may have been the first woman to make a career of singing for the new-fangled "talking machines," and she was almost certainly the first feminine artist to operate her own record company, which began issuing Lyric cylinders (named, I imagine, for the Trio) in 1898. I don't think I have ever heard the recorded voice of Miss Mann, but all available information agrees that she was a concert singer of high standing, an accomplished artist with a beautiful, well controlled, soprano voice. A pioneer of pioneers, she deserves to have her life story told and the history of her accomplishments preserved.

Although I have said Miss Mann probably was the first professional woman recording artist, I do not mean that she was the first woman to sing into a phonograph. It may be impossible to determine to whom that honor belongs. From the earliest days of Edison's original crude tin-foil device, both men and women were eager to hear their voices issue from experimental "phonograms." Tradi-

tion says that the first record made in England was sung by Mrs. Pierre Ronalds, a lifelong friend of Sir Arthur Sullivan. In 1877 Sir Arthur set music to Adelaide Proctor's poem, "The Lost Chord," while he watched by the bedside of his dying brother. Shortly after its publication the song became the greatest ballad, or "semi-classic" success England had known in 40 years. Sullivan gave Mrs. Ronalds the original manuscript of the song, and she sang it into a tin-foil phonograph. By her instructions, the manuscript was buried with her. I wonder what became of that record!

There is a persistent story that "the Swedish Nightingale," Jenny Lind, who died in 1887, ten years after the invention of the phonograph, also made a record, but no one seems to know whether it still exists. In the early 1890's an enterprising Edison dealer in San Francisco engaged a talented young soprano, name unrecorded, to sing cylinders of "Ave Maria," which were sold to the somewhat gullible public as replicas of the voice of Mrs. Thomas A. Edison. Many opera stars, among them Nellie Melba and Adelina Patti, made Bettini cylinders in the '90's, but these were chiefly for Bettini's private collection rather than commercial distribution. "Edison House," in London, even had a woman announcer, who officiated on August 2, 1890, when Kenneth Landfrey recorded the bugle call that he had sounded 36 years before at the Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War. (The same bugle had been used at the Battle of Waterloo.)

The still charming Edith Helena, one of the finest coloratura sopranos of her day, sang in 1898 for the crude seven-inch Berliner discs, and Alice Nielsen and her "double quartet" made records that same year. A Miss Helen Jenyngne also sang "The Meba Waltz" for Berliner. In preceding articles I have referred to Grace Spencer, yet happily with us, as "The First Lady of the Phonograph," but Miss Spencer (Mrs. Willard Foster Doolittle) says her diary shows that she made her first cylinders, under the personal supervision of Mr. Edison, in 1897. She therefore was preceded by Miss Mann, but Miss Spencer does appear to be the first woman who made a Victor record. About a year ago *The Billboard* published a notice of the death in New York on January 19, 1951, of Mrs. Kate Ellis Hobby, 90, "who made some of the first song recordings for the late Thomas A. Edison on the original gramophone. . . . The wax

cylinders used in cutting the songs were lost when a fire destroyed Edison's laboratory."

The Edison fire occurred in December, 1914. *The Billboard* displayed the layman's usual inaccuracy in referring to recorded music. Edison of course had nothing to do with the gramophone invented by Emile Berliner. Wax cylinders could not be played on a gramophone, and it was the Edison phonograph for which Mrs. Hobby sang. Until I read the death notice I had never heard of this lady and have no idea when and what she recorded.

Since beginning to make notes for this article I have been going through old catalogs, tracing the first appearances of "the forgotten women," and I should like to mention more of them, even though this involves a brief postponement of my account of Estella Mann's career. I feel an obligation to give the other erstwhile sopranos and contraltos at least this passing mention, because they are unlikely to become the subjects of later individual sketches.

In 1894 the United States Record Company, which made "New Jersey" cylinders in Newark, issued what the distinguished banjo virtuoso, Fred Van Eps, tells me was the first complete record catalog ever published by any company. It contains no records by women. The 1896 Columbia list also lists no feminine performers. In 1897, however, there were 14 by a contralto, Maud Foster, with the comment that "Miss Foster's records are well known. They rank among the best of female voice records, and are in great demand."

The Foster numbers ran from 2255 to 2268, and the titles were "Down in Poverty Row," "Oh, Uncle John!" "Arrah, Go On!" "Little Alabama Coon," "Girl Wanted," "The Picture in My Heart," "Sliding Down Our Cellar Door," "The Sunshine of Paradise Alley," "I Want Yer, Ma Honey," "Henrietta," "Dad's the Engineer," "The Midway in the Moon," "I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard" and "Mama Says It's Naughty." A few of these songs are still well known after 54 years. Most are ballads, but a few are humorous.

Maud Foster's eminence as the only woman singer for Columbia didn't last long. There were as yet no permanent master records, and it may be that her voice couldn't endure the strain of singing the same songs dozens of times by the "round." Her name is not in the 1899 catalog, but there is a list of 19 solos by Miss Minnie Emmett. According to the annotator, "The records of Miss Minnie S. Emmett's songs are the most successful and popular ever made of the female voice. Miss Emmett has a clear and strong soprano voice of great range and sweetness." The songs were nearly all the "old standard" type, with no comedy included, but in 1903 Miss Emmett sang a Columbia disc, No. 731, of a humorous selection, "If Money Talks It Ain't On Speaking Terms With Me." She made several Columbia records in 1905, but gradually disappeared

from the lists before coming back from 1910 to 1913 as one of the singers for Albert Benzler's U. S. Everlasting cylinders.

Although Minnie Emmett is entitled to only incidental mention in this article dealing with the life of Estella Mann, I can't resist setting down here a rather pathetic story which the late Albert Campbell once told me about Miss Emmett, who may just possibly still be alive.

Al said he had gone to see an old friend in a home for retired actors. In the lobby he glanced at an elderly woman wearing dark glasses. Not recognizing her, and assuming she was blind, Campbell didn't mean to stop. But the old lady wasn't blind. She imperiously exclaimed: "Albert Campbell, how dare you come in here without speaking to me!" It was Minnie Emmett, whom he had imagined dead long ago. Her sight was bad, but not so bad that she couldn't recognize black-haired, twinkly-eyed Al Campbell. I have never heard of the soprano's death, so it may be that she yet lives in the actors' home, peering wistfully or commandingly at casual visitors through those dark glasses.

The 1899 Edison cylinder catalog contains solo records by four women, with three listed as contraltos—Anna Barthold, May Kelso and Marguerite Newton. I know nothing of Anna Barthold, except that she was represented by half a dozen sentimental songs. May Kelso also sang a few solos but is now best remembered as a duet partner of the late John Bieling. Marguerite Newton was the most prolific of Edison's 1899 lady recorders. Although it is generally believed that Ada Jones was the first woman to sing comic numbers successfully, and she probably was the first to take part in humorous spoken sketches, this ancient Edison list includes many so-called "coon songs" by Miss Newton, with such titles as "Mr. Johnson, Turn Me Loose," "Kiss Your Goosie Woose" and "The Lady Friend of Mr. Rastus Jackson." Marguerite also sang an occasional sentimental trifle, of which "She Is More to Be Pitied Than Censured" is characteristic.

Marguerite Newton died ten years ago, aged 76. John Bieling told me that she was the wife of the famous German yodler, George P. Watson, who had 18 records in this 1899 list. However, no mention is made of Watson in a *Billboard* obituary, which tells of Miss Newton's death on January 1, 1942, at her home in Gallitzin, Pennsylvania. The article says that "she began her career at the age of 14 on the concert stage in New York. Later she appeared in vaude and in Chautauqua shows. She was the first woman whose voice was recorded by the late Thomas A. Edison after he perfected the phonograph."

The last quoted sentence need not be taken at face value. Whenever a pioneer recording artist dies, the publications using death notices say that the performer was one of the first—or usually the first—to sing for Edison. And just when *did* Thomas A.



A profile view of the late Estella Mann, as she appeared at the height of her career.

Edison "perfect" the phonograph?

Also listed in the 1899 Edison catalog are several records sung in Spanish by Senorita Godoy, whose voice quality isn't indicated. The senorita and the Misses Newton and Kelso are the only women shown in a 1900 group photograph of 42 Edison artists.

Likewise in the 1899 list—and here we get back for a moment to the ranking heroine of this article—is a list of eight songs by "the original Lyric Trio"—Estella L. Mann, John Havens and Wm. F. Hooley." These cylinders, one or two of which we may hope are still extant somewhere, were No. 4804, 4800, "Attila" (presumably the "Praise Ye" trio); 4801, "The Flowers That Bloom in the Spring"; 4802, "You Remember 'Twas Six Months Ago"; 4903, "No, No, 'Tis You"; "Farewell, My Own"; 4805, "Bell Trio"; 4806, "Unchain the Dogs of War"; and 4807, "When I Was a Boy." Numbers 4802 and 4806 were from Sousa's opera, "The Bride Elect"; 4803 was from "Olivette"; 4801 from "The Mikado," and the remaining three from "Pinafore." "When I Was a Boy" surely should be "When I Was a Lad."

By May, 1901, May Kelso and Marguerite Newton still had some records in the Edison catalog, but poor Anna Barthold was missing. No new women singers had been added, and the "Original Lyric Trio" was now composed of Grace Spencer, soprano, in the place of Estella Mann; Harry Macdonough as tenor, instead of John Havens, and Hooley remaining as bass. In the fall of 1902, when the gold-moulded cylinders had been introduced (no more Edison "brown waxes" were made after July 25 of that year), all the women just mentioned were missing, and the only feminine vocalist was a contralto, Miss Louise Roberts. The January, 1903, supplement contained a rendi-

tion of "I Am the Merry Postillion," by a soprano, Miss Hallie White, while Miss Minnie De Rue Fay, contralto, sang "a coon love song," "Moon, Moon, Moon." Corinne Morgan, the first woman recording artist to gain a large following on Edison cylinders, had begun making duets with Frank C. Stanley in 1902, and Edith Chapman, soprano, singing as "Miss Chappell," appeared in 1903 as a duet partner of George M. Stricklett.

In 1904 a mysterious Miss Daisy Boulais, who took "soubrette" parts in a few "rube" sketches with Byron Harlan and Frank Stanley, and Grace Hornby, a New York choir singer, became one of Stanley's duet partners under the pseudonym of Grace Nelson. And then, in March, 1905, came Ada Jones, beside whom all the other Edison women singers of that period pale into insignificance. (Ada, incidentally, appears to have made test records some eight or ten years before this.)

We are already several years past the period at which Estella Mann retired from phonograph work. But before leaving the Edison lists, it may be interesting to note that what seems to have been the first comic monolog recorded by a woman came out in October, 1905. It was "The Village Seamstress," adapted from a character sketch by Kate Douglas Wiggin, and made on Edison cylinder No. 9103 by Miss Elene Foster—presumably no relation to Columbia's Maud. This, apparently the only record Miss Foster ever made, was described as "something entirely new in the way of a phonograph record. Miss Foster, who makes it, is a well-known elocutionist, having given readings and recitations before many of the leading clubs and at select entertainments in various parts of the country. She is an unusually clever mimic, as those who hear this record will admit. Her portrayal of the garrulous village seamstress, with the latter's characteristic repetition of the gossip of the day, will be readily recognized as lifelike by all familiar with country life."

Now, just a glance at the early Victor lists before proceeding on to a detailed account of the career of Estella Mann. The first Victor ten inch records, beginning with 3000, were issued in 1901. The list I have is incomplete, but no woman appears as an artist, although I believe that Grace Spencer sang a few selections, which were later renumbered. The Lyric Trio, in its later stage of Spencer, Macdonough and Hooley, however, is present. She also made duets with Macdonough for Victor, Zonophone and Edison.

After some of the 3000 series records were renumbered and others were discontinued, Victor started over at No. 1. In the 700 series there are a number of records by the Trinity Choir, in which unidentified women sang. Probably Miss Spencer was the soprano. A comedienne, Mina Hickman, first appears with No. 1918, issued in 1902 or 1903. Several months afterward, there were solos by Edith Helena, and Sallie Stembler

sang her famous "Laughing Song" in 1904. Corinne Morgan's first contralto solos belong to 1903 or 1904, a year in which Mina Hickman did some more recording. Ada Jones was first heard on Victor discs early in 1905.

And this seems a fairly adequate covering of the field of pioneer women recording artists, except that it occurs to me I have said nothing about feminine instrumentalists. American companies made no records by women musicians for many years, considerably after they had been given recognition in England. Lillian Bryant, who was associated with the Edison Bell and Pathé companies, made piano solos in 1900. The first woman violinist to record in England, seems to have been Marie Hall, whose Gramophone and Typewriter Company discs were popular for many years, beginning about 1904. (However, I believe the American player, Maud Powell, made experimental white wax cylinders for Edison that were demonstrated at the Paris Exposition of 1889.) Also worthy of mention are the bird imitation records made by Maud Dewey, a whistler, for English companies as early as 1900.

And now, as an afterthought, before proceeding to the belated story of Estella Mann, I find myself wondering about the identity of an old-time woman recording artist mentioned in the *Talking Machine World* for September 15, 1910. Under the heading, "A Real Captain of Industry," the article describes the career of Eldridge R. Johnson and tells of his struggles to make a success of the Victor Talking Machine Company in its fledgling days. I shall quote a few sentences that fit appropriately into this study of the "forgotten women" of the phonograph:

"I remember," said one who worked with the inventor in the early days, "that we had no place for the singers to record in except a loft that you got to with a ladder. I would scurry around and get some poor devil to come and sing for a dollar in real money and then I'd push him up the ladder and try to get a record. Sometimes the voice would record and sometimes we would have nothing but failure."

"I sometimes think as I watch Melba and Tetrassini and Farrar singing in our laboratory, of a woman I got to sing for us once in the beginning. I can see her now, a stout, good-natured creature who had come in the rain without an umbrella, to sing for a dollar or so. She had a long feather in her hat and it hung over one ear and dripped water on the floor of the loft. What a time I had getting her up the ladder, too! She was a kindly soul, for she enjoyed singing into the machine so much that she wanted to come back every day and work with us."

Judging from her photograph, this description rather aptly fits Marguerite Newton, but I don't know that she ever sang for Victor around the turn of the century. Alas, the buxom lady with the feather in her bonnet probably always will be a "woman of mystery." And now, at last, to Estella Mann, who in those days, was managing her own record company.

Frequent reading of old record catalogs had made the name of Estella Mann familiar, but it remained the name of a soprano about whom I knew nothing until I attended a radio newsmen's convention last April in Washington. Then Rudolph E. Anderson, editor of NADA, the National Automobile Dealers Association's magazine, and author of "The Story of the American Automobile," took me for a visit to the Library of Congress. There I found a bound volume of the first talking machine trade publication, *The Phonoscope*, for the years 1896 through 1899. *The Phonoscope* was edited by one of the leading recording artists of that far-away period, Russell Hunting, originator of the famous "Casey" monologs.

Checking back through the notes I made then, I find a few mentions of records by women that had previously escaped my attention. There is actually a reference to a cylinder made by Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant and her children for "the famous Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang." That was in November, 1896. A couple of months later, the magazine mentioned that the French *chanteuse*, Yvette Guilbert, while visiting in America, made records, which she sent to her mother, describing her trip.

In addition to being editor of *The Phonoscope*, Russell Hunting in 1897 was manager of the Universal Phono-



graph Company, which offered "high class original records" by Dan W. Quinn, Ailen May, Hunting himself, George Gaskin, Lottie Gilson (the vivacious "Little Magnet" of many Weber and Fields productions), the Diamond Quartet and Len Spencer. A music publisher, Joseph W. Stern, was financially interested in the Universal Company, one of whose advertisements said:

"In the last ten years the record business has been handicapped by having only about ten vocalists, three bands and a few instrumental soloists." The ad continued that the company was planning to offer records by many famous vaudeville stars, including Lottie Gilson, Bonnie Thornton (wife of Song Writer James L. Thornton), James Thornton, Sam Devere (composer of "The Whistling Coon") Johnnie Carroll, Sam Bernard, Weber and Fields, Leona Lewis, Meyer

Cohen, ("The California Baritone"), Lottie Mortimer, Annie Hart, Maude Nugent (composer of "Sweet Rosie O'Grady"), Allen May, William Jerome, Margaret Gonzalez, May Howard, Walter Talbot, the La Porte Sisters, Ed. Latell, May Lowry, the Gotham Comedy Four, Anna Willmuth Curran and John P. Curran."

However, it's doubtful that many, if any, of these records appeared. The voices of the the average vaudeville singer of the day usually didn't record well.

In March, 1897, a list of new cylinder records was printed for the benefit of traveling phonograph demonstrators and penny arcade operators, but names of the companies were not given. Yvette Guilbert was listed as singing "I Wants Yer, Ma Honey" in both French and English versions. There were even two cylinders by Sarah Bernhardt, "Passage dans Izeyle" and Victor Hugo's "Un Pende Musique", while Madame Regane recited "Passage dans 'Divorcons." (At a guess, the Bernhardt and Regane records were issued by Bettini.) Both Lottie Gilson and Len Spencer had made cylinders of "You're Not the Only Pebble on the Beach." Maud Foster was the only woman in the month's Berliner list.

And then I came upon what to me was the most interesting item I had so far seen. In February, 1898, *The Phonoscope* quoted an article from the *New York World* about the leading lady of this sketch. Written in the typical *World* feature style it said:

"Estella Louise Mann, a pretty young woman of this city . . . makes a living singing into the phonograph. She used to be a concert soloist but now it pays her to go up into the recording room of the phonograph and 'talk' into the machine several hours each day. She was soloist for Sousa's Band for some time and studied in the College of Cincinnati under Professor Tito Mattioli and won a gold medal and certificate."

The article said that Miss Mann sang mostly classical music and was a member of the original Lyric Trio, consisting of herself as soprano; John C. Havens, tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass. "People of the other half of the world," the article went on, "can hear just how this extraordinary girl with a voice sings into five tin horns under the skylight of the building on Broadway."

I was even more interested when I learned that Miss Mann operated the Lyric Phonograph Company at 114 West 34th Street. The company advertised that it would make special records by her to order at short notice. Presumably, the services of the Trio were also available. No mention was made of any other artists.

In March, 1898, *The Phonoscope* commented: "The plucky lady phonograph singer, Miss Estella Mann, who lately opened a record making plant, has certainly met with great success in her new venture, and we understand that she can scarcely keep up with the demand." On page 18, there was a Lyric advertisement, which also appeared in several other issues, showing Miss Mann singing into a row of horns. I had a copy made of the picture and hope that it is sharp enough to reproduce with the article. I didn't copy the reference, but I recall an editorial remark that

"the wise boys" who had predicted that Miss Mann's business couldn't last were going to be disappointed.

The April, 1898, issue mentioned that the "plucky" soprano was the daughter of E. H. Mann, assistant manager of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company. Meanwhile, the young lady's records were meeting with new competition from Columbia. In July, readers were informed that Harry Spencer (brother of the more famous Len and a handy man around the Columbia establishment) had invented a new device for recording the female voice. Records of "Snow Baby" from "The Bride Elect" and "On the Banks of the Wabash," by Minnie Emmett, were described as "loud, clear and distinct and free from blast or screech." That same issue contained a group photo of "the galaxy of talent making Columbia records." Feminine interest was provided only by Minnie Emmett, whose career was described as "from church choir and opera to talking machine." No one then foresaw her latter-day destiny as a half-blind old lady in a home for retired actors and musicians.

Unfortunately, I didn't have time to read all the way through the volume, and there may have been some interesting references to Estella Mann that I missed. But what I did find was enough to stimulate my interest. It was nothing unusual for male recording artists to imagine they could make more money by operating their own company than by singing for U. S., Columbia, Edison or Leeds and Walcott at 75 cents to a dollar a round. In the first number of *The Phonoscope*, Editor Russell Hunting advertised his own series of "Casey" and "Hiram Wilkins" records, saying he'd had more than six years experience in recording and had already made over 50,000 cylinders. Then followed this indignant complaint: "Certain unprincipled individuals and organizations are duplicating my work, thereby deceiving the public and furnishing a record about one-third as loud as the original."

George J. Gaskin also had his own company for a time. The July, 1897, issue contained a letter from an exhibitor in Portland, Oregon, maintaining that Gaskin's records were too short. The Irish tenor, born in Belfast, was implored to "sing two verses and sometimes a refrain, and the phonograph men all over the country will rise up and call you blessed." Editor Hunting suggested that Gaskin should not confine himself to using light colored blanks, but might get better results from dark ones.

Roger Harding, who died in 1901, was a true pioneer in the juvenile field. He was reported to be having great success in making records, such as "Who Killed Cock Robin?" and "Little Red Riding Hood," especially for children. And in 1896, J. W. Myers was operating his own Globe Phonograph Record Company, making his own cylinders, which he sold for \$1 each. He laid claim to having the largest repertoire of any American singer.

But before Estella Mann there seemingly had been no woman with

sufficient confidence in her vocal abilities to set up her own company. Hurriedly turning the pages of *The Phonoscope* and wishing I hadn't arranged to leave Washington by an early afternoon train, I made up my mind that I must write a HOBBIES article about the soprano who some long gone *New York World* feature writer had called "this extraordinary girl."



Determination to do the article was one thing, but how to get the fill-in material was another. I didn't even know whether Estella Louise Mann were dead or alive, but since more than 50 years had elapsed since she started her Lyric Record Company, the odds were in favor of her having passed on. Assuming she was only 25 in 1898, she would be 78 if she were still alive. And I knew nothing of any surviving relations.

However, *The Phonoscope* articles gave a couple of clues. They mentioned that her father had been an official of the L. and N. Railroad, and that she had been graduated from the Cincinnati College of Music.

So, with this slender lead, I wrote to the Superintendent of the L. and N., at Louisville, Kentucky, and to the College. Both letters brought helpful replies.

Thomas E. Owen, editor of the *Louisville and Nashville Employees' Magazine*, wrote:

"This is in answer to your letters . . . asking to be put in touch with Miss Estella Louise Mann or some of her relatives."

"Miss Mann and her father are dead, but her brother, W. J. Mann, a retired city ticket agent of this railroad, lives at 814 S. E. Riverside Avenue, Evansville, Indiana. He says if you will write him at that address he will be glad to furnish any information possible."

Naturally, although I was sorry to learn of the hardly unexpected death of Miss Mann, I was glad to know she had a brother living, and I wrote immediately to Mr. W. J. Mann. Then came an interesting letter from Miss Marjora W. Shank, registrar and dean of women at the College of Music of Cincinnati:

"We are very glad to be of whatever help we can in helping you gather information regarding one of our former students, Estella L. Mann. Your 'labor of love' sounds most fascinating."

"Miss Mann took a Certificate in Voice from the College of Music in 1893. In 1894 she was granted a Diploma as a Vocal Artist. Although our terminology has changed somewhat over the years, a student awarded a Diploma was sure to have been an outstanding musician. Today this is the highest performance award which we grant."

"Our records reveal no more. Unfortunately, those who may know of Miss Mann or who may have been her teachers have now passed from our scene. Mr. Mattioli died a year or two ago, and others of that contemporary scene are no longer here at the College. If we can find further information relating to Miss Mann we shall be glad to pass it on to you."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 33)



## RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

Meanwhile, I had heard from Mr. W. J. Mann, in the first of a series of letters he has written to me, answering as best he can the many questions I have asked him about his accomplished, history-making sister.

Mr. Mann wrote:

"... My sister, Estella L. Mann . . . was born in Nashville, Tennessee, November 1, 1871. Her father was E. H. Mann; mother, Marie S. Mann. No sisters. In addition to myself, two brothers, A. E. Mann and A. H. Mann. 'She never married. She died at my home in August, 1947.

"She studied voice at the College of Music, Cincinnati, Ohio, under tutorship of Lino Mattiola. She sang with several recording studios in New York and made many records successfully alone as well as with the Lyric Trio.

"I was associated with her in New York and the Lyric Recording Company, but owing to financial difficulty it was necessary to dissolve. She returned to the theatrical stage and sang with the Mantelli Grand Opera Company, also in comic opera and vaudeville and was soloist with John Philip Sousa's Band.

"About a year ago I made a transcription over the local radio station WJPS of the American Broadcasting Company, being interviewed by Mr. Vernon Paule relative to her records.

"I am forwarding the only photo I have of her and after it has served your purpose, please return. I am only too glad to be of help and will appreciate it if you will favor me with a copy of the article you write. If you can locate one of her records, the station here would like to have it. If I can be of further service just let me know."

Mr. Mann's letter calls for a few notes. Nashville was also the birthplace, in 1876, of Alice Nielsen, the concert and opera star who became a popular Victor and Columbia singer after having, as I have already mentioned, sung for Berliner in 1898.

Notice that Mr. Mann's spelling of the name of his sister's teacher differs somewhat from that in the *New York World* story. I wonder if the Mantelli Opera Company was headed by Eugenia Mantelli, whose old Zonophone records are so much prized by collectors.

Mr. Mann's kindness and thoughtfulness in letting me borrow his only photo of his sister was typical of the generosity and cooperation I usually meet with in seeking information for these articles. I expressed my gratitude, and he replied:

"I have a lot of faith in humanity, so had no hesitation in forwarding you the photo of my sister.

"My father, a native of New York, was a corporal in the Union Army and an orderly to General U. S. Grant. After the war, having had railroad experience, he was sent to Nashville by the government to straighten out the freight car situation. He met and married my mother there, where my brothers and sister were born. He accepted a position with the L&N Railroad after his release from the government as trainmaster, in Louisville, Kentucky.

"They moved to Louisville, where I was born in 1881. He was appointed Assistant Superintendent at Evansville, date unknown, and lived there until his death in 1912.

"My sister was a niece of W. A. Sheetz, manager of the Vendome Theatre for many years. It was at the Vendome Theatre that Al Jolson made his debut as a minstrel. My sister's eyes were dark brown. She had black hair and was five feet eight inches tall. She died August 24, 1947. She began making records in 1896 through 1899. I do not recall any hobby she had outside of her

music. She never made any disc records. John Havens was an opera tenor but I do not know if he is living or not."

I had some excellent copies made of the photo of Estella Mann before I returned it to her brother, and have submitted one for reproduction with this article. To me the outstanding impression made by this picture, taken at the height of the soprano's career, is her appearance of quiet dignity and determination. That rounded chin and the straightforward gaze seem to indicate a nature that would not easily give in to obstacles. I can imagine that when the tall, raven-haired brunette stood on the concert stage, or sang in opera or with Sousa's Band, she was an impressive figure who looked every inch a prima donna. But circumstances were against her in founding her own record manufacturing company just when she did. The moulded process of making permanent masters would inevitably have doomed her methods to defeat, even if the disc record had not eventually removed the cylinder from competition.

Another kind act of Mr. Mann's was his lending me the recording of his interview on Vernon Paule's program, "A Penny for Your Thoughts." The interview took place on October 28, 1949, and, judging by the traffic noises, must have been of the "Man On the Street type," except when an Edison cylinder of a band record was played from the WJPS studio. The spoken parts sound as if they were recorded out-of-doors.

The transcription tells little that is new about Estella Mann, but it reveals that the brother was a friend of Thomas A. Edison, and that he became acquainted with the inventor when he was in the phonograph business and used to make business trips to the Edison laboratory. I suppose that these trips took place when he was associated with his sister in the Lyric Company, and that he went to West Orange to buy blank cylinders. Mr. Mann told of how Edison presented him with a phonograph, which he kept for many years but eventually presented to the Evansville Museum. It was this instrument, borrowed from the museum, that was played on the program.

Mr. Mann described Edison as "a very fine man—easy to talk to." He explained that his interest in the phonograph business started because of his sister making records, and said that since the female voice has many more vibrations than the male, it was much harder to record when the talking machine was new. The companies, he went on, had a great deal of trouble finding women whose voices would record, but his sister tackled the problem, "worked it out in some way or other," and made a great many records. For the benefit of listeners who didn't know what an old-time cylinder phonograph looked like, he described it as "a kind of little box, with the machine in the bottom, and a belt running up to the mandrel."

Another letter from Mr. Mann gave the names of the male members of his family in more detail than previously.

His own name is William J. Mann; his father's, Eugene H.; his eldest brother, a retired railroad man, is Albert E., and his second brother, now dead, was Arthur H.

I had asked if any of Estella Mann's cylinders were still in the family's keeping, but he replied:

"Sorry, all her records were destroyed. Being made of wax, they were warped, and melted — our hot summers were responsible."

Mr. Mann added:

"My acquaintance with Mr. Edison was through a Mr. Torres, a friend of his. On several occasions I accompanied him to the Edison plant. He was a very fine gentleman.

"My sister never made records direct through Edison, but the blanks were Edison made."

The latter statement, however, obviously is in error, since I have shown that Lyric Trio records, in which Miss Mann sang, are listed in the 1899 Edison catalog. I think it's also worth mentioning that six cylinders by "the Original Lyric Trio" appear in the catalog for that year of the Talking Machine Company of Chicago. Numbered from 6000

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

Have just purchased a large collection of records of 1920 period that includes Paul Whiteman, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Harry James & others; some with Bing Crosby vocals. Also Harry Lauder, Nora Bays, Moran & Mack, Van & Schenk.

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WRITE

ESTHER SKERRITT SANDERS  
Deansboro, New York

## RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

through 6005, they are "Attila," "Flowers That Bloom in the Spring," "You Remember 'Twas Six Months Ago," "No, No, 'Tis You," "Farewell, My Own" and "The Bell Trio"—in other words, the same selections that the Edison catalog contained.

Its no secret that the Chicago firm, which later became Babson Brothers, the famous Edision distributors "dubbed" its record supply from Edison and Columbia originals in addition to making its own cylinders by "the King of Coon Shouters," Silas Leachman. Its Lyric Trio records consequently were only copies of those issued by Edison. The catalog mentions Estella L. Mann as one of the company's artists, but the only solo records listed by women are taken from Marguerite Newton's Edisons and Minnie Emmett's Columbias.

Still later I learned from Mr. Mann that his sister "was in her early thirties when she retired. My memory is a bit foggy, however, as to the exact year. She did no church or solo work thereafter. My mother was quite a care in her old age, and she absorbed most of my sister's time. My mother died in her 87th year."

So there ends the story of the career of Estella Mann. Gifted with a beautiful voice and the courage and determination to organize her own phonograph company and to undertake the grueling task of making records to order by the round, she was self-sacrificing enough to give up her career as a young woman and spend most of her many remaining years, ministering to the needs of her mother. And then she herself died at the advanced age of 75.

It is impossible for me to repress a feeling of sadness at the way most of the life story of Estella Mann must remain obscure. I don't like to think of the destruction of all the wax cylinders that once contained the impress of her voice but now no longer exist. So accomplished and courageous an artist deserved a better fate.

But I have one surprise for her brother, whose courteous help I have so much appreciated. While I was assembling the notes for this article, I found in my card index a list of seven-inch Zonophone records which someone offered to sell me at some time in the past. I wish I had kept the owner's name, but I didn't. However, one of the records is No. 9461, "The Prince of Peace"—and it is sung by Miss Estella Mann. This shows that her brother, who was only about twenty when she gave up making records, was mistaken in his belief that she never sang for discs. Since she sang at least this one Zonophone, of the "etched" type issued around 1900, she may have made more. I hope she did, and that they will be brought to light.

Scratchy and imperfect as were those early discs, it is well worth knowing that the recorded voice of Estella Mann still exists. I only wish I had bought the record when it was

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Gardner, Chas. B., Box 27, New London, Conn. Buy flasks, documents, advertisements and pictures from Early American Glass Works. au25

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Charles Bray, East Bangor, Penna. Buys cigarette, tobacco, carmel cards. I will pay best cash prices for above. au25

## HOOKED RUG PATTERNS

Mrs. Royal F. Manson, Hudson, Mass. Hooked Rug patterns, books, frames, wool swatches & cutting machines. Write for price list. ja35

## NUMISMATICS

Max B. Mehl, 421 Mehl Bldg., Fort Worth, Tex. Largest coin firm in U. S. Est. 49 yrs. Everything in coins, etc. Send for free 60 pp. Ill. Coin Cat. You'll like it. ja35

## RAILROADS

O. Davies, 1214 LaSalle St., Chicago 10, Ill., buys R. R. time tables, histories, pamphlets, locomotive catalogs, etc. n25

## RUBBER STAMPS

STAMPICO, Detroit 4, Mich. 35c per line. Signatures, \$1 up. Pictorial Stamp Sets, \$2.98. "Good Work" stampers, 50c. Pads 60c. Cat. Free. ja35

## SOUVENIR SPOONS

Schwarz, 1806 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Penna. Sterling souvenir spoons, \$1.50 each. Assortments sent on approval. mh35

## SHELLS

Nick Iamarino, 3564 N. W. 46th St. Miami, Fla. Florida sea shells, 250, good mixture, \$1. ap1021

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offered to me, along with others by such completely unknown "Forgotten Men" as Lempiere Pringle, Dick Thomas and A. R. Stewart, and such well remembered favorites as S. H. Dudley, Collins and Harlan and J. W. Myers!

Once more I thank Mr. W. J. Mann for his generous and sympathetic help and hope this article will serve to bring the memory of his talented sister a bit farther out of the shadows. From now on, she should not be, as she might otherwise so easily have become, one of the completely "Forgotten Women" of the 1890's.

## NEXT MONTH

## THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF

Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

**A NEW ALBUM OF BANJO RECORDS BY FRED VAN EPS**

Millions of record buyers have acclaimed Fred Van Eps as one of the greatest banjoists who have ever lived. Now there's a pleasant surprise for admirers of this noted player. Mr. Van Eps, whose life story will be told later in "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists", and whose address is R. D. 2, Plainfield, New Jersey, has made a new album of six recordings, which he is issuing under the "Five String Banjo" label. Accompaniments are by his son, Robert, a brilliant pianist.

Included in the six selections are "Maple Leaf Rag", Scott Joplin's masterpiece which Rudi Blesh and Harriet Janis declare in "They All Played Ragtime" to be the greatest ragtime composition; James Scott's "Ragtime Oriole", which they rate almost as highly; Percy Wenrich's "Smiler Rag"; Felix Arndt's "Nola"; "Dell Oro" and Moszkowski's "Bolero." They are splendidly recorded and played in the masterly style that has always been typical of Van Eps.

These records probably make Mr. Van Eps the champion long-distance recording artist. He began in 1897 when he was in his teens, and he's still at it 55 years later. If this album meets with the success it deserves he undoubtedly will issue others. Meanwhile, he has a large business, manufacturing radio equipment at Plainfield.

—J. W.

When I hear music I fear no danger,  
I am invulnerable, I see no foe. I  
am related to the earliest times, and  
to the latest.

—THOREAU

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## THE FIRST TEN YEARS

By JIM WALSH

This department has now appeared in *HOBBIES* for ten years. The first instalment was published in January, 1942, under a short-lived title, "The Coney Island Crowd." I hope that it is beginning a second decade of increased usefulness.

Up to this time, a pioneer artist has been defined, for my purposes, as one who was recording before double-faced discs became popular in 1909. (Exceptions were made, however, in favor of Elizabeth Spencer and Charles Harrison.) But I am aware that many of the most outstanding recording stars came along after 1909, and it seems only fair that their life stories also should be told. With this in mind, I have considered changing my title to "Favorite Popular Recording Artists" or something similar, but have decided that since the heading I am now using is so well established, it may as well stand. Some veteran phonograph men have contended that no artist really is a "pioneer" who was not recording before 1900, but I intend from now on to stretch the term to include anyone who was making records before electric recording was introduced in 1925. This will let me write about such deservedly popular stars as Billy Jones, Ernest Hare, Irving Kaufman, Elsie Baker, Vernon Dalhart, Frank Crumit and many others whom a rigid interpretation of "pioneer" would compel me to pass by.

Needless to say, there remain many earlier artists, such as Albert Benzler, Charles D'Almaine and Frank P. Banta, to whom I shall pay tribute as enough information becomes available. I shall merely reserve the right to chronicle also the achievements of those whose careers began later.

Meanwhile, this seems an appropriate time to review the contents of the first ten years of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*. My knowledge of the early recording days has increased since I began writing for *HOBBIES*, and I now know that in past issues I have unintentionally made mistakes. Besides my own errors, the printers on occasion have been guilty of confusing and sometimes misleading typographical errors.

With this in mind, I have recently gone through all my preceding articles, marking any misstatements or other errors. This I have found a valuable lesson in humility. The process on the whole, however, has been enjoyable, for I have read not only my own writings, but those of my senior partner, Stephen Fasset, and have found much valuable information in Steve's *Historical Records* that had escaped my memory.

So, indeed, had some of the details of my own articles.

And now, as a prelude to going into the next ten years with clean hands and a clear conscience, I propose to devote my efforts this month to correcting and expiating past "sins." This, I hope, will be a valuable service to the readers who have kept complete files of my articles.

EDWARD M. FAVOR (March, 1942).—A printer's error changed the date of an Edison catalog from April, 1914, to 1941. The year Billy Murray saw Favor recording in San Francisco should be 1897, instead of 1896. The first song, "The Lass From the County Mayo," which Murray and Matt Keefe sang into a phonograph during that period, was not copyrighted until the former year. The name of the Edison distributors in San Francisco should be Bacigalupi Brothers not Bocigalupi. The cylinder of "Will You Please Pass the Salt?" and "Now We Can Both Laugh Together" was a Federal, not a U. S. Everlasting.

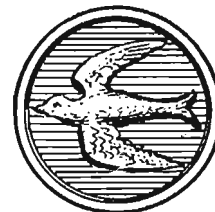
Favor died January 10, 1936. In some of his early vaudeville and recording work he used the name of Le Fèvre. He and his wife, known professionally as Edith Sinclair, made a four-minute Edison Amberol cylinder in 1909, with the assistance of Steve Porter, and under the name of the Empire Vaudeville Company. It was a comic sketch, "Casting Bread upon the Waters," which may have been adapted from one of their variety acts. In his later years, Favor won distinction as a legitimate actor. Eugene Burr, who formerly reviewed theatrical productions for the *Billboard*, showed no mercy to slipshod performers, but here is what he said of Favor's impersonation of "James Caesar," a grocer, in the production of St. John Ervine's play, "John Ferguson," at the Belmont theater in New York, in July, 1933:

"Edward Favor, in the meaty part of Caesar, turned in a performance which was, literally, without a flaw. Every effect to be achieved he got without a single false note or any concession to the obvious. It was a grand job." And Favor was then 78!

BILLY MURRAY (April, 1942).—Again Bacigalupi is misspelled, and Al G. Field's name appears as Fields. Thanks to the painstaking help of my dear friend, Ed Forman, the RCA Victor record sales manager, I have definitely established that No. 2048, "Absinthe Frappe," was not Billy Murray's first Victor record, despite its low number. Ed says that the record was made August 8, 1905, about two years after Murray began his Victor career, "and according to the file card, it was a special for V. D. & E." whatever that was. Apparently it was never released for general sale. The master is no longer available. The serial number is B2707. My interpretation of the entry quoted by Mr. Forman is that the record was made for Victor Dealers and Exhibitors to play for special demonstration purposes but not to be sold. It looks as if some of the numbers in the 2000 series had been skipped when they would normally have been reached in 1903, or had been reserved for special discs. Another example of this type of record, with numbers 2025 and 2036, will be found under Len Spencer's name. The first Victors by Murray were listed in November, 1903, and the one with the lowest number was 2452, "I Never Could Love Like That." The comedian's initial Edison

cylinders, issued in August, 1903, were 8452, "I'm Thinkin' of You All the While" and 8453, "Alec Busby, Don't Go Away." Murray's earliest Columbia disc that I have traced is 1648, "Under a Panama," issued in January, 1904, and his earliest Columbia cylinder, 32356, "It Takes the Irish to Beat the Dutch," came out that same month. June—The statement that "I Wonder Where My Baby is Tonight" was the only Murray-Burr duet is incorrect. In 1910 they recorded "They're All Sweeties" (No. 216068) for the Canadian His Master's Voice Company.

JOHN BIELING (August, 1942).—Mr. Bieling had blue eyes, not brown, as I wrongly said. The last Victor catalog in which his photo was published as a member of the American Quartet was dated November, 1917. However, there is now little doubt that his career as a recording artist ended early in 1914 when the Hayden Quartet disbanded. The last Hayden records, "The Woman Thou Gavest Me" and "Cross the Great Divide," were issued in April, 1914. This makes it probable that the final American Quartet records in which Bieling sang were two issued a month later, "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" (17534) and "Do You Take This Woman for Your Lawful Wife?" (17554). There were no more American Quartet records until November, when "It's a Long Long Way to Tipperary" appeared, presumably with John Young as first tenor. However, records by the Heidelberg Quintet which was the quartet with the addition of Will Oakland were issued in August, September and November, probably also with Young. But, to make it complicated, an American Quartet record, "Tennessee, I Hear You Calling Me," was published in January, 1915, and Bieling's photo is reproduced with those of the other quartet members, Murray, Porter and Hooley! This was the last time Bieling's likeness was shown in a monthly Victor supplement. However, Young sang top tenor in the Edison record of the same song, so he almost certainly did likewise for Victor.



ALBERT CAMPBELL (September, 1942).—Berliner discs were seven inches in diameter, not five and one-half. Although Campbell said he sang only under his own name and the assumed one of Frank Howard, I believe he made a Berliner record (No. 158) of "Sweet Marie," sung on December 12, 1894, and pressed on semi-flexible vulcanite. Name of the tenor soloist is given as A. C. Weaver. October—The Peerless Quartet was formed in 1907, instead of 1905, when Henry Burr was 25. The first Campbell-Burr duet, "While the Old Mill Wheel is Turning," was issued by Columbia in October, 1906. There seem to have been no others until after Frank Stanley's death in December, 1910. Burr's record company probably restricted itself to the seven-inch Par-O-

Ket discs and had nothing to do with the ten-inch Phonotype or Phono-Cut brands. Campbell made solos for Zonophone under his own name in 1910 and 1911.

BYRON G. HARLAN (February, 1943).—Harlan was born August 29, 1861. An old Edison catalog gives his birthplace as Lynn, Kansas, but Mrs. Harlan says it was Paris, Kansas. Oddly, the Encyclopaedia Britannica doesn't list a Kansas town by either name. He was the son of George Winchester Harlan, and his grandfather was George Washington Harlan. The tenor was christened George Byron Harlan (possibly in honor of Lord Byron, the English poet), but reversed his given names for theatrical use. His partnership with Arthur Collins began in 1902. March—His daughter is Mrs. Frank Olson, not Lucas.

HENRY BURR (April, 1943).—Burr's birth date should be January 15, 1882, instead of 1885. His first records were made for Columbia in 1902. May—Elise Stevenson's "married name" is Mrs. Rusling Wood. June—Burr's middle name probably was Haley. I have an electrically recorded Cameo dance record in which he sings the vocal refrain under the name of Harry Haley. One of his electrical recordings not mentioned in the article is a 1928 Okeh of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" and "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night." On page 129, the name of Sammy Herman is misspelled as Hermany.

STEVE PORTER (July, 1943).—Began making records in 1895, not 1897. October—The statement that the Harmonizers "free-lanced exclusively" should read "extensively." Porter died January 13, 1936. Death notices gave his age as 73, so he probably was born in 1862. During his stage career he appeared with Lillian Russell.

HARRY MACDONOUGH (November, 1943).—His full name was John Scantlebury Macdonald. The two Christian names honored a friend of his mother's. According to John Bieling, Macdonough was born in Windsor, Ontario. Both Macdonald and Macdonough should be spelled with small d's. "Crestfallen" got into print as "chest-fallen" and "affected" as "affectad." December—When this article was written, I thought that the "Miss Spencer" who sang with Macdonough around 1900 was Elizabeth Spencer. I have since learned that it was Grace Spencer.

WILLIAM F. HOOLEY (March, 1944).—The name of the Lyric Trio soprano should be Estella—not Estelle—Louise Mann. Again, Elizabeth Spencer is confused with Grace Spencer. John Bieling told me that Hooley was born in the Whitechapel section of London, where his father, an Irish political agitator, was in hiding. The Hooleys came to America, and Bill is said to have worked as a carpenter in Lowell, Mass., before he began making records. When the Hayden Quartet went to England in 1902, his Irish sentiments were so strong he refused to join in singing "God Save the King." The singer has a son, William F. Hooley, Jr., who is an official of the Selsby Shoe Company in Portsmouth, Ohio.

BOB ROBERTS (April, 1944).—Besides being a phonograph and vaudeville singer, Roberts also took part in automobile and six-day bicycle races.

PERFORMERS WHO "DOUBLED UP" (May, 1944).—Some additions and corrections: Vernon Dalhart called himself Tom Watson on Grey Gull records. Annette Hanshaw recorded also as Patsy Young and Dot Dare. Another name for Billy Jones was William Johnson. He also sang for Black Swan, a Negro Company, as "Howard Lewis." (A typographical error in the Jones paragraph was corrected later.) Add to list of Irving Kaufman pseudonyms: Noel Taylor, Frank Harris, Frank Christy, Confidential Charlie and Buzzin' Bob. Frankie Marvin also sang as George White. Corinne Morgan was not Grace Nelson. The latter's real name was Grace Hornby. M. J. O'Connell was not Billy Watkins, a well known vaudeville tenor who died a few years ago. Gladys Rice was called Victoria Marsden on Phantasia records. Herbert Stuart was

Albert Wiederhold. Walter Van Brunt made electric Romeo records as John O'Brien. John Barnes Wells was not De Los Becker. Later research has shown Becker to have been a New York concert singer. Arthur Fields, who is Jewish, made Irish patriotic songs for Emerson as "Padric O'Brien."

BILLY GOLDEN (June, 1944).—Golden made several Berliner records with George Graham.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES (August, 1944).—Harvey Hindermeyer began making records in 1907. He is not of Pennsylvania Dutch descent. His father was German and his mother of Bohemian ancestry. Eddie Morton was a policeman in Philadelphia, not New York.

CUT LINES FOR GROUP PICTURE OF PIONEER EDISON ARTISTS (September, 1944).—The name of No. 9 should be W. C. Deusing, not Densing.

GEORGE J. GASKIN (October, 1944).—Gaskin was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The group photo mentioned in this article was taken in 1898, instead of 1902, and was made when a group of exclusive Columbia artists visited the factory at Bridgeport for a demonstration of the new large-size "Columbia Grand" cylinder, five inches in diameter.

RUSSELL HUNTING, SR. (December, 1944).—Edison two-minute cylinders were discontinued when Blue Amberols were introduced in October, 1912—not 1914. January, 1945—The HOBBIES linotype appears to have been puzzled by English money values. Twice, when I referred to records selling for one-and-six (one shilling and sixpence) the amount was changed to "one-sixth." February—When I used the slant, the conventional English mark to indicate a shilling, the bewildered printer simply inserted six question marks to denote his lack of understanding. Where I said the price of Edison cylinders was reduced from one-and-six to one, it appeared as "from one-sixth to one?????"—probably also to the befuddlement of the average reader.

DAN W. QUINN (April, 1945).—"Bristol" at the top of column two, page 16, should be Boston.

"ARE THESE THE SUPREME FIFTEEN?" (June, 1945).—"Ada Jones" of course should be Ada Jones. The name of Freddie Maisch, veteran Victor recording engineer who retired in 1950, was printed as "Mesch."

August, 1945.—"Miss Chappel" was a New York church singer, Edith Chapman. September—As has already been pointed out, John Bieling left the American Quartet in 1914, not 1918.

FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS (December, 1945).—Eddie Morton's name is misspelled as Norton.

EDWARD MEEKER (February, 1946).—Col. 2, "in favor of just one recording career," should read "recording company." William A. Hayes' name is misspelled as Hays.

ADA JONES (June, 1946).—Once more, Grace Spencer is referred to as Elizabeth. I have written to the Registrar of Vital Statistics at Manchester, England, in the hope of learning when Ada Jones was born and the names of her parents. August—Although Miss Jones' recording career is considered to have started when she became Len Spencer's associate in 1904, L. B. Odell, of Brooklyn, has two ancient faintly recorded brown wax cylinders announced as by her, which were made years before she became world-famous. The titles are "Sweet Marie" and "The Volunteer Organist." Both songs were copyrighted in 1894, so they may have been made that year, two years before Edison records were issued regularly. These may have been sung by Miss Jones on the occasion she speaks of, when her stepmother took her to the North American Phonograph Company, for a try-out. The late John L. Norton told me he had learned that Ada Jones made tests for Columbia in 1897, and that a man who saw her then described her as appearing to be about 19. September—Len and Harry Spencer were not twins. Len was a few years older. October, second column, fifth paragraph—The sentence beginning,

"The first duet by Jones and Murray" should be "The first Victor duet—." December—column two, the statement should be: "From 1917, he (Billy Murray) sang much oftener with Gladys Rice than with his veteran partner." Among the last Victor records by Jones and Murray was a re-make of "The Widow Dooley," which she had originally done with Len Spencer.

LEN SPENCER (March, 1947).—Again, the Spencer boys were not twins. Readers should not overlook the Albert Campbell death notice, page 101. May, 1947.—Harry Spencer made many more spoken records than he is given credit for here. The double-faced Victor demonstration record, said to have 1903 labels, shows, on closer inspection, the date November 3, 1905, scratched into it. One side is numbered 2035, the other, 2036. (See discussion of "Absinthe Frappe" by Billy Murray).

SAD NEWS ABOUT S. H. DUDLEY (September, 1947).—The last two paragraphs of this article are confusing because they refer to a poster which was to have been reproduced but was omitted for lack of space. The poster contained photos of the Tavery Grand English Opera Company, with which Dudley appeared in 1895.

EUGENE C. ROSE (October, 1947).—The title of "I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming, Sweet Genevieve," is divided, by a printer's error, as if it were two songs.

JOHN BIELING GIVES ANOTHER PARTY (January, 1948).—Name of the Suburban Hotel should be capitalized. Charles Edison is referred to as the former governor of Jersey, instead of New Jersey. In cut lines, Jere Mahoney's first name is wrongly spelled Jerry.

GILBERT GIRARD (February, 1948).—Russell Hunting went to England in 1898, not 1899.

JOE BELMONT (March, 1948).—"The three original Floradora girls," should be "three of the original—."

GRACE SPENCER (April, 1948).—End of the fifth paragraph is garbled. It should read: "Meanwhile, she wrote to her friend, Mrs. Lewis M. Wilson, of New York City, that I had records by Grace Spencer (Mrs. Wilson's mother). Mrs. Wilson then sent me a note, asking what I would charge for them." May—By a misprint, the 3,000 Victor Monarch series is called the 6,000. Last paragraph: This should be, "The former Miss Spencer's tones" instead of "the former's Spencer's tones."

FREDERICK C. FREMANTEL (July, 1948).—The 16000 Victor double-faced list is referred to, by a printer's error, as 160000.

REINALD WERRENATH (August, 1948).—In mentioning Sir Edward Elgar's opera, "Caractacus," Elgar's last name is omitted. Calvin G. Child's last name is wrongly spelled Childs.

YESS L. OSSMAN (September, 1948).—Fred Van Eps began making banjo records in 1897, rather than after 1900. Through typographical errors, Princess Henry of Battenburg is mentioned as President Henry, and the Duchess of Manchester is called the Duchess of Lanchester. October—The one billionth pressing of a Victor record got into print as a "passing." November—The mystery of the Ossman-Dudley Trio has now been solved, and a full account of its activities will appear in a 1952 HOBBIES. Roy Butin was not one of the members.

FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS (December, 1948).—Mrs. J. W. Hulihan's name is misspelled as Houlihan. Bill Hayes' last name is wrongly printed as Hays. It should have been said that Russell Hunting had his son Harry's assistance, not "assistant." By a slip of my own, Mrs. Katherine Tully is called Mrs. Grace Tully. A sentence in the last paragraph should read: "I was already tired before I left Virginia, and by the time I returned home was so much more so that I set a new record for myself by sleeping 25½ hours at a stretch." On page 32, "Death of Three Recording Artists," the final sentence about Vernon Dalhart should be: "Be-



tween 1925 and 1931, under many different names, he made thousands of hill-billy records."

VESS L. OSSMAN (January, 1949).—A sentence in the fifth paragraph should be: "... The second banjoist obviously is not Vess, Jr." John H. Meyer's name is spelled Myers, and John Bieling gets in as Biehling. February—In the first sentence, Mrs. Vess Ossman, Jr., is called "Mr." A death notice of the great flute and piccolo player, Marshall P. Lufsky, is on page 70.

FRANK C. STANLEY (March, 1949).—The name, Grinsted, is repeatedly spelled as Grinstead in this installment and occasionally in others. The "a" should be omitted.

DEATHS OF RECORDING ARTISTS (May, 1949). — Brahams should be Brahms. William Brown is called Williams.

FRANK C. STANLEY (June, 1949).—"The late Campbell" should be "the late Albert Campbell." "The three original Floradora girls" should be "three of the original Floradora girls." In the last sentence, "career" should be substituted for "carefully." July—Mrs. Grinsted's son, Alan, now lives in Pensacola, Florida. Mrs. Grinsted broke her hip in a fall more than two years ago and has since been confined to her bed. The fall occurred in her apartment at Wicksford, R. I., but she was removed to Pensacola, where she is under treatment in the Waite Convalescent Home.

DEATHS OF THREE RECORDING ARTISTS—John Meyer's name is wrongly spelled throughout as Myers. In the August issue, under the heading of "Death of Noted Male Quartet Basso," Meyer's name is omitted by mistake in the first sentence, which should read: "Recently I wrote of the death of John Meyer, basso, of the world-famous Peerless Quartet." September—The fifth paragraph of the Stanley article is garbled. This sentence should be omitted: "Mrs. Grinsted's daughter, Mrs. Repelow, says: 'Mr. Lenox, the tenor, died after moving to California.'" This reminds me that the noted baritone, Vernon Archibald, told Fred Rabenstein, of the Edison Laboratory, a year or so ago, that George Seymour Lenox is still living.

FRANK C. STANLEY (October, 1949).—The concert given as a memorial to Stanley took place in the New Amsterdam Opera House, New York. Ernest R. Ball's first name is misspelled as Ernst.

WILL OAKLAND (November, 1949).—Oakland recorded his "Old-Time Song Medley" for U. S. Everlasting as well as Victor. "At Night at the Club" was a 12-inch double-faced Victor. "Just for Tonight" had a revived, not revised, vogue.

NOTES FROM EARLY VICTOR CATALOGUES (December, 1949). — Stephen Gilman, of Newport, R. I., tells me that Claude Spary was the trombone soloist of the American Band of Providence. The Old Homestead Double Quartet records came out in March, 1905, not 1906. January—The claim that Victor was the first company to make records by two tenors is incorrect. George Gasikin and John Bieling sang together, as "Gasikin and Livingston," for Columbia in the 1890's.

BILLY WHITLOCK (February, 1950).—"Madame Paule" should be "Paula."

RICHARD JOSÉ (April, 1950).—"Mr. Kith" should be Keith.

DEATH NOTICE (page 32, May, 1950).—Franklyn Baur's first name is wrongly spelled as Franklin. James Melton is referred to, by a printer's error, as James Walton.

SIR HARRY LAUDER (August, 1950).—Stanley Johnston, of Lansing, Michigan, has called my attention to Lauder's statement in his book, "Roamin' in the Hoamin'." That when he first began to make records he received only five pounds for singing six songs—less than five dollars a record!! Lauder said that, as a former miner, this looked like big money because he couldn't earn that much in a fortnight digging coal. The Gramophone Company, Lauder related, obtained his exclusive disc services at a ridiculously low figure, but "made it

right" when the time came for a new contract.

BERT WILLIAMS (September, 1950).—"Assay," column two, should be "essay." Page 24—Williams and Walker came East in 1898, not 1898. November—"The New World World" should be "New York World."

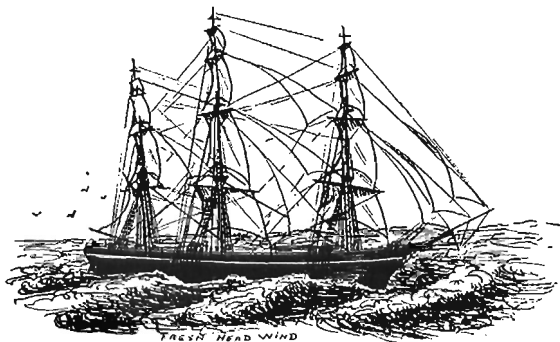
CAL STEWART (February, 1951).—On page 24, "explosions" should be "explosions." March—The title of the song written by Stewart was "I Want a Graphophone" — not "Want." Albert "Benzlar." I said that Reuben Hendricks Benzler's last name is misspelled as was the only Punkin Center resident I could think of who was "killed off," but Mr. C. L. Helden, of Millinocket, Maine, has reminded me that a dynamite explosion killed Hank Weaver in "Fourth of July at Punkin Center" and left Abe Sprosky unaccounted for. Page 23, the sentence beginning "If the exclusive Edison contract," should read: "If the

about our archive and what we hope to do. . . Both times Uncle Josh was a big success, and I'm wondering if he couldn't be revived."

I also feel it fair to say that in any "Supreme List" I might compile nowadays I would include "Banjo King" Vess Ossman, even though I had to remove someone else — probably Bill Hooley.

CAL STEWART (April, 1951).—Donald Chalmers' last name is printed as Chambers. Page 22—"Equity" should be capitalized. Page 23—The quotation from the Columbia supplement is garbled. It should read: "Laugh and the world laughs with you" is the key to Cal Stewart's grip on the hearts of fun lovers, the world over. . . You can always bank on Uncle Josh to smother your cares and worries in a good old-fashioned chortle."

DEATH NOTICE (April, 1951). — Page 24. The correct title of one of the Marguerite Farrell records is "Come On and



exclusive Edison contract actually ran for five years, it must have been signed considerably before this announcement appeared, for Stewart was represented in the Victor list for September, 1915, with two of his most popular records."

Here are a couple of reminiscences to supplement the Stewart series: Fred Rabenstein says that Stewart was lame and walked with a cane because of injuries suffered during his railroading experiences. Clarence Ferguson, of Merrill, Wisconsin, recalls that Cal liked to frequent James I. Lyons' phonograph store in Chicago, and would frequently "put on stunts," such as hiring small Negro boys to dive head-first into barrels of flour. Edward Riley, of Eureka, Illinois, quotes his friend, Otis Bradford, of Indianapolis, as telling how Stewart's troupe used to play the Indiana capital, on a two-a-day vaudeville circuit. Quoting Mr. Riley: "He told of how they always announced their coming to town with a small parade in the main part of Indianapolis. . . Stewart wore an old straw hat, a long white linen duster and carried a buggy whip and marched at the head of the procession. He had a big white horse pull a carriage or surrey with Aunt Nancy and other troupe members in it, and it was almost a State holiday for the Hoosiers. This was probably around the years of the First World War."

In the light of widespread interest in Cal Stewart and his career, I have decided that I did him an injustice when I compiled my list of the Supreme Fifteen pioneer recording artists. If I were making such a list today, I should move Stewart up from the last place to which I assigned him in June, 1945, to either third or fourth—that is, just above or below Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. I would not be surprised to find that Stewart's records will prove to have the most permanent appeal of any of the old-timers. Philip L. Miller, of the Music Division of the New York Public Library, has made the following comment: "Incidentally, I have been enjoying watching people's reaction to Uncle Josh. I gave a program here for the New York chapter of the Special Libraries Association, telling them something

Baby Me." Eddie Morton died in Wildwood, New Jersey, not Philadelphia.

FRANK COOMBS AND WILLIAM H. THOMPSON (May, 1951).—"Sergeant" is misspelled more than once as "sargeant." "Ragged Robbin," should be "Ragged Robin." The correct title of one of Thompson's records is "All That I Ask of You is Love."

NAT M. WELLS (June, 1951). — The New York Times headline gave the comedian's correct name, not as Willis. The last name of Koster and Bial's museum is misspelled as "Bail." Page 23—"Jokes" gets a ludicrous misspelling as "pokes." "Emanant" is a baffling misprint for "meant." The full name of the Victor supplement writer was James Edward Richardson. Henry M. Shaw, of North Carver, Massachusetts, has two seven-inch records by Wells not mentioned in my article. No. 7246 couples "B. P. O. E." and "Parody on 'Stars and Stripes Forever.'" On No. 7253 Wells tells "War Stories" while Harry Evans sings "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary" on the reverse.

MANUEL ROMAIN (July, 1951). — Page 21, "Edison Phonograph" should be "Edison Phonograph Company." Page 24, the song name is "Happy Li'l Sal," not "Happy, Happy Li'l Sal." A printer's error turns Dave Braham's name into Graham. Quentin Riggs, of Oklahoma City, has two seven-inch Emerson records by Romain that I didn't know about. "No One But Your Dear Old Dad" is on No. 725, and "My Own Iona" on 735. By a slip of my own, W. H. A. Cronkhite is called Frank Cronkhite.

ELIZABETH SPENCER (September, 1951).—The negative of the Edison group photograph was found by Fred Rabenstein in his home instead of the Edison laboratory, as I mistakenly said.

CHARLES HARRISON AND BEULAH GAYLORD YOUNG (October, 1951). — Frederick Wheeler died in 1951, not 1950, as said in the cut lines. Because of space limitations, this article was not published as I wrote it. After using about the first fourth, the remainder was omitted except for the concluding paragraphs, thus giving a confusing impression.

## MORE ABOUT COOK AND THOMAS RECORDS, and Some Acknowledgments

My article in February HOBBIES, mentioning Edison talking records by the noted baritone, John Charles Thomas, and a "Discovery of the North Pole" Victor by Dr. Frederick Cook, brought a quick response.

William R. Moran, of La Canada, California, tells me that Cook's record, "How I Reached the Pole," is listed in the Victor catalog for January, 1910. However, in November, 1910, Cook's record is missing and Robert E. Peary's "The Discovery of the South Pole" takes its place. Unfortunately, my own collection of Victor catalogs has a gap between January, 1909, and November, 1910, so that I cannot recall ever having seen the Cook record listed.

Mr. Moran writes: "I find that the Victor numerical list for June, 1908, carries the 31000 series up to 31702, so I would guess, in the normal march of events, that Cook's record was issued late in 1908. It was therefore in the catalog a little over one year, at the least, or nearly two years, at the most. I have had a copy for years and have had one duplicate, long since traded. My present copy is a "G" stamper . . . which means a good many thousand copies were pressed. . . Oh yes — the Pasadena Public Library has (or had) a copy in their files, so that makes three that I have seen. Still a rarity, however."

Homer C. Witten, of Altadena,

California, writes that he also has a copy of the Cook record. Commenting on Mr. Moran's letter, I'd like to point out that Cook claimed he discovered the North Pole on April 21, 1908, but the claim was not made until several months afterward. I have a Victor supplement for July, 1909, and the serial number, 31755, of the Cook record had not been reached up to that time. In fact, the high number was 31728, so this makes it likely that the Cook record was not issued until around January, 1910, got into the January, and probably May, general record catalogs and was out in November, after a stay of not more than a year.

Elmer T. Jones, of Manhattan, Kansas, writes that he has an Edison "explanatory talk" which is obviously not by Harry E. Humphrey, but is in "a musical baritone" voice, which he thinks is that of John Charles Thomas. The "talk," with serial No. 4131, describes Anna Case's record of "Bonnie Sweet Bessie."

Now, some acknowledgements:

Thanks to Mr. E. G. Hamer, manager of the Wuerth Theatre, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, for a clipping from the Ann Arbor News, telling of Mr. Hamer's collection of more than 2,000 cylinder records and many old phonographs. A photograph of Mr. Hamer and part of his collection is included.

I have also received a full page clipping from the Milwaukee Journal, showing the huge collection of cylinders and phonographs owned by R. C. Ambelang, a post office employee living at 2436 North 83rd Street, Milwaukee. He has 45 phonographs and almost 4,000 records.

Matt McNally, of 171 East 74th Street, New York, has sent me a valued memento — a letter written and signed in 1912 by one of the greatest of pioneer recording artists, Len Spencer. Mr. McNally also included a booklet containing photographs of many dance orchestras of the early 1920's, including Yerkes' Flotilla Band, of which he was a member.

And from Mr. and Mrs. Roy Moser, of Vanlue, Ohio, comes a long article from the *Findlay Republican-Courier*, giving the life story of the late song writer, Tell Taylor, a native of Findlay. The article is too long to be reprinted, but it contains many interesting facts about Taylor, whose biggest hit, "Down By the Old Mill Stream," was written about a girl who afterwards became a Chicago gangster's "moll." Some of Taylor's other songs which have been extensively recorded are "When the Maple Leaves Were Falling," "I Love You Best of All" and "Rock Me to Sleep in an Old Rocking Chair."

—Jim Walsh

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

ALBERT EDMUND BROWN,

FREDERIC MARTIN

AND W. FRANCIS FIRTH

By JIM WALSH



DR. ALBERT EDMUND BROWN

During a one-year period beginning in 1909 three men with deep voices made a few Columbia records. Two were baritones; the other was a bass. None continued his Columbia association after his first engagement, and two apparently never recorded for any other company. Not one made records enough to be classed as a professional phonograph singer, but in spite of their relatively minor place in the history of recorded music, Albert Edmund Brown, Frederic Martin and W. Francis Firth all played a prominent part in stimulating my imagination when I was a small boy and intensifying the fascination that the phonograph has always held for me. This they did, although I did not become acquainted with their singing until a good many years after their records were first issued.

Because of my gratitude for the influence the baritones and the basso unsuspectingly exercised in developing my musical taste, this month's *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* is intended as a tribute of gratitude to these accomplished singers, none of whom I have met, although I once lived within a few miles of Dr. Martin, and only one of whom is still alive. My HOBBIES articles usually relate the careers of artists best known for singing or playing popular songs, but I also enjoy records of other types. I doubt that there is any form of aesthetic pleasure more rewarding than that of hearing beautiful voices properly exercised in music especially suited to their capabilities, and it was the records of Messrs. Brown, Martin and Firth, together with one or two Columbias by the Italian operatic baritone, Taurino Parvis, that first led me to realize the beauties of the less obvious compositions.

Suppose we begin with that genial gentleman who is still with us and teaching singing and speech correction in Denver, Colorado—Dr. Albert Edmund Brown. As a rule, the artists about whom I write are not listed in "Who's Who in America." That somewhat elite compendium ordi-

narily looks on popular artists, regardless of their merits or fame, with less favor than it accords to the president of a small town factory. But Dr. Brown's accomplishments in the realm of serious music, both as singer and educator, are so impressive that he has been a standby of "Who's Who" for a generation.

From Volume 17, for 1932-33, we learn that this distinguished baritone is a music educator by profession, and was born in Derby, England, on December 9, 1874. That means he is now 77 years of age, although I am confident he has the mentality and stamina of an exceptionally able man of 40. Albert Edmund's father was Samuel Brown and his mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Frost. He came to the United States as a boy of twelve, and was a student in the Institute of Music Pedagogy in Northampton, Massachusetts.

On June 15, 1896, the young man already known for his excellent voice married a talented pianist, Miss Martha Elizabeth Taylor, of Easthampton, Massachusetts. They had a daughter, Doris Elizabeth, now Mrs. Fred J. Bergin, of Denver. The first Mrs. Brown died early in 1950. In July, 1951, Dr. Brown re-married. The present Mrs. Brown formerly was Mrs. Mary Kendall and was known as one of New England's top sopranos.

The condensed listing of Dr. Brown's career in the old "Who's Who" shows him to have had a wide range of activities and accomplishments. He was director of music of the State Normal School at Lowell, Mass., from 1910 to 1919; a member of the faculty of the Chautauqua Institution in 1912-13, and of Boston University in 1916-17. Besides appearing in many recitals in the United States and England, he conducted music at several conventions of the National Education Association, as well as for state teachers' groups. In 1917 he was an organizer of the War Camp Service. Three years later he was in charge of the musical programs at the Republican national convention in Chicago. "Who's Who"

lists him as a Republican and a Christian Scientist, also as a 32nd degree Mason, a Knights Templar, a Shriner, a member of the Elks, Rotary International and Sinfonian, and as a lecturer and writer on musical subjects. He was then living in Ithaca, N. Y., and was in charge of Ithaca College's Department of Music Education.

To these facts, the latest edition of "Who's Who" adds that Dr. Brown received his degree of Doctor of Music in 1933 from the New York College of Music "for distinguished professional services and outstanding achievements in Music Education." The following paragraphs are quoted from this latest biographical sketch:

Director Department of Music, Massachusetts State Teachers College. Organizer and director of music section of the Northeastern division of War Camp Community Service. Conducted courses in Voice Training for Teachers at Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, New York. Vocal studios in Boston and New York. Teacher of many professional singers. Member of the faculties — Voice and Speech — of Curry College and Boston University. Director Ithaca Conservatory of Music and Music Division of Ithaca College (Ithaca, N. Y.) Song recitals and other professional appearances in U. S. and abroad. Soloist with principal orchestras and choral groups including Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Handel and Haydn Society, Worcester Festival Association, etc. Lectures and recitals at leading institutions of higher education, Cornell University, Smith College, Wheaton College, etc.

Programs for the National Education Association and teachers' organizations in many states. Conductor of choral groups — Wagnerian Choral Club, The Choral Art Society, etc. President Emeritus of the Boston Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. For five years associate editor

of the New York Musical Courier. Lecturer and writer on musical subjects, principally the science and pedagogy of voice, interpretation in song and speech correction. Member Savage Club (London and Ithaca), Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, and the Oracle.

I knew nothing of Dr. Brown's scholarly attainments when he first became an important figure in my private world of the imagination. Nor did I know about them for a long time afterward. When I first saw his name on the label of Columbia record No. A749, which coupled his rendition of Schumann's "The Two Grenadiers" with Frederic Martin's interpretation of "Vulcan's Song" from Gounod's "Philemon and Baucis," I imagined Brown to be a stocky young man of about 28, wearing a gray suit and a felt hat of the same color. That same mental depiction holds good today, although I have had an autographed photo of him hanging in my home for almost twenty years and know well enough that my imaginary character doesn't look at all like the artist who is still flourishing and active.

But, although I didn't have any information concerning Albert Edmund Brown, I thought as a youngster that his "Two Grenadiers" was the most stirring record I had ever heard, and I never doubted that his interpretation was unbeatable. When I was ten years of age my tonsils gave so much trouble they had to be removed, and I was out of school for several weeks after undergoing what is now elegantly known as a "tonsillectomy." Finding that the time passed slowly, I decided to set up the mythical Walsh Talking Machine Company, whose headquarters was in the non-existent city of Goosia. I decided that the president of the company was one Cylope P. Walsh, whose son I imagined myself to be. A five-cent pencil tablet was dedicated to the honor of becoming the Walsh Company's numerical record catalog, and the catalog, which of course outgrew the one tablet, was steadily added to for years. It wasn't given up altogether until I was in my late teens.

And Albert Edmund Brown was one of my chief recording artists—all on the strength of that record of "The Two Grenadiers." Just as Elsie Baker was designated Walsh's "official staff contralto," so Brown was the official baritone. But because it seemed to me that his voice had an unusually high range, I gave him the special honorary description of "tenor-baritone," meaning his tones were a combination of high and low. For somewhat the same reason, I couldn't be satisfied with describing my favorite humorous singer, Billy Murray (who spent his boyhood in Denver), as either a tenor or a comedian but always called him a "tenor comedian." One ruled line of the pencil tablet was devoted to giving the number, title, composer and artist of one-side of a double-faced record. The performer's voice quality or the name of his instrument was filled in above the line.

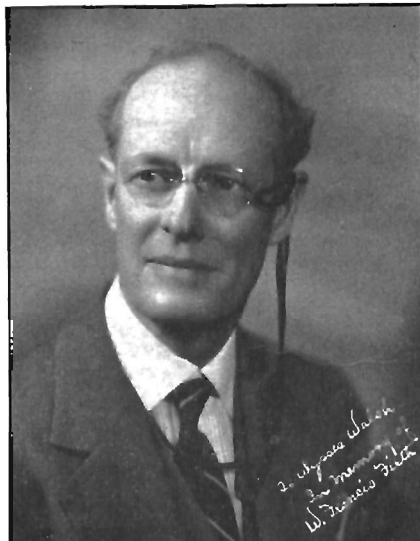
This brought about an amusing custom in my treatment of Dr. Brown.

His full name, Albert Edmund Brown, was too long to get on the line unless the song title and all the other information was short. Thus it happened that he was referred to in a variety of ways. Besides being Albert Edmund Brown, he was also Albert E. Brown, A. Edmund Brown, Al. E. Brown, A. E. Brown and, sometimes, just plain Al Brown, or, if space was drastically limited, he was merely "Brown." The nature of the song he was recording had something to do with whether he was talented with extreme formality or the reverse. With such a number as my beloved "Two Grenadiers" his full name had to be given, but if he were singing popular music the shortened form of Al. E. was sufficient.

Besides being a "tenor-baritone" soloist and singing duets with other Walsh artists, Albert Edmund Brown made himself useful in other ways. He was a member of the Central Male and Mixed Trios, which never sang



FREDERIC LOUIS MARTIN



WILLIAM FRANCIS FIRTH

together for any company but Walsh. The male trio consisted of Will Oakland, counter-tenor; Henry Burr, tenor; and Brown, baritone. The mixed trio was the same except that Helen Clark was substituted for Oakland. Brown was likewise a member of the Cumberland Quartet, whose other members I am not sure about, although I believe Arthur Clough was the lead tenor.

I have just been looking through the yellowed pages of my old pencil tablets, and shall quote a few examples to show how important Albert Edmund Brown was to the Walsh artist and repertoire department. One side of record No. A151, "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland," was by the Central Male Trio. On No. 156, Billy Murray and Al. E. Brown sang "Rainbow." No 157 contained the Central Trio in "Abide With Me", and Albert Edmund (it seems I consistently misspelled his middle name with an "o" instead of a "u") Brown rendering a hymn, "Child of a King." On 159, his name again was given at

full length for his rendition of Tosti's "Beauty's Eyes," ludicrously coupled with "Harmony Joe," by the Peerless Quartet. Going on down the line but skipping the record numbers, I find Brown singing "Afar From Thee, My Love" (Linne); Handel's "Angels Ever Bright and Fair"; "Come, Ye Disconsolate" (a duet with Harry Anthony); "One Sweetly Solemn Thought"; "Paradise" (a trio, with Anthony and Albert Campbell); "Angelic Songs are Swelling"; "Ariste, My Soul"; "Rock of Ages"; "Ruler of the Ocean" from Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine" and "Cassio's Dream" from Verdi's "Otello." The latter two numbers were among my favorites by Taurino Parvis, and it's a wonder I didn't have him singing for Walsh. The reason I didn't probably was a chauvinistic prejudice against vocal records in languages other than English. Parvis sang Italian, so he was out. Brown took his place, using the King's English to do it.

Besides compiling the Walsh record catalog and conducting all the imaginary business affairs of that remarkable concern, I wrote "interviews" with the members of the company's recording staff. These were entitled "A Walk With Billy Murray," Henry Burr or whoever the favored artist happened to be, and they were, I suppose, the forerunners of the biographical sketches I write nowadays for HOBBIES. I remember that in one about Albert Edmund Brown I had him confessing to "Mr. Walsh" that he had gone and got himself married and flatteringly expressing the hope that this wouldn't impair his business relationship with the Walsh Talking Machine Company. To which the broad-minded Cylope P. magnanimously replied, much to Brown's relief, "No, we don't mind your getting married. Bring Mrs. Brown around to see us!" This was followed up always in my imagination, of course—by a scene in which the tenor-baritone did "bring Mrs. Brown around"



and entertained her by playing many of his own recordings on a portable Walsh instrument that looked suspiciously like the \$25 Victrola which was then the joy of my life.

Looking back, I wonder that Mr. Walsh so readily forgave Mr. Brown for the sin of marrying. As a juvenile, I had a most intense aversion to the institution of wedlock, and the idea of anybody's being married. I must still have it, for I have stayed single all these years!

In spite of constantly having Albert Edmund Brown in my mind, it was not until 1932 that I got around to writing to him. For one thing, I didn't have any idea where he lived. I believe it was my friend, the late Miss Marian Reed, of Washington, D. C., to whom I had confided my admiration, who saw a mention of him in *Musical Courier* and let me know that he was head of the department of music at Ithaca College.

However that may have been, I wrote a letter to Dr. Brown, telling him how much his record of "The Two Grenadiers" had meant to me and asking if he could send me a signed photograph. Within a few days I received a reply that was cordial, but in which my praise of that record elicited a wry acknowledgement.

I never destroy a letter, so I'm sure Dr. Brown's reply is somewhere in my home. I have found the envelope, dated August 23, 1932, in which it was mailed, but the letter itself is misplaced. However, I recall its contents well enough to quote them almost verbatim.

Dr. Brown said he was glad his singing had indirectly exercised such a pronounced influence on my life, but he had never considered himself a recording artist and had no high opinion of the three records he made for Columbia. He referred to the many trials that were necessary before passable reproductions were obtained of the only three selections he sang, and his disappointment when he heard the records played back. His friends all told him, he said, that the records didn't sound like his real voice.

As for "The Two Grenadiers," Dr. Brown said that Victor Emerson, then

the Night," which was doubled with "Absent," sung by a once noted contralto, Mrs. A. Stewart Holt. I found a copy of "All Through the Night" a few years ago, but have still to run across "Israfel," although it stayed in the catalog through 1916, whereas the two ten-inch records were discontinued late in 1913 or early in 1914.

With his letter, Dr. Brown included a reprint of an article from the *Boston Record* of Friday, June 18, 1920, headed "BROWN, LEADER OF SINGING, WINS BATTLE AT CHICAGO NATIONAL CONVENTION." It was written by Rush Jones and told of the baritone's success in getting the weary delegates to the Republican convention that nominated Harding and Coolidge to do a fine job of "community singing" at a let-down period when everybody was tired out and tempers were frazzled. Jones' article is too long to be quoted entirely, but I'll use parts of it because of the light they throw upon Albert Edmund Brown's accomplishments and personality:

CHICAGO—One man from Massachusetts matched his strength against a roaring, hooting, laughing, jeering, screeching crowd of 15,000 people in the Coliseum on Thursday evening, and won. He was Brown of Massachusetts, Brown of the Republican League of Massachusetts, Brown the greatest leader of mass singing this generation of politicians has known.

Brown pulled off this battle of one man against 15,000 men and women when the crowd was worn out and melting in the fervent heat, while they awaited the report of the platform committee. . . . Brown, the big whirlwind of song, jumped to the front of the speakers' platform and shouted, "Will you join me in singing 'The Long, Long Trail'?"

NO!"

"But Brown called for the key from the big band at the far end of the hall. . . . The crowd started to scream, hoot, groan, shout and laugh. Brown began beating time like a madman and grinning good naturedly the while. . . . The pandemonium grew and still Brown waved his arms and kicked up his legs, beating out the 'Long, Long Trail.' The dust was flying before he hit the quarter stretch.

Suddenly the band swung into "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," and the protest of the crowd against being forced to sing whether it would or not was turned into a torrent of laughter that was nearly as loud and even more disconcerting than the avalanche of discordant noises which it had been making.

Quick to see his opportunity, Brown . . . led the rollicking "What the Hell Do We Care", end of the song. He saw his advantage and the grin grew broader. He had the crowd singing with him. Then he managed to signal the band and "Smiles" took the place of the hot-as-hades ditty. . . .

There was no way of getting ahead of that chap from Massachusetts with the tremendous voice and the assurance of a dreadnought, and when Brown finished he retired amid a perfect Niagara of cheers and a thunder of hand clapping. It was as dauntless a performance and as complete a victory as any man in that vast crowd had ever seen, and some of them had seen some mighty big things.

When I read this vivid account of Brown's leading those case-hardened politicians in such numbers as "Hail, Hail," "Smiles" and "How Dry I Am," which was also on the G. O. P.'s musical menu, I felt somewhat less guilty at occasionally having had him sing popular tunes for the Walsh

catalog. There was also a tribute to his leadership of group singing from Dr. A. E. Winship, who wrote in the *Journal of Education*: "Albert Edmund Brown led the singing at all the general sessions and at many banquets. We have known no one to do as varied work as did he, and it was always 100 per cent attractive. Mr. Brown is in a class by himself in Convention work of this kind."

However, those were, of course, his lighter moments. More representative of the type of music which the virile baritone ordinarily sang is the following program given April 8, 1931, before the Ithaca Rotary Club, with Mrs. Brown at the piano:

"My Love is a Like a Red, Red Rose" (Hastings); "On the Banks of Allan Water" (traditional); "The Pretty Creature" (Storace); "Thursday" (Molloy); "Yeoman's Wedding Song" (Poinatowski); "Sheriff's Song" and "Armorer's Songs from 'Robin Hood'" (DeKoven); and two Rudyard Kipling poems set to music—"Rolling Down to Rio" (German) and "Boots" (Souza.)

Here is a typical review, from *Musical America*, of another recital given by Mr. Brown at about the same period:

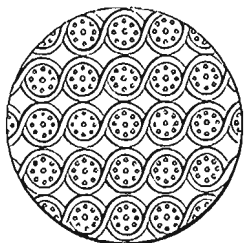
Albert Edmund Brown, director of the division of music, Ithaca College, recently gave a song recital in the Little Theatre. His program included several of Kipling's Barrack Room Ballads, an old English air, "The Vicar of Bray," and several Handel excerpts. Mr. Brown's art shows to greatest advantage in the deeper registers, which bring out the resonant, rich timbre of his voice. He proved an able dramatic projector, especially in the Kipling settings and in the ballads which his program contained. An audience which filled the hall demanded encores after each group. —N. V.

I suppose I wrote and thanked Dr. Brown for his interesting letter and enclosures. At least, I certainly hope I did. But there was no further communication between us for 19 years. Then when it occurred to me that I should like to write an article combining his life story with that of Martin and Firth, I wrote to the president of Ithaca College, asking if Dr. Brown were still associated with the institution. The president, Leonard B. Job, replied on September 12, 1951:

Dear Mr. Walsh: We are happy indeed to provide you with such information as we have concerning the subject of your letter of September 1.

Dr. Brown left Ithaca College 13 or 14 years ago. He worked in Albany for a while, then got back to the Boston area. A year or so ago, when the first Mrs. Brown died, he went to Denver to live with his daughter. He has since remarried and I believe at the present time is in charge of the music at one of the Presbyterian churches in Denver. I regret that I cannot tell you which one.

Obviously, the next step was to ascertain Dr. Brown's home address. The only friend I could think of in Denver who might check the city directory for me was Ray Perkins, song writer, former recording star for Victor and Brunswick and now perhaps the most popular disc jockey in the West. Ray came through immediately with the information that Albert Edmund Brown was listed as living at 1410 Grant street, Denver.



the Columbia recording manager, made him sing it too fast, to get it all on one ten-inch record side, and spoiled the interpretation. However, he considered his one 12-inch disc, No. A5118, "Israfel," coupled with "Oh! That Will Be Glory (The Glory Song)," by Harvey Hindermyer, to be the worst of the three. The remaining Brown record, and the first issued, No. A694, was "All Through

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His telephone number, Ray added, was 2685; "but," he remarked, "I guess you won't be using that."

As Ray had surmised, I didn't phone to Dr. Brown. But I did write him a letter, mentioning some of the things I had told him in 1932, and asking for an account of his recent activities. On October 1 he wrote the following fine letter, which seems to me to reflect admirably the warm, magnetic personality that tamed an unruly host of convention-tired Republicans:

My dear Friend, Thank you for your good letter which gave me a great "kick" and which I read with much interest. Many years have passed since the records of which you speak were made for Columbia. As I remember the three — which by the way took three days to make — they were "The Two Grenadiers," of Schumann, "Israfil," by Oliver King, and the well known folk song, "All Through the Night."

I remember Frederick Martin very well. Everything in recording then was so different from what is done today. The studio manager was a man named Emerson. We had to sing into a horn that was punched full of holes. If one seemed not to be good, another with more or less holes in it was selected. When it was not possible to get "Israfil" on a ten-inch disc, as was planned, Mr. Emerson suggested that we leave out the middle part, or that we hurry the song to get it on the discs. From my angle that was if course impossible. How things have changed!

As you know, the orchestra — a small one — was perched on step ladders and on boxes in order to make the best final effect. Under another cover I am sending you a Brochure which will give

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Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

you more up-to-date information regarding my work. I have been in Denver for a little over a year. Have the direction of the Choir of the First United Presbyterian Church and am doing some teaching. However, being removed some two thousand miles from Boston, where I was so well known, presents problems of promotion. Things are coming along and I am quite happy here.

I listen to Kay Perkins' programs and like them. I have never met him and would like to do that sometime before very long. As to my own voice, I am just the same as ever — I sang the other day and I marvel at what I can do after all these years. You may be interested that several years ago I was one of the organizers (and the first President) of the Boston Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Before leaving the "Hub" they made me President Emeritus, an honor that I prize highly.

In addition to my teaching I am called upon to give a lecture occasionally. I keep active and have a keen interest with Dr. Charles Norman Granville's Method — a series of recordings for the smaller communities. It is a fine piece of work with a volume of instructions together with the necessary accompanying records. It is published by the Music Publishers Holding Corporation of New York.

Please be assured of my cooperation. If you have any questions I will answer them — Pronto! Thank you again for writing to me. My best wishes to you — and — here's a hand-clasp across the miles.

Faithfully yours,

ALBERT EDMUND BROWN.

I found Dr. Brown's entire letter

of great interest, but my attention was particularly caught by his mention of Charles N. Granville, a baritone who made one or two Edison cylinders in 1913. I had not been certain whether he was still alive.

Soon after the letter arrived, Dr. Brown sent me a postal with the information that his home address has changed, to 648 Race Street, Denver, and that his telephone number is Fremont 2959. His studio is in the First United Presbyterian Church building at East 14th avenue and Lincoln street.

Another piece of publicity material shows that the veteran baritone is a great believer in clear enunciation and in "Songs in English for English Speaking Audiences," so perhaps I did right when, at the age of ten, I had him sing those Meyerbeer and Verdi arias for the Walsh Talking Machine Company in English instead of Italian. I think some of the statements he makes are worth quoting:

Our speech, though richer than any other in its possibilities, has not been wisely used by those music publishers who seek to supply songs in foreign tongues with English versions. Instead of employing poets of musical tendency with a copious vocabulary and well-turned phrases at their command, the publishers seem to have committed Ger-

man poems to men familiar enough with the original but not sufficiently conversant with English.

I speak of German more particularly because so much of the best vocal music is by Teutonic composers. . . . While many songs when translated into English lose much of their atmospheric and emotional content, it would be as absurd for a lecturer before an English-speaking audience to give a part of his discourse in French, and another part in German and another part in Italian, as for a singer to expect unqualified welcome for songs in foreign languages which he but imperfectly understands and which his audiences does not understand at all. To all American singers I would say: sing your songs in well-chosen English if singing to an English speaking audience, and sing them so that everyone understands your words; enunciate them so clearly that the audience can tell how every word is spelled. If you get away from the foreign language fad, you will find yourself nearer the heart of your audience.

Since Dr. Brown so obviously has the gift of winning the hearts of his audiences, I think his words are worth heeding. And now let us leave this fine artist, who has meant so much to me for virtually my entire life, happy at his work in Denver.

(This is the first of two articles devoted to the three pioneer recording artists. It will be concluded next month.)

## RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Will pay top cash for the following records: Any by Jimmie Rodgers, any by Richard Jose, any by Singing Sam. State price and describe. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. s68431

MARY GARDEN and Sigrid Onegin, Victor Electricals wanted.—Mrs. Maude Batson, 238 S. Mariposa Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. je3882

## MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder records, machines, and catalogues.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street Santa Monica, Calif. je6844

WANTED TO BUY, small horns and reproducers for Columbia cylinder phonographs.—A. Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. je3884

WANTED: Imperial Symphonion Music box that plays 20" discs with cuplike depressions at edges. Wanted 20½" Criterion and Olympia discs. — R. Shattuck, Eldred, Pa. je3846

## MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.50.—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. o 6844

FOR SALE: New Ampico & Duo-Art, Welte Mignon music rolls. Also various used music rolls. 3 Mills Virtuosos. 3 electric pianos.—Louis J. Kersten, 32 So. Street, Freehold, N. J. je3084

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WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

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Choice Collection. Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

Rare Vocal Recordings, including imports. Free lists.—Music Den, 825 Irving Street, San Francisco, Calif. je3063

Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Jones, Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, etc. Fine condition. Price 50c each. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. je3426

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. au3084

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C., N. Y. je6468

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THOUSANDS of used records: Jazz, Operatic, Instrumental, and Personalities. We must surely have some that you are seeking! May we have your want list?—Perry's Book & Record Shoppe, 3914 Van Buren Place, Culver City, Calif. je3065

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o 120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o 122511

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## MUSIC LITERATURE

FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

ALBERT EDMUND BROWN,

FREDERIC MARTIN

AND W. FRANCIS FIRTH

(Continued from the June Issue)

## II Frederic Martin

I have always had a remarkably vivid memory for happenings of my childhood, even to the dreams that intrigued my attention when I was a tot. One of the most vivid, which I have never forgotton, had a musical interest, and occurred when I was not more than seven. It seemed that my father had taken me to a concert, and that, as I watched, a man with a cynically twisted mouth that made him appear both sardonic and dissipated, climbed the steps leading to a platform, said "Now for the bass!" and began to sing "Vulcan's Song" from "Philemon and Baucis," with which I was familiar from Frederic Martin's Columbia record that we had at home.

After singing, the man stepped down and stood beside me. He asked me to tell him the names of some singers I liked. "Well," I replied, "of course Billy Murray is my favorite. But I like Ada Jones, too."

Noticing that he seemed disappointed, I added: "Frederic Martin is a good one."

His face brightened as he replied: "That's me!" (I had been sure it was!)

Then the basso went on: "Yes, I'd be pretty good—if I could just leave whiskey alone!"

I woke before anything more was said, but that dream has always remained bright in my memory. I am sure, however, that it was a gross slander upon Dr. Martin, who was not only a fine singer but a gentleman of high character. The reference to whiskey was a hang-over from a remark I had heard my father make some time before about a vaudeville act he had heard, who he thought "would be pretty good if they could just leave whiskey alone." Child-like, I had assumed that it applied to all musicians and had made Frederic Martin say it in my dream.

That Columbia record of "Vulcan's Song," on the back of Dr. Brown's "Two Grenadiers," was the only one Columbia ever issued by Frederic Martin, but it stirred my imagination almost as much as the Brown rendition. I particularly liked the suave melody to which Gounod set the words, not all of which I have been able to understand to this day. My father used to order merchandise from

wholesale houses in Baltimore, and this made my tricky imagination turn "Vulcan's Song" into a letter dealing with one of his shipments. I took the first two lines of the refrain to be:

"I enclose the bill of lading,  
For pillows, sheets and shading."

Much later, by careful listening, I detected them to be:

"I love the chat of neighbor  
That cheers the hours of labor."

Another part that I believed was, "free am I as the breezes as they sing through the trees" really is "free am I as the breezes, and I toil when it pleases." Outside my dreams, I imagined Frederic Martin to be a rather bald man, around 40, who was sitting at a window, writing, until his wife, who was holding a singing party, entered and said: "Frederic, we want you to sing bass for us!" Whereupon Frederic got up willingly from his writing and went into the living room where the guests were gathered.

I believe that "Vulcan's Song," recorded in 1909, represents the first time the name of Frederic Martin appears in a record catalog but it was not his first appearance before the horn. In September, 1910, "H. G. C.," of Westerly, Rhode Island, had this question published in Edi-

son's *New Phonogram*: "Has Fred L. Martin ever sung for Edison Records?" The reply was: "He has sung bass several times in our quartet Records; among them Standard No. 9607, 'Work, for the Night is Coming.'"

The latter record, listed as by the Edison Male Quartet, was issued in August, 1907. Ordinarily, the Edison Quartet was the same as the Haydn (John Bieling, Harry Macdonough, S. H. Dudley and W. F. Hooley) on Victor, but in this instance Martin may have substituted for Hooley, whose health was bad at times. On the other hand, the quartet may have entered into its agreement to sing exclusively for Victor, and Edison

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**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**



was compelled to reply on a "scratch" ensemble to take its place.

After his vigorously sung and, to me, admirable Columbia record was issued, Frederic Martin appears to have been a stranger to the recording studios until he made some solos for Edison in 1914. The July issue of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* said:

Frederic Martin, a native of Rhode Island, has pursued his artistic attainments with the foremost of American and European instructors. He has appeared many times with the leading musical organizations of the larger cities throughout the United States and Canada, has also made several tours with the Boston Festival, Pittsburgh and Chicago Symphonies, and is recognized as one of America's leading oratorio and concert artists. His voice is a noble one, sonorous in quality, of ample power, and of uncommonly wide range. He is basso of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Quartet, of New York City.

In that same issue, Edison announced Blue Amberol Record No. 2403, of Martin singing Schubert's immortal song, "The Wanderer." Seven months later, in February, 1915, his Blue Amberol Record No. 2520, "It is Enough" from "Elijah," was issued, and the following additional comment appeared, together with a good photo of the portly basso, who really was somewhat bald:

Frederic Martin... is the possessor of a wonderful bass voice. His training and vocal development have been with the foremost of European and American teachers. He is one of the most popular of concert and oratorio basses, and there are comparatively few musical or singing societies throughout the United States with which he has not appeared. He has also toured with the leading symphony orchestras of New York, Chicago and Boston. For the past nine years he has held the position of basso in the quartet of the famous and exclusive Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York. His rendition of a selection from "Elijah" is magnificently impressive.

Martin's Edison solos were also being issued on the then new-fangled Diamond Discs, and the June, 1915,

of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* contained this rather amusing item under the heading of "Selling Tips for Disc Records":

As an instance of how one specific little thing may just catch the buyer, the following incident actually happened recently. The record was "The Wanderer," sung by Frederick Martin. This classical song is one of the finest in the whole realm of music. . . . The salesman playing it told the customer everything he knew about the song and about Martin. The record was played and the customer did not like, nor could he be persuaded that he ever would like it. Another salesman who happened to be standing within hearing, approached and took part in the conversation. "Do you realize, sir," he exclaimed, "that this record contains the lowest note ever recorded by the human voice—a feature only possible on the Edison Disc?" Neither of the others had noticed it particularly, but the customer thought it would be worth playing the record again to hear this remarkable note. The upshot was that he bought the record! He didn't like "The Wanderer" much better than when he first heard it (he will in a few weeks, though), but he thought his wife and friends would be interested in that low note!

Although I own about two thousand Diamond Discs, I unfortunately don't have any of Frederic Martin's brief list. Here are the titles:

No. 82053 The Wanderer (Schubert) and The Horn (Flégier); 80193—Elijah—It is Enough (Mendelssohn) and Elijah—If With All Your Hearts (tenor solo by Reed Miller); 82058, Vespri Siciliani—O Tu Palermo and Hérodiade—Vision Fugitive.

A few years followed, during which I know of no more Martin records from any source. Then, in 1918, the Starr Piano Company began issuing hill-and-dale Gennett records, and Frederic Martin was one of the company's celebrity artists. His renditions appeared on its Red Label "Art Tone" series, which had a remote resemblance to Victor Red Seals.

I formerly owned a complete file or the vertical cut Gennett lists, but they were lent to another collector who, unfortunately, reported that he had lost or mislaid them. The only other "exclusive Art Tone" celebrity artist I can now recall is the violinist, Helen Ware. I'm sorry that I can't give a complete list of Martin's Gennett records, but I can mention the two that are in my own collection: No. 10019, my old favorite, "Vulcan's Song," coupled with "Gipsy John" (Clay); and 10030, "When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings" (Arthur J. Lamb and Alfred Solman), doubled with "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" (J. P. Knight.) The Gennett recording of "Vulcan's Song" is clearer than the Columbia, but I'm not sure that the voice seems quite so resonant and deep.

After his Gennett engagement, Dr. Martin, as far as I know, made no more records. He came to Bristol, Virginia, as voice instructor at Virginia Interment College and remained twenty years or more. During most of his residence there, I was living in Marion, Va., only 45 miles away, and still later my home was in Johnson City, Tenn., just 25 miles from Bristol, but alas! I never did meet Frederic Martin. I remember that while I was in Marion, I wrote to him,

as I did to Albert Edmund Brown, telling him how much that Columbia record had meant to me, and also relating what I considered the amusing dream in which he had taken part. He didn't reply. I hope he wasn't offended at my having imagined him to be a victim of the curse of drink!

Like Dr. Brown, Frederic Martin also married a musician, but Mrs. Martin was a singer instead of a pianist. Mr. and Mrs. Martin frequently gave recitals in Bristol, Roanoke, and other Virginia cities, and Dr. Martin sometimes served as music critic for the *Bristol Herald-Courier*. In one of my scrapbooks I have a clipping of his review of a 1935 recital by Nino Martini.

Dr. Martin died on September 12, 1945. The Associated Press sent out from New London, Connecticut, the following account of his death:

Frederick Louis Martin, 76, of Bristol, Tenn., once a widely-known vocalist who appeared with the Boston Symphony and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, died today at Lawrence Hospital. For a score of years he was voice instructor at Virginia Interment College, Bristol, Va. He had been stricken suddenly ill yesterday at his summer home at Noank and was admitted to the hospital last night. He appeared with most of the leading symphony orchestras in the United States and for 15 years was bass soloist at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City.

I believe that Mrs. Martin survived her distinguished husband and, so far as I know, she is still alive.

### III W. Francis Firth

The story of the third minor recording artist who influenced my youthful tastes must be told at less length than those of Brown and Martin, because I know less concerning W. Francis Firth than I do of the other two. In

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WANTED: Will pay top cash for the following records: Any by Jimmie Rodgers, any by Richard Jose, any by Singing Sam. State price and describe. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. s68431

WANTED: Cornet records.—Steve Gilman, 66 Sims, Newport, R. I. jly108

### MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6046

WANTED: Reproducer for Edison Amberola 30 phonograph.—George R. Hare, 3006 14th Avenue, Tampa 5, Fla. s3652

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. je128291

### MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List.—Durell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80.—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. o 6844

SWISS & REGINA music boxes, bar-room pianos; barrel & hand organs; large Regina piano, with drums; bells & cymbal playing, 32" disc. Old coin operated Edison juke box, playing cylinder records; accordion playing paper roll; musical alarm and others.—Ray Albertson, Box 23, Atlantic, Ia. jly1863

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Choice Collection. Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Jones, Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, etc. Fine condition. Price 50c each. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. s3426

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. au3084

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C., N. Y. d6829

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f124201

CHOICE PONSSELLE, Caruso, Stracciari, Lazzaro, many others. List on request.—Jacksonville Children's Museum, 1061 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville, Fla. s3832

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit.—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., N. Y. C. 28, N. Y. s3145

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o 120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6 New Jersey. o 122511

fact, aside from the fact that he made three Columbia records, I knew nothing about him, although I had used him as one of the Walsh Talking Machine Company's "Exclusive" artists, until I read the following in *Variety* for June 30, 1943:

W. Francis Firth, 75, painter-musician who formerly operated his own light opera company, died June 25 in Windsor, Ontario. A native of Auburn, N. Y., Firth went on the stage early and after appearances in the East, toured the country with the Milan Opera Co. and later with his own light opera company, which he both owned and managed. In addition to his work as a singing instructor, he was widely known as an artist, many of his paintings being hung in prominent American museums. He leaves his widow and a son.

Soon afterwards, I wrote to Mrs. Firth, asking for more information about her husband. On September 6, 1943, she wrote to me from Windsor:

My dear Mr. Walsh: Pardon my long delay in getting your letter answered... but I have not been very well, and still could be a lot better. Arthritis has gotten a hold of me and I have been almost a cripple, but I am thankful to say I am coming along nicely now. My deep thanks to God for His help!

Your kind letter was a great surprise to me, but I assure you a very pleasant one, to know that you, a perfect stranger, would write me such a lovely letter full of sympathy for me and my son in our deep sorrow. It was a terrible blow for me to have to take, but God knows best. I could have stood the strain better if I had been well, but it almost got me, waiting on him during his illness, although I had three trained nurses besides myself.

Yes, he was a baritone. I am so glad to know you think so much of his record. He made only two or three. I have a house full of his beautiful paintings. I wish you could see them. I appreciate very much what you say you intend to do as a tribute to Mr. Firth. I will send you soon a photo, if it will aid your purpose. Will be glad to hear from you again. Sincerely, Eva Firth.

Mrs. Firth's sentence, "I am glad to know you think so much of his record," referred to my telling her how much I had enjoyed her husband's rendition of "The Island of Dreams," a favorite Stephen Adams concert song, on Columbia record No. A769, combined with "I Know of Two Bright Eyes," by Henry Burr. It rated, in my boyish appraisal, right along with "The Two Grenadiers" and "Vulcan's Song," although I couldn't understand why the label called Firth a tenor. He was obviously a baritone. However, he is also described as a tenor in the November, 1913, catalog, which lists all three of his records. The others were No. 842, "There Let Me Rest" (Greene) doubled with "My Heart Has Learned to Love You," by Henry Burr (a record that I added to my collection only a year or two ago), and A1114, "The Little Irish Girl," coupled with "Off to Philadelphia," by Frank Croxton.

Like Brown and Martin, William Francis Firth was in his later years a vocal teacher, or, as he termed it, a "voice specialist." He had studios both in Windsor and in Detroit. It is not generally known, however, that in his earlier life he had sung in Italy as an operatic baritone under the assumed name of Francesco Baldanza. (Baldanza was actually his

Italian teacher's name.) From a folder issued by Mr. Firth and sent to me by his wife I quote the following paragraphs, which were written to publicize his abilities as a lecturer on music:

Out of the World of Opera has come a brilliant Baritone, familiar in the theatres of Europe under the name Francesco Baldanza. After a remarkable debut with the San Carlos Opera Company the critics discovered that Baldanza was William Francis Firth, a Canadian Scot who had been for many years the favorite pupil of the great Signor Ernesto Baldanza. Said *La Roma*, leading Naples newspaper: "Francesco Baldanza, the new baritone at the San Carlos, was a lucky find for the management. In last

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 31)

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

### PHONOGRAPHS

FOR SALE: Edison Phonograph. Tell us what you need.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. jly1401

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

For Sale: Large number of 15 3/4" Regina Music Box discs, \$2 each. Send for list. Minimum order, 3 records.—John W. Willever, 147 East Washington Ave., Washington, N. J. aux

MUSIC BOX DISCS bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list offering above average prices. Wanted: 18 1/2" New Century, 13 1/4" Kalliope and 14" Perfection discs.—Insley C. Looker, So. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3066

MUSIC BOX CARDS, Silent Night, Jingle Bells, Let Me Call You Sweetheart, Happy Birthday, Rock-a-bye Baby, Anniversary Waltz, \$1 each.—Meyers, 1502 Dodge, Omaha, Nebr. jly3234

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES, also mechanical musical instruments of any description, sleigh bells, United States coins, large bills, discs for Imperial Symphonian & minute repeating watches.—Herbert H. Meyer, Pittsburgh 15, Penna. au3694

### MUSIC LITERATURE

FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music. Everything. Catalog 10c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. jly12867

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC, hit songs, 1900-12, 3, \$1; 1913-19, 4, \$1; 1920's, 1930's, 5, \$1; 1940's, 6, \$1.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly12867

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. s3863

chimes on the hour and on each quarter of the hour, and plays the Westminster and St. John chimes. Brass and silver dial with moon and small second hand." Price \$200.00.

Note: This clock, when new, a few years ago, probably sold at a price several times the original price of the other clocks illustrated and described in this article. You can draw your own conclusions on the relative value of modern versus antique items.

At the same Lancaster sale, a number of clocks of lesser importance were sold. Unfortunately, I do not have pictures of them. A great many of them showed unmistakable signs of restoration, particularly with respect to the tablets. The prices, therefore, do not have much meaning but I am listing them as a matter of interest:

1. Ithaca Calendar Clock, walnut with ebony trim.....\$100.00
2. John Birge & Co. mantel clock ..... 57.50
3. Forrestville, 8-day shelf clock ..... 70.00
4. C. & L. C. Ives, 8-day shelf clock ..... 30.00
5. Birge & Peck, eagle, 8-day shelf clock..... 40.00
6. C. Jerome, 1-day, steeple clock ..... 15.00
7. Victorian alarm clock.... 7.00
8. French gilded clock under glass dome..... 47.50
9. Prescott walnut wall clock. 6.00
10. Bristol wall clock..... 4.50
11. Rapp shelf clock..... 17.50
12. Brass figure clock on base. 6.00
13. Victorian walnut mantel clock ..... 4.00

Note: Here is the inconsistency. Usually a C. & L. C. Ives clock with roller pinions is worth twice as much as a Forrestville Mfg. Co. shelf clock. In this instance, it brought less than half of the amount paid for the Forrestville clock.

MORE OF THE SAME NEXT MONTH



#### CLOCK DIALS STEEPLE CLOCKS

4 1/4" or 5" Dials. Can be cut to fit any Steeple Clock. Cards, 5 1/4 x 7" and 7 x 11" overall.

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Size Dials: 2 1/4"-3 1/4"-3 1/2"-4 1/4"-5"-6 1/2"-7 1/4" & 8", w/ 1" margin. Can be assorted lots.

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3 smallest sizes also, on glazed gummed paper. State Preference. ttc

W. L. KENDALL

629 W. Willis, Detroit, Michigan

## MUSIC

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

evening's performance he displayed not only one of the finest baritone voices heard here in years but his interpretation of the part of Charles V. in Verdi's 'Ernani' was filled with dramatic power. That Baidanza is a Canadian will be a surprise to those who heard him."

Not only is Mr. Firth a fine singer but he is a splendid speaker, bringing fine diction and the authority of the speaking stage to his aid in telling the entrancing story of "Music Through the Ages." Taking his subject from days long before music was even printed, through the long journey until opera and the great modern musical works took their place in the world's culture, Mr. Firth illustrates each epoch or school with finely chosen examples of song, which include early church music, operatic arias, modern and ancient songs. . . Mr. Firth's program is ideally adapted for "Music Days," and Music Chairman will welcome this great artist whose program will make their day one long remembered in their Club. Mr. Firth will also give a limited number of recitals and concerts." The folder was signed by Firth's manager, William B. Naylor, who had offices in both Detroit and Chicago.

The number of Firth records had dwindled to one, "The Little Irish Girl," when the November, 1914, Columbia catalog appeared, but this time he was listed correctly as a baritone. The "Irish Girl" remained available through 1916, then disappeared. Meanwhile, Mr. Firth apparently was devoting more time to his painting than to his concert work and lectures, and continued preoccupied with painting until his death.

So ends my tribute to the two baritones and the basso who did so much to influence my love for good music when I was a very little boy. I wonder what they would have thought if they had known that they were appearing, as strictly exclusive

## METAL CLOCK DIALS

(Black Roman numerals on baked white enamel)

#### DIAL SIZES:

4 1/4", 5", 6 1/4", 7", 8", with 2" sq. margin

#### STEEPLE CLOCKS:

4 1/4", 5", on 7x11" metal

Price \$2 each

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## IMPORTED CUCKOO CLOCKS

A real Cuckoo clock! The bird pops out of the swinging door and "Cuckoos" the time every hour and half hour. SPECIAL NO. 103H, \$13.75, wholesale only. Other models to choose from.

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Brooklyn 18, New York

628 Coney Island Avenue,

artists, in the catalog of the Walsh Talking Machine Company while they were engrossed with their other pursuits. I imagine they would have been amused and, perhaps, even touched to think of the good which the records that they perhaps lightly regarded had done. It's a satisfaction to realize that Albert Edmund Brown at least does know of what he unwittingly accomplished.

## TIMEPIECES

RESTORED ANTIQUE CLOCKS. Large stock, all running. Stamp for list. Dial refinishing. — Vandervort, 308 Bertley, Moberley, Mo. jly6045

COLLECTORS! DEALERS! Do your own clock repairing, refinishing. Complete instructions in "Clock Collector's Handbook," \$1, postpaid.—Kenneth Karsten, Compo Parkway, Westport, Conn. ja12741

HAMILTON CHRONOMETER watch, 21 jewels, as new, padded mounting box and carrying case, \$100.—Paul R. Peak, 952 So. Emerson, Denver 9, Colo. jly1481

## MRS. MARTHA HILL HOMMEL

### Gargoyle Antiques

Richlandtown, Pennsylvania

## — BOOKS —

Plus Postage, Please — Thank You, Sincerely

153. THE LIFE OF QUEEN VICTORIA, by Chas. Morris, pub. 1901, illus., good cond., (the story of her reign), colorful binding, \$1.50.
154. The Modern BRITISH PLUTARCH, by W. C. Taylor, pub. 1846, N. Y., good cond., \$1.50.
155. ARITHMETIC by Warren Colburn, pub. 1847, Boston, Mass., good cond., \$1.
156. ARISTOCRACY IN ENGLAND by Adam Badcau, pub. N. Y., 1886, good cond., \$1.
157. PITMAN'S MANUAL OF PHONOGRAPHY, by Benn Pitman, pub. Cin., Ohio, 1855, good cond., illus. engraved on stone by Benn Pitman, page edges marbled, \$1.25.
158. SANDER'S NEW SPELLER, by Chas. W. Sanders, pub. 1855, N. Y., illus., good cond., green illus. binding, \$1.
159. MEMORIALS concerning DECEASED FRIENDS for Penna. from 1788-1819, pub. 1821, Phil., Pa., leather bound, good cond., \$2.
160. NOAH WEBSTER'S Primary school pron. dictionary by Noah Webster, pub. 1848, good cond., \$1.25.
161. A Brief Memoir of MARIA FOX, pub. Phil., Pa., 1859, \$1.
162. Cuba's Great Struggle for Freedom by Gonzalo de Quesada & Henry Davenport Northrop, pub. Washington, D.C. 1898, illus., good cond., colorful binding, marbled edged pages, folding map, \$1.75.
163. MENSURATION by John Bonnycastle, pub. Phil., Pa., 1858, leather bound, good cond., \$1.
164. Journal of the Life Travels of Job Scott, pub. N. Y., 1797, leather bound, fairly good cond., \$2.
165. MEMOIR of MARY CAPPER, abridged from volume edited by Katherine Backhouse, 1847, pub. Phil., Pa., good cond., \$1.
166. SOPHISM of the PROTECTIONISTS by Frederic Bastiat, 2nd edition, paper cover bound, 1870, pub. N. Y., fairly good cond., \$1.
167. A Daily Scriptural Watchword by Jane Johnson, pub. 1860, Phil., Pa., 50c.
168. ANNUAL REPORT of the Pa. Dept. of Agriculture for 1902, good cond., \$1.
169. LIFE of Isaac Walton, Fanshawe, Wootton, Donne, Raffles, Exmouth, Collingwood, pub. London, 1843, good cond., \$1.
170. The New Testament, pub. N. Y., 1853, cute 4 1/4" tall volume, good cond., \$1.
171. HYMNS for Young Persons by Priscilla Gurney, cute small volume, fairly good cond., pub. Phil., Pa., 1840, 50c.
172. Adam's Latin Grammar, by Ben. A. Gould, 1858, pub. Northampton, loose in binding, 50c.
173. Mitchell's School Geography, by S. Augustus Mitchell, illus., 1853, pub. Phil., Pa., good cond., \$2.
174. McNally's GEOGRAPHY, by Francis McNally, pub. 1866, N. Y., illus., has many colored maps, text & maps, good cond., binding slightly warped, \$1.50.
175. INSTRUCTIONS for VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS of the SIGNAL SERVICE, U. S. Army, pub. 1882, Washington, D.C., good cond., \$1.50.

jlyp

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## "Professor Edison" Invents the Phonograph

### Whose Seventy-fifth Birthday Occurs this Month

By JIM WALSH

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the phonograph. On August 15, 1877, the original tinfoil talking machine gave its first performance.

Thomas Alva Edison was the pioneer recording artist. That distinction he achieved after having one of his laboratory mechanics, John Kruesi, construct a device whose likeness you can see on the cover of the May, 1952 HOBBIES. The job was not to cost more than \$30, and the actual expenditure is said to have been \$18. Young Edison, then only thirty years of age, recited "Mary Had a Little Lamb" into the "funnel" of the contraption. The sound came back in a squeaky falsetto from the sheet of tinfoil into which it had been indented, and tradition says that Kruesi, who hadn't believed the idea would work, exclaimed "Mein Gott in Himmel!" Never before, so far as we can ascertain, had the human voice been recorded and reproduced.

Claims have been made that a Frenchman, Charles Cros, whose name I have also seen printed as du Cros and Croys, struck on the idea of recording speech a few months before Edison, but his theorizing didn't go to the extent of reproducing sound. It was left to Edison to prove, what could be done and receive international acclaim for one of the greatest achievements of his extraordinary career.

However, it seems only fair to set down, for history's sake, the claim made by a now forgotten and never well known English mechanic, William Fitch. In 1906-07, readers of the Talking Machine News of London, carried on a controversy as to whether Edison, or someone else, invented the phonograph. Some participants,

with anti-American feeling stronger than logic, contented the honor should go to Cros. One held out for Kruesi because the German mechanic constructed the original machine, even though he worked from a sketch drawn by Edison. Other parties to the argument chiefly those with some practical knowledge of talking machine craft and history, staunchly supported Edison. The Russians weren't claiming all the important inventions in those days, and didn't get into the battle of words.

#### Did Fitch Invent the Phonograph?

The most startling contribution came from Fitch, a member of the technical and experimental engineering firm of B. S. Fitch and Company, 358-60 Goswell Road, E. C. (Dickens lovers will recall that in 1827 the immortal Mr. Samuel Pickwick was living in Goswell street.) And here is what Fitch wrote:

It may not be known to the majority of your readers, although it is to a large number in the trade, that I was at work on the phonograph as early as 1876 and I constructed a practical machine which was publicly exhibited soon afterwards. . . . In the autumn of 1876, a client of mine asked me whether I could devise a machine to record sounds, but he was not a mechanic. He consulted me as to whether I could work out the idea. . . . After discussing the nature of sound-force, which we found to be vibratory and not mechanical, my client suggested the well-known window-rattling effect produced by sound, a phenomenon which I, long previously, had noticed from the efforts of the discharge of a gun. This suggestion appealed to my mechanical mind because of the possibility I at once saw it offered to place a needle, on the window pane, at right angles to its surface and thereby transmit vibrations into needle pricks on something soft; i. e., a drum covered with tinfoil.

I succeeded in constructing a machine on the principle and improved it, firstly by revolving the drum by hand on a helical axle, thus obtaining a series of foil punctures in a spiral line; and secondly, by driving the drum with a clockwork motor to impart continuous speed. To this day the phonograph is

constructed on these lines. I therefore justly claim to be one of the first inventors of that machine.

Not having at that time a lathe large enough to turn the large brass mandrel and screw upon (about the concert record size) and to cut the screw, I placed the execution of this order with Mr. Norton, one of a well-known family of clockmakers living in Clerkenwell, and on December the 4th, 1876, about midnight (I have occasion to remember the exact date), I was re-cutting the screw in company with my client having found that the screw was defectively cut, I bought a screw-plate to do this, from Mr. Tyzack, of Old Street. The thread we cut was 26 to the inch. The needle in the center of the vibrating diaphragm was first made by me of hard steel. Finding that its point wore away very rapidly, I had a diamond stylus made which cut the vibrations on the record or tinfoil — the stylus did not indent the tinfoil. The diamond styluses were made for us by Mr. Holdsworth, of Spencer Street, Clerkenwell (now Messrs. Wood and sons.) We used this type of stylus for tinfoil.

When the machine was completed, it was exhibited at a Bazaar held at the Manor Rooms, Hackney; at a garden party in Penbury Road; also at the Lower Clapton Congregational Church school-rooms and at other places. On October the 10th, 1879, Mr. J. Lewis Young delivered a lecture at the Morley Hall, Hackney, and it was this machine (not an Edison machine, as has been stated) that was used in the demonstrations. It was manipulated by my aforesaid client. A glass funnel was used on that occasion with remarkable results, but the volume of reproduction given by the machine was due entirely to the fact that the record was cut and not indented.

A good while later, I designed and made the first clock or spring motor to be fitted to the talking machine and fitted it to the machine referred to. Before the year 1884 I made a brass mould

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TAPE RECORDINGS, professional or amateur, single or dual track, 7½ or 15 inches per second speeds, transferred to discs with Ampex tape recorder.

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RARE AND OBSOLETE VOCAL RECORDINGS by great artists of the past can be bought at YOUR OWN PRICE at our Fall Auctions. All bidders receive free of charge the selling price of each lot after the sale. Write for lists.

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ESTHER SKERRITT SANDERS

Deansboro, New York

tlx





Thomas A. Edison demonstrating the phonograph at the White House in April, 1878

for producing wax cylinders. I also converted an Edison spectacle arm phonograph by cutting off one of the diaphragm holders or spectacles and making it a single diaphragm holder. I also made this machine to run interchangeably by adding a screw to it and gear to run 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 to the inch . . . I further made in 1892 a small phonograph with the interchangeable gears. . . 100, 200, 300 and 400 threads to the inch, and this was submitted to the Edison Company at Northumberland Buildings, in reference to which I received a very congratulatory letter. I also made about that time a spring motor to run 28 records at one winding, which is still in my possession. It is about one-third the weight of the large Edison motors. The duplex diaphragm reproducers were also invented by me. . .

It is hard to know what to think of these sweeping claims. Fitch contended that he designed and made a phonograph almost a year before Edison produced his first model, but whether by accident or intention he made no specific statement that he succeeded in recording and reproducing speech before Edison's discovery was announced. He also, by his own assertion, antedated Edison and all other phonograph designers in the use of a diamond point. Fitch's letter, remember, was written in 1907, and Edison instruments were not equipped with diamonds until 1912. Moulded records were not issued commercially

in the United States until 1901, but Fitch says he made a mould in 1886, the same year that commercial development of the phonograph got under way in this country. Thomas H. Macdonald, of the old Columbia company, is usually credited with making the first clockwork motor for talking machines, but Fitch says he was the originator. The Englishman also apparently thought of a gear-changing device which made it possible to vary the number of lines per inch on a cylinder, and Edison didn't bring out his four-minute cylinders until late in 1908, nearly two years after Fitch's letter was written.

Mr. Fitch appears to have been a man of good reputation and some standing in his field, but even eminent men sometimes have delusions insofar as laying claim to popular inventions is concerned. In the lack of sustaining the sound recording idea, and the craftsmen who are mentioned in the letter probably had died in the intervening thirty years — we are justified in holding that if Fitch really did construct a device on the order of a phonograph, it didn't record and reproduce sound prior to the one brought out by Edison. J. Lewis Young, mentioned by Fitch, was prominent in the English record busi-

ness as the head of the company producing the Lambert indestructible cylinder. He frequently wrote for the *Talking Machine News*, but contributed nothing to corroborate Fitch's assertions.

Notice that Fitch says he first began constructing in 1876. The eleventh edition of the supposedly infallible *Encyclopaedia Britannica* erred by saying that the instrument "was invented by T. A. Edison in 1876" and Edison obtained his first patents in January, 1877. The *Britannica* was wrong by exactly a year. The same article asserts that Emile Berliner's first gramophone used "a cylinder coated with lampblack"! That certainly is not a statement of 100 per cent accuracy.

#### How Edison Hit On the Idea

In his later years Mr. Edison was frequently asked what he considered his greatest invention. He replied that the motion picture had more educational potentialities than the talking machine, but he also said: "I like the phonograph best. Doubtless that is because I love music. And then it has brought so much joy into millions of homes all over this country, and, indeed, all over the world. Music is so helpful to the human mind that it is naturally a source of satisfaction to me that I have helped in some way to make finest music available to millions who could not afford to pay the price and take the time necessary to hear the greatest artists sing and play." Edison's publicity quoted him as saying: "I want to see a phonograph in every American home."

Next arises the question, "How did Edison hit on the idea of inventing a sound reproducing instrument?" The story has been told often during the past 75 years, but many of the accounts are wrong. Since the phonograph is now at the scriptural age of three score years and ten, it may be well, to quote an authentic publication — a booklet, "How Edison Invented the Phonograph," issued by Thomas A. Edison, Inc., in the 1920's. The story is told simply but with enough detail for our purpose:

Scarcely a week passes that some country newspaper does not state that Thomas A. Edison's discovery of the phonograph was prompted by the accidental pricking of his finger by the needle of a telephone diaphragm with which he was experimenting. We shall have to put a quietus on this old newspaper story. The true story is best told in the inventor's own words. . .

"I was experimenting," Edison says, "on an automatic method of recording telegraph messages on a disk of paper laid on a revolving platen, exactly the same as the disc talking machine of today. The platen had a spiral groove on its surface, like the disc. Over this was placed a circular disc of paper; an electromagnet with the embossing point connected to an arm traveling over the disc, and any signals given through the magnet were embossed on the disc of paper. If this disc was removed from the machine and put on a similar machine provided with a contact point, the embossed record would cause the signal to be repeated into another wire. The ordinary speed of telegraphic signals is 25 to 40 words a minute, but with this machine several hundred words were possible.

"From my experiments on the telephone I knew of the power of a diaphragm to take up sound vibration, as I had made a little toy which, when you

## RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Will pay top cash for the following records: Any by Jimmie Rodgers, any by Richard Jose, any by Singing Sam. State price and describe. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. s68431

## RECORDS FOR SALE

Choice Collection. Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists: Jones, Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, etc. Fine condition. Price 50c each. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. s3426

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. au3084

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C. N. Y. d6829

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. t124201

CHOICE PONSSELLE, Caruso, Stracclari, Lazzaro, many others. List on request.—Jacksonville Children's Museum, 1061 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville, Fla. s3882

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit.—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St., N. Y. C. 28, N. Y. s3145

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 5, New Jersey. o122511

940 PHONOGRAPH RECORDS, many in the large size, a great variety in albums, including classical selections, \$135.—C. E. H. Whitlock, 15 Broadway, New Haven 11, Conn. au1612

CYLINDER RECORDS. One thousand for sale. Stamp for new list. Cylinder phonographs, records, bought and sold, repaired.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

## ORGAN

Aeolian organ rolls 10" wide, perforated, 10. Also Ampico, Welte-Mignon, etc. Player rolls bought, sold, traded. Extra Standard Roll boxes, 4½c. See—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. au1003

FOR SALE: Pipe Organ. Robert Morton, model 49. Restored to A.1 condition. Two manual. Compact with pipes in cabinets. Complete with blower. \$1500.00 F.O.B. Dallas.—Lee Co., 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Texas. s3215

## SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

recited loudly in the funnel, would work a pawl connected to the diaphragm, and this engaging a ratchet-wheel served to give continuous rotation to a pulley. This pulley was connected by a cord to a little paper toy representing a man sawing wood. Hence, if one shouted: 'Mary had a little lamb,' etc., the paper man would start sawing wood. I reached the conclusion that if I could record the movements of the diaphragm properly I could cause such records to reproduce the original movement imparted to the diaphragm by the voice, and thus succeed in recording and reproducing the human voice.

"Instead of using a disc, I designed a little machine using a cylinder provided with grooves around the surface. Over this was to be placed tinfoil, which easily received and recorded the movements

of the diaphragm. A sketch was made and the piece work price, \$18, was marked on the sketch. I was in the habit of marking the price I would pay on each sketch. If the workman lost, I would pay his regular wages; if he made more than the wages, he kept it. The workman who got the sketch was John Kruesi. I didn't have much faith that it would work, expecting that I might possibly hear a word or so that would give hope of a future for the idea. Kruesi, when he had nearly finished it, asked what it was for. I told him I was going to record talking, and then have the machine talk back. He thought it absurd. However, it was finished, the foil was put on; I then shouted 'Mary had a little lamb.' . . . I adjusted the reproducer, and the machine reproduced it perfectly. I was never so taken aback in my life. Everybody was astonished. I was always afraid of things that worked the first time. Long experience proved that there were great drawbacks found generally before they could be made commercial; but here was something that there was no doubt of."

Those who are old enough to remember will recall the great furor created by the newspaper announcement, immediately following this invention of the phonograph in the autumn of 1877. That speech and song could be actually recorded, preserved and reproduced seemed impossible, and while the world rang with the news that it had been actually accomplished there was such incredulity as to its truth that Edison was deluged with requests for machines with which the facts might be demonstrated to the public. His laboratory was overrun day and night with visitors from all over the world who had come to see and hear an inanimate machine talk.

To satisfy this insistent demand and to enable him to carry on his other work, he had a number of these primitive tinfoil phonographs made, which were taken for exhibits to various parts of the country, drawing vast crowds wherever they were

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY, books, catalogs on cylinder phonographs, records.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. s3863

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly126121

## PHONOGRAPHS

DISC PHONOGRAPHS, WANTED. Table model disc phonographs, any make, with diaphragm on small end of external horn, preferably. State condition, price and details.—A. B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Ill. au1861

## MUSIC BOX DISCS

For Sale: Large number of 15¼" Regina Music Box discs, \$2 each. Send for list. Minimum order, 3 records.—John W. Willever, 147 East Washington Ave., Washington, N. J. au1X

MUSIC BOX DISCS bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list offering above average prices. Wanted: 18½" New Century, 13¼" Kalliope and 14" Perfection discs.—Insley C. Looker, So. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3065

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

WANTED: MUSIC BOXES, also mechanical musical instruments of any description, sleigh bells, United States coins, large bills, discs for Imperial Symphonian & minute repeating watches.—Herbert H. Meyer, Pittsburgh 15, Penna. au3694

VIOLINS: Two "August Gemunder & Sons" 1902, perfect condition, \$225 each.—E. A. Frier, 12 Lyon Avenue, Menands, N. Y. o3882

## MUSIC LITERATURE

FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

AUCTION: Three complete music manuscripts written and autographed. 1. Victor Herbert, 1916, 6 pages. 2. John Philip Sousa, 1917, 2 pages. 3. Jerome Kern and P. G. Wodehouse, 1917, 3 pages. Bid before August 15th. Winners notified and 30 day guarantee.—Ronald Lowden, 141 West 82nd, N. Y. 24, N. Y. au1804

## MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6046

WANTED: Reproducer for Edison Amberola 30 phonograph.—George R. Hare, 3006 14th Avenue, Tampa 5, Fla. s3652

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. j6123291

WANTED: Sammy Kaye & Ink Spots transcriptions, V discs, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings. I will pay top prices. "Money is no object."—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. s3006

## MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. o6844

SWISS & REGINA music boxes, bar-room pianos; barrel & hand organs; large Regina piano, with drums; bells & cymbal playing, 32" disc. Old coin operated Edison juke box; playing cylinder records; accordion playing paper roll; musical alarm and others.—Ray Albertson, Box 23, Atlantic, Ia. o6637

shown. The older generation of New Englanders will undoubtedly remember the exhibit of this early phonograph at the Old South Church in Boston. Crude as this early phonograph undoubtedly was — a crude machine of iron, brass and tinfoil, with its harsh, metallic reproduction — it would repeat what it had recorded, whether, speech, song, whistling, laughter, or what-not, to the mystification, wonder and delight of an earlier generation to whom this was the greatest marvel of the times.

One version has it that Charles Carman, foreman of Edison's machine shop, was among those present when the first phonograph received its initial try-out. Carman, so goes the story, had bet Edison a box of cigars that the machine wouldn't work, and pretended to be disgusted when he lost. Still another account maintains that the bet was made between Edison and Charles Batchelor, later superintendent of the Edison Phonograph Works. Allen O. Tate's book, "Edison's Open Door," quotes Edison as saying that Kruesi set a price of \$30 — not \$18, as given in the Edison booklet — "and I told him to go ahead."

Whatever the price, there is no doubt about the sensation the phonograph caused. We have the first person testimony of such contemporary observers as an electrical expert, Edward H. Johnson, an associate of Edison's who wrote some reminiscences in the February, 1890, issue of *Electrical World*:

In the course of one of my lectures . . . it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to tell my audience about Edison's telephone repeater, at Buffalo, which I did. My audience seemed to have a much clearer appreciation of the value of the invention than we had ourselves. They gave me such a cheer as I have seldom heard. I did not comprehend the importance of the device at the time; but the next morning the Buffalo paper announced in glaring headlines: "A GREAT DISCOVERY! A TALKING MACHINE BY PROFESSOR EDISON. MR. EDISON'S WONDERFUL INSTRUMENT WILL PRODUCE ARTICULATE SPEECH WITH ALL THE PERFECTIONS OF THE HUMAN VOICE."

I realized for the first time that Edison had, as a matter of fact, invented a "talking machine". . . Realizing that and having had sufficient experience by this time to profit by such things, I made a special point of this feature in my next entertainment, which was at Rochester, and had a crowded house. . . That satisfied me that I had better go home and assist in perfecting the instrument. . . So I cancelled thirteen engagements and went back home with those newspaper clippings. I went straight down to the laboratory, which was then at Newark, and I said, "Mr. Edison, look here. See the trouble you have got me into." He read these things over and said, "That is so. They are right. This is what it is — a talking machine."

So, according to Edward Johnson, a Buffalo newspaper headline writer was the originator of the term "talking machine." It may as well be mentioned that Mr. Edison never liked that name and, almost forty years later, insisted that his masterpiece of the acoustic recording and reproducing era, the New Edison Diamond Disc, was not a talking machine. (A writer for the *New York*



Artists Helen Davis and Victor Young, singing and playing for Thomas A. Edison.

Daily Mail gave the New Edison its widely advertised slogan, "The Phonograph With a Soul." Other newspaper writers said Edison records were "Re-Creations," and Edison copyrighted "Re-Creation" as the official designation of his discs.)

#### Early Excitement

Some interesting details of the phonograph's experience in those days when it could be accurately described as in its "infancy" are given in a booklet, "The Life of Thomas A. Edison in Word and Picture," issued in 1927 — the 80th year of the inventor's life and the 50th anniversary of his favorite brain child. It relates that "Edison took his new invention to the offices of the *Scientific American* in New York. When his phonograph had recited and reproduced 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' over and over, a big crowd had gathered in the room and the floor was in danger of collapse. The morning papers were full of the event. After several larger and better machines were made, Edison had an exhibit of the phonograph at Menlo Park, to which thousands of the curious flocked from all points of the compass. So great was the interest in this almost uncanny device that the Pennsylvania Railroad ran special trains to accommodate the crowds." (Concurrently, Edison began to be known as "The Wizard of Menlo Park.") The phonograph also greeted the *Scientific American* editors with these words:

"Good morning. How do you do? How do you like the phonograph?"

Several months later, after his first phonograph patents had been issued, Edison received a telegram urging him to come to Washington. On April 18, 1878, he gave an exhibition to many members of Congress and other notables. About 11 o'clock at night President Rutherford B. Hayes invited Edison, who was fated to become the most famous man in the world, to visit the White House, bringing his phonograph with him. Interest was so keen in the miraculous device that Edison didn't leave until half past three the following morning.

Here I think we may make a reasonable assumption. Rutherford B. Hayes was a grave, bearded gentleman of aloof Olympian dignity, but he must have been human enough to want to hear his own voice — or a travesty of his voice — reproduced from a machine. Surely Edison affixed a sheet of tinfoil and invited the President to have his say, thereby giving Mr. Hayes the distinction of being the first chief executive to make a record. On the other hand, Benjamin Harrison, who held office half a generation later, appears to have been the first whose name appeared as a recording artist in any phonograph company's catalog.

A photograph taken when Edison visited the White House shows that he gave his demonstration with eith-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.)



In his spacious bell rooms A. C. Meyer examines one of his most prized bells. It is an elaborately etched rare Spanish bell bearing inscribed medallions of six church dignitaries.

under the title *Chimes* in the Wilson Standard Catalog for Public Libraries.

... In the southwest a Texas school teacher, Mrs. Bessie Fitzhugh, has been compiling a book of a very different nature, dealing with historic bells of that state. Publication of Mrs. Fitzhugh's book is eagerly awaited, for Texans are notably proud of their state history in all its phases.

... In the far West two of the most widely informed people on the subject of bells are Mr. and Mrs. DeWitt Hutchings of famed Mission Inn at Riverside, Calif. The delightful little catalog describing the vast Mission Inn collection of bells is a veritable "Bible" for all who really wish to be acquainted with their bells.

... Though the East is a fertile field for studying historic bells, collectors in the Middle West probably have to their credit more published books and pamphlets on the subject than any other regional group. A. C. Meyer of Missouri, the acknowledged dean of bell collectors, has several published pamphlets illustrating and identifying outstanding bells from his collection of approximately 1,500. These are of inestimable help in identifying one's own bells. Says an Ohio collector, "It is a rare dealer who knows anything about bells that come into his shop; so I find myself frequently referring to Mr. Meyer's catalogs and I have found a number of my bells that correspond to his pictures and descriptions." Mr. Meyer's other publications include his book *Travel*

*Search for Bells*. This is a fascinating, informal travelogue describing a pre-war bell-buying jaunt which he and the late Mrs. Meyer made across Europe.

## BELLS FOR BABIES

In discussing unique uses of church bells in a recent issue of *HOBBIES*, attention was called to the Glendale, Ohio, church bell that chimes out nursery rhymes to announce a birth. Several readers have reported that the First Presbyterian Church in East Aurora, N. Y., follows this same custom. Upon hearing of a birth, the organist hurries to play the Doxology on the carillon. By the time she has finished, townspeople have stepped outside their houses and offices to hear more clearly the next tune, which informs them of the child's sex. If it's a boy they hear "Little Boy Blue"; if it's a girl, "Little Bo-Peep." After the nursery rhyme, a lullaby is played to the town's youngest citizen and then a hymn to the mother.

*The tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell*  
*The all-softening, overpowering knell,*

*Please mention HOBBIES when  
replying to advertisements*

## PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

er his original cylinder instrument or another made on the same principle. However, he had already been experimenting with discs and his patent application described methods of recording both ways. Emile Berliner is generally considered the inventor of the disc machine, but it is more accurate to say that he produced the first commercially practical disc outfit employing the lateral cut system of recording. Having determined that the vertical cut was superior to the lateral, Edison used it for both cylinder and disc. Record buyers of today owe Mr. Berliner no debt of gratitude for popularizing the inferior lateral cut, because he wanted to avoid the patent complications that would have resulted from using the hill-and-dale. Through a combination of circumstances, Berliner's system became established as the popular method, and the vertical cut today is obsolete except for the highest quality radio transcriptions. But there is virtually no dispute among specialists that the vertical is inherently superior to the other.

As evidence that Edison recorded experimentally on discs as well as cylinders, the following letter which he wrote from Menlo Park, New Jersey, on December 29, 1877, to Frank Foell, of 510 Second Street, Philadelphia, may be quoted:

"Dear Sir: Your letter and sketch received. Am much obliged for the suggestion and it would be valuable, but owing to the inconvenience of placing the paper on the cylinder I had to adopt a revolving plate with a volute spiral and have one now working satisfactorily. The reproduction of the voice is now absolutely perfect. Yours, Thomas A. Edison."

Only a little more than four months after the phonograph spoke for the first time, its inventor, it will be observed, was claiming its reproduction was "perfect." Perfection is a claim which has been made for sound reproducing devices every time a new model has been brought out in the last three-quarters of a century!

Despite this use of the disc, Edison soon returned to the cylinder, explaining that it was theoretically perfect for the purpose of sound reproduction, since all grooves on the "rollers" were of even length, whereas the grooves on a disc become smaller as they near the center, with a consequent loss of tone quality. RCA-Victor has labored this point in recent years by shouting that sound waves on its seven-inch "45's" stop short of "the distortion point." And, although ten-inch Edison Diamond Discs would play up to five minutes, the recording always stopped a long way from the label.

Continuing with the booklet on Edison's life: "Now the phonograph entered the general exhibition stage of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)



## PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

its development. Offices were established at 203 Broadway, New York, whence demonstrators were sent out to all parts of the country. After going through a course of instruction the demonstrators were given machines and started on their way rejoicing. Even in those early days of the phonograph, still in its tinfoil form, famous prima donnas were not averse to trusting their precious voices to its crudities." (A drawing of a woman singer making a record is reproduced from an 1878 issue of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.)

### Cornet "Tone Tests"

Here I stop quoting to wonder who was the first famous artist to make a tinfoil record. There seems no way of knowing, but the cornet virtuoso, Jules Levy, who died in 1878, was one of the earliest. Levy also probably was the first performer whose records were listed in a special celebrity class. When he made a series of cylinders for Columbia in Washington in 1893 or '94, the price was set at \$2 each.

During a six-day period beginning June 3 and ending June 8, 1878, Levy played at Irving Hall in New York, giving "tone tests" somewhat similar to those which famous artists made forty years later to prove there was no difference between their singing or playing and the reproduction by the Diamond Disc. But there was plenty of difference between Levy's playing and the tinfoil phonograph's distortion of his art. Other well-known singers and musicians who took part in the demonstrations were Emily Winant, a soloist at St. Thomas' Church; S. P. Warren, George Warren and Eugene Oudin. Most of the audience grinned as the performers sang or played into the funnel, from which a tinny "play-back" would emerge a few minutes later.

Even earlier, on March 21, 1878, Professor J. W. B. Arnold had given a demonstration in Chickering Hall, about which the New York Tribune commented that "the tone is slightly metallic and has a strained effect, very much like the voice of a ventriloquist." The shortcomings of "Professor Edison's" ingenious toy were so apparent that in 1884 Stephen Fiske wrote, in his "Off Hand Portraits of Prominent New Yorkers," "the phonograph is practically a failure; the excitement about it soon died out." That was largely because Edison had given up trying to improve it while he worked on developing a practical system of electric lighting.

Levy may have been the first man to make a cornet record. On the other hand, Thomas W. Henry, who died suddenly in Boston on Saturday evening, March 13, 1897, may possibly have beaten Levy to the pioneer toots. A death notice said that Henry had "been a well known player to the phonograph beginning as early as 1878 when he played into one of its

original tinfoil instruments, then being exhibited at the old South Church in Boston. The celebrated Baldwin Cadet Band records (who remembers them now? — J. W.) were all taken while the band was under his direction. Mr. Henry was greatly interested in the phonograph and took as much pride in having the Cadet Band records of a superior quality as the company that recorded them. In the most brilliant and dazzling selections, Mr. Henry's cornet was a prominent feature and could be heard clear and sharp above the rest of the band. He was born in Manchester, England (also the birthplace of Ada Jones — J. W.) and came to this country at the age of twelve and soon afterwards was known as 'The Boy Cornetist.' He was never married but was a member of the BPOE."

### First Professional Recorder

A 1914 Edison Blue Amberol catalog says that the late Edward M. Favor was the first member of the theatrical profession to make a record. Perhaps it would be worth while to quote the brief biography of this favorite pioneer recording artist, who was the first to be made the subject of an article in this HOBBIES department:

This well known comic opera comedian was born in New York City. He first sprang into prominence as a principal under the management of the late J. M. Hill. The long run of E. E. Rice's "1492" at Wallack's Theatre, New York, made him famous as a Broadway comedian. He has starred in musical comedies with his wife, Edith Sinclair, and the team is a well-known "headliner" in vaudeville. He has been principal comedian with Klaw and Erlanger, the Shuberts and other prominent managers. Mr. Favor was the first professional to sing in a phonograph. His record was put on exhibition in the lobby of the Park Theater, Boston, during the long run there of "Ship Ahoy!" and attracted wide-spread attention.

I wonder just when this Favor record was made. It hasn't previously occurred to me to try to find out when "Ship Ahoy!" had its long Boston run, even though it might be possible to get that information. Favor's last records appeared in 1914, but he was still appearing as a character actor in Broadway productions until shortly before his death in 1936. He was 80 then. If he began making records in the phonograph's earliest days — say, in 1878 — he would have been only 22. He had long been an established favorite when Billy Murray first saw him recording in 1897 for Edison's San Francisco distributors, Bacigalupi Brothers.

### An 1879 Phonograph Recital

Mentioning Favor's Boston appearance reminds me of a letter from a veteran music lover, Mrs. Marion McIntyre Suck, of Hyde Park, Massachusetts, which appeared in the September, 1927, issue of the long dead Phonograph Monthly Review. I quote it as an excellent account of the impression made by the primitive phonograph upon cultured music lovers:

I wish I could take you phonograph folks, especially the young ones, back

years and years to the year 1879. I think it was. The scene was a bleak, hideously unattractive hall in Boston. It was crowded with the most unmusical Americans you ever saw in all your lifetime. That curious, noisy audience crowded forward to where a man was demonstrating, apparently for their amusement, a dingy looking brass toy with a funny looking brass horn;—out of that horn was coming a veritable nightmare of hideous sounds, and a man's voice, harsh, strident and raucous, came through the horn, grinding out in hoarse metallic notes a classic of the day, "The Man in the Moon is Looking, Love, is Looking, Love." The overjoyed crowd seemed to get quite a thrill out of the noise made by the man in the moon, although it really was rougher stuff even than Graham McNamee broadcasting a football game from California or a prize fight from New York. . . . One wag in the crowd suggested playing the little toy backward, to see if it would sound any worse! . . . It was nearly fifty years before I could bear to listen to another phonograph, so hideous was my memory of that first one.

But one incident I still remember. Beside that brazen horn of long ago I saw one man standing as if too fascinated to leave. The gentleman was Louis C. Elson, later of the New England Conservatory, the first Bostonian, I think, to write a history of American music. But I doubt, pioneer though he was, whether he had the slightest realizing sense of the part that new invention was to play in the music of the future.

### Edison Recital of 1895

Can Edward Favor, I wonder, have been the "vocalist" whose singing was travestied in that tinfoil reproduction? Again mentioning Favor reminds me that L. Brevoort Odell, of Church Hill Road, Branchville, New Jersey, recently found a handwritten program of an "Edison Phonograph Entertainment," given at 8 o'clock, Saturday evening, January 26, 1895, in Park Ridge Congregational Church. Admission for grown-ups was 25 cents and for children, 15. The Saturday afternoon matinee, at 3 o'clock, was 15 cents to all. Mr. Odell has kindly presented me with this program. It occurs to me that it would be interesting to move forward 16 years from 1879 to 1895 and get a taste of the phonograph's "quality" after wax cylinders had taken the place of tinfoil. Presumably these records were made by Edison, although the inventor's company had not then begun issuing regular monthly lists. Some of the artist's names—Favor's, for instance — are familiar to present-day collectors, but others I have never heard of except in this listing:

1—Selection, "God Save the Queen," 23rd Regiment Band; 2—Song, "Let Me Like a Soldier Fall," E. M. Favor (a more serious type of number than he sang in later years); 3—Banjo, "Imperial March," Vess Ossman; 4—Orchestra, "Children's Games," Banta's; 5—Mandolin, "Concert Polka," Edwin Myers; 6—Quartet, "Dance on the Old Barn Floor," Unique; 7—Piccolo, "Scotch Airs," J. Forchner; 8—Selection, "Germany and America," 23rd Regiment Band; 9—Comic Song, "He Didn't Split the Wood," E. M. Favor; 10—Banjo Solo, "Old Madrid," Vess Ossman; 11—Clarinet, "Mignon," D. Pfaff; 12—Song, "Old Black Joe," Thos. Butt; 13—Peephone — "Popular Airs," Laura Bennett; 14—Song and Orchestra, "You Had Better Stay at Home, Lads" (no artist's name); 15—Cornet Solo, "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer," Jules Levy; 16—Dialogue, "Casey as a Judge," Leoni and Everett; 17—

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 37)

For bracelets as well as for rings a favorite design with the Romans was of a coiled snake. These generally were of gold chased with the scales, eyes, and other finish. The majority of Roman gold bracelets were massive and the work on them correspondingly heavy. These heavy bracelets figure in the old story of Tarpeia. She bargained with the Sabines to open for them the city gates of Rome in exchange for the bracelets they wore on their left arms. When the Sabine king Tatius got through the gate as a result of this arrangement, he contemptuously threw upon the traitress not only his thick bracelet, but his shield too, which he had also worn on his left arm. When all the soldiers followed his example, Tarpeia was speedily crushed to death.

Brooches of a circular type with short pin probably originated in Rome and then traveled in all directions. It became, and perhaps still is, the commonest type, though the ring undergoes all kinds and manners of changes. One of the most appealing designs is that of small figures of animals and birds in full relief, generally made in bronze, and sometimes gilded, but, whatever the finish, cherished by all collectors.

—I. G.

### JEWELRY FOR SALE

**Charming Dresden Type bracelet** composed of 7 handmade gold edged china slates. Exquisite workmanship of an old Staffordshire potter. Each piece marked "1943", the date of manufacture. Natural color designs. Roses, violets or Colonial courtship scenes. \$8.50. Matching brooch, \$1.50 postpaid. Approval basis.—Stimson's, 408 14th St., Santa Monica, Calif.

o 68691

**CONWAY'S ANTIQUE JEWELRY**, 510 Conti St., New Orleans, P. O., Box 2503. —Jade, Catseyes, Aquamarines, Rings, Crests, Seal-Fobs, Charms, Bracelets, Slides, Gem-stones. n122741

**AUGUST BIRTHSTONE:** Carnelian or Sardonyx rings and jewelry.—Frederick T. Widmer, Jeweler, 31 West St., Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844) Liberty 2-3917.

jly120291

**COLLECTORS:** Send us your wants. Prompt replies to all inquiries. We are dealers in jewelry, china, glass, silver, furniture, paintings, objects of art, etc.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Phila. 3, Penna. au33805

**Make costume jewelry for fun or profit.** Send 10c for catalogue and instructions, to: —Hobby Jewelers, 1349 2nd Street, Lorain, Ohio. au34005

**OLD AND UNUSUALS** in jewelry, costume and otherwise. Write wants.—Majestic, 530 1/2 South Main Street, Elkhart, Ind. au3272

**LARGE STOCK** of antique jewelry accumulated from our vast gold-buying. Approval shipments sent dealers upon request and reference.—B. Lowe's, Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. au1612

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

Quartet, "Hush a Bye, Baby," Brilliant; 18—Selection, "Joys of Matrimony," 23rd Regiment Band; 19—Song and Banjo, "Hear Dem Bells," Walter Ellis; 20—Quartet, "Hot Corn Medley," Unique; 21—Xylophone, "Monastery Bells," Miss Jessie Warner; 22—Whistling Solo, "Mocking Bird," Joe Johnson; 23—Song and Orchestra, "Waiting By the Sea," Joe Natus; 24—Pipeophone, "Washington Post March," Laura Bennett; 25—Balled, "Leonore," E. M. Favor; 26—Selection, "Belle of Chicago," 23rd Regiment Band; 27—Quartet, "Der Wasserfall," Brilliant; 28—Banjo, "White Star Line March," Vess Ossman; 29—Comic Song, "Christo Colombo," E. M. Favor; 30—"Making a Record" (apparently a recording demonstration); and 31—Cornet Solo, "Home, Sweet Home," Jules Levy.

### Old-Timer Reminiscences

I imagine "Joe Johnson" was a mistake for the Negro whistler, George W. Johnson. And who knows anything about the "pipeophone," the instrument played by Miss Laura Bennett?

Space limitations prevent this article from containing a comprehensive account of the scientific development of the phonograph. For that reason, I am restricting myself largely to narrating the impression made by the unique invention during its earlier days. Valuable from this standpoint is a letter written by a St. Louis attorney, W. W. Henderson, and published in the Talking Machine Journal for December, 1918.

I was at my son's home the other evening listening to his wonderful Edison phonograph and my mind wandered back to my boyhood days. At that time I was employed as general workboy by the firm of L. G. Tillotson & Co., 5-7 Dey street, New York, then the largest railway and electrical supply house in America. In those days electrical supplies were very limited in number. This was in the early eighties, being either in 1880 or 1881.

One day, Thomas A. Edison himself came over to the store from the laboratory, which was then at Menlo Park, New Jersey, bringing with him his first model of a phonograph for demonstrating to his friend, L. G. Tillotson, who, like Mr. Edison, had been a former telegraph operator. I remember this machine well, as it was left at the store for some time, and Mr. Edison personally instructed me how to operate it for demonstrating purposes. Compared to the present marvelous Edison machine, it was indeed crude.

I will describe it to you. It consisted of an iron cylinder about eight inches long and three inches in diameter. This cylinder was very finely grooved, in screw fashion, the groove being very similar to the grooves on the old wax cylinder records. This cylinder was hung between two brackets with a handle at the end. Suspended over this cylinder was the combined mouthpiece and reproducer, being not unlike the transmitter of our present telephones. Around the cylinder would then be wrapped tinfoil, the needle on the mouthpiece touching the tinfoil very lightly. By turning a handle attached to the end of the cylinder, it was so synchronized with the mouthpiece that the one revolved while the other moved from left to right, and by talking into this mouthpiece the needle point made impressions on this tinfoil. To reproduce these impressions the mouthpiece arm was moved back to the point of beginning and all that had been spoken into the mouthpiece was reproduced. So wonderful had that first model then seemed, it hardly appeared

possible that a man within his lifetime could so improve it to the extent of the New Edison.

### The Phonograph in Europe

The tinfoil phonograph was demonstrated in Europe almost as soon as in this country. Sir William Preece gave the first exhibitions in England, in 1878 or 1879. The instrument had also reached Germany by that time, as witness this letter from Gustav Schraplan, of Prescott, Arizona, which appeared in the Edison Amberola Monthly for September 1919:

Your article in the Amberola Monthly on the invention of the phonograph made me look backward to the year 1878, when at the age of seven years, I was one of the first artists(?) to make a record on an Edison phonograph. At that time I was a scholar at the Gymnasium at Aix la Chapelle, Germany. Our teacher announced that a man from America would show for the small sum (but very big to us) of 10 pfennigs — about two cents — a wonderful machine, invented by Mr. Edison, that would talk and sing. There never was a more excited bunch of youngsters. All of us were at the classroom away ahead of time, each boy holding his precious entrance fee tightly in his hand. Nothing short of murder could have opened one little fist till the man with the magic machine arrived. . .

Our man then opened a small box and lifted out his phonograph. What! This little machine talks and sings! Impossible! We were disappointed; we had expected a big shiny machine with plenty of wheels. The man made a little speech. He then placed a piece of prepared paper about six inches square on the cylinder, adjusted the soundbox, turned the handle and made a speech about Mr. Edison's wonderful invention, shoved the soundbox back to starting point, turned the handle and we boys heard for the first time the reproduction of the human voice. The proudest and happiest moment of a long life was when my teacher told me to sing a little song, entitled "I Had a Little Comrade," into the machine. At the end of the song I crowed like a rooster. After my record was played I was presented with it. I saved that record for many years, vowing that when I was a rich man I would buy one of those machines and play my record to my children.

The following, from the Edison Phonograph Monthly for July, 1907, gives some information about early phonograph manufacture:

Among the visitors to the Edison Laboratory during May was Seligman Bergmann, who has had a business connection with Mr. Edison or his interests for many years. In 1878, with a factory at Avenue B. and 17th Street, New York City, Mr. Bergmann manufactured a quantity of the old style tinfoil phonographs, modeled after the original phonograph invented by Mr. Edison while at Menlo Park. The original phonograph made in the Edison Laboratory at that place now occupies a place in the Kensington Museum at London. The numerous "original" phonographs which come to life from time to time in this country are part of the lot made by Mr. Bergmann and patterned after the original. . . Some years ago he disposed of his business here and went to Germany, where he continued the manufacture of similar goods (electric light and telephone supplies.)

As is generally known, the original phonograph, which Mr. Edison presented to the South Kensington Museum, has since been returned to the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECODING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

Edison Laboratory, and is kept in a vault. A replica, however, is on public display.

What became of the other tinfoil phonographs patterned after the great original? Some have turned up through the years. For instance, the Edison Phonograph Monthly for May, 1916 reported:

There has just been brought to light at Fairfield, Iowa, a rare specimen of the earliest form of phonograph, the tinfoil, hand-cranked type. This device was purchased from Mr. Edison's company in 1878 by the late Senator J. F. Wilson and is now in possession of his son, J. F. Wilson, Jr. The bill of sale is also in the possession of Mr. Wilson and shows that the old phonograph is No. 11 and was at that time called "the Edison Speaking Phonograph."

And here is a newspaper clipping, apparently from the late 1920's:

Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 28 (AP).—The original model of Thomas A. Edison's second phonograph is the prized possession of Winfield Chase Parkins, of Atlanta, who obtained it from his grandfather, Winfield Chase, who in turn was presented with it by the inventor himself. Mr. Chase, at one time an examiner in the patents office, was a close friend of Edison and frequently studied with the inventor, since both were interested in astronomy.

## Mr. Edison's Prophecies

It has sometimes been said that Edison had no conception of the potentialities of the recording device he had invented; that he thought of it only as an entertaining toy. On occasion, the instrument did seem to appeal most to the boyish of the inventor's nature that gave him a fondness for playing pranks. A family legend, says that Edison once hid a phonograph in a guest's room. At eleven o'clock, the guest heard a ghostly voice saying, "One hour more!" Sleepless, the guest waited until midnight when the same voice said, "Prepare to die!" "As he fled," we are told, "there stood Edison shaking with laughter."

When his practical side was uppermost, Edison was most interested in the phonograph's capabilities, developed or latent, as a business device. Originally, he thought that its principal purpose would be for "Letter writing and all kinds of dictation without the aid of a stenographer." This sort of use met with determined opposition from many stenographers for years, but today the only recording and reproducing instrument sold by Thomas A. Edison, Inc., is the dictating machine, the Ediphone. For many years the company made only Ediphones using cylinders records, but its current product is in the disc form. As most record collectors know, Edison stopped making phonographs and records in the autumn of 1929.

But getting back to what Edison foresaw in the phonograph's future, he wrote an article in the June, 1878, issue of the *North American Review* which has been reprinted in part many times since. It is too long to be quoted here, but the inventor's ideas of the uses to which his best

liked invention might be put may be summed up thus:

(1) Letter writing and dictation of all kinds without a stenographer; (2), "phonograph books" for the use of the blind; (3), teaching elocution; (4), reproducing music; (5), "the family record" — recordings of sayings, reminiscences, etc., by members of a family in their own voices, and even the last words of dying persons; (6), "speaking" music boxes and toys; (7), clocks that would speak to announce the time for such things as going home and going to meals; (8), preservation of languages; (9), additional teaching uses; and (10), connection with the telephone, "so as to make the invention an auxiliary in the transmission of permanent and invaluable records, instead of being the recipient of momentary and fleeting communications."

Most of these visions of "The Wizard of Menlo Park" have become realities. Today, the use which he placed fourth, "reproduction of music," is certainly the phonograph's most important function. But specialized forms of the apparatus are internationally used for dictation; "talking books" are a commonplace blessing for the blind; languages were taught by phonograph almost as soon as the wax cylinder came into use in the late Eighties; telephone messages are frequently recorded nowadays; and phonograph music boxes and "speaking toys" are not unknown. A few clocks of the type imagined by Edison have been made as novelties, but such officious timepiece uses as he dreamed of have never been popular, nor has the average American family taken kindly to the gruesome idea of recording the last words of dying persons. But, considered as a whole, Edison's powers of prophecy were remarkably good.

## An Old Interview

Less widely known than the *North American Review* article is an interview with Mr. Edison which the enterprising *New York World* obtained no great while after the phonograph made its debut. Since few persons are likely to have access to the *World's* ancient bound files, most of the interview is reprinted here for its historical value. The alert reader will discover that the inventor's prophetic gifts were not so good when he went into details as when he let his imagination deal in generalities:

"... The reporter followed Mr. Edison into the wash-room, where about a dozen lathes and machines were in full operation. On one of the tables was the model. The improvement in the phonograph consists in a circular plate being substituted for the cylinder, and clockwork for the crank. (This mention of the "circular plate" seems to date this article as around December, 1877. Compare Edison's letter to Frank Foell. — J. W.)

"This clock-movement is a very important improvement," said Mr. Edison. "It ensures complete regularity and accuracy, and can be thrown out of and into gear simultaneously. We're going to start a publication office in New York when the phonograph is ready."

"What do you intend to publish?" asked the reporter.

"Music, novels, general literature, and

many other kinds of matter that are read by persons, and reproduced by instruments, or their vocal organs, for the benefit of themselves and other persons. Take music, to begin with. We will phonograph orchestral concerts by brass and string bands, instrumental and vocal solos and part-songs. The sheets bearing the sound impressions of this music will be removed from the phonograph and multiplied to any extent by electrotyping, and persons can make selections of any composition they desire. Then this music may be reproduced by any phonograph, with all the original sweetness and expression; and not only that, but the pitch can be raised or lowered by increasing or diminishing the speed of the phonograph."

"What will such a sheet of music cost?"

"About 25 cents."

"But how can you take an orchestra, when it is necessary, in talking to the phonograph, to apply your mouth close to the diaphragm?"

"The phonograph will be attached to a hole in one end of a barrel, and from the other end will project a runner like those used in ventilating steamships. This will receive the music from the entire orchestra, but of course not reproduce it with so great a volume. Piano music will be phonographed by a hood being placed over the instrument, and the volume of the reproduction will be one-fourth that of the piano."

"What method will be pursued with literary matter?" asked the reporter.

"We calculate that an ordinary 50-cent novel can be got on this," said Mr. Edison, tapping the circular plate, which was about six inches in diameter. "Novels and valuable literature will be read to the phonograph by elocutionists and persons understanding the subjects presented, and the matter will be multiplied by electrotyping in the same manner as music. You see, therefore, that you can have a phonograph in your parlor with an album of selected phonographic matter lying beside it. You can take a sheet from the album, place it on the phonograph, start the clockwork, and have a symphony performed. Then by changing the sheet you can listen to a chapter or two from a favorite novel, and this may be followed by a song, a duet, or a quartet. At the close the young people may indulge in a waltz, in which all may join, for no one need be asked to play the dance music. You can easily see," continued the Professor, "what an advantage the phonograph will be to the blind; and, indeed, I have already received one hundred orders from such persons."

"In some respects the phonograph will be a blessing to persons who are constitutionally tired."

"Yes, and to industrious persons also," answered Mr. Edison. "You know a man can never judge of the value of his own words or exactly how to deliver them by hearing his own words or exactly how to deliver them by hearing his own voice. Now, if a lawyer speaks an address to the phonograph in the way he thinks it should be rendered and then has the instrument repeat it, he can estimate very fairly what the effect would be on a court and jury. Again, there are many men who can talk better than they can write. They can, therefore, talk to the phonograph without the hindrance necessarily caused by using a pen; they can stop when they please and wait for ideas, and then they can let someone else copy the production as the phonograph repeats it. You see this opens up a vast field, and one suggestion follows another. Now," continued Mr. Edison, with another of his happy laughs, "the lover, while waiting for his sweetheart to finish her toilet, can place on the phonograph a sheet of the pretty things she has said to him before, and so occupy himself for a time with her counterfeit presentation."

"What will be the cost of a phonograph?"

"About \$100."

And now we have reached a logical stopping point, with Mr. Edison's

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 61)

## GREEN RIVER ANTIQUES

Robert F. Urbano

85 Spring St., Williamstown, Mass.

- Peachblow Hobnail ruffled shades on matching oil lamps in matching lacy brackets with mercury reflectors, a real rarity, the pair \$60.00
- Heavenly blue opalescent Coin Dot syrup pitcher, applied handle 16.50
- 7" Pair of bright yellow Sandwich Loop & Petal candlesticks, one under petal chip, the pair 28.00
- Hobnail cordials, one in amber, \$7.00; and one in blue 9.50
- Pair swirled white over cranberry open dot salt & peppers, no tops 9.50
- 5 1/2" Diamond pattern amber slipper with frosted bow 5.00
- Yellow Block pattern hat, cute 4.00
- Pair Loop & Dart 4" sauce dishes, each 2.50
- 3" Clear D. & B. mug with ribbed applied handle 4.00
- 3 Shell & Jewel tumblers, each 2.50
- Tree of Life footed tumbler 3.50
- 6 1/2" Tall square shape clear D. & B. cologne bottle with stopper 4.50
- Garfield Drape footed creamer 5.80
- Sawtooth band top & bottom clear syrup 4.50
- 5 1/2" High & 5 1/2" diam. small Sawtooth compote 6.00
- 8 1/2" S border deep amethyst M. G. plate 7.50
- 8 1/2" Gothic edge M. G. plate, \$5.00; 7 1/4", the same 3.50
- Egg shape bright floral shaded satin glass sugar shaker 6.00
- 6 Bavarian ramekins & plates in lovely delicate floral pattern, all perfect, the set 15.00
- 4 1/2" Square base handled night stick in meissen type Onion pattern 5.00
- 5 1/2" diam. handled & match holder night stick in bright blue, delft like dec. of birds & flowers 5.00
- 4" Violet dec. mustard in gold far, no ladle, cover 2.50
- Little green & white German basket in china with whole strawberry dec. on side 4.00
- 11 1/2" Octagonal pewter plate with folded rim 10.00
- 18x11" Scalloped & folded edge pewter platter 15.00
- 15 1/2"x10 1/2" Scalloped & folded edge pewter platter with well & feet 17.00
- Pewter gill measure with handle 5.00
- 8 1/2" Burnished brass mayo hump base, very ornate, a little beauty 7.00
- Pair of double iron brackets, \$11.50; & single lacy brackets 3.50
- Morton & Bremner hanging scale with 3 chains & pan 4.00
- Iron lady in bathing suit foot scraper 4.50
- Godley's complete leather bound volumes for years 1852 & 53, each 4.50
- Peterson's 1856 leather bound, 2 pages torn but there 4.50
- Pair Kate Greenaway bibs: "Good Luck" and "Be Happy," one fair & the other poor condition, the pair 3.50
- 11 1/2" Diam. & 5" deep walnut burl bowl in beautiful refinished condition, a rarity & a beauty 25.00
- 14 1/2"x21 1/2" Deep beautiful heavy oblong bowl, perfect 17.50
- 2-Drawer plain walnut spool cabinet with brass pulls 10.00
- 12x14" Deep walnut frames with gold liner, good cond. 3.50
- Pair pillow back slat plank seat hitchcock chairs in the rough chair in good 15.50
- Baby's bar back high chair in good 9.50
- Stamp for Reply — Packing Included auc

MARIAN E. COULTER  
FLYING MANE RANCH

Route No. 37, Toms River, N. J.

- 18" G.V.W. lamp, duck hunter and dog one side, quail on other side, not original shade, but hp. same design, brass base, \$25.00
- Moss Rose 12-cup coffee pot, fine china, C. & D., a beauty 18.00
- Pr. Milford Ware Eng. vases, 11 1/2", double handles, white & pink roses, cream background, pr. 22.00
- Bohemian ruby vase, 14 1/2", frosted floral design and cut to clear diamond band, pedestal base 35.00
- Brass cuspidor with agate insert, 4 1/2"x7" 6.00
- Large lobster 2-section dish, luster and gold decoration 18.00

TRANSPORTATION EXTRA au

## TRAILSEND ANTIQUES

Box 45, East Marion, Long Island, N. Y.

- PATTERN GLASS: Lion creamer, \$10; yellow 3-knob Thousand Eye 6" open compote, \$6; 8", same, \$10; Fishscale water, \$5; Owl, 7 1/2" high, water, \$3; same, small creamer, 3 1/2", \$3; 5 Swirl 6" plates, R.W.L. 163, \$8, one mint, others very minor unseen wear marks.
- CURRIER PRINTS: Tree of Life, \$5; Southern Belle, \$3; pair Papa's & Mama's Darlings, \$5.
- ALBUM, original 16 camera shots, Columbian, 1892, ships, in Hudson River, Pinta, Nina, Santa Maria, etc., \$5. Pictures, 4x5.
- PINE W. W. GREENER knock down double barrel 8 gauge shot gun, presentation piece, 1889, etched, \$50.

TRANSPORTATION EXTRA auc

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55)

prediction of a sound reproducing instrument, selling for just one dollar, that would be capable of reeling off the complete words of a novel, or all the music of a symphony from a six-inch disc. In details he was wrong; in generalities, right, since the long playing record is a reality today. Looking back three-quarters of a century, as we arrive at the phonograph's 75th anniversary, we cannot — at least, I cannot — refrain from paying a warm tribute to the clear intellect and the foresight that were so characteristic of Milan, Ohio's, most distinguished son. Not for his invention of the phonograph alone but for many other achievements, Thomas Alva Edison, most of us agree, ranks with the greatest men of all time.

Next Month—EDDIE MORTON

## DORIS McLAUGHLIN

Box 305, Brockton, Mass.

1. Purple Grape & Cable Northwood punch bowl and 5 cups, lovely, perfect \$30.00
2. Apple green plain cruet, matching stopper 6.50
3. Pink satin glass rose bowl 12.00
4. Meissen Onion pattern hanging salt box, pine hinged lid 13.50
5. Lacy iron double lamp bracket 5.00

Write Wants — Stamps, Please auc

## HODGES HOBBY HOUSE

15504 S. Atlantic Ave.,  
Compton, Calif.

1. Cranberry threaded glass open salt dish \$ 8.50
2. Blue ONION PATTERN kitchen: jars, barrel shape, covers, excellent condition; tea, coffee. Each 8.75
3. Kewpie sitting in a hooded basket, all bisque, 4 1/2" high. Adorable 12.50
4. FAIRY LAMP, dark amber shade decorated with white enamel flowers, original matching base, clear candle cup, 4 1/2" high 29.50
5. Beautiful white Nilsen FAIRY LAMP, large ruffled saucer base, clear Clarke's insert and candle cup, same as Pl. 3. No. 7 "Clarke's Fairy Lamps" by D. Tibbitts. Perfect Write
6. MARRIAGE LAMP, white opaque glass base, blue font, clam's broth match holder 85.00

TRANSPORTATION EXTRA auc

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
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Photos most items available 15c each.

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- BLUE, PINK, ETC., HISTORICAL STAFFORDSHIRE.
- EARLY SORT PASTE ENGLISH AND CONTINENTAL CHINA, PORCELAINS, ETC.
- GLASS, FINE PATTERN GLASS. (Please tell what pattern you are collecting).
- GLASS, LACY SANDWICH GLASS, about 150 items, clear and colored.
- GLASS, VICTORIAN, "ART GLASS," AMBERINA, SATIN, HOBNAIL, PEACHBLOW, ETC.
- MILK GLASS, abt. 50 items, guaranteed authentic.
- CURRIER & IVES, about 50, large and small.

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22 Branch St., R. D. No. 1, Utica, N. Y.

- CHOCOLATE SET, Noritake, Serves 4; white, blue & gold trim \$10.50
- DRESSER SET, milk glass; 3 piece, gold leaf trim, raised & stippled, tray 12x9" very old 8.25
- AMETHYST miniature hand lamp, 7" tall, small crack in chimney at top, applied handle 24.00
- MAJOLICA basket, beautiful designs, red, etc. Send 25c for picture 27.50
- Trumpet, brass marked J. W. Pepper, Phila. nice shape 6.50
- TEAPOT, Royal Doulton, 5 1/2" tall, golden yellow to a red, brown, English city scenery 4.50
- FIREPLACE URNS, pr., 16" tall, footed, beautiful pr. brassed with red center. Picture 25c 34.00

Write your wants, maybe we can help you as we have hundreds of other items. Stamp on inquiries, Please. Transportation Extra auc

## MRS. ROY DOUGLASS — Pine Brook, N. J.

- 4-Pc. set, ETCHED DAKOTA: cov. butter, sugar, creamer & spoon, all proof \$30.00
- Old decorated TOLE oval box, hinged lid 10.00
- Child's early STAFFORDSHIRE MUG, "Leap Frog" & "Playful Tray," slight age check in bottom 8.50
- Emerald green SCENT BOTTLE (purple) 4.00
- Rare AMBERINA I.T.P. SYRUP JUG 28.00

TRANSPORTATION EXTRA auc

## Remember Grandma's Lamps?

Beautify your old lamps and preserve their authentic charm with handpainted partly-frosted chimneys. African Violets pictured burst into bloom at the turn of a switch. No. 2 chimney (3" base) fits the standard electric converter. (We can also supply you with the converter - \$2.00 each.) Ask for illustrated folder. Dealers send for wholesale prices on letterhead or business card.

CHIMNEY - \$3.00 Each, Postpaid  
(Add 20c West of Rockies)



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YORK,  
PENNA.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## EDDIE MORTON

By JIM WALSH

Among the things I keep promising myself I'm going to do when I have time is writing an article for one of the "quality" magazine on "The Decline of the Comic Song." This acidulous essay will contend that most of the co-called "popular" records sold today are bought by teen-agers and that the phonograph companies, by their own admission, cater more to the tastes of 16-year-old girls than to any other age group. These youngsters, I shall say with some acerbity, obviously have no sense of humor or they wouldn't spend their money on recordings of such deplorable trash as the wailings of certain so-called "singers," whose maudlin moans assail my affronted ears from juke boxes.

I shall also make the point that whereas there are clever fun-makers, and many not so clever, specializing in *spoken* comedy on radio and television, there are virtually no singing comedians, barring an occasional old-timer like Eddie Cantor. Some, like Arthur Godfrey, try to sing but don't succeed. Because, no thanks to teen-age domination, there is no longer much market for humor in popular music, song writers have virtually stopped turning out comic songs, and when they do write something that's supposed to be funny, it's usually so silly—in keeping with the juvenile taste for inane idiocy—that it merely disgusts reasonably mature and intelligent persons, such as the reading group to whom I shall be addressing my splenetic remarks. To what a come-down have we descended I shall say, in my lofty sour-puss manner, from the great early radio days of the immortal Frank Crumit and Billy Jones and Ernest Hare!

Even more, what a worse decline from the golden days of the phonograph comedians of the acoustic era, when records were bought for the entertainment of the whole family—not just that of the teen-agers alone! What singers have we today who can be compared with those greatly gifted ones whose records I can play by the hour with pleasure—such masters as Billy Murray, Al Bernard, Collins and Harlan, Bob Roberts and Eddie Morton! Recordings by these virtuosos of vocal tomfoolery provide an invaluable service in helping to unkink the knots in my frequently harried nervous system. I can enjoy more "intellectual" forms of music, such as chamber ensembles and the symphony (opera has never had much appeal for me) only when I am rested and relaxed, but mentally alert. The blessed comedians and

ballad singers come to my rescue when I'm too fagged out to concentrate on the more elevated things. Of course there are sometimes weeks at a stretch when I am too busy, or too tired, to listen to any records, but that's another matter.

### II

I mentioned Eddie Morton just now. Eddie Morton! There, my fellow record collectors, is a name for you!—the name of one of the most unjustly neglected but greatest comedians who ever took a firm stance in front of the recording horn and thrust his head forward or drew it back, depending on whether he was about to sing softly or take a high note that might "blast" without proper precautions. We may now dismiss, for the present, further consideration of my unborn jeremiad on "The Decline of the Comic Song," for we have carried at the honored name of the hero of this month's *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*.

My being able to write a reasonably accurate and comprehensive article about Eddie Morton is the culmination of ambition and research that have been spread over some twenty years. This department is now well into its eleventh year, but long before I knew there was a magazine called *HOBBIES* I was an earnest admirer of Eddie Morton and was trying without success, to find out something about his personal history and to learn whether he was still alive.

In 1932 I had a letter published in *The Billboard*, asking for information about Morton and a few other favorite recordings artists of the acoustic days, but got none concerning the one-time "Singing Policeman." Had I only known it, Ed. Morton was then alive but had retired from the stage and was a prosperous restaurant owner in Wildwood, New Jersey. But nobody told me. Neither did I see any account of his death when, as I have learned only within the past year or so, he died in Wildwood of a heart attack in 1938.

Fourteen years ago, in October, 1938, Billy Murray, accompanied by one of his dearest friends, Jimmy Martindale (one of my dearest, too!), came to see me in Johnson City, Tennessee, where I then lived. I remember asking the dean of recording comedians if he knew what had become of Eddie Morton. "The Boss" said he wasn't sure, but believed he had heard Eddie was living in retirement on a New England farm. We agreed that Morton was a fine comedian, and Jimmy has recently con-

firmed this opinion in a letter, saying:

Ed. Morton was a great performer. I am always vastly amused when I play "There's Lots of Stations on My Railroad Track," to hear him pronounce "boiler" as "berler." His all-out favorite of mine is "I'd Rather be a Minstrel Man Than a Multi-Millionaire." Incidentally, a record of that type I would play with a Kakti needle, due to its heavy vibrations.

(That pronunciation of "oy" sounds as "er" in the Brooklyn style, was a favorite stunt of Eddie's. In one of his best records, "The Last Shot Got Him," he sings of a cowboy's rival having "sperled his plans for matrimony.")

Alas, in October, 1938, the genial, jovial Mr. Morton had been dead for several months, but neither Billy, Jimmy nor I knew it.

### III

Let me pause here to make it clear that not *all* teen-agers go entirely, or at all, for the vapid, humorless popular tunes of the present day. Some of the most enthusiastic letters I receive from readers of this department are from boys around 14 and 15. (No girls of that age write to me. Apparently they care only for sickly sentiment.) I have long contended that if the youngsters now growing up had an opportunity to listen to the better artists and cleverer music of an earlier era they would prefer it to the rubbish foisted on them today. They like what they hear because they have never heard anything else. My own Walsh's Wax Works program has always received a warm reception from the younger set.

I frequently have to do a large amount of research, involving letter writing, sending for photostats of newspaper obituary notices, buying copies of birth and death certificates, etc., before I am able to piece together enough information to write one of these biographical sketches. That is especially true where the subject is dead or has long dropped out of public view. Because of the difficulty of obtaining adequate information, I have not yet been able, in spite of many requests, to write about favorite old-time recording artists as Albert Benzler and Charles D'Almaine.

Year after year, I met with the same lack of success in my search for "leads" about Eddie Morton. No matter where I turned I seemed to find myself wandering up a blind alley or bumping my head against a stone wall. About eight years I wrote to Joe Laurie, Jr., the famous vaudeville and radio comedian and co-author with Abel Green of the book, "Show Biz," and asked what he could



A Victor Talking Machine ad of 1908. Eddie Morton is No. 25 among the popular recording artists shown here.



Eddie Morton making a Columbia record. Among the famous musicians in the orchestra are Leo Zimmerman, Trombone; Vincent Buono, Cornet, and Marshall P. Lufsky, Flute. Note violins equipped with Stroh Amplifiers to direct sound into recording horn.

tell me about Morton. Joe replied he hadn't known Eddie but some of his fellow members of the Lambs Club recalled Morton as "The Singing Policeman." Yet no one he talked with knew whether Morton was still living or dead. That seems odd, for Eddie had been a prominent Lamb.

I made intermittent, but persistent, inquiries of this nature, getting nowhere, until late in 1950. Then I made up my mind that my longstanding admiration of Eddie Morton wasn't going to continue unrewarded. Some way or other I would find out more about that great comedian with the mellow, minstrel-style voice and an engaging personality that twinkled irresistibly through his records. Regardless of the effort and trouble involved, I was determined to know whether he was still alive, to trace the details of his career and to write a HOBBIES article about him.

Not only that, but for the benefit of other collectors, I would compile a list of the Morton records and publish it as a supplement to my sketch. It is impossible to enumerate all the recordings of some popular artists, for they made thousands. Charles Harrison and Walter Scanlan, about whom I have recently written, are good examples of "mass production" record makers. On the other hand, with a singer like Eddie Morton, who was popular on the stage for many years but whose phonograph career was comparatively brief, space sometimes can be fouled for such a list.

#### IV

Let me detail some of the steps I took before I finally was able to solve what I had begun to think of as "the Eddie Morton Mystery." Being a

regular contributor to *Variety*, I wrote a letter which appeared in the December 6, 1950, issue under a typical heading: "Anthologist Seeks Some Yesteryear Greats Among Pioneer Record Artists." The first two paragraphs read:

As some readers know I have been writing "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" in HOBBIES magazine for several years. Gathering biographical information about some of the old-timers who are no longer active is frequently a tough job. I'm wondering if anybody can give me some info on those whom I shall list below:

Eddie Morton, who was a native of Philadelphia and was known in vaude as "The Singing Policeman." I consider Morton one of the best singing comedians in the history of the phonograph but have been unable to learn whether he is still alive. I'd appreciate any information concerning him, and if Eddie reads this I'd like to invite him to attend the next party for pioneer recording artists to be held on Long Island next September."

I also asked for information about Harry Tall, Arthur Clough, Elida Morris and a comedian who made two Edison cylinders in 1905 under the name of "Tascott."

This appeal brought two replies. A man in Danmore, New York, wrote that he would send me a letter within a week, giving complete information about all the artists I had mentioned. I hopefully answered him the day his letter came but to this moment have received no further word. More to the point, I received the first of what has proved to be a steady stream of communications from the veteran song writer, Ray Walker, whom I have already mentioned more than once in these pages. Ray didn't know what had become of Eddie Morton but was eager to help me find

out. Rather ironically, he suggested that "a Brooklyn man by the name of J. V. Martindale, who a lot of old records, might be able to help you."

Ray did have a vivid recollection of playing the piano as accompanist for the comedian. He wrote:

I played for Eddie many years ago at private clubs. He sang "The Preacher and the Bear" better than anyone else. The first time I played for him he handed me the manuscript. It was written in E natural (four sharps). That is one key I can't play in very well. I played it one half-tone lower (in E flat—three flats). After the show he told me I had played it better than anyone else. He didn't know I had transposed it. The other players probably played it in E natural, which is a tough key for the majority—O. K. for concert players but tough for vaudevillians. I can read music in four sharps but can't play it in that key.

Well, that at least gave me an interesting item about Eddie Morton that I hadn't previously known. I had never heard that he had specialized in singing "The Preacher and the Bear," although of course I knew he featured the type of "blackface" humor that used to be known as "coon shouts." The song about the Negro preacher treed by a grizzly, written by Joe Arzonio (a pseudonym for the Philadelphia music publisher, Arthur Longbrake) would have been ideal for Morton's style.

However, from the time Arthur Collins made his first records of "The Preacher and the Bear" in 1905, it was considered "Collins' song" for recording purposes, and no other comedian recorded it in this country until Collins retired in 1925. (It was sung for several English recording companies by "the Australian Entertainer," Albert Whelan.) And, good

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Will pay top cash for the following records: Any by Jimmie Rodgers, any by Richard Jose, any by Singing Sam. State price and describe. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. s68431

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**Choice Collection.** Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

**Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists:** Jones, Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, etc. Fine condition. Price 50c each. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. s3426

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

**WILL BUY** phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C., N. Y. d6829

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f124201

**CHOICE PONSELLE,** Caruso, Stracciari, Lazaro, many others. List on request.—Jacksonville Children's Museum, 1061 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville, Fla. s3882

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large, varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit Record Collectors Service, 602 East 88th St., N. Y. C. 28, N. Y. s3145

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

**CYLINDER RECORDS.** One thousand for sale. Stamp for new list. Cylinder phonographs, records, bought and sold, repaired.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

**THE RECORD SPEAKS.** The parrot will say "just as good", but does he know what he is talking about? Can present-day re-issues, re-recordings, pressed at will in any form, take the place or give the excitement of getting rare originals, of the great singers of the past? Of course not. There is no substitute for an original. Besides the great thrill, pride and enjoyment that originals give, the money spent is a sound investment that grows with time. Your collection is worth just what you put into it. Is there anything to boast about a collection filled with common re-issues? We can supply originals dating from 1896 on, for the beginner, and for the most advanced collector. We welcome your friendship. Write us.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. n33212

### ORGAN

**FOR SALE:** Pipe Organ. Robert Morton, model 49. Restored to A.1 condition. Two manual. Compact with pipes in cabinets. Complete with blower. \$1500.00 F.O.B. Dallas.—Lee Co., 934 N. Lancaster, Dallas, Texas. s3215

as Morton's version must have been, I can't imagine how it could have improved on Collins'. "The Preacher" was considered "Sir Arthur's" masterpiece. He not only recorded it for almost every American phonograph company of his time, but also sang it thousands of times in his engagements with the Record Makers, the Eight Famous Victor Artists and in other stage appearances.

Friends of Ray Walker's tell me he is a big-hearted and unfailingly helpful gentlemen. I believe it, because he at once set to work writing to friends in Philadelphia, trying to track down Eddie Morton's latter-day activities (assuming Morton was still alive and living in his birthplace) and also helping me with much other research dealing with former recording artists. What little information Ray was able to get from his Philadelphia friends turned out anything but accurate. Nevertheless, he won my gratitude by "being in there, pitching." Meanwhile, with no better luck, I was exploring other "angles" of my own.

For a while my luck was no better than Ray's. I still didn't know whether Eddie Morton was living or dead, but since I had heard years ago that he was at one time a Philadelphia policeman it occurred to me that the Quaker City's police department should have some record of him. So I wrote to the Superintendent of Police. In reply, I received a one line note from Sergeant M. J. Fleisher, of the Police Superintendent's office, saying: "No record of this man having been a member of the Bureau of Police." Evidently, in the light of later developments, the records are defective or the Sergeant didn't carry his research back as far as the year 1898.

I also wrote to the *Evening Bulletin* and the *Inquirer*, asking if their files contained any data on Morton. Walter Lister, the *Bulletin's* managing editor, replied:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Search of our library files fails to reveal anything on Eddie Morton. Sorry.

On February 4, 1951, a postal card I received gave me my first definite "lead." It also gave the sad information that the comedian was no longer alive. It was signed by the *Inquirer's* librarian, J. E. Molloy, and said:

Mr. Fitzpatrick turned over to me your query about Eddie Morton and we find that Morton died April 11, 1938. For some reason the *Inquirer* did not carry a story at the time, or at least I have not been able to find one, but an obituary did appear in the *Record* on April 12.

I assumed from this letter that Morton had died in Philadelphia, and sent an item to HOBBIES which gave a wrong impression. As I was to learn a little later, and as I have already said, his death occurred at Wildwood, New Jersey, where he had lived for many years.

In the meantime, I had also written to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, asking if there was anything on file in its archives concerning Eddie Morton. On February

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**WANTED TO BUY,** books, catalogs on cylinder phonographs, records.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. s3863

**BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly126121

### PHONOGRAPHS

**DISC PHONOGRAPHS, WANTED.** Table model disc phonographs, any make, with diaphragm on small end of external horn, preferably. State condition, price and details.—A. B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Ill. o3861

**PHONOGRAPHS:** 3 Victor disc with outside horns; 1 early model with wooden arm, rare, 1 larger with wooden horn; exceptionally nice, 1 with aluminum horn, \$25 each. Edison cylinder with morning glory horn, \$25. Edison cylinder with built in horn, 30 model, \$15. 1 large size, \$20. Table model, disc with built in horn, \$10. 50 Edison disc records, \$10. Write us your wants if not listed. 25 records furnished with each phonograph.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. s1426

**EDISON HOME PHONOGRAPHS** with 25 cylinders each. 1 in good condition with morning glory horn, \$25, the other in perfect condition with beautiful brass topped horn, \$35.—Howe, 158 East Dixon, Dayton, Ohio. s1462

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

**FOR SALE:** 20, 27" diam. Regina discs for \$50.—Bornand, 139 4th Ave., Pelham 65, N. Y. s1631

**MUSIC BOX DISCS** bought, sold, traded. Send for my want list offering above average prices. Wanted: 18 1/2" New Century, 13 1/2" Kalliope and 14" Perfection discs.—Insley C. Looker, So. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. s3065

**WANTED: DISCS FOR "FORTUNA"** music box, 16 1/2" diam. with 3/4" diam. center hole.—R. Bornand, 139 4th Ave., Pelham 65, N. Y. s1671

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

**VIOLINS:** Two "August Gemunder & Sons" 1902, perfect condition, \$225 each.—E. A. Frier, 12 Lyon Avenue, Menands, N. Y. o3882

### MUSIC LITERATURE

**FOR SALE:** Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

6 the director—Dr. Rufus S. Reeves—wrote me a letter giving little information but of such an individual literary flavor that I feel HOBBIES readers will enjoy it. I know that I was grateful for Dr. Reeves' courteous and friendly attitude:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Due to the indefinite nature of the information requested in your letter of application, the Division of Vital Statistics of the Department of Public Health will be unable to institute a search for the birth and death records of Edward Morton, known as "The Singing Policeman."

An extensive search covering a number

### MUSIC BOXES WANTED

WANT ALL KINDS of music boxes, regardless of condition. Also any steel disc records or Swiss, cylinders, original pictures & catalogues. Describe briefly. Veteran starting hobby.—G. P. Battley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. 16306

LARGE MUSIC BOX given by Robert Louis Stevenson to Princess Kaiulani, Hawaiian Princess, with inscription on lid. \$750. or best offer. Contact—Miss K. Bartels, 313 Kauikeolani Bldg., Honolulu, T. H. 51842

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

RARE OLD SWISS MUSIC BOX with organ; 25" inlaid rosewood case, 8 tunes on 15" cylinder; 17 note organ at extreme end. Made by Heller, about 1871. Completely restored, \$275.—R. Bornand, 139 4th ave., Pelham 65, N. Y. 51213

REGINA MUSIC BOX. Carved mahogany console with harp and grafonola attachments. Perfect condition with 12 15½" discs. \$125.—Howe, Jr., 158 E. Dixon Ave., Dayton 9, Ohio. 51612

### MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6046

WANTED: Reprodur for Edison Amberola 30 phonograph.—George R. Hare, 3006 14th Avenue, Tampa 5, Fla. s3652

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave., Seattle 1, Washington. 1e128291

WANTED: Sammy Kaye & Ink Spots transcriptions, V. discs, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings. I will pay top prices. "Money is no object." — Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. s3006

### MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List.—Durell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. o 6844

SWISS & REGINA music boxes, bar-room pianos; barrel & hand organs; large Regina piano, with drums; bells & cymbal playing, 32" disc. Old coin operated Edison juke box, playing cylinder records; accordion playing paper roll; musical alarm and others.—Ray Albertson, Box 23, Atlantic, Ia. o 8637

KNABE SQUARE rosewood piano, case and action in excellent condition. Beautiful tone, \$350.—Howe, Jr., 158 E. Dixon Ave., Dayton 9, Ohio. 51291

HUNDREDS OF IMPORTED cut-out vocals, rare Golden Age operatics; G&T, Fonotopia, etc., hard to get Music Hall and Personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, imported LPs, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. n3367

of years might disclose one or several birth records under the name of "Edward Morton," and you would have no assurance that any one would be the record of the party you are interested in. I am confident you would not commit yourself unless you are sure of the facts.

The same uncertain and indefinite information applies to the search for the death record—only you have no knowledge that the "Singing Policeman" has ever died, and it might prove to be a boomerang to state in your article that he died on a particular date when in reality he is living and hale and hearty.

In the event that any identifying or specific information becomes available to you in regard to these records, please do not hesitate to contact me with every assurance that your request will be given every consideration and attention.

By the time Dr. Reeves' letter reached me I knew of course that the object of my search was dead. But I had also written to the Pennsylvania Department of Health at Harrisburg. On February 6, the same day Dr. Reeves' genial letter was written, the Delayed Record Division of the Bureau of Vital Statistics replied:

Please be advised that the Bureau of Vital Statistics was not established until January 1, 1906, therefore we would have no record for the above subject.

We suggest that you contact the City or County of Philadelphia to determine whether it might be matter of record.

I wrote another letter to Dr. Reeves, telling him I had learned that Eddie Morton died on April 11, 1938, and asking if that knowledge would make it possible to trace any entry concerning him. I thought it should at least result in the discovery of his death certificate. But no! I was still doomed, it seemed, to be thwarted. My letter was answered by one of Dr. Reeves' assistants, J. A. Farrell, who said:

No record of "Eddie" Morton's death in the year 1938. . . . Try some other date and we will gladly help you to secure any information you may desire. Do not hesitate, and if we can help you we will.

### VI

Well, it seemed I was fated to disappointment, but at least I had been given a most favorable opinion of the courtesy and helpfulness of the Division of Vital Statistics of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. In the meantime, it had occurred to me to write to my friend, F. H. Price, the librarian of the Free Library of Philadelphia, asking if there were bound volumes of the now defunct *Record* on file, and if so whether I could obtain a photostatic copy of the Eddie Morton death notice. Mr. Price promptly and obligingly returned that he had found the article under the heading, "EDWARD MORTON, 'SINGING COP,' DIES," and a copy would be made for me on receipt of 55 cents. I lost no time in remitting, and the photostat came a few days later. It reproduced the top half of page 28 of the *Philadelphia Record* for Tuesday, April 12, 1938, and for the first time I learned that my beloved comedian's death had occurred in New Jersey, instead of Philadelphia. The article was brief but interesting:

EDWARD MORTON, 'SINGING COP,' DIES. . . . Ex-Vaudeville Headliner, 68, operated restaurant in Wildwood.

Edward Morton, Philadelphia's erst-

while "singing cop" who became a headliner in vaudeville, died after a heart attack yesterday in Wildwood, where he conducted a boardwalk restaurant in recent years. He was 68.

Morton first gained renown as a singer while pounding a beat in the "bloody 5th ward." Soon becoming known as the "singing cop," he won a promotion by his music several years after he joined the force in 1898.

### Roof Garden Headliner

One night, after singing for several hours in the 5th Ward Political Club, he went on duty at midnight. Waiting for the street sergeant at Front and Dock streets, he fell asleep.

The sergeant found him slumbering and preferred charges. A ward leader, however, got the charges dropped and had Morton made a desk sergeant, with the admonition: "Sing oftener and longer."

He did and left the force in 1908 to enter burlesque. Two years later he was a headline act at the Madison Square Roof Garden. He became a member of the famous Friars and Lambs Club in New York.

### Golf Club Official

After years on the old Keith Circuit, he settled in Wildwood, where he became an original trustee of the Wildwood Golf Club. He was chairman of the club's house committee for 10 years.

He is survived by his widow, Mary, four sons, Paul, Ade, Joseph and Edward, Jr.

Now it seemed I was getting somewhere, but I still did not have the date of Morton's birth, names of his parents and other such details that I like to get into my HOBBIES articles. And I could say of my own knowledge that the date, 1908, given as the year in which Morton left the Philadelphia police department was wrong. He was already a roof garden and vaudeville star when he began to make Victor records in 1907.

Now that I knew he had died in Wildwood, New Jersey. I wrote to the New Jersey State Department of Vital Statistics, asking for a copy of Morton's death certificate. I was told to remit one dollar, but the money was returned with a curt statement that since I was not member of his family I had no right to the information and it would not be furnished. As I have mentioned before in HOBBIES, I have never met with a like attitude from any other City or State department.

### VII

While I was still sizzling over this brush-off, I happened to get into a conversation with Arthur McCoy, a helper in the kitchen of my favorite (CONTINUED ON PAGE 36)

## WORLD WIDE RECORD & MUSIC AGENCY

2034 North Third Street,

Milwaukee (12) Wisconsin

Collectors' phonograph records: cylinders, discs, Lateral, Hill and Dale; all makes. Old catalogs For collectors libraries, museums, radio and TV stations; ghost and gag Machines, parts and reproducers for cylinders.

The largest collection of Americana available. Jazz-Swing-Ragtime. Classical Operatic. Vocal and instrumental.



## FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Swiss chronograph calendar repeater. Gold. Rings hour, quarter, minute. Moon phase and star positions. Day and month in Finnish.—William C. Dias, 42 Amory St., Cambridge, Mass. a1232

**ALL PARTS TO ASSEMBLE** Black Forest clock with front piece, size 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ x6", at \$3. For leaflet, contact:—Jules Wolff, 74 Worth Street, New York. n3004

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

Roanoke, Virginia, restaurant, The Cavalier. "Cousin Arthur" mentioned that he worked in Roanoke during the winter, but usually moved on to Wildwood, New Jersey, in the summer, and was employed in one of the board-walk restaurants there.

Wildwood, New Jersey—the place where Eddie Morton died! "Do you," I asked, "happen to know if there is

anybody by the name of Morton operating a restaurant there? I'm trying to find surviving relatives," I explained, "of a famous singer, Eddie Morton, who was in the restaurant business at Wildwood before his death."

"Cousin Arthur" smiled. "Sure, there's a Morton's Restaurant there, he said 'I've passed it lots of times.'"

Elated, I decided to write to the postmaster at Wildwood, enclosing a letter to be handed to any of the members of Eddie Morton's family. Once more I received courteous and sympathetic cooperation. The postmaster, J. Carroll Bransfield, wrote:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Replying to your letter . . . Paul Morton, son of the late Edward Morton, now resides at 231 E. Wildwood Ave., Wildwood, N. J., and operates the restaurant that you have reference to in your inquiry.

I have forwarded your letter to Mr. Paul Morton and I am sure he will be happy to learn of your interest in his famous father's career.

Incidentally, Paul is a very close friend of mine and an excellent singer in his own right. I mention this as an item of interest, since I know that Paul's modesty will no doubt prevent him from disclosing this fact to you.

Postmaster Bransfield's letter made me happy, for it convinced me that my long years of efforts to find out the facts about Eddie Morton were about to be rewarded with success. A few days later I felt even better when the following communication arrived from Paul Morton himself:

I have received from Mr. Carroll Bransfield, our postmaster, a letter sent to him by you, seeking information about my father, Ed. Morton, the singer.

I shall be very happy to give you any information concerning Dad. I think, naturally, that he was one of the best in his line. So, if you will prepare a sketch of the kind of information you desire, I am sure I will be able to fill it in.

It is most heartwarming to hear after all these years that Dad is remembered by people, like you, in his own profession. I shall be most anxious to hear from you. Sincerely, PAUL MORTON.

Several days elapsed before I had time to write Mr. Morton the sort of letter I had in mind, but I finally did, asking every pertinent question—and perhaps some that might appear impertinent!—that I could think of. Then I settled anxiously back to get results. And, thanks to the cooperation and enthusiasm of my friend, Paul Morton, I got them!

## VIII

During the decade in which I have found much happiness in writing these articles, I have frequently had occasion to be surprised as well as pleased because of the helpful cooperation I have received, not only from living artists whose life stories I wished to tell but from surviving relatives of men and women no longer of this world. Only a few months ago William J. Mann lent me the only photograph he had of his sister, Estella Mann, so that I might have it copied. And Paul Morton not only gave me four photographs of his father, including one which provides

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 37)



**LEFT:** Junghans mahogany mantel clock. Rich cast brass decorations. Brass dial with cherub head. Beautiful finish and brass animal feet. Classical brass figures on corners. Two tone chime every 15 minutes, strikes on hour. 8-day. 24" to top of urn finial, 13" width overall. Price \$200.

**RIGHT:** Beautiful old, hand carved walnut French mantel clock with original French works. Porcelain dial with ornamental cast brass frame. 8-day. 19" high, 20" wide overall. Price \$78.

Small cottage alarm clock, about 1850. 1-day works. Plain case with rosewood veneer on base and door. Orig. decorated dial. Original decoration in lower section of door. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".....\$20.00

E. N. Welch single steeple in rosewood veneer. Unusually good, original condition. 8-day, striking movement with odd pendulum. Circa 1860-1890. 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high, 11" wide at base.....31.00

Atkins Clock Co. 1859-1879. Small walnut shelf clock with alarm attachment. Original paper and finish. Picture on door "Washington Landing" not original. 8-day strike.....15.00

E. Ingraham & Co. 1857-1880. Doric mantel clock. Original paper. 8-day strike. 16" high, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.....30.00

French brass and glass mantel clock. Solid brass case with four solid pillars, with heavy bevelled glass in all four sides. Glass in front door is curved. French works, time only. Porcelain dial. Free mercury pendulum. 12" high, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.....75.00

N. Pomeroy, Bristol, Conn. venetian design walnut mantel clock. Circa 1850. 8-day strike. All original. 16" high, 11" wide.....40.00

Unusual, old solid marble mantel clock. Greek temple design. Has very good French works and in perfect condition. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. 8-day strike.....25.00

Small Gilbert, 1-day cottage clock in Rosewood veneer. Has alarm attach-

ment. Original painting on door. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, 11" wide.....16.00

Nice, old china clock with open work brass dial. White with rose, blue and green floral decoration. 8-day strike. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high, 8" wide.....40.00

Odd design of small walnut shelf clock by Sessions of Forestville. Orig. decorated dial. Refinished. 8-day striking works. 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide.....20.00

Ingraham, 1870's. Doric shelf clock with alarm attachment. Orig. paper and has been refinished. 16" high, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide.....30.00

Most unusual statue type Victorian clock. Has large size statue of cavalier holding brass sword at one end and clock is mounted in very decorative cast section at other end. Both mounted on ebonized base with cast feet. Excellent detail. Brass decorations. Porcelain dial with exposed escapement and unusually beautiful hands. 8-day strike. 22" high overall, 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide overall.

Ithaca calendar clock in refinished rosewood venetian case. Slight restoration but basically original. 2-dial type. Upper dial is time; lower dial shows day, month and date perpetually. mantel or shelf type. 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high, 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide at base.....65.00

Tiffany & Co., green onyx with two bronze figures mantel clock. This is a very beautiful clock in perfect condition. 24" long, 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high.....150.00

ALL ABOVE CLOCKS IN RUNNING CONDITION.  
SEND FOR COMPLETE FREE LIST OF CLOCKS. PHOTOS 20c EACH.  
SUBJECT TO PRIOR SALE. NO C.O.D.'S. SHIPMENTS BY EXPRESS COLLECT.

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Shillington, Pa.

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his low rambling home situated on a high knoll surrounded by miles of scenic countryside is an outstanding highlight of a Galena visit.

In all, eight of historic Galena's outstanding homes, all privately owned, will be open for this tour and the guest, whether tourist, artist, architect or historian, will find much of interest in Galena, unofficially declared as the outstanding historic shrine of the Old Northwest Territory. For further information address the Tour Historic Galena Homes, Galena, Illinois.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35)

a revealing glimpse of a recording session at the Columbia studios, he also lent me the only copy he had of the *Wildwood Leader* for Thursday, April 14, 1938, telling of his father's death in more detail than the *Philadelphia Record* had done.

Although the two articles contain, to some extent, the same information, the one in the *Wildwood* paper is more interesting than the other. That must serve as my justification for reprinting it in its entirety. It began with the headline: "ED. MORTON, LOVABLE CHARACTER, DIES SUDDELY AT WILDWOOD." Beneath a cut of Morton, smiling and wearing a checked cap, were the cut lines: "Edward Morton, who died suddenly on Monday, is pictured above in one of his characteristic poses that made him famous while in vaudeville." And here is the body of the *Leader's* story:

Suffering a heart attack as he was about to get dressed early Monday morning, Edward Morton, familiar and loved character at Wildwood, died in his room. He was 68. His familiar smile and witticisms will be sadly missed as result of his untimely death.

A former Philadelphia policeman and better known while on the force as the "Singing Cop," Ed became a hit in vaudeville. For many years he conducted a restaurant on the North Wildwood boardwalk. He was an original trustee of the Wildwood Golf Club and was chairman of the house committee for many years.

A former cop in the "Bloody Fifth" in Philadelphia, Morton had had a colorful career which included beat pounding, house work as a police sergeant and experience in the Electrical Bureau of the Quaker City before he blossomed forth as a headline vaudeville attraction.

Morton claimed one record of which he was proud. He told his friends on numerous occasions he was the only man who ever got promoted on the Philadelphia force for sleeping on his beat.

"I had been singing for several hours in the Fifth Ward political club and was tired when I went on duty at midnight," he explained. "I was waiting for the street sergeant at Front and Dock streets

when I fell asleep while leaning against a building. The sergeant found me and hauled me up on charges, but the ward leader, in deference to my entertaining at the club, had the punishment lifted and had me made a desk sergeant."

As the "singing cop" his services were much in demand as an entertainer at political club dinners and entertainments, and Morton finally branched out as a full time performer, forsaking the police business to go into burlesque.

After three years in this work he had progressed so far that in 1908 he was the headline act at the Madison Square Roof Garden. This was about the time he first visited Wildwood as a special act for Sunday night shows at Baker's, an added attraction to the regular stock company.

Telling of his experiences he said: "The sand got into my shoes at once, and beginning in 1911 I so arranged my bookings that I had twelve weeks off each summer and brought my family to Wildwood. This continued for ten years and then I opened the restaurant at Twenty-sixth street and the Boardwalk.

"For several years I still continued in vaudeville, principally on the Keith circuit, but finally gave up the stage to devote myself exclusively to my business interests here. The business grew and several years ago when North Wildwood constructed the new Boardwalk, I rebuilt."

Morton was a member of the Friars and Lambs Clubs. Survivors are his widow, Mary, and four sons, Ade, Paul, Joseph and Edward, Jr.

A viewing will be held tomorrow evening in Philadelphia at 260 S. 4th Street with interment to take place Saturday afternoon in the Holy Cross cemetery.

At the Wildwood firemen and police banquet last night, silent tribute was paid to Mr. Morton. He was active in the Pine avenue department.

## IX

Interesting as I found the *Leader's* article, the letter that Paul Morton wrote to me on February 17 was even more so, for it contained many intimate details of the great comedian's personality and achievements as recalled by his admiring and devoted son. I am sure Eddie Morton's admirers will share my pleasure:

Dear Mr. Walsh: On my arrival home from a trip to Philadelphia I received your letter and card and was amazed at the information you succeeded in acquiring about Dad, particularly the fact that you have most of his records. We at one time had a complete collection, but a few years ago a junior member of the family while alone in the living room secured a poker from the fireplace and, before he was discovered, had broken all of our records including, of course, Dad's. We were all heartsick about this and tried to obtain duplicates but that was impossible.

I have managed since then to obtain five records from friends. Whenever I go into a house that has a collection of old records I beg them to look for any of Dad's recordings. So far I have five—(1) "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew" (fairly good); (2)—"I Won't Be Back Till August" (very scratchy); (3) "The Last Shot Got Him" (cracked); (4) "Let George Do It" (fair); and (5) "Oceans Roll" (fairly good.) Naturally I intend to go on trying to obtain more and would appreciate any information as to where I might be able to get them.

Now as to information about my father. He was born in Philadelphia May 15, 1870, the son of Charles H. and Mary Morton. He was five feet eleven inches in height, had dark brown hair, blue eyes, and in his younger years weighed about 160 pounds. In later years his weight increased to about 175 to 180 pounds. He was very well preserved and at the time of his death in 1938 appeared to be no more than 56 or 57 years of age. Always a well dressed man, he could wear either formal or sports clothes with equal ease. His personality was infectiously agreeable and he was liked by everyone he met. His sunny disposition endeared him to all of his friends and his smile and spontaneous wit could be called his outstanding characteristics, or trademarks. It is said that he was a master at telling entertaining stories and he had a story for any occasion or any group. He could entertain youngsters or old people with equal ease, groups of men or women or the clergy, and not embarrass or offend anyone. It has been stated that he had, and held, more friends than anyone else in show business.

Although not a prude he never sang an objectionable song on the stage. He would never use a song that he could not sing in his wife's or family's presence.

A few months before his twenty-first birthday he married Mary Mickie (she was seventeen) a member of a prominent south Jersey family. They had nine children—six boys and three girls. There are four surviving—Ade, Edward, Jr., Paul (me) and Joseph, mother having died on July 23, 1946.

Dad came from a family of the theater. His father, Charles H. Morton, was not only an actor but a playwright as well. He was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. During the War between the States he was in the neighborhood of Richmond, Virginia, and the South. I have a program of one of his plays, "A Kiss in the Dark," which played in Richmond on Friday evening, January 10, 1862, at "the Franklin Varieties (late Franklin Hall). After the war he came north to Philadelphia and managed the old Arch Street Theater for Mrs. John Drew.

I don't know much about Dad's early life except that he had the usual varieties of jobs before going on the Philadelphia police force. He first started to sing at parties, then he was liked so much that he was asked to sing at a club party. An agent heard him and persuaded him to try out for the vaudeville stage. He was an immediate success. This, as near as I can figure, was about 1904 or 1905. For years he did a single act in a full dress suit with no supporting cast and no back drop. He usually had to sing several encores after his original act and many times had to make apologies so that the show could go on.

His beat as an officer was in the colored section of Philadelphia, and I have heard of one instance—at least from an uncle who heard it—of two colored men arguing in the balcony of a theater as to whether or not he was colored. Finally, the one convinced the other that he was, so good was his colored dialect. He could sing character, dialect or sentimental ballads with ease and had an amazing capacity for memorizing songs. I have seen him get five new songs on Thursday; some with two or three different sets of verses and choruses and put them in his show the following Monday. He always sang new songs. As soon as a song began to be popular, he substituted another.

As for his recordings, I know that Mr. Johnson of Victor and he were very friendly. How this came about I do not know. I was born in 1906, so you can easily understand why I do not know too much about his recording days. I do know that his enunciation was exceptionally good. This might have had some bearing as to why he was selected to record for Victor and Columbia. He closed his vaudeville career in June, 1926, at the Earle Theater in Philadelphia voluntarily. His conviction was that a man should quit while still on top rather than go on until voice and personality were gone.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 47)

## WORLD FAMOUS SLEEPY HOLLOW LAND

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in color printing and produced several popular prints.

This popularity of the stipple engraving brought about Ryland's success and impelled him to spend large sums of money and embark upon business speculations which ended in bankruptcy. Through a collaboration with Angelica Kauffman he was able to pay off his debts, and their association even influenced the course of English engraving as he adapted her graceful designs for the popular demand which was greater than he could hope to supply. After achieving huge profits from this tremendous market for the prints, he allowed himself to again plunge heavily into debt even to the point of forging a sum of money, said to be in the amount of several thousand pounds. Upon discovery of this fraud he fled from the law even though the country was placarded with bills with his description. When he was informed on by a cobbler the officers of the law arrived just in time to find that he was attempting suicide by cutting his throat with a razor. However, he did not die from that act but was hung for his indiscretions.

Bartolozzi befriended Ryland's family and later advanced to the position which Ryland had held — that of dominating the market still demanding the stipple prints. He was an artist of masterly skill and his name will always be among those who are in the first rank of their art.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

Now as to myself, I am the sixth child and, coincidentally, the only one with a love for the theater. I love music or drama, any type. For example, I am at present the president of the local Community Concert Association, president of the men's group of the Schumann club (a local musical organization), director of the church choir and its only tenor. On March 5 I will appear as the Duke in Gilbert and Sullivan's "Gondoliers." I have had my own dance orchestra (local, of course) from 1922 to 1931, have sung popular songs on the radio and have the annual headache of directing the local firemen's minstrel show. I worked with Dad in his restaurant from 1926 till his death, then carried on for myself. . . .

If there is anything in addition I can tell you, do not hesitate to ask me. I shall be only too glad to answer questions. . . . I shall be anxiously waiting to see the HOBBIES article. The best of luck to you. Sincerely, PAUL MORTON.

I replied, thanking Mr. Morton for his splendid letter and asking a few more questions that occurred to me. He replied on March 9. I quote some excerpts:

. . . I am very grateful to you for all the information you've given me about Dad and shall treasure any documents I can get regarding his professional career. I'm sorry that Dad did not keep a scrapbook. I would be very proud to display it today to my friends. . . . You asked my father's full name. It is Edward Farren Morton, and the names of the other children are: Charles, who died in 1936, leaving a wife and one daughter, Helen; Mary, who died in 1929, at the age of 21; Viola, who died in infancy, and Agnes, who also died in infancy. There was also a boy, born dead. Charles was the musician of the family, a very good pianist. . . .

Thanks for giving me the name of the man (Al McRea, Sr.) in Westville, who might have Dad's records. I have not written to him yet because I would rather visit him personally. Westville is only about sixty miles from Wildwood and as soon as I have the time I am going up. . . . I do hope I can get some of Dad's records.

I was very happy to hear that you thought so much of Dad, even as a boy, and I'm sure he would feel very flattered to know that he was one of your favorites. You see, I was too young to appreciate just how popular he must have been. . . . Then, he was on the road so much that I hardly knew him until he retired from the stage. Of course we were pals after he went into business but we didn't talk too much about his stage experience. Most of my information came from Mother, so I feel that I am letting you down when you ask me things I should know but don't. However, I'll do my best to give what help I can.

So ends my most recent communication from Paul Morton. As this is written in May I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting the genial gentleman whom I have already grown to consider a dear friend, but by the time this article appears he and I may have shaken hands. Paul is planning to come to Virginia in September to see me and to meet "The Baby," the famous "Weeping Willow Waitress" of the already mentioned

Cavalier Restaurant. "The Baby," whose name is Ann Eunice, has a specialty of relating, with tears in her big brown eyes, the outrageous (?) "cruelties" of her boss, familiarly known as "Nicky." She is looking forward to meeting "Cousin Paul," as she already calls him, and the desire for a meeting seems to be mutual, since Paul writes:

I'll bet that "Baby" is a riot. I've had a couple of girls work for me who had the same spontaneous humor that she has. They make business a lot more pleasant to conduct. I shall look forward to meeting both you and, at dinner, she—that is, come September.

Gloating over these paragraphs, "The Baby" has been threatening to leave Nicky flat and go to Wildwood with Cousin Paul, to be the star of the floor show—assuming there is one! —of Morton's Restaurant, where sea food is a specialty.

Next month we'll consider Eddie Morton's recording career in detail, together with an approximately complete list of his recordings.

### PRINTS FOR SALE

OLD VIEWS OF CITIES. Early prints, hand-colored, of your native town are interesting Americana. These are neatly mounted and protected by cellophane. Prices, from \$3 to \$15. Handpainted Coats of Arms authentically prepared to order: family name only requirement. Framed in gold, 12½x11". English with solid-color mat, \$25; Scottish, with handpainted Tartan mat, \$27.50.—Old Prints, 525 E. Argonne Dr., Kirkwood, St. Louis 22, Mo. au122534

COLOR PRINTS. Flowers, fruits, birds, views, costumes. Fine old lace paper Valentines. Wholesale & retail. Wanted: Valentines before 1870 only. Pinprick pictures. Kate Greenaway cards, all.—K. Gregory 222 East 71st St., New York 21, N. Y. f128632

CURRIER & IVES PRINTS. Send 25c in stamps for list, large and small folios.—Frank W. Mathews, Scottsville, N. Y. ja120821

FOR YOUR Family History. Costume prints. Baronial Manors; Scottish Highlands. All with coats-of-arms. Early American portraits and places. Maps.—Mabel Louise Keech—"At the Sign of the Crest": 2622 Thayer St., Evanston, Illinois. Phone: University 4-5789. txf

ORIGINAL BAXTER PRINTS. Stamped mounts or signed plate; also Le Blond's ovals.—A. Edwards, 927 25th St., Santa Monica, Calif. ja6046

ORIGINAL CURRIER & IVES: "Assassination of Lincoln"; "Fall of Richmond"; and Lincoln portrait, "The Nation's Martyr". \$5 each.—Julia Newman, Rte. No. 1, Box 363, Battle Creek, Mich. s3234

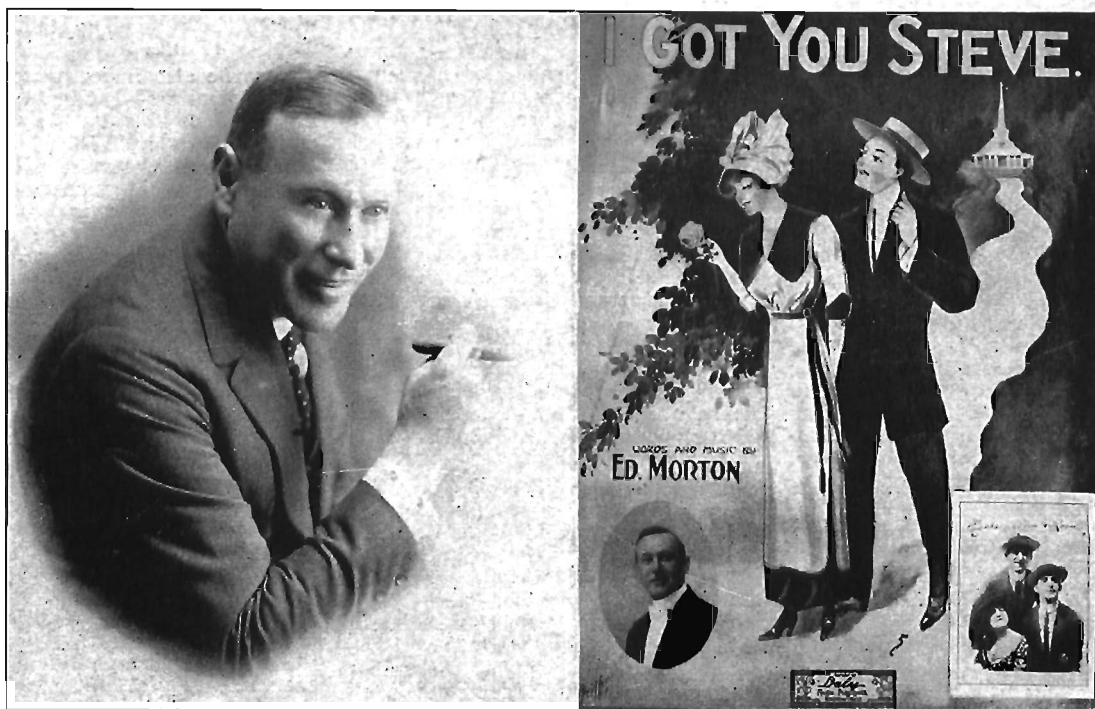
CURRIER & IVES PRINTS.—James P. Lynch, 3051 S. Columbus St., Arlington, Va. o3802

OLD COLOR PRINTS: Royal portraits. Sporting. Costumes. Napoleonic, military, caricatures. Posters. Maps. Poultry, dogs. Victorian watercolors, flowers, fruits. Tinsel pictures. Legal provincial.—Paul L'Arron, Box 1031, Santa Monica, Calif. n3054

CURRIER & IVES. Send large stamped envelope for list.—Jacques Schurre, 313 Maple Avenue, Falls Church, Va. d6445

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Eddie Morton at the peak of his long vaudeville career

Cover design of comic song, "I Got You Steve," written and recorded by Ed. Morton in 1912. His photograph is in lower left corner.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### EDDIE MORTON

By JIM WALSH

Last month's installment was devoted to an account of Edward Farnen Morton's life, largely as outlined by his son Paul. This month I shall trace his recording career and next month add a comprehensive, though possibly not absolutely complete, list of Morton recordings.

Eddie Morton's first appearance in a record supplement occurred just 45 years ago. Here I believe it would be well to reprint a paragraph in my article, "Notes From Early Victor Catalogs," which appeared in the January, 1950, *HOBBIES*:

In October, 1907, the first Victor record was listed by one of the finest, but... most neglected of early phonograph comedians — Eddie Morton. I quote: "Eddie Morton is one of the best coon song singers in America, and during the past summer was a feature of the Madison Square Roof production, 'Maid and the Millionaire,' where he was obliged to respond to numerous encores. The Victor has secured the exclusive services of this popular singer and now offers two of his greatest successes." The records were 5220, "Mariutch (Do the Hootch-a-ma-Cootch)," on the label of which the comedian's name appeared as Edward Morton, and 31661, "That's Gratitude."

Now a word on the way Morton's records were labeled. Just why Victor chose to call Morton by his formal

Christian name of Edward on his first record is not certain. The diminutive "Eddie" certainly suits his personality much better. The labeling may have been a mistake. Such things happened. The first Edison cylinders by John S. Macdonald were to have been issued as by "Harry Macdonald," and were announced that way, but the supplement writer or printer made it Macdonough (which happened to be the name of a famous stage comedian) and so the singer stuck to Harry Macdonough as his recording disguise. At the time he hadn't even heard of the other Macdonough, to whom he later apologized for the name filching. But the error, if there was one, in the use of Morton's formal first name was quickly corrected. Thereafter on Victor records he was always known as Eddie Morton.

Soon afterwards, however, he began singing for Columbia and Edison, and they both called him by an even shorter nickname, Ed. He also appears to have been better known in vaudeville as Ed. than Eddie. I remember looking some years ago through a bound volume of the Knoxville Journal and running across a

cartoon of "Ed. Morton, who is appearing at the local Keith Theater this week." But since his Victor records were his best sellers and he is better known to record buyers as "Eddie," that is the way I have chosen to write his name.

#### II

Morton's first Victors, as has been seen, were the ten-inch "Mariutch" and the twelve-inch "That's Gratitude." A few months later he was represented by one of his most amusing, "Just a Friend of the Family." Then came in succession during the next year "The Peach That Tastes the Sweetest Hangs the Highest on the Tree," made in both eight-inch and ten-inch; "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew," "The Party that Wrote 'Home, Sweet Home' Never Was a Married Man," "Don't Take Me Home" and "Somebody Lied."

The comedian's exclusive Victor contract must have been for only a year, because his first Edison cylinder appeared in October, 1908. This was "Don't Take Me Home," a number of which Morton made more records than of any other song he ever sang.



Here is The New Phonogram's description:

**DON'T TAKE ME HOME**—a new Edison artist in one of the comic song hits of the season. Ed. Morton is a warm favorite at the New York roof gardens and no vocalist is more in demand in vaudeville. This record recites the fortunes (or misfortunes) of a poor married man who had been out "on the town." Everybody he meets insists on taking him home." He has visions of what is waiting for him there and tearfully protests. Music, Harry Von Tilzer; words, Vincent Bryan.

It has already been mentioned that Morton sang this Von Tilzer hit for Victor. He likewise made it for Zonophone and Columbia.

The late months of 1908 and early part of 1909 were times of change in the record business. Edison, hard pressed by competition from the disc manufacturers and the makers of indestructible cylinders, came out with his four-minute Amberol, which doubled the playing time of his ordinary cylinder but was still easy to break. Victor and Columbia went in for double-faced popular records.

Edison's first list of fifty Amberol cylinders was issued in November, 1908. One of the fifty, No. 29, "A Singer Sang a Song," was sung by Morton. This was a clever comic song, by Seymour Furth, whose several refrains gave the vocalist an opportunity to sing part of such current hits as "Love Me and the World is Mine," "Harrigan" and "Won't You Be My Honey?" The Edison description said:

Sam Bernard's big encore-winner in his new play, "Nearly a Hero." We are introduced to all of the usual run of singers one hears at a "party," from the inevitable young lady who has a cold when asked to sing to Pat Casey, who could sing only "Harrigan." Morton works in some of the drollest imitations of the various singers and gets many laughs for every line.

This was the last record Morton made for Edison. It would be interesting to know why he chose to end his association with that company so abruptly.

### III

In December, 1908, when Eddie was changing from an exclusive to a freelance status, Victor published an unusual advertisement in The Ladies Home Journal. It consisted of a representation of two talking machines, the instruments' bodies and horns filled with photographs of Victor artists. One machine was devoted to Red Seal celebrities, the other to popular stars. Morton was included as No. 25 in the latter group.

The comedian was represented on two of the first twelve double-faced records issued by Victor. One, which apparently didn't sell well in spite of having the seemingly unbeatable combination of Morton on one side and Billy Murray on the other, was No. 16011, "Music Makes Me Sentimental." Murray's side was "The Old Time Rag." Unfortunately for my peace of mind, I have never been able to find this disc. Then came "A Singer Sang a Song," which stayed in the catalog for several years. It was paired with "A Busy Week at Pun'kin Center," by the ever popular Cal Stewart. Soon afterwards came

double-faced re-issues of "The Peach That Tastes the Sweetest" and "Just a Friend of the Family." July, 1909, brought a new number, "I'm a Member of the Midnight Crew," coupled with "Did He Run?" by the Peerless Quartet. The supplement said:

Two comic numbers of more than usual merit. It takes a good quartet to render a topical song like "Did He Run?" and give it intelligibly. and the Peerless has accomplished this task. The number by Morton is something of a novelty in "convivial" songs, as it recommends taking along your wife and family when you go out for a good time!

The next month, Morton reappeared with "In Ireland," a record I have never heard, and in February, 1910, he was present with "Please Don't Tell My Wife," whose theme was similar to "Don't Take Me Home." Then followed reissues of "Mariuch" and "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew," before Eddie reappeared in November, with "Let George Do It," an amusing number based on a comic strip which George McManus was drawing in those pre-Jiggs days. A month later Morton came through with one of the funniest records he ever made, "If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out." In February, he obliged with Jimmy Martindale's favorite, "I'd Rather Be a Minstrel Man Than a Multi-Millionaire," described as, "a new darky song by that eminent 'coon shouter,' Mr. Morton." Also in February appeared "I Won't Be Back Till August," of which the catalog editor said:

Vincent Bryan's amusing tale of the innocent youth who went to the seaside and refused to return is sung as only the genial Eddie can sing it. Music of the song was by Albert Gumble.

Although my file of Victor supplements for 1911 is complete, I haven't been able to find a monthly listing of one of Morton's biggest hits, "Wild Cherries Rag" (No. 16792), which he also sang for Columbia. It was paired with a U. S. Marine Band version of Scott Joplin's classic "Maple Leaf Rag," considered by Rudi Blesh and Harriet Janis, authors of "They All Played Ragtime," to be the greatest ragtime composition. Even a recording of "Wild Cherries" has so far eluded me, but I was glad to receive a letter in February, 1951, from Alden P. Armagnac, of New York City, in which he said:

For a long time I've been hoping to locate a swell record that I've remembered vividly from kid days, of "Wild Cherries Rag." It turned up the other day in the collection of my good friend and fellow-collector, Mr. Howard B. Rea, of Montclair, New Jersey, who had forgotten he had it until I reminded him of the title. Only had to hear the first couple of bars of the introduction to sing out, "That's IT!" — the selfsame record I'd remembered from 30 years back or more. Since Rea has a home-recording machine for making duplicates I left happily with a copy under my arm.

The record was by the same Eddie Morton whom you called in Variety "one of the best singing comedians in the history of the phonograph." Our opinions agree.

Maybe one of these days my luck will be as good as Mr. Armagnac's and I'll come across "Wild Cherries," which was a big seller and shouldn't, it would seem, be hard to find.

### IV

In September, 1911, Victor issued what is unquestionably the biggest selling record Eddie Morton ever made. This was Lewis and Denny's now classic "Oceana Roll," and it was one of "Six Special September Hits," offered on three double-faced discs to take care of an abnormally large outcropping of popular song successes. The supplement said that "Oceana Roll" describes a lively piece which one of our sailor boys on a battleship was wont to play on all occasions, whether a storm or a battle was in progress."

And why shouldn't it have sold? Not only was it a great number in its own right, but it was coupled with an even greater one — one of the greatest popular hits ever written, Irving Berlin's undying "Alexander's Ragtime Band," sung by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. Candor compels the admission that it was the Collins-Harlan side that was primarily responsible for the coupling's phenomenal sale, although "Oceana Roll" would have gone big no matter what its mating. "Don't Take Me Home" was the song of which Eddie made the most records, at least four, but all combined couldn't have sold more than a small fraction of the "Oceana Roll" output.

In January, 1912, Victor issued its first complete alphabetical catalog. The first few pages were devoted to an explanation of how the alphabetical system worked. "Alexander" and "Oceana" probably were the biggest selling popular record of the time, because the coupling was chosen for purposes of illustration. You were first shown how "Alexander" was listed in its proper place under the A's with "Oceana" following, indented and in italics, to indicate that it was on the other side. Then "Oceana Roll" appeared under the O's, with "Alexander" indented and ital-



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### RECORDS WANTED

OLD RECORDS by the "Carter Family", wanted.—Harvey Fink, Watertown, Wisconsin. o108

### RECORDS FOR SALE

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Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

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FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

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CYLINDER RECORDS. One thousand for sale. Stamp for new list. Cylinder phonographs, records, bought and sold, repaired.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

THE RECORD SPEAKS. The parrot will say "Just as good", but does he know what he is talking about? Can present-day re-issues, re-recordings, pressed at will in any form, take the place or give the excitement of getting rare originals, of the great singers of the past? Of course not. There is no substitute for an original. Besides the great thrill, pride and enjoyment that originals give, the money spent is a sound investment that grows with time. Your collection is worth just what you put into it. Is there anything to boast about a collection filled with common re-issues? We can supply originals dating from 1896 on, for the beginner, and for the most advanced collector. We welcome your friendship. Write us.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. n38212

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

icized. This continued to be the model example until the record was out of the catalog in 1920.

In spite of its potential immortality, the Victor catalog editor dismissed Alexander's Ragtime Band" rather cursorily, merely saying it was about "a colored organization which will make any audience sit up and take notice."

Eddie Morton contributed one of the remaining four hits in the special September supplement. His version of "You Can Lead a Mule to Water But You Can't Make Him Drink" was doubled with Bob Roberts' rendition of an Irving Berlin and Ted Snyder composition, "Woodman, Spare That Tree." Both songs were being sung by Bert Williams in the Follies of 1911. The third record, No. 16919, was coupled with "You'll Do the Same Thing Over Again," by Billy Murray, with an Ada Jones-Murray duet of "My Hula Hula Love," written by Edward Madden and Percy Wenrich, who died within six days of each other in March of this year. This was probably the first American popular song with an Hawaiian motif.

Somewhere in the late months of 1911, Victor put out another Morton record, "They're All Good American Names," which emphasized an excellent point, that no matter how unusual a person's name may be and regardless of his racial strain he's probably as good an American as anyone else. I don't have the record but should like to find it, particularly since Walsh is one of the names it uses for the sake of argument. It was coupled with our old friend, "If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out."

### V

Morton's records were issued rather irregularly, no doubt because his long vaudeville tours kept him away from the studios for a good many months at a time. But he was back in June, 1912, with one of his cleverest and most amusing numbers, "The Last Shot Got Him," otherwise described on the label as "The Great Bloo-ie Song." The catalog editor admiringly referred to "that famous classic, 'The Last Shot' (familarly called the 'Bloo-ie Song') with which Morton has been making such a hit in vaudeville."

The next month the erstwhile "Singing Policeman" makes his debut in a new role. Not even his son Paul said anything in his recollections of his father about the elder Morton's being a song writer. But he wrote both words and music as of "I Got You, Steve," a catchy ditty that made clever use of a popular slang phrase of the day to describe how a determined little lady captured a handsome young gent named Steve. This is another Morton record I haven't found, but a Vinton, Virginia, friend of mine discovered the sheet music in the Roanoke Goodwill store and presented it to me. The lyric is dated, but the melody is so tricky and appealing that, after playing it for me, Mavis Overstreet, the musical director of Radio Station WSLs, where I

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY, books, catalogs on cylinder phonographs, records.—Nugent, 12 N. Third, Richmond, Va. o3692

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3863

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly128121

### PHONOGRAPHS

DISC PHONOGRAPHS, WANTED. Table model disc phonographs, any make, with diaphragm on small end of external horn, preferably. State condition, price and details.—A. B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Ill. o3861

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

FOR SALE: 500 Regina, 15½" discs. 100 Regina, 27" discs. Also other sizes and makes. Send for lists. Send for my tune disc Want List, offering premium prices for certain tunes. Wanted: Mira music boxes playing 6¼" and 9¼" discs.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d3487

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

VIOLINS: Two "August Gemunder & Sons" 1902, perfect condition, \$225 each.—E. A. Frier, 12 Lyon Avenue, Menands, N. Y. o3882

### MUSIC LITERATURE

FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

### MUSIC BOXES WANTED

WANT ALL KINDS of music boxes, regardless of condition. Also any steel disc records or Swiss, cylinders, original pictures & catalogues. Describe briefly. Veteran starting hobby.—G. P. Battley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. 16506

### MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6046

WANTED: Reprodncer for Edison Amberola 30 phonograph.—George R. Hare, 3006 14th Avenue, Tampa 5, Fla. n3652

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. jcl28291

WANTED: Sammy Kaye & Ink Spots transcriptions, V discs, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings. I will pay top prices. "Money is no object."—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. n3005

am news editor, said she believes it would have hit possibilities if revived today.

In August, 1912, another Morton record appeared, of a song which has become something of a comedy classic, "Beans! Beans! Beans!" September brought "There's Lots of Stations On My Railroad Track," sung in the inimitable Eddie's best style, and in October he was represented with one of the prolific Harry Von Tilzer's hits, "Somebody Else is Gettin' It." To quote the supplement: "Eddie Morton sings here a touching ditty about the fellow who takes great delight in the thought that someone else is the present victim of the lady who 'threw him down.'"

There were no more Victor records by Eddie until January, 1913, when he sang still another Von Tilzer number, "Waiting for Me," from "Ten Little Brides." Morton must have been on a cross-country tour during much of 1913, because his name was missing from the supplements until November when he was present with the unfailingly hilarious "Ever Since You Told Me That You Loved Me (I'm a Nut! I'm a Nut! I'm a Nut!)"

Then in December, 1913, appeared the last Eddie Morton record that Victor was to issue. It combined another of his own compositions, "Noodle Soup Rag," with a cheerful ditty called "Isch ka Bibble," and to be a Yiddish term meaning "I should worry!" This, in my opinion, is one of the very best Morton records. Having arrived at the end of the list, I can't keep from regretting that Eddie's recording career didn't last as long as Billy Murray's or Henry Burr's.

## VI

The comedian's Columbia list also deserves attention, although on the whole I don't consider it as good as the Victor. For one thing, the voice doesn't seem to be recorded with as

much verve and brilliance. For another, the selection of songs is not so happy as those chosen by Victor, except of course in the several instances where the companies issued the same numbers.

Morton's first Columbia record, issued in 1909, was that wonderful "Wild Cherries Rag," combined with "I'm Going to Do What I Please," sung by Stella Tobin, who in private life was Mrs. Paul Southe. (Her husband also made Columbia records and sang in vaudeville.) In succession during the next few months followed "Don't Take Me Home," "Then We'll All Go Home," and "You Ain't Talking to Me."

There was an interlude of several months before Columbia issued an excellent number, "Oh You Dream." A little later Morton was represented by one of his most successful Columbias, the coupling of "That's the Fellow I Want to Get" and "Don't Make Me Laugh, Bill." Then came "If I Could See as Far Ahead as I Can See Behind."

After another interval of a few months the comedian contributed "That Peculiar Rag" to the November, 1911, list. This is a Morton masterpiece that I still have not the pleasure of hearing, but Bryant Burke, of Hempstead, Long Island, who recently found an excellent copy, says it's an admirable comic number. "The Trolley Car Swing" was added to the Columbia catalog in the early months of 1912, and then there was silence (probably caused by that same cross-country jaunting that kept Morton out of the Victor Lists) until "They've Got Me Doin' It Now," a medley of Irving Berlin hits, brightened the October, 1913, supplement. "What Do You Mean You Lost Your Dog?" came out in December and was followed in February by "I'm Crying Just for You," which I consider Morton's poorest record. The song itself is not attractive — at least not to me — and in my opinion has no particular merit, even though it has been revived with some success on an Al Jolson record. Morton sang it better than Jolson, but the number was a draggy sob-song, not suited to his buoyant style. If Eddie Morton must sing love songs, my preference is for something bright and boisterous like "Ever Since You Told Me That You Loved Me." But of course even in tear-jerkers he was a million miles ahead of the Johnnie Rays and other sob specialists of 1952.

There was also nothing outstanding about Morton's March, 1914, number, "While They Were Dancing Around," although the supplement termed it "one of the best of Al Von Tilzer's current productions." On the other hand, a comic specialty written by Grant Clarke and Irving Berlin, "He's a Devil in His Own Home Town," and issued in June, is excellent. Quoting the supplement: "He's a Devil in His Own Home Town" (is) a new Irving Berlin song which Ed. Morton is now using in vaudeville with extraordinary success."

Eddie Morton's last Columbia rec-

ord appeared in September, 1914, just a few weeks after World War One began. It was the big hit, "You're Here and I'm Here," written by Jerome Kern and introduced in "The Laughing Husband." I haven't heard it but doubt that it was well adapted to the comedian's style.

Only a few lines will be needed to summarize Morton's other recording activities. He made four cylinders for the U. S. Everlasting Record Company, which was in business from 1910 to 1913. Perhaps he made others but these are all I have been able to find listed, and I haven't heard any of them. I don't think he made indestructible (later called Federal) cylinders, but shan't make a positive statement to that effect.

In 1916, after Columbia's recording expert, Victor Emerson, left to establish his own firm, Morton began recording for his old friend. I don't know how many Emerson discs he made. A few years ago I found a six-inch, single-faced Emerson of "Just a Little Bit of Monkey Left in You and Me," by Morton, but it was cracked so badly I couldn't play it. Nevertheless, I have kept it, for sentiment's sake. He also made at least one seven-inch record, "Come Out of the Kitchen, Mary Ann," coupled with an Ada Jones selection.

My file of Columbia supplements for the years 1909 through 1913, is far from complete, and I am unable to quote from them so extensively as I did from the Victors. But here are a couple of interesting references. "You Ain't Talking to Me" appeared in the list for February, 1910, with this comment:

Mr. Morton entertains us this month with an amusing bit of ragtime, in which some up-to-date slang is very effectively applied to certain situations in which the singer finds himself. When people put up to him propositions that offend his good sense, he assumes that they must be talking to somebody else and tells them so in no uncertain terms. Three verses are recorded in Mr. Morton's best vein.

The October, 1913, supplement remarked concerning "They've Got Me Doing It Now:"

"Ed. Morton, always a favorite with Columbia patrons, sings... Irving Berlin's new vocal medley, into which is ingeniously woven almost every one of Berlin's recent successes, making a most novel and entertaining subject for recording."

To be Continued

## MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List. —Durell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. o 6844

SWISS & REGINA music boxes, bar-room pianos; barrel & hand organs; large Regina piano, with drums; bells & cymbal playing, 32" disc. Old coin operated Edison juke box, playing cylinder records; accordion playing paper roll; musical alarm and others.—Ray Albertson, Box 23, Atlantic, Ia. o 3637

HUNDREDS OF IMPORTED cut-out vocals, rare Golden Age operatics; C&T. Fonotopia, etc., hard to get Music Hall and Personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, imported LPs, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. n3867

WILL SELL PART of my collection: Hurdy Gurdy street organ, \$300. 26" automatic Regina, 24" records, \$275. Mills Violana, 10 rolls, \$150. Swiss Box, 10 tunes, bells, drums & castanets, beautiful box, \$165. 20 3/4" Automatic Regina, 24 records, \$225. Set of Swiss Bells, (music), \$100. Musical silver watch, \$175. Don't ask me for name of tunes and do not care to hear from curiosity seekers. — B. C. Williams, 8000 Conn Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. o 1065

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ux

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## EDDIE MORTON

By JIM WALSH

*(Continued from the October Issue)*

### VII

The foregoing tells the story of Eddie Morton's recording career — with one notable exception. Perhaps you recall that Paul Morton said he was sure his father would have appreciated the great interest I had in his records, "even as a boy."

I had told Paul that when I was a small boy I imagined I was the owner and operator of the Walsh Talking Machine Company, and that I started, in a pencil tablet, a catalog that grew to contain several thousand double-faced records. That mythical phonograph company was the greatest pleasure of my life. I wrote descriptions of Walsh Records for my "supplements" and even biographical sketches and imaginary interviews with the famous artists who, little as they suspected it, were busily recording for me.

Eddie Morton was one of my prime favorites. I had him record not only current popular songs but also other numbers which I had written myself—or imagined I had. And finally, to show my admiration for him, I put him and Bob Roberts in charge of the Walsh Company's comic recording department. Yes, Eddie Morton not only sang for Victor, Zonophone, Columbia, Edison, U. S. Everlasting and Emerson, he probably made more Walsh records than all the other kinds put together. Naturally, I feel a rueful regret today that his Walsh waxings were all imaginary!

But I can't leave the subject of Eddie Morton without saying that it gives me great pleasure just to read down the list of his records and find myself chuckling at some of the memories they evoke. Many of the titles are mirth-compelling in themselves. Others bring recollections of happy occasions, such as the time Bryant Burke, gleeful at discovering that I didn't own the twelve-inch version of "That's Gratitude!" aroused my envious emotions by spinning his own fine copy.

I urge any collector with a liking for clever, full-flavored humor to acquire all the Morton records he finds in good condition. Whenever I play those in my own collection it seems I can see Eddie, striding back and forth across the stage in minstrel attire, complete with high silk hat, face blacked with burnt cork and throwing back his head to take one of those ringing high notes that usually ended his records. I don't believe he did much, if any, minstrel work and doubt that he used blackface makeup in vaudeville, but when that glowing

baritone voice delights my ears that is how I delight to picture him, as one of the great minstrels of yesterday, living up to the sentiments of "I'd Rather Be a Minstrel Man Than a Multi-Millionaire."

Glancing down the list of Morton records brings many pleasant recollections. "Mariuch" is noteworthy for being sung in good Italian dialect. "Just a Friend of the Family" is another of the songs featuring the situation in which a "gentleman friend" is caught making love to a lady who explains, with fine disregard for the truth, that he's a relative or, in this instance, merely an old friend of the family. There's a similar theme in "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew."

"The Peach That Tastes the Sweetest" is one of the most mirth-provoking of the records. I well remember how my brother and I laughed the first time we heard Eddie's account of how he used to call on "Miss Tillie," stretch his "lazy five foot ten" on her sofa "and give my Tillie's lovin' lips a smack." His stingy ways, however, finally caused the lady to announce that if he wished to keep calling at her home he'd have to spend some money. As she put it: "Somethin' for nothin' is not to be commended! My free list is entirely suspended—'cause the peach that tastes the sweetest (Lawd!) hangs the highest on the tree!"

Funnier, if anything, is "If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out," which relates how one Rufus Brown went to "ol' Aunt Nance" to have his fortune read. Nance said that to do a good job she would have to summon Rufe's uncle from the dead, whereupon the panic-stricken Mr. Brown assured her that "if he comes in I'm goin' out," and added: "If that door is locked, that little hole in the lock will be plenty big enough for me!" A girl friend who told him there was a burglar in the house received a similar assurance: "That little rat hole there right beneath your chair will be plenty big enough!"

"I Won't Be Back Till August" tells of the delight a hitherto bashful young gentleman experienced at the seashore when he saw the girls wearing the "daring" bathing costumes of 1910. "You Can Lead a Mule to Water" is a sermon in song on the impossibility of making a woman do anything against her will, and "The Last Shot Got Him" tells how a "cowgirl named Mona" became jealous (in Arizona) of her cowboy

lover, Tony. She fired several shots before the last one got him "right between his breakfast and his dinner time." When Tony recovered he shot his rival, Dan, "right between his pantry and his dining room."

"Waiting for Me" is the sad story of a man who suffered from such wordly calamities as a jealous wife and New Jersey mosquitos. I always get a laugh out of "Ever Since You Told Me That You Loved Me" when Eddie narrates how he goes around "bumping into people on the street like a fool—like an awful fool!" and winds up: "Now my little derby hat will never, never fit—ever since you told me that you luh-huvved me!" It makes me wonder why public taste has changed so completely that no one writes such bubbly comic songs today. "The Party That Wrote 'Home, Sweet Home'" has a spoken discourse on walking the floor with the baby, and other woes of married life.

In the Columbia list, "Oh You Dream" is noteworthy for the names of the beauties of forty years ago whom Eddie compares unfavorably to his dream girl. Lillian Russell, Anna Held, Maxine Elliott and Eva Tanguay are among them. "That's the Fellow I Want to Get," apparently adapted and cleaned-up from an old off-color joke, tells of how "Little Willie," scolded for watching the ice man "kiss his ma," went to a druggist and asked for whooping cough germs. He explained he would give the germs to Mary, Mary would pass them on to John, who would infect the cook. "The cook will give it to Father; Pa'll give it to Ma, you bet; and Ma'll give it to the ice man—that's the fellow I want to get!"

"What Do You Mean, You Lost Yer Dog?" is the sad tale of an animal fancier looking for his "roving Rover," while "He's a Devil in His Own Home" is a satiric "rube" song about a rustic gentleman who "would never do in New York City" but is strictly hot stuff in his home town. He was the village checker champion, but the song adds: "And he cheated—can you beat it? He's a devil in his own home town!"

I have saved for the last my comment on "The Noodle Soup Rag" because it recalls the most amusing of all my Eddie Morton associations.

When I first began giving my Walsh's Wax Works program, featuring my collection of old records, from WDBJ in Roanoke, I wanted to put on a special Father's Day program.



Nearly all popular songs written about Father have been satiric ("Everybody Works But Father" is probably the classic example), so my program naturally was built around numbers of that type. Among those I particularly wished to play was Morton's "Noodle Soup Rag." The program director held up approval, saying he'd have to try to "clear it" through Broadcast Music, Incorporated, in New York, since we didn't know who published the music.

The woman who "cleared" for B. M. I. replied, to my chagrin, that she couldn't authorize us to play the record since the copyright of the song was owned by the composer and she didn't know how to get in touch with him. (Morton, who wrote as well as sang the song, of course had already been dead for several years in 1943.) Then she added this postscript:

"P. S. Will you please tell me what in h—! noodle soup has to do with Father's Day?"

A letter went back explaining that the lyrics described the joy the whole family experienced in watching Father as he dredged up his soup, and inquiring, "Father, aint youse got no bringin's up? The funniest part is the unexpected introduction of a quotation in the refrain from James Bland's favorite "In the Evening By the Moonlight." In the Morton version this becomes: "How the old folks would enjoy it; they could sit all night and listen and the fun would never lag—how we all would listen when Father ate his soup (swish!! swish!!) — that's the noodle soup rag!"

I close my Eddie Morton reminiscences with this quotation from a great comic song by a greater comedian. I am sorry that circumstances never permitted of my meeting Edward Farren Morton or even writing to him and telling him how much pleasure his recorded art had given me. But I am happy that I have come to know his son Paul through correspondence and hope that by the time this article appears I shall have met him in the flesh. And I hope too that Mr. Morton's many admirers among record collectors have enjoyed this review of the comedian's life and recording achievements.

Next Month—CHARLES A. PRINCE

### RECORDS BY EDDIE MORTON

(Note by Jim Walsh.—Titles with an asterisk prefixed to the numbers denote records not in my collection, but which I should like to get.)

- Victor Single-Face Ten-Inch (1907-1909)  
 5220 Mariuch Dance da Hootch-a-Ma-Kootch  
 5281 Just a Friend of the Family  
 5403 Peach That Tastes the Sweetest Hangs the Highest on the Tree (also in eight-inch)  
 5501 Right Church But the Wrong Pew  
 5513 Party That Wrote "Home, Sweet Home" Never Was a Married Man  
 5545 Don't Take Me Home  
 5546 Somebody Lied  
 Victor Single-Face Twelve-Inch (1907)  
 \*31661 That's Gratitude  
 Victor Double-Face Ten-Inch (issued 1909-1913, although some of the numbers were recorded earlier in single-face)  
 \*16011 Music Makes Me Sentimental with Old-Time Rag (Billy Murray)

- 16012 Singer Sang a Song with Busy Week at Punkin Center (Cal Stewart)  
 16150 Peach That Tastes the Sweetest with Under Any Old Flag at All (Billy Murray)  
 16284 Just a Friend of the Family with You've Got to Love Me a Lot (Ada Jones and Len Spencer)  
 16324 I'm a Member of the Midnight Crew with Did He Run? (Peerless Quartet)  
 \*16333 In Ireland with Make a Noise Like a Hoop and Roll Away (Ada Jones)  
 16445 Please Don't Tell My Wife with Nobody Knows Where John Brown Went (Arthur Collins)  
 16530 Mariuch with Over on the Jersey Side (Billy Murray)  
 16555 Right Church But the Wrong Pew with You'll Have to Sing an Irish Song (Ada Jones)  
 \*16646 Let George Do It with Conversations (Edward M. Favor)  
 16650 If He Comes In I'm Goin Out with Coon's Love Song (Pryors Band)  
 16697 I'd Rather be a Minstrel Man Than a Multimillionaire with Cheer Up, My Honey (Ada Jones and Billy Murray)  
 16706 I Won't Be Back Till August with Avenger March (Pryor's Band)  
 16758 Party That Wrote "Home, Sweet Home" with Googy-Oo (Ada Jones and Billy Murray)  
 16784 Somebody Lied with He Falls for the Ladies Every Time (Josie Sadler)  
 \*16792 Wild Cherries Rag with Maple Leaf Rag (U. S. Marine Band)  
 16908 Oceana Roll with Alexander's Ragtime Band (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan)  
 16911 You Can Lead a Mule to Water But You Can't Make Him Drink with Woodman, Spare That Tree (Bob Roberts)  
 \*16938 They're All Good American Names with If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out  
 17071 Last Shot Got Him with Lingerin' Love (Ada Jones and Billy Murray)

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Approximately 50 Symphonion discs 13¾" diameter, 9 Symphonion discs 10½" diameter, 22 Symphonion discs 14¾" diameter.

We have several Regina motors for 15½" machines and several double comb plates including short bed plate for late style Reginas for sale.

We have photostat copies of oiling and instruction sheets for 15½" Reginas price 25c each.

Photostat copies of parts sheets for 15½" Reginas 25c each.

Photostat copies of oiling and instruction sheets for automatic Reginas 50c each.

Photostat copies of pictures of all models of Reginas manufactured in the year 1902, \$1.00 ea.

### SWISS MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

524. Old key wind forte piano music box, rosewood cabinet 20½" long, 7" wide, 5" high. Plays the following 6 airs Les Filles de Martre, Lucrezia Borgia Polka Mazourka des Filles de Martre, Norm, Les Mille et une nuits, La Sonambule, \$125.  
 570. 8 Tune Quinture Swiss music box, burl walnut cabinet 34" long, 15" wide, 12" high, 17" nickel plated cylinder and music works, 4 music combs. Has original tune card, plays operatic tunes, waltzes, marches etc. All A-1 condition, price \$175.  
 585. 10 Tune Swiss music box, mahogany grain cabinet 20" long, 9½" wide, 6" high. Winds with crank on right end of box start and stop lever, change and repeat lever Jacot's safety check, Original tune card missing. Price \$65.  
 596. 6 Tune forte piano Swiss music box, rosewood cabinet 22½" long, 8½" wide, 5½" high, 13" cylinder with 2 music combs plays the following 6 airs, Fra Diavolo, La Traviata La Belle Helene, Light Blook, Il Trovatore, The Blue Danube. Price \$125.  
 600. Extra cylinder music box with 4 cylinders 9" long, each playing 6 tunes, fine tone Excelsior machine in carved oak cabinet with drawer to hold extra cylinders 20" long, 14" wide, 13" high. Price \$175.  
 623. 20 Tune Swiss music box, rosewood cabinet 19" long, 9" wide, complete tune list of American folk song and operatic tunes \$55.  
 628. 10 Tune Swiss music box rosewood cabinet 21½" long, 10" wide, beautifully inlaid with crossed musical instruments, all in good condition. Original tune card missing but plays the usual American and operatic tunes, \$75.  
 629. 8 Tune Sublime Harmonie music box inlaid burl walnut cabinet 26" long, 9½" wide, 7½" high, has original tune card, original combs, all A-1, \$90.  
 630. Very handsome small 6 tune Swiss music box

in excellent condition. Cabinet 11¾" long, 6" wide, 4½" high. Original tune card. Music comb and cylinder pins, all in A-1 condition. Plays the following 6 tunes — Star Spangled Banner, Forest Bird, Robin Adair, Ta ra ra Boom dea, Mocking Bird, Some Day, \$45.

586. 8 Tune Swiss music box playing all hymns in a beautiful burl walnut cabinet 26½" long, 11" wide, 7" high. Cover, front and ends of box are burl walnut inlaid with holly and ebony wood. Box has fine handles on the ends, a double spring for long running time, 2 music combs and a 14" cylinder, all in perfect condition. Plays the following 8 airs — Is My Name Written There, While the Days are Going by, Jesus Lover of My Soul, Scatter Seeds of Kindness, Let Us Gather, Oh Think of the Home Over There, Hallehuyal What a Saviour, My Redeemer, I Will Sing of My Redeemer, Whiter than Snow. Price \$135.  
 590. 12 Tune Swiss music box with 8 bells, rosewood cabinet 26" long, 15" wide 12" high, 12" cylinder and comb A-1 condition, harp attachment, tune number indicator. Plays the following 12 airs. Washington Post March, Planina, Wang, Roses du Ind, Les Cloches de Cornville, Sweet Ternium, Old Folks at Home, Daisy Bell, Marching Through Georgia, Cavalieria Rusticana, Des Vogelhandler, Coackling Club, \$125.

66. REGINA AND OTHER DISC TYPE MUSIC BOXES.  
 511. Symphonion music automaton made in Germany, table model, coin slot machine. Plays 12" discs, fine walnut cabinet, 26" high, 20" wide 13" deep with 3 tune discs, \$85.  
 556. 27" Oak table model Orchestral Regina with accordion folding type cover. Dimensions 34x20x12½". 18 tunes, price \$175.  
 560. 15½" Regina automatic mahogany case 68x26x22" with 36 tune discs, all A-1 condition, price \$225.  
 578. 14" Stella "Grand" music box, mahogany cabinet 25" long, 19" wide, 11" high, 14 tune discs, price \$75.

603. 15½" Regina approximately 20" square, 12" high, oak cabinet, 24 tune discs. Price \$55.  
 604. 15½" Regina mahogany cabinet single comb music box, 24 tune discs. Price \$85.  
 605. 15½" Regina fancy carved oak cabinet double comb approximately 20" square, 14" high, 24 tune discs. Price \$75.

611. Bell type Regina music box, very unusual type of a Regina music box in addition to the two music combs there are 12 bells that play an accompaniment. The cabinet is the same size as a 15½" disc type Regina approximately 20" square and 12" high, golden oak cabinet. This machine takes a special 15½" diameter record. We have about 20 discs with the machine. List of tunes will be furnished on request. Price \$175.

614. 15½" Mahogany double comb Regina approximately 20" square, 14" high carved molding on case, 24 tune discs. Price \$95.  
 615. Mahogany single comb 15½" Regina 24 tune discs, \$75.

617. 15½" Regina mahogany cabinet, double comb, cabinet approximately 20" square, 12" high, 24 tune discs, \$100.

620. 15" Imperial Symphonion, mahogany cabinet, single comb, 14 discs, \$85.  
 617. 15½" Regina mahogany cabinet, double comb, tune discs \$75.

We are manufacturing new 15½" Regina music box discs. Have a selection of over 200 to choose from. We also manufacture a few tunes for the 11" and 12" Reginas.

### NEW ITEMS MANUFACTURED IN THE YEAR 1952

We are also manufacturing musical dancing dolls, musical cigarette boxes with turning ballerina doll, musical shadow boxes and musical steins etc. Will be pleased to forward brochure on these items to anyone interested.

### RECORDS WANTED

OLD RECORDS by the "Carter Family," wanted.—Harvey Pink, Watertown, Wisconsin. d3061

WANTED: Will swap old vocals for cornet records.—Steve Gilman, 66 Sims, Newport, R. I. n1611

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Choice Collection. Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

I AM WEEDING OUT my collection and will issue free monthly lists of deleted vocal and operatic records for sale at decent and reasonable prices.—Milt Weiss, 715 Dickinson St., Memphis, Tenn. d3899

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. n3084

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C., N. Y. d6829

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f124201

100% EUROPEAN LISTS of selected vocal operatic records. Many rarities. Free lists on request. Wants applied.—Collectors' Haven, 148 Hancock Street, Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3483

ORIGINAL RECORDS, 1900-1925. Famous Artists of the past. Interesting premium offers. Free lists.—Universal, Box 32, Allston, Mass. d3403

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-46. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large varied stock. Please state "wants." For information write or visit.—Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St. N. Y. C. 29, N. Y. ap68301

THE RECORD SPEAKS. The parrot will say "just as good", but does he know what he is talking about? Can present-day re-issues, re-records, pressed at will in any form, take the place or give the excitement of getting rare originals, of the great singers of the past? Of course not. There is no substitute for an original. Besides the great thrill, pride and enjoyment that originals give, the money spent is a sound investment that grows with time. Your collection is worth just what you put into it. Is there anything to boast about a collection filled with common re-issues? We can supply originals dating from 1896 on, for the beginner, and for the most advanced collector. We welcome your friendship. Write us.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. n38212

Attention Record Collectors: Inaugurating auction sales. Rare and cut-out vocal records. Free lists.—C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. ja3825

\*17094 I Got You, Steve! (written by Morton) with That Precious Little Thing Called Love (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan)

\*17108 Beans! Beans!! Beans!!! with My Own Adopted Child (Bob Roberts)

17128 There's Lots of Stations On My Railroad Track with That Coon-town Quartet (American Quartet)

17151 Somebody Else is Gettin' It with Swanee River Bend (Arthur Collins and Vess L. Ossman)

17214 Waiting for Me with Fables (Bob Roberts)

17425 Ever Since You Told Me That You Loved Me (I'm a Nut! I'm a Nut!! I'm a Nut!!!) with On the Old Front Porch (Ada Jones and Billy Murray)

17451 Noodle Soup Rag (Composed by Morton) with Isch Ga Bibble (I Should Worry)

Victor Double-Face Twelve-Inch  
\*35051 That's Gratitude! with Jimmy and Maggie in Nickel-Land (Ada Jones—Len Spencer)

35079 That's the Doctor, Bill with At the Comic Opera (Nat M. Wills)

Zon-o-phone Single Face (1908)  
1176 Don't Take Me Home

Zono-phone Double-Face (1909)

\*5151 Singer Sang a Song (probably issued also in single-face with Laughing Song (George W. Johnson)

Columbia Double-Face (1909-1915)

\*A737 Wild Cherries Rag with I'm Going to Do What I Please (Stella Tobin)

A742 Don't Take Me Home with Beautiful Eyes (Ada Jones)

A758 Then We'll All Go Home with Blitz and Blatz in an Aeroplane (Fred Duprez and Bob Roberts)

\*A777 You Ain't Talking to Me with Lyna! Oh! Oh! Miss Lyna! (Collins-Harlan)

A928 Oh, You Dream with He's a College Boy (Frederick V. Bowers)

A955 That's the Fellow I Want to Get with Don't Make Me Laugh, Bill

\*A97 If I Could See as Far Ahead as I Can See Behind with Since I Fell in Love with Mary (Walter Van Brunt)

\*A1058 That Peculiar Rag with Knock Wood (Ada Jones and Walter Van Brunt)

A1147 Trolley Car Swing with Rum Tum Tiddle (Arthur Collins)

\*A1381 They've Got Me Doin' It Now with Ragtime Regiment Band (Collins and Harlan)

A1419 What Do You Mean, You Lost Yer Dog? with On the Old Fall River Line (Collins-Harlan)

A1456 I'm Crying Just for You with Daddy. Did a Wonderful Thing Billy Watkins)

A1484 While They Were Dancing Around with I'm On My Way to Mandalay (Albert Campbell and Henry Burr)

A1525 He's a Devil in His Own Home Town with Celebrating Day in Tennessee (Collins-Harlan)

\*A1557 You're Here and I'm Here with Walla-Walla Man (Peerless Quartette)

Emerson Single-Face Six-Inch (1916)

\*6164 Just a Little Bit of Monkey Left in You and Me

Emerson Double-Face Seven-Inch (1917)

\*7128 Come Out of the Kitchen, Mary Ann with M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I (Ada Jones)

Edison Two-Minute Cylinder Oct., 1908)

\*9949 Don't Take Me Home

Edison Four-Minute Cylinder (Nov., 1908)

\*29 A Singer Sang a Song

U. S. Everlasting Four-Minute Cylinders (1910-1913)

1113 If I Could See As Far Ahead as I Can See Behind

1114 Play That Barber Shop Chord

U. S. Everlasting Two-Minute Cylinders

439 Nothing to Do Until Tomorrow  
328 What's the Matter With Father?

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Choice records for collectors; fine condition; moderate prices. Vocal, operatics, old ballads, popular. All originals. Send for free lists. State special interests.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ja3027

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3863

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly126121

### PHONOGRAPHS

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, parts, records, catalogs, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6844

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, parts, small horns, reproducers, records, catalogs.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6084

DISC PHONOGRAPHS WANTED: Owens (open works - key wind), Gramophone & Typewriter Co., of London, Berliner Gramophone Co., or the National Gramophone Co., Toy, hand powered) Eldridge R. Johnson Talking Machine Co., Toy, (hand powered), and toy, model "D", Type "A", "B", and "C", Monarch, and Monarch Jr. (model "E"). Monarch Special. Improved Monarch, ("M"). Royal, ("R"). Victor: type numbers I, II, III, and IV. State condition details and price.—Aaron B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant Street, Oak Park, Ill. n1616

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

FOR SALE: 500 Regina, 15 1/2" discs. 100 Regina, 27" discs. Also other sizes and makes. Send for lists. Send for my tune disc Want List, offering premium prices for certain tunes. Wanted: Mira music boxes playing 5 1/2" and 3 1/4" discs.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d3487

FOR SALE: Regina disc, 15 1/2". \$1 ea.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. f4823

### MUSIC LITERATURE

FOR SALE: Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925 (200 page book) \$3.75, postpaid.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Ave., New York City 19, N. Y. n6064

### ORGANS

Symphony Player Organ with 300 rolls, nearly new blower attachment comes with it; finished in light mahogany, in good playing condition; price \$200.; shipping extra.—F. B. Hubley & Co., 364 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass. n1693

## MUSIC BOXES WANTED

WANT ALL KINDS of music boxes, regardless of condition. Also any steel disc records or Swiss, cylinders, original pictures & catalogues. Describe briefly. Veteran starting hobby.—G. P. Bartley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. 16806

## MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

FOR SALE: "STELLA" Swiss music box, 1896 make, with record cabinet. Overall height, 41", 24x21". Oak finish, perfect condition. Records.—William W. Edwards, 1206 Guyer Street, High Point, North Carolina. n1942

## MISCELLANEOUS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6046

WANTED: Reproducer for Edison Amberol 30 phonograph.—George K. Hare, 3006 14th Avenue, Tampa 5, Fla. n3652

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. je128291

WANTED: Sammy Kaye & Ink Spots transcriptions, V discs, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings. I will pay top prices. "Money is no object."—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. n3005

WANTED: Wurlitzer automatic player piano rolls. Rolls for Aeolian player organ, Celestina and Mandolina organs. State condition and price. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. ja3445

## MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Latest player piano rolls, 75c. List.—Durell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita, Kans. n128421

HUNDREDS OF IMPORTED cut-out vocals, rare Golden Age operatics; C&T. Fonotipia, etc., hard to get Music Hall and Personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, imported LPs, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. n3867



**THE OLD MUSIC STORE**  
Musical Antiquities in Working Condition  
Esther Skerritt Sanders  
DEANSBORO, N. Y.

## a brief discussion of The Value of Old Records

By JIM WALSH

I have always been glad to hear from the readers of my HOBBIES articles and to answer letters as I am able to find time. Lately, however, I have found letter writing an increasingly heavy burden—one which I cannot well attend to and at the same time keep up my writing for HOBBIES and other publications, in addition to doing my work as news editor of Radio Station WLS in Roanoke, Virginia. To make it worse, an attack of flu, followed during the winter by a series of severe colds, impaired my vitality and has made it necessary to curtail any activities that could possibly be avoided.

There is one thing HOBBIES readers can do to reduce my correspondence load, and that is not send me lists of records and phonographs which they have for sale, with inquiries as to whether I want to buy them myself or can recommend other buyers, and questions as to what they are worth. I am not a record dealer, do not go in for large-scale buying and have all the sound reproducing instruments to which I can give shelter. All I can do when I receive these inquiries is refer my correspondents to the advertisements of HOBBIES dealers. If you want to buy or sell records, it would be far simpler to write directly to the dealers whose advertising appears here each month rather than submit lists to me.

Probably half my "fan mail" consists of such inquiries as those I have named. And more than half of those who want to sell records seek to dispose of Edison Diamond Discs. Because these were heavier than the ordinary kind and look distinctively different, the ordinary person who

knows little about records thinks they must be rare and valuable.

The rather ironic truth is that because Edison records were so much better than anything else produced in their day (from 1912 to 1929) they have only nominal value now. They were so thick they were almost unbreakable and when played with their own diamond point reproducer they didn't wear out. Under ideal conditions, Edison records could be played thousands of times with no perceptible wear. They were sold in large quantities, and most of the factory output is still around in good condition. Since they are in no sense rarities, they are worth comparatively little from the financial standpoint, although well worth collecting for their musical merits. There are dealers who do good businesses selling them by mail, and when I was in Chicago several months ago I saw stacks of them in second-hand stores for five and ten cents each. Much the same comment as to "rarity" applies to Edison Blue Amberol cylinders.

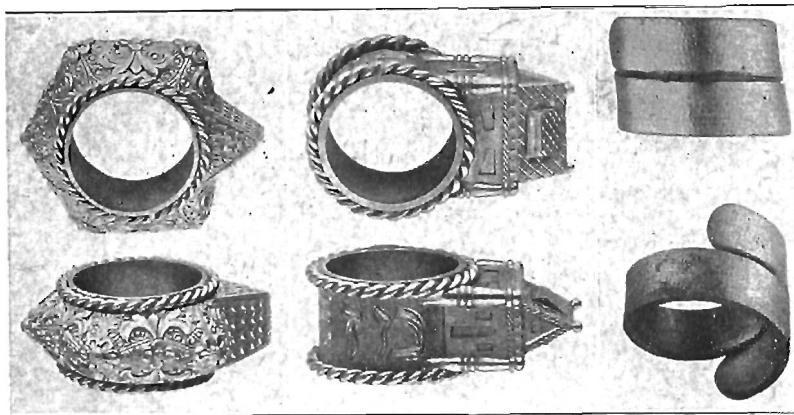
I have never sought to give the impression that the old "popular" records about which I chiefly write are worth large sums. They sold in vast quantities and were too popular to fall into the "premium" class. Some collectors have paid absurdly high prices for a few rare operatic recordings or for "jazz classics"—mostly played by Negro dance bands—which were small sellers to begin with, became hard to find and thereby acquired a fictitious value in the minds of those who like opera or jazz. I am no authority on these types of record and cannot "price" them. Those who wish to know the current quotations on jazz discs may obtain a booklet, "The Hollywood Premium Guide," from Will Roy Hearn, 1047 West 97th Street, Los Angeles 44, California. It sells, I believe, for \$2.50 and lists several thousand jazz numbers. Re-issues of this type of recording by the major companies is sharply reducing the value of such original pressings as still turn up.

As for the typical old "popular" records by such performers as Billy Murray, Ada Jones, Henry Burr, Vess Ossman, Collins and Harlan and the dozens of others about whom I have written, they can still be found on occasion in second-hand stores for about ten cents each. Several dealers who advertise in HOBBIES get an average of 50 cents each for these records in good condition. I suspect that within another generation or two many will have an appreciably higher

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 31)

Antique  
**MUSIC BOXES**  
For Sale  
Largest Assortment in existence  
All are old instruments in perfect condition  
All sizes & types from \$50 to \$5000  
ALSO EXPERT REPAIRING  
BORNAND MUSIC BOX CO.  
139 4th Avenue, Pelham 65, N. Y.  
(Originally established in Switzerland in 1925)

NEW BOOK  
"MUSICAL BOXES, A History & Appreciation"  
By John E. T. Clark, London  
This enlarged second edition contains valuable heretofore unpublished information on markings, identifications, and historical data. It should be read by every music box collector. Price \$6.00.  
American Distrib.: BORNAND MUSIC BOX CO.  
139 4th Ave., Pelham 65, N. Y.



of the scarab engraved with some device became the most popular of the signets. In order to procure any inscription in relief on wax or clay, the inscription must be hollowed out instead of raised above the surface. This was called *intaglio-cut*.

Rings were believed to possess power, and hence the scarab set in a ring did double duty. On the flat base was engraved the owner's name, the name of the reigning King, and certain other deities. It could be arranged so that it revolved on a pivot, which by a twist of the thumb and finger, could be turned over and serve the purpose of a signet. These were swivel rings.

Later the signet stone instead of being mounted on a swivel, was set solidly in a bed hollowed out of the metal. On its flat top the engraver cut on scenes from daily life, musical instruments, flowers, leaves, animals, in addition to the deities.

Another form of the signet, was the cylinder used by the Babylonians, from one to three inches long. It was elaborately engraved and *intaglio* with the name and title of the owner, perhaps a portrait, and no two cylinders were exactly alike. It was worn both as an amulet and a seal, but not in a swivel ring. It was suspended by a cord on the neck or wrist. When the mark of identification was needed, it was rolled over a flat surface of soft clay and the impression thus made. Merchants traveling in other lands made good use of this for marking their wares with their personal seals.

A signet ring said to have been given to her future husband Darnley by Mary, Queen of Scots, was engraved *Henril Darnley*, 1655.

The custom of engagement rings dates back to ancient times. In Rome, the ring represented a pledge made by the father or guardian of the young woman to the man destined to be her husband. He, in turn, pledged his troth by giving a ring to the girl.

Among some early Christian writings, is a passage stating that the betrothal ring is given by the espouser to the espoused, either for a

sign of mutual fidelity or still more, to join their hearts. It was placed on the fourth finger because of a certain vein, which was believed to flow to the heart.

Many medieval paintings portraying wedding ceremonies show the ring being placed on the right hand. The change to the third finger of the left hand appears in the Book of Common Prayer of Edward VI (1549).

The Jewish marriage ring was used only during the actual ceremony, being too massive to wear. These were often designed as synagogues, or temples, and were wrought in perfect detail even to the weather vanes, which revolved. They had the Hebrew inscription meaning good luck engraved on them and were elaborately decorated.

The Gimmel Ring, was the emblem of love and friendship, and consisted of two rings locked together, which could be separated, and a ring worn by each of the lovers.

Another type was the Fede ring, or two clasped hands, which could be combined with the gimmel, the double ring denoting double devotion.

During the middle ages a type of love ring known as the Posy Ring became popular, reaching the climax in the 16th and 17th centuries. The

sentiment on these was usually a rhyme and the jewelers kept a ready-made stock of appropriate verses on hand for his customers. In 1674 a book appeared entitled *Love's Garland or Posies for Rings*.

The flare of giving rings to wedding guests reached its climax in Elizabeth's reign, when Sir Edward Killey is said to have presented 4,000 pounds worth of gold rings at the marriage of a servant.

The gadget or fancy ring included the pugilist's ring, which could be used as a weapon, the compass ring, the puzzle ring and the tobacco stopper. When tobacco was first introduced into Europe in the latter part of the 16th century, it was expensive and smoked in a small pipe, the smoke being expelled through the nose. The dandies packed their tobacco in with golden rings.

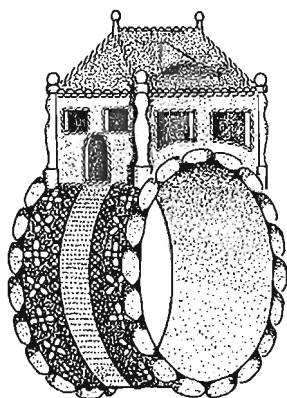
In many rings of the Renaissance, the bezel was made like a small vase, with a hinged lid or sliding panel beneath, which provided a small space for perfume or perhaps, poison.

## A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE VALUE OF OLD RECORDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

value, since the masters have been destroyed, but at the present time a stack of old popular records is by no means a gold mine. Personally, I'd hate to see the day come when collecting such records would be a rich man's privilege. The fact that they are comparatively cheap is one reason why there are so many thousands of collectors.

Once more, then: The average old record, whatever its sentimental or entertainment value, isn't worth a lot of money. Neither is an old phonograph. Edison Diamond Discs are not outstandingly valuable. And, since I am so busy with so many other things, please don't write to me asking if I want to buy records, have any to sell, or can tell you what the ones in your collection are worth.





# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## CHARLES ADAMS PRINCE

By JIM WALSH

Recently, I have been glancing at correspondence accumulated through the years, dealing with varied aspects of recorded music. In a letter from Douglas P. Ball, of Miami, Florida, dated July 30, 1938, I find these remarks concerning Victor band records of approximately 50 years ago:

"The reproduction . . . is terrible—there is no music . . . nothing but noise. A comparison . . . with the earliest Columbia band records indicates that Columbia was far in the lead in this type of recording."

Many collectors probably would agree with Mr. Ball. Others, perhaps, would not. Of course, most specialists in early discs and cylinders are primarily interested in vocal recording artists and are less attracted to the pioneer band and orchestral selections. Yet Douglas Ball's 14-year-old letter reminded me that I have long intended to write a biographical sketch of Charles A. Prince, the accomplished and likable musical director who was largely responsible for Columbia's best achievements in the instrumental recording field. So, while the subject is still fresh in mind, this should be a good time to pay tribute to a gifted man who seems largely forgotten now but was certainly one of the dominant phonograph personalities of an earlier day.

Even when he died some fifteen years ago, Charles Prince's passing received comparatively little attention. Typical was this death notice in the "New York Times", dated October 10, 1937, and sent from San Francisco:

Charles Adams Prince, musical director, died early today after an illness of three months at the suburban home of his sister, Mrs. Hazel Prince Tuggle. He was 68 years old.

Retired for the last three years, Mr. Prince had lived in Marin county, where he taught music. In New York he had been a director of the Columbia and Victor recording studios and for five years with the Ziegfeld Follies. Under his baton at different times were Tito Schipa, Mme. Sembrich, Mary Garden, Kathleen Parlow and Caruso.

Mr. Prince was a member of the Lambs of New York, and each year conducted at the club's annual gambol. His sister and a daughter, Mrs. Catherine Prince, of New York, survive.

An even shorter notice in the "Musical Courier" for November 15, 1937, said that Prince had also directed Gilbert and Sullivan productions and other operettas in New York.

The "Times'" list of operatic stars who had been "under his baton" presents a puzzle or two. The conductor's association with Schipa may have been during the comparatively brief period in the 1920's when he was as-

sociated with the Victor Talking Machine Company. Marcella Sembrich had retired before Prince "joined up" with Victor in 1924, so he must have conducted the orchestra for the Columbia records the soprano made in 1903. Mary Garden and Kathleen Parlow, sang for Columbia years later when Prince was in mid-career. But it's hard to see how he could have conducted Caruso records. The Italian tenor never recorded for any company in the United States except Victor, and Prince was still with Columbia when Caruso died in August, 1921. Perhaps Prince conducted for a public performance at which Caruso sang. Possibly the tenor appeared as a general guest at one of the Lambs' gambols!

Prince's prestige in the record world was at its height between 1910 and 1920. In those years, the Columbia record catalog contained a photograph of Prince as a smooth-shaven man of about forty (he had worn a mustache in earlier years, as is shown in a 1904 picture of the Columbia Band) and the photo was accompanied by the following information:

Charles A. Prince, musical director for the Columbia Graphophone Company and conductor of Prince's Band and Prince's Orchestra, is one of the most accomplished and experienced orchestral directors for musical record work in the world. Columbia band and orchestral records are so obviously superior to all others on the Market that the fact scarcely needs to be commented upon here. Mr.

Prince is, in addition, a composer of exceptional gifts, a number of his brilliant marches and cleverly conceived descriptive numbers appearing in our catalog.

Then followed a list of compositions by Prince, which included "Around the Christmas Tree," "Bell Buoy March," "Cuckoo and Canary," "Medley Two-Step," "Panama Exposition March" and "Suffragette Militante March." Although never a "March King"—after all, there was only one John Philip Sousa!—Charlie Prince made a respectable showing, composing lively martial music. And he may have consoled himself for his comparative obscurity as a march writer with the knowledge that any number of listeners considered the Columbia records by Prince's Band better than the Victors by Sousa. Incidentally, Sousa appears to have been the first to use "canned music" as a token of contempt for recorded sound. During the earlier years of his band's recording activities, he didn't take the trouble to conduct it himself, but simply allowed a sub-conductor such as Arthur Pryor, to direct some of its members and use the Sousa name when they played into the horn.

More enlightening than the sketch just quoted was the following article in Columbia's record supplement for September, 1919:

"Class in American History!"

"Name the Presidents of the United States."

"George Washington, John Adams. . ."



A 1904 photograph of the Columbia band, Charles A. Prince, its conductor, is the fifth man in the front row.

### RECORDS WANTED

OLD RECORDS by the "Carter Family", wanted.—Harvey Fink, Watertown, Wisconsin. d3061

Wanted: Victor Record #6232. Nocturne In B Flat (Paderewski). Columbia Record #17285. Nightingale And The Rose (Rimsky-Korsakov).—William Thailing, 5111 Guy Avenue, Cleveland 27, Ohio. d1213

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Choice Collection. Thousands of records. Mail auctions. Free lists.—A. H. Sles, 92-11 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights 72, N. Y. d120291

I AM WEEDING OUT my collection and will issue free monthly lists of deleted vocal and operatic records for sale at decent and reasonable prices.—Milt Weiss, 715 Dickinson St., Memphis, Tenn. d3699

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. f3084

WILL BUY phonograph records, collections or dealers' stock, any amount, made before 1940. Have many for sale. Send wants.—J. Schneider, 128 W. 66, N. Y. C., N. Y. d6829

FOR SALE: Regina, Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs.—Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. f124201

100% EUROPEAN LISTS of selected vocal operatic records. Many rarities. Free lists on request. Wants applied.—Collectors' Haven, 148 Hancock Street, Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3483

ORIGINAL RECORDS, 1900-1925. Famous Artists or the past. Interesting premium offers. Free lists.—Universal, Box 32, Allston, Mass. d3403

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-46. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o 120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o 122611

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: From collectors' items to just good "listening." Large varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit —Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St. N. Y. C. 29, N. Y. ap68301

Attention Record Collectors: Inaugurating auction sales. Rare and cut-out vocal records. Free lists.—C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. ja3825

For Sale: Judy Garland, Marlene Dietrich Broadcasts—Microgroove or 78RPM.—A. R. G. Box 341, Cooper Station, N. Y. C., N. Y. f3483

HAVE YOU CARUSO RECORD worth \$25? Price Guide to Collector's Records (1953 edition) lists artists, numbers, values: 7500 items. \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York 19, N. Y. my6829

THOUSANDS of used records, all varieties: send wants.—Perry's, 3914 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. f3652

And there you have the first great progenitor of Charles Adams Prince, the first and only great American conductor who has made a life study of conducting and recording, and who is responsible for so many of the instrumental and vocal masterpieces made in the laboratories of the Columbia Graphophone Company.

Charles Adams Prince (named from his famous Presidential relative), Conductor of Prince's Orchestra, Prince's Band, the Columbia Orchestra and Band, and responsible for the perfection of many other Columbia organizations, is one of the most popular, as well as original, stand-bys of the Columbia organization. His father a New England Yankee, his mother a native of New York, Prince was born in San Francisco. Therefore, geographically speaking, he is the All-American conductor.

Prince claims his first interest in music came from the days when his mother, who was very fond of the theater, took him to local shows. The shows were good, but young Charlie found himself much more interested in watching the conductor of the orchestra and the playing of the musicians. It was in the darkened theater that Prince first decided that conducting would be more appealing than following his father's business, which is, by the way, a successful fruit canning institution in the great West.

Within a very few years Prince "looked to the road" and confesses that he traveled with circuses, minstrel shows and legitimate comedies several years before he arrived in New York and came in touch with the Columbia Company.

At that time, about 1895, all vocal records were made with piano accompaniment. As Prince was then (as he is today) a born accompanist, he secured a position with the Columbia, and played all the accompaniments for the most famous singers of the day. When orchestral accompaniments became the order of the day, Prince was elected to organize an orchestra and band, which, from those early days to the present time, has made Columbia and all other recording history.

"A Prince of good fellows" is no play on words when referring to the famous conductor. He is as popular inside as outside the Columbia circle. The Lambs Club never gives a gambol without Prince's Orchestra in front of the stage. Prince has also been a member of the Friars Club and is active in the New York Athletic Club.

Music is his Muse and automobiling his amusement!

Practically the only conductor who has spent his entire career in the recording field, Prince has unquestionably been one of the moving spirits which have made Columbia records what they are today. The Stellar Quartet, for instance, is another of Prince's musical children. His remarkable pianism enables Prince to go over selections and instruct the perfect interpretation before artists stand before the horn. This he does over and over with tireless interest—his one aim being a perfect record.

We asked Mr. Prince the other day what his ideas for the future of Columbia records were. He replied: "Look back over the past twenty years and compare the perfection of product today with what it was in those days. Now, look ahead twenty years and imagine what Columbia records will be then. I know no more than you, but what I can do to make them be what they will be I will!"

Conductors may come and conductors may go, but, may we hope, for the pride of Columbia, Prince may go on forever.

To Be Continued

Choice records for collectors; fine condition; moderate prices. Vocal, operatics, old ballads, popular. All originals. Send for free lists. State special interests.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ja3027

### VIOLINS

FOR SALE: 4 old violins, made in 16th and 17th century.—A. H. Frye, Rte. 1, Nickerson, Kans. d1401

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

FOR SALE: 500 Regina, 15 1/2" discs. 100 Regina, 27" discs. Also other sizes and makes. Send for lists. Send for my tune disc Want List, offering premium prices for certain tunes. Wanted: Mira music boxes playing 6 1/2" and 7 1/4" discs.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. d3487

FOR SALE: Regina disc, 15 1/2", \$1 ea.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. f4823

### MUSIC BOXES WANTED

WANT ALL KINDS of music boxes, regardless of condition. Also any steel disc records or Swiss, cylinders, original pictures & catalogues. Describe briefly. Veteran starting hobby.—G. P. Battley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. 16806

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BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Catalog 15c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. o 124201

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80.—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. ap6844

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts, old, post cards, and advertising cards.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. d6044

WANT ALL TYPES of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. je128291

WANTED: Wurlitzer automatic player piano rolls. Rolls for Aeolian player organ, Celestina and Mandolina organs. State condition and price. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. ja3446

WANTED: Edison, Columbia, cylinder phonographs, cylinder records, books, catalogs on same. Small horns. Reproducers.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. f3023

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3863

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### PHONOGRAPHS

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, parts, records, catalogs, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6844

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, parts, small horns, reproducers, records, catalogs.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6084

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## CHARLES ADAMS PRINCE

By JIM WALSH

### PART II

(Continued from the December issue)

Some of Charlie Prince's personal traits are barely touched on in this quotation. Although he could be an enthusiastic and tireless worker, he was not hipped on the subject. Motor-ing is described as his amusement, but the eternally youthful-spirited Billy Murray recalls that Prince like-wise shared Billy's passion for base-ball. Both were devoted to the New York Yankees, or Highlanders, as they were known in the early years of this century, and when an unusually important game was scheduled and Billy had a recording date at Colum-bia, he and Prince would enter into an amiable conspiracy.

Billy would 'phone to the recording director, Victor Emerson, or some other studio official, and say: "I'm awfully sorry but I've taken a ter-rible cold and I just can't sing today. I think maybe I can get there to-morrow or the next day." The official would reply: "Too bad! Well, make it as soon as you can!" Billy had the knack of deepening his voice and making it sound as if he were in the first stage of pneumonia. But his tones would be perfectly clear when he called up Charlie Prince a few moments later and said: "All set, Charlie! Let's go!" Thereupon, Prince would suddenly discover that he didn't feel well enough to work that day and he and Billy would get together and shout frenzied encouragement to the Highlanders.

In this respect, Billy says, Prince was the exact opposite of the late Eddie King, who was in charge of Vic-tor's popular recording activities for many years. King, a saturnine person with what the non-smoking Billy calls "a chronic cigarette cough," was a zealot for hard work. On one occasion, the Victor Military Band, directed by King, was engaged to play at the opening of a World's Series. The Eight Famous Victor Artists went along, too. After the band and the Eight had performed, the troupe settled down to enjoy the game, but King began leading his musicians from the park.

"What's the matter, Eddie?" Billy exclaimed. "Aren't you going to see the game?"

King turned around, gave Billy a disgusted look, and snapped: "I'm not a fanatic, like you fellows! I've got work to do." Then he and his down-cast bandmen left the park.

The lovable Mr. Murray, by all odds one of the most confirmed base-ball enthusiasts of his time, will never be able to find King's attitude any-thing but incomprehensible. Billy used to slip away from recording en-gagements to join the Yankees on their spring training trips. Once or twice he played right field for them in exhibition games. He also played regularly on a theatrical baseball club — the Long Island Good Hearted Thespians Society — known for short as the Lights. For many years he prided himself on knowing every player on all sixteen teams in the two big leagues, and he was always a welcome visitor to any club's bench. When Billy goes to heaven he'll be bitterly disappointed if he doesn't find some red-hot baseball scheduled say, a Celestial Series between the Pearly Gates Pirates and the Walls of Jasper Giants!

No, Billy Murray couldn't under-stand Eddie King's indifference to baseball — and neither could Charlie Prince! Incidentally, Billy also recalls that Prince and Cesare Sodero, Edi-son's musical director for many years, were alike in one respect. Both had an uncanny sense of pitch. Frequent-ly, walking down the street, either would listen to a church bell, an au-tomobile horn or some other noise, and tell his companions just what key the sound was in. They frequently put on this performance for Billy and, as far as he could tell, never made a mis-take.

### III

Just when Prince became a member of the Columbia organization isn't clear. The article I have quoted says that the conductor-pianist-composer "came into touch with the Columbia company . . . about 1895." However, Columbia's first headquarters was in Washington, and it did not move its offices to New York until 1897. If Prince's acquaintance with the com-pany began after its leaving Wash-ington for New York, it can hardly have occurred so early as 1895. Fred Hager was in charge of Columbia's band and orchestral recordings for a

time in the late 1890's, and Tom Clark had held the position prior to that. Mr. Hager once told me that Prince was chosen to head the band and orchestra after he (Hager) left Columbia to go with another company. No Columbia Band or Orchestra is listed in the Columbia catalogs from 1896 to 1899, but the house orchestra appears in the latter year. The bands included Gilmore's (conducted by Vic-tor Herbert) and Sousa's Grand Con-cert group. Even in 1901 all the band records bear the Sousa and Gilmore names, but there is a long list of Columbia Orchestra records, directed by a highly praised but unidentified conductor — presumably Prince. Says the 51-year-old catalog.

"Every musician in this great orchestra has been selected with special reference to the creation of an organization representing the

Antique

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From December 20th to January 30th my shop will be closed. However, my mail will be forwarded and I will answer any important letters pertaining to music boxes, etc. After Feb. 1st, I will again be of service to you.

**GEORGE A. BIDDEN**  
Barrington, Rhode Island



highest achievement in our art. Its leader has shown remarkably good taste in choosing the "brightest music of modern times." (Fred Hager by that time had become associated with the Globe Record Company, later absorbed by Columbia, which turned out the Climax discs.)

Records by the Columbia Band and Orchestra soon became one of the standard features of the company's catalog. They were of almost every type — overtures, snippets from opera and symphony, arrangements of well known concert songs and popular tunes, descriptive specialties, "trombone smears," ragtime — the gamut of instrumental music. Prince's personal popularity and his growing reputation as a skilful and painstaking conductor enabled him to engage and retain some of the best musicians of the time — such experts as Vincent Buono, cornet; Leo Zimmerman, trombone; George Schweinfest and Marshall P. Lufsky, flute and piccolo; Arthur Bergh and George Stehl (he later spelled it Stell), violinists; Thomas Mills, xylophone and bells; Howard Kopp, xylophone, bells and drums; Thomas Hughes and William Tuson, clarinet, and Charles Schuetze, harp.

Prince himself sometimes played the piano in duets or trios with other Columbia artists, and he provided the organ accompaniment for Mill's chimes rendition of "Adeste Fidelis." But, oddly enough, he seems never to have made a solo record under his own name. However, he did play several celesta solos, using the disguise — not a hard one to penetrate! — of "Charles Adams." And he was the composer of "Edna Mazurka," issued in December, 1906, as an orchestra bells solo by Mills.

Nor should it be forgotten that the director sometimes acted as a foil to popular comedians. When the late Frank Tinney made "Frank Tinney's First Record" (No. A1854) he was assisted by Prince in the familiar role of the orchestra leader who is the butt of the footlight favorite's wit. Prince also acted the "professor" in some of Steve Porter's Irish specialties, such as "Flanagan at the Vocal Teacher's," and in an occasional Len Spencer comic offering. Most of the times that his rather thin, high-pitched tones were heard replying to the comedian, he got no label credit and the record owner had no idea who was speaking.

#### IV

For a few years, beginning around 1904, Prince teamed up with the amazingly ingenious Leonard Spencer in writing clever, if somewhat obvious, specialties that were recorded by the Columbia Band. The descriptions of some of these masterworks sound downright fascinating. For instance, No. 1550, "Cumming's Indian Congress at Coney Island:"

Five hundred Indians, representing forty-two tribes, living in tepees and wigwags; admission, twenty-five cents. Grand entree of the Indians and Mexicans, preceded by the Carlisle Indian Band. Princess Wininah, the champion rifle shot of the world. Indian sham battle

and realistic scene, introducing the war song, the attack of the Mexicans, who are routed amidst the yells and whoops of the Indians, who celebrate by their battle cry of Victory. A record of thrilling interest — Spencer and Prince.

Or how about No. 1563, "Departure of a Hamburg-American Liner?"

Those who have witnessed the departure from our shores of one of the great ocean greyhounds will be impressed with the striking realism of this record. The big whistle sounds the time of departure; the windlasses hoist the last of the late arriving baggage. "All ashore going ashore." The band plays popular airs from the Fatherland; friends on the pier shout farewells and adieus; and the giant liner backs into midstream, while the excitement increases. The music of the band is drowned in the cheering.

Or, for still another example, No. 1548, "In Cheyenne Joe's Cowboy Tavern."

A realistic descriptive record depicting a scene in the famous Rocky Mountain tavern, which was one of the features of the Pan-American Exposition, and has since been removed to the Coney Island Bowery. The outside barker invites the passing ones to stop and enjoy the hospitality of the tavern. The cowboy orchestra plays a characteristic overture. Bill Brindle, a cowboy waiter, sings a rollicking drinking song, in which the habitués of the tavern join heartily, expressing their approval by volleys of pistol shots and cowboy yells, given in a typical western style. It is a decidedly novel and entertaining record.

It must have been! But of course pot-boilers of this sort gave no indication of Prince's real musical attainments.

Another "descriptive specialty," which would have more than a touch of historical interest nowadays, was "The Capture of the Forts at Port Arthur," issued in November, 1904, on ten-inch disc No. 1865 and XP cylinder No. 32579. This was a representation of one of the battles of the Russo-Japanese war in which Japan, greatly to the pleasure of most Americans, gave czarist Russia a bad beating:

A scene from one of the Russian forts, with cannonading, shots and shrieks of shells. The Russian Band is heard playing the National Anthem, and as the cannonading becomes fiercer and fiercer, the Russian troops are found retreating, the music of the band dying away in the distance. "Mid the shriek of shells the Japanese approach, headed by their band playing their national air, and the band gradually approaches to take possession of the forts, amid loud cries of "Banzai," their triumphant war-cry, which means "May the Mikado Live One Thousand Years." The suggestion and the plan of this record were furnished by a member of the Japanese legation, of New York, and the record was made under his direction.

In the many years since that record was made, the United States has fought and won a war with Japan, and peace has been officially proclaimed, several years after the end of hostilities, as this article is being prepared. During the period in which the Japanese victory was popular in this country, Prince's Band recorded the "Japanese National March," with a vocal refrain in Japanese. It was number 3147 and was listed in May, 1905. I obtained a copy a good many years ago, and my brother Chad and I became obsessed with curiosity to find out who the singer was. The late Frank Dorian, who had been with Columbia almost from its beginning,

made a valiant effort to help us, but all he could do was come up with the report: "It was just a Jap, whose name wasn't considered of sufficient interest to be preserved in our files." Perhaps the singer was the member of the Japanese legation who suggested the "Capture of Port Arthur" record. This disc was responsible for my brother's beginning to teach himself Japanese from a textbook.

Another descriptive specialty, which must have had a painful historical interest to many Americans, especially those living in California, was "The Destruction of San Francisco," played by Prince's Military Band and issued late in 1906 on both cylinders and discs. The composition, it goes without saying, commemorated and to some extent duplicated the sounds of the awesome San Francisco earthquake of the preceding April:

A record of permanent historical interest is "The Destruction of San Francisco," arranged by Chris. Praetorius, and impressively executed by Prince's Military Band. The auditor becomes a spellbound ear-witness of the appalling upheaval at the Golden Gate. High edifices tumble with deafening violence; gas and water mains burst; an awful cry of "Fire!" sweeps the panic stricken city amid frantic appeals for water; martial law declared; commanding officers menacing; mandate to shoot, "Kill everyone caught ransacking the ruins;" mournful music of the military requiem for the bereaved city. A memorable record.

Charlie and his boys probably were hard put to it to get all those events into a record made by crowding a comparatively few performers around a horn! And here's a suspicion that hadn't previously occurred to me. That "Chris. Praetorius" as the name of the arranger sounds suspiciously like a pseudonym for Charles Prince. The initials are the same; Chris. suggests Charles, and by comparing the Latin word "Praetor" and its derivatives with Prince, the suspicion becomes almost a certainty. It might have been appropriate for the occasion to refer to Prince's Military Band as the Praetorian Guard!

One more picturesque example of the Spencer-Prince partnership will be mentioned before I pass to other phases of the Distinguished conductor's career. Among my favorite records is "Seeing New York; or Taking a Trip on the Rubberneck Coach," recorded by Len Spencer, with the backing of Prince's Orchestra, on April 27, 1906. Less than three minutes long, it gives the hearer a personally conducted tour to the more important features of the New York City of almost half a century ago. We visit Cooper Union, Tammany Hall (and hear the embattled Democrats roaring "Tammany"), the Bowery, and Chinatown; grin at the men gathered to catch a glimpse of the ladies' ankles when the wind blows around the Flatiron Building, and even catch a barbed reference to the great life insurance scandal of 1905. Of course, the new-fangled motorized "rubberneck coach" breaks down at the end, and the passengers are advised, in the words of a 1906 popular song, to "Take a Car." Equally of course, somebody yells "Get a horse!"



## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Transcription's, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings & etc. By Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo & Ink Spots. Money no object.—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d120061

**WANTED:** New York Philharmonic Symphony recordings of the broadcasts made in the year 1933-1934, 1935-1936 wanted. Send list quoting condition, recording speed, and requested price to:—Eugenia Gale, 655 West 254 Street, New York 71, N. Y. Ja1692

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**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. f3084

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**For Sale:** Judy Garland, Marlene Dietrich Broadcasts—Microgroove or 78RPM.—A.R.G. Box 341, Cooper Station, N.Y.C., N. Y. f3483

**HAVE YOU CARUSO RECORD** worth \$25? Price Guide to Collector's Records (1953 edition) lists artists, numbers, values: 7500 items, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York 19, N. Y. my6829

**THOUSANDS** of used records, all varieties; send wants.—Perry's, 3914 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. f3652

**Choice records for collectors;** fine condition; moderate prices. Vocal, operatics, old ballads, popular. All originals. Send for free lists. State special interests.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ja3027

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**MELODEONS;** small organs. Beautiful restored instruments. Expert repairing. Reasonable prices.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. je6676

## V

For several years the band and orchestra records conducted by Prince appeared under the Columbia house name, with no indication of the identity of the man in charge. The first disc I can find on which the organization is called Prince's Military Band rather than the Columbia Band is No. 3053, containing one of Sousa's marches, "The Diplomat." This record was issued early in 1905, just after Columbia had taken the rather confusing step of changing the numbering of its single-faced discs. These had been numbered from 1 to 1910 (the latter was "Teasing Medley," by Columbia Band), and this arrangement continued through January, 1905. Then, in February, the numbers skipped to 3019. (Those from 3000 to 3018 had already been used for a Jewish series.) Why it was decided to bypass all numbers in the 2000 series I don't know. Possibly they had been used already for some type of foreign language listing.

After February, 1905, the Columbia Band faded out in favor of Prince's Military Band, to take advantage of the prestige afforded by the reputation of its conductor. Prince's Orchestra didn't make its appearance until October, 1905, with No. 3249, a lively version of the ragtime classic, "St. Louis Tickle." I find it amusing that when American Columbia records were repressed in England under the Columbia-Rena label, the name of Prince was changed to King—obviously to make it appear that discs by "King's" Military Band or Orchestra were played by King Edward's own organizations. In this respect, Charles Prince could have truthfully asserted—but he probably knew nothing of the practice—that he was one Prince who had become a king. (As a small boy preoccupied with thoughts of records and recording artists, Paul Lincke's "Egyptian Serenade," "Amina," played by Prince's Band, was one of my favorites, and my imagination equalled the Columbia-Rena feat, or perhaps even improved on it. I was a devotee of the "In the Land of Wonderful Dreams" comic strip, and imagined Prince's Band to be the private property of the Princess who was one of the constant companions of Little Nemo in Windsor McCay's beautiful drawings. Thus Prince's Band became Princess' Band!)

For some obscure reason, Columbia-Rena records by the Peerless Quartet

## PHONOGRAPHS

**CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS,** parts, records, catalogs, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6844

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Old post cards, and early model typewriters.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. je6276

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, parts, small horns, reproducers, records, catalogs.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6084

**EDISON** cylinder phonograph, Morning Glory horn, \$25. Edison cylinder, 4 mi., Morning Glory horn, \$30. Edison cylinder, built-in horn, one only, \$15. Victor disc, built-in horn, one only, \$10. 50 Edison, thick disc records, \$10. 100 \$20.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. ja1443

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## MUSIC BOXES WANTED

**WANT ALL KINDS** of music boxes, regardless of condition. Also any steel disc records or Swiss, cylinders, original pictures & catalogues. Describe briefly. Veteran starting hobby.—G. P. Battley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. f6006

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## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80.—Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. ap6844

**WANT ALL TYPES** of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. je128291

**WANTED:** Wurlitzer automatic player piano rolls. Rolls for Aeolian player organ, Celestina and Mandolina organs. State condition and price. I will not bid.—C. A. Duncan, 347 E. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, Calif. ja3445

**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia, cylinder phonographs, cylinder records, books, catalogs on same. Small horns. Reproducers.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. f3023

**HUNDREDS** of IMPORTED cut-out vocals, rare Golden Age operatics; G&T, Fonotipia, etc., hard to get Music Hall and Personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, imported LPs, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont.

## SONG BOOKS WANTED

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly126121

## PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

**PLAYER PIANO ROLLS.**—Latest hits and old favorites, all 75c. Send for free list. Extra roll boxes, 4 1/2c. Also player

were labeled as by "Prince's Male Quartet." In this country, too, Prince's productions appeared under many disguises. I hope to determine some day just how many different labels Columbia records were sold under from 40 to 50 years ago, but I doubt that anybody has made an accurate calculation up to now. Besides bearing their own familiar "Note the Notes" trademark, they appeared — among others, as Aretino, Busy Bee, Climax, Consolidated, Cort, D. and P., Diamond, Harvard, Harmony, Kalamazoo, Lakeside, Manhattan, Oxford, Remick Perfection, Royal, Thomas, Sir Henri, Square Deal, Star, Standard and United, and no doubt there were others I can't think of off-hand. On most of these the performing organization was listed merely as Band or Orchestra, or was called Cort Band, Harmony Orchestra or something similar. On Standard and United records the Standard Band and Orchestra names were used for all such organizations, and male quartets became the Standard Quartet. Consolidated records were a later development which represented a merger of the firms producing Standard, United, Harmony, Busy Bee and Aretino records and phonographs. All had over-sized spindle holes, except the Busy Bee, which was equipped with a triangular turntable lug. On these later issues, which appear to have been discontinued in 1918, when there was a shortage of record materials, the organizations became Consolidated Band, Orchestra and Quartet. But, regardless of label, most of the band and orchestral numbers contained Prince's disguised work. For instance, I have a D. and P. record, "Medley of Charles K. Harris Hits," supposedly played by the D. and P. Orchestra. But the name of the arranger is given as Charles A. Prince!

## VI

Until now, these rather rambling remarks have treated largely of Prince's experiments with the less elevated forms of music. But, as has been indicated, he and his organizations did a great deal of recording of the higher type — not complete symphonies, of course, for such things were hardly dreamed of in the acoustic era, but "snippets" from some of the more familiar works of the masters, as well as sometimes severely abridged versions of the warhorse overtures and operatic excerpts.

In the United States, the possibility of recording a complete symphony orchestra began to be considered seriously around 1915. Already, as early as 1913, Arthur Nikisch had led the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in the first recorded version of Beethoven's Fifth, issued by the English Gramophone Company's German affiliate. At least another decade elapsed before anything so ambitious was undertaken in this country, but in 1915 Columbia began making single records by the Chicago Symphony and the New York Philharmonic — not, however, using the ensemble's full strength.

Victor did not engage any nationally known orchestras until late in

1917 when the Boston organization directed by Dr. Karl Muck made three records that were announced in the December supplement. A month later, the Philadelphia Symphony, under the baton of Leopold Stokowski, as the "New York Times" would have said, made its Victor debut. The company proudly announced it had developed an entirely new method of recording that made it possible to present "perfect miniature performances" by an orchestra of 100 players, whereas forty previously had been the maximum number of musicians who could be used.

In those days, phonograph companies so frequently paralleled each other in these "sensational discoveries" that I wonder if some bright fellow didn't strike on a new process or idea and sell the rights simultaneously to more than one firm, just as Victor and Edison, for all their bitter competition, sometimes signed artists to joint contracts. At any rate, in February, 1918, Columbia came through with its own spectacular method of recording a huge orchestra. Although dated February, the supplement in which the announcement was made was printed in November, 1917, before Victor's startling discovery had been made public.

A double-faced twelve-inch Columbia record, No. A6006, was devoted on both sides to Wagner's "Rienzi's Overture," played by the Columbia Symphony Orchestra of 90 instruments, directed by Charles A. Prince. Under the heading of "Stupendous Symphonic Recording," the supplement said:

The following record is remarkable as bringing together the largest number of instruments ever recorded at one time by any company. For over two years Columbia has been producing the music of the great symphonic orchestras — each attempt has shown greater knowledge and skill in recording. In this supreme test special recording laboratory facilities were made, the largest orchestra ever assembled for such a purpose was brought together, and the result is an impressive and flawlessly perfect orchestral interpretation of intense interest to all students and lovers of music.

The number of players in Columbia's "stupendous symphonic recording" actually was exceeded by the even 100 who took part in Victor's Philadelphia Orchestra discs, but his being chosen to conduct the *Rienzi* Overture probably was the high mark of Prince's phonograph career. He remained with Columbia several years more, but apparently never again recorded with so large an ensemble.

## VII

You will remember that when he was interviewed in 1919, Prince not only took it for granted that great improvements would be made in Columbia recordings during the ensuing twenty years, but that he would still be on hand, doing his part to make them better. Unfortunately, that optimistic conception was not fulfilled. Shortly after the first World War ended, a high-pressure promoter (I quote a former Columbia official) "sold" the company the idea that its business could be enormously expanded and records sold with as little effort as it takes to pass loaves of

bread across the counter. Then came the economic dislocation of 1920-21, followed by the upsurge of radio in 1922. Columbia was hard hit and, despite its discovery of how to make a record with a virtually noiseless surface, "went through the wringer" and into bankruptcy in 1923.

The business was continued, but many of its less profitable features were dropped. Probably it was also decided as an economy measure to dispose of the services of some of its higher-salaried employees. However that may have been, Charles Prince appears to have severed his quarter of a century Columbia association at about this trying time. The last record by Prince's Band, No. A3591, "Blue Lodge March" and "Englewood Commandery March" was issued in August, 1922. A few months later came the last Prince's Dance Orchestra offering — No. A3724, waltz versions of "Three O'Clock in the Morning" and "A Kiss in the Dark." The last Prince's Orchestra record I have traced is No. A3767, "Pirouette."

When we next hear of Charles Prince it is in a comparatively obscure capacity. I have a Puritan record (described on the label as "America's Best Record," which it certainly wasn't,) on one side of which Bob Thomas (a disguise for Ernest Hare) sings "Mickey Donohue." On the other, Vernon Dahlhart is heard in "You're In Kentucky Sure As You're Born." The accompaniment of both is said to be by Prince's Orchestra. So, apparently Conductor Prince, after leaving Columbia, found a temporary, and probably unsatisfactory, haven with the little known Puritan company — just as Walter B. Rogers, when he ceased to be the conductor of the Victor Band and Orchestra in 1916, went first to Henry Burr's short-lived Paroquette Record Company and then to Paramount (both makers of vertical-cut discs) before he signed up with the better known Brunswick organization for a decade of rewarding work.

Prince's stay with Puritan was short. An August, 1924, issue of "The Billboard" contained the following brief item:

PRINCE WITH VICTOR. . . Charles Prince of the famous Prince Orchestra, has been signed by the Victor Phonograph Company as associated musical director. He will be at the Camden, N. J., plant. Formerly he was connected with the Columbia Graphophone Company.

How long Prince stayed with Victor I don't know. He was "signed up" in a year when it looked as if radio would liquidate the phonograph business, although record sales got a shot in the arm in 1925 as electrical recording was introduced. I doubt that Prince remained long after the new-fangled method came in. All his training had been with horn recording. Josef Pasternak still headed Victor's classical recording activities, while younger men like Nat Shilkret and Rosario Bourdon were in charge of popular orchestral work.

Almost abruptly, we seem to have reached the end of this account of the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 31)

Perhaps it might be well to explain what is meant by a coin being mechanically deposited while taking part in the action of the bank. In the case of Pug Frog the coin is thrown from the back of the bicycle into the basket when the bicycle revolves. Another example is Darktown

Battery Bank where the pitcher throws the coin to the catcher. In both these banks the coin is part of the action and at the same time automatically deposited by the mechanism.

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## CIRCUSIANA

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

struck. All gasoline lights were then lowered and extinguished. Eli Bowen, the legless wonder, was the first one off the lot.

The large torches in the menagerie, however, were damaged to such an extent that the oil leaked out of them

## MECHANICAL ANTIQUES WANTED

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and they blew up. Only the heavy, driving rains saved it from being entirely destroyed by fire.

The big top fared the worst. It was completely demolished and much damage was done to the massive riggings which were up and ready for the night show. The first cyclonic wind lifted it up like one of the gas-filled balloons sold on the midway, and then brought it crashing down over the seats and huge aerial apparatus, tearing the canvas into ribbons. Lights flew through the air exploding and setting fire to the huge sea of torn canvas.

Had the storm struck an hour later there undoubtedly would have been many casualties. As it was, the estimated damage to show property was about \$8,000.

As a result of the storm, no main performance was given the following day at Muscatine, Iowa. Only the side show was up and open for business. At Ottumwa, Iowa, a show was given using side walls only. And on September 5, at Oskaloosa, Iowa, the new big top arrived and was up in time for both performances.

October 1, at Springfield, Missouri, marked the end of the tenting season for the show. From Springfield, the circus moved to Chicago, and all equipment not needed for this engagement was shipped on to winter quarters at Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The engagement at the Coliseum, Chicago, began with a matinee on Thursday, October 6, and ended with a night performance on Wednesday, October 19. The season was officially at an end.

Financially, the 1904 Season was a success. Statistically, the Barnum and Bailey Circus proved itself the "big one" again in covering 9,111 miles. Only 3 towns out of 128 missed the Greatest Show on Earth.

## CHARLES ADAMS PRINCE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26)

career of Charles A. Prince. After he left Victor, as the "New York Times" obituary notice said, he returned to his native State of California, where he had been born in 1869, and where, before his long and fatal illness, he "taught music." I hope that his final years were happy. Although many of the thousands of records in which he had some part displayed only a popular entertainment appeal, great numbers of others were educational or appealed to the higher reaches of the emotions and the intellect. Charles Adams Prince was a remarkable man — probably it would not be far wrong to call him a genius — and it is a pity that the phonograph world could not have had the benefit of many more years of his distinguished abilities.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

GEORGE N. and AUDLEY F. DUDLEY  
(of the OSSMAN-DUDLEY TRIO)

By JIM WALSH

This should be an easy article to write.

About all I shall have to do is compose a few introductory paragraphs, then copy portions of several letters I have received from a charming lady, Florence Taylor Dudley (Mrs. George N. Dudley), and accompany the quotations with occasional explanatory comment of my own.

But, simple as the job seems, the result should have one important effect. The "mystery" which for years has surrounded the Ossman-Dudley Trio in the minds of thousands of

record collectors will be a mystery no longer.

In 1948 I wrote a series of HOBBIES articles about the late Vess L. Ossman, widely known in the 1890's and the early 1900's as "The Banjo King." One of the subjects I mentioned was my inability up to that time to find out who had played with Ossman in the Ossman-Dudley Trio. Perhaps it would be well to quote briefly what I said in the November, 1948, issue:

"In 1906 Vess came through with another innovation—the Ossman-Dudley Trio, consisting of himself as banjoist, and two other talented players, one a master of the mandolin and the other of the harp-guitar. The guitar player may have been Roy Butin or it could have been Parke Hunter, who could play just about anything. The mandolinist must have been named Dudley, but I've never been able to find out WHAT Dudley. At one time I suspected the late S. H. Dudley, the Hayden Quartet baritone, but he assured me it wasn't he. That there was a 'Mr. Dudley' is shown by the Edison cylinder list for December,

1910, in which 'The Entrance of Topsy' scene from 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' is by Len Spencer and Company. The cast of characters includes 'Messrs. Ossman and Dudley' as banjo players. I asked Mrs. Muligan, Mr. Ossman's daughter, if she knew anything about Dudley, and she replied: 'I recall hearing Pop speak of 'Dudley,' but remember nothing about him.'

"The Ossman-Dudley Trio made several catchy records, the most popular of which was their Victor of 'St. Louis Tickle'—certainly one of the most captivating bits of ragtime ever put on wax. Other good sellers were 'Chicken Chowder,' 'Dixie Girl' and 'Koontime Kaffee Klatsch.' The Victor record catalog for September, 1908, commented on the trio's records:

"A novel feature of our instrumental list, which has been a most successful one. Trios by banjo, mandolin and harp-guitar—very loud, yet without a suspicion of harshness. Mr. Ossman, whose ability as a banjoist is well known, has associated himself with two famous players of string instruments, and the combination has made some extremely pleasing records. The harp-guitar gives a support to the other instruments which is decidedly effective."

It seems odd that S. H. Dudley (Sam H. Rous) couldn't remember the names of the Ossman-Dudley Trio members, since he was assistant manager of the Victor artist and repertoire department for years, besides being catalog editor. He no doubt wrote the description I have just quoted. On second thought, perhaps it isn't so baffling that he didn't remember, for some thirty years elapsed between the making of the trio's records and my putting the question to him. A man who has dealt with hundreds of artists and thousands of records is entitled to a little forgetfulness after a generation has gone.

As time went on, I despaired of

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I have a customer in Michigan that wrote me as follows "It sure was great to get those records of Nat Wills, Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Frank Stanley, The banjo solos of Vess Osman, Fred Van Epps, Saxophone by the Brown Brothers. I did not know that it was possible to get these old timers in such excellent condition."

It is a fact that every letter I get says the same thing. How can records so old be in such good condition. The answer is that there are thousands of people that cherish these all through their life and only get rid of them because of some unfortunate occasion. That is why they are kept so good.

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ever finding who played with Ossman in the once popular trio. Then, in the HOBBIES article I have quoted, I did something that proves the danger of trusting to circumstantial evidence. Because Parke Hunter frequently worked with Ossman and played different instruments, I thought he might be the guitarist. But I was even more inclined to suspect Roy Butin, because Butin, forty-odd years ago, was probably the best known guitar player in America. As the partner of the mandolin virtuoso, Valentine Abt, he made some of the earliest double-faced Victor records. He also played with another great mandolinist, Samuel Siegel. In vaudeville he and the violinist, Michael Banner, were famous as The Olivette Troubadours, a name they also used in making Edison cylinders. What more natural, then, than to suspect that Butin was a member of the Ossman-Dudley Trio?

But he wasn't. And neither, in spite of the circumstantial evidence, was Parke Hunter. Vess Ossman's partners in the trio were two brothers. Audley Dudley played the triple-string mandolin, and George N., the harp-guitar. And there, with the addition of the immortal Sylvester Louis Ossman, you have the Ossman-Dudley Trio! Now that I look back on the mystery which is a mystery no longer, I wonder why it never occurred to me that there might be two players named Dudley in the trio.

The way I stumbled on the solution, or, rather, had it forced on me, is an unusual story in itself. Most readers of this department know that the late John H. Bieling gave parties in September, 1946 and 1947, at his home in Hempstead, Long Island, for a number of his fellow pioneer recording artists and their admirers. Mr. Bieling died in 1948, but the series of parties continued, sponsored by record collectors.

More than two years after John Bieling's death, Mrs. George N. Dudley wrote to him, on November 13, 1950, from her home, 23 Central Avenue, Amityville, Long Island:

"About three years ago I saw a picture in *Newsday* of old-time phonograph artists at a gathering in your home. Would it be possible for me to obtain a record of the Ossman-Dudley Trio? They made records for Victor and Columbia at the time Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Will Oakland, Caruso, Melba and other top-notchers were recording.

"My husband is the last of the trio, being seventy-three years of age, so I surely would appreciate it if I could possibly get one of these records. Thanking you for whatever information you may give me, sincerely, Mrs. George N. Dudley."

The Bieling family turned this letter over to their neighbor and friend, E. B. Burke, president of Pioneer Recording Artists and Admirers, and Bryant was thoughtful enough to send me a copy. It gave me a moment of real excitement, for, thanks to a kindly twist of fate, it was apparent that I now had the means of solving that mystery of the Ossman-Dudley Trio. I wrote immediately to Mrs. Dudley, telling her I had long enjoyed the trio's recordings and asking for information concerning its members. This she gave in generous measure.

And now we have almost reached the point where I may begin quoting from Mrs. Dudley's letters, sometimes rearranging the paragraphs, which she set down just as they occurred to her, so that they will give a more coherent narrative. But first I should

like to mention that the Ossman-Dudley Trio appears to have been the successor to the Ossman Banjo Trio, which made several records in 1904 and 1905. The earlier group consisted of Ossman and two other banjoists, Parke Hunter and William Farmer. Their records included a hauntingly pretty Edison cylinder, No. 8841, "I've Got a Feelin' for You," issued in November, 1904, and two Columbia cylinders, Number 32666, "Egypt," came out in the April, 1905, Columbia list, and 32699, "Hurrah, Boys!" a two-step, in May. Vess Ossman also recorded a number of duets with Hunter and Farmer as his partners,

Now, Mrs. Dudley's letters, with occasional comment, where it appears to be needed, by myself:

"In regard to the Ossman and Dudley Trio, my husband, George (the older of the Dudley Brothers) played a 36-string harp guitar; his brother, Audley, a triple-string mandolin, and of course, Ossman, the five-string, long-neck banjo, which he played with his fingers.

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"George N. was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and Audley F. was born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Their grandmother had her plantation on the Eastern Shore. Their grandfather was a member of the House of Representatives. Colonel Tilghman, of the Eastern Shore, wrote two volumes of 'The History of Talbot County,' which mentions the Dudleys. He knew my husband's father, who was a trainer of racing and pacing horses and drove a high-wheeled sulky. He built a half-mile race track on the old estate. George's father had a stock farm and owned an offspring of the famous race horse, 'Hannibal.'

"The boys were left orphans when very young. When they grew older, being musically inclined, they formed a mandolin orchestra, which also included guitars. They went to Baltimore and played in the Palm Garden of Kernan's Theater for quite a few years. All the celebrities used to stop there, among them Nat Wills, Weber and Fields, Walter C. Kelly, McIntyre and Heath and numerous others. When they finished there, they came to New York and did Sunday night concerts in all the theaters. Finally, Vess heard about the Dudley Brothers, hence the Ossman-Dudley Trio. They were with Vess for quite some time, not only doing records, but they played in the homes of some of the wealthiest people.

"Here's a little story I think you might get a kick out of. They had a date at one of these homes, so naturally they walked up the front steps, and who should come out to greet them but the 'brass-buttons.' When he saw the instruments he directed them to the 'help' entrance. Ossman spoke up and said, 'We go in the front door, otherwise no music to-night!' I get a kick out of that because I knew Ossman very well, having worked for him at the Martinique Hotel, 32nd Street and Broadway."

To interrupt Mrs. Dudley for a moment, anyone who knows Vess Ossman, even if, like myself, only from

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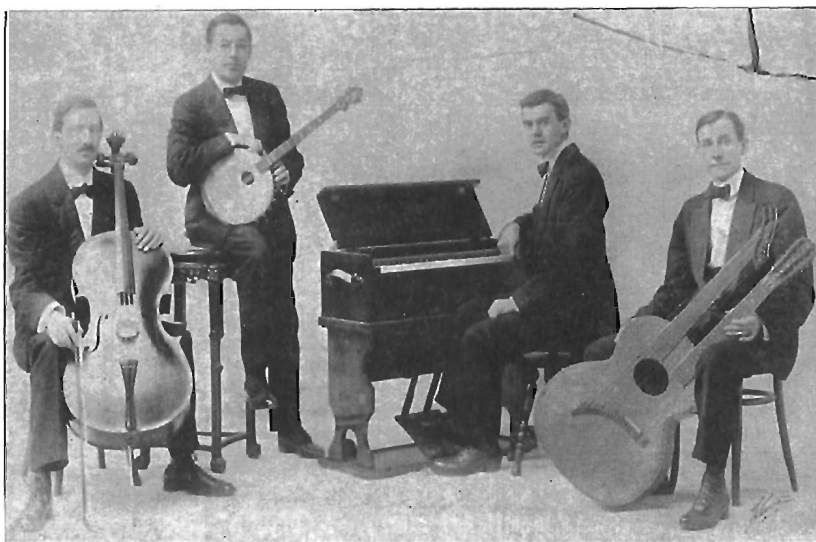
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Besides playing in the Ossman-Dudley Trio, George and Audley Dudley also had a quartet, shown above, which entertained at social events. Left to right—Henry Lundgren, 'cello; Audley Dudley, banjo; Charles Cochran, organ; and George Dudley, harp-guitar.

the reminiscences of his friends, will enjoy that anecdote. He was a man of fierce pride and easily aroused temper, and old-time phonograph company workers who can remember the feeling he used to display when a banjo string broke in the middle of a recording session will wonder that he showed so much restraint when the doorman tried to be snooty. It's a safe bet that the trio went in through the front door. After all, Vess had played for President Theodore Roosevelt and King Edward of England, and he wasn't a bit impressed by somebody who just happened to be wealthy!

Back to Mrs. Dudley:

"The Ossman-Dudley Trio used to play a lot for Cornelius Vanderbilt, Sr. They played in his home, also on his twin yachts, as well as at the 47th Regiment Armory, where he was Commodore. Ossman always carried an extra banjo with him for Mr. Vanderbilt, because he liked to sit down and play with the boys. He is only one of the elite that they played for, so you can gather from that the class of work they had.

"The trio also played Sunday night concerts in the theaters. Vess was late getting in one Sunday, so he hurriedly dressed to 'tux,' but forgot to change his shoes, so he went on stage with tan shoes. Well, that was 'our Vess!' The audience got a laugh out of that. Then, another time, the

stagehand put out three gilded chairs, and poor Vess would have to get the rickety one, so down he went. That got a howl also, but probably the audience thought it a part of the act. They also played on the 'apron' of the old Hippodrome Theater, where Radio City Music Hall now is.

"I also got a kick out of Dud when he tells about working in not such a choice neighborhood. There were quite a number of youngsters up in the balcony, who came 'armed.' The boys always played good numbers, such as 'Poet and Peasant' and 'William Tell' overtures, but the youngsters didn't like that, so they started throwing their missiles. One lemon struck Vess' banjo, which resounded all over the place. Pop sure does laugh when he tells of that experience!

"In regard to Vess' making records with Bill Farmer," Mrs. Dudley continues, "I have never heard any of those records, but I heard Farmer when he was playing at Faust's in Columbus Circle. In those days they called such places cabarets; today they call them night clubs. My husband remembers Parke Hunter. Vess' children were too young for him to remember, outside of Vess, Jr. Was very much surprised to learn of his death. I had often wondered what happened to him and whether he had followed in his father's footsteps."

Mrs. Dudley said that a financial disagreement, such as has been com-

mon to the theater since its earliest days and probably always will be, caused the Dudley Brothers to end their business association with "The Banjo King," but that the personal friendship remained unimpaired. She relates:

"When George and Audley gave up records they opened an agency of their own and had a very fine class of work. They developed banjos. My husband plays a long-neck 'plectrum' banjo. Finally, his brother died about the first of September, 1916, and we were married September 5 in Washington, D. C., by the same minister who preached the funeral service for Audley. He is buried in Bladensburg, Maryland. Had my husband thought, he would have had Audley taken to the Eastern Shore, as his father had a big 'plot' there.

"The Dudley Brothers had all George Hamilton Dean's work. He was opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral, where Radio City is today. Dean was one of the biggest caterers in New York. Then they had Louis Sherry's, at 44th Street and Fifth Avenue, and played at some of the most wonderful affairs.

"After my husband lost his brother he lost heart in music—that is, for a while. At that time WEA came into existence. They called up my husband and asked him if he would go

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 37)

Clocks made by Aaron Willard are distinguished by symmetrical design, good workmanship, excellent decoration and precision movements. His clocks are usually fitted with beautifully designed and delicate hands. The specimen illustrated is an excellent example.

Some case on case clocks by Willard, and others, have a kidney shaped dial which, in my opinion, does not improve the symmetry of the whole. It is believed that the round dial is earlier than the kidney dial. It is certainly more to my taste.

Willard clocks are rare today and, of course, in tremendous demand. Those bearing the name of Simon Willard are first choice while Aaron Willard's masterpieces rank second in demand and, of course, value. Some Willard pieces have commanded prices that are little short of fabulous.

The case on case clock is a typical product of Massachusetts clockmakers and was seldom seen even in neighboring Connecticut. This illustration is so good that elaborate description is neither necessary nor desirable.

*Illustration No. 23.* This is a very fine and most unusual musical English bracket clock. Most of this type clocks are rather plain at the top and fitted with a carrying handle. This is the first and only one I have seen with cupola added. It is of course entirely authentic.

This clock, by Des Granges of London, is early nineteenth century and, except in appearance, is typical of the musical bracket clocks of that period. It is fitted with a whole series of bells for both chimes and musical selections. With the standard setting, it will chime on each quarter hour and play a musical selection on the hour. As will be noted, there are settings at the top of the dial for music, bells, muted bells and various musical selections, allowing for a variety of chimes and musical numbers to suit the mood and desires of the owner.

These musical English bracket clocks are among the finest mechanisms made anywhere in the world and they were sold at fancy prices for that period. A great many of them were made for the American market. One of the largest importers in this country was Tiffany & Co. of New York. The selling prices, when new, ranged from six hundred to one thousand dollars, depending on the maker, the ornamentation, the musical arrangement, etc.

These clocks are comparatively rare today and much desired by collectors. Nevertheless, if one is lucky, it is still possible to pick one up at a price somewhat less than the original selling price. But one must be VERY LUCKY indeed.

Space for another chapter has run out and we still have a long way to go in completing the story of the Willis Michael collection. I still have twenty photographs to be covered, among which are clocks of world-wide renown and interest. If our readers will bear with me, these will all be covered in ensuing installments.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

"I also get a kick out of 'Dud' when on the air the opening night, but George told them he was not interested, since he had lost his brother. They said that on account of his being one of the pioneer record makers they would very much like to have him, Well, that was that, but shortly afterwards he 'perked up' and thought he would carry on the Dudley name again. He got Sherry's back and appeared there with his 'Versatile Sextet,' singing and instrumental. The musicians doubled up on two or three instruments.

"Thereafter we were on WOR, known as the 'Novelty Quartet,' of which I was one of the members. At that time there were no commercials, I'm sorry to say. We would have had to stay on for quite some time before being 'sold.'

"I remember that one time Vess could not leave New York to go on a show playing in Richmond, Virginia, so he sent Audley as banjoist in his place. Vess had charge of music and the show at the Martinique at that time, so Vess, Jr., went down and managed the show—my first appearance in show business. This was a long time after the Ossman-Dudley records."

Mrs. Dudley gives the following information concerning the senior Ossman, which may supplement my former HOBBIES series on "The Banjo King":

"Vess came from Hudson, in up-state New York. When he was a young fellow he used to play on the trains coming down to New York and back, wearing a 'linen duster.' While riding back and forth to New York, he heard of a contest being held at Carnegie Hall, so he threw his hat in the ring and came out with high honors. I think it was then that they named him 'the Banjo King' because shortly after that he went to Europe and played for King Edward. In my opinion there was only one 'Banjo King' and I mean just that . . . Vess used to play harmonics that no one ever does today. It was beautiful . . . But I have always enjoyed listening to Fred Van Eps' records, also those of Harry Reser. Reser is a later comer but very good."

Mrs. Dudley says that her husband was seventy-five years of age on April 24, 1952, and that his brother Audley would be seventy-three if he were alive. "I don't count," she adds, "because I'm only a kid of sixty!"

I was sorry to learn that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Dudley is in the best of health. She has arthritis and high blood pressure with, she says, bronchial asthma, to top it off. Mr. Dudley suffers from sinus troubles, and, because of low resistance, is constantly plagued with colds. However, he has been for many years a valued worker in a profession about as far removed from music as it well could be.

Says Mrs. Dudley:

"My husband still commutes every

day to New York and does not get home until late at night. He is in the advertising business—has been for years. Even when he made records he was in this business, and is one of the best men in his field today. He still has that wonderful spry gait, bless his heart! You would never guess his age. He was forty when I married him and is still going strong, outside of his sinus. He has always been termed 'the old iron horse,' taking care of business during the day and his music at night.

"Incidentally, George has had wonderful musicians working for him. Felix Arndt, composer of 'Nola,' was one of his piano players. He made piano rolls for Aeolian. (Arndt, who died in the 1918 flu epidemic, was also the first pianist of the Van Eps Trio, being succeeded in 1916 by Frank Banta, and he likewise made solo Victor records.—J. W.)

"'Dud,' as he is known, is very nervous and temperamental. After all, there's a reason for that, because, as I said, he gets up every morning at 5, leaves at 6:30, and I never know what time he will get home. He has a very responsible job—anything that goes wrong with metal advertising plates, he has to see that it's made O. K. before going to press. If there is a defect in a half-tone, they have him take care of it. When he is finished you can't tell where the defect or scratch was."

Mrs. Dudley mentioned in one of her letters that she was sending me a photograph showing the Dudley Brothers and two other musicians with whom they played for afternoon teas. I have submitted the photo for reproduction with this article. In the order of their appearance in the picture, the musicians are Henry Lundgren, 'cello; Audley Dudley, banjo; Charles Cochran, organ; and George Dudley, harp guitar. Mrs. Dudley also sent a photo of herself, taken in 1913. "In those days," she says, "I weighed 123 pounds. That's why they called me 'The Little Girl With the Big Voice.' Now," she adds jokingly, "I'm 'the Big Parade.'"

Mrs. Dudley also gives some interesting details of her own professional career. She writes:

"I am sending you an old program from the Martinique Hotel. They had me in *Variety* as being a riot every night. 'The Chocolate Soldier' was playing on Broadway at the time, and I was under contract to use 'My Hero' and 'Sands of the Desert' for a whole season. We had the reputation of having the best show along Broadway, bar none, under the supervision of Vess Ossman. That was in the time of Churchill's, Shanley's, Lauber's Bustanoby's, the Hofbrau, Marlborough, Blenheim, Faust's, Tokio, Pekin Reisenweber's, Rector's, Wallach's, Maxim's and others. When Vess got out the place was not the same, as the hotel had also changed ownership. I had everything that came through there—sang in the tearoom, also with Holmes' Concert Orchestra in the Louis Room, and then the Dutch Room at night, as well as at



banquets and dinners. Ossman thought a lot of me. He had all the confidence in the world in my making good. I only wish we'd had radio and television in those days. Years ago we didn't have to sing into a mike to be heard. You had to be there with the goods—or else!"

Returning to her husband's career, Mrs. Dudley continued:

"After Audley died, 'Dud' met Vess on Broadway, and Vess said he felt very bad about Audley's death. He intimated that he would like to 'double up' with 'Dud,' but my husband would not go on the road, because he had too much of his own work to take care of. Eren Mondorf, who was manager of Keith's Circuit, previously had wanted the Dudley Brothers to go on the road but they refused. . . My cousin, Thurland Chattaway," she adds, "was the composer of 'Mandy Lee' and 'Red Wing,' which were very popular years ago and still are today. Of course he had many others, but those seemed to be outstanding."

And now I have come to the end of my quotations from Mrs. Dudley's letters. But a few words about the Ossman-Dudley Trio records seem in order before closing the article.

The first two Victors by the ensemble were issued in April, 1906. They were No. 4624, "St. Louis Tickle," and 4625, Victor Herbert's "Al Fresco." The "Tickle," composed by Barney and Seymore, was the most popular of all Ossman-Dudley records. When Victor introduced its double-faced discs in 1909, it was coupled on No. 16092 with Ossman's solo, "A Gay Gossoon." This stayed in the catalog until the advent of electrical recording, but, probably because of defects in the master, was remade in 1923 by a group headed by Fred Van Eps and calling itself the Plantation Trio. Van Eps also remade the "Gossoon" side.

"Al Fresco" was less popular and stayed in the catalog only a couple of years. It was not issued in double-faced form. In May, 1906, the trio was represented by "Koontown Kaffee Klatsch" (No. 4659), which also had a relatively brief life. Then in June came No. 4679, J. Bodewalt Lampe's tuneful march and two-step "Dixie Girl." The supplement writer commented:

"A march by the composer of 'Dreamy Eyes' and 'Creole Belles' is sure to be a good one, and 'Dixie Girl' is quite worthy of Mr. Lampe's reputation. Played by this new instrumental combination with snap and precision."

"Dixie Girl," like "St. Louis Tickle," proved to be a big seller. It was combined on double-faced record No. 16667 with one of Ossman's best solos, "A Bunch of Rags," and stayed in the catalog for about twenty years. It also was remade (in 1921) by the Plantation Trio, but the later record omitted the mandolin, and the instrumentation consisted of two banjos and a guitar. Van Eps likewise did a re-make of "Bunch of Rags."

The Ossman-Dudley Trio's first

Columbia records appeared in September, 1906. Both were two-minute cylinders. On 32984, the trio played the "Koontown Kaffee Klatsch" march and two-step, composed by J. P. Greenberg, which it had previously recorded for Victor. Selections from "The Mayor of Tokio," a musical comedy by Will F. Peters, appeared on 32985.

In October, 1906, the trio made its first appearance on Columbia discs, with No. 3476, "Koontown Kaffee (or Koffee, as Columbia spelled it) Klatsch." The record was more successful, for some reason, than on the Victor, and when this oddly haunting number was combined on Columbia double-faced record No. A218 with Ossman's "Buffalo Rag" it remained a standard seller for many years.

One month later, in November, No. 3491, the disc version of the "Mayor of Tokio" selections came out. It was not so popular as "Koontown," although it was combined on A219 with a cornet and trombone duet of "Alice, Where Art Thou?" by unidentified players. (The latter was afterwards re-coupled on A881 with a flute solo, "I'll Follow Thee.")

Apparently, no more Ossman-Dudley records were issued until April, 1907, when No. 3591 came out, containing Irene Gible's very catchy two-step, "Chicken Chowder." It may have been issued later on a cylinder, but I haven't been able to trace it.

Also in April appeared what almost certainly is the rarest Ossman-Dudley record—BC cylinder No. 85109 of a two-step by Charles Seymour, "The Panama Rag." This cylinder played for three minutes as compared to two minutes for the average "roller" and could be used only on a special Columbia instrument with a six-inch mandrel. Not a great many of the longer-playing cylinder machines were sold, and records to fit them are hard to find.

As far as I can learn, that completes the list of Ossman-Dudley records, except that "Chicken Chowder" was doubled on No. A220 with Ossman's "Policy King" solo. In double-faced form, it sold well for fifteen years or more. Oddly enough, Vess doesn't seem to have made any Edison cylinders with the Dudley Brothers. The three may have played together for Leeds, Imperial, Zonophone or some of the other "off-brands" that were current in 1906. However, I have not seen any such records listed.

But, brief as the Ossman-Dudley list may seem, all their records make good listening, and Mr. and Mrs. Dudley would very much like to obtain copies of them all. If any HOBBIES readers have copies they can spare and will mail them to Mrs. George N. Dudley, 23 Central Avenue, Amityville, Long Island, New York, they will be received with genuine appreciation.

Since the foregoing was written, I have received a few more reminiscences from Mrs. Dudley, which I shall add here as a "supplement."

"My husband's middle name, she

writes, "is Nabb and his brother's was Fleming. Their father was William George Dudley. I cannot recall their grandfather's name, but imagine it also was William George."

"Dud's height is about five feet four; weight about 153; eyes, light blue; hair, gray, used to be dark."

"When my daughter comes to visit us, I will have her take a 'flash' of us, which I think you would like to have. We had only one child, Florence Mae (very good looking!) but we have four of the darlinest granddaughters—Florence Estelle Amberman, born May 5, 1938; Shirley Ann, born June 7, 1943; Jean Irene, born October 6, 1947; and Renée, born July 13, 1951. . . My daughter said, 'Mother, I'm making up for what you didn't have,' so I told her not to do me any more favors—four are enough! But the grandchildren are what 'Dud' and I live for. Their daddy is an engineer on the Long Island Railroad, but he and his little family are going down to Florida, so he will be an engineer down there. Long Island is very damp, not good for sinus troubles, which my son-in-law has, and the children have had terrible colds one after another, so I hope it improves their health, going down there."

"Audley Dudley has a daughter, Virginia, but she has no children. She lives in Kenwood, Maryland, but was only a child when Audley died. . . She has expressed a desire for some of her father's records, and I hope I can find them for her."

"Have you," Mrs. Dudley continues, "ever heard of Ruby Brooks and Harry Denton? They were banjoists and theatrical agents, who used to entertain in private homes. It was through their office that Vess Ossman went on the other side and entertained King Edward. They were considered top-notchers also. They always wore high silk hats, so you can gather from that what old-timers they were. I wonder if they made records? (Note by Jim Walsh—Ruby Brooks began making Edison cylinders in the 1890's and kept it up until his death in, or around, 1906. I don't recall his playing with Denton, but he did duets with a play named Ginter.)"

Mrs. Dudley also asks: "Do you remember Pavlowa, the Polish dancer? She had an idea that she would like to have a mandolin on the stage for one of her dances. She went to Brooks and Denton, and asked them if they knew where she could get just that kind of musician. She had all manuscript, which had to be memorized. Harry Denton said, 'There is only one man in New York City who can fill the bill and that is Audley Dudley.' He filled it O. K., and Pavlowa was very much pleased because he didn't have much time to memorize the music, but he had a wonderful brain and memory." (Note by J. W. —This is just one of a number of Pavlowa's unusual actions. The Columbia record supplement for December, 1911, says that when she saw

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 41)

Erwin H. Gold of Hollywood, California and is in excellent condition. It operates as follows: A coin is placed in the extended left hand, he lowers his arm and the coin is deposited in the bank. At the same time he nods his head forward in a polite gesture of thanks. Of course his arm returns to the original position automatically, ready for another coin.

The bank is made of cast iron with the exception of the left arm which is made in two sections of a metal stamping. It is in excellent condition with no repairs. The paint is in exceptionally good condition for a bank with such an early date of manufacture. The grillwork

is black with gold trimmings and the name "Bank" is also gold. The frock coat is black with grey trousers and the face and hands are naturally painted. Unlike most of the banks with either the conventional round coin trap or lock with key, this bank has a section of the grill by the feet of the figure which swings out to remove the coins. The bank itself is dated 1876 and this appears in front of the figure on the counter.

So far there are two of these banks known to exist in private collections. There have been rumors of another one and possibly two more, but so far nothing has come to light to substantiate these rumors.

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|---|---|
- PISTOLS:**
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>CAT</b></li> <li>● <b>DUCK</b></li> <li>● <b>CHICKEN</b> (Just out)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>MOON FACE</b></li> <li>● <b>TURTLE</b></li> </ul> |
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 38)

an eccentric dance, "The Texas Tommy," on the West Coast, she was "so charmed she stated her intention of introducing it in a ballet throughout Europe." I'll bet she didn't!

I am sorry to say Mrs. Dudley reports her health and that of her husband are worse than when her original notes were written. "Since the summer of 1951," she says, "I have lost 59½ pounds...I turned against food and even the cooking nauseated me terribly. Naturally, it has left me very weak. It is something new for up to last winter...I have a heart ailment also so have to take things easy and rest as much as possible. Have been advised to go to a drier climate, and 'Dud' also needs to go, so guess we'll have to pull up stakes and follow our son-in-law and his family to Florida a little later."

I'm sure we all hope that going South will mean an immediate change for the better in Mr. and Mrs. Dudley's health, and that they will discover the secret of Ponce de Leon's Fountain of Youth when they move to Florida. Both, through their talents, have provided much pleasure to those fortunate enough to see and hear them, and it seems only right that their remaining years should be both healthy and happy.

## MECHANICAL ANTIQUES WANTED

**BANKS: RARE** mechanical banks wanted. Price or will offer.—J. E. Nevill, 700 Dixie Highway, Covington, Ky. mh3272

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## WIZARDS OF ACCORDION AND CONCERTINA

(Peter and Daniel Wyper and Alexander Prince)

By JIM WALSH

Invention of the first primitive accordion is attributed to Christian F. L. Buschmann (1805-64), a German, who brought out an instrument in 1822 which he called a "Handaeoline." This was exactly fifty-five years before Thomas A. Edison contrived his even cruder tinfoil phonograph. Cyrillus Damian, of Vienna, Austria, one of several subsequent developers of the instrument, is credited with giving it the name of "accordion" in 1829.

In spite of its limitations the accordion soon became popular. Within twenty years after its invention it was being played, probably not with mastery, by perhaps the world's most famous man of his day. During his first visit to the United States in 1842, the thirty-year-old English author, Charles Dickens, had moments of homesickness in which he executed "Home, Sweet Home" with much feeling on an accordion. He also played for fellow passengers aboard ship. There seems no likelihood that he practiced systematically or performed regularly after he returned home.

Rather oddly as it now seems, the accordion did not become a favorite recording instrument when the phonograph was developed for home use. In fact, I have not been able to find any evidence of its being recorded during the 1890's, but the phonograph history of that period is so hazy I shan't take the responsibility of saying no experimental records were made in this country or Europe. However, the first accordion rendition I have so far discovered issued by any American company is No. 212, "American Clog," played by John J. Kimmel for Zonophone in 1905.

There will be more in a succeeding article about Mr. Kimmel. But he, although a favorite pioneer recording artist, is not the first accordionist whose records were offered for sale. That distinction goes to another skilled exponent of the technique of playing jigs and reels — a son of Auld Scotia — Peter Wyper of Hamilton, Lanarkshire, Scotland, who was in his professional prime from 35 to 50 years ago.

### 1. Peter Wyper

Hamilton is a town about eleven miles southeast of Glasgow, and Peter Wyper, little known as he is to the generality of American record

collectors, may be its most distinguished son. As long ago as 1903 he was painstakingly making his own "Empress" cylinder recordings of accordion and bagpipe solos, turning them out one at a time and apparently knowing nothing about processes of duplication.

The Talking Machine News of London first appeared in May, 1903. In its fourth (August) issue, Editor Leonard Lillingston wrote, under the heading of "Accordion Records":

From the North of Scotland Mr. Peter Wyper sends me a record of accordion playing, which not only proves him to be an expert record maker, but shows him to be quite a master of this instrument. I am not a lover of the accordion as handled by the Italian boys, the charm of whose playing is supplemented by a forlorn monkey, but Mr. Wyper proves beyond doubt that entertaining music can be produced from it.

"I can well believe him when he says, 'I have sold a considerable number of these records locally, but as I have to play and make each record separately, I should take it as a favour if you could enlighten me as to how to take one record from another. It is so monotonous playing the same tune time after time.'"

MANIFOLDING RECORDS. — This is the next stage after mastering "How to Make Records," and it requires special apparatus, which, by-the-way, I do not remember ever seeing advertised. There is nothing very formidable in it, however, and I have no doubt a chapter will be found in the series. . . It is too big a subject for the space allowed me, and I can only suggest that Mr. Wyper look at future numbers for an article on the subject.

The presumably genial Scotsman soon identified himself as a staunch supporter of the "T. M. N." In May, 1904, the editor wrote: "As will be seen elsewhere, Mr. Peter Wyper, of Cadzow, Hamilton, a good friend of ours ever since this journal was born, and himself a record maker of no mean ability, offers three prizes, of two pounds, one pound and ten shillings respectively, for the best records, to be made by amateurs only. We hope that our readers will avail themselves of Mr. Wyper's generosity, and prove themselves record makers at the same time." Wyper had an ad. occupying three-quarters of page seven, announcing his prize contest and saying:

The conditions are simple. The records must be made by Amateurs only. They must be CAREFULLY packed—note this well—to Mr. PETER WYPER, Cadzow Street, Hamilton, N. B., before the 25th of the present month of May. No records can in any case be returned. The records can be of whatever you like:

singing, talking, instrumental or band records. Competitors may send as many or as few records as they choose.

The ad. was repeated the next month, with the explanation: "We have decided to extend the time of entry in order to give readers all over the world a chance to compete. Records must be sent in not later than the 25th of June."

In view of Peter Wyper's spelling "carefully" in "carefully packed" with capital letters, the following editorial notice in that same June issue is at least mildly amusing:

Mr. Peter Wyper, Hamilton, N. B., sends two records for review, but, unfortunately, did not take our advice to pack them inside with wadding. In sending records through the post . . . they should have waste paper or wadding put inside the cylinder as well as being well packed outwardly, otherwise they are almost bound to be broken in transit. The unbroken record sent was a bagpipe solo and although we are not keen on the bagpipes at the best of times, we can recommend this record as a faithful reproduction of the instrument. The broken record we repaired, and find it was another of Mr. Wyper's specialties, an accordion solo, most carefully played. Mr. Wyper is a past master, as our readers are aware, on these two instruments.

On page 64 there is an ad. of "Wyper's Renowned Empress Records for Phonographs. Largest and best selections of Accordion & Bagpipe Records in the market, one shilling, threepence each. Trade supplied." Then follows a list of fifteen bagpipe selections. Wyper also made "Renowned International Melodeons, with hand-made steel reeds, best value in the world." Prices, at the rate of exchange prevailing then, would have been from about \$4 to \$8 in American money.

Presumably, one of the succeeding issues contained the names of Mr. Wyper's prize winners, but I have not sought them. However, on page 518 of the August, 1905, T. M. N. is an indication that Peter had learned something about duplicating methods, for his ad. reads:

PETER WYPER. The Champion Accordion Player's Phonograph Records. All Masters. Loud, clear and distinct Scotch music. Solos, Strathspeys, Reels, Hornpipes, Jigs, Marches, &c. Retail price 1/3 each. Special prices to the trade per doz. Lists sent on application.

On second thought, that reference to "all masters" may denote that the accordionist-piper was still monotonously turning them out one at a time.

make enough under such conditions to "supply the trade."

## II. Wyper Signs with Columbia

It's likely that Empress records continued to issue for another couple of years from Cadzow street, Hamilton, North Britain, but the market for wax cylinders had begun to decline. However, the home-made "rollers" had at least one good effect. They brought Wyper to the attention of Columbia's English branch and late in 1907 he began to make accordion solos for that well established firm. Not only that, but his brother Daniel was engaged as Peter's duet partner and played some solos of his own. Thus the Wyper Brothers foreshadowed the more famous Italian team — the Deiro Brothers, Guido and Pietro — who were to come along a few years later.

The Columbia records by the Wyper "boys" (they were men of mature middle age) were similar to those that John Kimmel was already making familiar to a much larger audience in the United States. They consisted mainly of jigs, reels, hornpipes and a march and polka or two.

Beginning in 1909, the Wyper Brothers' productions began to appear in the American Columbia lists. Probably their availability was the chief reason Kimmel was not engaged to play for Columbia, as he did for virtually every other American record company. The first of the imported records was A652, "Royal Belfast Hornpipe," by Daniel, coupled with "Starlit March," a duet by the brothers. Daniel's only other solo in the American list was A728, "High Level Hornpipe." Peter played "Strathspey" on the other side. Another duet, "Red Rose March," was on A656, Peter obliging with "The De'il Among the Tailors," to complete the coupling.

Peter Wyper solos not previously mentioned, circulating in the United States, were: A762, "Busby Polka" and "Irish Jig — Father O'Flynn"; A716 — "Highland Schottische" and "Lord Lynedoch, Strathspey and Hornpipe"; A674 — "Hornpipes — Selections" and "Jigs Selections"; and A702 — "Reel and Jig — Stirling Castle" and "Strathspey." These releases, it will be seen, were concentrated into a period of a few months. It may be there were no more because Columbia engaged the great Guido Deiro as piano-accordion soloist in 1911, and his records were considered sufficient to take care of the needed repertoire.

Incidentally, the well played Wyper records were almost, but not quite, the first accordion numbers to be issued by Columbia in this country. The August, 1907, cylinder supplement contains No. 65061, "Russian

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Transcription's, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings & etc. by Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo & Ink Spots. Money no object.—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d120061

**WANTED:** Gene Austin records in good condition.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vasser, Wichita 8, Kans. mh1021

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**Attention Record Collectors:** Inaugurating auction sales. Rare and cut-out vocal records. Free lists. — C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. my3825

**RARE RECORDINGS (1900-1950),** reasonable prices. Write for Bargain List. — Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York City. ap3403

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, operatic disk records. Best prices for new or mint records.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. jly6806

**ORIGINAL RECORDS, 1900-1925.** Famous Artists of the past. Interesting premium offers. Free lists.—Universal, Box 32, Allston, Mass. mh3403

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, Jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** From collectors' items to just good "listening," large varied stock. Please state "wants". For information write or visit — Record Collectors Service, 502 East 88th St. N. Y. C. 29, N. Y. ap68801

**"If its been recorded—we have it."** Lewin Record Paradise, 5600 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles 28, Calif. ap3804

**100% EUROPEAN LISTS** of selected vocal operatic records. Many G&T, Fonotipias, Pathe, etc. Free lists on request. Wants supplied.—Collectors Haven, 148 Hancock Street, Brooklyn 16, N. Y. my3234

**HAVE YOU CARUSO RECORD** worth \$25? Price Guide to Collector's Records (1953 edition) lists artists, numbers, values; 7500 items. \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York 19, N. Y. my6829

**Operatic Collector's Attention:** Drastic clearance; thousands of fine vocal records, classical and operatic. Priced 50 cents to \$1.50 each. All originals. Free lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ap3447

## MUSIC BOX DISCS

**FOR SALE:** 500 Regina, 15 1/2" discs. 100 Regina, 27" discs. Also other sizes and makes. Send for lists. Send for my tune disc Wani List, offering premium prices for certain tunes. Wanted: Mira music boxes playing 6 3/4" and 5 1/4" discs. —Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. mh3487

## MUSIC BOXES WANTED

**WANT ALL KINDS** of damaged music boxes. Parts etc. Swiss or Disc types. Large cylinders and large steel disc. Describe briefly.—Veteran's Hobby, G. P. Battley, 2749 Macomb St., N. W., Washington 8, D. C. mh3215

**WANTED MUSIC BOXES.** Upright Symphonion music box that plays a set of 3-14" diameter discs at one time; 6 combs. Will accept in any condition. State how many sets of discs, price and condition. — D. P. Battley, Box 2868, Washington 13, D. C. mh1443

## ORGANS FOR SALE

**MELODEONS;** small organs. Beautiful restored instruments. Expert repairing. Reasonable prices.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. je6675

## PHONOGRAPHS

**CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS,** parts, records, catalogs, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6844

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Old post cards, and early model typewriters.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. je6276

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, parts, small horns, reproducers, records, catalogs.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6084

**EDISON PHONOGRAPH, Model "D",** Manufactured 1908. Like new. 2 and 4 minute reproducers. Beautifully hand painted "Morning-glory" horn. 35 records. — Ranch House Antiques, Inglesfield, Indiana. mh1002

**EDISON CYLINDER** phonographs, morning glory horns. 12 records, \$20. Express collect. — Coppernoll's, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. mh1821

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Write your wants.—Fore's, H-3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. jly126121

## SQUARE DANCE

**AMERICANA:** Collection 20 Texas Square Dance Calls, 50c. Privately printed.—Muchmore, Box 36, Universal City, Calif. my3652

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.80.—Jules Wolff, 74 North Street, New York. ap6844

**WANT ALL TYPES** of old music boxes, coin operated and otherwise. Write, quote best price, and picture, if possible. —George Trambitas, 3126 Elliott Ave. Seattle 1, Washington. je128291

**EVERYTHING** for the collector: records, sheet music, piano rolls. Specialists in supplying rare items at "reasonable prices." Jazz, Blues, Race, Swing, New Orleans, Personalities, Popular, Operatics Vaudevillians. Send wants to: —Bob Colton, 680 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn 6, New York. ap3426

**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia cylinder phonographs, records, catalogues, small horns. Catalogues.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. jly6216

**FOR SALE:** Steinway Grand Piano, good condition, \$150. Mason and Hamlin Organ, good condition, \$25. Write: —Myron Warren, Box 964, Perry, N. Y. ap3863

**HUNDREDS** of IMPORTED cut-out vocals, rare Golden Age operatics; G&T, Fonotipia, etc., hard to get Music Hall and Personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, imported LPs, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. mh3867

**WANTED:** Old phonographs, Polyphones, coin operated machines, catalogs, reproducers; Victor, Edison, Columbia. Describe, quote. Will trade.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio ap3633

**WANT IN ANY CONDITION:** Mechanically operated pianos; organs; music boxes; instructions. Please describe fully and state price.—R. W. Cochran, 1235 Overlook Ave., West Englewood, N. J. my3004

**For Sale:** Collection of old violins. One small English piano. One pair of pewter pitchers.—Freda S. Roggash, Dix, Nebraska. mh1042



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

Kamarinskaja," composed and played by A. Greenberg, with organ accompaniment. There may have been other accordion offerings in foreign language supplements, especially those listed for customers in Scandinavian countries, where the accordion is extremely popular.

The 1917 Columbia record catalog still contained most of the Wyper records in its accordion section, which was prefaced: "With the five greatest accordion players in the world — Guido and Pietro Deiro, Daniel and Peter Wyper and John J. Kimmel — demonstrating their dexterity, the Columbia list of solos and duets on this interesting instrument may be considered representative." But, for some reason, the records in which Dan Wyper took part didn't sell as well in this country as Peter's solos, and by 1919 only four Wyper records were left — numbers A674, A702, A716 and A762 — all by Peter Wyper alone.

The 1917 catalog shows photographs of the brothers, both of whom I would judge to have been in their fifties, or even in the early sixties, when the pictures were made. Peter, smiling, has thin hair and a white mustache. Daniel, perhaps a couple of years younger, is almost bald but his mustache is darker than his brother's. He looks intensely serious.

Peter Wyper's four solos continued in the American Columbia catalog through 1926 — after the introduction of electric recording. In 1927 they had dropped to two — A716 and A762. In 1929, only one was left — "Busby Polka" and "Irish Jig — Father O'Flynn," which had been re-numbered 33020F and issued in the special Irish series. By 1933, Columbia ownership had changed hands, the catalog had been whittled down to a skeleton of its former self and the last Wyper record was gone.

In the British Isles, many more Wyper records were listed than were made available here. They were at first a part of the standard Columbia catalog, but when the British companies began to suffer from cut-throat German competition, Columbia brought out a new label, "Regal," at a lower price. A Regal circular dated August 18, 1921, contains a front page drawing of Peter Wyper, whom it describes as "Scotland's Greatest Accordion Player." It contains ten double-faced records on which the brothers play duets (the record that was called "Starlit March" by American Columbia was "Starlit Dell March" abroad); 48 double-faced offerings by Peter alone; and four by



Alexander Prince

Daniel, who seems consistently to have played second fiddle (or should we say second accordion?) to his brother. Peter occasionally essayed an old-time song, such as "Silver Threads Among the Gold," and he did several two-steps, including "The Flappers," "Uncle Joshua," "Buster Brown" and "The Dancing Dustman." All these are credited to "Felix Burns," which makes me wonder why Wyper so signally favored that otherwise unknown composer. Can Felix Burns have been an assumed name for Peter Wyper, with "Burns" being borrowed from the name of the Scotch poet, Robert Burns? Peter also played "The Queen Mary Waltz," written by Burns, and "Fountain of Melody Waltz." Another oddity is that Felix Burns is the only song writer

mentioned in the circular. I'll bet a bawbee he was Wyper himself!

The accordions played by the Wyper Brothers were the small, simple British type with the button on the right hand side. They derived from the "English" concertina, invented in 1827 and patented in 1829 by Charles Wheatstone (1802-75.) In 1844 he also produced the "Duet" concertina. Wheatstone was a distinguished man of science and is remembered for his development of the electric telegraph.

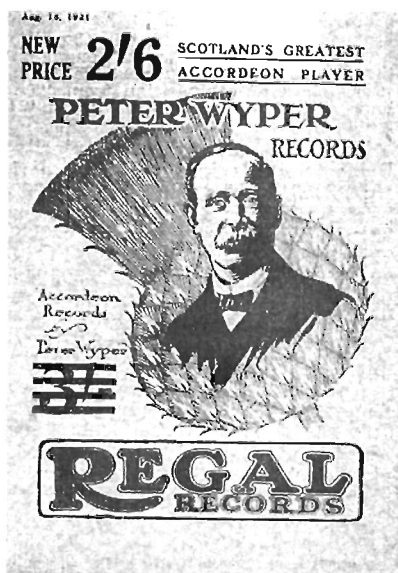
And that completes the story of the Wyper Brothers, as far as I know it. Presumably both are dead. Neither is of special interest to American collectors, but Peter deserves to be remembered as the first musician to market his own brand of accordion records.

### III. Alexander Prince

The earliest American record I have found played on the concertina is Zonophone 563, "Entré Acte—Rose Mousse," made in 1907 by a gentleman with a jaw-breaking name, Isak Piroshinoff. A Minneapolis, Minn., accordion and concertina enthusiast, C. Hilding Bergquist, who has helped me with this article, says the player's name has also been spelled Piroch-nikov and a photo of him appeared in the October, 1909, issue of "The Musician." But the foremost exponent of the concertina was a Scotchman better known in the United States than the Wyper Brothers — the late Alexander Prince. For many years Prince gave recitals throughout the world and was a hit everywhere.

Mr. Bergquist says Prince's real name was Sutherland, though he never used it professionally. He was a prolific recorder, who began by making cylinders and discs for most British companies, but in 1912 became exclusive to Columbia.

I lack detailed information con-



### CIRCUSIANA WANTED

Circus parade items wanted. About 1" per foot, but any size considered. —Wm. J. Boyd, 1908 East 86th St., Cleveland 6, Ohio. my3255

cerning Prince, but can quote parts of an interview, "The Prince of Concertina Players — A Chat With Alexander the Great," which appeared in the "Talking Machine News" of May 1, 1906:

Of course, everyone knows that Mr. Prince is acknowledged king of the concertina world, and those who would like to follow the fashion and belittle the same instrument as a musical instrument have but to hear him play, say, the "Tannhauser Overture" or the "Poet and Peasant," to have the foundations of that disbelief seriously undermined, whilst the experience of hearing any other excerpt from his large selection is guaranteed to completely shatter the remnant remaining.

A genius like Mr. Prince starts level with a poet—that he has to be born, not made. Developments come later. . . . Those readers of the T. M. N. who have had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Prince's artistic efforts, either on the cylinders of the Russell Hunting Company or the discs of another well known house . . . will be glad to hear that Mr. Prince survived the ordeal well and with due care will soon be able to get about.

"Tell me," I said . . . "how you began in this course? What was it that induced you to select the concertina in preference to more popular instruments, and what have you to say for yourself?" With somewhat of a sigh, he said, "I am, or was, alas, an infant prodigy. . . . I was eight years old, and I broke my leg. I had to lie in bed, and that was the start. . . . I used to be fond of pottering about with the instruments in my father's music shop, and when I was fostered up in bed they gave me a concertina, on which instrument I assiduously practiced."

Then followed the natural sequence. At the age of ten he performed at the Glasgow Exhibition, and this was the forerunner of a series of engagements that culminated in appearances at the London Pavilion, Crystal Palace and other abodes of high-glass talent. In the latter part of 1904 Mr. Prince had an extensive tour in the land of promise, South Africa, where his experiences were many and varied. . . . Traveling all night in a mule wagon through the celebrated Zwaartberg Pass (he) gave the dwellers at Oudtshoorn (a place untouched by electric car or motor bus) a great musical treat. On the way to the latter place . . . Mr. Prince and the party of which he was a member gave a show at another unfamiliarly named place, Prince Albert, and the journey between the last two places named was done in the mule wagon. . . . All night in a mule caravan is only part of the penalty of a successful concert artist, but there are plenty of persons who would be glad of a chance of such an outing.

Mr. Prince pointed out to me that the concertina was built fundamentally on the same principle as the organ. Enlarge the concertina, said he, and you have the organ. When I asked if he could explain why the concertina had not been so seriously treated as it deserved to be, Mr. Prince stated he thought one of the reasons was that no musician had ever taken it up, and another that practically no music was written for it. . . . He uses for his purpose the average instrument, but of a very superior make; one has 51 keys and the other 71, and it is the latter that he uses when organ effects are required principally on account of its greater range of bass. It is the variety known to concertinists as the duet concertina. On this the two higher octaves have their keys on the right of the instrument, whilst the rest are on the left.

A peculiar feature of the Anglo-German concertina is that the keys of all the notes which appear on the staves are on the one side, whilst the notes in the spaces are on the other. Mr. Prince has a remarkable knowledge of the theory of music, exemplified by the way he makes an adaptation of classical music to the needs of his instrument. He never bothers to write out the music, but goes ahead from the ordinary score, indelibly planting the adaptation in his mind at the same time.

Six weeks, said Mr. Prince, was the

length of his turn at the Tivoli, Cape Town. That's a remarkable testimonial to his popularity and speaks well of his hold on an audience. Of course, there have been longer turns often in a city like this London, but for a small place such as Cape Town, with a nearly settled population, six weeks is the nail mark or an excellent turn. A funny thing is that in the colony under discussion . . . the black man is a devotee more or less of the cheap, common concertina, and he generally rests content with his talents if he can produce the first three notes of "Three Blind Mice." For a concertina player to conquer that prejudice is a sure and certain sign of the artist, and that, as you can see, Mr. Prince did. . . . In London . . . he has appeared under the aegis of such musical authorities as the Legal Musical Society, the Choughs' Club, the Old Acquaintance Club and in company with such turns as the Meister Glee Singers.

Hilding Bergquist has some comments on the foregoing article. He says:

There are two types of superior concertinas on which classical music can be played, the "English" and the "Duet." Prince played the "Duet" system, which is more of a solo instrument like an accordion, in that it is complete in itself and really needs no accompaniment, although he did have a pianist on many records. The "English" system, also perfect for classical music, nevertheless requires either orchestral or piano accompaniment and has had numerous virtuosi in England (long before Prince) who played concertos with symphony orchestras. It has also had many concertos, sonatas, etc., expressly composed for it. The greatest period of popularity for the "English" concertina was 1845-1880. So, when Prince says that "no musician had ever taken up the concertina and no music was written for it," please make clear to HOBBIES readers that Prince here refers to the "Duet" system which he himself played. The "Anglo-German" concertina combines elements of the English and the simpler German systems.

The Edison Blue Amberol catalog for April, 1914, gives a brief but more explicit account of Prince, which reveals that he was born in Glasgow, only a few miles from Hamilton, home town of Peter and Daniel Wyper:

ALEXANDER PRINCE, concertina. Born in Glasgow, Scotland, of a musical family. At the age of twelve he was regarded as a youthful prodigy, having made several highly successful public appearances as a concertina player. His first important engagement was at the London Pavilion and the Crystal Palace, where he shortly became a favorite. He then made a tour of South Africa, where he became so popular that in Cape Town he was given a six weeks' engagement in one theater. His repertoire includes every class of composition from "Tannhauser" and "Lohengrin" down to "Hiawatha."

That Edison catalog contained six Prince records in its British series: No. 23081, "The Butterfly"; 23064, "Catch Me If You Can—Dance"; 23128, "Forgotten Melodies"; 23029, "Medley of Irish Airs"; 23111, "Merry Widow Waltz," and 23055, "Nazareth." A later addition was 23176, "Bonnie Scotland." He had also made Edison two-minute standard and four-minute Amberol cylinders.

An interesting note appeared in the American Columbia supplement for July, 1914. Record No. A1529 combined "Catch Me If You Can" (Noel) played by Prince, with accordion solo, "Pride of the Roses" (Lavalle) by Pietro Deiro, and the supplement said:

Alexander Prince is perhaps the greatest artist in the playing of the (Duet) concertina that the world has ever had.

It is our privilege to list this month one of his best and most recent recordings. Differing from the accordion in both volume and quality of tone, the concertina is none the less an instrument of captivating musical quality and in the hands of a master its possibilities for entertainment and pleasure are endless. This record will make a sensational impression. It combines with a new accordion solo by Pietro Deiro, played in the customary masterly style associated in the public mind with this artist.

In October, Columbia announced another Prince record, A1572, "Lead, Kindly Light," coupled with "Maidstone," by the St. Hilda Colliery Band. Prince's side was described as a "concertina solo of the beloved old hymn . . . a marvel of tone and execution, its quality easily rivalling that of a pipe organ."

It would be an almost endless job to pore through stacks of British catalogs of the period from around 1905 to 1920, jotting down details of records by Alexander Prince. And if any HOBBIES readers want to go crazy, I can assure them the quickest way of achieving the desired end is to try to make sense of the record listings by the dozens of German companies who fought to corner the British market just before World War I by offering records as cheaply as possible — at a shilling or less. Sometimes the same inferior productions were issued under several different labels. Usually they were made from worn matrices; not infrequently from discarded ones of the legitimate firms or from others acquired in bankrupt sales. Names of artists often were changed, but not always. The Germans were such a nuisance they compelled all the leading British companies to bring out cheap records as a support for their "name brands." Even the high and mighty Gramophone Company, which had been getting five shillings for single-faced discs of ordinary popular music, was obliged to make a double-sided record, the Cinch, to sell at a shilling in competition with the Germans. Gramophone also of course retained Zonophone as a medium-priced disc. (Many naive British buyers thought that their playing on just one side made Gramophone records sound better than other kinds.)

Prince was represented in many catalogs, although it's doubtful that he played directly for some of the cheaper brands. As has already been said, he became exclusive to Columbia in 1912. But he had five double-faced records in the Edison Bell Velvet Face list for 1913, with titles ranging from "Hop Scotch" and "Darkies' Holiday" to "Il Bacio" and "The Lost Chord." The catalog said: "When Prince plays there is a Military Band in tone and volume. Any title Mr. Prince performs one can depend upon, as he selects with utmost care compositions which are most suitable for his instrument."

Prince was also represented with much the same titles in Edison Bell's list of the cheaper Winner records. One of the German firms — Decapo — offered concertina solos by "Mr. Steve Bartle," which was probably a pseudonym for Prince, since the titles were of the sort he most frequently played. Decapo's accordion

records were by A. J. Scott, who played exactly the sort of numbers preferred by Peter Wyper. Scott's name also showed up in other catalogs. He probably was not Wyper in disguise, but he could have been. Some of Prince's Gramophone Company recordings were marketed in the United States in Victor's imported series.

Running down the list of accordion and concertina players for other British or pseudo-British companies of forty years ago: Coliseum offered "accordeon" solos by "G. Arditi," but the titles suggest they were really by Pietro Frosini, who remains to be considered in this series. Another unidentified player is Archie P. Andrews. Accordion players for the openly German Beka Company were "Mr. Frosini" and Scott. There was also "the Premier English Concertina Band" and one concertina solo by "W Seymour." Steve Bartle likewise appeared in the Favorite catalog, as did C. F. Losscher, who was probably a German. The one concertina record issued by Famous was by "Miss Minnie Paget" and tastefully coupled "Alexander's Ragtime Band" with the Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana."

One "Pamby Dick" had numerous accordion solos in the Guardsman list. After the war began, Guardsman changed its name to Invicta and made a strenuous pitch at all-out patriotism by maintaining its products were "manufactured throughout in England of British Material by British Labour employed by British Capital." Record buyers were urged not to accept anything containing the words, "Made in Germany."

"Pamby Dick," whoever he was, also bobbed up in the Homophone record list, (some of his British-made records were issued over here by Gennett) while A. J. Scott held the fort for Jumbo. Pathé had a list of concertina records under Prince's name. The accordion honors were entrusted to Scott and "Signor A. De Benedetto." Prince was also represented in Pathé's cheaper "Diamond disc" series (which sounds like a deliberate copy of the Edison Diamond Disc). Mr. "Steve Bartle" turns up again in the low-priced popular record, while there are accordion solos by "Leo Mallet." Polyphon had accordion numbers by "Signor Casidio Recchia." Pelican offered concertina solos by Perci (or Percy) Henri while Scala issued two accordion and con-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 42)

## POLYDOR CATALOG

I am very glad that Stephen Fasset has decided to complete the pages from the 1924-25 Polydor catalog, which he began in HOBBIES sometime ago. This and another installment in the near future will probably complete the series.

—Aida Favia-Artsay

## PAGES FROM A 1924-25 POLYDOR CATALOG

- LOLA ARTOT DE PADILLA & KARL JORN**  
19051 Die Koenigskinder—Bin ein lustiger Jaegersman B65005  
Die Koenigskinder—Willst du mein Maieubuhle du Blumenreiche B65006
- MICHAEL BOHNEN & ROBERT HUTT**  
80078 Margarethe—O, gib junges Blut (Gounod) 3-44139  
Margarethe—Wohlan unterschreibe 3-44163
- MICHAEL BOHNEN & ERNST KRAUSS**  
85304 Die Meistersinger—Gruss Gott, mein junker O44293  
Die Meistersinger—Mein Freund in holder jugendzeit O44294
- MICHAEL BOHNEN & LOTTE LEHMANN**  
85305 Die Meistersinger—Gut'n Abend, Meister! O44299  
Die Meistersinger—Doch starb eure Frau O44306
- MICHAEL BOHNEN & TINO PATTIERA**  
78546 Boheme—Ach, Geliebte, nie kehrst du mir wieder B25019  
Othello—Saht ihr nicht manchmal in Desdemonens Haenden B25020  
78548 Die Macht des Geschickes—In dieser feireichen Stunde (Verdi) B25021
- MICHAEL BOHNEN & VERA SCHWARZ**  
85306 Aida—Zu dir fuhrst mich ein ernster Grund O44309  
Aida—Wohlauf denn! Erhebet euch! O44310
- CLAIRE DUX & HERMANN JADLOWKER**  
72928 Lucia—An des Todes heiliger Staette O44307  
Lucia—Schwor! als Gattin mir ewige Treue O44308  
72929 Aida—Todesduett., in two parts O44320/21
- CLAIRE DUX & ALBERT KUTZNER**  
65556 Das Hollandweibchen—Lied der Bela und Duett O44316  
Das Hollandweibchen—Geliebter in der Ferne (DUX solo) O43325  
65557 Das Hollandweibchen—Wenn der Dudelsack erklingt O44317  
Das Hollandweibchen—(solo by CLAIRE DUX)
- CLAIRE DUX & JOSEPH SCHWARZ**  
72930 Rigoletto—Schon seit drei Monden O44297  
Rigoletto—Ach, Gott, nur fur mich O44298  
78548 Rigoletto—Gilda Duett O44314  
BOHNEN & PATTIERA: Forza—In dieser feierlichen Stunde B25021  
70691 Troubadour—Befreit, o welche Seligkeit (Verdi) 3-44157  
Boheme—Walzer der Musette (DUX, solo) 53642
- ELISABETH VAN ENDERT & HERMANN JADLOWKER**  
72756 Margarethe—Es ist schon spat (Gounod) B25004  
Margarethe—O Mondenschein B25005  
72564 Hoffmanns Erzählungen—Horst du es tomen O44283
- ELISABETH VAN ENDERT & FRIEDRICH PLASCHKE**  
65271 Die Meistersinger—Gut'n Abend Meister O44286  
Die Meistersinger—Ja, ja! Das hast du dir schoen erdacht O44287
- ELISABETH VAN ENDERT & JOSEPH SCHWARZ**  
72564 Troubadour—Die Stimme! Himmel, du bist es! (Verdi) O44292  
72565 Traviata—Gott schenkte eine Tochter mir O44290  
Traviata—Wenn einst die Zeit O44291
- EMMY HECKMANN-BETTENDORF & THEODOR SCHEIDL**  
62367 Troubadour—Sieh' meiner hellen Traenen Flut B5000  
Troubadour—Befreit, o welche Seligkeit B5001
- FRIEDA HEMPEL & VELICIA KASZOWSKA**  
78543 Lohengrin—Du Aermste B25016  
Die Meistersinger—Quintett, sung by LILLY HALFGREN-DINKELA,  
MARIA OLSZEWSKA, FRITZ SOOT, W. HENKE, JOSEF VON  
MANOWARDA B25014
- ROBERT HUTT & HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS**  
72735 Otello—Saht ihr nicht in Desdemonens Haenden O44333  
Die Macht des Geschickes—In dieser feierlichen Stunde B25006  
72741 Boheme—Ach Geliebte B25000  
Die Perlenfischer—Der Tempel Brahma' strahlt B25003  
72661 Wilhelm Tell—Ha, wohin? B25002  
Wilhelm Tell—Gebet (solo by JOSEPH SCHWARZ) O42608
- HERMANN JADLOWKER & JOSEPH SCHWARZ**  
72931 Die Perlenfischer—Der Temple O44315  
Die Macht des Geschickes—In dieser feierlichen Stunde 2-064058  
70699 Guarda che bianca luna (Campana) 54485  
Don Juan's Serenade (solo by JADLOWKER) B2017
- BARBARA KEMP & PAUL KNUFFER**  
65269 Die Hugenotten—Welch' ein Schreck O44279  
Die Hugenotten—Ach dies Herz O44276
- PAUL KNUFFER & WALDEMAR HENKE**  
65266 Stradella—Banditen—Duett (Plotow) O44274  
Fra Diavolo—Danditen—Duett (Auber) O44275
- ERNST KRAUS & WALDEMAR HENKE**  
61844 Siegfried—Wir sind zur Stelle 3-44121  
Siegfried—Doch heisse mich das 3-44122
- ERNST KRAUS & KAETE HERWIG**  
61849 Siegfried—Siegfried und der Waldvogel, 2 parts 3-44133/4
- ERNST KRAUS & JULIUS LIEBAN**  
65462 Siegfried—Act II duet, 2 parts O44288/9
- MELANIE KURT & FRIEDRICH SCHORR**  
65621 Der fliegende Hollander—Versank ich jetzt B25007  
Der fliegende Hollander—Wie aus der Ferne (SCHORR, solo) B22035  
65622 Der fliegende Hollander—Wirst du des Vaters Wahl B25008  
Der fliegende Hollander—Ach konntest das Geschick B25009
- SELMA KURZ & HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS**  
72854 Troubadour—Sieh' meiner hellen Traenen B25029  
Rigoletto—Sprich nie mit einem Armen B26030  
85301 Die Zaubersfloete—Bei Maennern B25031  
Don Juan—Schmaeche, tobe lieber Junge (Mozart), (HEMPEL solo) J24006
- LOTTE LEHMANN & HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS**  
72932 Mignon—Schwalben—Duett O44326  
Die Zaubersfloete—Bei Maennern O44330  
72933 Don Juan—Reich mir die Hand O44327  
Figaros Hochzeit—So lang' hab ich O44328

(TO BE CONTINUED)

finer mechanical movement can be found anywhere.

One great difficulty with these clocks is that they should be covered with a glass dome. The original dome is usually broken or missing altogether and domes of this shape are very difficult to find. Round glass domes are being made today and are easily had but I do not know of anyone making the oval shape. This is just another problem that one finds when he collects old clocks.

*Illustration No. 29.* Could anything be more appealing than this French musical clock of black figured marble with white alabaster columns and magnificent brass ornamentation? It is beautifully designed, perfectly proportioned and not at all overdone, although one might be inclined to think so at first glance. The bright brass work blends into complete harmony with the black and white base material so the effect of the whole is both interesting and pleasing.

This clock chimes on the quarter hours and on the hour. It is French of course with a traditionally fine French movement.

I have always been partial to French clocks. It is true that the decorative effects are inclined to the rococo. At the same time, the detail is always meticulous and the work is executed with a fine artistry. Who can say that it is overdone when each detail is perfection and the blending of the whole is harmonious. Further, no matter to what lengths the decorative effects may be carried, mechanical excellence is never forgotten. I rate these creations at the top, whether or not anyone agrees with me.

*Illustration No. 30.* A very remarkable example of a Viennese calendar clock in the Biedermeier style of design. In spite of the all-out effort to disguise the fact, this is still a practical timepiece and an efficient calendar mechanism.

The base of this clock is of black marble while the six round columns are of white marble. The ornamentation is of brass, very fine in detail and somewhat over-elaborate in execution. At the back of the gallery, there is a flat mirror with two angled mirrors at the sides to accentuate the temple effect. The large two-headed brass eagle at the top is not too well done and is almost grotesque in effect.

The action of this clock is very

fascinating. The cupid on the right grinds an arrow on a real grindstone as the quarter hour is chimed. The cupid on the left forges an arrow on the anvil as the hour is struck; the blows of his hammer in unison with the hour strike. The face at the top center of the dial has movable eyes and the eyes move in unison with the pendulum swing.

The pendulum, like the rest of the clock, is very ornate, made of brass, and is the figure of Bacchus astride a wine barrel.

When I study this design, I am at a loss to pick up the central theme. The temple effect with two angels floating above it seems well enough but Bacchus on his wine barrel swinging in the gallery seems to be a little bit inconsistent. I cannot connect the two-headed eagle with any other part of the decorative scheme. Perhaps there is no relationship in the design and the whole is merely the application of ornamentation to achieve an overall decorative effect. Since I cannot fathom it, I am compelled to accept.

The three rings in the lower half of the clock are the calendar dials; one for the day, one for the date and one for the month. The calendar is in Italian while the time numerals are Arabic.

I am both fascinated and puzzled by the decorative effects of this clock. However, it would perhaps be best to forget that feature and concentrate on the clock itself. The mechanical action is truly magnificent.

### WANTED

WANTED: Antique clocks and watches. Send description, photo and best dealer's price.—Heirloom Antiques, 201 E. Lancaster Ave., Shillington, Penna. tfx

### FOR SALE

COLLECTORS! DEALERS! Do your own clock repairing, refinishing. Complete instructions in "Clock Collector's Handbook," \$1, postpaid.—Kenneth Karsten, Compo Parkway, Westport, Conn. ja122741

WE HAVE A FINE SELECTION of Steeple clocks on hand; also cuckoos, calendars, beehives and many others. Send stamp for list. Dial refinishing. Replacement tablets made.—Vandervort, 308 Bertley, Moberly, Mo. ap3694

FIT-UP CLOCK movements: German, 30-hour, 2½" bezel. Roman dial, fits antique brass and china clocks with 2¼" opening; case thickness of 1¼ to 2", \$3.15 each postpaid. Dealers only. Also German Westminster Rod Chime Hall clock movements.—Louis Pierlot, 1010 South Fir, Inglewood 1, Calif. my3027

ITHACA CALENDAR CLOCK, walnut mantel type, \$15. Boardman and Wells, mantel, works not original, runs, \$20. Others, write. Express collect.—Coppernoll's, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. mh1002

ANTIQUE MUSIC BOXES & antique clocks.—C. A. Ramsey, 5505 So. State, Westerville, Ohio. ap2211

*Illustration No. 31.* It is perhaps well to end this chapter with another superb example of the combination of art and mechanics by a French maker. Here the famous figures of "The Three Graces" are employed to support a timepiece and the effect of the whole is most pleasing indeed.

The clock itself reverses the usual action in that here the time track revolves while the indicator, or hand, remains stationary. Most of us have seen this same principle used in small, modern clocks for table and desk use. This one is old, however, and undoubtedly served as a model for the newer versions. Needless to say, the modern versions are plain and cheap. They bear little resemblance to this graceful model and, of course, have none of its attractiveness.

There is much more interesting material in the Willis Michael folder to appear in subsequent installments. When it is finally completed, I shall feel that my own education has been greatly enhanced.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

certina couplings by "S. Fregoli" and "Alex, Argyle" — almost certainly disguises for Frosini and Prince. On 103, "Fregoli" played "Wedding of the Winds," while "Argyle" came through with "The Gladiator's Farewell." On 104, "Argyle" played "Irish Melodies," while "Fregoli" obliged with "Amoureuse Waltz." Henri, like Prince, played the "Duet" system and is said to have been the first concertina artist to make disc records.

This study of the catalogs of long defunct foreign record companies could be continued indefinitely, with confusion becoming worse confounded. But probably the sketchy survey just made has been sufficient. In August, 1921, Regal issued a four-page folder listing Prince's records, just as it had done for those of Peter Wyper. This included 25 double-faced discs, with such widely varied selections as "Silver Heels," "National Emblem March," "Bluebells of Scotland," "The Rosary," "Ora Pro Nobis," "The Missouri Waltz," "Till We Meet Again" and "The Lost Chord." Some Prince numbers of a more serious nature than the majority of his Regal offerings were retained in the parent Columbia catalog. He continued to make records until his death, which I believe occurred in 1926. He was dead before 1930, for the English Columbia catalog of that year contained the following by "the late Alexander Prince": No. 466, "Donauweller Waltz" and "Blue Danube Waltz"; 1449; "Under the Double Eagle March" and "With Sword and Lance March"; and 2426, "Il Bacio" and "Estudiantina Waltz." The first, a twelve-inch, was acoustically recorded, but 1449 and 2426 were ten-inch and made by the electric method.

—Jim Walsh



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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## More About the Early Days of the Phonograph

Although HOBBIES was generous about allotting space in the August issue to my article on the phonog-

raph's 75th anniversary, there were some facts concerning the instrument's early days that I was not able to mention. And since that article was written other historical matter has come to my attention which I think deserves to be touched on.

But before passing to this new material I should like to correct the typographical errors which somewhat impaired the sense of a few passages in the August issue. The sentence near the end of the last paragraph of column two should read: "In view of the lack of proof sustaining the sound recording idea, and the likelihood that the craftsmen who are mentioned in the letter probably had died in the intervening thirty years, we are justified in holding that if Fitch really did construct a device on the order of the phonograph, it didn't record and reproduce sound prior to the one brought out by Edison."

### EIGHT VICTOR ARTISTS

In the heyday of the acoustic recording era, when performers sang or played into a horn instead of a mike, artists known chiefly for their records were big attractions in concert. The Eight Popular Victor Artists stopped many a show from 1912 to 1927, everywhere from Broadway to country towns. They are shown here at Appleton, Wis., in the autumn of 1923. The background poster shows the late Henry Burr, whose sentimental tenor solos made him the "matinee idol" of the troupe, which he also managed. Burr made more records than any other artist, before or since. Beside him on poster is Billy Murray, tenor-comedian, and all-time most popular recording artist. Lined up in front of poster are Monroe Silver, who did "Cohen" monologs; Rudy Wiedoeft, usually considered world's greatest saxophone player; John H. Meyer, baritone of Peerless Quartet; Frank Croxton, quartet, basso; Frank Banta, pianist; Burr; Albert Campbell, first tenor of Peerless and Murray, shaking hands with Bill Nolan, Jr., whose father, William H. Nolan, was Victor dealer in Appleton. The concert drew a paid attendance of 1,600 in a town of 2,000 population. What a difference it would have made in the lives of these famous performers if Edison hadn't invented the phonograph!

By JIM WALSH

nel." There is also a garbled passage in the paragraph beginning, "Yes, and to industrious persons also." The mixed-up sentence should read: "You know a man can never judge of the value of his own words or exactly how to deliver them by hearing his own voice."

### Other Phonograph "Inventors"

That takes care of the August errors. Now, since one of the foregoing corrected passages refers to the claim of an Englishman, William Fitch, that he invented the phonograph, it seems only fair to give dubious "immortality" to an American claimant, T. W. Searing. In the December, 1898, issue of *The Phonoscope*, under the heading of "Claims to be the First Inventor of the Talking-Machine," Mr. Searing made some awkwardly worded and far from specific assertions:

In the Graphophone Company's suits against various parties, I have noticed for the first time, especially the present suit against the Gramophone Company, that they are endeavoring to hold up Bell & Tainter as the original inventors of the engraving of sound, which fact is not true from beginning to end.

Bell & Tainter, or the Graphophone Company, are certainly not the first in-



ventors of recording or duplicating records by the engraving method and up to the present date no company or person has yet been found, throughout the entire world, that has shown priority over the undersigned, of which the Patent Office can show by his prior applications filed years ago.

The present Phonograph, Graphophone, or any other talking machine company that make records by cutting out the material corresponding to speech or the vibrations from sound was invented by myself years before Bell, Tainter, Edison, or the Graphophone Company ever dreamed of it, and that it was first invented in Harlem, New York City, and that the papers were in the Patent Office years before Bell or Tainter went to Washington to conduct their experiments in a certain laboratory which resulted in the formation of the present Graphophone Company.

When the correct history of the talking-machine is published, which it certainly has not been as yet, it will show the original inventor of the principle that has made that interesting machine a success is T. W. Searing, who, in 1875, invented the engraving method and machine for recording speech and sound. Edison designed a somewhat modification of same invention in 1887 and known as the tinfoil perforated method.

Bell and Tainter conducted experiments at Washington in 1883 and was in close communication with the Patent Office, and they found that the engraving principle as invented by Searing years before, was the best, and in 1885 applied for a patent which was granted. This patent the Graphophone Company are now using to institute infringement proceedings against various parties.

About 1887, after eleven months of experimenting, Edison adopted the Searing engraving method also, and placed on the market the present electric Phonograph, and but a few years ago was struggling like the Graphophone Company is at the present time to prove priority of invention, but cannot while my evidence of work done in that line is known.

Edison, Bell, Tainter, and the Graphophone Company are entitled to the claim of being one of the first, but certainly are not the first by a number of years, and at a future date the public will be more fully informed of my work and connection with the recording and reproduction of sound.

In conclusion, wishing that they will prosper as in the past and have every success in the future while using the invention belonging by right of priority to  
Yours truly,

T. W. SEARING.

This ungrammatical and incoherent letter failed to win for the now forgotten Mr. Searing the distinction of being recognized as the phonograph's inventor. (Notice his uncertainty as to whether the name of one of the Graphophone's originators was Tainter or Taintor.) It sounds like a typical production of one of the kind of crackpots who nearly always rise up and lay claim to having first thought of any popular invention.

Another Englishman — A. A. H. Tokeley — in 1913 had his solicitor, A. J. Ford, write a letter to the Edison Bell Company, maintaining that he invented "the gramophone or phonograph, about the years, 1902 to 1905." In other words, Mr. Tokeley, an employee of the Drawing Office of the Great Northern Railway Locomotive Works at Doncaster, had the delusion that he invented the phonograph twenty-five years or more after it was first brought out by Edison. One wonders at the gullibility of his solicitor, Mr. Ford, who wrote:

"My client has never received any remuneration . . . and although not being the actual patentee, I think that the time has now arrived to make known the

fact. I am therefore desirous in the interest of my client of putting before you a proposal for your consideration that a payment should be made him as a solatium for the time and trouble spent by him in thinking out and giving the invention and improvements and method of production upon it for the general use."

Solicitor Ford also appears to have had trouble expressing himself clearly! At any rate, he was tackling the wrong customer when he presented his silly claim to J. E. Hough, the hard-boiled "Lancashire Laddie" who headed Edison Bell. Hough turned the letter over to the Talking Machine News, which reproduced Mr. Ford's handwritten screed with the jeering comment:

There seems to be a doubt in the minds of some people as to who really invented the "talker." The copy of the document which we print . . . should prove a valuable contribution to the subject. . . . We commend manufacturers, factors and dealers, and others to peruse the script, because if what is really said is true, we think the claimant is entitled to due consideration.

We should be glad to receive contributions from any good-minded traders when we would forward them on to the proper quarters.

The view appears to be that the originator of the invention is suffering gross neglect in the acknowledgement of his merits. Can any of our readers enlighten us on this subject? Mr. Hough has taken the method he thinks most likely to achieve Mr. Ford's object by giving the matter wide publicity.

It's a safe bet Mr. Tokeley never received any "solatium"!

#### John Kruesi's Later Years

It is well known that John Kruesi, under Edison's instructions, built the first phonograph. Yet how many lovers of recorded music know anything of Kruesi's later life? He has always seemed something of a mystery man, but the mystery is dispelled by an article, "He Made the First Phonograph," in *The Phonoscope* (edited by Russell Hunting, one of the first famous recording comedians) for February, 1899:

The man who made the first Phonograph was buried at Schenectady on Feb. 25. He was one of the little band of men who worked with Thomas A. Edison at Menlo Park and through whose skill and faithful assistance were developed the many inventions which gave to Edison the name of "the Wizard." It was in those days that Edison used to become absorbed in the development of an idea, work at it without rest or sleep for two or three days and nights and keep all those about him busy at the same time. He would call in an organ grinder from the streets to keep his men awake or resort to some other such device, and when the strain was finally over, charter a boat and take all hands down the bay on a fishing excursion. Among the most tireless of the men about "The Wizard" about that time was John Kruesi, the man who made the first Phonograph.

Mr. Kruesi remained with Edison and became one of his partners in the development of the electric light, and in 1886, when the Edison machine works were removed to Schenectady, he went there as assistant general manager under Mr. Samuel Insull. (Should be Insull—J. W.) In 1892, when the General Electric Company was formed and the whole plant of the great combination was consolidated, Mr. Kruesi became general manager of the works. It was under his supervision that the Schenectady works, the largest and most complete of their kind in the world, were designed and built. At the time of his death Mr. Kruesi was the chief mechanical engineer of the General Electric Company. Of the original Edison band of workers

only three were absent from the funeral. These were T. C. Martin, editor of the *Electrical Engineer*; Luther Stieringer, and E. H. Johnson, all of whom were unavoidably detained elsewhere.

Mr. Kruesi was a native of Switzerland and was born in 1843. He came to this country in 1870 and went to work for the Singer Sewing Machine Company at Elizabethport. In June, 1872, while Edison was making Gold and Stock Exchange telegraph instruments in a Newark shop, Kruesi joined him and was one of the first of his workmen to be transferred from commercial to experimental work when Edison got money enough to open a shop for the development of his ideas in 1875. That shop was in Greene Street, Newark.

#### Death of Professor Wangemann

Another of Edison's early associates was "Professor" A. Theodore E. Wangemann, who supervised the inventor's recording activities in the '80's and '90's and also demonstrated the phonograph in Europe. While abroad, Wangemann recorded piano solos by Johannes Brahms (a few of the cylinders have come to light in recent years), and in this country caused Hans Von Bulow to faint, when the great pianist made a recording which Wangemann pointed out, contained a wrong note. What became of the professor is told in the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for July, 1906:

A. Theodore E. Wangemann, who for many years had been connected with Mr. Edison in experimental work on the Edison Phonograph and Edison Records, was killed while attempting to board a moving train at Bath Beach, Long Island, on June 2d. Mr. Wangemann was born at Berlin, Germany, February 13th, 1855. He had lived in this country many years. He entered Mr. Edison's employ in the early days of the Phonograph and had been identified with nearly every phase of its later evolution. He was connected with the Edison laboratory at the time of his death. He was a skilled pianist, a fine musician and possessed an excellent musical education. He was a member of the committee of Edison officials who meet twice each month to pass upon Records before they are formally listed and his musical ability made him a useful member. He is survived by a wife. He was a member of the Pleiades Club, of New York City, which had charge of his funeral in Brooklyn on June 5th. In accordance with his own wishes his body was cremated at Fresh Pond, Long Island, on June 6th.

Wangemann was mentioned in some unintentionally amusing Edison inter-office correspondence of May, 1889. The superintendent of the Edison Phonograph Works, Charles Batchelor, wrote the following "memo to Mr. Edison":

We have had enormous orders for musical cylinders, some of them dating as far as two months back. Can you not make some arrangements so that we can have our orders filled . . . as in many cases it prevents shipments of goods until we get them. We have now with you orders for one-half dozen for Nebraska, one dozen for Washington, two dozen for Nashville, Tenn., all dated back to March 28th. Five dozen for North American of April 1st, one dozen for Japan, May 8th, one-half dozen for Ohio, May 13, and a few yesterday for Dakota. If you can give Wangemann orders to furnish what we want it will help us considerably in getting off our shipments more promptly.

To this, Mr. Edison replied a few days later:

"We are making about 50 per day and I am rigging up to furnish 300 daily. Please send orders (written) to Laboratory. We will book them, fill the orders by sending them to

Phonograph Company and make charges so that we will not be out of pocket."

It is hard to restrain a laugh at the thought of the handful of orders listed by Batchelor being considered "enormous."

#### First North American Record List

The "North American" referred to in the foregoing letter was the North American Phonograph Company, headed by a New York banker, Jesse H. Lippincott, which in the late 1880's and early '90's controlled the right to the sale of Edison phonographs and records. (It preferred to call records "musical phonograms.") The parent North American company assigned to other companies the right to do business on a state-wide or district basis. For instance, the Columbia company's name came from its having a lease to sell in the District of Columbia. There were about thirty of these territorial companies.

Lippincott within a year or so had a paralytic stroke, and died. Samuel Insull succeeded him as North American's president and himself was succeeded by Thomas R. Lombard, but, for reasons too long to detail, the company eventually went into bankruptcy — bringing about litigation that lasted some fourteen years.

While North American flourished—or, rather, existed—Edison turned out "phonograms" for use by demonstrators, but Allen O. Tate's book, "Edison's Open Door," says his attitude was "half-hearted" and not at all enthusiastic, for he was more inter-

ested in the phonograph's commercial and educational possibilities than its entertainment phase. But lists of cylinders were issued, and the Thomas A. Edison Laboratory has been kind enough to provide me with a copy of what is probably the oldest record catalog in existence — one put out in 1890 by North American.

This "first edition," as it is called, is described as a "catalog of musical phonograms for the Phonograph, is sued by the North American Phonograph Co., owners of the patents of Thomas A. Edison, for recording, perpetuating and reproducing articulate speech and other sounds, and exclusive agent for the sole licensee of the American Graphophone Co. Principal offices: 160 to 164 Broadway, New York."

A rather pompous foreword says: "The following list of Musical Phonograms we propose to keep in stock. This list will be added to from time to time as we ascertain from the demand those most likely to become popular. We have also in stock a large number of Phonograms not on this list, and parties can be furnished with almost any of the 'records' that have been sent out heretofore." (Printing "records" in quotes appears to indicate it was considered a slang word or one of not particularly good repute.)

The four-page folder is devoted al-



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#### JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1925); back copies of phonograph publications—Talking Machine World, Talking Machine News, the Gramophone, the Phonogram, Diamond Points, Edison Phonograph and Amberola Monthly, Voice of the Victor, etc.—photographs, advertisements, and all sort of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

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- ★ FOREIGN LABELS, such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G. & T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.
- ★ Old record catalogs.

Persons offering material not specified above or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

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most entirely to instrumental records. There are fifteen by "Brass Band"; 15, "Parlor Orchestra"; 16, cornet; 15, clarinet; 10, flute; 10, piccolo; 10, violin; six, piano "duets"; and two "vocal quartets." Many of these were discontinued in August, 1890. It is interesting to speculate on the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 45)

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Transcription's, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings & etc. By Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo & Ink Spots. Money no object.—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d120061

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**Attention Record Collectors:** Inaugurating auction sales. Rare and out-of-vocal records. Free lists.—C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. my3825

**RARE RECORDINGS (1900-1950),** reasonable prices. Write for Bargain List.—Classical Record Shop, 825 Seventh Avenue, New York City. ap3403

**WANTED:** Cylinder records, operatic disk records. Best prices for new or mint records.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. jly6806

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**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Old post cards, and early model typewriters.—Elmer Moore, 1035 17th Street, Santa Monica, Calif. je6276

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, parts, small horns, reproducers, records, catalogs.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ap6084

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**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia cylinder phonographs, records, catalogues, small horns. Catalogues.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. jly6215

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**WANTED:** Old phonographs, Polyphones, coin operated machines, catalogs, reproducers; Victor, Edison, Columbia. Describe, quote. Will trade.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. ap3633

**WANT IN ANY CONDITION:** Mechanically operated pianos; organs; music boxes; instructions. Please describe fully and state price.—R. W. Cochran, 1235 Overlook Ave., West Englewood, N. J. my3004

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Music boxes, hand roller organs, as Celestina and Gem, Roller and rolls. Private collector.—Newmann Miller, 436 West Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. je3844

Antique

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Largest Assortment in existence  
All are old instruments in perfect condition  
All sizes & types from \$50 to \$5000  
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sieur E. Blery, for about six months. The true artist of the etching seems to require little training in his field for the gift appears to be the product of his rich nature and is intensely personal. Many instances prove this and two of the outstanding examples are Rembrandt, who etched some fine works in his early youth, and Whistler who produced some of his best while in his twenties. Of great importance to Meryon's future was his purchase of some views of Paris which had been done about 1650 by Renier Zeeman. These inspired him to begin the series of etchings portraying the city which he loved so deeply and, after about twenty experiments in the technique of etching, Meryon began his life-work with "The Petit Pont" which has grandeur and shows great understanding of his craft. It is one of the most outstanding of his etchings besides being one of the most remarkable original etchings of the nineteenth century. In 1854 he produced four masterpieces, any one of

which would have made his name famous, and these were "The Rue des Mauvais Garçons," "The Pont-au-Change," "The Morgue," and "The Apse of Notre Dame."

Victor Hugo spoke highly of Meryon's "beautiful imagination," and said "The breath of Immensity blows through Meryon's work and makes his etchings into more than pictures—into visions." Charles Baudelaire was another admirer and wanted to accompany Meryon's etchings with appropriate verse, but was frustrated by Meryon's insistence on precise information regarding the buildings and places portrayed.

Meryon retouched some of his worn plates, and in 1861, between the columns of "The Gallery of Notre Dame" he added a few ravens; for "The Clock Tower" he applied rays of light; he reduced the houses of the Rue Dauphine in "The Pont Neuf" to their true proportions. In "The Morgue" he modified the figures; in "The Pont-au-Change" he drew, in three different states, the balloon Speranza, then balloons of various sizes and then what looked like ravens or a flight of eagles. He also renewed the background of "The Chimera" and "The Apse of Notre Dame." In the first state of his striking view of "The Rue des Toiles," produced in 1853, he showed a dog snuffing at the ground, but in a later stage the animal gave place to two soldiers talking with a woman.

His reasoning was affected in 1858 and '59, and again in 1866. On February 14, 1868, he died after a prolonged fast, and was buried in the Charenton churchyard, where a brass plate marks his grave.

have individual numbers except under the division headings. For instance, "Warrior's Farewell" was flute solo No. 1, but No. 1 under the violin heading was "Selection from 'Clover'." The whole set-up was distinctly amateurish, with apparently no organized effort—as witness Mr. Batchelor's plaint—being made to supply the demand for "phonograms." That word, incidentally, persisted in the title of the "house organ," The Phonogram, (later The New Phonogram), which Edison began publishing in 1899, discontinued in 1902, revived in 1904 and discontinued again in 1914.

### First Encyclopedia Mention of Phonograph

This article, a collection of odds-and-ends about the phonograph's early days, also lacks systematic organization. We have been considering the early 1890's. Now let's go even farther into the past and consider what may be the first mention of Edison's invention in an encyclopedia or other work of general reference.

"Johnson's New Universal Cyclopaedia" was first issued in 1879, but the edition I have contains a supplement at the end of the last volume covering new discoveries and this appears to have been printed in 1885. Despite the phonograph's then being only a few years old, the article, written by F. A. P. Barnard, makes one mistake by saying it was invented by Edison in the spring of 1878. This should have been "the summer of 1877." It reads:

PHONOGRAPH, an ingenious instrument invented in the spring of 1878 by Mr. Thomas A. Edison of Menlo Park, N. J., for impressing upon a metallic surface an exact copy of the vibratory movements of a stretched membrane acted on by sonorous undulations in the air; so that, by using this impression to react upon the membrane as a riddle-bow acts upon the string, the vibrations, and consequently the sounds, are reproduced in their original order. The instrument considerably resembles in construction the phonograph of Scott and Koenig. . . The principal differences are—first, that so-called "pen" in that instrument is placed so as to vibrate laterally, whereas in the phonograph its motion is perpendicular to the surface of the cylinder; and, secondly, that the cylinder of the phonograph, instead of being covered with smoked paper, is wrapped with a smooth sheet of tinfoil hardened by a slight admixture of antimony.

When the instrument is used to record articulate sounds, the large funnel is removed, and the mouth of the speaker placed very near to the membrane. . . The operator then turns the crank uniformly, and enunciates his words in a bold tone while turning. The record being completed, the mouthpiece is withdrawn from the cylinder, and the crank turned backward until the original position is reached. The mouthpiece is then restored to its place, the large funnel attached to it for the purpose of reinforcing the sound, and the crank is turned forward as before. The words previously spoken by the operator are now repeated by the instrument with all their peculiarities of accent, emphasis and pitch. Musical tones, the cries of animals, laughter, falsetto notes, and sounds of every description, are imitated by the instrument with the same exactness as the articulations of human speech.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

### PRINTS FOR SALE

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CURRIER & IVES PRINTS. Send 25c in stamps for list, large and small folios.—Frank W. Mathews, Scottsville, N. Y. ja120521

CURRIER & IVES. Send large stamped envelope for list.—Jacques Schurre, 313 Maple Avenue, Falls Church, Va. jly6445

OLD PRINTS. Collections sent on approval. Discount to dealers.—Hazel Swayze, Connecticut, Antiques, Pomfret Center, Conn. ap3652

ORIGINAL COLORED fashion prints. Petersons Magazine, 4 prints \$2.—C. K. Johnson, Hurley, N. Y. jly6064

Original old colored Peterson fashion print (1860-88) \$.85. Full list for stamp.—Blackford, 2002 N. 4th St., Harrisburg, Penna. ap3654

CURRIER - IVES. Winter, Sporting, Railroads, Clipper Ships, etc. Send for price list. Buying also.—Laurin's Old Print Shop, 235 Post Road, Darien, Conn. my3253

TAIT: Black and white (10x12) drawing of "Sheep Fold, Central Park, New York City". \$25.—Leonard M. Robinson, Vineyard Haven, Mass. ap1251

### ReSTORING — FRAMING

PRINTS, PAINTINGS, Documents, etc., restored or cleaned. Maps and samplers wanted. Prints matted and cellophane wrapped. Engravings cleaned and colored. Old frames, moldings. Complete picture framing service. Satisfaction guaranteed.—Hazel Swayze, Connecticut Antiques, Pomfret Center, Conn. je3675

### Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36)

instrumentalists. The cornetist may have been Jules Levy, who had played in public demonstrations with the phonograph in 1878. Eugene C. Rose, who made demonstration cylinders which Edison displayed at the Paris Exposition of 1889 and who is still living in Freeport, New York, could have made the flute and piccolo numbers. The clarinet player may have been William Tuson. Frederick W. Hager has generally been considered the first violinist to make commercial records, but he is not likely to have played the ten numbers listed by North American. I have no idea who recorded the "piano ducts." The two male quartet records may also upset the belief that the Manhasset Quartet, consisting of John Bieling, Roger Harding, Jim Cherry and Joe Riley was the first foursome to make a record. The late Mr. Bieling said he had been told the Manhasset were "absolutely the first," but the two records of "Negro Melodies" and "Popular Songs" listed by North American probably antedate his singing career.

The cylinders on this 1890 list did not

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## More About the Early Days of the Phonograph

(Continued from the April Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### Early HARPER'S Article

Many readers of HOBBIES probably saw the October 1 issue of "Variety", "The Bible of Show Business," which contained a special section commemorating the 75th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph and the 50th anniversary of the RCA Victor Company. Editor Abel Green hit on the idea of the special edition after I sent him an article on the phonograph's early days. It was published with the streamer headline on page one. I also had 43 other articles in the same issue on historical aspects of recorded music; a few under my own name; others disguised with the pen names of J. W. Jefferson, G. Fenn Grace, Bob Walton, Ronnie James and James L. Shaw, but most unsigned.

So much material was contributed that when the issue was complete Editor Abel had considerable "overset." One article, left out because of lack of space but of which he sent me the proofs, was entitled "The Phonograph" and was taken from "Harper's Weekly" of March 30, 1878. Published little more than seven months after the invention of the talking machine, it is of so much interest that I feel it should be preserved here, so I am including the proofs with this article and hoping that the HOBBIES linotype operator

will forgive my asking him to re-set it in six-point, to save space:

If it were not that the days of belief in witchcraft are long since past, witch-hunters such as those who figured so conspicuously in the early history of our country would now find a rich harvest of victims in the Tribune Building. Here are located the headquarters of two marvels of a marvelous age. The telephone, which created such a sensation a short time ago by demonstrating the possibility of transmitting vocal sounds by telegraph, is now eclipsed by a new wonder called the phonograph. This little instrument records the utterance of the human voice, and like a faithless confidante repeats every secret confided to it whenever requested to do so. It will talk, sing, whistle, cough, sneeze, or perform any other acoustic feat. With charming impartiality it will express itself in the divine strains of a lyric goddess, or use the startling vernacular of a street Arab.

A few days ago a reporter for Harper's visited the phonograph for the purpose of ascertaining, so far as an unscientific person might, the peculiar characteristics of the marvelous little instrument. Prepared for an elaborate system of weights, pulleys, levers, wheels, bands, such as abounded in the case of Barnum's talking machine, whose utterances, by-the-way, were confined to some half dozen inarticulate sounds that no man living could understand, it was rather startling to find in the famous phonograph a simple apparatus, which, but for the absence of more than one cylinder, might have been a modern fluting machine.

This single cylinder of hollow brass is mounted upon a shaft, at one end of which is a crank for turning it, and at the other a balance-wheel, the whole being supported by two iron uprights. In front of the cylinder is a movable bar or arm, which supports a mouth-piece of gutta-percha, on the under side of which is a disk of thin metal, such as is used for taking tin-types. Against the centre of the lower side of this disk a fine steel point is held by a spring attached to the rim of the mouth-piece. An India-rubber cushion between the point and the disk controls the vibration of the spring.

The cylinder is covered with a fine spiral groove running continuously from end to end. In using the phonograph the first operation is to wrap a sheet of tin-foil closely around the cylinder. The mouth-piece is then adjusted against the left-hand end of the cylinder so closely that the vibration of the voice on the disk will cause the point to press the tin-foil into the groove, making minute indentations resembling, on a very small scale, the characters of the Morse telegraph. The cylinder is moved from right to left by the screw crank, so nicely adjusted that the steel point is always against the centre of the spiral groove. While turning the crank the operator talks into the mouth-piece in a voice slightly elevated above the ordinary tone of conversation. Every vibration of his voice is faithfully recorded on the tin-foil by the steel point, the cylinder making about one revolution to a word.

In order to reproduce the words—that is, to make the machine talk—the cylinder is turned back, so that the steel point may go over the indentations made by speaking into the mouth-piece. A funnel, like a speaking-trumpet, is attached to the mouth-piece, to keep the sounds from scattering. Now turning the crank again, every word spoken into the mouth-piece is exactly reproduced, with the utmost distinctness.

Thus the disk is either a tympanum or diaphragm, as the case may be, the first when it listens, and the second when it talks. Herein the phonograph seems actually to have got ahead of that other marvelous construction, the human body. In our anatomical economy the contrivances by which we are enabled to hear and talk are not only separate and distinct, but are also much more complicated than the method by which the phonograph accomplishes the same results.

While comparing this remarkable machine to the race whose characteristic attribute it has stolen, it is, we believe, habitually asserted by people who have no means of knowing anything whatever about the matter that man is the only animal that talks, it may not be unfitting to allude to the admirable ex-

### Music Boxes

1. Parker Band Organ. Needs repair.
2. 27" Automatic Regina. Needs repair. Comb good. Mah. About 20 disks.
3. 20 3/4" Automatic Regina. Needs rep. Mah. Comb good. About 20 disks.
4. 8" Regina good condition. 8 disks.
5. Swiss box with matching table. Cylinder over 20" long. Playing condition.
6. Swiss box with bells. Playing condition. Beautiful box with brass handles. Chased bells with humming bird strikers.
7. Large drum and bell Swiss box. Butterfly and bee strikers. Brass handles & nice inlay. Needs work.
8. Swiss box 8 tunes. Good condition.
9. Symphonium 12" double comb. Table model. Mechanically good.
10. Clariona paper roll hand organ walnut and in good condition.
11. Concert roller organ with 1 doz. rolls. Good condition walnut.
12. 3 Gem roller organs. 2 good, 1 needs work. 1 doz. rolls with each.
13. Musical casket. Walnut. Good condition.
14. Tangbar, German made accordian plays paper roll. Good condition.
15. Musical album. Red plush with brass trim. Good condition.
16. Musical alarm clock. Glass front and sides. Needs work.
17. Swiss miniature by Polliard. Nice inlaid burl wood case. Plays 6 tunes. Original tune card.
18. Small hand crank box 3 1/4" diameter.
19. Small hand crank box 3 1/2" diameter.
20. Musical jug. Plays "School Days." Good.
21. Swiss box by Nicole. 6 tunes. Original tune card. Like new condition.
22. Some extra rolls and disks.

RAY ALBERTSON

1107 Locust

Atlantic,

Iowa  
myp

### For the Record Collector

AL. McREA, Sr.

Box 182, Westville, N. J.

The man "JIM WALSH" has wrote about lately "EDDIE MORTON." I have just received four in excellent condition. Victor-5545, "Don't take me home," 16011—"Music makes me sentimental," 16012—"A singer sang a song," 16050—"If he comes in I'm goin out." They'll go to highest bidder.

I have just made up new lists of stage & screen stars. Ask me for your favorites.

Plenty of new items in Billy Murrays, Henry Burrs, Ada Jones, Jones & Hare, Chas. Harrison Hawaiian, also cornets, saxophone, xylophone, banjo and other instruments.

Next month June, I will list names of the great bands and orchestras of period 1920 to 1940.

#### RECORD OF THE MONTH

VI-19986-That means nothing to me/Do I love you. IRENE BORDONI. EXCELLENT. Also records by Irene Franklin, Marie Cahill, Yvette Rugeil, Fifi D'Orsay, Mizzi Babos, Nora Bayes, Miss Patricola, Marion Harris and many others. Send for these lists and prices

myo

ample it sets many garrulous and wearisome individuals. The phonograph never speaks until it has first been spoken to. Herein it also offers a worthy admonition to many ambitious but inexperienced writers. It has no original ideas to advance, or else is possessed of that spirit of modesty which precludes the possibility of its annoying the public with unripe fancies and crude speculations. The phonograph only consents to astonish the world at the instance of some dominant and controlling mind. When it is about to exhibit itself, an operator must be on hand to put it through its paces. On the occasion in question this gentleman was Mr. William H. Applebaugh, General Superintendent of the Telephone Company of New York.

Seating himself before the instrument, Mr. Applebaugh confided to the disk names, numbers, scraps of poetry, comic songs, and various other bits of information calculated to amuse the phonograph, but not improve its mind. These were faithfully recorded upon the foil, which was made to revolve by turning the crank. Then the disk was sent back to the original starting-point, the crank again set in motion, and the metallic point brought into contact with the foil. Presently the phonograph began, in clear, distinct tones, to count, to call names, to describe its own peculiar talents, to give its own address, and finally to sing:

"There was an old man whose  
name was Uncle Ned,  
And he died long ago, long ago;  
And there wasn't any wool on the  
top of his head,  
On the place where the wool  
ought to grow.

..This dropping into poetry apparently gave a sentimental turn to the thoughts of the phonograph, for presently, in spite of the fact that it was discoursing to a mixed and unsympathetic audience, it began to long for

The touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still.

As yet the phonograph is in its infancy. Its discovery was the result of an accident, and so far but little idea can be formed of the development of which it is susceptible. The gentleman who has the honor of being its inventor is Professor Thomas A. Edison, the famous electrician who, is experimenting with the telephone, happened to notice the manner in which the disks of that instrument vibrated in accordance with the breath used in speaking. Believing these vibrations could be recorded so as to be reproduced, he set to work to manufacture a machine for the purpose, and the result is the phonograph.

In a short time we shall, no doubt, have the curious little contrivance worked up to its highest perfection. And then, possibly, there will follow a revolution in all departments of public singing and speaking. There is no reason why we should not have all the great men of the age, as well as all the brilliant singers and actresses, taken possession of and driven off the course by the phonograph.

Let them sing or speak once in any place, there words and tones will be captured by the phonograph. The tin-foil, whereon all they have said is duly recorded, will be electrotyped, and copies sold at so much a piece. We shall all waste a portion of our substance on these little instruments; and then we have only to turn a crank, or set a kind of clock-work in motion, in order at any time to hear the great ones of the earth discourse in our own parlors.

### The Story of Mary and Her Lamb

The final paragraph of that "Harp-er's" article has a striking similarity to the "New York World's" interview, quoted in the August HOBBIES, in which Mr. Edison predicted songs, symphonies and even complete novels would be "electrotyped" and sold for home entertainment and educational use.

And, speaking of Mr. Edison, although it has been repeatedly mentioned that the first recording of the human voice was his recitation of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," how many of us know the story of that favorite childhood poem? Some interesting statements concerning it have been made by Edward O. Cutler of Kew Gardens, N. Y., who wrote the following letter to the "New York Times" on March 31, 1951:

Your article concerning the little red schoolhouse of "Mary's Little Lamb" fame is of interest to old and young alike. The children of future generations will thank Henry Ford's Wayside Inn Corporation for preserving the schoolhouse. . . "Mary's Little Lamb" has been called America's greatest tradition.

My grandmother, who lived in Clinton-Lancaster, Mass., knew quite well Mary Elizabeth Sawyer, the "Mary" of the poem, and occasionally took my mother over to Sterling, three or four miles away, to visit "Mary." My mother was born in 1845 and my recollection of the stories she told me many years ago would place the visits around 1855.

My mother always spoke about "Sarah Hale" as the writer of the poem, and I believe they were acquainted; so I feel Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations" is probably correct in attributing the authorship to her.

Hoyt's New Cyclopaedia of Practical Quotations says that the verse was first printed in 1830 as part of Mrs. Hale's "Poems for Our Children," and that she "definitely asserted her claim to authorship before her death." However, it seems that Mary Sawyer Tyler (apparently the grown-up married name of the little girl about whom the poem was written) maintained it was written by one John Roulston — a claim disproved by a son of Mrs. Hale in a letter to the "Boston Transcript" on April 10, 1889. So even this innocent little poem has been the subject of controversy!

### RECORDS FOR SALE

VICTOR, 10", Good, Excellent: McCormack, 15, \$2.50; 50, \$20; Gluck, 12, \$2.50; 20, \$4.50; Violin, 20, \$3.50; 50, \$8.; Blue, 30, \$6.50; Purple, 15, \$2.50; Jazz, 75, \$17.50; Misc., 12, \$2; Heritage Series, \$1.75. — Toby's, 2426 Jackson, Kansas City, Mo. my1023



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made by Stewart and Chickering, Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts during the first years of the 19th century — in playing condition but needs tuning — length 6 ft. — height 3 ft. — depth 23 in. — case in extra good condition. Price \$350.00 crated F. O. B. Boston.

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### FOR SALE

#### VICTOR RED SEAL RECORDS

Artist	Number	Title	Price
Culp	74527	Silver Threads among the Gold	\$1.50
Caruso	88376	Dream of Long Ago	2.25
"	88378	The Lost Chord	2.25
" & Scotti	89001	Swear in This Hour	3.00
" & Melba	95200	Thou Sweetest Maiden	8.00
Farrar	88238	My Old Kentucky Home	3.00
Galli-Curci	74532	Shadow Song	3.00
"	74500	Lucia Il dolce suono	3.00
"	74512	Juliet's Waltz Song	3.00
Gluck	74251	Home Sweet Home	2.25
" & Male chorus	74420	Carry Me Back to Old Virginny	1.50
Gluck	74534	Aloha Oe	1.50
Gadske	88546	Kathleen Mavourneen	5.00
Hempel	88541	Ben Bolt	4.00
"	88567	The Last Rose of Summer	5.00
"	88540	Blue Danube Waltz	3.00
"	88588	Wine, Women and Song	3.00
Homer	88309	There's a Green Hill Far Away	2.50
"	88128	Old Black Joe	2.50
Juch	74014	Elsa's Dream	6.00
Martinelli	76032	Malida, I Love Thee	4.00
Melba	88454	Old Folks at Home	3.00
"	88455	John Anderson, My Jo	4.00
"	88073	Lo, Hear the Gentle Lark	4.00
"	88066	Jewel Song	4.00
Paderewski	74535	Crucienne Fantastique	2.50
Powell	74412	Large (Handel)	1.50
"	74531	Fifth Nocturne	1.50
Ruffo	92039	Barbiere di Siviglia	3.00
Schumann	88547	Lorelei - Volkslied	3.00
Heink	88138	Silent Night	3.00
"	88417	Delliah's Song of Spring	4.00
Tetrazzini	88349	The Swallows	3.00
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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Arthur Fields

### Part One

By JIM WALSH

"The Arthur Fields tragedy was the worst I can recall in my whole lifetime. . . . God rest poor Arthur. He surely went straight to Heaven, if ever a soul did. He was a great guy."—FRED WHITEHOUSE.

Sometimes tragedy strikes with sudden, cumulative, irresistible force.

On Sunday, March 29, 1953, I found myself thinking constantly of my friend, Arthur Fields, the famous recording artist and song writer. I knew that Arthur, who was living in Florida, had been in poor health because of arthritis, and I kept wondering how he was. Although I call him my friend, we had never met, but he had told another friend, Song Writer Ray Walker, that he hoped to drive to New York this spring and intended to stop in Roanoke to see me. So I was anticipating a "get-together" that would intensify the friendly feeling we had already formed by correspondence.

I spent much of that Sunday afternoon compiling lists of records made by Frank Crumit and George O'Connor, two recording comedians about whom articles will later appear in HOBBIES. In many instances, Crumit and O'Connor sang on only one side of their double-faced records, and quite often the opposite side was by Arthur Fields. That kept Arthur even more on my mind, and I went to bed thinking of him.

Late on the night of Monday, March 30th, I was at work in the news-room of Radio-TV station WSLs, and was watching the teletype spell out news from the outside world. Suddenly, I was horrified to see an item saying that among the many persons burned to death in the fire that destroyed the Littlefield Convalescent Home at Largo, Fla., was "the well known song writer, Arthur Fields."

For a few moments I couldn't believe what my eyes told me the coldly mechanical teletype was saying. Arthur Fields burned to death! Surely it couldn't be! I knew, as I have said, that Arthur was in poor health but I hadn't known anything of his being put into a nursing home. I told myself he surely would not have been admitted merely for treatment of arthritis, as painful and crippling

as that can be. I simply couldn't accept what the "ticker" said.

But the teletype's unfeeling revelation was true. Arthur Fields had suffered a stroke of paralysis, was admitted to the nursing home and, on the early morning of Sunday, March 29th, was one of more than 30 persons burned to death. The fire occurred just 11 hours after he was admitted. Fortunately, the naturally genial and jovial comedian was under the influence of opiates and knew nothing of his terrible fate. Had he been aware of what was happening, he could have done nothing to save himself. It was the overpoweringly horrifying effect of his paralytic seizure and sudden death that caused his old friend and fellow recording artist and song writer, Fred Whitehouse, to term his tragedy "the worst I can recall in my whole lifetime" and to pay the heartfelt tribute I have quoted at the beginning of this article.

Perhaps Arthur Fields' death, though ghastly, was merciful. Doctors had told his wife, Mrs. Selma Fields, that he could never recover or be any better. In one catastrophic stroke he was relieved from the possibility of a long term of suffering. Nevertheless, the news of his passing was a terrible shock to his countless friends and admirers, including myself who had thought of him so constantly on the very day he had already been burned to death.

#### II A Letter from Mrs. Fields

On the morning after the night on which I learned of Arthur's passing I hurriedly wrote an article for *Variety*, recalling some of the colorful phases of his more than 50 years as a public personality. The article appeared in the April 8 issue and brought me several letters from friends of the comedian-composer. I have also heard from his widow, Mrs. Selma Fields. The result is that, combining the information thus obtained with what I already knew of Fields' recording career, I have almost an embarrassment of riches from which to choose in preparing this biographical sketch. As I set about the writing, I find myself wishing that it could have been published and received Arthur Fields'

approval during his lifetime, instead of appearing as a posthumous tribute. But "it was not so to be."

Perhaps it would be well to begin with excerpts from the letter written to me on April 12 by Mrs. Fields:

My dear Mr. Walsh: Your very nice letter made me feel that I have known you always. Thank you kindly.

Arthur would have indeed been proud to know how all his friends eulogized him. Radio Station WFLA in Tampa spoke beautifully of him and played his songs for one hour. So did WTAN in Clearwater. . . .

Arthur had suffered two minor strokes, (besides) the one on March 11 which I was told he could never recover from. The sad part of it all was that his wonderful brain refused to function. I visited him daily, but he never recognized me, although the nurses told me that he was constantly calling my name. To think that he was checked into the Littlefield home only eleven hours before that terrible holocaust happened has me in a state of collapse. . . .

It is very kind of you to write an article about him, and I appreciate it immensely. Arthur was born August 6, 1888 (in Philadelphia.) His real name was Abe Finkelstein. His father's name (was) Mortimer and his mother's, Elizabeth. I do not know her maiden name. She passed away in 1907, long before I came into the family.

He was a very popular recording artist from 1914 until electrical recording came in. The vaudeville team of Weston, Fields and Carroll also did very well. In 1923 he traveled for a year with the Avon Comedy Four. Around 1920 he and Fred Hall did the first hill-billy radio show at N. B. C. for Rex Cole, sponsored by General Electric. It was called "The Rex Cole Mountaineers." Arthur always called it "The Times Square Hillbillies." He had a terrific sense of humor.

After five years with Cole they did a morning show called "The Streamliners." Arthur did a single called "The Old Man of the Mountains." Every Saturday they did "No School Today," all from N. B. C. in New York — also "The Sunday Drivers." After Fred and he parted company, Arthur did an early morning show on WJZ called "The Woodshedders." . . . And that is about all the information I can give you. Again my sincere thanks for your consolation. Wishing you every success in the years to come, believe me, cordially yours, SELMA FIELDS.

#### III Recollections of George Graff

One of the most interesting letters I received shortly after Arthur's death came from his old friend, George Graff, of Stroudsburg, Pa. Mr. Graff has been an outstanding writer of popular song lyrics. He is one of the comparatively few au-

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## Arthur Fields

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

thors of words for songs whose work is always literate, grammatical and in good taste. For years he was the associate of the late Ernest R. Ball. Together they gave music lovers such virtual popular classics as "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," "Teach Me to Pray," "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," "As Long as the World Rolls On," "I Love the Name of Mary," "Mother of Pearl," "Little Crumbs of Happiness" and a musical prayer to do away with war, "Let Us Have Peace," which was dedicated to President William Howard Taft. With other composers Mr. Graff wrote "In the Garden of Tomorrow," "Out Where the Blue Begins" and "Wake Up, America!"

George Graff's recollections of Arthur Fields follow:

Arthur spent most of his early days in Utica (New York). He sang solos as a boy in church there and when about 16 went on the road with a minstrel show.

Around 1907-08 he helped form a vaudeville act — Weston, Fields and Carroll — one of the earliest, and possibly the first, Rathskeller acts. Eddie Weston was a veteran performer and a few years older than Arthur and Harry Carroll, who were about 19 at that time. The act was a great success and headlined the Keith Circuit until Weston died. Fields and Carroll worked together for a while. They were both writing songs and Carroll had a couple of pretty big hits. He then did acts with girl partners.

Arthur stayed in vaudeville too with different partners and for a while was with the Avon Comedy Four. He began making records and soon was singing for all the record companies. At one time he had his name or nom de plume on more records than any other singer. A little later he started the team of Fields and Hall and played vaudeville and, later, radio. They wrote a lot of songs which they published themselves as Piedmont Music.

When they broke up around 1941 Arthur started the Arthur Fields Publications. He had written "On the Mississippi," "It's a Long Way to Berlin," "Aba Daba," which was revived a year or two back, and "Eleven More Months and Ten More Days," among many songs during the years past. He had a lot of creative talent and now wanted to write songs of a different type. He and I had been friends from the Weston, Fields and Carroll days, so he came to me and asked me to join him. We both loved to write songs and had a lot of fun together turning out numbers that satisfied us even if no one would buy them.

The hymns he sang back in Utica as a boy had made a great impression on him and we decided to write some sacred songs. This was a labor of love for both of us and we wrote and published forty or more hymns which we called "Hymns of Happiness."

One day I read an article about fireflies and in it was a quip about who would have thought of sticking a taillight in a bug. The steps to the many things only God thought of caused me to write "Who Else But God?"

I knew it had great commercial possibilities that our little venture couldn't realize for it, but Arthur would have been heartbroken if he couldn't have had it. He gave it the perfect musical setting, and while it never made us any money the letters we have received thanking us for writing it have repaid us in ways more valued than money. Arthur was on radio at that time and never used "Who Else But God?" without getting many wonderful letters. . . Cordially, GEORGE GRAFF.

## IV Ray Walker Recalls

Probably no one, aside from Mrs. Fields, was more distressed by the news of Arthur Fields' death than his old friend, Ray Walker. On the day my *Variety* article was written I received a letter from Ray, who was then living at Miami Beach but has since returned to New York, telling me he was worried because of having learned that Arthur had suffered a stroke and been placed in a hospital. Then on April 1, the ever helpful and obliging Ray Walker wrote:

"Feel lousy today. Read in the newspapers about Arthur Fields being burned to death in that fire in the Littlefield Nursing Home near Largo, Fla. His wife wrote me the other day and mentioned a different hospital."

Almost incredible as it seems, Arthur Fields and Ray Walker were working together in "show business" some 53 years ago when Fields was not quite 12 and Ray only a little older. Walker's letter added:

"Arthur worked with me at Coney Island around 1900, singing illustrated songs. Four years ago we did a radio show on WKAT at Miami Beach, billing ourselves as The Tavernaires. . . I can't begin to tell you what a shock this has been to me."

On April 6, Ray, still upset over the loss of his old friend, wrote: "Haven't felt well since I heard about Arthur Fields. . . Just received . . . a letter from Mrs. Fields. She probably has written you also. Her letter is very sad. It seems that Arthur was only in that hospital (convalescent home) 11 hours when the fire broke out. All they could identify Arthur from was his teeth. His body was a charred ruin . . . you could put in a pillow case. She had him cremated, and they played his song, 'Who Else But God?' at the funeral . . . I am sick about it."

In the same letter Ray said: "I found out that Arthur lived in Utica, New York, when he was about 10 years old. His father was in business there."

It was like Ray Walker not only to go to the trouble of jotting down some notes about Arthur Fields' life but also to send me a letter he received last January from Arthur, which contained some colorful reminiscences.

From Ray's notes, it appears that Fields sang at Wackie's moving picture house, Coney Island, when he was 11, with Walker as his accompanist. When he was 17 he joined the Guy Brothers Minstrel Show. In 1908 he sang at a New York place, "The German Village." One of the other entertainers was Sophie Tucker. A year later, Arthur was singing in the Bohemia Cafe at 41 West 29th street. In 1910 he was master of ceremonies at College Inn on Coney Island. Tess Gardella, later known on radio as "Aunt Jemima," also sang there, and Mel Craig led the orchestra.

A short time afterward while sing-

ing in the Garden Restaurant, at 50th street and Seventh Avenue, Fields formed the trio of Weston, Fields and Carroll, already mentioned by Mr. Graff. After Weston died, Fields and Carroll continued as a vaudeville team. In 1912, with Ballard MacDonald, they wrote a big hit, "On the Mississippi." According to Walker, Fields first met his future recording and radio partner, Fred Hall, at the Emerson Record Company offices in 1923.

One interesting thing mentioned by Ray is that Arthur had "a collection of thousands of old records. Some were made by stars but not released, due to errors in the making. One record I heard was by Bing Crosby. The first part is OK, but someone hit a blue note and Crosby started to swear through the whole second chorus. He had other similar records, some very funny. He also had thousands of old song copies — one with Yoelson's (Al Jolson) picture on the title page."

The deep sorrow evident in Ray Walker's letter was echoed in comments from friends and admirers throughout the nation as the bad news spread. Part of Fred Whitehouse's expression of grief has already been quoted. He likewise said: "Arthur was always a friend of mine. Many a time, Arthur, Irving and Jack Kaufman, Billy Murray and the rest of the old recording boys and myself would meet up at Columbia, Brunswick, Pathé or the other studios and have a regular get-together."

Henry Marshall, the veteran song writer, who lives at 515 Bumble Bee Lane, Scotch Plains, New Jersey, (so named in honor of his two biggest hits, "On the 5:15" and "Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee") wrote that he was grief-stricken because of Fields' passing and said he suspected my *Variety* article "brought tears to the eyes of many of Arthur's friends." Daniel J. McNamara, publicity director for ASCAP, wrote to tell of the sorrow Arthur's fellow members felt because of his death.

A 14-year-old record enthusiast, Gordon Hunter of Portland, Oregon, sent an air mail letter to say: "I am very sorry to hear of the death of Arthur Fields. . . He was one of the great artists who brought so much joy to the troops in the field of battle during World War I. The phonograph has lost another of its pioneers."

Albert Via, Jr., of South Boston, Virginia, wrote: "I was certainly sorry to hear about Arthur Fields' fate. It was a terrible way for a fellow to come to an end. I got some of his Edison records together Monday night. He was good, all right."

Al. McRea, the Westville, New Jersey, dealer in rare records: "I just got *Variety* and must congratulate you on your masterful article about Arthur Fields. I read the account of the fire but didn't know he was caught in it. . . Right now I am playing a Bell by him called 'Me and the Boy Friend.' On April 21 Mrs.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 43)

## Arthur Fields

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

Fields wrote, saying: "Allow me to congratulate you on the splendid article you wrote in *Variety*. It arrived, today, thanks to you." I hope this HOBBIES article likewise will bring some consolation to Mrs. Fields, who is now living at 4722 North Lois Avenue, Drew Park, Tampa, Florida, in the home of Arthur's cousin, E. Goldstein.

### V. Arthur Fields' Own Recollections

When Arthur Fields set down some reminiscences of his long career for Ray Walker last January, they included the following, which reveal that he saw more than a little of the seamy side of some phases of New York life during his earlier days:

I worked in the German Village for five years. Worked in the "Cellar" with George Piantadosi (he was a waiter); Joe Schwab (tenor singer); Curly Monroe (also a tenor); Lew Weston (a comic), and Jack Schiller, who played piano. Schiller was a remittance man — a two-fisted drinker. His dad owned a hotel in Canada and paid him so much a month to stay away from Canada. Charlie Muzocci played piano on the second floor. . . . Sophie Tucker worked with him and so did Flossie Crain. On the third floor Al Piantadosi played for some guy that was crippled up but a great entertainer — Joe something-or-other — I can't recall his name. That was somewhere around 1908. . . .

I also worked with Arthur Stone (Blind Stoney). We were in the Bohemia. I saved his life by pushing him in back of the piano when the Humpty Jackson gang came to square some account with another gang. Three men were killed. One man dragged himself all the way to Bellevue Hospital in the snow. One saved himself by rushing across the street into the Heidelberg. From the Bohemia, Stoney did an act with two other fellows.

Fred Hall played piano with the gang at Sennett's. In fact, he helped to write "Maybe" . . . Corbett, Shepard and Donovan were already an act at the College Inn, where I was the M. C. when I was but a kid. . . . It was from there that Eddie Weston became sick and died. . . .

About my being a charter member of ASCAP (the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers) in 1914, I left the organization because I didn't think I was adding anything to it when I started singing for phonograph records. E. F. Bitner, of Feist, kept up my dues for a while, but I didn't know it. Anyway, I rejoined in 1937.

### VI A Newspaper Interview

On Friday, April 22, 1949, the *Sun-Tattler*, a newspaper published in Hollywood, Florida, contained an article about Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Fields having come to Florida to live. Since it is largely biographical and contains considerable information about Fields' later years, it is worth reprinting here. There is also a picture, showing the singer-composer playing a record, and with cut lines reading: "Works on Program Script — Arthur Fields, songwriter, composer and singer, is shown preparing script for his daily radio program at his home, 1931 McKinley St. Mr. Fields says he purchased the home because it had a large garage, giving him ample room for a den to store his collection of records and sheet music."

Under the heading, "Famed Stage Tenor of Past Now Makes His Home in City," the article said:

Although he has made his home in this city for the past three years, few Hollywoodians know that the Arthur Fields residing at 1931 McKinley St. is the same golden-voiced tenor who helped popularize hit tunes of a quarter century ago. More than a thousand recordings which caught the fancy of another generation after the turn of the century are filed away in his garage den. All carry the title, "Solo by Arthur Fields." Many have been reintroduced in the last five years and are heard over the radio and wherever juke boxes are played.

Mr. Fields. . . is listed in the ASCAP's official publication as a composite song writer, author and composer. In short, he has tackled a little of everything in the musical world and in recent years collaborated with George Graff on a radical departure. That was a series of sacred hymns, published as "Forty-eight Hymns of Happiness."

His outstanding accomplishment as writer and composer includes "On the Mississippi," written with Harry Carroll 30 years ago. That song sold two million copies and is still used today as theme music. . . . Others were "Aba Daba Honeymoon," written with Walter Donovan, which went over the million mark in sales, and "There's a Blue Sky Way Out Yonder," released in 1930 and still popular as a ballad.

The song, "Eleven More Months and Ten More Days," also released in 1930, is another of his better known ditties. This one caught on like wildfire in London and started a craze for hill-billy tunes among the English people.

Mr. Fields was born in Philadelphia in 1888. First billed as a child singer, he made his professional debut at the age of 11. By the time he was 16 he was appearing regularly in minstrels when that type of entertainment was at its peak. In 1907, three years later, he swung into vaudeville and teamed with Harry Carroll, with whom he later composed a number of songs.

About this time he went into the recording field and started a long series of vocal solos for Columbia, Victor, Banner and other leading companies of that day. Many are no longer in business. . . . Oddly, Mr. Fields recalls that leading singers were reluctant to make recordings and often insisted on being billed under a fictitious name. Mr. Fields himself recorded under several pseudonyms.

. . . For a number of years (he) held a personal contract with Thomas Edison in vocalizing tunes for the Edison company.

One of the most popular songs at the time of World War I was "It's a Long Way to Berlin," which Mr. Fields wrote, and which he sang on recruiting tours in New York City. With Earl Carroll, who was recently killed in an airplane crash, he introduced "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner" and then followed with "Alice, I'm in Wonderland." The former song clicked to the extent of more than a million and a half copies.

In recent years, Mr. Fields returned to radio in New York, where he continued his singing and also wrote scripts. His most recent musical composition is "Frisky Little Filly," written three years ago but which failed to catch on.

The serious illness of his wife, Selma, brought the Fields to Florida in 1946 on doctor's orders. They left "Tin Pan Alley" for good, and headed for Miami. Both liked Hollywood better than anything they saw in Miami and their purchase of a home followed. . . . Since making his home here, Mr. Fields has swung back to radio, while continuing his song writing. He has a one-half hour program over WKAT, Miami, Monday through Friday, known as the "Arthur Fields Program," dealing with favorite songs of yesteryear and tributes to the song writers and composers fraternity. . . . In addition, he recently ran into an old friend, Ray Walker, well known pianist and writer, who fashioned "Good Night, Nurse," and "Poor Pauline." The pair are now contemplating night club engagements and a radio show.

With George Graff, a pianist now residing at Stroudsburg, Pa., Mr. Fields attempted something different in 1943 by going into the field of sacred music. . . . (This) led them to publish another hymn, "Who Else But God?" which Mr. Fields today looks on as one of his finer efforts.

In writing "Who Else But God?" the two men attempted to capture a tender-

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## KATE GREENAWAY'S VALENTINES

(Continued from Page 39)

In Spielmann and Layard's "Kate Greenaway," facing p. 74, is an illustration of three water-color drawings intended, according to the book, for use on Christmas cards. These drawings depict children in ulsters, as follows:

1. A maiden in fur-trimmed green ulster, with muff and hat;
2. A maiden in red ulster, with muff and hat;
3. A boy in blue ulster and hat, carrying an umbrella in one hand and a French poodle dog under the other arm.

Although intended for use on Christmas cards, these designs were also used for other purposes. We find two of them in Mrs. McPhail's collection with fancy printed frames in gold and colors and with illustrations (2 7/8" x 4 1/4") with cut corners. Legend ribbons at top and bottom say: "St. Valentine's Day," "Forget Me Not," "I

Send This Little Maiden;" "With Loves' Best Wishes Laden." (The Christmas cards appeared on the cover of HOBBIES in December, 1950.)

There are no verses on the back and hence it seems likely that these cards were intended for mounting on larger sheets or, more likely, in a booklet which would accommodate two or even three cards. This set is of the later period and is one of several which have only three subjects, a departure from the sets of six or four, during the earlier period. This is explained by the change in greeting card fashions from verse cards and folders to booklets and sachets.

For purposes of identification, we will call this the "Children in Ulsters" set.

In our concluding article, we will mention several more of the later designs which were also used for valentines. We will then review the sets of valentines described and attempt to arrange them in a logical order.

**BENJAMIN WEST**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36)

listening to the story of the life of Socrates and his historic death as related by the English governess, and his imagination quickly acted on the hint of the gunsmith. The figure of Socrates he completed to his satisfaction, but when he came to the slave handing the poison—"The slave ought, I think, to be naked," going, in his dilemma, to his friend of the forge, "and I have always painted men clothed." The gunsmith returned to his forge and presently brought out one of his workmen, half-nude and splendidly formed, saying "There is your model." West introduced him with his bare limbs into the picture. So early as this did he show that his conceptions of art were the purest.

West had now been roaming about so long indulging his one passion that at the age of fifteen we find him with barely the rudiments of an education. Dr. Smith, whose kindly interest in the boy induced him to undertake the part of tutor, with mistaken judgment allowed Benjamin to shirk hard and disagreeable study and to skim through the classics, fastening his attention only to those incidents likely to inflame his imagination. What he needed most was severe and methodical study, but this his indulgent tutor and more indulgent parents did not realize.

There was now a serious question to be discussed and answered. One of the peculiar articles of faith among the Quakers was the condemnation of the art of painting as being an agency "employed to embellish life, to preserve voluptuous images, and add to the sensual gratifications of man." The Wests were Quakers, and conformed in all things as did the others to the strictures of their sect. The question as to whether Benjamin might follow the beckonings of his genius was submitted to the Society for their wise consideration. Benjamin was ruled out while these deliberations of such deep moment to him were held. The spirit of inspiration came first to a Mr. Williamson. "God has bestowed on this youth a genius for art," he said, "shall we question his wisdom? I see the Divine hand in this; we shall do well to sanction the art, and encourage the youth." Like a wind that bends every golden wheat-head down in assent to its whispered love-tale, the same spirit moved over the hearts of these Friends, and every head bowed in grave consent to the words that had been spoken. Benjamin was called in, and Mr. Williamson continued his address: "We have classed painting among vain and ornamental things and excluded it from among us. But this is not the principle, but the misemployment of painting. In wise and pure hands it rises in the scale of moral excellence, and displays a loftiness of sentiment worthy the contemplation of Christians. God has endowed this youth with rich gifts. May it be demonstrated in his life and works that the

gifts of God have not been bestowed in vain, nor the motives of the beneficent inspiration which induces us to suspend the strict operation of our tenets prove barren of religious or moral effect." The voice ceased. One man arose and laid his hand in silent benediction upon West's head; another followed, till all the men had blessed him, and then the women consecrated him, each by a kiss, to his work. West now considered himself dedicated to Art, to uphold its sanctity and purity.

**BELLS**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35)

well as an old, old Soho bell, each bring to mind interesting English scenes and times. But my most highly prized bell from England is doubtless a graceful pewter tap bell from the Queen Anne Period. It stands on a polished base of fine-grained English oak and beckons with a marvelously sweet tone. This bell was purchased originally by John Adams, second president of the United States, who liked fine old decorative pieces and purchased many of them while Minister to England from 1785-1788. When I first saw this bell at an old estate, the date of purchase, etc., was well preserved on a sticker in Adam's own characteristic script. By the time the bell was offered for sale a year later, a careless housekeeper had torn off half the brittle old sticker . . . but the story remains, thanks to that earlier examination of the bell.

**ARTHUR FIELDS**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43)

ness which they believe is inherent in the heart of man. . .

Who else but God could have thought of these things,  
Dew on a petal, a tendril that clings,  
The throat of a bird and green moss on a log,  
A bee on the wing and a fern in a bog;  
The sweet smell of clover, of grass after rain,  
The flame of October and full fruited grain,  
A tree in its glory a seed in its pod.  
Who could have thought of such beauty but God?

Who could have thought of a meadow in bloom,  
An orchard in blossom, a lilac's sweet perfume,  
The egg of a robin, the sun through the trees,  
The touch of cool water, a soft summer breeze,  
Or white drifting clouds with wild geese wheeling by,  
The blaze of a sunset, a star in the sky,  
Eternity's span and a butterfly's wings;  
Who else but God could have thought of these things?

Thrilled as a child I give thanks for these things,  
Praising my God for the blessings He brings,  
So grateful for bounties that crowd every day,  
And for His forgiveness when I go astray.

Oh, how can I show all the joy in my heart,  
And humbly, devotedly do my small part!  
I know of the tears on the road that He trod;  
Who could have loved us so—who else but God!

And now, having touched on some of the highlights of Arthur Fields' singing and song writing career, we may retrace our steps to 1914, when he made his first records and became one of the most popular singers the phonograph has ever known.

(To be continued)

**Music Box Collection in California**

A pleasant vacation stop in California this summer would be Altadena. You can easily identify it by the sweet sound of old music boxes you hear coming from the 24x24 foot Hobby House of Homer (Bud) Witten.

Here he has 180 early phonographs in working order, including early juke boxes, possibly the first portable, a German Symphonion which plays on bells, and a Rocking Melodion (lap organ), ranging in size from portables to large console models.

Edison's voice can be heard on one of his 6,000 or more old records, reportedly one of four in existence. Speeches by William Jennings Bryan and songs by Caruso can also be heard.

"Bud" says visitors are welcome, just phone Sycamore 7-7982 to make sure he will be home. He is adding another 24 feet to his Hobby House, so there will be a little more room if all collectors come at once.

"Bud" began collecting in 1938, by accident when he bought an old phonograph that played cylinder records from a Pasadena house wrecker for 25 cents. After repairing it, he began looking for records, and thus acquired the collecting spirit.

He repairs many of his finds, using hopeless cases for spare parts. He now has about 55 of these in his attic.

His music boxes range from magnificently intricate Swiss machines that play eight tunes on one cylinder, to glass-doored symphonion consoles several feet tall. These play punched steel records more than a foot in diameter.

His collection of 180 phonographs and 30 music boxes, plus records, is estimated to be worth \$100,000 Bud says. But, although he has a few duplicates for trade, he doesn't seem to plan to sell any of them.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Arthur Fields

### Part Two

By JIM WALSH

Arthur Fields was only twenty-six when he began his long record-making career late in 1914, but he was already a veteran entertainer of some fifteen years experience. Starting as a boy singer in a place on Coney Island, he had traveled with a minstrel show, been master of ceremonies at "clubs," headlined in vaudeville and won sufficient recognition as a writer of popular songs to be admitted as a member of the newly formed American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers. As his recording career got under way, "The Aba Daba Honeymoon," for which he had written the words to music by Walter Donovan, was a big seller, and as sung by Collins and Harlan it remained the first record listed in the alphabetical Victor, Columbia and Edison catalogs for several years afterward. It was the first because "Aba" came nearer the beginning of the alphabet than the initial word of any other song title, nosing out "Abide With Me," which had been the accepted leader.) Some thirty-five years after the song was first written, it was revived in a movie and again swept the country.

Fields' first record, however, was not one of his own compositions. Instead, it was written by a young fellow of about Arthur's own age—one, who like Fields, had begun his career as a child, was of Jewish descent and, as a fledgling entertainer, had seen something of the less savory aspects of New York life. The other young man, beginning to be recognized as the greatest popular song writer of the day, was Irving Berlin, and his song, which Arthur Fields sang for his recording debut, was "Along Came Ruth." He was to record many other Berlin songs in the years that followed.

In those days the number of singers who could make satisfactory records was limited, and a large percentage of artists elected to "freelance." More often than not, they sang under more than one name. Arthur Fields at first didn't use any name but his own, but he appeared for the first time on record lists in both the Victor and Columbia supple-

ments for December, 1914. And in both instances he sang "Along Came Ruth," which many of his admirers still insist is one of the best records he ever made. I remember that some years ago Arthur's friend, Joe Franklin, the successful young New York disc jockey, wrote me he considered "Along Came Ruth" the best Fields recording.

The Victor record, No. 17637, was issued without comment, merely appearing under the heading, "Popular Songs of the Month." It was fortunate in being coupled with one of Billy Murray's masterpieces of rapid-fire ragtime, "I'll Do It All Over Again." This pattern of Fields on one side of a double-faced record and Murray on the other was repeated many times, especially in 1918-19, after Murray had returned for a year to free-lance recording. The record companies seemed to think it sound business policy to put two of their most popular comedians on one disc. Murray and Fields were good friends and, as will be seen, Billy frequently assisted Arthur in Edison recordings that featured Field's solo voice.

The Columbia version of "Along Came Ruth" was No. A1612, and had the most popular ballad tenor of the day, Henry Burr, singing "You're the Same Old Girl on the Other Side." The Supplement commented: "one of the best popular numbers in every respect that have been issued in many months is 'Along Came Ruth,' the new Berlin-Snyder publication whose title is taken from the very successful play of the same name. Our record introduces a new singer, Mr. Arthur Fields, a baritone whose voice and style are preeminently adapted to selections of this same character."

Here an oddity appears. Columbia called Fields a baritone, but Victor termed him a tenor. This difference of opinion was even more noticeable later when Fields was singing for all the American record companies. Victor (and Emerson) continued to maintain he was a tenor; Columbia, Edison and many others held to the baritone designation. And, in spite of his also having been called a tenor by



Arthur Fields

a Florida paper which interviewed him, I believe "baritone" is the correct description for his voice. Certainly, I think it strikes the average person as too deep to be considered a tenor.

Fields must have signed an exclusive two-year contract with Columbia, because he did not appear again in Victor record lists until August, 1918, and, as far as I can determine, didn't sing for any company except Columbia until he was mentioned in the February, 1917, Edison supplement. In January, 1915, he had two selections in the Columbia list—A1628, another Irving Berlin song, "Stay Down Here Where You Belong," coupled with an irresistible bit of Berlin ragtime, "He's a Rag Picker," sung by the Peerless Quartet; and A1626, "Poor Pauline," a composition by Charles McCarron and Ray Walker, satirizing the pioneer movie serial, "The Perils of Pauline," which starred Pearl White. The other side was "Do the Funny Fox Trot," by Collins and Harlan.

I have not heard Fields' version of "Stay Down Here Where You Belong" but it was the sort of song he should have sung well—one in which



the Devil admonished his son to stay beneath the ground rather than venture to the earth, where the first World War was causing "more hell up there than we have here below." On the other hand, "Poor Pauline" doesn't represent Arthur at his best. The recording seems to be bad, and the voice has a shrill, apparently distorted quality.

Fields' next Columbia record, issued in April, 1915, was an excellent comic song rendition, "He Comes Up Smiling," coupled on A1696 with a Peerless Quartet interpretation of a Harry Von Tilzer tune whose title at least deserves to be immortal, "Cows May Come, Cows May Go, But the Bull Goes On Forever." On A1699 he sang a song in praise of the 1915 Pan-American Exposition, "San Francisco (At That San-Fran-Pan-American Fair)" doubled with "Come Over to Dover," by Albert Campbell and Henry Burr.

In June came No. A1755, "The Little Ford Rambled Right Along," probably the funniest of all songs about automobiles, combined with an Irving Berlin "rube song" masterpiece, "Si's Been Drinking Cider," by Collins and Harlan. Here again Fields seem to have had recording, for "The Little Ford" record isn't as good as some of his other early Columbias. Perhaps it was because of technical defects that Columbia had it re-recorded in the early 1920's by Frank Crumit — the recording of whose voice also could have been improved.

There is no point in attempting to list all the records Arthur Fields made for Columbia or any other company. His "waxings" are numbered in the thousands — under his own name as well as a bewildering variety of nom de disques, some of which will be listed. Occasionally, it is possible to append fairly complete listings of the records made by singers who were not especially prolific, but this is impossible in the case of a highly popular artist like Arthur Fields. Lack of space would prevent, if nothing else did. A specialist such as Julian Morton Moses, of the American Record Collectors' Exchange, with his valuable "Price Guide to Collectors' Records," has found it possible to publish compilations of the Red Seal type of disc, with their approximate retail value, and Will Roy Hearne of Hollywood has done a like service for jazz collectors in his "Hollywood Premium Guide." But both Moses and Hearne would say, "No, thank you!" if asked to compile an absolutely complete list of all the discs and cylinders made by such untiring recorders as Arthur Fields, Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Collins and Harlan, Ada Jones, Charles Harrison and Irving Kaufman, to name only a few. And, even if they were willing to undertake the job, it would be virtually an impossible assignment when one considers how many different companies some of these artists, like Fields, sang for under a variety of names.

## II Field Sings for Edison

It is always a pleasure to trace in the recorded work of a painstaking, conscientious artist such as Arthur Fields a gradual but consistent improvement in his singing. Throughout his phonograph career, the comedian's recordings showed betterment in both voice and style. But he was not assured of consistently good recording until he became one of the Edison staff artists. Although many Diamond Disc surfaces were bad, the recording itself was uniformly and unfailingly excellent, unlike the output of the needle record companies, which was sometimes good and just as often bad. In my opinion, nearly all the best records Arthur Fields made in the pre-electric days are Edisons.

Fields is first discussed as an artist in the Edison Amberola Monthly for February, 1917. His Blue Amberol cylinder, No. 3112, "Don't Leave Me, Daddy," was mentioned as scheduled to be issued in March. Although dubbed from a Diamond Disc, it never appeared in disc form. The following interesting biographical sketch was given:

Arthur Fields, widely known as a vaudeville singer and as a writer of popular songs, makes his debut in the Blue Amberol catalog with the March list. Mr. Fields is the possessor of an exceptionally fine baritone voice and his manner of rendering ragtime numbers and other varieties of topical songs has made him exceedingly popular in the leading vaudeville centers of America. Mr. Fields was born in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1888 and he made his first appearance on the stage in Utica, N. Y., in 1904. Only sixteen years old at the time of his vaudeville debut, it was some years before his voice reached maturity. But during that time he filled many vaudeville and theatrical engagements. For the past five years he has been in vaudeville continually, traveling on the big circuits exclusively.

While Mr. Fields has gained much prominence in the theatrical world through his work in vaudeville, his reputation as a song writer is international. Among the big song hits that have been written entirely or in part by Mr. Fields are "On the Mississippi," "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner" and "The Aba Daba Honeymoon." He is known by name and reputation to all persons who keep themselves informed on affairs of the stage and his records should be ready sellers because of their exceptional artistic merit and the wide renown of Mr. Fields.

Oddly enough, a check of the Edison record lists reveals that the Amberola Monthly was wrong in saying Fields appeared for the first time in the March supplement. The month before he had been represented by No. 3083, "Honolulu, America Loves You." This also was his first Diamond Disc. It was coupled on No. 50414 with "How Could Washington Be a Married Man and Never Tell a Lie?" by M. J. O'Connell. (O'Connell appears to have got the jump on every other recording artist with this song, for he hurried around and made it for Victor, Columbia, Pathe, Emerson and perhaps some other companies in addition to Edison.)

Fields' third Blue Amberol, not issued on the Disc, came out in April and was 3163, "Rolling Stones (They All Come Rolling Home Again)", a

bit more serious number than the type he ordinarily sang. Two months later, in June, he was represented by 3197, "Everybody Loves a Jazz Band," one of the first songs written about the jazz (at first spelled "jass") craze then beginning to sweep the country. It also appeared on Diamond Disc 50439, combined with a hilarious antimatrimonial ditty, "I'm a Poor Married Man," by Billy Murray.

Shortly after he was engaged by Edison, Fields began to free-lance in earnest, singing for virtually every company then making records. Starting in 1918, he made many splendid Pathé sapphire discs. Some, such as "The Darktown Strutters Ball" and "In the Land o' Yamo Yamo," which had accordion duet accompaniments by the Boudini Brothers, were especially good. On one of his 1918 Pathés, "The Tishomingo Blues," he called himself Arthur Mack — possibly the first time he recorded under a name other than his own — or, rather, the one which he had adopted years before for theatrical purposes.

## III War Song Singer — Recruiter

Arthur Fields had already gained considerable popularity as a recording artist but his fame reached new heights after the United States entered the first World War in 1917. As soon as hostilities were declared Tin Pan Alley began flooding the country with patriotic songs, and Fields, perhaps more than any other popular artist, had exactly the right personality, pep and enthusiasm to put them over. Columbia may have been the first company to recognize his specialized gifts, but all the others fell in line. Arthur must have had to work around the clock to supply the demand for his recordings of war tunes.

His popularity also was not impaired by the fact Fields himself wore the American uniform and won a reputation as one of the most effective military recruiters in the country. He does not appear to have gone overseas, but as a recruiter in the New York "Gay White Way" district probably gave his country more valuable service than he could have anywhere else.

Under the heading of "Five Hundred Recruits Secured by Edison Artist," the Edison Amberola Monthly for December, 1917, said:

"Arthur Fields, Edison artist and writer of popular songs, has made a big hit singing his own compositions and the stirring recruiting songs, 'Where Do We Go From Here?' and 'Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, France.' "Arthur Fields joined the New York National Guard at the outbreak of the war and volunteered his services for unique recruiting work. He donned his uniform and with Lieutenants Farrell and Orsengo, Corporal Daniel F. Kelly and Private Leon Flatow, of the 71st Regiment, began a stirring campaign to build up the National Guard of New York. A large auto truck was contributed, this was decorated with bunting and a piano installed, and the boys set out

to make the White Light district hum.

"Private Fields was highly commended by the military authorities for the splendid work he had inaugurated. Its appeal was strong. The soldier singers made a big impression on the blasé youths of the Great White Way. This was evidenced by the hundreds of recruits who volunteered for service in the army. Three thousand names were turned over to the recruiting offices of Uncle Sam and at least 600 boys are now 'Somewhere in France' preparing to fight for democracy as a result of the work started by Private Fields. The 71st Regiment obtained 500 recruits through the spectacular appeal made nightly by the singers. One of Fields' own compositions is the war song sung by U. S. Soldiers, It's a Long Way to Berlin, But We'll Get There."

Fields recorded the "Long Way to Berlin" song for Edison and several other companies. He wrote the words and the music was by Leon Flatow, already mentioned as one of his fellow enthusiasts in the recruiting drive.

It would be tedious as well as unnecessary to list all the passingly popular war songs of which Fields made records. However, one of his especially popular numbers was "I Don't Want to Get Well," a clever comic number about a hospitalized soldier in love with a Red Cross nurse. He sang this as a solo for Columbia and other companies, but on his Edison Blue Amberol cylinder had the assistance of a contralto, Grace Woods. Mention of this record brings out the rather odd fact that Fields seldom sang duets with other artists and appears not to have been a member of any recording quartet. His duet work with women seems to have been largely confined to three numbers with Miss Woods — "I Don't Want to Get Well," "Whose Little Heart Are You Breaking Now?" and "Sweet Mama, Papa's Getting Mad," all of which appeared on Blue Amberol cylinders but not on Diamond Discs. In 1919 he made a duet with the well known concert baritone, Royal Dadmun, of a post-war song, "Homeward Bound," for Pathé. And he sang a few duets on Emerson records with one or other of the Kaufman Brothers — Irving and Jack. One of these, "Swanee Shore," by Fields and Irving Kaufman, was written by the pair. He also made a 1919 Columbia of "Breeze (Blow My Baby Back to Me)," with Jack Kaufman, on which Jack was described as a tenor — which he wasn't. Irving Kaufman was a tenor, but Jack had a strong baritone. And in 1923 Arthur joined Al Bernard in sing "Maggie (Yes, Ma'am Come Right Upstairs)" for Pathé Actuelle. "Grace Woods" was just a disguise for Helen Clark.

One of the oddities of the songs about World War One was the way some writers thought an approach to profanity would help pep up their numbers. Fields recorded a Teddy Morse tune, "We'll Knock the Heligo Into Heligo Out of Heligo Land."

"We're All Going Calling on the Kaiser" had a refrain which said: "We'll wish him well with shot and shell — the son-of-a-gon — we'll give him — well, we're all going calling on the Kaiser!" "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here!" was revived for war use, but although the records said, "what the heck do we care?" the soldiers didn't sing it that way. And records of "Tell That to the Marines" bluntly referred to the Kaiser's "damned old U-boats."

Fields' first Columbia under an assumed name was A2530, issued in June, 1918, on which he sang two big hits, "Good Morning, Mr. Zip-Zip-Zip" and "K-K-Katy." In the first he had the assistance of the Peerless Quartet, which worked with him on a number of Columbias, including "I Ain't Got Weary Yet," "I Wonder What They're Doing Tonight," "Johnny's In Town," "The Navy Will Bring Them Back," "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" (with the words revised to bring them up-to-date for war use), "We're All Going Calling On the Kaiser," "When I Send You a Picture of Berlin" and "Where Do We Go From Here?" On the record just mentioned, A2530, he called himself Eugene Buckley. This and the Pathé pseudonym of Arthur Mack were the start of a long list of assumed names which he was later to use.

In June, Columbia issued another zippy Fields combination, A2528, "The Yanks Started Yankin'" and "Hunting the Hun," with this comment: "Arthur Fields' 'war songs' are the hit of the day — because he has a voice you can hear, understand and enjoy. A. F. 'sings on his toes'; his latest Columbia records show it." A month later came A2539, "Pay Day (That Was His Favorite Call)," written as well as sung by Fields, with "What'll We Do With Him, Boys?" by the omnipresent Peerless on the other side. Said the monthly supplement: "There are a score of bugle calls we civilians know nothing of and Arthur Fields introduces us to the most popular one of all, 'Pay-Day' — his own song, sung in the spirit which has so successfully aided recruiting wherever Fields has appeared." Two other excellent Fields records, treating the war from a humorous point of view, were Archie Gottler's still well remembered "Would You Rather be a Colonel With an Eagle on Your Shoulder (Or a Private With a Chicken On Your Knee?)" and Sam Ward's now forgotten but perhaps even funnier, "Your Boy is on the Coal Pile Now."

The August supplement contained several Fields numbers, including a re-listing of A2496, "Tom, Dick and Harry and Jack" and "I'll Come Back to You When It's All Over," which had been originally announced months before. The supplement said the unusual success of those songs "has prompted this re-listing of two of the best bits of popular melody in print." The singer-recruiter's Columbia ver-

sion of "Over There" was also highly popular.

In August, Fields reappeared in the Victor supplement. He had not made a Victor record since "Along Came Ruth," almost four years previously, but now he came through with "When I Send You a Picture of Berlin," with the admirable assistance of the Peerless Quartet, whose members made so many records they were suspected of frequenting recording studios in their sleep. The other side was one of the cleverest and most original songs that came out of the war, "Indianola." Sung by Billy Murray, it told of how an Indian chief, "Bugaboo," set out to scalp Kaiser Bill. For the next year records by Arthur Fields were prominent features of the Victor list.

One of the best, undoubtedly, issued in September, was No. 18489, combining Irving Berlin's classic "Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" (the best song written by anybody about a typical doughboy's "grousing" at army life) with "Oh, Frenchy." The page devoted to the record included an excellent photograph of Fields as a handsome young man, together with this write-up:

In the army the bugler shares the fate of the fat man, for nobody loves him. "Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" is a breezy song by Irving Berlin, sung to perfection by Arthur Fields, and outlines a soldier's intention to murder the bugler—to "amputate his reveille and step upon it heavily." "Oh! Frenchy!" tells how Rosie went to France with an ambulance and fell in love with Jean. The clever words are by Sam Ehrlich and the music by Con Conrad.

Arthur Fields is a cheery singer, warranted to chase the blues a mile away on a hot day. (He) is well known, not only as a singer, but as a writer of popular songs, many of which have become household words with the general public. As soon as the war started, he was one of the first to place his gifts at the service of his country, and did great work helping the old 71st Regiment to fill its ranks. In this war, as in all others, the ancient power of music to draw soldiers to the colors has been vindicated beyond dispute, and much has been done in this way by such singers as Arthur Fields. In the two songs given here, he has happily caught the gay and venturesome spirit of our soldier boys. Though engaged upon serious business, they wisely refuse to take the work too seriously, and in their songs especially give rein to the high spirits and good humor so characteristically American.

Victor was astonishing late issuing "Good Morning, Mr. Zip-Zip-Zip," which Fields, as Buckley, had sung for the May Columbia supplement. Victor didn't get around to it until January, 1919, after the war had been over for two months. It was doubled with another belated war song, "When Tony Goes Over the Top," by Arthur's persistent coupling companion, Billy Murray. The Peerless Quartet again gave Fields harmonious reinforcement. Describing the record, Catalog Editor "Jim" Richardson remarked, in his characteristically graceful style: "Good Morning, Mr. Zip-Zip-Zip". . . is a typical soldier song, brisk and lively — sharp as a needle. Anti-tobacco-nists will appreciate the line, 'Ashes to ashes and dust to dust,' if the Cam-

els don't get you the Fatima's must."

In April, Fields sang a clever song about the excitement caused by the return of overseas service men, "Johnny's In Town," this time without the Peerless but with Billy Murray rendering "My Barney Lies Over the Ocean (The Way He Lied to Me)" on the reverse. That same month he and Billy also were paired on what must have been one of the biggest selling popular records ever made up to then. Fields sang the irresistibly catchy "nut song," "Ja-Da," while Murray had one of the best of all the songs written about the imminence of prohibition, "The Alcoholic Blues."

A much later, Arthur was represented by perhaps the best Victor record he ever made, although "Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" and "Ja-Da" could give it a run. This was "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm?" which I would nominate as the best comic song written about the problems caused by the return of soldiers to their normal ways of life, with Irving Berlin's "I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now" a close second. And who should turn up on the other side of "How Ya Gonna?" but Billy Murray

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 39)

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Transcription's, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings & etc. By Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo & Ink Spots. Money no object.—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d120061

### RECORDS FOR SALE

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THOUSANDS of used records, all varieties. Send wants.—Perry's 3914 Van Buren, Culver City, California. s3042

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

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Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

Al Jolson Collectors — Complete sound-track to the film—"Heart Of New York", recorded on discs.—ARG, Box 341, Cooper Station, N.Y.C., N.Y. au3825

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HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. n6407

FOR SALE: Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs. — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. mhl24201

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WANTED: Edison, Columbia cylinder phonographs, records, catalogues, small horns. Catalogues. —Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. jly6215

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For Sale: Rare Piano excellent condition. Organ combination—one keyboard push-lever for change organ to piano. Over hundred years old. Rosewood case. Will send photo if interested. —Northwest Settlement Inc., Wisconsin Dells, Wis. s3215

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FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina, Criterion, Mira, Monarch, New Century, Orphenion, Polyphon, Stella, Symphonion, Thorens. State size wanted. Lists. Send for Want List, offering premium prices for certain discs.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. s3426

MUSIC BOXES: The A. V. Bornand Collection at 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y., is open to visitors Monday through Friday mornings during July, August & September, or by appointment. Pelham 8-1506. s3695

Wanted: Old music boxes, larger types, also items of the Old West.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliot Ave. Seattle 1, Wash. je120291

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gloom. The greens and browns of the subject, and the once white and fleecy clouds all seem to be approaching a common grey.

Pigments embedded in a hardened mass of oil, that have changed their chemical composition and hence their colors, cannot now be returned to their original appearance as the artist saw them. No feasible "restoration" can bring back the beauty of the scene that every one who has viewed it remembers it, and as the painter undoubtedly portrayed it.

Contrasted with this are paintings, often of the same period, whose colors are also dulled, but for another reason, by varnishes and dirt. It has always been considered good practice to varnish paintings, after they have dried sufficiently. Varnishes of various kinds have been used for generations, to preserve as well as to improve the light reflecting properties of paintings. As time passes, such coatings become discolored and dirty, until finally the original brilliance of the painter's work is obscured by a dark brown film of dirty varnish.

Restoration usually includes the removal of such discolored varnishes, and replacement with fresh and cleaner coats. This is the sort of painting the collector would like to have, as the original freshness of the colors, if they have retained their brilliance, can be brought back by judicious use of cleaning agents.

Antiquity alone does not make a painting valuable. There are plenty of old paintings encountered here and there in homes, auction houses, antique shops and even museums, that have little to commend them save that they were painted many years ago and by some half-forgotten painter, who perhaps may even at one time have had a following.

But original paintings with that necessary combination of composition, colors and ideas, that sets the artist apart from just the painter, and in good condition, or sufficiently sound condition that they may be restored, are always desirable, and will continue to be valuable, regardless of how good or cheap printed reproductions may come to be.

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## CIRCUS HORSES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

ed commands of their trainer or the cues from his whip. With their arched necks and flashy trappings, few animals under the big top capture the admiration more than do these spirited beauties. The arched neck is due to the bearing-rein which draws down the head and keeps the animal under control. It does not hurt the horses, however. It maintains order and protects the horses themselves from one another when so many are working together.

A special attraction of any circus performance is the presentation of high school horsemanship. L'haute école is a precision act which brings to the highest perfection the intelligence of a horse and the teaching of man. A shifting of weight on the part of the rider, a slight touch of the reigns, or a touch of the heel gently on the horse's side will mean a certain command to a dancing horse. They can trot slowly with their knees almost touching their chin. They learn to walk in a light, springy fashion, and to canter in a slow, rolling motion. Many are taught two extra gaits known as the "slow gait" and the "rack." No dance step seems too difficult for them to master — the waltz, the jitterbug, the carioca, the rhumba, or the polka. In addition they do the Spanish walk, side walk, running walk, side trot, Spanish high trot, canter, side canter, single foot, and march.

Circus horses have more leisure now that snorting tractors and other machinery have taken over some of their chores of the past. Traffic increases have spelled an end to the great circus parades with the forty-horse teams. And the smell of gasoline and jet fuel may get even stronger over our land in the years ahead, but one thing is certain — the horse began the circus, and so long as there is a circus big top somewhere there will be circus horses performing under it.

## "DISCHI FONOTIPIA"

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

ors still do not realize. J. R. Bennett's introduction — all too brief — gives a glimpse of the Company's history and system of numbering. I wish he had treated this at much greater length. A list of the principal artists follows and then the main body of the work — the numerical listing of every record issued by Fonotipia from its inception in October, 1904, until its identity had become indistinguishably merged with Odeon in the late twenties.

The layout of this section makes it very easy to read. The original number of the record is given, followed by the artist and selection, by the matrix number when known, and occasionally by the corresponding Odeon number. All numbers are listed and in the few cases where the record is not known, the information is left to be added in later editions. No

attempt has been made to indicate couplings or to give subsequent Odeon-Decca-Parlophone, etc., numbers as this would have been too confusing even if the information had been available.

This is the kind of book that a true collector cannot put down until he has read every page for before his eyes will pass a procession of the best representation of *bel canto* on records, including many of the rarest prizes in the record collecting world. Also, this is the first time that a complete listing of Fonotipias, both acoustical and electrical, is available under one cover. Heretofore no listing beyond 1909 existed. I can unreservedly recommend this book to every collector as an indispensable addition to his catalogue library and, am sure, it will greatly stimulate interest in one of the most worthwhile and rewarding fields of record collecting.

## ARTHUR FIELDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

singing another clever prohibition dirge "How Are You Goin' to Wet Your Whistle?" Since Billy was a total abstainer, this and "The Alcoholic Blues" didn't represent his personal sentiments. Mr. Richardson's comments are worth quoting:

"How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Paroo?)" is a conversation between old Reuben and his wife. It is a lively number and the contrast between farm life and Broadway is well brought out in the accompaniment with imitations of cows and chickens to emphasize the farm and some jazzing for Broadway. This popular number is by Sam M. Lewis, Joe Young and Walter Donaldson. As a companion Billy Murray asks another question that is also agitating many of us in "How Are You Goin' to Wet Your Whistle (When the Whole Darn World Goes Dry)?" He sings the song as few could sing it, and adds a merry interpolation of his own that nobody else could sing at all — to finish up with. The band enters into the spirit of the jest by playing a few bars of "Down Where the Wurzbarger Flows." The "whistle" that is to be wetted appears right at the start. This song is by Francis Byrne, Frank McIntyre and Percy Wenrich. The timely nature of these two numbers will appeal to those who like to feel they are getting the music they want when they want it. The returning soldier and a dry world have furnished topic for endless discussion, but few of these discussions are as "worth while" as the humorous remarks of Arthur Fields and Billy Murray, each past master at the art of revealing new and humorous aspects of familiar topics. Each has his own special way of being funny, too. So the two numbers are well contrasted in style, the one complementing the other.

And now that we have reached the period when the service men were returning home, this seems a good place to end the discussion of Arthur Fields' remarkable record as a recruiter, singer and writer of war songs. Although he gained popularity and profited financially by the war song vogue, it is nonetheless obvious that the military authorities owed him a real debt of gratitude for services rendered.

(To Be Continued)



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Arthur Fields

### Part Three

By JIM WALSH

#### IV

#### "Tone Tester" Fields Signs Up with Emerson

The April 19, 1919, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* contained one of those Edison ads that reduced the advertising writers for other phonographs and record companies to helpless annoyance. The ad, which also appeared in the *National Geographic* and many other publications, was headed "Broadway Is Gay Again!" A photo taken in the Edison recording laboratories was reproduced with a heading that became something of a catch phrase, "It's You Arthur!" It showed Fields singing in direct comparison with a New Edison Diamond Disc phonograph to prove there was "no difference" between the Edison recording of his voice and his actual tones. There wasn't—as long as he kept his voice modulated to the phonograph volume level. The "tone test" was something that no other phonograph company could give.

Some of the reading matter of the advertisement is worth quoting for present day record collectors who have never heard — perhaps have not even heard of — an Edison tone test:

There are those who appear to believe that the Edison Recording Laboratories specialize on grand opera and classical music to the neglect of the songs of the day. Nothing could be farther from the truth. . . . The artists who sing the new songs and play the new dance music for the New Edison will testify that Mr. Edison's recording experts are as painstaking and exacting in recording the latest nonsense from "Tin Pan Alley" as they are in making a record of a grand opera aria. Recently, after repeated rehearsals, a celebrated singer of comic songs said disgustedly to his companion: "Edison certainly makes you earn your money. You'd think I was going to sing 'Celeste Aida' instead of a thing that nobody will remember the name of twelve months from now." (This sounds like something Billy Murray might have said.—J. W.)

. . . For the same reason that the New Edison brings to your home everything the ear can give you of the art of the world's great opera singers, it also puts the very breath of Broadway into its RE-CREATION of the Broadway song and dance hits. The illustration on the opposite page is from a photograph taken at the Edison Recording Laboratories on Fifth Avenue, New York City, as Arthur Fields was making the acid test of sing-

ing in direct comparison with the New Edison's Re-Creation of his voice. If you will close your eyes as you listen to the New Edison's Re-Creation of Mr. Fields' voice in some of the recent Broadway song hits a magic carpet will transport you to Longacre Square, and Fields' performance will be as entertaining to you as if you were sitting in a second row seat at the Palace Theatre.

Arthur Fields, the great vaudeville favorite, is a past master at putting the "punch" into popular songs. . . . The test of direct comparison is an Edison test. It is made by no other manufacturer. At the table (in the photo) are seated three experts, who pass on each Edison recording. In the group surrounding them are several popular Edison artists who happened to be at the Edison Recording Laboratories when this test was made. Among them are Collins and Harlan, world famed singing comedians; George Wilton Ballard, the popular ballad singer; Cesare Sodero, Director of Sodero's Band; and Eugene Jaudas, Leader of the Jaudas Society Orchestra. The verdict of this critical assemblage was expressed in the spontaneous ejaculation, "It's you, Arthur!" The New Edison has never failed, in similar comparisons, to bring forth a similar verdict.

I have already said I consider most of Arthur Fields' best records are Edisons. If I had to pick my favorite it probably would be "Ja-Da." The accompaniment is not so ingenious as on the Victor, but the Edison record's greater length allows leeway for the incidental "business," which was usually an attraction of Edison recordings. Fields sings the first verse and chorus in an irresistible rollicking manner. Then it is sung softly by a group of male voices, and Fields, turning to Billy Murray, says: "Kind of got you going, hey, Billy?" To which Billy replies: "It certainly has, I'm humming it all the time!" then leads the group in singing part of the refrain. Still later, Billy again takes the lead. The Edison recording laboratory seems to have operated on the principle of a fine stock company. No matter how famous an artist was in his own right, he would frequently be called on to sing in the chorus of some other performer's record. Thus Murray was often heard subordinating his own great talents to those of Fields.

Other fine Diamond Discs by Arthur Fields are "You'll Have to Put Him to Sleep With the Marseillaise and Wake Him Up With an Oa-La-La!" in which he displays his abil-

ity to sing very softly and sweetly in the final refrain an amusing "Stuttering song," "Oh Helen," in which a young man in love with a girl named Helen sounds as if he is using profanity in his fervent efforts to praise her; "All Those in Favor Say Aye," "Madelon," "Ragging the Chopsticks" and "Singapore." All are of the 1918-19 period.

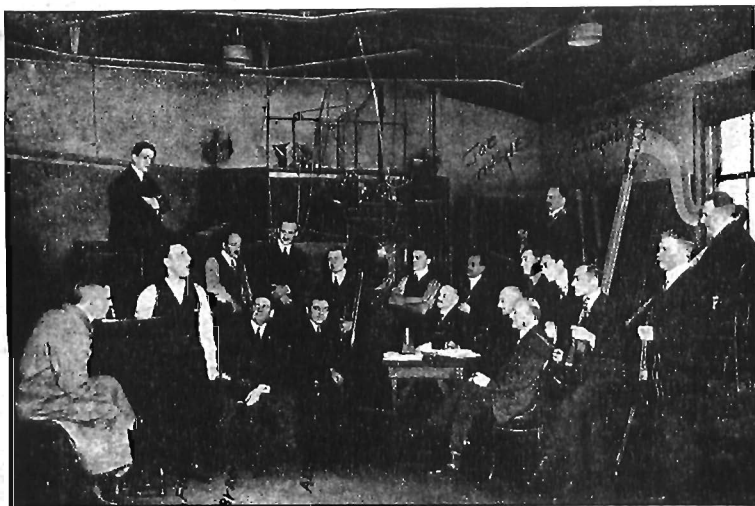
Since he was recording for virtually all the other American record companies, I have often wondered why Arthur agreed to pose for that tone test photo, which could not have a hit with Edison's competitors. A lot of record buyers were surprised when another *Saturday Evening Post* ad, appeared a few months later. It contained pictures of Arthur Fields and his old "buddies," Irving and Jack Kaufman, signing exclusive Emerson contracts. They were to make solo and duet records, and when all three sang together were to be known as the Three Kaufields. Obviously, Emerson must have made an attractive offer to persuade three such popular free-lancers to give up working for any other record company.

Nevertheless, Arthur, Irving and Jack soon realized they had made a mistake. The recession which set in late in 1920 hit some of the phonograph companies hard. Many Victor dealers, unable to get adequate supplies of Victor records in 1917-18, had taken on the Emerson line, but Emerson discs were made of a material that didn't wear well and the recording could have been better. Business declined in 1920 and 1921, and when the trio's two-year contracts ran out they didn't renew, but returned to free-lancing.

#### V

#### Again a Free-Lance

Arthur Fields was back in the Victor list in August, 1921, with "Anna From Indiana," a catchy comic about a Hoosier farm girl so fat that "she hides the farm when she sits down." In December he was represented with a conventional type of love song, "Who'll Be the Next One to Cry Over You?" Aside from singing a few refrains for dance numbers he



Edison recording studio, 1919. Arthur Fields sings in direct comparison with the new Edison. Edison officials, recording artists and members of the orchestra exclaim, "It's YOU, Arthur!"

never afterwards made Victor records.

Fields also made a number of new Columbia discs, but didn't regain his former standing as one of the company's most popular stars, although during the later years of his career he recorded extensively under various names for the 50 cent record made by Columbia which was sold bearing the Harmony, Diva and other labels. An unusual record, apparently never listed in the regular Columbia catalog, was his 1922 rendition on No. A3447, of "Hail, Chicago!" which had been chosen as "the official Chicago song" in a contest sponsored by the Chicago Herald-Examiner. Prince's Band played "Chicago," the second prize song, on the other side.

It was during this second free-lance period, shortly before and immediately after the introduction of electrical recording, that Arthur Fields began to pile up his remarkable total of records under different names — most of them made for the so-called "off-brands." He was a particularly prolific recorder for Grey Gull, makers of a cheap record which was also sold under a number of other labels, including Radiex Madison and National Music Lovers. On these labels he was known as "Vel Veteran," "Mr. X," William Lewis, George French and, occasionally, as Bob Thomas, although this name was usually reserved for Ernest Hare.

On Phantasie records, which were Lyrics under a different label, he was called Walter H. Dale. Nom de disques used on Emersons included Padric O'Brien, for Irish songs, and Donald Baker and Fred Stone. These names also were used for Regal and Medallion records, made by Emerson. On Harmony he was Jimmy Ryan, and Arthur Seelig. On Cameo-Oriole-Romeo, he was Charles Dale, Arthur Baldwin, Andy Britt and Harry Crane. I also have a Romeo record on which he sings "Hugs and Kisses for Two," with a woman I can't identify.

The artists' names are listed as "Gent and Wheeler." He likewise took part in Romeo records listed as by "The Hometownners" and "The Lumberjacks." I have seen only two Melva records, and know nothing about that brand, but one of them contains a solo by Fields, disguised as Jack Martin.

Some of Arthur's most interesting and unusual recording assignments came from the minor companies, such as Grey Gull. After Vernon Dalhart's 1924 Victor and Edison records of "The Wreck of the Southern Old 97" turned out to be sensational hits, Arthur recorded the number for Grey Gull, but with words credited to "Watters" that differ widely from the Dalhart versions, which had been copied from an Okeh record by a Virginia mountaineer, Henry Whitter. He also sang other hill-billy numbers for Grey Gull and was frequently called on to record old-time songs — both comic and sentimental — as well as Christian hymns. Some typical titles are: "The Last Rose of Summer," "Break the News to Mother," "A Bird in a Gilded Cage," "And Her Golden Hair Was Hanging Down Her Back," "Tell Mother I'll Be There," "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder" and "Throw Out the Life Line." He even sang the refrain of "My Old Kentucky Home" for a Hawaiian guitar duet by Franchini and Dettborn. Frequently, he did the refrains for Grey Gull dance records, as on the beautiful "Lane of Dreams," without receiving label credit. An excellent Grey Gull record is his rendition of "Down at the Old Boarding House," which might be construed as an indirect plea for racial tolerance written by him and Fred Hall.

When William Jennings Bryan died in 1925, Fields recorded for Paramount a typical hill-billy paean of praise for "The Great Commoner," "Bryan Believed in Heaven (That's Why He's in Heaven Tonight)" The

death of the screen's "great lover" brought such songful tributes as "Rudolph Valentino (The Great Director Has Called You)" and "There's a New Star in Heaven Tonight."

In 1926 Arthur returned to the Edison ranks, after an absence of seven years. One of his first Diamond Discs of this later period was a brilliantly sung and spoken version of "My Dreams of the Big Parade," given with thrilling fervor. It was perhaps the type of serious number which Fields did best. He also recorded "Flaming Ruth," a tribute to Ruth Elder, the woman aviator who tried unsuccessfully to match Lindbergh's ocean-crossing feat.

A year later Edison began to issue records by "Arthur Fields and His Assassimators." Field sang in these and the dance music probably was played by B. A. Rolfe's Orchestra, or Dave Kaplan's. These continued until Edison quit the record business late in 1929. One of the best was "Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, Montreal," a jolly anti-prohibition effusion.

After electric recording was introduced in 1925, vocal refrains for dance numbers became more and more popular, and Arthur Fields and Irving Kaufman undoubtedly sang more of them than any other artists. Both Arthur and Irving believed they had the largest total. I shan't try to decide between them, but both must have sung several thousand.

## VI

### Song Writing and Radio

In the late 1920's, Arthur's association with Fred Hall caused him to pay more attention to song writing than he had done for a good many years, and they specialized for a time in comedy and hill-billy numbers. Their "Eleven More Months and Ten more Days" was a real hit in 1930. Under the name of the Piedmont Music Company, Fields and Hall published an album of country and Western songs for which the Edward B. Marks Music Corporation was the sole sales agent. It included "There's a Blue Sky Way Out Yonder," "Eleven More Months," "Our Home Town Mountain Band," "Why Do They Call Them the Funnies?" "Don't Believe It," "Hang It in the Hen House," "You Can't Win," "When I Went Around With Mary," "I Laughed So Hard I Nearly Died," "I Don't Want to Get Married," and "When I Pumped the Organ for the Old Village Choir."

A composition by Billy Rose and Fields and Hall, which deserves special attention is "I Got a Code in My Doze," perhaps the only really funny song ever written about that unfunniest of afflictions, the common cold. As sung in a "little girl" voice on a Victor record by Rosetta Duncan, of the famous Duncan Sisters, with accompaniment by her sister Vivian, it deserves to rate as a comedy classic. Arthur and Fred also wrote material for other artists, including a series of "medicine show" and "minstrel" records for Okeh. For Harmony they recorded songs about

Amos 'n' Andy and Hank Simmons' Show Boat. They sang "Piccolo Pete," and other comedy numbers for Okeh.

The great depression of 1929 practically destroyed the record business for the next half dozen years, although Victor, Columbia, Brunswick and a few small companies limped along, doing about five per cent of the business they had formerly enjoyed. Arthur Fields' virtual disappearance as a recording artist, like that of many another once well established singer, dates from this time. However, he and Hall did well, writing songs, appearing on radio, and recording transcriptions. I still recall their programs of the early 1930's, in which they were assisted by a girl named, if I remember right, Ann Page. In memory, I can hear Miss Page's ecstatic squeals to the sardonic Hall: "Oh, Freddy, you're so masterful!" The boys had a theme song which ended something like:

Don't you think our voices are marvelous? . . .

If you do you're off your nut!  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 33)

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Transcription's, Armed Forces Radio Service Recordings & etc. By Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo & Ink Spots. Money no object.—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d120061

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**Attention Record Collectors:** Inaugurating auction sales. Rare and out-out vocal records. Free lists. — C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. au3825

**THOUSANDS** of used records, all varieties. Send wants.—Perry's 3914 Van Buren, Culver City, California. s3042

**FOR SALE:** Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collectors' items to just good "listening". Large, constantly changing stock. See for yourself! Write, or visit. We Buy Collections. — Record Collectors Service, 530 East 83th St., New York 28, N. Y. o63801

**RARE VOCAL RECORDS:** Items for the most discriminating collector. Interesting free lists sent upon request. Patti, de Lussan, Gadske, Caruso, Sembrich, Bonci, etc. Available at prices not to be bettered elsewhere. Write:—Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Michigan. s3426

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 42 Church St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

**Al Jolson Collectors** — Complete sound-track to the film—"Heart Of New York", recorded on discs.—ARG, Box 341, Cooper Station, N.Y.C., N.Y. au3825

**RECORDS:** Vocal Classics, new and old, Victor, red, blue, black, Heritage, Columbia, TRI-COLOR, blue, green, \$1.00 each — August only.—Toby's, 2426 Jackson, Kansas City, Mo. au1002

**Auction Sales: Rare and cut-out** vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists. —Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh128022

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. n6407

**FOR SALE:** Regina Symphonium, Stella, Mira, Olympic discs. — Harry Brody, 1972 72nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y. mh124201

**Fifty years of popular vocal records;** Monarch, Victor, Grand Prize, Columbia and many others. Every Pioneer Recording Artist represented in fine condition at the astounding price of 50 cents each. Send for free "Pops" lists.—Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. o32301

**CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS,** cylinder records, catalogs, small horns, recorders, reproducers and old flat records over 40 years old. Bought, sold and exchanged. —A. Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. ja6698

### BOOKS FOR SALE

**MAN AND MASK,** Chaliapin; Souvenirs, Georgette Le Blanc Maeterlinck; Men, Women, Tenors, Alda; Jenny Lind, Mrs. Raymond Maude (daughter); Edouard Remenyi, Violinist, Struggles and Victories, Yvette Guilbert; Melodies and Memories, Melba; Melba, Colson; Mapleson Memoirs, 2 Vol.; Anna's of Covent Garden Theatre, 2 Vol.; Sims Reeves, Pearce; Marie Malibran, Pougin.—G. O. Moran, Lodi, Wisconsin. au1234

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. d128402

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC** to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Catalog 15c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. o124201

**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list. —Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, California. s3863

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

**MELODEON.** Rare double keyboard; beautiful rosewood. Also Harmonium. See April HOBBIES, p. 107. Both instruments refinished and in perfect playing condition.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Michigan. s3844

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**EDISON CYLINDERS,** playing condition, 2 and 4 min., \$25. 2 min., \$20. Morning Glory horns with each machine. 2 min. records, 10c each. Amberol 20c, in lots of 25 each. Express collect. —Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, New York. au3259

### PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

**PLAYER PIANO ROLLS.**—Latest hits and old favorites, all 75c. Send for free list. Extra roll boxes, 4 1/2c. Also player material, parts, service.—Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Company, 222 South Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. d122112

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Music boxes, hand roller organs, as Celestina and Gem. Roller and rolls. Private collector.—Newmann Miller, 436 West Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. o3844

**TOY DISC PHONOGRAPHS WANTED.** Hand powered or spring motor as Owens; (open works) Berliner; National Gram-O-phone; Zon-O-phone; Eldridge R. Johnson Talking Machine Company, models "A", "B", "C", "D". Also Monarch Series. State condition and price. —Aaron B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Illinois. mh120052

**AUTOMATIC PIANOS.** Selling entire collection. Choice pieces such as Seeburg flute piano with keyboard; Nelson-Wiggen piano-orchestration with 10 instruments; Western Electrics, Mills Violina-Virtuosos, etc. Also stock of parts for rebuilding and restoring. Write your wants.—J. D. Mitchell, Sebring, Florida. s3276

**COLLECTION OF SONGS,** ballads, verse, over 100,000 different. Very old. Many song folios and sheets, 1920's and 1930's. Old hymn books. Sheet music 1900-1938. 55,000 post cards, all kinds; old German Magazines, 52 copies DAS ECHO, Industrielles. Pub. in Berlin, 1899-1901, 130 copies Die Gartenlaube, Illustriertes Familienblatt, Pub. in Leipzig 1894-1901. Life magazine file, 1936 through 1940 and 1944 complete, other years incomplete. Some stamps.—L. H. Peevey, Rt. 1, Box 328, Creswell, Oregon. au36121

**For Sale:** Rare Piano excellent condition. Organ combination—one keyboard push-lever for change organ to piano. Over hundred years old. Rosewood case. Will send photo if interested. —Northwest Settlement Inc., Wisconsin Dells, Wis. s3215

**REGINA, 18x21", 13" high, 15 metal discs, 15 1/2" on original cabinet, 34" high, 47" overall, \$150.** Edison cylinder phonograph, mahogany cabinet type, 3 drawers for records, \$30. Edison cylinder with morning g. horn & stand, \$30. Edison cylinder with small horn, 5" at bell, \$20. Edison cylinder built in horn, \$15. Another extra nice cond., \$20. Edison with Tuba morning glory horn, \$40. Edison discs, built in horn with 20 disc records, nice condition, \$11.50.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. au1466

### MUSIC BOXES

**FOR SALE:** Tune discs for Regina, Criterion, Mira, Monarch, New Century, Orphenion, Polyphon, Stella, Symphonion, Thorens. State size wanted. Lists. Send for Want List, offering premium prices for certain discs.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. s3426

**MUSIC BOXES:** The A. V. Bornand Collection at 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y., is open to visitors Monday through Friday mornings during July, August & September, or by appointment. Pelham 8-1506. s3696

**Wanted:** Old music boxes, larger types, also items of the Old West.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliot Ave. Seattle 1, Wash. je120291

### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8.

(Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)

legend, the carp swims up the Yellow River till it reaches the Dragon Gate Falls. It then jumps the falls and turning into a dragon upon reaching the top of the falls is caught up in a cloud and carried off to the skies.

The shops in Seoul were not fancy, but I was anxious to find what treasures they held. In one shop I found a large fifteen-pound bowl gong. When struck, this gong would continue to vibrate for several minutes. Later I discovered that originally it was made for a temple in Japan. As I continued my search I found more and more bells that I wanted. The news traveled fast. The Korean merchants would meet me at their doors with bells in their hands. Children would run up with small animal bells to sell to me. I became so loaded down with bells that I despaired of being able to carry them all, so I hired a Korean man with a wooden "A-Frame" attached to his back. Then I inverted the bowl gong and set it on his "A-Frame" and piled it to the top with the other bells. I thought to myself, "He looks like a Bell Collector's Santa Claus." On this trip I acquired many items which I consider priceless. Three of the bells have snake-like characters in what is apparently a forgotten script. I could find neither Japanese, Chinese, Korean nor Indian who could translate it. They were also of interesting shape. All three have handles with a ring at the top. One is an open mouthed bell, while the other two were closed, with loose jinglets on the inside. One was barrel shaped, about the size of a short water glass, and the other was cubic. An interesting feature was that the latter two stood on three short pegs. There was evidence that the metal of these bells contained gold because in the smelting this metal had not been perfectly amalgamated, and had left gold-like streaks in the bell.

Another important bell which I bought is called the Mokugyo, (Wood-

en Fish). It is a roundish, hollow wooden instrument about the size of a human head. It has a few scale-like designs carved on it, so it symbolizes a fish. Its origin is described in the legend that Buddha had a very rude and stubborn disciple who was punished by being born a fish in his next life. In addition to living in the sea he was plagued by having a large tree growing from his back. Every time there was a storm at sea, the tree was tossed about and he was in great pain. As penance for his misconduct in his first life, the fish offered the tree to be used as Buddha saw fit. So this wooden bell was fashioned out of it. It is still struck with a stick at every service by way of proving the disciple's repentance. In my collection I have such "Wooden Fish" made by Chinese, Japanese and Korean Craftsmen. Some have as a handle the fish biting its own tail, possibly a symbol of eternity. On others, the handle consists of the heads of two open-mouthed dragons, struggling for the possession of the Sacred Jewel.

I found one bell treasure in Seoul, whose true value I did not learn until I returned to this country. It was a deeply scalloped Lotus bell. It is inscribed "Lo-Lang," which was a Chinese Colony founded in 108 B. C. on the southern banks of the Taitong River in North Korea. The colony flourished several centuries and then passed out of existence. The bell is an hexagonal, conventionalized lotus, and is green with the natural patina of great age. In 1921 Japanese archaeologists started excavating the ancient tombs of Lo-Lang which lay across the river from Pyongyang, the present North Korean Capital. Their findings provided the modern world with its first accurate knowledge of the structure and contents of Han Dynasty tombs. A good deal of their contents went to the Seoul Museum, which was later repeatedly looted whenever the city changed hands during the bitter conflict. This bell may be one of those museum pieces and a relic of this ancient Chinese colony.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

### BELLS WANTED

WANTED: Bells.—Mrs. Tilden Patton, Lexington, Illinois. d12407

UNUSUAL COMMEMORATIVE Liberty Bells wanted. Send complete description and price. — Box SPL, HOBBIES Magazine, 1006 S. Michigan, Chicago 5, Illinois. tfx

### FOR SALE

BELLS: Iron farm bell complete, \$12; three without hangers, \$6 each; 10 brass hand bells, assorted sizes, one dated 1878, \$30.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. au1802

### Travel Search for Bells

By A. C. Meyer — \$2.50

Published by

LIGHTNER PUBLISHING CORPORATION

1006 So. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

A story about the Meyer's personal search for bells, a down-to-earth summary of a fascinating hobby.

or Europe, but there were whispers that union members were taking part in "sneak sessions" of recording. Records appearing under the Hit label were a particular cause of controversy.

One of these, combining "Der Fuehrer's Face" and "Gee, But It's Great to Meet a Friend from Your Home Town" was represented as being by Arthur Fields. Since it was understood that only assumed names were being used on Hit records, an inquiry at once arose as to why the company had given a supposedly disguised artist the name of one of the most famous former record makers. The Billboard and Variety quoted Fields as saying he didn't make the record and as threatening suit against the manufacturer. Whether there were any further developments I don't know. I have the record, and "Der Fuehrer's Face" doesn't sound like Arthur to me, but the other side does. It could have been made by Fields years before for some other company and the master obtained for use on the Hit recording. The strike ended, and the incident was forgotten.

And so ends the story of Arthur Fields' recording career. During the last decade of his life he was more and more preoccupied with writing religious music, although the revival of "The Aha Daba Honeymoon" in a movie was very welcome, and at the time of his death he was anticipating a similar revival of his and Walter Donovan's ditty about the love life of frogs, "Gila Gala Galoo." Then the March 29th fire in the Littlefield Convalescent Home at Largo, Florida, brought to a tragic finale the long and colorful career of a fine performer and a lovable gentleman. Mercifully, it also relieved poor Arthur of an indefinite period of future suffering.

I have done my best to pay tribute in these articles to the accomplishments of a friend whom I knew only by correspondence. As I have previously said, I wish Arthur Fields could have lived to read them and give them his approval. Failing that, I do hope they will be a source of pleasure to Selma, his sadly stricken widow.

THE END.

### ARTHUR FIELDS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

Sometime in the early 1930's, Fields and Hall made a spoken Brunswick record which I believe was called, "Hello, Artie; Hello, Freddy!" But that was in a period when records weren't selling, and this one was no exception.

The remainder of Arthur Fields' career has been fairly well covered in the first installment. However, one interesting thing remains to be told having to do with his recorded music associations. During the second World War the American Federation of Musicians called a strike against the record companies. Union musicians were forbidden to play for "platters," but records continued to be turned out. Some were said to have been sung or played in Mexico

### Committee Appointment

The following committees for the current season of the Musical Box Hobbyists Organization were announced recently by Lloyd G. Kelley, President. Below are the chairmen of these committees:

Ways and Means Committee: Glenn P. Heckert, Massillon, O.; Publicity: Mrs. Ruth Bornand, Pelham, N. Y.; Fair Practice: Perry Ghare, Indianapolis, Ind., and Committee on By-Laws, U. B. Lust, Fremont, O.

Among the fifteen new members welcomed for the year, is the firm of Baud-Freres, of Ste. Croix, Switzerland, the last remaining music box firm in Europe.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Frank Crumit

### Part One

By JIM WALSH

A Detroitier informs me she was anxious to get a recording of Frank Crumit singing "Abdul Abulbul Amir." Not only was she unable to get the record, but in the music shops she visited they told her they had never heard of Frank Crumit. The ignorance of many small shop owners as to their business is depressing. No wonder there are so many failures in small business enterprises. Frank Crumit, who died about ten years ago, was one of the best known recording artists in the country. Also a well-known radio star in partnership with his beautiful and talented matrimonial mate, Julia Sanderson.

When the foregoing paragraph appeared in E. V. Durling's column, "Life With Salt on the Side," earlier this year in the *New York Journal American*, it carried me back in memory to the afternoon of Tuesday, September 7, 1943. I was then a reporter for the *Roanoke World-News* and had taken Monday (as it was Labor Day) as my day off. Among

other things I had enjoyed a radio program by my favorite duet team, Julia Sanderson and Frank Crumit, which ended with their singing "It's So Peaceful in the Country."

On Tuesday afternoon, when the first edition came off the presses, I was turning through it when I came to a headline, "Frank Crumit, Radio Star, Dies." I stared, uncomprehendingly and unbelievably, just as I was to do almost ten years later when the teletype at radio station WSLs coldly and unemotionally brought the news that Arthur Fields had been burned to death in the fire that destroyed the Littlefield Convalescent Home at Largo, Florida.

Frank Crumit dead! What sort of foolishness was this? Why, only a few days before, I had written my friend Frank a letter asking for some information and, knowing his habit of replying promptly, was expecting an answer almost any day! Not only

that, but I had heard him, in obviously good health and spirits, singing on his radio program just the afternoon before! There must be something wrong. Either my eyes were tricking me or the Associated Press had made a mistake. Frank Crumit, in his early fifties, was too vital and alert, too full of the zest of living, to be dead!

But the "story," necessarily brief for the first edition, was true. It read:

NEW YORK (AP)—Frank Crumit, radio entertainer, composer, and former vaudeville star, died suddenly of a heart attack in his hotel apartment early today.

His wife, known in the entertainment world as Julia Sanderson, was at his bedside.

Crumit shared his radio programs with his wife and the two were sometimes called "the ideal couple of the air."

He had lunched yesterday with several friends at the Lambs Club and appeared in good health. He was a former Shepherd of the club, a theatrical organization.

Crumit and his wife appeared on two radio programs, one a five-day feature broadcast in the afternoon, and the other an evening show, titled "The Battle of the Sexes."

The unexpected news of Frank's death was so shocking, especially in view of the warm friendship we had enjoyed through correspondence for almost a decade, that I finished my day's work deeply depressed and in a condition that could have developed into hysteria if a newspaperman's busy life had permitted excess emotion. The most poignant touch came when I reached home that afternoon, and my poor mother, who was in bad health and fated to die only a little more than three years later, met me at the front door. She was crying bitterly.

"Son," she said, "have you heard anything sad today?"

She had learned of Frank's death from the radio and had been crying ever since.

Another tug at the heartstrings came the following afternoon when I returned home to find one of Frank's familiar letters waiting for me. I shall have more to say later concerning that typically genial and kindly missive, which quite possibly was the last letter he ever wrote. It



A typical broadcasting pose of "The Singing Sweethearts," Julia Sanderson and Frank Crumit.

### APPROVAL FROM JULIA SANDERSON

"Dear Jim Walsh: I read the enclosed through my tears, and think it is just grand! You have accurately presented the sequences in Frank's life, all so tenderly expressed. He and I are very grateful. . .

"I have a large collection of Frank's records and would like the Phi Delta Theta Library . . . to have them when I go. Somehow at this time, I cannot bear to part with them. I surely appreciate Mr. McFall's interest in collecting them, and I wish I had duplicates. So many radio stations have asked for them.

"Again my thanks, dear Jim Walsh. All good wishes for you. Very sincerely, Julia."

was postmarked in the late afternoon, only a few hours before his sudden death in the early morning.

During the days that followed I gave two "Frank Crumit Memorial Programs" from Station WDBJ in Roanoke, where my "Walsh's Wax Works" then originated, and sent copies of the scripts to his wife, Julia. She wrote me that she read them through her "flowing tears." I also received many clippings from Frank's admirers of newspaper articles relating the details of his career and the circumstances of his death.

Bearing these things in mind, I "saw red" when I came across the Detroit woman's lament that she had been unable to buy Crumit records, and—to make it worse—had encountered only stupid, uninformed persons who smugly said they had never even heard of him. I have good reason to know there are still innumerable admirers of Frank Crumit throughout the nation. None of his recordings are still listed in the Victor and Decca catalogs, but in England, where memory seems to be longer and affection toward an artist more enduring, the Gramophone Company still offers a number.

Incidentally, Frank Crumit was distinctive among American comedians in that he became through his records one of the most popular comedians the British Isles ever knew—apparently without any personal appearances abroad—and even after his recording career with Victor ended made a number of discs especially for sale by "His Master's Voice."

So, as I say, I saw red when I chanced to read what the Detroit woman had written to Durling and was strengthened in a determination I had already formed to write a HOBBIES series to begin in this September issue as a memorial tribute, a decade after his passing, to a fine artist and a lovable man. The tribute is all the more appropriate at this time of year because Frank not only died in September but was born on September 26, 1889. His

father's name also was Frank, and his mother died when he was about four years of age.

### II An Obituary Notice

One of the most comprehensive and informative death notices to come to my attention appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune*. It combines biographical detail with some details of Crumit's personality and is therefore worth quoting:

Frank Crumit, who with his wife, Julia Sanderson, formed one of America's best loved musical comedy and radio teams, died yesterday morning after a heart attack in his apartment at the Hotel Gotham, Fifth Avenue and Fifty-Fifth Street. . . Miss Sanderson was with the actor when he died. They first met in 1921, when they appeared together in the musical comedy, "Tangierine."

Mr. Crumit was born in Jackson, Ohio. Although he made his first appearance on the stage at the age of five, when he took part in an amateur minstrel show, he did not begin life as an actor, but as an engineer. It was not until many years after his graduation from Ohio State University, where he studied electrical engineering that he decided to go into vaudeville.

#### Wrote Own Songs

Once he had decided on a stage career it wasn't long before he had developed ukulele playing into a fine art. Meanwhile he was writing some of his own songs and his genial personality was winning him many friends. His act was informal. He would stroll onto the stage, order the orchestra out of the pit, pull a chair up to the footlights and sing to his own ukulele accompaniment.

It was a happy act and one that soon came to the attention of musical comedy entrepreneurs. He left vaudeville to play the leading role in "Betty, Be Good," and, after two seasons, joined Miss Sanderson's company in "Tangierine," which opened its New York run at the Casino Theatre in the summer of 1921.

It was for this show that Mr. Crumit wrote "Sweet Lady," which he strummed and sang to Miss Sanderson. The song was one of Mr. Crumit's most nostalgic numbers and eleven years after it was first heard on Broadway, Mr. Crumit estimated that he and his wife had sung the song for stage and radio audiences more than 16,000 times.

Subsequently, Mr. Crumit, with his songs and friendly patter, and Miss Sanderson, with her tinkling laugh, played together in many musicals. They took "No, No, Nanette," "Queen High" and "Oh Kay," on the road. They were married in 1927 and after "Oh, Kay" closed its run, Mr. Crumit and Miss Sanderson decided to retire from show business. They settled down at Dunrovin, their home at Longmeadow, Springfield, Mass., but they were not to have the rest they planned. In 1928 they began their appearances together in radio.

The public must have sensed something of the by-play which went on in the studio where Miss Sanderson and Mr. Crumit amused themselves by making faces at each other before the microphone, for the success of their program was immediate. They became the "Singing Sweethearts" of the air.

#### 4,000,000 Records Sold

Mr. Crumit's versions of the songs, "The Gay Caballero" and "Abdul Abulbul Amir," did as much as anything else to make him famous and his recordings of those songs have sold more than 4,000,000 records.

Mr. Crumit was a former Shepherd of the Lambs. Funeral services will be tomorrow in Springfield, Mass. Burial will be in Hillcrest Mausoleum in Springfield. Friends of Mr. Crumit in New York will participate in memorial services at 2 p. m. tomorrow in the theater of the Lambs Clubhouse, 130 West Forty-fourth Street. The Rev. Randolph

Ray, rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, will preside.

Before going on to quote more biographical sketches, I should like to mention a few minor things. Mr. Aaron B. McFall, of Oak Park, Ill., a long-time admirer and fraternity brother of Frank's, tells me the singer's full name was Frank Poore Crumit. (It was at Mr. McFall's earnest request more than a year ago that I promised to pay this memorial tribute to Frank.) The statement that it was "many years" after his graduation before Crumit went into vaudeville is incorrect. And somewhere in this series I shall quote Frank's own account of how he came to write "Sweet Lady."

### III What the New York Times Said

The *New York Times* also published an excellent obituary notice, from which I shall quote, omitting matter that duplicates the information already copied from the *Herald Tribune*:

Frank Crumit. . . died of a heart attack at 4 a. m. yesterday. . . Mr. Crumit and his wife, Julia Sanderson, were known on the radio to millions. . . Miss Sanderson. . . said Mr. Crumit had not complained of being ill. . .

Mr. Crumit, son of a Jackson, Ohio banker. . . at the age of five. . . had appeared a number of times in home-talent minstrels, and a year or so later, added to his experience as a motion-picture show entertainer in other Ohio cities. He attended high school, then Culver Military Academy, and the University of Ohio. From the latter he was graduated in electrical engineering, but never practiced.

The love of the stage was too strong and almost immediately—aged 20 or 21 (he) went into vaudeville. Except for a short period of retirement. . . following his marriage to Miss Sanderson, he had been on the stage and in radio ever since 1910. He became head of the Lambs in 1935.

Few stage or radio performers had a more winning style or personality. With his ukulele, in the old vaudeville days, he liked to stroll on stage, sit down, order the orchestra to retire backstage and "join the pinochle game." He would then converse informally with the audience and sing the songs that made him famous. . . Many were of his own composition. His repertoire, it is said, included nearly 10,000 songs.

His recordings sold in the millions. . . He began recording in 1923 with an old friend, Frank Banta, at the piano. Six months later Jack Shilkret and orchestra took over the job. At last Monday's broadcast Mr. Banta was again at the piano for the singer. His last song was "It's So Peaceful in the Country."

Miss Sanderson, so the tale goes, walked out of a stage rehearsal of "Tangierine" in 1922 when she learned Mr. Crumit was to be the leading man. She came back, however, and thereafter the couple appeared in numerous stage productions. . . On the closing day of "Oh Kay" in 1927 they were married. . .

Mr. Crumit and Miss Sanderson originated the "Battle of the Sexes" over the Columbia network from WABC in 1930 and in 1938 the quiz went to the National Broadcasting Company through WEAU, where it was a feature until last July. Following a brief lay-off the pair began the two current series at WABC.

Mr. Crumit seemed to have the unusual ability of picking a song that "would go over." He rarely was mistaken. One single melody ("The Gay Caballero"), strummed on guitar or ukulele in his inimitable style, made him famous almost overnight. . .

The *New York Times* article also calls for a note or two. Crumit did not begin his recording career in 1923, although his first Victor record

may have been made then. He started recording for Columbia in 1920. Jack Shilkret's Orchestra may have provided the accompaniment for some of his records, since Shilkret's group played for Victor and Jack conducted the orchestra heard on many of Frank and Julia's radio programs. However, it's more likely the Victor accompaniments were by Jack Shilkret's brother, Nat, then in charge of Victor popular recording.

#### IV An Ohio Appraisal

Many columnists commented on Crumit's death. Ed Sullivan remarked, in the *New York Daily News*: "Too bad Frank Crumit died before he heard the great news of Italy's unconditional surrender." (This, of course, was written while World War II was in progress and the end not in sight.) In the *Daily Mirror*, Nick Kenny said: "Radio fans who smiled last Saturday night when Frank Crumit tossed his cheerful 'See you next Saturday night' into the mike were shocked by the sudden passing of the beloved balladeer of stage and studio. That Great Sponsor Up There must have grown weary of earthly cares and called for radio's merry minstrel."

One of the most interesting appraisals of Crumit as a man and a performer appeared in an Ohio newspaper, the *Cleveland News*, for Thursday, September 9. Headed "Show Time" and written by Peter Bellamy, it read:

The untimely death Tuesday of Frank Crumit, Ohio born singer, composer, musical comedy star and radio entertainer, brought back to us a flood of youthful recollections of this completely charming and lovable man.

Crumit, of course, was the husband of Julia Sanderson, our cousin, and we can still remember the excitement which came to us with the news that Cousin Julia and Frank were coming to town in another show. Their arrival came under the heading of WONDERFUL events.

Frank Crumit could win the heart of a child or an adult in 30 seconds flat. In dealing with children, he had the rare and wonderful gift of making himself just as young as they. He didn't have an ounce of affectation, artificiality or condescension in him.

The adage that you can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy, applied to him. Born and raised in Jackson County, he always retained the warm, boyish, unspoiled manner and neighborly friendliness one associates with rural communities.

He could sing merry songs and tell funny stories by the hour. If you were a boy, he could show you how to throw a baseball. If you were an adult, he could give you a lacing at golf. Grantland Rice said he played the best game of golf of any actor alive.

A big fellow, Crumit played football and baseball at Ohio State. On one of our early birthdays he gave us a football and then took us out in the street to show us just how to boot it. He made children feel as though his attentions to them were more important than his success in the theater.

#### Remarkable Career

He and Julia Sanderson had a remarkable career together. Just when the musical comedy was fading and their days on the stage appeared numbered, they branched into radio. Until Tuesday they had been broadcasting 14 years or longer than any team with the possible exception of Amos and Andy. There was no harsh jazzy jingle in

Frank's musical soul. He loved to sing nostalgic tunes like "The Parlor is a Pleasant Place to Sit In Sunday Night" and "Grandfather's Clock" and gay jingles like "The Preacher and the Bear." He was widely known as composer of the "Buckeye Battle Cry," an Ohio State football song.

He and Cousin Julie appealed to those who like home entertainment devoid of flipness, cheap sophistication and vulgarity. Their audiences were mainly composed of sentimental, gentle people of whom there are still happily quite a number.

Their married life was as sweet as the songs they sang. Walter Winchell recently wrote that they had gone to the movies together every night of their 16 years of marriage. This may be a slight exaggeration, but it was indicative of the devotion they had for each other.

Frank carried his kindly personality into his professional life. We recall some years ago when he took Fred Allen's place on a summer radio program. There was an amateur contest connected with the show and Frank always felt bad that some of the contestants got the gong. He truly wanted them all to be good and win prizes.

In view of Frank's lifelong interest in sports, it is worth noting that several Ohio papers mentioned that his sister Mary, who died in 1939, was the first wife of George M. Trautman, now president of the minor leagues' organization, the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues. One paper mentions his also writing "Round On the Ends, Hi in the Middle" for Ohio University, where he became a member of the Ohio Gamma Chapter of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity. A Columbus paper said: "The Crumit-Sanderson team's first joint commercial program was in 1929 with Ted Husing and Leonard Joy's Orchestra. A recent radio poll showed they had a weekly audience of 15,000,000. Frank Crumit ranked among the leaders in popularity of his recordings. 'The Sun Goes Down On Ohio' was among his most recent compositions."

#### V Associated Press Feature

Since I'm trying to capture, if rather haphazardly, as much as I can of the warmly human side of Frank Crumit's personality (and, for that matter, the appealingly sweet and feminine nature of his beloved Julia), I shall quote a few paragraphs of an Associated Press feature story by Sigrid Arne, which appeared just after Crumit's death:

Frank Crumit had fun any day. Labor Day was more of the same. He strolled to the Players Club (this should be Lambs—J. W.) and for some tall tale telling with cronies of the theater.

At 3 p. m. he and his wife, Julia Sanderson (holding hands as they always did) sang and wise-cracked into the microphone for their regular five-a-week program. They trailed out through the studio, still humming and holding hands, and across town, a few blocks, to their home at the Hotel Gotham. In the early morning hours Crumit died of heart failure.

It's uncertain what will happen to their "Singing Sweethearts" program. They had earned that title. Crumit's sudden death, just before his 54th birthday, has been a severe shock to Miss Sanderson. But their first absence from the air in many years was to be filled by an old friend from their theatrical days, Irene Beazley, who planned to sing "Sweet Lady," a song Crumit wrote for his wife.

Crumit was known for singing the old

favorites. But he never lost his ability to pick winners. He and Miss Sanderson introduced "Deep in the Heart of Texas" and "Jingle Jangle Jingle."

An interesting item from a September, 1943, issue of *The Billboard* concerns Crumit's song, "The Buckeye Battle Cry," which he wrote for Ohio State University and recorded for Victor, although for reasons to be explained later it is probably his least known Victor disc:

Frank Crumit, stage and radio star who died last week, wrote a song, "The Buckeye Battle Cry," that will endure as long as Ohio State has a football team. This information appears in the *Chicago Daily News*.

Crumit never went to Ohio State and never intended to write a marching song for the Buckeyes. He attended Ohio University, a smaller and older school at Athens, in the southeastern part of the state, where he played on the line. About 20 years ago he set out to write a song for his alma mater. It so happened that Crumit's brother-in-law, George (Red) Trautman, was assistant director of athletics at Ohio State, and the Buckeyes were seeking a new song to go along with their new stadium. So Trautman persuaded Frank to write an Ohio State song. "The Buckeye Battle Cry" was the result and it quickly won a place among football's immortal songs, along with Notre Dame's "Victory March," "On Wisconsin" and Michigan's "Victory." For years Crumit arranged his stage or radio engagements so that he could attend Ohio-Michigan games and hear his song played by the band he liked best.

In going through a scrapbook in which I had pasted items concerning Crumit's death, I find this interesting paragraph in a *Cleveland Press* article which, perhaps carelessly and certainly incorrectly, gave his age as 64: "The son of a banker, he was slated for the medical field to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, but when he entered Ohio University . . . and had his first view of a dissecting room he decided he wasn't fitted for medicine."

#### VI Julia Returns to Radio

The *Roanoke Times* several weeks later carried an item headed: "Radio Star To Return To Air—Julia Sanderson to Have New Show on Dec. 2." The news of Julia's return to the air was greeted with rejoicing by my mother, who was especially pleased because December 2 was her birthday. She cherished an autographed photo, which I still have, of Julia, and always referred to her as "The Queen." The *Times* article said in part:

Julia Sanderson, one of the best loved radio performers, stars in a new daytime coast-to-coast Mutual network series—her first air show since the death of her husband and co-star, Frank Crumit—Thursday, December 2, from 1:30 to 2 p. m. The program, entitled "Let's Be Charming," will be heard over WLSL. Appearing with Julia will be veteran emcee Pat Barnes, the piano-organ team of Jack Shilkret and Johnny Gart, and a rhythmic trio featuring singers Guy Bonham, Wamp Carlson and Dwight Latham.

"Let's Be Charming" will provide welcome relief to daytime listeners from the routine radio fare usually heard. A highlight of the weekly show will be helpful hints on how women listeners can be more charming. . . . Since Julia has retained all the charm and beauty that has made her a star for more than two decades, she is a likely candidate

for the chore of helping others to become more attractive.

But, although Julia bravely tried to overcome the near-heartbreak that Frank's death had brought her, it was obvious that without him she had no real enthusiasm for continuing her career. She did not remain many months in radio, but returned to "Dunrovin," with her mother as her inseparable companion. During the last year or so she has been further saddened by the loss of her mother, who was Mrs. Albert Sackett. Julia's father was an actor in stock and a favorite of Philadelphia theatergoers for many years. When little Miss Sackett decided to go on the stage herself she took her mother's maiden name, Sanderson, for her professional cognomen.

### VII Other Crumit Clippings

Searching through old, inadequately indexed scrapbooks makes it hard to arrange these items about Crumit in ideal order. Here is a clipping from the *Roanoke Times* of July 18, 1937, which gives more information concerning Frank's emergence from his brief retirement:

"I've had my share of work in the entertainment world. I have a nice home in Massachusetts, and there Julia Sanderson, my wife, and I are going to retire and stay retired."

That, in essence, is what Frank Crumit has said twice—once in 1928 and once last fall. And yet here he is back on the air as the jovial master-of-ceremonies and ballad singer of Columbia's "Universal Rhythms" programs.

It might seem, after some 13 years on the air—off and on—and a stage career which goes back to 1909 that Crumit would welcome complete rest and relaxation. But both he and Julia, also a radio and stage star of long standing, were restless in the inactive months taken up largely in motoring, golf and developing their garden.

In desperation, Frank, who is husky, healthy and alert, went into the bond business after the 1928 retirement. He was successful at it, and happy at the diversion. But that still left Julia out and so, not long afterward, they were both back on the air.

Until the conclusion of their CBS series last fall, the two were broadcasting pretty steadily. Once more they tried desperately to retire but again it didn't work. So eager was Frank to spend all of his energies in the entertainment field that, in addition to his current radio work, he is producing a musical show which will appear on the New York stage in the fall.

And Julia? Well, Frank says that the two will doubtless be back on the air together in the fall. He won't predict when the third retirement is to take place.

As we know, only death brought that third and final "retirement" to Frank Crumit.

I have just remembered that "Lord Broadway," a book by Dayton Stoddard about Sime Silverman, the founder of *Variety*, has an incidental reference to Crumit as he was in his younger days. The scene is Maxim's, a New York night club or "cabaret," as such places were called then:

"... A young fellow... came out, sat down on a chair and began to strum a ukulele. He was a good-looking lad, smooth-cheeked, dressed in a sack suit. 'Looks like a college boy,' said Sime."

The whitish cone of the spotlight bore down on the lad. In its light, the faces

and shirt fronts and bare shoulders were close enough together to make a living carpet."

The book goes on to tell how Crumit made a hit singing "The High Cost of Loving," and adds, "That was Frank Crumit's professional debut in show business." Sime is quoted as telling Percy Elkeles, the Maxim's manager, "You got box office for the dames there, Perce," and the book also says he was fascinated because "Crumit was wearing a shirt and the shirt was soft with soft collar attached. Soft shirts were just coming in." Silverman, who was a free-and-easy dresser, decided he wanted a dozen soft shirts for himself.

Mr. McFall has sent me a copy of Phi Delta Theta's publication, *The Scroll*, which throws some incidental light on an even earlier stage of Crumit's career. The article is primarily concerned with a radio personality, Jim McWilliams, who formerly conducted the "Askit Basket" program. It mentions Frank in this way:

In the fall of 1910 Brother McWilliams got his accidental but fortuitous start in vaudeville. While staying at the New York Delta house at Columbia he was asked by Jay Hugo Fish, a Yale man, and Frank Crumit (Ohio '12), a brother Phi from Ohio University, to accompany them on the piano while they performed their routine in a neighboring theater. The manager suggested that the group take the pianist out of the pit and put him on the stage. They were an instantaneous success and became known as the "Three Collegians." This performance launched a long career in the entertainment world and during their years of traveling the vaudeville circuit the devotion of Brothers McWilliams and Crumit to Phi Delta Theta continued to grow. They were known throughout the realm of the Fraternity.

Phi chapters all over the country got the word that the "Three Collegians" were good. Wherever they performed, Phi gathered from miles around to see them. During their travels they visited 40 Phi chapter houses and often gave impromptu performances for their adoring undergraduate brothers. It was in 1914 that the "Three Collegians" decided to split and do single acts. Each went his own way, though Brothers Crumit and McWilliams remained close friends through the years that followed.

It was after he left the trio, of course, that Frank began singing at Maxim's. During this 1914 period Columbia issued Record No. A1509, called "A Night at Maxim's," arranged by J. Louis Von der Mehden, Jr., later the Pathé musical director, in which the choruses of several popular numbers are sung by entertainers from the cabaret. If Crumit takes part, it is the first record he made. However, I have not been able to hear in it any voice resembling his.

This seems the logical place to mention that Mr. McFall, whose address is 952 Pleasant Street, Oak Park, Ill., is trying to assemble a complete library of Frank Crumit's records, which he will present to the Phi Delta Theta Memorial Library at Oxford, Ohio. He has most of the Crumit numbers, but is having a hard time finding a copy of DL-5, a ten-inch long-playing "demonstration" record issued when Victor introduced the pioneer LP's in 1931. This is a miniature concert by the Revelers

and other Victor artists with Crumit as master of ceremonies singing part of "A Gay Caballero" and "Donald the Dub." If any reader has a copy of this record in good condition Mr. McFall would be glad to hear from him. The May, 1953, *Scroll* contains an article describing Mr. McFall's generous proposal.

What I hope is a complete list of Frank Crumit's records will be published at the end of this series.

(To be continued.)

## Recent Music Books That Are Helpful

THE SPICE OF "VARIETY." Edited by Abel Green. 277 pages. \$3.50. Henry Holt & Company.

FIRESIDE BOOK OF FAVORITE AMERICAN SONGS. Selected and edited by Margaret Bradford Boni, with music arranged for the piano by Norman Lloyd. 360 pages. \$5. Simon & Schuster.

THE VICTOR BOOK OF OPERAS. Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. 596 pages. Simon & Schuster.

The three books listed above all contain much of interest to music lovers, record collectors and readers fond of the theater. "The Spice of Variety" was compiled by Abel Green, editor of "The Bible of Show Business," as a representative collection of the best articles contributed by theatrical celebrities and other noted persons to *Variety's* annual huge green-covered anniversary issue. Most of the material is on the light and amusing side. Contributors include Fred Allen, Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, Jimmy Durante, George Jessel, Joe Laurie, Jr., and more than two-score others. This is the sort of book that is especially good bedtime reading—or that will make time pass more pleasantly when you're trying to get over the flu. It's to be hoped Editor Abel will bring out other similar compilations.

"The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs" must be one of the handsomest books published in years. It gives a representative selection of the songs that have been popular with Americans from the arrival of the Pilgrim Fathers through the early years of the 20th century. The book's progress into the past is backward—that is, the newer songs come

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 37)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Frank Crumit

## Part Two

By JIM WALSH

*I Crumit's Columbia Records*

When Frank Crumit first began making records in 1920, the electric process was still five years distant and the technique of singing or playing into a horn was much the same as it had been when the famous counter-tenor, Richard José, was interviewed by Ashton Stevens of the *San Francisco Examiner* thirteen years before. Stevens asked if there was "a great deal of mystery connected with recording for talking machines, or if there was any secret in singing for that purpose," and José replied:

"Secret! It's the most secret thing in the world—for the singer. You're locked all alone with the band in a big bare room. Your back is to the musicians and your face to a bleak blank wall through which protrudes a solemn horn. A bell rings—one. That is to get ready, for the receiving instrument is so sensitive that if you moved your sleeve against your coat the sound would register. Somebody outside presses the button—two. The band starts the prelude, then you sing, turning neither to the right nor left, always looking and singing into that protruding horn. And you can't even let out a breath after your last note; you must close your lips on it and wait for the little whirr within the horn to cease."

"When do you hear the result?"

"In hardly no time. And if you are new to the game it nearly kills you. When I first heard my own voice I turned clammy all over and shook like a frightened child. I had to be quieted down before I could go on with the next ballad. No man knows what his own voice sounds like till he hears it reproduced by a machine; he can't know otherwise; his auditory apparatus is too closely mixed up with his vocal machinery—he can't get the distance!"

Frank Crumit probably was not so nervous and easily upset as José appears to have been, for he had presence of mind enough, in singing his first record, to fill in during a few bars rest by exclaiming "Sweet lady!" which later became the title of the popular song he sang to his wife, Julia Sanderson, in "Tangerine." But, like José, he had a high tenor voice, though of course not a counter-tenor.

Personally, I think Frank was unfortunate in that the microphonic

method of recording had not been developed when he signed his Columbia contract. Some singers sounded better when recorded by the horn system than under the early electric process, but Crumit did not. He came into his own after the "mike" succeeded the horn. I have never believed that any of his Columbia or Victor acoustic records do justice to his voice or style of singing in the early 1920's. The most successful recordings of that day were those with naturally strong, well-rounded voices, such as Caruso's, or those who expended large quantities of energy by "hammering"—that is, singing vigorously into the horn. Frank's easy, relaxed, informal method of singing was not adapted to acoustic techniques. Too often it was made to sound rather nasal, flat

and without enough "body." But with electric recording Frank Crumit stepped triumphantly forward as one of the most completely natural, charming personalities the phonograph has known.

The stocky, blue-eyed, brown-haired comedian with the heartwarming smile that could be heard in his voice first appeared in the Columbia list for May, 1920. He made his recording debut at the age of 30. The title of his initial Columbia disc was "My Gal" (No. A2884), and it was a rather amusing song redeemed from mediocrity by a few, ingenious twists in the lyrics and some unusual or-



A typical broadcasting pose of "The Singing Sweethearts," Julia Sanderson and Frank Crumit.

annotations in those days were usually perfunctory. The writer merely said: "My Gal" is 'some gal' and introduces Frank Crumit, a new and exclusive Columbia artist, well known on the vaudeville stage."

Crumit was fortunate in having his offering coupled with a really great hit, Al Jolson's version of George Gershwin's first outstanding success, "Swanee." Jolson's interpretation made the song famous and was notable for a whistling interlude, such as that which caused his later Brunswick record of "There's a Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder" to be enormously popular.

Despite his slight advance "build-up," genial Frank's personality surmounted the generally poor recording he received on those early Columbia discs, and he became a favorite from his first record, appearing in almost every supplement. In June he was represented by A2915, "What a Day That'll Be," combined with "Jean," by the Peerless Quartet. July brought a coupling of perhaps the cleverest "nut song" ever written, "Oh! By Jingo" on A2935 with another hit of the day, "So Long, Oolong (How Long You Gonna Be Gone?)" This was one of the best of the Columbia Crumits. In August, on A2940, he sang "I've Got the Profiteering Blues," doubled with Jolson's "Some Beautiful Morning."

Something of a mystery surrounds a double-faced Crumit record listed in October, "Goodbye, Dixie, Good-bye" and "Don't Take Away Those Blues." It was listed, and that was all. It didn't appear in the 1921 catalog, nor have I been able to find it in any succeeding issue. Just what happened—whether it was withdrawn because of a technical defect after only a few copies had been pressed or was "cut out" for some other reason—is something I don't know. At any rate, it is the rarest of Crumit's Columbia records—nearly all of which had large sales.

Undoubtedly, one of the biggest sellers of this early period was A2973, on which Crumit sang "The Love Nest" from "Mary," with Henry Burr's interpretation of a beautiful Ernest R. Ball ballad, "Down the Trail to Home, Sweet Home" on the other side. In November, Crumit teamed up on A2981 with Lew Brown, the song writer, in "She Gives Them All the Ha-Ha-Ha." A Crumit solo, "My Little Bimbo Down On the Bamboo Isle," was on the other side. Brown wrote the words of "Oh! By Jingo" and was also the lyric writer of "She Gives Them All," with the music by Albert Von Tilzer, who had composed the weirdly original melody for "Jingo." He was one of the few singers with whom Crumit made duets.

Another excellent Crumit interpretation of a "nut song" was issued on A3303 in December. It combined "Jinga-Bula-Jing-Jing" with "Nobody to Love." And January, 1921, might almost have been called a "Crumit month." On A3320 he sang "I'm Coming Back to Dixie and You" with "Kentucky," sung by the well known popular song writer, Benny Davis, on the other side. Two excellent comic songs, both by Frank, were on A3324,

"Palesteena" and "I Wish That I'd Been Born in Borneo." To complete the month's Crumit procession, he and a baritone, William Davidson, sang the big hit, "Whispering," on A3323, while the Crescent Trio did "For Every Boy Who's On the Level" on the reverse. Mr. A. B. McFall says "Wild Bill" Davidson was a trumpet player who is still active in New York.

It is not necessary to go down the entire list of Crumit's Columbia recordings, since I have prepared an approximately complete tabulation of all his discs to appear at the conclusion of this series. But a few high lights should be mentioned. During the next three years, the versatile tenor helped to popularize a number of hits, including "Margie," "Three O'Clock in the Morning," "Dapper Dan," "Stumbling," "I Gave You Up Just Before You Threw Me Down" and "Say It With a Ukulele." The latter, issued in February, 1924, was his last Columbia record. He began in 1921 a series of records in fox trot time with the Paul Biese Trio playing "novelty accompaniments." Toward the end of that year he sang "Sweet Lady," the number so intimately associated with his devotion to the lady who became his wife. He also re-made two "automobile songs" which had been originally recorded in 1914 and 1915 by William J. Halley and Arthur Fields, respectively—"He'd Have to Get Under" and "The Little Ford Rambled."

During that same period he revived and recorded the first number of the "old time" variety in which he later was to shine for Victor. All Crumit's Columbia records were of current popular songs until he made A3459, "Frankie and Johnny," in a "cleaned-up" version of his own. The other side was a new song, "I Ain't Nobody's Darlin'," in the "rube" tradition which Byron G. Harlan had made famous on records. But "Frankie and Johnny" was a foretaste of what he was to do much more successfully for Victor.

Another Columbia record deserving mention is the February, 1922, doubling of "Da Da Da, My Darling," (a song for which Crumit must have had a fondness, because he sang it years later for Victor) with "When Francis Dances With Me."

Columbia encountered financial difficulties late in 1923 and went through the bankruptcy wringer. Although it stayed in business, its prospects didn't appear bright, and that no doubt had a bearing on Frank Crumit's decision to sign an exclusive Victor contract. It is worth mentioning that in 1923 his success as a song writer brought him membership in the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers, better known as ASCAP.

## II Crumit's Victor Career Begins

Frank Crumit's first Victor record appeared in the supplement for March, 1924—a rather unpropitious time when the phonograph companies were beginning to feel the pressure of radio competition. Disc sales had been large throughout 1923, but they took a nose dive the following year with each month's figures showing a decline over those preceding. The downward

droop continued until Vernon Dalhart's Victor coupling, No. 19427, "The Prisoner's Song" and "The Wreck of the Old 97" came along late in 1924 to stimulate the sale of records in general. The Dalhart record was the biggest seller ever made up to that time. In 1925 the advent of electric recording and new instruments to play the different-sounding records gave the business another badly needed shot in the arm.

However, Crumit's first Victor records were among the company's best sellers and racked up excellent totals, considering the state of the business as a whole. His initial offering combined "Oh, Baby!" with a song written by Crumit himself, "Sweet Alice." The supplement said:

"First Victor record by Frank Crumit, clever Follies star. 'Oh, Baby!' has that master-hand, Phil Ohman's, at the piano. 'Sweet Alice' (not Ben Bolt's, but Frank's, now being featured in vaudeville), has the orchestra. This comedian has a good voice and an easy style. 'Oh, Baby!' is a model of piano-accompaniment in the popular style. Its companion, 'Sweet Alice,' has amusing rhythms and an easy swinging tune of the popular-waltz persuasion. This record will make a lot of new friends for the artist." It is worth noting that this shows the *New York Herald-Tribune* erred in saying Frank Banta accompanied Crumit's "first (Victor) record." The accompanist was really a good friend of the two Franks—Phil Ohman.

Crumit also appeared in the same supplement, singing "Mindin' My Business." Marcia Freer, Lewis James and the Manhattan Merrymakers and then there is some really lovely rendered "Linger Awhile" on the other side. The accompaniment of the Crumit number was by The Virginians, a small jazz ensemble headed by Ross Gorman.

Despite an occasional jazz accompaniment, Frank's heart never was in that type of music. Only a few months after he made his Victor debut he showed his fondness for singing older numbers of the "nostalgic" type by coupling two former Eddie Leonard hits, "Ida! Sweet as Apple Cider" and "Roll Them Roly Boly Eyes." Incidentally, the photos of Crumit reproduced in the Victor supplements during this period are interesting. He seems to have had a changeable taste in headgear. Sometimes he is wearing a cap; at other times a hat—among them a derby. Sometimes he was snapped with a pipe in his mouth.

I have long thought it a shame that Frank's least known Victor record is the coupling of the football song, "Buckeye Battle Cry," which he wrote for Ohio State University at the request of his brother-in-law, George Trautman, with another Crumit gridiron composition, "Hi-Hi-Ohio." This excellent record was not listed in any monthly supplement but was "dumped" into the 1925 yearly catalog, together with a good many other popular and classical selections, without any public announcement. Consequently, it went almost unnoticed, was sold in only small quantities and is little known today. Billy Murray's version of an Irish dialect

comic song, "Officer Kelly, Don't You Think It's Time to Wake Up?" was another that met the same fate. Only a few months after the 1925 catalog appeared, electric recording was introduced and began to make even the most recent acoustic numbers seem virtually obsolete. The electric recording wasn't necessarily more natural—in many instances, it was less so—but it was louder and had more range, and so the acoustic process was dismissed as "old stuff."

Billy Murray's recorded voice, for one, was almost ruined at first by what the electric process did to him. But Billy was a "hammering" singer of the old school who found it hard to relax under a changed system. On the other hand, microphonic recording suited Frank Crumit to perfection. The way in which it captured his seemingly careless, easygoing personality and gave added depth and body to his tones not only did him more justice than he had ever received under the acoustic method but brought about corresponding improvement in his singing. Because of his complete adaptability to the "mike," his records were among those which the company insisted that its dealers play to demonstrate the Orthophonic Victrola. For instance, the house organ, *The Voice of the Victor*, urged in the January, 1926, issue that dealers use Crumit's revival of an old song, "The Parlor is a Pleasant Place."

It said: "For utter naturalness of both vocal and instrumental tone it would be hard to equal this record. The voice is practically of actual volume; each syllable comes as distinctly as if the artist were standing before you. You will think you hear the old cabinet organ that used to ornament the parlor of many homes; and then there is some really lovely tone as the guitar is played. You will not have to lean forward and listen for the words; you will hear them distinctly without effort."

"The Parlor" was one of the many records in which Crumit played his own guitar accompaniment. It became one of his biggest sellers up to that time, especially since it was combined with a quietly effective "plantation song," whose pathos, if you are in the right mood, is almost heart-breaking, "I'se Goin' From the Cotton Field."

### III Frank Approaches His Recording Peak

For several months, while the Orthophonic still had powerful appeal as a novelty ("you can even hear the singers breathing in it!" awestruck listeners used to say) Victor kept on directing attention to the value of Crumit's records as "demonstrators," as in the April, 1926, *Voice*:

"Show Me the Way to Go Home." Nothing but the Orthophonic Victrola could reproduce the peculiar intimacy and naturalness of Frank Crumit's highly individual style. You will, when you hear this music, feel that the singer is actually before you with his ukulele and the accompanying piano. The Orthophonic instrument must not be held responsible

for the change of 's' to 'sh' in certain parts of the song; that's only Crumit in an amusing imitation of a man whose s's begin to wobble after drinking not wisely but too well! The point is, the Orthophonic Victrola reproduces exactly whatever sounds the performer makes—note, for example, the clean-cut Scotch dialect."

In May, when Frank combined the age-old favorite, "Billy Boy," with "Grandfather's Clock":

Frank Crumit has a way about him, you'll have to admit that when you hear this old song... A jolly old tune, given with the guitar accompaniment in the old-time manner—and each word as clear... (as) if the artist were standing... before you. If you have forgotten the words of this old tune, just listen, naturally without any effort and you will find that you can hear them all.

And in June, when Crumit was represented by a popular song, "Thanks for the Buggy Ride":

Talk about the "voice with a smile!" Frank Crumit certainly has it. And with the Orthophonic Victrola you can almost see the smile; unquestionably you can feel it. You say to yourself, "There's a good fellow" when you hear him sing; that's because this instrument seems to catch that elusive thing called personality.

The "annotator" was right. It was perhaps this quality of being a "good fellow"—and, more than that, a good man—one cordial, affectionate and lovable—that somehow most irresistibly impressed the listener to Frank Crumit's best records.

During the next year or so, Frank's records became increasingly popular, the latest successes alternating with the old-time numbers for which the tenor cared most. One of the best popular song records combined two brilliant Rogers and Hart compositions, "Mountain Greenery" and "The Girl Friend." This was followed by two numbers in the style of a past era, "Pretty Little Dear" and "Get Away, Old Man, Get Away."

In August, 1927, Frank was represented by his next-to-best selling record: "Frankie and Johnnie" (a far better performance than he had given on his earlier Columbia record) and "Abdul Abulbul Amir." The former beautifully printed Victor supplements in booklet style had given way early in 1926 to a folder printed on cheap "butcher paper," but the incomparable James E. Richardson was still writing the record descriptions, and this is what he said of the new Crumit coupling: "('Frankie and Johnnie') is the famous 'low-life' ballad. Frankie, with her bucket of beer, is put wise by the barkeep to the philanderings of her man Johnnie. Frankie takes out her gat—but hear the record! With it is the epic sword-fight in genteel humorous style."

Both "Frankie and Johnnie" and "Abdul" proved tremendously popular and were widely recorded by other singers for competitive companies. Edison, for one, issued a record with Billy Jones singing "Frankie" and Ernie Hare giving an unctuous, deep-voiced interpretation of the Mock Russian ballad on the other side. Only a year or so later Victor put out a hill-billy record of "Frankie and

Johnny," by the legendary Jimmy Rogers, which was almost, if not quite, as popular as Crumit's.

Frank's brooding, wistful style—the sort in which I doubt that he has ever been equaled by any other popular singer—was beautifully displayed in the February, 1928, coupling of "That Old Wooden Rocker" and "I Miss You, 'Lize." By this time Mr. Richardson had died, but his successor as supplement writer (probably Charles O'Connell) said:

"It's no use talking... Frank Crumit has something you can't describe, but it gets you. A bit of homely sentiment, a bit of humor, sometimes a little pathos; a genial voice and personality plus—these are some of the ingredients of Crumit's popularity. And he likes to sing old-fashioned songs like these just as much as you like to hear them. 'That Old Wooden Rocker' is just the kind of crooning, comfortable song you'd hope for... only you couldn't guess how delightfully Crumit does it. There's more than a bit of pathos in 'Lize'... and an unusual touch in Frank Banta's expert fingering of the piano, and the lingering notes of the lute."

This same supplement listed without comment, a record which became much more popular than the one just described. It combined Gene Austin, then perhaps the most popular Victor artist, in "Lonesome Road," with Frank singing "Wake, Nicodemus" to the accompaniment of an organ and his own guitar. "Nicodemus" was written by the composer of "Grandfather's Clock," Henry C. Work, a musician of the Civil War period for whose songs Crumit seems to have had considerable affection. Its popularity was somewhat overshadowed by the nationwide vogue for "Lonesome Road," but it is one of the best Crumit records—one which really grips at the heartstrings with its story of how the jubilant freed Negro slaves longed to wake their "prophet," Nicodemus, lying dead in a swamp, who had predicted that the "great day" of deliverance was almost at hand.

The next Crumit record also contained one of Work's songs, "Kingdom Coming" (which would have made a perfect coupling for "Nicodemus") combined with the nonsensical old college song, "Bohunkus." Then came one of the all-time Crumit masterpieces for sheer infectious nonsense, his own "The Song of the Prune." A little later he was called on to do re-makes of one of the most popular double-faced talking records in the catalog: "No News, or What Killed the Dog," which Nat M. Wills had first spoken into the horn in 1909, and the 1912 version of "The Three Trees," originally made by the English comedian, Tom McNaughton, who was the husband of Alice Lloyd.

(To be continued)

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Frank Crumit

### Part Three

By JIM WALSH

#### IV "A Gay Caballero" and Its Successors

And now we come to the all-time Number One Crumit record—the one said by the New York Herald Tribune to have sold four million copies: "A Gay Caballero," doubled with a musical setting by the comedian of Rudyard Kipling's poem, "The Ladies." On the record it was called "I Learned About Women From Her."

The Victor advertising department seems to have slipped badly when this record was issued in the December, 1928, supplement. Descriptions are given of many other popular records whose sales were small by comparison, but the Crumit number simply appears in "The Complete List of Victor Records for December" with no "annotation" whatever. Perhaps the company thought it was strong enough to sell on its own merits without a special blurb; or perhaps the artist and repertoire department didn't recognize a big hit when it was recorded.

However that may be, the disc received a favorable review in *The Phonograph Monthly Review*, then edited by Axel B. Johnson and published in Boston, although all the enthusiasm was for "I Learned About Women" with the "Caballero" getting a mere mention: "Crumit is always at his best in semi-folk or 'men's songs,' and his own setting of Kipling's 'I Learned About Women From Her' (21735) gives him ideal material. The coupling is 'A Gay Caballero.'"

Reviewing the "Caballero" ditty

later when it was sung by other artists, the *P.M.R.* critic expressed belief it wasn't very funny. But that wasn't the opinion of the general public, which found uproarious comedy in the adventures of the modern Don Juan who wound up by having his ear chewed off by a jealous husband. The tune, too, was irresistible. Within a few weeks "A Gay Caballero" was the biggest selling Victor record and it continued to be for months. In an effort to get some share of the "gravy," other companies issued it by various singers: Edison by Billy Murray; Columbia by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare; Brunswick by Frank Luther; Okeh by Pete Wiggins (who probably was Luther in disguise); Harmony by Vernon Dalhart, and Domino by Irving Kaufman. All the rival versions were good, with Murray's perhaps the best, but none quite equalled the specialized touch given to it by Crumit, who had either composed it or adapted it from an old college song. There are different stories of the "Caballero's" origin. However, many buyers of the Victor record complained that it soon wore out because the combination of a heavy orchestral accompaniment with the deep notes of Frank's guitar shattered the grooves when played on the typical phonograph of that day.

Riding high with "A Gay Caballero" and "I Learned About Women," whose literary quality and unforced pathos

many listeners found even more attractive than the comic number, Frank turned out another masterpiece for May, 1929. This combined "The Road to Vicksburg," a quietly humorous study of Negro character, with a brilliant comic song, "The King of Borneo," which ended with "the strains of 'Hiawatha' played by the royal band." *The Phonograph Monthly Review* said:

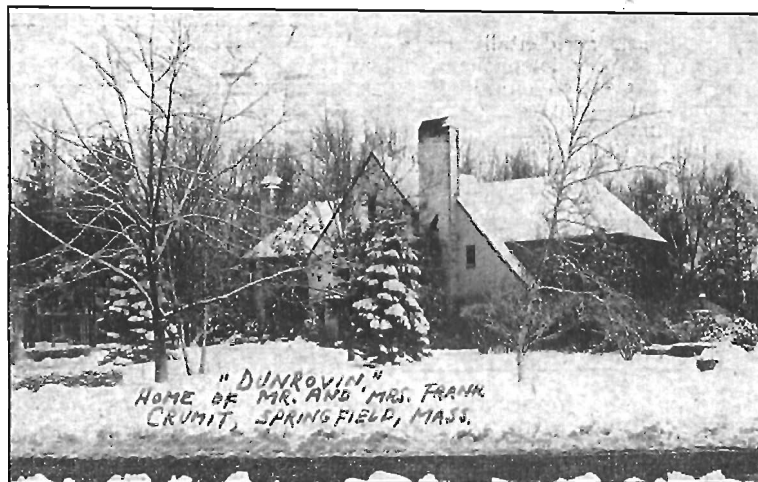
"Victor lists some of the individual winners of the month, particularly Frank Crumit's finest record to date, 'The Road to Vicksburg,' which has the distinction of being genuinely amusing, (besides) containing also a number of the finest rag-time masterpieces . . . sung in the most delightful fashion. The coupling is a gay tale of 'The King of Borneo,' sung in cheerful vein and featuring a virtuoso clarinetist in the very ingenious accompaniment. May we have more releases of this type from Crumit!"

Once more Victor had failed to pick a winner, because this record also was issued with no fanfare.

#### V Downfall of the Record Business

Although there was no reason at the time to suspect it, "A Gay Caballero" marked the peak of Frank Crumit's career as a recording artist. Less than a year after it appeared, the terrible depression of 1929 arrived and the record business, which had been in a prosperous condition, within a couple of years was barely managing to survive, with sales down to about five per cent of what they had been. It was this, rather than any falling off in personal popularity, that led to Frank's decline as a Victor performer.

However, he remained as alert and ingenious as ever. Shortly after the stock market crash he recorded a satiric number with the topical title, "A Tale of the Ticker," and combined it with "The Return of the Gay Caballero," which was almost as amusing as the great original. Two of his couplings issued early in 1930, before the depression reached its worst, also did comparatively well. Two golf songs, "Donald the Dub" with "And Then He Took Up Golf" appeared on one, and a couple of highly amusing numbers, "Down By the Railroad Trac" and "Around the Corner" on the other. They were followed by "The Return of Abdul Abulbul Amir" and "I'm Betting the Roll on Roamer," which



"DUNKOVIN"  
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got hardly anywhere. People who still had jobs were wondering how much longer they would have them. The majority of Americans had decided radio had made the phonograph obsolete, and there were any number of things they'd rather buy than records. Even when Victor splurged on a long-playing record late in 1931 the public remained apathetic. And there was good reason. The L-P volume was low; the records were full of pitch wavers; satisfactory 33½ motors were available, and the material on which the discs were pressed wasn't good. As was told in the preceding installment, Crumit was the master of ceremonies on a "dealers' demonstrator" record, relating the "wonders" of those early long-players.

Record sales continued negligible, with the all-time low being reached in 1932. Only two of the Crumit records made during the depths of the depression call for special mention. One is "Would You Like to Take a Walk?" the first number he recorded with his lovely Julia, her inimitable giggle being much in evidence. In England this was referred to as "the most charming record ever made," and the "His Master's Voice" supplement for mid-May, 1931, termed it "a duet that will enchant you for months to come." But it didn't sell in the States and had been cut out when the 1933 Victor catalog was printed. The record is now a collectors' rarity. I paid \$2.50 for mine.

A word must be said, too about Crumit's solo stint of "I'm a Specialist." This was a musical setting of "Chic" Sale's famous booklet, "The Specialist," and the few persons who bought it considered it comedy of a hilariously amusing, if earthy, sort. They did, that is, if they were average Americans. *The Gramophone's* critic, however, looked down his nose at it and, in the April, 1932, issue remarked: "I'm a Specialist' . . . I imagine is too much of the American brand of humour for most of us to appreciate." Perhaps, but had the record been issued in 1929 instead of 1932, its sales over here probably would have rivaled those of "A Gay Caballero!"

#### VI English Comments

I mentioned in the first installment that Frank Crumit was one of the most popular singing comedians whose records were ever sold in England, and that he still has a British following. As far as I know, his acoustically recorded Columbias and Victor records were not sold abroad, but after the electric process was introduced, H. M. V. began to import his Victor matrices, frequently coupling them differently than the way they were issued on this side, and their success was instantaneous. This is true, even though *The Gramophone* took exception to the label's giving Frank credit as the composer of "Abdul Abulbul Amir." The critic said the song was one familiar to English college men at the time of the Crimean War, and added something to this effect: "Mr. Crumit is not a young man, but even he is not old enough to have been living that long ago." (Frank actually was only 39 when the "Abdul" record was issued!)

It is a pleasure to turn to more favorable criticisms from the same source. When H.M.V. issued "A Gay Caballero" in July, 1929, *The Gramophone* said: "One of the best items in a very good H.M.V. July issue is Frank Crumit singing 'A Gay Caballero' and 'Jack is Every Inch a Sailor.' Crumit never fails." In August *Gramophone* readers were told: "The best record of the month . . . is another by Frank Crumit. He sings two delightful songs, 'The King of Borneo' and 'The Road to Vicksburg' in the sing-song rhythm at which he is such an adept."

In February, 1930, a Crumit record of "Dolan's Poker Party" and "O'Hooligan's Ball," which Victor never issued in its regular catalog but in the special booklet (hill-billy, mostly) of "Familiar Tunes Old and New," appeared in a special H.M.V. Irish supplement. *The Gramophone* writer said Crumit got "every ounce" out of them. The verdict in June, 1930, on "Donald the Dub" was that it was one of Crumit's "most light and airy songs, full of rhythm and humour, all about golf. On the other side is 'And Then He Took Up Golf,' which is not quite so good. Hurry up and send this to your golfing neighbor or he will have heard it before."

In March, 1931, the *Gramophone* pontificated, with a touch of condescension: "Frank Crumit . . . has an American accent that would hurt no one and delight most people in 'Three Little Words' and 'I Miss a Little Miss.' The lilting accompaniment is first class." Crumit's accent was compared favorably with that of Eddie Cantor, of whom the writer gloomily predicted: "His fame as a film star will surely introduce this record into thousands of English homes where his really execrable accent will distil its poison." Three months later the

Sanderson-Crumit duet of "Would You Like to Take a Walk?" was termed "a triumph of artistry."

March, 1932, found the *Gramophone* saying: "Frank Crumit never fails to charm, and his own adaptation of 'Little Brown Jug' is . . . charming."

The comparatively unfavorable review of "I'm a Specialist" has already been noted, and another of the "not so good" kind was pronounced in February, 1933: "Frank Crumit, an old recording friend, is only this time an imitation jewel; after the first glance you realize that the glitter wears off quickly. After all, it is difficult to be really amused for three and a half minutes by the trials and tribulations of the vegetable kingdom." The record referred to was one of five-doubled faces discs recorded by Crumit for Victor but intended for sale abroad rather than in the United States. It had "They're Always Together" on one side and "The Vegetable Blues" on the other. Another of the British-only titles was "The Grandson of Abdul Abulbul Amir," which is still in the H.M.V. catalog—or was in 1949.

The July, 1933, verdict on "My Girl Ran Away," which occupied both sides of a record, also was unenthusiastic: "Frank Crumit's story of all the various men his girl ran away with . . . does not stand up to two sides of a ten-inch disc." However, as a whole the British attitude toward Crumit's artistry was warmly appreciative and, unless they have all been cut out of the latest catalog, which I haven't seen, several of his records are still selling there.

Next month I shall give some details of Crumit's Decca recordings, made from 1934 to 1942, quote from his correspondence to me and end this series by publishing the promised list of his recordings.



Page Ellis interviewing Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," on her "Woman's Radio Journal" program from WSLS, Roanoke, Va. Jim told of his record collecting activities and his HOBBIES articles and "Fan Mail."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Frank Crumit

## Part Four

By JIM WALSH

Before relating the details of my friendship by correspondence with Frank Crumit—one of the many dear "friends by mail" whom I have unfortunately never been privileged to meet in person—I think I should mention two of his Victor records which were passed over without notice in the second part of this series.

One is the fox trot, "Just a Night for Meditation," played by Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra, with Frank singing the refrain. As far as I have been able to learn, this 1928 disc is the only dance number in which Frank was the vocalist.

The other is the 12-inch "Victor Minstrel Show of 1929," probably the best minstrel record ever issued, in which Crumit was one of a galaxy of all-star entertainers, each performing brilliantly. He sang the irresistible "coon song," "Abraham Lincoln Jones," to his own guitar accompaniment. Other features included Billy Murray, caroling "Down Where the Watermelon Grows," and Henry Burr warbling "By the Light of the Silvery Moon." Although the jokes are only so-so, the singing is so excellent as to make the record well worth acquiring by anyone who likes good, clean entertainment done by the topmost recording talent of an earlier day—performers miles above anything the recorded repertoire offers today.

My first letter from Frank Crumit is dated October 7, 1933 and was written at his home, "Dunrovin," 154

Colony Road, Longmeadow, Massachusetts. I had long been one of his most ardent admirers not only from tireless listening to his records but also from faithful hearkening to his radio programs sponsored by Blackstone Cigars and other firms. Finally, I wrote to tell him how much his and his wife, Julia Sanderson's, art had meant to my mother, my brother Chad and me, and received a characteristically cordial reply, which I am sure HOBBIES readers will find as interesting as I did:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Thank you so much for your very charming letter. I am awfully glad you liked my two songs.

I did start recording in 1920 for the Columbia Phonograph Company. My first record was on the back of one of Al Jolson's, and was called "My Gal." This little item may interest you. In the middle of the song I had a couple of bars rest and filled it in with just two words—"Sweet Lady"—and thought at the time what a great title it would be for a song. Shortly afterwards, I wrote it and was very happy to see it become such a big success sung by us in the show, "Tangerine."

I attended Jackson, Ohio, High School, Culver Military Academy and University of Ohio at Athens, Ohio. I played baseball and football most of my life and today my athletics consist mostly of golf. My handicap is seven in Massachusetts.

In 1919 I wrote the "Buckeye Battle Cry" for Ohio State University, which is still being used before all games. My brother-in-law, George Trautman, was assistant athletic director there at the time.

JIM WALSH  
WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1925); back copies of phonograph publications—Talking Machine World, Talking Machine News, the Gramophone, the Phonogram, Diamond Points, Edison Phonograph and Amberola Monthly, Voice of the Victor, etc.—photographs, advertisements, and all sort of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

JIM WALSH

Box 131

Vinton, Va.

The record business over here has gone all to pieces, but I still record for the Victor Company and the pressings are sent to the Gramophone Company of England. I am glad to say their sales have not decreased very much.

Sorry I haven't time to write more, but I do hope this information may be of value to you. Thanks again for saying so many nice things and we send you our very best wishes. Sincerely,

FRANK CRUMIT.

P. S. I found a little more time, and as records have been so close to my heart for so many years I thought I would try to think up a little more information for you. During the three years I was with Columbia I averaged around 40 records a year. A great many of these I have up in the attic at home. If you would care for a few for your collection I would be glad to ship them to you.

I have averaged for ten years around twelve records a year for Victor. The biggest seller for Victor was the "Gay Caballero," closely followed by "Abdul" and "Frankie and Johnny."

A little more data on the theater. I played vaudeville over the Keith and Orpheum circuits for six years from 1912 to 1918. From 1918 to 1928, when Mrs. Crumit and I retired, I played in about six musical comedies. We started radio work in 1929 and have been on the same two programs ever since.

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- ★ FOREIGN LABELS, such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G. & T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.
- ★ Old record catalogs.

Persons offering material not specified above or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

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Original copies of all the big hits of the past 50 years for sale. Call, phone (LA-6-0841), or send 10c stamps or coin for big list.

DEAN SNYDER

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s45c

If anyone failed to receive a reply from my October advertisement, please write again!!

Does anyone have pre-war German, Italian, or Japanese dollar bonds? Perhaps found in the estate of deceased persons?

Write to:

J. B. ELLIS

8806 Holmes Ave. Los Angeles 2, Calif.

dp



and was bringing suit for money which he considered still due him under his contract. He also sued a New York radio station for playing his records without permission, maintaining the playing infringed his rights as a recording artist. The Decca Company made itself a party to the suit, contending that since Crumit had been paid for making the discs, it was really the manufacturer's rights which were infringed. The suit must have gone in favor of the station, for records of all sorts continued to be played.

But, although Frank's "pancakes," made when the depression was still almost as bad as it had been in 1932, didn't sell well, some of his best recordings are included in his first Decca productions. The first, No. 113, was a huge 35 cents worth, coupling "A Gay Caballero" with "Frankie and Johnnie." No. 114 offered "Abdul Abulbul Amir" and a captivating medley of songs written by Gus Edwards—"School Days," "By the Light of the Silvery Moon" and others. Even more delightful was the two-part "Harry Von Tilzer Medley," with "In the Sweet Bye and Bye," "Down, Where the Wurzbürger Flows," "Goodbye, Boys," "Take Me Back to New York Town," "On a Sunday Afternoon" and "I Want a Girl." The remainder made during this first Decca engagement were all good comic songs—"The Pig Got Up and Slowly Walked Away," "The Dashing Marine," "There's No One With Endurance Like the Man Who Sells Insurance" and "Whoa, Josephine."

There is now a gap of several years in the letters I shall quote from Frank. Some were written during the intervening period, but I didn't find them in the limited time I could spare for searching. I remember that when he was having guest artists on a 1938 program, sponsored, I believe, by Alka-Seltzer, I wrote, suggesting that he use Billy Murray. He replied, saying he had recorded programs with both Billy and Monroe Silver the week before.

A few weeks later I was happy to hear by transcription the program on which Billy told Frank of the time he was walking near his home and met a man who thanked him for saving his life many years before. When Billy replied that he couldn't recall the life-saving exploit, the man told of having been sent by his firm to China. He almost died of homesickness and was thinking of suicide when he passed a store and heard a phonograph playing a Murray record of "Forty-five Minutes From Broadway." The homesick Yankee bought the machine and record (presumably other records as well), took them to his room and played them over and over, almost feeling that he had been transported back to Broadway. Gradually, the homesickness wore off, and he always gave Billy's record of "Forty-five Minutes From Broadway" credit for saving his life. To finish with, Billy sang the number in his own inimitable style, showing he was every bit as good as he had been when the record was made more than thirty years before. It was a memor-

able experience, and I was grateful to Crumit for providing it.

My next letter from Frank is undated, but was postmarked January 19, 1940. I had written that I hoped to be in New York around Labor Day for the Elbeetian Legion convention and suggested that perhaps he could use a group of the former Lone Scouts as guests on "The Battle of the Sexes" program, which, as you may remember, was one in which four men took part in a quiz program against four women. Usually, husbands competed against wives on the quiz, sponsored by Molle. Sometimes there were other divisions, but always four men opposed the same number of women. The winning lineup received wrist watches as prizes.

Frank replied:

Thanks for your very interesting letter and for the editorial you wrote. We enjoyed it very much. I'm always glad to hear from you and would like to have you on one of our programs. We couldn't use you alone, but if you knew of three other fellows in your game who were going to be in New York at the same time, I think I could fix it. We are only accepting challenges in teams of four.

We would really like to sing more, but the present craze is for questions and answers, so we stick to that formula. . . . I may go back to recording for the U. S. Record Corporation, twenty years after I first started. . . . Wish I could pick up your radio program. It sounds great to me. Be sure and let me know when you come to New York. . . . I would like to meet you and have a talk.

I'm with you in your opinion of modern songs and hope you have a very happy and successful 1940.

My opinion of modern songs, which Frank shared, was distinctly unfavorable, but if he were still living I'm sure he'd agree the average popular tune of that day was a masterpiece compared to most of the drivel being ground out now, when what *Variety* calls "non music" appears to have reached its all-time low. In another letter he said he'd like to shake hands with me for preferring the old popular songs to the new.

I learned that Frank and I had another taste in common. We both liked to "talk back" to radio announcers when they were being nontifical or sounding off with high pressure commercial. (That of course was before the days when I had become a radio news editor and nothing short of an Act of Congress, a major operation or a firing squad would induce me to listen willingly at home to any radio program!)

At any rate, I replied, explaining more about the Elbeetian Legion and saying it should be possible to line up teams of husbands and wives for a broadcast during the Labor Day convention period. This eventually was arranged and the program was given, but I was unable to be in New York for the occasion. My visit was postponed until October, when I spent two weeks with Billy Murray at his beautiful home in Freeport on Long Island. I also attended a meeting of New York Elbeetians (pronounced L-B-tee-ans), and the fellows who had appeared on the program enjoyed flaunting their new wrist watches before my envious eyes. One who had

taken part, Charles A. Wright, then a member of the faculty of Temple University, had already written me: "We enjoyed the Molle broadcast, but were awfully sorry that we couldn't have you with us. Frank Crumit spoke of you quite affectionately."

From another source I learned that "General Julia" was bewildered because wives of Elbeetians were known as TOTAS (pronounced Toters), and it didn't seem much clearer to her when she was informed the initial letters stood for Tribe of the Accepted—a term that had been taken from the former Lone Scout organization. Frank himself commented on the program in a letter written on September 30, 1940, in reply to one from me sending birthday greetings:

Dear Jim: Thanks for your birthday good wishes. Fifty-one years have gone by and because I have no kids I suppose my slogan should be "A half-century of no progress."

We had fun with your friends, and am sorry you weren't there.

We'll be in town on October 11, making transcriptions. I should be here in the early afternoon. Drop in and have a chat.

Shortly, afterwards, I made my first trip to New York and looked forward eagerly to meeting Frank and Julia. But I was not destined to come face to face with the pair whom I regarded as dear friends. I remember driving with Billy Murray and his pal, Jimmy Martindale, to a house in which the Crumits' accompanist, Jack Shilkret, had lived, with the hope of finding out whether they were in town. But Jack either had moved or was not at home.

Then, on the night when Frank and Julia were to give their weekly broadcast, I went to the radio station where the program originated, showed the note from Frank and asked an usher if I could see him.

"You can," he drily replied, "if you can get to Hollywood in a hurry. Mr. and Mrs. Crumit went to California a few days ago."

So near, in a way, and yet so far! I didn't visit New York again before Frank's death, less than three years later, and that was the nearest I ever came to meeting him. I wrote to tell him of my disappointment, and on December 20 he wrote:

Sorry we were out West when you were in New York. We were there for three broadcasts and had a great time. I don't wonder that you liked New York. It's quite a place, but very heartless. . . . Julia wants to join me in wishing you a very Merry, Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years.

There is now another gap in the correspondence I have been able to find from Frank until July 7, 1943, exactly two months before his death. Letters were exchanged in the interim, but I have not come across them. My mother had decided she would like for "The Singing Sweethearts" to "dedicate" a song to her, and I had written, requesting this. Frank replied:

If I had received your card yesterday instead of today, I could have mentioned your mother's name, as we sang "Comin' In On a Wing and a Prayer" yesterday. However, I'll get her name in real soon on our request list. I'll bet you have some priceless items on your "Wax Works." (I like that title.) Best of luck.

A few days later, a number was sung for my mother, but I can't re-



member what it was. Frank decided he'd also like to sing one for me, and I asked him to do it on my "day off" so I could be sure to hear it. During that war period it was against security regulations to sing any requested number at a given time, for fear enemy spies might be using it as a code system, but on July 14th, Frank and Julia did sing for me "You Never Knew About Me," from a 1917 musical comedy production, "Oh Boy!" The choice was appropriate since the words were written by another friend of mine, P. G. Wodehouse, to music by Jerome Kern.

On the following day Frank wrote me this amusing description of what he went through to make that dedication:

Dear Jim: Wish you could have seen the scramble to mention your name yesterday. War-time rules forbid mentioning a name on any certain date or time, because it might send a message or be a signal or "sumpin'." I had to tell how long we have corresponded and all I know about you. Thought you'd be amused. Best to you and your "Ma."

Again, it was characteristic of Frank Crumit's thoughtfulness and consideration to go to the trouble of getting FBI clearance in order to sing a number for an unseen friend.

And now I come to the last letter I was ever to receive from Frank Crumit. But before quoting it I must catch up a couple of loose ends. In one of his 1940 letters he mentioned the likelihood of his singing for the American Record Company. The negotiations apparently fell through, but in 1938 he had settled his differences with Decca and made several excellent records, which are included in the list accompanying this article. All the eight 1938 titles are good, but my personal choices are "The Girl With the Paint On Her Face," a frivolous ditty with a weirdly haunting, plaintive melody and an excellent accompaniment by Al Duffy's Gilt-Edged Four, and "The Old Apple Tree," a rollicking burlesque of the old-time sentimental "sob song." It is a far remove from my favorite tear-jerker ballad. "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree!"

By this time Frank's voice had deepened, if the recorded quality can be trusted, from a high tenor to a baritone range. These deeper tones were even more in evidence in the delightful album he and Julia sang for Decca of their best known musical comedy hits. The album, issued in 1942, was a good seller but is now out of print, although Julia's rendition of "They Didn't Believe Me" is still available as part of a long-playing medley.

And now we come to my last letter from Frank—written on the afternoon of Labor Day, Monday, September 6, just a few hours before he suffered his fatal heart attack the next morning. I had written to tell him that George O'Connor, a popular Washington entertainer and former recording artist whom I had recently interviewed, wanted to find the sheet music of "O'Hooligan's Ball," of which Frank had made a Victor record years before. I asked if he had any idea where the music could

be had. I also asked if he had any information concerning some one-time vaudeville and recording stars. In his reply, possibly the last letter he ever wrote to anyone, Frank said:

Dear Jim: Have been trying to get some dope for you. The old Empire City Quartet were Harry Tally, Harry Mayo, Harry and Irving Cooper. H. Cooper and H. Mayo are dead, I hear, and Harry Tally was running a cigar stand out in California some time ago. Joe Downing, the old monologist, is getting Irving Cooper's address for you. Downing and Joe Laurie, Jr., remember Eddie Morton as the "Singing Cop," but don't know where he'd be.

I'll keep a lookout for George O'Connor. As I remember, Donald Brian gave me the words to "O'Hooligan's Ball" and I hummed the melody to our recording orchestra. Next time I go up to Massachusetts, I'll look and see if I have the lead sheet. "Donnie" Brian is playing in "Abbie's Irish Rose" up in Boston now, I think, or soon to be.

I have been lucky in finding old records at the Liberty Music Shop, 50th Street and Madison Avenue. They specialize in finding the "oldies." Have you ever corresponded with Jerry Vogel, 112 West 44th Street, New York City? He's an expert on old songs. Jack Norworth is out on the Coast at present but should be back soon. . . Best, Frank C.

And so, on the accustomed note of helpfulness and geniality, ended my ten years correspondence with Frank Crumit. For him there was to be no trip back to Massachusetts—except that final one to the last resting place from which no one returns.

Ten years have now passed since Frank Poore Crumit's death—a period long enough to have caused him to be half-forgotten, perhaps, by thousands of Americans who were once his warm admirers. But there are thousands of others, especially collectors of his records, who have not forgotten, and will not forget, the fine artist and lovable gentleman whose art gave, and still gives, them so much pleasure. Frank's fellow Lambs still display a large oil painting of him, as their former Shepherd, in their Club at 130 West 44th Street, New York. Quentin Riggs, an Oklahoma City record collector, now doing military service in France, wrote me about seeing it last year when he had lunch at the Lambs with the famous tenor and song writer Geoffrey O'Hara.

And to this day I know of no more relaxing, soothing treat, when I am in the vein for light music, than to load my automatic record player with a stack of twenty Crumit discs and drink in that heartwarming voice mingling side-splitting humor with delicate pathos. I can hear him for hours without tiring. Few popular singers have been so signally and individually gifted.

It is my earnest wish that these notes, inadequate as they may be, will be accepted by Frank Crumit's loyal admirers, and especially by his devoted wife, Julia Sanderson Crumit, as a sincere tribute on the 64th anniversary of his birth and the tenth of his untimely death. The writing has truly been a labor of love.

## Records by Frank Crumit

(Unless otherwise noted,  
both sides by Crumit.)

COLUMBIA 10-INCH (1920-1924)

- A1457 He'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under (remake of original 1914 version by William J. Halley) and Pussy Cat Rag (Ada Jones and Peerless Quartet)
- A1754 Little Ford Rambled Right Along (remake of original 1915 version by Arthur Fields) and Si's Been Drinking Cider (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan)
- A2884 My Gal and Swanee (Al Jolson)
- A2915 What a Day That'll Be and Jean (Peerless Quartet)
- A2935 Oh! By Jingo and So Long Oolong
- A2940 I've Got the Profiteering Blues and Some Beautiful Morning (Al Jolson)
- A2946 Early in the Morning and In Sweet September (Al Jolson)
- A2948 Marion (You'll Soon Be Marryin' Me) and Pretty Kitty Kelly (Charles Harrison)
- A2952 Chhi Bean (acc. by Paul Biese Trio) and Bells of Monterey (Biese Trio)
- A2965 Goodbye, Dixie and Don't Take Away Those Blues
- A2973 Love Nest and Down the Trail to Home, Sweet Home (Henry Burr)
- A2981 My Little Bimbo on the Bamboo Isle and She Gives Them All the Ha, Ha, Ha (duet by Crumit and Lew Brown)
- A2982 In Old Manila (acc. by Art Hickman's Orchestra) and Cuban Moon (Hickman's Orch.)
- A3303 Jinga-Bula-Jing-Jing and Nobody to Love
- A3320 I'm Coming Back to Dixie and You, and Kentucky (Benny Davis)
- A3323 Whispering (duet by Crumit and William Davidson) and For Every Boy Who's On the Level (Crescent Trio—Charles Hart, Lewis James and Elliott Shaw)
- A3324 I Wish That I'd Been Born in Borneo and Palestine
- A3332 Margie and I'm a Lonesome Little Raindrop
- A3346 Rosie and My Gee Gee (From the Fiji Isle) (Tod Weinhold)
- A3352 Timbuctoo (acc. by Paul Biese Trio) and Rose (Biese Trio)
- A3359 Happy Hottentot (acc. by Paul Biese Trio) and Remember Me (Biese Trio)
- A3375 Home Again Blues and Ding-a-Ring-a-Ring (Al Jolson)
- A3388 No Wonder I'm Blue and I Used to Love You But It's All Over Now
- A3406 Nestle in Your Daddy's Arms and Pucker Up and Whistle
- A3407 Hortense and Oh, Sweet Amelia
- A3415 All By Myself and Madeline
- A3430 Mimi (acc. by Paul Biese Trio) and Oh Me! Oh My! (acc. by Biese Trio)
- A3431 Three O'Clock in the Morning and Moonlight
- A3459 Frankie and Johnny (acc. by Paul Biese Trio) and I Ain't Nobody's Darling (acc. by Paul Biese Trio)
- A3475 Sweet Lady and You're Just the Type for a Bungalow
- A3477 Dapper Dan and Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes (Irving Kaufman)
- A3521 Da Da Da, My Darling and When Francis Dances With Me
- A3530 Delia and In My Heart, On My Mind
- A3543 Boo Hoo Hoo and Sally, Irene and Mary
- A3573 Ha! Ha! Ha! and She's Mine, All Mine
- A3587 Walkiki (I Hear You Calling Me) and Hawaiian Rainbow (Vernon Dalhart)



A3613 Down On Avenue A and Mama Loves Papa, Does Papa Love Mama?  
 A3625 Sheik of Avenue B and My Yiddish Mamma (Irving Kaufman)  
 A3626 Stumbling and Coo-Coo (Al Jolson)  
 A3651 Pinkie, The Flapper Song and By the Riverside  
 A3666 Nineteenth Hole and In My Home Town  
 A3699 My Honey's Lovin' Arms and I Wish I Knew (both acc. by Ray Miller's Novelty Orchestra)  
 A3705 True Blue Sam and Toot, Toot, Tootsie (Al Jolson)  
 A3715 Where the Bamboo Babies Grow and I'm Through Shedding Tears Over You  
 A3744 If You Don't Think So You're Crazy and Lost (A Wonderful Girl) (Al Jolson)  
 A3785 I Gave You Up Just Before You Threw Me Down and Don't Say Good-bye (piano and banjo acc. in both by Phil Ohman and Harry Reser)  
 A3812 Jimbo, Jambo and Wanita (Al Jolson)  
 A3827 Everything is K. O. in K-Y and Sweet One  
 A3932 Sweet One and That's My Baby  
 A3933 When You Walked Out Someone Else Walked Right In and Waitin' for the Evenin' Mail (Al Jolson)  
 A3968 Stingo, Stungo and That Big Blonde Mama (Al Jolson)  
 A3984 Oh! Min and You've Simply Got Me Cuckoo (Al Jolson)  
 A3997 Old-Fashioned Girl and My Home Town in Kansas  
 26-D Say It With a Ukulele and Ko-Ko-Mo (Billy Jones and Ernest Hare)

#### VICTOR 10-INCH (1924-1932)

19236 Sweet Alice and Oh, Baby  
 19269 Mindin' My Business and Linger Awhile (Marcia Freer and Lewis James)  
 19275 Where the Lazy Daisies Grow and You're In Kentucky Sure as You're Born  
 19365 Ida! Sweet as Apple Cider and Roll Them Roly Boly Eyes  
 19437 How Come You Do Me Like You Do? and Knock at the Door  
 19468 Buckeye Battle Cry and Hi-Hi-Ohio  
 19469 Oh! Didn't It Rain! and No One Knows What It's All About  
 19549 Get Yourself a Broom and Insufficient Sweetie  
 19582 Cross Word Mama (You Puzzle Me) and Why Couldn't It Be Poor Little Me?  
 (Following titles electrically recorded)  
 19701 My Sweetie Turned Me Down and Ukulele Lady  
 19739 I Married the Bootlegger's Daughter and How's Your Folks and My Folks? (Happiness Boys—Billy Jones and Ernest Hare)  
 19774 Old Uncle Bill and Sonya  
 19777 I'se Goin' From the Cotton Field and Parlor is a Pleasant Place to Sit In Sunday Night  
 19928 I'm Sittin' On Top of the World and Sweet Child (Gene Austin)  
 19937 I Wish't I Was in Peoria and Show Me the Way to Go Home  
 19945 Billy Boy and Grandfather's Clock  
 20030 Thanks for the Buggy Ride and My Bundle of Love (Gene Austin)  
 20124 Girl Friend and Mountain Greenery  
 20137 Pretty Little Dear and Get Away, Old Man, Get Away  
 20462 Crazy Words, Crazy Tune and High, High, High Up in the Hills  
 20486 My Lady and Sunny Disposition  
 20715 Frankie and Johnny and Abdul Abulbul Amir  
 20919 Bye-Bye, Pretty Baby and Some Day You'll Say "O. K." (Jim Miller and Charlie Farrell)  
 21029 Da Da Da, My Darling and 'S' Wonderful  
 21091 I Miss You, Lize and That Old Wooden Rocker  
 21098 Wake Nododemus and Lonesome Road (Gene Austin)  
 21108 Bohunkus and Kingdom Coming  
 21430 Song of the Prune and Down in de Cane Brake  
 21466 No News; or What Killed the Dog? (remake of original 1909 version by Nat M. Wills) and The Three Trees (remake of 1912 version by Tom McNaughton)  
 21579 Dolan's Poker Party and O'Hooligan's Ball  
 21668 Jack is Every Inch a Sailor and Bride's Lament

21735 Gay Caballero and I Learned About Women From Her  
 21899 Road to Vicksburg and King of Borneo  
 22021 High Silk Hat and a Gold-Top Walking Cane and Mountains Ain't No Place for Bad Men  
 22154 Return of the Gay Caballero and A Tale of the Ticker  
 22323 Donald, the Dub and And Then He Took Up Golf  
 22423 Down By the Railroad Track and Around the Corner  
 22482 Return of Abdul Abulbul Amir and I'm Bettin' the Roll on Roamer  
 22579 Three Little Words and I Miss a Little Miss  
 22630 Would You Like to Take a Walk? (duet with Julia Sanderson) and One Little Raindrop  
 22859 I'm a Specialist and Lady of My Dreams  
 22943 Rhymes and Plink! Plonk! I Pluck My Guitar  
 23515 Foolish Facts and What Kind of a Noise Annoys an Oyster?  
 24091 Granny's Old Armchair and Gum Tree Canoe  
 24092 Little Brown Jug and Life is Only a Merry-Go-Round  
 V-40214 I Don't Work for a Living and Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, Keep On a' Trampin'

(NOTE—Crumit also sang the refrain in Victor No. 21647, "Just a Night for Meditation," by Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra, coupled with "If You Don't Love Me," by Johnny Hamp's Serenaders. He was an end man and sang "Abraham Lincoln Jones" on 12-inch Record 35961, "Minstrel Show of 1929." Crumit was also master of ceremonies on a 10-inch Victor dealers' demonstration record, DL-5-B, issued in 1931 to give a sampling of the new long playing records.)

Crumit records, pressed from Victor matrices and issued, 1926-1934, by the Gramophone Company, Ltd., of England. (The last five double-faced records in this series were never issued in the United States.)

B2293 I'm Sittin' On Top of the World and Sweet Child (Gene Austin)  
 B2325 Billy Boy and Thanks for the Buggy Ride  
 B2526 Girl Friend and Mountain Greenery  
 B2620 Bye, Bye, Pretty Baby and Some Day You'll Say "O. K." (Jim Miller—Charlie Farrell)  
 B2712 Bohunkus and Kingdom Coming  
 B2787 Song of the Prune and Down in de Cane Brake  
 B2859 No News and The Three Trees  
 B2921 Bride's Lament and You're a Real Sweetheart (Sam Coslow)  
 B3054 Gay Caballero and Jack is Every Inch a Sailor  
 B3065 Road to Vicksburg and King of Borneo  
 B3208 Abdul Abulbul Amir and Get Away, Old Man, Get Away  
 B3234 Dolan's Poker Party and O'Hooligan's Ball  
 B3269 Return of the Gay Caballero and Frankie and Johnny  
 B3419 Donald the Dub and And Then He Took Up Golf  
 B3528 Around the Corner and Down By the Railroad Track  
 B3569 I'm Bettin' the Roll On Roamer Return of Abdul Abulbul Amir  
 B3722 Three Little Words and I Miss a Little Miss  
 B3833 One Little Raindrop and Would You Like to Take a Walk? (duet with Julia Sanderson)  
 B3883 Foolish Facts and What Kind of a Noise Annoys an Oyster?  
 B4059 Granny's Old Arm-Chair and Little Brown Jug  
 B4102 Lady of My Dreams and I'm a Specialist  
 B4331 I'm In Love With Susan and Grandson of Abdul Abulbul Amir  
 B4356 They're Always Together and Vegetable Blues  
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113 Gay Caballero and Frankie and Johnny  
 114 Abdul Abulbul Amir and Gus Edwards Medley  
 205 Harry Von Tilzer Medley—parts 1 and 2  
 313 Pig Got Up and Slowly Walked Away and The Dashing Marine  
 475 There's No One With Endurance Like the Man Who Sells Insurance and Whoa, Josephine  
 1697 Josephine and Connie's Got Connections in Connecticut  
 1708 Old Apple Tree and I Can't Stand Sitting in a Cell  
 1729 Sissy and Nettie is the Nitwit of the Networks  
 1749 Girl With the Paint On Her Face and Sunday in the Park  
 Decca Album 245, "Frank Crumit and Julia Sanderson in a Group of Famous Song Hits From Their Best Known Musical Comedies":  
 18154 Sweet Lady and Hello! I've Been looking for You  
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 18156 You're Here and I'm Here and Bring Me a Rose (solo by Miss Sanderson)  
 18157 They Didn't Believe Me and The Girl With a Brogue (both solos by Julia Sanderson) . . . "They Didn't Believe Me" is currently available on Decca Long-Playing Record DL 8019, "Memorable Moments in Musical Comedy."

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Albert Benzler

By JIM WALSH

*NOTE—This article is dedicated to two of my friends. One is Clarence A. Ferguson, of Merrill, Wis., a veteran dealer in Edison products, who was also a friend of Albert Benzler's and who for years has urged me to write a sketch of that versatile musician's life. The other is Eugene Carbaugh, Jr., an attorney and business man, who recently moved to Roanoke, Virginia, from Newark, New Jersey, the city where Albert Benzler was born and died. Without Mr. Carbaugh's help I still would not have enough information about Benzler to put my notes into print.*

From the standpoint of obtaining adequate information, this has been one of the most difficult tasks I have ever undertaken.

Although at the time of writing—June 2, 1953—Albert Benzler had

been dead less than twenty years and even though he was a noted musician in his heyday, the details of his life have become so obscure that I have found it well nigh impossible to obtain sufficient data on which to base an article concerning him.

There are still gaps in my information. I don't know the names of Benzler's parents, whether he had any brothers or sisters, any of the details of his early life or whether his second wife, who survived him, is living. I don't even know what the middle initial, W., in his name stands for. But HOBBIES readers are chiefly interested in artists' recording careers, and thanks to investigation that has extended over a good many years, I hope to write a passable account of Albert Benzler's achievements.

For a time my chief stumbling block was the refusal of either the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Newark or the New Jersey State Health Department at Trenton to send me a copy of Benzler's death certificate. This was refused on the ground that I, not being a relative of the deceased person, had no legal right to a certificate.

Then, fortunately for me, Eugene Carbaugh, Jr., a native of Kansas City, Mo., and a graduate of the University of Virginia, came into my life. Gene Carbaugh arrived in Roanoke as head of a group which is building two huge parking garages to help ease the city's traffic problems. He and his associates had already constructed a similar garage, which is in successful operation at Newark, where Gene lived for a good many years before coming to Roanoke and liking Southwest Virginia so much he decided to make it his home.

One day, as part of my news editing work at Radio-TV Station WSL, I phoned to Mr. Carbaugh for information concerning the first parking garage. Then, with what has since struck me as a considerable amount of gall, I asked if he would do me a big favor the next time he went to Newark. I explained that for years I had been trying to assemble information enough to write a biographical sketch about a musician, Albert Benzler, who had died in

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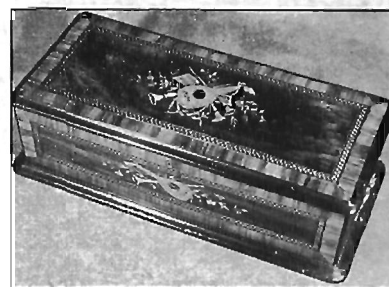
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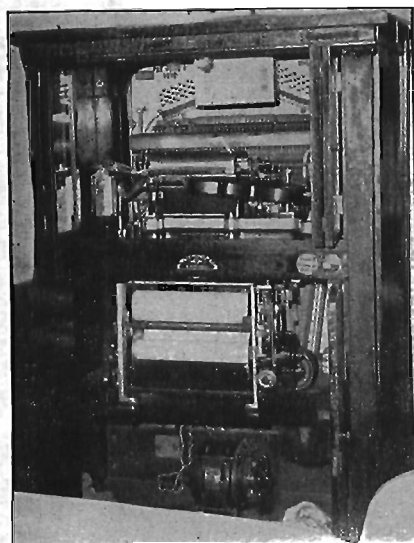
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Newark some years before, but had been stymied because of the bureaucratic refusal to let me have a copy of his death certificate.

My plight seemed to bring out the Good Samaritan in Gene Carbaugh, a warm-hearted gentleman by nature. He swore that if there was a copy of that certificate in Essex county, I should have it. Since he is an extremely busy man of large affairs, I really didn't expect him to think any more about it, but I didn't fully comprehend Mr. Carbaugh's energy, enthusiasm and zeal in what he considered a good cause. Not long afterward, he called me up and said he had inquired at Newark, only to be referred, as I had been, to State headquarters at Trenton. This busy man had then driven to Trenton, solely with the big-hearted desire to help my research work. He was told a copy of the death certificate would be immediately sent to me and that it might also be possible to send one of Benzler's birth certificate.

Several weeks passed, but the certificate didn't come. Evidently some Higher Up had again intervened to keep the harmless information contained in that printed form away from me. But now Gene Carbaugh was getting mad at being balked. He went back to Newark and this time, thanks to his peculiar powers of persuasion and his willingness to sign an affidavit, he got a copy of that death record and gleefully presented it to me one night when I had nearly resigned hope of ever seeing it.

## II What the Death Certificate Says

After I obtained the certificate I found that it contains disappointingly meager information, but it does list Albert Benzler's birthdate as November 13, 1867, and the day of death as February 19, 1934. His birthplace is given as Newark and the place where he died as 117 Bank street. Benzler was 66 years, three months and six days old when he succumbed to what the certificate calls "sudden death in a grocery store." I believe, however, that 117 Bank street was his home address rather than that of the grocery. The city medical examiner, C. G. Berardinelli, set down the cause of death

as "hypertensive cardio-renal disease." A physician who happened to be with Mr. Carbaugh when he handed me the certificate interpreted this as meaning a combination of heart and kidney disease involving hyper-tension and resulting in a blood clot that was the cause of Benzler's sudden passing. The certificate, from the office of Newark's City Clerk, Harry S. Reichenstein, also says Benzler was married but doesn't give his wife's name.

## III Help From Clarence Ferguson

Clarence Ferguson, as a long-time friend and admirer of Albert Benzler's, has been able to give me some help. When I wrote him the glad news that Eugene Carbaugh had brought me the long wanted death certificate, my Wisconsin friend, although grieving because of the recent death of his wife, found time to reply:

Dear Friend Jim: Glad to hear that you have a little more on Al W. Benzler. Sorry it doesn't give more. For a fellow who was as well known as Al was, it is hard to believe his life is such a blackout. The Orange Lodge of Elks should know him well, as he was an old member, and the Union of Newark should know him as he was one who started it. It is odd that his wife's name is not listed. She was his second wife. His first passed away some years ago. The second one did not know him in his recording days.

He started out as a doctor and went through school, but gave it up for music. He played in the orchestra in one of the theaters in Newark for years, after the U. S. Phonograph Company closed out.

In an earlier letter, Mr. Ferguson had written:

After Al died his second wife sold the home. Al lived in Newark about two blocks from the Orange and Newark city line... I used to see his name a lot in the Elks paper, back around 1929-30. My father was an Elk. I have a letter from Al in which he lambasts the Edison Company. He was to have been the musical director, but the know-it-

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J. D. Hartzler  
Willman, Iowa

jax

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Let me choose this opportunity to thank all my satisfied customers who have written and told me how much they enjoyed the records I have sold them and invite new ones to send me their wants. In sending for lists please specify what kind of record you want as I have over 50,000, and what artist or outfit you want. This will expedite my sending you lists.

AL McREA, Sr.

Box 182,

Westville, New Jersey

all "musical clique" put a wrench in the machinery.

Some of the points touched on by Clarence Ferguson call for a bit of comment. I wrote to the Elks Lodge, but received no reply. My luck with the musician's union was somewhat better. On March 13, 1951, Matty Franklin, secretary of Local 16, wrote:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Albert Benzler was made a member of Local 16, A. F. of M., Newark, prior to 1917. We have no records beyond that date. He played for many years at the Empire Theater, then called Miner's... He was a member of the Board of Directors of Local 16 for many years. I do not know his relatives. Perhaps Mr. Leo Cluesmann, 220

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Persons offering material not specified above or seeking information, are requested to enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

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Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Newark, could furnish some further information.

I wrote to Mr. Cluesmann, who is secretary of the American Federation of Musicians, but received only a briefly courteous reply: "... Regarding the late Albert Benzler, regret that I am unable to furnish the information you desire. I have delayed this reply in hopes that somewhere I might obtain some information, but to no avail."

The librarian of the *Newark News* informed he couldn't find an obituary notice of Benzler in the paper's "morgue." And a check of the Newark and Orange directories revealed no mention of Mrs. Benzler, who, if she is still living, may have remarried. Mr. Ferguson's references to Benzler's criticising Edison and to the "closing out" of the U. S. Record Company will be explained at the proper places in my account of Benzler's recording career. He appears to have been associated with only two phonograph firms - Edison (then known as the National Phonograph Company) for ten years or more, and the concern which made U. S. Indestructible cylinders, from 1909 to 1913. When U. S. went out of business, Benzler, who was its musical director, the post he had expected to hold with Edison, ceased to be active as a recording artist. He is almost unique in that he apparently never made a disc record, unless he played in some band or orchestra. As far as I know, his solo work never was recorded on flat records—but I have long since learned not to make dogmatic statements on any subject dealing with the phonograph industry!

#### IV Early Recording Days

Just when Albert Benzler's first association with Thomas A. Edison's record making activities began is something I haven't learned. However, he appears in that famous group photo of forty-two Edison artists taken near the Edison laboratory in 1900. He is No. 22 in the picture and is described as a pianist. Although only in his early thirties, he looked, judged by present-day standards, considerably older, and to me resembles a studious German professor. The cast of his face seems unmistakably Germanic. His expression is thoughtfully serious, he wears a mustache and his eyes are shaded by heavy spectacles. If he were known in advance as a musician, he might easily enough be taken as a scholarly exponent of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms rather than as a specialist in ragtime piano playing who had obtained much of his professional experience in a burlesque house.

Although Benzler is shown in this 1900 picture, I have not been able to find his name in any Edison record catalog issued before the middle of 1903. His first solo record apparently was a two-minute cylinder, 8462, "Alita (Wild Flower)," issued in August, 1903, and it was an orchestra bells solo rather than a piano number. Throughout his career, it was a player of bells and xylophone rather than as pianist that

the versatile Al was best known to the Edison public.

However, Benzler's greatest service to Edison from the time he first became a member of the recording staff, back in the '90's, was as a piano player. Just how he happened to join Edison is not known to me, but it seems obvious enough that his playing at a Newark theater brought him to the company's attention. The large city of Newark is, so to speak, in the front yard of the comparatively small town of West Orange, where Edison records were made, and consequently Benzler's engagement was only natural.

Just as Bach, Beethoven and Brahms are known as the three "B's" of fine music, so Edison had as accompanists five pianists whose names began with B. They included Fred Bachman, an excellent musician who was born in Europe and obtained his training there; Frank P. Banta, who also directed bands and orchestras and died in 1904 at the early age of 33; C. A. A. Booth; John F. Bruckhardt, who, like Benzler, made bells and xylophone solos and continued to be an Edison staff member through most of the Diamond Disc period; and, of course, Benzler. Bachman, Banta and Booth also worked for other companies. Billy Murray has told me that Fred Bachman was his accompanist when he made his first records for Victor. Booth made one or two Victor piano solos.

Actually, Edison's fondness for pianists whose names began with B. was not restricted to these five. Karel Bondman was the first master of the keyboard to make four-minute Amberol cylinder records. Until Sergei Rachmaninoff began recording for Edison in 1918, the only Edison disc piano solos were by Albert Spalding's accompanist, Andre Benoist. Charles Albert Baker played accompaniments Edison records by Arthur Middleton and other noted artists, and Frank E. Banta, son of the Frank P. Banta already mentioned, occasionally did Edison accompaniment work and played the piano passages in the 1928 record of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" by the Edisonians. Come to think of it, a young lady named Bessie Brookhurst accompanied two 1928 clarinet solos by Felix Vevier. When Benzler's phonograph career began, all vocal records had piano or occasionally, banjo accompaniments. Most of the piano accompaniments might as well have been played by the banjo, for the recording was nearly always very bad and the piano came out more like a banjo with a pitch waver than anything else. Reproduced electrically, Edison two-minute cylinders sound much better than discs of the same period in most classes of music, but the discs beat them on piano tone and Victor and Columbia band and orchestra records are usually better than the contemporary cylinders. The method of recording the piano was crude. The instrument stood on a platform raised about four feet above the floor and the recording horn was pointed at the piano's back, fo-

cused on the middle and treble notes. No effort was made to record the bass, which came out only as a blur. No pedaling was allowed, and the performer played with a thumping, staccato touch. After the Diamond Discs were introduced, Edison piano recording was far better than that of any other company and was virtually perfect from about 1921 on.

Edison himself in the 1920's attributed the superior quality of his piano recordings to the "advantage" he enjoyed because of having defective hearing. He said: "The phonograph never would have been what it now is and for a long time has been if I had not been deaf. Being deaf, my knowledge of sounds had been developed till it was extensive and I knew that I was not, and no one else was, getting overtones... Deafness, pure and simple, was responsible for the experimentation which perfected the (Edison Diamond Disc) machine. It took me twenty years to make a perfect record of piano music because it is full of overtones. I now can do it—just because I'm deaf."

A small red-bound book, "The C. W. N. Handbook of the Phonograph," written by C. W. Noyes and published in 1901, before the gold moulded process was introduced, contains an interesting drawing, showing three singers—Grace Spencer, Arthur Collins and Joe Natus (the latter said by Clarence Ferguson to have been related to Benzler)—"making records of their popular selections listed among the trios." When I received this book, I was astonished by this picture because I had never before heard that Grace Spencer (Mrs. Grace Spencer Doolittle, who died, aged 80, in New York on August 13, 1942) had sung with Collins and Natus. Her trio work was supposed to have been restricted to singing with Harry Macdonough and William F. Hookey in the Lyric Trio after Estella Louise Mann left that organization, and I have never seen any Edison catalog in which Spencer-Collins-Natus records are listed.

The pianist, sitting on an elevated "throne," with his back to the singers, is probably Benzler. He unmistakably is shown in another illustration of Byron G. Harlan singing into several horns. Harlan used to maintain he was the first singer to record with an orchestral accompaniment instead of the piano, and

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within a few years after this picture was made the orchestra took the piano's place almost entirely. But Benzler continued to be a useful man in the Edison recording laboratories as a rehearsal specialist. Singers would run over their numbers with him at the piano before they sang into the horn with an orchestral accompaniment. The December 15, 1906, *Talking Machine World* contains an article devoted to an account of the National Phonograph Company's recording studios, then in the Knickerbocker Building at Fifth Avenue and 16th street, New York, and one of the eight pictures shows Benzler trying a number with a singer who may be Billy Murray. In another picture, the artist making a record with orchestra accompaniment is unmistakably John Young, while one singing with a piano background may be Albert Campbell.

#### V Some Anecdotes of Benzler

Speaking of Harlan, his recording associates used to get a lot of fun out of the genial tenor's poor memory. He could never remember the words of a song, no matter how often he sang it, and always had to have either the music in his hands or the words printed in big letters on a large sheet of cardboard, propped against the back of the piano. On one occasion—probably during the concert given early in 1911 as a memorial tribute to Frank C. Stanley—he was singing "Two Little Baby Shoes," to Benzler's accompaniment. As usual, the words were printed on the cardboard. Then Benzler decided the audience wasn't hearing enough piano tone, and opened the top of the instrument. This caused the cardboard to fall into the footlights, and burn. Poor Harlan, the words completely gone, stood helpless, staring blankly, while his friends back stage went into hysterics. After a while, they gained enough control to troop onto the stage and sing the refrain of the number, to Harlan's infinite relief.

A former member of the Edison staff has given me some recollections of Benzler that help to bring out the human side of the man. He says: "I know nothing of Benzler's music

background or intimate items of his career, except that he played in and around Newark and was quite popular with the band and orchestra leaders locally.

"Benzler was a character. He was our house pianist until about 1909 and was a good musician, playing different instruments, including bells and xylophone. He made an old wax recording of a tune called 'Violets' with variations that was one of the first big sellers of piano records. A good piano record was hard to make—they always sounded tinpanny. Later, of course, with new techniques we got fairly good results."

Here I interrupt my friend's reminiscences to say that this Edison piano solo, No. 8394, was originally recorded in 1903 by Frank P. Banta, but was re-recorded in 1907 by Benzler. This was probably done, not because of defects in the original master but to take advantage of slight improvements in recording procedures. When Edison first began experimenting with non-breakable cylinders as a prelude to developing the Blue Amberol, the company made a white unbreakable copy of the Banta record of "Violets" as a souvenir for his widow. The younger Banta, himself a better known pianist than his father, displayed it at the 1948 "John Bieling Day" party. The piano record was a "transcription" of the popular song by Ellen Wright—"transcription" meaning that the music was rearranged to be played entirely in the higher keys. Now back to the former Edison man:

Benz used to play at "Waldman's" opera house in Newark—a burlesque theater—and he always claimed that was where he got a knowledge of so many tunes, and where he learned to fake the accompaniments. Some of the performers did a lot of "ad lib" singing and the pianist had to be ready for it, and Benz certainly was.

We also had another pianist in the '90's—his name was Bachmann—and he and Benz were always playing jokes on each other. I am passing on an in-

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**Auction Sales:** Rare and cut-out vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists. —Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh128022

#### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia, Victor phonographs. Collections bought. Reproducers, cylinder records. Describe—price. —Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. mh6215

**SPEECH,** phonetics, language, dialect records. Also, private recordings of voices of ordinary people.—Howie Shayer, 32 Brighton Tenth Path, Brooklyn, N. Y. ja3023

**Attention Collectors:** Rare operatic vocal records at auction. Send for free interesting lists — C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. av3825

**WANTED:** Transcriptions, Sunday Serenade programs, Air-shots, "armed forces recordings, etc. by "Sammy Kaye," also transcriptions, Air-shots armed forces recordings etc. by "Ink Spots,"—Paul Adams, 30 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. je6299

cident that was told me about 1902. It seems both Benz and Bach used to take off their shoes and wear slippers when playing. The shoes were left at the side of the pianos so as to be handy when they were ready to quit. It is told that one day Benz drove a nail through the soles of Bach's shoes and fastened them to the floor. When Bach finished he got up from the piano, dropped off his slippers and slid one foot into a shoe. When he tried to raise the shoe to tie it he couldn't budge it. Then he found it nailed and then there was a wild man.

In 1908 or 1909 Benzler left us to go into the record business with a couple of others. One of them was Frank Hofbauer, our experimental mechanic. They made a four-minute record—the U. S. Everlasting—but they did not last long. After they busted up, Hofbauer went with Brunswick and was one of their recording men. He got up the idea of using a continuing groove at the end of the regular disc record groove. This groove made a couple more turns and ended in a circle. The idea was that after the record was played you did not have to jump up to raise the reproducer; it just continued in the extra grooves until it hit the circle.

It is this eccentric or run-out groove that makes automatic record changers possible today.

When the New York Edison recording studios were moved to 79 Fifth Avenue on February 1, 1908, we had a couple of studio pianos on one truck, and Benzler went along to see that they were handled right. When we got to the building and got one of the pianos on the freight elevator, Benz lifted the lid and started playing on the trip to the eighteenth floor, then went down for the second one and also played going up. When they got to the top the elevator operator remarked to Benz, "Any man who can play the piano like you is a d—chump to stick to the moving business." Benz got a great kick out of this observation.

Benzler lived at the boundary line between Newark and East Orange—think it was 17th street, near Central Avenue—and in East Orange. Harvey Emmons, one of our recording technicians who used to make chimes records (he also recorded under the name of Henry Nesbit) at one time was a tenant of Benzler. Most of this neighborhood is now a negro one. Most of Benz's old pals have passed on. We have many stories of him, but not details of his background. Benz was a member of the Musicians' Union in Newark. Besides playing in the orchestra at Waldman's, he also played in Proctor's and other theaters, and in local bands. Most of his outside work was at night, and he had days free for recording.

Benz had a daughter, Viola, who married. Don't recall her marriage name nor if she is still living.

When I first came with the Company, the elder Frank Banta was with us, but because of illness he had to quit and passed away a short time later. I believe the studio bought a bunch of his music from his widow, but this has gone with all the rest of our music and arrangements. I don't recall his son playing for us, but I did hear of him—many of the singers used to tell about him playing accompaniments when they recorded elsewhere. You refer to his ability to play accompaniments without benefit of sheet music, and another one that could do this was Al Benzler. All you had to do was give him a hint of the words or tune and he went ahead and played it. He said he learned when he played in the burlesque house. On

the same lines, Eugene Jaudas and Justus Ring staged competitions during waiting times when records were being made. Both played violin and one would start a tune, play a few bars, and the other would have to pick it up and continue for a few more bars. They didn't use current tunes, but tried more or less unknown ones. The idea was to get something the other couldn't play. Some of the other musicians listening couldn't follow and admitted it, but I don't know that Jaudas or Ring ever got stuck. One had got his training at Tony Pastor's and the other at Koster and Bial's.

This really happened. We were recording a song and in one part chimes were to be heard in the distance for three or four bars. To get the distant effect we had placed the chime stand by the door in an adjacent room with the door partly closed. After everything was set we started on the last master—but when the chimes were supposed to ring there was no sound. Walter Miller, who happened to be in the recording room at the time, looked behind the door to see what was wrong, and there was Benz in a chair fast asleep. After waking him we started and finished the master O. K. Miller didn't bawl Benz out, but the ribbing he got from the singers and musicians for a long time after didn't make Benz too happy.

#### VI Benzler's Edison Cylinders

Albert Benzler's activities as a recorder of Edison bell and xylophone solos do not call for extended comment. Before he began making orchestra bells records in 1903, the Edison bells soloist was Edward F. Rubsam, a Newark musician who soon afterwards became an exclusive Columbia artist and played in the Columbia band and orchestra a good many years. Charles P. Lowe, who seems to have been the pioneer of all xylophone record makers, had played for Edison in the '90's. He was succeeded by J. Frank Hopkins, and Benzler in turn took Hopkins' place. Many of the Hopkins titles were popular, but by 1908 Benzler had remade them all. Among these were "Down Where the Wurzbürger Flows Medley" (8412), "I Have Grown So Used to You" (8005) and "Mr. Dooley Medley" (8366). Benzler's original recordings were of the same type, mostly collections of popular songs, of which No. 8931, "Come Take a Trip in My Airship Medley" and 9044, "Down in Blossom Row Medley," are typical, and a sprinkling of marches. His bell solos were less of a strictly popular nature, and he and "Henry Nesbit" made two bells and chime duets—8912, "Monastery Bells," and 8956, "A Summer Dream." Benzler and James W. Hager also played a very popular bells and xylophone duet version of Theodore Morse's great 1904 hit, "Blue Bell."

In January, 1907, the second Edi-

son gold moulded cylinder of a piano solo was issued, No. 9437, Benzler's transcription, or transposition, of "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms." The description in *The New Phonogram* sounds rather jubilant:

This is a record that will be greeted by many expressions of satisfaction by phonograph owners everywhere. Ever since we put out the transcription or "Violets" we have had hundreds of calls for more piano solos. We are learning more about piano recording than we once knew and have no hesitancy in claiming that this is the best piano record ever put on the market. Like "Violets" it is a transposition and in its rewritten form is admirably suited to the piano. Mr. Benzler is quite as much of an artist on the piano as he is on the xylophone and bells, and gives a splendid rendition of this well known ballad.

Compositions for piano recording use were still being rewritten, it will be seen, in order to avoid the bass notes. In October there was another Benzler piano solo:

9653. CHAPEL IN THE WOODS. In accordance with the many requests for another piano solo, we have had Mr. Benzler make this record. It is played with his usual brilliancy of execution, and will be a welcome addition to the others he has made. It was composed by Gustave Lange.

Edison began making the four-minute Amberol cylinders late in 1908, but Benzler was represented by only one of these longer records. It was included in the first list and was No. 9, "Light as a Feather." The description said it was "by far the most elaborate bells solo ever attempted."

#### VII Benzler and U. S. Records

A few months after Edison introduced his "longer-playing" cylinders, Benzler left the inventor's company to become musical director of the U. S. Phonograph Company, whose recording laboratory seems to have been in Newark, although its sales offices and manufacturing plant were at 1013 Oregon Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. Perhaps he had become convinced that the fragile cylinders made by Edison were steadily losing ground in competition with the stronger, more convenient discs, but that there was still a good future for an unbreakable cylinder. And, as Clarence Ferguson has said, his decision to change jobs also was influenced by the fact that he had not been appointed Edison's musical director.

The U. S. Everlasting record was made under patents controlled by Varian M. Harris, who, with Edmund A. Balm, had started the Indestruct-

#### MUSIC BOXES

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina, Criterion, Mira Monarch, New Century, Orphenion, Polyphon, Stella, Symphonion, Thorens. State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. mh3084

Wanted: Old music boxes, larger types, also items of the Old West.—George Trambitas, 3126 Elliot Ave. Seattle 1, Wash. je120291

#### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair. Reasonable prices.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. je6445

#### PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

PLAYER PIANO ROLLS: Latest hits and old favorites. Send for free list. Player material, parts, service.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. d122741

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Catalog 15c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. o124201

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, California. mh3863



ible Phonograph Record Company in Chicago in 1900. His process of making a cylinder virtually non-breakable and wearproof consisted of using a thin layer of celluloid mounted on a filler of wax impregnated wood pulp. From the standpoint of durability and tone quality, most of the U. S. Everlasting records were excellent, and a great many leading popular artists sang and played for them.

A story has made the rounds that Mr. Edison was so incensed at Benzler's leaving his company he ordered all Benzler records stricken from the catalog and the moulds destroyed. The story is fiction. Stung into action by loss of business to the disc record companies and to the Indestructible and U. S. Everlasting cylinders, Edison issued his own unbreakable Blue Amberols in the fall of 1912. But up to that time Benzler records continued to be listed. They included the four-minute bells solo; 15 two-minute bells solos; three piano numbers; six xylophone solos; the two bells and chimes duets by Benzler and Nesbit, and the "Blue Bell" duet by Benzler and Hager.

Mr. Ferguson comments:

Edison thought a lot of Al. It was the gang that passed on the records that Al had no love for.

After his U. S. record days, one of Al's friends had him come to the Lab one day to make a test recording along with other players. When the record was done they sent for Edison, who came into the room and went over to the machine to hear the recording. When it came to the xylophone part, Mr. Edison turned and looked over the players, then came over to Al and said, "Why, hello, Al, where have you been?" He wanted to know how he was and what he was doing. He knew by the playing that it was Benzler.

I told Al he should have told Edison what had happened years back. "Oh, that is all long gone now, and in the past, so why bring it up?" he told me.

According to Mr. Ferguson, when Benzler decided to leave Edison he went to a friend of his, Charles Daab, who also was a bells and xylophone virtuoso, and suggested that he try for Benzler's job at Edison. Daab did, and made records for the company for several years. Another friend of Daab's recalls that this talented performer, who has been dead a good many years, was one of the few persons who could sign his name in musical notation. He used to write C. DAAB for fun in this way with musical notes on a staff.

Benzler's name also became prominent in the U. S. Everlasting record catalog. The one for October, 1912, issued just as the Edison Blue Amberols were appearing, includes three four-minute bell solos and one four-minute xylophone number by him. There were also nine two-minute bell solos and eight numbers on the xylo-

phone. Even more interesting, there were two-minute piano recordings of "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms" and "Black and White Rag."

However, I believe that before the U. S. Company went out of business, Benzler must have made many more piano solos. I am sure that as a child I had never seen a catalog of the then defunct U. S. Company, but the pencil tablet in which I began the catalog of my imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company contains a long list of piano solos by Benzler. I can't recall how I learned that he was a pianist or where I obtained the titles of the records I catalogued. Possibly someone had given me an old Montgomery Ward catalog containing lists of U. S. Records. (I think they may also have been sold by the Charles William stores.) At any rate, I considered Benzler my "official staff pianist" and offered many records, mostly of the ragtime type, by the gifted player.

Benzler played the piano accompaniment for Fred Van Eps' U. S. banjo records, and I have also discovered an unusual selection which should be added to the list of records by Vess L. Ossman and George and Audley Dudley, which I published some months ago. On two-minute record No. 323, Vess Ossman, one of the Dudleys (presumably Audley) and Benzler played a banjo-mandolin piano version of "Dixie Girl." This record must have been made around 1910, after the Dudley Brothers supposedly had ended their business association with "The Banjo King."

Al Benzler accomplished at least one noteworthy thing while serving as the U. S. Company's musical director and instrumentalist. He made a cylinder which may have been played more than any other number ever recorded. Here is the story of the amazing achievement of a record that was played 40,444 times on a 1910 "juke box" as related in the

November *Talking Machine World* of that year:

What would you think of an investment that would yield over 115,000 per cent? Wouldn't it look good to you? The following, isn't a bait for "get-rich-quickers," nor an advertisement of gold bricks, but the sober recital of facts about a U. S. Everlasting Record No. 223, "Peter Piper March" (xylophone), by Albert Benzler.

This record was placed in a penny arcade last March, where it remained on a machine equipped with an ordinary reproducing sapphire until the middle of October. During that time it was played 40,444 times by automatic count, and earned for the proprietor of the arcade the sum of \$404.44. The record cost 35 cents.

The U. S. Phonograph Company have  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

## MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** For cylinder phonographs, small horns, reproducers, recorders, catalogs. State price postpaid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. my6676

**WANT TO BUY PIANO ROLLS** for National Automatic piano. Send lists and prices. Also want coin-operated SEEBURG Model "X" EP-RESSION PIANO and other coin-operated musical instruments.

B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, Calif. f8084

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Music boxes, hand roller organs, as Celestina and Gem. Roller and rolls. Private collector.—Newmann Miller, 436 West Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. ja3844

**TOY DISC PHONOGRAPHS WANTED.** Hand powered or spring motor as Owens: (open works) Berliner; National Gram-O-phone; Zon-O-phone; Eldridge R. Johnson Talking Machine Company, models "A", "B", "C", "D". Also Monarch Series. State condition and price.—Aaron B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Illinois. mh120053

**IF YOU LIKE GOOD MUSIC, and have a tape recorder, send stamp to—Attle Melodies, Box 6, Cornwallville, N. Y., for interesting proposition. ja32301**

**WANTED:** Harpsichord, vintage of 1700, (encased harp).—Harold Warp, 1100 N. Cicero Ave., Chicago 51, Ill. f3652

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS, assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.65.** Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. ja4633

**WANTED GUITARS:** Martin Gibson, either round-hole or F-hole. Write me price and model. Eddie Bell, 101 West 46th St., New York, 36, N. Y. ja3614

**INDEX to HOBBIES** articles on historical records from Sept. 1935 through Dec. 1953, now available from W. R. Moran, 1335 Olive Lane, La Canada, California for \$1.00. mh3483

**CARDS FOR INDEXING** phonograph records. Spaces for title, record number, vocalist, orchestra, reverse side, and musical notes. 100 3x5 cards \$1.—B. H. Steere, 1232 Chenango Street, Binghamton, New York. mh3084

**NICKELODEON ROLLS.** All classical and operatic. Will play on any electric piano that takes an "A" 65-note roll. These rolls are single selections and medleys, 50c and \$1 per roll.—G. T. Merriken, 112 Lynnmoor Dr., Silver Spring, Md. ja1023

**PHONOGRAPHS:** Sixteen Edison, Columbia and Victor, \$17.50 to \$45. Several Berliner records recorded 1896, \$2 each. Victor dog about 12" high, needs paint touchup, \$5. Beautiful large Olympia music box in cherry case with 30 records, \$150. Want: Edison Opera model (mahogany case preferred); early Edison with electric motor; Edison Kinetoscope.—Phillips, 843 S. Citrus Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. mh3829

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**ALL IMPORTED** vocal operatic records. Free list on request. Many G&Ts, Odeons, Fonotipias, Zonophones, Pathes, etc.—Collector's Haven, 1131 Bergen St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. my6867

**Attention Collectors: Rare operatic vocal records at auction.** Send for free interesting lists. — C. Brown, 1375 East 18th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y. ap3825

## PHONOGRAPHS

**WANTED:** Edison Stethoscope phonograph, with 5c slot and earphones attached with rubber tubes.—Harold Warp, 1100 N. Cicero Ave., Chicago 51, Ill. f4353

**CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, records, catalogs, parts.** Bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. my6844

## ROLLS—COIN MACHINE

**WANTED:** M music rolls for coin operated Cremona music machine, will pay extra for good rolls.—R. J. Hamilton, Star Rt., Tule Lake, California. mh3673

## PIANOS—ORGANS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Estey organ, 1890, walnut fancy case, excellent condition throughout. Chickering square piano, made about 1839, 73-note scale, walnut cleaned down to natural wood, playing condition. Steinway square piano, 1870, good condition throughout. Come haul the above three instruments away for \$250.—Sannebeck Music Co., 1425 E. Liberty St., Mexico, Mo. ja1804



on the morning after the British fleet had left Fort McHenry, using notes he had hurriedly made while a prisoner of the British. The manuscript was purchased from the Walters Art Gallery for the sum of \$26,400.

\* \* \*

A special exhibition entitled "Old Fashioned Winters" opened in November at the New York Historical Society. Such things as paintings and prints depicting winter scenes in New York City as well as sleighs, wooden ice skates and other winter objects from the society's collection are on display. An early American room setting displays articles used by our ancestors to keep warm, such as foot warmer, toddy mug, and pewter hot water bottle. The exhibit will be on view through February 15.

\* \* \*

The Medical Museum of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D. C., has assembled

an exhibit to show the development of the X-Ray in war and peace from the first simple instrument used by the inventor, Dr. Roentgen, to the latest developments designed by the Armed Forces and the Picker X-Ray Corporation for use in Korea. The exhibit traces the various scientific discoveries which contributed to Dr. Roentgen's discovery as well as the current progress of the x-ray in modern medicine. The exhibit was first shown at the Fourth Mid-Eastern Conference of X-Ray Technicians in Washington from November 13 to 15. The exhibit is to tour the major cities of the United States in 1954. Included in the exhibit is the laboratory where Roentgen made his discovery of the ray, an eight scene diorama which shows the uses to which the x-ray has been put by the Armed Forces from the Spanish American War to Korea, to mention just a few of the highlights of the exhibit.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29)

the record now on exhibition at their general offices in Cleveland, where it is played in comparison with new records of the same selection and from the same matrix. They are confident in asserting that absolutely no difference can be detected in the reproductions, and that a microscope fails to detect any traces of wear on the surface of the record...It is in perfect condition, the company claims, to be played 50,000 times more...A run of 40,444 playing is equivalent to continuous running day and night for 56 days. The sapphire on the reproducer travels 194.8 feet to play this record once. In playing it 40,444 times the sapphire travelled 7,878,491 feet, or 14,921.3 miles.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this achievement is the fact that xylophone records, because of their sharp "pingy" notes, wore out more rapidly on ordinary wax cylinders than any other kind of music. No wonder, Edison, the grooves of whose four-minute Amberols quickly broke down, decided he'd have to put out an unbreakable, wearproof record himself! And just imagine trying to get 40,444 plays out of a present-day "juke box" disc!

### IX Finale

That brings us to the end of the story of Albert Benzler. Edison is said to have threatened the U. S. Company, which made cylinder phonographs as well as records, with suit for infringement of patents. The company, unable to buck competition from the Blue Amberols, and financially unable to withstand expensive litigation went out of business in 1913.

In turn, that, as far as I know, ended Albert Benzler's phonograph career. He continued to play in New York theaters, bands and orchestras and for a time had his own Benzler's Band. He remained a prosperous musician but not a recording artist until his sudden death in 1934. Today, even though the facts of his life have become relatively obscure, many of his records remain to testify to his musical abilities.

# Met Announces Opening of Major Collections

Opening dates for three major collections now being installed in three wings of The Metropolitan Museum of Art that have been reconstructed since 1950 were announced recently by Francis Henry Taylor, Director. Scheduled at intervals during a five-month period beginning January, 1954, openings will return to public exhibition some 7,500 masterpieces of European painting and decorative art in 95 modernized galleries and six period rooms. The collections and dates of their first public showing are:

**THE PICTURE GALLERIES**—Saturday, January 9, 1954.

**THE GALLERIES OF MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE ART**—Friday, February 19, 1954.

**THE GALLERIES OF POST-RENAISSANCE DECORATIVE ART AND PERIOD ROOMS**—Friday, May 7, 1954.

Also scheduled to open at the Museum early in 1954 are a modern restaurant with facilities capable of seating upwards of 300 persons and the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium accommodating an audience of more than 750 people.

Commenting on the initial stage of reconstruction, new building and reinstallation of the collections at the Museum which is now drawing to a close, Mr. Taylor said that it would involve a total expenditure of approximately \$9,000,000.

"This undertaking which has been part of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program of the City of New York has been made possible by the joint application of funds from the City and from private

sources," Mr. Taylor said. "The Metropolitan Museum would like at this time to express through the kindness of the press its deep appreciation of the generosity of the City and the individuals who have made this program possible. The Museum is indebted particularly to the three Mayor's under whose administrations this program has been planned and executed; to the Commissioner of Parks, the Honorable Robert Moses, who has constantly presented the Museum's case to the Board of Estimate; to the Members of the Board of Estimate themselves; and to the Museum's Trustees, both elective and ex-officio."

The rehabilitation of the three oldest wings of the Metropolitan from basement to roof, the construction of a new unit linking the North Wing of the building fronting on Fifth Avenue with the Morgan and American Wings to the west in Central Park, and the cost of the various installations will account for \$7,700,000 the Director said. Of this, the City of New York appropriated approximately \$3,100,000, including \$400,000 of deferred maintenance. The remainder was from the museum including funds accumulated for the building program during and following the 75th Anniversary Campaign of 1945-46.

"The construction and equipment of the new auditorium involving \$1,150,000," Mr. Taylor said, is being derived entirely from the Museum's private funds, a sizable portion coming from the estate of the

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## Correction and Addition to Frank Crumit Record List

By JIM WALSH

One error was made in the December listing of Columbia records by Frank Crumit. No. 3922 shows "Sweet One" combined with "That's My Baby." The first title should be "Oh, How She Lied To Me."

It should also have been mentioned that a few of Crumit's Columbia discs were dubbed onto the single-faced 5½ Little Wonders that sold for a dime in five-and-ten cent stores. "So Long, Oh Long" was one. In the absence of a complete Little Wonder catalog, it is impossible to give a full list of the dubbed Crumit numbers.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Albert Spalding

By JIM WALSH

The country has lost one of its finest artists and one of its best citizens in the death of Albert Spalding. He retired from the concert field almost three years ago, but he continued to be a vital part of the intellectual and artistic life of his country. He leaves an empty place that will not be easily filled.

His pathway to artistic recognition was actually more difficult because of the fact that he was so very much an American. He came of an American business family, successful and respected. But in his time, indeed for most of his life, almost all of the great violin virtuosi who were beloved by Americans were foreign born. Mr. Spalding won some degree of eminence abroad before he was accepted in his own country with the respect that is given to true greatness.

His musicianship could never be challenged. He was anything but flamboyant and his achievement was all the finer because it was completely divorced from anything that could smack of cheap showmanship.

He will be remembered, also, as a patriot who gave distinguished service to his country in two wars. He also gave a distinguished life to his country in time of peace. We can be proud that he was an American, just as he was proud of being one, and we can be grateful for the pleasure and beauty that he brought into our lives.

The foregoing editorial from the *New York Times* of Friday, May 29, 1953, admirably sums up the career and character of Albert Spalding, the world-famous violinist who had died three days before. It was so pertinent and so well expressed that I could not resist quoting it.

This is the first *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* article that I have written concerning a musician of such widespread acclaim and distinguished intellectual attainments as Albert Spalding. Most of these biographical sketches have dealt with the "popular" performers whom I can never sufficiently honor because their recorded work did so much to make my childhood happy. In their way, most of them deserve to be considered great artists, but their greatness was of a different, less exalted kind than that of the recently departed violinist.

I feel a certain diffidence at stepping out of my accustomed role to relate the life story of Albert Spalding, but think I am justified in doing so because of having the honor of a slight acquaintance with the virtuoso.

My knowledge of the death of Albert Spalding came while I was tearing news from the teletype of Radio-TV Station WSLs in Roanoke, Virginia, just as I had been doing a few months earlier when I learned

of the passing of Arthur Fields. As I read the brief item telling of Spalding's sudden fatal seizure at the age of 64, my memory went back to the morning of December 6, 1940, one year and a day before the Fall of Pearl Harbor — when I began what proved to be perhaps the most hurried, harried and hectic day of my entire news writing career.

I was then chief reporter, editorial writer, feature writer and columnist for the *Johnson City Press* in upper East Tennessee. When I came to work early that morning my city editor told me he had received a tip that one of the most trusted men on the Johnson City police force was about to be exposed as an impostor who had stayed in the local Soldiers Home a considerable time, before joining the police department, under a false name, and had bilked the Federal government of a considerable sum of money. It was also reported that he had escaped from a State penitentiary in Texas while serving a long sentence. The chief of police had agreed to let the paper know when the arrest was about to be made. Meanwhile, I, as police reporter was expected to remain alert.

### II. An Interview With Spalding

News of the impending arrest complicated my morning's schedule besides making me feel genuinely sorry. The suspected officer was a

dear friend of mine. He had a fondness for doing little kindnesses for people and frequently sent my mother gifts of jelly, fruit or other things he thought she would like. Only the week before he had handed me a sweater too small for his own little boy and had asked me to "give it to some poor little colored boy that it will fit." I found it was just the right size for the six-year old son of our Negro maid, and gave it to the youngster, to his delight and gratitude.

Not only was I worried because of the revelation about my friend, I also wanted to get an interview with Albert Spalding. I knew that he and his invariable accompanist and longtime friend, André Benoist, were to give a recital that night in East Tennessee State Teachers College. I had long been an ardent admirer of both men from their many Edison records, and I wondered if I couldn't squeeze in an interview by catching them early in the morning.

Luck was with me. When I went to the John Sevier Hotel and phoned to Mr. Spalding's room, he said he was just about to come down to breakfast, and asked me to join him. He seemed eager for the meeting when I told him I was not only an interviewer but "an old Edison Diamond Disc fan."

Within a few minutes the great violinist appeared and we shook hands. His step was brisk, his manner simple and unaffectedly friendly, and he looked to me like a middle-aged, middle-weight athlete who had kept himself trim and wiry from constant exercise. Although the *New York papers* described him after his death as "of average height," I received the impression, perhaps, because of his slenderness, that he was rather tall. I'm sure he looked younger than his 52 years.

Mr. Spalding and I went into the dining room, where he ordered breakfast, and a few minutes later we were joined by Mr. Benoist (pronounced Ben-wah.) The famous pianist was ten years older than Spalding and was completely bald, though with a rather young appearing face. He was shorter and stockier than his companion, and puffed much of the time at a pipe while Spalding smoked cigarettes. One oddity of the interview was what seemed to me a foreign quality in Spalding's speech



Albert Spalding, distinguished American violinist and Marie Rappold, Metropolitan opera soprano, performing in 1916, in direct comparison with their Edison Diamond Disc of the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria."

(perhaps derived in part from his years of study in Italy), which made it hard for me to understand some of the things he said, despite his being born in that perhaps most American of cities, Chicago. Benoist, on the other hand, although a native of France, spoke perfect English without a trace of any accent that I could detect. I understood his frequently brief sardonic remarks much more easily than I did the more extended conversation of Spalding.

When Benoist first came down, Spalding introduced me to him as—in the term I had already used—"an old Edison Diamond Disc fan." Benoist understood him to say "man" instead of "fan" and, after looking me over, exclaimed: "That's funny! I can't seem to remember ever running into you around the Edison studios!" Spalding then explained I was only a record collector and an admirer of Edison recordings and had never been a company employee, and Benoist gratified me by saying: "I thought you looked too young to have been with Edison back in the recording days!"

I told my two new friends that I'd have to hurry the interview more or less and, in confidence, gave them an idea of what was about to happen to my friend, the policeman. Spalding exclaimed, "That's a shame!" and I shall never forget the energy with which Benoist said: "Well, if, as you say, the fellow has gone straight since he's been a policeman and has a wife and several small children—I hope they pardon him instead of taking him back to Texas!" I also mentioned that I not only had the top news stories to get but must also write a supply of editorials and the "Sunlight and Shadows" column before calling it a day. "I do a lot of things for the paper," I explained, and Spalding said: "You *are* the paper!"

We talked about the days of Edison recording, and Spalding recalled that he began as an Edison artist by making four-minute Amberol cylinders. "Afterwards," he said, "I played for the Diamond Discs, but many of them were dubbed onto Blue Amberol and Royal Purple cylinders. And—I can't be quoted on this because I'm now under contract to Victor—but from the standpoint of silent surfaces and absolutely perfect reproduction of tone, those Diamond Discs are the finest records that have ever been made."

"I agree," I said. "But a lot of people with technical training would scoff at that statement. They say that the Edison frequency range was limited, and present-day records have a wider range, consequently are more natural."

Spalding nodded. "I know," he said. "Lots of them have said that same thing to me. But the truth is that recording engineers and other technicians are the world's worst judge of musical quality. With them music is just a matter of charts and graphs. They have no ear for it at all. Some of my engineer friends



Albert Spalding in his later years

show me graphs illustrating how many more frequencies are recorded by the electric method than we used to get by playing into the horn. All I can stay to that is that I used to play my fiddle on the stage in direct comparison with Mr. Edison's recordings, and not a soul in the audience could tell when I stopped and the phonograph took over except by watching the movements of my bow. Today if I tried to play in direct comparison with my electrical Victor records, everybody could tell the difference—and a big one. Victor recording of the violin," he added, "is improving, but it's still far from what it should be. Edison's was perfect."

"You mentioned the silent surface of the Diamond Discs," I replied. "Of course you were thinking of those made from 1912 to about 1916. Because Edison couldn't get anything but inferior materials during the First World War, most of the Diamond Discs of that period had a bad background of noise."

Spalding agreed, and went on to relate some of his Edison record making experiences. Despite the excellence of Edison recording, there were days—mostly when both the temperature and the humidity were high—that a good master record couldn't be obtained. "Quite often," he said, "we'd have to postpone a recording engagement when the weather wasn't suitable. Something or other—we didn't know what—seemed to happen to the recording diaphragms, the horns, the wax master records—or all. I learned to avoid having a recording date in hot, sultry weather."

"Speaking of the effects of the weather," he went on, "I remember being told that the right color for the Blue Amberol cylinders could be obtained only under certain climatic conditions. As I remember, they would watch out for bright, star-lit nights and mix huge batches of the color-

ing. It seemed to reach just the right hue and consistency on such nights—but I'm not sure I remember that right."

Of course Thomas A. Edison himself was mentioned, and both Spalding and Benoist had some anecdotes of "The Old Man's" eccentricities and his frequently odd choice of numbers to be recorded. "Speaking with all respect for the dead," Spalding said, "Old Man Edison was a terrible crank, and Walter Miller, Bill Cronkhite and the other fellows who had charge of recording were scared to death of him. They knew he would listen to every record before it could be issued and they wouldn't take a chance on recording anything they thought he wouldn't like. Most of my Edison records were of good music—mainly, though, the well-worn concert 'war horse' stuff—but he really made some of the other artists do some queer things."

"You're—telling—me!" Benoist chimed in. "I made a record of a Chopin etude that Walter Miller and I thought was fine. The piano tone was the real thing—and that was hard to get in those days. The Old Man listened to it and returned it with a note, saying, 'Rotten. Ain't got no tune.' So to please him they had me record 'Old Black Joe'—with variations." Benoist also mentioned that he played the accompaniment for many of Jascha Heifetz's Victor records.

I recalled a story, for which I said I couldn't vouch, that Edison discharged one of his most trusted employees for issuing a piano record of "Monastery Bells," by Henry W. Lange, without waiting for his permission. According to the story, everybody at the Edison studios thought the piano recording was wonderful—and it was—but Mr. Edison swore when he heard it, saying it sounded more like a tin pan than a piano. However, it stayed in the catalog and, so legend has it, became the biggest selling piano record Edison ever made. Incidentally, Benoist's record of "The Two Larks" was usually played during "tone test" recitals by other artists to give the public an idea of the progress Edison had made in recording piano music. The tone was usually termed perfect, as far as it went, but some critics said that because of its avoidance of bass notes the general effect was that of a Swiss music box. A few years later, Edison could record the bass as well as he did the treble and Edison superiority in piano recordings was perhaps more marked than in any other kind of music.

Benoist shuddered slightly when I said the title of the piano solo that allegedly infuriated Edison was "Monastery Bells." Apparently, the thought of a composition with such a banal, commonplace name shocked his finer sensibilities.

I asked Spalding what had been his biggest selling Edison record and he didn't surprise me much when he



replied "The Meditation From 'Thais.'" It sold, within a few years, he said, some 300,000 copies. Dvorak's "Humoresque" took second place. Knowing the stock violin repertory of the old phonograph days, my guess would have been the "Humoresque" first and the "Meditation" second. Anyway, 300,000 was a whale of a sale for a \$2 record that could not be played on conventional phonographs but required the special New Edison instrument.

Before I parted from Spalding and Benoist, I commented on their long friendship and musical association and, in an effort to be lightly facetious, said: "You two go together like ham and eggs!" "I'm the ham!" Benoist wryly exclaimed, while Spalding gently said: "I think pork and beans would be a better comparison." Spalding, who lived at Great Barrington, Massachusetts, promised to send me a photo of himself, and Benoist said he would mail me one from his home at Monmouth Beach, New Jersey. In return I promised—and kept my promise—to send them copies of the *Press* with my "story" about the policeman.

Benoist was prompt to keep his word. He mailed me an autographed photo and showed his strong sense of humor by inscribing it to "Jim Walsh, from the first half of ham and eggs—André Benoist." I didn't get one from Spalding, although I wrote one or two letters reminding him. In fact, I had no further communication of any sort with the great violinist until I acted on an impulse last December 6, and wrote him a letter, recalling our meeting in Johnson City exactly twelve years before and saying I still hoped for that photograph. On December 15, Mr. Spalding wrote me a charmingly contrite note from his home, Aston Magna, at Great Barrington:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Indeed I do remember you and our meeting some twelve years ago in Johnson City—and, to my shame, of that unredeemed promise of a photo. By this same mail I am making good and the photo will be on its way. With all good wishes,

Yrs sincerely,

ALBERT SPALDING.

The photo suitably inscribed, arrived, and I am submitting it with this article in the hope that it can be reproduced in *HOBBIES*. I imagine that when Spalding read my note and realized he had kept me waiting twelve years for a photo, he shook his head wryly, as he had done when I asked him what he thought of the early electric records he made for Brunswick after ending his fifteen year's association with Edison. "Terrible!" he said. "My Victors are much better. But it's still true that the acoustic Edisons are the only perfect recordings of my playing."

And now, having set down some of the things I remember about that 1940 interview, we may proceed to a consideration of Albert Spalding's career as concert violinist and recording artist. But if you are wondering what happened to the policeman, I'll reveal that the denounce-

ment was more dramatic than I had been led to expect. When he was summoned to headquarters, he admitted that not only had he entered the Soldiers' Home under the name of his dead brother, but that he had been convicted in Texas for murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. After shaking hands with me, he insisted that he would "tell the whole story" only if he were locked in a room with Jim Walsh. It turned out that he had married a wealthy woman much older than himself and after her sudden death had been found guilty of hiring two men to kill her. He had managed to escape while a trusty on a Texas State prison farm. He was returned to Texas, leaving his second wife and three small children in Johnson City. Later, I understood, Texas authorities pardoned him and he began serving a term on the Federal charge. Whether he is still alive and out of prison I don't know, but if he is and is making an honest living I wish him well. He was always an unselfishly good friend to me.

It was pathetic that my reformed officer friend had to leave his wife and children in Tennessee, fearful, as he expressed it in a letter he wrote to me from prison, that they would "go on sufferance." But to me the most pathetic thing about that memorable news-gathering experience was related by the colored maid to whose little boy I had given the policeman's son's outgrown sweater. That afternoon, the *Press* came out with a front page "streamer" headline above my "story," which I had written frantically in "short takes." There was also a large photo of the arrested officer. The little boy saw it and began laughing. "Mama," he said, "here's a picture of that nice man that was so good to me!" The mother looked at him sorrowfully. "Honey," she said, "that nice man is in terrible bad trouble! They've put him in jail and they're going to send him back to Texas."

The tot began crying then, she told me, "as if his heart would break." "They oughtn't to do that to him! He was so good to me!" the grateful child sobbed.

To cap the climax of that most upsetting day, just when I was about to go home in the late afternoon a young lady from a Southwest Virginia town, who was an admirer of my radio program, phoned that she was in a Johnson City department store and insisted that I hurry over to meet her. Groaningly, I went, in anything but a romance-seeking mood. She later wrote she had been much disappointed in me because I appeared completely distraught and seemed to have almost no idea of what we were talking about!

(TO BE CONTINUED)

#### ROLLS—COIN MACHINE

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## Current Collectors' Records

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

Jim Walsh has now been writing his fine series of articles for *HOBBIES* for twelve years. In that time many new recordings and reissues of old recordings have been pressed by the various companies by the all time stars. These records are collectors' items just as truly as are their early Brunswicks, Black and Silver Columbias or Victor Monarchs. Perhaps they are even rarer than the earlier records because in many cases these discs have been issued by small firms which have had little money to advertise their releases, and many collectors who would have bought them have never heard about them. Here is a list of a few of the artists who have recorded in the last twelve years: Al Jolson, Sophie Tucker, Eddie Cantor, Maurice Chevalier, Helen Kane, Billy Murray, Monroe Silver, Gus Van, Joe Howard, Gallagher and Shean, Groucho Marx, Harpo Marx, Nick Lucas, George M. Cohan, Jr., Gene Austin, Harry Richman, Belle Baker, Eddie Peabody, Benny Fields, Blossom Seeley, and even W. C. Fields. Besides these there have been innumerable repressings. Of course not all of these are available now, but many still are, and I am going to try to list as many of these as I can in this column every month. There may be many current collector's items that I haven't heard of, so if you readers think I am missing some rare ones please write in and I will list your discoveries here.

This month I'd like to mention some brand new banjo and banjoline solos by Eddie Peabody for the Dot label. These are wonderfully brilliant recordings by an artist whose early electric discs are always in demand. If you like banjo recordings at all, don't miss these.

Dot 15098 - Baby Face and I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover/St. Louis Blues

Dot 15099 - Stars and Stripes Forever/Sing Song Girl and Chinatown, My China Town

Dot 15100 - La Golondrina/Tea for Two

Dot 15101 - Sleep and I'll See You in My Dreams/Sweet Sue—Just You

Brunswick's Crooning Troubador of the twenties, Nick Lucas, has made several excellent discs lately. The Capitol records below are a couple of years old and may be a little difficult to get from your dealer unless he puts in a special order.

Capitol 15242 - Tip toe Through



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Albert Spalding

## PART II

By JIM WALSH

## III. Albert Spalding's Concert Career

Some of the salient details of Albert Spalding's long and brilliant career were summed up in the biographical sketch which appeared in the 1940 edition of the Victor Record catalog:

Happily a biographical note of Albert Spalding does not begin with citing his poor and struggling parentage. Albert Spalding, America's own violinist, was born in Chicago of a quite well-to-do family. He inherited much of his talent from his mother, who was conspicuously identified with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Theodore Thomas. Albert Spalding began playing the violin at the age of seven and his principal teachers were Chiti of Florence, Buitrago of New York, and Lefort of Paris. He was graduated from the Bologna Conservatory of Music at fourteen with the highest honors ever accorded anyone since Mozart. His first American appearance was at Carnegie Hall as soloist with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch.

Mr. Spalding has since appeared in practically every civilized country of the world, and today is one of the most popular of the world-famous violinists. Radio audiences have repeatedly voted him their favorite violinist. Mr. Spalding is distinguished not only as an executant but as a composer. He has written more than sixty works for the violin, twenty-five for piano; thirty songs; several quartettes and several works for orchestra, not including many transcriptions and arrangements. Charming, handsome, debonair, Mr. Spalding is a conspicuous ornament to America in music and to music in America.

As the *New York Times* remarked in its obituary account, Spalding, born on August 15, 1888, was "one of the few native American violinists to attain a reputation of world importance." His father, J. Walter

Spalding, and his uncle, A. G. Spalding, were partners in the famous sporting goods house of A. G. Spalding and Bros. His mother, Marie Boardman Spalding, maintained a music salon in Florence, Italy, for many years. Much of the *Times* article is so informative that it may well be quoted:

"I was an ordinary looking child," he said, after he had reached the top of his career, "undersized for my age but with a kind of restless and wiry energy that was always getting me into scrapes and accidents."

He was seven when he asked for a violin, and when it arrived at Christmas it was a half-sized instrument that cost \$4 and was intended for a joke. But the boy would not put the little fiddle down, and eventually lessons were started. They went so well that he was enrolled in the Bologna Conservatory.

His formal debut was in Paris in 1905, and that same season he attracted much attention by appearing on a gigantic benefit program with Adelina Patti. Mr. Spalding's accompanist was delayed, and Patti offered the use of her own. They played without rehearsal and were very successful.

His American debut was made Nov. 8, 1908, in Carnegie Hall as soloist with the New York Symphony under the late Walter Damrosch. It was the beginning of a close friendship and led, more than a decade later, to one of the most dramatic events of Mr. Spalding's career. This was his trip through Europe with Mr. Damrosch and his orchestra, sharing soloist honors with John Powell, the pianist. (Mr. Powell, like me, a native of Richmond, and an old friend of mine, is perhaps Virginia's most distinguished native musician.—Jim Walsh.) The tour was the first ever made by an American symphony orchestra and it attracted wide attention on both sides of the Atlantic.

After his debut, Mr. Spalding toured frequently in the United States and Europe. In 1939 he made his 200th Atlantic crossing. In addition to appearing as soloist with the world's leading or-

chestras, Mr. Spalding had the distinction of being the only American violinist to perform in La Scala of Milan. He also was believed to have been the only

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American, and one of three world-famous violinists—the others being Fritz Kreisler and the late Eugene Ysaye—to be invited to play with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra.

When the United States entered World War I, Mr. Spalding cancelled more than \$35,000 worth of concert commitments to enlist in the Army Aviation Corps. A commission as a lieutenant soon followed, and he was assigned to serve in Italy, where he became adjutant to Major Fiorello H. La Guardia, later Mayor of New York. Upon his discharge the violinist married in 1919 Mary Vanderhof Pyle.

In World War II Mr. Spalding returned to Italy to serve in the psychological warfare branch of the Allied forces. Conservative and immaculate in appearance, Mr. Spalding never hesitated to try new things, sometimes with unexpected success. One of these ventures was begun in 1940, when he became violinist and master of ceremonies on an important national radio program. In addition, he composed largely, although not many of his works reached the broader audience. Mr. Spalding was one violinist virtuoso who did not use a Stradivarius. His favorite instrument was a Guarnerius del Jesu dating from 1735, although occasionally he played a Mantagnana, fourteen years older.

Mr. Spalding was a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor, and held the Cross of the Crown of Italy. Besides his wife, Mr. Spalding leaves a brother, H. Boardman Spalding.

With reference to the *New York Times* death notice, it is interesting to recall that the Virginia pianist-composer, John Powell, is one of the most enthusiastic advocates of the theory that great American music will be constructed from our Southern and Western "folk tunes." Spalding apparently had much the same views. The *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for December, 1916, said: "Albert Spalding . . . is an enthusiastic advocate of the use of the folk-song in the recitalist's repertoire and he declares that America has a wealth of such songs that are as fine as any that can be found. He believes that folk-songs should be judged by their merit when unsupported by an accompaniment. 'A tune whose outline is not strong enough to stand without props has no right to be counted as a folk-song' is his dictum."

The "lead" of the *Times* article said that Spalding died about 8:30 p. m., May 26, of a cerebral hemorrhage at his New York home, 3 East 77th Street. He and his wife were about to go to dinner when he collapsed and died within a few minutes. His death occurred within a month of the third anniversary of his last concert appearance, on June 20, 1950, at the opening of the Lewishon Stadium Season, with Efrem Kurtz directing the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. The next day Olin Downes commented: "Mr. Spalding has been before the public for 45 years. His delivery of the music (a Beethoven violin concerto) gave us the true measure of his sincerity, his inalienable perception of beauty, and unfaltering ideals."

The *New York Herald Tribune's* death notice quoted Walter Damosch as saying: "Spalding is the first great instrumentalist this country has produced," and added: "By 1941, almost ten years before his retirement as an active concert violinist, it was estimated that he had

earned more than \$2,000,000 from stage appearances alone. A soft-spoken man of average height with a ruddy complexion, he served in Italy . . . in World War II as 'Major Sheridan' (making) regular broadcasts to the Italian partisans and for a few months in 1944 was in charge of Radio Rome for the Allied Powers.

"At his farewell concert . . . he said he wanted to retire from the routine of concerts to devote his full time to writing, teaching and composing. He added, almost jokingly, that he wanted to leave 'while they still regret to see me go.' . . . During a dinner in Mr. Spalding's honor at the Waldorf-Astoria in April, 1951, Fritz Kreisler said of the honored guest: 'He never fails to play on the heart strings of his listeners.' Mr. Kreisler described him as a 'wonderful violinist . . . a distinguished citizen and patriot.'"

"Aside from his musical career, Mr. Spalding had been a director in his father's sporting goods firm, although he took little active part in its operations. His books included 'Rise to Follow,' an autobiography published in 1943, and 'A Fiddle, a Sword, and A Lady,' a biographical novel based on the life of Giuseppe Tartini, Italian violinist of the eighteenth century."

Spalding's novel, which received generally favorable criticism, was published only a few months ago. In "Rise to Follow" he gave considerable information about his record making activities and said that in some years his royalties from Edison records equaled his concert earnings. Spalding said he felt that he was in a favorable position as the only Edison violinist with a wide popular following, whereas Victor had a whole "stable," such as Kreisler, Elman, Heifetz, Zimbalist, Kubelik, and Maud Powell. Edison of course recorded other noted violinists—among them Carl Flesch, Vasa Prihoda, Kathleen Parlow, Mischa Violin and Mary Zentay—but only Spalding became a prime favorite with Diamond Disc buyers. One of the favorite stunts of the "Tone Test" days was to play violin records by Spalding and Flesch and ask the audience to observe how the New Edison brought out perfectly the characteristic touches of both—Spalding's elegant, graceful bowing as contrasted to the sturdier, more "masculine" technique of Flesch. Frequently, another violinist, for example, Arthur Walsh, an Edison staff member; Rudolph Polk, Abraham Bond or Richard Czerwonky would play with the Spalding or Flesch records, to demonstrate that the phonograph actually did "recreate" violin tone.

#### IV Albert Spalding's Records

Little space remains for consideration of Spalding's recording career, which lacked most of the picturesque experiences of performers who had begun earlier. His first record, Edison four-minute Amberol No. 177, was issued when he was 21, in August, 1909—the year which I consider the end of the pioneer recording period.

#### The New Phonogram commented:

Mr. Spalding is a young American violinist, who, by virtue of his unusual talent, has scored a great success. We regard ourselves as fortunate indeed in inducing him to reproduce some of his marvelous talent on our records. Violin solos of Henri Wienawski, the composer of this selection ("Polonaise in D Major"), are very popular with concert performers, and are found in the repertoire of every violin artist. Wienawski was himself a renowned violinist as well as composer. His "Polonaise" . . . calls for that artistic conception and brilliancy of technique so essential to the true violinist.

This first Spalding record sold at the regular price for four-minute cylinders, 50 cents. He appears not to have made any two-minute records. The August issue of *Phonogram* also contains a biographical sketch, which says that Spalding made his first appearance when ten years of age before the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. "When fourteen years old, he successfully passed the severe test of an examination for professorship at Bologna Conservatoire. He secured 48 marks out of a possible 50 and was declared by the professors composing the committee on examination to be the youngest on record to pass such an exacting examination."

Although some of Spalding's records were of too intellectual a type to appeal to the predominately "middle-brow" Edison clientele, he never-

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** For cylinder phonographs, small horns, reproducers, recorders, catalogs. State price postpaid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. my6675

**TOY DISC PHONOGRAPHS WANTED.** Hand powered or spring motor as Owens; (open works) Berliner; National Gram-O-phone; Zon-O-phone; Eldridge R. Johnson Talking Machine Company, models "A," "B," "C," "D." Also Monarch Series. State condition and price.—Aaron B. Mc Fall, 952 Pleasant St., Oak Park, Illinois. mh120052

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Music boxes, hand roller organs, as Celestina and Gem. Roller and rolls. Private collector.—Newmann Miller, 436 West Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. my3464

**SWISS MUSIC MOVEMENTS,** assorted tunes, direct imports, \$1.65. Jules Wolff, 74 Worthstreet, New York. ap3422

**INDEX to HOBBIES** articles on historical records from Sept. 1935 through Dec. 1953, now available from W. R. Moran, 1335 Olive Lane, La Canada, California for \$1.00. mh3483

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theless became a favorite with those who preferred a higher grade of music, and when Edison decided to compete a bit more energetically against Victor and Columbia in the "higher brackets" of music, he was one of the several artists "promoted" to a 75 cent classification. His first Amberol cylinder in this classification appeared in February, 1912. It was the Prize Song from Wagner's "Die Meistersinger," with piano accompaniment by the ever faithful Benoist. In addition, Spalding also played a violin obligato to Marie Rappold's soprano solo of the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria." They afterwards recorded this hackneyed but ever popular bit of religiosity on a Diamond Disc, and it was a big seller. Sometimes Mme. Rappold and Spalding gave "tone tests," singing and playing in unison with the record as in a phonograph I have.

There is an interesting article in the August, 1918, *Edison Amberola Monthly* concerning the war services of Spalding, who had made a long list of Diamond Discs before he went overseas the year before. The article is illustrated with a photograph of Lieutenant Spalding with "Captain (Congressman) F. H. LaGuardia, Commanding Officer of one of the American Aviation Camps in Italy." Although only LaGuardia's head and shoulders are shown, somehow the cocky little Fiorello, who afterwards was one of New York's most controversial mayors, appears to be strutting, while Spalding is smiling in a rather shy way. The article quoted an interview with Spalding in an Italian newspaper, *The Rome Giornale d'Italia*. Asked how he could keep up with his music and still serve as a soldier, Spalding replied:

"You cannot do two things, and do them properly, at the same time. At the present moment there is more music for me in the factories so gloriously grinding out planes and motors than in a symphony by Beethoven. And today I would rather run an office-boy's errand for my country, and do it as well as I can, if it is to serve my country, than play successfully the Bach chaconne, and I would rather hear a well-directed battery of American guns blasting the road to peace and victorious liberty than the combined applause of 10,000 audiences. And I want you to believe that the artist in me is not asleep in telling you these things, for it is my conviction that art has as much at stake in this war as democracy. Art depends as much on the freedom of individual thought and action as democracy. How, then, could it hope to endure and prosper in the face of a German peace—the triumph and vindication of a human machinery and the crushing out of individualism? With a German peace we would have seen a world-wide spreading of that foul and insidious disease which has already sapped the life and spirit out of what was once Teuton art."

Those were pulse-stirring words, well suited to win the plaudits of the Allied world in war time, but as I type this tribute to Spalding on a burning hot Memorial Day, only about 90 hours after his death, I wonder if he would echo them now in the light of the demonstrated failure of both World Wars to bless the world with even a semblance of effective democracy.

Let us pass on to other less debatable considerations. The 1925 catalog of Edison records contains more than 70 titles by Spalding, representing music of varying degrees. He once said in an interview that he was grateful because Edison had never asked him to play "any unworthy music," but much of his list consists of comparatively trivial numbers which his more cultivated listeners would hardly consider worthy of his artistry—just as Kreisler's Victor output was the subject of much complaint. There is little frankly "popular" music, although "Marcheta," "Roses of Picardy" and "Love Sends a Little Gift of Roses" are represented. There are beautiful arrangements of "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Folks at Home," and "Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes." Apparently, the only compositions by Spalding himself are "Alabama—Plantation Melody and Dance," "From the Cottonfields," and two "etchings"—"Sunday Morning Bells" and "Hurdy Gurdy Waltz." Many of the arrangements of other composers' material are credited to Spalding. For the most part the repertoire is the standard concert "war horse" type, leaning to the lighter numbers such as "Humoresque," "Meditation," several of Joachim's arrangements of Hungarian Dances by Brahms; Sarasate's "Spanish Dance No. 5"; Mendelssohn's "Spring Song"; Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois"; Raff's "Cavatina"; Rubenstein's "Melody in F"; Beethoven's "Minuet in G," and Paderewski's "Minuet," the latter doubled with Spalding's transcription of Schubert's "Hark, Hark the Lark." Those titles give a general idea of his Edison repertoire.

Spalding's Brunswick list, beginning in 1926, was much briefer and no more impressive. When he began recording for Victor in the 1930's, however, although he duplicated many of his Edison offerings, he was given an opportunity to do more impressive things, such as playing Spohr's "Concerto No. 8 in A Minor" with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra; Tartini's Devil Trill Sonata; an album set of Franck's Sonata in A Major; another album of the Brahms Sonata No. 2 in A Major; and Handel's Sonata VI in E Major. He and the distinguished viola player, William Primrose, also recorded Mozart's "Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola and Orchestra, in E-Flat."

During recent years Mr. Spalding

has made some Remington long-playing records of fine music.

I neglected to mention in the proper place that when Edison began issuing electric lateral-cut recordings in 1929, Spalding returned to the company with which he had made his start. At least one twelve-inch needle-cut record by him was issued in the new "Golden Seal" series which Edison hoped to launch as a revival to Victor's Red Seal. This record, No. 47005, contained "Humoresque" and "Hark! Hark! The Lark!" showing that the old favorites were still in demand. It was also issued on a Diamond Disc.

And three years earlier, when Edison brought out his vertical-cut long playing records, one of them playing 40 minutes (20 minutes to a side) consisted of a recital by Spalding and Benoist, dubbed from their conventional Diamond Discs.

Despite his later association with other companies, it is as an Edison star that the average record collector thinks of Spalding. In his death his native country and the world have lost a genius who was equally great as a lovable gentleman. What a pity that only three years were left to him after his retirement! The literary career which he was just beginning might have come in time—given enough time—to rival his musical achievements.

Since this article was written André Benoist also has died. He survived his long-time friend and associate less than a month. Mr. Benoist, who had been Spalding's accompanist more than 40 years, died Friday, June 19, at the Ivy House Nursing Home, Middletown, New Jersey. His home was at 5 Valentine Street, Monmouth Beach, New Jersey.

As has already been mentioned, Benoist was a native of Paris. In 1933 he was elected to the French Legion of Honor for his musical accomplishments. He was a member of the Friars and Bohemian Clubs of New York. Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Alice Moss Benoist; two daughters, Mrs. Harold Phillips and Mrs. Robert H. Higginson, both of Shrewsbury, New Jersey, and a son, Albert Spalding Benoist, of New York City.

On June 22, the *New York Times* paid Benoist this editorial tribute:

**THE ACCOMPANIST.** The life and career of Andre Benoist, who died on Friday at the age of 74, illustrate strikingly how important can be the role of those whose function is to help others without seeking the limelight for themselves. Mr. Benoist was one of the most gifted pianists of our generation, but he was known and loved not as the solo performer but in his supporting capacity. To musicians all over the world his name meant "the accompanist."

His marvelous skill added to the luster of some of the most famous instrumentalists. The three most outstanding violinists of our time, Fritz Kreisler, Jascha Heifetz and the late Albert Spalding, and the greatest cellist, Pablo Casals, had the benefit of his magnificently sympathetic understanding at the keyboard. Each was better for his assistance.

In other walks of life, similarly, there are many persons who voluntarily take

(Continued on page 41)

*Work is love made visible.  
And if you cannot work with  
love but only with distaste, it  
is better that you should leave  
your work and sit at the gate  
of the temple and take alms  
of those who work with joy.*

—Gibran

## Assorted Circus Facts

(Continued from page 29)

and of but 22 inches in stature. . . . She is willing to exhibit herself as a shew to such Gentlemen and Ladies as are desirous to gratify their curiosity, for one shilling lawful money for each person."

The smallest person who ever exhibited herself was Lucia Zarate, the Mexican Lilliputian. When she was twelve years old, she weighed only five pounds and was 20 inches high. She showed with Admiral Dot in the old Keith Museum in Boston. She died of pneumonia as a result of exposure while on a stalled train in a blizzard in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1889.

An "armless wonder," Miss M. A. Honeywell, made silhouette cutouts of the New York curious for twenty-five cents apiece from 1798 to 1831.

The first sea lion went on exhibit in Boston in 1716; the first camel there in 1739. A monkey is the first trained animal on record and was described like this in a New York newspaper in 1751: "He is a creature, called a Japanese, of about two feet height, his body resembling a human body in all parts except the feet and tail."

The first elephant ever to set foot on this country is supposed to have been shipped from Bengal in a ship called "America." It reached New York in April, 1796, and was shown at Broadway and Beaver Street before being taken on a tour of the country. Purchase price is said to have been \$10,000.

The most famous elephant of all was Old Bet, who was bought in London for twenty dollars by the brother of Hakaliah Bailey, and sold to Hakaliah for \$1,000.

Dan Rice—most famous as a clown, but well known also as a circus proprietor—experimented with electric lights for his Big Top in 1852. The Dan Rice Circus was one of the most successful of the old wagon shows. It toured the country from 1861 to 1879. Rice also at one time operated showboats on the Mississippi.

The largest of the circus boats operating on any of the rivers of America was Spaulding and Rogers' Floating Circus Palace, built in Cincinnati in 1851. This floating show resembled a huge box and was almost 200 feet long and thirty-five wide.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(Continued from page 38)

the second role, gratified in their contribution to the success of others. It requires rare skill and deep human sympathy to do this well. Some, like Andre Benoist, do it supremely.

In considering a few of the uncountable songs that have been written with Mother and Mother Love as their theme, it's odd to see how little attention song writers have paid to Mother's Day. Off-hand, one recording of a song specially written for that occasion can be recalled. A

quarter of a century ago, Ford Rush and Glenn Rowell waxed "I'll Wear a White Flower for You, Mother Dear" on a Columbia platter. It was appropriately combined with that hallowed old-timer, "A Boy's Best Friend is His Mother."

This makes it seem as if Irving Berlin may have missed a trick. Berlin, who gave the nation its unofficial patriotic anthem in "God Bless America" and its equally unofficial secular Christmas and Easter compositions, "White Christmas" and "Easter Parade," hasn't turned the trick for Mother's Day. However, in 1919 he paid homage to the Mother theme with "Was There Ever a Pal Like You?" (although Mother lives in an exalted sphere of her own, she is sometimes a Pal to her children) and in 1916 he had written "When the Black Sheep Returns to the Fold," a musical setting of the old prodigal son theme in which the wanderer's aged parents "shed tears of real joy as they whisper 'My Boy!'"

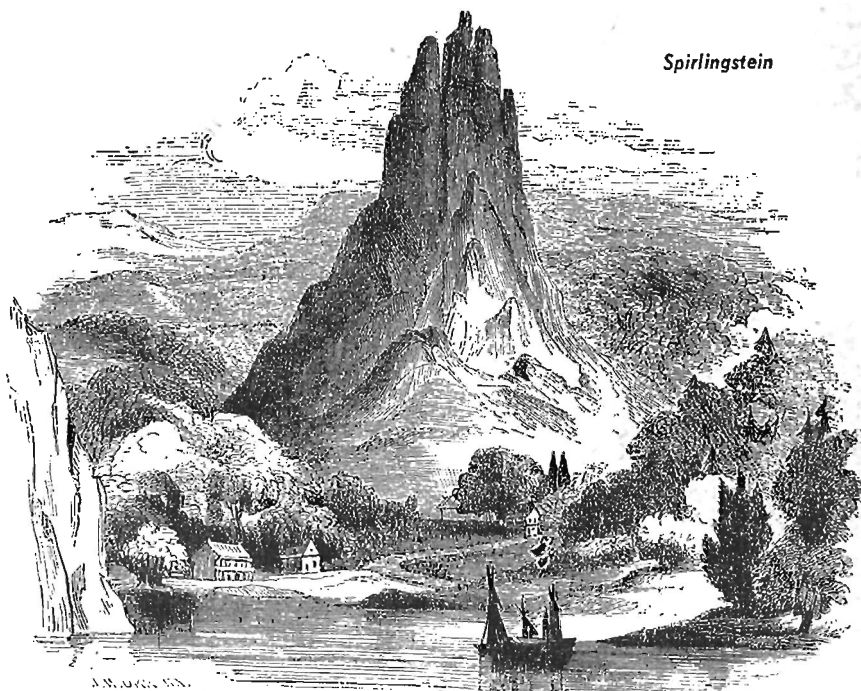
Just a cursory run-down of song titles makes it apparent that everything connected with Mother is sacred. The writer sheds tears of remorse and leads a better life as he recalls "My Mother's Prayer" or "My Mother's Bible." "My Mother's Rosary" was "ten baby fingers and ten baby toes"—"she'd watch them by the setting sun and when her daily work was done she'd count them each and every one." The theme of regret for past misdeeds runs through the revival hymns, "Tell Mother I'll Be There" and "Meet Mother in the Skies," as well as the one which Homer Rodeheaver used to intone at Billy Sunday's revival meetings, "Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me."

## Ring Lore

(Continued from page 28)

is the first prince of our Saxon rulers who is recorded to have been served in silver dishes. We can easily understand a hermit's repugnance to bathing of any kind.

Some other instances of rings as tokens are related by mediaeval historians. We are told by Matthew Paris that Pope Innocent, desiring to gain King John over to favour his plans, and knowing that he was covetous, and a diligent seeker after costly jewels, sent him four gold rings adorned with precious stone, in token that the rotundity of the rings signified eternity; "therefore your royal discretion may be led by the form of them to pray for a passage from earthly to heavenly, from temporal to eternal things. The number four, which is a square number, denotes the firmness of mind which is neither depressed in adversity nor elated in prosperity; which will then be fulfilled, when it is based on the four principal virtues, namely—justice, fortitude, prudence and virtue. . . . Moreover, the greenness of the emerald denotes faith; the clearness of the sapphire, hope; the redness of the pomegranate denotes charity, and the purity of the topaz, good works. . . . In the emerald, therefore, you have what to believe; in the sapphire, what to hope for; in the pomegranate, what to love; and in the topaz, what to practice; that you ascend from one virtue to another, until you see the Lord in Zion."



From an old engraving.

Handwritten notes in the bottom left corner of the page: "April 1954" and "32".



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Helen Trix

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

A few months ago I was glad to read in the New York Times that a writer, Joseph M. Graham, has organized "The Friends of Frank Merriwell." The purpose of this group is to bring together in a mutual interest the men who read Burt L. Standish's stories of those legendary Yale athletes, Frank and Dick Merriwell, in the five-cent Tip Top Weekly, and to make sure that although the stories of the Merriwell Brothers are out of print, Frank and Dick and their friends will not be forgotten.

I don't exactly belong in the charmed circle because Tip Top ceased publication years before I would have

been old enough to read it. But when I entered my teens a great many back copies came into my possession and I have bought others since. The result is that I have a fair working knowledge of the Merriwell saga. And of all I have read I have the most recollection of No. 568, "Dick Merriwell's Regret; or the Friend He Never Knew." This was usually acclaimed the masterpiece of the more than 900 Merriwell stories turned out by Gilbert Patten under the Standish pen name.

The plot of "Dick Merriwell's Regret" deals with the tragic story of Ellis Preston, a quiet, retiring Yale student who worshipped the university's star athlete from a distance. Preston died, apparently from pneumonia following a hazing, and only after his death did Dick Merriwell learn of the admiration that shy Ellis had felt for him. This left Dick with a lingering sense of regret that there had been a true friend and admirer in his life whom he had never known.

"Standish" must have modeled himself on my favorite author, Charles Dickens, in writing the story's death bed scene, for it was crammed full of pathos—or bathos, if you prefer. I was fifteen when I read it and I cried myself sick, while the tune of my favorite sob-ballad, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," ran like a leit motif through my mind. I have never since been able to separate my liking for the song from the memory of "Dick Merriwell's Regret."

Frank and Dick Merriwell have nothing to do with Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists except that as I set about telling the life story of Helen Trix I myself am filled with regret that I made a friend, and a dear one, whom it was never my privilege to meet face to face. That has happened more than once during the more than eleven years I have been writing for HOBBIES. Of course I have written about many artists whom I have met in person. Others were already dead before I wrote concerning them. But there have been still others with whom I corresponded and for whom I formed a deep affection but was never fortunate enough to greet in the flesh. Frank

Crumit was one. And Helen Trix was another.

It will be a source of lasting regret to me that Helen and I were never able to put into effect the plans we had made for a get-together. This talented artist, who was born in a small Pennsylvania town but grew up to become a favorite in American vaudeville houses and English music halls and give several command performances before the Royal Family of Great Britain, had one of the most romantic careers of any pioneer recording artist. I am sure she was not only a gifted but also a lovable lady.

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*Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*

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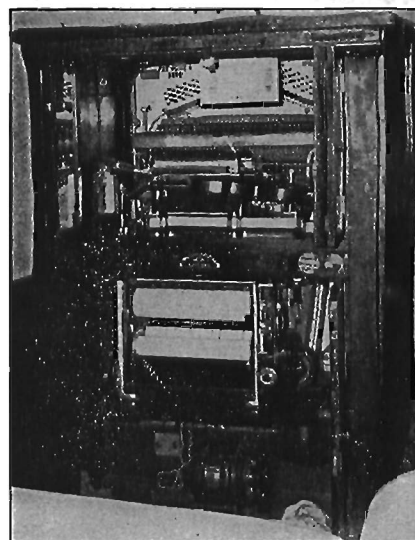
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From hints she dropped I knew my friend Helen was not in good health, but it was a shock when I received a telegram on November 19, 1951, from her sister, Josephine, who had been her vaudeville and musical comedy partner for many years. It said: "Helen Trix passed on Sunday. Services Wednesday 8 p. m., Campbell's Funeral Home, 81st Street and Madison Avenue, New York City. Josephine Fields." Unfortunately, I couldn't get away from my job as a radio news editor in Roanoke, Va., to attend the funeral and pay my last respects.

Some of the facts of Helen Trix's life may be found in "The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Composers, Authors and Publishers," but a bit more detail was contained in the New York Herald Tribune obituary notice:

A funeral service will be held tomorrow night . . . for Miss Helen Trix, 59, author and actress who died at St. Elizabeth's Hospital Sunday night. Her home was at 11 E. 32nd St.

Miss Trix was born in Newmanstown, Pa., and was graduated from Albright College, where she specialized in music and elocution. She entered vaudeville as both a singer and actress and while touring the circuits became interested in writing special material.

In 1920 she was featured in the London production of "League of Nations" and was herself composer, producer and star of a musical revue in London entitled "A to Z." With Andre Charlot she composed and produced a revue, "Tricks," in which she starred in 1925-26. She wrote and prepared radio material and songs for her own productions and gave several command performances in London.

Among the songs she wrote were "Parisian Peacock Girl," "It's Making Me Love You All the More," "That's How I Knew," "I Just Want to Give Myself Away" and "You'd Love to Live in Paris."

Surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Josephine Greenfield and Mrs. Alma Cirina, and a brother, Carl Yeiser.

The Herald Tribune also contained this notice, inserted by ASCAP: "We announce with profound sorrow the death of our beloved member and colleague, Helen Trix, in New York City, on Nov. 18, 1951. OTTO A. HARBACH, President, American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers."

(In passing, although Josephine Trix's husband is known professionally as Fields, the foregoing biographical notice makes it appear his name is really Greenfield. And since the last name of Miss Trix's brother is Yeiser, Trix probably is only an assumed name for theatrical use.)

The ASCAP book mentions a few other songs written by Helen Trix: "Follow Me," "In Boo Boo Boo," "There Will Come a Time," "Back

to London Town," "I Never Worry About the Morning," "International Wedding Song," "Huckleberries," "Beautiful Shangri-La," "I'm Going Home," "Sweet Daddy," "Calico Ball," "The Fascinating Whistle of a Train," "The Bridal Waltz," "I Can Live on Memories" and "The Yankee Tango Girl." There were many others. None of her compositions, however, would be classed as outstanding hits.

## II

Most of this department's readers, I imagine, are more interested in Helen Trix's recording career than in her many stage successes. Yet it is odd, at first sight, that the ASCAP biography and the obituary notices in the Herald Tribune and Variety all omit any reference to the fact that the comedienne was a pioneer recording artist.

I think I know the reason for this. The information in the ASCAP book was supplied by Helen herself, and the death notices contained information taken from the book. And any reference to Helen Trix's singing for records as long ago as 1906 would have brought her age into question. If the published statements are correct, then Miss Trix was only fourteen when she began making records. That of course is not impossible. A good many well known recording artists began their careers in their teens. But the age of fourteen is hard to reconcile with the statement that the singer attended college, and with Billy Murray's recollection that she was married to a vaudeville comedian, Frank Fogarty, when she started her phonograph career.

Stage personalities naturally like to appear as young as possible. It's a bread-and-butter matter with them. So it's likely that Miss Trix, in an entirely justified effort to conceal the advance of time, took off from five to ten years in preparing the notes from which the ASCAP material was taken. Of course it doesn't particularly matter.

At any rate, Helen wrote me that her first record was an Edison two-minute cylinder, "Is Your Mother In, Molly Malone?" This, No. 9365, appeared in the October, 1906, list, with the comment:

We take pleasure in presenting to the army of phonograph owners a new singer in Miss Trix, whose clear, well modulated contralto voice will, we believe, gain her a firm place in the galaxy of Edison stars. Her first offering is a song in Irish dialect, telling of the Irish lover, who, whenever he went to court Molly Malone, felt it his duty to first inquire if her father and mother were in . . .

Incidentally, I differ with Edison's description of Miss Trix as a "contralto." To me she sounds like a soprano.

In view of Helen's later successes in England, it's interesting to observe that early in her career she had already developed a knack of imitating the popular British music hall entertainers. Her second Edison cylinder, announced in November, 1906, was a take-off on the highly popular English comedienne, Vesta Victoria, singing one of her topical hits, "The Next Horse I Ride On":

A new note in popular songs was struck by Fred Murray and George Everard when they produced this composition, which has been chosen by Helen Trix as her second Edison record. A young girl's father came into some money and he insisted that his daughter should learn to ride horseback. The first time she was put on the horse the wrong way, looking backward . . . The second time . . . the girl had a no less unhappy experience. Each time she declared that "The next horse I ride on, I am going to be tied on." The song has a good swing. Miss Trix has made a record of it that will add to her popularity as an Edison artist . . . This song has been widely sung by Vesta Victoria, who also made a great success with "Waiting at the Church."

It probably will be a surprise to most collectors that Helen Trix even on occasion sang Harry Lauder songs. During the period in which she made Edison cylinders she was also singing for Victor and Zonophone discs, and one of her Zonos, No. 796, is a charming version of Lauder's success, "Stop Yer Tickling, Jock," which I prefer to Sir Harry's own recording. It contains no laughing and no monolog in Scotch dialect, but is sung vivaciously and attractively.

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Tanenbaum, a Hartford, Conn., book dealer, some Zon-o-phone record lists for 1905, 1906 and 1907. In the supplement for July, 1907, this record is listed with the comment: "Humorous English song guaranteed to start the feet going and bring a laugh to the lips." As far as I know, this is the only Lauder song Miss Trix recorded during her brief American phonograph career of about two years.

The same supplement contains another Trix record of which I had not previously heard—No. 797, "The Story of a Clothes Line," which had the sub-title, "Another pair of stockings on the line." "The story," we are informed, "unfolds as new stockings appear on the line. Sung with great success by Alice Lloyd, the clever English comedienne."

And, although it really has nothing to do with Helen Trix, I cannot resist setting down here for my fellow collectors the (to me) astonishing knowledge gained from this supplement that when the Peerless Quartet was first organized in 1907 the baritone was Steve Porter instead of Arthur Collins. In all my years of amassing information about pioneer recording artists I had never heard Porter mentioned in connection with the Peerless, although he obviously takes part in some of the old Columbia Quartet records. The other members of the Peerless of course were Albert Campbell, Henry Burr and Frank C. Stanley. But because Campbell used the name of Frank Howard in singing for Zon-o-phone, the first tenor is referred to as "Mr. Howard."

In December, 1906, the comedienne was represented in the Edison list by No. 9426, "A Chip of the Block," which she also sang on an eight-inch Victor, No. 4923. The Edison is much better than the disc. I owned the Victor version for many years but couldn't understand more than half the words. Then, when I obtained the cylinder, I got every word at first playing. Here is what the Edison supplement said: "Father raised a family of six of the good old fashioned stock and they were all chips of the block. The two verses and chorus tell in a funny manner in what way each followed Dad's peculiarities. A feature . . . is Miss Trix's clever whistling. She is an expert in the art and few members of the opposite sex are her equal."

For a short time a new cylinder by Helen Trix appeared monthly. Her offering (No. 9450) for January, 1907, was her biggest hit as an American recording artist. It was the still well remembered "Bird on Nellie's Hat," which she also made on Victor record No. 4904. This clever number was a sensation, and after Miss Trix had gone to England the demand for a four-minute version was so great Edison had it re-recorded by Ada Jones. The supplement said: "A new comic song by Alfred Solman (music) and Arthur J. Lamb (words). The little bird on Nellie's hat sees and comments on the love making of Nellie's various

beaux. Miss Trix . . . is in her usual clear and distinct voice."

The "Nellie" song also appeared in the January Victor list, with this comment:

A thoroughly original song, which has made one of the biggest hits of the season. The bird which Nellie wears on her hat is quite a knowing little rascal, and tells a number of things which Nellie would rather suppress. Miss Trix's singing of this song must be heard to be appreciated. Another number by Miss Trix, "Chip o' the Block," which is used in her clever vaudeville specialty, will be found in the 8-inch list.

In this same January Victor supplement was a duet by Miss Trix and Dan W. Quinn, No. 4914, "Is Marriage a Failure?" Editor Sam Rous wrote:

Here is still another new combination of singers—Miss Trix being a new comer, while Mr. Quinn is well-known as a famous entertainer. This amusing duet was one of the hits of "The Mayor of Tokio." The first verse pictures everything as lovely and serene in the family, but the second stanza is full of storms. The little conversations, one of which is supposed to occur in the ballroom, and the other at 3 a. m., when hubby comes home, are well done and quite amusing.

From the Victor reference to Miss Trix's "vaudeville specialty" it will be seen she had already begun doing stage work as well as making records.

In February, 1907, Edison issued one of the most unusual records in which Helen took part. It was No. 9471, the catchy "Whistle It," from Henry Blossom and Victor Herbert's operetta, "The Red Mill," in which she sang with Billy Murray and Edward Meeker—the latter being the Edison announcer as well as one of the company's popular comedians. Oddly enough the record by this talented trio didn't sell well and was discontinued by August, 1909.

As another oddity I'll mention that Billy Murray took part in at least four recorded versions of "Whistle It," each time with a different combination of assisting artists. On the Victor record he sang with Ada Jones and S. H. Dudley; on Zon-o-phone with Miss Jones and Steve Porter; and on Columbia with Ada and Frank C. Stanley. He once told me he recalled the Helen Trix of 1907 as "a little girl living in Brooklyn and with a slight German accent." "When we'd meet," he said, "she'd exclaim 'Hel-lo, Bil-lee!' After she went to England she acquired the British mannerisms so successfully that when I'd see her on one of her trips to this country, she'd intone 'Cheerio, Willie!'"

I believe there were only two other Edison records by Helen Trix. The May, 1907, issue included another of her Vesta Victoria take-offs, "I Told His Missus All About Him," and in June she sang a Harry Von Tilzer number, "Lulu and Her La, La, La." This was unsuccessful—not a common characteristic of Von Tilzer songs—and the record was cut out in 1909.

Just why Helen ended her successful Edison career after less than a year I don't know. Perhaps domestic unhappiness had something to do with it. Billy Murray thought she went abroad after her husband, Frank Fogarty, died of tuberculosis, but

Helen herself said in one of her letters to me the marriage ended by divorce before Fogarty's death. In the March, 1909, issue of *The New Phonogram* an Elmira, New York, reader asked: "Does Helen Trix sing for you any more?" and received the reply, "She has not sung for us in some time."

Two Victor records by Helen Trix not so far mentioned are No. 4986, "It Ain't All Honey and It Ain't All Jam" (another selection popularized by Vesta Victoria) and No. 4946, "The Next Horse I Ride On." She largely duplicated her Edison repertoire on Victor. Because of Helen's seeming reluctance to discuss her recording career I never learned how she happened to begin making records, but perhaps she was a protegee of Dan Quinn and he introduced her to the recording studios. I have mentioned their Victor duet, "Is Marriage a Failure?" and they also sang No. 4959, a nonsense song, "Fol de Iddley Ido," from "Pearl and the Pumpkin."

I likewise have two Zon-o-phones by them—538, "Fol de Iddley Ido," and 549, "Whistling Mike." Miss Trix doesn't sing in the latter but whistles rather faintly in the background. Both these numbers are listed in the November, 1906, Zon-o-phone supplement, but probably had previously appeared in September. If so, they were issued a month before the Edison cylinder of "Is Your Mother In, Molly Malone?" which Helen believed to be her first record. Concerning No. 538, the supplement termed it a "humorous duet of exceptional merit, introducing singing and whistling," while "Whistling Mike" was "a humorous Irish selection; the words are clever, tune very catchy. Mr. Quinn sings the verses, Miss Trix whistles the choruses."

And now I have told all I know of Helen Trix's American recording career.

(To be continued)

## Explaining Those "Mother's Day Songs"

By an odd accident which I can't clearly explain, four paragraphs of an article about Mother's Day songs appeared at the end of my Albert Spalding article in the March issue of *HOBBIES*. Of course they didn't belong there.

I recognize the paragraphs as being from an article which I wrote last year for *Variety*. Possibly a discarded sheet of manuscript got mixed in with the ones about Spalding and was set into type. At any rate, the article properly should have ended with the quotation from the *New York Times*, commenting on the death of Spalding's accompanist, Andre Benoist. This explanation is given for the benefit of those who have been puzzled by the incongruous combination of parts of two separate articles.

—Jim Walsh

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Helen Trix

(Continued from the April Issue)

By JIM WALSH

I don't know just when Helen Trix went to England or why. Perhaps it was to forget the wreck of her unhappy marriage, for in her life with Fogarty the answer to "Is Marriage a Failure?" was "yes."

The next we hear of this brilliant comedienne and accomplished lady the year is 1912, and the source is George Jessel's autobiography, "So Help Me," in which he confesses that at the age of 14 he loved Helen Trix:

Our act, "The Kid Kabaret," began a tour of . . . the Orpheum Time circuit in Winnipeg. One of the other attractions on the bill was Helen Trix. She had been born in a little town in Pennsylvania, had gone to Europe as a pianist and had now returned to America as a typical English lady, singing gentle songs with a decided British accent. At the finish of the act she appeared as a boy, her very feminine figure even more impressive in pants. She was the first gentlewoman I had ever known. It was through her that I started reading poetry. When the Orpheum Circuit ended I knew most of the Indian Love Lyrics by heart. Helen used to read them to me on the long sleeper jumps through the tour.

I was fourteen and terribly in love with her. She had been married to a famous Irish monologist, Frank Fogarty (sic), but they had been divorced. She was very sweet to me. One morning as we were arriving in San Francisco she held my hand and told me she would not be seeing so much of me from now on, for in Frisco was waiting her man, Jimmy Britt, former lightweight champion of the world. This news was a knockout for me. I found myself mumbling aloud one of the poems she had taught me, "For This is Our Wisdom" . . .

I kept repeating this . . . until one day, dining in a kosher restaurant on Turk Street in San Francisco, (Eddie) Cantor said to me, "Georgie, stop cry-

ing in the noodle soup. It's weak enough as it is."

It must have been during this American tour that Helen wrote three songs which Witmark published in 1913. She did both the words and music of "Chiquita Chi" and "Are You Coming to the Ball?" and the music of "In Boo-Boo-Boo" to words by Fred Leigh. Presumably, she was never married to Prizefighter Jimmy Britt—certainly a rather surprising choice of "heart interest" for so refined and feminine a lady.

### IV

Just when Miss Trix's younger sister, Josephine, joined her as her partner in the "sister act" which made them outstanding favorites in England is something I have not learned. They were well established by the early 1920's. I have a faded clipping from a Baltimore newspaper, probably published in 1922, which shows a blurred photo of the pair, then appearing at the Maryland

Theater. They were obviously two attractive young women, and probably many admirers indulged in the same pun as did a friend to whom I showed a picture of the sisters:

"Well, they certainly were cute little Trix!"

They also must have been one of the first so-called "sister teams." About the first of the sister acts to make records in the United States were Fanny and Kitty Watson, who sang for Okeh, Pathe, Emerson and other records from 1917 to 1920. They still play an occasional date at the Palace in New York. Then came the Farber Sisters (Columbia and Pathe); the Heart Sisters (Columbia), who sang with Al Jolson in "Bombo";

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Vivian and Rosetta Duncan (Victor); the Brox Sisters (Victor and Brunswick); the Dennis and MacDowell Sisters (Edison); Ethel and Dorothea Ponce (Edison and Columbia); the Tietge and Pickens Sisters (Victor); and the Frohne and Paull Sisters, who sang with dance bands playing for Edison. Ethel and Eleonora Olson made duets in Norwegian for Edison and Victor, and I knew the Bowman Sisters of Johnson City, Tenn., who had sung hill-billy and "blues" duets for Columbia, with Sister Jenny playing an accordion accompaniment, in the late 1920's. In more recent years there have been the Boswell Sisters (Brunswick), the very popular Andrews Sisters trio (Decca), the Wallace Sisters (Decca) and the teen-age Bell Sisters (Victor).

The Trix Sisters were going strong a good many years before most of the others got started. They were making records in England as long ago as 1922—probably earlier. One of their 1922 offerings was HMV B1302, on one side of which they sang "There'll Come a Time." On the other, with the appropriate assistance of the dapper English musical comedy star, Jack Buchanan, they did "Dapper Dan."

After electric recording was introduced, the Trix Sisters were features of the English Columbia catalog. Both Helen and Josephine recorded alone as well as a pair. Issues of The Gramophone in the late 1920's frequently contained reviews of records by the Sisters. In October, 1926, there was praise of their version of "I'm Sittin' On Top of the World." Three years later, in November, 1929, the critic said: "Their many friends will welcome another record by the Trix Sisters, especially as it contains two such popular numbers as 'S'posin' and 'Come On, Baby.'"

Roger Wimbush had an article in the June, 1929, Gramophone, in which he said: "The success of the Trix Sisters . . . shows that there is a definite public for female interpreters of jazz. . . . These in particular make excellent records since they chiefly rely on vocal harmony, and if the listeners can imagine the two sisters in the daintiest of evening frocks (not a great strain on the imagination, surely) he will be enjoying all there is to enjoy. Their rendering of 'I'm Crazy Over You' is worth hearing if only for the amazing imitation of the saxophone toward the end." Wimbush's article was accompanied by a drawing showing Helen at the piano, while Josephine, standing, apparently was "singing the lead." Personally, I don't like the typing of the Trix Sisters as "jazz singers."

In July, 1929, appeared this comment: "The Trix Sisters have another record, but this time they each have a side. Josephine sings 'I Must Have That Man' and Helen 'Digga Digga Do.' They are both good efforts." The 1930 English Columbia catalog listed twelve double-faced records by the sisters. One side of No. 5368 sounds particularly interesting. The title is "Negro Com-



THE TRIX SISTERS  
Helen and Josephine

plaints." It is sung by the sisters, with Helen at the piano and Len Eillis playing the guitar

My friendship by correspondence with Helen Trix began in 1941, after she had come back to her native country because of World War II. I read in Variety of her return and wrote to her to tell her how much I had enjoyed her records—the American ones, for I have never heard the English Columbias. On September 24, she replied, in a large and dashing type of handwriting that appears characteristic of theatrical personalities, and at times wasn't easy to read:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Thanks for your letter of August 10th. I shall be very glad to meet you if you get to New York any time. Our mutual friend, Billy Murray, will know where to get hold of me, as I am giving up this apartment the first of October. All good wishes, sincerely, Helen Trix.

At that time I was living in Johnson City, Tenn. On January 31, 1942, Miss Trix wrote:

Dear Mr. Walsh: . . . I don't know yet if you ever got to New York. Never saw Billy Murray after I wrote you saying he would know where to find me. Well, I have been writing songs again and we are starting off with the enclosed number. We think it will be a good spring and summer song. Do give it a plug down there. Next week we are having several records made by some of the hit record-girls. The song is light, catchy and easy to learn. The chorus makes a good singing blues idea. Am hoping it will be a hit.

The song, "Huckleberries," didn't turn out a hit, although it was a good novelty number which I was glad to give several plugs at radio station WJHL in Johnson City.

There must have been another letter or two which I didn't find while assembling material for this article. The more intimate part of our correspondence began in February, 1951, when I received a letter addressed to me in care of Walsh's Wax Works, WSLS, Roanoke, Va.:

Dear Jim Walsh: Hello, this is Helen Trix speaking. Read your very interesting article in Variety Christmas and it was indeed fine. I have been back in the song writing business a few years. . . . Last year I wrote "The Calico Ball," recorded by Johnny Long and his band. And yesterday the record of the enclosed came out and it's a peach—Abbey records. The music boys in New York think I may have something worth while as there are hundreds of brides a day. Let us hope so. . . . I trust this finds you well and still enjoying the music world as I do.

The "enclosed" was the sheet music of the song she had written, "The Bridal Waltz," a very pretty number as I learned when the Abbey record was sent to me.

From this time until her death I heard from Helen frequently and we soon seemed old friends. By February 26 I had become "Dear Jim" and she was "Dear Helen":

Thanks for your very charming letter and thanks for your kind cooperation down there on "The Bridal Waltz." They are giving it a plug up here at quite a few places and they (the publishers) are getting special cards out to forward to all prospective brides. A splendid idea, don't you think?

About the party (for pioneer recording artists) at Garden City, L. I., I shall be delighted to come along if I am in town. Dear old Billy Murray! I have not seen him in a long time. About Elida Morris, I never knew she came to England and heard nothing of her being there, but I did know her here and we played on the bill with her several times. I always thought she was a very good artist. I never knew Billy Whitlock. . . . I am sorry not to be able to send you a photo. The old ones are stored in trunks with my sister in Brooklyn, and I don't want to have any new ones done until I do something worth while.

I am working hard on the writing of songs and have a few more coming along. My sister Josephine is out of the business and lives right near me. She does not care for show business any more, although she says she would make records with me. . . . Her husband is in the antique business and doing well. They went through the war in London and lost everything they had, but they have pulled out beautifully and are doing fine. . . .

I had already known that Josephine was in "the States," for I had saved a clipping headed "Josie Trix Back in U. S." from the November 15, 1944, issue of Variety, which said: "Josephine Trix, of the former vaude team, the Trix Sisters, arrived in New York from London last week, accompanied by her husband, Eddie Fields, London comedian-producer. Couple had been trying to get out of London since last April. An American, it's Fields' first time here in twenty-nine years. Their London home was bombed, but they escaped unscathed. Couple are making their home in New York with the other Trix sister."

About this time I sent Helen a snapshot of myself, made while I was eating breakfast at the Swan Luncheonette in Vinton, Va. On first reading I thought she was thanking me for a "Plute," but I finally made it out to be "photo." I found her comment on the flash shot both flattering and amusing:

"Dear Jim: Your letter and photo arrived. Writing later. Will try and scout up an old picture and forward same. You should have been a Broad-

way leading man. You have the appearance of such."

In turn, I amused Helen by sending her an envelope I had received in 1945 from my dear friend, the late John L. Norton, Sr., who with his son Jack operated the Woodymay Record Company in Boston, Mass., and whose advertisements appeared regularly in HOBBIES until his death. "Satan," as the elder Norton delighted to call himself, had a fondness for putting all sorts of odd return addresses on his envelopes. The one I sent for her to see was purportedly from "Helen Trix, Canary-voice, New York." She was also amused when I told her that because of her "pepper-pot" personality in her "Chip of the Block" record, I always thought of her, when I was a small boy operating the imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company, as a lady of uncertain temper who would become annoyed if any delay occurred in her recording engagements and stalk indignantly out of the studio. As I remember expressing it in one of my imaginary stories about the recording artists who obsessed my imagination: "Miss Trix had long since gone home in disgust."

By this time Helen Trix had only a few months to live, but for some time longer her mood continued cheerful. Her letter dated March 16, 1951, is especially interesting:

Thanks for your nice long letter. I was quite amused at your imaginary dramas. I am returning the envelope, and he wrote my name almost like I do at times. Yes, I do remember doing "Chip of the Block." My first record was "Molly Malone." I did "The Bird On Nellie's Hat" . . . and I do remember the one with Billy Murray and Ed Meeker. I had forgotten Ed's name till you mentioned it. Yes, Jim, I will come to the party. . . . Thanks for sending me a copy of HOBBIES. . . . I shall be delighted to give you an article for it and am sure I can give you a good one. . . . I still sit at the piano and sing songs and songs. I have written some lovely ones. Am in hopes of placing some with the publishers. All you need is one good hit, so shall keep on working. . . . I should love to get back to making records again, and I feel I will one day.

I am sending a photo of the Trix Sisters. This was one of our much used ones in our heyday. One day I shall send you an up-to-date one. Do you ever hear from Billy Murray? If you do ask him to give me a ring. . . . If he gets into New York I could say hello to him and have a chat. I know he lives in Freeport. . . . Now don't work too hard. Life is beautiful, so don't hurry it and knock yourself out. About Clarice Vance, I think she passed on several years ago. Take it easy, Jim! All the best from HELEN.

On April second, Helen wrote:

We had our ASCAP dinner last week and it was really lovely to see so many old friends. . . . Did I tell you I placed another song with Jack Mills and they seem to be very keen on it? Title, "The Black Sheep Is Back in the Fold." With all the spiritual pictures and songs of a sacred order now in swing I hope it will hit. Josephine and I made a swell record of it in harmony. When they start getting the dubs out I will send you one.

Unfortunately I was never sent a dubbing of this Trix Sisters record, nor did I get the "up-to-date" photo I was promised.

A letter misdated May 26, 1950, instead of 1951, is less cheerful than the preceding ones. Helen said she had learned that eleven songs called "The Bridal Waltz" had been written and registered with ASCAP during the past seven months, and this naturally was interfering with promotion of her song by the same name. I had mentioned her marriage to Frank Fogarty and my belief that he died before the marriage ended. She commented: "Yes, I was married to Fogarty, and it's a horrible memory. I left him long before he died. . . . It's like a book—you read and forget the details, Jim."

On June 2, Helen wrote me she didn't remember making the Zonophone record of "Stop Your Tickling, Jock," and shortly afterwards I sent her a dubbing. She was more cheerful when she wrote four days later: "Dear Jim: Thanks for HOBBIES. . . . Shall look it over thoroughly. Here is good news. Darewski Music Company of England, whom I have known for years, just bought the British rights of 'The Bridal Waltz.' Hurrah for a break!"

On June 26, Miss Trix again misdated a letter as 1950 instead of '51. Referring to the dubbing, she said: "'Stop Your Tickling, Jock,' was like (something) out of the dark and handed me a laugh. It's no more like me today than someone else. I shall try it again on a better player. It goes to show how we have all gone forward when we hear these old things. We had news from London. 'The Bridal Waltz' had a splendid reaction after being broadcast and they are doing records. . . . I am hoping for the best. . . . I enjoyed HOBBIES very much, Jim. It's quite a magazine."

With the "Jock" dubbing I sent Helen a recording of my own voice. On July 13, she wrote: "Yes, you have a Southern drawl and I like it. So don't let anyone tell you it's too much. I also sounded better with 'Stop Your Tickling, Jock.' Today was the first chance I had to hear that record on a good machine. . . . I had a letter from London saying 'The Bridal Waltz' was their Number One plug and they were crazy about it. Joe Loss, the top band, did a record of it. . . . I had a long chat with Jack Mills and he is very keen on me doing TV."

In August and September I received only three postals from Helen, who was obviously unwell and becoming worse because the handwriting grows progressively shaky. On the one for September 20, she complains of "feeling seedy."

My last letter from Helen Trix was dated October 16, just a month and two days before her death. In part it said:

My dear, I have not written before as the devil has just tried to knock me about like mad. I have felt so rotten, have not been near a publisher in weeks. All I want to do is lie around. . . . The publisher that publishes "The Bridal

Waltz" in London is here and I will try and see him before he returns. I really don't know what is going on as I have not even seen a Variety. Well, that's the way it goes at times. . . . It's just a battle, old dear, and may the best man win.

We are having Indian summer . . . and I love it. I cannot stand the cold weather. Keep well, Jim, and let me hear from you when you can. All the best. Ever, HELEN.

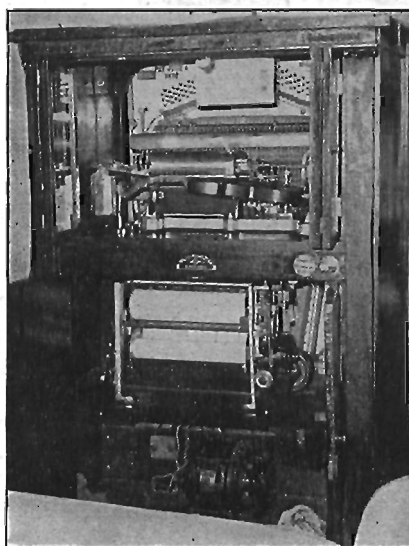
I replied, but heard nothing more from, or about, Helen until the telegram from Josephine came, telling me of the death of my dear friend by correspondence, "The Little Pepper Pot," who had enjoyed triumphal appearances before British royalty but whom I was fated never to see. For her the battle was over. The shock was great and my sorrow was the greater because it was out of the question for me to go to New York for the funeral services. Recalling how much her records had meant to me and how our acquaintance through the mail had deepened into an almost tender intimacy. I was left feeling much as Dick Merriwell when he experienced that gnawing regret because of the death of "the friend he never knew."

It had been my plan to have a long talk with Helen and write a HOBBIES article based on what she told me. Failing in that, I have done the best I could, on the basis of what information I have, to pay a tribute to the memory of a gifted and gracious lady.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## ADA JONES

### and the Shannon Four Give a Concert in Roanoke, Va.

By JIM WALSH

Fifty years ago a Columbia Graphophone Company official talked turkey to the great Leonard Garfield Spencer.

The official walked in one day while Len and Billy Murray were rehearsing what used to be called a "coon song," with Spencer taking the part of a Negro man and Murray, his tenor voice pitched to a falsetto, enacting the role of the "wench." For a moment the official, who probably was Victor Emerson, stared in disgust, then he exclaimed:

"Oh, for gosh sake! If you've got to do this sort of thing, cut out this business of having a man pretend that he's a woman! From now on use a woman when the part calls for one!"

That was an historic moment. Billy told Len of a young woman he had heard singing popular songs a few days before in Huber's Museum. So Spencer, whose varied talents had caused him to become the first famous recording artist in the early 1890's, no longer did duets with Billy Murray, but engaged Ada Jones as his partner, and (as related in a series of HOBBIES articles from July, 1946, through January, 1947), Miss Jones became by far the most popular feminine record maker. By an ironic twist, she began recording sentimental duets with Murray three years later, and their team work was so popular it gradually pushed the Jones-Spencer descriptive sketches into the background.

A decade or more before she won international fame as Len Spencer's associate, and probably while she was still in her teens, Ada Jones made experimental cylinders for the ill-starred North American Phonograph Company. However, her career as a professional recording artist began in 1904 and continued until her death 18 years later. At the height of her popularity the buxom comedienne was almost a legendary figure. False reports that she had died were constantly in circulation. Today, although she has been dead nearly 32 years, there remains a fantastic side to Ada Jones' life story, for she has admirers among record collectors who refuse to believe she is not still liv-

ing. Unfortunately, some of the details of this gifted artist's life are so obscure that in spite of my extensive investigation she remains much of a "mystery woman."

That statement brings to mind my article, "Her Dolls Depict Favorite Phonograph Stars," in the January HOBBIES. In describing the dolls dressed by Mrs. Margaret E. White to represent Ada Jones and Billy Murray, I wrongly gave Mrs. White's address as Rockport, Mass. The skillful doll's dressmaker's son, Lester L. White, has a home there but his mother lives at 261 Derby Street, West Newton, Mass. In July, 1953, I made a plane trip to visit Mrs. White, whom I have "adopted" as my godmother, and she has presented me with the Ada and Billy dolls, which she considers among her finest achievements.

At the conclusion of the article I said that I hoped to learn the exact date of Ada Jones' birth by writing to the Central Registrar of Vital Statistics in London, England. And I promised to share with HOBBIES readers any information I received. I am sorry to report that my efforts once more proved fruitless. H. W. Taylor, the Registrar General at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, replied that the archives contained birth records of a large number of persons named Ada Jones; consequently, he said, the information I was able to furnish was "too meagre and indefinite to permit of a search being made." He was also unable to find any listing of the birth of Charles D'Almaine, the once famous violinist, whose life story is difficult to piece together but shall yet be related in these pages.

#### II

Just after I had typed the preceding paragraph, I received a letter from my old friend, Clarence A. Ferguson, well known Merrill, Wisconsin, dealer in Edison discs and cylinders. Mr. Ferguson thanked me for writing the January article on Albert Benzler, and mentioned that in addition to being a virtuoso of the piano, bells and xylophone, Benzler played the violin. Says Mr. Ferguson:

"I have an old picture taken in the Edison recording room, where a record is being made, and (Eugene) Jaudas is directing the orchestra. . . . Benzler is one of the players, and he is playing a violin. He could take any instrument and play it like a master. The picture is about 1905."

My attention perked up when I read the next paragraph of the Ferguson letter:

"I believe I have some news on Ada Jones for you. . . . A woman who buys records from me . . . came from England, and the same town as Ada Jones. The lady was born December 6, 1878 . . . and she went to school with a girl by the name of Ada Jones. They were about the same age, (so) this would be the age of Ada. . . . I hope, Jim, this is what you are looking for, and sure hope you get some good luck out of it, as Ada's early years are in the dark."

For a moment I felt exhilarated after reading the foregoing. Then I remembered a devastating fact. Ada Jones' parents came to this country when Ada was a baby, and Ada was singing in a Philadelphia theater by the time she was seven. Obviously, she could not have gone to school in England with Mr. Ferguson's friend. As Mr. Taylor had pointed out, there were a lot of people in England named Ada Jones.

However, a lucky chance has come my way, which if it does not solve the mystery of Ada Jones' parentage and birth date at least does provide some additional information based on the comedienne's own statements.

Some months ago I was fortunate enough to find a photograph of Ada Jones and the Shannon Four, taken when she and that excellent male quartet, which had then been in existence only a few months, gave a concert in Roanoke, Va., 36 years ago this month, in April, 1918. At that time World War I had almost reached its frenzied climax and few observers dreamed the end was only seven months away. (The terrible influenza epidemic of the fall of 1918 also wasn't dreamed of.) It occurred to me that the photo would be an interesting one to reproduce in HOBBIES and that it likewise would be





ADA JONES AND THE SHANNON FOUR photographed at the Roanoke Cycle Company on their visit to Roanoke, Va., in April, 1918. Standing—Charles Hart, Harvey Hindermeyer, Elliott Shaw and Wilfred Glenn, all of whom are still alive. Miss Jones died in May, 1922.

a good idea to go through the 1918 files of the Roanoke Times and re-print the newspaper's review of the concert. So I took a couple of hours one Saturday afternoon to make a search of the yellowed, decaying bound volumes, and my efforts were rewarded, even though my garments were unspeakably dirty before I got through. The remainder of this article, then, will be an account, supplemented by some background material, of what I found in the file room of the Roanoke Times.

### III

Since I didn't know the date on which the concert was given, it took a bit of preliminary searching to find the first reference to what was later described as "a musical event." But when I reached the issue for Sunday, March 31, I knew I was moving in the right direction. There was a large display advertisement headed: "Grand Musical Concert By World's Famous Talking Machine Artists," with a sub-head, "Personal Appearance in a Two-Hour Concert—a Real Show." The ad. was poorly printed and the lay-out man had made several errors, so that photos of members of the Shannon Four were accompanied by identification lines meant for others of the group. Here are the descriptions given by the ad. writer of the five men and one woman in the company:

ADA JONES. Everybody who knows the phonograph loves Ada. She has been a great factor in making the phonograph what it is today. Her pleasant personality and superior soprano voice afford the greatest pleasure by her unique comic songs and general concert work. Her impersonations are invariably perfect, each of its kind. Miss Jones will sing a duet with George L. Thompson, and don't come with cracked lips, for you will surely suffer if you do.

Among the most popular talking machine artists of the day are the Shannon Four. These singers were all engaged in solo and concert work in different parts of the country and their musical

ability together with their peculiar qualifications for record making caught the attention of the scouts of the great record making firms, who put them under contract for exclusive work.

CHARLES HART is one of those tenor singers that wins by delivering the goods. You will appreciate why he is placed as the first tenor of the Shannon Four when you hear him.

HARVEY W. HINDERMEYER. He easily takes first place among the talking machine artists with his clear, rich tenor voice.

WILFRED GLENN. Mr. Wilfred Glenn too has helped make the phonograph famous. His voice with its remarkable range of some 2½ octaves from C below the bass clef to F sharp is one of the richest de profundo of bass voices. Soloist of the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine, and member of several leading musical organizations.

GEORGE L. THOMPSON. He is a veritable Gatling gun set to music. To see and hear him is a whole entertainment.

Presumably because of the sloppy make-up, I didn't find any cut lines for the Shannon Four's fine baritone, Elliott Shaw. Mr. Shaw continued to suffer from a "bad press." Another ad. on April 7, listed him as Elliott Low.

### IV

Before proceeding further with my research, perhaps it would be well to say something about the artists who paid that visit to Roanoke so many years ago. After more than a decade of great popularity, Ada Jones was entering the declining years of her career. She had carried on successfully for several years after the death of Len Spencer in December, 1914, and her duets with Billy Murray remained popular. But, after 1917, her name appeared much less frequently in record lists. She and Murray did one duet, "I'll Take You Back to Italy," for Victor in 1918. They also sang the same number for Edison, but the most popular comedienne and comedian of their day appear not to have been paired again until they recorded "When Francis

Dances With Me" for Victor late in 1921.

During 1919 Miss Jones made only a few solo records, but assisted Cal Stewart in a great many "Punkin Center" recordings. After his death in December, 1919, she did little aside from working with Steve Porter in making for Edison several descriptive specialties that she had originally recorded years before for other companies with their author, Len Spencer. Although in semi-retirement, she had returned to the concert field and was touring the country when she died in Rocky Mount, N. C., in May, 1922.

George L. Thompson was the least-known member of the troupe. Perhaps it would be fair to say he was a "make-weight." Or, to use a baseball comparison, from the popularity standpoint he was only a minor league performer while the other five singers were all major league. Thompson, who was born in New York City in 1875, made his first stage appearance in 1893. He was one of the "Cohen on the Telephone" recorders, having made a splendid Edison record of the famous old comic sketch. He also sang a few comic songs for Edison and recorded for Emerson, Okeh and other minor companies. One of his Okeh discs purported to be a representation of Horace Goldin's famous vaudeville sketch, "Sawing a Woman in Two." He presumably is the George Thompson, who made a 1930 Columbia record of two hill-billy numbers, "A Chaw of Tobacco and a Little Drink (Won't Send Your Soul to Hell)" and "Cross-Eyed Sue." Thompson died a few years ago.

Two of the Shannon Four members were recording artists of wide experience while the others apparently had been before the horn for only a short time. Harvey Hindermeyer was born in Easton, Pa., the son of a German father and a Bavarian mother. His first record, an Edison cylinder of "She Was a Grand Old Lady," appeared in 1907. The genial, short and stocky Harvey once told me of the elation he felt a few weeks after he made the record when he walked past a penny arcade in Philadelphia, and heard Edward Meeker's voice announcing: "She Was a Grand Old Lady." Sung by Harvey Hindermeyer. Edison RECORD!" Within a short time he was recording for Victor and Columbia as well as Edison. He also sang for Okeh and other companies, but during most of his career he was regarded as primarily an Edison artist and toured the country from coast to coast giving tone tests.

Wilfred Glenn, born on one of the great ranches in the San Joaquin Valley of California, had begun singing as an exclusive Victor artist in 1912, and had made a series of popular basso profundo recordings. His voice had, and has, a remarkably fresh and virile quality that won him great popularity.

Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw seem to have made their recording



debuts in 1917. Hart's Victor record with the lowest number, 18283, was "Forever is a Long, Long Time," which appeared in the November supplement. For some reason its issue was delayed. The number indicates that it should have come out in June. The first two Hart records to be placed on the market were listed in July, 18294, "Thou Shalt Not Steal (a Heart Away)" and 18300, "It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier." He had a double-faced offering in August, No. 18319, "A Tear, a Kiss, a Smile" and "That's Why My Heart is Calling You."

Shaw seems to have done no solo work in 1917, but to have had his initial recording experience as a member of the Shannon Four, whose first Victor record, "I May Be Gone for a Long, Long Time," was issued in September, coupled with the American Quartet's version of the greatest hit of World War I, "Over There." Whoever coupled the Victor records made a big mistake by picking "I May Be Gone" as the more likely hit side of the two. The quartet was on hand in October with 18355, "Wake Up, Virginia (And prepare for Your Wedding Day)" and in November with 18358, "Break the News to Mother," a revival of a Charles K. Harris ballad that antedated the Spanish-American War, coupled with the American Quartet singing George M. Cohan's 1906 hit, "You're a Grand Old Flag."

The Shannons were represented by three Victor waxings in December, 1917: 18391, "Come Back Home"; 18401, "Hello, Aloha, Hello" and 18400, "Melody Land." A month later they came through with 18414, "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here"; in February with 18428, "There's a Vacant Chair in Every Home Tonight"; in March with 18434, "There's a Service Flag Flying at Our House," and in April with 18438, "Tom, Dick and Harry and Jack." And that brings us up to the month they sang in Roanoke—which is just across a small bridge from Vinton, Va., the town in which I live.

Meanwhile, the quartet was also recording for Edison. Among other records, it sang "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here" for a Diamond Disc. Only a few Shannon Four records were issued, however, by Edison under that name. Edison soon changed the name for its own purposes to the Lyric Male Quartet, and under that disguise the foursome provided harmonious backing for such distinguished artists as Anna Case, Marie Rappold, Frieda Hempel and Virginia Rea. By a similar trick, Pathé used the Shannon Four name only a couple of times before switching to Acme Male Quartet for many other recordings.

## V

When I was in Chicago in October, 1951, I asked Lewis James, who succeeded Harvey Hindermeyer as the quartet's second tenor a few months after the Roanoke concert, how the name, Shannon Four, was chosen. He said it was so called because Irish ballads were very popular around 1917 and the ensemble intended to

specialize in them. I then asked why the name was changed to Shannon Quartet in 1923, and James said it was because the singers decided "Four" sounded too much like a vaudeville group. I surprised the genial tenor by pointing out that the names of the different members of the original Shannon Four were more or less concealed in the first word. "Shannon," for instance, begins with the first three letters in Shaw. Its second and third letters are the first two in Hart; and the "nn" at the end corresponds to the last two letters in Glenn. There are also indications of Hindermeyer in the word. Lewis James frankly said he was astonished at what I had pointed out but was sure the quartet hadn't tried to incorporate parts of the individual members' names into "Shannon."

I find myself wondering just how long the little concert company had been traveling together when it came to Roanoke, who first thought of organizing it, and how long the troupe kept on the road during that fateful year of 1918. Perhaps the success of another group, known in those days as the Peerless Record Makers but destined to become widely acclaimed a couple of years later as the Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor Artists, had something to do with the second company of "world-famous talking machine artists" going into the concert field.

The Eight in those days was composed of Ada Jones' long-time partner, Billy Murray, as star comedian and master of ceremonies; Henry Burr as manager and second tenor of the Peerless Quartet; Albert Campbell, the quartet's first tenor; Arthur Collins, comedian and quartet baritone; John H. Meyer, quartet bass; Byron G. Harlan, tenor comedian and duet partner of Collins; Vess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King," and Theodore Morse, song writer and pianist—surely one of the most scintillating light concert companies ever put together. Of that inimitable Eight, only Billy Murray is now alive. But it's good to know that all the original Shannon Four members are still with us.

And now let's return to April, 1918, when the phonograph fans of Roanoke presumably were set agog by the knowledge that they were to have an opportunity of hearing some top-flight talent in person.

(To be continued)

## Current Collectors' Recordings

(Continued from page 25)

is DL 6019 and it includes the following: Walter Huston, "September Song"; Julia Sanderson, "They Didn't Believe Me"; Mary Martin, "My Heart Belongs to Daddy"; Millie Weitz, "Nobody Makes a Pass at Me"; Ethel Merman, "I Got Rhythm"; Ethel Merman and Joan Carroll, "Let's Be Buddies"; Gertrude Niesen, "I Wanna Get Married," and The Foursome, "Bidin' My Time."

A quarter century ago one of the biggest stars was Helen Kane whose unique "boop boop a doop" style

makes her recordings favorites with many collectors. Recently she sang one of her best numbers, "I Wanna Be Loved by You," in the MGM musical "Three Little Words." The sound track from the movie was released in album form by MGM and this record is included as number 30241. Later she disked a few more numbers for Columbia, the best of which is No. 39205 which has "The Aha Daba Honeymoon" coupled with "Hug Me, Kiss Me, Love Me."

Several months ago I mentioned that Nick Lucas had resumed his recording career with Cavalier records. I have since received a complete list of his discs made for that company. They are as follows: 823—Tiptoe Through the Tulips/Painting the Clouds with Sunshine; 824—Francine/My Blue Heaven; 825—Tear Drops/Coquette; 826—Til the End of Forever/Lady Be Good. They are also all available on a single 10-inch LP disc CAV 5003-LP. I have heard the records and I think they are really fine. If you can't obtain them through your local record store, tell the manager to write Cavalier Records, Inc., 1300 26th Ave., San Francisco 22, Calif., for more information.

Cavalier has another interesting artist in its catalog. Stan Wilson may not appeal to a collector whose records deal with only one phase of entertainment, but if calypso, folk songs, and blues interest you, buy "The Stan Wilson Story on Wax," CAV 5001-LP, which has all of these sung by a young man who does them all well.

## Early Sleeping Equipment

(Continued from page 20)

rockers were of similar wood, an inch or more in thickness, set edge-wise into slots in the corner posts.

Heart shaped openings might be cut in the head and foot to be used as handles when the cradle had to be carried from room to room. These openings had a certain ornamental value as did the scrolled sides. Old Pennsylvania cradles were stenciled in the typical Pennsylvania Dutch style with red and blue tulips and other designs and colors as found on old dower chests, etc.

Today these stout old cradles find their use as wood-boxes beside the modern fireplace and usually they are strong enough to endure such usage.

The terms crib and cradle are often used interchangeably, but ordinarily we think of the crib as the bed for a baby that has outgrown the cradle age. There are cribs made with rockers and only a little advanced from the cradle, but for the most part our cribs stand up on casters, high enough to make it easy for mother to lift the baby in and out. The sides are spindled and may even be movable. There is no hood save as netting may be used.

It is the cradle, not the crib, that represents in our minds babyhood, and it is "cradle" not "crib" that is used symbolically as we speak of "from the cradle to the grave" or "the cradle of Liberty."

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## ADA JONES

### and the Shannon Four Give a Concert in Roanoke, Va.

(Continued from the June Issue)

By JIM WALSH

#### VI

As the time for the concert neared, "teaser" advertising was published almost daily. On April 2, under the head of "Great Musical Concert," there was a picture of Ada Jones with these cut lines:

Sweet-voiced Ada Jones is one of the musical stars at the Academy of Music on April 17, together with the internationally famous Shannon Four and others. These phonograph musical celebrities are to stage one of the grandest treats Roanoke has ever known. Tickets, 50 cents, 75 cents and \$1 at Barnett, Schenk and Roanoke Cycle Company.

The Roanoke Cycle Company was the Victor dealer sponsoring the artists' engagement. Barnett, Schenk was a drug store. The Academy of Music was a grimy old building. Though smaller, it was almost as dingy as New York's Metropolitan Opera House, but was sometimes said to have the finest acoustics of any theater in the South. It was torn down as a "fire trap" about two years ago, after six decades during which hundreds of the world's most famous theatrical personalities had been seen and heard on its stage.

An ad. featuring Glenn appeared on April 3, and one of George Thompson the next day. Ada Jones was shown again on the 5th, and the ad. said: "World's Famous Talking Machine Artists. Not a Tone Test! A Real Show! A Grand Concert! Professor R. H. Mazziotta, pianist. Shannon Four—Charles Heart (Sic!), Harvey Hindermeyer, Elliott Shaw and George L. Thompson." Here were two more mistakes—misspelling Hart's name and listing Thompson instead of Glenn as a member of the quartet.

I was amused that the April 11 ad. also emphasized that the concert was not a "tone test." This of course was inspired by envy of the fact that only the Edison Diamond Disc had sufficiently realistic recording to venture "the supreme test of direct comparison with the living artist." Since the Victrola and all other talking machines only approximated the sound of the living artists' tones, rather than "re-creating" them, dealers for the competitive makes tried to represent the Edison tone tests as nuisances which audiences didn't want to be bothered with. I was also

amused by a Roanoke Cycle Company ad. headed "Play Victor Records On Your Edison," followed in smaller letters on a second line by, "Columbia, Sonora or Brunswick." This seemed to indicate that in 1918 the Edison was the most widely used phonograph in Roanoke with the exception of the Victrola.

Further advertising revealed that Professor Mazziotta, the accompanist, was the pianist of the Venetian Trio, which made Victor records. Collectors of old-time recordings will wonder what relation, if any, he was to Frank Mazziotta, who played flute and piccolo solos for Edison, Victor, Zonophone and Columbia around 1900.

But the most interesting thing in the April 11 Roanoke Times was a brief article, "Ada Jones Relates Her Experiences As a Phonograph Artist." From this article, purportedly written by the singer herself, I learned that old Edison record catalogs were wrong in giving Ada's birthplace as Manchester, England, and that this perhaps had led me on a blind trail in trying to learn just when she was born:

I was born in Oldham, Lancashire, England. As a child I developed a talent for mimicry and was known as "Little Ada Jones, the Child Wonder." If they could see me now they would laugh at the idea of my ever being little. For some reason or other, everyone thinks I am small, and it is humorous to see the look of blank amazement which passes over their faces when I meet people. I feel sorry to know I have disappointed them.

My first experience in making records was with the former North American Phonograph Company, and my voice was the first female voice to record successfully for them. My next venture in phonograph work was with Len Spencer for the Columbia Gramophone (should be Graphophone—J. W.) Company. From that time on I worked for the Victor, Edison and all the other companies.

I have often been reported dead, and I even have a double who has been singing throughout the country, using my name as "Ada Jones, Phonograph Artist." I was just out with a troupe of phonograph artists, in several entertainments where I was introduced as "Ada Jones, the mother of the phonograph." It made me feel quite ancient. I assure you. (Signed) ADA JONES.

The tone of the foregoing letter obviously is not that of an elderly woman. It sounds more like the expression of one just entering middle-age

and strengthens my belief that Ada Jones was between 40 and 50 when she died four years later. Perhaps now that her birthplace has been revealed as Oldham, which is seven miles from the industrial city of Manchester, I shall be able, by writing to Oldham authorities, to trace more of the soprano's family history.

In that same issue the following was said of the Shannon Four:

Each and every one of them seems possessed of a magnetic personality and the snap and ginger they put into their efforts immediately wins an audience and holds them to the last note. It is by no means sufficient to be a good musician to be on the staff of any great phonograph record producing firms. There must be an unusual purity of musical tones, a positive, clearly defined enunciation, and the ability to transmit the living soul of music through the dead medium of the record. These artists have been sought and gleaned from the best musical combinations the country can produce and are under contract to the great record firms, who keep them on their regular staffs at great expense.

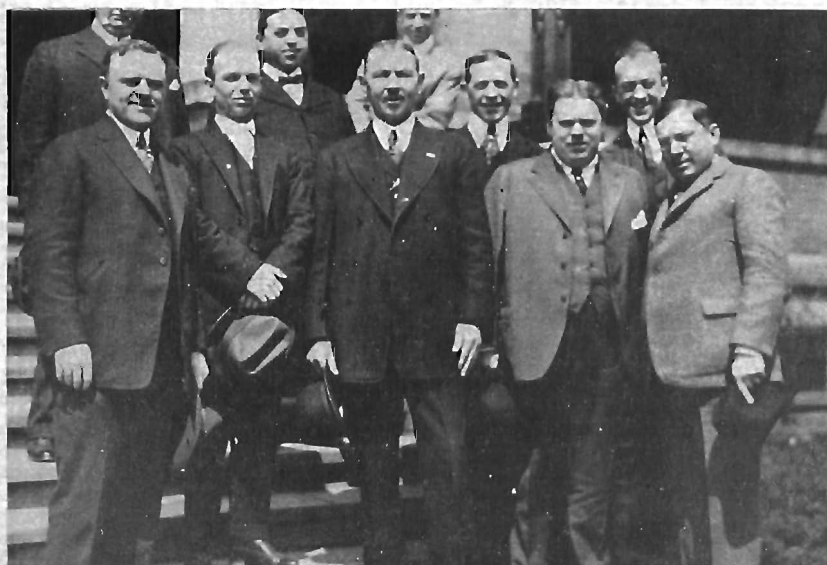
#### VII

And then, finally, the eagerly awaited concert itself took place on the night of Wednesday, April 17. Ada Jones and the Shannon Four came and they conquered. The next morning, under the heading of "Victor Artists Render Pleasing Program of Song," the Roanoke Times said:

One of the largest audiences of the season gathered at the Academy of Music last evening and was rewarded by a musical treat such as is rarely offered in cities the size of Roanoke. The galaxy of Victor artists appearing under the auspices of the Roanoke Cycle Company were at their best and entertained their auditors for more than two hours with a varied program embodying the best and most popular music not only of the day but of all time.

Decidedly the hit of the evening was made by the Shannon Four, the well known quartet composed of Charles H. Hart and Harvey W. Hindermeyer, tenors, Elliott Shaw, baritone, and Wilfred Glenn, basso. They presented a repertoire that appealed alike to the lover of so-called classical music and the admirer of topical songs and their solos, duet and quartet numbers were most enjoyable.

Ada Jones, the popular soprano and comedienne, sang several of her comic songs, giving them with the inimitable rendition that has made her such a universal favorite. Miss Jones appeared twice and each time was generously en-



THIS PHOTO OF THE VICTOR RECORD MAKER TROUPE, later known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists, probably was taken in 1917. It was sent to Jim Walsh by the late "Dolly" Morse, widow of the song writer-pianist Theodore Morse. She did not know where it was taken, and Billy Murray, only survivor of the Eight, also does not recall the place. The two unidentified men probably were Victor dealers. Front row, left to right: Billy Murray, comedian; Vess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King"; unknown; Henry Burr, second tenor of Peerless Quartet; and Theodore Morse. Another unidentified man is looking over Burr's shoulder, and John H. Meyer, Peerless Quartet basso, stands at the back of Burr and Morse. On the steps with only part of his face showing is Byron G. Harlan, comedian. His partner, Arthur Collins (baritone of the Peerless Quartet) is between Harlan and Albert Campbell, the quartet's first tenor. Campbell, Burr and Meyer were the Sterling Trio.

cored, responding with geniality on each occasion. "The Songs My Mammy Sang to Me" and "I'm the Only Star That Twinkles on Broadway" were given to vociferous applause and evidently were prime favorites with the audience.

Appearing with the Shannon Four and Miss Jones was Billy Hughes, who took the place of George L. Thompson and entertained with musical novelties and an assortment of stories, "some of them old and some of them new," and all of them mirth provoking in the extreme.

At the piano was Ralph H. Mazziotta, who proved to be a musician of excellent ability and an accompanist of unusual merit. Mr. Mazziotta's rendition of McDowell's "Polonaise" and "The Arabesque" was artistic in the extreme and received the warm applause that was richly deserved.

All the singers were most obliging in the matter of encores, and several of the most enjoyable numbers rendered came as encores. Mr. Shaw's rich baritone voice was heard to advantage in "Loch Lomond" and as an encore he responded with "Tommy Lad," than which no selection of the evening was more enjoyable. It was a matter of general regret that Mr. Shaw was down on the program for only one solo, for his voice is one of the finest ever heard by Roanoke auditors and his delivery is most pleasing.

Messrs. Hart and Glenn sang Faure's "Crucifix" in French, their voices blending beautifully and in delightful harmony. Mr. Hart's rendition of the ballad, "The Minstrel Boy," brought forth hearty applause and he responded to an encore with "I Hear You Calling Me" in which he displayed surpassing range, his bell-like tenor taking the high notes with appreciable ease without losing in the least its mellow sweet effect.

"The Rosary," sung by the Shannon Four, was rendered as only an artist quartet can render it, and was heard in that perfect silence which is the greatest of compliments.

Mr. Glenn's bass solo, "The Armorer's Song," from Robin Hood, gave him an opportunity to display the majesty and

power of his splendid voice which combines sweetness with strength in pleasing degree.

The Shannon Four rendered several of the topical songs of the day, such as "There's a Service Flag Flying at Our House," "There's a Vacant Chair in Every Home Tonight" and "I May Be Gone for a Long, Long Time," with a spirit and dash that contributed to the successful impression produced on the audience. In songs of this kind the quartet is at its best, or at least so it seemed.

Mr. Hindermeyer's tenor solo, "Roses, Roses, Everywhere," was delightful and for an encore he responded with the whimsical, "K-K-Katy," bringing down the house.

The evening's program concluded with "Just a Bundle of Sunshine," by the Shannon Four, one of the new songs that is destined to become very popular from the start.

## VIII

One or two comments seem necessary on the foregoing. I am not certain of the identity of Billy Hughes, who took the place of George L. Thompson, but suspect he was the blackface comedian who made records intermittently from 1908 to 1923 as Billy Golden's partner and was known as John Hughes on Victor, William Hughes on Columbia and Okch and Joe Hughes on Edison records. Just what his real given name was no one seems to know, but the bulk of evidence seems in favor of William (Billy). Or perhaps he was John William Joseph Hughes!

It seems odd that no mention was made of duets by Hart and Shaw, for they were soon to become one of the most popular duos on records.

However, their first Victor duet rec-

ord, No. 18479, "My Belgian Rose," didn't appear until August, 1918, when Shaw's name was listed ahead of Hart's—a reversal of the usual procedure which has the tenor coming first. And Shaw wasn't represented by a Victor solo record until May, 1920, when he sang "I'm Always Falling in Love With the Other Fellow's Girl," on one side of 18660, doing a superlative job of an unusually clever popular ballad. He afterwards sang many solos.

Although Hart and Glenn sang together in the concert, I can't recall their doing recorded duets.

## IX

It's a coincidence that since I began making notes for this article I found a review of a concert given by the rival troupe already referred to as the Eight Famous Victor Artists, but which on this occasion was referred to as The Victor Record Makers Concert Company. The Eight (with Fred Van Eps taking the place of Vess Ossman as banjoist) presented an entertainment in Uniontown, Pa., on Thursday, April 25, 1918—just eight days after Ada Jones and the Shannon Four made their big hit in Roanoke. The Eight was nothing short of sensational in Uniontown, and P. W. Simon, the Victor dealer there, brought them back for a return engagement on May 21. I shall yield to temptation and copy part of the review as an example of the high quality of entertainment purveyed by the popular recording artists of those days:

P. W. SIMON'S VICTOR CONCERT GREAT SUCCESS. . . . There never was a success in Uniontown like it. . . . It was entertainment of an ideal character with special features to please every taste and not one number that was not thoroughly enjoyed by the largest audience ever to fill the spacious Penn. . . .

A word or two is assuredly due the eight artists, who with their fine voices, delightful personality and generosity with encores entertained the big audience so charmingly that the two hours and a half passed as one. Big, manly Henry Burr, with his voice of pure silver; rotund, happy Arthur Collins, "coon shouter" of the real kind; Albert Campbell, whose lyric tenor makes ballads exquisitely tender; Fred Van Eps, a concert banjoist without a superior in the country; Billy Murray, who stole the hearts of all the girls with his stirring military songs and his sly native blarney; John Meyer, whose sonorous basso was so full and resonant; Byron Harlan, with his "rube" songs that were classics; and last, but far from least, Teddy Morse, composer, piano virtuoso and accompanist extraordinary, each one and all of them are deserving of a column. And only lack of space prevents their getting it.

Another article gave a vivid idea of the Eight in action:

For utter joyousness nothing like the Victor artists concert at the Penn last evening has ever been known in Uniontown. . . . It is perfectly safe to prophesy that records by Henry Burr, Billy Murray, Collins and Harlan, the Peerless Quartet, the Sterling Trio, and Fred Epps (sic!) will be heard soon in homes hitherto loyal to Red Seal artists only. And right here it is worthy of record that Theodore Morse, composer, pianist and accompanist, had such a big part in making the evening the success it was that it is hard to think of the individual artists without linking them to the smiling man at the piano whose proud and pleased grins were a sure tip that something new was being pulled off. . . .



There was a program . . . but from the manner in which it was not followed by the master of ceremonies, interlocutor Billy Murray, and Mr. Morse, it seemed merely for purposes of reference, for instead of the songs and selections printed in black and white, these generous entertainers just wandered all over the Victor catalog and, spurred on by the applause of an insatiate audience, picked out dozens of the most popular record numbers, singing them in groups of three and four and even six and seven at a time. Arthur Collins was given an ovation and his inimitable Negro minstrelsy made such a hit that he was brought back again and again until he answered the popular demand by singing "The Preacher and the Bear." The same thing happened in the Collins-Harlan duets, in which medley after medley was sung, until at last they swung into "Bake Dat Chicken Pie," one of their first and greatest records. Even then, with Collins leading, they turned their backs on the audience and faced that portion seated on the stage, "The Metropolitan Opera Chorus," according to Billy Murray—and the hint was taken.

In another place, the *Uniontown Morning Herald* said of the Eight:

They served a musical menu (such) as has seldom been served in Uniontown or anywhere else, comprising cocktails to cheese. Albert Campbell, tenor, was the cocktail; Burr and Meyer, the oyster and soup; Arthur Collins, the entree; the Sterling Trio, the roast and vegetables; Byron Harlan, the real rube, the "tomato surprise"; Fred Van Eps, the salad; Burr, the sweets; and the great Billy Murray himself the nuts and cheese and demi-tasse and everything else that might round out a melodious meal.

Yes, there were real musical giants among the popular recording artists of those days. It is sad to recall that only Murray and Van Eps are left of the Eight who created such a sensation in Uniontown, but good to know that, as has already been mentioned, the original Shannon Four members are still alive and active. I shall send copies of this article to Messrs. Hart, Hindermeyer, Shaw and Glenn, in the hope that they will enjoy reading of their long-gone success in Roanoke 36 years ago.

(The End)

### MUSIC BOXES

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20½", 27", 32"; Criterion 20½"; Mira 6½", 9½", 15½", 18½"; Monarch 15½"; New Century 18½"; Orphenion 16½"; Polyphon 24½"; Stella 14", 17½"; Imperial Symphonion 13½"; Thorrens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. s3867

FOR SALE. Regina 15½" tune discs. Price list.—William H. Eicher, 827 E. Central, Miamisburg, Ohio. j1y3652

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair. Reasonable prices.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. s3882

### PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

PLAYER PIANO ROLLS: Latest hits and old favorites. Send for free list. Player material, parts, service.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. d122741

PIANO ROLLS: Duo-Art, Ampico, QRS, etc. Popular and classical. For lists write—Howe, 158 East Dixon Ave., Dayton 9, Ohio. au3633

# Current Collectors' Recordings

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

Whoever owns many of the fine recordings made by Gene Austin for Victor in the late 1920s might well have wished that the star was still making hit records today. Actually Gene Austin made a few Four Star, Universal, and Universal Double Feature records after the war, but to the best of my knowledge these fine discs are out of print today. Therefore I am particularly happy to write that he has once again signed up with RCA Victor and a new album including all of his most popular numbers has been released ("My Blue Heaven"—Gene Austin-LPM 3200—also available on 45 rpm extended play records). Besides his perennial "My Blue Heaven," he sings "How Come You Do Me Like You Do," "One Sweet Letter from You," "I'm in the Mood for Love," "I Can't Give You Anything but Love," "Sleepytime Gal," "Who," "Ramona," "Lonesome Road," "Somebody Sweetheart," "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," and "She's Funny That Way." If you like the music of the Twenties don't pass this album up.

"Ukelele Ike"—Cliff Edwards—has also come forth with a single platter that rivals the best he has ever made. It is "Singin' in the Rain" coupled with "June Night" on Mercury 5809 (78 rpm). The record is a few years old but it is worth while looking for.

A slightly more controversial album is RCA Victor's "Showbiz" narrated by George Jessel. Scanning the

vast panorama of 50 years of American entertainment many collectors may feel that their special interest is being neglected, but to this I can only say that this was inevitable and that as a worth while documentary the album belongs on every collector's shelf who is interested in the growth of American entertainment. Smith and Dale, Jimmy Durante and others made special recordings for the album and dubbings have been selected with care from the vast vault of RCA masters. Here are a few highlights from the album that I think are worthy of mention: Smith and Dale—scene from their famous "Dr. Kronkheit sketch," Maurice Chevalier—"Mimi," Jimmy Durante—"I Can Do Without Broadway But Can Broadway Do Without Me," Charles King—"Broadway Melody," as well as many other selections by Sir Harry Lauder, Bayes and Norworth, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Eddie Cantor, etc.

Now that the baseball season is in full swing it might be worthwhile to mention a new six-inch recording of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and "The Umpire" which has been recorded by a quartet of four top notch ball players: Phil Rizzuto, Tommy Henrich, Ralph Branca and Roy Campanella. It is one of the childrens' records put out by Columbia on the Little Golden record label. The number is sR 107 and costs only 35 cents.

### PIANO ROLLS FOR SALE

PIANO ROLLS, 65 note, will play on any barroom electric piano that takes an "A" roll. 250 at 35c each. Special price for the lot.—G. T. Merriken, 112 Lynnmoor Dr., Silver Spring, Md. j1y1272

### ORGANS

FOR SALE: Concert hand roller organ, sixteen rolls. Offer price.—Marion Broring, Lamoille, Minn. j1y1211

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Catalog 15c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. o 124201

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, California. s6637

### PHONOGRAPHS

WILL PAY CASH for cylinder phonographs and records, also horn type phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write—Pollard, 4109 Old Hiway 1, Santa Cruz, Calif. s3614

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, catalogs, horns, reproducers, records, parts, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. n6215

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. ja128402

### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8.

(Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Wizards of the Piano-Accordion

### Guido and Pietro Deiro

By JIM WALSH

#### EDITED AND APPROVED BY PIETRO DEIRO

Dear Mr. Walsh: I am returning your article, together with notations that Dad made on the pages themselves . . . Dad enjoyed reading your article very much, and he has asked me specifically to request a copy. Also . . . we would appreciate permission to make reprints of the article to send it out to some 3,000 dealers and accordion studios that we supply.

Sincerely yours,  
PIETRO DEIRO, JR.

One of my scrapbooks contains an undated clipping from a *Billboard* published many years ago. The clipping is one in which the magazine's research man tells a woman inquirer that he has scanned the music files of the Library of Congress without finding any trace of a composition called "Pedro's Return."

Had the lady's spelling been better or the researcher a bit more familiar with piano-accordion music he would not have had to report failure. The sought-for composition obviously was not "Pedro's," but "Pietro's Return," and it was a leading number in the repertoire of one of the greatest accordion players the world has produced, Pietro Deiro—known today as "The Daddy of the Piano-Accordion."

Pietro, still happily with us and operating a school of piano-accordion instruction in New York, and his brother, Guido, who unfortunately died in 1950, present the unusual spectacle of two members of the same family who had virtually equal talents and both of them came to be recognized as among the masters of their instruments as well as gifted composers. It might be taking in too much territory to say that they with the late Pietro Frosini, constitute the three greatest accordion players of the Twentieth Century, but all three certainly would rank among the dozen finest.

Although this article opened with a mention of Pietro, it is only fair

to begin a consideration of the Deiro Brothers' stage and recording careers with Guido. After all, he was two years the older and his records were enjoying a wide sale before Pietro's name appeared on a label.

During most of his long and successful record making career, Guido Deiro was an exclusive Columbia artist, although the Minneapolis accordion and concertina specialist, C. Hilding Bergquist, says he made a few Cameo records in the 1920's under the alias of Carlo Pampini. He also made two Edison cylinders, and the important fact of his early career are rather inaccurately summed up in the Edison Blue Amberol catalog for April, 1914:

This young accordian player, who is one of the finest artists of his kind now before the public, was born at Torino, North Italy, in 1886. When a young man he took up the study of music at the Milan Conservatorio. For three years after his studies were completed he served in the Italian Army as musician, playing baritone. For five years after this term of service he toured the principal cities of Europe. Patrons of prominent vaudeville houses throughout the United States have had an opportunity to hear him for several years past, and he has a large and enthusiastic following; not only among them, but among Edison owners as well.

A 1911 issue of *The Talking Machine News* said that Deiro worked as a miner before he became a musician. It is hard to see just when he had this experience, which must have been brief if it occurred at all, but it is interesting to note the parallels in his life with those of his friendly rival, Frosini, who also studied at the Milan Conservatory and made a living for a time by playing in a military band. Frosini, however, played cornet with the British Navy Band at Malta and did not tour Europe so extensively as Deiro. Both came to the United States at about the same period and became stars in vaudeville as well as on records.

Pietro Deiro has several comments on and corrections of the foregoing statements. He is not sure, but believes Guido's exact birth date was June 10, 1886. He says that both he and Guido worked as miners,

but that he came to the United States about a year before his brother. Pietro arrived in 1907 and Guido in 1908, and Pietro sent for Guido after he had been here a short time. The brothers made their American debut in 1909 at the Washington Square Theater in San Francisco. Pietro says he was appearing at the theater for two weeks and asked the manager for permission to bring in Guido so they could play a duet as a try-out. They played afterwards one week together at another theater, then split, going their individual ways.

Guido and Pietro's parents were Carlo and Maria Deiro. Their father was a general storekeeper. They were not born at Torino, but at the nearby town of Salto Canvanese. The Edison statement about the Milano Conservatory is incorrect, according to Pietro, who says that neither he nor Guido ever attended a conservatory. Rather, they studied with private teachers. Guido, he adds, started with a private musician while in Germany, and the term "in service" is "very wrong," since "his service lasted but a few months."

#### II. Beginning of Recording Career

The first Guido Deiro record issued by any American company was placed on the market in the May, 1911, Columbia supplement. It contained two of the biggest favorites in top accordion players' repertoires, "Sharpshooters' March" (which bore the Italian sub-title, "Il Bergsaglieri" on the label), and "Ciribiribin." These were the first accordion discs of any kind Columbia had listed except for a number made in England by another gifted pair of brothers, Daniel and Peter Wyper, whose life stories were told in *HOBBIES* for March, 1953. The Deiro record was so skillfully played and well recorded, by acoustic standards, that it was "sure fire" and remained one of the most popular Columbias for many years afterward. In spite of the introduction of the electric process it didn't disappear from the catalog until the phonograph business debacle of the 1930's. But by the time

record sales had reached their lowest point in 1933, the Columbia catalog had been cut to a small fraction of its former size and there wasn't a single accordion record left.

The elder Deiro's next Columbia waxing appeared in the July, 1911, list, and in contrast to its sensation-ally successful predecessor, wasn't an especially good seller, although it stayed in the catalog several years. Announcement of this record, No. A1003, containing "My Treasure (Tesoro Mio) Waltz" and "Variety Polka," gave rise to the following supplement comment :

This astonishing young accordion player has recently become one of the sensations of the big vaudeville circuits in this country; partly by reason of the unique instrument he uses but mainly because owing to his own exceptional musical intelligence and skill, he is enabled to obtain from the accordion effects such as have never been heard. The Columbia was prompt in securing his services for a series of records and the first double disc, issued in May, practically outsold everything in that list. In his playing of the "Tesoro Mio Waltz," Mr. Deiro has given a remarkable interpretation of a famous instrumental number so well known as scarcely to call for any review. Its delightful waltz melody has never been heard to better advantage. Coupled therewith is a charming bit of modern Spanish composition in characteristic polka fashion.

In August, 1911, Edison issued the first of two four-minute wax Amberol records by Deiro, No. 743, "My Sweetheart Waltz"—apparently the same composition as the Columbia "My Treasure," for the name of the composer in both instances is Beccucci. A month later he was represented with No. 773, Eilenberg's "Italian Army March." Those two numbers ended Deiro contributions to the Edison catalog. He must have been signed up exclusively with Columbia immediately after playing them.

During the ensuing months, Deiro's Columbia records were so varied we would be justified in suspecting they were intentionally designed to prove his unlimited versatility. But probably the idea of "mixing 'em up" was to have something that appealed to the typical popular music fancier while not neglecting those of comparatively "egg-head" tastes. Thus, the third Deiro record coupled the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria" on A1040 with the "Miserere" from Verdi's "Trova-tore." Eleven numbers later, on A1051, came a ragtime classic with "Dill Pickles Rag" on one side, while the other combined two Ted Snyder and Irving Berlin numbers, "In the Land of Harmony" and "Stop, Stop, Stop."

Guido must then have been on tour, away from the Columbia studios, for a few months. At least there was a gap of 101 numbers before A1152 came out with two waltzes of Spanish flavor, "La Spagnola" and "Dolores." Then there was another



Left to right: Pietro Deiro and Guido Deiro, talented brothers.

wait of a few months before the advent of A1229 containing one of the classics of American popular music, L. Wolfe Gilbert and Halsey K. Mohr's "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" coupled with Guido's own composition named in honor of himself, "Deiro Rag."

Then what a switch on A1270—"Musetta's Waltz Song" from "La Boheme"! The opposite side contained one of the few couplings of Deiro records not played by the maestro himself, Rossini's "Semiramide Overture," performed on the ocarina, or "musical sweet potato," by Mose Tapiero, who had a habit of bobbing up on the odd side of accordion records.

Two couplings attractive to ragtime connoisseurs came next. On A1281 Deiro played "The Dream of the Rarebit Fiend," while that superb banjoist, Fred Van Eps, obliged with "Omena—Intermezzo." On A1294, Deiro played one of the great hits of 1912, Irving Berlin's "Everybody's Doing It Now," while Van Eps kept in step by romping through "Whipped Cream," by Percy Wenrich. The latest Deiro number to get into the November, 1913, Columbia catalog brought his act to a rousing patriotic finish, for the time being, by combining another of his compositions, "Deirina Mazurka" on A1351 with Sousa's immortal march, "Stars and Stripes Forever."

### III. Brother Pietro Gets Into the Act.

Meanwhile, brother Pietro, two years younger than Guido, had got into the Columbia act. In July, 1913, this blonde, blue-eyed, fair-complexioned young man from North Italy, made his Columbia debut on A1323 with two of the day's biggest

ragtime hits, James V. Monaco's "Row, Row, Row," published by Harry Von Tilzer, and Berlin's "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam'." Said Catalog Editor George Jell:

The Columbia has so far been listing the best accordion solo records in the world by Guido Deiro. Mr. Deiro now has a formidable rival in the person of his own brother, Pietro Deiro, who has recently made some exceedingly successful records for us. These two new selections show the same broad, organ-like tones, vigor of execution and perfection of technique and detail that have so distinguished the Deiro accordion records throughout. The titles are already familiar everywhere as two of the catchiest and most successful of the recent ragtime hits.

Perhaps Pietro had already signed an exclusive Victor contract when this record was issued, and Columbia knew it. That would account for the slightly patronizing tone in which it was more or less intimated that he was a small boy following in big brother's musical footsteps.

The "Deirina—Stars and Stripes" combination by Guido was issued in September. Neither Deiro name appeared again until January, 1914, when there was a real *tout de force*—the *creme de la creme* of accordion offerings, duets by Guido and Pietro of Monaco's "I Love Her, Oh! Oh! Oh!" and "Mammy Jinny's Jubilee." Here is what the supplement said:

Two recent ragtime hits played . . . by Guido Deiro and his brother, Pietro. In a manner that will give a fresh impetus to the popularity of these numbers. The wonderful execution and tone work of the Deiros is again in evidence to an almost surprising extent.

There were no more duos by the Brothers Deiro. By the time Colum-

bia issued the one just mentioned, Pietro's exclusive Victor engagement had been announced and his records were creating one of the greatest "stirs" of any popular productions up to that time. Thanks to lavish publicity and advertising, Pietro's Victor records in all probability far outsold any of Guido's Columbias, except, perhaps, for a few stand-outs such as "Sharpshooters."

Columbia, however, had several Pietro masters on hand and continued to issue pressings of these at intervals after his Victor contract had gone into effect. Suppose we glance briefly at them before going back to Guido and, still later, considering Pietro's Victor career.

In March, 1914, Pietro was represented by an excellent double (A1477), on one side of which he played "Danube Waves" and on the other "The Return"—called "Pietro's Return" on a later Victor record. (It was this number which *The Billboard* expert was unable to find in the Library of Congress files.) The supplement said:

Our patrons apparently cannot have too many of the Deiro accordion solos, judging from the sales of these remarkable records. These new numbers show Mr. Deiro's superiority in music of a standard type, his mas-

tery of the resources of his instrument and his genuinely musical style.

The brothers shared sides on A1506, a May release. Guido played "O Sole Mio" and Pietro, "Bel Giorno" ("Fair Summer Day.") In July, Pietro held down one side of A1529 with Laval's "Pride of the Roses," combined with a concertina solo, "Catch Me if You Can," by Alexander Prince. The annotation said Deiro's side was played "in the customary masterly style associated in the public mind with this artist." Incidentally, "Pride of the Roses" is a corruption of the true title, "Bridal Rose Overture," which Pietro also made for Victor.

In October, Guido and Pietro had solos on A1568. Guido played "Unrequited Love," a waltz by Paul Lincke, composer of "The Glow Worm," while Pietro's offering, also a waltz, was "Repentance." Mr. Jell, or whoever wrote the annotation, remarked:

Two more of the famous Deiro accordion solos, one by Guido, the other by Pietro, and the two equally good. There is no need of enlarging on the Deiro tone and the Deiro execution. Everybody knows what they are. In these recordings they seem to have really outdone themselves in tonal volume and excellence of quality, the wonderful organ-like effect being truly astonishing.

Pietro made his final Columbia appearance in the supplement for November, 1914, when he played on A1598, "Wedding of the Winds Waltz" (a favorite of his friend Frosini) and "La Sirena." Said the supplement:

The Columbia, in continuing to issue its remarkable accordion solo records by Pietro Deiro demonstrates first its capacity to record him to unsurpassed perfection and secondly the undiminished popularity of the artist himself.

These comments apparently were a slap back at Victor, which was advertising that only "the unequalled Victor process" was capable of recording adequately Pietro's playing!

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR SHEET MUSIC to 1850. Ballads, Ragtime, everything. Catalog 15c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. o124201

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, California. s6637

OLD POPULAR SONGS. Big list for 3c. Baker, 549 Park Drive, Daytona Beach, Fla. au1211

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WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. ja128402

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WILL PAY CASH for cylinder phonographs and records, also horn type phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write—Pollard, 4109 Old Hiway 1, Santa Cruz, Calif. s3614

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, catalogs, horns, reproducers, records, parts, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. n6215

LARGE CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS. Opera models of Columbia and Edison. Millers, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. o3422

#### BAGPIPE WANTED

STRICTLY FOOL IDEA, but I want a Scotch bagpipe. Anybody got one?—Dr. H. R. Coats, 615 So. Broadway, Tyler, Texas. au1861

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

WRITE FOR LISTS of top rarities to be auctioned soon. Price lists will also be issued. Includes best and rarest in both acoustic and electrical vocal classics. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.—W. B. Harr, 106 N. Hala-guano, Carlsbad, N. Mex. au3276

Coin operated pianos and other coin operated musical devices wanted. Top prices paid. Music rolls, catalogues and instruction books for above also purchased. Write B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, Calif. s3297

WANTED: Some phonographs have high value. Up to \$100 paid for certain phonographs. Send \$1 and learn value of old machines and cylinder records. Collector of one of the World's Largest Private Collections of Antique Radios and Phonographs.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. o3886

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, records and parts. Music boxes, hand roller organs and other old organs, roller and rolls. Private collector.—Newmann Miller, 436 West Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. o3464

ANY MUSICAL ANTIQUE sold or repaired. Automatic pianos, melodeons, music boxes, roller organs, phonographs, reed organs and pipe organs.—Old Music Store, Deansboro, N. Y. d6008

#### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Transcriptions, Sunday Serenade programs, Air-shots, armed forces recordings, etc. by "Sammy Kaye," also transcriptions, Air-shots armed forces recordings etc. by "Ink Spots."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. s3215

#### RECORDS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Record Collectors' items. Opera, ballad, popular, jazz, 1900-45. Special wants are requested.—Cath. V. O'Brien, 402 First Ave., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. o120061

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

BING CROSBY Collectors, send for free catalog.—Arg. Box 341, Cooper Station, N. Y. C. o3802

#### MUSIC BOXES

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina 15 1/4", 20 3/4", 27", 32"; Criterion 20 1/4"; Mira 6 3/4", 9 1/4", 15 1/4", 18 1/4"; Monarch 15 1/4"; New Century 18 1/4"; Orphenon 18 1/4"; Polyphon 24 1/4"; Stella 14", 17 1/4"; Imperial Symphonion 13 1/4"; Thorens 4 1/2". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. s3867

FOR SALE. Regina 15 1/4" tune discs. Price list.—William H. Elcher, 827 E. Central, Miamisburg, Ohio. o3652

MUSIC BOXES, imported from France, German, Austria and Italy with moving or dancing figures for either jewelry or cigarettes in the best metals, enamels, ivories, marbles, porcelains, woods and leathers available. Animated bar items, whistling figures, mechanical birds in cages and sterling silver boxes, revolving children's music boxes and Christmas angels, novelty clocks. Repairs.—Sponholz, 770 Madison Ave. (corner 66th Street) and 11 East 66th Street, New York 21, N. Y. o36921

#### PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

PLAYER PIANO ROLLS: Latest hits and old favorites. Send for free list. Player material, parts, service.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. d122741

PIANO ROLLS: Duo-Art, Ampico, QRS, etc. Popular and classical. For lists write—Howe, 158 East Dixon Ave., Dayton 9, Ohio. au3633

FOR SALE—400 rolls, Ampico, QRS, others. Composer played by Kreisler, Rachmaninoff, Lopez, Rubenstein, German rolls, rarities, Adams-Schaff, mechanically perfect, pump player. Stamp for list.—Mrs. Goodwin, Box 64, Harlingen Air Force Base, Harlingen, Texas. au1403

FOR SALE: Used Player Piano Rolls, old favorites, fox trots, waltzes, marches, and others, write your wants.—Walter Garback, 7412 Outlook Ave., Cleveland 9, Ohio. o3004



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Wizards of the Piano-Accordion

### Guido and Pietro Deiro

#### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### EDITED AND APPROVED BY PIETRO DEIRO

Dear Mr. Walsh: I am returning your article, together with notations that Dad made on the pages themselves . . . Dad enjoyed reading your article very much, and he has asked me specifically to request a copy. Also . . . we would appreciate permission to make reprints of the article to send it out to some 3,000 dealers and accordion studios that we supply.

Sincerely yours,  
PIETRO DEIRO, JR.

#### IV Continuing Guido's Columbia Career.

Too much space would be required to give a "play-by-play" account of Guido Deiro's Columbia career, which extended from 1910 to 1924. Just why it ended then isn't apparent. Seemingly, his records were still popular. But Columbia went through the bankruptcy wringer in 1923 and may have retrenched by ridding itself of some of its expensive artists' contracts. He continued for years to run the gamut of passingly popular tunes to "light classics," and contributed to Columbia's Italian series some numbers which were never issued in the American catalog. Among these was "Egipto — Fantasia," which Hilding Bergquist describes as "Guido's only classical original composition." Recorded in August, 1912, it was issued under two numbers, E3976 and C2219. It is now published as sheet music by Pietro's firm. For some unknown reason, Columbia never had Guido make any 12-inch records of overtures, such as were popular when Pietro recorded them on the larger size for Victor.

For more than a decade during the period when his popularity was greatest, the yearly Columbia catalogs contained the following reference to Guido:

Beyond question the most proficient accordion player of the present day is Mr. Guido Deiro, whose Columbia records have enjoyed a sale that has been nothing short of phenomenal. Mr. Deiro is a well-known stage fig-

ure, having traveled as a vaudeville headliner over the most important circuits of the United States and Canada, and has also appeared with sensational success in the Winter Garden and other well-known places of amusement in New York.

Actually, those few lines pretty well sum up Guido Deiro's career. Vaudeville engagements, recording, composing and writing accordion textbooks — those things constitute his life's story. Perhaps it would be as well to mention here that he seems usually to have been known by his last name, and it probably was because of this that his younger brother soon discarded "Deiro" and throughout most of his professional activities was known as Pietro.

Other well-known Deiro records are A2343, "Vesti la giubba" from "Pagliacci" and "Musetta's Waltz Song" from "Boheme"; A2395, "Siciliana" from "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Tancredi Overture"; A1843 "Down in Bom-Bombay" and "Put Me to Sleep With an Old-Fashioned Melody"; A1802, "Hop a Jitney With Me" and "My Little Girl" (both on one side) and "O Those Days"; A2202, "Madam Butterfly Selections" and "Poor Butterfly"; and A2615, "Serenade from 'Les Millions D'Arlequin'" and "My Florence." Toward the latter part of his Columbia career Deiro recorded a number of his own compositions, including A3665, "Lights and Shadows" and "Moonlight Waltz"; and on A3728, "Neapolitan Polka" and "Western Stars." Song hits which he played in the early 1920's include "Blue Diamonds" with "Zampa Rag" (A2969); A3875 "Underneath the Mellow Moon" and "Sahara Moon"; and A3451, "Crooning" and "I'll Keep on Loving You."

In March, 1924, two months after Columbia had introduced its New Process "scratchless" discs and changed its numbering system, Guido was among those present (on record No. 34-D) with Victor Schertziner's great success, "Marcheta," doubled with Deiro's own "Valse Caprice No. 1." The supplement comment is entertaining:

Cleek, one of the greatest detectives of all fiction, was known as "The Man With a Thousand Faces."

He was a whole army of detectives in one. We might call Deiro the Cleek of the accordion. When he presses his fingers on . . . his piano-accordion it is immediately transformed into a whole band. Play these two widely different waltzes . . . You will sit and marvel as the artist's deft fingers fly back and forth over the keyboard.

Deiro's latest Columbia records, issued in 1924, appear to be 94D, "Campana di San Giusto — Polka" and "Breitenbush March"; and 173D, Nevin's "Narcissus" with Guido's own "Valse — Pirouette." Bergquist lists two Cameos which Deiro made under that already mentioned disguise of Carlo Pampini — 533, "Campana di San Giusto" and "Lola"; and 719, "Vesti la giubba" and "My Treasure Waltz." The numbers seem to indicate the former was issued in 1924 and the latter in 1925.

#### V End of Career

For much of the remainder of his life Guido Deiro appears not to have been in robust health. However, he continued to play theatrical and night club dates and also composed and wrote instruction books. I have an undated clipping from a magazine whose type I can't identify, which says, under the heading of "Guido Deiro's Royal Method Wins New Friends":

Volume 2 of the Royal Method for the Piano Accordion by Guido Deiro, world famous piano-accordionist, reports the publisher, Nicomede Music Co., Altoona, Penn., is winning new friends again this season. One feature . . . is found in the listing of new ways to play the piano-accordion skillfully. Mr. Deiro has collected enough of these to win the approbation of teachers and pupils everywhere. P. Frosini, noted accordionist, recommends Deiro's method highly.

There was sad news for admirers of the brilliant virtuoso in *The Accordion Review*.

For April — May, 1950, although a hopeful note came in toward the close:

One of America's Accordion Pioneers and internationally-famous players, Guido Deiro, recently succumbed to a nervous breakdown brought about by overwork and exhaustion. At the time of writing he is well on the road to recovery, we are pleased to say, after several weeks spent in a sanatorium where he went to undergo treatment and



convalesce. It will be quite a while, however, before he will resume his professional and teaching career, since he was recommended by the doctors to take a complete rest in the country.

A few months later there was an even sadder announcement which told of Deiro's death and also gave some information not previously mentioned in this article:

It is with regret we announce the death of Guido Deiro, who passed away on 26th July in California, after a long illness. Until some months ago he had been playing professionally and conducting his own studios. Owing to a heart attack, he was forbidden to teach or play again and, despite convalescence . . . his health did not improve.

Guido Deiro was probably one of the best known accordionists, having toured Europe, Africa, England, Australia and the Orient. He was the first to make (piano accordion) recordings when he waxed for Columbia . . . in 1911. In 1920 he played on the first nation-wide American broadcast and eight years later was the first to star in a picture featuring the Accordion.

Joe Laurie, Jr., gives a piquant mention of Deiro in his valuable book, "Vaude," the informal history of vaudeville. Laurie says that Guido Deiro was at one time married to Mae West! However, my song writer friend, Ray Walker, who knew both Deiro and Miss West well, says they were never married, although they were "very close friends." Walker's assertion is confirmed by Pietro.

Hilding Bergquist recalls that Guido Deiro wrote the music, to words by Herschel Henlere, of the popular Oriental type fox-trot, "Kismet," which he recorded as a solo on Columbia A2931, backed by "Karavan." Bergquist adds: "I've also seen one of his own marches, published in orchestrated form. I vaguely recall it as his 'Breitenbush March' but am not sure. I've also seen the sheet music of his 'Kismet.' He seemed to be fond of Oriental type tunes."

#### VI Pietro's Early Years

Pietro Deiro was born August 28, 1888. It probably would not be far wrong to say that he was born to play the piano-accordion. At least, an article in *The Etude* for August, 1931, gives that impression. The article, called "The Interesting Piano-Accordion: An Interview With Pietro Deiro, secured by El Vera Col-

lins," contains this biographical note:

Pietro Deiro (known professionally as "Pietro") is what may be termed a pioneer piano-accordionist . . . This has placed him in the category of dean of American accordionists. When he was a child in Italy, the accordion fascinated him as a toy, because he could push the various buttons and try to guess what tone would come forth. No strict parental discipline made him practice hours a day . . . He did so of his own free will. For, besides being a joy in itself, it was a means of occupying his time in other ways than working in his father's general store. After Pietro Deiro came to America he put in twenty busy years of vaudeville concert playing, as well as in the making of phonograph records. All his spare time was devoted to arrangements and compositions for the piano accordion . . .

When asked recently to what he attributed the popularity of the accordion and why it should appeal particularly to pianists, Mr. Deiro made the following statements:

"A pianist has a great deal to gain by studying the piano-accordion. Some have had the mistaken idea that their art would suffer and that the piano-accordion is not sufficiently dignified to warrant their interest. The study of the piano accordion, however, will not only broaden their musical scope but also increase their versatility . . .

Before a pianist touches an accordion he already has eighty percent of the requirements for an accordionist, namely, his musical background, his ability to read music, his knowledge of harmony and his technique. The other twenty per cent may be readily obtained, as it consists of the knowledge of the correct manipulation of the bellows and of the left hand keyboard . . . There are few limitations to the possibilities of the piano-accordion. The most ardent lover of classical music can express himself through the medium of the accordion, with music arranged or composed for it . . . Arrangements have been made of selections by such composers as Verdi, Gounod, Von Suppe, Rossini and Beethoven. In addition to these there are many other original compositions written for the piano-accordion . . . The classical selections which have been adapted for the accordion do not suffer through being rearranged for the instrument. Indeed they are often enhanced on account of the organ effects . . . The piano-accordion of today is so constructed that, by the application of the register switch, it can produce the deep vibrant tones of an organ. When the register switch is released it can produce the clear sweet tones of a violin. Register switches have also been applied to the bass keyboard so that the effects may be varied in many ways."

The November, 1931 *Etude* contained an advertisement of Pietro's piano accordion instruction books

and arrangements. One, "The Jazz Accordionist," was said to teach "how to play 'hot' and 'blue' and modern syncopation." There was also "Pietro's Piano Accordion Method," as well as ten new arrangements of songs that included "Dark Eyes," "Ay, Ay, Ay" and "Song of India." Of course the Pietro Deiro Accordion Headquarters today publishes a vast variety of such material.

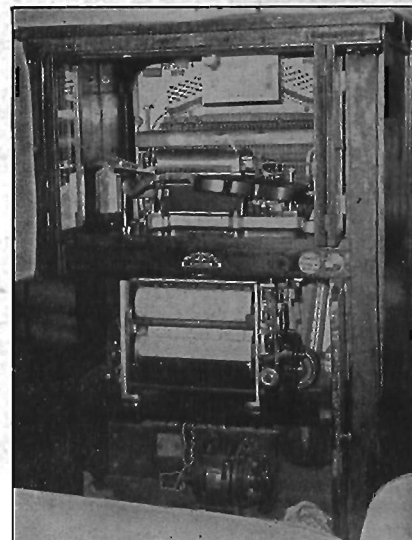
#### VII. Pietro as a Victor Artist.

However, it is Pietro's career as a Victor recording artist that primarily concerns us. His first Victor record was announced in the supplement for January, 1914, under the heading, "Two records By a Famous Accordion Player." The double-faced disc, No. 17486, consisted of "Broadway Medley," which included "Mammy Jenny's Jubilee" and "Here Comes My Daddy Now"; and "Great White Way Medley," consisting of "I Love Her, Oh, Oh, Oh" and "You Made Me Love You." Catalog Editor Sam Rous wrote:

This accomplished player, who has been making a tremendous success in vaudeville, presents the unique spectacle of an accordionist who does not drop notes all over the stage, a fault quite common with many other players on this difficult instrument. Signor Pietro's execution is unusually brilliant and his playing is marked by correct fingering and a fine sense of rhythm. These reproductions of the playings of this artist, who now makes records exclusively for the Victor, will, we think, be pronounced quite beyond competition. Two pop-

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ALLEN G. DEBUS

918 Rogers Ct. Waukegan, Ill.

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ular medleys have been selected for Mr. Pietro's first record, and those who hear them are likely to insist on further specimens of the work of this unusual artist.

Note the reference to "Mr. Pietro." The artist's name was given, however, on record as Pietro Deiro, and it was not until his "Sousa Medley March" and "Blaze Away March" (17921) was issued in February, 1916, that his name was shortened on the label to Pietro.

In February, there were two new Pietro records—a 10-inch, No. 17506 "International Rag" and "Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay Medley," and a 12-inch, 35345, "Bridal Rose Overture" and "Stradella Overture." The overwhelming success of the January record must have caused Victor to rush production on the February issues, which had been recorded the preceding November 13. Here is what the catalog editor said:

To say that the January Pietro records made a "hit" is putting it but mildly, and that much-abused word "furor" might even be used. That no such accordion playing has ever been produced on records is the universal opinion of customers who have heard the two fine numbers issued last month. For February we announce . . . two more popular selections and two fine overtures. The overtures are sure to cause a sensation and give one an idea of the wonderful instrument used by Pietro—which he calls a "piano-accordion." It might be called also a full military band and an orchestra, judging by the effects produced. Pursuing its usual policy of always giving Victor customers the best, Pietro, being the greatest accordionist in the world, has been engaged to make Victor records exclusively.

Pietro was also present in March with 17531, "Luna Waltz" and "Pietro's Return," that number for which *The Billboard* researcher sought in vain. In April he played, on 17551, the old faithful "Sharpshooters March" which Guido had made so popular on Columbia, combined with "Beautiful Days Waltz." He missed out in May, but in June was on deck with 17574, the A side of which contained two Irving Berlin songs, "This is the Life" and "My Arverne Rose." The "B" side likewise was all-Berlin, with "Down in Chattanooga" and "Kiss Your Sailor Boy Goodbye."

Collectors who have this record may ascertain with a little experimenting that it includes an amusing feature. After the music of "Down in Chattanooga" ceases, in the very last groove of the disc a voice (presumably not Pietro's) says "Cut it out!" The sound runs into the smooth inside rim, with the result that the voice repeats, "Cut it out! Cut it out! Cut it out!" over and over until the needle is lifted.

Editor Rous wrote in a humorous vein:

The unfortunate committee which has charge of the selection of records for the Victor Monthly Supplement has been scolded by some customers for allowing a month to elapse without new records by this famous player, who has made a success almost unprecedented with the splendid reproductions of his "piano-accordion." However, the blame must be laid on the record factory, which has not

been able to take care of the demand for the Pietro records previously issued.

In August, Pietro was present with another 12-inch record, No. 35367, on which he gave remarkable interpretations of the "Rigoletto Quartet" and "Light Cavalry Overture." Two months later he was back with 17609, "Hungarian Rag" and "Hummer Medley," and Rous jokingly said: "The prize offered to any individual who can keep his feet still while Pietro is playing a 'rag' is still unclaimed." In December the first Pietro record with one side by another artist was offered: No. 17643, on which he played "Italian Favorites—La Spagnola Waltz" and "Ciri-biribin" while Dr. Clarence Penney gave a mandolin rendition of "Azalea Waltz."

Having followed Pietro through his first Victor year, we must, to conserve space, hereafter touch only the high spots. When 17709, "Tip-Top Medley Fox Trot" and "Crackerjack Medley Fox-Trot," was issued in April, 1915, this interesting comment was given:

Several famous composers have honored the accordion by writing music especially for it. Tchaikowsky used four accordions in his second orchestral suite, and Wolf-Ferrari effectively employs it in "Jewels of the Madonna." While the Pietro dance medleys are very pleasing, they do not permit the artist to exhibit his great skill as do the more serious compositions, and in a short time we hope to bring out several new overtures by him.

In September No. 17802 was issued, combining Pietro's own "Verona Waltz" with "Italian-Spanish Favorites." The promise to bring out more overtures was kept in November on 35488, when the virtuoso played "Il Guarany Selection" and "Tranquillo Overture," the latter written by himself. Two of the greatest favorites in the accordion repertoire appeared in December on 17865—"Wedding of the Winds Waltz" and Waldteufel's "Estudiantina Waltz."

When 17895, "Success Medley" and "Melody Rag" (the latter another Pietro composition) was issued in January, 1916, it was announced that "this accomplished player, who has been for sometime a vaudeville 'headliner,' has just renewed his exclusive agreement with the Victor for a term of years, and perfect reproductions of his playing made in the Victor Laboratory are thus assured to his admirers. In April, on 35524, he played a "Romeo and Juliet Selection" and "Overture to the Barber of Seville." A month later, 35503 coupled Keler-Bela's "Comedy Overture" with Pietro's own "Trieste Overture."

In September, a real novelty was offered. On one side of 17941, Pietro played "Vesti la giubba" while on the other "Pietro's Accordion Quartet," consisting of himself and the three Marconi Brothers, was heard in the Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana." Said the supplement:

Here is another Victor novelty which is likely to make a hit with those who enjoy accordion music—and that means almost everybody.

The only Pietro has joined forces

with those accomplished vaudeville favorites, the Marconi Brothers, who are pupils of the greatest of players on this instrument; and some remarkable effects are produced by these four players in this beautiful record of the Cavalleria Intermezzo.

#### VIII—Other Accordionists

For the sake of comprehensiveness, this seems a good place to mention a number of other expert accordionists who made records during the period in which the Deiro Brothers dominated the field. A separate article had been devoted to Pietro Frosini. The Marconi Brothers made several Columbia records in 1917-18. Another team of brothers, Phil and Dan Boudini, made Pathé records during the same period, and furnished the accompaniment for some of Arthur Fields Pathes. Other Pathe accordion players recording in the United States were Charles Klass, Joseph Peppino and Mario Perry.

Peppino and Perry also played for Brunswick in the early 1920's. About the same time Anthony Galla-Rini was making Vocalion records, and much later he turned out some splendid electrically recorded numbers for Victor and Brunswick. Around 1919-20, "Le Vaux" was playing "Beautiful Ohio" and other popular numbers for Aeolian-Vocalion. Phil Baker and Ben Bernie made an accordion-violin duet of "Goodbye, Alexander" and "Waters of Venice" for Victor in 1918, and some years later Baker played accordion solos for Edison and Emerson, usually interpolating vocal refrains. No doubt there were piano-accordion recordings by other artists, but these players are typical of the top-flight talent of the acoustic and early electric era.

However, among those just mentioned, Frosini, the Marconi Brothers, the Boudini Brothers and Joseph Peppino played the button keyboard instrument rather than the piano ac-

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cordion. Mario Perry was a son of Peppino. Their real last name was Mentrasti. Mario Perry, to use his stage name, was the first accordionist to play on the radio at its birth in 1919, and two years later he became the first to join Paul Whiteman's Orchestra.

Before returning to Pietro's Victor activities, I should like to refer briefly to his records which appeared in English catalogs. A 1915 Regal list contains four double-faced Pietro records. Regal discs were made by the English Columbia company, so presumably the matrices of these records were obtained through a working agreement with the Columbia company in the United States, but most of the titles were never issued by American Columbia. That appears odd. Even odder is the fact that none of Guido Deiro's records were included, in spite of his having been an exclusive Columbia artist. Pietro's were G6714, the "Blue Danube" and "Luna" waltzes; G6730, "Donanwellen (Danube Waves) waltzes" and "Firefly Waltz"; G6770, "Blaze Away March" and "Tranquilla Overture"; and G7027, "Faust Waltz" and "Pagliacci Selections."

Another mystery is found in the 1926 catalog of Aco records issued in England by the Vocalion Company. There is a double-faced Pietro record, No. G15450, "Kiss of Spring" and "Valse Bluette." Since the inimitable Pietro was still under contract to Victor, I am puzzled over the source of this record.

Pietro himself says he can't account for this Aco record, which was also issued in the American Vocalion catalog. He never did any recording, he says, while abroad, nor was he a Vocalion artist. Perhaps, he speculates, the matrices were sold to the Vocalion company by either Victor or Columbia.

#### IX Continuing Pietro's Career

This review of Pietro's Victor recording career has now reached the period of the United States entry into the first World War. During those trying days, Pietro, as might be expected, was called on largely to play numbers with a military flavor. In November, 1917, he was represented by 18361, "American National Airs" and "Patriotic Airs of the Allies." In December, No. 18397 coupled "Good-bye, Broadway, Hello, France," and "Don't Throw Stones in the Well That Gives You Water" with "We're Going Over" and "The Old Gray Mare." There were no further Pietro records until July, 1918, when he played "War Ballad Medley" and "Eclipse Medley" on 18466. The A side contained "Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight" and "Joan of Arc" and the B, "I May be Gone for a Long, Long Time" and "Sweet Emalina, My Gal." The war ended in November, but there was still an overseas flavor in the next Pietro record, issued in March, 1919. On one side of 18520 he played "Oui, Marie" and "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows," and on the other All-Star

# Current Collectors' Recordings

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

## Reinald Werrenrath and Charles Harrison Record Again!!

I had intended to continue my discussion of Maurice Chevalier's records this month, but I have just heard some brand new Lp discs by Reinald Werrenrath and Charles Harrison on the Gavotte label which I feel are important enough to be written about first.

The Werrenrath record was made in the Spring of 1953—less than four months before he died. Considering the fact that he had already suffered a stroke shortly before, and that he was 70 years old at the time, his voice was remarkable. There is little point in recalling his long career on records which was done so well by Jim Walsh for HOBBIES in 1948. However, I might mention that one of my most vivid recollections of the John Bieling Day party in Garden City in 1948 is of Dr. Werrenrath describing the conditions under which he had to record for Edison some forty years before. His red seal Victors were probably some of the most popular which that company ever released to the public. And now we have this final testimonial to his great voice.

Gavotte album LPG 104—Reinald Werrenrath Favorites:

Love Sends a Little Gift of  
Roses  
Gypsy Love Song  
Drink to me Only With Thine  
Eyes  
Duna  
The World is Waiting for the  
Sunrise  
Smilin' Through  
Rose in the Bud  
The Lost Chord

It also might be worth while to mention that the noted actor, (and composer of the World is Waiting for the Sunrise) Gene Lockhart, has written a tribute to Reinald Werrenrath which is printed in the album cover.

The other Gavotte offering by Charles Harrison is equally impressive. Again I want to refer the readers to Jim Walsh's excellent biography of the artist whose career on records goes back to May 1911. This new record was made by Mr. Harrison just last May and after comparing his voice now with his electrical Edison Diamond Disc of "Sunny Boy" made in 1928, I was amazed to find that his voice today is nearly as fine as it was 26 years ago. Here too is a carefully considered selection of songs.

Gavotte album LPG 108 - Charles Harrison Sings

At Dawning  
Because  
For You Alone  
Sunshine of Your Smile  
Give me One Hour  
Somewhere a Voice is Calling  
My Wonderful One  
Song of Songs

Unfortunately these excellent records are not available in your local record stores. Ed Manning has written me that they should be purchased directly by mail to George V. Thompson Inc., 2017 Main St., Niagara Falls, New York. The price is \$4. each. Both Mrs. Werrenrath and Mr. Harrison profit from the sale of these records.

#### "EIGHT FAMOUS VICTOR ARTISTS"

Billy Murray has called attention to errors of identification in the photo of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, appearing in the July HOBBIES. The man on Billy's left is not Jess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King," but was an assistant to a well known legitimate stage director, Ira Hards. (Murray does not recall the pictured man's name and Hards is not shown.) The third man in the front row was a Victor dealer, whose name Murray does not remember. Ossman stands in front of Albert Campbell, behind Henry Burr. Other identifications in the cutlines are correct.

Trio gave out with "Sweet 'n' Pretty" and "I'm Waiting for You, Liza Jane."

From this point, lack of space makes it necessary to condense the discussion of Pietro's recording career. His records continued to be extremely popular and he was a top-notch attraction in Keith vaudeville. It was never my pleasure to see and hear him perform, but he frequently appeared at the Roanoke theatre in Roanoke, Virginia, and some of my Roanoke friends have told me he was an irresistibly attractive figure as he danced his way around the

(Continued on page 33)



mings of Chicago recently acquired. The pieces at the museum portray the evolution of the Mochica Civilization, emphasizing particularly the early primitive phase of their art. According to Junius Bird, curator of South American Archaeology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, the collection is one of the finest examples of Peruvian art outside of Peru. B. J. Wasserman of Buenos Aires formed his collection from 1920 to 1948, at which time he brought it to New York to be sold.

\* \* \*

The National Park Service has opened a museum at the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, Va. The museum which deals with the final retreat and surrender of the Virginia Army, occupies the first floor of the old Clover Hill Tavern. The exterior of the building has been restored to its 1865 appearance. The interior is also to be restored to its original appearance. The famous McLean House where Lee and Grant met, is open nearby as a historic house museum.

\* \* \*

The Ohio State Museum, Columbus, O., opened an interesting exhibit of Zane Grey material on July 11. Grey was born in 1872 and was descendant of one of the founders of Zanesville. Although he was educated at the University of Pennsylvania for the dental profession, he practiced for only a short time and in thirty-five years turned out seventy four books which have been translated into many foreign languages. In addition to books and original manuscripts there are items which belonged to Grey, furniture, sporting equipment, and other items on display through the cooperation of Grey's widow who lives in California.

### NEW ACQUISITIONS AT De YOUNG MUSEUM

The M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, Calif., announces the addition of two superb pieces of furniture, a commode and secretary, to the Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Collection. Both pieces were made the latter part of the 18th century by the French cabinetmaker, Jean Henri Riesener, for Queen Marie Antoinette. For the past hundred years they have been in the possession of one of New York's oldest and most prominent families.

The pieces are made of ebony faced with Japanese lacquer showing landscapes, plants and animals on gold background and are profusely mounted with gilt bronze appliques.

The early style of classicism, characteristic of the era of Louis XVI and his Queen Marie Antoinette, shows in the flat front, the straight lines of ormolu mouldings framing the panels, and certain motifs like acanthus leaves, rosettes and cornucopias, yet the gracefulness of Ro-

coco is still preserved and the style is decidedly feminine. The most outstanding feature is the mountings or ormolu appliques. Heavy swags of various flowers enrich the front while delicate intertwining garlands of roses decorate the frieze on the top panels where the Queen's initials M.A. are shown in the center. The gilding of the bronze is partly mat, partly burnished thus creating the effect of light and shadow. Every detail, the minute treatment of flower petals and leaves, the turning and movement of flowers reveal the virtuosity of the artist. In fact the garlands almost have the delicacy of a piece of jewelry.

Jean Henri Riesener is claimed by the French as the greatest cabinetmaker of his epoch and he enjoyed the same fame as the painters and sculptors of his time.

Born in 1734 in Western Germany he entered as a young man the workshop of Jean Francois Oeben, Royal cabinetmaker in Paris, who is also represented in the Oakes Collection. In 1774 Riesener was made *ebeniste ordinaire Du Mobilier De La Couronne* and was especially favored by the new Queen. He created magnificent furniture especially for her chateau in Saint Cloud.

After the French Revolution most of the chateau's furniture was disposed of. Two pieces bearing the stamps of the *Garde meuble de la Couronne* and of Saint Cloud that were for a long time in the possession of the family of the duke of Hamilton are now in the Metropolitan Museum. They are closely related to the commode and the secretary in the de Young Museum so presumably the Queen was so delighted with these pieces of art that she commissioned Riesener to make two similar ones with slight corrections—the two de Young pieces. Thus the new Oakes acquisitions are outstanding not only for their exquisite craftsmanship and aesthetic beauty but also for their historic provenance.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 30)

stage. My brother Edward, who saw him on several occasions, once remarked to me: "Pietro had more life and energy than anybody else I've ever seen. He seemed to overflow with it!"

After electric recording was introduced in 1925, some of Pietro's

acoustically made discs appeared in the Victor catalog for years afterward. The last to go was 18748, "Turkey in the Straw" and "Russian Rag," first listed in May, 1921, and still around in 1936. And until 1933 his versions of "Danube Waves," "The Return" and "Bel Giorni" stayed in the Columbia catalog.

It seems strange that when Victor first began re-making electrically its best selling old process records, it did not have Pietro do over some of his standard favorites. Instead, Mario Perry played eight numbers that had been intimately associated with the younger Deiro—"Beautiful Days," "Estudiantina," "Italian - Spanish Favorites," "Over the Waves," "Sharpshooters," "Sirens," "Verona" and "The Wedding of the Winds." Perhaps Pietro was out of the country at the time. He made occasional trips to Europe, during one of which he was honored by the Italian government for the contributions he had made to good music and the distinction he had conferred upon his native land by his great skill and popularity.

However, Pietro's familiar name was soon back in the catalog, with new recordings. His versions of "The Kiss Waltz" and "The Broadway Waltz" were listed on No. 21163 in the international list for March, 1928, and also appeared in the complete 1929 domestic catalog. This had been preceded in December, 1927, by another coupling in the international series, No. 80130, combining a polka, "Meridionale e Settebrionale" and "Dora—Mazurka." In October, 1928, No. 81457, "Tres Jolie—Waltz" and "La Petite Tonkinoise—One-Step" "made" both the international and domestic releases, as did a two-part "Medley of Italian Airs" on 81710 in December, 1929. After the Great Depression set in, about this time, the record business went to pieces for almost a decade. The "Broadway" and "Kiss" waltzes combination was the last Pietro record to be cut out of the catalog. It stayed around until a shortage of materials resulted in catalogs being reduced to a minimum around 1942.

Pietro's last recorded overture appears to have been 68719, "Sicilian Vespers" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor," issued probably in the mid-1920's.

Pietro was heard from again as a recording artist when Decca engaged him for a series of fine electrically recorded discs around 1936. They included:

1276—Ciriibiribin and O Sole Mio/La Spagnola and Cielito Lindo; 1277—Sharpshooters March/Pietro's Return; 1278—Dora Mazurka/Elvira Waltz; 1345—Tango of the Roses and Who'll Serenade You?/Giovinezza, Giovinezza and Faccetto Nero—March Medley; and 1668—Over the Waves/Funiculi, Funicula and Viva la Giga—Tarantella medley.

The Decca records, from the standpoint of superb playing and brilliant recording are, among the finest Pietro ever made.

(Continued on page 35)

### WANTED

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DENTAL and medical books and instruments.—Whitlocks, New Haven, Ct. n3061



impetus for a building. The Apalachicola Land Company gave appropriate land for a site.

A building fund campaign was launched and when a sufficient amount was raised the currently popular Greek architecture was chosen, and specifications for a structure of white pine to be constructed only with wooden pegs were mailed to New York City. Months later the building, cut in sections and pieces, unassembled arrived by boat at Apalachicola.

A year later, 1838, it was completed with organ and bell. On the high bell tower, forming a spire, was placed the gleaming white cross, like a beacon of faith beckoning to the hostile Indians, runaway slaves and pirates that inhabited the surrounding wilderness.

Local slaves attended the regular religious services in large numbers as it was one of the few churches in the South with a special gallery built for them. Church records show many slaves were baptized and became regular communicants.

The building was consecrated in 1841 by the Bishop of Tennessee. Soon after, the congregation was reduced by the yellow fever epidemic that spread to Apalachicola from nearby St. Joseph.

Sturdy and stalwart, the building survived wind and war, although windows and doors were "crushed in" by the violent gale of 1852. During the Civil War the building was closed after the bell had been melted into cannon and the carpets and cushions converted into blankets for the Confederate Army.

The Rector was sent inland to Marianna, Fla., taking the rare English silver communion service and which he hid in feather mattresses during the battle of Marianna. Today this antique silver is exhibited in the Church building, open to the public weekdays and Sunday.

Trinity Church has long reflected the trend of the times. One morning in 1901 townspeople were startled to see the facade of the building draped in black. The Greek columns were swathed in black cloth with festoons of it fluttering between them.

This baffling mystery was solved hours later when a merchant mentioned that the previous night he had opened his shop and sold his entire stock of black calico to certain

citizens of English ancestry who had just learned of the death of Queen Victoria. Some church members opposed this tribute to a foreign monarch but the calico remained until after the Queen's funeral.

Trinity's historical importance was emphasized when the first monument honoring Dr. Gorrie for his invention of the artificial ice making machine was placed in the front yard of the Church in 1900. The yard was then called "Gorrie Square," but in 1951 it was changed to "Gorrie State Park" by an act of the Florida Legislature.

Another prominent member was the New England Doctor, Alvin Wentworth Chapman, who sang in the choir. After making his home in Apalachicola, he combined the practice of medicine with the study of Florida's flora and fauna, and today is known as "the eminent botanist" and author of the still used standard text, "Flora of the Southern United States."

Since construction the Church has been under the supervision of the Ladies' Auxiliary Guild, which continues the old New England practice of hand dipping the Eucharistic candles and other early customs. However, it has introduced modern inventions when ever practical but without detracting from the building's original style and motif.

The hand-pumped organ has been replaced by a streamlined pipe model. The kerosene lamps have been supplanted by electric lights strategically arranged to accent the magnificent stained glass windows with their indescribably beautiful color combinations. Quaint, old fashioned covers for the kneeling cushions are handmade by members of the Guild.

A more recent innovation is the appointment of a very young rector. He is the Reverend William Anderson, an energetic, handsome native of Jacksonville, Florida, who modestly calls himself "the green deacon." With his attractive wife, Martha, he is instituting many new, progressive measures and which is why many old timers affectionately murmur "Bill's at it again!"

Reverend Anderson began the nightly illumination of the cross on the steeple as a reminder that this Church is continuing its century old credo: "The strength of Trinity is in its power of faith and labors of its people."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

### A Letter From Pietro Deiro

After vaudeville went into what now appears to be a permanent decline, Pietro set up the Pietro Deiro Accordion Headquarters at 46 Greenwich Avenue, New York, which has become known as "The Accordion Capital." As a long-time admirer of the great wizard of the piano-accordion, I wrote to him in the spring of 1951, inviting him to attend the next John Bieling Day for pioneer recording artists and telling him of the pleasure his recorded works have given me ever since my childhood. I received this reply, dated May 8, 1951:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Your very complimentary letter has been received and I must say that it is very flattering and nice to hear from people who remember the old days of vaudeville and records. At the moment I am still quite active in the accordion field and have ventured particularly into the publishing business for accordion. This has served to keep my name in front of the public somehow and ever so often I get a letter similar to yours which awakens old memories and brings back many happy days.

You can be assured that it is a pleasure to have my photograph forwarded you. I have personally autographed it and will have it mailed.

About the day on Long Island, I suggest that you let me know more about it a few weeks before the event takes place. I will try to make it if it is at all possible as I am sure that it will be a pleasant day.

I shall be looking forward to hearing from you.

Unfortunately, plans for the John Bieling Day, which was to have been held on September 10, fell through, and the parties, which gave so many pleasures to many recording artists and record collectors, have not been resumed. I have not since been in New York and so I have not yet achieved my long-time wish for meeting Mr. Deiro.

However, I hope I shall yet be able to do that. In the meantime, here's wishing him many more prosperous and happy years as the originator of his accordion headquarters and as the dean of piano-accordion players. With these good wishes to "The Daddy of the Piano-Accordion" go equally warm regards to his family. Pietro married Miss Bianca Vincenzi, and they have one son, Pietro Deiro, Jr., and a daughter Blanche Deiro. Pietro, Jr., is actively in charge of the business, which is primarily accordion music publishing with an edition of more than 1,000 publications, supplying the great majority of the accordion teachers and dealers throughout the country.

Let us keep on having grateful recollections, too, of that other fine artist, Pietro's brother, Guido. The Deiro Brothers, whose stage and recorded work has given pleasure to millions, are sure of a permanent place in the history of American music.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Wizard of the Accordion

### Pietro Frosini

By JIM WALSH

P. Frosini for 40 years was famous throughout much of the world as a concert and vaudeville performer, a composer and a recording and radio artist. However, aside from amateur and professional accordion players, there were few admirers of the virtuoso who knew what the P. in his name stood for.

On his Victor records Frosini's last name was prefixed by the initial letter. Edison discs called him simply Frosini and omitted the P., which stood for the same given name as that possessed by one of his great rivals, Pietro Deiro. During most of his career Deiro, who is still living and active, was known professionally as Pietro. Had Frosini followed his example and omitted his own family name there would have been a fine mix-up!



Pietro Frosini as he appeared when he first came to the United States.

But Pietro Frosini didn't. He was known almost entirely by his last name, as Deiro was by his first. So the two bearers of the name of Pietro (which means Peter in English) went their separate, distinct ways, winning deserved and lasting fame as masters of the piano-accordion. The life stories of Pietro Deiro and his brother, Guido, were considered in an earlier installment of this series. The career of Frosini may be summed up by reference to the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Composers, Authors and Publishers, edited by my friend, Daniel I. McNamara.

From the dictionary we learn that the composer-accordionist was born on August 9, 1885, and died at Woodside, N. Y., September 29, 1951. He became a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers in 1942. Frosini received his education at the Municipal Conservatory of Fine Arts in Catani, Sicily, and studied composition and cornet with Francesco Frontini, before attending the Milan Conservatory of Music. Although he mastered the accordion at an early age, he was a cornet player for two and one-half years with the British Navy at Malta. Coming to the United States in 1905, he made his debut as an accordionist at Fresno, Calif. A vaudeville artist for many years, Frosini gave a command performance before King George V of England in 1911. His compositions include many transcriptions and original pieces for the accordion. Among the latter are "The Sun-Kissed Waltz," "The Accordion World March," "Overture in C Major," "Swedish Steel Mazurka," "Silver Moon Waltz," "Sicilian Shore," "Northern Skies" and "The Jolly Caballero."

The foregoing may be supplemented by the following, which appeared in *The Edison Phonograph Monthly* for December, 1916, several years after Frosini had established himself as a favorite in vaudeville and on records. However, as will be shown, he did not learn to play the accordion at the Milan Conservatory, but studied other instruments there.

To Americans, who generally are unfamiliar with the possibilities of the accordion, it may seem strange that

instruction in the art of playing such an instrument should be given in such a world-renowned institution as the Conservatory of Milan. This is one of the most famous of all schools of music and it has produced some of the world's greatest musical artists, yet it was in this institution that P. Frosini, "wizard of the accordion," studied the art of playing his chosen instrument, and it was from here that he was graduated after he had mastered it. So it readily can be understood that the music which this artist draws from the accordion does not resemble in the least the weird and tuneless strains that many so-called accordion players produce.

Leaving Italy after completing his studies at Milan, Frosini came to this country, where his playing created a sensation in vaudeville circles. He has played in practically all of the high class theatres in the United States, having been given protracted engagements in many of the metropolitan playhouses. His success in America brought him foreign engagements and he was particularly successful in England where he appeared in the leading music halls of London and other larger cities. Frosini is not only a master of the accordion, but is a composer of note, and many of the pieces that he presents are his own compositions, composed especially for the accordion. He has made a number of selections for the Blue Amberol catalog and his rendition of "New York Blues," a melodious ragtime number that now is very popular, made for the January supplement, is a fine example of his art.

#### II FROSINI'S RECORDING CAREER BEGINS

Probably one of Frosini's first compositions to be issued in the United States was "The Chalice," copyrighted in 1908 by Maurice Shapiro, founder of the present-day music publishing firm of Shapiro & Bernstein & Company. The words to Frosini's music were by Edgar Selden, and were of a combined sentimental and pseudo-religious type, such as have not been unknown in popular ballads during recent years. The scene was "the mission gray near old Monterey." It was arranged for piano, not accordion.

Frosini's first record appears to have been Edison Amberol cylinder No. 103, issued in April, 1909. It was described as "a record by a new Edison artist, known on the stage as 'Frosini, Wizard of the Accordion.'" The selection played ('Wedding



of the Winds') is a favorite with admirers of the better class of music. It is considered to be the best of John T. Hall's compositions and is well adapted for the accordion solo."

Frosini's next Edison appearance was in the August, 1909, list, with No. 192, "Poet and Peasant Overture." "Frosini," the supplement writer said, "is a wonder as a player of the accordion. The way in which he plays the 'Poet and Peasant Overture' for our record will cause many an individual to revise his or her opinion of the musical possibilities of the accordion."

In October, 1909, there was a listing of No. 223, "Seneca Waltz": "An accordion solo unaccompanied and one of Mr. Frosini's own compositions. It is played in concert style. It is no exaggeration to say that this artist has no rival on the vaudeville stage, on which he is always billed as 'Frosini, Wizard of the Accordion.'"

February, 1910, brought No. 347, (Continued on page 28)

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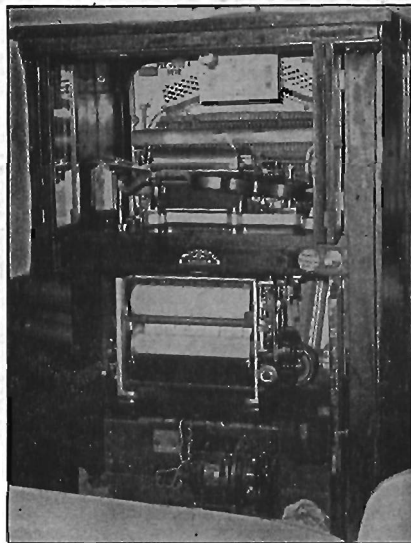
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Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 25)

Rudolphe Berger's "Amoureuse Waltz," with the comment: "Responding to the magic touch of Frosini, the accordion seems to develop a latent charm of tone quality that is absent when the instrument is in the hands of less skilful artists."

Meanwhile, Victor, which seldom let Edison keep a good artist to itself, likewise had begun making Frosini records. In January, 1910, the disc company also issued his version of "Amoureuse" on No. 16434, coupled with "The Swiss Shepherd," an ocarina solo by another gifted Italian, Mose Tapiero. By an error, Frosini's instrument was described not as a button-key board accordion but as a "concertina grand." Catalog Editor Sam Rous said: "A brilliant record of a favorite waltz played with much expression by a new Victor instrumentalist. Mr. Frosini is quite a remarkable concertina player and a whole orchestra in himself."

The second Victor record by Frosini, one of his own compositions, "Spring Flowers Waltz" (No. 16482) came out in June, coupled with a Pryor's Band rendition of the irresistible "Dill Pickles Rag," by Charles L. Johnson. In July, No. 16493 combined Frosini's interpretation of Delibes' "Naila Intermezzo," with a rather unsuitable companion, "Happy Go Lucky—Two-Step," again by Pryor's Band. Said the supplement commentator: "One of the catchy two-steps for which (J. Bodewalt) Lampe is noted, combined with the third Frosini record. Signor Frosini has given us this time a favorite bit from the popular Delibes ballet, which he plays with remarkable skill."

Just a month later the signor proved his versatility by demonstrating that, although a graduate of the Milan Conservatory, he had come to understand and appreciate American style ragtime. On No. 16501 he played his own "Operatic Rag," while a mandolin player, Roger Casini-Florenz, obliged on the A side with "Napoléon—Tarantella," written by somebody named Mezzacapo. "An interesting combination," said the annotator, "will be found here in Mr. Casini-Florenz's skilfully played mandolin number and the odd parody on operatic compositions which Mr. Frosini calls an 'operatic rag.'" Incidentally, by this time Victor had begun to term Frosini's instrument an "accordion grand."

December, 1910, marked Frosini's last appearance as a Victor artist on acoustic recordings. On No. 16829 he played his own "Echoes from Naples," while on the other side the Estudiantina Trio (don't ask me who the members were!) obliged with "Araby March," played on two mandolins and a bandurria—a kind of lute.

Many years later Frosini was to return to Victor's lists with a number of electric recordings made especially for international sale. These included 81222, issued in August, 1928, "Aida

—Fox Trot" and "Silver Moon—Waltz"; and 81368, two waltzes, "Beautiful Heaven" and "Vision of Love" announced in November.

Frosini's accomplished rival, Pietro Deiro, also contributed to the 81,000 series, and they both appeared in another international series whose numbers began with V. In November, 1929, Frosini was represented by V-20, "Coquette—Polka" and "Serenata Primavera." He also made other records for "foreign" sale, of which I do not have the catalog listings. However, a further check of the 1930 Victor numerical catalog shows in the Italian section that No. V12047, listed in August, 1929, contained two Frosini solos, "Carmen—Fox-Trot" and "Fior d'oliva."

A few years later, Frosini became one of the first artists engaged by Decca when it began business in 1934. He contributed three electrically recorded double-faced discs to the Decca catalog: 210—"Carnival of Venice" and "Valse Chromatique"; 211—"Accordiomania" and "Hot Fingers"; and 1029—"Bubbles" and "Cordinella." In the 1930's he made at least one record for the short-lived Master label.

Incidentally, the "Naila Intermezzo," mentioned in a preceding paragraph, was soon reissued in a more appropriate coupling, under the number 16933, with "Entr' Acte Gavotte" (Gille), a xylophone solo by William H. Reitz, on the other side.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the selections which Frosini recorded on various labels were his own compositions. These included almost all of his electrically recorded Victors; three of the earlier Victors; most of the Edisons; his three Deccas, issued during the electric era, and a few others on off-brand labels. As his warm admirer, C. Hilding Bergquist, says: "This is significant, because usually the company tells the artist what to play—mostly the 'known' or 'popular' material. Frosini had a prolific gift for creating lovely melodies and harmonies, which apparently the companies recognized."

### III FROSINI GOES TO ENGLAND

For about two years after Frosini's last old-style Victor record appeared, his name did not figure again in any American record company's monthly supplements. The reason no doubt was that the brilliant player of the "accordion grand" not only filled numerous vaudeville engagements during this period in the United States, but also crossed the Atlantic for a European engagement. While abroad, he made many recordings for firms operating in England, but does not seem to have played for Victor's British affiliate, H. M. V.

I have been turning through some old English record catalogs, mostly those issued by the smaller companies, in the hope of finding mentions of a few characteristic Frosini records, which I shall touch on here in spite of the fact that they have long been out of print and can be of only academic interest to the virtuoso's American admirers. The Zonophone lists of that period contain no accordion records, although there are a

fairly large number of concertina performances by George King and Alexander Prince. (Use of "Prince" and "King" as the last names of the artists, both of whom played the English concertina, suggests that King was merely one of the versatile Alexander's noms de disque.)

On the other hand, the German-controlled Beka company offered three double-faced couplings by "Mr. Frosini"; 460, "An American Rag" and "An Operatic Rag"; 470, "Wedding of the Winds" and "Rigoletto Fantasia" and 520, "Amoureuse Valse" and "The Aristocratic Coon"—certainly an incongruous combination.

The May, 1914, catalog of Winner records issued by a Simon-pure English company, Edison Bell, included these by Frosini: 2077, "Poet and Peasant Overture"—parts 1 and 2; 2145, "The Aristocratic Coon" and "The Glow Worm—Intermezzo"; and a coupling of what must have been his two favorite numbers for recording, 2433, "Amoureuse Waltz" and "Wedding of the Winds."

Edison Bell also made a higher priced record, "Velvet Face," which was said to have almost no scratch. The 1913 Velvet face catalog contains these same six Frosini selections, but in slightly different couplings, and shows a picture of the player, looking young but small and rather frail. A descriptive note says: "Frosini, who has just concluded an engagement at the 'Empire,' Leicester Square, London has played for us some of his celebrated excerpts. This artiste is gifted with marvelous execution and his quick passages are truly wonderful." Both sides of record 1084 were taken up with the "Poet and Peasant"; "Glow Worm" and "Amoureuse" were on 1090, while 1098 contained "Wedding of the Winds" and "The Aristocratic Coon." "Poet and Peasant" stayed in the catalog until Edison Bell went out of business in the 1930's.

I suspect that "G. Ardit" who made "accordeon" solos for another German company, Coliseum, was really Frosini. Some of the titles at least suggest it: 207 "Operatic Selection" and "Amoureuse Waltz"; 163—"American Rag" and "Intermezzo, Two-Step"; and 140, "A Ragtime Gem" and "An Autumn Idyll."

Frosini probably played for some of the other English companies during his highly successful stay abroad. Years after he had returned to this country, the Gennett Company obtained some of his English matrices and issued them under its own label.

### IV BACK TO EDISON

Frosini's next appearance in an American record company's catalog was when Edison listed "Wedding of the Winds" in July, 1913, on Blue Amberol cylinder no 1861. Then in October came that familiar "Amoureuse Waltz" as No. 2107. These, however, were only re-issues in "indestructible" form of his original wax Amberol recordings.

But the master accordionist, back in this country, began a new series of recordings in 1914 which were

(Continued on page 37)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 28)

well as Blue Amberols. In February, 1915, Edison listed his own composition, "Echoes From the Movies," as Blue Amberol No. 2531, with the artist's name given as P. J. Frosini. This must have been made shortly before the disastrous Edison factory fire of January, 1915, after which all new cylinder recordings were "dubbed" from Diamond Discs. (Contrary to the belief of some collectors, no Edison discs were made from cylinder masters.)

About the same time, undated Diamond Disc supplement No. 25 contained No. 50215, "Thro' the Park March," another Frosini composition, and "Echoes From the Movies." This was included ten years later in the booklet of "Music That Lives," a compilation of the 300 most popular Edison discs. The catalog description is interesting:

According to one musical writer and critic, (in the Encyclopedia Britannica,) "The Timbre of the accordion is coarse and devoid of beauty, although in the hands of a skillful performer the best instruments are not entirely without artistic merit." Truly a most grudging praise! However, this particular critic probably never heard Frosini play, for if he did he certainly would have to change his ideas as to the artistic merit of the accordion.

"The Wizard of the Accordion," P. J. Frosini has been called, and those fortunate enough to hear him play must certainly agree with the originator of the motto. This medley, that Mr. Frosini aptly calls "Echoes From the Movies," he arranged himself, for he is a composer and a very clever arranger as well as an "accordion virtuoso." The selection starts with a few strains from the familiar "Spring Song" of Mendelssohn. Then comes snatches of several classical and popular pieces all cleverly interwoven, bugle calls, patriotic selections, and the selection ends with the stirring strains of the "Wedding March."

In April, 1915, Frosini was represented by B. A. No. 2567, his own "Italian Fantasia," which the supplement said "comprises several characteristic Italian melodies, played with brilliant variations. This is without question one of the finest accordion records ever made." It also appeared as D. D. No. 50199, doubled with another Frosini composition, "Panama Exposition Overture." The later had been listed in March as B. A. 2537.

Without trying to describe all Frosini's Edison records in detail, it may be said that No. 51030, "Carnival of Venice—Variations," doubled with a cornet solo, "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms," by Ernest Albert Couturier, made the best-seller list, as did 50454, coupling Frosini's "New York Blues (Rag Classical)" with Rudy Wiedoeft's version of "Saxophone Sobs."

The description of "New York Blues" is rather amusing:

Frosini is considered one of the best accordion players now before the public. His success in vaudeville throughout the United States has been, as they say, "terrific." This selection he wrote himself. He calls it a "classical rag." That seems

# THE CHALICE

## SONG

WRITTEN BY

EDGAR SELDEN

COMPOSED BY

PIETRO FROSINI

PRICE 60 CENTS

Published by  
MAURICE SHAPIRO  
436 Broadway & Thirty-Ninth St.  
NEW YORK

Title page of one of Frosini's first compositions to be published in this country. (Reproduced by permission of Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., Inc.)

rather an anomaly, doesn't it? But it isn't. Look up the definition of the word classical and see if, with a little poetic license, you cannot fit it to this piece. It seems possible; certainly this rag is very different from most."

The description of a 1921 Frosini Diamond Disc, No. 50749, "Curro Cuchares March (The Bull Fighter)" and "Medley of Old-Time Tunes" gives still more conception of the keyboard wizard's remarkable versatility:

Many requests have come to us for a Re-Creation of this selection. Formerly, the composition was listed under the title of the "Italian Army March," probably because it was a favorite number of Italian military bands. The melody was written by Gerardo Metallo, and Mr. Frosini, the wizard of the accordion, takes particular pains to play the composition exactly as the composer wished. Mr. Frosini is well known to the American public as a vaudeville artist, but few of them are aware that he studied in the world renowned Conservatory of Milan, and is therefore, really a graduate artist of that classic institution.

Then, for a quick change of pace, consider the annotation of the reverse side:

This lively medley always makes a hit with Frosini's vaudeville audiences and will doubtless repeat its success with Edison owners. Several of the reels in the potpourri are Frosini's own. The older airs, woven together by the accordionist, are: "Sailor's Hornpipe," "Arkansas Traveler," "Annie Laurie," "Irish Washerwoman," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "Hail! Hail! the Gang's All Here," and "The Minstrel Boy to the War Has Gone." Needless to say the technique of Mr. Frosini is perfect.

Certainly, on the basis of this evidence it would be hard to prove that Frosini didn't have catholic musical tastes and sympathies!

"Curro Cuchares" was listed as Blue Amberol 4162 and "Old-Time Tunes" as 4129. Other Diamond Discs not hitherto mentioned, with

the Blue Amberol numbers for the same selections in parentheses, are:

50694 (4167), "The Four Jacks March" with "The Ring and the Rose," harp-guitar solo by Kitty Berger; 50477 (3753), "I Hate to Lose You Medley," with "Hindustan—Fox-Trot," All Star Trio; 51397, (3127), "Sonata in C Major" with "Duo Concertant," clarinet duet by Anthony Giammatteo and Fred J. Brissett; 80432 (3082), "Stradella Overture" with Offertoire (Donjon), by Weyert A. Moor, flute; and 50872 (4113), "Valse Caprice"—No. 1, with "A Perfect Day," xylophone solo by Lou Chiha "Friscoe."

It will be seen that every Diamond Disc by Frosini was also issued in cylinder form, but some of his earlier cylinders were omitted from his disc list. In the early 1920's the accordionist made several records which were listed on low-price "off-brands" such as Oriole, Grey Gull, Radiex, Paramount, Puritan, and Pathe Actuelle. Apparently he made no effort to obtain a further Victor engagement in the pre-electric era after returning from Europe. This was probably because Victor had signed Pietro Deiro to an exclusive contract and was publicizing him lavishly as the world's greatest piano-accordion player—a claim that Columbia was also making for Pietro's older brother Guido. Neither Victor nor Columbia needed another star accordionist, but Frosini was useful to Edison as a rival to his fellow virtuosos.

(To be continued)

## BILLY MURRAY IS DEAD

The September HOBBIES contained a note in which Billy Murray, most famous of pioneer recording artists, corrected an error in the cutlines of a photo of the Eight Famous Victor Artists that appeared in July. While the September issue was still on the press, "The Boss," as he was lovingly known to many of his friends and admirers, succumbed to a heart attack and died at the age of seventy-seven.

No effort will be made here to tell the life story of the one-time "Denver Nightingale," who was born in Philadelphia, Pa., May 25, 1877. A biographical sketch (rather inadequate by present-day standards) appeared in HOBBIES under "The Coney Island Crowd" heading during April, May and June, 1942. But I do feel that I should quote information concerning Billy's last hours and the funeral rites supplied by his dear friend and mine, James V. Martindale, of Brooklyn. On August 22, Jimmy wrote:

Dear Jim Buddy: Your sorrow at receiving the sad news of The Boss' demise was as deep as was mine in imparting it to you, I am sure.

A man and wife, friends of Maddy (Madeline Murray, Billy's wife—J.

(Continued on page 41)

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Wizard of the Accordion

## Pietro Frosini

(Continued from the October Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### V Frosini, the Man

So much for Frosini, the recording artist. But what of Frosini, the man?

I am indebted to an enthusiastic accordion music specialist, C. Hilding Bergquist, of Minneapolis, Minn., for some intimate details concerning the accomplished musician. Mr. Bergquist, who was a friend as well as admirer of Frosini, has given me permission to quote from notes which he has sent to me at various times. Among other things, he reveals that Frosini's name really wasn't Frosini. The notes, somewhat rearranged, follow:

It's nice that you are writing to Frosini . . . but he is small and frail and often ill and may not be inclined to answer letters. But I hope his sister and brother, who are with him, will answer you, sending a photo and some material . . . He is unique and inimitable in his musicianship, and a genius, as you will agree if you have heard his masterworks on the Edison Blue Amberol cylinders and Diamond Discs. As a point of interest, his "Overture in C Major" was erroneously labeled "Sonata" on both cylinder and disc.

He has never been in robust health (but) still manages to commute every day to his New York WOR morning broadcast on the John Gambling program. He plays in a semi-classical quartet . . . His wife died in 1949. Although Frosini's first name was Pietro, he never used it, probably because the name of his friend and accordion contemporary was Pietro Delro.

Frosini's real last name is Giuffrida, but he never used it. In his early youth he had an operatic composer teaching him—Paolo Frontini—and when later beginning his own career he honored his teacher, whom he admired, by modifying the teacher's name and calling himself Frosini. He came to America in 1905. He is known now as the finest composer of accordion music . . . By the way, his right-hand keyboard has buttons (still favored in Europe), not piano keys. A small accordion used in an early photo I have of him was the one he used on his five Victor records and on a similar number of Edison Blue Amberols . . . Frosini's "Panama Exposition" is an overture, not a march.

### VI Accordion Magazine Interview

More sidelights on the personality and career of the delicate but indomitable little musical genius were given in an interview published by *The Accordion World* in November, 1938, from which the following excerpts are quoted:

Recently we had occasion to drop in the Frosini home in Sunnyside, Long Island. Frosini, characteristically, was standing working over music at the special high-built desk in his studio-living room. However, he immediately stopped and welcomed us with true Italian hospitality . . . We expressed our pleasure to find him looking well.

"Yes," said the brilliant accordionist, in speaking of his health, "it is fortunate for me that I have never had to do any hard manual labor. I've earned my living from the time I was 16 as a musician."

"But you didn't begin as an accordionist," we interposed.

"Not professionally," Frosini admitted, "though I had learned a great deal about the instrument from my father before entering a musical conservatory at the age of 10. There the accordion was denied me, for at that time it did not have a high musical standing. I studied here for six years, taking up the cornet, piano, harmony, counterpoint and composition. My first professional job was first cornetist in the British Navy Band. In that capacity I toured the globe for four years. It so happened that my term expired while my ship was anchored in San Francisco Bay, California. I decided to stay, and go back to the accordion."

"It was a lucky day for America that you made that decision, Mr. Frosini," we exclaimed, "and of course it is well known accordion history that you were an immediate success in vaudeville. You toured the country, appearing at leading theaters for many years, did you not?"

"For nearly 30 years," said Frosini with evident satisfaction. "Then, in 1932, I retired from this in favor of the radio field."

"Anything else?" we queried.

"Well, you might say that I give all credit for being well enough to continue my career, to my wife, whose watchful care enables me to carry on." And Froz turned to bow gallantly to charming Mrs. Frosini.

Although it isn't mentioned here, while Frosini was playing cornet with the British Naval Band, he had an attack of malaria, which damaged his lip embouchure. He then returned to full-time accordion playing.

Sadly enough, the devoted Mrs. Frosini died two years before the passing of the husband of whom she took such good care. As Mr. Bergquist relates, he was then cared for by a brother and sister. My letter to Frosini brought no response, but knowing the precarious state of his health I hadn't really expected one.

### VII Dan McNamara Recalls

Just as I had reached this point

and was about to bring this brief study of Pietro Frosini to a close I received a letter from Dan McNamara, already mentioned as my friend who prepared the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary. And it fortunately happened that Dan, who had previously written me that he considered Frosini probably the greatest of accordionists, recalled in his letter an interesting happening in which he, Mr. and Mrs. Frosini were the "stars." Not only that but he enclosed a thumbnail biographical sketch of Frosini prepared by the accordionist himself on November 1, 1950, less than a year before his death. It is refreshingly free from false modesty, and I shall print it as a supplement to what I have written, although to some extent it duplicates information already given.

But first, Dan McNamara's reminiscences.

Dear Jim: I fear that you were magnifying beyond its just proportions my "heroism" re Mrs. Frosini. However, if you find the incident of sufficient interest to refer to it in your article, I shall . . . tell you just exactly what happened.

This took place years ago on the Sunday night during the Christmas—New Year holiday week. The fire was in the Kingsbury Hotel, Waterbury, Connecticut (I am sure this has gone the way of all flesh by now.) It was a five story wooden building only a couple of years old, and because of the reasonable rates and nice, new quarters it was popular with the theatrical profession. It was just a stone's throw from the theatrical section. The hotel was well filled. A road company of "The Merry Widow," Dockstader's Minstrels and the going and coming vaudeville shows (we booked them for a week) had filled the hotel about to capacity. We had no Sunday shows, but because Monday was a big day with the playing of our new bill I used to get to bed early on Sunday nights . . .

When I awoke about 11 p.m. I thought I was dreaming when I heard shouts of fire, etc. However, in a few seconds I was on my feet and made myself presentable enough to look out into the hall. The place was filled with smoke and there was a lot of running around. A stairway which went down the five stories was just outside my door and the elevator was quite a distance down the hall. As I got to the top of the stairs, I encountered a little man who was supporting an unconscious woman. If you remember Frosini you will recall that he was a tiny fellow, probably not much more than five feet tall, and his wife was of about the same stature. I did not know them (they had just come into the hotel a little while before the fire.) Not knowing the extent of the fire, we thought best to take advantage of the stairway, so between the two of us we got Mrs. Frosini down to the ground floor. By that time the excitement had somewhat subsided, for it had been determined that all the fire was confined to a burning mattress, which was attributed to carelessness of a cigarette smoker. It was only a short time before all

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By MOSORIAK & HECKERT

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the excitement was over and the Frosini returned unscarred to bed.

I do not claim to be an authority, but I have always believed that the great accordionists in the heyday of vaudeville were Frosini and the Deiros. You will find a fairly complete reference to Frosini in the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary. Deiro never became a member of ASCAP. The Waterbury theater in which Frosini was was the Jacques', one of the earlier units to be included in the later important vaudeville chain of the late S. Z. Poll, whose theatrical interests in New England now are included in the chain known as the Loew-Poll circuit. . . . My own connection with the Poll circuit was reasonably brief. I left newspaper work to become manager of the Jacques' theater, which had vaudeville and some stock. I went from Waterbury to New Haven to be the general press representative for Poll at his headquarters there and not too long after returned to newspaper business. I am now in my 18th year with ASCAP, currently director of public relations.

If you care to refer to Mr. Frosini's creative work, you might be interested to know that his most performed works are "Skippin' Along" and "Silver Moon Waltz."

### VIII Frosini's Autobiography

And now the year-by-year notes prepared by Frosini himself. These reveal that the ASCAP dictionary somewhat shortened the name of his birthplace which was in Sicily rather than Italy proper. I am not sure what Frosini meant by saying he made the first "commercial Victor record" in 1908. Perhaps he meant the first Victor record played on his type of accordion. At any rate, the late John Kimmel had made accordion records before him, but on an old-type instrument. And Frosini's records probably were made in 1909 rather than 1908:

Biography of PIETRO FROSINI, residing at 47-36 46th street, Woodside, Long Island. 1885—born August 9 in Mascalucia province of Catania, Sicily. 1887—parents, poor farmers, went to Catania to live. 1888—blinded by the measles. Sight was restored but remained defective.

1889—began to play on toy accordion. 1891—kidnapped by a fanatic "lover of children," returned home after six months.

1893—began playing on father's chromatic accordion. In a short space of time I mastered this instrument and played operatic selections as well as overtures and

### MUSIC BOXES

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina 15 1/4", 20 3/4", 27", 32", Criterion 20 3/4", Mira 6 3/4", 9 1/4", 15 1/2", 18 1/2"; Monarch 15 1/4"; New Century 18 1/2"; Orphenon 15 1/4"; Polyphon 24 1/2"; Stella 14", 17 1/4"; Imperial Symphonion 13 1/2"; Thorons 4 1/2". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. d3867

FOR SALE—TWO SWISS music boxes, one with drum and bells.—Marg Paape, 602 East Broadway, Winona, Minn. n1441

FOR SALE: Reginalphone music box complete with large selection 21 inch metal discs. Make offer.—R. W. Mouser, Winter Haven, Fla. n3023

### PLAYER PIANO ROLLS

PLAYER PIANO ROLLS: Latest hits and old favorites. Send for free list. Player material, parts, service.—Durrell Armstrong, 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. d122741

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Transcriptions, Sunday Serenade programs, Air-shots, armed forces recordings, etc. by "Sammy Kaye," also transcriptions, Air-shots armed forces recordings etc. by "Ink Spots."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. d3084

### RECORDS FOR SALE

RARE VOCAL RECORDS: Treasured performances by the greatest artists available at reasonable prices. Galski Renaud, Sembrich, Bonci, Tetrassini, etc. Write for interesting free lists. All inquiries promptly answered.—George Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Michigan. ja3065

ALL IMPORTED vocal operatic records. Free list on request. Many G & Ts, Odeons, Fonotipias, Zonophones, Pathes, etc.—Collectors' Haven, 1131 Bergen St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3004

RARE OLD VOCAL OPERATIC SINGERS: Will send sales list comprised of Caruso, Battistini, Boninsegna, Martinelli, McCormack, Patti, Plancon, Rethberg, Tetrassini, others; old records catalogs, supplements, books on opera singers. Please enclose 3 cent stamp. Curiosity seekers and information hunters, don't bother to write as you won't get any lists.—Marvin Smisssman, 5361 Ridge Ave., St. Louis 12, Mo. ja34431

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 44 Church St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

DISPOSING of my private classical collection. Many rarities, Adams, De Lucia, Patti, Nordica, etc. Send wants, no lists sent.—Ronald Slaughter, 424 9th St., Santa Monica, California. d3614

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. my124661

EDISON, PATHE, VICTOR, COLUMBIA. Send us your wants. Discs only. Catalogs bought and sold.—C. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. n3023

Auction Sales: Rare and cut-out vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

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THOUSANDS of used records, all varieties, send wants.—Stanley Brile, 3914 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. d3652

HUNDREDS OF IMPORTED cutout vocals, rare Golden Age operatics—G&T, Fonotipia, etc., hard to get Music Hall, musical comedy and personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. n3867

WANTED: Edison cylinder record 7438 "Mary Was A House Maid."—M. Raschelle, 6 Colon St., Apt. 21, Brighton, Mass. ja3403

LARGE LIBRARY of Classical Records 78s: Symphonies, Concertos for all instruments, Piano and Violin Music, Vocal and Operatic Sets and Singles, over 16,000 records most of which are imported. Will sacrifice on account of moving.—M. J. Epstein, 242 Lexington Ave., New York 16, N. Y. n1063

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 617 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. ja128402

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED melodeons and organs. Repair service. Reasonable prices.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. d3882

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, catalogs, horns, reproducers, records, parts, bought, sold, exchanged.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. n6215

WANTED TO BUY: Edison Concert, Columbia Grand and other Cylinder Phonographs, horns, reproducers, catalogs, records. Describe fully and price prepaid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. f6238

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Edison, Victor and Columbia Phonographs. Hundreds of Cylinder and Disc Records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or Disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppertop's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N.Y. d3886

### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

Coin operated pianos and other coin operated musical devices wanted. Top prices paid. Music rolls, catalogues and instruction books for above also purchased. Write B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, Calif. d3297

ANY MUSICAL ANTIQUE sold or repaired. Automatic pianos, melodeons, music boxes, roller organs, phonographs, reed organs and pipe organs.—Old Music Store, Deansboro, N. Y. d6008

SWISS music movement, finest make, assorted tunes, ask for leaflet.—Jules Wolff, 38 Murray Street, New York, N. Y. f6445

WILL PAY CASH for cylinder phonographs, records, reproducers, parts, catalogs, literature and music boxes. Please describe and price.—Write Pollard, 4109 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz, Calif. d3234

FOR SALE: 20 Criterion tune discs 20 1/2". Also Amberola cabinet style.—Marg Paape, 602 East Bdw. Winona, Minn. n1251

PAPER ROLLS wanted for Wilcox & White "Angelus Orchestral" player organ. Also want Mills Violano Virtuoso rolls and automatic piano rolls.—Larry Givens, R. D. #1, Wexford, Penna. d3006

children's nursery tunes. 1895—since my parents did not have the means to give me the proper education to advance my extraordinary musical talents, sent me to the Municipal Conservatory of Fine Arts. At the age of ten I entered this conservatory. Since I am left-handed I could not play any wind or string instruments, therefore I learned to play cornet. The accordion was prohibited in the Conservatory.

1898—I became a pupil of Maestro Francesco Paolo Frontini. I distinguished myself as composer and cornet player and won many awards, medals and citations. 1902—I transferred to the famous Milan Conservatory of Music; however, I accepted a job as cornet player with the British Navy, stationed on Malta, serving with the Navy for 2½ years.

1905—I was brought to America by a vaudeville agent who, upon hearing me play "The Poet and Peasant Overture" on the accordion, appointed himself my manager. I was a big hit and was credited with civilizing the accordion. My salary reached new proportions when I finally hit New York, where I played the Keith-Orpheum circuit.

1908—I made the first commercial Victor record. 1911—went to London for six weeks engagement at the Empire. 1913—I was getting lonely for my family and sent for them. We made New York our home. 1914—as war broke out (I was rejected for physical disability) I entertained the boys in camps and hospitals.

1920—I married Miss Alfride Larsen in Philadelphia. 1924—we bought a home in Beechhurst, Long Island. 1925—my health began to fail, and soon had to retire from traveling.

1932—I began to teach the accordion. I found this to be uninteresting. I got a job with John Gambling on WOR and composed accordion works in my spare time. I submitted several of these compositions to the Alfred Music Company. They had the foresight and the courage to publish my first serious accordion works. (This company now publishes the bulk of my compositions.)

1940—I bought a new home in Sunnyside, Long Island, which is still my residence. I have contributed to the accordion literature the most complete library in the business. The biggest and most well-known composition is "The Jolly Caballero," which is acclaimed the world over as the most outstanding composition for the piano-accordion. 1942—I joined ASCAP.

1940—On June 13, 1949, I lost my beautiful wife. This tragedy left a deep wound in my heart. And though time will never heal this wound I shall try to keep my chin up. And with the help of God I hope that my creative vein keeps flowing and will continue to compose good music.

Mrs. Frosini was of Danish descent and had been in show business.

And so, with a "gallant bow" like that he had made in happier days to the wife whose memory he cherished after her death, let us say hail and farewell to Pietro Frosini, who himself will be remembered with admiration and affection as long as his compositions and records are heard. A little man of great talents, he was a fine example of the old saying that "good things come in small packages."

## MORE ABOUT FROSINI'S RECORDINGS

After the preceding article was completed, Hilding Bergquist submitted additional information concerning Frosini's recordings and compositions which he asked me to include to make the biographical sketch as nearly complete as possible. Rather than rewrite the article for the sake of making the many necessary insertions, I am adding Bergquist's remarks as an appendix to the biographical sketch:

Frosini never played a piano-accordion, but some photos show his instrument with imitation piano keys alongside the rows of buttons which he always played on. The white piano keys actually were in performance the third row of buttons. Button-

keyboard accordionists like Frosini often later adopted such a piano keyboard appearance as a concession to the growing popularity of normal piano keyboard accordions in this country. However, I don't believe Frosini adopted this keyboard appearance before the 1930's.

You seem to have listed most of Frosini's records . . . but I think I'll list the few other records by Frosini of which I know, which I hope you'll include . . . so as to make his discography absolutely complete:

VICTOR—V-32, "Fragrant Flowers"—Waltz"/ "Dizzy Accordion—Fox-Trot"; V-57, "Come, My Love—Waltz"/ "Florette"—Waltz; V-12123, "A Malva Rose—emmez 'O Grano"—Waltz/ "O Silenzio—One Step"; V-12142, "Pensieri Alegri (Happy Thoughts)—Waltz/ "Mazurka Italiana"; V-12242, "Mazurka Amabile"/ "Lettera 'e Suldato Medley"; V-12306, "Love Smiles"—Tango/ "Thoughts of Love"—Waltz; V-12404, "Cielo Sereno—Waltz"/ "Visione D'Amore"—Waltz (this is the same as "Beautiful Heaven" and "Vision of Love" on V-125 and 81368); V-12598-A and 25-7075-A, "Angelica—Mazurka" (I don't know the title of the reverse side but presumably it should be played by Frosini); 24605, "Frosini's Symphonic March"/ "La Mariposita".

The following are miscellaneous titles by Frosini on "offbrand" labels, issued earlier:

GENNETT—4670, "Amoureuse—Waltz" (probably from Edison Bell matrix), backed with "Belphegor March," played on the concertina by Alexander Prince; RADIE—4006, "Stradella Overture"/ "Medley of Old Favorite Airs"; ORIOLE—154, "Stradella Overture"; 169—"Medley of Old Favorite Airs"; PATHE 20672, "Rag in D Minor"/ "On to Paragon—March" (same titles on Actuelle 020672); PARAMOUNT—20031, "Down in China Town"—Fox—"I'm Always Falling in Love With the Other Fellow's Girl"—Medley Fox-Trot; Trot/ "Just Like a Gypsy" (introducing these Paramount titles also appear on Puritan 11031). Somewhere in the middle 1930's Frosini also made MASTER MA-130, "Winx"/ "Gauchos on Parade".

And in the early 1940's, I believe, he made, with a trio, under his name:

HARMONIA—H-2036, "Bel Fiore"—Tarantella/ "Baciarmi Sempre"—Mazurka; H-2037, "Sogna de Madre"—Waltz/ "Ritorna l'Allegria"—Polka; H-2038, "Napoli in Festa"—Mazurka/ "Bel Viso"—Polka; and H-2039, "Sogno di Gioventù"—Mazurka/ "Carezze—Waltz."

I have also (Bergquist adds) found and heard the foregoing Pathe Actuelle titles issued on catalog No. 02115, but mislabeled "I Pattinatori" and "Valzer Espana," as by Fisarmonica Duetto—meaning, in Italian, "accordion duet."

The guitar-banjo accompanist he had on electric Victor, was Dan Maffei. I also have a vague recollection of seeing listed in a 1930 Victor supplement his issue of "L'Aetna"—Polka. Perhaps it was withdrawn early, as I've found no further data on it.

Besides "The Chalice," Frosini, in his earlier career, also wrote two other songs, "Just Because" (with lyrics by Stevens), published by Huntzinger, and "The Rose and the Butterfly," "Just Because" was recorded by Earl Fuller's New York Orchestra in 1921 on Edison disc 50824, and also on Olympia 15116; while the Van Eps Quartet recorded it at it was issued on Cardinal 2043 and on Medallion 8318. I have no data whether "The Rose and the Butterfly" or "The Chalice" were recorded.

# CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

## BILLY MURRAY'S LAST RECORDS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

My friend Bryant Burke was the first to write me the sad news that Billy Murray had died on August 16th. Although I only met him once, I cannot help but feel that his passing is a personal loss. I think that most collectors of old popular recordings will feel the same. As for myself I know that I would never have started collecting had it not been for my love of Billy Murray's comic songs.

There is no need to go over all of Billy Murray's career in this column. In 1942 Jim Walsh tackled this job for HOBBIES in three articles. However, I feel that a short discussion of his last records made from 1940-1943 would be of interest even though today they can only be obtained through used record dealers.

As you know, Billy Murray's style of singing lost popularity rapidly in the late 1920s. After his Victor contract expired in 1928 only a few comedy numbers were made by him and most of these were duets with Walter Scanlan. In my opinion the greatest of these is Victor 22040 "Oh Baby What a Night" which is backed with "Katie Keep Your Feet on the Ground" by Murray and Aileen Stanley. Incidentally this disc is also memorable as being the last Victor record ever released by the great comedian. Murray and Scanlan continued to record for many of the smaller concerns and I have duets by them on the Brunswick, Crown, and Domino labels. However, more common than these are the vast number of "vocal refrains" by Murray who must have sung choruses of popular songs for most of the bands who recorded in the late twenties and the very early thirties. But with the collapse of the recording industry Billy Murray ceased to record.

Ten years later the industry had changed and was riding the wave of an ever increasing prosperity which had not been dreamed of during the depression. RCA signed the veteran comedian on its 35 cent Bluebird label to sing "It's the Same Old Shillelagh" with Harry's Tavern Band. Although listed on the label merely as a vocal refrain, it was in effect a true Murray solo. The record sold very well and Bluebird began to issue a series of Murray records. However, the remaining records were all listed by Billy Murray accompanied by Harry's Tavern Band.

(Continued on page 56)

## RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Record "Through the Years" by Nelson Eddy.—Mrs. T. R. Turner, 1831, E. 31st Place, Tulsa, Okla. n1541

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## More About the History of The Phonograph

By JIM WALSH

### DISC MACHINES OF THE EIGHTIES

Preceding articles in this series on the early history of the phonograph have dealt almost entirely with Edison's cylinder instrument. For the sake of fairness, let's turn to the disc instrument invented by Emile Berliner and see what it was like nearly sixty years ago. "A. L.," writing in the Talking Machine News for January 15, 1906, said:

The disc machine in its early form, sold in the later eighties, was regarded merely as a fairly interesting toy. . . . Even in its early form there were a number of persons who exhibited it at a charge, generally of one penny per record, hearing tubes being employed. . . . After a fairly good run the use of hearing tubes for talking machines rapidly waned, and the use of the horn became common. This was a consequence of the progress of the record in the direction of loudness.

The majority of these machines and records hailed from Germany. These were retailed, with one unimportant exception, at the uniform price of two guineas, including six records. . . . The discs or records were five inches in diameter, and the hearing tubes one-eighth inch bore. The trumpet (made of cardboard) was of little use, the hearing tubes (always fixed direct to the speaker) being indispensable in order to at all appreciate the record.

After a time a larger machine . . . was heralded, but the larger size and rather better get-up was the total compensation for increased price. The records were the same—and the results not one whit better. . . . An attachment was also sold as an extra, called the "gramophone globe attachment." It may be looked upon as the incipient idea of a sound-box, but though lauded as an apparatus to increase the sound, it utterly failed in that object—indeed, it rather diminished the sound. In structure it consisted of a hollow metal globe, with projections on which to fix the listening tubes. The sounds were conveyed from the diaphragm to the globe, and from the latter to the listeners. The diaphragm was of vulcanite, about the thirty-second of an inch in thickness.

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Of records the English selections were small in number but those in German were numerous. There was also a good list of selections in French, Spanish, Italian and Russian. The English records were mainly nursery rhymes, such as "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son," "Little Jack Horner," "Sing a Song of Sixpence," etc. Of the quality of the records, well, it is better to be silent on that subject. But there were two exceptions, these being good records, and about the only saleable — they had quite a good run. These were "The Lord's Prayer" and "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." They were really splendid money-earners and many an exhibitor's eyes twinkled as the pennies rolled in. "The Lord's Prayer" always retained premier place for quality of reproduction. One person the writer has in mind made a good weekly return from this record alone. He possessed a good presence and loud voice, a seedy frock coat, and a well-polished tall hat. Armed with these and the "Lord's Prayer" record, he took up a stand in the public dancing room, and day after day during the "season," shouted at intervals, "Come and hear General Booth recite the Lord's prayer to five thousand people in Melbourne." An excellent harvest resulted.

Needles at this period cost "so much each," and to use one per selection would have been deemed willful extravagance—they saw very different use, the more so as they had to be re-sharpened by the user, a slow and monotonous operation. The records were sold at from one shilling to one shilling sixpence each. The material was vulcanite and occasionally records could be purchased made of zinc. As is well known, a disc plate scratched by frequent contact with the steel needle gives off a disagreeable grating sound, but the proportion of such results was less observable in the early form of plate. The machines themselves were operated by hand.

### Sir William Preece Introduces the Phonograph

By skipping back and forth between the United States and England, this article has begun to acquire a trans-Atlantic flavor. Now we'll visit Great Britain again, to consider the following account given to *Tit-Bits* in 1904 by Sir William Preece, who introduced the phonograph in Great Britain:

"It was, I believe, the result of a conversation I had at Menlo Park in 1877 with Mr. Edison on the theory of the telephone that led him to discover the phonograph. With characteristic kindness, Mr. Edison sent me one of the first instruments he made, and I showed it and explained it to the members of the Royal Society who were assembled at one of the meetings in 1878. In order to demonstrate how it would talk back, I spoke into it.

"I said, 'I am the phonograph. I

am a very funny fellow. I can talk. I can laugh. I can sing.' Then I talked, laughed and sang into the machine. When the reproducer was put on to give back the record, everything came out clearly and loudly, but with that Punch-like effect peculiar to the early phonographs.

"Immediately in front of me at the meeting were two very distinguished dignitaries of the Church, whose names I do not remember at the moment. When the phonograph finished speaking one of these gentlemen turned to the other, and in loud voice exclaimed, 'What a disgraceful thing it is that the Royal Society should encourage these ventriloquists!'

### First Needle Manufacturer

The W. H. Bagshaw Company, established in Lowell, Mass., in 1870, maintained it was the first firm to manufacture steel needles for playing disc records and for many years remained the largest needle manufacturer.

The first wooden needle, the B. & H. Fibre, was invented in 1907 by a Chicago business man, Fred D. Hall, who wanted to preserve his large collection of high class records. Hall sold his rights to the needle in 1910 to the Victor Talking Machine Company. Today the steel needle is practically obsolete and the fibre, thanks to the growing popularity of records playing at 33 and 45 revolutions a minute and the gradual decline of the standard 78 speed, is becoming so. Neither the steel nor the wooden needle is suited to playing slow speed records, and their eventual disappearance seems inevitable.

### Edison's Harp Experiments

Stories dealing with Mr. Edison's plodding, patient pursuit of tonal perfection are almost innumerable. The *New Yorker* of August 9, 1952, contained an interview with Melville Clark, a native of Syracuse, New York, who is the inventor of a concert harp made of glass, and has a harp factory in Syracuse.

According to the *New Yorker*: "Mr. Clark worked 50 years on the glass harp before perfecting it. Thomas A. Edison gave him the idea. 'I played my harp for him at his laboratory . . . one day,' he said, 'and he declared wistfully that he'd captured every instrument accurately on his phonograph cylinders except the

harp. All other instruments have a point from which the sound emanates, but a harp is like a floodlight. While I played my harp, he got down on his knees and bit it here and there to see where the vibration came from. It came from the five sound holes behind the shell. 'We'll have to build a booth to get it,' Tom announced. So he built a booth of rock maple and put me inside it and stuck a recording horn through a little hole, and I played my harp. Oh, he was delighted with the cylinder! Later, he built a booth of plate glass, for he used to say that glass is the greatest sound reflector in the world. That's what prompted me to build a glass harp."

Apparently, Mr. Clark's experimental recording was never issued.

#### Poems Honoring Inventor Edison

Grateful purchasers of Mr. Edison's phonograph in the early 1900's frequently strove to express their appreciation in verse, and some of their effusions were published in the New Phonogram. Most of it deserved to rank among the world's worst poetry, but occasionally there was something which was reasonably good, as amateur poetry goes. Without making invidious comparisons, this article may well draw near its end with two poetic contributions. The first, by John Montague of Aberdeen, Maryland, and entitled "The Phonograph," appeared in July, 1907:

I heard a phonograph today, and all  
ma heart went out  
To greet its liltin' melodies, an' join  
the merry shout;  
I laughed with Billy Golden, Arthur  
Collins an' the rest,  
An' sat in speechless wonder at its  
jocund song an' jest.  
The brass band played, an' there I  
jigged, an' kept time with ma  
foot;  
There's nary danger lingerin' of get-  
tin' in a rut  
Of sad-eyed melancholy. Oh! the  
blues are far away  
When you sit a-listenin' cozy when  
the phonograph does play.

You may talk about your organ,  
your upright, square, or grand;  
I allow their music's fetchin', but  
in all this good broad land  
There's nothin' in the music line  
comes near the phonograph  
To make you wicker with delight,  
and raise a hearty laugh.  
Its music is so varied, perhaps the  
hours drag slow,  
You can call up Mr. Ossman to play  
his old banjo;  
Or maybe you're a-droopin', then  
Collins is the boy  
To send your heart a-jumpin' an'  
steep your soul with joy . . .

God bless you, Mr. Edison! You've  
filled the world with song;  
I'm but a humble member of this  
big world's mighty throng;  
But my soul goes out to greet you,  
an' I'm feeling proud to say  
That I've lived to hear about you an'  
your phonograph today.  
Across God's sweet green meadows  
its melodies ring out  
An' millions listen to its strains,  
their troubles put to rout.  
An' I, with all those millions, bless  
you each time I laugh,  
For givin' us this wondrous thing,  
your glorious phonograph.

At about the same period, Miss Ellie Wemyss of Parkside, South Australia received a cylinder record which her brother, who was living in Chicago, had made of his own

voice. Mis Wemyss was so thrilled at hearing her brother's living tones that she wrote a long poem of more than average merit which she sent to the inventor. Here are some representative stanzas:

A voice from far across the sea!  
We hear each word and tone!  
'Tis not a mere machine—'tis he!  
Himself—his voice—his own!

Oh, Wonder-worker, Wizard great!  
World-helper! It would be,  
You knew, a gift to world and State—  
'Tis now a gift to me!

For now we hear—I hear—a voice  
From that far sister-land.  
And at the sound our hearts rejoice—  
It seems so near at hand!

Here in the room with us he seems;  
He knows his voice is heard;  
And clear beyond our wildest dreams  
His every tone and word! . . .

And so we send our thanks to you  
From our far Continent;  
With grateful love, a tribute due,  
Such men are well content. . . .

God cherish that great life of thine!  
God guard and bless it still,  
That you may give more gifts divine,  
And all His work fulfill!

I wonder if that cherished cylinder  
of the voice of Ellie Wemyss's brother  
is still unbroken?

#### Ultimate Tribute

But perhaps the ultimate tribute paid to Mr. Edison was contained in a letter written June 4, 1920, by Clifton E. Merrill of Brewer, Maine, and published in the Edison Amberola Monthly of the following September under the well chosen heading, "Here is a Rhapsody!" It seems doubtful that praise could be more lavish than this:

Thomas Edison, Esquire,  
Orange, New Jersey.

Dear Sir:

Before your clear-seeing, all observing eyes grow dim; before the deep and regular steadfast beating of your mighty heart has forever ceased; before ye pass on and rest with the mighty dead and belong to the ages; I must breathe one fleeting word of GRATITUDE. I have, during seven long and happy years, owned an "Amberola" Edison Phonograph — a first class, bang-up, \$200 machine of wine-red mahogany with diamond point. Once that machine, your marvelous, paramount invention, had saved my reason — once it saved me from despair — just now it has cheered and comforted my little six-year-old daughter, who is slowly recovering from a severe attack of measles and pneumonia. When we brought her downstairs, her first request was for "music," and she got it, a hundred fold. Sweet and low, divine, ethereal ravishing the inmost soul of harmony, "like the brooks, like the birds, like the wind in the leaves." She would lie on her little couch of pain and with parted lips and bated breath listen to Grand Master Thomas Edison's incomparable, unparalleled melodies. And slowly the lovely color would rise in the wan little cheek—so faint and mute she could not speak — verily, Sir Thomas! "Thou art the master of all music; the sweetest of all singers; the master of magician." Ah! thou inventor paramount! With deep gulps of gratitude from CLIFTON E. MERRILL.

## Current Collectors Recordings

### THE RECORDS OF GEORGE M. COHAN

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

In 1911 Victor released the following seven purple label discs by George M. Cohan:

60042 Life's a Funny Proposition,  
After All

60043 You Won't Do Any Business  
If You Haven't Got a Band

60044 I'm Mighty Glad I'm Living,  
That's All

60045 I Want to Hear a Yankee  
Doodle Tune

60049 Hey There! May There

60052 Small Town Gal

70039 P. S. Mr. Johnson Sends Regards

Although the May, 1912 Victor catalog affirms that "there has been a very large demand for these reproductions of the voice and mannerisms of the popular author-comedian," they are not too easy to run across today. I am still looking for a copy of 60049 myself. Nevertheless the scarcity of his records is due probably not because of the number of discs that are available, but to the great demand for them by the collectors themselves. Because of this I have seen dealers sometimes charge exorbitant prices for these records. On the other hand, the only dealer I know of who has had most of them for sale in the last year or two is Mr. Reichman of Record Collectors' Service who advertises regularly in HOBBIES. He has recently had five of the seven in his lists and they were nearly all in mint condition. His prices varied from \$3.50 to \$6.00 which is certainly within reason considering the present demand for them. However, the collector must realize that the price of the same record may vary in price considerably even with the same dealer since the dealer often must pay different amounts for the same item. Furthermore, the price will vary considerably with condition. In any case the collector should keep in mind that 60042 should always be listed as the cheapest Cohan disc since it was available down to the early days of electrical recording. I know of one Chicago collector who has found seven Cohan records, six of which are 60042.

George M. Cohan never recorded any of the patriotic numbers for which he is chiefly remembered today but the numbers like "Yankee Doodle Boy," "You're a Grand Old

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## George H. O'Connor

By JIM WALSH

The day was Saturday, August 7, 1943, and the time about 9 in the morning. I had come to Roanoke, Va., a few months before as a reporter and feature writer for the *World News*. At the moment I was on my way to Hotel Roanoke to get a "story" about the annual meeting of the Virginia State Bar Association.

As I walked, I glanced at a copy of the program which "Smitty," my city editor, had handed me, and suddenly my attention was caught by the statement that a Washington attorney, George H. O'Connor, would entertain at that night's banquet session.

I stopped for an instant. George H. O'Connor! Where had I heard that name before? Then it occurred to me—could this be the same George O'Connor who had made many popular Columbia records from 1915 to 1918? A fine singer of the once popular "coon songs" in the style made classical by such great performers as Arthur Collins, Bob Roberts and Eddie Morton (his style especially resembled Morton's), he had long been one of my prime favorites. Then I recalled, almost word for word, a paragraph in the Columbia record supplement for January, 1918:

"George H. O'Connor is a lawyer—you must take our word for that—one of the best known humorists and singers in Washington and, above all, a lover of Dixie. Our coupling shows it!" (The "coupling" consisted of "Down South Everybody's Happy" and "Down Where the Sweet Potatoes Grow," in the latter of which he had the assistance of the Peerless Quartet, calling itself for the occasion the Columbia Quartet).

Something else occurred to me as I stood stockstill, digesting this unexpected bit of good luck. George O'Connor was an entertainer to whom the abused word "fabulous" might be applied. The ragtime specialist and "coon shouter" was said to have been the favorite White House entertainer of every President from McKinley through Franklin D. Roosevelt. No big-time social event in the Capitol was complete without O'Connor. Probably you can imagine that my feet accelerated their tempo and I felt exultant at the possibility of meeting the legendary George as I resumed my pilgrimage to the hotel.

My friend, the switchboard oper-

ator, smiled at me as I entered, and told me she believed Mr. O'Connor was in his room. I put in a call, explained who I was and what I wanted, and was told by a voice that had become familiar to me through dozens of recordings to "come right on up."

### II. Meeting George O'Connor

When I opened the door, I found myself facing a short, stout, gray-haired, elderly man. My first impression was that he looked tired, but his face lighted with a genial smile as we shook hands and I said that I was particularly glad of the chance to interview him because I had so long admired and enjoyed his records. He chuckled gleefully when I added: "But I have one complaint to make. It's awfully hard to find good second-hand copies of your records. Their former owners have nearly always prayed them to pieces!" This truthful compliment set up such a warm glow of friendship that within a few minutes we were "George" and "Jim" to each other.

The serious business of interviewing then got under way. George, who was 68, told me he first realized his abilities as a humorist and singer of comic songs while attending Georgetown University. He gave me a surprise by adding that while he was in college he made brown wax cylinders for the old Columbia Phonograph Company, before Columbia moved its headquarters in 1897 from Washington to New York. Like his better known contemporary of the '90's, Len Spencer, he sang into a row of six or eight phonographs perched on top of a piano, and received a few cents for each accepted record. George couldn't remember whether he sang under his own name or used an "alias," but I have never seen him listed in any Columbia cylinder catalog. He probably was one of the performers called on to make records for special occasions, but who was not considered a "professional" and whose output was not catalogued. Another surprise was O'Connor's statement that he helped Emile Berliner with the German inventor's early experiments in turning out disc records, but none of his efforts were issued under the Berliner label. However, many years later he did, as I shall explain, make two Victor records under unusual circumstances.

Looking at the roly-poly comedian

with the twinkling blue eyes that no longer appeared tired, it was hard to realize he was not only an entertainer but was also a prominent member of the Washington bar and president of the District Title Insurance Company. Later that day I was told by one of his friends Col. Christopher B. Garnett: "George is not only a darn good comedian, he's also a darn good lawyer and business man"—an undeniably true statement.

Naturally, I asked George how he happened to resume making records for Columbia in 1915, and I received another surprise when he said his Columbia contract was the result of "propaganda" by President Woodrow Wilson's daughter, Margaret Woodrow Wilson. In those days Miss Wilson had a prominence as a concert soprano akin to that Margaret Truman more recently has enjoyed. She heard O'Connor sing at White House receptions and insisted that the Columbia Company, to which she was under contract, should make some O'Connor records. He proved to have a splendid "recording voice" and his discs were big sellers from the start.

George told me he thought his first record, "The Mississippi Barbecue," was his best, but was under the mistaken impression that it was never issued. I expressed a preference for "They May Call You Hawaiian On Broadway," to which he had written the words and his accompanist the late "Matt" Horn, an irresistible, rollicking tune. "Of course," I qualified my admiration by saying, "the song wouldn't do nowadays for radio use or any type of public performance. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People would be down on you—and who could blame them?" (I had reason to remember those words a few years later).

"Well," George returned thoughtfully, "it just goes to show you how times change. I have always been a friend of the colored people, and I had no intention when I wrote 'They May Call You Hawaiian' of ridiculing the Negroes as a race or reflecting on them. I was only poking good-natured fun at a character who put on airs to which he wasn't entitled, and he could just as well have been a member of any other nationality or race except that I specialized in



Negro dialect. There won't be any colored people at the banquet, so I'm going to sing that song tonight without fear of offending anyone. You remember how the chorus goes, don't you?"

And then I had the honor of joining George O'Connor in singing the refrain of his own composition about "Mose Walker, a high-yellow nigger," who got a job playing in a Hawaiian band but was always detected by old friends, who shouted: "They may call you Hawaiian on Broadway, but you're just a plain nigger to me!"

The refrain goes:

*Jes' because you pick a ukelele  
an' say 'wicky' now an' then,  
An' wear a what-you-call-it  
'round yo' neck,  
you ain't foolin' yo' ol' frien.,  
You may comb your hair with cocoa  
butter 'til it's shiny as can be—  
They may call you Hawaiian on  
Broadway,  
but you're jes' a plain nigger to me!*

Although these words would have been considered innocuous 40 years ago in the great days of dialect comedy when there seems to have been more good-natured give and take among races and creeds than there is today, they obviously would be offensive nowadays to sensitive Negroes who have developed an ever increasing pride of race. However, I accepted George O'Connor's word when he said he had never had any idea of hurting anyone's feelings by his dialect work. He was, I was sure, too gentle and kindly to want to hurt anyone.

Al Jolson, another distinguished native of Washington was mentioned, and George quoted a Columbia official as telling him that Jolson was paid only \$25 for his first Columbia record. This was a statement I have never been able to accept, and I think George's memory was playing him tricks, because Jolson had first been an exclusive Victor artist and it didn't stand to reason that, in 1913, when he had already become a big name, he would quit Victor to sign up exclusively with Columbia for a mere \$25 a record.

I said something about George not having made duets with other artists and he remarked that the only recording in which he had "outside help" was his rendition of an old Harry Von Tilzer number, "Down Where the Sweet Potatoes Grow" which, as I have said, he made with the assistance of the Peerless Quartet.

"We had an awful time making that record," George said. "Took us nearly all day. Every time we'd think we were all set something went wrong. But that was a fine bunch of singers I was with. Let's see, what was the name of the leader of that quartet—the fellow who made more records than anybody else—big fat fellow—?"

"Henry Burr," I chimed in.

"Oh yes, that's right—Burr. Real name was McClaskey, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Harry McClaskey."

"Sure. And then there was little Albert Campbell, the top tenor; a

tall, skinny, bald-headed fellow, John Meyer, as the bass, and another fat boy, Arthur Collins, the 'Preacher and the Bear' man, for the baritone. Well, as I said, everything went wrong. Burr and Meyer and Collins got mad and started cussing. One time when we all had to duck down below the horn so the sound of the orchestra playing mid-way of the record could get through, Meyer and Collins bumped their heads together and then there was some real language. Of course we had to start all over. Only fellow that didn't lose his temper was little Al. He laughed and took the whole thing as a joke!"

George mentioned that he'd very much like to find the sheet music of an old Irish comic song, "Dolan's Poker Party," and I told him I might be able to get it for him from my friend Frank Crumit, who had made a Victor record of the song. I wrote to Frank about it and he promised to see what he could do, but alas! poor Frank died exactly a month from the day I met George and never got around to helping out.

### III. Favorite Songs of Presidents

I asked George about the personal characteristics and favorite songs of the Presidents he had known. He said it had been so long ago he couldn't remember any of William McKinley's favorites, but added: "My most popular number in those days was a coon song, 'Lam', 'Lam', 'Lam', that came out in 1900." I told him I had a clipping from an old copy of the *Washington Times-Herald*, in which Dick Mansfield, a traffic officer who combined police work with cartooning, had drawn a caricature of him singing "Lam', 'Lam', 'Lam'" to Matt Horn's accompaniment.

Neither did O'Connor recall any of Theodore Roosevelt's pet tunes, but he laughed joyously when William Howard Taft was mentioned.

"You know," George said, "in 1912 the Republican party was hopelessly split. Taft was renominated, but Roosevelt had formed the Progressive party, which meant that the Democratic nominee, Woodrow Wilson, was a shoo-in to win. Taft realized that as well as anybody else, and he proved that he knew he was licked by sending for me to come to the White House.

"George," he said, "I'm on good terms with the people who make Victrolas and Victor records, because I've installed a 'Victrola corner' here in the White House, and they've given it wide publicity. So I want you to go down to Camden and make two Victor records specially for me. They'll be glad to record them when you tell them they're for President Taft."

"What are the songs, Mr. President?" I asked, and Taft's fat sides shook as if he would explode when he said:

"They're two of your favorite coon songs. One is 'Tain't No Disgrace to Run When You're Skeered' and the other is 'If He Comes In, I'm Goin' Out!'"

So O'Connor went to Camden and made the two records, whose titles reflected Taft's certainty that he

would be defeated in the November election. Only half a dozen copies of each were pressed. George said he still had his, but they were cracked. He had no idea whether Taft's personal copies had survived. And that was his only experience as a Victor recording artist.

Continuing our talk of the Presidents, George said Wilson was especially fond of an Italian dialect song, "My Cousin Caruso," written in 1909 by Edward Madden and Gus Edwards. He recalled Harding as a "genial, good-natured fellow," who seemed to have no outstanding musical preferences. Perhaps Calvin Coolidge's New England appreciation of thrift and frugality was responsible for his preferring a hilarious 1916 Irving Berlin hit, "Cohen Owes Me 97 Dollars," which told of an aged Jewish merchant instructing his son to collect from all their creditors so the old gentleman could "die mit a smile upon my face." After the money was collected, papa got well because "when business is so good, it's no time for a business man to die." It seems that dialect numbers were as popular with Presidents as with the public at large.

Hoover, O'Connor said, had a strong sense of humor that the generality of people didn't suspect, but during his years as chief executive he was so harassed by the depression that he seldom smiled and almost never took part in any social functions. "He put in the longest hours and was the hardest working President we've ever had. I didn't have any idea he would live through his term," George said. Happily, Mr. Hoover did live, and today has the nation's esteem and affection at the age of 80.

### IV. FDR Liked "Saloon."

Franklin D. Roosevelt was described by O'Connor as "one of the boys" and "a hail-fellow well-met," who liked to get together with his cronies for a roaring and perhaps ribald good time. I mentioned the popular belief that "Home On The Range" was Roosevelt's favorite song, but George laughed again as he said it was the song that FDR hated more than any other. A White House assistant, Marvin McIntyre, had been fond of singing the number as a member of an amateur quartet and he impishly started the rumor that it was Roosevelt's favorite so he'd have a chance to sing it at entertainments attended by the President. Poor FDR was obliged to writhe through innumerable renditions of that pathetic ballad while his hosts thought they were delighting his ears with his favorite song.

O'Connor quoted Mr. Roosevelt as saying: "George, you know I'm fond of you and like to hear you sing, but if you ever sound off with that blanket-blanked 'Home On The Range' in my presence, I'll kill you!"

"Then what is Roosevelt's favorite song?" I inquired (FDR was alive at that time), and George replied:

"It's one that was written in 1921 by George Whiting and Ernest R. Ball. Ernie Ball—we used to call him 'The Silent Swede'—specialized



in ballads like 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling' and 'Mother Machree', and maybe that's the reason why he disguised his name on 'Saloon' as Roland E. Llab. It's a song praising the glories of the old-fashioned saloon that was supposed to have been killed by prohibition, and Roosevelt likes to join me in singing it. I brought down the house when I sang it at the White House Correspondents' annual dinner in 1933, with FDR attending. "Incidentally," George added proudly, "I'm the only honorary member of the White House Correspondents' Association."

For my benefit he sang "Saloon," the chorus of which will be printed later in this article.

"That's funny," I said thoughtfully, "but it's odd, too, that the President thinks so much of that song. Of course he advocated prohibition repeal in his 1932 campaign, but he was represented to be personally a total abstainer and he pledged that the saloon should never return—though of course it has."

George laughed jovially, "That 'total abstainer' stuff and pledge not to let the saloon return was just a gag," he said, "to get the vote of the temperance element. FDR probably pours more hard liquor down his hatch than any other man in the White House since Grant."

"Does he have a keen sense of humor?" I asked, and George replied: "In his own way his sense of humor is very strong, but it has its own rules and regulations and restrictions. The President likes to kid his cronies, but they mustn't kid him in return. He gives them names like 'Tommy the Cork' and 'Sammy the Rose' but it would be just too bad if one of them spoke of him to his face as, say, 'Frankie the Roose.' He's got a strong sense of his own dignity and when there's kidding to be done he's the one to do it. As far as he is concerned, joking is strictly a one-way street with him working the street."

In spite of this rather acid criticism, I nevertheless got the impression, though George didn't say so outright, that Roosevelt was his favorite of all the Presidents he had known, with the possible exception of Taft.

When I left George O'Connor after a long and, to me, most enjoyable meeting, he urged me to come to the banquet session that night and hear him sing "They May Call You Hawaiian On Broadway." Unfortunately, something came up to keep me from going, but although we never met again we didn't lose track of each other.

(To be continued).

## PIANO ROLLS

**WANTED: PIANO ROLLS** for Seeburg style "G" & "H" piano-orchestras, Cremona-Orchestra style "M" and Coinola style "O". Also Peerless-orchestra style "O" and Peerless 44-note endless rolls. —B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave. San Francisco 9, Calif. mh3468

## MUSIC WANTED

**WANTED:** Phonograph Record Catalogs, Literature, prior to 1927. Silver-tone and Cecilian Upright Phonographs. Old Player Piano Rolls. State Price and Condition. No Bids.—D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. f3084

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**COMPLETE** back volumes. Gramophone '42 - '54; Gramophone Shop Record Supplement, '40 - '53; American Record Guide, '40 - '54; New Records, others, best offer.—P. O. Box 887, Chicago 90, Ill. ja1002

**WANTED:** Old Model Disc or Cylinder Phonographs with outside horns. Old small disc or cylinder records, phonograph catalogs, reproducers, horns, parts, etc. Send stamp for our Wanted-for sale list.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. mh3403

**SWISS** music movement, finest make, assorted tunes, ask for leaflet.—Jules Wolff, 38 Murray Street, New York, N. Y. f6446

**ANTIQUE MECHANICAL** birdcage three birds, excellent condition.—Mrs. Martin McGowan, 831 Maple, Downers Grove, Ill. Phone 657 ja1631

**WILL PAY CASH** for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Sequel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. mh3614

## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, V-Discs, Armed forces radio service recordings, all kinds of recordings, etc. by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Ink Spots," "Blue Barron" & "Art Kassel."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. mh3065

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Edison Concert, Columbia Grand and other Cylinder Phonographs, horns, reproducers, catalogs, records. Describe fully and price prepaid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. f6238

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**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. ja128402

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**FOR SALE:** Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20¾", 27", 32"; Criterion 20¾"; Mira 6¾", 9¾", 15½", 18½"; Monarch 15½"; New Century 18½"; Orphenon 18½"; Polyphon 24½"; Stella 14", 17½"; Imperial Symphonion 13½"; Thorens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. d3867

**SWISS MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE** Need repair. Write for picture and description.—B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco 9, Calif. mh3272

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**RARE VOCAL RECORDS:** Treasured performances by the greatest artists available at reasonable prices. Gadske Renaud, Sembrich, Bonci, Tetrassini, etc. Write for interesting free lists. All inquiries promptly answered.—George Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Michigan. ja3066

**ALL IMPORTED** vocal operatic records. Free list on request. Many G & T's, Odeons, Fonotopias, Zonophones, Pathes, etc.—Collectors' Haven, 1131 Bergen St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. ja3004

**RARE OLD VOCAL OPERATIC SINGERS:** Will send sales list comprised of Caruso, Battistini, Boninsegna, Martinelli, McCormack, Patti, Plancon, Rethberg, Tetrassini, others; old records catalogs, supplements, books on opera singers. Please enclose 3 cent stamp. Curiosity seekers and information hunters, don't bother to write as you won't get any lists.—Marvin Smisssman, 5361 Ridge Ave., St. Louis 12, Mo. ja34431

**RECORD** Rare classic vocals, collect-or items. Send your wants.—Record & Hobby Shop, J. Jurgel, 4136 W. North Ave., Chicago 39, Ill. mh3403

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collector's items to just good listening. Operatic, historical, and personality discs featured. Your wants located, if possible. Collections bought.—Record Collectors Service, 530 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. je66501

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. my124661

**FOR SALE:** Records, Collectors Items Opera, Theatricals, Ballads, Popular Jazz Speeches of Famous Men and Women. Special wants are requested. Free lists.—Cath. V. O'Brien, P. O. Box 278, Rich-boro, Pa. d126581

**CYLINDER RECORDS** for sale, large stock to select from, only records that are in good condition are offered for sale. Cylinder Phonographs and Horn type disc Phonographs for sale. Also parts, horns, reproducers, recorders, and catalogs. Send stamp for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Sequel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. mh3257

**Auction Sales: Rare and cut-out** vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

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**100 COLUMBIA** and Edison cylinder records available. List sent on request.—Kilburn Arnold, Rossford, Ohio. f3042

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**HUNDREDS** of imported cutout vocals, rare Golden Age operatics—G&T, Fonotopia, etc., hard to get Music Hall, musical comedy and personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today.—Ross, Court & Co. (Canada), 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont. f3867

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## George H. O'Connor

(Continued from the January Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### Letters From O'Connor

Soon after George O'Connor returned to Washington I wrote to him, primarily to send him a clipping of my interview which had appeared in the *Roanoke World-News* on the afternoon of the day we met. On August 11, 1943, he wrote to me on blue stationery containing the names of the District, Lawyers and Washington Title Insurance Companies, all at 1413 Eye Street, Northwest:

Dear Jim: I appreciate your write-up of me . . . and am still wondering how you did it with so little to go on. I am departing tomorrow morning for Gloucester, Mass., and on my return in a couple of weeks I'll dig up a photo for your collection of "Wax Workers." Very best regards.

On August 16, George wrote:

Dear Jim: your nice letter reached me as I was leaving for this place (Gloucester) and after I had written to you. Our letters crossed. I am fortunate to be out of Washington and the heat and am enjoying the cool breezes here. Best regards.

Getting the promised photograph turned out to be a more complicated matter than I had expected. On September 24, I again heard from George saying:

Dear Jim: I have not forgotten about the picture, but I am going to have some new ones made at the first opportunity. Things have been a bit rushed with me—unusually so—but I'll get around to it next week.

I note what you say about Frank Crumit and I am sorry that he passed along. Will talk over the Saturday Evening Post thing some time soon. Please forgive this hurried scrawl, as my secretaries (three) have joined up with Uncle Sam.

The reference to the Saturday Evening Post was in reply to my suggestion that George would be a good subject for a Post article and I'd like to try writing one about him. Unfortunately, the idea never came to anything, since I didn't get around to visiting Washington and talking with him, to obtain more information.

The next letter I find is dated December 20, 1943. George wrote:

Dear Jim: I have not forgotten my promise to send you a photo of

myself, but have been delayed in securing one up-to-date. Due to a lot of things, cold, of family and self, it was but just a few days ago that I drifted into Harris and Ewing's and sat for a new series. I hope they are good, and you are down as the recipient of one—if that be not an affliction. I was altogether out of representatives of myself, and time flew by.

I duly received a large, handsome photo from George, and wrote to thank him. On January 18, 1944, he replied:

Dear Jim: It was my intention to write a note to accompany the photo and then the second edition of the flu struck me, and I had to return to my home for some days . . . where I still am. I hope to get into circulation again by tomorrow or next day. Am glad to know that you are pleased with the picture, as my wife objects to it because I did not have my hair combed.

It will be a great pleasure to foregather with you on the occasion of your trip to Washington, and I would be greatly pleased to have you "pump" me for an article for the Saturday Evening Post . . . I feel that you could do a good job of it . . . Looking forward to seeing you here, with fond anticipation of pleasure and with best regards.

Although I am sure I received other letters from George O'Connor, the foregoing is the last on which I have been able to place my hands. A few weeks before starting this article I moved from the house in which I had lived for eleven years to another address, and my record collection, my letter files, my books and everything else I own have since been in hopeless confusion. So, because of the prevailing chaos, the foregoing samples must suffice.

### VI "Who's Who" Sketch

A few things that I have previously omitted now occur to me. Shortly after meeting Mr. O'Connor, I looked up his biographical sketch in "Who's Who in America" and discovered that his full name was George Henry O'Connor. He was born in Washington, the son of a U. S. Army captain, Patrick Edward O'Connor, and of Ellen Mary McCarthy O'Connor. He studied in St. John's Academy at Alexandria, Va., from 1888 to 1891, received his L. L. B. degree from the National University Law School in 1894, and his L. L. M. in 1895. During the latter year he was a special stu-

dent at Georgetown University from which he received an honorary A. M. degree in 1915.

On January 20, 1905, O'Connor married Blanche Higgins. They had two children, Helen Louise and George H. O'Connor, Jr. The "White House Entertainer" was admitted to the District of Columbia Bar in 1895 and to the Bar of the U. S. Supreme Court in 1918. Who's Who said O'Connor had been president of the Washington Title Insurance Company since January 6, 1941. He had served on many civic committees, including presidential inauguration and Community Chest groups, and had been a delegate to the National Chamber of Commerce. O'Connor was a trustee of the Catholic Charities of Washington, St. Vincent's and the Home Group Hospital. He was a member of the American Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the American Title Association, the White House Correspondents Association, the Washington Board of Trade, the Knights of Columbus and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. He belonged to the Alfalfa, National Press, University, Lawyers, Rotary, Calvert, Wellwood County and the Charles-town, Md., Yacht Clubs. His home was at 3313 Cleveland Avenue, Washington, and he was listed as a former contributor to the Washington Daily News. This is a list of distinctions unequalled by any other recording artist I have written about, except Albert Spalding.

In one of his letters George enclosed a clipping of an article which had appeared in *The Catholic Review* for Oct. 8, 1943. The Review had reprinted it from *The Directors' Digest*, apparently a title insurance publication. The heading was "George O'Connor Makes Presidents Laugh," and the article itself follows:

George O'Connor might have been an Eddie Cantor or an Al Jolson if he hadn't been so successful in business. As it is, he has probably lifted laughs from almost as many highest-ups as have these song-and-comedy kings. His amateur entertaining also helps him relax from his chief responsibility—the managing of a group of leading title insurance companies in Washington, D. C.

He is on the Board of Directors of the National Permanent Building Association, a \$12,000,000 institution, and that takes thinking, too. So to

get his mind off business sometimes he has kept right on singing at banquets and social affairs at Washington in that throaty baritone which first made Grover Cleveland a devotee of his when he sang "The Bowery" from a Washington High School stage.

By the time George was ready to finish his undergraduate work at Georgetown University, he had a somewhat wider-than-campus reputation as a glee club minstrel star, so two weeks after McKinley's inauguration, he sang at the Gridiron Club dinner in honor of the new president.

A long string of White House occupants, both Roosevelts, Taft, Wilson, Hoover, and Coolidge, have found his brand of minstrel singing a perpetual relaxer. At the insistence of Miss Margaret Wilson, herself a singer, he made phonograph records of "Mississippi Barbecue" and "I Guess I'll Soon Be Back in Dixie-land" and although the listeners missed seeing the chunky, little rosy cheeked man whose voice they heard, their ears did grasp the eternal, indefinable quality which brings on a smile or a laugh.

The Liberty Loan rally at which he sang in Philadelphia during World War I brought \$780,000 in bond sales, and that was tops for the times. That evening was the climax of a tour he had made of the army cantonments in the company of Mme. Schumann-Heink and his accompanist, on his amateur performances, the late Matt Horne.

A minstrel career which has been carried on from a thousand banquet tables has always included the District of Columbia Savings and Loan League parties. He is so well known in Washington for his avocation that it was a surprise to thousands of his devotees to find out the other day what he does for a living when it was announced that he was the new president of the District, the Lawyers, and the Washington Title Insurance Companies.

VII George O'Connor's Death  
Then came the sad news of George O'Connor's death on September 28, 1946. I first learned of my friend's passing from a Roanoke woman who was an intimate of the O'Connor family. A day or two afterwards she gave me a clipping from The Washington Post containing a biographical sketch by Edward T. Folliard that was so admirably written and included so much detail I have not previously given that I have decided to reprint it in its entirety. To save a couple of hours of typing I shall not copy it but will ask the HOBBIES linotype operator to reset the "George H. O'Connor, District's Beloved Troubadour, Dies," article, in "six-point indent".

(To be Continued)

## PIANO ROLLS

**WANTED: PIANO ROLLS** for Seeburg style "G" & "H" piano-orchestras, Cremona-Orchestrale style "M" and Coinola style "O". Also Peerless-orchestra style "O" and Peerless 44-note endless rolls. —B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave. San Francisco 9, Calif. mh3468

## PIANOS FOR SALE

**DUO ART**, Steck 6 ft. grand, circa 1928, \$350.00.—T. P. Grattelo, 1523 W. Stover St., Freeport, Illinois f1251

## SONG BOOKS WANTED

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. ja128402

# CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

## Eddie Cantor

Few, if any, of the great show business comedians have recorded for as many companies as Eddie Cantor has. An excellent summary of his recording career has already been written by Jim Walsh (Variety-December 23, 1953). From 1917 to date a steady stream of his records has been offered to the public, and with the filming of his life story a fine long playing record was released. But more about that later.

First let's quickly review his earlier records. Cantor first waxed his hit songs from the "Ziegfield Folies" of 1917 for both Victor and Aeolian-Vocalion. The same songs ("That's the Kind of a Baby for Me," and "The Modern Maiden's Prayer") were recorded for both, and the Victor is fairly common today. However, the early Aeolian-Vocalions were needle cut hill and dale records and most of these are quite scarce today.

By 1919 Cantor was recording both for Emerson and Pathe, and for any collector who specializes in comic songs these are a "must." He sang many great numbers for these companies such as "I Never Knew I Had a Wonderful Wife Until the Town Went Drv." "I Used to Call Her Baby (But Now She's A Mother to Me,)" and "Give Me the Sultan's Harem." They may be a little dated today, but they are still funny. I also have a Regal record by him from this period.

In 1922 he switched to Columbia with songs like "How Ya Gonna Keep Your Mind on Dancing," "I Love Me," and "Charley My Boy." According to Jim Walsh he was with Columbia until 1925 and made a few electrically recorded discs for them, but the last Columbia I have by him made at this time is his acoustic 1924 record of "We're Back Together Again" on 397-D. In any case, he stayed away from recording from about 1925 to 1928 when he went back to Victor for a year or two to sing "I Faw Down and Go Boom," "If I Give Up the Saxaphone (Will You Come

## MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** Phonograph Record Catalogs, Literature, prior to 1927. Silver-tone and Cecilian Upright Phonographs. Old Player Piano Rolls. State Price and Condition. No Bids.—D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. f3084

**BUY, SELL or trade** mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001

**WANTED:** Old Model Disc or Cylinder Phonographs with outside horns. Old small disc or cylinder records, phonograph catalogs, reproducers, horns, parts, etc. Send stamp for our Wanted-for sale list.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. mh3408

**SWISS music movement, finest make, assorted tunes, ask for leaflet.**—Jules Wolff, 88 Murray Street, New York, N. Y. f6445

**WILL PAY CASH** for Cylinder Phonographs and Records. Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. mh3614

**NORWEGIAN HARDANGER** violin made by John Elefson Steinkjondahlen, Bo. Telemark, Norway in 1819. Recently put in A-1 condition by noted violin maker. Also old table model sewing machine with shuttle, hand crank and claw feet, German make, brought here in 1889. Write—Box 81, Thief River Falls, Minnesota. ap32511

**FOR SALE:** Music Box, very fine condition, 3 - 14" cylinders. Original list of 30 tunes and instruction papers, \$125.00. Wall Map: State of Connecticut, 1859, 4x6" showing all houses, churches, stores etc., \$50.00.—Herman Jacot, Weaver St., Greenwich, Conn. f1213

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Edison, Victor and Columbia Phonographs. Hundreds of Cylinder and Disc Records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or Disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Copenroll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. ap3656

## MUSIC BOXES

**SWISS MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE** Need repair. Write for picture and description.—B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco 9, Calif. mh3272

**CYLINDER TYPE** Music Box plays 8 pieces automatically, in good condition. Bargain \$150.00.—Stillmanks Watch Shop, 423 Walter S. E. Albuquerque, New Mex. ap3633

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Edison Concert, Columbia Grand and other Cylinder Phonographs, horns, reproducers, catalogs, records. Describe fully and price prepaid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. f6238





**GEORGE H. O'CONNOR**

(Continued from the Feb. Issue)

By JIM WALSH

Continuing last month's discussion of the life of George H. O'Connor, we quote from the Washington, D.C., Post article which gave a biographic sketch of the life of the beloved singer.

"The voice of Washington's beloved troubadour is stilled.

"George H. O'Connor, a chunky, gay-hearted little man of 72, whose songs over a half century had brought delight to nine American Presidents and to legions of others, died yesterday at 20 minutes after midnight.

"He was almost beyond doubt the most popular man in Washington. Though he had passed the Biblical span of three score and ten, the news of his death had a stunning effect.

"His repertoire of songs had hardly changed since the gay 90's of McKinley's time; somehow, he hadn't seemed to change much either. Hence, the shock produced by his passing.

"This feeling about O'Connor's agelessness was summed up in a note written to him by the late Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"The occasion was a White House Correspondents Association Banquet in 1939. The President, along with others, had relaxed and grown

**MELODEONS FOR SALE**

**BEAUTIFUL RESTORED melodeons and organs. Repair service. Reasonable prices.**—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. my3882

**DOUBLE KEYBOARD rosewood melodeon;** also single keyboard, ebonized case. Both instruments completely restored. Will accept offers. These must be sold as we are moving.—C-sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Michigan. my3215

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED**

**WANTED:** Grand roller organ, Regina 27-inch steel disc music box.—Oscar Furnberg, R. #1, Fargo, N. Dak. my3272

**SONG BOOKS WANTED**

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. f128402

**PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE**

**FOR SALE:** Edison, Victor and Columbia Phonographs. Hundreds of Cylinder and Disc Records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or Disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. ap3656

**COLLECTORS ITEM:** Edison phonograph - 50 years old. Cylinder wax records, open to offer.—Musarra 40-01 Queens Blvd., Long Island City 4, New York. my3255

**SHEET MUSIC**

**8 DIFFERENT PIECES** of Sheet Music before 1870 for \$1.25.—Tatum's Antique Shop, 1008 Brookstown, Winston Salem, N. C. mh1402

**MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS**

**BUY, SELL or trade mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001**

**WANTED:** Old Model Disc or Cylinder Phonographs with outside horns. Old small disc or cylinder records, phonograph catalogs, reproducers, horns, parts, etc. Send stamp for our Wanted-for sale list.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. mh3408

**WILL PAY CASH** for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. mh3614

**NORWEGIAN HARDANGER violin** made by John Eieson Steinkjondahlen. Bo, Telemark, Norway in 1819. Recently put in A-1 condition by noted violin maker. Also old table model sewing machine with shuttle, hand crank and claw feet, German make, brought here in 1889. Write—Box 81, Thief River Falls, Minnesota. ap32511

**WANTED:** Hand roller organs, such as concert, Chautauqua, Clarion, etc., music boxes, old phonos,—coin operated preferred. Private collector.—Neumann Miller, 436 W. Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. my3844

**FOR SALE:** 100 four minute cylinder records \$30.00. What do you need in Edison cylinder phonographs? —Karr Museum, Stanberry, Missouri. mh1061

**WANTED:** Old phonographs, upright and table models. Phonograph Record Catalogues, Literature, before 1927. Old popular piano rolls. State price and condition. No bids.—D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, Calif. je3084

**MUSIC BOXES**

**SWISS MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE** Need repair. Write for picture and description.—B. Shirar, 1450 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco 9, Calif. mh3272

**CYLINDER TYPE Music Box** plays 8 pieces automatically, in good condition. Bargain \$150.00.—Stillmanka Watch Shop, 423 Walter S. E. Albuquerque, New Mex. ap3633

**RECORDS WANTED**

**WANTED:** Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, V-Discs, Armed forces radio service recordings, all kinds of recordings, etc. by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Ink Spots," "Blue Barron" & "Art Kassel."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. mh3065

**WANTED:** Vocal Record of Song "Every Race Has a Flag But the Coon."—Clifford R. Dew, 5148 Charles St., Maple Heights, Ohio. ap3253

**RECORDS FOR SALE**

**RECORD Rare classic vocals, collect-** or items. Send your wants.—Record & Hobby Shop, J. Jurgel, 4136 W. North Ave., Chicago 39, Ill. mh3403

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collector's items to just good listening. Operatic, historical, and personality discs featured. Your wants located, if possible. Collections bought.—Record Collectors Service, 530 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. je66501

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. my124661

**FOR SALE:** Records, Collectors Items Opera, Theatricals, Ballads, Popular Jazz Speeches of Famous Men and Women. Special wants are requested. Free lists.—Cath. V. O'Brien, P. O. Box 278, Richboro, Pa. d128581

**CYLINDER RECORDS** for sale, large stock to select from, only records that are in good condition are offered for sale. Cylinder Phonographs and Horn type disc Phonographs for sale. Also parts, horns, reproducers, recorders, and catalogs. Send stamp for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. mh3257

**Auction Sales:** Rare and cut-out vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

**THOUSANDS** of rare collectors' items on hand. Send me your wants on any type of 78 RPM records. New ones in daily.—Box 182, Westville, N. J. my3614

**FIFTY YEARS** of recording: All your favorites on all labels - Monarch, Zonophone, Columbia. Etc. Send for free "Pops" lists.—Gertrude Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. my3696

**HUNDREDS** of imported outout vocals, rare Golden Age operatics—G&T, Fonotipia, etc., hard to get Music Hall, musical comedy and personality records, unusual band and orchestral items, all may be found on our free mailing lists. Write today—Ross, Court & Co., (Canada), 121 Elmcoo Street, Toronto, Ont. my3867

**EDISON, COLUMBIA cylinder** records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 44 Church St., Norwich, Conn. mh3084

**RARE Operatic vocal records;** send for free mail auction lists.—Robert J. Nathan, 5480 Broadway, New York 63, N. Y. my3084

**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs. — Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia 23, Pa. ap3623

**THOUSANDS** of used records, all varieties, send wants.—Stanley Brille, 8914 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. ap3652

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought. — E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

**FREE SALE LISTS** of collectors records at realistic prices. Many fine operatic and concert vocals from 50c up. Write.—Jack Whistance, Hurley, New York. mh1882

**RECORDS:** Early recordings by Gadski, Galli-Curci, Destinn, Melba, Schallapin, Farrar, Landouzy, Lauder, Scotti Muzio, Tetrazzini, Schumann-Heink, Sobinoff and many others. Write.—N. Mann, 100 San Buena Ventura, San Francisco, Calif. mh1652

**EDISON, PATHE, VICTOR, COL-** umbia. Send us your wants. Discs only. Catalogs bought and sold.—C. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. my3023

**CLASSIFIED AD RATES**

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8. (Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)



George H. O'Connor as he appeared near the end of his life.

mellow as the red-faced little man on the stage went through his medley — 'You Ain't No Relation of Mine,' 'My Gal's A High-Born Lady,' 'Little Tommy Murphy,' and the fabulous 'Saloon.'

Mr. Roosevelt scribbled a note on his place card, and told a waiter to take it to O'Connor. It read:

"Dear George:

"Like special vintage wine, you improve with age. More years to you. FDR."

"A great outpouring is expected for the funeral of Mr. O'Connor. The services will be held at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning in St. Matthew's Cathedral. The Rev. Father Joseph Moran, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, of which O'Connor was a communicant, will say the low mass. Burial will be in Mount Olivet Cemetery.

"Honorary pallbearers, as announced late yesterday, include the following:

"Commissioner John Russell Young, Commissioner Guy Mason, Ben McKelway, Charles P. Light, Thomas W. Brahaney, Joseph H. Himes, Eugene Meyer, Sidney Taliaferro, Mark Lansburgh, E. H. Johansen, Robert V. Fleming, Corcoran Thom, Henry Spencer, Dr. James Mitchell, James E. Colliflower, John Reilly, Dr. Edward Larkin, Earl Godwin, M. F. Calnan, Clifford K. Berryman, William E. Leahy.

"Carter Barron, White House Secretary William D. Hassett, Harold Crooks, Jesse H. Jones, Leslie Biffle, Martin McNamara, Stephen Early, Joseph P. Tumulty, Edward Curran, John G. Bell, George W. Stetson, Robert E. Buckley, James McD. Shea and John H. Stadler.

"Among organizations to be represented at the funeral are the White House Correspondents Association, the National Press Club, the Rotary Club, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, the Lawyers' Club, the District of Columbia Bar Association, the Knights of Columbus and the Alfalfa Club.

"These organizations tell the story of a many-sided George O'Connor. 'He was best known — in fact, famous — as a troubadour, a blithe spirit who made Presidents and others among the mighty tap their feet and sway with his melodies.

"But he was also a distinguished lawyer-business man, president of the District Lawyers and Washington Title Insurance Co's.

"He likewise was a deeply religious man, who once a year spent a few days of meditation at Manresa, the Jesuit retreat house on the Severn, near Annapolis.

"O'Connor made his last appearance as an entertainer at a dinner in honor of Chief Justice Fred Vinson at the Mayflower Wednesday night.

"On Friday night, before his death, he left home in his role of public-spirited citizen. He attended a meeting of the board of trustees of Group Hospitalization, Inc., in the Metropolitan Club. He did not reach his home at 3313 Cleveland ave. nw. until after midnight.

"He was talking to his wife, Mrs. Blanche Higgins O'Connor, when he sank back into a chair in the bedroom and lapsed into unconsciousness. Mrs. O'Connor called Dr. Charles W. Ordman, 3300 Cathedral ave., who found that he had died of a heart attack.

"Besides Mrs. O'Connor, he leaves a son, George H. O'Connor, Jr., a Navy officer in the war, now a student at Georgetown University law school; a daughter, Helen Louise O'Connor, and a brother, Dr. Charles E. O'Connor.

"Gene Buck, who helped the late Flo Ziegfeld stage his celebrated Follies, and who has been coming to Washington for 35 years, was one of George O'Connor's warmest admirers.

"Buck, a director and founder of ASCAP, had this to say about him last night.

"He had a great talent as a singer of cons. He was a genuine amateur, as Bobby Jones was an amateur in the field of golf. No singer ever lived who put more sincerity into his singing or who had a greater sense of humor.

"He was a great personality as well as a singer. I never knew of a man who gave so much of himself."

"George Henry O'Connor was born August 20, 1874, in a house on Fourth st. nw., facing Judiciary Square. He was the son of Capt. Patrick E. O'Connor, USA, and Ellen McCarthy O'Connor. He attended St. John's Academy in Alexandria, National University Law School, and Georgetown University as a special student.

"As a child of 6, George was sent to a dancing school conducted by a Professor Sheldon of Tenth and F sts. The professor used to put on Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, and it was in one of these, 'The Pirates of Penzance,' that little George made his debut.

"As he grew older he worked and went to school at the same time. He probably owed his rise in the business and professional world to the fact that he literally danced his first job away. This was a book-keeping job at Woodward & Lothrop.

"George, still in short pants, couldn't reach the high desk to do his work, and he got a box to stand on. One day Samuel W. Woodward came in to find George doing a clog dance on the box and fired him.

"Thereafter, George got a job as messenger with the District Title Insurance Co., and started a Horatio Alger climb that continued until he was top man.

"Old files of The Washington Post show that O'Connor was a favorite singer when he was 20 years of age. He was then appearing with the Columbia Athletic Club Minstrels and a little later was to join the Georgetown University Glee Club.

"This period — the 90's — was the heyday of the blackface minstrels, when Lew Dockstader, and Primrose and West were touring the land.

"O'Connor often appeared as an endman. He remained essentially a minstrel all his life. From the standpoint of technique, he never left the ragtime era. Nevertheless he could enchant youngsters brought up on jazz and swing as well as the old-timers.

"The Post of March 23, 1897, carried a page-one spread about a Gridiron Club dinner at which President McKinley was the guest of honor. According to the story, solos were sung by 'Mr. A. J. Stoffer and Mr. George H. O'Connor, the Hazelton piano being used. George sang 'My Gal Is a High Born Lady' and 'Mammy's Little Alabama Coon.'

"Teddy Roosevelt liked George's song about 'Tommy Murphy,' which concerned an Irish soldier who lost a leg in battle, but was determined to get back and strut before his sweetheart.

"Taft was fond of 'It Ain't No Disgrace to Run When You're Scared.' After his defeat in 1912, Taft laughed uproariously when George sang 'If He Goes Out, I'm Going Out.'

"Not long after Woodrow Wilson took office, he heard George sing 'My Cousin Caruse.' He put his arm

around George and thanked him, and later a swarm of job hunters descended on George to ask that he put in a boost for them with W. W.

"Harding also was an O'Connor fan, and so was Coolidge.

"It was in the Coolidge-Hoover period that George, appearing at White House Correspondents' banquets, sang his "Saloon," a haunting, mournful tune that was both an elegy of days gone by and a prayer for their return. With the late Matt Horne plunking the keys, George would sing.

Saloon, saloon, saloon,  
It runs through my mind like a tune.  
I don't like cafes and I hate cabarets,  
But just mention saloon and my cares  
fade away.  
For it brings back a fond recollection  
Of a little old low-ceiling room  
With a bar and a rail,  
And a dime and a pall,  
Saloon, saloon, saloon.

"Sir Willmott Lewis, the correspondent of the London Times, wrote a new version of Saloon after the eighteenth amendment was repealed, but George was never able to use it. His audiences liked the old one, and it became the custom for all hands—including Mr. Roosevelt and then President Truman—to join in with a crescendo of melody that rattled the chandeliers.

"George O'Connor could have made a fortune on the stage; almost everybody agreed on that, including the professionals. In this connection, there were two memorable anecdotes.

"Al Jolson and O'Connor, both natives of Washington, entertained at an Alfalfa Club banquet. Jolson, a toast on Broadway, sang his mammy songs and then gave way to George.

"Will Rogers turned to Gene Buck and said:

"Gene, I don't know but what the better boy stayed home."

"Back in T.R.'s time, George went to New York to sing at a dinner in honor of the President. Later he visited the Lambs Club. Wilton Lackaye, a famous actor and native of Washington, introduced him to George M. Cohan and James T. Powers, saying:

"You fellows think you're good, but here's a man who plays New York as a one-night stand."

"Many years after George attended Georgetown University he appeared at a smoker on the Hilltop. An old grad listened to him sing song after song and heard the crowd yell for more. Finally, getting a chance, the old gentleman went over to George and said:

"For goodness sake, young man, aren't you ever going to graduate?"

"George O'Connor's life seemed to prove that a man who sings just for the fun of it, and sings for the lowly as well as the mighty, never grows old."

Glancing over this article, I read the list of pallbearers and wondered if the Henry Spencer who served as one was the brother of the first famous phonograph artist, Leonard Garfield Spencer. Both Len and Henry Spencer were natives of Washington, and I only recently learned that Henry, who occasionally did some recording, was living in Washington when George O'Connor died.

#### VIII. Unfortunate Radio Experience

And now I come to a personal reference which involves my only unpleasant association with George H. O'Connor—one that was not at all his fault, since he was dead when it occurred. I mention this incident chiefly to show how hasty action and unintended thoughtlessness may sometimes mar a well-meant undertaking.

Almost as soon as I learned of George's death, I decided to present a George O'Connor Memorial Pro-

gram on my Walsh's Wax Works program, at that time heard from radio station WDBJ in Roanoke. The program was to include several O'Connor records together with comment by me on the comedian's life, personality and achievements.

Being busy with other things, I gathered the records up almost at the last minute. Because I remembered "They May Call You Hawaiian on Broadway" as the most amusing of the lot, I included it, forgetting it contained lines which were merely intended to be funny when they were written many years before, but which Negro listeners of more recent years would find grossly offensive.

The program went well until I put on "They May Call You Hawaiian," but as soon as the first line, "Mose Walker was a high-yellow nigger from down in Dixieland" was heard, I realized what I had done. My program had always been popular among Negro listeners, and a lot of them were tuned in that day. Hardly had that offensive line been heard when the phone began ringing. Then, as soon as the last line of the refrain, "They may call you Hawaiian on Broadway, but you're just a plain nigger to me!" went on the air it seemed that every colored man or woman in Roanoke was calling to complain.

I felt badly upset, but did what I could to right matters by explaining I had picked the record out hurriedly without recalling that it contained remarks which, though intended good-naturedly, might be interpreted as slurs on the Negro race. I apologized for any hurt feelings I might have caused and said I was deeply sorry—as I certainly was. The happening was particularly unfortunate since I had a reputation among the colored people of being one of their staunch Roanoke friends. A couple of weeks later I tried to make further amends by playing a program composed entirely of music by Negro artists, and whatever ill will may have resulted from my thoughtlessness soon died away. In late years I have played, at their request, records of many of the "coon" songs, replete with such words as "nigger" and "shine," for some of my cultured Negro friends, and they have found them uproariously amusing. (I hasten to add they were played in private—not on the air.) I was pleased when one fine young fellow thoughtfully said: "I enjoy those records because they are funny, and I know well enough there are such colored people. They are not any more a reflection on me as a person than Maggie and Jiggs are a slur on all the Irish. I don't think a little friendly kidding among the races does anybody any harm."

There's much to be said for that point of view. But, though they were not so intended, the words of "They May Call You Hawaiian," could easily be taken as sneering instead of kidding, and I have never ceased to be sorry that I didn't take a bit more time to assemble the records for my George O'Connor Memorial Program. Had I not been so hasty in my choosing I should not have done an injustice to the memory of one

of the kindest and most lovable of men—one in whose nature there was not a shred of malice toward any race or creed.

#### IX George O'Connor's Records

George O'Connor's first Columbia record, No. A1669, combining "Mississippi Barbecue" and "The Alabama Jamboree," appeared in the March, 1915, supplement. On the same page his fellow Washingtonian, Al Jolson was represented with two of his Winter Garden hits, "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers" and "When the Grown Up Ladies Act Like Babies." Here is the comment of Editor George Clarence Jell on the initial O'Connor offering:

In Mr. O'Connor we have another Columbia "find" and a valuable one. Though this is his first record it is evident that he is a real singer of the American "coon song," and in his infusion of the characteristic unctious, vociferation and abandon into his rendering of this class of music he has few peers. It is certain that if it is well done no line of popular song work is more pleasing to the public than this, and the present record may be ordered with the assurance that it is out of the ordinary in quality. Two of the most effective of current coon song successes have been made use of to introduce this new artist.

(It will be remembered George told me he considered "Mississippi Barbecue" his best record, but was under the impression it was never issued).

In April, George was back with A1693, "At The Mississippi Cabaret," coupled with a Harry Von Tilzer song, "Roaming Around," sung by Arthur Fields. A month later he had a coupling of "Everybody Rag With Me" and "On My Way To New Orleans," the latter composed by Harry Von Tilzer's brother, Al. The number was A1706.

There were no more O'Connor records until August, 1915, when he sang a popular song, rather out of his usual style, "Hop a Jitney With Me," which was combined on A1768 with another Arthur Fields rendition of a Harry Von Tilzer number, "In Matewan." (I have never heard this record and I wonder how many HOBBIES readers could remember the words and music of "In Matewan." I must ask my friend, Sophie Salpeter, manager of the present-day Harry Von Tilzer Music Publishing Co., to send me a copy of the sheet music for my collection of musical oddities).

In October, George was back on A1805 with an Italian dialect comedy song, "Scaddle de Mooch," which I remember telling him I liked but which he didn't seem to think was especially good. The other side was Byron Gay's hilarious automobile "nut song," "Gasoline Gus And His Jitney Bus."

Harry Von Tilzer songs were really making the Columbia lists in those days. In January, 1916, on A1870, O'Connor sang a Von Tilzer number, "I'm Homesick," doubled with "Out Of a City Of Six Million People (Why Did You Pick On Me?)" sung by the late Marguerite Farrell, who for some reason changed it to "pick out me."

The most genuinely typical O'Connor



nor record that had so far appeared was offered in February, on A1901, when he sang "I Guess I'll Soon Be Back In Dixieland," combined with the ludicrous "These Feet Of Mine," written by his accompanist, J. Martin (Matt) Horn. In March, George had another corking coupling, A19, an old George M. Cohan number, "P. S. Mr. Johnson Sends Best Regards," (the "Best" didn't appear in the title of the song as Cohan recorded it for Victor) and "Loading Up The Mandy Lee," written by Stanley Murphy and my dear friend, Henry I. Marshall, who is still actively composing songs and making guest appearances on the stage and in TV. The supplement description is interesting:

The character singing of George H. O'Connor has made a hilarious hit at his every appearance. George M. Cohan is responsible for the words of Mr. Johnson's "P. S." and the other George is responsible for a most laugh - provoking interpretation. "Loading Up The Mandy Lee" is a regular "coon shouter" of a song. In listening to O'Connor's lively singing, you can picture the shuffling, shouting crowd of cotton pickers on the Mississippi boat dock and even join in the chorus, if the spirit moves.

In the true O'Connor vein and a song that would have ideally suited Bert Williams was "I'm Gone," which appeared on A1980 in June, doubled with an early Walter Donaldson hit, "Oh Joe, With Your Fiddle And Bow, You Stole My Heart Away." It's interesting to note that "I'm Gone" was the brain child of S. H. Dudley, but don't jump to the conclusion that this Dudley was the Hayden Quartet baritone who was also for years the Victor catalog editor. There were two S. H. Dudleys, one of whom was a Negro show man who had a string of theaters in the Piedmont area of Virginia, and it was he who wrote the blackface dialect number, "I'm Gone."

George sang another Walter Donaldson ditty, "Come On To Nashville, Tennessee," for the July supplement. It was coupled on A2008, with one of the most amusing records Collins and Harlan ever made, James Brockman's "The Kid Is Clever," a satirical treatment of a rustic smart Aleck.

The most lastingly popular of all the O'Connor records—one that stayed in the Columbia catalog until 1928—appeared in October. It was A2064, "The Nigger Blues," an irresistible catchy bit of nonsense whose title would keep it from being recorded nowadays. This popular specimen of the blues was written by Leroy "Lasses" White, who struck me when I once called on him in his hotel room in Johnson City, Tenn., as being perhaps the most serious looking middle-aged man I had ever seen. He was also a sick man, which may have accounted for his depressed appearance. For the first time, an Al Jolson solo appeared on the back of an O'Connor record. It was "I'm Saving Up The Means To Get To New Orleans." After this, Jolson-O'Connor couplings were frequent—possibly because Columbia was said to be paying Jolson \$8,000 a side (in spite of his not being a good seller

when compared to Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Will Oakland, Collins and Harlan, Ada Jones and many other professional phonograph singers) and it may have been thought good economy to put a song by a less expensive artist on the other side of the Jolson waxings.

In November, on A2080, O'Connor sang a "coon song," which he and Matt Horn had written, "You Ain't No Relation Of Mine," combined with "Now He's Got A Beautiful Girl," a Ted Snyder opus, recorded by Jolson.

The January, 1917, Columbia list included O'Connor's version of "Oh! Southern City (Send Us Some Beautiful Girls)" combined on A2127, with "How Could Washington Be A Married Man And Never Tell A Lie," by M. J. O'Connell, who recorded this comic selection for virtually every American phonograph company. The same supplement also contained one of the greatest O'Connor successes, "I Ain't Prepared For That," with Al Jolson on the other side No. A-2124, singing a catchy Irving Berlin song, "Someone May Be There While I'm Gone." Concerning the O'Connor side the supplement said:

We offer no comparisons, but challenge anyone to maintain his habitual calm while George O'Connor sings the great "preparedness" lament of 'Rastus Brown. The three choruses of this song will unquestionably prove one of the humorous hits of our entire catalog.

In fact, this record made such a hit that it was specially reissued in February, 1918.

O'Connor's February, 1917, record ranked well among the most popular he ever made. It was the slightly unrefined but unfailingly amusing and still popular "Pray For The Lights To Go Out," backed (on A2143), by a popular hit, "They're Wearing 'Em Higher In Hawaii," by Morton Harvey, who will be further heard of in HOBBIES one of these days.

In April, on A2184, George had another catchy "coon song," "Misery," doubled with Irving Kaufman singing an Irving Berlin song that proved a failure, "That Goody Melody." A month later O'Connor (whom Columbia always called a tenor, although some listeners considered him a baritone) sang "She's Dixie All The Time," with a Sam Ash solo on the other side, of A2210, "Wonderful Girl, Good Night"—another Harry Von Tilzer composition. In the same list on A2211, he sang "Ephraim's Jazbo Band," one of the first songs about "jass," as it was then called, while Arthur Fields occupied the other side with "Everybody Loves A 'Jass' Band."

The September supplement brought two more O'Connor offerings—neither among his more outstanding catalog contributions. A2293 combined his "Ain't You Coming Back To Dixieland?" with "If You Had The World And Its Gold," sung by a vaudeville tenor, Jim Doherty, then almost unknown to record buyers, but who a few years later became a popular exclusive Edison star. I would nominate A2294 as the most obscure of all O'Connor recordings—a patriotic number, "Sons Of America," backed

with "Three Cheers For The Army And Navy," sung by Edgar Stoddard and the Broadway Quartet. This was a disguise for Andrea Sarto and the Columbia Stellar Quartet.

The November O'Connor record was numbered A2364. He sang "Sailin' Away On The Henry Clay," written by the great popular composer, Egbert Van Alstyne, while the reverse side was taken up by the sweet-voiced tenor, "Mike" O'Connell, with "You Never Can Be Too Sure About The Girls."

January, 1918, brought the already mentioned A2411, "Down South Everybody's Happy" and "Down Where The Sweet Potatoes Grow," while the February list contained my pick (in spite of its painful associations) of all O'Connor discs, A2441, "They May Call You Hawaiian On Broadway," coupled with a great Collins and Harlan performance of the side-splitting "Cannibal King."

It will be observed that few of the later O'Connor records had him singing on both sides, but he occupied the two faces of A2481, issued in April. The songs were the still famous "I Ain't Got Nobody" and "Everybody's Crazy 'Bout The Dog-gone Blues, But I'm Happy."

The last George O'Connor record Columbia ever issued was A2507, which came out in May, 1918, and combined "Jazzin' The Cotton Town Blues" and "There's Always Something Doin' Down In Dixie."

If I should be asked why O'Connor records "lost out" after the middle of 1918, I would guess that it was partly because winning World War I had become such a grim business that the type of song the veteran comedian sang was considered inappropriate. Too, the record companies were being required by the government to use some of their plant space for war purposes, and the monthly record lists were reduced in size. The "coon song," more over, had gradually been losing popularity, and it is worthy of note that Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, after a fabulously successful singing partnership of 16 years, never made a Victor or Columbia record in the years following 1918, although their superb comedy was still issued by Edison and some of the smaller companies.

To sum up, George O'Connor happened to be a past-master of an art form that was becoming outmoded. But his loss of popularity on records didn't affect the status as the "favorite White House entertainer" which he enjoyed until his death. Today, eight years after the banker-lawyer comedian's passing, there are many collectors who would like nothing better than to have a full set of George O'Connor's discs—including of course, beyond all others, those special Victor versions of "Tain't No Disgrace To Run When You're Skeered" and "If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out." It would be nice to know the masters are still in existence, but it's almost certain they are not. And it seems equally unlikely that anybody will ever find any of the brown wax Columbia cylinders he made in the nineties.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## JOTTINGS

### From Old Record Catalogs and Phonograph Publications

By JIM WALSH

Some readers say they especially enjoy articles in which I quote from old record catalogs or early publications dealing with the phonograph. This is intended for those readers, as a change from the "straight" biographical sketches.

The veteran banjo virtuoso, Fred Van Eps, tells me that the first record catalog in booklet form issued by any talking machine concern was the 36-page one published in 1894 by the United States Phonograph Company of 87-91 Orange Street, Newark, New Jersey. The North American Phonograph Company had issued four-page lists of cylinders recorded by Edison in 1890, but the folders hardly attained to the dignity of a catalog.

There were some oddities about United States' initial production. For one thing, the records weren't numbered. The catalog announced "We Do Not Handle Duplicate Records," and further asserted: "All records listed in this catalog are *original records* unequalled for brilliancy, clearness and general excellence." On page four appears a form letter headed "To Our Customers":

"In ordering, state clearly whether you desire records for horn or slot purposes, or way-tubes.

"In addition to the records listed in this catalog, we can also furnish an endless variety of vocal, instrumental and miscellaneous records, of which no catalog can be made. We will gladly accept orders for such records, making selection according to our judgment. . . .

"Price: All records, except Quartets and Minstrel First Parts, \$1.00 each; Quartet and Minstrels, \$1.25 each. (The higher cost no doubt was because records involving several artists cost more to make by the "round".) . . . If you want to buy a phonograph or supplies of any kind, it will pay you to write us. V. H. Emerson, Manager."

V. H. Emerson was the Victor Emerson who became a Columbia recording expert when the United States Phonograph Company went out of business around 1897. Virtually all the U.S. artists went with him to Columbia, where Emerson stayed until 1916 when he founded his own record company. Incidentally, the cylinders produced by the United States Company were known as "standard New Jersey records."

A valuable feature of the 1894 catalog is the series of good photographs of the handful of artists who

had by then won a reputation as record makers. Under a picture of Dan W. Quinn, looking youthful with his spiky hair brushed straight back, we read:

Mr. Quinn has achieved prominence quicker than any other artist who devotes his time to professional Phonographic work, chiefly because he always speaks his words plainly, makes a specialty of the latest songs, and sings without straining his voice. We recommend his records for single-tube, way-tube, or horn use.

This meant that Quinn's records were considered equally well adapted to being heard through one pair of ear-tubes, several pairs or through an external horn. There were 49 unnumbered titles, of which "Daisy Bell," "Farewell, Daisy Bell," "Kelly's Bicycle Song," "Do, Do, My Huckleberry, Do," "The Cat Came Back" and "The Girl That Broke the Man That Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" are typical.

Under the photo of George J. Gaskin, "The Irish Thrush," we read:

Gaskin is too widely known to require much mention. He stands unrivalled in his class. Every record is loud and ringing in tone, each word and syllable distinct, as if Mr. Gaskin were in the room with his audience. For horn use no vocals compare with these in loudness. They may be heard in the remotest corner of a great theater if horn is attached to the Phonograph, yet are not unpleasantly loud when heard through the tubes.

Mr. Gaskin had some good sellers to his credit, including "Sweet Marie," "The Fatal Wedding," "Two Little Girls in Blue" and "O, Promise Me." There were 43 titles in all.

Next we come to Len Spencer:

Mr. Spencer has a sympathetic, well-cultivated voice, which he uses with good taste and unusual skill. Being also possessed of considerable ability as a comedian, he renders the best of the comic songs in a manner both humorous and original. No one does these things quite as Spencer does. . . . During the past year his vocal powers have been taxed to the utmost to meet the great demand for his songs, and it has been difficult to procure them.

Among Spencer's 24 cylinders it is interesting to notice "Turkey in de Straw," later associated exclusively with Billy Golden.

Now J. W. Myers, complete with walrus mustache:

Mr. Myers is a popular baritone, has a sweet voice, and our latest records from him show much improvement in practice before the Phonograph that they easily rank with the best made. We have heard few better vocal records than are contained in the following list. . . . Words distinct at all times, even when spoken the most rapidly.

Myers' list ran to 40 records, including "The Bowery Grenadiers," "The Land League Band," "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "Nellie and May, Sisters Were They" and "Two Little Girls in Blue."

Page 14 is devoted to George W. Johnson "in his two great specialties":

Up to date, over 25,000 records of these two songs have been made by this artist, and the orders for them seem to increase instead of diminish. Mr. Johnson's laugh is simply irresistible. Whole audiences are convulsed by simply hearing these songs reproduced. No exhibition box is complete without these two records.

"As old-timers have probably guessed, Johnson's "specialties" were his "Laughing Song" and "Whistling Coon."

All the artists so far mentioned are familiar to collectors specializing in records of the 1890's and 1900's. But now we come to one of whom I know nothing. He is Charles A. Asbury, and his nine records of the "coon" variety were made with banjo accompaniment:

Mr. Asbury's work is full of ginger, and is always pleasing, his songs being rendered in the good old plantation negro style. His execution on the banjo is simply marvelous.

On page 16 is an item that will bring a half-sad smile to the face of friends of the late John Bieling. Here we have "Selections by the Manhansett Quartet," of which Mr. Bieling was first tenor, as was related in a HOBBIES article in July, 1942. Other members were George Gaskin, second tenor; Joe Riley, baritone, and Jim Cherry or Walter Snow, bass:

The Manhansetts were probably the first quartet to sing to the Phonograph, and still the demand for their work continues. Their pleasing melodies have been listened to by thousands of delighted hearers. These are the only satisfactory quartet records before the public. All very loud and brilliant.

The nine Manhansett titles included the time-honored "Cornfield Medley"!

Minstrel records were by Spencer, Williams and Quinn. Two of these are still familiar names, but Billy Williams (not to be confused with the later English music hall comedian or the present-day Negro crooner) is completely forgotten:

These gentlemen have together produced a most decided novelty in their new minstrel records. Spencer & Quinn are well known to all users of the Phonograph. . . . They are ably assisted by Mr. Billy Williams, the aged-negro delineator and comedian, as well as by Geo. W. Johnson in his inimitable laughing specialty.

Each record contains a complete minstrel first part, embracing overture with bones and tambourine accompaniment, several jokes and witty sayings, interspersed with laughter and applause by the audience, and finishing either with some comic negro song or story by Spencer, or a pathetic song by Quinn or Williams. Wherever reproduced these records have made an instantaneous hit. They have been arranged in a series of six records . . .

Coming next to the instrumental section, we find "Selections by Issler's Orchestra," and the note: "This organization, under the direction of Mr. Edward Issler, is composed of prominent soloists and musicians, such as Schweinfest, Dana, and others. . . . No musical records made by any individual or organization have as large or as general a sale as the cylinders by Issler's Orchestra. . . . Long use does not dim the record, the cylinders being deeply engraved for hard wear." There were 72 of them.

Next, humorous talking records which, as might be expected, were made by the greatly gifted Russell Hunting:

These records have met with an enormous sale, owing to their originality and mirth provoking qualities. They give universal satisfaction and are without doubt the best talking records on the market.

Hunting was represented by 11 of his famous "Casey" character sketches.

There were five cylinders by Voss' First Regiment Band; eight by Holding's Military Band; and 18 by Gilmore's Band. For instrumental solos, the buyers of New Jersey cylinders could take their choice of 11 cornet renditions by David B. Dana, ten piccolo offerings by George Schweinfest, and seven clarinet solos by William Tuson. And that was the extent of the United States Company's recorded repertoire.

Now let's move up a couple of years to 1896, when Russell Hunting, the "Casey" monologist, became editor of a talking machine trade paper, *The Phonoscope*. During a visit to the Congressional Library in Washington, D. C., I made some notes from this publication which Hunting edited until he went to England in 1899.

The November 1896 issue, contained a photo and biographical sketch of Len Spencer, who always managed to look something like Beethoven. The article said that Len was under exclusive contract to the U. S. Phonograph Company "at a fat salary," and also mentioned that when Issler's Orchestra played "descriptive specialties," the ingenious Mr. Spencer manipulated the castanets, clogs and tambourines. He and a noted comedian, John P. Hogan, were then appearing in vaudeville in a sketch, "Our Sunny Southern Home."

The same issue contained an advertisement of the Chicago Talking Machine Company, 107-9 Madison Street, Chicago, which for 30 days only was offering 50,000 cylinder records at \$5 a dozen. Artists included: Quinn, Gaskin, Golden, Herbert Holcombe, Edward M. Favor, and others. The ad. said: "Dan W. Quinn has been here again, making another 10,000 records."

Russell Hunting had his own business at 45 Clinton Place, New York, and advertised his series of "Casey" and "Hiram Wilkins" records. He said he had had more than six years experience manufacturing his own cylinders, with over 50,000 already made, and added: "Certain unprincipled individuals and organizations are duplicating my work, thereby deceiving the public and furnishing a record about one-third as loud as the original."

There was a mention of a cylinder by Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant and her children being played for the Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang; also an advertisement of "the latest model Gramophone" and a statement that at least five thousand cylinder records were being used in the McKinley-Bryan presidential campaign. One of the latest popular songs was "Mary Black From Hackensack," by Lew Dockstader.

Someone had reported George Gaskin was dead but *The Phonoscope* said he was still living and devoting about one-third of his time to recording. He had been singing for the Chicago Talking Machine Company while under exclusive contract to Leeds and Walcott, and had been in trouble about this but had cleared it up.

J. W. Myers was operating his own company, the Globe Phonograph Record Company, making his own records, which he sold for \$1 each. He claimed the largest repertoire of any American singer. (I have a dubbing of his Globe record of "The Man in the Moon is a Lady." Just as Myers finishes singing, someone yells "You're a liar!")

Editor Hunting jokingly remarked there was no funnier sight on earth than 200-pound Len Spencer singing the pathetic sob-song, "Wait, Mr. Postman, Wait!" and grimacing in disgust as he sang.

The issue for January-February, 1897, mentioned that Yvette Guilbert, while traveling in the United States, sent records to her mother, describing her trip. Russell Hunting was managing the Universal Phonograph Company, and offering "high class original records" by Quinn, Allen May, Hunting, Gaskin, Lottie Gilson, the Diamond Quartet and Speneer. Another ad. said Berliner discs were "an indestructible record made of hard rubber."

In March it was announced that the irrepressible George Gaskin, a native of Belfast, was going to pay a visit to his native North Ireland, saying he felt the urge to spend some of his phonograph profits. There was a mention of Thomas A. Edison's taking a phonograph to the office of the *Scientific American* in December, 1877, and playing a record that said: "Good morning. How do you do? How do you like the phonograph?"

The record lists for March, 1897, were arranged by artists but without any indication of the recording company. They included Myers, Hunting, Columbia Orchestra, Diamond and Curry (banjo duettists), the Aeolian Trio, Quinn, Myers, Spencer, Sousa's Band, Charles P. Lowe (xylophone), Yvette Guilbert (singing "I Wants Yer, Ma Honey," in both

French and English versions), Issler's Orchestra, Schweinfest, Gaskin, Vess L. Ossman (banjo), Paine (whoever that may have been), Pete Le Maire, G. W. John, Signor Fregoli, Sarah Bernhardt ("Passage dans Izeil" and Victor Hugo's "Un Pende Musique"), Madame Regane ("Passage dans 'Divorcon'"), D. Wormser (a zither player who popped up in a record lists for many years afterwards), and J. T. Kelly, comedian known on the stage as "The Rolling Mill Man." Both Lottie Gilson and Len Spencer recorded "You're Not the Only Pebble on the Beach."

Berliner Gramophone artists for the month were Quinn, Gaskin, Stephen Clement (banjo), Golden, Maurice Farkoa, Maud Foster, Holcombe, Myers and George Graham, who gave a recitation, "What is the Gramophone?" A lot of people who listened to the Gramophone's rasping, grindstone-like reproduction probably would have been glad to record an answer!

In April 1897, the break-up of the U. S. Company became apparent. George Schweinfest, who had been playing with Issler's Orchestra, had moved on to Columbia, J. J. Fisher was announced as a new Eastern recording baritone.

The May issue contained an anecdote about a piano falling on Len Spencer in the Columbia studio. Len decided to move the piano, elevated on a platform about four feet above the floor, and what followed probably was classical: "The piano objected and unceremoniously flopped over on Leonard, using him as the filling of a sandwich with floor and piano sides. I am glad to say that with the exception of a few external bumps, Leonard is 'up and around,' feeling as well as ever."

The truly great Mr. Spencer advertised that he was no longer identified with the U. S. Phonograph Company but was now exclusive to Columbia.

In July, a phonograph exhibitor from Portland, Oregon, wrote a letter asking George Gaskin to sing two verses "and sometimes a refrain" on each cylinder, "and the phonograph men all over the country will rise up and call you blessed." The editor suggested that Gaskin, in turning out his own private records, might get better results if he didn't confine himself to using light colored blanks. There were mentions of duets by Spencer and Roger Harding.

In the combined August-September issue, editor Hunting roughly observed: "If you come to New York to see the sights don't fail to see the expression on Len's face when he shifts from 'A Hot Time in the Old Town' to 'Goosey, Goosey Gander.'" Gaskin was in his native Belfast, singing popular songs with great success, and Roger Harding was specializing in making cylinders for children—"Who Killed Cock Robin?" "Little Red Riding Hood," etc., and was reported very successful in this pioneer anticipation of the present-day "kidisks." Gaskin's return from Ireland was announced in October.

Another combined issue was that of (Continued on page 45)

This name had been suggested to him by a friend who greatly admired Scott's "Lady of the Lake". Why did he escape from that life which seemingly had him branded? He had taught himself, with the help of a kind-hearted white woman, to read and write, and he recognized his capabilities. The world must know! Soon it began to get this knowledge. Somewhere, somehow, with money earned by blacking boots, he had bought his first book, "The Columbian Orator".

And here is coupled on the next link, encircling the date 1841 and labeled Nantucket, Mass. At this town in August of that year, he made an extempore speech which led to his being appointed an agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. Throughout the New England and Middle States he delivered many speeches against slavery. A few years later he published an autobiography, and started at Rochester "Frederick Douglas' Paper", a weekly abolition newspaper.

The succeeding link shows 1863 and encircling this "1864-'65 Mass. Regiment." He was among those who ad-

vocated the hiring of negro troops by the United States government. Whether he, himself, served in this regiment the writer has been unable to learn.

The next recorded link chapter is "1872, Elector at Large". This was not his first political office, for the previous year he had been Secretary of the Commission to Santo Domingo.

Then, "1877 U.S. Marshall for District of Columbia" is seen in the next part of his life story.

The succeeding link states, "1889-91 U.S. Minister to Haiti". If space permitted there could be an extended chain, for his life, in reality, was a continuous list of opportunities turned into achievements.

The final link, which forms the crown of the spoon is a broken link stating "1895, Died, Washington". His name in full is on the crown of the reverse side, where the stem corresponds to the links just described (only that here they are not labeled, but are entwined with a floral design which ends in a wreath at the crown).

Back to the bowl we go for a final look at the portrait. If there is an "art to read the mind's construction in the face", we see in this face serenity and integrity. We see the firm-set lines of determination, but we see the softer, deeper expression of understanding and sympathy. We see the penetrating eyes that fathom a world beyond that into which the unkind hand of Fate had placed him.

yond the Gates of Paradise," L9460; and "The Prince of Peace," L9461.

The fortunate possessor of these extremely rare records comments: "The announcement is done by a female voice of clear and rich but somewhat childish timbre. The voice of Miss Mann is exceedingly rich and well handled, as is evident even on these ancients. The discs reproduce, I should judge, as well as they ever did. Piano accompaniments, very simple, but competent." In all probability the announcements were made by Miss Mann herself, and the "childish" quality comes from playing the records at the present-day 78 speed, instead of the 70 or so at which they were recorded.

As far as I know, none of Estella Mann's solo cylinders have turned up. But Allen Debus, a Glenview, Illinois collector, recently sent me a dubbing of an Edison cylinder of "The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring," by the Lyric Trio, consisting of Miss Mann, John Havens and William F. Hooley. At this writing Mr. Kishpaugh is planning to have dubbings made of the Zon-o-phones to send to Miss Mann's brother, William J. Mann of Evansville, Indiana.

The February issue also mentioned that Edison was opening a New York office, and the editor commented it was to be hoped this would mean an end to the inventor's poor business methods, which had made it necessary to "go past a wilderness of meat markets and similar places in West Orange before you could find where to buy a phonograph and some records." The selling methods of Edison's phonograph division continued to be criticized for the 30 years that it remained in business.

In March it was announced that Harding had been ill but had recovered. (He died in 1901). There was also a mention of a "quartet provided by one voice." Leon F. Douglas of Chicago was making recordings of the voice of "Silas Leachman, 'the 24th Ward Politician,' who was described as the fortunate possessor of a voice ranging from bass to first tenor, 'and he has made a number of quartet records. The singer puts on the cylinder first whatever part he finds easiest for him to sing, then sings second, third and fourth parts.'" Leachman was the precursor of Patti Paige and other "moderns" who dub in more than one voice on a record.

Photos of famous artists who made Bettini cylinders were shown on pages 10 and 11 of the June 1898 issue. They included Miss Lizzie B. Raymond; Miss Dora Valesca Becker; the mysterious "Lady X" (photographed with her back turned); Miss Gertrude Silva; Mlle. Lora; Henri Marteau; Emilio de Gogorza; Yvette Guilbert; Signor Campanari; Signor Alberto de Bassoni; Miss Marie Engle; Hans Kronold, the famous 'cellist'; Signor Tomaso Salvini; Mme. (Rosa) Chalia; Sarah Bernhardt; Signor L. Fregoli; Mme. Clementine de Vere Sapio; Signor Dante Del Papa; Mlle. L. de Brelor; Pol Plancon; Mme. Torriani; Mme. Bejane; Mme. Strakosch, and Mme. F. Saville—the latter apparently the light opera singer, Florence Saville. There was also a

(Continued on page 56)

## SILVER FOR SALE

**Sterling Souvenir Spoons \$1.50 ea.** up. tax inc. Assortment sent on approval. State seal spoons, \$2. Foreign and enamel spoons, \$2.50 to \$10.00—Schwarz, 1806 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Penna. d120882

**ENGLISH TOAST RACK** By R. & S. Hennell, c. 1804. Correspondence solicited.—Frederick T. Widmer, Jeweler, 31 West Street, Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844) LIBerty 2-3917 jly124431

**FLATWARE:** For active, inactive, and obsolete patterns in sterling silver, write us your needs. Prompt replies. We also have on hand a fine assortment of sterling, Sheffield, and silver plated silverware.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa. my120652

**STERLING SOUVENIR SPOONS, \$1.50 each, tax incl.** Foreign & enamel spoons, \$2.50 to \$10 each, tax incl. We ship on approval.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Penn. my126581

**EISENHOWER SOUVENIR SPOON.** Sterling-Enamel. Presidents campaign portrait in the bowl and U.S. Flag on handle beautifully done in colors on enamel. \$5.50 only. postage prepaid.—Albert H. Oechsle, Dept. H. 1., Jefferson City, Mo. au60211

**ANTIQUE SHEFFIELD** Condiment Set. Contains 7 matching fine cut bottles. Stand has rococo border, and is footed. Circa 1830. 9 1/4" diameter, 8" high \$90.00.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa. ap1652

**SIX diff. enamelled Spanish Provinces shield spoons \$9 pp.** Free premium souvenir spoon with order. Bank Draft to—E. Serrano-Mesa, Plaza Marina Espanola 6, Madrid, Spain. my3234

**COLLECTING TEASPOONS?** Our 7 best known Presidents in full size Original Rogers Silverplated Teaspoons. Example: Lincoln spoon has his modeled bust, raised letters show he was the 16th Pres., years in office - 1861 - to 1865, and his full name. In the bowl is part of his Gettysburg Address. The others made the same - a raised picture associated with each Pres. in the bowl. Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Grant, Theo. and Franklin D. Roosevelt. \$1.00 each ppd. Available only from Don Parker Silversmithing, Cheshire 8, Conn. my34531

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 29)

November-December, 1897. There was an ad. of the Norcross Phonograph Company, I. W. ("Ike") Norcross, Jr., manager, in the New Zealand Building at Broadway and 37th Street, New York. The Excelsior Phonograph Company had bought Roger Harding's plant at 18 East 22nd Street and retained him as general manager.

The February 1898 number, contained a long write-up of Estella Louise Mann, who was operating her own Lyric Phonograph Company, but this has already been quoted in an article about Miss Mann. Incidentally, the Rev. Harlan B. Kishpaugh, of Cornwallville, New York, has found five solo records by this almost legendary soprano. They surely must rank among the rarest records in the world.

Mr. Kishpaugh's records, however, are not cylinders but nine-inch Zon-o-phone discs, probably made in 1900. He has listed the numbers and titles of four, but says the fifth has been temporarily mislaid. The four are "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," No. L9223; "Rock of Ages," L9224; "Be-

## MISCELLANEOUS

**GOLD AND SILVER** indicators. Sold on money back guarantee. Small, can be carried in your pocket. Price \$30. For information write.—P. O. Box 51, Plant City, Florida. s6238



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 45)

large photo of of G. Bettini and a larger one of his private office in the Bettini Phonograph Laboratory, New York, showing the walls covered with photographs of artists. It's still something of a puzzle why so few Bettini cylinders are found. And what has become of all those pictures?

In July, the Excelsior and Musical Phonograph Company advertised records by the Excelsior Quartet (probably the Haydn in disguise); S. Holland Dudley, "the King Supreme of Record Makers"; Harding's negro songs; William F. Hooley, "the famous basso, whose records are the best in volume of any that have ever been made"; and Cal Stewart's Yankee dialect stories. This issue contained a poem by Stewart, "My Old Yaller Almanac Hangin' on the Kitchen Wall." The same number had an article on a genial gentleman, Fred-eric W. Hager, who is still living and will eventually be the subject of a Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists series. Meanwhile, I'll quote the following brief sketch, which accompanied a photo of Fred wearing a mustache:

Frederic W. Hager, the popular young bandmaster of Hager's American Military Band of New York City, was born in Susquehanna county, Pa., in 1874, and ever since he was eight years of age has played the violin. He studied under Prof. F. Hermann for several years, after which he received a term of free scholarship at the National Conservatory of America. He then studied with Carl Heuser, a prominent violinist of New York City for three years. Mr. Hager has the distinction of being the youngest bandmaster of merit in New York City, having procured a contract to furnish a band for a public park when he was but 21 years of age. This is now in its third year and promises to be very successful. Mr. Hager has recently gone into the phonograph field and is at present engaged by Messrs. Harms, Kaiser and Hagen, and the large sale of his band and violin records prove that he will be in great demand this season. Among the musicians in his phonograph and park band are: A. Bade, cornetist, Messrs. Nickell, Reiter, Mygrant and the justly renowned cornet virtuoso, John Hazel.

In July 1898, it was revealed that Len Spencer's brother, Harry, had invented for Columbia a new device for recording the female voice, which was a tough baby in those days to catch accurately. Records of "Snow Baby" from Sousa's opera, "The Bride Elect," and "On the Banks of the Wabash," both sung by Minnie Emmett, were described as "loud, clear and distinct and free from blast or screech." Steve Porter, already well known as a recording comedian was referred to as a member of the Ocean Yacht Club of Staten Island. He had his own yacht, the Chiquita, 42 feet long and with a 14-foot beam.

Pages 12 and 13 of the July issue showed "the galaxy of talent" making Columbia records: Spencer, Gas-kin, Quinn, Porter, Fisher, Johnson, William F. Denny (a native of Boston, well known in vaudeville), George P. Watson, Miss Minnie S. Emmett (from church choir and opera to talking machine), Golden,

Hunting, Myers, Lowe, Sousa's Grand Concert Band, Monsieur B. Begue, Wormser, Frederick Hylands (rag-time pianist and composer) and Ossman. The article said Lowe had been making xylophone records for nine years and Ossman banjo solos equally long. Of Ossman it added: "When he was 12 he got music out of a banjo made from a peck measure. He studied under a violinist and had his first professional engagement at the age of 15. After winning the championship of the Hudson River (note by J. W.—probably by playing on the ferry boats), he settled in New York in 1878." This no doubt should be 1888, as Sylvester Louis Ossman was only ten years of age in 1878.

George Schweinfest, the ad. continued, learned to play the violin at the age of six. He had been a member of the Red Hussar Band. Cal Stewart was another Columbia artist: Tom Clark was director of the Columbia Orchestra; and Roger Harding had been long associated with Strakosch and Hess' English Opera Company, for which he was choir master, and with the Nellie McHenry Company.

That was as far as I had time to copy from *The Phonoscope*. The next time I'm in Washington I'll visit the Library of Congress again and try to complete the job.

## DOLLOLOGY

(Continued from page 38)

riocities, from all over the world, the rarest, the tiniest, the most diminutive dwarf imaginable—Tom Thumb, 11 years old and only 25 inches high, just arrived from England!!!

Barnum's clever publicity, with the cooperation of the newspapers, brought 3,000 people the very first night of Charlie's entrance into the theatrical world. After that fame and fortune came to both, for, to add to his charm, Charlie became a perfect little imitator and never failed to bring down the house with his songs and dances.

In all the key cities along the Atlantic Coast wherever the big and the little men appeared, money rolled into their coffers. Tom's huge success encouraged Barnum to look for even broader fields. He decided to take Tom to England "to see the Queen" and made the departure a gala occasion. Ten thousand people gathered at the wharf to see them off. "Yes," said Barnum to the eager crowd, "I am obeying the orders of Her Majesty, the Queen, to bring Tom home to England." Later on he found out that it was not so easy to gain admission to the court of England and he was almost in despair long before the cherished moment arrived and they actually were ushered into the presence of the Queen.

It was on the *Yorkshire*, "fastest, finest packet afloat" in 1844, that Tom learned his favorite song "Life on the Ocean Wave" from an admiring crew. It took nineteen days to cross, quite an achievement in those days.

How the midget captured the hearts

of the crowned heads of Europe and repeated his success in America and later toured the world with his wife is charmingly told in "Barnum Presents General Tom Thumb" by Alice Curtis Desmond.

The highlight of Tom's career was his marriage to a little lady his own size, Lavinia Warren, February 10, 1863. It probably was the biggest wedding "little old New York" ever saw, attended by such celebrities as President Lincoln and his cabinet, governors, congressmen, senators, army generals and a host of friends and admirers. Lavinia's wedding gown of tulle and satin, presented by Barnum, cost \$50 a yard. Presents were showered upon them. Two thousand pieces of an eighty-pound wedding cake were distributed to friends. Lavinia kept her piece for forty-three years, long after Tommie had been gathered to his forebears. His earthly existence ended on July 15, 1883, in his forty-sixth year, and he was buried with great ceremony at Mountain Grove Cemetery, a cemetery that Barnum had helped to create, in Bridgeport, Conn. There one may see on top of a high monument the small likeness of Tom Thumb, little in stature but big in heart and brain. A glimpse of his character may be seen in a note which he wrote when he was but nine years old: "I adore my Creator and know that He is good to us all. He has given me a small body, but I believe he has not contracted my heart, nor brain, nor soul." Few people now living were among the ten thousand who attended his funeral, but he has become an American legend that never will die.

For information on Charles Sherwood Stratton I am indebted to Alice Curtis Desmond's book, "Barnum Presents General Tom Thumb." Published by MacMillan Co., New York, 1954.

\*\*\*

The Dollmakers Guild is holding a Popularity Contest at the Henry Whitfield House in Guilford, Conn., from July 1st to Labor Day.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Ed Smalle

### Part 1

By OLIVER R. GRAHAM  
"Guest Conductor" for JIM WALSH.

#### A NOTE FROM JIM WALSH.

In the thirteen years I have been writing *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*, this is the first time I have used an article by anyone other than myself. However, Oliver Graham has done such an excellent job of interviewing his friend and neighbor, Ed Smalle, and recording the comedian's colorful life story, that I am glad to present the material as he wrote it, with occasional slight changes and comments of my own. This article has Mr. Smalle's approval, and he says he thinks Oliver Graham has done a "fine and dandy" job—an opinion in which I concur.

A few months from now I expect to present the work of another "guest conductor." Tony Altamirano, a young record collector living in Montebello, California, is preparing a biography of his intimate friends, the famous Duncan Sisters, Rosetta and Vivian, which I am sure I shall have pleasure in presenting to you and which you will enjoy reading.

"Just because I could sing 'do do deo,' play the piano a little and make funny noises, my wife, our two children and I had two trips to Europe. What do you think of that?"

With these words Ed Smalle began to discuss his career in the recording, music and radio industries. "Do-do-deo" certainly paid off in a big way, for Ed made records for nearly every company of the acoustic and early electric recording eras as a vocalist in his own right, one of a duet team, as a member of a group or as an accompanist. Later, he rose to prominence as an arranger and teacher.

Edwin James Smalle (pronounced SMALLEY, but no "y", please), is the youngest of a family of five children. Son of James and Mary Smalle, Ed was born November 3, 1887, at Eustis Street, near Dudley, Roxbury, Mass. His father, a building contractor, was the only member of the family to show any traces of musical ability—and his activities were confined to a jew's harp.

However, there was to be music in the family, for when the Smalles

moved to Maplewood, Mass., Ed was a boy soprano in the church choir. This was around 1900, and Ed, now about 13 years of age, began to study piano. At the prevailing rate of 35 cents per lesson, his piano teacher, Miss Mary Conway, surely earned her pay, for Ed recalls:

"Many's the time I'd say 'Mama, look at the others playing outside. How about - -' and she'd reply: 'There's nothing to stop you—AFTER you've finished your lesson!'"

So the games with the boys, and the turtles, small snakes and toads that Ed collected had to wait. But the effects weren't serious, for he learned to be a good hand in a football game—until a collision with an opposing team member caused a large cut near an eye. The cut required several stitches to close, whereupon football lost favor.

The music lessons continued for three years. By that time Ed was playing well enough to accompany one of his brothers who liked to sing popular songs. This was when Ed decided to hum along too, then to harmonize and find little musical obligations. Local clubs heard of their talent and engaged them to sing and play.

In 1902 Ed graduated from grammar school and, after a few months of high school, decided to go to work. His eldest brother was a buyer for a shoe firm, and Ed thought he'd like to learn the business. However, the music implanted by Miss Conway was beginning to bud, and Ed's musical education was continuing—from the school of hard experience, featuring observation and the questioning of teachers and musicians. Ed's favorite lunch time hang-out was the Old South Music store on Washington Street in Boston, where Joe McCarthy (who later wrote the musical score for "Rio Rita") was demonstrating songs. One day the regular pianist didn't appear, and Ed stepped in. Mr. McCarthy offered him a salary of \$7 per week—an increase of \$4, with the added inducement of shorter hours, when compared with the shoe clerk position. Later, McCarthy went to New York City, and Ed was out of the music business—at least temporarily.

II Ed Marries and Goes to New York.

#### His First Record

On September 28, 1908, in a church in Providence, R. I., Ed took for his wife Maude Ruddick of Medford, Mass. This union was blessed with two children, Edwin Jr., and Gertrude, now Mrs. Gertrude Wallace. The happy family was living in Boston when

LO! Mr. McCarthy returned, very enthusiastic about New York City. He offered Ed a job paying \$26 a week if he would go there. So quite in the manner of the story book heroes of Horatio Alger Jr., the famous author of boys' stories who was born in Revere, Mass., only a few miles from Ed's birthplace, the Smalles went to New York to seek their fortune. One day in 1914 Ed and his family left by boat for the big town. Ed says:

"We arrived one dark, gloomy day and landed in lower New York City. It was in the fish market district and the street cleaners hadn't been around. You know what first impressions are. We lived in New York 27 years, and it took us the first ten years to get to like it!"

Ed's first job was teaching in Harry Von Tilzer's music publishing studios. Here he met and taught the new Von Tilzer songs to stage and recording artists, among them Al Jolson, Fanny Brice, Eddie Cantor, Fred Astaire and his sister Adele (who later married an English nobleman), the Duncan Sisters, Collins and Har-

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

BUY, SELL or trade mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001

WANTED: Old Model Disc or Cylinder Phonographs with outside horns. Old small disc or cylinder records, phonograph catalogs, reproducers, horns, parts, etc. Send stamp for our Wanted-for sale list.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Va. je3296

WILL PAY CASH for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. je3614

WANTED: Hand roller organs, such as concert, Chautauqua, Clarion, etc., music boxes, old phonos, coin operated preferred. Private collector.—Neumann Miller, 436 W. Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. my3844

WANTED: Old phonographs, upright and table models. Phonograph Record Catalogues, Literature, before 1927. Old popular piano rolls. State price and condition. No bids.—D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, Calif. je3084

EDISON PHONO (Cylinder) 90 records, small organ. Dolls, Souv. Spoons, Fans, Hat pins, calendars, costumes. Post cards for sale. Lists 10c.—Florence Nelson, 1613 Buys, Rt. 2, Muskegon, Mich. je3004

FREE LIST of Catalogs, opera, and record oddities.—C. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. je3422

ARMSTRONG Player Piano Co. has bellows cloth, tubing, leather. New 88 note rolls, \$1.00.—22 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ap126111

FOR SALE: Electric coin operated "Electrotone" with keyboard. Reasonable.—Mrs. Isabelle Sardelli, 3720 6th St., Goodview, Winona, Minn. my1441

#### VIOLINS

VIOLIN, John Bapt. Schweitzer, Germany, 1813. Repaired in London, 1909, no hair in bow. American Art Guitar, three in one, American Music Co., Kansas City, Mo., Sheet Music Lesson. Both \$45., each. Both pieces fine condition.—Jim Thompson, Texas Indian Museum, Waelder, Texas. my3886

lan, Henry Burr, Harry Macdonough, Ada Jones, Len Spencer, Vernon Dalhart, Gerald Macy, Dick Robertson, June Havoc, Van and Schenk, John Charles Thomas and Billy Murray. They liked to come to the studio, for Ed played piano in any key to suit the artist, and could hum the harmony.

One day in 1919 Billy Murray came to the studio to learn Harry Von Tilzer's "I Aint'en Got'en No Time to Have the Blues," and Ed sang along with him. Billy said: "I like that—and if I like it, Mr. Edison should like it!" Thereupon the two of them rehearsed a bit, and went to the Edison studio at 79 Fifth Avenue to make a trial recording. There they found a room with a piano in one corner, and in the opposite corner was a sheet of burlap with a hole ripped in it. Protruding from this hole was a horn, hung face high. Ed had to strike a note on the piano to get the proper key, and run to join Billy in the opposite corner, after which they sang unaccompanied, cheek to cheek, into the horn. In less than five minutes after the test recording was heard, they were told to report the following day for recording with full orchestration.

This represented the opening door for Ed's recording career. Besides Edison, Ed made records for Victor, Columbia, Brunswick, Domino, Cameo, Emerson, Okeh and other recording companies, in the capacity of arranger-accompanist and vocalist.

Note by Jim Walsh.—I interrupt Oliver Graham's narrative to say that although this duet, the only one Ed ever made with Billy Murray for Edison, no doubt was his first recording experience, he and Billy also sang "I Aint'en Got'en No Time To Have The Blues" for at least two other companies, Victor and Pathé, and the Victor record was issued before the Edison. The Victor, No. 18593, came out in September, 1919, coupled with "Take Me to the Land of Jazz," sung by the late Marion Harris. The supplement writer said: "Something absolutely new! You never before heard anything like 'I Aint'en Got'en No Time to Have the Blues,' by Andrew B. Sterling and Harry Von Tilzer. It is an 'eccentric' humorous number in which certain jazz effects have crept into both music and words—the sudden halting of the rhythm, the quaint rhyming, the quality of style peculiar to Billy Murray and his new teammate, Ed Smalle."

The Edison record, No. 50572, issued in October, had "I'm Not Jealous (But I Just Don't Like It)," sung by Billy Murray and Rachel Grant (Gladys Rice) on the other side. It also was dubbed on Blue Amberol Cylinder 3799. On the Pathé (22124) Billy and Ed sang two duets, "I Aint'en—" and "Oh, How She Can Sing." The Edison was the best of the three, having better recording and containing the complete song. Murray and Smalle also made "Oh, How She Can Sing" for Emerson and sang "Open Up, the Golden Gates to Dixieland," on an Aeolian-Vocalion vertical cut record. All their duet numbers were Von Tilzer songs).

The free-lance duets of Murray and Smalle extended over only a short time, for Billy became an exclusive Victor artist in 1920. In October that year their second Victor duet, "The Dardanella Blues," appeared and from that time all Murray-Smalle duets were on Victor records. Meanwhile, Ed continued to sing for any company that had the price and made both solos and duet renditions with a number of artists, more especially Vernon Dalhart in the late acoustic era and with Johnny Marvin (on Victors) after the electric process was introduced. In June, 1921, he made his debut on the Columbia list under the slightly high-faluting name of Edwin Smalle. The record, A3394, contained "Mary and John" and "Nobody's Rose." The supplement said: "Edwin Smalle, new Columbia tenor, shows on his first Columbia record just what real song hits are.")

### III Origin of The Revelers.

In 1925 a quartet known as the Shannon Four was making records for Victor and other companies. When organized in 1917 the foursome consisted of Charles Hart, first tenor; Harvey Hindermeyer, second tenor; Elliott Shaw, baritone, and Wilfred Glenn (the organizer), bass. Hindermeyer was succeeded by Lewis James a year later, and in 1924 Hart dropped out, to study operatic singing in Germany. His place was taken by Franklin Baur. Previously, Ed Smalle had made arrangements for the Quixy Four, a vaudeville quartet, and Ed die King of the Victor Company heard them and liked Ed's humming and vocal tricks. The result was that late in 1925 the quartet became a quintet with Smalle as arranger and accompanist, and the name was changed to The Revelers, although the quartet continued to sing as the Shannons when recording "standard" numbers. Their initial record, the first of the jazz vocal type, was issued by Victor in November, 1925. It was 19775, "Collegiate" and "I'm Gonna Charleston Back to Charleston."

James E. Richardson, the Victor supplement writer, said:

"Ever hear high-speed dance records by a vocal male quintet? Maybe; we'll wager though, you never heard any like these two. 'Collegiate' is sung in a version unfamiliar to some of you—but we should like to hear the average player rattle a banjo as fast as these five artists vocalize. You can dance in quick time if your feet and your wits are nimble enough, or you can dance sedately in half time. Most of us listen amazed; for the only accompaniment to these voices is the piano. It is easy enough to think at moments that a whole orchestra is booming and clanging behind. These records almost form a new class of music—we might call it jazz-display choral singing."

Talk happiness. The world is sad enough without your woes.

—Orison Swett Marden

The first Revelers record was rather weakly recorded and was only moderately successful, but the second, announced in February, 1926, was a sensation. That was the month in which Victor discontinued its large monthly supplement and began to issue a four-page folder. The front page was devoted to a cartoon of five Negroes singing and playing, with the cutline, "Ask To Hear Dinah." A footnote said, "'Dinah,' is a jewel of close harmony by the Revelers. For sheer beauty, harmony and realism, no record in its class can be compared with it." The number was 19796 and the other side was "Oh, Miss Hannah." This disc launched The Revelers on a fabulously successful career.

In spite of The Revelers' success, keeping a first tenor was a hard job. After Baur left, Charles Harrison, Frank Luther and Frank Parker all sang in the organization, but not for a great length of time. Around 1927, when the time came again to find a new top tenor, the Revelers heard of a saxophone player, then appearing in the Roxy Theater, who was said to have a good voice. James Melton was the find this time. Incidentally, although the name of The Revelers appeared only on Victor records, the group performed for Columbia as the Singing Sophomores and for Brunswick as The Merry-makers.

### IV Adventures Abroad

A man in a London hospital heard the recording of "Dinah" and, being a showman, knew a good thing when he heard it. He made arrangements, and soon the group, including Ed, his wife and family, embarked for England and an engagement at the Prince's Cafe on Piccadilly and at the Palladium. On the way over, an incident occurred that shows well Ed Smalle's good nature and kindness:

It seems a special performance for the benefit of the Seamen's Fund is held each trip while at sea. The Revelers were asked to perform, but one of the members was a bit out of sorts and not in the mood to entertain. Things looked gloomy, and as evening approached fog set in to make matters worse. When entertainment time came 'round, Ed Smalle was at the piano giving a performance of his own, with the ship's fog horn for company. Ed had found the horn was timed to blow every so often, so his own numbers were timed to the horn. When it sounded the performance halted and the guests applauded.

While the group was playing at the Prince's Cafe in London, the present Duke of Windsor (then the Prince of Wales) and his brother Prince Albert, and Princess Elizabeth, who were then the Duke and Duchess of York, heard the act. It wasn't long before Ed and the rest of the group were called on to give what amounted to a command performance at the Palace of St. James. Ed was at the Prince of Wales' right hand during the reception, and Fred Astaire's sister, Adele, was at the left. During

(Continued on page 28)

"Who Played Poker with Pocahontas When John Smith Went Away." One that sounds equally as good, but which I have not heard is "I Sent My Wife to the Thousand Isles" on A2021.

Occasionally there have been songs which the major companies have assigned to their highest priced talent. Perhaps the classic example of this is the "Argentines, the Portuguese, and the Greeks," which was recorded for Pathe by Jack Norworth, for Columbia by Nora Bayes, for Emerson by Eddie Cantor, and for Victor by the Duncan Sisters. A similar happening occurred with the fine ballad "A Broken Doll." Jolson did a beautiful job with this for Columbia. Another ex-Dockstader star, the great Manuel Romain recorded it for Edison, and Nora Bayes recorded it for Victor. These three readings of the same number are so good that I think collectors should strive to find a place for all of them in their collections.

Although the aforementioned Columbia supplement suggests that each Jolson record was a big seller, this is not necessarily true. Columbia sales figures are not available, but many of Jolson's pre-World War I waxings are rather uncommon. A1356 is very rare and very few of the other early numbers seem to have sold in large

quantities. I am inclined to agree with Jim Walsh that Columbia backed Jolson's sides with other artists starting in 1916 to boost sales of this very expensive singer. And yet this argument hardly holds true a few years later. From the number of records turned in to Salvation Army stores and other outlets I am sure that Jolson must have been one of Columbia's biggest attractions in the 1918-22 period. Even today, when the Jolson interest is so strong, his records from these years often lie around for weeks with no one picking them up. When Gertrude Heyman and Al McRea (HOBBIES advertisers) list Jolson items at fifty cents they almost always are Columbia records of post World War I vintage.

All things considered, many of Jolson's most important sides come from his association with Columbia. When he left that company the competition with radio was already beginning to cut deeply into record sales and Columbia was already in bad financial straits. It appears that his 1923 releases are much more uncommon than those of a year or two earlier. In any case he switched to Brunswick in 1924 and he made a wise move, for it is known that Brunswick was the only record company to show profit in that year. Next month I shall discuss these records.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 26)

the evening, the Prince sat on the bench with Ed and sang Cole Porter songs. Then he played the drums while Ed manipulated the piano. Ed was told then that the Prince didn't want to become King of England. In his words: "Those were some of the finest people I've ever met. You know, it takes a truly nice person to make a truly BIG person."

While in London the group also played at the Palladium, the Silver Slipper night club and at the Bath Club. Ed had the distinction of being the first American to broadcast a radio program beamed at the United States. This was on July 4, 1927, and was a 15-minute stint for N.B.C. During the visit to England, the group made many recordings for Victor's English affiliate, His-Master's Voice. Ed also made several solo records.

From London, Ed and his family flew to Paris. "Boy, was I airsick!" Ed recalls. "The only happy passenger was a gentleman who was equipped with a bottle. He was feeling fine—but he made the rest of us much worse. Gene Austin, his wife and his pet bear had already flown to Paris, and when we arrived it was November 2, Mrs. Austin's birthday. I hadn't recovered from the trip, but of course it was necessary that we celebrate the happy event, so we went out, anyway. After midnight, it was no longer Mrs. Austin's birthday, but by then it was November 3, my own birthday, and so the celebration continued. We saw Paris all night, had a hearty breakfast, and when we finally turned in at 7 a.m., I never felt better." During their stay on the Continent, Ed and his folks visited many places. "I liked Switzerland best," Ed reports, "but you had to pay attention to your daily program of activities. It would be quite warm in the valley, but if you went far into the mountains, overcoats were in order."

On returning to England, the act was again engaged at the Prince's Cafe. Ed was much pleased one night to receive a program on the margin of which was written: "So glad to see you again—even better than before." It was signed by Albert and Elizabeth, who later became King and Queen of England. Ed met several other American show folk, including Nora Bayes and Lew Leslie, as well as the French sensation, Maurice Chevalier. Today's Queen of England was a baby then, being wheeled outside Marlborough House in a carriage.

—O—

The Emperor Theophilus, who died in 842, was a great builder and lover of the arts. He once had skillful mechanics construct a gold tree over his throne and on the branches were numerous birds which were made to sing by clock-work while two gold lions at the foot of the tree joined in with roars.



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Ed Smalle

(Continued from the May Issue)

## Part 2

By OLIVER R. GRAHAM

"Guest Conductor" for JIM WALSH.

## V Ed Goes Into Radio

When Ed returned to the United States, he found that radio was in the process of taking over the record business. Although he kept on making "platters," the record business was in a deep recession and radio was growing by leaps and bounds. The tenor-comedian had made records with many artists, with the Revelers' Victor version of "Dinah" being the most popular. It became apparent that the old adage, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" was good advice. "Deke" Aylesworth, then president of the National Broadcasting Company, heard Ed and his group and signed them for radio.

At that time, NBC had two networks—WEAF, the Red, and WJZ, the Blue. Both were at 711 Fifth Avenue, New York City, on the same floor of the same building. Ed used to do a program for Forhan's Toothpaste with Vaughn De Leath, "the first lady of radio," then step across the hall and do another for Champion Spark Plugs with Gus Haenschen and his orchestra. His friends used to wonder how he moved from station to station so quickly.

It wasn't long before Ed was swamped with radio commitments, all on major networks. On CBS he was with Phil Baker seven years (Ed Smalle's Seven G's). He did programs for Eveready Batteries, Pure Oil, Dodge Motor Cars, Silvertown Tires, Sam Lanin's Ipana Troubadours (with Dick Robertson), Whelan Drug

Stores, Lucky Strike, the Roxyaires and Castoria and, with his Fur Trappers, for I. J. Fox. Besides this, he made musical arrangements for Paull-Pioneer Music, Robbins Music and others, and did records, radio and personal appearances with "Jerry" Macy, Vernon Dalhart, the Leaders Trio and the Eton Boys. It certainly kept him on the go.

In November, 1933, *Variety* said: "Ed Smalle's Leaders handle pops and the familiar classics in extraordinary manner, backing it up with novelty instrumental simulations that sound uncannily like the real thing. The group featured Dick Ballou, Ed Ellinson, Glen Cross, with Smalle at the piano." A little later the *New York American* commented: "The Leaders, NBC trio, are now making arrangements which will allow them to make a tour of all the key vaudeville cities of the South."

From the *New York Post* of December 16th we learn that "Ed Smalle's Leaders Trio has been signed to make a series of recordings for broadcast purposes in England, Ireland, Australia and Canada." The December 23 *New York American* reported: "Ed Smalle's Vagabond Glee Club has been renewed for 13 additional weeks on CBS' 7-Star Review, with Jane Froman and Erno Rapee's Orchestra." On the same day the *Mirror* reported, "The Leaders have been signed for a local program on Station WTIC, Hartford." Ed and his group were with Ted Lewis and his Old Gold Concert at this time, and they also joined the Travelers Hours from WTIC.

In January, 1934, the Leaders made a group of recordings for the English Recording Company, called "Americana, 1900-1934." This featured famous American songs such as "Sweet Adeline" and "Down By The Old Mill Stream." This pace continued through 1935 — programs, arrangements, vocalists, appearances, accompaniments, records and benefits. Here is a letter of thanks to Ed, dated November 22, 1935:

"Dear Mr. Smalle: As chairman of the New York Committee of the Will Rogers Memorial Fund, I want you to know how much we appreciate your cooperation with us in our broadcast of Thursday evening, November 21st. The 7 G voices were the highlight of the program and we have had no end of fine comment on the unusual and beautiful numbers they gave. Mr. Berger has told me of your fine spirit in offering this talent, and I want you to know that I personally appreciate your coopera-

tion with him. Yours very truly, H. E. Talbott, Chairman, NYC Committee."

Also during 1935, the Frim Sisters, an Ed Smalle "find," were signed by Lucky Strike, and Ed and his group were in the film, "Radio Nuts," directed by Johnny Walker. In 1936, Ed and his choral group replaced the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra on a series of programs sponsored by a group of bankers and the CBS network. Ferde Grofe directed the 30-piece orchestra. And Ed became a poet as witness the following written July 20, 1936:

## ROMANCE, 1936

Show me that life  
Can surely mean  
More than a deadly  
Gray routine.

Break down the boredom,  
Smash the bars,  
Show me the pathway  
To the stars.

And when the game  
Becomes a bore,  
Show me, young lady  
Any door.

Ed and his company made several short films for Warner Brothers, with June Allyson and Betty Hutton, and at the year's end, 1936, were busy doing the vocal sound tracks for a Warner short musical feature with the Prier Sisters and David Mendoza's Orchestra.

The *New York World Telegram* of Saturday, January 30, 1937, tells us; "The Revelers return to old prominence. After a lapse of four polls the Revelers have climbed back into first place in the editors' estimation. The quintet won the first of these polls and hovered between second and fourth for the next four. The Revelers now have undisputed possession of first place in the editors' estimation." Nick Kenny headlined on Friday, January 31, 1936: "Ed Smalle is Talk of Radio Row."

## VI End of Big Time Career

On and on . . . and then . . . New York throat. Overwork and tension found their prey; Ed was ill. He went to his summer home in Charleston, Rhode Island, to rest. Each time he tried to return to New York his affliction grew worse. "Finally," Ed says, "I had to give up. I cut all relations as cleanly as possible in the city and retired to Charleston, I thought, to die. For two years I was in bed. Medicines, doctors, specialists . . . and the money saved over the



A photo of Ed Smalle, taken during his visit to England



years was gone." So in 1940, Ed turned to Westerly, Rhode Island, rather than risk his health in New York again, and began teaching piano and other musical instruments.

The results of Ed's efforts may best be found in an item from the *Westerly Sun* of March 26, 1946:

"Local music lovers today are still extolling the debut last Sunday of Andy DeRocco's Orchestra, a teen-age outfit that surprised and pleased nearly 200 dancers at the Calabrese Hall with their renditions of popular numbers. Although they have played at the weekly YMCA dances and at a number of weddings and parties, the Sunday appearance was their official public debut and the youngsters took it right in stride. Their well planned numbers had the throng hugging the bandstand continuously. In fact, on several occasions it had to be forced back to allow room for dancing as the interested spectators crowded onto the floor to watch the youngsters move through the numbers.

"The orchestra was organized three months ago by Ed Smalle, who has all the boys for pupils, and since then they have progressed rapidly. Smalle, who remains in the background, handling all the details, plays the piano and gives the youngsters the poise and confidence essential to a top notch band.

"Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the new group, aside from the fact that they all exhibit skill in their work, is their ages. The oldest member of the outfit, first trumpeter Arthur Guarino, is 17, while the leader, Andy DeRocco, saxophonist and clarinet virtuoso, composer and music arranger, is 16. In the rhythm section young Ronnie Gardiner, 13 years old, beats out the drums. . . . Rapidly building a musical library to meet the demands of the dancing public, the young organization features a specialty, an original composition by DeRocco called 'The Squirrel Hunters' Ball.' This is a snappy jive number that is becoming increasingly popular wherever the youngsters appear. The nine piece orchestra includes four saxophones, three trumpets, a piano,

and drums. The group does not specialize in hot numbers alone, but arranges its evening's work to satisfy all dancers."

Since the foregoing "story" was written, Ed has had many new students and made many new friends. When the Westerly radio station, WERI, went on the air in 1947, Ed was on hand with a program of fun and songs each day at noon, and he still does programs from time to time.

Ed and Mrs. Smalle now live at 94 High Street, Westerly. Ed is very active with his teaching and various musical activities. Mrs. Smalle is a hook-rug enthusiast, and some of her creations prove her to be an artist of high degree.

When I asked Ed for some anecdotes of his recording career, he told me: "I lost my big scrapbook, and all I have is a few items that I put together at a later date. Of course, many things happened that are amusing when I look back, although they weren't so funny at the time. I recall Vernon Dalhart, my wife and I were making a tour through the South, and we were traveling by car. Mrs. Dalhart, who died a couple of years ago (Dalhart died September 15, 1948), was with us and she was, shall we say, on the plump side. One day, on entering the car, her foot went right through the floor boards—what a time we had! Another time I was over at Victor with the Revelers, and the recording manager, Eddie King, sent word that Paul Whiteman, recording in another studio, wanted a fellow who could sing with an English accent. The song was 'Every Street is Canal Street in Venice.' This was my first, and LAST, vocal chorus with the Whiteman Orchestra. I really don't see how they had the nerve to release it, it was that terrible. (Note by Jim Walsh—I cannot find that this record ever was issued). And at another Revelers session, on a Gershwin tune, I sang the tenor part (Jimmy Melton was ill that day), and I never heard anyone make a comment, so it must have been O. K."

#### VII Ed Smalle's Recordings.

It is impossible to make a complete compilation of records by Ed Smalle, for there are too many recording companies involved, too many groups and too many selections. However, in the 1928 Columbia catalog, the following electric recordings are listed:

No. 506D, "Oh Lovey, Be Mine"/Roll 'Em, Girls"; 579D "My Bundle of Love"/"Gimme a Little Kiss, Will Ya, Huh?"; 661D, "The Pump Song"/Kalinka"; 711D, "Whadda Ya Say We Get Together?"/"Cross Your Heart" (duets with Vaughn De Leath); and 686D, "Meet Me in Old Philly. Billy"/"Out in the New Mown Hay" (duets with Jerry Macy).

It is possible to give a complete list of Ed's Victor duets with the late Billy Murray, who died in August, 1954. The pair's duet association lasted for six years, their first record being issued in September, 1929, and the last in October, 1935. Only their final offering, "Dear Old Backyard Days" and "It's Just That Feeling for Home," was electrically recorded. Billy and Ed's partnership ended

about the time Ed became active in the Revelers' varied undertakings. In 1927 Murray had lost so much of his popularity that Victor didn't renew his contract, and Johnny Marvin, then a rising young star, became the duet associate of both Ed Smalle and Aileen Stanley, with whom Billy had previously sung.

Here is the complete Victor Murray-Smalle list:

18593, I Ain'ten Got'en No Time to Have the Blues/Take Me to the Land of Jazz (Marion Harris); 18688, Dardanella Blues/Swanee (Peerless Quartet); 18704, I've Got the A-B-C-D Blues/Sally Green, the Village Vamp (Murray); 18810, Humpty, Dumpty/In the Old Town Hall (Murray); 18830, Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes/When Francis Dances With Me (the last duet by Ada Jones and Billy Murray); 18918, Kicky-Koo/Sleepy Little Village Where the Dixie Cotton Grows; 18959, Yankee Doodle Blues/Childhood Days (American Quartet); 18982, Homesick/(You Tell Her—I Stutter (Murray); 19006, Toot, Toot, Tootsie, Goodbye/Carolina in the Morning (American Quartet); 19095, That Old Gang of Mine/Hi Le, Hi Lo; 19144, My Sweetie Went Away/I'm a Lonesome Cry Baby (Aileen Stanley); 19188, Oh! How She Lied to Me/What Do You Do Sunday, Mary? (American Quartet); 19240, Chili Bom Bom/Happy and Go Lucky in My Old Kentucky Home; 19293, What Does the Pussy Cat Mean When She Says Meow? (with animal imitations by Steve Porter)/Home in Pasadena; 19442, 'Way Out West in Kansas/Go 'Long, Mule (Vernon Dalhart); 19516, Choo-Choo/I Want to See My Tennessee; 19640, I Don't Want to Get Married/Titina (Murray); and 19748, Dear Old Back Yard Days/It's Just That Feeling for Home.

(Continued on page 26)

#### SONG BOOKS WANTED

WANT TO BUY: Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. f128402

WANTED: Copy International Day School Singer by Jas. R. Murry & Wm. H. Pontius. Pub. by John Church Co. Cincinnati, Ohio. Used in Mansfield, Ohio in 1880's.—Ruth A. Ballard, 1326 South Stanislaus St., Stockton 6, Calif. je1692

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 24)

Billy and Ed also sang the refrain in No. 19421, "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More," by the International Novelty Orchestra, combined with "The Hayseed Rag," by the Dizzy Trio. And it may be of interest as an antiquarian to note that Compton Mackenzie, the novelist who edits the English record publication, *The Gramophone*, in an 1924 issue pronounced "My Sweetie Went Away" to be the best comic record of the past six months. In England, the HMV company coupled it with "I've Got the 'Yes, We Have No Bananas' Blues," by Belle Baker.

As has been mentioned before many Smalle records were made for Brunswick, Domino, Cameo, Emerson, Edison and other companies as well as for Victor and Columbia, and with many groups. A great many of these records are still pleasing due to the skill and artistry shown in the arrangements. This is especially true of the Revelers' group singing.

At this point I'll include a couple of notes from Jim Walsh. Jim says that Ed made duets for Brunswick with one of the original "Radio Franks," Frank Bessinger; with Gerald Macy (Macy and Smalle called themselves "The Radio Aces"); Dick Robertson and one of the most charming of recording comediennesses, Esther Walker. On Victor he sang with Billy Murray, Johnny Marvin and Vaughn De Leath, and he and Robertson assisted Gene Austin in Austin's record of "Wedding Bells Are Breaking Up That Old Gang of Mine." An odd combination was Smalle and his Revelers associate, baritone Elliott Shaw, singing the refrain in the Victor record of "Song of Hawaii," by the Hilo Hawaiian Orchestra. As has already been said, Ed also did duets with Vaughn De Leath for Columbia, and he and Vernon Dalhart sang together for Edison, Okeh and other companies.

And Jim says he has an especially personal interest in a duet Ed made with the late Billy Jones for Okeh. A year or so ago Jim wrote a *Variety* article about songs inspired by automobiles. He received a letter phrased in terms of mock-heartbroken protest from Sadie Salpeter, manager of the Harry Von Tilzer Music Publishing Company, asking why he hadn't included a 1921 song, words by the late Billy Curtis and music by Von Tilzer, called "The Scandal of Little Lizzie Ford." Jim replied that he had never heard of that song and doubted it had ever been recorded. A few days later he received a box of records from Gertrude Heyman, the Brooklyn dealer in fine quality second-hand records, and was intrigued to find an Okeh sung by Jones and Smalle, with one word, "Scandal!" as the title. When he noticed that the song was credited to Billy Curtis, Jim's eager suspicions were aroused, and surely enough the number turned out to be "The Scandal of Little Lizzie Ford," of which Jim had thought no record had been made. It's a fine comic song but he's still wondering why the title was so stringently shortened and why

Harry Von Tilzer wasn't credited on the label with writing the music!

### VIII Summing Up.

In closing, perhaps it will be well to forward the message that Ed sent to modern male voice ensembles in 1936, for it is as true now as then, and is pertinent in the light of current interest in group singing:

"Decide upon one fellow to be your director. . . . Let him make decisions and be responsible for your group. If you do this and all work together, your progress will be much faster and happier. Practice difficult phrases repeatedly until they seem easy for you. Use the piano for learning your parts and sing without it as soon as possible in order to train your independence and blend. . . . Sing with your easiest tone and your voice will stay in tune and not tire quickly. If you will always try to be happy and friendly with each other and will sing for the love of singing, you will create a sincerity and enthusiasm for your work that will thrill your audience."

Ed has followed his own advice in his recordings and in his current work and every-day life. He is indeed a happy and friendly man. Seek out, listen to and enjoy some of his many recordings. They are a very worth while addition to any collection.

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The price-cuts of record manufacturers of today, will never effect the price and value of rare old vintage records, some of which are worth their weight in gold. Their values will keep on augmenting with time.

We have these appetizing morsels of recorded gems, each with its individual rarity of flavor and brilliance, so magnetic to the ears and eyes. We welcome your friendship and patronage.—Record Treasures, 740 E. 183rd St., New York 57, N. Y. jly30614

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Silas F. Leachman

By JIM WALSH

I hope HOBBIES readers will not weary of my recurring examples of the way in which chance or coincidence aid my quests for information about the pioneer recording artists after more ordinary research methods have failed.

A good example of the potent effects of chance may be found in my experience tracking down details of the life and career of the late Silas F. Leachman, once known as "The King of Coon Shouters." Leachman was one of the earliest recording artists. Sixty years ago he was near the peak of his popularity. Ten years later his career had ended, and he became a shadowy figure about whom almost nothing was known. For more than twenty years I tried unsuccessfully to acquire more than a smattering of knowledge about him. Then, a few months ago, a "feature story" published in the sports section of the *Rounoke, Va., World-News* led to the

facts I sought and made it possible to write this article.

I am constantly aware of an element of romance in the research which I must do to compile my HOBBIES material, and I am so much engrossed—almost obsessed—with the desire to compose an adequate biographical sketch of every pioneer recording artist that I hope eventually to find time to write a "back log" of articles that will be published far into the future, perhaps even for many years after my death. Just now I am investigating promising "leads" that may result in a biography of Columbia's stellar baritone of 50 years ago, the mysterious George Alexander. Perhaps some day I shall even be able to tell the stories of such forgotten, forgotten old-timers as Minnie Emmett, Marguerite Newton, Mina Hickman, A. D. Madeira, John Terrell, Franklyn Wallace and the better remembered German yodler (be-

lieved to have been Marguerite Newton's husband), George P. Watson. My research cuts deeply into my time and takes much of my income, but I love it.

### II Preliminary Search

Although I have been collecting information about recording artists since I was six or seven years of age, I had never heard of Silas Leachman until I read a reminiscent article by a noted record collector and music critic, the late Henry S. Gerstle. Describing the pleasure his family received from its first phonograph, Gerstle wrote in the October, 1927, issue of the long gone *Phonograph Monthly Review*:

"We had a lot of fun out of Arthur Collins singing 'Mr. Dooley,' Silas Leachman ('the King of Coon Singers'), the sweet-voiced Harry Macdonough, Billy Murray in a dialect song, Corinne Morgan singing 'Toyland,' Cal Stewart as 'Uncle Josh,' and the inimitable Hayden Quartet in their vaudeville specialties. And we really got a kick out of some of the records of Sousa's and Pryor's Bands."

All the names in that paragraph were familiar to me except Leachman's. Gerstle's mention of "the King of Coon Singers" mystified me and whetted my desire for more information. The next time I saw Leachman's name was when I bought some old bound volumes of the *English Talking Machine News*. In this issue for October, 1905, I read a letter from Linzey A. Willcox of Newcastle-on-Tyne, perhaps the leading phonograph enthusiast of his day. (I wonder if he is still living at an advanced age). Mr. Willcox wrote:

"A little while ago I mentioned . . . that I had a record collection comprising records from a very early date to the present day gold moulded ones. Among the former I have a record which, I believe, I am not wrong in saying is a Columbia. The announcement on it is as follows: 'I'll

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Marry the Man I Love,' sung by Silas Leachman of Chicago.

"I understand that this gentleman used to live all alone in a hut on the railway side not far from Chicago, and that the Columbia Phonograph Company supplied him with blanks to make records for them and that he used to sing and play his own accompaniments. I believe that musically his records were not a success, but for clearness of words they 'took on' tremendously. The record I have is clearness itself as regards the words, but the accompaniment, although evidently a piano, might easily be mistaken for a banjo. Mr. Leachman also used to make records of this last-named instrument, but I have never come across any of them.

"My record was given me by a friend who had it in his possession for ten years, and the man who gave it to him had had it a considerable time previously, I believe about two years . . . I should almost think that the record . . . is one of the oldest wax records in existence; if not, I should like to hear of an older. . ."

Mention of "I'll Marry the Man I Love" probably being a Columbia record caused me to write to my dear friend, the late Frank Dorian, for years assistant to the president of the Columbia Company. Mr. Dorian who had been associated with Columbia from its early days in Washington, was a man of great good nature and bore patiently all the inquiries I showered upon him. But he knew little of Leachman.

"Silas Leachman," Frank Dorian wrote, "was a local Chicago singer whose records were quite popular for a few years. He was not much of a musician, but he had an agreeable voice and a pleasing way of singing." (Note the similarity of the Dorian and Willcox appraisal of Leachman's musical abilities).

In another letter, Mr. Dorian said he didn't think Leachman recorded for Columbia or Edison, but confined his cylinder making to "brown waxes," which the Talking Machine Company of Chicago marketed during the

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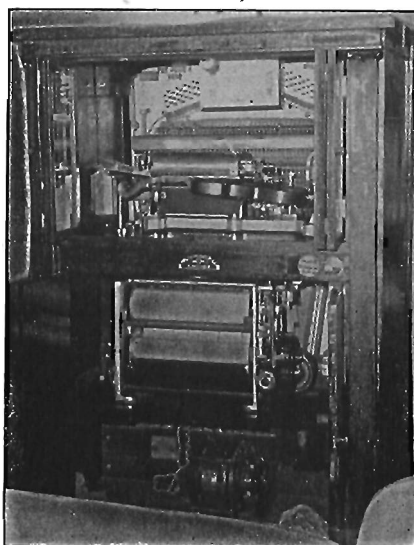
## JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1915); back copies of phonograph publications and all sorts of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD, ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single-faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS (such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G. & T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIAUTE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

## AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla, New York tfr

## WANTED

Coin operated pianos and other coin operated musical instruments. Also rolls for the above, operators' manuals and catalogs.

## ED. ZELINSKY

11 Jordan Ave. San Francisco 18, Calif.

jltp

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. Works cleaned and polished, squeaks eliminated, broken tips and teeth replaced in combs, cases refinished, parts in stock and made to order.

Choice music boxes of all types for sale including machines playing up to 60 selections. Others have dancing dolls, organs, drums, bells and castanets, etc. Every item offered rebuilt like new throughout.

Rare bird boxes in enamel, gold, silver, tortoise shell, etc.

Music box organ bellows, and bellows from bird boxes, and bird in cage pieces rebuilt like new. Birds refeathered.

**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**



1890's. I wrote to the late F. K. Babson, one of the Babson Brothers who founded and operated the Talking Machine Company, and he told me that Leachman was still living in Chicago. (This was in the 1930's). However, Fred Babson didn't give the comedian's address, and I didn't write to Leachman as I now wish I had done.

Mr. Babson lent me a copy of the Talking Machine Company's 1899 phonograph and record catalog, issued at the time when Leachman was most popular as a recording artist. The catalog contained a photo of Silas, who had curly hair and walrus-type mustache, and quoted his testimonial to the Polyphone, a cylinder instrument with two horns and twin reproducers:

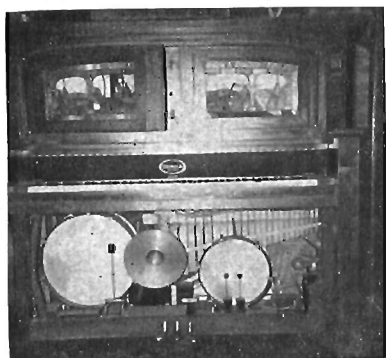
"The Polyphone will do away with all machines made in the past, because it actually reproduces music, which other talking machines fail to do."

### III Silas Leachman's Cylinders

The Babson Brothers' catalog also contained a list of more than 100 cylinders made by Leachman, under the heading: "Silas Leachman, the Record King. We handle Silas Leachman's entire output of records. His records bought elsewhere are duplicates. We claim his records are louder, clearer and more musical than any records on the market. Every record *guaranteed* to give you satisfaction or money refunded."



FOR SALE



Massive Coinola Orchestration

— Plays 8 instruments —

Also have other coin operated machines. Write.

**MARG PAAPE**  
602 E. Broadway  
Winona, Minnesota

The Leachman records were sold for 75 cents each - "no discount." All other records (which the Talking Machine Company bought from the Edison, Columbia and New Jersey companies, but without identifying the source in its catalog) were 50 cents each or \$5 a dozen. In the cause of historical interest, I shall copy here the 1899 list of Leachman cylinders, although it's likely that only a comparatively few of these fragile, low-volumed brown wax productions still exist. (However, Allen G. Debus of Waukegan, Ill., has several, of which he has kindly sent me long-play dubbings.) The number is first given, then the title. The remarks in parenthesis are the catalog comments on the records:

053. Arrah, Go On (Irish); 063. "All Coons Look Alike to Me" (the new rag time); 074. Ambolena Snow (a great coon marching song); 0108. At the Cost of a Woman's Heart; 035. Better Than Gold (Chas. K. Harris); 09. Big Fat Coon (funniest of all); 082. Burning of Smith at Paris, Texas; 0104. Battle Cry of Freedom; 0106. Break the News to Mother; 0107. Bred in Old Kentucky; 038. Church Across the Way (with church bells); 080. Coal Black Lady; 0101. Colored Volunteers; 01. Dora Dean (great darky song); 016. Drill, Ye Terriers. Drill (with drill); 026. Deacon Went Away; 033. Down in Poverty Row; 042. Dad's the Engineer; 073. Elsie From Chelsea; 079. Every Nigger Had a Lady But Me (latest).

0110. Enjoy Yourself; 0117. Eli Green's Cakewalk; 095. Get Your Money's Worth; 06. Hear Dem Bells (with chimes); 014. He Leads the Colored Band (with drill); 021. Honey, Does You Love Your Man?; 028. Henrietta, Have You Met Her?; 051. Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight (the rage); 0111. He Certainly Was Good To Me; 0112. He's Up Against the Real Thing Now; 0118. Hannah Thomson Is My Baby's Name; 0119. How Would You Like to be the Ice Man?; 04. I'll Be True to My Honey Boy (with clog, negro hymn and sermon, makes everyone laugh); 07. I Wish They Would Do It Now; 045. It's Not the Same Old Smile; 050. I Don't Love Nobody (negro melody); 060. I'm Happy Since My Baby Came to Town; 067. Isabelle (a girl who is one of the boys).

077. I Love Her in the Same Old Way (latest); 085. I Don't Care if You Never Come Back; 087. I'll Marry the Man I Love; 0109. I Want My Lulu; 0120. If That's the Case I Want to Join the Army; 0121. I've Got Him Dead; 0122. I Love Her Just the Same; 0123. If They Only Fought With Razors in the War; 0124. I Ain't Done Dealing in Coal; 0125. If You Go This Will Bring You Back; 053. Just Behind the Times (Chas. K. Harris); 0127. Johnnie Took the One I Wanted; 019. Keep Dem Gates Wide Open; 012. Little Alabama Coon (with baby crying); 075. Lucky Jim (mock ballad); 041. My Best Girl's a New Yorker; 048. Mother Was a Lady; 056. Mother Is in the Baggage Coach Ahead.

061. My Girl is a High-Born Lady (a hot one); 064. My Black Venus; 078. Maybe Mary Didn't See New York (and maybe she did); 097. Mama's Pumpkin Colored Coon; 0128. Mr. Johnson, Don't Get Gay; 0129. Miss Maria Johnson; 05. Negro Hymn and Sermon; 076. O! Mr. Johnson, Turn Me Loose (a hot coon song); 081. Organ-Grinder's Serenade; 089. On the Banks of the Wabash; 0130. Oh, Ebenezer; 015. Pat Malone Forgot That He Was Dead; 031. Put Me Off at Buffalo (greatest of all); 034. Paradise Valley; 030. Rabbit Hash (great darky hit); 081. Rock of Ages; 010. Standing on the Corner (a dandy); 013. Strange Coons; 017. Streets of Cairo (with tom-tom); 024. She Always Dressed in Black.

062. Sweet Rosie O'Grady; 0103. Just Before the Battle, Mother; 0126.

Just One Girl; 092. Shall We Gather at the River?; 0114. She is More to be Pitied Than Censured; 0115. Stars and Stripes Forever; 0131. She Was Right; 0132. Sister Flossy's Bright Red Hair; 02. The New Bully (hottest darky song ever heard); 070. Take Back Your Gold (very popular); 071. The Little Lost Child; 088. The Wedding of the Chinese and the Coon; 098. Take Your Clothes and Go; 099. The Heroes Who Sank With the Maine; 059. There'll Come a Time (a hit); 0133. Take Back Your Coal; 011. Whoa, Dar, Mule (laughing with funny sayings).

018. Whistling Coon; 023. What Could the Poor Girl Do?; 049. Widow's Plea for Her Son; 069. Whisper Your Mother's Name (a late one); 083. Warmest Baby in the Bunch; 093. Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?; 094. What Shall the Harvest Be?; 0100. We Are Ready; 0102. Warmest Member in the Land; 0106. When Johnny Comes Marching Home; 0113. What Did Dewey Do to Them?; 0116. Wench With a Rag-time Walk; 0134. You've Met All Comers But You Haven't Met Me, and 0135. You'll Get All That's Coming to You.

I imagine you have detected that the foregoing list contains the title of the Leachman record, "I'll Wed the Man I Love," which Linzey Willcox had owned. Apparently, Mr. Willcox was in error as to this having been a Columbia, although it seems odd that a "roller" made in Chicago should have found its way to Willcox's home town in England—a case of carrying cylinders, rather than coals, to Newcastle. Perhaps Leachman had recorded for Columbia before he became exclusive to the Talking Machine Company, but since he made his home in Chicago and Columbia's headquarters was in Washington, that appears unlikely.

It has just occurred to me to look up the publication date of "I'll Marry the Man I Love," and I find that Willcox considerably overestimated the age of his record. The song, written by Monroe H. Rosenfeld, wasn't issued as sheet music by Joseph W. Stern until 1897. Willcox wrote in 1905, so his record could have been eight years old at most. And this indicates that it was one of the series which Leachman made for the Chicago firm.

An outstanding characteristic of this list is Leachman's versatility. Although he was chiefly known as a comedian, we find him here singing old standard songs, "the new rag-time," "coon" songs, sentimental ballads, patriotic ditties of the Civil and Spanish-American wars and even, in "The Burning of Smith at Paris, Texas," (who was Smith and why was he burned?) the type of topical pseudo-hill billy composition that Vernon Dalhart was to make enormously popular on records a generation later. Perhaps he was not a trained musician, but Silas Leachman was at least a versatile singer.

Worthy of note, too, is the fact that although many of the songs Silas sang are forgotten. Others are remembered and some are still heard. And "Drill, Ye Terriers" should be "Tarriers."

### IV. Leachman Sixty Years Ago

After receiving Mr. Babson's letter and catalog, my progress in learning more about Silas Leachman was

discouragingly slow. Even as recently as the autumn of 1951 when I was in Chicago, I still was far from the point of writing this article. Only one family of Leachmans was listed in the city directory. When I telephoned the woman who answered seemed confused and gave the impression she had never heard of Silas. A letter to the Chicago Tribune later brought the information that there was nothing in its files concerning the comedian's life and death.

But a real "break" occurred when Harold Farnsworth of New Haven, Vt., came across an article about Leachman while reading an old copy of the Scientific American dated April 27, 1895, and in the thoughtful fashion I have found to be characteristic of Mr. Farnsworth copied it for me. The Vermont record collector didn't know I wanted to write about Leachman, but thought an account of the recording procedures of sixty years ago would interest me. It did, and I have pleasure in reproducing the article from Harold Farnsworth's notes:

#### A PHONOGRAPH VOICE . . .

Away out in the extreme northwestern part of the city (of Chicago), near the Milwaukee Railroad tracks, Silas Leachman puts in four or five hours every day singing at the top of his lungs, though not a soul is in hearing but his wife. When he gets tired of singing he varies the proceedings by preaching a Negro sermon or gives an imitation of an Irish wake, and altogether conducts himself in a way that would lead the neighbors to consider him a fit subject for a lunatic asylum if there were any neighbors, but there are not.

This is the reason Mr. Leachman chose the lonely spot for his residence. No one ever goes there to hear him sing, and yet he is getting rich at it. He earns something over \$50 every day, though he never sees one of his auditors.

Mr. Leachman sings for phonographs, and as he has a monopoly of the business in the West, he continues to keep busy, and has even been heard to express a wish that he were twins. He has better protection in his monopoly than a copyright or an injunction or unlimited legal tal-

ent could afford. Nature gave him the peculiar qualities that enable him to reproduce his voice perfectly on the wax cylinders. Hundreds of people have attempted to break in on his profitable monopoly, but the results of their efforts put an effectual stop to their attempts. And so Mr. Leachman goes on enjoying the monopoly and reaping the profits thereof.

There are four other men in the East that also do work for the phonograph, but while they have to have a man to play the piano while they sing, another to make the announcement, another to change the cylinders, and a fourth to keep the machines in order, Mr. Leachman is the entire show in himself. Furthermore, he can give an unlimited number of impersonations while the other four men are limited to a few specialties each. Mr. Leachman is a natural mimic and therein lies the secret of his success. He sings ballads, Negro melodies and Irish, Dutch and Chinese dialect songs. He plays his own accompaniment on the piano and takes care of the machines. He prepares three

(Continued on page 58)

**WANTED:** All types of mechanical coin-operated musical instruments. Also, mechanical shows. Give full particulars first letter.—Walbox Distributing Co., 3909 Main, Dallas, Texas s3483

### MUSIC BOXES

**BIRD BOXES** and cages with mechanical singing birds, whistling carved figures, and 60 different models of music boxes for jewelry or cigarettes. Unusual Christmas articles for sale. Repairs.—Sponholz, 770 Madison Ave., New York 21, N. Y. au3065

**STELLA MUSIC BOX** discs, 14", twelve assorted for \$15. No lists.—James Riley, 44 Church Street, Norwich, Conn. s3654

**FOR SALE:** Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20¾", 27", 32"; Criterion 20½"; Mira 6¾", 9¼", 15½", 18½"; Monarch 15½"; New Century 18½"; Orphenion 16½"; Polyphon 24½"; Stella 14" 17¼"; Imperial Symphonion 13½"; Thorens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. s3867

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**EDISON, Columbia, Berliner, Victor, Standard** phonographs, Diamond Disc, 7 inch cylinder records, horns, reproducers, catalogs, parts, collectors items. Bought, sold, exchanged. Stamp for detailed information.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. d62511

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED:** Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, V-Discs, Armed forces radio service recordings, all kinds of recordings, etc., by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Ink Spots," "Blue Barron" & "Art Kassel."—Paul Scriven 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. jly3065

**WANTED:** Radio transcriptions, airshots, armed forces radio service recordings, recordings of all kinds by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Blue Barron," "Art Kassel," "The Ink Spots."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna, Niles, Ohio. jly3694

**WANTED: JOLSON MATERIAL.**—Dick Bonesteel, 1409 McGilvra Boulevard, Seattle, Washington. je12046

**WANTED:** Vocal Record of Song "Every Race Has a Flag But the Coon."—Clifford R. Dew, 5148 Charles St., Maple Heights, Ohio. au3253

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collector's items to just good listening. Operatic, historical, and personality discs featured. Your wants located, if possible. Collections bought.—Record Collectors Service, 530 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. je66501

**FOR SALE:** Records, Collectors Items Opera, Theatricals, Ballads, Popular Jazz Speeches of Famous Men and Women. Special wants are requested. Free lists.—Cath. V. O'Brien, P. O. Box 278, Richboro, Pa. d126581

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** Never before so much for so little, as a member of the only world wide, non-profit records collectors' club. Free details. Write Mrs. Ruby Collings, Sec., International Discophiles, Incorporated, 1227 North Jackson Avenue, Fresno, Calif. s3215

**CYLINDER RECORDS** for sale, large stock to select from, only records that are in good condition are offered for sale. Cylinder Phonographs and Horn type disc Phonographs for sale. Also parts, horns, reproducers, recorders, and catalogs. Send stamp for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. s3257

**Auction Sales:** Rare and cut-out vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

**THOUSANDS** of rare collectors' items on hand. Send me your wants on any type of 78 RPM records. New ones in daily.—Box 182, Westville, N. J. au3614

**FIFTY YEARS** of recording: All your favorites on all labels - Monarch, Zonophone, Columbia, Etc. Send for free "Pops" lists.—Gertrude Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. au3696

**EDISON, COLUMBIA** cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 44 Church St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

**ENTIRE COLLECTION**—Three thousand and Edison Discs plus fifteen hundred duplicates, twenty Edison Long Plays all in original covers as new condition. 150 Red Seal Victors, 300 classical Victors - Record Player to play 12 Edison Discs automatically with electric Pick-Up. One William & Mary Edison console with Edison L. P. reproducer and L. P. gear, plus Edison Reproducers, Motors, catalogs, parts, etc. To highest bidder over \$1,000. F. O. B. Storeroom shelves.—C. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. s30021

**OPERA, Popular, cylinders, discs, vertical, lateral records.** Lets hear your wants. Old catalogs wanted.—George Meiser, 506 West Douglass, Reading, Pa. s3633

**THOUSANDS** of Used Records, All varieties. Send wants.—Henry Kurtz, 3912 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. s3652

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collectors items to just good "listening" Operatic, historical & personality discs sold. "Wants" located. We buy collections.—Record Collectors Service (c/o D. Reichman) 530 E. 88 St., New York 28, New York s3826

**I HAVE A LARGE LOT** of Edison Cylinder records in good condition. Price \$7.00 per hundred. Also Edison Disc records \$5.00 per hundred. Orders promptly filled. Shipped F. O. B. Woburn, Mass. No. C. O. D.'s Write—J. J. Keating Trading Post, Grape Street, Woburn, Massachusetts. s3276

(Continued on next page)

### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

**BUY, SELL** or trade mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001

**WILL PAY CASH** for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. s3614

**WANTED:** Hand roller organs, such as concert, Chautauqua, Clarion, etc., music boxes, old phonos, coin operated preferred. Private collector.—Neumann Miller, 436 W. Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. au3844

**ARMSTRONG** Player Piano Co. has bellows cloth, tubing, leather. New 88 note rolls, \$1.00.—22 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ap126111

**COINOLA** Coin-operated Piano; has Flutes, Mandolin and 88-note Piano with Keyboard. This Orchestration completely rebuilt, changed to .25c play, and refinished beautiful Cactus Green. Plays and works like new \$500.00 or best offer above includes 7 rolls.—J. A. Collins, 2120 Grace St., Dubuque, Iowa. jly1673

**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia Cylinder Phonograph Reproducers. Best prices paid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. d6084

## ON TIME

(Continued from page 33)

edge, his confidence in his judgment and his financial resources. In this fascinating pastime, one must grow from a small beginning to the high point of his desires. To my knowledge, there is no other safe way to travel.

When building up a collection, it is perhaps best if there are no preconceived ideas as to what the collection is to eventually become. If one moves along slowly and carefully, the natural interest will manifest itself in time. In my early days as a collector, I very often found myself straying far from the beaten path. In time, everything came out clearly and, from that time on, I have not been tempted to leave the straight highway. When I finally found out what I really wanted and where I was going, it was not too difficult to clear out the undesirables and the misfits and to bring the situation into focus. If you have bought carefully, you will not need to face a loss of any consequence in the weeding out process.

If I were to start all over again now as a clock collector. I am sure that I would follow along much the same lines as I did a long time ago. The first items in my collection were kitchen clocks of the 1870 to 1910 vintage. They were purchased at negligible prices. One of them, representing an investment of fifty cents, gave me my first opportunity to try my hand at repairs and restoration. I learned more from that one operation than from any single source since that time in all the years that I have been a collector. I learned then that if you can understand one clock mechanism, you can master them all. Putting that one clock into operating condition gave to me a feeling of confidence that I have never lost.

It was a simple transition from the kitchen clock to those a little better and a little better, to the point where I can confidently restrict my interest to clocks and watches that are of real antique interest and which are valued accordingly. In all of this process I have never had to charge off any sizeable amount of money to experience. In building a collection, one trades and occasionally buys and sells in such a manner that everyone gets what they want and no one is penalized in the process. The whole thing is enjoyable and instructive and, from a financial standpoint, is relatively painless.

I have not recently stressed the therapeutic value of a hobby. The fact remains, however, that a hobby, no matter what it is, will do more than medicine to counteract the effects of the stress and strain of modern living for most people.

The clocks and watches illustrated are types of interest for an average collector.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 25)

"records," as the wax cylinders are called, at one time. To do this three phonographs are placed near the piano with the horns at one side pointing away from the keyboard at an angle of 45 degrees. The horns have to be placed very carefully, for a fifth of an inch makes a great difference in the tone the cylinders will reproduce.

When the horns have been adjusted exactly right, Mr. Leachman seats himself at the piano and, turning his head away over his right shoulder, begins to sing as loud as he can, and that is pretty loud, for he is a man of powerful physique, and he has been practicing loud singing for four years. He has been doing this work until his throat has become calloused so that he no longer becomes exhausted after singing a short time. As soon as he has finished one song he slips off the wax cylinders, puts on three fresh ones without leaving his seat, and goes right on singing until a passing train compels him to stop for a short time.

In the four years he has been in the business he has made nearly 250,000 records. So great is the demand for them that he cannot fill his orders. It is such exceedingly hard work that he cannot sing more than four hours a day. He gets 35 cents for every cylinder he prepares. He has a repertoire of 420 pieces and his work is put on the market under a score of names. He has a remarkable memory, and after once hearing a song cannot only repeat the words and music correctly, but he can imitate excellently the voice and expression of the singer.

This article, which I consider one of the most interesting I have ever read about the early days of the phonograph, was reprinted in the *Scientific American* from the *Chicago Tribune*. It would be interesting to know who the "four men in the East" were. At a guess they were Len Spencer, Russell Hunting, George J. Gaskin and Dan W. Quinn, but none of these was limited in repertoire to "a few specialties." And, the truth is, there were many more than four successful record makers in the middle '90's. It is fairly obvious that Linzey Willcox had read this article and got from it the impression that Leachman lived "all alone in a hut on the railroad side not far from Chicago." It is likewise fairly clear that Leachman was recording for the Babson Brothers instead of for Columbia, and they were paying him 35 cents for the records they sold for 75 cents.

Mr. Farnsworth also copied three brief items from even older issues of the *Scientific American*. They have no direct association with Silas Leachman, but since they are of great antiquarian interest and I shall probably never have a better chance of quoting them, I shall reprint them now. The first is from the January 12, 1889, issue:

**CURIOSITIES OF THE PHONOGRAPH** . . . Subscribers to whom are rented machines can have left at their door every morning the waxy tablets known as phonograms, which can be wrapped about a cylinder and used in the phonograph. On these tablets will be impressed from the clear voice of a good talker a condensation of the best news of the day, which the subscribers can have talked back at them as they sit at their breakfast tables.

Who ever before heard of this fore-runner of the radio and tv newscast? It seems that "record" had not come into general use in 1889 as the name of the cylinder on which sound was indented. It was still a "phonogram."

On February 2, 1889, "L. O. B." wrote:

I have read a great many pieces on the new phonograph, but there is one question I cannot find an answer to, and would like to have you tell me. Will the new phonograph chronicle anything said in the room, whether the person has mouth to mouthpiece or not? Could one be in a courtroom and chronicle all said by witnesses, or in a hall where a singer or speaker was and receive song or speech?

Answer: The phonograph does not record sounds well, except such as are spoken into its mouthpiece.

"L. O. B." must have had visions of a 1955 model tape recorder. Much the same type of question was asked by "B. O. L." (the initials are those of "L. O. B." reversed, and it was probably the same person) in the April 13, 1889, number:

When the phonograph is talking can it be heard all over the room by the entire audience if the voice talked into it was loud enough, or must a person have ear to receiver in order to hear anything? Can only one hear at a time?

Answer: An ear tube is required. If several are provided, as many persons can listen as there are tubes. It cannot be heard all over the room.

However, by the time Leachman was making his records, an external horn had been devised as a supplement to the ear tubes which were still in use.

We now leave the *Scientific American* and move up almost a decade to March, 1898, when an intriguing item having to do with Leachman's versatility appeared in *The Phonoscope*. I suspect I have quoted this in another HOBBIES article, but it is brief and worth reading again:

"Silas Leachman, the 24th ward politician, is the fortunate possessor of a voice ranging from bass to first tenor, and he has made a number of quartet records in Chicago. The singer puts on the cylinder first whatever part is easiest from the song, sings the second part, then third and fourth."

(To be continued)

**Your Local Museum and Library are worthy of your whole-hearted support and encouragement**

Check and double check and if they have not yet subscribed to HOBBIES, a gift subscription would make an ideal remembrance of the season.

Keep in mind that HOBBIES already has a large circulation among this group, so please check first.

**HOBBIES**  
1006 S. Michigan, Chicago

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Silas F. Leachman

Part Two

By JIM WALSH

## V. Leachman as a Victor Artist

Somehow around the turn of the century, litigation or moral suasion forced the Babson Brothers out of the record making business, and their star singer, Silas Leachman, became one of the first performers to record for the infant Victor Talking Machine Company. I imagine he had previously sung for Victor's predecessor,

Berliner, but have no evidence that he did. Since Victor had no Chicago recording studios, Leachman must have made special trips to Camden, and he probably sang enough numbers on each trip to make the long journey worth taking. However, his big money days as a recording artist were obviously over, since at the fees prevailing in those days (\$100 each

was considered "exorbitant" for Caruso's first discs!), he could not earn as much by singing for permanent masters as in the days when he made cylinders over and over for 35c each.

The February, 1902, catalog of Victor (7-inch) and Monarch (10-inch) single-faced records listed Silas Leachman as an exclusive Victor artist. All of page 27 and half of 28 was taken up with a discussion and description of the Chicago comedian's productions. Under the heading of "SILAS LEACHMAN, Negro Songs," the supplement writer (could it have been Sam Rous?) said:

Mr. Leachman's new records are superior in every way to those he has previously made for us. Could they have any better recommendation? You can't make a mistake in ordering all of them, but we wish to call special attention to 1132, "Truscalina Brown," with chimes, and 1131, "Every Nigger Has a Lady But Me," in both Victor and Monarch sizes.

New records have been made of Mr. Leachman's old list, and we want you to hear the new "Don't You Hear Dem Bells," with Chimes, and "Whoa Dar, Mule." The Laboratory Dog became interested and tried to help Leachman move the mule, adding greatly to the realistic effect.

Close your eyes and listen and you can see it all. The old nigger and his colored lady in the sleigh, with the dog barking excited encouragement at the driver's efforts to start the balky mule.

It is worth noting, as evidence of Leachman's popularity in those antediluvian days, that all his records were obtainable in both 7 and 10-inch sizes.


Following is the list of Leachman's 1902 Victors and Monarchs. Those prefixed with an asterisk were still available when the August 31, 1904, record catalog was issued. Lack of a "star" indicates the disc had joined the pathetic ranks of "cut-outs":

\*788, A Big Fat Coon; \*794, A Negro Hymn and Sermon; \*1124, Ain't Dat a Shame?; \*802, Coon, Coon, Coon; \*1134, Casey's Wedding Night; \*803, Don't You Hear dem Bells? (with chimes—a great record); \*1122, Don't Forget to Write Me Every Day; \*1131, Every Nigger Has a Lady But Me; 1121, Good Morning, Carrie; \*1123, Go 'Way Back and Sit Down; 796, I Ain't Got No Happy Home to Leave; 790, I Couldn't Stand to See My Baby Lose; \*795, I Don't Care if I Never Wake Up; 798, I Need The Money; \*1133,

14 THE TALKING MACHINE CO.

### Polyphone Testimonials.

We have received several hundred unsolicited testimonials in the last three months regarding the merits of the Polyphone. We consider the following testimonials especially strong, as they were given by the oldest and best record makers in the business. Their judgement unquestionably proves the superiority of the Polyphone over all other Talking Machines.



The Polyphone will do away with all machines made in the past because it actually reproduces music which other talking machines fail to do.

*Silas F. Leachman*

Leaf from the Talking Machine Co. publication wherein Silas Leachman is featured.



I'll Have to Telegraph Another Baby; 793, I'm Living Easy; 789, I've Got Money Locked Up in the Vault; 792 Just Because She Made Dem Goo-Goo Eyes; 806, Lam', Lam', Lam'; 797, Maybe Mary Didn't See New York; 799 Mr. Johnson, Turn Me Loose; 800, Mr. Johnson, Don't Get Gay; \*1130, My Old Savannah Home; 1125, My Girl From Dixie; \*1127, My Little Zulu Babe (Williams and Walker hit); \*1123, My Lady Hottentot; 1135, My Maid From Hindostan; \*1129, Quit That Tickling Me (laughing song); \*804, Turkey in de Straw; 1126, The Fortune Telling Man; \*1132, Truscalina Brown (with chimes a companion to 803, Don't You Hear Dem Bells?); \*801, Whoa, Dar, Mule (you can almost see the old mule kick the sleigh.)

The 1904 Victor catalog contained several Leachman records made after the 1902 list was issued. They are:

1894, All Goin' Out and Nothin' Comin' In; 1857, Ambolena Snow; 1458, Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?; 1460, I Wish They'd Do It Now; 1459, Johnnie Took the One I Wanted; 1893, The Old Log Cabin in the Lane; and 1858, Tobie, I Kind'o Likes You.

All the foregoing records begin with spoken announcements by Leachman. In some he calls himself "little" or "li'l old Silas Leachman," but, as we shall see later, that reference to his diminutive size was just Silas' own private joke. Most of the discs feature a boisterous type of "coon shouting" that has now disappeared as a characteristic of American popular music.

With the issuance of his 1902-03 records, Silas Leachman's career as a professional phonograph singer ended. To have remained successful he would have had to move to the East, where Victor, Columbia, Edison and the other leading record makers were, and he apparently preferred to stay in Chicago. Perhaps the Phono-

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, California. d6407

#### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL Restored melodeons. Expert repair service. Reasonable prices. Also buy.—C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 415 S. Diamond, Grand Rapids, Mich. c3882

#### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: Victor Set M-235, singles 1699 (Thibaud), 4541/3 (Ugarte Sonata), 10-1026/8 (Turina Sonata), 10-1240/1 (Ital. Concerto), 6510 (Heifetz), 7650/1 (Haydn "Lark"), 9107 (Hambourg); vocals: 1118, 1241, 6554 (Cortis), 1401 (Ruffo), 1627, 7771 (Fleta), 9694 (Folgar), 1594 (McCormack), 6891 (de Maro), 6892 (Mojica), 7656 (Melchior), 6536 (Jeritza), 1144, 1167 (Galli-Curci), 1540, 7584 (Schumann-Heink), Col. 89234 (Lazaro). Also Mengelberg rehearsals. Have records for exchange or will pay cash. LCDR T. L. Clear BOQ D-1, U. S. Naval Station, Newport, R. I. au1429

WANTED: JOLSON MATERIAL.—Dick Bonesteel, 1409 McGilvra Boulevard, Seattle, Washington. je12046

WANTED: Vocal Record of Song "Every Race Has a Flag But the Coon."—Clifford R. Dew, 5148 Charles St., Maple Heights, Ohio. au3253

scope's joking reference to his being "a 24th ward politician" is an indication that he quit record making to take a Chicago political job. At any rate "J. W. B." of Beaver Meadow, Pa., asked in Edison's *New Phonogram* for June, 1905: What has become of Silas Leachman? The old wax records I have of this artist were made for the Chicago Talking Machine Company and are very fine." The reply was: "Silas Leachman is out of the record business and we understand that he is now in Chicago."

But although "Li'l Silas'" active recording career was over, some of his records stayed in the Victor catalog a few years longer. By January, 1908, however, only three were left—

WANTED: Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, Armed Forces radio recordings, recordings of all kinds by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Bill Kenny," "Ink Spots," "Blue Barron," "Ted Lewis."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. o3694

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

BUY, SELL or trade mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001

WILL PAY CASH for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz, Calif. s3614

WANTED: Hand roller organs, such as concert, Chautauqua, Clarion, etc., music boxes, old phonos,—coin operated preferred. Private collector.—Neumann Miller, 436 W. Colorado Blvd., Glendale 4, Calif. au3844

ARMSTRONG Player Piano Co. has bellows cloth, tubing, leather. New 88 note rolls, \$1.00.—22 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ap126111

WANTED: Edison, Columbia Cylinder Phonograph Reproducers. Best prices paid.—Nugent, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. d6084

WANTED: All types of mechanical coin-operated musical instruments. Also, mechanical shows. Give full particulars first letter.—Walbox Distributing Co., 3909 Main, Dallas, Texas s3483

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

EDISON, Columbia, Berliner, Victor, Standard phonographs, Diamond Disc, 7 inch cylinder records, horns, reproducers, catalogs, parts, collectors items. Bought, sold, exchanged. Stamp for detailed information.—A. Nugent, Jr., 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. d62511

FOR SALE: 1 Busy Bee Record Player with 16 cylinder type records, about 60 years old, in good condition. Record player measures 7"x7"x4½", horn 14" long. For further information, contact Mrs. Erwin Kind, 213 E. Washington Avenue, Tomahawk, Wisconsin. au1443

VICTOR Disc Phonograph with extra large horn, rare, \$25.00; A few Edison Cylinder Phonographs left, Morning Glory horn, \$25.00; There will be no more, 250 Cylinder Blue Amberole records, \$25 per 100.—Karr Museum, Stanberry, Mo. jly1882

#### RECORDS FOR SALE

THOUSANDS of Used Records, All varieties. Send wants.—Henry Kurtz, 3912 Van Buren, Culver City, Calif. s3652

See Old Music Box Ads  
on page 29

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: Collector's items to just good listening. Operatic, historical, and personality discs featured. Your wants located, if possible. Collections bought.—Record Collectors Service, 530 East 88th St., New York 28, N. Y. je66501

FOR SALE: Records, Collectors Items Opera, Theatricals, Ballads, Popular Jazz Speeches of Famous Men and Women. Special wants are requested. Free lists.—Cath. V. O'Brien, P. O. Box 278, Richboro, Pa. d126581

RECORD COLLECTORS: Never before so much for so little, as a member of the only world wide, non-profit records collectors' club Free details Write Mrs. Ruby Collings, Sec., International Discophiles, Incorporated, 1227 North Jackson Avenue, Fresno, Calif. s3215

CYLINDER RECORDS for sale, large stock to select from, only records that are in good condition are offered for sale. Cylinder Phonographs and Horn type Disc Phonographs for sale. Also parts, horns, reproducers, recorders, and catalogs. Send stamp for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. s3257

Auction Sales: Rare and cut-out vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

THOUSANDS of rare collectors' items on hand. Send me your wants on any type of 78 RPM records. New ones in daily.—Box 182, Westville, N. J. au3614

FIFTY YEARS of recording: All your favorites on all labels - Monarch, Zonophone, Columbia, Etc. Send for free "Pops" lists.—Gertrude Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. au3696

EDISON, COLUMBIA cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 44 Church St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

ENTIRE COLLECTION—Three thousand and Edison Discs plus fifteen hundred duplicates, twenty Edison Long Plays all in original covers as new condition. 150 Red Seal Victors, 300 classical Victors - Record Player to play 12 Edison Discs automatically with electric Pick-Up. One William & Mary Edison console with Edison L. P. reproducer and L. P. gear, plus Edison Reproducers, Motors, catalogues, parts, etc. To highest bidder over \$1,000. F. O. B. Storeroom shelves.—C. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. s30021

OPERA, Popular, cylinders, discs, vertical, lateral records. Lets hear your wants. Old catalogs wanted.—George Meiser, 606 West Douglass, Reading, Pa. s3633

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS: Collectors items to just good "listening" Operatic, historical & personality discs sold. "Wants" located. We buy collections.—Record Collectors Service (c/o D. Reichman) 530 E. 88 St., New York 28, New York s3225

I HAVE A LARGE LOT of Edison Cylinder records in good condition. Price \$7.00 per hundred. Also Edison Disc records \$5.00 per hundred. Orders promptly filled. Shipped F. O. B. Woburn, Mass. No. C. O. D.'s Write—J. J. Keating Trading Post, Grape Street, Woburn, Massachusetts. s3276

RARE VOCAL RECORDS - Monthly mail auctions & special lists at set prices. Offering only items in good playing condition, domestic & imported. We know you will be pleased with your purchases. Free lists.—Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. o3046

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from preceding page)

**RARE Operatic vocal records;** send for free mail auction lists.—Robert J. Nathan, 5480 Broadway, New York 63, N. Y. au3084

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia 23, Pa. au3633

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—B. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122611

**FREE Al Jolson catalog.** Arg.—Box 341—Cooper Station—New York City. mhl2046

**FREE Bing Crosby catalog.** Arg.—Box 341—Cooper Station—New York City. mhl2046

**COLLECTORS TIRED** of run-of-the-mill lists, send for free list of Unusual vocal operatic records. Golden age, Pre-war electrical, G&T's, Fonotopias, Zonophones, Pathes Hill & Dale, Etc.—Collector's Haven, 1131 Bergen Street, Brooklyn 16, New York. o3046

### SONG BOOKS WANTED

**WANT TO BUY:** Old hillbilly song books by such artists as Harry "Mac" McClintock, Fiddlin' John Carson and Moonshine Kate, Bradley Kincaid, etc.—Royal Carney, 517 San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, Calif. f128402

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**PHONOGRAPHS, Reproducers, records.** Learn values. For \$1.00 I will send you 23 pictures of valuable phonographs and amounts paid for phonographs, parts. Collector of One of the World's Largest Private Collections of Antique Phonographs.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate Road, Troy, Ohio. o3046

### SHEET MUSIC

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**BACK POPULAR Sheet Music** to 1850. Catalog 15c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. ap12238

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**WANTED:** Anything. Everything by Al Jolson, Cylinders, catalogs, playbills, programs, personality records.—Larry F. Kiner, P. O. Box 25208, Los Angeles 25, California. au3633

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"All Goin' Out," "Quit That Tickling" and "Turkey in de Straw." The first-named was discontinued in February. Then on June 1, a letter was sent to dealers giving a list of records which would be withdrawn from sale August 1, 1908. The letter explained that "the majority of these records are good sellers, and comparable with any records in the catalog, they being retired simply to make room for the new monthly records." "Quit" and "Turkey" were included in the out-out list and the name of Silas Leachman disappeared from the Victor record catalog, never to reappear.

### VI Dr. George Leachman

The information you have been reading almost constitutes a biography of Silas Leachman. Almost, but not quite. It leaves unanswered such questions as when and where he was born and the time and place of his death. This article would still be unwritten had not my old crony, Coincidence, who sometimes seems to turn her back but in the long run never fails me, come to my aid.

In the Roanoke World-News for August 18, 1954, I saw a sports story about Dr. George C. Leachman, a 78-year-old medical practitioner who had been physician to the Louisville Colonels baseball team of the American Association for more than half a century. The unusual family name caught my attention and, knowing that Silas was a native of Kentucky, I wondered if the doctor could be a relative or would in any event have some information concerning the almost mythical record maker. I wrote to Dr. Leachman and, since the "feature story" said he was an inveterate enemy of liquor and tobacco I mentioned that I have never tasted either.

And I received a gratifying answer. On September 8, Dr. Leachman wrote:

My dear Mr. Walsh:—Please accept my sincere apology for this delayed response to your letter of August 19, 1954. I am delighted to know how much you appreciated the humble efforts of the boy from Kentucky and I am sure were he here today he would be very happy to read your complimentary letter. For this, I am certain, he happened to be my oldest brother.

For a number of years, prior to his singing for the Victor Phonograph Co., he had been a minstrel, a minstrel in which he sang and played the piano. He was a hale and hearty 260 pound man, well met and made friends readily.

Regret very much I am unable to give you the exact date of his death. The best I can recall was 19 years ago. During the time that he was singing for the Phonograph Co., he sang under two other names as well as his own. Silas was 76 years old at the time of his death, having suffered some heart condition. At his request he was cremated in Chicago.

Regarding the article that appeared in the Roanoke World-News relative to my association as physician to Louisville Baseball Club, it may interest you to know that I have been surgeon to this Club for 53 years in which course of time I have met some fine men, some from this side of the tracks, some from the other side and both played the game with equal vigor, earnestness and determination.

We have never met, but I want you to know it's a real pleasure re-

ceiving a letter from one so interested in the Minstrel and Songster, my brother. If I can help you in any way by furnishing any further information I am yours to command.

I replied almost immediately and asked Dr. Leachman several other questions, such as what the F. in the middle of his brothers's name represented and what were the other names under which Silas sang for Victor. (And how I'd like to know that "score of names" he used, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, in making his cylinders of the '90's!) At the moment I have not had a second letter from the busy physician, but I shall submit this article for his approval and if he provides additional information I shall use it as a supplement.

Meanwhile, Dr. Leachman's recollection that Silas had been dead some 19 years gave enough of a clue for me to ask the Chicago Bureau of Vital Statistics to search for the genial "little" 260-pound comedian's death certificate. The search was successful and a copy of the long wanted document was sent to me by the County Clerk, Richard J. Daley. (Now Mayor of the City of Chicago).

The certificate reveals that Silas F. Leachman lived at 3715 Concord Place. His wife's name was Amelia. I assume that she too has died in the last 19 years. Leachman was born August 20, 1859, so was 76 years, eight months and five days old at his death on April 28, 1936. For eight years he had been a clerk in the personnel department of the Chicago police department. What he did for the quarter of a century between the end of his recording career and the beginning of his police work isn't indicated. He was born in Louisville, the son of two native Kentuckians—William and Lettie Field Leachman.

Silas Leachman was buried in Montrose Cemetery, Chicago, April 30. He had been under medical treatment by Dr. J. H. Moran since April 19 for arterial hypertension and a form of heart disease.

Those are the important facts revealed by the death certificate. And so at last, after more than 20 years of off-and-on investigation, I have been able, thanks to some fortunate coincidences, to fulfill that long standing desire to tell something of the life story of Silas Leachman, a gifted pioneer of the phonograph whose diversified talents entitle him to permanent and affectionate remembrance.

This article has been approved by Dr. George Leachman who gives the following additional information:

"The F. in Silas' name represents the name Field (Silas Field Leachman). He had two sisters and six brothers. My sister and myself are still living. I don't recall the minstrel troupes and don't recall the other names he sang under; however, there were two. His wife is dead. He was a blue-eyed blonde and weighed about 260 pounds. I greatly appreciate your interest in my brother and regret that I am unable to be of more help. Hope to have the pleasure of

(Continued on page 77)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 77)

meeting you in the near future. Kindest regards and best wishes."

In closing this biographical sketch, it occurs to me that Dr. Leachman himself is such an outstanding personality that his achievements deserve to be chronicled with those of his brother. I therefore reprint the following United Press article written by Richard Coleman, which appeared on August 18, 1954, in newspapers throughout the nation:

"Dr. George Leachman is convinced baseball players play just as hard today as they did in the old days when 'all the players were Irish.'"

"He should know. He has been team physician for the Louisville Colonels of the American Association 52 straight seasons, probably the longest stretch of service of any baseball doctor. He is 77.

"The little, white-haired man leaned back in the swivel chair in his office today and recalled:

"They played awfully hard in the old days. I fixed many a bloody nose and loosened jawbone. The boys have finger blisters and sore arms nowadays.

"Most of the players were Irish 50 years ago. Those boys were tough because they lived hard lives. A lot of them were blacksmith's helpers, hard working men. Today, a lot of the players are college boys. But, I honestly think they play just as hard today."

"Dr. Leachman watches almost every home game the Colonels play, although sometimes he can only watch an inning or two from his seat behind home plate. He handles just the surgical chores for the club, and occasionally operates on major leaguers as well.

"The pink-faced little man likes to visit the dugouts and the dressing rooms. It's there he has a chance to offer advice to both the veterans and rookies.

"I try to talk to young players, especially the pitchers," Dr. Leachman said. "I ask them if they expect to make baseball a career. Most of them are good listeners—I've never raised my voice to a ball player.

"I tell the young pitchers they've got to take care of their legs as well as their arms. I tell the young ones they shouldn't play basketball or football during the off-season. A lot of injuries—mean injuries—happen then.

"There are three rules I tell them they must observe if they want to be really good. First, don't drink whiskey. Alcohol affects the vision and reflexes. Don't drink beer—it slows up your legs. Third, don't smoke. It affects your wind.

"The doctor thinks the beanball ought to be outlawed. His voice is a little sharp when he talks about it.

"It's one thing to throw close to a batter to keep him from digging in," he said. "But, when they throw a beanball at you they're trying to

put you out of business. That's not good baseball. If a pitcher has to go that far, he ought to quit."

"His worst baseball injury came when Merito Acosta, a popular Cuban outfielder, was beaned here in 1927. Acosta was close to death for three days, but lived, although the "The doctor called Ty Cobb the greatest player he's seen."

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By JIM WALSH

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By ANTONIO (TONY) ALTAMIRANO

("Guest conductor" for Jim Walsh)

"THE DUNCAN SISTERS"!!! Magic words in the theatre of today and yesterday!!!

When Jim Walsh wrote me saying, "Tony' since you know the Duncan Sisters so well, why not write me an article on them for my column," I was thrilled.—And so—to use a little which the "Duncs" made internationally famous—I would like to do some very pleasant "Rememb'ring."

My friendship with "The Duncan Sisters" began in January, 1936, in the picturesque little California town of Covina. My teacher, the late beloved diva, Madame Ellen Beach Yaw (well-known as "Lark Ellen"), invited me to an audition for a special show that the famed Duncan Sisters were giving in honor of Madam Yaw in appreciation for the inspiration she had been to them and the interest she had taken in them when they were children.

Having auditioned, I was then introduced to the Duncan Sisters, Rosetta and Vivian, and was greatly impressed with their beauty and extreme graciousness! I had known no greater honor than when they told me that they would like to have me join their special show for "Lark Ellen."

The next few days of rehearsals only enhanced my first impression of the beauty and graciousness of these two really *great* artists, and the harmony in working together during these few days was the beginning of a friendship that was to last throughout the years.

True to their theatrical record on this memorable night, the Duncan Sisters played to a packed house and, needless to say, kept the audience in gales of laughter throughout their entire performance.

To further enhance the eventfulness of this great evening when "Lark Ellen" was introduced, she walked onto the stage together with a tall, elderly lady, dressed in black from head to foot. Upon introduction, we were all thrilled to learn that this stately lady was the beloved composer, Carrie Jacobs Bond! (Years later Mme. Yaw presented me with a recording of Mrs. Bond speaking and playing one of her own compositions. I still have that recording.)

The Duncan Sisters asked Mrs.

Bond if she would be kind enough to sit at the piano and play a number for the audience. To mix laughter with sweet memories, Rosetta immediately asked her, "Mrs. Bond would you *happen* to know one of my favorite songs? If you know it, I would love to hear "The End of a Perfect Day."

The "Duncs" then asked "Lark Ellen" if she would do a number. Then more fun began! Madame Yaw, being not only a great singer but a most clever actress, gave an impersonation of Rosetta, when she was a little girl studying with her. To add to the laughter and applause of Madame Yaw's "rendition," Rosetta quipped, "Ladies and Gentlemen, 'The March of Time'!"

The cleverness, the timing, the repartee of the Duncan Sisters is an element beyond explanation, but a theatrical "student" could learn more than money could buy just by observing the keen artistry of these two great entertainers.

Let me here present to you an extract from the unpublished manuscript of the memoirs of Ellen Beach Yaw entitled "Flight of the Lark" and let Madame Yaw tell you in her own words about "The Duncan Sisters."

"Young talent has always deeply interested me. One day during a call, in company with my sister-in-law, Nettie, at the King's Daughters' Day Nursery, a home for children at Manhattan Beach, a Los Angeles suburb, we found the juveniles up in the attic playing theatre and costumed in the matron's old dresses. Nettie's mother, Mrs. Emma L. Jay, by the way, was one of the founders of this Home. Nettie and I sat in a dark corner and watched the little ones with interest. The talent of one little girl in particular held my attention and inquiring her name was told she was Rosetta Duncan. Rosetta was the prime leader; practically 'the whole show.' At the end of the act I asked the precocious child if she would like to learn to sing and told her I would teach her, but not until she had finished grammar school.

"Little Rosetta was quite enthusiastic over my offer, and about a year later on the very day after she graduated, a little girl just as plump as

a partridge came running up the path to my home near Covina, all out of breath, ready to begin work with me. Never had I met a more delightfully natural child, so I said to her: 'Rosetta, if you remain just as you are you will be a great success on the stage.' She has since reminded me of that prophetic remark, declaring it is the secret of her success in the theatre.

"I taught Rosetta every summer during my vacation at home. She came out in the morning and remained all day wandering about the garden and orange grove, seldom speaking—just dreaming. Once when I gave a benefit concert for the Lark Ellen Home for Boys in the sunken garden at my sister Anna's home in Covina, Rosetta sang, and a lady who was present asked her to appear at a party she was giving the following week. Rosetta was paid five dollars for that engagement, which I believe was the first money she had ever earned.

"Some time after this when I learned Rosetta's sister, Vivian, one year her junior, often sang duets with the former, I gave her singing lessons also; in addition I taught the two girls acting. It was, not very long before the Duncan Sisters were widely heralded for their great 'hits' in America and Europe. Their greatest success to date was scored in the musical comedy 'Topsy and Eva' with the song hits 'Rememb'ring' and 'I Never Had a Mammy' composed by Rosetta and Vivian who write many of their own songs used by them on the stage. They are exceptionally clever and original young women."

This was about 1914. That is, when Ellen Beach Yaw discovered them. The girls always remembered Mme. Yaw with their great generosity and many was the time when they presented "Lark Ellen" with checks of large sums when they were at the height of their fame and success, as a little gesture of their sincere appreciation for the inspiration "Lark Ellen" had given them in their first struggles for recognition.

Since this is not a chronological biography of them, they were born in Los Angeles, Calif., at the turn of the present century. They were the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel



Duncan and, in addition to Rosetta and Vivian, there is another sister, the eldest, Evelyn Duncan (now Mrs. Stewart S. McClelland) and two brothers, Harold and Alex Duncan. Their mother died in childbirth and Mr. Duncan sent his motherless little ones to the King's Daughters Day Nursery. They were educated in the Los Angeles Public Schools. I read of Mr. Duncan's passing on at the age of 84, in December, 1945, while I was visiting in Canada. I later recall Evelyn telling me, that at the funeral, Madame Yaw sang "Abide With Me" and how beautiful her voice sounded.

It may not be known in general—but the famed Duncan Sisters consisted of three beautiful, wholesome American girls, yes, all three of them, blonde as they could be! The eldest sister, Evelyn, had her day in the theatre too. About 1915, she was with Rosetta and Vivian in a trio called "The Duncan Sisters Trio" and they toured the Western States together.

Evelyn left the trio to become the dramatic member of the family. She appeared in stock companies from San Francisco to New York, and was a featured player with Marie Doro on Broadway in "Lilies of the Field," Selwyn's "Fair and Warmer" and in many silent motion pictures, such as playing opposite Cyril Maude in the Morosco, production of "Peer Gynt."

Rosetta and Vivian gained their early theatrical experience in "The Kiddies Revue" with Gus Edwards and they were well-known in vaudeville, prior to their appearance at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, in May, 1917. In October, 1917, they appeared in Shubert's "Doing Our Bit" at the Winter Garden Theatre. Then at the Globe, in May, 1919, in Dillingham's "She's a Good Fellow," Raymond Hitchcock's "Hitchey Koo" and in October, 1922, in "Tip Top" with Fred Stone.

They made their first appearance in London at the Gaiety Theatre in De Courville's "Pins and Needles" on June 1, 1921. They reappeared in London, at the Adelphi, in 1928, in Buchanan's "Clowns in Clover." They also appeared in many leading London variety theatres.

Their greatest success, "Topsy and Eva," was originally produced on July 9, 1923, at the Alcazar Theatre, in San Francisco. I believe this theatre is now named "The United Nations Theatre" and is for motion pictures only. This unique musical comedy was taken from Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin." I recall Rosetta telling me, how she went to the public library and, reading the book, started work on it for their production. Later on, Catherine C. Cushing, wrote the play as suggested by "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for their theatrical production. Mrs. Cushing had written the screen scenario for Mary Pickford's film, "Pollyanna."

In June, 1924, they appeared in "Topsy and Eva" at the Selwyn Theatre, in Chicago. They broke all box office records drawing more than a million dollars a year!



Rosetta and Vivian Duncan as "Topsy" and "Eva" in their production of that name. This photograph was made from a colored cardboard cut-out used by Victor record dealers for window displays in 1925.

At the Gaiety Theatre, in London, in October, 1928, they also appeared in "Topsy and Eva." It was during this engagement, Rosetta told me, that she was not only homesick, but also too ill to play the role of "Topsy." Hearing of her illness, a young lady came to see Rosetta and at her bedside told her that she would be delighted to "stand in" for Rosetta during her illness and since she had seen the show so many times was certain that she already knew the part. Rosetta and Vivian heard the young lady read the part and put her into the show until Rosetta could return to the stage. The "stand in" Topsy during Rosetta's illness was none other than (the then unknown) Grace Fields!

In November, 1931, at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood, they also appeared in "Topsy and Eva" and in December, 1933, appeared in a revised version of the show at the Apollo Theatre, in Chicago.

They toured the British Isles in 1937 and 1938 and broke all box office records in the Music Halls where they appeared.

In 1942, they again toured in a revised version of "Topsy and Eva." I saw them in this version in November, 1942, at the old Music Box Theatre, in Hollywood. This place is now the Fox Guild Theatre. How well I recall my back-stage visit with them. The walls of their dressing room were covered with telegrams of good wishes from Mae Murray, Eddie Cantor and other great names of show business.

Rosetta never married. Vivian mar-

ried Nils Asther, star of such motion pictures as: "Her Cardboard Lover," with Marion Davies; "The Cossacks," with John Gilbert and Renee Adoree, "Sorrel and Son," with Anna Q. Nilsson; "The Single Standard," with Greta Garbo; "Loves of an Actress," with Pola Negri, etc. A daughter, Evelyn, was born to them. Vivian and Nils were later divorced. A few years ago, Vivian married for the second time. This time, a businessman of San Francisco, Frank Herman.

On June 16, 1927, at the world-famous Egyptian Theatre on Hollywood boulevard, their silent motion picture version of "Topsy and Eva" had its world premiere. The audience consisted of all the great ones of the motion picture industry at that time. The late Sid Grauman, had staged one of his great prologues and the Duncans, were in top form on opening night. They appeared at this theatre for some time in the prologue. In addition, to the motion picture people in attendance, including Madame Ellen Beach Yaw, many civic and cultured celebrities were present.

Occasionally, even today, the film is shown in theatres in and around Hollywood. I first saw this film back in 1949, when Evelyn telephoned me, to tell me that it was being shown in a Hollywood theatre. Naturally, I was most anxious to see it. The surprise of the evening of that showing, was that the silent film star, Mae Murray, whom I had seen years ago on the stage, made an appearance and spoke of her great friendship and love for the Duncan Sisters. Evelyn also appeared on the stage that evening and



A present-day pose of Vivian and Rosetta Duncan  
(Continued from page 27)

told some things about the production of the picture. The film had three directors, including Del Lord and D. W. Griffith. She recalled how Griffith referred to Rosetta as "The Female Charlie Chaplin of the Screen" in tribute to her great ability as a comedienne. The picture was originally produced by John Considine and released through United Artists.

A few months ago, a print of "Top-sy and Eva" was shown at a party, at the home of Vivian Duncan and it was indeed a real pleasure to see and hear Vivian play the piano and talk to her audience all through the screening of the film.

In 1929-30, they made their only  
(Continued on next page)

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talking film, "It's a Great Life" for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios. It was directed by the late Sam Wood. Two selections were recorded by Victor from this film, with them. See my Discography for this information.

This cannot be classed as even being a "thumb nail" sketch of these two fabulous, beloved ladies of the theatre. Their life, their stage, their experiences have been so full that it is an impossibility for me, as a layman writer, to relate even the greatest highlights of their famous careers. I feel that I have been among the most fortunate to have heard them tell in person of their good times and battles—the Actors Equity strike of 1919—their experiences with Mrs. Vanderbilt, seven kings and the Prince of Wales while touring Europe—the stories about how they wrote and introduced so many songs—their stories, their lives can only be summed up in one word, Greatness!

I can only wholeheartedly agree with a statement once made about my sweet friends, "The Duncan Sisters have made deposits worth millions in the bank of hearts, a bank that never goes bankrupt and pays off in love, loyalty and true friendship."

Now, for the many, many songs that the Duncan Sisters have either composed or made famous. Here are but a few:

"Bye Bye, Blackbird," "Mary Lou," "Then I'll Be Happy," "Moonlight and Roses," "In the Little Red Schoolhouse," "Avalon," "Carolina in the Morning," "Chicago," "Ukelele Lady," "Let the Rest of the World Go By," "I'm Following You," "I'm Happy When I'm With You," "Side By Side," "Doodle Dee Doo," "Sweet Onion Time in Bermuda," "The Gay Caballero," by Frank Crumit and Lou Klein, and "Bell Bottom Trousers."

And the following song "hits" from "Topsy and Eva": "Rememb'ring," "Do Re Mi" (The Music Lesson), "Um-Um-Da-Da," "Just in Love With You," "I Never Had a Mammy," "High Brow Colored Lady," "Moon Am Shinin'," "The Land of Long Ago," "Sighing," "We'll Dance Thro' Life Together," "Under Love's Moon," etc.

Rosetta and Vivian are not the only composers in this fabulous Duncan Family. Their brother, Harold Duncan, now a prominent tennis pro of the East Coast is also a member of ASCAP and has composed several song "hits" which the Duncan Sisters have helped to popularize. "God Is Love" and "Blow Blow Winds of the Sea," are the latest published selections. Several other of his songs have been recorded by RCA-Victor.

The Duncan Sisters were great stars of stage, screen, radio, recordings, the early ear-phone radio, nightclubs and NOW television. I consider them the greatest real sister-team of the theatre. I am happy to say that the years have not dimmed the magic of their personalities.

Here follows my complete Discography on them.

### "THE DUNCAN SISTERS"

Discography by Antonio ("Tony") Altamirano.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE RECORDINGS: London, England.

Number	Title	Date Recorded
B 1419	Oh, Sing-A-Loo	10-20-22
	The Argentine, Portuguese, and the Greeks	10-20-22
C 1093	The Bull Frog Patrol	10-20-22
	The Music Lesson	10-20-22
B 2309	Happy Go Lucky	1-15-26
	Kinky Kids Parade	1-15-26
	(Titles for B 2309, were recorded in America, by Victor).	
B 2915	The Music Lesson	12-27-28
	The Argentines; the Portuguese, and the Greeks	12-27-28
UNPUBLISHED TITLES FOR H.M.V.:		
	At Sundown	12-13-27
	Breezing Along With The Breeze	12-13-27
COLUMBIA RECORDINGS: Recorded in London, for English Columbia.		
Number 5182	The Prune Song	(?) 1928
	The Bullfrog Patrol	(-) 1928
COLUMBIA RECORDINGS: Recorded in New York City, U.S.A.		
No. 15745-D	Dusty Roads (Master Number W-151949)	19-26-31
COLUMBIA UNPUBLISHED: (Released in 1932)		
	Hard Luck Mama	10-26-31

Miss Rosetta Duncan told me that in 1919, they recorded one title for Columbia, which was never published. All three sisters, Evelyn, Rosetta and Vivian, were certainly surprised when I told them that they had recorded for Columbia both in Europe and America! They had never heard of such recordings! They remembered the title of "The Prune Song" but they all thought it had been recorded in London, by H. M. V.!!! Unfortunately ALL masters of the H. M. V.'s and Columbias have been destroyed. Years ago, I do recall that a collector had a copy of "The Prune Song" on Columbia, in England. Investigation has revealed that Columbia Record No. 15745-D, was coupled with "It's All In The Game" recorded by Celia and Ann Sawyer. . . "The Sawyer Sisters."

### VICTOR UNPUBLISHED RECORDINGS:

Masters destroyed. Courtesy of Mr. E. C. Forman of RCA-Victor Company.

Number	Title	Date Recorded
	Some Day Soon	2-16-26 and 1-2-30
	Oh, How I Love My Boatman	9-13-27
	Some Day You'll Say "OK"	9-16-27
	Yep, Long About June	9-16-27

### VICTOR RECORDINGS:

Recorded in various Victor studios in the U.S.A.

Number	Title	Date Recorded
19050	Baby Sister Blues	3-14-23
	The Music Lesson	3-14-23
19113	The Argentines, the Portuguese and the Greeks	3-19-23
	Stick In The Mud	3-19-23
19206	Rememb'ring from "TOPSY AND EVA"	11-19-23
	I Never Had A Mammy from "TOPSY AND EVA"	11-19-23
19311	Aunt Susie's Picnic	4-4-24
	Um-um-da-da	4-4-24
19527	Bull Frog Patrol	4-4-24
	Tom Boy Blues	4-4-24
35751	In Sweet Onion Time) (Only 12" record recorded)	11-10-24
	Vocalizing	11-10-24
19527	Cross Word Puzzles	11-14-24
	Mean Cicero Blue	11-14-24
19987	Happy Go Lucky	2-16-26
	Kinky Kids' Parade	2-16-26
21226	Lickens	2-16-26
	Black and Blue Blues	9-12-27
20963	Dawning	9-16-27
	Baby Feet Go Pitter Patter	9-16-27
22345	It Must Be An Old Spanish Custom	1-3-30
	I Got A Code In My Doze	1-3-30
22269	I'm Following You	1-4-30
	Hoosier Hop	1-4-30

(The last two selections are from their M-G-M film, "It's A Great Life" The first seven Victor recordings here listed, are of the old acoustical method of recording.

### PARLOPHONE RECORDINGS:

Recorded in London, in August and September 1937. These recordings were listed in the Parlophone Supplementary Catalogue of November 1937, to October 1938. Masters destroyed!

Number	Title
F 1156	Ti-Pi Tin
	Adam and Eve
F 1191	In A Little Dutch Kindergarten
	Loch Lomand in Swing Time
F 1215	Daniel In The Lions' Den
	Sweet Onion Time In Bermuda

DUNCAN DISC COMPANY RECORDINGS  
These recordings were recorded in San Francisco, in 1947, with Phil Bovero and his A.B.C. Orchestra

### TITLES

Rememb'ring, from "Topsy And Eva"  
I Never Had A Mammy, from "Topsy And Eva"  
White Christmas  
Jingle Bells

### UNPUBLISHED DUNCAN DISC COMPANY RECORDINGS

Also: recorded in San Francisco, in 1947, with Phil Bovero and his A.B.C. Orchestra.  
Boogie Woogie Lullaby  
It's Somebody's Birthday Today  
I'm Following You  
Welcome Stranger

### VITAPHONE RECORDINGS:

She Fell Down On Her Cadenza  
Why Do I Sit On My Patio?  
(Continued on page 33)

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**WANTED:** Catalogs showing threshing machines and steam traction engines.—Vic Wintermantel, Bellevue, Pa. d6614

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**WANTED MECHANICAL** Penny banks any condition. Please quote price in first letter.—Daniel Cutini, 121 Roma Ave., Buffalo, New York. o6046

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- **MONKEY & PARROT** (Tin)
- **PRESTO**
- **JAPANESE BALL TOSSEY** (Tin, wind-up)
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- **COASTING BANK**
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**THE DUNCAN SISTERS**

(Continued from page 30)

And many others! But unfortunately, all masters have been destroyed. These Vitaphone recordings were for the early "talkies" of 1928-29.

A most interesting comparison is their 1923 and 1947 recordings from their greatest success, "Topsy And Eva."

In my collection of recordings of all of the great ones of the past, I have most of "The Duncan Sisters" recordings. At this time, (1955) I need two of the parlophones: Numbers F 1156 and F 1191. Of the H.M.V.'s I must have numbers: B 1419, C 1093, B 2309 and B 2915. But I certainly would pay the price if someone had for sale both of their Columbias! So, please, do let me know! I have several private recordings of them that were never recorded for public sale.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## LEWIS JAMES

### REVISED AND APPROVED

By Lewis James

This article is dedicated to one of the most enthusiastic Lewis James admirers, Robert Burwell, of Wellsville, Mo.

I have received the following letter from Mr. James:

"Dear Jim: Thanks for writing the story, which I have checked . . . I believe it's essentially accurate. . . .

"I made about 3,000 records—1,200 to 1,500 of them solos—all types from 'Songs for Little People' nursery rhymes, popular ballads, concert songs and sacred songs to oratorio songs by Handel and Bach.

"The Shannon Quartet made the first live broadcast from the New York district. Actually we sang from the Westinghouse factory at Newark. The station later was known as WJZ (New York). That was in October, 1921. The Revelers were the first to have an NBC contract when the network started in 1926.

"Many people are interested in church singing. I was soloist in several well known New York churches, my last being the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church at 55th street.

"Hope to see you soon. Best wishes.  
*Lewis James.*"

I appreciate Lewis James' interest in this biographical sketch and trust it will please his myriad admirers.  
*Jim Walsh*

A visit to Chicago in the autumn of 1951 has enriched my memory with vivid recollections. One of the most sudden and severe snow storms I have experienced occurred while I was making the rounds of Salvation Army stores, looking for old records, with Frank Gloodt, a Chicago collector who specializes in Billy Murray discs. By contrast with the cold and unfriendly behavior of that storm, I like to think of the warmly genial welcome I received when I went to radio station WGN in the *Chicago Tribune* building and enjoyed a two-hour "get-together" with one of the most popular of former recording tenors, Lewis James.

It was a delightful experience, finding myself in the "Tribune Tower" at 441 North Michigan Avenue and be-



LEWIS JAMES,  
Program Director for WGN, Chicago

ing greeted by a dapper brown-eyed gentleman of middle height whom I recognized instantly from his photographs which appeared for so many years in record catalogs and monthly supplements. A typical example of these photographs appears in Roland Gelatt's new book, "The Fabulous Phonograph," in which James is shown making a Victor record with his associates of the Crescent Trio—Charles Hart (wrongly identified as Charles Harrison) and Elliott Shaw. That cordial greeting made me feel immediately at ease, while I was still reflecting that Lewis James looks much the same today as at the height of his singing career. He still wears the trim mustache that was something of a trademark in the days when his records were played in millions of homes, and, although his brown hair has grayed, he is unmistakably the man who made his share of phonograph history.

Before we parted, the tenor told some of his associates I was "the fellow who knows more about me than I know about myself." That was a humorous exaggeration. I was equipped with a considerable advance store of information concerning Lewis James, but he told me a great many other things I didn't know. I was sorry to see he had trouble getting up and down and had to grip the edge of his desk before he could stand. He said he had been suffering

for two and a half years from arthritis which was destroying the cartilage in his knees. The arthritis makes it difficult for him to write and, he said, plays its part in keeping him from acknowledging the letters which he still receives, and appreciates, from record collectors. When I recently asked if his condition has improved, he gallantly replied: "I'm getting quite expert on crutches."

### II Some Biographical Data

I was of course familiar with Lewis James' long and successful recording career, not only as a tenor soloist but as a duet partner of many other noted singers and as a member of the Crescent Trio, the Shannon Four and the Revelers. In my reference file is a copy of the *Edison Amberola Monthly* for August, 1920. It has an excellent photo of James on the front cover. The accompanying article reads:

"The Navy may have lost a famous Admiral, or at least a Captain, when Lewis James was persuaded to forego his appointment to Annapolis in order to study music. . . . It was while studying engineering at the University of Michigan that he received his offer to become a member of Uncle Sam's Navy, but listening to the advice of the Director of Music at the College, he devoted himself to vocal study which has so well equipped him for concert, oratorio and Amberola work. He has developed under capable American teachers and stands out as a good example of our methods of instruction.

"His decision to devote himself to the art of singing came rather strangely. He is still remembered at college for his quarter and half-mile running—he held the State college records—and for his baseball . . . prowess. No one had associated him with music until the Glee Club held a concert at the University, where James gave a remarkable performance.

"This was really his debut. The advice of the music faculty and his friends was fortunately followed, and his tenor voice so well recorded on the Amberola has carried him to success."

Then there was the biographical sketch that used to appear in the yearly Victor record catalogs:

"Lewis James is of American birth and American experience. He has won his way to the front rank of pop-

ular singers by both intelligence and natural gifts. He has been, in the past, a church singer and a concert artist both. He has a fine voice, excellent enunciation, a healthy view of life, a keen sense of humor, and, what frequently goes with these things, a gift of expression which can meet with hearty response wherever it goes. He has made many fine records for us, and they have brought him into the public favor they deserve. He sings with great feeling and in the most simple of styles both the joy and the tragedy of being."

And in a 1929 issue of the *Roanoke Times*, I discovered the following thumb-nail sketch of the Revelers, who sang in Roanoke, Virginia, when their popularity on records and radio was at its zenith:

"The Revelers . . . consist of four singers and a pianist: Lewis James, James Melton, Elliott Shaw, Wilfred Glenn and Frank Black. Each member is a soloist in his own right, each a distinct personality, each an American born artist—a unique personnel and one of which this country can boast. Although this is their first American concert tour—they have made unusually successful appearances in England, Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, and Holland—everyone in the United States knows the Revelers through their phonograph and radio fame. Either under their own name or as the Shannon Four on Victor records, as the Merry-makers on Brunswick, and the Singing Sophomores on Columbia releases, or on the air . . . they have become a household word in America. The so-called 'music public' has also heard them individually, as assisting soloists with orchestras or in recital.

The article went on to say that James had sung in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and Wilfred Glenn was a favorite soloist with the Boston Handel and Haydn Society. It should have mentioned that James sang the Verdi "Requiem" with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and also sang in such favorite oratorios as "The Messiah" and "Elijah."

### III Lewis James' Own Story

Such printed matter gave me a backlog of information. But there was still a good deal more I wanted to know about Lewis James, and he graciously "filled me in" during that enjoyable chat which I had a guilty feeling was taking up too much of his time. He observed me stealing frequent furtive glances at the clock and gently admonished me about being so concerned with the time, saying his duties as a WGN production manager were not so pressing that afternoon that I needed to hurry away.

The tenor was born in Dexter, Mich., a small town near Detroit, on July 29, 1892. He attended the State Normal School and the University of Michigan, where as the *Amberola Monthly* said, he made a name for himself in athletics. Although he did well at baseball and track, he was too slightly built to star at football. He married the former Miss Jeanette

Wallace, of Detroit. They have a daughter, Janet, who is Mrs. Orion M. Arnold of Western Springs, Ill. Mrs. James is an enthusiastic collector of antiques, and I had the pleasure of presenting her husband with tickets for HOBBIERS' 26th Annual Antiques Exposition and Collectors' Fair, then in progress at the Conrad Hilton Hotel.

Lewis said he got his start as a recording artist with the help of the famous basso, Frank Croxton, who was, at one time or other, the bass singer of the Frank Croxton Mixed Quartet, the Columbia Stellar and Peerless male quartets, and the American Singers. He thought his first Columbia records were made in 1914 or 1915, but I haven't been able to trace any prior to December, 1916. For most of the first two years of his Columbia career, James' records appeared under the pseudonym of Robert Lewis. The first disc, No. 2108, combined "I Know I Got More Than My Share," by Lewis, with Vernon Dalhart's first record for Columbia (and probably for any other company), "Just a Word of Sympathy." The brief description said: "Vernon Dalhart, a former member of the Century Opera Company, makes his initial bow with Robert Lewis, a singer from the West of decided merit."

In 1918, James began a free-lance career. He had a joint contract with Victor, Columbia, Edison and Pathé which left him free to sing also for the smaller companies. He was engaged by nearly every American record company during 1919 and the earlier 1920's. The tenor made many solo records for Edison, but never did any "tone test" work. Undoubtedly, his demonstrating the musical merits of the New Edison wouldn't have been popular with the other companies sharing his contract.

James told me that, as far as he could recall, Robert Lewis was the

only assumed name he used, aside from Harold Harvey a *nom de disque* which appeared on the labels of some of the records he made for "His Master's Voice" in Montreal. I recalled, however, that he was dubbed "Robert Bruce" on a number of Pathés, and Bruce Wallace on some Victors and Okeh's. He was also called "Uncle Lewis" on a series of seven-inch records for children. He was surprised when I told him the Shannon Four was usually the Lyric Male Quartet on Edison Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinders. As the Lyric, the quartet sang in support of such Edison stars as Frieda Hempel, Maggie Teyte, Marie Rappold, Virginia Rea and Anna Case. He commented sadly that "'Virginia Rea—poor girl!—died of a broken heart after an unhappy marriage and the break-up of her singing career." At another time, thinking of how many of his recording associates had died, the tenor said reflectively: "Before many years, we old-timers who are still around will just be museum pieces!" His comments on the artists with whom he had worked were uniformly kind and friendly and he appeared genuinely shocked when I mentioned a few who had fallen on evil days. I have never met any famous man with a more modest, unassuming personality than Lewis James, nor one with a more complete absence of affectation.

I asked Lewis how it happened that the Shannon Four, of which he became a member in 1918, chose that name. He said it was because John McCormack and other famous singers had made Irish ballads so popular the quartet decided to specialize in them—hence, Shannon from Ireland's River Shannon. After five years or so as the Shannon Four it was decided to change the last word to Quartet, because—as James expressed it—"we thought Shannon Four sounded too much like a vaudeville outfit."



This photo of the The Revelers, sent to Jim Walsh by Elliott Shaw, shows the group in Paris and was taken in 1928 during one of the ensemble's triumphal European tours. Left to right: Lewis James, second tenor; Frank Banta, pianist; Wilfred Glenn, basso and manager; Elliott Shaw, baritone; and James Melton, first tenor.

I said I had suspected the title came from an amalgamation of the names of its members, and pointed out that Shannon begins with the first three letters of Elliott Shaw's patronymic. It also contains the first two letters of Charles Hart's last name, ends with the "double n" in the family name of Wilfred Glenn, and includes the first two letters of Harvey Hindermeyer's first name. Lewis looked astonished and said he had never before given a thought to those odd combinations, but he could assure me the Shannon Four didn't derive its distinctive designation from scrambling up the names of its four original members.

He also hadn't known that the Shannon Four was usually disguised on Pathé records as the Acme Male Quartet, and that the Crescent Trio was turned into the Apollo Trio. Names of the quartet members were frequently disguised. Hart and Shaw were often called Charles Cinway and Frank Sterling. In fact, Pathé took more liberties with artists' names than any other company.

In view of previous experiences with favorite pioneer recording artists, I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised to learn Lewis James doesn't or didn't, own even one copy of his records, but I couldn't help being a bit taken aback. I have always felt that if I had been a popular singer I would have kept at least half a dozen of each of my records, for posterity's sake, in a fireproof vault. But since James made thousands the storage problem would have been more, no doubt, than he would care to undertake.

Referring to his statement that the Shannon Four had intended to specialize in Irish songs, I amused the tenor by telling him that the *Gramophone*, England's leading record magazine, once referred to him as an Irish tenor and praised his "pleasant Irish accent." He told me something I hadn't known—that he sometimes sang the lead in the Columbia Stellar Quartet when Reed Miller was out of New York, filling concert and oratorio engagements or was otherwise unavailable. He spoke affectionately of the late Billy Murray and recalled that the Revelers sang in support of Billy on a radio program which featured the erstwhile "Denver Nightingale" in the spring of 1927. He chuckled over Billy's notorious free-handedness with money when Murray was the top recording comedian.

Mention of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, of whom Billy Murray was a member, of course brought up thoughts of the Eight's manager, Henry Burr, known in his later years as "The Dean of Ballad Singers." James expressed admiration for Burr's ability as a singer. Talking of a trip to England and France taken by the Revelers in 1928, James gave me a laugh by describing how Frank Banta, who had been pianist for the Eight Victor Artists, used to baffle hotel clerks by assuming a thick "Cohen-on-the-telephone" accent, redolent of the New York East Side, and im-

periously demanding mail for Monroe Silver. Silver, like Banta, was a member of the Eight for years, and he spoke in real life exactly as he did on his records. The temptation to pretend to be "Mike" Silver and to demand in his name mail from harassed English and French men behind the hotel desk was more than the impish Frank could resist.

When we spoke of the Shannon Four, Lewis said Charles Hart (who at this writing is appearing in a Broadway theatrical production, "Witness for the Prosecution") could always be reached through the Lambs Club in New York. Elliott Shaw, he said, had "saved his money" and was living in retirement in Sharon, Connecticut. Wilfred Glenn was still active in concert work and had revived the Revelers, but with only himself remaining from the original troupe. Phil Duey, who succeeded Shaw as the ensemble's baritone after Elliott had a long illness, was described as a "studious chap." He had taken a doctorate degree at Columbia University and was teaching at the University of Michigan. We laughed at the difficulty the quartet had in keeping a first tenor after Charles Hart left it in 1924 to study opera singing in Germany. He was succeeded, generally for fairly brief periods, by Franklyn Baur, Charles Harrison, Frank Parker, Robert Simmons, James Melton, and perhaps others.

Lewis said he didn't realize, until he went abroad with the Revelers, how a popular recording artist was a well loved, almost a legendary figure, in millions of homes throughout the world. I told him that my brother Chad, now a professor at Beloit College in Wisconsin, once remarked of the pioneer recording artists: "I suppose they were just folks trying to make an honest living, but to me they will always be the most glamorous of all people." Lewis laughed and said the recording artists hadn't thought of themselves in that exalted light. "But the reception we got abroad," he remarked, "was really an eye-opener." He recalled circumstances of the Revelers giving command performances for members of the British Royal Family, as was related a few months ago in the HOBBIES article about Ed Smalle.

Lewis said he detested jazz, but liked the choral arrangements used by the Revelers. These were sometimes called "jazz choral effects," but he didn't consider them jazz. I learned he came to Chicago in 1940 when his health became impaired and he had to give up singing. He had since been with WGN and said he was "very happy" in his production work.

When I left the distinguished tenor it was with the feeling that I had experienced one of the most pleasant meetings I have known in my long career of interviewing and "writing up" recording artists. A few hours later I received another agreeable reception from the equally famous "Red-Headed Music Maker," Wendell Hall, whose records of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" swept the nation late in 1923.

#### IV Lewis James Records

Lewis James is one of those artists whose recorded achievements are so vast it would be impossible to chronicle them in less than a book-length biography. However, I shall trace briefly his recording career and give some idea of the kinds of records he made. From December, 1916, until early in 1918, he seems to have been exclusive to Columbia. In January, 1917, a new male quartet was introduced with "Robert Lewis" as the lead singer. The Columbia supplement writer said:

"Introducing the Knickerbocker Quartet! A new specialty quartet—destined to become one of the most popular singers of popular music in Columbia Catalogs—makes its initial bow in the current list. Our Recording Department has spent great efforts developing the Knickerbocker vocal ensemble and special attention is requested from our patrons to the happy results. The Knickerbocker counts its members: George Eldred, first tenor; Robert Lewis, second tenor; William Morgan, baritone; and Glenn Howard, bass. All these gentlemen are musicians of real merit and have individually sung with marked success before the public for a number of years." The quartet's first record, A2129, "Songs of Yesterday," was combined with "Everybody Loves an Irish Song," by M. J. O'Connell and the Knickerbockers. Records by the Knickerbocker Quartet continued to appear for another year.

"Robert Lewis" stuck around through most of 1918 (by the way, Columbia photos showed him smooth shaven instead of with the later familiar mustache), but "mystery man" Lewis disappeared from the lists forever in November, 1918, when Record No. A2618, "My Little Gypsy Wanda," was announced as sung by Lewis James, doubled with "Roses of Picardy," by Charles Harrison. Lewis James remained a familiar name in Columbia supplements for the next decade.

The tenor's first Victor appearance was in May, 1918, when, on No. 18441, he sang "All Aboard for Home, Sweet Home," with the assistance of the Shannon Four. (This must have been made just at the time he succeeded Harvey Hindermeyer as the Shannon's second tenor.) His first name was misspelled as "Louis." (Columbia also was occasionally guilty of that slip). The other side was "Send Me a Curl," sung by the still active Geoffrey O'Hara.

James' first Edison Diamond Disc, issued in the fall of 1919, was a beautiful rendition, with mixed chorus assistance, of "Dreamy Alabama," coupled with "Carolina Sunshine," an equally lovely number by Vernon Dalhart. His initial Pathé appears to have been 20193, "Sometime You'll Remember," with Isabelle Cannon singing on the reverse side, "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby."

As a soloist, Lewis James was called on, like other popular tenors, (Continued on page 39)

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • <b>CAMERA</b>               | • <b>OSCAR WILDE</b>  |
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**LEWIS JAMES**

(Continued from page 32)

to sing a wide range of music that included classic, semi-classic and standard concert numbers at one extreme, and the banal, trivial "sob ballad" at the other. Typical of the "tripe" he perforce recorded are "The Pal That I Loved Stole the Gal That I Loved," "The Ten Commandments of Love," "You Can't Be a Good Little Fellow and Still Be a Good Little Girl," "Just a Girl That Men Forget," "It's a Man Every Time, It's a Man," and "If You Like Me Like I Like You." Perhaps the depths of banality were plumbed in "My Kid," which contains the immortal lines: "He comes down stairs in his little white nightie and says his prayers to God Almighty . . . there's no kid like my kid."

James re-made a good many standard songs and hymns which had been originally recorded for Victor by pioneer singers who included Harry Macdonough and Frederic C. Freemantel. The Shannon Quartet also re-made some Hayden Quartet offerings. Another tenor who was called on for "re-makes" was William Robyn. James told me "Wee Willie's" name should be pronounced Roe-bine, instead of Robin, as most record collectors have always called it.

An especially fine James record is the Edison of "Duna." Another Edison, which, both sides considered, may be the finest semi-classic record he ever made, couples Ernest R. Ball's setting of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poem, "Who knows?" with the equally beautiful "Look Down, Dear Eyes." But when I mentioned this fine record to Lewis he couldn't remember

making it. My opinion is that he was always great in the charming ballads of Ernest Ball. Those recorded for Edison included "Little Crumbs of Happiness," "Down the Trail to Home, Sweet Home" and "Ten Thousand Years From Now."

During his career James recorded with many singers. His first duet partner was "George Wilson," who also sang as James Harrod, but was better known as Colin O'More. Then came Charles Harrison; Charles Hart (he probably sang more duets with Hart than with anyone else); Elliott Shaw; Helen Clark; Harold Wiley (a Brooklyn church singer baritone, who died a few years ago, with whom he sang for Pathé); Vernon Archibald; Marcia Freer; Olive Kline (disguised as "Alice Green"); Sam Ash; "Edna Brown" (another name for Elsie Baker); Franklyn Baur; Claire Brookhurst; Della Baker; Helen Davis (Mrs. Victor Young); Elizabeth Spencer; Gladys Rice; Betsy Lane Shepherd; and, on one Columbia record, a singer listed as May Meredith. He doesn't remember this soprano, but she may have been Helen Clark. In one of his Victor records he had the backing of the Peerless Quartet (Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, John Meyer and Frank Croxton), and as a member of the Shannon Four and Crescent Trio he sang in support of Wendell Hall, Harry C. Browne and Vernon Dalhart, besides artists already mentioned. I may have overlooked others. From the standpoint of both quantity and quality Lewis James has had a remarkable phonograph career.

I have such pleasant memories of my 1951 visit to Chicago that I am thinking of spending another few days there when I take my next vacation. If I do I shall make a point of dropping around at the Tribune Tower and seeing Lewis James. From our one meeting I am sure he makes friends easily and keeps them permanently. I know his HOBBIES admirers will join me in wishing him restored health and many years of congenial activity.

## MECHANICAL ANTIQUES WANTED

PLEASE NOTE my mechanical bank display ad in this section, listing various wants.—F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

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**A MUSICAL BOX DESK**

An unusual Swiss musical box which recently stirred the collecting delight of Mrs. Ruth Bornand, Pelham, New York, is in the shape of a parlor or church organ, though it is actually a musical box desk. It was made by Nicole Frere.

It has an engraved silver name plate and silver inkwells. It also has engraved spring barrels, two sectional comb, and ten cylinders which play eight selections. Inside the lid is a silver engraved program card.

In the 18th and 19th centuries Swiss farmers, and later watchmakers, produced fine music boxes. The latter installed mechanisms in umbrella handles, walking sticks, steins, pistols, dolls and similar items.

Famous people have collected musical boxes, including Napoleon. Not long ago Bing Crosby bought a fine old mahogany box with an ebony trim.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH



Ruby and Morton Harvey in their stage days

## The First Singer Who Made a "Blues" Record MORTON HARVEY

As regular readers of this department have become aware, I frequently remark that I never cease to wonder at the obliging manner in which coincidence, fate, Providence or some other inscrutable factor in human affairs arranges things so that I eventually get the information I need about formerly popular recording artists. Sometimes the help comes in unexpected ways.

A couple of years ago, a New York man asked me if I could give him the address of Morton Harvey. It seemed the gentleman was an ardent pacifist who collected songs opposing war, and he wanted to write and ask Harvey where he could get a copy of the Victor record of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier" which was issued back in 1915. I replied, telling the inquirer I had been trying for years to find out something about Morton Harvey, but had learned nothing and had no idea whether the singer was still with us. I also said he should be able to get a good copy of the record from Gertrude Heyman, Al McRea or some of the other regular HOBBIES advertisers. He wrote me a little later that Mrs. Heyman had supplied him with a "mint pressing."

Then, in July, 1954, I received a letter from Charles Lindsley, a disc jockey at KYA, San Francisco. After assuring me that he was "one of your most avid fans," Chuck made my eyes protrude by going on:

I wonder if you've entertained the thought of doing an article on the old-time disc artist, Morton Harvey. He's hale and hearty, 68, and lives just 35 miles south of San Francisco. You may of course have his address, but just in case you haven't here 'tis: Morton Harvey, P. O. Box 66, Los Gatos, California. He was recently a guest on my competitor's radio program, "Dusty Records." I missed this, but was told that he was very genial and felt quite at home before the "mike" as he had been on radio in the early days.

Mr. Harvey related one amusing anecdote about his old "recording horn days." This was in regard to a session at the Edison studios. The critical Thomas Alva was in attendance with his favorite dog and, as the story goes, if the canine walked out during the artist's vocal efforts the record in question wasn't issued. Thus, Mr. Harvey says, what he considers one of his best songs was never released.

I understand that Morton Harvey recorded under many aliases, including "Gene Rogers." . . . I understand also that if you send him any of his old records he will send you a recent photograph of himself with a personal message on it. I saw this particular photo and it reveals a rather dapper fellow with a flashy mustache and a roguish look in his eye.

Morton Harvey also said that he was about the first artist to record the "blues", referring to his discing of "The Memphis Blues", but said that there are no jazz aspects to the platter because the musicians were from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. My favorite record of his is "I Want to Go Back to Michigan", I'll . . . be looking for a series of articles on the Happiness Boys, Billy Jones and Ernie Hare.

## II. I HEAR FROM MORTON HARVEY

I was elated at receiving this interesting letter and wrote to Morton Harvey that same day, telling him how glad I was to learn he was still here and thriving. My letter mentioned some of my recollections of his recording career, as well as the fact that my brother Edward had seen him appear years ago in a vaudeville sketch with Jimmy Alman as his partner.

The erstwhile vaudeville and recording comedian whom I was soon thinking of as an old friend didn't lose much time in replying. Under date of July 21 he wrote:

Friend Jim: Don't shake the envelope. Your photo will be along later. We are bizzyazell. We make young ones out of old ones. Photos, that is. We do everything, and only Mrs. and Me. The Craftsmen got swamped out by photography. We do color and copying and restorations.

That's an interesting little sheet

you enclosed with Billy Murray's pix in it. Where does he live now? He made the discovery or really 'dug me up' when I was with Al Field's Minstrels in 1912 or '13. We were in Jersey and he told me to look him up when our season closed, and I did. I went into show biz with "The Time, the Place and the Girl" road show out of Chicago. Born in Omaha the year of the big snow, 1886. Father and mother were away the day I came along. I was visiting Mother's sister. (Read that again.)

Yes I was in vaudeville with Jimmy Alman and where he is I'll never know. I tried to reach him and then we came out here. We still do some of the old act Betty and I did as Mort and Betty Harvey. . . I find I must run a few pix of me and some of Betty and me. She was one of the Nunn-Bush program singers, introduced by Bill Hayes of Amos and Andy's first hit radio fame. . .

"Gene Rogers" is my only other wax name. I had 18 releases one month for Emerson records. Where are these old platters, or saucers, available if anywhere? I am trading a personally autographed photo for any of my old records. More later. In haste, MORTON HARVEY.

### III. A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW

The foregoing letter calls for a few remarks. It was written on stationery containing Morton Harvey's name, followed by the initials A. R. P. S., and by an insignia showing he is a member of the Photographers' Association of America. According to the letterhead, Morton and his wife, Betty, make copies and restorations of old and new photographs. They also make photostats and color portraits, in addition to doing ordinary picture taking work.

It's also worthy of note that the singer, whom Victor called a tenor but all other companies for whom he recorded described as a baritone, was "discovered" by Billy Murray. Several prominent recording artists — Ada Jones, Walter Van Brunt and Ed Smalle among them — owe their start in the recording profession to encouragement and help given by the big-hearted Billy. I was glad to write Morton that Billy was living in Freeport, N. Y., and seemed in reasonably good health, but only a month later I had the sad task of letting him know his old friend had died of a heart attack while preparing to witness a production of Guy Lombardo's "Arabian Nights" spectacle at Jones Beach.

Morton sent me a photostat of a feature story about him in the San Jose Mercury-News for Sunday, January 23, 1949. The article, "Presenting Harvey, Former Thespian," was written by Carol Greening. I'll quote the parts that should be of most interest to HOBBIES readers:

LOS GATOS, January 22—"But what will you say about me when you introduce my act?" inquired Madame Nazimova of Morton Harvey, behind scenes at the 85th St. Theater in New York.

"I will say 'I now present a lady and an artist who needs no introduction!'" Harvey replied with a flourish.

"Artist I will try to be, but not a lady!" said the great dramatic actress emphatically.

This is but one tale stored away in the treasure house of memories that belongs to Morton Harvey and his wife Betty. . . They trod the boards for many happy years in vaudeville circuits throughout the country, making friends with such greats as Fred Allen, Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone, and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy.

Harvey, a genial gentleman who has never lost his knack for a deadpan quip, came from a non-theatrical family in Omaha, Nebraska. His grandfather had brought over the first Aberdeen Angus cattle to this country, had founded the town of Harvey, Ill., and looked askance at his grandson's singing ability.

But Morton used to slip away and see a family who encouraged his ambitions, and finally when Phil Schwartz told him to go to Chicago to try out for a road show of "The Time, the Place and the Girl", he didn't say no. He became part of the chorus, secretly understudied every male part of the cast, and finally got a chance to play the organ grinder. (Note by J. W. Morton says he was living in Chicago at this time and Schwartz was with the Chicago office of the Jerome Remick music firm.)

After the show disbanded in 1913 he joined Al Field's minstrels. In New York, Alfred Solman heard him sing and introduced him to Billy Murray, a phonograph singer. An audition was arranged for Harvey and he began to make Victor, Edison and Columbia records.

This led to his first outstanding achievement—the job of making the first vocal blues record—"Memphis Blues"—for a major company. "The members of the Philharmonic Orchestra who did the instrumental work had quite a time adjusting themselves to the music," Harvey reminisces.

One day Harvey saw Enrico Caruso making 11 records in one day at the

Victor plant in Camden, N. J.—with retails, about 50 arias were sung in all. The next day Caruso got a pan-ping from the critics for being in poor voice at a "Pagliacci" performance at the Metropolitan, Harvey says.

During these years of making recordings and working in vaudeville all over the country, Harvey met Lou Holtz, among other stars. Holtz and Joe Howard and Harvey were all staying at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. Howard and Harvey took to each other immediately because Harvey remembered all the words and music to every one of Howard's songs—even some Howard had forgotten he wrote. Harvey and Howard even collaborated on a song—to find that it actually was the same melody as one Howard had written many years before. Fred Allen, Al Jolson, Jim and Molly Jordan (Fibber McGee and Molly), Eddie Foy—all were either stars or working their way up via the vaudeville route when Harvey knew them. But the person he liked best on and off stage was his "partner's partner," (Betty) whom he met in Greensburg, Pa., in 1925.

### IV. MORTON HARVEY'S "CONFESSION"

A short time after I received Morton Harvey's first letter, he sent me his "confession"—a batch of hastily jotted pencil notes set down to give me information for this article. From this I learned his father was Charles A. Harvey of Chicago and his mother, Elizabeth M. Plummer of Connecticut. HOBBIES' Mark Twain expert, Cyril Clemens, will probably be interested to learn that Harvey's parents were married in the girlhood home of

### LLOYD G. KELLEY

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We manufacture 200 other tunes for the 15 1/4" Regina, tune list furnished on request.

We have for sale also many fine disc type music boxes ranging in size from 8" diameter discs to 27" diameter discs. We also have a large assortment of Swiss music boxes from one and 2 tone musical numbers to large table music boxes with extra cylinders playing as many as 72 tunes.

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### JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1915); back copies of phonograph publications and all sorts of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not interested in buying phonographs and records by mail and do not want "The Victor Book of the Opera." Do not submit material without being instructed by me. I will not pay for or return unsolicited items. If I do not reply I already have the material you offer. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

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Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

Harriet Beecher Stowe in Hartford, across the street from where Mark Twain lived. The three Plummer girls, Harvey says, were "Mark's pets," and the humorist attended Elizabeth's wedding.

"Grandfather Harvey," Morton wrote, "was T. W. Harvey of Chicago, lumber man and importer of the first Aberdeen Angus cattle to America . . . I came along in the '80's, but the panic of '89 wiped Dad out of a lush luxury business - the Omaha Mantle and Tile Company, with offices at 1514 Farnum street.

"We moved to the new town of Harvey in time to see from our windmill the Cold Storage Building fire at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Finally, to school in Chicago, and mother's sisters wanted me to go to school in the East to relieve pressure at home — three other children and a marvelous stepmother. Dad without a job. I always sang boy soprano and a quick switch to bass in the Illinois glee club, a male quartet in Lyceum. I also did readings and was one of the Bell Ringers. By this time I was back from school in the East. They wanted me to become a preacher, but I wanted show business.

"Then Riverview Park and White City opened in Chicago and I became a high class saloon canary until Phil Schwarz gave me a card to Hamilton Coleman, who was producing 'The Time, The Place and the Girl'. He signed me as a tenor, so off we went to Chicago, on a coast-to-coast season and my first Orange Blossoms. No wedding bells — just olfactory blossoms.

"Summer came, and the moving pictures in legit houses with slides and singer. The following season, Al Jolson was doing a whistling specialty in Lew Dockstader's Minstrels. The show played Decatur, Illinois, so our 'flicker show' laid off, but Tom Ronan, manager of the Opera House, said 'You should hear my singer.' So they did, after the show — Jolson, Dockstader, the company and me. Eddie Cupero was the minstrel orchestra director, and he asked me what ballads I knew. I didn't even know what a ballad was, so I handed him my music. Eddie picked out 'Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold,' and I sang it. Dockstader and Jolson walked down the aisle toward me at the piano and asked, 'How much money would you have to have to join the troupe?' I said, 'Do you think \$25.00 would be too much?'

"Lew turned to Al and said, 'What the h-l do you suppose is the matter with the kid?' I was to have taken the place of Will H. Thompson (famous as a phonograph singer in the early days of recording). He was getting \$125.00, but when he heard me Will changed his mind about quitting.

"Montgomery, the Motion Picture Man' heard about me and sent for me to come to Jacksonville. Then I played his picture theatres and in Memphis I was signed up by Al Field's Minstrels. We played in New Jersey, but went to New York to hear some new songs at one of the publish-

ers'. Billy Murray heard me and took me to the phonograph companies. That's how my recording career started.

"I played vaudeville with an old-fashioned 'audience act,' then went to the Manhattan Trio, and then it was King and Harvey for several years. The act had been Stepp, Mehlinger and King—the first rathskeller act out of the Tonopah, Nevada, gold rush days.

"Alman and Harvey was the first talking and singing act I did. I gained much experience in stagecraft with Jimmy. We split because he didn't like the dressing room in Watertown, New York, so I went on that afternoon and did a 'single,' which I was doing when I met Betty. I played 'round' once or twice as 'the Rolling Stone,' a fairly successful singing and talking monolog, then it was Betty and I from then on. We met in Greensburg, Pa. She had been with Ralph Dunbar acts (singing) and was one of the Nunn-Bush Singers on radio. She also was featured in 'Robin Hood' in the Jessie Bartlett Davis role for Dunbar, coast to coast tour. I needed Betty in those days when I didn't have her. She has been an inspiration and a guiding light to me since the first day we met. It was Thanksgiving Day and I have never ceased to give thanks for that day.

"We came west on a Pantages tour when Jolson was making his first talkie, and after two Christmas days in New Amsterdam we felt that the talkies would kill vaudeville, so we got out. I had been interested in photography. I carried a camera (8x10) and did portraits of Mae West when Harry Richman was her pianist at Shea's, Buffalo, Vera Gordon, and many others. We played Chicago, and C. L. Carrell, who was far ahead of his day, was trying to sell transcriptions to radio stations. He had four one-lung portables (100 watts), with one just allowed to anchor at Ponca City, Oklahoma. So Betty and I were sent down to manage it and to build up good will.

"We were there 14 years and came out here to do some work for the soldiers after Pearl Harbor. Not photography, but setting them right on the idea of their place in God's universe and how to think in combat, etc. Then the War Manpower Commission needed some instructors for the job training of supervisors in war plants, so they sent for me at Camp Roberts, where I had been doing some preliminary work so well that I became a normal instructor on job relations in the San Francisco area.

"Came D Day and that training was doomed, so they gave me charge of personnel at an Army hospital until it closed. The day it closed I saw a

(Continued on page 41)

#### MUSIC BOX DISCS

MIRA music box discs, 18½" \$3. 15½" \$2.50; 12" \$1.50; 9¼" \$1.; 6-13/16" \$0.75. Plus postage and insurance. Send for lists. No Reginas. —Squires, 2328 Channing, Berkeley, California. n1633

## CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

#### LIBBY HOLMAN:

Like Harry Richman, Libby Holman is best remembered to collectors for her work with Brunswick in the late 1920s. She is one of the unforgettable torch song stylists of that period, and Decca has recently reissued two of her finest sides.

Decca 9-11060 (45 rpm) Love for Sale/Moanin' Low (also available on 78 rpm and 33⅓ rpm).

In 1942 Decca released an album by her which was not kept in the catalog very long. For the next ten years she made no records that I know of. But in the December 16, 1953 issue of Variety, a short news item mentioned that Libby Holman had waxed two new Lp albums for a new recording firm called MB Records.

One record was titled "Libby Holman Sings", and the other "Libby Holman's Blues Classics". Her accompanist for these numbers was Gerald Cooke. However, I have never seen these two records for sale in Chicago or environs. Do any of the readers have copies?

#### RUTH ETTING:

Whenever Hollywood grinds out a film biography of some show business personality the record collectors of that personality almost invari-

#### MUSIC BOXES

BIRD BOXES and cages with mechanical singing birds, whistling carved figures, and 60 different models of music boxes for jewelry or cigarettes. Unusual Christmas articles for sale. Repairs.—Sponholz, 770 Madison Ave., New York 21, N. Y. n3065

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20¾", 27", 32", Criterion 20½", Mira 6¾", 9¼", 18½", Monarch 15½", New Century 18½", Orphenion 16¼", Polyphon 24½", Stella 14" 17¼", Imperial Symphonion 13½", Thorens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. d3367

MUSIC BOX: 6 tunes, three Chinese figures strike bells, very old, \$60.—R. D. McWilliams, 1027 Eighth St., Las Vegas, New Mexico. n1061

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

BUY, SELL or trade mechanical pianos, Hurdys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Rolls, Write—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. d120001

has a souvenir bell made of brass from the Battleship Maine. And a prize ring gong which is attached to a square of wood placed just over her kitchen door.

Animal bells, beside those for dogs and cats, include the common cow bells, goat bells, horse bells, and turkey bells, familiar to many of our pioneering forefathers. There are also camel bells from the Near East, elephant bells from India, and water buffalo bells and sacred bullock bells from the Far East.

Of her school teachers' bells, Mrs. Cole said, "Many of them have remarkably fine tones, as do some of the harness bells. Harness bells always remind me of the days when the towns and cities of Maine were full of their winter music.

"The fun of collecting," Mrs. Cole went on, "is to find out all you can about each item. I read everything I can get my hands on about bells. If possible, I clip the article. So far I have run across relatively few books on bells, but I try to acquire any available.

"I make out a card with a drawing of each bell and list all the data I have," Mrs. Cole continued. "I would not be satisfied to have a collection about which I knew little or nothing."

Then Mrs. Cole added with a charming smile, "You know, I think bells are most appealing to collect because they are the only things I know of that are fun to dust. They 'talk back' and you get a different tone from each one."

### MORTON HARVEY

(Continued from page 38)

studio for sale in Los Gatos, and here we have been since 1946. We still sing and write songs and have lots of fun and lots of friends. Business is good, and Betty has a few voice and piano pupils, so we move on."

(To be continued)

### ADDITION TO MURRAY— SMALLE DUET LIST

W. M. Allinon of Saylesville, R. I., calls attention to the fact that one record was omitted in the list of duets by Billy Murray and Ed Smalle, published in the recent Ed Smalle series by Oliver R. Graham.

The missing record is Victor 19039, with Murray and Smalle singing "No One Loves You Any Better Than Your M-A-Double M-Y," on one side, and Aileen Stanley on the B side with "Don't Think You'll Be Missed."

The lessons of paternalism ought to be unlearned and the better lesson taught, that while the people should patriotically and cheerfully support their government, its functions do not include the support of the people.

Inaugural Address, March 1893

—Grover Cleveland

### CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

(Continued from page 38)

ably have cause to rejoice. The recent recordings of Al Jolson, Helen Kane, Blossom Seeley, Benny Fields, Eddie Cantor, Joe Howard and many others have all been linked to biographical motion pictures — either their life stories or the life stories of other personalities with whom their performances played a vital role.

No exception to the rule is the current "Love Me or Leave Me" in which Doris Day plays the role of Ruth Etting whose stormy private life is the theme of the picture and there is little point in outlining it here. Her professional career began in Chicago in the mid twenties where she became an immediate success and was quickly signed to a Columbia contract.

Her first record for this label was a vocal chorus on the Art Kahn dance record of "Hello Baby" (716-D), recorded in 1926. The following year she moved to New York where she starred in one hit show after another. "The Ziegfeld Follies of 1927" were followed by "The Ziegfeld Follies of 1928", Ziegfeld's "Whoopee" with Eddie Cantor, "The Ziegfeld Follies of 1929", "Simple Simon" with Ed Wynn in 1930, and "The Ziegfeld Follies of 1931". From there she went to Hollywood, appeared on radio and in night clubs, and starred with Eddie Cantor once again in "Roman Scandals".

She was without doubt one of Columbia's most popular vocalists in the late twenties. With the release of her film biography this company has seen fit to reissue some of the finest recordings she made for them.

In this splendid long playing album may be found Ruth Etting's superb version of "Shine on Harvest Moon" which she revived in the 1931 "Follies". Others that come to my mind as among the best of her releases are "Mean to Me", "At Sundown", "Love Me or Leave Me", "Sam the Old Accordion Man", "It All Depends on You", and "Ten Cents a Dance". I think the album is worth its price for these seven titles alone, but besides these, there are five others which many will think are equally good. The recording from the old masters is superbly done and I can recommend this album wholeheartedly.

Columbia album ML 5050 — The

### BELLS FOR SALE

NEW BELLS - Bell metal Call Bell or Saigne Legier pattern Cow Bell, \$2.00 each. Write for list. — Stonecrest Antiques, Route 2, East Hampton, Conn. (Location Marlborough) ja3614

FARM BELLS complete \$15.00. Dealers discounts lots 6 or more. — Patrick's, Box 215, Marion, Ohio. ap6084

### Travel Search For Bells

By A. C. Meyer — \$2.50

A story about the Meyers personal search for bells, a down-to-earth summary of a fascinating hobby

Published by

LIGHTNER PUBLISHING CORPORATION

1006 So. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60604

Original Recordings of Ruth Etting:  
Shine On Harvest Moon  
Mean to Me

Shaking the Blues Away  
Out in the Cold Again  
I'll Never Be the Same

At Sundown  
Love Me or Leave Me  
Nevertheless

Sam, The Old Accordion Man  
It All Depends on You  
Take Me in Your Arms  
Ten Cents a Dance

If I had any complaint at all, it would be that they left out one of my Ruth Etting favorites, "I'm Good for Nothing but Love", (Columbia 2505-D). I am not an expert on the Etting recordings. Her only common ones are those she waxed for Columbia between 1926-1931. However, she also recorded for other companies here and I have one Perfect and one Oriole record by her.

The earliest Decca catalogs also list a few numbers. In England she became a favorite very shortly and, judging from the notices in *The Gramophone*, most of her American releases must have been made available in that country. Her last English Columbia release seems to have been DB 571 "There Ought to be a Moonlight Saving Time", which is mentioned in the September 1931 issue.

The following months show that her Columbia contract was over, for in October she had a Decca release, in November, a Winner record, and in December an Imperial disc. For those of you who would like to see a complete Etting discography, I urge you strongly to send for a copy of the Fall issue of the *International Discophile*, in which this material has been promised.

### CIGAR STORE FIGURES IN AMERICAN FOLK ART

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guarded shops along  
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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## The First Singer Who Made a "Blues" Record MORTON HARVEY

(Continued from the November issue)

### V Excerpts From Other Letters

In the same envelope that contained his "confession," Morton sent me a letter which he neglected to date, from which I shall select some items of interest:

Friend Jim: I haven't been forgetting you. How can I? More people are writing me that they heard from you about me. The funny part about it is they come from everywhere. They all say that they are enjoying, and have been enjoying, my little and big records.

I printed some pix this a. m. and will try to make some notes to give you an outline. We are closed today, as every Monday, and expected to be at the beach in time for lunch. It is coming up one o'clock. The lunch is packed and we haven't left yet.

I have in my files a letter . . . from Thomas P. Westendorf, who wrote "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," saying he was enjoying the "Michigan" record of Irving Berlin's song (sung by me) many times each day . . . I can't tell how I sound now, but I'll bet in two or three weeks I could cut a couple of honeys on platters.

Later—I am back from a day at the beach. Didn't even get out of the car. Beach too dirty. Dogs, kids and picnic litter.

I am sure you and I could write a book. I have a good memory and an abundance of material . . . I have a list including Belle Baker, Pat Rooney, Eugene O'Brien, Sophie Tucker, Frank Van Hooten, Van and Schenk, Fred Allen and Fred Ardath of the Country Store—a wonder of show business, five to seven companies playing all circuits and the Winter Garden. Six people, top salary, \$35, bringing in from \$750 up for years. My partner, Jimmy Alman, was partner in this venture with Ardath. So many laughs and such accurate timing no one ever heard the lines until one day at rehearsal, Fred and Jimmy heard the lines and walked out on their own golden egg. The show went on.

I am enclosing two self-portraits of myself. The light one would make a good reproduction for you . . . Kindest regards and sorry for the delay, but the first day in August we had 12 sittings in the studio and the next day six, and there are only two of us and the dog. Still they come, and we work long hours, besides the other things we do. Betty is organist and I am an officer in Eastern Star, and I was chaplain of the Elks last

year plus some other activities, so we go from about 6:30 a. m. until 11 at night. Right now I have been printing pix since 7:30 a. m., and Betty is just finishing a piano lesson, which she gives two or three mornings a week before the photo department opens at 10 a. m.

Morton wrote me another letter on Monday, August 30, after I had told him of Billy Murray's sudden death.

Saturday night I called Station KFRG in San Francisco and told Don Davis, disc jockey, about Billy Murray. I suggested he announce it and play a disc by Billy, which he did on "Old Dusty Records," his program.

Arthur Clough I don't remember, because I came right out of the sticks to Broadway, one music publisher, back to the minstrel show to finish the season, and into New York and the experience of vaude, records, want and plenty, marriage and divorce, but never a police blotter. Don't know how I missed it.

I too lived in Freeport when the Long Island and Good Hearted Thespian Society—LIGHTS—was organized with Leo Carillo as the head man—called the Angel, not president or master.

Here are a couple of things that might be of interest. On one recording at Camden for Victor I was smoking my pet pipe during a "break." The call came for resuming the work. I knocked the ashes out of the pipe on the outside ledge of the window sill and scraped the pipe with my knife. One of the musicians said, "You shouldn't do that!" I replied that the ashes were cold—no fire hazard. He said:

"Harry Lauder has much more money than either of us will ever have. He never throws out ashes. He smokes 'em again!"

On another recording date in the same place we had quite a session trying to get a good cutting of, I think it was, "The Memphis Blues." There was no "dressing a run" of a recording after a master record had been played back. We must sing until the playback sounded O.K., and then make a master just like it. I tried my darndest. We were on the last measure of the last line of the chorus. I was sustaining the note for the ending, when "B-O-O-O-O!" the 12 o'clock whistle at the neighboring Campbell's Soup plant boomed in through the open windows. The orchestra heard it and went into a most discordant finale. The director said, "Wait five minutes, and re-cut!" The re-cut was the final. Incidentally, although the orchestra that accompanied me in "The Memphis Blues" was composed of symphonic players, it wasn't their fault that they didn't get a "blues" quality into the record. The "Blues" style of singing and playing, which became so familiar later, was just about to be born. Even the dance records of "The Memphis Blues" made during that period were played as straight one-steps. However, there were a few good old-fashioned "trombone smears" in the orchestral effects of my "Memphis Blues" record.

At Emerson's office one day I was hearing the coming month's releases when up popped "Old Black Joe" by a tenor. I said, "That should be done by a bass or baritone." I nodded to the pianist, he played it. I sang it, so we went back to record it immediately. That's why a tenor had me to

back him up—Henry Burr, on "My Old Kentucky Home," Emerson 773. I don't know why Victor called me a tenor. None of the others did. "Shoeboot's Serenade" I don't recall, but it was probably a Negro parody on the Schubert's Serenade melody.

There was a story that Thomas Alva Edison couldn't hear anything, but he and Mrs. Edison and a dog listened to every release. If the dog walked out of the room (the story went) the record was discarded. I worked all one morning on a recording of "Look in Her Eyes," which on the Victor was made by George MacFarlane. When it failed to be released on Edison I asked about it and was told, "The dog must have walked out on you." (This song was issued on an Edison record by another baritone, Vernon Archibald. —J. W.) There was no official note of rejection, and I didn't care much, because Edison paid off immediately after the record was cut.

### VI Morton Harvey's Records

I'm sure all the readers of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists have enjoyed the genial comedian-photographer's reminiscences of his colorful career. We may pass now to a brief discussion of his records.

Morton Harvey's first Victor records were issued in December, 1914, with no fanfare. For several years, beginning in July, 1913, Victor didn't give individual descriptions of its popular records, but listed them on one page under some such heading as "Song Hits of the Month." One of Harvey's first was 17650, "I Want to Go Back to Michigan," (the Irving Berlin song so much enjoyed by Thomas P. Westendorf) coupled with "At the Mississippi Cabaret," by the American Quartet. The other was 17649, "At the Ball, That's All," the reverse side of which was perhaps the first song to be written about the fox trot, which has now been a standard dance step for 40 years. It was "Do the Funny Fox Trot," sung by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan.

In January, 1915, came perhaps the biggest seller of Harvey's entire list, No. 17657, W. C. Handy's immortal "Memphis Blues," doubled with "The Mississippi Barbecue," by Collins and Harlan. (First a "Mississippi Cabaret," then a "Barbecue") Recording this number gave Morton Harvey the distinction of being the first singer to make a record of a blues song. It was not, however, the first blues record. In October, 1914, the Victor Military band had played a one-step version of "The Memphis Blues," and Prince's Band had made a 12-inch Columbia in the same style. Harvey's nevertheless was the first vocal blues record. It didn't meet with a wholly favorable reception in the South, where some listeners re-



A series of "shots" taken by Morton Harvey of himself

sented our friend Morton's pronounced Mid-Western accent and insisted the song should have been sung by someone who sounded more like a Negro. The critics, however, overlooked the fact that the lyrics, by George A. Norton, described the sensations of a visitor to the South, rather than a native—a visitor who heard "The Memphis Blues" played by Handy's Band. Regardless of conservative Southern sentiment, the record was a whopping seller.

In March, 1915, Morton was represented by the song, "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," which was so ardently craved by the pacifist New York gentlemen. The number was 17716, and the coupling was a denunciation of war by Irving Berlin, "Stay Down Here Where You Belong," in which the devil forbade his son to visit the earth, where (because of World War One) the sun said, there was more hell than in Satan's own domains. This was another big selling record, but it was cut out of the Victor catalog when the United States got into the war.

During 1915, Harvey made several Edison records of which two were

issued both as Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinders. Both were sung with the assistance of mixed choruses. Diamond Disc 80220 coupled "There's a Bungalow in Dixieland" with "Back to the Carolina You Love," by Owen J. McCormack. Its cylinder number was 2557. D. D. No. 80226 combined my choice of all the Morton Harvey records, "In the Hills of Old Kentucky," with "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," sung by Helen Clark and Chorus. (Obviously, this record also was swept out of the catalog when the war fever raged). The Blue Amberol number of "In the Hills" was 2623. It is a beautiful piece of singing and recording. Concerning it, the Edison supplement writer said: "The feature of this record is the steadiness of Morton Harvey's tones as he sings this charming and catchy melody. As a singer of this type of popular song ballad, Morton Harvey is unsurpassed."

It's worthy of mention that Harvey's records exhibited a considerable price range. His Victors and Columbias sold for 75 cents each and his Edison discs for \$1.50, but the seven-

inch Emersons which he made later were only 25 cents a copy. The Edison cylinders were 60 cents.

The baritone (or tenor as Victor insisted) wasn't represented in the Victor list again until October, 1916, when he came through with one of his best waxings, the mock-tragic, irresistibly funny "If You Don't Want Me Send Me To My Ma" coupled on 18108 with "Morning, Noon and Night." To my ears his singing improved consistently and considerably as he gained maturity and experience and one of the best of all his records was 18151, "Melody Of My Dream" (composed by "Unknown") combined with "I'm Going Over the Hills to Virginia." "Melody of My Dreams" is an exquisite bit of ballad singing, done in a serious style that wouldn't be expected of the warbler of "Memphis Blues" and "If You Don't Want Me Send Me To My Ma."

The final Victor record by Morton Harvey was 18206, "From Me to Mandy Lee," doubled with "Down at the Huskin' Bee," by the Peerless Quartet. It was issued in September, 1917. Meanwhile, his only Columbia disc had appeared in February, 1917, and was a great seller, No. A2143, "They're Wearing 'Em Higher In Hawaii," with George O'Connor (subject of a 1955 HOBBIES series) being heard on the other side in the rowdy, roistering and slightly ribald "Pray for the Lights to Go Out."

I'm afraid my list of Harvey's seven-inch Emerson records of 1916 and '17 is far from complete. However, the following, which were issued under his own name, may be mentioned:

7130, Honolulu, America Loves You/Tho' I Had a Bit of the Devil in Me (Jim Doherty); 774, I Left Her on the Beach at Honolulu/On the Beach at Waikiki (both by Harvey); 729, Shoeboot's Serenade/Turkey in de Straw (Billy Golden); 759, I've Got the Army Blues/Old Flag Never Touched the Ground (Manuel Romain); 788, There's a Little Bit of Bad in Every Good Little Girl/She is the Sunshine of Virginia (Sam Ash); 791, Pretty Baby/Tennessee Blues (Gene Rogers); 773, Old Black Joe/My Old Kentucky Home (Henry Burr); 785, Turn Back the Universe and Give Me Yesterday/Ireland Must Be Heaven/For My Mother Came From There (Herbert Morley); and 776, You're a Dangerous Girl/Loveland, Beautiful Land of Love (both by Harvey).

These were sung by Morton Harvey under the assumed name of Gene Rogers:

7136, O'Brien is Tryin' to Learn to Talk Hawaiian/Wearin' of the Green (John W. Myers); 787, Pray for the Lights To Go Out/They Made It Twice as Nice as Paradise and They Called It Dixieland (Herbert Morley—whoever he was!); and 791, the already mentioned Tennessee Blues, coupled with Pretty Baby.

It has been a pleasure to tell the life story of Morton Harvey, whose

career as a phonograph singer, though comparatively brief, produced so many good records. Here's wishing him and his treasured helpmeet, Betty, many happy years in their charming California retreat.

### SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF "SHOEBOOT'S SERENADE"

By Jim Walsh

Several months after the Morton article was written, I found the mysterious "Shoebot's Serenade" listed in a 1917 Emerson record supplement. The composer's name was given as Handy. Surmising that this must be my friend, W. C. Handy, the beloved blind "Daddy of the Blues," I wrote a letter of inquiry and received the following reply, dated July 25:

"For the past year I have spent very little time at the office, having lost my sight, and yet being called on to go here and there to meet the demands of a public that likes to hold on to these old numbers. I forgot my old age and tried to crowd too much into life, and the doctor took me to the hospital to slow me down. Later I had a light stroke that put me in a wheel chair for several months and about all I do now is take it easy.

"While 'St. Louis Blues' is about to enjoy its 41st year of existence, I still feel about my 'Memphis Blues,' which was my first, like a mother does toward a wayward son. When I was leading a band in Memphis we rehearsed all the popular music, committed it to memory and played our dances without music stands, so they got it into their minds that we couldn't read music. In discussing the matter I asked a gentleman to name a classical number and I would put blues lyrics to it, and give it a modern treatment. He challenged me with 'Schubert's Serenade.' I came back with 'Shoebot's Serenade,' a copy of which I will send you. . . I am improving daily, and managed to go to the office on July 11th for our annual meeting of the Board of Directors, where I presided four hours. I will be glad to receive the Morton Harvey article and thank you in advance for it. Wishing you life's blessings to the fullest. . ."

So that solves the mystery of "Shoebot's Serenade." And I'm sure all HOBBIES readers wish a full bounty of life's blessings to that modest genius, W. C. Handy, and hope he will recover his health and sight.

### CORRECTION

We wish to correct an error on page 36 of the November issue. The caption under the picture should read, "Betty and Morton Harvey in their stage days" not "Ruby and Morton Harvey . . ." as appeared on some copies.

### MUSIC BOXES

FOR SALE: Tune discs for Regina 15 1/2", 20 3/4", 27", 32", Criterion 20 1/2", Mira 6 3/4", 9 1/4", 18 1/2", Monarch 15 1/2", New Century 18 1/2", Orphenion 16 1/4", Polyphon 24 1/2", Stella 14" 17 1/4", Imperial Symphonion 13 1/2", Thorens 4 1/2". State size wanted. Lists—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. d3867

12" REGINA penny-in-slot with discs. Fascinating paper-roll-operated full size concertina (old fashioned type accordion) "Tanzbar," or will buy additional 2 1/4" rolls for same. Handsome 12" 1906 model Victor phonograph, mahogany trimmed with gold, large wood horn, Queen Anne mahogany stand with record cabinet. Photos 25c.—Phillips, 2335 W. 3rd, Los Angeles 57, Calif. d1044

## CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

There is one great disadvantage in collecting the recordings of "personalities." Many of the greatest artists on the vaudeville stage should have been seen as well as heard. I recently purchased two records by the very famous English music hall star, Albert Chevalier. These were a great disappointment to me, and I subsequently found out by corresponding with other collectors who had seen Chevalier that although the records are excellent sound reproductions of two of his most famous songs, they just do not do justice to him because he had to be seen to be truly appreciated.

Several times I have sent tape recordings of famous vaudevillians to Jack Norworth and often he has written the same reply. Among them were records by artists of such caliber as Elizabeth Murray, Vesta Tilley, and Elsie Janis. Now the collector of operatic recordings has fewer disappointments such as these because although many singers of the "Golden Age" must also have been great "visual artists," nevertheless in nearly all cases it was the voice which really counted.

Similarly the collector who specializes in the standard popular vocalists of the acoustic era such as Billy Murray, Henry Burr, and Collins and Harlan will rarely be disappointed with the recordings of their favorites. But with the great vaudevillians there are times when the novice collector will wonder why some stars had such a great reputation. It is true that most of these artists of the big time made superb recordings—certainly it is hard to find a bad record by Harry Lauder, Jack Norworth, Nora Bayes, Vesta Victoria, Raymond Hitchcock, Bert Williams, to name a few—but is there a collector who, having a star-studded vision of George M. Cohan singing the "Yankee Doodle Boy" or "Grand Old Flag," found a copy of his "Life's a Funny Proposition After All" and didn't have his dream somewhat deflated?

Only sound motion pictures could remedy this situation, but this is obviously out of the question for the earlier artists. However, about fifteen years ago motion picture "juke boxes" attained some popularity as they have had ever since. For these instruments some of the foremost stars made sound films and used prints may be obtained from photographic supply stores that specialize in motion picture films for the camera enthusiast. A current catalog of available prints may be obtained from Imperial Enterprises, Inc., 34 Park Row, New York 38, N.Y. The prices for these musical shorts 16 mm. 100 ft. - each one plays about three minutes) are reasonable and range from six for

\$5.00 for prints which have their opening titles reversed (because they were made for rear projection originally) to three for \$5.00 for regular prints. Brand new copies are more expensive. Personally I think these are a good buy for any collector who also has a sound motion picture projector. Just to see how they look, I bought 6 for \$5.00 and picked up these interesting films:

GENE AUSTIN

"I Want to Be Bad"

BENNY FIELDS

"I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now"

WILLIE HOWARD

"Comes the Revolution"

(Continued on page 37)

### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

BUY, SELL or trade mechanical pianos, Hurrys Gurdys, Calliopes, Band Organs, Kongs, Write—R. C. Lambert, Mountcello, Iowa. d12000.

WILL PAY CASH for Cylinder Phonographs and Records, Also Horn type Phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. d3614

ARMSTRONG Player Piano Co. has bellows cloth, tubing, leather. New 88 note rolls, \$1.00.—222 S. Vassar, Wichita 6, Kansas. ap10111

WANTED: Edison, Columbia Cylinder Phonograph Reproducers. Best prices paid.—August, 12 North Third, Richmond, Virginia. d6084

BUY SELL OR TRADE Coin operated pianos-rolls. Expert repairing all makes. Satisfaction guaranteed.—Dodge House Museum, 2208 W. Chestnut, Dodge City, Kansas. d3863

FOR SALE: Acme Earphone Edison coin operated. Write—Marg. Paape, 602 E. Bdwy., Winona, Minn. d1021

1928 BROCKWAY fire engine truck, equipped with Tanglely Calliope, all in good condition.—B. D. Williams, 3400 Conn. Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. d1671

OLD STREET PIANO, new strings, 6 tunes. Hurdy Gurdy, 27" Regina automatic, also 21" Beautiful Swiss box, large drum, 6 bells castnets, \$150.00 Swiss box, oak, 6 extra rolls, \$110.00, perfect.—B. L. Williams, 3400 Conn. Ave., Chevy Chase, Maryland. d1023

WANTED: Old bugle in good condition, no dents, no parts missing. Also one leaf of an old bellows.—E. R. Lemper, 712 W. Huron, Ann Arbor, Mich. d1612

FOR SALE: Reginalpha, plays 15 1/2" tune discs and 78-RPM records; also has zither attachment. Has mahogany case with serpentine front. Size 48"x20"x20". Price \$350.00. If interested send for free photo. Also have large Classcal Ampico expression rolls like new—\$10.00 per doz. Transportation collect.—Colonial Craft Shop, Mounted Route, Bryan, Ohio d1614

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED: JOLSON MATERIAL.—Dick Bonesteel, 1409 McGilvra Boulevard, Seattle, Washington. j12046

WANTED: Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, Armed Forces radio recordings, recordings of all kinds by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Bill Kenny," "Ink Spots," "Blue Barron," "Ted Lewis."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. ja3215

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay \$5 each for fine copies of 9-inch, single-faced Zon-o-phone records of "Jenny Lee," sung by Atwood Twitchell, and "Chocolate Drops," played by Hager's Orchestra. Both wanted for sentimental reasons only. Will pay \$3 each for good copies of the February, 1912, and February, 1914, Columbia monthly record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912.—Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. ttx

DOES ANYONE HAVE any Pathe cylinder records for sale? Especially need the 3" diameter size. Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Santa Cruz, Calif. ja3863

See other ads on Too Late to Classify page?

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## FRED VAN EPS

(NOTE—It is a pleasure to dedicate this series of articles to a gifted young banjoist and painter who is probably Fred Van Eps' most ardent admirer—Howard Weilmuenster of Ballwin, Missouri, his wife, Alma, and their baby son, David Michael, born November 7, 1955. Howard says David "will be ONE boy, in his generation" who will know who Fred Van Eps is!") J.W.

### I. Introduction

January, 1956, marks the fourteenth anniversary of my beginning to write for HOBBIES. And never, since my first article appeared under the short-lived heading of "The Coney Island Crowd," have I felt more pride in telling the life story of any singer or musician than I now have in presenting this "profile" of the man conceded by virtually every authority to be the greatest living master of the five-string banjo.

There are several reasons why I am proud of this series. For one, I consider Fred Van Eps not only the greatest contemporary banjoist, but also the most important pioneer recording artist whose life story has not yet been told by me. It is a story for which I have had dozens of requests over the years.

For another, Mr. Van Eps is the first celebrity who has made a special trip to my home to be interviewed for a HOBBIES biographical sketch. After attending a banjoists' convention in Lewisburg, Pa., Fred drove to Roanoke, arriving Monday, September 19th, 1955, and spent the greater part of two days with me. He brought with him an Edison cylinder phonograph which he had equipped with an electric motor and pick-up, on which he had played banjo records for the enthusiasts at Lewisburg. The day before he left to return home to New Jersey, I sat him down in front of a tape recorder and, by asking innumerable leading questions, elicited, in effect, the spoken story of his life. That same day I had him talk by long distance with two of his enthusiastic admirers—A. R. Via, Jr., and N. G. Terry, Jr., well known South Boston, Va., record collectors. I recall Fred's humorous greeting to "Jack" Via was: "Good afternoon, Mr. Via. This is Fred Van Eps. I play banjo. What crimes do you commit?"

There was nothing egotistical or vainglorious in Fred Van Eps' attitude as he recalled the lights and shadows of his 76 years. Instead, he quietly, modestly and patiently answered questions as I asked them. Because of having used the record-

ing device, I shall, for the first time, be able to tell the greater part of an artist's life story in his own words.

I shall do this by setting the tape in motion and transcribing Fred's statements. Naturally, some editing will be necessary. I shall not include the questions I asked which brought out the transcribed information. For the sake of greater clarity and structural coherence, I shall not always publish his remarks in the order in which they turn up on the tape, but shall rearrange them in order to provide a more connected narrative. Some of the reminiscences I shall include have no direct bearing on Fred Van Eps' life story, but in my judgment should be included because they possess musical and historical value as a revelation of his unusual experiences, colorful personality and individual mental patterns.

Too, I shall take the liberty of continuing to write in the first person when I include something my dear friend told me when we were casually conversing but not speaking into the Recordio. Letters and material which he thoughtfully prepared for me will be treated in like manner. After his reminiscences have been concluded, I shall round out the series with a review of the distinguished banjoist's recording achievements.

I offered to submit the manuscript to Mr. Van Eps for his approval, but he said that wasn't necessary, for he was sure anything I wrote would be fair-minded and accurate. I shall do my best to live up to his estimate. You may be sure I shall not tamper with the statements contained on the tape and that, in quoting from unaided memory, I shall use great care not to distort anything he said or misrepresent him in any way. I consider myself extremely fortunate that, because of Mr. Van Eps' gracious cooperation, I have an unusually interesting collection of photographs from which to choose in illustrating his memoirs. One thing I regret keenly is that Fred's beloved wife, Florence, who had been his devoted companion for 43 years, did not live to see this HOBBIES tribute.

For the sake of simplicity, I shall refrain from placing the printed matter that follows in quotation marks. But I think you will understand that, from now on, until I speak again in my own right, the "I" with whom you are about to become acquainted is Fred Van Eps and not Jim Walsh.

### II. Fred Van Eps' Own Story

My name is Fred—not Frederick—Van Eps, but the birth certificate which was issued when I was born in Somerville, N. J., on December 30, 1878, doesn't list any given name. I am identified merely as a "male". When my wife and I decided to visit Europe in the spring of 1954 I had trouble getting a passport until I produced a program which mentioned a violin performance I gave when I was a small boy.

Somerville is exactly half way between Jersey City and Easton. My father, John Perry Van Eps, was a watchmaker. On my father's side I am descended from some of the old Dutch settlers of New York State. The family came originally from the Mohawk Valley near Herkimer, and one of my ancestors, who was also a John P., outfitted and commanded a company in the Revolutionary War. So you see there have been Van Epses around for some time—and, judging by the way the grandchildren are coming along, they'll be around for quite a while yet! My parents had one other child—my brother William, five years younger than I, who now lives in Arizona.

My mother's maiden name was Jenny A. Bergen. It seems that in the 1600's a man named Hansen came over from Bergen, Norway, and changed his name to Bergen. Whether there's any connection with Bergen county, New Jersey, is something I don't know. Anyway, I'm Dutch on one side and Scandinavian on the other—probably with a sprinkling of other nationalities. My father and mother died in 1926, within 12 days of each other. He was 81. She was 77. That's the way devoted married couples ought to go—within a few days of each other. Then neither is left behind long to grieve for the other.

I grew up and got most of my schooling in Somerville. Then we moved to Plainfield, which is still my mail address, although I live in Warrentonville, on a Plainfield RFD, high up in the Jersey mountains. I was 13 when we went to Plainfield in 1892, but I was still in Somerville when I began studying the violin at the age of seven. That violin study was very much my father's idea instead of my own. A few years later, when I wanted to give up the violin for the banjo, he didn't like the idea and wouldn't buy me an instrument. Finally my mother broke down and bought me one.

Maybe you wonder how it happened I decided I wanted to play a banjo. Well, I just happened to hear one and liked it much better than the violin. I still like it better after all these years. The banjo is a peculiar instrument. It's almost the easiest if you want to get certain effects, but the hardest of all if you set out to master its maximum possibilities. It's harder than the violin because when you draw the bow on a violin you have control of the tone from start to finish, but when you hit out with your right hand on your banjo if you don't hit right there's nothing you can do about it—it's gone.

And there's always room for a ban-



joist to improve his technique. After playing in one way for around 40 years I worked out a new technique in the 1930's. It seems that before then no one had ever taken stock of the banjoist's working tools and tried to find out what the hands could and could not do. My investigation showed that of the three basic motions of the right hand, two were unnatural and awkward, therefore tiresome, and contrary to the design of the hand. What I did was to retain the one good move and use in place of the awkward two a highly natural move—thumb, first finger, second finger, in rotation, in this order. That is the natural sweep of the hand and is very fast, bringing the banjo up to violin or flute velocity. I can now play 14 notes per second.

This is what makes it possible to play rapid numbers such as "William Tell Finale," Chopin's "Minute Waltz," "Dizzy Fingers," etc. That reminds me that the "William Tell Finale" has been the joke of the banjo for as long as I can remember. All the vaudeville players used it—but the violins in the orchestra did the work. My changed technique has made it possible for the banjoist to play it in proper tempo.

I don't remember just how many years I played the violin. I do remember I used to play at school exercises on Friday mornings. I was a bad boy on the repeats. The girl who played the piano was always prepared to hop over if I skipped them. I'd like to have a record of that scratch. I'll bet it was something awful!

I was 12 when the banjo began to fascinate me. I heard a conductor on the Jersey Central Railroad, George W. Jenkins, play and it sounded so musical I knew I wanted to play a banjo, too. Although Jenkins didn't read music he was a very musical man, and my mother engaged him to teach me. He taught parrot fashion—played it over and over and showed me where to put my fingers. It didn't take long to learn all his numbers, and I was at a dead end until I heard a record by Vess L. Ossman, who was called "The Banjo King." Then I began to run around, looking for more music and to take a greater interest in my playing.

#### IV. Fred's First Banjo Record and Phonograph

The first Ossman record I ever heard was "The White Star Line March." I had been trying to play that myself by ear. I decided I had to have a phonograph to listen to the records by Ossman and other banjoists—and right now I'd like to say that at his best Vess Ossman was a wonderfully fine player. His work deteriorated in his later years—largely, I suppose, because he didn't keep practicing consistently—but I have been listening lately to some of his very old records and many of them are amazingly good. Ossman had a certain rhythmic facility that I don't think any other banjoist has ever equaled.

"The White Star Line" wasn't an Edison record. I heard it in 1893 be-

fore Edison began to make cylinders. It was a New Jersey Record made by the old United States Phonograph Company at 87-91 Orange Street, Newark. The U. S. Company was upstairs above Swift's meat house. They had the hams and carcasses downstairs and the records upstairs. Of course some "hams" went upstairs occasionally to make records! The first time I visited the studio I heard a band playing so loud and clear I thought surely the musicians themselves must be up there, but it was just a record!

"So I bought a Type M Edison two-minute cylinder phonograph. It cost me \$100—a lot of money then—but I paid for it the next week by attaching 14 ear tubes, taking it to the Firemen's Fair and letting people listen at five cents a play. I've got those tubes yet that fit in your ears. Lots of people came up who had never heard a phonograph before. Mine was the first in Plainfield, which even then was quite a decent sized city. To tell the truth, the machine was something of a nuisance because it was so much of a curiosity. People would come to my home and ask to be allowed to listen to it. We couldn't very well refuse them, but all such favors took time.

"Well, anyway, I bought all the Ossman records, and soon I was able to play them and write out the copies. My chief purpose in getting the machine was to practice making my own records, and I began to do home recordings almost as soon as I obtained it. Incidentally, I still have some of the wax cylinder recordings I made more than 60 years ago and they are in as good condition as the day I made them. I have preserved them by protecting them from moisture and extremes of heat or cold. Dampness and temperature extremes will cause a fungus to form on the surface and spoil the records. Mine have always had the best care. I imagine I am the only artist with records made by himself three score years ago.

I got my blanks from the U. S. people—20 cents each. All the machines in those days had a shaving attachment. If you didn't like the results you simply shaved them off and tried again. Plainfield is 17 miles from Newark. It would have been quite a trip by horse and buggy, but there were direct train connections. Victor and Clyde Emerson were with U. S. then. I don't remember whether Harvey Emmons was there at that time or not. He was later. Still later he went with Edison and, among other things, made chimes records under the name of Henry Nesbit. Frank Capps, who had such a long career in various phases of the phonograph industry, was also there. As late as the 1930's he was manufacturing a recording stylus, but back in the '90's, while he was still in Washington, he built the first successful spring motor for Columbia. He was suited to be a recording technician because he had been a tool maker for the watchmaking trade, and if anything has to be exact, watchmaking does. And, speaking of

watchmaking, I worked a considerable time in my father's shop, helping him with his watch repairing and practicing the banjo in between. I had a banjo at home and one alongside my repair bench. I remember a garbage collector who heard me playing at home told my mother I was pretty good but not as good as the watchmaker's son downtown. He didn't dream I was the same boy! I wish my father hadn't taken me out of school so soon to help him, but he didn't set much value on higher education.

After a great deal of experimenting and home recording, I decided the time had come to try my luck as a professional recording artist. I made two cylinders at home that sounded fairly decent, so I put them under my arm and went to the Edison plant at West Orange. This was in 1897, and Edison had begun to issue brown wax cylinders regularly the year before.

#### V. First Recording Experiences

The Edison people weren't at all enthusiastic when I first showed up. They gave me a fairly good brush-off, but I finally induced a man to listen to them. I know Walter Miller was in charge of recording, but I don't remember just who it was that I talked into listening. Anyway, I got a job for every Wednesday afternoon, making 40 cylinders, one after the other. They paid me the usual rate—\$1 for each "round." If that doesn't seem much for making 40 records, remember I was making only \$16 a week helping my father repair watches, and \$40 for one afternoon a week wasn't bad. It probably would be the equivalent of \$150 a week now.

My first accompanist was the father of the present-day famous pianist—Frank Banta. He was Frank P. Banta, while his son, who plays for the National Broadcasting Company, is Frank E. I never knew what the P. stood for. The elder Banta was a real old-timer in the phonograph game. He had been at it for years before I got in, and at one time or other he conducted bands and orchestras for practically all the pioneer record companies. You know, Frank—the elder Frank—got his preliminary musical training as a "rough tuner" in a piano factory. That is, he would do the first part of the tuning, and somebody else would come along and put on the finishing touches. In that way he learned to play the piano and was finally good enough to go out and get engagements. I don't think he had any formal musical training. He was just a "natural." He died in 1904 at the early age of 33.

Incidentally, Mrs. Banta is still living and is a very active old lady. When I first saw her she was employed by Walcott and Miller, who were record makers on 14th Street. I went there to buy records and she demonstrated them for me. That was when she was a young girl, before she was married. You asked me if



Fred Van Eps and Jim Walsh, in Roanoke, Va., Tuesday, September 20, 1955

I remember a firm called Burke and Rous that used to make cylinders in Brooklyn, and you say that Rous was a brother of Sam Rous, who made so many records under the name of S. H. Dudley. No, I never heard of them or of the cylinders they were turning out for slot machine use in the early 1900's. I'll bet you never heard of Reed and Dawson, who made lots of cylinders in Newark.

I worked a long time for Edison on that Wednesday afternoon basis. Of course I had competition. Vess Ossman was making lots of records, and Ruby Brooks made some, but Brooks—he was a member of the vaudeville team of Brooks and Denton, and died of lung cancer around 1906—wasn't any real competition. I remember a pair of banjoists, Cullen and Collins, made records for Columbia in Washington, D. C., before Columbia moved its headquarters to New York in 1897.

I continued recording through the early 1900's. I don't know just how many records I made and I doubt that I have books, that would show it, but I know a lot of my banjo records were sold. I was also teaching and playing with orchestras. Sometimes we banjoists would go out and play with orchestras until 2 A.M., then come home and have to prepare a couple of numbers for 10 o'clock that

morning. You notice this 1902 Edison record catalog you showed me lists several selections by me, and this copy of "The Columbia Record" for January, 1904, mentions a seven-inch disc of another banjoist, William Bowen, and myself playing Sousa's "Jack Tar March." That was probably the first disc I made. I don't remember that Bowen and I ever recorded any more duets, and it seems odd that they don't appear to have put this one out in the ten-inch size. Bill Bowen, who is still living in New Jersey and I worked for Vess Ossman one summer, filling engagements Ossman obtained through his booking office. It must have been during that period that we recorded "The Jack Tar March." I didn't do any work for the early Berliner discs, but around 1916 or 1917 some of us recording artists began going to Canada about every six weeks and recording for Berliner, Victor's affiliate there. I don't recall making any cylinders for Columbia. I did lots of work for Zon-o-phone when Eddie King was manager of their artist and repertoire department. When Zon-o-phone folded around 1913, he went with Victor as assistant to John Macdonald (record collectors know him better as the tenor, Harry Macdonough), who was then the head of the "popular" division of Victor's A.

& R. Calvin Child of course headed the Red Seal section.

You asked if I was nervous during my first recording engagement. No, I don't think so. I always practiced slowly, to gain sufficient accuracy, and I was already used to making records at home. They had six or seven horns lined up in racks, because in those days there was no duplicating. Every record was an original. The one in dead center usually was best and brought a higher price. Actually, I didn't pay much attention to the size of horns, the thickness of diaphragms and other technical subjects. I wasn't supposed to. If I had carried tales from one recording laboratory to another I would have been in a hornet's nest.

However, some of the artists weren't above doing that. There was one fellow who slipped parts away from the old U. S. Record Company plant, one part a night, and would slip them back the next morning. They were parts from a duplicating machine which allowed several dozen records to be turned out from each original. Edison didn't have a duplicating device at that time, but he was able to build one with the help of that skulduggery. Of course, there were lots of things about the phonograph that Edison didn't originate, though usually his product was the best of its kind. For instance, he didn't invent the indestructible cylinder, but his Blue Amberol was better than any of the others. I've often wondered just what were the secrets that let him get such marvelous quality into his Diamond Discs. No other company had anything like it. No doubt part of it came from using the hill-and-dale recording method, but what accounted for the rest—some recording method that only he knew, the construction of the reproducer, or what? I believe the Edison reproducer diaphragm was built up with 40 very thin layers of rice paper, coated with shellac. He made thousands of test models before he was satisfied. Incidentally, I've never understood why, when long-playing records were brought out in 1948, they weren't made hill-and-dale instead of lateral cut. The music would have been better and it would have been possible to put almost twice as much on a side. Technicians have tried to explain to me why the change wasn't made, but in view of my own experience manufacturing recording equipment none of their arguments are convincing.

A great improvement in cylinder recording occurred somewhere around 1909 or '10. Edison made the big improvement when he stopped clamping the glass recording diaphragm between rubber gaskets and floated it with wax on the outside. That allowed the whole glass to vibrate. They used just a small aluminum tube connection instead of a lot of mechanism, such as levers and links. Right away the records were twice as good—very clear and natural.

(To be continued)

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## FRED VAN EPS

(Continued from the January issue)

### VI. Free-Lance Recording Days

Still relating Fred Van Eps' life story and recording experiences in his own words:

I think my first big break occurred when my first Victor record, "The Burglar Buck," came out in April, 1910. Although the Victor Talking Machine Company had been founded only nine years before, it had already become the dominant American phonograph and record company. The fact that I was good enough for Victor made every other company want me, too. I made my first Columbia solo record a few months after my Victor debut, and soon I was free-lancing for, I suppose, just about every record company of the day. Several years later, when I was one of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, Henry Burr tried to persuade me to sign an exclusive Victor contract. He argued I'd make as much money as I did playing for all comers and wouldn't have to work so hard.

But I couldn't see it his way. I had set a minimum fee of \$100 for any recording engagement, and I col-

lected a good deal more from larger companies like Victor. I figured that if I could make three records in the morning and another two or three in the afternoon at \$100 or more a playing I was doing all right. It certainly seemed good in comparison with the \$1 a round Edison had paid me when I started out—and especially good by contrast with that \$16 a week I used to get, working in my father's watch repair shop.

As you remarked just now, I became the dominant banjo recording artist in this country from about the time I began to work for all the companies. Olly Oakley, who has been dead a long time, had the same status in England, and in my estimation he was the best of the English players. He came closer to having an American style than any of the others. It's sad to think of all the talented instrumentalists who have died while I am still going strong at 76. Really, I have never been sick enough to go to bed in my life. Most sickness is in the mind, and I've succeeded in keeping myself convinced I'm in excellent health. An infected tooth is about the worst physical ailment that has ever happened to me. . . . But about those instrumentalists you mentioned men like Samuel Siegel, Valentine, Abt (pronounced AHBT) and Eugene W. Page, who made mandolin records in the early days, and the guitar players—Roy Butin (pronounced Bew-TIN), and Ramseyer, whose first name you said you didn't know but have always imagined to be Hugo. Well, it wasn't Hugo. He used to work with me and his name was Dave. They're all gone now. I always considered Sam Siegel the best of the mandolin men. But I was talking about my becoming, as you said, the leading recording banjoist from 1910 on. Vess Ossman had begun moving around the country a great deal, providing music for hotels in various places, and that probably had something to do with his not making many records between 1910 and his death in 1923, although he did make quite a comeback in 1916-17, when he was with the Eight Famous Victor Artists. (I succeeded him as the banjoist of the troupe when he couldn't get along with the manager, Henry Burr).

And, as I have already said, Ossman no longer practiced consistently

and his work began to deteriorate. I still practice at least two hours a day and, if I am a judge of my work, I'm playing better, thanks to my changed fingering methods, than I did in my younger years.

You were asking me why practically all the Ossman records that had stayed in the Victor catalog a good many years were made over by me. To some extent, it was because of accidents happening to the original masters or defects appearing in the matrices. Then, too, as time went on the methods by which Ossman had recorded became outmoded. However, the records were still popular, and Victor wanted them remade by the latest processes. But since Ossman wasn't readily available and his playing no longer was what it had been, they had me do the remakes, usually with young Frank Banta at the piano. Some of those I made over were "Turkey in the Straw Medley," "Silver Heels" and "Keep Off the Grass." You asked me who played in the Plantation Trio, aside from myself, when it remade the Ossman-Dudley Trio records of "The St. Louis Tickle" and "Dixie Girl March" in the early 1920's. I don't remember just who was with me. The catalog shows "The St. Louis Tickle" was played by a banjo, mandolin and guitar, and "Dixie Girl March" by two banjos and one guitar. My brother Bill was originally a mandolin player, and he may have been one of the group. He also could have played the second banjo in "Dixie Girl." Dave Ramseyer may have been the guitar player. Audley Dudley used to work with me but since he died in 1916 he was out of the question, of course, for recording done in the '20's. I always called Audley "Al." I'm glad to learn his brother George is still living in retirement in Florida.

Oh yes—that Victor record called "A Little Bit of Everything Medley," by Ossman, which you had me listen to, hoping I could identify the songs. The last one, of course, is "Auld Lang Syne," and the second, which takes up most of the record, is an old-time banjo favorite, "Nigger in a Fit." But I can't remember ever hearing the first selection. (Note by Jim Walsh—The song at the begin-



Fred Van Eps' father, John Perry Van Eps, on his high-wheeled bicycle in the 1880's. The elder Van Eps, a watchmaker, died in 1926, aged 81.



Fred Van Eps as a youthful banjoist





Because of the frequency with which Fred Van Eps mentions Billy Murray in his reminiscences, this seems an appropriate time to publish a picture of a rare poster showing young "William Murray" in blackface as a member of the Al G. Field Minstrel Troupe. The poster probably was printed around 1900—a few years before Murray, on Field's advice, changed his first name to Billy, and began his phenomenal recording career. In 1902 his photo appeared, still as William Murray, on the front cover of a song, "A Little Boy in Blue," written by Raymond A. Browne and Theodore Morse. "Teddy" Morse was the first pianist of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, but, at Van Eps' suggestion, was succeeded in 1918 by young Frank Banta.

ning of the record has since been identified as "Angel Gabriel").

#### VII. Van Eps Trio and Banjo Orchestra

One of the great successes of my recording activities from about 1912 to 1922 was the Van Eps Trio. The country was dance crazy in the decade from 1910 to 1920 as it never had been before, and hasn't been since, and I got the Trio together to furnish music both on records and for dances. Our first Victor record was "The Florida Rag." The instrumentation was two banjos—one played by me and the other by my brother Bill—and a piano, played by Felix Arndt. When the next Van Eps Trio record was made we dropped one of the banjos and, at John Macdonald's insistence, substituted drums played by Eddie King. The Victor people thought drums gave a steadier, more insistent

rhythm than a second banjo, but I wasn't "sold" on the drums idea. However, since King was assistant manager of the Victor artist and repertoire department, I felt there wasn't anything I could do except go along. That set-up lasted several years.

I think your readers will be interested in the story of my association with Felix Arndt. He was just a youngster demonstrating music for the Witmark song publishing firm at \$20 a week when we first met. In spite of his German sounding last name, his racial strain was Latin. His father was Italian and his mother a mixture of Spanish and French. She had the French attitude toward being thrifty and playing it safe. When I first proposed to hire Felix to work with me she didn't want him to give up his sure \$20 a week to take a chance on anything else. She

consented though, when I told her I would guarantee the boy \$50 a week, but that if he couldn't make \$100 I didn't want him. Poor Felix had a short life. He died in the 1918 flu epidemic. Before his death he had trouble with his hands and had to stop playing with me. Today he is best remembered by his song, "Nola," named for his wife, which served so long as a theme song for Vincent Lopez. Felix's widow has a studio in Steinway Hall, and *Variety* recently carried a news item telling of her suing a music publishing company for \$11,000 which she claims are due as royalties from the sale of "Nola."

Soon after his association with me began, Felix started making piano and celesta records for Victor, and some of the piano numbers—especially "From Soup to Nuts," "Desecration Rag," "An Operatic Nightmare" and "Nola,"—were big sellers. He also made a great many player piano rolls. It was because the trouble with his hands kept him from playing consistently that I took young Frank Banta out of high school in 1916 to become my duet partner and the pianist of the Van Eps Trio. The youngster, whom Billy Murray used to call, jokingly, "Solid Ivory, the Boy Wonder," was a ten-strike. His playing was a little rough at first, but he soon smoothed out. His father had been dead since 1904, but his mother had gone into the corset business and done a fine job of rearing Frank and a daughter, who has since died. Frank has never married. He still lives with his mother and earns a handsome income as a pianist for NBC. As you remarked, anybody who attended the "John Bieling Day" reunions of recording artists and record collectors in 1948 and 1950 must remember what a brilliant player Frank is, and how willing he was to play accompaniments for everybody who wanted to sing, as well as solos by himself.

To anticipate a little, I was responsible for Frank's becoming the pianist of the Eight Famous Victor Artists. He did so well with me that when I took Ossman's place with the troupe I suggested that young Banta should be hired in the place of Theodore Morse. Teddy Morse was a swell fellow and one of the greatest writers of popular songs this country has known, but he simply couldn't play the piano the way Frank Banta could. Besides, his time was tied up to some extent not only with his own song writing but with being a music manuscript reader for Leo Feist. Frank clicked immediately and stayed with the Eight until Henry Burr disbanded the group some time late in 1927 or early in 1928. That latter year, Frank went abroad as pianist for The Revelers. . . . Speaking of pianists, George Gershwin, before he was famous, used to play sometimes with me at dances. I never used him on records. Getting back to the Van Eps Trio days, I kept on being dissatisfied with using a drummer, but for several years I



couldn't convince John Macdonald that the saxophone, which had become extremely popular, would be a more suitable instrument. But at last I got the best of him. Russell Hunting, the famous pioneer "Casey" monologist, had returned to this country after years abroad as supervisor of Pathé's European recording activities, and was manager of Pathé's New York studio. I talked Russell into letting me make a Van Eps Trio record of a fox-trot called "The Hawaiian Blues," with Nathan Glantz (pronounced GLAHNTZ) playing a sax, in place of the usual drums. It went over well, and when Macdonald heard it he told me to go ahead and use a saxophone from then on in my Victor recordings. The good results we got on Pathé were a challenge to him and he felt he had to meet the challenge. He thought he just couldn't let Pathé get ahead of Victor! Our first Victor with Glantz on the saxophone combined "Teasin' the Cat" and "On the Dixie Highway." From then on, the Van Eps Trio was composed of Banta, Glantz and myself. Afterwards I added Joe Green as a xylophonist and the group was known as the Van Eps Quartet or the Van Eps Specialty Four. Nathan Glantz is dead now, but his son, Nathan, Jr., is a successful musician. Joe Green also is dead, but his brother, George Hamilton Green, who used to be famous as a xylophone player, is still active—as a cartoonist rather than a musician. His drawings frequently appear in *Collier's* and other publications.

The Trio played with almost metronomic precision. I remember that once we made half a dozen "takes" of the same number, and our timing was so exact there was less than three seconds difference between the fastest and the slowest.

In 1914 I came along with what the record companies called the Van Eps Banjo Orchestra, although that term was somewhat misleading. There never were more than five instruments—hardly enough for an orchestra. The make-up of the group, as well as the membership, varied from time to time. Nearly always there were two banjos—sometimes my brother played the other one—and of course we had Felix Arndt at the piano. You just mentioned that the Banjo Orchestra played accompaniments for some of Arthur Collins' Pathé records. Even though you've shown me the records I still don't remember anything about playing those accompaniments. In fact, there's a lot that at this late date I don't remember. No, I don't remember, either, playing accompaniments for Collins and Harlan duets and Porter and Harlan comic sketches on Victor.

But you've got the records to prove I did. I do remember, though, that we took a lot of classics and made dance numbers of them. Chaminade's "Scarf Dance" was one, and there was another we called "Tambourines and Oranges." Then there was a prohibition number—oh yes, "The Alcoholic Blues!"—in which we played "How Dry I Am" and other time-honored drinking songs. You say you

have a sapphire ball record of the Trio playing "The Alcoholic Blues" on a Meteor disc, put out by the Meteor Record Company of Piqua, Ohio. No, we never played for any company with a name like that. That was probably one of the several disguises under which Pathé records were issued—just as Columbias used to be sold under all sorts of labels. I am constantly meeting people who tell me they have records by me on Superior or some other brand I know I never played for. And then I know they have got hold of an off-brand which is just some formerly famous line disguising itself behind false whiskers.

#### VIII. Phonograph Boom Days

After the first World War began in 1914, the phonograph and record business began to boom. The "Big Three"—Victor, Columbia and Edison—couldn't increase production enough to meet the demand, and something like 50 new companies sprang up to make "talking machines" while there was also a large increase in the number of firms making records. However, since Victor and Columbia between them controlled the patents on the more popular lateral type record, the newcomers—Aeolian-Vocalion, Starr, Okeh, Paramount and others—had to make their discs on the hill-and-dale principle, like Edison and Pathé. Henry Burr even had his own company for a year or two—the Paroquette Record Company, which turned out seven-inch double-faced Paroquet records that sold for a quarter. I made some for them. He lured away Victor's recording director, Walter B. Rogers, but the market was too

limited for that type of record and it wasn't a success. Burr made huge amounts of money as a recording artist and as manager of the Eight, but he also lost scads in such schemes as running a silver fox farm and starting a music publishing business. He and I had a banjo factory together, but I'll tell more about that later.

Anyway, as I said, the record business boomed. I remember the Victor figures for 1918. Their gross business was \$204,000,000, and they thought that could never be beaten. It seemed the saturation point had been reached. That's the more surprising because both Victor and Edison turned over much of their factory space that year for defense work. . . . No, I don't remember making any Little Wonder records—those 5½ inch, single-faced discs that sold in ten cent stores for a dime each. Since, as you say, they were made under Columbia patents, they probably copied the first half of an ordinary Columbia record onto a Little Wonder.

I was speaking of Victor and Columbia having a strangle hold on lateral-cut patents. The only fellow who was able to get around them, until Gennett brought a suit in 1919 that broke the patents monopoly, was Victor Emerson. You'll remember I mentioned Vic Emerson was with the old U. S. Record Company in Newark the first time I went there back in the '90's. When U. S. folded he became a Columbia recording expert. He left Columbia in 1916 and started the Emerson Record Company. In order to make a record that would play in the ordinary Victor or Columbia position, he developed a way



The Van Eps Trio (sometimes called the Van Eps-Banta Trio) about 1919: Fred Van Eps, banjo; Nathan Glantz, saxophone, and Frank Banta, piano. In those days Van Eps signed his photos, "Trio'-ly Yours."



The recent Davy Crockett furore should add interest to this photo of the Eight Famous Victor Artists at the Alamo in 1919. Top row, left to right: Frank Banta, Monroe Silver, Frank Croxton, Henry Burr, Billy Murray and an unidentified man—probably a Victor dealer. Front row—John Meyer, Albert Campbell, and (in striped shirt) Fred Van Eps.

of cutting the grooves at a 45-degree angle and called it the universal cut. Theoretically, an Emerson record would play either laterally or vertically, but the thing was a makeshift compromise. You could hear it fairly well in a lateral position, but the vertical rendition was barely audible. As far as I know, that was the only "compromise cut." Of course, there never was a lateral cut cylinder.

As best I can remember, I recorded for 14 or 15 companies between 1916 and 1922, when I virtually gave up recording work. There may have been more. I'm sure there weren't many in the Eastern United States that I missed. Of course I had worked for Edison from the very beginning of my recording career, except for a period of two or three years. I had an argument with them about the numbers to be recorded, and it ended with my "going on strike" until they saw things my way. Frank Banta was my accompanist on nearly all my recording dates, except that Edison insisted on using John F. Burkhardt. They reasoned that since they had a staff accompanist on salary, there was no sense in paying Frank to play in Burkhardt's place. Bill Cronkhite was Edison's critic, and he was always gumming the artists up with his odd ideas.

As I know you've often heard, Cronkhite was so conscientious and so fault-finding—and maybe so afraid of Thomas A. Edison—that he almost worked Edison artists to death. I saw a group that included Ada Jones, Billy Murray and a male quartet work all day to make a cylinder that satisfied Cronkhite. It contained a lot of sound effects. Maybe it was "Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine." Anyway, something went

wrong every trial, and they were all worn out before it was done. Ada Jones never troubled to learn a song until she had a date to record it, so that slowed them up.

Another odd thing I remember is that elaborate duplicating device Pathé had. I don't mean I was allowed to examine it—the Frenchman who had made it and brought it to this country didn't allow anybody to operate or even look at it but himself—but it was a wonder. It recorded on cylinders 14 inches long, and from these they dubbed discs that were 10¾, 11½ and 13¼ inches in diameter. The playing time was the same, but the larger records were louder. Those were the hill-and-dale

Pathés, played with a sapphire ball, but they could also dub lateral cuts or cylinders if they wanted to. The Pathé dubbing system was much better than the Edison. After Edison had his disastrous factory fire in 1915, they quit recording Blue Amberol cylinders direct and started copying them from the Diamond Discs. This was often poorly and carelessly done, and the cylinders lost tone quality in consequence. But that Pathe dubbing system was amazing. Not even Russell Hunting knew how it worked—he just knew it did!

Before I tell of my experiences as a member of Eight Famous Victor Artists, I'd like to say something about the fun we had in the old recording days. I have an affectionate recollection of McGirr's restaurant at 37th Street and Sixth Avenue. It's still there. That was where most of the recording talent ate lunch during engagements. Several studios were in the neighborhood, so the gang got together to chew the fat, discuss the recording news and occasionally swap a few scandals! Victor's recording laboratory was on 38th Street. Columbia was across the street in the Joseph W. Stern Music Publishing building, and Pathe's lab was on 37th, about half a block away. Edison was at 79 Fifth Avenue, and Aeolian-Vocalion also was not far away on 43rd Street, back of Aeolian Hall.

There was another restaurant we frequented at 42nd Street and Sixth Avenue. I can't remember its name, but it's out of business now, so nobody's feelings will be hurt by my telling this anecdote. We used to call it "The Greasy Spoon." One day Frank Banta's mother called up, wanting to speak to her son. She couldn't remember the name, so, unable to think of anything else, she asked: "Is this the Greasy Spoon?" Whoever took the call didn't relish the title, and hung up on her without saying whether or not it was the Greasy Spoon!

(To be continued)

## MORE ON DOUBLE TAKES

(Continued from page 31)

Renato Zanelli (as tenor): Otello-Dio mi potevi Gramola DB1173 (2-052381) (CR2095 11 A)  
 Renato Zanelli (as tenor): Otello-Niun mi tema Victor Orth. 7020B (CR2094 111 A)  
 Renato Zanelli (as tenor): Otello-Dio mi potevi Gramola DB1173 (2-052380) (CR2094 111 A)

### ADDITIONS:

1. a) Lucrezia Bori Victor 12" 88475 Boheme-Mi chiamano Mimi (Take 2) without "narrative" at end of aria.  
 b) Lucrezia Bori Victrola 12" 6048A Boheme-Mi chiamano Mimi-with narrative at end of aria.
2. a) Apollo Granforte 10" Gramola DA1053 (7-52433) Zaza-Zaza, piccola singara (BM 809 1)  
 b) (Apollo Granforte 10" Eng. HMV DA1053 (7-52433) Zaza-Zaza piccola singara (BM 1188 1)  
 (Apollo Granforte 10" Mauve & Gold HMV AGSA23 (7-52433) Zaza-Zaza, piccola singara (BM 1188 1)
3. a) Amelita Galli-Curci Victor 12" 74499 Rigoletto-Caro nome-with recitative (Take 4)  
 a) Amelita Galli-Curci HMV 2-053126 (A18596) Rigoletto-Caro nome with recitative (Take 4)  
 a) Amelita Galli-Curci HMV DB257 Rigoletto-Caro nome-with recitative (Take 4)  
 b) Amelita Galli-Curci Victrola 12" 74499 Rigoletto-Caro nome-without recitative (Take 6)  
 b) Amelita Galli-Curci Victrola 12" 6126 Rigoletto-Caro nome-without recitative (Take 6)

(While most collectors already know of the acoustical versions of Galli-Curci's Caro nome, I felt that they might be interested in knowing that they were carried over on the European pressings, too. However, Victor 74499 (Take 4) was never doubled on American Vict.)

Kindest regards,  
 Bill  
 William Vlod

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## FRED VAN EPS

(Continued from February issue)

### VIII. The Eight Famous Victor Artists

Fred Van Eps continues his reminiscences, with most of this installment being devoted to his experiences as a member of the Eight Famous Victor Artists troupe:

My memory goes back a long way, but sometimes, like everybody's memory, it fails me. I clearly recall the blizzard of 1888—probably the worst storm ever recorded in the Eastern United States—and the trouble I, a boy of about ten, had getting around for several days after the big snowfall.

But up to now I've forgotten to mention that I made a few records under an assumed name. They were made for Pathé, which went in more strongly for aliases than any other record company, and they were duets with an accordion player, Dan Boudini. I was called "Edward Boynton." I notice that here in Roanoke you have an architectural firm by the name of Smithey and Boynton. But I don't have any idea who chose that name of Boynton for me to use when I played with Boudini. We made "Down South" (20433) and "Silver Heels" (20382).

Speaking of names, assumed and real, of course I'm resigned by this time to having the Eps in my name misspelled Epps. And frequently people call me Mr. Epps, seeming to think Van is my middle name. Shakespeare said "What's in a name?" but sometimes having the right name means a lot to a professional musician.

I think I'll talk now about my years as a member of the Eight Famous Victor Artists one of the most interesting periods of my musical life. I joined the troupe late in 1917 or early 1918 when it was still known as the Record Makers. The title identifying the aggregation with the Victor Talking Machine Company didn't come into use until five of the members—Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Albert Campbell, John Meyer and Frank Croxton—signed exclusive Victor contracts in the summer of 1920. The other three—Frank Banta, Monroe Silver and I—continued to free-lance. Some observers said the Eight had the most talent and the most remark-

ably varied gifts ever packed into one small concert ensemble. At the height of his fame Rudy Vallee remarked that the Eight Famous Victor Artists were his "ideal of show business."

When I joined I took the place of my fellow banjoist, Vess Ossman, who didn't get along with the manager, Burr. As I have already said, that swell fellow Teddy Morse, the song writer, was the pianist, but he gave way in 1918 to young Frank Banta, who had begun working as my accompanist when he was 17. Arthur Collins and Byron Harlan, the famous "coon song" comedians, were also with the troupe, but Collins and Burr never did hit it off, and Burr didn't consider Collins' style of singing well adapted to work with the Peerless Quartet, although Collins had been its baritone since 1907. Their bickering came to a head, and Collins was dropped. John Meyer, who had been singing bass, became the quartet baritone, and Frank Croxton stepped in as basso.

Harlan left with Collins and was succeeded by Monroe Silver, a brilliant comedian who specialized in monologs about "Cohen." He also sang well in a mock-Yiddish style. I used to tell "Mike" Silver (Billy Murray, with whom he roomed on tour, had nicknamed him Mike) that he had ability enough of his own not to need to copy the "Cohen on the Telephone" act which Joe Hayman had made popular, but Mike always insisted on doing a telephone skit in his public appearances.

Before I get down to telling of my travels with the Eight, I'd like to answer a question I am often asked: "How did the Peerless Quartet (Campbell, Burr, Meyer and Croxton) and the Sterling Trio (Campbell, Burr and Meyer) ever find time to rehearse so many numbers when they were free-lancing, and where did they meet to rehearse?" I don't know exactly myself how they found the time except that, as Al Campbell used to say, they rehearsed and recorded in three shifts almost around the clock, but I can tell where they rehearsed. John Meyer had an uncle, John Wilbur, who gave him a florist shop, on Third Avenue, New York. In gratitude to his uncle, John called himself John Wilbur when he

first made records but soon changed to his right name. Throughout the years he was with the Peerless, from 1911 through 1925, he continued to operate this shop and he went back to it after he left the quartet. While he was on tour somebody managed it for him. Well, anyway, John had a piano in a back room, and it was there that the members of the troupe used to get together and practice. John Meyer was a very good pianist and he made many of the trio and quartet's arrangements. Sometimes he and Frankie Banta played duets in our concerts.

One thing I learned was, we didn't have to rough it with the Record Makers or the Eight Victor Artists. We weren't allowed to. Burr insisted that we wear evening clothes in giving our performances, and that led the impishly irreverent Mike Silver to dub us "The Pallbearers." After I left, I understand, it was decided to appear in street clothes as a touch of informality designed to loosen up the audience, but we were strictly formal in my day. When we went on our three-month tours throughout the United States and Canada we stayed at the best hotels, and were never allowed to carry baggage. Even if the concert hall or theatre was only a few blocks from our hotel we went in taxis. I remember one time we were in Houston, Texas, and I told a taxi driver I wanted to go to the Municipal Auditorium where we were to appear that night.

"Why," the driver said, the Auditorium is just across the street from this hotel."

"O. K.," I said. "Drive me there!"

Although Burr was the organizer and manager of the troupe, its business affairs were in the hands of an Allentown, Pennsylvania, Victor dis-



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tributor - Philip W. Simon - who maintained a booking office at 1658 Broadway, New York. Simon was a nice fellow whose assistant, L. C. Mountcastle, attended to the actual booking. After Burr's recording career ended he was for a time the program director for the Columbia Broadcasting System and Mountcastle was his right-hand man.

Henry Burr had a genius for making money, but almost as much ability to lose it in fantastic ways. For a year or two he had the Paroquette Record Company, which was a failure. He sank a lot of money in a silver fox farm, and lost even more heavily in a sheet music publishing venture. But he and I did well for several years, manufacturing and selling a banjo I had designed, and of course the Eight was very profitable until the "talkies" came along and, for a long time, killed the appeal of "live" attractions. Too, he was one of the highest paid recording artists.

On one occasion, after the troupe had filled an engagement, the manager of the theater handed me a check. For some reason he had got the impression I was managing the show. I looked at the check and almost fainted. It was for exactly twice as much as the maximum I had imagined Burr could possibly be getting for our services. When I told the other boys, human nature asserted itself and we decided to strike Henry for a raise. At Mike Silver's suggestion, we put on false beards, to make us look like anarchists, and, so to speak, "bearded the lion in his den." Ever afterwards, whenever we decided Hank was becoming too prosperous for his own good and that we should have more money, we put on our beards—some red and some black—and went in for a heart-to-heart talk. I never tried to find out what the other fellows were getting, but it was generally understood that Billy Murray's take was tops. And it should have been. He was not only a marvelous master of ceremonies but also the most popular recording artist this country has ever known.

That business of putting on false facial fungus was the start of the Order of Beards, about which you were telling me. That was after my time, but I got a laugh, Jim, out of your story of how the Eight used to put on those false beards and parade through trains, brandishing hatchets and scaring passengers by pretending to be Russian anarchists. Finally, as you said, Burr decided he wanted to be a member and asked to be allowed to join. The boys kept him waiting in an anteroom for two hours and then Billy Murray came out and showed him a hat into which seven black pellets had been dropped. Every body in the troupe had blackballed Burr! (Mike Silver had slipped off the train at a convenient spot and bought some pieces of licorice that were rolled up into balls.) And, as you say, Hank became so furious the other seven decided in a hurry to let him become a full-fledged member of the Order of Beards.

Burr insisted on paying off in cash on Saturday nights. The boys used



FRED VAN EPS, lower right, in an unidentified recording studio with other artists of that period.

to kick about that because they considered the display of so much money an open invitation to a stick-up, but Burr argued that a hotel lobby was a good pay-place and handing out stacks of greenbacks was good business because "it looks prosperous." Then, as you say, someone slipped into Monroe Silver's room in a Columbus, Ohio, hotel, while he was taking a bath and not only stole his week's salary but also took a ring his dead mother had given him. Mike didn't mind the money so much—there would be another pay-day next week—but he did mourn for the ring, which he never recovered. Burr lost a \$700 ring in the Hotel Muhlenbach in Kansas City, but later got it back.

Henry and his wife were both fat and heavy eaters. One day down in Texas we watched them packing away a huge meal. Mike remarked: "They're reducing."

"Reducing?" somebody else said incredulously, and Mike replied: "Yes, reducing the food supply!"

I got many a laugh from Billy Murray's ability to make off-the-cuff funny remarks. Sometimes Billy talked a slang that was almost a form of shorthand. On one occasion he was telling about somebody buying a good second-hand Cadillac car for a thousand dollars.

"Gee, just think of it!" Billy exclaimed. "A Cad for a thou!"

Al Campbell and Mike Silver liked to roam, after the show, about any city in which we were playing. When they got tired of sightseeing they'd drop into a movie, picking what looked like the worst picture they could find. Then they'd take turns watching and sleeping. One would watch the picture a few minutes while the other slept, then wake up, briefly outline the plot up to then, and go to sleep himself. Maybe they'd watch

and sleep through a couple of screenings rather than get up and go to the hotel.

Neither Mike or Al drank, and neither did Billy. Burr had been a heavy drinker as a very young man, but he had sworn off and he never touched a drop when I was with the troupe. I'll bet you didn't know that before he came to New York and began his musical career he was a candy salesman in his native Canada. He must have been a very young salesman, for he was only 20 when he began making Columbia records in 1902.

As for myself, I used to go to the beer-and-beefsteak parties which Victor gave each year for its male artists, but nowadays I don't touch anything alcoholic. Neither do I smoke. A specialist who has performed autopsies tells me that nobody would ever inhale cigarettes if the lungs of dead smokers were put on public display. He says the mass of black tar and other harmful substances revealed by a lung autopsy is really frightening.

In spite of looking, as Billy Murray used to say, as if I don't have a spare pound of flesh on me, I've always been remarkably healthy. I've never been ill except that I once had an infected tooth. Most illness is in the mind. I'm still looking forward to the future and still have a zest for living. Never let yourself feel you're old and washed up or you'll lose your incentive for keeping on. There's always something worth doing around the corner. That's why I've kept up my banjo practice, and why I can truthfully say I'm playing better today, thanks to my change of technique, than I did when I was at the peak of my recording career.

One thing I'm proud of is the fact that I've never had a traffic accident,



and I've been driving since 1910. Whenever I'm driving over unfamiliar territory and know I'm going back that same way, I make a point of looking back and seeing the territory unroll behind me. In that way, I remember what it looks like and am not likely to lose my way when I begin the return trip. . . I wish I could have kept my hair as thick and glossy as Al Campbell did. His hair was jet black, and when he died, aged 76, in 1947, there were very few traces of gray.

#### IX. Van Eps - Burr Corporation

During my years with the Eight, Henry Burr and I formed the Van Eps - Burr Corporation and marketed the Van Eps Recording Banjo, modeled after the one I used in my recording and concert work. There was a popular impression that I used a steel-back banjo, but this one had an aluminum resonator with a sound hole in the head, which was made of calfskin.

When I left the troupe in 1922 I took over the sale of the banjo, and it remained on the market until about 1930, when the depression showed up. By that time recording had become electrified, and the loud volume produced by that type of banjo wasn't needed any more. Better results could be obtained with a solid head. I gave banjo lessons for a time, but as the instrument, which had once been so popular, lost its appeal I went into my present business. I'll tell more about that later. I'm happy to say it has been a great success, and I've made most of my money in it. Luckily, I've done so well that if I should live to be 108 I'll still have more money than I'm likely to spend.

I ceased to consider myself a recording artist after I left the Eight, but it seems I did some recording I've forgotten about. You've mentioned several Edison records, such as "Darkies' Dream" and "Darkies' Awakening" and "The Lonesome Mama Blues" which I made for Edison in 1923, and I even made Edison records of "I'm Sitting On Top of the World" and "Dinah" in 1926. I know I did because you played the records for me, but I don't have any recollection of making them.

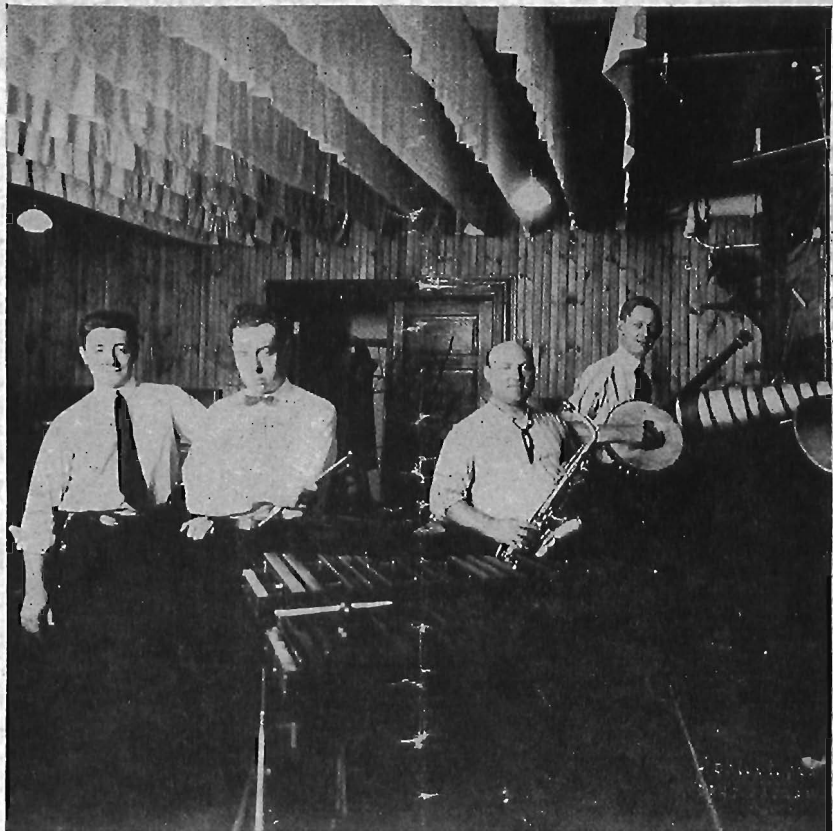
And now I believe this would be a good place to insert, for the benefit of HOBBIES readers, some notes I jotted down on March 12, 1935, about the history and development of the five-string banjo. I headed it, "America's Own."

#### X Van Eps Article On Banjo

Not everyone knows the banjo is a native instrument and the only one developed in this country; and when I say banjo I mean the original form, having five gut strings and played with bare fingers—the only type used up to 30 years ago.

The so-called dance era brought into use numerous variations—tenor, plectrums, etc.—all strung with wire and played with some kind of a tool. These were easy to play.

The earliest form of musical instrument was a tree stump hollowed out, with a vibrating string stretched across the top. If you sawed this off and put a handle on it you would have a sort of banjo. Almost from man's first attempt to build an instrument, banjo-shaped affairs were used.



The Van Eps Quartet photographed in an unidentified recording studio. Left to right: Frank Banta, piano; the late Joe Green, xylophone; the late Nathan Glantz, saxophone, and Fred Van Eps, banjo. The photo was probably taken in 1920.

The banjo has been associated with the Negro, and while it is true that the slaves brought it from Africa in the form of the "banya," it took an Irishman, Joe Sweeney, to put it in its present form with its five strings and rim. . . There's a memorial to Sweeney at his home town, Appomattox, Virginia.

No other instrument has a more interesting history. It grew up with the minstrels and you had better try to make a ham sandwich without ham than stage a minstrel show without a banjo. . . Starting about 1885 and lasting about ten years the banjo became a fad and everybody plunked one. The then Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII, started the craze in England, and was promptly dubbed "Prince Tum-Tum."

The next stage was that of the college clubs; you need only ask Dad to find out what an institution the Banjo Club was and what it meant to belong to one. The man who graduated from college twenty years ago is still either playing a five-string banjo or longing to hear one played.

#### WHO MADE HIGHEST TYPE BANJOS?

S. S. Stewart of Philadelphia was a manufacturer who spent his life improving and elevating the banjo. He was tireless in his efforts and intolerant of the scoffers, and told them that at one time the violin was said to be no musical instrument. Stewart said the banjo was limited only by the performer's ability, and time has proved him correct.

Since the symphony orchestra is supposed to contain all musical colors, the time is not far distant when the banjo will be a part of these organizations. You can't get that certain timbre without the combination of catgut and calf skin.

After the before-mentioned banjo craze there was the usual reaction,

but when the old-time Edison recording artist, Ruby Brooks, began playing in Tom Gould's cafe, which was a rendezvous for fashionable people, New York society began using banjos as an accompaniment for dancing. Brooks teamed up with Harry Denton, and not to have them at your party was the worst social blunder.

The banjo has been crossed with other fretted instruments. If you put a mandolin neck and strings on a banjo body, it becomes a banjo-mandolin. If you reverse the process and put a banjo neck and strings on a mandolin body it becomes a mandolin-banjo. In 1898 there appeared an automatic banjo housed in a glass case and operated with a perforated paper roll which controlled buttons for stopping the strings and vacuum bellows which operated steel picks. This was a popular piece of saloon furniture.

#### PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY

An extremely odd thing about the professional banjo players was their jealousy—not ordinary professional jealousy, but an ACUTE variety. If you were an advanced student and paid for tuition you would not be shown anything if there was danger of your becoming too good. During (Continued on page 35)

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

THE OLD MUSIC HOUSE Buys, Sells, trades, coin operated pianos, Reginas, hand organs, rolls. The largest collection in Middle West.—R. C. Lambert, Owner, Monticello, Iowa. d122511

ACCESSORIES, Music & Studies for the Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar & Ukulele; Steel, & Spanish Plectrum Guitars and other fretted instruments. — Gima's Guitar Salon, Box 2235, Colorado Springs, Colorado. mh3844

in its "Old Curiosity Shop" album. But in the last few months Victor has reissued five more of her recordings on its Label "X" including the following "When a Woman Loves a Man," "I'd Rather Be Blue," "Cooking Breakfast For the One You Love," "Second Hand Rose," and "If You Want the Rainbow."

#### A FANNY BRICE DISCOGRAPHY— Columbia Records recorded in 1916

A1973 (name spelled Fannie Bryce) 1  
- Don't Know Whether to Do it or Not/  
Rhoda Bernard - Nathan.  
A2122 (name spelled Fannie Brice) If  
We Could Only Take Her Word (2  
parts).

Victor Records recorded 1921-2.  
45263 Second Hand Rose/My Man  
45303 I'm An Indian/O, How I Hate That  
Fellow Nathan

45323 Becky is Back in the Ballet/ The  
Sheik of Avenue B

Victor records, electrically recorded from  
1928-30.

21163 My Man (two versions released)/  
The Song of the Sewing Machine  
21211 Mrs. Cohen at the Beach (2 parts)  
21815 If You Want the Rainbow (You  
Must Have the Rain/I'd Rather Be  
Blue)

22310 When a Woman Loves a Man/  
Cooking Breakfast for the One You  
Love

Capitol Records, c. 1947

Album No. DC 3081 (78 rpm) includes  
the following:

Baby Snooks Learns to Tell the Truth  
Baby Snooks Learns to be Good  
Baby Snooks Learns to be Clean  
Baby Snooks Learns Table Manners  
Baby Snooks Learns About Crossing  
Streets  
Baby Snooks Learns to Be Kind to  
Animals

Fanny Brice Reissues:

Blumore 1016 My Man (1921 version)/

Helen Morgan - Bill

RCA Victor Album LCT 1112 "Old Curiosity Shop." Includes the 1921 version of "My Man." (12 inch 33-1/3 rpm; also available in 45 rpm).

Label "X" LVA 1006 (12 inch 33-1/3 rpm) Fanny Brice - When a Woman Loves a Man, I'd Rather Be Blue, Cooking Breakfast for the One You Love, Second Hand Rose, If You Want the Rainbow/Helen Morgan - Body and Soul, Why Was I Born, Mean to Me, Frankie and Johnnie, Can't Help Loving That Man, Something to Remember You By.

#### A NOTICE TO ALL COLLECTORS OF CYLINDER RECORDINGS:

For a considerable amount of time now Duane Deakins and Tom Grattelo on the West Coast have been engaged in the Herculean task of trying to compile a complete list of all the cylinder records issued in this country. The first part (Edison 4 minute wax amberol records - popular series) has now been completed and indexed and should be available this Summer to all those who are interested. Duane Deakins (1057 Paloma St., Stockton 4, Calif.) would be interested in hearing from all collectors and dealers who would be interested in subscribing to this series so that he can have some idea of how many copies to have printed. They are now engaged in completing the regular Blue amberol series and are lacking information on Numbers 2960, 3210, 3743, 4791 and 4819. They have information on all of the Edison 2 min. wax gold moulded records from 8000 to 10575 except No. 8002. If anyone can supply information on any of these numbers would you please write Dr. Deakins at the above address. I feel that this is a most important undertaking and that they should be assisted by collectors as far as possible.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 32)

the first days of the phonograph the banjo was about the only instrument that recorded well and was used extensively. Violin records were out of the question - the sound went in so sweetly and came out so sour!

George L. Lansing, a well known banjoist of Boston, wrote "The Darkies' Dream" as a solo and it became such a hit that nearly all the bands in the country played it.

Now let's tell our right names and have an understanding as to just what a banjo is:

It's an instrument with five strings (four long, one short) and not what you have heard in the dance orchestras. Those steel strings instruments played with picks or plectrums I just can't call musical instruments, but they filled a gap in the dance orchestras of the '20's. They were a part of the rhythm section and supposed to add to the band. Harry Reser, I think, was, and is, the best player of the so-called tenor banjo. During the several years following World War I more tenor banjos were made and sold than any other music-making tool. Since then the tenor banjo has largely given way to the superior tone of the guitar.

#### THE NATIONAL INSTRUMENT

Practically everyone knows that the Stars and Stripes is our national emblem. Almost every moron knows the goldenrod is our national flower, but if you were to walk up the street and ask the first six men you met what our national instrument is you would probably get little information. If, after you told them what it is you asked what a banjo really is, you would be apt to get much less information.

Scotland has its bagpipe; Italy the violin, and so on down the line. So it is high time everyone knew our national musical instrument, the only one developed in the United States, is the banjo - especially so since it has had the most interesting career of any.

The foregoing was written more than 20 years ago when the banjo was near its lowest ebb. During the past year there have been gratifying signs of a revival of interest in the orthodox five-string variety, as was evidenced last summer when the August 15 issue of LIFE contained an article on "The Banjo Boom." The article didn't mention a fellow named Fred Van Eps, who has probably been actively booming the banjo longer than anyone else now alive. But, Jim, you took care of that to some extent by writing a reply that appeared in the September 5 issue. You say they cut your letter of more than a page down to five lines - but, at any rate, it let LIFE'S readers know that I am still living and playing the time-honored five-string banjo!

(To be continued)

### A "Limited Edition" Record By Edith Helena and Domenico Russo

By JIM WALSH

When I attended the John Bieling Day Memorial observance at Garden City, New York, in September, 1948, I met a charming lady who had won world-wide fame as the operatic soprano, Edith Helena. As one of the organizers of the party I was so busy with many duties that I had less opportunity to talk with Madame Helena than I liked, but I still hope

to have the happiness of meeting her again.

Meanwhile, I was recently overjoyed to receive an autographed copy of a ten-inch long-play record constituting a recital by Edith Helena and her late husband, Domenico Russo, a noted Italian tenor of the past generation, who was born in 1874 and died in 1932. The record is, without exaggeration, a limited editions production because the pressing has been restricted to 100 copies—which means it undoubtedly will become a choice collector's item. It is obtainable for \$5, postpaid, from Arthur E. Knight, 81 Edgewood Avenue, Cranston 5, Rhode Island, a gifted young pianist and authority on operatic and concert recordings, who frequently contributes to that fascinating English publication, *The Record Collector*.

Included in the two faces of the long-player are three solos by Russo, which were made in 1907 and 1911, but have never hitherto been published; re-recordings of 4 numbers sung by Madame Helena from 1903 to 1923; three songs electrically recorded by her for private use from 1953 to 1955, and a spoken introduction in which the wonderful little lady of almost 80 graciously expresses her pleasure at authorizing the issuance of her beloved husband's legendary recordings. Mr. Knight furnishes the piano accompaniment for the electrically recorded solos.

Despite the technical defects, such as fairly high surface noise and occasional pitch wavers in the old records' piano background, this LP is a joy to hear in well nigh its entirety. My one disappointment was in the copying of the 1923 Edison Diamond Disc originally issued as "Novelty Imitation Medley," and containing Madame Helena's famous imitation of a violin playing "Kiss Me Again," and her singing of "The Last Rose of Summer" in which she introduces an amazing high note of F above high C. This record is more "forward" and "realistic" than any other of the acoustically recorded numbers, but the tone is rather coarse and the scratch seems more pronounced than when the Edison record is played on a New Edison phonograph. However, I have never yet heard dubbings of Diamond Discs that seemed entirely satisfactory, so there is no wonder that to my ears this one falls somewhat short.

The Russo numbers are heard first on side one. They include "La donna é mobile," from "Rigoletto," which the tenor sings with the proper rollicking abandon and gusto. It is very well recorded by 1907 standards. To my perception the best of the Russo records is the second, "O Paradiso," in which the beauty and passion of his voice are genuinely thrilling. I wonder how many other hearers will find a resemblance, as I thought I did, between his voice and that of another great Italian singer, Giovanni Zenatello. Tosti's "Ideale," a song for which I have never especially cared, is sung extremely well with consummate mastery of the melodic line. These last two numbers were recorded in 1911.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## FRED VAN EPS

(Continued from March issue)

### VIII. The Eight Famous Victor Artists

I have had and am still having, an interesting and what I suppose most people would consider a successful life, but the things that give me most pleasure nowadays are the knowledge that my children are doing well and the memories of the 43 years companionship I had with my beloved wife, "Flossie."

I had four sons. One, John, named for my father, was killed in a car wreck in 1945. Of the remaining boys, Fred, Jr., is the oldest. He was the arranger for Paul Whiteman until Whiteman went out of the orchestra business. Now he arranges for Raymond Scott's "Hit Parade" telecast seen on Saturday nights. He is in New York.

The two other boys are in California. Robert, a gifted pianist, is with M-G-M, where he is an arranger. George, who has been well known for many years as a dance band musician, is free-lancing with his guitar. He is the author of "The Van Eps Method" of guitar playing. He's been in a lot of films lately, but I haven't seen them. One is "The Pete Kelley

Blues," starring Jack Webb. People frequently tell me, "I saw George in the talkies last night." Although I've lived in New Jersey all my life, I'm planning to move my laboratory to California, where I can be with Rob and George. Rob is well known as a writer on musical subjects and has written a book, "The Physics of Piano Technique." He has been my accompanist in the recordings I have made privately during recent years.

Which reminds me that this would be a good time to list the accompanists I have had, in the order in which they played for me. They are: William E. Mac Clymont, Frank P. Banta, Charles L. Van Baar, Belle Harty, Charles A. Prince, Felix Arndt, George Gershwin, Frank E. Banta, and Robert Van Eps.

My wife was Florence Schoffstall, of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Her father was a contractor who took out the coal pillars from the mines and substituted wooden supports. At first the coal pillars were left in the mines for safety's sake, but then it was found that they could be removed and the wooden ones left in their place.

Now I come to the trip Flossie and I took to Europe. It was a wonderful

experience, but it had what I suppose playwrights would call a tragic ending, at least a sad one for me.

You know, Flossie had almost an obsession for England and everything English. All her life she had wanted to go there. Mention almost any castle or cathedral and she could tell you its history. She used to read Pepys' Diary in bed before dropping off to sleep. It was her Bible. Well, we talked for years about going abroad, but somehow never actually made the start. Then something seemed to tell me: "If you are ever going to take that European trip you'd better get busy!" So I told Florence to get ready—we were going.

And we did. We sailed on the Queen Elizabeth on April 7, 1954. But we had plenty of preliminary trouble. As I've already mentioned, my birth certificate didn't give my first name, but merely said I was a male whose last name was Van Eps. Finally, I found a program of a recital in which I played the violin when I was eight years old. It was dated, and it gave my full name, Fred Van Eps, and mentioned my age. I had it photographed, sent it to Washington, and the trouble was cleared up. I never was able to find any proof that my wife had ever been born, but everything eventually worked out.

We had a wonderful time abroad. British hospitality is marvelous. No one has ever been treated any better than the English treated us. My fellow musicians gave two dinners in our honor and we were beautifully entertained at many private parties. A friend, Mrs. Fay Shields, went with us. Both Flossie and I were a hundred per cent Americans, but we certainly fell in love with England. That is, I did; she had always loved it.

We were abroad almost nine weeks. We went to Land's End and Southdown, and made a trip to Scotland, where we went up above Loch Lo-

### JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1915); back copies of phonograph publications and all sorts of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not interested in buying phonographs and records by mail and do not want "The Victor Book of the Opera." Do not submit material without being instructed by me. I will not pay for or return unsolicited items. If I do not reply I already have the material you offer. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

JIM WALSH

Box 476

Vinton, Va.

tfx

Trend of the times is to glamorize the 1920 days of prohibition Dixieland and the Charleston. I have hundreds of Dixieland Jazz Band, Charleston records. A little later on radio got its start and the record business fell flat on its face. The greatest musical stars like Ellington, Jolly Roll, Morton, Fats Waller, King Oliver and other great artists appeared on independent labels such as Harmony, Brunswick, Okeh, and many others. I have thousands of these rare items.

AL McREA, SR.

Box 182, Westville, New Jersey

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Jack L. Caidin

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Hundreds of music boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island



mond. Here are some pictures I made of that famous scenic spot. It's so far north you can read a newspaper without artificial illumination at 11:30 at night. We made side trips to Stratford-on-Avon and to Windsor Castle. Fourteen days were spent on the continent of Europe. It was a perfect trip. I'm so glad Flossie was able to fulfill her life's ambition.

We were impressed by the gallant way the people of Great Britain kept going so many years under great difficulties. They have an income tax of a straight 45 per cent and there's a 50 percent sales tax on virtually everything they buy. Yet they survived the horribly grim days of World War Two and the British Isles are now prospering. Tourists are able to buy things at a large discount by having them delivered to the boat. The material of this suit I am wearing was delivered to my boat. (We came home on the Queen Mary.) A suit of this material would cost at least \$200 over here.

And now I think I can best tell the story of our return from that wonderful trip by quoting the following "Notes and Comments By the Editor" from the August, 1954, issue of B. M. G. That's a magazine which has been published more than 50 years in England for banjo, mandolin and guitar players. It carried a long interview with Vess Ossman when he went to England and gave a command performance for his fellow banjo enthusiast, King Edward VII, in 1903.

The people who had the pleasure of meeting the Van Eps on their recent visit to this country will not disagree with me when I say that Mrs. Van Eps has probably made the greatest conquest of any visitor to these shores. Her charm, her grace, her obviously "pleased to meet you" attitude to all she met did much to cement the "Hands Across the Sea" spirit in the course of her all-too-short stay.

It will therefore come as a shock to many to hear that this gracious lady suddenly died from massive coronary occlusion on June 8, within an hour after returning to her home in Plainfield, N. J.

Every reader of B. M. G. will want to join with me in extending sincerest condolences and the deepest sympathy to Fred Van Eps in his loss.

On their return to America, Mr. and Mrs. Van Eps and Mrs. Shields were met by a handful of friends, including Mr. and Mrs. Magee, who had arranged a welcoming dinner at the Red Coach Inn at Gloster, N. J. During the dinner, following a toast, the guests of honor gave snatches of their experiences and impressions and Flossie and Fred made a speech in which she spoke most highly of the people she had met in England.

Mr. and Mrs. Longacre, who live near Pittsburgh, decided to drive the Van Eps home. Within an hour Flossie was dead. They arrived in Plainfield: Mrs. Van Eps alighted from the car and kissed the neighbors' children who ran out to welcome the returning travellers. Stepping into the house, she sat down and suffered the heart attack that brought immediate death.

Fred Van Eps, in a brief note received a day or so ago, tells me that although his wife had suffered from a heart ailment for some time, the shock of her passing has left him prostrate. The only consolation he can find is that, as his dearly beloved wife had to go before him, she has been saved the utter grief he is suffering had he passed away first.

Yes, that's the way it was. We went into our home. Flossie sat down, said, "Our trip was the most wonderful experience of my life, but it's good to be back"—and was dead within just a few minutes. It seems that her strength held together just long enough for her to take the trip she had dreamed of all her life. Then, when her ambition was accomplished, it suddenly gave way. And I'm sure you understand what I meant when I said my father and mother went the right way when they died within 12 days of each other back in 1926.

#### XII Van Eps Laboratory

Now, let's talk about something else. I have already mentioned my laboratory at my home near Plainfield, and if I don't do some explaining your HOBBIES readers will probably be scratching their heads, trying to figure out what sort of a business I'm in.

Back in 1940, I was still trying to perfect my new technique for playing the banjo but was uncertain whether to keep on experimenting with it or to go back to the old method. The result was, I swung back and forth like a pendulum and for a while I didn't play the banjo at all. I had always been interested in the technical processes of sound recording, and so, during this period when my banjo stood idle, I developed some devices that are the foundation of my successful business.

The pictures on this circular will give you a clear idea of what we make. One of our specialties is the Van Eps vacuum system for drawing the chip in disc sound recording. We make this for the big recording companies. The vacuum system, which consists of four bellows vacuum pump mounted on a base, (a slow speed motor driven by a V belt), prevents the tangling of the thread with the stylus. Thread tangling, I'm sure you know, is the most common cause of failure in disc recording. My apparatus is efficient and quiet and can be placed directly beneath the recording machine.

Then here's a photo of the Van Eps patented eccentric fixture which cuts the eccentric circle that actuates record changers. It includes an eccentric cam that grips the pin of the turntable and actuates the swinging arm carrying the advance-ball and stylus. A magnifier and lamp are included, and with this fixture it does not take more than 30 seconds to make a cut that adapts the record for use on automatic changers.

It isn't necessary for me to have a large number of workers to turn out my recording devices in adequate volume, but the business, as I have said, has proved very profitable. One of these days I'll be operating it from California.

Speaking of California. I have another plan on the fire. Not so long ago I received a phone call from a man in New York who identified himself as a nephew of Vess Ossman. He had what I think is a great idea—a plan for getting one of the big movie companies to make a feature film based on the history of the banjo with prominent attention paid

to the life story of Joe Sweeney, its inventor, who lived at Appomattox, Virginia, Where Lee surrendered to Grant. There could be also mention of Sweeney's brother, another skilled banjo player, who was attached to the staff of the Confederate General, "Jeb" Stuart. When I go to California in December, as I have been doing for years, I shall get in touch with some of the movie magnates and try to interest them in this scheme. A marker honoring Joe Sweeney has been placed at Appomattox, but he deserves more recognition than that.

#### XIII New Photography Method

One thing seems to lead to another, rambling along like this. You asked me to tell HOBBIES readers something about my method of—as you said—photographing nothing and making it come out something. For instance, taking a picture of a clear pane of glass and by careful attention to developing methods coming out with a finished print of intricate design and, often, of remarkable beauty. Well, the process is secret, and I don't think anybody else has done anything like it, but I'll tape record a description which I'll try to keep as non-technical as possible.

To begin with, it's not strictly a photographic process, for the reason that a camera lens is not used. It's a manufactured negative, starting with a piece of plain glass, 2½ inches by 4. The original idea was to make crystal negatives, with art effects like snow, frost on the window and what-have-you? I made a few of those and found that if you made one you made all. There was no variety. They were all alike. Then I got to floundering around and ran into a process that seemed to afford infinite variety. Finally, I got a method of making a rather remote form of crystallization that could be controlled. The results were astounding. The prints range from apparent photographs of the solar system to what appears to be luxuriant South American scenery. That's about all the detail I feel I can give, but I showed you some of the prints and you agreed they are really "out of this world." I think I can truthfully say nothing just like them had ever been seen before I hit on my secret process.

#### XIV New Recordings

Making records is far easier today than it was in 1897 when young Fred Van Eps first walked over to the Edison laboratory with two homemade cylinders as samples of his work, but a conscientious artist still will often make lots of "takes" before he achieves anything that satisfies him.

A few years ago, after I had perfected my new method of playing, I went back to recording. I issued an album which you remember, Jim, you reviewed in the April, 1952, issue of HOBBIES. The descriptive notes on the inside album cover were reproduced from your review in *Variety*. The records came out under the Five String Banjo label, and the recording was done on equipment designed



and built by me. The playing was done at Robert's home, with Rob serving as accompanist.

The album includes "Maple Leaf Rag," "Ragtime Oriole," "Smiler Rag," "Nola," "Dell Oro" and Moszkowski's "Bolero," and it was quite successful. Right now I have plans for issuing another album of five-string banjo music and I'm giving you some test pressings of numbers that may appear in it. I call your special attention to one called "Cubist," recorded in Rob's home after several hours hard work. This is the sixth take. "Cubist" is an enormously difficult thing to play properly, but I believe this is the best record I have ever made.

You asked me the names of some of my favorites in the old recording days. Well, I like "Persiflage," which I made for Victor and other companies. I also like a Victor by the Van Eps Trio, "Oh, Susie, Behave." And I think one of the brightest and most sparkling things I recorded is an Indestructible cylinder which I played for you with my electrified cylinder machine. It has the odd title of "Powder Rag and Dope," and seems to be rather a hard record to find nowadays. Probably my biggest seller was the one called "Dixie Medley" on Edison discs and cylinders and a good many other brands. Edison used it as its "standard" banjo record—that is, the one that all banjo recordings were supposed to equal in skill of performance and naturalness of tone. I was amused by this excerpt from instructions to Edison dealers, which you showed me in the Edison house organ, *Diamond Points*, for May, 1917:

You should have a supply of No. 50195, "Dixie Medley" and "Infanta March." A dancing expert tells us that the Dixie Medley is the best one-step she ever heard. This was news to us. But the expert was right; we proved it. Moreover, this is a superb demonstration record. Van Eps plays the Dixie Medley for a well-known talking machine. Compare Van Eps' talking machine record with Van Eps' New Edison Re-Creation. We don't know anything deadlier in comparative demonstration.

No, I'm not going to say what brand of "talking machine record" the Edison writer was thinking about. I honestly don't know. "Dixie Medley" was called "Turkey in the Straw Medley" on Victor. I re-made it around 1920, after it had originally been recorded by Ossman. As I remember, Charlie Prince, the recording director for the old Columbia Phonograph Company, arranged that medley.

One of the most popular records the Trio ever made was Victor 17575, "Too Much Ginger and The Smiler Rag." They were both one-steps and they were played good and loud. I was amused when you showed me that description in the June, 1914, Victor supplement:

"A REAL DANCING NOVELTY. Here are two novelty selections, which can be used for dancing purposes if desired. They are simply tremendous in volume, and are just the thing for dancing on the porch or lawn, or in a large hall. If you play them in a small room you should use a half-tone needle or you are likely to break the windows!"

"The players in this new combination are the best in their respective lines—the best banjoist, the best ragtime pianist and the best drummer in America!"

That was quite a compliment for Felix Arndt, Eddie King and Fred Van Eps!

In September we came through with two more rowdy one-steps on Victor record 17601. One side was "Chinese Picnic" and "Oriental Dance," and the other "The Notoriety Rag." The supplement remarked:

"To say that the two records by this organization of 'noise makers' which were listed in June have made a hit is putting it very mildly indeed, as the effort to supply the demand has in fact taxed the capacity of our record factory. Here are two more lively numbers, just as loud and in perfect time for one-stepping. They will be found ideal for open-air dancing, as they can be heard at almost any distance."

We gave the old "William Tell" warhorse a ragging in August, 1915, when the Trio's record of "I Wonder What Will William Tell" came out in one-step form. It was on 17799, backed with "Chicken Reel Comedy Medley" by the Six Brown Brothers Saxophone Sextet. Once more we were lively and loud—but all this time I still didn't like using drums and wanted to do what I eventually did—substitute a saxophone.

I have always been a strong believer in restricting the banjo to the type of music for which it's suited. To my way of thinking, the late Alfred A. Farland, my Plainfield neighbor who died May 5, 1954, at the age of 88, was a pathetic example of the banjoist who goes wrong. All his professional career Mr. Farland tried to adopt the banjo to types of classical music for which it was unfitted. When Vess Ossman was interviewed by B. M. G. more than 50 years ago he pointed out this fallacy of Farland's. I once paid Farland for a course of instruction and when he wanted me to play Hauser's "Cradle Song" I quit in disgust. It isn't the question of classical or otherwise, it's the type. There are plenty of rhythmic numbers that are effective in both classes.

Mr. Farland and I were friends and used to attend get-togethers of five-string banjoists. In his late years when he had trouble with his hands (he also became deaf) and couldn't keep playing, he was a ticket-taker at a theater. He had a great admiration for my wife—everybody admired Flossie—and he would always "pass" her in. The old gentleman was an impressive looking figure with a shock of snow white hair, but his house on East Second Street in Plainfield was the most abandoned appearing place in the city. It was never painted and the grass on the lawn was never cut. I used to hear Mr. Farland practicing on the banjo inside the house when he would have been far better occupied outside, getting some wholesome exercise by cutting the grass. Yet he certainly lived to an advanced age. It seems he made only one record—an Edison of "Carnival of Venice." I heard it for the first time when you played it for me, and it was obvious that Far-

land's banjo was out of tune! . . . Speaking of banjoists, I was very sorry when Joe Morley, the best English player of his time, died back in 1937.

#### XV Random Reflections

Jim, I want to tell you I've been very much pleased by the warm love you so evidently have for your two beautiful cats, Roger and Gray, and the devotion they show you in return. One of my tests of a man is whether he cares for animals. If you didn't like animals I couldn't like you. I have never seen better cared for pets than black-and-gold Roger, and Gray, who lives up to his name, and I don't think I ever saw two cats whose sweetness and goodness made them more worthy of the best of everything.

My wife was extremely fond of animals. She was devoted to our Collie, dog, Nellie, and taught her to "sing." Flossie would say "pianissimo, Nellie," and Nellie would bark very softly. "Fortissimo!" would bring a loud outburst, Nellie actually understood, and still understands, a number of musical terms. Some people insisted she merely learned a routine and gradually barked louder as Flossie worked up from pianissimo to fortissimo. To disprove that, she would mix up the instructions, and Nellie would obey them in whatever order they were given.

I know a cat 25 years old, and I hope Roger and Gray will reach that fine old age. But I must tell you about a black cat owned by some friends of mine in England. We'll call him Tommy. My friends lived in one of the heavily bombed sections of England during World War Two, and the lady of the house got into the habit of listening for the bomb "alert." When it sounded she would pick



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Lift cover and listen! Lovely melodies automatically play on a fine imported Swiss music box which stops when cover closes. Carry-All is handmade in peasant fashion from native ash wood trimmed in gleaming black. Self-Locking cover is beautifully decorated in color and personalized with your name. Measures 9 1/4" long, 7" wide, 6" high. Send check or m. o. (No COD's, please), also name to be personalized.

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Warren, R. I.

myc

## FRED VAN EPS

(Continued from page 32)

in banjos. An instrument came out called the "Encore" automatic banjo. It was more or less like the tenor banjo, with the four strings tuned in fifths—C, G, D, A,—and it was activated with a paper roll, perforated just like a player piano roll. It was run by a vacuum. They had little knobs to stop the strings and there were four little vacuum bows with steel picks on the ends that picked the strings. You could make a single stroke or a tremolo continuous stokes. When they were in order they sounded pretty good.

The first automatic banjo I ever heard demonstrated was at a concert in Chickering Hall—that's an old place long since gone—at 18th street and Fifth Avenue, New York. One of those things out of tune was the most god-awful things you ever heard in your life—they were terrible! Well, anyway, there's a player out in Venice, California, who's supposed to be the originator of the tenor banjo. He was called in to tune this automatic banjo. He was a violinist, but he thought that if he could tune a banjo in fifths the way he did a violin, in a week or two he could become a banjo player.

About that time there were a lot of mandolin players who came to New York from Chicago, looking for business, but they found there wasn't any demand for the mandolin. Everybody wanted the banjo. They stayed until their money gave out, then went back to Chicago and came back with banjos tuned in fifths. And that was the start of the tenor banjo, which is used as a rhythm instrument in orchestras. But it never was, and never will be, a solo instrument!

So much for that. You asked me if I listen to present-day popular music. Yes, I tune in "Hit Parade" programs and that sort of thing and listen as long as I can stand it, but I usually wind up turning the knob violently to shut the set off and muttering to myself. Popular music today undoubtedly is the worst in American history. When the disc jockeys play the so-called ten most popular songs of the week they select almost entirely the moronic junk picked by teen-agers who will fall for any new fad. This "rock and roll" and all that sort of rubbish is terrible beyond belief. In the old days music was for the whole family, but it was usually the grown-ups who did the buying. Nowadays it's the kids who bring home the records and tune in the radio and tv—and it's largely they who make eating in a restaurant a nightmare for a civilized person by dropping coins into juke boxes.

But if I keep talking in this vein, the younger set among HOBBIES readers will accuse me of being an old fogey—or, maybe, even a "square!"—and we don't want that to happen. I don't want to conclude our recorded interview on a note of bitterness and disillusionment. Life has been too good to me for that. So suppose, Jim, we bow ourselves off the stage

gracefully by quoting that paragraph you wrote about me in Life for September 5, 1955:

SIRS: "Strummin' Up a Banjo Boom" (Life, Aug. 15) should have mentioned the virtuoso most connoisseurs consider the greatest living master of the five-string instrument—Fred Van Eps of Plainfield, N. J. He made his first phonograph records at the age of 16 on Edison's wax cylinders, and is still going strong, playing and recording, at the age of 76. JIM WALSH, Vinton, Va.

Going strong! That's what I am doing and hope to be doing for many years to come—even up to the age of 108 and beyond! Regardless of whether I am in New Jersey or California or paying another visit to you and Roger and Gray here in Roanoke I'm going to keep on trying to make the most of every passing moment, for only in rightfully directed action can progress be made. And, as Thomas A. Edison used to say: "I'd rather wear out than rust out!"

## THE END

## CURRENT COLLECTOR'S RECORDINGS

(Continued from page 32)

of these was issued a few years ago by Coral and the record is titled "I'll Cry Tomorrow" (Coral EC 81103). Besides the title song, the record includes three other songs closely identified with Lillian Roth: "Eadie Was A Lady," "Did You Ever See A Dream Walking," and "Please Tell Me When."

In connection with the current motion picture Epic has released a twelve inch long playing record that is truly a Lillian Roth cavalcade of hits:

Epic LN 3206 (also available on PG 9010) Lillian Roth:  
Love Thy Neighbor  
Ain't She Sweet  
Let's Fall In Love  
If I Could Be With You  
When The Red, Red Robin Comes  
Bob Bob Bobbin' Along  
Sing You Sinners  
Honey  
Goody, Goody  
As Time Goes By  
Don't Take Your Love From Me  
Happiness Is A Thing Called Joe  
I'd Climb The Highest Mountain  
\* \* \*

HELEN KANE: In June, 1954, in this column I mentioned some of the recent recordings that had been made by Helen Kane for the MGM and Columbia labels. Since then she has again recorded for MGM, this time a record titled "Boop Boop a Doop Girl."

MGM X1164 (45 rpm extended play)  
Do Something  
When I Get You Alone Tonight  
That's My Weakness Now  
When My Sugar Walks Down The Street

For all collectors of the music of the late twenties and the early thirties, I am sure these recent records by Lillian Roth and Helen Kane will be of importance.

## OLD VEHICLES

## THE GAD-WHIP

By D. TUDOR HARRELL

At Caistor in Lincolnshire, England, there existed a custom on Palm Sunday, whereby a person representing the proprietor of the estate of Broughton came to the porch of Caistor Church while the first lesson was being read and cracked the Gad-Whip three times. He then folded it up neatly and returned to his pew until the reading of the second lesson.

He then approached the minister with the whip held upright. At the upper end was a purse holding 30 pieces of silver. He knelt before the

(Continued on page 37)

## WANTED

WANTED AUTOMOTIVE ITEMS: Anything pertaining to the early automotive industry, all kinds of automotive trade publications, catalogs, instruction books, technical books, automobile hand books, pictures, framed or suitable for framing. Brass lights, oil or acetylene, bulb horns, acetylene generators, some accessories, emblems, name plates, hub caps, license plates, motor meters, old cars, trucks, bought anywhere, clothing, dusters, goggles, etc., or what have you.—B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. je 36311

WANTED TO BUY OR TRADE automobile radiator name plates.—Wallace Huffman, 610 South Webster, Kokomo, Indiana. ja124201

WANTED: Genuine stagecoach.—Wm. Gannon, Mabton, Washington. ap12654

OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted.—D. D. Way, P. O. Box 372, San Mateo, California. ap6015

WANTED:—License plates; Automobile magazines; Old automobile; all before 1920. —Anthony Shuplenus, Newport, New Jersey. je3042

UP TO \$10.00 each paid for early license plates in good condition, more for 1st issues. —Linville Jewelry Store, Winterset, Iowa. au6276

WANTED: Old Automobile magazine "MOTOR" prior to 1925.—Paul N. Woehler, 572 Enright Ave., Cincinnati 5, Ohio. my3272

REWARD Wanted old time automobiles or parts of same regardless of condition. Especially interested in old Stutz or Mercers. \$25.00 Reward for discoveries, if such information results in a purchase by me.—F. W. Edwards, 839 Marsh Road, Menlo Park, California. ap1823

## AUTOMOBILIANA FOR SALE

COLLECTORS ITEM: 1920 Lincoln Motor Co. stock certificate, original Henry Leland issue. Also two 8x10 glossy photos of the Leland Lincoln, items are original not copies. While they last \$2.00.—Wylie S. Boley, 11707 Mendota, Detroit 4, Michigan. ap3046

## WANTED

Antique Automobilia: Brass Head and Side Lamps, Horns, etc. Also old prints, sheet music, posters pertaining to old autos.

## Toys:

Tin and iron automobiles, Iron horse drawn carriages, circus wagons, fire engines, etc. Also Bell Toys.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## Joseph Tunnicliffe Pope, Jr.

The title of this month's article is just a little joke of mine. It amuses me to imagine HOBBIES readers wondering "Who is Jim writing about this month?" And then to think I hear them exclaiming: "Joseph Tunnicliffe Pope, Jr.! Who on earth was he?"

Not one record collector in a thousand, I am sure, would be able to give any information, off-hand, concerning the subject of this sketch. But when I explain that Pope was famous in vaudeville for a generation as one of the brightest, breeziest and cleverest of rapid-fire monologists and that he used the stage name of Murry K. Hill, I can visualize some irate readers and a concerted exclamation something like this:

"Murry K. Hill! Of course we know him! Why didn't you say you were talking about Murry Hill in the first place!"

Now that I've had my joke, I'll say it's truly a pleasure to be writing about Murry K. Hill, whom I have admired nearly as long as I can remember. Although the genial comedian's recording span was only a brief five years, he made a long series of comic talking and singing records, many of which remained popular for nearly a generation. In my opinion they are among the most amusing specialties ever recorded by any professional funny man.

Even though he used the "Jr." suffix until he died, Joseph Pope lived to an advanced age. He was 65 when he retired, and he survived for 12 years after that. I hope his sunset years were happy, for his stage appearances and records had given pleasure to such a multitude of listeners that he deserved to enjoy his days of leisure. Surely the veteran fun-maker found some consolation in the knowledge that his discs and cylinders, made 30 to 35 years before his death, would keep him from being forgotten.

Let's consider the relatively little known about "Murry K. Hill" himself before entering into a detailed consideration of his recordings. The November 11, 1942, *Billboard* contained this obituary notice:

"POPE—JOSEPH T. (Murry K. Hill) 77, vaude actor for 30 years before his retirement 12 years ago, October 23 in Chicago. He toured the country in black face roles and also made comedy phonograph records."

Note that *The Billboard* spelled

Hill's assumed first name as "Murray." So did some of the record companies in the beginning, but Hill must have told them he preferred the shorter spelling, for the name was soon changed to Murry.

### II. Biographical Details

Joseph Tunnicliffe Pope, Jr., to use his full name for the last time, was born in New York City on April 15, 1865—just six days after Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox, Va. His father was born in England, and his mother, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Bradley, in New York State.

Even though he was born in the East there is some reason to believe the comedian lived most of his life in the Middle West. He may have grown up in Indiana, for an old Victor record supplement refers to him as "the Indiana humorist." However, his home appears to have been in Chicago from the beginning of his vaudeville career until his death at 4:30 p. m., October 22, 1942—not October 23, as given in *The Billboard's* "Final Curtain." I know little of his early life, but a U. S. Everlasting cylinder record catalog for 1912 says he "began as a traveling salesman, then decided to tell his funny stories in vaudeville." I question the statement that he did blackface comedy. Hill didn't use Negro dialect in his records, and pictures of him in his stage make-up show him as a tall, slender, hatchet-faced middle-aged man, wearing an enormous high hat and having something of the appearance of a farcical school teacher.

The comedian was married. His wife's first name was Nellie, and she was 65 when he died at the age of 77 years, six months and four days. Dr. Alex J. Azar, who treated Pope in his last illness, recorded that he attended the elderly humorist from September 8, 1942, until his death. The physician attributed his patient's fatal illness to an acute cardiac dilatation caused by chronic myocarditis (inflammation of the muscular part of the heart wall) and to hypertension. Pope had been ill a year. He was cremated and buried in Acacia Park cemetery, Cook County, Illinois, on October 24, 1942.

And now, as we proceed to a consideration of Pope's recording activities, let's abandon the name his parents gave him in favor of the much better known assumed one of Murry K. Hill.

### III. Edison and Other Cylinders

I have often wondered what caused Joe Pope to take the stage name he made famous. Conceivably, it may have come from the Murray Hill section of his metropolitan New York birthplace, with the K. placed in the middle to balance the sound.

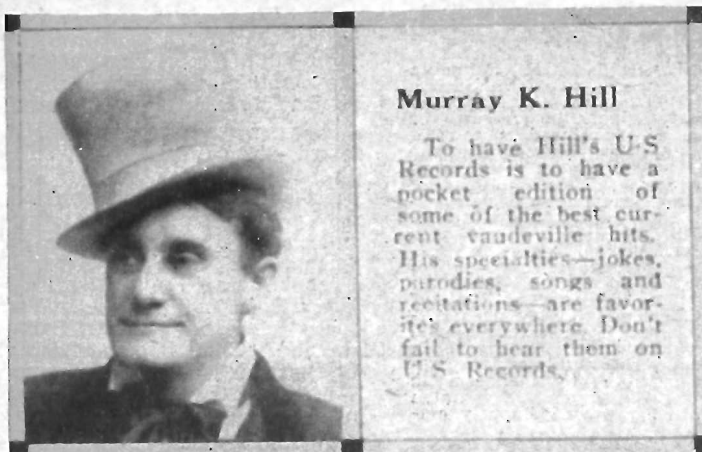
If Hill was a comedian for about 30 years before he retired, he must have given up toting a drummer's sample case to enter vaudeville somewhere around 35. He was 42 when his first record appeared—rather a late start. This Edison cylinder, "In the Good Old Steamboat Days" (No. 9619), was announced in August, 1907, the month that also saw the debut of Harvey Hindermeyer and Reinald Werrenrath as Edison soloists. Here's what *The New Phonogram* said of Hill's first offering:

A comic song telling of the days when the old Mississippi used to carry a different type of river boat from what she bears now. In those days, if the singer is to be believed, existence was far from monotonous. . . . There are five verses on the record. The enunciation though rapid is so distinct as to be easily understood. Murry K. Hill, who wrote it and sings it, although a new addition to our artists, is a well known singer on the vaudeville stage.

"In the Good Old Steamboat Days" is the only Murry K. Hill record I can recall that is entirely sung, instead of featuring a rapid-fire monolog. It has a catchy, haunting, jig-like tune, and the words are amusing. Here are two stanzas I find especially funny:

In the good old steamboat days,  
When the river would not raise,  
The old Miss-sip she got so slow  
In the bottom of the river  
the ducks would blow.  
Fish called pikes and cats,  
they all were acrobats;  
They'd stand on their heads  
to wet their gills  
In the good old steamboat days!  
In the good old steamboat days  
Draw poker was the craze.  
My grandad played a game  
one night,  
Held five kings—that was not right!  
That started up the fun,  
for the captain held a gun,  
And the coroner held an inquest  
In the good old steamboat days!

Many listeners who heard this first Hill record observed that the comedian had a high tenor voice and detected a certain resemblance in his singing style to Bill Murray's rendition of rapid-fire George M. Cohan patriotic and comic songs. There was perhaps even a greater similarity to Cohan himself, but without the nasal, out-of-the-side-of-the-mouth effect that Cohan's singing always had. Years later, anyone seeking a comparison would have found a kinship between Hill's carefree style and that of Frank Crumit. His best work also had much of the fresh and seemingly spontaneous air of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. But Murry K. Hill was no imitator. He was a personality in his own right, with a manner so refreshing and inimitable that, in spite of the outmoded subjects around which his monologs are largely based—woman suffrage, prohibition, "trust-busting," etc. (and of course, like all comedians, he adverted often to the infelicities of married life) his satiric



Murray K. Hill is shown wearing his vaudeville high hat, in this advertisement of U. S. Everlasting Records.

*Illustrated from the May, 1911, Talking Machine World*

discussions remain entertaining today.

But, since this first record had no monolog, I am anticipating a bit. Edison seemed in no hurry to issue a second two-minute cylinder by Hill, for the next, No. 9940, "Oh, Glory!" didn't appear until September, 1908. It was described as "one of Mr. Hill's comic song successes. The funny words and Mr. Hill's droll manner combine to make it an instant hit with his vaudeville audiences."

Rather surprisingly, neither of Hill's wax cylinders was in Edison's best-seller list. To the contrary, both were listed in a special catalog of 500 "slow sellers" which dealers were privileged to sell at a reduced price before they were cut out of the catalog on September 15, 1911.

The comedian's remaining Edison cylinders are all four-minute. He is well represented in the first list of Amberol wax cylinders dated November, 1908. Amberol No. 16 is "The Stranded Minstrel Man," of which the description said: "One of the cleverest acts now in vaudeville, consisting of two very good humorous songs and a 400 word monolog. The monologist must of course knock somebody and on this occasion, (1) the manager of a minstrel troupe who left his company stranded, (2) the B. & O. Railroad and (3) the Inside Inn of the Jamestown Exposition all get 'theirs.'"

In the same list Hill was again on hand with No. 41, "A Bunch of Nonsense." Said the supplement writer: "Another crack-a-jack vaudeville sketch by Hill, which includes a couple of his latest song hits. The first is a neat parody on 'Goodbye, Little Girl, Goodbye.' The second, a parody on 'Blue Bell.' This is very funny. It tells the short life story of 'Our Hired Gal, Sal,' after she used coal oil for starting a fire. Her history was very short indeed. Another feature is a short recitation about a piece of cheese. This also is a remarkably 'strong feature.' Judging from the titles of the two songs he parodied, Hill could hardly have been singing 'two of his latest song hits' on this record for both 'Blue Bell' and 'Good-

bye, Little Girl' go back to 1904—which was probably the year he began to use the parodies in vaudeville. I suspect that Hill's records were largely composed of material which he had discarded after preparing new acts. The Inside Inn of the Jamestown Exposition of course flourished in 1907, the year the exposition was held.

In January, 1909, the monologist was represented by another four-minute cylinder, No. 66, "A Comedy Dream," which I consider one of his less amusing efforts. However, the Edison writer was just about correct in saying: "It would be difficult to find a more nonsensical lot of matter than Mr. Hill repeats for this record. It includes some of the brightest, best things picked from his several vaudeville acts."

Two months went by without another Hill cylinder, but when one appeared in April it took rank with the best records he ever made. It was No. 101, "A String of Laughs." The opening song, "Don't!" now sounds too outmoded to be especially funny, but the ludicrous account of Columbus' discovery of America (in which Queen Isabella of Spain meets Columbus while walking down Broadway and takes him into the bar of the Waldorf-Astoria, where she buys him "three schooners" will always bring a laugh. So will "400 Nursery Rhymes Brought Up-to-Date," sung in Hill's inimitably breathless manner. A typical excerpt:

Mary had a little lamb;  
Its fleece was white as snow, sir.  
She took the lamb to Pittsburgh -  
Now it's blacker than a crow, sir.

But there aren't 400 nursery rhymes, I counted them.

Hill probably was away on tour several months, for his next Edison record, No. 185, "There's a Woman in the Case," didn't appear until August, 1909. I haven't heard it.

Another hilarious concoction came out in November - No. 291, "Grandma's Mustard Plaster." The catalog editor said: "A monolog on everything in general and a goat in particular precedes a song recital of the wonderful drawing qualities of

"Grandma's Mustard Plaster..." This is followed by more talk and another humorous song containing advice on how to successfully handle a bumble bee."

Still another excellent concoction came out in March, 1910 - No. 370, "A Monolog On Married Life," described as "a vaudeville specialty following the usual lines of this artist's always acceptable contributions. In this number he injects an amazing amount of sometimes sage and always side-splitting advice to married men, the wisdom of which he avers was gained by personal experience. At the conclusion of the monolog he gives a neat little recitation in which he compares life to a game of cards."

An absence of almost a year and a half followed before Hill was again represented in the Edison catalog. I have never heard No. 748, "Back to Arizona," which made its bow in August, 1911, but its description sounds as if it would be highly amusing:

A bunch of nonsense, pure and simple, but very funny and told in his happiest vein by this prime favorite of monologists—with a sprinkling of song thrown in. It's all about Arizona—a truly wonderful place if credence can be given to the somewhat weird tale of its productivity that Mr. Hill recites. For instance, who would believe that German catfish could be raised on an alkali plain? Mr. Hill solemnly avers that he raised such a crop and moreover would try to have us believe that they were all drowned in a rainstorm. There are plenty more such absurdities, all combining to make one of the most entertaining records of its kind we have ever placed in our catalog.

Notice that this cylinder was described as "a bunch of nonsense." That must have been a favorite expression with Hill, for it is frequently used to describe his records. Judging from the quoted description, I suspect he used some of the same material in this Edison record that went into his Victor, "Burbank the Wizard."

Another likely claimant for the honor of being Hill's best Edison cylinder was announced in June, 1912. It was No. 1019, "Seated Around an Oil Stove," and was described as "a clever and original vaudeville sketch, almost telling of the sad fate of 14 children who were seated around an oil stove." Hill rambles along, getting away from the subject of the 14 children and being heckled so much by Ed Meeker that in disgust he finally sings a song to "kill these kids off."

That concludes the list of Hill's four-minute Amberol cylinders with one exception. Edison set aside ten records which were not to be sold by dealers but were given away to everyone who bought a gear-shift attachment that made it possible to play four-minute cylinders on a two-minute machine. One of these, identified by the letter B, instead of by number, was "Father's Eccentricities," which, I'm not sure, but what I consider the very best of Hill's comedy effusions. It includes a song poking fun at "Father's" chicken heartedness when war was declared and a monolog telling how absent-minded



Father was. It seems Father had a dog he thought the world of and every night before he went to bed he would kick the dog downstairs. But one night, instead of kicking the dog downstairs and going to bed, Father put the dog to bed and kicked himself downstairs. He then prowled around all night through alleys, looking for cats, rats and other dogs and didn't know the difference until morning came and he couldn't bark. Hill dryly commented: "We're going to put a muzzle on Father in the morning." He also sang a song illustrating the method Father, as a school teacher, used in explaining the alphabet.

When the Blue Amberol unbreakable cylinders came out, several of Hill's efforts were incorporated into the B. A. list. "Father's Eccentricities" remained as B. Others were: 1909, "Seated Around an Oil Stove;" 1969, "Grandma's Mustard Plaster;" 2112, "String of Laughs," and, finally, one which I haven't found in the wax Amberol list, 2166, "The Honest Hold-Up Man and Billy Beans." All these were issued in 1913. Hill never made another Edison cylinder, but it's strange he didn't record for the Diamond Discs.

Hill's other cylinder activities may be disposed of briefly. He made at least four U. S. Everlasting cylinders. These appeared in 1910 and 1911. One was two-minute - No. 374, "Oh Fiddle!" and the others four-minute: 1172, "A Bunch of Nonsense," 1175, "Married Life" and 1242, "The Trusts." He also made one four-minute Indestructible cylinder (the Indestructible brand at that time was being sold and issued under the Columbia name) - 3230, "A Bunch of Nonsense." Possibly he made others that haven't come to my attention.

#### IV. Hill's Disc Records

As far as I know, Hill didn't make any Zon-o-phone records, and his Columbia list is so short it may as well be disposed of now.

The first appeared in June, 1911 - A991, "The Old Jokes" and "Some Talks and Songs." The supplement writer was downright effusive:

Introducing to Columbia audiences one of America's cleverest and most versatile monologists and comedy entertainers, Mr. Murry K. Hill, whose work on the big vaudeville circuits the country over has made many thousands laugh. There is individuality to spare in each of these recordings by Mr. Hill. A generous measure of the artist's own cheerful and optimistic personality has found its way into the heart of the record itself, which results in the auditor receiving an impression of intimacy with the performer such as it is impossible to resist. In labeling his first number "Old Jokes," Mr. Hill has himself indulged in a joke at the expense of his audience, as the jokes (the way he tells them) are not half as old as they are extremely amusing. On the reverse side Mr. Hill runs the gamut from grand opera to burlesque, leaving the listener with a feeling that he has never in his life been better entertained.

Hill's only other Columbia disc was announced the following month: A1011, "A Discourse on the Trusts"

and "Father Was Out." It was thus described:

Murry K. Hill's first Columbia Double-Disc made an instantaneous hit in our list last month, something in his easy, nonchalant manner of presenting the humorous side of a situation appealing strongly to the thousands who are able to separate the wheat from the chaff in lines of comic recitation and descriptive specialty. Mr. Hill's natural and unforced manner stamps him as an artist in this peculiar line of work. In this month's double disc we have two of the very best specialties in his repertory, "The Discourse on Trusts" in particular having many unexpected humorous twists in it such as will provide entertainment for everybody. . . . "Father Was Out" is an amusing potpourri of song monologs in which Mr. Hill's versatility as a comedian is again conspicuously evident.

Years ago I asked the late Frank Dorian, a veteran Columbia official, why that company issued so few Murry Hill monologs. Mr. Dorian, with whom I maintained a long and intimate correspondence, replied that Hill was an amusing comedian but his stock of material was too limited to provide of many records being arranged from it. However, judging from the length of the humorist's Edison and Victor lists, scarcity of material could hardly be the right explanation.

The first ten-inch Victor record by Murry K. Hill didn't come out until January, 1910, when he was already well established as an Edison favorite. It was No. 16436, "Father Was Out," coupled with "Flanagan's Motor Car," by Steve Porter.

Catalog editor Sam Rous wrote: "A new entertainer is here introduced to the great Victor audience. Mr. Hill is a vaudeville favorite and always keeps his hearers in roars of laughter by his droll delivery of a very witty store of jokes, parodies and nonsense in general."

That same month, January, also brought a 12-inch Hill record, No. 35093, "The Tale of the Cheese," coupled with "Hortense at Sea," a comic monolog by another great vaudeville favorite, Nat M. Wills. The comment on the Hill offering was: "Mr. Hill presents one of his inimitable nonsense specialties, which contains a parody, some comic conversation, a melodramatic recitation and a song about a boy and a bumblebee. The scene in which the cheese suddenly appears, unaided, in the courtroom to testify for the prisoner is most affecting."

In February, Hill was on hand with his favorite title, "A Bunch of Nonsense," coupled on No. 16446 with "Down Where the Big Bananas Grow," by Collins and Harlan. Victor had started out mispelling Murry as Murray, and the supplement note read: "Murray Hill has become a favorite Victor entertainer at one jump, his January records making a big hit. Here is another frivolous collection of 'Hillisms,' augmented by another of those real darky shouts by the ever welcome 'Kings of Comedy.'" The April issue brought No. 16463, "A Talk On Married Life," with "Negro Medley," by the American Quartet, on the B side. In this

record Hill said his wife's hair was so red that if she went into the yard at night the roosters would begin to crow, thinking it sunrise. He also recited "Life is a Game of Cards."

A year went by before Hill was heard of again in the Victor lists. Probably he was on one of those coast-to-coast vaudeville trips that used to take so much out of the old-time variety artists. His ten-inch offering, No. 16838, was "A Bit of Grand Opera," coupled with a Harry Von Tilzer song, "I Love It," sung by the American Quartet. Sam Rous warned: "Don't imagine from the title that this is a grand opera selection—it isn't!" By this time Hill's first name was being spelled "Murry."

On the same supplement page was a twelve-inch Hill record, 35186, "Seated 'Round an Oil Stove," inappropriately combined with "Jolly Jingles Two-Step" by the Victor Dance Orchestra. Remarkably Rous: "Under this absurd title, Mr. Hill has given us a large chunk of pure nonsense—that is all it can be called. However, you must laugh in spite of yourself, as it is undeniably funny."

May brought two more Hill recordings: 16844, "Through the Hole in the Fence," a rather below par offering dealing largely with baseball, coupled with "Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine," by Ada Jones and the American Quartet; and 16846, "A Bit of Drama," with a rather unsuitable coupling, "That's Yiddisha Love," sung by Monroe Silver. A few weeks before the present article was completed, the death was announced of Hans Wagner, the great old-time shortstop of the Pittsburgh Pirates. In "Through the Hole in the Fence," it is rather amusing to note that Hill refers to Wagner's being paid the fabulous salary of \$10,000 a year! But he predicted that when "The Dutchman's" eyes grew dim and his legs began to fail, some ten years from then, the only way Hans would see baseball would be "Through the Hole in the Fence." In "A Bit of Grand Opera" he said he would sing something written by the great Wagner—"the greatest shortstop who ever lived." "A Bit of Drama" was described as "a mock melodrama, in each act of which he forgets his characters and invents new ones. It is all very funny."

In June, Hill made two more appearances in the Victor list. He occupied the A side of 16849, with "Burbank, the Wizard," while Steve Porter and Byron Harlan on the reverse gave an impersonation of "Two Rubes Swapping Horses." The supplement said: "We have all heard of Mr. Burbank's achievements in creating new varieties of fruit and flowers, but some of the marvels which Mr. Hill relates will astound even Mr. Burbank." Hill was allotted the B side of 16861, his "Adventures in a Department Store" playing second to "My Yiddisha Colleen," sung by Walter Van Brunt.

July brought another Hill record, No. 16867, "The Old Jokes" (which had been issued the month before by

(Continued on page 35)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

Columbia) with "Steamboat Bill," a big hit as sung by Arthur Collins, sharing the honors. "Mr. Hill," the supplement commented, "relates some antediluvian jokes in so clever a manner that they seem better than new ones!"

There was a lapse of a month before the next Hill record came chuckling from the presses. It was 16903, "A Talk on Trusts," "The Old-Time Street Faker" on the other side, represented the combined talents of Porter and Harlan with Fred Van Eps playing a snappy banjo accompaniment. In October, Porter, Harlan and Van Eps combined on 16890 to depict "The Village Barber," while Hill told "How Columbus Discovered America." The supplement editor said: "The true history of Columbus' discovery is now for the first time made public. It is quite interesting, but Mr. Hill must be mixed in his periods, as he mentions a meeting between Isabella and Columbus at the Waldorf!" Incidentally, on this Victor record Hill referred to the hotel as the "Waldorf-Castoria!"

The list of Hill's Victor records was now complete, except that four titles were soon given different numbers and couplings from those they had originally had, in the belief that the weak songs with which they had been coupled were slowing their sales. "Adventures in a Department Store" and "A Bit of Drama" were divorced from their Yiddish pairings and combined on 16944. "A Bit of Grand Opera" and "Through the Hole in the Fence" were coupled on 16954.

Thenceforth, the name of Murry Hill never appeared in another Victor supplement, but most of his records remained good sellers for several years. An odd thing happened when the November, 1916, catalog of Victor records was issued. Up to that time Hill had never been given an annotation in the complete alphabetical Victor lists but—probably in the belief that his excellent comedy sketches were being pushed into the background by newer records—the catalog said:

"Murry K. Hill is a vaudeville favorite, and always keeps his hearers in roars of laughter by his droll delivery of a very witty store of jokes, parodies and nonsense in general. There is individuality to spare in each of these recordings by Mr. Hill. A generous measure of the artist's own cheerful and optimistic personality has found its way into the heart of the records which results in the auditor receiving an impression of intimacy with the performer such as it is impossible to resist."

Until I copied the foregoing commentary I had never noticed the most amazing thing about it. The lead-off sentence is lifted from the

January, 1910, Victor supplement description of Hill's first Victor record, but the other two sentences are taken bodily from the description in the June, 1911, Columbia supplement, which I quoted a few paragraphs before this. George Jell, the Columbia writer, no doubt would either have laughed or become purple with indignation if he had noticed the "swipe." Those descriptive lines were retained for several catalog editions. By 1920, Hill's Victor titles had dwindled to three—"Burbank the Wizard," "Tale of the Cheese" and "Talk On Married Life." The "Cheese" effusion was dropped in 1921, but the other two remained until 1924 when the name of our truly gifted comedian disappeared from the Victor catalog.

### V. Summing Up

Just why so brilliant an entertainer as Murry Hill ceased to make records is hard to understand unless we assume that, like many vaudevillians, he went on using much the same material year after year and didn't do much about changing his act. In that event, his supply of recordable humor would have become exhausted. He remained a headliner for a good many years after his recording engagements ceased.

Everyone who enjoys real comedy of the old-fashioned type should collect Murry K. Hill records. However a word of warning is advisable. The titles under which his discs and cylinders appear seldom mean anything. Don't assume that "A Bunch of Nonsense" on his Victor, Edison, U. S. Everlasting and Indestructible records are the same thing. They are not. The Indestructible "Bunch of Nonsense" is with minor changes the same thing as the Edison "String of Laughs." Part of the Victor "Bunch of Nonsense" went into the Edison "Stranded Minstrel Man" and the remainder into Hill's first Edison record, "In the Good Old Steamboat Days." The Victor of "Father Was Out" is the song which is introduced in the Edison of "Father's Eccentricities."

The Victor record of "The Alphabet Song," which I am sorry to say I overlooked in its chronological order (it is No. 16458 and appeared in March, 1910, coupled with "Lyna, Oh Miss Lyna," by Collins and Harlan) is much the same as the song about the alphabet which Hill sings on the Edison about "Father's Eccentricities." The Victor monolog, "How Columbus Discovered America," is incorporated in the Edison "String of Laughs" and the Indestructible "Bunch of Nonsense." And so it goes. Names mean nothing whatever in checking on Murry K. Hill records.

Even so, one thing is certain: The New York-born humorist who lived to the age of 77 was one of the best comedians of his generation and should be long and gratefully remembered for his wholesome fun and general gaiety.

## CURRENT COLLECTORS RECORDINGS

(Continued from page 33)

key as a recording artist is a special announcement in the Edison record catalog for October, 1899, which Jim Waish kindly copied for me:

### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Ira D. Sankey is singing the famous Moody and Sankey Gospel hymns and Sacred Songs for the Edison Phonograph. The records are manufactured at the Edison Laboratory, which is a guarantee of their excellence, exclusively for the Bigelow and Main Co., 135 Fifth Avenue, New York. For sale at retail by all dealers in Phonographs, from whom lists and further particulars can be obtained.

Unfortunately none of these special lists seem to have survived, but a few of the records can exist. In the January, 1943 issue of HOBBIES it was announced that John L. Norton, Jr. of the Woodmay Record Co. owned a badly moulded copy of Bigelow and Main cylinder No. S-18 "The Mistakes of My Life" sung by Ira D. Sankey. And last year I had the good fortune to pick up a superb copy of Bigelow and Main No. S-15 "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," from Mrs. Coppernoll of Coppernoll's Antiques. This recording is made of light brown wax and still has the original insert slip on which the number and the artist are printed. On this slip it is called a Bigelow and Main record and there is no reference to the fact that the cylinders were turned out by Edison.

Actually Bigelow and Main was a hymn book company. Furthermore there was a very logical reason why Ira D. Sankey associated himself with them in 1899. His son, Ira Allan Sankey, who also composed sacred songs and compiled hymnbooks, had associated himself with Bigelow and Main in 1898. A great number of this company's publications from the turn of the century are preserved in the Library of the Moody Bible Institute, but in none of them is reference made to the series of wax cylinders sold under their name.

It is of interest that one of these early Sankey records was reissued on a 78 rpm National Vocarium disc about twenty years ago. Denis Reichman has written me that he once had the item in a list of his.

12-inch National Vocarium TNV 124 — "Immortality" by William Jennings Bryan, preceded by Ira Sankey singing one of his famous hymns.

In conclusion may I suggest that anyone who is interested in the music used by Moody and Sankey should strive to acquire the medley of Moody and Sankey Hymns as sung by the Victor Mixed Chorus and issued about the time of the First World War.

12-inch Victor 35510 Victor Mixed Chorus — Moody and Sankey Hymns (Full for the Shore, In the Sweet Bye and Bye, Almost Persuaded, Hold the Fort, Where Is My Boy Tonight, Beulah Land, God Be With You Till We Meet Again), Billy Sunday Hymns (I Am Coming Home, solo; I Walk With The King, If Your Heart Keeps Right, De Brewer's Big Hosses, duet; Sweeter as the Years Go By, Since Jesus Came Into My Heart, Brighten the Corner Where You Are.

Could it be possible, now that the ball is rolling in the right direction, to have all future RCA long play releases of old vocals receive the same careful treatment in this respect? Please?

A.F. - A.

\* \* \*

#### RCA - HMV SPLIT

After a union of over half a century, RCA Victor and His Master's Voice have agreed to disagree! The reason for this break is not yet clear, but the fact is that in April, 1957, they will come to the end of their relationship begun in 1901. On top of this, it is announced that in May of next year RCA will enter into an agreement with the English Decca, while HMV will release its records here through other subsidiaries of the British EMI (Electric and Musical Industries Ltd.), probably Capitol Records and Angel Records.

The situation, at the moment seems quite involved. Among other things, just imagine reworking the catalogs. That in itself is a tremendous task. And what about the pooch? The dog trade-mark is owned by the HMV, so any RCA records released in England will bear the RCA monogram alone, while on the RCA label in America Rover will continue to sit before the horn as if nothing happened.

This is unexpected news indeed, and rather disturbing. Almost from the onset of recording, Victor and His Master's Voice, originally Gramophone and Typewriter) worked together, issued each other's records; and as a result their names became synonymous to all interested in discs. Now, to have them parted, and even affiliated with other recording companies, sort of marks the end of an era in recording. But then, as all things go, it won't be long before this surprising event will become accepted, and the ex-Victor-HMV alliance just another "historical fact." (Sniff-sniff, has anyone a recording of "Hearts and Flowers?")

A.F. - A.

#### PIANO & ROLLS

**FOR SALE:** Three Reproducing Mahogany Grand Pianos in excellent rebuilt condition, beautiful tone and playing quality: 6 foot, 2 inch Steinway Duo-Art with forty rolls, \$1200.; 5 foot, 6 inch Chickering Ampico with thirty-five rolls \$800.; 5 foot, 6 inch Ellington Welte-Mignon (the most difficult make to obtain in good repair) with thirty-five rolls \$800. Crating and shipping extra.—Dean Howe, 219 Oxford Road, Franklin, Ohio.

**NEW ROLLS and repair supplies** (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos.—Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 223 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ap124661

#### MELODEONS

**EXPERT RESTORATIONS** at reasonable prices. Also buy and sell.—C. Lamper, C-sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N. W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 06046

#### SHEET MUSIC

**BACK POPULAR Sheet Music** to 1850. Catalog 15c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. ap12698

**OLD POPULAR SONGS.** I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. au3263

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

### The Champion Duet Singer

By JIM WALSH

Not long ago a HOBBIES reader asked a couple of questions that struck me as so interesting I decided to write an article based on them. "What," he inquired, "do you consider the most successful duet team in the history of the phonograph? And what singer made more duet records—that is, sang with more different artists—than any other?"

On first thought, these inquiries seemed hard to answer. My mind ran down a long list of famous duos—Ada Jones and Len Spencer, who worked together from 1904 until Spencer's death in December, 1914; Ada Jones and Billy Murray, from 1907 to 1922; Albert Campbell and Henry Burr, who made one duet for Columbia in 1906, "While the Old Mill Wheel is Turning," then didn't sing as duet partners again until 1912, after which they kept it up through 1925; Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw; Billy Golden and Joe Hughes; Irving and Jack Kaufman; Vernon Dalhart and Carson Robison; Billy Jones and Ernest Hare; Gus Van and Joe Schenk; Frank Stanley and Henry Burr; Stanley and Corinne Morgan; Stanley and Elise Stevenson—the names flashed through my memory.

Of those listed in the foregoing paragraph, Campbell and Burr undoubtedly made more duets than any of the others, unless possibly they were equaled by Jones and Hare. But we still haven't come to the champion duet team. In my opinion that honor belongs without question to those brilliant interpreters of black-face and rural comedy, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, who started making records together in 1902 and kept it up until 1926. Then the independently wealthy Collins retired and went to live in Tice, Florida, where he remained until his death in 1933. Throughout their career of nearly a quarter of a century, Collins and Harlan free-lanced, singing for every company that wanted their services, and they made thousands of big-selling—often, best selling—records. No other duet team stayed together so long or with such sustained success.

But when it comes to picking the singer who recorded with more duet partners than any other the honor doesn't go to either Collins or Har-

lan. I had little doubt of what research would reveal, and my initial belief was amply confirmed by a search of catalogs. Nearly every performer who worked regularly in the pioneer recording days believed, or still believes, he made more records than anybody else. However, documentary evidence proves the champion was the late Henry Burr, whose career covered almost 30 years, from 1902 to around 1930. During most of this period Burr was a free-lance.

#### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

**THE OLD MUSIC HOUSE** Buys, Sells, trades, coin operated pianos, Reginas, hand organs, rolls. The largest collection in Middle West.—R. C. Lambert, Owner, Monticello, Iowa. d123511

**WILL PAY CASH** for Cylinder Phonographs and Records. Also Horn type phonographs and anything pertaining to early phonographs. Write.—Pollard, 4109 Sopuel Dr., Soquel, Calif. je3614

**WANTED:** Reproducers for Edison and Columbia cylinder phonographs. We repair reproducers—details for 3c stamp.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. jly3023

**ASTONISHING** reproduction on Edison disc records with new Electronic Tone Arm. Fits any motor or player capable of 80 R.P.M. speed, uses magnetic or crystal cartridge, \$40. P. P. Reproducers electrified \$15. Edison disc records, catalogs bought, sold, exchanged.—Clyde B. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Pa. jly3867

**WANTED:** Hurdy Gurdy for my private collection. Also any rare musical piece.—Walter, 214 East Holmes Road, Lansing, Michigan. je3403

**1901 EDISON ILLUSTRATED CATALOG** showing machines, accessories, parts and supplies. Reprint of original only \$1.50. Send to—Dick Davis, Mentone, California. je3683

**AL JOLSON MEMORIAL CLUB, 1320** West Morgan Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dues \$1.25/year ap12333

**RARE** Old Orchestron over 100 years old. Barrel piano, base and snare drums, cymbals and bells. A real museum piece. Case all walnut. Perfect. 10 new Wurlitzer 165 band organ rolls. Never been played.—R. C. Lambert, Monticello, Iowa. je1213

**FOR SALE:** Edison standard cylinder phonograph, with 45 records \$35.00 cash or will trade for picture buttons.—Clarence Staudenmayer, Portage, Wis. je1252

**AUCTION:** Complete Sept. 1935 - April 1948 Hobbies "Historical Record" articles. Closes June 30.—Knight, 81 Edgewood, Edgewood, Rhode Island. je1461



Henry Burr, as he appeared at the beginning of his recording career that led him to make more records than any other singer. This picture was taken in 1904 when he was 22.

What with his solos, duets, work with the Sterling Trio, and innumerable performances as lead of the Peerless Quartet, he probably made twice as many records as any other singer. And, by the same token, he sang duets with more vocalists than any of his rivals.

I have no idea that the list I have compiled is absolutely complete, but it is reasonably so, even though the names of some of Burr's duet asso-



Henry Burr, who made more duet records than any other singer, is shown here as he appeared from 1934 to 1941 as "The Dean of Ballad Singers," on the National Barn Dance, Chicago. He is looking at some of the thousands of records he made from 1902 to 1932.

ciates no doubt have escaped me. According to my notes, Burr sang, as Henry Burr and Irving Gillette and under his real name, Harry McClaskey, with the following:

Elsie Baker, Rose Bryant, Albert Campbell, Edith Chapman, Helen Clark, Miriam Clark, Ethel Costello, Frank Croxton, Sibyl Sanderson Fagan, Frances Fisher, Marcia Freer, Lt. Harry Gitz-Rice, Charles Gordon (better known as Percy Hemus), James Hall, Edmund A. Jahn, Mae Jennings, Ada Jones, Grace Kerns, Agnes Kimball, Louise King, Ruth Lenox, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Margaret Mayew, Louise McMahon, John H. Meyer, Gwilym Miles, Clara Moister, Elida Morris, Billy Murray, Grace

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED: JOLSON MATERIAL.**—Dick Bonesteel, 1409 McGilvra Boulevard, Seattle, Washington. je12046

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$5 each for fine copies of 9-inch, single-faced Zon-o-phone records of "Jenny Lee," sung by Atwood Twitchell, and "Chocolate Drops," played by Hager's Orchestra. Both wanted for sentimental reasons only. Will pay \$3 each for good copies of the February, 1912, and February, 1914, Columbia monthly record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912.—Jim Walsh, Box 176, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

**WANTED:** Radio Transcriptions, Airshots, Armed Forces radio recordings, recordings of all kinds by "Sammy Kaye," "Guy Lombardo," "Bill Kenny," "Tink Spots," "Blue Barron," "Ted Lewis."—Paul Scriven, 129 Vienna Ave., Niles, Ohio. je3216

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**RARE RECORDS,** lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought. —E. Hirschman, 100 Duncan Ave., Jersey City 6, New Jersey. o122511

**CYLINDER RECORDS For Sale:** Cylinder phonographs and horn type disc phonographs, also parts, repairs, horns and catalogues. Send 25c for all three lists. Your 25c will be refunded on first purchase.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. je3219

**COMPREHENSIVE MONTHLY LISTS** of 78s, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals, mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. d128862

**Auction Sales: Rare and cut-out** vocal (G. & T., Zonophone, Polydor) and instrumental records. Free lists.—Arthur May, 85 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn 26, N. Y. mh120042

**EDISON, COLUMBIA** cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 44 Church St., Norwich, Conn. je3084

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS:** Collectors items to just good "listening." Operatic, historical & personality discs. "Wants" Located. Send for free lists or visit store.—Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, Florida. je3446

**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia 23, Pa. au3638

**RARE VOCAL RECORDS**—Monthly mail auctions & special lists at set prices. Offering only items in good playing condition, domestic & imported. We know you will be pleased with your purchases. Free lists.—Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. jly3046

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

**RARE Operatic vocal records;** send for free mail auction lists.—Robert J. Nathan, 5480 Broadway, New York 63, N. Y. au3084

**OPERATIC, vocal, instrumental** records. Free lists on request.—John A. Seely, Box 101, Millerton, Pa. au3042

**ROCCO RECORDS** now available—Caruso recital—12" L.P. Rerecordings of four fabulously rare 1902 Zonophones and eight G&Ts including Adriana Lecouvreur and Iris arias. Write—Rococo Records, 121 Simcoe Street, Toronto, Ont., Canada. jly65501

**FOR ADVANCED COLLECTORS:** Free listings, hundreds vocal operatic records G&Ts, Fonotipias, Odeons, Pathes, Zonophones by Golden Age Singers.—Collectors Haven, 1131 Bergen Street, Brooklyn 16, N. Y. au3004

### PIANOS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Peters, Webb & Company square grand piano about 100 years old. For details write.—Mrs. K. R. Stickney, R. R. #2, Assumption, Illinois. au3863

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Edison, Victor and Columbia Phonographs. Hundreds of Cylinder and Disc Records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or Disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppernol's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. jly3883

### MUSIC ROLLS WANTED

**WANTED:** Duo-Art, Ampico, and Welte-Mignon rolls. Will buy your complete stock or collection. Send titles and prices wanted in first letter.—Dean Howe, 219 Oxford Road, Franklin, Ohio. je3464

### MUSIC ROLLS FOR SALE

**ORCHESTRA** rolls for Marquette piano. 6 - 10 tunes per roll. 18 rolls good price for lot.—G. T. Merriken, 112 Lynnmoor Dr., Silver Springs, Maryland. jly4405

### ORGAN WANTED

**WANTED:** Hurdy-gurdy organ, type with bellows and reeds used only for charitable purposes entertaining orphans, the aged and helping raise money for charitable purposes. Need in good working order, cheap.—Reinhardt N. Ausmus, 1102 Buckingham St., Sandusky, Ohio. je3426

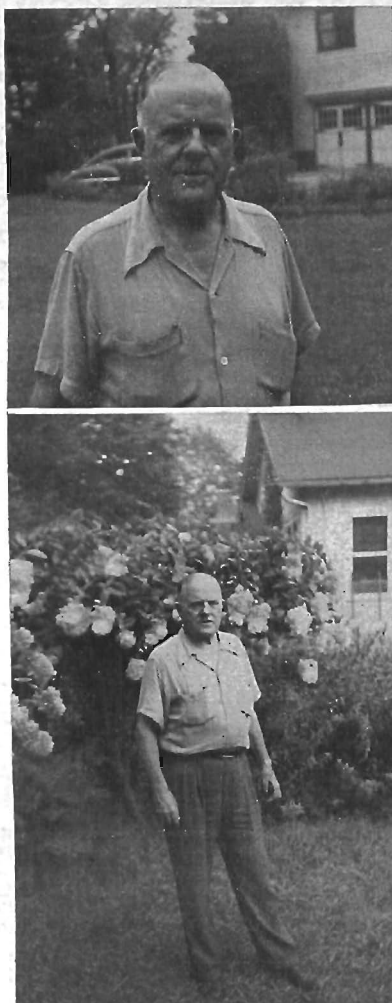
### MUSIC BOXES

**FOR SALE:** Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20¾", 27", 32" Criterion 20½"; Mira 6¾", 9¼", 18½"; Monarch 15½"; Orphenion 16½"; Polyphon 24½"; Stella 14"; Imperial Symphonion 13½"; Thorens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, New Jersey. je3886

**SWISS** 10 tune, cylinder playing music box (14x27") oak case, perfect condition, drums, bells, etc.—M. Swartz, 1093 Lincoln St., Santa Clara, Calif. jly3663

**REGINA** music cabinet. Solid mahogany case 73" high, 34" wide, 12 records 27" round. Perfect condition. Put a nickle in to play. Picture on request.—Wenger's Antiques, 409 S. Sixth St., Reading, Pa. je1462





These snapshots are probably the last ever taken of Billy Murray, whose total of duet records was second only to Henry Burr's. They were made by a young tenor and admirer of Murray, Howard Thain, who is now studying in Rome, Italy, for an operatic career. They were made about a year before Murray's death, aged 77, in August, 1954.

Nash (Grace Kerns), Alvah Nichols, Maude Randolph, Homer Rodeheaver, Andrea Sarto, Elizabeth Spencer, Frank C. Stanley, James Stanley, Jean Sterling, Elise Stevenson, Edgar Stoddard, Merle Tillotson (Merle Alcock), Caroline Vaughn, Nora Watson, Albert Wiederhold, John Wilbur, Elise Wood and Beulah Gaylord Young.

Truly an impressive showing!—somewhat more impressive in appearance than it actually is, because the list includes some artists who used more than one name. I suspect for instance that Nora Watson was Elsie Baker; Ethel Costello was Edith Chapman; James Hall was Andrea Sarto (who was also Edgar Stoddard); and some of the "mysterious" women, such as Frances Fisher, Mae Jennings, Louise King, Ruth Lenox, Jean Sterling and Caroline Vaughn may have been stalwarts of the recording studios—Helen Clark for in-

stance—recording under assumed names. Elise Wood, in private life Mrs. Rusling Wood of East Orange, New Jersey, was Elise Stevenson. John Meyer and John Wilbur also were one and the same basso.

Burr made more records for Columbia than for any other company, and a great many of these duet performances were done for that pioneer firm. Among the singers with whom he seems to have recorded only for Columbia are Rose Bryant, Edith Chapman, Miriam Clark, Ethel Costello, Frances Fisher, Charles Gordon, James Hall, Grace Kerns, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Louise McMahon, Gwilym Miles, Margaret Mayew, Clara Moister, Alvah Nichols, Andrea Sarto, Edgar Stoddard, Merle Tillotson, Carolyn Vaughan, "Nora Watson" (if she was not Elsie Baker), Albert Wiederhold and Beulah Gaylord Young (Mrs. Charles Harrison).

Burr duet partnerships restricted to Victor were with Elsie Baker, Marcia Freer, Billy Murray, Homer Rodeheaver and James Stanley.

The "Dean of Ballad Singers" sang with Frank Croxton for Victor and Columbia; made an Okeh record to Sibyl Fagan's whistling obligato; was with Gitz-Rice on Victor and Columbia; with Edmund A. Jahn, Mae Jennings and Agnes Kimball on U.S. Everlasting cylinders; with Louise King on Emerson; Ruth Lenox, on Columbia and Pathé; Elida Morris, on Pathé; Maude Randolph, on Okeh; Elizabeth Spencer, on Edison cylinders and Victor discs; Jean Sterling, on Pathé; and John Wilbur, on U.S. Everlasting.

Wilbur, as already said, was John H. Meyer, who became the base of the Peerless Quartet after Frank Stanley's death in 1910. There are many oddities associated with Burr's duet activities. One is, why, during his free-lancing days, did he and Albert Campbell make duets together for nearly every company, whereas he sang frequently with Meyer for the smaller firms, such as Pathé, Aeolian-Vocalion, Emerson and Okeh, but never teamed with him for a single Victor or Columbia duet? And why, when Meyer switched to singing baritone and Frank Croxton became the quartet's basso, was Croxton used in duets for Victor and Columbia but virtually never with other companies?

Incidentally, the partnership between Burr and Frank Stanley began in 1907 with the issuance of "Iola," sung by them on Columbia cylinders and discs, and their association continued with increasing momentum until Stanley's death three years later. Had that great basso lived there probably would never have been a Campbell—Burr duet partnership, and Stanley and Burr would have gone down in phonograph history as the most prolific of all duet teams. Some Stanley-Burr duets were issued by English Columbia as by "H. C. Parker and Irving Gillette."

But the list of duet partners doesn't

exhaust the catalog of Burr's association with other singers. He was briefly a member of the Columbia Stellar Quartet, with Charles Harrison, Sarto and Croxton as his fellow members. He, Campbell and Will Oakland constituted for a short time the Lyric Trio. He sang in the Metropolitan (also called Manhattan) Trio, whose other members were Stanley and Elise Stevenson. One of the few times Burr ever sang opera on records occurred when the Metropolitan Trio recorded the Trio from Faust issued in the first list of four-minute Edison Amberol cylinders in the autumn of 1908. He also sang in the Soldiers' Chorus from Faust, by the Columbia Quartet, on Columbia cylinder No. 32694, issued in May, 1905.

Nor should it be forgotten that as a member of the Peerless Quartet (also known on occasion as the Columbia Quartet and the Invincible Four) Burr sang in support of a good many other singers. The first of these seems to have been Bob Roberts, whose "Down in de Chinguapin Lane," made with Columbia Quartet assistance, was issued in April, 1906. Others with whom the quartet worked were Mr. and Mrs. Cal Stewart, Billy Murray, Molly Ames (Beulah G. Young), Charles Harrison, Maurice Burkhart, Arthur Fields (who also called himself Eugene Buckley on Columbia records), Lewis James, Lew Dockstader, Ada Jones, Manuel Romain, George H. O'Connor, Ned LaRose, Clara Moister, Eddie Morton and Harry C. Browne. As the Invincible Four the quartet sang with Marie Morrissey, contralto, on a Pathé record. The Sterling Trio (Campbell, Burr and Meyer) assisted Russell Hunting in a Pathé, "Christmas Eve in the Toy Shop."

By this time you probably are wondering who came second to Burr in the ranks of those making duet records. The answer again is no surprise. It's Billy Murray, who was second to Burr in the number of individual titles recorded, but who was an all-around bigger seller than his old friend, "Hank," because the average Murray record for many years had a larger sale than those by Burr. (This trend was somewhat reversed during the later years of their careers).

Murray entered into duet associations with Joe Belmont, Edna Brown (another name for Elsie Baker), Burr, Helen Clark, S. H. Dudley, Rachel Grant (Gladys Rice in disguise), Marion Harris, Ada Jones, Irving Kaufman, Kathleen Kingston, Margaret McKee, Elida Morris, Will Oakland, Isabelle Patricola, Steve Porter, Gladys Rice, Bob Roberts, Frederic Rose, Victor Roberts, Walter Scanlan, Monroe Silver, Ed Smalle, Len Spencer—and he and an obscure performer, Harry West, did incidental comic talking in an Edison two-minute cylinder of an orchestral selection, "The Darkies' Dream." Billy also did the Italian dialect monolog in an Edison cylinder of a "Street Piano Medley," by August Molinari,

who presumably was turning the street piano crank.

Murray made more duets for Victor than for any other company. Among them are those with Edna Brown, Burr, Dudley, Marion Harris, Kaufman, McKee, Morris, Oakland, Patricola, Rose, Victor Roberts (who was much better known under his real name of Billy Jones) and Silver. Most of his Ed Smalle duets were for Victor. "Kathleen Kingston," who sang "You're Here and I'm Here" with Billy on an Edison Blue Amberol cylinder, was the noted concert soprano, Mary Carson.

As a trio member, Murray sang Victor Herbert's "Whistle It," from "The Red Mill," with Ada Jones and Frank Stanley on Columbia; Jones and S. H. Dudley (Frank Kernell), Victor; Jones and Steve Porter, Zonophone; and Helen Trix and Edward Meeker, Edison cylinder. Murray, Harlan and Porter were the Victor Vaudeville Company; and Murray, Harlan and Joe Belmont got together for a whistling specialty on Victor. The Weary Willie Trio on one Edison Diamond Disc was Murray, Meeker and Donald Chalmers.

The quartet of which Murray was a member, known as the American on Victor and the Premier on Edison, sang in support of a number of other artists, including Edward M. Favor, Arthur Clough, Frederic H. Potter, Manuel Romain, Anna Chandler, Joseph Phillips, Walter Van Brunt and Charlotte Kirwan. With the addition of Will Oakland the foursome was known as the Heidelberg Quintet. Be-

(Continued on page 33)



This photo, taken by John F. Gilbert, television photographer for WSLR Roanoke, Va., shows Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," as he appears when giving his program from WSLR (Channel 10) at 2:30 p. m. each Tuesday. The phonograph is a 45-year-old Edison Concert (or Opera) model, playing four-minute cylinders. Gilbert's achievements as an outstanding television photographer are well known in a wide area of Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee. For the past two years he has won first place in the annual Virginia State contest for TV photographers.

## CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

### Frank Bush

Today the dialect comedian is almost a thing of the past, and yet any collector of the comedy records of fifty years ago cannot help but admit that the wide use of dialect humor is one of the most appealing features of that era. The masters of the dialect monologue were many and perhaps the best known of these was Walter C. Kelly who had the opportunity of making both acoustic and electric recordings for Victor in the twenties. But rather than Kelly, or Edwin Whitney or any of the other recording stars of this medium, I prefer to discuss Frank Bush who is probably an unknown to the average collector. He is an interesting personality for several reasons, and his present day obscurity must rest to some degree on the fact that he seems to have only made one record, a two minute wax cylinder.

Edison's New Phonogram for December, 1905, (which incidentally, introduces the Collins and Harlan classic "Nigger Loves His Possum") gives this information on cylinder No. 9163 "Short Stories by Frank Bush."

This is a talking record made by Mr. Bush himself, who is one of the best known vaudeville artists on the American stage. The stories are extremely funny, and the manner in which Mr. Bush tells them adds to their humor. The stories given on this record were written for this special purpose and have not been published in any form.

I was lucky to obtain a copy of this cylinder from the well known West Coast dealer, Thomas Pollard, who has done so much to help me locate rare "rollers." The record itself is a perfect example of the best of this type of comedy and Mr. Bush switches back and forth with ease from one dialect to another. The first story is with a Hebrew dialect, the second Irish, and the third Irish and German. The stories are all good, but they would lose so much in being read rather than listened to that it seems pointless to transcribe them here.

Although there are many notable exceptions to the rule, it may be stated that relatively few top notch stars of the vaudeville stage made records before 1909. This date is an approximation to be sure, but certainly no one will deny that "personality recordings" dating from 1905 or earlier are few and far between. If for no other reason, his early entrance into the recording field should make Frank Bush an interesting artist for the collector. He was a top name in variety in the 1880s and 1890s, and with the greater apprecia-

tion of his type of humor after the turn of the century he became even more in demand. Thus, his Edison cylinder of 1905 represents him at the very height of his career.

His performance is described in Douglas Gilbert's *American Vaudeville*. First he opened in an accented Jewish makeup telling stories and singing comic songs with English and Yiddish intermixed. The latter were embellished with an absurd shuffling dance. Next he made up as a German "with a mop of iron gray hair, a walrus mustache to match, a straw hat, and a long linen duster." As a third character he impersonated a Yankee farmer and then closed with a tin whistle solo. For extra income he used to sell these whistles on the street between shows. In its original form with grotesque makeup his act must have been a joy to see as well as hear. But as his audiences became more refined he decided to drop his makeup and after 1910 he appeared on the stage dressed in a tuxedo and merely told a series of dialect stories. His popularity soon declined and little more was heard of him in succeeding years, but he should be remembered not only as one of the greatest dialect comedians from the turn of the century, but also as one of the earliest headliners to make recordings.

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**RECORDING ARTISTS FAVORITE PIONEER**

(Continued from page 31)

sides this, Murray probably sang in the choruses of half the Edison records in which an ensemble was used to assist the soloist. He also took part in virtually all the Edison comedy sketches by the Empire Vaudeville Company.

So there they are—the champion duet ensemble recorder of all time—Henry Burr—and his worthy runner-up—Billy Murray. And let's not forget the most prolific and popular of all duet teams—Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan.



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## Taurino Parvis

As I sit on my shaded front porch, a portable typewriter in my lap, and prepare to write this article on a pleasantly warm May afternoon (Sunday, May 6, to be exact) I am projecting my consciousness into the future and visualizing a series of lifted eyebrows a few months from now.

And I admit there is reason for seasoned readers of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* to be surprised at seeing, after all these years, a biographical sketch from my Underwood about an operatic artist. Up to now, that is a theme I have scrupulously left for the consideration of my brilliant colleague and friend, Aida Favia-Artsay. However, here is a reassuring note for readers who fear this department is going permanently classical. I have no intention of abandoning my customary "profiles" of comedians, ballad singers, popular instrumentalists and other performers whose records were issued under the Black Label, or its equivalent, rather than the Red Seal. My choosing an opera singer is strictly a "one shot" affair and is done because I feel I owe the formerly eminent baritone, Taurino Parvis, a debt of gratitude.

Perhaps my choosing to write about Parvis, concerning whom I have only a scant stock of information, can be best explained by quoting from an article, "Personal Preferences," which I contributed to the April, 1948, issue of *The American Record Guide*. The *Guide's* editor, Peter Hugh Reed, had asked me to send him an article discussing a dozen records in my collection that had special significance for me. Near the beginning of the survey I wrote:

Many readers know me as a veteran advocate of the theory that the pioneer "popular" recording artists were, for the most part, great performers in their specialized fields, and I believe there is a common impression that I enjoy no music other than the popular tunes of the 1890's and early 1900's. Hence it may come as a surprise that my first selection is:

MEYERBEER: L'Africana — Adamastor Re dell' onde profonde; and VERDI — Otello — Era la notte. Sung by Taurino Parvis (baritone). Columbia disc A-715.

I have chosen this double-faced disc, made in 1909 by the once-tamous Italian baritone, Taurino Parvis, because over the years it has meant

more to me than any other operatic record ever issued. It was, in fact, the first "grand opera" record I ever heard. My parents acquired a phonograph when I was about six years old, and the discs which came with it included this Parvis one. Probably the dealer in the little Virginia town was sure he would never sell it and gladly "threw it in."

Not being of Italian descent, I had no idea of the words, but Parvis' dramatic singing of both sides made a powerful appeal to my childish imagination. That was particularly true of the "Otello" excerpt. I can't think of anything more calculated to inspire terror than the way in which Parvis as Iago, relates to the jealous Othello the things he malignantly represents Cassio to have murmured about Desdemona in his dreams. For years I didn't have the slightest conception of the story behind the record. Instead, I tried to make English of the foreign words and thought I detected a phrase about someone suffering from "a cruel yellow fever." The thing fascinated, while it frightened me.

The "Africana" side, I realize now, is a curiosity. It plays for only a minute and a half, whereas Ruffo's version of the same aria required a 12-inch Red Seal. Obviously, Parvis has recorded only a fragment of the African slave, Nelusko's, account of the fearful Adamastor; but the brief passage has always seemed to me a fascinating combination of terror and exhilaration. I still have a childish tendency to shudder when the baritone breaks into a wild laugh, but revel in the rapid-fire portion which follows when he seems to "go into his dance."

Some years ago I found a green-label Columbia on which Parvis sings an entirely different version of "Adamastor." It is considerably longer and is taken in a rather restrained and subdued style that I do not like half so well.

Since the preceding pages were written, the threat of a storm with points of resemblance to those which Adamastor, Ruler of the Ocean, conjured up for his own amusement, accompanied by the belligerent buzzing of a hornet on the sidelines, has compelled me to retreat from the porch and come indoors. But I think the quotation makes it clear why I am, this once, overstepping the boundary

line between Aida's department and mine, and writing about an opera artist.

For further justification, I may point out that, although Parvis was an esteemed singer, he never achieved the eminence of Victor Red Seal or Columbia Symphony labels. There is no reason to think he ever sang for Victor and his Columbia records were sold at the same price as those of "popular" artists. From the price standpoint he belongs in my bailiwick. However, I am not belittling Taurino Parvis. Although he never received quite the acclaim of his Italian contemporaries — Caruso, Martinelli, Bonci, Zentalleo, Scotti and the others — he was nonetheless a fine artist. And he has two individual claims to distinction:

He apparently was the first performer to make a 12-inch Columbia record, and he seems to have been the first singer to record commercially with accompaniments by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. (That statement disregards, of course, the cylinders by opera stars which Lionel Mapleson recorded in the early 1900's back stage of the Metropolitan).

### II. Trying to Trace Signor Parvis

Throughout childhood, Taurino Parvis' rich baritone voice and the mysterious Italian sounds it produced were often in my ears and influencing my imagination. On occasion I dreamed of him, as I did of Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Frederic Martin and other record makers. I recall one dream in which I learned that Mr. Parvis was to give a recital in front of (not inside) a barn. I went to hear him and appeared to be the only person in the audience. Of course he sang "Adamastor" and Iago's aria. I could not have been more than eight at the time of that dream.

Years before I began to write for HOBBIES, I asked George Clarence Jell, then manager of Columbia's artist and repertoire department, if he knew what had become of Parvis. He replied:

"As to Taurino Parvis, it must be at least 20 years since I have heard anything about him whatever. I doubt very much if he is singing now and have not the slightest idea where he might be located. If I should hear about him, shall let you know."

Mr. Jell must not have heard anything, for he never was able to give me more information about Parvis.





Taurino Parvis in one of his favorite baritone roles—Figaro in "The Barber of Seville."  
Taurino Parvis as the scheming, malignant lago in "Otello."



Even today, after prolonged intermittent research, I still have discouraging little information about the singer and do not even know whether he is still alive. The chances, I suppose are, he is not, but if he is yet with us, his age is about the same as that of another artist—Fred Van Eps, the banjoist, whose biography has recently appeared in these pages.

Actually, the chief reason for my writing about the baritone, aside from paying that debt of gratitude, is the hope that the sketchy biography will be read by someone who knows more about him than I do, and result in my receiving more information which can be published later in HOBBIES. As recently as September, 1955, I had a request in that fine English publication, *The Record Collector*, which everyone interested in classical vocal records should read, for European readers to send me any information they have concerning Parvis. To my disappointment, no one has yet replied.

But let's pass on to the relatively little I do know. The Edison Diamond

Disc catalogs for years contained the following:

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I HAVE JUST PURCHASED a large collection, including Sir Harry Lauder, Victor Herbert's records from first pieces he did. Also many Fats Waller, rare hillbilly and race and many operatic, classic gems and just like new. Many rare organ by Jesse Crawford and others. Many Banjo, Xylophone, Bells, and the most beautiful lot of Red Seal Classics by Mischa Elman, Fritz Kreisler, Artur Schnabel, Horowitz, Paderewski, and many others. Send for lists.

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Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not interested in buying phonographs and records by mail and do not want "The Victor Book of the Opera." Do not submit material without being instructed by me. I will not pay for or return unsolicited items. If I do not reply I already have the material you offer. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

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On January 27, 1955, I wrote to John Mundy, manager of Orchestra Personnel of the Metropolitan Opera, asking what information there was in the opera company's files concerning Parvis. A week later Mr. Mundy replied:

"In answer to your letter of January 27th, 1955, for which I thank you, I herewith give you all that I can find re Taurino Parvis, Italian baritone. He was born in Taurino on September 15th, 1879, and made his debut on November 23rd, 1904, at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York as Enrico Ashton in Lucia Di Lammermoor and sang here for two seasons (1904-1905, and 1905-06).

"The other roles he sang in his two seasons at the Metropolitan were: Morales (Carmen), Schumard (Boheme), Silvio (Pagliacci), Mercutio (Romeo and Juliette) and Germont (Traviata). . . .

Sincerely yours,

JOHN MUNDY."

A letter to William H. Seltsam, of Bridgeport, Conn., president of the International Record Collectors Club and compiler of a book listing bygone Metropolitan Opera performances, brought essentially the same information. Oddly enough, neither Mundy nor Seltsam mentions any Metropolitan appearances by Parvis after 1906, but there is some evidence that he was singing with that organization during the late World War I period and perhaps a year or so afterward. Both Edison and Pathé, which issued Parvis records in 1918, said in their publicity material that the baritone was then singing with the Met. I quote from the Edison Amberola Monthly for October, 1918:

"Taurino Parvis, the prominent Italian operatic baritone, has had a wonderful musical history. He is now singing at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City and looks back upon his long and successful engagements at Covent Garden, London, La Scala, Milan for six seasons, Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires and seven seasons in Petrograd."

Edison publicity of the same period describes Parvis as "a young singer with his future all before him." The truth is, the baritone had already attained his peak and was teetering on the verge of 40, if he hadn't quite reached it. The photo which Edison published showed him as worried looking and rather haggard, with deep lines in his forehead, in contrast to the handsome, carefree appearing younger man of his earlier career. Another photograph, dated 1920, and inscribed by Parvis to the distinguished baritone, Giuseppe La Puma, lacks the worried look, but depicts him as hatchet-faced and with a cleft chin. This picture was taken by a photographer with studios in San Francisco and Mexico, and that may

possibly throw some light on places in which Parvis was singing shortly after the First World War.

It would be interesting to know if Parvis was a member of the Metropolitan staff in 1918 and the years immediately preceding or subsequent, and if so what roles he sang. Judging from his records he sang almost entirely the standard Italian arias for baritones, though presumably his Carmen role was in French. He made at least one record in French, a Zonophone of "The Marseillaise," but he seemingly never attempted Wagnerian roles or anything else in German. He also appears to have sung nothing in Spanish or English.

I have no knowledge of Parvis' activities after his last Edison and Pathé records appeared. Probably he returned to Italy and resumed his singing career. Incidentally, his birthplace is not Taurino, as Mr. Mundy wrote it, possibly from confusion with the singer's Christian name, but is called Torino in Italian and Turin in English. A community of more than 600,000, it is the capitol of Torino province, is situated on the Po river and is the chief city of Piedmont, northwest Italy.

In other efforts to learn more about the first opera singer whose name ever meant anything to me, I wrote to the music division of the New York Public Library, but was told nothing I didn't already know; and I also asked Aida Favia-Artsay, if her good friend, Giovanni Martinelli, had known Parvis. Aida replied she doubted that the two had ever sung together or that Martinelli would recall the baritone. However, if Parvis was singing at the Met in 1918 and afterward it appears likely the two would have come into professional relationship.

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### WILL OAKLAND DIES OF HEART ATTACK

Will Oakland, one of the most popular pioneer recording artists, died Tuesday, May 15, of a heart attack, on a Bloomfield, N. J., bus enroute to Newark.

The funeral for the world-famous counter-tenor was held at 10 A.M., Saturday, May 19, in St. Philip's Church, Clifton, N. J.

Will Oakland's career was comprehensively detailed in a Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists article in HOBBIES for November, 1949. Since that article was published, Mr. Oakland lived largely in retirement in Glen Ridge, N. J., but he sang in vaudeville for a week at the Palace Theater, New York, in 1951. He also made a number of television guest appearances—notably on the George Jessel and Ed Sullivan programs. A note was found on his person, asking that Sullivan be notified in the event of his death. A Newark physician said Oakland died of coronary occlusion.

The tenor's voice retained its high vibrant quality up to the time of his death. Two years ago he issued a limited edition long-playing record as a memorial to his 50 years of show business. More recently he had been preparing another LP dealing with his minstrel experiences, but apparently he died without bringing the task to fulfillment.

### MUSIC—MISCELLANEOUS

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1901 EDISON ILLUSTRATED CATALOG showing machines, accessories, parts and supplies. Reprint of original only \$1.50. Send to—Dick Davis, Mentone, California. s3663

1905 EDISON MACHINE CATALOG (reprinted) \$1.50.—Dick Davis, Mentone, Calif. s3633

AL JOLSON MEMORIAL CLUB, 1329 West Morgan Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dues \$1.25/year ap12238

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

By JIM WALSH

## Taurino Parvis

PART II

### III Parvis' Recording Career

I have no intention of attempting a detailed analysis of Taurino Parvis recordings. Despite my lifelong admiration, I have heard only a few of his discs. However, I have been at great pains to compile perhaps the most nearly complete list of his records anyone has so far undertaken, and I shall quote a few comments from record catalogs, trade publications and similar sources. Since I have anything but a comprehensive knowledge of the singer's native language, proofreading and correcting my typewritten copy of his Italian titles has been agony, and I fear that some errors will find their way into print, even though I have done my best to be accurate.

Parvis' first records appear to be the single-faced Zon-o-phones with dark green labels, which he made in the United States from 1904 through 1906. It is conceivable that he had done earlier recording work in Italy, but I have no knowledge of any. When Parvis made these records, Zon-o-phone had already come under Victor control, but for some reason he, Eu-

genia Mantelli, Luisa Tetrizzini and other afterwards famous singers were not added to the Victor Red Seal galaxy. Since Parvis was only 24 or 25 when he began making Zonos, he may have been looked on merely as a promising youngster who might some day have a great future instead of an already established star.

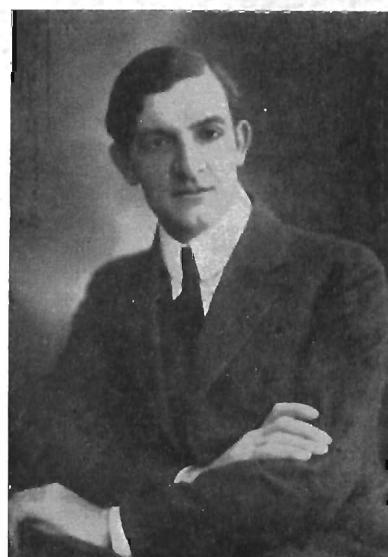
Zon-o-phone publicity, however, hardly bears out that speculation. A September, 1906, Zono catalog published in Spanish refers to him as a "celebrated artist" and says that to obtain a "dignified" accompaniment, suitable to an artist of his eminence, the services of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra had been secured.

Another distinction Parvis reached was that of being the only duet partner on records of the fabulous Mantelli. In the April, 1949, issue of *The Record Collector* (published by J. Dennis, 61 Fore Street, Ipswich, England, and sold to American readers at \$2.50 a year), Albert Wolf published a Mantelli discography, from which I shall extract his comments dealing with the Mantelli-Parvis duets.

Of Zon-o-phone 12572, "Favorita—Ah, l'altro ardor," Wolf says: "The voices blend to perfection, the vocal line is beautifully preserved throughout—a finely controlled and successful version of this duet."

Since January 27, 1956, marked the 200th anniversary of Mozart's birth, there is topical interest in what Wolf says about 12573, "La ci darem la mano" from "Don Giovanni": "Both performers display lack of finesse and understanding, essential to sing the music of Mozart well. Mantelli, much at ease in the soprano range, contributes a few pretty ornaments."

Zono No. 12574 contained "Duetto delle Rondinelle" from "Mignon." The comment: "Mantelli's voice is light



This photo of Taurino Parvis was inscribed by Parvis in 1920 to another great baritone, G. La Puma. It is reproduced through the courtesy of the present owner, Arthur Knight, of Edgewood, R. I.

and limpid, Parvis better than competent and the result is a duet sung with grace and charm." No. 12575 was "Dunque io son," which was afterwards listed as double-faced record No. 40072A. Wolf says: "Leaning strongly upon the score as well as upon tradition, Mantelli's vocal flexibility is brilliantly in evidence. This contrasts with the rather colorless singing of Parvis, who restricts himself to outline the music instead of singing it with precision."

These four duets were made with piano accompaniment. I might add I have thought it unnecessary to indicate in the discography which follows this article whether records had piano or orchestral accompaniments.

Next to the Zon-o-phones in possible order of issue come more than 20 Columbia single-faced discs with black and silver labels. Arthur E. Knight of Edgewood, Rhode Island, who generously aided me by copying numbers and titles of Parvis records from the famous Bauer catalog, says Bauer lists these Columbias as having been made in Milan, Italy, in 1905. Since Bauer is an authority, I suppose the odds are he is right, but in view of the fact that Parvis was singing with the Metropolitan in 1905, the time and place are open to question. I have an idea that instead of being sung in Milan in 1905, these discs were recorded in London, after Parvis had already made a long series of American Columbia records.

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Westville, N. J.

jeo



The following appeared in the *Talking Machine News of London* for December 15, 1906.

Taurino Parvis, the eminent Italian baritone, has entered into an exclusive contract with the Columbia Phonograph Company. He is an experienced record maker, having sung several operatic arias into the Graphophone in America while fulfilling an engagement at the New York Metropolitan Opera House. During the Covent Garden season, just closed, Parvis was the principal baritone star and won most favorable notices in the press for his splendid voice and acting. Before leaving London he made some more Columbia records which will be published later. He has insisted that none of his records shall be published until he has tested them.

A few months later the English Columbia Company began to issue a series of Parvis records and they were precisely the ones which Bauer lists as having been made two years earlier in Milan! Several appeared in the English list for March 1, 1907.

Early in 1905 Parvis began singing for the Columbia Company in New York. Here again he won distinction by being the duet partner of a noted Italian soprano, Gina Ciaparelli, or Gina C. Viafora, as she was called, by her married name, on her later Victor records. The baritone's first Columbias came out in April, 1905, and were issued as both two-minute cylinders and 10-inch discs. They were "Occhi di Fata" (cylinder 32662; disc, 3080), and the Pagliacci Prologue—cylinder 32663; disc 3079.

The June, 1905 *Columbia Record* contained a picture of Parvis, handsome, youthful and debonair as *Figaro* in "The Barber of Seville". Under the heading, "Columbia Records for June", the following appeared:

Taurino Parvis, baritone, who has a voice of wondrous beauty, has displayed it to good advantage in Denza's beautiful composition, "Giulia." The solo is in Italian—cylinder No. 32711. The same artist appears on the June list of disc records: his Prologue from I Pagliacci—12-inch disc record No. 3141—with orchestra accompaniment—being so realistic as to make you imagine you are at the opera and listening to the real singer. It is a fine illustration of the latest progress in the art of record making. All of the Prologue is rendered with the orchestral effects exactly as in the opera. Parvis also sings the famous Toreador song from "Carmen", with orchestra accompaniment—disc No. 3140.

The 10-inch disc and the cylinder of the Prologue issued two months previously had piano accompaniments. This orchestrally accompanied Prologue appears to be the first 12-inch record Columbia ever made in the United States; at least it is the only one in the 1906 catalog, although there are twelve 14-inch records to furnish music for dancing. In the list compiled by Arthur Knight, the 12-inch Prologue appears as No. 30000, and it may have been reissued later under that number, although I have been unable to find it, so numbered. It certainly originally appeared, and was catalogued, as 3141, in the same sequence as the 10-inch records.

Parvis may have been the most prolific operatic recording artist of 1904-07. At the time he began singing for Columbia, that company, which had made a splurge early in 1903 with 10-inch recordings by Marcella Sembrich, Eduard De Reszke, Ernestine

Schumann-Heink, Giuseppe Campanari, Suzanne Adams, Antonio Scotti and Charles Glibert, had no other operatic singer. Ciaparelli was added in June, 1905, and she and Parvis continued for the next year to hold the operatic fort as far as Columbia was concerned. The 1903 records were poorly recorded and a financial failure, which led Columbia's president, E. D. Easton, to decide "there's no money in opera," and let Victor have a monopoly of celebrities.

The July list contained several other Parvis solos, and the *Record* said: "Signor Parvis has gained great popularity with Columbia patrons and his magnificent voice is heard to good advantage in the above selections. All are in Italian." Apparently, it didn't occur to Columbia to give "Signor Parvis" celebrity rating. His records were sold at the same price as ordinary discs and cylinders. So were those of Ciaparelli and, a little later, Marcel Journet. Perhaps the 1903 debacle of trying to sell celebrity discs at \$2 per single-faced 10-inch had persuaded Mr. Easton there would be a better market if the price was held down to \$1. That same month, Columbia also issued a six-inch cylinder by Parvis of the Prologue. It could be used only on a Columbia machine with a specially long mandrel and had a playing time of about three minutes.

Several months elapsed before Parvis was again mentioned, but the March, 1906, *Columbia Record* said: "Six standard songs by Taurino Parvis of the Metropolitan Opera House are listed, among which are selections from Carmen, Ernani, Rigoletto and La Traviata. Mr. Parvis is gifted with a clear baritone voice of great range and excellent quality. His low tones are smooth and melodious, and the high tones are given with perfect ease and splendid artistic effect." In April, there was this comment on Parvis' disc record of "Giulia": "Mr. Parvis has a superb voice which he uses with all the grace and charm that come from study when combined with the fine musical taste that marks the true artist."

When Columbia began to issue double-faced records late in 1908, Parvis' single-faced discs were placed on the market in two-faced form. Then nothing was heard of the baritone in domestic listings from 1909 until the March, 1913, supplement appeared. Under the heading of "Popular Priced Operatic Vocal Recordings," was combined on A1258, a duet from Boheme by Giuseppe Armanini, tenor, and Parvis, with a Rigoletto selection by Rita D'Oria, soprano. This was described as "a popular priced operatic double disc sung by some of the best artists of Italy, two of whom, Armanini and D'Oria, are singing with signal success this year on the Pacific Coast. Parvis is also well-known to the American public as a baritone of exceptional ability."

In April, record A1262 contained "A Brilliant Operatic Duet By Italian Artists." This was a two-part Traviata aria sung by D'Oria and Parvis, and was described as: "A new popular priced record from Italy sung by two of the best artists available. . .

The duet is given a forceful and artistic rendition of Mme. D'Oria and Mr. Parvis."

Parvis also was represented by several selections (to be found in the appended discography) in the March, 1914, supplement. The supplement said: "The twelve selections here listed of Columbia Blue Label Double-Disc Records are the first of a new series of Grand Opera recordings at popular prices. They were made in our recording laboratories in Milan under the shadow of famous La Scala, that great temple of music whose very bricks and mortar have become sanctified through the long years of a glorious career as the world's greatest temple of Opera—the Mecca of every devotee, the ambition of every artist, the foundation of Grand Opera itself. In no other institution are the highest traditions of Grand Opera so reverently preserved, for this is their birthplace. The artists who have made this new series of records are singing leading roles in La Scala today; it is more than likely that at least some of them will be heard in this country before long. Each is an artist by training and by instinct, with the real artist's knowledge of the technique, and the real artist's deep understanding of the spirit of his art."

Others of the La Scala series were issued in March, 1915, and that ended Parvis' appearances in the American Columbia catalog, unless other records of which I have no knowledge were included in the green label international series. The last catalog in which any Parvis records appeared was dated 1918.

The baritone's disappearance from the Columbia catalog coincided with his debut in the American Pathé and Edison repertoires. His hill-and-dale recordings probably were made during his farewell visit to this country. Years ago I found an old copy of the long gone humorous magazine, *Judge*, which published a record review department conducted by "Disco." The date was either 1919 or 1920. I recall "Disco's" reviewing one of Parvis' Pathé records (I've forgotten which) and saying it was the best thing Pathé had done in a long time. And I remember the concluding sentence of his review: "Parvis, a most accomplished baritone, sings it splendidly."

That brings us to the end of this brief consideration of that "most accomplished baritone's" career. As I said earlier, I do not even know whether he is dead or alive. If alive, he can hardly be singing or even, at the age of 77, teaching. Even so, I thought at once of Parvis a few months ago when a contributor to the *New Yorker* related a visit he had paid to a home for retired opera singers at Milan. He said that as he strolled along he met two elderly men, one of whom threw his head back and vociferated some operatic aria in a wonderfully well preserved, rich baritone voice. I found myself wondering, "Can that have been Taurino Parvis?" And as I conclude this article I find myself hoping it may have been!



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## George Alexander (CLIFFORD ALEXANDER WILEY)

By JIM WALSH

One of the most rewarding moments of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists' long history occurred in the mid-afternoon of Saturday, February 5, 1955, when I opened post office box 476 in Vinton, Virginia, and removed an envelope with the name of the City of New York Department of Health in the upper left hand corner.

I opened the envelope with a grimace of anticipatory disappointment, but my mood quickly changed. Instead of the form letter apology I had expected, I found myself clutching something I had almost given up hope of obtaining — a photostatic copy of the death certificate of Clifford Alexander Wiley. I can't dance, but I felt like executing a few impromptu steps as I realized a search of more than twenty years had come to a successful end and I should be able to write a HOBBIES article about a singer once highly popular, but now one of the most bafflingly obscure of all early-day record makers.

Most likely there are few readers of this department to whom the name of Clifford A. Wiley has a significant meaning, but when I explain he was the baritone who made so many fine records under the assumed name of George Alexander you will understand why I felt elated. Despite his former prominence, there are few bygone phonograph stars about whom less is known today. I believe my research concerning George Alexander and his career has involved more prolonged effort and Sherlock Holmes technique than has been required to track down information concerning any other artist.

Up to now I have never mentioned Alexander to any other performer who made records during the same period in which he "flourished" and brought forth any sign of recognition. "Never heard of him; what did he do?" has been the stock reply. I once asked Billy Murray if he remembered George Alexander, but "The Denver Nightingale," who was not a student of record catalogs wrinkled his brow in perplexity as he said he couldn't recollect having ever before heard that name. Billy also said he had

never heard of the accordion playing jigs and reels specialist, John Kimmel, concerning whom I have carried on an investigation almost as long and extensive as that dealing with Alexander.

Yet, although the singer himself is so dimly recalled, there is no doubt concerning his popularity as a recording artist in the first decade of the present century. From 1902 to 1907 no Columbia monthly supplement was thought complete without at least one Alexander recording of a ballad, a hymn or a patriotic number. His fame extended overseas. In the Talking Machine News for February 15, 1906, a writer said, in commenting on the influence of the phonograph upon British musical tastes:

"If George Alexander or Henry Burr or J. W. Myers were to advertise a concert in the Albert Hall next month, nine-tenths of their audience would be talking machine users."

A once highly esteemed artist but for more than a generation a mystery man — that was George Alexander. No wonder my heart pounded joyfully at the knowledge that, after almost a quarter of a century of off-and-on research, I was at last prepared to write this article, which I now take a properly modest pride in submitting.

### II Preliminary Investigation Failures

I have pored over record catalogs since I was six or seven years old, and even as a tot I was mystified by the abruptness with which George Alexander's name had dropped out of the Columbia monthly supplements, even though many of his discs held their place among the company's best standard sellers. When I later obtained old Columbia catalogs I was intrigued to find each artist assigned a code letter, to save the space that would be needed for printing a performer's name in full after each record. An A after the title indicated a record by George Alexander; a B, one by Henry Burr, and a Z, a soprano unknown to me, Hedwig Zimmer. The lady obviously was given a Z because no other singer whose name began with "zed," as our Eng-



This photograph of George Alexander is made from a Columbia display poster of 1907.

lish friends call it, was making records.

A few instrumental soloists also were single-letter men. These included the xylophonist, Charles P. Lowe; Thomas Mills, who played orchestra bells and xylophone, and Edward F. Rubsam, also a bells and xylophone virtuoso. But other performers, no matter how popular were given longer designations. As an example, take the letter M. Lucy Isabella March was shortened to "Mar"; Corinne Morgan, "Mor"; Emil Muench, "Mue"; Billy Murray, "Mu," and J. W. Myers, "My." You probably are thinking "What a silly system!" and I concur. The catalog from which I am quoting is the 1909 issue, containing the first listing of Columbia double-faced records. In the preceding years there was an even sillier method. Most of the artists weren't identified by name, but were dismissed as "tenor," "baritone," "soprano" and the like. Hence, figuring out who made any given disc in Columbia single-faced record catalogs is often a matter of heartrending difficulty — sometimes an impossibility!

For a while I toyed with the belief that the George Alexander who had made records was the same man as a noted English theatrical producer, Sir George Alexander. The idea suggested a certain versatility, since theatrical producers, I assumed, ordinarily didn't sing a large repertoire of gospel hymns. Nevertheless, the conception pleased me, and seemed plausible enough to delude me into thinking I could hear an English accent in the Alexander records.

My first sustained effort to find out something about George Alexander occurred when I struck up a friendship by correspondence with the late Frank Dorian, then assistant to the president of the Columbia Phonograph Company. Mr. Dorian, who had been with Columbia during most of his 40-year business span, answered my innumerable questions with a

gracious patience I have never ceased to marvel at and glowingly recall. He once wrote he suspected I was "the destined historian of the phonograph" and he therefore was glad to help me all he could.

I mentioned to Mr. Dorian I was puzzled why no new records by George Alexander appeared from about the time double-faced discs were introduced. I also asked for any information he could give me concerning the baritone. Although I have tried to keep all Frank Dorian's letters, valuing them as a storehouse of first-hand information about the antique phonograph days (they would make fascinating reading for recorded music enthusiasts), I seem to have mislaid the one in which he answered my Alexander questions. However, I recall his saying that Alexander was "a young concert singer" when he began making Columbia records, his real name was Clifford Wiley and he was a native of Baltimore.

Mr. Dorian said the reason why new Alexander recordings ceased to be issued was simple. The singer, he said, had a painful lingering illness and died about the time double-faced records were introduced. In making that statement, Mr. Dorian's usually reliable memory led him somewhat astray. The death certificate photostat which I clutched that memorable February afternoon revealed Clifford Alexander Wiley didn't die until several years after Columbia's first double-disc record catalog appeared.

Frank Dorian's statement was the only George Alexander information I was able to obtain for a long time. I had never even seen a photograph of Alexander. Then another veteran Columbia executive, Walter A. Forbush, gave me a large poster of "Some Columbia Talent," which had been sent to record dealers in 1907. Among the artists depicted was George Alexander, who didn't look much like the young singer described by Mr. Dorian. The photo had no resemblance to my mental conception of a clean-shaven, hatchet-faced man wearing a black felt hat. The man on the poster seemed to be rather stout, with what used to be called "walrus" mustache, and gray hair.

That remains the only picture I have ever seen of George Alexander, aside from reproductions of the same photo in old record supplements and the company's "house organ," *The Columbia Record*. Perhaps because he was well known in the recital and concert field as Clifford Wiley, the singer wasn't proud of his phonograph affiliations (many recording artists weren't in those days) and didn't encourage any extensive use of his likeness. I have had his photo copied from the old poster and hope it is clear enough to be reproduced.

### III Fruitless Baltimore Research

As time went on and I began to write for *HOBBIES* and other publications, I was never free from a desire to fathom the mystery and tell the romantic life story I was sure

lurked behind the commonplace assumed name of "George Alexander," but none of my occasional efforts to learn more about Baltimore's native son were successful. For the purpose of this narrative, I shall disregard my earlier efforts and concentrate on attempts made in the past few years that eventually brought success.

In October, 1952, I wrote to the Reference Library of The Baltimore Sun, telling why I was interested in Clifford Wiley and asking if the newspaper "morgue" contained a death notice or any other information concerning him. More than two years later, I received the following letter, dated January 23, 1955, from the librarian, Weldon Wallace — a letter which came, ironically, after I had finally achieved my objective through another source but still with the Sun's help:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Tonight, among some other papers, I found your letter of December 16, 1952, which somehow got misplaced. You made inquiry about a singer named George Alexander, also known as Clifford Wiley. In case you are still seeking information about this oldtimer, I am sorry to disappoint you, for I have been unable to find anything in the library of this paper — either in the clippings or in our books — about the gentleman. My apologies for the delay in answering."

Apparently I forgot that I had already written to the Sun without receiving a reply, for on August 4, 1954, I tried again, saying: "I believe Wiley to have died around 1910, and he presumably was in his forties. I believe he was buried in Baltimore, but have no trustworthy information. He was well known on the concert stage in 1900 and for several years thereafter. Since he was a notable, I imagine your files will contain something about him and would very much appreciate either a typewritten copy or information as to what a photostat would cost." This brought a brief reply from "M. B." of the Information Bureau: "We regret we have no record on Clifford A. Wiley, known as 'George Alexander,' in our files, and none of our sources have been able to help us. One of our sources suggested that you write to the New York Public Library." Alas! I had already tried the New York Public Library with no luck.

Still thinking that since Wiley was born in Baltimore he was likely to have been taken there for burial, I wrote to the Bureau of Vital Records of the Baltimore City Health Department and had a search made of the years 1908 through 1916 — the span during which I was reasonably certain the singer must have died. The result was negative. There was no record of Wiley's death and burial, for the good reason, as I learned later, that he neither died in nor was buried in Baltimore.

Well, I thought, perhaps the Enoch Pratt Library would have something on its shelves dealing with Baltimore's once famous resident. But a letter of inquiry brought the following let-down from James K. Dickson,

head of the Fine Arts Department:

"Your letter . . . regarding a Clifford Wiley has passed about the various departments of this library, which might have information, in vain. I am sorry to report that we cannot help you."

Eager not to overlook any possible source of information, I tried the Haskin Information Service in Washington. This effort also was without success, though it brought me an unexpected compliment which I had no reason to anticipate:

Dear Mr. Walsh: We have done more than the usual amount of research on your inquiry . . .

"Your articles in *HOBBIES* about former phonograph recording artists have always been of great interest.

"Unfortunately in 1910 and earlier the record companies did not keep the biographical material that is available today for present-day singers. You might write to RCA Victor or Columbia and ask if they have any information. . . It will be a pleasure to hear from you again."

I appreciated the friendly spirit of the reply, and if this article chances to be read by the lady who dictated the latter, I assure her that if the Haskin Service should receive any inquiries it is unable to answer concerning pioneer recording artists I stand ready to help.

### IV Success At Last!

Then I took what proved to be the most sensible step in the whole of my sleuthing. I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Baltimore Sun*, asking any reader with information about Clifford Alexander Wiley, who made phonograph records under the name of George Alexander, to write to me. I thought it barely possible somebody might still be living and reading the *Sun* who had known, or at least known of, the elusive artist.

I was right. On August 16, 1954 — just ten days before I moved from the house I had occupied in Vinton, Virginia, for the preceding eleven years, I received a letter from a gentleman to whom I owe an abject apology — Harry F. Klinefelter of 19 Commerce Street, Baltimore. I shall beg Mr. Klinefelter's pardon by mail, but I herewith also apologize in public. His letter brought me almost as great a thrill as receiving the death certificate photostat, for it was the letter that made it possible to obtain the photostat and write this article.

"I am writing this from bed where I have just read your letter inquiring about my old friend, Clifford Alexander Wiley, who possessed just about one of the grandest natural baritone voices I have ever heard, and had he studied French, Italian and German they couldn't have kept him out of grand opera, but he, like my very intimate friend, James W. Clayton, who also had a magnificent baritone voice . . . wasn't a linguist. I was fortunate enough to appear in many concerts with both Wiley and Clayton.

"In 1904 I spent a week in Mountain Lake Park, Md. Wiley and I appeared twice daily in the Chautauqua, and I still at 78 am able to do my specialty, although I have long since stopped appearing in public. Nobody enjoys hearing an ugly woman sing, and I am too . . . old to whistle in public.

"Actually, I began whistling before I was three years old and for many years appeared in concerts. I am not a bird imitator. I whistle popular and classical music, otherwise I could have not appeared with such singers as Wiley and Clayton.

"I once visited Cliff in New York. I was 24 at that time (1904.) Cliff was about 30 or so. That would make him about 85 were he alive. He couldn't have been 50 when he died. I also have appeared with John Charles Thomas and many other great singers, and even now I appear in the musicals of the University Club of which I am a member, but am not a university man as I never got past the eighth grade.

"A contemporary of Cliff's, a fine tenor singer who used to teach locally said that Wiley had the greatest natural baritone voice he had ever heard. I can hear him now and I am sure I can remember most of the songs he sang in Mountain Lake Park. Two years ago I visited Mountain Lake. The Chautauqua has gone with the wind. A gas well occupies the site, but I am sure is not giving off as much gas as the Rev. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, who ran the Chautauqua. . . .

"The vocal teacher who taught Wiley was Clifton Andrews, long since dead, whose wife survives him and who was quite a soprano with whom I have appeared.

"I hope I have been able to furnish you with at least a part of what you desire. . . . Just where is Vinton? I get down to Winchester occasionally and expect to be down that way in the fall. HARRY F. KLINEFELTER."

In spite of being almost distracted, and with good reason, by the worry of my impending moving, I replied immediately to Mr. Klinefelter, asking if he knew whether Clifford Wiley had any surviving relatives and where he died and was buried. He replied on August 19. I had mailed my letter to him in an insurance company envelope, and his opening sentence shows he took me to be an insurance man, like himself, instead of a radio-TV newsman and free-lance writer:

"Dear Jim Walsh: So you are in the insurance business. Well, I'll be damned!

"When I tell you how I found out the following you will think me a Pinkerton. We have represented the Employers' Group for over 50 years.

. . . In their office was a girl named Bowland. One day she told me her mother's maiden name was Wiley. I told her that I once knew a very great baritone singer named Clifford Alexander Wiley. 'Why,' she said, 'he was my uncle—my mother's brother!' For the life of me I couldn't remember her name, but I remembered the name of her chum in the Employers' office, a Miss Sheely, so I called up her father, the agent of Moore and McCormick Steamship Lines, whom I know quite well, and he gave me the name of Mrs. W. A. N. Bowland, 3507 North Charles St., Baltimore, whom you can write, but she knows very little about Cliff, whose brother, Maurice Wiley, was quite successful in the lumber business. . . . Cliff was married. I visited him and his wife at their apartment in New York. He did die in his forties, is buried somewhere on Long Island, but his sister doesn't know where. They had no children.

"I hope this will be some help. I shall never forget the way Cliff sang Valentine's song from 'Faust,' (he interpolated a high A). 'The Publican' and the Toreador Song from 'Carmen.' Then Mr. Klinefelter added a colorful postscript:

"I am sorry you can't whistle, but I can't sing worth a damn, and, believe it or not, I can't play a single musical instrument, and I can't read a note, but I know hundreds of songs and instrumental pieces to whistle in

concerts. I am quite a musical freak. Excuse this penmanship. It's hard to write in bed with an electric light coming over my right shoulder. I should be left-handed."

Now comes the regrettable part of my correspondence with the candid and kindly Harry Klinefelter. When his second letter reached me I was in the throes of packing. The letter together with much other correspondence, was tossed into a box, became misplaced and was found only a few days ago when I ransacked my new house for the material I needed to write this long-delayed biographical sketch of George Alexander. Mr. Klinefelter must have thought me ungrateful, to say the least, because I didn't reply. I couldn't remember his address. However, I shall send him a copy of this article and have the issue of HOBBIES containing the published version mailed to him, and perhaps that will make amends. I hope so, for had it not been for his thoughtful reply to my letter to the editor this article would still be in the dream-plan stage.

#### VA Letters From Alexander's Niece

Feeling myself on the way to success, I wrote to the lady Mr. Klinefelter had mentioned. I told her of my long search for information about her uncle, Clifford Wiley, and also said that my WSLS news department associate, Ed. Thomas, the station's sports director, expected to be in Baltimore within a short time and had offered to phone to her and take down all the information she could recall concerning her illustrious uncle. The letter which I received a few days later was dated August 29, and signed Elizabeth Bowland Gillet (Mrs. Bowland Gillet). It was rather disappointing, for it revealed little I hadn't already known:

"My dear Mr. Walsh," Mrs. Gillet wrote, "this is in reply to your letter of August 24th. . . . My mother, who . . . is quite ill at the moment, feels it should have an answer at once.

"You suggested Mr. Thomas . . . would call mother, and while she would be very glad to receive him, she has no real information to give. Her illness is a respiratory infection, and it is very difficult for her to talk, so the doctor has ordered complete rest and quiet.

"In her telephone conversation with Mr. Klinefelter, she answered his questions as best she could. However, mother was the youngest of seven children, while uncle Clifford was the eldest, and there were many years difference in their ages; in fact, the next in age to mother, uncle Maurice, was a grown man when mother was still a little girl. Thus, as you can readily see, dates and other pertinent data such as you might want for your biography have become considerably hazy. Further, uncle Clifford died in New York City approximately 40-45 years ago. However, she does remember, that he sang under the name of Clifford Alexander rather than 'George Alexander,' as your letter mentions.

"Mother says that in addition to her many pleasant childhood memories of her very talented brother, it is nice to know that he is remembered by others after so many years.

"We are indeed sorry that we cannot help you further and hope you can appreciate the difficulty made by the many years difference in their ages."

This was a charming letter, but it was, as I have said, to some extent disappointing, and it contained one piece of unintentional misinformation—the statement that Clifford Wiley used Clifford Alexander, rather than George Alexander, as his professional name. The memory of Wiley's sister had played her false here, as reference to any old Columbia catalog would show. Nevertheless, there was one valuable piece of information—the statement that Clifford Wiley died in New York City. Having that knowledge, I was able to ask the Bureau of Records and Statistics of the Department of Health of the City of New York (to quote its round-about title in full) to send me a photostat of the death certificate. And it was that photostat which I was so happy to receive on that February afternoon.

#### VI What the Photostat Said

Now that I had it, the photostat didn't absolutely dazzle me with the variety and extent of its information, but it did give the date of Clifford Wiley's birth and death, the cause of his death and some other pertinent information—enough to make it possible for me to produce the article I had long hoped to write.

Applying a magnifying glass to the photograph of the death certificate (filled out in handwriting instead of the typewriting that is more common nowadays) I found that Clifford Alexander Wiley died in his apartment at 2469 Broadway, New York City, at the age of 45 years, seven months and 21 days. He was born July 9, 1867. His birthplace is given as Baltimore and his profession as "vocal instructor." His father was Alexander Wiley and his mother's maiden name was Anne Wells. Both were born, like their son, in Baltimore.

Wiley died March 2, 1913, and was buried March 5 in the New York-New Jersey cemetery. The undertaker's name appears to be Frank Calyer, of 154 East 23rd Street. I make the doctor's signature out, rightly or wrongly to be John Henry Wychett, Jr. He says he attended Wiley from February 21 to March 2, 1913, and death occurred at 4:15 p.m. of the latter day. Complex medical terms are used to indicate that the singer died of chronic Bright's disease and a heart condition, from which he had suffered for four years, with "general arterial sclerosis" (hardening of the arteries) as a secondary cause. From this it appears safe to deduce that Wiley became chronically ill about the time his records ceased to appear in Columbia supplements (roughly speaking, the period in which single-faced records began to be succeeded by double-faced), but that he seems to have been able to teach singing even though he was no longer (with one or two exceptions to be mentioned later) making records.

And now, with the statistical data out of the way, we may proceed to a consideration of Wiley's recordings. However, first I should like to

(Continued on page 34)



# CURRENT COLLECTORS' RECORDINGS

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

Grace La Rue was one of the most popular stars of musical comedy from shortly after the turn of the century until the mid twenties. Her death on March 12 of this year at the age of seventy-five made me pause a moment to review her career and her recordings.

She was celebrated as being the first woman performer to earn \$1500 a week and her style was so distinct that she was a common subject for imitators. Grace La Rue had studied voice on the continent and she was well known on the concert stage as well as in vaudeville. In musical comedy she starred in such productions as "The Tourists" (1906), "Ziegfeld Follies of 1907," "Ziegfeld Follies of 1908," "Madame Troubadour" (1910), "Betsy" (1911), "Hitchy Koo" with Raymond Hitchcock in 1917, "Dear Me" (1921), and the "Music Box Revue" of 1922.

The only recording I know of by her is Columbia A904 which has two numbers by her: "Clap Hands" and "Has Anybody Here Seen Nancy?" This recording was released in 1910, and although neither of the songs seem to have become "hits", she sang them well, and it is evident that her voice was well suited for acoustic recording. Her photograph was printed in the 1912 Columbia catalog, and it is mentioned that "Grace La Rue, one of America's foremost light opera comedienues, under exclusive Columbia contract, has sung some of her most successful numbers." This recording seems to be quite rare today and it evidently had a rather small sale. It is probably because of this reason that no more discs were released by her.

In the last year or two several collectors have written in to give additional information in reference to some of the artists I have discussed in this column. I am always most happy to hear from my readers and it seems particularly worthwhile to devote some space this month to these letters because of the additional information that has come in to me concerning other recordings made by Elsie Janis for HMV than those I mentioned in my July column.

First, Alan H. Mueller wrote to me that he had in his collection a copy of the twelve-inch HMV recording of "I've Got Everything I Want But You" from the "Passing Show." This disc is a duet made by Elsie Janis and Basil Hallam. The number is 04116. After receiving this information, I received a letter from Marvin Smismman of St. Louis who had consulted his extensive collection of catalogs and had come up with the following.

January, 1916 HMV catalog:

## 10-INCH RECORDINGS

- B485 Janis & Hallam - Keep Smiling/Hallam - Balling the Jack
- B488 Janis & Hallam - Florrie Was a Flapper/Janis - You're Here and I'm Here
- B489 Janis - I Want a Dancing Man/Janis - When We Tango to the Wearing of the Green

## 12-INCH RECORDINGS

- C566 Janis & Hallam - Prudence/Janis - Same Old Song
- C569 Janis - Yip I Addy I Ay/George Grossmith - The Fortune Teller
- C597 Janis and Hallam - Piccadilly/De Groot and the Piccadilly Orch. - I've Got Everything I Want But You

The October, 1917 catalog, besides the above recordings, lists the following twelve-inch solo records by Elsie Janis:

- 03512 Along the Rocky Road to Dublin
- 03526 I'm Not Prepared
- 03516 When You're in Louisville
- 03511 Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula

Mr. Smismman also consulted the 1922, 1924, and 1925 HMV catalogs. The last two had no Janis listings, but the 1922 catalog, which I did not think had any of her records actually lists two twelve-inch discs by her.

- D388 Smiles/Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula
- D435 Give Me the Moonlight (Two parts)

Back in March, 1955, I discussed the records of George Jessel and Gus Van. Larry Kiner was quick to write me that I had left out some items by both artists. On George Jessel he offered the following information:

- Operaphone 21186 - Marcelle
- Pathe 22418 Dolls/Marcelle
- COLUMBIA
- Unissued - You Know What I Mean (made on 10-11-1919)
- Unissued - Give Me the Sultan's Harem (10-28-1919)
- Unissued - When They're Old Enough to Know Better (10-28-1919)
- Banner 2094 Professor Labermacher (2 parts)
- 2097 Toastmaster (2 parts)

With Gus Van, Larry was able to supply me with a list of solos he made for the American Record Co., whose masters appeared on such labels as Oriole, Banner, Perfect, Melotone, etc.

## MATRIX

- 10434 In a Cafe on the Road to Calais (2-19-1931)
- 10543 I've Gotta Heavy Levee Date With Mandy (4-7-1931)
- 10544 Please Don't Cut Out My Sauerkraut (4-7-1931)
- 10699 Roll On Mississippi, Roll On (6-15-1931)
- 10700 When Yuba Plays the Rumba on the Tuba (6-15-1931)

In regard to the Jolson series which began in the April, 1955, issue of *Hobbies*, it should be mentioned that it seems almost positive now that the quoted Victor sales figures on the Jolson records are incorrect. A letter from Jim Walsh dated May 5, 1955

gives some interesting data on Jolson's Brunswick releases:

Looking through a scrapbook I came across a couple of Al Jolson items that should interest you. One is a 1924 clipping from the Roanoke Times headed "Jazz Worth More Than Caruso's Tones." A cut shows Jolson singing into a phonograph recording horn with Isham Jones, behind him, playing a saxophone, and the cut lines read:

"Caruso's golden tones have turned into baser metal (metal) and Al Jolson, jazz king, supplants the famous tenor as the gold getter, for Jolson, shown here, making his first record has signed a contract with P. L. Deutsch, of the Brunswick Phonograph Company, which agrees to pay the blackface comedian \$30,000 a month for four years to make phonograph records—a total of \$1,400,000. Playing the saxophone for Jolson is Isham Jones, jazz millionaire, who has made his million in the past five years with his saxophone and his syncopation compositions."

If that contract was real and not a press agent's imagination, Brunswick must soon have experienced a terrific headache whenever it thought of Jolson, for partly, because of the general decline in record sales from radio competition, he was a flop as a Brunswick singer and didn't have a big selling record until "Sonny Boy" and "There's a Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder" were paired. His first Brunswick was "California, Here I Come" and "I'm Goin' South" (he had previously recorded the latter for Columbia) and the "Melody Mart" department of the Billboard remarked, after the record had been out a few months: "There are no songwriters on Broadway making more of a holler than the writers of 'California' and 'Goin' South.'" These two numbers were backed upon first Brunswick record made by Al Jolson. It was hoped that 200,000 would be sold. According to the statements rendered the writers, 85,000 was all."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

mention the sixteenth annual catalog of the Henry Wolfsohn Musical Bureau of 131 East 17th Street, New York, which has recently come into my possession. Covering the seasons of 1901 and 1902, it lists Clifford A. Wiley as one of the baritones under Wolfsohn management—an indication that at about the time he began to make records he was already well established in his career. Other Wolfsohn artists who made records and whose names will be familiar to some, if not all, collectors, are:

Soprano—Mrs. Hissem De Moss (Mary Hissem De Moss); tenors—Evan Williams, John Young and Ellison Van Hoose; baritones—Gwilym Miles (who did a little duet singing for Columbia with Henry Burr); Albert Jampolski (spelled Iampolski in the catalog); cellists—Leo Schultz and Hans Kronold; accompanist—Bruno Huhn; and one ensemble—the Kneisel Quartet. Some of the others may have recorded, possibly under different names, but their catalog identifications don't click with me.

(to be continued)



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## George Alexander (CLIFFORD ALEXANDER WILEY)

(Continued from the September issue)

By JIM WALSH

### VII Was Alexander "Atwood Twitchell"?

Having told the little that is known about George Alexander's family history, his life and death, let us proceed to a consideration of his records. First, though, I must mention a "wild surmise" that has struck me since the earlier pages of this sketch

were written in the first few days of September, 1955.

For virtually ever since I can remember, my parent's record collection included a badly cracked nine-inch single-faced Zon-o-phone of a sentimental ballad, "Jennie Lee," sung by "Mr. Atwood Twitchell." The disc has the black center with white lettering that characterized all Zon-o-phones until paper labels were substituted in 1903—presumably as a result of Victor's acquiring the old Universal Talking Machine Company, which had begun making Zon-o-phone records in 1901. (See Roland Gelatt's fascinating new book, "The History of the Phonograph," for a lucid explanation of the interlocking of the Berliner, Victor and Zon-o-phone concerns). Although the record has such a wide crack that only a few words can be understood when it is played, I have never thrown it away, largely because I have been bemused by the mystery surrounding Atwood Twitchell. "Jenny Lee," which was written by Arthur J. Lamb and Harry Von Tilzer and published by Shapiro, Bernstein, Von Tilzer and Company in 1902, remained the only record I had ever seen by Twitchell until I came across Zon-o-phone No. 933, "The Holy City," 15 years ago while rummaging through Jack Caidin's record

shop in New York City. To this day I have never seen any others or found them listed in print.

Who was Atwood Twitchell? That I have wondered over and over. Many years ago I wrote to my faithful, already mentioned friend, Frank Dorian, and asked him if he knew of such a singer in the early 1900's. Mr. Dorian replied he had never heard of any baritone named Twitchell, and had referred my question to his Columbia associate, J. O. Prescott, whose brother, F. M. Prescott, had been instrumental in founding the Zon-o-phone business. "If anybody now living would know about Atwood Twitchell," Mr. Dorian wrote, "Mr. Prescott should. But he says he never heard of anyone with that name."

Other inquiries proved equally fruitless and I decided "Atwood Twitchell" must have been an assumed name for one of the established recording baritones.

But which? For a time I leaned strongly toward the English singer, Alan Turner, who spent much time in American recording studios. Singers of the acoustic era were fond of using *noms de disques* whose sound or initials resembled their real names (as witness Elsie Baker calling herself Edna Brown and Gladys Rice reversing her initials and becoming Rachel Grant), and it probably was more than a coincidence, I thought, that Alan Turner and Atwood Twitchell had the same initial letters. Fred Hager, who was in charge of Zon-o-phone's early recording activities, told me he believed Turner sang for the company and did some announcing, although John Kaiser was the chief announcer. I thought I detected traces of Turner's characteristic intonations and accent in Twitchell's singing, as best I could judge by one badly cracked and one seriously worn record. I still haven't given Alan Turner up as a possibility, but as best I can learn Turner did no American recording until 1906. That would leave him out as the 1902 Twitchell.

More recently I have toyed with the idea that the late Emilio de Gogorza might be responsible for the Twitchell recordings. After all, Emilio wasn't above singing "The Holy City" and probably wouldn't have caved, either, at "Jennie Lee." He made Victor and Zon-o-phone records under such names as Carlos Francisco, Herbert Goddard, M. Fernand and Ed. Franklin—so why not Atwood Twitchell? By shifting the speed of "The Holy City" to what I hoped was the right number of revolutions, I thought I detected a resemblance to de Gogorza's voice. Again, that still isn't impossible.

But while writing this article, the

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thought seemed to come out of nowhere; Wasn't George Alexander the most likely candidate for the Twitchell title?—always assuming there really was not, as there may have been, a singer by that name. The Twitchell records appear to have been issued shortly before the Alexander name appeared in the Zon-o-phone catalog, and it may be that Clifford Wiley at first for purposes of disguise chose to call himself Atwood Twitchell before becoming the better known George Alexander. Twitchell's name doesn't appear in the oldest Zon-o-phone catalog I have—the date is June, 1905—and "Jenny Lee," which apparently didn't sell, has been expunged. But there is a record of "The Holy City," sung by George Alexander! Either in 1903 or 1904, the Zon-o-phone seven and nine-inch records were renumbered apparently so that the new 10-inch series could begin with No. 1, and the smaller records were shifted to the 5,000 group. Perhaps those remained in the catalog were remade by the Victor process and there was later some altering of speeds, but a great many stayed in the active list under new numbers until the seven and nine-inch discs were discontinued a year or so later. What more natural than for the company to have transferred "Twitchell's" recording of the popular Stephen Adams composition to the new 5,000 series and catalogued it under Wiley's new assumed name of Alexander?

One thing is obvious. The Alexander records didn't begin to appear until after the older numbers had been given up for the new. In transferring the numbering system, rec-

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ords already in the catalog were grouped in blocks. Band selections were numbered from 5000 to 5119; orchestra, 5120 to 5213; duets by Collins and Harlan from 5440 to 5452, etc. But after a group of Dan Quinn records (5574 to 5578), the discs receive numbers regardless of the classification into which they fall. Alexander's first, 5589, is "Believe." His name should appear only on Zon-o-phones with the paper label and the trumpets and harp trademark. Those of Twitchell, on the other hand, will be met with solely on the black-and-white etched type. Hence, it appears reasonable that the mysterious "Alexander" was the successor to the even more mysterious "Twitchell."

De Gogorza doesn't appear in the 1905 Zono catalog. The only other baritones engaged by the company whose repertoires were like Twitchell's were J. J. Fisher, James F. Harrison, John W. Myers and Frank C. Stanley, and Twitchell's tone production methods could never have been mistaken for those of Stanley, Myers or Harrison. I know too little of Fisher to deliver a positive pronouncement, but a 1904 *Columbia Record* seems to dispose of him as a possibility. It says that he had just returned to record making after several years spent in other business, and was "singing better than ever." Presumably, then, he wasn't recording in the Twitchell era of 1901-02. Until there is evidence to the contrary—and I shall welcome Atwood Twitchell information of any kind from any source—I shall please myself with the possibility that Twitchell was merely a try-out for the Baltimore baritone who became internationally noted as "George Alexander," even though almost none of his admirers knew who he actually was.

After typing the foregoing, I got out a magnifying glass and submitted to a searching scrutiny the only two nine-inch Zon-o-phone records with paper labels which I have by Alexander. And I found something that strengthens my belief he began his recording career as Twitchell. As already mentioned, the label number of "Jenny Lee" is 1123. Well, the number, of Alexander's "Home, Sweet Home" under the new system is 5680, but the original number, 1192, is etched into the smooth material surrounding the label. That makes it obvious Alexander was singing for Zon-o-phone shortly after Twitchell's offerings appeared. Alexander's version of "Always in the Way," a Charles K. Harris "child ballad" issued in 1903, has a label number of 5798, but the original recording number is 2216.

If anyone has a nine-inch Zon-o-phone record of "The Holy City," (No. 5757), sung by Alexander, and finds the original "Twitchell number," 933, scratched into the inner rim, that should just about make the Alexander-Twitchell-Clifford Wiley identification complete. Now let's turn to a consideration of George Alexander's records.

#### VIII Records by Clifford Wiley

As far as careful checking has revealed, the assumed name of George Alexander didn't appear in any Amer-

ican record list before 1902. Some of the songs he recorded were written at an earlier period. Dr. Alfred Robyn's "Answer," for instance, goes back to 1885, and the Alexander list was largely composed of "standard" numbers of even greater antiquity, but none of the so-called "popular" selections he recorded became known before 1902 or some time in 1901. Alexander's name is missing from the 1901 and 1902 Victor catalogs. Columbia didn't begin to make discs until 1902, when it bought the business of the Globe Record Company and issued several hundred Globe recordings, identified in their new guise as "Climax Records, made by the G. R. Co. for the Columbia Phonograph Co." Zon-o-phone was a struggling beginner in 1901 and soon got into financial difficulties that suspended its operations for several months. Alexander doesn't show up in its lists with any songs, other than "standard" numbers, published before 1902. Apparently he began making Zon-o-phone and Columbia records at about the same time, for identical titles frequently appear in the lists I am appending at the end of this sketch.

Incidentally, included in the list are three discs I doubt are by Alexander, although he made Columbia cylinders of the same selections. Question that he was recording early enough to sing Nos. 10, 302 and 657, which probably were pressed from original Globe Record masters. However, since the Columbia cylinder catalog does contain titles of those numbers by Alexander, I'm giving him the benefit of the doubt and placing (?) after the disc numbers. I have already explained that until Columbia began making double-faced records, the catalog didn't give names of singers but only identified their voice quality.

The first Columbia disc definitely identified as by Alexander is 1098, "Three Roses Red." The number clearly indicates a 1902 record, since one of the earliest duets by Collins and Harlan, who began their recording association that year, is 1141, "Closing Time in a Country Grocery." "Three Roses Red" is followed by 1099, "Entreaty" and 1100, "The Rosary." Already the type of song by which "George Alexander" was to be typed has been established. Columbia was using him for good "safe," conservative numbers that didn't display the extreme range and power of his voice. And, like his great tenor contemporary, Henry Burr, who also began in 1902, he was to be called on frequently for recordings of hymns. It may be said he was Columbia's "baritone gospel singer," just as Burr was the "sacred tenor," and Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison were the "gospel duo."

Alexander, however, is shown singing occasional comic opera numbers, such as "The Toreador" and "The Coo Song," the latter from Ross and Monckton's "Country Girl." Occasionally he was allowed to tackle something more difficult, including the Drinking Song from "Martha" (which he sang on a cylinder though I doubt his making the disc) and "The Publican" fondly recalled by his old friend and associate, Mr. Klinefelter. Note that he sang, among others, "An-

swer," "The Coo Song," "A Dream of Paradise," "The Drinking Song from 'Martha,'" and "The Toreador Song" for both Columbia and Zon-o-phone. In fact, there are two "Toreador Songs" in the Zono list. They aren't differentiated, but probably one is from "Carmen" and the other from Francis Wilson's comic opera, "The Toreador."

I have a personal interest in two of Alexander's Columbia records. His rendition of "My Old Kentucky Home," with a spoken announcement, is one of the first discs I can remember hearing. And when I heard the cylinder of "Mighty Lak' a Rose," it seemed to me the announcer (who may or may not have been Alexander himself) started to announce it as an Edison record, but after saying "Edi—" changed to Columbia. As far as I know, however, Alexander never sang for Edison. When I mentioned the apparent announcing "goof" to Frank Dorian, he replied he couldn't see how the experts who tested Columbia records before they went into market could have overlooked a stumbling announcement that began as "Edison" and ended as "Columbia," and indicated his belief I was mistaken. "But," the genial old gentleman humorously added, "plenty of funny things happened in the record business in those old days" (For the sake of preserving a historical fact, it may be worth mentioning here that Mr. Dorian's wife, Mrs. Mary Dorian, was the first person hired by the pioneer Columbia Company when it opened its offices in Washington in 1889. She may still be living. She was, half a dozen years ago).

#### IX The Baltimore Baritone's Victor Records

George Alexander made only a few Victor records, although of course Zon-o-phone was owned and its output anonymously controlled by Victor from 1903 until the name was abandoned some ten years later. The baritone's first Victors came out in the September, 1903, bulletin, with this comment: "Mr. Alexander is a well known concert singer and robust baritone who sings with intelligence and taste." His first two Victors were 2414, "Thy Beaming Eyes" (MacDowell) and 2415 "Under the Rose" (Hawley), which he had already sung for Zono and Columbia. During the next few months he made six others, but they apparently lacked the popularity of his Columbia and Zonophone offerings.

Only two—"Danny Deever" and "One Sweetly Solemn Thought"—survived into the 1906 catalog. All were gone by 1908, with none moving on into the double-faced era. What happened to the masters is a mystery. A mimeographed Victor list issued more than 20 years ago, listing the single-faced Black Label recordings of which the masters were still safe in the vaults, includes only one by Alexander—"The Toreador Song"—from the comic opera, not "Carmen."

#### X More About the Columbians

But if Alexander's Victor experience was a failure, he was a brilliant success with Columbia. I have files of *The Columbia Record* from the beginning of 1904 through April, 1907,



and they are full of praise for the popular baritone. Here are a few typical excerpts:

June, 1905—George Alexander's sacred songs have placed him in the front rank of religious singers for the graphophone. . . . This month he is heard in Gounod's beautiful composition, "Nazareth."

November, 1905—Mr. George Alexander is a baritone of great reputation. . . . His particularly powerful voice is well known to Columbia patrons.

December, 1905—A song famed the world over. . . . "Oh, Holy Night" . . . is sung . . . by Mr. George Alexander, and the exquisite treatment of the theme so beautifully expressed is characteristic of Mr. Alexander's work. . . . This conscientious artist also renders our national air, "The Star Spangled Banner" . . . We esteem Mr. Alexander's records as among the choicest in our catalog.

January, 1906—John Howard Payne's "Home, Sweet Home" . . . is sung by Mr. George Alexander. (His careful and brilliant work is the ideal of vocal excellence for the graphophone. . . . The sentiment is given with peculiar tenderness.

April, 1906—Mr. George Alexander's rich baritone voice is universally appreciated.

July, 1906—Mr. George Alexander, the great baritone, appears this month in three splendid records.

October, 1906—One of the most popular baritones of today is Mr. George Alexander. (The November issue mentioned Alexander's "noble baritone.")

January, 1907—"In the Gloaming" . . . by one of the most captivating baritones on record, George Alexander.

Yet, in spite of this praise *The Record* never devoted any space to telling something of Alexander's life and personality as it had done about Henry Burr, Vess Ossman, Bob Roberts, J. J. Fisher and others. No photograph of the baritone appeared until the April, 1907 issue. The inference is irresistible that the concert singer, Wiley, although not averse to receiving additional income as a recording artist, preferred to conceal, as far as possible, his identity with "George Alexander."

Meanwhile, the sands of his recording career were about to run out. There is an unfortunate gap in my Columbia supplements between the August, 1907 issue, in which Alexander is represented by two records, and the first catalog of double-faced discs, issued early in 1909. Somewhere in that period, owing no doubt to the illness that was creeping upon him, Clifford Alexander Wiley ceased to make Columbia records. His Zonophone career had already closed with the issuance of a few ten-inch single-faced discs in 1906. All the double-faced Columbias, which remained a prominent part of the catalog for years and a few of which were retained after the advent of electric recording, were taken from previously listed single-faced offerings. As time went on, George Alexander became more and more a man of mystery and few of the Columbia patrons who bought his records consistently year after year knew the mellow-voiced baritone had died, after a lingering illness in 1913.

#### XI The Summing Up

As I prepare to sum up and conclude this survey of Clifford Alexander Wiley's recording career, sev-

eral random thoughts occur.

First Wiley (or Alexander) was what I call, in no derogatory sense, a "lone wolf". That is, he worked on records with no one beside himself. He never took part in duets, though he and Henry Burr probably would have made a fine pair, and he did not sing in quartets. I can't even recall his ever being assisted by a chorus. Aside from one dubious instance, to be mentioned a bit later, I can think of no example of his being associated in record making with anyone else. That, no doubt, is the chief reason why his contemporaries who survived him seemed to know nothing about him.

Because of the blank spaces in my Columbia files between August, 1907, and early 1909, I do not represent the list of Alexander cylinders and discs which follows this article to be absolutely complete, but it is very nearly so. As an indication of the relative popularity of his double-faced records, I have broken them down into classes. One shows records which appeared in the first double-faced compilation in 1909, but which, because of declining sales, had been discontinued by 1912. (In a few instances they had been re-coupled with more appropriate companions and given new numbers). Then there is a group which, because of still dwindling sales, couldn't make the grade in 1913. After that come the staunch sellers that survived into 1913.

Carrying this breakdown further, we find that in 1929, four years after the introduction of electric recording, time had taken its toll and only one Alexander record was left, A236, "Abide With Me." By 1933, when Columbia issued its pitifully thin catalog of Royal Blue records, even that was gone. Thus, no George Alexander record has been offered for general sale, aside from those obtainable from dealers in second-hand stocks, for more than 20 years.

Going down the list of double-faced couplings, I am amused by some of the wildly inappropriate matings Columbia saw fit to give Alexander's performances. What was the idea of coupling his sonorous rendition of Victor Herbert's "I Want What I Want When I Want It" with Arthur Collins' "Parson and the Turkey"? The two songs were on entirely different planes. A champion bit of perhaps unconscious comedy may be detected in the teaming of Alexander's "Let Me Like a Soldier Fall" with Lew Dockstader's famous rendition of "Everybody Works But Father." "Love Abiding" doesn't seem to go well with "I Just Can't Make My Eyes Behave," by Ada Jones; "Bendemeer's Stream" is not a natural companion of an obscure popular song, "Make Believe"; "Home, Sweet Home" is grotesquely unsuited to mating with "Reuben and Cynthia"; and "The Minstrel Boy" has nothing in common with "Down on the Brandywine."

Most of the couplings that survived to 1913 and later are suitable enough, but "America" doesn't go very well with Henry Burr's "Sweetest Girl in Dixie" (the latter was remade in 1917 and coupled with Burr singing "Little Alabama Coon"); "Dearie" has no business being on the

other side of "The Rambler Minstrels" and "The Star Spangled Banner" could have had a more suitable companion than "In the Valley of Kentucky." Why, indeed, weren't "America" and "The Star Spangled Banner" coupled unless the idea was to make a customer buy two records if he wanted both of the two great American patriotic airs?

But the most amazing piece of grotesquerie in the lot is one of the records that couldn't make it to 1912: No. A444, which put into partnership "Killarney" with "The May Song," sung (in Greek) by the Royal Greek Quartet. In the entire history of the phonograph business is there a more side-splitting piece of mismatching? Critics who give some of the Edison Diamond Discs top honors for inappropriate couplings should first examine George Alexander's double-faced Columbia list before awarding the championship!

Although he made phonograph history, "George Alexander's" active recording career covered only five years. And there is a sad indication in the double-faced list that Columbia felt there would be no new Alexander records. In an apparent effort to space his recordings as far as possible, each was coupled with a selection by some other singer or singers. I haven't found any double-faced record of which both sides were sung by Alexander. Apparently none of his Zonophone records was taken into the double-faced Zono list. Few would have been suitable, since most were in the seven or nine-inch size.

#### XII In Conclusion

I have just come across a letter, dated February 9, 1955, from the veteran Merrill, Wisconsin, Edison dealer, Clarence A. Ferguson. He reminds me that, seemingly several years after ill health compelled him to quit singing for Columbia, Alexander made one four-minute cylinder for the U. S. Everlasting Company. The number was 1254, and the title, "Lorna," a song which he had previously recorded several years before.

Mr. Ferguson also told me something I didn't know, that Alexander made one or more cylinders for a Jewish firm in New York (he didn't remember the firm's exact name), "who hired singers in the summer when all the theaters were closed. They sold the masters to Columbia and Lambert. They just gave the name of the song, but not any name of the record company. He made one for them that I am sure of—"Riding on the New Electric Car"—but never gave his name, just the name of the song."

So says Clarence Ferguson. Since I know nothing of the activities of the firm he mentioned, I have not been able to include any George Alexander records it issued in my list.

I said there was one possible example of the baritone's having worked with another artist. In the *Talking Machine World* for November 15, 1910, is a list of new vertical-cut records, played with a sapphire and issued by the Sonora Company. I've never seen any of these discs, but they probably were made for Sonora during a few months by the Phono-



Cut Record Company, which the veteran Fred Hager was operating in Boston for a Massachusetts millionaire. One coupled two "Uncle Josh" specialties. The "B" side was "Uncle Josh and the Sailor," by our familiar friend, Cal Stewart. The "A" side is listed as "Uncle Joseph at the Dentist's," by "Stewart and Alexander." Clifford Alexander Wiley during his entire phonograph career never had done spoken comedy work, but it's possible that in this instance, Stewart asked him, because of his deep voice, to take the part of the dentist who mistakenly pulled a tooth "Uncle Josh" would have preferred to keep.

And so, on that puzzling and rather depressing fade-out, we have reached the end of the story of Clifford Wiley, who probably had no idea, as he lay dying more than 40 years ago, that the events of his life would some day provide mental stimulation for record collectors and cause one of them at least to go to a great deal of work and worry in trying to trace the details of his, by this time, obscure career. However, in spite of my regret that the Maryland singer had to be ill for years and died when he should have had a long and prosperous career ahead of him, I am glad I have been able to learn enough about him to share what I have learned with the readers of HOBBIES. Now, perhaps I shall be able, one of these days, to do appropriate justice to other elusive biographical subjects such as Corinne Morgan, Charles D'Almaine and John J. Kimmel. . . .

And just one reminder in closing: If you know ANYTHING about Atwood Twitchell—whether he was, or was not, "George Alexander," I'd like to hear from you!

#### THE GEORGE ALEXANDER DISCOGRAPHY SINGLE-FACED COLUMBIA RECORDS (1902-1907)

(Note—All these Alexander records, up to and including 1585, "Mighty Lak' a Rose," were made in both 7-inch and 10-inch size. The last Columbia record supplement containing 7-inch records was dated January, 1904. From that time all records were 10-inch or 12-inch. It is doubtful that Alexander made records No. 10, 302 and 657, which are listed here because he made Columbia cylinders of the same titles. However, Columbia frequently re-made old recordings, and it is possible Alexander sang these numbers after they had been originally recorded by someone else. Columbia did not issue any domestic records in the 2,000 series, which accounts for the jump from 1899 to 3048.)

- 10 (?) Drinking Song from "Martha"
- 302 (?) A Dream
- 657 (?) The Palms
- 1098 Three Roses Red
- 1099 Entreaty—A Love Song
- 1100 The Rosary
- 1134 The Toreador—from Francis Wilson's comic opera of the same name
- 1143 Coo Song—from "The Country Girl"
- 1585 Mighty Lak' a Rose
- 1670 Love's Sorrow
- 1671 Happy Days
- 1708 If I But Knew
- 1709 Answer
- 1827 A Dream of Paradise
- 1838 Afterwards
- 1873 The Publican (Composer: Beardsley Van de Water)
- 1874 Because
- 1898 Oh Lord, Be Thou My Light
- 1899 Lorna
- 3048 Nothing But A Rose
- 3054 Fear Not Ye, O Israel
- 3092 Maryland, My Maryland

- 3098 Hosanna
- 3099 America
- 3152 Nazareth
- 3184 Columbia, The Gem of the Ocean
- 3200 From the Depths (Composer: Pablo Campana)
- 3211 Bendemeer's Stream
- 3235 Killarney
- 3269 O Holy Night
- 3270 One Sweetly Solemn Thought
- 3280 I Love You
- 3285 Star-Spangled Banner
- 3293 Men of Harlech
- 3294 Loch Lomond
- 3295 Anchored
- 3312 When Stars Are In the Quiet Skies
- 3318 Song That Reached My Heart
- 3351 Battle Hymn of the Republic
- 3352 Flee As a Bird
- 3353 Home, Sweet Home
- 3354 My Old Kentucky Home
- 3364 Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms
- 3365 In the Sweet Bye and Bye
- 3378 Dearly
- 3443 I Want What I Want When I Want It—from Mlle. Modiste
- 3444 When the Right Little Girl Comes Along
- 3455 Little Dustman (Johannes Brahms)
- 3456 Low-Backed Car
- 3484 Minstrel Boy
- 3516 Abide With Me
- 3595 In the Gloaming
- 3613 Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me

#### 30069 The Holy City COLUMBIA DOUBLE-FACED RECORDS

(The following records, all made up of couplings from the single-faced list, appeared in the 1909 catalog but had been discontinued by 1912.)

- A330 Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean; In the Village By the Sea (J. W. Myers)
- A238 Flee As a Bird; Nearer My God, to Thee (Chimes)
- A329 Goodbye: Just Before the Battle, Mother (Myers)
- A243 In the Sweet Bye and Bye; Ring the Bells of Heaven (Columbia Quartet)
- A293 I Want What I Want When I Want It; Parson and the Turkey (Arthur Collins)
- A444 Killarney; May Song (Royal Greek Quartet)
- A306 Let Me Like A Soldier Fall; Everybody Works But Father (Lew Dockstader)
- A349 Love Abiding; I Just Can't Make My Eyes Behave (Ada Jones)
- A315 Men of Harlech; For All Eternity (Henry Burr)
- A333 My Old Kentucky Home: When the Fields Are White With Blossoms I'll Return (Henry Burr)
- A337 When the Right Little Girl Comes Along; When the Mocking Birds Are Singing in the Wildwood (Frank C. Stanley)

The following, listed in 1912, did not survive to 1913:

- A739 Anchored: The Homeland (Mrs. A. Stewart Holt)
- A442 Bendemeer's Stream; Make Believe (Elise Stevenson—Frank C. Stanley)
- A886 Flee As a Bird; Ring the Bells of Heaven (Columbia Male Quartet)
- A578 Home, Sweet Home: Reuben and Cynthia (Contralto and baritone—probably Corinne Morgan and Stanley)
- A666 Killarney: Where the Silvery Colorado Wends Its Way (Myers)
- A312 Loch Lomond; Tannhauser—O Star of Eve (Horatio Connell)
- A455 Minstrel Boy: Down on the Brandywine (Arthur Collins—Byron G. Harlan)
- A269 One Sweetly Solemn Thought; Holy City (Myers)
- A311 Song That Reached My Heart; Tempest of the Heart—Trovatore (J. J. Fisher)

The following, still active in 1913, did not survive to 1919:

- A336 America: Sweetest Girl in Dixie (Henry Burr)
- A332 Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms; Clang of the Forge (Listed as "baritone solo," but sung by Fisher.)
- A469 Dearly; Rambler Minstrels

- A258 Fear Not Ye, O Israel; Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping (Stanley Burr)
  - A5034 (12-inch) Holy City; Crucifix (Stanley-Burr)
  - A5035 (12-inch) Holy, Holy, Holy; Looking This Way (Harry Anthony-James F. Harrison)
  - A262 Hosanna; Yield Not to Temptation (Burr)
  - A495 In the Gloaming; Sweet and Low (Columbia Mixed Quartet)
  - A246 Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me; Refuge (Columbia Mixed Quartet)
  - A328 Low-Backed Car; Wearin' of the Green (Myers)
  - A325 Maryland, My Maryland!; Last Night (Corinne Morgan)
- The following, listed in 1919, were dropped by 1925:
- A237 Oh! Holy Night; Star of Bethlehem (Henry Burr)
  - A263 Oh Lord! Be Thou My Light; Just As I Am (Burr)
  - A326 Star-Spangled Banner; In the Valley of Kentucky (listed as tenor solo but sung by Byron G. Harlan)
- The following were still active in 1925:
- No. A249 survived until 1927 and A236 to 1929
  - A236 Abide With Me; Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight? (Henry Burr)
  - A248 All Hall the Power of Jesus' Name; The Sabbath Day (Columbia Male Quartet)
  - A335 Battle Hymn of the Republic; Old Folks At Home (listed as "tenor solo" but sung by Henry Burr, until remade by George Meador for the 1923 catalog)
  - A249 Just As I Am; Lead, Kindly Light (Columbia Male Quartet)
  - A235 Nazareth; The Ninety and Nine (Burr)

#### VICTOR SINGLE-FACED RECORDS (1903-04)

- 2550 Danny Deever
- 2426 Long Ago
- 2523 One Sweetly Solemn Thought
- 2414 Thy Beaming Eyes
- 2549 Toreador Song (From the comic opera, "The Toreador")

2415 Under the Rose

- 2576 Years Touch Not the Heart
- 2427 You'd Better Ask Me

Sonora vertical-cut record by "Stewart and Alexander" (1910)

- 5010 Uncle Josh at the Dentist's; Uncle Josh and the Sailor (Cal Stewart)

#### SEVEN AND NINE INCH ZON-O-PHONE RECORDS (1902-05)

(All the following Zon-o-phone records were made in both seven and nine-inch single-faced styles. After No. 6018 was reached, the seven-inch series was discontinued, and the nine-inch gave way in 1905 to a new 10-inch series.)

- 5798 Always in the Way
- 5634 Anona
- 5653 Answer
- 5589 Believe
- 5661 Coo Song
- 5799 Dream of Paradise
- 5670 Drinking Song—Martha
- 5671 Entreaty
- 5615 For All Eternity
- 5819 Girl of My Dreams
- 5674 Good-bye (Tosti)
- 5756 Happy Days
- 5757 Holy City
- 5680 Home, Sweet Home
- 5828 If I But Knew
- 5844 Last Farewell
- 5696 Last Night
- 5698 Loch Lomond
- 5699 Long Ago
- 5701 Love's Sorrow
- 5600 Maybe
- 5831 Message of the Violet
- 5702 Mighty Lak' a Rose
- 5609 Rosary
- 5624 Since I First Met You—from "The Sultan of Sulu"
- 5722 Soldiers of the Queen
- 5725 Three Roses Red
- 5610 Thy Beaming Eyes
- 5726 To My First Love
- 5727 Too Late
- 5641 Toreador Song
- 5753 Toreador Song
- 5728 Under the Rose
- 5651 Violets
- 5613 What's the Matter With the Moon Tonight?
- 5628 Witch Behind the Moon—from "The Wizard of Oz"
- 5854 Winsome Winnie
- 5734 You'd Better Ask Me

(Continued on page 37)

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS ARE NOT NEW

(Continued from page 25)

anti-Democrat scrip of 1952, good for "One hundred paper cartwheels" based upon a "mink standard of value." And, it won't be a bit surprising if 1956 produces more such scrip lambasting one candidate or the other.

### Campaign Slogans

In connection with the various political tokens and badges, it is interesting to read a list of some of the campaign slogans that have appeared in past campaigns:

**ANDREW JACKSON:** Democrat, 1st campaign, 1828. "The Hero of New Orleans" (This is worded in various ways). 2nd campaign, 1832. "The Advocate of the American System."

**MARTIN VAN BUREN:** Democrat, 2nd campaign, 1840. "Martin Van Buren & Democracy" (or similar references to democracy). "The Independent Sub-Treasury." An interesting token of this period pictures Van Buren and reads "Democrats to the polls & victory is ours." His opponents (the Whigs) also issued a token showing Van Buren but the reverse pictures a scale with the inscription, "Weighed in the balance and found wanting." The Democrats issued similar tokens against Harrison and the Whig who was running against Van Buren.

**WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON:** Whig, 1840 campaign. The Whigs made great use of Harrison being born in a log cabin and campaign tokens usually picture a log cabin and cider barrel. One of the tokens shows the cabin with the words "To Let, 1841." and was taken to mean that he would be in the White House and could rent his cabin. He was called "The Hero of Tippecanoe." Another slogan was "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." "Go it Tip/Come it Tyler." Also used was "He Leaves the Plow to Save the Country." An interesting Whig token against Van Buren shows Harrison on the obverse, with a steamboat on the reverse which is entitled "Steamboat Van Buren, Loco Foco Line - for Salt River Direct." As you can see, it isn't new to "go up Salt River," nor is the word "O.K." new. It is said to have first been used at a political convention in 1840 and stands for "Oil Correct." The expression evidently received immediate favor for it appears on at least two Van Buren tokens, one of which reads "The Sober Second Thoughts of the People are O.K."

**JAMES K. POLK:** Democrat, 1844 campaign. "Young Hickory, Dallas & Victory." (Jackson was "Old Hickory" and Polk received the nickname because he was from the same state of Tennessee. Dallas was the vice-presidential candidate.) "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!" which was another slogan, refers to the Oregon boundary dispute with Great Britain.

**HENRY CLAY:** Whig, 1844 campaign. "The American System" or "Protection to American Industry," etc. "The Millboy of the Slashes." "Henry Clay Will Carry the Day."

**ZACHARY TAYLOR:** Whig, 1848 campaign. "A little more grape, Captain Bragg." (This refers to grape shot in one of his battles.) Battle pictures of the Mexican War were used in this campaign of "Old Rough and Ready."

**MARTIN VAN BUREN:** Free Soil Party, 1848 campaign: "Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Speech, and Free Men."

**JOHN C. FREMONT:** Republican, 1856 campaign. "Free Speech, Free Soil, Free Men and Fremont!" "Fremont and Jessie." (Jessie was Fremont's wife.)

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN:** Republican, 1860 campaign. Much use was made of Lincoln's nicknames, "Honest Abe," "The Rail Splitter," etc. "Vote Yourself a Farm" refers to the Government lands to be given to settlers

in the West, 1864 campaign: "Don't swap horses."

**U. S. GRANT:** Republican, 1868 campaign. "Let us have peace."

**HORATIO SEYMOUR:** Democrat, 1868 campaign. "Reduce Taxation Before Taxation Reduces us."

**HORACE GREELEY:** Liberal-Democrat, 1872 campaign: "Turn the rascals out!"

**1884 CAMPAIGN:** The campaign of 1884 between James G. Blaine and Grover Cleveland was possibly the dirtiest in American history. They had political slogans, plenty of them, but most were not for themselves but used against the opposite party. For example, the Democrats called Blaine (Republican candidate), "The continental liar from the state of Maine" and made references to his connections with financial scandals. "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" was another anti-Blaine slogan. In turn, the Republicans used such slogans as "Ma! Ma! Where's my Pa." To which the Democrats answered, "Gone to the White House, Ha! Ha! Ha!" However, there were a couple pro-Cleveland slogans: "Grover the Good." "A Public Office is a Public Trust." "We Love Him for the Enemies He Has Made."

**WILLIAM MCKINLEY:** Republican, 1896 campaign. "The Full Dinner Pail." 1900 campaign: "Fou! More Years of the Full Dinner Pail." (This refers to the hard times of 1893 under the Democrats followed by Republican prosperity.)

**WILLIAM J. BRYAN:** Democrat, 1896 campaign. "Sixteen to One." (This refers to free coinage of silver.)

**WOODROW WILSON:** Democrat, 2nd campaign, 1916. "He Kept Us Out of War."

**WARREN G. HARDING:** Republican, 1920 campaign. "Back to Normalcy."

**CALVIN COOLIDGE:** Republican, 1924 campaign. "Keep Cool with Coolidge."

## GRACE NOTES

(Continued from page 27)

—and again with the joint sponsorship of the Metropolitan Opera Guild. The price of this second book has not yet been made known to me.

\* \* \*

The following communication has come in: "The New York Gramophone Society meets the fourth Wednesday of the month in *Freedom House*—20 West 40th St., New York City, at 8 P.M. Interested collectors may attend three meetings without any obligation to join or make any payments whatever. Those wishing to join for the second half of the 1956 season may do so at a reduced rate. Further information may be obtained from the secretary: Robert J. Nathan, 5480 Broadway, New York 63, N. Y."

Another organization devoted to historical records has been formed in New York City under the name of *The Vocal Record Collectors Society*. The following principles motivated its establishment:

"1) The first responsibility of the Society is towards the membership as a whole. This requirement must not be compromised by a desire to benefit individuals, deserving or otherwise.

"2) The actions of the Society itself must be of unimpeachable integrity, and free of any questionable practices, such as the staging of artificial biddings at society auctions (if the latter take place).

"3) If any member feels that these principles are being violated, that member has a right, and a duty, during the business portion of any meet-

ing, to state the facts and call for a vote on the question.

"4) These principles are held to be so important to the welfare of the Society that membership is offered exclusively to persons in accordance with these principles, and who have not demonstrated incompatibility with them."

At its August 3rd meeting the members elected the Rev. J. Edward Vesper as chairman, Ben Lebow as vice-chairman, John Secrist as Secretary-Treasurer; and Ted Fagan, Marty Sokol, Joe Martel and Sam Weinfeld as directors.

Arrangements have been made for meetings to be held at *Freedom House*, 20 West 40th St., New York City, at 8 P.M. on the following dates: 1956—Friday, October 5th; Wednesday, November 14th; Friday, December 7th; 1957—Wednesday, January 9th; Friday, February 1st; Wednesday, March 13th; Friday, April 5th; Wednesday, May 8th; and Friday, June 7th. For details please get in touch with the secretary: John Secrist, 70 Morning-side Dr., New York, N. Y.

## THE GEORGE ALEXANDER DISCOGRAPHY

(Continued from page 33)

10-INCH ZON-O-PHONES (1906)

588 Bendemeer's Stream  
566 Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean  
550 Yes, Let Me Like a Soldier Fall  
573 The Minstrel Boy

TWO-MINUTE COLUMBIA CYLINDERS

BY GEORGE ALEXANDER  
(1902-07)

24005 The Palms  
32038 Three Roses Red  
32039 Entreaty  
32340 The Rosary  
32043 A Dream  
32063 Under the Rose  
32070 The Toreador  
32079 Coo Song  
32080 Drinking Song—Martha  
32296 Mighty Lak' a Rose  
32378 Love's Sorrow  
32379 Happy Days  
32401 If I But Knew  
32400 Answer  
32537 Dream of Paradise  
32538 Afterwards  
32587 The Publican  
32588 Because  
32597 Oh Lord, Be Thou My Light  
32610 Lorna  
32617 Nothing But a Rose  
32630 Fear Not Ye, O Israel  
32600 Maryland, My Maryland  
32697 Hosanna  
32637 America  
32657 From the Depths  
32760 Bendemeer's Stream  
32791 Killarney  
32826 O Holy Night  
32809 One Sweetly Solemn Thought  
32741 I Love You  
32760 Star-Spangled Banner  
32827 Loch Lomond  
32757 When Stars Are In the Quiet Skies  
32915 Battle Hymn of the Republic  
32916 Flee As a Bird  
32854 Home, Sweet Home  
32864 My Old Kentucky Home  
33056 In the Sweet Bye and Bye  
32928 Dearie  
32957 Let Me Like a Soldier Fall  
32813 Little Dustman  
32991 Minstrel Boy  
33019 Abide With Me  
33064 In the Gloaming

SIX-INCH COLUMBIA CYLINDERS

(1906-07)

85003 Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean  
85004 Bendemeer's Stream  
85045 Rose Marie  
85113 Holy, Holy, Holy  
85127 O Loving Father

U. S. EVERLASTING FOUR-MINUTE  
CYLINDER (August, 1911)

1254 Lorna

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Mary Jordan

By JIM WALSH

Mark Twain often argued that the first action taken by a human being after the creation of the world was the initial link in a chain of circumstances that led, logically and inevitably to everything else which has occurred since the dawn of time.

If Twain were still living he could cite the way in which this article has come to be written as good evidence for his theory.

In October, 1951, HOBBIES published my biographical sketch of a famous recording tenor, Charles W. Harrison, and his wife, professionally known as Beulah Gaylord Young. The article was illustrated with a photograph showing Harrison and five other singers enacting the Lucia Sextet for a 1912 Edison talking film.

One of the group was a lovely young contralto, Mary Jordan. I quoted Charlie Harrison as saying he had lost track of Miss Jordan, but believed she "married an oil man and moved to Texas." That was the first link in a new "chain" of the kind Mark Twain envisioned.

The second came when a friend of Mary Jordan's read the Harrison article and sent her a copy of HOBBIES. That in turn led Miss Jordan to write me a letter of thanks, which was published in the issue of April, 1952. She referred to the group in the photograph as "the old Edison Sextet" and recalled having sung as a member of many other Edison organizations. The eminent contralto also said, "I am still living in my beautiful home, which I came to as a bride, in San Antonio. My beloved husband, Colonel Charles Clement Cresson, died February 27, 1949."

Naturally, I added a link of my own by writing to Mrs. Cresson and telling her how much pleasure her letter had given me. I also said I should like some day to write a biographical sketch of her. For a long time it seemed there were to be no more links in the chain, for I heard nothing more from Mrs. Cresson for several years. Then she sent me a mass of clippings and several charming photos of herself, together with a letter explaining ill health had been the cause of her silence. She also revealed that she is the fifth woman on the front row in a group of Edison artists whose pictures were published with the Elizabeth Spencer article in September, 1951. That leaves just two

unidentified persons in the photo—the second and fourth women.

Here is what Mary Jordan Cresson wrote on December 16, 1955:

Dear Jim Walsh: Will you ever forgive me for not writing you before this? You were so kind and if it were possible I would have written you a note.

I am a cripple with arthritis - have been in the hospital most of this year - and now my eyes are dim and can scarcely see. I travel in a wheel chair in my home; at times I cannot hold a pen. On Nov. 27 last I was 76 years young. My friends from all over the country write me recalling happy times together.

I am physically crippled but mentally stronger than ever—also have my keen sense of humor. Please forgive my writing. God Bless You! And enjoy a Happy Christmas. Mary Jordan Cresson . . . You will hear from me soon again. Let me know if you receive this and the large envelope.

It goes without saying that I replied warmly to this appealing letter and that I was elated when the "large envelope" containing biographical material and photographs arrived a short time later. Obviously, in view of her physical condition. I have not been

in constant communication with the lady in San Antonio, but I do have enough information to tell something of her life and recording activities in this article, which will appear in this November HOBBIES as a 77th birthday "gift".

### II Biographical Sketches

We may as well begin our study of Mary Jordan's career by considering a couple of brief biographical sketches. The one-volume MacMillan Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians, published in 1938, contains the following alphabetical entry:

JORDAN, Mary. Welsh dramatic and concert soprano, born Cardiff, Nov. 27, 1879. She studied under d'Auria, J. H. Stewart, Saenger and Maurel, in 1911 and made her debut with the Boston Opera Company, and remained with that company until 1914. She has appeared frequently in recitals and in oratorios at the principal music festivals.

The catalog of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders for April, 1914, says:

As the leading contralto of the Century Opera Company, New York City, which is giving notable productions of Grand Opera in English, Mary Jordan occupies a prominent place in the operatic world. She was born at Cardiff, Wales. She studied under many of the most prominent teachers, and before entering opera, appeared with many of the leading concert orchestras. It is in the field of English Grand Opera, however, that Miss Jordan has made her greatest success. In addition to her present engagement at the Century Opera House, New York, she has appeared with the Aborn Grand Opera Company, and the Henry W. Savage production of "Parsifal." Her voice is of great soul quality, richness and power.

Items in the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* show that Mary Jordan was a famous White House singer during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. The following is from the issue for May, 1916:

Mary Jordan, the prominent contralto whose Blue Amberol reproductions have delighted owners of



Mary Jordan as she appeared at the height of her career. She inscribed the photograph "To Jim Walsh with sincere appreciation of all he has done for the artists of yesteryear. Sincerely, Mary Jordan Cresson."



Amberolas in all parts of the world, was one of the artists who appeared in the last musicale that was given at the White House in Washington this season. The artists associated with Miss Jordan in the concert were Percy Grainger, pianist; Paul Reimers, tenor, and Charles Gilbert, accompanist at the piano. Miss Jordan was among those who enjoyed a dinner with President and Mrs. Wilson, the social affair following the concert.

Miss Jordan narrowly escaped injury in an elevator accident in New York recently. She was leaving the Mishkin photograph studio when the elevator, which she occupied with two other passengers, dropped several stories. In order to rescue the occupants of the car it was necessary to cut a hole through the top of it and reach them with a ladder. Miss Jordan was shaken up badly but received no serious injuries.

In May, 1917, the *Edison Amberola Monthly* said:

Mary Jordan, the popular American contralto, who makes Blue Amberol records, recently had presented to her a beautiful pin in the form of a laurel wreath, with lyre and arrows, surmounted by an eagle with wings spread. The gift was from Mrs. Woodrow Wilson as a memento of Miss Jordan's singing at the White House.

A much more detailed account of Mary Jordan's career may be found under the heading of "Interesting Service Women" in *The Army and Navy Journal* for March 17, 1928. It is an excellent brief biography in itself:

"The services may well be proud of their women who, in spite of the handicap of constant moving, have found time to make places for themselves in the business world, and in fields of science and art. There is no doubt about the fact that the Army has in its midst one of the foremost contralto singers in the world—Mary Jordan, who in private life is Mrs. C. C. Cresson, wife of Major Charles C. Cresson, J.A.G.D., U.S.A. At present Major Cresson is stationed in the Office of the Judge Advocate General and he and his charming wife are living at 1661 Crescent Place, Washington, D. C.

#### Has Traveled Extensively

"Though born of English parents in Cardiff, Wales, Mary Jordan has spent all her life in America, and it was in this country she received her entire musical education which has equipped her so splendidly for the opera, oratorio and concert stage. She has traveled extensively from one end of the country to the other and has sung from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Alaska to the Gulf of Mexico. She insists that America contains everything an artist needs for development and inspiration, and the fact that she now holds an elevated position among the leading singers of the world amply bears out her contention.

"Mary Jordan has an astonishingly large repertoire, and as leading contralto of the Century Grand Opera Company and other organizations of similar standing she has sung such roles as Amneris in 'Aida,' Dalilah in 'Samson et Dalilah,' Azucena in 'Il Trovatore,' Laura in 'La Gioconda,' Ortrud in 'Lohengrin,' and Carmen in 'Carmen.' Her recital programs have special interest as she



Mary Jordan Cresson's home in San Antonio, Tex.

sings in no less than eight different languages. Few singers before the public are in more constant demand, and fewer still have greater artistry.

#### Gave Recitals at White House

"This delightful artist has been twice summoned by requests to appear in recitals at the White House. The first summons was during the Wilson regime, and the second was during the present (Coolidge) administration, when she appeared in connection with the most distinguished annual social function in Washington the state dinner given by the President and the First Lady of the Land to the members of the Cabinet and their wives.

"For about twelve years Mary Jordan was soloist for the Jewish Synagogue, Temple Emmanuel, 5th Avenue, New York, and also for the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn. She has also been soloist for leading orchestras of America, among which are numbered the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Symphony, Cincinnati Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Montreal Orchestra, and the San Francisco Orchestra, and has also been soloist on tour throughout the United States in the great oratorios such as the Messiah and Stabat Mater.

#### Made Concert Tour Through Orient

"During the past two years she has been in the Philippines, stationed at Fort William McKinley, where Major Cresson was on duty, and was soloist for the Philippine Orchestra, and also a professor of singing at the University of the Philippines. She was on an extended concert tour throughout China and Japan, giving large concerts in Hong Kong, Tientsin, Peking and other points. She also gave a number of recitals throughout the Philippines, and on the occasion of her concert in Manila on Sept. 30, 1925, the *Manila Times* of the next day said in part:

"Mary Jordan for ten days was heralded by her press agent as second to no other contralto in the world. . . . She sang to an audience of over six hundred, which is the biggest audience that any single artist has ever had in Manila, and there was not one of the entire audience who last night did not agree with her press agent and conclude that she has no superior. . . . Mary Jordan came, she saw and she conquered."

"On many occasions Mary Jordan has been soloist for conventions of the American Legion and has been selected to act as such for the large annual convention in San Antonio in October. During her stay in the Philippines, she learned many songs in various native dialects which she has sung in concerts since her return, dressed in native Philippine costumes."

#### III Press Comments

The critical reviews of Mary Jordan's singing published in newspapers large and small were so uniformly laudatory it will not be necessary to quote many as evidence that she was an artist of far more than ordinary merit. Regardless of time or place, the reviewers seemed of one opinion concerning her distinctive abilities.

A critic for the nation's most influential newspaper *The New York Times*, said: "Mary Jordan, an admired contralto, filled Aeolian Hall with a gala audience. She introduced not only French, Russian and old Hebrew airs, which were re-demanded, but also, by request, some Negro folk-songs which she sang with much sympathy."

*The New York World* said: "Mary Jordan, popular American contralto, was in fine voice, and made a stunning picture. Intelligence and charm marked the delivery of all her songs." *The New York Evening Mail* termed the recital "a triumph," and remarked,





Mary Jordan as she appeared for her solo, in the "Flower Maid," given by the Henry Savage Opera Co.

"Miss Jordan knows how to sing and how to interpret." *The New York Sun* said her voice was one "of velvety beauty," and in the Mid-West, *The Chicago Herald and Examiner* commented: "Miss Jordan has a voice that is at all times round and smooth, and full throughout its entire range. There is a well-thought-out purpose behind every one of her beautifully produced tones." *The Indianapolis Star* praised "her artistry and personal charm," saying: "Hers is a big voice of generous compass, with the deep contralto notes so generally adored. It is refreshing to see a singer so free from self-consciousness."

Probably one of the most eloquent tributes to the contralto was paid by the *Sacramento, California, Union*, which said on March 4, 1921: "Her voice is exquisite. It has all the beautiful sonorous sweetness of a deep-toned cello, and with it there is a haunting cadence that remains long after the voice is stilled. Added to the warm mellowness of tone there is a remarkable range, and the charm of perfect production and clear diction."

And in 1923 the reviewer for a Mexico City paper said: "Mary Jordan, beautiful and gracious, is a contralto of widespread recognition, both for her work in concert and opera. Miss Jordan possesses the thrilling lower notes of the true contralto. Yet for a voice of such great depth her high notes are astoundingly fine and beautiful. Miss Jordan has great temperament, which is always under control of her fine mind. It would have been impossible to select a more enjoyable or varied program, including as it did songs in French, English, Russian, German and Spanish. Miss Jordan sang in a manner most thrilling, receiving an ovation after each number."

The remarkable versatility of Miss Jordan's programs was a quality often commented on by the critics. A good example is the recital given in Manila on November 1, 1926. In the beginning she sang four numbers in German, "Ehre Gottes," (God's Glory in Nature), by Beethoven; "Ave Maria" (Schubert); "Sapphische Ode" and "O Liebliche Wangen," both by Brahms. Four French songs followed, "Beau Soir," by Debussy; "Serenade Italienne," (Chausson); "La Vagabonde" (Bloch) and "Tes Yeux" (Rabey). Then came four in English: "Deep River," an American Negro spiritual dedicated by the composer, Harry T. Burleigh to Miss Jordan; "Water Boy," an American Negro convict song; Cyril Scott's "Lullaby," and "Moon Marketing," by Powell Weaver. Finally three Richard Strauss numbers in German: "Allerseelen," "Traum Durch Die Dämmerung" and "Cecilie."

The intellectual quality in Mary Jordan's approach to music was shown in a series of lecture-recitals on "Music and How to Listen to It," which she gave in her San Antonio home. The first recital interpreted and explained the music from four operas. In the second, Miss Jordan sang and analyzed French and German classics of song, old and modern. The third recital dealt with folk music of many nations, including songs of Little Russia and the Philippines, sung in the original dialects.

Perhaps Mary Jordan never received a more appreciated compliment than was paid to her when Ann Farrell, a young girl from Scranton, Pennsylvania, which Miss Jordan considers her "home town," was awarded a musical scholarship. Speaking at a dinner for Miss Farrell before she left Scranton to study in New York, Dr. D. E. Jones, the music critic of the *Scranton Tribune*, said:

"She has a God-given voice of superb quality, the nearest to my ideal, Mary Jordan, that I have heard in this city. Whenever I see or hear Ann Farrell, I am reminded of another little girl (Mary Jordan), whom we are proud to call a Scrantonian, and who went out into the great musical world and won honors for this city."

In her adopted home of San Antonio, Miss Jordan's voice was one of the first ever heard by radio. There was no local station in San Antonio, shortly after the first World War, but a man named Sam Woolford arranged for some broadcasting to be done through what he has described as "a primitive loud speaker system which resembled a combination of an old Edison morning glory horn, a series of condensers and other radio paraphernalia." The broadcasting was done from the Fort Sam Houston signal corps laboratory. Radio trucks from the post, Camp Travis Kelly and Brooks field were stationed downtown, in front of the Alamo, in Travis park and in front of the city hall. Woolford recalls that "ten or twelve amateurs in the residence districts rigged up horns which extended from windows and doors of backyard radio shacks, and the neighbors were invited to hear the voices come over the air."

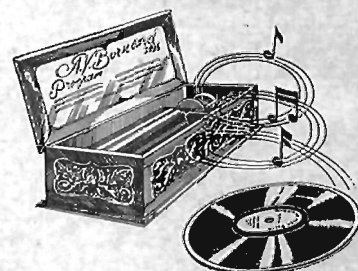


Mary Jordan as Amneris in "Aida," second act, Boston Opera House, 1911

Miss Jordan sang from 8 to 9 the first night, and said Woolford: "That night 5,000 persons jammed Travis park. Alamo plaza was crowded. Perhaps I had been too enthusiastic about the new radio, for despite all the signal corps could do, the radio voice could only be heard at a maximum distance of about 30 feet. Yet people crowded closer to hear the music and seemed to be satisfied as others moved in to listen."

(Continued in the December issue)

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Mary Jordan

Continued from the November Issue

By JIM WALSH

### IV Mary Jordan's Records

In view of her admitted artistry, it is a pity that only one of Mary Jordan's records - "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice" - can be considered to give a fairly adequate idea of the gorgeous opulence of her contralto tones. Looking back, it is hard to find any reason why the Edison company, apparently the only one for which she ever made records, used this luscious voice almost entirely in ensemble work. Not all the fingers of one hand are required to enumerate her solo cylinders and her duets also were few. And why, as far as I can determine, did she never sing for the Diamond Discs? Her name doesn't appear in any disc record catalog that I have examined, although there is a chance, of course, that her voice is heard in some of the choral groups.

Research indicates the first mention of Mary Jordan's name in phonograph publicity occurs in the Edison cylinder record list for March, 1911. The front cover shows a photo of the Metropolitan Quartet, which must be one of the most unusual pictures ever taken. The four artists are lined up in profile and snapped from an angle that makes it hard to tell the women from the men. Page 2 contains this descriptive sketch:

**METROPOLITAN QUARTET** — The exquisite Barcarole from Offenbach's "Tales of Hoffman," appearing in the March list of Amberol Records, is a striking example of the lovely harmony which results from the blending of voices whose natural beauty has been enhanced by careful, intelligent cultivation. Each member of this well-known organization is an artist of the very highest calibre, with an enviable and far from local reputation. All have appeared at various times upon the concert platform in this country and Canada, and all are soloists of prominence in the church circles of New York and vicinity.

Their previous contributions to the Amberol catalog are No. 28, "Quartet From Rigoletto"; No. 131, "Come Where the Lilies Bloom"; No. 338, "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton"; and No. 352, "Juanita."

The members of the Quartet are: Edith Chapman, soprano; Mary Jordan, contralto; Harry Anthony, tenor, and James F. Harrison, bass.

Edith Chapman was better known

in concert circles by her married name of Edith Chapman Goold. "Harry Anthony" was really John Young, and "James F. Harrison" (a baritone, rather than bass) was Frederick J. Wheeler. His death was announced in the issue of HOBBIES that carried the photo of Miss Jordan and Wheeler among the singers of the Lucia Sextet.

And now I must mention an oddity. The March, 1911, issue of Edison's little "fan magazine," *The New Phonogram*, also contained a write-up of the Barcarole record. It concluded: "The members of the Metropolitan Quartet, each of whom has won an enviable reputation on the concert platform, are: Florence Hinkle, soprano; Margaret Keys (sic!), contralto; Harry Anthony, tenor, and James F. Harrison, bass. Apparently the *Phonogram* writer had confused the personnel of the Edison Mixed Quartet with that of the Metropolitan. When the two ensembles were formed the Mixed Quartet was ordinarily used for recording church music and the Metropolitan for secular songs. After the Diamond Discs began to appear the Edison Mixed Quartet name was dropped, and the Metropolitan sang both sacred and secular music. The Metropolitan soon ceased to have a permanent personnel. Any four singers whose voices blended harmoniously and who were available for a recording date appeared for the occasion as the Metropolitan Quartet."

Because of this shifting personnel, it would be wasted effort to discuss in detail all the Metropolitan Quartet recordings of the late wax Amberol and early Blue Amberol periods. Instead we move up a month and come to the first duet record in which Mary Jordan's name is given as one of the singers—the familiar "Home To Our Mountains" from "Trova-tore." This was four-minute Amberol No. 652. After a description of the action leading up to this number in the opera, the *New Phonogram* said: "Miss Jordan and Mr. Anthony have given us an interpretation . . . that vocally and dramatically is beyond criticism."

In September, 1911, Miss Jordan took part in a two-minute version of "Every Little Movement," from "Madame Sherry." The contralto sang with an Australian young lady, Marie Narelle, whose voice was considered around 1906 to be the only soprano that reproduced with undistorted naturalness. The monthly supplement said: "The big song hit of 'Madame Sherry,' and one which seems destined to enjoy continued popularity. It is a satirical description of a new dancing fad, set to a particularly captivating melody. This record is an abridged edition, so to speak, of Amberol No. 482." The Amberol record was sung by Miss Narelle and a little known tenor, Frederick H. Potter, and since a contralto assisted in the refrain, Miss Jordan probably was the contralto.

Here I shall remark parenthetically that the four-minute Amberol (re-issued in December, 1913, as Blue Amberol No. 2098), deserves special mention because of being the only record I know in which the noted vaudeville comedian, Bert FitzGibbons, sang. He was a member of the chorus which also included J. F. Harrison and W. F. Hooley.

During the next few months Mary Jordan sang in a variety of Edison records, though usually her presence can be detected only by reading the catalog descriptions. She and Elizabeth Spencer, soprano, and Anthony and Harrison constituted the Edison Mixed Quartet which sang No. 808, "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder"—a far remove from Miss Jordan's recital renditions of Beethoven, Brahms and Strauss! She also took part in a series of four records containing airs from "Pinafore," the other singers being Miss Spencer, Anthony, Harrison, Walter Van Brunt and William F. Hooley. In January, 1912, she had the incidental part of Ivonne in No. 876, "Music Caressing of Violins," from "The Sirens," a duet by Miss Spencer and Mr. Anthony.

There appear to have been no Mary Jordan solos until No. 2158, "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice," from "Samson and Dalila," was issued in February, 1914. Then in June came No. 2307, "Sweet Thoughts Of Home," described as "the song hit of 'Love's Lottery,' the comic opera in which Mme. Schumann-Heink, the Wagnerian contralto, starred a few seasons ago. Mary Jordan, a prominent figure in grand opera at the present time, through her position as one of the leading contraltos of the Century Opera Company, New York City, is heard at her best in this rendition."

Apparently those two Blue Amberols are the only solo records ever issued by Mary Jordan, although the quotations I have copied from the *New Phonogram* seem to indicate she was still singing for Edison in 1916 and 1917. If she was, she must have been heard in concert work on Diamond Discs, for Edison gave up direct recording of cylinders after the disastrous factory fire of December, 1914.



Mary Jordan in 1912 as Laura, the Doges' wife in the opera, "La Gioconda."

Just how long the contralto's recording career continued is a matter of uncertainty. It may have continued until she married Colonel Cresson and moved to Texas.

Regardless of how long or short that career may have been, the lady now bedridden and with failing vision was a great artist on the testimony of all the qualified judges who heard her. It is my sincere hope that this article will be a source of pleasure as her birthday nears and that both her health and sight will improve so that she may enjoy many more pleasant years. I am sure that all her admirers who read HOBBIES will join me in this wish.

The foregoing article was submitted in manuscript to Mary Jordan, who has graciously approved it. However, in expressing her approval and appreciation, she has provided so much more valuable information. I am submitting this "appendix," to quote the greater part of what the contralto wrote. For the sake of musical history, it deserves inclusion:

June 14, 1956. Dear Jim Walsh: I scarcely know how to begin to answer your kind letter and article, showing you have spent a lot of time reading the notices I sent you. I will look forward, God willing, to the Nov. & Dec. issues of HOBBIES—and what a birthday gift!

I found this list of records I made for Edison and Columbia in an old book yellow with age and falling apart. This is marked "continued." Where the first part is I don't know. (The list is quoted at the end of the article—J. W.)

I was with the Edison Company when they changed to the discs. We had to make three perfect ones, in case one or more would be broken in transit to the factory. My voice was too full and round for solos; in fact, the voice had to be pointed, like a tenor or soprano; the whiter and more nasal the tone the better it would cut into the record. John Young, Fred Wheeler, Charles Harrison, Marie Narelle, Elizabeth Spencer, were perfect for recording solos, but I was in almost every combination where the voices had to blend and sing accurately. For instance, the Sextet. It took us three months

to make a perfect record, with Mr. Edison in charge. He was trying to synchronize the vibrations of tone color and action, and he stayed with it until he accomplished it.

Records were sent to every silent moving picture house in America. I saw it 'way out in Columbus, Ohio. It was the beginning of the moving pictures with sound. The colors are not perfected yet.

However, my goal was opera. I was told that unless I went to Europe and had the stamp of approval of Germany, France and Italy, I would not stand a chance. I grit my teeth and said if America could not develop the talents of her own people without dictation of foreign countries it was too bad, and so my first effort was to use the music of our American composers. I never gave a concert that I did not have a group of American compositions. I talked it up in public and to all press men. Then Louise Homer fell in line, as her husband, Sidney Homer, wrote songs but could not get them started, only when she or I sang them. I was not too proud to sing opera in English, and the people loved it because they knew what it was all about.

Just at that time, Hammerstein came back to New York and threatened to produce opera in English, so the Metropolitan organization paid him one million a year to stay out for ten years. The Met leased the century theater for a period of years, and gave operas every Monday night in their original language and the rest of the week in English, so we had to learn every opera in two languages. They engaged Mr. Milton Aborn as manager and a fine one he was. He spent his life trying to bring opera in English to Americans. The conductors were foreigners and all stage equipment and costumes were furnished by the Met. I bought and owned my own, but they were made and designed by Mme. Museur, wardrobe mistress at the Metropolitan. We had the same stage manager, etc., so we always felt we were part of the Met. I had an opportunity to go there in minor roles, but I could make more money in one month, and they asked a percentage on all concerts, etc. Some like



Miss Jordan as the "Flower Maid," Parsifal, in 1904.



Miss Jordan as "Amneris" in Aida, in her debut at the Boston Opera House in 1911.

Werrenrath, a poor actor, and some of the others took it but dropped it later — Sophie Braslau, for one.

I finished my opera career satisfied I could make the goal without some Europeans' say-so. During the war, all foreign performers were ordered out of the country and the American talent had a chance. Some had better voices but lacked training.

I sang ten years as contralto soloist in Temple Emanuel, 43rd street and Fifth avenue, — highest paid salary for churches in New York City; 12 years in Dr. Auyless' Presbyterian church in Brooklyn, and 12 summers in the Elberon, New Jersey, Moses Taylor Memorial church. The church quartet was John Young, Marie Stoddart, Grant O'Dell and myself. Robert Gaylor was organist. He also was with the Edison Company. People came from long distances to attend our services. Dr. and Mrs. Baruch (Barney Baruch's mother and father) never missed a Sunday. I became known as an oratorio singer and every year sang with Frank and Walter Damrosch in Carnegie Hall, creating many first performances.

I sang the voice in the Greek dramas given by Margaret Anglin and the Damrosch Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. Edith Chapman and I had a standing engagement to sing in Das Rheingold, the Rhine Maidens, with Damrosch. I sang a group of Ernest Bloch's songs with the Philharmonic, Strinsky conducting — the first time this weird and difficult music was heard in this country. I opened the new auditorium in Portland, Oregon, with Louis Graveure, and sang in many combinations of quartets, among them Reed Miller, Florence Hinkle, Frank Croxton and myself, and Inez Barbour, Will Wheeler, Herbert Witherspoon and I.

You have aroused my memory of contemporaries. I could go on and on. Frederic Martin, bass; Royal Fish, tenor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York; Elizabeth Tudor and I sang the first oratorio, "The Messiah," in San Antonio, before I ever knew my husband.

At Manila in the Philippine Islands, I established the voice department in the University. Quezon gathered 60 voices from every part of the Islands. I learned and sang their native songs in native costume presented to me by my class. I went on the theory that music is a universal language. I developed one native soprano with the most beautiful quality, not native but western, and

(Continued on page 53)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

coached her in Madame Butterfly and Aida. She went to Milan, Italy, and made her debut in Butterfly. Her husband was a painter, and Quezon financed them. She was a sensation. Another, Inez Gonzales, then only 18 years old, is singing with the American Opera Company in New York City. I sang all over China - Hongkong, Shanghai, Tien Tsin, Peking and in Japan, and sang in the first Wagnerian concert ever given in Manila. I sang the Rienzi aria and helped organize the orchestra.

Alexander Lippay came from Vienna to take over the music in the university and we started to organize an orchestra. He had to send for an expert tuner of instruments to teach them how to tune - they all played out of tune. But he organized a magnificent orchestra and gave an all-Wagner program - a program Toscanini would have been proud of.

The Negro spirituals, considered our American folk songs, were sung by me on one of my New York City recitals - the first white woman to sing Negro spirituals on the concert stage.

The radio concert you described was intended mostly for hospital patients. They attached ear phones to every hospital bed, and I sang the program from the shed through the huge brass megaphone. The following week,

Rosa Ponselle, who was my guest, and I gave a lovely concert for the patients. All who were able to come to the auditorium on the first filled the hall. The others heard it over the ear phones. We both sang solos and they went wild over the duets. Our voices blended beautifully. The nurses could hardly get the patients back to the hospital. They shouted, "More! More!"

My good friend, I love your sentiment over your two cats, Roger and Gray. Mine went for dogs and birds - Hartz Mountain canaries. My prize canary, "Peppo," was given to me in a flower covered cage at one of my recitals in New York City, in 1917. I heard gentle, low, rolling tones when I sang, and could not imagine where they came from. When I came back to sing an encore, Kurt Schindler, my accompanist, said, holding up the cage, "Your competitor is a canary." The audience went wild over it - the first time I ever knew of such a gift presented over the footlights. I brought him to San Antonio and left him with my husband's mother to take care of while I was off to sing a few concerts. When I returned I found a little grave in my back yard. On the tombstone was engraved, "Here Lies 'Peppo,' the sweet singer." Her pet cat was jealous and jumped on the cage and killed the canary.

My Pekinese dog was Singo Wang, a thoroughbred. We always said he was going to talk before he died, and he did, in his own language. He lived 14½ years with us. He too has a tombstone - "Our Friend and Companion for Many Years."

So ends Mary Jordan's informative and charming addenda. Her list of records in which she took part includes the two solos mentioned—"My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice" and "Sweet Dreams Of Home." One record, "Adeste Fideles," is identified as a Columbia. It probably was one by the Columbia Mixed Quartet. Other titles, presumably all made for Edison as an ensemble member or in support of a soloist, are: "Old Black Joe," "Hymns and Bells," "My Old Town," "It's A Long Lane That Has No Turning," "The Siren," "Nearer My God, To Thee," "Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" "There's A Girl In Havana," "Chimes of Normandy," "The Enchantress," "Oft In The Stilly Night," "Shall You, Shall I?" "O Be Happy," "Hail Columbia," "Where The Silvery Colorado Winds Its Way," "Excerpts From 'Patience,'" "Crossing The Bar," "Softly And Tenderly," "Darling Nellie Gray," "Gypsy Maid," "Beautiful Isle Of Somewhere," "How Fair Art Thou," "Excerpts From 'Erminie,'" and "Inflammatus From Rossini's 'Stabat Mater.'"

With her letter, Miss Jordan sent a copy of the October, 1923, *National Magazine*, edited by Joel Mitchell Chapple. It contains an article, illustrated with four photographs of the contralto, and headed, "American Musical Advantages Supreme." The subtitle reads: "One of the foremost of our opera and concert stars, who received her training in the United States, dispels the illusion of European instruction as the 'open sesame' to fame and an artistic career." The article reveals Miss Jordan was just 11 months of age when her parents left Wales and that she began her

(Continued on page 65)

# CIRCUSIANA

By DANA STEVENS

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q:** How many circus performances did Merle Evans participate in before he retired from the Ringling show?

**A:** I think the figure comes to around 22,000 successive performances.

**Q:** What is considered the worst wreck in circus history?

**A:** I am assuming you have reference to circus trains. There have been many disastrous circus train wrecks down through the years. One of the earlier disasters occurred on May 30, 1893, at McCanns Crossing Pennsylvania. The Walter L. Main show was enroute to Tyrone, Pa., from Osceola, Pa., when it was wrecked at this crossing. Some thirty cars were demolished and smashed into splinters. Fortunately only five persons were killed. Cause of the accident was never determined.

**Q:** What happened to the Al G. Barnes Circus? Did it just quit, or what?

**A:** The Al G. Barnes Circus was merged with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum Bailey Circus in 1938.

**Q:** I've heard a lot about the duties of an anchor elephant with an elephant herd. Exactly what is an anchor elephant?

**A:** An anchor elephant is literally the disciplinarian of the herd. When anchored or tied to another elephant she can lead the other elephant wherever she pleases. An anchor elephant, however, is not necessarily stronger than her charges, but is simply more astute in throwing her weight around.

**Q:** What is meant when they call an elephant a jughead?

**A:** Jughead is the name they give a circus work elephant. Today the tractor has largely taken over the jughead's duties in putting up and taking down the big tents and spreads of canvas.

**Q:** Has the Sparks Circus been important in circus history?

**A:** Yes, indeed. the early Sparks show, in its heyday, was considered the model show of America. It inaugurated a new era in show business when it became the first circus to exchange its 54 foot flatcars for 72 foot all-steel cars.

**Q:** When and where was Barnum's famed African elephant Jumbo killed?

**A:** Jumbo was killed in a train accident in St. Thomas, Ontario, September, 1885.

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**MUSEUM NEWS**

(Continued from page 45)

Syracuse China Corporation and the Ferro Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio. The Ceramic National has exerted great influence on the field of ceramics and new talent is discovered each year through its efforts. It is the only exhibition of its kind in the world.

\* \* \*

The Rochester Museum Association, Rochester, N. Y., is sponsoring Audubon Screen Tours in its Youth Lecture Series for the 1956-1957 season. Six of North America's best known wildlife photographers and lecturers are being featured on successive Saturday mornings at 10:30 A.M. The Series began on Oct. 27, 1956 and will be completed March 2, 1957.

\* \* \*

The Newark Museum, 43-49 Washington St., Newark 1, N. J., is holding its "Fifth Annual Christmas Exhibition—Sale of Work by New Jersey Artists and Craftsmen" through January 6. Items in the exhibit such as ceramics, jewelry, woodenware, weaving are priced from \$1 to \$25. Prints, paintings and furniture may be priced up to \$50.

**FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS**

(Continued from page 53)

musical career in Scranton when she was only 14. One of the photos was taken in the music room of the singer's beautiful San Antonio home and another shows her in front of the house, "Here," say the cutlines, "some of the country's most famous celebrities have been entertained, among them General Pershing, Rosa Ponselle, Frances Nash, General John L. Hines and Major E. M. Lewis."

I find the following quotation from the magazine article especially appropriate to conclude with:

"In addition to her strictly professional work and duties Miss Jordan is a wonderfully well educated woman, being a profound student of history, biography and religious theology. To be a true artist one must know life from all angles. Her theory of success is that it is three-fourths hard work and one-fourth natural ability. 'Hard work is the master-key that unlocks every door' is one of her favorite self-coined quotations. 'Success did not come easy with me,' she confessed in a reminiscent mood. 'Of course, one must have a voice, next to that brains and good health, to sing. You must have the urge of genius or you will never get anywhere without work.'"

**REAL ESTATE**

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

## Sir George Robey

By JIM WALSH

Few American collectors realize the British phonograph companies had a galaxy of pioneer recording artists entitled to rank with the best our country has produced.

Billy Williams, "The Man in the Velvet Suit," might fairly be called the British Billy Murray. Before his death in 1915 Australian-born Williams dominated the popular record output in Britain more completely even than Murray did in the States. King Edward's favorite tenor, Ernest Pike, was the English equivalent of Henry Burr; Peter Dawson corresponded to Frank C. Stanley, and Florrie Forde was the British Ada Jones. Hundreds of other British artists won their share of popularity and fame. Some, like Harry Lauder, were as successful in America as at home. So it seems only fair that the achievements of some of their more outstanding performers should be chronicled on occasion in HOBBIES.

The subject of this article was one of the most popular of old-time British comedians; one whose gallant work in behalf of the Empire's war efforts caused him to be knighted—Sir George Robey. Never so big a seller on records as Billy Williams or Billy Whitlock, he was as popular on the stage as Lauder and his career ended only when he died a few years ago, aged 87. That career also included a "trial by ordeal" with a phonograph association which is amusing to look back on now but must have been peculiarly exasperating to the comedian who, although he delighted to appear in music halls wearing outlandish attire and ludicrous wigs, was a man of innate personal dignity. I shall relate in its proper place the sad story of George's sufferings from the "Robeyphone."

But first a confession. I believe this is the first article I have written about an artist without having heard some of his records. As far as I can recall, the only time I ever listened to George Robey's voice was when I tuned in a short wave program from London and heard him singing. This "Music Hall" offering was broadcast in October, 1952, and Robey was the only performer whose name meant anything to me. *Variety* later commented: "The bill was distinguished by the inclusion of vet George Ro-

bey, who that day celebrated his 83rd birthday. He made a gallant but brief contribution which garnered sturdy mittings from the studio audience." (The production also was given on TV). I wrote to the comedian telling him of the pleasure it had given me to hear him, recalling some of the events of his remarkable career and asking if he could spare me an autographed photo. Instead of a photo he sent a brief note saying: "Thank you for your kind letter. Thought you would prefer this self drawn sketch." The other side of the card contained a caricature of himself in blue ink, with the exception of the nose, which is a vivid red. It is worth mentioning that, aside from being a comedian, Robey won recognition both as a painter and cartoonist.

I was glad to receive the first person caricature of so eminent a humorist but I still wanted a photo, and was delighted when Mrs. C. K. Fletcher, a London dealer in autographs and celebrities' letters, sent me two fine signed photographs of Robey, with a note saying she believed they would give me "endless amusement." One look when the pictures came by registered mail made me sure Mrs. Fletcher was right. They amused me so much, in fact, that I felt I must share them with HOBBIES readers even though I couldn't give any firsthand information about Robey recordings. So I have sent the likenesses along with this biography and have also included Sir George's pen-and-ink misrepresentation of himself in the hope that they can be reproduced and add to the word's merriment. That is an appropriate thing to do, for Robey called himself—or at least the music halls termed him—"The World's Fun Provider" and "The Prime Minister of Mirth." Those who are interested in obtaining specimens of his recorded voice no doubt can obtain them from a Canadian HOBBIES advertiser—Ross, Court—or some of the other firms that import rare English records.

Now, if I can stop laughing long enough at the replica of Robey in his monstrous wig and sour-pickle expression, depicting the part he took in some unidentified "pantomime," we'll consider some details of his career.

### II "Grand Old Man of the Music Halls"

George Robey was born September 20, 1869, at Herne Hill, London, and by the time he died November 29, 1954, in his home in Saltdean, Sussex, he had become known as "The Grand Old Man of the Music Halls." He had also been knighted and dubbed Sir George Robey by Queen Elizabeth II in the 1954 New Year's honors list for his war-time services to the Empire. But before his knight-ing and the death that followed less than a year later, George Robey had enjoyed, or endured, some 63 years, first as a struggling drudge and then as a star of the British stage. His achievements had ranged from grotesquely comic parts in music hall, pantomime and harlequinade, to portraying Falstaff on the stage and Sancho Panza on the screen.

Robey's real name was George Edward Wade. His family wanted him to be an engineer and didn't approve of his theatrical ambitions. When he decided to go on the stage he thought it would be undignified to use his real name so called himself George Robey, from the name of one of his school-boy friends.

The comedian used to recall that he got into the theatrical profession almost by accident at the age of 21 in 1891 when he volunteered to be a subject for a hypnotist and convulsed the audience by singing comic songs in a pretended trance.

Many admirers of the man who played such broad comedy roles were surprised to find he was exceptionally well educated and had been educated in Germany and at the University of Cambridge. He made no apologies for being what he called "a red-nosed comedian" and said: "I was never afraid of the bellylaugh. I believe in honest vulgarity. So did Shakespeare. Honest vulgarity is the finest antidote I know of to present-day hypocrisy." An ambitious young comedian who called himself Charlie Chaplin partly modeled his famous tramp act after Robey's stage costume of baggy black clerical dress, shallow derby and small cane.

Robey's appearance as Sancho Panza was made in a film of "Don Quixote," starring the great Russian basso, Feodor Chaliapin and he appeared on the stage in 1935 as Falstaff in Shakespeare's "Henry IV." The comedian collected stamps and Chinese porcelain. Some of his amateur paintings were exhibited at the Royal Academy, and one of his hobbies was making excellent violins. Beginning at small salaries, his fee for music hall appearances rose to approximately \$4,000 a week. The people of Britain, proverbially warm-hearted toward their variety favorites, loved him all the more after he gave hundreds of charity performances and raised large sums for British and French relief organizations in World War I.

The foregoing is a broad outline of George Robey's career. The following more detailed information was obtained from "Music Hall Parade," a book written by M. Willson Disher and published in England some 20



George Robey, as he appeared wearing a ludicrous "Clarkson wig," in an unidentified Christmas pantomime.

years ago. Disher reveals that Robey spent part of his childhood near Birkenhead, England. His father was the engineer who supervised the laying of some of the London lines for "horse-drawn trams"—which Americans used to call "horse cars," in the days that preceded electrically operated street vehicles. The family went to Dresden, Germany, probably because of some of the elder Robey's engineering engagements, and George Edward prepared to become a doctor of science. Before that happened the family returned to England and George became a Cambridge undergraduate, then followed his father's example as an engineer and laid out the tram-line in the City of Birmingham. He was an accomplished mandolin player and he and a friend gave mandolin and guitar duets at charity concerts. He then met Kennedy the hypnotist at the Aquarium Music Hall, on the site of which Central Hall was afterward erected, opposite Westminster Abbey. Robey talked Kennedy into engaging him as his assistant, with the understanding that he would be used as a "horse"—that is, a pretended victim of mesmerism. Robey himself afterwards recalled:

"At a certain point in the program the mesmerist glared at me, projected his arms, and executed a few rapid passes. Like a person in a dream I rose. My face slipped, my eyes grew vacant. Then, apparently obeying his command, I groped my way up to the stage amid a general hush that could be felt. The other 'subjects' on the stage—old hands at the game—looked on with interest. I walked up to the platform, closed my eyes, and waited. He began to make 'passes' over me. 'Don't forget,' I whispered to him through lips almost closed like a ventriloquist's. 'I am a comic singer!' I heard him breath deeply. Then he exclaimed in a loud voice. 'Young man, you are now under my power. You will do whatever I tell you. *You are a comic singer.*'"

Robey went on to recall that everybody laughed when he sang "A Little Peach in an Orchard Grew," but finally one of Kennedy's other "subjects" became jealous and kicked the "entranced" comedian over the footlights. George stood up, pretended to be hypnotized all over again, and went on with his song. Eventually, he was given a trial in an Oxford Music Hall matinee, and that resulted in his accepting a year's contract. By that time he was already wearing the enormous "property" eyebrows that later became something of a trademark, but the remainder of his costume consisted of a brown derby, a high collar, a huge pale blue necktie, a yellow vest and a vermillion coat. A little later he dressed himself as a parson to sing a comic song called "The Simple Pimple." Disher says, "There was a simper on his face, and he had a high, bald forehead, which a long lock of hair, rooted just above one ear, tried vainly to cover. That was the origin of the round-faced, impudent-eyed *decollete* curate, wearing a very flat hat and swishing a vertebrate cane, we see in imagination whenever we hear the words, 'Prime Minister of Mirth.'"

In addition to his familiar curate impersonation, Robey acted scores of other characters. He was especially popular as "Oliver Cromwell," when he sang a song by that name composed for him by two of the best English writers of music hall productions, A. J. Mills and Bennett Scott.

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Another brief quotation or two from "Music Hall Parade" may be appropriate:

You have seen him as the bland, self-satisfied professor of music from Germany, shaking a collar of sleigh bells, twinking a triangle, banging a drum, and carefully avoiding more difficult instruments in the formidable array set on the stage to proclaim his virtuosity. Then there is Sir Walter Raleigh, with his story of being on the shore waiting to receive Columbus when he discovered America; also the auctioneer, with his offer to the woman who wants a hen that would eat sawdust and lay firewood, of a love-bird which "eats feathers and lays down." At one time he transformed himself into Cupid and at another into Shakespeare. . . .

His zenith seemed to have been reached during the long run, lasting well over a year, of "The Bing Boys Are Here," at the Alhambra during the War. As village boys looking for life in London, he (the devilish one) and Alfred Lester (the mournful, misgiving one) were let loose in a night club where chorus girls sat on their knees, drank their champagne and went off without granting them a look or a word. Lucifer Bing's emotions were such that while a bishop and a general published protests . . . audiences shouted with laughter night after night. After raising a quarter of a million for war charities by organizing concerts and holding auctions on the stage, he joined the

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Motor Transport Volunteers. At the end of the war, the O. B. E. was conferred upon him.

For a while he tried his hand at films. Next he went into management with the revue, "Bits and Pieces," which he took on tour into the provinces, South Africa and Canada, in between seasons in the West End. We thought he was settling down in to the usual groove of successful comedians, before he took us by surprise as Sancho Panza to the Don Quixote of Chappin on the films. But this was nothing compared to the news, proclaimed by newsboys' bills all over London, of his intention to play Falstaff in "Henry IV, Part II." Great expectations filled His Majesty's Theatre in the spring of 1935, and he lived up to them . . .

Sir George married an actress whose stage name was Blanche Littler. They had a son, Edward G. Robey, who became a metropolitan magistrate in London.

### III The Robey Gramophone Records

It is out of the question to give a comprehensive discussion in this sketch of George Robey's recording career. There are too many gaps in my collection of old English record catalogs to make such an achievement possible. Since his theatrical work began in 1891, it's not at all unlikely that he made wax cylinders before or shortly after 1900.

The first mention I have been able to find of a George Robey record appears in a list of Gramophone Company offerings published in the *Talking Machine News* for October, 1907. This is not to say he may not have sung earlier for Gramophone records, but that company didn't regularly supply *T. M. N.* with review copies prior to 1910, and the latest Gramophone lists were omitted more often than not. The number of the single-faced disc was 0-2104 and the title, "What Are You Looking At Me For?"

Sir George-to-be Robey was an exclusive Gramophone artist for years. The August, 1911, *Talking Machine News* contained a self-drawn humorous likeness of himself, similar to the one he sent me, with this commentary by the editor:

"... In the above sketch there is just a faint idea as to the comic effect this hilarious artist has upon one. The sketch is by George Robey himself, and though he is not as great an artist as he is an artiste, yet there is the making of the former in him. Mr. Robey, by the bye, adds another splendid number in the August Gramophone series. It is an exceedingly humorous piece entitled 'It's a Very Deserving Case.' His wicked humor is unbeatable, and it makes our sides ache so with laughing that afterwards—not that we want to take up another deserving or undeserving case—we feel as if we could send him to Coventry."

That reference to Coventry is a sly dig at George's legal entanglement with the "Robeyphone," which will be explained shortly. The magazine's reviewer described the record (02-335) in these terms: "This artiste is always comic, but it is seldom

that his humour reaches to the extent of the drollness that it does in this funny song. We will not spoil the comedian's song by explaining it."

### IV Annoyance With The "Robeyphone"

It was while he was making Gramophone records that George Robey suffered serious annoyance from the activities of a swindler who set himself up in business in the city of Coventry (hence the *T. M. N.* editor's teasing reference to Coventry in the foregoing quotation) under the name of "George Robey, the World's Provider." Obviously with the intention of persuading the public that the great music hall and recording comedian, George Robey, was at the head of the business, the tricky merchant, a man named Francis Salmon O'Brien, placed on the market what appears to have been a terrible talking machine which he called the "Robeyphone." It was one of the cheap made-in-Germany affairs with which the British Isles were bombarded for a few years before World War I.

In establishing the firm of "George Robey, Limited," O'Brien and his wife, Ada O'Brien, who were bicycle dealers before they went into the gramophone business, engaged the part-time services of an illiterate young Coventry man whose legal name was George Robey. He became the nominal head of the concern, but was discharged after five months. Then, when the comedian brought suit to end the nuisance of having his stage name associated with a devious operation, the Coventry Robey was rehired. For a short time, the *Talking Machine News* accepted the advertising of "The World's Provider," but discontinued it after Robey began to protest the ill treatment he was receiving.

When the comedian appeared in court with his complaint, the reception he was given by the judge, Mr. Justice Darling of the King's Bench division, was not entirely sympathetic. The case went to trial on March 28, 1911, and Robey himself testified. He said the only association he had with the gramophone industry was having entered into a contract to make records for the Gramophone Company. He quoted the defendant firm's advertising as offering to send "the world-famed Robeyphone, terms to suit yourself, at half shop cash price." He also insisted that the advertising slogan, "George Robey, the World's Provider," was copied from his music hall catch phrase, "The Fun Provider," and that characters appearing in the Robeyphone advertisements were drawn and dressed to resemble some of those he impersonated on the stage.

Robey testified to having been educated as a civil engineer and said he attached great value to the importance of his theatrical name. He told of having received letters addressed to "George Robey, England," from indignant buyers of the Robeyphone, and said he was annoyed by persons in his audience shouting at him, "George, your gramophone is rotten!" and "What price gramophones?"

Asked what he did when these outbursts occurred he said he passed them over as well as he could until he decided to go to law to abate the nuisance.

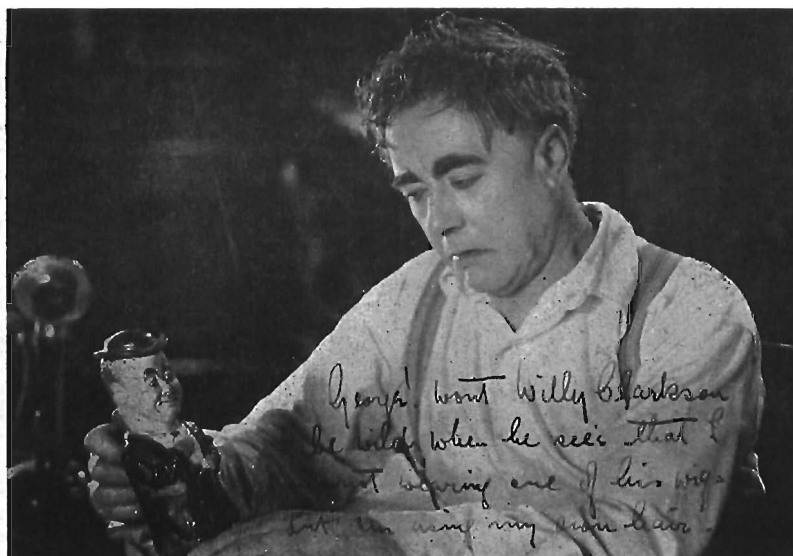
Attorneys for the defense took the ingenious tact of maintaining the O'Briens were within their rights in using the name of George Robey, inasmuch as they had nominally placed at the head of their business the young man by that name who could neither read nor write and who made an "x" to sign contracts. On cross-examination they brought out that the comedian's real name was Wade and that he had taken his stage name from a friend. They ridiculed his contention that he used an assumed name to preserve the "dignity" of his lawful patronymic, and asked why it hadn't occurred to him that he was impairing the value of his school fellow's name when he appropriated it. In effect, the defense contention was that Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien and their feeble-witted stooge had more right to the use of the name of George Robey than the comedian who had made it famous by his many years on the stage. They asked if he would consent to the O'Briens carrying on the business under the name of G. W. Robey, and the future knight of the realm said he certainly would object. He said in reply to more cross-examination that he wouldn't mind if it were operated under his real name of Wade because the public didn't know him by that name and his stage career wouldn't be adversely affected.

The defense contention of course was flimsy and specious, but the presiding justice seemed unaccountably sympathetic to it. However, the jury awarded Robey 100 pounds damages. O'Brien appealed, but on July 28th decided not to press the action after counsel for Robey withdrew a portion of his bill of complaint which charged that the Coventry couples' operations were in some degree fraudulent. Robey, through his attorneys, conceded that the people who bought the Robeyphone might have got as good a machine as they could expect for the price they paid and said his only objection to the business was the use of his assumed name. It was brought out that O'Brien was in extreme ill



George Robey, at the age of 83, drew this caricature of himself and sent it to Jim Walsh.





George Robey as himself, looking at a dummy of himself as he appeared in his stage clerical costume. The inscription says: "Won't Willy Clarkson be wild when he sees that I am not wearing one of his wigs but am using my own hair."

health and could no longer carry on his tricky business.

And so, to George Edward Wade's relief, the Robeyphone nuisance was "abated."

#### V Robey's Columbia Records

In January, 1916, the English Columbia Company announced that Robey, who had been making Gramophone (H.M.V.) records for almost ten years had signed an exclusive Columbia contract. His first Columbia disc was a double-faced 12-inch containing two of his specialties, "Where's the Butler?" and "What Was There Was Good," No. 581, described as "a feast of song and patter in the comedian's richest vein." A month later the *Talking Machine News*, on which I must depend for information concerning the Robey records, said:

Columbia has two more first-rate George Robey records on the February list. As was announced last month, the popular comedian is exclusively engaged by this company for record purposes, and we understand that he is going strong. The two fresh records are the famous "Family Ghost" and "The Best Man at the Wedding." On glancing at the list again we find he is actually down for more on a 10-inch disc, "The Barrister" and "The Pro's Landlady." It is impossible to have too much of the irrepressible George. By the way, we hear there is great competition on the part of the music-hall proprietors to book George Robey for revue. It is said he has the choice of four big West End halls open to him. Mr. Oswald Stoll is understood to be particularly anxious to get "The Prime Minister of Mirth" for the Alhambra. The difficulty, we are told, is not so much arranging Robey's salary, which would be a considerable item, but fixing up with the people who hold him in contract."

Columbia took a two-page ad in the February issue to publicize the exclusive Robey engagement. The magazine's critic, who usually lavished praise upon virtually any record, good or bad, was downright lyrical in what he said about the 12-inch, No. 583:

One of the biggest things the Columbia has ever done was the exclusive engagement of England's greatest mirth-maker for records. This month he is giving us the excruciating bit of foolery known as "The Family Ghost." If this phantom does not compel you to burst every button on your waistcoat, we'll eat it, together with all the buttons there may be left. As "The Best Man at the Wedding," George is also inimitable. There is only one Robey, and the Columbia has got him. Long may he flourish.

And consider the following, anent 10-inch record No. 2639:

Two more of George Robey's rib-ticklers. "The Barrister" is a characteristic bit of work by the great comedian. In his speech to the jury in a breach of promise case George is the barrister to the life, and the comic element is of the super-abundant sort that draws tears of laughter from the listener. Nothing could possibly be more irresistibly humorous. "The Pro's Landlady" relates the experiences of a whilom actress who has turned landlady of a professional boarding house . . . These records will aid immensely to Robey's reputation as a laughter-provoker, and also as a record-maker, for every word is heard with a clearness which is beyond cavil.

Mention has already been made of the great success Robey and Alfred Lester scored in "The Bing Boys Are Here." The June, 1916, *T. M. N.* contained another double-spread Columbia ad, this time featuring records by Robey, Lester and Violet Loraine from that popular production. Those in which George took part were both 12-inch—L1034, which combined "Another Little Drink Won't Do Us Any Harm," sung as a trio by Robey, Lester and Loraine, with "I Stopped, I Looked, I Listened," as a Robey solo; and L1035, "If You Were The Only Girl in the World and I Were the Only Boy," a duet by Miss Loraine and Robey, and another Robey solo, "In Other Words." The reviews were flattering, and the records stayed in the Columbia catalog until 1930.

One double-faced 12-inch H.M.V. Robey record also remained in the

Gramophone catalog through 1929. It was C546, coupling "And Very Nice Too!" with "Archibald — Certainly Not." The catalog was careful to point out the second side should be played at a speed higher than 78.

I don't have the 1917 volume of the *News*, but in January, 1918, there was a brief item indicating that Robey by that time was appearing in a musical production called "Zig-Zag," and had recorded two of its songs: "A Deed That Spoke Louder Than Words" and "She Spoke To Me First." The April number revealed that a new version of the Bing Boys was being produced at the Alhambra as "The Bing Boys on Broadway," and Robey was scoring another great hit. An elaborately illustrated article reproduced the labels of four record sides George had just made for Columbia and on which he had drawn caricatures of himself. These records were presented to "a young royal personage" who had called at his dressing room. My guess is the "personage" was the then Prince of Wales, now the Duke of Windsor.

The review of record No. 1236, "First Love, Last Love, Best Love" and "Day After Day," is rather less flattering than the usual fulsome *Talking Machine News* type:

England's own vocal comedian, as we may call the indefatigable George Robey, has undoubtedly scored one of his biggest hits in "The Bing Boys on Broadway." As a vocalist pure and simple we cannot, of course, take George seriously. His singing voice is not of the range that "lifts the roof off," nor is it of that depth which is sometimes described as "coming out of his boots," yet he contrives to get along pretty well with it, and one must remember it's the only voice he's got, so we must e'en be content with it or go further and fare worse. In the two duets under notice he exercises it as well as he can and that is something to be thankful for. On the other hand, Miss Clara Evelyn, although she is not a Violet Loraine, sings very nicely indeed and the pair make a very creditable show.

The Columbia list that month also contained two "Bing Boys" solos by Robey on record No. 1237, "Shurr-Up!" and "The Fact Is—". The music of all the "Bing Boy" productions was written by an American song writer, Nat. D. Ayer, who went to England and had such success he spent the remainder of his life there. He is best remembered today as the writer of the music of one of the great all-time hits, "Oh You Beautiful Doll."

In August, 1918, *The Talking Machine News* contained an article on "George Robey as Money Extractor," which deserves reprinting in part as a graphic example of how the great comedian was working to help win the war then only a few months from its close. It may also serve fittingly to conclude this article:

George Robey cannot be allowing himself an undue amount of leisure these days. It is difficult to see how he can even find time for the rest necessary to keep himself fit over his strenuous work, for the comedian with two shows to do a night, rehearsals and other calls, has a more strenuous life than outsiders would imagine. He has worked day and night in the cause of war charities and revels in

(Continued on page 37)

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)  
it. Although a humorist of the first water both on and off the stage, his war work is the one thing he does not joke about in conversation. It is a serious affair with a serious object, and George tackles it as he tackles his profession—thoroughly and completely. . . .

His last effort of the kind was at the Coliseum on July 14th, when George set himself to collect 10,000 pounds for the French Red Cross in honor of France's Day. Seeing that by dint of hard work he had secured his 10,000 pounds the day before the concert one might reasonably have left the affair to run itself, but that is not George Robey. Having set his goal, the next thing was to see how far he could surpass it. These are some of the things he did to achieve it:

He auctioned Arnold Bennett's manuscript of his Message to the Audience, and with bidding starting at 100 pounds brought it up to 300 pounds. . . . The signature of "The Tiger," M. Clemenceau, realized five pounds, and the original painting of "Les Foulards Rouges," given by the Daily Graphic, went at 275 pounds. An American sailor had given a dollar note to the French Red Cross. Mr. Robey produced it and offered it for sale. Bidding started at 32 pounds and finished at 400 pounds. A polliu's wife in the gallery threw on the stage a 20-franc piece taken from her bracelet: George sold it for 140 pounds. A polliu thereupon offered a 50-franc piece: George realized 50 pounds and handed the 50-franc back to the polliu. A lady in the stalls sent up a gold ring that brought 40 pounds.

Over 50,000 pounds to war funds is George's proud record. Small wonder that he is the idol of the boys out there, for they know what he thinks of them! Bravo, George!

And we Americans may add, even at this remote date, small wonder that George Edward Wade received the O. B. E., was knighted by his queen and died as Sir George Robey. He deserves to be lovingly remembered by the British people.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Gene Austin

By JIM WALSH

Gene Austin comes closer than any other performer about whom I've so far written to getting into *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* barely by the skin of his teeth. In fact, it is only by a liberal stretching of the rules governing this department that I can conscientiously include him.

Not that I consider this world-famous singer unworthy of such "distinction." Without question he has been one of the most popular vocalists who ever made records and I have had many requests to tell his life story. But, by a strict application of standards, the genial curly-haired "crooner" isn't a pioneer recording artist. His largest selling numbers were all placed on the market after electric recording supplanted the "hammer-into-the-horn" system. Nevertheless, he made a fair number of discs by the old acoustic method, so I have decided that, after all, Gene Austin belongs in these pages. And it is a pleasure to write about the handsome, affable man whom I greatly like and admire on the strength of my one meeting with him—a meeting he probably doesn't recall since it occurred 17 years ago.

In the late 1920's, the new-fangled electrical techniques of recording and reproducing had redeemed the phonograph from the slow death to which radio was believed to have consigned it, and records were selling merrily. Undisputedly, the king of record makers for the first half dozen years of the electric era was Gene Austin. He "blanketed" competition to an extent that none of his competitors and successors—Vallee, Crosby, Sinatra and the like—achieved. And today, at the age of 56, he is still far from a has-been. A few months ago he appeared as a guest on the "Golden Records" program with a good many present-day recording "stars," and the critics were virtually unanimous in saying Austin "stole the show" and was the only performer who displayed real personality and sang effectively. It was announced that 85,000,000 copies of his records have been sold. I have no doubt that if the 1929 depression hadn't hit the record business harder

even than radio had and for a decade almost put an end to the sale of "platters," Gene Austin would have stood a good chance of being the all-time best selling recording artist.

This article isn't scheduled to appear until February, 1957, but is being written on June 16. Just 12 days ago the *New York Times* published the following:

**GENE AUSTIN LIFE PLANNED AS FILM.** Story of Popular Crooner of Twenties Will Be Made by Case Productions . . . Hollywood, Calif., June 4.—The life of Gene Austin, Texas-born blacksmith and cowboy who helped to establish the singing vogue called crooning in the early Twenties, will be portrayed in a motion picture.

"The Lonesome Road" is the tentative title for the film, based on a story by Larry Marcus. It will be made by a new company known as Case Productions.

Mr. Austin . . . started his singing career in New Orleans and became popular with his recording of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby." His most famous recording, however, was of "My Blue Heaven." The partners plan to make the film after the fashion of "The Jolson Story," with Mr. Austin singing while an actor portrays him.

"The Jolson Story" rescued Al Jolson from near oblivion and caused young people to develop a vogue of collecting his records which persists today. It is possible that "The Lonesome Road," which should be well into production or even completed by the time you read this, will touch off a new fad among the teenagers for collecting Austin—in my opinion a better singer than Jolson.

### II Early Biographical Sketches

In 1929, when the Gene Austin enthusiasm throughout the nation was at its peak (I knew several teenagers who prided themselves on buying no records other than Austin's), and he was Victor's most valuable "property," the Victor record catalog published the following elaborate biographical sketch, perhaps unprecedented in the space it gave to a popular recording artist:

**GENE AUSTIN.** Tenor—The tremendous success that has marked the Victor career of Gene Austin seems phenomenal, and yet, considering his remarkable gifts, his warm and genial personality, and the romantic details of his life, someone with a pro-

phetic gift might have forecast for him the popularity that is his.

Gene Austin was born in 1900 at Shreveport, Louisiana. He was the typical American boy, mischievous and lovable, always happy and often with a song on his lips. At 15, he ran away from home and joined a circus, after his parents had laughingly vetoed his desire to go on the stage. His circus jobs ranged from playing the calliope to selling peanuts, but he was satisfied, he says, because the work kept him out of school.

At 16, Gene, being large for his age, beguiled a recruiting officer to accept his services for Uncle Sam's army, and he was sent to the Mexican border with the famous punitive expedition. But Gene's parents objected so vigorously to this "job" that the boy was released and sent to school. But not for long. On the day the United States entered the war, Gene joined the army again, and was sent to France, where he served as a bugler during 1917 and 1918. On his return from the war he went to school in Baltimore, and later to Baltimore University. During this time he still managed to exercise his interest in music, managing a dance orchestra which later was taken on a "round the world" tour. In 1923 he joined with a friend in a piano and song vaudeville act, and in April, 1925, made his first Victor record—"The Only, Only One for Me" and "I Never Knew How Much I Loved You."

From that time to the present Gene Austin's career has been a series of successes. His delightful mellow tenor voice, his intimate style of singing, his pleasant, soft, Southern intonation, and above all the magnetic personality which he somehow projects through his Victor records have endeared him to countless admirers the country over, and have caused the sale of his records to reach the millions.

There is one misstatement in that Victor biography. Gene was born in Gainesville, Texas, rather than Shreveport. Incidentally, I believe the singer's family name was Lucas, but that, because of the prestige of his stage name, he had Lucas changed to Austin.

The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary, published by the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers, also contains a biography of Gene, mentioning that he was born in Gainesville on June 24, 1900, and joined ASCAP in 1925. After giving much of the information contained in the Victor write-up, it relates that he appeared in the New York stage productions, "Broadway Rhapsody," in 1933, and "Going Places," 1935. Among songs which he had a hand in writing are "Whippoorwill," "Go Tell My Honey That I Love Her," "The Lonesome Road," "Please Come Back To Me," "How Come You Do Me Like You Do," "When My Sugar Walks Down The Street," and "Ridin' Around In The Rain."

### III Newspaper Interview

Earlier, I mentioned that I once met Gene Austin. That was on Thursday, April 27, 1939, when the tenor appeared in Johnson City, Tenn., with a "tent show," the Star-O-Rama Canvas Theater. By that time the record business had begun climbing out of its near fatal slump of the '30's and Austin was again making discs, but for Decca instead of Victor. A young woman reporter, Lucia Burbage, who worked for the Press, (I was its top



Gene Austin presented this autographed photo to Jim Walsh when they met in Johnson City, Tenn.

reporter, feature writer, editorial commentator and columnist!) had been assigned to interview the singer, but when I learned about it, I persuaded her to let me go to see him instead. And a very good time, the still famous crooner, and I had in his John Sevier hotel room. In fact, we got along so well together from the moment he extended his hand and his blue eyes smiled in a quizzical way that when I left, proudly carrying an autographed photo, he asked me to come back and spend the afternoon. He explained that he seldom met in his travels anyone with whom he had so much in common or so many common friends. Unfortunately, "pressure of official duties" kept me from returning, but I did attend the show that night and reviewed it the next day.

A couple of nights ago I hunted up the scrapbook in which I pasted my interview with Gene Austin and re-read it for the first time in 17 years. It still strikes me as a good job, to have been written in haste with a deadline just ahead, and is so inclusive that I have decided to copy it and let it give much of the information I would otherwise be at the trouble of looking up. So here goes, for another "six-point, indent" quotation:

**POPULAR TENOR AND REPORTER GET TOGETHER**—Gene Austin Finds Much to Talk About With Record Collector. By Jim Walsh—When one of the world's most popular recording, radio and vaudeville singers meets a record collector who has been keeping tab for years of the artist's career, they find plenty to talk about.

That was the case this morning when I dropped in at the John Sevier to chat with Gene Austin, tenor headliner of the Star-O-Rama.

#### Knew Background

Since I have been collecting records almost all my life, I knew the salient points of Gene's career: That he was born in Gainesville, Texas, but grew up in Shreveport, La.; joined a circus at the age of 15; while still a boy saw service with the AEF, and later became a noted vaudevillian. I also knew more than 35,000,000 copies of

his records had been sold. I was even able to tell him that he started out as a singer of hill-billy numbers for the Vocalion and Edison companies; made his first record (issued in April, 1925), as an assisting artist to Aileen Stanley, and scored a memorable success a month later with "Yearning," "No Wonder" and "The Only, Only One for Me."

But I didn't know how he happened to get started at record-making and to move up, within a year or two, to undisputed leadership of the popular vocal field, so I asked him.

#### Once Was Writer

The tenor with the silvery voice chuckled. "I was a song writer in those days," he said, "so I often dropped around to the studios to give our songs a boost for recording purposes. One day Cliff Hess, recording manager at Vocalion (and himself the composer of "Treckles" and other song hits), told me he was worried. It seemed a Knoxville firm had sent George Reneau, known as 'The Blind Musician of the Smoky Mountains,' to New York in the belief he could make a series of hill-billy records that would be a big success. However, while Reneau's mouth harp and guitar playing were all right his voice didn't record well, and he lacked a sense of timing. Several singers had been tried as his partner but they didn't seem to have the Southern style needed for that type of recording. So I was asked if I'd have a try.

#### Worked Together

"I would, and did. Reneau, who was quite a character, and I did a lot of work together, at first for Vocalion but later also for Edison. I remember he had an idea he could 'clean up' if he could only play the guitar and sing on the streets of New York, as he had in Knoxville, so I took him to Broadway and 42nd and sat him down. I kept a watchful eye for the cops, of course. He made something over three dollars in a little while and thought he had struck a gold mine. Edison paid him so much (\$1,000) to make a series of records he returned to Tennessee, got married and is still, I hope, living happily.

"I got in with Victor when I wrote a song, 'When My Sugar Walks Down the Street,' which Aileen Stanley was chosen to sing. She needed some assistance, so I was called in to help her. The record went over so well the company decided I was worth a trial as a soloist. And my career as a recording artist has continued to the present day."

Gene's biggest seller was the double-faced record of "Ramona" and "Girl of My Dreams," which had the good fortune to combine two great hits. His sales graph also soared into the millions with "My Blue Heaven" (he used to own a huge yacht which he named "Blue Heaven") "Lonesome Road" (his own composition) and a good many others. Of recent years he has made a number of Decca records and now has ready for release a Victor of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" and another old-time hit, in which he is assisted by Candy and Coco, who appear with him tonight. He also makes many transcriptions for broadcast use and was with Joe Penner for two seasons in California on his nationally-broadcast program.

"I'm enjoying traveling with the Star-O-Rama," the singer said. "Of course people ask me what I'm doing traveling with a tent show, but I expect that. My answer is that our show seats about 5,000 people and brings to a place like Johnson City an entertainment of high quality that couldn't be duplicated under any other system. I think the whole tent idea is swell—I've always wanted to have a try with a show of this type, anyway—and the crowds we've been attracting seem to indicate the public shares my enthusiasm."



This Victor folder was issued in 1927 when Gene Austin's records were the sensation of the day.

#### IV More Reminiscences

The review I wrote after that night's performance makes it clear I agreed with the enthusiasm. Here are the parts I wrote dealing with Gene's share of the show:

"The Star-O-Rama canvas theater, which is showing tonight at Kingsport, last night played to an audience of nearly 5,000 persons at the East Main Street circus grounds.

"Gene Austin, recording and radio star, who recently concluded a successful engagement in the Broadway smash hit, 'Helzapoppin', with his comedy team of 'Candy and Coco,' was the stellar attraction of the excellent program. He sang 'My Blue Heaven' (a copy of his 1927 record of this number has been placed in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., so that future generations may judge what popular music of the present day is like), 'My Melancholy Baby,' 'Forsaken,' 'You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby,' and one of his latest record best-sellers, 'I Cried For You.' The audience gave Austin an ovation and burst into applause as he began each of his familiar numbers. There was general agreement he had never been heard in better voice."

Naturally, I didn't have time or space, in writing an interview at breakneck speed, to set down all the things about which Gene and I talked. But my memory of the conversation is still vivid and since HOBBIES readers are avid for any information about their favorite recording stars I shall jot down some more reminiscences.

Gene told me that when his recording career was zooming and it ap-

(Continued on page 55)



it is today for those who fancy reproductions on LP — their collections expand by leaps and bounds with each new acquisition.

It is very evident that FRP is now much more painstaking in the pitching of 78 r.p.m. discs on LP (I assume that the hill-and-dale have previously been transferred on 78). That is most laudable. In this batch the majority are in perfect pitch, some edge more or less around it, but four are off — two unquestionably so. These are: Ruffo's "Siberia" (must be in D-flat Major, is half tone too low in C); Calvé's "Vivandière" (should be in F Major, is half tone too high in F-sharp); Butt's "Sosarme" (should be in F-sharp Major, sounds half tone too low in F); and Navarrini's "Borgia" (must be in A-flat Major, is one whole tone too high in B-flat; which is much too much — the poor basso has been practically emasculated). If you will notice, I gave the benefit of the doubt to the Calvé and Butt recordings, as the first, a mezzo part, could have possibly been transposed upward by the soprano; and the second could have been sung in any key by the unpredictable Butt. However, upon studying the voice positions of both the ladies in these selections, it becomes quite obvious that Calvé sang her piece in the original: first, because her voice here comes through better placed in the key of F, and second, because had she raised the tonality, her repeated high F-sharp would be in the third register and not in the second, as she has them on this band. To allay any doubts about the Butt number, if a changeable speed LP machine is available, all one has to do is play her band one half tone higher to find how much more natural, and less as if coming from a butt (ouch!) her voice sounds in F-sharp. Neither Ruffo nor Navarrini, of course, would have had any reason to transpose the selections they sing here.

The re-recording job is good throughout, with a minimum of surface noise and a maximum of the original voice quality left in.

These are very fine L'Ps, and with just a little more attention to the pitch problem, the future FRP releases should lack nothing in excellence.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

peared Victor records by Gene Austin could never quit selling, he was virtually a millionaire—on paper. But he admitted he didn't invest his money wisely and was "a plain sucker for anybody who came along with a plausible scheme. 'I had a big automobile agency in New York,'" he said, "but the guys who were 'managing' the outfit could spend money even faster than I was making it." He also took a beating, like millions of other more or less affluent citizens, from the 1929 stock market swoon.

I was surprised to learn that, just after World War I, Gene had a phonograph and record store—in Shreveport, I believe—and he convulsed me by his account of how one of his sales "pitches" backfired. He had the agency for Edison and Pathé instruments and records. Because he considered the Diamond Disc superior to the Pathé he made little effort to sell the latter, and his Edison sales outnumbered Pathés ten to one. One of his principal demonstration points was dropping a stack of Edison records to the floor to show they were so thick and strong it was almost impossible to break them.

"One day," he laughed, "I was showing a Pathé to somebody who wanted a cheaper machine than the Edison. As I neared the point where I hoped to close the sale, my mind must have fogged, for I said, 'And the beauty of these records, aside from their perfect reproduction, is the fact that you can't break them!' So I picked up a couple of dozen Pathé records, slammed them to the floor—and they all broke! I suppose nobody has ever looked any sillier than I did then—or anybody more surprised than my customer!"

Gene discovered that I knew more about the whereabouts of many of his fellow recording artists than he did, and plied me with questions. Mentioning Vernon Dalhart, he said: "What's become of old Dalhart? I haven't heard anything from him in years. I told him Dalhart was again making records, with his 'Deep Cypress Boys,' for Victor's low priced label, Bluebird. Gene recalled that his Edison record of one of his own songs, 'I've Got the Railroad Blues (But Haven't Got the Railroad Fare)' was coupled with Dalhart's version of the comic song classic, 'Casey Jones.' He then told me something I didn't know that Dalhart's real name was Slaughter—Marion Try Slaughter, to be exact.

I mentioned that Billy Murray had come, with Billy's beloved pal (and mine), Jimmy Martindale, to visit me in Johnson City a few months before, and he spoke in high esteem of Billy, terming him "a good comedian and a fine singer." "In fact," he said, "Billy would be a great attraction for this show, and if I could get him away from New York, I'd pay him a big salary to get him to join us. Everywhere I go people ask me about Billy Murray, whether he's still living and what he's doing. There never was a singer with a greater following." Gene spoke in a friendly way of all his recording associates except one singer, who shall be nameless here, whom he compared to "a grouchy old country storekeeper with the hives." And he recalled that he and my good friend, Carson Robinson, joined talents in a Victor record of pseudo-hill-billy number, "Way Down Home."

I recalled having a clipping from an August, 1924 issue of *The Bill* (Continued on page 64)

# CIRCUSIANA

By DANA STEVENS

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q:** Can you give me some information concerning the Circus Saints and Sinners organization?

**A:** The full title of this organization is Circus Saints and Sinners Club of America. It was organized in 1927. F. Darius Benham, a circus enthusiast was the original founder of the club, and he started it for the purpose of establishing a home for indigent circus people. At the time he was a reporter on the old *New York World*. He was assisted in his efforts by Frank Baldwin, a banker from Richmond, Va.; Fred Pitzer, an insurance man; Charles Tremaine, a salesman from Bradford, Pa., and Chalmers Pancoast, a hotel executive. All of the men were living in New York at the time. The *New York Chapter* is known as the "Dexter Fellows Tent." Lowell Thomas, the famous news analyst and world traveler, was its first president.

Total membership in the organization numbers well over 3,000. Whenever a group organizes locally, under the banner of Circus Saints and Sinners, they establish what is called a Tent. Each tent carries the name of some famous personality from the world of the big top, and each tent carries on charity work of its own choosing.

The first national convention was held in Richmond, Va., on October 11 and 12, 1929, at the William Byrd Hotel. Dr. Clifford Rudd of Richmond was elected the first national president.

**Q:** Do circus elephants eat much?

**A:** It is estimated that a full-grown elephant eats 125 pounds of hay daily, half a bushel of oats, seven pounds of bran and all the peanuts that fans will feed him. He will drink fifty gallons of water daily.

**Q:** Do elephants have a special ointment used on their skins?

**A:** Neatsfoot oil is used to oil their skin to keep it from cracking. An elephant's skin is tender and not "bullet-shedding" tough.

**Q:** Do elephants sleep?

**A:** Often like babies. They lie down to sleep, some snore, others do not. They are not tireless animals but, on the contrary, after a day's work need and require rest.

**Q:** Where is the winter quarters of the Al G. Kelly and Miller Bros. Circus?

**A:** In Hugo, Okla., in Choctaw County.

## ANTIQUES WANTED

**MECHANICAL** Banks, old coins, Indian relics, old buttons, old letters.—Romey, 112 Washington, Bluffton, Indiana. my120441

**WHALING ITEMS:** Books, pictures, ship's log and implements, pertaining to whaling.—Dr. E. Lee Dorsett, 120 Orchard Ave., Webster Groves 19, Mo. mh6407

**IVES, IVES-BLAKESLEE,** Carpenter, Kenton, Hubley, N.N. Hill Brass Co., Gong Bell Manufacturing Co., Shepard Hardware Co., J. & E. Stevens Co., and Wilkins. Especially want any catalogs issued by these companies. See my large ad in the Old Mechanical Banks Department of this issue.—F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**WANTED:** Old iron hitching posts and old tin tobacco tugs.—R. F. French, 507½ Highland Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa. au122511

**FLEXIBLE FISH,** handkerchief holders, bouquet holders, metal animal paper clips, animal penny banks.—The Curiosity Shop, Curwensville, Pa. f1441

**WANTED TO BUY:** Atlases, Geographies. Maps before 1803, also Maps of Western States before 1860.—Tenney 152 Woodland Ave., Lexington, Ky. ap6278

**CIVIL WAR** naval cutlasses, pistols, belt plates, medals, insignia, cannon models, small porcelain and metal cabinet pulls.—Harry Stewart, 4010 Princeton Ave., Philadelphia 35, Pa. f3004

**WANTED** Caramel Slag pieces.—Alice Gordon, St. Johns, Ohio. f3612

**WANTED:** Fine old fans. Also signed Lalique.—Mrs. Frank Sanchez, 77 Longview Ave., White Plains, N. Y. ol28531

**SHAVING MUGS** with picture, owners' occupation and name. Liberal prices.—Fred Patterson, P.O. Box 1730, Atlanta, Georgia. f122511

**WANTED:** U.S. coin imprint glass, and colored toothpick holders.—Pauline Myers, Box 633, Dodge City, Kansas. Je6445

**WANTED TO BUY—Old Penny Banks** by collector - advise condition and quote best price. Also want old jewelry, even if broken - send on approval & receive check by return mail - will hold jewelry pending your acceptance.—M. C. Carl, 1 Ridgeway St., Salem, Mass. ap3233

**SHAVING MUGS,** vases in pairs, Mary Gregory items and toys.—Walter J. Henry, Adamsburg, Pa. ja12069

**PLEASE NOTE** my display ad in Mechanical Bank Department of this issue, listing various wants.—F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**COLLECTOR WANTS:** Early Pewter of all kinds, including mugs, tankards, Primitive paintings.—Oliver Deming, Westfield, Mass. f6215

**WANTED:** Tintype and daguerreotype cameras.—W. E. Musick, 12007 Yale, Chicago 28, Illinois. tfx

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs and records, reproducers, horn type phonographs. Kindly describe fully, size, type, condition, etc.—Pollard, 4109 Soquel Drive, Soquel, California. f3863

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 55)

board, which I had picked up in a second-hand store, containing a paragraph about his song writing activities. The clipping is still safely affixed in a scrapbook, so I'll quote it here. It refers to Austin as a recording artist. Since he hadn't then started singing for Victor, the reference is probably to the records he and Reneau had made for Vocalion and Edison:

Gene Austin, vaudeville artist, record star and songwriter, has been signed by Jack Mills, Inc., and will now devote himself to writing exclusively for that concern. He is acknowledged to be an authority on the native and characteristic type of Southern Negro songs, especially blues. His first contribution to the Mills catalog are "Charleston Charlie" and "I've Got the Railroad Blues."

(To be continued in the March issue)

## DICK DAVIS REPRINTS

### Another Edison Booklet

Dick Davis, an enthusiastic California collector of cylinder phonographs and records, has taken on a sideline — making exact reprints of early Edison advertising booklets. The latest is the 32-page Edison instrument catalog for 1905. It is attractively presented with a brown cover and is a fitting companion to the 1901 Edison phonograph reprint of the same size issued several months ago.

The catalogs are not a money-making proposition, but Davis is obliged to charge \$1.50 per copy, to cover the cost of production and distribution. Every cylinder phonograph enthusiast and all others interested in early sound recording history should obtain them. Address: Dick Davis, 1456 Soffel Avenue, Mentone, California.

—Jim Walsh

**WANTED:** American silver and bronze president portrait medallions, reverse showing clasped hands; Early military buttons; American Indian beaded items, Metal Tomahawks, axes, drums, quiver with arrows, swords, send list and price.—Irving Browning, 1845 Broadway, New York 23. f66112

**SILVER** by St. Louis or Kentucky Silversmiths. Give description and price 1st letter.—Margo Antiques, 4430 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo. mh3633

**WANTED:** Currier and Ives lithographs—Hunting, Fishing, Western, Racing, Fruits, Flowers, Rivers, Boats, Scenes, Railroads. All correspondence answered. Free list of prints for sale.—A. R. Davison, East Aurora, New York. Je6299

**CAMERAS.** Anything pre-1915 in photographic equipment. Plate, wet-plate, Daguerreotype, box cameras, darkroom equipment, etc.—J. W. Baldwin, P.O. Box 123, Des Moines, Iowa. al24661

## CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8. (Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)

## DEATHS

**BENJAMIN PLATT THOMAS**, well known historian and biographer of Abraham Lincoln, at his home in Springfield, Ill.

Thomas was born February 22, 1902, at Pemberton, N. J. He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1924 and received a Ph.D. from there in 1929. He was awarded honorary degrees from Northwestern University and Knox and Lincoln colleges.

The most impressive of his writings was considered to be his 1952 book entitled "Abraham Lincoln", which was widely acclaimed by experts and scholars as the outstanding one volume biography of the Civil War President. His other books include: "Lincoln's New Salem", 1934; "Lincoln 1847-1853", 1936; "Portrait for Posterity; Lincoln and His Biographers", 1947; "Theodore Weld, Crusader of Freedom", 1950, and "Three Years with Grant, as Recalled by War Correspondent Sylvanus Cadwallader", 1955, which Thomas edited.

Thomas also lectured and was active in a number of organizations associated with Lincolniana. He served as executive secretary of the Abraham Lincoln Association from 1932 to 1936, was associate editor of the Abraham Lincoln Quarterly from 1940 to 1953, and was a trustee of the Illinois State Historical library.

—o—  
**MRS. ELMER HIGGS**, Texas City, Tex., president of the Texas City Hobby Club.

—o—

**MARION GIBSON** of Flora, Ind., passed away recently. Mr. and Mrs. Gibson maintained a shop at their home for many years. He had a personal collection of covered hen dishes and Victorian art glass. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gibson were active in local study groups relating to antiques and collecting.

—o—

**MRS. FRANK H. PILLSBURY** of Grants Pass, Ore., passed away a few weeks ago.

She and Mr. Pillsbury shared a love for antiques and collectors' items, and they had a joint interest in reading HOBBIES Magazine.

## ANTIQUES FOR SALE MISCELLANEOUS

**WEEDEN TOY** electric steam engine on 9"x6" wooden base. Runs O.K. \$22.50.—A. F. & R. L. Foulk Antiques, 1617 S. Tuxedo Ave., Stockton, California f1002

**BLUE CLOISONNE** ball watch; honey Amber and Amber square Hobnail master salts; 6" Tiffany vase not signed; iron Still banks; mechanical banks; patchwork quilt top; Cut glass; Milk glass crucifix candle holders; child's carpet rocker, perfect.—Helen's Antiques, 926 State St., Racine, Wis. f1443

**FOR SALE:** White shell knitted bedspread 8½ - 7½ ft. Authentically 150 yrs. old in good condition. \$50.—Marie Elick, Box 3895, Miami, Fla. f1671

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Gene Austin

(Continued from the February Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### V The Austin Recordings

I don't intend to discuss the Austin recordings in detail. There are so many of them, following for the most part the same pattern, that extensive analysis would be useless. Neither is there space to publish a complete list of his recordings. However, George Collings, editor of an attractive quarterly publication, *The International Discophile*, tells me an Austin "discography" will appear in the autumn issue, and it may be available by the time this article sees print. The *Discophile* costs \$2 per year and may be obtained from Mr. Collings, of 1227 North Jackson Street, Fresno 2, California.

I have few Vocalion record lists for the mid-1920's and am unable to give the numbers and titles of the Austin-Reneau duets. Fortunately, I can do better with their four double-faced Edison Diamond discs. The first, No. 51422, appeared in the Edison list for December, 1924. It combines "Arkansas Traveler," with Gene calling the square dance figures in true back country style, and an infectious rendition of "Little Brown Jug."

Next came, in March, 1925, No. 51498, "Life's Railway to Heaven," and a hill-billy sob song which a "Georgia Cracker," "Fiddlin' John" Carson, had already made famous on an Okeh record, "You Will Never Miss Your Mother Till She's Gone." Gene succumbs to the temptation to kid the red-brush lingo a bit in "Life's Railway," when he pronounces "falter" not as "fawl-ter," but with a short a.

In April, 1925, just when Gene's Victor recording career was getting under way, came No. 51502, "Turkey in the Straw—Breakdown" and "Susie Ann." Finally, in May, Edison issued "The Lonesome Road Blues" (with Austin and Jack Mills credited as composers) coupled with "The Blue Ridge Blues." This was No. 51515.

Gene made one more appearance—this time without Reneau—in the November, 1925, Edison supplement when the already mentioned "Got the Railroad Blues" was issued on 51611, combined with the Dalhart "Casey

Jones." The Austin side, a catchy number in typical blues vein, has a piano accompaniment by Charles Bates. It's a mystery why Edison let a singer with Austin's unmistakable gifts get away. But then, many artists more or less "discovered" by Edison went over to Victor, for "better money," as soon as they became popular. All the Austin and Reneau Diamond discs were dubbed onto Blue Amberol cylinders.

It will be interesting to trace the young crooner's progress during the first few months of his Victor career through the monthly supplements. In April, "When My Sugar Walks Down The Street" was combined with "I Ain't Got Nobody To Love," both sung by charming Aileen Stanley. Editor Jim Richardson, one of the most accomplished literary stylists of his day, said: "Two highly popular numbers in a manner which is the contemporary outgrowth of the 'blues.' The first one introduces one of its composers, Gene Austin, as an assisting artist. It has a catchy melody and rhythm, and has dicky-bird effects and queer vocal ululations."

Gene appeared as a soloist for the first time in May with two double-faced records that headed the month's popular list. The bigger seller of the two turned out to be 19625, "Yearning (Just for You)" and "No Wonder (That I Love You)." Here is what Mr. Richardson wrote:

"This and the following record introduce Gene Austin, composer and singer of popular songs, as a Victor solo artist. A month ago he appeared, as you may recall, as assisting artist to Aileen Stanley. The two numbers here given are fox trot songs to the guitar, the ukulele and the violin or the viola. They are serio-comic in style and remarkably well sung."

Of record No. 19599, the supplement said:

Gene Austin "repeats" here with a couple of fox trot songs, sentimental in theme, with the full orchestra. Pathos and humor combine in them, with half-spoken passages and other bits "from life." You will find in the artist, we think, a distinct and striking personality in popular song.

Austin's only contribution in June was the quasi-hill-billy number, "Way Down Home," made with Carson Robison, and combined with "The Time

Will Come," by Dalhart. The supplement said "Way Down Home" has good harmony, introduces "Home, Sweet Home," and cleverly introduces some Grieg melody into a late stanza." In July, a photo of Gene was shown together with a black animal (I can't be sure whether dog or cat), and his titles were "Let It Rain" and "What a Life." The editor commented: "Gene has some sentimental moments in these two records, though, toward the close . . . he lets a wink . . . slip into his voice. If Gene is disposed to be serious, it is for the first time in his Victor life, and he gets over it promptly enough."

That same month saw Gene Austin move into the "smash, best-seller class" when Victor combined "Everything is Hotsy-Totsy Now" with an even bigger hit, "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby." Here is a typical example of James E. Richardson's graceful style:

Gene Austin, in these two numbers, is aided and abetted by an artist new to Victor records—Billy Carpenter, known to the profession as "Uke." Gene sings, and Uke produces other vocal and instrumental sounds—new combinations to the uke and the human larynx to bring joy to the irrepressible heart. Both records are good strong ones, for both artists are men of energy . . . Half the country will be trying to imitate Gene and Uke before these records are 24 hours old.

By this time, it may be mentioned, electrical recording had replaced the horn method through which Gene had made his first records.

No more Victor records by Gene were issued until February, 1926. All three of his February numbers are now regarded as "standards." Record No. 19899 combined "Sleepy Time Gal" with "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue," and he occupied the B side of 19864, singing "I Never Knew," while Henry Burr and Billy Murray, assisted by Carl Mathieu and with Frank Banta at the piano, held down the A face, with "I Wonder Where My Baby Is Tonight"—a side that is memorable because Billy had the flu when it was made and was so hoarse his admirers feared he had lost his voice.

There seems no need of quoting much further. By mid-1927, Victor was issuing a special folder listing Gene Austin records and offering an autographed photo with each record. He was the singing sensation of the day. However, the company was guilty of a bad "goof" by including No. 20964, "My Blue Heaven" and "Are You Lonesome Tonight," among the "also rans," in December, 1927, without even a word of comment.

Although "Blue Heaven" seems ac-

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cepted nowadays as the all-time Gene Austin best seller, its immediate sales were outdistanced by "Ramona" and "Girl Of My Dreams," placed back-to-back on 21334, in June, 1928. "Tomorrow" and "So Tired" were also combined on one record that month. Mr. Richardson, who died shortly after they were issued, commented:

The place of Gene Austin is firmly established in American popular song, where it has been won in fair and open competition, by public acclaim, without prejudice or favoritism of any kind. He here contributes two records which are among the best he ever has done. The first-mentioned is the theme song from the recent filmplay, "Ramona," based on Helen Hunt Jackson's American fiction classic. The other numbers are just as good musically, and they will appeal to many thousands of listeners. The artist himself needs no reintroduction.

For another year and a half the record business continued good. Then came the stock market crash, and millions of people who had formerly bought the new popular records began to wonder how they were going to eat. Disc sales skidded to almost nothing by the end of 1930, but Victor continued to issue a large number of Austin titles until the first of 1932. What looked at the time to be his final appearance was made in November, 1931, when record No. 22806 combined "Blue Kentucky Moon" and "Love Letters in the Sand." Where other Austin records had sold in the millions, this one probably didn't reach 10,000. As late as 1935, the Association of Recording Artists issued a public statement complaining that not even the biggest "hit songs" of the day were selling 20,000 record copies. "Satiety" caused by tunes being played over and over on radio was blamed.

But Gene was not entirely through

## JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1915); back copies of phonograph publications and all sorts of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for

### Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not interested in buying phonographs and records by mail and do not want "The Victor Book of the Opera." Do not submit material without being instructed by me. I will not pay for or return unsolicited items. If I do not reply I already have the material you offer. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

JIM WALSH

Box 476

Vinton, Va.  
tfx

with Victor. The record business began slowly to improve in 1933 (the year before was the worst in its modern history), and in August, 1934, two double-faced Austin records were issued. No. 24640 combined what I take to have been new recordings of "After You've Gone" and "My Melancholy Baby," both of which were already in the Austin list, and 24663 doubled "Ridin' Around in the Rain" with "All I Do Is Dream Of You." All these songs except "Melancholy Baby" were listed as having been introduced in the movie, "Sadie McKee,"

### 18th SEASON DIXIE RECORD CLUB 1635 duPont Building Miami (32), Florida

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in which I believe Gene appeared.

Even earlier, in May, 1934, "My Blue Heaven" had been coupled with "Ramona" on 24573. I'm not sure whether these were re-makes of the old favorites or whether Victor had decided there would be a good sale for a doubling of the tenor's two biggest hits. In November came an unmistakably new recording, No. 24725, which combined "Blue Sky Avenue" with "When the Roll is Called by the Fireside"—two unsuccessful numbers.

Gene also made records for some of the smaller companies which catered to the five-and-ten-cent store trade and, when I talked with him, he was recording for Decca. His records were selling very well, by the standards of 1939. He was pleased with the success of his coupling of "I Cried For You" and a 1914 hit tune, "If I Had My Way," but was annoyed that Decca had also allowed Bing Crosby to record the former, thus cutting into the Austin sales. As far as I can find, the record of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby," which he, Candy and Coco had made for Victor, never was issued.

In the years that followed, Gene has recorded for other minor companies, but in view of the *International* discophile listings, I shall not go into details of these "off brand" efforts.

#### VI In Conclusion

As I approach the end of this article, written at one five hour sitting, and prepare to put away my notes, I find a couple of other items that should have a passing glance. One is a *New York Herald-Tribune* story telling of Gene's becoming a member of the Joe Penner radio show. It ends with the statement that he "credits his voice to the removal of his tonsils as a young man. As a boy he had a fine voice, he said, but when it changed, something seemed to go wrong. He had his tonsils out and his present voice was the result."

Then I find this clipping from an October, 1952, issue of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*:

"GENE AUSTIN'S DAUGHTER IN FILM HERE—Beauty has role in Capitol Movie—The Charlotte Austin who will be at the Capitol this week in 'Rainbow Round My Shoulder' is the daughter of singer Gene Austin, and a pretty thing she is, too."

Which reminds me that Gene has appeared as a character actor in a good many movies besides doing extensive entertaining, in recent years, as a night club feature. I recall his telling me he had a supporting role in some film, but when the picture came out all that was seen of him was a shot of the back of his head as he played a piano, supposedly in a Western saloon. I believe he said he was paid \$15,000 for that stint.

And now Our Hero, one of the most popular singers of his time, not only has a daughter doing well in the flickers but is to have his own life story told. I predict that we have not yet heard the last of Gene Austin on rec-

ords. If the picture does well, there undoubtedly will be demands that he exercise that tenor voice again for the pleasure of "platter fans." That will be all to the good. Gene Austin is a fine fellow and a fine singer, and I wish him the best of luck in everything he does.

—o—

Since the foregoing article was written, Gene Austin, on the strength of the filmed story of his life, has been once more signed as a Victor recording artist. And 1957 bids fair to be a busy year for the veteran tenor, judging by the following news story in the December 26, 1956 issue of *Variety*:

GENE AUSTIN'S "COMEBACK TIME"  
Kansas City, Dec. 25.

Singer Gene Austin has a heavy schedule ahead of him going into 1957. Here for a night club engagement in the Terrace Grill of the Hotel Muehlebach, Austin revealed he has upcoming a TV dramatic show, a film in the making, and a book in the background. Meanwhile he is keeping up a string of nitery dates, following the Muehlebach with the Key Club, Dallas.

Music is virtually completed for the story which will be presented on the "Alcoa Hour" on NBC-TV Feb. 15. Story is a page from Austin's life as a vaude headliner, recording star and night club performer, with incidental music. He has written the score entwining some of the hits with which he is identified with two new songs, "It May Be Too Late" and "What Do You Think I'm Made Of."

Story outline has been set and arrangements made in Hollywood for shooting of the picture dramatizing his career. Many details remain to be worked out on this, however, he said. The book, recently suggested by cartoonist Walt (Pogo) Kelly, has progressed to outline form. As an extra filip, he'll go to England in the spring to re-do the TV show on BBC.

### MORE RECORDS BY TAURINO PARVIS AND GEORGE ROBEY

By JIM WALSH

Since my articles on the Italian baritone, Taurino Parvis, and the English music hall comedian, George Robey, were published I have learned of more records by both, which I feel should be mentioned.

Aida Favia-Artsay says she was surprised to find in her collection a copy of 10-inch record No. 42934, issued by the Societa Fonografica Napoletana of Italy, on which Parvis and the tenor, G. Martinez-Patti, sing "Solenne in ques' ora" from "La Forza Del Destino."

The other side (42935) is "Pace, mio Dio," from the same opera, sung by Appendin, a soprano. After saying the record should be played at a speed of 88, Aida remarks: "Your hero indeed does nobly by himself in this cut, hurried version of the duet; but the tenor may at best be classified as mediocre. Not forgetting Appendin—the poor girl, beautiful voice and all, can do no more than produce a patch-up job with a badly slashed adaption of Leonora's lengthy piece."

Marvin Smissman of St. Louis

points out a Zon-o-phone Parvis record I missed: No.1 2585, Faust—Dio Possente, which appears in the February, 1908, Spanish Zon-o-phone catalog and presumably was made for the South American market.

Also mentioned by Mr. Smissman are the following 12-inch Parvis records in the British Pathé catalog for September, 1920:

5256—Otello—Credo, parts 1 and 2.  
5257—Pagliacci—"So ben che lo schermo";  
Re di Lahore—"O casto fior."  
5258—Cavalleria Rusticana—"Sortito di Alfio"; Amleto—Brindisi.

In the January HOBBIES I said I had found no George Robey records listed prior to 1907. Since then I have discovered he made several two-minute Edison cylinders in 1904 and 1905. They were recorded in London and are:

November, 1904—13090, "What

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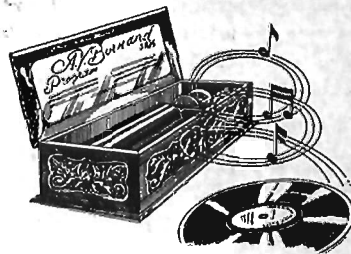
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Funny Things You See"; 13098—"A Very Deserving Case"; 13104—"Cruel To Be Kind"; 13017—"I Bow To Superior Knowledge"; 13109—"The Idea"; and 13110—"Poor Thing."

(Robey evidently had made other records, for the Talking Machine News commented, "This popular music hall humorist has certainly advanced in the art of record making.")

March, 1905—13164, "The Roman Gladiator"; 13165—"Say No More About It"; 13167—"The Mayor of Mudcumdyke"; 13179—"As a Friend"; and 13182—"The Prehistoric Man."

April, 1905—13203, "I Said 'Oh!'", and 13208, "Salad, Substantial and Thick."

Mr. Smissman also lists the following which appeared in the 1917 His Master's Voice catalog:

#### 10-inch

B-465—The Prehistoric Man; Not That I Wish To Say Anything.  
B-466—The Mormon's Song; Wait Till The Work Comes Round (sung by Gus Elen).

#### 12-inch

C-426—The Servants' Registry Office; The Editress.  
C-546—And Very Nice, Too!; Archibald, Certainly Not!  
C-547—Bang Went The Chance of a Lifetime; Good Queen Bess.  
C-548—Hey, Ho, What Might Have Been! More In Sorrow Than In Anger.  
C-549—I Think I Shall Sleep Well Tonight; Mrs. B.  
C-550—Tempt Me Not; the Barrister.  
C-551—The Manager of the Splitz Hotel; The Mayor of Mudcumdyke.  
C-552—The Pro's Landlady; President of the Republic.  
C-553—The Witness; You've a Very Nice Day For It, Too.  
C-570—Worse, Much Worse; Robin Hood.  
C-571—I Don't Think It Matters; We Parted The Best Of Friends.  
C-617—And That's That; Cohen Rings Up His Tailor (Tom Clare).

### ELISABETH SCHUMANN

(Continued from page 29)

mann, nevertheless, did build for herself an enviable reputation, but chiefly as an interpreter of classical songs, and particularly of Mozart's works. On the strength of what her records disclose, hers was an outstanding voice, not large but of lovely quality, backed by artistic perception of wide scope. Despite claims to perfectionism, however, her singing was not entirely free from blemish. While such things as occasional tonal insecurity and a broken word in difficult passages are understandable, there is no explanation for the absence of chest support in her low register, nor for the persistent failure to close trills with the required turn—the first a vocal and the second a musical fault, and both quite undesirable in a finished singer's makeup.

Side 1 of Roco R6 opens with two selections from "Don Giovanni," Vedrai carino and Batti, batti, both sung in German, as are all other recordings on this LP with the exception of the Mozart Motet, which is done in Latin. Schumann's is a classical Zerlina, a refined and dignified peasant wench, even when she urges her Masetto to administer her a thrashing for the escapade with the irresistible Don of which he suspects her. Mozart is well treated here, for

all three parts of his Motet (Kochel's No. 165) are given, which is certainly welcome because most of the time all one hears of this magnificent work is the third and last part, the Alleluja.

On Side 2, first comes a virginal rendition of the Jewel Song, followed by an expressively and beautifully sung Quel bonheur ie respire from "Fra Diavolo." The spiritedness of "Der Wildschütz" is succeeded by the playful mood of "Hansel und Gretel," and the disc is happily concluded with Richard Strauss' gentle tonal scene, portraying the three Kings in quest of Bethlehem.

—A.F.A.

### WILLIAM DUPREE

Everyone who attended the September, 1948, John Bieling Day observance at the Garden City Hotel, Garden City, New York, will recall the 18-year-old Roanoke, Virginia, boy, William Dupree, who sang for the guests. In December, 1948, HOBBIES Jim Walsh quoted the late Reinald Werrenrath as saying Dupree had "a naturally sweet voice and a true feeling for singing and with proper training should go far as a concert artist." The prediction has come true. For the past several years, Dupree, now 27, has been a member of the Singing Sergeants unit of the American Air Force. He has toured almost a score of countries and has sung as soloist for the Queen of The Netherlands. And, within recent months he starred in the Oscar Hammerstein production of "Carmen Jones" at the City Center, New York. Critics for New York papers termed his singing and acting sensational. This photo was taken about eight years ago, before Dupree's military service, when he was employed by Radio Station WSLs in Roanoke. Dupree's father is a barber and his mother a school teacher.



William Dupree

# CIRCUSIANA

By DANA STEVENS

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: What is a rosin-back horse?

A: The jockey-act horses are known as rosin-backs, and of all circus horse-folk they are most docile, the most loveable, and certainly the most romantic. Usually they are the Percherons and the Belgians with broad and roomy backs, but they may be anything. Any horse with a well-rounded croup, not too heavy, but with a spacious back will make a rosin-back. Sometimes they are called bareback horses because they do not have saddles upon their backs when they perform.

Q: One night I watched a bunch of horses in what was called a Liberty Act. What was it?

A: "Liberty Act" is circus jargon for mass horse drills, and is so named because the horses are riderless and seem to perform at liberty. Whip cues, or a ringmaster's voice, take the place of a rider. Kentucky-bred horses are usually used in this kind of an act.

Q: Do you know of the origin of the famous Lion and Gladiator wagon?

A: The origin of this wagon is obscure. It was used by Hagenbeck-Wallace in parades until 1934, and made its final appearance in the 1945 Ringling spectacle. It is now housed in the Museum of the American Circus at Sarasota, Fla.

Q: Where are circus horses bought?

A: Circus horses are bought today just as the wagon shows bought them a hundred years ago. They get them wherever they find them. However, the circus scouts sometimes attend the major sales in search for just the individual or type they want.

Q: Has there been more than one Madison Square Garden?

A: Yes. The original Madison Square Garden was located at 26th Street and Madison Avenue. P. T. Barnum opened here in 1873. The second Madison Square Garden was erected on the same site in 1890. The present Madison Square Garden, at 49th Street and Eighth Avenue, was opened in 1925.

Q: Who was James McSorley?

A: James McSorley once had a world-wide reputation for training chimpanzees. He is said to have first trained a chimpanzee to ride a bicycle while wearing shoes. Mr. McSorley also had the reputation for keeping his chimps alive in captivity longer than any other trainer in the business. His circus career started sometime in 1897. He passed away in 1954.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## THE RECORD MAKERS GIVE A CONCERT IN PULASKI, VIRGINIA, 40 YEARS AGO

By "Q. X. Z."

"Guest conducting" for JIM WALSH

(Note by Jim Walsh.—I am proud to present this month what I think is one of the most interesting articles ever to appear in *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*. The article was submitted by a woman who lived as a girl in Pulaski, Virginia, where the troupe which became known afterward as the Eight Famous Victor Artists gave a concert in April, 1917—40 years ago.

The article came to me as a letter in long-hand and was supplemented at intervals by other handwritten notes jotted down as more facts of that long-gone concert by eight fine artists, all now dead, surged upward in the lady's memory. This mass of material was sent with only one stipulation—that no clue be given as to the writer's identity, "because," as she put it, "I don't want the people in the place where I live now to know I'm old enough to have attended a concert 40 years ago." For reasons known best to herself, my correspondent asked that she be given the "pen-name" of Q. X. Z.

I think you will agree that "Q. X. Z." has achieved a near miraculous feat of almost total recall in setting down the details of a musical event that occurred considerably more than half a life time ago. In an effort to supplement the few spots in which her memory has proved defective, I went to Pulaski, about 60 miles from Vinton, where I live, and asked for permission to examine the *Southwest Times'* bound volume for 1917. The request was courteously granted, but I experienced frustration when I discovered the volume contained the files for every month except April! I had hoped to find a review of the concert, which would fill in the gaps in my correspondent's recollection of what happened 40 years ago, but it was not so to be! The only way I can account for the omission is by recalling that the United States entered the First World War in April, 1917, and surmising that copies of the paper sold so briskly that month none were left for the files. But even without the background material which I had hoped to supply, Q. X. Z.'s remarkable article is well able to stand on its own feet.

In addition to editing the manuscript and reducing it to chronological order, I have also inserted some information unknown to Q. X. Z. about the artists and their personalities. I have done this as a part of the narrative and have not considered it necessary to differentiate my own contributions from hers.

So, with a deep bow of appreciation to a lady with a marvelous memory, here is Q. X. Z.'s account of the events preceding the concert given by the Record Makers 40 years ago, and of the concert itself.

J. W.

### II "You Know These Boys!"

My dear Mr. Walsh: I have read *HOBBIES* for many years and your *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* has always been my favorite department. You have so often mentioned your admiration for the singers and musicians who became known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists and have referred so frequently to your friendship with some of them in their later years that I wonder if you would be interested in my recollections of a concert which the original group gave in my old home town of Pulaski, Virginia, as long ago as 1917. I still consider the night on which I heard those peerless performers sing and play to have been the greatest event of my life, and most of the details of the concert are as clear to me as if they had happened week before last. In the hope that you will be interested I shall set down my memories from time to time and, when I have done all the "damage" I can do, possibly you will consider making a *HOBBIES* article from them, as a tribute to something wonderful that happened in the little town of Pulaski 40 years ago.

One afternoon in early spring, school being out for the day, I was walking down Main street in Pulaski on my way home. I had just become 16 the week before and I remember feeling very grown-up. Suddenly I saw a large poster, with blue letters on a white background, which had been pasted to a wall since the last time I had walked along there. As I read that poster, my head almost swam from excitement and I

could hardly believe my eyes. It read very much like this:

Look! You Know These Boys!

They positively appear!

(Not a moving picture)

HENRY BURR, tenor  
ARTHUR COLLINS, baritone  
ALBERT CAMPBELL, tenor  
THEODORE MORSE, pianist  
THE STERLING TRIO  
BILLY MURRAY, tenor  
BYRON G. HARLAN, tenor  
JOHN H. MEYER, basso  
VESS L. OSSMAN, banjoist  
THE PEERLESS QUARTET

At the bottom of the poster was the statement, in large letters, that the "boys" (I thought that an undignified way of referring to such a galaxy of sparkling stars) would appear in the Elks Theater at 8 p.m., Thursday, April 12, 1917. In much smaller type was the statement that they were managed by L. C. Mountcastle. (Incidentally, when Henry Burr became director of the Columbia Broadcasting System's Artists Bureau in 1929, he took Mountcastle with him as his assistant. Burr was really the organizer and manager of the troupe, and Mountcastle was its booking agent).

I could hardly get home fast enough to tell my mother about the wonderful thing that was going to happen. When my father came home from his work at the General Chemical plant of course we told him, too. About half an hour after I dashed in breathless to break the great news, my twin 12-year-old brothers came running in all excited. We were really a phonograph family. The big Brunswick with the Ultona reproducer that played both Pathé and needle cut records, which we had bought from S. B. Steger, was almost our family altar, and all of us regarded the leading popular record stars of the day as personal friends, virtually members of our home. Of course we had our individual preferences among the artists. My mother was a bit unhappy because her favorite, Ada Jones, was not to visit Pulaski, but was consoled by the knowledge that the runner-up in her affections, Billy Murray, would. My father's favorites were the Collins and Harlan duet team, but he was also extremely fond of Billy Murray and the banjo records of Ossman and Fred Van Eps.

As for the twins, both had a fierce and unswerving loyalty to Billy, whom they considered the funniest man in the world, but they also shared my father's love of banjo music. One boy insisted Van Eps was better than Ossman and pointed triumphantly to

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the fact that Van Eps had made many Pathé records but Ossman hadn't made any. The other twin, an Ossman fan, was hilarious at the knowledge that Ossman was a member of the troupe that was coming to town, and shouted gleefully that "ol' Van Eps wasn't good enough to get in!" The other sturdily maintained: "Fred could-a got in if he wanted to! He jes' didn't want to!"

The choice of Big Sister—me—was first, last and always Henry Burr with Albert Campbell second, and Murray, third. I was at a very romantic stage of my girlhood, when I made up all sorts of romances in my mind about dream princes and that sort of thing, and in my imagination Henry Burr—tall, slender, black-haired, youthful and dashing—had long been my "fairy prince." That silvery tenor voice of his did amazing things to my emotions and I often told myself he was the man I was going to grow up and marry. I had no idea he was already married and his wife usually traveled with the troupe. Campbell's voice also stirred my romantic impulses, but, beautiful lyric tenor though it was, it somehow lacked the heart-stirring effects of Burr's. As for Billy Murray, I admired him extravagantly and could always laugh at his inimitable comic songs, but, like most girls of my generation, I preferred sentimentality in my popular music to humor.

Father summed up our sentiments when he said: "This family's got to go to that show even if we all sit in 'peanut heaven' (the gallery)." "You know," he added soberly, "this is most likely the only chance any of us will ever get to see these fellows. They're the greatest of their kind in the

world, and I wouldn't miss it for a mint of money!"

### III Preliminary Advertising and Anticipation

Within a few days an advertisement that seemed to echo my excited father's comment appeared in the *Southwest Times*. It was headed "World's Greatest Singers To Visit Pulaski," and began something like this: "Some of the world's greatest singers will visit Pulaski and appear in the Elks Theater on the night of April 12. Included are ----" then followed a list of the performers and a brief description of their outstanding talents. The ad had the effect of increasing my interest in Theodore Morse, who was described as one of the nation's foremost writers of popular songs, as indeed he was. I examined the labels of our hundreds of records and found that Mr. Morse had written many of the songs I liked best. So, although he was not a recording artist (he appears to have made only one record—a 1918 Pathé piano duet of "Jazzin' Around," with Abe Frankel as his partner), I was eager to see him. Although I understand that the Eight was known at that time as the Record Makers—later, as the Victor Record Makers

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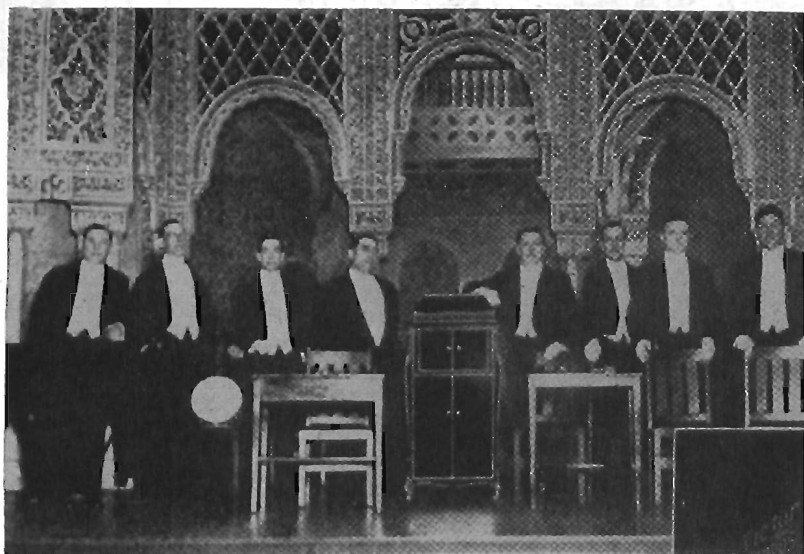
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This photo of the Record Makers was taken on the stage of Orem Temple in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., in April, 1917, the same month they gave their concert in Pulaski, Va. From left to right; Morse, Ossman, Campbell, Collins, Burr, Meyer, Murray and Harlan.

when Victor dealers began to sponsor their concerts—I do not recall that either the poster or the newspaper advertising referred to them by any group name. They became known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists when they signed an exclusive Victor contract in 1920.

A day or two before the concert, the Victor Company inserted an ad in the paper, headed something like "Famous Victor Artists to Visit Pulaski," and urging the public to go hear them "and learn for yourself how the Victrola reproduces their singing and playing with absolute fidelity." The ad continued, "Caruso (and a long list of other Red Seal artists) have no engagement in Pulaski, but through the Victrola you can hear them whenever and wherever you wish." A list of the Eight's latest Victor records was included (I remember Murray's was "Napoleon" and Burr's "Rolling Stones (They All Come Rolling Home Again)") and the readers were urged to go to Heuser-Patterson's, Jewelers, and hear them.

The great day itself came, to the mounting excitement of my family, although I got the impression the rest of Pulaski was able to take the event of the ages, as we regarded it, in stride. I remember my father's saying he had met Mayor E. W. Calfee and expressed surprise that so famous a group of entertainers would play as small a town as Pulaski. Mr. Calfee had replied the Pulaski engagement was primarily to break a "jump" from Atlanta to New York, where the performers were headed for the opening of the Big League baseball season, and that the concerts were a form of advertising which Victor and possibly other phonograph companies were subsidizing.

As I went to school that morning, I saw photos of the artists displayed on easels in front of the Elks Theater. One of the twins told us that afternoon, a sly grin on his face, that he had walked past and seen the pictures unguarded. The temptation was strong upon him to take the one of Billy Murray, showing that happy-go-lucky comedian wearing an infectious smile and a big cap. (A copy of this photo appeared in the October, 1954, HOBBIES). One or two people were hanging around the entrance, so he decided to walk down the street, wait a few minutes, then, when the coast was clear, "hook" the picture. He did, but when he came back, although the other photos were still in place, the Murray picture was gone. No doubt somebody else who madly admired Billy had taken the picture.

As for the other twin, he was at the depot that afternoon when the eight notables descended from the train. He bubblingly told us how thrilled he was when he heard a man with a deep bass voice (undoubtedly John Meyer) point to the Maple Shade Inn and ask, "What building is that?" He was so carried away that when I asked him what Henry Burr looked like it was clear he had no idea which was Burr, and didn't care. Instead, he scornfully asked: "Aw, who gives a darn about that ol' love song guy?"

#### IV Waiting for the Curtain To Go Up

We five were in our seats that  
(Continued on page 34)

### MUSIC BOXES

**FOR SALE:** Large collection tune disc for Imperial Symphonion music boxes. 13½" size. Write for list of titles at reasonable prices.—Herbert Hulse, Cuddebackville, New York. **je6238**

**FOR SALE:** Tune discs for Regina 15½", 20¾", 27", 32" Criterion 20¾"; Mira 6¾", 9¼", 18½"; Monarch 15½"; Orpheon 16½"; Stella 14"; Thorens 4½". State size wanted. Lists.—Insley C. Looker, South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge, N. J. **je3806**

### PIANO & ROLLS

**NEW ROLLS** and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos.—Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 223 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. **ap124661**

### MELODEONS

**BEAUTIFUL** restored instruments. Also buy and repair, reasonable.—C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. **ap6806**

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

**MILLS VIOLANO** Virtuoso, excellent condition - many extra rolls.—G. T. Merriken, Route 2, Silver Spring, Md. **my3652**

**WANTED:** Cornet - shaped instrument with name "Zobo" stamped on bell.—F. H. Moynahan, Harwich, Mass. **ap3068**

**MUST SELL** our duplicate musical antiques as we have many new items for display and need space. Fully restored melodeons, grind organs, nickelodeons, player pianos, phonographs, music boxes, paper roll organs.—Musical Museum, Deansboro, N. Y. **au62611**

**WANTED:** Barrel & Street organs, Mills, Seeburg, Calliopes, Mechanical Pianos, Swiss & Regina Music Boxes, Phonographs, horn type, Antique Musical Instruments, literature on phonographs & Mechanical Instruments.—Kugler Music Co., 7 So. 6th St., Minneapolis, Minn. **je3675**

**WANTED:** Harp and Melodeon reasonable. State condition, price.—Mildred Brown, 2829 Texas St., Albuquerque, New Mexico. **ap1821**

### 26 WALTZ MELODIES from Rare Old Music Boxes ON 12" Hi-Fi 33⅓ Microgroove Record



#### NOSTALGIC

#### "OLD MUSIC BOX MELODIES"

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#### Invitation to the Dance, Danube.

#### After the Ball, A Sunday Afternoon

#### Treasure Waltz, etc., etc. from 5 rare old

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evening almost an hour before the performance was to begin. As my father had jokingly said, we sat in "peanut heaven," having agreed that the front row seats, costing 75 cents, would let us hear as well as if we were in the main body of the theater and give a better view of the stage. My father was dressed in his "Sunday-go-to-meetin'" suit and I thought he looked young and handsome. My mother, also wearing her best, surprised me by looking so pretty and girlish. My parents had married young and were still young people by modern standards, he 38 and she only 35, but I had been in the habit of thinking of them as hopelessly middle-aged. Out sitting "on high" had only one disadvantage. Programs weren't distributed in the gallery, and I didn't think to get one as we left the theater.

I had an impression of the Elks, ordinarily a movie house, being more attractively decorated than usual, but was especially interested in the lineup of phonographs on the stage in front of the curtain. All the leading dealers had placed machines on display. The Victrola was exhibited by Heuser-Patterson; the Columbia Gramophone by the Seagle Furniture Company; the Brunswick by S. B. Steger, and a huge Chippendale Official Laboratory Model New Edison stood in the center and seemed to dwarf the others. It was displayed by the Stevens Furniture Company. I was proud that our Brunswick at home was exactly like the one Mr. Steger was displaying and was sure we had the best phonograph in the world. At that time I had never heard an Edison or an Edison record. When I did, my idolatry of the Brunswick was gone forever.

One of my father's fellow General Chemical workers came in and sat down beside him, and they talked while waiting for the curtain to rise. Although the United States had declared war on Germany only six days before, I don't remember hearing them mention the fighting in Europe. Instead, they talked baseball. The General Chemical Company had a string of plants throughout the country and each plant had its own ball team. Father and friend agreed that, thanks to Pulaski's having acquired a fine pitcher named Ralph Worrell, but always called "Jargo," the home team's prospects were good for winning the G. C. championship. And, to anticipate a few months, Pulaski did achieve the amazing feat—as the twins never grew tired of recalling—of going through the entire 1917 season without losing a game and finally defeating Bayonne, New Jersey, for the championship. Worrell was both the pitching and hitting star, batting .456 for the season—a percentage that the awe-stricken chatter of the twins has forever burned into my memory. When he was bought by the Baltimore Orioles, my brothers were sure he would go on to become one

of the greatest stars in baseball history, but an unkind fate stepped in and poor "Jargo," after doing splendidly in his first season with Baltimore, died in the flu epidemic of 1918.

As the time for the concert grew nearer, we began to hear the tinkle of a piano played by Teddy Morse, and the sounds of voices uplifted in scraps of practice singing, with the deep basso tones of John Meyer being especially prominent. One of the twins expressed suspicion that "they are just goin' to use records an' the men won't be here," but the one who had seen them get off of the train rebuked him. His suspicions were deepened, however, when just after the footlights had been turned up, there came from behind the curtain a chorus of rich male voices singing "Carry Me Back To Old Virginny." I was thrilled at the thought that they were singing James Bland's dear old song just for us, their only Virginia audience. Then the curtain slowly went up, and we were in the presence of, as the ad had said, "some of the world's greatest singers"—the Record Makers themselves!

#### V A Few Reflections About the Troupe

Before describing the concert, I must pause a few moments to reflect on the miracle that for the low cost of 75 cents I was privileged to see and hear so much remarkable talent—in the case of some of the artists, genius, might not be too strong a word. I can't imagine that there has ever been any other concert unit featuring the lighter type of music which included so much individual ability. And it was ability of a specialized kind. These men were the leading record makers because their gifts were exactly adapted to the techniques of singing or playing into a recording horn. Had Edison not invented the phonograph, they all, with the exception of "Teddy" Morse, probably would have been at best only minor figures in the American musical scene. But as recording artists they were supreme.

Then, too, they were such a varied group. Consider their backgrounds—Billy Murray, born in Philadelphia, was the son of an Irish-born blacksmith. Arthur Collins, also born in Philadelphia, had a Quaker sea captain for a father. Byron G. Harlan was born in a prairie schooner at Paris, Kansas, while his parents were traveling to South Dakota. John Meyer, of German descent, and born in New York City, had traveled with a circus band before becoming a singer. Vess L. Ossman, also of German descent, was the son of a baker in Hudson, New York. Young Vess made his first instrument by placing banjo strings on a bushel basket, and went on to win a New York championship by the time he was 20. Albert Campbell, a native New Yorker, was Irish and had begun his working career as an employee of the Corning Glass Works. Henry Burr, a Canadian of

Scotch-Irish descent, was a "child prodigy," singing with military bands at the age of 13. And Theodore Morse, from Washington, D. C., was an instinctive composer, who could read a newly submitted song lyric and beat out the tune on a table with his fingers, as he did when he wrote "Down In Jungle Town" while vacationing in Maine.

Six members of the troupe would be included in almost anybody's list of the 15 or 20 greatest pioneer recorders—Murray, Burr, Collins, Harlan, Campbell and Ossman—and the first four would almost automatically go into a list of the greatest half dozen, with Ada Jones and Len Spencer, or perhaps Cal Stewart, in place of Spencer, taking the other two places.

Some of the artists used their real names, while others had modified them or, as in the case of Burr, taken a new one altogether. His real name was Harry McClaskey, and he also made records both as McClaskey and as Irving Gillette. Albert Campbell's full name was Albert Charles Campbell, and Collins' was Arthur Francis Collins. Byron G. Harlan was christened George Byron Harlan, and Vess L. Ossman had begun life as Sylvester Louis Ossman. Billy Murray had shortened his original name of William Thomas Murray. John Meyer was John Henry Meyer, and Morse was using his real name.

If, as the dictionaries say, middle-age is the period between 30 and 60, then all these performers were middle-aged. Henry Burr, the youngest, was 35. Billy Murray and John Meyer were pushing, but had not quite reached, 40. Teddy Morse was 43; Albert Campbell, 44; Vess Ossman 48; Arthur Collins, 53; and Byron Harlan, the oldest, 55.

A curious pattern may be observed in the way these men died. Ossman, the banjoist, was the first to go in 1923, followed by Morse, the only other instrumentalist, in 1924. There was not another death among the troupe personnel until 1933, when Collins died. His partner, Harlan, followed in 1936. Burr died in 1941 and his tenor duet partner, Campbell, in 1947. The sole remaining member of the Sterling Trio and the Peerless Quartet—Meyer, passed on in 1949; and Billy Murray, the last of the Eight, in 1954. Morse died of pneumonia; Campbell, Burr and Meyer of lingering illnesses, and the others of heart attacks.

At the time the concert was given, all the performers appeared to be at their peak, but some were, or soon would be in a decline. Murray, Burr, and the Trio and Quartet went on to increasing popularity for several years, but the World War made a sharp change in public tastes, and the "coon songs" and ragtime numbers which Collins and Harlan had sung with such great success were soon on their way out, to be succeeded by jazz. (The first jazz record, by "The Original Dixieland Jazz Band," ap-

peared less than a month after the concert was given, in the May, 1917 Victor supplement). After the end of 1918, Collins and Harlan never made another Victor or Columbia record, although they continued to sing several years longer for smaller companies. Ossman, who couldn't get along with Burr and didn't remain long as a member of the organization, being succeeded by Van Eps, had made about all the records he was to make, and Morse, though he wrote several fairly successful songs during the next few years, had already composed all his big hits. The influence of war and jazz was soon to make a drastic change in the American popular song scene.

But on that night of April 12, 1917, probably not a person in the audience had ever heard the word "jazz," and no one had any suspicion of the many other changes that were to occur.

So, having obliged with this brief overture concerning the performers, let's raise the curtain and let the concert begin.

On with the show!

(To be continued)

### "MC CORMACK MEMORIAL"

(Continued from page 29)

fame, McCormack's was more of a steady, secure climb to glory on a ladder of faith, hard work and determination. Born in Athlone, on June 14, 1884, at the age of eighteen and without a lesson in singing, John won a gold medal at the Feis Ceoil, the yearly music festival in Dublin. Shortly after, in 1904, he was engaged to sing in the Irish Village at the St. Louis Exposition. By this time his ambition was to take up singing seriously. Recommended to Vincenzo Sabatini, in Milan, he was readily accepted by the Maestro. During this period his recording career began when on a visit to London he made eight cylinders for Edison and, later, ten for the Edison Bell. These were followed by his G & T's, Sterling "Special" cylinders, Pathé's, Odeon's, and, finally, Victor's and HMV's. In December 1905, McCormack made his operatic debut in "L'Amico Fritz," in Savona, a little town near Genoa. Well received, he was engaged to do ten performances of "Faust" at the Teatro Verdi, in Santa Croce sull'Arno. Here, by the way, he was known as Giovanni Fali (an Italian adaptation of Foley, Countess McCormack's maiden name) because of the difficulty for the Italians to pronounce his Irish surname. From there on, outlining sketchily John's career: On Oct. 15, 1907, he first appeared at the Covent Garden, as Turiddu in "Cavalleria Rusticana." During 1909: in the spring he bowed at the San Carlo in Naples, as the Duke in Rigoletto; went back to Covent Garden for "La Bohème" with Melba, "La Traviata"

with Tetrizzini and Sammarco, an appearance as Cassio in "Otello" with Melba, Zenatello and Scotti; and then on to New York for the opening of the Manhattan Opera season on November 10, in "La Traviata," again with his colleagues Tetrizzini and Sammarco. In the course of the 1910-11 season, he sang with the Boston Opera: in "Cavalleria" (Dec. 2) with "Carmen Melis," "La Bohème" (Dec. 3) with Alice Nielsen, another "Bohème" (Dec. 15) with Melba and Sammarco; and with the Chicago Opera, of which he also made part later, in the 1915-16, 1917-18 and 1918-19 seasons. His debut at the Metropolitan took place on November 29, 1910, in "La Traviata" with Melba and Gelfi. There his name re-appeared in the roster from 1912 to 1914 and, again, from 1917 to 1919, when he did "La Bohème" (Nov. 16, 1917) with Alda, De Luca, Didur and de Seguroia, and "Madame Butterfly" (Feb. 4, 1918) with Farrar, Fornia and Scotti. Meanwhile, in 1911, he visited Australia with Melba's own operatic company. Also, that same year, McCormack became a member of the newly-formed Chicago-Philadelphia Opera (formerly Manhattan Opera but no longer under Hammerstein), where he had the distinction of creating the part of Lieutenant Paul Merrill in Victor Herbert's "Natoma," with Mary Garden, Lillian Grenville, Mario Sammarco, Armand Crabbé, Gustave Huberdeau and Hector Dufranne in the cast. Aside from the above operas, his repertoire also included leading tenor roles in "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Tosca," "Don Giovanni" and "La Fille du Régiment," among others.

Numerous were the honors conferred upon John McCormack during his brilliant career, but it was when he was made Papal Count that his devout Catholic heart was gladdened beyond words. After he died in Dublin, on September 16, 1945, John was buried, as he wished, in the resplendent scarlet and gold Papal uniform, of which he was so infinitely and humbly proud.

As McCormack's operatic activities lessened, his work in recital increasingly absorbed his interest, until he completely dedicated himself to the concert stage and, luckily for us, to making records. Of the many discs he made for Victor and HMV, a number for some reason remained unpublished. Amazingly enough, some of these escaped destruction and are now being presented in the AGS "McCormack Memorial" issue, along with several of his most sought-after discs. And what better way is there to honor the memory of one as dearly loved as John McCormack? Here we find him oozing youthful liquid gold in his acousticals, and follow his vocal development progressively in the electricals, up to the age 58. The smoothly carved, cameo-like phrasing for which he was justly famed is displayed to the best advantage in two Donaudy songs, and in the Lieder

of Schumann, Schubert and Brahms. To me it is always a gratifying experience to hear him in Art Songs, for while retaining the needed severity of line, he invests them with a warmth of color, a "bite" they are often robbed of by an erroneously conceived "classical" handling which forgets that they are musical pictures in the highest degree and must be interpreted as such. Of the electricals, particularly impressive are "The Little Boats," "The Dawn Will Break," "Passing By," "Charm Me Asleep," "When I Awake," "The Blind Ploughman," "At the Mid Hour of Night," "An Chloe," "Under the Spell of the Rose" and "Fallen Leaf." In most of the electrical recordings the tenor's voice is fresh and lustrous; a few of the later ones betray his age but reveal how well he knew and practiced what every aging singer should always bear in mind, i.e., stricter application than ever of "the school" when vocal limitations arise; but in all discs without exception—he is the one and only John McCormack!

### ANNIVERSARY RECORDS

In 1946 the Bormand Music Box Company of 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y., began making their first phonograph recordings of old music box tunes. As the demand for these has grown the company has continued to improve them. For the tenth anniversary of the first recordings they have published some High Fidelity 33 1/3 Microgroove recordings of Christmas songs, old waltzes, folk songs, children's songs and others. They also have 78 rpm and 45 rpm recordings. We recently had the pleasure of hearing "Music Box Waltz Melodies." This disc has a total of 26 old waltz tunes which adds up to 45 minutes of delightful music. If these recordings don't bring back the old music boxes we don't know what will. Some of the tunes on this recording are: Merry Widow Waltz, On a Sunday Afternoon, After the Ball, Skaters' Waltz, Edelweiss Glide and many other popular songs of an earlier era. The music comes from two Swiss cylinder music boxes and four of the disc music boxes including the 20 disc Regina.

Perhaps it is poetic justice that the invention of the phonograph by Thomas A. Edison which caused the eclipse of the music box in the early part of this century may be the means of causing renewed interest in these fine old instruments.

—Virginia Ruth Smith.

—o—

Sentiment is the poetry of the imagination.

—Lamartine

—o—

Your sole contribution to the sum of things is yourself.

—Frank Crane

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## THE RECORD MAKERS GIVE A CONCERT IN PULASKI, VIRGINIA, 40 YEARS AGO

(Continued from the April issue)

By "Q. X. Z."

"Guest conducting" for JIM WALSH

### VI. THE CURTAIN GOES UP AND THE CONCERT BEGINS

As the last strains of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" died away, the curtain slowly ascended and revealed a group of men scattered informally about the stage. I tried hard to make myself realize that at last I was having an experience I had never, until a few weeks ago, had any idea of enjoying. I was seeing some of my favorite recording artists in the flesh. Although the names of most of these men had been familiar to me since I was a tiny girl, I had never really thought of them as ordinary mortals in spite of my dreams of growing up to marry Henry Burr. They had seemed like Olympian gods, remote and aloof and far removed from any chance of my ever beholding them. Yet here they were and here I was!

As I strove to realize my good fortune, one of the twins whispered indignantly: "Hey, they're cheatin'—ain't but seven guys on the stage!" I hurriedly counted and surely enough there were only seven, including Theodore Morse, already seated at the piano. While I was

wondering who was missing, the group onstage started singing "Are You From Dixie?" (to my ears one of the best popular songs ever written) and I felt myself tingling, for they were singing it just like the Peerless Quartet did on our Pathe record at home. It WAS the Peerless Quartet singing and they were using the same arrangement as the one on the record.

A tenor voice began, "Hello there, stranger, how do you do?" and I gaspingly recognized it as Henry Burr's. A baritone replied, "You'll pardon me, but I don't know you," giving a sort of ragtime break between the last four words, and I knew it was Arthur Collins. They continued their duet until the chorus was reached, and Campbell and Meyer joined in. The song was concluded to hearty applause, and the seven seated themselves in front of the footlights.

During a brief pause I took occasion to collect my thoughts and find out how the artists compared in reality with the way I had imagined them. I was surprised at the sheer bulk of Collins and Harlan.

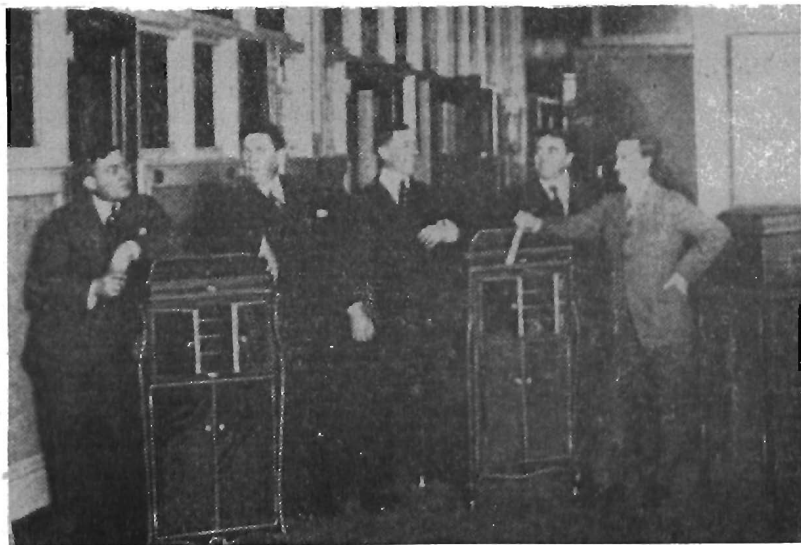
Both were tall, fat men, and Collins was dark and swarthy. When he sat down he blinked his eyes and gave what I thought a silly looking smile. It made me suspect that at some time he had been an end man in a minstrel show and had unconsciously fallen into his old-time black-face comedy grin. Albert Campbell had jet black hair and was a surprisingly little fellow, not much over five feet tall. John Meyer, whom I had recognized because of his bass voice, was tall, slender and getting bald. Teddy Morse, as best I could tell from his seated position, was short and wore glasses. He kept a smile on his face throughout the concert and seemed to be enjoying himself. That left only one man and I wasn't sure whether he was Billy Murray or Vess Ossman. Since he looked to me the youngest of the group and I had always imagined Murray a perpetual 25, in spite of the years he had been making records, I decided it was probably Billy.

But my idol, Henry Burr! One look at him and my dream picture was devastatingly demolished. Instead of the tall, slender, black-haired fairy prince of whom I had dreamed, my hero appeared as an unmistakably fat man of middle height. Whatever the original color of his hair, it was now almost entirely gray. His face was puffy, with bags under the eyes, and I thought his complexion appeared pasty. He looked to me to be over 50, whereas, as I have already said, he was only 35.

It was Burr who arose, with what seemed to me a look of mingled sadness and annoyance on his face. I wondered if he was provoked because the eighth man wasn't on stage. In a somber voice, he said: "Kate O'Donohue," sung by Mr. Albert Campbell," then sat down again. My romantic instincts got the best of me, and I decided from his seemingly sad bearing that he had been "disappointed in love," or as the teenagers would say today, "was carrying a torch." The thought was nonsense, since he was happily married, but that was something I didn't know. Whatever the reason for his expression, I can't remember seeing him or Al Campbell smile the entire evening, but I have been told Campbell was among the most cheerful of men.

Campbell walked to the center of the stage and in his exquisitely high lyric tenor voice began singing "Kate O'Donohue," which the program described as "an old Irish song." I imagine it was a number he had recorded on cylinders back in the '90's, but the only record I know of that he made of it was a Paroquette, for the Par-o-ket Record Company headed by Henry Burr. Nothing was said during the program to indicate that Burr, besides singing for virtually all other phonograph manufacturers, had a small (and short-lived) record company of his own.

The song had a pretty waltz tune



Five of the Record Makers in the story of the J. H. Troup Music Co., Harrisburg, Pa., in April, 1917. Left to right: Morse, Harlan, Ossman, Collins and Campbell, Burr, Murray and Meyer were not present.



and Campbell sang it beautifully, but it was not the sort of thing to warm up a Southwest Virginia audience and its reception was lukewarm. Little Al then sang an encore, which I'm ashamed to say I can't remember, but I have been told he ordinarily used "Little Mother of Mine" for that purpose.

While he was singing, a short, rather stocky man, appearing to be perhaps five feet six, came in from backstage, and sat down. Once he coughed, but carefully put his hand over his mouth to keep the sound from carrying. When Campbell had finished and had taken his bow — for many days afterward I was fascinated by recalling the intent, unsmiling appearance of his face as he inclined his head — the late arrival arose, came up front and began to speak.

#### VII BILLY MURRAY TAKES OVER

As soon as a broad smile flashed across his face and words came from his lips I knew this was the twins' hero of heroes, Billy Murray! His speaking voice seemed a trifle husky and was a bit deeper than the one we were used to on records. One of the twins whispered: "Huh, this feller don't sound much like I thought he did!"

Billy began by saying he wanted to make an apology. Somewhere between Atlanta and Pulaski, he said, the trunks of two of the members of the troupe had been lost and they were compelled to appear in street clothes instead of the evening attire the other six were wearing. (Billy himself was one of the unfortunates, and the other was Ossman.) He then referred affectionately to Al Campbell as "the young fellow" (incidentally giving the wrong impression that Al, in spite of his coal black hair, was the oldest member of the outfit) and said: "When I first started in this business in 1897—"

That was another bit of disillusion. If Billy Murray had begun making records twenty years ago he couldn't possibly be the 25 my family had always imagined him. All of us thought he had begun about ten years before, at the age of 15. At once I overestimated his real age by half a dozen years by telling myself he might be forty-five, and the other twin said:

"Huh, this feller's older'n I thought he was!"

"When I first started in this business in 1897," Billy went on, "The Young Fellow" was at the height of his career, and judging by the way

he sounds tonight he's still going good." It was also disillusioning to know that Al Campbell had been making records before 1897, even though he still appeared young.

Billy, as master of ceremonies, then introduced Henry Burr and John Meyer as a duet team, but I don't remember what he said about them. I'm sure he didn't repeat the crack he had made at an earlier concert. Observing that Burr was bow-legged and Meyer knock-kneed, he had told the audience: "When they stand side by side their knees spell OX." This had annoyed both Henry and John, just as Collins and Harlan had resented his jokingly calling attention to their weight by tagging them "the Half-Ton Duo."

Burr and Meyer sang Frederick F. Bullard's "Hunting Song from 'King Arthur,'" and in spite of the conventional black they were wearing I somehow got the impression they had on hunting costumes and were brandishing whips. My family didn't go in much for "high-brow music" and we afterwards agreed we considered this the poorest number of the program. It got scanty applause from an audience which, except for its appreciation of "Are You From Dixie?" hadn't yet warmed up. There was, of course, an encore, but again I don't remember what. For some reason, my recollection of the second half of the concert is much clearer than of the first. Why, oh why, didn't I save a program? What I'd give for one now!

Arthur Collins was next, and Billy confided to the listeners that Collins was known to the other troupe members as "Old Joe, the Pirate" — "Uncle Joe" from the success he'd had in singing one of Teddy Morse's songs, "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo," and the "pirate" because he was so dark and swarthy and his father had owned a ship.

Collins sang something — again

I can't recall what — and then Billy said that by special request, his encore would be what it always was, "The Preacher and the Bear," or "The Grizzly's Dessert," as we call it on Long Island." And then occurred one of the high spots of the program as Collins swung into the irresistible lilt of probably the most popular old-time comedy record ever made, with his fellow troupers, sitting in a semi-circle around him, joining in the chorus in a way that made the theatre reverberate. He was rapturously applauded, and the house warmed up and stayed warm from that time. At the conclusion all the members of the troupe filed off the stage.

Billy next appeared alone, walk-

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## ANNOUNCEMENT!

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myc

## ANTIQUE MUSIC BOXES

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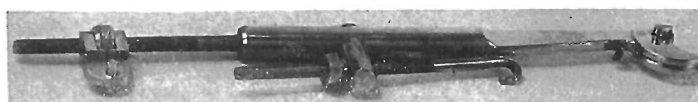
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ing in time to something that Morse always played for his entrances. It sounded like a few bars from "Hail Columbia," but probably wasn't. He said "The Nickle-Plate - oh pardon me, the Sterling Trio" would be next heard from. I had been wondering who the members of the Sterling Trio were, since they were not identified in the record catalogs, and was interested to see that they were Campbell, Burr and Meyer — the Peerless Quartet with Collins dropped out.

Once more my memory doesn't function. I can't recall what they sang, but since "Georgia Moon," their first Victor record, had been highly popular, they probably began with it. I suspect, but again I can't be certain, that they concluded with "Indiana," which was to be their biggest selling record of the year. We acquired it a few months later on a Pathe disc and considered it one of the most beautiful records in our collection.

### VIII VESS OSSMAN BRINGS DOWN THE HOUSE

Next occurred THE high spot of the evening. I can't remember what Billy said to introduce Vess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King," other than that he was known to his friends as "Plunks," but I observed my twin brother who adored Vess gazing at the stage with heaven in his eyes, while the Van Eps fancier tried to maintain a contemptuous indifference. Ossman, who as I have already said, looked surprisingly young, took a seat and tuned his banjo for what seemed an unconscionable time. But when he was satisfied with its condition, his fingers fairly flew across

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the strings as he swung into the rollicking melodies of his biggest selling record, one which we had in our collection, the "Turkey in the Straw Medley."

He began with "Dixie" and that was enough to set an audience of Southwestern Virginia mountain people half wild. He followed with "The Sailor's Hornpipe," "The Arkansas Traveler," and, finally, with "Turkey in the Straw," just as on his Victor record. Before he had struck the last notes of the favorite "Turkey" tune, the men in the audience were on their feet, yelling their heads off, and the women were shrieking hysterically. I was among those who were screaming — perhaps very much as the kids today do about Elvis Presley. My father and his General Chemical friend were on their feet, shouting for all they were worth. I looked at the twins. They too were up and yelling. The one who preferred Van Eps and pretended to disdain Ossman was making as much noise as anyone else. For five minutes at least the Elks Theatre was a bedlam of shouting, shrieking and hand-clapping, while Ossman, perhaps somewhat surprised at the ovation he was getting, looked positively boyish as he smilingly took dozens of bows.

In most other parts of the country, a banjoist probably would not have scored the individual triumph of the concert, but the banjo was, and still is, the favorite instrument of Southwestern Virginians, and when a man who played as well as Ossman did led off with a medley of beloved Southern tunes — well, the sky was the limit. Finally, he again seated himself and obliged with his encore, "A Footlight Favorite." When he finally left the stage, it is likely he had received the biggest reception of his entire career with the Record Makers.

### IX. I Hear My Hero

Billy Murray's smile was even broader as he emerged from the wings and said: "We will next hear from the 'matinee idol' of our troupe, Mr. Henry Burr." (Burr was also, of course, the organizer and manager, but Billy didn't mention that).

If the audience had shouted itself into a frenzy at the music of Vess Ossman's banjo, it gave Burr perhaps the greater tribute of almost unbroken silence. The puffy-faced gray-haired tenor began with "Somewhere a Voice is Calling." I have heard that song hundreds of times since, but never as my long-time idol, Henry Burr, sang it that night. The audience seemed to be holding its collective breath, although my father's friend did whisper, "He's got a perfect vocal chord!" The sweetness, the breath control, the expressiveness that the man who was to be known on radio many years afterward as "The Dean of Ballad Singers," put into that hackneyed ballad is something I shall never forget. When he finished there was sheer, trembling silence for a moment and then what

seemed a burst of almost reverent applause. He followed with "My Dreams," a Tosti song that was one of the few approaches to "high-brow" music in the entire concert, and did it with equal beauty. This was a favorite song of Burr's, one of which he had made Columbia and Zonophone records at the beginning of his career. Some weeks later, I bought the Victor record of "Somewhere a Voice" which he had made under his real name, Harry McClaskey, but in recorded form it didn't seem half as beautiful as it had direct from his throat on that enchanted April evening.

Billy Murray's smile stretched from ear to ear as he again appeared. "Next," he said, "is the only Red Seal artist in our troupe—the one who is making John McCormack and all the other matinee idols head for the tall timber—Billy Murray." The twins, both of whom came away from the theater with the impression that the short Mr. Murray was the tallest and most commanding appearing member of the ensemble, were in ecstasies with this bit of mock-boastful humor from one of the most modest of men. We all listened with joy as he sang in his own inimitable way three numbers, "He May Be Old But He's Got Young Ideas," "I've Got the Sweetest Girl in Maryland," and "Here Comes the Groom." I noticed there was no trace of the nasal quality that phonographs sometimes put into his records.

Billy also got an ovation. As the uproar died down, he said: "I have two announcements to make. The first is, you people certainly haven't (Continued on page 34)

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got handcuffs on. The second is, there will now be a short intermission."

### X. The Final Half Begins

During the ten-minute intermission, my father and his friend, after talking rapturously of Ossman's banjo playing and praising the troupe in general, resumed their discussion of the prospects for the Chemical baseball plant having a winning team. I sat twisting a handkerchief. I was happy, even if disillusioned in the appearance and ages of most of my demigods.

When the curtain went up again, Morse was back at the piano, and Billy walked over and laid a hand on his shoulder. "Next," he said, "we'll hear a medley of Teddy Morse's old song hits. This is Teddy," he added, and Morse turned and faced the audience, focusing a wide smile through his large glasses. Billy stood beside him and called out the titles of the songs as Teddy struck into the choruses. When he started "Dear Old Girl," Billy remarked: "He had to rehearse this one a week before he could play it." Of "Down In Jungle Town," he said: "This song made a big hit with the big game hunter, Theodore Roosevelt." "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag on His Old Banjo," brought the comment: "We ought to hear from Uncle Vess on this one," and, surely enough, Ossman, behind the scenes, played along with Morse. Other songs Teddy played were "A Little Boy in Blue," "Salvation Nell," "Arrah Wanna," "I've Taken Quite a Fancy to You," "Keep a Little Cozy Corner in Your Heart For Me," "Bobbins' Up and Down" and "Mo-t-h-e-r, a Word That Means the World to Me." I wondered why Burr hadn't sung the latter, since it had been one of his biggest selling records. The Morse medley was enough to convince the audience that Teddy had really written his share of big hits.

The program, I imagine, was beginning to run a little over schedule, for Billy contented himself on his next appearance with saying, "Campbell and Burr. Duets," Little Al and Big Henry first struck into "Where the Black-Eyed Susans Grow," which was their duet record in the April Victor list, and for an encore gave a number that was soon to sweep the nation, "For Me And My Gal." A few months later Pathé issued it sung by them. We bought the record and on listening to it on our Brunswick it seemed to me the reproduction was absolutely perfect—precisely as I had heard it coming from the black-haired little fellow and the bulky big fellow on the stage. A touch of comedy which I imagine few of the audience caught came when Campbell and Burr were walking off stage. Just before they disappeared, Campbell, walking behind his big partner, kicked him, and Burr reached down, picked him up and carried him behind the scenes. That was the only thing either did

the whole evening that seemed to indicate a sense of humor.

### XI. Billy Murray's Private Joke

When Billy Murray next appeared he was smiling as though at something funny that had just occurred to him. He said: "Next on the program is a bass solo by the only member of our troupe who has ever been able to go a week without taking a drink—Mr. John Meyer."

My mother gave a little gasp of disapproval. "I wouldn't have thought any of these fine singers drank!" she said to my father. I have no way of knowing whether the remark was one of Billy's stock witticisms or whether it was spontaneous, but from the broad smile long tall, bald John Meyer wore all the time he was singing, I suspect it was something he had just heard for the first time. (It occurs to me now that Burr and Meyer were the only members of the troupe who sang from music, although of course Morse had a stack of it on the piano). Meyer sang superbly what I have since learned was his standard lead-off number, "Keep the Home Fires Burning." Then in his deep, resonant voice, he announced: "Mr. Morse's latest success—'Love's Lullaby,'" pronouncing "lullaby" as if it ended with a short i, instead of a long i, sound.

"Sing Me Love's Lullaby," to give it its full name, was a beautiful, dreamy song, for which Teddy's wife had written the words under the pen name of Dorothy Terriss. She had met Morse as a girl of 15 or 16 when she brought him the words of a song, "Girlie, I Love You," and asked him to set it to music. He did, and it was recorded for Victor by his old friend, Billy Murray. (The first car Billy ever owned he bought from Morse). Within a few years they were married, and Mrs. Morse had since written the words of most of her husband's songs under the assumed names of D. A. Esrom and Dorothy Terriss. (Esrom was Morse spelled backward).

I understand that in succeeding concerts, Morse himself gave a talk, relating interesting anecdotes in connection with the composing of his song hits, but he didn't say a word on this occasion. He also could have surprised the audience if he had wished by giving a violin solo, for he was a skilled violinist as well as pianist. As for the remark about Meyers' being the only trouper who could go a week without a drink, that was just a sly dig and a private joke of Billy's. Most of the members, including Murray, I have since learned, were tee-totalers, and Meyer was the only one whose fondness for the bottle caused Burr any worry.

### XII. The Last Part of the Concert

After Meyer came Byron G. Harlan, introduced by Murray as "a neighbor of Thomas A. Edison in West Orange, New Jersey, and the only member of the troupe who can

call Mr. Edison 'Tom' to his face without being thrown out." Harlan, a specialist in "rube" songs, sang "He's Getting Too Darn Big for a One-Horse Town" and "Way Down East Where I Belong." While he sang the latter, Al Campbell sat nearby in a chair and blew a tin whistle at an appropriate point. The genial Byron G.'s rustic witticisms went over big.

Billy Murray re-appeared to announce the Peerless Quartet. He pretended to get his tongue twisted, and said: "The Beerless - Tearless - Fearless - Peerless—that's it—the Peerless Quartet."

Then occurred what seemed to be the only temporary hitch in the smooth running of the performance. Burr and Meyer walked over to the piano and looked at some music—something Campbell and Collins apparently hadn't expected them to do for they remained in the center of the stage. The audience tittered and Collins, to ease the interlude, began doing a ridiculous shuffling dance—perhaps one he had done in his minstrel days, if he really had been a burnt cork performer. Meyer and Burr returned, and the quartet sang a medley of songs they had recorded, including, "Is There Still Room For Me 'Neath the Old Apple Tree?" "Oh, Joe, With Your Fiddle and Bow, You Stole My Heart Away," and "Arrah, Go On, I'm Gonna Go Back To Oregon."

About two hours had now gone into history since the performance began, and when Billy Murray once more walked forth he announced that the next act would be the last before the "grand finale." It was Collins and Harlan. "Hot dog!" exclaimed my father's friend. "That's what I've been waiting for—Collins and Harlan!"

The two veteran comedians may have passed the high point of their popularity, but they were at the top of their form as they sang, first, one of their best selling records, "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner" (for which Teddy Morse had written the music to the words of Arthur Fields and Earl Carroll), and then perhaps their biggest all-time favorite, which occupied the back of Collins' Victor record of "Preacher and the Bear." If you know your old records you will recognize the title as "Bake Dat Chicken Pie." Smiling broadly and looking affectionately at each other, they gave the black-face dialog from the middle of the record about finding an egg with a woman's name and address on it, and the words, "Please write." However, Collins explained to Harlan, he decided not to write, "because after I ate the egg I decided that by this time she must be a very old lady!" The audience roared, although most of us knew the joke by heart.

Then came the finale. The entire troupe appeared on stage, and with Billy Murray in front of the others and waving a baton, they gave a heart-stirring rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner." The last thing we

saw as the curtain came down was that uniquely talented group standing "on center," giving forth with what is now our National Anthem, and with the great little comedian beating time. It was the last glimpse most of us were ever to have of a distinguished group of artists whom we considered had done Pulaski an honor by appearing in its one theater.

On our way home we saw Mr. Patterson at work in his jewelry store. Although the Victor dealer, he hadn't come to the concert. We wondered how he could bear to stay away. I remember my mother insisted that the town officials should have given a banquet after the performance in the Eight's honor, but my father replied with considerable logic that in all probability "the boys were dead tired when they finished a show, and had rather go to their hotel room, or catch their train, and get some sleep."

### XIII. In Conclusion

I thought about, talked about, and dreamed about that concert for months. Within a few years I married and moved away from Pulaski. Never afterward did I catch a glimpse of even one member of that long-gone troupe (a photo of the eight members appeared in the July, 1954, *HOBBIES*), but there have been innumerable nights on which I have dreamed I am back in the old Elks Theater and waiting for the curtain to go up so I can hear another concert by the Record Makers. Always I am happy, but always I wake before the show begins, with a sadly let down feeling of frustration. I still consider that concert an even greater event in my life than my wedding day.

A few months after the concert, Mr. Morse published a beautiful song called "Old Virginny Days." I have always hoped and believed it was inspired by his visit to Pulaski. I like to imagine that when Billy Murray died, 37 years after that concert was given, and became the last of the eight to pass from this earth, he got together in the next world with his old friends and they gave a concert that won the plaudits of the innumerable millions who have gone before us. For all any of us know, they are now regularly singing their hearts out in a better and happier state of being.

I'm sorry, Mr. Walsh, about the lapses and gaps in my memory as I have tried to describe that concert, but, after all, 40 years is a long, long time!

Sincerely yours,

"Q. X. Z."

# Old Vehicles



Mr. Hooks servicing a car at his station at Geff, Ill., on Highway No. 45

## Hubcap Hobby

By BERYL RINEHART

Several years ago, H. R. Hooks, who operates a service station at Geff, Ill., on U.S. Highway No. 45, began collecting auto hubcaps. It all started by buying hubcaps from highway crewmen who would find them along the highways during duty hours. Other people soon learned where they could sell their old hubcaps. Hooks lined the inside walls of his service building with the collections until space ran out, then, he hung them all around on the outside. Motorists, driving by, spotting hubcaps they needed to replace ones they had lost, began stopping to see if they could buy what they wanted. So, Hooks began selling, realizing a nice profit.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Gene Greene

(Accompanied on the piano by Charley Straight)

By JIM WALSH

A recent biographical sketch in this series told the life story of the favorite tenor, Gene Austin. On the theory that one good Gene should succeed another, I have decided to relate next what I know about the one-time "Ragtime King," the veteran, long dead vaudeville comedian, Gene Greene. In this way I shall set down the salient details of the career of a picturesque personality and shall also answer the queries I occasionally receive as to why I advertise in *HOBBIES* that I will pay \$3 each for any of Greene's Pathé discs not already in my collection. After months of advertising I still have only four of the double-faced records Greene made for Pathé in London well over 40 years ago.

Gene Greene and his records have a peculiarly personal interest for me not only because he was an accomplished comedian with a distinctive style but also because he was the second recording artist with whom I ever talked.

In June, 1928, I was visiting in Montgomery, Ala., as the guest of a friend who, at a remarkably youthful age, was state editor of the *Advertiser*. Soon after my arrival I learned that the next change of program at the Grand Theater, which featured vaudeville mixed with movies, would have Gene Greene as the headliner. I was excited at the thought of seeing and hearing the famous singer and composer of "The King of the Bungaloes" in person. My friend and I were in a car parked near the Grand and I remarked: "I see Gene Greene is on tomorrow's show. I'd certainly like to see him."

"Well," was the reply, "look up the street and you can see his car right now." I looked, and saw an expensive appearing parked vehicle adorned with a sign testifying that it belonged to "The Human Singing Machine," Gene Greene, on a triumphal coast-to-coast tour."

"And," said my friend dryly, after I had sufficiently admired this modestly retiring bit of press agentry, "if you want to see Gene Greene, look over there in front of the box office. See a man talking with the theater manager? Well, that's Gene Greene—that's the old boy himself!"

If you can imagine the emotions of a present-day teenager unexpectedly vouchsafed a vision of Elvis Presley, you can visualize the emotions of young Mr. Walsh, a phonograph lover since infancy, as he gazed upon the rubicund features of the erstwhile Ragtime King now transformed into a Singing Machine. And this is how I recall Gene Greene after all these years:

The comedian was rather short and stout with an unmistakable double chin, as he stood with the side of his face toward me. He was smoking a cigarette in a long holder, was smiling broadly as he talked with the manager, whose name I have forgotten, and he occasionally waved his right hand rhythmically to emphasize some point in the conversation. I thought he looked to be about 48 years of age. (As I know now, he was 50). He was rather loudly dressed in typically prosperous vaudeville fashion and appeared in high spirits. The manager, a tall, handsome, gray-haired man, seemed to be listening attentively but seldom smiled.

The state editor and I watched the pair of "show biz" personalities a short time, then returned to the *Advertiser* office. I remarked, "I'd sure like to talk to Gene Greene a few minutes. I've got a couple of questions I want to ask him." My friend replied: "Well, you go to see the manager early tomorrow afternoon, tell him what you want and he'll fix it up for you."

### II. I Meet Gene Greene

About an hour before the performance was to begin Friday afternoon, I called on the manager, told him I had long admired Gene Greene at a distance and would like to talk with him "for just a minute." The manager surveyed the excited youth before him with a look of tolerant amusement, and genially replied: "All right, go to the stage door and tell the doorman I said to pass you in. But, remember, this isn't to be a visit. Don't take up Gene's time longer than a few minutes."

I don't remember talking with the doorman, but I do recall going back stage and being confronted by a tall, dark-eyed woman who was running through a song with her accompanist.

I later recognized her as Lillian Gordon, a comedienne who had the "deuce spot" on the program. When I asked if Mr. Greene were in she said he hadn't come yet and added, "Any message?" I said I merely wished to speak to him for a moment and would wait outside.

A few minutes later Gene Greene himself came down the alley. He was wearing rectangular shaped spectacles that struck me as looking odd and he appeared younger in full face than in profile. As I stepped forward and said, "Mr. Greene?" he hesitated for a moment and then in a voice that seemed to have been carved from ice cubes replied, "Yes." I suspected he suspected I was a panhandler.

To disabuse him of that impression I said: "I'll take only a few moments of your time, but I have something I'd like to ask you. Do you know where I can get any of the Pathé records you made years ago?"

At that unexpected inquiry a broad smile almost split the comedian's face in two. "Why," he said, "I made those back in 1912 and '13 when I was in England. They haven't been sold in this country for years, but you can still get them from the Pathé Phonograph Company, London, England."

The ice cubes broken, I went on to tell Gene that I had long admired him through his Victor and Columbia records, but this was the first chance I had ever had to hear him in person. A flicker of suspicion crossed his face as he said, "I've often appeared here at the Grand."

"Yes," I replied, "but I'm just temporarily in Montgomery. My home is in a small town in Virginia." I mentioned that my favorite among his records was "The King of the Bungaloes," a nonsense song which he had written in collaboration with his former accompanist, Charley Straight. He smiled affectionately at the mention of Straight and told me, what I already knew, that Straight played the accompaniments for all his English Pathé records. "Charley," he added, "is doing well in the dance band business now. He's had a band for years."

Gene asked my name and when I replied "Walsh," he didn't quite catch

it and asked, "Wallace?" When I said "No, Walsh," he extended his hand and said, "I'm certainly glad to know you." "Are you going to be with us this afternoon?" he asked, and when I replied nothing could keep me away that day from the Grand, he said: "Be there and I'll sing 'The King of the Bungaloes' especially for you." Naturally, I felt elated at this mark of esteem, and we parted with cordial good will. As we clasped hands, neither of us suspected that I was destined to be Gene's biographer—probably the only one he will ever have.

### III. Gene Greene's Performance

I spread the word among several of my *Advertiser* friends that Gene Greene was going to sing his best known composition specially for me and there was an irruption of newspaper personnel into the theater.

The entire bill was good and I enjoyed it all, but naturally, I was impatient for Gene to appear, which he finally did, in the next to closing spot. I was eager to see just what sort of a performance he would give because a few years before a critic for *The Billboard* had harshly criticized him. As I remember, the writer said: "Gene Greene sang 'Sweet Mama, Papa's Getting Mad,' then used a lot of old and decrepit stuff that had people leaving the house. As an encore he did his famous Greek waiter stunt which convulsed those who were left. If Gene would cut out the antiques and bring his act up-to-date, he would be in next to closing, where he rightfully belongs, instead of high up on the bill." I reflected that, since Gene was the featured act on the Grand's program, he must have changed his ways, but it would be perfectly all right with me if he wanted to sing his old ragtime numbers—

## JIM WALSH WANTS TO BUY

Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (mostly prior to 1915); back copies of phonograph publications and all sorts of reference material dealing with the history and development of sound recording that will provide background information for

### Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Please do not send me lists of records for sale. I am not interested in buying phonographs and records by mail and do not want "The Victor Book of the Opera." Do not submit material without being instructed by me. I will not pay for or return unsolicited items. If I do not reply I already have the material you offer. I am not a dealer and have nothing to sell. Address:

**JIM WALSH**

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particularly "The King of the Bungaloes"—rather than the current song hits. Even then, I preferred the old songs to the new.

Greene's act opened with a beautiful girl at the piano in the place of the quondam Charley Straight, and a red-haired boy, wearing a Western Union outfit, in the center of the stage. The boy exclaimed, "All right, Genie, all right, Mr. Greene, come on out here, for here's where you sing those songs!" and "Genie" entered to a heavy hand that showed he was a great favorite in Montgomery. He came striding on stage wearing a straw hat, blue coat and white trousers and swinging a cane. As he appeared, the house orchestra paced by a white-haired violinist struck up "Away Down South in Heaven," and Gene began to sing it lustily. I thought he looked elated, as though our talk had given him a "lift."

I heard only a few bars before I realized with disappointment that his voice had little resemblance to the one I knew on records. It contained a husky quality that I had noticed in our conversation, and he mentioned during one of his monologs that he had a cold. The cold may have accounted for the husky sound or it may be that his voice had suffered from many years of use. Conceivably, too, he had changed his style and was singing in the stentorian shouting manner that characterized Al Jolson, then at the peak of his popularity. For a reason that will appear later, the latter supposition perhaps combined with the cold, was probably the logical solution.

I told myself that Gene had probably sung "Away Down South in Heaven" to flatter his Deep South audience, and I suspected he chose his next number, "Stay Out of the South (If You Want to Miss a Heaven On Earth)" for the same reason. Both were good routine popular songs but with no element of comedy. Gene then introduced his assistants. The boy was Bobby Koyle and the girl he referred to as "Little Miss Frances." They were both from Dallas, Texas, and I wonder where they are and what they are doing today. Bobby was a mouth harp virtuoso, and the girl, besides being a capable pianist, was also a good guitar player. (The newspaper review, at least, says she played a guitar, but it seems to me now the instrument was really a ukulele). Her costume, when she came on for her string music solo, was extremely abbreviated, which didn't detract from her allure.

Gene, besides singing, told a series of stories, many of which, occasionally interspersed with profanity, were surprisingly off-color for the vaudeville stage. Some of the other acts on the program also used "blue" material which wouldn't have been tolerated in the great days of "vaude." But, though we didn't suspect it at the time, vaudeville was already dying. The following Sunday another

theater gave the first exhibition of talking movies ever seen in Montgomery—an event that pointed to the unfortunately certain death of what, at its best, was probably the cleanest and most delightful form of light amusement the American theatrical public has known, vaudeville.

Some of Greene's jokes seemed to have a mildly anti-Jewish bias, though they may not have been so intended. He mentioned someone's asking him if he had trouble finding his way around the hotel in which he was staying, and he had replied that he "had enough Yiddish to get around the lobby." He got a big laugh with a story about a little Jewish boy who was asked where he wanted to go when he died, and he replied, "to hades — because papa says business has gone to h-l and I want to go where the business is." His remark that Al Smith was sure to be chosen president because "there are enough Smiths in the telephone directory to elect him" got only tepid applause. Alabama in those days was a hotbed of Ku Kluxery and anti-Catholic sen-

(Continued on page 33)

### VIOLINS

TO SETTLE ESTATE—Sell for best offer (large type violin) made March, 1716. Needs reglueing and refinishing. Many other articles, books and a clock. Stamped envelope, please. — Mrs. John Winkelman, R. #1, Scotts, Mich. jcl462

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Edison, Concert, Opera, Gem, and Alva models, also U.S. Cylinder Phonograph. Write J. W. Thornhill, Box 284, Abington, Va. au8633

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Edison, Victor and Columbia Phonographs. Hundreds of Cylinder and Disc Records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or Disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppertoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. jly3886

RARE PHONOGRAPHS for sale. Part of my personal collection is for sale, such as: Edison Opera, Berliner, Edison Concert, Columbia Grand, Pathe, Columbia coin-operated machines and others. Now is your chance to get that rare machine. 10c for list of phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3867

FOR SALE many nice Phonograph items: Pictures, Articles, by "One of the world's largest private collectors of Antique Phonographs.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. au3483

FOR SALE: Learn value of phonographs 2nd list 25 pictures now ready \$1.00. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. au3278

COLUMBIA GRAND (Model A G) 5" phonograph with 12 records. (2) North American battery operated electric phonograph (1890-94); (3) Edison battery operated electric phonograph (c. 1898); (4) Edison "suitcase" home phonograph (1898). For sale or will trade for pre-1898 machines. Photograph 25c.—Phillips 2335 W. 3rd, Los Angeles, Calif. jcl443

The true facts tell us that Whittington's parents were both of good family and owned a town house in Gloucester as well as a prosperous farm nearby. When centuries later the town house was demolished, a chimney piece was found on which was a carved picture of a boy holding a cat in his arms. The statue of Whittington which stood on ancient Newgate in London also had a cat beside it. And a famous 16th Century engraving also shows the lad with a cat. So it does seem probable that Richard either had a pet cat or else had a great affection for cats in general.

Collectors possessing bells with a likeness of Dick Whittington's cat on them must draw their own conclusions as to the significance of their bells (see *illustration #1*).

### And What of Bow Bells?

We have little reason to doubt that young Dick Whittington did, in a moment of discouragement, allow himself to be recalled to London by the cheery sound of Bow bells. The original chimes in the belfry of St. Mary-le-Bow were noted for their sweet beckoning tone. To journey within sound of their magical music was the goal of many a London-bound person (see *illustration #2*).

Dick, being a lad of only twelve years when he left for London, may well have become homesick for pleasant Gloucestershire, after a brief apprenticeship in London. At any rate at the foot of Highgate Hill in North London there is a much photographed stone popularly supposed to mark the spot where Dick paused to listen to the chimes of Bow bells.

Were they to be permanently silenced, much of this historic lore attached to Bow bells might gradually disappear. In the face of so many determined efforts to restore the bells, that is not likely to happen though. A peal of twelve has already been cast at Whitechapel Foundry and waits only for restoration of the church and its belfry.

*And when will that be?  
Ask the bells of Stepney.  
I do not know,  
Says the Great Bell of Bow.*

At the present time no one knows just when Bow bells will ring again, despite all manner of novel fund-raising appeals being made to hasten the restoration. One of the bells which made up the famous "cockney" chime has been converted into a collection box, inviting visitors at the ruined church to contribute to the restoration fund. Nearby an exhibition of pictures shows how St. Mary-le-Bow, its belfry and its bells will be restored.

The peal waiting to be hung in the restored belfry marks the fourth change in St. Mary's chimes. The six original bells that rang so prophetically for Dick Whittington were destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Next month:  
Ancient Celtic Saints' Bells

## GENE GREENE

(Continued from page 30)

timent, and although most of the people of Montgomery were much more liberal in their attitude than the "red-necks" in the hinterland they still didn't care much for Smith. I observed the theater manager watching the performance from a box and his expression was stony and unsmiling during some of Gene's off-color sallies. I also remember the displeased look of a remarkably beautiful young woman in another box.

The act ended with Gene's singing a really good comic song, "Real Estate Papa (You Ain't Gonna Subdivide Me!)" I enjoyed everything but the "blue notes" to the highest, but left with a feeling of disappointment—for he didn't sing "King of the Bungaloos." I found out later from the manager that "little Miss Frances" didn't know the song and, lacking the music, couldn't play it on short notice. Gene made a curtain speech, in which he said the Grand patrons were "a wonderful audience" and that he thought the theater should play him a full week instead of on a split basis.

When I dropped in at the *Advertiser* office, Jack Young, the managing editor, asked me to write a review of the bill. I did, and since it represents one of my first attempts at newspaper criticism, I shall reproduce it here. The date was Saturday, June 16, and the headline read: "Audience Pleased at Vaudeville Bill. Gene Greene, Pierrot and Co., and Others at Grand Applauded":

One of the best vaudeville and movie bills of the season was given at the Grand on Friday. The same bill will be continued through Saturday and Sunday. Gene Greene is probably the most noted performer who appears on the bill, but James Pierrot and Company shared applause honors with him. Both these acts practically stopped the show.

The vaudeville bill opened with Pierrot, the piano accordionist, assisted by his "company," which is comprised in the person of an extremely handsome young woman. Pierrot played his accordion, and the girl whanged a xylophone and sang. Everything they did met with applause. Pierrot and his partner, both of whom are radio favorites, took innumerable bows and the male half of the team expressed the appreciation of his "company" and himself in a neat curtain speech.

Lillian Gordon, an attractive young woman, sang popular songs in typical "blues shouter" style. She has a voice that carries, make no mistake about that, and the audience proved by its repeated hand-whacking that it liked her wares.

Fred Berrens and his Ampico automatic piano provided a real novelty. Fred came out and told a weepy story, in verse, of his lady love who had flown to the spirit world, but who returned to officiate as his accompanist whenever her services were needed. Suddenly the piano began to play itself by "spirit" influence. Fred asked it what the two of them should play as a duet (Fred is a nifty hand with a fiddle) and the Ampico suggested "Ain't She Sweet?" by playing a few bars of that ditty. The suggestion was vetoed, but they played several numbers together, to much appreciation.

Gene Greene, the famous phonograph singer and veteran stage comedian, scored a triumph. His voice was not in quite so good shape as usual, for he had a cold, but his pep and personality put his songs over. Some of his jokes almost stretched the hearers in the aisles. His company consisted of Koyle and Francis, a boy and a girl from Texas. The boy played a mouth harp and the girl a guitar. She also served as Gene's piano accompanist. Montgomery likes Gene Greene and said so. He too made a curtain speech, betokening his appreciation of his reception.

The Dronoff Sisters Revue and the Mogiloff Orchestra dispensed music that was decidedly out of the ordinary. Their performance made a decided hit with the audience, which applauded them very generously.

The movie feature was "Your Wife and Mine," a typical light comedy of high life. Phyllis Haver, Wallace McDonald, Stuart Holmes and Barbara Tennant were the most prominent players. One of the funniest comedies seen in Montgomery in many a day was exhibited, as was the Pathe News. The latter gave a number of scenes at the Republican convention in Kansas City.

Besides writing the review, I wrote Gene Greene a note, telling him how much I had enjoyed his act, and saying that several of the *Advertiser* staff had bought Edisonics (the Edison Company's rival to Victor's Orthophonic Victrola) and wished he would make some Edison Diamond Discs. Some time later I wrote to the English Pathé firm, asking if Gene's old records could still be supplied, but received a reply that "we have practically abandoned the manufacture of sapphire records" and that the Greene discs had long since been cut out of the catalog.

After I returned to Virginia, I heard nothing further about Gene Greene. Then in 1938, when Billy Murray and Jimmy Martindale visited me in Johnson City, Tennessee, I asked Billy if he knew what had become of my Montgomery friend. Billy told me Gene had lived in Chicago but had been dead for several years. It is only in recent months that I have obtained enough background information to make it possible to write this HOBBIES article. (To be continued in the July issue)

## Match Box Labels of the World

By A. J. CRUSE

The coloured labels adorning the familiar match box have been in use for more than a century since John Walker, an English chemist, gave the world its first friction match in 1828. They have portrayed an ever-increasing variety of subjects, colours and designs from glamorous women to nursery rhymes, historical scenes, to beasts and fishes. These labels are now much sought after by collectors all over the world who enjoy a hobby which is even older than stamp collecting, offering an equally wide range of colorful and interesting material. "Match Box Labels of the World" will introduce beginners to a delightful hobby, provide a work of reference for experienced collectors; while the subject being both original and full of interest, should have a wide appeal. Send \$3.00 for your copy to:

LIGHTNER PUBLISHING CORP.  
1006 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Gene Greene

(Accompanied on the piano by Charley Straight)  
(Continued from the June Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### IV Douglas Ball's Recollections

A few weeks ago, Douglas P. Ball, corresponding secretary of the Dixie Record Club of Miami, Fla., sent me two of those oh! so-hard-to-find Pathé records by Gene Greene, and followed them with a letter of interesting reminiscences, from which I extract the following:

Gene Greene was a neighbor of ours — lived across the street from us on Lake Park Avenue in Chicago. As he was a few years older than I was, I never knew him personally, but we knew his "father and mother," an elderly couple who adopted Gene when a young boy. I'm not sure, but I think there was some relationship . . .

Gene grew up in the neighborhood, but ran with a rather wild crowd, and in these days would have been termed a juvenile delinquent. Not being able to keep him in high school, his father insisted on his doing some kind of work. The father had a rather large men's furnishing store on Cottage Grove avenue, a few blocks from his home. The boy wasn't interested in this kind of business.

Finally the father rented a small store next door. They made a ticket window, a boxed-off room for the projector, threw in some folding seats and were in business as a "nickel show." Gene hired a friend who had a license as an operator to grind out the one and two-reelers and to run the stills for the song slides. Gene took in the nickels, and, after the film, closed the box office and came in and sang the song slide. Later, he began to sing songs without slides and, as he had a good voice and a catchy way of singing and invented a number of tricky songs, he soon attracted the attention of vaudeville scouts. He got on the "cheap" 10-20-30 circuit operating in small houses throughout the city. From then on he rose rapidly to the Keith Orpheum Circuit and soon got top billing.

Gene lasted about 15 years. I saw him in Louisville during the first World War. He looked very dissipated and had an early spot. Then he vanished. His best number was a pantomime of a dope fiend. . . .

Mr. Ball is mistaken in believing that Gene Greene "vanished" from the vaudeville stage. His career continued until his death. And when I saw him, ten years after the war-time period Mr. Ball mentions, he did not look especially dissipated to me, although his face undeniably was florid.

### V "Cuz" Falkener Recalls

Another friend who sent me a Pathé Gene Greene record is Harold

"Cuz" Falkener, owner of an old record shop at 973 Tremont Street, Boston. "Cuz" writes:

I knew Gene Greene in Grand Rapids in 1925, also earlier. Gene had a big cafe on Ionia Street, but I think he went in the hole. I don't know what year he died. I was in his place several times. I think his brother, Frank, managed the cafe. Alas, that the good old vaudeville days are dead and gone!

### VI From Other Sources

Because Gene Greene had lived in Chicago, I assumed that he died there and wrote to Edward J. Barrett, the county clerk, for a copy of his birth and death certificates. Mr. Barrett, replied, however, that a search of his files from 1871 through 1940 revealed neither of the certificates I wanted.

I then asked the Newspaper Service department of the Chicago Public Library to search its files for any Gene Greene information, and was sent a copy of the following Associated Press story from the *Chicago Tribune* of April 6, 1930:

"New York, April 5—With his bathrobe drawn about him, Gene Greene, 52, styled 'The Al Jolson of the West,' collapsed as his act closed at a vaudeville theatre here today, apparently of a heart attack, and died before a doctor arrived. Greene's wife and son live in Chicago. His brother, Frank, of Grand Rapids, Mich., was notified."

This brief item led to my writing to the *New York Times* in the hope of obtaining a more comprehensive obituary. However, it too, was disappointingly brief. Under the heading of "Actor Dies As He Leaves Stage," the *Times* for Sunday, April 6, 1930, said:

"Gene Greene, 52 years old, a vaudeville actor, living at the Hotel Somerset in West 47th Street, died suddenly yesterday afternoon at the Grand Opera House, Eighth Avenue and 23rd Street. Greene, who is known on the vaudeville circuit as 'The Western Al Jolson,' was standing in the wings with his accompanist, Dan Manley, after finishing their act. He complained of not feeling well. A patrolman was called and an ambulance from New York Hospital was summoned. When a doctor arrived Greene was dead."

From the foregoing it seems that Gene had parted company with his

Texas proteges, "Koyle and Francis," some time before, and that he was no longer "The Human Singing Machine," but was calling himself "The Western Al Jolson" and obviously, was patterning his singing style on Jolson's shouting mannerisms. This surely was a mistake, for Gene Greene was too clever a comedian in his own right to copy anyone else.

Learning the name of the theater in which the comedian's death occurred made it possible for me to obtain a copy of Greene's death certificate from the New York City Health Department.

This reveals his correct name as Eugene (not Gene) Greene, and gives his age as 52 but does not list date of birth. His father's name was George S. Greene and his mother's maiden name, Frances Nash. The singer's birthplace is given only as "U.S." The certificate says he was married but doesn't give the name of his wife. Medical terms are used to indicate death occurred from a heart attack. And that's about all the information it gives. I have since seen the name of a Gene W. Greene listed in the Chicago city directory, but an inquiry revealed that the present-day Greene is not, as I had hoped, a son or other relative of the comedian.

I have been disappointed at not being able to find a good photograph of Greene to reproduce with this article.

### VII Gene Greene's Records

Gene Greene's recording career falls into three periods—1911, when he made his first Victor and Columbia discs; 1912-13, when he made vertical cut sapphire ball records for Pathé in England; and 1917, when he again sang for Victor and Columbia and appeared on a few minor labels.

Columbia got the jump on Victor by just one month in marketing Greene's records and placed its first on sale in June, 1911. It also gave the buyers more for their money. The Columbia disc, with both sides by Gene, sold for 75 cents, while Victor issued two single-faced numbers at 60 cents each.



Greene's Columbia titles, on A994, were "Cancel That Wedding March" and the irresistible "King of the Bungaloes." The Columbia supplement said: "Mr. Greene is a past master of the art of singing coon songs—and there is a very real art in singing just that sort of song, popular prejudice to the contrary notwithstanding. In his vaudeville work, which has brought him before some of the biggest audiences in the country, Greene is making a tremendous hit in the two songs which constitute his first Columbia double-disc."

Victor announced its first Gene Greene records in July, 1911. They were 5858, "I'm Going To Stay On Solid Ground" (another composition by Gene himself) and 5850, "Stay In Italy," a comic Italian dialect song by Irving Berlin and Ted Snyder. Seven years later Berlin again used the theme of the latter number in his highly successful "I'll Take You Back To Italy," featured in "Jack O'Lantern." The supplement said:

Those who have been fortunate enough to see and hear Mr. Greene in his vaudeville specialty will note with pleasure that the Victor has engaged this popular comedian for a series of records. Those who have not heard him have something of a treat coming to them, as Mr. Greene's singing of the popular coon songs is simply inimitable.

Two of the comedian's best songs are offered this month, and both are highly amusing. Don't fail to hear the dandy tell about his trip in the aeroplane, and learn why he is willing to leave such aerial stunts to the white man hereafter. "Stay in Italy" is one of the best Italian dialect songs we have ever heard. The Italian-American gentleman, who apparently has not prospered in the new country, is advising his "brud" in Italy to remain where he is, as long as he has "eats" and a bed to sleep in!

The foregoing supplement description is accompanied by a photo of Greene, showing him wearing a derby hat and standing with clinched fists, as if he is giving an impersonation of an old school Bowery "tough."

In August, Victor issued the titles Columbia had marketed by Greene two months before — 5853, "Cancel That Wedding March", and 5854, "King of the Bungaloes." Supplement editor Sam Rous, said:

The August records by Mr. Greene will be found most amusing. "Cancel That Wedding March" is the touching story of a broken engagement, wherein Ephraim Jackson requests the organist to play a funeral dirge instead of the Mendelssohn Wedding March, which had been decided upon!

In "The King of the Bungaloes" Mr. Greene relates that he has been notified of his accession to the title of Gazoo in a South Sea isle; and the narrative is accompanied by some of the remarkable stunts for which the singer is famous, and which no one could possibly describe!

As a comment on the latter statement, I may mention that Gene had a rapid-fire style of singing and an ability to make "funny noises," such as imitations of orchestral instruments, that sometimes caused later listeners to compare him with "Pop-eye the Sailor Man's" sound effects in the talkies.

In September came Greene's first

Victor double-face, 16887, "Alamo Rag" and "Maybe You Think I'm Happy." The description was brief:

The renowned Alamo at San Antonio has been seized upon by the song writers as a title for a new "rag." With this lively affair is offered one of Mr. Greene's own songs, in which Mr. Cohen, who was foolish enough to marry an Irish maiden, plaintively inquires if you think he should be happy, inasmuch as the new Mrs. Cohen insists on feeding him on pigs' feet several times a week!

The statement that "Maybe You Think I'm Happy" was one of Greene's own compositions is incorrect. The words were by L. Wolfe Gilbert and the music by Addison Burkhardt. This may have been the first song written by "Wolfe" Gilbert to be recorded. Gilbert, now 70, has just published a book, "Without Rhyme or Reason," full of witty reminiscences of his 50 years as a song writer.

Gene Greene's first series of contributions to the Victor list ceased with his double-faced coupling in October, 16894, "Go Back" and "Dublin Daisies." (Both these songs were later issued on English Pathés, which were better recorded than the Victor). The catalog editor absent-mindedly referred to this as the first double-faced Greene record, forgetting there had been one the month before. "Excellent value," he said, "is offered in the first of the Greene records to be issued in double-face form. Leaving the (coon) song field temporarily, this versatile comedian gives us an eccentric and amusing 'rube' number, and the favorite Irish marching song by (Percy) Wenrich, now offered for the first time as a vocal selection.

#### VIII Gene Records In England

By all odds the most interesting, the most tantalizingly hard to find and the Gene Greene records most coveted by collectors are the Pathés which he made on his sensational successful visit to London and the English provinces in 1912-13. More than 30 of these mouth-watering morsels were issued and sold in large quantities for that time. But today, for a reason I shall explain, they are exasperatingly hard to find. However, no connoisseur of old-time ragtime singing at its best should be satisfied until all the English Pathé Gene Greene records are reposing in his collection.

Five double-faced Greene records were issued in November, 1912. A month later a Pathé ad. said: "Gene Greene, the American Ragtime King, is scoring remarkable successes wherever he goes, and for the five discs we issued in November—the most wonderful Ragtime Records ever made—the demand grows greater every day." Since I shall print a complete list of Greene's Pathé records at the end of this article, I shall not identify the ten initial titles here. But I will say that anyone wishing to go crazy with the least possible delay should try to make sense out of the Pathé system of numbering Gene Greene's records, which jumps from

a low figure of 11 up to the 5400's, with the high numbers for the most part issued before the low. I have tried vainly to puzzle it out. Perhaps Harry Hunting, whose father, Russell Hunting, Sr., headed Pathé recording activities in those days, would be able to give an explanation.

Month after month the Greene records appeared, many of them containing songs already regarded as "back numbers" in the States. They received uniformly favorable reviews in the *Talking Machine News*, which seldom treated any of its advertisers' products with critical disdain. In April, 1913, for instance, the reviewer (probably Ogilvie Mitchell) said of No. 11, "Beautiful Doll, Good-bye" and "Oh, You Beautiful Doll":

The King of Ragtime, Gene Greene is styled, and worthy indeed is he of the title, for no other singer seems to comprehend the meaning of the accentuation of the musical innovation styled Ragtime, and when it is stated that the artiste is accompanied on the piano by Charles Straight, than whom there is none better able to finger the ivories in Ragtime, it must be confessed that in all honest truth we find much to please us. The recording is excellent.

A few lines farther down the page from this gibberish is a review of No. 447 (again that baffling jump in numbers!), "Maybe You Think I'm Happy", and "That Coontown Quartette."

Two more Ragtimes well recorded. These four numbers by America's genius should be procured instantly, as Messrs. Pathe are sure to have a busy and strenuous time in meeting the demand.

Notice that the "T. M. N." stiffly referred to Greene's accompanist as "Charles" Straight, although the pianist never called himself anything but "Charley" and was so called on the record labels. Since the Brunswick dance records by Straight's orchestra were popular for years, I think he deserves a bit of biographical description here. Briefly, then, Charley Straight was born in Chicago on January 16, 1891, so was a stripling of 21 when he and Greene began making their Pathé records. He died in Chicago, September 21, 1940, from injuries received in an automobile accident.

After attending Forestville Elementary School and Wendell Phillips High School, Straight entered vaudeville, then became a recording artist and a musical director of a player-piano roll company. Beginning in 1920, he and his orchestra played in various night clubs and hotels. Among the songs he wrote are: "Everybody Calls Me Honey," "I Love You Sunday," "Funny, Dear, What Love Can Do," "That London Rag," "Everything is Ragtime Now," "June Moon," "The Mocking Bird Rag," "The Red Raven Rag," "Bless Your Little Heart" and "Kiss Your Baby Good-night." He was a member of the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers.

The final "Greene & Straight" Pathé record was issued in April, 1914, a few months before World War

I began. It coupled "There's a Big Cry Baby in the Moon" with "My Little Hong Kong Baby" and the number was just 99! When Pathé opened its American branch, with headquarters in Brooklyn, that same year, the Gene Greene records appeared in the first few editions of the company's weirdly put together record catalog.

Then they all vanished, and I think I know why. Though recorded in London, the Greene records were pressed in French and Belgian factories (they were all of the "center start" variety, 11½ inches in size, playing from the label out toward the record edge and running at 90 revolutions per minute), and no doubt after the Germans invaded France and Belgium, the factories were closed. Probably the masters were destroyed. At any rate, American Pathé couldn't obtain any further supplies. Several of the Pathés were Greene and Straight compositions—among them "Blarney Barney Finn," "Stop That Bear Cat, Sadie," "The Long Lost Chord," and of course, "King of the Bungaloes."

After all my advertising and years of searching I have obtained only four of these records. They are the ones I have marked with an asterisk in the appended list. I still stand ready to pay \$3 each for all the others. Of the ones I have, the best combination by far is "Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee" and "Oh You Circus Day"—two of the most tuneful songs ever written. Straight's accompaniment to Greene's syncopated singing is brilliant, although, like most Pathé piano recording, the tone is too distant and sounds as if Charley is playing in a back room or a back yard instead of in the room with the singer. I have been able to "improve" it to a great degree by copying the record on tape then amplifying the sound to bring the piano "closer." Oddly, in "Circus Day," Gene sings "and the monkeys we will personate," instead of the original "pestciate," which rhymed much better with "all the side shows we'll investigate." Perhaps he thought the American slang word, "pestciate," would baffle the British.

In "Go Back," Straight heckles Gene a couple of times. "Frankie and Johnny" is an excellent ragtime version of a number now recognized as an American folk classic, and Greene's is probably the first record ever made of that undying song. "Dublin Daisies" and "Ragtime Soldier Man" are splendidly done; "That Was Me" is an amusing number in the blackface minstrel manner, and "Drinking" is a laughable impersonation of a "souse." My greatest Gene Greene "want" now is his coupling of "Casey Jones" and "Parisienne," followed by the two "Beautiful Doll" numbers. But I yearn for them all!

### IX Back To American Recording

Although he retained his high favor in vaudeville, Gene Greene didn't appear again in American record catalogs until 1917. He then made at

least one seven-inch record, 7140, "The Chinese Blues," for Emerson. It was coupled with "Ephraim's Jazbo Band," by Arthur Collins. Allen Debus has also discovered him singing "From Here to Shanghai" on a 5½ inch Little Wonder. Probably Columbia at first intended to issue this fine comedy record by Greene, but changed its mind when one of its top exclusive stars, Al Jolson, said he wanted to record it. From an interpretative standpoint, the Little Wonder, presumably dubbed from a Columbia master, is better than Jolson's slow, draggy rendition that completely misses the spirit of the song.

Greene also sang "From Here to Shanghai" on Victor 18242, coupled with Billy Murray's classic interpretation of "Napoleon," issued in April, 1917. The catalog editor said: "Our customers will be glad to note the return of Mr. Gene Greene, the famous vaudeville headliner, to the Victor catalog. Irving Berlin's latest, 'From Here to Shanghai,' is a cheerful composition in which the sounds of 'Chinatown' manifest themselves with enlivening results." Gene was assisted by the Peerless Quartet.

In June his final Victor appeared with 18266, "Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band" (a record which had been made two years before by William J. Halley) and a new, improved version of "King of the Bungaloes." It led the list of popular vocal records for the month, and the supplement annotator said: "An admirable record of Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band" is already in the Victor catalog, but we just had to get out Gene Greene's variation of it for the sake of his imitation of the musical instruments. Flute, drum or loud bassoon—it's all the same to Gene. 'King of the Bungaloes' . . . is a vivid picture of the kingdom of the Bungaloes, lions, gorillas, crocodiles and all, realistically sung by an inimitable comedian."

(Incidentally, the "Bungaloes" song isn't entirely forgotten today. Bob Pierce, an early favorite at Radio Station WOR, made a splendid Edison Diamond Disc record of it in 1928, and when it was also issued in lateral-cut form it had the lowest serial number of any Edison needle record. Although I hate to say it, Pierce's version is even better than Greene's, having the benefit of superlative recording and marred only by his consistently mispronouncing "Bungaloes" as "Bungalows.")

In August, 1917, Greene had another Columbia record—his first since 1911. On one side of A2276 he sang the irresistibly catchy "Buzzin' the Bee." The other side was "That Creeper, Weepy Feeling," sung by Anna Wheaton, soprano (P. G. Wodehouse, who knew Miss Wheaton well, tells she's still living on Long Island), and a tenor listed as George Wilson, who also made records under the name of James Harrod but later became much better known as Colin O'More. The supplement description referred to

Greene as "one of the famous 'old guard' of American ragtime singers."

Gene was back with Columbia in March, 1918, on A2472. He sang "Alexander's Got a Jazz Band Now," coupled with Sam Ash singing "Cleopatra Had a Jazz Band." The ragtime era, during which Greene had called himself "The Ragtime King," was ending and jazz was taking over. Thus it was rather appropriate that the last record he ever made, so far as research indicates, was "Alexander's Got a Jazz Band Now." But I'd still take, any time, his performances as the King of Ragtime over his hoarse shouting as "The Human Singing Machine" or "The Western Al Jolson."

And, regardless of whatever shortcomings Gene Greene had as a man or an artist, I shall always have an affectionate recollection of the way his blue eyes twinkled that hot June afternoon in Montgomery as he said:

"Why, I'm glad to know you! If you're going to be with us this afternoon I'll sing 'The King of the Bungaloes', especially for you."

\* \* \*

Since the foregoing article was written, I have obtained from Henry M. Shaw of North Carver, Mass., a copy of Gene Greene's record of "Casey Jones." (Mr. Shaw read my article about the Casey Jones Museum in the February HOBBIES and recalled he had a copy of the Pathé disc stored with some other old records in his attic). Repeated playings have convinced me that "Casey Jones" is not only the best Gene Greene record I have yet heard but my favorite version of the great comic song.

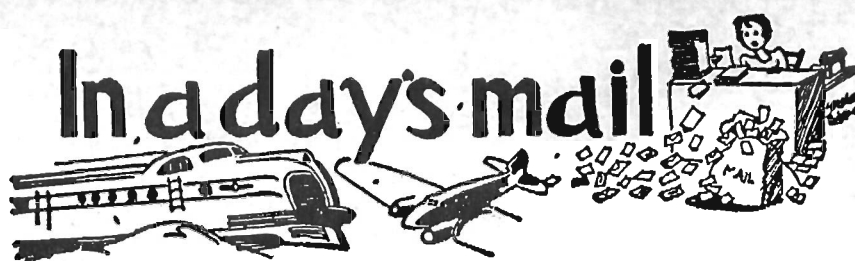
It is especially interesting that Greene, recording in London, transferred the scene of the wreck to England. Thus Casey is carrying the Southern, rather than Western, mail and is on his way to Dover instead of "Frisco." The fireman becomes the guard, and Mrs. Jones tells her children they "got another papa on the Cunard line" instead of the Salt Lake. There are several other changes. It is a wonderful record, and "Parisienne" on the reverse side, has an oddly fascinating melody with abrupt changes from minor to major. Greene sings it in a baritone voice instead of his usual high tenor.

**PATHE RECORDS BY GENE GREENE**  
Note by Jim Walsh: I have the four marked with an \* and want to buy the others.

((11½ inches, recorded in London and issued from December, 1912, through April, 1914).)

- 5296 Moonlight Bay (Wenrich). Reverse: In Dear Old Tennessee (Newman).
- \*5351 Dublin Daisies (Murphy—Wenrich). Reverse: That Was Me (Rose—Snyder).
- 5350 When You're Married (Gumble—Grant). Reverse: Ragtime Melodies (Gene Hodgkins).
- 5349 Rum Tum Tiddle (Gene Schwartz). Reverse: All Night Long (Shelton Brooks).
- 5348 Blarney Barney Finn (Greene). Reverse: King of the Bungaloes (Greene—Straight).

- 5347 Waiting for the Robert E. Lee (Lewis F. Muir). Reverse: Ragtime Violin (Irving Berlin).
- 5369 Hitchy Koo (Muir—Abrahams). Reverse: Mocking Bird Rag (Charley Straight).
- \*100 Ragtime Soldier Man (Irving Berlin). Reverse: Drinking (Will Marion Cook).
- 90 My Lady Angeline (Christie). Reverse: My Ever Loving Two-Step Man (Murphy—Wenrich).
- \*5370 Go Back (Egbert Van Alstyne). Reverse: Franky and Johnny (Three Leightons).
- 305 Ragging the Baby to Sleep (L. F. Muir). Reverse: That London Rag (Greene—Straight).
- 142 Stop That Bear Cat, Sadie (Gene Greene). Reverse: Hella, Go On, Goodbye! (Walsh—Brown).
- 167 Whistling Rag (Irving Berlin). Reverse: Heinze (Egbert Van Alstyne).
- 148 My Rose of Old Kildare (Straight). Reverse: Long Lost Chord (Greene—Plantadosi).
- 41 Beautiful Doll, Goodbye (White—Violinsky). Reverse: Oh, You Beautiful Doll (Brown—Ayer).
- 447 Maybe You Think I'm Happy (Gilbert). Reverse: That Coontown Quartette (Jerome—Schwartz).
- 544 On the Mississippi (Earl Carroll—Arthur Fields). Reverse: Rag, Rag, Rag (Flannagan—Heath).
- 538 Ragtime Goblin Man (Andrew B. Sterling—Harry Von Tilzer). Reverse: That Organ Rag (Greene—Straight).
- 151 Everybody Two-Step (Wally Herzner). Reverse: You're My Baby (Brown—Ayer).
- \*5222 Oh, You Circus Day (James V. Monaco). Reverse: Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee (Henry I. Marshall).
- 529 Ragtime Cowboy Joe (Muir). Reverse: That Haunting Melody (Jerome—Schwartz).
- 644 Row, Row, Row (Monaco). Reverse: Way Down South (George Fairman).
- 446 Keep Away From the Fellow Who Owns An Automobile (Berlin). Reverse: One O'clock in the Morning I Get Lonesome (Berlin).
- 536 I Want to be in Dixie (Berlin). Reverse: When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam' (Berlin).
- 563 Casey Jones (Eddie Newton). Reverse: Parisienne (Albert Von Tilzer).
- 551 Jimmy Valentine (Gus Edwards). Reverse: That Baboon Baby Dance (Joe Cooper).
- 5185 They All Kept Time With Their Feet (Edwards). Reverse: You'll Never Know the Good Fellow I've Been (Glogau).
- 558 Down in Dear Old New Orleans (Conrad—Whidden). Reverse: Kentucky Days (Percy Wenrich).
- 150 Piano Fingers (Brown—Grant). Reverse: Billy Green (arranged by Greene and Straight).
- 106 No Man Can Do It Like My Father (Jerome—Schwartz). Reverse: I'm Going to Stay on Solid Ground (Greene—Straight).
- 99 There's a Big Cry Baby in the Moon (Brynn Smith and Burris). Reverse: My Little Hong Kong Baby.



### Love Conquers All

KANSAS—Am sending my check for HOBBIES for another year. I can't say enough nice things about HOBBIES. I love it.—Helen Hill.

### Seventeen

NEW YORK—I have enjoyed HOBBIES for 17 years. — Adelaide C. Clarkson.

### Constant

IOWA — I have all HOBBIES from No. 1 (March, 1931) to date. — F. J. Gluck.

### Welcome, M. J.

NEW JERSEY — Enclosed please find a check in the amount of \$3.50 which I hope is correct. The latest issue I have been able to find was February, 1956, and I know that some other magazines have increased in price since then. So if the amount I enclose isn't enough please let me know as soon as you can so that I may send the correct amount. I can hardly wait until I receive my first copy of your fascinating publication. —M. J. Michael.

### Among Our Good Friends in the Blue Grass State

KENTUCKY—Dear HOBBIES: All of you . . . here is my renewal check. I'm always happy to send it to you, because I love HOBBIES! It has broadened my knowledge on antiques, and acquainted me with "fields" in antiques that I have never dreamed of. My several visits to St. Augustine and the Lightner Museum of Hobbies have been a source of much satisfaction, pleasure and extended education to me.—Mrs. Theo. E. Deddens.

### And for the Loyalty of Our Readers, Our Gratitude

MASSACHUSETTS—It was a pleasure to spy my name in "In a Day's Mail." It is also a pleasure when my HOBBIES arrives the first of the month — we are assured of interesting and instructive reading. I always read page 100, with perhaps a few omissions until Mr. Lightner's passing in June, 1950 when the page became the "Americana Page." It certainly continues to be worth reading. I recall how shocked I was upon turning to page 100 in the July, 1950, issue of HOBBIES to see "In Memoriam," and the personal loss that I felt. I can truthfully say to the Staff of HOBBIES, "Well done!"—Esther S. Burr.

### A Year Later

NEW HAMPSHIRE—First of all may I say that I had very good results from my ad in your magazine —over fifty replies, some unusual and interesting, others, so-so. As a result I am conducting some very rewarding correspondence from Oregon to Florida to Maine, and even Ottawa. And I hope to so add to my already interesting collection.—Doris C. Maxwell.

### Special Editions

ARKANSAS—Enclosed please find renewal. I can't say one portion of HOBBIES is better than the other because it's all special to me—even after I have read them through several times. —Mrs. W. J. Avery.

### O.K. "Jane Doe."

NOVA SCOTIA—Here is \$4 for renewal of HOBBIES, which I have taken for more than ten years, along with the books advertised in HOBBIES. They have educated me in glass, until now I am considered quite an authority. But don't publish this over my name—I don't like to "blow my own horn" too loudly.—"Jane Doe."

### Thank you, Thelma

Michigan—Three cheers for your fine magazine! It is tops.—Thelma Rector.

### Friends and Antiques

South Dakota — I look forward to this magazine each month. Our home is furnished with antiques and many of them have come through HOBBIES. All friends you meet through HOBBIES are good friends.—Mrs. A. H. Coon.

### A Year Too Late

Ohio—I thought I could get along without HOBBIES, but I can't. Enclosed find check for a subscription. Looking through some old issues today I found several items I wished I had sent for, but I'm just about a year late.—Mrs. W. J. Root.

### Prices, Places, and Antiques

Indiana—Find enclosed check for another year of HOBBIES. I would be lost without it. No other magazine quite fills the need like this magazine. Keeps you up on prices as well as a place to shop.—Mrs. Fred J. Rutledge.

### A New Friend

Michigan—Enclosed please find check for \$3.50, the correct amount, I believe, for a year's subscription for your magazine, HOBBIES. It was highly recommended to me.—Mrs. C. W. Norman.

### Cover To Cover, Plus.

Pennsylvania—Thanks for your reminder for subscription. I especially enjoy your doll articles, price lists, etc. I study the magazine every month. We have a small shop so we go over your magazine from cover to cover about four times before I lay it aside for reference.—Mrs. J. G. Bailey.

### OUR Pleasure, Too

California—Please continue my subscription to HOBBIES for another year. I am ashamed of myself for overlooking the expiration date. Thank you for the past five years of pleasure.—Bernice J. Gordon.

### Under the Wire

Illinois—Thanks for the reminder. I have taken HOBBIES Magazine for many years and would be lost without it. I hope I am not too late for the current number. Enclosed please find my remittance for another year.—Mrs. George Harman.

### Betty Knows Values

New York—I am an avid reader of HOBBIES and I certainly get more than my money's worth.—Betty B. Benedict.

### Esto Perpetua

New York—Can't give up HOBBIES now. Each copy comes as a surprise, for there is always something new.—Willard F. Sanford.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Harvey Hindermeyer's "Golden Anniversary"

By JIM WALSH

### I. The Voice from the Slot Machine

One warm day in August, 1907, a very young man, brown eyed, short and stockily built, was strolling down one of the less fashionable streets of Philadelphia. Suddenly, as he walked past a popular amusement place, known in those days as a penny arcade, a stentorian baritone voice blared from a penny-in-the-slot phonograph. The young man recognized the voice. It was that of Edward Meeker, a versatile comedian who made the spoken announcements on the old wax Edison cylinders, and as Ed's tones boomed forth the stroller indulged in a gleeful smile.

Meeker was proclaiming: "She was a Grand Old Lady." Sung by Harvey Hindermeyer. Edi-SON record!"

No wonder the youthful saunterer smiled. He was enjoying for the first time a public reproduction of the only phonograph record he had ever made up to that moment. It had not issued as promptly as records are marketed nowadays—the June *Edison Phonograph Monthly* had announced it as scheduled for August release, so it probably had been recorded in May—but it was now beginning to be played, not only in penny arcades, but in homes throughout the land.

Perhaps the fledgling concert tenor had even seen the description of his initial record, in the August, 1907, *New Phonogram*:

No. 9614, "She was a Grand Old Lady," by Harvey Hindermeyer, is a song dealing with the affection of a son for his mother. It is one of the songs certain to please the tastes of a very large circle; and this will be no exception to the rule. It deals with the gray haired mother always ready to do everything she could for her child's welfare. This record is a march ballad with good rhythm and tuneful air. And the singer who is a new comer, will be appreciated.

"She was a Grand Old Lady" did not become a hit. It had a merely modest success, but that long forgotten song is of historic interest to record collectors. Not only did the Edison cylinder mark Harvey Hindermeyer's debut as a recording artist, but when Victor issued its first

APPROVED BY  
HARVEY HINDERMEYER

Dear Jim:

I am sorry I have been so long in returning your manuscript, but I have been away on a short vacation.

I am delighted with it, and I thank you.

Sincerely,

HARVEY

double-faced record, No. 16000, one side was occupied by "Strains From Stern's," a medley played by Arthur Pryor's Band. Selections in the medley were "Castles in the Air," "You Splash Me and I'll Splash You," and "She was a Grand Old Lady." "Centennial March" was on the other side.

Harvey says he doesn't know just why his name was so consistently and insistently misspelled, almost invariably misspelled Hindermeyer. But he probably didn't mind very much. Whether he suspected it or not, he was beginning a career as an Edison recording artist that would extend over most of the next 22 years and cause him to be regarded as one of Edison's top stars. Today, as a memento of what used to be, a large handsomely framed photo of Harvey Hindermeyer still hangs in an upstairs room of the Edison laboratory at West Orange, N. J. And this month marks his fiftieth anniversary as a recording artist.

### II. Hindermeyer's Columbia Records

However, for an association that was to be close and intimate, Hindermeyer's Edison career got off to a slow start. Almost three years went past before he made any more Edison cylinders. But, meanwhile, he had begun singing for Victor and Columbia. These companies made considerable use of his services for a few years, but his relationship with them was never so intimate as it afterwards became with Edison.

Suppose, then, before we consider the tenor's Victor and Columbia activities, we see what was said about him in the Edison Blue Amberol catalog for April, 1914:

HARVEY W. HINDERMEYER ... is a native of Easton, Pa., but the greater part of his studies were pursued in Philadelphia, under the direction of W. Warren Shaw. He has sung in musical festivals, oratorios, concerts, and song recitals in all the principal cities east of the Mississippi and has also appeared in many light operas, such as "The Mikado," "The Chimes of Normandy," "The Gondoliers," and Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus." Mr. Hindermeyer's voice is refreshing in its robustness—a quality which so few sweet tenor voices possess. It is fresh, unstrained and combines with its rich calibre the delicate nuances of the mezzo voice.

To the foregoing may be added the fact that the tenor's middle name is Wilson and that his mother was of Bohemian and his father of German descent. This home environment gave him a knowledge of German, which resulted in his being called on to sing an Edison Diamond Disc in German in 1925. It was No. 57019, "Tief im Bohmerwald," coupled with "Bedenklichkeiten," by another tenor, Arthur Hall (Adolph J. Hahl), known primarily for his English language renditions of popular songs. Still another well known tenor who made one or more German language records is Charles Hart. He and the former Mrs. Hart (Esther Nelson) did a few German duets for Gennett.

Hindermeyer's first records for both Columbia and Victor were made in 1908, but the Columbias appear to have preceded the Victors by a few months. The new tenor made his disc debut at a time when startling changes were being instituted in record selling procedures and at a time when bad feeling between Victor and Columbia was strong. 1908 was the year in which Columbia took Victor by surprise by changing all its popular records from single-face to double-face. Caught napping, Victor at first refused, in spite of dealers' clamor, to follow suit. Before long it was evident Victor had to have records playing on both sides to meet competition, so on October 20 the "Master's Voice" company issued its first list of 125 double-faced records. However, the list was accompanied by a letter to dealers in which Columbia was bitterly denounced for trying to take the profit—so Victor alleged—out of the record business. Victor dealers were told the double-faced records were not catalogued to be sold, but merely to keep Columbia from selling. The dealers were asked not to sell the d-f's if it could be avoided. Meanwhile, Victor continued to issue single-faced discs while Columbia boasted it had "the only complete catalog of double-faced records." In December, 1908, Victor announced that it had developed an improved system of recording which had made it necessary to change the standard speed of Victor records from 76 to 78. Despite this announcement, Victor speeds continued to vary widely, from about 74 to 82 revolutions per minute.

It was during this embattled period that Harvey Hindermeyer confidently took his stance before the





HARVEY HINDERMEYER,  
as a mature artist

Columbia and Victor recording horns. His first Columbias were single-faced but within a few months they were taken over into the d-f list. The one-sided 10-inch discs included 3761, "Maxim's" (from "The Merry Widow"); 3781, "Don't Leave the Old Folks, Jennie"; 3900, "Come to the Land of Bohemia," and a number now recognized as a popular song classic although it was not specially suited to Hindermeyer's style - Jack Norworth and Al Von Tilzer's immortal, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," written by two men who up to that time had never seen a baseball contest.

Hindermeyer's association with Columbia lasted about three years. His last solo record for that company, a ballad with the mouth-filling title of "When a Boy from Old New Hampshire Loves a Girl From Tennessee" was issued in February, 1911. Exactly 16 years later, he reappeared under a *nom de disque*.

Here are a few typical Columbia supplement comments on Hindermeyer's singing. Of "No One Knows, No One Cares," the annotator said: "Mr. Hindermeyer's vocal excellence is too well known to call for extended appreciation. He has never shown to better advantage than in this record." Concerning Liddle's setting of Charles Kingsley's poem, "A Farewell," readers were told: "Mr. Hindermeyer sings this number with the rich tonal quality for which he is noted." And when the once enormously popular "Glory Song" appeared, Columbia customers were informed: "It is undeniably a sacred song of genuine musical beauty, and as rendered by Mr. Hindermeyer will be welcomed to the sacred repertoire of every Columbia user." It also was the only 12-inch record made by Hindermeyer for Columbia.

I believe the following to be a complete list of Harvey Hindermeyer's double-faced Columbia records:

A426, Don't Leave the Old Folks Jennie/Piccolo — from "A Waltz Dream" (Elsie Stevenson—Frank C. Stanley; A430, Maxim's/Some Day When Dreams Come True (Henry Burr); A586 Take Me Out to the Ball

Game: Come to the Land of Bohemia; A628 No One Knows, No One Cares/Arab Love Song (Billy Murray and Chorus); A670, A Farewell/If Tears Were Pearls (Stanley); A717, Good Night, Dear/I Know a Lovely Garden (John Bardsley, English tenor); A734, If I Had a Thousand Lives To Live/It's Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Goodbye (Stevenson-Stanley); A743, Can't You See?/Garden of Roses (Stevenson-Stanley); A770, If I Could Gain the World by Wishing/Darling Nellie Gray (Carroll C. Clark); A817 Tell Her I Love Her So/Last Night (Merle Tillotson, contralto, better known later as Merle Alcock); A952, When a Boy from Old New Hampshire/Vale of Dreams (Arthur C. Clough); A5118, Oh, That Will Be Glory/Israel (Albert Edmund Brown).

Of all these records, "Don't Leave the Old Folks, Jennie," though by no means a big hit when issued, seems to turn up most consistently in second-hand stores nowadays. The only one with both sides by Hindermeyer was A586.

### III. Hindermeyer's Victor Records

Harvey Hindermeyer's first two Victor records, both single-faced, appeared in the catalog supplement for December, 1908, when the controversy over Columbia's double-faced innovation was going full blast. (Columbia had introduced about a dozen double-faced discs, all orchestral, in 1904, but had withdrawn them when the German Odeon company filed suit for patent infringement). The Victor titles were "When Jack Comes Sailing Home" (5598) and "There's Nothing in the World Like Love" (5599). The supplement said: "The Victor adds this month a new tenor to its list of singers, and it is freely predicted that he will be warmly welcomed." Neither record was a big seller and neither was taken into the double-faced list, but their reception was sufficiently encouraging for Victor to call again on the young "tenor robusto."

As he had made one 12-inch Columbia record, so Hindermeyer sang one of the oversized discs for Victor. In March, 1909, his offering was No. 35026, "You Can't Stop Your Heart From Beating for the Girl You Love" (another long title!) inappropriately coupled with "Bumble—Two-Step," by the Victor Dance Orchestra. His next Victor appearance was in August, when he sang the Charles K. Harris "sob-song," "No One Knows," which he had also recorded for Columbia. It was combined with "If I Had a Thousand Lives to Live," sung by Reinold Werrenrath, making his first disguised appearance on Victor records under the assumed name of "Edward Hamilton." In September, Hindermeyer was represented with "Somebody Loves You, Dear," coupled with the Haydn Quartet's rendition of "Up In My Aeroplane."

Then there occurred an inexplicable lapse of two years before Hindermeyer again appeared in the Victor catalog — inexplicable that is, unless his status by this time as an active Edison artist had precluded his making Victor rec-



This photo, taken about 1912, shows HARVEY HINDERMEYER in the early days of his recording career. It was frequently shown in old phonograph record catalogs.

ords for a time. His rollicking version (on 17043) of "Come Kiss the Blarney, Mary Darling" was combined with "Bless Your Ever Lovin' Little Heart," by Walter Van Brunt. The description was brief: "A new and popular sentimental ballad by one of the Victor's most popular tenors is here combined with an entertaining little Irish song which has been selected by Mr. Hindermeyer for his reappearance in the Victor lists."

The Van Brunt—Hindermeyer record was one of the first my parents acquired when they bought a small victrola, and I shall never forget the enthusiastic declaration by a now dead uncle of mine that "Come Kiss the Blarney" was the prettiest record he had ever heard.

Another Hindermeyer number appeared in August, 1912—one of his best for Victor. It was the old favorite, "Roses, Roses Everywhere," doubled on 17117 with "Drifting," a contralto-baritone duet by Elsie Baker and Frederick Wheeler.

And then more than three years elapsed before the last two Hindermeyer solos ever issued by Victor appeared. In November, 1915, he had both sides of record No. 17857: "Dearie Girl (Do You Miss Me?)" and "That's the Song of Songs for Me." The supplement said: "Mr. Hindermeyer exhibits his mellow and pleasing tenor in two excellent ballads." Incidentally, speaking of his "mellow tenor" the label of "Come Kiss the Blarney" calls him a baritone! The truth seems to be that in spite of Harvey's ability to take very high notes (he says he sometimes filled in high ones for Billy Murray on Edison records when Billy couldn't quite get the range) his lower tones were baritone in quality.

Hindermeyer made no more solo appearances on Victor records, but took part in several quartet numbers which the newly organized Shannon Four sang for Victor in 1917 and 1918. He

left the quartet after about a year and his place was taken by Lewis James. More about the Shannon Four will be found in HOBBIES for June and July, 1954. A photograph showing Hindermeyer as a member of the group is reproduced with the article.

#### IV. United States & Edison Cylinders

We are now approaching the point where Harvey Hindermeyer's recording career was largely bound up with the Edison Company. However, it is worth noting that he made several records for the U.S. Indestructible Company, which antedated Edison in producing an unbreakable cylinder. The U.S. Company began business in 1909 and continued until 1913 when it succumbed to the competition of Edison's new Blue Amberol. The complete U.S. catalog dated October, 1912, contains one two-minute cylinder by Hindermeyer, No. 454, our old friend, "Come Kiss the Blarney." The following four-minute also are listed:

1019 If I Could Gain the World By Wishing; 1050 The Ould Plaid Shawl; 1166 There'll Never Be One Like You (this gives the singer's full name, Harvey Wilson Hindermeyer); 1193, Girl of my Dreams (not the familiar song of the same title which became popular many years later); 1314, I'll Be With You, Honey In Honey-Suckle Time (surely a sickly sweet title!) and 1496, a presumably comic selection from "The Quaker Girl" — Keep Away From a Married Man.

Just as our friend's Victor records had a habit of appearing three years or more apart, so there were two and a half years between his first Edison cylinder and his second. Hindermeyer reappeared in the Edison list for February, 1910, and he was never long absent from it thereafter. His second Edison was a four-minute Amberol, No. 348, "Hello, Mr. Moonman, Hello!" It elicited these editorial remarks: "A pleasing melody, whose theme is in the nature of suggestions to lovers for relief when the moon's rays interfere with their spooning, is the vehicle that Mr. Hindermeyer uses with which to return to Edison ranks.

He will be remembered as having contributed. . . 'She Was a Grand Old Lady' to our catalog. Mr. Hindermeyer is the possessor of a magnificent tenor voice whose effectiveness is greatly increased by his unusually distinct enunciation." (Notice that his name was spelled correctly on this occasion!)

In May, 1910, Harvey was back on Amberol 424, singing with the assistance of a chorus, "One Little Girl." This time the *Phonogram* editor was guilty of a memory lapse. He referred to "Hello, Mr. Moonman," as the tenor's first Edison record, forgetting the "Grand Old Lady":

A pretty waltz song sentimental in theme and engaging in melody, is Mr. Hindermeyer's second contribution to the Edison catalog. His first it will be remembered, was . . . "Hello, Mr. Moonman, Hello," which proved very popular. We feel sure that the good impression created by his first record will be fully confirmed by the artistic rendition he gives this selection in which his sweet voice and perfect enunciation are particularly agreeable.

The same record was referred to in the abbreviated monthly list; "An engaging waltz song of the sentimental type by one of the country's foremost concert tenors, the quality of whose voice is as agreeable as his enunciation is pleasingly distinct."

#### V. Long Edison Years

Harvey Hindermeyer was now well launched on his long and successful Edison career, which would require too much space to follow in extensive detail. Edison maintained what amounted to a stock company of the most accomplished popular recording artists of the acoustic recording period, and the artists made themselves useful in many ways. Harvey not only had the assistance of other famous stars in his records but he also sang in the choruses of many featuring his fellow performers. He sang second tenor in a number of Knickerbocker and Metro-

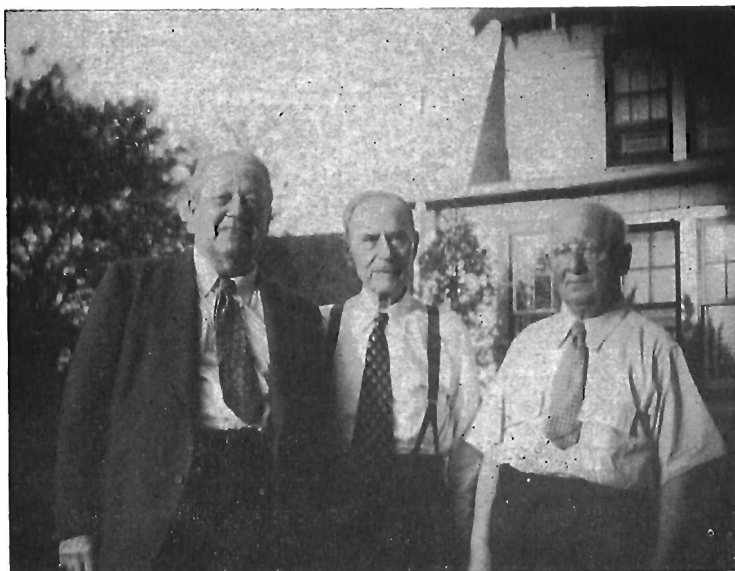
politan Quartet records. Some of his best work was done in the medleys from "Pinafore," "Patience" and other Gilbert and Sullivan operas. (A photograph of an Edison light opera group, with Hindermeyer among those present appeared in this department for September, 1951). His interpretation of Sir Joseph Porter's song, "I Am the Monarch of the Sea," is a masterpiece! Equally good is a duet with Thomas Chalmers, "When I Go Out of Door," from "Patience." He also sang in many other favorite light opera excerpts.

When the first list of Blue Amberol cylinders came out in November, 1912, Hindermeyer was represented with one of his favorite songs, "Roses, Roses, Everywhere," No. 1554, which we have already mentioned among his Victors. The catalog description said that the song "though flowing easily, . . . has a decidedly distinctive note and reaches a beautiful climax which Mr. Hindermeyer enjoys thoroughly, as will those who hear his powerful, well-modulated voice."

In December, Hindermeyer (his name was again being misspelled Hindermeyer!) was on hand with 1585, "When I Carved Your Name on the Tree," a conventional type of love ballad, and 1505, a duet with Helen Clark, "When You're Away," from the musical comedy, "The Winsome Widow." The supplement writer paid this left-handed compliment to the song: "(It) is one of the hits of the performance. Although in the play the antics of the principal comedian tend to detract from the effectiveness of the song itself, we give it the serious treatment to which it is justly entitled."

When Edison achieved his great masterpiece of the acoustic recording era with the New Edison phonograph and Diamond Disc records, Hindermeyer was one of the first performers to make the discs, and he remained steadily among the more popular singers. Not only did he record solos and take part in quartets and chorus work, he also, during the 17 years the tonally perfect discs were issued, sang duets with Donald Chalmers, Helen Clark, Marion Evelyn Cox, Charles Hart, Charlotte Kirwan, Elizabeth Spencer, and perhaps others who escaped my hasty rundown of the catalogs. He was still singing for Edison when the electrical process was introduced and he remained an Edison artist until the venerable inventor went out of the phonograph business in 1929. He sang occasionally for other companies — for instance, he made some Okeh records for his old friend, Fred Hager, and also did a few for Gennett — but he was predominantly an Edison singer and was usually thought of as an exclusive Edison artist.

His Edison repertoire was varied and extensive. It ranged from purely popular songs such as "Margie" and his charming interpretations, with a mixed chorus, of "The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," and "I Love You,"



Harvey Hindermeyer, the late John Bieling, and Eugene Rose, the veteran flute soloist, at the Bieling home, Hempstead, L.I., N.Y., September 9, 1947

to old gospel hymns like "Are You Coming Home Tonight?" and masterful renditions of such Negro spirituals as "Wait Till Ah Put On My Crown" and "Standin' in the Need of Prayer." His duty of "Let the Rest of the World Go By," with the contralto, Marion Evelyn Cox, is a beauty, and one of his finest, though least known, Diamond Discs is "Route Marchin'," a musical setting of a Kipling poem, with a surging orchestral accompaniment featuring some astonishing crashes on the drums.

He likewise sang the refrains of many Edison dance records, among them "No, No, Nora" and "I Love Me." I suspect, but am not sure, he is also the unidentified chorister of "Yes, We Have No Bananas." He certainly sings the vocal part in that time-honored favorite among instrumental specialties, "The Jolly Coppersmith March." Most of his Edison records sold from \$1 to \$1.35, depending on the period at which they were issued; some from \$1.50 to \$1.85; and one—the most popular of all from \$2 to \$2.25. This was 82516, a superb recording of Harry Von Tilzer's great ballad, "In the Evening By The Moonlight, Dear Louise." It was one of the 300 most popular Edison records.

His identification as an Edison star was so clearly established that only a few months ago, when the New York Public Library, gave an evening program of Diamond Discs, Harvey Hindermeyer was one of the surviving Edison artists invited to be present. Among the others who came and heard their former recordings were Anna Case, Edna White and Charles Hart.

It is distasteful to relate that after we entered World War I, anti-German sentiment was such that Edison felt it expedient to list some Hindermeyer records—among them, "I'm Forever Chasing Rainbows," under the super-patriotic name of Harvey Wilson. Probably some record buyers who penetrated the secret took the use of "Wilson" to be a gesture of fealty to President Woodrow Wilson, but Wilson, as we know, is the tenor's middle name.

#### VI. Church & Radio Achievements

His phonograph engagements of course took up only a part of Hindermeyer's time. He was also much in demand for church and concert work. In the early 1930's *The Musical Courier* published a news story saying: "Grace Leadenham Austin's composition, 'At Eventide,' was the opening number on a recent program of the Choir of the First Presbyterian Church of Flushing, New York. The concert was given under the auspices of the Men's Club. Miss Austin was in the audience and was introduced by Harvey Hindermeyer, leader of the choir."

Hindermeyer was a busy man in the 1920's, in secular as well as sacred activities. When radio arrived, he and a basso, Earle Tuckerman, were

among the first to see its possibilities, and they soon became one of the most popular acts on the air, featuring singing and comedy of the old-fashioned black-face minstrel sort. They were sponsored by the makers of Gold Dust, with Hindermeyer being known as "Goldy" and Tuckerman as "Dusty." Their vogue lasted several years. During that time they made one Edison Diamond Disc, which I haven't yet been able to find but which I badly want, No. 51830, "Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane" and "Zip Coon."

In February, 1927, Hindermeyer appeared in a new Columbia list for the first time in exactly 16 years when he and Tuckerman, as "The Gold Dust Twins," came through with record No. 820-D, "Susan Jane" and "Stop That Knocking at the Door." The supplement gave the mistaken impression that Columbia had issued other duets by them when it said: "Goldy and Dusty, the Gold Dust Twins, sure do themselves proud with their latest record. . . . There are light touches of philosophy and a lot of real laughs, put over in a most melodious, pleasing style."

The duet team not only sang the old-fashioned, homey, minstrel-style music on radio, but did much research into genuinely antique Americana. On one Washington's birthday they resurrected "The Derby Ram," a song that had been a favorite of George Washington. Another time they sang one of Abraham Lincoln's favorites, "The Blue-Tailed Fly," which has since become a popular number on the air.

#### VII. I Meet Harvey Hindermeyer

My first meeting with Harvey Hindermeyer, whom I had long admired and now regard as a dear friend, came just a little more than 40 years after he strolled the streets of Philadelphia and heard his first record being played. The date was September 9, 1947, and I was in Hempstead,

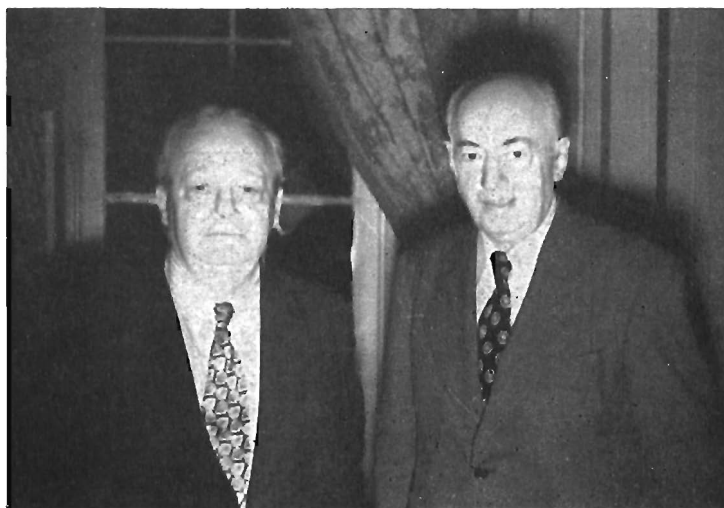
New York, for one of the parties given by the late John Bieling for his veteran recording artist friends. John asked me if I would mind going to the station, to meet Harvey when he got off the Long Island train and show him the way to the Bieling home, accompanied by John's sister-in-law, Mrs. Katherine Moore, I set out.

The train had already arrived when we reached the station, and I saw a stocky, white-haired man walking vigorously along. I recognized him at once and introduced myself, receiving a cordial look from his large brown eyes. And I still have happy recollections of the conversation that he, John Bieling, and some of our friends and I had that night. Part of the time, as he ate his dinner, he autographed postal cards for record collectors who couldn't be with us.

I remember asking Harvey if it was true, as I had heard, that he some times filled in high notes for Billy Murray, whose production of highs tended to be uncertain. He said it was. He also recalled that on one occasion when the American Quartet had an engagement to sing in upstate New York, Billy, who was also uncertain about filling dates, didn't show up, and Harvey went along as second tenor in his stead.

I asked if he had done any Edison tone tests and he said he traveled "from the Atlantic to the Pacific," giving them, and, as far as he knew, not one person ever was able to distinguish the sound of his living voice from his reproduced tones on the phonograph. However, he recalled a fiasco that occurred one night when he was supposed to leave the stage in the dark and leave the New Edison singing in his place. He stumbled and fell off the stage, effectually spoiling the act. I recalled that the late Arthur Collins had a more serious accident during one of those "dark

(Continued on page 55)



HARVEY HINDERMEYER and his old friend, Fred Hager (former Okeh recording director) at the 1948 John Bieling Day, Garden City, New York  
(Photo by Allen G. Debus)

bells were hung on either side of the altar and had a symbolical part of the ceremony there.

Russia is the homeland of a little bisque woman whose skirts hide a bell. She holds a cup of tea and nods her head back and forth when placed in the palm of your hand.

Bells shaped like flowers and decked with flowers; bells bearing the coats of arms of provinces in France, democratically nudge bells that speak with varying tongues of early America.

"That ship's bell was found in the sand near the Inlet," Mrs. Kipp tells the observer. "This little rusty iron bell was unearthed near Tomoka Park." Did it come, perhaps, from one of the nearby long vanished plantations Audubon visited?

Beside the cabinet full of bells, hangs a string of sleigh-bells whose silvery jingles recall the snowy Pennsylvania landscapes they once knew.

Another of Mrs. Kipp's bells with a history, is one that once hung in a tavern on the pike from Washington to Brownsville, Pennsylvania. It was used to herald the approach of the stagecoach, some 100 years ago, according to her aunt who gave it to her.

In Mrs. Kipp's garden is a small summer house, with a 50-pound plantation bell hanging in it. The bell was once used on a Georgia plantation to call the slaves from the fields. Her largest bell, a 150 pounder, is nearby. It was a gift from her cousins in Pennsylvania and was on their estate for eighty-five years, but it was not new when they acquired it, Mrs. Kipp recalls, so the exact age is not known.

Mrs. Kipp's interest in bells has added other items with a bell theme to

her collection. She has received innumerable bell corsages (and has saved them all); a decorative painting of lily "bells" hangs on the wall and is a gift of the artist, Margaret Jones. A tiny old-fashioned music box tinkles out "Monastery Bells" and was a gift of her husband. Her daughter gave her the antique Liberty Bell glass platter bearing the names of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

scenes," when he fell down a ladder into the basement of a theater and was grievously hurt.

I asked Harvey if there were any special "tricks," as rival dealers had maintained, in giving Edison tone tests, and he replied: "Well, you had to make yourself sound like the machine." When I asked if that implied the singer imitated the Edison, he said he hadn't meant it that way. What he did mean was that the artist must learn to sing exactly on the phonograph volume level. Some performers of nervous temperaments or with imperfect breath control couldn't do it. They'd find themselves singing louder than the instrument. Thus a certain amount of practice was necessary, and the singer had to continue practicing to find the right level and keep it.

"Obviously," Harvey said, "the phonograph was capable of extracting just so much volume from a record. There was no mechanical means of amplifying the sound to fit the requirements of a large concert hall, as a singer could do by simply singing louder. Since it would be unreasonable to expect a phonograph to alter its volume and keep pace with changes made by the singer, it was up to the artist to sing just as loud as, but no louder than, the phonograph. As far as the tone quality was concerned, there wasn't the slightest difference between the singer and the Edison."

Harvey told an amusing anecdote about how he and Tuckerman tried to make one of the long-playing Edison records, introduced in 1926, which ran 20 minutes to a side. The boys were going to fill both sides of a 12-inch disc with their minstrel songs and patter. The first time they had sung 19 minutes successfully into the horn when somebody opened the studio door and slammed it. That spoiled the last minute. The second time they had gone 19½ minutes when a train whistle blew, and the record was ruined. Thereupon Hindermeyer and Tuckerman said, "The heck with it!" or words to that effect, and refused to try any more. It proved impossible for Edison to make 20 minute discs by the horn recording method without a break, and the few Edi-

son LP's that were issued all contained dubbings of ordinary four-minute Diamond Discs.

I remember, too, Harvey's saying he considered Billy Murray the greatest of all the popular recording artists.

When September 9, 1948, came, dear John Bieling was dead, but some of his friends held a John Bieling Day party at the Garden City Hotel on Long Island as a tribute to his memory. Harvey Hindermeyer was among those present, and he and I had another warm greeting. I appreciated his thoughtfulness in bringing me fine photos of himself. Two years later there was a second John Bieling party at Hempstead, and again Harvey was there. He sang "The Sunshine of Your Smile" in a manner that proved him still a master of the concert ballad.

We haven't met since, but it was at the 1950 get-together I told Harvey I'd like to write an article about him for *HOBBIES*. The biographical sketch has been postponed much longer than I anticipated, but here it is and I shall send it to my cherished friend for his approval. I hope that he will like it, inadequate as it may be as a tribute to his many years of artistry, and that he will accept it as a "Golden Anniversary" greeting. With all my heart I wish Harvey Hindermeyer many years of health and happiness and hope that we shall meet again and that I may enjoy more of his delightful reminiscences.

## Postscript

After this article was mailed to *HOBBIES*, I received a letter from my old friend saying that, contrary to what I had always understood, his name should be spelled Hindermeyer rather than Hindermeyer, as it usually appeared on record labels.

He also gave some interesting information in his letter, from which I quote:

"Your sketch of me is wonderful and I thank you more than I can tell. Yes, I was married to Miss Gertrude Miller in Philadelphia in 1905 in the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, but unfortunately we did not have any children and my wife passed away in 1948.

"Did you know that Mr. Edison used my voice in his experiments while perfecting the Disc? I cannot tell you how many times I sang 'Carry Me Back To Old Virginny' during that process."

I'd like to add one further note. When the New York Public Library gave a concert of Edison Diamond Discs a few months ago, Harvey Hindermeyer was one of the former Edison recording artists who graced the occasion with his presence. Others were Anna Case, Amy Allerman, Edna White, and another noted tenor, Charles Hart.

J. W.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Art Gillham "The Whispering Pianist"

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE: This article is dedicated to Dennis Deas of Gracewood, Ga., who made it possible for me to write it).

Recently I had an acidulous discussion with a veteran record dealer concerning the younger sets' passion for the "singing" of such performers as Elvis Presley.

The dealer shook his head resignedly. "I'm like you," he said. "I can't understand what they see in those characters. But getting crushes on recording artists and show business personalities is nothing new. After all, middle-aged women have acted just as silly as the kids, but about Liberace. And before Presley there were Johnnie Ray, Sinatra and Crosby, and going even farther back, we had Rudy Vallee, Gene Austin and Art Gillham. Fifty years ago women were writing mash notes to Billy Murray and Henry Burr, and Ada Jones was receiving dozens of written proposals from men who were smitten by her records."

"That's true," I agreed, "and your mention of Murray and Burr reminds me of something. I learned not long since that about 30 years ago Murray, Burr and the other members of the Eight Famous Victor Artists made a sound film for Metro, Goldwyn and Meyer called 'Eight Victor Artists at the Club.' I've been trying to get a copy for my phonograph curio collection, but have learned that although the negative has been preserved the sound, recorded on a separate disc, has been lost. It's exasperating."

The dealer looked thoughtful a moment, then smiled. "Did I ever tell you," he asked, "about the girl who had a crush on 'The Whispering Pianist,' Art Gillham? She lived a few miles out of town and came in one summer morning with several other girls who were going somewhere. They trooped into my store, and the Gillham fan told them she'd decided she didn't want to go any farther but would stay and 'play a record.' They could come by for her on their way home. Well, she played a record, all right. She asked for a sirupy thing called 'I Love You—I Love You—I Love You, Sweetheart

READ AND APPROVED  
By ART GILLHAM

June 20, 1957

Dear Jim:

Am rushing this back to you. I think it's good. You have done a swell job. I corrected one or two spots and added the five best sellers of all my records—hope that's okay.

I wonder if I will be able to get about six copies of the HOBBIES issue that will have this article in it. I have a few "cotton picking" relatives who would want a copy. If you get them this way be sure to contact me at once, and good luck. Sincerely,

ART GILLHAM

of All My Dreams' and started playing it about 9 o'clock. Once in a while she came out for a drink of water, but she stayed in that airtight booth until 2:30, playing that same record over and over. I thought I'd go nuts. When her friends mercifully rescued me, she was pale but happy, and left without saying anything about buying the record. No, they're no worse now than they were in 1929. . . By the way, whatever happened to old Art Gillham?"

"I don't know," I replied. "He is the only crooner whose records I can listen to with unqualified pleasure. Most of the others give me the willies, but Art had a pleasant tenor voice. Although it wasn't of operatic caliber, at least it wasn't a husky, one-note baritone, and his brilliant piano playing made his records sparkle. I liked him better in his comedy numbers than the ballads and tear-jerkers, but I've never been fond of musical sentimentality. As to what became of him, I've made repeated efforts to find out over the past ten years, without any luck. I even wrote to Station WSM at Nashville, with which he used to be associated, but received a brief reply that they had no information concerning him. I'd really like to know what's become of the old boy, because I liked him a lot."

As so often happens, my lack of information was relieved in an unexpected way. The postmaster at Gracewood, Ga, Dennis Deas, wrote to compliment me on my HOBBIES article about Gene Austin. He then said he wished I would do one on

Art Gillham and mentioned that the erstwhile "Whispering Pianist" lived in Atlanta, Ga., and was in the office space rental business. He even gave me Art's address. This resulted in my writing to Gillham and, to my surprise, obtaining a prompt reply. (Most singers are notoriously slow correspondents, if they answer mail at all.) We have since exchanged several other letters, and I have been impressed by the warmth and humor of Art's personality, as well as the invariable promptness of his answers. I have been sorry to learn his health could be better, but hope it will steadily improve.

### II. Art Gillham's First Letter

May 13, 1957. Dear Jim: Thanks for your interest in my work, and I appreciate your letter. I am enclosing a sketch that will tell a little of what I have done in my 62 years, and a picture taken of me over 30 years ago when I was recording for Columbia, for whom I made about 60 records in a little over eight years.

I have been under the weather for the past six months, but am gradually coming out of it, and have been on the job . . . for about a month.

I expect to see Dennis Deas in July in Augusta, Ga., where I will try to be for the Legion State Convention, if I am able. . . .

Be free to write anything you wish about me in your articles. Let me hear from you again, and once more, thanks for your interest in my corny recordings. When I hear the beautiful jobs that are on the market now, I just don't tell anyone that I made records back in the dark ages; before electrical recording. By the way, I did make the first released electrical record, No. 328-D, for Columbia in November, 1923. The title was (one of my own songs), "You May Be Lonesome But You'll Be Lonesome Alone." Gosh, that was a long time ago!

### III. Art's Thumb-Nail Biography

The "thumb-nail autobiography" which the singer enclosed with his letter says that his parents came to Georgia from Texas three years before he was born on January 1, 1895. They moved to St. Louis in 1904, and he attended Wyman School, Central High School and St. Louis University. Art was 19 when he left school to enter orchestra work. He served in the Army during World War I, then returned to music and entered radio at the Drake Hotel Radio Station in Chicago. That was in 1922. He was on the first network show the night President Coolidge was elected, November 4, 1924. Will Rogers was master of ceremonies. Others taking part were the Joseph Knecht Orchestra, the Shannon Four, Wendell Hall, and the late Carson Robison, who died early this year.

The "Whispering Pianist" identification was bestowed on Gillham by Lambdin Kay at WSB, Atlanta, in February, 1924, while he was touring and appearing at radio stations. He was a featured, exclusive Columbia recording artist from 1924 to 1931, and recorded about 40 of his own compositions. Art estimates some 40,000,000 of his records were sold.

In 1932 he began working at WBBM in Chicago, and at some time around this period I heard an announcer at WSM play a number requested by the singer, whom he

jokingly referred to as "Art Gillham, just a broken-down old piano player in Chicago." (Art frequently called himself "a broken-down old piano player.") While at WBBM he met and married Gertrude Sheldon in October, 1932, and they will celebrate their 25th anniversary this October.

In January, 1937, Gillham left radio and returned to Atlanta. For 15 years he served as principal of Crichton's Business College, but left to open his own business, "The Representative's Center," at 3105 Roswell Road, N. E. Summing up, Art said: "Gertrude and I have 3 1/2 acres out of Atlanta, a house in the middle of them that we built at 152 Burdett Road, N. W. I have done numerous radio programs and TV shows on local stations since I have been in Atlanta, but just as a 'side-line' or for advertisement for my own business. I have had two attacks of coronary thrombosis, and cannot use my arms too well to play piano very long at a time, so am not active in music any more."

#### IV. More Letters from Art

When I replied to thank Art for his informative letter (his cooperation has made this one of the easiest HOBBIES articles I have ever written), I questioned his statement that he made that first electrically recorded Columbia record in November, 1923, and pointed out it wasn't issued until the spring of 1925. I asked if he didn't mean November, 1924. I also said I don't admire most of today's vocal recordings, because the engineers make them sound any way they wish, changing a man with a tinny little voice into a Tamagno, and that most of the time the voice coming from the record has little resemblance to the original. On May 20, Art replied:

Dear Jim: Well, you caused Old Pappy a lot of thinking to no purpose, so I went up into the attic and dug up the old scrap book—because when you get over 60 and try to remember dates of 30 to 35 years ago happenings, you sort of kinda get fouled up. And I was really fouled up on the date of the time of 328-D.

I made that record in November, 1924, and your dates are right. I came into New York about the first of November for the network show and then stayed for recording ten sides for Columbia.

Just goes to show you how forgetful an old man can get—1924 was a year of firsts for me. Lamdin Kay, the "Little Colonel" of WSB, gave me the tab of "The Whispering Pianist" in February when I spent a week at the station, and I used it from then on; worked the first network program in November, and made Columbia's first electric recording in November.

I made ten sides for Gennett Records at Richmond, Ind., in 1923, of which they released four; made four sides for Pathe Records in New York, in 1924, all released, and made six sides for OkeH Records in New York, in 1924, all released, before I signed an exclusive agreement for Columbia Records. My first release for Columbia was "How Do You Do, Everybody?" on one side, and the other side was "Way Out West in Kansas."

I agree with you on some of these modern recordings, but the microphone certainly was a blessing for me, when I could work so softly that I could not be heard in the studio, yet it came out as clear and distinct

as it did. Thanks again for your interest and let me hear from you at any time. Sincerely, ART.

In my next letter, I asked Art if he could give me a complete list of his Gennett, Pathe and OkeH records, to supplement the one I had made of his Columbia discs. I mentioned, too, that his record of "How's Your Folks and My Folks Down in Norfolk Town?" (his only Columbia on which he didn't sing both sides) was one of my favorites, but that any Virginian could tell he wasn't a native of the Old Dominion because he pronounced Norfolk as "Nor-fork," instead of "Naw-f'k," as Virginians do. I also asked why on one of his 1931 Columbias, "When They Changed My Name to a Number" - a piece of sentimental tripe that was probably his worst record - somebody named Alex Hill played the piano accompaniment, instead of its being by Art himself. With the letter I enclosed a list of his Columbia records (printed at the end of this article) and asked him to check it.

With his unfailing promptness, Art replied on May 24:

Dear Jim: Thanks for your letter and list of the 22nd. I find you have about seven records listed that I had forgotten about—damn, I'm getting old. But there were two more that you did not have listed, namely, 2349D—To Whom It May Concern/Gazing at the Stars, and 1319D—Silver Haired Sweetheart/Who Gives You All Your Kisses? And I'm afraid that about covers the Columbia releases.

Here is some inside dope on some of them. . . . Due to the acceptance and big sale on 328D, Frank Walker, the recording manager for Columbia, wished to get another record on sale quick, and had only one more side that I had recorded. With me on the West Coast and unable to get to New York at once, he backed Van and Schenk on "Norfolk," the only record where I was not on both sides. And about Norfolk—I ruined three masters when recording this one (as I was from the "Deep Sooth"), because Walker insisted on my putting the "r's" in and that took plenty of practice.

Red Nichols' Band was the Lanin's Red Heads on "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue." He and I were good friends, and he asked Walker to have me do a vocal on his record. I did, and it did the sales no good. That was the only dance record for which I sang the vocal.

Both sides of "When They Changed My Name to a Number" were tunes that Walker wanted me to record SURE, and as I had no time to get up on the piano part and get them on wax, we used a publisher's piano player to get them out quick. (And they both stunk). You see, I was doing a lot of personal appearances and theater dates at the time, and I got away for only two or three days or week at most to run into New York for recording.

I do not recall any of the numbers I recorded for Gennett, and the only ones I remember for Pathe and OkeH are "How Do You Do?" and "The Deacon Told Me I Was Good."

Sorry to hear about Jimmy Dorsey's illness (and subsequent death). He and Tommy were mighty nice to me back in the early '20's, when I was just getting started.

In all my record, theater, songs and personal appearance dates, I at no time had an agent. I paid no one commissions on my work, as I handled all my own business. When I went into New York with recording on my mind, after making about 50 radio stations around the country as a traveling radio artist, I sent a telegram to each recording manager of the various New York companies, telling them I was on WJZ for one

week at noon and at 9 o'clock at night, and as I had a radio following throughout the country they should be interested in my record sales, if I made records. The only companies that responded to the telegrams were Pathe, then OkeH, then Columbia—so I made records. That was also in 1924.

Thanks again for your interest, and I am waiting to see the sketch you are writing about "Old Pappy." I hope we can get together one of these days.

And so, up to this moment, stands my correspondence with Art Gillham. But I hope to keep hearing occasionally from "The Whispering Pianist."

#### V. The Gillham Records

I do not intend to discuss Art Gillham's recordings in detail, but shall call attention to some I consider among the best. Too, there are some interesting comments scattered through the Columbia supplements in which his records are reviewed. A majority of the records are sung to his own piano accompaniments, but a fair number have an orchestral background, identified in some instances as by his "Southland Syncopators" with Art at the piano. All are electrically recorded except four. (See the accompanying list.)

The first Gillham record, issued late in 1924, coupled, as he has already mentioned, "How Do You Do?" (which became best known as the theme song of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare) and "Way Out West in Kansas." The acoustic recording is rather poor, but the horn method under no circumstances would have done justice to Art's light tenor voice. Next in order was a slightly risqué but amusing composition of Art's own, "The Deacon Told Me I Was Good," coupled with "Carolina Blues." The first electric has already been identified as 328D.

Art says his biggest selling records were, "You May Be Lonesome", "So Tired", "Things that Remind Me of You", "Thinking", and the top one "Waiting for Ships that Never Come In".

Now, let's look at the supplements. In August, 1925, there was a review of No. 387, doubling "Take 'Em to the Door," by Van and Schenk, with "How's Your Folks and My Folks?" Of the Gillham side, the supplement said:

The coupling is by the The Whispering Pianist (Art Gillham), the cross-country radio tourist, whose friendly, intimate way of whispering his songs has made him popular with Columbia buyers who have heard his previous records.

November 1925:

The Whispering Pianist (Art Gillham) is becoming more popular every day. A recent letter from him—he is touring the radio stations of the Middle West—says he is getting requests to sing more ballads. Here are two ballads ("So That's the Kind of a Girl You Are" and "Feelin' Kind O' Blue") that are sung in a way that clearly indicates why he is popular as a ballad singer.

January, 1926, brought some bad news, but with a word of reassurance to Art's fans:

A short time after Art Gillham . . . recorded "I'm Sitting On Top of the World," he accidentally shot himself and has been confined to the hospital since. Recent word from him, however, tells us that he is improving and expects to be back "on the air" in a short time.

March, 1926, brought two double-faced Gillham records, No. 529D and 550D, with this comment:

The Whispering Pianist is one of the most sought-after artists on the air. He is in constant demand throughout the country, and he attributes his popularity to the intimate way he delivers his entertainment. Whether he is singing a ballad, a blues or a comedy number, Art injects his personality in a way that makes it "different."

As an example of the way Art infused personality into his records, may be mentioned his characteristic way of talking to his hands and telling them to "play it pretty for the folks" or his simply saying, "play it, fingers!" This dry humor added much to the entertainment quality of his records.

June, 1926:

Art Gillham has added to his titles that of "The Modern Minstrel of the air," because of his frequent touring of radio stations. The Whispering Pianist presents "In Your Green Hat" in an entirely different style than that usually used for such songs. His intimate, conversational tone adds a touch that is not usually found in the work of other artists.

October, 1926:

The Whispering Love-Maker—Art Gillham. This record makes Art the world's champion indoor and outdoor, daylight and after dark whispering love maker. Art made a special trip to Columbia's New York Recording Laboratories to get "Tenderly" and "Thinking" off his mind and on to the wax. The last named required a lot of effort on Art's part.

By this time, a new Gillham record almost invariably came first in the monthly lists of popular numbers, indicating Art had become Columbia's biggest selling singer. He usually managed to select song titles that the record buying public would almost automatically associate with him, and frequently the two sides of a record "ran together" so naturally they could be read as one title—sometimes with amusing results. Examples: "Hot Tamale Molly, Can't Your Friend Get a Friend for Me?" and "I Can't Keep You Out of My Dreams—Hello, Little Girl of My Dreams". Also, "I Don't Want to Forget Broken Hearted Sue," and "Don't Forget the Pal You Left at Home Twiddling My Thumbs."

Incidentally, Columbia always seemed uncertain as to how Gillham's records should be listed in the yearly catalogs. Prior to 1929 they were referred to as by The Whispering Pianist (Art Gillham.) If you looked up Art Gillham in the 1929 and 1930 catalogs you were told: "See Whispering Pianist." But in 1931 if you turned to "Whispering Pianist," you were instructed to "See Art Gillham"!

Continuing with the supplements, in June, 1927, we find the following:

When the Whispering Pianist (Art Gillham) sings "I'm Only Another To You," thousands of girls who have heard him on Columbia New Process Records, the air and the stage will

rise to object. Any girl who has ever listened to Art's whisper will never forget it. "I'm Drifting Back to Dreamland" is another appealing selection by this popular artist.

"Drifting Back to Dreamland" was also a surprising selection. When I obtained a second-hand copy many years after the record was made I put it on expecting to hear a few bars of piano introduction, after which Art would sing. But he never did uplift his voice. The disc is a delightful piano solo all the way through, beginning with shimmering effects resembling the wail of Hawaiian guitars, then gradually stepping up the tempo until a breakneck speed is reached, after which, for the conclusion, it subsides to waltz time. Toward the end of his Columbia career, Art made another "Dreamland" record. It is one of the few of his I don't have, but I assume it is a vocal.

In the July, 1927 supplement:

And now The Whispering Pianist picks "Broken Hearted" as the vehicle to express his feelings. Perhaps Art really is broken hearted—because there are no more worlds for him to conquer. He's a hit on the stage, a sensation on the radio, and a favorite on Columbia New Process Records.

In August:

The Whispering Pianist . . . presents a new style of interpretation in "I Crave You," which is coupled with "Tonight You Belong To Me." In the first named selection, Art introduces to Columbia's record audience his Southland Syncopators. As Gillham whispers the words, his orchestra keeps in perfect rhythm and fills in every space behind him.

So much for the supplements. Art Gillham's success continued as long as the sale of records held up. He not only recorded the latest ballads and comedy numbers, but also showed a fondness for reviving such old-timers as "Chinatown, My Chinatown," "Just for Tonight" and "On the Alamo." They were all deftly sung and accompanied.

As has often been related, the world-wide depression that began in October, 1929, almost put an end to the record business. Sales in 1930 were not half of what they had been in 1929, and those for 1931 probably were not half of 1930. As for 1932, that was the worst year in the industry's history. It is estimated that Columbia's entire record sales didn't reach 250,000 copies for that entire year.

However, "The Whispering Pianist" continued to whisper on "New Process" Columbias for almost two years after the depression began, and made some of his best records during that period. Their sales, naturally, were small. His last, 2506D, was issued in September, 1931. Columbia passed under new control and late in 1932, as part of a desperate effort to restore some semblance of sales, began putting out a new "Royal Blue" record. The 1933 catalog was a thin, poorly printed pamphlet, but it still contained a few Gillham records: No. 2245D, 2374D, and 2506D.



ART GILLHAM at the height of his radio and recording career

By the next time a catalog was issued, several years later, these too were gone. But Art had been a big seller as long as there were millions of record buyers to cater to.

And our genial friend in Atlanta is still remembered with affectionate pleasure by a multitude of now middle-aged men and women who heard and enjoyed his recordings when both they and the world seemed young. He deserves, and I am sure he has, the gratitude of millions of popular music lovers to whom he has given so much enjoyment. Let us all join in wishing him a long and happy life and speedy restoration to perfect health.

### COLUMBIA RECORDS

By ART GILLHAM (1924-1931)

(NOTE--All are 10-inch, double-faced. All are electrically recorded except No. 238D, 297D, 326D and 343D. Both sides are by Gillham in all except 387D.)

- 238D How Do You Do/Way Out West in Kansas
- 297D Carolina Blues/The Deacon Told Me I Was Good
- 326D Hot Tamale Molly/Can't Your Friend Get a Friend For Me?
- 328D You May Be Lonesome/I Had Someone Else Before I Had You
- 343D Hesitation Blues/Second Hand Love
- 387D How's Your Folks and My Folks? /Take 'Em to the Door Blues (Gus Van and Joe Schenk)
- 411D Smile All the While/Angry
- 428D If You Leave Me I'll Never Cry/Cecelia
- 442D So That's the Kind of a Girl You Are/Feelin' Kind O' Blue
- 458D Are You Sorry?/Loving Just You
- 505D I'm Sitting on Top of the World/You're More Than a Pal To Me
- 529D Bam Bam Bammy Shore/Don't Let Me Stand In Your Way
- 550D She's My Gal/Mean Blues
- 614D In Your Green Hat/It's Too Late To Be Sorry Now
- 626D I'd Climb the Highest Mountain If I knew I'd Find You/Say It Again
- 657D It Don't Do Nothing But Rain/He Ain't Done Right By Nell
- 685D I Wish I Had My Old Gal Back Again/I'm Leaving You
- 710D Tenderly/Thinking
- 737D I Can't Keep You Out Of My Dreams/Hello, Little Girl Of My Dreams

- 771D Just Waiting For You/Crying Again
- 806D Rags/ Just a Little Longer
- 842D I Don't Want To Forget/Broken Hearted Sue
- 892D Things That Remind Me Of You/Let's Make Up
- 955D I'm Drifting Back To Dreamland (piano solo)/I'm Only Another To You
- 972D Broken Hearted/If I Get a Sweetie Now
- 1007D Tonight You Belong To Me/I Crave You (with the Southland Syncopators)
- 1051D I'm Waiting For Ships That Never Come In/Pretty Little Thing
- 1081D That Savophone Waltz/I Could Waltz On Forever
- 1116D Flutter By, Butterfly/I'd Walk a Million Miles
- 1152D I Love You But I Don't Know Why/Just Before You Broke My Heart
- 1194D Don't Forget the Pal You Left At Home/Twiddlin' My Thumbs
- 1253D What a Wonderful Night This Would Be/Now I Won't Be Blue
- 1282D You'd Rather Forget Than Forgive/So Tired
- 1319D Who Gives You All Your Kisses?/Silver Haired Sweetheart
- 1353D I Found You Out When I Found You In/The Hours I Spent With You
- 1392D Gee, But I'm Blue/I'm Longing For My Old Gal, Sal
- 1429D Nobody's Lonesome But Me/In My Sweetheart's Arms
- 1472D I'm Missing The Kissing Of Someone/My Heart's Aching For My Old Gal
- 1540D Right or Wrong/It's Never Too Late To Be Sorry
- 1572D My Heart Cries Out For You/Somebody Else May Be Telling Her Something (She'd Love To Hear From You)
- 1619D Chinatown, My Chinatown/ Just For Tonight
- 1663D Lamp of Aladdin/You Can't Take My Memories From Me
- 1726D I Love You, I Love You, I Love You, Sweetheart Of All My Dreams/Some Sweet Day
- 1802D Somewhere There's Someone/What Wouldn't I Do?
- 1873D I'm Still Caring/You've Made My Dreams Come True
- 1919D Two Little Rooms/True Blue
- 1944D On The Alamo/Tell Me There's Hope For Me
- 2016D Blue Little You and Blue Little Me/If You Know What I Know You'll Know I Love You
- 2051D If You Were The Only Girl In the World and I Was the Only Boy/Hollywood
- 2119D Have a Little Faith In Me/Ab-



A photo of Art Gillham distributed by Columbia records in 1929

- sence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder for Somebody Else
- 2189D You Don't Care/If I Had to do Without You
- 2245D Just Forget/Tonight
- 2265D Confessin'/My Heart Belongs to the Girl Who Belongs to Somebody Else
- 2291D Good Evenin'/I'm Drifting Back to Dreamland
- 2331D (You Were Only) Passing Time With Me/When They Changed My Name to a Number
- 2349D To Whom It May Concern/Gazing at the Stars
- 2374D Shine On, Harvest Moon/If You're Happy I'll Be Glad
- 2450D If You Haven't Got a Girl/Something Reminds Me of You
- 2506D Just a Minute More to Say Good-by/You are the Rose of My Heart

### Dance Record with Vocal Refrain By Art Gillham

- 483D Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue (fox-trot by Lanin's Red Heads, conducted by Red Nichols)/I'm Gonna Hang Around My Sugar (Lanin's Red Heads—no vocal).

## Do You Remember?

By EDNA C. ARMSTRONG

When colors were named very differently from now? For instance, there was reseda, sage, and Nile greens, magenta and cerise in reds, watermelon pink, heliotrope in lavender, and robin's egg, peacock, and Alice blues.

— o —

When every town had one or more mandolin clubs?

When one of your favorite playthings was a set of doll furniture made of paper.

— o —

When the "Grecian Bend" was so popular and by metal devices, women would dip the front of their belts from three to six inches below the normal waist-line?

When the first "high-water" skirts came out, with brush binding at the bottom, and made of heavy material like the later golf capes?

— o —

When meningitis, and appendicitis were pronounced—eetis?

— o —

When China silk, foulard and peau de soie were favorite dress fabrics?



# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Edwin M. Whitney

By JIM WALSH

The genial gentleman whose name appears at the head of this article occupies a warmly individual place in my esteem, for he is the first recording artist with whom I ever had the pleasure of speaking.

That statement means just what it says. Edwin Whitney was not the first pioneer recording artist whom I had seen. I had heard a number of others, including some of the most famous, in their concert appearances. But he will always be memorable to me because he was the first I was privileged to shake by the hand and with whom I had a long, and to me, engrossingly interesting conversation—one which he also seemed to enjoy.

I met Mr. Whitney on only the one occasion I shall describe, and although, we occasionally exchanged letters afterward, I have not heard directly from him in many years. However, my old friend, "Uncle Jim" Harkins of the NBC Television Department, tells me that Edwin Whitney, who was at one time a National Broadcasting Company program director, is now living in happy retirement at Pawling, N. Y.—a next door neighbor to the renowned news commentator, Lowell Thomas.

Many HOBBIES readers will remember the Chautauquas which used to make the rounds of the nation's towns and smaller cities every summer. The annual Chautauqua visitation was a great event in a community's cultural life, and although these productions, given in a large tent, were derided by the snobbishly inclined "intelligentsia," they resulted in millions of villagers acquiring a touch of, and perhaps a taste for the finer things. It was a Chautauqua that was responsible for my meeting Edwin Whitney.

When the news came that the Chautauqua would soon be in town I wasn't greatly interested, although I had pleasant recollections of having seen a Victor recording artist, William Sterling Battis, give some excellent impersonations of Dickens characters in one a couple of years before—an event that caused my brother Chad, then a primary school youngster, to go around for weeks afterward, imitating Battis, imitating the brain

children of our favorite author. Chad's delineation of Uriah Heep was a masterpiece of whining and writhing. But when I learned the famous elocutionist, Edwin M. Whitney, was to be a feature of one night's performance, my interest perked up. His "Walnut Story" record had been a favorite in our family for years, and I wanted to see and hear in person the man who made it.

Then I got the audacious idea I'd like to meet Mr. Whitney. It was not in my nature to obtrude myself upon a person of distinguished attainments, but I felt that if the noted entertainer realized I was one of his phonograph followers he wouldn't mind exchanging a few words. So I approached the manager of the Chautauqua, told him that I would like a chance to talk briefly with Mr. Whitney, and explained why. He readily agreed to introduce me and asked me to come around that night about an hour before the performance would begin.

You may be sure I did go, accompanied by a teen-age friend, Llewellyn Elsbree (always known as "Boss"), who went everywhere with me in those callow days. True to his word, the manager took me back stage and presented me to a rather slightly built gentleman attired in a blue suit that matched his eyes. His hair was white but his complexion was fresh, his face unlined and, in spite of the white hair, he had a surprisingly youthful look. We shook hands and he had spoken only a few words before I realized I was in the presence of a cultured gentleman and a man of high intelligence.

He, on his part, understood I am

### DEATH OF EDWIN WHITNEY

Since this article was written we have learned of Mr. Whitney's death in a New York hospital on June 5.

The veteran singer and elocutionist had been looking forward to the appearance of his biographical sketch and we regret that it appears too late for him to see it.

sure, that he was being admired by a somewhat excited and impressionable youth.

I told Mr. Whitney of the pleasure his record of "The Darkey and the Boys" had given all the members of my family, and asked if he knew where it had originated. He said he had learned the story from a Virginia-born humorist, the late Ralph Bingham, but didn't know where Bingham had obtained it. I interrupted to say I hadn't heard Bingham was dead and to express my regret. (The maker of "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone" was another comedy favorite of mine). Mr. Whitney then told me Bingham had died a year or two before and gave some details of my fellow Richmonder's death (like Bingham, I was born in Richmond), which I have forgotten.

I asked the cordial gentleman how he happened to begin making records, and he said it was because Victor engaged the Whitney Brothers Quartet to sing a series of "standard" songs and gospel hymns, and he was the quartet's second tenor.

That also was news to me. For years I had been reading Victor catalogs in which records by the Whitney Brothers Quartet were followed by those of Edwin M. Whitney, "humorist and elocutionist," but it had never occurred to me he was one of the quartet singers.

I mentioned this and said I had read a death notice in *The Billboard* some time before about a singer whose name wasn't Whitney but who was identified as a former member of the Whitney Brothers Quartet. Knowing that not all the Six Brown Brothers of saxophone sextet fame were really brothers, I'd had no trouble accepting this statement, but it seemed to annoy Mr. Whitney.

"Whoever that man was, he never sang in our quartet," my Chautauqua friend said. "I should know, for I was a member of the quartet until it disbanded. And all my brothers who sang in it are still living and in good health."

I asked Mr. Whitney what he thought of the Whitney Brothers records as compared to those made by the modern electrical method, and he said he thought they were very good, considering the time and circumstances under which they were made. He said that, as compared to electrical recordings, there was a lack of "dynamics"—that is, strong contrasts between loud and soft and what musicians refer to, in painter's terms, as "light and shade"—and that this lack of dynamics was more evident in their few Edison cylinders than in their Victor discs.

"We had to be very careful," he said, "not to get too close to the horn, otherwise we would 'blast.' I remember somebody at Victor telling me Schumann-Heink was inclined to crowd the horn, and they had several strong men—I think it was six—to pull her back whenever she was about to let go with a loud, high note

—high, that is, for such a chesty contralto.

"We met some nice fellows at Victor," Mr. Whitney went on. "The manager of the artist and repertoire department was Harry Macdonough. No doubt you know of him?"

I replied that I did and told Mr. Whitney something he didn't know, that Macdonough, whose real name was John Scantlebury Macdonald, had recently left Victor after many faithful years with "His Master's Voice" and was now a Columbia recording director.

"Then," the elocutionist went on, "I remember Rous, the assistant artist and repertoire manager. He was also the baritone of the Hayden Quartet."

"I thought," I said, "his name was S. H. Dudley. That's what the record catalogs call him."

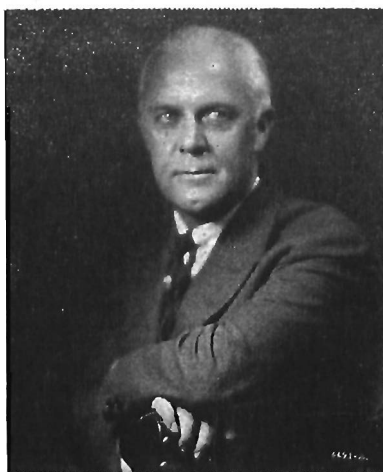
Mr. Whitney smiled. "His real name was Rous," he said "Dudley was just an assumed name. But there was a well known colored comedian whose name really was S. H. Dudley, and I was told they stayed in a constant mix-up from getting each others mail. Poor old Rous," he added, with a sad look. "I understand he went blind, had to give up his job and now is just about down and out. Too bad, for he was such a nice fellow!"

It just happened that a short time before I had written to Camden, asking what had become of S. H. Dudley, and I was able to assure Mr. Whitney that the baritone's plight wasn't so bad as he feared. Rous, who wrote the first "Victor Book of the Opera" and was for years the company's catalog editor and supplement writer, had suffered severe eye-strain but had recovered, retired and was living comfortably in Southern France.

Mr. Whitney said he thought the quartet made about 40 Victor records and perhaps a dozen for Edison. If they did a large percentage of their records went unissued by both concerns. I know of only four Edisons that were actually published, and can account for less than a score of Victor titles. I asked which he considered the best and he said emphatically: "Swanee River" ("Old Folks at Home.")

Then he mentioned something that greatly interested me. "Last fall," he said, "I was playing an engagement in the Middle West when I saw that the Eight Famous Victor Artists were giving a concert that night. I went, and soon became convinced that those fellows gave the perfect light entertainment. They were all masters of whatever they had to do. When the intermission was called I went back stage and ran into the manager of the troupe, Henry Burr, who was standing in a doorway. As he turned and saw me, he said: 'Your face is familiar, but hanged if I can place you. Where in h---have I seen you before?'"

"I don't know," I replied. "What part of h---did you come from?"



EDWIN MORSE WHITNEY, as he appeared while program director with the National Broadcasting Co.

"Somehow that seemed to jog his memory. 'Oh yes, I know now!' he exclaimed. 'Whitney Brothers Quartet—you were one of the quartet! Hey, fellows!' He excitedly called the other members of the troupe, and I renewed my old acquaintance with Billy Murray, who of course, had been acting as master of ceremonies. Then I met the others who hadn't been actively recording in my phonograph days. Carl Mathieu, first tenor; Stanley Baughman, baritone, and Jim Stanley, the bass of the Peerless Quartet; Monroe Silver, the 'Cohen' monologist; Sammy Herman, the xylophonist, and young Frank Banta, who seemed just a kid but had been playing piano for the troupe a good many years. We had a great time together, and the Eight really seemed to hate it when they had to go back and give the second half of the concert, instead of staying back stage and talking about the good old phonograph days."

I think the high point of our chat came when I told Mr. Whitney something that I have since told many famous recording artists — that as a small boy I operated, in imagination, the Walsh Talking Machine Company, and made out, in pencil tablets, a record catalog that came to contain thousands of titles. "And," I said, "although you didn't suspect it, Edwin M. Whitney was one of my artists."

At this Mr. Whitney gave a shout of delight and called the Chautauqua manager. Turning to me, he said: "Tell him what you've just told me!" I repeated my statement, and the manager mentioned that one of the Chautauqua speakers, Ruth Bryan Owen, daughter of William Jennings Bryan, was "an Orthophonic Victrola fan" and went into Victor dealers' shops to hear the new records wherever they traveled. Mr. Whitney expressed great admiration for the Orthophonic and its ability to reproduce large massed effects. He mentioned a record of "The Bells of St. Mary's" by the Associated Glee

Clubs of America, in which 1,500 voices had taken part, and said the singing was transmitted over a telephone line into Victor's New York laboratories, where the actual recording was done.

A member of the Ellenor Cook folk dancing troupe, whose act preceded his, passed us and smiled significantly, I thought, to indicate he'd better be getting ready for his own contribution to the evening's entertainment. So "Boss" and I took the beautiful young lady's hint and said goodbye to Mr. Whitney. As we parted he slapped me on the back and exclaimed, "All the luck in the world to you!"

We youngsters then went out front, where in due time we enjoyed the Ellenor Cook dancers and watched Mr. Whitney give a one-man production of a three-act play, "The Man From Mars," whose plot—a sermon against selfishness—seemed suggested by Dickens' "Christmas Carol" but was nevertheless gripping. As the newspaper review said the next day, "it was excellently given by Mr. Whitney, who impersonated at least a dozen characters and seemed an entire theatrical company in himself."

So ended my first, and up to now, only "get-together" with the first recording artist I ever met, Edwin M. Whitney.

#### II Biographical Notes

Despite the pleasure this meeting gave me, I still knew little about Edwin Whitney's life story. However, the 1938-39 edition of "Who's Who in America," has since come to my aid.

It identifies Edwin Morse Whitney as "an interpreter of plays," (as he was in giving the one-man production of "A Message From Mars"), and says he was born March 17, 1877, at Parma Center, N. Y. Hence by the time this article appears he will be on the verge of observing his 80th birthday or will have passed it.

His father was the Rev. Edwin J. Whitney, and his mother before her marriage was Miss Myra C. Bentley. Mr. Whitney was graduated in 1896 from the high school at Castile, N. Y. Six years later he was graduated from the Emerson College of Oratory in Boston.

On September 8, 1904, he married Miss Foss Lamprell of Malden, Mass. She died January 7, 1923. He married his second wife, the former Miss Emma Miller Bolenius of Lancaster, Pa., on July 29, 1933.

As we already know, Edwin Whitney began his career (in 1902) as a reader and as second tenor of the Whitney Brothers Quartet. In 1912 he became a reader of plays. After radio became popular, he went into broadcast work. In 1928, he became program director for the National Broadcasting Company — a position which he retained for several years.

Much earlier, in 1914, he had founded and directed the Whitney Studios of Platform Art, and in subsequent years filled more than 5,000 engagements in public recitals.

At the age of 21, he enlisted in Arizona as a member of Company A, First Territorial Volunteers Infantry, serving in the Spanish-American War, and being advanced to first sergeant. He is a Republican, a Methodist and a 32nd degree Mason.

### III The Whitney Records

The recording careers of both Edwin M. Whitney as an elocutionist and a humorist and of the Whitney Brothers Quartet were confined to a two-year period, from late 1908 through a part of 1910. However, one of their Edison cylinders, recorded during this time, was not issued until 1911.

January, 1909, marked the first appearance of the Whitney name in the Victor list. The quartet made its debut on No. 5629, with a musical setting of Eugene Field's poem, "The Little Red Drum." Like most—perhaps all—of the Whitney records, this was unaccompanied. Catalog Editor, Sam Rous introduced the ensemble thus:

This fine organization, which is composed of four brothers, is quite well known to patrons of the various Lyceum courses, and the brothers have thousands of admirers, especially throughout the Middle West.

It is rare to find in one family four gifted sons; and rarer still to find them with voices so placed that they can assume the several parts in a male quartet. The Whitney Brothers sing both classical and popular songs in a most artistic manner, and in their concerts give an entire evening's program without other assistance.

In spite of the praise the brothers' work received, the unaccompanied singing and the nature of the song were perhaps too much out of the ordinary to appeal to the average record buyer of almost 50 years ago. "The Little Red Drum" was not a big seller and stayed in the catalog only through May, 1912.

The Whitneys were again on hand in February, with No. 5635, an old English glee, "Hail, Smiling Morn." Said Ed Whitney's old friend, Mr. Rous: "The quartet's singing of this number is wholly admirable; the trying turns which each voice takes up in turn being rendered with a facility which shows the most careful study and unlimited rehearsals." This record, too, was not a spectacular seller, but lasted longer than any of the other Whitney single-faced discs and remained in the catalog until May, 1913. It is odd that all the Whitney Quartet one-sided records, containing some favorite standard numbers, were comparatively poor sellers, but most of their double-faced discs remained consistent favorites for many years.

Also in February appeared Edwin Whitney's first recorded monolog, the already mentioned "Darky and the Boys." No description was given other than the sub-title, "The Walnut Story," but this record, No. 5636, was for a long time one of the best selling humorous numbers. In 1910 it was combined on No. 16661 with "The Old Oaken Bucket Parody," by Nat M. Wills, and remained available until 1923. The amusing story

tells of two boys dividing walnuts they had gathered behind a high graveyard wall. An elderly Negro, walking past on the other side, hears them and decides the Lord and the Devil are inside, "dividin' up de souls." He runs and tells a white man, who scoffs but nevertheless accompanies him to the wall. They arrive just in time to hear one of the boys say: "There, that's all of 'em! Now we'll get the two outside of the fence an' we'll have 'em all!"

"And they tell me," Mr. Whitney concludes, in a drily unctuous voice, "that the white man beat the Negro running!"

This monolog was of the type of comedy popular in the days before "racial stereotypes" were the butt of organized opposition, and by 1909 standards it sold gratifyingly.

A long time went by before more Whitney records were issued, but in September, 1909, there were three ten-inch and one twelve-inch by the quartet. Judging by the titles, all should have sold well and it's surprising that none was taken into the double-faced list. The three smaller records all of which made their final appearance in the January, 1912 catalog, were: 5727, "Dixie"; 5728, "San Lucia," and 5730, "How Can I Leave Thee?"

That same month, a new monolog was offered by "Edwin Whitney, elocutionist." It was No. 5740, "Roosevelt and the Darky." The supplement said:

Mr. Whitney, who is the second tenor and elocutionist of the Whitney Brothers Quartet, is pleasantly remembered for his amusing "Darky and the Boys" which has been most popular. A new record by this clever entertainer is now offered—a good story circulated about our late President, shortly after his return from that celebrated bear hunting trip in Louisiana. It will be admitted that the old darky did what very few people in the world have been able to do; and really got the best of Theodore Roosevelt.

The Roosevelt record didn't sell as well as the "Walnut Story" and today is rather hard to find. And what was "that celebrated bear hunting trip?" The quartet's first double-faced record came out in November, 1909. It was 16362, on which the brothers' singing of a hymn, "Eternity," was coupled with a "clear" and distinct reading of the Twenty-Third Psalm and the Lord's Prayer. The reader's name wasn't given, but he was Len Spencer, and his Columbia version of these readings was played at his funeral in December, 1914.

In December, the Whitneys were represented with the beautiful old song, "Forsaken," on one side of 16369, coupled with "I Cannot Sing the Old Songs," by a husband and wife duet team, Elizabeth and William Wheeler. On 16372, they sang "Home of the Soul," which had on the reverse side, "I Am Praying for You," by Frank Stanley and Henry Burr. There was another Whitney monolog, "A Couple of Good Ones" (and they are!) combined with one of the best ragtime songs ever written, "Oh, That Yankiana Rag," sung

by the greatest of all ragtime singers, Billy Murray.

It was probably also in this month that one of a series of "Special records," which dealers were not expected to carry in stock but could obtain on special order, was issued. It was 5746, "Grace Be Unto You," a hymn by the Quartet with "greetings" spoken by Edwin Whitney. I have never found a copy of the obscure record, which lasted only through January, 1912.

The next double-faced disc in numerical sequence was 16401, "Sally In Our Alley," whose "mate" was "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," a soprano solo by Elizabeth Wheeler. January, 1910, brought two Whitney Quartet offerings on record No. 16430, "Remember Me, O Mighty One" (sacred words to the melody of "The Soldier's Farewell") and "Galilee." This was followed in February with 16441, "Jesus Saviour, Pilot Me" and "Light of Life," on which the supplement commented: "The double records of hymns by the Whitney Brothers Quartet have been quite successful, and the two numbers now offered are perhaps the best of the series."

March records included: "Nearer, My God To Thee," by the Whitneys, combined on 16451 with "Yield Not To Temptation," by the Australian baritone, the late Percy Hemus. It also brought the final Edwin Whitney monolog, another Victor record I have never found: No. 16459, "A Phenomenon," with, on the other side, "Experiences of a Commuter," by the famous comedian, Lambs Club enthusiast and New York Giants rooster, Digby Bell, who died in 1917. The catalog description said: "Two amusing talks by two famous raconteurs. Mr. Bell relates in his usual witty style some happenings in a railroad station; while Mr. Whitney gives us another of those darky stories in which he is inimitable. A colored preacher, having used the word 'phenomenon,' is hauled up before the congregation and forced to explain. He does!"

A month later, Victor issued No. 16454, "Old Folks at Home," which I have already mentioned. Mr. Whitney said he considered the best of the quartet's records. It was combined with "Loch Lomond," by that accomplished soprano, Elizabeth Wheeler. (She and her husband years afterwards went to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where they headed the University of Michigan music department and had, as a promising baritone pupil, Thomas E. Dewey, who was to become governor of New York and twice a candidate for the presidency of the United States). Immediately afterward followed 16465, "The Light of the World is Jesus," coupled with "He Leadeth Me," by Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.

And that was the last of the Whitney Quartet Victor recordings. In view of the obvious popularity of their "standard" songs, it is rather puzzling that they did not continue

to make other records. "Galilee," "Home of the Soul," "Remember Me, O Mighty One," and "Sally in our Alley," were still in the 1925 catalog, as was "Eternity," which had been remade in 1924 by the Shannon Quartet. They were removed only because of the introduction of the electrical recording process, and when, in 1927, a catalog of records of special personal and historic interest was issued, No. 16430, 16362 (in the remade Shannon version) and 16372 were included.

#### IV The Whitney's Edison Records

As has already been said, the Whitney Brothers made only a few Edison cylinders; or at least a mere handful were ever issued. No. 10230, a two-minute version of "Santa Lucia," was announced in October, 1909. The supplement said: "This record introduces a new combination of artists to the Edison public. The Whitney Brothers' Quartet, as its name indicates, is composed of four brothers, all of whom possess remarkably fine voices. Their work is truly artistic."

In the same month, a four minute record of "Love's Old Sweet Song," also was issued with the comment: "The first Amberol record by this quartet. This record, together with the one shown in the list of two-minute selections, will put the Whitney Brothers in a high niche among Edison artists."

In order to build up its catalog of the recently introduced four-minute Amberols, Edison also issued in October, 1909, a special list of 50 additional titles. One was 280, "Sally in our Alley." The supplement said: "This old English song is given an effective rendition by this remarkable quartet of brothers, whose work is a little different in character from any similar organization we have had. It shows the great pains they have taken to perfect themselves in quartet singing."

The only other Edison cylinder by the Whitneys did not appear until August, 1911. It was a two-minute rendition (No. 10610) of "Forsaken," and was announced as follows:

This grand old song with its beautiful melody and rich harmonies is well adapted for quartet singing. In the hands of the Whitney Brothers it shapes itself into a record which must eventually find a place in collections of the better grade. The artistic rendering of the number by this quartet of capable artists is pleasantly reminiscent of their superb rendition of "Love's Old Sweet Song" and "Santa Lucia."

Concerning "Love's Old Sweet Song," the March, 1911, complete Edison record catalog, had lavished high praise by saying: "This favorite sentimental ballad was never given a more delightful reproduction anywhere than is here presented." In view of such enthusiasm, it's a pity Edison didn't see fit to issue more of Whitney records. All those mentioned here were cut when wax cylinders were abandoned late in 1912 in favor of the unbreakable Blue Amberols.



**PIONEER PHONOGRAPH SONG.**—This is an illustration of the cover design of possibly the first song ever written about the phonograph. A few months after Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, a 16-year-old boy, Henry Holden Huss, wrote "The Song of Mister Phonograph," which was published in 1878 by G. Schirmer and sung at the phonograph exhibitions then being given in New York. It was the first published composition of Huss, who became a noted composer of serious music in a career that lasted 75 years. Notice the music was published under the pen name of H. H. H. von O'Graph. After Huss' death five copies of the sheet music were found in his effects by his widow. His nephew, B. A. Lascelles of Kew Gardens, N. Y., sent a copy to Jim Walsh.

#### V Conclusion

And so ends the story of the recording career of Edwin M. Whitney and his three brothers of the Whitney Quartet. Not having been in touch with Mr. Whitney in recent years, I do not know whether all, or any, of his brothers are still living. But they were fine artists whose memory can never be entirely forgotten as long as their records survive. As for Edwin Whitney, he will always have my affectionate warm wishes for the reasons I set forth in the beginning of this article. I hope that he will enjoy many happy years of retirement in his beautiful home at Pawling.

—o—

Several months after the foregoing article was written I became worried because there was no photograph of Mr. Whitney to go with it,

and decided to try to again obtain one. So I wrote to "Uncle Jim" Harlins, of the National Broadcasting Company, and asked if any photos remained from Mr. Whitney's association with the network. He was able to find only a clipping from *Radio Guide* of December 14, 1931, but as a result of "Uncle Jim's efforts I had a long distance telephone conversation, the night of May 11, with Mrs. Jean Whitney, which resulted in the accompanying photo being sent to me. I also exchanged a few words with Mr. Whitney, but he suffers from a severe asthmatic condition that made it necessary for him to cut the conversation short.

From Mrs. Whitney I learned the Whitney Brothers Quartet was composed of Alvin, first tenor, now dead; Edwin, second tenor and professional (Continued on page 35)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 33)

reader; William, baritone, also dead; and Yale, bass, now living in California. Another brother, Casward, not associated with the quartet, lives in Pittsburgh.

During his stage career, Mr. Whitney appeared in "Becky Sharp" with Minnie Maddern Fiske. After joining NBC in 1928 he created the roles of Captain Jimmy Norton in "Harbor Lights" and Judge Whipple in "Real Folks." He directed "Death Valley Days" for four years, and also directed "The Wizard of Oz," "Manhattan Merry-Go-Round," "Friendship Town," and "Waltz Time," with Abe Lyman's Orchestra.

The *Radio Guide* article contained this interesting paragraph — which, remember, appeared nearly 26 years ago:

"... It seems impossible to believe that anyone with eyes like Ed Whitney's could ever grow old. He is clean-shaven, fresh complexioned, has a dimple in the center of his chin, and gives the appearance of being keenly alive. He has a lovely deep voice, and speaks very clearly and easily. His favorite dishes are his mother's home-made bread, cinnamon buns and allspice apple pie. She is 81 years of age, but still young in spirit, and whenever Ed is expected home she dons her apron and visits the kitchen to make his favorites for him."

## The Records of Jack Norworth

By ALLEN G. DEBUS

PART 2  
(Will be continued in an early issue)

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# Circusiana

## Questions and Answers

By DANA STEVENS

**Q.** Was there ever a parade wagon patterned after the old woman in the shoe idea?

**A.** Such a wagon was built in 1888 for the Barnum and Bailey Circus. It was entitled "The Old Woman in the Shoe." It was built when James A. Bailey decided to have a series of fairy tale floats in the parade, which he called the childrens' section of the street parade. At various times this wagon was used by Cole Bros. and by Ringling Bros. Circus.

**Q.** When was the first light plant used to light a circus performance?

**A.** The earliest mechanically operated light plant in a circus was a slow speed, on-lung horizontal, engine-belted set employed by the Ringling Brothers about 1910. It gave much trouble and spectators had to be kept away from its long belt.

**Q.** I've heard that a ski jump was once featured in a circus. Do you have any information about this?

**A.** In 1907 the Barnum and Bailey Circus featured such a ski jump by a Captain Carl Howelson.

**Q.** It is said that P. T. Barnum's famous Jumbo, the elephant, had a fabulous appetite. Do you have any facts about what he ate?

**A.** It is reported that Jumbo ate the following for his daily ration: 200 pounds of hay, two bushels of oats, ten loaves of bread, a barrel of potatoes, two or more quarts of onions, and an occasional keg of beer.

**Q.** What were Jumbo's actual measurements?

**A.** According to the Museum of Natural History, Jumbo was 10 feet, nine inches tall.

**Q.** What happened to Jumbo after he died?

**A.** Jumbo was mounted and displayed by the circus for several years. Later his skeleton was given to the Museum of Natural History, where it may now be seen. His hide was reconstructed and mounted and placed in the Barnum Museum at Tufts College, Medford, Mass. Barnum was once on the board of directors of this college.

**Q.** Was the Dailey Circus on the road in 1948?

**A.** Yes. They played a number of dates in the Midwest that year. The show was a five-railroad car show. One of the main attractions was the baby elephant named "Butch." A contest was held in each city among the children patrons to try and find a new name for "Butch." Any boy or girl under twelve years of age, who attended the circus, could suggest a new name by dropping that name into a receptacle at the entrance to the big top. The winner was to be given five hundred dollars and a trip to the winter quarters of the show in Gonzales, Tex.

**Q.** Does Emmett Kelly ever get a haircut?

**A.** It is said that Kelly gets only two haircuts a year, and even then the barber leaves his hair long for it is an integral part of his clown characterization.

**Q.** Is there a school for clowns in Paris?

**A.** I know nothing about this school other than that First Sergeant Elmer C. Linquist, veteran of two world wars, received a sheepskin from a Paris clown school during his time in the army of occupation following World War I, and in 1947 started clowning full time for the Sparks Circus.

**Q.** Are most clowns unhappy?

**A.** It is not true that all clowns hide an aching heart. Stories about unhappy Pagliaccis of the Big Top have always fascinated the public. Some can be traced to an original source of woe, while others can only be said to exist as part of the legend of clowndom. But, by and large, most clowns are happy persons and according to Dexter Fellows, one of the great circus press agents of all time, a clown's aim in life is to provoke laughter, not to cover up a melancholy disposition.

(Continued on page 43)

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Charles D'Almaine

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to one of my dearest friends, an admirer of Charles D'Almaine and himself an accomplished violinist—Albert Ross Via, Jr., of South Boston, Virginia).

A few years ago I went with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Via, Jr., to visit Branch Dunn, of Halifax, Va., and hear his fine high fidelity phonograph. After listening to a superb long-play performance of a Bartok violin concerto by, I believe, Yehudi Menuhin and the Philharmonic Orchestra, I remarked:

"I wonder how Charles D'Almaine would have played that?"

Albert, who had frequently discussed the pioneer recording violinist's techniques with me, replied: "I doubt that he could have played it." When I asked why, he said that D'Almaine had recorded mostly short, simple pieces of the salon or semi-classical type when he was not performing jigs and reels or downright "popular" music. "He never in his career," Albert pointed out, "recorded anything as hard to play as this concerto."

I had a ready answer. "Neither," I said, "did anybody else in those early days. After all, you couldn't crowd a concerto or an extended classical violin work onto a single-face 7 or 10-inch disc or a two-minute wax cylinder. The early Red Seal violinists, such as Maud Powell, Elman and Kreisler, played mostly the same sort of salon-type music on records that D'Almaine used. If D'Almaine played 'The Mocking Bird', Kreisler played 'Old Folks at Home.' Kreisler, in fact, recorded a great deal more strictly popular music than D'Almaine."

Then I went on to say that fifty years and more ago, recording techniques weren't capable of mastering the interplay of sound between a violin and a large orchestra, and the record-buying public wouldn't have bought such "long-hair stuff" if it had been made. Tastes ran to "Humoresque," the Meditation from

"Thais," "The Irish Washerwoman" and "Pop Goes the Weasel." And I wound up by saying I believed that if D'Almaine were playing today he could have interpreted that Bartok concerto in a manner to do it justice.

On further reflection, Albert agreed D'Almaine should not be blamed for not having recorded the more ambitious types of music and expressed admiration for the quality of tone he produced in performing the meager recorded violin repertory of his era.

I still stick to my contention that Charles D'Almaine, one of the most versatile musicians who ever touched bow to fiddle, could have given an excellent account of himself in any branch of the classical violin field. Regardless of his merits, he certainly has been one of the most difficult subjects about whom I have ever striven to obtain biographical information, and I am grateful that I find myself able at last to pay tribute to so colorful and accomplished a musician.

### II EARLY INFORMATION

The more one knows about the pioneer recording artists the more there still seems left to learn. The research worker can never be sure some unexpected piece of information won't come along to upset existing beliefs. For instance, my friend, C. Hilding Bergquist of 3029 — 15th Avenue, South Minneapolis, Minnesota, who specializes in accordion records, thought he had a complete list of all American discs made by P. Frosini. But now Hilding has learned Frosini made overture recordings for Paramount and Puritan, which had previously been unknown to him. Naturally, he's eager to obtain these "mystery records" by his virtuosic idol. And I had never doubted the brilliant old-time blackface comedian, Billy Golden, used the name his parents gave him. However, Raymond Tump of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who owns a book, "Monarchs of Minstrelsy," written by Edward Le Roy Rice and published in 1911, quotes Rice as saying Golden's name was really William B. Shire and he was born (in Cincinnati) June 9, 1858. The

book further says he began his partnership with Joe Hughes (that appears to have been Hughes' legal name) September 25, 1904.

Similarly, during the many years in which I have been trying to find out more about Charles D'Almaine, I have received a great deal of well meant misinformation. Although I have admired D'Almaine since my childhood, when I made him the "staff violinist" for that imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company which I have mentioned so often in HOBBIES, he ranks with other artists (among them Eddie Morton, Silas Leachman and George Alexander) about whom I did research for years before I had information enough to write an article. What little I knew for a long time about D'Almaine was contained in the following biographical sketch appearing in several editions of the Edison Blue Amberol record catalog:

A native of Hull, England. Mr. D'Almaine comes of very musical parents, both of whom were operatic artists. He displayed remarkable talent when a mere boy, and at 14 played before Royalty at Inversay Castle, Scotland. Coming to this country with the Balmoral Scotch Choir, he met with immense success upon his first tour. As soloist with the Redpath Bureau, Marie Decker Concert Company, and with many symphony orchestras, he has acquired fame both as a master of technique and of expression. His hobby is the making of his own violins.

(Parenthetically, that mention of D'Almaine's having been soloist with many symphony orchestras seems additional reason to believe he could have mastered a concerto by Bartok or anyone else).

The sketch was accompanied by a small photograph of D'Almaine, like one I have submitted in the hope that it can be reproduced. It shows him wearing a mustache curled at the ends and as having dark hair brushed back from a high forehead. I had never seen a photograph of D'Almaine without a mustache, until—to anticipate a little—one was sent to me by his sister-in-law in Chicago. I also hope to reproduce it.

As I grew up, I frequently found myself wondering if Charles D'Almaine were still alive and what had become of him. That was one of the questions I asked the late Frank Dorian, that veteran Columbia official who was so genially helpful in giving me information over a period of years. I am quoting from memory, not being able to lay hands on the letter in which he answered my inquiry, but he replied substantially in these words:

"Mr. Forbush (Walter Forbush, another pioneer Columbia official) tells me Charles D'Almaine 'hung up the fiddle and the bow' long ago and became a chiropractor in Newark. We do not know whether he is still alive."

For a long time this odd information, that the gifted violinist had abandoned his profession to adopt another—that of adjusting spines—was all I could learn about the post-



This unusual, smooth-shaven photograph of Charles D'Almaine was sent to Jim Walsh by D'Almaine's sister-in-law, Miss Lillian Berry of Chicago.

phonograph days of Charles D'Almaine. But, as the pages that follow will prove, I tried to find out more.

### III MORE INVESTIGATION

One golden day in October, 1940, I was having lunch in Lindy's, the famous New York theatrical restaurant, with Jimmy Martindale and three of the great recording artists of earlier years—all gone now—Billy Murray, Albert Campbell and Monroe Silver. I asked what had become of Charles D'Almaine. (By the way, the violinist's family name is pronounced *Dal-main*).

"Mike" Silver, who made his first records in 1910 or 1911, didn't remember D'Almaine at all, but little Al Campbell spoke up, "I haven't seen Charles D'Almaine in 35 years," he said. "Is he still alive?"

"That's what I'm trying to find out," I replied, and Billy Murray chimed in:

"I remember one thing Charles D'Almaine said to me many years ago. We were eating together in the Victor Lunch Club, and he said: 'Billy, one way to have a happy married life is always to take your vacation separate from your wife. If my wife goes to Atlantic City, for example, I go to the Maine woods. Each one takes time off at the spot he or she prefers. When the few weeks of separation are over we're happy to be back together.'"

"I haven't seen Charles D'Almaine for many a year," Billy concluded, "and I don't know whether he's still living, but I have never forgotten that 'happy though married' theory of his."

A little more than two years later I had a letter from the Rev. Damian Smith of St. Mary's Abbey, Newark, N. J., which contained an interesting passage about the violinist. Some of the information Father Smith gave was incorrect, but that was not his fault. It resulted from erroneous

information he had been given. He wrote:

"Re Charles D'Almaine, I have gathered the following information (from one of the men in Edison's plant in West Orange). Up until his death, just a few years ago, he was a chiropractor in Ocean Grove, New Jersey. The informant paid him a visit there four years ago and said he lived right beside the post office, but couldn't remember the name of the street. He said that if you would write to the postmaster in Ocean Grove he could most likely put you in touch with D'Almaine's wife (if she is still living) or some of his children (if he had any). Another informant at Edison's said D'Almaine was not an Englishman, but a French Canadian."

Before going farther I shall correct the misinformation in the foregoing paragraph. D'Almaine was not dead when this letter was written December 7, 1942—the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor—but died the following year. And, he was not a French Canadian, but a "John Bull Englishman." Mrs. D'Almaine had already died, and the couple had no children. Several years after Father Smith's letter was written, Ed Forman, record sales manager for RCA Victor, told me a young man had called on him and, as Ed believed, represented himself to be D'Almaine's son. He asked if there were any master records by D'Almaine still in the Victor vaults and was told not one remained. Mr. Forman was not sure, however, the man identified himself as the violinist's son, and he had mislaid the card his caller gave him. The relationship, if the inquirer claimed any, may have been something else.

During the years that followed the Smith letter I was so busy doing research about other pioneer recording artists, I did little about D'Almaine. But in June, 1951, I followed the suggestion that I write to the postmaster at Ocean Grove, only to receive this discouraging reply:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: No one in this office has ever heard of the D'Almaine family. I'm sure you have the wrong town. Sorry. I can't help you. Respectfully, Willie C. Austin. P.M."

In the preceding March I had written to the *Newark Daily News*, asking if its files contained anything about D'Almaine. Stan Gruvy, of the News' library, whom I frequently called on for help in those days, replied:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Sorry again!! No record of his obit from 1938 to 1944. Hope you're luckier next time."

### IV CHECKING THE CHIROPRACTORS

By this time my dander was up, and I took what now seems the obvious step of writing to the Palmer School of Chiropractic at Davenport, Iowa, and asking what its files revealed about D'Almaine. The reply I received was the most revealing I'd had up to that time. On July 5, the following letter was sent to me:

Dear Mr. Walsh: We have your letter of June 27, requesting what information we have concerning Charles D. and C. Helen D'Almaine, but we doubt if the information we can impart will be of much value to



This photo of Charles D'Almaine is the one usually reproduced in old record catalogs and supplements. It was taken in 1900 by the Channell Studios of East Orange, N. J.

you for the reason that it consists entirely of addresses we had for them over the years.

When these people enrolled here at the Palmer School of Chiropractic on April 6, 1914, they gave as their home address 104 Webster Avenue, Bronxville, Westchester county, New York. As of July 3, 1915, C. Helen D'Almaine gave as her future address 4438 Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. As of October 4, 1916, Charles gave as his future address Fireman's Building, Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey.

The last address we had for C. Helen D'Almaine was 36 Park Place, St. Regis Building, Newark. She was taken off our mailing list on January 13, 1925.

The last address we had for Charles D'Almaine, D. C., was 101 Third Avenue, Newark. Mail sent to that address was returned to us on May 22, 1936. We've never had an address for him since that time.

In the above paragraph, where the initials D. C. follow Charles D'Almaine's name, those initials stand for Doctor of Chiropractic, which is the degree conferred upon graduates when they complete their course of study at a Chiropractic school or college.

As stated above, we realize this information won't be of much value to you, Mr. Walsh, but it is everything our records reveal. Cordially yours, The Palmer School of Chiropractic.

I was given the name of Dr. Joseph Miller as a veteran Newark chiropractor and wrote to him to ask if he could tell me anything about D'Almaine. On February 5, 1952, Dr. Miller replied that he did not know D'Almaine personally, but had got in touch with Dr. William A. Dittmar of Newark, "at one time a member of the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners, who knew of Mr. D'Almaine, but could give me no information." Dr. Miller gave the names of three chiropractors who, he thought, might have known D'Almaine, and from one—Dr. Ruland W. Lee, of 105 Halsey Street, Newark—I received a genial reply:

Dear Jim: The seeming delay in answering your letter of February 19

is due to the fact that I have been endeavoring to gather some helpful data for you, but without much success. I talked on the telephone with Henry Decker of 24 Warren Street, Newark—a former Chiropractor and a former musician colleague with Charles D'Almaine. He has not practiced Chiropractic nor played for several years. No doubt you already have such information as he was able to give me. He said that Dr. D'Almaine had played for several years at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. Also that at the same time as he was playing there he used to spend some time at the Edison plant in Orange, N. J., making cylinder recordings.

It would make me much happier if I could give you more detailed information about D'Almaine & D'Almaine. They practiced Chiropractic in Newark and New York City. During summer months they had a home in Ocean Grove. Charlie did not devote as much time to practice as Mrs. D'Almaine. I knew them both very well—we were students at the Palmer School of Chiropractic at the same time in 1914 and 1915. Mrs. D'Almaine carried on the practice here in Newark for a few years after the death of her husband—the date of which I do not recall. When Mrs. D'Almaine decided to concentrate in practice in New York City it was I to whom she referred her patients in this area. Mrs. D'Almaine died several years ago. As well as I knew them I do not recall either of them ever mentioning that there was a son.

With best wishes to you in your interesting and unusual hobby, sincerely, Ruland W. Lee, D. C.

#### V MR. MUNDY OF THE METROPOLITAN

I can't recall now why I didn't immediately follow the lead Dr. Lee had given me about D'Almaine's having played at the Metropolitan, but a few months later I became acquainted by correspondence with my cherished friend, Lester White, of West Newton, Massachusetts, and he sent me a copy of a large volume, "The Musical Blue Book of America" for 1921-22. Turning casually through an alphabetical list of musicians who were active when the book was published, I snapped to attention when I saw this brief entry: "D'Almaine, Charles, Second Violin, Metropolitan Opera Company Orchestra."

So D'Almaine had continued to play after he practiced Chiropractic! This time I sent a letter of inquiry to the Metropolitan, and shortly afterward received a reply from John Mundy, the veteran Orchestral Personnel Manager, who retired not long ago to devote himself to composing. By a coincidence, my letter to Mr. Mundy was written December 7, 1952—ten years to the day from the time the Rev. Damian Smith had written to me about D'Almaine, and 11 years after the Pearl Harbor debacle.

Mr. Mundy wrote:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Your letter . . . addressed to Mr. Rudolf Bing has been handed to me for reply."

To my own knowledge Mr. Charles D'Almaine comes from a well-known family in London, England, who were dealers in musical instruments. 1924-25 was his last season at the Metropolitan Opera House.

Herewith a letter from the Local 802, American Federation of Musicians, which is self-explanatory. Sorry for the delay in answering your inquiry. Yours very truly, John Mundy.

The letter to which Mr. Mundy referred was from Charles R. Iucci, secretary of the Musicians' Union.

It said the Union's records showed the date of D'Almaine's birth as June 13, 1871, and of his death, June 17, 1943. He lived at Hotel Newarker, 1074 Broad Street, Newark, and his beneficiary was Frank C. Berry of 4438 Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago.

This was the most definite information I had yet received. On January 4, 1952, I had written to the General Register Office at Somerset House in London, England, asking if its archives contained birth certificates for D'Almaine and for Ada Jones, who was born at Oldham, near Manchester. On February 21st, H. W. Taylor of the Register Office responded:

"In reply to your letter . . . requesting a record of the birth of Charles D'Almaine, at Hull, search has been made in the Indexes of Births, registered in England and Wales, during the years 1863-1880 inclusive, but no trace of an entry agreeing with the particulars furnished by you has been found. With regard to your request for a record of the birth of Ada Jones, I have to inform you that in view of the frequent occurrence of that name in the Index of Births, the information you are able to furnish is too meagre and indefinite to permit of a search being made."

It must have been because of a desire to learn if the Metropolitan's records indicated D'Almaine's birthplace that I wrote again to Mr. Mundy on March 8, 1953. He replied that he had previously given all available information, but added:

"Sorry, we cannot be more helpful. Mr. Peyre, a violist member of our orchestra for 52 years, said he remembers him (D'Almaine) well. He was not second violinist, but a member who sat in the second violin section, and was known as Dr. D'Almaine!! Only at Met. during two seasons. Mr. Peyre did not hear from him when he gave up the instrument playing."

Regardless of frequent discouragements, I began to feel that the pieces of the musical jig saw puzzle were beginning to fit into place. So I wrote to Frank Berry of Chicago, who had been listed as the beneficiary of Charles D'Almaine's estate, and my anticipations were rewarded when I received a delightfully informative letter from Mr. Berry's sister, Miss Lillian Berry. Having read it, I realized that the information I needed to write about Charles D'Almaine was now virtually complete.

#### VI MISS BERRY'S LETTERS

I shall quote Miss Berry's first letter, dated March 15, 1953, almost in its entirety:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Your letter of March 5th, asking information regarding Dr. Charles D'Almaine, was forwarded to our new home, and my brother, Mr. Frank C. Berry, has asked me to answer it.

We are very happy to tell you about Brother Charles. Cornelia Helen D'Almaine was our dear sister. She passed away in Newark, N. J., on September 25th, 1933.

They were married December 24th, 1897. There were no children by that union, but Charles was previously married. I do not believe there were any children or we certainly would have heard of it in over 35 years.

Both Charles and my sister were real artists, very talented. Previous

to their marriage he played first violin in the old Grand Opera House here in Chicago. He was born in London, England, and played his "fiddle" on the streets of London as a child, an orphan.

After they had been married about a year they moved to New York City. He played first violin in the Metropolitan Opera for over 17 years, and during the years that you mention he went to Philadelphia twice a week on the train to make records for Victor. I believe he also made some for Columbia.

He also was a concert violinist and my sister was his accompanist on the piano. He also had a studio in old Central Music Hall here in Chicago, teaching violin. He did some very fine oil paintings, one of which, "The Old Salt," I still have. . . I also have a fine photograph of him I would lend to you, but unless I can find another I would certainly want it back. . .

In later years both Cornelia Helen and Charles went to the Davenport, Iowa, College of Chiropractic, graduated and had offices across the street from the "tube" station on Broad Street, Newark. Charles was a Mason and my sister was Worthy Grand Matron of an Eastern Star chapter in Newark. . .

When your article is published I would like very much to have a copy.

Our home address is 10539 South Hale Avenue, Chicago 43, Illinois.

I replied almost immediately, thanking Miss Berry for her fine, informative letter, and asking if she were sure D'Almaine was born in London, since the Edison catalogs gave his birthplace as Hull. On March 24th she replied.

I am sorry to say I have mislaid or lost the death certificate which I got from Newark after Charles' passing. . . and that contained the date of birth, I believe the names of his parents, and place of birth. He may have been born in Hull, but was certainly not a French Canadian. He was English, "Johnnie Bull" to the tips of his fingers and toes.

I am enclosing a photo of Charles which I found in a scrapbook and I'll be happy to give it to you. I have only one of the fine photographs which I told you of. Would lend it so that a copy could be made, but I could not give it up. The companion photo of my sister was made at the same time and they have identical frames.

Yes, Charles did make several violins and sold them for a very good price. The last tour he made was with Harry Lauder.

My next message from Miss Berry, on a card mailed September 14, 1953, brought the sad news of her brother's death. She said that because of his passing she had no wish to proceed further with the D'Almaine biography for the time being. Largely for that reason, I have let several years go by without doing further work on the project. However, I now hope to obtain Miss Berry's approval and to publish this long planned series. . .

Meanwhile, it must be admitted there are a good many discrepancies in the record as it stands—some of them irreconcilable. For instance, Dr. Lee was honestly mistaken in believing Mrs. D'Almaine carried on the chiropractic business after her husband's death. D'Almaine himself was living when Father Smith believed him dead. All the evidence points to the couple's being childless despite Ed Forman's memory of the "son" who called on him. It is still a matter of speculation whether Charles was born in Hull or London.



His status as a member of the Metropolitan orchestra is open to question. Miss Berry believes he was first violinist for 17 years. Mr. Mundy says he was a member of the second violin section, but played with the orchestra only two seasons. (Perhaps the Metropolitan files are incomplete and he had been first violinist a good many years before). It is hard to understand how an orphan boy who played his fiddle on the streets of London could also have played for royalty, as the Edison booklet says he did, at the age of 15.

However, in the long view, none of these things matter so much. What is important is the emerging portrait of a singularly gifted man—one who was not only a fine violinist and violin maker, but also a skilled painter; one, moreover, who for almost a decade was the only violinist of importance in the phonograph world. Somehow, the name, Charles D'Almaine, seems to me to suggest a great concert virtuoso. It is the ideal name for a violinist. In former years when I read the advertisements of D'Almaine's, the great English music house, in *The Gramophone*, I wondered if Charles D'Almaine were a member of that family. Now, thanks to John Mundy, we know he was.

Since the preceding pages were written, Miss Berry has graciously read them and made some comments, as well as provided some additional information which I feel should be recorded here. What she says strengthens my belief that there is a mistake in the information that D'Almaine played only two seasons with the Metropolitan Orchestra. Under date of May 14, she writes:

Dear Mr. Walsh: I received your manuscript yesterday and have read it carefully, twice. There are one or two corrections, or suggestions. Otherwise, I think you have done a very fine job.

First off, I would definitely take issue with the question of time that Charles was with the Metropolitan Orchestra. In those days I spent a lot of time with my sister and Charles, and very many years attended the opera with my sister, and Charles in the orchestra. I may have been wrong as to whether he played first violin. It may have been the second.

I also was in their home the day Charles came home with the news that he had been let out. He had a contract which he thought was a life contract, and which he afterwards called "a scrap of paper!"

The management had employed a new conductor, an Italian, who said he would come on one condition—that being that he should bring 23 of his own men. So the management discharged their men and Charles was among the number! And that day both Charles and my sister said: "What an awful thing to do after 17 years of faithful service!" You see I know whereof I speak. I was there! They did spend their summers in Ocean Grove. I was with them one summer. They had rooms in a private home, and Charles played that season with Arthur Pryor's Band in Ashbury Park.

Charles died on June 17, 1943, was cremated, and his ashes brought to Chicago where they were placed in the grave with my sister. He had requested to be with his beloved.

I had, but do not know where they are now, large autographed portraits of famous opera singers. Two that I

remember are of Caruso and there is one of Melba. . . Charles was on familiar terms with many and that could only happen over a period of many years.

I call special attention to Miss Berry's last statement. Caruso died in Italy, August, 1921, after a long illness. It is obvious that for him to have known and esteemed Charles D'Almaine well enough to present him with two autographed portraits, their friendship must have begun long before the "two-season" period which the Metropolitan records indicate as the extent of the violinist's association with the Opera Orchestra. I wish it were possible for Miss Berry to find one of the Caruso portraits for reproduction here.

Next month, we shall discuss Charles D'Almaine's records.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 32)

worries especially when one gets contradictory statements from authorities concerned with the case. Then one does his best and finds that the critics tear him apart, because the speed may be a fraction higher or lower than these critics are accustomed to or wish to listen to. As if the listeners could not adjust their sets most of the time to the speed they prefer! And what about the abusive letters one gets, because Tamagno was recorded half a tone lower, though there may be a perfectly good reason why it was done so!

I am recording a Plancon and a Calve recital next week and I hope I shall not be far out on the speeds. Yet again I had to use my best knowledge gathered after consulting books and magazines. And I may still be out on what may be the best sound to a critic!

Please re-read my article and you will find that I was speaking generally and that what I was preaching is a correct approach to our peculiar problems. For example I found one of the Hempel Odeons to have different speed on one side of the record than on the other. I also found a Faust disc by Borjoli on Columbia marked speed 80, which should really be played with speed 77, that is if the artist was singing as the score demands. I recorded Tamagno on 78 r.p.m. in spite of much contrary advice and with the exception of Morte d'Otello which I felt should be lowered. I also had very much trouble with determining the speed of the Patti discs. I may have decided rightly or wrongly, but most of the time I had some reason for it and as good a reason as anyone else may have provided proving the contrary.

Generally speaking and within limits of gross distortions harmful to the listeners' appreciation of the music or the singer, I believe that it makes no appreciable difference to the pleasure a record can give if there is a slight—at times even as much as half a tone—disagreement as regards to the correct pitch between the experts.

I should be greatly pleased if I succeeded in convincing you and I should be glad if you could publish this letter in *HOBBIES* at your own convenience. In any case I should like to assure you of my personal interest in your articles and opinions even if at times we may differ. After all that makes the record collecting such a pleasure!

Trust, that I have now completely removed any misunderstanding which may have arisen between us, and wishing you the best, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

A. G. Ross

Many thanks, Mr. Ross, for your interesting letter. I'm happy to publish it, as you request, and under the circumstances it seems that a few comments of my own are necessary.

Well now, let's see: I believe the reason for your writing me was my opening paragraph to your excellent Hempel Rococo LP, in August *HOBBIES*. In it I said ". . . as part of the Rococo management does not believe that correct pitching is possible, etc. . . ." What other interpretation, pray, could I give to your summing up statement: "One may ask then: Does the foregoing mean that the original key and pitch of a recording or re-recording cannot be satisfactorily determined? My answer is that it cannot. One may see then what a responsibility some people take upon themselves when they assert that they are able to determine what is right and wrong in this respect."

I'm glad you find my Hempel review "honest," but then so were my other reviews. It so happened that in this record I found "a very laudable all-around job," and in some of the others I didn't. Sorry, to give the impression, that I "seemed to have been laying down the law as to the correctness of (my) conclusions rather intolerantly." It is true that I'm extremely uncompromising in my statements concerning correct pitch (and that for a solid reason), but no one who does not so choose is obliged to agree with me. In fact, I remember stating exactly this in one of my earlier reviews, as well as explaining thoroughly and repeatedly how I draw my conclusions.

Besides, when in doubt, I always say so and give a detailed reason why. It is only after weighing the matter from all angles, when I feel that my deductions cannot possibly be wrong, that I am positive in my assertions.

About the standardization of the 440 vocal modern pitch that has been done, with but little variation, long before records came into existence, so there really isn't much to worry about on this score. And as for fractions above or below in re-recording, I disregard small deviations, but when they approach a half-tone the voice is definitely distorted—something many people cannot correct on their machines, either because they don't know how or because their turntables revolve at a set speed only, or both.

Frankly, Mr. Ross, I don't know whether to continue to emphasize the pitch in LPs as much as I have. It all started when people began asking me about selections on this or that Long Play disc. Each time it is a long and tedious job, and is it worth it? Incidentally, the observance of correct pitch on LP has been stricter of late, and that is an encouraging trend. Perhaps a referendum would be in order: if enough readers write in asking that this feature be kept unchanged it will stay that way, otherwise a more conventional line of reviewing will be followed.

In closing, hearty congratulations to Rococo for its splendid work.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Charles D'Almaine

PART II  
By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to one of my dearest friends, an admirer of Charles D'Almaine and himself an accomplished violinist—Albert Ross Via, Jr., of South Boston, Virginia).

### I. D'Almaine's First Edison Records

It would be interesting to know how Charles D'Almaine happened to become a recording violinist — just as I should like to know why he and Mrs. D'Almaine virtually abandoned a musical career in favor of being chiropractors. I wonder if he approached the recording companies after his removal to New York from Chicago in 1898 or whether somebody associated with one of the companies heard him play in a recital and suggested that he make records. Whatever the reason, the English-born musician soon became the recording violinist and remained so for almost ten years. He had virtually no opposition except from a few "celebrity" performers whose discs sold for high prices. In some way not easily explained he seemed to have a knack, unrivaled by any contemporary player, of impressing his personality upon the wax.

However, D'Almaine was not the first violin virtuoso to make records. The initial list of "phonograms" issued by the North American Phonograph Company in 1890 contains several selections by an unidentified violinist. I have not found any violin numbers in the Columbia catalogs issued during the 1890's and none appear in the Edison cylinder list for 1898. However, in the complete catalog dated October, 1899, there are 16 — all played by Frederick W. Hager, better known in later years as a band and orchestra conductor and composer. Mr. Hager is still living, in retirement in Florida, at the age of 81, but is in poor health. The numbers he played are a virtual forecast of those Charles D'Almaine would record a little later.

I believe that D'Almaine first appeared as an Edison artist in a supplement dated November 20, 1899. He was represented by three two-minute brown wax cylinders: 7324, "El Miserere," from "Il Trovatore"; 7325, "Polish National Dance," and 7326, "Ben Bolt—Fantasia." The Edison catalog for the fall of 1902 contains 18 records by him, done by the gold moulded process, which had

been introduced only a few months before and made it possible for the first time to have a permanent cylinder master. Fred Hager's name had disappeared by this time as an Edison violinist, and several of the D'Almaine offerings were remakes of numbers previously performed by Hager. Both violinists are shown in a group photo of 42 Edison artists taken in 1900 and reproduced in HOBBIES of September, 1944. As far as I can find out, Hager is the only one of the group alive 57 years later.

For historical interest, here is a list of the 1902 D'Almaine records. They clearly foreshadowed the type of music with which he would long be identified, except that none of his masterly performances of Irish and Scotch jigs, reels and hornpipes had yet appeared. Yet before many years D'Almaine's lively fiddling of old country dances would type him in the average record buyer's mind as specializing in the same sort of boisterous music that John Kimmel played so well on the accordion. The following were all two-minute gold moulded Edison cylinders:

7326, Ben Bolt Fantasia; 7732, Come All Ye Faithful; 8070 (old No. 7990), Edward German's Shepherd Dance; 7324, El Miserere; 7574, Gems from Faust; 6702, Gypsy Dance; 7590, Holy City; 7377, Imitation Bagpipes and Scotch Air; 6703, Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana; 7824, Le Carnaval de Venise; 8099 (old No. 6705), The Mocking Bird, with variations; 7325, Polish National Dance; 7633, Raff's Cavatina; 7455, Scenes That Are Brightest; 7192, Schubert's Serenade; 7195, Mendelssohn's Spring Song; 7458, Then You'll Remember Me; 7659, Waltz from Faust.

Several of these selections became stock favorites in D'Almaine's recording repertoire. Among his standard "war horses" were "Ben Bolt," "Imitation Bagpipes," "The Miserere," the "Cavalleria Intermezzo," "The Mocking Bird," "Polish National Dance," "Raff's Cavatina," the "Spring Song" and "Waltz from Faust."

### II. D'Almaine Plays for Victor

I am assuming that Edison was the first company for which D'Almaine recorded, but that is by no means certain, and almost any statement about the pioneer recording days should be regarded as tentative and accepted with caution. It is possible that he played for the seven-inch Berliner discs concurrently with, or even before, making his Edison records, but I lack Berliner catalogs

to check. It is also possible that he made Columbia records about the same time as his first Edison records were issued, but the 1899 Columbia catalog, published late in 1898, lists no violin cylinders.

However, the 1901 Columbia cylinder catalog contained 18 violin records which could be obtained in either the small brown wax two-minute size, or the five-inch "concert" or "grand" type, also playing only two minutes but much louder. No artist's name is given, but I had to smile as I read the list of titles. The repertoire makes it appear likely most, perhaps all, were by D'Almaine:

27003, Because; 27002, Ben Bolt (special arrangement); 31495, Carnival de Venise; 27013, El Miserere; 31493, Gems from "Faust"; 27012, Waltz from "Faust"; 27004, Gypsy Dance; 31492, Holy City; 27006, Imitation of Bagpipes and Scotch Airs (special arrangement); 27007, Imitation of Organ and "O Come All Ye Faithful" (special arrangement); 27001, Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana"; 27000, Mocking Bird (with variations); 27009, Mr. Finniagin's Conversazione (comic, with vocal effect); 27014, Polish National Dance; 31494, Raff's Cavatina; 27005, Scenes That Are Brightest; 27010, Schubert's Serenade; 27008, Then You'll Remember Me.

Comparison will show that Edison and Columbia were keeping remarkably in step in their choice of violin selections. I suspect "Mr. Finniagin's Conversazione" was the same comic sketch that became famous on Edison as "Down at Finnegan's Jam-boree."

Charles D'Almaine was an important Victor artist from the beginning of Eldridge R. Johnson's company in 1901. I find the following quotation from the February, 1902, Victor catalog specially interesting:

"At enormous expense, our entire list of 'Victor' (seven-inch) Records, with very few exceptions, has been remade. No greater proof of the advance we are making in recording sound could be given than the marked improvements in our new records of the old seven-inch 'Victor' lists of Sousa's Band and D'Almaine and (Samuel) Siegel's violin and mandolin solos."

This makes it clear that D'Almaine was not only recording for Victor in late 1901, when the catalog was prepared, but had even earlier played other numbers which had been remade. Here is his 1902 Victor repertoire. Records having numbers prefixed with a V were seven-inch Victors. Those with an M, were Monarchs, as the 10-inch records were then called:

V405, Ben Bolt; V432, Gems from "Faust"; V431, Hungarian Gypsy Dances; V248, Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana"; M3336, Medley of Irish Airs; V430, Mendelssohn's Spring Song; V245, Miserere; V404, Polish National Dance; M3334, Raff's Cavatina; M3337, Shepherd's Dance from "Henry VIII"; V247, Scotch Medley; V249, The Mocking Bird; M333, The Holy City; M3335, Then You'll Remember Me; V246, Traumerel.

Where have we seen most of these names before. Why, in the Edison and Columbia lists. It really seems as if when D'Almaine decided upon a suitable recording title, he made the rounds of the companies, playing it for all impartially. Of course the amount of violin music of even pseudo-classic status that would fit onto two-minute cylinders and seven-inch discs was severely limited.

Until some time in 1905, D'Almaine was the only violinist playing for Victor. Then a few Red Seal records were made by Maud Powell, and one of Kubelik's solos was imported. In the complete Victor catalog dated August 31, 1904, the following D'Almaine titles had been added:

M2802, Gavotte from "Mignon"; 1209, Hearts and Flowers (both seven and 10-inch); 2424, Polish National Dance (probably a remake of V404); 2738, Pop Goes the Weasel Medley; M2871, Raff's Cavatina; 2921, Scotch Medley; M2872, Shepherd's Dance; M1210, Sixth Air and variations (De Berliot); 2923, Spring Song; 1985, Then You'll Remember Me; 1208, Waltz from "Faust."

Observe the large number of apparent remakes of earlier numbers. Old-timers at Victor used to tell a story about the "Pop Goes the Weasel Medley," which may have been D'Almaine's first jigs and reels recording. It contained besides the title number, "Irish Washerwoman," "Mrs. McCloud's Reel," "Speed the Plow" and "Prince's Reel." The story was that many years after the record was cut from the catalog, a small boy became desperately ill and constantly demanded to hear the family's copy of "Pop Goes the Weasel," which had been broken. His physician said he would die if the record couldn't be played. The Victor company was informed of this and the master was brought out of the vault and a special pressing made, which, by its soothing influence saved the child's life. There may have been no truth to the story . . . a similar one was told about Billy Murray's record of "The Story Book Ball" but it is at least interesting.

During this period D'Almaine's records were also appearing on Columbia discs, and the Talking Machine News for May, 1905, praised his Columbia record of "Ben Bolt," issued the preceding year, as being wonderfully fine. The T. M. N. referred to its "weird, wailing strains" and added: "The almost human tone of the violin interprets marvelously that fine old English ballad, 'Ben Bolt'—which was an American, rather than an English, song. 1905 was the year that saw two other violinists added to the Columbia list—Arthur Bergh and Miss Jessie Strauss. Walter Biedermann, George Stehl (or Stell) and Jan Kocian came along shortly afterward.



#### FIRST VICTOR ORCHESTRA

These instrumentalists constituted the Victor Talking Machine Company's first permanent orchestra. Charles D'Almaine, second in top row, was the solo violinist.

The 1904 Victor catalog contained three records by D'Almaine described as being played on the "viol-horn." This was the Stroh violin, designed by an English inventor, Charles Stroh, to give the violin a stronger tone for recording. A small bell was fitted to the violin and served as an amplifier. It gave a coarse tone but the Stroh violin was extensively used in recording studios until electrical processes took over in 1925. The

viol-horn records were 2770, "Donkey and Driver"; M2804, "Favorite Hymns" (with an organ imitation), and 2828, "Military Serenade."

"Donkey and Driver" shows D'Almaine essaying a comedy number. As described in the catalog: "The peasant starts for market with his faithful donkey—jogging along the road—the donkey becomes playful and is whipped—song of the driver—Mr. Donkey is obstreperous

and lifts his voice in protest as he is again chastised."

This record sounds intriguing and I regret that I haven't found a copy. In a year or so Victor dropped the "viol-horn description" and these numbers were listed, like D'Almaine's others, under the heading of violin solos.

### III. D'Almaine Joins the Victor Orchestra

In its monthly supplement for February, 1906, Victor announced that the company had set up its own permanent recording orchestra. The announcement, no doubt written by Sam Rous, did not err on the side of modesty:

The Victor Company, in 1903, began to make its vocal and instrumental solos and duets with orchestra accompaniment. It soon became dissatisfied, however, with the plan usually followed by record-making laboratories of engaging musicians as individuals whenever they were needed. Even though the best available players were used, it was found that really artistic work could not be done in this way. In 1904, therefore, the Company conceived the idea of establishing a permanent orchestra which should give its exclusive time to the making of Victor records.

From a list of the very best instrumentalists of America were chosen the players comprising the Victor Orchestra, and it is an indisputable fact that this is one of the most remarkable bodies of musicians in the world.

Although the cost of this exclusive Victor feature has been very great, the expenditure has been fully justified, as Victor records soon became famous for their artistic accompaniments and are now in a class by themselves, no other records even approaching them in general excellence.

Walter B. Rogers was conductor of the Victor orchestra, and D'Almaine was solo violinist. Here is what the supplement said concerning the English-born virtuoso:

The Victor Company has much reason to feel proud of the engagement of this noted violinist to head the string section of its orchestra. Mr. D'Almaine is an artist of international reputation, well known in England and America. His playing is marked by superb execution, delicacy of touch and great purity of tone—these qualities being especially noticeable in the fine solos and obligatos he has played for the Victor catalog, although his work with the Victor Orchestra is of the greatest value.

During this period of his association with Victor, D'Almaine proved his versatility by playing the fiddle in "The Arkansaw Traveler" and other comic sketches by Len Spencer, and by providing obligatos for a long series of contralto solos by Corinne Morgan. He also played obligatos for Harry Macdonough and other singers.

The supplement from which I have quoted gives brief biographical sketches of other members of the Victor Orchestra. Since I frequently receive inquiries concerning the personnel of this ensemble and it is unlikely I shall ever write biographical sketches of most of the members, I believe it will be worth while to interrupt the continuity of the D'Almaine bio-

graphy long enough to copy the highlights of these thumbnail sketches. This information may be of special interest to collectors, such as Steve Gilman, Al Bridges and Charlie Hodgdon, who specialize in instrumental records:

**WALTER B. ROGERS**, Conductor and Cornet Soloist. The career of this brilliant young conductor has been one of uninterrupted success. After some years of study in the Cincinnati College of Music he joined Cappa's Seventh Regiment Band of New York as cornet soloist, and during the years that followed he was one of the great features of that famous band. On the death of Bandmaster Cappa, Mr. Rogers became the leader of the band and served four years in that capacity. In 1899 John Philip Sousa made him a flattering offer and he became the cornet soloist of Sousa's Band. After five successful years with Sousa, the Victor Company induced Mr. Rogers to leave the band and become its general Director of Music. His work with the Company speaks for itself in the Victor Orchestra records and the artistic accompaniments which are provided for Victor singers.

**LOUIS CHRISTIE**, Solo Clarinet. Few musicians have had such a wide experience as this young New Yorker. He has filled the position of solo clarinet with seven great bands, having served with Brooke's Marine Band, Reeves' American Band, Gilmore's Band, and under Liberati, Innes, Sousa and Pryor. Mr. Christie's work in the Victor Orchestra and Pryor's Band records shows what a valuable addition he is to the musical staff. He is one of the most accurate of players and his execution is fluent and graceful, the most difficult of clarinet passages being easily mastered.

**DARIUS LYONS**, Solo Flute. Mr. Lyons is a native of St. Paul, Minn., where he began his study of the flute, and made such rapid progress that he soon became the leading player of that city. Being ambitious for a wider field, however, he went to Chicago for further study, and finally to New York, where his talent soon made him widely known. He has filled the position of soloist with Victor Herbert's Orchestra, the Savage Grand Opera Company, and Sousa's Band, with which organization he remained six years. The artistic obligatos played for the soprano soloists were a feature of the band during its transcontinental and European tours. An engagement with Pryor's Band followed, and the Victor Company has now persuaded Mr. Lyons to become a member of its permanent orchestra.

**EMIL KENEKE**, Solo Cornet. Emil Keneke is a native of Germany, having been born in 1866, in Magdeburg. His military band experience is a wide one, comprising four years as solo cornetist in the Garde Hussars, Potsdam, two years in the 8th Field Artillery, Coblenz, one year in 7th Pioneer Battalion, and two years as first trumpet and solo cornet with the Warsaw (Russia) Symphony Orchestra. He came to America in 1892, and was solo cornetist five years with 7th Regiment Band of New York, three seasons with Innes and five years with Sousa. In 1903 Mr. Savage secured him for first trumpet in his Parsifal Company, a most important position, which he filled with distinction. The Victor Company congratulates itself on being able to secure such a player.

**HERMAN CONRAD**, First Bass. Herman Conrad is undoubtedly one of the best bass players in the world. His work with Gilmore's Band first made him famous, and during the six years from 1883 to 1892 he was one of the features of that great band. On the death of Mr. Gilmore there

was great competition among the leading conductors for Mr. Conrad's services, but he was finally secured by John Philip Sousa, who succeeded in keeping him for eleven years, until the Victor Company in turn persuaded him to abandon the road and enlist in their service. Mr. Conrad is a man of magnificent physique and is known as the tallest tuba player in the United States.

**O. EDWARD WARDWELL**, First Trombone. From the frozen North came in 1893 this young Maine giant, whose splendid physique and broad chest account in some degree for the wonderful tone he produces. Wardwell's experience is a broad one and the organizations he has played with comprise the foremost in the country. He was three years with Innes, and five years with Mr. Sousa, participating in the famous European tours. In 1904 he joined Arthur Pryor's Band as first trombone, and his solos and his masterly playing with the band have been a feature of the Asbury Park engagements.

**FRANK E. RESCHKE**, First Viola and Saxophone. . . was born in Detroit and pursued his first studies there. After a season with Liberati's band, he settled in Chicago, playing first violin with Thiele's Symphony Orchestra and saxophone with Brooke's Chicago Marine Band and Innes Band. A flattering offer from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra induced him to return there, and after four years with that orchestra and the Detroit Philharmonic Club, he returned to the saxophone and went abroad with Sousa. As Mr. Reschke is one of the finest viola players in America, the Victor Company has persuaded him to resume that instrument, and become a member of its permanent orchestra.

**WALTER PRYOR**, 1st Cornet. . . is a native of Missouri and has taken a large part in the musical affairs of that state. As director and soloist of Pryor's Military Band of Missouri he gained much distinction. The Victor Company has induced him to abandon his work in the West and accept the important position of first cornet in the orchestra, where his accurate playing and fine tone have been quite noticeable.

**A. LEVY**, 1st Clarinet. A native of Sioux City, Iowa, Mr. Levy came to Chicago in 1894 and joined Brooke's Chicago Marine Band, the organization that has produced so many fine players. After three years with Brooke, he came East and played with Innes' and the United States Band, Victor Herbert's Orchestra and the New York Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Levy was then engaged by Sousa, and, after several seasons, joined Pryor's Band. This is his second season with the Victor Orchestra, and he has proved a decided acquisition to the Victor forces.

**ARTHUR TREPTE**, 1st Oboe. The Victor Orchestra is to be congratulated that it has been able to command the services of this noted oboe soloist. His beautiful tone and fine execution are especially noticeable in the higher class orchestra records, where the oboe is indispensable. The Victor Company was the first to use this instrument in its records, and the beautiful effects produced have been highly commended by music lovers.

**THEODORE LEVY**, 1st Violin. This talented young musician, who is not only a fine violinist but an expert cornetist, in 1896 found his native town, Salt Lake City, too small for him and came East, where his artistic playing soon secured him an engagement in Sousa's Band, with which organization he remained for many years. In 1903 he joined Arthur Pryor's Band and is now a valued member of the Victor Orchestra.

**S. O. PRYOR**, Tympani and Drums. This young Westerner is one of the

(Continued on page 67)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

cleverest drummers in the country. He has been for two seasons a member of Arthur Pryor's Band and his work has attracted much attention. Mr. Pryor handles the difficult work required of him in the Victor Orchestra extremely well.

C. H. H. BOOTH, Organist and Accompanist. This distinguished young pianist, organist and composer has been on the Victor staff for several years, and the artistic accompaniments which he has played for the Caruso, Sembrich, Homer and other Red Seal records have been greatly admired. Many of the arrangements for the oratorio selections, grand opera numbers and other high-class records were made by Mr. Booth, and they are written in a masterly style.

As far as I know, none of these artists are still living, but it may be that some are, and have merely faded into obscurity with the years. I wonder if the two Pryors were brothers or other near relatives of the famous bandmaster, Arthur Pryor, who was intimately associated with Victor for a generation. Since they both came from the West and Arthur Pryor was a native of Missouri, it is likely that they were.

(To be continued)

## A. B. C. (ANTIQUES BOOK CLUB)

A. On page 80 of the September HOBBIES our revitalized ANTIQUES BOOK CLUB offered a half-price packet with no strings attached and promised a bonus for such takers when announced the December quarterly selection. Their free bonus booklet now ready for mailing, and any latecomers who take September offer A (3 Furniture Books for \$6.50) along with December offer B below get the extra bonus, too. Whatever you do, may we urge immediate action, especially on B... it's another steal in very limited supply.

B. AMERICAN LITHOGRAPHS, hard-bound basic text and identifying pictures by the great authority (Comstock) with rarity indicated. Covers not only Currier & Ives, but their sometimes more valuable contemporaries (\$2.50); also in packet is related book, over 100 historical cities prints pictured with pricing (\$5.00), plus old packet of Hornung's 4x8 colored lithographs showing bygone vehicles and suitable for framing (\$1.00). Unbelievably while they last, an \$8.00 list for only \$4.00 postpaid. Learn the value of prints and collect them, or use with the print packet for Xmas gifts. Send to Antiques Book Club, Watkins Glen, N. Y. Reminder: Check for both A (\$6.50) and B (\$4.00) gets you an extra bonus.

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## UNUSUAL ITEMS

### Old Documents, Old Paper Money, Coins, Medals, Etc.

- |  |      |   |      |
|--|------|---|------|
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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Charles D'Almaine

CONCLUDED

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to one of my dearest friends, an admirer of Charles D'Almaine and himself an accomplished violinist—Albert Ross Via, Jr., of South Boston, Virginia).

### III. D'Almaine's Varied Recordings

I do not know how long Charles D'Almaine remained solo violinist of the Victor Orchestra, but there is some reason to believe he gave up this position within a year or so after the announcement I quoted last month appeared.

Meanwhile, his was a prominent name in the Victor lists for 1906, and he was becoming acclaimed, not as the accomplished concert violinist he primarily was, but as a purveyor of country dance tunes. A Victor dealers' order blank for February, 1906, lists a 12-inch, single-faced record 31480, "Medley of Old Time Reels." It included "De'il Among the Tailors," "Flow'r of Edinburg," "Speed the Plow," "Tom and Jerry," "Roger's Reel" (which I'd like to believe was named by D'Almaine's looking 50 years into the future and foreseeing the advent of my beloved black cat, Roger!) "Miss McCloud's Reel" and "Auld Lang Syne." The annotation said: "Everybody knows how popular D'Almaine's former records of reels, jigs and hornpipes are. This is the best of the series."

In March, D'Almaine was paired with the flute player, Lyons, in two 12-inch records of standard numbers in his repertoire: 31493, "Call Me Thine Own" (the Romance from "L'Eclair") and 31493, Schubert's Serenade. A month later he played, on No. 4617, a 10-inch version of the "Medley of Old Time Reels." There was this comment: "D'Almaine's rollicking medley reel listed in February has proved one of the big successes of the season. While we have issued thousands of these 12-inch records, which are especially suitable for dancing, there has been a large demand for a ten-inch size."

The July, 1906, contained D'Almaine's last single-faced, 10-inch record, No. 4723, Mazkowski's "Serenade."

In March, 1907, D'Almaine and Lyons were back with No. 5007, "Sing On, Sweet Bird," and a little later the violinist made his final appearance as a Victor soloist with an eight-inch record, 5054, "Medley of

Favorite Reels." When Victor issued double-faced records in the autumn of 1908, most of D'Almaine's popular titles were taken into the two-sided classification, but a number remained in single-faced form.

There is an oddity concerning Columbia's first catalog of double-faced records which appeared a few months before Victor's. D'Almaine had not played for Columbia in several years, but several of his records were taken into the double-faced catalog, without his name being used. All were listed merely as "violin solos." These records were of the old announced type, with the artist's name given in a spoken introduction but omitted on the label. In later catalogs they were identified as being by D'Almaine. They were: A202, "Ben Bolt Fantasia," coupled with "Suwanee River Medley," a xylophone solo by Charles P. Lowe; A229, "Faust Gems," in appropriately doubled with a banjo solo, "Whistling Rufus," by Vess L. Ossman; A214, "Imitation of Bagpipes and Scotch Airs," with "Nigger Fever," a piccolo solo by George Schweinfest; and A234, "Jigs and Reels Medley—The White Cockade," combined with "Two Little Tots," by Prince's Military Band. In May, 1915, after D'Almaine had given up recording work to become a chiropractor, Columbia reissued "The White Cockade" as No. A1712, combined with "Harrigan's Reel," by Prince's Orchestra.

I suspect, but am not certain, that D'Almaine left the Victor Orchestra (Howard Rattay took his place as violin soloist) in order to assume a similar position with Edison. Certainly, for the remainder of his recording career, his name appeared more frequently in Edison catalogs than in any others. A list of his earlier Edison records has already been given, but it is interesting to note that his "Pop Goes the Weasel Medley," issued in May, 1904, contained a tune identified as "D'Almaine's Favorite Reel" and presumably composed by the performer himself. Another oddity, issued years later as a four-minute Blue Amberol cylinder, is "Jim Lawson's Medley of Reels." I wonder if the "Jim Lawson" referred to was the famous Punkin Center character whom Cal Stewart introduced into his "Uncle Josh" records and if so whether Stewart selected the numbers D'Almaine played. Still another D'Almaine dance number, "Fisher's Hornpipe" is named for Kitty Fisher, notorious English courtesan of more

than 200 years ago. He also played a hornpipe named for Jenny Lind.

In May, 1905, Edison issued No. 8993, "Garry Owen Medley," and there was then a long interval before the next D'Almaine cylinder, presumably because of his having entered into an exclusive Victor contract. D'Almaine didn't reappear, in fact, until April, 1908, when he was represented with 9797, "Hornpipe Medley." In May he had 9833, a Jigs and Reels Medley.

With the introduction of the four-minute Amberol record late in 1908, D'Almaine had a better opportunity to show Edison audiences what he could do. The December, 1908, New Phonogram contained an inquiry from "A. L." of Binghamton, New York: "What kind of a violin does Mr. D'Almaine use in making records?" He received the rather flip-pant answer: "We do not know. It is not one made by the old masters." And, two months later, "C. A. T." in far away Invercargill, New Zealand, asked: "Where is Charles D'Almaine, the violinist?" He was told: "Charles D'Almaine is still making records for us. Violin records are not largely sold and we make no effort to add many of them to our catalogs." This statement was in contrast to an earlier one which said all D'Almaine's records were so popular they were considered permanent catalog additions with no chance of being cut out.

### IV. Final Records

It also contrasted with the comment made in June, 1911, when "Shepherd's Dance" was issued as four-minute Amberol 711: "As Standard 8070, by Mr. D'Almaine, this has been for several years the most popular instrumental number on the Standard list, and there is little doubt that with the artistic interpretation he has here given its bright happy strains it will be a formidable competitor for the popular supremacy of the Amberol instrumental catalog."

The following month, there was another intriguing description in the New Phonogram as "Down at Finnegan's Jamboree" was resurrected in four-minute form:

Cast of Characters in the Order of Their Appearance. . . Mrs. O'Brien - Steve Porter; Mrs. McCarthy - Ada Jones; Finnegan, Host and Master of Ceremonies - Steve Porter; O'Grady, Fiddler and Leader of Orchestra - Charles D'Almaine; O'Brien - Edward Meeker; McCarthy, winner

of the Dancing Contest - George Werner.

A bright, breezy sketch of wit, mirth and music. Standard Record No. 8146 - the popularity of which has kept it in the catalog over ten years - made into an Amberol. New "business" - new situations - new characters - more music - more dancing - more laughs - in the added two and one-half minutes of playing time. This is a "corking" record, and one that convincingly demonstrates the entertaining superiority of the Amberol over the Standard record.

The two-minute catalogs listed D'Almaine as the "composer" of this genuinely funny sketch. He apparently does not speak in it, however, but contents himself with playing the dance music. George Werner, who took an incidental part, was an Edison studio employee. This sketch was so popular that it was made again in 1921 as an Edison Diamond Disc with Eugene Jaudas as the fiddler. The disc is one of the most realistic group productions ever made by the acoustic method. It is almost impossible to believe that you aren't present at a genuine Irish shillelagh-swinging brawl instead of hearing the efforts of a few men and women crowded around a horn.

During the last five years of his recording career, D'Almaine may have performed only for cylinders. Besides working for Edison, he was also employed by the U. S. Everlasting company, whose recording chief was his old friend, Albert Benzler, and by the Indestructible Record Company. For U. S. Everlasting he played some of his favorites - "Chanticleer Medley," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "Jigs and Reels Medley" and "Shepherd's Dance" - and assisted Len Spencer on 1399 in a four-minute version of the ever-green "Arkansaw Traveler."

The old "Arkansaw Traveler" with its quaint music and philosophy has been a classic of its kind for many generations. This arrangement by Mr. Len Spencer is especially unique and pleasing, and when the "traveler" - the eminent violinist, D'Almaine - finishes the tune on the fiddle that the native contended "couldn't be did," it permits a most happy conclusion.

Indestructible issued a number of novelties, with D'Almaine playing one half of a four-minute record and somebody else concluding it by playing another instrument. Thus, on one, the violinist played a medley of jigs and reels, and Vess L. Ossman gave a rousing banjo finale. On No. 3067, the procedure was reversed. John J. Kimmel, the accordionist, began with "A Medley of National Airs," and D'Almaine concluded with jigs and reels.

When Edison brought out the first list of unbreakable Blue Amberol cylinders in November, 1912, D'Almaine was represented with No. 1519, "Kitty O'Neil Medley of Reels." The description said:

A spirited medley of reels including "Charlie's Reel," "Ball and Pin," "Dick Sands," "Douglas Favorite," "Old Ironsides," "Kitty O'Neil," "Juniaata" and "Quindaro." Charles D'Almaine, well-known in Edison circles, performs the selection as only a talented violinist can. If you doubt

that it takes unusual energy to make a record of this kind, try playing a medley of lively reels continuously for over four minutes, and bear in mind that there mustn't be even a single mistake!

D'Almaine was now nearing the time when he would give up his recording career for chiropractic work, but before he said goodbye to the studios he recorded for Edison his only three performances of currently popular music. In January, 1914, he was represented with Irving Berlin's lament over the death of his first wife, "When I Lost You." In May he offered 2263, "Peg o' My Heart," concerning which the supplement writer said: "Charles D'Almaine, an accomplished violinist, avails himself of the opportunity to play something more serious than his usual dance music, and gives a most beautiful rendition." The annotator must have forgotten that during his earlier recording days D'Almaine didn't specialize in jigs, reels and hornpipes - a type of music the record-buying public had been taught to demand - and that he had been soloist with many symphony orchestras.

The list of popular song numbers ended in October, 1914, with "Mother Machree." And that was almost the last time Charles D'Almaine's name figured in any list of new records. He had by this time entered the Palmer School of Chiropractic and was learning a new profession. However, in February, 1918, Edison brought out one of his old masters and issued it as "Blackthorn Stick Medley of Jigs."

For several years after his retirement from phonograph work, Edison dealers continued to regard D'Almaine's records as among the best for demonstration use. In the March, 1917, Edison Amberola Monthly, George A. Myers of Vermont, Illinois, related that "an old gentleman who I knew loved violin music met me on the street one day and asked me if I had some good violin records. I told him I had some that played so naturally that it was impossible to distinguish their music from actual violin music. . . He came to my store a few days later. I played a few D'Almaine records for him. 'It beats anything I ever heard,' he said. . . Get the instrument and all of those records ready for delivery."

In May, 1917, Fred E. Stevenson,

of Killarney, Manitoba, Canada, told of how the D'Almaine record of "Medley of Country Dances" so charmed an illiterate old Irishman that the Hibernian, Mr. Bartley, sold a flock of geese to raise money for an Amberola and some good fiddling records. In May, 1918, another Canadian dealer, Frank C. Pethick, of Bowmantown, Ontario, described a visit a family from the country made to his store.

"As they came in," Pethick wrote, "a Model 75 . . . behind a partition was playing the violin solo, 'When I Lost You.' As I greeted them, one of the daughters asked who was playing the violin so sweetly, and said she wished she could play like that. I told her an Edison artist was playing and, if they wished, I would be glad to introduce him. You should have seen their faces when I led them behind the screen and showed them the Amberola. . . I knew I had the sale nearly completed and to make it certain I used a bit of psychology. They have a boy overseas doing his bit and I put on 'Stick to Your Mother, Tom,' and that settled it - they bought the Amberola and 30 records."

This article may well conclude with a complete list of D'Almaine's Blue Amberols. Since he, unfortunately, made no Diamond Discs, they represent the best recording he ever achieved. Where the unbreakable cylinder Blue Amberol was a reissue of an earlier Amberol wax cylinder, the Amberol number is given in parentheses:

3434, Blackthorn Stick; 1763, Down at Finnegan's Jamboree (718); 1770, Fisher's Hornpipe Medley (886); 1790, Jim Lawson's Medley of Reels; 1519, Kitty O'Neil Medley of Reels; 2419, Mother Machree; 2263, Peg o' My Heart; 1964, Sailor's Hornpipe Medley (776); 1885, Shepherd's Dance (711); and 2131, When I Lost You. Amberols not carried over into Blue Amberol stock were 584, Chanticleer Jigs and Reels Medley; 960, Hornpipe Medley, and 675, Larry O'Gaff Medley.

I'll sum up by saying few instrumentalists have ever given so much pleasure to millions of persons as Charles D'Almaine did during the 15 years he was making violin records. How I wish he were still alive and in full possession of his powers. I'd like to see him have the backing of a full symphony orchestra and hear him tackle a Bartok Concerto!

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# Harry C. Browne

By JIM WALSH

John Cowper said, "Variety's the very spice of life that gives it all its flavor," and John Gay expressed the same idea by remarking, "Variety's the source of joy below, from whence still fresh-revolving pleasures flow." Since I agree with these long-dead poets, I seek to give as much variety as possible in my articles about pioneer recording artists. Like a canny baseball pitcher, I try to "mix them up."

During the past year or so, the series has included a famous Italian operatic baritone, Taurino Parvis; a distinguished American concert and opera contralto, Mary Jordan; an English music hall comedian, George Robey; a once noted American vaudeville performer, Gene Greene; two comparatively modern "crooners," Gene Austin and Art Gillham; an eye-witness account of a concert given by the Eight Famous Victor Artists 40 years ago; a concert tenor, Harvey Hindermeyer; an elocutionist and singer, Edwin Whitney; and an accomplished violinist, Charles D'Almaine. About the only fault I can find by way of variety is that the ladies are rather insufficiently represented, but that is largely because women recording artists were greatly outnumbered by men in the pioneer days. Anyway, I hope to go on giving plenty of variety.

That word, "variety," brings me to the subject of this month's sketch. I don't know what the C. in Harry C. Browne's name stands for, but his middle initial should be V. for Variety, or, perhaps, for Versatility. Seldom have I had occasion to write about so versatile a gentleman with such a variety of accomplishments. A man who has been a soldier, an actor on Broadway and in the movies, a banjoist, a recording artist, a phonograph company executive, a radio star and producer and, finally, president of the Mother Church of Christian Science, has achieved a career almost bewildering in its scope. No wonder Harry Browne is one of the comparatively few recording artists about whom I have written whose life story has been summarized in "Who's Who in America."

From the 1953 edition we learn that the humorist with the resonant baritone voice was born August 16, 1878, in North Adams, Mass. His father, Isaac Shell Browne, was a skilled banjoist and one of the foremost composers in his day of songs of the old-fashioned Negro plantation type. The singer's mother was Elizabeth Tobin Browne.

Harry Browne was educated in the grammar and high schools of North Adams. He served in the Santiago campaign of the Spanish-American War, and lectured on the war in 1898-99. On November 7, 1900, he married Edith Elizabeth Jacklin, by whom he had one daughter, Jane Elizabeth. In that year he began as an actor, traveling with repertoire

companies and later playing with stock companies in the East and Middle West. Beginning in 1909 he was under the management of such leading impresarios as Klaw and Erlanger, Cohan and Harris, David Belasco, William Harris, Comstock and Gest, the Selwyn Brothers and the Actors Theater.

Browne was engaged in radio work from 1926 to 1931. This included producing the once famous "Hank Simmons' Show Boat." He became interested in Christian Science in 1910, and from 1932 to 1936 was first reader of the Second Church in New York. He was first reader of the Mother Church, Boston, from 1938 to 1941, and in 1948-49 was the Mother Church's president. When *Who's Who* was published he lived at 107 Falmouth street, Boston 15.

## II Browne's Recording Career

Most HOBBIES readers will be chiefly interested in Browne's career as a Columbia recording artist (apparently he never sang for any other company), so I shall trace his activities before the horn, beginning with his first record, issued July, 1916. On disc A1999 he rendered two old minstrel classics, "Nigger Love a Watermelon, Ha! Ha! Ha!" and "Old Dan Tucker," the latter written by Daniel Decatur Emmett, composer of "Dixie." The catalog editor termed them "Quaint Mississippi River Songs" and commented: "Here is a treat that will tickle the musical palates of all lovers of the old slave-day river songs and bring to the younger generation some rattling, jiggling melodies that will open their eyes to what real American ragtime is. How anyone who can sing as well as H. C. Browne found time to play the banjo as well is a mystery. Mr. Browne is a double-barreled genius."

This first Browne record was a big seller, probably the biggest he ever made. In August, he was represented by a Stephen Foster song, "Gwine to Run All Night" (better known as "Camptown Races") and a number written by a Kentuckian, Will S. Hays, who regarded himself as a greater composer of songs of this type than Foster — "Roll Out, Heave Dat Cotton." Said the monthly supplement:

American Folk Songs by Banjo-Baritone Expert. . . Turn back a leaf of your life—recall the old-time minstrel songs—let H. C. Browne, baritone and banjo expert, take you back to the good old days of Haverly, Hooley and Primrose. Mr. Browne's clever records were the brightest spot in last month's list; and if you have not yet heard this versatile artist, don't miss this month's opportunity.

I do not intend to quote all the supplement comments of the ensuing years on Browne's recordings, but shall use some of the most interesting because of the light they throw

on the man himself. Meanwhile, the brief biographical sketches in the 1917 and 1922 Columbia record catalogs are interesting. First the 1917:

Harry C. Browne is the son of I. C. Browne, the well known composer for the banjo. He inherited his father's genius for this instrument, and in addition has the added gift of a remarkable baritone voice. Mr. Browne is a well known actor, a popular New York club man, a splendid gentleman, and an exclusive Columbia artist who has given some of our best renditions of old darky melodies with banjo accompaniment.

(Mentioning Browne's father as I. C. Browne obviously was a mistake. The initials should be I. S.)

Now the 1922 write-up:

Harry C. Browne's father was a well known composer for the banjo, which accounts for Harry's love of the instrument. Browne has spent years traveling around the highways, byways and back alleys of cities and country collecting original Negro melodies, which he jots down and sings to the accompaniment of his banjo. Singing is the second of Browne's gifts. Browne is also an actor of distinct merit, having appeared in many of the most successful Broadway shows. He is a war veteran, a lecturer, a vaudeville artist and six-foot-plus a man! But "banjo" is his middle name without question.

In November, 1916, when "Angels Meet Me at the Crossroads" and "Angel Gabriel" was issued, the supplement said:

H. C. Browne is doing more than giving amusement in preserving the old time minstrel and plantation songs he sings so admirably. These airs compose a unique chapter in musical history, and Mr. Browne's recordings are equally unique.

"Unique" perhaps was not the most accurate word the writer might have chosen, but he was correct in saying that records like Browne's contribute to American musical history. Yet today when racial tensions are high there would be no chance of such records being issued unless the words were drastically revised. Even the Stephen Foster songs are foolishly bowdlerized by substituting words such as "children" and "people" for "darkies," which was always a term of affection for Negroes in the South. There was no intention on the part of the men who wrote the songs Browne sang to hurt the Negroes' feelings, and certainly the genial singer had no such intention. Minority groups — Negroes, Irish, Italians, Jews and the rest — were not so thin-skinned in those days and vaudeville audiences delighted in all types of dialect comedy. But the prevalence of words such as "nigger" and "coon" in the titles and lyrics of these "old time minstrel and plantation songs" would cause a protest by the NAACP if the records were being issued today.

In June, 1917, Browne had the assistance of the Peerless Quartet—at that time Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, Arthur Collins and John Meyer—and the Peerless soon became his recording "buddies," their fine harmonies adding strength and charm



to his recordings. The songs were "Gwine to Get a Home Bye and Bye" and that Foster classic, "O Susanna." The supplement said:

Harry C. Browne, humorous actor and artist of the baritone, the Peerless Quartet, familiar as singers of real popular music, a full orchestra accompaniment, and Browne's personal banjo playing thrown in—here are two more of those Mississippi River songs which make it really quite impossible to sit still.

Browne sang both sides of nearly all his records, but there was an exception in August, 1917, when "She Stopped to Powder Her Nose," which appears to have been written by himself, was paired with a talking comic sketch, "All Aboard for the County Fair," by Byron G. Harlan, Steve Porter, and Harlan E. Knight. The supplement said: "Harry C. Browne lays down his banjo to sing an original composition with orchestra. His subject is a delicate one but is handled with complete success!"

One of the most interesting descriptions occurred in the February, 1918, supplement:

H. C. Browne takes as much pleasure in discovering his old Negro songs as he does in singing them. Up and down out-of-the-way alleys and in and out of old barber shops—Browne always emerges with one more unique melody. The Golden Stairs to our knowledge has never been recorded and dates back at least a quarter of a century. Everyone knows snatches of Johnny, Get Your Gun, but how many have heard the entire song? Browne sings us the original complete—it is well worth knowing in its entirety.

Both "Johnny, Get Your Gun" and "Climbing Up the Golden Stairs" were written by Monroe H. Rosenfeld, "Johnny" in 1884 and "Climbing" in 1885. The annotator was mistaken in saying the golden stairs song had never before been recorded. Edison issued it on a Blue Amberol cylinder by Walter Van Brunt in October, 1915, and it appeared later on a Diamond Disc. It had also been made on wax cylinders in the '90's.

The supplement writer, probably my old friend George Clarence Jell, made an amusing error in his description of Browne's two songs for May, 1918. He wrote:

When a bit of music is so good it does not matter what happens to the words it is famous! "Polly-Wolly-Doodle" means about as little as words could, but where is the man or woman who has not sung this rollicking air? With H. C. Browne and a banjo the old tune dances into new life. You will have a new appreciation of the old Negro spiritual, "Push Dem Clouds Away," if you remember that underneath all the swing of the music these folk tunes are born from the deepest hopes, longings and sufferings of one of the most emotional races of man. Listen for this undercurrent of feeling in Browne's singing—you will find it.

"Push Dem Clouds Away" was not a spiritual or a folk song. It was written in 1892 by Percy Gaunt, a white man born in England, and sung in Charles Hoyt's "Trip to Chinatown" production, for which Gaunt also wrote "The Bowery" and "Reuben and Cynthia." Its references to "boys smoking cigarettes . . . ma-



Popular Stage and Radio Comedian and Columbia Recording Star. In 1948 he became President of the Mother Church of Christian Scientists in Boston.

ma's little pets" and similar sophisticated jeers have nothing in common with the cotton field type of spiritual.

Some interesting comment was provided when Browne's record of "Climb Up! Ye Chillum, Climb!" and "Carve Dat 'Possum" appeared in October, 1918:

A well versed musical student has traced our American ragtime directly to the Mississippi River songs of the Negro, which had traveled up from the South and reached Chicago at the time of the Great Fair. Recalling the sentimental ballads of the day and the change which came over popular music at that time, this seems extremely probable. The banjo has always been the favorite instrument of the Negro, and their songs are based on the three basic chords of this instrument. H. C. Browne has fortunately united a love of the banjo and a love of Negro music in his clever collection of Columbia records—the most "true to life" Negro "rags" ever recorded.

In December, 1920, Browne appeared in the Columbia list in a way that demonstrated his versatility. On record A2992 he and the Peerless sang his father's song, "Meet Me on de Golden Shore," coupled with "Keep Those Golden Gates Wide Open," by an unknown composer. On A2991 he assisted Cal Stewart (who had died December 6, 1919) in "Uncle Josh at the Dentist." Browne was one of several deep-voiced gentlemen who had the opportunity of portraying the dentist in this Uncle Josh sketch. Len Spencer helped Stewart on the Victor disc and the Edison cylinder; Gilbert Girard was the dentist on the Emerson; George Alexander assisted "Josh" on the almost mythical sonora vertical-cut disc, and after Stewart's death, Byron G. Harlan, acting Uncle Josh, made the skit for Okeh with Ernest Hare as the wool-gathering tooth-puller. . . . And, by the way, speaking of Alexander, I am now convinced that he was the baritone who sang for Edison cylinders under the name of Arthur Clifford, in records listed from 1903 to 1906. It suddenly occurred to me not long ago that "Clifford's" Edison repertoire was

largely identical with that Alexander had sung for Columbia, Victor and Zon-o-phone. And when I recalled that Alexander's real name was CLIFFORD Wiley his identification with Arthur Clifford appeared unmistakable.

Harry Browne assisted Cal Stewart in remaking another Uncle Josh record, although his name never appeared in the catalog as an assisting artist. I have a 1911 copy of A865, "Uncle Josh on an Automobile," on which only Stewart's name is given. I also have another version, made some ten years later, which contains Browne's name as well as Stewart's. But as long as the record occupied space in the yearly catalog, it was attributed solely to Stewart.

### III Decline in Popularity

Browne's records were among the most popular in the Columbia catalog up to and including A2992. All the titles issued up to that time sold well and are easily found in second-hand stores today. But those that came afterward are hard to find and seem to have sold in relatively small quantities. There is then one reason for this. Columbia had greatly over-expanded its activities and was hard hit by the depression that succeeded war-time prosperity late in 1920. The company went into bankruptcy in 1923, but was "bailed out." Radio, too, came along and cut into record sales. Browne was not alone in finding his record sales had skidded. No doubt the fact that "coon songs" were becoming frowned upon had much to do with it.

Browne's inimitable offerings continued to appear, however, at gradually increased intervals, and the comment on "Skeeter and the June Bug" and "Dar's a Lock on de Chicken Coop Door," in August, 1922, is worth reprinting:

When the day's work is over and dinner out of the way, everyone likes to hand the double cross to Old Man Trouble. There is no more direct route than via one of Harry Browne's rollicking, nonsensical songs.

Di'ja ever see the time when "All Bound Round With a Woolen String" didn't make a frown slip its clutch and set one's feet to patting? Well, "Skeeter and the June Bug" is just that kind of tune. It's a rube, slapstick, comedy song and dance combination to jig time with a teasing refrain that goes, "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen." On the other side a wall from a darkey who finds things ain't as they used to wuz. He plaintively wants to know why, when there's going to be a party, or the parson's invited to eat, "Dar's a Lock on de Chicken Coop Door."

One more quotation. In April, 1924, after Columbia "New Process" silent-surfaced records had been introduced, Browne was represented by "Shinbone Alley" and "Marsa' Joe." He was assisted in both by the Shannon Four. His former associates, the Peerless Quartet, by that time were exclusive to Victor:

These Negro character songs by Harry C. Browne, prove conclusively that someone has made a close study of the darkey, his habits and his characteristics. That someone is Isaac S. Browne, the father of the singer, who writes practically all of the record material his son uses. "Shinbone Alley" is a tale of the place all the darkies love to go, every

colored lady and her beau. There you can find them on a Saturday night, larking and sparking to their heart's content. The other side of the record shows that the darkey has a more sober side to his nature. It tells of the intense devotion of an old slave for his beloved "Marsa" Joe."

A few months later, Browne's final acoustically recorded disc was listed, containing "I Long to Go to Dixie" and "Rock Me, Honey." (Was the latter title an anticipation of rock-'n-roll?) No new records by the baritone-banjoist were issued until July, 1928, when he had an electric version of the already issued "Polly Wolly Doodle" and "Push Dem Clouds Away." Since this was his only electrical re-make, it may have been the most popular Browne record, but "Nigger Love a Watermelon" and "Old Dan Tucker" was the only one of his acoustic recordings still in the 1929 catalog. It should be mentioned that a number of the horn-recorded Columbias were transferred to the lower-priced Harmony label which Columbia introduced in 1925 or 1926.

I believe that at some time in the 1920's Browne became a Columbia artist and repertoire official, supervising the hill-billy records which came into vogue during those years. I recall a Columbia "folk song" artist, Clarence Greene, showing me a check he had received with an accompanying letter from Browne. I have been told and am inclined to believe that Browne went on scouting expeditions into the Southern mountains for hill-billy talent and that he was the deep voiced "Bill Brown" who assisted Gid Tanner, Riley Puckett, Clayton McMichen and other popular country music performers in recording the popular "Corn Liquor Still in Georgia" series "Brown" was the villainous prohibition agent who was always seeking to arrest the ostensible "moonshiners."

#### IV Stage and Radio

Harry Browne was well established as an actor before his recording career began, but his achievements in radio came years later. In the early 1930's a New York newspaper published an article by William Clayton, which told of how Browne originated the "Show Boat" program and also recounted his theatrical successes. The article is too long for complete quotation, but I'll boil it down to the essentials:

More than two years ago . . . he (Browne) was called in to a conference to consider the advisability of putting on the air an old-fashioned melodrama. . . . He rushed out and bought scripts. He telephoned for actors. He edited copy. He started rehearsals, and before noon had passed the whole thing was complete, living and colorful—Hank Simmons' Show Boat—with a complete repertoire. . . .

Before two weeks had passed the Show Boat was running smoothly and has been running smoothly ever since. And Harry Browne has grown with it. A handsome man, not unlike his heroes, with a career somewhat heroic, he served in the Spanish War, lectured here and there, mounted the political stump, became an actor.

He was leading man for Lillian Russell, Mary Ryan, Rose Stahl, Frances Starr, Edith Taliaferro and

Irene Bordoni and played the leading role in Channing Pollock's "The Fool," after James Kirkwood left the cast. He went into the movies and played with Mary Pickford, Constance Talmadge, Mae Murray, Hazel Dawn and Corinne Griffith. . . . In the Columbia Broadcasting studios he is the biggest man alive. He directs actors, coaches supernumerary audiences, shouts directions to Freddie Rich and the Show Boat orchestra, writes the atmosphere and acts himself.

In manner he is modest, quiet and efficient. Has no radio mannerisms. Treats his cast, which is still intact, like one big family. He played football in his high school days and wore his hair long. . . . He is the brother of Brad Browne, of Nit Wit fame.

#### V Letters From Browne

I have had only a little correspondence with Harry C. Browne. It occurred from 1948 to 1950, the period when he was president of the Mother Church of Christian Science in Boston. Our acquaintance by mail resulted from my writing to invite him to attend the John Bieling Day reunions of pioneer recording artists on Long Island. On July 31, 1948, the singer whom I had long admired wrote this typically friendly letter:

Dear Mr Walsh: Thank you for taking valuable time from your busy days to write me such an appreciative letter as yours of June 12.

Yes, I am the same Harry C. Browne of Columbia Phonograph days, and at present am continuing to make recordings—transcriptions for use over some 150 stations throughout United States, Canada, Cuba, Porto Rico, Australia, New Zealand, Bermuda and short wave to Europe and the British Isles, for the Christian Science Church here in Boston.

Your invitation to attend the party of record collectors in September at Garden City is gratefully acknowledged. At present I cannot say if it will be possible to attend. I will surely keep it in mind.

By the way, I have two recordings about Christian Science, which were made two years ago. They are on sale at Christian Science reading rooms. I'll see if I can send them to you.

It would be most pleasing to meet Frank Croxton and John Meyer, as well as the other artists you are having as guests. I will send you the photograph very soon. With best wishes, sincerely yours, HARRY C. BROWNE.

On September 6, 1948, Mr. Browne wrote:

I regret not being able to attend the John H. Bieling Day at Garden City, as I would surely like to renew the acquaintance of many friends—Frank Croxton, Billy Murray and others. I am sending you the autographed photograph I promised, under separate cover. The recording will be sent later.

Once more thank you for thinking of me in connection with the party and with best wishes to all, cordially yours, HARRY C. BROWNE.

On September 2, 1950, Mr. Browne wrote to me, regretting his inability to attend that year's Bieling party. The photo which he mentioned in his September, 1948, letter is reproduced with this article. He apparently forgot to send the record, for I never received it. I expect to have the issue of HOBBIES containing this article mailed to Mr. Browne, and it may serve to remind him that I'd still be glad to receive that recording.

#### VI Harry Browne in Christian Science

The biographical sketch in Who's Who indicates Browne was attracted by Christian Science as early as 1910, but he seems not to have become active for more than 30 years afterward. However, a clipping from a 1948 Christian Science Monitor indicates his membership goes back to 1910:

##### BROWNE HEADS CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MOTHER CHURCH . . .

Harry C. Browne of Boston, former actor and radio executive, was elected president of the Mother Church of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, yesterday at the annual meeting to succeed Mrs. Helen Chaffee Elwell of East Hebron, N. H.

A native of North Adams, Browne has been a member of the church since 1910. Following his service in the Spanish-American War he toured the United States and Canada for 25 years as an actor. Later he was production director and announcer for the Columbia Broadcasting System. In 1931 he withdrew from radio to devote his time to Christian Science. He served as First Reader in the Mother Church from 1933 to 1941, and in the following year was elected a member of the Christian Science board of lecturership. He was official speaker for church programs.

And here is a condensation of an article, "Christian Science on the Air," from a 1953 issue of Time:

From 600 radio stations this week came a new kind of opening announcement. "The power of God," said a voice to a soft organ background is present and available today to heal you of sickness, sin, sorrow, and limitation. . . . This program is another in the series on How Christian Science Heals, produced and transcribed by the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Scientists were on the air with a 15-minute weekly series, each to consist of a believer's own account of a real-life crisis, followed up with a vest-pocket sermon by Lecturer Harry C. Browne, president of the Mother Church in 1948 and onetime troupier with such greats as Lillian Russell and Irene Bordoni. . . .

Browne lost no time in making his point: "Perhaps you haven't realized that your bonds were self-imposed, and that with your own thinking you have forged the fetters that are binding you? But you have. . . . Just as surely as the divine voice spoke to our friend in the tank of the ship and directed his release, so that divine voice speaks to you and me as we learn to understand God aright. . . . Friends, it's worth trying, don't you think so?"

That seems an appropriate point at which to end this survey of the career of Harry C. Browne and his diverse achievements. Few men have had the opportunity to make a name for themselves and serve their fellow man in so many fields of human endeavor. I am sure we who have enjoyed his records wish him many more years of health and happiness in which he may devote his energies to the missionary work he finds so much to his liking.

##### COLUMBIA RECORDS BY HARRY C. BROWNE (1916-1928)

Note: Both sides are by Browne unless otherwise indicated. The letters, "H," "K" and "P" in parentheses mean Browne was assisted on the indicated records by the Harmonizers, Knickerbocker or Peerless Quartets. Many Browne records may be found on Standard, United, Cimax, Consolidated and other "off-brands" which Columbia is-

sued for private traders, but the titles and, usually, the couplings are the same as on conventional cumbias.

- A1999 Nigger Love a Watermelon, Ha, Ha, Ha/Old Dan Tucker  
 A2016 Gwine to Run All Night/Roll Out, Heave Dat Cotton  
 A2075 Angel Gabriel/Angels Meet Me at the Crossroads  
 A2116 Keep in de Middle ob de Road (K) /Oh! Dem Golden Slippers (K)  
 A2179 Bann of Gilead/Southern Medley (Fred Van Eps, banjo)  
 A2218 Gwine to Get a Home Bye and Bye (P/O Susanna (P)  
 A2252 She Stopped to Powder Her Nose/All Aboard for the County Fair (Byron G. Harlan, Steve Porter and Harlan E. Knight)  
 A2255 Jordan Am a Hard Road to Travel /De Gospel Train Am Coming (K)  
 A2430 Climbing Up the Golden Stairs/Johnny, Get Your Gun ny, Get Your Gun  
 A2502 Polly - Wolly - Doodle/Push Dem Clouds Away  
 A2590 Carve Dat Possum (P)/Climb Up, Ye Chillun, Climb (P)  
 A2622 Oh Boys, Carry Me Long/Li'l Liza Jane (P)  
 A2853 Hear Dem Bells (P)/Keemo Kimo (P)  
 A2922 Hi, Jenny, Ho, Jenny Johnson (P) /Razors in the Air (P)  
 A2991 Uncle Josh at the Dentist's (with Cal Stewart)/Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove (Cal Stewart and Ada Jones)  
 A2992 Keep Those Golden Gates Wide Open (P)/Meet Me on de Golden Shore (P)  
 A3386 Get Yo' Ticket/Put on de Golden Sword (with male quartet)  
 A3622 Skeeter and the June Bug/Dar's a Lock on de Chicken Coop Door (H)  
 A3678 Colored Barbeque/I Loves You, Mister Coon  
 A3769 De Darkies' Jubilee/Angelina (both with male quartet)  
 A3832 I'll Make Dat Black Gal Mine/Kiss Me, Honey, Do  
 A3896 Get Behin' Me, Satan!/It's Hard to be a Nigger  
 A3963 Darktown Jambores/Rosy  
 53D Marsa Joe (with Shannon Four)/Shinbone Alley  
 204D I Long to Go to Dixie/Rock Me, Honey  
 1359D (electrically recorded) Polly Wolly Doodle/Push Dem Clouds Away

## FOLK ART AND THE COLLECTOR

(Continued from page 25)

er sheath and sold for the amazing price of \$1.40! Costa Rica is noted for its hand painted oxen carts. Every cart is a brilliant display of color, especially the wheels. They are done in triangles of vivid colors, and when the wheels turn in that bright sunlight, it looks as if a rainbow is coming right at you. They have miniature oxen carts for sale, if you don't care to take a real life-sized one back with you.

PANAMA — This nation gets most of its objects from other countries and consequently isn't as rich in folk art as the others, but they do create beautiful pottery and wooden bowls. They decorate them richly with color patterns that have been handed down through centuries. The colors are vivid blacks, reds and lavenders, and most of the designs are of insects, birds, alligators and swamp animals. What more can I say, except that here in your own back yard are objects that will not only form a collection but objects that will delight you each time you look at them. Can any collector ask for more?

## ANTIQUE JEWELRY

### THE SANCY DIAMOND By DOROTHY TUDOR HARRELL

*The lively diamond  
drinks thy purest rays,  
Collected, light, compact.*

—THOMSON

The Sancy diamond has been called the Sphinx of Diamonds, and the story goes that two or three different stones were blended together successfully. The first record of this stone shows that it was the property of Nicholas Harley de Sancy in the latter part of the 16th century. He is said to have purchased it in Constantinople while on business for the French. In 1604 he sold it to King James I of England. It remained in the English Treasury until the reign of Charles I, when he was forced

to send it to the Continent along with other valuable jewels, to raise money for the Royalist troops. Queen Henrietta Maria took charge of these transactions, and the Sancy was pawned. It was later redeemed by Cardinal Mazarin, who bequeathed it, along with 17 other fine diamonds to the French crown. In 1792 it was stolen, and could not be traced as the Regent was.

It was first taken to Spain, passing through many hands, and is said to have belonged to a rich Parsee, Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, and later was acquired by the Indian Potentate the Maharaja of Puttiala.

It was finally returned to Europe and was purchased by Baron Astor for his daughter-in-law the Viscountess Astor. Its weight is given as 55.23 metric carats.

Many stories are connected with his jewel. It is said that Charles the Bold wore and lost it at the Battle of Granson in 1476 with the Swiss. However, the Swiss did not sell it until 1492 when it was purchased by Johann Fugger a banker of Augsburg. In 1547 it was sold to Henry the VIII of England, and became a part of the collection of English Crown Jewels, being set in an elaborate brooch with rubies and pearls.

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OLD GOLD WANTED: Highest prices paid for old gold jewelry, gold coins, rings, watches, teeth or any gold item in any condition. Prompt replies. Send by registered or insured mail.—Midax Enterprises, Box 257, Frederick, Md. mh3675

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## John H. Kimmel, "The Irish Scotchman"

(Piano Accompaniment by Joe Linder)

By JIM WALSH

### I. Sudden Urge

Occasionally, meditating these sketches, I find myself eager to write about someone who has not previously been in the forefront of my mind.

This is an example. For years I have been intending to tell, eventually, the life story of John J. Kimmel, the first American accordion player to make commercial records, but, in spite of much research, the time for writing has always seemed some day in the future. Now, however, the impulse to chronicle Kimmel's career is so strong that I am hastening to relate what I know about a skilled instrumentalist who for many years seemed a remote, mysterious figure.

I was wrong. Besides being a master of the old-style, ten-button "Irish accordion," John Kimmel was a regular guy. And so, it seems, was his almost inevitable accompanist, Joe Linder, without whose piano playing Kimmel never felt completely at ease.

But I was surprised to learn Kimmel had been a saloon-keeper—though a law-abiding one.

### II. Preliminary Notes

Before telling something of the man himself, I'll clear up a few



A photo of John Kimmel in the December, 1910, New Phonogram.

former misstatements. In the March, 1953, HOBBIES, writing about the Scotch accordionists, Peter and Daniel Wyper, I said that the first accordion record made in the United States, was, as far as I had been able to learn, Kimmel's Zon-o-phone disc No. 212, "American Clog," issued in 1905. Since my former article was written I have obtained a good many old Zono catalogs and supplements and have discovered Kimmel was recording a year or more earlier than I thought.

The 10-inch records which Zon-o-phone introduced in 1904 had been preceded by seven- and nine-inch discs bearing numbers beginning with 5,000 and continuing through 6,168, when the series was discontinued. Kimmel contributed at least five selections to the pre-10-inch listings. The earliest was 5996, "Bedelia," made in both seven- and nine-inch. Since "Bedelia" was published in 1903, the Zon-o-phone disc presumably was made that year, though it may not have appeared until early 1904. This was one of the few instances of Kimmel's playing contemporary popular music. "Bedelia" was followed by 6006, "Irish Jigs and Reels Medley," issued in both sizes, and by three others in nine-inch only: 6047, "Irish Reels Medley," 6060, "American Polka" and 6071 "Straight Jig Medley." The jigs and reels were characteristic of most of the music Kimmel was to record throughout his career.

Kimmel made two single-faced 10-inch Zonos that appeared in 1905. One was 212, "American Clog," which the catalog described as "a real novel record. The tone and execution are very good." Then came 234, "Yankee Doodle Dandy," which, in a badly cracked form, was one of the oldest records in my parents' collection. It was among a large number of relatively ancient "platters" my father had bought second-hand. The title was misleading, for the music Kimmel played was not that of the "Yankee Doodle" of the Revolutionary War, but George M. Cohan's 1904 hit, "The Yankee Doodle Boy." The catalog said: "A particularly good record of this instrument. The variations introduced are recorded very well." It might have added that the piano accompaniment, undoubtedly played by Joe Linder, was excellent and unusually well taken down for that primitive period.

No more single-faced Zon-o-phone records by Kimmel were issued, at least through 1907, but when a double-faced catalog was compiled in 1909, he was represented by the following twelve titles: 5058 Irish Jigs/American Clogs; 5059 Cakewalk/Irish Jigs and Reels; 5331 Medley of German Waltzes/Irish Boy March; 5332 Straight Jigs Medley / Schottische Medley; 5333 American Polka/Yankee Doodle Dandy (still mislabeled!); and 5184 Tipperary March/The Fan March. By the time the double-faced Zon-o-phone record list was issued Kimmel had been recording some time for both Edison and Victor.

In the article about the Wypers I said that Peter Wyper's first records came out before Kimmel's and he appeared to be the first accordionist to have his playing reproduced. That statement possibly is still true, if Wyper's home-made cylinders, recorded one at a time in Cadzow, Hamilton, Scotland, are counted, but since Wyper's first Columbias didn't reach the market until late in 1907, Kimmel seems to have been the first to record for an established commercial firm.

However, the distinction of making the first accordion-type record would seem to belong to a well-known player of the concertina, Percy Honri. On October 1, 1898, Honri made one of the earliest seven-inch records for the Gramophone Company, then just beginning business in England. The title was "Happy Darkies."

### III. Something About Kimmel

The question of John Kimmel's racial strain was discussed several years ago in an exchange of letters between a Minneapolis specialist in accordion recordings, C. Hilding Bergquist and me. Hilding maintained Kimmel must be Irish, "for, otherwise, how could he play Irish jigs and reels with such skill and authority?" I, on the other hand, pointed out the resemblance of Kimmel to the German word for heaven, "himmel," and maintained he must have come from German stock.

I was right. Kimmel's father and mother were both born in Germany, but he specialized in Irish dance music to so great a degree that he was jokingly known among his ad-



ming friends in Brooklyn, where he lived all his life, as "the Irish Dutchman."

For a man who made hundreds of popular records, it is strange how little was known, outside Brooklyn, about John Kimmel. I have met with great difficulty in obtaining information about many pioneer recording artists, but Kimmel was one of the most elusive of the lot. The first time I met Billy Murray I asked him if he had known John Kimmel and knew whether he was still alive. Billy amazed me by replying he not only hadn't known Kimmel but couldn't remember having ever previously heard his name. Yet Billy, after coming east and beginning to make records in 1903, had lived several years in Brooklyn!

I probably still would be floundering in my search for knowledge about John Kimmel had it not been for my veteran song writer friend, Ray Walker, also of Brooklyn. Ray not only made some personal inquiries, but in 1953 inserted a letter in the Old-Timers' department of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, which brought considerable correspondence from men who had known Kimmel and Linder. From what these courteous and informative letter writers told either Ray or me I have garnered the information to write this article. I also eventually obtained a copy of Kimmel's death certificate which gave the date of his birth and death.

John Kimmel was born in Brooklyn on December 13, 1866, and was living there, at 1044 Decatur street, when he died (in Kings County Hospital) at 11:20 p.m. September 18, 1942. He was 75 years, nine months and five days of age. Although he had the middle initial J., the certificate doesn't list a middle name. (It probably was Jacob or Joseph.) His profession was given as "musician," with a notation that he retired in 1927. (However, he made records later than that.) His father, also John Kimmel, was born in Germany, as was his mother, whose maiden name was Margaretha Schmidt. He was married (his wife's name was Margaret), but they seem to have had no children other than an adopted daughter. The cause of death was given as lobar pneumonia, accompanied by chronic glomerulonephritis—a form of Bright's disease.

Now I may as well set down what information I have about Kimmel's "accomplice," Joe Linder. Lennie Diehl, of Baldwin, L. I., New York, an old friend of both Kimmel and Linder, who was especially helpful to me after reading Ray Walker's newspaper letter, wrote that Linder



John J. Kimmel and Joe Linder

was born in Brooklyn on January 23, 1870, and died January 12, 1943, less than four months after Kimmel. His last address was 1121 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn—the YMCA building.

Lester W. M. Hunkele, of 7917 Fifth Avenue, Brooklyn, wrote the following interesting note to Ray Walker:

Joe Linder was a very good "fake" piano player. He was tall, slightly bald, large frame, wore glasses, and had he studied might have been another Liszt. He read a little in the treble clef, but as he played for the same performers nearly all the time his memory helped him to get by.

I first met him around 1908 to 1916. At first he was popular at stage parties where Johnny Casey, Frank Fogarty and Johnny Carroll were the principal entertainers.

I am sure he was German. . . He was well known around the various Elks divisions, and many times played Elks' parties here in Brooklyn Lodge, where he was a member. In 1916, when the YMCA built 65 Hanson Place, I was pianist for gym classes, and organist and pianist for special events. Joe Linder was for a time, my assistant in the gymnasiums.

So much for Joe Linder. Now some reminiscences from men who knew Kimmel.

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#### IV. More About "The Irish Dutchman"

None of John Kimmel's old friends who wrote to Ray Walker or me describe the accordion wizard's appearance, but photos in old record catalogs and supplements show him as a rather short, stocky man, wearing a placid expression on a round, moon-shaped face. His features were typically German.

I found a letter from Patrick F. Stedman of 326 Lincoln Place, Brooklyn, unusually interesting. In part he wrote:

I personally knew Mr. Kimmel and Mr. Linder through a young man who was employed at the same store as I was at that time, 1893. His name was Frank Gammon. He afterwards became sanitation commissioner for the Borough of Brooklyn. A quartet including Gammon . . . along with Kimmel and Linder assembled four or five nights a week in an undertaking establishment on Court street, across the way from St. Paul's Church. They practiced their singing and playing their skills. The undertaker's name was Eickoff. All of them have passed away . . . I still have in my possession several of Kimmel's recordings and I sure enjoy listening to them . . . even at the age of 81, my next birthday.

Of equal interest was a letter from Lennie Diehl, written April 7, 1953:

Dear Jim: . . . Regarding Kimmel, I've sent out at least 15 letters to different sources to try to locate his aged sister (if still alive) and his foster daughter. I saw her grow up. . . . Kimmel's last records were made with a banjo-guitar accompanist whose name was Andy Fiedler. I also am waiting to hear from him. You are right about 1929 being Kimmel's last recording year, as that was the year I made orchestra arrangements for John . . . for a spot on WOR that Don Carney was promoting.

About his title, "The Irish Dutchman." Before John opened saloons he hit the board with a musical act such as coming out and playing four-part harmony on cornets, then saxophones, xylophone and, of course, during scenery shifts he'd solo on the accordion. He never set the world on fire with

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the other instruments . . . but nevertheless he was there playing.

Before his death he dabbled in real estate. His last saloon was on Myrtle Avenue and Madison street in the Ridgewood section of Queens, a little over the Brooklyn line. The name of the place was "The Accordion," and he didn't have it long. He wouldn't sell whiskey and beer against the law and he had the place in the early days of prohibition. Previous to that he had a place at Himrod street and Irving Avenue in Brooklyn. . . . This was a good spot with the cream names of entertainers appearing. Plenty of good performers came out of this neighborhood—among them Joe Schenk, Gus Van and Mae West.

Mr. Diehl's statement about Kimmel's having been in vaudeville is confirmed by a U. S. Everlasting Records catalog for 1912 which described him as "the world champion accordionist, formerly with Elite Musical Four, and a headliner in vaudeville."

The Daily Eagle, to whose reference department I had applied without success for any information concerning Kimmel and Linder, appears to have published an article about Kimmel in 1945, for Lennie Diehl sent me a clipping of a letter to the editor he had written that year, in which he said:

It certainly was a treat to read the article on Johnny Kimmel. It's too bad that John couldn't stay with us to see that nice article. Johnny Kimmel passed away . . . after living in retirement up in Greene Avenue, Ridgewood, for the past 25 years or so. In this time he was still making phonograph records and was in the "Main Street Sketches" on WOR. For the past few years he was ailing in health and only brought the accordion out for rare occasions.

Still another letter from Lennie Diehl said:

I knew John Kimmel well and played piano in his back room while I still wore short pants. I also played mandolin and guitar in one of his troupes. John played cornet, xylophone and saxophone in a musical four act, similar to the old musical acts of B. A. Rolfe. A fellow by the name of George Bell, living in Babylon, L. I., still has Kimmel's old cornet.

Through his letter in the Daily Eagle, Ray Walker heard from Kimmel's adopted daughter, Mrs. Madeline Stumpp, who became a member of the Kimmel family at the age of nine. She lived at 625 47th street, Brooklyn, and wrote to Ray that she would be glad to give him all the information she could about her foster father. However, because of the difference in their working hours, she and Ray didn't meet, except for a brief conversation in the night club where he was playing.

#### V. John Kimmel's Edison Records

John Kimmel was in his fortieth year and presumably was already operating his saloon in the German "Old Dutch Town" section of Brooklyn when he had his first Edison recording date on May 8, 1906. He made Edison cylinders and, later, discs, at widely spaced intervals for almost 23 years afterwards.

That initial engagement resulted in Kimmel's recording a pair of two-minute Standard cylinders. The first, No. 9341, "American Cake Walk," ap-

peared in September, 1906. The Edison publicity writer misspelled Kimmel's last name as Kimmble and that awkward use of superfluous letters continued until 1918 when he made his first Diamond Discs. It was also an Edison custom in those days to add an incorrect "h" to the end of Ada Jones' first name and refer to John Biehling instead of Bieling—the way the annoyed tenor himself spelled it. The New Phonogram said:

This is an accordion solo, with piano accompaniment, and is the first record of the kind that we have ever listed. Mr. Kimmble is an especially fine player on this instrument, probably one of the best in the country, and he has chosen for his initial selection a non-published composition of Edward De Veau that is well adapted to this popular musical instrument.

Who, I wonder, was "Edward De Veau" and why should Kimmel be playing one of his compositions that hadn't even been published? The suspicion may be wrong, but I think it is justified, that De Veau was simply a pen name for "Kimmble," who also composed for the accordion.

In November, 1906, came 9389, "Medley of Reels," with the comment: "Mr. Kimmble's first accordion record was such a success that he has made another for this supplement. That it will be equally popular will be admitted by all who hear this selection. It is full of variety and well rendered."

Edison called Kimmel back to the recording studio on March 7, 1907, and this time he appears to have made eight cylinders. In July, 1907, the company listed No. 9581, "The Kimmble March," and the customers were told:

The enormous success of our two previously listed accordion solos prompts us to list another by the same artist. It is one of Mr. Kimmble's own compositions—a march and a fine one, too. To hear it played is to admire it at once, for no composition ever before listed is better suited to the accordion and few marches are more tuneful. Played with piano accompaniment.

There is a bit of mystery associated with the "Kimmble (Sic) March." It is the same composition as Zonophone and Victor listed under the name of "The Irish Boy March." Why did Kimmel use one name for Edison and another for the other companies? And why did he call it "The Irish Boy March?" Did he perhaps feel that was as close as he could come to referring to his status as "The Irish Dutchman?" Whatever the reason, the composition was extremely popular, and years later, as "The Kimmel March," was one of the big selling Edison Diamond Discs. For a time, as we shall see, "The Irish Boy" occupied an even more elevated position among Victor records.

No. 9665, "Medley of Straight Jigs," was listed in October, 1907, and 9761, "American Polka," appeared in February, 1908, with this enthusiastic notice:

An accordion solo that will add much to Mr. Kimmble's already widespread popularity as a player of unusual skill on this somewhat peculiar musical instrument. Mr. Kimmble's execution will

do much to dissipate the opinion that many have concerning the musical qualities of the accordion. In his hands it becomes most attractive. His previous records are among the best sellers in the Edison catalogs and his newest contribution will rank fully as high in selling qualities.

I have a bit of unusual evidence to prove that the catalog writer knew what he was talking about when he mentioned the popularity of Kimmel's records. It is an order blank which the Edison dealer at Whitman, Mass.—P. A. Howland—filled out for February, 1908. He ordered only one copy of an Edison cylinder of an Italian dialect song, "Garibaldi," sung by the popular song writer, James Brockman. Ada Jones was vastly popular, but her "Under the Matzos Tree" was down for just two copies—probably because Mr. Howland suspected a Jewish dialect number wouldn't sell well to his New England customers.

He ordered only four of "Somebody's Been Around Here Since I've Been Gone," by that day's king of popular recording artists, Billy Murray. Ten copies each were ordered of "The Crack Regiment Patrol" by the Edison Symphony Orchestra and "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane," by the Edison Male Quartet. But the top order, twelve copies, went to Kimmel's record of "The American Polka"! At this period Kimmel's records probably were second in popularity, among instrumental offerings, only to Vess Ossman's banjo solos, and were even more popular than Charles D'Almaine's violin renditions of Irish jigs and reels.

In July, 1908, Kimmel was present with No. 9881, "Medley of Irish Jigs." The supplement writer said:

An accordion solo of a number of well known Irish jig airs. The large and steady sale of Mr. Kimmble's records shows how popular the accordion is throughout the country. This selection is made with a piano accompaniment, as usual, bands and orchestra accompaniments serving to confuse the peculiar melody of the accordion.

It should hardly be necessary to say that the accompaniment was by

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the inevitable and never-failing Joe Linder!

When No. 9943, "Schottische Medley," was issued in September, 1908, the supplement writer said: "The accordion used by Kimmble in his solos has no relation to the ordinary concertina type of instrument. You will be astonished at its sweet tone and variety of musical expression, while the volume is sufficient to fill a large-sized concert hall." And in November, when 9975, "Popular Straight Jigs," appeared, the supplement remarked: "After hearing Kimmble play on his magical accordion, one wonders why jigs are ever played on any other instrument. But then every accordion player is not a Kimmble."

In February, 1909, Kimmble was represented by 10071, "The Minor March," which he also recorded for Victor. Edison misspelled "Minor" as "Miner." July, 1909, brought 10172, his own composition, "The Fans' March."

#### VI. Kimmble's Later Edisons

"The Irish Dutchman" was not called back to the Edison recording rooms until May 27, 1910. When he walked out he must have felt he had put in a busy day, for he had recorded three Standard two-minute cylinders and three four-minute Amberols. The first of the Standards, 10284, "Medley of Irish Reels," became available in July, 1910. It was described as "an accordion solo with piano accompaniment introducing a number of well-known popular Irish airs that are as infectious as they are melodious."

The other Standards were 10417, "German Waltz Medley" and 10525, "New Tipperary March." The Amberols were 504, "International and Fan Marches," 553, "Buck Dance Medley" and 927, "Elite March," another composition attributed to the shadowy De Veau. These were issued at intervals from September 1910, to March, 1912, when the "Elite March" appeared. This time "De Veau's" first name was given as Edgar.

Almost eight years slipped by before Kimmble was again on hand at 79 Fifth Avenue to make more Edison records with Linder as his accompanist. Linder was now 48 and Kimmble past 50. On March 4, 1918, they recorded three numbers, "The Kimmble March," "Bonnie Kate Medley" and "Connaught Man Medley." "The Kimmble March" was the first to be issued, appearing in June, 1918, as Blue Amberol No. 3943. For the first time on an Edison list, Kimmble's name was spelled Kimmble instead of Kimmble. "The Connaught Man" (B. A. 3521) was issued in October, and "Bonnie Kate" a few months later, as 5547.

Characteristic of Edison's peculiar treatment of withholding potentially big selling Diamond Discs from the market for months or years was the delay in issuing the new Kimmble performances. "The Kimmble March" and "Bonnie Kate" were coupled on disc No. 50604 in February, 1920. As if to make amends, the Edison musical

magazine, *Along Broadway*, for that month included a full length photograph of Kimmble and the following article, headed "The Accordion Comes Into Its Own":

The fellow who writes things for the Encyclopaedia Britannica said in describing the accordion that "this, the smallest of the organ family, in the hands of a skilful performer is not entirely without artistic beauty." It is a safe wager that he had never heard John J. Kimmble turn her loose. If he had, he probably would have said, "My word, but the accordion is a hum-dinger!"

Because of its construction, the accordion is almost a fool-proof instrument. When you pull it out and squeeze some keys a certain kind of sound results. When you squeeze it together something else happens, usually not discordant but not necessarily pleasing.

Mr. Kimmble has put the accordion in the class of real musical instruments. In the "Bonnie Kate Medley of Reels," which he has re-created on the New Edison, you are reminded of a combination that might result from a Scotch bagpipe and a jazz band, and the rhythm is so compelling that you feel like shouting "swing your partner." In his own composition, "The Kimmble March," there are occasional suggestions of tones of a church organ swelling out in all their beauty, coupled with the rhythm and "pep" of a military band.

"Connaught Man—Medley of Jigs" was issued late in 1920 as Diamond Disc No. 50692. Its coupling was a "Medley of Scotch Airs," by Fred J. Bacon, banjoist.

Just before "Bonnie Kate" and "Kimmble March" reached the market, Kimmble and Linder reappeared at Edison, on January 17, 1920, and recorded four more numbers. These were "Haste to the Wedding," which became Blue Amberol 4194 and Diamond Disc 50653; "Oh Gee—Medley Reel" (B. A. 3985 and D. D. 50870); "Homeward March" (B. A. 4111 and D. D. 50674) and "Haley's Fancy Medley," issued on Blue Amberol 4076 but never issued on the disc. Probably Mr. Edison thought he heard a technical defect which, in his opinion, rendered the recording unsuited for disc use but satisfactory for the Blue Amberols, on which the standards were not so high.

On August 11, 1922, the Damon and Pythias of accordion and piano recorded "Stack o' Barley Medley" (often regarded as Kimmble's "theme song") and "Contentment Medley," which became Diamond Disc 51141. "Stack o' Barley" came out as Blue Amberol 4688, but "Contentment" didn't appear on the cylinders.

When Kimmble next made Edison records the modern era of electric recording had arrived—but Joe Linder wasn't with him! Why the inseparables had separated we don't know, but, as Lennie Diehl has said, the accompanist was a guitar player, Andy Fiedler. On December 27, 1928, they played "Bryant's Favorite Hornpipe" and "Fitzmaurice's Polka," which became Diamond Disc 52488. On January 3, 1929, they came through with "Floggan Reel" and "A Trip to the Cottage—Irish Jig"—Diamond Disc 52499. All four selections were likewise recorded for Edison needle cut records. In the order mentioned they had master numbers N659, N600, N673 and N674, but they

were never issued. No. 52488 came out in February, 1929, and 52499 in March—a few months before Edison went out of the record business. Diamond Disc sales had fallen off badly, and these last Kimmble records are hard to find.

Thus ended Kimmble's more than 20 year association with Edison.

#### VII Kimmble's Victor Career

Although Victor controlled the Zon-o-phone label for which Kimmble had recorded, his name didn't appear in a Victor supplement until October, 1907, when 5237, "Irish Boy March," and 5238, "Medley of Irish Jigs," were issued. Catalog Editor Sam Rous said:

For a great many people in the world there is no music like that of an accordion. For their benefit, as well as the enjoyment of those who like a lively record of a march or jig, we offer two of the finest records of that instrument possible to make. They are very loud and splendidly played, Mr. Kimmble's execution being simply astonishing.

Kimmble made as immediate a hit with Victor audiences as he had with Edison patrons. When his record, 5417, of "American Polka" was issued in May, 1908, Rous remarked:

Lovers of lively music, and plenty of it, will be pleased to see this new Kimmble number. The records of this favorite accordion player have enjoyed tremendous popularity, especially the merry "Irish Boy March," which for some time was the most popular of all Victor records. . . .

Other Victor records by Kimmble of the 1907-08 period are 5254, "Medley of Straight Jigs"; 5307, "Medley of Popular Reels"; 5438, "American Cakewalk" (described as "a loud and lively record of this popular instrument, which in the capable hands of Mr. Kimmble becomes almost a whole orchestra"); and 5468, "Medley of Reels, No. 2."

Kimmble probably had a hand, but without label credit, in at least three of the records of that time. The comic "rube duet" by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, "My Gal Irene," has accordion interludes which must have been played by Kimmble, for Victor then had no other player on its list. The accordion is also introduced in 5406, Steve Porter's comic sketch, "Thim Were the Happy Days." One of a series of records issued in 1908 for demonstration purposes by Victor dealers but not to be sold to the public was called "The Irresistible Accordion." It appears reasonable that Kimmble provided the samples of accordion music.

When Victor began to issue double-faced records late in 1908, Kimmble's single-faced numbers were gradually coupled. "The Irish Boy Medley" was rather inappropriately doubled on 16747 with "Bye, Bye, My Honey," a "coon shout" by the imitable Billy Golden. Kimmble's records continued to appear for several years, although no new ones were issued in 1912, 1913 or 1914.

"The Irish Dutchman" made a Victor comeback in November, 1915, despite the strong competition of Pietro Deiro's vastly popular piano-

accordion solos. On record 17849, he played Medleys 3 and 4 of Irish Reels. Mr. Rous said:

While Mr. Kimmel renders many kinds of music well, it is in the playing of jigs and reels that he is most thoroughly at home. Here are two lively medleys of Irish reels, and the only persons in America who can listen to them and keep their feet still are the unfortunates who are totally deaf!

Kimmel was back in January, 1917, with 18193, "Geese in the Bog—Irish Jigs" and "Stack of Barley—Irish Reels." A photo showing him holding his accordion had the cut lines, "Mr. Kimmel Waiting for His Cue." The editor commented:

The accordion, as played by John Kimmel, is a very good instrument for a medley of Irish jigs; it has the reedy virtues of the bagpipes, without the raucousness. The jigs in the present medley are lively enough, in the words of Pope, to "make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven."

Our Brooklyn friend was back in March with 18207, "Floggan Reel Medley" and "Irish Jig Medley." He also made several Victor records during the early 1920's, which usually were issued in March for the St. Patrick's Day trade. Then, after electric recording came in, there was an interval of no new Kimmel records until in 1928 he and Andy Fiedler made No. 21441, issued on July 6th. It contained a remake of the eternally popular "Irish Boy March" combined with "Fitzmaurice's Polka." Thus his last Victors were recorded a few months before his final Edisons. No. 21441 stayed in the Victor catalog until 1933, as did the acoustically recorded 18193.

#### VIII. Columbia and Other Companies

Kimmel's Columbia debut came long after he had made records for Zonophone, Edison and Victor. He first appeared in a Columbia supplement in March, 1916. The reason probably was that Columbia had been able to import accordion jigs and reels records, played by Peter and Daniel Wyper, from its English affiliate. Too, it had Guido Deiro, selling large quantities of piano-accordion discs. This initial record, A1917, was "Irish Jigs," introducing "Connaught Men's Ramble" and "Irish Reels," which included "Mason's Apron" and "Cuckoo's Nest." (In view of Kimmel's all-German ancestry, it still seems odd that he should have been so much fascinated by Erin-go-bragh music!) The supplement said:

Mr. Kimmel is a new accordion expert for Columbia lists and opens his reputation with a collection of Irish jigs and reels that will bring delight to several hundred thousands of our patrons at least. Mr. Kimmel has completely mastered the intricacies of his instrument and plays with unusual vim and vigor.

In September, 1916, Columbia marketed A2036, "Medley of Irish Jigs" and "Medley of Irish Reels." Under the heading of "Kimmel a Real Accordion Acrobat," the editor made a surprising statement:

John J. Kimmel would be a famous man today if he had taken his accordion and his playing ability and gone on the stage. A ten-minute play-

ing of the Irish jigs featured on this latest Columbia record would bring any house to its feet. As it is, Mr. Kimmel is reaching just as delighted and a far larger audience on his records. Well worth hearing is the splendid technique of this artist of the accordion.

How did it happen, one wonders, that George Jell, or whoever else wrote that paragraph, didn't know Kimmel for many years had been a famous vaudeville headliner?

In December, 1916, Kimmel had another Columbia record, A2094, coupling "Medley of Reels" and "International Echoes," the composer of the latter being listed as Joe Linder. During the next two or three years he made several others. As a rule he played both sides but A2283, issued in September, 1917, coupled his "Medley of Jigs," with a march—two-step, "Irish Hearts," played by the unbeatable banjoist, Fred Van Eps.

As more and more companies went into the record business between 1916 and 1925, Kimmel was engaged at least occasionally by most. His versions of "Stack of Barley" and "Bryant's Favorite" were recorded on Pathe sapphire record No. 20956 and were also copied on to the Actuelle needle-cut disc. In the Emerson supplement of December, 1919, he was represented by 10-inch record 1099, "Medley of Irish Jigs" and "Irish Reels." The first side included "Haste to the Wedding," "Larry O'Gaff" and "Trip to the Cottage" and the second, his old favorites, "Bonnie Kate" and "Green Fields of America." The supplement's annotator was rather facetious:

Mr. Music-Lover, we want you to meet our new artist, John J. Kimmel, the famous accordion player. Mr. Kimmel was born in Brooklyn, but he has managed to live it down. He has met and vanquished, in turn, every competitor for the championship of the ten-key accordion.

Kimmel probably wouldn't have cared much for that good-natured "crack." All the evidence seems to indicate he was proud of being an "Old Dutch Town boy" and that he

remained a loyal Brooklyn patriot to the last, never seeking to "live down" his birthplace.

And so it went as long as John Kimmel was active. Whenever and wherever he played, he was recognized as one of the masters of his instrument—a brilliant performer of the type of music which may appeal more to the feet than the head but which entertains if it doesn't edify. He probably lacked the wide musical culture of Charles D'Almaine but he played much the same type of music on the accordion that the gifted D'Almaine essayed so well and so often with his violin. It is appropriate, I think, that Kimmel's biography should appear in HOBBIES so close on the heels of D'Almaine's.

#### DEATHS OF HARRY C. BROWNE AND HARVEY HINDERMYER

By JIM WALSH

Since my biographical sketch of Harry C. Browne appeared in the January HOBBIES I have been surprised and saddened to learn Mr. Browne died in November, 1954. My information comes from Miss Hazel A. Firth, manager of the Executive Office of the First Church of Christ Scientist in Boston, Mass.

I had not corresponded with Mr. Browne in recent years but had not seen any notice of his passing in the publications which naturally would be expected to publish it. Consequently, I wrote my article without knowing that the versatile gentleman whom I so much admired was no longer with us.

I am also informed by the noted tenor, Charles Hart, that our friend, Harvey Hindermeyer, died a short time ago, not many weeks after my article, "Harvey Hindermeyer's Golden Anniversary" appeared in the August, 1957, HOBBIES. I hope to have more detailed information later about Mr. Hindermeyer's death.

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# Reed Miller

## (AND NEVADA VAN DER VEER)

By JIM WALSH

### I A Birthday Party

Forty-two years ago, on March 7, 1916, at his home in New York, Reed Miller celebrated his ninth birthday.

The party was held a week late. The eminent concert and oratorio tenor and recording artist had been born in Anderson, S. C., on February 29, 1880. He was really 36 years of age, but since that Leap Year date comes only once each four years, the birthday was actually his ninth. Miller and his wife, a noted contralto known professionally by her unmarried name of Nevada Van der Veer (she was born in Springfield Center, N. Y., January 25, 1884) wore costumes suitable for boys and girls of nine and eight.

Among the guests were the baritone Frederick Wheeler, at that time Miller's partner for making duet records, and another famous recording tenor, Harvey Hindermeyer. Also on hand were members of the Mendelssohn Glee Club who presented Reed and Nevada Miller with a silver service.

Reed Miller was at the summit of his career when that birthday party took place. A short time before, his singing voice had been heard across the continent by long-distance telephone—a miracle in those days before radio and TV—as a feature of the Pan-American Exposition in San Francisco. Charles Wakefield Cadman, the composer, had written to him from California: "Your 'Drummer Boy' song sounded bully last night over 3,500 miles. Leonard Lieb-ling and I sat together and marveled. Wasn't the stunt thrilling? We could hear every note, and the piano, too."

There was no hint, that winter night, of Reed Miller's premature death. Yet the genial tenor, whom his equally distinguished fellow tenor and associate, Charles Harrison, has pronounced "the finest oratorio singer of his day," was to have a short life. On December 29, 1943, when he was only 43 and before he had observed his eleventh birthday, Miller died. But his life, though regrettably brief, was one marked by genuine musical achievement.

### II Some Biographical Notes

Reed Miller never sang exclusively for any phonograph company, but he was one of the few free-lance artists who received biographical sketches in the record catalogs of all the major companies for whom he worked—Victor, Columbia and Edison.

For years the Victor catalog contained the following, accompanied by a small photo of the tenor:

It is with much pleasure that Victor announces the engagement of Mr. Reed Miller, the well-known concert tenor,

whose beautiful voice, admirable diction and correct method have earned for him a large following of musical people. Some of Mr. Miller's recent engagements show in what favor he is held by concert-goers. Besides his regular engagement as solo tenor of the Brick Presbyterian Church of New York City, he has lately sung at the Spartanburg and Greensboro Festivals; Musical Art Society, Pittsburgh, with Damrosch and the New York Symphony; at the Worcester Festival, etc. The numbers selected for his Victor list by Mr. Miller are most attractive ones, and consist of a number of standard and sacred songs, besides several duets with Mr. Werrenrath.

### The Columbia catalog said:

As one of the best tenors of the concert platform, Reed Miller has occupied an enviable position among American singers for several years, and the admiration everywhere felt for his splendid work increases season by season. Mr. Miller is not alone a singer with a tenor voice of magnificent calibre and quality, he is also an interpretative artist with every resource at his instant command.

This was supplemented by another mention under the Columbia Stellar Quartet heading:

Reed Miller, second tenor, is a native of the South. Miller came to New York with nothing in his pocket but ability. With a voice no less than a gift, he has achieved fame as one of the greatest oratorio soloists the country has ever known. From coast to coast Mr. Miller has been called to sing in chorus productions.

The April, 1914, Edison Blue Amberol catalog contained write-ups of both Miller and his wife. Of the tenor it said:

Reed Miller, born in Anderson, S. C., was not satisfied with merely possessing an unusually clear tenor voice, but was determined to become a true artist. To that end he studied under F. Powers, Arthur Mees and Walter Damrosch. His field of endeavor is

large, including opera, oratorio and concert work, and he has appeared in the best houses all over the United States, singing with the New York Symphony Orchestra and with the Theodore Thomas Orchestra. He has also sung at the Worcester and Evanston Festivals and with the New York Oratorio Society. His voice is clear, perfectly rounded and tremendously powerful.

Under the heading of "Nevada Van der Veer Miller, Contralto," the following appeared:

An artist of whom much is heard is the young and attractive contralto, Nevada Van der Veer, who has earned her prominence by most artistic work and a beautifully trained voice. Mme. Van der Veer (in private life Mrs. Reed Miller) is a singer whose interpretation of oratorio has much of the English tradition, combined with modern individuality, while her song singing is a sheer delight. That Mme. Van der Veer is receiving great recognition is shown by the fact that she is to be heard in so many performances of oratorio clubs. She is a member of the famous Frank Croxton Quartet, composed also of Agnes Kimball, soprano, Reed Miller, tenor, and Frank Croxton, basso.

The 1922 Edison Diamond Disc catalog contains a sketch that appears to have been adapted from the one in the Blue Amberol booklet of several years before:

Reed Miller has sung to immense audiences in the largest cities in the United States. His field of endeavor is a vast one, including opera, oratorio, concert work and song composition. He has been a soloist with the New York Symphony, the Theodore Thomas Orchestra, the Chicago Orchestra and the New York Oratorio Society. Mr. Miller was born in South Carolina and received his musical education in the United States. His voice is clear, tremendously powerful and perfectly rounded. Mr. Miller is now the soloist of the famous St. Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue, New York.

The frequent mentions of Miller's appearances with the New York Symphony under Damrosch remind me of something I heard Ben Gross, the radio and television critic for the *New York Daily News*, tell on a New York Philharmonic program.

Gross said he was a small boy when the New York Symphony came to his home city, Birmingham, Ala., and he was one of a group of youngsters who gathered outside the auditorium in which the performance was given. They couldn't pay but wanted to listen. Mr. and Mrs. Miller were the soloists and during a rest period they stood inside a door opening on the alley in which the boys were clustered.

Miller looked at them, smiled and said: "Hey, kids, you wanna come in?" They say they did, he opened the door and they heard the remainder of the concert from good seats. Gross declared Reed Miller's genial thoughtfulness gave him a start toward a lifelong love of good music.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

### III Reed Miller Records

It probably will surprise most admirers of Reed Miller to learn he made records as long ago as 1904, and possibly a bit earlier. His first recorded work was done for Zonophone, under the assumed name of James Reed, which he used extensively a decade later.

The first record I can find by him is Albert Von Tilzer's great "coon song" hit, "Teasing"—not the type of composition with which one would ordinarily associate Reed Miller's name. This was a nine-inch record, No. 6055. Likewise in the Zonophone nine-inch list was 6092, "I'm Wearing My Heart Away For You," which had been written in 1902 by the tearjerker ballad specialist, Charles K. Harris. It also was listed as Zonophone ten-inch record No. 17.

The 10-inch was described "a very clear and distinct record."

I have found no more Zonophone records by Reed Miller. His next appearance in any record list appears to have been in the Edison two-minute standard cylinder supplement for October, 1907. In view of his Southern ancestry, he began his Edison career appropriately on Record 9658 with an Ernest R. Ball ballad, "The Birds in Georgia Sing of Tennessee." The supplement said: "A pretty sentimental ballad that will gain many admirers. Mr. Miller, who sings it, although he has made over several records for us, has not previously made a new one, and should soon become a favorite by reason of his fine voice."

The first complete Edison standard record catalog in which Miller's name appears is dated December, 1907. Besides the "Birds in Georgia" song, it contains two records, originally made by Harry Macdonough, which had been done over by Miller: 7242 "Sing Me a Song of the South" (again an appropriate choice for a South Carolina tenor!) and 6504 "The Lost Chord," a number to which his ringing resonant voice should have been well adapted.

Reed Miller and that superb baritone Reinald Werrenrath were represented by their first recorded duet in the November, 1907, Edison supplement. The tone quality with Werrenrath singing the "lead" and Miller harmonizing, is remarkably clear and sonorous, and Werrenrath's voice sounds richer than on any disc record I have heard by him. The song they sang on this cylinder, 9679, is "Honey Boy," with words by Jack Norworth and music by Albert Von Tilzer. The supplement writer truthfully said "the air is catchy and uncommon . . . a swinging march tune, sung with much spirit."

Miller did not become widely known as a song writer, but he was testing his talents at composition in 1907, when these first Edison cylinders were made. M. Witmark & Sons published at least two of his songs that year: "From the Depths," with words by Samuel Wood, and "Memories," for which Miller wrote both

words and music. Both are numbers resembling Tosti's "Goodbye" in theme, with an air of sad disillusionment. "Memories" has an unusual type of lyric, containing only seven lines. There is no reason to think Reed Miller personally shared in the conventionally heartbreaking sentiments which his songs expressed.

The tenor continued to record for Edison, but his first Victor record did not appear until January 1910. It was a ten-inch single-faced, No. 5753, the Clifton Bingham and Edward German ballad, "Roses in June," which, judging by the frequency with which he recorded it and sang it in concert, was one of his best liked songs. Other favorites of his repertoire were Hope Temple's "'Tis All That I Can Say," and Stephen Adams' "Maid of the Mill." The supplement contained the biographical sketch of Miller which has already been quoted, and commented: "The number selected for Mr. Miller's first record is that charming song . . . 'Roses in June,' which he sings delightfully. The accompaniment, with its violin obbligato and harp passages, is a wholly beautiful one."

"Roses in June" was soon combined on double-faced record, 16675, with "Annie Laurie," sung by that sterling English baritone, Alan Turner.

Before many months Miller had become a Victor stand-by and, as such, took part in some of the medleys sung by the Victor Light Opera Company. His second record, a melodious Ernest Ball ballad, "In the Garden of my Heart," appeared on black label disc 5765 in March, 1910. It was after words combined on 16741 with "My Wild Irish Rose," by the Hayden Quartet. The supplement said:

Mr. Miller's beautiful record of "Roses in June" has met with much favor since its issue in January. The tenor's friends were charmed with such a perfect reproduction of his voice, and the record has made him many new admirers.

In March, 1911, the supplement listed two new Miller records—5820, "Kathleen Mavourneen," and 5721, "Beauty's Eyes," by Tosti, with the statement that "this popular concert singer has returned from a long tour in the West, where he has been highly successful, and has sung for us two old favorites."

The Victor tendency was to restrict Miller, in the beginning at least, to ballads of a Victorian flavor. In April, 1911, he was represented by 5829, "Tell Her I Love Her So," and this comment was made:

. . . Mr. Miller sings this lovely old song with rare expression and perfect diction. Those who are fortunate enough to possess this unusual reproduction will doubtless wonder why such genuinely beautiful songs as this are so neglected by concert singers. The Victor, however, intends to perform a public duty by rescuing many of these numbers from the oblivion into which they have apparently fallen.

Neither Victor nor any other phonograph company ever gave the tenor an adequate opportunity to display his unusual accomplishments as an interpreter of oratorio and opera.

The April, 1911, supplement also contained the first of several duets by Miller and Werrenrath, No. 5832, "The Army and Navy," described as "a famous old duet which was the delight of tenors and baritones thirty years ago. It serves admirably to introduce to Victor audiences this new combination of Victor artists. Mr. Miller's clear tenor and the vigorous baritone of Mr. Werrenrath blend admirably in this fine martial number."

Reinald Werrenrath became an exclusive Victor artist and was promoted successively to Purple Label, Blue Label and Red Seal status. Miller's records never went higher than Black Label, but had he become exclusive to Victor instead of free-lancing throughout his recording career he probably also would have been advanced to higher rank. His Edison Diamond Discs were always issued in the 80,000 series, selling at from \$1.50 to \$1.85, and corresponding to the Victor Blue Label.

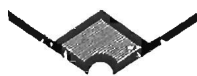
### IV Columbia Recordings

From 1910 to April, 1915, all Victor records by Reed Miller were listed under his own name. But when he made his first Columbia he revived the "alias" of James Reed which he had used for Zonophone in 1904. Columbia, with a flourish of trumpets, had just entered into an agreement with Charles K. Harris to record all his songs—an arrangement which didn't amount to much, for Harris, composer of "After the Ball," was already outmoded and no longer able to write hits consistently. Miller's first Columbia disc, as James Reed, was A924, "It's Always June When You're in Love," whose coupling was another Harris number, "I Miss You Honey, Miss You All the Time," sung by Ada Jones and chorus.

The supplement writer gave this double-barreled Harris combination a rousing send-off:

Following our recent arrangement with the Chas. K. Harris Music Publishing Company . . . we introduce Harris' greatest sentimental song success of the present season—one of the most popular and tuneful numbers composed by him in the entire course of his successful career. The theme of the words is one that never grows old or loses its interest, and the air, in slow waltz time, is of an unusually engaging and ingratiating character. Add to this the wonderful vocalism of Mr. James Reed and you have a record that is indeed difficult to equal in popular music. That Mr. Reed is a "find" of the first water, for recording work, is obvious from his first note; he is a real tenor and a notable acquisition to Columbia ranks. Undoubtedly he will be heard from regularly in the future.

The next month, January, 1911, Miller was present as himself. The front cover of the Columbia supplement was used to advertise his record, A941, of "Beauty's Eyes," combined with Eugene Cowles' "Forgotten," more often sung as a bass solo. True to its tradition of giving



better value than Victor, Columbia offered both songs for 75 cents, while Victor, whose version of "Beauty's Eyes," appeared two months later, charged 60 cents in single-face. The supplement said Miller "has sung for the Columbia one of the most celebrated love-songs of the nineteenth century, and one which holds a high place in the list of the most popular songs ever written. . . . Coupled with 'Beauty's Eyes,' Mr. Miller gives us an interpretation of this favorite standard number by Eugene Cowles. . . . That Mr. Miller is precisely the artist to do it justice is amply proved in this splendid record."

From that time on, both as Reed Miller and as James Reed, the South Carolina tenor was as big a favorite on Columbia records as on Victor. He not only made many solos, but also sang duets with Grace Kerns, soprano; Frank Croxton, basso; Walter Lawrence, a 12-year-old boy soprano (the selection by this unusual combination was "Love Divine, All Love Excelling," from "The Daughter of Jairus"); and recorded one duet with his wife, a Mendelssohn composition, "The May Bell and the Flowers." This is a record I have never succeeded in turning up. Mr. and Mrs. Miller seldom recorded duets together, but some years later they made a few Emerson records of gospel hymns. One was No. 10271, "I Need Thee Every Hour" and "I Love to Tell the Story."

#### V Miller as a Quartet Member

The late Frank Croxton, that golden voiced basso from Paris, Ky., made his debut as a recording artist in 1911. By that time he had organized a mixed quartet, all of whom were accomplished soloists. Whatever scruples of modesty he may have had did not deter him from naming the ensemble the Frank Croxton Quartet.

The Quartet's photo appeared on the cover of the Edison record supplement for January, 1912, and its first record was announced in that issue. It was four-minute Amberol 884, "Flora's Holiday—A Song Cycle," composed by H. Lane Wilson. The cycle, written in old English style, was not of a nature to arouse much enthusiasm among Edison cylinder enthusiasts, most of whom probably found the music a bit "difficult."

However, Edison issued several other Frank Croxton Quartet records, of which three appeared on Blue Amberols: 1528, "Quartet from 'Rigoletto'"; 1545, "Abide With Me," and 1745, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee." The Quartet later made discs for several companies but not for Victor—which, incidentally, was one of the few for which Mrs. Miller never sang.

In 1914 Miller also became a member of the once world-famous Columbia Stellar Quartet, singing second tenor, or "lead," as it is called nowadays. He was not the original second tenor of this remarkable organization which specialized in sing-

ing without accompaniment. John Barnes Wells held that post for a couple of records and was succeeded by Henry Burr for one or two more. But the Quartet achieved its greatest success when the personnel became Charles Harrison, first tenor; Reed Miller, second; Andrea Sarto, baritone; and our old friend, Frank Croxton, bass. It continued to be a feature of the Columbia catalog until the early 1920's, but as Miller's concert and oratorio popularity increased he traveled a great deal and was sometimes unavailable for the quartet's recordings. When that happened other artists, among them Lewis James, took his place.

The year 1914 was also one in which Columbia allowed Miller to do some more ambitious recording work than he was usually associated with. In January, he was represented by a 12-inch disc, A5511, on which he gave some of the noble numbers from Mendelssohn's "Elijah." The first side contained the recitative, "Ye People Rend Your Hearts," and the aria, "If With All Your Hearts." On the other side he sang "Then Shall the Righteous Shine Forth." The supplement commented: "The two principal tenor solos from this most dramatic and beautiful of oratorios reveal Mr. Miller at his best—and his best is exceedingly good."

Columbia needed recordings of the Rigoletto Quartet and the Lucia Sextet in English to compete with the Purple Label versions which Victor had issued, and in October, 1915, on double-faced 12-inch record A5709, these two classics of operatic shouting were combined — again giving more for the money than Victor. The quartet was sung by Grace Kerns,

soprano; Mildred Potter, contralto (she died a month or so before the record was issued); Charles W. Harrison, tenor, and Albert Wiederhold, baritone. The same artists sang the sextet with the addition of Reed Miller and Frank Croxton. The supplement annotator waxed lyrical:

In this new popular-priced Columbia recording a wonderful opportunity awaits the thousands who recognize in these two selections the most inspired concerted compositions in all opera. . . . The great fact is the singing of them by Columbia artists of such merit that the resulting record can be compared favorably with the most expensive ones that money can buy, and yet sell at a popular price. The singers, selected from the long list of Columbia talent, have been trained specially to produce the perfect vocalization and stupendous finales of these operatic masterpieces. Their success can be delightfully heard in every home on this remarkable Columbia record.

In 1913, Miller had made two Edison Diamond Discs of opera arias in English. On 82031 he sang "Vesti la giubba" from "Pagliacci" and on 82041, the Siciliana from "Cavalleria Rusticana." They were short-lived, their masters probably having been destroyed in the disastrous December, 1914, fire at the Edison laboratories. He later became one of the Edison "tone test" artists.

As befitted a South Carolinian, Reed Miller was a remarkable interpreter of the Negro spiritual type of composition. One of his finest records was Edison Diamond Disc 80487, "By an' By," and "Go Down Moses," in which the Edison catalog statement that his voice was "perfectly rounded and tremendously powerful" is proved beyond doubt. Columbia and Victor also provided examples of his ability to sing music of the Negro type. In September, 1914, Columbia issued on A1558, his version of "Exhortation" (A Negro Sermon), combined with Croxton's singing of "Uncle Rome." These were described as:

Two standard Negro songs, perhaps the best and most characteristic of their kind that have ever so far been written. They are absolutely true to type, each presenting a distinct phase of the Negro character with a fidelity and clean-etched outline that is almost startling. In "Exhortation" Will Marion Cook has created the musical setting to a Negro sermon which, underneath its grotesque literary form, has the kind of common-sense religion that stands a man in good stead for every day in the week. In his musical investiture of the words Mr. Cook has risen to truly great heights of descriptive composition, and Mr. Miller — a Southerner himself with a thorough conception of the Negro character — has made a record that is intensely full of personality and meaning.

Victor delayed issuing its version of "Exhortation" until December, 1915, although the number, 17695, indicates it had originally been scheduled for publication around March or April. The B side was another so-called Negro sermon, "Dah's Gwinteb er Lan'slide," written by a South Carolina woman composer, Lily Strickland. The thought occurs that Victor missed a bet by not teaming Miller with another South Carolina singer, the contralto, Marguerite Dunlap, and having them sing some of Miss Strickland's compositions, such as the favorite "Mah Lin-



THE FRANK CROXTON QUARTETTE.  
FRANK CROXTON, bass; AGNES KIMBALL, soprano; NEVADA VAN DER VEER, contralto; REED MILLER, tenor.



REED MILLER (Stroking Victor Dog) and FREDERICK WHEELER photographed in 1917 in La Voice's Music and Art Shop, Plattsburg, N. Y.



A 1915 photograph of the Columbia Stellar Quartette. Left to right—CHARLES HARRISON, first tenor; REED MILLER, lead; ANDREA SARTO, baritone; FRANK CROXTON, bass.

dy Lou." Such an all-Carolina combination should have been a big favorite—at least in South Carolina!

Miller and Nevada Van der Veer were an extremely busy couple at this stage of their careers. The *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for November, 1914, remarked of Miller that "his repertoire is necessarily very extensive and includes much that it would be impossible for the average tenor to present creditably. But, with his conscientious, untiring study and his remarkable natural endowments, Mr. Miller has been able to gratify his ambition to become one of the foremost tenors of the country."

More information on Mr. and Mrs. Miller's musical progress is given in the *Phonograph Monthly* for November, 1916:

Reed Miller and Nevada Van der Veer (Mrs. Reed Miller) made a splendid impression on New England audiences during the course of a Chautauqua tour through Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine in the latter part of the summer and fall. Their itinerary also took them into New York State, where they appeared at Plattsburg and sang to the "rookies" encamped there in large numbers. Mr. Miller has been engaged for the "Messiah" performances of the New York Oratorio Society at Carnegie Hall, New York, and by the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, while Nevada Van der Veer is to sing with the New York Oratorio Society in its presentation of Mendelssohn's "Elijah."

For a "boy" and "girl" who had signalized their ninth and eighth birthdays only a short time before, the Millers were doing all right!

#### VI Duet Partnership With Fred Wheeler

As the photo of the Columbia Stellar Quartet taken in 1915 reveals, Reed Miller was a small, short man whose once abundant dark hair had begun to thin and threaten him with baldness by the time he reached that ninth birthday. But, regardless of loss of hair, he became ever busier.

Late in 1914, Miller, who had not

sung with Werrenrath for a considerable time, decided he needed a baritone duet partner, and Frederick Wheeler, the famous recording baritone, found himself in need of a tenor associate. Wheeler had been for almost a decade the partner of John Young, and under the assumed names of Harry Anthony (Young) and James F. Harrison (Wheeler) they had made hundreds of duet records. Their specialty was gospel hymns. But Young decided to sign an exclusive Edison contract, with a loophole that allowed him to sing on Victor records as a member of the American Quartet.

Young and Wheeler continued to sing together for Edison, but since the tenor's services were not available for duet work on other records, Wheeler's activities were curbed. Hence, the decision he and Miller made to join forces. They did not sing together on Edison records, but made the rounds of most of the other companies, especially Victor and Columbia. Occasionally they used their real names for duet work, but for the most part disguised themselves as James Reed and James F. Harrison.

The first Columbia duet by Reed and Harrison, No. A1682, appeared in March, 1915. It coupled their rendition of "Over the Hills to Mary" with a novelty number, "The Violin My Great-Grand-Daddy Made," sung by a vaudeville baritone, Henry Santrey. Their initial Victor record came out the following month—No. 17732, "The Little House Upon the Hill," combined with a Harry Von Tilzer hit, "When My Ship Comes In," by Albert Campbell and Henry Burr.

Reed and Harrison's harmonizing became immediately popular and remained so for almost three years. During the period in which their partnership flourished they toured to-

gether and made many visits to the stores of record dealers. An oddity occurred in the February, 1917, Victor supplement when their record, No. 18197, of "Just a Word of Sympathy," was listed among the new song hits as being sung by Reed/Harrison, but in the index at the back was credited to Miller and Wheeler.

#### VII Reed Miller's Last Years

American entry into the first World War probably resulted in ending the partnership of Reed Miller and Frederick Wheeler as well as somewhat impairing the demand for Miller as a recording soloist. His last Victor record under his own name, No. 18234, "Love Will Find the Way," appeared in April, 1917. The last Victor duet by Reed and Harrison, 18402, "Old Virginny Days," was issued in December, 1917. It was coupled with "Sometime You'll Remember," Miller's final Victor solo on which he once more appeared as James Reed. At the end of 1917, much of the Victor plant was converted to war manufacturing and with lessened record production the staff of artists was reduced.

"Sometime You'll Remember," also appeared in the December Columbia list, but under Miller's own name. In January, on A2412, he and Wheeler sang their final Columbia duet, "My Sunshine Jane." Miller's last Columbia solo, issued in June, 1918, was A2526, "Lafayette, We Hear You Calling." It seems likely that his association with the Columbia Stellar Quartet ended at this time, although no announcement of a change was made. The tenor also seems to have made no Edison records after 1918, but a few numbers which he had recorded earlier were issued subsequently.

The cause is obscure, but although Miller's career as a recording artist

(Continued on page 49)



## SPOONS FOR SALE

**Sterling Souvenir Spoons \$1.50 ea.** tax inc. Assortments sent on approval. State seal spoons \$2.50. Foreign & enamel spoons, \$2.50 to \$10. —L. & F. Schwarz, 1806 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa. d120882

**STERLING SOUVENIR** and unusual spoons, \$1.50 up. Approval selections upon request and reference. Four spoon lists a year, \$1. —Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa. my126351

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## REED MILLER

(Continued from page 33)

was not over, from the middle of 1918 until the time of his death he sang mostly for the smaller companies, especially Aeolian-Vocalion and Emerson, by whom he was employed fairly regularly. He also did a little singing for others, among them Gennett and Pathé.

The last Miller records I have been able to trace again bring the James Reed disguise into play. They are on the 35 cent Cameo brand. On S-308 "Reed" sings "The Palms" and "The Holy City." On 342 he sings a ballad, "River Shannon Moon," coupled with "When Will the Sun Shine for Me?" by Scott and Grey, who sound like Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw. Miller's friends say he never "went back" and his vocal powers were as great at the end of his career as at the beginning. That may be true, but as best I can judge through the execrable Cameo recording the tenor's tones had taken on an "old" sound and the renditions of the hymns seem tired and without spirit. However, there is no reason why Miller should have suffered any serious artistic decline at the age of 43.

The end came unexpectedly and dramatically for the sweet-voiced singer from South Carolina. Charles Harrison says Miller had taken the flu and his death came from a stroke suffered during a coughing spell. As already mentioned, it occurred in Christmas week of 1923. The March, 1924, issue of that famous recently discontinued, music magazine, *The Etude*, briefly mentioned his passing by saying:

## SPOONS WANTED

**WANTED:** Sterling souvenir teaspoons of Wisconsin cities. Place of interest of town in bowl. Not just the name.—Edward A. Thuriot, 2030 12th St., Racine, Wisconsin. mh3614

**WANTED:** Souvenir Teaspoons, any description. Send them postpaid will make immediate offer.—G. S. Shampianler, Box 123, Fresno, Calif. my3403

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**FLATWARE:** For Active, Inactive and Obsolete Sterling patterns. Write us your needs. Prompt replies.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania. my128041

**UNUSUAL SILVER,** modern and antique — Frederick T. Widmer, Jeweler, (est. 1844) 31 West Street, Boston, Mass. jly124001

## SILVER WANTED

**1847 ROGERS** Vintage silverware — Melus Cushing, 14426 Emerald Ave., Harvey, Illinois. je4671

**WANTED:** Certain pieces to Meriden Silver Tea Service, number 2024. What have you? — Crawford, 121 North Maple, Somerset, Kentucky mh1651

"Reed Miller, one of our best tenors in concert and oratorio, passed away at his home in New York on the afternoon of December 29. He was a native of Anderson, S. C., and had filled a number of leading church positions in New York."

But though gone, Reed Miller had not been removed out of memory. In 1938 the MacMillan Company issued a one-volume Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians, edited by Albert E. Wier. The editor apparently did not know Miller had died 15 years before, for there is no mention of the tenor's death in this brief sketch:

**MILLER, REED,** American tenor, born Anderson, S. C., Feb. 29, 1880; cornettist in the Spanish - American War and pupil of E. G. Powell. He made his concert debut in 1903 and sang with all the leading American orchestras and choral societies. His repertory included the standard oratorios and more than a hundred concert numbers.

Mrs. Miller also was mentioned, thus:

**VAN DER VEER, NEVADA,** contemporary American contralto, born at Springfield Center, N. Y., studied in Europe and was soloist with the New York Oratorio Society and the New York Symphony Orchestra.

I might also mention that most of Mrs. Miller's solo work for the phonograph consisted of singing Christian Science hymns.

If Reed Miller were still alive he would now be 78 years of age. He has been dead so long he now remains in memory only on the strength of his many fine records. Electric recording was unknown in his lifetime; radio was in its swaddling clothes when he died and television seemed a barely remote possibility. But a singer who is a fine artist in one generation could be equally good in another. Should Miller return to earth today, with the vocal equipment he had 50 years ago, there would be no doubt of his ability to do now what he did at the turn of the century — leave South Carolina with nothing in his pocket and carve a distinguished career for himself.

## CORRECTION

Sorry that we erred in our heading of Mr. Walsh's article last month. It should have read, as you probably have noticed, **JOHN J. KIMMEL, THE IRISH DUTCHMAN.**



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# The Original Radio Girl

## Vaughn De Leath

By JIM WALSH

### I. The Rival "First Ladies"

A few years before World War II, a chubby, sweet-faced girl from Virginia was one of the most popular singers on radio. Kate Smith's frequent renditions of "God Bless America" touched off so much patriotic fervor that her admirers dubbed her "The First Lady of the Air."

This gave offense to the admirers of an equally chubby, sweet-faced young woman from Illinois — known to millions of radio fans and record buyers as Vaughn De Leath. They argued that if anyone were entitled to be known as "The First Lady of the Air," Vaughn De Leath, "The Original Radio Girl," deserved that distinction. They recalled that Vaughn's was the first woman's voice ever broadcast on radio. She was also the first woman to announce and manage a radio station. Her voice was the first ever broadcast on a beam of light. In 1935 it was announced she had sung more than 15,000 songs in 2,000 broadcasts. A few years earlier an Edison record supplement had said she had "one of the sweetest voices that ever crooned a Southland melody or whispered a song of wistful love. Into her simple songs she puts her whole charming personality, known and loved by millions of radio listeners and record buyers." She had written more than 300 songs as well as many magazine articles and had made uncountable records. She was an aviation enthusiast, an "inventor" (along rather frivolous lines) and reputed one of the best trap shooters in the East. Surely, Vaughn De Leath's admirers maintained, it was she who was the First Lady of Radio.

Those days and that debate now seem remote. Kate Smith is still active as an entertainer, but her one-time rival has been dead half a generation. However, a fragrance yet clings to the memory of the gifted, great-hearted Vaughn De Leath that makes it both a pleasure and a debt of gratitude to tell the story of her too-short life.

### II Biographical Notes

Not a great deal of space is needed to relate the more important facts in the life of "the Original Radio Girl." The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Authors, Composers and Publishers described Vaughn De Leath as a "composer, author, pianist, singer, actress, radio and recording artist." She was born in Mount Pulaski, Illinois, September 26, 1896, and died in Buffalo, New York, May 28, 1943. After attending the high school in Pomona, California, she went to Mills

College in San Francisco for two years.

Miss De Leath began writing songs when she was eleven. Her first two compositions, "Glenwood Waltzes" and "In the Twilight," were published in 1912. She was a concert singer in her early teens and in January, 1920, became the first woman to give a broadcasting program, under the direction of Dr. Lee DeForest, in the now demolished New York World Tower building. Shortly afterward she was manager-director and chief entertainer of New York radio station WBT, housed in a piano factory. In 1939 she became one of the first artists to appear on television, then in an experimental stage.

The versatile Vaughn was in vaudeville several years. Her acting engagements included the role of the prima donna (her hefty physique inevitably suggested the vast proportions of the old time operatic singers!) in Lionel Barrymore's play, "Laugh, Clown, Laugh." Governor Alred of Texas presented her with a scroll for writing "Blue Bonnets" for the Texas Centennial Exposition. She was also an honorary member of the Oklahoma "Rangerettes." In 1921 she was employed by Irving Berlin's music publishing company and wrote the music of a song, "Drowsy Head," for which Berlin supplied the words. Her other songs include "Drive Safely," "Hi Yo Silver," "A Little Bit of Sunshine," "At Eventide," "Honey, I'se A-Waitin' Jes' fo' Yo," "Bye Low," "Ducklings on Parade,"

"I Wasn't Lying When I Said I Love You," "If It Hadn't Been For You," "Love Is a Song," "My Lover Comes A-Riding," "Rosemary for Remembrance," "The Gingerbread Brigade" and "The Madonna's Lullaby."

Although the foregoing didn't take long in the telling, it points, in bare outline, to a wide variety of achievement by the gifted lady in her fewer than 47 years.

### III. A Magazine Interview

In September, 1930, The Delineator published an article, "Bagging Radio Lions," by a woman interviewer, Vera Connolly. That article is interesting to collectors of old-time records, because among those whom Miss Connolly interviewed were Jessica Dragonette, Harry Reser, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare and Vaughn De Leath. Her account of a visit to Miss De Leath provides some valuable information concerning that favorite pioneer recording artist.

Here are the more important parts of the interview with Miss De Leath:

My next fascinating adventure . . . was a luncheon party at the home of famous Vaughn De Leath, the pioneer radio singer, whose beautiful contralto voice is heard every Monday evening in the Firestone program. Miss De Leath has an enormous following. First, she is a distinguished artist. Second, she is warm, sincere and unspooled; qualtles her listeners feel. Third, she has helped make radio history.

She is the "original radio girl"—the first American woman ever to broadcast. She began ten years ago, just for fun, at the invitation of Dr. Lee de Forest, who was then experimenting with wireless in the World tower. She sang, there in his cluttered laboratory. Her audience consisted of lonely wireless operators at sea. But so fascinated was she by the experience, and the grateful letters that came pouring in from the high seas, that she continued to sing. Then Dr. de Forest's experiments resulted in his inventing the vacuum tube. Wireless became "radio," radio spread like wild-fire. And Vaughn De Leath became famous with it. Despite her success, Miss De Leath has never grown egotistical. She remembers her early struggles as a western girl in New York. She is happily married to Livingston Geer, a portrait painter of note, and their New York apartment is charming.

It was in this apartment that the luncheon party was held. Dr. Lee de Forest was the guest of honor. We were served in Miss De Leath's Italian dining-room, on a lovely old table spread with filet lace. Then we returned to the living-room fireside. Here Dr. de Forest settled down on a divan by the fireplace. Miss De Leath seated herself opposite him, and the two relived for us, humorously, the struggles of those early days of wireless experimentation. . . .

"Speaking of present day radio," I asked Dr. de Forest, "will television be a practical reality in the near future? In our homes?"

The inventor of radio gave a quick nod. "Oh, yes. In five years, I would say."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

"One last question, Miss De Leath," I pleaded, as we prepared to depart. "You were the forerunner of all the present day crooners. How did you happen to choose crooning when you began broadcasting?"

A sudden gust of understanding laughter swept over everyone in the room—except me. One guest turned to me, and explained:

"Even today a too loud, harsh tone can ruin a transmission. In those days it could shatter a tube! Tubes were very costly. So she crooned, to save the tubes. And crooning became the fad. Isn't that right, Vaughn?"

Vaughn De Leath laughed. "It's not far wrong," she replied. "I do not croon today, you notice."

I recall reading another interview with Vaughn De Leath in which she described herself as a "typical small town girl at heart, whose idea of a good time is a party with ice cream, cake and lemonade." She expressed a dislike for night clubs and "big parties."

Unfortunately, there is a sad sequel to the reference about the singer's being happily married. On September 21, 1934, the Bridgeport (Connecticut) Post published the following under the Stamford date line:

Leonore Von der Leath, known professionally on the radio and stage as Vaughn De Leath, today instituted suit for divorce from Leon Geer of Hasbrook Heights, N. J. . . . The suit will be returnable in Superior Court, Bridgeport, Oct. 2, and will be in the singer's married name.

Miss De Leath, known as the "Original Radio Girl," and heard over a national network, charges "intolerable cruelty between January and September, 1931." She will also ask a return of her maiden name. The singer and Geer were married May 3, 1924, the papers set forth.

For the past three years Miss De Leath has lived in Easton, her home being known as "The Hitching Post."

Perhaps you have noticed the Delineator interview gives Geer's first name as Livingston and the newspaper article as Leon. Perhaps he had both names. Ray Walker, the noted popular song writer, who worked with Miss De Leath at her radio station, says he understands that after her divorce from Geer, she was married to Irving Rose, now a movie producer in California. A New York Herald Tribune death notice, to be quoted later, gives the name as Irwin Rosenbloom, and describes him as a Pittsburgh musician. The second marriage took place in 1936.

#### IV. Start of Recording Career

The singer's professional name of Vaugh De Leath obviously was a modification of her family name, Vonderleath. By changing "Von" to "Vaughn," "der" to "De" and using "leath" as a separate syllable, she arrived at a name with a suggestion of French influence, as against the unmistakably Germanic sound of Vonderleath.

Leonore Vonderleath had already adopted Vaughn De Leath as her working name when she made her first record. The song was "I Love the Land of Old Black Joe," and it appeared in the October, 1920, Edison supplement as Blue Amberol 4091. The original recording was made on a Diamond Disc, then dubbed to the cylinder. For some reason—perhaps because of a technical defect in recording—Mr. Edison didn't approve it for sale on the disc. He frequently



VAUGHN DE LEATH (1896-1943).

The first woman to sing on radio. Shown here in an early experimental television program with "Young Tarzan."

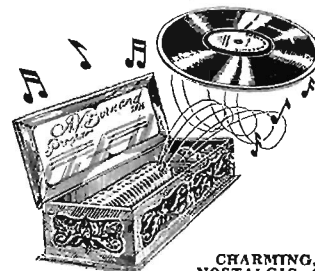
rejected for Diamond Discs selections that were considered good enough to go on the cylinders.

Anyone familiar with Vaughn De Leath's other recordings will be surprised and perhaps shocked on hearing the Blue Amberol. Instead of the chesty contralto tones that were so popular in later years . . . tones deliberately assumed, as we have seen, to avoid blasting out the tubes in pioneer radio stations—the voice is a high, pure soprano.

An even better example of this unexpected sound may be found in Columbia 1203D, on which the Singing Sophomores (the Revelers) harmonize "When Honey Sings an Old-Time Song." Miss De Leath impersonates "Honey" and sings snatches of several antique ballads in a sweet soprano. The record has "My Blue Heaven" on its other side, but, like Vaughn's own Edison record of that song, the Sophomore's version was almost overlooked in the public's mad rush to acquire Gene Austin's history-making Victor interpretation.

After that one trial, half a dozen years came and went before Vaughn De Leath made another Edison appearance. However, she did considerable singing in the early 1920's for other companies, and seems to have been exclusive to OkeH for two or

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three years ending in 1925. Her first OkeH, "For Somebody Else" and "Vamping Rose," No. 4303, came out in 1921. Many of the titles of the De Leath solos in the 1923 OkeH catalog are amusing and short on dignity. They include "Can't Feel Jolly Blues," "I Ain't Gonna Be Nobody's Fool," "I'm a Dog-gone Struttin' Fool," "I've Got the Blues But I'm Just Too Mean to Cry" and "Maybe You Think You're Fooling Baby." On No. 4439 she sings "Dozing," coupled with an almost unknown solo version of "On a Little Side Street," by Ada Jones — certainly one of the last records Ada ever made. Two of Miss De Leath's 1922 OkeHs were duets with Billy Jones — "Sweet Lady" and "When Francis Dances With Me."

Her first Gennett record, 4095, "I'm Just Wild About Harry" (coupled with "Why Should I Cry Over You?" by Arthur Fields) came out in 1922. I have a Bell record by her, No. P182, of "Where the Bamboo Babies Grow" and "Lovin' Sam, the Sheik of Alabam'." Bell, I believe, was a disguise for Cameo. It is of about this same period.

By 1925, Vaughn De Leath had resumed free-lancing and was making records for most of the smaller companies under the name of Gloria Geer — Geer being, of course, her married name at that time. This seems to have been the only alternate name she used to a great extent, but I have a Harmony record, 240-H, on which she is called Angelina Marco. She sings "I'm Leaving You" and a lament for the death of Rudolph Valentino, "There's a New Star in Heaven Tonight."

#### V. Peak of Recording Career

The charming comedienne, who infused so much warmth and wholesome friendliness into her recordings, achieved her greatest popularity and did her best work after she began to sing for the four leading companies of the mid-1920's — Victor, Columbia, Brunswick and Edison.

Columbia came first. Early in 1925 she made several acoustically recorded numbers for Columbia, and one by the electric process. Recorded by the horn method were 271D, "Nobody Knows What a Red-Head Mama Can Do" and "I Ain't Got Nobody to Love" and 320D, "Somebody Like You" and "Polly of Hollywood." No. 361D, "Ukelele Lady" and "Banana Oil," was electric. A year or so later Columbia paired her with Irving Kaufman (calling himself Frank Harris) for a series of sentimental duets and comic sketches. She also made duets for Columbia with Franklyn Baur and Ed Smalle. When 361D was issued in the mid-month, 1925, supplement, the copy writer said: "Vaughn De Leath knows how to sing a comedy song so that all the humor registers. This record, with ukulele and violin accompaniment, is no exception."

The popular young lady's Edison reappearance was next. Her first Diamond Disc to be issued was 51874, "Hello, Bluebird," and "I'm Tellin' the Birds — Tellin' the Bees — How I Love You." It appeared with no

comment, but a smiling photograph of Miss De Leath was included.

A few months later, the Edison supplement for July, 1927, contained this "plug" on the back cover:

If you want to hear a truly delightful record, overflowing with joy, listen to Vaughn De Leath sing "The Whisper Song" — No. 52018. Vaughn puts her whole personality into her recorded voice, and, believe us, it's a charming personality. Since her first release, "Hello, Bluebird," she has won thousands of loyal friends among Edison owners, and many of them have started collections of her records. Seven have now been released, including two this month. There are more to come, and they make a fine little library of love and happiness. Start yours now with "The Whisper Song."

"The Whisper Song" is every bit as charming as the Edison writer said. It is full of amusing effects and at one point Miss De Leath becomes so amused she laughs — apparently without premeditation. A former Edison official told me the company wanted to issue De Leath records for a considerable time before she was signed up. He said the record business had been declining so badly the Edison people didn't feel inclined to pay the high fee Miss De Leath's agent demanded, but her popularity on radio and other records became so great, "they decided she was worth it, after all."

The Edison records were her best and will be discussed in more detail a little later. Meanwhile, Vaughn made her Brunswick debut in the March, 1927, supplement, with "Crazy Words — Crazy Tune" and "Since I Found You."

That initial Brunswick by the soprano turned contralto was listed in the supplement without any sort of "send-off." Nor did her first Victor record, in the July, 1927, list, receive

a fanfare. It was 20600, "Song of the Wanderer," coupled with "Rock Me To Sleep in an Old Rocking Chair," by the baritone, Elliott Shaw, now living in retirement at Sharon, Conn. The annotator merely said, "Vaughn De Leath has been making a name for herself over the radio."

In the September list the supplement writer paid her what sounds like a backhanded compliment. In describing No. 20664, on which she sang "Kentucky Babe" and "Mighty Lak' a Rose," he described her performance as "an almost perfect example of what the ordinary non-musical music lover means by 'good singing.'"

Victor continued to issue De Leath records at intervals and they sold well, but her list for the industry's top company was not so large as for some of the others. However, it contained some interesting titles, notably a tribute to Charles A. Lindbergh because of his flight to France, "Like an Angel You Flew Into Everyone's Heart." She and Ed Smalle did a duet version of "Together, We Two."

Certainly, the most unusual Victor record by Vaughn De Leath is 19740. Both sides are devoted to a "Ukulele Lesson." Vaughn gives the spoken instructions and sings, while May Singhi Breen plays the ukulele, with her husband, the late Peter De Rose, famous composer of "Deep Purple" and other popular song classics, at the piano.

Miss De Leath actually became a Victor Red Seal artist! When an album of Stephen Foster Melodies was recorded under Nat Shilkret's direction, she sang, or recited, "The Village Maiden" and took part in other numbers. She made no Victor records after 1930, when the "platter" business seemed ready to topple, and all her numbers had been discontinued by the time the drastically reduced 1933 catalog appeared. However, she afterwards sang some children's songs for Victor's lower priced Bluebird label. After Edison went out of the record business in the autumn of 1929, most of Vaughn's recording was done for the cheaper labels.

#### VI. More About Her Edisons

I have said that Vaughn De Leath's Edison Diamond Discs were the best records she made. That is true for several reasons. Edison recording was better than any other of its day; the records had a longer playing time and gave the artist more opportunity to develop the possibilities in a song; and most of the De Leath records had brilliant piano accompaniments that were as attractive as her singing. The lady had a gift for selecting excellent accompanists. They included Muriel Pollock, Stuart Ross and Bill Regis. Ross' work in "Everything's Made for Love" and Regis' in "Yep! Long About June!" is especially fine.

Miss De Leath provided some unusual fare for the dwindling coterie of Edison loyalists at that period when the company's life was running out. On No. 52129, "Christmas in Other Lands," she sang Christmas songs of ancient Judea, England,



Cover of an Edison supplement featuring Vaughn De Leath, "the radio girl."



France, Spain, Italy, Germany and the United States — all in the language of the country mentioned. On 52131 she rendered "The Night Before Christmas," to an incidental piano background by Hanna Van Vollenhoven, who had set Clement C. Moore's beloved old poem to music.

But from a historical standpoint, the most fascinating Diamond Disc by Vaughn De Leath is 52044, "It's a Million to One You're in Love." This was recorded on the day New York held its wild celebration honoring Lindbergh's return from France. Before singing she gives a spoken introduction in which she says she has just been up on the roof of the Edison building (at 79 Fifth Avenue) "watching the big Lindy parade" and is still excited over it. This intimate, warm-hearted touch was typical of Vaughn De Leath's vibrant personality.

Finally, Miss De Leath had the privilege of making the last Diamond Disc ever issued. The master number printed on the label shows it was not the last recorded. It had been held in the files for several months before being placed on the market, but it has the final catalog number assigned to any Edison disc—52651. On one side she sang "Oh Susanna" and on the other her own composition, "Honey, I'se a Longin' Jes fo' Yo'."

A few De Leath records also were issued on the Edison electric needle-cut discs that were on the market less than three months in 1929. They included 14002, "I Got a 'Code' in My 'Doze'" and "I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling"; 11037, the same titles as Diamond Disc 52651; and 14025, "Reaching for Someone and Not Finding Anyone There" and "Honey." She likewise sang a good many vocal refrains for both Diamond Disc and Edison needle-cut dance records, sometimes being identified only as "The Radio Girl." The other companies also used her as a dance tune "plugger." On Brunswick, for instance, she did some singing with Ben Bernie's Orchestra.

#### VII. A Letter from Vaughn De Leath

A few years before her death, but after her recording career had ended, I wrote to Miss De Leath and told her of the pleasure her records had given me. My letter was suggested by an article she had written for Radio Guide, saying many old-time radio artists whose popularity had declined were returning to favor. She promptly replied:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Your letter was an elixir! After being buffeted about by this network and that, and hearing various bits of unsound propaganda about myself, I am finding a certain contentment in a little commercial on WMCA for Battle Creek Foods. Strange are the exigencies of fate! While I may not be pleased at playing small time (feeling that I still have something to give the larger networks) I enjoy my tri-weekly programs and yet I am a bit curious as to what the future may hold.

May I vouch the suggestion that you write as one older than your actual years? It seems strange that a chap of your youth should be writing about old-timers. One might rather expect such a treatise from an older man writing his memoirs!



VAUGHN DE LEATH, Song Writer,  
Recording Artist and Radio Star

—Photo courtesy the American Society  
of Authors, Composers and Publishers

Recording was one of the most fascinating experiences I have ever had. Alas!—that I should have to speak of it in the past tense. I haven't made a record in over two years.

So you want a few details about my recording career? There isn't an awful lot to tell, except that at one time or another I probably did a number for each of the companies. You were right, "The Land of Old Black Joe" was the first record I ever made. As you know, it was for Edison, and there was a lapse . . . before I ever made any more for them. You see, I made a test for Okeh records and they immediately gave me an exclusive contract which lasted for several years. It was after that that I made discs for Edison again, Victor, Columbia, etc.

Edison seemed to unload their recording department about the time that the industry itself collapsed, although I have heard that "The Old Man" carried on the recording division at a considerable loss for many years.

I am sorry that you have been unable to complete your collection of my Diamond Disc recordings. I have some in my attic in the country. I do not know how complete it is (my collection), but it just occurred to me that the records I do have might be safer in your hands than in mine as a "permanent exhibit," and if you will let me know which numbers you are lacking, I will look them over some time when I am out there. I know of no one else to whom I would entrust them, for as you know they are unobtainable. . .

Sincerely, VAUGHN DE LEATH.

Naturally, I replied to Miss De Leath, saying I would be delighted to have any of her Edison records she would care to send me and in due course half a dozen or more arrived. More than a year later she wrote to ask if I could give her the name and address of a Bridgeport man who, she had heard, had developed a new type of dahlia which he had named the Vaughn De Leath. I was able to tell her that the dahlia had been developed by an accomplished horticulturist, the father of my old friend, William H. Selt-sam, founder of the International Record Collectors Club. I believe she obtained cuttings from the elder Selt-sam.

#### Death of Vaughn De Leath

I am not certain whether I had any further correspondence with Vaughn De Leath, but I heard she

had become associated with a radio station in Buffalo, N. Y. Then, while I was reading the New York Herald Tribune for Sunday, May 30, 1943, I was saddened to learn of her death. A brief Associated Press dispatch, dated May 28, from Buffalo, said: "Vaughn De Leath, singer and composer, sometimes known as The First Lady of Radio, died Friday after a long illness caused by uremic poisoning and a heart condition. She was 42 years old." (She was actually 46.)

The Herald-Tribune provided some supplementary information, from which I shall quote:

Miss De Leath was making phonograph records in 1920 when she was invited by Dr. Lee De Forest to sing over his wireless telephony station at 40th street and Broadway, New York. There was no piano or other musical instrument in the studio when she stepped to the microphone to sing "Swanee River" and became the first woman whose singing voice was heard on the air.

At Mills College in San Francisco, Miss De Leath had surprised her instructors with a three-range voice, from contralto to soprano, and they had permitted her to develop it. Singing into the imperfect microphones of the experimental period of radio, she was compelled to use soft, dulcet tones, lest a high note shatter a transmitter tube. Thus, Miss De Leath was credited with originating the "crooning" style of singing. . . Later, when crooning fell into disfavor with some radio fans, Miss De Leath denied that she was a crooner, and identified herself as a "qualtioniste." She described her voice as a "definite quality of vocal tone, full, but modulated and low pitched, particularly adapted to microphone singing."

After radio left the experimental stage, she sang over station WDJ at Roselle Park, N. J., and was one of the radio artists of the day who helped to open WJZ in Newark as well as WHN and WEA.

She was made director and chief announcer of the old Shipowners station WDT, on West 23rd street, and remained with the station until it was shut down at the time the Shipowners closed their radio jobbing department.

She was then signed by Belasco for the part of Signora Calvaro, an opera singer, a light comedy role in the play, "Laugh, Clown, Laugh," which ran for seven months in New York in 1923. She also appeared in Owen Davis' farce, "Easy Come, Easy Go," in 1925, but she soon returned to radio and appeared on many programs, several with commercial sponsors, over a dozen years or more.

She wrote more than 500 songs. . . (and) had broadcast over WBEN, Buffalo, from August, 1942, until shortly before her death. . .

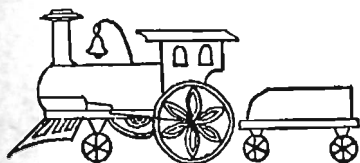
Shortly before Vaughn De Leath died, I had begun my Walsh's Wax Works program over WDBJ in Roanoke, Va. On June 27 I gave a Vaughn De Leath Memorial Program, which was written up by Nick Kenny in his department in the New York Sunday Mirror.

About the same time, The Billboard carried the following news story from Bridgeport:

"According to the terms of a will filed in Probate Court here this week, Vaughn De Leath ("First Lady of Radio") named her sister, Alma Cunningham, of Los Angeles, as her sole beneficiary.

"She also provided for the establishment of a 'Radio House' at Mount Pulaski, Ill., as a museum for her effects and for information on early

(Continued on page 37)



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14. Creedmoor. Same as above but base has been repaired. \$25.00
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16. Jolly Nigger Bank. "Bow Tie." Very good condition. \$25.00
17. Jolly Nigger. Same as above, but bottom plate missing. \$22.00
18. Eagle Bank. "Old feeds young." Left wing missing, otherwise very good. \$12.50
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- FOOTBALL BANK (Man Kicks Coin In House)
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- BRITISH LION (Tin)
- TOAD IN DEN (Tin)
- PERFECTION REGISTERING BANK

### PISTOLS:

- CAMERA
- DOLPHIN TORPEDO
- SHOOTER
- HUMPTY DUMPTY (3 heads)
- SAILING SHIP
- TWO DOGS ON BENCH
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Also want Cast Iron horse drawn carriages, and  
mated bell ringing pull toys, old toy automobiles  
and old catalogs showing banks and toy pistols

**F. H. GRIFFITH**  
HARRIS PUMP & SUPPLY CO.

Pittsburgh 3, Pennsylvania u.

### FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Iron bank and toy parts.  
Coin traps 25c, broken banks and toys  
wanted.—Kurtz Antiques, Sanatoga, Pa.  
je6806

HAVE nice selection of still banks and  
few mechanicals. Please enclose stamp  
for list.—A. Hotze, 9326 McKenzie Rd.,  
Affton 23, Mo. au6407

### FAVORITE PIONEER

(Continued from Page 33)

radio history. Also stipulated that  
income from her membership in  
ASCAP be known as the 'Vaughn  
De Leath Fund' and loans be made  
to members in distress without inter-  
est. No estimate of the current value  
of her property was announced."

The generous provisions of that  
will are characteristic of the glowing  
personality of Vaughn De Leath. I  
have no information as to whether  
the Radio House was established at  
Mount Pulaski or whether, if it was,  
it is still in operation. Perhaps some  
HOBBIES reader from Mount Pu-  
laski can enlighten us. But no mu-  
seum is needed to keep the memory  
of Vaughn De Leath ever green. Her  
records attest that she was too sweet  
a woman and too fine an artist ever  
to be forgotten.

As good almost kill a man as  
kill a good book; who kills a man  
kills a reasonable creature, God's  
image, but he who destroys a  
good book kills reason itself.

—John Milton

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Billy Williams

"The Man in the Velvet Suit"

By JIM WALSH

### I. Those Amazing Australians

Throughout the phonograph's history there have been periods when one comedian or ballad singer has dominated the popular record scene.

The 1890's were the era of Len Spencer. From 1900 to 1905 the outstanding performers probably were

Harry Macdonough and the Haydn Quartet. From 1905 to 1910 Ada Jones created more interest than any other singer. The dominating figure from 1910 to 1920 unquestionably was Billy Murray, although he received worthy opposition from such friendly competitors as Collins and Harlan, Cal Stewart and the Peerless Quartet. Henry Burr's sentimental songs may have been the foremost attraction from 1920 to 1925. From 1925 to 1930, Gene Austin led in sentiment, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare in comedy and Vernon Dalhart—probably the largest seller of that period—in hill-billy numbers. The years from 1930 to 1940 were a time of small record sales, but they were also unmistakably the age of Bing Crosby. It is harder to find a dominating figure from 1940 to 1950, excluding the dance bands which accounted for a large percentage of the sales totals, but probably Frank Sinatra is the best choice. More recently there have been Frankie Laine, Johnnie Ray, Elvis Presley and Pat Boone.

Only American artists and recordings are referred to in the foregoing paragraph, but if we look across the Atlantic we find that, remarkable as the achievements of these Yankee performers were, in some respects they were surpassed by two Australian-born singers who came to England and made careers. No American has equaled Peter Dawson's achievement as a popular recording artist for more than 50 years, beginning in 1904. And none of our compatriots has ever towered over his country's recording scene so completely as did another Australian the music hall comedian, Billy Williams, from 1907 until his death in 1915. By compar-

ison, the furor caused by Elvis Presley during the past year has been mild, even though the existence of a much larger number of record players has caused Presley's nasal "singing" and git-tar twanging to sell a larger number of records as just another proof of how mass taste has deteriorated.

But although Billy Williams blanketed his "area of operations" more completely than any other singer had done before or has done since, the man himself has become, with the lapse of 43 years since his passing, a remote and shadowy figure about whom it is hard to glean information. Perhaps one way of beginning this biographical tribute, before trying to tell who he was, is to tell what he was not.

Billy Williams has been a popular name for phonograph singers. I know of at least three who have used it, and it may not have been the legal name of any. However, the man about whom I am writing certainly was not the still living American Negro singer of popular songs. Neither was he a long-gone comedian who called himself Billy Williams, specialized in impersonating aged Negroes and assisted Len Spencer and Dan W. Quinn in making minstrel cylinders for the U.S. Record Company at Newark, New Jersey, in the early 1890's. Instead, as I have already said, he was a native of Australia, a star of the English music halls, and his real name appears to have been William Banks. At any rate, it wasn't Billy Williams.

### II. A Brief Biographical Sketch

The nearest approach to a biographical sketch of Billy Williams I have been able to find is contained in a

Left to right

A January, 1912, advertisement of the English branch of the Columbia Phonograph Company, boasting of having Billy Williams records out earlier than competing firms.

An October, 1912, Columbia ad., showing Billy Williams, "The Man In The Velvet Suit," in a characteristic music hall pose.

In March, 1911, The "Twins" record company, which soon afterwards combined with Zon-O-Phone, advertised a new "Boom" in the records of Billy Williams, who had just returned from a tour of his native Australia.

**Columbia-Rena Records**

**OUT FIRST—As Usual!!!**

10 inch 16. 6d.

NOW, Mr. Dealer, here's another big opportunity of doing big business. We put all our factory facilities into the rapid production of these new Billy Williams Records, with the result, we fully believe, that we are roughly **THREE WEEKS AHEAD** of any other maker! So you have that time to get in all the business without fear of competition or wait. If the public wants Billy Williams NEWEST titles they must have Columbia-Rena. You know they will. **HAVE BILLY WILLIAMS**, so there's your opportunity.

**THREE Sparkling New Records by BILLY WILLIAMS**

Which is better to **SELL** the Records that are **READY**, or wait while others make them? You know best, but there's an old saying that a pound or even in the pocket is worth a hundred on the promise. So order all you can of Billy Williams on Columbia-Rena, and watch the man who is waiting for the other makes to come along, looking sick. We'll have "Dealer's Right."

**ABSOLUTELY FIRST—AS USUAL!**  
And This Time Nearly **THREE WEEKS AHEAD!**

PLENTY OF ADVERTISING MATTER READY WRITE FOR A SUPPLY  
COLUMBIA-RENA RECORDS LTD. GENERAL CITY ROAD LONDON E.C.

## "THE BEST—AS USUAL"

YES THREE **Columbia-Rena Records** NEW ONES!!

HAVE your chance again! Once more COLUMBIA-RENA brings the band with a new batch of some new Billy Williams' records. **THE BEST—AS USUAL**, and **READY TO GO!** You know what that means with NEW records!

## Billy Williams

Here they are, on COLUMBIA-RENA. Remember that, and while you are waiting, get the most dealer who will trade for your records because the public must have Columbia-Rena, and he won't get them! Conclude, hence that Billy is at his best on Columbia-Rena.

**COLUMBIA-RENA RECORDS**  
**BILLY WILLIAMS' LATEST**

16011	16012	16013	16014	16015
16016	16017	16018	16019	16020
16021	16022	16023	16024	16025
16026	16027	16028	16029	16030

10 inch — Price 2s. 6d.

**WIRE YOUR FACTOR**  
**YOUR ORDER TO DAY**

**The Boom in Billy Williams**

**"The Man in the Velvet Suit"**

ANTICIPATING in time the boom which was bound to follow the return of the famous Comedian from Australia, we at once set out to make all his new songs for "Twins"—the record the public will love.

The following titles will be ready early in March

16011 Sing me an Irish Song	16012 I'll love you my heart's glad
16013 Billy Williams	16014 I don't want a Girl for Nothing
16015 Here we are again	16016 Oh, my love, my love
16017 Let's have a song upon the Grammer	16018 When Father passed the parlour
16019 You found me	16020 I'm the man that saved Flanagan

You bet they are the best they're

**On "Twins"**

2/6

book, "Music Hall Parade," written by a British authority on old-time popular entertainment, M. Willson Disher. It is worth quoting to set the stage for my own research, although I think Mr. Disher exaggerates the degree to which Williams nowadays is "forgotten":

Is Billy Williams remembered? Although none of those who once shouted his name from gallery, pit, circle or "faux" will forget him, he has no share in the legendary fame that makes some of our idols loved even by those who never saw them. Yet he was among the very few who could whip an audience to enthusiastic frenzy. I remember a Bank Holiday performance when he was still being called for after he had sung song after song. He had to leave, but the shouting and the tumult would not die. No other turn could hope for a hearing in that din. The management put on a prolonged display of living statuary. Pose after pose of chalk-white figures invited our admiration. Instead we all went on shouting "Bil-lee Wilyums, Bil-lee Wilyums!" just to relieve our feelings, although we knew he had gone. Soon he had gone beyond all earthly recall. He died in the spring of 1915 at Shoreham.

Turn on one of his gramophone records and you will find that infectious gaiety is still a living thing when his chuckle comes out of the disc. He was one of the first to collect a gramophone following, for he had that knack of putting his whole soul into the recording which makes you feel the singer must be inside the box. "Why Can't We Have the Sea in London?" and "Let's All Go Mad" project into present and future that blithe irrepressible spirit of the past. There was nothing much to look at in his turn—merely a curly-headed, sturdily-built young man, rapidly swaggering up and down by the side of the footlights, with flapping jacket to show the bright lining of his dark blue-green velvet jacket. He was called "The Man in the Velvet Suit." That was all he employed, unless you count white spats, flowing tie, and a button-hole, by way of costume or make-up.

According to Charles Wilmott's biographical sketch of him in the "Album of Billy Williams' Popular Songs," he was born in Melbourne in 1877. "The love of sport which was in later years to prove so expensive to him found early development," it is stated here. He entered a racing stable at Caulfield, and then became a boundary rider at a squatter station. His next experience of the turf was as a golf instructor, "an epoch the brevity of which was owing not so much to ignorance or want of facility in the language essential to the game as to the fact that his brothers, Dick and Rowley Banks, were by way of becoming professional champions of the Antipodes."

He joined a small variety company in 1895, and traveled the back country, "playing in comedy, tragedy, vaudeville, and barns or anything else big enough to hold paying audiences which were principally composed of miners and roughriders, whose disapproval of anything mean or villainous in the entertainment invariably made good for the gunpowder trade." This led to a pantomime engagement and then to parts in musical comedy. In 1900 he started afresh in London as assistant-manager of the Marylebone Music Hall. There he made his first public appearance in England, and began to reveal his way of inspiring song writers and composers to happy examples of "the wit of the wash-tub." At least one of his songs, "John, Go And Put Your Trousers On," was written and composed by himself, and in several others he took a hand. His spirit of cheerful nonsense is in them all.

### III. Billy Williams Begins Recording

Although Willson Disher had known and admired Billy Williams, somehow I don't feel that what he wrote brings us as close to "The Man in the Velvet Suit," as we should like. Perhaps I can make the approach a bit more warm and human by quoting the reminiscences of a couple of other men who were associated with the comedian in a business way—friends who liked him as a man and admired him as an artist. Meantime, we may trace the beginning of Williams' career as Great Britain's all-time most sensational performer for the phonograph.

There is no doubt that Billy Williams' first records were two-minute Edison Standard cylinders. Although his later fame was largely that as a singer of his own fresh and original compositions or of material written specially for him, in the beginning he recorded parodies of several currently popular songs.

## 12" Hi-Fi 33 1/3 RECORD of 26 WALTZ MELODIES from Rare Old MUSIC BOXES



HEAR—Skater's Waltz, Merry Widow, Invitation to the Dance, Blue Danube, After the Ball, A Sunday Afternoon, Treasure Waltz, etc. faithfully recorded from 6 finest old MUSIC BOXES in the world-famous BORNAND collection—another treat for those who have already enjoyed our CHRISTMAS MUSIC BOX RECORD, and have requested more.

\$3.95 ea. Postpaid

H. BORNAND MUSIC BOX CO.

Est. 1823

139 4th Ave. (Pe. 8-1506) Pelham, N. Y.  
Free lists other recordings.

MUSIC BOXES: Restored, Bought, Sold.  
myo

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS

of GREAT SINGERS on  
ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD, ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single-faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS (such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G. & T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla,

New York

tdx

## 18th SEASON DIXIE RECORD CLUB 1635 duPont Building Miami (32), Florida

OCCASIONAL RECORD AUCTIONS - Operatic & Concert VOCAL Selections by Great Singers of the Past and Present. Rareties of early vintage to recent cutouts. The bidder makes to price. List of realized prices sent to each bidder after the sale. Write for lists. tfo

## ANTIQUE MUSIC BOXES

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EXPERT REPAIRING

FINE MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

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Member Musical Box Society—Int. tfo

"F. R. P."

## Famous Records of The Past 2060 1st Ave., New York, N.Y. Jack L. Caidin

Re-issues and re-recordings or rare and unusual phonograph records. Operatic, Theatrical, Political, Instrumental. The finest in quality and true reproduction. 10" LP—\$2.98. 12" LP—\$3.98. Tax and postage prepaid. Also original records.

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## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW ESPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of music boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.  
Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island tfo



However, his first cylinder was of one of the songs with which his name is most intimately associated today and he is credited with writing himself. The record, No. 13539, was issued in January 1907, but somehow escaped being reviewed by the *Talking Machine News*. It was "John, John, Go and Put Your Trousers On" (some labels give it as "John, Go and Put Your Trousers On" or merely, "John, Put Your Trousers On") and the enthusiasm it generated caused some less admiring souls to fear its vogue would last forever. The title

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: A two horn antique phonograph. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. my3671

### SHEET MUSIC

BACK POPULAR Sheet Music to 1850. Catalog 15c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. je126921

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list. — Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. je3253

### ORGAN FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Electrified Reed organ, in family 75 years. Black walnut, beautifully carved, 70" high, 45" wide, 22" deep. Excellent condition.—Mrs. Lillian Samson, 2223 Goldenrod Street, Sarasota, Florida. my3215

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the *Talking Machine World* from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as *The Edison Phonograph* (and *Amberola*) (Monthly), *Dia*, *Points*, the *Columbia Record* and the *Voice of the Victor*. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

WANTED: Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or centre start.—Alda Favia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

WANTED: JOLSON MATERIAL. — Dick Bonesteel, 1807 42nd No., Seattle, Washington. o12046

WANTED: Cornet, trombone and Providence band records. Buy or swap. — Steve Gilman, Jamestown, R. I. my1021

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

GOLDEN-AGE and cut-out vocals, personality discs, band, orchestral and instrumental records, catalogs, books and photos. Write for lists to—Ross, Court & Co., 2098 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. Canada. jly3084

became a catch phrase just as "Yes, We Have No Bananas" (a much better song) did half a generation later.

After reading about the "John" song for many years, I heard it for the first time a couple of years ago when Allen Debus sent me a British disc pressing of it, and I was sadly disappointed. The tune is banal, although incorporating a snatch of Harry Lauder's "Stop Your Tickling, Jock," and to me the words don't seem funny. I consider it well below the Billy Williams standard.

Regardless of my present-day opinion, the record sold and sold and the Edison Company preened itself on having obtained dirt-cheap, a star of first magnitude. Actually, Williams, who was about 28 years of age, with what now seems an almost incredible lack of business acumen, had signed a contract to make Edison cylinders exclusively for three years at two pounds, ten shillings per record — about \$12.50 each, at the exchange rates prevailing then. In February, he was represented by 13548, a parody on "I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut For You," and in March by 13561, "Where, Oh Where?"

The popularity of the wax cylinders caused Williams, whose vogue had been mainly confined to the provinces, to receive much more lucrative engagements in the London music halls, and Edison's American business manager rather self-righteously took the attitude he was justified in holding the comedian to his "starvation contract" because of the increased money Billy was making from personal appearances. Williams, however, considered he had been victimized and protested strenuously.

From this point the story of Williams' early recording days may be told best by a veteran Edison official, who prefers not to be mentioned by name but who was at that time employed in the American company's English plant. I wrote to him for whatever reminiscences he could give of Billy Williams, and he replied at generous and appreciated length on May 16, 1956:

#### IV. Edison Old-Timer's Recollections

Dear Jim: . . . In regard to Billy Williams . . . I think the first time I had the pleasure of meeting Billy was about 1907. At that time I was living in a part of London called Cricklewood, and on my way home one evening I stopped in a music hall which was only a few minutes out of London himself. . . . The manager, a man by the name of Edgar . . . informed me that he had a man working there, doing two turns a night, who he was quite certain would be a great addition to our catalog.

After Mr. Williams had finished his first turn, Mr. Edgar introduced us and we had quite a talk. I at once thought he would be certain to make a wonderful record, but I must confess I had no idea at the time that he would reach to the heights that he did as a phonograph singer. As you quite understand, at that time it was not too easy to find voices that were suited to the phonograph, but Billy Williams, as soon as he had made a trial record, convinced us all that he was a great artist. As he had not made any records up to this time, he was very pleased with the results, and was so excited about it that it took some time for us to get rid of him. I contracted him for three years. We had to be very careful in going that

20,000 OPERATIC RECORDS (1898-1945). G & T's, Zonofono, Fonotipias, Victor, Columbia, etc. For beginners and advanced collectors. Send want list to: John Scignano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley 10, N. J. my6299

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

EDISON, COLUMBIA cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. —James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. je3084

Rare Vocals, Operatics, cutout collectors' items supplied. Wants located. Lists available, reasonably priced. — Personalized Record Service, 158 W. 58th St., N. Y. C. s85

25,000 POPULAR RECORDS (1900-1945). Vocals, bands, spoken, instrumentals, etc., at 50c each. Send want list to: John Scignano, 29 Columbia Ave., Nutley 10, N. J. my6468

CARUSO COLLECTORS! Send for free list of over 125 original Caruso records now in stock. Also request lists of other Operatic, Show Business, Popular or Vaudeville artists you collect. Huge stock available. — Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Michigan. my60401

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia 23, Penna. my3633

IF IT'S RECORDED I have it. 450,000 Collectors Items. Send wants. I will also buy store stocks or collections of Pre-1940 records (popular). — Jacob S. Schneider, 109 West 83rd St., New York City 24, New York. jly128632

THOUSANDS of out of print records—jazz, blues, personality, country, classical and opera. Send me your wants. Satisfaction guaranteed.—William C. Praster, Sr., 438 N. Broad St., Woodbury, N. J. my3084

FREE LISTS: Classical vocals, instrumentals, personalities, old timers and jazz. Please specify interests. — Jack Whistance, R.D. 2, Box 232, Kingston, N. Y. je3633

LP REISSUES of famous voices of the past. Caruso, Tamagno, Melba, Patti, Hempel, Calve, Schumann-Heink, Plancon, etc. Send for catalog to — Rococo Records, 2098 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont., Canada. jly3084

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, P. O. Box 155, Verona, N. J. d128801

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. my3618

Cylinder records, various makes. 4 minute record list (2000 selections) 25c. 2 minute record list (2000 selections) 25c. List cost refunded with first purchase. — Dexters, 421 W. Arbor Vitae, Inglewood, Calif. my3447

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.—South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Records bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. jly3447

ENTIRE Private Collection for sale. 1902-03 Carusos, Calve, Plancons, Adams; and Nordicas, Pattis, Melbas and many more. Send for particulars. Will sacrifice as unit for \$1500.00.—Howe, 219 Oxford Road, Franklin, Ohio. jly3215

## PHONOGRAPHS

**FREE.** My estimate of value of your phonograph. Describe completely. Collector of one of the world's largest private collections antique phonographs.—Miller, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. my3614

**ATTENTION!** Edison Cylinder Phonograph owners: Why be satisfied with only about half of the reproduction that is obtainable from your Edison reproducers? I can increase the volume and reproduction on all types of Edison cylinder reproducers. Write for details.—Pollard's 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3027

**FOR SALE:** Edison, Victor and Columbia phonographs. Hundreds of cylinder and disc records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder or disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. jly3886

**EDISON 2-4 minute home phonograph,** with cygnet horn. 350 two minute and 100 four minute cylinders. All \$120.—Howe, 219 Oxford Road, Franklin, Ohio. my1082

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

**ELECTRONIC** tone arm for Edison disc records. Edison disc records, catalogs, reproducers, bought, sold & exchanged. Special 100 Edison discs, \$35 F.O.B.—Clyde E. Haines, Box 1442, Reading, Penna. my3234

**VIOLIN BOWS** for Violano Virtuoso. Factory duplicate, guaranteed. Set of 4 \$20.—Feese Hobby Shop, 1202 North Washington, Lexington, Nebr. Phone: 4-2154. my3053

**WANTED:** Seeburg, Wurlitzer and other mechanical instruments, grind organs with paper rolls, music boxes, phonographs, Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico rolls. Antique instruments.—Kugler, 7 South 6th St., Minneapolis 2, Minn. my3034

**WANTED:** Edison, Columbia cylinder phonographs and disc phonos, with large horns. Cylinder records, music boxes, roller organs.—Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. je3004

**WANTED:** A Vega Tubaphone 5-string banjo, in good condition: or what have you to offer? Describe fully.—N. Howard, 45 West 32nd Street, New York 1, N. Y. my1232

**ANTIQUE BAND INSTRUMENTS,** especially Civil War over-the-shoulder type.—Carl A. Landrum, 920 Spring St., Quincy, Illinois. my1441

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

**WURLITZER BAND ORGAN.** Brass trumpets, violin, flute and bass pipes, bass and snare drums. Takes a Callola roll still available. Double tracker. Price \$500 F.O.B.—G. T. Merriken, 2141 Briggs Chaney Rd., Silver Springs, Md. jly3065

## MUSIC ROLLS

**RAGTIME & JAZZ** rolls wanted, also some such rolls to trade. Write Trebor Tichener, P. O. Box 6, Sappington, Mo. jly3023

## MUSIC BOXES

**IF YOU HAVE** a 17 note Harmonette reed music box would you please write me?—Ben Buchtel, 2003 Franklin Pl., N.W., Canton 9, Ohio. my1291

**Mira music box discs,** 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 12" \$1.50; 9¼" \$1; 6-13/16" 75c, plus postage and insurance.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. my1882

far—one year was about the limit at that time—but I took the chance and I never regretted it, neither did the company because he became a best seller month after month.

At this time the sales department had to be consulted when making a deal with artists. . . Now it was not the price that we were going to pay Williams, but it was the length of time that we were contracting him for. Mr. (James H.) White, who was manager, also readily saw that he was a find and did not object in any way. Later Mr. John R. Schermerhorn became manager of sales and it was with this gentleman that Billy was forced to deal when he decided that the money we were paying him was far too little. He of course first came to see me, but I told him that when I signed him up that finished the contract with me. The cost was up to the company—as to whether or not they wanted to give him an increase in money.

Up to the time I discovered Williams he had done very little work in London itself. Most of it was in . . . the provinces, and of course he was . . . a big headliner in the provinces. When his records went on the market all the dealers in our products immediately put out big ads on the front of their buildings saying that Billy Williams was appearing in such-and-such a theater and that it was now possible to obtain records made by him, and to see the Edison dealers in town if they wished to buy these wonderful records he had made. This of course increased business in the various theaters in which he played perhaps three or four times a year. . .

This gave Williams a good opportunity to obtain an increase for his records. When he studied his contract he found that he was tied exclusively to the Edison people. When he returned to London he immediately visited us and told me all about how he was treated in the provinces and what success he had had, and that he thought he ought to get more money. I then brought him to see Mr. Schermerhorn. Billy stated his case but he was up against a hard-boiled man, and he flatly refused to make any change, saying that Williams should have known what he was doing when he signed, as he was not a boy any more and could read and write, etc., and that he knew that he was very intelligent. Billy became somewhat annoyed and he told Mr. Schermerhorn that when his contract was up he certainly would make the Edison Company pay or he would quit them altogether.

Feeling that Billy should have had a big increase, we left Mr. Schermerhorn and went back to the recording department, where we had quite a long talk about Billy's future. . . I finally told him that he had better read his contract once more. He wanted to know why and I said that I didn't think he understood . . . that he was only contracted to the Edison company to sing for cylinder records, and that was stated plainly. Of course he immediately saw what I meant—that he was free to sing for disc records—and that was all that he wanted. He left me at once and went to the Gramophone Company and that very afternoon he made disc lateral-cut records. These records I knew would be placed on the market as soon as they could possibly get them out, because of his popularity and because up to then only cylinder records of his voice could be obtained. I notified Mr. Schermerhorn that neither he nor the company had any hold on Williams, and there was no sense in trying to keep that away from him. . . That was one big step in the life of Williams.

When he had finished his contract with us he kept his promise, but he made it very hard for us as far as money was concerned. However, there were no hard feelings and we remained on the best of terms. He of course finished his contract at an increase. He continued to be a big seller and his sales increased as the years went on.

All I know, after leaving London in 1914, is that the theatrical business increased during the first few years and that Williams' reputation was still as

## MISCELLANEOUS

**PLAYER PIANO** music rolls bought, sold and traded, all makes and types.—D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Maryland. je68001

**CYLINDER RECORDS** for sale. Send for large list. Edison, Columbia, Victor and other rare phonographs for sale. Parts, repairs, Reproducers and horns, all types of reproducers repaired. Player piano rolls and catalogues. Send 25 cents for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. je88001

**EARLY CYLINDER** and disc phonographs, records, reproducers, catalogs, parts. Bought, sold, repaired.—Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. au6806

**CYLINDER** machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mhi22361

**PLAYER PIANOS.** Old rolls, 50c each, lots of 10 or more. Victrola, Pathe, other's 78's records. Three ladder back chairs, \$25.—Berlins, 660 Neil Ave., Columbus 8, Ohio. je3834

**WANTED:** Ampico and Duo-Art piano rolls. Coin-operated pianos and rolls. Grind organs. Sales or service manuals and any literature pertaining to player instruments, cylinder phonographs, or music boxes. Odd or unusual players. I want anything in the automatic music line. State price and condition.—Larry Givens, R. D. 1, Wexford, Pa. jly3008

## PIANO & ROLLS

**NEW ROLLS** and repair supplies (bel-lows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos.—Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ap124661

**CASH** for your old piano rolls — \$2 to \$15 each! Airmail stamp brings list.—Pfc. Robert Montgomery, 7945th Liaison Group, APO 800, New York City. 094011

**SMALL SEEBURG** coin operated player piano. Automatic mandolin attachment. No keyboard. Plays 65 note Clark "A" rolls. Has been reconditioned and plays perfectly.—Albert Evans, 220 Berry, Stillwater, Okla. Phone 571. my1342

## MELODEONS

**BEAUTIFUL RESTORED INSTRUMENTS.** Also buy and repair; reasonable.—C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. au126651

**MELODEONS.** Fully restored Melodeons, reasonable. Stop in or write for list.—Chet's Shop, 91 Union St., Manchester, Conn. my6084

**MELODEON:** 105 years old, refinished, re-leathered like new, unusual tone, keyboard.—Richard M. Geddes, R.F.D. 1, Winsted, Conn. my1441

**MELODEON:** 6 octave, rosewood. Restored to excellent playing condition. Case refinished. Price \$200, crated F.O.B. Akron, Ohio.—W. E. Vale, 112 Hamilton Ave., Akron, Ohio. je3004

## NICKELODEONS

**NICKELODEON:** By Seaburg, fully restored to excellent playing condition. Coin operated. Plays 8 orchestra instruments. Case refinished. Have 10 rolls of music.—W. E. Vale, 112 Hamilton Ave., Akron, Ohio. je3084

great as when I was there. On one occasion a member of the (Edison) Company visited London. When he returned I inquired about Billy Williams and was quite surprised to hear of his death, which I knew nothing about. . . . They left me with the impression that he had dropped dead on the stage. Since that time one of the recorders working for me visited America. . . . When I was talking one day about old times in London I inquired as to what had happened to Williams and he told me the same as I had heard before — that he dropped dead during a performance.

All that I can say about Billy Williams as a man is that he was one of the best I have ever met and that he could make a record the easiest of any of the artists who recorded in those days. His name was always at the top of the list when the monthly supplements were published. He was really what we call a "natural" when it came to recording. As far as I know, he was born in Australia, but he never talked to me about that country. He always felt that he became recognized when he started working in London and was helped to a great extent by his making Edison records.

#### V. More About the Edison Argument

A few years ago I was talking with the veteran Edison employee whose letter has just been quoted and he gave me an account of the dispute between Billy Williams and Schermerhorn that was more colorful and amusing than the version put on paper. It entertained me so much that I have decided, even at the risk of a bit of repetition, to set it down here, substantially as I recall it.

My friend said that after Williams had his unsuccessful argument with the business manager he advised Billy, as he mentions in the letter, to read his contract and see for himself that he was at liberty to make all the disc records he liked and was exclusive to Edison only for cylinders. The comedian's delight was almost beyond expression. He went to the phone, called up several of the amazingly large number of disc firms England had 50 years ago and told them that he was available for making records. The various recording managers almost fell over themselves at the thought of obtaining the day's most popular comedian. Billy then took my friend to a nearby tavern, ordered champagne and drank to his good health and happiness.

"You're all right, Yank," he said. "But as for that other son-of-a-sea lion (meaning the business manager), I'll make him sorry for the way he's treated me if it's the last thing I ever do."

Time went by and Williams, thanks to his hundreds of disc and cylinder records and his music hall engagements, was more popular than ever. He faithfully lived up to the terms of the contract which bound him to sing for Edison at a paltry \$12.50 per record. As his old contract was about to expire, Schermerhorn approached him.

"Well, Billy," he said, "it's time to renew your contract. I suppose you'll come back at the same terms?"

This was the moment Williams had been waiting for. His voice took on the expression of a gigantic icicle and his voice might have been carved from ice cubes.

"Oh, yes?" he said. "Well, let me tell you this—I'll renew my Edison contract under certain conditions, and you can take it or leave it. If you don't want me on these terms plenty of others will."

"First of all, I'm not doing any more singing for chicken-feed. I'm the most popular comedian in this country and I know my value. Instead of two pounds and ten shillings, you'll pay me 100 pounds each time I sing for you. Furthermore—"

"Wait a minute, Billy!" the agitated Schermerhorn interposed. "You know we can't afford to pay you anything like that—!"

"You will or I don't sing for you," Williams replied inflexibly. "But that's not all. I said you'd pay me 100 pounds each time I sing for you, and that's exactly what I mean. I'll sing each song once. If anything goes wrong and I have to do it over, that'll be another hundred pounds. And—"

"But, Billy," protested Schermerhorn, "suppose you make a mistake—"

"I don't make mistakes," the glacial Billy imperturbably replied. "But if I do I'll sing the second take for the original fee. If the recorders make a mistake or the orchestra blows up it'll be, as I said another hundred pounds. Another thing, I'm not going to waste my valuable time rehearsing with the orchestra. I'll let you know what day I'm coming in to record and the orchestra will have a chance to practice my songs in advance. You'll have that orchestra here from early morning until night, and I'll come in just whenever I feel like it. I may be here at 7 a.m., and I may not show up until dark. But the orchestra is to be ready and waiting and all set to accompany me, whenever I'm in the mood to sing. Those are my terms!"

And it actually worked out that way. It cut Schermerhorn to the quick to accede but he felt Edison must have the new Billy Williams records to meet competition and they could be obtained only on the singer's terms. Williams was as good as his word. There was never any telling when he would appear for recording date, but morning, noon or night, he found a well rehearsed orchestra waiting. And he collected 100 pounds for each song he sang. Probably in all history there have been few more picturesque exemplifications of the old maxims, "Every dog has his day," and "Revenge is sweet."

#### VI. A Letter from Sir Louis Sterling

In my zeal to clear up some of the obscurity concerning Billy Williams' early days and his death, I wrote to the man who was for many years known as Britain's "Gramophone King," Sir Louis Sterling. Louis Sterling began life as a Jewish boy on the East Side of New York and received his first real business opportunity when he was sent to Europe to take charge of the old International Zon-o-phone Company's affairs. Afterwards, in England he and

the late Russell Hunting operated the Russell Hunting Record Company, which made the Sterling cylinder and was sales agent for Odeon and Fonotopia discs. When the company eventually failed, Hunting became recording director for Pathé and Sterling founded the Rena Record Company which was afterwards consolidated with Columbia. The erstwhile New Yorker rose to the top with Columbia and became a millionaire many times over. On his fiftieth birthday he decided it was high time to give away some of the money he made and within the next year or so had distributed some \$40,000,000 to charities and other worthy causes. Because of his great public services he was knighted and became Sir Louis Sterling.

This is what Sir Louis wrote me on February 1, 1956:

Dear Jim Walsh: I have yours of January 22nd. I am awfully sorry I cannot give you much information about the late Billy Williams. Of course I knew him very well during the years he was recording, but I left that industry over 16 years ago. I met him a dozen or so times but know nothing about his personal life, whether he was married or not, and I do not remember now about his "tragic death." He certainly was a very great recording artiste, and he became so prominent and important that no one company could make an exclusive deal with him and eventually six different companies signed a contract with him without any one of them having exclusivity. I am very interested to hear that you might be visiting this country . . . and I will be delighted to make your acquaintance. Yours sincerely, LOUIS STERLING.

Meanwhile, I had written to the editor of the *London News Chronicle*, the great Liberal newspaper founded by Charles Dickens, asking if its files contained a death notice of Williams. I was emboldened to write to the editor, who had since died, Mr. R. J. Cruikshank, because we were both members of the Dickens Fellowship and I had greatly enjoyed his book, "Charles Dickens and Early Victorian England." On October 3, 1955, his secretary, Miss Lillian Russell, wrote to me:

Dear Mr. Walsh: I am writing to acknowledge your letter to Mr. Cruikshank of September 27th. Mr. Cruikshank has read your letter and has asked me to thank you for it for your very pleasant remarks about his books on Charles Dickens. Also, he was much interested to hear of your activities in connection with the Dickens Fellowship in the States and sends greetings to a fellow Dickensian.

With regard to the information you require on the death of Billy Williams, I am hoping to be able to get some details for you. As it is necessary to look at our index and files for 1915—and this may take a little while—I thought I would send you word that the matter is in hand. I will let you know by air mail as soon as possible the result of the search. I trust we can find some material that will be of assistance to you.

On October 31, Miss Russell wrote:

. . . I regret to say we have been unable to trace any details regarding the death of Billy Williams. Our librarian has had a thorough search made of both our own files and those of The Times of London from January to May 1915, but unfortunately there is no mention of Billy Williams at all. I gather that in 1915 the reference library in this office was in its infancy, which probably accounts for the fact that we have no reference to

him in our index. I am more than sorry that we have drawn a blank. I feel sure you will want to pursue the inquiry and if you feel that we can help in any way, please let me know.

Since I failed here, despite Miss Russell's sympathetic cooperation and am not sure what Williams' real name was, so as to have a search made among the death certificates filed in London, I still don't know exactly when the comedian was born and died. *The Talking Machine News*' references to his death are exasperatingly vague. This brief mention appears in the April, 1915 issue:

"Out for the Day Today" and "Who's Your Friend?" on the Scala April list (686) are full of interest, inasmuch as they were the last two records that the late Billy Williams made. The artiste has gone, but his voice still is left to cheer us, and this pair are two of his best.

A few pages farther on I find:

In connection with the lamented death of Billy Williams, it is interesting to know that the Coliseum Company claim that they have all the singer's records in their list. As they say, the artiste is dead, but his voice still lives. There can be no doubt that the tragic end of the versatile comedian will give a genuine if somewhat somber interest to the titles he has left behind him.

What I wonder, were the "tragic" circumstances of Williams' death at the age of 36 or 37. Did he drop dead on the stage or die from some other cause? It is certainly a reason for regret that the *Talking Machine News* wasn't more explicit. Incidentally, a few months later Coliseum, one of the innumerable companies for which the comedian sang, was boosting another performer, George Crowthorn, as "The New Billy Williams," but Crowthorn never succeeded in obtaining a fraction of the great original's popularity. I may also mention that some of Williams' records for the companies making cheap records were listed under the alias of Billy Melville.

## VII. Williams' Recording Career

What sort of a comedian was Billy Williams? Would he be as amusing to American hearers as to British? Those are questions probably a great many readers by this time are asking.

In reply I can only say that tastes always have differed and always will. I have a good many Billy Williams records and enjoy most of them highly, but Al Debus, with whom I am usually in accord concerning the merits of comedians, says the only Williams record he likes is "My Old Arm Chair." He objects to Billy's innumerable chuckles and that is an objection which I share to a degree.

There may have been a tradition that British music hall comedians must chuckle all the way through their song to prove not only that they were naturally funny fellows but that they stayed good humored. An even more glaring example of the chuckle carried to excess may be found in Harry Lauder, whose records I like less than Williams.

Actually, no American record collector need be without specimens of Billy Williams' work. Edison imported most of his Blue Amberol re-

cordings and they are probably the best reproductions of his voice and style, with his Pathé sapphire records coming next. Columbia also issued several of his recordings for its English branch. Williams had an infectiously breezy, swinging style of singing and his lyrics were usually clean, although he did occasionally get away with a bit of profanity. One example occurs in his Pathé record or "Blame It Onto Poor Old Father," when he uses a naughty word and then says in a chuckling whisper: "Did you hear me say 'd--n'?" (The other side of this record is of unusual interest, being a number sung, or rather drawled, by the still active cartoonist, R. L. (Rube) Goldberg. Apparently the only record Goldberg ever made, it has the title of "Father Was Right.")

As has already been said, Williams did not ordinarily sing current popular songs, but instead confined himself to special material written for him by some of the best English "tunesmiths." Sometimes he wrote the words or music himself. His songs usually deal with ordinary happenings, often featuring Father, the time-honored butt of many comic songs. Typical examples are two of his most famous numbers, "When Father Papered The Parlor," and

He added to the sum of human joy, and were every one to whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave, he would sleep tonight beneath a wilderness of flowers.

Robert G. Ingersoll

"Where Does Father Go When He Goes Out?" "Wait Till I'm As Old As Father" is the announcement by a potential juvenile delinquent that when he grows up he means to misconduct himself exactly as Father does.

Although Williams was never exclusive to any company, the various English firms waged a merry war, especially from 1910 to 1914, to convince the public their Billy Williams records were better than any competitors. Nor were the German firms—Peka, Pilot, Mellophone, Scala, Coliseum and many others which were making a determined effort to capture the English record market—behindhand with their claims. Most of them took full page advertising in the *Talking Machine News* to boost their Williams wares. Columbia's boast was that it was always "Out First With The New Billy Williams Records," and it probably paid the comedian a double fee to give Columbia its first "crack" at his new titles, so they could be issued about three weeks before the other companies had theirs on the market. Columbia put them on sale 18 days after the recording. In all, Williams made thousands of records for many more than the six firms which Sir Louis Sterling mentioned as having the command of his services. Although many of his numbers were topical they were sel-

dom serious. However, in one, "Wake Up, John Bull!" he made a plea for a protective tariff in the British Empire. "Go Where The Crowd Goes" was a song he sang especially about the Coronation of King George V.

It is pleasant to know that the stocky young man with the infectious grin, the curly hair, and the rather commonplace features went back to Australia and gave the "home folks," who had been hearing him only through records, a sample of his wares. In a full page *T. M. N.* ad. for March, 1911, the Twins Company (later combined with Zonophone), announced "The Boom In Billy Williams, 'The Man in the Velvet Suit.'" "Anticipating in time," the ad. said, "the boom which was bound to follow the return of the famous Comedian from Australia, we at once got him to make all his new songs for Twins. . . . You bet, they are the best—they're on Twins. The Twin records of Billy Williams are the only ones to have." The ad. included an excellent photo of the smiling Billy.

And, so it went, with ever-increasing popularity, until Billy Williams died in the spring of 1915, possibly a victim of overwork. He had also been injured in a traffic accident in 1913. His records remained popular until the end of the acoustic recording era. In 1921 English Columbia listed a large number of its Williams recordings under the lower-priced Regal label and a special four-page folder was printed to advertise them. The Vocalion Company, which was not operating in England at the comedian's death, obtained from somewhere a great many masters of his old songs and issued them in its 1924, 1925 and 1926 Aco catalogs. The Gramophone made an amusing mistake in reviewing one, when it referred to "an almost uncannily realistic reproduction of the voice of the late Billy Jones. Obviously, by a slip of the pen the reviewer had confused Williams with the popular American comedian Billy Jones, whose death didn't occur until 1940.

Nor is Williams forgotten today. Especially in Great Britain and the overseas dominions, there are many avid collectors of Billy Williams recordings, who never tire of listening to his cheery lilt and hearty laugh. But no collector can hope to have a copy of every record Williams ever made. Although he was active before the recording horn for only about eight years, he made so many that to compile an unabridged list of his discs and cylinders would be virtually impossible.

## VIII. Billy Williams Song Titles

No such effort will be made here. It must be remembered that when Williams added a new song to his repertoire he quite possibly sang it for a dozen or more companies, not all of whom always used exactly the same title. Probably most of the numbers were never published and were recorded from manuscripts. But I have assembled what I hope is virtually a



complete list of the titles the comedian recorded, and because the names are frequently amusing, shall publish them here. In some instances where titles vary slightly from company to company I have copied only one:

All Coons Look Alike to Me—Parody; All the Ladies Fell in Love With Sandy; All the Houses Are Going Round and Round; All Silver from the Silvery Moon; Are We All Here?; As Good as Money in the Bank; Bamboo Bungalow—Parody; Billy Williams in His Catchiest Choruses (a series of four sides made for Jumbo); Blame It On to Poor Old Father; Bobbing About in the Briny; Boys and Girls, Come Out to Play; Call Me Early in the Morning; Chanticleer; Clog and Shawls—Parody; Cock-a-Doodle-Do; Cohen Keeps On Rowing; The Colliers; Come and Have a Look at What I've Got; Come Into the Garden, John.

Daylight Bill; Don't Go Out With Him Tonight; Girls of Gottenberg; Girls of Today; Girls Want Everything; Give My Love to Scotland, Maggie; Giving a Donkey a Strawberry; Goodbye Eliza Jane—Parody; Goodbye, Ragtime; Go Where the Crowd Goes; Has Anyone Seen My Poodle Dog? Here Comes Oxo; Here We Are Again; Hobnail Boots That My Father Wore; I Can't Keep Still Tonight; I Come Frae Scotland; I Didn't Know What to Do; I Don't Care; I Don't Know How You Do It; I Don't Want a Girl for Sunday; If I Could Only Find the Key; If the World Belonged to Me; I Keep on Toddling Along; I Like Little People; I'll Have to Ask My Mother if She'll Let Me; I'll Lend You My Best Girl; I'll Meet You One Dark Night; I'm the Man That Buried Flanagan; I must Go Home Tonight; I'm Wearing My Heart Away for You—Parody; I Never Heard Father Laugh So Much Before.

In the Land Where There Are No Girls; It's a Far Better Thing I Do; It Jolly Well Serves You Right; It's a Grand Old Song is "Home, Sweet Home"; It's a Wonder What Little Things Lead to; It's Mine When You've Done With It; It's a Treat to be Alive; I've Found Kelly; I've Got a Lover Up in Scotland; I wish It Was Sunday Night; I Wish I Were a Ladies Man; I Wish I Were You; I Wish I Were Back in Lancashire; I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut for You—Parody; Jean from Aberdeen; Jean Loves All the Jockeys; John, John, Go and Put Your Trousers On; John James Brannigan; Kangaroo Hop; Land Where the Women Wear the Trousers; Let's All Go Mad; Let's Go Where the Crowds Go; Let's Have Another One Together; Let's Have a Song on the Graphophone; Let's Have a Song on the Homophone; Let's Have a Song on the Pathophone; Let's Have a Song Upon the Phonograph; Little Willie's Wild Woodbines; Little Wooden Hut—Parody.

Matrimonial Chimes; Molly McIntyre; Mr. Harris from Paris; Mr. John Mackenzie, O.; Mrs. B.; My Ballooning Girl; My Father Was Born in Killarney; My Girl From London Town; My Lass From Glasgow Town; My Old Arm Chair; My Sweet Rosetta; My Young Man is Not the Chocolate Soldier; Nobody Knows How to Kiss Me; Oh! Diablo; Oh; For Another Day at Margate; Oh! Mr. McPherson; Oh! That Ragtime Waltz; Oh! The Sailors of the King; Old Gray Coat; One Girl's As Good As Any Other Girl; On Her Pic-Pic-Colo; Only Bit of English We Have Got; On the Sunny Side; Our Little Kiddie Sings the Best Song of All; Out for the Day Today; Pantomime Songs; Picture Postcards; Poodle Dog; Poor Old England; Put a Bit On It, Do; Put Me Amongst the Girls.

Rosetta's Ragtime Wedding; Sally O'Malley; Save a Little One for Me; Settle Up—Settle Down; Sheila O'Neill; She Does Like a Little Bit of Scotch; She is My Best Girl Now; Since Father Joined the Territorials; She's Coming Home Tonight; Sing Me an Irish Song; Soap and Water; Spanish Dance; Spooning With My Girl; Squeeze Her, Ebenezer; St. Kilda (Australian song); Take Me Back to the U.S.A.; Take Me Where There Are No Eyes About; Tale of Paris; Taximeter Cab; Tell Them You're a Londoner; That's a Jolly Fine

Song; There Must be Something Nice About the Isle of Man; There's a Picture for a Postcard; There's Life in the Old Dog Yet; There's Something Nice About a Girl; They Can All Do As They Like With Me; Tickle Me, Timothy.

Under the Yum Yum Tree; Wait Till I'm As Old As Father; Wake Up, John Bull; Walking Home With Angeline—Parody; We All Live at No. 24; We All Sang Too-ral-lou-ral-addle; We All Came Into the World With Nothing—Parody; We Don't Want More Daylight; We're All Waiting for a Girl; What's the Matter with Father?; What Time Tomorrow Night?; When Father Papered the Parlor; When Father Tried to Kill the Cock-a-Doodle-Do; When Mother Backed the Winner of the Derby; When There Isn't a Girl About—Parody; Where, Oh Where, Where Shall We Go Tonight?

Where Are the Girls We Used to Know?; Who's Your Friend?; Why Can't We Have the Sea in London?; Why Don't Santa Claus Bring Me Something Nice?; Why Do You Think I Look So Gay?; Worst of It Is, I Like It; You're the One.

### IX. In Conclusion

I was preparing to write "The End" when I found a few notes calling for brief attention. In spite of one of his titles, "Take Me Back to the U.S.A.," I don't think Billy Williams was ever in this country. Whether he would have been a hit in American vaudeville is a matter for speculation. Besides using the name of Billy Melville, he also appears to have made off-brand records under the disguise of "Billy Wilson" and "Billy Mersham."

The series of titles, "Let's Have a Song Upon the Phonograph," etc., was the same song, slightly adapted to change the requirements of whatever company he was recording for. It amounted to a "plug" for records he had previously made, with Billy singing a line or two from each.

In 1934 the Edison-Bell Company, then in its last days, issued a record called "A Night at the Old Tivoli Music Hall," which consisted of excerpts from records made years before by music hall stars. Christopher Stone, associate editor of *The Gramophone*, was the master of ceremonies, or "compere," as the record called it. The artists included Florrie Forde, Billy Williams, G. H. Chirgwin, Jay Laurier, Jack Pleasants, J. W. Rickaby, Arthur Lennard and R. G. Knowles. Perversely, the dubbing of the Billy Williams record is the worst of the lot and I have never been able to decide from the brief chorus what song "The Man in the Velvet Suit" was singing. Florrie Forde, caroling "Down at the Old Bull and Bush," did her part "live," but all the other artists are represented by old acoustic recordings.

For a laughable conclusion, I'll quote the *Talking Machine News* re-

Grass is the forgiveness of nature—her constant benediction. Fields trampled with battle, saturated with blood, torn with the cannon, grow green again with grass, and carnage is forgotten. Forests decay, harvests perish, flowers vanish, but grass is immortal.

Robert G. Ingersoll

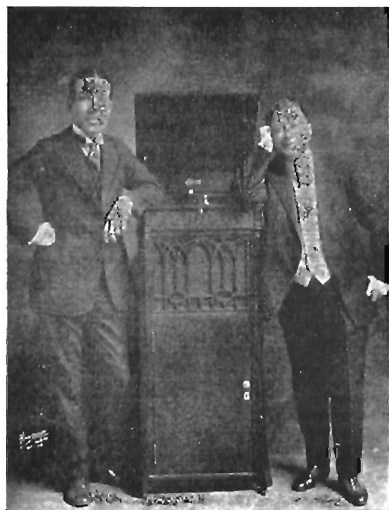
view of three Billy Williams records in its March, 1911 issue, just after he had returned from Australia. The elderly, bearded Ogilvie Mitchell, who did most of the *T. M. N.* reviewing, was usually sycophantic in his approach and too lavish with his praise for what were often poor records, but he outdid himself in fulsomeness, reviewing these Williams productions. No doubt the songs were funny, but no records could be as amusing as Mitchell represents these to be. The old Bohemian gentleman tossed words about with such abandon that he must have been paid by the line. Anyway, here is what he said:

**SPECIAL NOTICE.**—We are pleased to receive from the Columbia-Rena Company six songs by that diverting comedian, Mr. Billy Williams. In the days of our youth, long, long ago, there used to be a favourite song entitled, "Oh, Willie, we have missed you!" Now, as Willie is only another form of Billy, we might appropriately apply the phrase to our humorous old friend. It is, indeed, true. "Oh, Billy, we have missed you!" Yes, missed you sadly, for there are few who can bring the tears to our eyes as you can—tears of laughter, of course, we mean. We, therefore, extend to you the hand of friendship and welcome you back to the recording world with all the enthusiasm that a weary old reviewer can command. That Billy is in his very finest form can be told the moment the first note of his familiar voice issues from the machine.

The record we light upon is, singularly enough, "Here We Are Again" (1564), and, as the chuckle and comical "aside" reach our ears, we begin to smile, the smile broadens into a grin, the grin turns into a laugh, the laugh to a roar, and presently we are doubling up "with laughter holding both her sides." The song comes to an end, and we turn over the disc. There we find, "When Father Papered the Parlor." "Oh dear! Oh dear! This is more excruciating than ever. Shall we ever be able to stop? The manner in which that parlour was papered is one of the funniest things we have listened to for ages. Luckily for our waistcoat buttons, the record runs out before they burst off.

When we change the disc, we see that the title before us is "I'm the Man That Buried Flanagan." (1565). We are glad that Flanagan is dead, simply because Billy Williams is the man who buried him. According to his undertaker, however, Flanagan must have been a bit of a scamp, but we shall say nothing more about that at present, leaving our readers to hear the story from Billy's own lips when they have secured the record. Then, if they don't laugh, they must have been brought up as mutes. "I've Found Kelly" is coupled with the foregoing. Having told us that he buried Flanagan, Billy proceeds to inform us how he found Kelly, that other gentleman who was connected with the Isle of Man. It is equally diverting with the Flanagan history, and we are still shrieking.

We now put on the third disc, though we are gradually growing weaker, and discover that the first song thereon is "I'll Lend You My Best Girl." (1566). Billy in this ditty takes care to inform us that it is not the sort of thing a young fellow should make a practice of. There is danger in lending your girl, but our merry comedian makes infinite fun of the business, so that the tears of laughter are now rolling down our cheeks. "Laugh and grow fat," says the adage. We are positively bursting. And now we come to the last, "Let's Have a Song on the Gramophone." It is a little more personal than the others, Billy here speaking of himself, but it is no less risible. We have laughed till we can laugh no more. Our muscles are limp, our sides are aching, our eyes are painful through shedding tears. We are just able to stop the machine and then we collapse. Good-night, Billy!



Harry Mayo and Harry Tally, singing in direct comparison with their Edison Disc of "At the Ball, That's All," in their Orpheum Circuit vaudeville act.

## HARRY TALLY

(Not Forgetting Harry Mayo and the Empire City Quartet)

By JIM WALSH

(Dedicated to an ardent Harry Tally admirer . . . my fellow HOBBIES contributor, Allen G. Debus.)

\* \* \*

### 1. Good Luck and Bad

Frequently I find myself pondering over the manner in which Providence, Fate, Chance, Luck or some other unseen force appears to conspire at one moment to help me write my HOBBIES articles and at the next seems determined to keep me from accomplishing my task. Sometimes it almost seems there are two opposing factions battling over

whether a given subject shall find its way into Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists.

This biographical sketch is an example. For years I hoped to write about the sweet-voiced tenor, Harry Tally, but was unable to obtain enough information to justify the effort. Then, when a fair amount of knowledge was available, I withheld action because of a lack of suitable photographs.

That defect was remedied on Saturday, February 15th, this year, when the favorable forces momentarily took control. On a bitterly cold, snowy morning I received from Milford Fargo, of Rochester, New York, a large package containing issues of Diamond Points, the house organ of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., for 1916 and 1917. My delight was almost beyond expression when I opened the box and came on the April, 1916, number, containing a splendid photograph of Tally and his singing partner, basso Harry Mayo, giving an Edison "tone test" as part of their Orpheum vaudeville act on the West Coast. They were singing in conjunction with their first Edison duet record, "At the Ball, That's All."

My glee was so great I was clutching the April issue and still looking at that photo as I went out the post office door. Then the forces opposed to my writing took charge. The wind was blowing hard and, to my horror, it snatched the Diamond Points from my hands, tore the pages apart and scattered them for a considerable distance over the snow. Despite the handicap of a swollen left foot, I ran frantically about through snowdrifts, grasping at the pages of which the wind had robbed me. If necessary, I was resigned to part with all the others but I had to recover that precious photo. Eventually, out of breath, I retrieved them all and was overjoyed to find Mayo and Tally still beaming from the yellowed page. As soon as possible I had a copy made for HOBBIES and although it isn't as sharp as I had

expected I think it will still reproduce reasonably well. I scored that as a victory for my friends, the Favorable Forces.

The scene moves now to Sunday, February 23. By this time I was seething with desire to write about Tally and for several days had been collecting reference material. Early that afternoon I decided I had everything I needed. Then it occurred to me that I had still lacked a clipping in an old scrapbook giving some information about one of Tally's singing associates, Harry Cooper. In high good spirits, I went upstairs to get the scrapbook out of a box in which I thought it had been placed. A sheet of plate glass was on top of the box and I casually picked it up. A few moments later I found my left hand was bleeding profusely and the finger next to the little finger had been almost cut in two. That resulted in a hurried trip to Lewis-Gale hospital in Roanoke, where a surgeon discovered a tendon had been severed by a rough spot or a sharp edge on the glass. He took eight stitches in the finger and sternly warned me not to type or use that hand in any way until it had healed. Farewell to the bright visions I'd had of writing my Harry Tally article that Sunday afternoon! The Evil Forces had scored a smashing triumph.

Now it's Sunday afternoon, March 16. My finger has healed and I'm once more in the mood to write. Thus far I have got along fairly well except for being interrupted by several phone calls and by the loving insistence of my beautiful cat, Gray, who thinks I should hold him in my lap instead of wasting time pounding a stupid old typewriter. Thus far, however, Gray has been overruled. And now, with a prayer that nothing else will happen to interrupt my creative mood, I shall proceed to tell what I have found out about Harry Tally.

### II. Some Varied Information

As long ago as the 1930's I was seeking information about Harry Tally. The late Frank Dorian, a veteran Columbia official from whose informative letters I have often quoted, told me he recalled Tally as a tenor with a peculiarly sweet voice, who "wasn't fat but was short and stocky." He didn't know what had become of the singer whose records were popular for almost a decade. The "tone test" photo reveals Mr. Dorian's description was very apt.

I also wrote to The Billboard, asking if its readers could give me any information about Tally and several other old-time recording artists. I said I believed Tally had been the original second tenor of the Empire City Quartet, an ensemble reputed to have played more vaudeville time than any other organization or individual. It was likewise known as the Empire City Four.

My inquiry brought a reply which indicated my belief that Tally was one of the original Empire City Quartet members was wrong. A New

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

### SPECIAL NEW LEN SPENCER SERIES TO BEGIN IN JULY ISSUE OF HOBBIES

The following is quoted from a recent letter of Jim Walsh to the Editor of HOBBIES:

"I am planning to begin a new series that I consider in some respects the most interesting and valuable of any I have written for you. It will contain fresh information about the first famous recording artist, Len Spencer, based on the recollections of his daughter, Mrs. James A. Yarbray, of San Antonio, Texas. It will supplement the Spencer series that appeared in 1947 and correct some of the errors unavoidably contained in the earlier articles. Mrs. Yarbray has provided me with a great many old and rare photographs of her father and other members of his family, and I hope to have the series lavishly illustrated."

York woman, Lillian Thelma Alton, wrote to The Billboard:

Roy Alton was the original tenor of the Empire City Four. I have a photograph of him with the quartet, Roy Alton, Harry Mayo, Irwin (should be Irving—J. W.) Cooper and Harry Cooper. Irwin Cooper today refers with pride to Alton having been their tenor for he possessed a great and glorious robust voice.

He afterwards became principal tenor in Ziegfeld's Red Feather opera company and was co-starred with Grace Van Studdiford, star of the piece, and was chosen from 500 tenors for the role, owing to power and range of voice. He scored heavily with the famous "sword song." He was also tenor in the Ben Hur production of Klaw & Erlanger, was tenor of the Tivoli Opera House Company in San Francisco, and made phonograph records, among them arias from great operas. He died of typhoid fever on October 22, 1905, aged 23 years. Chicago papers carried headlines about his death. He was acclaimed an American tenor with an Italian voice and at the time of his death he held a contract for three years in Milan, Italy.

Until Lillian T. Alton's letter appeared I had never heard of Roy Alton, who must have been an unusually gifted young man to accomplish so much in only 23 years. Neither have I ever come across any other reference to him or seen his name in a record catalog. (I wonder if the letter writer was his mother, wife or sister!) Nevertheless, he seems to have been the original "lead" of the Empire City group. I now believe that Tally, who succeeded him, was appearing in McIntyre & Heath's famous blackface comedy production, "The Ham Tree," when Alton died. He recorded for Columbia two of the songs he sang in "The Ham Tree," "Sweethearts in Every Town" and "Goodbye, Sweet Old Manhattan Isle."

For years my Tally investigation stood still. Then Al Debus, who had urged me to write about the tenor, informed me the famous comedian, Jack Norworth (a friend of both Al and mine) had told him that after Tally retired from the stage he operated a cigar store in California. I wrote to Jack, who replied on April 12, 1956:

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Jep



Dear Jim: So glad to hear from you. I am afraid I cannot give you much help about Harry Tally. I was playing a split week at Ocean Park, California. I met Harry when he had his little cigar store on the boardwalk. Ocean Park was a tiny Coney Island. I am fuzzy on dates, but I think it must have been between 1920 and 1923. If he is dead and you want to write a death certificate the proper place would be Ocean Park. . . You will pardon me but will have to leave you now. The horse racing season starts today and the Mrs. and I do not want to miss the first race.

Jack's letter made me recall that a Chicago friend of mine, Frank Gloodt, who specialized in collecting Billy Murray records, had told me years before he had clipped a newspaper item saying Harry Tally, the famous vaudeville tenor, had died in California, but had mislaid it. Now that I knew where to apply for more information I went into action.

A letter to the reference department of the Los Angeles Examiner brought a reply that the Examiner didn't carry a death notice about Tally: "We have searched our files and can find no clips on the gentleman at all."

However, one to the Santa Monica Evening Outlook brought better luck and made me feel the Favorable Forces were toiling in my behalf. A courteous and obliging reporter, William Hale, wrote me the Outlook for August 17, 1939, published the following brief death notice:

Harry L. Talley, 73, for 25 years a headliner on the Orpheum circuit, died last night in his home at 3009 Washington Blvd., Ocean Park, after a short illness. He had resided in Ocean Park since his retirement from the stage in 1918. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mary H. Talley.

Rosary will be recited at 8 p.m. tomorrow at the chapel of Kerkelie, Bernard & Peek, and requiem mass will be said in St. Clement's Catholic Church Saturday at 9 a.m. Burial will be in Holy Cross Cemetery.

Notice that the newspaper spelled the tenor's last name as Talley. That form was also adhered to in the death certificate, but his name never appeared on records or in record cat-

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alogs any way except as Tally, which is almost certainly the correct spelling.

Bill Hale not only copied the obituary, he also offered to call on Mrs. Tally, who was still living, and interview her for me. This offer I accepted eagerly. Meanwhile, I had applied to the Division of Vital Records of the Los Angeles County Health Department for a photostat of Tally's death certificate, and received it a few days later.

### III. What the Death Certificate Said

The certificate revealed that Tally was born June 30, 1866, and was 73 years, one month and 16 days of age when he died. He was about a year older than the first famous recording artist, Len Spencer, but five years younger than another contemporary comedian, Bryon G. Harlan, and two years younger than Harlan's partner, Arthur Collins. However, he made his recording debut more than ten years after Spencer and a few years after Collins and Harlan.

I was surprised to learn Tally was a Southerner, born in Memphis, Tennessee. However, I should have suspected his Southern descent because his voice had a liquid softness and sweetness characteristic of the best type of "magnolia and honeysuckle" accent.

His father, Fletcher E. Tally (spelled Tally on the certificate) also was born in Memphis. The reference to his mother results in a slight puzzle. Her maiden name is given as Marcella Leake and her birthplace as Leake county, Virginia. There is no Leake county, Virginia and I believe Mississippi is the only State with a county of that name. However, there is a Lee county in the coal mining, mountainous section of Southwest Virginia, and I am sure that is the one which was meant. The person who took down the obituary information - presumably from Harry's widow, could easily have misunderstood "Lee county" to be "Leake county." This also brings up the possibility that Mrs. Fletcher Tally's maiden name was Marcella Lee in-

stead of Leake. Harry Tally's middle initial was L., and Harry Lee is a common compound name for boys in the South.

The certificate says Tally was a professional vocalist and had been for 30 years before his retirement in 1918. He had lived in California for 21 years and in Ocean Park for 20. His physician, Dr. Leonard E. Croft, of 327 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, reported he had treated Tally from 1936 to 1939, and that the tenor had been stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage on July 15, 1939. He also suffered from arteriosclerosis and vascular hypertension.

Unfortunately, Bill Hale's kindly plan to interview Mrs. Tally and get her to answer a long series of questions I sent him didn't fructify. She at first readily agreed to be interviewed, but on May 16th, 1956, Bill wrote:

I received your letter, questionnaire and note to Mrs. Tally this afternoon and promptly gave her a call.

The last time I talked with her she mentioned she had been troubled with rheumatic fever, and this afternoon she was too ill to speak long with me. She said her doctor had advised her against doing anything which would excite her and thought it best if I would wait until the first of next week to see her. . . . I will expect her to call me next week.

Mrs. Tally, who must have been aged if she were near her husband's age (he would have been 90 if still living at the time of my correspondence with Mr. Hale) never could bring herself to the point of granting an interview - a fact I regret, for I am sure she could have filled in many blanks in my information. Once more the forces in opposition to my writing had the upper hand. But now I had information enough, despite their trials of my patience, to compile the article you are now reading.

### IV. The Empire City Quartet

I am sorry we don't know more about Harry Tally's earlier life . . . especially his boyhood and young manhood. It would be interesting to have the facts as to when and where he decided to go on the stage and what type of work he had done prior to beginning his long vaudeville association with the fabulously successful Empire City Quartet. In view of his appearing in "The Ham Tree," it's probably a shrewd guess that at one time he had sung in minstrel shows.

It is easier to find references to the quartet in books about the show business than to its individual members. For instance, in "Show Biz," by Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr., we are told that, shortly after the turn of the century, "My Sweet Little Eskimo," was sung by every male quartet, including the Empire City Four, who first introduced 'bum-bum-bum' counterpoint." We shall hear more later about the "bum-bum-bum" effects introduced by the Empire's stupendous basso, Harry Mayo.

When the late Joe Laurie, Jr., wrote

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"Vaudeville," he had this to say about the quartet:

"Who will ever forget the great Empire City Quartet (Harry Cooper, his brother Irving, Harry Tally and Harry Mayo)? Harry (Cooper) did a Hobo comic, no make-up except for an oversized derby which he kept tipping through the act to imaginary women in the audience, saying, 'How's the Momme?' which became one of the first catch lines in vaude (years before 'Do you wanna buy a Duck?' and 'Vas you dare, Sharlie?') The boys had grand voices besides making 'em laugh."

My impression is that all the members of the quartet except Tally specialized in dialect and wore appropriately absurd costumes, with the tenor being conventionally clad as the "romantic lead." Harry Cooper did the Jewish impersonation; Harry Mayo was a tramp, and Irving Cooper, I believe, did blackface. Was there ever another quartet with three of its four members named Harry? Had it not been for Irving Cooper they might appropriately have called themselves the Hairy Four!

Now we come to the scrapbook clipping for which I was looking when I cut my hand . . . a New York Herald Tribune story telling of the death of Harry Cooper. Through an oversight I didn't date it, but judging from the other clipping on the same page it appeared in October, 1937:

Harry Cooper, former vaudeville actor who was a member of the Empire City Quartet, died Friday in the Hospital for Joint Disease of an infected foot. He was 59 years old. Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. today at the Riverside Memorial Chapel, Amsterdam Avenue and 76th Street, under the auspices of the Jewish Theatrical Guild, of which Mr. Cooper was an incorporator and former secretary.

Mr. Cooper's tenor was heard in the Keith, Orpheum and William Morris circuits probably more often than any other voice in vaudeville, for the Empire City Quartet was credited with playing more "solid time" than any other vaudeville act on record. Mr. Cooper also put on a solo act in the role of a letter carrier.

For 24 years after 1900 audiences heard him and his brother, Irving Cooper, and Harry Tally and Harry Mayo sing such popular favorites as "My Little Eskimo" and "Cheer Up, Mary." Harry Cooper was also noted for his Irish airs and Irving Berlin songs. He acted in the original production of Victor Herbert's "Naughty Marietta" and also in "The Ham Tree."

Recently he was in the insurance business, with one venture into the restaurant field, and he organized and was master of ceremonies at countless benefits for fellow actors. On his 50th birthday in 1928 a dinner was held in his honor at the Commodore by the then Mayor James J. Walker; Herbert H. Lehman, candidate for Lieutenant-Governor at the time; Senator Royal S. Copeland, Dr. Shirley W. Wynne, Eddie Cantor and 2,000 other friends in political and theatrical life.

His father was a cantor. Surviving besides his brother, Irving, are his mother, Mrs. Fanny Cooper; his wife, Mrs. Dora Lazarus Cooper; three brothers, Joseph, Louis and Bert; two sisters, Mrs. Sadie Tauber and Mrs. Lena Scherman, and a daughter, Miss Helene Cooper. A son, Irwin Cooper, a radio sports announcer known as Wynn Cooper, died eleven months ago.

Irving Cooper lived to be the last surviving member of the Empire City Four but has since died. The Herald-Tribune article must be wrong in saying the quartet stayed together for 24 years after 1900. As we have seen, Tally retired in 1918, and there is reason to believe that he and Mayo had left the quartet and set

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**MELODEON:** 6 octave, rosewood. Restored to excellent playing condition. Case refinished. Price \$200, crated F.O.B. Akron, Ohio.—W. E. Vale, 112 Hamilton Ave., Akron, Ohio. je3004

## NICKELODEONS

**NICKELODEON:** By Seaburg, fully restored to excellent playing condition. Coin operated. Plays 8 orchestra instruments. Case refinished. Have 10 rolls of music.—W. E. Vale, 112 Hamilton Ave., Akron, Ohio. je3084

## HURDY-GURDY FOR SALE

**PUSH CART** hand cranked organ or Hurdy Gurdy in its original condition, plays ten songs. Write Sal Esposito, 157 Central Ave., West Haven, Conn. je1002

up as a duet team not later than 1915. I have no idea who took their places if the quartet continued after their going.

### V. Harry Tally's Recording Career

We return now to our principal subject and shall consider Harry Tally's recording career. I am unable to say with certainty exactly when he began making records, but I believe the year was 1902 and the company for which he first sang was Columbia. Here the Frustrating Fates once more get in their dirty work, for Columbia, during the first five or six years the company made disc records, perversely refused to give artists' names in catalogs. They were identified simply as "Tenor," "Bari-tone," etc. The same stupid procedure was followed with cylinder lists. Neither was the performer's name carried on the record label. A spoken announcement at the beginning of the disc or cylinder was considered identification enough.

However, I have a Harry Tally record (unfortunately broken) which is numbered 203. It is a "coon song," "Love Me, Phoebe, Love Me." Tally himself gives the spoken announcement in that liquid accent which makes for sweetness rather than for clarity of enunciation. Columbia didn't begin to make disc records until 1902, so "Phoebe" must go back to that year. It is probably one of several hundred records which were made by the short-lived Climax company, for which Columbia served as sales agent. Afterwards they were issued under the Columbia label. Two other very old Columbias by Tally are 934, "I'm Going to Live Anyhow Till I Die" and 1084, "I'll Miss You in the Golden Summer Time."

The tenor probably was exclusive to Columbia for a one-year term. Luckily, there is printed evidence as to when his Victor association began. In the September, 1904, Victor supplement appeared the following brief note: "It is with pleasure that we introduce a new tenor to our great Victor family. Mr. Tally's records will speak for themselves." They were 2955, "All Aboard for Dreamland" (referring to the great amusement park, so popular in those days at Coney Island) and 2956, "I've Got a Feelin' for You," a Teddy Morse "coon classic."

For the next five years Tally was a regular contributor to the Victor catalog and his records gained a great deal of popularity. This is shown by some characteristic comments on the order blanks sent to dealers. The February, 1906, form said: "Three brand new successes by Mr. Tally with orchestra accompaniment will no doubt be near the top of the February list. They are the finest records this favorite tenor has made anywhere." The titles were "Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie" (one of the greatest hits Harry Von Tilzer ever wrote), "Silver Heels," an Indian song sensation, and "My Irish Molly-O." To repeat an oft-used

phrase: "They don't write songs like those anymore!"

In April, 1906, the order list said: "No advice will be needed in regard to Tally records. The five records with orchestra accompaniment already listed have been tremendous sellers."

And in October, 1906, dealers were told: "Tally's sweet tenor continues to delight record buyers, and his popular ballads are large sellers. We introduce for October two frivolous 'spoon' numbers which are now the rage and a really beautiful Irish love ballad." The songs, all written by Harry Von Tilzer, were "A Little Lunch for Two," "Holding Hands" and "Sweet Rose of Athlone"—the latter a 12-inch disc. All these records, of course, were single-faced.

### VI. Records for Other Companies

It may be well to pause here and discuss briefly the records Harry Tally made for companies other than Victor and Columbia.

The tenor's Edison cylinder career was mysteriously short. His first two-minute Standard cylinder, No. 8483, "My Little Coney Isle," was issued in September, 1903, a year before his Victor beginning. In October he was represented by 8518, "There's Music in the Air" (not the old song with the same name by George F. Root). No more Tally records were issued until October, 1904, when 8808, recorded on August 10, "Seminole," appeared. For some reason Tally's Edison cylinders didn't sell well and all were discontinued by February, 1906. More than ten years elapsed between his last cylinder and his first Diamond disc.

Tally also made a number of records for the Zon-o-phone company, which passed under Victor control in 1903. They included the following single-faced 9-inch: 5896, "The Gondolier"; 5960, "Goodbye, Little Girl, Goodbye"; 5898, "If I Were Only You"; 5895, "In the Village by the Sea"; 6014, "Seminole," and 5943, "We've Got to Move Today." All these were listed in the June, 1905, catalog and were made in '904-05. Later 10-inch Zon-o-phone recordings included 436, "Anxious"; 288, "Goodbye, Sweet Old Manhattan Isle"; 471, "I'm Trying to Find a Sweetheart"; 445, "My Dusky Rose"; 320, "On an Automobile Honeymoon" (another hit from "The Ham Tree"); 863, "Balloonin'," and 873, "Take Me Back to New York Town."

The tenor also recorded for some of the disc companies that were put out of business in 1907 for infringing Victor-controlled patents. I have two Leeds records by him—4212, "The Furniture Man," and 4272, "Mr. Wilson," both comics. Although Tally was primarily a ballad singer he occasionally essayed comedy, especially of the "coon" variety. One of this type is a Columbia I had previously overlooked, 1086, "No Use in Askin' 'Cause You Know the Reason Why." Also in my collection is a blue 10½-inch American record with an Indian trademark on which Tally

announces and sings "My Maid of Hindoostan." Arthur Collins sings on the other side "By the Watermelon Vine." Tally seems to have made only one four minute U.S. Everlasting cylinder, "Goodbye, Betty Brown," No. 1128, a march song written by Theodore Morse whose title was obviously borrowed from the refrain of the Southern folk tune, "Old Joe Clark":

Fare you well, Old Joe Clark,  
Goodbye, Betty Brown.  
Fare you well, Old Joe Clark,  
I'm going to leave this town.

### VII. Victor Record List

Tally's popularity as a Victor artist seems to have tapered off around 1908. When double-faced records were introduced late that year some of his best sellers were taken over into the two-for-one form, but a great many less popular titles passed out of the catalog. And the double-faced records he made of new songs were comparatively few. It is worthy of mention that he did no duet work for Victor, and the only record of that early era by him which contains other voices, so far as I recall, is 12-inch Victor, 31548, on which, with the help of the Haydn Quartet, he sings the Charles K. Harris ballad, "Somewhere." I asked the Quartet's first tenor, the late John Bielting, what he recalled about Harry Tally but John couldn't remember ever meeting him.

For the sake of Tally admirers who would like a fairly comprehensive list of his recordings I shall give what I believe to be a virtually complete tabulation of his Victors. First, the single-faced:

2936, Mandy Won't You Let Me Be Your Beau?; 2987, Seminole; 2933, If I Were Only You; 2955, All Aboard for Dreamland; 2956, I've Got a Feelin' for You; 2976, Always in the Way; 2977, Kitty Dooley; 2978, My Little Creole Babe; 4060, I've Gwine to Live Anyhow Till I Die; 4148, Egypt;  
4551, Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie; 4579, Silver Heels; 4580, My Irish Molly-O; 4592, On an Automobile Honeymoon; 4593, Why Don't You Try?; 4618, Fly Away, Birdie, to Heaven; 4619, Can't You See I'm Lonely?; 4647, My Dusky Rose; 4775, Alice, Where Art Thou Going?; 4820, A Little Lunch for Two; 4821, Holding Hands; 4859, When the Girl You Love Loves You; 5078, The Girl Who Was Meant for You; 5130, Roll Around; 5139, Deutschland; 5160, A Friend of Mine Told a Friend of Mine; 5213, Balloonin'; 5224, Broncho Buster; 5258, Bye, Bye, Dearie; 5260, Sacramento.

The following are 12-inch: 31548, Somewhere; 31549, Just One Word of Consolation; 31571, Sweet Rose of Athlone.

Victor's initial list of double-faced records, issued in October, 1908, contained the following by Tally:

16097, Wait Till the Sun Shines Nellie, combined with Where the Morning Glories Twine Around the Door, by Byron G. Harlan; 16098, On an Automobile Honeymoon/Why Don't You Try?; and 16099, Always in the Way/Fly Away, Birdie, to Heaven. A little later came 16156, Sacramento, doubled with The Stars, the Stripes and You (Harry Macdonough); 16259, In Those Good Old Country Days, whose coupling was Shine On, Harvest Moon, by Macdonough and "Miss Walton"—probably a disguise for Elise Stevenson; 6283, Let's Go Into a Picture Show, doubled with Won't You Even Say Hello? (Byron G. Harlan); and 16221, A Friend of Mine Told a Friend of Mine, with The Family Tree (Collins & Harlan).

Tally's last appearance in the Victor list was in the supplement for January, 1911. No. 16689 combined his version of My Bonnie Blue Bell, in which his voice seems almost at its sweetest, and Without You the World Don't Seem the Same, by the Peerless Quartet. The supplement said Tally had rejoined the Victor staff, but this was his final appearance.

Before leaving the subject of Tally's Victor records, I must mention one confusing problem. The September, 1904, supplement certainly gives the impression that Tally was making his first Victor appearance with "All Aboard for Dreamland," and "I've Got a Feelin' for You," yet the numerical list of his records shows three others with earlier numbers—"Mandy, Won't You Let Me Be Your Beau?" "Seminole," and "If I Were Only You." I am not sure whether these three were listed a month or so before the records first mentioned or whether, in spite of their lower numbers, they were held for later release.

### VIII. Tally's Columbia Records

Because, for a reason already explained, it is impossible to identify all the Tally records in the Columbia single-faced and cylinder catalogs, no effort will be made to list them here. However, I am glad to give a complete list of his double-faced Columbia discs:

- A200, Won't You Fondle Me?/Rabbit Hash (Billy Golden);
- A308, My Irish Molly O/Any Rags? (Arthur Collins);
- A334, Why Don't You Try?/'Tis But a Dream (Henry Burr);
- A443, Goodbye, Sweet Old Manhattan Isle/That Welcome on the Mat Ain't Meant for Me (Collins-Harlan);
- A584, Love Me Just Because/Are You Sincere? (Lucy Isabelle Marsh and Henry Burr);
- A592, Honeymooning/Pat O'Brien's Automobile (Steve Porter);
- A642, I Wish I Had a Girl/Golden Land of My Dreams (Henry Burr and Columbia Quartet);
- A733, When I Dream in the Gloaming of You/My Little Eva (Frank Reade);
- A855, When the Bells Are Ringing, Mary/Call Me Up Some Rainy Afternoon (Ada Jones and Chorus);
- A927, Goodbye, Betty Brown/Scuse Me Today (Harlan);
- A966, Come, Josephine, in My Flying Machine/Washington Grays March (Prince's Band).

Tally's final Columbia disc, A966, came out early in 1911, about the same time he made his last Victor. Just why he quit making records isn't clear. Perhaps the quartet's coast-to-coast vaudeville tours interfered with his filling recording engagements.

### IX. Mayo and Tally's Edison Duets

We now reach (if my midget kit-ten, Little Nipper—named for the Victor dog—will cease strolling over the typewriter keys and give me a fair chance to write) the five Edison records were the climax and virtually the conclusion of Harry Tally's recording career. These Diamond Discs were all made as duets with Harry Mayo and were by far the finest records on which Tally's name ever appeared. For the first time he had perfect recording and the four-

minute playing time gave the duo ample opportunity to turn their performances into typical vaudeville acts.

As far as I can find out, Tally made no records after his last Victors and Columbias appeared in 1911 until early in 1915 when he and Mayo teamed up in the first of their Edison offerings, "At the Ball, That's All"—the one with which they are singing in the "tone test" photo. This was issued as Blue Amberol cylinder 2595 in May, 1915, and as a Diamond Disc shortly afterward. Maurice Burkhart sang "At the Yiddish Wedding Jubilee" on the other side. "At the Ball" seems to have been Mayo's first appearance on records, but he had made some Edison tests on January 4, 1911. It remains a mystery why such a famous ensemble as the Empire City Quartet never recorded.

In the next year and a half, during most of which the tenor and bass were touring in West Coast vaudeville, Tally and Mayo made four other Diamond Discs. 50269 combined a Harry Von Tilzer hit, "When My Ship Comes In," with a pretty but mournful ballad composed by Egbert Van Alstyne, "When I Was a Dreamer (And You Were My Dream)," sung by George Wilton Ballard. The two Harrys chose another Von Tilzer song for their next offering, No. 50297. It was the catchy "Somebody Knows" and was paired with "My Hula Maid," sung by two fine artists who are still living—Gladys Rice and Irving Kaufman. On 50315 they sang my favorite of all the Mayo-Tally duets, "Piney Ridge," coupled with "When Old Bill Bailey Plays the Ukulele," by Billy Murray and chorus. Finally, in December, 1916, came 50394, "I Was Never Nearer Heaven in My Life," with a number in contrasting vein, "There's a Little Bit of Bad in Every Good Little Girl," sung by Gladys Rice and chorus, occupying the other side. In view of the remarkably entertaining quality of their records, it's surprising that Tally and Mayo's Edison output was restricted to five. They had the qualities that should have made them one of the most popular duet teams in recorded music history. Perhaps Tally was already thinking of retiring, and this brought the association to an end.

"I Was Never Nearer Heaven in My Life" also was issued as Blue Amberol 3012, but the other three duets seem not to have been dubbed onto cylinders. *The Edison Phonograph Monthly* for November, 1916, contains a write-up of the pair, which appears to indicate the Empire City Quartet had already disbanded, or at least that Tally and Mayo had ceased to be among its members:

Few people have not heard of the Empire City Quartet, an organization that was a headline feature in high-class vaudeville for many years, and the majority of people who live in the larger cities have been entertained by the superb renditions of these singers. On their vaudeville programs, the members . . . presented solos and duets as well as quartet numbers, and it was this, perhaps, that brought renown to

Harry Mayo and Harry Tally. The latter was the tenor of the organization and his solos always brought repeated demands for encores. And the public also seemed to appreciate the bass renditions of Mayo . . . about as much as they did the tenor numbers of Tally, and both of the artists gradually acquired individual prominence.

They formed a team to render tenor and bass duets, which have proved highly popular features of their programs. It is some time since they started to sing together and today their names seem to have become linked inseparably, at least in the world of vaudeville music. They specialize in songs and ballads of the popular variety and their voices seem to be especially effective in their characteristic arrangements of this class of numbers. Their latest production for the Blue Amberol catalog is a rendition of "I Was Never Nearer Heaven in My Life." This is one of the most popular songs of the day, the melody being sweet and simple and the words having a strong sentimental appeal.

### X. Excerpts from Mayo—Tally Duets

The Edison Company had gone out of the phonograph and record business before I heard my first Mayo and Tally Diamond Disc. I happened to acquire a copy of "Piney Ridge," and when I played it the first time I was captivated almost beyond expression. The song is a successor to "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," written by Ballard Macdonald and Harry Carroll, but having to my ears an even prettier melody. The thing that attracted me most in the beginning was the gorgeous blending of the tenor and bass voices. Never before having heard Mayo I was well-nigh overcome by the resonance, power and beauty of his ponderous tones. There was an indescribable freshness in his voice that I have heard equaled by only one other basso—Gus Reed, who also made Edison records. Although Harry Tally is the subject of this article and Mayo only a subordinate figure, I must admit that on hearing that record I thought—and I still think—that as a vocalist the tenor was dwarfed by his partner. Tally's tones were sweet and pretty, but the tall, black-haired Mayo was a vocal giant. I consider his voice one of the finest I have ever heard in any branch of music.

If the pair's singing enthralled me, I was even more delighted by the nonchalance with which, after the first chorus, they ceased to warble about the little girl waiting by a rustic bridge "somewhere in the Blue Ridge Mountains" (the section of Southwest Virginia in which Tally's mother was born) and went into a typical vaudeville patter act that had no relation to the theme of the song. Some people say the talking by Mayo and Tally spoils their records; to me it's a pearl of great price because of its utter incongruity. This same pattern is followed in three of the remaining four Mayo-Tally duets which I hastened to acquire. Only in "I Was Never Nearer Heaven in My Life" is the incongruous conversation omitted. Since it is a typical sobby song of longing to be a child again and to return to "mother's knee,"

apparently not even the measureless nonchalance of Tally and Mayo could solve the problem of introducing frivolous dialog without jarring the listeners' sensibilities.

However, they let nothing stand in their way in the other four records, and their sublimely irrelevant remarks have amused me so unfailingly over the years that I shall quote portions here. Incidentally, during the singing portion of "At the Ball, That's All," Mayo speaks to Tally in one place as Henry, another as Harry and in a third as Will. This gave me for a long time the idea the tenor's real name was William Henry Tally, instead of the Harry L. listed in the death certificate. I still wonder why Mayo called him Will. After the singing, there is this conversation:

Mayo—Who do you think I saw this Morning, Harry?

Tally—Why, I have no idea. Who was it Harry?

Mayo—Mr. Rockefeller. (He pronounced it Rock-feller.)

Tally—John D. Rockefeller? (Pronounced Rocky-feller.) I'd like to have seen him. He's an old friend of mine. In fact, I knew John D. Rockefeller when he had only one barrel of oil, and now he controls the entire output of oil for the United States. Then there's Andrew Carnegie. Do you know Andrew Carnegie, Harry?

Mayo—He spoke to me one. . . He told me to get out of the road!

Tally—Well, Andrew Carnegie's another old friend of mine. I knew Andrew Carnegie when he had only one piece of steel, and now he controls the entire output of steel for the United States. Then there's—

Mayo—No! No!

Tally—What's the matter?

Mayo—You're going to tell me you knew Heinz when he had one pickle!

Tally, laughing—Well, maybe so.

They then resume singing.

I consider the talking in "When My Ship Comes In" the most amusing of all. After singing an intensely sentimental song, the music stops and the conversation goes like this:

Tally—Why do you always carry a little frog with you, Harry?

Mayo—Little frog tells me when to go home. . . Each time I take a drink I look at the frog. When I see two frogs I go home.

Tally—Well, that's time to go home. But what happened to your little frog the other night? You went home with an awful bun on!

Mayo—I sold it to the brewery for hops and the darn thing croaked! You know the minister lives next door to me?

Tally—Oh yes, I know the parson.

Mayo—Well, he told me if I'm ever in that condition again I'll turn into a rat. Ain't that terrible?

Tally—Why, my boy, it's worse than terrible. It's horrible!

Mayo—Keep your eye on me, will you, Harry?

Tally—I'll do that; I'll watch you closely.

Mayo—And if you see me beginning to grow small, with hair all over my back and ears, and a great long tail—

Tally—Now don't you worry. . . I'll keep my eye on you all right!

Mayo—Pay no attention to me!

Tally—Pay no attention to you?

Mayo—Keep your eye on the cat!

Then they return to their sentimental singing with some astonishing vocal pyrotechnics by Mayo at the end. Incidentally, in "At the Ball, That's All" he gives a gorgeous demonstration of the "bum-bum-bum"

style of singing which Green and Laurie said was originated by the Empire City Quartet.

The comedy in "Somebody Knows" is rather weak, involving a pun about a man named John Rice riding horseback down a street in which a wedding was being performed. As the equestrian came to the church the wedding party emerged and the horse, wishing to enter into the spirit of the occasion, "stopped and threw Rice."

In "Piney Ridge," Mayo asks Tally a riddle "Why is a horse with a sore neck like next Tuesday?" Tally gives up and receives the answer, "Because it's next week (its neck's weak!)" Mayo then asks Tally how it would be possible to divide 999 eggs equally among a thousand soldiers. Tally suggests, "Scramble 'em!" but that isn't the right answer, which turns out to be, "Kill one of the soldiers." What this has to do with the little girl waiting at Piney Ridge for her homesick sweetheart is more than I have ever been able to figure out!

#### XI. In Conclusion

"I Was Never Nearer Heaven In My Life" may have been the last issued record by Tally, but the final solo on which his name appeared—the first he had made in more than five years—was listed on Pathé sapphire disc No. 20082. Tally sang a Charles K. Harris ballad, "Come Back, Let's Be Sweet Hearts Once More," backed by the Sterling Trio's harmonious rendition of "On Lake Champlain." This is a rare record, but through the kindness of Al Debus, I have been fortunate enough to obtain a copy. Mine and the one Al kept for himself have the same defect—the recording seems to begin

too near the edge and the sapphire ball declines to track the first few grooves. But I have never heard Tally's voice sound sweeter or more musical than in this solo swan song.

On September 20, 1917, Tally recorded, without Mayo, an Edison Diamond Disc, "How Can I Forget You?" which was given the serial number 5795. It was scheduled for issue, but the extremely critical Mr. Edison rejected it. That was probably the last recording Tally ever did.

The following year the tenor retired from the stage work, but he and Mayo joined with Clarence Gaskill in writing a fairly successful patriotic song, "That's a Mother's Liberty Loan," which was sung on Columbia record 2471 by a musical comedy baritone, Greek Evans. After Tally went to live in California, Mayo continued in vaudeville for another decade. He also continued to write songs. In 1920 he, Gaskill and Alfred Dubin contrived a follow-up to "Oh, What a Pal Was Mary!" They called it "Who'll Take the Place of Mary?" and it was recorded by most of the phonograph companies. I have no biographical information about Mayo and do not know when he died.

And that, at last, is as much as I know of the story of Harry Tally, Harry Mayo and the Empire City Quartet. In view of the difficulties under which it has been written I shan't be surprised if the Frustrating Forces induce the manuscript to get lost in the mail before it can reach the editor's desk, but I hope it will survive the journey it is beginning on St. Patrick's Day and find its way into type. I have long admired Harry Tally and his singing associates and it is a pleasure to have chronicled, however sketchily, their genuine accomplishments.

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

By EDNA ARMSTRONG

WHEN Baker Electrics, with cut flowers in vases in the corners, would pass you, with elegantly dressed ladies steering them with white-gloved hands on the control?

WHEN every lady wore a breast-pin?

WHEN the what-not shelf showed a bottle of beautifully shaded sands?

WHEN skating-sails carried the owners over the ice at 30 or more miles per hour?

AT the beginning of the season you went skating on "rubber" ice?

The many hours you spent playing croquet?

WHEN girls wore stiff collars with shirtwaists?

WHEN tandem bicycles were often seen on the streets?

WHEN all girls and women wore muffs?

WHEN your fingernails were worn down on one side from playing Jacks on cement sidewalks?

Peek-a Boo blouses? and camisoles?

The Song: Don't Bite the Hand That's Feeding You?

WHEN ladies wore blouses with such full sleeves that they hung like wings?

WHEN you played two kinds of hop-scotch—round and long?

WHEN you played Run, Sheep, Run,—Dare Base—and New Orleans?

WHEN you rode the Merry-go-round for 5c a ride or six for a quarter?

WHEN horses had their heads help up in a most unnatural position by the use of check reins?



# Leonard Garfield Spencer

*As His Daughter Ethel Lovingly Recalls Him*

(And new light on Ada Jones)

By JIM WALSH

How time flies!

More than ten years ago I wrote a biography of the great pioneer recording comedian, Len Spencer, which appeared in HOBBIES from March through August, 1947. The series was one of the most comprehensive I had written, but it was based so largely on third and fourth-hand information that I doubted its being as accurate as I should like.

Time has proved my qualms were justified. Although the mistakes were not intentional, they were numerous and the article stands as perhaps the least trustworthy of any I have published. But now, through a series of fortunate chances, I can present a revised version of the life and personality of Leonard Garfield Spencer, based on the recollections of his charming daughter, Mrs. James A. Yarbray of San Antonio, Texas.

In writing the 1947 "profile" one of my worries was that I had never become acquainted by correspondence, or in person, with any of Len Spencer's surviving relatives. And, when I finally came to know Mrs. Yarbray, it was not through my learning where she lived and writing to her, but through her getting in touch with me.

This was followed by a face to face meeting in 1954 that I regard as one of the major events of my life.

This series will not be a revamping of the one that appeared more than a decade ago and will not try to cover the same ground where the

statements already made are trustworthy. Instead, it will be largely a retelling of Mrs. Yarbray's reminiscences, expressed in writing and in person. First though, since I don't want to be making corrections of preceding errors throughout this article, I shall devote a section to remedying the former misstatements. And, by another lucky "break," I shall also be able to give some additional information about Len Spencer's long-time protegee and associate, the almost legendary Ada Jones. First, the Spencer alterations.

## II Correcting Some Mistakes

In the March, 1947, installment, the name of Len Spencer's mother was printed as Sara Andrew Spencer. It should have been Sara Andrews Spencer. The Spencerian Business College was at Ninth and D Streets in Washington, D. C.

Len and Henry (Harry) Spencer were not twins. Len was several years the older. This error came from a statement by a former pupil of the business college that the boys were twins and when they dressed in each other's clothes were so much alike not even their mother could tell which was which.

In April, I quoted from Fred Gaisberg's book, "The Music Goes Round," a statement that Len Spencer's face was scarred from a razor cut. Mrs. Yarbray says this is not true—at least she never observed any scar. The statement that Len had trouble with failing eyesight is true but does not go far enough. In his late thirties he lost the sight of his right eye.

The May installment says that the name of Garry Allen, which Len sometimes used in his early recording days, was taken from the maiden name of his wife, Miss Elizabeth Allen. Spencer was married more than once, but not to anyone named Elizabeth Allen. Mrs. Yarbray doubts the story that he eloped with a business college student.

Harry Spencer made more records than the former series would indicate. They were mostly recitations. Companies for which he worked included Columbia, Edison, Berliner, Zon-o-phone and Leeds. It was he who made the Columbia record of "President McKinley's Address at the Pan-American Exposition," which has been generally credited to Len. I learned this from a 1907 catalog of Marconi semi-flexible records, pressed from Columbia masters, which specifically gives the artist's name as Harry Spencer. The first Victor rec-

ord (No. 1070), made in 1901, of portions of McKinley's last address, was recited by the Haydn Quartet basso, William F. Hooley. This was soon remade by Len Spencer. Victor record No. 1071 also contained portions of McKinley's last address with snatches of his favorite hymns, sung by the American Quartet (not the same group which Billy Murray headed a decade later). Since Hooley sang bass in the American, no doubt he again did the McKinley impersonation. Frank C. Stanley made an Edison wax cylinder of the McKinley address. Not one was by the President himself, who was mortally wounded before he could have had a chance to record the speech.

After his early Columbia days, Len Spencer signed an exclusive contract with the U.S. Record Company of Newark, New Jersey, and recorded for it a number of years. He returned to Columbia on the death of the U.S. Company, which made "New Jersey" records. Columbia moved its headquarters to New York in 1897, but Len continued to live in Washington for several years. The details of his association with the U.S. Company are well brought out in an article which appeared in the November, 1896, issue of *The Phonoscope*. It probably was written by the editor, Russell Hunting himself, a brilliant recording comedian:

MR. LEONARD SPENCER, better known among his friends as "Len," was born in Washington, D. C., January 12, 1867. His father was the famous Henry C. Spencer, of the Spencerian Business College of Washington, and joint author of the Spencerian system of penmanship. From his 18th to his 21st year, Mr. Spencer taught in his father's college. He then accepted an offer of the Columbia Phonograph Company, of Washington, D. C., to sing to their phonographs. This is a fine art, and few make a success of it, but Mr. Spencer's remarkable powers gave a big impetus to the business of the company. First one Company, then another, outdid each other for his services. Finally he was secured, at a fat salary, by the U. S. Phonograph Company, with whom he has now been for more than six years.

Mr. Spencer has an original way of singing the best Negro songs that makes his records of splendid merit in that line. His sympathetic, well-cultivated voice also enables him to render familiar ballads with great sentiment and feeling. The gifts of comedian and vocalist he combines in an unusual degree. He is the originator of the darky shout in phonograph work. His efforts are always original and his resources seemingly without limit. He has a repertoire of fully 600 songs, of which more than 300 are being catalogued at the present time, and the total records he has made exceeds 62,000.

Some of his great hits are: "Nigger and the Bee," "Little Liza Loves You," "Little Alabama Coon," etc. "The New Bully" he has sung ten times a week for six months with great success, May Irwin having complimented him especially on his rendering of this song. Mr. Spencer is one of the few successful imitators of Chevalier's coster songs, where he seems not only to have caught the spirit of the original singer, but also to have entirely donned the character of the East End Cockney.

In the descriptive selections played by Issler's Orchestra, Mr. Spencer manipulates the castagnettes, clogs, tambourines, etc., making also the necessary announcements and the remarks that cause so much laughter by those who have listened to these popular

**FAVORITE  
PIONEER  
RECORDING  
ARTISTS**

Conducted By JIM WALSH



A copy of a 90-year-old photo, taken December 7, 1867, showing the future great recording artist, Len Spencer, when he was not quite 11 months old.

selections. Gifted with a powerful voice he utilizes it to great advantage in announcing for band and other records where a number of machines are used, necessitating great vocal power to fill the horns of the several machines which are running at the same time.

He has lately formed a co-partnership with the popular artist, Mr. John P. Hogan, for the production of a sketch called "Our Sunny Southern Home," a true character delineation of the Southern Negro, with all his wit, humor and pathos. This sketch has been produced at a number of the leading theatres in and around New York, meeting with the approval of critical audiences.

Mr. Spencer is a universal favorite as is shown by the many songs that have been dedicated to him by such popular composers as Monroe H. Rosenfeld, Addison Kent, Will Carlton and others.

Perhaps it may be well to explain that the Chevalier mentioned in the foregoing quotation was an English music hall comedian, Albert Chevalier—not the still active French singer, Maurice Chevalier. One of the songs dedicated to Spencer was a sequel to "The New Bully," called "De Bully's Weddin' Night." It was written by Will C. Carleton, the once famous author of "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse," and John W. Cavanaugh, who was credited with the music of the original "Bully" song. In later years it has been corrupted into a hill-billy tune, "Bully of the Town."

A year and a half later, in July, 1898, after Spencer had returned to his original Columbia allegiance, the *Phonoscope* said:

Len Spencer is acknowledged to be the most versatile artist in the record making business. He is a Washingtonian and a member of the famous family that brought Spencerian penmanship into the world. Early in life he began to shine in private theatricals and minstrel entertainments. About ten years ago he began record-making for the Columbia Phonograph Company, and he has won a place at the head of the profession. Gifted with a splendid voice and a talent for interpreting the comic as well as the sentimental,

he sings effectively comic songs, Negro songs or ballads of a sentimental sort.

The "record of pure gold," mentioned in the May, 1947, installment was presented to Thomas A. Edison by National Phonograph Company jobbers during a convention in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, July 17-20, 1906. Len Spencer read the message on the cylinder, which is as follows:

Mr. Edison: This record of pure gold, which addresses these words to you, is a gift from the jobbers engaged in the distribution of the Edison phonograph and records. They have come from the East, the West, the North and the South of this fair land of ours. They are your loyal and admiring friends—your ambassadors of commerce, whose mission it is to distribute your products to the far quarters of the globe. By the touch of your colossal inventive genius you have created industries giving employment to countless thousands the world over. The wheels of commerce occupied in the production of your invention sing a never-ending song of praise to your magnificent achievements.

To the seven existing wonders of the world you added the phonograph, which is the eighth wonder of the world. It speaks every language uttered by human tongue, and in the field of language-study it is the greatest educator the world has ever known. With song and story it will continue till the end of time to entertain the multitudes of the earth, who place the name of Thomas A. Edison at the head of the column of the world's greatest captains of industry.

The record ended with an orchestra playing "Auld Lang Syne." Each jobber was given an ordinary wax copy of the "gold record," and several years ago I was fortunate enough to obtain one, which I still have.

In spite of its label of an earlier era, the record made for Victor dealers, described in the May issue, came out in 1905—not 1903.

Turning to the June, 1947, HOBBIES, Spencer's association with Ada Jones began in 1904, not 1905.

The speculation in the July issue that Myrtle Spencer was Harry's daughter was incorrect. He had no children. She was Len Spencer's child. One of the most glaring errors I committed was in giving the names of Len's children as Michael, Ethel and Clare. This was taken from a New York newspaper obituary notice in which the names were wrongly spelled. Spencer was not survived by any sons. His three surviving children were Myrtle, Ethel and Clara. The Ethel Harboro mentioned as taking part in one record was not Ethel Spencer.

In the August, 1947 issue, there is a reference to Len Spencer's last record, the Edison Diamond Disc of "Uncle Fritz and the Children's Orchestra," introducing the "Christmas Symphony" composed by F. X. Chwatal. Mrs. Yarbray recalls going to the Edison studios with her father and playing a toy instrument—probably a triangle—as a member of the "children's orchestra," which helped him make the record.

Spencer's death occurred in his office, not at his home. He was 47 years of age, not 46, and the record played



Len Spencer, about the time his recording career began in the late 1880's.

at his funeral was not—Mrs. Yarbray says—an Edison cylinder but a specially made over-sized Columbia disc. She still has the record. When the comedian died he was not signing a letter, but was talking with a woman performer who had come into his Lyceum. Mrs. Yarbray, then a girl of 16, was standing beside him when the fatal attack occurred. She says, The Lord's Prayer record has a symbol in script along the edge: Sp 18-19367-2" and the 23rd Psalm, "Sp 18-19366-2." Undoubtedly, "Sp" stands for "Special."

### III New Discoveries About Ada Jones

That seems to take care of the corrections. Now, before relating how I came to be acquainted with Mrs. Yarbray and privileged to put into type her recollections of her distinguished father, I should like to digress briefly to relate some newly discovered facts concerning that most remarkable of phonograph comedienesses, Ada Jones. After all, it was reading a magazine article of mine about the inimitable Ada that caused Mrs. Yarbray to write her first letter to me.

My Ada Jones series appeared in



Ada Jones sending a joke by wireless, about 1921.

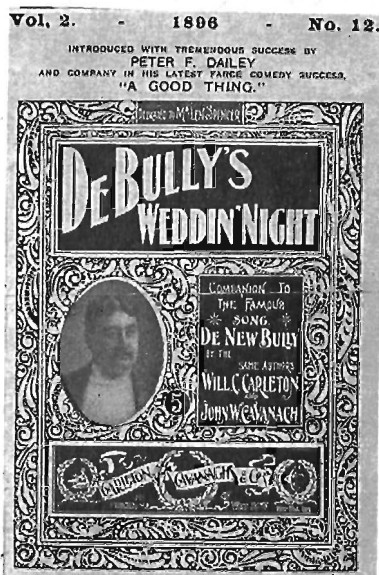
HOBBIES from June, 1946, through January, 1947. It was as comprehensive as it well could be considering the circumstances in which it was written, but it left some things unrevealed. For instance, although I knew the singer was born in, or near Manchester, England—probably during the 1870's—I had been unable to obtain her birth date. Neither did I give the date of her marriage to a vaudeville "song and dance man," Hugh Flaherty.

Now, thanks to an enthusiastic admirer of Ada Jones, I can. Milford H. Fargo of 1279 Park Avenue, Rochester 10, New York, is a young man who is a member of the faculty of the Eastman School of Music. Although his activities have been in the field of fine music, Mr. Fargo recently became acquainted with some of the cylinder recordings of Ada Jones and was charmed. He recognized Ada as a great artist—as great in her way as the operatic stars in theirs. He determined to find out everything he could about Ada, but had no luck until he discovered in a public library the old copies of HOBBIES containing my articles. After reading these he wrote to me for more information, sent me a number of questionnaires and began doing independent research, which he is still carrying on. He has acquired some 550 discs and cylinders by Ada Jones and hopes to establish a memorial to her by assembling the most nearly complete collection of her records in existence.

Seeking to learn Ada's birth date and the names of her parents, he obtained a copy of the information she gave when the New York State census of 1915 was taken. With this as a basis, he wrote to the General Register Officer, Somerset House, London, and as he says, "In a couple of very long weeks I was rewarded with a certified copy of an entry of birth."

Now, owing to the fine work of Milford Fargo, I am able to report that Ada Jones was born June 1, 1873, in her parents' home at 78 Manchester Street, Oldham, Lancashire, England, a suburb of Manchester. Her birth was registered August 18, 1873, and she seems to have been given only the one name of Ada. She was not quite 49 years of age when she died in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, May 2, 1922. Incidentally, her death certificate gave her age as 46, not 40, as was printed in the former series.

Ada Jones' father, James Jones, was an innkeeper. An Oldham directory of 1875 lists him as the innkeeper of "The British Flag," at the Manchester Street address. Her mother's name was—I discovered to my surprise and pleasure—Ann Jane Walsh. As far as I know, she was not related to me, but my late father, who vastly admired Ada Jones, would have been captivated at the thought of a possible family connection. Ada said her mother was a well-known professional singer, but Oldham authorities who have aided Mr. Fargo in his research have found no record of her singing career. However, as he remarks, "it has been a long-stand-



Cover of an 1896 song hit dedicated to Len Spencer.

ing custom in Oldham for a public house to provide entertainment, and it is possible that Ada Jones' mother sang in "The British Flag." The original building is no longer standing, but the site is now occupied by another public house called "The Lancashire Vaults," built in around 1900 to 1910. Apparently there are no photos of the old "British Flag."

Ada's baptism is registered at the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Patrick in Oldham. A search of local newspapers revealed an obituary notice for Ada's baby brother, Arthur James Jones, aged six months, born October 24, 1874.

Mr. Fargo adds: "Papa must have liked that name for he chose Arthur F. for one of his sons from his third wife. No living relatives have been located, but an article by John Gaunt appeared last month in a local paper (the Oldham Chronicle, I think), which brought my search to the attention of the readers in the hope of doing so."

Milford searched the marriage records of the Borough of Manhattan and finally discovered Certificate No. 16264. It was that of Ada Jones and Hughie Flaherty, and said: "I hereby certify that the above-named groom and bride were joined in marriage by me, in accordance with the Laws of the State of New York, at 217 Second Avenue, in the Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, this 9th of August, 1904." The marriage must have taken place some two or three months before Billy Murray heard Ada singing in Huber's Museum and recommended to Len Spencer that he engage her as his associate. She often sang to the accompaniment of colored song slides and was considered one of the best "delineators" of that type of work. The first issued record in which she worked with Len Spencer appears to have been the Columbia of "The Hand of Fate," which came out

in February, 1905, as cylinder 32623 and disc 3050. Henry Spencer played a minor part in it. This burlesque sketch likewise was recorded for other companies. The Imperial record label, made by the Leeds & Catlin Company, refers to her as "Miss Ida Jones."

The 1915 census report says, "Ada Jones was born in England, but had been in the United States for 35 years. She was listed as an alien, so apparently she never became a naturalized American. Her occupation was given as "professional singer." Her husband was noted as Hughie Flaherty, 36 years of age (six years younger than Ada), an actor by profession who had been in this country 33 years. The marriage certificate gave his birthplace as County Kerry, Ireland, his father as John Flaherty, and his mother as Kate Sullivan—certainly an all-Irish combination. Their only child, Sheilah, was nine years old when the census was taken." Mrs. Frances Seay Verme, who lived next door to the Flahertys as a girl, told Mr. Fargo that Sheilah married after her mother's death and had a son. She thought Sheilah, after moving away from Huntington Station, died in the early 1930's.

I am happy to pass on these newly learned facts concerning the woman whom I have already referred to as "the almost legendary Ada Jones." The singer was so nearly a legendary figure in her lifetime that almost from the beginning of her recording career rumors periodically swept the country that she had died. For instance, the following denial appeared in the Edison publication, *Along Broadway*, for June, 1919, together with a photo showing her cooking over an old-fashioned coal stove:

A little while ago someone wrote in to us for corroboration of a rumor of Ada Jones' death. We denied it emphatically. As Mark Twain once said of a similar rumor about himself, "It was greatly exaggerated." Just how alive Miss Jones is may be imagined from this picture, where she looks competent to fry hot cakes for a whole family. We know very well that the May supplement established her presence on this mortal sphere more completely than any picture could, however, with the two new numbers her admirers hastened to carry home.

To conclude the Ada Jones section, I believe it should be interesting to reprint my article, "Miss Ada Waxed Hot in Her Day," which I contributed to the Capitol Record Company's *Music Views* magazine for June, 1953, and which made Mrs. Yarbray, who accidentally happened upon it, decide to write to me:

Today's record business is full of "glamour girls"—Margaret Whiting, Dinah Shore, Doris Day, Patti Page, Rosemary Clooney—but for ten years or so, beginning in 1904, the phonograph had only one "Personality Miss." Her name was Ada Jones.

In proportion to the number of "talking-machines" then in use, blonde, blue-eyed, buxom Ada probably had the greatest following of any woman recording artist.

Born in Manchester, England, Ada was brought to the United States as



a baby and made her debut at seven in the old National Theater, Philadelphia, singing "Killarney" in a strong, sweet voice that filled the house. As a child prodigy, she appeared in stage shows and made records—as tests only—for the North American Phonograph Company.

In 1904 the singer's real phonograph career began. She was singing in Huber's Museum in New York, when Len Spencer, a famous recorder of comic sketches, engaged her as his assistant. Spencer coached her so carefully that soon her skill in the use of dialects and impersonating various types of characters was considered uncanny.

Almost overnight, she became the most popular woman singer of sentimental ballads.

Ada's vogue was amazing. Although the wife of Hughie Flaherty, a vaudevillian, she was generally believed to be single. Lighthouse keepers in Australia, gold miners in Alaska, plantation owners in Africa, wrote letters of proposal to the "Dream Girl" whose voice came to them out of a phonograph horn. Few had seen her photo, and none of those far-away admirers knew she suffered from epilepsy.

Miss Jones' greatest popularity came in 1907 when she formed a duet partnership with Billy Murray. They worked together 15 years as perhaps the most popular singing team in recorded music's history. A fantastic phase of her career came with periodic rumors that Ada had died. Phonograph companies denied them, but the rumors persisted. Even more oddly, there are record collectors today who insist the soprano is still living, although Ada Jones died in High Point, N. C., May 2, 1922.

Within the past few weeks the alert and resourceful Milford Fargo has been informed by J. Taylor Finley, superintendent of schools in Huntington Station, the school's records give Sheila Flaherty's birth date as January 14, 1906. I thought it would be interesting and amusing to check the Victor, Columbia, Edison and Zon-o-phone supplements for that month and find out what records Sheila's mother was currently represented by at the time that young lady arrived to gladden the lives of Hughie and Ada. My research yielded the following:

Ada's Victor records for January, 1906—made, of course, a few months before being placed on sale—included No. 4548, "My Word," a solo in which she imitated the famous English comedienne, Katie Barry (Miss Jones frequently did imitations of Vesta Victoria and other English music hall favorites, singing their songs as a rule better than they did) and two descriptive specialties with Len Spencer, 4550, "Fritz and Louisa," and 4549, "The Golden Wedding." Len also teamed up on 4554 with the animal imitator, Al S. Holt, who died in London in 1924, to do "Punch and Judy"—a record I haven't found.

Neither Ada nor Len was in the Columbia January list, but in February they were represented by a cylinder, 32868, of "Fritz and Louisa" and a disc, 3314, of "The Golden Wedding." Their January two-minute Edison cylinder offerings were a solo by Ada, No. 9182, "I'm a Woman of Importance" (no doubt the proud young mother felt she was important after producing Sheila!) and a German dialect comic sketch by the pair, 9172, "Fritz and Louisa" (again!) which was vastly popular for years. For Zon-o-phone, Ada alone sang "Have You Seen My Henry Brown?"

(348); she and Len did "The Fair Fisher Maiden and Her Catch" (341) and "The Golden Wedding" (342), and Len on 347 gave an unassisted version of "The Musical Yankee." No doubt they also had records in the January lists of Leeds, American, International and the other "pirate" companies of that day. For the benefit of those who are wondering, "Where's the Zon-o-phone record of 'Fritz and Louisa'? I'll say that Zono didn't get around to issuing it until August, 1906.

These numerous "releases" give an idea of how popular Ada Jones had become, in solos and with the amiable Mr. Spencer, within less than a year after her records first appeared. Now, more than half a century later, the buxom comedienne's ability to charm her hearers has not died—witness her effect on Milford Fargo!—although she has been dead 36 years. Milford's latest discovery is that Ada had two stepmothers and three of her half-brothers are still living.

I have found the following entry in the Imperial record catalog for October, 1906, showing how popular the Jones and Spencer specialties had become in little more than a year and a half. Eighteen of their duets are listed, including one, No. 44567, "The Future Mrs. 'Awkins," which is not well known in this country and may have been made primarily for export to Great Britain. The description reads:

#### VAUDEVILLE SKETCHES BY LEN SPENCER AND ADA JONES

These duets by Mr. Spencer and Miss Jones are becoming more and more popular. The reason is not hard to find. The public knows the work of these artists is up-to-date in every respect. Their dialogue is bright, catchy and witty, and shows the effect not only of a thorough understanding of what is demanded by the public, but of careful study and a determination to meet the demand.

#### IV I Hear From Mrs. Yarbray

There still seems something almost fairy-like about the way I finally came into communication with Leo-

nard Garfield Spencer's daughter, Ethel. For years before I wrote the 1947 HOBBIES series I had tried vainly to find out if any members of the immediate Spencer family were still alive and where they were. The nearest I came to obtaining that information was when a veteran Edison official wrote me he had heard that "Mrs. Len Spencer and her daughters are believed to be living somewhere in Arizona," but just where he had no idea. The report was incorrect, for Mrs. Spencer had died before the letter was written and the mother and daughters had not gone to Arizona. They had instead, moved to Texas.

Then came the near miracle. On July 29, 1953, I experienced one of those "thrills of a lifetime," when I received the following letter, forwarded by Bob Johnson, the editor of *Musio Views*:

Capitol Publications, Inc.,  
Sunset and Vine  
Hollywood 28, California  
Attention: Mr. Robert E. Johnson,  
Editor.

Dear Sir:

Through a friend connected with the San Antonio Music Company I have read your June, 1953, edition of *Musio Views*, and found an article of great interest to me. It is headed "Miss Ada Waxed Hot in her day."

My particular interest in this article rests in the fact that the Len Spencer whom Mr. Walsh mentions is my father. I would like to have a copy of this edition and would appreciate your mailing me one and I will gladly pay whatever charges are necessary.

I would also be interested in knowing whether you have published an article on Len Spencer. If so, I would certainly appreciate having a copy of it also. My father died December 15, 1914, and it is rarely that I hear of him or his recordings, so this mention of him really touched me. . . . Sincerely yours, Mrs. James A. Yarbray, 843 Peck Avenue, San Antonio 10, Texas.

Elatedly, I lost no time in writing to Mrs. Yarbray and seeking additional information about that remarkable man, her father, whom I had admired since I was a small boy. Almost by return mail I received a long and memorable reply.

(To be continued)

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

By CLARENCE EDWARD HELLER

"That Old Sweetheart of Mine," by James Whitcomb Riley, on every table in 1904?

"Ben Hur," by General Lew Wallace, when it was a book before the play?

"Harper's Round Table," for the year 1898, by Santa Claus, bound to give boys' cheer?

"Youth's Companion," in every boy's stocking, when Grover Cleveland was president?

"Golden Days" and "Golden Hours," with their wonderful effects on childhood's fancies—two of our leading children's weeklies?

When porcelain-lined bath tubs took the place of tin contraptions with wooden sides?

"Hood's Sarsaparilla" Rainy Day Puzzle which you obtained with the box tops?

William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech?





Jim Walsh, author of HOBBIES' "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," which has been a favorite of collectors for many years, was interviewed May 15 on Dave Garroway's coast-to-coast NBC network television program. The upper photograph shows Dave and Jim in action. Dave, with back to camera, is near an Edison cylinder juke box, whose latest patent date is 1893. Jim stands beside an old Victor talking machine with outside horn. Near the Victor machine is an Edison Opera model cylinder phonograph of about 1910.

The lower view shows a close-up of the interview. The part in which Jim appeared was televised from Mill Mountain in the heart of the South Roanoke, Va., residential section.

—WSLS—TV (Roanoke, Va.) photo by Maurice Wright





This photo of Len Spencer's comedy partner, Ada Jones, was taken a few months before her death in Rocky Mount, N. C., May 2, 1922. This is taken from an old photograph, hence the crease mark.



The first president of the Columbia Phonograph Company, Edward D. Easton (probably taken about 1899), and Len Spencer on the right.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

# Leonard Garfield Spencer

## *As His Daughter Ethel Lovingly Recalls Him*

(And new light on Ada Jones)

Part II

By JIM WALSH

### I. Ada Jones' Last Days

If Milford Fargo, tireless researcher that he is into the life and achievements of Ada Jones, continues to unearth more valuable information this series will wind up being as much an Ada Jones saga as the intimate portrayal of her distinguished associate, Len Spencer, which it is primarily intended to be.

Since the first installment was written, Mr. Fargo has obtained material which simply shouts for reproduction. His inquiries caused the Rocky Mount (N. C.) Telegram for Sunday, March 9, to publish a long "feature story" recalling the fact that Ada Jones died in the North Carolina town, and reprinting the 1922 accounts of her illness and death. Since most Len Spencer admirers also admire Ada Jones, I believe they will forgive my delaying the reminiscences of Spencer's daughter, Ethel, long enough to place the 36-year-old news stories in the record.

The Evening Telegram for Friday, April 28, 1922, carried the following advance story:

Rocky Mount is to be treated to a personal appearance of the celebrated phonograph star, Ada Jones, known wherever phonographs are played. Ada Jones makes records for several of the leading companies, among them the Victor and Edison, and hardly a home possessing a phonograph does not have records made by this star. In addition to Miss Jones, on the concert to be given at the Palace tomorrow afternoon and night will be seen Miss Beth Hamilton, a violinist of note, Miss Mabel Loomis, pianist and soprano singer of pleasing voice, and Armstrong, the man of mystery, who will entertain by moments of mystifying and being funny. Altogether it will prove an entertainment of high merit and one to be enjoyed immensely. In addition to this concert of stellar artists will be shown a picture program comprising Dorothy Dalton's latest Paramount photoplay, "The Crimson Challenge," from the widely read novel of Beulah Dix, "Theron of Lost Valley," and a two-reel comedy.

On Tuesday, May 2, the Rocky Mount paper carried a one-column headline, "Phonograph Star Dangerously Ill," with a sub-head reading, "Little Hope Entertained for Ada Jones, Who Is Critically Ill Here":

There is a likelihood that Ada Jones, noted singer and phonograph star, may have sung her swan song when she appeared in concert at the Palace theatre Saturday night, as Miss Jones is now resting in a local hospital after being stricken with a serious illness here yesterday morning before leaving for Tarboro, where she was booked to appear last night.

Hospital attendants and the other members of Miss Jones' special company regard her condition as most serious and entertain grave fears for her recovery. It is stated that she is

suffering from a complication of kidney troubles.

Miss Jones, it is stated, collapsed in her room at the hotel yesterday morning and was found in a semi-conscious condition by other members of her company when they joined her before catching a train for Tarboro. She was immediately rushed to a local hospital where she is now receiving medical attention.

That same evening, Miss Jones died, and the next day, May 3, the headline, "Ada Jones, Phonograph Star, Gets Death Summons Here," shocked Evening Telegram readers. The story, on page 1, read as follows:

The smiles and applause that greeted Ada Jones, noted comedienne and phonograph record star, when she sang "Oh Lordy," one of the coon songs that brought her into such great prominence, and then "You Ain't the Man" as an encore at a local theatre Saturday night, proved a farewell tribute to the famous singer of character songs whose name is familiar wherever phonograph records have gone, for the music turned out to be the swan song of the internationally known artist.

Miss Jones, in private life Mrs. Hugh Flaherty of New York, died at St. Mary's hospital last night. Rushed to this institution Tuesday morning after she had been discovered by other members of her company in a semi-conscious condition at her room at a local hotel, the comedienne put up a plucky but losing battle with death Monday, Monday night and yesterday. Attending physicians declared her to be suffering from uremia and little hope was entertained for her recovery from the moment she was stricken. She gradually grew worse and then came the end last night shortly after ten o'clock.

Miss Jones, who was 46 years of age (really 48—J.W.), is survived by her husband, who is a dancer; her step-mother, Mrs. A. D. Jones, of New York, and one daughter, Miss Sheelah (sic!) Flaherty, also of New York. None of these relatives are expected to come to the city as members of Miss Jones' company, which appeared in concert at the Palace theatre Saturday night, are winding up affairs here. Remains will be shipped to New York, the home of the deceased, tonight, and funeral services and interment will take place there. Miss Jones was born in England and came to this country to make her home when a young girl.

Members of Miss Jones' company state that she had shown no signs of illness recently although she appeared nervous and overworked. She attended church services, however, Sunday evening, and was slated to go on to Tarboro Monday morning, where she was booked for Monday night. It was when members of her company went to her hotel room shortly before noon Monday to get her and catch the train for Tarboro that they found she had collapsed into a semi-conscious condition.

While Miss Jones was widely known as a concert artist, her fame lay primarily in the field of producing graphophone records. She had made hundreds of records for the Victor, Edison, Brunswick, O-Kay (sic) and other companies and had probably furnished more genuine amusement with her character and dialect songs than any

other graphophone artist. In addition to making a number of solo records she has worked with such internationally known personages as Cal Stewart, Len Spencer and Billy Murray. She enjoyed the distinction of being the first woman to make graphophone records whose voice could be distinctly understood.

Included among her best known records are "Oh, Lordy," "Irish Blood," "You Ain't the Man," "Life's Highway," and "Just Plain Folks," while her duet with Billy Murray, "Peaches and Cream," takes first place for popularity. It was altogether appropriate that her swan song Saturday night should have been two of her inimitable and most popular character songs. Residents of the city generally were grieved to learn of her death, and many messages of condolence from friends and former business associates over the entire United States have come in to members of the company here.

Her remains are reposing at a local undertaking establishment today, but will be shipped to her home in New York tonight.

The Telegram article contains a few rather inconsequential errors. I am unable to find that Ada Jones ever made Brunswick records, and her "Peaches and Cream" duet was not with Billy Murray but Len Spencer. And that once more brings us back to the topic from which we have strayed.

## II. A Letter from Mrs. Yarbray

Receiving a letter from the daughter of Len Spencer, the greatest recording artist of the 1890's and early 1900's, ranks high among my treasured experiences. As I read my first letter from Mrs. Ethel Yarbray, my mind went back to September 9, 1948, the morning of the John Bieling Day party for the pioneer recording artists and their admirers at Garden City, Long Island. Once more I seemed to hear the Rev. Edward Vesper remark: "Now if we just had Len Spencer with us today, everything would be perfect!"

Here is Mrs. Yarbray's letter:

August 2, 1953. Dear Mr. Walsh: Your wonderful letter arrived day before yesterday, and I cried with happiness and memories.

To me my father was the most wonderful man in the world—the finest—the handsomest—I adored him! I was Papa's little "Happy Heart!"

It was a shock, though a happy one, to learn that there are folks who remember and admire him, for I have lived in the belief that he was long ago forgotten.

I appreciate all you have written me, and am writing to obtain the articles and magazines of which you wrote in order that I may read and keep them. I remember there was always a copy of Variety at home while Papa lived. I would sincerely appreciate having the new article, "Jottings from the Phonoscope," if you would be so kind.

It is hard to write how much it means to me to learn all that you have written about Papa. I had forgotten about sister Myrtle recording "Mama's Boy" and "Little Eva," but now I vividly recall Papa coaching her to pitch her voice just so for recording. One of the outstanding memories of Papa is of him sitting at the piano, accompanying himself as he sang "Silver Threads Among the Gold" or "When You and I Were Young, Maggie." No sweeter music was ever rendered.

Mother passed away in 1941 and is buried beside my father in Glenwood Cemetery, Washington, D. C.

Sister Myrtle, the oldest daughter, married twice, had no children and died in 1929 of tuberculosis contracted from her first husband.

Sister Clara, the youngest daughter, made a career in commercial art and in oil painting, retiring several years ago due to ill health. There was another daughter, Constance, between



Len Spencer (third in the front row) was one of a group of prominent performers who signed exclusive Columbia recording contracts in 1898. Also shown in this faded photo are: Front row—George Emerson, recording technician; George Graham, comedian; Vess L. Ossman, banjoist; Dan W. Quinn, comedian, and Clyde Emerson, technician. George Gaskin, tenor, is sitting on platform. Standing in background are: George Schweinfest, piccolo and flute soloist; Victor Emerson, recording director; Steve Porter, comedian, and Russell Hunting, comedian.

Clara and me, who died as a baby before Clara was born.

As for me, I was the second daughter. I married an Army man, who retired as Chief Warrant Officer almost ten years ago after serving over 44 years of continuous service. We have a lovely daughter, Clara, who is married and has a precious baby girl, Karen, almost eight months old. That is the history of the Len Spencer family since Papa passed away now almost 39 years ago.

I have the two records, "The Lord's Prayer" and "The 23rd Psalm," that Papa recorded two or more years prior to his death and that were played at his funeral. These records were flown down to San Antonio at Sister Myrtle's request and played again at her funeral.

Once again let me thank you for taking time out to write me a letter with which I shall never part. If you are ever down this way, please come by for a visit, for we should be so happy to see you. Sincerely yours,

ETHEL L. YARBRAV.

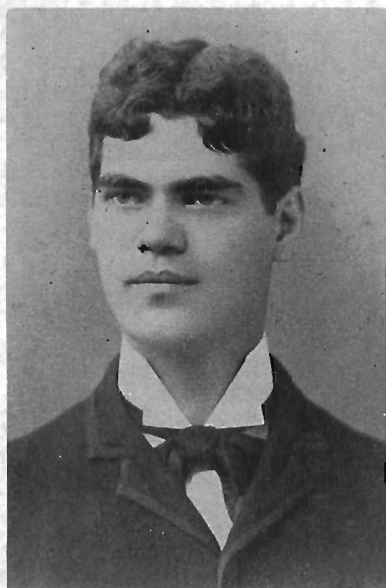
In a letter written to me recently, on January 20, 1958, Mrs. Yarbray again touches lovingly on her father's fondness for seating himself at the piano and singing in his rich baritone voice songs of a more serious nature than his name is usually associated with:

... One of Papa's outstanding characteristics was his desire to always help the other fellow. I don't believe he ever turned down a request for help and when he passed away his books were a record of unpaid loans and unpaid commissions; and more of his goodness was the fact that the majority of his loans were more like stakes that never were expected to be repaid. It was why Papa never held on to any money.

My fondest memory of Papa was as he sat at the piano improvising chords and melodies and nearly always ending up with "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," which was one of his favorites. Papa had a touch that is given to few and those who were privileged to hear him play never tired of listening. He sang the words as he played and I loved it.

For our pleasure, Papa would sometimes do a little song and soft-shoe dance routine to the words and music of "While strolling in the park one day, in the merry, merry month of May." He had small hands and feet, so that for a large man he was light on his feet and graceful in every move he made. Papa stood over six feet, or six feet one, and weighed right around 200 pounds, without an ounce of excess fat, anywhere. . . . a powerful well-built physique. . . . What a striking figure he made in his top hat and tails, his satin-lined Inverness cape coat and his cane! He had a dynamic personality and acted as master of cere-





LEN SPENCER, in the early 1890's, when he was making "New Jersey" cylinder records for the U. S. Phonograph Co., of Newark, N. J.

monies at the annual Motion Picture Exhibitors' Balls, being as much a drawing card as the actors and actresses whom he introduced. . . I adored him—knew his faults—but could so easily overlook and forgive them because to me he was the most wonderful Papa in the world, and of course the handsomest man in the world. Childish of me, maybe, but remember I was just 16 when I lost him, so my love also contained the hero-worship so familiar to small fry where fathers are concerned.

When you write about him don't forget the minstrel show with the phonographs installed in the blackface wax figures at Coney Island that was burned to the ground and cost him thousands!

## II. Concerning Coney Island

I believe the Len Spencer Minstrels at Coney Island were a separate attraction from a "live" minstrel show which he seems to have had briefly in the 1890's. It consisted of nine or more "dummies" made up to represent popular recording artists, including Spencer himself as inter-locutor. Columbia "sound-magnifying graphophones," which gave great volume, provided the music. Not long ago I had a letter from Edo McCullough of Arlington, Va., author of a fascinating new book, "Good Old Coney Island." Mr. McCullough's family has been intimately associated with Coney Island enterprises for generations. He tells me the Len Spencer Minstrels were destroyed in the terrible fire that wiped out the Steeplechase Park at Coney Island on July 28, 1907.

Len Spencer wrote and recorded a number of descriptive sketches dealing with Coney. One, by him and Ada Jones, was "Coming Home From Coney Island." Then there was another which purported to reproduce "Cummings' Indian Congress." Concerning it Mr. McCullough comments: "Cummings' Indian Congress was a Steeplechase Park attraction. It was a typical Wild West show with many Indians, cowboys and horses." "Louis

and Lena" is staged at Luna Park, and gives Ada an excuse to sing "Meet Me Down at Luna, Lena." In "Peaches and Cream," the blonde heroine, "Peaches," asks her news-boy sweetheart to "take me in bathing down at Coney Island." He agrees, explaining he wants to see what her natural complexion is like. The Jones and Spencer skits sometimes contain pathos but more often they feature comedy, frequently of a rather boisterous kind. To my perception, their funniest line probably occurs in "Every Little Bit Helps," when Len, as a Negro lover, strikes a domineering pose, and Ada acidly retorts: "Who you think you talkin' to? Go count yo'self, nigger—you ain't so many!"

## III. Excerpts From Other Letters

Once begun, the correspondence between Len Spencer's daughter and myself flourished and, as the preceding quotation indicates, has continued to this day. It was not long before we abandoned the formal greeting of "Dear Mr. Walsh" and "Dear Mrs. Yarbray," and began calling each other "Cousin Jim" and "Cousin Ethel"—a Southern custom when there is a warm friendship but no kin.

Now I shall quote from other letters of "Cousin Ethel," but for simplicity's sake shall not identify them by dates. At times I may transpose paragraphs from one letter to another, in order to give better structure and more coherence to the gracious lady's recollections of her father.

I have just been looking back to the lines in which Mrs. Yarbray describes the way in which Spencer would do a song and dance to amuse his little girls, and the thought occurs that his attitude toward his children was like that of Charles Dickens toward Dickens' own numerous brood. Dickens used to dance with his daughters and on one occasion, his daughter Mamie relates, hopped out of bed in the middle of the night and practiced some steps he was to perform with them and which he feared he might have forgotten. Indeed, because of the skill with which he portrayed so many types of characters in the limited compass of a phonograph record it seems to me Len Spencer might well be called "The Dickens of the Phonograph." His abilities were so many and varied and everything he did he did so well that had he turned his attention to novel writing, his ability to create character and master dialect might have made him another Dickens.

Back to the letters: Regardless of missing dates and transpositions, the words that follow are those of Mrs. Yarbray herself:

I have been trying to get an opportunity to go through the trunk in the storeroom in which I have some photographs of the family, and was waiting to do this before writing to you, but time flies. . . I have, I believe, a photograph of Daddy, Mama, Myrtle, Grandmother Spencer and little me taken before my younger sister was born—which means in 1901 or 1902. I also think I have photographs of Papa

and Russell Hunting in cut-away coats and top hats. (The picture is really one of Spencer and the first president of the Columbia Graphophone Company, Edward D. Easton—J.W.) Many photographs were not marked and in moving, after Mother died, I destroyed many whom I did not remember.

There were several newspaper articles on Father's death in the New York papers and many were incorrect in several details, but at the time we felt it made little or no difference. There was one article that said his daughter had gone to his office to ask for some money to buy a coat, which was entirely untrue. I used to go down sometimes after school or on Saturdays just to be there or to help in the song-slide department or to help the book-keeper post, and I just happened to be standing by Daddy when he slumped over at his desk. Some of the men present put him down on the floor, they called a doctor and then the coroner—and that was it. Mother did not see him until he was at the Campbell Undertaking Parlors. He was buried from the Campbell chapel—or, I should say, he was taken to the crematory from there.

As for George W. Johnson, "The Whistling Coon," I remember his name distinctly but cannot recall any details of his personal life. Nor do I remember his working as a porter for Papa, though of course I wouldn't know that, anyhow, as little as I knew of Papa's business. I also haven't the slightest idea of where Papa and Ada Jones rehearsed. I know very little about their professional association.

Billy Murray is the name I remember best as concerns Papa and his phonograph. It grieves me to know that he is not too well and I have intended writing to him. (Note—This was written before Billy's death in August, 1954.) I do not recall any concerts given by the Eight Famous Victor Artists in San Antonio. Billy Murray played in Atlanta at one time during our stay there, but if I recall right our daughter Clara Elizabeth either had chickenpox or I had the mumps, or Arthur had the flu, or something in the way of sickness kept us from contacting him at that time.

I wonder if you knew that President



*Len Spencer*

A silhouette study of Len Spencer made in 1902 by the once famous artist, X. Ackley Sackett.



James A. Garfield was Papa's god-father? He was a dear friend of Papa's father. Also a point of interest and pride to us is the fact that Sister Clara had as her godmother Clara Barton, the Red Cross nurse. Papa's mother, Sara Jane Spencer, and Clara Barton were dear friends, and I have a letter or two written by Clara Barton to Grandmother Spencer, who was among the first women to "bob" her hair. I believe the Spencerian Business College was the first to have recordings for instruction and educational use.

Your letter from William Shea, who studied at the college as a boy, intrigued me. I remember the Chinese student he mentions, and somewhere in my possession have a beautifully embroidered silk handkerchief in colors that the said Chinese student brought to Grandma Spencer from China. She in turn gave it to me as a treasured possession when I was a very small child.

Gilbert Girard (the animal imitator, who made many "descriptive sketches," such as "A Scene at a Dog Fight" and "Daybreak at Calamity Farm," with Len Spencer) called on us after Papa passed away, and I have a page in my autograph album, signed, "Yours in barks and growls, Gilbert Girard."

You asked about Uncle Henry. He passed away August 29, 1946, in Washington, D. C., and his wife died many years before he did. I do not know the date of her death.

The Spencerian penmanship was originated by Platt Rogers Spencer, the father of the five Spencer brothers, as was also the Spencerian steel pen.

I think any permanent record of Papa's life should have his Masonic affiliations included. His Blue Lodge was Dirigo Lodge No. 30, F.&A.M.; his chapter was Zerubbabel Chapter No. 147, R.A.M., and his Commandery was Ivanhoe Commandery No. 36, Knights Templar.

I believe it is obvious from the foregoing quotations that family

pride was, and is, deservedly strong with the Spencers. After all, the family record is one of achievement and there is a thread of genius running through it which perhaps reached its highest expression in Len. This pride of family is amusingly exemplified in Columbia record No. 645, "The Old Log Cabin Minstrels," made in 1902. It gives Len an opportunity of telling a joke, based on family pride, that I have always found hilarious, and which seems a bright spot with which to close this installment.

A comedian whose voice I am not sure I recognize but who may be Harry Spencer says: "I haven't seen you for six months, Mr. Spencer. Have you been sick?"

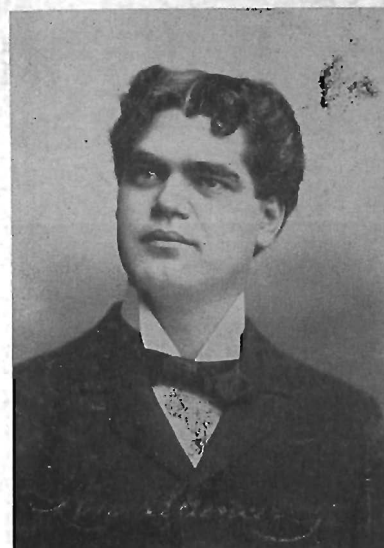
Len: "No!"

Comedian: "In trouble?"

Len: "Worse—in jail!"

Comedian: "In jail! Explain!"

Len: "Well, it was all over a game of cards. You see, Brown bet me \$100 he could bring two jacks out of the deck together and, sure enough, he did. The two jacks came out together. But I saw Brown stack the cards and had him arrested. The Court heard the case and said, "What's your name?" Not wishing to disgrace the family, I gave my name as Jack Smith. Brown gave his right name, Jack Brown. The Court said: "You are both equally guilty of gambling. Jack Smith, I give you six months. Jack Brown,



LEN SPENCER autographed this photo, made around 1900.

I give you a year—and I'll bet you both a hundred dollars you two Jacks don't come out together!"

Next month I shall tell of my face-to-face meeting with "Cousin Ethel" and relate some of the additional information she gave me on that memorable occasion.

(To be continued)

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

By MRS. B. S. KIMBALL

When one could buy a midget cone of ice cream for only a penny?

When some staple foods were purchased by the barrel, as flour, sugar, and Boston crackers?

The most popular souvenir at a country fair, a small edition of a buggy whip?

When one possessed an original buffalo fur robe for winter-time buggy rides?

When most ladies carried a decorative silk parasol sun shade?

When a tobacco company offered a premium of "Flags of all Nations," (cotton squares) and they were fashioned into pillow tops, etc.? Ashtrays of glass and pictured beneath them, varied arrangements of cigar bands?

Mattress ticks layered with corn husks for coolness during summer-time?

Linked wire wall racks to hold post cards?

## "LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD"

After Jim Walsh, author of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists, was interviewed May 15 on Dave Garroway's coast-to-coast NBC network television program, Lloyd Grose, manager of Wade's Superette near Jim's home, placed this sign in his window as a "salute" to the new "celebrity." Shown with him is Mr. and Mrs. Grose's son, Michael. The program originated from WSL, Roanoke, Va.

Another snapshot (right) of Jim Walsh in front of Wade's Superette, Roanoke, Va., taken the day after his appearance on the Dave Garroway television program last May. The part in which Jim appeared was televised from Mill Mountain in the heart of the South Roanoke residential section.

We understand that the little "gag" spread. Jim's newsboy was quick to catch on, and made himself a sandwich man sign. One side read, "I deliver Jim Walsh's Paper," and the other side said, "I mow Jim Walsh's grass."



# Leonard Garfield Spencer

*As His Daughter Ethel Lovingly Recalls Him*

(And new light on Ada Jones)

PART THREE

By JIM WALSH

## I. A Peep Into The Past

Long before Thomas A. Edison invented the phonograph and Leonard Garfield Spencer became the first popular recording artist, men had longed for a way of preserving the sight of a vanished form "and the sound of a voice that is still." Because of this deep-seated human longing, passages occasionally are found in old manuscripts that almost seem to forecast the development of sound recording.

Elmer Moore of Santa Monica, Calif., has just sent me a copy of an editorial, with the curious title, "The Phonograph in the Moon Two Centuries Ago," from *Scribner's* magazine for June, 1880. Because of its historic interest, I consider it well worth reproducing here:

### THE PHONOGRAPH IN THE MOON TWO CENTURIES AGO.

The editor has been shown a curious old volume which contains a passage showing that there is nothing new under the moon, in the way of the phonograph, at least. The title reads: "The Comical History of the States and Empires of the Worlds of the Moon and the Son." Written in French by Cyrano Bergerac. And newly Englished by A. Lovell, A. M., London: Printed for Henry Rhodes, next door to the Swan Tavern, near Bride Lane, in Fleet Street, 1687."

This book gives an account of the writer's travels in the Sun and Moon. While in one of the cities of the Moon, he meets an inhabitant of the Sun, who had wandered to the Moon, and they take a stroll through the city, discoursing, as they go, pleasantly concerning their new surroundings. The citizen of the Sun is suddenly called away, and before going gives his companion two books. The writer says: "No sooner was his back turned, but I fell to consider attentively my books and their boxes, that's to say, their covers."

"As I opened the box, I found within somewhat of metal, almost like to our

clocks, full of I know not what little springs and imperceptible engines. It was a book, indeed, but a strange and wonderful book, that had neither leaves nor letters. In fine, it was a book made wholly for the ears and not the eyes. So that when anybody has a mind to read in it, he winds up that machine, with a great many little strings; then he turns a hand to the chapter which he desires to hear, and straight as from the mouth of a man or a musical instrument, proceed all the distinct and different sounds, which the Lunar Grandees make use of, for expressing their thoughts, instead of language.

"When I since reflected on this miraculous invention, I no longer wondered that the young men of that country were more knowing at sixteen or eighteen years old than the graybeards of our climate; for knowing how to read as soon as speak, they are never without lectures, in their chambers, their walks, the town or traveling; they may have in their pockets, or at their girdles, thirty of these books where they need but wind up a spring to hear a whole chapter, and so more, if they have a mind to hear the book quite through; so that you never want the company of all the great men, living and dead, who entertain you with living voices."

Just before Mr. Moore's letter reached me, I read in *Variety* that experiments are being made to engrave sight, as well as sound, waves on phonograph records. If this can be done, it will be possible to project a recorded picture onto a screen and watch the performers while listening to the music.

## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

**WANTED:** Titia Ruffo's Pathe Dlnorah: Sel vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or centre start.—Alda Favia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

**WANTED:** JOLSON MATERIAL. — Dick Bonesteel, 1807 42nd No., Seattle, Washington. o12046

**WANTED:** Recordings of Ira D. Sankey, C. I. Scofield, F. B. Meyer, or associates in evangelistic work. — Bernard R. DeRemer, Moody Bible Institute, 820 N. LaSalle St., Chicago 10, Ill. o3614

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's**, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

**EDISON, COLUMBIA** cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. —James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

**Rare Vocals, Operatics**, cutout collectors' items supplied. Wants located. Lists available, reasonably priced. — Personalized Record Service, 158 W. 58th St., N. Y. C. s85

**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). n3863

**RARE RECORDS**, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, P. O. Box 155, Verona, N. J. d128801

**50 Years of old songs and popular favorites.** Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. n3618

**OLD OPERATIC RECORDS** of famous singers for sale. — Anthony DeTratto, 7331 S. Winchester, Chicago 36, Ill. s3652

**RARE VOCAL RECORDS** at auction. Items for the basic collection and the advanced collector. Also early disc and cylinder phonographs. — Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. s4846

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.** South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. ja68801

**Cylinder records, various makes.** 4 minute record list (2000 selections) 25c. 2 minute record list (2000 selections) 25c. List cost refunded with first purchase. — Dexters, 421 W. Arbor Vitae, Inglewood, Calif. o3447

**Private Collection of 500 operatic vocals** on European labels for sale. Reasonably priced. Lists will be sent upon request, but there will be no shippings. If interested write, records will be put aside, come to see them and take them. Earliest postmark or better offer will get the preference. — Brenda Bennett, 309 West 72nd St. (1C), New York 23, N. Y. s1027

**FAVORITE  
PIONEER  
RECORDING  
ARTISTS**

Conducted By JIM WALSH



LEN SPENCER, as a mature artist,  
photographed January 1, 1903.

How I wish some such process had been available in Len Spencer's day, so that we could view him and his associates as they sang or talked into a horn jutting from the wall like a ship's funnel or, to go even farther back, sending their voices into an assortment of cylinder phonographs lined up on racks!

Since that is impossible, what a pity is that old-fashioned stereoscope views apparently were never taken in recording studios of the 1890's and early 1900's, making it possible to see the pioneer recording artists at their work—just as one may study such views of Abraham Lincoln and almost feel one beholds the living President. Lincoln's voice, of course, is another thing. Since he died 12 years before the Phonograph appeared, we shall never know with certainty what his tones were like.

It would be wonderful to discover that Len Spencer recorded for Edison's experimental sound pictures and that the films and concert size cylinders exist. But I don't think he did.

## II. I Meet Len Spencer's Daughter

Since, as I have already said, there is no way of returning to the past and seeing Len Spencer as he was, the next best thing is knowing someone who was near and dear to him and being told some of the great comedian's intimate personal traits. And that brings me to my meeting with his daughter Ethel.

My correspondence friendship with Mrs. Yarbray had been in progress almost a year when I received the welcome news that there was a

chance of our soon being face to face. She wrote me that she, her husband, their daughter, son-in-law and little granddaughter were planning to drive through Roanoke the first week of September, 1954, on their way to New York, and hoped to see me.

Nothing could have given me more pleasure than a meeting with Len Spencer's daughter, but for a time it seemed as if the get-together couldn't be arranged and would have to be written off ruefully as a "near miss." I had already promised to fly to West Newton, Mass., during that first week of September to visit the late Mrs. Margaret E. White, and her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Lester L. White. However, after some close figuring, I was able to rearrange my schedule so I could return to Roanoke the evening before my friends from Texas were to arrive.

In spite of my being bowed down with grief and woe at this moment of writing because of troubles caused by weather conditions, I have to laugh when I think of the contrast between the day Mrs. Yarbray came to see me and the one on which I am compelling my nearly frozen fingers to type. Then it was almost unbearably hot; today, Wednesday, February 19, 1958, it's almost unbearably cold, with the temperature only a few degrees above zero as Southwestern Virginia cringes beneath its worst "cold spell" in 20 years. The water pipes in my house are frozen, and, despite the heating system's going

full blast, my feet, like my hands, feel as if they are frozen, too. By the time this page appears in print we may be snarling about another heat wave. Certainly, there was no possibility of freezing on that burning, broiling, blistering, sizzling September 7, 1954, when Mrs. Yarbray came to Roanoke.

Seldom can an eagerly awaited meeting have taken place under more unfavorable circumstances. As I left Boston by plane the weather was fairly cool, but when we landed at Richmond, Va., was being suffocated by one of the worst heat waves in its history and in the late afternoon the temperature stood at 102. It wasn't much cooler when I returned home to Roanoke. Just a few days before leaving for Massachusetts, I had moved from Cedar Avenue in Vinton to King Street in Roanoke, and my new house was in a hopeless state of dirt and confusion. Nothing was in its right place. The moving men had dumped my record collection down in great stacks on the floors of the upstairs rooms and it was so disarranged I had little idea where anything was. (Four years later, owing to lack of time for working on the collection, it's still not in much better condition). However, by a lucky chance, they did leave my disc records by Len Spencer in a spot where they were not hard to find. The cylinders I couldn't locate.

Early on the morning of the day Mrs. Yarbray and I were to see each other for the first time, I went to Dr. W. O. Crutchfield's Animal Hospital to bring home my gorgeous black and reddish-gold cat, Roger, who had been left to be boarded and receive a distemper shot during my West Newton visit. Roger, then a tiny kitten with one of the sweetest dispositions I have ever seen in any creature, had made himself the pet of the place and was permitted to make the rounds with Dr. Crutchfield while the veterinarian treated the other "patients". But soon after I brought him home and fed him, he began to display a fractious complaining spirit he had never before shown. I feared the hospital stay had warped his nature or that, being good at imitations, he had picked up whining, peevish qualities from some of the other cats.

In the early afternoon my phone rang and a pleasant feminine voice let me know I was at last speaking to my "Cousin Ethel". She told me she was staying at the Big Oak motel on Williamson Road in Roanoke, and I said I would be out to see her as soon as the bus connections could get me there. I felt it would be a relief to get away from the complainings of Roger, who was wailing ever more querulously as the scorching hot day went on. I was almost completely worn out, mentally and physically, from my recent moving and the trip to and from Boston, or I probably would have realized what was wrong with the little fellow long before I did.



Turning to my diary entry for the next day, I find I wrote:

Yesterday afternoon, following my talk with Mrs. Yarbray, I caught the 2:55 Kenwood bus to Roanoke, then took a Tenth Street Extension express to the Big Oak motel. My 'Cousin Ethel' is tall and vivacious, with gray-ing, long black hair and a charming personality. She told me many fascinating things about her father. After supper at the Cavalier Restaurant, they came here and stayed until 9 o'clock. I played many Len Spencer records and gave her my Zon-o-phone copy of the Transformation Scene from 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.' I made a return visit this morning to the Big Oak. She told me to keep all the pictures she had given me except one which had been left by mistake. We had breakfast at the Canary Cottage, then parted at Campbell Avenue and Jefferson street.

There, condensed into a few words, is a succinct but incomplete account of what I consider one of the memorable experiences of my life. Now I shall set down some of the things Mrs. Yarbray proudly told me about her father.

### III. A Daughter's Recollections

I shall never forget the cordial reception I was given by Mr. and Mrs. Yarbray; their daughter, Clara; her husband, Eddie Mockert, and Mr. and Mrs. Mockert's little daughter, Karen, who has a marked resemblance to her maternal great-grandfather. It was a wonderful moment, finding myself in the presence of the daughter of that authentic "Genius of the Phonograph," Len Spencer. Before I left, we posed for some color photos to commemorate the meeting. Naturally, I soon set to work to learn more of what "Cousin Ethel" could tell me about her father and his family.

One thing I learned was that the Spencerian Business College in Washington, where Len was employed before beginning his recording career was operated by Len's father, Henry Caleb Spencer, and his wife. There were five of the older generation Spencer boys and one sister. They also included Platt Rogers Spencer, of New York, a noted attorney; Harvey Aldine Spencer, a handwriting expert who was frequently called on to testify in New York forgery cases, and Lyman C. Spencer, a minister—all dead many years ago. The daughter, Ellen Spencer, married General R. D. Mussey of Orange. N. J. The Spencer family was of the Swedenborgian religious faith, and Len's parents contributed generously to a fund for building the first Swedenborgian church in Washington. Later, the family installed a handsome stained glass window in memory of Len's father.

There has been some confusion in printed accounts of Len Spencer's birth year, but Mrs. Yarbray told me she found a copy of the family Bible which contained the date, in Len's father's handwriting, as January 12, 1867. Another son, Platt Rosson (Rosie) Spencer was born—like Len, in Washington, D. C., February 22, 1871, but lived only a few years. The third son, Henry Caleb Spencer, Jr., usually known as "Harry", and who

became, like his more famous brother, a recording artist, was born in Washington, February 14, 1875. Hence, Len was slightly more than eight years Henry's senior.

Mrs. Yarbray said she had trouble disentangling the somewhat complicated status of her father's marriages, but the record indicates the first occurred when he was only 18. Grandfather Spencer recorded in the Bible: "Leonard Garfield Spencer married April 8, 1885, in St. Matthew's Church, Washington, D. C., Margaret Agnes Kaiser, foster child of her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Allen. She was born at Lexington, Ky., May 22, 1864. Their first child, Margaret Agnes, died at birth. Their second child, Sara Allen Spencer, was born January 31, 1887."

Mrs. Yarbray believes Margaret Agnes Kaiser, whose foster parents were named Allen, is the "Elizabeth Allen" whom old-time Columbia officials thought Len married in a run-away match, and that the intervening years had caused the name to become confused. She pointed out that it was during the period of this first marriage that he made records for the U.S. Company under the disguise of "Gary Allen".

Following the entry of Len's marriage was one in his mother's handwriting, telling of the death of the second child, Sara Allen Spencer, on February 5, 1891. Len's young wife died July 10 that year, and his father died on August 30, 1891. As Mrs. Yarbray remarked: "What a hard year 1891 must have been for Papa!"

In spite of personal heartbreak, the brilliant young comedian forged ahead as one of the world's first famous recording artists. On July 20, 1892, he married Elizabeth Norris at Norfolk, Va. They separated a few months later, but on July 27, 1895, were remarried in New Church—presumably the Swedenborgian Church already



LEN SPENCER'S MOTHER—  
Sara Jane Andrews Spencer.

mentioned. It was Elizabeth who became the mother of Len's four daughters: Myrtle, Constance, Ethel and Clara. "Cousin Ethel" said, in remarking, that some of the details of her father's married life were obscure: "It has been over 35 years since I have lived near mother, and she was always reticent about discussing her affairs or Papa's life, or anything, for that matter. Mother was very quiet and felt that the less was discussed, the better for everyone."

Mrs. Yarbray surprised me by revealing that she is partly of Russian descent. Although her mother's family name had been Anglicized to Norris, it was originally Nowicki. Her father was a count in the court of the Czar of Russia. After being exiled, he came to the United States, and married an American girl. He retained the Russian spelling until he died, but his daughter and two sons preferred Norris. Myrtle Lincoln Spencer was the oldest of Len and Elizabeth Spencer's daughters. She was born February 13, 1897, and died



A photo taken late in 1901 or early in 1902, prior to the birth of Len Spencer's daughter Clara. Left to right—Len Spencer; his mother (standing)—Sara Andrews Spencer; Myrtle Lincoln Spencer; Mrs. Elizabeth Norris Spencer, and Ethel Leonora Spencer (now Mrs. James A. Yarbray.)





An interior view of the Spencerian Business College (about 1888), showing Len Spencer (far background) teaching the use of the wax cylinder phonograph in dictation. The Spencerian was the first institution to use phonographs. Notice also the old-fashioned "invisible" typewriters.

of tuberculosis January 16, 1929. She is buried in the Mission Cemetery at San Antonio, Texas.

Mrs. Yarbray said Myrtle married an orchestra director, George Kester, two months after her father's death. After he developed lung trouble, he underwent treatment at a Liberty, N. Y. sanatorium, and they moved to Texas, where he died in 1919. Myrtle married Fred Allen (of course, not the late radio comedian) in February, 1921, and several years later, on a hunting trip, she developed a heavy cold that ended in a long, losing struggle against tuberculosis.

Ethel Leonora Spencer—my "Cousin Ethel"—was born September 19, 1898. Constance, next in order, had only a short life. Clara Barton Spencer, born May 29, 1902, made a career as a commercial artist and an oil painter and now lives in retirement.

In regard to the Washington phase of the Spencer family's life, Mrs. Yarbray recalls:

"We were living in Washington when sister Clara was born in 1902, and Papa made trips and long stays in New York. I remember Mother telling me one time Clara was three weeks old before Papa even saw her. When I was about six, we moved to Dyker Heights, about 1904, and then moved to New York City in 1907 or 1908."

During the little Spencer girls' childhood in Washington, Myrtle was fondly known to her father as "Good

Looks", Ethel, as "Happy Heart", and Clara, as "Sunshine". Mrs. Yarbray recollects herself as having been of the carefree disposition suggested by her loving father's nickname. She says she frequently caught glimpses of the Negro slums in Washington—which are probably worse now than they were in the early 1900's—and one of her favorite remarks, after seeing the squalid conditions in which so many unfortunate people lived, was: "I'm so glad I belong to white folks!"

#### IV. Life in New York

After leaving Washington for New York, where Len could be in closer touch with recording companies and where he established his booking agency, the Spencer family, as already mentioned, lived in Dyker Heights, between Brooklyn and Coney Island. Here the soft command from their mother, "Don't bother daddy!" became familiar to the three little girls, as their father worked in his study, wearing a green eye shade and writing material to be recorded not only by himself but by other artists as well. He had suffered an eye injury when struck by a swinging door in a recording studio and entirely lost the sight of one of his blue-gray eyes. A few years before his death he suffered a slight stroke, and the combined misfortunes caused him to carry a cane for safety's sake, on his blind side.

Mrs. Spencer was a registered nurse before her marriage. She had



Mr. and Mrs. Harry Spencer

an aversion to theatrical life, but many of Len's fellow recording artists visited the Spencer home. One of the attractions was the poker games which the genial comedian had relished since his boyhood. Mrs. Spencer always served coffee and sandwiches for these carefree assemblies.

During much of this time, Len's formerly strong-minded and rather tyrannical mother, who had been a terror to backsliding students of the Washington business college, lived with her son and daughter-in-law. As she grew older she lost her keen mental grasp. The college began to lose money and she mortgaged it. Len spent large sums trying to save the institution in which he had taught, but was unsuccessful. He fitted an entire upper floor for his mother in his Dyker Heights home and did his best to make her happy, but in her dotage she proved a "problem child". The old lady developed a persecution complex. She suspected people were plot-



The Spencerian Business College, in which Len Spencer taught before beginning to make records.

ting against her, and frequently ordered carriages and other things which she couldn't use and didn't need. She also was a sufferer from diabetes and in 1909, aged 72, she died in the Home for Incurables.

As we shall see later, "Harry" Spencer's life ended unhappily, in a way that suggests his mother's pitiful decline.

However, I prefer to end this installment of Ethel Spencer Yarbray's recollections of her father on a happier note. Her eyes took on a reminiscent glow as she recalled her tired father's nightly homecomings from his work. He would get off a trolley car on the corner of the street opposite that on which his family lived. The little girls weren't allowed to cross the street, but they would run to the corner, attracted by a peculiarly distinctive whistle which their father always gave when he got off the trolley. Then they would be hugged and would happily trot home with the big, handsome father whom they idolized.

"Cousin Ethel" laughed as she recalled Len Spencer's fondness for peanuts. He liked to take the children to the beach at Coney Island in an old-fashioned open streetcar, and would sit on a seat facing backwards, eating "goobers" and dropping the shells in the car. Occasionally, for Clara, Myrtle and Ethel's amusement, he would toss one into his mouth and swallow it with exaggerated appreciation. "On these occasions," Mrs. Yarbray said, "he wore a wide-brimmed cap and really relaxed. He was a marvelous swimmer and went out after dark, fighting 'way out beyond the breakers, but coming in refreshed and vigorous. He preferred it that way. He also liked to stand on the porch, with arms folded, watching a storm and appearing to defy the elements. His brother Harry was exactly opposite. Thunder storms frightened him horribly. When one came up he would hide in the bathroom with the shades down until it was over."

(To be continued)

\* \* \*

While the railroads of the United States may have mistakes to answer for, they have created the most effective, useful, and by far the cheapest of land transportation in the world. This has been accomplished with very little legislation and against an immense volume of opposition and interference growing out of ignorance and misunderstanding. It is not an exaggeration to say that in the past history of this country the railway, next after the Christian religion and the public school, has been the largest single contributing factor to the welfare and happiness of the people.

—James J. Hill

\* \* \*

## CIRCUS CONTRASTS

By DANA W. STEVENS

Although P. T. Barnum's name is most frequently associated with the circus, it wasn't until he was sixty years of age that he became interested in the world of the Big Top. Quite possibly he never would have touched the land of tinsel with his peculiar brand of showmanship had not two well-to-do show veterans named Coup and Costello approached him with a proposition. The meeting took place in 1870; Mr. Coup was the spokesman. "Mr. Barnum," he said, "we'd like you to join us in staging a circus."

Barnum, always the cautious one, questioned the two men at great length. When he finally made up his mind that they were sound men who thought pretty much as he did, he said to them: "Gentlemen, I'll join you on one condition—that we put on the biggest circus there is."

Coup and Costello agreed and the more Barnum thought about the idea the more excited he became. He paced up and down repeating aloud the idea of the circus being the biggest and the greatest. Finally, he stopped his pacing and his face took on a happy light. "That's it," he cried. "That's what we'll call our circus: *The Greatest Show On Earth*!" Thus was born the name, the motto, the slogan, whatever you prefer to call it, that has remained synonymous with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus down to the present day.

The first opening day of *The Greatest Show On Earth* was quite another thing, however. The show was a one-ring affair that opened under a tent in Brooklyn on a sunny day in April 1871. Barnum, wearing top hat and tails, acted as the ringmaster to an audience who was seated on crude wooden benches around the single ring.

Many, many years later, as the show grew up to its name, it provided just a few more rings, a few more seats, and a bit more equipment. For example, in the 1947 edition of *The Greatest Show On Earth* 236 performers of twenty-six nationalities kept three rings, two stages, and a quarter-mile hippodrome track busy for almost three hours. In all fifty-one acts and displays were presented.

In Barnum's opening show the stars were a group of Negroes whose act was the creation of P. T.'s fertile imagination. Barnum called them Man-Eating Cannibals from the Fiji Islands. Actually the man-eaters, twelve in all and probably natives of the South, were dressed in loin cloths and sandals and were made-up to look as fierce and forbidding as possible. They were paraded around the single ring on foot behind Barnum in his carriage.

As the procession moved around the ring, Barnum cracked a whip over their heads and shouted to the spectators that they had nothing whatsoever to fear. Occasionally, he would reach into the back of the carriage and pull out a shotgun and aim it at the man-eaters. "Don't fear," he would roar. "I'll shoot if a single one of them makes a move near you."

Barnum kept his procession moving around the ring for something like ten minutes, all the while bellowing and shouting for everyone to keep calm. Just at the moment when he sensed that the audience was about to panic, he would drive the men out in a hurry and bring in a bareback riding act. Needless to say, despite the near-panic, the crowds kept getting larger at every performance.

The Big One, some fifty-nine years later, provided the public with an authentic importation of strange people from the Congo. They were not cannibals and certainly their appearance with the big show was handled with a bit more dignity than the man-eaters of Barnum. These were the Ubangis, five men and eight women, who proved to be one of the most expensive attractions that Samuel W. Gumpertz ever provided for *The Greatest Show On Earth*.

The women in particular in this group were quite startling in appearance. Their beauty marks consisted of wooden disks inserted in their lips in childhood and gradually increased in diameter up to eight or even ten inches. A definite duck-bill effect was the result.

The Ubangis were first exhibited with the show in 1930. Three thousand dollars was the price paid to display them. During the second season with the show they became very homesick and very unhappy.

The experience with a hundred or more Somalis who were exhibited with the show in 1914 was somewhat different from that of the unhappy Ubangis. These people came with five school teachers and lived in a house that was rented for them near Madison Square Garden. Their beauty lay in their teeth which they kept filed to a fine point with small sticks. Sheep was the main item of their diet. After returning to Africa they sent back word that they would be happy to appear with the show again. These people were the real thing.

Gumpertz had much better success with a group of nineteen wild men from Borneo that he brought to this country in 1906. Some three-hundred bags of salt was the privilege paid to their chief for their absence from his country. The contract originally stipulated that they were to receive no salary, but were to be given food, clothing, and lodging. Civilization, however, quickly made inroads on their thinking. After observing that other strange people were getting crisp bills and hard cash every week, they demanded a new treaty in which gold replaced the original salt.

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By **JIM WALSH**

## I. Len Spencer's Last Days

This installment concludes Mrs. Ethel Yarbray's recollections of her father, Len Spencer, as related to me in letters and in a personal meeting in September, 1954.

After the comedian suffered a slight stroke a few years before his death he became less active in making records and devoted himself largely to the affairs of his Lyceum or booking agency. He did not give up recording altogether, but his records became fewer and the vastly popular Ada Jones - Len Spencer "vaudeville specialties" gradually gave way to popular song duets by Miss Jones and Billy Murray. However, Spencer's voice was unimpaired and he continued to entertain his family by singing their favorite old songs and playing his own piano accompaniment. Like many popular singers of both the past and present, he could not read music, but he played the piano well and could transpose in any key. He also played the banjo and the ocarina.

Concerning the New York offices which her father maintained, Mrs. Yarbray says: "I have a heavy horn or bone cane with a silver band just across the handle that papa used after he lost the sight of his right eye. It is inscribed in script, 'Len G. Spencer, 16 West 27th Street.'"

"After the 27th street address, Papa moved to 44 West 28th street, from there to a 14th street loft, and the address on 42nd street was ac-

quired less than a year prior to his death. I know nothing about the West 27th street address. The 44 West 28th was in a building occupied by music publishers, and I believe it was in 1909 that he moved into the huge loft over the Crystal Theatre (the theatre had water running under glass stairs in the center entrance, which was 46 East 14th, and where he had the stage and auditorium built for auditions of musicians, vocalists and entertainers.). It was here also that he had his largest collection of song slides, which he shipped all over the country in specially constructed boxes to prevent breakage. Song slides were on the decline when we moved to the 42nd street office, less than a year before we lost Papa."

A few years ago I (Jim Walsh - that is) obtained a letter written by Spencer himself during the years his Lyceum, "The Quick-Action Service," was at the 14th street address. Written April 24, 1912, it reflects Len's characteristic good heartedness and willingness to help others. It is addressed to William C. O'Hare, of the Witmark Music Publishing Company, and reads:

Friend Will: This will introduce to you Mr. Mat McNally, the young man of whom I spoke to you over the phone. Mr. McNally is anxious to master the theory and fundamentals of music and harmony. I could think of no one better qualified to advise him than yourself. It is needless to state that I take a personal interest in Mr. McNally myself and that anything you can do to place him on the right road would be greatly appreciated by

Yours sincerely,

LEN SPENCER

The letter, sent to me by Mr. McNally himself, is signed in Len's beautifully flowing, distinctive Spencerian penmanship.

The letterhead reveals that the Lyceum also had a Scranton, Pa., office at 136 Washington Avenue, with P. J. Dempsey as manager. On the left of the sheet is a column printed in red listing the Lyceum's services. Because of its historical interest, I shall copy its contents:

BOOKING AGENCY. "Musical Talent in All Lines." Vocal and Instrumental Artists for Concert, Vaudeville, Burlesque, Minstrel, Dramatic and Musical Comedy. Lecturers, Vocalists, Pianists, Violinists, Drummers. Instrumentalists and Moving Picture Artists in all lines Provided Upon Short Notice. Special Offices and Studios at Disposal of Managers and Artists. Call, Write, Wire or Phone.

SONG SLIDE SERVICE. Newest, Latest and Best Illustrated Song Slides Bought, Sold, Rented and Exchanged. Special Run - New Run - Standard Run and Commercial Run Song Slide Service at Lowest Rental Rate Consistent With Good Service. Send for Lists and Terms.

ILLUSTRATION BUREAU. Song Slides, Travelogue Slides, Announcement Slides, Advertising Slides, and Lantern Slides of Every Description to order on short notice, at lowest terms consistent with superior work.

MUSIC PUBLISHERS' EXCHANGE. Popularizing "All Songs of All Publishers." Free Song Coaching and Demonstration Daily for Lyceum Artists and Patrons. PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS CORDIALLY WELCOMED. ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO LEN SPENCER'S LYCEUM, 46 EAST FOURTEENTH STREET, NEW YORK. MANAGER'S PHONE, STUYVESANT 3480, 3481. ARTISTS' PHONE, 3046 STUYVESANT.

Mrs. Yarbray recalls that she helped with the song slide part of the business and had gone to the Lyceum to work a few hours when her father had the seizure that caused his death. During her teens she and her sister Myrtle also sang in the choir of the Metropolitan Temple Methodist Church, although, as was mentioned in an earlier installment, the Spencer family was of the Swedenborgian faith.

As might be expected, "Cousin Ethel" retains a vivid recollection of her father's death, especially since she was an eyewitness when Len Spencer's life was prematurely ended December 15, 1914, at the age of 47. She was standing beside him while he talked with a woman who was seeking an engagement. Almost without warning he fell over, was laid on the floor, and was dead. He had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage.

Mrs. Yarbray recalls that her mother was not surprised when told her husband had died. Quietly, she said: "I rather expected it. He came back twice this morning to kiss me goodbye and seemed to hate to leave me so badly. I had a feeling that something was wrong."

Len Spencer's body was cremated and the ashes were placed some six months later, in Glenwood Cemetery, Washington, where his wife is now buried beside him.

His death was a tragedy to the Spencer family. Lacking sons or other male relatives to take charge of the Lyceum, Len left his affairs in the hands of his brother Henry. Because of inexperience the business folded within half a year. The insurance money Len had left went to pay debts contracted by the younger Spencer in his mismanagement of the Lyceum.

Shortly afterward, Myrtle married and Ethel got a job with the Mutual Life Insurance Company, while 12-year-old Clara was still in elementary school. In 1919, after her husband was buried in Chicago, Myrtle returned to Texas. In September that year, Mrs. Spencer, Ethel and Clara also moved there. Says Mrs. Yarbray: "Clara had had flu and measles combined at 17, the year of her high school graduation, and I had constant sieges of acute bronchitis. The doctor thought a change of climate would benefit us, so we

(Conclusion)

By **JIM WALSH**

## Leonard Garfield Spencer

*As His Daughter Ethel Lovingly Recalls Him*

followed Myrtle here to San Antonio. I married James Arthur Yarbray July 25, 1921."

As for Harry Spencer, the remainder of his life had a wierd appropriateness for the man whose most popular record had been "The Mad Ravings of John McCullough," a bloodcurdling impersonation of the insane sounds made by the once famous tragedian before he died in Bloomingdale Asylum, New York. At one time Henry tried to operate a detective agency. He had a motor-cycle concession at Coney Island. He also worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and in 1947 Joe Belmont, the now deceased "Human Bird," recalled having run into Harry some years previously in Lancaster, Pa., where he was a train caller.

Finally Henry Spencer lost his mind and died in St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington. While in the hospital he wrote a raving letter to Mrs. Yarbray, accusing her and his other relatives of ill-treatment and conspiring against him. It is good to know that Masons and other friends kept the unhappy victim of mental illness supplied with comforts until he died. He, too, is buried in Washington.

Henry Spencer was married to a woman of Italian descent much older than he. Her given name was Gazelle, but Mrs. Yarbray doesn't recall the last name. She does remember her family owned a restaurant in Pennsylvania.

## II. A Visit From "Cousin Ethel"

The diary entry I quoted last month mentioned that, after our meeting at the Big Oak motel, Mrs. Yarbray and her family joined me for a meal in the Cavalier Restaurant. They then accompanied me to the house into which I had moved only a few days before and we had a pleasant evening, listening to some of the disc records by Len Spencer, which I had luckily been able to find, and seeing a bit of my collection. The only unpleasant feature, aside from my embarrassment at the place being unavoidably in such a mess, was the peevish behavior of my kitten, Roger, who, as already mentioned, had been querulous all day, and who became almost desperately complaining as the evening wore on. I couldn't determine what was wrong with him, but his almost ceaseless meowing upset me.

I remember playing a Zon-o-phone record of "The Jokesmiths," by Len Spencer and Steve Porter, but it was in poor condition and Mrs. Yarbray found it hard to understand. She mentioned her admiration of her father's interpretation of the Transformation Scene from "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and I gave her my Zon-o-phone version. When I played Spencer's last record, the Edison Diamond Disc of "Uncle Fritz and the Children's Orchestra," Cousin Ethel's eyes brightened and she asked: "Do you have a record as clear as that in which my daddy sings?"

I did have some equally clear singing records, but they were on Blue Amberol cylinders, which I hadn't been able to find. I hope Mrs. Yar-

bray will come to see me again and I shall be able to put on "Peaches and Cream" and "Little Arrow and Big Chief Greasepaint."

In both these records, as well as in many others I have, the comedian displays his fine singing voice.

After my guests had gone, Roger resumed his clamoring and I, being almost worn out from my recent plane trip and the still well-nigh unbearable heat, was disposed to be cross with him as I made ready to bathe before going to bed. Then I suddenly discovered why poor Roger had been so unlike his usual radiant

self. I had left a lavatory faucet dripping, and Roger suddenly climbed up the side, entered the wash basin and began with feverish eagerness drinking the trickle. After he had swallowed a few drops he started to purr. Then I knew what I had done. That morning I had taken care to feed him, but, not feeling mentally alert, I had overlooked his need for water. So, throughout that blistering hot day and night, the poor little fellow had been suffering acutely for water, and his insistent meowing was to let me know he was parched with thirst. I at once gave him a pan full



LEN SPENCER was one of the performers depicted in a large, handsomely colored poster, "Popular Artists Who Make Records for the Victor," distributed to Victor record dealers in 1908. Victor singers and entertainers, shown on the poster reproduced here, were: Top row—Billy Murray, comedian; Clarice Vance, comedienne; Al H. Wilson, yodler; May Irwin, comedienne, and Harry Macdonough, tenor. Second row—John Philip Sousa and Arthur Pryor, band conductors. Third row—Alice Lloyd and Vesta Victoria, English comedienues. Fourth row—Frank C. Stanley, bass; Corrine Morgan, contralto; DeWolf Hopper, comedian; Ada Jones, comedienne, and Richard Jose, counter-tenor. Fifth row—Emil Keneke, cornetist; Len Spencer, comedian; Arthur Collins, comedian; Byron G. Harlan, comedian, and Darius Lyons, flute soloist. (Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," would like to buy an original copy of this poster.)





HENRY SPENCER, Len's younger brother, who also made records.

and after he had drunk his fill I hugged him and, on the point of tears assured him that never again should he suffer for water while he lived with me. Roger nuzzled me, purred and stroked my face with his paw to assure me that he understood my failing was of the head not the heart and that he forgave his temporarily thoughtless "Papa."

I have often thought since of something "Cousin Ethel" said when we had a brief reunion next morning. Speaking of her husband, she said: "Arthur and I consider we've had everything we want out of life. We don't know how much longer we'll be together, but we have had each other for years, loved each other and had a daughter who has been a great pleasure to us. Now she is married to a fine young man and they have a lovely little daughter. What more

could we have asked of life?"  
What more, indeed!

### III. Len Spencer's Early Cylinders

Mrs. Yarbray not only gave me many old family photographs (most of which I have submitted with this manuscript in order that the articles may be well illustrated), but also two booklets which I prize highly. One is a small notebook, with her father's name stamped on the cover — misspelled as Len Spencer — in which, in his own handwriting, are written the names of hundreds of songs. Each title is followed by a number, such as 7210, which seems to indicate a record number, and by letters and figures — C19 is an example — which apparently denotes a filing system of some sort. Reference to an 1899 Columbia record catalog indicates the notebook must have been an index of Len's private collection. For instance, "The New Bully" is followed by 7216, and that is the number of his Columbia cylinder of the same song.

Valuable as this booklet is from the standpoint of possessing something which Len Spencer formerly owned, even more interesting, from the record collector's point of view, is the 1892 catalog which "Cousin Ethel" gave me of records obviously made by the U. S. Phonograph Company, although the firm name does not appear in it. The cover says only "Catalog and Records for Use on the Phonograph" followed by the date, 1892, and the name of the printer, The Holbrook Printing Company of Newark. At the bottom, in what I take to be Spencer's handwriting, is the note, "Sent as marked, Oct. 7, 1892."



ETHEL SPENCER (Mrs. J. A. Yarbray) as she appears today.

Cylinders by Len Spencer monopolize the early part of the book. They are numbered consecutively from 1 to 140, and after the last one appears the notation: "Mr. Spencer is constantly adding to his already extensive musical repertoire. Special records can be furnished to order."

I doubt that even one of these 1892 cylinders still survives, but for historical interest I shall list them here, under the classifications in which they appear in the catalog and following its spelling and punctuation. Besides using his own name, Spencer was also making records under the pseudonym of Garry Allen (Garry, I suppose, from his middle name, Garfield, and Allen from the family name of his wife's relatives), and Larry Leonard — an assumed name of which I had never heard before I obtained the booklet and one which he reserved for comic Irish numbers. "Leonard" of course came from his first name, and Larry I take to be a variant of Garry. "Till the Snowflakes Come Again" was No. 1, and the numbers of the others follow in chronological order:

SENTIMENTAL. Till the Snowflakes Come Again; Life's Story; Just a Little Sunshine; Twelve Months Ago Tonight; Norine Maureen; There's a Light in the Window; Dear Robin I'll Be True; The Song That Reached My Heart; You'll Miss Mother When She's Gone; Annie Laurie; A Quiet Little Home; Her Father Has Turned Her Dear Picture; Marguerite; The Broken Home (Latest Hit); In Old Madrid; A Picture of Her Boy; Mother's Watch By the Sea; Alice, Where Art Thou?; Sadie Ray; Down on the Farm; the Mottoes on the Wall; A Mother's Appeal to Her Boy.

CHARLES T. ELLIS' SONGS. Sunshine Will Come Again; A Buttonhole Bouquet.

WM. J. SCANLAN'S SONGS. Gathering the Myrtle With Mary; The Swing Song; Moonlight at Killarney; Molly O!

IRISH SENTIMENTAL SONGS. Remember Boy You're Irish; Barney, Come Home; Maggie Murphy's Home; Come Back to Erin; Eileen Allanna.

NEGRO SENTIMENTAL SONGS. Carry Me Back to Old Virginia; I'm Gwine Back to Chloe; Old Jasper's Dream; My Old Kentucky Home; I'se Gwine Back to Dixie; Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground; Old Folks at Home; Old Black Joe; Old Log Cabin in de Dell.

PATRIOTIC SONGS. My Country



LEN SPENCER is at the blackboard in this 70-year-old photograph of the interior of his parents' business college in Washington, D. C.

'Tis of Thee; Hail Columbia; Star Spangled Banner.

WAR SONGS. Tenting On the Old Camp Ground; Marching Through Georgia; Battle Cry of Freedom; The Soldier's Farewell.

DRAMATIC SONGS. Between Love and Duty; the Postillion; Anchored; As Across the Bridge They Go.

TOPICAL SONGS. He Never Came Back; Then You Wink the Other Eye; It's All a Matter of Taste; You're Not in It; In the Dark (Blythe's Latest); It Used to be Proper; I Did It; Mistakes Are Apt to Happen; They Never Told a Lie; Man, Poor Man; They're After Me; It Takes a Girl to Do It; I'll Bet you a Dollar you Don't; I Went With Him.

FROM COMIC OPERAS. Near it "Pearl of Pekin"; Oh! What a Difference "Tar and Tartar"; Ask of the Man in the Moon "Wang"; Bob Up Serenely "Olivette".

DRINKING SONGS. With Chorus. Hi! Waiter; Razzle Dazzle; Have a Glass With Me; We Don't Care If We Do; I Never Drink Behind the Bar.

NEGRO SONGS BY GARRY ALLEN (Nom de Plume). Carve Dat Possum; It's Hard to be a Nigger; Martha's Weddin' Day; De Nigger an' De Bee; Turkey in De Straw; Bran New Little Coon (Monroe H. Rosenfeld's latest success); Put on De Golden Sword; Uncle Billy's Dream; Only Had Fifty Cents; Push Dem Clouds Away (with whistle); Good Bye My Honey.

SONGS AND DANCES (with clog effect) BY GARRY ALLEN. Hello! Babby!; Put on De Bridal Veil; Johnny Get Your Gun; Little Liza Loves You; A High Old Time; Pretty as a Picture.

IRISH SONGS BY LARRY LEONARD (Nom de Plume). When Hogan Paid His Rent; There Goes McManus; Kelly's New Spring Pants; When McCarthy Took the Floor; I Owe Ten Dollars to O'Grady; The Irish Spree; Mickey Brannigan's Pup; The Irish Christening; Come Down, Mrs. Flynn; Patrick Brannigan; McNulty, You're a Daisy.

HARRIGAN AND BRAHAM'S SONGS BY LARRY LEONARD. Take a Day Off, Mary Ann; Wist, Wist, Here Comes the Bogle Man; Paddy Duffy's Cart (Medley); Mrs. Brady's Piano Fortay; The Little Widow Dunn; The Bold McIntyres; The Market on Saturday Night; That Family Overhead.

HEBREW SONGS BY GARRY ALLEN. Solomon Levi; The Sheeny Ball.

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS, BY LEN SPENCER. Ta-ra-ra Boom Der E (with whistle); Paddy Flynn (with Chorus of Shouts, etc.); Drill, ye Tarriers! (with Chorus of Shouts, Blast, Drills, etc.); The Salvation Army (with Chorus, Tambourines, Triangle etc.); Clancy's Trotter (with Trotting of Horse); Song of all Songs (Embracing the Titles of Fifty Different Songs).



Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Yarbray and their granddaughter, Karen, taken in 1954  
CLARA YARBRAV MOCKERT and her daughter, Karen, in March, 1954. Note the little girl's facial resemblance to her great-grandfather, Len Spencer.

VOCAL SOLOS WITH ORCHESTRA ACCOMPANIMENT, by LEN SPENCER. Sailor's Home Sweet Home; A Buttonhole Bouquet; Only a Picture of Her Boy; Sadie Ray; Maggie Murphy's Home; Down on the Farm; Brighter Days Will Come Again; Dreaming as She Sleeps; A Mother's Appeal; The Mottoes on the Wall.

DRAMATIC. The Postillion; The Old Turnkey.

TOPICAL. They're After Me; It Used to be Proper, But It Don't Go Now; Then you Wink the Other Eye.

COMIC. The Song That Breaks My Heart; Ta-ra-ra Boom Der E.

NEGRO. Good-bye, My Honey, I'm Gone; Martha's Weddin' Day.

IRISH. I Owe Ten Dollars to O'Grady; Since Casey Runs the Flat.

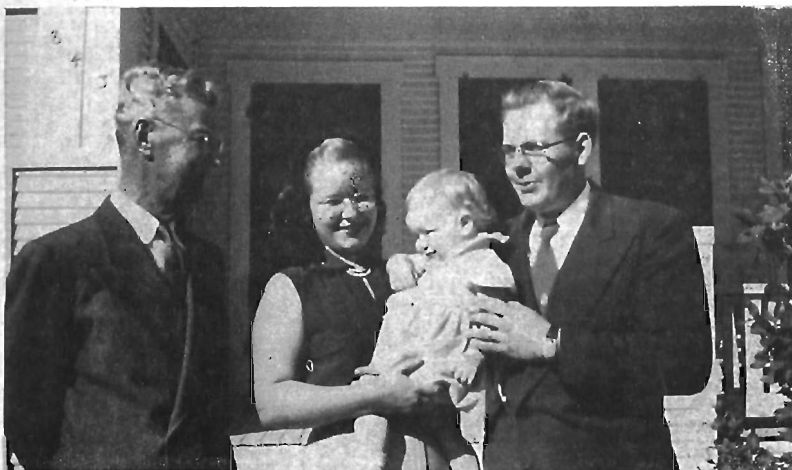
What a parade of now almost utterly forgotten once popular tunes march through the foregoing list! And what a job it must have been to turn out these records, even assuming that the U. S. Company had perfected a duplicating device by this time and that the artist no longer had to sing each number separately! Notice that the greater part of the list is of songs with piano accompaniment, but that some selections were made with the purchaser's

choice of piano or orchestra — and it probably was SOME orchestra. A few of the titles later became associated with other artists. For instance, "Turkey in de Straw" and "Bye, Bye, My Honey" today are identified almost entirely with Billy Golden.

Other performers listed in this ancient record catalog are "the popular baritone J. W. Myers"; "the eminent basso, Mr. Thomas Bott"; "the German Dialect Comedian and Yodeler, Mr. L. W. Lipp"; "the Renowned George W. Johnson"; "the Popular Colored Banjoist and Comedian, Chas. A. Asbury"; and there are also "Vocal Solos, with Piano Accompaniment, by Various Artists of Recognized Ability." There are six records by the Original Bison City Quartet — Chas. C. Miller, Ben. R. Cook, Harry C. West and Lester L. Pike.

Under the heading of "Instrumental Records," there is a long list of "parlor orchestra" numbers by Isler's Popular Orchestra. These are followed by band selections, "as played by Gilmore's Band of New York"; cornet duets, "by Messrs. Clark and Dana, with accompaniment by Holding's Military Band of New York"; cornet solos, "By the well-known Cornetist, Mr. Thomas Clark, and accompaniment by Holding's Military Band"; band numbers by Holding's Military Band and Voss' First Regiment Band of Newark; piccolo solos, "by Mr. Geo. Schwenfest, with accompaniment by Voss First Regiment Band; piccolo solos, with piano accompaniment, by Schweinfest; Clarinet solos with piano accompaniment, "by the Popular Soloist and Composer, Mr. William M. Tuson"; cornet solos, with orchestra accompaniment, "As played by the well-known Soloist, Mr. David B. Dana."

Then follow several vocal solos by George J. Gaskin, and 12 numbers by the Manhasset Quartet — Gaskin, Girard, Riley and Evans. Once more there are cornet duets by Clark and Dana. Then come piccolo duets by "Messrs. Atz and Schweinfest";



The late J. A. Yarbray, Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Mockert and their daughter, Karen, in 1954.

flute solos by Schweinfest; violin solos by "Signor Spazzati"; chimes records, "from the famous chimes of St. John's Church, Newark, N. J. Extremely loud and brilliant. Unequaled for exhibition purposes."

I thought I had listed all Len Spencer's records, but now I come to "the O'Grady Records, By Mr. Larry Leonard, with choruses of shouts, cheers, etc." They are: 579, O'Grady's Address to the Montgomery Guards; 580, O'Grady's Speech on Love (with chorus); 581, O'Grady's Speech on Temperance (with chorus); 582, O'Grady on the Labor Question (with chorus, drum and fife corps, applause, etc.); 583, O'Grady's Speech on Free Trade (with chorus); 584, O'Grady at the Guttenburg Race Track (the arrival - the book-maker - "they're off" - the finish - O'Grady "broke.")

Next we have "Vocal Solos by the popular baritone, Allen P. May, of the Howard Burlesque Co."; vocal duets "by the Popular Artists, Allen P. May and Lillian Cleaver"; vocal solos "by Miss Lillian Cleaver, the phenomenal contralto of the Howard Burlesque Co."; and, bless my soul, if here aren't three duets by "Messrs. Spencer and May": 610, The Upper Ten and the Lower Five; 611, The Broadway Swell and the Bowery Bum, and 611½, The Larboard Watch. (Was any other record ever given a one-half number?)

Next are 15 offerings "by the English Minstrel Vocalist, Mr. Will White." Opposite the White records the dealer who apparently sent this catalog to the U. S. Company to have his order filled has written in pencil: "Give us these by Spencer and piano, just as well." This may be what the note on the cover, "Sent as marked, Oct. 7, 1892" refers to.

Charles P. Lowe (spelled in the booklet as Low), who must have been the first xylophonist to make records, is represented by 15. The back cover is devoted to "Army Bugle Calls," by Mr. D. B. Dana ("Announcement Preceding Each"), and to vocal solos "by the well-known Irish Comedian and Vocalist, Mr. Johnnie Carroll."

There is one thing in this old catalog that I regret. My dear friend, the late John Bieling, firmly believed that as a member of the Manhasset Quartet he took part in the first commercial recordings ever made by a male quartet. However, the booklet shows that before John's career began, an earlier version of the Manhasset already was singing for New Jersey cylinders. Two of the members — George Gaskin and John Riley — were in the group with which Bieling was associated. "Girard" is probably Gilbert Girard, the baritone and animal imitator. I can't identify the fourth member, Evans. You may also have noticed that another quartet — the Original Bison City Quartet — was recording concurrently. None of its members' names mean anything to me, except that Harry R. West probably is the Harry West who did a little work for Edison in the early 1900's.

Two other items having to do with the earlier days of Len Spencer's

career occur to me. Mrs. Yarbray recalled that her father occasionally gave public demonstrations of how records were made. One of these was presented on Monday, November 28, 1904, for the Capitol Phonograph Company, of 825 Seventh street, Washington. Len's demonstrations of the tricks of a professional recorder's trade must have been helpful to those in his audience who made, or tried to make, cylinder records at home. On a larger scale, that same year he was in charge of the Columbia Company's display at the St. Louis Fair, showing how records were made, and every visitor was given an opportunity to hear his own voice reproduced and permitted to take the cylinder home.

One of the intriguing items which Mrs. Yarbray gave me was a letterhead advertising Len Spencer's Greater New York Minstrels. The illustration at the top shows Len seated as interlocutor and towering over the other performers on each side.

On the left side of the page "Our Comedians" are listed. Those named are Spencer himself, Russell Hunting, Billy Golden, Cal Stewart, John P. Hogan and Frank Somers. "Our Vocalists" are Roger Harding, Steve Porter, Fred Rose (presumably the same Fred Rose who later made Edison cylinders) and William C. Jones. "Our Specialists" are Vess L. Ossman, Wizard Goldin, Spencer Trio, Gilmore Brass Quartet, Diamond Comedy Four, the Three Murray Brothers and Tom Clarke's Brass Band and Orchestra. At the bottom appears: Address all communications, "LEN SPENCER, 36 West 27th St., New York."

Just when Spencer had this minstrel show is a poser. The letter that originally appeared on the sheet has been removed, so there is nothing to indicate the date. The New York address would seem to indicate the show was in operation after 1900, following Len's moving to New York, but the address suggests it was before he set up his first Lyceum on 14th Street. On the other hand, Russell Hunting is included as a performer — but Hunting went to England in 1899, when Len was still in Washington, and didn't return to live in the States for 15 years! This, in turn, suggests the possibility that the show was one using records with Len as the "live" interlocutor — a forerunner of the Columbia Minstrels at Coney Island. If the show used living performers instead of their recorded voices, it must have been restricted to occasional appearances in and near New York, because the expense of giving a traveling production with such famous and high-salaried performers would have been excessive. We probably never shall know the solution now. I imagine the large poster Mrs. Yarbray sent me after she returned to San Antonio belonged to this same phase of Spencer's presumably brief minstrel activities.

But now something else occurs to me. Roger Harding died in 1901, so the show must have been organized at some time prior to his death. I'm

afraid I'll have to give up except to hazard the guess that Len may have continued to live in Washington but commuted to New York and maintained a booking agency there. Another thought: The Columbia recording laboratory was at 27th street and Broadway, so the West 27th Street address may have been the Columbia headquarters, which could have served Len as a New York mail address. That seems the most logical solution. The artists mentioned appear to be almost entirely those who, with Spencer, signed exclusive Columbia contracts in 1898.

Concerning Spencer's minstrel activities, Mrs. Yarbray comments: "The 1890 Minstrel Show I know nothing about. I really believe the Len Spencer Minstrels on that letterhead were the dummies at Coney Island. Papa had it at Luna Park and used a huge breathing dragon through which one walked to get to the show. I remember it very distinctly, and I also know there were more than nine dummies. It was a full stage setting. I believe the dummies were named for the famous artists they were supposed to represent. I would have been nine years old at the time they burned."

#### IV. The Past Four Years

Four years have now passed since my memorable meeting with Mrs. Yarbray, and it has brought to her, as to most of us, her share of both trouble and joy. On June 15, 1955, she wrote to tell me of the serious illness of the husband, whom I called "Cousin James Arthur":

Arthur has been in Brooke Army Hospital for the past five weeks and was in for six weeks from March to Easter. It seems he has a stiff fight still ahead of him, as it was a malignant tumor. Now they are giving him deep X-ray therapy. . . . His reaction will decide whether or not surgery will be necessary. . . . Another "cousin" is due in August, and of course we are all thrilled over the prospect of another grandchild. Clara is doing fine and little Karen is as sweet and adorable as ever.

On October 1, Mrs. Yarbray wrote me the sad news of her husband's death:

Dear Cousin Jim: Arthur passed away yesterday at Brooke Army Hospital, having re-entered on the 2nd of September. God was merciful and spared him much suffering.

. . . . It's been a hard row to hoe and a losing battle all the way, but he passed away peacefully and knew us all on the morning he left.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Yarbray was convinced — as she wrote on April 16, 1956 — that she must "keep my mind and body active to crowd out the awful feeling of loss." so, since she had always enjoyed office work, she obtained a secretarial appointment with the National Guard Branch of the Reserve Components Division at Fort Sam Houston. She commented: "Arthur served his country 45 years and now I am doing my bit to carry on."

There is a bright and cheerful tone to the latest letter I have received from her — the one dated January



20, 1958, from which I have already quoted:

My little family is all well. . . Karen is now past five, Helen is past two, and they are certainly two precious little girls and the pride and joy of my life—though of course my heart belongs to my own gal Clara. Karen is still a little red-head, but Helen is platinum blonde. Eddie is still with Westinghouse and works hard and long. . . He has a level head on his shoulders, so I feel at ease about my kids. As for me, I'm still with Civil Service, having completed my second year with a superior rating of which I am very proud. . . My work is interesting and being with my "Darlin's" Army is a great deal of satisfaction. I feel at home, as you must realize.

I am happy to have had the privilege of setting down for present and future readers of HOBBIES the former Ethel Spencer's recollections of her distinguished father, and I hope that what I have done will not only be informative and entertaining to thousands of collectors of old "popular" records, but will also give pleasure to my cherished "Cousin Ethel" herself.

(The End)

## BOOKMARKS

(Continued from Page 25)

Auntie . . . Maggie's Love. This is a beautiful marker, finest perforations, scalloped card—minute stitching in sky blue. For Aunt Mary—mounted on gold perforated card, worked in variegated shades of rose and red wool, and edge of frame worked in one line green cross stitch. A beautiful bookmark, ten inches long, two and one half inches wide. Another large and beautiful one. The Light of Home is Love—lettering in live red, floral center green, yellow, brown and outline of red. Mounted on beautiful wide red ribbon. This type was often used as wall decoration.

Bible quotes or pious sentiments: In God We Trust . . . Holy Bible . . . Search the Scriptures . . . Thou Art My Hope . . . Thou God Seest Me . . . The Lord Will Provide . . . Hope On, Hope Ever . . . The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom. Many of these are breathtakingly beautiful. They are mostly Berlin work.

One unusual specimen depicts a large parent house done in glowing colors, including shade trees, and on either side a smaller home, more than likely the dwelling of married offspring. A custom in olden days. A rare specimen is done in colored beads. A large colonial house in yellow beads, white bead trim, trees and flowers in shades of green, red, blue, etc. It is like a tiny primitive.

Among the sampler type in the collection, is a box filled with small finished pieces depicting squirrels, sailing ships, high smoke stack engines, kerosene lamp and chimney, and topping the group a handsome rooster, flaunting lively feather tints, proclaiming to all and sundry . . . *ARISE—'TIS MORN!* These may have been the stint set out for the children of the family, and must have furnished

many happy moments to the little needlewomen of that day.

About the turn of the century many bookmarks appeared in the Holiday Greeting card trend. Beautifully printed in soft colors, attached to ribbons in colored embossed satin, they embraced Scenic . . . Religious . . . Sentimental and 'Children's series. They were the last mass effort in the nineteenth century commercial production, and were published by Louis Prang, of Boston, Raphael Tuck, of England, later by Rust Craft, and several other well known publishers.

The earliest of the pierced card type are those with embossing. They were made by early publishers as Windsor and Wood, both of whose names are well known to Valentine collectors, and these could have passed as Valentine tokens were the sentiments and groups just a little different. The one marked Windsor is pierced through its entire length, the edge a highly embossed flower border. In a circular cartouche at one end is a family group (Biblical feeling) in high relief, background cut out. They are waving farewell to some unseen person. The words "Aus Leibe" are worked in white silk on the length of the marker, 1840 to 1845.

The second is of a family group, on pleasure bent. A father fishing, a daughter reading a book, seated at the edge of the stream. A mother walking beside a mule on which a small daughter is taking a timid lesson in riding. The mother carries a very tiny sunshade. These figures are in sentimental feeling, in high relief. The word "PATIENCE" worked in a beautiful shade of pink silk thread. To date I have found only two of this type, 1840 to 1850.

Another form of the pierced card-board marker is intricate indeed. The pattern is pressed out between the stamped whole. Usually the design is a cross, which stands alone in the center of the card, and the remainder is pressed out in a lacy pattern. They are extremely beautiful but so delicate that few have survived. I have several perfect ones and several damaged ones, and across the years I hand the palm to the patient designer and the skilled result of her hand and brain. These seem to have been conceived as Easter gifts, for crosses abound, and several have printed lithographed subjects set into a frame-like enclosure. About 1860.

However, Americans are omnivorous readers, and today's trend toward condensed editions, rapid reading courses, etc., has again brought to the fore an awareness of that delightful, delectable time saver . . . The Bookmark . . . So . . .

*Place me between your pages,  
And like a sentinel so true,  
I'll guard your place and save it,  
And hand it back to you.*

ANON.

## OBITUARY

ANTHONY L. MARESH, JR.

Anthony L. Mares, Jr., popular member of the younger set in Cleveland, Ohio, recently passed away of a heart attack at the age of 42. At his passing the Cleveland Plain Dealer stated that he had the largest funeral ever held in South Cleveland.

He was president of The Mares & Son Piano Co., "Cleveland's Oldest and Largest Piano and Organ Dealers," the firm founded by his father, 64 years ago. He is survived by his father, mother, wife Vera, six year old son, and a brother.

Anthony Mares, Sr., is a noted Lincoln collector, composer and musician. For many years he was active as president of the Lincoln Association of Ohio. He presented many of his Lincoln documents to the Cleveland Public Library and in later years has assembled a fine group of Lincoln relics which are scheduled for the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland.

Anthony, Jr., took an active interest in his father's collection, and as his father said, "HOBBIES was his favorite magazine."

HOBBIES staff will miss this talented, happy spirited young man, and so will thousands of other people throughout the country, particularly in Cleveland, and in his vacation home of Ft. Pierce, Fla.

JOHN W. GRAY

John W. Gray, Mitchell, Ind., passed away the latter part of July. Prior to his retirement to Mitchell, where he and Mrs. Gray operated an antique shop in their hotel, he was a theatrical furrier in Chicago. He was a member of the Illinois chapter of the Sons of the Revolution, and a member of the Masonic order for 52 years.

He was particularly interested in the diamond as a hobby and wrote "The Historical Romance of the Diamond."

His retirement years were spent between the antique shop and Spice Valley Ranch, near Mitchell, where he and Mrs. Gray raised Palomino horses.

There is but one virtue; to help human beings to free and beautify life; but one sin: to do them indifferent or cruel hurt; the love of humanity is the whole of morality. This is Goodness, this is Humanism, this is the Social Conscience.

—J. William Lloyd





RAY WALKER, as he appears today, surrounded by sheet music of his songs.



AMERICA'S GREAT POPULAR SONG WRITER, IRVING BERLIN, served his country in uniform besides writing patriotic song hits.



ELSIE JANIS, who became "The Sweetheart of the AEF" from entertaining overseas troops in 1918.

## RAY WALKER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF ENTERTAINING

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE.—This article is dedicated to my old friend, the veteran song writer, Warren Raymond Walker, who suggested that the patriotic achievements of the theatrical profession in the First World War should be commemorated this month, the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice.

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs and records. Parts and anything pertaining to old phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3882

WANTED: Cecilian Phonograph, upright or table model, walnut or mahogany. Also other makes except Victor, Columbia and Brunswick. Record catalogs, supplements and other phonographic material. Please describe fully and state prices. No bids. — D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. ja3046

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs For Sale: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many rare models. New lists. Large list of hard-to-find cylinder records, parts of all kinds, repairs, reproducer repairing a specialty, player piano books and catalogs. 25c for lists. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. d36501

FOR SALE: Phonographs, duplicates of my collection. List 25c. Need Edison Excelsior. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. d3042

FOR SALE: Edison, Victor and Columbia phonographs. Hundreds of cylinder and disc records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppennoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. n3886

Forty years ago, at 11:11 a.m., on November 11, 1918, the shooting stopped in the First War to end war. It is almost no exaggeration to say that the noise from millions of rejoicing men, women and children the world over came close to blowing holes in the sky. Because of that fortieth anniversary, this seems an appropriate time to review the splendid work done by American singers, stage stars, song writers, and other theatrical persons in World War I.

The world of "show biz" stimulated civilian morale on the home front and entertained American fighting men both at home and abroad. Since this department is chiefly interested in recording artists, we'll first mention the activities of a representative few of the men and women who were making discs and cylinders 40 years and more ago.

The tireless work of the late Ar-

thur Fields in recruiting hundreds of members for the old 71st Regiment is still well recalled. Recently I came across an amusing photo of this famous song writer-comedian riding on the back of an elephant from the New York Hippodrome to deliver an "Army and Navy" model of the New Edison phonograph to New York's First Signal Corps. The Edison Company supplied hundreds of these instruments without cost to military camps, and famous stars, including, Anna Case and Alice Verlet, gave direct comparison "tone tests" with them. After one such test by Mme. Verlet, Raymond Hitchcock, the master of ceremonies, who had made Victor and Columbia records, remarked:

### MISCELLANEOUS

EARLY CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, reproducers, catalogs, parts. Bought, sold, repaired. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f6806

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mh122361

EARLY CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, reproducers, catalogs, parts. Bought, sold, repaired. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f6806

SINGLE or collection cylinder records by Bettini; complete phonographs German, French, American; antique, unusual musical instruments. — Rita Ford, 907 3rd Ave., New York 22, N. Y. mh6407

WANTED TO BUY: Early piano items of all descriptions. Piano catalogues and broadsides, pamphlets and price lists before 1890. Also old New York City Directories. — M. Curtis, Pianos, 362 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y. ap64811

PLAYER PIANOS \$75 to \$500. Standard Player Rolls, 3 for \$1. Also Aeolian, Duo-Art and Deluxe. 78 R.P.M. Victrola Records. Some Pathe Sapphire & steel cut.—Berlin's, 660 Neil Ave., Columbus, 8, Ohio. ja3825  
(Classified ads continued on page 33)

# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH



THE MAYO "SHOCK TROUPE" UNIT IN FRANCE, 1918. Standing—Lois Meredith, Margaret Mayo, Elizabeth Brice, Will Morrissey and Sgt. Bernard Sobel. Sitting—Thomas J. Gray and Ray Walker.

"Some phonograph! I couldn't tell the artist from the Edison!"

Other Edison artists, including Amy Eilerman, George Wilton, Ballard and Sibyl Sanderson Fagan gave similar tone tests, thus combining entertainment for the men in uniform with good publicity for the New Edison. During 1918 there was a nationwide drive to collect so-called "slack-er" records (records which the average family owned but didn't play) for the pleasure of the fighting forces. During a week-long drive in New York City, recording artists sang repeatedly on the steps of the Public Library, but were concealed inside a huge oak replica of a Chippendale model Edison. A rather amusing account of their activities is given in the December, 1918, issue of *Along Broadway*:

Marie de Kyzer, who sang several times herself, brought her husband, Mr. Donald Ross Cummings, with her one afternoon. Mr. Cummings is so tall he said he'd feel uncomfortable inside the phonograph—which was about seven feet high—but he consented to sing on the outside with Miss de Kyzer as his accompanist. Vernon Dalhart, too, not only sang but provided another singer. This time it was a cousin—a coxswain in the Navy—whose uniform and his delightful singing of "Caroline" quite captured the audience. Harvey Hindermeyer, Yvonne de Treville, Julia Heinrich, Reed Miller, Gladys Rice, Marion Evelyn Cox, George Wilton Ballard and Betsy Lane Shepherd were others who contributed their services to the movement to send music in its most varied and interesting shapes to the boys overseas. In camps and on ships.

I wonder if Dalhart's cousin were Guy Massey, who was credited with being the composer of that best-selling record of 1924-25, "The Prisoner's Song." Of course other phono-

graph companies rallied to the nation's service. Victor, for instance, placed the greater part of its factory space at the government's disposal in making war equipment, and many Victor artists, among them John McCormack, Olive Kline, Elsie Baker and Sir Harry Lauder (whose only son, John was killed in the war) were active in recruiting programs and Liberty Bond sales. Lauder was afterwards knighted by the British government and became Sir Harry Lauder.

The famous American violinist, Albert Spalding, gave up his instrument for the duration to serve his country in uniform. The still living Joe White, who became famous on radio several years later as "The Silver-Masked Tenor," enlisted and while in uniform made several Columbia records under the name of J. Malachy White. Another still active singer and song writer, Geoffrey O'Hara was musical director at Fort Oglethorpe in Georgia. He wrote "K-K-Katy." Percy Hemus taught singing to sailors at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

A sailor on recruiting duty, W. J. ("Sailor") Reilley, sang on a few Victor records. Poor Reilley's health failed after the war and he lingered on for many years as an incurable invalid in an Illinois military hospital. A Negro musical group, Lieutenant Jim Europe's 69th Infantry (Hell-Fighters) Band, made a large number of Pathé discs featuring the still popular comedian, Noble Sissle, who also recorded many solos. And we must not forget the war-time services of Sergeant Irving Berlin, who qualifies as a recording artist because

of having sung a Columbia disc of one of his compositions, "Oh, How That German Could Love," as long ago as 1910. (This was one of the records I played when I appeared on Dave Garroway's "Today" program last May. It was played in spite of Mr. Berlin's asking me how much I would charge NOT to use it!) Berlin not only wrote some of the best popular songs with a war-time theme—"For Your Country and My Country," "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," "I Can Always Find a Little Sunshine in the YMCA," and "I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now," among them—but was the guiding spirit of the production of "Yip-Yap-Yaphank" at Camp Upton. His services in World War II were equally great.

Now on to Ray Walker's recollections of the part played overseas by the show business in that outburst of global insanity 40 odd years ago.

## II. Ray Walker Recalls

First though, Ray would like to quote from a book, "Entertaining the American Army: The American Stage and Lyceum in the First World War," written in 1921 by a dramatic producer and coach, James W. Evans, and Captain Gardner L. Harding, who was attached to General Pershing's staff at Chaumont in the Intelligence Division of the War Department:

The American stage was one of the powerful forces behind all the Liberty Loans, Red Cross drives and United War Work campaigns. It was directly instrumental in raising hundreds of millions of dollars. It recruited the entertainers from every available source, including actors, lyceum entertainers, lecturers, singers, musicians, song leaders, motion picture stars and operators, vaudeville performers, soldier shows, stock companies—all merging in this achievement, which required the organization of play bureaus, costume and scenic factories, transportation offices and the leasing of many of the most famous theaters in Europe. It enrolled in its operations at home and abroad more than 35,000 men and women. It is estimated that more than 20,000 actors, professional and semi-professional, with lyceum workers, singers and amateur entertainers, appeared before the soldiers in American camps.

Perhaps a majority of the 1918 performers are now dead and the surviving veterans who saw them put on their acts are fast moving out of a middle-age status into the elderly class. But most of the old-time front line entertainers who still survive have keen memories of what they say and did in those long-gone days. One of the keenest memories belongs to Ray Walker.

Ray says the Over There Theater League was organized April 23, 1918, at the Palace Theater in New York City. E. F. Albee, head of the Keith vaudeville circuit, was host. Albee named George M. Cohan as chairman. As a result of the meeting more than 700 entertainers volunteered for overseas service. A good many performers were already in France, but a much larger number was needed. Elsie Janis, who went to France in March, 1918, to appear in a Paris theater,

had her contract cancelled, so she volunteered to sing for the soldiers under YMCA auspices. Because of her work among the service men, Miss Janis was called "The Sweetheart of the A.E.F." More than 20 years after the war ended, the "Sweetheart" was making the rounds of veterans' hospitals, telling jokes and singing songs the men had liked. Her overseas piano accompanist was William Januashchek, who went across in December, 1917, before the Over There Theater League was formed.

Ray Walker recalls that Winthrop Ames and E. H. Sothorn went to France in January, 1918, at the suggestion of Mrs. August Belmont who was already there to study A.E.F. entertainment needs. They gave shows, watched shows, mingled among the men and conferred with General Pershing at his headquarters in Chaumont, as well as with YMCA heads in Paris. Returning to the United States they gave a dinner on April 6 at the Metropolitan Club. Among the guests were Albee, Daniel Frohman, and the chairman of the National War Work Council, William Sloane.

The next step was to organize the theatrical managers. A dinner at Sherry's was attended by almost every prominent manager. Included were Cohan, Lee Shubert, Marc Klaw, Abraham L. Erlanger, Frohman and Albee. On April 17, they sent out this proclamation to the entire theatrical profession:

Mr. E. H. Sothorn and Mr. Winthrop Ames have just returned home from a three months' tour through the American camps in France. They report that entertainment, and particularly entertainment sent from "home," is vital to the morale of our troops

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

"PIANOLIN" for sale. Needs restoring but in good condition, \$300. Also German merry-go-round organ, \$350. National nickelodeon, needs repairing, \$175. — Glenn Gould, Jr., Box 25, Shirley Center, Mass. n1842

### MELODEONS

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED INSTRUMENTS. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. au126551

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 478, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

WANTED: Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or centre start. — Alda Pavia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

RECORDS by John McCormack. — James Sanford, 601 N. Broadway, Weatherford, Okla. o12407

there. They bring a message from General Pershing emphasizing the need.

The opportunity has come for our men and women of the stage to serve, in person, our soldiers abroad. This opportunity for service is so important that we feel it should be brought before the American Theater as a whole. Will you attend a meeting at the Palace Theater on Tuesday morning, April 23, at 11 o'clock, to consider the situation? Mr. Sothorn and Mr. Ames will describe the situation in France. The need is urgent. We bespeak your presence.

The appeal was signed by Albee; Cohan, as Abbot of the Friars; Rachel Crothers, president of Stage Woman's War Relief; Walter Damrosch, president of the Musicians Club; Charles Dillingham; John Drew, president of The Players; Daniel Frohman, president of the Actors' Fund of America; Joseph Grismer, shepherd of The Lambs; Mark Klaw of Klaw and Erlanger; Willard Mack, president of National Vaudeville Artists; Lee Shubert, president of Shubert Theatrical Company; A. Augustus Thomas, president of American Dramatists and Composers; and Francis Wilson, president of Actors Equity Association.

The next step was the meeting at the Palace, with more than 2,000 show business personalities attending. Cohan said: "General Pershing has called upon the actor to line up with the rest of the manhood and womanhood of America and now is the time to send him his answer." He read this telegram from President Woodrow Wilson: "I learn with greatest interest of the work you are undertaking in collaboration with Mr. E. H. Sothorn and Mr. Winthrop Ames. It has my most cordial approval and I wish you the best possible success. It is a big undertaking, but I have no doubt you will accomplish it."

Ames explained the situation confronting actors in France. He said they were virtually in Army service and subject to Army discipline. Then he added: "I have no doubt that if any of your performances over there should be bad enough to warrant it, the officers in command might order you out and have you shot at dawn."

### III. Over There!

Officers of the Over There Theater League were set up at the Little Theater, where they remained nine months. More than 700 performers immediately volunteered for service and over 15,000 did later. A hall on Ellis Island was the try-out center. The first volunteers under the League program sailed July 31, 1918; the last, May 15, 1919. The League ceased its activities the following July 15, but some performers including Ray Walker remained overseas until all AEF entertainment ended.

Margaret Woodrow Wilson, daughter of the President went to France October 23, 1918, after spending the summer entertaining at camps and army centers at home. She was overseas seven months and sang at practically every center the American army was occupying. Her accompanist was the composer-poet, Mrs. Ross David, whose husband also sang. Many record collectors have Miss Wilson's

Columbia record of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Will H. Cressy and Blanche Dayne, well remembered from the stage classic, "The Old Homestead," were in the first company to arrive in France after the Over There Theater League was formed. Others were George Austin Moore; Howard T. Collins (musical director of Victor Herbert's "The Only Girl"), and Helene Davis. Later, Stella Hoban joined the troupe. Their initial performance was given in London at the Eagle Hut and was the first presented abroad by a League unit. Like many others, Cressy was gassed before the war ended, but didn't realize it until he cut himself with an axe almost a year later. Then the latent gas poisoning brought on an infection.

(Continued on next page)

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

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#### IV. The Margaret Mayo Troupe

The Margaret Mayo Troupe was among the next to go. Miss Mayo, a noted playwright took over the "Mayo Shock Unit," consisting of the comedienne, Elizabeth Brice, former singing partner of the late Charles King, with whom she made Victor and Columbia records; film star Lois Meredith, who joined the company from the Alcazar Theater, San Francisco; Playwright Will Morrissey, who was afterwards briefly married to Miss Brice; and two song writers—the late Thomas J. Gray and our friend, Ray Walker. Ray was also a member of a later group, the "Gloom Chasers," which included Eddie Fredericks, Olive Palmer and Ida Van Tine.

Miss Mayo wrote a book, "Trouping for the Troops," recalling some of the amusing, tragic and terrifying experiences of her group. On one occasion the troupe was sent to within three miles of the firing line, into woods that had been under German occupation for four years. They were to play chiefly to a company of engineers who had not seen a woman in 18 months. The service men were sitting on the wet ground, on logs, around a stage they had built and equipped from German loot. She writes:

It was screened from above by a thick canopy of leaves and boughs so as to escape detection by the enemy planes. Four small German machine guns, also salvaged, served as chairs for us. There was even a piano salvaged from a nearby dugout that had been occupied for four years by German officers. We inspected the dugout later and found it was cement lined, calclimined and wired for electricity. The piano which had been originally captured by the Boche was now to be played by an American musician, Ray Walker. At intervals through it all came the steady boom of the big guns, slaughtering while he played.

In similar vein, Walker recalls that at another time when a show was being given the whole division was ordered to the front lines. The troupe's automobile went with them, and the performers had to walk to the nearest railway station and wait for a box car to take them "home". "We arrived there," he says, "five hours later, at midnight, hungry and freezing."



THE LATE ARTHUR FIELDS, riding a Hippodrome elephant down Broadway, on his way to present the First Signal Corps with an "Army and Navy" phonograph in 1917.

GEOFFREY O'HARA, who taught the soldiers at Fort Oglethorpe to sing, autographs a record for Quentin Riggs in Oklahoma City.

Walker's list of members of the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) who went with the Over There Theater League includes, besides Gray, Morrissey, Elsie Janis and Ray himself, George Botsford, Herman Paley and Dorothy Donnelly. Other song writers were George Spink, Henry Souvaine and Irene Franklin's husband, Burt Green. Other piano players included Ed Porray, Harry Ferguson, Howard T. Collins, Harry Israel, Lucie Bancroft, Diano Kasner, Helen Collay, Henry Marcus, Arthur Downing, Amy Horton and C. Allen Lewis.

#### V. More Walker Recollections

This seems a good place to pause and insert more of Ray Walker's own personal recollections. They are frequently, but not always, amusing:

Tom Gray was in the lowest class in the draft. He tried to enlist several times but had TB and was always turned down. Will Morrissey had only one eye and they wouldn't take him, either. I was above the draft age, but tried to enlist. At Palham's Bay they turned me down three times. The main reason we went over with the Y was that we thought we might get into the army that way.

One night we were giving a show on a truck when the soldiers started hissing and called us slackers. For five minutes we couldn't talk until a General made them keep quiet. We started the show and in about a minute Tommy and Will got them to laughing and we finished the show with the boys cheering us. Next day we went to the Adjutant and told him we couldn't stand it any more and wanted to enlist. He listened to us and when we got through he said: "You keep up doing the work you are doing. You are doing lots of good by making the boys happy and you would be of no use as soldiers. I heard the show last night and you are braver than I am. I would have quit when the boys began hissing."

In Bar-Le-Duc we were giving a show for French and American soldiers. When Elizabeth Brice finished her song the French soldiers began hissing and the Americans started applauding. It looked like a riot was starting and we got off the stage quick. At last the Mayor of the town got upon the stage and explained in French to the French soldiers that Americans applaud when they like anything. He explained in English to the Americans that the French hissed when they were pleased. Things were peaceful after that.

Elizabeth sang a song I wrote for her in her act and in the wards of hospitals where she entertained. She would pick out the most bashful soldier and sing directly to him. At the end of the song she would kiss him and all the rest of the soldiers would laugh. The title of the song was "I'd

Like to be a Sister to a Brother Just Like You." We never published it.

In one ward at the hospital in Chaumont we were entertaining in a ward and she sang to a soldier who was very bashful. He pulled the covers over his head when she pointed at him. All the other soldiers laughed. When she finished the song she went to him, pulled the covers off his head and found him dead. He had died from nervousness while she was singing. She put the covers back over his face and never sang that song again. That was the end of the song and the kissing.

I was standing in the lobby of the Folies Bergere one day waiting for the doors to open. Four American soldiers and four English officers were waiting also. One of the English officers kept looking at the AEF insignia on the American sleeves. One of the English officers in an insolent tone asked one of his fellow officers what the AEF stood for. He kept repeating this about a dozen times. At last one of the American soldiers got mad and told the English officers, "AEF means 'After England Failed.' I got out of the lobby quick for I felt a fight was coming. A battle did start in a few minutes. They smashed the whole lobby and I stood outside watching. Everything was ruined.

In Aix-Le-Bain there was a "leave area" where soldiers went for a rest. Two divisions were there—a few men at a time. They were the "Yankee" 26th Division of New England—the National Guard, who were volunteers—and the drafted 81st Division called "The Wild Cats." One morning one of the Wild Cats wrote on a board in front of the YMCA, "They call us the Wild Cats—81st Division." One day one of the Yankee Division wrote underneath the sign, "They didn't call us—we volunteered." A battle started on the street whenever a Yankee Division soldier and a Wild Cat soldier met.

The Gloom Chasers, with whom I played after the Mayo Troupe disbanded following the armistice, were stationed at Aix-Le-Bain for two weeks to give shows in the YMCA. One night after the show I was on my way back to the hotel when I passed a cafe where a lot of soldiers were singing inside. It was pretty cold, so I thought I would go in the cafe and have a hot rum. When I opened the door all the singing stopped. They thought I was a regular Y man. On my right sleeve there was a big YMCA. On my left sleeve it read "Entertainment," but I sat on the end of the table and they saw only my right arm. I ordered a hot rum and drank it with every soldier as quiet as a mouse. When I finished the drink I ordered another. A few minutes later I ordered still another as it was very cold outside and I was frozen stiff. After the third rum one soldier on my right asked if I was a YMCA secretary. When I told him I was (I didn't mention the entertainment branch) the soldier asked why I was drinking. I explained then I was in the entertainment branch and ordered a round of drinks for all the soldiers in the place.

I offered to show them the sights of the town if they would meet me the next morning. At 8 a. m., they were waiting for me outside my hotel. I took them up to Mt. Revard, and that afternoon I bought each of them an ice cream soda—a glass of seltzer with a dash of sirup. It cost me one dollar each. They were so tired at night they stopped going to the cafe. I was their guide all week until they left the area.

After they left I was standing in the Y hut when I was told the secretary wanted to see me. I thought he wanted to bawl me out for drinking with the soldiers, but when I got the courage to see him he told me he had been watching the work I had been doing. He shook hands and said, "I want to congratulate you. We had been trying to get those soldiers into the Y and you were the only person who succeeded!" I wonder if he knew the hot rums did it!

#### VI. Other Recollections

Besides contributing these reminiscences, Ray Walker asked some of his "show biz" friends for their recollections. One, Harry Ferguson, recalled





he and his wife, Ida May, went across as a team, at the suggestion of George M. Cohan, who himself wrote the greatest American song of World War I, "Over There." The production was called "The Variety Show," and Ferguson says:

I was the manager, emcee and accompanist, besides doing our act which closed the show. The other people with our show were Fred Livingston and Winifred Williams. Some other acts that I remember off-hand are Cantwell and Walker, Mary Boland, Elizabeth Brice, Perry and Wilbur, Cressy and Dayne, George Austin Moore, Hunting and Francis, Burr McIntosh, Elsie Janis, and the Victor recording artists, Horace Wright and Rene Dietrich.

It was tough going over there. No planes to take us anywhere. We had Ford jalopies assigned to us to hold five people—us, the driver and hand baggage. It was an experience we won't forget but wouldn't undertake again. We sailed on the Orduna in August, 1918, and arrived back in the U.S. on the President Wilson in May, 1919. We were in Paris the day of the Armistice, and at 7 in the morning I helped decorate the statue of Joan of Arc opposite Red Cross headquarters. After Christmas, Ida May and I did 75 songs in a hospital outside of Paris one afternoon. Now we are a couple of old-timers enjoying our reminiscences.

The former concert soprano and Columbia recording artist, Amparito Farrar, who is now Mrs. Goodrich Smith of Fort Myers, Fla., recalls doing a "single act." She too, went over in August and was in Paris when the Armistice was declared. "Those," Miss Farrar says, "were rugged days for all of us. The modern troop entertainment is something we couldn't vision, but I think ours was helpful. I retired from the concert stage, married a doctor and now we are both retired and enjoying living in Florida."

Herman Paley, who wrote such popular songs as "Billy," "Cheer Up, Mary," "Keep On Smiling," and "Sweet Little Buttercup," recalled that he left New York in a convoy

of 13 ships September 13, 1918, and arrived in Liverpool 13 days later. The figure 13 continued to trail him, for after entertaining in Liverpool and London, Paley sailed for France on November 13, two days after the Armistice. "Finally," he said, "I was assigned to play for a show given by the boys themselves. We called it 'The Victory Players.' I was musical director and pianist. There were about 25 to 40 in the outfit. We traveled all through France, Belgium, Germany and Holland in big army trucks. Ever since then, and I am now 75, that wanderlust possesses me, and will never be stilled."

After the Victory Players broke up and went back to the States, Paley remained abroad and entertained with units of individual artists. Ray Walker also stayed overseas until there was no more need for troop entertainment. He had planned to return home in April, 1919, but at the request of A. M. Beatty of the YMCA's Entertainment Department, he remained until the Theater League disbanded its activities. After he was back in Brooklyn, where he still lives, he received from Madison Cory, Regional Director of the Le Mans Region, a medal commemorating his services. This was accompanied by a letter which Ray treasures, saying:

"I am happy that under such trying conditions you never faltered in giving to the Service all you possessed but with a splendid conception of duty, without any thought of professional standing or your own condition, met every call and request promptly and cheerfully."

That letter gave Ray Walker a warm glow back in 1919, and it still does, almost 40 years later. But our friend's face takes on a wry expression when he recalls what happened when he started back home on the U.S. America, after two years of entertaining the troops, with a trunk full of clothes and souvenirs. On the return trip he played for the men in the "sick bay" and other parts of the ship. But, "When I went for my trunk after landing in Hoboken," he recalls, "I found it contained just one dirty shirt. The Navy took me over and the Navy sure 'took me' coming back!"

Of the entertainers so intimately associated with Ray's overseas experiences, Margaret Mayo, Thomas Gray and Will Morrissey are dead. He believes Elizabeth Brice is still alive (she was operating a tea room on 47th Street, New York, in 1938), but isn't sure what has become of Lois Meredith. Ray himself, though in poor health, a few months ago observed his 60th anniversary as a song writer. During much of the time, since he returned from France, he has entertained in night clubs as a player of the piano and piano-acordion. I hope this glance backward into the exciting days of 40 years ago will please him and that he will soon recover his health and be able to go on giving pleasure to his huge number of friends and admirers.

Orille B. Rhoades

## CIRCUSIANA

### Questions & Answers

By DANA W. STEVENS

Q: Is there any record of the earliest woman animal trainer?

A: In 1840, an English circus called Hilton's presented an animal act presided over by a Miss Hilton, the owner's daughter. It is presumed the animals were lions because she was called the "Lion Queen." However, another English performer, Miss Nellie Chapman became the most celebrated Lion Queen of that era. She traveled with Wombwell's circus. Miss Chapman left this circus in 1849 to get married, and thus a new Lion Queen had to be found. That person was a young lady named Helen Bright who unfortunately, figured in the first death in a cage. She had a habit of flicking the animals on the face with her whip. One evening in 1850, a tiger, enraged, sprang upon her and bit her so severely on the head that she died shortly afterward. This incident put an end to the use of "Lion Queens" for many, many years. Mabel Stark was possibly the greatest of them all. She handled tigers in the same cage with a black panther. Her body, as she was fond of remarking, "bore more scars than her tomcats have stripes."

Q: Was there ever a clown act under the big top that did an imitation of Amos and Andy?

A: There was, but I must confess that I haven't many specific details concerning this act. I saw this act in person at the Sells-Floto Circus sometime in the early 1930's. As I recall, the two clowns working this presentation were in black face and dressed as Amos and Andy of radio fame. They had a model T-Ford that was covered with humorous signs. The key point of the act was the argument that took place between the two clowns. As they argued they were unaware that their "taxi" moved by itself on around the hippodrome track. Needless to say, audiences loved this fun-making.

Q: What kind of costume does Lou Jacobs wear?

A: Lou Jacobs is a white-face clown. He wears a small derby hat on top of his high false dome. He sports a huge red bulbous nose that is accented by an ear-to-ear grin. His most notable prop is the pint-sized automobile that amuses and yet puzzles everyone. The puzzle stems from the way he stuffs his six-foot, 176 pound frame into his little car.

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted By JIM WALSH

## Charles Hart

Tells the Story of His Life to

JIM WALSH

Note By Jim Walsh

HOBBIES readers for many years have urged me to tell the life story of one of the most popular of pioneer recording artists, Charles Hart. Among others, this request has been made by Philip L. Miller, of the Music Division of the New York Public Library.

I am happy that I am now able to fulfill these solicitations with an autobiography written by Charles Hart himself. The tenor has told his story in such a clear and characteristically straight-forward style I believe it has resulted in one of the most interesting articles I have ever published — one that is an auspicious means of bringing to a close the 1958 volume of FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS.

By CHARLES HART

### 1. In the Beginning

I was born May 16, 1884, on South Halsted street in Chicago and was christened Charley Hart. When I began to sing professionally I took my father's name, Henry, and called myself Charles Henry Hart. Later I used only the middle initial of H. When the Actor's Equity Association came into being I again wanted to call myself Charles Henry Hart, but because they had a member named Henry Hart I was not permitted to use the name of Henry. So I settled for Charles Hart, although Charles Henry Hart is more euphonious.

My parents were born in Germany. My mother, whose maiden name was Elsie Timm, was born in Schoenfeldt, a suburb of Hamburg, December 8, 1857. My father's birthplace was Bielefeldt. I do not know the exact date of his birth, but imagine he was about the same age as my mother.

When Mother was 18 she came to the United States on a sail ship and landed in Baltimore. It took her six weeks to cross the Atlantic. Father came over with his parents when a boy and they settled in Hoboken, New Jersey. Mother was 26 when she met Father in Chicago, and they were married there.

Father was a civil engineer, and talented, but drink ruined what otherwise might have been a fine career. It also brought poverty and misery into our home, and when I was four years old he deserted us, leaving a note in which he wrote that he was of no use to himself or to us and that we would be better off without him. We never heard from him again, and I often wonder what became of him. How right Abraham Lincoln was when he said: "Liquor has many defenders but no defense!"

### II. An Impoverished Boyhood

Mother was an excellent cook, and she secured a position in a family where she could have me with her. We now fared better. My father was right. We were better off without him. When he was with us we often went hungry, and Mother made my clothes from her old dresses. A suit with kilts which I had at the age of four she made herself. She must have had quite a wardrobe, for she never had a new dress after she married. Father's earnings were all handed to bartenders.

My mother's first position was with a family by the name of Silverman on the south side of Chicago. The next was on the north side with an evangelist, Merton Smith, and his wife and small son. He was very zealous for the Lord and preached in a mission on Clybourn Avenue which was supported by Dwight L. Moody's church. Mother had a great religious sense. She went to church every Sunday and I to Sunday school. For this I have always been grateful, for it gave me a knowledge of the Bible and an insight into the better side of life.

We next lived with a family named Withrow on the corner of North and Dearborn Avenues. I was now six years old and started grammar school. It was the Sheldon school on the north side of Chicago. When I was seven we went to live with a family on the corner of Oak street and LaSalle avenue. There I went to the Wendell school.

I was then seven years old. In the summer I went barefoot and sold newspapers on the corner of Chicago



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THE CRESCENT TRIO — Hart, Shaw and James making a recording

Avenue and Clark Street. When paying their street car fare some of the passengers took transfers, which they didn't need. I would give them a paper for a transfer. Then I sold the transfer for three cents. In this way a rider saved two cents on a five-cent fare. Newspapers, of course, cost only one cent. We were business men in those days.

I was nine when we went to live with an Adams family in Green Bay, Wisconsin, which at that time (1893) had a population of about 5,000. This was a high spot in my life, for it was my introduction to the country and the beauties of nature. With fishing in the Fox river, swimming in the bay and going barefoot, it was veritably a small boy's paradise.

### III. An Illinois Newsboy

After a year and a half Mr. Adams failed in business and we went to live with a couple by the name of McCullough in Evanston, Illinois. They were both lawyers, and Catherine Waugh McCullough was well known as an ardent worker for woman suffrage. They had a young son named Hugh. He was then four and I, eleven. He is now a prominent lawyer with offices in Chicago. We lived with the McCullough family for about a year and a half and then Mother got other work and we rented part of a double house. I helped by cutting lawns, taking care of furnaces and delivering papers before school. If Horatio Alger, Jr., had known me he could have used me for one of his hard-working young heroes. Our rent was \$20 a month, an incredibly small sum, but the dollar was worth something then. Round steak was ten cents a pound, or three pounds for a quarter, with free liver for the cat and all the ox tails you could carry home from the slaughter houses.

Evanston was a lovely university

town of about 25,000, with a YMCA equipped with bowling alleys, a gym and swimming pool — and all this for dues of five dollars a year. I finally finished grammar school and later Evanston Township High School. I also sang in the choir of St. Mark's Episcopal Church and in time became the tenor soloist. We had a wonderful choirmaster, Robert Holmes. He taught us to read music at sight and for this I have always been grateful, for it was valuable knowledge when I came to make singing my profession.

### IV. An Aspiring Singer and Cowboy

I had been able to sing from the time I was four, but now I became really interested and began to study. I attended the Chicago Musical College and took dramatic art, fencing and singing lessons. My very first public performance was the role of the smuggler, Dancairo in "Carmen." This was an amateur production given by the Musical College in the Auditorium Theatre in 1902.

In the spring of that year I met a dentist in Evanston, who practiced in the far West. He would go from ranch to ranch and take care of patients in a rocking chair. He suggested I might enjoy working on a ranch and gave me a letter of introduction to a friend who had a ranch near Medina, North Dakota. The Northwestern Railway gave me a pass to Oaks, N. D., the end of their line, and from there I took the Northern Pacific to Medina, not very far from Oaks.

I stopped with my dentist friend's family for a short time and then went to the ranch, where I spent the summer. As I had worked one summer for Chicago & Northwestern RR. they gave me a pass. I received a dollar a day and meals. When I asked where I would sleep they said I could take my choice between the sheep barn and the cattle barn. I tried the

sheep's quarters first, but the ewes were lambing, and it was "Baa! Baa!" all night long.

When I couldn't take any more of that I went to the hay loft in the cow barn. After a rat fell off one of the rafters and hit me on the chest I decided to go back to the sheep barn and make the best of it.

I finally learned how to ride and stay on in the saddle, rope and brand, but it was a tough life and at the end of the summer I was quite willing to be a tenderfoot again. I'd had enough horseback riding to last me a lifetime and I have never boarded a horse since. There is no romance in cow punching.

I went from there to Jamestown and worked for a young man who had a shanty alongside the railroad track. His father, who was a prominent man in Bismarck, came down one day for a visit and said he felt I had a good enough education to do something for him. He took me to Bismarck and gave me a job locating the water mains of the city and drawing a plan of them. I had an office in one of the buildings he owned and lived at a very nice boarding house. This job ended at the end of the summer and I went to Mandan, North Dakota, just across the river, and got a job on a cattle train which took me back to Chicago. Mandan was an interesting small city. Near it was Fort Lincoln from which Custer and his troops left for the fatal battle with the Indians at the "Little Big Horn."

Next, I went back to Medina and stopped at the little hotel there for a couple of days. Three meals and lodging cost a dollar a day—75 cents for three meals and 25 cents for sleeping. All the beds were double ones and you never knew before retiring whom you would bunk with. There were always two men to a bed. They put their pants under the pillow so no one could go through the pockets during the night. There was no light in the rooms and you took up a kerosene lamp from a table in the hall.

I worked my way back to Chicago on a cattle train and slept in the caboose. Whenever the train stopped I had to take a pole and get the cattle that had fallen back on their feet. This was child's play compared to what I had been through with the horses.

The big city looked wonderful. My mother had moved to the south side and I enrolled as a student in Armour Institute of Technology for a four-year course of engineering. I ran an elevator at night in an apartment building to help support myself and Mother.

I find this part of my youthful days gracefully referred to in the Victor record supplement for August, 1918. Reviewing the record of "Paul Revere (Won't You Ride for Us Again?)" which I sang with the assistance of the Shannon Four — you'll hear more of them later — the catalog editor said:

"Paul Revere" . . . is an invitation to the great patriot to ride again and rouse us once more with war's alarms. . . . Charles Hart is a good one to sing this song, as before his beautiful voice developed he was a cow-

boy out West; like Paul Revere, also, he is greatly interested in mechanics. In fact he returned from the West to study electrical engineering at the Armour Institute of Technology in Chicago. His voice proved so effective in entertaining his friends, however, that he moved over to the Chicago Musical College, and developed his powers as a singer. Soon after he joined an opera company and another electrical engineer was definitely lost to the world.

This flattering write-up was headed with a picture of me pushing a wheelbarrow full of leaves. It had a sub-title, "Charles Hart likes to mow his own lawn" — a throwback, though the editor didn't know it, to the days when I mowed lawns and delivered papers to help Mother make a living.

#### V. On the Stage

The Chicago Musical College was owned and operated by Dr. Ziegfeld and his sons, "Willie" and the famous "Flo," later of Ziegfeld Follies fame. I used to go down to the college occasionally and one day in the spring of 1904 "Flo" asked if I would like to go on the stage. "The Sultan of Sulu," with Frank Moulan, was

#### SHEET MUSIC

BACK POPULAR Sheet Music to 1850 Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. 1e124221

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list.—Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. d3253

#### PIANO & ROLLS

NEW ROLLS and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos.—Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kansas. ad1214241

DUO-ART upright piano. Excellent condition throughout. Expression perfect. \$395 fob.—Harvey Roehl, Vestal, N. Y. d1821

WANTED - 44-note Wurlitzer piano music. 10 tunes to the roll. Also rolls of a music.—Dan Gray, P.O. Box 3181, Fort Worth, Texas. mh4675

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

AIR CALLIOPE WANTED. Playable or repairable condition. Immediate answers to all.—Orchestra Leader, 420 S. Main St., Plainwell Mich. d3403

WANTED: Band organs and rolls. Give model No., condition and price.—Don McElhinney, Box 207, Marlon, Iowa. ja3272

#### MUSIC ROLLS

PLAYER PIANO music rolls bought, sold and traded. all makes and types.—D. Nickelson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Md. d6276

#### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale; all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired.—Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jel20422

#### ORGAN FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Electrified Reed organ, in family 75 years. Black walnut, beautifully carved, 70" high, 45" wide, 22" deep. Excellent condition.—Mrs. Lillian Samson, 2223 Goldenrod Street, Sarasota, Florida. f3215

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs and records. Parts and anything pertaining to old phonographs.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3882

WANTED: Cecilian Phonograph, upright or table model, walnut or mahogany. Also other makes except Victor, Columbia and Brunswick. Record catalogs, supplements and other phonographic material. Please describe fully and state prices. No bids.—D. Miller, Box 392, Long Beach, California. ja3046

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs For Sale: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many rare models. New lists. Large list of hard-to-find cylinder records, parts of all kinds, repairs, reproducer repairing a specialty, player piano books and catalogs. 25c for lists.—Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. d36501

FOR SALE: Phonographs, duplicates of my collection. List 25c. Need Edison Excelsior.—Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. d3042

#### MISCELLANEOUS

EARLY CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, reproducers, catalogs, parts. Bought, sold, repaired.—Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f6806

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mh122361

EARLY CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, reproducers, catalogs, parts. Bought, sold, repaired.—Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f6806

SINGLE or collection cylinder records by Bettini; complete phonographs German, French, American; antique, unusual musical instruments.—Rita Ford, 907 3rd Ave., New York 22, N. Y. mh6407

PLAYER PIANOS \$75 to \$500. Standard Player Rolls, 3 for \$1. Also Aeolian, Duo-Art and Deluxe. 78 R.P.M. Victrola Records. Some Pathe Sapphire & steel cut.—Berlin's, 660 Neil Ave., Columbus, 8, Ohio. ja3826

WANTED: Reproducing piano rolls, Jazz and ragtime rolls. All types of music rolls except standard player. Roller organs. Literature pertaining to any type of mechanical musical device. Anything unusual in the player line. State price and condition.—Larry Givens, Wexford, Pa. ja3656

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

"PIANOLIN" for sale. Needs restoring but in good condition, \$300. Also German merry-go-round organ, \$350. National nickelodeon, needs repairing, \$175.—Glenn Gould, Jr., Box 25, Shirley Center, Mass. n1842

#### MELODEONS

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED INSTRUMENTS. Also buy and repair; reasonable.—C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. au126651

#### VIOLINS FOR SALE

STRADIVARIUS violins for sale, with papers. Write for appointment.—Matile M. Fair, 1120 Ash St., Muskogee, Okla. f3272

#### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor.—Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

WANTED: Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinarah: Sei vendicata—any number, size, or coupling; outside or centre start.—Aida Favia-Artasy, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

RECORDS by John McCormack.—James Sanford, 601 N. Broadway, Weatherford, Okla. o12407

WANTED: Premium prices for harp electric recordings, 78 speed.—Joe Kral, 1010 Park Ave., Highland Park, Ill. f3272

#### RECORDS FOR SALE

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7,500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

EDISON, COLUMBIA cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

RECORDS: Old popular, jazz bands, personalities, blues, hillbilly and western, comedy, Victor single face, religious. Everything but classical. Send wants to William C. Praster, Sr., 438 N. Broad St., Woodbury, N. J. ja3215

CATALOGUES, BOOKS. Free list, scarce items, reasonable prices.—Bob Foote, 427 Gilham St., Philadelphia 11, Penna. f3662

RARE RECORDS, lowly priced. Free lists. Collections bought.—E. Hirschman, P. O. Box 155, Verona, N. J. d128801

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists.—Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, New York. f3618

RARE VOCAL RECORDS at auction. Items for the basic collection and the advanced collector. Also early disc and cylinder phonographs.—Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. d3234

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS. South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold.—Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. ja68801

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities.—Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. o126121

GOLDEN - AGE and cut - out vocals, personality discs, band, orchestral and instrumental records, catalogs, books and photos. Write for free monthly lists. Distributors of Rococo records, LP re-issues of famous voices of the past: Melba, Patti, Caruso, Tetravini, Gerville-Reache, etc.—Ross, Court & Co., 2098 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont., Canada. ap62381



playing at the Studebaker Theatre, and he said they needed an extra chorus man. Would I care for the job? Of course I would and from that day on I was a full-fledged professional. When the show closed I got a job at the La Salle Theatre in "The Royal Chef." I played there for several seasons in a number of shows. The most outstanding ones were "The Isle of Bong Bong," with Al Shean, and "The Time, the Place and the Girl," with Florence Holbrook and Cecil Lean. In the latter I had a small part and in the next one, "Honeymoon Trail," I did the leading juvenile. Now I was on my way and out of the chorus at last.

#### VI. First Recording Experience

In spite of rehearsals and the night shows I managed to pursue my studies at Armour Tech. The theater was closed for part of the summer and in the summer of 1906 I was employed by the Columbia Phonograph Company to demonstrate how personal records could be made on the old cylinder machine. The Company had an office in Chicago and H. L. Willson was the manager. I can shut my eyes and see Willson now—a man with an oval face, who wore glasses and parted his dark hair in the middle. On November 20, 1906, he was transferred from Chicago to Columbia's New York headquarters and afterwards became the Company's general manager.

Willson said I had a perfect recording voice and predicted I would be making records for Columbia and other companies. Some ten years later he proved to be right.

After the La Salle Theater engagement I went on the road with the Joseph Sheehan English Grand Opera Company, to sing the tenor roles in "Faust," "Il Trovatore," "Martha," "Carmen," "The Bohemian Girl" and "The Mikado." We played the whole summer in Winnipeg, Canada. When the opera company closed I went to New York to join a vaudeville act, which failed. And so, I was stranded in the big city. I borrowed the train fare home from Clarence Dickenson, organist of the Brick Presbyterian Church on Fifth Avenue. I had known Clarence in Chicago, and he was most kind and gracious. The fare was only \$16—but that is a lot of money when you haven't got it.

#### VII. "Charlie Ryan," The Song Slide Singer

Back in Chicago, I got a job singing illustrated songs in a Madison Street nickelodeon, The Alcazar. For those who may not be familiar with this long gone sort of entertainment, let me say the singer was in the dark at the side of the stage with a small light on his music. On the screen were shown slides illustrating the song lyrics. These were flashed onto the screen by the operator in the front booth who ran the moving pictures. I was paid \$25 a week at first, then \$35. I took the name of Charlie Ryan and became known as

"The Irish Tenor." It took me years to live that down, and for a long time afterward I was still known to some people as Charlie Ryan. My advice to artists is to stick to one name. If one sings respectable songs there is nothing to be ashamed of.

But—to look forward several years to my recording career—in the beginning the better known singers did not want to use their names on records. It was Enrico Caruso who removed the "curse." If he could use his right name, anybody could.

Popular recording artists, like myself, however, did use assumed names in singing for the smaller companies, as the larger ones didn't like for us to use the names under which we made records for them. At one time I had yearly guarantees from six companies for \$3,000 each. This agreement was made to keep me from signing exclusively with one company. As I remember them, they were Victor, Edison, Aeolian Vocalion, Columbia, Okeh and His Master's Voice of Canada. But I also sang for a good many others, including Pathé, Emerson, Gennett, Brunswick, Paramount and Grey Gull.

While singing the illustrated songs, I also for a time, sang with a mixed quartet from 11 p.m. to midnight in the old "Boston Oyster House" beneath Hotel Morrison. For this I received \$25 a week. So with the \$35 I finally received from the picture show I was making \$60 a week.

When I had paid all my debts and saved a little, I went back to New York and was engaged to sing the tenor role in "The Spring Maid," with Christie MacDonald and Tom McNaughton, husband of the famous English comedienne, Alice Lloyd. We played the season of 1912-13 at the New Amsterdam Theater in New York and toured after we closed there. That was three or four years before I began making records.

I again returned to Chicago, got a church job and sang small oratorio dates. With money I had saved I had already set my mother up in a small business so that she could manage without me. Now I could give my ambition free rein. I had become interested in Free Masonry, so I took the first three degrees and became a Master Mason. The next four degrees made me a Royal Arch Mason. Then followed the Commandery, Knight Templar and Shrine. I was now a member of St. Cecilia Lodge, St. Cecilia Chapter, Chicago Council No. 4, St. Cecilia Commandery, and Medina Temple Shrine. Later I joined the New York Consistory and became a 32nd Degree Mason. Now I had everything except the 33rd, which is purely honorary. I was quite a joiner in those days. But I have never had reason to regret it for in the various bodies I made many wonderful friends.



#### VIII. Professional Recording Artist

In 1915 I returned to New York and, remembering what Mr. Willson had told me in Chicago about my having a good recording voice I made a test record some months later for a small, short-lived company called the Perma. Fred Hager was the manager. Shortly afterward, I was engaged to do some recording and my very first record was "Little Grey Home in the West."

About this time a bass singer, the late James Stanley got up a male quartet to make records. I was the first tenor, De Los Becker, second tenor, William Simmons, baritone, and Stanley the bass. I can't remember what companies we recorded for, but I think one was Pathé.

In 1917 Victor wanted a new male quartet and Wilfred Glenn was asked to form one. This was called the Shannon Four. I was the first tenor, Harvey Hindermeyer, second tenor, Elliott Shaw, baritone, and Wilfred Glenn, bass. Hindermeyer stayed with the quartet less than a year and was replaced by Lewis James. Harvey died in the fall of 1957, but the rest of us who were associated with the quartet 40 years ago are still around. Bill Glenn has retired to a farm near Charlottesville, Va.; Elliott Shaw lives at Sharon, Conn., and Lewis James is a program director for WGN in Chicago. On occasion, when three voices seemed better suited to a song than four, Hart, Shaw and James made records as the Crescent Trio.

In 1923, Cesare Sodero, who was musical director of the Edison Company, arranged an audition for me with Mr. Polloco of the Chicago Civic Grand Opera Company. I was engaged to sing tenor roles and made my debut in December of that year in "Koenigskinder," by Humperdinck. In the cast were Claire Dux and Alexander Kipnis. That year I left the Shannon Four or Shannon Quartet, as it was now called. Franklyn Baur took my place as first tenor and was followed by James Melton. Baur was instrumental in getting the boys to do jazz numbers and the name was changed in 1925 to the Revelers. For a considerable length of time Ed Smalle made our arrangements, and later Frank Black took over as arranger and accompanist. Frank Banta accompanied the boys on a trip to Europe in 1928.

When I started recording for Perma I was tenor soloist in the First Methodist Church of Mount Vernon. I also sang in a synagogue on Washington Heights, besides singing in a picture house on Eighth Avenue for \$25 a week. So I was doing pretty well. Being a member of the new Victor male quartet, I had an opportunity to make a test record and they engaged me to record regularly. The first song that I recorded for Victor was "It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier."

I must not omit mention of a male quartet which the Edison company



This photo of Charles Hart was illustrated in the August, 1917, Victor Record Supplement

organized in 1920 to record jazz and comedy numbers and which stayed together until about the time I left the Shannon Four. I was first tenor, Billy Jones, second tenor, Steve Porter, the baritone, and Harry Donaghy, bass. Steve Porter was jokingly called the "silent baritone." He would cup his right ear in his right hand and almost rest his chin on the horn. We had long horns in those days in place of the microphone and electrical recording had not yet been thought of. Porter's voice must have blended in, for the records had a good vocal balance. But I don't believe that anyone actually ever heard Porter's voice. He had invented an earphone for the hard of hearing (it was suggested by his mother-in-law's being deaf) and it was called the Portophone. He did quite a business, but no one could have heard Steve's voice even with one of his Porto-phones!

Of course, in a male quartet, the baritone, being an inner voice, is unimportant. The same thing is true as in a mixed quartet—the contralto is the least important voice, but it must be there for the tonal blend. In a regular standard male quartet the first tenor and bass are the important voices, for the first tenor carries the melody and the bass is the foundation. It is like figured bass in harmonic progression. In popular music it is different, for the second tenor usually carries the melody and the first tenor tops it.

#### IX. The Lambs—Early Radio Days

Again looking back to my early recording days, I had a most interesting experience in 1918. There was a Liberty Loan rally, sponsored by the Victor Company, in Carnegie Hall. Caruso and Farrar both sang. As I was doing a lot of Victor recording, they asked me to appear on the program. That night I met Caruso and had a short talk with him. It was a genuine thrill.

In 1920 I joined The Lambs, a theatrical club, and there I met an

old man named Ferguson. He had been call boy at Ford's Theater in Washington the night Lincoln was shot, and he told me all about it.

The famous composer, Victor Herbert, and the noted prize fighter, Jim Corbett, were both Lambs and good friends of mine. I had lunch at the club with Victor the day he died. He left me, went home, had a heart attack and passed away. He was an Irishman educated in Germany and spoke with a German accent. Can you imagine that?

Jim Corbett loved to tell me all about his fights. He said that when he trained for his fight with John L. Sullivan he worked in the gym for one year. The first day he put in 10 minutes and at the end he was doing five hours. Jim was in fine shape at 60. He said that when Jim Jeffries fought Jack Johnson he was in Jeffries' corner. It looked bad for Jeffries from the start and in one round he yelled to Johnson: "Don't you dare knock him out, Jack!" He said Jack leaned over Jeffries' shoulder and with a broad grin displaying a lot of gold crowned teeth said: "How long shall Ah let him stay, Mistah Corbett?"

The fight with Jeffries took place on a July 4th, when I was singing the illustrated songs. A saloon stood next to the little picture house, and between songs I went into the saloon to look at the ticker tape and see how the fight was progressing. In those days a man would come down with 20 cents, looking for a job. He'd allot 10 cents for carfare, five cents for the movie show and five cents for a glass of beer with all the roast beef, baked ham and rye bread he could eat. One day a man brought along an alarm clock, set it and put it under his seat in the show, so as not to be late for a job. It went off in the middle of my song. Ah, those were the days!

Now here's something that staggered me. Just before the New York Hippodrome was torn down, I sang in a performance of "Aida." As I passed the front of the house I saw an announcement that Jack Johnson would appear in the opera. I couldn't believe my eyes. Jack Johnson in a grand opera! Well, at the end of the second act, where the Ethiopian captives carried me seated on a throne, there was Jack Johnson as one of the slaves helping to lug me on stage! I spoke to Jack afterwards and he remembered Corbett yelling at him not to knock Jeffries out.

The first radio program ever broadcast in the metropolitan New York area went on the air in 1921 from a WJZ studio in a factory in Newark, New Jersey. Those who took part were myself, Elliott Shaw, Lewis James, Wilfred Glenn and "The Happiness Boys," Billy Jones and Ernie Hare. Tom Cowan was the announcer, and he is still announcing for WNYC in New York City. There is a picture of the group in one of the studios at NBC, New York.



This picture was taken in St. Louis when Charles Hart was with the Municipal Opera Co., there in the summer of 1924.

My very first introduction to radio was in the home of Herbert Berliner in Montreal. From time to time I used to go to Montreal to record for him. He had the His Master's Voice of Canada company. Herbert had rigged up a "sender" in the recording studio down town and a receiving set in his home. After dinner he said: "Now I'm going to give you a surprise. I shall have records played in the studio and we shall hear them in this room." It was fascinating. We all remarked how wonderful it was for the sound to come through the air and through the brick walls of the house.

#### X. Abroad And At Home

In the summer of 1924 I sang tenor roles in "The Prince of Pilsen," "The Lilac Domino," "The Fortune Teller" and "Naughty Marietta," with the St. Louis Municipal Opera Company.

In 1925 I went to Berlin, Germany, for radio broadcasting and to make records in German for the Electrola company (the Victor of Germany). Returning to New York, I resumed recording and was engaged by the Shuberts to play and sing the part of Dr. Engel with the original company of "The Student Prince." In 1927 the Opera Comique of Paris came to New York for a short season, and I sang the tenor role in "Girofle, Girofla" with them at the Johnson Theater, which is now called the Century. The beautiful old Century Theater was on Central Park, West, but it was torn down to make way for an apartment building. More profitable, I suppose.

George Gershwin had composed a grand opera called "135th Street." I was engaged to sing the part of Joe, the gambler. Paul Whiteman and his orchestra provided the musical accompaniment. We gave two well received performances in Carnegie Hall. It was rather a unique kind of grand opera.

(Continued on page 49)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)



CHARLES HART TODAY

In 1929 I again went to Germany with my wife, three children and mother. So as not to change the language in their education, I put the three girls in English boarding schools—the first in Southampton, the next in Buxton and the third in Banks, England. For some five years I sang in the opera houses in Berlin, Dresden, Breslau and Mannheim and also made Electrola records. I lived there three years under Hitler, but since I was an American and kept my mouth shut, I was never molested. Germany was becoming so nationalistic I realized it held no future for me, so in October, 1934, I returned with my family to the U.S.A.

Five years in Europe made a better American of me. As a nation, we have our faults, but there is no country in the world so good and free as the good old U.S.A. Of all the European countries I liked Germany best — until the Nazi rough-house started. I used to go to the Sports Palace in Berlin to hear Hitler speak. It was a lot of rubbish. But there was something magnetic about the man. He could hold an audience for an hour and 40 minutes.

When I went to Berlin in 1925 the Germans were recovering from the inflation. They looked back with horror on the first World War, but when you mentioned inflation they shuddered. Most of the people who had been wealthy had been brought low and had lost everything. Just imagine this: 40,000 marks had been a lot of money. It was about \$10,000 in our coinage, yet when inflation came it wouldn't buy a ride on the subway.

A telephone operator told me she had a room with a formerly wealthy family. In her room were two chairs and a settee, but she had been using only one chair. One day when she came home there was a rope tied

from arm to arm on the chair, so she couldn't sit in it. The lady told her it just would not do to sit in only one chair. She must sit in all of them, so that they would all wear out a little, and not just one.

"And," said the operator, "there is a young man working here in the American Consulate who had this experience. He was living on a pension. The first Sunday morning he decided he would lie abed for a while and make up some sleep. Then there came a knock at the door and a voice said it was time to get up. He said he was going to stay in bed a while longer, whereupon the voice said in that case he would have to pay a little extra per week, as remaining in bed an unusual length of time would cause extra wear to the bed linen and he would have to pay for that extra wear."

The telephone operator worked in the American Consulate. This story, incredible as it sounds, is true. The former rich wanted the money for rental, but they wanted to keep their things just as in former days. Poor Germany! And just when they had almost recovered, came Hitler and the whole country was ruined. You can't blame the German people. It was go along or go to a concentration camp. To buck a man like Hitler calls for a leader of the opposition—and there was none.

(To be continued)

## DEATH OF MRS. REED MILLER

(Nevada Van Der Veer)

HOBBIES readers who read the article in the March, 1958, issue, about the tenor, Reed Miller, will be sorry to learn his wife, known professionally as Nevada Van Der Veer, died September 26 in French Hospital, New York. She was 74.

Mr. and Mrs. Miller conducted the Van Der Veer-Miller Summer School at Lake George, N. Y., from 1920 until Mr. Miller's death in 1923. From 1934 to 1950 she was head of the voice department of the Cleveland Institute of Music. She taught privately after returning to New York.

We are also sorry to learn of the serious illness of the baritone, Albert Edmund Brown, who was the subject of a Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists biographical sketch in June and July, 1952. We are sure Dr. Brown would be glad to receive letters from his admirers. His address is: Valley-Hi Nursing Home, 4686 Asbury Circle, Denver, Colo.

## MUSEUM NEWS

(Continued from page 44)

cabinet with 34 Sèvres plaques, a side table, an occasional table, and four secretaries variously of satinwood, rosewood, amboyna wood, and marquetry, all of the Louis XVI period (1774-1789).

The 55 superlative examples of Sèvres porcelain are colored in the favored turquoise-blue, royal blue, apple-green, and rose-Pompadour hues with

medallions of painted scenes; they include, among others, two extraordinary boat-shaped potpourri vases, a pair of elephant vases, and various garnitures.

There is also in the Kress gift a royal Savonnerie carpet made for the Palais du Louvre at the order of Louis XIV. In addition to clocks, wall barometers, and candelabra, the Kress gift contains a suite of furniture (four pieces bearing the stamp of Georges Jacob) and matching wall hangings made for Marie Antoinette.

The interior of the room from Croome Court is complete in all its architectural elements—wood paneling, mahogany doors, mirror and elaborately carved frame, inlaid console table, marble mantel with its central slab of lapis lazuli, ornamental plaster ceiling, and oak flooring—as well as its furnishings, in chief its celebrated set of tapestries and tapestry-covered settees and chairs.

Croome Court is in Worcestershire, the seat of the Earls of Coventry. About 1760 Robert Adam was called in by the sixth Earl to decorate the interior of Croome Court. Some of the designs by Adam are now preserved at the Soane Museum in London.

The famous tapestries were woven to specification by Jacques Neilson at the Royal Gobelins Manufactory in Paris, between 1766 and 1771. Their pictorial panels with the loves of the gods were designed by François Boucher and the floral surrounds by Maurice Jacques. They were woven to hang edge to edge, so as to cover the entire wall-surface above the dado. The tapestries consist mainly of a rose-colored, simulated silk damask with a floral pattern, and the nominal subject of the tapestry is rendered in the guise of a small framed painting, partially outlined by "shadow" and apparently hanging on a wall covered with the material. The illusion is further heightened by the woven designs of enframement, with birds, flowers and hunting horns, at the edges of the tapestries. This method of hanging tapestries was peculiar to England and was unknown in France. Among the several other tapestry-covered Adam rooms of this type in England is that, of a decade later, at Osterley Park.

Soon after 1900 the tapestries and the matching furniture were separated from the room itself. They were sold to a French collector and remained in France for a number of years until they came to this country, where they were purchased by the Kress Foundation.

Now the room and its celebrated furnishings will be reunited for the first time in over half a century at the Metropolitan Museum. The room will be shown to the public in several months.

Samuel H. Kress was a long-time trustee and benefactor of the Metropolitan Museum. He died in 1955. At the time of his death he had served on the Board of Trustees for nearly twenty years.

# Charles Hart

Tells the Story of His Life to

JIM WALSH

## PART II

(Continued from the December Issue)

### Note By Jim Walsh

HOBBIES readers for many years have urged me to tell the life story of one of the most popular of pioneer recording artists, Charles Hart. Among others, this request has been made by Philip L. Miller, of the Music Division of the New York Public Library.

I am happy that I am now able to fulfill these solicitations with an autobiography written by Charles Hart himself. The tenor has told his story in such a clear and characteristically straight-forward style I believe it has resulted in one of the most interesting articles I have ever published — one that is an auspicious means of bringing to a close the 1958 volume of FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS (See Dec. Issue) and starting off the year 1959.

By CHARLES HART

### XI. Later Years

On my return to America, I sang for a time with the San Carlo Grand Opera Company and other small companies, and also did some radio broadcasting and miscellaneous singing. Many strange and humorous things happen in grand opera. It is so close to burlesque that if one departs from the serious vein there's likely to be trouble. I recall that during a performance of "Faust" with a small Italian company the following incident occurred. Faust has pledged his soul to the devil in exchange for his youth. Near the end of the opera Mephisto puts his cape around Faust. They both step on the trap which is supposed to take them to the lower regions. This night the trap stuck and there we were with only our heads and shoulders show-

ing. Whereupon a boy yelled from the gallery: "My God, they can't get in! Hell is full!" That ruined the rest of a very serious opera.

I was now getting along in years and I realized that one cannot sing forever, but you can play dramatic parts until you fall over, so I began to look for dramatic engagements. I will give a brief list of the shows I have appeared in:

"Sing Out, Sweet Land," with Alfred Drake and Burl Ives; "Catherine Was Great," with Mae West; "Spring in Brazil," with Milton Berle; "The Iceman Cometh," by Eugene O'Neill; "Come Back, Little Sheba," with Shirley Booth; "As You Like It," with Katherine Hepburn; "The Silver Whistle," with José Ferrer; "The Girl of the Golden West," with June Havoc; "Oklahoma," and "The Witness for the Prosecution," in which I played the judge on tour.

When I was playing at the Harris Theater in Chicago with "The Witness for the Prosecution" in 1956, I made a tour to all the places where I had lived as a boy some 66 years before. The houses were all there, but some in a dilapidated condition. To quote a well known author, "My thought did walk down the corridors of time," and I felt a real affection for Chicago, where I had spent many happy years and some sorrowful ones.

My mother passed away in 1945 at the age of 88. I owe her so much I am grateful that in her older years I was able to take care of her. My three daughters are married and I have ten grandchildren. My life has been a happy one and the world owes me nothing. Singing is a joyous occupation.

And now, a few odds and ends: I have served as soloist in the following New York churches: The Old First Presbyterian and the Park Avenue Baptist, which is now the Riverside church. When I sang there, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., often invited us to his home for supper after the Vesper service. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick was the minister, and what a preacher he was! I remember a line from one of his sermons: "The drama was once a child of the church; it is now a prodigal in a far country, feeding swine." I wonder what he would say today! In 1929 I was soloist in the Second Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, and I have served as soloist in the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston. I also enjoyed singing in many reformed synagogues and have sung many a Requiem Mass. All this taught me how various religions worship God.

The only dog I ever had was in Green Bay, Wis., and the fox terrier's name was Toby. A picture of Toby and myself, which I hope can be reproduced, was taken when I was about eight years old. What an old dog Toby would be if he were still here! I have never owned a cat, but they are sweet and lovely creatures.



CHARLES HART, aged 8, in 1892, with Toby, his dog. Toby looks like a forerunner of the Victor trademark dog, "Little Nipper."

Writing this story of my life's experiences has brought back pleasant memories. If you enjoy reading about them half as much as I enjoyed the writing I shall feel richly rewarded.

### XII. More About Hart's Recordings

I am sure you who are reading this have enjoyed Charles Hart's account of his life and career as much as I have. However, I'd like to comment briefly on some phases of the recording activities of my dear friend, "Charley," whom I have not yet met in person, but with whom I am hoping to clasp hands before another year has gone.

Although the tenor, whose voice is still clear and youthful, says his first Victor record was "It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier," that recording does not come first in numerical sequence. The Hart record with the lowest number is 18283, "'Forever' Is a Long, Long Time." However, its release was held back for several months and it did not appear until the November, 1917, supplement. Meanwhile, in July, Victor had issued No. 18294, "Thou Shalt Not Steal (A Heart Away)" and



Crescent trio; left to right, James, Shaw, Hart.

FAVORITE  
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ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH





CHARLES HART, 1912, as Baron Rudi in "The Spring Maid."

18300, "It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier." These early recordings constitute the singer's first Victor catalog appearance.

The first Victor record on which Charles Hart sang both sides appeared in August, 1917, together with an excellent photograph of him. The number was 18319 and the titles, "A Tear, a Kiss, a Smile" and "That's Why My Heart is Calling You." The catalog editor said: "Charles Hart has a fine lyric tenor which he uses to advantage in these two numbers."

The Shannon Four made its first Victor appearance in September, 1917 on No. 18333, singing "I May Be Gone for a Long, Long Time," which was coupled with the American Quartet's version of the greatest American song hit of World War I, "Over There." The Shannons were back in October, singing "Wake Up, Virginia," and in November with a revival of Charles K. Harris' Spanish-American War song, "Break the News to Mother." Hart also had another double-faced coupling that month: "Somewhere in France is Daddy" and "So Long, Mother." The quartet sang three titles in December—"Come Back Home," "Hello, Aloha, Hello" and "Melody Land." In January, 1918, it did its



Another view of Hart, 1912, as Baron Rudi in "The Spring Maid."

famous version of "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," while Hart offered a solo, "Somewhere in France is the Lily." By this time both the tenor and the quartet were Victor favorites.

Mr. Hart does not mention his recording partnership with Elliott Shaw, which for five years made Hart and Shaw rank with Albert Campbell and Henry Burr as one of the two most popular duet teams singing popular ballads. The first Victor duet by the pair, "My Belgian Rose," appeared in that same August, 1918, supplement which contained the already quoted brief biographical sketch of Hart. Oddly, Shaw's name was placed first, but always afterwards the team was known as Hart and Shaw instead of Shaw and Hart—no doubt because "Hart and Shaw" has a smoother sound.

Hart also sang duets with other artists for Victor. Among them were Lewis James, Helen Clark, Elizabeth Spencer and Louise Terrell (Elizabeth Lennox).

Undoubtedly three of the most popular records he ever made were in duet form: "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," with Shaw; "Till We Meet Again," with James; and "Let the Rest of the World Go By," with Miss Spencer. In 1920 Hart and Shaw remade three 12-inch records which had been originally sung many years before by Frank C. Stanley and Harry Macdonough: "The Crucifix," "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" and "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

The Shannon Four sang four Edison Diamond Discs about the same time the quartet made its first Victor records. The titles were "Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here," "I May Be Gone for a Long, Long Time," "Katy Mahone" and "Lullaby." The latter featured Helen Clark as soloist with the quartet's assistance.

Although the Shannons continued to make Diamond Discs, their name, for Edison purposes, was changed to the Lyric Male Quartet. In this guise the foursome served as assisting artists to several distinguished operatic and concert singers, among them Anna Case, with whom they sang "Good-bye, Beloved, Good-bye," "How the Gates Came Ajar" and "Love Lifted Me." They also sang with Virginia Rea in "Good-bye, Beloved, Good-bye"; with Frieda Hempel in "Hush, Little Baby, Don't You Cry," "Kentucky Babe" and "Vesper Hymn"; with Maggie Teyte in "Tse Gwine Back to Dixie," and Marie Rappold in "Little Bunch of Honeysuckle."

Charles Hart's name appeared for the first time as an Edison artist in 1918 when he sang "Life's Railway to Heaven," with "Edward Allen"—a disguise for the famous Metropolitan Opera bass-baritone, Arthur Middleton. His first Diamond Disc solo was 80444, "Molly Darling."

Hart and Shaw made only a few Edison duet records, but the tenor probably did more general duet work for Edison than for any other company. Besides Shaw and Middleton, he sang for Edison with James, Miss Clark, Miss Spencer, Leola Lucey, Betsy Lane Shepherd and Harvey Hindermeyer. He also did several duet records with a sweet voiced soprano, Esther Nelson. Hardly anyone who bought the records knew Miss Nelson in private life was Mrs. Charles Hart.

It was Edison alone among the major recording companies which gave the tenor a chance to show what he could do as an opera and oratorio singer. His photo appeared on the cover of the February, 1924, Edison supplement, which listed, as Diamond Disc No. 80774, his superb versions in English of "Celestial Aida" and "Oh Paradise" from "Africana." There was a brief comment: "Hart has just been engaged by the Chicago Opera. Good luck, Charles!" In that same year Hart and Miss Nelson remade the record of the Miserere from "Trovatore," which had been in the Edison catalog for years as sung by Agnes Kimball and Hart's old friend, Charles Harrison. He also remade "A Dream," which had originally been sung by the English tenor, Hardy Williamson, and he, Elizabeth

Spencer and Vernon Archibald did a remake of the "Silent Night" record previously made by Spencer, Archibald and John Young. Even that was a remake, for the first version was by Miss Spencer, Royal Fish and Thomas Chalmers.

In August, 1928, our tenor friend showed the fine range and heroic quality of his voice on an electrically recorded Diamond Disc (No. 52324) of two oratorio compositions by Sir John Stainer: "King Ever Glorious," from "The Crucifixion," and "My Hope is in the Everlasting," from "The Daughter of Jairus."

Hart did not make any more Victor records after returning from his first trip to Germany, but resumed singing for Edison and other companies. In the Edison company's closing years he sang the refrains of many dance records.

Although Mr. Hart says the Harmonizers were organized because of Edison's desire for a new comedy quartet, the ensemble never appeared in the Edison catalog under that name. Instead, on Edison records it was called the Premier Quartet—a name which had been used for a group headed by Billy Murray. When Murray signed exclusively with Victor in 1920 it became necessary to find a new quartet. Steve Porter was the only singer who was a member of both Premier Quartets.

The late Harry Donaghy told me that "Oh By Jingol" was the first Harmonizers' record, but there are several others with lower catalog numbers in which Billy Jones sings the lead. Since the Edison catalogs lumped all the records together under the Premier Quartet heading, regardless of which group made them, I think it worth while to list here those that were by the Harmonizers:

50607, Floatin' Down to Cotton Town; 50621, I Love You Just the Same, Sweet Adeline; 50666, Oh By Jingol; 50683, There's a Typical Tipperary Over Here; 50737, I've Got the Blues for My Old Kentucky Home; 50741, My Mammy; 50769, I Want to be the Leader of the Band; 50771, Blue Jeans and Hey, Paw; 50782, I Was Born in Michigan; 50790, Down Yonder; 50818, Melon Time in Dixieland; 50897, Down in Midnight Town, and 50917, Darktown Quartet Rehearsal. The latter is one of the most amusing of the lot. A supposedly colored quartet is rehearsing "Way Down Yonder in the Corn Field." Hart takes a ringing high note, whereupon Porter, "the Silent Baritone," exclaims: "Oh, peaches, cream and honey! Let me die listenin' to dat boy sing!"

The Harmonizers appeared in the Victor list for the only time in February, 1921, assisting Billy Jones (who then called himself "Victor Roberts" on Victor records) in "For Every Boy Who's on the Level There's a Girl Who's on the Square," and "My Home Town is a One-Horse Town." They did more work for some of the other companies, and on Columbia assisted Harry C. Browne in a Negro comedy number, "Dar's a Lock on de Chicken Coop Door." Their Pathe record of "Casey Jones" called them the Country Harmonizers.

Incidentally, after Pathe issued two records by the Shannon Four, the Quartet's name was changed, as far as Pathe was concerned, to the Acme Male Quartet. The Crescent Trio became the Orpheus Trio. It is likely that the male quartet which James Stanley organized recorded only for Pathe, for two of its members—Stanley and William Simmons—had exclusive Pathe contracts for several years. Many of Hart's Pathe solos appeared under the alias of Charles Cinway, and his duets with Shaw were sometimes disguised as being by Arthur Wilson and Frank Sterling. On Emerson records he and Lewis James sang duets as George Gordon and Robert Bruce, and on Regal records, also made by Emerson, they were called Harry Curtis and Edward Burke. On National Music Lovers records, issued by Grey Gull, Hart was David Harris (a name NML used for several tenors) and Shaw was Thomas Edwards.

It is worth noting that among Hart's Columbia records is one on which a trio composed of himself, Elliott Shaw and Everett Clarke sing two numbers, "The Sheik," and "Granny, You're My Mammy's Mammy." Too, since he made records in German for the Electrola Company while abroad, it's intriguing to see that the 1923 Gennett catalog contains No. 10063, with two songs rendered in German by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hart. The titles are "Abschied Der Vogel" and "Du Du Liegst Im Herzen." I wonder if Mrs. Hart was the soprano identified only as "Bates" who joined the tenor in singing "While the Years Roll By" and "For the Sake of Auld Lang Syne?" on Gennett record 4946.

If space were unlimited, I could go on writing about Charles Hart's recording career, but I suspect both he and the general reader will think I have already said enough. So I shall end here with my warmest thanks to the accomplished tenor for his kindness in preparing his fascinating autobiographical sketch and with the hope that many years of health and happiness await him.

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Since the foregoing article was submitted, Mr. Hart has recalled several other facts which he believes should be included for the sake of completeness. They are appended here, out of chronological order.

The tenor says he has sung in the following grand operas and in the indicated languages: "Rigoletto" - Italian; "Il Trovatore," Italian and English; "La Traviata," Italian and English; "Aida," Italian and German; "Pagliacci," Italian and German; "Cavalleria Rusticana," Italian and German; "Faust," French, German and English; "Samson et Dalila," French; "La Gioconda," Italian; "La Boheme," Italian; "Tosca," Italian and German; "Madame Butterfly," Italian and English; "Carmen," French, Italian, English and German; "Tannhauser," "Lohengrin," "Walkure," and "Koenigskinder," all in German. "The role of Don Jose in 'Carmen,' he says, 'you will notice I have sung in four languages.

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"I made my debut in Germany," Mr. Hart continues, "singing Don Jose in Mannheim for the first time in German. In the second act a cut frequently is made where Carmen sings 'Tra la la,' etc. Don Jose breaks in at the proper place, telling her he must go back to camp for the night. At the Mannheim performance it was agreed the cut should be made. This was a difficult cue for me, so I had learned Carmen's part as well as my own to make sure I wouldn't make a mistake. Carmen forgot to make the cut this night, and I saw a look of anguish come over the conductor's face. However, knowing the thing so well, I came in exactly where I should have, as if she had made the cut. After the performance the whole company was called on stage, and the conductor said: 'You should be ashamed of yourself, Carmen. A tenor from America, singing his part for the first time in German, has to save the show.' I thought it the greatest compliment I had ever been paid.

"Here is how it happened I was engaged to appear in 'The Spring Maid.' While I was singing in the picture house the first 'Spring Maid' company played Chicago. A friend with whom I had sung in the Joseph Sheehan Grand Opera Company was singing the baritone lead. He told me they were looking for a tenor for the role of 'Baron Rudi,' for the second company with Mizzi Hajos I sang for the manager and was at once engaged for \$65 a week. I was told they weren't satisfied with the way the part was being played and they wanted me to play it as it was done in the first company. I demurred and said it might get me in trouble with the star to do so. They said they would send a letter to the manager of the second company, explaining to him how they wanted me to play the part. This letter was never sent. I joined the company

in Nashville, Tenn. Right from the start I was in trouble and when we got to Milwaukee I got my two weeks notice. I closed in Sioux City, Iowa, and I was furious. It was Holy Week, and at that time they paid half salary for that week. To add insult to injury, I had to pay for a berth for a sleeper jump we had that week. They had to pay my fare back to Chicago, because I was sent from there.

"I immediately bought a ticket and went to New York. The first company was playing there in the old Grand Opera House at 23rd Street and Eighth Avenue. Werba and Luescher were the owners and had offices in the old New York Theater building on Broadway between 44th and 45th streets. I was still boiling over what I considered the greatest injustice I had ever suffered. Mr. Luescher would not see me. I shoved the office boy aside and entered his office. I said, 'Mr. Luescher, I have been treated badly.' He replied: 'Well, the report we got was that you were very bad in the part.' So I said: 'You are playing the Grand Opera House and tomorrow is Saturday. Let me play the part at the matinee and you can judge for yourself just how bad I am. After you see how good I am in the part I feel sure you will apologize to me for the treatment I have received.' He agreed. After the performance he said, 'I do apologize, Hart, and if it's agreeable to you, I would like to have you continue, since the man we have wants to get away. We will play the Tremont theater in Boston for the summer and I will raise your salary to \$75.' And that's how I happened to get with the first company of 'The Spring Maid' with Christie MacDonald and Tom MacNaughton. I was fresh in those days and had plenty of nerve. I wouldn't call it conceit, for I knew exactly what I could and could not do. I had plenty of confidence and that has carried me over many a tough spot. Show business is no place for a shrinking violet.

"We went on tour after Boston, came back to New York, played the New



CHARLES HART looking over the music of the first solo he recorded for Victor in 1917, "It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier."

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CHARLES HART in 1951 as the Sheriff in the "Surrey With the Fringe on Top," scene from "Oklahoma."

Amsterdam Theater and continued the tour. When the first company closed I went back to the second company for my \$75 a week and had a nice long season. By that time Mizzi Hajos had left the company, although later we became good friends. You see, Christie played the part as a prima donna and Mizzi clowned it for comedy. Had I been

smart I would have ignored my instructions from the first company and played the part to fit what Mizzi was doing. At least, I should have compromised. But I was still quite young. It takes time to acquire wisdom.

"When I first went in for grand opera, and after I had learned an opera, I was

glad of an opportunity to sing it somewhere for a small company, to 'break in.' Performances are given all over New York by companies put together for one or two appearances. Italians get a thirst every now and then to hear one of their native operas, so an impresario gets the necessary singers together and takes a chance on making or losing a little money.

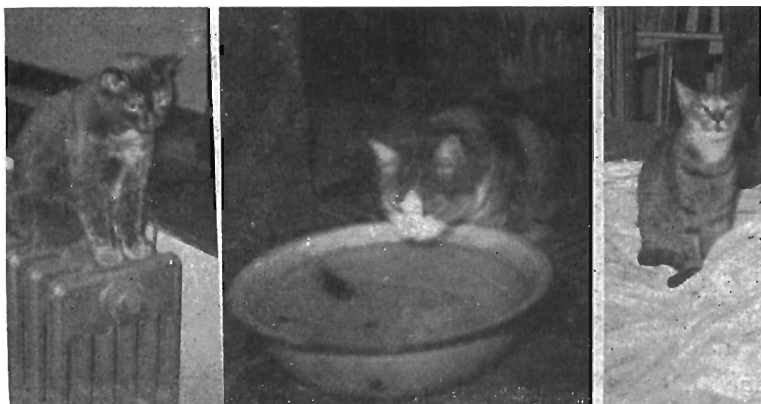
"I was singing the tenor role, Ra-dames, in one of these. Because of his love for Aida he has been a traitor, and is tried, condemned and sentenced to be buried alive in a tomb under the altar of the goddess, Isis, in the temple. Here he will eventually suffocate. The first line he sings is: 'The fatal stone is closing over me. Here is my tomb. Never more shall I see the light of day!' After I sang the line, 'Aida, oh where art thou?' an Italian in the gallery yelled in a Sicilian dialect: 'In the washroom!'"

One unusual experience the Crescent Trio had in 1922 was assisting the comedian, Byron G. Harlan, sing two "rube" songs composed by the Okeh recording director, Fred Hager. On Okeh record 4622 Harlan and the trio sang "Carnival Night" and "Under the Mulberry Tree." This record does not turn up often.

Finally, Mr. E. C. Forman, manager of the Special Services department of the RCA Victor Record Division of the Radio Corporation of America, has supplied information concerning Charles Hart's first Victor solo records. He says:

"Record No. 18294, 'Thou Shalt Not Steal a Heart Away' and No. 18300, 'It's Time for Every Boy to be a Soldier,' were both recorded April 23, 1917. Record No. 18283, 'Forever is a Long, Long Time,' was recorded June 29, 1917. The only explanation I can offer, and it's purely a guess, is that the number 18283 was assigned to the selection considerably in advance of the actual recording. I believe that was done at times, but I am quite certain it was not a general practice."

## A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



ROGER, GRAY and LITTLE NIPPER are anticipating a Purr-fectly HAPPY NEW YEAR

I am always abnormally busy during the holiday season, serving as publicity chairman of the Christmas Seal sale in Roanoke besides doing my news writing work for WSLS-TV and radio. Because of this I never have time to send Christmas and New Years cards or to thank HOBBIES readers for the many I receive.

So here, with the cooperation of my cats, Roger, Gray and Little Nipper, whose photos many readers have asked me to publish, is a holiday greeting to everybody—especially those of you who tell me you always look forward to reading Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. I hope to continue writing it for many years to come and to be blessed with the companionship and devotion of three of the sweetest "children" any proud father has ever possessed. Please accept this warm token of appreciation from

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FOR SALE: Phonographs, duplicates of my collection. List 25c. Need Edison Excelsior. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. mh3042

The Age of Romance has not ceased; it never ceases; it does not, if we will think of it, so much as very sensibly decline.

—Carlyle

# Virtuosos of the Cornet

## Walter B. Rogers and Jules Levy

By JIM WALSH

At 5:20 P.M. on Christmas Eve of 1939, a 74-year-old musician died in his home at Brooklyn, N. Y. His passing created little attention, but the elderly man had been a prominent figure. He had been a band and orchestra leader, a composer, a musical director for talking machine companies and one of the great cornet soloists of his time. He was Walter Bowman Rogers.

When a representative of the New York Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Records and Statistics filled out a death certificate his information was somewhat meager. The certificate gives Rogers' full name and says he lived at 182—68th Street in Brooklyn. He was married and his wife's first name was Florence. No children are mentioned. He was born October 14, 1865, and when he died was 74 years, two months and 10 days of age. His profession was described as musical conductor and 1929 was listed as the last year in which he worked at this occupation, which he had followed for 40 years.

Rogers' birthplace was given only as the United States, but Charles V. Foreman, of Aurora, Colo., who has compiled much information about band and orchestra personalities, says he was born in Delphi, Ind. He had lived in New York for 58 years. His father, William Rogers, was born in England, as was his mother, whose maiden name was Nancy Bowman. He had been ill for three years with chronic myocarditis—inflammation of the muscular area of the heart wall. His body was reduced to ashes in the crematory at Fresh Pond, Long Island, on December 27, 1939.

What a sad Christmas that must have been for Mrs. Florence Rogers!

### II Young Musician

I know nothing of Walter Rogers' earlier years, from his birth in Delphi, Ind., until he went to New York, seemingly at the age of 15 or 16. His youthful musical activities were summed up in a biographical sketch which appeared in Victor record catalogs for a good many years:

The career of this brilliant young conductor has been one of uninterrupted success. After some years of study in the Cincinnati College of Music, he joined Cappa's Seventh Regiment Band of New York as cornet soloist, and during the years that followed he was one of the great features of that famous band. On the death of Bandmaster Cappa, Mr. Rogers became the leader of the band and served four years in that capacity. In 1899 John Philip Sousa made him a flattering offer and he became the cornet soloist of Sousa's Band. After five successful years with Sousa, the Victor Company induced Mr. Rogers to leave the band and become its general director of music.

The foregoing seems to indicate Cappa died in 1895, but his death must have occurred a year or so earlier. I have a copy of the 1894-95 catalog of the Phipps Musical and Lyceum Bureau, which represented many of the noted musicians of more than 60 years ago. A page is devoted to advertising "Rogers' Famous Seventh Regiment Band and Orchestra . . . of New York City." The advertisement said the Seventh Regiment Band had played for 15 years "in Central Park, New York City, and at all the leading Expositions, Fairs, Commencements, etc." It added that all engagements were "under Mr. Rogers' personal direction." Apparently, Rogers had assumed direction at some time before 1894. An illustration shows him wearing a typically "Gay Nineties" mustache. He was then in his late twenties.

### III Rogers as a Recording Artist

Probably Walter Rogers' first records were made about the time he became Sousa's cornet soloist. The bearded Mr. Sousa despised sound reproducing devices and may have originated the derisive term "canned music." Although he permitted his band to make records he did not personally conduct its phonograph engagements in the '90's and early 1900's. That menial job was left to his sub-conductor, Arthur Pryor, who founded his own band in 1904 and entered into a warmly intimate relationship with the Victor Company that lasted a generation. Sousa's Band made many 7-inch Berliner discs, and I imagine Rogers also recorded Berliner cornet solos. However, I cannot recall any, off-hand.

What cornet player, I wonder, did Sousa have in mind when he appeared in 1906 before the Joint Committee on Patents of the U.S. Senate

House, which was considering a new copyright bill? Sousa made a savage attack on the phonograph companies because they were not paying royalties for the use of his Marches as well as the music of other composers. In an obvious jab at Victor, for whom his band was then actively recording, Sousa said "these talking machine managers will pay Caruso \$3,000 to sing one song for them," but would pay one of his best cornet players only \$4 a record.

Sousa's statement must have been an exaggeration. It is hard to believe any famous musician would have accepted a fee of \$4 a record, especially from Victor, which was usually more generous in payment than the other companies. Edison's standard fee for a solo cylinder, even in the earliest gold-moulded days, was \$40. But what player was Sousa thinking of? I would suspect Rogers except that he had left Sousa two years before the Committee hearing to become Victor's musical director.

The Victor record catalog for February, 1902, listed Rogers as having signed an exclusive contract with the Victor Talking Machine Company, which Eldridge R. Johnson had organized only the year before. In those days, single-faced seven-inch records were known as Victors and 10-inch as Monarchs. Here is the list of Rogers' 1902 cornet solos. Where an asterisk precedes the number the record was made in both seven and 10-inch sizes. A "V" before the number means it was issued solely in seven-inch, and an "M" that it was 10-inch only:

\*525, A Southern Dance. \*524, A Soldier's Dream. V375, Auld Lang Syne. M3241, Minne-ha-ha Waltz. V348, Souvenir of Naples. M3262, When You Were Sweet Sixteen.

The foregoing records were made with an accompaniment by Sousa's Band. Two, "A Southern Dance" and "Minne-ha-ha Waltz," were Rogers' own compositions. Another list had piano accompaniments:

M3418, Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder. M3419, Bonnie Sweet Bessie. V529, Concert Polka. V531, German Sounds. V3423, Old Black Joe, with variations. V523, War Songs, with variations. V532, Yankee Doodle, with variations. Rogers and Pryor had made a cornet and trombone duet, M3415, of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and he and Darius A. Lyons also teamed up in a cornet and flute duet, on M3424, of Titi's Serenade.

Herbert Clarke was represented by 12 cornet solos in the 1902 catalog. Since he was with Sousa, he may have been the "\$4 man." Probably both he and Rogers were irritated if they read the description which accompanied a list of seven records (made in both seven and 10-

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH



inch sizes) by their highly touted rival, Jules Levy:

The world's greatest cornetist has come from Chicago at great expense to make records for us. This is only one of the many instances that illustrate our policy of obtaining the best artists in all classes to make our records, regardless of expense. Levy says the Victor machines and records are the surprise of his life in quality of both vocal and instrumental music. The great cornetist plays as well if not better than he did twenty years ago, and his records are positively wonderful. No extra charge will be made for them.

Notice the amusing ambiguity of the remark about Levy's coming from Chicago "at great expense" to make records. One is left wondering whether this means Victor paid Levy a lot of money or whether he took an expensive means of traveling from Chicago to Camden. The boast about obtaining the best artists, "regardless of expense," doesn't sound as if Levy were paid a beggarly four dollars a solo! His records, with piano accompaniment, were:

1052, Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder; 1059, Blue Bells of Scotland; 1056, German Air and Variations; 1065, Leviathan Polka; 1060, Must We Then, Meet as Strangers?; 1062, Medley of National Airs; and 1052, Our Own Make—Polka.

Until recently, I owned a copy of "Must We Then, Meet as Strangers?" but finally parted with it to a Rhode Island collector, Steve Gilman, who wanted it worse than I did. In spite of the blurb about Levy's Victor discs being "simply wonderful," the recording of this one was pretty bad, with an annoying pitch waver. A bland voiced gentleman, presumably not Levy, gave a spoken introduction in which he said the number was played by "the world's greatest cornet soloist, Mr. Jules Levy." Such statements also likely irritated Rogers and Clarke, if they heard the records.

#### IV Victor Musical Director

Walter Rogers' engagement as Victor's musical director in 1904 was the result of the company's deciding to establish its own permanent orchestra instead of engaging musicians by the "date." It also tied in with a new policy, established in 1903, of using an orchestra, rather than the piano, to accompany most vocal records. (For more information about the Victor Orchestra under Rogers see the Charles D'Almaine article in the December, 1957, HOBBIES).

On August 31, 1904, about the time Rogers assumed his Victor du-

ties, a new catalog was issued, in which the number of cornet records had greatly increased. Some of Rogers' 1902 titles remained, but nearly all had been remade, and given new numbers. Those which formerly had piano accompaniments now appeared with orchestral support. The 1904 list was prefaced by the statement that "Mr. Rogers' brilliant tone and fine execution are exhibited to perfection in these records." Those with orchestra accompaniment were:

M2706, Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder; 2701, Bonnie Sweet Bessie; 2694, German Sounds; 2736, Old Black Joe; 2748, Souvenir of Naples ("one of Mr. Rogers' most brilliant compositions"); M2737, Toyland; M2695, War Songs; and 2705, Yankee Doodle, with variations.

The following were accompanied by Sousa's Band:

M1435, A Little Boy in Blue; 524, A Soldier's Dream; 2469, I Need Thee Every Hour; 2439, Lullie Waltz; 1202, Minne-ha-ha Waltz; 2470, Tale of a Sea Shell; M2663, The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls; and M1429, The Volunteer Polka—another Rogers composition.

The list of cornet and trombone duets by Rogers and Pryor had now grown to six, one of which, 2593, "Cheerfulness," was accompanied by Pryor's new band. Others were: 1548, "A Song of Home;" M837, "Answer;" 1521, "Nearer, My God, To Thee;" 1550, "Oh How Delightful!" and 1547, "Polka Caprice." Titl's "Serenade," formerly by Rogers and Lyons, had been remade by Rogers and Marshall P. Lufsky, then the flute soloist of Sousa's Band. The number was changed to 2476.

Herbert Clarke's cornet solos had



JULES LEVY (1848-1903), frequently referred to in his lifetime as "the world's greatest cornet player."

all been cut out, but there was an augmented list, in the seven and 10-inch classifications, by Jules Levy, who had died the preceding November:

2106, Bonnie Sweet Bessie.. M1056, Du Du, with variations; V2102, Home, Sweet Home; 2103, In the Gloaming; M2105, Killarney; 2529, Nancy Lee; 1066, Nearer, My God, to Thee; M1055, Non e Ver; 2496, Our Own Make Polka; 1706, Robin Adair; 2104, Tale of a Bumble Bee—King Dodo; 1708, The Last Rose of Summer; M1065, The Leviathan Polka; 1707, The Low Back'd Car; and 1709, Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town.

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Rogers examining the finished master record of the Lucia Sextet.



Rogers decides the Sextet record must be made over.



Walter Rogers conducting a Victor recording of "The Lucia Sextet" on December 8, 1915. The singers are Harry Macdonough (hands clasped behind back), Marguerite Dunlap, Olive Kline, Wilfred Glenn, Lambert Murphy and Reinald Werrenrath.

In 1903, Victor introduced its \$1.50 De Luxe series, the first 12-inch discs ever made. There were three of the large size by Rogers. The catalog editor said: "Mr. Rogers is the Solo Cornetist of Sousa's Band and undoubtedly the most brilliant player now before the public. His execution is at times so wonderful that it excites amazement in the mind of the listener. Mr. Rogers plays variations which have always been considered impossible." His 12-inch records, all accompanied by Sousa's Band, were 31110, "The Harp, That Once Thro' Tara's Halls"; 31111, "Minne-ha-ha Waltz," and 31112, "Lulle Waltz." On 31114 he and Pryor once more played "Nearer, My God, To Thee." Levy was represented by 31176, "The Merry Birds," which Victor apparently considered the best of his records; Emil Kennecke (as the catalog spelled Keneke's name) played 31178, "Remembrance of Prague," accompanied by the Victor Military Band; and on 31077, Clarke's Providence's Band played "The Bride of the Waves," featuring a cornet solo by its leader, Herbert L. Clarke.

It is not generally known that in 1903 Victor also introduced a 14-inch single-faced record, the De Luxe Special. Only about two dozen titles were issued, and the series lasted only a year or so. However, two of these \$2.00 offerings were by Jules Levy. On 41021 he played Rosini's "Inflammatus" from "Stabat Mater" and on 41022, "The Lost Chord." Apparently Rogers made no 14-inch records.

The 1904 Victor catalog marks the peak of Walter Rogers' activities as a cornet player. Like Harry Macdonough and S. H. Dudley, who became manager and assistant manager of the Victor Artist and Repertoire Department and found they had less and less time for singing, Rogers' duties as recording director soon occupied him so fully he laid his horn aside. By the time the 1909 record catalog was issued, his number of solos, with no new titles included, was down to six: "Absence Makes the Heart," "Bonnie Sweet Bessie," "German Sounds," "Old Black Joe," "War Songs" and "Yankee Doodle." Meanwhile, Keneke, Clarke and Bohumir Kryl were represented by two solos each.

But Jules Levy, "the world's greatest cornet soloist," was down to only one, "The Merry Birds." Even it was offered with a half-apologetic note which read:

Although this record is not quite up to our present standard of recording, having been made several years ago, it is kept on our lists as a memorial to this great cornetist, who died in 1905.

The record remained in the catalog through 1919, its listing always accompanied by a slightly altered version of the foregoing:

NOTE—Although this record is not up to our present standard of recording, having been made in 1904, it is kept on our lists for those who wish to possess it as a memorial to this great cornetist, who died in 1905.

The latter "note" is inaccurate in at least two respects. Levy died in 1903, the year in which his record-

ing of "The Merry Birds" was made.

Besides his solos, Rogers had two duets with Pryor in the 1909 catalog—the already familiar "Nearer, My God" and on 4513, the *Miserere* from "Trovatore." There was also a cornet duet with Keneké, No. 4780, "When Life Is Brightest," and a cornet trio by Clarke, Rogers and Herman Bellstedt, "The Three Solitaires." A description of the latter number, appeared in the October, 1905, supplement:

Seldom indeed has such a galaxy of talent been employed in the making of a record. Here is a merry and rollicking cornet trio composed by Victor Herbert, played by the three foremost cornetists in the world, and accompanied by Sousa's Band. It is almost needless to state that this could only happen in the Victor Laboratory. The trio is a most delightful composition and makes a unique record.

In December, 1905, the Rogers-Pryor duet of the "Miserere" was thus described:

A smooth and perfect record of a favorite operatic duet by two of the most famous players in the world. It is of great volume, yet the two instruments blend perfectly.

Rogers' talent for making unusual arrangements of popular songs was displayed in the February, 1906, Victor list, when he produced, on No. 4577, a "musical burlesque" on "Everybody Works But Father":

A side-splitting instrumental description of a few episodes in the daily life of father. The familiar melody is played in several different styles, including a ponderous treatment by the basses, and is followed by "Bits of Other Father Songs," "Father, Dear Father, Come Home," etc. The scene suddenly shifts to 7 A.M., as father is soundly sleeping after a hilarious night out. The town clock strikes 7, the tuba plays a solemn lullaby, accompanied by melodious (?) snores from father's bedroom. The entire family is gathered outside the door in a vain endeavor to make father wake up, but even the barking of the dog, the dinner-bell and terrific pounding on the door fail to interrupt the snores. Whatever father may or may not have done, it is certain that Mr. Rogers "worked" in making this arrangement, which is a most clever one.

Perhaps because the recording process through which his records were made had become outmoded, Rogers by 1910 was down to three solos: "Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder," "Old Black Joe" and "Yankee Doodle"—none of which gave much opportunity to display his virtuoso accomplishments. In the January, 1912, catalog, his representation had dwindled to one record, No. 16794, on which the *Miserere* duet with Pryor had been coupled with "Chant Sans Paroles," by the Vienna Quartet. The double-faced record stayed in the catalog through 1922—six years after Rogers' association with the Victor company had ended.

#### V Activities as Musical Director

I have often thought the late Calvin Child, who organized the Victor Red Seal department and brought most of the great opera singers into that company's catalog, must have been one of the world's most accomplished diplomats. The nervous strain resulting from dealing with so many temperamental song birds, many of them with an imperfect knowledge of English, could only have been tre-

mendous. What finesse must have been required to soothe the jealousies of sopranos who just knew they were being slighted in favor of Alda, Farrar or Galli-Curci, or to tame tenors who suspected their Victor royalties didn't compare with those of McCormack or Caruso!

Rogers, too, must have been a diplomat. Where Child restricted himself to dealing with "celebrities" and snootily decried the "Coney Island" atmosphere of the "popular" artists, Rogers conducted recording sessions for all types. The Black, Purple and Blue Label performers perhaps were not quite so much stuck on themselves as the "Red Sealers," but their human frailties must have occasioned the recording director many tense moments.

Whatever his powers as a diplomat, Rogers certainly was a versatile arranger and many novelties in the Victor catalog were of his invention. He arranged and directed most of the early dance records. It was he who thought of the idea of organizing a staff ensemble to sing "gems" from musical comedies and grand opera. The group was called the Victor Light Opera Company when it sang relatively light music and the Victor Opera Company when its efforts were more serious. The first record by this aggregation was No. 16326, which came out in August, 1909. It coupled "Hello, People" from "Havana" with Ada Jones' version of "The Yama Yama Man." This was the first and only ten-inch record by the Victor Light Opera Company and the only one devoted to an entire song rather than a medley. Among the voices to be recognized in it are those of Frank C. Stanley and S. H. Dudley. A soprano is probably Elizabeth Wheeler. The first 12-inch "Gems," which followed shortly afterward, were 31744, "Gems from Havana" and 31745, "Gems from 'The Beauty Spot.'"

The first photo of the Light Opera Company included Rogers as its director. Members were Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Reinald Werrenrath, Harriet Keyes, William Wheeler, Harry Macdonough, Inez Barbour, Elizabeth Wheeler, Elise Stevenson, Marguerite Dunlap, William F. Hooley, Steve Porter, Frank Stanley, S. H. Dudley, Billy Murray, John Bieling, Frederick Gunster, John Barnes Wells, Ada Jones and George Carré. After 1912, the personnel was mostly a blending of the Orpheus and Lyric Quartets—Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Lambert Murphy, Werrenrath, Macdonough and Hooley. Other artists, such as: Marsh, Dunlap and Wilfred Glenn, were sometimes used.

Somewhat similar to the "Gems" were the medleys of "Songs of the Past," which Rogers introduced in 1915. He made the arrangements for the various old-time songs, which grew to comprise a series of 12 double-faced records. Many other medleys of popular and standard songs also bore his touch, and he arranged and conducted most of the early Victor dance records.

A good idea of Rogers' adaptability may be found in the following:

One of the best selling records in

phonograph history was Victor 16483, combining a rendition of the comic song classic, "Casey Jones," by Billy Murray and the American Quartet, with "Moonlight in Jungle Land," by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. (Incidentally, "Casey" Jones' widow died in Jackson, Tenn., on November 21, 1958, only nine days before this article was written. She was 92).

Murray and the quartet recorded "Casey Jones" on March 11, 1910, and the record was issued in May. However, after several thousand copies had been pressed, Victor officials decided the quartet wasn't heard strongly enough, and sent telegrams to the four members—Murray, Bieling, Porter and Hooley—telling them to come to Camden and do it over. Porter, the baritone, didn't receive his, so after the other three had waited a long time and were growing impatient, Rogers remarked:

"Well, I can sing a little baritone in a pinch. I'll take Steve's place."

Which, stepping down from the podium, he did. This recording "date" was on May 13, 1910. Still another version of "Casey," and the best of the three, was made on October 10, 1911, with Steve Porter back in his accustomed baritone role.

Rogers probably conducted several recordings of ensemble operatic numbers, such as the Lucia Sextette, featuring Caruso and other bygone greats. He certainly officiated at a session in Camden on December 8, 1915, when the Sextet was sung by the Victor Opera Sextet, consisting of Kline, Dunlap, Macdonough, Murphy, Werrenrath and Glenn. Pictures were taken of every stage of the procedure, from the arrival of the artists at the laboratory in a 1915 model car through the recording session and Rogers' verdict that because of a flaw in the master, the singing would have to be done over. Olive Kline says the Opera Company singers used to have such a noisy good time coming down to Camden on the train that they called themselves the Victor Uproar Company!

#### VI Rogers Leaves Victor

In 1916, when he was 51 years of age, Walter Rogers' 12-year association with Victor as its musical director came to a serio-comic end. He left the largest talking machine company to become recording manager of a small firm, the Paroquette Record Company.

Paroquette, which made seven-inch, double-faced, vertical cut records that sold for 25 cents each, was the brain child of the most popular tenor ballad singer in the phonograph's history, Henry Burr. An idea of forming a company to turn out a small, inexpensive record had been in Burr's mind for a considerable time. The late Albert Campbell told me he signed a contract to sing for Par-o-ket records on August 23, 1915. However, the firm didn't go into production for more than a year.

I have mentioned Calvin Child's prowess as a diplomat and said Rogers must have had gifts of the same



order. But it almost seems Burr must have been the champion diplomat of all time. He enticed Victor's musical director away, but still went on making "His Master's Voice" records. Not only that, but in spite of operating a recording company of his own whose product was intended to under-cut the prices of the larger concerns, he also continued singing for every American company of the time except Edison, with which he had quarreled over recording fees in 1915. It was an amazing achievement.

Although Burr was the instigator and chief financial backer of the Paroquette Record Company, probably Rogers also invested some money in it. At any rate, he supervised the recording sessions and the catalog contained a good many records by Walter B. Rogers' Military Band. Meanwhile, the May, 1916, catalog was the last in which Rogers was identified as Victor's musical director. The October, 1916, catalog retained the biographical sketch, but ended it by saying: "After 5 successful years with Sousa, the Victor Company induced Mr. Rogers to leave the band and become its general Director of Music, a position which he filled for many years." The sketch was omitted in the next, May, 1917, issue. Rogers had been succeeded by the late Josef A. Pasternack (known to the musicians who sweltered under his autocratic baton as "Old Monkey Face"), a versatile genius of wider musical knowledge than Rogers. Pasternack played every orchestral instrument except the harp.

The Paroquette Record Company did not last long. The seven-inch platters played three minutes, had excellent tone quality, with as much or more volume than the Edison Diamonds Discs of the period, and with their black labels they looked something like miniature Diamond Discs. But the majority of phonographs were made to play only lateral cut records like Victor or Columbia, and a profitable business could not be done in a little-known vertical cut disc. After about a year, during which a few more than 100 titles were issued, the business was discontinued toward the end of 1917, and Par-o-ket records joined other losing ventures in which Burr sank his large income as a recording star. A silver fox farm, a banjo factory, and a sheet music publishing firm, were among the others. Only his "Eight Famous Victor Artists" troupe was consistently profitable.

Rogers' activities of the next few years are involved in almost as much obscurity as the early days of "the immortal Pickwick" or Walter B.'s own boyhood. However, he may have become musical director for the Paramount Company, which also made vertical cut records, but switched to lateral after the Victor-Columbia patent monopoly was broken in 1919. In 1918, dance records by Walter B. Rogers' Band appeared on the Paramount label.

Possibly, too, he also was associated briefly with the Emerson Company, whose musical director was Arthur Bergh. In the December,



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This page from a Phipps Musical and Lyceum Bureau catalog of 1894-5 shows Walter B. Rogers as a young man in his twenties. He was then the conductor of the Seventh Regiment Band.

1921, Emerson supplement there is a record, No. 10459, of "Kiddies' Patrol (Christmas Eve)" and "Kiddies' Dance (Christmas Morning)," both composed by Rogers, and performed by the Emerson Concert Band. It is possible he had a band which played as a "house group" for more than one company.

### VII Recording Director for Brunswick

Not later than 1921, Walter Rogers became recording director for the Brunswick Company, which had begun making lateral-cut records in 1919. (Some vertical Brunswicks had appeared as early as 1917). The 1922 catalog contains three double-faced records by Rogers and his Band, and this list was steadily augmented during the next seven years. On 2132 the band played "American Patrol" and "General Mix-Up, U. S. A. March"; on 2145, "Legion of Honor March" and "On the Campus March," and on 2160, the "Washington Post" and "El Capitan" marches.

Rogers' Brunswick association may have begun earlier than 1921, for in the January, 1921, supplement appears record 2054, a coupling of the two compositions, "Kiddies' Patrol" and "Kiddies' Dance," already mentioned on an Emerson record. They are listed as played by the Brunswick Concert Band, and the description says:

Walter Rogers, the scholarly musician who painted this delightful tone-picture, is assuredly a member of that cult of the child which includes such names as Schumann, Stevenson and J. G. Browne in its membership. The companion-piece to "Kiddies' Patrol," written by Mr. Rogers, is full of speaking toys just for the "kiddies" of America whom he loves and so truly understands. These same children offer Rip Van Winkle's toast to you, Mr. Composer—"Your health! May you live long and prosper."

Brunswick, like Victor and Columbia switched to electric recording in 1925. Rogers, with almost 30 years experience of the horn method, may have found it hard to adapt to the new system. It is hard to account

otherwise for the uniformly unfavorable reviews which his work received for a time in *The Phonograph Monthly Review*, a record collectors' magazine published in Boston from 1926 to 1932, and the more laudatory comments that appeared later. Perhaps as time went on Rogers achieved a mastery of microphone methods.

In April, 1927, the *P. M. R.* said:

Brunswick 3429 and 3430—William Tell Overture, played by Walter B. Rogers and his Band. . . The Rogers band seems rather small and although it plays well this version is hardly as interesting as the recent one of Fryor for Victor. . .

A much harsher criticism appeared in August, when Brunswick issued a 12-inch record, 20054, containing four marches—"Baltimore Centennial," "Boston Commandery," "Manhattan Beach" and "High School Cadets":

Walter B. Rogers and his Band choose a group of selections that would be hard to surpass for effectiveness and then, unfortunately, play them in a way that would be hard to surpass for ineffectiveness. The recording itself is very good, but the band is small and while from a tonal standpoint it is not bad, the slipshod performance which must be blamed to the very slack conducting unquestionably does the fine pieces more harm than good. . . Another striking example of the fact that no matter how good the recording may be, or how well the musicians play, in the end it is the life—or lack of it—of the conductor's reading that will decide the work's fate.

In November, 1927, Brunswick Record 3539, "Pride of the Wolverines" and "Gridiron Club" marches received this acidulous note:

"Pride of the Wolverines" is a great march, but it is not within Mr. Rogers' grasp yet, nor, from the evidence of this and several earlier records will be for a long time. His talents must lie in other directions: all his records so far are but mediocre at their best.

The reviewer probably knew nothing of Rogers' brilliant achievements as a conductor of Victor bands and orchestras. But in January, 1928, his remarks were more favorable:

Brunswick 3622. El Capitan and



Washington Post Marches. Rogers at last redeems himself with two excellent march performances. As before, his band is not very large nor does it strive for exceptional brilliance, but it is well balanced and plays with meritorious (sic) rhythmic and tonal coloring. Hardly a startling band record, this is decidedly a most satisfactory one.

Real acclaim came in May, 1928:

Brunswick 3515. Stars and Stripes Forever and National Emblem Marches. Given a band of larger size, Rogers might put Creators and Sousa to shame, so effectively does he handle his present small organization. An excellent disc on all points.

This seems a good place to part company with Walter Rogers. No doubt the depression which began in October, 1929, and caused the record business to fall off to almost nothing was the cause of his parting company with Brunswick. From that time, he seems to have lived in retirement until his death ten years later. Perhaps there is a sort of appropriateness in the fact that the genial man who liked to write "descriptive specialties" about the joys children experienced on Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning was relieved of his last years of suffering on Christmas Eve, 1939.

#### VIII Jules Levy and His Records

Although Jules Levy was never so intimately associated with recorded music as Walter B. Rogers, he was from the standpoint of glamour and "color" the reigning cornet player of his day. Just as Caruso surpassed all other opera tenors not necessarily from the standpoint of voice and artistry but from that of glamour, so Levy overtopped all other cornet players. He might, in fact, be called "The Caruso of the Cornet."

It would be difficult at this late date to chronicle the great Levy's career in detail, but some notes concerning his life and recording activities should not be amiss.

The January, 1904, *Etude* contained this succinct death notice:

JULES LEVY, the celebrated cornetist, died in Chicago November 28, 1903, aged 66. He was born in London, England, April 28, 1838. While still a small boy he showed a love for the cornet and at 17 was an accomplished artist. In 1866 he made his first trip to the United States. After that he played in all parts of the world and was considered the greatest living artist on his instrument. Several years ago he made his permanent residence in this country.

The *Etude* chronology is wrong. If Levy were born in 1838 he could have been only 65 when he died in 1903.

Levy was a short, heavy, bearded man with a remarkable chest development. In 1879 and 1880 he was star soloist with Patrick Saarfield Gilmore's Band at Manhattan Beach and was such a sensation Gilmore began to resent his success. This led to his importing a great trombone player from Paris, Frederick Innes, to "take the edge off" of Levy's acclaim. This in turn, led to a historic feud between the two temperamental virtuosos, but Levy and Innes afterwards became close friends.

Levy was probably the first dis-

tinguished musician to play in competition with a phonograph. Less than one year after Thomas Edison invented his squeaky, tinfoil "device of the devil," it was demonstrated in Irving Hall, New York. From July 3rd through the 8th, Levy played along with it (thus anticipating the Edison "tone tests" of 40 years later) and a contralto, Emily Wissant, also sang duets with her metallic-sounding recorded voice. One observer reported: "There was many a grin at the somewhat tinny reproduction of sound that issued from this early phonograph."

Jules Levy was one of the first recording artists about whom a phonograph company ever splurged superlatives. It was probably in 1895 that the Columbia company, then with headquarters at 919 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, issued an undated circular phrased in terms of almost hysterical excitement. The purport of the hurrahing was that Jules Levy had consented to toot his horn into the Columbia recording mechanism and that Levy two-minute cylinders could be bought by a music-loving public for \$2 each.

Levy, however, was not the first cornet player whose records had sold at a premium price. The record catalog of the New England Phonograph Company for August 1, 1893—almost 66 years ago—offered cylinders by "the late Walter Emerson," who was born in 1856 and died a few months before the catalog came out, for \$3.00 each. No titles were listed and the higher price no doubt was caused by the fact that the New England Company had no duplicating process. When the dead man's records were sold there could be no more.

For the sake of historical interest—and for entertainment—the ancient Columbia circular is worth quoting. Its language is reminiscent of that of the already quoted 1902 Victor catalog:

THE GREAT AND ONLY LEVY!!  
SUPERB! INCOMPARABLE!

LEVY—THE WORLD'S GREATEST CORNETIST—The one artist whose mastery of his instrument has made him greater than the instrument—the man who has thrilled millions by the power of his marvelous execution—can now be brought to you to render his choicest gems at your pleasure. He had never performed for the Graphophone before, and so charmed was he with its accuracy of reproduction of every tone and note that he carried a Graphophone away with him when he left us, that he might always hereafter, "hear himself as others hear him."

You may have this Prince of Cornetists at your service now whenever you wish. Millions have paid high prices for standing room to hear him play. For the price of a seat at one of his concerts you can procure a record of his superb music to be reproduced long after the artist is dead and gone—for Levy is about to retire from the concert stage, and to many millions of people this is the first as well as the last opportunity to hear him. If you have a talking machine; if you haven't one now but intend to get it in the near future (however remote), or if you have friends or acquaintances who possess them and who will permit you to use theirs, you should invest in one or more of these records.

We may not be able to replenish the stock of these remarkable records; therefore, the opportunity is NOW!

The Levy records were not numbered, but were prefixed with letters from A. to N. as follows:

A. The Blue Bells of Scotland (with variations); B. Hearts (Beautiful Waltz Song by the Author of "After the Ball"); C. The Palms; D. The Old Folks at Home (Swanee River); E. Nearer, My God, To Thee; F. The Star Spangled Banner and Yankee Doodle; G. Ben Bolt; H. Then You'll Remember Me; I. Say Au Revoir But Not Good-Bye; K. (why was J omitted?) Du Du (German Song, with Superb Variations arranged by Levy); L. My Country 'Tis of Thee (Played in Four Octaves—Marvelous Execution); M. Alice, Where Art Thou?; N. Home, Sweet Home.

One wonders if a solitary example of these 68-year-old cylinders has survived until today. Columbia cylinders catalogs from 1898 to 1907 do not give names of artists, so it is impossible to tell whether any of the cornet solos listed in them are by Levy. Probably not, judging by the following quotation from The Columbia Record of October, 1904:

Cornet records have been made by all the great masters of that instrument, one of whom—Jules Levy—has recently passed away. He was probably the greatest cornet player that had ever lived up to the time Bohumir Kryl made his appearance. (I believe Kryl is still living—Jim Walsh.) Both of these great artists have made records for the Columbia Phonograph Co. and now that Mr. Levy is dead a sad and peculiar interest attaches to those that were made by him. We are able to supply those named below and they are well worth having as souvenirs of a great artist who will return to us no more. Besides that, the records are of excellent quality. They come in ten-inch discs only: 918, Alice, Where Art Thou? 920, Du Du (with variations); 921, Nearer, My God, To Thee; 917, Palm Branches; 919, Robin Adair.

In a further comment on the Levy records the Columbia 1906 disc catalog said:

In their way these records are inimitable and it is extremely gratifying that his last perfect work was done after the metal master had been invented; for through this permanent method of record making Mr. Levy's records can continue to be furnished even though the great artist himself is no longer with us.

Two of Levy's single-faced records were taken over into the double-faced Columbia catalog. "Du Du" appeared on A183, coupled with "Bugle Calls, U.S. Army" by Vincent Buono. No. 180 combined "Palm Branches," by Levy, with "Bugle Calls of the Rough Riders." (Why didn't they make one double-faced record of bugle calls and couple the Levy numbers?) These records were discontinued after the 1909 catalog, but "Palm Branches" was issued on A880 with the "Stabat Mater—Inflammatus," by Buono, and held on until 1912. After that the name of "the world's greatest cornetist" disappeared from record catalogs with the exception of Victor's record of "The Merry Birds." He seems not to have made Edison cylinders.

Levy's son, Jules Levy, Jr., also was a skilled cornet player and for several years was leader of the Jules Levy, Jr. Brass Quartet. Both as a soloist, and as one of the quartet, he made records for several companies including Edison, Emerson and Pathé. Later he went to Hollywood and entered the movie business, becoming, I believe, a director.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The Happiness Boys . . .

# Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE—This series is dedicated to Charles Lindsley, of San Francisco, Calif., who for years has urged me to write the life story of Billy Jones and Ernie Hare.)

Damon and Pythias!

For more than 2,000 years (although the Encyclopedia Britannica says Pythias was really Phintias) those two names have meant the ultimate in friendship between man and man.

Nowadays, however, insofar as the world of the theater is concerned, the place of Damon and Pythias as symbols of never-failing harmony and brotherly love might well be taken by the late Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. While I do not believe there is such a thing as predestined friendship, the association of Jones and Hare seems almost to have been intended from their birth. They had many things in common: Both were born on the same day of the month, or within one day of it, with Hare six years the elder; both had mothers whose maiden name was Roberts; both were the same height and, until Jones became portly, they weighed the same.

Long-standing partnerships, of course, have not been uncommon in the theater, but they have not been necessarily accompanied by congeniality. Gilbert and Sullivan quarreled bitterly; Weber & Fields often hardly spoke to each other for months; and, in the field of phonograph recording, Collins and Harlan, although they had a genuine affection, sometimes engaged in explosive differences. But from the moment William Reese Jones of New York City met Thomas Ernest Hare of Norfolk, Va., in 1920, until Hare's death 19 years later there seems never to have been a tremor of controversy between them. Their "pal-ship" was so great that anyone who met either of the pair alone was likely to ask in surprise: "Why, where's Billy?" - or Ernie, as the case might be. Ham and eggs or pork and beans are no more a natural affinity than were tenor-voiced Billy Jones and basso Ernie Hare.

The artistic status of the song birds equalled their harmonious qualities. I do not think anyone could seriously challenge a statement that Jones and Hare were the most accomplished pair of singing comedians ever to be heard on radio. Nor, in their own field of seemingly spon-

taneous comedy, were they ever equaled by any duo on records. (They probably recorded at least 4,000 duets as well as making many hundreds of solos.) Both were famous before they met, but neither was so good alone as he was with the help of the other. Within a year of their first singing together, their style had neared perfection, insofar as anything human can come close to being without a flaw. Perhaps there is a note of frustrated ambition in the fact that both the tenor and the bass had voices of operatic caliber and both had hoped for opera careers, only to be sidetracked into what was, for them, the more remunerative field of making people laugh. Because they are remembered chiefly as comedians, their fame today is not so great as it might be if they had enjoyed distinguished careers at the Metropolitan and La Scala, but there is no doubt that, from the standpoint of "the greatest good to the greatest number," they did more to benefit their fellow men than if they had confined themselves to the higher walks of music.

Jones and Hare's recording career, as a partnership, was confined almost precisely and entirely to the 1920's, a period which now seems to be considered almost a legendary golden age - as indeed it was when the state of popular music and the

abilities of public entertainers of that decade are compared with the conditions prevailing now. And it was Billy and Ernie's destiny to serve as light-hearted historians, chronicling all the fads, foibles and foolishness of those bewitching ten years. Whatever was gay, giddy or gruesome in the Twenties they satirized. The flapper, the "gold digger," prohibition, radio, mah jongg, the Model A Ford; the "so's your old man" epidemic, short skirts, bobbed hair, Dr. Coue, eccentric dance steps, grandmothers trying to pass as teen-agers—all the foam and froth that arose above the surface of normal everyday life they treated with gentle satire or, just as often, broadly burlesqued. But there was never a sting to their comedy, and everybody who knew and loved them felt that the last thing in the minds of the two smiling gentlemen, harmonizing to Dave Kaplan's brilliant piano accompaniment, was harming or hurting the feeling of anyone. I am serious when I say that any earnest historian in the approaching 1960's, wishing to gain a clear conception of how the world wagged 30 to 40 years ago, could not do better than to take a thorough course of the recordings of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.

Since the two comedians were so devoted to each other, I suspect

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss music boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW ESPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of music boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.  
**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**

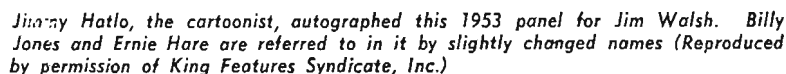
### ROSEWOOD MELODEON

One of the much sought after Melodeons mfg. by Geo. A. Prince & Co., Buffalo. Reconditioned by Grand Rapids Hobby Shop. Controls at each end of keyboard, an artist said sounded like a pipe organ. Music rack. Octagon legs. Beading around the outside. A very outstanding article and in perfect condition. For Sale - \$300. Snapshot 25c. Packing and shipping extra.

MRS. F. C. DUNN — Salda, California

mhp

Their other special assets included the lilt of their singing voices, their mock-serious tones (which they could use to advantage when engaged in such pursuits as hurling defiance at the dictates of Emily Post, as in "Etiquette Blues"), and their absolutely uninhibited sense of buffoonery. Their individual stamp was on everything they touched, even when using "normal," rather than specially written, material. Take for example the deathlessly irrelevant snatch of dialogue that opens "It Won't Be Long Now" ("... Do you



file your nails?" ". . . No, I just cut them and throw them away.")

The world to which the Happiness Boys belonged was fast slipping away when they died: by now it is completely gone and rather foreign to us. But it seems well worth dipping back into it on occasions — back into that far-off time when, so it seems, everything and everyone was very fresh and young and susceptible to bright songs and snappy patter.

I might mention that the "Do you file your nails?" gag was used by Jones and Hare on several records. When I talked with Billy Jones in his New York office little more than a month before his death, he told me the joke was one that he and Bert Grant, the song writer, had used when they were partners in vaudeville. The thought occurs: if Jones and Hare were alive, at the peak of their powers, how they could make a career in television or radio? Song writers no longer write comedy numbers, and popular music is no longer aimed at an adult audience. If the comedians were seeking a name for themselves today they would be swamped by the caterwaulings of Elvis Presley and other such "singers," and their sweet notes would be submerged by the primitive idiocy of "rock'n' roll." Jones and Hare were lucky they lived when they did. Their clean comedy would be out of tune with current trends.

### III More Background Material

"Radio Personalities, a Pictorial and Biographical Annual, 1936," gives the following brief biographical sketch of Jones and Hare:

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Ernie Hare entered the Peabody Conservatory of Music at Baltimore. Soon afterward he obtained his first theatrical engagement and later played in 14 musical comedies.

Billy Jones hails from Manhattan. He worked in a bank, herded sheep in Wales, mined ore, climbed telephone poles and made cables, meanwhile singing in clubs and musical shows. While recording for a phonograph company he met Ernie.

They made a record together, and its success was so instantaneous that they formed the team whose jests and jokes later brought them fame. First known on the air as "The Happiness Boys," later as "The Interwoven Pair" and "The Flit Soldiers," Bill and Ernie have been broadcasting together for twelve years and were heard from WOR in the Purily Bakery broadcasts. Sixty of their electrically transcribed programs have been released throughout the country. For 18 weeks they were held over at the Roxy Theater. Their birthdays, heights and weights are the same.

Concerning Jones and Hare's birthdays, it was always reported in publicity material during their lifetimes that Hare was born March 15, 1883, and Jones March 15, 1889. You will have noticed that the long-play record says Hare was born March 16. Perhaps he was, but it was thought better publicity to give them the same birth date, just as George M. Cohan, "The Yankee Doodle Boy," claimed July 4 as his birthday, although it seems to have been July 5. The article from which I have just quoted didn't mention that in the early 1930's they sang on NBC, sponsored by Hellman's Mayonnaise, as



Billy Jones and Ernest Hare were among the first recording artists Jim Walsh (Then known as Ulysses Walsh) wrote to when he began seeking information for a book he planned. (The book's place has been taken by the Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists series in HOBBIES.) Jones and Hare took it turn about, writing the message on this photograph.

"the Go'd-Filled Tenor and the Silver-Plated Baritone."

From various sources I have put together some other interesting background material concerning Jones and Hare.

Most radio authorities agree the first real broadcast comedy program . . . that of the Happiness Boys — was the result of Ernie and Billy's accepting an invitation to make their first appearance on the air from the red-brick Westinghouse factory in Newark, New Jersey. That was on October 18, 1921. After entering a small third floor room hung with a tarpaulin they looked rather bewildered at some outlandish new mechanical devices, but when the signal was given began indulging in a series of songs and jokes over Radiophone Station WJZ. This they kept up for 90 minutes, ad libbing all the way.

Fan mail poured in from persons who listened with crystal sets. Jones and Hare were fascinated by radio and it wasn't long before they were singing each week as a comedy and singing team for the Happiness Candy Stores over Station WEAF. In 1924 they adopted what would nowadays be called their theme song:

How-do-you do, everybody,  
how-do-you-do. . . .

Don't forget your Friday date,  
Seven-thirty unto eight. . .  
How-do-you-do, Everybody,  
how-do-you-do!"

As one student of radio has pointed out, the Happiness Boys were the first successful radio comedy team; they apparently were the first to entertain for a commercial sponsor; and they were the first to use a team name with sponsor identification. They were on radio for 18 years until Hare's deplorable death. During Ernie's final illness and for some time after his death, his 16-year-old daughter, Marilyn, took his place.

At the peak of their popularity, Jones and Hare received 700 or more fan letters a week, with the answers being attended to by their faithful and efficient secretary, Ann Perkins. When they broadcast "I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover" in 1927 ardent admirers sent them several pounds of the supposed good luck plant.

One writer made an amusing misstatement by saying that Jones and



Hare met in the Victor studios, became fast friends and soon were highly popular in the "then rapidly growing phonograph industry." The same commentator also says the Victor Company objected strenuously to their going into radio, fearing their broadcast work would impair their popularity as a recording team. He mentions, too, that Jones had been a jack-of-all trades until Lew Fields, of Weber and Fields, gave him a chance in a musical comedy, "Step This Way," after which he went on concert tours and did vaudeville work. His first Victor records were made under the name of Victor Roberts. Of Hare we are told he appeared in ten musical shows at the Winter Garden and was Al Jolson's understudy in "Sinbad."

It is not true that Jones and Hare met for the first time at Victor. It is true that Jones began making records under the name of Victor Roberts in 1920 (the Victor was taken from the name of the company and Roberts from his Welsh mother's maiden name), but, as I have already said, the first Victor duet by Billy and Ernie was issued as a part of the June, 1924, supplement. Up to that time, although Hare had sung for virtually every other American record company under his own name and a variety of disguises, his name had never appeared in a Victor list and his voice had not been heard on a Victor record.

Nor is it true that the phonograph business was a rapidly growing industry at the time Jones and Hare made their first Victor record. The truth is that by 1924 records and record players had suffered almost a mortal attack from radio, and Victor's sales that year were only about half what they had been four years before. Only the introduction of elec-

tric recording and new instruments to play the microphonic records caused the talking machine industry to flourish again until the 1929 depression almost wiped it out. As for the statement that Victor objected to Jones and Hare doing radio work (when Hare was not even a Victor artist) — well, in the title of a comedy song the Happiness Boys used to sing, "That's a Lot of Bunk." Or, if you prefer, "It's All a Lot of Baloney."

The most trustworthy evidence indicates Jones and Hare crossed paths for the first time in the Edison studios, and the Edison Company afterward proudly proclaimed that they had never sung together until they made their first Diamond Disc. However, Edison was mistaken. Billy Jones told me their first duet record was an Irving Berlin song, "I Like to Do It," which they recorded for Vocalion.

But I have since discovered Billy himself was wrong, and that they made another record, to be mentioned later, and which he apparently had forgotten, several months before the Vocalion offering appeared.

#### IV. What the Death Certificates Tell

I have obtained from the New York Health Department copies of the death certificates of both Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. (On a few records his first name was spelled as Ernst.) Since Hare was the older and died first, I shall begin with the information contained in his certificate, although Jones made records before Hare, and usually, but not always, his name took precedence on their duet records. It was the custom to give a tenor's name, as a rule, before that of his baritone partner.

As has already been said, Hare's full name was Thomas Ernest Hare. He died March 9, 1939, in Queens General Hospital, 82-68 164th Street, Jamaica, Long Island. He lived in Flushing at 144-16 35th Avenue. His wife's name is given as Mary Hare, but, oddly, his date of birth is not recorded, although his age is set down as 56. He actually had about a week to go before reaching his 56th birthday. The certificate says he had been employed 17 years as a radio artist, the last day he worked being January 22, 1939. His birthplace is given only as "U. S. A.," and he had been, according to the certificate, a resident of New York for 30 years.

Hare's father's name is given as Thomas U. Hare and the maiden name of his mother as Ida Roberts. Both were born in this country. The almost indecipherable medical diagnosis of his fatal illness indicates he died of pneumonia. He was buried March 12, 1939, in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Norfolk, Va. The undertaker was Hallett and Hallett, Inc.

Jones' certificate gives his name as William Jones, omitting the middle name of Reese. He lived at 215 West 88th street, Manhattan, and his wife's name was May Jones. (Billy married a very few years before his death. As long as his widowed mother lived, he made a home for her and remained single.) The date of his birth also isn't given, but his age appears as 51 and his profession as radio artist employed by the National Broadcasting Company. He had been a lifelong resident of New York and was a veteran of World War I. His father's first name was Thomas (as Hare's had been) and the birthplace of his father was given as "Wales, England" (!) His mother was Sussanna Roberts, and she too was born in "Wales, England." Jones had died of a heart attack — "coronary arterio-

(Continued on page 64)



A Richmond, Va., Times-Dispatch artist's conception of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare doing a black-face minstrel number in Al Jolson style. Hare was born in Norfolk, Va., not far from Richmond.

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs and records. Parts and anything pertaining to old phonographs. Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. mh3882

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare phonographs for sale: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many rare models. Large list of hard-to-find cylinder records, parts of all kinds. Repairs. Reproducer repairing a specialty. Stylus (needle) installed. reproducers for sale. Will pay \$6.50 and up for any good cylinder reproducer. 25c for lists. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. mh32721

FOR SALE: Phonographs, duplicates of my collection. List 25c. Need Edison Excelsior. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. mh3042

FOR SALE: Edison, Victor and Columbia phonographs. Hundreds of cylinder and disc records, many rare, hard to find numbers. Send dime for either two or four minute cylinder, or disc record list. All three lists for 25c.—Coppertoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. ap3886

## PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

sclerosis" - while walking on Broadway, and 1627 Broadway was given as the place of death, on the afternoon of November 23, 1940. He was buried four days later in Woodlawn Cemetery, New York City, with the Frank E. Campbell Funeral Church, Inc., in charge.

And that is the extent of the information on the death certificates.

## V Billy Jones Begins Recording

There seems some reason to believe that Billy Jones, before he found himself as a singer and comedian, was regarded as something of a "ne'er-do-well," for a time he was even sent to Wales to visit relatives and spent part of his time herding sheep.

When I talked with him during that long conversation in October, 1940, Billy told me he did his first commercial recording in 1918, but had taken part in 1912 in some of the talking picture experiments Thomas A. Edison was then making at West Orange, N. J. He mentioned the recording was done on concert size cylinders and that, in order to keep the performers from being huddled together, Edison had developed a huge horn, well out of camera range, which picked up sound from 30 or 40 feet away.

Jones' initial recording was done for Edison under the name of Reese Jones. The Edison files show his first record, "Bring Me a Letter From My Old Home Town," was sung on May 6, 1918. Backed by the Harmony Four's superb rendition of "We'll Do Our Share While You're Over There" (the mixed quartet was composed of Gladys Rice, John Young, George Wilton Ballard and Donald Chalmers), it became Diamond Disc 50494 and Blue Amberol 3549. Jones was in military service, and my lamented friend, the late Fred Rabenstein, who used to look up so much Edison information for me, said he thought Billy was stationed in a submarine chaser off Sandy Hook.

Other Reese Jones records were Diamond Disc 50698, "I'd Love to

Fall Asleep and Wake Up in My Mammy's Arms" (coupled with "Mammy's Good-Night Lullaby," sung by the Crescent Trio), and 50716, "Wonderful Girl — Wonderful Boy," a duet with Helen Bell Rush, a soprano from Scranton, Pa. Jones and Miss Rush recorded this song for several companies, but he called himself Billy Jones on other labels. The other side, "My Home Town" is a One Horse Town," was sung by Jim Doherty.

(To be continued)

IVES, IVES-BLAKESLEE, Carpenter, Kenton, Hubley, N.N. Hill Brass Co., Gong Bell Manufacturing Co., Shepard Hardware Co., J. & E. Stevens Co., Kyser, Rex and Wilkins. Want any catalogs issued by these companies. See my large ad in the Old Mechanical Banks Department of this issue. — F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

WANTED: Old iron hitching posts and old tin tobacco tags. — R. F. French, 507½ Highland Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa. f122511

ITEMS OF POLISHED STONE or quartz such as lamps, bowls, figures, chess sets, flowers, etc., signed Tiffany not gold color. — Rita Ford, 907 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. mh6468

CIVIL WAR, Slavery, the South. I will pay fair prices for anything in these categories (books, pamphlets, documents, broadsides, soldiers' letters, portraits of generals, Confederate currency, Confederate imprints, slave documents and deeds - anything). — D. R. Spaight, Book-seller, Waterford, Va. ap3428

OLD AMERICAN COINS, stamps, & envelopes with stamps wanted. Also Long Island, N.Y., material before 1900, such as old letters, documents, post cards, pictures, books, newspapers, antiques, etc. Need large cents, Indian heads, scarce Lincoln's, one dollar gold pieces, etc. Please state what you have in your first letter and state price for entire lot. No offers. I buy for resale. — Marakowski Stamp & Coin Shop, 612 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park, L.I., N.Y. au60042

SPECIAL WANT in old cast iron toys: Horse drawn fire chief wagon. Horse reel wagon with the two fat heavy walking horses. Royal Circus giraffe cage wagon. Nodding head wagons. Small Royal Circus cage wagons. Seeing New York Autocar 899. Fancy carriages. I am no dealer. — A. H. Mundis, 731 Wallace St., York, Pa. my62971

WANTED, Schoenhut circus animals: cat, gorilla, seal, wolf, hyena. — Clara Morearty, 810 So. 59th, Omaha, Nebr. ap3652

SOUERS grandfather clock. — Prof. W. H. Miley, Ashland College, Ashland, Ohio. mh169

PLEASE NOTE my display ad in Mechanical Bank Department of this issue, listing various wants. — F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

SHAVING MUGS, vases in pairs, Mary Gregory items and toys. — Walter J. Henry, Adamsburg, Pa. f12069

WHISKEY AMERICANA: bottles, ads, posters, licenses, books, magazines or anything relating to pre-prohibition whiskey business. — Barton Distilling Company, 134 North LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. au6008

WANTED: Antique clothing, 1895-1920, men and women. Describe and price in first letter. — Doyer, 1626 No. 46th St., Phoenix, Arizona. mh120801

BOTTLES, FLASKS and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted New England Pineapple oval dish, handled mugs and cruets. — The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. ap128271

MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS: Bleeders, etc. — J. Koeliker, 4610 Wood St., Willoughby, Ohio. d12497

FORT LARNED, KANS.: Any information or historical material concerning soldiers stationed at Fort 1859-1882. Letters, diaries, photos, military or Indian relics from vicinity. Especially want photos of young Thomas McGee and Isaac Marrs 1864. Write Mrs. H. C. Campbell, Box 486, Larned, Kans. mh1253

TOP CASH PAID for letters and documents of famous people. Also want interesting old diaries, letters about Indians, pioneers, whaling, etc. Immediate decision! Immediate payment! Ask today for free brochure, "How to Sell Your Autographs." Catalogs issued. — Charles H. Hamilton, 515 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y. Eldorado 5-3464. tfx

## FOR SALE

WHOLESALE FURNITURE. Write for Free Dealers Lists. Early American, Penna. Dutch, Marble tops, sinks, chests, cupboards, Cane & Plank Chairs, etc. Visit us. Large stock. — Deaven Antique Shop, Main St., Jonestown, Penna. ¼ mi. South of U.S. Route 22. my6612

WHOLESALE DEALERS. New shop open. Please stop by. — Antiques, Inc., Route 16, Knoxville, Tenn. mh3422

BOTTLES, FLASKS and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted New England Pineapple oval dish, handled mugs and cruets. — The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. my128271

POWERFUL 4-sectional brass telescope. Dated 1865. Excellent. \$26. Polished ivory snuff flask of 1810 from whale tooth. 6" long. Silver mounted. Rare. Beautiful. \$26. Double barrel Civil War pinfire pistols. Good. \$25 each. Five antique flintlock pistols. Complete and in fair condition \$26 each. Matched pair flintlock pirate pistols. Brass trim. Excellent working order and condition. \$127. Small copper pistol powder flasks. Rare. Excellent. \$15 each. Send for antique firearms list. 25c. Many bargains. — Tontz Country Store, Elstnore, Calif. mh30821

JOHN ROGERS GROUPS, collection of twenty different groups for sale. — C. K. Johnson, Hurley, New York. ap6215

OLD SOUTHERN ANTIQUES. Furniture, glassware, china, primitives, firearms, anything. Sister scouts for the South. Bargains every day. — Garnetts Outlet Sales, Starkville, Miss. au124431

I am selling my antiques by mail at low prices. List for stamp. — Florence M. Alexander, 606 California St., Newtonville, Mass. mh3405

IMPORTED laces, Point de Velas, thread Valenciennes. Costume items. Genuine Japanese prints. Oriental items. List for stamp. — Ox Shoe Treasure Shop, Helena, Mont. mh3863

ANTIQUE Ivory hand carved chess set, king ¼", rest in proportion. If interested, write — Mrs. W. McKim, Morrison, Ill. ap3633

PEWTER: Some pieces marked. Qt. cans or open tankards, \$17.50 each; 10" plates, \$12 each; 9" plates, \$10 each; 14" round charger, \$27.50; 4" bowls, \$7.50 each. Two primitive clipper ship oils, write. Map on parchment, dated 1699, \$45. Two half-models, write. 9" disc Polyphon box with 12 records, \$60. Postage extra, inquiries invited. — Herbert Callister, 920 West Great Falls St., Falls Church, Va. mh1025

## WANTED

MECHANICAL BANKS, gold coins, Indian relics, music boxes, old guns — Romey, Box 291, Bluffton, Indiana. my120441

PETROLEUM: Books, pamphlets, magazines, maps, catalogs, photographs, letters on American petroleum before 1910. Describe and price. — W. R. Johnson, 416 Wheeler, Ardmore, Okla. ap3863

CIVIL WAR bugle and other Civil War relics wanted. — Walter A. Holloway, 303 W. Ontario, Chicago 10, Ill. my3882

WANTED: 14" colored hanging lamps, original G.W.T.W.'s, weather vanes, old store signs, miniature lamps, barn and street lamps, silver napkin rings with animals, Edison horn phonographs, hanging iron match boxes, tealeaf china, country store items. — Yankee Trader Antiques, Carson City, Nev. my3276

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## *The Happiness Boys . . .*

# Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

(Part 2)

By JIM WALSH

The name of Billy Jones, didn't appear in the Edison lists until the summer of 1921, when he and a male chorus (apparently the Harmonizers, of which he had become second tenor) sang perhaps the greatest of all comic songs, "Casey Jones." His version was patterned closely on Billy Murray's great Edison cylinder version of the same classic, but it was not as good as the Murray rendition. It brought out an unpleasant habit Jones had in his early recording days of singing with a hissing sound on certain syllables and occasionally evincing a trace of a lisp. This disappeared after his partnership with Hare. By the end of 1920 Jones was singing for nearly every American record company (unless some on the West Coast might be excepted) under the name of Billy Jones. However, his first Brunswick records appeared in a disguised form as being by William Reese. He didn't appear in the Victor list until June, 1920, when he sang, on 18670, "My Sahara Rose" and "Oh, How I Laugh When I Think That I Cried About You." The record displayed a pleasing tenor voice but a rather affected style of which he soon afterwards rid himself. His Columbia debut was postponed until the spring of 1922 when he sang (on No. 3551) "Feather-Bed Lane," with Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw rendering "Mammy Lou" on the reverse.

By this time he had struck up his partnership with Hare, and the very next number, 3552, combined their first Columbia record, "Lalawana Lullaby." The Shannon Four obliged with "Ka-Lu-A," to fill the other side of the platter. It is amusing to recall that some veteran record buyers resented the idea of a singer calling himself Billy Jones. They suspected that because of the great popularity of Ada Jones and Billy Murray he had trickily taken the Billy from Murray's first name and the Jones from Ada's family name. However, Billy Jones of course was a name to which he was lawfully entitled. And neither Ada Jones or Billy Murray bore him any grudge. One of the last records Miss Jones ever made was Edison Diamond Disc 50852 on which she and the male Jones sang duets of "On a Little Side Street" and "When Francis

Dances With Me." The Edison company had planned to make duet partners of them, since Billy Murray had signed up exclusively with Victor, but Miss Jones' death in May, 1922, intervened.

As for Billy Murray, then at the crest of his popularity, he made one Victor duet record with Jones while the latter was still calling himself Victor Roberts for Victor use. It was 18723, on which they sang "Down By the O-Hi-O," coupled with Murray's solo of "Marimba." Murray, Jones and Hare became excellent friends.

### VI Ernest Hare's First Records

Ernest Hare also probably made his first records for Edison. Fred Rabenstein's research indicated his first Edison work was done in November, 1918. He sang "A Good Man is Hard to Find," a comic "coon song" written by Eddie Green later famous as "the singing waiter" on the "Duffy's Tavern" radio program. It was rejected, because of some flaw, for issue as a Diamond Disc but appeared as Amberol cylinder 3690. In February, 1919, Ernie had another try with better luck. He sang an extremely amusing Negro dialect song, "Satan, I'm Here (I Can't Stand for No Triffin' Man)" which was issued as one side of Diamond Disc 50542 and as Amberol 3746. The other side of the disc was occupied by Al Bernard, then just beginning to make a reputation as one of the greatest white "blues" singers of all time, holding forth with "The Nigger Blues." It appeared in the August, 1919, supplement of Edison "Re-Creations."

What might be considered one of the turning points in Hare's recording career occurred a month later when Edison issued No. 50558, his first duet with Al Bernard, "I Want to Hold You In My Arms," a side-splitting "coon" duet written by Bernard and J. Russell Robinson. The other side, "Oh! Lawdy (Something's Done Got Between Ebacaneer and Me)," was a masterly "coon" song interpretation of another type by Ada Jones.

The Bernard and Hare duet was one of the popular song recording sensations of 1919 — and it was inspired because Bernard and Hare lived in the same apartment house

and Ernie wanted to borrow an egg one night from Al. But that's a story to be told later. It resulted in a long series of comic songs and sketches written by Bernard and recorded by him and Hare, to steadily widening popularity.

I could devote a great deal of space to relating in detail the professional association of Bernard and Hare, which continued to some extent even after Jones and Hare had discovered each other. However, since Bernard, as the author and composer, was the "top man" of the Bernard-Hare duo, I shall withhold such information for a later series which will give that brilliant comedian's life story. I have often wondered why, when the Bernard and Hare duets were so popular on Edison, Brunswick, Emerson, Pathe and other brands, the team was never called on to record its inimitable skits for Victor and Columbia. They were certainly among the funniest records ever made — far funnier, in my opinion, than those by The Two Black Crows, who came along nearly a decade later.

But that's in passing. Both as a soloist and as Bernard's duet partner, Ernest Hare was well established as a recording artist by the time he met Billy Jones. Already, like Jones, he had begun to record under a variety of names, but there was no mistaking that rich voice that ranged from a fairly high baritone, chock-full of overtones, to a sepulchral bass. However, he never, so far as I can recall, made a solo Victor record (his work for Victor consisted entirely of duets with Jones), nor did he make a Columbia solo recording until 1924. Meanwhile, Jones, beginning in 1922, had made a good many solos and also sung the refrains in a spate of Columbia dance records.

We have now reached the point where we may begin consideration of the formation of the historic Jones and Hare partnership — an association that is still so memorable and redolent of the peculiar fragrance of the 1920's that when Jimmy Hatlo, the famous cartoonist of "They'll Do It Every Time," decided a few years ago to introduce a nostalgic touch into one of his delightful panels, he had a rooming house oc-

cupant complaining that the covers on his bed hadn't been changed "since the days of Ernie Jones and Billy Hare." Jimmy later autographed an original of that 1953 drawing for me, and I have submitted it for reproduction (by permission of King Features Syndicate) with this series. (See page 34 March Issue). Hatlo explained he didn't get the singers' names mixed up but makes it a rule never to use anyone's exact name in his comics. Therefore Billy and Ernie's last names were deliberately switched.

The chances are that Billy Jones and Ernest Hare met for the first time in the late fall of 1920 at the Edison recording studio, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York. As was said last month, they did not do their first recorded duet work for Edison (despite that company's belief to the contrary); however, my frequently quoted Edison friend, Fred Rabenstein, wrote me he was present at the meeting when the future Damon and Pythias of the Phonograph and Radio shook hands for the first time.

One legend is that Billy and Ernie felt attracted to each other when they swapped reminiscences and each confided he had originally hoped to be an opera star. The story goes on that they amused themselves by singing snatches from operatic arias in a burlesque fashion and discovered their voices blended remarkably well. This led them to decide, perhaps, that they would make a congenial duet team.

When Billy Jones first looked at Ernest Hare he saw a man with an oval shaped face, whose hair was thinning, who wore rimless glasses, and whose lofty forehead gave him an appearance of intellectuality. Hare was 37. Jones was 31, round-faced, freckled, blue-eyed and already inclined to be chubby. Both were rather short, about five feet seven. (Jones gives his height in the pair's last Victor record, "Happiness Boys Going Abroad.") Both had broad smiles when they were amused, with Ernie's being a trifle wider.

Besides doing solo work for various record companies under several names, Hare was still singing as a partner of Al Bernard, even though Bernard had also formed an alternate association with the popular yodeler, Frank Kamplain. Hare was chiefly regarded as a comedian, in which capacity he had recorded some of the songs - among them "I'll Say She Does" and "I Gave Her That" - in which he had understudied Al Jolson. However, at least one company, Brunswick, used him mainly as a ballad singer. Brunswick boasted that Hare's record of "Old Pal, Why Don't You Answer Me?" was the best issued by any company, but its sale probably was small in comparison with Henry Burr's Victor version, which had the advantage of a Campbell and Burr duet of "Feather Your Nest" on the reverse.

It is interesting to compare records by Hare and Jolson and to discover how much superior as a singer the



BILLY JONES AND ERNEST HARE as broadcasting stars in the 1920's. Whoever the piano player may be, it's obviously not Dave Elman.

understudy was to the star. Jolson apparently had a knack of sending his personality across the footlights in a way that no other performer could equal, but he didn't have much of a voice. As his records reveal, it was harsh and rasping and marked by eccentric tricks of style. Hare, on the other hand, had one of the finest voices of his day, one worthy to hold the center of any operatic stage, but must have lacked Jolson's electric magnetism for stage work. In my opinion, the very qualities that made Jolson a poor recording artist (his success on the stage is another matter) caused Hare to be a superlative one.

As for Jones, he also was singing for nearly every recording company and using an assortment of names. Though not established as anyone's regular duet partner, he was the second tenor of the Harmonizers Quartet, which had Charles Hart as first tenor, Steve Porter, baritone, and Harry Donaghy, bass. (More information about the Harmonizers may be found in the Charles Hart article in HOBBIES for December, 1958).

Fred Rabenstein accounted for Jones and Hare's not having begun their duet partnership with Edison by saying it was always necessary to "get a date" in advance for a recording session. He pointed out that orchestrations must be prepared and other arrangements made before the actual record making could be done. Even so, it seems strange that the first Jones and Hare duet for Edison, "Down at the Old Swimming Hole," was not recorded until June 25, 1921. This appeared as Diamond Disc No. 50841 and as Blue Amberol cylinder 4391. It became one of the 300 best selling Diamond Discs.

Here is what the booklet, "Edison Records of Music That Lives," said about it. Notice the cautious way in which the statement that this was the first Jones-Hare duet is qualified:

The engaging topic of the song, "Down at the Old Swimming Hole," will surely appeal to all boys from nine to ninety. As sung by those jolly songsters, Jones and Hare, one is carried away, indeed, to the scenes of one's childhood, when life was just one good time after another.

Jones and Hare, you know, are the celebrated "Happiness Boys" of radio fame, and, to our knowledge, we do not believe that Jones and Hare were ever paired together until they made this record.

"Down at the Old Swimming Hole" was one of a series of "kid songs," written by Al Wilson and the late James A. Brennan (we'll hear more of Jim Brennan later), which Billy and Ernie considered ideal material for their talents. Others that came a little later included "Down by the Old Apple Tree" and "In the Little Red School House." It was also the first song which the pair recorded for several companies. Their work is good, but any listener familiar with all stages of their career can tell it was made at a period when they had not been together long and hadn't perfected their duet style. The voices do not blend so admirably as they did later and there is still an occasional sharp, hissing quality that detracts from the rounded beauty of Jones' tenor.

## II. The First Jones and Hare Duet

I believe, but am not sure, that Billy Jones told me in my talk with him that he and Hare did meet for the first time at Edison. However, in spite of that and Fred Rabenstein's recollections, I am not con-





This photo of DAVE KAPLAN, director of Kaplan's Melodists, who became Jones and Hare's accompanist in 1925, is reproduced from the February, 1926, Edison record supplement.

vinced that the Edison encounter was their initial meeting. There is a chance that they originally ran into each other at Brunswick. If so, and it was a recording director who had the inspiration of teaming them, the credit probably goes to Walter Haenschel.

At any rate, although Billy told me the team's first duet record was "I Like To Do It," for Vocalion, the fact remains that record wasn't issued until June, 1921. In February, 1921, four months earlier, Brunswick had marketed the earliest Jones-Hare duet I have been able to find. This is 2063, "All She'd Say Was 'Umh-Hum,'" coupled with "Feather Your Nest," by the Amphion Quartet, which was probably another name for the Harmonizers. The Brunswick supplement said:

"All She'd Say Was Umh-Hum," according to that prize song-comedian, Ernest Hare, a statement that is musically concurred in by his friend, Billy Jones. It's a mighty good song with words that bring more than inaudible smiles. Both sing well and the accompaniment is splendid. It appears that Mr. Hare met someone "that thrilled him through and through," and he confesses in his richest baritone range that he "met his Waterloo."

Despite this praise the record is indifferent by later Jones-Hare standards. There is little harmony and Jones doesn't have much to do. A few months later the boys did better when they teamed up on a Brunswick record of "Down Yonder," L. Wolfe Gilbert's song that had a big revival a few years ago owing to Del Wood's piano rendition. When the revival was at its height a disc jockey wrote to The Billboard that he had been playing the old Brunswick record because Jones and Hare sang "Down Yonder" better than any of the latter-day artists.

The Vocalion record, which Jones believed to have been the comedians' first, was No. 14174. The other side had the Harmonizers singing "I Lost My Heart to the Meanest Girl in Town."

### III. On Their Way Up

To repeat: "Down at the Old Swimming Hole" really gave Jones and Hare their start as a successful duet team. They sang it for several companies, and the team name was now usually appearing as "Billy Jones and Ernest Hare," even though both the Brunswick and Vocalion records we have just discussed gave Hare first place. However, their names were changed on the label of the Phantasie record of the song to "Lyons and Heilman," although their identity was given away by their calling each other "Billy" and "Ernie" in the record. Phantasie was a disguise for Lyric records. New labels were applied over the Lyric ones (which had a trademark showing a cat making an unsuccessful effort to scratch a record), and false names were given the artists. For instance, Gladys Rice was called Victoria Marsden.

Not long afterward (as related last month) Billy and Ernie made their radio broadcasting debut. The Shannon Four — Charles Hart, Lewis James, Elliott Shaw and Wilfred Glenn appeared on the same experimental program. A short time later came their first sponsored program, for Irving Fuerst's Happiness Candy company — a fact which resulted in their attaining their greatest radio success as the Happiness Boys.

For the next several years the paths of Jones and Hare, on radio, records and in personal appearances led steadily upward. They were the most popular feature on radio for several years and their records con-

tinued to be large sellers despite the fact that they could be heard each week by "wireless."

A 1924 Billboard mention of their broadcasting activities said:

Ernie Hare and Billy Jones, known on radio as The Happiness Boys, will start their broadcasting again, Friday, September 19. These popular artists have done much to popularize songs, and their phonograph records continue to sell at a surprising rate. One thing about this team is that it doesn't sign up with any particular publishing house, but knows a good song when it hears it, regardless of whose it is.

About this same time, The Billboard published a news item that I find hard to believe. It said Jones and Hare were in such great demand by so many companies for making records that they had taken out insurance against forgetting to fill a recording engagement. The idea was that if an annoyed company sued them for not showing up on schedule they would be protected against being sued. The "story" was probably "planted" by a press agent, but it gives a good idea of the remarkable popularity they had achieved.

Of considerably later date is the following review in a New York newspaper (I'm not sure which) of a typical Jones and Hare broadcast. It was written by David Bratton:

The Interwoven Pair, the finest team on the air for good humor and lively program, were pleasing to the extreme over WJZ last night. A couple of humorous songs put just the proper amount of spirit into the program and the pair sang several ballads in a manner that proves beyond a doubt the boys have many years ahead of them as radio stars. The wise cracks and gags were rendered with freshness



ETHEL MERMAN AND MARY MARTIN, in their famous impersonation of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare on the Ford television program.



ERNEST HARE in a relaxed mood. (Reproduced from the Vocalion Record Supplement for March, 1920).

that is exceedingly bright in comparison with most of the other radio humor teams. We liked the bit about Venice and not being able to see much of the place on account of the flood. Not new, but put across in a pleasing manner. That new song, "Singing in the Bathtub," proved to be a good one.

The reference to the duo as "The Interwoven Pair" and mention of "Singing in the Bathtub" sets the date of this review as 1929, a time when — although they probably didn't realize it — Jones and Hare had reached and passed the peak of their popularity as radio and recording attractions.

#### IV. Great Teamwork

The year 1923 saw this country swept by two comic songs with "funny paper" connotations. One was "Barney Google" and the other, the year's greatest hit, "Yes, We Have No Bananas," whose title was taken from a slang term. T. A. Dorgan introduced into his "Indoor Sports" cartoons. Jones and Hare did their share in making both popular. 1923 was also the year in which phonograph and record manufacturers began to view with concern the steadily advancing inroads of radio. It was likewise the year in which Edison Diamond Discs, now bearing easily read white labels instead of the formerly almost indecipherable black ones, became known by the plebeian term of Edison Records instead of the pretentious Edison Re-Creations. Columbia records, formerly notorious for their scratch, now came out with new labels and almost silent surfaces. Recording continued to be by the horn method, with the electric process still two years in the future.

By the beginning of 1923, Jones and Hare had perfected their duet style. Their singing was now so polished that cultured persons who ordinarily disliked popular music and cared nothing for comedy could listen to them with pleasure for the sake of hearing the superb blend of

their fine voices. There was no "strong" and "weak" man in the team. The work of both was of equal value. If Hare's vocal equipment was perhaps somewhat superior to Jones', the tenor, with his higher, more flexible voice, had a greater gift for dialect interpretations. Bowery, English, Negro, German, French, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Greek — Jones was the master of any type of dialect and Hare was not far behind him. Occasionally they sang in mock-operatic style, as in their amusing Edison and Vocalion records of "Operatic Syncopation," in which they "rag" familiar operatic melodies — just as tradition says they did at their first meeting. They even made one Edison record in which there was no singing, but in which they talked all the way through in Negro dialect — a forerunner of "The Two Black Crows." It was "From de Ol' Home Town (The Meeting of Lincoln and Glascoe)," and to my perception is not up to the Jones and Hare standard.

Anyone wanting a double-faced record showing the comedians at their best should get Edison No. 51155, coupling "Barney Google" and an even more amusing and tuneful Harry Von Tilzer song, "Old King Tut." (The discovery of King Tut's Egyptian tomb was one of the topical sensations of 1923.) This record is also the best possible illustration of the superiority of Edison recording to any other of the pre-electric day. Billy and Ernie sang "Barney Google" for at least a dozen companies, but in no other records do the results approach those obtained on Edison. The needle-cut records all fail to discriminate clearly between the two voices. Hare sounds almost as high as Jones, and the rich overtones are missing from his voice. On the Edison there is never any doubt as to which is which. There is also a flash of brilliant piano playing (probably by Dave Kaplan) that could not have been duplicated on any lateral cut disc.

Not only were Jones and Hare recording hundreds of duets each year, they were doing an equal number of solos, as well as occasionally singing with other artists. Hare still sang an occasional duet with Al Bernard, and one of their 1923 specialties, "Samuel Johnson, Get Thee Gone From Here" deserves to rank with their 1920 classic, "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon Is Over." Jones sang a duet with Gladys Rice, "My Old Girl," but the Edison label gives his name as "Eugene Harold." Hare did a couple of gospel hymn duets with Helen Clark, also for Edison, in which he is disguised as "Roy Roberts" (the "Roberts" obviously being taken from his mother's maiden name, just as Jones had called himself "Victor Roberts" on Victor records). The beautifully sung "sacred duets" are "The Old Rugged Cross" and "Waiting and Watching for Me." Both Jones and Hare sang occasionally in the Edison ensemble known as the New York Light Opera Company.



ERNEST HARE and another important member of his family—from the August, 1920, Vocalion Supplement.

#### V. Assumed Names

This is probably a good place to give a list of the various names under which Jones and Hare recorded. Most of them had been used before the advent of microphonic recording in 1925, but a few were not adopted, mostly for use on the cheaper brands of records, until after the electric era began. It seems ridiculous for records by two such popular comedians to have been issued under "aliases," but this was probably done because manufacturers of the more expensive records objected to having their stars compete openly on cheaper brands with the better grade discs. Billy and Ernie were certainly among the most prolific free-lance recorders of the 1920's (probably ranking from 1925 to 1930 just below Vernon Dalhart), and their total sales for all companies must have been far in excess of those of singers like Gene Austin, Billy Murray and Henry Burr, who during most of this period were exclusive to one company. Other leading free-lances were Irving Kaufman and Arthur Fields, with Jack Kaufman and Charles Harrison not far behind.

Jones seems to have used a great many more assumed names than Hare, but this list is not represented as being complete. There may be a good many others I haven't yet run across. At any rate, Jones was Harry Blake on Pathe, Actuelle and Perfect records, and Billy de Rex on several brands, including Gennett. On Actuelle he also recorded a mock operatic performance, "La Banana Aria," under the almost unbelievable pseudonym of "Ugesso Gargolo." I haven't heard this, but have seen it described as "a riot." The Edison name of Eugene Harold has already been mentioned, and he, like several other tenors (and also like Hare) was disguised as David Harris on National Music Lover records, which probably were made by Grey Gull. On seven-inch records for children

(Continued on page 64)

## PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

he was sometimes called either "Uncle Billy" or just "Mr. Jones." He was also Reese Jones on Edison and Willy Jones on some of the cheaper brands. Pathe-Actuelle was particularly set on giving him different names, which beside those already mentioned included Dennis O'Malley, William Rees, Melvin Strong and Carlton Williams.

Jones was William Reese on Brunswick and Victor Roberts on Victor, and names he used on Regal, Banner and other "off-brands," included Bertram Smith, Bob Thompson, Joe White (not to be confused with Joseph M. White, "the Silver-Masked Tenor"), Billy West, William West and Frank Williams. I formerly thought he was "Howard Lewis," who sang "Yes, We Have No Bananas" on the Black Swan records made by a Negro company, but the "Bananas" singer was really Arthur Hall. Jones' Edison record of "Yes, We—" included amusing impersonations of a Greek fruit seller and an English food store "clark."

Hare appeared as Wallace Daniels on Actuelle records. For that same label and others with Pathe affiliations he was also Arthur Grant, Robert Judson and Frank Mann. On children's records he was known as "Uncle Ernest" and "Mr. Hare" and, like Jones, he was sometimes called "David Harris" on National Music Lovers. He was Henry Jones on Regal records (the name obviously was borrowed from his famous impersonation of the Negro "Henry Jones" character), and on miscellaneous brands he was Curt Phillips, "Radio Joe," Ernie Spencer, Bob Thomas, John Thomas, and Allen Turner (again, not to be confused with the English baritone, Alan Turner.) Roy Roberts on Edison has already been mentioned. Brunswick even issued a record, "Santa Claus Hides in the Phonograph," in which he is identified on the label, for the children's benefit, as Santa Claus himself. However, the words, "Ernest Hare," appear parenthetically in smaller type. For Edison, Hare made a record of "Santa Claus Proves There is a Santa Claus," and Jones teamed up on the other side with Steve Porter in an excellent version of Steve's famous comic sketch, "Christmas Morning at Clancy's." Jones and Porter did several comic sketches for off-brands, and Hare assisted Byron G. Harlan in an Okeh record of Cal Stewart's original skit, "Uncle Josh at the Dentist's."

As a team, Jones and Hare were called "Reed and Griffin" on Silver-tone records, Jones and Harold on Moonshine, and "The Romeo Boys" on Romeo discs. Their accompanist, Dave Kaplan, seldom had liberties taken with his name but on a Silver-tone record he is changed to "Dave Landis." Hare was only occasionally given a chance to show the full range of his basso profundo, but he took advantage of the opportunity in two Edison records — an old minstrel

number, "A Bullfrog Am No Nightingale" and the standard nautical display piece, "Bells of the Sea."

Even after Jones and Hare ceased to be the Happiness Boys on the air and were sponsored by Interwoven Socks, they were still called the Happiness Boys on records. Victor always catalogued them by the team name with their individual identities being given in parentheses, but other companies laid more emphasis on Jones and Hare as individual personalities and subordinated their radio affiliation.

Perhaps before closing this discussion of assumed names I should mention that Hare's daughter, Marilyn, told Quentin Riggs of Oklahoma City that her father made records under the alias of "Hobo Jack" Turner. However I believe the young lady is mistaken. "Hobo Jack" was John C. Turner, a well-known folk singer at various Western radio stations. He died nine years ago in Denver. His deep voice had a quality much like Hare's, and Marilyn probably heard some of his records and took them to be by her father. Listening closely to the Turner records, one detects a Western accent whereas Ernie Hare's voice never entirely lost a trace of the pronunciation of his native Virginia.

(To be continued)

## WANTED

**MECHANICAL BANKS,** gold coins, Indian relics, music boxes, old guns — Romey, Box 291, Bluffton, Indiana. my120441

**PETROLEUM:** Books, pamphlets, magazines, maps, catalogs, photographs, letters on American petroleum before 1910. Describe and price. — W. R. Johnson, 416 Wheeler, Ardmore, Okla. ap3863

**CIVIL WAR** bugle and other Civil War relics wanted. — Walter A. Holloway, 308 W. Ontario, Chicago 10, Ill. my3882

**WANTED:** 14" colored hanging lamps, original G.W.T.W.'s, weather vanes, old store signs, miniature lamps, barn and street lamps, silver napkin rings with animals, Edison horn phonographs, hanging iron match boxes, tealeaf china, country store items. — Yankee Trader Antiques, Carson City, Nev. my3276

**IVES, IVES-BLAKESLEE,** Carpenter, Kenton, Hubley, N.N. Hill Brass Co., Gong Bell Manufacturing Co., Shepard Hardware Co., J. & E. Stevens Co., Kyser, Rex and Wilkins. Want any catalogs issued by these companies. See my large ad in the Old Mechanical Banks Department of this issue. — F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**WANTED:** Old iron hitching posts and old tin tobacco tags. — R. F. French, 507½ Highland Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa. f122511

**WANTED:** One twin size walnut bed. Headboard height near 60" with carving. — Mrs. Winford Carlisle, Box 1386, Lovington, New Mexico. je3023

**CIVIL WAR, Slavery, the South.** I will pay fair prices for anything in these categories (books, pamphlets, documents, broadsides, soldiers' letters, portraits of generals, Confederate currency, Confederate imprints, slave documents and deeds — anything). — D. R. Spaight, Bookseller, Waterford, Va. ap3426

**OLD AMERICAN COINS,** stamps, & envelopes with stamps wanted. Also Long Island, N.Y., material before 1900, such as old letters, documents, post cards, pictures, books, newspapers, antiques, etc. Need large cents, Indian heads, scarce Lincolns, one dollar gold pieces, etc. Please state what you have in your first letter and state price for entire lot. No offers. I buy for resale. — Marakowski Stamp & Coin Shop, 612 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park, L.I., N.Y. au60042

**SPECIAL WANT** in old cast iron toys: Horse drawn fire chief wagon. Horse reel wagon with the two fat heavy walking horses. Royal Circus giraffe cage wagon. Nodding head wagons. Small Royal Circus cage wagons. Seeing New York Autocar 899. Fancy carriages. I am no dealer. — A. H. Mundis, 731 Wallace St., York, Pa. my62971

**WANTED,** Schoenhut circus animals: cat, gorilla, seal, wolf, hyena. — Clara Morearty, 810 So. 59th, Omaha, Nebr. ap3652

**BOTTLES, FLASKS** and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted: New England Pineapple oval dish, handled mugs and cruets. — The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. ap128271

**MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Bleeders, etc. — J. Koelliker, 4610 Wood St., Willoughby, Ohio. d12407

**OLD BEAD PATTERNS,** instruction books, such as those by Priscilla, etc. — Peggy Allen, 318 Bluff Ave., La Grange, Ill. je3882

**WHISKEY AMERICANA:** bottles, ads, posters, licenses, books, magazines or anything relating to pre-prohibition whiskey business. — Barton Distilling Company, 134 North LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. au6008

**WANTED:** Post cards. Large or small collections before 1913. Unpicked cards only. Price and description in first letter. — Herbert Hulse, Cuddebackville, N. Y. s63637

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonographs and records, horn type phonographs, and any parts. Describe fully and price wanted. — Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. je3253

**PLEASE NOTE** my display ad in Mechanical Bank Department of this issue, listing various wants. — F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**SHAVING MUGS,** vases in pairs, Mary Gregory items and toys. — Walter J. Henry, Adamsburg, Pa. f12069

## FOR SALE

**WHOLESALE FURNITURE.** Write for Free Dealers Lists. Early American, Penna. Dutch, Marble tops, sinks, chests, cupboards, Cane & Plank Chairs, etc. Visit us. Large stock. — Deaven Antique Shop, Main St., Jonestown, Penna. 14 mi. South of U.S. Route 22. my6612

**BOTTLES, FLASKS** and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted New England Pineapple oval dish, handled mugs and cruets. — The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. my128271

**PROOF 13" rose medallion vase,** circa 1890, \$12.50. Tortoise-shell 5" fluted edge dish, heavily embossed with gold pelican diving for fish in swamp, \$2.15. Chinese horn spoon, 4" long, \$1.25. Stunning replated 3-piece after dinner coffee set, chased design, gadroon edges, pot, sugar and pitcher. List for stamp. — Ox Shoe Treasure Shop, Helena, Montana. ap1844

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## VI. Praise From Catalogs and Critics

Almost from the beginning of their recording careers, the exceptionally fine voices of Billy Jones, the former telephone company lineman, and Ernest Hare, who had been a baking powder salesman for a brief time as a young man, won praise from the writers of record supplements and catalogs as well as critics who reviewed their records. This was especially true of Hare.

In the Vocalion Record Bulletin for November, 1920, the editor, Pearl Spaulding, said:

In the voice of a singer of popular numbers, one has learned to expect quantity rather than quality. Ernest Hare is fortunate enough to possess both.

When Jones and Hare sang "Operatic Syncopation" for Vocalion, the May, 1922, supplement remarked:

Ernest Hare's deep bass voice booms out some wonderful notes in "Operatic Syncopation," sung with Billy Jones. Opera in jazztime this is, and very amusing.

The June, 1923, Edison Diamond Disc supplement said, in reviewing Hare's record of "Down By The River":

We don't know of any voice that we like better than the virile bass-baritone of Ernest Hare. This favorite artist is blessed with a voice of natural beauty that is rich with overtones.

Being only human, Billy Jones probably wouldn't have been greatly pleased with the following possibly joking comment from the November, 1922, Brunswick supplement:

Billy Jones, the one and only Billy, in association with four male friends who sing better than Billy, records "Mary Dear."

But there should have been consolation in a review published by the English magazine, *The Gramophone*, of his 1924 Edison record, "When It's Night-Time In Italy It's Wednesday Over Here":

Billy Jones is always good, and his fruity tenor is really delightful in a bit of "O Sole Mio."

Billy greatly delighted in using that "fruity" tenor to sing snatches of opera, usually somewhat burles-

qued, and many of his records contain such harkings back to his frustrated operatic ambitions. He gave the same sort of treatment to "O Sole Mio." By contrast, in his Edison record of "I'll Make the Pies Like Mother Made (If You'll Make the Dough Like Dad)" he introduced a medley of old Harry Von Tilzer tunes.

The 1922 Brunswick record catalog contained flattering sketches of both singers. Of Jones, shown wearing a straw hat with a black band, it says:

There is just one "Billy Jones," even if his name is, so to speak, rather common. A good singer, a clever comedian and a bad man to listen to when he tells a funny story—with or without music—for you may never stop laughing. Jones is just—well he is just the celebrated singing-comedian Billy Jones whose records sell wherever people like to laugh. He is qualified by nature to bring health and happiness to pale people and he does it and puts real love in the work. May his tribe increase if they are all as good, clever and musical Indians as Billy Jones.

When I come to the proper place, I shall relate my own experience of hearing Billy Jones tell a humorous story. Meanwhile, I have just recalled the remark of a newspaper paragraph years ago that there were only four famous Joneses in history: John Paul, Bobby, Billy and Casey. He forgot Ada!

Here is the Brunswick tribute to Hare:

Ernest Hare in his double role of the earnest singer of songs of sentiment and capital singer and actor in humorous character sketches is widely known through his splendid records. Hare is like his superb baritone voice, big, sincere and direct. He is liked as well in the recording laboratory as he is outside of it (and that is no little remark), and is just the man and the artist to sing his way into the heart of the American home as he is rapidly doing.

Moving forward a few years to 1926-27 when, I think it is fair to say, the Jones and Hare popularity was at its zenith, the *Happiness Boys* were often the subjects of good-natured joking in humorous publications. Either *Life* or *Judge* published a cartoon under some such title as "Private Life of the Happiness

Boys," showing them in grouchy moods, throwing plates at waiters, quarreling with their wives, and the like, then appearing with their characteristic expansive smiles to sing "How Do You Do?" One of the humor magazines also contained an article purporting to be a conversation between Jones and Hare just before broadcast time. Hare was bemoaning the sorry state of the world, to the ready sympathy of Jones, and both quoted learned authorities on war, poverty, malnutrition and similar depressing subjects. Then it was time to go on the air and Jones announced, to Hare's appreciative laughter, that he would now sing a classical number, "I Fell In Love With The Acrobat's Daughter (But She Wouldn't Give Me A Tumble").

My nomination for the finest American humorous writer of the 1920's, Harry Leon Wilson, in one of his novels, "Lone Tree," had Miss Ellis, a nurse, remarking that her patient had been in such a jovial mood he reminded her of the *Happiness Boys* in one of their half-hours of mirth and melody. When Paul Whiteman's *Rhythm Boys* made a Columbia record of "That's Grandma" in 1928, they mentioned a party which Grandma attended. Part of it went:

"... All the celebrities were there.

First on the program came Billy Jones and Ernest Hare." The *Rhythm Boys* (who included Bing Crosby) then sang a bit of the Jones-Hare theme song, "How Do You Do?"

Billy and Ernie introduced a satirical reference to themselves in one of their funniest records, "Twisting the Dials." Jones, pretending to be a radio announcer at a prize fight, said he wanted "to mention some of the celebrities who are here tonight." Among them, he listed "Cross-Eye Kelly" (referring, of course, to "One-Eye" Connolly, the formerly famous gate-crasher at athletic events), and The Crepehangers—those sorrowful boys, Billy and Ernie, with big broad smiles."

Still advancing nearer the present day, a woman reporter, Vera Connol-

## The Happiness Boys . . .

# Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

Continued

By JIM WALSH



ly, gives an interesting glimpse of the Jones and Hare personalities in an article, "Bagging Radio Lions," published in *The Delineator* for September, 1930. After telling of calls on Walter Damrosch, Amos and Andy, Vaughn De Leath, Harry Reser, and other radio notables of the early depression days, Miss Connolly wrote:

The scene of my lion hunting was suddenly transferred to the studio where the Intertwined Pair (formerly the Happiness Boys), Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, were rehearsing. "When it's Sweet Onion Time in Bermuda."

As I came in, one of these lovable comedians was saying to the other:

"Look here, I studied singing in Brussels."

"That's nothing. I studied singing in valm."

They stopped rehearsing to chat with me. They stood leaning against the piano, while I sat on the bench with my note-book against the keys. It was a comical interview.

The team has been on the air since 1923. Mr. Hare is married, Mr. Jones is not; his elderly Welsh mother lives with him, and before he leaves home to broadcast, he sets the radio for her, so she can sit cozily in her big arm-chair and hear her son sing and joke. These two men were born on the same day of the month; they are the same height and they look alike. Both started as choir boys. Both are accomplished singers.

"We used to weigh the same!" said Hare sarcastically, with a mean wink.

"Now—none of your ugly cracks!" returned Jones, who has recently grown stout.

I questioned them about television.

"We'll have it in our homes in two years," prophesied Hare.

"That's what you thinies say," retorted Jones. "You don't suppose we fatties want to see it come, do you? Can you imagine me playing Hamlet then?"

"Don't worry, pet; you'll never play Hamlet, anyway."

"Oh, no? What about you? You started out to be John McCormack. But I notice you're not," Jones flung back.

"What am I?"

"Just a radio clown!"

"Well—you're my team mate," was Hare's complacent retort.

It was gorgeous foolery, just for my benefit. The interview ended in a laugh.

Ernie Hare obviously was far off base when he predicted American homes would have television by 1932. Even if it had been available, comparatively few people then could have afforded TV sets. Probably though, it would have become commercially feasible years sooner than actually occurred if World War II hadn't intervened. Miss Connolly's comment on the prospect of television is worth quoting:

Television, television! One hears nothing else. Radio artists who are not physically alluring dread its arrival. Singers able only to "croon" fear it too. Many broadcasting officials, foreseeing that it will turn the broadcasting industry upside down, introducing costumes, scenery and acting, naturally regard it with foreboding.

A brief interview was granted me the next day with Merlin Hall Aylesworth, president of the National Broadcasting Company. I brought up the question of television at once.

"Oh, yes. It will come," he replied quietly. "When, we do not know. It's not ready yet for general use. Frankly, I think the anticipation is greater than the actuality will be. Playlets, operas—these may prove more interesting than now. But television cannot improve the playing of a great orchestra or the voice of a fine singer.



Harry Reser, greatest master of the five string banjo, played accompaniments for many Jones and Hare records. Reser (left, front row) is shown here with members of his banjo quartet.

And I am inclined to think the public's imagination, now, evokes persons and settings as lovely—if not more beautiful—than any that can be produced artificially. However, no matter what our individual views are, television undoubtedly is on the way."

So spoke the president of the National Broadcasting Company more than 28 years ago.

Neither Jones nor Hare lived to see television become the dominant form of American home entertainment. But the personalities revealed by their records and remembered by those who heard their broadcasts are still so vivid that when two popular present-day stars — Ethel Merman and Mary Martin — appeared as guests on the Ford program several years ago they caused one of the biggest sensations in TV history by singing a medley of old-time popular songs in a manner which they admitted was based on the Happiness Boys' style. They even made up to impersonate Billy and Ernie, although the result was pretty far wide of the mark. However, the success of their television ap-

pearance and of the long-playing record which preserves that singing act remains a tribute to the artistry of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, whose voice blending was so admirable and some of their vocal effects, even in comedy numbers, so exquisite, that the Victor supplement for September, 1925, said their record of "I Miss My Swiss" contained harmony "as delicate as musical icing."

### Part 3

#### I.

Last month, in tabulating assumed names under which Billy Jones and Ernest Hare made records, I forgot that some of their Vocalion discs were issued by the Aco Company in England and attributed to "the Webster Brothers." Whoever thought of calling Billy and Ernie brothers must have had an instinctive perception of the depth of their devotion. Their love for each other was much deeper and

more unquestioning than the affection of many brothers by blood.

As the partnership continued and prospered, Jones and Hare began to use many personal references in their recordings. This was especially true after they adopted "How Do You Do?" as their theme song in 1924. By this time they had a large office at 1674 Broadway, New York, which was to remain their place of business until Jones' death, and they were far advanced toward the peak of their popularity. Almost from its first appearance, "How Do You Do?" whose words they changed to suit themselves, was identified almost entirely with the Happiness Boys.

However, they were not the only artists who recorded it. In fact, they appear to have made only a few duet versions. Art Gillham sang it for Columbia and Billy Murray and Ed Smalle for Victor. The Murray-Smale combination also did some revising, as in the following amusing lines:

"Late at night when you're in bed  
And someone turns on Bill and Ed,  
Don't you wish that we were dead?"

#### How Do You Do?

Oddly, Jones sang the number alone on an Okeh record, to a ukulele accompaniment by Harry Reser, and undoubtedly annoyed some listeners by pronouncing "neither" in the line, "neither one has met Gillette," as "nye-ther." Pathé recorded the song on Actuelle and Perfect records as a fox-trot by Max Terr's orchestra with Hare singing a refrain.

Brunswick's version by Billy and Ernie, had a banjo accompaniment by Reser and Phil Ohman at the piano. Reser and Ohman, both of whom are still living and active, were associated with the Happiness pair in a good many records, chiefly for Brunswick.

It is a pleasure to know that, more than 30 years later, my good friend Harry Reser is making a hit on television. He was the greatest player

of the tenor banjo in the 1920's and remains the greatest today. Under the heading, "Banjo Comeback Is Being Pushed By Sammy Kaye," the following article appeared in a December, 1958, issue of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*:

The banjo, whose great popularity in the roaring '20's faded with the ascendancy of the guitar, is zooming back into favor again. Booming its stock is maestro Sammy Kaye.

Strumming the banjo for Kaye is one of the great show-business names, Harry Reser, whose Cluquot Club Eskimos were the top radio band from 1926-1934. In the intervening years Reser has become one of the busiest of all recording musicians, having played on more than 2,000 recordings during the past 20 years. He has also done considerable arranging for various orchestra and recording companies.

When Kaye heard that this great banjolist was available, he signed him to a contract and began to build a banjo "spot" for each of his dance shows. Reser is also featured with Kaye's band at the Roosevelt Grill.

Reser's latter-day success is the more gratifying to me because his band is one of my two favorite dance organizations. The other is Harry Roy's English group on the old blue label Decca records. Especially good are the Reser records made for Brunswick under the name of the Six Jumping Jacks, with vocal refrains by Tom Stacks, who was burned to death while playing in a restaurant that caught fire after he left Reser.

On Edison records the orchestra was called Earl Oliver's Jazz Babies and Stacks was disguised as Tom Howard. The group played for virtually all companies and to me their records, mostly emphasizing comedy, are almost an infallible cure for the blues. Actually, they amounted to much the same thing in orchestral music that Jones and Hare did in vocal, and often the band played the same songs that Billy and Ernie chose for their inimitable comedy work. Stack's voice lacked the quality of the Happiness Boys', but he had a gift

for making his listeners laugh and feel in a better mood.

If asked to name the most "relaxing" popular records—those best calculated to make a man with the toothache forget his troubles—I should select the Jones and Hare duets, many of Frank Crumit's solos, dance numbers by Roy and Reser, and an infusion of ragtime piano by Johnny Maddox, Del Wood, Frank Banta, and other masters of that informal style.

The Edison record of "How Do You Do?" revealed Jones and Hare at their rollicking best. It begins by saying: "How do you do, everybody, how do you do? How do you do, everybody, how are you? We are here, we must confess, just to bring you happiness—hope we please you more or less—how do you do?"

Hare then sings, "How do you do, Billy Jones?" to which Jones replies on one copy I have, "pretty good," and on the other, "pretty well." He in turn sings, "How do you do, Ernie Hare, how are you?" to which Hare robustly replies, "All right!" Hare then says, "Bill, I hope you like this song," and Jones replies, "Well, I hope it's not too long; am I right?" Hare returns, "No, you're wrong. How do you do?"

As the catchy tune goes on, the boys pay their respects to "Misses Hen," "John Chinaman," "Old-timers" who could remember "way back when girls were girls and men were men—it's so different now from then." They deplore the fact that nowadays—that is, in 1924—"even grandmas learn to swear; they also smoke and bob their hair."

At the end, the duo sings: "good-bye, Edison fans, goodbye . . . Billy and Ernie are nearly through singing this little song to you, so we'll say goodbye-di-by, goodbye."

It was probably the Edison record that made "How Do You Do?" so

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A smiling, youthful Billy Jones is shown on the cover of the Edison Amberola Monthly for September, 1921.

popular Jones and Hare decided to adopt it as their theme song. The other side was a solo by Jones, "Cross Words (Between Sweetie and Me)," a satire on the then prevailing crossword puzzle craze. Whatever fad or foible showed its head in the '20's, it was sure to meet with the satirical attention of William Reese Jones and Thomas Ernest Hare!

## II. "That's My Happiness"

Many of the Jones and Hare duets referred jokingly to Hare's being a happy married man and Jones a contented bachelor. In their 1926 Edison disc of an attractive Irving Berlin song, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," Billy asks: "Ernie, is your wife a blonde or a brunette?" To which Ernie replies: "Well, really, I can't say, for I haven't seen her since I left home this morning."

That "gag" was typical of the spoken comedy in the pair's recordings—short and snappy and rather obvious. Most of their quips seemed new and fresh at the time they were put on records but have since become rather stale from repetition.

One of the most revealing records from the standpoint of depicting Jones and Hare's individual personalities is "That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness," which they freely adapted for their own purposes before singing it for Victor and Edison. Billy as an unabashed bachelor declares his chief delight is in such things as prize-fights and baseball.

On the Victor record he says: "When Gene Tunney swings his hand and I see that old glove land—that's

my hap-hap-happiness." On the Edison this becomes: "When the pugilist swings his hand." Farther on he refers, in the Victor version, to his joy "When Babe Ruth walks to the plate." The Edison reference is to "the Home Run King." One wonders why Edison preferred not to mention Tunney and the Babe by name.

After the first chorus, Ernie remarks: "But you know, Bill, you're a bachelor and you don't know anything about home ties," to which Billy replies: "Well, if that was a home tie your wife gave you for Christmas I don't want to know anything about them Ernie." Hare then paints a picture of his domestic life by singing of the joy he finds in the companionship of his little daughter, Marilyn who was about three years of age:

Ernie: Every meal I sit beside  
My sweet baby girl, my pride,  
And that's my hap-hap-happiness.

Billy: She loves potatoes, the little  
dear,  
She sticks them in your nose  
and your ear,  
And that's your hap-hap-happiness.

Ernie: She brings me joy, but, boy,  
She breaks every toy her two  
eyes can see

And when we bought a new baby  
grand she broke every key.  
Billy: But when she breaks things  
you're not sore,  
You go out and buy her more!

Ernie: And that's my hap-hap-happiness.

I am reserving another chorus of "That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness" for later quotation.

The personal touch is again to the fore in their 1927 Victor record of "You Don't Like It—Not Much," made when the Happiness duo was at the zenith of its recording career. The final chorus:

"People write us and they delight us;  
They boost our singing and such,  
And we don't like it—no, we don't like it—

Not much!  
They befriend us, some gifts they send us

That often get us in Dutch,  
And we don't like it—no, we don't like it—

Not much!  
Records that we make they say sell  
real good,  
So splendid!

We hear that news and get offended!  
We visit stations without vacations,  
We go to Europe and such,  
And we don't like it—no, we don't like it—

Not much. . . Too much!"

The reference about going to Europe puzzles me, since I haven't been able to find that Billy and Ernie filled European engagements. Perhaps they did during summer months when most popular radio performers took time out from their regular broadcasting.

In their 1927 Okeh record of "I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream For Ice Cream," they give a satirical cheer for "the Happiness Boys," and end by exclaiming, "Are we crazy? You should guess! Billy and Ernie, yes, yes, yes! . . . There!"

## III. Dave Kaplan Joins The Boys

Something new and attractive was added to Jones and Hare records in 1925 when Dave Kaplan became their piano accompanist. Kaplan, who survived Jones and Hare by a good many years, was a brilliant ragtime piano player whose experience went back to Spanish-American War days.

When he joined Billy and Ernie he was, and had been for several years, in charge of the orchestra that played accompaniments for Edison "popular" records. (Cesare Sodero directed the "classical" numbers). Kaplan's Melodists was one of Edison's most popular dance orchestras. The group also made a few records under the disguise of McNalpak's Orchestra and I suspect it of being the Atlantic Dance Orchestra, just as Vincent Lopez's Orchestra was called the Broadway Dance Orchestra on most of its Edison performances.

As entertaining as the Happiness Boys' duets always had been with orchestral backing, they were even more so with Kaplan's sparkling piano work. For the first time it occurs to me to wonder why Edison, whose piano recording was incomparable, didn't issue solos by Kaplan.

Kaplan was frequently made the butt of kidding remarks. Either Jones or Hare would intone some such expression as "Play on, Dave!" or "Play, slave!" He is directly addressed in the Edison record of "The Farmer Took Another Load Away," when he was still merely the orchestra conductor instead of accompanist. This record has an amusing interlude in which Jones pretends to forget what he is doing and to think he and Ernie are giving a broadcast.

On radio the pair frequently used an interchange such as, "I'll tell 'em in the high voice. This is—'No Bill,' Hare would interrupt, 'I'll tell 'em in the low voice.'" In this record Jones says: "I'll tell 'em in the high voice. This is Billy Jones and Ernest Hare broadcasting—" Whereupon Hare interrupts and says: "Bill, pull yourself together and stop wandering. We're not broadcasting—we're making a phonograph record!"

Examples of personal references might be jotted down almost indefinitely. Hare was smooth shaven, but in the Victor and Edison records of "Must You Wear a Mustache?" he pretends to have a flourishing upper lip growth. Toward the end he says: "You know, Bill, I strut around like some movie star," and Jones retorts: "Take 'em off! Take 'em off! I know you, Ernie Har'!" In "Who's That Pretty Baby?" on Edison and Columbia, Jones, declaring his love for the "pretty baby," exclaims: "I'll get her or break my bones!" and Hare comes back, "Well, fifty-fifty, Mister Jones!"

The jovial jesters had favorite jokes, which they used more than once. The gag about filing one's finger nails has already been mentioned. Another, appropriately introduced in the Edison version of "Lunatic's Lullaby," involves Jones' assertion that

he has a sister who is a waitress in a lunatic asylum. . . . "She carries soup to nuts."

In the Victor of "Why Aren't Yez Eatin' More Oranges?" Billy takes a ribbing concerning his status as a clean-living young bachelor. Hare pretends to be a doctor and Jones asks him how he can live to be a hundred. When Billy admits he never smokes, drinks, stays out late at night or "runs around with the flappers," Ernie inquires: "Well, what on earth do you want to live to be a hundred years old for?" When the "doctor" reminds Billy that he owes him for four visits, the "patient" replies: "Well, put it all on one bill, Doc, and I'll disappoint you in a lump!"

In the Edison record of "Go Home and Tell Your Mother That I Love You" Jones pretends to be Hare's girl friend, but with seeming anxiety he asks Ernie to realize, "This is only an imitation. Don't take me serious!" One of the funniest effects they achieved is in the Edison of "I've Never Seen a Straight Banana." I have had two "takes" of this record. In one, Hare sings "banana" straight. In the second version, which must have been made later, he has an inspiration and intones "ba-na-a-na" to imitate the bleating of a billy-goat. Jones gives a startled laugh, and the effect is hilarious.

Another mirthful production is the Diamond Disc of "Speech!" in which the comedians take turns at delivering eloquent orations in fox-trot time. It begins with Hare saying, "I now call on Mr. Billy Jones for his address." Jones replies, "My address is 804 Tenth Avenue, over the fish market." The orchestra shouts, "Speech! Speech!" and Billy obliges. Hare then comes through with one, after which they impersonate an oratorical deaf man, a stutterer, and a patriotic Italian.

#### IV. Some Of Their Best Edisons

I find pleasure in casually reading the titles of Jones and Hare records, for the mere names bring back many happy memories of the first-rate singing and sparkling comedy. Too, the humor was always clean. Nick Kenny was thinking of the wholesome quality of the Happiness Boys' comedy as he wrote a few years ago:

"When filth and smut befoul the air I long for the days of Jones and Hare."

A hurried run-down of the comedians vast recorded repertoire should begin with their Edison records, for Edison was the company with which Billy and Ernie had the most intimate, if not necessarily, the happiest associations. Too, they considered their Edison records their best. Jones remarked in my conversation with him that Edison recording was not only better than the other companies, but "they made us work a lot harder." Then, too, the four-minute length of the records against the usual 2½-minutes of needle-cut discs allowed them more opportunity for exercising their funny bones.

One of the "craziest" titles which Jones and Hare recorded for Edison, and Victor was "As The Porcupine Pines For Its Pork That's How I Pine For You." This screwball number was written in 1925 by the late Art Walsh, who was then at the head of the Edison artist and repertoire department, and Anthony Paganucci. Art Walsh wrote the words and Paganucci the music.

Art, who called me "Cousin Ulysses," although we were not able to discover any real kinship, became vice president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., and a Senator from New Jersey. Paganucci was born in Brooklyn, attended the Pacini Institute at Lucca, Italy, and was the composer of an opera bouffe, "The Opera King," and "The Laughing Cavalier," an operetta.

Enrico Caruso sang Paganucci's song, "Black Eyes," to the composer's accompaniment on the concert stage. He had been an opera conductor at the Manhattan Opera House and the Brooklyn Academy of Music and at the time he collaborated with Walsh was Edison's musical director. Paganucci died January 22, 1954, at his home in New York. He certainly stepped down from his role as high-brow composer when he contrived the tune for the frivolous "Porcupine" song!

Billy and Ernie also made a special recording of another Art Walsh composition. It is a disc not represented in the collection of the average Edison enthusiast. The song, recorded in 1927, was called "Say It To The Ediphone," and commemorated the 50th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph together with a "plug" for Edison dictating devices. The record was sent as advertising matter to Ediphone dealers, and I have seen only one copy. It, of course, did not appear in the Edison record catalog. On the other side was a talk by Charles Edison.

One of the Boys' most amusing Edison records is their 1924 version of "He Looks At Her And Then He Goes ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!" This is a ridiculous account of the happy married life of a huge fat woman and her sawed-off husband. We are told that "he looks, when he's on her lap, like a button on a cap. You can't keep a good man down!"

Another funny comment: "He looks like a jumping jack when he has to scratch her back. Love will always

Take life too seriously, and what is it worth?

If the morning wake us to no new joys, if the evening bring us not the hope of new pleasures, is it worth while to dress and undress? Does the sun shine on me today that I may reflect on yesterday? That I may endeavor to foresee and control what can neither be foreseen nor controlled—the destiny of tomorrow?

—Goethe

find the way!" The chorus, with a hearty laugh between almost every line, is broad satire on American life as it appeared to the humorists of 35 years ago:

"I love to pay my income tax!

Ha ha ha ha ha!

I love those acrobatic acts!

Ha ha ha ha ha!

Invest in oil, you can't go wrong!

Ha ha ha ha ha!

I love to hear a mammy song!

Ha ha ha ha ha!

Things are cheap at bargain sales,  
Women hate the Prince of Wales—  
We have prohibition now—

Ha ha ha ha ha!

One wonders what the lyricist would have to say about today's income tax. And in my opinion the repeal of prohibition has been no laughing matter.

In the 1925 Edison record of "How's Your Folks And My Folks Down In Norfolk Town?" Ernie (you will remember he was born in Norfolk) has an opportunity to impersonate a train caller whom he heard as a boy announcing the names of stations as the train approached Norfolk. Hare pronounces Norfolk as "Naw-f'k," the way the average Virginian does, but Jones, being a New Yorker, calls it "Nor-fork."

This seems an appropriate time to copy a biographical sketch of Hare from the 1923 Gennett record catalog:

"Ernest Hare hails from Virginia. For this reason he has been able through contact with the colored folks in that state to make a study of their humorous mannerisms which has made him invaluable as a recorder of character songs for Gennett records. He has been associated with the New York Winter Garden for several years. You'll enjoy his records because his character and personality shine right through his singing."

The 1924 record of "Laff It Off!" is another irresistible laughing song. In the 1926 Edison of "Sing, Katie, But Leave The Piano Alone," the comedians introduce the name of one of the recording artists of the early 1900's when they refer to "little James McCool, the smartest kid in school." James McCool was an Irish tenor who made records for Victor, Edison and other companies.

Perhaps as characteristic a Jones and Hare record as any is an Edison with the inspired title, "You Never Get Nowhere Holdin' Hands." (Reser and his Six Jumping Jacks recorded the same number for Brunswick as a fox-trot with a refrain by the tragic Tom Stacks). The Edison begins with a flourishing piano introduction by Dave Kaplan. Jones says, "That's wonderful!" and Hare inquires, "What's wonderful, Bill? The way Dave plays the piano?" and Jones retorts: "No. The way the piano stands for Dave's playing!"

Jones decides that before they sing "this classical selection," he needs to test his voice. He says, "Give me something to work on, Dave," and then

(Continued on page 43)



N. H." with railroad engine in the center.

No. 20 - Another "Whooper" Pin-back, rendered in red and black on white.

No. 21 - "Carter & Churchill" Over-all button: this company no longer manufactures work clothes but specializes in sports wear, using the Profile for a trademark.\*

No. 22 - Concord Fire Department: convex, silvered with raised design.

You may notice that one famous New Hampshire character is missing from this group: the Old Man of the Mountain has a group to himself!\*\*

Button mountings of this kind are fun because they are free from restrictions; there are no rules and regulations about them. You may use whatever buttons you wish—so long as they pertain to the subject—and may combine them in any way that pleases you. While some states are richer than others, in button material, I venture to think that there is no state in the United States which could not furnish an interesting and varied display.

But please do not feel that you have to group State Buttons in this way! Any suggestions that I make are suggestions only; there is nothing compulsory about them! Special buttons, like State Seals, are always effective when grouped by themselves.

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**WILL PURCHASE** rare buttons at half list price. — Mrs. Edna Cunningham, 407 Valley Drive, Syracuse, N.Y. jyl2618

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**Just Published:** "Buttonhooks, To Trade-To Treasure." Abundant information, fully illustrated. \$1 postpaid. — Bertha Betensley, 5042 N. St. Louis, Chicago 25, Ill. jyl20291

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS**, direct European imports, collectors' items, 18th century buttons, pictorials, crests, dress-earrings, sets, cuff links. — Mrs. Margot Jacoby, 260 W. 94th St., New York 26, N. Y. my122971

**OLD BUTTONS**, for beginners or advanced collectors, good value British Military. On approval for references. — Mrs. R. E. Turney, 2128 Douglas St., Rockford, Ill. jyl3882

**FOR SALE:** Rather large collection of buttons. Write. — Ella Campbell, 1714 6th Ave., S.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa my3291

A collection of State Flowers, too, makes a pleasing project. Pictures of State Capitols may be combined with the foregoing. When it comes to button manufacturers, some states—like Massachusetts and Connecticut—are richer than others; but buttons made in the state are only one of many possibilities.

There are wooden buttons shaped like states: (I have seen Texas, Minnesota and New Hampshire). There are buttons made from native woods: Redwood from California, myrtle from Oregon, holly from Washington. There are Indian silver and "gemstone" buttons from the West; Shell buttons from Florida; "Fresh-water Pearl" buttons from Iowa; souvenir buttons from many different parts of the country. Any of these could be included in its appropriate group.

All you really have to do, to arrange an interesting "State" display, is to choose your state; and whether it is North, South, East or West, you will soon find that, as far as buttons are concerned, it can be a State of much pleasure and satisfaction!

\*I cannot be positive that these work clothes are still being manufactured, in 1959. Perhaps I should have said, "are or were" made.

\*\*See HOBBIES for September, 1956.

**100 GOOD OLD BUTTONS** \$1. Others on approval, also goofies. — Ruth Griffith, 632 S. Cochran, Charlotte, Mich. s6804

**150 GOOD.** Some exceptional. (from old store closed 25 yrs.) \$1, plus 4 stamps. — Lone Star Hobbies, Box 118, Bellaire, Texas. jyl3252

**\$1.50 BUYS** 10, 20, or 50 good old buttons including one large picture button. Send for my \$1.10 value. Money-back guarantee if not satisfied. — Mrs. A. S. Campbell, 788 Bonaventure Ave., N.E., Atlanta 6, Ga. jyl3024

**EXTRA GOOD OLD BUTTONS:** 100 assorted, 50 assorted and 1 large picture button, 6 small pictures, or 25 uniform for \$1.10. Poke boxes and approvals. — Minerva M. Miner, Sherburne, N. Y. jly3654

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**200 OLD MIXED** extra good values for \$1.50. Poke boxes. — Muriel Kalil, Hampstead, N. H. jyl3180

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**THREE BOOKS ON GOOFIES** at \$1 each. Contains photographs, descriptions and index. Price list included. — E. Packard, 825 So. 98th, Tacoma, Wash. jyl6826

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

goes: "Me-me-me-me!" His voice is pronounced to be in good condition, but Hare discovers he has a "frog" in his throat, and says he'll have to use the atomizer. He pretends to spray his vocal passages and then begins singing vigorously. Jones asks him where he got the atomizer and Ernie says his rich uncle left it to him. Billy gets off the outrageous pun toward which they have been working by exclaiming, "Atta miser! Atta miser!" Then they sing the song.

An exceptionally good 1928 Diamond Disc is the one which combines the presidential campaign song, "Mr. Hoover and Mr. Smith" (Hoover gets the best of all the personal exchanges) with the idiotically entertaining "I Love to Dunk a Hunk of Sponge Cake."

Among the pair's miscellaneous contributions to the Edison catalog, not in association with each other, Hare helped Steve Porter revive Len Spencer's famous old specialty, "The Arkansas Traveler." Jones assisted Porter in Steve's almost equally well known sketch, "Christmas Morning at Clancy's," and did some other comedy numbers with Porter for Grey Gull. Hare sang an old black face minstrel number, "I Wasn't Scared But I Just Thought That I Had Better Go," on the back of the Edison record of "The Wreck of the Old 97," which started Vernon Dalhart on his career as the greatest of all recorders of hill-billy songs.

Jones' 1925 Edison of "Christoforo Columbo (Thought the World Was Round-O)" is one of the funniest he ever made. In collaboration with his former vaudeville partner, Bert Grant, he wrote one of the earliest songs about broadcasting, "Love Her By Radio," which he recorded in 1923 for Edison. Another radio song is his Edison of "Tune In On L-o-v-e," in which the call letters of such early stations as WEAf and KDKA are mentioned.

His 1922 version of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie, Blues," amounts to a clever vaudeville sketch. He begins by warbling a snatch of opera, but Edward Meeker demands that he sing an old-time number. After a little demur he agrees and a charming-voiced soprano, probably Gladys Rice, exclaims, "Atta Billy!" Jones then says he'll sing a syncopated version of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," and asks for help, first from the male bystanders and then from the ladies. The girls sing a "straight" version of the old song while he "rags" it.

(To be continued)

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## The Happiness Boys . . .

# Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

Continued

By JIM WALSH

### V. Other Good Ones

Of course not all the outstanding Jones and Hare records were confined to Edison Diamond Discs. They made hundreds of superb needle discs, and it is one of the pleasures of collecting their records that they are still easy to find at reasonable prices. They can often be bought for five or ten cents each in second-hand stores and can be obtained in excellent condition from such reliable HOBBIES advertisers as Gertrude Heyman for 50 cents or so apiece. No one who has a quantity of Jones and Hare records should think he has the nucleus of a fortune, but he does have the makings of a great deal of wholesome light-hearted entertainment.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the offerings of these inimitable comedians is the seeming nit-wittedness of many of their songs. They possess a quality that, for lack of a better term, I shall describe as "intellectual idiocy." A prime example of this quality is their Okeh record of "Oh My Yes, Us Boys Must Have Our Fun," sung to a ukulele accompaniment by Harry Reser.

Interspersed with the nonsensical lyrics they sing snatches of children's play songs. An elderly woman for whom I played the record laughed helplessly and then exclaimed: "Just think of two strong grown men singing such stuff!" That is one of the unfailing charms of the Jones and Hare records. Superficially, it does seem hard to conceive of two mature men singing such foolishness, but the listener at the same time is aware of the overmastering sense of humor and the keen intelligence behind the performances.

A special word should be said for the tone quality of "Oh My Yes." It was made about a year ago before the advent of electric recording, but the sound is so brilliant it is hard to believe a microphone wasn't used. For several years prior to 1925 Okeh had the consistently best recording of any company making lateral cut discs.

It is hard to decide in what record the Happiness pair reached the ultimate in buffoonery. If the distinction doesn't go to "Oh My Yes," it

may be deserved by their delightfully imbecilic Columbia of "I Love to Catch Brass Rings on a Merry-Go-Round." I defy any normal person, no matter how much of a grouch he may be sporting when the record begins, to keep from laughing before it ends. Two other mirth-inducing Columbias, combined no one disc, are "She'll Never Find a Fellow Like Me" and "She's the Sweetheart of Six Other Guys."

Among their acoustic Columbias, "So This is Venice!" is outstanding. It ends with their deciding to use a gondola for a taxi and summoning its owner by exclaiming, "Hey Wop!" The other side is their version of Wendell Hall's 1923 comedy classic, "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'." Hall himself sang "It Ain't Gonna Rain" for Victor, Edison and Gennett, but Jones and Hare did a "second edition" for Edison. Brunswick called on the pair to sing the vocal refrain of a dance version of "The Wreck of the Old 97" by Carl Fenton's Orchestra.

In discussing Jones and Hare's Columbias I almost overlooked what is probably their best for that company, excepting the "Brass Rings" masterpiece. It is "Since Henry Ford Apologized To Me," a song which they also sang for Victor and some of the minor companies, and which perpetuates in burlesque form a bit of the colorful American history of the late 1920's.

Henry Ford's weekly newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, had been carrying on a wrong-headed, unfair campaign against the Jews, both as a race and as individuals, and one of them, Aaron Shapiro, sued Ford. The suit ended with a public apology by Ford to Shapiro. Song writers Billy Rose, Dave Stamper and Ballard MacDonald seized gleefully upon the incident and turned out a comedy song classic—at least it deserves to be considered a masterpiece after being modified and improved by Jones and Hare.

From the first words, Jones' "oy, oy, gevelt, gevelt!" and Hare's "Vot's der matter Abram?" the whole thing is a masterpiece of Yiddish dialect and interpretation — heavily burlesqued, of course. Among other things

Jones, who impersonates the man who received the apology, says: "I told the superintendent that the *Dearborn Independent* doesn't have to hang up where it used to be" and rapturously proclaims that "since he changed his point of view I like even Edsel, too!" Probably Thomas A. Edison's friendship with Henry Ford kept Edison from issuing a Diamond Disc of this song.

Perhaps Okeh led in giving Billy and Ernie odd assignments. One of Billy's best Okeh solos bore the senseless title, "I Want a Phos Phos." Hare helped one of the pioneer recording comedians, Frank Kennedy, whose career went back to the 1890's, in a talking skit based on funny paper characters, "Mutt and Jeff on Socialism." He also recited "Jack and the Beanstalk" on a record for children.

One of the most unusual jobs Hare did for Okeh was to serve, so to speak, as master of ceremonies for a harmonica solo. Joe Ross played "The Barking Train Blues," on his mouth-harp while Ernie explained what it was all about. He was frequently called on to make records specially for children and for Brunswick he did a medley of Children's Playroom Songs with a group of boys and girls as assistants. The other side is an account of the adventures of Peter Rabbit.

For Columbia, Jones and Hare were masters of ceremonies on a 12-inch record, "Studio Stunts," designed, Billy said, "to show the multitude the tone qualities of the new Columbia Viva-Tonal phonograph." Other artists in this 1927 record were Franklin Baur, tenor; saxophonist, Arnold Brillhart; Freddie Rich's Orchestra; the Cavaliers, who specialized in playing waltzes, and the Shannon Four, also doubling as the Singing Sophomores.

Until this moment I had overlooked an unusual record in which Ernest Hare took part. It is a 1926 Edison of a pseudo-moralistic song, "Too Many Parties and Too Many Pals," sung by a group called the Metropolitan Entertainers. The trio sang together on only this one record. It

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

consisted of Elizabeth Spencer, Charles Harrison and Hare, who takes the part of "a stern old judge" in a courtroom scene. Ernie was also called on by the Grey Gull company, which made a cheap "off-brand" record, to sing old-time songs, such as "Home, Sweet Home," and even gospel hymns.

A real novelty is the Cameo record called "Tuning in with Ruby Norton," combined with Jones and Hare singing "Will the Spearmint Keep Its Flavor on the Bedpost Overnight?"—a title worthy to rank with their Okeh of "The Coat and Pants Do All the Work but the Vest Gets All the Gravy." The "Ruby Norton" side is a satire on the radio programs of 1924, and it is by Jones and Hare although their names don't appear on the label.

However, there was a vaudeville performer named Ruby Norton and it may be she, rather than Billy, who gives the imitations of a screechy operatic soprano. In effect, the Cameo is a try-out for the memorable Victor of "Twisting the Dials," one of the funniest records ever issued. It was reviewed in the January, 1929, issue of the *Phonograph Monthly Review*:

"This two-part satirical delineation of a quiet evening with the radio is without doubt the funniest record since the memorable first release of the Two Black Crows. . . This masterpiece of caricature is consistently funny from the first squeal of tubes and rasp of static to the signing off. And this concludes our program for this evening—and forever."

"The operatic soprano, the prize fight, the jazz band, the bedtime story man (with his hair-raising lion story followed by the injunction for the kiddies to have pleasant dreams), all the familiar 'raddio' artists are caught with broad sure strokes. The lowbrow will enjoy it as burlesque; the highbrow as satire. Anyway you take it, it's unqualifiedly good. Let us hope the signing off is not 'forever;' the subject can bear reworking."

"Twisting the Dials" deserves to be called a masterpiece. Everything goes wrong. The "announcers" invariably "fluff" and make the wrong introductions. The sound effects man is equally erratic. When a lion's roar is needed he produces the high-pitched call of an elephant, and when the elephant should be heard the lion roars. There is a New York announcer with a "tough" accent, who says "On Der Rud Tuh Manduleh" will now be "sung for de foist time on any raddiyuh." (Instead we hear a horrible version of the Lucia Sextette).

A bit of a hill-billy record by the Carter Family is introduced. There is a physical culture professor with a German accent and a woman announcer who sounds as if she is about to burst into tears—patterned after one who was heard from WSAI, Cincinnati, in the early days. Hare gives a broad burlesque of the late Graham MacNamee announcing a prize fight. He is also "Daddy Scarem," who frightens the wits out of tiny tots with his gory bedtime story. Jones is "Miss Louder Screecher," an operatic soprano. The 12-inch record, not an easy one to find nowadays, is one long laugh.

## VI. Decline Of Recording Career

If, as has several times been said, 1927 marked the peak of Jones and Hare's recording career, there was a perceptible decline in their phonograph popularity during 1928. They continued to make many records but not so many as in former years and the records didn't sell as well.

The downward trend was even more marked in 1929. Brunswick had ceased making records by them, and their last Columbia, which appeared in March that year, was an excellent version of Frank Crumit's great Victor hit, "A Gay Caballero," combined with a splendid rendition of "All By Yourself in the Moonlight," sung as a couple of English comedians might do it.

Frank B. Walker, then in charge of Columbia's popular recording activities and now president of MGM records, attributed the comedians' decline in recorded popularity partly to their having given up their Happiness Candy program and become the Interwoven pair. The late Frank Doran said they lost out because people could tune them in so frequently on radio they didn't see any need of hearing them sing the same songs on records.

Victor continued to use them through 1929, but after the stock market crash the record business began speedily to go to pieces, and most high priced artists were dropped. (I should have mentioned before this that Columbia frequently put Jones and Hare records on the back of solos by that very expensive star, Al Jolson).

Their final Victor record appeared in October, 1930. It was "Happiness Boys Going Abroad" and "Happiness Boys in London," mediocre talking sketches with almost no singing. The monthly record supplement, however, said: "These clever comedians are unusually entertaining in their dialogue relating to their first European trip. You'll get a good laugh when you hear Going Abroad and The Happiness Boys in London. Here are wise-cracks and jokes galore."

In 1929 Billy and Ernie signed a contract to make the new Edison needle-cut records as well as Diamond Discs, but the Edison company abandoned the record business after the needle discs had been on the market only about three months, and that removed one of the most consistent markets for the team's services. Jones and Hare may have made a few records for Domino and other minor companies after 1930, but I have not seen them.

What appears to be the final recorded appearance of either Jones or Hare was made in April, 1932, when Columbia issued two solos by Ernie—"Gene, the Fighting Marine" and "Those Good Old Days Are Coming Back Again." Surprisingly, and for no apparent reason, this combination was issued in the Columbia hill-billy series. "Gene, the Fighting Marine" does

not refer to Gene Tunney, as I imagined it did until I found a copy of the record. "Those Good Old Days" was a prediction that, some time or other, the terrible depression of the early 1930's would end. Fewer records were sold in 1932 than in any other year since the beginning of the century, so there probably are not many copies of Ernie Hare's last disc still in circulation.

## PART IV

### I. Some Preliminary Corrections

As a rule, in writing HOBBIES articles that are to extend through several months, I prefer to complete the manuscript before mailing it. Having the entire production before me makes it easier to strike out repetitious matter and arrange installments of more nearly equal length.

Circumstances, however, have compelled me to write about Billy Jones and Ernest Hare from month to month, and I am glad they have, for this has made it possible to publish some interesting material that otherwise would not have been used. After the first installment appeared, I received some valuable letters and two charming photographs from Ernie Hare's daughter, Marilyn, as well as communications from other persons who had known the Hare family. I shall make use of these windfalls in preparing the final portion of this series.

I also now have the opportunity of correcting a couple of errors. By a mental lapse, when I wrote the cut lines for a photograph of Jones and Hare in the April HOBBIES, I said: "Whoever the piano player may be, it's obviously not Dave Elman." What I meant to say was the accompanist couldn't be Dave Kaplan, who played for Jones and Hare on records. Veteran radio listeners may recall Dave Elman as a man who had a network program, "Hobby Lobby," 20 years or so ago.

I have also learned that when I mentioned Ernest Hare's last recordings for Columbia in 1932, I overlooked one disc of about the same date as the already mentioned "Gene, the Fighting Marine." It is No. 2602, "New 21 Years" and "Fifty Years."

A more serious slip occurred in the February issue when I identified a man rejecting a test recording of the "Lucia Sextette," by the Victor Opera Company, as Walter B. Rogers. Actually, I have been informed, the gentleman turning thumbs down was the head of Victor's Red Seal recording division, Calvin G. Child. The mistake came about through ambiguous wording in the Victor house publication, *Voice of the Victor*, from which the photos were copied. It said merely that "the chief" was called in to decide, whether to accept the master. Since Rogers had conducted the recording session, I assumed "the

chief" meant him instead of Child. Jesse T. Bastian, of Hollywood, Calif., says the man with Rogers was Victor Recording Engineer, Harry Sooy.

Shortly before the February issue appeared, I learned of the death of Marguerite Dunlap, who sang contralto in the Sextet and is shown in one of the photographs. In private life she was Mrs. Joseph E. Garabrandt, wife of a retired marine engineer, and lived at 271 Montclair Avenue, Upper Montclair, New Jersey. She was 71. I was never able, during my lifetime, to learn what had become of Miss Dunlap, who was a native of South Carolina, and in 1910, began making records for Victor, the only company for which she ever recorded. For the next ten years she shared honors with Elsie Baker as one of Victor's most popular contraltos. Miss Baker was born in Philadelphia, Sept. 27, 1886, and died in New York, April 28, 1958, also at the age of 71.

With these preliminaries out of the way, I now can proceed to tell the remainder of the life stories of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.

## II. Later Radio Days

Although Jones and Hare's recording career was virtually over by 1930, as the depression caused sales of records to tumble, they retained a considerable measure of radio popularity and remained network attractions until late in 1932. They also sang for the new-fangled "talkies" (not exactly new to Jones in view of his work for the experimental Edison talking pictures of 1912), and had become such masters of improvisation that once, when Billy forgot his lines, he "invented" new words for the song they were singing and he and Hare went along as if nothing had happened.

When the makers of Heilman's mayonnaise decided to give up sponsoring the pair as "The Best Foods Boys" in those dark days of 1932, their network activities came to an end for a few years. But Billy and Ernie were still in demand for personal appearances and set out on a coast-to-coast tour, during which they frequently were treated as conquering heroes. On one of their visits to California, Gov. James Rolfe, Jr., appeared on a radio program in which they appeared "to pay the respects of the State." In San Francisco, Mayor Angelo J. Rossi honored them by a visit.

By 1934 they were again in New York, not on a network but doing well over a local station. Their good friend, Vaughn De Leath, "The Original Radio Girl," wrote an article, "Are Listeners Loyal?" for the June 16, 1934, issue of *Radio Guide*, in which she said: "Jones and Hare, long known as the Happiness Boys, were as such at one time the biggest attraction on radio. Then their popularity waned. Recently they have swung back into public favor with new material and an enthusiastic sponsor." The lovable Vaughn her-

self was making a comeback in 1934.

The network return for which the now middle-aged "Boys" were hoping came in the fall of 1936. The Gillette Safety Razor Company decided to sponsor a community sing program over the Columbia Broadcasting System, with the present day veteran, Milton Berle, then a brash young comedian, as master of ceremonies. Wendell Hall, "The Red-Headed Music Maker," also was a feature, as was a small girl, "Little Jolly," known today as Eileen Barton. Andy Sanella's Orchestra furnished the instrumental part of the offering. Jones and Hare were placed in charge of the community singing. A community sing booklet issued by Gil-

lette showed photos of Billy and Ernie, wearing top hats, and contained the following comment:

Billy Jones and Ernie Hare are the exact height, wear the same size shoes, celebrate March 15 as a mutual birthday, have mothers whose maiden names were Roberts, and are often mistaken for brothers. And small wonder, the Gillette Gentlemen have been inseparable since 1919. Famed as recording artists before their radio debut in 1921, Billy and Ernie, then known as the Happiness Boys, were radio's first outstanding singing and comedy team. Their appearance on the Gillette Original Community Sing is another milestone in their careers.

In passing, I'll say, I don't believe Jones and Hare had met as early as

(Continued on page 43)



These pictures, reproduced from a 1939 issue of *Radio Guide*, show (top:) Billy Jones and Ernest Hare as "The Gillette Gentlemen," on their last network program; and (bottom), the "new" team of Jones and Hare as 15-year-old Marilyn Hare substituted for her father during his fatal illness.



Union Jack - the combined Crosses of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick; a Fleur-de-Lis might be appropriate for French buttons (or for Boy Scout buttons); an Anchor for Naval (or Rhode Island) buttons; a Lyre for Musicians' buttons; a fireman's helmet for Fire Department buttons, etc. There is considerable scope for ingenuity and originality in such mountings, but they are most effective when the design is symmetrical and as simple as possible.

The Canadian Uniforms shown are just a sample of the many which may be acquired, and which are delightful additions to any collection. Like practically all British buttons, they are beautifully designed and finely made. And behind the devices they bear is a wealth of history and tradition.

No wonder our neighbors to the north are proud of their symbol:

"Then swell the song both loud  
and long,  
'Til rocks and forest quiver,  
God save our Queen and Heaven  
bless  
The Maple Leaf forever!"

\* See HOBBIES for February, 1946.

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150 GOOD. Some exceptional, (from old store closed 25 yrs.) \$1, plus 4 stamps. — Lone Star Hobbies, Box 118, Bellaire, Texas. je3252

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

1919. But I can still vividly remember the thrill I felt at hearing them back on the air when the first community sing program was given. I recall Berle's saying they were such inseparable pals they lived in adjoining apartments separated only by a towel. He told of calling on the team. "Jones," he said, "poured me a drink; Hare drank it."

Jones, apparently wandering aimlessly through the audience, came upon the Metropolitan Opera tenor, Charles Hackett, who no doubt had been "planted." Billy asked Hackett what he had been doing during the summer and Hackett said he had been rehearsing some new roles for the Metropolitan. "Oh boy, I envy you!" Billy exclaimed, and then proceeded

\$1.50 BUYS 10, 20, or 50 good old buttons including one large picture button. Send for my \$1.10 value. Money-back guarantee if not satisfied. — Mrs. A. S. Campbell, 788 Bonaventure Ave., N.E., Atlanta 6, Ga. je3024

EXTRA GOOD OLD BUTTONS: 100 assorted, 50 assorted and 1 large picture button, 6 small pictures, or 25 uniform for \$1.10. Poke boxes and approvals. — Minerva M. Miner, Sherburne, N. Y. jly3654

100 and 1 good old buttons for \$1. Large selection, write. — Mrs. Emma Smutnick, Box 145, Abington, Conn. au3024

CIVIL WAR Battlefield found buttons for sale. Will buy Military and early state buttons. Relic list 10c. — Sam McClaren, Route No. 3, Richmond, Va. je1831

30 OLD BUTTONS or 50 old mixed for \$1.25. Poke boxes. — Muriel Kalil, Hampstead, N. H. jly3291

200 OLD MIXED extra good values for \$1.50. Poke boxes. — Muriel Kalil, Hampstead, N. H. jly3180

OLD BUTTONS, 100 for \$1. Others. State wants. Good values. — Mrs. Karl S. Gerstenlauer, Broadway Rd., Milton, Pa. jly3402

NICE OLD BUTTONS, 125 plus two small picture buttons for \$1 plus 15 cents postage. — Mrs. Albert Netting, 259 So. Main St., Mansfield, Ohio. jly3882

THREE BOOKS ON GOOFIES at \$1 each. Contains photographs, descriptions and index. Price list included. — E. Packard, 825 So. 98th, Tacoma, Wash. jly6825

OLD BUTTONS and Goofies. — D. Barts' Antiques, 75 Centre St., R.F.D. 3, Bradford, Mass. au3291

FOR SALE: 50 old buttons, including metal and black glass. \$1. — Mrs. Julius Kibler, 54 Lake St., LeRoy, N. Y. je1621

WE HAVE an outstanding collection of buttons of all types, materials and designs. Plan to pay us a visit this summer and spend an afternoon or evening in my Button Room. No mail order on buttons - just come and see for yourself. — Western Reserve Antique Shop, Florence Gage White, Route 20, Mentor, Ohio. Tel. Bl. 5-3855. je1633

40 OLD BUTTONS \$1.25. Assorted materials, types, pictures. Worth more. Other buttons on approval, with references. — Rachel Price, 17 So. 8th, Stroudsburg, Pa. je1831

to do a brief bit of operatic singing of his own, which Hackett pronounced "very nice." Finally, Billy pulled a terrible pun by handing his fellow tenor a new Gillette razor, and saying: "Always shave your face with this. Then you'll be sure you won't hack-it!" I also remember Ernie's coming upon his wife in the audience and kissing her to the noisy gratification of the onlookers.

After their engagement with the community sing program ended, Jones and Hare did more touring, then returned to working on a local station basis in New York. They had regained much of their formerly vast popularity before Ernie succumbed to his fatal attack of pneumonia, following an illness of several weeks.

### III. Death of Ernie Hare

The New York Times for March 10, 1939, published a long death notice of the brilliant comedian, news of whose passing brought tears to both my late mother and myself when we heard of it. I shall quote the Times write-up but condense it in order to omit, as far as possible, information that has already been given:

Ernest (Ernie) Hare, whose resonant baritone voice was heard over a period of 18 years in the familiar song-and-comedy patter of the "Happiness Boys," pioneer radio funnyman, died early yesterday in Queens General Hospital of complications resulting from bronchial pneumonia.

Many "firsts" were claimed by the smiling Ernie Hare and his more rotund partner, Billy Jones, since they made radio history on Oct. 18, 1921, by singing into a "tomato-can" microphone. They received credit, before the "big broadcast" era, of being the first successful radio comedy team, among the first to entertain under the auspices of a commercial sponsor, and the first to adopt a team name identifying themselves with their sponsor's product.

In later years, when radio drafted such established stars as Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, Ed Wynn and Jack Benny from the stage, the popularity of the "Happiness Boys" waned. The partners, however, took it smiling. They attempted a comeback in 1936, essayed long coast-to-coast personal appearance tours, and before death broke up the act were doing Sunday afternoon programs over Station WMCA, singing songs and cracking jokes in their old-time manner.

In the last three weeks of her father's illness, his 16-year-old daughter, Marilyn, who never before had undertaken professional appearances, substituted for him on the radio program. For Billy Jones, however, the team of Jones and Hare is broken. "I'll try to go on alone," he said, "but, as far as I am concerned, I'll never have another partner."

Born in Norfolk, Va., he (Hare) attended the Xaverian Brothers' School. He started earning his living as a baking powder salesman, but he discovered, by singing in a church choir, that he had a voice. In 1909 he was on Broadway, singing in various productions, which included ten Winter Garden shows. He teamed with Jones almost 20 years ago, just before their radio career began, when a talking machine company, in need of a tenor and baritone duo, brought them together. The two men found they not only sang well together but enjoyed each other's company, so they formed a permanent partnership.

In 1936 the Columbia Broadcasting System called them back to radio to lead the "Community Sing" programs

(Continued on page 62)

## BIRCHLANDS

12 North Main Street

Essex, Connecticut

Telephone South 7-1377

ETHEL HALL BJERKOE

1. For a rare and interesting wedding gift. Sterling silver double wedding cup. Overall height 7". The groom's cup size of large goblet with arms extending downward to hold the bride's cup, held in place with pivots, allowing it to be moved into position so that the groom and bride may drink a toast simultaneously. The bride's cup is size of wine glass. Both cups are gilded within. Each cup, as well as arms, is decorated with heavy repousse scrolls and cartouches. Bride's and groom's initials on cups with date 1898 but these could be removed and replaced with others. Piece well hallmarked. Has one tiny dent at base of groom's cup. Including tax, \$33.
2. Metal replica of the Obelisk of Luxor presented by the Khedive of Egypt, Mohammed Ali Pasha, to the Government of Louis Philippe and erected on its present site in the Place de la Concorde in Paris in 1834-36. The designs on three sides of the column base represent the history of its embarkation in 1831 and its transit from Egypt to Paris. The hieroglyphics on the column itself are to the glory of Rameses II (14th century B.C.). On the front face of the replica column is a thermometer with reading in centigrade and Fahrenheit. The obelisk is on a base 5" square and there is a small picket fence around the base 1/2" in from edge, held in place by pins that fit into corresponding holes in base. Overall height 14 1/2". Thermometer in working condition. \$12.50.

3. Chinese porcelain blue and white fish dishes to be used as ash-trays. Length approximately 5". Shaped and decorated like a fish, hollowed out with tail slightly upturned. (4) \$2.50 each.
4. Robin's egg blue opaque glass hand tray with flowers at wrist. About 4" long. Attributed to Union Glass Works, Somerville, Mass. Considered to be about 70 years old. (2) \$3 each.
5. 30" string of graduated round ivory beads with ivory clasp. Beads have yellowish tinge of old ivory. \$6.50.
6. Round hoop style ivory bracelet, carved. Opening 2 1/2". Yellowed. \$3.
7. 30" string of very dark reddish-amber beads. Beads are oval, faceted, very light in weight. Largest bead is 1" in length. \$8.50.
8. Carnival glass shallow bowl with scalloped edge. 8" diameter. Orange with rich blue-green-purple opalescent. Grape pattern. \$2.75.

Everything guaranteed as advertised.

Postage extra. No C.O.D.

Jex

### EARLY SUMMER OFFERINGS

- U.S. FROSTED COIN COV. SUGAR \$132.  
Same 7" Cov. Compote on Standard \$178.  
Same SAUCES - Quarters 4 ea. ----- 28.50  
DIAM. THUMBPRINT GOBLET ----- 118.00  
PR. BLACK SLAG Cdl. Ionic - rare ----- 32.50  
LG. CRANBERRY D.Qlt. BASKET - thorn hdl. Ribbon Crown - ex. fine old one 37.00  
FAIRY LAMP W. Combined Flower Holder  
Ex. as Tibbitt Pl. 111 No. 2 8 1/2" ----- 117.00  
PINK MLK. Gl. Matchholder - great rarity 16.00  
RAINBOW VASE - Brilliant Coloration  
Flared Rim 8" - Here's a rarity of the first water-Handled ----- 274.00  
STEVENGRAPHS - several ----- Write  
Extra SPECIAL - Mkt rare and interesting  
AHL 120 word Letter by Washington - official business ----- 390.00  
Lacy Sandwich MINIATURES ----- Write  
TIPFANY - Mkd. Many Colored Extra Lg. Roso Bowl (No Iriscence) ----- 28.00  
CRANBERRY CRUET 7 1/2" - Inverted Panels App. Sunburst Handle ----- 28.50  
STERLING PEPPER GRINDER ----- 11.75  
COV. 3-Face COMPOTE - 9" - On High Standard ----- 47.00  
CREAMER - 3-Face with Faces under hdl. and Spout - rarest of the series ----- 48.50  
LG. SALTGLAZE Wat. Pitcher, altover raised motif - proof ----- 34.00  
MINIATURE SATIN GL. Lamp Font 4 1/2" Apple Shape - Frost. Feet ----- 37.00  
M.O.P. TUMBLER, Apricot - Diam. Qlt. 29.00

- AMBERINA FTD. TUMBLERS 8" sold as Set. ea. 5" hg. ea. ----- 22.00  
HIST. PLATE - ALLOVER BLUE - MacDonough Victory 8" ----- 22.50  
BLUE MINIATURE HOBNAIL Set - Lee 83 Cov. Sug. Butter, Spoon, Creamer ----- 42.00  
PR. ROBIN EGG BLUE Large VASES - Enam. Flowers & Birds, Life size - 15" - Just Handsome this pair ----- 44.00  
CORNER LUST. PITCHER - Gadrooned Rim Wide Blue Band w. Raised Varicolor Plaques 5 1/2" - a beautiful thing ----- 42.00  
XMAS DATE SHAKERS w. Agitators, 1 Blue, 1 Amber, pr. ----- 21.75  
AMBERINA SQUATTY VASE W. Peacock Tail Crown 5" - extraordinary item ----- 33.00  
OLD TOYS - Horseshoe on Rd. Platform - Toile - Music - rare article ----- 22.50  
BELLINGER - Plg. Sways striking two belts 7" lg. ----- 23.75  
Large FIRE ENGINE - 3 Big Horses - see Hertz Pg. 28, 1st. item 19" - Iron ----- 56.75  
BETTY LAMP ALL BRASS ----- 29.00  
MECHANICAL BANKS - I have decided to sell these two rarest of banks - UNCLE REMUS No. 230 \$495. BREADWINNER No. 24 \$595, each worth \$100 more.  
LISTS AVAILABLE for Art Glass, Glass Toothpicks and Candy Con't's, Rare Documents, Master Etchings, Fairy Lamps & Sandwich Lacy Glass 8C in Stamps Please.  
MUFFINIER - CRANBERRY - Bulbous Base Ornate Silvered Top ----- 14.50  
\*Stks.

ARTHUR GABLER

395 Broadway,

Trumbull, Conn.

Jec

### HEMLOCK HOLLOW ANTIQUES

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JEAN BURNS

8 miles east of Youngstown, Ohio

Phone: LE 6-6323

1. Signed Cameo Glass Daum-Nancy small rose bowl, dull finish of green and gold applied metal ring at base and metal detail extending up the sides of the bowl, choice. \$40.00  
Galle vase, 5 1/2" landscape with tree & shrubbery, sunset in background ----- 30.00  
Galle pomade jar with matching lid, ovoid shape, ferns, tones of green and browns ----- 32.50  
Le Gras dull finish vase, floral sprays, in shades of pink, 7" ----- 20.00
2. Northwood Chrysanthemum covered butter, good gold ----- 25.00
3. Small Iron dog and a small Iron kitten used as paperweights, paint good, each ----- 2.50
4. Flow Blue Alaska sugar and matching creamer, each \$1.50, set ----- 14.00
5. Painted Cherry cracker jar 6 1/2"x8" wide Eyewinker open compote, proof 8 1/2"x7" ----- 10.00  
Emerald green Inv. Strawberry butter lid ----- 4.50  
2 Strawberry goblets, each ----- 4.50  
Peacock Feather butter ----- 5.00  
Royal Ivy tumbler ----- 11.00  
Royal Ivy sugar base, no lid ----- 10.00  
Jewel and Dewdrop bread plate ----- 6.25
6. Torpedo covered butter, few rough spots on eyes, unnot. ----- 6.00
7. Placques covered mustard, marked, Retriever dog in clear glass, tall chip and another rough spot ----- 8.50
8. Sunbonnet pitcher 9" ----- 15.00  
Girl mounting stairs, candle in hand, sugar bowl ----- 6.25  
Poppy mayonnaise ----- 6.00  
Spade shaped box, pink roses ----- 5.50
9. Sugar shakers with orig old lids: Pink apple blossom with fishnet ----- 9.50  
Turquoise blue quilted ----- 9.50
10. Shrines champagne, bowl mounted on swords ----- 5.00
11. Haviland & Co. Autumn Leaf on smooth blank, 12 plates 9 1/2", \$3 ea.; 12 c/s, \$5.50 ea. exc. condition.
12. Punch cups green beaded swirl \$2; Button Arch, souvenir \$2; 2 Orange Carnival each \$1.50; 6 Pressed glass, pinwheel, very nice, each ----- 1.50
13. Bent wood spice set, never used ----- 4.25

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 43)

originating from Boston. A year-long tour followed this engagement, and then came the WMCA contract about a year ago that was to continue until Ernie Hare's death.

Jones and Hare did not seem quite as much at home before the microphones of today as they did in the earlier days. Such things as scripts never worried them much as they ad-libbed their way through a program, packing their dialog with spontaneous humor. Nowadays, with radio time bought, paid for and timed to the exact second, they were forced to prepare scripts and follow them pretty closely. It hampered their technique. But with the aid of a third man, who sat at the piano and added his voice to choruses, they gave their Sunday afternoon listeners much the same type of entertainment that they purveyed during the 1920's, and radio station officials said they had attracted a good following.

Besides his daughter, Hare is survived by his widow; his mother, Mrs. Thomas E. Hare, and a sister, Mrs. J. C. Morgan of Norfolk.

(To be continued)

## ROSE BALL ANTIQUES

1908 Post Rd.

Noroton, Conn.

Come see us when traveling this summer. Coming north, leave New England Turnpike at Exit 10, turn right, few short blocks to Boston Post Rd., there you are; or send for descriptive map card.

Quite a time keeping up with requests for good flint glass at sensible prices, but shall continue reconnoitering. In the meantime, this single rarity: Diamond Thumbprint cov. butter dish, chip on finial, \$34.

Early clear non-flint blown Stiegel type mug, barrel shape, engraved design, \$8.50.

Lovely pr. 10 1/2" tall Pairpoint (unmkd.) glass candlesticks, blown, with polished engraving, \$20.

Quaint framed sampler, all about boiling water properly for tea, \$10.

Fred Cozzens framed water color, boat scene off Cape Cod, \$40.

Scarce item in early Staffordshire, sepia 6 1/2" bowl, Sower pattern, Adams, straight sides, \$15.

Pewter soup ladle, English, mkd. Lielewellyn & Ryland, \$8.75.

Brass flour or sugar scoop, dated 1868, \$5.

Handsome bronze elephant, uplifted trunk, 3 1/2" length, 6" tall, extremely heavy weight, \$35.

Transportation extra.

Jec

### MRS. SADIE GAWTHROP

121 Dietrich Avenue Galesburg, Illinois

2 pair Mercury glass tie backs, frosted grape dec. dia. 3" pair \$6.50; - Early Staffordshire Child's Tea Set, 6 plates, 6 cups/s, teapot, creamer, sugar, perfect except for 1 mended cup, small chip on top edge teapot, brown and white, MAY pattern, set \$35; - pair Sandwich drawer pulls w/ orig. screws, pr. \$7.50; - 6 tear drop drawer pulls, complete w/ brass fittings, set \$7.50; - Doll's old home made PINE cradle, re-finished but crude, \$12; - Prices net. No C.O.D.'s; No inquiries ans.; Refund guarantee always if dissatisfied.

Jec

### MRS. WALTER G. EITLE

5179 Mayview Rd. Cleveland 24, Ohio

D.Q. Cranberry Syrup, clear handle, good silver top, mkd. Patent Dates 1881, 1882 22.50  
Blown Frosted Green Satin Vase, 7" high, flared scalloped top, deep white loopings, camphor leaf feet ----- 17.50  
Unusual Rockingham Wall Vase, 8 1/2" long, 3" wide at top, beautiful coloring, design Glass Wheelbarrow, 7 1/2" barley pattern, metal wheel, mkd. "Pat. Appl. For" ----- 7.50

Transportation Extra

Jec

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The Happiness Boys . . .

# Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

Continued

By JIM WALSH

### IV. The New Jones and Hare Team

Dave Kaplan had ceased some time before this to be associated with Jones and Hare. Their new pianist was James A. Brennan, who as mentioned earlier in this series, had written some of the duet team's most successful hits.

Not long after Ernest Hare's death, *Radio Guide* published a touching article, "Pinch-Hitting for Hare," with a sub-title, "Ernie's Marilyn Sings on in the Hare Tradition." It tells how, despite Billy's statement that he would never have another partner, little Marilyn stepped in for a brief period to sing with him so the team could still be known as Jones and Hare. Later, she and her mother went to California, and she became a movie "starlet." In shortened form, the *Radio Guide* article said:

It was the hardest program Billy Jones had ever had to do. For 20 years, in vaudeville, on records, in radio, he had worked as a partner in the team of Jones and Hare — singing, comedy, patter. Then, suddenly, he was left to face the microphone alone. There was no genial Ernie Hare across from him, and he missed the friendly presence. It didn't help any to remember that, even as he went on with his patter and comedy, down in Norfolk, Va., they were burying his friend and partner. Life had been unable to drive a wedge between them. They had watched other teams of their day split up for various reasons — money, jealousy, old age. Jones and Hare seemed to go on forever . . . until death struck.

Ernie should never have made his last two broadcasts. His face had been flushed with fever and he could hardly keep on his feet. "I'm probably walking around with pneumonia," he laughingly remarked, and it wasn't until Billy finally forced him to go to a doctor that he learned how true his laughing remark had been. He WAS walking around with pneumonia, and only the stern tradition in which he had been steeped — the show must go on — had kept him from falling over.

Of course you've heard Jones and Hare. Maybe you remember them from the highly popular recordings they used to make — their comic duets and sentimental ballads. Or, if you're of a later generation, you'll know them from radio. For ten years their clean-

cut comedy and blended voices were welcomed in every home that boasted a receiving set.

In 1936 the Gillette Razor Company put them on a show over the Yankee Network and later moved them into New York to appear with Milton Berle over CBS on "The Community Sing" program. When that series was over, the team went to WMCA, where they did a show for Sachs Furniture Company. It was here pneumonia caught up with Ernie.

The first week that Ernie missed, a substitute act was put in the team's place. Then the doctor told him it would be a long time — if at all — before he would be able to take his regular place in the team. It was then that he hit upon his big idea, an idea that Billy Jones heartily approved. His daughter, Marilyn, would take his place.

On that first broadcast Marilyn sang "Deep in a Dream." The next week she sang another request number for her father—"Deep Purple"—and, hurrying home that day after the program, arrived just as they were taking Ernie away in an ambulance. The doctor had ordered him removed to a hospital hours earlier, but he refused to go until he had heard Marilyn. That was the last time he heard her sing. Ten days later he died.

So now, even at the hour they were burying Ernie, Billy carried on alone. He had wanted to go down to Norfolk to be with his friend on this last occasion, but they had a contract to fulfill and Ernie had contracted his fatal illness in striving to fulfill it. The least Billy could do was to carry on alone. There were no substitutes for Ernie this day. It was a memorial program, and in the middle of it Billy broke down in spite of himself.

The next day "We, the People," contacted him. They wanted him to come on their program and tell the story of his famous team that had pioneered the airways. They wanted Marilyn, too. As Jones and Hare, they pattered back and forth in Jones and Hare style, sang their famous theme song, "How Do You Do?"

The mail response to this program was overwhelming. And almost every letter begged this new team of Jones and Hare to stick together. There was nothing else to do. The public wanted it, WMCA wanted it, the sponsor wanted it. But most important, both Billy Jones and Marilyn knew that Ernie Hare would have wanted it that way.

Now Billy and Marilyn — the new Jones and Hare — are broadcasting locally over Station WMCA in New York, confidently awaiting an opportunity to stage a big-time radio comeback.

### V. A Chat with Billy Jones

In October, 1940, I spent two weeks with Billy Murray at his home in Freeport, New York. On the last day of my visit I went with another famous pioneer recording artist, the late Albert Campbell, to call on three singers whom I had hoped to see before I left the city—John Meyer, who had been the basso of the Peerless Quartet; Aileen Stanley, who wasn't in her office, and Billy Jones.

When Al and I entered the large office at 1674 Broadway, which Billy had continued to occupy despite his partner's death, I noticed the walls were covered with hundreds of photographs showing the team of Jones and Hare in almost every imaginable activity. At first, I didn't see anyone, but a moment later a man whom I recognized as Billy Jones emerged from what I suppose was a smaller back room. His face was florid and he appeared to me to be under some sense of strain. He looked rather puzzled at first as he came forward and said "Something for you?" but the expression changed to a smile as he recognized Al Campbell. Al introduced me and a lively conversation was going at once.

I told Billy he and Ernie were among the first recording artists I had ever written to and the notes I had received from them were signed by "a girl named Ann Perkins." He smiled again and nodded his head toward one corner of the room. "She used to sit right over there," he said.

I mentioned how much I had treasured the autographed photo he and Ernie had sent me when I lived in Marion, Va., and was surprised when he said he remembered it. "We took turns writing the message," he said. "If you look closely at it you can tell our writing apart because Ernie made one kind of small 'e' and I made another." Then he spoke feelingly of the years of hard work and good fellowship they had enjoyed together.

Al asked Billy, "How's the little girl getting along out in California?" and Billy replied: "Fine! The film company has renewed her option and it looks like she's going places in the movies. Her mother's out there with her. I hated to see Marilyn go, but the prospects for her in California seemed too good to pass up."

Another man came in, as did a girl with golden hair. The man was introduced as "Mr. Brennan," and I asked, "J. Keirn Brennan?" recalling the lyricist of that name who wrote the words for many of Ernest R. Ball's ballads. "No," Billy replied, "James A. Brennan—wrote, 'Down at the Old Swimming Hole,' 'In the Little Red School House,' and some of the other songs Ernie and I recorded. He works with me as my partner now." He also introduced me to the girl, who said she was from Tennessee and was appearing on a hill-billy radio show. Apparently Billy was her business manager. The subject of the approaching presidential election came up, and the young lady boomed lustily when every man in the room said he was going to vote for Willkie. I have often thought it remarkable that during my entire New York stay I met only two persons, both women, who said they would vote for Roosevelt, and yet how easily he carried both the city and the nation a few weeks later.

Recording processes, old and new, were discussed, and Al asked Billy if he had ever heard how "hard-boiled" the Edison musical director, W. H. A. Cronkhite, had been with some of the formerly popular phonograph performers, especially Ada Jones and Byron Harlan. Billy's face became even more florid at the thought of that legendary boogie man, Cronkhite, and he found it necessary to express his sentiments in profanity that took on a lyrical note.

"Our Edison records," Billy said, "were the best Ernie and I made before electrical recording came in. Edi-



Marilyn Hare was one of a group of American theatrical personalities who entertained American fighting men in Italy during World War II. She is shown here in a party enroute to Capri. Members of the group who can be identified include Ed Gardner, "Archie" of "Duffy's Tavern," wearing a cap; Don Hutson, immediately behind him; Miss Hare, at right of Gardner, Howard Hammersley, and near extreme right, Jinx Falkenburg.

son had by far the best recording process. That was one reason they were better. But another reason was the way the Edison people worked us. We could make a dozen records for any other company while Cronkhite was having us go through a song over and over at Edison. No matter how tired we were it didn't seem to show up in the record, but I used to feel like I'd drop dead before Cronkhite got through with us." And here he went on to heap some more choice compliments on the memory of the late Mr. Cronkhite. In that respect he was no different from almost any other artist I have known who had worked for Edison under Cronkhite's supervision. That man, who stood in

great awe of the irascible Mr. Edison, must have been a slave-driving perfectionist.

For the sake of recorded history, I'll mention here that Jones and Hare's last duets for Edison were "It Ain't No Fault Of Mine" and "She Has a Little Dimple On Her Chin," which they recorded on May 23, 1949. This coupling was issued both as a Diamond Disc and an electric needle-cut record. Concerning the latter, *The Phonograph Monthly Review* for September, 1929, said: "The Happiness Boys . . . repeat their well-known performances of 'She Has a Little Dimple On Her Chin,' and 'It Ain't

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- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

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50 Prospect Avenue

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Hundreds of music boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**



**PHONOGRAPHS WANTED**

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs and records. Parts and anything pertaining to old phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3882

WANTED: an Edison disc phonograph, with double spring motor. Chippendale or Adam, or any other in that series. — H. A. Ferguson, 427 So. Olive St., Los Angeles, Calif. jly1612

**PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE**

Rare Phonographs for sale: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many rare models. Large list of hard-to-find cylinder records, parts of all kinds. Repairs. Reproducer repairing a specialty. Styli (needle) installed, reproducers for sale. Will pay \$6.50 and up for any good cylinder reproducer. 25c for lists. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly32721

FOR SALE: Surplus antique phonographs from private collection, cylinder and disc. Send for free list. — R. J. Baker, Fort Gray Dr., Lewiston, N. Y. jly3253

EDISON cylinder record players. Sell, trade for old pistols, gold, silver or copper U.S. coins. — Gun Shop, Hallowell, Maine. jly1061

**MISCELLANEOUS**

WANTED: Edison talking doll, Columbia Grand, Edison Concert, hurdy gurdy, street piano. Describe, price. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. au3023

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mh122361

MUSIC BOXES, singing birds, early phonographs and collectors items. Let me find it for you for your price. Send stamped envelope please. — J. E. Koehler, 416 College Ave., DeKalb, Ill. au3262

DISPOSING of Jenny Lind and musical collection. Listing 10c. — Morales, 37-16 55th St., Woodside, N. Y. jly1631

**SHEET MUSIC**

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 4, Colo. je126921

WHAT AM I OFFERED? Sheet music: Allied Waltz, picturing Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, Napoleon III and Empress, and other collectors songs. Write for list. — Odelia Surmson, 308 W. Bell Ave., Houston, Texas. jly1652

**PIANO & ROLLS**

NEW ROLLS and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos. — Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kans. ap124661

WANTED: 44-note Wurliitzer pianolino music. 10 tunes to the roll. Also rolls of "A" music. — Dan Gray, P.O. Box 8181, Fort Worth, Texas. d6367

Wanted: Ampico & Duo Art piano rolls. — Thomas Grattelo, 860 Sunnyside Road, Oakland, Calif. jly3633

WANTED: Ampico rolls, \$1 each, my choice from your list. Send title and pianist. — Daggs, 725 N. Columbia Place, Tulsa 10, Okla. jly 3253

No Fault of Mine' (14010). Both of these discs are recorded with unusual clarity and brilliance and both should be popular. 'It Ain't No Fault Of Mine' is one of the best of the Happiness Boys' many skits." On July 29, 1929, Hare made his final Edison solo, "Believe Me, That's Love."

**VI. Billy's Hold-Up Story**

One of the popular Edison singers, Horace Ruwe, who recorded under the names of J. Donald Parker and Jack Parker, had died a few days before, and Billy recalled an amusing anecdote about him.

It seemed that while Parker was still a struggling young singer he made a promise to himself that if he ever became a success he would treat himself to the most expensive hat in New York. After he signed his Edison contract in 1927 he decided success had come, so he paid \$150 for a hat and wore it to his next recording engagement in the Edison laboratory at 79 Fifth Avenue. He decided to return home in the subway and sat beside an open window. The train stopped at a station and a man on the platform reached through the window, deftly yanked the hat off Parker's head and ran away with it. The tenor afterwards said he certainly didn't think he got his \$150 worth!

Somehow Jones' former operatic ambitions were mentioned, and that reminded him of what I learned later was one of his favorite stories. He said he was on his way to the Astor Hotel, where he was staying at the time, after seeing a late show. It was about midnight and he was on Broadway near the Metropolitan Opera House when a man stepped up and pointed a gun at him. In a business-like manner and in a voice that smacked either of Brooklyn or the Bronx he informed Billy this was a stick-up and he wanted his money.

Billy accordingly stuck up his hands and the man rifled his pockets. Then the hold-up specialist told him he could go. As Billy started walking away, his ever-present sense of humor surged up and he looked back over his shoulder and began singing: "Goodbye forever, goodbye forever—!"

This irked his new acquaintance. "Say," he snapped, "if youse don't cut out makin' all dat noise it will be 'goodbye forever' for youse! Come back here!"

"Say," exclaimed the hold-up man as Billy came back to him, "dat voice of yours sounds familiar! Ain't you dis guy Billy Jones dat sings on de raddiyuh ever' Friday night wit' Oinie Hare?"

"Yes," Billy modestly admitted, "I'm Billy Jones."

"Well, ain't dat sumpin'!" rapturously returned his admirer. "Say, I listens to youse guys all de time! Wouldn't miss you for nuttin'! I can't take dis money offa youse after all de pleasure your singin' has give me and me ol' lady!"

That sounded good to Billy. "Well, of course," he said, "I WOULD be glad to get the money back. I do have a lot of bills to meet, and—"

Suddenly the hold-up man's eyes hardened and his voice took on an added rasp. "Yea," he snarled, "I guess you would be glad, but you ain't goona git it back! I hear you raddiyuh characters makes more money in a week than a hard-workin' stick-man gits in a year! Lemme frisk you again!"

He went through Billy's pockets a second time but found nothing. To recompense himself for his disappointment, he removed Billy's wrist watch, saying, "Dis'll do me more good than it does you!"

"Now," said the hold-up man in conclusion, "take off dem shoes! Looks to me like you an' me wears de same size kicks! An' sometimes hep characters like youse hides money in dere shoes! I'll take de feetgear too, Mister Jones!" Which he did, leaving Billy to hobble along to his hotel as best he could in his bare feet.

Al Campbell and I left the Jones-Hare office with a cordial invitation from Billy to "come back any time." When we were outside Al laughed and said: "Billy has told that hold-up story dozens of times and he improves it every time he tells it. I wonder how much of it is really true?"

(To be continued)

**MUSIC ROLLS**

PLAYER PIANO music rolls bought, sold and traded, all makes and types. — D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Md. je124431

OVER 200 Duo-Art fully reproducing classical piano rolls. Chopin, Beethoven, etc., by Paderewski, Rubinstein, others. For information write William Pilkey, 100 Warwick Road, Jamestown, N. Y. s3234

**MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE**

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale: all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. je120422

RECORDS . . . PHONOGRAPHS . . . MUSIC BOXES . . . ANTIQUE

INSTRUMENTS . . . PIANOS & ROLLS . . . MELODEONS . . .

NICKELODEONS . . . SHEET MUSIC . . . ORGANS . . . MUSIC ROLLS

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Billy Jones and Ernest Hare

## The Happiness Boys . . .

(Dave Kaplan at the Piano)

Continued

By JIM WALSH

### VII. Death of Billy Jones

Only a few weeks later, on the morning of November 24, 1940, I was lying in bed at my home in Johnson City, Tenn., indolently reading the Sunday morning paper when I was shocked to find a brief item saying Billy Jones had dropped dead on Broadway the day before. Saddened by the loss of the friendly comedian with whom I had talked such a short time before, I obtained a copy of the Sunday NEW YORK TIMES for the sake of the death notice I knew it would publish. I quote it here in somewhat abbreviated form:

Billy Jones, of the erstwhile popular radio team of Ernie Hare and Billy Jones, the Happiness Boys, died of a heart attack last night while walking along Broadway near Fiftieth street. He collapsed in front of 1627 Broadway and was carried by passersby into a nearby restaurant where he was pronounced dead by an ambulance doctor from Metropolitan Hospital. His age was 51.

Identification was established at once by a radio script in his pocket. It was the script for his part in the Three Little Sachs program, 2 to 2:30 today over WMCA. His body was removed to the new West Fifty-fourth Street station house, and efforts were made to reach his wife who is believed to be in Philadelphia.

After the death of his mother several years ago, Mr. Jones, who was considered by his intimates to be the perennial bachelor, was secretly married. He and his wife operated what they called a "general store" in a little Pennsylvania town near Philadelphia, and it was always to this destination that Jones started when he finished his regular Sunday broadcast.

Mr. Jones was born in New York on March 15, 1889, and was educated in schools here. His first job was in the Custom House, and after two years he became an employee of the Bank of Commerce. He decided that banking was not his forte, so boarded a boat for North Wales, where he operated briefly as a sheep herder on his uncle's farm at Towyn, Merionethshire. He returned to New York, he told friends later, because he could not handle the tongue-twisting Welsh vocabulary.

Back in New York he went up-State

to work in an iron ore mine. Later he strung poles for the American Telegraph and Telephone Company and pulled copper wire for Western Union. He worked as a carpenter on the New York Central and even went in for blacksmithing before he discovered his rich tenor voice.

It was in a phonograph recording studio that he met Ernie Hare. They teamed up for recordings and remained an inseparable pair until Hare's death. Toward the end of their Happiness contract they also were doing Flit Soldiers for Standard Oil of New Jersey and then the Interwoven Pair for the Interwoven Stocking Company. The Happiness Boys reappeared, to be followed by the Taystee Bread program and a program for the Gillette Safety Razor Company. At his death Mr. Jones was doing the program for Sachs Furniture.

The Times also published this paid death notice:

JONES, Billy, suddenly on Nov. 23; survived by his beloved wife, May; his sister-in-law, Bessie, and nephews, Stuart and William. He was a member of New York Athletic Club, Winged Foot Golf Club, Vice Commander American Legion Post #54 and The Niblicks. Services at Funeral Church, Madison Ave. and 81st St., Tuesday evening, Nov. 26, at 8:30 o'clock. Interment Woodlawn Cemetery, Wednesday, Nov. 27. Cortege leaves Funeral Church at 10 A.M.

The Associated Press news story of Jones' death said: "The famous Jones-Hare radio partnership broke up on March 9, 1939, when Hare died just a week before his 56th birthday. Sadly, at that time, Billy recalled that he and Ernie had made 4,000 phonograph records together — "Good Lord, I suppose at least that!" On November 25, another AP item said:

"A memorial program was broadcast today over Station WMCA instead of the scheduled one starring Billy Jones, pioneer radio entertainer, who died in Times Square of heart disease. Marilyn Hare, 16, whose late father, Ernie Hare, and Jones once comprised the famous "Happiness Boys" team, and James Brennan, pianist and song writer, appeared on the program."

I was surprised to learn from the NEW YORK TIMES that Jones and his still surviving wife had a hobby of operating a country general store. He didn't mention it to me. Since his

office was at 1674 Broadway, he probably either was going to, or coming from, the office when he dropped dead at 1627 Broadway.

Jim Brennan survived Billy Jones by almost 16 years. He died in his home at Middleboro, Mass., after a long illness, on August 24, 1956, at the age of 70. A death notice in VARIETY said he began his song-writing career in 1910 after operating a commercial art studio in his native Boston. He wrote the music for the 1918 song hit, "The Rose of No Man's Land." According to VARIETY, Brennan was a pioneer in radio, and "his first commercial program was the 'Imperial Imps,' featuring Billy Jones and Ernie Hare."

### VIII. Some Random Recollections

After the first installment of this series appeared, I received a letter from a valued correspondent, Mrs. Edna E. Sheldon, of Long Island City, N. Y., from whom I have been hearing occasionally for years. Considerably to my surprise, Mrs. Sheldon revealed in the following passages that she had been well acquainted with Ernie Hare and his family:

HOBBIES came today and I just sat and edited it from cover to cover. Noticed of course what data you gave about Ernest Hare.

His only sister lived in Ocean View, Va., a suburb of Norfolk. I lived in her cottage one summer, next door to Ernest Hare's mother's year-around house. His sister and her family lived with his mother. This was in 1920. She - the sister - had four children: Two boys; one, John Carl Morgan, was for some years an announcer in the '30's at Norfolk's radio station. There was Ernest Hare Morgan also.

Ernest Hare was close to his mother and sister. I met him when he spent his vacation with his family and was then understudy for Al Jolson. He brought along the music of a new popular song, "The Love Nest," and his sister accompanied him on the piano time and time again while he warbled. His sister would play his Vocalion records for me and tell of the critics' praise of his singing. His sister played the piano at the Catholic church nearby, on First street, Ocean View.

I kept some contact by mail at Christmas time and an occasional letter, and visited his sister also in 1936. After 1940 I lost track of her. His sister and her family were proud of their famous uncle. I think his wife's name was Marie. She had been a show girl—

**PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE**

Rare phonographs for sale. Edison Concert, Berliner, Pathe', Edison Maroon Gem, Eldridge Johnson, early phonograph with ear tubes and others. Cylinder records, parts of all kinds. Reproducer repairing, styli (needle) installed. Reproducers for sale. Send 25c for lists. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o36501

FOR SALE: Surplus antique phonographs from private collection, cylinder and disc. Send for free list. — R. J. Baker, Fort Gray Dr., Lewiston, N. Y. o3253

**MISCELLANEOUS**

WANTED: Edison talking doll, Columbia Grand, Edison Concert, hurdy gurdy, street piano. Describe, price. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. au3023

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minneapolis, Pa. mh122361

MUSIC BOXES, singing birds, early phonographs and collectors items. Let me find it for you for your price. Send stamped envelope please. — J. E. Koehler, 416 College Ave., DeKalb, Ill. au3262

WANTED: Lowery Organo attachment for piano; Ampico rolls; player pianos in fair condition; player organs and rolls; coin operated gum and candy machines. Animated displays of any kind before 1900. Please send pictures of displays. Must be in working condition. Price, etc. — F.R.P., Box 188, Westboro, Mass. o3637

FROM A FORMER EDISON dealer's stock that had been in storage, I was able to find some original Edison styluses (needle) in both sapphire and diamond. Have a small surplus and will sell some while they last. Also, Diamond Disc reproducers at \$5 each. Send for free brochure on cylinder reproducers. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3219

**SHEET MUSIC**

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 4, Colo. je126921

**PIANO & ROLLS**

NEW ROLLS and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos. — Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kans. ap124661

WANTED: 44-note Wurlitzer pianoino music. 10 tunes to the roll. Also rolls of "A" music. — Dan Gray, P.O. Box 3181, Fort Worth, Texas. d6867

Wanted: Ampico & Duo Art piano rolls. — Thomas Grattelo, 860 Sunnyside Road, Oakland, Calif o3633

SIMPLEX piano player, plays any piano. Has been electrified. About 50 rolls. \$150 crated. — Richard Bissell, Rowayton, Conn. o3882

WILLIAM JENNING BRYAN'S "Estey" Baby Grand Piano for sale. Write Stephenson's Antiques, Huntsville, Ohio. o3291

a very nice looking woman. When I lived in the Morgan-Hare cottage, it was on Avenue B, Ocean View, I believe. I can still remember the cottage's name, Auganax — a combination of three names.

Ray Wile, a staff writer for RECORD RESEARCH and an authority on Edison Diamond Discs, who lives at Flushing, New York, wrote me:

Your current series on Jones and Hare is interesting. Ernest Hare lived in the block behind my family (168th street in Flushing) for several years. At about the time the Happiness Boys began working for Filt the Hares moved to the 150 series of streets in Flushing.

I was at Ernie's funeral. His death had shocked all of us. Incidentally, his wife's name was Marie—not Mary, as his death certificate stated. Later his family moved to Hollywood and Marilyn was a contract player for Universal. I think she subsequently married Rudy Vallee's press agent. I believe Marie Hare is dead. I cannot say since we lost contact years ago.

You will observe that both Mrs. Sheldon and Ray Wile say Mrs. Hare's given name was Marie. However, as one of the letters to be quoted from her daughter will reveal, the name was originally Mary, but was changed to Marie for "show business" reasons.

In view of Mrs. Sheldon's saying Ernie constantly practiced singing "The Love Nest" during his 1920 vacation, it is surprising that I have not been able to find that he recorded it for any company. It is the sort of song in which Vocalion and Brunswick would have been most likely to use his fine voice, but Brunswick assigned the number to other singers and Vocalion appears not to have recorded it.

**IX. Letters from Marilyn Hare**

One thing I hoped to do when I began this series about "The Damon and Pythias of Show Business" was to write accurately enough to please Ernie Hare's daughter. Even so, I had no communication with Marilyn until after she had been sent copies of the first installment.

However, the articles did not come as a surprise to her. Several years ago Charles Lindsley told her I was contemplating such a series and Quentin Riggs of Oklahoma City mentioned my plans when he visited California in 1957 and talked to her by phone. On September 20, 1957, Quentin wrote to me concerning the telephone conversation:

"Marilyn's married name is Parker and her husband's name is Joseph. For a while she had a regular TV show, but now she is devoting her time to her family (she has four children — three of her own and

**VIOLIN BOWS**

BOWS by Heinz Doelling, endorsed by Menuhin and Oistrakh, internationally acclaimed by leading artists as the modern Tourte. Now available through K. W. Jones, sole U.S. Agent, 2855 Carter Rd., Treviso, Pa. s3216

**MUSIC ROLLS**

PLAYER PIANO music rolls bought, sold and traded, all makes and types. — D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Md. je124431

OVER 200 Duo-Art fully reproducing classical piano rolls. Chopin, Beethoven, etc., by Paderewski, Rubinstein, others. For information write William Pilkey, 100 Warwick Road, Jamestown, N. Y. s3234

**MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE**

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale: all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. je120422

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale: all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jly120422

**VIOLINS—REPAIRS**

VIOLINS - New, used; Italian, German, etc. French bows. Repairs, appraisals. — K. W. Jones, 2855 Carter Rd., Treviso, Pa. au3882

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED**

WANTED. Edison and Columbia cylinder phonographs and records, Disc phonos with horns, roller organs, music boxes, and melodians. Private collector. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. s3844

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE**

FOR SALE: Melodeon: 2 Rosewood: 1. Estey 1856, plays, needs cabinet repair, \$160. 2. Restored and refinished, \$210. Crating free. Freight extra.—Mrs. M. H. Grimmett, 107 Country Club Drive, Concord, N. C. au1462

**MELODEONS**

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. au126661

OLD MASON MELODEON, wonderful condition, \$95. Write for appointment. — Mrs. Ruth Nelson, 46 Auburn Street, Malden, Mass. s3272

RECORDS . . . PHONOGRAPHS . . . MUSIC BOXES . . . ANTIQUE  
INSTRUMENTS . . . PIANOS & ROLLS . . . MELODEONS . . .  
NICKELODEONS . . . SHEET MUSIC . . . ORGANS . . . MUSIC ROLLS

one stepson) and to making occasional TV commercials. She was very charming and friendly when I talked to her, and I wish I could have met her. She has a beautiful speaking voice — very deep-pitched, resonant, etc., quite similar to her father's. I have never heard her sing, but if she sings as well as she speaks she must be very good.

Early in March, 1959, I was delighted to receive a long and informative letter from Marilyn herself, from which I shall quote:

March 9, 1959. I was glad to receive your letter today. I had already received a copy of HOBBIES and was so happy with the story thus far I did want to tell you how accurate and well done it is. I am sure both Billy and my Daddy would be proud, grateful and pleased.

Mother, Mrs. Ernie Hare, formerly Marie Flood of the Shubert musical days, passed away in Hollywood on Thanksgiving Day, 1956. It was very sudden, as she had been in perfect health—went to bed on Wednesday evening and apparently suffered a painless cerebral hemorrhage at approximately 9 A.M. She had been very active during the war years at the Hollywood Canteen. You can understand that this was a great joy to her as in this place, where almost every star, old and new, appeared at some time or other, she had a marvelous opportunity to renew many memories.

I have show biz in the blood, brain and heart, so I am still carrying on somewhat. This year I was on "Queen for a Day," doing Jeanne Cagney's fashion commentary while she was on a maternity leave for six months. I have done a number of half hour dramatic shows and lots of commercials. I always think how strange I should now be "selling soap," as the saying goes, when Daddy was one of the first



LEFT TO RIGHT

Marilyn Hare Parker, daughter of Ernest Hare, as she appears today.

Marilyn Hare, movie and television notable, sent this autographed photo to Jim Walsh after reading the first installment of the current Jones and Hare series. The inscription reads: "To Jim Walsh, in grateful remembrance of all the wonderful things you've said of Jones and Hare. Marilyn Hare, 1959."

## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor.—Jim Walsh, Box 478, Vinton, Virginia. txf

**WANTED:** Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or center start.—Alda Favia-Artay, 60 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. txf

**RECORDS** by John McCormack.—James Sanford, 601 N. Broadway, Weatherford, Okla. o12407

**PIANO ROLLS WANTED:** all types, send list, receive cash offer by return mail (list returned).—M. Montgomery, 722 Spring, Ann Arbor, Mich. je128041

**WANTED: HILLBILLY RECORDS** by Carter Family, Uncle Dave Macon, Monroe Brothers, Cliff Carlisle, Jimmie Davis, Malvers Mountaineers, Goebel Reeves, Gene Autry, etc.—Don Wahle, 1128 Keller Ave., Louisville 13, Ky. au3084

**WANTED:** Glenn Miller material. Civilian and Air Force orchestras. Air shots, air checks, V-discs, 16" transcriptions, (original dubs or tapes); home recordings of radio broadcasts. Also articles and pictures.—Donald Whyte, 416 Parkside Ave., Buffalo 16, N. Y. au3426

to see the possibilities of entertainment as a sales media. Of course I am practically completely involved in TV since there is disc jockey radio only, though I have a few radio commercials running locally.

My family life is Number One of all. I am, as you know married to Joe Parker, a motion picture director. You may have noticed his credit on "D. A's Man," "The Texan," "Highway Patrol" and the new up and coming "Pete Kelly's Blues." On April 16th be sure to watch for the director's

(Continued on page 33)

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's.** including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide lists 7500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold.—James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

**OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records.** 1903 to LP.—Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight Street, San Francisco 17, Calif. d126121

**50 Years of old songs and popular favorites.** Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists.—Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 13, N. Y. au3618

**FREE "Personalities" catalogs** - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities.—Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. o126121

**FOR SALE:** Hundreds of disc and cylinder records, many types of phonographs. 25c for lists, refunded when ordering.—Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. au4006

**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). s3253

**CLASSICAL VOCAL RECORDS** at mail auction. Also phonographs, autographed photographs, books on music and record catalogs.—Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. s3863

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.** South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold.—Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. au3066

**Advance Collectors** desiring rarities as Bassi, Bellincioni, Caruso, Carelli, Fabbri, Rossi, Wermez, etc., are advised to communicate with the Gramophone Trading Co., 5810 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fla., for quarterly auction listings. au3447

**RARE UNUSUAL** operatic records for sale, mostly French imported. Lists on request.—Collectors' Haven, 1131 Bergen St., Brooklyn 16, N. Y. s3633

**OLD RECORDS FOR SALE:** Kreisler, Caruso, Curci, Heink, McCormack, Lander, Williams and others. Best offer.—Mrs. Stephen Tredennick, 56 Chestnut St., Boston, Mass. s3863

**WANTED:** Radio transcriptions, AFPS recordings, records of all types by Sammy Kaye, Guy Lombardo, Blue Barron, Bill Kenny & Ink Spots. Top prices paid.—Paul Scriven, 238 West State St., Niles, Ohio. au3215

## CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8.

(Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)



in flight. All in all, such a bell must at one time have made a most suitable gift, for every detail bespeaks the wish for a long life. Indeed, the inscription itself when translated expresses this same wish.

A variation of this bell has the tortoise carrying an elephant on his back. The elephant in turn, an emblem of strength and sagacity, carries on his back a dome-like bell representing the world.

Most commonly the tortoise is shown with a crane astride his back, a bell in the bird's beak. These attractive call bells have long been popular in Oriental households as inexpensive symbols of the family's wish for a long life.

To the Oriental mind, each creature has a special symbolic value and serves to express some thought, usually felicitous, when adorning a bell or other art object. The sheep is the symbol of a tranquil retired life; the horse is emblematic of speed and perseverance; the monkey stands for good luck. Two other animals frequently represented on both Chinese and Japanese bells are the deer—meaning happiness, and the fox—mischievous.

The peacock signifies grace and charm, and sometimes poses as the handle on a bell. Mandarin ducks and wild geese, especially in pairs, have become symbols of conjugal fidelity because they are thought to mate for life. A graceful pair of geese, with necks arching, forms the handle on an unusual bronze bell having pellets enclosed within it. In shape the bell resembles a child's toy iron except that it is "lacy" perforated so that the sound can be heard.

Fish, in general, stand for wealth and success and perseverance—for as

legend tells us, their struggles and leaping against the rapids in the Yellow River have always been greatly admired by the Chinese. The carp in particular forms a favorite motif and there are many life-like creations of it in ivory, jade, wood, and metal.

The carp is not only a prime leaping fish but is also credited as a first rate message-carrier. The idea of the carp as a message-carrier was first recorded by a poet of the Han dynasty, who told how he "was brought some carp by a boy, and cutting open one, found in its belly a letter from his beloved, declaring her love and wishing him happiness."

Later poets have carried on this fantastic legend, even crediting the carp with the power to carry prayers. High over the entrance to a temple there often hangs a large bronze bell shaped like a carp. A tug on the lengthy tassel indicates the worshiper's wish that his prayers be carried forth by the messenger-carp.

Among mythological creatures the dragon and the phoenix are of special interest. The phoenix, an imaginary bird living in the highest heavens, has always been the special emblem of royal personages. It signifies eternal youth and vigor.

The dragon as a symbol has now been widely replaced by the lion (Dog of Fo) as the orthodox guardian of Buddhist faith. But the dragon for centuries was the dominating symbol of Chinese culture. As such it stood for all that is powerful, magnificent, terrible, and glorious—a genuine symbol of imperial power.

Actually, there were nine types of mythical dragons. However, those shown by craftsmen were invariably either the royal dragon (P'u Lao) or the musical dragon, the latter being especially appropriate on bells.

Even the elements of nature have symbolic attributes in Oriental art. Representative of a thunderbolt is the Tibetan *Dorje* used as a handle on lamasery bells. Four prongs curve gracefully over a center prong, the five signifying indestructible power. Fire rays are symbolized on many shrine bells by numerous long spikes.

### BELLS FOR SALE

LIST of bells for sale, and bells wanted, 10c. — Stonecrest Antiques, Marlborough, Conn. F. O. East Hampton, Conn. s3272

FOR SALE: Bronze Bell from s/s "Claremont" 1906. With clapper, crate and ship F.O.B. \$50. — Albert Carriere, 8234 Apple St., New Orleans 18, La. o3483

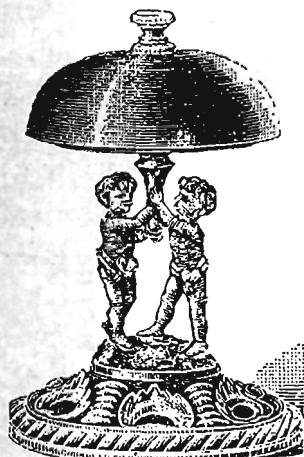
### Travel Search for Bells

By A. C. Meyer — \$2.50

A story about the Meyers' personal search for bells. A down-to-earth summary of a fascinating hobby.

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St. Louis 13, Missouri

## BILLY JONES & ERNEST HARE

(Continued from Page 31)

credit on the Academy Awards as Joe has had that chore for the past three years. Joe started in radio here in Los Angeles in 1936 and was producer-director on some wonderful shows like Fibber McGee and Molly, Amos and Andy, etc., not to forget his last radio bit with Rudy Vallee, who was, as you may know, a good friend of Jones and Hare. Rudy was best man at the Parker wedding in Chicago April 13, 1947, and is godfather to our first born, Stephen Ernest, now aged 10.

That brings us to the children. They are: Stephen Ernest, born Sept. 11, 1948; Christopher Joseph, born May 14, 1951, and Germaine Marie, born May 7, 1955. We think they are all pretty special and though Steve bears the Ernest name, it is Chris who bears the physical resemblance to Ernie Hare. Both the boys are musically inclined. Steve is pretty good on the piano and Chris has the blessed Hare vocal chords, though all this talent is at this point reserved for home consumption. Germaine is too young to tell us of her abilities except that she is "the princess with the personality" to all of us.

Oh yes, you might like to know how the Joe Parker—Marilyn Hare romance blossomed. I was overseas, entertaining troops all over Italy and Africa with Ed Gardner of "Duffy's Tavern." We landed in Naples, Italy, and Joe and Ed renewed their old radio acquaintance and Joe and Marilyn started a new friendship which was renewed upon Joe's return to the States in 1946.

We hope that one day the Happiness Boys story will be on the screen. There has been much interest from time to time and I am certain one day the time will be right. I hope I have answered a few of the questions you asked. Use what you will. We'll be looking for the next installment eagerly. Thank you for caring so much for the ones I love so. Sincerely, MARILYN HARE PARKER.

With her letter, Marilyn enclosed a biography prepared by the NBC Publicity Dept. After telling of how she took her father's place as Billy Jones' partner during his last illness, the biography says:

Republic Pictures brought Marilyn to Hollywood. Within three years she had starred in 21 motion pictures. She was borrowed from Republic by the producers of the musical hit, "Meet the People." She co-starred with a young and coming comedian, Jack Bailey, now the star of NBC-TV's "Queen for a Day." . . . During the war years Marilyn appeared in more than 600 camp and hospital shows. . . . With the advent of television, she starred in "Admiral Hollywood Revue," telecast from the stage of Pantages Theater, Hollywood, in 1948. She followed this with her own daily show from a Hollywood station. Later she appeared on "The Red Skelton Show," "The Bob Crosby Show," "Art Linkletter's House Party," "The Buster Keaton Show," "The Danny Thomas Show" and "Queen for a Day." Her latest motion picture credit is "Eighteen and Anxious" with Martha Scott, Jim Backus, William Campbell and Mary Webster.

The sketch says Marilyn attended Flushing High School in New York and the University of Southern California; that she is 5 feet, 3½ inches tall, has blonde hair and brown eyes and her hobbies are "children, swimming and golf — in that order."

A later letter from Marilyn gives

(Continued On Page 35)

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Only good, clean, originals desired. Top prices. — Donna J. Fisher, Sellingsgrove, Pa. o3042

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Pittsburgh 3, Pennsylvania tfx

**BILLY JONES and  
ERNEST HARE**

(continued from page 33)

the following additional information:

Ernest Hare had brown eyes and brown hair. My paternal grandparents are both deceased. There are two of Daddy's sister's children in Norfolk—Ernest Morgan and Louise Morgan Farrar. One cousin, John Carl Morgan, is in radio at Vicksburg, Va., and one, Ida, somewhere in Virginia—I don't know where.

Mother was born Mary Flood but used Marie Flood in the theater and Marie Hare ever after. She was born Feb. 27, 1886, in Huntington, Pa., and passed away Nov. 26, 1956, at 70.

Billy Jones' widow is residing in Lancaster, Pa. Billy and May were married in 1937.

I was born Oct. 23, 1923, in Flushing Hospital, Flushing, N. Y. As you mentioned, I have three children and one stepchild, Ronald, 16. I am dark blonde with brown eyes.

**X. In Conclusion**

And now, having chronicled the achievements of the younger generation, as exemplified by Marilyn Hare Parker, we have reached the conclusion of the saga of those two most lovable gentlemen of the entertainment world, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. Their memories deserve to remain ever green not only because of their great abilities and the happiness their performances brought to millions but because their association so well exemplifies one of the greatest virtues—brotherly love. I hope their life stories will soon be told on the stage, TV or the screen. Meanwhile, I can think of no more appropriate way in which to sum up their attitude toward their fellow men and the good they did while they lived than by quoting the final chorus of their Edison record of "That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness":

(Continued on page 43)

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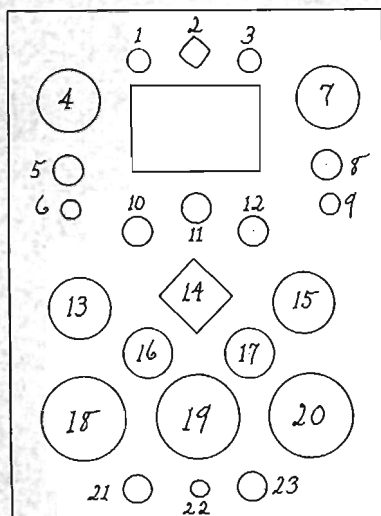
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14. Black Glass Waistcoat (?) button with dull finish, incised pattern.

15. "Liberty Head" in hard rubber. (Nos. 13, 14 and 15 are shown against lighter colored mounts).

16. Gold-plated Filigree button from a wedding dress, c. 1898.

17. Overall button: "Carter's, Lebanon, N. H."

18. Moss Rosebud in pressed brass, tin back.

19. Hand-painted plaster-of-Paris button, made by D.F.B., showing church, etc. as in picture above. (This is the only button in the group that didn't come from Canterbury place, but this seemed an appropriate place to put it).

20. "Venus and Cupid": brass with applied figures, tin back.

21. "Butterfly": two-piece Czech "Paperweight" in several colors, c. 1915.

22. "Rosebud": same type and age as number 21.

23. "Steeplechaser" in brass with tinted background.

I know where every one of these buttons came from; I remember the circumstances under which each was acquired. I shall never forget the friends and "friends' friends" who proffered their button bags and box-

es and urged us to "take all you want!" (Sometimes I wish I had availed myself of that generous offer! But in those days, we were anxious not to be thought greedy!)

I am sure that most collectors have buttons such as these, which are dear to them for personal reasons. Mounting such buttons together is like meeting old friends, for as we look at them we remember days that are gone, and enjoy them, even in retrospect. Such buttons may be arranged in various ways, as individual taste suggests. I have seen "Family" buttons grouped together; or buttons mounted beside pictures of those who wore or donated them. I have seen them carded in rows, isolated in daguerreotype cases, mounted and identified in albums. It doesn't matter how they are arranged—what does matter is the pleasure they can give, the joys and memories they can revive.

### WANTED

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**\$1.10 BUYS 10, 20, 50 or 100 good old buttons** including 10 worth \$1 free or 1 large picture button free. Money-back guarantee. — Mrs. A. S. Campbell, 788 Bonaventure Ave., N.E., Atlanta 6, Ga. s3024

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**CIVIL WAR Battlefield found buttons** for sale. Will buy Military and early state buttons. Relic list 10c. — Sam McClaren, Route No. 3, Richmond, Va. je1831

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I have many buttons which are showier than these "Canterbury Buttons," many that are more valuable, in a money sense. But these are the kind of buttons I like best: they are not "outstanding"; they are not museum material; they are buttons such as any collector might have—and might cherish for similar reasons.

To me, they are Memories-in-miniature and unchanging souvenirs of "happy highways," that I can never travel again.

"When Time who steals our years away  
Shall steal our pleasures, too,  
The memory of the past will stay,  
And half our joys renew."

### BILLY JONES and ERNEST HARE

(Continued from page 35)

On Edison records Jones and Hare Entertain you folks out there,  
And that's our hap-hap-happiness!  
Just to know the things we do  
Makes us feel we're pleasing you—  
That's our hap-hap-happiness!  
Each one beneath the sun should do  
his share while he's here,  
Spreading all around him a little sunshine and cheer.  
If we've failed, at least we've tried,  
But if you feel satisfied,  
That's our hap-hap-happiness!

### THE END

Now that the Jones and Hare series is concluded, there are one or two odds and ends I should like to add and an error or so to correct.

Bob Pye, of Penticton, British Columbia, has added two more names to the list of those under which Jones and Hare recorded. Mr. Pye has a Silvertone record on which they are called Lewis James and John Marron—a puzzling choice of names, since the late Lewis James was one of the most popular recording tenors of the Jones and Hare period. Says Bob Pye: "It's Billy and Ernie, with Dave Kaplan. They even identify themselves with some patter." Another Silvertone record lists them as the Radio Kings.

In the May issue, the cut lines beneath the photo of Harry Reser's Quartet incorrectly referred to him as "the greatest living master of the five-string banjo." This, of course, should have been "tenor banjo." His group should not have been referred to as a "banjo quartet" since Reser was its only banjo player and he was holding another instrument in the picture. Harry plays the guitar and ukulele in addition to the banjo.

Two or three typographical slips should be noted in the June article. In the first column, where it is said the record of "Oh My Yes" was made "about a year ago before the advent of electric recording," "ago" should be omitted. The record was made in 1924.

In the third column Franklyn Baur's first name is misspelled as Franklin. Baur always spelled it with a "y." On page 35, the statement that I was never able, "during my lifetime," to learn what had become of Marguerite Dunlap, obviously should be "during her lifetime."

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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## LAMBERT MURPHY

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE: This article is written at the request of, and dedicated to my friend of long standing, Miss Aletta Reed, of Fort Myers, Fla., who has been a Lambert Murphy admirer for many years).



LAMBERT MURPHY, at the beginning of his recording career

### I. A Word on Arthur Godfrey's Cancer

I am writing on Sunday, May 3. For the past several days millions of Americans have been concerned over the health of the comedian, Arthur Godfrey, who recently underwent an operation for removal of a lung cancer. His plight recalls the fact that Lambert Murphy, an artist of a wholly different type, was a victim of a malignant growth on his vocal chords. An operation ended a brilliant career by reducing Murphy's voice to a whisper, but it arrested the disease, and Murphy lived a useful life for years afterward.

Knowing this, we may hope that Arthur Godfrey will also be spared.

### II. In the Beginning

Lambert Murphy, who was one of Victor's top tenors for almost 20 years, beginning in 1911, and who also had four successful years as a member of the Metropolitan Opera, was born April 15, 1885. He died in

Hancock, N. H., where he had made his home for a good many years, on July 24, 1954. It hardly seems possible, when one studies his boyish appearing photos in the old Victor catalogs, that he was 69 years of age when his life ended.

For more than ten years the Victor publications contained this summation of Murphy's career:

Lambert Murphy is an American and was born in the city of Springfield, Mass. As a boy he sang in church choirs, and later, while at Harvard University, took much interest in musical matters. During his senior year at Harvard he commenced his concert career, continuing it for two seasons after his graduation in 1908, and filling many important engagements, including concerts of the Boston Festival Orchestra (three successive seasons), and the Handel and Haydn Society. He was soloist at St. Bartholomew's Church, New York, but resigned his position there when he went to the Metropolitan in 1911, in order to devote his time entirely to operatic work. Mr. Murphy is naturally endowed with a tenor of unusually pure quality, which, during his professional career, has developed in richness, warmth and color.

From the MacMillan Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians I glean the additional information that Murphy was a pupil of a noted pianist and teacher, Isidore Luckstone, as well as of Herbert Witherspoon, the distinguished basso who afterwards became a Victor recording artist and manager of the Metropolitan.

Two years after Victor introduced electrical recording in 1925, the Blue Label record series in which Murphy's offerings had been cataloged was discontinued and he, like Olive Kline and Elsie Baker, was promoted to Red Seal status, as Reinald Werrenrath had been six years before. His biographical sketch was transferred to the Red Seal section of the catalog, and the 1929 edition tells us that "his career as a singer began as a choir-boy, in which occupation, as an alto, he was greatly outshone by his brother, who had a soprano voice. He 'grew up' and went to Harvard, where . . . he 'made' the Glee Club. Not so long afterward, at the instance of Riccardo Martin, he was heard by, and taken into, the Metropolitan Opera Company. Since leaving there, he has sung at concerts, festivals, and with the symphony and other important organizations everywhere in America."

Lambert Murphy's brother, who "outshone" him, was Ray Dickinson Murphy. At the time of the tenor's death he was living in Upper Montclair, N. J., and was president of the Equitable Life Assurance Compa-

ny. There probably is almost no risk of error in surmising that when he made his Victor records under the disguise of Raymond Dixon, Murphy used a modified form of his talented brother's two given names.

### III. Death Notice

Additional information about Lambert Murphy's life and achievements is contained in the death notice, with a Springfield, Mass., date line, which the *New York Times* published July 25, 1954:

Mr. Murphy made his debut at the Metropolitan at the age of 26, but resigned four years later to take up concert work. At about the same time he became one of the Victor recording artists. He once estimated that he had made 200 recordings.

In later years, Mr. Murphy taught voice at the Malkin Conservatory in Boston and also conducted classes weekly in New Haven and Springfield. During World War II, after the conservatory had closed, he conducted voice classes in Springfield and worked in a local war plant. Mr. Murphy also had been a soloist at the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York.

His singing and teaching were brought to an end when he underwent a serious throat operation in the early Forties.

Mr. Murphy married Jesse Stewart Rowe in 1921. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Jesse Washburn and Miss Marion C. Murphy, both of this city, and a brother, Ray Dickinson Murphy.

Lambert Murphy made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera on November 17, 1911, singing the role of the sailor in "Tristan und Isolde." His other roles included Joe in "The Girl of the Golden West," Vogelgesang in "Die Meistersinger" and Froh in "Das Rheingold." He created the roles of Caradoc in Horatio Parker's "Mona" and of "Montfleury" and "Cadet" in Walter Damrosch's "Cyrano de Bergerac" and he was the Majordomo of Von Faninal in the first American performance of Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier."

Except for one brief period, throughout his career, record buyers had scant opportunity to hear Lambert Murphy in operatic roles, especially such relatively unfamiliar ones as those mentioned in the obituary. If the tenor estimated his recordings at 200, I am sure he under counted. He not only made a long list of solos but also sang in many duets and quartet offerings and was one of the standbys of the Victor Light Opera and Opera Companies. It is a pity space is lacking to undertake a comprehensive tabulation of his recorded output.

### IV. Murphy's Recording Career Begins

The first solo record by the tall, broad-shouldered, athletic appearing young tenor appeared in a special group of new musical comedy offerings which Victor issued early in



November, 1911. His identity was concealed under the assumed name of Raymond Dixon on the 12-inch double-faced record which contained his version of the oddly titled "Hm! She is the One Girl" from Leo Fall's light opera, "The Siren," coupled with the Victor Concert Orchestra playing "Gypsy Love Waltzes." Listed on the back page of the Dec., 1911, Victor supplement, only brief information was given about this record, but "Hm!" was described as Donald Brian's song hit in "The Siren," "by the Victor's new tenor, Mr. Dixon."

As part of the regular December issue, "Dixon" was represented by a ten-inch double-faced Black Label record, on which he sang "You Are the Ideal of My Dreams," with Reed Miller's version of "All That I Ask of You is Love" occupying the A side. Editor Sam Rous commented: "Two favorite ballads of the past season which are still high in favor. This combination of both songs, given by two new singers, should prove one of the most popular features of the December list."

In January, 1912, "Dixon" accomplished something of a more ambitious nature. On a 12-inch single-faced disc he sang in English a "Ave Maria" adapted to the Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana." The supplement said:

Few instrumental compositions have become so popular with all classes of people as this beautiful intermezzo, which Mascagni wrote to divide his CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA into two parts. Because of the great vogue of the number, it has been set to words by the English writer, F. E. Weatherly, and the result is a most impressive song. The Victor's new tenor, Mr. Dixon, who has made a very great success with Victor audiences, has given a fine rendition.

In more conventional vein, Dixon was also represented that month by a Theodore Morse ballad, "If This Rose Told You All It Knows." Again his companion was Reed Miller, singing "For Killarney and You." In February, Victor issued his first gospel hymn record, "Nearer, My God, To Thee." On the reverse, the baritone, Frederick Wheeler, better known then as James F. Harrison, sang "Flee as a Bird." The supplement said: "Both Mr. Dixon and Mr. Wheeler are well-known choir singers in leading New York churches."

In April, Murphy, alias Dixon, probably took part in the Orpheus Quartet record of "The Long Day Closes," and "Ho! Jolly Jenkins!" A month later the Orpheus obliged with "If All My Dreams Were Made of Gold." Besides Murphy, the members were Harry Macdonough, second tenor; Reinald Werrenrath, baritone, and William F. Hooley, bass. It is likely that by this time Murphy had begun to sing in the Opera Company records, and he may have been the tenor in the Purple Label record of the Rigoletto Quartet, by the Victor Opera Quartet, announced in July, 1912.

The name of Raymond Dixon was

now to disappear from Victor supplements and was not seen again for another two years.

#### V. Murphy Records Under His Own Name

"Dixon's temporary banishment undoubtedly was caused by the decision to begin issuing records by Lambert Murphy under his own name, on the Purple Label, at a higher price than the Black Label records sold for. On page two of the October, 1912, supplement appeared a photo of Murphy (no picture had been shown of Dixon), and a heading: "A New Metropolitan Tenor Makes His First Victor Record." The record was No. 70080, Walther's Prize Song from "Die Meistersinger." It was sung in German. The supplement said:

A notable addition to the Victor's list of artists is Lambert Murphy. This young American tenor joined the forces of the Metropolitan Opera Company last season, and he has won great praise from both press and public by the masterly manner in which he has acquitted himself in many important roles. A brilliant operatic future is predicted for this young singer, who has just made an exclusive contract with the Victor.

In November, 1912, Murphy sang the Weatherly-Denza song, "Call Me Back," and in December he had a seasonal offering with a Christmas flavor, "The Birthday of a King."

#### VI. Some Operatic Recordings

It is hard to understand why no more Murphy records (aside from two or three numbers by the Orpheus Quartet in which he presumably sang) appeared for almost a year. Not until Nov., 1913, was the name of Lambert Murphy again seen in a Victor supplement. This time he sang a 12-inch version in Italian of "O Paradiso" from "Africana."

A month later, Murphy was heard in "Ah! leve toi soleil!" (Fairest Sun, Arise!) from Act 2 of Gounod's "Romeo et Juliette." This time he sang in French, bringing to four the numbers of languages in which he had recorded. The editor said: "Mr. Murphy's rendition of this lovely Gounod air is a beautiful one, and it is hoped that he will soon be heard at the Metropolitan in such roles as *Romeo*, for which his voice is admirably adapted."

The most ambitious recording Murphy had undertaken was issued in January, 1914, when he and his baritone friend, Werrenrath, joined forces in a 12-inch Purple Label production of "Solenne in quest' ora" (Swear In This Hour) from Verdi's "Forza del Destino." The names of Caruso and Scotti automatically come to mind when his difficult operatic duet is mentioned, so no wonder Sam Rous began his comment by saying:

The Caruso and Scotti rendition of this number has had an enormous vogue all over the world. There are, however, many customers, who have felt unable to possess this record, and it is mainly for these that we now issue a splendid rendition in the Purple Label class, which is worthy of a

place in every collection. The Purple Label record of the duet is an excellent one, exhibiting the fine voices of these two young singers to much advantage.

Murphy and Werrenrath sang in Italian. A month later, in February, they aired their duet prowess with another Italian opera air, this time "Ah, Mimi, tu piu" (Ah, Mimi, False One) from act 4 of Puccini's "La Boheme." Mr. Rous said: "Mr. Murphy and Mr. Werrenrath . . . give an admirable rendition of this effective duet."

The prominence accorded to Murphy's operatic repertoire at this period may have been a reflection of the high regard which Calvin Child, chief of the Victor Red Seal division, had conceived for him. Murphy and Billy Murray were among the few male Victor recording artists aside from the classical galaxy, whom Child frequently entertained in his home. He may have been "grooming" Murphy for later Red Seal honors. There is no reason to think he ever meditated Red Seal status for Murray, but Billy's quiet, gentlemanly demeanor appealed to him.

#### VII. Dixon Again Takes Over

It is rather amusing, but somewhat puzzling, to observe how Raymond Dixon and Lambert Murphy alternated in Victor recording lists. After the splurge of operatic airs by Mur-

(Continued on page 62)

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** Edison talking doll, Columbia Grand, Edison Concert, hurdy gurdy, street piano. Describe, price. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. n3023

**CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded.** — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minneapolis, Pa. mh122361

**BUY, SELL OR TRADE 12" & 16"** Radio Transcriptions of all types, radio transcription catalogs, anything & everything regarding radio transcriptions. — Paul Scriven, 238 W. State St., Niles, Ohio. n3464

**WANTED:** Lowery Organo attachment for piano; Ampico rolls; player pianos in fair condition; player organs and rolls; coin operated gum and candy machines. Animated displays of any kind before 1900. Please send pictures of displays. Must be in working condition. Price, etc. — F.R.P., Box 188, Westboro, Mass. o3637

**FROM A FORMER EDISON dealer's** stock that had been in storage, I was able to find some original Edison styluses (needle) in both sapphire and diamond. Have a small surplus and will sell some while they last. Also, Diamond Disc reproducers at \$5 each. Send for free brochure on cylinder reproducers. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3219

#### ORGANS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Reed organ, piano cabinet, Cornish made about 1900. Good condition. — Lucille Russell, 1007 Arapaho Trail, Alamogordo, N. M. n3003

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

**WANTED:** Edison Concert Phonograph any condition, describe and price. — Everett A. Schlenker, Box 147, Gaston, Indiana. n3652

## BELLS

(Continued from page 55)



L. O. Gannon studies one of the many large Oriental bells to be found in the halls of the building. This one is located in the "First Corridor" of the underground "catacombs." With changes now under way it will probably be moved to a new location where the bells are being concentrated for display and cataloging.

every kind: paintings, bronzes, ceramics—even mounted animal heads and a large, very large array of fine dolls. Bringing this entire accumulation under control will be no small task.

After visiting the curio shop to secure a few distinctive additions for my own (now modest) collection, including a large cast-iron crown-topped "Father Serra" memorial bell and one of the original tin decorative bells from a remodeled part of the Mission Inn Hotel itself, along with some small cast bells, souvenirs of the hotel, I forced myself to turn toward the road again. On passing through the tropic gardens where fountains play, it was with reluctance that I took a last look at the sun-brightened tower and the vine-covered arcade of mission bells. The giant "Bell of Nanking," I noticed, is now almost covered by lush living verdure, the letters have weathered away from its painted nameplate, making it a stranger to all but those who read about bells.

## NOTHING

Our forefathers did without sugar until the 13th century, without coal fires until the 14th century, without buttered bread until the 15th century, without potatoes until the 16th century, without coffee and tea and soap until the 17th century, without pudding until the 18th century, without gas and matches and electricity until the 19th century, without canned goods until the 20th century, and we have had automobiles for only a comparatively few years. Now what was it you were complaining about?

—Anon

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 32)

phy, he dropped out of sight, as far as Victor supplements were concerned, and was not heard of again for a year.

But in August, 1914, "Dixon" came back, after an absence of more than two years, and contributed steadily to the catalog for the next several months. Victor had begun an extensive series of "educational" records intended mostly for use in public schools, and the majority of the Dixon records, from 1914 on, were the educational type. In August he sang "Over the Summer Sea," to the melody of "La donna e mobile," from "Rigoletto;" "Rory O'More" and "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and in September, two compositions of the Civil War era, "Battle Cry of Freedom," and "Song of a Thousand Years." In October he was represented by "Under the Greenwood Tree," from "As You Like It," and in January by three more Shakespearean songs combined on one double-faced Black Label record: "Come Away, Death," "Take, Oh Take Those Lips Away," and "O Mistress Mine." Besides that, he and Macdonough did a duet version of "It Was a Lover and His Lass," also from "As You Like It."

Lambert Murphy was back in February, 1915, and "Dixon" went into a short eclipse. Murphy's Purple Label record was "A Beam From Yonder Star," concerning which the supplement said:

The progress of this young singer is being watched with much interest, and a brilliant career is being predicted for him. During his two years at the Metropolitan his voice gained in power and beauty, and he filled many roles with distinction. Mr. Murphy's success is all the more gratifying because he

is American taught and has reached his present high position without the supposedly necessary European training and reputation which have always been thought essential to a success in opera in America.

One month later Murphy's *alter ego*, Dixon took over with another educational Shakespearean record, "Sigh No More Ladies" from "Much Ado About Nothing." In May he took part in five songs recorded by trios of male voices: "The Duke of Marlborough," by Macdonough, Dixon and Werrenrath; "When That I Was a Little Tiny Boy," and "Hold Thy Peace," by the same group; and "Come Unto These Yellow Sands," and "Green Sleeves," combined on one record side, by Werrenrath, Dixon and Hooley. In June, on record 17760, "Dixon" sang four French folk songs.

In March, Murphy, as Dixon, had been allowed to make one of his infrequent contributions to Victor's popular song list. On No. 17715 he sang "Good Bye, Girls, I'm Through" from "Chin Chin." This disc reveals the tenor's principal singing weakness. He was not adept at interpreting the lighter, more colloquial type of popular music, and his style was too heavy for such a song as "Good Bye, Girls." One need only compare it with his old friend, Billy Murray's singing of "Ragtime Temple Bells," on the B side, to understand why. There is no need to analyze the vocal equipment of the two, but Billy sings the lilting "Temple Bells" as it should be, while "Dixon's" approach is out of character. Of course, Murphy sang opera in a manner Murray would not attempt.

(To be continued)

## OLD VEHICLES

(Continued from page 55)

## VEHICLES PARADE

A nostalgic fifty years paraded before the eyes of old car lovers, on a recent Sunday, as the Newark Museum, continuing its 50th Anniversary celebration, held an Antique Auto Meet.

The afternoon event started with some sixty of the early vintage cars assembled at Washington Park, directly across from the Museum. There the autos were available for public viewing. Judging of the antique autos and announcements of awards took place at the Museum.

Highlight of the afternoon was a colorful motorized parade of all entries from Washington Park down Broad St. to Lincoln Park and back.

The parade and auto meet, sponsored by the Newark Museum with the cooperation of the New Jersey Chapter of the Antique Auto Club of America, was only one of many special events being held at the Museum, in celebration of the Museum's fiftieth year.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## VIII. Height of Career

Lambert Murphy reached the peak of his recording career when he was transferred from the single-faced Purple Label records to the double-sided Blue Label which eventually supplanted the Purple. His first 12-inch Blue Label record was issued in March, 1916. It combined "Mavourneen Roamin'" and "The Sunshine of Your Smile," and must have been one of his best sellers. The supplement said:

Admirers of this young tenor, who has left the Metropolitan to devote himself entirely to concert work, will be gratified at the announcement of two new songs by him. These two excellent new numbers, which have found great favor with concert audiences, are excellently given by Mr. Murphy, whose beautiful voice and splendid diction have won him great popularity.

Also in March, there was a Black Label "Dixon" record of "Underneath the Stars."

## LAMBERT MURPHY

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

The Orpheus Quartet was at the height of its popularity from 1913 to 1918. As its first tenor, Murphy sang in support of a number of popular Red Seal stars, including Frances Alda, Alma Gluck and John McCormack. The quartet was disbanded after the death of its versatile basso, "Bill" Hooley. Known as "the little man with the big voice" (he was only five feet seven inches tall), Hooley was born in Cork, Ireland, April 16, 1861, and died in New York, Oct. 12, 1918.

Besides continuing to make educa-

tional records, some of them in foreign languages, Murphy recorded under his own name many ballads and concert songs, and a number of popular hits, such as "Tell Me," "Memory Lane," and "Rose-Marie." He was one of a group of Victor Blue Label and Red Seal artists who took part in a music festival sponsored, in 1918, by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. of Cincinnati. Husky-looking Evan Williams, a Red Seal tenor as popular as Murphy, was among the party but died unexpectedly a few days after the festival ended. Murphy's former teacher, Herbert Nitherspoon and his wife (Florence Hinkle) were also included.

In the Oct., 1922, Victor list, Murphy offered what was probably the first record ever made of Stephen Foster's "I Dream of Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair," a song that was to become a nation-wide plague nearly 20 years later when radio stations had their bitter battle with the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers. It sometimes seemed "Jeanie" and other Stephen Foster songs were the only things on the air. The Murphy record was doubled with "My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free," composed by Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The supplement termed "Jeanie" "one of Stephen Foster's best lyrics. It was lost for many years and only recently discovered."

During this period, Murphy helped re-make a few records that had originally been sung by other artists. In 1920 he and "Edna Brown" (Elsie Baker) made over "Those Songs My Mother Used To Sing," which had been done years before by Corinne Morgan and Macdonough. The Dixon disguise was used for this re-make, as well as the one of "Near the Cross," which he and "Alice Green" (Olive Kline) sang in 1922 to replace the original version by Mr. and Mrs. William Wheeler. Another Elizabeth and William Wheeler offering succumbed in the 1925 catalog when their record of "Dear Lord and Father" gave way to one by Kline and Murphy—this time under the singers' real names. This was the only Black Label record on which Murphy's true name had been used up to that time.

## IX. A Red Seal Artist

Lambert Murphy became a Victor Red Seal artist in 1927. His first record with the red label was No. 4004, issued in April. It contained electric recordings of two of his former hits, "Roses of Picardy," and "Lonesome—



LAMBERT MURPHY was a member of the American Singers who were heard on radio and made records in the late 1920's and early 1930's.

Left to right: Murphy, first tenor; Charles Harrison, second tenor; Vernon Archibald, baritone and Frank Croxton, bass.



Reading from Right to Left: Evan Williams, Florence Hinkle, Lambert Murphy, Rudolf H. Wurlitzer, Mabel Garrison, Clarence Whitehill, Reinald Werrenrath, Herbert Witherspoon and Giovanni Martinelli—Taken before the huge record rack in the Rudolf Wurlitzer Company's store in Cincinnati during the May festival of 1918  
Williams died a few days after the photo was taken.

That's All." Virtually all his Red Seals were electrical versions of songs he had previously sung into the horn. Besides those already mentioned, titles in the 1928 catalog included "Hark! Hark! the Lark," "I Dream of Jeanie," "Just An Ivy Covered Shack," "Rose-Marie," "My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free," the Serenade from "Blossom Time," and "Winding Trail."

The 1929 catalog added a few more Murphy records, and Raymond Dixon was still being heard from with electrical versions of educational songs in English, French and Italian. However, the end of Murphy's career as a star Victor soloist was at hand. When the New York banking house of J. W. Seligman and Co. bought the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1927 (not long afterward control passed to the Radio Corporation of America). Most high-priced stars lost their contracts. Murphy, Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Reinald Werrenrath, Lucy Marsh, Billy Murray, and Henry Burr, were among those who were told their services were no longer required. After the 1929 depression began, as little as possible was spent on artists. When the pitifully thin 1933 Victor catalog was issued only three Murphy titles were left: "Hark! Hark!", "Serenade," and "Rose-Marie." Some time later, Victor issued record 4083, containing

"Flow Gently, Sweet Afton," "Sally In Our Alley," and "Ye Banks And Braes," and this held on through the 1948 catalog.

At some time between 1933 and 1938, as business improved, most of the Murphy Red Seal records which had been cut out of the 1933 catalog were reinstated. Moreover, he was represented, under his own name, by several educational records in the Black Label section. All these presumably had been recorded before his contract lapsed.

#### X. With the American Singers

After Murphy lost exclusive status with Victor, he became a member of a fine male quartet, the American Singers, which had originally consisted of Redferne Hollinshead, a Canadian tenor; Charles Harrison, Vernon Archibald and Frank Croxton. Hollinshead soon dropped out, and Murphy took his place. The quartet was popular on radio and made some excellent records for Victor, Columbia and Edison, but as the going became harder in the early 1930's it disbanded and the members devoted themselves largely to teaching. Its Edison discs, made during the Edison Co.'s last year of recording, are especially hard to find. They include 52512, "When Song Is Sweet," and "Vale;" 52615, "Carry Me Back To Old Virginny," and "My Old Kentucky Home;" and 52636, "Darling

Nellie Gray," and "On the Banks of the Wabash."

A newspaper article about the American Singers said Murphy liked to spend as much time as possible on his New Hampshire farm with his collection of firearms, and his prize hunting dog.

#### XI. A Letter from Lambert Murphy

I was privileged to receive only one communication from Lambert Murphy—a cordial reply, dated June 5, 1948, to a letter I had written him asking him to attend that year's John Bieling Day party for pioneer recording artists at Garden City, N. Y. He surprised and gratified me by revealing that he regularly read my articles in HOBBIES. Written from 417 Maple Road, Longmeadow, Mass., the letter said:

Dear Mr. Walsh: I was delighted to get your letter, and before going further I want to say that I feel quite well acquainted with you already, because of your page in HOBBIES, to which my wife subscribes, inasmuch as she is something of an "antiquer."

I was particularly interested in the fine things you had to say of Jack Macdonald (Harry Macdonough), who was an intimate friend over many years. In fact his family and mine spent their summers together for at least ten years, both at Ogunquit, Maine, and at Munsonville, New Hampshire. Also it was through your page in HOBBIES that I learned of Sam Rous and later heard of the death of both him and Mrs. Rous. Of course they were good friends of a bygone age. I am sending you under separate cover the autographed photo you asked for.



It is one from my singing era, as you will of course know.

Now I am going to have to tell you the sad news (as far as I am concerned) that I cannot come down to the dinner. It comes just exactly in the middle of my vacation for which I have already made previous arrangement. I shall certainly miss seeing you and so many of my old friends! Olive Kline, Werrenrach, Harrison, Croxton and Hindermeyer were all buddies of mine, also Billy Murray.

Richard Crooks dropped in on us recently and told us that Jim Stanley (the Peerless Quartet bass) had the same thing happen to him as I had, and that we both make the same sort of noises. The handicap of having a loud whisper instead of a voice is considerable from the angle of teaching voice. So much so that I am not even trying. But from other angles it isn't too bad, even if it is necessary to split up the phrases.

All kinds of best wishes for the dinner, which I KNOW will be a success. Please give my best to all my old friends, and many, many thanks for your letter and the invitation to attend! Very sincerely, LAMBERT MURPHY.

I do not know what was the cause of the tenor's death—whether it came about by a recurrence of his throat cancer or something else. But I have long admired him as a singer and I treasure the letter I have just quoted, while regretting that we never met. He lived for many useful years after the malignant affliction ended his singing.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 29)

for his treatments based on suggestion of hypnosis.

Relieved of his depressed state Rachmaninoff took a trip to Italy, and when back in Russia, produced his Second Piano Concerto in C Minor, which he gratefully dedicated to Dr. Dahl. This magnificent work was first performed with tremendous success by Ziloti, with Nikisch conducting in St. Petersburg, March 28, 1902.

In 1904, at the instigation of Chaliapin who had recognized Rachmaninoff's genius since the days at the Mamontoff Opera, Rachmaninoff was offered the conductorship at the Bolshoi, which he accepted. Opinions conflicted as to his work on the podium.

During his two-year stay at the Moscow Imperial Opera, no liberties were allowed the singers when he led the orchestra, and the composers' intentions were faithfully carried out. Moreover, the orchestra ceased to be a supporting instrument and acquired a voice of its own in the operatic scheme of things.

Rachmaninoff's remaining two operas "The Miserable Knight," and "Francesca da Rimini," were first performed under his baton at the Bolshoi, on January 11, 1906. His other vocal works include many songs (some very beautiful), "The Bells"—a choral symphony with so-

loists and chorus, "The Spring"—a cantata for baritone and chorus, etc. Among his instrumental compositions are three symphonies (D Minor, E Minor, and A Minor), "The Isle of the Dead"—Symphonic Poem, "The Rock"—a Fantasia, four piano concerti (F-sharp Minor, C Minor, D Minor, and G Minor), "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini," a Sonata for Cello, and numerous short pieces highlighted by ear-catchers like the preludes in C-sharp Minor, and G Minor.

Rachmaninoff's extensive tours finally took him to the United States. On November 28, 1909, he gave his first concert here, with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch, playing his Third Piano Concerto which he composed especially for the occasion.

This appearance was followed by others in the capacity of pianist, and also as conductor of his own compositions in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Boston. Acclaimed by critics and public alike, he returned to America one year later, after bidding a last adieu to his country of birth in December, 1917.

This uprooting from native soil marked for Rachmaninoff the beginning of a new life. His composing had by then slowed down, but his concert work kept him constantly busy in America and abroad. Fame and Glory were completely his now—undisputed, effulgent, and boundless.

After years of unceasing triumphs, four days before his 70th birthday, on March 28, 1943, Sergei Rachmaninoff succumbed to cancer at his home in Beverly Hills, California. To many like myself that sad day marked the end of the noble line of incomparable pianists, and of truly great pianists—composers as well.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADDENDA TO FANNY ANITUA DISCOGRAPHY

Through a regrettable oversight on my part, the list of artists supporting Fanny Anitua in the Columbia "Carmen" set—part of a Discography by Wm. J. Wilson, Jr., August HOBBIES—was omitted. I am very sorry for this omission, and here is the complete cast:

Carmen - FANNY ANITUA  
Micaela - INES MARIA FERRARIS  
Frasquita - ROSA GARAVAGLIA  
Mercedes - LUISA GARAVAGLIA  
Don Jose - LUIGI BOLIS  
Escamillo - CESARE FORMICHI  
Dancario - LUIGI BALDASSARRI  
Remendado - CARLO PALTRINIERI  
Zuniga - ENRICO SPADA  
Morales - LUIGI BALDASSARRI

Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (name of the conductor not given).

For this information, as well as for the titles and numbers of the recordings, we are indebted to Dr. Frank Garcia Montes, of Cuba.

A. F. A.



MARIO ANCONA

(See page 30, No. 13, September, 1959" Due to lack of space, this illustration could not be included in that number).

## MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: Edison talking doll, Columbia Grand, Edison Concert, hurdy gurdy, street piano. Describe, price. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. n3023

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mh122361

BUY, SELL OR TRADE 12" & 16" Radio Transcriptions of all types, radio transcription catalogs, anything & everything regarding radio transcriptions. — Paul Scriven, 238 W. State St., Niles, Ohio. n3454

WANTED: Lowery Organo attachment for piano; Ampico rolls; player pianos in fair condition; player organs and rolls; coin operated gum and candy machines. Animated displays of any kind before 1900. Please send pictures of displays. Must be in working condition. Price, etc. — F.R.P., Box 188, Westboro, Mass. o3637

FROM A FORMER EDISON dealer's stock that had been in storage, I was able to find some original Edison styluses (needle) in both sapphire and diamond. Have a small surplus and will sell some while they last. Also, Diamond Disc reproducers at \$5 each. Send for free brochure on cylinder reproducers. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3219

FOR SALE. Tubing chart for Seeburg Eagle "G" tracker scale, showing connections. \$2 postpaid. — Musical Museum, Deansboro, N.Y. o1251

## ORGANS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Reed organ, piano cabinet, Cornish made about 1900. Good condition. — Lucille Russell, 1007 Arapaho Trail, Alamogordo, N. M. n3003

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Edison Concert Phonograph any condition, describe and price. — Everett A. Schlenker, Box 147, Gaston, Indiana. n3652

WANTED OLD PHONOGRAPHS, cylinder and disc type with the horns, records, catalogs and parts or anything pertaining to phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3004



A young and pert FANNY ANITUA

tion of our great respect and veneration." The parchment was accepted by Mme. Anitua with tears of gratitude.

Congratulations were received from Sr. López Mateos, President of the Republic, as testimony to his cordial admiration and esteem for her generous and tireless labors as a professor. In a closing tribute to this remarkable personality, Don Jaime Torres Bodet presented Fanny with a commemorative medal of honor.

During the ceremonies, a musical program was provided, with selections from Gluck's "Orfeo"—the opera of Fanny Anitua's début—and "Barbiere di Siviglia." It was presented by the Bellas Artes Orchestra, and the soloists, Mmes. Aurora Woodrow, mezzo-soprano, and Maria Teresa Orgaz, soprano.

As the curtain fell to deafening applause, Fanny Anitua's students all but smothered her with flowers and embraces. Over to one side, her son, Arrigo Coén Anitua, who also was drying his eyes, exclaimed: "What a great day this has been!"

#### ADDITIONS TO ANITUA DISCOGRAPHY

By THOMAS G. KAUFMAN

The following is additional data to Fanny Anitua discography:

IL TROVATORE: Stride la vampa (11119)	D4309
WERTHER: Va! no, non e mal (11123)	D4309
(This coupling came out also on D609)	
LA FAVORITA: Fernando, dove mai (11122)	D4310
UN BALLO IN MASCHERA: Re dell'abisso (11125)	D4310
LA GIOCONDA: Voce di donna (11124)	D4674
ORFEO: Che faro senza Euridice (11126)	D4674
AIDA: Gia i sacerdoti (w. Cunego) (11126)	D4378
AIDA: Misero appien (w. Cunego) (11127)	D4378
(This coupling came out also on D572)	

The above are the original numbers under which the records were released in Italy. D9264 (previously given in the Discography for the ORFEO/GIOCONDA coupling) is the Ci-

When a series of articles relating the life story of the eminent violinist, Charles D'Almaine, appeared in the November and December, 1957, and January, 1958, HOBBIES, it was mentioned that the late Mr. D'Almaine was a talented artist and that one of his oil paintings, "The Old Salt," hung in the home of his sister-in-law, Miss Lillian Berry, of Chicago. It was also mentioned that Miss Berry cherished excellent photographs of Mr. and Mrs. D'Almaine. Miss Berry has kindly allowed copies to be made, and it is a pleasure to reproduce the photographs and the painting (see page 32).

The D'Almaine series came to the attention of Mr. Harry D'Almaine, of Chicago, who has long been interested in obtaining additional facts about his illustrious namesake and probable kinsman. His letter seems to me so valuable in the first-hand light it casts upon Charles D'Almaine that I feel I must share the greater part with HOBBIES readers:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Your extremely interesting article in HOBBIES Magazine on Charles D'Almaine was brought to my attention by Mrs. Eric Charles D'Almaine, wife of my second cousin. She is a professor at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. Thelma is well aware of my keen interest in the history of the D'Almaines, as a result of which I apparently have the most complete and accurate record

gale number. D4309, D4310, D4378, and D4674 are all Columbia (sold slightly cheaper). D609 and D572 are Columbia Popolare.

This is indeed a fabulous Series, of which I am currently compiling a numerical catalog. Other artists who recorded for acoustic Italian Columbia include: De Hidalgo, Minghini-Cattaneo, O'Sullivan, Burzio, Boninsegna, Franci, Borgioli, Pertile, Galeffi, Formichi, Garbin, Della Rizza, Corradetti, Gherlinzoni, and many others.

A great many thanks to Tom Kaufman for his contribution. It will please the collectors to know that Tom promised to let his Italian Columbia numerical catalog appear on these pages, in installments, as he completes it.  
A. F.-A.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### MORE ABOUT CHARLES D'ALMAINE

By JIM WALSH

that exists. It is not in fact complete and there are gaps that need filling in; nevertheless, I have not been able to find here or in England anything better. There is no question that anyone with our name is a member of the same family.

I dare say I was about ten years old when I first heard about Charles. That was in 1911. My eldest sister, who was 22 at the time, was visiting some friends and they had some records made by Charles. They asked her if he was any relative. . . . When she asked my father who Charles was, my father also was unable to locate him on the family tree. I remember the incident very well. We were all so excited to have found another D'Almaine in America.

In 1922 I went to New York. One of the things that was uppermost in my mind was to visit Charles. It was shortly after lunch that I went to the Metropolitan Opera House. Somewhere we had acquired the knowledge that he was first violinist of the Met.

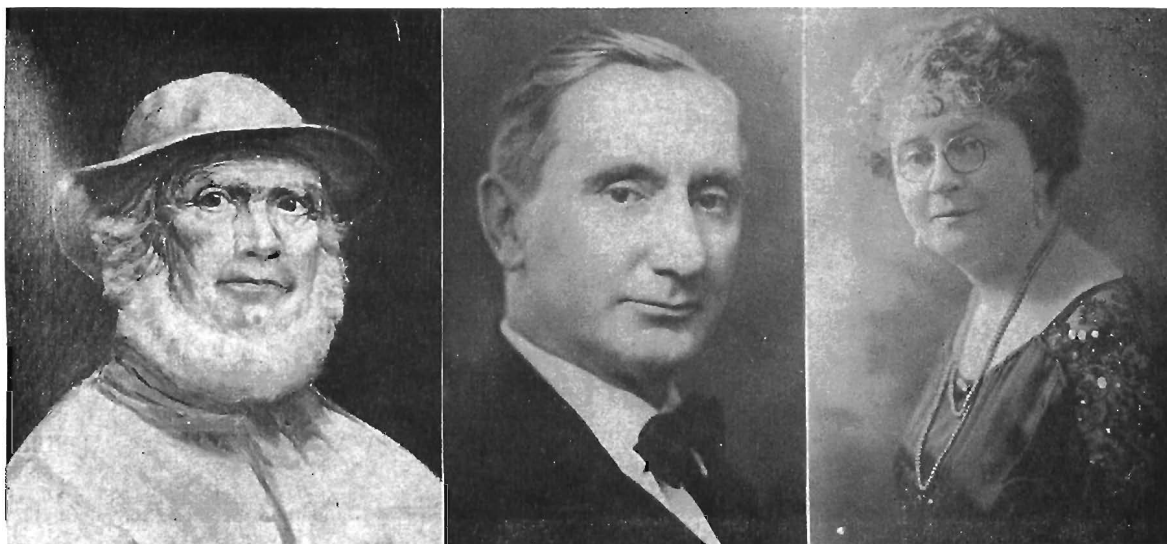
Being unfamiliar with the building, I first approached the doorman. He took me inside to a similarly uniformed individual, who—as it seems to me now—must have been, the elevator starter. We stood in a not too wide corridor just inside the outer doorway. This party remembered Charles and said that Charles had left the Met "a couple of years ago." He said that Charles had married a chiropractor and had taken it up himself and they were in business in Newark.

I was shocked at this news for several reasons. First, my family had been manufacturers, stockbrokers and bankers, and artists with a couple of ministers thrown in. They had been leaders in their chosen professions. Only in the case of my grandfather, who gave up banking in England for portrait painting in America and achieved wealth and considerable acclaim had there been any abandonment of an original profession. And to be honest, if, as you said in your article, the name D'Almaine seemed the perfect one for a violinist, it seemed less than perfect for a chiropractor.

I caught the next train for Newark. . . . Leaving the train, I went directly to a telephone booth and looked up "D'Almaine." Sure enough, there it was: "D'Almaine & D'Almaine, chiropractors." And most astonishing of all, they were right upstairs. Right over my head. I walked out onto the sidewalk and, standing at the curb, looked up. In a golden arc the letters about three inches high repeated the information in the telephone book.

Proceeding upstairs, I found myself in the first room of what appeared to be a two or three-room suite. I recall that the room I was in had a couch on the left-hand side. Charles appeared. Naturally, he must have been tremendously surprised. That probably accounts for his not asking me to sit down. During the half hour I was there we stood about the couch.

Charles appeared to me about 55 years old. Actually, I know now that



Left to right: Charles D'Almaine, eminent violinist, as depicted in painting, "The Old Salt;" Mr. D'Almaine, and Mrs. D'Almaine.

he was 51. He was a little shorter than I, possibly five feet eight or nine, portly, with iron-gray hair brushed straight back. He was clean shaven.

He did not know much about his ancestry. He attached no importance to the name. He did not know of any relatives of that name. I was burning with curiosity to know why he gave up the glamour of the Met for the obscurity of a chiropractor's office in Newark.

He told me that both his father and his mother were in theatricals. When he was about six years old he had a violin put in his hands—"and I was made to fiddle." His parents traveled a good deal, much of it in France. He had harbored all these years a smoldering resentment at the trap that Fate held him in. And when his opportunity for freedom came he took it. I can understand this in theory, but it will always remain difficult to comprehend how one could rise so high while having such an attitude.

He said he was born in London. We discussed the subject of chiropractic. He offered to give me a treatment, which I declined. I did not meet Mrs. D'Almaine. And that was about the end of the interview. . . . I never saw him again. . . .

In 1945 I was on business in New York City and having occasion to visit Philadelphia. . . . I stopped at RCA Victor and spoke to Ed Forman. They had no history of Charles as a matter of record. They had none of his recordings and the master records had been destroyed. I did obtain from them a list of the recordings he made. . . . I never represented myself as Charles' son. Mr. Forman was mistaken on that point. I did say, of course, that we were related in some way. . . .

On July 14, 1947, I wrote to Frank C. Berry in Chicago and received in reply a letter from Miss Berry. She said Charles' violin was sold, as he had requested, and the proceeds went to the Red Cross. Some pupil at a musical school in Chicago got it. . . .

From my family records it is quite certain that Charles was not a son of Thomas D'Almaine, baptized May 22, 1776, and who died about 1860 to 1866. Thomas founded the firm of Thomas D'Almaine & McKinley, later called Thomas D'Almaine & Company, 76 City Road, E. C. 1, London. Thomas died without issue. They manufactured pianos and the firm was listed in the London directory for 130 years, until 1935.

Thomas had an older brother, George, and a younger brother, William, who both had numerous children with many

descendants to the present day. The record of the period when Charles was born is incomplete and it is possible that he was of the fourth generation from George or William — which would make him my fourth cousin. . . .

A further comment on Miss Berry's thinking that Charles' mother was French. Just when the D'Almaines left France for England I cannot say. The earliest date I have is 1737, when my great-great-grandfather was born in England. In any event it perhaps is not surprising that a number of French wives pop up in the record. Most cordially yours, HARRY D'ALMAINE.

### TAURINO PARVIS

More information also has come to light concerning the Italian baritone, Taurino Parvis, who was the subject of articles in the July and August, 1956, *HOBBIES*. I am sorry to say I have learned of this fine artist's death. My colleague, Aida Favia-Artsay, some time ago sent me a clipping from the "Gazzetta del Popolo," a newspaper published in Parvis' native city of Torino, giving the sad news that Parvis had died in Barcelona, Spain, May 9, 1957. It also gives the surprising information that he was the stepfather of Roberto Rossellini, the Italian movie director who until recently was married to Ingrid Bergman. Following is Aida's translation of the article:

Taurino Parvis, a noted baritone, died yesterday in Barcelona, where he resided for some time. Taurino Parvis was born in Torino on September 15, 1879. In our city he graduated in law, but later he followed his deep vocation, dedicating himself to music, for which he had always shown temperament and gentility.

When very young, he began at the Theatre Chiarella, with Burzio in "La Favorita," and at the Vittorio, with Carmen Melis, in other operas. This was the onset of his success.

In 1927 he was called to the Regio (this opera house is in Torino; I believe both the previous ones are there, too—Aida) where, favored by the public and the critics, he sang in "Falstaff." Successively, he was at La (Continued on page 51)

### MISCELLANEOUS

**WANTED:** Edison talking doll, Columbia Grand. Edison Concert, hurdy gurdy, street piano. Describe, price. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. n3023

**CYLINDER** machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mhl22361

**BUY, SELL OR TRADE 12" & 16"** Radio Transcriptions of all types, radio transcription catalogs, anything & everything regarding radio transcriptions. — Paul Scriven, 238 W. State St., Niles, Ohio. n3464

**FROM A FORMER EDISON** dealer's stock that had been in storage, I was able to find some original Edison styluses (needle) in both sapphire and diamond. Have a small surplus and will sell some while they last. Also, Diamond Disc reproducers at \$5 each. Send for free brochure on cylinder reproducers. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3219

### ORGANS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Reed organ, piano cabinet, Cornish made about 1900. Good condition. — Lucille Russell, 1007 Arapaho Trail, Alamogordo, N. M. n3003

**WILCOX WHITE,** Angelus organ. It plays a piano at same time. 100 rolls. Largest banjo in the world. Nat'l Coin Piano, small, Tourphone hand organ. Mills Violina. — Williams, 8400 Connecticut Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. n1082

### ORGAN INFORMATION

**INFORMATION WANTED:** re: Vocalion reed organ. 61 notes, 12 stops, pedal operated, pressure system. Made in New York or Worcester (Mass?). — Charles Ferguson, 429 W. 8th Ave., Columbus 1, Ohio. d3084

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

**WANTED:** Edison Concert Phonograph any condition, describe and price. — Everett A. Schlenker, Box 147, Gaston, Indiana. n3662

who did not display a fierce manner.

The only feminine member of the group was the Glorious Goddess, Sri-devi, who was represented as most savage. She was regarded as the special protectress of the Dalai Lamas. As "the queen of the warring weapons," she was perhaps the most dreaded of all the demons.

Begtse is one of the most difficult figures of the group to study. He seem to have been a typical war god. He showed remarkably restricted traits, and assumed different special forms among various nations. There is also evidence of his having been a protective divinity of a certain region. He frequently appeared in an eight-fold aspect.

Of portly form like his prototype, the Hindu Ganesa, Kuvera is usually depicted as a dwarfish figure with a large paunch. Shown here is a representation of Kuvera sitting on cushions—with a Tibetan inscription on one of the cushions. In his left hand he holds the symbolic mongoose, disgorging pearls.

The mongoose in this position is a Tibetan emblem of wealth. Indian tradition indicates that the mongoose overpowers the serpent demigods, or Nagas, who guard the treasures hidden in the sea.

Striking is the contrast between this very mundane deity and the idealized divinity. Here there are no spiritual ideals. Here, no religious ecstasy. This figure is a personification of materialism and of the worldly life. The movement of the fingers of

Kuveras' right hand indicates a prayerful mood, but the prayers are for worldly—not spiritual—benefits.

The *Yi-dam* form of Kuvera was known as Jambhala. The *Yi-dam* were guardian gods of the distinction of Buddha. Every Lama chose a special *Yi-dam* as his protector—for some special occasion, or perhaps for a lifetime.

Jambhala is represented here in a figure on a goat. The coarse, strong features, and the facial expressions of both forms of Kuvera indicate a great capacity for the enjoyment of the pleasures of living. The well-fed bodies make it clear that hard work or abstinence was not a part of the gospel which this god preached.

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#### MISC. SILVER FOR SALE

**FLATWARE:** For Active, Inactive and Obsolete Sterling patterns. Write us your needs. Prompt replies.—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa. my128041

**UNUSUAL SILVER,** modern and antique. — Frederick T. Widmer, Jeweler, (est. 1844) 31 West Street, Boston, Mass. jly124001

#### SILVER WANTED

James W. Tufts of Boston silver plated pieces, pattern No. 1948. Also, interesting Victorian silver syrup pitchers. Advise capacity and condition. — Box E.B.W. c/o HOBBIES, 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago 5, Ill. n1224

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 32)

Scala, Covent Garden of London, Metropolitan of New York, St. Petersburg, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Santiago of Chile. He left the theatre for reasons of health at the zenith of his artistic career.

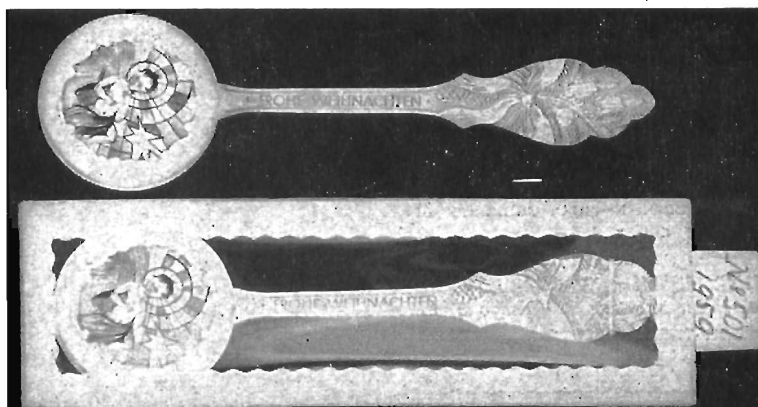
The news of his death came last light by telegraph from Barcelona to his brother, who for many years was an esteemed journalist, Taurino Parvis had married the widow Rossellini, mother of the director Roberto, and, therefore, was father-in-law of Ingrid Bergman. (Mrs. Favia-Artsay asks, "Would that be stepfather-in-law in English?")

The news of Taurino Parvis' death produced a strong impression in the artistic circles of Torino, with which the celebrated singer had always remained in affectionate contact.

Mrs. Favia - Artsay commented: "Jim: Note that the 1927 'Falstaff' at the Regio is put ahead of the La Scala, Covent Garden, etc., appearances, which took place much earlier. This was done, I believe, because the writer wanted to keep Parvis' Torino appearances in one group. I thought of a misprint, but then it couldn't have possibly been 1897 as he was only 18 then, and no lawyer gets out of school that quick. It could have been '07 or '17, but that would have happened after his other activities, anyway, so 1927 would be the most logical—Mother city asked the famed son to sing in its best opera house (one of the foremost in Italy) 'at the apex of his artistic career' (as the article says). Too bad it isn't specified whether the performance of 'Falstaff' took place before or after his retirement."

The real price of everything is the toil and trouble of acquiring it. —Adam Smith

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## NOTABLES OF THE NINETIES:

John Yorke AtLee  
And Dan Kelly

By JIM WALSH

On the morning of Wednesday, September 11, 1946, my friend, Bryant Burke, of Hempstead, L. I., and I were killing time near the Pennsylvania station in New York while I waited for a train to Boston. We took a short stroll, came to a building in which used records were offered for sale and went in.

As the proprietor, a small, excitable looking man, walked forward, I yielded to an impish temptation. Doing my best to keep my face straight, I asked: "Do you have any brown wax 1891 Columbia cylinders by John Yorke AtLee, the artistic whistler, with piano accompaniment by Professor Fred Gaisberg?"

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1906 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor.—Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. **tfx**

**WANTED,** on cylinders only, four-minute Amberol preferred, give number and artist: Pretty Baby, Oh You Beautiful Doll, Redwing, After the Ball, Three O'clock in the Morning, Moonlight Bay, My Gal Sal, Sweet Rosie O'Grady, When You Were a Tulip, Sidewalks of New York, "Ma" (She's Making Dyes At Me), Old Bill Moses Ford, Alexander's Rag Time Band, Let the Rest of the World Go By, In the Good Old Summer Time, Silver Bell, Oh Johnny. Also 200 others. Dealers and individuals - send lists and prices to: H. W. Oltmann, 1505 Elmen, Houston, Texas. **ja38841**

**WANTED:** Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling: outside or center start.—Alda Favla-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. **tfx**

**WANTED: FOLK, HILLBILLY, AND WESTERN RECORDS** - including Carter Family, Uncle Dave Macon, Cliff Carlisle, Gene Autry, Jimmie Davis, etc.—Don Wahle, 1128 Keller Ave., Louisville 13, Ky. **d3234**

The little man's face was a study in bewilderment. When he spoke it was with emphasis. "What in the all-fired heck—/ or words to that purport, he exclaimed.

I broke down and told him Bryant and I were collectors of antique records, with no love for jazz or crooners, and that I had asked for AtLee's whistling solos because they were scarce and hard to find.

The storekeeper's face cleared. "Oh, I see!" he said. "You guys like music! Well, you won't find it in this dump. All I've got is second-hand late popular stuff—nothing but junk, the kind the teen-agers buy! Lots of times I'm ashamed to take their money for the trash I pass across the counter, but if I didn't somebody else would, and I gotta make a livin'!"

Without bothering to explain that I didn't place the long gone Mr. AtLee's whistling specialties in the realm of high-class music, I spent several minutes in a conversation with the volatile storekeeper and enjoyed it very much. As Bryant and I went out the door, he cordially said: "Come back any time you're looking for rubbish. But don't hope to find any music in here. I ain't got it!"

### II. Setting the Scene

Memories of the impassioned self-styled rubbish peddler returned to me when I began to set down the comparatively little I know about one of the first, but today, most obscure of pioneer recording artists, John Yorke AtLee. Probably not more than a score or so of collectors hoard even one of the fragile two-minute cylinders which the Washington, D. C., civil service employee was turning out energetically from 65 to 70 years ago. I don't have one myself, but Allen G. Debus sent me a disc re-recording of an AtLee solo, which reproduced very distinctly. I still have it somewhere, but in the present disordered state of my collection can't find it or recall the title.

It's not even certain how the man's last name should be written, but the prevailing opinion is that it should be AtLee, with both the A and L capitalized and no separation of the syllables. However, his early associate, Fred Gaisberg, spelled it "Atlee" in his book published in England as "Music on Record" and in this country as "The Music Goes Round." An 1893 issue of the first talking machine publication, *The Phonogram*, prints it Atlee. And a death certificate issued by the District of Columbia health department at first gives it as AtLee, then fol-

lows with At Lee in parentheses. My dear dead friend, the late Frank Dorian, who began working for Columbia in 1890, always wrote it, however, as AtLee, so I shall follow that style.

Before discussing Mr. AtLee and his recording career, I shall set the stage by quoting a couple of old magazine articles which show how the phonograph, invented by Edison in 1877, was already taking hold of the public imagination in the early 1890's. It is well known that Mr. Edison suggested, shortly after his first tinfoil

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's**, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. **ja128862**

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide lists 7500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 18, N. Y. **je120061**

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. **d3084**

**OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records.** 1903 to LP. — Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight Street, San Francisco 17, Calif. **d126121**

**50 Years of old songs and popular favorites.** Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. **d3618**

**FREE "Personalities" catalogs** - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. **ap6276**

**25,000 OLD RECORDS**, transcriptions, air shots, and sound tracks. Professional quality disc to tape copying, too. Lists free. — Geo. Collings, P.O. Box 946, Fresno, Calif. **f3004**

**BREAKING UP** my collection of Red Seal and HMV opera and symphonic rarities. All in new condition. Free list. Geo. Collings, P.O. Box 946, Fresno, Calif. **f3004**

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.** South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. **f3065**

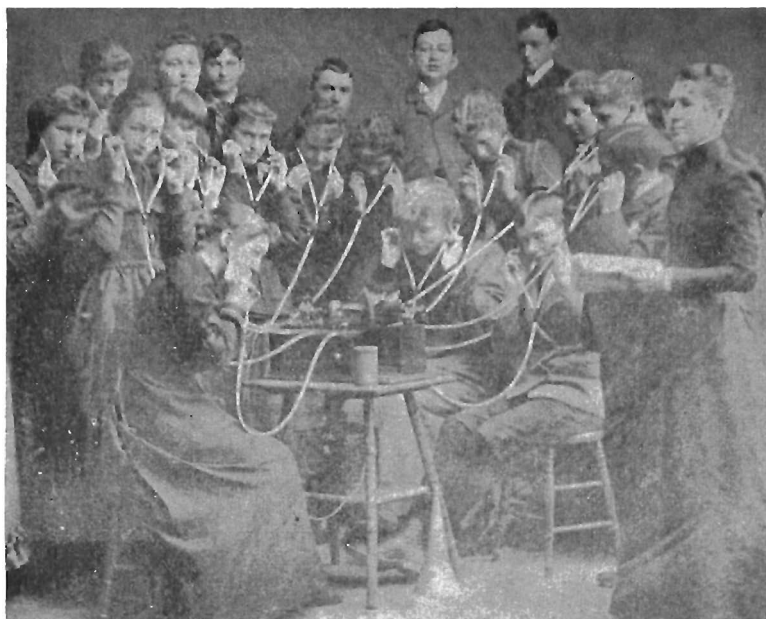
**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). **f4353**

**BRAND NEW 78 rpm disc records**, 25c up. Also special dealers discounts. Highest prices paid for special old type disc and cylinder records. Send stamp for both above lists. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. **f3675**

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

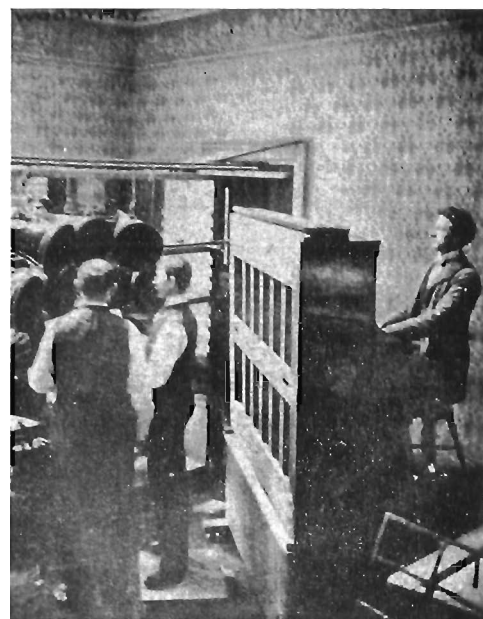
**REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY** old and new tune discs for sale: all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. **je120422**

**REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY** old and new tune discs for sale: all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. **jly120422**



LEFT

This photo, taken from a book, "Proceedings of the National Phonograph Association for 1893," shows a public school class studying reading by means of the new-fangled phonograph in the days when John Yorke AtLee's whistling specialties and Dan Kelly's "Pat Brady" series were popular recorded entertainment.



RIGHT

A typical recording scene in the Edison studio of the 1890's. The pianist is Frank P. Banta, who died in 1904. The singer may be Steve Porter or a German yodler, L. W. Lipp. The man with back to camera is unidentified. What appears to be woman's face may be seen above the top rack of horns. A man's face is at the left of the piano.

sound reproducing instrument appeared, it might prove useful in preserving the last words of dying persons. It is even better known that when the first world-famous recording artist, Len Spencer, died in December, 1914, his recorded voice was heard at his own funeral reciting the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer. Some eight years earlier, the reproduced voice of a Chicago music teacher, Miss Minnie Nelson, had sung hymns at her final rites.

But the idea of having one's voice dominate one's own funeral proceedings had already stirred some people's imaginations as early as the beginning of Spencer and AtLee's record making activities. I am indebted to Mrs. C. H. Anderson, of West Lafayette, Ind., for the following extract from the *Philadelphia Musical Journal* for March, 1890:

**WILL SING AT HIS OWN FUNERAL.** "Capt. Frank Cunningham, collector of taxes in Richmond, Va., says that within the past two years he has sung at 385 funerals. 'I often sing,' said the collector, 'at two funerals a day.' 'And who will sing at your funeral?' Capt. Cunningham was asked.

"Why, I intend to sing on that occasion myself. I hope to be able to get a phonograph or graphophone pretty soon for the purpose of singing the songs into it that will be heard at my funeral. When the time comes the machine can be taken to the church and my songs delivered just as if I were alive." Capt. Cunningham did not say what songs he would select, but the favorites, "Home of the Soul" and "Good Night," will probably be chosen.

Some *Richmond Times-Dispatch* or *News-Leader* staff writer might get a good Sunday feature story by turn-

ing through the files until he found an account of Capt. Cunningham's death and observing whether recordings of his voice were used at the funeral.

### III. Mr. Edison's 1891 Talkies

It was mentioned in a recent HOBBIES series that the comedian, Billy Jones, sang in talking motion pictures which Thomas A. Edison produced early in 1912. But almost no one knows that, as long ago as 1891, when John Yorke AtLee was just beginning to hit his stride, turning out whistling specialties and recitations, Mr. Edison was working on the problem of synchronizing the sound of the phonograph with the motion of the movie projector, and apparently believed he had solved it. The following interesting article was copied for me by Mr. Harold Farnsworth, of New Haven, Vt., from the June 20, 1891, *Scientific American*. I was startled when I read that the great inventor at that early date had perfected, or thought he had, a cylinder playing half an hour with volume enough to fill a good-sized hall:

The "kinetograph" is a machine consisting of a clever combination of a photographic camera and the phonograph, by which the words and other sounds of a speech or play are recorded simultaneously with the photographic impressions of all the movements of the speaker or actor. The photograph impressions are taken at the rate of 46 a second, and the phonograph has its capacity increased so that it will make a continuous record for 30 minutes without shifting of the cylinders. The celluloid film upon which

the photographic impressions are taken is perforated along one edge with a series of holes arranged at regular intervals with as much precision as can be secured by means of the finest perforating mechanism.

This feature is of vital importance, for the holes must move the film with such regularity as to make each separate impression when produced coincide exactly with the words or sounds recorded in the phonographic cylinder simultaneously with the position and expression of the speaker, actor or singer at the time the sounds were uttered. Exact synchronism between the sound-recording mechanism and the shutter-operating and film-moving devices of the camera necessitates exceedingly accurate mechanism both in the recorder and in the reproducer. The phonograph and camera mechanism in both cases is driven by the same motor and controlled by the same regulating mechanism.

The greatest difficulty experienced in taking the photographic impressions and reproducing them was in the stopping and starting of the film. It was found that the stopping and starting of even so light a thing as the film 46 times in a second required about two-thirds of the time, the remainder being utilized for the exposure of the plate. To secure enough light for the production of a good image in so short a space of time, a special camera lens of large aperture had to be constructed at a cost of \$600. The apparatus has already been carried to such perfection that the motion of the speaker's lips coincides so exactly with the words reproduced by the phonographic cylinder that the words actually seem to proceed from the picture, and all the movements of the speaker or actor are reproduced by the succession of the different images with such rapidity as to make the picture appear absolutely continuous, instead of intermittent, as it really is.

The reproducing apparatus is practically a reversal of the camera and phonograph; that is to say, instead of the photographic camera, a superior form of projecting lantern is employed,

which is provided with a strong light and mechanism for moving forward the strip with an intermittent motion corresponding exactly to the motion of the negative strip in the camera and, like it, acting in perfect synchronization with the phonograph. The lantern is also furnished with a light interrupter, which eclipses the light during the brief period required for shifting the film forward to a new position to show the succeeding picture.

The phonograph with its resonating horn is able to reproduce the sounds so that they may be easily heard in any part of an ordinary hall without the necessity of applying the ear to the instrument, as in the case of the commercial machines, and the successive pictures necessary to produce the effect of motion upon the screen follow each other with such rapidity, and with so little change in the successive positions, as to give the picture all the appearance of life.

I wonder what "bugs" developed in this early model "talkie" so that Mr. Edison apparently never gave public demonstrations and was not even able to produce a cylinder playing four minutes instead of 30 for another 17 years. I have no idea that John Y. AtLee, singing in his spare time for the Columbia Co., of Washington, D. C., ever did any experimental talking film work for Mr. Edison, of Menlo Park and West Orange, N. J., but I have thought this article worth preserving for the light it throws upon the state of sight and sound reproduction at the time AtLee was making one wax cylinder after another. To realize what an early period of phonograph history 1891 was we have only to recall it was not until 1886 that Charles Sumner Tainter and Chichester Bell, of the Volta Laboratory, produced their wax-coated card-board cylinder which made the phonograph practicable for home entertainment.

#### IV. Fred Gaisberg Recalls

Most of the depressingly scanty information we have about John Yorke AtLee comes from Fred Gaisberg, who sang in his teens in a Washington church as a choir boy and also became a fair pianist. He was engaged by the newly formed Columbia Co. to serve (at the age of 16) as accompanist on records by such early stars as Dan Quinn, John W. Myers, George Gaskin, Len Spencer and Billy Golden. Two years later he became associated with Emile Berliner, who was then experimenting with the disc gramophone. In 1898 Gaisberg went to London, where he helped establish the Gramophone Co. and became its chief recording expert. He recorded Patti, Caruso, Melba, Paderewski, and many other Red Seal celebrities.

Frederick William Gaisberg died September 2, 1951, at his home in Hampstead, London. As one of his associates said in a letter to me: "He was 78, still an American citizen and still a bachelor." He retired from ac-

tive duty, but was still retained by H. M. V. as a consultant.

Judging from his photographs, Gaisberg was a small man, not much more than a dwarf, but this did not keep him from being rather acidulous in his comments on AtLee, who also was far from being a Hercules. According to Gaisberg, AtLee prefaced each of his records with a pompous announcement, "in tones that made the listener visualize a giant." Instead, Fred goes on, AtLee was "a mere shrimp of a man, about five feet in his socks"—one who was proud of his deep, powerful voice and "flowing mustache." He worked from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. as a government clerk, then would go home and sing into three Columbia phonographs. With Gaisberg playing the piano and receiving 10 cents per rendition, AtLee spent hours turning out records of such things as "The Whistling Coon," "The Mocking Bird," and "The Laughing Song." (Two of these specialties are usually associated exclusively with the Negro entertainer, George W. Johnson). Said Gaisberg: "I can still hear that reverberating announcement—'The Mocking Bird,' by John Yorke AtLee, artistic whistler, accompanied by Prof. Gaisberg."

AtLee's cylinders must have traveled overseas to virtually every English-speaking country for Gaisberg said that Australians and New Zealanders who had heard him (Gaisberg) mentioned on the whistling records were astonished by his boyish appearance when they met him years later. AtLee's stock of recitations included Mark Antony's speech in "Julius Caesar," "The Lord's Prayer" and "The Mad Ravings of John McCullough," which virtually every phonograph elocutionist recited in the '90's or early 1900's, with Harry Spencer's Edison cylinder being the best known. Gaisberg makes this unkind comment: "What a nuisance we must have been on those long summer nights to our suffering neighbors! From our open window, evening after evening, that beastly little man, with myself as sole accessory, would keep up this infernal racket till all hours."

Roland Gelatt, in his admirable book, "The Fabulous Phonograph," says AtLee was one of the Columbia artists who made advertising records to order for storekeepers. He would whistle a bit of something like "The Chirp, Chirp Polka," and then either AtLee or an announcer would vociferate to this effect: "Wasn't that good whistling? But you'll whistle when you see the bargains being offered by——!" It must have sounded like present-day radio.

The Columbia record catalog dated November 24, 1890, contains 21 records by AtLee, listed under the heading of "Artistic Whistling." It ex-

plains, "The following records with piano accompaniment (were) made by Mr. John Y. AtLee of Washington, D. C., the famous Artistic Whistler:"

1. The Mocking Bird; 2. Would I were With Thee; 3. Anvil Chorus; 4. Sweet Bye and Bye; 5. Annie Laurie; 6. Sleeping, I Dreamed Love; 7. Swanee River; 8. The Dude's March; 9. Ever of Thee; 10. Fair Dove, Fond Dove; 11. Golden Robin Polka; 12. Cornflower Waltz; 13. Bischoff's Bobolink; 14. Annie Rooney; 15. When You and I Were Young, Maggie; 16. Home Sweet Home; 17. When Will the Birds Come Back; 18. Blue Danube Waltz; 19. Now was I Wrong; 20. Marching Through Georgia; 21. Down Went McGinty.

The list for Nov. 10, 1891, contains mostly the same titles with some changes and additions. No. 9 has become "A Curl From Baby's Head"; 10, "Love's Dreamland Waltz"; 14, "Love's Golden Dream"; and 21, "Comrades." Then there are new titles, from 22 through 28: "Maggie Murphy's Home," "Once Upon a Time," "Dreaming as She Sleeps," "Selections from 'Erminie,'" "Erminie—the Sighing Swain and What the Dickey Birds Say," "Erminie Gavotte and Erminie March," and "Lullaby From 'Erminie.'"

The 1890 and '91 lists also contain about a score of recitations, including several from Shakespeare, part or all of which probably were intoned by the diminutive John Yorke.

How long AtLee continued to harass the neighborhood with his home recording is a matter of conjecture. The 1893 issue of *The Phonogram* said: "Mr. John Y. AtLee continues to afford great pleasure by his rendering of music produced by artistic whistling." However, I find no mention of him in any Columbia lists later than 1891.

#### V. A Doubtful Death Notice

In an effort to clear up some of the obscurity surrounding AtLee, I asked a friend who works for the *Washington Star* to search the Star's files for a death notice or anything else mentioning the Whistler. He found nothing.

Then I wrote to the District of Co-  
(Continued on page 64)



Fred Gaisberg (left), who played piano accompaniments for John Yorke AtLee at the age of 16, examining the first clockwork driven gramophone. With him is Alfred Clark, for many years manager of the English Gramophone Co.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

lumbia Health Department, gave the little information I had about AtLee and asked that an effort be made to find his death certificate. I was delighted when a photostat came a few days later, but on examining it I became perplexed. I still am. The certificate unmistakably lists a last name of AtLee and a middle one of Yorke, but the first name is not John. As best I can make it out, it is Goodwin.

That poses a problem. Could there possibly have been two men in Washington with the uncommon last name of AtLee and the equally unusual one of Yorke? The odds seem against it. But why Goodwin instead of John for the first given name? One possibility is that the man's full name was John Goodwin Yorke AtLee, and that the person who prepared the certificate omitted the John. Or perhaps the whistler considered that Goodwin Yorke AtLee would be a hard name to understand on a record and he merely substituted the simpler one of John.

Chances are we shall never know definitely. I wrote to the U.S. Civil Service Commission and asked for any information its files contained about John Yorke AtLee, but received a reply that all civil service records were confidential.

Goodwin Yorke AtLee—whom we shall assume to be John Yorke—died of a chronic heart condition on April 1, 1910, aged 68 years, two months and four days. If my figuring is correct, this would make his birthday January 28, 1842. He therefore would have been close to 50 when he began to make records. He was born in Detroit. His father, whose name is not given, was born in Philadelphia, and his mother in Westford, N. Y. He had lived in Washington for 60 years and his occupation is given as "bookkeeper"—which sounds like a government job. He was married and lived at 1322 S. Street, N.W., but we are not told his wife's name. His burial took place April 4, 1910, at Arlington, Va. This probably means he had served as a Union soldier in the Civil War.

And that is all I am able to tell about John (or Goodwin) Yorke AtLee. I have never seen a photograph of him and must content myself with reproducing one of "Professor" Gaisberg, taken when he had lived many years in England and was far past the age of 16.

### VI. Dan Kelly

I must admit that, after having spent most of my life amassing information about pioneer recording artists, I had never heard of Dan Kelly until I saw him mentioned in Roland Gelatt's book. When I came across a reference to him as one of the most popular recording artists of the '90's I was incredulous and wrote to Mr. Gelatt for more information,

(Continued on page 86)

## WANTED

**MECHANICAL BANKS**, gold coins, Indian relics, music boxes, old guns. — Romey, Box 291, Bluffton, Indiana. my120441

**IVES, IVES-BLAKESLEE**, Carpenter, Kenton, Hubley, N. N. Hill Brass Co., Gong Bell Manufacturing Co., Shepard Hardware Co., J. & E. Stevens Co., Kyser, Rex and Wilkins. Want any catalogs issued by these companies. See my large ad in the Old Mechanical Banks Department of this issue—F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**WANTED:** Old iron hitching posts and old tin tobacco tugs. — R. F. French. 507½ Highland Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa. f122511

**BOOKS**, documents, etc. on Civil War, Slavery and the South. I will pay fair prices for anything in paper in these categories (books, pamphlets, documents, broadsides, soldiers' letters, signed portraits of generals, Confederate currency, Confederate imprints, slave documents, etc.) Not interested in weapons, uniforms, medals, etc.—D. R. Spaight, Bookseller, Waterford, Virginia. ap6238

**BOTTLES, FLASKS** and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted: New England Pineapple oval dish, handled mugs and cruet. —The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. ap128271

**WANTED:** Antique clothing, 1895-1920, men and women. Describe and price in first letter. — Doyer, 1626 No. 46th St., Phoenix, Ariz. ap126102

**CROSS SWORDS** Meissen, silver gilt, marquetry furniture, also gold items. Price (for resale) and condition first letter. — The Red Velvet Shop, Rear 187, Rock St., Fall River, Mass. au122971

**MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Bleeders, etc. — J. Koelliker, 4610 Wood St., Willoughby, Ohio. d12407

**WHISKEY AMERICANA:** Bottles ads, posters, licenses, books, magazines or anything relating to pre-prohibition whiskey business. — Barton Distilling Company, 134 North LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. au120061

**EARLY** Victorian mahogany card table. Good condition. Send photo.—Mrs. Henry B. Henson, 19 Schenck Ave., Great Neck, N. Y. ja3413

**PLEASE NOTE** my display ad in Mechanical Bank Department of this issue, listing various wants. — F. H. Griffith, Harris Pump & Supply Co., Pittsburgh 3, Pa. tfx

**SHAVING MUGS**, vases in pairs, Mary Gregory items and toys. — Walter J. Henry, Adamsburg, Pa. f12069

**COLLECTOR WANTS** old time iron toys: Royal Circus wagons, horse-drawn pleasure vehicles such as: hansom cabs, phaetons, spiders, traps, tallyhos, etc. — L. C. Hegarty, Coalport, Penna. f6008

**WHOLESALE DEALERS!** Opening new shop. Need stock. Please write. — Anna B. Ress, 2928 Market St., Youngstown, Ohio. d1631

**SILVER NAPKIN RINGS** with figures of animals or children applied, also with wheels attached. Cruets or small cabinet pieces in rare art glass. Send description and price in first letter please. — J. C. Thier, 343 Starin Ave., Buffalo 16, N. Y. ap60821

## FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Fine Rib goblets, decanter. Bellflower barrel shape goblets. Chinese lacquered tea caddy, pewter insert. Pitcher and tumblers opal top. Custard glass souvenir pitcher, goblet. Tea Leaf lustre oval teapot and sugar. Sawtooth glass. Old tin box to paint. Pleat and Panel large compote. White Ironstone covered sugar, oval dishes. Cream colored Bristol compote. China chocolate pot, small cups and saucers. Carnival glass. Copper pans with handles. Chafing dish. Light green Sawtooth compote. Diamond Point jar. Tobacco jars in Royal Doulton and Rockingham brown ware. Clear glass paneled punch cups. Paneled Thistle pitcher, compotes, celery, dishes. Staffordshire cup plate. Waffle and Thumbprint decanters WT stoppers. Cut glass cruet. China partial dinner set, floral blue decorated, GWW lamp base. Crystal lamp wines. Old pewter plates, teapot. I'm a collector, disposing of surplus. — F. H. Reed, 59 Torrey St., South Weymouth, Mass. d14011

**PICKLE CASTOR**, no fork, \$10. 5 bottle castor set, \$17. 3 qt. copper coffee pot, \$10. 8x10" deep walnut frame, gold liner, \$7. Plano rolls, 50c each. 3-leg bean pot, \$6. Pewter salt and pepper shakers with design, \$5 pr. — Ott's Shop, R.R. 1, Yellow Springs, Ohio. d1063

**AMBERINA** 5" bowl, 3" deep, has six deep scallops, \$22.50. 9½" bowl, blue, rose poppies, red R. S. Prussia, \$12.50. Bee and Hive footed covered 5½" honey dish, \$6.50; crystal champagne glasses, have cut hollow stems, lovely, \$20 for four. Crystal Wedding 3½" sauces, 2 for \$5. 10" Sandwich glass Garfield memorial plate, \$7.50. Marked "Germany" stein, pewter top, tan and green. German verse, 9½" tall, \$8.50. Sterling spoons, California, Niagara Falls, Wisconsin, South Dakota, \$2.50 each. All items perfect, transportation extra. — Leona Norton, Route 1, Moberly, Mo. d1696

**CAMERA COLLECTION.** One of the best collections in the country, for museum or outstanding collection. 120 cameras, many of unusual quality and appearance, including the rare Obscura, which alone is worth \$1,000. Collection also includes valuable equipment and rare books on photography. \$4,000 takes the entire collection. Reason for selling: retiring and moving west.—Wm. Musick, 41 West 124th St., Chicago 28, Ill. d1614

**PAIR** - Mother of pearl Opera glasses, Paris 1878, \$25. Salad spoon & fork, Gorham, 1880, gold and silver handle, \$35. Ringmans - 3 carat white zircon in 14K solid gold yellow Gypsy mounting, women could use it. Brilliant cut, pre-war \$55. Blue Brilliant cut zircon, basket mounting 14K, yellow gold 1.77 c. Special cut \$36.62. P.P. extra. Stamp for reply.—Marjorie E. Oliver, 275 Genesee St., Lockport, New York. d1825

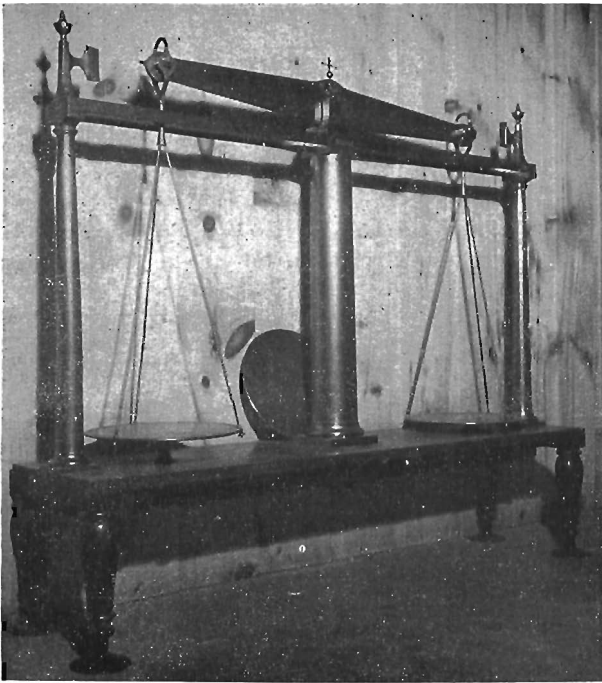
**FOR SALE:** Closing out all antique furniture due to ill health in family: Medium size cherry corner cupboard; refinished pine cupboard (small) \$45; cherry bureau; chests; large 2-drawer pine table; lovely large white marble top bureau with rounded corners; oval and round lamp tables; refinished night tables (one drawer) \$16 up; lamp bases; lovely gilded picture frames; large walnut secretary with cathedral glass doors \$45; refinished walnut gateleg table \$70; wooden and china clocks \$4 up; Smith American organ \$175. Closed Sundays.—Mrs. Tylee Davis, 1932 Oak St., New Albany, Ind. f32741

### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8.

(Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)





## WORLD'S MOST UNIQUE SCALES

Make an offer.

**LONGFELLOW**  
Antique Shop  
86 Portland St.  
Portland, Maine  
do

## BERT PETERSEN TRADING POST HOME OF THE OLD, ODD AND UNUSUAL

1019 Mission St.

South Pasadena, Calif.

SYcamore 9-5525

PACKING OR CRATING FREE.		TRANSPORTATION EXTRA. PHOTOS 35c	
1. Very large cow bells, ea.	2.50	14. Gold scales in cabinet, 17x15x7", with weights	48.50
2. Iron corn sheller, needs handle.	5.00	15. Mission style shelf clock, good.	15.00
3. Cherry pitter, works.	4.50	16. Seth Thomas Westminster chimes shelf clock, perfect cond.	32.50
4. Two hat racks made of horns, ea.	6.00	17. Edison disk phonograph, 30 records.	35.00
5. Two good log branding hammers, ea.	6.00	18. Ships binical compass, oil light, copper	40.00
6. Two amber glass net balls, ea.	2.50	19. Gay Ninety shelf clock, original.	20.00
7. Two clear glass, ea.	2.00	20. Unusual collection of 50 electric razors, all kinds and makes	65.00
8. Old fish snare.	5.00	21. More branding irons from Kans., ea. \$5; doz. assort.	50.00
9. Crystal radio ear phones.	6.50	22. Old miner's gold pans, large	\$2.50;
10. Old gasoline wall light, rare.	10.00	smaller one	2.00
11. Iron drugstore scales, marblo pans.	22.50	23. 100 piano rolls (fair to very good).	35.00
12. Cast iron dog sitting on cushion bank.	11.50		do
13. Three Chinese gongs on cord.	10.50		
13. Brass Student lamp, electrified.	42.50		

### MRS. SARAH C. WINSLOW

1654 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge 38, Mass.

1. Cov. Butler dish, gold band Button Arches	6.50
2. Spooners: Shell, Jewel, Dickerson, Loop, Dart, Grape Medallion, Button Arches.	5.00
3. Cané & Rosette Open 7" Compote	5.00
4. Pink Portland Band 6" Sauce	5.00
5. 3 Open Rose Goblets, each	4.50
6. Plain Dakota Cov. Butter	4.50
7. 4 Rice Chinese 3 3/4" sauce dishes, ea.	2.00
8. Carnival Orange: Luster Rose Cov. Sug. Creamer \$4. Butterfly, Berry Spooner	3.00
9. Milk Glass: Three Kitten Plate, Three Bear Plate, each	5.00
10. Cider Set: 1 large pitcher, 6 Handle Mugs Burley, Winter Co. Pottery 1850. Set	12.00
11. 6 Coin Silver teaspoons not matching	5.00
12. 1 pair 12" Bulbous decanters cut glass stoppers, pair	8.00
Transportation extra.	do

### ANTIQUES

#### ON PEACEABLE STREET

Several boxes of fine toy soldiers including

THE DRESDEN KNIGHTS  
KAISERPARADE bei MUNCHEN  
REVUE

A Schoenhut Circus

A few choice dolls

### JACK & GRETCHEN SHARP

R.F.D. 1, South Salem, N. Y.  
Lewishoro 3-2735  
dp

### KENNETH JOHNSON and OTTO LAXY

179 Newbury St. Boston 16, Mass.

Amber Thousand Eye Christmas light	8.50
Emerald Green Bryce (Ribbon Candy) doughnut stand, 6" diam.	9.00
Blue Spirea Band footed sauce, 4 1/2" diam.	6.50
Heart & Thumbprint: covered butter plate, 6 1/2" diam.	8.50
2 Buckle with Star wines, ea.	5.00
Pillar & Bulls Eye goblet, Lee plate 24, brilliant flint	12.50
2 Pinotiss Feather plates, 6" diam., ea.	12.00
Blue Willow Oak handled mug	12.50

No Reproductions. Free Pattern Glass List.

Transportation extra.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS"

do

### MRS. DONALD FOSTER

13 York Ave. West Pittston, Pa.

Grace Putnam By Lo doll, 11" neck size	Write
Caster set, 5 bottles, resilvered.	25.00
Blown sapphire blue milk pitcher, Coin Spot, applied handle, plated top, bulbous.	25.00
Matching finger bowl	8.00
German pink luster Mustache cup, picture Park Hotel, Mt. Clemens, Mich.	3.50
Pr. Flint glass loco decanters.	35.00
Matching celery	9.00
Seale Model, Main Coast Guard Turret Gun WWI	30.00
Magic Lantern, interesting hand-painted slides	13.00
Sewing Bird	5.00
Hawks cut glass bowl, 8"	12.00
A. Keppler's post Civil War political cartoons	write
Ribbon candy goblet	2.50
Postage extra.	dp

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

which he promptly gave. I am still of the opinion that Kelly's "Pat Brady" cylinders could have had only minor popularity when compared to the productions of Len Spencer, Russell Hunting, Cal Stewart, and many other performers of that day. I am also sure. Kelly's vogue must have been restricted to the very early 1890's when companies licensed to operate in only one state, made their own records. Kelly's output appears to have been restricted to the short-lived Ohio Phonograph Co. But, for the sake of historical interest, here is what the *Phonogram* excerpt sent to me by Mr. Gelatt says about him:

A NOTED RECORD MAKER—DAN KELLY, of CINCINNATI, OHIO. We have obtained, in response to numerous calls from our readers, a very natural and characteristic portrait of Mr. Dan Kelly, of Cincinnati, who is so well known to all users of the phonograph through his "Pat Brady" series of Irish humorous records, and present it herewith, together with a short biographical note of Mr. Kelly.

Mr. Kelly was born in New York City Jan. 22, 1842. His parents were both vocalists, from whom he inherited a peculiar and surprising vocal talent owing to its wonderful register, which, coupled with his mimicry, enables him to sing acceptably the heaviest bass or tenor vocal solos, Negro plantation melodies, the Irish "As Is," "Come all Ye's," and "lamentations," in the true and peculiar style of each race.

His first appearance on the public stage was in Wyatt's Theatre, Hartford, Conn., in 1855, on which occasion he played the part of Paddy Miles in the Irish farce of "The Limerick Boy." Being then only 13 years old, his impersonation of that character was doubly admired by press and public, from whom he received encomiums of praise. Preferring minstrelsy to the drama, he entered that line and remained several years, singing with the best minstrel companies then in this country.

In 1871 he entered into partnership with the scenic artists, Simmons and Morgan (the late Matt Morgan of artistic fame) to exhibit a panorama of Ireland, which was universally pronounced to be the best artistic production on that subject ever exhibited. The financial crash of 1873 came, the show business was generally paralyzed, and Mr. Kelly then withdrew from professional life, and afterwards returned to the boards in 1877, his last engagement being at the Buckingham Theatre, Louisville, Ky., in 1887.

At present Mr. Kelly spends his spare time in making records for the Ohio Phonograph Co., and writing songs, sketches and dramas for the profession. He commenced in the phonographic field about three years ago with Shakespearean recitations and songs without accompaniment.

The idea occurred to him that an imitation of a scene in court which he witnessed when a boy would be the thing for the phonograph. He immediately reproduced and recorded it on a cylinder, under the title "Pat Brady's Plea in His Own Defense; a scene in the Police Court in Hartford, Conn., between Pat Brady, Mrs. Callahan and Judge Collier." The record took well with the public, which encouraged Mr. Kelly to try other subjects, and he soon succeeded in placing before the patrons of the phonograph the celebrated "Pat Brady" series which has been welcomed and enjoyed by the English speaking people of North America during the past three years.

Where is there a phonograph in the United States or Canada without a Brady? The answer is, Nowhere! Where-

ever mankind appreciates the peculiar wit and humor of Irish character, that comical Irishman, Pat Brady, is always in demand, and it is not at all uncommon to see ladies and gentlemen standing in line before an automatic phonograph in many of the larger cities, awaiting their turn to hear him sing and talk. Mr. Kelly not only was the originator of these humorous phonographic records, but, notwithstanding his many imitators, stands today the acknowledged head of all humorous talkers for the phonograph. There are probably no records on sale that exceed these in demand.

More information about Dan Kelly, the "Pat Brady" series, and other pioneer recording artists is given, under the heading of "Famous Record-Makers and Their Work," in the same issue, most of which I quote:

The celebrated "Pat Brady" records . . . have been used in all sections of the country from Boston to California and from Canada to New Orleans and Texas. The Ohio Co. reports that orders for these records continue to come along in large numbers, and there seems to be no end to their popularity. They are made in Cincinnati . . . by Dan Kelly, who spends a large portion of his time making these records. Mr. Kelly was formerly connected with some of the leading minstrel companies, such as Bryant's, Christy's and others when these companies were the great attraction in New York. He was also for some time the lecturer for McEvoy's Hibernicon, a panorama which traveled extensively through the country. . .

The great charm to these Pat Brady records is their naturalness of tone. The Irishmen that talk are real Irishmen, with the rich brogue and their Celtic way of saying things, and not an imitation of the genuine article. There have been many imitators of Mr. Kelly in his Pat Brady records, but none of them have been successful. The number of records disposed of by the Ohio Phonograph Co. up to date amounts to about five thousand.

Mr. W. F. Denny, who has been employed by the New England Phonograph Co. for over a year, early developed a talent for popular music, and appeared first as a public singer at the Academy of Music, where he sang with great success the then popular song, "The Pretty Red Rose." Shortly thereafter he became a member of the "Quartette Club" of Philadelphia. After the termination of Mr. Denny's contract with that company he began to "star," visiting all the best theatres and music halls in the country. Mr. Denny's voice is a tenor of pure tone and much pathos, and his articulation is extremely wonderful. As a vocal record maker it is claimed he has no equal in this country, and although his services have been sought by others, he had devoted his spare time entirely to the New England Phonograph Co. . .

Mr. Russell Hunting offers highly dramatic representations, in which all phases of actual life are manifested, with the addition of railway whistles, bells, galloping of horses, and other sounds, brought to a wonderful pitch of perfection. . . Among others we may mention Mr. John C. Leach, who imitates the Chinese, the Yankee, the English dude; Mr. Leon (Sic!) Spencer, whose repertoire embraces songs of all sorts, notably "Near It," from the comic opera entitled "The Pearl of Pekin." Mr. George J. Gaskin, whose forte is pathetic songs, and Mr. Diamond, who introduces a variety; Mr. Hogan, Mr. Clarence, Mr. Asbury, and last though not least, Mr. George W. Johnson, whose "Whistling Coon" has been heard in all climes, even in the wilds of Africa, must be heard in order to be appreciated.

How many present-day record collectors, I wonder, have ever heard of

(Continued on page 88)

## OAKGLADE ANTIQUE SHOP

CHLOE CROUSE, Owner  
White Oak, W. Va.

1. Cranberry threaded glass match or toothpick barrel, hallmarked silver top, 2 1/2" high, 3/4" diam. \$5.50
2. Semi-footed old copper lustre pitcher, baluster shade, applied white grapes and leaves at neck; tiny fleck off under spout. \$17.50
3. Copper lustre pitcher, snake handle, 6 1/2" high; white, blue and yellow floral decor each side. \$25.00
4. Large 7" high, 6" wide old copper lustre pitcher, no harn. nick under spout, enamel floral; pink, green, yellow in wide band around neck, base of pitcher bulbous and fluted. \$27.50
5. Impressed WEDGWOOD, only blue and white jasper cracker jar, EPNS ball and lid, good condition, a lovely one. \$45.00
6. Dark blue jasper tea set: pot, open sugar, creamer, silver hallmarked rims, Classical figures, ADAMS, Tunstall, England. \$85.00
7. Blue and white Impressed WEDGWOOD only 8" tall clock Jasper with Classical figures front and sides. Across arched top are the Latin word in white "Tempus Fugit." Runs perfectly, but the key that moves the hands is missing. \$100.00
8. Carlton ware, dark blue and white floral, plated cover and rim shows wear, cracker jar, a nice one. \$15.00
9. Strawberry soft paste, lustred shallow bowl, 8" diam., 1 1/2" deep. \$15.00
10. Silver lustre goblet, copper lustre lined, 4 1/2" high. \$15.00
11. Beautiful silver lustre teapot, overall width 11 1/2", height 7"; almost indiscernible ago crack running across one side. Fluted lower half (Warman shows the tall pot similar to this one). \$27.50
12. Pair of old English cut decanters, original stoppers. \$32.50
13. 9" tall, Buzz cut wino cruet, diamond cut stopper. \$22.00
14. Onion Meissen, crossed sword, double gourd shaped vase, a lovely old one. \$18.50
15. Set of 8 Minton 9" plates, COCKATRICE pattern. \$40.00
16. Mocha pitcher, 7" tall, 5 1/2" base, 7" across widest part, no mark. Green and brown seaweed decor on 3" wide neck band; 2 white brown line bordered bands around lower part of pitcher. \$37.50
17. For the Toby collector here is a Merry Xmas:
  - a. OLD seated Toby with spotty face, holding a foaming beer mug which bears the words, "Success to our wooden walls" (the English Fleet). Black hat rim has had a repair on one side hardly noticeable, lavender pink coat, yellowish pants, black shoes, orange chair and handle, 9 1/2" tall, 5" base diam. \$45.00
  - b. Glazed pottery Toby. Woman in tri-corn hat, yellow apron. Her hands are hidden in its deep pockets. Green shawl, 9" high. \$25.00
  - c. Dog Toby in all over brown glaze. He is sitting up with his paws in a cowering position; the top of his head comes off to form a lid. Lid has an under edge chip or two, doesn't show. 11" tall and a very nice Toby. Indecor. \$32.50
18. Half pint size Mason's Ironstone china pitcher, blue and floral decor inside and out, green snake handle. \$10.00
19. Old buff Stoneware bottle in shape of big scaly fish, stopper in mouth, pint size, 11 1/4" long, 4" across widest part. A fine catch for the bottle collector. \$17.50

## WOODHAVEN ANTIQUES

W. Farmington, Ohio

NOTE: Price each pc. Stamp for reply, 18 pcs. Ruby barred oval, Actress Pinafore celery tray, \$12.50. Beautiful Millefiori small cov. sugar, \$45; creamer 3 c/s, \$37.50 ea. Blue Mary Gregory patch box, \$22.50; others, write. Camphor, Coraleña rose bowl, \$30.50. Goblets: 2 Moon & Star, \$9.50; 2 Rochelle, \$8.50. 2 Celtic Cross, \$5.50. 2 Kings Crown, \$8.50. Log Cabin sauce, \$4.75. Torpedo cruet, \$8.75. Wines: 3 Feather, \$4.50; 1 Hour glass, \$4.75; 1 Bellflower, \$20.00; 2 Cut Log, \$3.50. Sawtooth syrup, \$12.00. R. T. Print tumbler, \$8.50. Amaretto bread tray, \$22.50. 8 footed saucers, \$7.00. 8 flat saucers, \$4.75. Cov. butter, \$35.00. Cov. sugar, \$35.00; celery, \$22.50; creamer, small base chip, \$21.00. do

## LIQUIDATION SALE of PRIVATE COLLECTION

PRIVATE SALE OF ANTIQUES COLLECTED DURING PAST 40 YEARS.

No Reproductions. Hundreds of rare items in: FINE & TIME soda glass; CUT GLASS COLORED GLASS; MILK GLASS; some ART glass. China, BLUE WILLOW, TEA LEAF LUSTRE, China SLIPPERS, BENNINGTON type pottery, MAJOLICA, COPPER LUSTRE pitchers. Collection of Clear Glass CRUETS, TOOTHPICK HOLDERS. Over 75 patterns in Pressed Glass, including such rare patterns as Westward Ho, Fr. Lion, FR. CABBAGE,

L. KRING — 3215 N. Washington Road, Fort Wayne, Ind.

19. Sarreguemines preserve pot in the shape of an orange. Green stem and leaf form the knob. Orange peel color, glazed, cream inside, 4 1/2" over all height, 4" diam. \$12.50
20. 5" square Majolica box in yellow brown glaze; inside is white, lid is lifted by a huge bee with outspread wings that are delicately colored. \$17.50
21. The prettiest inkwell in MOP finish, hinged brass lid and jacy brass color, clear well insert, base 5" height, 3 1/4". Iridescent pearly glass, and a lovely piece. \$15.00
22. Orange water Carnival set: grapes, bulbous pitcher and 6 tumblers. \$17.50
23. Iridescent Cobalt blue water pitcher and six tumblers, enameled in white and green floral. \$27.50
24. Pair of Royal Bayreuth lobster ash trays, only one mark'd, but both alike. \$12.50
25. Six beautifully cut and altogether lovely, 6 1/2" tall sherry goblets. You do not see these often. \$60.00
26. Lennox Belleek honey pot: white with gold applied bees, shape of beehive, gold bee knob on cover. \$12.50
27. Three French candle lithophanes, 4 1/2" by 4", lovely wood scenes with figures of girl and nuan, each. \$7.00
28. Old - similar one illustrated in Cox's book of china and pottery, crossed sword Meissen chocolate pot, floral decor, slightly fluted bulbous sides. \$35.00
29. 14" paneled effect inside clear to deep Cranberry vase. An old piece of Cranberry. \$15.00
30. D&B 5" amber pitcher, reeded starfish, base applied handle. \$10.00
31. MINTON impressed old dark blue and white Willow pattern soup tureen, platter, gold lined decor, open handles, acorn fluted, no fls. \$55.00
32. Pair of pink overlay (white inside) crimped top vases, white floral spray decor, 7" high. \$25.00
33. Majolica butter (one stick size) base green leaves top ear of yel. corn fluted, a pat of yellow butter. \$15.00
34. Old Waffle and Thumbprint goblet, has turned slightly amethyst with ago rough crackly base. \$6.50
35. Pair of Milk glass hand vases, 10", creamy yellow hands (these are turned the same way) hold white flower decorated crimped top milk white cornucopia vases, rings on ring finger and chain at wrist. \$28.00
36. Four Tea Leaf cups and saucers, very creamy, almost buff color, round cups, deep saucers, mk'd. B. M. and Company, with black bound dog sitting upright perfect but crazed ea. \$8.50
37. Winter pitchers: Blue Cano, \$14.00; dark blue Beldrop, \$17.50; Inverted Thumbprint Cranberry, \$32.50; Cranberry with opal overlay Dalsey and Fern, \$32.50; amber SPRIG. \$17.50
38. Pair of Dalsey & Button fan plates. \$5.00
39. Pair of 10" DAVENPORT saucers. \$15.00
40. Crossed sword MEISSEN plate, 11" wide, deep scalloped edge, floral center, wide flange patterned in cheeks, diamonds, swirls. Beautiful white china. \$25.00
41. Pair of natural color Staffordshire lions, reclining, 10" long, glass eyes, reduced for quick sale to. \$25.00
42. A lovely old ABC plate in English pottery, 7 1/2" diam., all in brown sepi with a big lion in center. Registry mark circa 1870-1882. One slight flake, and a spider underneath, not through. Looks perfect, and is, considering it is old and used. \$8.50

MERRY CHRISTMAS from Oakglade to you and yours.

Please do NOT send postage. Price includes everything. dc

## THE LIGHTED WINDOW ANTIQUES

804 Governor Costa Mesa, Calif.

Extremely rare Dolphin stem Ribbon compote, rectangular bowl, scalloped top, a beauty, \$85. Metz page 171. Mary Gregory amber water pitcher, little girl wearing large hat \$55. 2 matching ale goblets amber, boy & girl, ea. \$22.50. Amber mug with boy, tinted face, hair & hands \$18. Beautiful cranberry threaded glass footed creamer 4 1/2" h., 1 1/4" around, very ornate \$27.50. Amethyst Croesus cruet, mint condition, original stopper also rare relish dish mint - green Croesus butter, covered sugar, cruet, S/P saucers and condiment tray. Cranberry Delaware water pitcher, beautiful dark rich color and fine gold. 16" all original Bylo doll brown eyes, original clothes and cap, this is the finest I have ever seen \$75. Write on other dolls. Telephone MIDWAY 6-1243 dc

## OUR DECORATIVE BICYCLE PLATE COLLECTION

(Continued from page 53)

the Jersey coast near Asbury Park the writer bought a large 10-inch plate commemorating the 9th Olympiad at Amsterdam in 1928. It contains many sport pictures including a racing cyclist on the Olympic race course.

Through an article in the HOBBIES Magazine we bought a real old French plate part of a set entitled "Les Sports" showing four ladies riding bicycles wearing the daring bloomers of the period. From Altman's New York City antique shop we bought a plate with a hobby horse rider dated 1818. It is marked on the reverse side "Hand painted in California." The rider is wearing a top hat and tails, a dandy of the period.

While in California last summer on a cycling tour of our national parks we picked up two plates. One is a small green plate showing a couple riding a tandem. The other is a Japanese import showing a tandem couple with their baby on the rear luggage carrier. They portray a modern couple enjoying family cycling.

From Italy is a medium sized plate with rider on old high wheel bicycle holding umbrella in front of him. This is the first picture of a rider holding an umbrella to be shown on a plate. The last item in our collection is a very small 3-inch metal plate marked "Made in Italy." It portrays a high wheel rider of the eighties wearing top hat and full dress suit.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 87)

"Mr. John C. Leach," Mr. Hogan, Mr. Clarence and Mr. Asbury?" And how many readers smiled with me at the statement that Dan Kelly's "huge" output of records had reached a total of five thousand?

I wish it were possible to illustrate the photograph of Kelly which accompanied the *Phonogram* article, but it is too dark. It shows a middle-aged-man of considerable weight, wearing a large black hat, and sporting a thick mustache, with his clasped hands holding some sort of a stick.

I have never seen one of Kelly's "Brady" records and imagine almost none are in existence. And I have not tried to trace his life story after he stopped making records. Finding the right death certificate for a man named Dan Kelly would be almost an impossibility in a large city, but undoubtedly he died many years ago and is not still living at the age of 117.

The chief interest to present-day record collectors in John Yorke AtLee and Dan Kelly lies in their ever-deepening obscurity. The time must come before many years when not a playable record by either will be left on earth. Anyone who possesses an AtLee or Kelly cylinder may congratulate himself on having a real rarity, even though not necessarily "a pearl of great price."

## OBITUARY

### MRS. LOUISE DISSELHORST

Mrs. Louise Disselhorst, 87, dealer of the World's Antique Mart, Chicago, passed away on October 12. Mrs. Disselhorst was active as a collector, dealer, and exhibitor at shows throughout the Middle West and South until she was suddenly stricken about October 1.

She was also a dog fancier and held many ribbons for prizes in exhibitions of pure bred dogs throughout the country. She had also written extensively on topics relating to the dog world.

During the World's Fair of 1893 when the renowned Sousa and his band played at the exposition, she was one of the featured soloists. She was offered a traveling position with the group, but her father, being of the conservative school, decreed that the "theater" was not for his daughter.

She was an accomplished needlewoman also and in her younger days held classes in needlework.

Surviving are two sons, Louis and Herbert, and grand-children and great-grand-children.

—O—

### MRS. T. B. TEASDALE

Mrs. T. B. Teasdale, noted collector of St. Louis, Mo., passed away on October 5. Mrs. Teasdale was a regular visitor to the semi-annual Chicago Antique Expositions where she mingled with many of her fellow collectors and friends. Through the years she amassed a great collection of pattern glass, paperweights, jewelry, china, silver and decorative items for her home.

—O—

### WILLIAM B. PITTS

William B. Pitts, 92, a noted collector of gems and minerals and honorary curator of gem-minerals at the California Academy of Sciences at San Francisco, died recently in Atlanta, Ga.

—O—

### WILLIAM E. SUIDA

William E. Suida, 82, art historian and curator of art research at the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, died in New York recently.

—O—

### LEAH TISHA TOMLINSON

Leah Tisha Tomlinson of near Elkton, Md., died on October 21. She had been an antique dealer in Delaware and Maryland since 1930, and owned the Kitty Knight House at Georgetown, Md., from 1924 to 1947.

Surviving is a son, Dr. Ray. J. Tomlinson, Columbus, Ga., and two grandchildren.

—O—

### PROF. CHANDLER R. POST

Professor Chandler R. Post, 77, Harvard University authority on Spanish painting and sculpture, who taught at Harvard 45 years prior to his retirement in 1950, died in Cambridge, Mass., November 8.

—O—

### R. M. SEEKINS

Mr. R. M. Seekins, well known collector of Ellington, N. Y., who

liquidated his long time collection last year, recently passed away very suddenly. Mr. Seekins was postmaster in Ellington for several years.

## VISITORS AT 1006 S. MICH., CHICAGO

Mr. and Mrs. George D. Rust, art glass collectors of Berkeley Heights, N. J., were among the many collectors gathered in Chicago for the Antique Show sponsored by HOBBIES Magazine. This cheerful couple also stopped off at the HOBBIES offices to renew their subscription.

\* \* \*

Mrs. T. N. Brandon of Clarksville, Tenn., and her son T. N. Brandon Jr., found their recent visit to the Mart most rewarding. Mr. Brandon, Jr. is a pilot for Delta Airlines.

\* \* \*

About 20 members of the Antiques Study Group of the Hinsdale, Ill., Women's Club visited the Mart on October 23. This group plans a tour each month and the Mart shops were their October destination.

\* \* \*

Brian Forster of Chicago, whose interest lies in collecting metal military miniatures—55 mm or semi-flat, was in the Mart recently looking for specimens.

\* \* \*

Some HOBBIES advertisers who recently stopped in at the Mart were: Mrs. Harry D. Wilson of Pike County Antiques in Petersburg, Ind.; Mrs. M. L. Hermanson of Muskegon, Mich.; Gladys Rainey, dealer from the Antique Market, Findlay, Ohio; Mr. and Mrs. Ora D. Orr of Orr's Antiques in Ankeny, Ia.; Francis H. Kraus of Larchmont, N. Y.; Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Dankers of Oregon, Mo.; Mrs. W. H. Zwilling, Vincennes, Ind.; Charles H. Stinson, Kankakee, Ill.; and Henry H. Huber, Germantown, Ohio.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Lillian Shull and daughter, Thelma, of Pasadena, Calif., stopped at the home of HOBBIES Magazine on their recent trip to their native Mid-West.

\* \* \*

Judge and Mrs. Chester Pendleton of Findlay, Ohio, greeted fellow collectors in Chicago during show week. The Pendletons have re-designed their dining room with special cases and lighting to show off their outstanding collection of art glass. As might be expected, they are interested in Findlay glass among other collectibles.

\* \* \*

Another enthusiastic visitor during October, Gwen Y. Wilcox of Salt Lake City, Utah, spoke of Beehive House there, formerly occupied by Brigham Young, which is being restored.

\* \* \*

Two sisters from Ohio, Mrs. William L. Davis from St. Mary's, Ohio, and Mrs. R. E. Hansen of Cleveland, spent an entire day browsing through the Mart shops and thoroughly enjoyed their visit they re-

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## POLK MILLER

### And His "Old South" Quartet

By JIM WALSH

On first thought it seems surprising that few pioneer recording artists served in the Civil War. After all, Thomas A. Edison invented the phonograph in 1877, only 12 years after peace was proclaimed and when most Union and Confederate veterans were still young men.

But on second thought it isn't surprising that hardly any of the popular early record-makers had fought either for the preservation of the Union or for State's Rights. During its first 10 years the phonograph was a crude toy which recorded by indenting tinfoil, and had no commercial use.

Not until 1886, when Charles Sumner Tainter and Chichester Bell began recording on cardboard wax-coated cylinders, did the phonograph slowly start finding its way into penny arcades, saloons, and, a little later, a few homes.

The greater number of popular pioneer artists didn't begin making records until the late 1890's or early 1900's. By the time the phonograph became established as a popular means of home entertainment the veterans were middle-aged.

A few popular artists — Edward

M. Favor and Cal Stewart among them — were born before the war began but were children when it ended. Another small group, including Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Steve Porter, and William F. Hooley, were born during the war.

But by far the larger number didn't come into the world until years after the fighting was over. Even Len Spencer, the first famous recording artist, arrived at his parent's Washington home a few years after Lee surrendered to Grant.

This being true, it is intriguing to learn that one well-known recording artist was a Confederate veteran, who made perhaps the only complete version ever waxed of the Southern war song, "The Bonnie Blue Flag." To make it more surprising, he was 65 years of age when his recording career both began and ended.

I am thinking of a Richmond, Va., man, the late Polk Miller, a druggist by profession who is known to record collectors today because of the Edison cylinders he sang, with the assistance of his "Old South" Quartet composed of four of his devoted Negro friends.

### II A Son's Tribute

A year or so ago I received a letter from Stanley L. Johnston, of Lansing, Mich. It said he had seen in drug stores a number of medical preparations, mostly remedies for illnesses of dogs, which bore the name of Polk Miller.

Mr. Johnston asked what relation the medicine maker was to the Polk Miller who sang for Edison half a century ago. He was nonplussed when I told him the two Polk Millers were the same.

The druggist was a lifelong lover of animals, and had developed a series of preparations which are still sold for treating their ailments. Recently, it struck me that, since so little is known today of Polk Miller, a HOBBIES article about him might be welcome.

I wrote to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, asking if the newspaper's Reference library contained any material about the banjo-playing folksong singing druggist. I was told the only item was a faded type-written, biographical sketch by his son, Withers Miller.

The librarian, Miss Mary M. Watt, kindly had the article copied for me. It is so interesting as evidence of the son's admiration of and devotion to his father that I shall copy it:

Polk Miller was born at Grape Lawn, Prince Edward county, near Burkeville, Va., on the second day of August,

1844, and was the fifth child of Giles A. and Jane Webster Miller. From early childhood to mature manhood that sweet, gentle disposition so manifest in his later life was ever present and corralled friends around him whose devotion bordered on idolatry. His genial smile and hearty handshake increased this number as years went by. No change evidenced itself during his lifetime, for, in manhood, he was the same as a prattling boy around his mother's knee, quiet, obedient and truthful, and was never known to attempt to add force to his remarks by indulging in profanity.

Being brought up on the farm with four brothers and many colored boys, he was a leader in all athletic sports then known to the average country boy, but not an instance can be recalled of his ever being overbearing or unfair to his opponent. His ears were ever open to the cries of distress and suffering of his fellow man, regardless of the source from which it came, and (these) were met with Christian charity, not letting one hand know what the other was doing. He was a friend and protector of all dumb animals and was foremost in their defense in resenting any act of cruelty inflicted upon them. It was this outstanding trait in his character that led him to originate the many remedies for creatures of the animal world. He was an acknowledged champion in field sports from his boyhood, which he retained to the later years of his life, being indefatigable and untiring in its pursuit. His fairness in the field was always apparent and he was never known to countenance anything like a dispute in regard to the game killed. Recognized as one of the finest shots in Virginia, no one, whether a good or poor shot, was ever made to feel humiliated at missing birds while in his company.

In the early spring of 1860 he left home to buffet the waves of the business world and landed in Richmond, as he always loved to recall, "a green country boy" who had not attained his 16th year. He secured a position with the well-known firm of Meade and Baker and loved to relate his experience in mastering this intricate and difficult position. He always alluded to the kindness, patience, and friendly advice bestowed upon him by Mr. Meade, whose friendship and confidence he retained to his death.

He was still with the firm when the War Between the States commenced. On arriving at the age of 18, he arranged to enlist in the Second company, Richmond Howitzers. On one occasion, when waiting on Mrs. Jefferson Davis, who was a patron of the store, he remarked to her that probably that would be the last time he would have the pleasure of serving her as he had arranged to enlist for the war. She expressed her regrets and left the store, but in a few days an order was issued by President Davis that he should be detailed to retain his position with Meade & Baker. But it did not take long before his patriotism overcame the force of the detail and he joined the Second company of Howitzers in one of their Valley campaigns, with which organization he furled the banner of the Lost Cause at Appomattox. He also served as hospital steward of Cutchew's Battalion of Artillery, of which the Second company of Howitzers was a part, in addition to his other duties.

He returned home then to Amelia county and while the commercial world was still at a standstill he took up farming. As soon as the business machinery adjusted itself he secured a position with the Broad street firm of Powhatan Dupuy, with whom he lived until 1871, when he opened a drug store on his own account at 500 East Marshall street. At this time he was engaged to assist Mr. Mann S. Valentine, who was then perfecting his discovery of the well known "Valentine's Meat Juice," now sold all over the world.

On Nov. 29, 1871, he was married to Miss Maude Lee Withers, the oldest daughter of Dr. William M. Withers,



Polk Miller, prominent Richmond, Va., druggist and Confederate veteran, as he looked when he made Edison cylinders 50 years ago.



of Richmond, and to her he always gave the credit for his methodical conduct of his business affairs. She made his home a haven of rest from the worrying business cares which he always left at the store. He would then, to drive away dull care from his fire-side, pick up his banjo, with which he delighted not only his own family and friends but up to the time of his death almost the entire country, the greater portion of which he covered in the latter years of his life.

He was so successful in his business at 500 East Marshall street, due to his universal popularity, that he purchased the drug business then being conducted at 9th & Main streets, where for many years he gave the glad hand to his many friends from every section of the country, and they were made to feel at home in his native city. He was thoroughly fond of music, having a good voice, his singing being one of his many accomplishments. In story telling he had few equals, if any, and no superiors. In interpreting the Negro dialect he excelled, and it was through this channel that he achieved his greatest fame. In 1890 his son, W. Withers Miller, was taken into the business and since that time has had active charge of it. He passed over the river on Oct. 20, 1913, and no more fitting tribute could possibly be paid him than that inscribed on his tomb (Continued on next page)

## RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

**WANTED,** on cylinders only, four-minute Amberol preferred, give number and artist: Pretty Baby, Oh You Beautiful Doll, Redwing, After the Ball, Three O'clock in the Morning, Moonlight Bay, My Gal Sal, Sweet Rosie O'Grady, When You Were a Tulip, Sidewalks of New York, "Ma," (She's Making Eyes At Me), Old Bill Moses Ford, Alexander's Rag Time Band, Let the Rest of the World Go By, In the Good Old Summer Time, Silver Bell, Oh Johnny. Also 200 others. Dealers and individuals — send lists and prices to: H. W. Oltmann, 1505 Elmen, Houston, Texas. ja38841

**WANTED:** Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or center start.—Aida Favia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

**WANTED: HILLBILLY AND MOUNTAIN RECORDS.** Send lists to Don Wahle, 1128 Keller Ave., Louisville 13, Ky. mh3652

**WANTED,** John McCormack records: Victor Nos. 923, 1272, 1660, 1695, 1594, 64250, 64304, 64498, 74296, 87078, 87563. — John J. Collins, 24 Stearns Rd., Belmont, Mass. mh3004

## MUSIC ROLLS

**PLAYER PIANO** music rolls bought, sold and traded, all makes and types.—D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Md. je124431

**PIANO ROLLS WANTED:** all types. Send list, receive cash offer by return mail (list returned). — M. Montgomery, 722 Spring, Ann Arbor, Mich. s128041

## MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

**REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY** old and new tune discs for sale; all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jly120422

**SWISS MUSIC BOX,** 8 tuned cylinder type; inlaid walnut case, 12x27x8"; over 75 years old, in good mechanical condition. Appraised at \$500. Will accept best reasonable offer. — W. S. Sayles, Box 346, Prairie View, Ill. f3639

## MISCELLANEOUS

**EDISON, COLUMBIA, VICTOR** phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, springs, reproducers, hand organs hurdy gurdys, music boxes, Holcomb Hoke coin phonograph. I buy, sell, exchange, repair. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f3084

**CYLINDER** machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. mh122361

**BUY, SELL OR TRADE 12" & 16"** Radio Transcriptions of all types, radio transcription catalogs, anything & everything regarding radio transcriptions. — Paul Scriven, 233 W. State St., Niles, Ohio. mh3464

**WANTED:** Theatre-Cinema unit pipe organs, Wurlitzer Band Wagons, Hope-Jones literature, theatre music, specs, console photos. — Alden Miller, 3212 34th Ave. So., Minneapolis 6, Minn. mh3614

**FROM A FORMER EDISON** dealer's stock that had been in storage, I was able to find some original Edison styluses (needle) in both sapphire and diamond. Have a small surplus and will sell some while they last. Also, Diamond Disc reproducers at \$5 each. Send for free brochure on cylinder reproducers. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3219

**FOR SALE:** 150 Wurlitzer band organ, hand carved front, double tracker bar, metal chimes. Seeburg Jr. piano. Mills Violano - Virtuoso. Regina floor model with piano sounding board. Rolls for sale. — Dodge House Antiques, Box 567, Dodge City, Kans. mh3295

## ORGANS FOR SALE

**KIMBALL REED ORGAN.** Purchased in 1900, has original polished oak finish. In A-1 shape. Original warranty is still with it. Make offer. — Mrs. Wayne Nash, 1419 Leisher Rd., Cheyenne, Wyo. f3215

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

**WANTED.** Edison and Columbia cylinder phonographs and records. Disc phonos with horns, roller organs, music boxes, and melodeons.—Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. mh3084

**WANTED:** Very small band organ cheap for quick cash sale, in good playing condition. Write giving full details. — J. J. Howard-Exploracion, Aptdo. 172, Maracaibo, Venezuela. f3004

**WANTED:** Wurlitzer or Seeburg Orcheston in restorable condition. Buy or trade. — Arch Rankin, 589 Neff, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ja3882

**WE WILL PAY \$50.00** to anyone who will give us a lead that materializes in the purchase of the following: Nickelodeons, H Seeburg, Model 72 Wurlitzer, Welte Orchestron, Hupfeld Violin Orchestron, Encore mechanical banjo. We buy junkers for parts. Anything that plays mechanical. Una-phon. — Kugler, 7 So. 6th St., Minneapolis 2, Minn. mh3848

**FOR SALE:** One Packard piano. Organ in excellent shape. Made in Fort Wayne, Ind. — C. I. Dilocker, 118 Dak. Ave., Cherokee, Iowa. ja1481

## MELODEONS FOR SALE

**BEAUTIFUL RESTORED** instruments. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1366 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. my9219

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**Rare phonographs for sale.** Edison Concert, Berliner, Pathe', Edison Marion Gem, Eldridge Johnson, early phonograph with ear tubes and others. Cylinder records, parts of all kinds. Reproducer repairing, styli (needle) installed. Reproducers for sale. Send 25c for lists. — Pollard's, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja36501

**OLD EDISON** phonograph and round records, lots of unusual antiques, send for list. — Stinson, Route 1, Riesel, Tex. ja3882

**RECORD LIST.** Our next disc and cylinder record lists will be ready in January, 1960. Send stamp for full particulars. Anything in the old disc or cylinder phonograph line bought, sold and exchanged. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f3046

**ATTENTION!** A large selection of both cylinder and disc phonographs, all complete and in working order. Please send wants. Small Edison cylinder floor model, mahogany cabinet complete, \$85, extra clean. — Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Brewer, Maine. ja1003

## SHEET MUSIC

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1860. Catalog 20c.—Fore's 3151 High, Denver 6, Colo. au126921

**EARLY** American, French sheet music. Classics for 4 hands. Several bound volumes. List for stamp. — Holsclaw's Antique Shop, 307 S. Jeffries Blvd., Walterboro, S. C. mh3004

## PIANO & ROLLS

**NEW ROLLS** and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos. — Durrall Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kans. ap124661

**Wanted:** Ampico piano rolls. \$1.00 each picked from list. — Daggs, 725 N. Columbia Place, Tulsa, Okla. mh3488

**Wanted:** DuoArt and Ampico piano rolls. — Thomas Grattelo, 1519 California St., San Francisco, Calif. ja3063

## PIANO FOR SALE

**1862 STEINWAY** Concert Grand piano. Beautiful plain case, excellent condition. — L. Freeman, Viking Hotel, Marshall, Mo. ja3652

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

**MILLS** Violano-Virtuoso machine, single violin type. Needs only minor repairs. — Robert G. Halley, 2430 Gallows Road, Falls Church, Va. ja3023

## MUSIC BOX DISCS

**Mira** music box discs, 18 1/2" \$3; 15 1/2" \$2.50; 9 5/16" \$1; 6 13/16" 75c. Plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. mh3084

in Hollywood (a Richmond cemetery), reading as follows:

"Honest Citizen, Faithful Friend,  
Confederate Patriot, Christian Gentleman,  
Virginia's Son, Loving and Beloved.  
'Peace to His Ashes.'"

### III Polk Miller's Records

I can add only a couple of things to this filial tribute. Miller's death certificate shows he died from a heart condition. And I suspect he was named for James Knox Polk, who was elected President of the United States on the Democratic ticket in 1844, the year Polk Miller was born.

All the gifted Richmond druggist's records were issued by Edison in March, 1910. The set consisted of four Amberols, playing four minutes each, and three Standard two-minute cylinders. Miller sings in four, and the other three are by the Negro quartet alone. Only one of its members, the bass, is mentioned by name. Here are the comments from that month's issue of *The New Phonogram*:

#### Amberole Records

389, *The Bonnie Blue Flag*—Polk Miller and Quartet. One of the most popular war songs of the South, surpassing in popularity even the world famous "Dixie" in the days from '61 to '65. It was sung by Miller around army camp fires and he now sings it at Confederate Veterans' reunions. Banjo accompaniment.

390, *Laughing Song*—Quartet. It takes a genuine Southern Negro to sing this song, which is typical of the happy darkey nature. The laughter is natural and contagious. Guitar accompaniment.

391, *What a Time*—Quartet. A favorite church hymn of the Virginia country Negroes, with a quaint plantation air. Guitar accompaniment.

392, *The Watermelon Party*—Quartet. An original "makeup" by James L. Stamper, the basso of the quartet. Mark Twain referred to this number as a "Musical Earthquake."

#### Standard Records

10332, *Rise & Shine* - Polk Miller and Quartet. Polk Miller sings this melody just as the darkeys sang it on his father's plantation before the war. Guitar accompaniment.

10333, *The "Old Time" Religion*—

Polk Miller and Quartet. A hymn of Negro origin, so melodious that Southern whites have introduced it into their church service. Unaccompanied.

10334, *Jerusalem Mornin'*—Polk Miller and Quartet. A camp-meeting song and probably the catchiest of the seven numbers. Lines are sung alternately by first tenor and quartet. Unaccompanied.

Miller played his own banjo accompaniment in "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and was the "first tenor" just mentioned. Perhaps he also played the guitar in the other records. He had a pleasant voice. I wonder how he happened to make his Edison cylinders.

Perhaps C. B. ("Pop") Haynes, the Edison distributor in Richmond, who was a close friend of Mr. Edison's, convinced the great inventor that some of the old Negro spirituals and Confederate battle songs should be recorded. They must have sold well in other parts of the country as well as the South for they remained in the catalog for years.

Even so, parts of the cylinders puzzled some listeners. B. A. F., of Harrisburg, Pa., wrote in the *New Phonogram* for June, 1911:

"Will you kindly publish . . . the words of Polk Miller's 'Laughing Song,' Amberol record No. 390? The record is melodious and entertaining, but I am unable to reconcile some of the words and sentences; they seem to be without much sense or connection."

The editor replied:

It is not at all surprising that you should have difficulty in making sense out of certain parts of the song. . . . This song, written by genuine Southern plantation darkeys with little or no education, contains phrases and expressions which are coined and introduced haphazard. . . . The fact that the words and phrases are meaningless and loosely strung together does not detract from the attractiveness of the song. . . . the melody and harmony are there and the fact that the words are truly characteristic of the darkey as he is rather enhances the attractiveness

of the record. Following is the song in its entirety:

(first verse)

A journey to Long Branch is pleasant  
and always delightful to me,  
While strolling the beach at moonlight  
while the wild waves are rolling the sea;  
Then give me a lady for waltzing,  
such pleasures to me they are grand,  
And quickly passed by it is finished,  
we have oysters and wine at two.

(chorus)

Oysters and wine at 2 A.M., 2 A.M.,  
2 A.M.,  
We have oysters and wine at 2 A.M.,  
we have oysters and wine at two.

The leader then sings:

Music is pleasant, music has charms,  
music is something that keeps us along,  
Music is pleasant, most fortune (sic)  
and grand; now watch my motion  
and see how I laugh!

Then the whole quartet comes in on the laugh, using no words, but with mouths stretched from ear to ear they go through a "Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

(second verse)

I'm a fellow that never refuses all  
the pleasures that come in my way,  
But now it is time to get married,  
I'll banish all bashful display;  
We fought while the stars were  
shining, we fought for the friends  
that were true;

And quickly passed by it is finished,  
we'll have oysters and wine at two.  
(chorus as above)

The December, 1913, *Edison Phonogram Monthly* published a brief mention of Polk Miller's death and said that four of the previously listed records would be reissued in February in unbreakable Blue Amberol form. Since Edison had quit making two-minute records, the three Standard numbers were not reissued.

The death notice said: "Polk Miller, a well known business man of Richmond, Va., and author of several songs familiar to Edison enthusiasts, died at his home at the age of 69, last October. His plantation stories of war time and his performances on the banjo and guitar at many Confederate reunions were always much admired and enjoyed."

Four of his best selections appear

Gray, Nipper and Roger are happy in their new home and they wish you



The new home at  
225 N. Maple St.,  
Vinton, Va.



GRAY, preparing a snack for Santa to eat when St. Nick dropped in Christmas Eve night.



NIPPER is either a literary genius, looking upward for inspiration, or he's trying to figure out how Santa Claus gets down that stovepipe.



ROGER, lying at ease on the basement stairs, and dreaming of a happy New Year.

A  
HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR

Once more Gray, Nipper, Roger and I want to thank HOBBIES readers for all the nice letters we have received during the past year. Since we don't have time to send Christmas cards, we feel it is both a duty and a pleasure to wish you a most HAPPY NEW YEAR.

JIM WALSH

in the February list: (2175), The Bonnie Blue Flag; (2176), the Laughing Song; (2177), What a Time, and (2178), The Watermelon Party; all but the first accompanied by the guitar. The first one is accompanied by the banjo. They are fine!"

#### IV A Daughter's Recollections

Several years ago I wrote an article for the Richmond Times-Dispatch in which Polk Miller was mentioned. This brought me some pleasant correspondence from his daughter, Mrs. Garland C. Chewning, of Bon Air, Va. On October 29, 1951, she wrote:

My dear Mr. Walsh: Your article about Virginia entertainers of bygone days interested me a great deal. Please tell me for whom you succeeded in making a re-recording of my father's 'Bonnie Blue Flag,' how you went about it and how successful you were. I am Mr. Miller's youngest daughter and would like to have a record made for my sons. Several of my father's songs have never been published. I believe I am the only person who can sing 'Huckleberry Picnic.' Would appreciate any information you can give me. Very sincerely yours, Virginia Miller Chewning.

On November 20, Mrs. Chewning wrote:

Dear Mr. Walsh: You were most kind to go to so much trouble to record the 'Bonnie Blue Flag' for me and I do appreciate it. . . . Would that you could have known my father and heard him sing. He was quite a character. It always irritates me to have people call him a vaudeville performer or entertainer. His associates were mostly humorists such as Joel Chandler Harris, Mark Twain, Thomas Nelson Page and others. I have his scrapbooks of programs and they are always accounts of entertainments in Carnegie Hall, before the Southern Society at the Waldorf, or before some of the most exclusive groups in the country. . . . I wonder if I could trace any of those other records by writing to the Edison company. . . . Again let me thank you for making the recording. Sometime I hope I will have an opportunity to thank you in person.

Three days later Mrs. Chewning wrote:

We had a grand time playing the record Thanksgiving Day and it was just like a trip to bygone days. My boys just enjoyed it so much. By the way, I have a lead on an old batch of records and I'm going to do my best to get hold of "Rise and Shine" and "Old Time Religion."

I believe that was the last letter I received from Mrs. Chewning, but I hope she has been able to find all seven records by her father and his Old South Quartet. It should gratify her that Polk Miller's voice has been preserved on both wax and Blue Amberol cylinders and, 46 years after his death, his admirers can go on hearing "the sound of a voice that is still."

I REMEMBER carriage makers

With the autos did compete;

How they advertised new numbers

Were equipped with "Auto Seat."

—Spencer C. Ackerman

## OLD VEHICLES

### TOURING IN 1915

By H. L. LARSON

"Roads fair, weather hot," wrote a 1915 motorist in his new Auto Tour Record.

"Left home 6 A.M., arrived 11 A.M., home again 10 P.M. Total miles of tour 223, bought 5 gallons of gasoline at 12¢ a gallon, averaged 15 miles per gallon," and, under Remarks (very possibly incomplete) "two tires blew out!"

He was one of the early drivers on the Lincoln Highway, giving three friends and his wife a June outing in his four cylinder, 25 horse-power Studebaker.

One wonders if the friends stayed home on purpose the next time, for in July he was accompanied only by his wife. They started out at 5 A.M. There is an exultant flourish to his writing—"Roads good, weather good, gasoline 11¢ a gallon, no tire trouble or trouble of any kind, home at 4 P.M." Certainly it must have seemed well worth the \$4.00 license fee. We doubt, however, that the return from this 370 mile trip was at 4 P.M. the same day, in view of the speed limits and other laws summarized in the back of his Record. The speed limits were usually "in business districts ten miles per hour, residential districts fifteen miles per hour, outside of city, town or village limits twenty-five miles per hour (fifteen in South Carolina)." but "when going around a corner or curve six miles per hour."

And if you overtook a horse and buggy and the driver raised one hand, this indicated that the horse was frightened and the automobile driver must come to a complete stop.

Only twenty-three states supplied license numbers for a fee of from 50¢ to \$40.00, sometimes varying as to horsepower. In most other states the owner supplied his own number plates or painted the numbers on front and/or back of the car, in one or two states also on the glass of the front lamps! Thirteen states had no motor laws, although legislation was pending in some of them.

What a traffic tie-up would result in some of our big cities if the following rule were still in effect! "In business districts—a turn in the street must be performed in the block and not at street intersections, as—it would block traffic. Outside the business districts, and on boulevards, however, a driver wishing to turn and retrace his course on the same street should proceed to the next corner and pass clear around the center of the street intersection."

Proper care of the automobile was important if one desired to obey the rules that said, "No noxious smoke, gas, steam or offensive odor to escape from the automobile. No unnecessary noise permitted. No oil, gas-

oline or like fluid to be spilled on asphalt pavement," and even "Don't open the cut-out in cities. It may subject you to arrest."

Some rules included are still good in modern dress, "Don't see how close you can run to a pedestrian—you may make a mistake. Don't take chances when children are—hitching on wagons—slow down and sound your horn (or bell or other signal device producing an abrupt sound loud enough to warn of danger). Don't assume you have rights—you'll avoid accidents even if your temper does become ruffled. If you do cause an accident, stop and give aid—don't run away."

And this final word of wisdom!

"Don't argue with an officer—it will do no good and besides, in all probability he will be in the right!"

### FORD MUSEUM'S ANNUAL SPORTS CAR EXHIBITION SET FOR JANUARY 8-31

Dearborn, Mich.—The Henry Ford Museum's ninth annual sports car show will be held January 8 through 31.

A panorama of the world's leading competition cars, "Sports Cars in Review" is the nation's only auto show devoted entirely to sports cars.

The annual exhibit will bring together nearly 50 cars from Italy, England, Germany, France and the United States, with some shown for the first time in this country, according to Alan R. Symonds, show chairman.

To show the development of sports cars over the years, several earlier models, both foreign and domestic, also will be displayed.

The 1959 show, held in February, was viewed by nearly 50,000 persons.

#### WANTED

WANTED - AUTOMOBILE ITEMS. Most anything pertaining to early automobile era. Literature such as catalogs, manuals. Trade publications, hand books, posters, pictures, etc. Also horse-drawn vehicle era literature. Old cars, trucks, chassis, other components suitable for parts. Brass lights, horns, name plates. Most any kind of accessory or usable part, etc. I have discontinued collection of clothes, license plates, and most technical books. — B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. je62722

AUTOMOBILE sales catalogs wanted. Best prices offered. — M. Hollis, 4930 Queen Mary Road, Apt. 19, Montreal, Que., Canada. s122511

OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted.—D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. my128801

WANTED TO BUY OR TRADE automobile radiator name plates. — Wallace Huffman, 610 South Webster, Kokomo, Indiana. ja6215

AUTOMOBILE catalogs, trade papers and leaflets, brass lamps, early gadgets. —Whitlock's, New Haven Conn. ja1211

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Geoffrey O'Hara

By JIM WALSH

Tenors who wanted to become popular in the early days of the phonograph got off to a good start if they were born in Canada.

The two most successful ballad singers among pioneer recording artists, Henry Burr and Harry Macdonough, were Canadians. So was Edward Johnson who shone as an opera star in Italy before eventually becoming manager of the Metropolitan. Craig Campbell, who made Pathé and Columbia records, and George Carré, who did some singing for Victor, were of Canadian birth. And so is Geoffrey O'Hara, although he has long been a citizen of the United States and now lives on South Quaker Hill in Pawling, N. Y.

Accomplished as a singer and famous as a composer, Mr. O'Hara is one of the most versatile and distinguished artists about whom I have written. He is one of the few popular pioneer recording artists to have his biography published in "Who's Who in America."

From the 1922-23 "Who's Who" it appears that the tenor-composer, whose 78th birthday will occur about the time this article sees print, was born in Chatham, Ontario, Feb. 2, 1882. He was the son of Robert and Maria Sophia (Dobbs) O'Hara, was educated at Chatham Collegiate Institute and studied music with various teachers. He came to the United States in 1904 and became a naturalized citizen in 1919. On June 7 that year he married Constance Margaret Dougherty, of Cambridge, Mass.

O'Hara was widely known as a singer when his first success as a song writer occurred. In 1913 Enrico Caruso recorded his song, "Your Eyes Have Told Me," for Victor, and it was so successful that many other artists soon were singing his compositions. After Woodrow Wilson became President, Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane appointed O'Hara an instructor in native Indian music. He visited the reservations of the Navajos and other tribes and used an Edison cylinder phonograph to record the Indians singing their primitive songs. When the United States entered the First World War, the War Department sent the tenor to Fort Oglethorpe,

Ga., in June, 1917, as a military song leader. "Who's Who" listed O'Hara as a Mason, an Episcopal in religion and a Republican in politics. He belonged to the Musician's Club, the Young Republican Club and the Canadian Club of New York. At that time he lived at 25 Post Street, Yonkers, N. Y.

A more detailed sketch appears in the 1938-39 "Who's Who." This reveals that Mr. and Mrs. O'Hara had two children—a son, Hamilton Murray O'Hara, and a daughter, Nancy Jackson. He was listed as a member of the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) of which he had been president. He was also president in 1922 of the Song Writers Protective Association and of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association in 1925. He was a Shriner and his clubs were then the Town Hall, Canadian and Lambs.

More than 20 years ago O'Hara had composed a large number of operettas, including "Peggy and the Pirate," produced in 1927; "Riding Down the Sky," 1928; "The Count and the Co-Ed," 1929; "The Smiling Sixpence," 1930; "Rogues and Vagabonds," and "Lantern Land," 1931; "Harmony Hall," 1933; "The Princess Runs Away," 1935; and "Puddin'-head the First," 1936. Among his songs are "There is No Death," "K-K-K-Katy," "I Love a Little Cottage" (of which Walter Scanlan made an exquisite Edison Diamond Disc, incongruously paired with a comic Irish waltz song, "I Certainly Must Be In Love," sung by Marquerite Farrell), "The Wreck of the Julie Plante," "The Living God," "I Have a Rendezvous With Life," "Do You Fear the Wind?" "If Christ Came Back," and about 150 others. He had also written a book on Canadian folk songs and frequently lectured on musical subjects.

The 1952 edition of "The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Authors, Composers and Publishers" contains some information supplementing that already in "Who's Who." It says that after four years in the banking business, O'Hara gave up banking for music. At twelve he was the organist for the Chatham Episcopal church. His early stage career included four years in minstrel work and major vaudeville circuits as a pianist, singer and entertainer. He was instructor in community singing at Teachers College, Columbia Uni-

versity, in 1936-37, and received a degree as Honorary Doctor of Music at Huron College in 1947. "To Be In Love" is added to his list of operettas, and additional song titles include "Leetle Bateese," "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked," "Give a Man a Horse He Can Ride," "Where Heaven Is," "Tomasso Rotundo," "A Little Close Harmony" (this was the theme song of my Walsh's Wax Works, the first radio program featuring old-time popular recordings), "The Old Songs," "Sing Awhile Longer," "Forward to Christ" and "One World." The ASCAP dictionary also mentions that O'Hara published a book of poems.

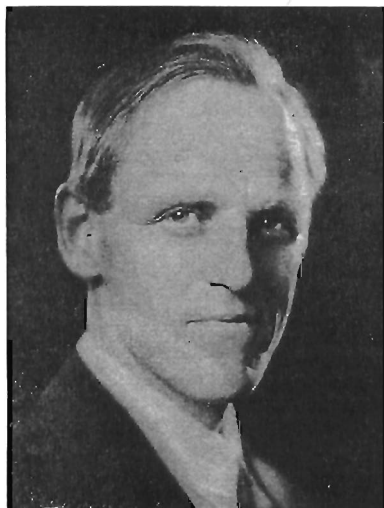
This adds up to an impressive and comprehensive career, which is by no means over, but we are less concerned with Geoffrey O'Hara's status as a composer, lecturer and author than with his career as a pioneer recording artist.

## II. First Recordings

In a recent letter to that excellent Brooklyn publication, *Record Research*, Mr. O'Hara recalled making Zon-o-phone records in 1906-07 as a male quartet member. He said he couldn't recall any titles or the name of the quartet, but the baritone was "the afterward nationally great Reinald Werrenrath." O'Hara was the second tenor and Walter MacPherson the bass, but he doesn't recall who was first tenor. Then, he says, he began making Victor popular song records in 1917, after having previously recorded some Navajo Indian songs in 1913 for the Victor Educational Department. Mr. O'Hara is a bit mixed up in statement. His first Victor popular records came out in 1916 instead of 1917, and the Indian songs were not listed until late in 1914. Of course they may have been recorded the year before.

The quartet whose name escaped Mr. O'Hara must have been the Criterion, which the late John Young, its first tenor for many years, told me was organized by Werrenrath. The Canadian tenor seems, however, not to have been a member when it made its only two-minute Edison wax cylinder, issued in January, 1905. The record, No. 8866, was a comic specialty, "Little Tommy Went a Fishing," which a completely reorganized Criterion Quartet also recorded nearly a score of years later on an Edison Diamond Disc. Those who sang in the cylinder were Robert R. Rainey, first tenor; William A. Washburn, second tenor; Werrenrath (then a stripling of 21), baritone, and Walter A. Downie, bass. O'Hara obviously replaced either Rainey or Washburn shortly afterward if he sang with Werrenrath's group. The Criterion Quartet which was a popular recording group from about 1916 to 1930 included John Young, first tenor; Frank Mellor, second tenor; George W. Reardon, baritone, and Donald Chalmers, bass. Afterwards it sang as a regular feature at the Roxy Theater in New





GEOFFREY O'HARA inscribed this photo to Jim Walsh in appreciation of his editorial support of ASCAP when the song writers' organization was entering its historic controversy with radio stations.

York and called itself the Roxy Quartet.

Eight 9-inch Criterion Quartet records appeared in the Zon-o-phone catalog for June, 1905. I shall list them, although it is doubtful that Mr. O'Hara sang in them: 5990, Abide With Me; 6087, The Bridge; 6088, Carry Me Back to Old Virginia; 6055, Jesus, Lover of My Soul; 6043, Kentucky Babe; 6069, Lead, Kindly Light; 6046, Little Tommy; 6012, Rock of Ages. There were also twenty-one 9-inch records by the Invincible Quartet, but this was a group managed by Frank C. Stanley—the forerunner of the more famous Peerless Quartet. (Years later, the Peerless sometimes called itself the Invincible Quartet on Pathé records).

Among the 10-inch records in the same catalog there was only one male quartet number, No. 72, The Soldier's Farewell, by the Criterion.

By March, 1907, when we may assume Mr. O'Hara had joined the quartet, the Zon-o-phone list of concerted records had grown considerably, but there was still only one by the Criterion. The Peerless Quartet was represented by four 10-inch discs and the Universal Male Quartet by seven. No names are given for the Universal singers, but their repertoire was the same type the Haydn Quartet recorded for Victor. Since Victor controlled Zon-o-phone it is likely the Universal was the Haydn in disguise. There was also a Zon-o-phone Male Quartet, which specialized in comedy numbers and descriptive sketches, as a little later, did the Colonial Quartet, which I suspect to be the same organization. And I believe both the Zon-o-phone and Colonial Quartets were the Rambler Minstrel Company, consisting of Billy Murray, Steve Porter, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. But in the lack of positive evidence, it is conceivable that O'Hara sang with

the Universal or Zon-o-phone Quartets.

Meanwhile, the Criterion made a few records for Columbia, as well as Leeds, Talk-o-phone and perhaps other companies.

The first mention I find of Geoffrey O'Hara name in any record list occurs in the *New Phonogram* for August, 1905, when the Knickerbocker Quintet recorded "The Rosary"—an ambitious undertaking for those days. The descriptive notes said:

9052. The Rosary. The Knickerbocker Quintet is a new organization and this is its first Edison record. It is probably the only time that a Quintet Record has been made of Nevin's beautiful song, "The Rosary." The Knickerbocker Quintet is known throughout the realm of vaudeville as "The Original Spook Minstrels." It is composed of: Parvin Witte, first tenor; Charles H. Bates, second tenor; G. de V. O'Hara, baritone; Walter C. White, second baritone; Leon Parmet, basso. The singing of this Quintet is quite different from the work of the ordinary groups of singers. It is of a character that will be found very pleasing. . .

When Mr. O'Hara visited Oklahoma City a few years ago he told an enthusiastic record collector, Quentin Riggs, who then lived there but is now working for the U.S. State Department in Saudi Arabia, that he had been hoping for years to find that Knickerbocker Quintet record, but with no success. I am sure if any HOBBIES reader has a spare copy, he would be glad to receive it. There are two puzzles concerning this cylinder. Why was O'Hara singing baritone? And what does that middle de V. stand for?

### III. Indian Songs

Geoffrey O'Hara's next appearance in a record list was in November, 1914, when Edison issued a four-minute Blue Amberol cylinder, No. 2451, of his rendition of several In-

dian songs with tom-tom accompaniment and explanatory comment, and Victor did the same thing on double-faced 10-inch disc 17635. The reverse of the Victor contains "The Gambler's Song," recorded by the Blackfeet tribe of Glacier Park Indians.

There is some interesting comment in the October, 1914, *Edison Phonograph Monthly*:

When Mr. O'Hara was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior at Washington, Instructor of Native American Music, that act constituted a change in the attitude of the United States government towards the red man. . . Anyone can see at a glance that this is a revolutionary move, for while it was thought necessary to dispatch brigades and regiments to put the poor Indian to rout, now a single man is dispatched, armed, not with cannon or bayonet, but merely with an Edison phonograph. Song is appointed to supersede steel.

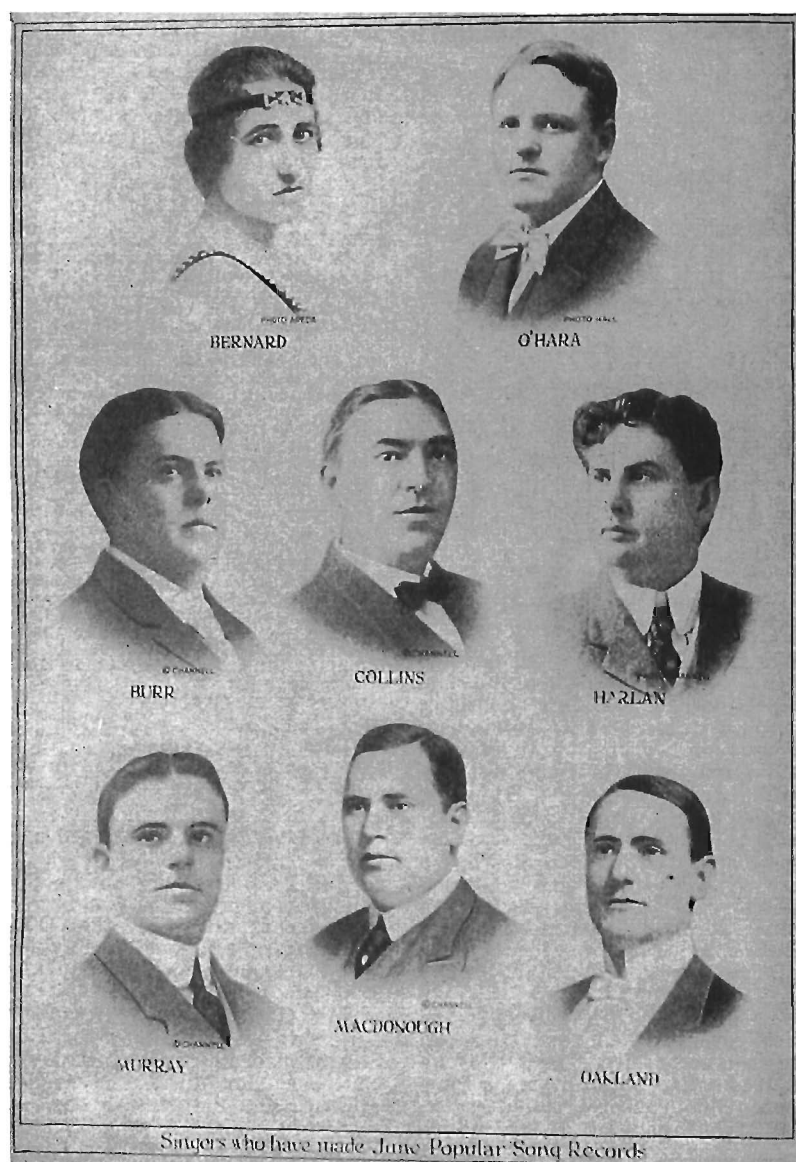
The Navajo Indians are located in Arizona and are rich in thousands of songs that have been composed with skill and handed down for centuries from father to son, from teacher to pupil. They have a number of ceremonies, each one lasting nine days and nights, each containing more than 600 songs. Several of the best of these Indian songs were selected from a large number taken on the Edison recording phonograph. . . All these songs have been made a matter of special study by Mr. O'Hara. He himself has learned several, and having harmonized them is enabled to reproduce them with novel and interesting effect.

The *Monthly* also contained a tribute to O'Hara's Indian work from former President Theodore Roosevelt. The November, 1914, Victor record supplement described the O'Hara disc as forming "another notable addition to our American Music Series."

"Mr. O'Hara," the write-up continues, "was appointed by the United States government as Instructor of Native Indian Music, and lived and worked with the Navajos for some years, studying their songs and teach-



GEOFFREY O'HARA was the center of attraction at a record collectors' meeting held Saturday, October 10, 1958, in the Sprout Brook Grange Hall at Ames, N. Y. Shown in this photo, taken at the meeting, are Mrs. James H. Van Demark of Cohoes, N.Y., and her husband, a noted record collector; Mr. O'Hara; Mrs. Harlan B. Kishpaugh; the Rev. H. B. Kishpaugh, who sponsored the get-together; and Mrs. Robert Hodge, who served as registrar.



GEOFFREY O'HARA was one of the artists included in a full page of photographs in the Victor record supplement for June, 1916. Rhoda Bernard was a singer of dialect songs, who made only a few records. The remaining six—Henry Burr, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, Harry Macdonough and Will Oakland—all now dead—were among the most popular pioneer recording artists.

O'Hara, Burr and Macdonough were Canadians.

ing them. Although the Navajos are most famed for their wonderful blankets, they possess a remarkable store of more than 15,000 legendary songs. Mr. O'Hara, in his interesting record, explains some of the peculiar features of their songs."

I have not heard the Victor record, but the Edison is brilliantly recorded and fascinating from the first groove to the last one of the best Blue Amberols.

In the April, 1951, issue of *The Record Collector*, an informative magazine published at irregular intervals in Ipswich, England, Capt. H. H. Annand tells of a meeting of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society, at which many records were played, and says:

One record in particular calls for special mention. This was the Navajo

Indian Songs, collected and sung by Geoffrey O'Hara. Mr. O'Hara, like our own Cecil Sharpe, has made an interest of collecting and editing original folk tunes and this delightful record is the result.

#### IV. Popular Songs For Victor

Geoffrey O'Hara makes his next record appearance in the Victor supplement for June, 1916, singing a ballad written by Charles K. Harris, "All I Want is a Cottage, Some Roses and You." The other side of disc 18022 is "Croon-Time," sung by Edna Brown and James Reed, who were really Elsie Baker and Reed Miller. No descriptive comment is given, but O'Hara's photograph is shown together with his fellow Canadians, Burr and Macdonough, and five other singers of what were then the latest song hits.

A month later, O'Hara was pres-

ent with the hit of the month, one of the catchiest tunes ever written, and what undoubtedly was his biggest selling record—No. 18051, "They Made It Twice As Nice As Paradise And They Called It Dixieland." His recording of this sensational hit by Raymond B. Egan and Richard A. Whiting swept the country, especially since it was doubled with an Irving Berlin song whose vogue has been even more enduring, "Simple Melody." This was sung by what at first sight appears an unlikely combination—"Edna Brown's" and Billy Murray—but Miss Baker's serious-sounding espousal of the old-time "heart songs" is admirably matched by Murray's lilting defense of rag-time.

It is strange that after this "red-hot" beginning, O'Hara was not heard of again in the Victor lists until Dec., 1916, when, on No. 18166, he and a contralto, Lillian Davis gave duet versions of his own composition, "Ma Li'l Starlight," and an English serio-comic song, "I'll Make You Want Me." I consider this the poorest of the O'Hara records. The singers sound insufficiently rehearsed, and as if they don't know the tune of "I'll Make You Want Me," which was given a superb Edison disc interpretation by "Rachel Grant" (Gladys Rice) and Billy Murray.

Who Lillian Davis may have been is a mystery. She first appeared in the Victor supplement for Feb., 1914, singing "Just You and I and the Moon," and wasn't heard of again until Sept., 1915, when she and a male chorus recorded "Hold Me In Your Loving Arms." Her next and last appearance was in the duets with O'Hara. Her photograph was never published, so the suspicion is irresistible that she was some other well known Victor contralto in disguise. But which? Since Elsie Baker was doubling as Edna Brown, it's hardly likely she was also Lillian Davis. The only other prominent contralto then making Black Label records was the late Marguerite Dunlap. I have a strong hunch she was also Lillian Davis. (At least both last names ended in D.!) Mr. O'Hara told Quentin Riggs he met Miss Davis, whoever she was, for the first time on the day they made the records and never saw her again.

Exactly a year passed before Victor issued another Geoffrey O'Hara record. Probably the U.S.'s entry into World War I and O'Hara's being sent to Fort Oglethorpe as a singing instructor kept him from being available for regular recording dates. But in Dec., 1917, on 18391, he sang "The South Will Do Her Part," combined with "Come Back Home," by the newly organized Shannon Four. "The South Will Do Her Part" was a patriotic parody on O'Hara's smash-hit, "They Made It Twice As Nice As Paradise," and the supplement said its words "were handed to Geoffrey O'Hara by a total stranger, and contain a stirring promise that the South will do her part in the war.

The music, of course, is that of Richard A. Whiting. Geoffrey O'Hara is supervisor of music at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and is doing his part, too. A particularly good feature of this record is O'Hara's enunciation; the song is in quick time, but not a syllable is lost."

The May, 1918, Victor supplement was almost a special O'Hara issue. Page 10 shows a large photo of him, apparently leading a group of unseen soldiers in singing, and terms him "The 'Rookies' Choirmaster." Beneath is a description of record 18441, combining his version of "Send Me a Curl," which he wrote himself, and "All Aboard For Home, Sweet Home," by Lewis James and the Shannon Four. The supplement said:

Not often are singer and composer combined as in the case of "Send Me a Curl," but Geoffrey O'Hara happens to be both. He is musical director in one of Uncle Sam's training camps, and knows better than most what soldiers want. This he has put into the music of an unusually attractive march song that goes with an irresistible swing and spirit that ought to make the song popular.

On the opposite page is a listing of O'Hara's great war-time hit, "K-K-K-Katy," sung by Billy Murray, and one of the best selling records of that period. The description (Continued on page 47)

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale; all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jly120422

SWISS MUSIC BOX, 8 tuned cylinder type; inlaid walnut case, 12x27x8"; over 75 years old, in good mechanical condition. Appraised at \$500. Will accept best reasonable offer. — W. S. Sayles, Box 346, Prairie View, Ill. f3639

### MISCELLANEOUS

EDISON, COLUMBIA, VICTOR phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, springs, reproducers, hand organs, hurdy gurdys, music boxes, Holcomb Hoke coin phonograph. I buy, sell, exchange, repair. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f3084

CYLINDER machines, records, parts, outside horn disc machines bought, sold, traded. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minneapolis, Pa. mhl22361

BUY, SELL OR TRADE 12" & 16" Radio Transcriptions of all types, radio transcription catalogs, anything & everything regarding radio transcriptions. — Paul Scriven, 238 W. State St., Niles, Ohio. mh3464

WANTED: Theatre-Cinema unit pipe organs, Wurlitzer Band Wagons, Hope-Jones literature, theatre music, specs, console photos. — Alden Miller, 3212 34th Ave. So., Minneapolis 6, Minn. mh3614

FOR SALE: 150 Wurlitzer band organ, hand carved front, double tracker bar, metal chimes. Seeburg Jr. piano. Mills Violano - Virtuoso. Regina floor model with piano sounding board. Rolls for sale. — Dodge House Antiques, Box 567, Dodge City, Kans. mh3295

### ORGANS FOR SALE

KIMBALL REED ORGAN. Purchased in 1900, has original polished oak finish. In A-1 shape. Original warranty is still with it. Make offer. — Mrs. Wayne Nash, 1419 Leisher Rd., Cheyenne, Wyo. f3215

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 326 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. mh3084

OVER 100,000 hard - to - get records, 1903 to LP. — Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight Street, San Francisco 17, Calif. d126121

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. mh3618

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. ap6276

25,000 OLD RECORDS, transcriptions, air shots, and sound tracks. Professional quality disc to tape copying, too. Lists free. — Geo. Collings, P.O. Box 946, Fresno, Calif. f3004

BREAKING UP my collection of Red Seal and HMV opera and symphonic rarities. All in new condition. Free list. Geo. Collings, P.O. Box 946, Fresno, Calif. f3004

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS. South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. f3065

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs. — Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). f4353

BRAND NEW 78 rpm disc records, 25c up. Also special dealers discounts. Highest prices paid for special old type disc and cylinder records. Send stamp for both above lists. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f3675

GOLDEN-AGE operatics, personality records, collectors' items and exclusively imported European LPs are found on our free monthly list. Distributors of Rocco Records, reissues on LP of Famous Voices of the Past. — Ross, Court & Co., 2098 Yonge, Toronto, Ont. Canada. mh3656

FOR SALE: Hundreds of Disc and Cylinder Records, many types of phonographs, 25c for lists. From Tinfoil to Stereo - Evolution of the Phonograph, by Oliver Read and Walter L. Welch. The first complete history of the phonograph and sound recording industry including moving pictures. 550 pages, \$9.95. Send check for early delivery. — Coppernolls Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. f3219

119 DUPLICATES from private collection. Mostly single side Red Seals. Also, Edison, Perfect, Columbia artists in all fields. \$50 takes lot. You pay shipping. Free list. — Hazel Davidson, Box 11244, St. Petersburg 33, Fla. f1272

### MUSIC ROLLS WANTED

AMPICO rolls wanted. Pay box price for my pick from your list. — Richard J. Howe, 5703 S. Louisville Ave., Tulsa, Okla. ap3633

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — L. L. Lamber, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1865 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. my9219

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED, OLD PHONOGRAPHS, cylinder and disc type with the horns, records, catalogues and parts or anything pertaining to phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap3004

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPH reproducers, parts and records. — G. O. Stuber, 232 S. Charles, Waukesha, Wis. f1401

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

RECORD LIST. Our next disc and cylinder record lists will be ready in January, 1960. Send stamp for full particulars. Anything in the old disc or cylinder phonograph line bought, sold and exchanged. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. f3046

ATTENTION! A large selection of both cylinder and disc phonographs, all complete and in working order. Please send wants. Small Edison cylinder floor model, mahogany cabinet complete, \$65, extra clean. — Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Brewer, Maine. ja1003

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BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's 3151 High, Denver 6, Colo. au126921

EARLY American, French sheet music, Classics for 4 hands. Several bound volumes. List for stamp. — Holclaw's Antique Shop, 307 S. Jeffries Blvd., Waltham, S. C. mh3004

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NEW ROLLS and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos. — Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kans. ap124681

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Wanted: DuoArt and Ampico piano rolls. — Thomas Grattelo, 1519 California St., San Francisco, Calif. ap3063

### PIANO FOR SALE

KNABE BABY GRAND player piano. Ampico reproducing with many rolls. Fully restored. Case refinished and new ivories. — W. E. Vale, 112 Hamilton Ave., Akron 4, Ohio. ap3614

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira music box discs, 18 1/2" \$3; 15 1/2" \$2.50; 9 5/16" \$1; 6 13/16" Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. mh3084

## PRINTS WANTED

**Good Prices Paid for Currier and Ives prints.** — Earl Romey, Bluffton, Indiana. au12867

**WANTED:** Currier & Ives prints. Especially want American homesteads, railroads, Mississippi river, western, fire scenes. Other interesting subjects. — A. R. Davison, East Aurora, N. Y. f6008

**WANTED:** Currier & Ives, all subjects.—Jacques Schurre, 313 Maple Ave., Falls Church, Va. jly6844

**WANTED:** I offer \$1000 for a fine impression of *The Road—Winter*, large N. Currier, and \$700 for *Snowed Up*, Ruffled Grouse in Winter, large C&I. — T. M. Beece, Boonville, N. C. ap68801

**RED CURTAIN PRINT** of James Madison, 4th President. Describe and price. — Harris, 6223 Mardel, St. Louis 9, Mo. f1441

**WANTED:** Godey's, Petersen's, and similar prints. Advise date, condition, number and price.—W. Z. Funnell, Snow Hill, Maryland. f6675

**WANTED:** Florida maps before 1850 from old atlases, geographies, and books, all sizes wanted. — Newell Caudell, 113 Lakeview Ave., West Palm Beach, Fla. f3863

**WANTED:** Currier & Ives print, "Route to California, Truckee River, Sierra Nevada." — M. H. Duxbury, P.O. Box 2978, Reno, Nevada. ap3633

## PRINTS FOR SALE

**EVERY KIND OF PRINT** except Americana. Lace valentines; silhouettes; old playing cards; gold paper edgings and ornaments. Will buy valentines before 1875; silhouettes if labelled. — K. Gregory, 222 East 71st, New York 21, N. Y. f122112

**ORIGINAL** historical prints. Specialize in Lincoln and Civil War. — Julia Newman, Gulf Park, Bradenton Beach, Fla. ol24201

**CURRIER & IVES PRINTS.** State wants, or send quarter for price list. — Jacques Schurre, 313 Maple Ave., Falls Church, Va. my6046

**JOHN RUMBOLD, WOODBRIDGE, CONN.,** has hundreds of old colored prints for sale. Send 10c for list of 200 prints and paintings, 135 finest Currier & Ives. Tel. New Haven FULTON 7-4643. n124891

**CURRIER & IVES** lovers! Get a copy of "Bricktop's Comic History of America" containing 36 comic sketches by famous artist Thomas Worth. Educational, comical and Americana originally by Currier & Ives. Send \$1 to Henry Szydio, Burlington Ave., Collinsville, Conn. f3046

**25 YEARS SINCE THEY WERE LOOKED AT.** 29 large black cloth covered boxes containing pictures of all kinds. Supposed to be very valuable. Some of the boxes contain pictures over 300 years old. Some of the boxes have newer pictures with autographed names like Zorn, Briscoe, Haden, Cameron, etc. The older boxes have names like Hogarth, Callot, Houbracken (portraits) Van Huysum (colored flowers) Daumier van Layden, etc. From 25 to 80 pictures in each box. Send post card for list of boxes and prices. I want from \$20 to \$35 a box. — John Bender, Pine Beach Farm, Nevis, Minn. ap30451

## PAINTINGS FOR SALE

**INDIANA GYBERSON** painting. Write. —Aline Mann, 920 North Michigan, Chicago 11, Ill. mh3671

## REPAIRS - RESTORATIONS

**CURRIER & IVES PRINTS.** Expert cleaning, repair, restoration. — John Rumbold, Woodbridge, Conn. tfx

RECORDING ARTISTS  
FAVORITE PIONEER

(Continued from page 37)

said the song "pictures the efforts of a stuttering recruit to pour out his heart to his 'best girl.' Nobly he promises that "when the m-m-moon shines over the c-c-cowshed he'll be waiting at the g-g-gate."

O'Hara next appeared in the July, 1918, supplement, on double-faced record 18451 whose content embodied some of his military camp experiences. The titles were "A Soldier's Day" and "Parodies of the Camp." Here is the description:

To hear these two numbers is almost as good as meeting Geoffrey O'Hara himself—a big, smiling, fair-haired, grey-eyed man in the khaki uniform of a camp song leader. He is all enthusiasm, and inexhaustible in vitality, and just the man you would pick out to cheer up the soldiers with a little music. "A Soldier's Day" consists of bugle calls, which are afterwards sung by O'Hara to traditional words used by our soldiers and typical of the special kind of "joshing" in use at the camps. . . . The reverse of the record contains some familiar tunes with parody words. . . . When Geoffrey O'Hara came to Camden to make these records he told us something of his work. "What the boys want," he said emphatically, "is a good tune on a familiar subject, and full of humor. One may say, paradoxically, that the war is too serious to take seriously."

At the top of the page was another photo of O'Hara, "who," said the cut line "is helping to make ours a Singing Army."

And that was the last of the Geoffrey O'Hara records for Victor. As far as I know, they were the last records he made for any company. Yet Victor appears to have thought of him for several years afterward as still a Victor artist, for *The Voice of the Victor* published lists of his concert engagements, and suggested that dealers "tie in" with his personal appearances in their cities.

## V. In Conclusion

As much as I should like to meet Geoffrey O'Hara, I have not yet done so. My only direct communication with him came some 20 years ago, when, as editorial writer of a Tennessee newspaper, the *Johnson City Press*, I warmly supported the efforts of the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers in its efforts to compel radio stations to pay a more generous fee for air use of copyrighted songs. One editorial was photostated by ASCAP and sent to all its members. It

(Continued on page 84)

GENNARO  
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BRANCH OF NAPLES, ITALY  
CORAL, CAMEO  
ANTIQUÉ JEWELRY  
Cameos Our Specialty

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32 N. State St. Chicago 2, Ill. tfo

## OLD JEWELRY

## JEWELRY WANTED

**DIAMONDS, OLD GOLD, COINS,** watches, stickpins, rings, earrings, etc., regardless of condition. Highest prices paid. Prompt replies. Send by registered mail to—Edward G. Willson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Penna. myd24891

**ANTIQUE & MODERN JEWELRY** from all over the world, bought and sold. Inquiries solicited. — Kenneth R. Park, 31 West St., Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844) jly126351

## JEWELRY FOR SALE

**Earring Screwbacks** (sm., med., lge.), golden or silvered 30c dozen, \$2.25 gross. Dangle screwbacks 35c doz., \$2.50 gross. Sterling screwbacks 95c doz., \$8. gross. Clip earbacks 40c doz., \$3 gross. Sterling pierced earbacks (screw type 80c doz. Wire type 45c doz.) Free complete illustrated list of chain, pinbacks, clasps, cards, cuff linkbacks, cameos, boxes, etc. — Folsom's, P.O. Box 52, Medford, Mass. f38841

**FOR SALE:** Antiques and semi-antiques, gold-filled, silver, etc., 10 articles for \$6. Assortment includes lockets, charms, pins, rings, etc. Good value. — St. Louis Refining Co., 1115 Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. ap68801

**LARGE STOCK** antique jewelry from our vast gold-buying. Charms, brooches, rings, etc. 10 for \$6, or better grade ones 10 for \$10. — B. Lowe, Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo. mh3844

**CHAIN SLIDES,** samples and price on request. Earrings made from old cuff links and pins. All types of antique rings and jewelry repaired and refinished. Estimates sent on all jobs before work is started. All pieces returned by registered or certified mail. — Jemeral Jewelers, 534 Vine St., Cincinnati, Ohio. ap3487

## THE RICHARDS

65 Price Ave. Columbus 1, Ohio  
P. O. Box 6921, Station E

2 1/4" long ornately filigreed white gold bar pin with sm. diamond \$10.00. 14K white gold stick pin with sm. diamond and deep blue stone \$12.50. 3/4" long platinum dinner ring set with nice center diamond and two smaller ones \$46.50. Lg. 10K yellow gold man's black intaglio ring \$15.00. Gold stick pin with lg. oval red stone and seed pearls around \$8.25. 2x1 1/4" oval cameo mounted in silver and black \$4. 1 1/2" garnet pin in shape of a star \$12.50. 14K white gold embossed double cuff links \$10.00. Sterling poison ring with moon stone \$10.00. Sm. cameo pendant in Sterling \$8. Pr. silver 2" long pierced earring with floral and leaves \$7.50. Following is gold filled: 2x1 1/2" oval black onyx pin \$5.00. 1 1/4" x 1 1/2" oval black onyx pin with white enamel woman's head — most unusual \$15.00. Good watch pins \$3 - \$5. 1" sq. intaglio tiger eye charm with head \$7.50. 1" sq. charm which swivels with lg. green stone \$6.00. Pr. large filigreed charms \$7.50 (2). 2 lg. slides set with stones \$11. (2). Sm. garnet pierced earrings \$17.50. 2" long pierced earring in gold and black embossing \$15.00. 1" dia. pierced earrings with embossing \$7.50. Lovely earring set with black onyx and cute drops \$20.00. 1 1/2" long crescent shaped pin with sm. ruby and enamel flower \$8.75. "February's Dealer Specials" 50 rings (silver & gold filled) all assorted with colored sets \$50.00. Ten watch fobs all different kinds. \$12.50. All items proof! Prices include Fed. Tax and transportation. Dealers: Write for semi-monthly wholesale list of cut glass, fancy china, etc. Stamp appreciated. fc

Please mention HOBBIES when replying to advertisements



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 47)

brought a flood of appreciative comment from famous song writers, including Mr. O'Hara.

Replying to his letter, I told him I had long admired his records and asked him to send me an autographed photo, which he did. I was both surprised and flattered when he said he liked my way of writing and wondered if I would like to collaborate with him in a book "which would have to be from a strictly New Deal standpoint." (Since I have learned he is a Republican I have wondered about that "New Deal" angle). I was extremely busy in those days, as I am now, and regretfully informed Mr. O'Hara I couldn't undertake the project.

But I haven't given up hope of meeting Geoffrey O'Hara, who today still seems to have the "inexhaustible vitality" of which the Victor writer spoke. Perhaps his lecture engagements and other travels will yet bring him to Roanoke, Va., and I shall have the pleasure of returning what I am sure would be a warm handclasp.

Shortly after the biographical sketch of John Yorke AtLee was published in December HOBBIES, Ralph Miele, a prominent Yonkers, N. Y., antique dealer, pleasantly surprised me by sending me a 7-page letter written July 9, 1889, by Samuel York AtLee, of Washington, D. C. In this letter Mr. AtLee refers to his sons, Goodwin and William. Assuming that Goodwin Yorke AtLee and John Yorke AtLee were the same man, as I speculated in my article, this letter was written by the recording artist's father. Unfortunately, there is no mention of any phonograph activity by the son.

Mr. AtLee, who wrote to "My dear Loessing," devoted most of his letter to expounding his belief that public schools should include courses of instruction on the American constitution. He probably was 80 or more, for the letter mentions his having taught school in Cincinnati, Ohio, prior to 1832, where he tested "the practicability of interesting a class of boys . . . on the Constitution of the United States."

—Jim Walsh

## LINCOLNIANA in 1959

(Continued from page 64)

On January 27, 1838, he spoke before the young men's Lyceum of Springfield, Ill. Taking account of the current historical incidents of an exceedingly questionable and forbidding nature, Lincoln concentrated on three main ideas in his speech in which he attempted to controvert the objectionable issues. The main divisions of the Lyceum address touched on mobocracy, political liberty and equal rights, obedience and

reverence for the Constitution and Laws.

The speech was that of a young man with limited education and little experience. Emotional appeal to audiences of that time was traditional, and Lincoln followed the pattern. In later years, his speeches became terser and more logical.

Wishing to make a good impression on this select group of young men, Lincoln used some very high sounding language and some figures of speech that were a bit extravagant. Some of the metaphors employed in this speech were: "Eternal Snows," "Fortresses of Strength," "Pillows of the Temple of Liberty," "Let the Proud Fabric of Freedom Rest."

The speech was well prepared, full of logic, gives us an insight into Lincoln's patriotic motives, and, in fact, is an excellent piece of literary composition.

The author is professor in the speech department of St. Cloud State College in Minnesota. His analysis and appraisal of the speech is convincing and clearly refutes the fallacious comment of others that the speech was "crude" in style and the language "gaudy."

### Other Lincoln Events in 1959

The annual Lincoln events that have become traditional were not neglected during the year. The Boy Scout Pilgrimage, the American Legion Pilgrimage and the production of the Lincoln play at Lincoln's New Salem were scheduled and well attended. All of the Lincoln shrines were visited in unusually large numbers.

The listings of other events concerning Lincoln and the mention of books, articles, newspaper and magazine productions have been so complete that it appears superfluous and repetitious to enumerate them again here. The Sesquicentennial Intelligencer issued by the Commission has been issued frequently during 1959 and gives us a synopsis and current view of all of the Lincoln events and activities of the year. Write the Commission for copies of the Intelligencer. It is free.

It does appear a necessity to properly recognize the excellent work done by the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Commission. Professor William E. Barringer headed the

Continued on page 89)

### BARBARA BERTSCH

159 Oakdale Ave. Akron 2, Ohio

Rare colored pap. mache clock doll.  
12" Br. eyed rose lustre china .....\$75.00  
20" Blond China Boy ..... 35.00  
20" Lustre Dolly Madison ..... 75.00  
9" Br. Eyed Byselo, signed ..... 27.50  
25" Cl. M. Fashion ..... 100.00  
17" Jumeau, Cl. M., signed ..... 100.00  
18" Bisque Boy ..... 35.00  
18" Turned Hd. Bisque ..... 35.00  
Pair Tommy Tucker dolls, each ..... 20.00  
After Christmas mark-down on fine German  
Bisques; prices range from \$15 to \$30.  
Lists 25c. Trans. Extra. Stamp please. to

(Continued from back cover)

### EDWARD G. WILSON

1802 Chestnut St.  
Philadelphia 3, Pa.

2. Gold, hinged, bangle bracelet, plain with ornate monogram. 1/4" wide, large wrist size. \$38.50.
3. Gold bangle bracelet, threaded, 1/4" wide, large wrist size, \$33.
- 3-A. Collection of 65 gold stickpins, many with stones. \$5 each, or 6 for \$27.50.
4. Gold bangle bracelet with allover chased design, 3/16" wide, large wrist size. \$33.
5. STICKPIN. Platinum & gold pointer dog studded with diamonds. 1/4" long. This is a registered J. E. Caldwell Co. piece (ruby eye). \$165.
6. STICKPIN. Platinum & gold "sitting up" rabbit studded with diamonds (ruby eye) 1/2". This is a registered J. E. Caldwell Co. piece, \$165.
7. STICKPIN, platinum & gold bird studded with rose diamonds (ruby eye). 3/4", \$110.
8. Gold, prong mounted, circle pin with alternating deep color, round, faceted amethysts and whole, round pearls. Very choice, 3/4" diameter. \$35.
9. Old deep blue & white Wedgwood oval pin with a gold filled simple, plain frame, Cupid motif, 1", \$38.50.
10. Gold heart locket with raised gold "nub nails," 3/4", \$38.50.
11. Gold, prong mounted, opal heart pendant with fleur de lis shaped diamonds, set in platinum, above it. (Complete with chain), 3/4", \$220.
12. A most unusual and fine gold, prong mounted, deep color, faceted amethyst heart pendant with 4 diamonds and 2 pearls mounted above it. 1 1/4", complete with chain, \$495.

### CANADIAN COINS

13. Large cent, 1853, VG, \$5.
14. Large cent, 1884, F, \$1.
15. Large cent, 1887, F, \$1.25.
16. Large cent, 1898, F, \$2.
17. Large cent, 1898H, VF, \$3.
18. Large cent, 1900, (no H) VG, \$1.50.
19. Five cent piece, 1874, Crosslet 4, F, \$6.
20. Five cent piece, 1880, F, \$2.75.
21. Five cent piece, 1886, VG, \$1.50.
22. Five cent piece, 1899, UNC., \$3.
23. Five cent piece, 1902, small H, F, \$5.

OTHER CANADIAN COINS IN stock.  
Send us your want list.

### GRIGNON TRADING POST

Butte des Morts, Wisconsin

Loop & Dart round ornament spoon-  
er ..... \$4.00  
Pressed leaf open sugar ..... 4.25  
Panelled dia. cut and fan spooner ..... 3.25  
Checkerboard celery ..... 3.00  
Dark blue commemorative plate,  
Buffalo ..... 6.00  
Missouri spooner ..... 3.00  
Egyptian goblet ..... 4.75  
Alabama toothpick ..... 3.50  
Shrine spooner ..... 4.00  
Cord and Tassel spooner ..... 3.25  
Dahlia water pitcher ..... 5.00  
Diamond Quilted vaseline ftd. sauce ..... 3.50  
Cut glass finger bowl ..... 7.50  
Lightning spooner ..... 3.75  
Buckle spooner ..... 6.25  
Beaded mirror goblet ..... 6.00  
Long Buttriss goblet ..... 5.00  
Cameo spooner ..... 4.50  
Virginia berry bowl, green flashing ..... 4.25  
Toy iron fry pan ..... 2.50  
Loop open compote, flint ..... 10.00  
Melrose pattern cup and saucer .. 3.00  
Jersey Swirl celery ..... 7.00  
Basketweave open compote ..... 4.50  
Bull's eye and fan creamer ..... 3.50  
Thompson No. 77 clear wine ..... 1.50  
to

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MARGUERITE FARRELL, as she appeared when singing for Edison in 1921.

## Marguerite Farrell

By JIM WALSH

During the closing years of the 1940's and for a little while afterward, clients of the Erie County Department of Social Welfare in Buffalo, N. Y., were served by a case worker in her late fifties or early sixties, who had a charming smile and a cultured, soft, sweet voice. The men and women on relief knew the case worker as Mrs. Wheeler, and there was sorrow when she died on January 26, 1951, of a coronary thrombosis that followed prolonged suffering from phlebitis.

Probably few of the welfare recipients, and perhaps not all of Mrs. Wheeler's fellow workers, knew that 30 years before she had been a star of the American stage, and had sung, danced and made records under the name of Marguerite E. Farrell. Yet it was true. Marguerite Wheeler had lived in Buffalo for 25 years, after giving up her theatrical career to marry Leroy M. Wheeler. She became the mother of a daughter who grew up and at the time of her mother's death was Mrs. Barbara Hutter of 151 Allen St., Buffalo, which was also Mrs. Wheeler's address. Following the death of her

husband, she had obtained a position with the welfare department and had worked there four years when she succumbed to her fatal illness. The only survivor mentioned besides her daughter in an obituary notice was a sister, Mrs. Marie Farrell Schmidt.

Thus the curtain came down for Marguerite Farrell, erstwhile singing star, on a life of modest usefulness in her later years—an anticlimax perhaps, to great days as an entertainer but one of public service, nevertheless.

### II. From Various Sources

I first learned of the death of Marguerite Farrell, whose records I had for many years admired, from a brief notice in *Variety*:

Marguerite Farrell Wheeler, 62, retired actress, died of a heart ailment in Buffalo, N. Y., January 26. Known professionally as Marguerite Farrell, she appeared in vaude partnered with Clara Inge in a comedy singing act and later as a single. She retired after her marriage. . . .

Prior to vaude engagements, Miss Farrell had appeared in Shakespearean repertory and in several musicals on Broadway, including the late Lew Fields' production of "Step This Way." Her last appearance was in the 1920's in the musical, "Up She Goes." . . .

Soon afterward, I wrote to the Erie County Department of Social Welfare, expressing my regret at Mrs. Wheeler's passing and asking for any available information concerning her. On February 14, 1951, Miss Frances M. Culliton, the general case work consultant, replied:

Dear Mr. Walsh: Thank you for your letter of February 12, 1951, in relation to our esteemed employee, Mrs. Marguerite Farrell Wheeler, who was taken from us by death recently.

We are referring your letter with its request for further information about Mrs. Wheeler to her daughter, Mrs. Barbara Hutter. . . . We know that she will be pleased to read your tribute to her mother.

I did not hear from Mrs. Hutter, but I did obtain a copy of Mrs. Wheeler's death certificate, which revealed, in addition to information already set down, that she was born in Providence, R. I., on September 16, 1888, had lived in Buffalo 25 years and was 62 years, four months and 10 days of age when she died.

The certificate also reveals her father was Joseph Farrell and her mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Wagner. Thus the comedienne obviously was a mixture of Irish and German, but I think that anyone who observes the blarney in her charming photographs will agree the Celtic element predominated.

### III. Columbia Records

As far as I can learn, Miss Farrell, during her too brief recording career, sang for only three leading phonograph companies of that day. The career may be divided into two parts—1916-17, when she sang for Columbia and Victor and 1921-22, when her name appeared in the Edison lists. She may have had a joint contract with Columbia and Victor, but that would have been unusual. Victor and Edison quite often signed artists to a joint agreement, but Columbia usually "went it alone."

Her first Columbia record A1920, appeared in March, 1916, several months ahead of her initial Victor offering. The supplement editor said: "Don't omit hearing Marguerite Farrell sing the Irish coupling, 'Along the Rocky Road To Dublin,' and 'He's the Son of an Irishman.' There is real music here." It is amusing to note the statement on the same page that "One of the most beautiful songs of the day, in any field of music, is Van Alstyne's 'Memories,' sung by Henry Burr. This is coupled with 'My Mother's Rosary,' a combination of unusual beauty." The amusing thing is that the record was actually issued under Burr's real name of Harry McClaskey. Thus the catalog editor unintentionally gave away the fairly well kept secret that Burr and McClaskey were the same man. Although he praised several of the month's records, the editor was short-sighted enough to omit comment on one of 1916's biggest hits, "Are You From Dixie?" sung by the Peerless Quartet.

"Along the Rocky Road to Dublin" was prettily sung, with a captivating touch of brogue, but it was only a modest seller, which suffered by comparison with the Victor and Edison records by the American Quartet. The number was better suited to a rousing male voice interpretation.

Miss Farrell's next appearance was in May with A1962, "When Priscilla Tries to Reach High C" and "At the Fountain of Youth"—the latter a song in which the veteran comedian, Dan W. Quinn, who hadn't made a record for years, had just essayed a Victor comeback. The editor said: "Marguerite Farrell, as brightly humorous as ever, will raise many a laugh in Von Tilzer's coloratura-parody, 'When Priscilla Tries to Reach High C.'" In June she had another coupling, A1981, "Now's the Time (the Great Leap Year Song)" and "Arrah Go On, I'm Gonna Go Back To Oregon."

July brought No. A2006, on which the soprano sang a Harry Von Tilzer song, "Pretty Please," coupled with "Are You Prepared for the Summer?" by Arthur Fields.

In August, Miss Farrell again shared one side of a double-faced Columbia disc, No. A2020. She sang "She Always Did the Minuet," while on the opposite side the Sterling

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

Trio was heard in "Do What Your Mother Did." (Did "Mother" also do the Minuet?) The supplement remarked: "Marguerite Farrell is very delightful in the quaint little song."

The comedienne's September offering was perhaps her biggest record hit, a song she also sang for Victor, "If I Knock the 'L' Out of Kelly." It was combined with Irving Kaufman's first Columbia record, "The Greatest Battle Song of All (Here Comes the Bride)" on A2040. Said the supplement: "Coupled with Kaufman's first record is the hit from Lew Fields' 'Step This Way,' 'If I Knock the 'L' Out of Kelly,' sung by the popular maker of this hit in the show, Marguerite Farrell. It's as good as the show itself to listen to Miss Farrell in this joyous song." The lyric asserted: "When you knock the 'L' out of Kelly, you knock the 'L' out of me."

Miss Farrell's first duet record came out in October, with no fanfare. It was No. A2063, "This Great Big World Owes Me a Living," in which she was joined by the popular tenor, M. J. O'Connell. The other side was "I'm Gonna Make Hay While the Sun Shines in Virginia," sung by Gladys Wilbur, whom I suspect of being Anna Chandler. O'Connell was the only duet partner of her recording career.

In November, Miss Farrell was represented by another song with which she was peculiarly identified, "Come On and Baby Me." The record was A2082. On the reverse side, Grace Nash (Grace Kerns) and O'Connell sang "Love is Just a Lottery." On A2088, Marguerite was again teamed with O'Connell singing this time "You Were Just Made to Order for Me." The opposite side had the noted song writer, Henry I. Marshall, interpreting his own composition, "Somewhere There's a Little Cottage Standing."

And then, abruptly, after only a six-month span, from March to November, the output of Columbia rec-

ords by Marguerite Farrell ended. Just why is puzzling, since she obviously was becoming popular. Perhaps, instead of having a joint Victor-Columbia agreement, as I have speculated, she quit Columbia to sign an exclusive Victor pact.

#### IV. Victor Recordings

The Columbia supplements told nothing about Marguerite Farrell herself, but the Victors were more informative. The comedienne's first Victor coupling appeared in September, 1916, and the catalog description was accompanied by a fetching photograph of her in her "Come On And Baby Me," pose which revealed that, unlike most women recording artists of that now remote time, she not only had a pretty face but a lovely figure.

The record was 18105, combining "If I Knock the 'L' Out of Kelly," and "By the Sad Luana Shore," both of which she sang with the assistance of a male chorus—probably the Orpheus Quartet. Here is what Catalog Editor, Sam Rous said.

Miss Farrell, the Victor's latest acquisition from the field of musical comedy, has scored a great success with the Lew Fields production of "Step This Way," a revised edition of "The Girl Behind the Counter," which had a very successful run some years ago. This popular comedienne has had a varied career in vaudeville, light opera and grand opera—and now has found a new field for her talents in Victor Records. . . . These two widely different numbers are well calculated to display Miss Farrell's versatility.

Having made an auspicious start with her biggest hit, "Kelly," Miss Farrell was back in October, with 18131, "Since Maggie Dooley Learned the Hooley-Hooley," and "Come On and Baby Me":

Miss Farrell's September records made a big hit with our customers and this popular comedienne has acquired many thousands of new friends among those who had never had an opportunity of hearing her in person.

The singer's October selections are quite entertaining, as are all the songs she chooses. "Maggie Dooley" is an instructive tale about an Irish maiden who went to the Hawaiian Islands and acquired some highly dangerous knowledge, with disastrous results to her native village. The second is about a fair maiden who wanted to be 'babyed,' and when Miss Farrell sings this in public and plaintively says, in the direction of the audience, 'Come and baby me,' she may find it wise to provide a screen to prevent the rush!

The most interesting reference to Marguerite Farrell appeared in the Victor supplement for November, 1916, when record No. 18135 was issued. It contains two Harry Von Tilzer songs (probably a majority of the numbers Miss Farrell used were written by Von Tilzer), "You've Eyes, and "Sweet Babette (She Al-Got Me Going With Your Irish ways Did the Minuet)," which she had already made for Columbia:

The career of Miss Farrell is an interesting one, showing what pluck and determination will do for a young girl who is ambitious. When she decided on a theatrical career she determined to learn the business thoroughly, and began at the bottom—by having her feet educated! After a course in dancing she secured some stage experience with "Rogers Brothers in Ireland," followed by a season in vaudeville with the "Four College Girls." This showed her the need of voice culture and she spent six months with a vocal teacher, after which she offered her services to Oscar Hammerstein and was engaged. However, 28 grand operas in one season seemed pretty hard work, and the young lady then tried comic opera.

#### Record Collectors - Attention!

Selling my private collection of over 30,000 records. Labels such as: Edison, Vocalion, Perfect, Harmony, Brunswick, Zon-O-Phone, Cameo, Bluebird, London, etc. Classical and Popular, Jazz and Bands. Mail 25c for our first 1960 catalog.

CANTON OF HIGHLANDTOWN  
29 S. Robinson St., Baltimore 24, Md.  
app



MARGUERITE FARRELL, as she appeared in the 1916 production, "Step This Way."



MARGUERITE FARRELL, appropriately costumed, singing "She Always Did the Minuet."

Engagements with "Miss Princess," "American Maid" and with Lillian Russell gave her a reputation which resulted in a vaudeville engagement on the "Big Time." When Lew Fields saw Miss Farrell's performance in Chicago he told her she must be in his next production. In "Step This Way" she has made a great success and her singing and dancing are one of the features of the production. For the November list Miss Farrell has given another of the Irish songs she does so well, and a new Von Tilzer number which looks like a big hit.

This seems a suitable place to discourse briefly on Marguerite Farrell's singing voice and style. The voice was a dainty, clear, high, flute-like soprano with a sweetness which reflects a roguish quality that peeps out of her charming photographs.

The most surprising thing about her singing is a culture and cultivation which the listener does not ordinarily expect to find in the voice production of an interpreter of comic songs. I suspect that most of her girlhood was spent in New England, for she is addicted to the use of the broad "A"—invariably saying "ahnswer" for "answer," to give one example—even occasionally when it is out of character. The overall effect is what an older generation would call lady-like and the listener feels she was completely feminine. No doubt her experience in light and grand opera intensified the refined quality, but it must have been there to begin with. On her Victor and Columbia records the words are not always clear, but there is never any doubt as to even a syllable on the crystal-clear Edisons, which have yet to be discussed.

Miss Farrell's next Victor record came out in February, 1917. It was No. 18213, and she sang "Naughty! Naughty! Naughty!" a catchy ditty from the Winter Garden "Show of Wonders." It had the good fortune to be coupled with "When You Hear Jackson Moan on His Saxophone," by Billy Murray, the king of popular record makers 40 years or more ago. As the catalog editor said: "Although ostensibly singing to her child, there are a good many men who would like to be chided the way Marguerite Farrell chides in 'Naughty! Naughty! Naughty!'"

There was a long interval before Miss Farrell's next Victor record appeared. It was also her last. In October she occupied both sides of 18346. Here is what the editor said:

A most engaging Irish brogue is a prized possession of Marguerite Farrell. She uses it to good advantage in "Says I To Myself, Says I," a lilting account of a little love episode, words by Eddie Moran and music by Harry Von Tilzer. . . "Wonderful Girl, Good Night" is by Garfield Kilgour and Harry Von Tilzer, which tells tales out of school, for it is a love letter read aloud.

One can only speculate on why Marguerite Farrell's Victor recording career ended at this point, after a little more than a year, just as her Columbia activities had occupied an even shorter period. Probably the most likely reason is that the United States had entered World War I, and there was little demand

for anything but so-called "patriotic songs," which were best sung by men. Victor also devoted much of its factory to war production with an inevitable decrease in the number of records turned out. A number of seemingly well established artists were dropped from the Victor rolls during this period.

#### V. Singing For Edison

The name of Marguerite Farrell did not appear on records again for another four years, when she was signed to make Edison Diamond Discs, some of which were also dubbed as Blue Amberols. *The Edison Amberola Monthly* for October, 1921, contained her photograph. There was also a biographical sketch called "The Girl on the Cover," which reads as if it were rewritten from the one in the November, 1916, Victor supplement, and contains the same information. However, the first and last paragraphs may be quoted:

As a singing comedienne, Miss Marguerite E. Farrell, whose picture adorns the cover of the present number of the *Amberola Monthly*, has had an unusually rapid rise in the theatrical world.

At present, Miss Farrell is under contract with the Shuberts. Her two numbers on the *Amberola*, "Arrah Go 'Long with You (Do You See Any Green in Me Eye?)" No. 4338, and "To the Strains of that Wedding March," No. 4280, are first rate examples of humorous character songs given with faultless delivery.

One other of Miss Farrell's Diamond Discs was transferred to a cylinder—"Yo-Lay-Ee-Oo," which became Blue Amberol No. 4408.

The comedienne's first Edison disc was announced in the spring of 1921. It was "To the Strains of that Wedding March (It's a Long, Long Walk)," coupled with "I Want to be the Leader of the Band," joyfully sung by the Harmonizers, masquerading as the Premier Quartet. I wonder why either Miss Farrell or the Edison recording staff chose a song that was more than ten years old for her initial offering. As sung by Billy Murray, it was a big hit in 1910 on Victor record 16833, especially since it was coupled with one of the all-time great popular waltz songs, "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland," rendered with operatic fervor by John Young. Perhaps Marguerite had sung it at the beginning of her stage career and believed it had sentimental or "good luck" associations. At any rate, her melodic warning against the perils of a walk to the altar is charming. It is characterized by daintiness and feminine fastidiousness.

A couple of months afterwards the soprano was back with a couple of excellent comic songs on No. 50808—"I've Got the Traveling Choo-Choo Blues" and "Arrah, Go 'Long With You," the latter already mentioned as a Blue Amberol. Despite the merit of this record it was not a good seller and was cut out of the 1924 catalog.

In October, 1921, came No. 50819, "Yo-Lay-Ee-Oo (Means I Love You)." This pseudo-yodeling tune was bright and catchy and well

sung. The brief supplement description said: "Marguerite Farrell, who sings this song, is a favorite in vaudeville. All of her whimsical art will be found in her rendition of 'Yo-Lay-Ee-Oo.'" On the other side Vernon Dalhart sang "Molly on a Trolley," to a soprano obligato by Betsy Lane Shepherd.

Miss Farrell's next addition to her Edison repertoire didn't appear until late in 1922. (Probably she had been away from New York on tour). It was also the best record, in my opinion, she ever made for any company—an irresistible East Side waltz song, called "I Certainly Must be in Love." It had one of the most incongruous couplings in phonograph history—Walter Scanlan singing a semi-religious ballad "I Love a Little Cottage," composed by Geoffrey O'Hara, who will be the subject of a *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artist's* biography one of these not too distant days.

Not only is the music of "I Certainly Must be in Love" attractive to anyone who likes a "good old-fashioned waltz," but the words are clever and amusing to a degree seldom attained by comedy numbers. And Miss Farrell's interpretation is superlative—perhaps as good as Billy Murray's Victor rendition of the same song—than which there could be no higher comic song praise. Despite her always unmistakable culture, the comedienne enters admirably into the spirit of the ditty about "Mamie McShane, a dumb, dizzy dame" who lived on "Thoid Avenue" and fell in love with a young Bowery socialite at the gas fitter's ball!

As "Mamie," Miss Farrell describes the ludicrous sufferings the onslaughts of love have brought to her. Most of the time she sings in a convincing East Side dialect, but once or twice she slips into her customary broad A's and says "ahnswer" and "pahss" for "pass"—the latter even when Mamie is supposed to be speaking. To render unmistakable the depths of her passion for her Bowery boy friend, Mamie proclaims: "I step in the bathtub and scrub meself white, an' now I'm convinced that me mind isn't right, for when I take a bath befo' Saddidy night—I sointly must be in love!"

Near the end of the record, the orchestra softly plays the chorus. Then, before it reaches the close, there is a charming and unexpected effect when Marguerite, as Mamie, exclaims: "Oh boy, ain't it a grand an' glorious feelin'!" By some near-magic she makes you see the glow in the girl's eyes as she dreams of her "steady beau." Another amusing bit of lyric writing ends the song: "Folks talk, but I don't hear a woid what they say: I'm so noivous an' worried me hair's toinin' gray—I drink thoity saucers of cawfy a day—I sointly must be in love!"

That record is a comedy masterpiece. Several months later, in the Spring of 1923, Miss Farrell's last Edison appeared: "If You Go, You'll

(Continued on page 53)



Italy) shows in the bowl a San Francisco cable car, the bay bridge, and the buildings of Chinatown. The handle is surmounted by a bear rampant, in full relief.

The spoons described are only a few of the many, old and new, that can be found. The variety is endless, but all are invested with historical association and some are real works of art.

## THE LILIOUKALANI CLOCK

(Continued from page 42)

phase of the moon, with the dots marking the days of the period.

Another eight-inch dial is placed below the center of the clock's face. This consists of an elaborate Perpetual Calendar which makes one complete revolution every sixteen years. The inside figures indicate the day of the month at the end of every seven-day period, beginning with January 2. The outer figures mark the weeks of the year.

This intricate mechanism bears the name "*Gale's Patent*," indicating that the clock was probably manufactured by the Welch Spring Company of Forestville, Conn. The inventor of this type of perpetual calendar movement was Daniel Jackson Gale (1830-1901),\* who lived most of his life in Bristol, Conn. He had been born in Waitsfield, Vt., and moved to Sheboygan Falls, Wis., when he was about 25 years old. He became apprenticed to a shoemaker and eventually owned and operated his own shoe shop.

It was in this Sheboygan Falls shoe shop that Gale invented and constructed his Calendar clock which he completed on August 17, 1865.

The clock was patented on November 16, 1869 and production was begun by Welch, Spring & Company in 1870. The firm paid a handsome royalty of \$100 to Gale for his invention.

Gale moved to Bristol in the following year and went to work for the firm that produced his clock. He worked a 10-hour day for a total daily wage of \$2.25!

The firm of Welch, Spring & Company had been formed as a partnership by Elisha N. Welch and Solomon C. Spring in Bristol in 1868 and they continued to operate under the same trade name until 1884. They produced a fine grade of calendar and regulator clocks, incorporating features of calendar movements invented by Gale as well as by B. B. Lewis, which they had also purchased. In 1884 the firm merged with E. N. Welch Manufacturing Company, another of Welch's many clock-making enterprises. The new firm went into receivership in 1897 and was reorganized in 1903 as the Sessions Clock Company, which continues to the present time as one of the major clock manufacturers of the United States.

## REMEMBER THE OLD GROCERY?

By WILLIAM H. RICHARDSON

When wide oak boards were used as counters?

When the first glass show-case came into being?

When apples and oranges were sold by the dozen?

When pickled pig's feet were bought from the barrel?

Sauerkraut was sold by the pound?

When you could buy cranberries by the pound and cooked them?

When you could purchase 5¢ worth of loose grits, meal, etc.?

When men sat around the pot belly stove in the winter?

When men sat on the porch of the old grocery and played checkers by the hour?

When bacon was sold from a slab?

When they used hanging scales?

When lagniappe was given by the merchants in the south to their customers?

When kerosene was sold for the little black stove?

When the Piggly Wiggly installed the first self-service store?

When the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co., changed from selling just tea and coffee, to all sorts of groceries?

When the oil lamp hung from the ceiling to light the store at night?

When deliveries were made by horse and wagon?

When milk could be bought in pint bottles?

When milk was sold for 5¢ pint, 10¢ quart?

When bread retailed for 5¢ a loaf?

When lard was sold loose from a large can?

When butter was sold from a barrel or tub, scooped up with a paddle and put in a wooden or paper container?

When fly paper was sold to catch the fly?

When large and small bins surrounded the walls to house grits, corn meal, rice, beans, etc.?

When almost every corner grocery kept a little credit book on the shelf?

## OLD VEHICLES

### WANTED

**WANTED - AUTOMOBILE ITEMS.** Most anything pertaining to early automobile era. Literature such as catalogs, manuals. Trade publications, hand books, posters, pictures, etc. Also horse-drawn vehicle era literature. Old cars, trucks, chassis, other components suitable for parts. Brass lights, horns, name plates. Most any kind of accessory or usable part, etc. I have discontinued collection of clothes, license plates, and most technical books. — B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. je62722

**AUTOMOBILE sales catalogs wanted.** Best prices offered. — M. Hollis, 4930 Queen Mary Road, Apt. 19, Montreal, Que., Canada. sl22611

**OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted.**—D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. my128801

**AUTOMOBILE catalogs, trade papers and leaflets, brass lamps, early gadgets.** —C.E.H. Whitlock, New Haven, Conn. mh1211

### OLD BICYCLES FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Large collection of old bicycles, high wheelers, wooden, tandems, high wheel gear driven, ratchet drive, and many other odd types and rare old bicycles. Would make a wonderful museum. — Everett Dix, Couderesport, Pa. my3085

### PLYMOUTH ANTIQUE CENTRE

Melvin P. Klasky  
26 Union St. Plymouth, Mass.



Boston & Albany #404 Scale Model Train, with tracks, run by steam. Size, length 8 1/4". Please write for further information. Photo 23a. mh3

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Come Back By and By." Billy Jones singing "Counterfeit Bill (from Louisville)" was her "platter-mate."

Just why Marguerite Farrell recorded only briefly for each of the three companies with whom she was associated is not clear. Probably her country-wide stage engagements prevented her having regular recording dates. Whatever the cause, the comparatively small amount of phonograph work she did clearly estab-

lished her rank as one of the cleverest of comedienues. It is a pity, of course, that her last years, after she abandoned the footlights for domesticity, should have been marred by sorrow and suffering. But, even while she labored as a welfare department case worker, it must have given Marguerite Farrell Wheeler pleasure to know that her pretty voice and excellent singing had been preserved on records which were treasured by many collectors.



GEORGE WILTON BALLARD,  
the popular pioneer recording tenor.

One afternoon I was walking toward my former home in Marion, Va., when I heard the sound of a man's voice uplifted in song. I was about a quarter of a mile from home at the time. There was nothing about the voice from which I could determine whether I was hearing a living singer or a mechanical reproduction, and the distance was so great I couldn't distinguish a word. But after I had walked a few steps farther I smiled. There was something about the voice that made it unmistakable even though the sound was faint and far away. Only one singer I could think of had that peculiarly distinctive quality.

When I reached home I said to my brother, Chad: "Weren't you playing a record by George Wilton Ballard a few minutes ago?"

He pointed to the phonograph turntable on which lay an Edison Diamond Disc of "Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold." But he found it hard to believe I had recognized Ballard's voice from a point so distant I couldn't catch a word.

Yet, it was true. George Wilton Ballard had a voice with a tone quality so individual that a good record by him could never be mistaken as the work of anyone else—a quality so elusive of reproduction, moreover, that insofar as my experience goes, only Edison ever succeeded in perfectly recording it. I have never heard any of his U.S. Everlasting cylinders, so exempt them from this discussion, but I have listened to most of the tenor's lateral-cut records and they are uniformly bad. The flat and nasal voice that emerges is only a travesty of his true tones, and it seems odd that he al-

lowed such unflattering representations to be issued. But most of his Edison records are excellent.

It is probably because his voice responded favorably to only one recording method that George Wilton Ballard, although a popular singer whose Edison discs and cylinders sold well, never achieved topmost rank as a recording artist. Instead, he was what I think of as a "middle-of-the-road" performer. He was not so popular as Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Ada Jones, Gene Austin, Collins and Harlan, Walter Scanlan and Cal Stewart, and his recorded output does not compare in volume with that of the favorite free-lancers, Charles Hart, Charles Harrison, Arthur Fields, Irving Kaufman and Helen Clark. Nevertheless, the span of his recording career, some 15 years, was about that of the average popular singer, and if his records didn't sell in such huge quantities as those by the artists I have mentioned, there were many other highly regarded comedians and singers who ranked below him from a sales standpoint. In fact, Ballard might be compared to a member of the supporting cast of an old-time stock company. If not one of the stars (during his Edison career he was obliged to play second fiddle to Scanlan, who was unmistakably Edison's most popular singer of popular sentimental songs), he was still a useful and highly regarded member of the company.

## II. Some Reflections on the Phonograph

When I observed that George Wilton Ballard was born November 24, 1877 — about three and one-half months after Edison produced his first tinfoil phonograph — I was moved to reflect on some facts of phonograph history that I believe are not generally recognized.

We collectors have a feeling that the era of the cylinder record extended over many generations. Actually, its active life, from Edison's first tinfoil production until the Blue Amberol was discontinued in 1929, was just 52 years. Edison, who officiated at the cylinder's birth lived to see its death. If the tinfoil period, when recording was wholly experimental, is discounted, the wax cylinder's life was only from 1886, when Tainter and Bell produced the first cardboard specimens coated with wax, to 1912,

when Edison supplanted the wax variety with the Blue Amberol. Unbelievable as it seems, that was only 26 years. (However, the Clarion Co. in England continued to make wax two and four-minute cylinders until the early 1920's). To look at it another way, if the wax cylinders had first been produced in 1933 and lasted a comparable period, they would now be breathing their last. All their history would have been crowded into the 26 years that have elapsed since Franklin D. Roosevelt first took office.

When we come to consider the historical disc picture, the facts are equally startling. From force of habit, I always imagine that for an immeasurably long time records were made by the acoustic process of singing into a horn. By a similar process of "reasoning," I picture the old Victor Talking Machine Co., as dominating the phonograph and record industry for several average lifetimes. Actually, Emile Berliner produced his first crude specimens of single-faced discs in 1894, and only 31 years later, in 1925, the acoustic recording method gave way to the electric. The strangest reflection of all is that electric recordings have now been made for 34 years—three years longer than the mechanical system lasted—and eight years longer than the wax cylinder survived. Cylinders of all kinds (excepting tinfoil) endured for only 43 years. Ten years from now electric recording will have had a longer history than that of all types of cylinders.

As for the Victor Talking Machine Co., its founder Eldridge R. Johnson, did his first repair work on phonographs in 1898. Three years later he founded the Victor Co. And, like the wax cylinder, Victor lasted only 26 years, before falling into other hands and, unlike the cylinder, becoming a subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America.

When we come to examine the careers of recording artists the facts are equally startling. Upon considering the individual's life history, it is astonishing to find how small a proportion of his or her earthly stay was devoted to making records. True, Len Spencer, who died at the early age of 47, was a recording artist for the last 25 years of his life, but Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, whose popularity at one time seemed likely to go on forever, made records for only about the same length of time as Spencer, although Collins lived to be 69 and Harlan 75. Ada Jones' career as a professional recording performer was only 18 years and she was well past her peak when she died. Mary Macdonough made records for a little over 20 years, and Olive Kline and Elsie Baker for less than 20.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

As a small boy, I was unable to visualize any time in the past when my hero, Billy Murray, hadn't been singing on records or any future period when he wouldn't be. He had made them before I was born and he seemed likely to be making them when Gabriel responded to demands for encores of his trumpet solo. Yet, disregarding some early experimental work in his teens, Billy's true recording career extended only from 1903 to 1932, with a brief comeback in 1940-41. During more than half of his 77 year life span he had no association with the phonograph.

And Henry Burr, who made more records than any other singer before or since, was active from 1922 through 1929—about 27 years. Bing Crosby made his first record more than 30 years ago and still makes an occasional one, but ten years ago he was losing his luster as a recording star.

Consequently it will be seen, that given a normal lifetime, the most popular phonograph singers managed to go on working between 20 and 30 years, with 25 years about the average. Those of the second flight of popularity held on for 10 or 15 years, or about the length of a good baseball player's big league career. Thus, as I have already said, George Wilton Ballard's tenure before the recording horn (he never made an electric record) was about the "middle-of-the-road" average.

### III. Biographical Facts

George Wilton Ballard was born in Syracuse, N. Y. (which Irving Kaufman also regards as his home town, although Kaufman was born in Russia and came to Syracuse as a child), and spent nearly all his life either there or in New York City. He died in Syracuse on April 6, 1950, aged 72 years, four months, and 12 days. His father was Alfred Ballard, and he was given his middle name of Wilton from his mother's maiden name. His death certificate says his home was at 708 James St., and he had been living in Syracuse (presumably on his return from New York) for 15 years. He had mostly given up his singing career (probably about the time he ceased to be an Edison recording artist) and was a salesman in a jewelry store. The certificate gave "salesman" as the occupation he had followed most of his life.

*The Syracuse Herald-Journal* for Friday, April 7, 1950, published the following obituary:

G. W. BALLARD, SINGER, WILL BE BURIED MONDAY . . . Funeral services for George Wilton Ballard . . . widely known concert tenor, who died yesterday, will be held at 2 p. m. Monday in the Schumaker and Mason Funeral Home.

Mr. Ballard was employed as a diamond specialist and salesman for Howe's jewelry store since 1939. He died while at work.

A resident of Syracuse most of his life, he lived for several years in New York City where he gave concerts in many churches and made recordings. He was a soloist at First Baptist Church in Syracuse.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Della Ready Ballard; a son, Robert Hudson Ballard; a sister, Miss Bertha Ballard, of Detroit, Mich.; two grandchildren, Miss Martha Louise Ballard and Wilton Sprague Ballard, and several nieces and nephews. . . Burial will be in Amber Cemetery.

The death certificate attributed the singer's passing to a sudden attack of arteriosclerotic heart disease.

Relatively little information concerning George Wilton Ballard may be found in old phonograph publications. However, the following appeared in the Edison cylinder record catalog for April, 1914, when Ballard had made only two Blue Amberol records:

A native of Syracuse, N. Y., Mr. Ballard has for many years been among the leading concert and church tenors of the Eastern United States. He started his musical career as soloist in leading church choirs of Syracuse, where he remained upwards of ten years. He is now located in New York City, where he occupies a prominent position as choir soloist at the Calvary Methodist-Episcopal church. Notwithstanding his success, he is still studying under the famous vocal instructor, Oscar Saenger. Mr. Ballard is a favorite with Edison owners. His enunciation and phrasing are especially commendable. His voice is clear and sweet, and he puts a fervor and feeling in his interpretations that is most impressive and enjoyable.

This may be supplemented by the following from the 1923 catalog of Gennett records:

There is no more popular Gennett singer than George Wilton Ballard. He possesses a rich, pure tenor of wondrous quality and his tones, especially the higher ones, are produced without effort. His shadings of tone and his voice control in general have endeared him to the hearts of thousands.

(Continued on page 45)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 32)

the rage for a long while. But may it gently be reminded that knowing how to say *da* does not make one an authority on the subject. Among the ridiculous statements along this line stands out the preposterous claim that Vialtzeva was a gypsy! She sang the so-called "gypsy romances," but because of that she was no more a gypsy than the interpreters of Iris and Butterfly are Japanese.

Incidentally, I never had occasion to mention this before: please note that the unsigned footnote to my article "Singers of the Tzar," which appeared in the February, 1953, number of the English "The Gramophone," was written not by me but by the editor of that department. In it, a paragraph read: ". . . there were fourteen G & Ts of Vialtzeva, including what must be a unique performance of the Gypsy Song from *Carmen*; to hear this sung by a genuine gypsy (sic) must certainly have been a revelation!" I repeat, and most emphatically: I DID NOT make this statement!

---

I REMEMBER how the grocer

Put potatoes on the spout,

Just to keep the liquid contents,

When you walked, from sloshing out.

—Spencer C. Ackerman

---



JIM WALSH, photographed on the front porch of his new home in Vinton, Va., while trying to gaze serenely into the distance, with his squirming cats, Nipper and Roger in one hand, and an armful of phonograph reference material in the other. Nipper disappeared the day after the picture was taken for *The Commonwealth*, a magazine published in Richmond, Va., and wasn't found for three weeks.

essentially the same service is very great indeed.

This is by no means the ultimate in contrast. The American dollar watch is the low in this field while there have been watches made in Europe, with heavily jeweled case, running to many thousands of dollars. The same is true of clocks.

These two illustrations, one HIGH and one LOW give some idea only of the wide range in which timepieces have been made. Every gradation between has been filled by countless designs and qualities. No one will ever know of them all, even after a lifetime of study and research.

There is a reason for presenting this kind of an article and the purpose is to give some idea of the immensity of this field. I still get letters, almost every day, from people who say, in effect: "I have an old clock. Will you please tell me all about it, and especially, what is it worth." I would like to be helpful, whenever I can, but this sort of thing is quite frustrating.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 35)

### IV. Ballard's First Recordings

Judged by current standards, George Wilton Ballard made a rather late start as a talking machine artist. He was in his early 30's when he began recording for the company which made U.S. Everlasting cylinders from 1910 through most of 1913. The U.S. recording manager, Albert Benzler, had previously been associated with Edison, and had a keen ear for good phonograph voices. As I have already said, I have not heard any of Ballard's U.S. cylinders and can't comment on their tone quality, but a survey of the catalog dated October, 1912, shows he was sometimes assigned a higher type of music than the popular sentimental songs he usually sang for Edison.

The Syracuse tenor's four-minute U.S. records included 1043, "A Dream"; 1313, "I Hear You Calling Me"; 1448, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart"; 1049, "Love Abiding"; 1194, "Love's Sorrow"; 1402, "My Sweetheart When a Boy"; 1150, "Red Wing", and 1392, "The Snowy-Breasted Pearl," which for some mysterious reason was sung without accompaniment. Others may have been issued in the year that remained before the company went out of business, unable to meet the competition of Mr. Edison's new Blue Amberol.

Ballard's two-minute repertoire included 213, "Carissima"; 303, "Daisies Won't Tell"; 266, "Dream River"; 484, "I'd Love to Live in Loveland With a Girl Like You," and 389, "Summer Days." Among the four-minute vocal duets, he and William H. Thompson sang No. 1547, "When the Old Oaken Bucket was New." On the two-minute they did 466, "Driving Home the Cows from Pasture," and 504, "A Girlie was Just Made to Love."

It is possible that Ballard also made some Indestructible cylinders during this period, but lacking catalogs, I can't be sure. I do have one Indestructible which he sang under the name of George Wilton — an atrociously recorded version of "Break the News to Mother," but this probably was done in 1917 or 1918.

### V. Becoming an Edison Artist

The tenor may have had an exclusive U.S. contract, for he made no Edison cylinders until the Cleveland firm ceased to function. His first Blue Amberol, No. 2150, "When the Twilight Comes to Kiss the Rose Good-Night," was issued in February, 1914, and remained popular for years. It was followed in March by No. 2196, a now forgotten Irving Berlin song, "There's a Girl in Arizona," which stayed in the catalog only a short time. After that, despite the statement in the April, 1914, catalog that Ballard had become a favorite with Edison owners, more than a year elapsed before he was again heard from.

Meanwhile, the melodious George was extending the scope of his activities. His first Victor record came out in December, 1914. On one side of 17654 he sang "You're More Than the World to Me," while on the opposite side Albert Campbell and Henry Burr were heard in "Diane of the Green Van."

About that same time, Ballard produced a disc that has been lost to the world. On December 1, 1914, the Victor Co. notified dealers two records which had been scheduled for the January supplement had been withdrawn and would not be issued. One was 17653, which combined Ballard's version of "You're Always Welcome at our House," with "Underneath the Japanese Moon," by his erstwhile Syracuse neighbor, Irving Kaufman. Also withdrawn was No. 17645, which combined a group of children's songs sung by Olive Kline. The latter was issued shortly afterward as 17719, and Kaufman's song, recoupled with "Where the Oceans Meet in Panama," became 17699. However, the Ballard half of 17653 was consigned to permanent oblivion. I wonder why.

After this somewhat discouraging start, Ballard was not heard from again on Victor until November, 1915, when he and "John Wilbur" sang a duet version on 17889 of "When You Sit Beside the Fireside in Winter." ("Wilbur" was the Peerless Quartet basso, John Meyer). An Irving Berlin hit, "Araby," sung by Harry Macdonough, was its mate. The tenor's final appearance as a Victor artist was in January, 1916, when he sang on 17903, "Could the Dreams of a Dreamer Come True." The other side was "If it Takes a Thousand Years," by James Reed (Reed Miller) and James F. Harrison (Frederick Wheeler).

His Columbia experience was equally short and unimpressive. He first appeared in a Columbia list in

August, 1914, on record A1553, singing "When You Play in the Game of Love." His "platter mate" was Manuel Romain, rendering "My Love Would Fill a Thousand Hearts." The supplement referred to Ballard as a "singer so far a stranger to our list . . . a tenor of much reputation in concert and high-class vaudeville. Mr. Ballard makes a remarkably attractive record of Leo Feist's latest hit."

Ballard was heard from again in January, 1915, when he and Ada Jones recorded a song that didn't sell, "In the Garden" (not the gospel hymn made familiar by Homer Rodeheaver and Virginia Asher), on No. A1627. Their companion duetists were Collins and Harlan, singing "It's a Very Easy Thing to Put a Ring Upon a Finger"—another tune that didn't catch on.

The tenor's third and last Columbia appearance was in March, 1915, when he sang "In My Dream of You" on A1684. The Lyric Trio (Will Oakland, Albert Campbell and Henry Burr), occupied the other side with "Everything Reminds Me of that Old Sweetheart of Mine."

I have no doubt Ballard's Victor and Columbia activities were cut short because his records didn't sell, and they were poor sellers because the lateral-cut recording process fell short of doing justice to his voice, which was peculiarly rich in overtones. Victor and Columbia obtained excellent results with many singers, but Ballard's tones were so distinctive that only Edison could register them in all their individuality.

The same statement concerning a lack of realism may be made concerning the Gennett and Federal records by Ballard, which came out for several years in the early 1920's. The Federal discs also appeared under the Silvertone label.

### VI. Back to Edison

It has been mentioned that Ballard made two Edison Blue Amberol cylinders, issued in February and March, 1914. Then there was a period of more than a year, while he was making discs, before he again appeared in an Edison cylinder list. In June, 1915, he was on hand with 2613, "The Violin My Great Grand-Daddy Made," which appeared soon afterward as his first Diamond Disc, 50242, coupled with "The A. O. H's of the U.S.A." by that rollicking comedian, Edward Meeker. These two songs are virtually unknown today, but the record was popular enough to stay in the catalog for ten years.

In August, 1915, Ballard's Blue Amberol, "Take Me Back to Your Heart," appeared. This was an English song and the record was made chiefly for sale in British territory. It did not appear on the Diamond Disc.

From this time, Ballard throughout the next ten years was one of the most consistent performers for

(Continued on page 53)



me. Ye are to charge him on pain of forfeiture of his employment that he do not sing such verses about the streets. Ye are to charge him to take care of thieves and robbers, but to waive that part of his duty to the princess, for since her guards are taken off, she is neither to be regarded by day, or guarded by night."

By the time the colonists were settling in America, the bellman was evolving into the town crier. Old borough records give some interesting items relating to the criers' bells. For example, the price of a five and three-fourths pound one, polished inside and out and engraved, was upwards of one pound. These bells were greatly treasured and records tell of many a stiff fight a town crier had to wage, on occasion, to keep his bell in hand.

Today, criers are still a colorful feature in the British Isles, where they may be found mainly in resort towns, proclaiming local events, distributing handbills and attending municipal functions. And the office is still a proud one, having remained in the same family sometimes for several generations.

Each summer town criers from England, Scotland and Wales gather at Hastings, Sussex, for a national championship contest. Prizes are given for the loudest, clearest voice and for the best, most colorful uniform. The trophies and awards are much sought after, and the entire contest a very gala affair.

In colonial America the town crier was much like his English counterpart, less a watchman and more a purveyor of news. His familiar Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! (Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye!) accompanied by his bell always preceded the crying of objects lost or found, weddings, funerals, auctions, etc.

A few of the colonial town crier bells have been preserved in collections. At Mission Inn, Calif., is the one used at Bedford, Mass. It is inscribed as follows: "This bell was rung on the morning of the 19th day of April, 1775, to arouse the people and farmers and tell them that Paul Revere had brought the news that the British Army was coming to destroy stores of ammunition at Concord, Mass., and to attack them at Lexington, and there they met the foe. Here commenced the Revolutionary War in the early morning hours."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 45)

the Edison disc and cylinder catalogs. During part of the time he may have been an exclusive Edison artist, which most record buyers thought of him as being, anyway. He was assigned many song hits as well as some old-time ballads which probably were personally selected by Mr. Edison. "The Old Man" had a fondness for recording the songs of his boyhood, without much regard as to

whether they would sell. Most of the Ballard Diamond Discs were in the 50,000 series, which sold at various times from \$1 to \$1.35, but some were in the 80,000 class, whose prices varied from \$1.50 to \$1.85. A hearing of the records reveals the tenor had clear enunciation, but a trace of an Italianate style, which sometimes caused him to pronounce "i" as "e". Thus, "hickory stick" becomes "heekory steeck." His voice was always warm and charged with emotion even in trivial ballads. He was not versatile, as many other popular recording artists were, but stuck to sentimental songs and never essayed comedy.

A list of Ballard's most popular Edison records would include 50686, "Daddy, You've Been a Mother to Me"; 50307, "I'm a Lonesome Melody"; 50534, "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles"; 50690, "The Love Nest"; 50325, "M-O-T-H-E-R (A Word that Means the World to Me)"; 50755, "Mother of Pearl"; 50343, "There's a Long, Long Trail" (probably the most popular of all); 50269, "When I Was a Dreamer"; 50678, "When You're Gone I Won't Forget"; 50811, "Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold"; and 51014, "Sunset Trail of Gold." He did relatively little duet work, but "Bubbles," and several other numbers were sung with Helen Clark; "The Love Nest," and "When You're Sure I Won't Forget," with Louise Terrell, who was really Elizabeth Lennox; and "Sunset Trail of Gold," with Betsy Lane Shepherd. His first Edison duet partner was the comparatively obscure baritone, Owen J. McCormack, with whom he sang, on 50313, "In the Land of Love with the Song Birds."

Ballard was one of the artists engaged to give "tone tests," singing in comparison with the Official Laboratory Model New Edison. I find the following paragraph in *Along Broadway* for March-April, 1919:

Under the auspices of the Jewish Welfare Board, Miss Amy Ellerman, Mr. George Wilton Ballard and Mr.

## OLD VEHICLES

### WANTED

**WANTED - AUTOMOBILE ITEMS.** Most anything pertaining to early automobile era. Literature such as catalogs, manuals. Trade publications, hand books, posters, pictures, etc. Also horse-drawn vehicle era literature. Old cars, trucks, chassis, other components suitable for parts. Brass lights, horns, name plates. Most any kind of accessory or usable part, etc. I have discontinued collection of clothes, license plates, and most technical books. — B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. je62722

**AUTOMOBILE sales catalogs wanted.** Best prices offered. — M. Hollis, 4930 Queen Mary Road, Apt. 19, Montreal, Que., Canada. s122511

**OLD AUTO LAMPS,** horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted. — D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. my128801

Jacques Glockner gave several Tone-Test recitals for men in uniform a few weeks ago. The Tone-Test feature of the programs was more or less of an experiment, as we wondered a little how the soldiers would enjoy it. As the men had no particular interest in the Edison, it was an excellent opportunity of judging the Tone-Test from the point of view of entertainment only. . . . Each one was a complete success. The men were delighted with the music, and seemed particularly interested in the recitals as a demonstration of the degree of perfection which has been attained by the Edison phonograph.

One of my friends who attended a Tone-test in which Ballard took part described him as a small man with rather prominent eyes, who sang well but sometimes became so interested in following the progress of the record that he turned away from the audience to watch the "platter" spin, and momentarily forgot to sing along with the disc.

In 1917 Edison organized one of the best mixed voice quartets that ever made records — the Harmony Four, consisting of John Young, first tenor; Ballard, second tenor; Gladys Rice, soprano, and Donald Chalmers, bass. The quartet sang several records in which the four voices blended exquisitely. One of these was the big 1918 song hit, "Smiles." Miss Rice, who made her first Edison records at the age of 19 and is still active in New York musical circles, is the only survivor of the group.

Ballard also sang in the Edison series of "Songs of the Past," and occasionally took the lead in Premier Quartet records, when Billy Murray was not available. One of these was 50528, "Mammy's Lullaby." He sings "Good Night, Dear" on 50750, "The Land of Minstrelsy," by the Premier Quartet and Minstrel Co., but takes no part in the comedy, which is entrusted to Steve Porter, Murray and Meeker. At times he sang in the Metropolitan Quartet of mixed voices.

One of the unusual Edison records in which Ballard participates is 80354, "That Creepy, Weepy Feeling," from the musical comedy, "His (Continued on page 84)

## OLD BICYCLES FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Large collection of old bicycles, high wheelers, wooden, tandems, high wheel gear driven, ratchet drive, and many other odd types and rare old bicycles. Would make a wonderful museum. — Everett Dix, Couderport, Pa. my3066

## OLD VEHICLES FOR SALE

**For Sale:** Only Bryan steamer auto in the world. Last of seven built. Runs like new. — Al. Wissinger, 315 W. 13th St., Peru, Ind. ap1882

**Old Fire Truck - 1927 Reo, 5200 actual miles.** Pump, motor, tires, body all in perfect condition. Solid brass ladder hangers, also 40 gal. brass priming tank. Valves and bell heavy nickel. Total length only 19 feet. Price \$395. — Merl Wakefield, Broadwell, Ill. ap1405

(Continued from back cover)

**EDWARD G. WILSON****1802 Chestnut St.****Philadelphia 3, Pa.**

- 15 Gold Butterfly Charm studded w/ Rubies, Diamonds & Sapphires. 1/2". \$55.
- 16 COLLECTION OF GOLD JEWELLED STICKPINS - your choice, at \$22 each.
- A. Lover's Knot w/ Diamond.
- B. Circle of whole round Pearls.
- C. Gold & Pearl studded Fleur de Lys.
- D. Pearl Horseshoe of whole round Pearls.
- E. Gold Owl's head w/ garnet Eyes.
- F. Baroque Pearl Clover.

**SILVER**

17. English Sterling hoof footed Gravy Boat - beautifully proportioned. 6 1/4" long. \$38.50.
18. A beautifully proportioned American Coin Silver Pape Boat by Wm. Gale & Sons, New York, circa: 1852. 4 1/2", \$65.
19. Tiffany English Sterling Child's Cup, straight sides. \$27.50.
20. J. E. Caldwell Sterling Mug (Cann) in the 18th Century style. Slant sides, Eagle Crest. 4 1/2". \$44.
21. Paul Revere style Sterling Bowl by Lunt. 4 1/2" high, 7 1/2" diameter. \$49.50.
22. Dozen plain Sterling Bread & Butter Plates, monogrammed. Thread border. 6 3/8" diameter. \$65 doz.
23. Graceful 3 pc. footed Sterling After Dinner Coffee Set by Tiffany & Co. \$125 set.
24. A fine 7 1/2" English Silver "Rat Tailed" Spoon w/ Mid Rib, London, Circa: 1728-9. \$20.
25. Set of 11 R&W Wilson Coin Silver, Fiddle back, Tea Spoons, circa: 1825. \$44 set.
26. Rare Coin Silver Fiddle back Tea Spoon w/ Basket of flowers motif. By Moore, N.Y., circa: 1830. \$9.90.
27. Rare Dessert Spoon, Coin Silver Fiddle back w/ Sheaf of Wheat motif. Moore & Brewer, N.Y., circa: 1855. \$10.

**MAY L. WOOD****19 W. Bow St. Franklin, N. H.**

Small colored Staff. Hen on Nest 1850.  
Rare Staff. lg. 2 handle mug, frog inside, retrievers outside in relief. \$60.00

Purple Crocus lg. sugar. write  
4 china 2 1/2" mugs, black transfer scene \$4.50 each, lot. 18.50

Crust electric blue TYP enamel dec. (others) 25.00

Rose Satin 8", crimped, decorated bowl, exquisite 50.00

Lilao Satin ornate vase. 48.50

Blue "Delft" bird house inset. 7.50

Delft 8 1/2"x8 1/2" tray 0.00

Pr. multi cased Spangle glass shoes, app. leaf rigareo, ea. 20.00

app

**HOUSE OF MEMORIES**  
Woodville, Wisconsin

Montgomery Ward catalog, 1/w 1883, v.g. cond., with wholesale grocery catalog & order blank. \$28.00

Butler Bros. dry goods, notions, etc., Jan. 1898, 10x13", 44 pp., v.g., with order blank. \$3.50

G. Sommers & Co., St. Paul, 1897 w/Holiday, 154 pp., 10x13", 25 pp toys & dolls, thousands of items. \$8.00

Letters, by Henry Thoreau, first ed. excel. \$5.00

Old school desks, shipped knocked down. Shipping extra. Singles, \$5; doubles \$8.00

Town Hall Tonight, by Harlowe Hoyt. DC. \$6.50

Ex. app

**LOWRY'S ANTIQUES**

50 Bissell Ave. Youngstown 4, Ohio

3 Jewel with Dewdrop mugs, each \$4.25

Pogo Stick water pitcher, late, base chip 2.00

Paneled Dewdrop open compute 8.00

Touring plate, 8 3/4" dia., sml. under flake 3.50

Carlsbad dresser tray 5.00

Batzenberg round table cover, 51" diam., beautiful 5.00

Very old white porc. door knobs, pr. 6.00

Stamp please. Transportation extra. app

**FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS**

(Continued from page 53)

Little Widows." This was recorded in 1917 by Miss Rice, Marion Evelyn Cox, Ballard and Harvey Hindemyer. On the other side Vernon Dalhart sings beautifully "There's Egypt in Your Dreamy Eyes."

In May, 1924, Edison proudly announced an innovation — a series of dance records on which an orchestra played the complete number, followed by a vocal rendition of the same selection in waltz or fox-trot tempo. The first of these was 51318, with Ballard singing "Don't Mind the Rain," after it had already been played by the Top Notchers — whoever they were. The reverse side had the same group performing "Just Like a Baby," followed with a vocal rendition by James Doherty.

Although this combination of dance and vocal never became especially popular, a good many records of that type were made, and Ballard probably sang more of the vocal portions than anyone else. In fact, after the "two-in-one" discs, as they were called, were introduced, his Edison work was restricted almost entirely to them.

The tenor made his final appearance for Edison in the February, 1926, supplement on 51673, when he sang the chorus of "Fond of You," played as a fox-trot by Ernie Golden and his Hotel McAlpin Orchestra. The reverse side is a better known song, "A Cup of Coffee, a Sandwich and You," played by Mike Speciale and his Hotel Carlton Terrace Orchestra, with refrain by Arthur Hall. This record was issued a year and a half before Edison adopted the new-fangled electric process, and as far as I know, it constitutes Ballard's last work for any record company. The Edison business was declining and many of its standby artists were being dropped. That probably was the reason Ballard ceased to sing for Diamond Discs.

Whatever the reason, he still had almost a quarter of a century of life remaining. Apparently, he continued to live in New York for several years before returning to Syracuse and working as a gem expert in a jewelry store. (I wonder when and where he received his specialized training). During his 15 years or so as an active recording artist, he did excellent work. It is a pity that a considerable part of his recorded repertoire doesn't bring out the true beauty of his voice and singing style.

**FOUR WINDS**

- 5000 Gulf of Mexico Dr. Sarasota, Fla.
1. Blue glass, 2 panel oval bowl, 8x6x2 1/2", has a V shaped chip out of edge, only \$6.
2. Blue milk glass round scroll dish, 4x1 1/2", \$8.50.
3. China mug type cup with handle, gold dec. with scene P.O. Milwaukee, Wis., \$4.
4. Custard glass, large round bowl, wreath pattern, similar to Shell & Scroll, no dec., \$8.50.
5. Custard glass - salt, pepper & sugar shakers, panel & teardrops. 1 top missing, tops need plating. Unusual, \$15.
6. Cloisonne medallions. 1 pr. round, 1 pr. club. 1 oval, very colorful both sides, \$5 pr., \$3 single.

Transportation extra.

app

**NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY MAGAZINE FEATURES COLLECTING**

THANKS to the many readers of HOBBIES Magazine who sent clippings from the Sunday, February 20, edition of the New York Times Sunday Magazine with the interesting story by Barney Lefferts of the Times staff. Mr. Lefferts headed his article "Who Collects What and Why." Many friends of HOBBIES Magazine through the years are mentioned in the article, with their comments and thoughts on collecting. In these days when so many are wanting international peace, "there's food for thought" in Mr. Leffert's lead paragraphs. He says:

"Sergei Khrushchev, son of Khrushchev, made news recently by sending a Brooklyn man named Aminadov Glanz fifty-four butterflies. The deed was done in the name of retroactive gratitude, Glanz having pressed a consignment of Lepidoptera on young Khrushchev when the latter visited his insect shop last fall.

"A simple case of East-West cooperation? Possibly. But an incident additionally illustrative, if one pokes beneath the surface, of the universality of that special species of humanity that answers to the name Collector.

The collector in America is known familiarly as Legion and his numbers increase with each passing year. He feeds on stamps, coins and autographs; rocks and muskets; beer coasters, cast-iron piggy banks, glass elephants and cloisonne. Because he threatens to overwhelm the non-collector—a pitifully small minority group, as it is—it may be useful to assess the nature of his accumulations and discuss the motivations that drive him to stuff his living quarters with objets.

"The variety of the collector's experience is initially shocking to the uninformed."

Mr. Lefferts observed also: "About half of each issue of HOBBIES—

**JEANETTE TUCKER**

254-06 Northern Blvd. Little Neck 62, N. Y.

Child's ice cream freezer, like new, cuts. \$4.00

Crust set, so. pewter base, 5 compl. pcs. 15.00

President Commem. plate, all Pres. to F.D.I., 12" 7.50

Souv. steril. tsp., Patrick Henry, rare. 4.50

Cigar-band lined bottle, Amer. Eagle, Pres. 3.50

Bennington-type flask 6", emb. man/plce. 12.50

Cow bell, v. early, h. made, orig. clapper, 7" 5.00

Stamp please for Spring List, inquiries. Ship. extra. app

**JERRY SLOANE****221 East 31st St.****New York 16, N. Y.**

Rare offering ram's head bowl with matching candlesticks in lavender having the original gilt. Belknap frontispiece & 32-A. Sold as a set at \$225.

Slag Dolphin candlesticks in a vibrant peacock coloring. 5 1/4" high. \$125 the pair.

The above pieces are in mint condition.

Transportation will be extra. app

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Vernon Dalhart

By JIM WALSH  
PART I

### I. The Hotel Clerk

At 5 o'clock of the afternoon of Wednesday, September 15, 1948, a 65-year-old night clerk for the Bar-num Hotel died in the Bridgeport, Conn., Hospital.

Probably few of the doctors and nurses who had attended the dead man knew that less than a quarter of a century before he had been a famous tenor who had experienced one of the most remarkable careers in American musical history. He had sung successfully in opera, both light and grand, and had been even more successful on the concert stage. He had won a deserved reputation as one of the most versatile and accomplished recorders of popular music and had made hundreds of records of sentimental ballads and comic songs.

Then, after the so-called "hill-billy" tunes came into vogue, he had been recognized as the leading exponent of that type of song. From 1925 to 1930 he probably made more records—thousands of them—than any other singer—and was almost unquestionably the biggest selling recording artist of that five-year period. His first Victor "hillbilly" was the most popular vocal record ever made up to that time and, because of its curiously complex and confusing history, caused more ill feeling and resulted in more expensive, long continued legal action than any other disc in the annals of sound recording. And the singer himself had a personality and character seemingly as complex and baffling

as his most famous recorded production.

The dead man, whose legal name was Marion Try Slaughter, had made records under a bewildering variety of disguises—nobody knows precisely how many, but two score probably would be a conservative estimate. He was, however, best known to record buyers under his stage name, Vernon Dalhart.

### II. Descent Into Obscurity

The Vernon Dalhart, who lay dead in the Bridgeport Hospital, had come a long way, accomplished much and suffered much since his birth at Jefferson, Tex., on April 6, 1883. He had been a leader of his profession for years, and had made—and lost—a fortune. After several years at the crest of popularity, his vogue had vanished as the record industry collapsed in the depression of the early 1930's, and he had descended into obscurity. Just six days before his death, I met two of his former associates at a party for pioneer recording artists in Garden City, N. Y., and asked them where Dalhart was and what he was doing. Both

### RECORDS WANTED

**WANTED TO BUY:** Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

**WANTED:** Titta Ruffo's Pathe Dinorah: Sei vendicata—any number, size or coupling; outside or center start.—Alda Favia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

**WANTED:** Trombone records by Arthur Pryor. — Steve Gilman, Jamestown, Rhode Island. my148

**WANTED:** HILLBILLY RECORDS by Carter family, Uncle Dave Macon, Cliff Carlisle, Luke Baldwin, Frank Hutchison, Charlie Poole, Monroe Brothers, Charley Blake, etc. — Don Wahle, 1128 Keller, Louisville 13, Ky. je3084

### RECORDS FOR SALE

**Comprehensive Monthly Lists** of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. ja128862

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

**Edison, Columbia cylinder records.** Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. je3084

**OVER 100,000 hard - to - get records,** 1903 to L.P. — Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight Street, San Francisco 17, Calif. d126121

**50 Years of old songs and popular favorites.** Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. jly3618

**FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare** records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. o6276

**Cylinder Records - 4 Minute list** 25c; 2 Minute list 25c. List cost refunded with first purchase. — Dexters, 421 W. Arbor Vitae, Inglewood, Calif. my3255

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.** South's store for top condition collector's 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. my3065

**I SEE HUNDREDS** of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please.) my3253

**CLASSICAL RECORDS:** Regular auctions by mail. Domestic and imported items. Books, catalogs, autographed photographs. Condition always given prime importance and absolutely as represented. — Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. my3084

**FOR SALE:** Hundreds of disc and cylinder records, many types of early phonographs, 25c for lists. Also "Evolution of the Phonograph," by Walter Welch and Oliver Reed, a complete history of the phonograph, 576 pages, regular price \$9.95. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. my3257

**MASSIVE disc and cylinder records** lists for 1960 now ready. 50c each list. Also many records wanted. Send stamp for record wanted list. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. my3084

**RECORDS FOR SALE.** Private collection of 50 years. Columbia, Victor, Fort-eign labels, Edison Disc, Victrola, McCormack, Caruso, Kreisler, etc. — Mrs. George R. Saunders, 1329 21st Way So., Birmingham 5, Alabama. jly3234

### MUSIC ROLLS WANTED

**PLAYER PIANO music rolls** bought, sold and traded, all makes and types.—D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Md. je124431

**PIANO ROLLS WANTED:** all types. Send list, receive cash offer by return mail (list returned). — M. Montgomery, 722 Spring St., Ann Arbor, Mich. s128041

**PLAYER ROLLS WANTED:** 58, 65, 88 note, reproducers and organ rolls. Also advertising material and catalogs on players, rolls, coin players and musical novelties. Tell me what you have and price, I'll tell you what I want. — Carl Barker, Moylan, Pa. jly3656

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

**WANTED:** Edison and Columbia cylinder phonographs and records. Disc phonos with horns, roller organs, music boxes, and melodeons.—Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. je3084

**WANT:** Mills Violano, Wurlitzer band organ, Seeburg Orchestrion, other coin operated music machines, roller organs and musical curios. Calliope music boxes and Hokey-Pokey wagon steam engines.—Halley, 2430 Gallows Road, Falls Church, Virginia. my3085

**WANTED:** Early and unusual phonographs, music boxes, Hurdy Gurdys, monkey organs, roller organs, antique and unusual bicycles, handcuffs, records. Send stamp for large wanted list. — Nugent, R.F.D. 6, Box 33, Richmond, Va. my3215

his former singing partner, the late Carson Robison, and Bob Miller, who wrote many of the songs Dalhart recorded, said they had no idea what had become of him.

Yet when the metropolitan press learned Vernon Dalhart had died, his passing was treated as a colorful "story" and given generous space. One newspaper published an estimate, which I think exaggerated, that he had made a million dollars from his "Prisoner's Song" recordings alone. And all the papers recalled details of the bizarre law suit touched off by the amazing success of his record of "The Wreck of the Old 97."

A fine newspaper summary of Dalhart's life and achievements - though it contains a few inaccuracies - was published by the New York Herald Tribune. I quote it, somewhat condensed:

### III. Herald-Tribune Obituary

**VERNON DALHART DIES; SINGER OF 'PRISONER SONG'** . . . Believed First Professional Hillbilly Minstrel; Also Known for 'Floyd Collins'

Bridgeport, Conn., Sept. 16.—Vernon Dalhart, 65, considered the first of the professional hill-billy singers, died at Bridgeport Hospital last night after a long illness. He introduced "The Prisoner's Song," one of the nation's all-time hits, and his records, made mostly in the late 1920's, were reputed to have sold 2,000,000 copies.

He retired in 1931, in modest circumstances, despite earnings from his songs of several hundred thousand dollars. In his last years he was a teacher of voice culture with a studio at Bridgeport.

#### Took Charles Edison's Tip

In 1925, Vernon Dalhart was a more or less obscure tenor who had appeared in musicals including "The Girl of the Golden West" with John Charles Thomas and in vaudeville at the old Hippodrome. He was trying without much success to invade the young record industry when Charles Edison, son of the inventor of the phonograph, suggested he put aside operatic and light operatic numbers and try a Southern song instead.

As Mr. Dalhart recalled later, he first recorded "The Wreck of the Old 97." He added "The Prisoner's Song" merely to fill the other side.

The resulting record made history. Almost immediately, "The Prisoner's Song" was being sung and wailed in speakeasies, fraternity houses and theaters all over the country. It sold 225,000 copies in four months and is still being sold. R.C.A.-Victor, first of a dozen companies for whom Mr. Dalhart recorded it, estimated total sales at two or three million records, and Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., which holds the copyright, said sheet music sales totaled more than 3,000,000. Its royalties probably have totaled \$100,000.

Its origin is lost in a confusion of stories, several versions contributed by Mr. Dalhart himself. Sometimes he claimed authorship. More often he credited the song to his cousin, Guy Massey, a wandering singer with a tragic life who died at 27, just as his song was becoming famous.

#### 'Death of Floyd Collins'

Mr. Massey's name is listed as author on the published version. Both the tune and the theme, however, appear in the folk music of Tennessee and Kentucky and in old cowboy and prison songs. A consensus of authorities is that Mr. Massey picked these up in his travels and combined them in a song which Mr. Dalhart edited into its final version.

After "The Prisoner's Song" Mr. Dal-

hart was kept busy by record companies. Until 1928 he worked with Carson Robison of Pleasant Valley, N. Y., who wrote some of the many songs they recorded. Among their best sellers were "My Blue Ridge Mountain Home," "The Bird on Nellie's Hat," "Little Green Valley" and "The Death of Floyd Collins," the latter a topical lament of the youth who died trapped in a Kentucky cave.

Mr. Dalhart was born Marion Try Slaughter on a ranch near Texarkana, Tex. He studied voice at the Dallas Conservatory of Music and moved to New York on recommendation of his teacher. It was then he assumed his professional name, taken from two Texas towns of Vernon and Dalhart. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Sally Lee Slaughter, and a daughter, Mrs. Lewis A. Shea of Westport, Conn.

### IV. Some Changes and Corrections

Although the Herald-Tribune obituary notice was excellent, a re-reading has brought a few errors to my attention.

The speculation that Dalhart's records sold 2,000,000 copies is a ludicrous under-estimate, if it is intended to refer to all the records he made for all companies. Even if it applied only to his best selling disc, the Victor which combined "The Wreck of the Old 98" and "The Prisoner's Song," it would still be too low.

There is no way of knowing how many millions of Dalhart records were sold, but even before he scored his sensational success with Victor's No. 19427 he was singing as a free-lance for most American companies. After he turned out the biggest selling vocal "platter" that had ever been made, he worked, without exception, for all record companies in the Eastern United States. In the late 1920's his voice could be heard (even though the label may not have called him Vernon Dalhart) on records with the widest possible range of prices. He was on the cheapest discs, such as Grey Gull, Radiex and Madison (the latter were sometimes sold by ten cent stores for a dime apiece), and the three-for-a-dollar type which included Perfect, Cameo, Banner and Domino. His Edison Blue Amberol cylinders cost 35 cents. He was on Columbia's 50 cent Harmony and Velvet Tone labels; and on the standard 75 cent brands, among them Victor, Columbia, Brunswick and Okeh. His Edison Diamond Discs cost \$1 and \$1.50. (All his Edison hillbillies were a dollar.) The amount of work he must have done during his most productive five-year span staggers the imagination. Sometimes a tired sound crept into his voice, as on his Columbia record of "The Bum Song."

The Herald Tribune says Dalhart was a voice instructor during his last years. My statement that he was a hotel night clerk is taken from the death certificate issued by the Connecticut State Department of Health, containing information given by his son-in-law. It is of course likely that Dalhart taught singing before changing to the hotel job or that he combined the two.

The certificate also says he lived in apartment 1 at 2825 Fairfield

Avenue, Bridgeport. His father was Robert Slaughter and his mother's maiden name was Mary Jane Castlebury. Both were born in Jefferson, Tex. (There is some uncertainty as to whether Dalhart was born in the town or on a ranch nearby.) Dr. Benjamin Horn certified he had attended Dalhart from January 14 to September 15, 1948. The funeral directors were Mullins & Redgate and the burial was in Mt. Grove cemetery, Bridgeport. Cause of death was given as coronary occlusion. His wife died October 26, 1950, aged 65, in Westport, Conn.

Dalhart began his "second career" as a singer of hillbilly ditties in 1924, not 1925. He was not "a more or less obscure tenor," but one of the best known singers in the phonograph field. He was not trying to "invade the young record industry" (the phonograph in 1924 was 47 years old), but had already begun a successful recording career in 1916. Although he was not quite so popular as Victor's exclusive stars Billy Murray, Henry Burr and Aileen Stanley, and did not make quite as many records as such outstandingly successful free-lancers as Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, Irving and Jack Kaufman, Charles Harrison, Arthur Fields and Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw, he was still a prolific and highly regarded performer. It may be true that Charles Edison suggested that he try making Southern-style records, but the late Arthur Walsh, who afterwards became a Senator from New Jersey, headed Edison's artist and repertoire department in 1924. Dalhart's first record of "The Wreck of the Old 97," did not, as will be shown later, have "The Prisoner's Song" on the reverse side. The royalties from records and sheet music of "The Wreck" have been far more than \$100,000.

If Dalhart and Carson Robison made a record of the 1904 comic song, "The Bird on Nellie's Hat," I have never seen it or come across it in a record catalog. It certainly was not one of their most popular numbers. Dalhart recorded "The Death of Floyd Collins" as a solo rather than a duet with Robison, although the latter probably played the guitar accompaniment in the various versions. "Little Green Valley" was one of Robison's compositions which he recorded chiefly in association with Frank Luther after he had ended his partnership with Dalhart.

Dalhart did not appear in vaudeville at the Hippodrome, but in a Gilbert and Sullivan production during 1913-14, and, according to this entry in a 1929 issue of the Columbia booklet, "Familiar Tunes, Old and New," he was by no means "obscure" after his engagement there:

This famous Southern tenor is known both South and North, and his long list of records proves his great popularity. Vernon Dalhart, who comes from Texas, was nothing short of a sensation when he made his New York debut at its famous Hippodrome. Dalhart was one of the first to carry Southern tunes North, and now devotes his whole time to them. If you don't know him yet, either via the air or





## LEFT TO RIGHT

Vernon Dalhart's photo appeared on the cover of the Edison Amberola Monthly for July, 1921, three years before he became the leading singer of "hillbilly" numbers. As these pictures show, Vernon Dalhart strongly believed in athletic exercise for singers.

## TOP

Dalhart with a scrapbook of clippings about his starring in "Pinafore."

Columbia New Process records, ask your dealer to play for you one of his records.

A 1926 edition of the same booklet contains a slightly different writeup:

Here's a Southern tenor who is claimed by the South and the North alike. Vernon Dalhart was born in Texas. Early in his career he came to New York to perfect his singing art. The measure of Dalhart's success is recorded in Columbia records, which sell by the thousands. . . Dalhart has organized a musical group called "Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers." The popularity of this organization promises to be second only to that of its leader.

The April, 1958, HOBBIES contained a brief description of Dalhart's home town which I cannot resist quoting:

Jefferson is Texas' first river steamboat metropolis and for years (was) its second commercial city.

The city was laid out in 1842. Sawmills in the surrounding wilderness of tall cypress and pine trees turned out durable lumber for the stately homes that rose quickly. The Big Cypress Bayou was deep enough to accommodate steamboats from New Orleans and intervening points. They brought settlers from the East and glamorous goods for Jefferson and points further West. Long wagon trains bore them, after depositing their loads of buffalo hides and tongues.

The town boasted artificial gas street lights as early as 1857. When the railroads that had been refused rights-of-way by this thriving steamboat center won out with their low rates, Jefferson lost population, but it kept its old Southern glamour and charm.

Dalhart's photo appeared on the cover of the July, 1921, Edison Amberola Monthly, three years before the idea of becoming a hillbilly specialist occurred to him. He had been for several years one of the leading

Edison artists and the magazine contained an interview which may conclude this installment. Next month his recording career will be traced from its beginning:

Vernon Dalhart was born in Jefferson, Texas, one of the oldest towns in the "Lone Star State." At the age of 16 he moved to Dallas, Texas, where he went to work in a hardware store. His happy disposition kept him constantly singing at his work. One day a French-Canadian vocal teacher heard him singing and advised him to study. He took the advice lightly, but when other voice culture experts said the same thing, he gave it serious consideration and finally saved enough money to go to New York. There he worked as an assistant shipping clerk in a big piano house from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and studied after working hours. His first engagement was a small part in "The Girl of the Golden West." He was next engaged as leading tenor for the Hippodrome production of "Pinafore," and then re-engaged for the big road production of the same show. It was following his appearance in "Pinafore" that he became an Edison artist.

(Continued on page 45)

## RARE MUSIC BOXES

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## AUCTION

June 15 and 16, 1960

COLLECTION to be sold from "Depression Ranch" (home of the late E. E. Kauffman) at Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, which is located 8 miles northeast of Akron, Ohio. Take route 5 from Akron to route 532 at Cuyahoga Falls, route 532 to Loomis Ave., south 1 block, or 3 miles west of Talmadge on route 532 to Loomis Ave., south 1 block.

This fine collection of music boxes are in playing condition unless otherwise stated. No. 1 - 27" Regina Carona, 12 selection, automatic, floor model with mahogany case, double spring wind. No. 2 - 27" Regina, 12 selection, floor model light wood case, automatic, double spring wind. No. 3 - 27" floor model mahogany case, nickel coin operated. No. 4 - 8 tune Swiss music box with 3 bells. No. 5 - 6 tune Swiss music box. No. 6 - 15½" Stella table model music box in mahogany case. No. 7 - Chantagna roller organ with rolls. No. 8 - very large Swiss type music box with 2 sets of bells with honey bee tappers and drums in inlaid case 36" by 18". No. 9 - large Sublime Haemonie made in U.S.A. inlaid box. No. 10 - 15½" single comb Regina in light wood case. No. 11 - clock with Symphonian type music box. No. 12 - 17" Stella table model in mahogany case. No. 13 - 9½" Symphonian double comb in maple case. No. 14 - musical albums and jugs, four upright organs, one rosewood melodeon, large square piano, 4 different types of Edison phonographs, Angelus paper roll organ, floor model, to be sold as is. Also many fine antiques and a lifetime collection of bells. (Please refer to our ad under the Bell section.)

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## OLD JEWELRY

### BEADED BAGS

Fashion, as it has often been remarked, is fickle. Time was when status was associated not with a stole nor a little jacket of a certain fur but with a beaded bag. Now largely forgotten, this feminine accessory enjoyed several periods of great popularity. The first occurred in France, England and America in the mid-18th century and the last in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Examples of these delightful bagatelles of other days—125 of them—are now on display in the Randolph Street corridor of the Chicago Public Library. They are part of a collection owned by Constantine Speros of Chicago.

Mr. Speros, of Greek descent, came to the United States from Turkey as a young man. From 1918 to 1933 he owned and operated an establishment that specialized in the making of fine clothes and furs for women. He started the beaded dress craze in Chicago and years later began to collect beaded bags as a nostalgic reminder of earlier modes.

Beaded bags or reticules date back to about 1770 and were used by fashionable women in place of the older handkerchief pockets of embroidered silk and linen. The new bags were large enough to hold these

necessities as well as a fan and an essence-bottle. Fashioned of the minutest of beads, the patterns were crocheted on the finest silks. Patterns were difficult to obtain, very elaborate and hard to copy. It has been noted that to lend a pattern for a beaded bag, during this period, was considered the strongest mark of friendship between women.

Very few bags had metal mountings and the rare one that did was usually of French origin. Most of the bags were finished with a binding of black velvet, black or colored silk drawn up with ribbons or drawstrings of the same. Most of the designs were floral or a combination of floral and landscape designs.

Later periods introduced the beaded and netted "misers" purses that could be carried in the hand or tucked into a belt. Many of these were made of cut steel beads. New steel-making techniques in the late 18th century made steel jewelry possible and in some cases provided a discreet replacement for the tinkle of diamonds, which had been dangerous in Revolutionary times.

The cycle of fashion carried the beaded bag into popularity on two or three occasions during the 19th century but it reached the peak in the latter part of that century and the early part of the 20th. Beaded bags were made in France, Austria and Germany and sent to all parts of the world where they were snatched up by style-conscious women. Many of the bags were elaborately framed—some by famous goldsmiths and jewelers. Many of them were examples of the finest handwork while others were cheaper, machine copies. But all were fashion's

darling for a brief period of years. Examples of all of these periods can be seen in Mr. Speros' collection at the Chicago Public Library on Randolph St., during the month of April. And who knows, the beaded bag may become fashionable again!

### VERNON DALHART

(Continued from page 35)

In a recent interview, when asked what class of music he most enjoyed singing, Mr. Dalhart said:

"My ambition in life is to sing always the songs that please the great masses of the people, to bring into the many dark corners of life just a little more sunshine and happiness. I was educated for grand opera, but really feel that I can bring more happiness to the many with the singing of what we popularly call the heart-songs, the ballad type, with their little strains of love—love of family, home, country and dear ones.

"There should be music in all our lives. It would take away much of the grimness and sorrow, and to those of us who have been gifted with that greatest of all gifts, the singing voice, comes the great duty of giving what joy our voices may bring to those less fortunate."

Although a hard worker and industrious student, Mr. Dalhart has always found time for physical training; in fact, he believes it is a necessary part of the singer's life. When questioned on this subject, Mr. Dalhart replied:

"Many a young and promising musician, in his climb toward success, forgets to cultivate one of the factors most essential to the winning of the greatest possible success. That factor is health.

"I believe in a regular system of physical training for the concert singer. I have a daily schedule which includes a certain number of hours devoted to boxing, handball, swimming and gymnasium exercise, and it all has helped me as a singer. There is much demand on the body in the life of a professional singer. His body must be ready to meet those demands or he will not accomplish what he might otherwise do. Many a promising singer has developed only failure, because of his lack of proper exercise. I have always been a strong advocate of physical exercises for the young singer."

As this article shows, Dalhart was not recording operatic arias at the time he abruptly changed the course of his professional career. He was singing mostly ballads with a sprinkling of comic songs.

(To be continued)

### JEWELRY FOR SALE

Earrings Screwbacks (sm., med., lge.), golden or silvered 30c dozen, \$2.25 gross. Dangle screwbacks 35c doz., \$2.50 gross. Sterling screwbacks 95c doz., \$8 gross. Clip earbacks 40c doz., \$3 gross. Sterling pierced earbacks (screw type 80c doz. Wire type 45c doz.) Free complete illustrated list of chain, pinbacks, clasps, cards, cuff linkbacks, cameos, boxes, etc. — Folsom's, P.O. Box 52, Medford, Mass. my38841

LARGE STOCK antique jewelry from our vast gold-buying. Charms, brooches, rings, etc. 10 for \$6, or better grade ones 10 for \$10. — B. Lowe, Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo. je3844

CHAIN SLIDES, samples and price on request. Earrings made from old cuff links and pins. All types of antique rings and jewelry repaired and refinished. Estimates sent on all jobs before work is started. All pieces returned by registered or certified mail. — Jemeral Jewelers, 534 Vine St., Cincinnati, Ohio. jly3487

Large genuine rock crystal stone pendant, beautifully carved pagoda; Mounted on 18" 12 Kt. gold filled neck chain. Only \$2.75 plus 28 cents tax. For other jewelry items sold direct, send 25 cents for descriptive price list. — Kenny-Gemcraft, 1500 Pacific Ave., Atlantic City, N. J. my1045

FOR SALE: Antiques and semi-antiques, gold-filled, silver, etc., 10 articles for \$6. Assortment includes lockets, charms, pins, rings, etc. Good value. — St. Louis Refining Co., 1115 Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. o68801

### JEWELRY WANTED

DIAMONDS, Old GOLD, COINS, watches, stickpins, rings, earrings, etc., regardless of condition. Highest prices paid. Prompt replies. Send by registered mail to — Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Penna. my124891

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RINGS, bracelets, earrings, charms: Top prices for quality antique gold and gold-filled jewelry, plain or jeweled, in good condition. For prompt reply ship insured with separate list to — D. H. Marion-Davis, 1925 Westheimer, Houston 6, Texas. f122342

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Heavy chain necklace or watch chain 39" long with large slide \$125; Pin & Earring set - amandino garnets, pearls and fringo \$135; pair earrings. Colonial lady handpainted on ivory \$45; 14K white gold wrist watch, double bracelet, 4 diamonds each side watch \$38; 10K gold key wind watch, gold face \$35.  
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# Vernon Dalhart

By JIM WALSH

PART II

## I. Columbia Recordings

When the young Texas tenor, Marion Try Slaughter, selected his stage name he combined it from two towns near which he had grown up—Vernon and Dalhart. But he seems not to have made it clear how Dalhart should be pronounced. Nearly all record collectors say it to rhyme with "pal heart," but a 1927 Brunswick catalog gave it a broad A sound and indicated it should be called "doll heart."

Pronunciation aside, the first mention I have found of Vernon Dalhart as a recording artist is in the June, 1915, catalog of Edison Diamond Discs. Near the end of a list of "Artists Who Have Made or Will Make Edison Records" occurs the entry: "VERNON DALHART, Tenor. American tenor of experience in Grand Opera and Operetta."

That entry notwithstanding, no Dalhart records are listed in the catalog and another two years went by before his name appeared in an Edi-

son publication. It is possible that the tenor had done some recording for Edison, but Mr. Edison had rejected the trials.

Dalhart's first record for any important company may have been Columbia 2108, "Just a Word of Sympathy," which appeared in the December, 1916, supplement. It was mated with "I Know That I Got More Than My Share," sung by another promising tenor, "Robert Lewis" (Lewis James). The description was brief: "Vernon Dalhart, a former member of the Century Opera Company makes his initial bow with Robert Lewis, a singer from the West of decided merit." Dalhart's song is attractively sung, but the record was not a good seller and was cut out when the 1919 catalog appeared.

The tenor had it hard to establish himself with Columbia. He was not heard from again on the "Note the Notes" label until August, 1918, when he sang a World War I song, "Paul Revere (Won't You Ride For

Us Again?") coupled with a Peerless Quartet offering of perhaps one of the least attractive sounding titles on record, "France, We'll Rebuild Your Towns For You." The war ended a few months later and this record went into oblivion.

Vernon Dalhart's name disappeared from the Columbia catalog in 1920, but reappeared in January, 1922, when he sang one of the "mammy" songs which were then ravaging the country. It was "Weep No More, My Mammy," and was doubled with Al Jolson singing his great hit, "April Showers."

In February, Dalhart was back in a duet with Al Bernard, the brilliant blackface comedian, with whom he had struck up a brief partnership. They sang "I Want My Mammy," and the supplement writer said: "Dalhart and Bernard bring out, with a depth of feeling and a wealth of harmony, the words of this melodious piece." On the reverse, Edwin Dale, who was really Charles Hackett, stepped down from his Metropolitan Opera environment to sing "That's How I Believe In You."

Dalhart returned in May with "Pick Me Up And Lay Me Down In Dear Old Dixieland," with Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw occupying the other side in one of the interminable crop of "mammy" songs, "Weep No More, My Mammy." A little later he sang "Hawaiian Rainbow," coupled with Frank Crumit's version of "Waikiki, I Hear You Calling Me." And there, for the time being, Dalhart's Columbia career again came to a halt. He was not heard from again as a Columbia singer until 1924.

## II. Emerson Discs

Emerson seems to have been the first record company to use Dalhart's services consistently. Victor Emerson had quit his job as Columbia's recording expert in 1916 to start his own company, and Dalhart's records began to appear before Emerson had been in business a year, producing the poor quality 7-inch double-faced records that sold for a quarter and supposedly could be played equally well in either lateral or vertical position.

An Emerson catalog issued early in 1917 listed seven discs on which Dalhart occupied one or both sides and more may have been published later. Most had special accompaniments arranged by the Emerson mu-



In this 1923 photograph Dalhart is pretending to be annoyed with his accompanist, who hasn't been identified. Could she be Dalhart's wife or daughter?

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



VERNON DALHART  
in the late 1920's

sical director, Arthur Bergh. These usually consisted of violin, 'cello, and piano, but sometimes two violins were brought into play. In numerical order, the Emerson Dalhart records were:

No. 798, "The World is Hungry for a Little Bit of Love," coupled with "My Hawaiian Sunshine," sung by Gus Van and Joe Schenk; 7104, "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" doubled with "Mother Machree," by Henry Pinckney; 7127, "I Know I Got More Than My Share" (coupling, "It's Not Your Nationality," by William Scherfer); 7132, "When Shadows Fall" and "Sometime," both by Dalhart; 7174, "Li'l Gal" and "Deep River," the latter adapted and arranged by Bergh; 7183, "Off From Rio," combined with "Off to Philadelphia," a baritone solo by the veteran John W. Myers; and 7192, "Till the Clouds Roll By" and "You Said Something," two musical comedy hits written by P. G. Wodehouse and Jerome Kern.

These little Emerson records aren't easy to find nowadays, but if you have some don't spring to the conclusion that they are worth a lot of money. And please don't send me lists of records you want to sell by Dalhart or other artists. I don't have time to read, reply to, and return unsolicited record lists. As I have said many times, the average old "popular" record is of interest because of its musical value or historical associations rather than monetary worth. Records of this type were sold in too large quantities to bring big prices today. Those by Dalhart, as well as other performers of his period, are mostly worth about 50 cents each in good condition.

### III. Debut With Edison

Vernon Dalhart began achieving status as an important recording artist when his first Edison records appeared, some two years after his name had been published in the 1915 Diamond Disc catalog. His progress was as rapid with Edison as it had been slow with Columbia.

The following appeared in *Edison Diamond Points* for June, 1917:

Vernon Dalhart is an American tenor who will soon make his Edison debut. His first stage experience was acquired in "The Girl of the Golden West." He also sang a leading role in the revival of "Pinafore" at the New York Hippodrome in 1913 and 1914.

(Referring to Dalhart's appearance in Puccini's "Girl of the Golden West" opera, the late Fred Rabenstein, who was associated with the Edison company for many years, told me he understood the tenor lost his job because of a ludicrous happening on stage. In one scene a character was supposed to pick up a bowl and drink feverishly from it. Fred said he was told that one night a practical joker coated the inside of the bowl with limburger cheese. He wasn't sure whether Dalhart was accused of applying the coating or whether it was he who picked up the bowl and objected to the fragrance. At any rate there was a fight in view of the audience between the joker and the drinker, and both men were fired. At least, so the legend goes. The whole thing very likely never happened, but I mention it because of the story's amusing nature).

Dalhart's first Edison record, and probably the best record he ever made, appeared as a Blue Amberol cylinder in the list for June, 1917. It was No. 3185, "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" and it was a masterpiece of interpretative dialect singing from the first note to the last. "Caroline" has been recorded by many other singers, including those of such diverse talents as George Mac Farlane, Frank Coombs, Al Bernard, and Reinald Werrenrath, but none of them came close to Dalhart. Although Dalhart sings it in Negro dialect there is no trace of the minstrel show type of burlesque intonation. The whole thing rings as true as if a thoroughbred Negro tenor were being heard. A striking feature of Dalhart's singing was the depth of expression, intense feeling and apparent sincerity that he could put into type of song from a hill-billy ballad to an operatic aria. In this respect, I think, he was unequalled by any other popular artist.

The Diamond Disc version of this wonderful piece of character singing came out in August, 1917, and was so successful it became one of the 300 most popular Edison records. The description said:

You must realize, even when you have only heard "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" once that this is quite different from the usual "coon song." It is a really artistic, old-fashioned darky love song. Vernon Dalhart sings it with tremendous effect. He gets the real darky whine. This is probably the best rendition of its kind ever recorded.

"Caroline" was paired with a beautiful rendition of "Indiana" by the three ladies who then comprised the Homestead Trio—Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd, and Amy Ellerman.

Dalhart's peculiar ability to sing naturally in Negro dialect was mentioned in the *Edison Amberola Monthly* for December, 1918:

Amberola owners all know Vernon



VERNON DALHART,  
as he appeared as a concert singer

Dalhart's proficiency in singing Negro melodies. He was recently asked how he ever learned such perfection in Negro dialect.

"Learn it?" he said. "I never had to learn it. When you are born and brought up in the South your only trouble is to talk any other way. All through my childhood that was almost the only talk I ever heard because you know the sure 'nough Southerner talks almost like a Negro, even when he's white. I've broken myself of the habit, more or less, in ordinary conversation, but it still comes pretty easy."

Dalhart's mastery of dialect also was referred to in the biographical sketch of him published in the yearly Victor catalogs from 1920 through 1923:

One of the best light opera tenors in America is Vernon Dalhart, an American, who has made a career for himself in the characteristic American way. He was born in Jefferson, Texas, one of the oldest towns in the "Lone Star State," and one of his earliest experiences was that of a "cow puncher." Since 1912 he has been on the stage, part of the time with the Century Theatre Company of New York. There is no burlesquing in Mr. Dalhart's singing of Negro songs. To quote his own words, he simply imagines he's "back home" again and sings as the spirit and his home experiences dictate.

### IV. An Edison Favorite

Dalhart's second Edison appearance was in October, 1917, on a Blue Amberol cylinder. He and Gladys Rice sang "Ain't You Comin' Back To Dixieland?" thus giving Miss Rice, then a girl hardly out of her teens, the distinction of being the first singer with whom Dalhart recorded duets. For some reason the record did not appear as a Diamond Disc.

The tenor's Edison popularity grew steadily and his appearances on both



discs and cylinders were regular. The October *Diamond Points* said.

Vernon Dalhart is rapidly becoming an Edison favorite. His "The Sunshine of Your Smile" will gladden your musical longings. Not in a long time have we heard a more appealing voice than Dalhart's. You may expect frequent Re-Creation of his voice.

The November issue revealed that Dalhart could be engaged to sing in Edison "tone tests" and advised dealers to write for information to a gentleman with the delightfully improbable name of Verdi E. B. Fuller, who had charge of assigning artists to sing in direct comparison with the Edison disc instrument.

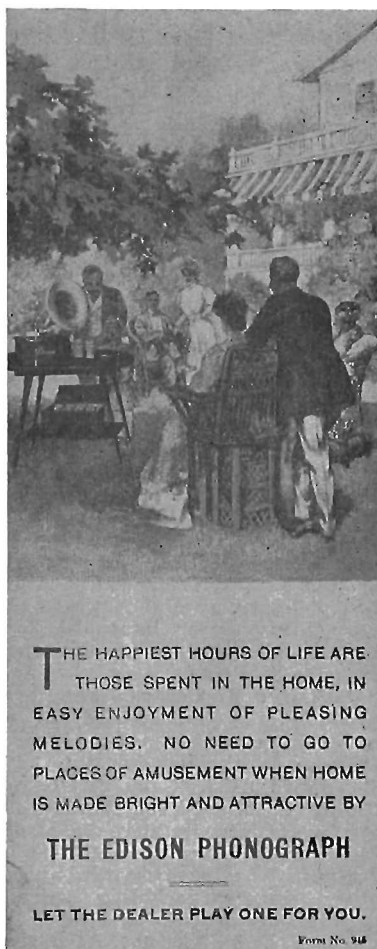
Dalhart soon went on a tone testing tour, in which he was assisted by a gifted young lady violinist from Alabama, Miss Adelyne Hood, of whom more will be heard later. On one occasion he gave a tone test in a little town in South Carolina when the temperature was breaking all local heat records, but in spite of this practically the whole town turned out to hear him. Just a few months before, *Diamond Points* reported the Criterion Male Quartet had given a similar test in a Minnesota town with the temperature 15 degrees below zero.

Apparently Dalhart had difficulty in singing on exactly the same volume level as the phonograph. A dealer in a Western town invited high school boys and girls to come to a tone test and set down their impressions. One keen-eared girl wrote: "The New Edison sang as well as Mr. Dalhart, but not as loud." Miss Hood displayed the fidelity of Edison violin tone by playing in comparison with records made by other performers.

#### V. Ada Jones' Little Girl

An interesting Edison disc in which Dalhart took part was made January 25, 1918. It was an elaborate version of "The Golden Wedding," a vaudeville sketch which had been a great favorite as recorded by Ada Jones and Len Spencer on Edison cylinders and for various companies before Spencer's death in December, 1914. When the Edison disc was issued the company said it had received more than enough letters to fill a bushel basket asking that "The Golden Wedding" be added to the *Diamond Disc* catalog.

The leading parts of the old couple who had been married 50 years were played by Miss Jones (in private life Mrs. Hughie Flaherty) and Steve Porter, who took Spencer's old role. Other members of the cast included Marion Evelyn Cox and Dalhart. But the most interesting performer to me was Ada Jones' daughter, Sheilah, then just a few days past 12 years of age. Sheilah, who was not destined to a long life, was paid \$5 for saying a few words to "Grandma"—actually her mother. As far as I know this is the only record on which her voice can be heard. It was hard to make and when it was over Sheilah decided—in the words of that dedi-



Old display advertising for the Edison Phonograph. Walsh collection.

cated Ada Jones specialist, Milford Fargo—that "singing and record-making were not for her."

I find the following item from *Along Broadway* of December 1918, to be of interest:

The Slacker Record Drive in New York owes a great deal of its success to the enthusiastic support of the Edison artists who sang repeatedly on the Public Library steps during the entire week of the drive. They sang within a huge oak replica of a Chipendale Model Edison, and bystanders were heard to remark "What a wonderful imitation!"—and then to retire in confusion when the singer emerged in person instead of on a black disc! Marie de Kyzer, who sang several times herself, brought her husband, Mr. Donald Ross Cummings, with her one afternoon. Mr. Cummings is so tall he said he'd feel uncomfortable inside the phonograph—which was about seven feet high—but he consented to sing on the outside, with Miss de Kyzer as his accompanist.

Vernon Dalhart, too, not only sang, but provided another singer. This time it was a cousin—a coxswain in the Navy—whose uniform and delightful singing of "Caroline" quite captured the audience. . .

I have an idea the cousin in uniform was the ill-fated Guy Massey, whose name is destined to appear often in succeeding installments of this series, when the controversy over who composed Dalhart's greatest hit, "The Prisoner Song," is related.

Mention of the late Marie de Kyzer (she changed her name from Kaiser in 1917) reminds me that one of Dalhart's early Edison assignments was to help re-record the duet, "On Yonder Rock Reclining," from Auber's "Fra Diavolo," which the soprano had originally made with a sweet-voiced New York tenor, Royal Fish. Both Miss Kaiser and Dalhart did a superb job with this captivating melody. It was paired with an ensemble rendition of the Soldier's Chorus from "Faust."

Running down the list of records Dalhart made during his first five years or so with Edison I find many attractive titles. One, a popular song, "My Baby's Arms," which he sang in 1919, impresses me because it recalls the time, many years later, when my brother, Chad, now head of the English department at Beloit College but then a high school student, decided to find out which popular recording artists were most nearly free from tell-tale regional accents. He was unable to detect even one quirk in Dalhart's singing of "My Baby's Arms" that would indicate any sectional origin. It was completely without accent—a feat the more amazing in view of the natural way in which Dalhart sang in Negro dialect and was later to seem the embodiment of the Southern mountaineer. I have no doubt that Vernon Dalhart was one of the most versatile singers who ever lived. His enunciation and pronunciation were usually irreproachable, but in his Edison record of "Joan of Arc" he makes the curious mistake of pronouncing "legions" as "legends."

#### VI. More Fine Edison Records

In 1919 Dalhart made a fair Edison record of the big comic song hit, "The Alcoholic Blues," but this was the sort of thing Billy Murray sang much better for Victor and Columbia. Going back to 1917, his rendition of "There's Egypt In Your Dreamy Eyes" is charming. The beautiful melody by Herbert Spencer had surprisingly literate words, with genuine poetic feeling, written by Spencer's wife, Fleta Jan Brown. Recollections of the tenor's light opera days came when he recorded the Nightingale's Song from "Pinafore" and made a duet with Miss Rice of "We Strongly Now Will Try Together" from "La Fille de Madame Angot." "The World Is Hungry for a Little Bit of Love," which he had also made for Emerson, likewise is of light opera type.

Another Dalhart *Diamond Disc* of exceptional interest is 80482, on which he combines two songs, "Night, My Love And I," and the old spiritual, "Nobody Knows The Trouble I See." In semi-sacred vein, he recorded Stephen Adams' "Star of Bethlehem."

Turning to the "straight" popular songs, his 1917 version of "I'm All Bound Round With the Mason-Dixon Line" did well, and his 1919 singing of "Carolina Sunshine," with the help

(Continued on page 60)

## VERNON DALHART

(Continued from page 36)

of a mixed chorus, is exquisite. He recorded "Rock-a-bye Your Baby With a Dixie Melody" for both Edison and Victor and won the Edison supplement writer's praise for singing it in his own way and not imitating the mannerisms of Al Jolson, whose stage renditions had made the song a hit. He was praised, too, for the fervor with which he sang "Sweet Emalina, My Gal." His record of a pretty English ballad, "That Dreamy, Dreamy Lullaby" had a striking accompaniment by the Alessios-De Filipis Mandolin Orchestra. He sang a duet of "The Missouri Waltz" with Miss Cox, "Till We Meet Again" with Miss Rice, and his interpretation of "Molly on a Trolley" has a soprano obbligato by Miss Shepherd. He and Miss Rice were also called on to make a Diamond Disc of the Indian song, "Silver Bell," which had been so popular when Ada Jones and Billy Murray sang it on an Amberol cylinder in 1910.

Dalhart and Al Bernard, whose Columbia duet record has already been mentioned, gave a splendid rendition, in 1921, of a comic "coon song," "I've Got My Habits On." And he and Miss Rice helped to make phonograph history of a sort when Edison first decided to issue a special series of records to be known as "Flashes From Broadway." These were records manufactured as rapidly as possible and placed on the market in advance of a regular release date to meet the complaints of dealers that the Diamond Discs, because of the painstaking methods used in turning them out, were too slow in appearing with the current popular hits.

The first of the "Flashes from Broadway" was No. 50818, which had on one side "Sunnyside Sal," sung by Rice and Dalhart, and on the other "Melon Time In Dixieland," by the Premier Quartet—otherwise the Harmonizers. Today in the Edison laboratory a copy of this record, with the Rice-Dalhart side facing the viewer is still on display. It is framed and hangs on one of the bookshelves in Thomas A. Edison's library, about ten feet from the inventor's roll-top desk. The inscription printed beneath the record is as follows:

"First 'Flashes from Broadway.' Recorded 2:30 p.m., June 2, 1921. First prints 1:30 p.m., June 5, 1921. On sale in Chicago, June 7, 1921. Airplane—New York to Cleveland—plane, Cleveland to Chicago. On sale San Francisco, June 9, 1921. Plane New York to Cleveland. Train—Cleveland to Omaha. Plane—Omaha to Frisco."

Unfortunately, in spite of all this rapid motion, neither side of the record was anything even approaching a hit, and the "Re-Creation" over which so much aviation energy was expended was never more than a poor seller.

Dalhart acquired one of the first of his many assumed recording names

on July 23, 1923, when he made an Edison record of a comic song, "Stingo Stungo" (an obvious imitation of that great comedy classic, "Oh By Jingol!"), under the alias of Robert White. An inter-office note from W. A. H. Cronkhite to another Edison official said:

"Mr. Folsom—This song was sung by Vernon Dalhart under the name of Robert White. He prefers to sing songs of this kind under another name. If he can be worked into this line satisfactorily it will relieve the too frequent use of Billy Jones."

The tenor made three more comedy records under the disguise of Robert White—"Oh Sister, Ain't That Hot?" "Hard Hearted Hannah" and "Circus Days," the latter a revival of the 1912 hit better known as "Oh, You Circus Day." Looming just ahead of him was his emergence as a singer of hill-billy tunes when he would use an almost innumerable number of assumed names and so completely change his singing style as to make some listeners wonder whether one man could be so versatile or there were really two Vernon Dalharts.

(To be continued)

## HINDU BELLS

(Continued from page 57)

the two full-length figures back to back, forming the handle. The figures are always quite similar except for the faces; one resembles a human's face while the other resembles a monkey's.

There are various interpretations of the figures on this so-called evolution bell. Some claim that the two faces are those of Yayu and the monkey nymph Anjana, parents of Hanuman. And indeed, on some bells one face does appear to be more masculine than the other. Still another interpretation says that the two figures are those of Anjana before she was turned into a monkey nymph, and after. In view of the fact that bells on which these pairs of figures appear are called evolution bells, the latter interpretation would seem to be the more correct.

There are countless variations in the detailed designing of India's old religious bells. These are accounted for by the fact that the bells were individually made. Metal sculpture having been the dominant art in India for centuries, it is not surprising to find a highly pleasing artistry in both workmanship and materials. Furthermore, because the Hindu mind is always preoccupied with religion it is only natural that India's best artistic efforts were lavished on her prayer bells. Nowhere is all this more evident than in the various evolution bells. There are seldom two with the same identical handle. The proportions and decorations of the bell proper also vary.

A most interesting feature of the finer evolution bells has been pointed out by the late B. A. Lascelles, a fol-

lower of this column for many years. Mr. Lascelles had the opportunity of studying Hindu bells and their uses at first hand, and he observed that many of the finer larger evolution bells were being used as impromptu rice bowls by mendicant priests. Observing more closely, Mr. Lascelles found that the handles unscrewed and the clappers unhooked so that the bell might easily be inverted to serve as a rice bowl. He also noted that the finish on the inside of these particular bells was unusually fine and highly polished.

It should scarcely be necessary to point out that evolution bells usable as rice cups are far more rare than the ordinary ones.

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MINIATURE (salesman's sample) flint glass CUSPIDOR, proof, \$3.  
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Pair diamond-point FLINT GLASS FOOTED SALTS, tops 2x2", \$4.  
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Pair SEVRES CERUBS 5" hl., white & gold, playing musical instruments. Very lovely, \$13.50.  
SUGAR SHAVER, fine china; exquisite rose dec., \$5.  
IRONSTONE plate, COPPER LUSTER band & flower center, 10" dia., panel edge, fine cond. \$3.  
Set of 6 OLD FRENCH DESSERT PLATES, scalloped panel border w. sprigs of various flowers in panels, gold-leaf trim, turquoise centers, \$10.50.  
BRI-DALE TABLECLOTH 76x72", heavy white linen, hand-hemstitched, w. wide border of cherubs embroidered in blue and pink, playing musical instruments & 6 matching napkins. Exceptional \$22.  
6 sterling "LANCASTER ROSE" pat. bouillon spoons \$13.  
Old iron DOOR STOP, woman riding horseback, gray colors, 7" hl. \$4.50; another old iron doorstop, little girl w. big dog, old paint worn off, \$2.75.  
Gold badge FIN "DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA," enamel w. eagle & Am. flag \$3.  
Water-color PAINTING, SIGNED "FRED S. COZZENS, '97," Yacht, fine detail w. American flag; title "Vamoure off Point Judith" \$12.50.

Every item guaranteed. Add postage for mailable items or by express collect.

Joe

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- Ivory Buddah, 4 hands, 2 of them holding lotus flowers, seated on Lotus flower, (old piece), 6" high, 2 1/2" at base. Has intricate carvings of headrest and neck-lace. Finely carved face ----- 65.00
- Ivory Bearded Warrior on Elephant, beautifully carved (Old), approx. 5 1/2" high ----- 55.00
- Ivory old man & stick, with child, (old), good carving, approx. 5" high ----- 40.00
- Ivory Netsuke, what appears to be family of 3 in hut, nicely done ----- 15.00
- Ivory Netsuke, Frog on box, interesting piece ----- 12.00
- Semi-precious stone, FROG, Tiger eye, 3 1/2" long x 1 1/4" high ----- 20.00
- Semi-precious stone, Rock crystal, 1 3/4" L, 1" H. A nicely done Tortoise and a small one on its back ----- 20.00
- Semi-precious stone of Buddah in Rose Quartz, would make nice cabinet piece, 3 1/2" h. x 3 3/4" long ----- 65.00
- Viennese Bronze Pomeranian Dog, brown & white approx. 3 3/4" from nose to tail, approx. 2 1/4" h. (old) ----- 25.00
- Viennese Bronze Dog, appears to be a collie, in various shades of brown, approx. 4" from ear to end of tail, approx. 3" high ----- 30.00
- Wedgwood Portland Vase, blue with white classical figures, 10 1/2" high, also with classical figure on base in white, old and in good condition ----- 175.00
- Wedgwood old, pair of 8" candlesticks, good condition, blue with white classical figures. ----- 100.00

Collectors Wants on Ivories, Semi-Precious Stones, Viennese Bronzes and Wedgwood Solicited. No Lists. Transportation Extra. Joe

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Vernon Dalhart

By JIM WALSH

PART III

### I. Some Additions and Corrections

When I received Vernon Dalhart's Columbia records, I forgot that he sang one under the name of Bob White—a forerunner of the disguise of Robert White, which he adopted five years later in singing comic songs for Edison.

The overlooked Columbia, No. A2541, was issued in July, 1918. It coupled "White's" rendition of "When Alexander Takes His Ragtime Band to France" with Arthur Fields singing "When It Comes to a Lovingless Day." This record was listed only in the 1919 catalog.

In February, when I mentioned Geoffrey O'Hara's Victors, I missed No. 18053, issued in July, 1916. It combined O'Hara singing "Where the Shamrock Grows" with a soprano version of "My Grandfather's Girl" by Jane Kenyon, whoever she was.

I'd also like to correct some recent typographical errors. In April the name of the tenor, Harry Macdonough, came out as Mary Macdonough! Henry Burr's recording career was said to have extended from 1922 to 1929 when it should have been 1902 to 1929. And the title of one of George Wilton Ballard's Edison recordings was given as "When You're Sure I Won't Forget" instead of "When You're Gone—" in May, one of Dalhart's most famous discs, "The Wreck of the Old 97," appears as "The Wreck of the Old 98."

Last December I mentioned that Capt. Frank Cunningham, of Richmond, Va., expressed his intention, some 70 years ago, of making cylinder records to be played at his funeral, and said I wondered whether he did. I have since had a letter (from Mrs. O. J. Mallory, of Farmville, Va., who attended the Captain's funeral) in which my question is answered. Here is part of Mrs. Mallory's communication:

"Both my mother-in-law and I were at Mr. Cunningham's funeral, and he did not sing, as his wife would not allow it to be done. She said she 'couldn't stand it.' It was a very large crowd there. The church could not hold them. They wanted to hear him sing. He was a particular friend of my husband's and a member of the same Masonic Lodge, Meridian Lodge No. 284. He was the past master. . . My husband was a pallbearer. I pass Mr. Cunningham's grave every time I go to my husband's grave in Hollywood (cemetery). On his monument is 'Rich-

mond's Sweet Singer.' The hymn he wanted to sing was 'The Ninety and Nine.' I have heard him sing it many times. He had a very, very sweet voice and was loved by all.

"I am nearly 77 years old, but can remember the day he was buried well. He was very much missed when he passed away, as he was a friend to everyone."

### II. Dalhart Records for Victor

Late in 1918, when he was 35, Vernon Dalhart achieved the ambition of nearly every recording artist of those days by being engaged by Victor, whose disc sales exceeded all other companies! His first Victor, No. 18512, appeared in February, 1919, doubled with the Sterling Trio singing "The Pickaninny's Paradise."

The supplement description said: "Vernon Dalhart is a new Victor artist and has a fine medium in which to introduce himself in 'Rock-a-bye Your Baby With a Dixie Melody.' . . . It is a darky song of a 'rolling stone' who has gone back to his mammy to be put to bed in the old style."

This song has made a big hit at the Winter Garden show, 'Sinbad.'" The supplement contained an excellent photo of Dalhart posed behind a stand bearing the sheet music of the song.

Dalhart was back in March with No. 18525, on which he sang "I'm Waiting for You, 'Liza Jane." Again he had the Sterling Trio for "plattermates." They sang "Mummy Mine."

The supplement writer said: "'I'm Waiting for You, 'Liza Jane' is a darky serenade that is the real thing. It has a rhythmic swing, and the words will carry you back to the 'Land of Cotton;' nor will you miss the whistle of the Mississippi steamboat."

This was a promising start, but almost a year went by before Victor marketed another Dalhart record. In February, 1920, on No. 18635, he sang "Bye-Lo," with John Steel occupying the B side with "While Others are Building Castles in the Air."

"Bye-Lo" was composed by Ray Perkins, who for many years has been one of the country's most successful disc jockeys from a station in Denver, Colo. It was Dalhart's only Victor record in 1920.

The tenor's next Victor appearance was in September, 1921, when, on

No. 18782, he sang "Emaline." On the other side Henry Burr obliged with one of his typically melodious ballads, "You Made Me Forget How To Cry."

Dalhart's biggest selling Victor, up to that time, came out in November, 1921, when, on No. 18807, and with the assistance of the Criterion Trio (probably three members of the Criterion Quartet), he sang one of the year's biggest hits, "Tuck Me to Sleep in My Old 'Tucky Home.'" Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw harmonized "Plantation Lullaby" on the reverse.

The next year brought an epidemic of "Mammy" songs touched off by Walter Donaldson's great hit, "My Mammy," and Dalhart did as much as any other singer to keep the torrent of "mammy" songs at full strength.

In May, 1922, on No. 18875, he sang "Don't Leave Me, Mammy." Turning the record over revealed a lovely Ernest R. Ball ballad, "Time After Time," characteristically sung by Henry Burr.

The catalog editor said of Dalhart's contribution: "Out of the hundreds of 'mammy' songs now pouring from the cities, 50 years after the virtual disappearance of the good, old black 'mammy' from inland American life, this is one of the most popular, and deservedly so, for it is one of the best." It was also Dalhart's only Victor record of 1922.

The "Texas tenor" obviously had not established himself with Victor audiences as he had with Edison, for there were no more Victor records by him until the weekly issue for November 16, 1923, when he occupied one side of No. 19168, singing "Mammy's Little Silver Lining."

The B side was taken up with the Peerless Quartet's richly harmonized version of "Memories of Virginia." The supplement included an amusing photo of Dalhart rolling his eyes upward and pretending to tear his hair because of some crime committed by his accompanist (perhaps his wife or daughter), a lady with long hair down her back.

In the December 14, 1923 supplement, The Virginians, directed by Ross Gorman, played a fox-trot, "Stavin' Change," composed by Dalhart's friend, Al Bernard, and Dalhart sang the refrain. A little earlier, in the October 26 list, he had

sung the refrain of a fox-trot version of an Irving Berlin song, "Tell All the Folks in Kentucky," played by Charles Dornberger's Orchestra.

Possibly there were a few other Victor dance records in which he was heard. The supplements did not always list the names of "song pluggers."

No more Victor solo records by Dalhart appeared until the history-making No. 19427 appeared in November, 1924. But before the amazing career of that disc (perhaps the most controversial record ever published) can be considered, it will be necessary to provide some background.

### III. Miscellaneous Records

During the years when he was singing regularly for Edison and intermittently for Victor and Columbia, Dalhart was also working for other companies. The 1923 Gennett catalog contains three of his characteristic titles, "Carolina Sunshine," "Dear Old Southland," and "Till We Meet Again."

By 1924 he was recording duets for Okeh, Edison, and other companies with Ed Smalle, who on Victor records sang only with Billy Murray, but needed a partner when he offered his clever duet arrangements to competing firms. Their Edison titles included "Mrs. Murphy's Chowder" and "Where Have Those Old-Timers Gone?"

In June, 1924, they appeared in the Okeh supplement with "Back in Hackensack, New Jersey," which had a ukelele accompaniment by Harry Reser. Dalhart and Smalle made a couple of numbers for Edison as the Arkansas Trio (the third member of the trio was banjoist John Cali) and the same ensemble was known on Gennett as the Windy City Duo.

Dalhart appeared on National Music Lovers records as Joseph Elliott, David Harris, and Harry Harris. He sang vocal refrains in the Columbia record coupling "Honeymoon Chimes" and "One Little Smile" by the Hawaiian guitar players, Frank Ferrara and Anthony Franchini.

He also sang in Edison Diamond Disc No. 51144 of "One Little Smile," by the Waikiki Hawaiian Orchestra. Presumably he also played the incidental mouth-harp solo. It probably was his first appearance on records as a mouth-harp virtuoso.

His skilfully performing these widely differing assignments points up what I have said about Dalhart's extreme versatility, which, to anticipate a bit, caused a writer in the December, 1925 issue of *The Gramophone*, published in London, to speculate on the possibility of there being two singers with the same name:

"Another queer American record is Brunswick 2911 wherein one Vernon Dalhart, a tenor, sings 'The Runaway Train' and 'Chain Gang Song' to an accompaniment of guitar and chromonica—a sort of accordion. People who specialize in out-of-the-way records should secure this, but it is not one that I dare recommend generally with confidence.

"Are there two Vernon Dalharts, as there are two Winston Churchills? The

one who sings on Parlophone B5494 is very versatile if he is the same as the Brunswick singer, but I like him less."

The songs Dalhart offered on the Parlophone record were a sloppy bit of moralizing, "It's a Man Every Time, It's a Man" (an answer to "Just a Girl That Men Forget") and "Why Don't My Dreams Come True?" Okeh records were issued in England under the Parlophone label. As for the "chromonica—a sort of accordion" it was really a harmonica.

### IV. Some Hill-Billy History

The radio craze swept the United States in 1922 and the record companies viewed its spread with justified concern. By 1923 the record business was still good, but not so good as it had been in 1920 and 1921.

It occurred to some of the officials of the Okeh company, seeking for a means of stimulating sales, that there might be possibilities of good business in sending recording expeditions into the South—especially the Southern mountains—and having native musicians sing and play for "platters" designed primarily for customers below the Mason-Dixon line. This seemed a plausible idea when they recalled how special records by Mamie Smith and other Negro "blues" performers had delighted not only colored listeners but many white ones.

A clear indication that there was a market for hill-billy records was given by the success of Victor No. 19171. On this Wendell Hall, "The Red-Headed Music Maker" from Chicago, sang "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'."

Hall took an old country dance tune, gave it new and funny words and within a few weeks after his Victor record was issued on November 16, 1923, "Rain No' Mo'" took the nation by storm. He also recorded the song for Edison and Gennett, but it was the Victor record that touched off the deluge.

"It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" was Victor's best seller of 1923 and one of the biggest the company had ever known. Early in 1924 newspaper advertisements said more than 2,000,000 copies had been sold within three months, but when I met genial Wendell Hall in Chicago in 1951 he questioned the accuracy of that statement.

Naturally, other artists got into the act. Al Bernard recorded Hall's song for Cameo; Billy Jones and Ernest Hare for Columbia; Hare for Okeh; and Dalhart did his part. He sang it under his own name for Emerson, with a ukulele accompaniment by May Singhi Breen, and the Emerson record was issued under the Regal label with the Bob White alias.

He was called Fred King on his Domino record and Harry Harris on the National Music Lovers. It may be that the vogue of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" first gave Dalhart the idea there would be money in entering the country music field. A trip he and Ed Smalle made to

the South in 1924 may also have helped.

Meanwhile, the Okeh scouting expedition had taken primitive transportable recording equipment to the South. Temporary studios were set up in a number of places, including Asheville, N. C., Atlanta, Ga., Bristol, and Johnson City, Tenn., St. Louis, Mo., and Dallas, Tex., and mountain men and women were invited to come in for tests.

The two most successful hill-billy performers were Fiddlin' John Carson, a middle-aged Georgian who played his own fiddle accompaniments, and a Virginian, Henry Whitter, who sang to his own accompaniment of mouth-harp and "git-tar." One of the numbers Whitter recorded, which became famous as Okeh No. 40015, was "The Wreck on the Southern Old 97," coupled with "The Lonesome Road Blues." The tune of the wreck ballad was taken from "The Ship That Never Returned," composed by Henry C. Work, a song writer of the Civil War era.

He also wrote "Marching Through Georgia," "Grandfather's Clock," "Kingdom Coming," and "Nicodemus." The words described a Southern Railway train wreck which occurred September 27, 1903, on the outskirts of Danville, Va., in which 11 persons were killed and seven injured. The last survivor of the wreck died only a few months ago.

Soon after the wreck occurred country musicians in the Danville area began to sing a doleful ditty describing it, and the song became a favorite throughout the Southern mountains. It was this which Whitter recorded. Most likely owing to the bad equipment his voice sounds terribly nasal and "back country," but the record was a sensation in the South.

It was such a success in fact that Okeh engaged another Virginia musician to make a 12-inch record of the entire number. Because of its higher price the record did not sell well in comparison with Whitter's, but it was much better sung.

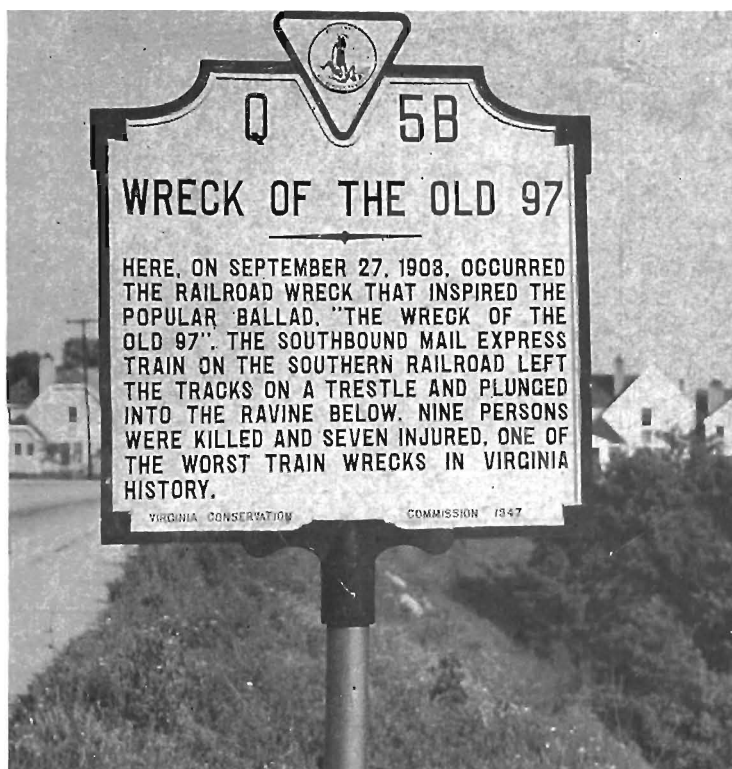
The artist, Kelly Harrell, who was born in 1889 in Wythe county, Va., had an excellent voice for a singer of country ballads, and his words came out clearly. Some of Whitter's were indistinct.

I should say, however, I believe the nasal quality of Whitter's recordings was caused by some quirk in the sound processing. I knew him very well after his recording career had virtually ended and there was nothing nasal about his way of speaking, nor did his electric recordings sound through-the-nose.

Henry told me he considered the poor quality of his early Okehs was largely caused by makeshift equipment being set up for a day or two in the rear of somebody's store, where the acoustics were bad.

However that may be, the record by Harrell, who was then living at Fries, Va., but afterwards moved to Fieldale, Va., and who worked in a towel factory, remains to this day,





HENRY WHITTER, A VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN MUSICIAN MADE THE FIRST RECORD OF "THE WRECK OF THE 97." HE USED THIS BUSINESS CARD AFTER HE LEFT THE OKEH COMPANY AND BECAME A VICTOR ARTIST

Left to right: The Virginia Conservation Commission erected this marker at the spot near Danville, Va., where the Southern passenger train, "Old 97," wrecked September 27, 1903. The wreck inspired one of the most famous Southern hill-billy songs. It was the first song of its type which Vernon Dalhart recorded.

—Photo by Albert Via, Jr.

The late Kelly Harrell, a Virginia ballad singer, made the only complete record of "The Wreck of the Southern Old 97."

—Courtesy of his son, E. K. Harrell, Roanoke, Va.

I believe, the only one containing the full version of "The Wreck on (or of) the Southern Old 97" as traditionally sung by mountain musicians.

Whitter's record omitted the first two stanzas sung by Harrell, who died in July, 1942:

"One cloudless morning  
I stood on the mountain,  
Just watching the smoke from below;  
It was coming from a tall,  
slim smokestack,  
'Way down on the Southern railroad.

"It was Ninety-Seven,  
the fastest train  
Ever run on the Southern line;  
All the freight trains that passes  
stands aside for 97,  
For she's bound  
to be at stations on time."

Whitter's version began with the third stanza:

"They give him his orders  
at Monroe, Virginia,  
Saying "Pete,  
you're way behind time!  
This is not 38, but it's old 97—  
You must put her  
in Spencer on time!"

Whitter pronounced "put" as "putt." Take notice of that name, "Spencer." It will be important later.

#### V. Dalhart Makes His First "Hill-Billy"

Whitter's records, like Fiddlin' John Carson's and Kelly Harrell's, sold so well in 1924, a year when the bottom seemed to be dropping out of the phonograph and record industry, that other companies began to issue hill-billy discs in the hope of sopping up some of the "gravy."

Their actions came to Vernon Dalhart's attention. Perhaps, as the *New York Herald Tribune* article said, it was Charles Edison who first suggested to him that he try his skill in the country music field.

It may be someone else had the idea or that it occurred to Dalhart himself. At any rate, he must have taken stock and decided he was well equipped for a change in his singing procedures.

He had grown up in the heart of the Texas ranch country and become familiar with cowboy songs, such as "O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie." Somewhere along the way he had become an expert player of the mouth-harp and Jew's harp and he was an accomplished whistler. All he needed to invade the hill-billy territory was a guitar accompanist.

He found his first accompanist in a Hawaiian native of Portuguese descent—Frank Ferrara. He is seldom mentioned nowadays but in the 1920's he was making best-selling Ha-

waiian guitar records for every American company.

Ferrara, whose first name was really Palakiko, (some of his records were made under the name of the Palakiko Hawaiian Orchestra) came to this country in 1900 and laid claim to being the first musician to introduce the Hawaiian guitar to American audiences. Even those who abominated Hawaiian music conceded he was a skilful instrumentalist.

Vernon Dalhart's debut as a singer of hill-billy tunes was made in the Edison Diamond Disc supplement for August, 1924, on No. 51361. He had copied the words of "The Wreck on the Southern Old 97" from Whitter's Okeh record, and he sang to the accompaniment of Ferrara's steel guitar and his own mouth-harp playing.

The coupling was poorly chosen—an old-time minstrel song, "I Wasn't Scared, But I Just Thought That I Had Better Go," drolly sung by Ernest Hare. Had the reverse been another hill-billy song—for instance, "Hand Me Down My Walking Cane" which Whitter had successfully sung for Okeh, and Harrell was to sing even more successfully for Victor—sales probably would have been greater.

But, as it was, the record was a tremendous seller by Edison standards, and both Dalhart and the Dia-

(Continued on page 55)

ings. But I hope the following examples will give at least a small idea of their charm:

No. 1. Deep metal cup, with clear glass beads sewed to a thread foundation. Two holes in the back facilitate the sewing process. A similar button is of black metal with black glass beads.

No. 2. Convex covered button with silver lustre beads sewed in close formation between bands of black braid. Thread back.

No. 3. A modern button (c. 1940) made of beads strung on wire. A pin-head shank passes through the central bead, securing it to a metal disc which forms the button back. The beads are different colors, and the button is much more attractive than the drawing indicates.

No. 4. Convex covered button of mauve broad-cloth, decorated with black glass beads and black silk cord. Thread back.

No. 5. Sometimes one bead can be as effective as many. This semi-spherical button of green silk is topped by a single bead of black glass. Loop shank of green cord.

No. 6. An unusual button of fine brown silk thread, drawn to a central point, front and back, and ornamented with black glass beads. Metal shank. Sometimes beads are attached to the button edge only, giving a "pin-cushion" effect.

No. 7. Convex covered button with black glass beads and black braid surrounding a black glass button. These cylindrical black glass buttons are known as "bugles." They were very popular during the second half of the 19th century.

No. 8. Flat modern button covered with yellow crêpe and decorated with clear glass beads and mirror studs. Cloth back and canvas shank.

No. 9. Another modern covered button, slightly convex. The blue, pink, red, and silver beads are most effective against the black fabric. Tin back with canvas shank.

No. 10. Similar in type to No. 1, this shallow cup of black metal holds iridescent beads sewn to a thread foundation. I have a curious imitation of this type of button: it is made from an acorn cup, painted black, with metal shank inserted, and black glass beads glued hit-or-miss inside.

### WANTED

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4806 Fitzhugh Ave.  
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I've often wondered what poor woman was obliged to concoct such a make-shift button. Whoever she was, I admire her grit and ingenuity!

No. 11. Convex covered button of dark green velvet. The forget-me-nots are rendered in blue beads with yellow bead centers and green bead stems.

No. 12. Typical black Bead-and-Fabric button, convex, with thread back. Black Covered and Needle-work buttons offer a variety of bead arrangements. They are sometimes called "Passementerie Buttons," but the name is not strictly accurate, since it is from the French *passement*, meaning gold or silver lace.

The word referred originally to dress trimmings of braid, lace, or silk embroidery. However, because such trimmings are often embellished with beads, the term has been applied to beaded trimmings and buttons, as well.

Fashions have changed since some inspired cave-dweller was first thrilled and enchanted by a necklace of shells. Men and women have changed, too, superficially, at least. But beads have changed very little in the thousands of years since they were invented. Their smooth, cool charm still appeals to women, both "savage" and "civilized." Their unique fascination still touches everything that they touch, including buttons.

\* Beads and beadwork are a study in themselves. From the ancient Egyptians to the North American Indians; from the bone necklace of the African witch doctor to the finest products of the Venetian glass-makers, they wind their sinuous way through the history of mankind. They have been used in so many countries and in so many ways that much research would be needed to more than scratch the surface of their possibilities. An interesting article about beads and beadwork by Amelia E. MacSwiggan appeared in HOBBIES for April, 1965.

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(Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)

### VERNON DALHART

(Continued from page 37)

mond Disc makers were sure they had hit upon something good. The vogue of "The Wreck" was not restricted to the South. It went big with Edison patrons throughout the country.

Equipped now with a good talking point, Dalhart decided to bolster his Victor fortunes by persuading that company to issue the "Wreck of the '97." How he overcame Victor's objections that it had no suitable song to occupy the B side of such a record, made the platter and touched off the most heated argument and hardest fought legal battle in the phonograph industry's history. That story must be reserved for next month.

(To be continued)

### 500 LINCOLN ORATIONS

For the first Lincoln Birthday in 35 years, there were no speeches on February 12 by the dean of Cleveland Ohio's Lincoln orators, Anthony L. Maresh. At 82, Mr. Maresh was forced to retire by severe arthritis.

Maresh estimates he has given about 500 talks in honor of Lincoln's birthday. He has headed the Lincoln Association of Ohio for many years, and maintains a fine collection of Lincolniana in his home.

### PERSEVERE

The fisher who draws in his net too soon  
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The child who shuts up his book too soon,  
Won't learn any lessons well.

If you would have your learning stay,  
Be patient—don't learn too fast;  
The man who travels a mile each day,  
May get round the world at last.

—McGuffey's Reader

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## 1. Victor Consents to Record "The Wreck"

When Vernon Dalhart, swapped horses, so to speak, in the middle of the stream and gave up singing popular songs and concert ballads to become the most prolific recorder of hill-billy tunes, he was just entering middle age.

At the time he began to importune Victor to make a record of "The Wreck of the Southern Old 97," which he had already successfully waxed for Edison, he was 41. Judging by photographs, he resembled our present day Vice President Richard M. Nixon, who in 1924 was only a small boy.

In the fall of 1952 I attended, in Richmond, Va., a performance of Cornelia Otis Skinner's "one-woman" production, "Paris '90." The orchestra leader for Miss Skinner, Nathaniel Shilkret, in the 1920's was the Victor Company's staff accompanist and the conductor of the Victor Salon Orchestra.

After the performance Nat and I ate dinner in a bus terminal with Quentin Riggs, a young Oklahoma City record collector, who was then stationed in military service at Camp Lee, Va. I remember the friendly, unassuming conductor surprised us by saying that in his early career he was a member of the Edison Orchestra and played for Blue Amberol records.

I had heard reports that Nat Shilkret had a big part in the success of Dalhart's historic Victor record combining "The Wreck of the 97" and "The Prisoner's Song." I asked him about that.

Was it true, I asked, that "The Prisoner's Song," which turned out to be an even greater hit than "The Wreck," was partly his own work? Nat assured me it was. He then gave this account of the genesis of what, in some respects, is the most remarkable of all records:

"In 1924," Shilkret said, "Dalhart's popularity as a maker of popular song records was declining, at least

as far as Victor was concerned. He was anxious to hit on something that would give his sales a boost.

"He kept telling us about the success of the 'Wreck of the Old 97' record on Edison, and insisted that we let him record it. 'Come on and give me the date!' he would say. 'I need the money!'"

"The record business was bad along then and we weren't much inclined to experiment. Besides, we told Dalhart, he didn't have any suitable number to go on the other side of 'The Wreck.' I asked him if he could think of anything for the flip side.

"After a while Dalhart said he had at home a manuscript of a song written by a cousin of his which might do. I told him to bring it in. A day or two later he showed up with some pencilled notes but no music.

"The manuscript, as he submitted it, was a mess. It was only long enough to fill about half a record. I told him it couldn't be used as it stood, but that I thought it might be fixed up to do.

"He agreed for me to take it home with me. I wrote more verses and ground out a simple, mournful tune to fit the words.

"When I submitted the finished result to Dalhart he was well pleased. But," Nat said, with a touch of bitterness, "neither then nor when the record became the biggest seller ever made up to that time did he offer to give me as much as a cigar.

"We went ahead and recorded both sides," Shilkret continued. "I remember Dalhart's saying Victor was getting a bargain in that record, since one side was in the public domain and the other was mostly written by the company's musical director, so no royalties would have to be paid to publishers and composers. And that," Nat summed up, "is how 'The Prisoner's Song' came to be written and recorded.

"The original manuscript may have been written or copied from some source by Dalhart's cousin, Guy Massey, but it was unsalable and

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## RECORDS WANTED

WANTED TO BUY: Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

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WANTED: 16" transcriptions, tape, home made recordings of Mark Warnow orchestra on Hit Parade and Swing Session.—Lyle Poole, 3041 Garlough, Seattle 16, Wash. o3004

See Records For Sale  
Classified Ads on  
Page 35

# Vernon Dalhart

PART IV  
By JIM WALSH

not worth recording as it stood. Dalhart himself had nothing to do with writing it. There would have been no "Prisoner's Song" record if it had not been for my altering, editing, and adding to the manuscript."

That is Nat Shilkret's statement, and he is well known to the musical world as a man of scrupulous integrity. There are, however, other versions of the song's origin and I shall quote them with the intention of being fair.

## II: "Old 19427" Sets New Records

Dalhart's Victor record of "The Wreck of the Old 97," which bore that never-to-be-forgotten number, 19427, was nothing like as good as his Edison, even though it sported a train whistle by way of an incidental effect. The recording was below the Edison standard, and the singing was not so good.

In the Diamond Disc, Dalhart sang in his natural voice, but in the Victor he imitated the nasal sound of Henry Whitter's Okeh record from which he had copied the words. Perhaps this was done on orders from some Victor official, who suspected, with considerable reason, that lovers of country music prefer a singing-through-the-nose effect.

The record sounded a lot like an indigenous hill-billy, but it didn't sound like the former operatic artist, Vernon Dalhart. "The Prisoner's Song" was better. The voice quality was natural, without nasal tricks, and Dalhart sang it with what seemed sincerity and a genuine sympathy for the maudlin lyrics.

It seems to me "The Prisoner's Song" is a good counter-argument to people who insist that the 1920's were a time of nothing but jazz, unrestrained gaiety, and wild hysteria, done to the accompaniment of a high crime rate and unlimited drinking in defiance of that terrible ogre, prohibition.

Actually the 1920's were a period in which ballads and comic songs divided the popular music market pretty equally between them, and jazz meant little to the average man. There was a public for jazz, but it was a specialized one confined to a small minority.

As for drinking, any fair survey of conditions 30-odd years ago compared to now would report the per capita consumption of liquor under prohibition was small compared to the amount of booze-h'isting today.

The crime rate also was much lower than nowadays, when every year sees a new all-time high being reached under the "beneficent" influence of repeal.

What a field-day the "wets" of 1925 would have had if they could have reached into the future and brought down today's high alcoholism rate among both men and women and the appalling prevalence of juvenile delinquency, and blamed it on prohibition!

Maudlin though the words and music of "The Prisoner's Song" undoubtedly were, the record struck

a responsive chord in the public taste of the time. The Victor disc, which was recorded during hot summer weather, sold in astonishing volume from the time it was first announced in the supplement for November, 1924. Not that the supplement editor, James E. Richardson, gave it much of a send-off. He merely said:

Genuine songs of the Southern mountaineers, given with all their original lyric crudeness and their vigorous quaint melody. The fiddle, the guitar, and the mouth-organ figure in accompaniment. "The Wreck of the Old 97" is not a steamboat, but a railroad song, a classic like "Casey Jones," and apparently much older. "The Prisoner's Song" is from the hair-brooch and weeping-willow period. A Mark Twain might describe it.

Actually, since the wreck described in "Casey Jones" occurred three years before that of the "Old 97," the former song, in its original folk form, is the older of the two. A young man, newly arrived from the Middle West, who called himself "The Kansas Jayhawk," is said to have played the guitar for Dalhart in these records. (I have never heard who the fiddler was, but it may have been Murray Kellner, who played with Dalhart for several years).

The name of the young man from Kansas was Carson Robison. Finding him was the greatest piece of good fortune that ever happened to Dalhart, aside from his recording "The Prisoner's Song."

Even though the supplement description was brief, Victor must have had considerable hopes for Dalhart's record. It headed the list of popular vocal numbers for the month.

It was placed first despite such strong competition as a solo by Billy Murray; three duets by Murray and Aileen Stanley; "Tea for Two," and "I Want to Be Happy," sung by Helen Clark and Lewis James; "Where the Dreamy Wabash Flows," and "Follow the Swal-

low," by the Peerless Quartet; "Hard Hearted Hannah," and "Sweet Little You," by Belle Baker; two solos by Georgie Price; two by Henry Burr, and "How Come You Do Me Like You Do?" and "Knock at the Door," by Frank Crumit.

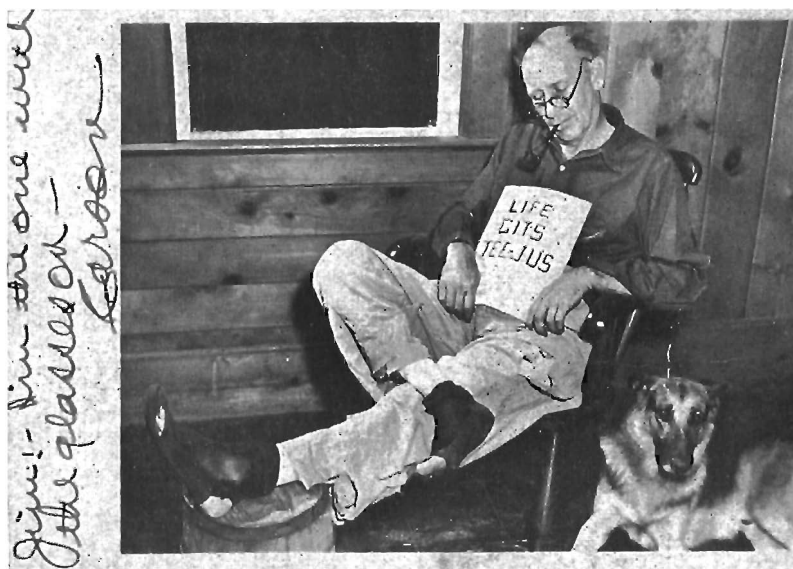
Imagine any monthly record supplement of today offering a group of such hits! But, even so, it's likely that, in the course of time, the Dalhart record outsold all the others combined.

For good measure, there was also one other Dalhart record. No. 19442, on which he sang "Go 'Long, Mule." This was a pseudo-hill-billy. Although generally in the country comedy style, it had an orchestra accompaniment.

On the other side, Billy Murray and Ed Smalle sang "Way Out West in Kansas," composed by Dalhart's new associate, Carson Robison. It was the first song written by Robison to be recorded. The supplement said:

Two comedy songs that come up to the name; even the instruments of the orchestra laugh and chuckle. . . . Vernon Dalhart, aided and abetted by an orchestra, does funny things with the tale of a mule in the first number. On the reverse side of the record the International Novelty Orchestra gets into all sorts of mischief while those classic entertainers, Billy Murray and Ed Smalle, are doing their best to tell you of the charms of being "Way Out West In Kansas."

The International Novelty Orchestra, like the Victor Salon group, was directed by Nat Shilkret. It is rather odd that Murray and Smalle were selected to sing "Way Out West in Kansas," for Dalhart, assisted by Robison on the guitar, recorded it for nearly every company except Victor. Too, it is interesting to recall that the song on the other side, "Go 'Long, Mule," was the last solo record made (for Edison) by the pioneer comedian, Arthur Collins.



The late Carson Robison who wrote many of Dalhart's most successful records, sent this snapshot to Jim Walsh in 1940 after his record of "Life Gits Tee-jus, Don't It?" had become a big success.



### III. "The Prisoner's Song" Becomes a Craze

As soon as it became obvious that radio, which had drastically cut into the sale of records, wasn't keeping Victor's version of "The Prisoner's Song" from becoming the biggest selling vocal disc in phonograph history, every other company insisted on Dalhart's singing it.

He also sang "The Wreck of the Old 97" for most companies. (An exception was Columbia, whose version was by a blind North Carolina musician, Ernest Thompson, with a high falsetto voice). But Dalhart made "The Prisoner's Song," under several names, for nearly all of Victor's competitors. I recall one exception. Columbia issued the number by Dalhart under its regular 75-cent label, but Irving Kaufman sang it on the 50-cent Harmony record also made by Columbia.

A couple of years later the vogue of the song still continued, and Victor let Reinold Werrenrath, the one-time Metropolitan Opera baritone, sing the pathetic lament of the "prisoner" on a Red Seal record, backed by his version of "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane." To give an honest opinion, Werrenrath didn't sing "The Prisoner's Song" nearly so well as Dalhart, who is believed to have recorded it for 28 or 30 labels.

Nor was that all. The dancing public began to demand waltz versions of the prisoner dirge, and when these were made Dalhart sang the refrains. The Victor dance number, by the International Novelty Orchestra, had one of the greatest all-time waltz hits, "After the Ball," on its reverse side, with Henry Burr doing the vocal honors.

"The Prisoner's Song" mania was not confined to this country. It sold throughout the English-speaking world. British dance bands, such as the Savoy Orpheans, recorded it.

I know of no rational way to account for the amazing vogue of "The Prisoner's Song"—a vogue it has never entirely lost. It was essentially a throwback to the morbid sentimental songs at which Mark Twain had poked fun 50 years before, and its popularity may have reflected a longing for a simpler, if sadder, vanished way of life.

Or it may have been a relatively mild example of mass hallucination. Certainly, if the words and music are critically examined, there is nothing to praise in "The Prisoner's Song." But, regardless of lack of intrinsic merit, it made Vernon Dalhart, almost overnight, the most important recording artist of his day.

When Dalhart died, the New York Daily News said it was estimated 25,000,000 copies of his various records of "The Prisoner's Song" had been sold. That figure may not be greatly exaggerated when one recalls that the record sold not only in this country, but that matrices were imported into the British Isles, India, Australia, and New Zealand.

During much of the second half



Nathaniel Shilkret, former Victor recording director, who arranged "The Prisoner's Song" for Vernon Dalhart's recording.

—Photo by George Maillard Kessler, B.P.

of the 1920's, wherever one went in the English-speaking world, the chances were good, in city, wilderness, or jungle, of hearing the reproduced voice of Vernon Dalhart wailing: "Now if I had wings like an angel, over these prison walls I would fly—"

### IV. "The Prisoner's Song" Controversy

Despite his statement that Victor was in luck because of having a record with two songs in the public domain, as soon as Dalhart saw what a hit "The Prisoner's Song" was turning out to be, he had it copyrighted in the name of his cousin, Guy Massey. Thus the record companies were obliged to pay royalties to the firm which published the sheet music.

It was not long before a controversy regarding the origin of the most popular song of the day was in full swing. As the New York Herald Tribune death notice said, Dalhart told conflicting stories at different times.

At first he said it was written by Guy Massey, who lived only long enough to collect a small part of the royalties. Later he said he wrote it himself.

Nat Shilkret's side of the controversy was not generally known in those days, but a 1926 issue of a formerly popular weekly news magazine, The Pathfinder, had an interesting discussion of the subject. After saying that "Guy S. Massey, 27-year-old sailor-minstrel and ballad writer . . . on his death-bed claimed the words as his own," the article continued:

Readers from all sections of the country continue to write us disputing Massey's claim even to the words. Apparently the song was written years ago and made popular by the sailor-minstrel Mrs. Kate M. Bryan, of Dallas, Tex., who knew the Massey family, has this to say on the subject:

" . . . I think it only fair to tell you what I know of Guy Massey and the Prison Song. To begin with, he had no more to do with either writing or discovering the song than you or I. (Continued on page 60)

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale; all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jly120422

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## VERNON DALHART

(Continued from page 35)

Having no desire to meddle, I kept quiet until I saw that others questioned his authorship of the song.

"An older brother, Robert, was a wanderer all over the U. S. in his younger days and while on his wanderings learned the Prison Song with many others, known to the 'Knights of the Road' as old road songs. His brother Guy, a vaudeville actor, came from New York to visit his family, and while here Robert taught him a number of these songs thinking they would be good material for his vaudeville work. Guy returned to New York and tried to make a record of the Prison Song, but from some cause failed. He then taught it to his cousin, Vernon Dalhart, who was accustomed to making records and who succeeded in getting the record released. The copyright was taken out in Guy's name.

"When Robert learned of this he was justly indignant, but said nothing because, to use his words, 'he did not want to get Guy in bad.' Robert was living in my house at the time and discussed it with me from time to time. Guy's attitude toward this greatest musical fraud of the ages was that he 'had beat Robert to it' in the perpetration of a huge joke on the public. I don't know the exact amount of royalties he received, but it was several hundred dollars, or sufficient to pay the greater part of his hospital expenses. This is written solely in the interest of truth and with no feeling of ill-will toward Guy Massey."

I wonder why Mrs. Bryan referred to the much debated composition as "The Prison Song." Her letter brought a quick reply from Guy Massey's brother, Seaborn C. Massey, Jr., also of Dallas:

I am an older brother and best friend of Guy Stapleton Massey, deceased author of the "Prisoner's Song," the authorship of which is so much disputed. This song, both words and music, were (sic) written by Guy and were his own original composition regardless of what others may say in reference to it. The song was copyrighted by Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., which proves beyond any doubt that there was no other composition like it, or it could not have been copyrighted. Robert Massey, brother of Guy Massey, did not have any claim on "The Prisoner's Song," but did write and have published a song known as "The Chain Gang Song," something similar to the "Prisoner's Song."

Guy lived a good, clean Christian life always, and served his country during the war, being honorably discharged from the U. S. navy at Armed Guard Barracks, New York, January 31, 1919, on account of injury to his hearing received while in the service. The character of my dead brother was above reproach. He received two citations for bravery while in the service which I have here with his discharge papers. He was not a convict and never was, as so many people seem to think he died in prison. He died in the U. S. army hospital at Fort Sam Houston, Tex., February 13, 1936, where I took him for treatment after leaving my home here in Dallas. His death was due to an operation on his brain which had caused him to become paralyzed some time before he died. He never received any compensation from the government, though given a medical discharge. He was totally disabled and in bed for more than a year before his death. His mother died when he was four years old—the old story of a broken-up, motherless home.

I nursed Guy during his last illness and held his hand while he passed away. May I add that his last request was, "Bury me next to Mama. I did not have her in life and I want to be next to her in death." And the last word he spoke before he died was "Mama," and then his lips were sealed forever. His last request was granted

and he sleeps beside his mother in Greenwood cemetery, Dallas, Tex.

After Guy Massey's death, Dalhart received the royalties on the song.

I shall give Carson Robison's comments on the "Prisoner's Song" controversy when I discuss his association with Dalhart. In his "History of Popular Music in America," Sigmund Spaeth refers as follows to the heated debate:

Another controversial number was the notorious "Prisoner's Song," credited to Guy Massey, \*\*\*\* although it has been claimed that Nathaniel Shilkret, then a musical director for Victor records, was largely responsible for the finished product. This curiously effective piece of hill-billy "corn" had been recorded by Vernon Dalhart merely to fill the reverse side of the disc carrying that established favorite, "The Wreck of the Old 97," whose tune was taken bodily from Henry C. Work's "The Ship That Never Returned." To the surprise of everyone concerned, it was "The Prisoner's Song" that sold the record, carrying its distribution up to fantastic figures.

One more item about "The Prisoner's Song" and this installment must end, with discussion of the legal battling that centered around "The Wreck of the Old 97" reserved for next month. On September 28, 1955, Joseph M. Bryant, who had been a New York theatrical booking agent, wrote me an interesting letter in which he said:

I got a two weeks engagement at the New York Strand Theater for Dalhart at \$1,750 a week. He was offered \$3,500 a week if he would dress as a prisoner. He flatly refused. All he sang was "The Prisoner's Song." . . . Nat Shilkret insists that he wrote "The Prisoner's Song."

Mr. Bryant mentioned that Dalhart made records of a song, "Many, Many Years Ago," written by Bryant's former wife, who was known in vaudeville as Madelyn Sheppard, and said it ranked next to "The Prisoner's Song" in total sales among Dalhart's records. The amazing suc-

cess of record 19427 also brought Dalhart many radio engagements. Naturally, he was always expected to sing "The Prisoner's Song."

(To be continued)

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# Vernon Dalhart

PART V  
By JIM WALSH



Left to right:

WENDELL HALL, "The Red-Headed Music Maker," stimulated interest in country music when he recorded "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" for Victor, Edison and Gennett in 1923. It paved the way for Vernon Dalhart's records a year later

—Photo by Bloom, Chicago

The late ARTHUR WALSH, who was vice president and recording manager of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., wrote an answer to "The Prisoner's Song," which he called "The Prisoner's Sweetheart." He was not related to Jim Walsh, but referred to him as "Cousin Ulysses."

—Photo by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.

## I. "The Prisoner's Song" Again

I thought when I concluded last month's installment that I had disposed of the "Prisoner's Song" except for holding in reserve some comments by Carson Robison. But I still have some notes that should be included.

Not only was the pathetic lament of the "Prisoner" recorded by dance bands here and abroad, but Eddie Peabody made a banjo record of it with Dalhart singing a refrain. In mentioning the handful of other hill-billy artists who recorded the number, I overlooked George Reneau, "The Blind Musician of the Smoky Mountains," whose name appeared on the Vocalion version.

It's likely, however, that Gene Austin sang the dirge, to Reneau's mouth-harp and guitar accompaniment, for Austin obtained record-

ing engagements for Reneau and usually did the singing, though as a rule his name did not appear on Reneau's Vocalion records. I have never heard this "Prisoner's Song" record so can't say positively that Gene was the vocalist.

Of course, other mountain musicians have recorded the number since Dalhart's day, and the same thing is true of "The Wreck of the Old 97," but as long as he was active he had a near-monopoly. Perhaps the only other singer who enjoyed more of a strangle-hold on a song was Arthur Collins with "The Preacher and the Bear." From the time Collins first intoned this "coon song" classic in 1905 until he retired 20 years later, no other American singer recorded it.

After Guy Massey's Pathetic death, Dalhart made several records of a song called "Guy Massey's Fare-

well," composed by Guy's brother, Robert Massey, who was mentioned last month in the *Pathfinder* letter by Mrs. Kate M. Bryan, of Dallas, Tex. The "Farewell" was written in the true maudlin hill-billy vein and was, in effect, a reply to "The Prisoner's Song." The last stanza went:

"And now, with the bright wings of an angel,  
To the arms of his darling he has flown,  
And his grand ship now is anchored up in Heaven,  
Where there's someone to call him their own!"

Dalhart even made a number of records under the name of his dead cousin and on a few occasions called himself by Bob Massey's name. Perhaps this is the logical place to publish a list of assumed names under which he sang. I do not represent the list as complete, for a new Dalhart name turns up on "off-brand" discs every now and then. A few of the aliases that follow were used for ordinary popular song records, but most were not adopted until Dalhart became the king of hill-billy recording:

Mack Allen, Wolfe Ballard, Jeff Calhoun, Jess Calhoun, Jimmy Cannon, Al Craver, James Cummings, Vernon Dell, Joseph Elliott, Jep Fuller, David Harris, Harry Harris, Kanawha Singers (this was a Brunswick record of a duet by Dalhart and Carson Robison), Fred King, Hugh Latimer, Tobe Little, the Lone Star Ranger, Bob Massey, Guy Massey, Warren Mitchell, Dick Morse, Josephus Smith, Billy Stuart, Allen Turner, Sid Turner, Bill Vernon, Billy Vernon, Tom Watson, Bob White, Robert White, and Walter Whitlock.

He, Ed Smalle, and the banjoist, John Cali, made Edison records as the Arkansas Trio; and Gennetts, as the Windy City Duo. I have seen it claimed that Dalhart also made records as Frank Evans, but the only Frank Evans (and Frank Evers) records I have heard were by Frank Luther, whose style was similar to Dalhart's. Authenticated additions to this list would be appreciated.

A year or so after "The Prisoner's Song" with its vivid words and mournful music had overcome whatever critical judgment the average American listener possessed, the late Arthur Walsh, then the Edison company's recording director, wrote a reply, called "The Prisoner's Sweetheart," which met with moderate success. Oddly, Dalhart seems to have sung Walsh's song little, if at all. Recordings included one by Henry Burr for Victor, and Charles Harrison's Edison version.

## II. Back to "The Old 97"

Although plentiful controversy centered around "The Prisoner's Song," and although it became a larger seller than "The Wreck of the Old 97," the railroad song steamed up even more fuss and fury and resulted in the most protracted and expensive legal action of any record in the phonograph's history. The story is too long to tell in exact detail, but I shall touch on some of the high spots.

You may remember Nat Shilkret's saying Dalhart remarked Victor was

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

in luck when it recorded "The Prisoner" and "The Wreck" because it was getting two songs on which composer's royalties wouldn't have to be paid. As time went on, however, persons who felt they could use the royalties began to contend they had written the words of "The Old 97," and Victor, whose sales of the number dwarfed those of all other companies, decided to find out who was responsible and pay off. I have an old scrapbook, in which a clipping from the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, dated September 12, appears. The year probably was 1927.

"DANVILLE, VA.—A quiet inquiry is being made here by the representative of a recording company into the origin of the popular songs 'The Wreck of No. 97.' The inquiry becomes necessary because the recording company does not know to whom to pay accruing royalties from the sale of the record, and the sum is said to be a substantial one.

"The agent has interviewed old railroad men in Danville in the hope that they might reveal the name of the man who first wrote the song. None questioned has been able to give specific information. All of them remember in a general way that the wreck ballad has been a household number in the railroad men's repertoire, but nobody here can say where it began. The tune also is a mystery, although there are strong points of resemblance with that of 'Ships That Never Come Back.'"

(Note by Jim Walsh.—There is no mystery about the tune. It is note for note the same as Henry C. Work's 'The Ship That Never Returned'.)

"The investigating agent, who has been here for two days, has heard different versions of the song, with verses supplied by some men which are not in the song as sung today.

"Henry Whitter, of Galax, who recorded the song first of all, claims to be the author, but since that claim was made others have come forward, and it is now necessary to establish legal rights. The impression has been here for years that a Danville brakeman originated the song, but there are others who say that Negro employees whistled and sang it 15 years ago . . ."

Ten days later another dispatch from Danville said:

" . . . Fred Lewey, of Concord, N.C., a former Danville resident, who also lived in Lynchburg, asserts he is the man who wrote the words to the song and fitted them to 'The Ship That Never Returned.' He believes he will have no trouble in establishing the authenticity of his claim. He says he wrote the song after a month's effort and that with his guitar he visited different parts of Danville and played and sang it before different gatherings.

"He says it is not true that the song had its origin among the railway folk, but that it first gained a local reputation among the cotton mill people, for Lewey worked in the Riverside mills here. Lewey also gives what he claims to be the original version of the song, which is different in many respects to that now finding popularity."

By presenting a version of the song that did not follow minutely the words contained in Dalhart's records, Mr. Lewey proved himself wiser than another claimant.

### III. David Graves George Enters Suit

The real fireworks concerning authorship of "The Wreck" had not yet been detonated. They were set off when a determined Virginian named David Graves George proclaimed himself the lyric writer and went to court to collect the royalties. He came within a hair's breadth of getting them.

# THE WRECK OF THE OLD 97

by HENRY WHITTER, CHARLES W. NOELL and FRED J. LEWEY



Cover design of the sheet music of Dalhart's great hit, "The Wreck of the Old 97." An elderly Virginia man, David Graves George, convinced a Federal judge he was the author of the song, but lost his case in a higher court. It was finally decided it was written by Henry Whitter, who made the first record of "The Wreck."

George, who died Jan. 24, 1948, aged 82, in Williamsburg, Va., survived by his wife, six daughters, and eight sons, said he was living in Danville at the time "Old 97" plunged from the trestle, killing nine or more persons. He contended he wrote the poem after helping with relief work. The progress of this suit against the Victor Company, which went to trial in 1930 may be traced from a few more clippings Here is another from Danville, dated April 18:

"The suit filed by David George, of Gretna, against the Victor Talking Machine Company to recover royalties aggregating approximately \$150,000 on the sale of records of 'The Wreck of No. 97' is set for hearing at the April term of Federal court in Newark, N. J. Reports recently current that the hearing would be held at Richmond were incorrect, since representatives of the Victor Company who have been collecting evidence here and at other Southern Railway Centers say that the case is docketed in New Jersey . . ."

An Associated Press story sent from Camden, N. J., under date of May 2, said:

"The litigation between the Victor

Talking Machine Company and David Graves George . . . over the money George alleges is due him from the phonograph record of his song, 'The Wreck of the Old 97,' was taken up again today. Before Edward I. Berry, special master of the Federal District Court, figures were presented on the company's contention that it owes George only a share of some \$86,000 in profits, while the latter holds the sum to be considerably above that amount.

"Records were demanded from the company covering the sale of the record in China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and several other foreign countries. George's attorneys seek to show the company made millions from the distribution of the disc."

The suit appears to have dragged on and on and was not finally decided for several years. Henry Whitter and Dalhart were among the persons who testified. Whitter's widow recalled in 1951 being told it was brought out in court that between six and seven million copies of "The Wreck" record had been sold, but she was not clear whether this referred to the Victor record alone or those made for all companies. Dalhart testified he copied the words



of his records from the Okeh by Whitter.

Here are two AP clippings from Camden, dated October 15—presumably 1930. For convenience, I shall lump them into one:

"David G. George, mountaineer poet from Virginia, took the witness stand before Judge J. Boyd Avis in Federal Court here today and recited the poem, 'The Wreck of the 97,' which he charges the Victor Talking Machine Company recorded and then refused to pay him royalties. He is asking that the company be forced to account for its profits on the record . . . Attorneys for the Victor company suggested that Mr. George sing the words of the song which he declared he composed on the Sunday following a train wreck in 1903.

"He explained, however, that he had lost his voice two years ago. The company contends that an investigation by folk-lore experts has established other persons as authors of the song. A portable Victrola was used in court to reproduce music of an old popular song, 'The Ship That Never Returned,' which George says he appropriated for the melody of his song."

"Judge . . . Avis . . . has under advisement the suit of David Graves George . . . asking accounting of records of the song, 'The Wreck of the Old 97,' made by Victor, preparatory to instituting claim for royalties. George claims he wrote the original words. The company does not deny the words were written by George, but contends the records and his verses are not identical."

That last sentence was a misstatement. As will be seen, the flaw in George's claim was that the words he read to the court and those on Dalhart's record *were* identical!

Another Associated Press clipping from Camden, dated February 4, says George's claim to authorship had been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, but I suspect this was a mistake for the Federal Court already mentioned:

"The question of dividing the profits of 'The Wreck of the Old 97' is still unfinished business. David Graves George whose claim to authorship of the barber shop ballad and to a share of the Victor Talking Machine Co.'s marketing profits was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, faces a suit asking for 20 per cent of his share.

"Executors of the estate of Morris Davidson, who died last May in Richmond, told Federal Court in a petition that Davidson loaned \$300 to George to help defray the cost of the suit against the Victor company. George is awaiting an accounting. Davidson estate lawyers want the money held up until their claim is heard. The court fixed February 14 for a hearing."

Final disposition of George's claim is found in an undated clipping from an unidentified newspaper, which however, I think probably was the *Baltimore Sun*. The year appears to have been 1933. Under the heading, "Court Denies Virginian's Claim He Composed 'Wreck of Old 97,' it says:

"The United States Circuit Court of Appeals here yesterday set aside a decision that would have meant a fortune in royalties for a Virginia mountaineer who claimed authorship of the hill-billy song, 'The Wreck of the Old 97.'

"In the opinion of the Circuit Court, the claimant, David Graves George . . . himself copied the sad words of the saga of the train wreck from a Victor phonograph record sung by Vernon Dalhart.

"When the case was heard in Federal Court in Camden in 1930, the Virginian, who is 67, declined to sing the plaintive ballad, saying his voice was gone, but

he undertook to recite the words, reading from his supposed original manuscript in an old almanac.

"In the lower court, Federal Judge John Boyd Avis expressed 'an abiding conviction amounting to a moral certainty that George did compose and write the song shortly after the wreck occurred,' but Circuit Judge J. Warren Davis, in a 19 page opinion, now virtually brands George's claim as false. George contended he wrote the words of the song in 1903 after helping to remove nine bodies, including that of Pete, the engineer, from the wreckage of the Southern Railroad's first mail train, No. 97, at North Danville, Va., on September 27 the same year.

"The Victor Company said it purchased recording rights of the song from three other Virginians. According to the Circuit Court, the composition is that of Henry Whitter, a Virginia musician, who based it on a poem written by Charles Noell, who was 17 when the train wreck occurred near his home. Whitter shortened Noell's poem, gave it the tune of 'The Ship That Never Returned,' and added to it the final stanza of the song, 'The Parted Lovers.'

"Circuit Judge Davis says the evidence plainly shows that George copied the words of the folksong from the phonograph record made by Vernon Dalhart . . . A short time before that, in 1927, an advertisement had appeared in a Richmond (Va.) newspaper, seeking information regarding the writer of 'The Wreck of Old 97,' and George went to a neighbor's house where the Dalhart phonograph rendition of that song was played, Judge Davis says.

"Dalhart had made several mistakes in copying the words, and George made the same mistakes in the copy of the song he produced in the lower court; therefore it seems clear, Judge Davis says, that George must have copied the words from the phonograph record. The court opinion points to other inconsistencies in George's claim . . . Attorneys for George estimated that 5,000,000 copies of the song have been circulated."

It may be of interest to know the mistakes Dalhart made in transcribing the words from Whitter's poorly recorded Okeh record. Where Whitter had mentioned a town in North Carolina, saying "You must put her in Spencer on time," Dalhart understood Spencer as Center and sang it accordingly.

When Whitter sang "it was on that grade that he lost his air brakes," he telescoped that last word and made it sound like "average," which Dalhart took it to be. The last stanza contains the line, "Now ladies, you must take warning from this time now and learn," but Dalhart changed "learn" into "on."

Graves probably had deluded himself into believing that he wrote the song, but since his words correspond exactly to Dalhart's defective ones they were a dead give-away to Judge Davis that they were taken from the Victor record—as they should have been to Judge Avis. But somehow Davis saw what Avis did not!

Sigmund Spaeth sums up the protracted and senseless litigation in his invaluable book, "A History of Popular Music in America," by saying:

"About 50 claims came in, all obviously spurious, but when Victor decided to drop the matter, one claimant acquired a lawyer and brought suit. He actually won his case in the lower court by proving that he had been present at the wreck itself . . . The clear evidence that the so-called 'manuscript' had been written many years later, and obviously copied from the Victor record itself seemed to make no difference. For a time it appeared that a

quarter of a million dollars would change hands as a result of this absurd decision, but after several appeals, blind justice finally joined itself with common sense, and the lyricist of 'The Wreck of the Old 97' remains a mystery to this day."

#### IV. A Talk With Whitter's Widow

Despite Dr. Spaeth's statement that the authorship of "The Wreck" remains a mystery, at least three persons today are being paid royalties from the sale of the records and sheet music. They are Henry Whitter's widow from his second marriage, who when I met her in 1951, was Mrs. Charles Hader, of Crumpler, N. C. Also Charles W. Noell, mentioned in the clipping quoted a few paragraphs back, and Fred J. Lewey, who had the good sense to say his original version of "The Wreck" differed markedly from the one recorded by Dalhart. I believe a son of Whitter's by his first marriage also shares in the royalties.

I came to meet Mrs. Hattie Hader in an unusual way. One day in the late summer of 1951 I received a long distance telephone call from the late Elliott Shapiro, president of the New York music publishing firm of Shapiro, Bernstein & Company.

He asked if I would mind going on a mission for him and said I had been recommended to him by my old friend, the late Fred Hager, who died a year or so ago. After telling me he read everything I published in *HOBBIES* and *Variety* with warm interest, Mr. Shapiro remarked that the sheet music of "The Wreck of the Old 97" had been copyrighted in 1925, and since copyrights run for 28 years, would expire in 1952.

Every effort, he said, was being made to obtain the signatures of the copyright holders to a new contract, but Mrs. Whitter had refused to sign. Could I possibly go into the mountains of Western North Carolina where she lived, armed with a new contract, and use my persuasive powers on the lady?

He explained that Fred Hager also was a party to the deal because when he was head of Okeh's recording activities Henry Whitter had assigned him a share of his royalties from all recordings of "The Wreck" except the Columbia (I have always wondered why it was withheld!) and in the sheet music. Could I do both him and Fred a favor by trying to bring Mrs. Hader to terms, so the copyright might be renewed?

Mr. Shapiro offered me a generous fee, and I said that my vacation was coming up in a couple of weeks and I would make the trip if he would wait until I was free to travel. He agreed, and within a few days, I received a supply of blank contracts, and a full history of the song's tortuous career.

So it happened that one morning, after spending the night in a hotel at Abingdon, Va., I found myself on the Norfolk and Western Railway's "accommodation train," which made

(Continued on page 45)

ions are steel, very accurately cut. The two springs are very large and a size 14 key is required for winding.

I have not had the clock running long enough to tell just how long it will go on one winding, but I am certain it will run three weeks at least, perhaps a full 30 days. Twenty-four half-turns are required to wind the springs up full. The movement does not have fusees.

At the left of the movement the rack for controlling the regular strike can be seen. The rack is controlled by a large wheel, immediately below the rack, which acts as a snail, but looks more like a count-wheel, or locking-plate.

The deep cuts in this wheel are for the hour strike. Between the deep cuts are three steps which make the quarter-hour strikes; the same rack performing both functions.

For the quarter-hour strike the arbor with two arms actuates the two striking hammers. At the time for the hour strike this arbor is moved over so that only one hammer is actuated.

This entire arrangement is different from anything I have examined or worked on before. Incidentally, the snail-wheel is moved by a pinion on the end of the hour-wheel arbor. This is visible near the center of the plate.

The repeat mechanism is on the right side and is entirely separated from the rest of the movement except for the two snails which control it. The repeat mechanism has its own spring, as is found in a repeater watch.

The repeat cord is wound around a pulley and this can be seen at the upper right of the movement. When the cord is pulled out it turns the pulley. This in turn, winds up the repeat-spring that is on the other end of the pulley arbor, on the front-plate of the movement.

The pulley will move only far enough to permit the correct hour and quarter strike. This is controlled by two snails, one located on the hour-wheel arbor, and another set on a star-wheel and actuated by the snail on the hour-wheel arbor.

When the cord is pulled out and released the two hammers on the right come into play; first the hour is struck on the larger bell by one hammer, and then the proper quarter-hour is struck by two hammers on both bells with a ting-tang. I have not seen this type of repeat action on a clock before, and as I have said, it more nearly resembles the action of a quarter-hour repeater watch.

This clock is 24 inches high, and 13 inches wide at the widest point near the base. A final, of course, would increase its height. A door to close up the back of the case is missing and I have not yet replaced it. This is a simple matter when I finally get around to it.

This clock is, undoubtedly, one of the finest in my collection today. It is the result of a gamble that has paid off well. I do have a sizable investment in the clock. That invest-

ment represents the original price paid, plus uncounted hours of painstaking labor to restore its beauty and usefulness. I consider it to be well worth its cost.

I have often said in previous articles, that in my opinion, one should learn to repair and restore these old time-pieces if he is to realize the full enjoyment and satisfaction of his hobby as a collector. I am very glad, indeed, that I took an interest in the matter of repair and restoration a long time ago and that I have learned how to do a great deal of this work with my own hands and from my own knowledge.

Without the confidence that comes from this experience, I never would have dared to take a chance in purchasing either of these fine old clocks: this one, and the one described last month. I shudder to think of what it would have cost me, in either case, had I turned the jobs over to a clock-repair man.

I am not suggesting that anyone should take a chance on clocks in the condition of the two I have described. I can assure you however, I am glad I did.

## THE RECORDS OF FREDERICK V. BOWERS

(Continued from page 37)

the only one of them to be issued with both sides by him.

In the short descriptions of their artists at the end of the 1912 catalog, the editor, noted with obvious pride that "Ada Jones makes at least one record for Columbia every month." He then stated that "Frederick V. Bowers, of the song-writing team of Horwitz and Bowers, and vaudeville headliner, makes records exclusively for the Columbia." But when this was written, the last of the Bowers records had already been released.

I should mention that collectors will also find the Bowers records on the Columbia off-brand labels, as I have a copy of A928 on the Standard label with no mention or identification of the artist. I also have a copy of Heigh-Ho on the single-faced Lakeside label as number 70339.

Mr. Bowers made this handful of records nearly half a century ago. In an era in which more music is being offered in recorded form than ever before, perhaps we may all hope that he will record a long-playing record for his fans. As one of the leading composers and performers from the turn of the century such an offering would be more than welcome to hundreds of collectors I am sure, as well as to the thousands of people he entertains every year.

I REMEMBER when a neighbor  
Had a cylinder gram-o-phone;  
How I spent much time in wishing  
That I had one of my own.

—Spencer C. Ackerman (c)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

a trip each day except Sunday from Abingdon to West Jefferson, N. C. In so doing it climbed the highest grade of any train operating in the Eastern United States and chugged past White Top the highest mountain in Virginia, where a folk music festival used to be held each summer.

The train was the slowest I had ever been on, and I hadn't occupied it long, before a young mountain man, his wife, and their baby got on as my only fellow passengers. The man was richly under the influence of alcohol and his wife surprised me by puffing cigarettes, one after the other.

The man soon revealed himself to be a baseball enthusiast. "Hey, bud!" he yelled at me, after the train had gone a few miles. "You like baseball?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Me too," he returned with great satisfaction. "Who you think's gonna win that there 'Merican League Pen-nant?"

"The Yankees," I replied.

"Me too!" he bellowed, waving a bottle in my direction. "I'm a real ol'-time Yankee fan! Come over here an' have a drink on me!"

"Thank you," I said, "but I don't drink."

A few minutes later the same routine again was gone through: "Hey, bud! You like baseball?" and the rest of it down through the invitation to drink and my insistence that I was a tee-totaler.

After I had suffered through this a dozen times, the man's wife (removed the latest cigarette from her mouth long enough to) exclaim: "Oh, fer gosh sake, why don't you leave the feller alone? He's done tole you a million times he likes baseball an' he thinks them Yankees will win!"

"Well," her husband returned indignantly, "he mought-a changed his mind, moughtn't he?"

And he continued to call baseball inquiries to me. It was a relief when he stumbled off the train, followed by the woman and baby, at some hamlet short of West Jefferson, and I was able to travel the remainder of the distance, untroubled by superfluous conversation and cigarette smoke, to both of which I am allergic.

I had considerable difficulty learning where Mrs. Hader lived, but eventually a taxi driver was found who knew the way to the little town of Crumpler, which I recollect as being about 14 miles from West Jefferson. When we reached her home she wasn't there, but someone told us she probably had gone to her father's, a couple of miles away. This proved to be a small house situated far below the high-

(Continued on page 49)

Chapeau Bleu" by Matisse and \$4,500 for a bronze bust by Epstein, "Old Pinager (1923)." Prices for Continental contemporaries were especially interesting and included \$27,000 and \$13,500 for two Dubuffets; \$8,000 for a Giacometti figure; \$7,000 for a Venard and \$5,800 for a Matia; with \$11,000 for a Hartung and \$9,000 for a Soulages, neither of whose works had sold here before at auction.

Only two sales devoted solely to the sale of Old Master paintings occurred. The highest prices were brought by a Salomon van Ruysdael, "River Scene," \$10,500, followed by \$9,000 for a Vigée-Lebrun portrait of "La Comtesse de Chatenay."

### GREENTOWN GLASS ON DISPLAY

A display of Greentown glass occupies the entire wall space in 12 cases at the Grand Rapids, Mich. Public Museum. It will be there through July and August of this year.

The collection was amassed by Dr. Ruth Herrick of that city. She researched, excavated, and bought the various pieces of her collection.

Greentown glass was manufactured by the Indiana Tumbler and Goblet Company, Greentown, Ind., from 1894 to 1903, when the factory burned. In 1894 patterns of clear glass were being manufactured. Later chocolate glass was highly popular. Holly amber is another favorite pattern of the early 1900's.

Dr. Herrick is an authority on Greentown glass. She published a book on the subject last year. Her glass was on exhibit in January of this year at the Museum, and by request was loaned again for the two summer months so visitors to Grand Rapids, as well as the townspeople, could enjoy it.

\* \* \*

Miss Gloria C. Gossling has been appointed head of the School Service Division of Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, Rochester, N.Y., it was announced by Dr. John R. Williams, chairman of the Museum Board of Commissioners. Miss Gossling has had wide experience in teaching of science in secondary schools. From 1951 to 1957 she served as director of education of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, Pa. Her most recent position has been as teacher of high school and adult classes in science at the Kimball High School in Royal Oak, Mich. Miss Gossling has also written several articles on museum activities and has spoken before the American Association of Museums, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and other professional organizations. She is listed in "Who's Who in American Science." Miss Gossling succeeds Mrs. Irene D. Reitz who served as acting head following the resignation of Miss Marion R. Peake on December 31.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 45)

way and invisible from the road. It seemed to me I walked a quarter of a mile down one stepping stone after another, before I reached it.

Mrs. Hader was on the back porch, shelling peas, and she proved to be friendly, but in no mood to sign a contract. She told me she and her present husband wanted to make a new record of "The Wreck of the Old 97" and were going to New York the next month to see about it. She said she would call then on Mr. Shapiro and talk about renewing the contract.

I had introduced myself as an old friend of her late husband and told her that when I knew Henry Whitter he had a singing partnership with G. B. Grayson, a blind man who lived at Laurel Blooming, N. C. She said Grayson had been killed years before in an automobile accident, and Henry had spent the last years of his life in a North Carolina institution, suffering from an ailment which had worn him down to "a bag of skin and bones"—a shadow of the robust young man I had known. I believe she said he died in 1941.

When I left, after delivering my most persuasive arguments and presenting as good a case as I could in behalf of Mr. Shapiro, I still didn't have a signed contract, but I did seem to have the friendship of Mrs. Hader, whom I liked in return. The letter I sent Mr. Shapiro, relating my adventures, however, pleased him so much that he considerably increased the fee he had agreed to pay me, so I didn't feel the trip was entirely a failure.

Several months later he wrote me that Mrs. Hader had finally "fallen into line" along with the other persons sharing in the copyright, and publication rights of "The Old 97" were now protected until 1980, when it will go into public domain. The last survivor of the wreck died a few months ago.

Before leaving the subject of "The Wreck" and proceeding to discuss less litigious aspects of Vernon Dalhart's later career, I should like to mention a few odd recordings. There was, for one, the dance band version played for Brunswick by Carl Fenton's Orchestra with a vocal refrain by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.

A genuine oddity was a version of the song on a Grey Gull record sung by Arthur Fields, with words credited to someone named Watters, and bearing little resemblance to those in Dalhart's recordings. Grey Gull was said to have a custom of issuing a hit tune on one side of a record, then giving aspiring song writers \$50 to write something to go on the other side, with the understanding that royalties would not be demanded. Probably "Watters" received \$50 to do a non-royalty version of "The Wreck." This was possible, since a song title cannot be

copyrighted and the tune was public property.

And several fanciers of hill-billy music have asked me not to overlook the excellent Columbia record of "The Wreck of the Old 97," made in 1927 by Gid Tanner's Skillet Lickers, assisted by Clayton McMichen and Riley Puckett. This record was good value, for it contained another back country classic, "John Henry (The Steel Drivin' Man)" on its reverse side—a rendition which the Columbia catalog editor facetiously termed "the musical millenium."

### POSTSCRIPT

After the manuscript of this installment had gone to the printers, I was awakened from a nap on the afternoon of Sunday, June 5th, by a telephone call from a HOBBIES folder operator in Oak Park, Ill. My caller said he was a student of folk-music and I was mistaken in quoting the words of "The Wreck of the Old 97" as referring to the engineer as "Pete." The engineer, the young man said, was a man named Brodie, who was called "Steve" from the Steve Brodie who insisted he jumped from the Brooklyn bridge. My informant said he had a book of folk-music in which the name was printed as Steve, and he wanted to change "Pete" to "Steve" in my copy.

I am sure that, historically speaking, he was right. The sheet music also gives the name as Steve. Nevertheless, Dalhart sings it "Pete" in all his records, including the electrically re-made Victor and Bluebird. On replaying Henry Whitter's original Okeh record, I am inclined to think he says "Steve" rather than "Pete," but like many of the other words in that record, it is indistinct. So "Steve" is probably another word that Dalhart sang wrong and David Graves George miscopied after him. Dalhart also continued in his later records to say "Center" for "Spencer" and "average" for "air brake."

Incidentally, after Dalhart ceased to make new records in this country, in the early 1930's, his old ones were issued regularly in England, Australia, and New Zealand, and sold well for several years.

Several folk-music enthusiasts have urged me to devote my articles hereafter to nothing but the so-called "hill-billy" artists, but that will not be done. Such performers were not pioneer recorders and are outside the scope of this department. Dalhart has been written about at length because he was established as a singer of popular and semi-classical music before he went into the "folk music" field as a synthetic "hill-billy."

(To be continued)

I REMEMBER circus clowning  
And the circus day parade.  
I remember cotton candy  
And the pinkish lemonade.

—Spencer C. Ackerman (c)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## I. Carson Robison Joins Dalhart

It is a relief to turn from the confusion and controversy that surrounded Vernon Dalhart's most famous record and narrate some of the major events of his later phonograph career.

From 1925 through 1928, Dalhart was the busiest and most popular of all recording artists. Singing for every company of even the slightest importance, he made thousands of records—just how many, nobody knows, and probably no one ever will know.

Some Dalhart enthusiasts have insisted that I publish a complete list of his recordings, but space limitation alone would prevent that, even if it were possible, which it isn't, to compile an errorless discography of the tenor's work. And I lack the time to attempt such a colossal undertaking. I have been told that Marion Hoffman of Kansas, has more than 3,500 Dalhart records and a Chicago man owns almost as many.

If Dalhart's first great break was the "fortuitous concurrence of circumstances" that led him to combine his Victor record of "The Wreck of the Old 97" with "The Prisoner's Song" his next vast slice of luck was becoming associated with the greatest of all writers of hill-billy songs, Carson Robison.

"Robbie" who was born in Chetopa, Kansas, August 4, 1890, and died March 24, 1957, in St. Francis Hospital, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., was self-taught in music. When he was 15 he became a professional entertainer in the Midwest and in his early 30's worked for a time in Chicago with Wendell Hall, "The Red-headed Music Maker."

Besides being an excellent singer and guitar player, he was also a phenomenal whistler. But above all he was a song writer who knew exactly what buyers of country-type records wanted and gave it to them unerringly.

Coming to New York in 1924 with almost no money, he soon obtained work with the recording companies and made Victor records as an assisting artist to Hall before beginning his folk-music association with Dal-

hart. The personal relationship between Dalhart and Robison was never cordial and it ended in bitterness, but during the three years in which they were closely associated they were an ideal combination from the standpoint of the type of music Robison wrote and Dalhart sang.

When Robison severed the connection Dalhart's popularity suffered an immediate decline. At the time their partnership began, incidentally, Carson had just published his first successful song in the pseudo-hill-billy genre, "Way Out West in Kansas."

## II. Edison Cylinder Hill-Billies

Since Dalhart's first successful hill-billy record was made for Edison, it should be interesting to observe in some detail the steady flow of such waxings which he turned out for both the Diamond Discs and, through dubbings, for the Blue Amberol cylinders.

His popularity with the dwindling number of cylinder record buyers from 1925 through 1929 was so great it would hardly be an exaggeration to say his hill-billy records, appealing strongly to country customers, were about the only thing that kept the Blue Amberols going as long as they did.

During his Edison career, more solo Blue Amberols were issued by Dalhart than by any other artist, although Billy Murray appeared in a larger number of records, counting the Premier Quartet offerings in which he sang the lead.

I have counted 137 issued Blue Amberol solos by Dalhart, and one other, "The Sneeze Song," which was assigned a number 5061, but not placed on the market. His list also includes nine duets with Gladys Rice, one with Al Bernard, and one with Marion Evelyn Cox.

The August, 1925, list of "latest Edison Amberol Records" (Edison by that time had quit calling them Blue Amberols) included Dalhart singing, Madelyn Sheppard's song "Many, Many Years Ago," and Robison composition, "The Time Will Come," which had an irresistible shuffling rhythm.

In September there were three, "Doin' the Best I Can," whose composer was listed as M. T. Slaughter—that is, Dalhart himself. It had a rather elaborate accompaniment of harmonica, fiddle, piano, and guitar. Also included were that great back-country favorite, "The Rovin' Gambler," and "The Runaway Train," the latter jointly credited to Robert Massey and Robison.

Only 12 Blue Amberols were issued in November, but Dalhart starred in three of these and sang an incidental chorus in two fox-trots, "Cecilia," played by Billy Wynne's Greenwich Village Inn, and "Red Hot Henry Brown," by the Georgia Melodians. He had not yet completely abandoned popular songs for hill-billies.

Records of the latter type were "She's Comin' 'Round the Mountain," "The Little Rosewood Casket," and "The John T. Scopes Trial (The Old Religion's Better After All)." This last was an appeal to backwoods religious fundamentalism which Robison wrote (under the pen name of Carlos B. McAfee) and Dalhart sang both, I suspect, with tongue-in-cheek.

Robison, by the way, wrote songs under many names other than his own. He told me he couldn't remember how he hit on "McAfee," but when he turned out hill-billies under the disguise of Maggie Andrews he was using his mother's maiden name. "Zeb Turney's Gal" is a charming number of the country kind which he composed under the Maggie Andrews pseudonym.

In the February, 1926, supplement out of 15 Blue Amberols listed, four were Dalhart's rustic specialties—"Behind These Gray Walls," "Sydney Allen," "The Unknown Soldier's Grave," and "Zeb Turney's Gal." In addition, he sang the refrain of "The Prisoner's Song" played rather belatedly as a waltz dance record by Kaplan's Melodists.

Page two was devoted to a complete listing of "Mountaineer and Rural Ballads," comprising the 22 of that type Dalhart had made prior to the February supplement. The list was prefaced with this statement: "We have had such an enormous demand and so many inquiries about this type of record sung by Vernon Dalhart with violin, harmonica, and guitar accompaniment that we are listing them this month for your convenience in ordering."

At the bottom of the page was an inquiry which in those days appeared in every issue of the Blue Amberol monthly supplement: "Does your collection include the only recording of Mr. Edison's voice? *'Let Us Not Forget—A Message to the American People,'* by Thomas A. Edison, No. 3756."

This constant reminder caused Mr. Edison's brief spoken remarks to become one of the best selling Edison records. Yet today everybody who finds a copy seems to think he has stumbled on the only one in existence.

Let me answer many inquiries by saying that Edison discs and Blue

# Vernon Dalhart

PART VI

By JIM WALSH





Charlie Bowman's daughters, Jennie and Pauline, also were recording artists. Their Columbia record of "Railroad, Take Me Back" (written by their father), and "Old Lonesome Blues" was especially popular.

Amberol cylinders of "Let Us Not Forget" are not—the high prices sometimes asked to the contrary—either valuable or rare. Plenty of other folks beside yourself have records of Mr. Edison's voice.

And so the deluge of Dalhart cylinders continued, month after month. As a final example, in March, 1926, besides singing the refrain of the waltz record of "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," by Kaplan's Melodists, he also did "Frank Dupre," "The Boston Burglar," "The Freight Wreck at Altoona," and "The Wreck of the 1256." Both of the railroad songs were from the pen of the prolific Robison.

### III. Hill-Billy Diamond Discs

Following the course of Dalhart's Edison Diamond Disc hill-billies amounts to much the same thing as tracking his cylinders, for as has been pointed out, the cylinders were copied from the discs. It is interesting, however, to note that in June, 1925, he combined his own song, "Do-in' the Best I Can," with Robison's "The Time Will Come."

Robison was now playing the guitar in all Dalhart records and contributing incidental whistling effects, while the violinist was "Fiddlin' Murray Kellner," a gifted musician who later had his own salon orchestra which recorded for Edison.

In July, Dalhart sang that ancient tear-jerker, "In the Baggage Coach Ahead" (written by a Negro Pullman porter, Gussie L. Davis), and combined it with "Many, Many Years Ago." By October Dalhart's Diamond Disc popularity was reaching full

tide, for he had no less than four double-faced records of hill-billy tunes besides singing the refrain of the dance record of "Red Hot Henry Brown."

The hill-billies were "The Chain Gang Song," written by Bob Massey, and doubled with "The New River Train." (This song, named for a slow train that runs through the mountains of Southwest Virginia, was copied from one of Henry Whitter's Okeh records). Also, "The Little Rosewood Casket," and "The Picture That Is Turned Toward The Wall;" "She's Comin' 'Round the Mountain," and "The Boston Burglar;" and finally, "The John T. Scopes Trial," coupled with one of Dalhart's best sellers, "The Death of Floyd Collins."

The latter gruesome opus, commemorating the death in a mountain cave of a young Kentucky man, was written by an Atlanta, Ga., blind minister, the Rev. Andrew Jenkins, and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Irene Spain. Jenkins himself was a popular Okeh recording artist both under his own name and the slight disguise of "Blind Andy." "Floyd Collins" swept the South almost as strongly as "The Wreck of the Old 97" had conquered it a year before.

It will be seen from the foregoing that Dalhart, besides relying heavily on such writers as Carson Robison and Andrew Jenkins, was reviving many old-time popular songs and singing them in the hill-billy vernacular. Some of his incidental touches were masterpieces, such as the droll way in which he dragged out "husband" in the final refrain of "The Baggage Coach Ahead."

These touches, however, may have made the more discerning country customers suspect he was having a bit of fun at the expense of the music they liked. I have often wondered if, in spite of the rich financial rewards of singing hill-billies, Dalhart didn't have many struggles with his artistic conscience.

Dissatisfaction with the type of music to which he had descended, combined with overwork, may have caused the irritability and impatience which annoyed many of his fellow recording artists during this, his most successful period.

Dalhart's contribution to the November, 1925, Edison list was even larger. He made both sides of four records and one side of a fifth. The combinations were "Dear, Oh Dear" and "The Sneeze Song," "I Wish I Was a Single Girl Again," and "After the Ball," "The Wreck of the Shenandoah," and "The Wreck of the 1256." (Both written by Robison, who not only wrote songs concerning any ancient railroad wreck he could hear about, but also seized on current calamities, such as the wreck of the Shenandoah dirigible, for his inspiration); "Jesse James" and "The Ship That Never Returned," and for the finale, "Casey Jones," coupled with "Got the Railroad Blues (But I Haven't Got The Railroad Fare)," sung by Gene Au-



Charlie Bowman "Champion Fiddler of East Tennessee," who made Brunswick, Columbia, Okeh, and Vocalion records, was a friend and admirer of Dalhart. He now lives in retirement at Union City, Ga.



The late "Jack" Reedy, banjoist and recording artist of Marion, Va., was proud of knowing Vernon Dalhart. He is shown here outside a tent in which a folk-music festival was being held on White Top Mountain.

stin with a piano accompaniment by Charles Bates.

The October supplement included this statement: "So great is the demand for these unique records by Dalhart and Company that we have difficulty keeping up with it. Above are listed eight selections for which we have had countless requests."

By May, 1926, the number of Dalhart's monthly offerings was being curtailed, but there was no let-up in his popularity. This month was notable for a record coupling "The Floyd Collins Waltz," and "Better

Get Out Of My Way," the latter an old-fashioned country dance tune.

Both numbers were played by an instrumental group, Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, with vocal refrains by Dalhart and featuring Murray Kellner's fiddling. Dalhart planned to turn out a series of records by this combination, but these two selections, which they recorded for most of the important companies, seem to be all they did.

Although Robison had accompanied Dalhart in all the Diamond Discs under discussion, he did not begin harmonizing his baritone voice with Dalhart's tenor until No. 51807 was issued in October, 1926. This combined two of his songs, "Just a Melody," and "When You're Far Away."

The names *Dalhart* and *Robison* were thereafter printed in capital letters whenever they appeared together in an Edison supplement—a distinction given to no other artist. In January, 1927, they sang "The Dying Girl's Message," and "If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again." The catalog editor dryly remarked: "If you have tears, prepare to shed them now."

By the time this supplement appeared Edison was beginning to make records by a few authentic Southern musicians. There had already been a few by a Tennessee mountaineer, Fiddlin' Powers, and his children. And just below the Dalhart-Robison duets were listed "John Henry" and "Wild Bill Jones" by Ernest V. Stoneman, a Galax, Va., resident, who called himself "The Blue Ridge Mountaineer." "Dad" Stoneman is still living in Maryland, but he returns each year to take part in a mountain music festival at Galax, which was also the home town of Henry Whitter for most of Whitter's life.

In February, 1927, Dalhart made an Edison record of two songs which had previously been popular with Southern patrons on a Columbia disc by a North Carolina hill-billy, Charlie Poole: "I'm the Man that Rode the Mule Around the World," and "Can I Sleep in your Barn Tonight, Mister?"

In March, Robison was represented by his astonishing whistling record of "Nola," and his own composition, "Whistle-Itis." April was marked by two of Dalhart's best Edison numbers, which unlike most of his recordings, approached the true folk vein, "Don't Let the Deal Go Down," and "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie"—a song, he no doubt had heard many times during his boyhood ranch days in Texas. (The tenor always sounds a little homesick to me when I hear his records of "I'd Like to be in Texas When They Round Up in the Spring").

Edison's October supplement contained one of Carson Robison's most successful songs, "My Blue Ridge Mountain Home," sung by Dalhart and Robison — to follow the supplement style. It was coupled with another attractive Robison composition,

"When the Moon Shines Down Upon the Mountain," sung by Dalhart alone. On second record Dalhart sang "The Mississippi Flood," and "The Wreck of the Number Nine," both written by Robison. This is one of the few Edison records by Dalhart not in my collection.

Mentioning "The Wreck of the Number Nine" reminds me of what I believe is the only time I ever felt that I was profiteering from the sale of a second-hand record. In June, 1958, I received a letter from Morgan Seymour, a police officer of Carmel, N. Y. Mr. Seymour, who collects everything associated with American railway trains of the steam locomotive era, said he had made a long but unsuccessful search for a copy of Dalhart's record of "The Wreck of the Number Nine," on any brand.

He explained it had been one of his favorites when he was a boy and now he wanted it to play for his children. Despairing of ever finding the record in his home environment, he had turned to me because I lived in the South where such discs were more popular. He said he'd gladly pay \$10 for a copy in good condition.

It happened that I had an excellent Brunswick record of the number, which probably hadn't cost me more than a dime. I replied to Mr. Seymour, telling him I'd let him have the record at his suggested price, and he promptly sent me \$11—the extra dollar to cover the postage.

Feeling pangs of conscience at what I felt was over-charging him, I also included a Domino record of the same song, not in as good condition as the Brunswick, and there probably never was a box of records more carefully packed. Within a few days I received a happy letter from Mr. Seymour, saying the two had arrived safely and were being played over and over.

Since then he has visited Roanoke, taking movies of old-time Norfolk and Western trains. We talked by phone but unfortunately had no chance to get together in person. My policeman friend probably will be interested to know that just a few days ago I found in a Goodwill store a Romeo record of "The Wreck of the Number Nine," coupled with "If Your Love Like the Rose Should Die" sung by Dalhart and Robison.

But let me make it clear that Mr. Seymour doesn't want to pay \$10, or anything like it, for other Dalhart records. He offered that price only because the record had sentimental associations for him and he hadn't been able to find it in New York. He is not interested in buying other Dalhart records, and neither am I. So please don't send us record lists and ask us to quote "best price!"

Late in 1957 Edison published a folder giving a list of all the hill-billy Diamond Discs that had been issued up to then. Some were not really hill-billies, but renditions of old-time popular songs or later songs in the old-fashioned manner.

Included were one by Gene Austin; eight by Austin and George Re-neau; 10 by John Baltzell, "champion old-time fiddler;" two by Al Bernard; six by another fiddler, Jasper Bisbee; two by the Dixie Mountaineers; four by Fiddlin' Powers and Family; 10 by Henry Ford's Old-Time Dance Orchestra! one by Ernest Hare; one by Charles Harrison; two by Harvey Hindermeyer, and Earle Tuckerman; two by Kaplan's Melodists; one by the Sam Patterson Trio; two by Manuel Romain; eight by Allen Sisson, "Champion Fiddler of Tennessee;" 14 by Ernest V. Stoneman; seven by Stoneman and the Dixie Mountaineers—and 58 by Dalhart, three by *Dalhart* and *Robison*, and two by Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers!

Unintentionally, I skipped past the July, 1927, Edison supplement in which Dalhart had two double-faced records: "The Crepe on the Old Cabin Door," coupled with "Kennie Wagner's Surrender" (the latter referring to a notorious East Tennessee desperado who, I believe, is still living); and "Lindbergh, the Eagle of the U.S.A.," doubled with "Lucky Lindy."

The latter two songs, of course, hymned Charles A. Lindbergh's successful flight to France in May, 1927. Dalhart's restrained versions of the hastily contrived tunes were less impressive than the two rousing, heavily amplified ones which Irving Kaufman made for Okeh under the name of Noel Taylor and which were on sale within 10 days after Lindbergh landed.

My old friend, the late E. W. (Jack) Reedy of Marion, Va., made Victor and Brunswick records as a member of the Blue Ridge Ramblers and Jack Reedy and His Walker's Mountain String Band (Walker's Mountain is a few miles from my former home in Marion). He used to tell me with pride of how he met Dalhart in Brunswick's New York studios, when, as Jack phrased it, "he was puttin' on 'Lucky Lindy' and 'Lindbergh, the Eagle of the U.S.A.'"

Jack recalled Carson Robison as the guitar player, and said the fiddler was "a little Jewish fellow from Brooklyn" — probably Murray Kellner. Jack always insisted that Dalhart, in a friendly conversation, asked him where he was from, and when Jack replied "Virginia," Dalhart retorted, "If you're just from Virginia you don't know anything about the South. You ought to see Georgia, where I came from!"

I told Jack that Dalhart wasn't from Georgia, he was from Texas, but my friend insisted with some heat that Georgia was what Dalhart had said, and he couldn't be convinced otherwise. Until he died it was one of Jack's proudest recollections that he had actually shaken hands with the man who stood far above anybody else at that time in the hill-billy record field.

Jack shared the common hill-billy musician's belief that Dalhart had

(Continued on page 44)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

made "over \$6,000,000" from his records. That, of course, was a grotesque exaggeration.

Jack Reedy's mention of Georgia reminds me of something that puzzles me. I once met J. Frank Smith, who headed a company of "Sacred Singers" that made some highly popular Columbia records. He told me that Dalhart was a member of the troupe at one time during his recording career.

Our talk was hurried, and I didn't ask for particulars. I wish now I had. But it's inconceivable to me that Dalhart could ever have taken part in the wanderings of a group of country musicians after he had become such a successful recording artist that he must have sung both day and night to fill all his engagements. Perhaps he made a few "courtesy appearances" with the Sacred Singers when he and Ed Smalle toured the South in 1924.

Another folk musician who remembers with pleasure more than one meeting with Dalhart is 71-year-old Charlie Bowman, who has lost a leg in recent years and now lives a shut-in life in Union City, Ga. Charlie began making Columbia, Okeh, Brunswick, and Vocalion records as fiddler for Al Hopkins' Buckle Buster and as the leader of Charlie Bowman and His Buddies in the 1920's when he lived in Johnson City, Tenn.

He says he won more fiddling awards than any other competing musician. Charlie also has two daughters, Pauline and Jennie, who made Columbia records in their teens, and, as their fond father says, "were for years the best-known kids in East Tennessee." Charlie wrote the following in a letter to me:

"I knew Dalhart very well—met him in New York on one of my recording dates and several occasions later. He was a very nice fellow to talk to, and was a very good mouth-harp player and singer—very serious about his recording work along with Carson Robison. Vernon was high tempered. He would fly off the handle if he made a mistake while making a recording, but he only got mad at himself. I have sat in the studio with him while he was recording."

Although, as will be seen in the concluding installment, Dalhart's popularity took a tail spin after 1927, his appeal probably held up with Edison record buyers better than with any other group, and his name continued to appear regularly in the Diamond Disc lists until the final supplement appeared late in 1929. Well before that time, however, he had lost the invaluable services of Carson Robison. But prior to relating their unfortunate estrangement it would be well to turn back a few years and briefly discuss some of his recordings for Victor and other companies.

For the moment, however, let's go overseas and chuckle at some of the reviews of Dalhart records that appeared in the *Gramophone and Talk-*

*ing Machine News* of the late 1920's and early 1930's. I have already indicated Dalhart's recordings won considerable popularity throughout the British Empire and continued to be issued in Australia and New Zealand for several years after his vogue had passed here. But they didn't earn the approval of Ogilvie Mitchell, the bearded, cantankerous 80-year-old who, for many years, had done the reviewing for the *T.M.N.* Mitchell had an anti-American attitude which is glaringly obvious in what he said about the Dalhart discs.

I believe a Regal record, reviewed in May, 1926, must have been made by Dalhart and taken from Columbia matrices. If so, it gives us a new assumed name for him—Herbert VERNON. The songs, "A Boy's Best Friend Is His Mother," and "After the Ball," had been recorded by Dalhart for Columbia and other American companies. Mr. Mitchell crustily wrote:

"The first of these is a very old ditty of at least 40 years ago. . . Is Columbia sure that 'After the Ball' was by Charles K. Harris? We always understood it to have been written by George Le Brun. Herbert Vernon has a nice light tenor and sings with a curious accent."

The "curious accent" undoubtedly was American. And Mitchell must have been about the only person with some knowledge of popular music who didn't believe Charles K. Harris wrote "After the Ball."

When Zonophone issued "The Governor's Pardon," and "The Engineer's Child" in July, 1926, Mitchell said:

"This is so very American in accent and intonation that we could hardly understand a word of either of the songs. We are told that the record will make a wide appeal. Well, perhaps so, but we doubt it."

It is interesting that in August Zonophone issued a record of "The Prisoner's Song" as a "grand organ" solo by Spencer Shaw.

In February, 1927, Dalhart had a Zonophone record of "There's a New Star in Heaven Tonight" (a pathetic tribute to the late Rudolf Valentino) and Carson Robison's song, "An Old-Fashioned Picture." Said Mitchell:

"If, as we are told, this gentleman specializes in this type of song, we are sorry for the poor people who have to listen to him."

In July, 1927, when Dalhart and Robison were represented with Zonophone duets of "Far Away In Hawaii," and "Just a Melody," the reviewer wrote:

"These two American entertainers entertain after their own fashion, which is not ours. Those who prefer American style to our own will revel over this record."

(A few years later Robison and his Pioneers went to England and were sensationally successful on records, stage and radio. It is amusing to find Mitchell shortly after the foregoing remarks appeared referring to the Southern-born Gene Austin as being a "whispering baritone, with a rich Coney Island accent.")

In December, 1928 Zonophone

brought out a record of "Climbin' Up De Golden Stairs" by Dalhart, Robison, and Hood, and "Little Green Valley" by Dalhart and Robinson. Mr. Mitchell snorted:

"Except for the inclusion of the word, 'golden,' in the first title, we cannot imagine the reason for the inclusion of the jews-harp in the above, especially as we are unable to distinguish the peculiar tone (if any) among the rest of the twangs. . . For the rest the disc is sprightly enough—well sung and admirably recorded."

Dalhart was virtually a has-been in the States by December, 1930, but in that month Regal issued a record of him and Miss Hood singing "The Deacon's Prayer," which was performed in jazz style, with a "hot" accompaniment, despite its religious title and "Hallelujah! There's a Rainbow in the Sky." It wasn't reviewed.

In June, 1930, Dalhart, singing on an Imperial record as The Lone Star Ranger, got a fairly favorable review of "Eleven More Months and Ten More Days." This humorous number, written by Arthur Fields and Fred Hall, was one of the best of Dalhart's later offerings. It was combined with "Song of the Condemned," by the Radio Imps, Gerald Macy and Ed Smalle. By this time Mitchell's health had failed and Hubert S. Ryan had taken his place as the reviewer. Ryan said:

"The Song of the Condemned" . . . is a little melodrama in itself, with a grim background, and is most effectively done. The number on the reverse side is more conventional, but almost equally well rendered. This disc, unless I am much mistaken, is going to prove a tremendous success."

(To be continued)

## FOR LOCAL HISTORY STUDY YOUR MUSEUM LABELS:

Rochester's first silversmith was Erastus Cook, who came here in 1815 and rented a room from Jehiel Barnard, the first tailor in a small building near the Reynolds Arcade.

He was followed by others, notably Johnathan Packard the 3 Burr brothers, Albert who was an apprentice of Cook and who died in the cholera epidemic, Alexander J. and Cornelius; William and Henry Stanton, Jedediah Baldwin, James Steele, Ezra Booth and Thomas Henry Marshall.

Most of these were located in the Exchange Street area, then the business section of the city. According to a newspaper advertisement of September, 1834, James Steele was located at the corner of North Clinton and Main Streets.

From 1815 to 1850 there were at least 41 Rochester silversmiths.

Early Rochester, New York, as depicted on one of the labels in the *Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences*

HALF CENTURIES OF ITALIAN OPERA: RAFFAELE GRU-Buridice: Funeste spiagge (Peri); DE LUCA - Orfeo: Tu sei morta (Monteverdi); SPANI - La Donna Ancor e Fedele: Se Florindo e fedele (Alessandro Scarlatti); ROTHIER - Oedipe a Colone: Elle me prodigue (Sacchini); BACCALONI - Matrimonio Segreto: Udite (Cimarosa); BONCI - Barbiere di Siviglia: Se il mio nome: AMATO & LUPPI - Puritani: Suoni la tromba; BATTISTINI - Favorita: Vien Leonora; GALVANY - Crispino e la Comare: Io non sono; LAZARO - Trovatore: Di quella pira; PONSELLE - Gioconda: Suicidio; ZENATELLO & DIDUR - Mefistofele: Fin da stanotte; KRUSZELNICKA - Wally: Ebben; DE MURO - Fanciulla del West: Or son sei mesi; DESTINN - Pagliacci: Ballatella; GARBIN - Cavalleria Rusticana: Brindisi; MUZIO - Madame Sans-Gene: Che me ne faccio; FORMICHI-Resurrezione: Oh! non crediate; LAZARI - L'Amore dei Tre Re: Son quarant'anni; MERLI - Sly: Non sono buffone.

Contents of T-328 THE THREE MELODISTS OF ITALIAN OPERA: DONIZETTI, ROSSINI, BELLINI: GRANFORTE - Don Sebastiano: O Lisbona; STORCHIO & RAPPINI - Linda di Chamounix: Al bel destino; PAOLI & POPOVICI - Poluto: Al suon; DE MACCHI - Lucrezia Borgia: Com'e bello; PICCAVER - Belisario: O, si tremendo; BORONAT - Don Pasquale: Quel guardo; LAURI-VOLPI - Favorita: Una vergine; BATTISTINI - Maria di Rohan: Bella e di sol vestita; COSTANTINO - Duca d'Alba: Angelo casto; STRACCIARI - Lucia di Lammermoor: Cruda, funesta smania; ESCALAIS - Guillaume Tell: Asile hereditaire; DE ANGELIS - Mose: Invocazione; TETRAZZINI - Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce; BACCALONI & GERACE - Italiana in Algeri: Al capricci; BONINSEGNA - Semiramide: Bel raggio; GALVANY - Sonnambula: Ah! non giunge; LAZARO - Puritani: A te, o cara; BURZIO - Norma: Qual cor tradisti; FABBRI - Capuleti ed i Montecchi: Se Romeo; MUZIO - Bianca e Fernando: sorgi, o padre.

### VALE! KEATING COLLECTION

Wary of reports that reach me from time to time, I sought George T. Keating's confirmation of the startling news that he had disposed of his collection — the richest in the United States, possibly in the world.

In answer to my letter, Mr. Keating elaborated on the details of his unexpected decision. The collection, although sold privately, will eventually belong to the Yale Library. In fact, part of the records are already there.

The reason for this sudden turn of events was Mr. Keating's wish to reside in a place smaller than the "houses built around housing my many records," as he puts it.

However, Mr. Keating assures me of his continued interest in the hobby. "I found perhaps a thousand duplicates in albums," he writes, "and so have a fair start to a listening collection: Schorr-Wotan's Farewell, Stracciari, Hempel, Bindernagle, Galli-Curci, De Luca, Pinza, Rethberg, Farrar, Gerville-Reache, Husch, Huni-Mihasek and other favorites. So I will always be glad to hear from you and swap gossip about the gentle art of bel canto."

Honestly, I'm dismayed; and surely many others will feel the same way. It's because the glamour of "The Keating Collection," accumulated through the years with much expenditure of time, perseverance, and money — the glamour we all knew and respected — is now gone.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### I. Hill-Billies for Victor and Others

Despite the resentment which Victor's popular pianist, arranger, and conductor, Nat Shilkret, felt because he considered Dalhart had not sufficiently recognized his part in shaping "The Prisoner's Song" into a sensational success, the overwhelming success of record No. 19427 caused Dalhart to be called on for many other Victor hill-billy recordings.

There was a lapse of six months, however, between the appearance of "The Wreck of the Old 97" and "The Prisoner's Song," in November, 1924, and Dalhart's next record of that type. Perhaps the lag was caused by the factory's efforts to catch up with the demand for the biggest selling vocal record made up to that time.

In May, 1925, Dalhart came through with "In the Baggage Coach Ahead," in which he was assisted by a male trio, and "I'll Ne'er Forget My Mother and My Home."

The supplement said: "A call has gone up all over the country for Dalhart to sing more popular songs of the old-time sort, like the 'Wreck of the Old 97.' Well, here are two more of them."

In June his version of "The Time Will Come" was coupled with "Way Down Home," by Gene Austin and Carson Robison. In July his admirers were pleased with "He Sure Can Play a Harmonica" and "Ain't You Comin' Out Tonight?" The supplement said the last was written jointly by Dalhart and Robison, although the tune was the same as "Buffalo Gals," which had been published almost 100 years before.

August brought two more Victor records by Dalhart. One appropriately coupled "The Runaway Train" and "The Chain Gang Song," and the other "A Boy's Best Friend is His Mother" and "Many, Many Years Ago."

His records, mostly titles he was also singing for Edison, Columbia, Brunswick, and many other companies, continued to pop up regularly in Victor lists. They were both the Alpha and Omega, so to speak, of the May, 1926, supplement.

On page one, under the heading

"A New Dramatic Dalhart Record," the editor said:

"Vernon Dalhart's record of 'The Prisoner's Song' is proving the best-selling vocal record in Victory history. Here is a new two-ballad record exhibiting weird crude power of appeal. 'The Governor's Pardon' is the night-vigil of a condemned man before the day set for death. To the monotonous ticking of the clock, the night-hours wear away. With morning comes not the expected death-warrant, but the Governor's pardon. 'The Engineer's Child' tells of the wife who is to hang a red lamp in the window if her sick child dies; a green, if it lives. Her husband, thundering past in the night, sees the green light and all is well."

The last record in the supplement received this mention:

"As we begin this issue with Dalhart, we conclude with him. In this new trio, (its first record), he appears as both vocalist and instrumentalist. The trio includes guitar, violin, flute, jew's harp, harmonica, and some interesting tricks. It has a waltz based on the familiar Floyd Collins ballad which Dalhart sang for us not long after this tragic event; this is coupled with a whirling swift reel, an almost ideal number for trick Charlestoners. Dalhart sings in both numbers. (The second side, of course, was 'Better Get Out of My Way,' by the group known as Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers.")

For many months afterward, Dalhart's Victor records continued to appear with little sign of a drop in popularity. Some of his best selling numbers, in fact, were still to come. But it would serve no useful purpose to list them all. Instead, I prefer to mention several unusual discs he made during the next few years.

"The Texas Tenor" was one of the few popular singers who sometimes sang songs that were long enough to take up both sides of a 10-inch disc. One of these was his Columbia of "The Bully Song," an irresistible "coon shout" which Charles Trevathan had written for May Irwin in the 1890's. With its swinging refrain of "When I walk that levee round, round, round—" it is one of the best records Dalhart ever made. The hill-billy tune, "Bully of the Town," is a corruption of Trevathan's old-time hit.

Another two-part disc which, in my opinion, has less to recommend it is "Tired of Mother," which Victor issued in June, 1928. The words of this dirge were written by a Wesleyan Methodist minister in High Point, N. C., and the music by another

## Vernon Dalhart

By JIM WALSH

PART VII



preacher of the same family name. The author of the words published it himself. It is hard to understand how Dalhart could believe a record of such a mawkish affair, occupying two full sides, could sell well enough to make it a paying proposition.

The crude lyrics tell of a paralyzed, aged woman who was lifted off a train in the belief that her daughter would come to take care of her. When the daughter didn't show up, and evinced no interest in what became of her mother, the "unwanted mother" was taken to a hospital, where she died.

The author says he "cried and prayed" over this "true story" before putting words to paper, but his internal struggles did not inspire him to write literate English. Nevertheless, the number came to Dalhart's attention (probably the author sent him a copy of the sheet music) and he recorded it, smoothing out some of the limping lines and amateurish versification.

Its sale was small and did not add to Dalhart's popularity. The record was made after his break with Carson Robison, when he was increasingly harried to find good material.

Shortly before this, the name of Adele Hood, who had appeared in Edison tone tests with Dalhart as far back as 1917, began to be seen in Victor and other supplements. She had taken the place of Murray Kellner as Dalhart's violinist.

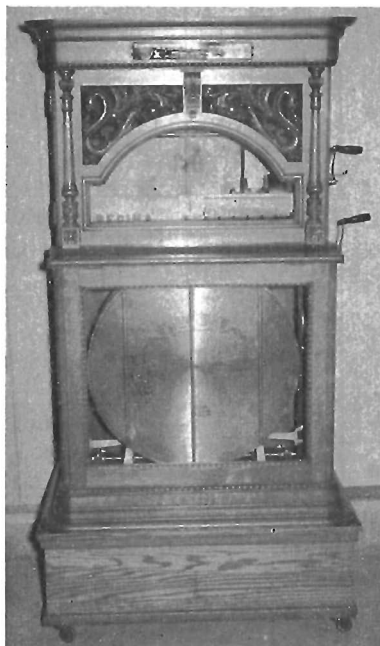
Her name was published in a Victor supplement for the first time in January, 1928, when she, Dalhart, and Robison sang and played "Sing On, Brother, Sing." (A little earlier Dalhart and Robison had sung refrains in dance records of "Shine On, Harvest Moon" and "On Mobile Bay," by the International Novelty Orchestra conducted by Nat Shilkret).

In March, the Dalhart-Robison-Hood trio had a big seller in "Oh! Susanna" coupled with Robison's beautiful composition, "When the Sun Goes Down Again," sung as a Dalhart-Robison duet. Miss Hood's incidental violin playing is exquisite.

#### II. Charley Case's Songs

One of the most amusing double-faced records Vernon Dalhart ever made, and apparently one of the scarcest and hardest to find, is his coupling of two mock-ballads written by the brilliant Negro comedian, Charley Case. One side was called "A Warning to Boys" and the other "A Warning to Girls." This appeared under Columbia's 50 cent Velvet Tone label as by Dalhart and as a Harmony record by "Mack Allen." It is amusing that "Mack Allen" was claimed as "an exclusive Harmony artist." Charley Case was a comedian of a high strung disposition, who always played with a piece of string while on the stage to give his nervous hands something to do. He made three Victor records around 1909-10, "Father as a Scientist," "Experiences in the Show Business" and "How Mother Made the Soup."

My vaudeville comedian friend, the late Joe Laurie, Jr., told me Case



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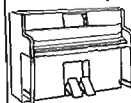
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VERNON DALHART  
at the peak of his recording career.

was born in Lockport, N. Y., his mother being a Negro of the Albino type and his father a white man of Irish descent. He died in the Palace Hotel on 45th Street in New York, in or about the year 1916, aged 58, and his wife, a full-blooded Negro woman, died of shock when she learned of his death.

He was cleaning a revolver when he was fatally shot. Although the shooting may have been an accident, Joe Laurie said Case was known to have brooded, and the general opinion of his associates was that the wound was intentional—a further example of the truism that the greatest comedians have their tragic side.

At any rate, Dalhart unearthed the two burlesque ballads with which Case convulsed his theater audiences, and recorded them with a mock solemnity to the accompaniment of an old-fashioned parlor organ, that is irresistibly funny. The words are worth reprinting, although to be appreciated to the fullest, they should be heard with the music. Here is the "Warning to Girls."

"Homeward to her mother a working girl  
did come—  
Weary with her honest toil and lighted  
up with rum.  
Supper was not ready—she aimed a  
brutal blow,  
When the bright baby stopped her,  
saying: 'Sister, don't do so!  
Don't swat dear mother, girl, just 'cause  
she's old—  
Don't mop her face with the floor!  
Think how her love is a treasure of gold—  
Don't push her face through the door!  
Don't put the rocking chair next to her  
eye;  
Don't bounce the lamp off her bean!  
Angels are watching you up in the sky—  
Don't swat dear mother—it's mean!"

#### RECITATION:

"There was once a poor young girl who  
left her country home  
And came to the city to seek employ-  
ment.  
She had to leave her home because the  
wolf was at the door  
And her father had fallen down and  
hurt his knee.  
Just before she went away her sweet-  
heart, whose name was Jack,  
Said to her, 'I fear you will not be  
true.'  
And so she had to promise him before  
she got on the train  
That every night at 8 o'clock she would  
burst into tears.  
She came to the city and was riding on  
a street car  
When a man got up and offered her  
his seat.  
She refused the offer with scorn for she  
saw that he wore a ring  
And she did not know but that he  
might be a married man.  
Then up came the conductor and said 'I  
knew you would be true!  
And tore off his false whiskers—and it  
was Jack!  
And that day she got a telegram saying  
that her father's knee was better,  
And an aunt had died and left her  
Fifty-eight  
Thousand  
Dollars!"

And here is the "Warning to  
Boys:"

"There was once a poor young man who  
left his country home  
And came to the city to seek employ-  
ment.  
He promised his dear mother that he'd  
lead the simple life  
And always shun the fatal curse of  
drink!  
He came to the city and accepted em-  
ployment in a quarry.  
And while there he made the acquaint-  
ance of some college men;  
He little knew that they were demons,  
for they wore the best of clothes—  
But clothes do not always make the  
gentleman!  
One night he went out with his new-  
found friends to dine,  
And they tried to persuade him to take  
a drink.  
They tempted him, and tempted him, but  
he refused and he refused,  
Till finally he took a glass of beer!  
When he seen what he had done he  
dashed the liquor to the floor  
And staggered through the door with  
delirium tremens.  
While in the grip of liquor he met a  
Salvation Army lassie,  
And cruelly he broke her tambourine.  
All she said was 'Heaven bless you!' and  
placed a mark upon his brow  
With a kick that she had learned be-  
fore she was saved.  
So now, kind friends, take my advice  
and shun the fatal curse of drink  
And don't go around breaking people's  
tambourines!"

If you happen to run across a  
copy of this masterpiece of satire,  
be sure to acquire the record. It is  
worth having.

#### III. The Break With Carson Robison

A record dealer once told me of a  
visit he received just before Christ-  
mas of 1927 from a lanky, somewhat  
intoxicated, mountaineer. The rustic  
gentleman bought a dozen Dalhart  
records, all of them dealing with  
train wrecks, floods, earthquakes,  
murders, and similar tragic happen-  
ings, and all, of course, ending with  
a moral admonition, such as "Don't  
forget that the trip is a short one  
from this earth to that sweet prom-  
ised land!"

As his records were being wrap-  
ped, the mountaineer explained they  
were a Christmas present "for the  
old woman and the kids." Said he:



ADELYNE HOOD

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Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa.  
mh120821

FOR SALE: Cylinder and disc. phono-  
graphs. Article "Phonographs as a Hob-  
by" free. Eight pages pictures, present  
day values on 65 phonographs, \$2.25 post-  
paid. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate, Troy,  
Ohio. ja3614

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phono-  
graphs, records, catalogs, horns, re-  
producers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys,  
player pianos bought, sold, exchanged,  
repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City  
Road, Richmond 31, Va. ja6468

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand,  
Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also  
5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and  
parts. Many horns, large, small, flow-  
ered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner,  
Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc  
music boxes. All items in perfect con-  
dition, from my collection. — Neumann  
Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif.  
ja3867

#### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price  
of 2; twelve months for the price of 8.  
(Except for change in address, no  
changes permitted on the low three and  
twelve months rate.)

"The old woman and the kids will play these here sad pieces and cry their d--- fool heads off! With all this here mis'ry music they're sure gonna have one h--- of a Merry Christmas!"

Most of those "sad pieces" were written by Carson Robison, who soon afterward parted company with Dalhart. I have a letter which Robbie wrote to me in October, 1951, explaining why they dissolved partnership.

It boiled down to two things. Ro-  
(Continued on page 44)

### SHEET MUSIC

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. aul2698

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

WANTED: A Seeburg Eagle nickelodeon. Write—Harold Shaner, 1042 Myrtle Street, Cumberland, Md. n3802

WANTED: Large Regina cigar store Indian, Mills Violino, Dewey, Owl, Judge, large saloon items. — Frank Curtiss, St. Louis, Michigan. n3403

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Columbia Graphonola, floor model. Plays steel and regular records - 10 steel records - 96 regular records on portfolios famous singers and operas. Original mahogany finish turned slightly dark. Best cash offer. — D. R. Perdue, 3409 Poplar, Pine Bluff, Ark. d3806

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

ORIGINAL: Mills Violano-Virtuoso manuals. Actual reprints, clean and new, with drawings, instructions for repair and operation. No photostats. Write: —The Old Collector, 2323 Arthur Street, Eugene, Ore. n3844

WANTED: Song Slide Illustrations and Advertising Slides (sometimes referred to as Lantern Slides) of songs from the 1890 to 1915 era. — W. K. Dorsey, Wilmington College, Wilmington, N. C. ja3464

REPRODUCER REPAIRING of all kinds. Have a supply of the original Edison Styluses and can install them in your reproducers. Send stamp for brochure on reproducers. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3825

SEVEN FOOT GRAND, Arion Piano Forte (1866). Very good condition. — Mrs. Floyd E. Guentner, 415 S. Broad St., Lanark, Illinois. n1061

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3845

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED, OLD PHONOGRAPHS, cylinder and disc type with the horns, records, catalogues and parts or anything pertaining to phonographs. — Pollards, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3004

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. jly120821

### NICKELODEONS WANTED

WANTED: Wurlitzer Band Organ model 125 or similar model. Other nickelodeons wanted also. Interested in hearing what you have.—Douglas W. McGee, 532 Arrowhead Drive, Green Bay, Wis. n3844

### PIANO FOR SALE

For Sale: Antique piano, 100 years old. African rosewood, Grand, Superior condition. Make: F. C. Light & Co. — George Blankley, 1121 Johnson, Boise, Idaho. n1882

### PIANO & ROLLS

NEW ROLLS and repair supplies (belows cloth, tubing, leather) available for all types of automatic pianos. — Durrell Armstrong, Player Piano Co., 222 S. Vassar, Wichita 8, Kans. ap124661

Wanted: DuoArt and Ampico piano rolls. — Thomas Grattelo, 1519 California St., San Francisco, Calif. ja3563

For Sale: Steinway Duo-Art reproducing player, 7 foot Grand. Beautiful hand-rubbed mahogany case. In mint playing condition. An heirloom for some music lover to enjoy the finest instrument that money can buy. Write to: D. Nicholson, 1209 W. North Ave., Baltimore 17, Maryland. d30801

PIANO ROLLS wanted, all types, any quantity, especially Welte-Mignon, Deluxe and Duo-Art. Also rolls for sale. Information exchanged with collectors. — A. Grigorian, 603 So. Walter Reed Dr., Arlington 4, Va. jly120291

FOR SALE: Four Mills Violano Virtuoso rolls in excellent condition. Offer will be appreciated. — Douglas W. McGee, 532 Arrowhead Drive, Green Bay, Wis. n1481

PIANOLA player piano attachment (65 notes) and 450 music rolls. Pushes up to and plays any piano, \$125. Write: — Joseph Beondo, 108-01 101 Ave., Richmond Hill 19, N. Y. n1422

50 PIANO MUSIC ROLLS in nice condition 75c each (take all). Send stamped envelope for reply. — L. A. Hughes, P.O. Box 654, Altoona, Pa. n1002

### RECORDS WANTED

WANTED TO BUY! Will pay \$3 each for fine copies of any Pathe sapphire ball records by GENE GREENE, "The King of Ragtime." Not interested in Greene's Victor and Columbia records and do not want to buy records by other artists. Will also pay \$3 for a good copy each of the February and May 1912, Columbia record supplements. I need most Columbia supplements prior to 1912. Do not need Victor and Columbia supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, especially the Talking Machine World, from 1905 to 1926, and "house organs," such as The Edison Phonograph (and Amberola) (Monthly), Dia. Points, the Columbia Record & the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Virginia. tfx

78 R.P.M. DISC preferred. Moody and Sankey, Pres. Wm. McKinley, Theo. Roosevelt, Wm. H. Taft, Sarah Bernhardt. — Elsie Smith, 1016 So. 52nd St., Omaha 6, Nebr. d6008

SEEKING TOSCANINI 78's on Victrola, HMV, Brunswick, Victor, V-Discs. — Weaver, 4406 Clay Ave., Houston 23, Texas. ap6445

WANTED: Al Jolson recordings. Please send list. Want information on Jolson Fan Club mentioned in HOBBIES, April, 1955. — John DuVal, 2715 Alabama, Ft. Smith, Arkansas. n3004

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought.—The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N.Y. ja128862

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers, values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y. jcl20061

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

OVER 100,000 hard - to - get records, 1903 to LP. — Jack's Record Cellar, 400 Haight St., San Francisco 17, Calif. d126121

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — Gertrude M. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ja3618

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. ap6276

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS. South's store for top condition collectors' 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. n3065

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). n3253

GOLDEN - AGE operatics, personality records, collectors' items and exclusively imported European LPs are found on our free monthly lists. Distributors of Rococo records, reissues on LP of Famous Voices of the Past. — Ross, Court & Co., 2098 Yonge St., Toronto, Canada. mh62131

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP.—ARG, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. f6806

FOR SALE: Hundreds of disc and cylinder records, many types of early phonographs, 25c for lists. Also "Evolution of the Phonograph," by Walter Welch and Oliver Reed, a complete history of the phonograph, 576 pages, regular price \$9.95. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N.Y. d3886

RETIRING! Going out of business! My entire stock of old records going at real bargain prices. None over \$1. (No Oliver's, Jelly Roll's, etc.). Your free lists now ready. — Geo. Collings, P.O. Box 946, Fresno, Calif. ja3295

FOR SALE: Miller, Goodman, Dorsey's, Sinatra, Vallee, Jolson, swing, personalities and others. Very reasonable. Write. — A. Carlo, 22 Brookwood St., East Orange, N. J. n1522

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

REGINA MUSIC BOX COMPANY old and new tune discs for sale; all types of antique music boxes and other mechanical musical items bought, sold and repaired. — Lloyd G. Kelley, Broadway & Route 3, Hanover, Mass. jly120422

Mira Music Box Discs, 18 1/2", \$3; 15 1/2", \$2.50; 9 15/16", \$1, plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. n3234

## THE REST OF THE FAMILY

(Continued from page 43)

Aaron Willard, Jr., son of Aaron, and nephew of Simon. Born in 1783 at Roxbury, he learned the clock-making trade with his father and devoted his life to the making and selling of time-pieces.

For a short time he became a partner with his brother-in-law, Spencer Nolan, in a sign-painting enterprise. He then opened his own clock-making shop and eventually became manager and finally owner of his father's flourishing factory.

After amassing a sizable fortune, he retired to an estate in Newton, Mass., where he lived until his death. In addition to the time-pieces or banjo clocks for which he is so well known, Aaron, Jr. produced tall case, gallery, and regulator clocks.

His own name appears only on time-pieces dating after 1823, the year in which he became the owner of his father's establishment. There is no certainty of the actual number of clocks which he produced, but there is a banjo clock with his name which has the serial number 3482.

A fine example of the tall case clocks produced by Aaron Willard, Jr. is illustrated here from the collection of Mrs. Helen Vaughan of Bethel, Conn. The over all height is 7 feet 11 inches with a fine mahogany case trimmed with brass.

The clock features a beautifully painted dial marked with the maker's name, and the time-piece reflects in every aspect the fine workmanship of the maker. The clock was formerly owned by descendants of Miles Standish.

The Willard clock-makers continued into a third generation. There was Zabdiel Willard son of Simon Willard, Jr. He was born in 1826, was apprenticed to his father, and eventually became his partner in 1850.

Zabdiel was responsible for the production and popularity of the Frodsham Watch. He also was an inventor of numerous processes, machines, and furnaces for the reduction of gold and silver ores. He worked as a chemist and assayer, and often acted in the capacity of a physician in mining camps in Colorado and California.

There were other Willards who made their mark in the world of Time. This includes Sylvester Willard of Bristol, who was a partner in the firm of Case, Willard & Co. in that city in 1835. Of a Thomas Willard little is known, and of his work only a single signed clock has survived. The name John Willard of Boston appeared in the city directories of 1803 and 1842.

Finally, last and probably least, there was a W. W. Willard, for in this writer's collection there is an old watch paper engraved:

"Repeating Lepine & Plain Watches repaired by

W. W. WILLARD,, Cazenovia, N. Y."

## VERNON DALHART—Part VII

(Continued from page 35)

bison resented Dalhart's bringing in the charming Adelyne Hood to replace Murray Kellner while he was on vacation. Robison objected even more strongly to Dalhart's insistence that he be "cut in" for half the sheet music and record royalties from Robison's songs. This was not an uncommon practice.

Many popular artists had their names published on sheet music as part writers of songs with which they had nothing to do, in order to share in the royalties, but one can easily sympathize with Robison's attitude. I shall quote part of his letter, but it should be remembered that we have only his side of the story and Dalhart is not here to speak in his own defense:

"Dear Jim: . . . Dalhart . . . was a very difficult person to get along with. From the time I knew him until we split up, he had a continual chip on his shoulder and was suspicious of everyone. I grant that he had some tough breaks when he first got to New York from Texas, but who doesn't? I landed in New York with \$3.65 in the one good pocket of my only suit and for a long time I ate 35 cent spaghetti dinners on Eighth Avenue. But even after things really began to break for Dal he couldn't get over his bitterness at life. . . . When Dal and I split in 1928 I know he was worth between \$150,000 and \$200,000, and he told me one time that he was going to show them how to make some real money on the stock exchange—not knowing a thing about it, of course. . . .

"When we first got together in 1924 . . . he compelled me to give him one-third of the royalties I received on any song that he recorded, even if he only recorded it on one label. Then he finally tried to make me give him 50 per cent and that was the pay-off. When we split, practically every recording company . . . got in touch with me and offered to help me find a voice to replace him. In fact, Nat Shilkret offered to spend \$5,000 if necessary. . . .

"About Miss Hood, I knew practically nothing about her until he suddenly brought her to New York from Alabama to record with us, and he chose the time to bring her when I was out West on a vacation. I had worked for a long time with an excellent violinist, teaching him hill-billy style of 'fiddlin' and he had gotten really outstanding in this type of work and did all our dates with us . . . Naturally he felt that he was a part of the combination. Dalhart said nothing to him about changing and nothing to me, and when I got back and found Miss Hood there the first thing I asked Dal was if he had told the old fiddler about it. His reply was, 'Why do I have to tell him anything?' . . . Miss Hood was a charming person, but that actually was the beginning of the end with him and me. Without patting myself on the back, he lasted just about a year after we split, due mainly to the lack of proper material to record. I had made a study of his ability and wrote accordingly and we had some terrific sellers together, but he didn't have one outstanding record after we split.

"The story of 'The Prisoner's Song' is a long one. . . . Guy Massey . . . sang the song continually while he was visiting Dalhart in New York and When Dal and I were called by Victor to record 'Wreck of the Old 97,' Mr. (Eddie) King of Victor asked us if we had anything to put on the back of it. Dal told him about 'The Prisoner's Song,' which at that time was not even named, and told Mr. King there would be no royalty, as the song was public domain, as far as he knew. We recorded it and shortly afterwards Dal copyrighted the song in his name and stuck Victor for royalties. As far as I can learn, he collected from Shapiro-Bernstein approximately \$85,000,

which represented 95 per cent of all royalties. Guy Massey got five per cent and died in San Antonio a few years later practically penniless. In later years when Dal was doing everything he could to get back on records, he was guest star on 'We, the People,' and I cringed when I heard him tell how he went home one night and composed 'The Prisoner's Song.' The man never composed a note of anything in his life. . . ."

And that is the late Carson Robison's version of his break-up with Dalhart. I dislike to give only one side of a controversy, but since Dalhart had died three years before this letter was written there was no way of quoting him in rebuttal.

Robison obtained Frank Luther as his singing partner (they made Victor records for a time under the names of Bud and Joe Billings) and went on to many other recording successes. In the 1930's he and his radio troupe known as Carson Robison and His Buckaroos went to England, were a big success on the stage, and made a large number of records.

In justice to Adelyne Hood, I should register my opinion that she was an excellent violinist, although certainly not a fiddler of the robust hill-billy style, and she also had a charming voice, which added much to many of Dalhart's records. Their Columbia duet of "The Frog Song," written by Thomas P. Westendorf, who composed "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," is captivating.

She was also a brilliant comedienne, who (thanks perhaps to her Alabama background) could impersonate a Negro woman to the life, as her 1930 Columbia records of "Madam Queen" and "He's On the Chain Gang Now" reveal. (Dalhart takes the part of a police court judge in the latter.)

The last I heard of Miss Hood was 10 years or more ago when she was broadcasting as "Aunt Jane" each day from a Pittsburgh radio station. I have always admired her and hope she is still alive and happy.

## IV. Dalhart in Decline

Judging by Robison's remarks about Dalhart's desire to show other people how to play the stock market, he probably invested heavily, and, like thousands of other unwary citizens, was virtually wiped out in the October, 1929, crash. It is difficult otherwise to account for his descent into comparative poverty.

Another hard blow for him was the shrinking of the record buying public to negligible proportions after 1929. If Robison had still been working with Dalhart the depression would have curtailed his sales, especially since hill-billy records were mostly bought by people of low incomes. Too, he and Miss Hood now had to battle the competition of more authentic hill-billy recorders such as Jimmy Rodgers, the Carter Family, and Riley Puckett.

Edison's departure from the record business was another blow. Dal-



hart kept plugging away, however, and made ingenious efforts to freshen the appeal of his records by introducing new effects, a jug band among them. Some of his last Victor and Columbia records, such as "Eleven More Months and Ten More Days" and "Low Bridge, Everybody Down!" would have been big sellers a few years before, but after the depression set in few "country cousins" felt they could spare 75 cents for such a luxury as a phonograph record.

Dalhart's name ceased to appear in both the Victor and Columbia supplements at about the same time in 1930. Occasionally, it might be seen in a Banner or some other cheap record list, but after 1931 he realized he was through.

(To be continued)

## OLD VEHICLES

### WANTED

WANTED - AUTOMOBILE ITEMS. Most anything pertaining to early automobile era. Literature such as catalogs, manuals. Trade publications, hand books, posters, pictures, etc. Also horse-drawn vehicle era literature. Old cars, trucks, chassis, other components suitable for parts. Brass lights, horns, name plates. Most any kind of accessory or usable part, etc. I have discontinued collection of clothes, license plates, and most technical books. — B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. d36311

OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted.—D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. my122511

WANTED: Automobiles, any condition: Mercer, Simplex, Packard, Rolls Royce Locomobile, Thomas Flyer, Pope Hartford Losier, Alco. — David Tunick, Brook Dr., Greenwich, Conn. o124431

Wanted: Instruction and parts manuals for Sear's Motor Cars, 1910 Buick Model "19", and 1913-1914 Moyer. Also Penna. licensed drivers badges, and brass duster buttons picturing old cars. — Carl M. Rustine, R.D. 3, Stroudsburg, Pa. o122553

WANTED: Steam engines, old style gas tractors, antique cars & steam calliope. — Jerry Horinek, Atwood, Kans. ja3652

### FOR SALE

1929 PONTIAC COUPE, very good cond. \$400. 1932 Hupmobile 4 dr., very good cond., \$400. — Ralph S. Johnson, 1415 18th Ave. N., Minneapolis 11, Minn. o3004

FOR SALE: Detroit Electric Broughm, Model 98, in mint running order, complete new set of batteries, and charger, photo available, \$1,500. — Geo. N. DeLaplaine, P.O. Box 861, New Brunswick, New Jersey. n3084

FOR SALE: 1921 Model T Ford. Five-passenger sedan. Like brand new. — William H. Finegan, 16 Roosevelt Street, Glen Cove, L.I., N.Y. d3293

DIETZ REGAL and Cocoran brass driving lamps. Both 6 1/2" diameter nicely burnished. Black carriage lantern 6" diameter 14" high. Radio, 3-tube 1924 model, horn speaker and earphones, needs new tubes maybe? Best offer. — Elden Sawhill, 666 Highland, Salina, Kans. n1023

## THE IRISH THRUSH

Back before World War I two baseball men began a famous double life. They spent their winters in vaudeville, their summers with the great American game.

Meet them! Marty McHale, a Yankee pitcher who became vaudeville's Irish Thrush or The Baseball Caruso. And Mike Donlin, Giant star with a clever tongue.

Their billing "Right Off The Bat" was in Keith's Palace Theatre on Broadway in November, 1914. In those days baseball salaries were still "modest."

Sometime before that Donlin had married Mabel Hite, a vaudeville star, and had left baseball to go on the circuit with his wife. He returned to baseball when she died in 1912.

But Marty McHale's story was different. He had sung his way through college at nickel movies, had been a star athlete at Tilton Academy and the University of Maine, and had joined the Red Sox after graduation.

Soon he, with three other players—Buck O'Brien, Hugh Bradley and Bill Lyon, delighted the townspeople by singing of evenings around their hotels when the Red Sox were on the road. Then, in B. F. Keith's Boston office John F. Royal fixed up vaudeville bookings for the "Red Sox Quartette."

When the "Quartette" broke up, Marty McHale went the circuit alone for a couple of years singing "When You're a Long, Long Way From Home," "Mother Machree," and "Forever is a Long Long Time." Then he joined up with Donlan. The war and Marty's stint in the Air Force put a stop to that.

All told, Marty McHale was in vaudeville 10 years. He did a turn as a sports writer on a New York paper, became an expert golfer, married Margaret Dunstan, daughter of a famous restaurateur, produced a successful film "Baseball Review," and built the M. J. McHale Company, Investment Securities.

He has two sons, one in Prep school at Woonsocket, the other at the University of Maine. He is president of his company, keeps track of his old friends, and is a favorite with all who know him.

But today he loves to dig out the big envelopes of old clippings and the scrap books, and mull over the time when "it wasn't all made." When, for that fleeting minute, on the old Keith-Orpheum Circuit, the Irish Thrush sang youth back into the hearts of his vaudeville audience, and dreams back into their eyes.

An old friend of HOBBIES Magazine, Clarence Edward Heller, "Bard of Brooklyn," and also HOBBIES Magazine, dug up this interesting bit of history about his friends. No doubt other readers will recall the joys they gave in days not so long past.

## OLD JEWELRY

### JEWELRY WANTED

DIAMONDS, Old GOLD, COINS, watches, stickpins, rings, earrings, etc., regardless of condition. Highest prices paid. Prompt replies. Send by registered mail to—Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Penna. my124891

ANTIQUE & MODERN JEWELRY from all over the world, bought & sold. Inquiries solicited. — Kenneth R. Park, 31 West St., Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844) jlv126351

ANTIQUE JEWELRY: Top prices for good old jewelry and old silverware. Mail with separate list to — The Bayou House, 407 Hathaway, Houston 6, Texas. my126351

### JEWELRY FOR SALE

Earrings Screwbacks (sm., med., lge.), golden or silvered 30c dozen, \$2.25 gross. Dangle screwbacks 35c doz., \$2.50 gross. Sterling screwbacks 95c doz., \$8 gross. Clip earbacks 40c doz., \$3 gross. Sterling pierced earbacks (screw type 80c doz. Wire type 45c doz.) Free complete illustrated list of chain, pinbacks, clasps, cards, cuff linkbacks, cameos, boxes, etc. — Folsom's, P.O. Box 52, Medford, Mass. n66792

LARGE STOCK antique jewelry from our vast gold-buying. Charms, brooches, rings, etc. 10 for \$6, or better grade ones 10 for \$10. — B. Lowe, Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo. d3084

FOR SALE: Antiques and semi-antiques, gold-filled, silver, etc., 13 articles for \$6. Assortment includes lockets, charms, pins, rings, etc. Good value. — St. Louis Refining Co., 1115 Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. ap68801

SPECIAL jewelry closeout! Necklaces and bracelets (odds & ends) \$2.75 doz.; earrings \$1.25 doz.; pins \$1.75 doz. Adjustable stone rings \$1.25 doz. Sample assortment \$5, plus 35c postage. — Boxer, G.P.O. Box 976, Brooklyn 1, N.Y. n3066

BEAUTIFUL GEM STONE jewelry. Our choice of stone. Select earrings, necklace or key ring, \$1.50 per item. — A. McAdoo, 1401 Highland Dr., Hollister, Calif. n3293

CHAIN SLIDES, samples and price on request. Earrings made from old cuff links and pins. All types of antique rings and jewelry repaired and refinished. Estimates sent on all jobs before work is started. All pieces returned by registered or certified mail. — Jemeral Jewellers, 534 Vine St., Cincinnati, Ohio. n3487

BEAUTIFUL sterling silver filigree dagger pin, 2 3/4", only \$3.95. — Essof's, Sistersville, W. Va. n3802

CAMEO PENDANT. Hand-carved carnelian (pink) cameo in antique gold finished setting with gold-filled chain. \$3. Matching earclips \$3. Special, both items for \$5. Postpaid and tax included. Gift boxed. Send for listing of my beautiful and unusual custom created jewelry. — MEB Custom Jewelry, Route 4, Box 320, Leicester Road, Asheville, North Carolina. ja3468

## GENNARO RUSSO

BRANCH OF NAPLES, ITALY

CORAL, CAMEO

ANTIQUÉ JEWELRY

Cameos Our Specialty

Dearborn 2-2094

32 N. State St., Chicago 2, Ill. tfo

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Vernon Dalhart

By JIM WALSH

PART VII — Conclusion

### V. A Letter from Vernon Dalhart

The only letter I ever received from Dalhart was written after his recording career had come to a halt, but he still had an office at 120 West 45th Street, New York. The letter's tone certainly doesn't bear out my old friend Carson Robison's statement that Dalhart carried a chip on his shoulder and had a grouch toward everyone. Perhaps adversity had mellowed him. I thought, and still think, the letter he wrote in reply to one in which I expressed admiration for his work and hoped he would make more records, expressed a charming spirit of good will:

"My dear Mr. Walsh: Your delightful letter of September 1st received, and in reply will say that it was quite flattering, and I might add that we all have a falling (or falling) for flattery. It seems that you have covered about everything there is to say in regard to my association with the hill-billy records, except to express my sincere appreciation of how the dear public received my efforts.

"I am sorry to learn that my efforts have in any way damaged any other artist, and this goes especially for Henry Whitter as I liked him very much personally, as well as his recordings. (Note by Jim Walsh—I told Dalhart that Whitter had mentioned to me that Dalhart's records of 'The Wreck of the Old 97' had

killed the sale of Whitter's Okeh version).

"I have always claimed that the popularity of one singer or song helped others, as no one man could do them all. If some Whitter fan came in to buy one of his, a clever salesman might also show one of mine, and it goes both ways. The main thing is to get that customer.

"For your information, 'The Old 97' sales were nothing to compare (according to statistics) with 'The Prisoner's Song.' However, 'The Old 97' was the cause of 'The Prisoner's Song' in that it needed a tie-up, and I had 'The Prisoner's Song' up my sleeve, and of course it is history that 'The Prisoner's Song' gave me my first commercial break, and started a deluge of recording for me along that line. You are probably more familiar with the rest of it than I.

So again assuring you of my sincere appreciation . . . I beg to remain yours very truly, VERNON DALHART."

### VI. A Brief Comeback

In May, 1934, Dalhart's name startled his former admirers by appearing once more in the Brunswick list. It isn't clear whether he had been called on to re-record two of his former numbers or whether they had been salvaged from the vaults and reissued, but judging from a comment in the Music Lovers Guide for that month it was most likely the latter:

"Brunswick and Victor each dig up a couple of popular old-timers for re-issue. On Victor 24573 Gene Austin (once a best-selling crooner, now almost forgotten) repeats his dulcet versions of 'My Blue Heaven' and 'Ramona,' which in the original pressings probably sold well into a million copies. Brunswick's revival is sturdier native stuff, Vernon Dalhart doing masterly hill-billy versions of those masterpieces of melancholy, 'The Prisoner's Song' and 'The Letter Edged in Black,' both done with neat fiddle and git-tar accompaniments (Brunswick 6799—a bit of Americana well worth investigation.")

I should have mentioned, when I was discussing Dalhart's Victor recordings, that in 1926 he re-made his original acoustical versions of "The Prisoner's Song" and "The Wreck." But, even though they were done over electrically, the same number, 19427, was retained—I suspect because either Dalhart or Victor was superstitious about its "magic" qualities.

In the early 1930's he was called on to make a still better electrical version of "The Wreck," which was coupled on a 35 cent Bluebird record with "Sourwood Mountain," sung by a group called The Vagabonds. And still later "The Wreck" and "The Prisoner" were combined on Bluebird No. B-10578. I haven't heard the record, but suspect it is taken from the 1926 Victor masters.

During the 1950's these undying mountain music classics were in-

cluded as part of a long-play record featuring outstanding examples of "Americana." Gene Austin and Jimmy Rodgers were the other artists.

In 1939 I was surprised and delighted when Dalhart began making a new series of records for Bluebird. I wrote him a letter expressing my pleasure that he was again recording and hoping his new venture would be successful.

He wrote a postal card in reply, thanking me graciously, but I have been unable to find it. The records were listed as by Vernon Dalhart and His Big Cypress Boys—the Big Cypress coming from the bayou by that name near his home town of Jefferson, Tex.

There were three of the Bluebird records, which marked Dalhart's final appearance in the hill-billy recording field: B-8170, combining "Johnnie Darlin'" and "You'll Never Take Away My Dreams;" B-8191, "My Mary Jane" and "Don't Cry, Little Sweetheart, Don't Cry," and B-8229, "Lavender Cowboy" and "Dear Little Darling, Don't Forget Me."

They were unsuccessful, and when I heard them I could understand why. They were so over-amplified it was almost impossible to recognize the voice as Dalhart's. There was an edgy baritone quality that changed it out of all resemblance to the real thing. No wonder they didn't sell.

### VII. Descent Into Obscurity

From that time, Dalhart's life and activities became more and more obscure. I have told about meeting Carson Robison and the late Bob Miller in 1948 and asking if they knew what had become of Dalhart, but neither did.

The year before, on November 26, 1947, I had received a letter from Bob, in which he said: . . . "I have made every effort to locate Vernon Dalhart, but have been unable to do so. The last that anyone seems to know of him he was living in Larchmont, N. Y. During the war he worked in a war plant, and I cannot find anyone who knows his present whereabouts. . . If I am able to locate him in the near future I most certainly will let you know."

Dalhart had recorded many of Miller's compositions, and I found it depressing that Dalhart had dropped so completely out of sight even Bob could not find him. When I learned he was living in Bridgeport at the time of his death, I imagined the war plant probably was in Bridge-



VERNON DALHART

VOICE PLACING

PROFESSIONAL COACHING

Bridgeport, Conn.

One of the last photos of Vernon Dalhart  
—Photo courtesy of Marion Hoffman,  
Valley Center, Kans.

port, and that after his defense work ended he took the job of night clerk in the Barnum Hotel which his death certificates indicated he held when he died.

I might mention that a student of folk and hill-billy records, Joe Drochetz, of Minneapolis, who called on me not long ago, told me he happened to be in Bridgeport in 1948, learned Dalhart was in the Bridgeport General Hospital and went in to see him.

He was unable, however, to reconcile the varying stories the then elderly singer told about the origin of "The Prisoner's Song" and some of his other records. Joe said many collectors consider Dalhart's singing of hill-billy numbers for the smaller recording firms as generally poor, but I disagree.

The recording often was not what it should be, but it seems to me that Dalhart always was a true artist who tried just as hard to make a good record when he was singing, say, for Grey Gull, or Cameo as he did when recording for Edison, Victor, Columbia, Okeh or Brunswick. But on occasion it was unmistakable that he was overworked.

During the late 1920's a writer in the New York Times Sunday magazine expressed the opinion that records by Vernon Dalhart would be eagerly collected by future generations for the light they shed on American folk ways in the earlier years of this century. Time apparently is in the process of vindicating that writer's judgment.

It is easy to tell, from correspondence I have received since beginning this seven-part series about Dalhart, that there are a large number of collectors who are eagerly seeking his records, and I believe that number will steadily increase as the available supply begins to dwindle. Only today I received a letter saying Dalhart admirers are circulating a petition to have RCA Victor issue a long-playing record of some of his old numbers.

Like the rest of us, Marion Try Slaughter may have had his faults as a person, but he was a genuine artist in whatever type of musical activity he undertook. It is because I believe him to have been one of the most important pioneer recording artists, that I have devoted more space to his life story than I have given to any other one performer about whom I so far have written.

#### ADDENDA

Is "The Prisoner's Song"  
An Old Scotch Folk Tune?

Apparently the controversy over the origin of "The Prisoner's Song" never will end. Late in September, several months after my complete manuscript of the Vernon Dalhart series had been submitted to HOBBIES, I received the following interesting letter from Mr. Robert Williamson, of 205 Brook St., Petersburg, Ontario, Canada:

"In 1924, at the age of 19, I came to Canada from Scotland with my

father's family. In the fall of 1925, while teaching in northern Saskatchewan, I heard 'The Prisoner's Song' (probably Vernon Dalhart). Home for Christmas, I was singing this song around the house when I was rebuked by my mother. 'Sing the song right,' she said. I was surprised, but still more surprised when mother sang the song from beginning to end in the broad Doric Scots. This was a song she had known when she was young. She had learned it at least before her marriage in 1901.

"It seemed to me at the time that the ease and fluency of the words and phrasing showed that the words had originally been written in Scots, but I am no longer sure of this. Sometimes translations can be excellent. . . I did not copy the Scots words, and mother and dad and their contemporaries are all long gone. . . I have no connections in the Old Country to help to dig up these words.

"In a situation such as this the question must be raised: 'Who is fooling whom?' I assure you I am not fooling and unquestionably my mother was not playing a trick. We are not a family of practical jokers.

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(SEE OUR FULL PAGE, ILLUSTRATED AD ON PAGE 35)		

tfc

However, I thought that even with no evidence beyond my statement you would be interested in knowing that the words and melody of 'The Prisoner's Song' go back at least to the turn of the century."

Mr. Williamson's letter gives students of folk music another problem on which to exercise their ingenuity. Meanwhile, I am reminded by a letter from the Kansas collector of Dalhart records, Marion Hoffman, of something I wrote in an early installment, praising the tenor's Edison record of "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin,' Caroline?" Mr. Hoffman corresponded with Dalhart for years, and he quotes him as saying: "The first real recording of my voice was 'Caroline,' which I made for Mr. Edison." This shows that Dalhart had a low opinion of the Emerson and Columbia records he had previously made and did not consider them reproductions of his voice. In the same vein, Christine Miller, who made records for both Victor and Edison, wrote to Mr. Edison, "You have made the only true records of my voice." And when a Victor dealer told her he had some of her records and asked her to give a "tone test" with them, such as she gave for Edison, she replied: "You have no records of my voice. My name is on the label, but the voice is not mine."

— 0 —

Since this series was completed, Marion Hoffman, of Valley Center, Kans., has sent me a folder issued by Dalhart during his later years in Bridgeport. It contains probably one of the last photographs taken of the singer, who was offering his services in voice placing and professional coaching. (See beginning of this installment).

The folder describes Dalhart as having been a leading tenor in these operas: *Trovatore*, *Cavalleria*, *Faust*, *Pagliacci*, *Butterfly*, *Aida*, *Bohemian Girl*, and *Girl of the Golden West*; oratorios—*Holy City*, *Messiah*, *Elijah*, *Persian Garden*, *Stabat Mater*, and *Rose Maiden*; and light operas—*Pinafore*, *Gondoliers*, *Spring Maid*, *Fencing Master*, *The Mikado*, *Naughty Marietta*, *Paul Jones*, and the *Merry Widow*.

There was also a page of critical comment. The *Boston American*, for instance, had described Dalhart as "a remarkably fine tenor;" the *New York Sun* said "he has a charming voice and knows how to use it," and *Alan Dale*, in the *New York American*, said he "sang with purity and clarity and his voice floated easily over the Hippodrome."

Incidentally, either because of typographical errors or my own typewriting slips, there were two mistakes involving dates in the August installment. In one place the year of Guy Massey's death is given as 1936 instead of 1926. And the photo of Carson Robison was sent to me in 1950 instead of 1940.

J. W.

## SHEET MUSIC

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. aul2698

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ORIGINAL: Mills Violano-Virtuoso manuals. Actual reprints, clean and new, with drawings, instructions for repair and operation. No photostats. Write:—The Old Collector, 2323 Arthur Street, Eugene, Ore. f3844

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Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list.—Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3845

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FOR SALE: Steinway Grand - Duo-Art electrical reproducer, 5'11", jet black, plain case, completely reconditioned, like new, inside and out. Plays classics and jazz, old and new rolls, as the artist played them with accent. A rare treasure.—B. Pellfort, P.O. Box 481, Farmington, New Hampshire. f3867

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Pioneer Song Writers Who Made Records

By JIM WALSH

Nineteen years of writing about pioneer recording artists have brought me thousands of inquiries.

One of the most intriguing questions recently came from an enthusiastic HOBBIES reader, David E. Kemp, of Shinglehouse, Pa., in a letter denouncing the atrocious quality of most present-day popular music. By contrast, Kemp points out, "from 40 to 50 years ago there probably were at least 200 writers who turned out good song hits occasionally or regularly. I would like to know how many of these lyric writers and composers made records, whether singing, instrumental, or what-not, and would appreciate information as to what they were and where they can be found. I think a collection of recordings by popular and semi-popular song writers would be unusual and fascinating."

When I read Kemp's letter it was obvious he had struck on a new idea, for no such survey as the one he suggested had ever been made. So I decided to make it. Even so, some reservations are involved, for the line must be drawn somewhere. As an example, many popular artists have written songs. Examples are Gene Austin, Frank Crumit, Vaughn De Leath, and Bert Williams. Others, notably the late Al Jolson, have been credited with assists on a good many tunes, whether or not they actually had anything to do with writing them. I decided that to conserve space this run-down must be largely restricted to the men and women who were primarily song writers rather than listing those who were essentially entertainers, but indulged in writing as a sideline.

No guarantee is given that the following listings are 100 per cent complete, and details of recordings must necessarily be sketchy. Almost certainly, some of the old-time writers and composers made records for obscure brands that have escaped me. I hope, however, this information will be useful not only to Dave Kemp but to others who feel, as he does and I do, about the days when "they wrote the sort of songs they can't turn out today."

But please don't write and ask where you can buy these records.

They may be found, if you are lucky, in second-hand stores, or the stocks of dealers in second-hand discs and cylinders like those who advertise in HOBBIES. And if you have some of these records, don't ask me where you can sell them. I don't know—unless it is to those same HOBBIES advertisers. There is no need of anyone ever writing to me, asking where records can be sold, when HOBBIES Magazine's classified advertising carries offers every month from dealers who buy record collections. I am not a dealer and do not want to buy records.

HARRY AKST made piano duets with Frank Banta for Columbia. "Ding Toes," and "Typhoon" are among them.

FELIX ARNDT, a victim of the 1918 flu epidemic, made many piano and celesta solos for Victor. Piano numbers included his own compositions, "Nola," "An Operatic Nightmare," "Desecration Rag," and "From Soup to Nuts." He also played in the earlier records of the Van Eps Trio.

ERNEST R. BALL proved himself a fair singer on his 1916 Columbia record of one of his great ballad successes, "Goodbye, Good Luck, God Bless You." Apparently it is the only record he ever made.

IRVING BERLIN, when he was 21, in 1910, was invited to make a Columbia record of a dialect ditty he had written with Ted Snyder, "Oh, How That German Could Love." I always laugh when I read the back-handed compliment in the April, 1910, Columbia supplement:

"The latest song by the author of 'My Wife's Gone to the Country.' It is natural that the writer of a song knows best how he wants his production sung, and as Mr. Berlin is a singer of no mean ability besides being a character artist of the first rank, we have secured him for this unique interpretation. This is probably the first time that the exact ideas of a song writer have been put into effect in the recording of a song. The result has been most strikingly successful and Mr. Berlin will undoubtedly be called up to do more and even better work for us in the future as he becomes more experienced in recording work."

The high, piping voice revealed on the 50-year-old Berlin record is not of operatic caliber. In a letter to me commenting on the record, Irving says: "We have a copy somewhere in our files and I heard it about a year ago and laughed my head off. Not at how funny I was, but at how brave I was to do a song in German dialect that I had written for Sam Bernard."

Berlin was not called on to do "more and even better work" for Columbia; at least no more records by him were issued. Forty-odd years

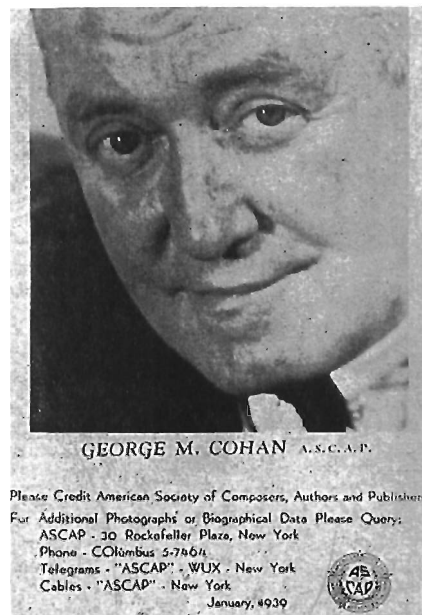
later, when Decca cataloged an album of selections from "This Is The Army," one of the numbers, "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," was sung by "Mr. Irving Berlin with supporting cast and soldier chorus."

EUBIE BLAKE played the accompaniment of most of Noble Sissle's vocal records for various companies. He also made piano solos, including "Ma," and "Sweet Lady" (Irving Kaufman sang a refrain in the latter) for Emerson.

FREDERICK V. BOWERS is one of the few surviving big-timers from the golden age of popular music—which was the 1890's and the early 1900's, rather than the 1930's, as the Johnnies-come-lately so often contend. Around 1911 Bowers sang five Columbia records: "Heigh, Ho," "Here Comes a College Boy" (his own composition), "I Love the Girls From A to Z," "Let's Make Love Among the Roses," and "Mary, You're a Big Girl Now."

SHELTON BROOKS made a fairly large number of Okeh records featuring blackface songs and sketches.

LEW BROWN served as a helper in the Columbia, and Brunswick records of his song, "She Gives Them All the Ha! Ha! Ha!" made by Frank Crumit and Fred Whitehouse respectively. Crumit wrote a good many songs, and Whitehouse several, among them "Sam, You Made the Pants Too Long."



GEORGE M. COHAN, A.S.C.A.P.

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January, 1939

GEORGE M. COHAN, "The Yankee Doodle Boy," recorded seven of his own compositions in 1911.

GEORGE M. COHAN made seven 1911 Victor records of his compositions. The most popular was "Life's a Funny Proposition, After All." Some preposterous statements have been made about the Cohan records, such as that they were sung in 1905 and that "since Victor didn't have master records then, each had to be sung separately and only 200 copies were made of each." Victor had per-

manent masters from the beginning, and "Life's a Funny Proposition" probably sold over 200,000 copies, rather than 200.

**ZEZ CONFREY** led his dance band on many records, and also made piano solos for Victor, Edison, Emerson, and Brunswick. Titles included "Kitten On the Keys," "Greenwich Witch," "Coaxing the Piano," and "Poor Buttermilk."

**BENNY DAVIS** made several Columbia records of popular songs around 1921.

**MELVILLE ELLIS** came through with one of the all-time piano record oddities in 1911 when he combined a piano arrangement of tunes by Irving Berlin and Richard Wagner. On one side of a Columbia record he played "Alexander's Ragtime Band," contrasted and combined with strains from "The Magic Fire Scene" from "Die Walkure." He played "In the Shadows" on the second side.

**SAMMY FAIN**, "The Crooning Composer," made a few vocal records of popular songs for the Harmony, and Velvet Tone labels in the early electric era.

**ARTHUR FIELDS**, who helped write "On the Mississippi," "Aba Daba Honeymoon," "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner," and many other hits, of course was one of the most

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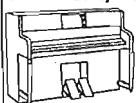
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(SEE OUR FULL PAGE, ILLUSTRATED AD ON PAGE 35)

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## Once More, A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE GREAT HOBBIES FAMILY



Students of cat folk ways say that where there are three or more, one is "elected" to scrub the tops of the others' heads. Nipper, seen here washing Roger while Gray sedately eats, is proud of his scrubbing privilege.



Petey, who was left behind by the former owners of Jim Walsh's "new home" at Vinton, meows a cordial "Happy New Year."



Gray, enjoying his favorite indoor sport—eating. (Notice how small Nipper, in the background, appears by contrast.)



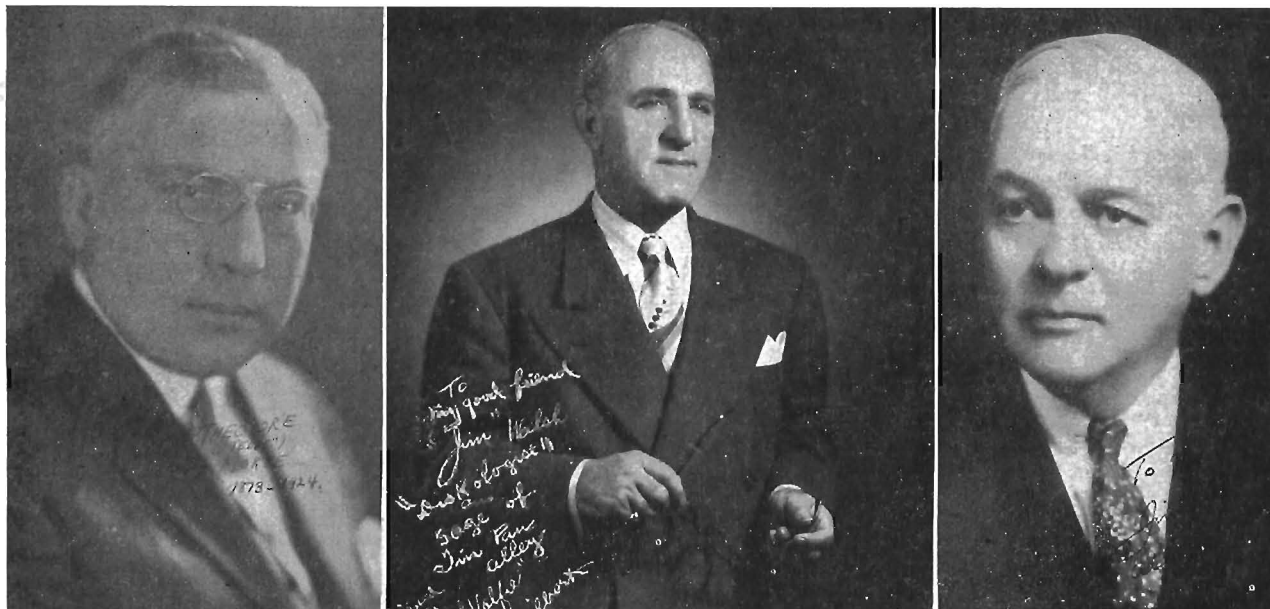
Christmas Eve night, Nipper carefully tied up a gift for Santa Claus.



Roger peering intently into what he is sure will be a happy 1961.

*And, Looking Forward Into the Future  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS, 1961*

From **ROGER, GRAY, LITTLE NIPPER, PETEY & JIM WALSH**  
225 North Maple Street, Vinton, Virginia  
jax



Left to right:

THEODORE MORSE, one of the greatest pioneer composers of popular songs, who was also the original pianist for the Eight Famous Victor Artists, made a Pathe record of "Jazzin' Around."

—Photo by Apeda, N. Y.

L. WOLFE ("Wolfie") GILBERT did the vocal honors in the Edison record of his song, "The Natchez and the Robert E. Lee," played by Vincent Lopez's Orchestra.

—Photo by Jean Raeburn, N. Y.

JACK NORWORTH recorded many songs, both as solos and with his first wife, Nora Bayes.

prolific recorders from 1914 to 1930. He and FRED HALL wrote many comic songs and hill-billy skits, some of which they recorded together.

MALVIN FRANKLIN played piano accompaniments on many Emerson vocal records in 1917-18.

HUGO FREY, besides conducting dance bands, joined Frank Banta in piano duets in some of the Victors by Joseph C. Smith's Orchestra.

RUDOLF FRIML made piano solos for Victor, and Columbia of some of his big hits, including "Indian Love Call," "Huguette," and "Song of the Vagabonds." Earlier, he had sought to make Edison records, but Thomas A. Edison gave a written opinion Friml couldn't play well enough to qualify for Diamond Discs!

GEORGE GERSHWIN played piano in Paul Whiteman's Victor's of "Rhapsody in Blue" and also made Columbia records of some of his songs.

L. WOLFE GILBERT sang, or rather chanted, the vocal part of a 1923 Edison record of his song, "The Natchez and the Robert E. Lee," by the Broadway Dance Orchestra, which was Vincent Lopez's band in disguise.

LT. HARRY GITZ-RICE teamed with his fellow Canadian, Henry Burr, in 1918, to make Victor and Columbia records purporting to describe "Fun in Flanders," and "Life in a Trench in Belgium." For Pathe he sang his compositions, "Sammy Lad," and "The Road That Leads Back Home," playing his own accompaniment.

JACK GLOGAU in 1921 made a Hy-Tone piano record of "All By

Myself," and "Just Like a Rainbow." He also played accompaniments for duets by Al Campbell and Jack Kaufman on Edison, Harmony, and other records.

EDDIE GREEN made comic Negro dialect sketches for Victor, and Okeh.

WENDELL HALL's 1923 versions of his big hit, "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'," may be found on Victor, Edison, and Gennett. He also sang many other records for Victor, and Brunswick.

W. C. HANDY led his Memphis Orchestra on several Columbia platters in 1917. They recorded later for Okeh. Many records by Negro artists may be found on the Black Swan label of the early 1920's, HENRY CREAMER and TURNER LAYTON among them.

VICTOR HERBERT conducted his orchestra on Edison cylinders and for a couple of years, beginning around 1910, was Edison's musical adviser. Then he signed up with Victor, for which he played several 'cello solos.

"Victor Herbert's Band," which turns up on Zon-o-phone discs made around 1902, was merely the Zono house group with a few Herbert men sitting in. Herbert allowed his name to be used, but had nothing to do with making the band records, which were conducted by the late FRED HAGER.

HAGER was one of the first performers to make violin records, beginning with two-minute wax Edison cylinders in 1898. He also made Berliner, and Zon-o-phone discs, on which it's hard to hear his fiddle for the scratch. Hager wrote more compositions, especially for phonograph use, than any other composer.

CLIFF HESS made piano duets with Frank Banta for Columbia in the early 1920's. Two titles were "Roll On, Silvery Moon," and "Remember the Rose."

JOE HOWARD once told me he made Columbia records in 1909, but they were never issued. In the early 1930's Joe sang a medley of his hit tunes for Vocalion, and several years later made a four-record Deluxe album "Joe Howard's Gay Nineties Revue."

ELSIE JANIS in 1911 made Victor records of her songs, "Fascinating Baseball Slide," "Fo' de Lawd's Sake Play a Waltz," and "When Antelo Plays the 'Cello." She made other records in England.

HARRY JENTES shared a double-faced Okeh piano record of the early 1920's with Pete Wendling. Jentes' side was "Blooeey Blues," and Wendling's "Papa Blues."

F. HENRI KLICKMANN played the piano accompaniment to Roy Smeck's ukulele wizardry on "Twelfth Street Rag" for Edison.

JOE MAXWELL used his excellent tenor voice on several 1910 Edison cylinders. "Planning" was one of the songs he recorded.

THEODORE MORSE teamed up in 1918 with Abe Frankel to make a piano duet - "Jazzin' Around" - for Pathe sapphire ball records.

JACK NORWORTH in 1910 made several Victor records with Nora Bayes, who was then his wife. He also made a few solos. One of the latter, "For Months and Months and Months," always brings a laugh nowadays from the standpoint of "how things have changed."

It tells of how a daring lady

thought it would be fun to cause a sensation by publicly smoking a cigaret. Then, sings Norworth, "the newspapers roasted her . . . and I don't think she'll smoke again for months and months and months."

That may sound unbelievably old-fashioned in 1960. But there are still innumerable men who wish the same standards of feminine proprieties were in vogue today as were the rule 50 years ago.

Norworth made a large number of Pathe records.

GEOFFREY O'HARA made an Edison cylinder and a Victor disc in 1914, describing his research among the Navajo Indians and singing some of their songs. From 1916 to 1918 he recorded popular songs for Victor.

CHAUNCEY OLCOTT sang many of his Irish songs on Columbia records, beginning around 1913. (I haven't gone to the trouble of looking up exact dates for records mentioned in this article.)

RAY PERKINS, who for many years has been on the air in Denver as one of the West's most successful radio disc jockeys, began a successful song-writing career more than 40 years ago. In 1921 he began making piano records for Edison. Then Brunswick engaged him to sing, which he does very well, to his own accompaniment.

ARTHUR PRYOR, for several years sub-conductor of Sousa's Band, directed the band for record making. John Philip Sousa, who is said to have originated the derisive term, "canned music," took the money but thought it beneath his dignity to conduct.

In 1904 Pryor organized his own band and orchestra, which made hundreds of Victor records. He also recorded trombone solos. "Dearie," "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," and "Love Me and the World is Mine," and "O Dry Those Tears" were included. And he made duets with cornet virtuosos.

J. RUSSEL ROBINSON assisted Al Bernard in many comic blackface sketches, mostly for Brunswick.

WILLARD ROBINSON sang some of his songs for Victor, and Perfect.

TED SHAPIRO played the accompaniment on many Sophie Tucker records, and NOBLE SISSLE made a large number of vocal selections from 1918 to 1929 on Pathe hill-and-dale discs. The accompaniments were by Lt. Jim Europe's Hell-Fighters Band.

After Europe's tragic death in 1920, when he was stabbed by a drink-crazed drummer, Sissle formed a partnership with Eubie Blake and together they made records for virtually all the major companies. Jim Europe's Orchestra made Victor dance records 45 years ago.

TED SNYDER'S TRIO made a Zon-o-phone record before 1910 of what appears to have been one of the pioneer laughing specialties. It was called "Make Me Laugh." I wonder if Ted Snyder remembers who the other members were. Could his song-writing partner Irving Berlin, have been included?



HENRY I. MARSHALL, who wrote "Be My Little Baby Bumb!.. Bee," and "On the 5:15," did some recording for Columbia.  
—Photo by Bill Witt, Newark, N. J.

CHARLES GILBERT SPROSS recorded several piano solos for Victor around 1910.

SAM H. STEPT was one of the original "Record Boys" (the others were Al Bernard and Frank Kamplain), who sang, played, and yodeled for several companies, notably Brunswick.

CHARLEY STRAIGHT played piano on more than 30 double-faced records made by Gene Greene in England from 1912 to 1914. (These are the records for which I have so long been advertising that I will pay \$3 each for copies not in my collection. I now have about half of them.) Straight's dance band made Brunswick records in the 1920's.

DAN J. SULLIVAN made some records in the 1920's for Victor's special Irish series.

WILBUR C. SWEATMAN made a jazz clarinet record for Emerson in 1917. Later his jazz band recorded for Columbia, and Edison.

JAMES L. THORNTON intoned snatches of his famous "Barber Shop Monolog" on a 7-inch Emerson in 1917. The record will prove a painful disappointment to anyone who has heard how side-splittingly funny that monolog was. Jim must have saved the best parts for stage use. The record isn't amusing.

PETE WENDLING, who played a mean ragtime piano, displayed his talents on a few Okeh's, including "Page Paderewski." In 1927 he played Cameo piano versions of "Mary Lou," and "I Meet Her in the Moonlight." Both have refrains by an unidentified woman who sounds like Kate Smith. The Cameo was also issued under the Romeo label with Wendling's name changed to Peter Ling.

PERCY WENRICH seems not to have made records, but his wife, DOLLY CONNOLLY, sang a large number of songs, mostly written by Wenrich, for Columbia, around 1912. Later she went to Emerson. Espe-

cially good is the Wenrich classic, "Red Rose Rag." As Dolly sings it, it's ragtime in excelsis.

HENRY I. MARSHALL made a couple of records for Columbia in 1916-17, his own song, "Somewhere There's a Little Cottage Standing," and "Whose Pretty Baby Are You Now?"

FRANK WESTPHAL conducted his dance band for Columbia and made several piano solos.

Many Negro song writers, including CLARENCE WILLIAMS, JAMES P. JOHNSON, PORTER GRAINGER, and DUKE ELLINGTON, made records, either piano solos or with dance bands, for the various companies' "race" supplements. These, however, were mostly done far into the electric recording era and do not properly belong here.

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# Elise Stevenson

By JIM WALSH

## I. "Still Lively as a Kitten"

Mrs. L. W. Kraus, of 26 Aubrey Road, Upper Montclair, N. J., is one of my thousands of friends whom I know only by correspondence. Australian-born Ann Kraus and I have at least one cause in common—a life-long love of cats. She is untiring in the work of the Cat Protective League of Montclair, and all "men and women born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts" should join her crusade for humane treatment of the beautiful creatures whom she and I hold to be the most lovable of pets.

Having learned of my equally life-long devotion to the artists who recorded in the days when both they and the phonograph were young, Mrs. Kraus has sent me a clipping from a Montclair newspaper, showing a photograph of a lovely young lady and announcing her coming marriage.

Unfortunately, I have mislaid the clipping, but the bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rusling Wood, Jr., of Montclair, and Mr. Wood is the son of one of the popular record makers of more than 50 years ago—Mrs. Rusling Wood, Sr., whose discs and cylinders usually bore her maiden name of Elise Stevenson.

Receiving the clipping reminded me that for many years I have wanted to write the story of Elise Stevenson's recording career. It also reminded me that last March a friend at the Edison Laboratory National Monument in West Orange, N. J., sent me Mr. Wood's telephone number, and I surprised him on Sunday morning, March 13th with a long distance call.

He was most cordial in our conversation, and delighted me with the news that his mother was living and "still as lively as a kitten," although she was then 82 (she was born in Liverpool, England, on February 9, 1878) and had broken her hip in April, 1959.

Mr. Wood told me he has a sister, Mrs. Barbara Epel, who was born in 1910, and lives in North Hollywood, Calif. He was born in 1912. For several years after her husband's death his mother lived in an apartment house opposite Hotel Suburban in East Orange, but spent the winters with her daughter.

His mother then decided to make California her year-round home and now lives with her brother at San



Elise Stevenson became a member of the Victor Light Opera Company when it was organized in 1909. She is the first woman in the second row. The other artists are identified in the article.

Clemente, "below Capistrano." Rusling Wood, Jr., assured me "we are very proud of her and what she did in the early recording days."

## II. First Victor Records

Elise Stevenson was 28 and a singer of reputation in church and concert when she began, in 1906, a busy but too brief, recording career that lasted for the next five years. She became a familiar figure before the recording horns of the pioneer talking machine companies because a fine bass singer, who has now been dead just a little more than half a century, needed a soprano to help him sing duets.

The partner-seeker was William Stanley Grinstead, who was born December 29, 1868, and died December 12, 1910, aged 41. From 1898 to his death he was known the world over on records as Frank C. Stanley, and for a couple of years prior to 1898, while still a bank employee, he had played banjo accompaniments under the assumed name of George S. Williams for Edison cylinders by other singers. Even earlier, he had won the five-string banjo playing cham-

pionship for the State of New Jersey.

Elise Stevenson's association with Stanley began at the most crowded period of his incredibly active life. In 1906 the tireless Mr. Stanley was not only making solo records for some 18 or 20 labels, but was singing in church, and giving recitals. He was the leader and manager of the Metropolitan Trio, the Invincible Male Quartet (whose name he was about to change to the Peerless Quartet), the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, and the Lotus Glee Club.

He was also recording duets with two tenors — Byron G. Harland and Harry Macdonough — and was soon to add Henry Burr to the list. He had been working with two contraltos — Corinne Morgan, whose full name was Corinne Morgan Welsh, and "Grace Nelson," who was really Grace Hornby. He and Harland had also recorded a long series of comic "rube" sketches written by Stanley and based on rustic characters he had observed.

In his "spare time" he was an alderman in his home town of Orange. But until his association with Miss Stevenson this versatile genius

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had never recorded two-part harmony with a soprano. The new soprano-baritone combination proved so popular, however, he gave up making duet records with contraltos.

Stanley's last duet records with Corinne Morgan, who spent much of 1906 in Europe, appeared in the Victor and Columbia lists for August of that year. Elise Stevenson's name was first seen in the Victor supplement for that same month. She and Stanley were represented by two serio-comic duets, "Cross Your Heart," and "I Would Like to Marry You."

Two months earlier, however, the first records by the Lyric Quartet had been announced. Old Victor catalogs give the names of the quartet members as Stevenson, Stanley, Morgan, and Macdonough, so the young soprano presumably sang in those initial issues. They were a 10-inch disc, No. 4690, "Evening Chimes," and a 12-inch, No. 31524, of "Incline Thine Ear to Me."

The latter was described as "an impressive sacred number opening with a fine bass solo, followed by an anthem for four voices. This new organization, which will sing exclusively for the Victor, is composed of four well-known New York choir singers. Their voices blend here extremely well."

Besides recording duets with Stanley, Miss Stevenson soon was singing soprano-tenor duos with Harry Macdonough (John Scantlebury Macdonald), for many years manager of the Victor artist and repertoire department. Their first joint effort was 4940, "Don't You Tell," which came out in January, 1907.

In the same supplement the Lyric Quartet sang the Gloria from the Twelfth Mass attributed to Mozart; and the Schubert Trio, composed of soprano, tenor, and baritone, was heard in "Praise Ye," from Verdi's "Attila." The trio sounds like Stevenson, Macdonough, and Stanley.

Miss Stevenson also sang in the Trinity Choir, composed of several Victor artists who were professional church singers, and when the Victor Light Opera Company was organized in 1909 she became a member and took part in some of the medleys recorded by that gifted group.

Versatility was one of Elise Stevenson's assets. With Frank Stanley's guidance, she recorded every type of music, from "coon songs" to hymns, and from popular ballads to light and grand opera.

A photograph of the Victor Light Opera Company is reproduced with this article from the November, 1913, Victor Records catalog. Miss Stevenson is the first woman in the second row. Also in the middle row are Steve Porter; Walter B. Rogers, who arranged and conducted the light opera "Gems"; Harry Macdonough; John Barnes Wells; Ada Jones; and Billy Murray.

The top row consists of Harriette Keyes, Reinald Werrenrath, S. H. Dudley, Elsie Baker, William Wheeler, Elizabeth Wheeler, and John Biebling.

In the bottom row are George Carre, Marguerite Dunlap, Frederick Gunster, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, William F. Hooley, and Inez Barbour.

An out-of-the-ordinary record appeared in May, 1907, when Miss Stevenson and Miss Morgan sang a 12-inch duet (No. 31628) of "Holy Mother, Guide His Footsteps," from "Maritana." The supplement said: "The famous duet between Maritana and Lazarillo in the second act of Wallace's opera . . . is a striking number, and is beautifully rendered by these two Victor singers."

The duet, however, was perhaps a bit too "classical" for most buyers of Black Label records. It sold poorly and was cut out of the catalog in November, 1908.

Elise Stevenson did not immediately begin making solo records for Victor. Her first was an 8-inch, No. 5109, of "When the Swallows Homeward Fly," issued in June, 1907. Her next solo in April, 1908, was one of a group of five specially recorded numbers from "The Merry Widow," then the reigning musical comedy craze. It was "The Vilia Song," done with the help of a male chorus.

Others were a Red Seal of the famous "Merry Widow Waltz" sung by Marcella Sembrich; "Maxim's," by Harry Macdonough; "The Silly Cavalier," a Stevenson-Stanley duet, and "Women," the first Victor record by the Peerless Quartet. Three other Stevenson solos were listed in the 1909 Victor record catalog — "Are You Sincere?" "Dear Heart," and "Through Sunny Spain," with this comment:

"Miss Stevenson, who has been represented in the Victor catalog for some time in duets with Mr. Macdonough and Mr. Stanley, now appears as soloist in some remarkably fine records—a famous old song of Spain by Tito Mattei; a new sentimental ballad by Gumble, which is



FRANK STANLEY

Elise Stevenson began her recording career in 1906 as a duet partner of the popular basso, Frank C. Stanley, who was born in December 1868, and died in December 1910, just a little over 50 years ago.

meeting with much success; the favorite 'Villa,' given with male chorus, and the ever popular 'Dear Heart.'

Among the duets by Miss Stevenson and Macdonough were "Tell Me Pretty Maiden," a re-make of the catchy number from "Floradora" which the tenor had originally made with the late Grace Spencer and which continued to have the old catalog number, 1362. There was also a 12-inch of "I Will Magnify Thee, O God."

The 1909 catalog contained six Ste-

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venson-Stanley duets: "Cross Your Heart," "Good Evening, Caroline," "It's Up to You to Do the Rest," "I Would Like to Marry You," "Piccolo," from Oscar Strauss' "A Waltz Dream," and "The Silly Cavalier."

"Piccolo" is charming and so, in a different way, is "Good Evening, Caroline," written by Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer. It might be described as a pseudo "coon song" with an attractive melody and some fine harmonizing by the singers.

On October 20, 1908, Victor announced its first list of double-faced records. One hundred were 10-inch and 25 were 12-inch. Numbers began at 16000 for the small size and 35000 for the large. No. 16013 combined "I Would That My Love," and the Miserere from "Trovatore," by Miss Stevenson and Macdonough.

On 16014 Miss Stevenson and Stanley sang "Honeymooning," coupled with "Sailing," by the Haydn Quartet. "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," occupied 16061, with Macdonough's "In the Shade of the Palm," completing the coupling. On 16066 the previously single-faced version of "Piccolo" was doubled with "Rah! Rah! Rah!" from "The Soul Kiss," by the Peerless Quartet.

### III. Recording for Zon-o-phone

In 1903 Victor acquired control of the Universal Talking Machine Co., which made Zon-o-phone records, and some ostensibly exclusive Victor artists appeared regularly by special permission in the Zono lists.

Elise Stevenson's Zon-o-phone debut was in March, 1907, when she and Stanley collaborated in a 12-inch record of a Theodore Morse song, "Take a Little Ride With Me." In April, on a 10-inch disc, they sang "The Linger Longer Girl."

An oddity is that although Victor always printed correctly Miss Stevenson's first name as Elise (pronounced Aye-lease), Zon-o-phone insisted on calling her "Miss Alice Stevenson," sometimes with a C. in the middle. It was a change she didn't like but couldn't get corrected.

In May, the Stanley-Stevenson combination was responsible for "Because You're You," Victor Herbert's great hit from "The Red Mill." The Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (which appears to have been the same as Victor's Lyric Quartet, except that Henry Burr took the place of Harry Macdonough) sang "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

In June, the new duet combination was represented with "Cross Your Heart," which Stanley had previously sung with Corinne Morgan for some of the other companies. And, in February, 1908, "Miss Alice C. Stevenson" and Frank C. Stanley sang "If I Should Fall in Love With You," which the supplement said was "bright and melodious" and "rendered by Miss Stevenson and Mr. Stanley in their usual acceptable manner."

A little earlier, Miss Stevenson had begun making solo records for Zon-o-phone. In December, 1907, her name adorned a 12-inch version of

"Home, Sweet Home." By the time the first catalog of Zono double-face discs appeared in 1909 she had sung four 10-inch solos — "For All Eternity," and "Are You Sincere?" coupled on 5099, and "Sweetheart," and "Carissima," No. 5161.

Among the 12-inch records, her "Home, Sweet Home," was combined (No. 4041) with "The Last Rose of Summer," by Roberta Granville; and the duet of "Take a Little Ride With Me," on 4042, with "Shine On, Oh Stars," by Henry Burr.

There were four double-faced records with both sides by Stevenson-Stanley, five by the Metropolitan Trio (Stevenson, Stanley, and Burr) and four by the Mendelssohn Quartet. A good many other records by these various artists and combinations were issued later.

Victor discontinued Zon-o-phone's rather surreptitious activities two or three years after Stanley's death. Meanwhile, in 1907, he had taken his charming young protege, nine years his junior, to the studios of such companies as Leeds and Catlin, American and International, and they recorded for all.

Stanley's free-lance activities reached their peak in 1907, for toward the end of that year all the disc manufacturers who were making lateral cut records in competition with Victor and Columbia were put out of business by court order for infringing the major manufacturers' patents.

### IV. A Long Columbia List

Although Elise Stevenson and Frank Stanley didn't appear in the Columbia catalog quite so early as they had in the Victor, they clicked big when they did begin "operations" and probably made more records together for Columbia than for any other company.

Their first Columbia duet appearance was in February, 1907, when they sang "The Linger Longer Girl," on XP cylinder 33074. A month later the same song was issued on disc 3573. On three-minute BC cylinder 85105 they sang "Take a Little Ride With Me." (Observe that they recorded much the same songs for the different companies.) In April they obliged with "Because You're You," issued on cylinder 33098 and disc 3590.

When Columbia "jumped the gun" on Victor late in 1908 by combining its best selling single-faced records in double-face, the new series contained a long list of Stevenson-Stanley duets. There was one solo by Miss Stevenson, A591. "Don't Be Cross With Me," which teamed up with Henry Burr's "You Have Always Been the Same Old Pal."

I have enjoyed turning through some of the 1909-10 Columbia supplements and digesting the occasionally amusing descriptions of the duet team's recordings. In January, 1909, the following was said of their 12-inch record of "Good Evening, Caroline," incongruously paired with a talking comic sketch, "Shipmates," by Billy Golden and Joe Hughes:

"Many will remember how 'Good Morning, Carrie' was sung the country over some years ago. 'Good Evening, Caroline' is in every way a better song. . . . The characters are very matter-of-fact individuals who approach the momentous question of a marriage proposal in a manner showing much individuality and ingenuity."

In June, the soprano and baritone sang "Under the Honeymoon," from "Mr. Hamlet of Broadway." This was described as:

"... a bright piece of musical dialog in which is described, with considerable detail, the best conditions under which the gentle art of 'spooning' should be conducted. A lively and attractive melody gives the singers excellent opportunity for a high-class vocal work."

For the December, 1909, list Miss Stevenson sang a solo, "A Little China Doll," from the musical comedy, "A Broken Idol." Columbia couplings were usually eccentric in the beginning of the double-faced era, so the doll song — a lovely little number — was paired with the "Lullaby from 'Jocelyn,'" sung by one of Columbia's English tenors, Bernard Turner. "A Little China Doll" was for a long time my late mother's favorite record, and she sometimes called Elise Stevenson "the best woman singer in the world."

The supplement said:

"The story tells of the disastrous love affair of a diminutive china doll and a toy soldier, suspended on the same string in a toy shop. One day the string breaks, however, and when they are picked up from the floor it is found that the doll, being of china, is broken, while the soldier, who comes from Germany, and is of tougher fibre, has escaped unharmed, the moral being that hearts, like china, are brittle, and should not be worn on a string. Miss Stevenson's crystal-like voice is perfectly adapted to the character of this selection."

The soprano, still as "Alice C. Stevenson," sang "The Little China Doll," coupled with "Rose of the World," on Zon-o-phone 5582.

There was marked contrast between the delicacy of the china doll song and the Stevenson-Stanley duet, "I've Lost My Gal," which appeared the same month, but both were the work of the same successful song writing team, Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne. The Columbia supplement annotator said "I've Lost My Gal"

"... tells of the woes of Henry Baxter, a colored gentleman whose girl goes back on him. He is inconsolable until another charmer comes along, and discovering the cause of 'all his pinin' and heavin' of the chest,' explains how he may get a new and better girl, namely, herself. The selection is decidedly catchy and pleasing as rendered by Miss Stevenson and Mr. Stanley."

In February, 1910, after Frank Stanley had entered upon the last year of his life, the duettists sang "That Would Be Lovely," with Prince's Orchestra playing "Selections from 'The Chocolate Soldier,'" to go along with the vocal number.

April and May seemed to set the duet partners off on an animal "kick." In April their choice was "Two Giddy Goats," from "The Belle of Brittany," described as:

"... a piece of contagiously melodious humor (that) will probably long remain unequalled. Being mainly in very rapid tempo with short staccato notes it is a rather difficult number to sing, which

fact brings out all the more prominently the excellent work done by Miss Stevenson and Mr. Stanley."

Their May duet was "My Little Kangaroo." Stanley sang, to go along with it, a comic Harry Von Tilzer composition, "Keep Your Foot on the Soft Pedal." The duet was described as:

"... a selection of the better class of ragtime, very recently published and already having a great sale in sheet form. ... The love tale of the two Australian kangaroos which it exploits will entertain everybody. Its light and breezy music all will find attractive. It is sung in a cleverly arranged dialog setting."

May also was marked by Miss Stevenson's first Columbia duet with a tenor. She and John Young sang the Trovatore "Miserere" on 12-inch record A5165, with Prince's Orchestra playing "Selections from 'Aida'" to blend into the operatic atmosphere. Very likely the Stevenson-Young duet was inspired by the success of the "Miserere" which Miss Stevenson and Harry Macdonough had previously done for Victor. Columbia described its version as:

"... a new and splendid recording of the great 'Miserere' scene from the fourth act of 'Il Trovatore'—possibly the most celebrated concert number in all opera. ... We feel justified in being proud of the record here presented, in which these eminent soloists and the chorus have given of their very best to make the record the success which it unquestionably is."

Columbia's British affiliate waited until May, 1911, before issuing the "Miserere" under the Columbia-Rena label, but it was announced with a whoop. An advertisement in the Talking Machine News was headed: "The Celebrated 'MISERERE' Duet in English at Usual Prices — NOT HIGHER!" It continued:

"The 'Miserere,' one of the most impressive of all concerted numbers, is here presented (in English) in a manner that defies description. It is so perfect a record that the question of charging (as is so often done) a higher price was seriously debated. But we want the public to have the BEST at OUR PRICES and this is one of the best. Remember this is a TWELVE-INCH record of two Grand Opera selections in English (the other, 'Home to Our Mountains,' and both the gems of 'Il Trovatore') and is sold at the regular COLUMBIA-RENA PRICE—4 shillings. This record proves there is no need to pay more!"

British buyers got better value than Americans, for instead of the band medley on the reverse of the "Miserere," there was a contralto-tenor duet of "Home to Our Mountains" by Merle Tillotson (to become well known later as Merle Alcock) and Young. The T. M. N. review read, in part:

"The 'Miserere' is probably the most heart-rending farewell in all the regions of lyric drama, and here it is very beautifully rendered by Miss Elsie (Sic!) Stevenson, a sweet soprano, and Mr. John Young, a light tenor of admirable quality. ... On the reverse is the renowned duet, 'Home to Our Mountains,' sung by Miss Marie (Sic!) Tillotson ... and Mr. Young. ... Miss Tillotson has a fine deep contralto voice and sings with taste and feeling."

As 1910 moved inexorably toward the month of December, in which Frank Stanley would die of pneumonia, taken after giving a recital in New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, Miss Stevenson's name gradually

ceased to appear in the record lists. She was anticipating the birth of her first child.

#### V. Edison, Indestructible, and U. S. Cylinders

Elise Stevenson was fortunate in having Frank Stanley not only as her professional associate but as her business manager. An artist of genial manner and magnetic personality, he was also an astute business man, who knew how to arrange recording dates on a free-lance basis from all the companies at the highest attainable fees.

He was late, however, in taking Miss Stevenson to the Edison laboratory, and, according to his widow, the late Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Grinsted, it was actually the soprano who brought him back to Edison after he had quarreled with its recording department.

Mrs. Grinsted said the Edison experts heard disc records by Miss Stevenson and wanted her to sing for their cylinders, but she replied that Grinsted was her business manager and negotiations must be conducted with him. The upshot was that she was engaged and he returned to Edison at a payment schedule twice as high as he had previously received. Mrs. Grinsted commented: "We all considered this quite a feather in Miss Stevenson's cap."

Even so, Miss Stevenson did little work for Edison. Her first appearance on an Edison cylinder occurred when the initial list of 50 four-minute Amberol records was announced in November, 1908. As a member of the Metropolitan Trio, she sang the part of Marguerite in the Trio from "Faust" (No. 19.) Stanley was Mephistopheles, and Henry Burr, known to the Edison public as Irving Gillette, took the tenor role of Faust. The supplement assured prospective buyers that "not a word or note is cut from the stage version, which is rendered with artistic finish."

In February, 1909, on Amberol No. 79, Miss Stevenson, Stanley, and a chorus gave an elaborate presentation of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Listen to this description, in which John Young is referred to as Harry Anthony, the name which he was then using when singing for Edison:

"A remarkably fine presentation of Julia Ward Howe's stirring national anthem. Mr. Stanley, baritone, sings the first verse; Miss Stevenson, soprano, the second verse; Mr. Stanley and Mr. Anthony the third verse, and Miss Stevenson and Mr. Anthony, the fourth verse. The chorus between the verses are sung by the Mixed Quartet. The singers are accompanied by the New York Military Band, which also plays a number of original interludes, these being among the most attractive features of the record. It will be strange, indeed, if this does not prove one of the largest selling records ever made for the Edison phonograph."

In March, 1910, the Manhattan Mixed Trio, which apparently was the same as the Metropolitan, sang "Do They Think of Me at Home" on Amberol No. 367. This old-time song was still popular 50 years ago

and the cylinder was taken into the Blue Amberol catalog as No. 1973.

Only two Stanley-Stevenson duets were issued by Edison, both in the two-minute size. The first, "Under the Honeymoon," came out in October, 1909. The second, "Two Giddy Goats," already mentioned as a Columbia disc, appeared in May, 1910.

Almost as soon as the Indestructible Phonographic Record Co., of Albany, N. Y., began making unbreakable two-minute cylinders in the fall of 1907, Frank C. Stanley was included in its list of artists. His first two duets, which probably had been recorded a considerable time before they were issued, were with Grace Hornby, the contralto who served only a short time as his partner.

In February, 1908, Stanley and his associates were represented by a special group of "Merry Widow" recordings, such as those they had made for Victor. One was a Stevenson-Stanley duet, "I Love You So" (the "Merry Widow Waltz"), and on another, Miss Stevenson, with the aid of a chorus, sang "Vilia."

Indestructible issued eight "authentic" "Merry Widow" records that month, not to mention "I Want to be a Merry Merry Widow," by Ada Jones, and "Chimmie and Maggie at 'The Merry Widow,'" by Miss Jones and Len Spencer.

In all, Indestructible published six Stevenson-Stanley duets, and three solos by Miss Stevenson, besides 26 Stanley solos, 29 duets by Stanley and Henry Burr, two Nelson-Stanley duets, and one between Stanley and Steve Porter.

The supplement descriptions of two of Miss Stevenson's solos make good reading. In the April, 1909, Columbia record list (Columbia had taken over distribution of the Indestructibles under its own brand name), this is said of 1042, "Don't Be Cross With Me."

"The naive confession of an unaffected and unsophisticated young girl who cannot see why it should be wrong to ask a man to hold her hand when she wants him to. She has 'lots of trouble with her smile,' as she simply cannot keep it from 'breaking through,' when any man whose appearance she likes smiles at her. Miss Stevenson sings this delightful little song in such a manner that, whether we agree with the sentiments or not, we simply can't be 'cross with her.'"

In December, 1909, on No. 1219, she sang "Dear Heart."

"A delightful song by one of the best modern song composers—a sincere and tender expression of unchanging affection. This is unmistakably one of the best soprano records ever issued in a Columbia Indestructible series, made so by the exquisite quality of Miss Stevenson's voice and her intelligent conception of the interpretative demands of the song."

The U. S. Phonograph Co., of Cleveland, O., followed Indestructible by about a year in making unbreakable cylinders—the U. S. Everlasting. The October, 1912, U. S. catalog does not contain any solos by Miss Stevenson, but there is one four-minute Stevenson-Stanley duet (with her name spelled as Stephen-son), "What Makes the World Go Round?"



## VI. Conclusion of Career

As has already been said, Frank Stanley died in December, 1910, and no more was heard of Miss Stevenson in record supplements for the next several months. Then in April, 1911, Victor published a photo of her, together with an announcement of single-faced record No. 5830, which she had sung as a duet with Henry Burr:

"After a long illness, Miss Stevenson makes a welcome reappearance in the Victor lists in a duet with Mr. Burr; the number selected being the charming 'Day Dreams,' from 'The Spring Maid,' that delightful comedy in which Christie MacDonald is now starring."

The "illness" was her daughter's birth.

Presumably, Burr had become Miss Stevenson's duet partner because he had succeeded Stanley as the manager of the Peerless Quartet and, in all probability, as the soprano's business manager. The new Stevenson-Burr combination also recorded "Day Dreams," and another "Spring Maid" number, "Two Little Love Bees," for Indestructible.

For U. S. Everlasting they sang "Day Dreams," and "When You're in Town." Incidentally, in some cylinder record list I have seen records described as being by "Elise Wood" (using her married name) and Burr, but am not sure which one it was.

Burr sang "Day Dreams," on a Columbia disc assisted by a soprano, Margaret Mayew, with whom he made several records, but I doubt that Mayew was a disguise for Miss Stevenson, although no information was given concerning her.

The only Columbia disc by Stevenson-Burr was A1021, "When You're in Town," issued about the same time as the Indestructible cylinder. It is rather surprising to find Miss Stevenson, in September, 1911, giving, on No. A1029, a raggy interpretation of Shelton Brooks' Negro song classic, "Some of These Days," which has been immortalized by Sophie Tucker.

Miss Stevenson had the shouting assistance of the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet. That was her last Columbia appearance, but in the same supplement she and the still living Walter Van Brunt sang, on A1023, "Hannah, Won't You Smile Awhile On Me?"

After five successful years, Elise Stevenson's recording career was coming to a close. In June, 1911, however, she and Burr made a highly popular record (No. 16854) of "Love is Like a Red, Red Rose," coupled with Guido Gialdini, probably the greatest of all whistlers, trilling "My Hero Waltz," from "A Chocolate Soldier."

In September, the month in which her last Columbia appeared, she sang (on 16898), "When You're in Town," with Burr, coupled with "I Only Know I Love You," by Macdonough. One month later she and Burr occupied the B side of 16907 with a charming duet, "Save Up Your Kisses for a Rainy Day." Van Brunt and John Bieling took side A with "The Owl in the Old Oak Tree."

That was the last Elise Stevenson record except that "The Garden of Dreams," which she sang with Macdonough, was recoupled on 16932 with Elizabeth Wheeler's vocal version of "The Glow Worm," after having previously been issued under a lower number.

The reason why Elise Stevenson gave up her recording career is made clear in a letter she wrote to me on August 29, 1947. Her husband preferred for her to concentrate on being a housewife and mother rather than a professional entertainer, and she acceded to his wishes. In part the letter says:

"My dear Mr. Walsh: Your letter finally reached me in Spring Lake (N.J.) where I am spending the summer. Needless to say that it surprises me very much that anybody would remember Elise Stevenson. (The Alice was a mistake, but the company insisted on standing by that mistake, so—who were we in those days to dictate as to what they did?)

"Thank you for the compliment of wishing to see me, but I am going to my daughter's home from here next week. She lives in Montrose, Calif., and I do not know just when I will return to East Orange—some time next year, as each time I go I usually stay over the holidays. My son and his family live in Montclair, so I see them all spring and summer.

"Yes, I was the soprano in the Metropolitan Trio.

"... About Corinne Morgan, or Welsh, I only know she married and went West.

"... About the 'China Doll,' I didn't remember it. I haven't any list of all the records made by me for any of the companies. If you have one would it be too much to ask you to let me have a copy? My son seems to be particularly interested, on account of his children—one daughter and two sons.

"Mr. Wood died in July, 1943, after a long illness. I never kept up with any of my musical associates. Mr. Wood left the musical for the business world... and as I had my two children and the home to look after, I thought it better to 'keep the peace.'

"I'm sorry I can't help you, but I do appreciate your passing interest in 'Elise Stevenson.' It certainly picked up my morale to think that anyone would have the slightest interest in a back number. Thank you sincerely, ELISE S. WOOD."

I compiled as nearly complete a list as I could of Mrs. Wood's records and sent it to her. I also assured her my interest was not merely a "passing one," but had been with me ever since I first heard a record by her, and that thousands of record collectors considered her anything but a back number.

That assurance I now repeat. And I wish there were space to publish a virtually complete list of her recordings, but she made too many for that to be possible.

And so—in the style of the old movie "travelog" editors—we bid farewell to Elise Stevenson in her sunny California home and hope that she will enjoy many happy years as a good neighbor of her fellow song birds, the Swallows of Capistrano. (Lacking first-hand knowledge, I'm assuming swallows do sing!)

And here's wishing happiness also to her granddaughter, the bride, and wishing that I hadn't lost the clipping giving her photo and full name! My four cats—Roger, Gray, Nipper, and Petey, join me in these good wishes.

P. S. Since this article deals in part with marriage, perhaps this is a suitable place to quote from a letter sent to me by a travelling evangelistic singer, Wilbur Leverett of Lamar, Mo. In my recent series concerning Vernon Dalhart I said I wondered what had become of his violinist, Adelyne Hood. Mr. Leverett writes:

"I was in Tuscaloosa, Ala., in 1952 or 1954, and called on Adelyne Hood's cousin, who told me that Miss Hood had married an importer, and they travelled all over the world together. I forget what Miss Hood's husband imported, but he sounded like a very important man."

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March 22, Bohème: Same cast as November 18 except: Marcello - Lo. se, Alcindoro - Tavecchia.  
 March 24, Madama Butterfly: Same cast as November 30 except: Butterfly - Destinn, Suzuki - Swartz, Kate Pinkerton - G. Fisher, Sharpless - Polese, Commissioner - Huddy.  
 March 25, Matinee, Manon: Same cast as February 15 except: Manon - Garden, Lescaut - Gilly, Guards - Strozso, White.  
 March 25, Fanciulla del West: Same cast as January 17 except: Jack Rance - Polese.

As Father Palmer pointed out in his first listing of the Boston Opera, a link obviously existed between many of its artists and the domestic Columbia label.

Witness Boninsegna for one—no sooner had she joined the newly-formed Boston operatic forces than Columbia signed her up. To a greater or lesser extent the same is true of Bronskaja, Dereyne, Freeman, Gay,

Lipkowska, Nielsen, Olitzka, Baklanoff, Mardones, Destinn, Garden, Gay, Swartz, Villani, Carolina White, Blanchart, Goritz, Slezak, Zenatello.

It would appear, then, that were it not for the Boston Opera, our collecting might be somewhat different now. Goodness, just imagine not having those nice "banner labels" of Boninsegna, Garden, Gay, Olitzka and others to look for.

After this sobering thought we hasten with our thanks to Henry Russell, the brain behind the Boston organization, for saving us from such a dire fate, and to Father Palmer for giving us the first glimpse behind the Boston Opera curtain.

This latter contribution is what in the journalistic jargon would be defined as a "scoop."

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### PART I

#### I. Unrivalled American Basso

"The unrivalled American basso," as Columbia record catalogs used to call the late Frank Croxton, has been mentioned frequently in articles about other pioneer record makers. Among his associates whose biographical sketches have already appeared are Charles Harrison, Reed Miller, Lambert Murphy, and the Eight Famous Victor Artists. Now I have decided it is time to publish an appreciation of the recording career of Frank Croxton himself.

In 1924 the late George Pullen Jackson, then a member of the music faculty of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., was writing a series of articles on "Southern Musicians" for Sunday newspapers. I don't believe I can give a more

### Frank Croxton

By JIM WALSH

effective general introduction to Frank Croxton and his achievements than by quoting what Dr. Jackson said about him:

"I think it would be a fair guess that big, jolly, golden-voiced Frank Croxton has provided the United Statesers with more unalloyed musical enjoyment than has any other American bass singer. You want me to prove it? It can't be done, of course. It was only a guess.

"But show me the man whose phonographic records have gone into millions of homes; who has, for a number of years, given a hundred recitals per season from coast to coast; who has func-

tioned for full 14 years as soloist in one of New York's best churches, and whose artistry, during a term of ten years as head of the vocal department of the Chautauqua (N. Y.) assemblies, has brought him into touch with uncounted thousands. Show me one other man of the basso variety who has a record that will match this one, and I shall have to acknowledge that my guess was a bad one.

"If the Blue Grass State doesn't stop producing great singers and players we shall have to change the general title of these articles to 'Kentucky Musicians.' And we shall have to say of that Commonwealth that it is the home of 'fast horses, fair women and famous artists.'

"Frank Croxton saw the light of day in Paris, Ky., in 1877, and passed the first five eventful years of his life there before his parents moved to Lexington. It was in Lexington that he got his general education in the public schools and in Transylvania University, where he graduated in 1898. It is there also where he received his first musical instruction at the hands of his father, Chester F. Croxton, who is now, by the way, a prominent choir leader in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Immediately after young Croxton's graduation he went to New York City and laid his musical talents in the hands of Frank Herbert Tubbs, voice builder. Later he worked also with the noted masters, Oscar Saenger and John Denis Mehan. The European part of Mr. Croxton's vocal education was gained in Paris in 1907 and 1908 under Frank King Clark, a well known music pedagogue of the French capital, for whom Mr. Croxton, after his return to America, arranged a master class in New York, which was attended by many of the best American singers.

"At this time Mr. Croxton was in the midst of his work at Chautauqua, summer after summer. And it was at this time that he started his long period of service as soloist at the Brick Church in New York. In the years following, the basso did, in addition to the above-mentioned singing, an ever increasing amount of concert and recital work. He was for a long time a member of a concert quartet, the other noted members of which were Agnes Kimball (soprano), Nevada Van Der Veer (contralto), and the late Reed Miller (tenor).

"Mr. Croxton's present occupations are threefold: He runs down from his Morristown, N. J., home (30 miles from New York on the Lackawanna) to Camden once in a while to make records for one of America's most prominent talking machine concerns; he takes a concert tour as often as he can get away with the 'Eight Victor Artists'; and he devotes the rest of his energies, mainly during the summer, to teaching vocal



Photos of the Peerless Quartet, reproduced from a 1919 Aeolian-Vocalion record catalog.

—Photo by Grooks Studio, Flint, Mich.

Frank Croxton autographed this photo in person for Jim Walsh.

—Photo by Apeda, New York City

art at his Morristown studios, far removed from the mechanical distractions of the big city, and still within reach of its art life.

"In 1899 Mr. Croxton married Elizabeth Lloyd of New York. Mrs. Croxton is an excellent soprano singer and is now associated with her husband in his summer master-class work."

## II. Newspaper Death Notice

Frank Croxton had about a quarter of a century of life remaining after George Pullen Jackson's eulogy was put into print. When he died, September 4, 1949, the following appeared in the New York Herald Tribune:

"Frank Croxton, 71, a church soloist for 40 years and a basso who toured the United States and Canada with various singers and symphony orchestras, died yesterday at Sanger's Nursing Home, 500 West 67th Street. He lived at 441 West 57th Street.

"Born in Paris, Ky., Mr. Croxton's singing career encompassed opera, concerts, oratorios, recitals, phonograph recordings, and radio programs, usually in supporting roles. He was soloist at the Brick Presbyterian Church, when it was at Fifth Avenue and 36th street, for 25 years, and later at the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, Fifth Avenue and 48th street, for 15 years. He resigned from the latter two years ago.

"Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Croxton, and four sons, Chester H., Lucius, John C., and Frank Croxton, Jr. The funeral service will be private."

The death certificate issued by the City of New York Department of Health says the eminent basso had lived in New York for 45 years. By an error, it gives his birth date as October 7, 1887, instead of 1877. He was 71 years, 10 months, and 27 days of age at his death.

His profession is set down, inac-

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## The New Edison Records for October

THE NEW PHONOGRAM, October, 1911

—All photos from the collection of the author

curately, as "actor." His father's name, as we already know, was Chester Croxton, and his mother's maiden name, Mary Anderson.

He had been in the Sanger Home for 20 days, and his death occurred at 4:30 p.m. on September 4. His physician, whose signature I can't

decipher, attributes death to "generalized arterio-sclerosis." The body was cremated at Fresh Pond Crematory and the funeral was held on September 6.

## III. Other Brief Sketches

Additional information concerning Frank Croxton may be found in the 1914 catalog of Blue Amberol records and the 1920 Columbia list. The Edison cylinder booklet says:

"Frank Croxton was born in Paris, Ky. His father, Chester F. Croxton, had a remarkable basso voice and sang only the best song literature; consequently the young son knew the great songs and arias before he had any thought of becoming a professional singer. Mr. Croxton spent several seasons in opera and has sung every bass role in the grand and light operas commonly sung in repertoire companies, and has always ranked high among America's leading oratorio and concert basses. Among the great orchestras with which he has appeared may be mentioned the Boston Symphony, New York Symphony, New York Philharmonic."

It is obvious that Croxton was an artist of sound musical attainments, but I wish we had more information about his operatic career. The Columbia catalog referred to him both under his own name and as a member of the famous Columbia Stellar Quartet. I have combined the two references:

"Music lovers throughout the United States will commend our action in securing Mr. Frank Croxton, the unrivaled American basso, for a number of selections. Mr. Croxton has been known for years as one of the ablest and most gifted vocal artists the concert stage of the country has been able to boast, his continuous engagements with most of the large orchestras and in oratorio performances bringing him closely in touch with the best of the musically inclined portion of the American public."

"Frank Croxton was born in Kentucky and was educated at the Kentucky

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University. At the youthful age of six his remarkable voice was developing under the tutelage of his father. At 21 he came to New York and built up a reputation which has taken him as soloist with orchestras and choral societies throughout the United States. The outstanding quality of Croxton's voice is an unusual clearness seldom found in a voice of such low bass register. In his solo passages this clarity is particularly noticeable."

#### IV. Beginning a Recording Career

When his recording career began, Frank Croxton was a tall, barrel-chested, strongly built man of 33. His photographs usually show him wearing glasses and a sardonic expression. It is amusing to observe how he towers over his three associates of the Columbia Stellar Quartet in a picture published in *HOBBIES* for March, 1958.

The first Croxton record I have traced is a two-minute U. S. Everlasting cylinder No. 239, which must have been made late in 1910 or early in 1911. It is a duet version of an Ernest R. Ball song hit, "In the Garden of My Heart," which he sang with that most prolific of all duetists, Henry Burr.

Like Croxton, Burr had been a star pupil of the distinguished singing coach, John D. Mehan, and it is probable that the most popular ballad singing tenor in the history of the phonograph deserves the credit for persuading Croxton to make records.

A few other Croxton records are listed in the U. S. Everlasting catalog for October, 1912. They include the following four-minute cylinders: 1447, "Hosanna;" 1320, "The Lord is My Shepherd," a duet with Reed Miller, and 1562, "Flora's Holiday," by the Frank Croxton Quartet.

#### V. Singing for Edison

The basso's first Edison appearance occurred in October, 1911, when he and Reed Miller sang, on Amberol cylinder No. 799, the "Lost, Proscribed" air from "Martha."

The New Phonogram editor remarked: "Mr. Miller is too well-known among Edison enthusiasts to require an introduction; Mr. Croxton's robust baritone voice and his dramatic style in singing will endear him at once to all purchasers of this record. The perfect blending of the two voices, coupled with the fact that the record is sung in English, is sure to make it extremely popular among lovers of grand opera."

In November, on No. 835, Miller and Croxton sang "The Lord is My Shepherd." Said the editor: "Reed Miller and Frank Croxton have both sung the anthem hundreds of times in their church work and it naturally follows that their rendition of it is beyond unfavorable criticism."

Croxton was one of the few recording artists who headed a quartet featuring his name. In January, 1912, the Frank Croxton Quartet was represented with an Amberol cylinder, No. 884, of the "Flora's Holiday—Song Cycle," which has already been mentioned as a U. S.

Everlasting record. The description said:

"'Flora's Birthday' is a cycle of songs by H. Lane Wilson, who has been unusually successful in arranging quaint and charming melodies in the old English style. Our record contains: 'Come All Ye Lads and Lassies,' an original song in 2-4 time; 'Gentle Dawn,' an arrangement of an English melody of the 15th century, which is in madrigal form, sung unaccompanied; and 'Country Dance,' a characteristic melody in 6-8 time, full of life and spirit. The fine organization of the Frank Croxton Quartet, now en tour in concert work, is shown by the clear enunciation of the singers and their spirited work throughout."

Besides Croxton, the quartet consisted of Agnes Kimball, soprano; Reed Miller, tenor, and Miller's wife, Nevada Van Der Veer, contralto—all now dead. Their photos were published on the front cover of that month's Edison supplement. The New Phonogram said of Croxton, "there is not a prominent oratorio society in America that has not had him for soloist at one time or another," and commented about the Quartet:

"The Frank Croxton Quartet is composed of singers of the highest rank individually and collectively. Their work has never been excelled in America by any organization of vocalists. It represents several years of earnest effort together, more with the idea of perfect ensemble from an art point of view than from any idea of exploiting their work publicly. The demand for their services has been so insistent that the artists are making several short tours during the season to all parts of the country. The quartet, when in New York, sings at Dr. Henry Van Dyke's famous Fifth Avenue Brick Church. The members of the organization have the distinction of singing over 100 concerted numbers from memory—a record that will probably stand for many years."

In February, the quartet sang "I Love, Love" from "The Red Widow." And in March, Mrs. Kimball, with the other members assisting, was heard in the "Inflammas" from "Stabat Mater." Croxton and Miller were present with a duet rendition of "Crucifix." May brought a three-part interpretation of "God is Love, His Mercy Brightens," by Kimball, Miller, and Croxton.

A month later, Croxton's first Edison solo was announced. It was the composition with which he perhaps was most identified, "Gypsy Love Song" from Victor Herbert's "Fortune Teller," and was made with the help of a mixed chorus—no doubt the other three members of the quartet, which also sang the record of the beautiful waltz, "Carmena."

A second Croxton solo, "Hear Me! Ye Winds and Waves" was issued in July, with this comment:

"Surging with the spirit of the elements, this great masterpiece of Handel's has been one of Mr. Croxton's most successful songs as baritone soloist with the New York Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Victor Herbert and Theodore Thomas Orchestras. A recitative from Handel's 'Julius Caesar' and the air from 'Scipio' are combined by an orchestra accompaniment in which is heard the ceaseless booming of the restless waves."

No more Croxton records were issued by Edison before the first list

of unbreakable Blue Amberol cylinders came out in November, 1912.

#### VI. Croxton as a Columbia and Victor Singer

Croxton's Columbia debut was only a month later than his Edison. In February, 1912, attention was called to his 12-inch record, No. A5344, of two standard bass numbers, "Out on the Deep" and "Thy Sentinel Am I."

March brought a 10-inch version, No. A1114, of "Off to Philadelphia," coupled with "The Little Irish Girl," sung by W. Francis Firth. Croxton and Miller teamed in April to sing "The Wanderer's Night Song" on one side of a 10-inch disc while Grace Kerns and Bessie Volckmann sang "O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast" as its coupling.

Croxton also offered a bass solo of "Hosanna." Its mating was "Welcome, Happy Morning," by the Columbia Mixed Quartet—possibly another name for the Croxton Quartet.

In July, Miller and Croxton were heard in "A Stein Song," "Brown October Ale," sung by another basso with the initials F. C.—Frank Conly—was pressed on the other side.

In November, Miller and Croxton sang a 12-inch version of "The Lord is My Shepherd." Its pairing was Handel's "Largo," given in Italian by the great German baritone lieder singer, Alexander Heinemann.

For December, 1912, Croxton cashed in on the Christmas trade by making a 12-inch version of Gounod's "Nazareth," sung with the help of the Columbia Mixed Chorus. The other side was occupied with "And the Glory of the Lord," by the Columbia Oratorio Chorus. The monthly supplement said, concerning the Croxton side:

"This celebrated song—one of the best achievements of its equally celebrated composer, and especially adapted to the male voice of low register—still stands supreme among songs of its class. It is sung for our list by Mr. Frank Croxton with the entire strength of our unrivaled Mixed Chorus."

Croxton's only solo Victor record also appeared in December, 1912. It, too, was a solo rendition of "Nazareth," but without the aid of a chorus, and was doubled with "Yuletide," a "Christmas fantasia" played by Arthur Pryor's Band. Said the supplement:

"The Victor introduces a new bass in Gounod's majestic song of the Nativity. Mr. Croxton's rich and resonant voice and good delivery are already familiar to concert-goers throughout the United States, and his Victor records will present him to a new and much larger audience."

Strangely, in view of the way Croxton had immediately "caught on" with Edison and Columbia patrons, his name didn't appear again in a Victor list for almost seven years, even though the "Nazareth" record sold well. And, although Victor issued solo records by Agnes Kimball and Reed Miller, the Frank Croxton Quartet was never among the Victor recording groups.

(To be continued)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## I. Established Artist

By the end of 1912 Frank Croxton was established as a recording artist, but one who sang operatic and concert songs almost entirely and did not go in for "popular" music.

His absence from the Victor lists after the "Nazareth" record may have been due to his signing a contract to make lateral cut discs only for Columbia. I have never, however, seen any mention of his being an exclusive Columbia artist for solo work.

When the first list of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders was issued in November, 1912, Croxton, Kimball, and Miller were heard on No. 1502, in the Trio from "Faust." After describing the scene in which the Trio is sung, the supplement said: "Miss Kimball and Messrs. Miller and Croxton have been singing in concert for years as soprano, tenor, and baritone, respectively, of the celebrated Frank Croxton Quartet. An effective record of their concerted efforts is offered lovers of grand opera in English."

A month later, on No. 1537, Croxton and a chorus of female voices sang to an accompaniment of harp, organ, and orchestra, "List! The Cherubic Host" from Alfred Gaul's oratorio, "The Holy City."

Another ambitious undertaking came in the fourth Amberol list when the four sang the Quartet from "Rigoletto" (No. 1528). I have never heard this record, but I found an intriguing reference to it in a recently acquired copy of the English magazine, *The Gramophone*, for September, 1923.

Felix Sykes, recording secretary of the City of London Phonograph Society, reported that "Mr. Hillyer

## Frank Croxton

By JIM WALSH

### PART II

had some interesting remarks to make upon the record of the Quartet from 'Rigoletto.' He said that he had heard all the leading discs of this title—several made by celebrated artists—but the Blue Amberol cylinder easily came out on top. The meeting was in complete agreement with this opinion."

On No. 1517 Croxton sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" as a solo. His only Edison Diamond Disc (No. 88072) combined "Rocked in the Cradle" with "My Pretty Jane," sung by John Young and Frederick Wheeler. The basso's sonorous tones are heard to scintillating effect.

In the sixth list, issued in March, 1913, Croxton, with the help of a chorus, sang "O, Little Mother of Mine." The following month, on 1745, the Quartet rendered a hymn, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

In August, on 1805, Croxton gave a rousing interpretation of "Father O'Flynn." Kimball, Miller, and Croxton sang "God is Love, His Mercy Brightens" (1862) for the September list, and in October, on 1991, the trio was heard in "Praise Ye" from Verdi's "Attila." Also in October, on 2004, Miller and Croxton sang Faure's "Crucifix."

Frank Croxton's last Blue Amberol record, 2110, issued in December, 1913, contained the "Gypsy Love Song," which, like "God is Love,"

had already appeared on the wax Amberol.

In view of the standard type of the numbers sung by Croxton and his associates it is probable that all the Blue Amberol records had been made originally for wax cylinders. This lends more color to the supposition that he became an exclusive Columbia artist for a period of two years or so.

## II. Columbia and Others

Croxton recorded so extensively for Columbia from 1912 to 1920 that it would be tedious to trace his activities. The November, 1914, catalog lists 17 solos by him, as well as duets with Henry Burr, Harry McClaskey (who was also Henry Burr!) and Reed Miller; a rendition of the "Good Night Quartet" from "Martha," with Grace Kerns, Mildred Potter, and Miller; and two records by the Croxton Mixed Quartet.

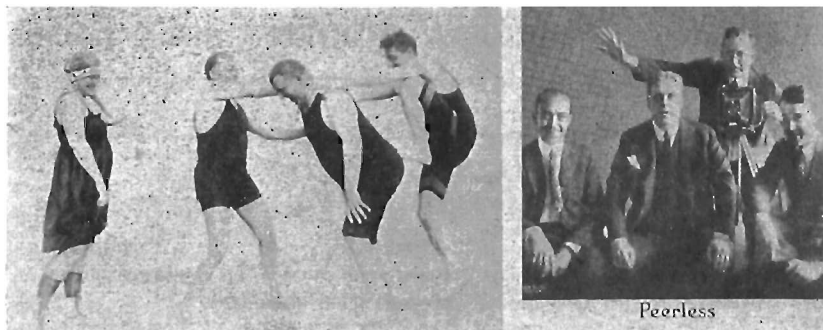
A little later he took part in a 12-inch version of "Carmena," the other singers being Kerns, Potter and Craig Campbell. He also sang in the Columbia Mixed Quartet, with Kerns, Potter, and Charles Harrison. After Miss Potter's death in 1915, the women members became Beulah Gaylord Young (Mrs. Charles Harrison), soprano; and Rose Bryant, contralto.

Shortly before Miss Potter's death Croxton took the bass role in a recording of the Lucia Sextet, the other members being Kerns, Potter, Harrison, Reed Miller, and Albert Wiederhold, who also recorded under the name of Herbert Stuart. Charles Harrison is the only survivor of the Sextet singers.

For half a dozen years Croxton was especially prominent among Columbia artists as a member of the famous Stellar Quartet, whose first record appeared in January, 1914. The Quartet was formed because Columbia Recording Director, George Clarence Jell, wanted a four-voice group that would specialize in the unaccompanied singing of higher type music than the ordinary popular song.

For a record or two John Barnes Wells was the second tenor; Charles Harrison, the first; Andrea Sarto, baritone, and Croxton, bass. Henry Burr also sang the lead tenor part once or twice, but then Reed Miller was obtained, and the personnel remained constant until Croxton signed exclusively with Victor in 1920.

Two of the members—Miller and Croxton—were "lifted" from the Frank Croxton Quartet. The Colum-



Left to right:

This informal snapshot was taken at the Victor Jobbers' Convention in Atlantic City, June, 1920. Billy Murray, Frank Croxton, and Frank Banta are "doing stunts" to amuse Mrs. Murray.

A 1923 photo of the Peerless Quartet. Henry Burr, the manager, thought it bad luck for the quartet to have its picture taken "four in a row," so insisted on Croxton bringing up the rear. In front—John Meyer, Burr, and Albert Campbell.

bia Stellar organization won a deserved recognition as the best group of its kind. Although some Stellar Quartet records were issued after Croxton left Columbia, I have no idea who took his place.

Beginning around 1915, Croxton did some recording for the minor companies that made hill-and-dale records in the hope of sharing the phonograph's growing popularity. I have a Rex sapphire record on which Croxton sings "The Clang of the Forge," backed with "Annie Laurie," by the Peerless Quartet.

The Croxton Quartet sang a medley of Christmas Carols on Gennett 7620. When Okeh began to make vertical cut records in 1917 Croxton and his associates were engaged.

On one double-faced record the Croxton Trio sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." On another the Quartet sang "Goodbye, Sweet Day," and on still another Croxton was heard in a solo version of "When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings." On others the Trio sang "Praise Ye" and the Quartet, "Sweet and Low."

Croxton and Miller recorded a Pathe duet (No. 30400) of "The Two Beggars." And when Okeh began to make lateral cut records in 1919 the Croxton Trio did a "Christmas Hymns Medley."

While I can't prove it, I suspect that "Franklin Careau," a bass who sang "Gypsy Love Song" and other standard numbers for the 7-inch Emerson list in 1916-17, was Croxton. Both singers had the initials F. C. — and performers who were using an assumed name usually liked to give some clue as to who they really were!!

### III. Peerless Quartet and Eight Victor Artists

In 1919 Frank Croxton became a member of the Peerless Quartet and the concert group which was to become known the following year as the Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor Artists. Croxton took the place of Arthur Collins, the baritone who had been a Quartet member for more than 10 years but was frequently at odds with the second tenor and manager, Henry Burr. John Meyer, the Peerless bass, switched to the baritone part, and Croxton took the bass.

After an absence of almost seven years, Croxton's name and photo appeared in the Victor supplement for November, 1919, when, on record 18609, he and Burr harmonized a ballad, "Weeping Willow Lane."

It was combined with the Peerless Quartet version of a favorite sentimental tear-jerker, "When I'm Gone You'll Soon Forget." This record was such a big seller that when electrical recording was introduced in 1925, Victor had both sides remade by the same artists and issued as 19870.

Until late in 1920 Peerless was kept busy recording as free lances for every record company in the United States, excepting Edison



Frank Croxton (center, lower left) was one of the many artists represented in the first list of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders issued in November, 1912.

and Brunswick, and also making periodic trips to Canada. Albert Campbell, the first tenor, recalled they scheduled recording "dates" in morning, afternoon, and night shifts in order to make discs enough to satisfy all the companies and still take long concert tours.

It must have been a relief to the Quartet, from the standpoint of avoiding excessive work, when an agreement was reached to make records exclusively for Victor, and the concert troupe's name was changed from the Record Makers to the Eight Famous Victor Artists.

It is amusing that Burr had one odd superstition concerning the Peerless. He had no objection to photos being taken of himself, Campbell, and Meyer as a group, and old Victor supplements contain many pictures of the Sterling Trio, as the three were known. But Burr considered it bad luck for all four members of the Quartet to appear in the same picture and strenuously objected to Croxton's being added for photo purposes to the Trio.

On just one occasion he was persuaded to allow the Peerless to be photographed as an ensemble, instead of separately, but only on condition that one of the four must not be in line with the others. So Croxton was posed in the background, operating a camera, and Burr was placated—more or less.

The Quartet's exclusive Victor engagement was announced in The Voice of the Victor for December, 1920, but by that time it was not news. The Eight had been guests at the Victor jobbers' convention in Atlantic City late in June, and it was known then that negotiations

were under way to place Billy Murray, Campbell, Burr, Meyer, and Croxton under contract to record only for "His Master's Voice."

I think it is generally agreed that the Peerless Quartet reached the height of its popularity and musical attainment during the six years Croxton was its "foundation." Arthur Collins was one of the finest comedians of his day, but he was not Croxton's equal as a quartet member.

For near-perfection in ensemble singing, the combination of Campbell, Burr, Meyer, and Croxton probably has never been surpassed, even though Meyer occasionally had a tendency, as Billy Murray said, "to cut in too strong."

Other members of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, during the years Croxton made cross-country tours with it, were Fred Van Eps, banjoist, who was succeeded by the greatest of saxophone virtuosos, Rudy Wiedoeft; Monroe Silver, comedian; and Frank Banta, pianist. Of this group only Van Eps and Banta are still living.

Some years ago a man who heard the Eight several times in concert recalled a time Croxton sang the Volga Boatman song. Before singing Croxton gave a spoken introduction in which he said he considered the late Feodor Chaliapin the greatest living basso and would try to sing the Boatman song as nearly as possible in Chaliapin's style. After Croxton completed his bravura rendition the man said he was convinced Croxton was as good as Chaliapin.

One of the Peerless Quartet records in which Croxton is heard to excellent advantage is the 1924 Vic-

tor of "There's Yes, Yes in Your Eyes." Ordinarily, Burr, as lead tenor, took all the solo lines, but in this number Croxton is allowed to dominate a chorus, and his resonant, sonorous tones make delightful listening.

He is also heard to splendid effect in "Where the Dreamy Wabash Flows." On an earlier Columbia record, the quartet occupied both sides of a disc singing "Hits of Days Gone By," a medley of old Harry Von Tilzer compositions. Croxton comes out strong in the last selection on side two, "Row, Row, Row."

It is worth mentioning, too, that from 1920 on Croxton was the bass of the American Quartet on Victor records. As soon as the exclusive contract was signed, the American became the same as the Peerless except that Murray was substituted for Burr.

The Eight was one of the first ensembles to make an electric recording. Immediately after the new process was developed, Burr's popular organization made double-faced 12-inch disc No. 35753, "A Miniature Concert by the Eight Popular Victor Artists." This record, issued in June, 1925, condensed their accustomed two hour concert programs to eight minutes.

Banta played "Strut, Miss Lizzie," Silver talked about his mythical friend, Cohen; the Sterling Trio sang "Love's Old Sweet Song," Burr, "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," and Murray obliged with "Casey Jones," on side one. On the second, Campbell and Burr sang "Sweet Genevieve," Wiedoeft tootled "Saxophobia," Croxton sang "Gypsy Love Song," and the Quartet, for a rousing finale, was heard in the chorus of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" and "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground." It seems generally agreed that Croxton's segment is the outstanding vocal achievement.

Unfortunately, Burr's personal relations with the Quartet gradually became less harmonious than the singing, and late in 1925 he decided to replace the other three members with singers who were capable but not so well known. Campbell, Meyer, and Croxton gave way to Carl Mathieu, first tenor; Stanley Baughman, baritone; and James Stanley, bass. The first record by the new Peerless Quartet was announced in the Victor supplement for January, 1926.

Being dismissed must have been a hard blow for Albert Campbell, who had sung in the Peerless and its predecessor, the Columbia Quartet, since the early 1900's. He soon formed a fairly successful duet recording partnership with Jack Kaufman.

Meyer, after making a few records with Henry Moeller, who disguised himself for duet purposes as Henry Fairbank, returned to the New York florist shop he had owned all through his recording career. Croxton went back to teaching, church work, and his many other activities.

#### IV. Later Years

After his break with Burr, Croxton joined another male quartet in the late 1920's. This was a group, organized primarily for concert and radio work, which at first consisted of Charles Harrison and Redferne Hollinshead, tenors; Vernon Archibald, baritone, and Croxton, bass.

After Hollinshead gave way to Lambert Murphy, the Quartet made some fine Victor, Columbia, and Edison records. Its activities were discussed in the biographical sketches of Harrison and Murphy, already published in this department.

The depression put an end to the quartet's activities, but Croxton continued to be active in teaching and church singing. By this time two of the members of his original Frank Croxton Quartet—Agnes Kimball and Reed Miller—had died. Nevada Van Der Veer, Miller's wife, was the last survivor of the group. She died September 26, 1958.

I never corresponded with Frank Croxton and met him only once. That was on October 18, 1940, when I went with Billy Murray and two dear friends, Jimmy Martindale and Walter P. Macdonald, to a place in New York City, where some formerly popular recording artists were rehearsing a minstrel show which they hoped would be suitable for radio. Among those present I recall Gus Van, Charles Harrison, Everett Clark, Harry Donaghy, Joe White—the Silver-Masked Tenor," and Croxton.

After the rehearsal, at which I remember Murray sang "Bill Bailey" and Croxton "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground," I handed Croxton a photograph of himself that Billy had given me and asked him to autograph it. As the tall, florid-faced man wrote, he remarked with a sort of sadly humorous look: "It's hard to believe I ever looked that young. That's the way my son looks now!"

Croxton at that time was 62 years of age, but I thought his voice was unimpaired. I also showed him a picture of John Meyer, which I meant to have Meyer sign (he did, a few hours before I left New York) and Croxton affectionately remarked: "Well, Well, there's John Meyer, the old rogue!"

So ended my personal knowledge of Frank Croxton, whom I consider one of the most genuinely accomplished of the "popular" recording artists. Actually, he hardly belongs in the popular classification, since his recording of that type of music was restricted almost entirely to occasional duets with Burr and his work in the Peerless Quartet. When he died a little less than nine years after our meeting, the world of music lost a genuinely able, versatile, and sincere interpreter of the best in vocal art.

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## Harold Jarvis

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. Tenor's Namesake

For the past 18 years I have hoped some day to tell the life story of the late Harold Jarvis. I have wanted to do this not only because of my admiration for the eminent Middle Western tenor, but also because I felt HOBBIES readers should know of my Roanoke, Va., friend, that great and good man, Harold Jarvis Yates, who was named for the Detroit songbird.

In 1943, I left Johnson City, Tenn., where I was then editorial writer of the Press, and came to Roanoke as a staff member of the World-News. In those war days the staff was small and considerable "doubling up" was necessary, so I was soon assigned to the police beat, among a great many other things.

A detective who especially interested me was a tall, hazel-eyed, pipe-smoking gentleman, H. J. Yates. Mr. Yates had a command of English—"The gift of gab," as his crony and inveterate "needler," Detective Cecil Daniel (Friday) Webster, termed it—and an intellectually whimsical sense of humor that delighted me. I soon came to think of him as—what I still consider him although we meet rarely nowadays—one of my best friends.

One afternoon, "Friday" Webster facetiously addressed Detective Yates as "Harold Jarvis." That caused me to remark: "Why, that's funny! Did you know there used to be a famous tenor named Harold Jarvis?"

"Heck yeah, I knowed it!" Mr. Yates returned, with grammatical exactitude. "An aunt of mine married a kinfolk of his, and she tagged me after the guy!"

He beamed complacently, ignoring Webster's comment: "If that character could sing you sure don't take after him!"

This was indeed surprising news. I inquired into the circumstances of how the aunt persuaded Mr. Yates' parents to name him after a distinguished singer, and he related the circumstances to the best of his memory.

A few days ago, with this article in mind, I called up H. J. and asked him to restate the facts. He did,

and he also had me call his sister, Mrs. Dorothy Jones, whose recollection, he said, would be more accurate than his.

Between the sister and brother, I learned their parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Yates, were originally from Saginaw, Mich., where Mr. Yates was in the lumber business. In the early 1900's they came to the South, and lived at Johnson City, and in Bland county, Va., where Harold Jarvis Yates was born, before they moved to Roanoke.

Mrs. Yates had been a Davidson. Her sister, Sadie Davidson, who remained in Michigan, married Leon (usually known as Len) Jarvis—and Leon was an uncle of Harold Jarvis, the tenor. "Aunt Sadie," and "Uncle Len," who was in the building supply business, often visited the Yates family, and were on hand when the Yates baby son arrived. There was a discussion as to what he should be named. Father Yates said he'd like for him to have the same name as his own father—Henry James Yates—or at least the same initials.

Then Aunt Sadie, a strong admirer of her husband's handsome and gifted nephew, who lived in Detroit, spoke up. "Why don't you name him Harold Jarvis Yates?" she asked. "You'd still be keeping the initials, H. J., and maybe he'll grow up to be a famous singer like Harold Jarvis."

The suggestion found favor. Harold Jarvis Yates the infant became, and it is a name on which he has cast individual radiance. While he has not become the talented tenor for whom Aunt Sadie hoped, during his years as a detective he induced many a law violator to "sing."

Sadie and Len visited their Roanoke relations regularly for many years. My friend says one of his earliest recollections is of meeting Santa Claus, whom he later had reason to believe was "Uncle Len" in disguise.

The Michigan couple had no children of their own, but Len had a son by a former marriage. After the son's death, he and his Sadie adopted Len's granddaughter, Alice.

Len survived his nephew, Harold Jarvis, by two years, dying in 1926. Aunt Sadie is also dead. Harold Jarvis never visited Roanoke, and Mr. Yates never saw the celebrity whose name he bears.

And that is the story of how my Roanoke friend, who quit detective work well over a decade ago to become, like "Friday" Webster, a val-

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

ued investigator for Associated Transport, came to be named Harold Jarvis Yates. We are not quite done with him, however.

Before proceeding to consider the life and recordings of Harold Jarvis, I must give myself the pleasure of publishing here, for the benefit of future generations, a poem I wrote some 15 years ago, in which I paid tribute to the remarkable qualities of Harold Jarvis Yates.

### II. "Lines in Praise of a Great and Good Man"

I am proud of that poem. Whenever I despondently suspect my life has been in vain and I have written *Nothing That Will Live*, I console myself by re-reading the painstakingly wrought effusions which I termed "Lines in Praise of a Great and Good Man." The more I observed Mr. Yates the more I was impressed by his almost superhuman strength of character, and the more I longed to lay my meed of praise at his amply proportioned feet.

At last I succeeded. I realize, of course—and this is an opinion in which Harold Jarvis Yates, with a modest, but well grounded knowledge of his own virtues, wholeheartedly concurs—that no poem could do absolute justice to his manifold merits.

But it is my considered belief that, for subtlety, unflinching reality, and sympathetic portrayal of a great man's character, there is no other ode in the English language to equal it. Mr. Yates himself says that although it does not do him entire justice it starts in where Shakespeare leaves off.

Among many other felicities, I hope you will note the superlative ingenuity by which the reader is permitted to substitute "chest" or "vest," if he prefers, for "breast" in the second stanza. But I must confess, to be perfectly honest, that although Mr. Yates highly approves of the poem as a whole, there are two expressions in the third stanza which he deprecates.

Those regrettable lines must be attributed to other members of the Detective Bureau—and especially "Friday" Webster. They, no doubt, were somewhat jealous of the poetic tribute which Mr. Yates had received. They accused me of taking indecent liberties with the truth and insisted on changes being made. They even threatened to refuse me further news if I didn't make them. In order to remain a productive reporter, I had to do violence to my artistic integrity.

I had written "never with rum his thirst he sates, but gladly for



cold water waits." "Friday" insisted on this becoming, "ever with rum his thirst he sates, and never for cold water waits." When I flatly refused to make that change, we compromised, after some bickering, on "seldom with rum—."

I had also written, "the truth he durn nigh always states." Mr. Webster objected even more strongly to this, and demanded that it become, "the truth he almost never states" or "the truth he hardly ever states."

Once more I declined, even though warned the Detective Bureau might be declared out of bounds for me. "Friday" next suggested, "the truth he with reluctance states," but I wouldn't have that, either. Finally, we agreed to substitute, "the truth he on occasion states."

It is those changes which Mr. Yates feels do violence to the overall concept of him as a noble, heroic character. But here, with all its merits (too numerous to mention) and its defects (precious few) is my poem in praise of that great and good man, who has even more merits and fewer faults than the work of art:

"Thrice blessed of the shining Fates  
Is he yeleft H. Jarvis Yates!  
He holdeth friendly tete-a-tetes  
With gentlemen who burgle freights,  
And ladies who hacksaw their mates  
Confide to him their better traits,  
The while he strokes their lovely pates  
And fingerprints perpetuates.  
Shy damsels snatched from hotel dates  
Sob on the breast (\*) of Harold Yates.  
Neighbors' quarrels he arbitrates  
And fussy females he placates,  
But sin he manfully berates,  
Envisioning the Pearly Gates;  
Aught that's depraved he staunchly hates,  
(So surely pure is Jarvis Yates!)  
Seldom with rum his thirst he sates,  
But gladly for cold water waits;  
The truth he on occasion states.  
Brawls he rarely originates—  
A fact that clearly indicates  
No vulgar rows he tolerates.  
In Fame's fair Hall he richly rates—  
Our Harold (H. J.) Jarvis Yates!  
(\* Or chest, or vest, if you prefer.)

And now, with this amiable horse-play disposed of, we may proceed to a serious consideration of the life and achievements of Detroit's favorite tenor, Harold Jarvis.

### III. Death Certificate

Harold Jarvis' death certificate, which the Detroit Department of Health sent me, proved disappointing. I was surprised to find Jarvis' wife, whose maiden name was Marie Judson (his second wife), didn't know the date of his birth. His age was given as "about 59," and his home as 702 Glynn Court. His occupation was set down as "artist."

Jarvis was born in Toronto, Canada, which no doubt partly accounts for his popularity in Canada and for his recording the national Canadian anthem, "O Canada!" His father's name is given as George Jarvis, and he was born, the certificate says, somewhere in England. His mother's maiden name was said to be unknown, but she, too, was believed of English birth.

Dr. G. P. Cooley's report said he had treated Jarvis from 1921 until his death on March 31, 1924, for



Harold Jarvis, Detroit church and concert tenor, well established before the 20th century.

edema of the lungs and aortic obstruction, which I interpret to mean a combination of dropsy and a heart ailment. Burial took place in Woodlawn Cemetery on April 3. There was no mention of any children.

Since the certificate reached me, I have had a windfall of further Jarvis information from Kurtz Myers, chief of the Music and Drama Department of the Detroit Public Library. Mr. Myers sent photostatic copies of virtually everything concerning Harold Jarvis in the Library's files, and graciously assured me: "We certainly wish to be helpful in the preparation of your article about one of Detroit's few musical celebrities."

He surely has been. In fact, I can't think of any time when any other person or institution has been more helpful! From the newspaper clippings and other material enclosed in Mr. Myers' bulky envelope I can give much information I did not previously have. In fact, I am almost swamped, but gratefully so, by the wealth of Jarvisiana which has descended upon me!

### IV. Considered for Light Opera

Before me is a newspaper story which reveals that, well before the 20th century, Harold Jarvis was established in the Detroit area as a church and concert tenor of exceptional ability. On January 3, 1899, a Detroit newspaper published a long news story saying the manager of the Alice Nielsen Opera Company was thinking of engaging Jarvis, to give the Company a tenor of the artistic stature of its famous basso, Eugene Cowles. Here is a condensed version of what appeared under the heading, "Jarvis May Join a Great Opera Company:

"Manager Frank L. Perley, of the Nielsen Opera Co., has ambitious plans for that organization for next season, and one of them is to secure Detroit's tenor, Harold Jarvis, as a member of the company.

"Mr. Perley had heard Mr. Jarvis spoken of as one of the leading tenors of the country, and when he came to Detroit last week made overtures to get his name to a contract. Mr. Jarvis re-

ceives many offers of this kind and has persistently refused to be tempted from his present pleasant and remunerative work, but after witnessing a performance of 'The Fortune Teller,' he said that was the first light opera organization he had seen that he would consent to become a member of. He made an appointment with Mr. Perley to sing for him at the Hotel Cadillac yesterday, but was unable to do so on account of the illness of Arthur Depew, his accompanist. Mr. Perley will, however, be given an opportunity to hear his voice next week in Chicago, during the engagement of 'The Fortune Teller' in that city.

"I am going to make the Nielsen Company the leading light opera organization in this country," said Mr. Perley yesterday, "and am on the lookout for a tenor who will equal Mr. Cowles as a basso. If all I have heard of Mr. Jarvis' singing is true he will fill the bill."

I wonder what happened. So far as I know, Jarvis didn't join the "Fortune Teller" company or any other light opera ensemble. Probably he decided he preferred to stay amid the congenial surroundings of Detroit, where he was a local celebrity with great personal popularity.

Although the death certificate mentioned no children, Harold Jarvis was already a father when he was considering light opera status. The Detroit News-Tribune for January 1, 1899, contained a photograph of a baby boy, with a cut line, "Rulers of Our Homes." Beneath the cut line appeared the following:

"Harold Jarvis, Jr., whose wise little face looks out from this picture, is the handsome son of Harold Jarvis, the well-known and popular singer of Detroit. The face of little Harold shows not only beauty, but intelligence, and there is a dreamy expression in his large dark eyes, quite unusual in so young a child. The portrait was reproduced in half-tone from a photo taken by James Arthur."

Unfortunately, little Harold, Jr. (the first of two boys to bear that name) did not have a long life. His story ended tragically. He gave great promise, as he grew up, of becoming an accomplished pianist.

While he was still a boy, in 1910, his mother took him to Leipzig, Germany, to study. On the ship going over he suffered a fall which caused his death after he arrived in Leipzig. A sequel to this sad occurrence was published in the Detroit Free Press for September 11, 1913:

"Mrs. Harold Jarvis, wife of the well-known Detroit tenor, died Wednesday noon at the family residence, 39 Atkinson avenue.

"Grief and worry over the death of her only child, Harold Reginald Jarvis, who died in Germany three years ago last June, caused Mrs. Jarvis to fall ill about a year and a half ago. She never recovered her health, and her condition was such that her death Wednesday was not unexpected by her husband and other relatives.

"Mrs. Jarvis, the daughter of Dr. W. H. Gelkie, late dean of Trinity Medical College, Toronto, married Mr. Jarvis in Toronto 21 years ago. Other surviving members of her family, in addition to her husband, are two brothers, Dr. W. W. Gelkie, of Elmira, Ontario, Dr. W. W. Gelkie, of Toronto, and a sister, Miss Ethel Gelkie, of Toronto."

A newspaper story published after Jarvis' death said Mrs. Jarvis, whose maiden name was Laura Gelkie, was an accomplished singer. The loss of both his son and wife was described as "a crushing blow" to the tenor,

"and it is believed to have had much to do with the tender expression always apparent when Mr. Jarvis sang at the burial of friends."

#### V. Recital Reviews

Despite his bereavement, Jarvis continued active in church and concert work. In 1914, for instance, he sang twice within a few weeks at recitals in Buffalo, N. Y. The reviews which he received then may be considered typical of those throughout his career. Concerning his recital on January 21, 1914, given less than four months after Mrs. Jarvis' death, the Buffalo Inquirer said:

"Harold Jarvis, of Detroit, the distinguished concert and oratorio tenor, was the leading attraction at the delightful musical concert held yesterday afternoon in the piano salon of the J. N. Adam Company. . . and attended by nearly 1,500 people. Mr. Jarvis won instant favor with his listeners and through his various songs scored the same brilliant success that he won at his former appearance in this city as a soloist several years ago."

On February 25, the Inquirer reported:

"The handsome piano salon of the J. N. Adam Company was crowded yesterday afternoon to hear Harold Jarvis, the noted Scotch tenor of Detroit, in a return engagement, his recital several weeks ago having been so successful as to bring many requests to hear him again. Mr. Jarvis is one of the most popular concert artists before the public. He has a tenor voice of robust quality, full of color, while his ingratiating stage presence at once puts him on agreeable terms with his audience."

"Mr. Jarvis substituted for the first number on his program a beautiful musical setting of Tennyson's 'Crossing the Bar,' which he sang with exquisite feeling for both the text and music. The Scotch ballad, 'Mary of Argyle,' won such applause that the singer sang as an extra number, 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic,' in which he asked the audience to join in the chorus. Mr. Jarvis sang the stirring music of this song with superb declamatory style."

"Another hit was 'The Irish Courtship,' which Mr. Jarvis sang with inimitable effect, and, being recalled, asked the audience which of two songs those present preferred to hear him sing - 'A Perfect Day,' by Carrie Jacobs Bond, or 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.' 'Both' was the response, so with customary good nature Mr. Jarvis sang both with splendid vocalization."

Probably few of those who saw the tenor accede graciously and smilingly to requests had any conception of the grief with which he was struggling.

(To be continued)

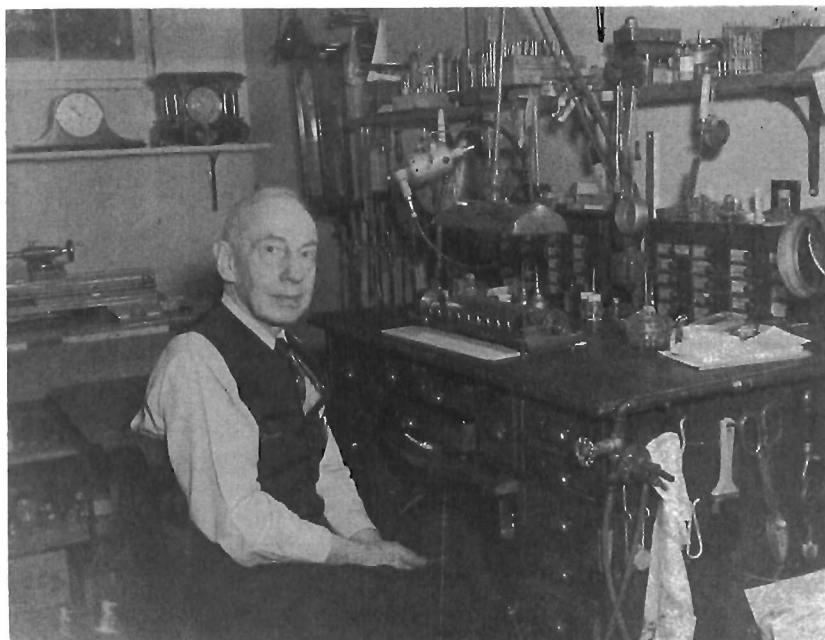
#### SHEET MUSIC

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell, trade. Send 10c stamps for big list. —Dean Snyder, 102 S. Main, Los Angeles 12, Calif. my3863

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 6, Colo. au12698

#### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL RESTORED instruments. Also buy and repair; reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. jly120821



GLENN P. HECKERT, Massillon, Ohio.

Mr. Heckert recently retired from his clock and jewelry business in Massillon. But he set up a basement shop at his home, and confesses that in his retirement he seems "busier than ever."

Many readers of HOBBIES know him also as a music box enthusiast. He is an expert on the mechanism of the old music box, and wrote the 32-page chapter on "Repairing the Music Box," for the book, "The Curious History of Music Boxes," published by the Lightner Publishing Corp.

He is one of the guiding spirits in the Music Box Society, which numbers an exclusive membership all over the country.

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WILL PAY CASH for cylinder reproducers of all types. Also, books and old record catalogs. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap3253

WANTED—Old cylinder phonos, and records, also disc phonos, roller organs and music boxes. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. ap3253

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books. \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3694

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

PRICES LOWERED again on over 100 antique cylinder and flat disc phonographs and antique radios. Prices to be lowered periodically until this list is sold. These are from my private collection because I am specializing in one kind. They are all the best you can find, and at no doubt the lowest prices you'll find. Lists 25c. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate Rd., Troy, Ohio. my36501

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. jly6468

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. jly3867

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap3426

ATTENTION! Antique phonograph service. Cylinder and disc phonographs, records, parts. Almost everything in this line available. No lists. Please send wants. All replies answered. Include stamp in first letter. Satisfaction guaranteed. List of what I have available for stamp. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State, Brewer, Maine. my48001

EDISON cylinder phonographs: Standard model, Cygnet horn, No. 10, \$75. Home and Standard models, \$40. Amberol model 50, \$30. Amberol Console model 75, \$35. Complete, playing, with 10 records. Busy Bee disc phonograph, \$50. Standard disc phonograph, model A, \$40. Harry Lauder; Cal Stewart - "Uncle Josh" disc records, 78's, 10", \$1; 12" \$1.50. Wanted: Player piano rolls and cylinder records. Will trade. — W. R. Harvey, 948 14th St., Apt. E., Santa Monica, Calif. my34811

FOR SALE: Old Victrola XI. Good condition. Many good records, both popular and classical. — Hylah R. Bender, 7816 Forest Ave., Munster, Ind. my3263

AUTOPHONE (mahogany). 46" high carrying 12 Blue Amberol cylinders playing one after the other continuously. Write: Benj. Franklin, Sr., Haynesville, Va. je3633

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Harold Jarvis

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Jarvis Records for Victor

Harold Jarvis had a rather late start as a recording artist. He must have been about 43 when he made his first appearance in the Victor studio. And he never became a professional recording artist—that is, one whose principal occupation was record making and who sang in public only as a sideline. Instead, recording remained subordinate to his high standing as a concert singer.

I have been able to trace a total of only 18 record sides by Jarvis, 12 for Victor, four for Columbia, and two Edison Blue Amberol cylinders. Most of his records had comparatively small sales, and his rating as a favorite pioneer recording artist today is based on the popularity of just one Victor disc.

Victor's issuing exactly 12 numbers from Jarvis' repertoire makes it appear plausible that the records, all issued within three months, were sung during one engagement occupying him only a few days. Probably he accepted an offer to make a dozen records and was never called on for repeat performances.

An examination of Jarvis' titles reveals that most were ill chosen for wide popularity. They were the sort of thing that an English "drawing room tenor" might have selected in Charles Dickens' day when called on to give a command performance at Windsor Castle before Queen Victoria, but they had little interest for American record buyers of the early 1900's. If he had chosen material less dated and of more popular appeal, his career as a Victor artist might have been extended.

The first two Jarvis records were announced in August, 1908. They both had a Scotch flavor—5486, "March of the Cameron Men," and 5487, "My Ain Countrie." The catalog editor said: "It is with pleasure that Victor offers two solos by this favorite tenor. In the cities of Canada and the Middle West, Mr. Jarvis is a great favorite, and we predict that he will make new admirers by his spirited rendering of the favorite Scotch battle hymn."

In view of Jarvis' fondness for old Scotch songs, I wonder if his par-

ents were born in Scotland instead of England.

In October, the tenor had a 12-inch record, 31706, of "The Death of Nelson," commemorating the great English naval commander's victory and death at Trafalgar. About the same time his 10-inch record, 5517, of the Canadian national hymn, "O Canada!" was issued.

The 1910 Victor catalog explained American dealers were not required to handle this record but could obtain it on special order. It was one of "a special series of records which are not usually carried in stock by dealers because they are of interest

#### WELL-KNOWN DETROITER.



HAROLD JARVIS.  
The Tenor.

Harold Jarvis, Detroit tenor church and concert singer, during the days of his record making.

—From small photo in record catalog.

only to certain classes of people—religious communities, societies, and persons in certain sections of the country. Many novelties will be added to this list in the future. Any of these special records will be promptly ordered by your dealer on request."

An interesting description of "The Death of Nelson" was given in the supplement:

"This famous song was composed by John Braham about 1810, and formed part of the comic opera, "The Americans," produced at the Lyceum Theater, London, in 1811. The stirring patriotism of the number insured its success at once; but it has, besides, unusual dramatic qualities—such as its effective commencement in recitative—

"O'er Nelson's tomb, with silent grief oppress,

Britannia mourns her hero, now at rest,"

"and the refrain, quoting the immortal words of the great commander, which are most impressive passages in a noble song. Curiously enough, however, Braham not only appropriated bodily the beginning of Mehul's Chant du depart (1794), but also the first and last lines of Norris' glee commemorating the death of Cumberland, in 1765, without giving credit to either author or composer.

"This number is one of the most successful in Mr. Jarvis' repertoire, and he delivers it most dramatically."

No doubt Jarvis sang the song effectively. But what was supposed to be the attraction of this 100-year ballad for American record buyers, especially when it was single-faced and cost a dollar in the hard cash of 1908?

#### II. For Dickens Lovers

I have never seen or heard the record, but it has a certain appeal to me as a Dickens lover. Perhaps you remember how, in the famous chapter of "David Copperfield," when David runs away from London trying to find his aunt Betsey at Dover, he sells his jacket to a crazy old storekeeper. He has to wait hours for his money, while the old man lies in bed and yells, "in a frantic way, to his own windy tune, 'The Death of Nelson,' with an Oh! before every line and innumerable Go-ros interspersed."

Probably you remember, too, how Mr. Micawber sardonically commented on Nelson's statement, "England expects every man to do his duty," by saying: "If England expects every man to do his duty it is the most sanguine country on the face of the earth and will find itself continually disappointed."

One of the oddest records in my collection is an 8-inch Broadcast, made in Australia on which Keith Desmond, a comedian, gives an impersonation of a London Cockney reciting "The Death of Nelson." To the right listener it might be funny.

Two more single-faced Jarvis records were issued: 5526, "Guard While I Sleep," and 31714, "The Ninety and Nine"—both religious. The for-

mer was described as, "A favorite hymn which is an especial favorite in the Middle West. Mr. Jarvis sings it reverently, with a most distinct enunciation of the words."

The 1909 record catalog describes "My Ain Countrie" as "a beautiful old hymn, which was always a favorite in the Moody and Sankey meetings."

The catalog also contains a small photo of Harold Jarvis. It reveals him as having dark hair parted in the middle, and a black mustache curling downward. Later catalogs carried a better picture, but one which left no doubt the tenor probably was stout and certainly was not a "bleached blonde."

### III. Double-Faced Victor Records

On October 20, 1908, in order to meet cut-throat competition from Columbia, Victor angrily issued its first group of double-faced records. Apparently all the remaining Jarvis recordings were included in this list. On 16006 he sang another Scotch song, "The Standard o' the Braes o' Mar," combined with a "nautical ballad," "The White Squall," by Alan Turner, an English baritone. 16007 contained the Jarvis version of "Jesus, I Am Resting," while another tenor, Frederic C. Freeman, occupied the B side with "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

The third 12-inch double-faced Victor, 35002, had Jarvis singing "Come Into the Garden, Maud," a musical setting by Michael W. Balfe of Tennyson's poem, while Turner did the Prolog from "Pagliacci." Jarvis' only double-faced Victor with both sides by himself was 16033, on which he sang "The Bay of Biscay," an English sea song now more than 150 years old, and a slightly more modern Scotch ballad, "Mary of Argyle." All these double-faced records were dropped into the catalog without comment.

Once more I find, however, something of Dickens interest. That author was familiar, of course, with "Come Into the Garden, Maud," and probably knew "Mary of Argyle." "The Bay of Biscay" is mentioned in his novels more than once.

Who can forget the scene in Dickens' first complete novel, the ever-green "Pickwick Papers," when Bob Sawyer, the medical student, gave a party at his Lant street lodgings, and Jack Hopkins obliged with "The King, God Bless Him?" This "he sang as loud as he could, to a novel air compounded of 'The Bay of Biscay' and 'A Frog He Would.' The chorus was the essence of the song, and as each gentleman sang it to the tune he knew best the effect was very striking indeed."

And in "Dombey and Son," when the simple, warm-hearted Captain Cuttle is telling his friend, Jack Bunsby, that he fears young Walter Gay has been drowned, he sorrowfully paraphrases the song by saying: "There he lays, all his days—"

"Mr. Bunsby, who had a musical

ear, suddenly bellowed, 'In the Bay of Biscay, O!' which so affected the good Captain, as an appropriate tribute to departed worth, that he shook him by the hand."

I found a copy of Jarvis' "Bay of Biscay" record in the City Drug Store at Marion, Va., many years after it had been cut from the catalog, and can testify that it is a splendid performance. In the days when it was recorded Victor singers supposedly were under instructions to adopt a restrained approach and to draw back from the horn in taking a high note, but Jarvis is not "under wraps." He fairly shouts, "A sail, a sail, sa-a-a-ill!" and finishes with a ringing high note. "Mary of Argyle" is sung expressively, with delicacy and restraint.

### IV. "Beautiful Isle"

I have saved for final mention among Jarvis' Victor records the most important of all, 16008. He sings the song most intimately identified with him, "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," with the Hayden Quartet, doing an Easter hymn, "Christ Arose," as its mating. Today, whenever anyone thinks of a Harold Jarvis record it is almost certain to be "Beautiful Isle."

Until just before the advent of electric recording, it was one of the most consistent sellers in the Victor catalog and always led Victor's annual list of suitable Easter music. Probably it outsold any other record in that first Victor double-faced list, although some, such as 16029, "Hearts and Flowers," 16046, "The Rosary," and 16092, "St. Louis Tickle," would have given it a good run. Jarvis sings the familiar hymn beautifully, but it sounds to me as if he makes a strange mistake. Unless my ears trick me, instead of singing "God lives and all is well," he says, "God lives and all is still."

I wish I could estimate the emotional impact Jarvis' interpretation of this song had upon innumerable listeners during the 15 years it stayed in the Victor catalog. And I hope the tenor knew of an incident which was reported under the title of "A Victor in the Wilderness," in *The Voice of the Victor* for July, 1916. A man named Neel Greene wrote of meeting La Fonde, a French cobbler, in the North woods of Canada. Visiting La Fonde's cabin, he and his companion asked, "What do you do to keep from going mad up here alone?" The article continues:

"He pointed to a corner of the room, and there stood a talking machine, a small one and a very prehistoric model, but still a talking machine.

"I will play it for you," he said, and straightway there sounded a familiar strain, 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere,' at two o'clock in the cold Northern dawn in a little cabin in the North woods. . . .

"That is my religion, my God and my church," said La Fonde. "That has made it possible for me to live and be contented."

"When we said good-night and started down the road to the hotel we were still silent."

"When they made that record," Jim said finally, "they didn't realize that it

was growing up to be a missionary, did they?"

The article ended with "EDITOR'S NOTE.—This really happened as it is told. The record mentioned was that made by Harold Jarvis."

Jarvis himself singled out that record in a testimonial he wrote in 1918 or 1919, after his recording career had ended, praising the Brunswick phonograph:

"The tone of the Brunswick was a revelation to me. Vocal records particularly have a sweet, full richness of sound, with a very vibrancy of life. I was of course specially interested in the productions of my own records. I have never heard them played as lifelike on any other instrument. In the 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere' the Brunswick brings out shadings that I never knew was possible on a reproducing instrument."

The Brunswick folder referred to Jarvis as "a distinguished performer for one of the prominent record makers."

If Jarvis had met La Fonde and received his thanks, his emotions probably would have been like those of Arthur Collins, related in the *Edison Amberola Monthly* for January-February, 1920:

"Last November, Collins and Byron G. Harlan were in Effingham, Kans., for a few days, and while there visited the store of Carl Latenser, the Edison dealer. . . .

"Sitting hunched up in a wheel chair was an old man, hopelessly crippled. He had never been able to walk. Two young farmers who lived nearby had agreed to bring him into town just so he could see Collins and Harlan. . . . He gripped Mr. Collins by the hand and said, 'You have brought sunshine into my life for many years. I consider it a rare privilege to be able to see and hear you in person and I want to shake hands with you.'

"Mr. Collins gripped his hand while tears came into his eyes and a lump rose in his throat so that he could scarcely speak. He said afterwards he considered it the highest compliment he had ever had paid him."

What greater tribute could any artist want than the one the isolated cobbler paid to Jarvis' record, or that the crippled man bestowed upon Arthur Collins?

It seems strange no more Victor records were ever issued by Harold Jarvis. Most of the 12 disappeared from the catalog in a few years. By November, 1910, "March of the Cameron Men" and "The Ninety and Nine" were gone. (The latter had succumbed to strong competition from versions by two other tenors, Richard Jose and Freeman-tel.)

Six months later, "The Death of Nelson" and "Guard While I Sleep" were missing, leaving "O Canada" as the only single-faced Jarvis disc. In November, 1913, "O Canada" also was dismissed (though perhaps it was retained by Victor's Canadian affiliate) so was "The Standard o' the Braes o' Mar" and—strangely, for a standard hymn tune record usually sold consistently and was seldom cut out—"Jesus, I Am Resting" also went.

This left only "The Bay of Biscay" and "Mary of Argyle" combination, which stayed on through 1919, and "Beautiful Isle." That perennial favorite remained until 1923, but in that year Victor had it re-



made by the most popular ballad singer of the day, Henry Burr.

The Shannon Quarter remade the Haydn's version of "Christ Arose." So in 1924, the year he died, Harold Jarvis' name passed forever from the Victor catalog. "Beautiful Isle" and "Christ Arose" were remade electrically by Burr and the Shannons, respectively, late in 1925, and given the number of 19883.

Yet an odd thing happened in 1927 when Victor issued a special catalog of "Records of Historical and Personal Interest." These were acoustically recorded discs for which Victor said there had been so much public clamor it was necessary to reinstate them. No. 16008 was listed, but with Jarvis' version of "Beautiful Isle" instead of Burr's remake. "Christ Arose" remained by the Shannon Quartet instead of the Haydens. Another oddity, Burt Shepard's 12-inch record of "The Robin," which had been cut out in 1907 was again offered. So were all the long deleted yodel records of Al H. Wilson. Many of Billy Murray's old numbers were picked up, but his most popular record, "Casey Jones," was omitted.

#### V. Columbia and Edison Records

Harold Jarvis reappeared as a recording artist in 1912, making two double-faced discs for Victor's arch rival, Columbia. The first appeared in May, as A1121, and combined "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," with an obscure coupling, "What is Heaven?" For some reason, this Columbia record, which I have never seen or heard, did not catch on and was discontinued in December, 1916. It must have given little competition to Victor 16008.

The second Columbia record by Jarvis, A1122, was issued in October, 1912. It combined a setting of another Tennyson poem, "Crossing the Bar," with "Oh, It Is Wonderful." Seemingly this, too, should have sold well, but it was cut out in the 1918 catalog.

The October, 1912, Columbia supplement contained a small photo of Jarvis, still with his mustache but looking as if he had lost a quantity of hair since the Victor picture was made. There was this comment:

"Another record by Harold Jarvis, the well known Detroit tenor. Mr. Jarvis sings this time two well-known sacred numbers with an interpretative command that years of familiarity have brought him. To Alfred Behrend's beautiful setting of Tennyson's last poem Mr. Jarvis brings a sympathy and understanding that wins everyone who hears it rendered by him. 'Oh, It Is Wonderful,' a simple, devotional hymn, is treated with the same sincerity and earnestness as others that have made so much for Mr. Jarvis' success."

Jarvis' only two Edison Blue Amberol cylinders were announced in the Edison Phonograph Monthly for March, 1914, with his first name misspelled as Harrold:

"Harrold Jarvis possesses a tenor voice that shows much careful training. He makes his debut this month with two songs: 2284, 'Scots, Wha Ha'e wi' Wallace Bled' and 2281, 'The Gift,' both so artist-

ically rendered that we long to hear him sing again and again."

I have not heard the "Scot" song, which should have made some appeal to Edison owners of Scottish descent, but I have "The Gift," another number written by Behrend. It is a quasi-lullaby and a poor song, so dull and devoid of interest it's hard to understand why either Jarvis or Edison officials chose it for recording. Probably both cylinders—seemingly the last records Jarvis ever made—had a disappointing sale.

Mr. Jarvis continued active in church and concert work for several years both before and after he ceased to make records.

(To be continued)

### ANGEL RECORDS

(Continued from page 33)

top authorities in their respective fields appear in glittering assemblage, each a golden particle of the priceless weave that is the history of Carnegie Hall.

Walter Damrosch and Tchaikowsky, on May 5, 1891, officially opened the Music Hall, as the edifice was then called. But it was actually an obscure pianist Franz Rummel, who gave the first recital there, on April 1, in the basement lyceum hall, while construction was still in progress. Thus his Beethoven was punctuated by the hammering noises coming from the main hall.

In its pre-inaugural days, two other pianists of more lasting fame—Arthur Friedheim and Leopold Godowsky—helped initiate the new building with their concerts.

Then, on the appointed date, amidst pomp and fanfare, the revered Peter Ilyitch Tchaikowsky figuratively broke the champagne bottle when he launched the now hallowed auditorium upon its historic course. In the process, he took the New York musical and social circles by storm.

Scores of world celebrities strove to do their best for the critical human mass across the footlights of this American concert Maximus. And many, at the onset of their careers, found its prestige an advantageous stepping stone in their climb to success.

Of the singers we know on records, Patti, Melba, Sembrich, Nordica, Garden, McCormack, Gigli, Schipa, Kiepura, to mention but a few at random, all were anxious to try out their voices on the splendid acoustics and discriminating audiences of Carnegie Hall.

While the book is studded with awesome music personalities, exponents of the dance, literature, politics, and so on, are also given wide prominence on its 438 pages.

Tastefully illustrated, wittily written, with deep understanding of the subject from its embryonic stage to the present day, "The World of Carnegie Hall" is not only an important compilation of historical data but an engrossing tale over-

flowing with human interest as well.

As the note on the books' jacket rightfully states, it is "The rich and resonant history of one of America's most famous landmarks."

A.F.-A.

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3664

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. jly6468

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flow-ered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonaphone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. jly3367

FOR SALE: Phonograph made for Exposition of 1902 found in private collection. For details write:—Reed & Long, c/o Gregory R. Reed, R.F.D. 4, Allentown 5, Pa. au3064

ATTENTION! Antique cylinder & disc phonographs bought, sold, repaired. Repairs done on all makes & models, parts replaced, reproducers bought, sold repaired. I will buy anything in this line. Large list of what I have for sale for stamp. Many rare and hard to find machines in stock. Almost everything in this line available. All machines and parts are perfect. No Junk. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Tel. 2-4985, Brewer, Maine. au38611

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CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

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HARRY BELLEFONTE material: records, pictures, articles, paper music, whatever you have. All letters answered. Request this material pertain to the time before he hit fame. — Mary Belle Smith, 2717 Hampshire Blvd., Huntington Beach, Calif. je3884

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Harold Jarvis

By JIM WALSH

### Part III

#### I. Death of Harold Jarvis

On April 1, 1924, the Detroit News published a long news story telling of the death of Harold Jarvis and revealing the esteem and affection in which the tenor was held by the people of his adopted city. It is too long for complete quotation, but I shall use the greater part:

"Harold Jarvis has gone to the 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.'

"Detroit's most beloved singer, whose golden voice for more than a generation has soothed the grief-stricken and bereaved, died last night after an illness of more than 10 weeks. The famous tenor had long suffered from a heart affliction.

"Harold Jarvis came here as the tenor soloist for the First Presbyterian Church. That was in 1891, and the lithe, powerful figure with its easy grace and wonderfully strong, clear voice had been ever since a Detroit institution. His hold on the people never waned. A few years ago, on a Board of Commerce excursion, the big boat ran into a fog and many were nervous. To quiet the crowd Mr. Jarvis sang to them almost the whole night through.

"A crippled girl living in Windsor, whose infirmity made it impossible for her to leave her home, often expressed a longing to hear Jarvis sing. A friend

told Mr. Jarvis of the girl's longing, and the singer, taking an accompanist with him, visited her home and spent nearly the whole afternoon singing her favorite selections.

"Mr. Jarvis was a singer from childhood. He was born in Toronto 59 years ago, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Jarvis. (The death certificate said George Jarvis.—J.W.) His mother was a famous Canadian singer, Annie — (the last word is illegible.) Little Harold, in Highland costume, was a favorite in Scotch songs before he could more than lisp, and when he entered his teens it became known he was a singer of promise.

"When he was 14, he went into the Merchant Marine service on the Allen Line, operating between Montreal and England. The captain of his boat chanced to be a musician, and noticing the boy's promise as a vocalist, encouraged him to continue his singing practice while at work. Mr. Jarvis advanced to first mate before relinquishing the sea life. He studied at the Royal Academy in London and received offers which meant an opera career, but preferring church singing he came to Detroit, to the First Presbyterian Church, as tenor soloist. He had held the position until his death. He had been a teacher of singing in Detroit for many years.

"Mr. Jarvis numbered the most prominent people in Detroit and throughout the country as his friends, and was equally at home with the humblest. He frequently visited the waterfront, due to his old sailor association, and is affectionately remembered by veteran lake men.

"Mr. Jarvis sang at the reception to Gen. John J. Pershing in Detroit after the war. His selections were "My Own United States" and "The Sword of Bunker Hill." The Commander-in-Chief of the Army was enthusiastic in his praise.

"The second Mrs. Jarvis, who survives him, was Marie Judson, of Detroit. She has two sons, Murray and Harold, Jr.

"A brother, Sidney, now is singing in New York City. A sister, Mrs. William Hope, lives in Montreal, and a brother, Col. Arthur Murray Jarvis, in Victoria, B. C.

"Funeral services for Mr. Jarvis will be held in the First Presbyterian Church Thursday at 2:30 p.m. The body will be taken to the church at 10 a.m., where friends will be permitted to view it until shortly after 2. The Rev. Joseph A. Vance, pastor, is in Bristol, Tenn., recovering from his recent illness, and it is not known whether he will be able to officiate. If he cannot come, he will send a special message to be read at the service."

#### II. Memorial Tributes

Two thoughts occur to me after reading that death notice. As a child, looking at the photo of Jarvis in the Victor catalog, I had a feeling he was in sailor costume, and since he had gone to sea and risen to first mate I may have been right. Second, I believe the tenor's mother probably was Annie Murray before her marriage, since Jarvis had a brother whose middle name was Murray and one of his sons was given that name.

The illegible name in the clipping could easily be Murray.

No, I guessed wrong. A shorter death notice in the Detroit News gives the name as Annie McLearn.

Dr. Vance was unable to return to the funeral service, but a message from him was read by the associate pastor, the Rev. C. E. Mieras, who conducted the service:

"It is no wonder that his fame became international, that people traveled hundreds of miles through zero weather to hear him sing; that the church where he poured forth this ministry of music, alike inspiring to preachers and people, to ignorant and cultured, to sinner and saint, was known most of all as 'the church where Harold Jarvis sings.'"

The Rev. Mieras himself said:

"Harold Jarvis will be missed beyond words for his place in this church where he sang for 33 years. His last song to this congregation, 'Peace, Wonderful Peace,' was sung at the request of a dear friend. He labored at his tasks with a faithful heart and has gone to his reward."

The Free Press radio station, WCX, broadcast a memorial service.

In Windsor, Ontario, T. Stanley Perry, tenor soloist of the First Presbyterian Church, sang "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," and the pastor, the Rev. H. M. Paulin, paid a tribute in which he said:

"Mr. Jarvis sang himself into the hearts of very many in the provinces. Not only did he visit our cities and large towns, but with that fine modesty and gracious generosity which characterized him, he went to the hamlets and out-of-the-way places. There are thousands of Canadian hearts that feel a sense of loss because he has passed on."

The Detroit News obituary notice mentioned that Jarvis continued his church singing until the middle of January, 1924, when he was taken



"Aunt Sadie" Jarvis, who named Harold Jarvis Yates for the famous tenor, Harold Jarvis, is shown here with Mr. Yates when he was a member of the Roanoke, Va., police department. Beside him is Will Yates Belote, youngest son of Mr. Yates' sister, Mrs. Dorothy Jones.

to Harper Hospital for treatment of the heart condition.

The Free Press said Jarvis had traveled as a concert soloist "through every state in the Union and throughout Canada the last 34 years. His phonograph records are popular all over the world, and he was particularly famous as the introducer of 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.'"

A feeling tribute was paid the tenor by a Canadian religious publication:

"Within a short time, one of the best known and most loved singers in Detroit has passed beyond sight; and England through Canada could claim him. A sweet and genial nature found expression in simple melodies with an appeal that never failed to win an answer. It is a question whether any singer of ballads will ever be more successful than Harold Jarvis, but it is beyond question that anyone will ever sing songs of the sea with more absolute perfection. It may not be generally known that Mr. Jarvis put aside brilliant opportunities for a wider career in deference to the prejudices of some of his connections. This alone would show him to have been of no ordinary character. He was most fortunate in the loving Christian appreciation of those ministers and fellow church members with whom he was associated to the general advantage for so many years. His going seemed all too soon, but his sun went down in the beauty of loving remembrance and well won observance."

### III. Harold Jarvis Memorial Fund

A man may be a great artist but a poor business man. If he sings for the joy of singing, as Harold Jarvis did, the chances are he will be imposed on financially or at least not drive a sufficiently hard bargain with those who would exploit his services.

But it must have come as a shock to many of the beloved tenor's friends and admirers to learn he had not left an estate large enough to provide for the upkeep and education of his small sons—Murray and the second Harold Jarvis, Jr., then aged four and two. Both were born when their father was far into his 50's.

So a Harold Jarvis Memorial Fund was established with Malcolm McGregor as chairman and William P. McCorkle as treasurer.

A letter signed by McGregor said: "Neither you nor I know what is ahead for these youngsters. . . except that they have their lives to live. We do know, however, that the estate Harold Jarvis left is too small to give them the care and education

that he would have given them if he had had the time." The letter continued:

"If you have never thrilled to the spiritual music of Jarvis' voice, then you are the rarest of Detroiters. Perhaps you still put a record on your phonograph of an evening, and recapture that feeling which his rendering of 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere' always aroused.

"I sometimes wonder, when I think of Harold Jarvis, dead, just how to put a valuation on the good that he did in his quiet way. For every time he sang for money, there were a dozen times when he sang without return in that sense. I never knew him to refuse to sing where money was not forthcoming—in fact I don't believe that money meant to him what it means to most of us. He would sing for hours every week to the poor youngsters in an orphan asylum, just because they loved to hear him sing. As chairman of the Harold Jarvis Memorial Fund I am offering you the opportunity to do something for Harold Jarvis' children which he never hesitated to do for other children—to give a share of what you have to give. "The fund thus created will be handled by the Detroit Trust Company and will be devoted to the purpose of caring for and educating these two children.

One result of the Fund appeal was a memorial program given by a group of Jarvis' friends and professional associates in Orchestra Hall on Friday evening, June 13, 1924. The program was directed by Frank Wrigley, organist of the church in whose choir loft Harold Jarvis had sung for so many years.

The Rev. Mr. Vance, who had returned from Tennessee, spoke briefly in praise of the dead tenor, "referring to his splendid personal qualities and the inspiration which his music had given to hosts of his fellow citizens over many years." The concert closed with "Crossing the Bar," led by Wrigley, and sung by a choir composed of Jarvis' most intimate professional associates.

### IV. An Old-Timer's Memories

During the 37 years since Harold Jarvis' death, George W. Stark, a veteran columnist for the Detroit News, has many times reminisced about the tenor, whose impress on the community's life was so deep and enduring. I shall compress several of these columns sent by Mr. Myers, head of the Music Department, Detroit Public Library, into one general "stream of recollections."

"As a concert soloist, the late Harold Jarvis was Detroit's most notable contribution to the song history of America. Such is the eminent opinion of Sam Slade, who sang with Jarvis for more than 20 years in the quartet at the First Presbyterian Church. In Detroit, Jarvis was little less than an idol. Today he remains a great part of our musical tradition.

"A Canadian by birth, he came of such distinguished stock that one of the principal residential streets of Toronto is named in honor of his ancestors. In that city he was a prime favorite always, but this was his adopted home and it was here that he came in for a special form of adoration. His singing of 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere' was an event that no true lover of music soon forgot. When he made a phonograph number of that song, the record sales mounted to prodigious heights.

"But Harold Jarvis was a very human man, with a deep and abiding sense of grotesque comedy. He was not above an occasional prank that would bring discomfiture to his fellow singers. Once he brought a limburger cheese into the



Harold Jarvis, singing in Detroit's First Presbyterian Church.

—From the Burton Historical Collection

loft of the church where he was singing and almost disrupted a solemn Sunday service. But he had his little joke and was very happy over it.

"Mr. Jarvis lived on Woodward Avenue, not far from the Bethune police station, at one time. He was very popular with the mounted police, who made their headquarters at Bethune, and he was popular with the horses, too. All during the winter months, Harold Jarvis' basement door was open (to the men, that is) and they always stopped in there about midnight to eat a delectable snack. That basement was warm and comfortable.

"When the day of a concert arrived, so did a terrific snow storm. Mr. Jarvis called the captain of Bethune on the telephone. 'Captain,' he said, 'I have an engagement to sing at a church over at West Warren and the Boulevard, and there are no street cars running. What can I do?'

"The ladies were almost ready to concede that the weather had cancelled out their concert when the singer arrived, in a horse-drawn patrol wagon. He was snug and warm and untouched by the snow. The horses were delighted to have been able to perform this little service for their friend. The ladies were delighted, too, and charmed by Harold Jarvis' songs, as were many thousands of others down through the enchanted years."

### V. Finding Jarvis Records for His Son

About 13 years ago, Harold Jarvis, Jr., then a man of around 26, told Mr. Stark he would like to own some records by his father. He especially wanted to hear the elder Jarvis sing "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere." Stark published the young man's appeal and on February 18, 1948, gave this account of the response:


"Harold, Jr., was only two years old when his gifted parent died, hence had no actual memory of the voice that thrilled and comforted many thousands of Detroiters as well as music-lovers all over America. Town Talk printed Harold Jr.'s request. That was a week ago, and now Harold, Jr., has his choice of at least 50 records. They have now been turned over to Harold, Jr., his brother

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Murray, and his mother, who dwell together in Highland Park.

"I thank all the good people who searched their basements and their attics for their musical treasure and who were willing to forego it for the sake of giving happiness to Harold Jarvis' sons. They had searched their hearts, too, and the results were good.

#### VI. "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere"

This survey of the life and achievements of Harold Jarvis may fitly end with another "Town Talk" column by George W. Stark:

"The years are many and the years are long since Harold Jarvis went to the Beautiful Isle of Somewhere, of which he sang so sweetly that the busy world stopped in its tracks to listen.

"Jarvis, in his fair young days, was the darling of Detroit's troubadours. Possessed of a tenor voice of singular sweetness, he had a sunny disposition to match it. On the streets of the town he was a striking figure, tall, handsome, immaculately dressed.

"As long as Belle Isle remains the playground of the people, the name of Harold Jarvis will never be dissociated from it. He was the most popular singer ever to adorn the nightly band concerts held over the grand canal on Belle Isle. When Jarvis was scheduled to sing, the crowd thronged over the old wooden bridge with its stone piers and iron structure. They poured over on the ferry boats. They clambered aboard their bicycles and rode over. It went on for years, but the populace never grew weary of him.

"Harold Jarvis and Sam Slade were members of the famous quartet that sang for years at the First Presbyterian Church. The unforgettable tenor and basso duets between Jarvis and Slade was a musical unit that endured for 21 years. On the distaff side of the famous quartet were Winifred Scripps Ellis and Emma Beyer Lewis. These four were most lavish of their exuberant musical gifts. Harold Jarvis particularly would sing for even less than his supper.

"No distinguished funeral was complete in Harold Jarvis' day unless he were there to sing 'Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.' Eventually he sang the song for the phonograph records. It is impossible to estimate how many of these discs found their way into the homes of America."

So with that final mention of "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," this review of Harold Jarvis' life and recordings closes. I have no doubt he would be happy to know that at least one of his records is so well remembered and is still cherished in thousands of homes, even though it was too popular and sold too well ever to become a so-called "collector's item."

Certainly, few men have left such an unmistakable impress for good in their dwelling places as Harold Jarvis did in his adopted city of Detroit.

THE END

Money may be the husk of many things, but not the kernel. It brings you food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; acquaintances, but not friends, servants, but not loyalty, days of joy, but not peace or happiness. —*Henrik Ibsen*

Egotism is the art of seeing qualities in yourself which others can't see. —*Survey Bulletin*

## EMMA EAMES ON LP

(Continued from page 31)

commonly made out to be, but a determined young woman who sets out to find José, and Carmen or no Carmen, succeeds in her purpose. It is always refreshing to have this inconsequential character acquire a personality which justifies its presence in the opera.

A record of exceptional beauty is Eames' "Gretchen am Spinnrade" — even to the "frog" on the last note. Here's where subtle handling is a definite necessity, and also that perfect melting line of which she had such superb mastery — to depict the dreamy sighing of the fair spinner stricken by Cupid's arrow.

In the Mozart duet — which is a musical gem in itself — the Sembrich - Eames team weaves its delicately chiseled phrases into a pattern of sheer loveliness. The lighter soprano of Sembrich blends deliciously with the more weighty one of Eames, and in the repeated passages for both, it is often difficult to identify the voice in action unless one knows the score.

Equally beautiful is the "Lakmé" duet with Homer, who lends her voluptuous contralto to form a glorious combination with Eames' entrancing soprano. The swelling lull of the two magnificent voices, the solo passages imbued with grace, all contribute to making this joint effort one resplendent whole.

Henschel's "Spring," a descriptive piece of cuckoos, chirping, and other such aviary sounds hailing the vernal season, is done fetchingly and with lightness of touch. On the other hand, the "Year's at the Spring," heavier fare, has Eames greeting the wakening of nature with greater and more intense effusion.

"Chanson des Baisers," a waltz, and "Si Tu le Veux," more romantic in vein, are both appealing French songs; while "Dixie" is a one stanza affair done with dignified drive — and with the "holds" Gounod taught her not to do in "Roméo."

If someone sang the Aubade (meaning Morning Song) under my windows early in one morning, I guarantee mayhem would ensue. The Vive amour qui rêve of the dancer l'Ensoleillad may have been all right for the lady-killer Chérubin, but a spirited ditty in Spanish style is definitely not my idea of a morning song. And besides, the gusto with which Eames delivers it is enough to awaken our Valhalla hill down to the house where Washington once slept.

But joking aside, Rococo R29 is a very desirable disc — and on my part, special thanks for the absence of "Who Is Sylvia?." Personally, I never cared to find out.

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3694

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. jly3668

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. jly3867

FOR SALE: Phonograph made for Exposition of 1902 found in private collection. For details write:—Reed & Long, c/o Gregory R. Reed, R.F.D. 4, Allentown 5, Pa. au3004

ATTENTION! Antique cylinder & disc phonographs bought, sold, repaired. Repairs done on all makes & models, parts replaced, reproducers bought, sold repaired. I will buy anything in this line. Large list of what I have for sale for stamp. Many rare and hard to find machines in stock. Almost everything in this line available. All machines and parts are perfect. No Junk. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Tel. 2-4985, Brewer, Maine. au38611

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa.

VICTOR Talking Machine, table model with beautiful wooden horn, good condition, \$95. — Bornand, 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. au3403

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BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3161 High, Denver 5, Colo. au12698

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Elizabeth and William Wheeler

By JIM WALSH  
PART I

### APPROVAL AND APPRECIATION FROM MR. AND MRS. WHEELER Cleveland, May 21, 1961

Dear Jim: It was very cheering to hear your voice this morning and that of Mr. Via. And again I marvel at how a fortuitous reading of an article in a magazine can set up a chain reaction—and what a pleasant one it is! . . . We think you have done a fine job throughout, and we are very grateful to you . . . The second section of your, and our, story is staggering when one considers the amount of research involved, and again I say that the FBI missed a bet when they allowed you to slip through their fingers. . . . Our family in Chagrin Falls read the two drafts of the story with vast interest and appreciation yesterday evening.

Cordially and sincerely,  
the Wheelers, per William.

### I. A Delightful Discovery

Like history, I sometimes repeat.

More than once in the past, I have written that I never cease to be amazed at the unforeseeable fashion in which I eventually obtain information concerning pioneer recording artists about whom I have long

wanted to write. It's likely that I shall be heard to the same effect in future, for fate, coincidence, or whatever it is, never seems to tire of making me the beneficiary of its benevolent tricks.

My discovery of Elizabeth and William Wheeler is the latest example. Nearly all my life I have enjoyed and admired the recorded art of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler, whom I consider the most successful husband-and-wife duet pair in the history of the phonograph. Never, however, could I come upon the information I needed to do them justice.

Occasionally there would be a glimmer of hope. During the 1944 presidential campaign, *Life* published an article saying the Republican nominee, Thomas E. Dewey, had studied singing at the University of Michigan in the early 1920's. Then the article mentioned that the head of the voice department of the University's School of Music at that time was a tenor, William Wheeler, and that his wife also was a member of the music faculty, I was sure they

must be the Elizabeth and William Wheeler who had made so many records from 1908, or thereabouts, to 1920.

Immediately, I wrote to Governor Dewey, telling him why I was interested in Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler and asking if he could give me their address. Soon afterward I received a letter from Dewey's secretary, saying the Governor would be away from his office for some time, but my inquiry would be answered when he returned. Since it was not, I assume that the inquiry was misplaced somewhere.

I also wrote to Mr. Wheeler in care of the University of Michigan with a request for the letter to be forwarded. It apparently was not, for Mr. Wheeler didn't receive it. So I appeared to be checkmated.

But Fate, Destiny, or Kismet was genially biding its time. Last February, I published a HOBBIES article about the soprano, Elise Stevenson. Not having a conventional photograph of the lady, I submitted a group photo of the Victor Light Opera Company, of which Miss Stevenson had been a member. Elizabeth and William Wheeler also appeared in that picture. A HOBBIES reader in Cleveland, Ohio, whose name I didn't know but to whom I must always be grateful, saw the group photo and passed the magazine on to Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.

Then came the exhilarating discovery that this richly gifted husband and wife were alive and active. One morning in March I opened my post office box and picked up an envelope postmarked Cleveland, with the return address of William Wheeler, 2472 Overlook Road.

My heart missed a couple of flips as I asked myself, "Can I be hearing from the William Wheeler?" A quick reading showed that indeed I could be. The warm tone of the letter convinced me that Fate was once more active in my behalf and that I must lose no time in obtaining information that would permit me to tell HOBBIES readers all about the famous Wheelers.

The result has been a friendship that I consider one of the most delightful experiences of my many years of writing about recording artists. And publication of this article will mean a fulfillment of a cherished dream.

It will also serve, I hope, as an only slightly belated birthday tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler. I have written with more than "all deliberate speed," in the hope that it can begin in the August HOBBIES, only a few days after this remarkable husband and wife have both observed their birthdays.



From left to right:

Elizabeth and William Wheeler celebrating their Golden Wedding in 1954, at the Cleveland, Ohio, Music School Settlement.

A typical pose of "Bess" and "Will" Wheeler as they look today.

—From the collection of the author

## II. William Wheeler's Letter

Mr. Wheeler's memorable first letter to me was dated March 5, and read:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: A friend recently handed to us the February issue of *HOBBIES* containing your interesting and full account of Elise Stevenson and her Victor and other records. It was like reading a chapter from our own biography, as Mrs. Wheeler and I were very much involved in those early days of recording, both with the Victor Company, and also with Leeds and Catlin, Zonophone and Pathe—mostly with the Victor, however.

"We never knew Miss Stevenson personally, as she was slightly before our time, but did know very intimately all the persons connected with her. Our contact with the Victor Company began somewhere around 1910, and lasted until 1919, when we moved to Ann Arbor, Mich., where I was head of the voice department at the University School of Music, and where Mrs. Wheeler also was on the faculty.

"We left there for Cleveland in 1924, and we have been here ever since, teaching singing, and singing around a good deal, as well as conducting choral groups. (As we celebrated our golden wedding anniversary six years ago, it goes without saying that we haven't sung in recent years.)

"It was interesting to see our faces on the third row of the Victor Light Opera Company picture which appeared in your article. We are much pleased when every so often someone says that he remembers our records very well—this after 40 years.

"We have many, but not all of our records, many of them from the time, years ago, when Victor discontinued many of their records, but gave us the opportunity of securing those that we wanted. Thank you for writing the article, thus reminding us of some bits of ancient history.

"Sincerely yours, the Wheelers, Elizabeth and William."

The letter was signed by Mr. Wheeler. Replying, I mentioned that my brother, Chad Walsh, who heads the English department and is poet-in-residence at Beloit College in Wisconsin, attended Michigan for five years, but long after Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler were no longer there.

In his second letter, the tenor told me he was much interested in Chad's association with Beloit College, because he himself had been a student there and was graduated in 1900, "to give the gruesome details." He said he and Mrs. Wheeler would be happy to send me any information needed for compiling the *HOBBIES* article which you are now reading.

As soon as I could spare the time, I prepared separate questionnaires for the husband and wife to fill in and return. Then, on a Sunday morning a few days later, I had a long distance telephone conversation with the singers who must have had one of the longest successful careers in all American musical history.

That was a genuine event for one who had so long admired them and felt as if they were old friends, even during the years when they had never heard of me. (Mr. Wheeler began his second letter, "Dear Seems-like-an-old-friend!")

The first voice I heard that Sunday morning was a lovely soprano which it was easy to recognize as Mrs. Wheeler's. She almost breathlessly explained that they had a busy morning ahead because they were



Elizabeth and William Wheeler and their son John, who was born in 1907, listening to one of their records.

arranging their apartment for a group meeting that afternoon. She remarked that they were both in their 80's.

When I replied that they certainly seemed to keep busy and active, she replied: "Oh, my dear, we stay so busy we hardly know what to do with ourselves!"

We talked a few moments about old recording days and she asked me if I had known her friend, the late Lucy Isabelle Marsh, who had been another of Victor's leading sopranos. I told her I had.

"Will wants to talk to you," she said.

And then a familiar voice said, "Hello, Jim!"

I was almost taken aback, for I had played some of William Wheelers Pathé records two nights before and this voice was so like the singing tones I had listened to it might almost be coming from the record. It was the same clear lyric tenor and, as best one could judge from a 'phone conversation, was completely unchanged from what it had been when the records were made almost 45 years ago.

I complimented "Will," as I now take the liberty of calling him, on the fine preservation of his voice. He told me that my letter and questionnaires had been received the day before, and would be answered as soon as he and "Bess" could find time to sit down together and go over the questions.

I had suggested that they might like to talk into a tape recorder and discuss old times in a husband-and-wifely way, but he said he'd rather

use his typewriter. He wanted to know what sort of a machine I had used to write my letter, which was in unusually large type.

I told him it was an ordinary model, but specially equipped with big letters to make it easier to read radio and television copy on the air. After the conversation ended, I felt that my Sunday had been greatly brightened by that brief conversation with Bess and Will Wheeler.

Another such delightful event occurred on the morning of Sunday, May 21, when I was being visited by one of my dearest friends, the South Boston, Va., record collector, Albert Via, Jr. I dialed Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler's number in Cleveland, and "Jack" was thrilled at having an animated conversation with both the singers whom he had so long admired. They had received the manuscript of this article only a day or two before, and I was made happy by their enthusiastic praise.

## III. Elizabeth Wheeler's Early Days

The two questionnaires came back to me after a week or so and were full of engrossing information. Scarcely in all my experience have I met with such painstaking and intelligent cooperation as I received from my friends in Cleveland. And not long after the questionnaires arrived, I received some wonderful photos to be used in illustrating this article.

Acting on the principle of "ladies first," we'll start with Mrs. Wheeler's replies to my questions. I was delighted to find that, just as I had a sort of bond with her husband because of his and my brother's associations with Michigan and Beloit, so I had one with her because we share the same birthdays. We both were born on July 20. The year of her birth was 1875, so by the time

these lines see print she will have passed her 86th birthday.

The future soprano was christened Bess Nicholson when she was born in Kokomo, Ind., to John and Mary Nicholson, but she afterwards adopted the first name of Elizabeth as being more dignified for a singer. Her father was born in Kentucky and her mother in Indiana. Her brothers and sisters in order of age were John, Thomas, and Nell.

Bess' father was a man of "very artistic temperament." He was a photographer and artist, who loved to sing the old songs to his guitar accompaniment. Early in the 1880's he established a photograph gallery in Crawfordsville, Ind. Mrs. Nicholson was "chiefly a homebody." Bess' half-sister, Eva Kirsch, was fond of elocution and enjoyed staging children's plays and entertainments.

The future Elizabeth Wheeler's first remembered stage appearance was in a program of nursery or Mother Goose numbers (sounds like a foreshadowing of many of the "educational" records she grew up to make for Victor!) in which she was "Little Miss Muffet." When the big stage spider was lowered over the chair where she sat eating her "curds and whey," she threw her dish to the floor and ran screaming from the stage. (Mr. Wheeler comments that she was "always extremely responsive and dramatic.")

Bess' sister, Nell, was a fine amateur singer, with a beautiful voice, from whom Bess learned how a beautiful singing tone should sound. Her brother, Tom, was a noted local impresario who put on concerts and other entertainments, and he and his brother, John, were well-known photographers.

She studied singing one or two summers in Crawfordsville with an Italian-trained teacher, Miss Dubois. She also studied with John D. Beall in Springfield, Ill., and at the Ithaca Conservatory of Music in Ithaca, N.Y. Going to Chicago, she studied with Genevieve Clark Wilson and D. Alva Clippinger. After her marriage she was a pupil of John Walter Hall (with whom Lucy Marsh also studied) and Percy Stephens in New York City.

And here the life streams of Bess and Will Wheeler begin to merge. Many a small boy has dreamed wistfully either of growing up to get even with his teacher or has imagined himself in love with her and hoped some day to marry her. Will Wheeler is one man who did marry his teacher, but not the divinity who taught him in grammar school. That happened because Bess became a voice teacher in a small music school at Danville, Ill.

After William was graduated from Beloit, he lived for one year with his cousin, Mrs. Willis Parsons, whose husband was minister at the Danville Presbyterian church. Here he studied music under the direction of Miss Bess Nicholson. In 1903 they both went to Rochester, N. Y., where they were soloists in the same

church. They were married in Rochester on August 31, 1904.

They moved on to New York in May, 1906, and their only child, John, was born there April 18, 1907—a year or so before his mother began making a name for herself as a recording artist. John and his family live in Chagrin Falls, near Cleveland. He is associated with a prominent Cleveland architectural firm.

A New Zealand-born baritone who came to this country as a child and grew up in Kansas heard Mrs. Wheeler sing and recommended her to the Leeds and Catlin Company, one of the large independent recording firms of the early 1900's.

The baritone was Percy Hemus, who had made a few records for Columbia under the disguise of Charles Gordon, but had now begun singing for Leeds as his true self. Her records, like Hemus', were immediately successful, but Leeds and Catlin were put out of business in 1908 for alleged infringement of Victor patents.

Mrs. Wheeler not long afterwards became an exclusive Victor artist for disc records, but was at first allowed to make cylinders for other companies. (Hemus, too, became a Victor artist.) Here are some interesting facts drawn from her questionnaire:

She made all sorts of records—"standard" songs, Victor Light Opera records, hymns, many duets with her husband and other singers, and many educational records for the schools of the country, for which she is still remembered by the old-time music educators. During her association with Victor, she met and sang with many of the big names of the time, Caruso, McCormack, et al.

Many times while she and her husband were living in New York they were kept awake at night by hearing their own records coming across the court from neighboring apartments. They never gave a concert or recital across the country at which people did not come up afterwards to express their pleasure at hearing "live" their favorite recording artists.

The old-time recording of a song or concerted number (Mr. Wheeler comments) was a complicated and difficult matter. The sound was conveyed to the diaphragm by a system of separate horns, some large, some small, some long, some short, and necessitated a good deal of scrambling on the part of the singers for the necessary place in the sun—or, rather, horn. It was always a surprise that the end product was as good as it was.

At the University of Michigan from the fall of 1919 to the spring of 1924, William was head of the voice department and Elizabeth also was on the voice faculty. Both sang in the same church choir. She went back to Camden once or twice to make educational records.

In the fall of 1924 she chaperoned two daughters of one of her pupils on a

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c.—Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. n6637

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1860. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. au12698

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each.—Ric Verdi Antiques, 354 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

four-months tour of Europe, and on her return to the States joined her husband in Cleveland, where he had gone to establish their home and studio.

Since moving to Cleveland, Mrs. Wheeler has been busy, both with teaching separately and with her husband in their joint vocal studio. In 1954 they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with a big surprise reception arranged by their pupils.

Mr. Wheeler fondly says: "A good many wrinkles have appeared on the scene, and age has done its best to exact its toll, but the spirit and enthusiasm are young and undiminished. Her hair now is nearly white, but her eyes blue and her figure slender. She has always been well-dressed and well 'turned out.'"

#### IV. Will Wheeler's Account of Himself

On turning to the questionnaire which William Wheeler answered in his own behalf, we find the same (Continued on page 36)

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books. \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3694

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. jly6468

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonaphone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. d3867

FOR SALE: Phonograph made for Exposition of 1902 found in private collection. For details write:—Reed & Long, c/o Gregory R. Reed, R.F.D. 4, Allentown 5, Pa. au3004

ATTENTION! Antique cylinder & disc phonographs bought, sold, repaired. Repairs done on all makes & models, parts replaced, reproducers bought, sold repaired. I will buy anything in this line. Large list of what I have for sale for stamp. Many rare and hard to find machines in stock. Almost everything in this line available. All machines and parts are perfect. No Junk. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Tel. 2-4985, Brewer, Maine. au38611

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3426

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

explicit detail, brightened by touches of his characteristic humor, that marked the one devoted to his wife.

William Rogers Wheeler lacks just a week of having the same birthdate as Bess. He was born July 13, 1879, in Shawano, Wis. His father, Willard Watson Wheeler, and his mother, Ellen Topping Wheeler, were both born in New York State, but didn't meet until both families moved to St. Clair county, Michigan.

William had a sister, Sybil, and a brother, Russell, both older than he. He says, "I am now the only leaf left on the original family tree."

The Wheeler family enjoyed music in the house around the parlor organ. Willard Wheeler had a high, untrained, tenor voice. Will himself was allowed to sing instead of reciting pieces in grade school. His voice never changed but slowly dropped from boy soprano to tenor.

At Beloit College he sang in church choirs, in the college quartet and glee club, as well as in a mixed quartet, "and made a respectable sum of money by singing in neighboring small towns. I took what music courses the college had to offer—few in those days—and graduated from the college in 1900."

His visit to Danville, Ill., where he met Bess Nicholson, followed:

"After one year's study with her, fraught with admiration on my part and wailing on hers that she couldn't teach a man to sing, we both went to Ithaca, where we graduated from the Conservatory in 1902.

"She then went to Chicago and I to Rochester, N. Y., where I did some singing in concerts and always in church, as well as very tentatively taking up classes in singing in two small near-by towns. I studied there with our Ithaca teacher, Dr. Beall.

"In New York, from 1906 to 1919, I studied with Percy Stephens and coached with Arthur Whiting, Kurt Schindler, and Arthur Mees. During that time I was soloist at St. Bartholomew's Church and Temple Emanuel, besides doing a lot of oratorios and concerts and recitals with Elizabeth. I sort of sneaked into recording in the train of Mrs. Wheeler, who was a much better recording artist than I.

"At Michigan, I was too busy with teaching to do a great deal of singing, but did direct and sing in the Methodist church choir, and went on one tour of some Eastern colleges and universities with Arthur Whiting, doing lecture recital programs, as well as making two appearances at the Ann Arbor May Festivals.

"Aside from Tom Dewey, my most famous student was Donald Dame, tenor, who was at the Metropolitan for a season or two and was to have been re-engaged at the time of his death in his early 30's, while on tour with a Fledermaus company sponsored by the Met. (This was after we had come to Cleveland.)

"Life in Cleveland has been varied: Explanatory folksong recitals, including a radio series, other recitals and oratorio engagements, private teaching and a period of 10 years at the Cleveland Institute of Music, back again in our own studio with Mrs. Wheeler, classes in music appreciation at Cleveland College and Lake Erie College in Painesville, a woman's chorus for 15 years—till I got tired of it.

"Several years ago I was elected to the American Academy of Teachers of Singing, an organization limited to 40 male teachers throughout the land. That,

I think, is my greatest honor.

"Health pretty good, considering year of the model; height a little under six feet, eyes blue as Jack Benny's, weight about 175. Ambition—not to retire but, as we have done, to cut down on our activities, take it easy as possible, and take good care, each of the other, in our declining years. (Excuse the cliché.)

"Our state has begun to scan with a jaundiced eye drivers of my age, and so last fall my driver's license was revoked, subject to renewal on passing a new driver's test. The first time I ignominiously flunked, unable to park properly, but later on, after several lessons under my son's tutelage and the purchase of a smaller car—a Lark—I passed gloriously and was able to thumb my nose at the authorities in Columbus."

After I sent Mr. Wheeler a copy of the list of the Elizabeth and William Wheeler records which will appear at the end of this series, he wrote on May 7th: "Seeing the name of the Whitney Brothers Quartet reminds me that I substituted for Alvin, the first tenor, who was ailing, for several months—in 1902 or 1903, I think it was."

Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler's recording activities will be related in detail next month. Meanwhile, this seems to be the best place to quote a feature story about them, by Jacqueline Taylor Wattenberg, a pupil of theirs, which appeared in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, when they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1954. I shall condense the article somewhat, to omit mention of things already told about:

"Husband and wife dance teams are pretty common—and so are couples who act or write together. But here in Cleveland we have something unique—a couple who have been teaching the complex art of singing for about 20 years—and have enjoyed a happy married life together for 51 years, also no routine accomplishment.

"They are Mr. and Mrs. William Wheeler of Cleveland Heights. The harmony of their married life has apparently extended to their co-operative teaching. "It's the greatest thing in the world for a husband and wife to be interested in the same thing, if they have sense enough not to be jealous of each other," asserted the slender, animated Mrs. Wheeler.

"Their pupils find this 'double-header' teaching doubly profitable. 'If one by any chance misses a trick, the other catches you on it. They're wonderful!' This is the comment of a well-known Cleveland soprano who recalls with distaste her struggles with 'name' teachers in New York City.

"Constant fighting" took up all their lesson time some 50 years ago when William Wheeler was persuaded by a minister cousin in Danville, Ill., to come there and study with a young teacher 'with a beautiful voice' at the local conservatory.

"I told him the first day he came to me that he better not stay at all—I didn't know a thing about singing!" Mrs. Wheeler recalled over a cup of tea.

"But I had heard her sing," her husband interrupted, "and I told her anyone who can sing like that can teach me."

"When Bess left for study in Chicago, Bill Wheeler moved on to Rochester, N. Y., and became part of the musical life there. After a year he wrote Bess to come to Rochester because there was so much musical opportunity. 'Oh, I may have been a sly dog,' he conceded with a chuckle. They were married in 1904. In 1906 they headed for New York City and soon were making records for Victor.

"She had the better recording voice," said her husband and described her easy production, and the evenness and beauty of quality. They came to know McCormack and Caruso.

"Everybody loved Caruso," Mrs. Wheeler recalled, "from the bellboys to

the musicians. He was grand to everybody. One year at holiday time he gave every bellboy in his hotel a \$20 gold piece."

"The Wheeler records ranged from opera and standard art songs to such popular light songs as those of Carrie Jacobs-Bond. Roy Chapman Andrews, a friend, once told them that the first record his expedition played in the Gobi Desert was one of 'The Wheelers.'

"Mr. Wheeler did a great deal of oratorio work and gave concerts with Rosa Ponselle and Alma Gluck. His wife and he toured hinterlands together, where people who owned their records were happy to see what 'The Wheelers' looked like.

"After 14 years of recording they moved to Ann Arbor, Mich., where Mr. Wheeler headed the voice department of the University of Michigan Music School. One of the most outstanding pupils was a young law student named Tom Dewey, who was a regular visitor to their house and became 'like a son.'

"He had a good bass-baritone voice," Mr. Wheeler related, "but he was especially outstanding for his ability to interpret and to tell a story." The young man was hovering between law and music in those days.

"After five years in Ann Arbor, the Wheelers headed for Cleveland. Mr. Wheeler taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music for 12 years, and his wife was singing teacher at Schauffler College for 20 years. But their private teaching, in partnership, has progressed so that they now jointly teach all their pupils.

"It just kind of grew," Mrs. Wheeler said simply. "He's better in languages than I am, the better student, more conservative and set. I believe in change and I try to see new ways. So we talk things over."

"I'm more analytical," Mr. Wheeler observed, "while my wife has this tremendous enthusiasm."

"Mr. Wheeler may start your lesson off with vocalizing—exclusive, inspired-on-the-moment exercises for your individual problems, not a set of standard exercises for all pupils. Then you do your songs, and it's right here, as your lessons progress, that Mrs. Wheeler's role emerges. When she can't restrain herself, she comes up to you with some of that enthusiasm: 'Why, that was lovely; a fine high B flat.'

"Yes," her husband may assent, "and now let's work on this line here . . ." and perceptively, gently, subtly, he sets out improving the tone, breath, and musicianship. Mrs. Wheeler sits listening to a song, then rises and, arms 'directing,' urges the pupil to feel and express the song's message.

"During lesson time Mrs. Wheeler sometimes baby-sits for young singing mothers and—being a fond grandmother—finds the task easy. Their son John, an architect who lives in Chagrin Falls, has two children, Barbara, now 14, and William R. II, 9."

Having typed the Plain Dealer article, I find myself wondering which Wheeler record the Andrews expedition played in the Gobi Desert. From a standpoint of suitability, there could have been none more appropriate than Victor 16506, on which Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler sang one of the loveliest of hymns, "Abide With Me!"

I find myself pleased, too, by the knowledge that there are still many thousands—probably millions—of mature music lovers who vividly remember the "Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler" records of 50 years ago. For instance, when I told James H. Moore, president of Radio-Television Station WSLs, for which I work, about my joy at discovering the Wheelers, he exclaimed: "Elizabeth and William Wheeler! Boy, I remember them! They used to make lots of beautiful hymn records!"

(To be continued)





## Elizabeth and William Wheeler

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Elizabeth Wheeler's First Records

As we already know, Elizabeth Wheeler's first records were made for Leeds and Catlin. This firm had begun by manufacturing wax cylinders, but changed to discs in the early 1900's and made the single-faced Leeds record, whose labels were gold colored with a crinkly effect. In 1904 or 1905 the Leeds label was succeeded by the Imperial, possibly because Leeds was establishing an agency in England.

My only Imperial record catalog, dated October, 1906, contains no mention of Mrs. Wheeler. The first reference I have found to any of her records is in the March 16, 1908, issue of the English *Talking Machine News*:

"We learn from the Imperial Disc Record Co. that they will shortly issue a complete set of Grieg's Peer Gynt on four records. They will also publish soprano solos by Miss Natalie Hillmar and Miss (!) Elizabeth Wheeler, and various selected pieces from the Merry Widow. Mr. Alan Turner's records which were issued last month have, we understand, sold extremely well."

Since records were made at least six weeks to two months before they were sold, and since there would have been additional delay in their reaching England, it appears reasonable to assume that "Miss" Wheeler first faced the horn during the latter half of 1907.

A review of Imperial records in the May, 1908, *T. M. N.* said:

"Two of the vocal records are not only good in themselves, but are also conspicuous from the fact that they have an attractive accompaniment on piano, violin and flute. They are Freeborn's 'Land of Golden Dreams,' (45580), sung by Natalie Hillmar, who has a fine soprano voice, and Tosti's 'Goodbye' (45582), sung by Elizabeth Wheeler, another soprano of parts."

The oddly praised "soprano of parts" also had another Imperial record listed that month, the familiar "Dreams," by Anton Strelezki, which seems to have been one of her favorite recording choices. Its number is given as 45581. A little later, the *News* again listed a Wheeler disc of "Dreams," with the number published as 45601. It is not clear whether two versions were issued or whether a mistake was made in printing one number, but the latter appears more probable. However, in

the list of her records at the end of this installment, I have included both.

Who, you probably join me in wondering, was Miss Natalie Hillmar? Whoever she was, her fame has not endured like that of Elizabeth Wheeler.

In June, we find:

"Miss Elizabeth Wheeler has a fine soprano solo with violin obbligato of 'In the Calmness' (45685) from Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, and also gives, with piano accompaniment, an effective rendering of 'Happy Li'l Sal' (45636)."

In a separate listing, the number of "In the Calmness" appears as 45635. "Happy Li'l Sal" seems to have been another of the soprano's favorites. It is a Carrie Jacobs-Bond song with words by Richard F. Outcault, the cartoonist whose "Yellow Kid" was the first colored "funny paper" feature and who afterwards drew the popular Sunday comic strip, "Buster Brown." Another mention of "Sal" refers to the singer as "Madame Wheeler."

Still another favorite in the Wheeler repertoire, Gounod's "Ave Maria," was offered to English record buyers in June. In September, the magazine said: "'Mighty Lak' a Rose' is sung with much finish and expression by Miss Elizabeth Wheeler, with violin obbligato."

In October, we find:

"Miss Elizabeth Wheeler gives us 'Dreams' (45601). She has a voice of much sweetness and purity, and the record is also noteworthy for a pleasing accompaniment of piano, violin and flute, which adds much to the charm of the song."

After that I find no more listings of Imperial records by Elizabeth Wheeler, but she may have made others not mentioned in the *Talking Machine News*. Victor's successful suit against Leeds and Catlin for patent infringement became effective late in 1908, and, as mentioned last month, the firm had to quit business. Imperial records were also issued under other labels for private traders. These included Busy Bee, Century, Concert, Clico, Royal, Symphony, Talkophone and Vim, so it would not be surprising to find an occasional Wheeler disc appearing under those, or other "off brands."

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

#### II. Indestructible, Edison and U. S. Everlasting Cylinders

About the time that Leeds & Catlin sank, by legal decree, out of existence, Mrs. Wheeler began making cylinder records. Four two-minute "rollers" which she sang as solos for the Indestructible Phonographic Record Co., of Albany, N. Y., are of the 1909 and 1910 period. They include "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms," both issued in January, 1910. A duet with the contralto, Idelle Patterson, of "Oh Morning Land" appeared that same month. Her record of "Good Night, Dear" was issued in February, 1910, and received this catalog description:

"This song, of delicate and refined sentiment, is widely known through being sung by Miss Billie Burke in her great comedy success, 'Love Watches.' It is a tenderly expressive number, and admirably adapted to Mrs. Wheeler's delightful soprano voice."

The records already mentioned were two-minute. One of Mrs. Wheeler's two four-minute cylinders, "Bonnie Sweet Bessie, the Maid of Dundee," also came out in February, with this comment:

"Mrs. Wheeler's solo this month is the best known of the several delightful Scotch ballads by J. L. Gilbert. There are few who have not, at one time or another, felt the charm of its plaintive words and air. Mrs. Wheeler's interpretation is, as always, an example of perfect vocalism and incomparable diction and phrasing."

The other 4-minute, Tosti's "Goodbye," had been issued in January. Our sweet-voiced soprano's name also appeared on a few Edison cylinders, all issued during a four-month period, from December, 1909, through March, 1910. With the exception of one solo, all the "Elizabeth Wheeler" Edisons were duets with John Young, who was then using the name of Harry Anthony. I must point out, however, that although Mrs. Wheeler says she knew Young well, she emphatically denies having ever made records with him and insists she never sang for Edison. She and Mr. Wheeler also knew Young's partner, the baritone, Frederick Wheeler. He was not related to William Wheeler. For the sake of historical interest, I shall, despite Mrs. Wheeler's disclaimer, list the Edison cylinders. The first Edison mention of Elizabeth Wheeler appeared in *The New Phonogram* for December, 1909:

"'The Garden of Dreams' (Elizabeth Wheeler and Harry Anthony.) A soprano and tenor duet, with Miss Wheeler singing the verses. The song is a sentimental composition of a higher order of merit, both in words and melody, by the same author who wrote 'Dearie'—Clare Kummer. This is a record that will find its way into every collection of high class numbers."

"Garden of Dreams" was a four-minute Amberol cylinder. The same

list also contained a two-minute Wheeler-Anthony duet:

"Dreamland Faces" . . . An unusual degree of attractiveness in composition and melody marks this number, which is rendered in duet form by soprano and tenor. The sentiment of the song is daintily expressed in lines that are refreshingly original and clever. The artists are so well and favorably known as to require no special word of commendation—their work is consistently artistic."

In January, 1910, three more Wheeler-Anthony duets were offered. The first two mentioned below were four-minute; the other played just half as long:

"Ring O' Roses" . . . This number is from 'The Dollar Princess,' a musical comedy which is now both a European and an American success. It is now playing to crowded houses in New York. . . . 'Ring O' Roses' . . . is the most melodious and attractive number in the production and always elicits many encores. "Gobble Duet," from 'The Mascotte,' . . . We confidently expect that this beautiful soprano and tenor duet . . . will prove one of the most popular records in our catalog. It is the famous 'Gobble Duet' from the comic opera, 'The Mascotte,' which was first produced at Paris in 1880 and, up to Aug. 29, 1897, had reached its seventeen hundredth performance. . . .

"Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland." . . . In this charming love ballad, the lines of whose verses are sung by the artists alternately, and the chorus in duet form, Miss Wheeler and Mr. Anthony display in a marked degree those talents that have established their popularity with the phonograph public."

February, 1910, brought a Wheeler-Anthony duet of "Sweet Bunch of Daisies," which Anita Owen had written as a successor to "Daisies Won't Tell." This was a two-minute cylinder:

"A dainty little effusion, wedded to a particularly sweet air, and rendered in duet form by a soprano and tenor whose names are synonyms of excellence, is a concise and truthful description of this record."

"Miss" Wheeler's only solo Edison cylinder, a four-minute Amberol, issued in March, 1910, marked her final appearance in the Edison catalog.

"Dreams" . . . To those who discriminate in favor of vocal selections of the higher grade this sentimental number will make a distinct appeal. Miss Wheeler's beautiful voice and artistic style are strongly in evidence in this selection, which she sings with an ease and brilliancy delightful to hear. Piano accompaniment with violin obbligato. . . .

Of these several Wheeler records, the Gobble Duet proved the longest lasting. After the unbreakable Blue Amberol cylinders were introduced, the duet was re-issued in 1913, as a new style cylinder, but with the tenor's name changed from Anthony, which he had then discarded, in favor of the rightful John Young. It is a fine record, which deserved its popularity.

The facetious thought arises that, although "Miss Elizabeth Wheeler's" Edison association was a short one, it was dreamy while it lasted!

She not only told of the charms of "Dreams," she also visited the garden of dreams, wistfully recalled dreamland faces and extended an invitation to meet her in dreamland, where the invited one probably would show up toting a sweet bunch of daisies!

In 1909, Albert Benzler, who had been one of the most useful men around the Edison recording studios, left Thomas A. Edison and, with some of his associates, began working for the new U. S. Everlasting cylinder record company. U. S. business headquarters was in Cleveland, now and for many years past the home of Elizabeth and William Wheeler. The only U. S. catalog I have, dated October, 1912, contains a two-minute cylinder of Mrs. Wheeler, "Last Rose of Summer," and a four-minute by her husband, "Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes."

### III. Mrs. Wheeler Begins Recording for Victor

The musically significant portion of Bess Nicholson Wheeler's recording career began in 1909, when she signed a Victor contract. Leeds & Catlin's compulsory liquidation had left her available to other offers. Someone at Victor apparently had heard her Imperial records and decided she would be a notable addition to the staff of Eldridge R. Johnson's company. That at least is the impression given by the comment on the Wheeler records, which appeared in Victor catalogs from

1912 to 1922, and in a slightly different form had been published as early as January, 1910:

"A soprano who can give a song the proper expression and yet pronounce the words distinctly is a rare discovery. In Mrs. Wheeler the Victor presents a soprano whose diction is really remarkable; and this fact is quite apparent in the records she has made."

"After hearing Mrs. Wheeler's first records, the Victor Company at once secured her exclusive services for disc work; and she has sung a number of old favorites, besides several of the popular ballads and many duets, both sacred and secular, with Mr. Wheeler, the soprano and tenor blending in most attractive style."

In 1923, after Mrs. Wheeler had given up recording and was busy with her teaching at the University of Michigan, the write-up was changed to:

"Elizabeth Wheeler is an old friend of the Victor and of Victor audiences. She is a soprano who cannot only sing but enunciate, and she preserves admirably the balance between these two essentials of good balladry."

"She has made a number of standard favorites, both alone and in combination with other artists; some of these are simple and 'homey,' and others call for rare and subtle qualities of artistic expression."

On turning to the numerical list of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler's records, you will find that several of her Victor single-faced discs bear lower serial numbers than the remainder. This is because Victor had recently changed its recording process and was remaking most of the selections already in the catalog. Mrs. Wheeler was called on to sing fresh versions of numbers previously listed by artists no longer available or whose services were no longer required.

"I Dreamt That I Dwelt In Marble Halls" had previously been sung by the contralto, Corinne Morgan; "Ave Maria" by a soprano, Florence Hayward; "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms," by Florence Hinkle, who afterwards returned and became a Victor favorite (she was the wife of the basso, Herbert Witherspoon, later manager of the Metropolitan Opera), and "Rock Me To Sleep, Mother" and "The Last Rose Of Summer," by Helene Noldi. Besides these solos, the duets by Mrs. Wheeler and Harry Macdonough of "The Mocking Bird" and "When You and I Were Young, Maggie" had been originally sung by the contralto-basso combination of Miss Morgan and Frank C. Stanley.

Next we come to a puzzle—one which I observed for the first time while preparing the list of Wheeler recordings. In the Victor supplement for February, 1909, record No. 5657, "The Glow Worm," was listed as a soprano solo by Elise Stevenson. It also appeared in March under Miss Stevenson's name. But in the next complete Victor catalog, for January, 1910, although the same number is retained, the record is said to be by Elizabeth Wheeler and, in both single and double-faced form, it was sold for many years under her name.

Now, what happened? Was "The Glow Worm" sung in the beginning



Left to right:

Elizabeth and William Wheeler at the beginning of their recording careers (from a 1910 Victor record catalog).

Elizabeth and William Wheeler (from the July, 1917, Victor record supplement).

Elizabeth Wheeler knitting (from a 1920 Victor record supplement).

By Bess Wheeler but attributed to Miss Stevenson through an error? If so, Mrs. Wheeler, whose name had not then appeared in a monthly Victor list, must have been making "His Master's Voice" records in the latter half of 1908. If it was actually by Miss Stevenson, why was a re-make necessary within a few months of issue? And why wasn't Miss Stevenson, who was still singing regularly for the company, permitted to do the new take herself, rather than assigning it to another soprano?

The first Victor record which Elizabeth Wheeler may be said to have made "on her own" was "Goodnight, Dear," which appeared in August, 1909. In September she was represented by the first of her long series of gospel hymns, "A Child of a King," and in October, under the heading of "A Perfect Record of the Favorite 'Last Rose,'" appeared this enthusiastic reference to her delicious version of "The Last Rose of Summer."

"It is with pleasure that we are able to offer a beautiful and all but perfect record of this most beloved of English ballads at a price of sixty cents. Mrs. Wheeler sings the dear old melody exquisitely, and delivers the words with absolute clearness."

In January, 1910, the supplement contained this eulogistic review of Mrs. Wheeler's record of a Carrie Jacobs-Bond song, "His Buttons Are Marked U.S.":

"One of the most delightful of the compositions of Carrie Jacobs Bond, whose songs of childhood are notable for their charming simplicity. This exquisite little gem, which Mrs. Wheeler has given so clearly and touchingly, expresses the thoughts of a child on seeing his father in a soldier's uniform; when he quaintly imagines that as the buttons are marked U. S., it signifies 'us,' and therefore his papa must belong solely to 'dear mamma and me!'"

Another of Mrs. Wheeler's favorite Bond songs, "Happy Li'l Sal," appeared in February.

While going through the complete Victor catalog for January, 1910, hoping to solve "The Glow Worm" mystery, I was surprised to find that Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler were mistaken in believing they never knew Elise Stevenson. The soprano at least sang with Miss Stevenson on one or more occasions. I quote the following from a description of a 12-inch single-faced record, 31757, "Gems From 'A Broken Idol,'" made by the Victor Light Opera Company:

"... The medley contains a bit of the dainty song, 'A Little China Doll,' sung by Mrs. Wheeler: 'Love Makes the World Go 'Round,' with its pretty swing, given first as a duet by Mrs. Wheeler and Mr. (Frederick) Gunster, then as a quartet, with Miss Stevenson and Mr. (S. H.) Dudley: 'Marie,' by the orchestra; 'Signs of a Honeymoon,' quartet by Wheeler, Stevenson, Macdonough and Gunster; and, finally, that lively ditty, 'Alabama,' with Billy Murray and full chorus. . ."

Actually, the correct title of the second song is "What Makes the World Go Round?" Speaking of the Light Opera Company, I remember Billy Murray telling me years ago all Mrs. Wheeler's associates thought her rendition of "Moonbeams Shining" in "Gems from 'The Red Mill,'" was remarkably beautiful.

William Wheeler took one of the tenor roles in an English-language Purple Label record (No. 70036) of the Lucia Sextet, recorded March 27, 1911. Macdonough was the other tenor, and the remaining singers were Lucy Marsh, Marguerite Dunlap, Reinald Werrenrath and William F. Hooley.

Turning back to October, 1909, we find evidence that "The Gobble Duet" from "The Mascotte," must have been one of Mrs. Wheeler's favorites. The Edison duet with John Young has already been mentioned, but even earlier Victor had issued it by Mrs. Wheeler and Harry Macdonough. Sam Rous ("S. H. Dudley") the catalog editor, remarked:

"No one can resist the spell of Audran's music, and certainly none can fail to admire the gem of the entire opera—this charming 'Gobble Duet,' so pleasantly sung by Mrs. Wheeler and Mr. Macdonough."

To use his own term, Mrs. Wheeler must have "sneaked" William in as a Victor artist late in 1909, for their first duets began to appear early the next year. Their only single-faced offering was a 12-inch version of Schubert's Serenade. "I Cannot Sing the Old Songs" (but they consistently did!) was their first 10-inch double-face, with the Whitney Brothers Quartet singing "For-saken" on the reverse. For some time the Wheeler duets were listed, not as by Elizabeth and William Wheeler, or Mr. and Mrs. William Wheeler, but simply as by "Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler," thus making it likely that a puzzled posterity would wonder *which* Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler had sung so exquisitely. Most of their duets were hymns, but there were also some standard art songs. No. 16700 contained their "Dear Lord and Father, While I Stray," combined with John Barnes Wells' "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere." I wonder why Victor issued a second tenor version of "Beautiful Isle" in only a little more than two years after Harold Jarvis' now classic interpretation had appeared on record 16008. In spite of the Jarvis competition, however, the Wheeler-Wells coupling remained in the catalog until electric recording was introduced and was afterwards included in a special catalog of historically interesting records. When it was announced in February, 1911, the supplement described it as "a new record of the beloved 'Beautiful Isle,' which has been for years one of the most popular numbers in the Victor's sacred list; combined with a new gospel hymn much used in evangelistic services."

Obviously, not all the records of so popular and prolific an artist as Elizabeth Wheeler can be mentioned here in the detail they deserve. She seldom sang passingly popular music, and one of her few records of that type, "Don't Be Cross With Me," is among her rarest discs. The song didn't "click" and the record was soon discontinued. Besides her husband and Harry Macdonough, (who was John Macdonald, head of

the Victor Artist and Repertoire department), her only other male duet partner for Victor was the baritone, Reinald Werrenrath, with whom she sang "Two Little Love Bees," from "The Spring Maid." This single-faced disc had a short life, for Victor engaged Christie McDonald, the soprano star of "The Spring Maid," to make some Purple Label records. When she and Werrenrath sang the "Love Bees," the Wheeler-Werrenrath version was deleted.

Since Mrs. Wheeler's single-faced records were largely of the "standard" type, most were afterwards brought forward into the double-faced list.

In 1911, Victor, with characteristic enterprise, established an Educational Department. An external horn machine was produced, chiefly to play marching music for use in public schools, and Mrs. Frances Elliott Clark, who had been supervisor of music in the schools of Milwaukee, Wis., was placed in charge of educational activities. She began energetically to issue both vocal and

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. n6637

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each.—Ric Verdi Antiques, 854 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3694

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. au6465

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flow-ered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. d5867

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3426

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. ja6468

instrumental records designed primarily for school purposes. These "educational records," as they were usually known, were not listed alphabetically in the Victor catalog, but were restricted to a special section. Their sale also was confined largely to educational institutions, and the majority of the titles were not widely known to the general record buying public. Within a short time, Elizabeth Wheeler was one of the leading contributors to the educational series. She sang solo records of Mother Goose rhymes and other children's numbers, and recorded duets and trios with Marguerite Dunlap, Elsie Baker and Olive Kline. Many beautiful records were produced as the result of this all-feminine collaboration.

It was during the period in which his wife was becoming more and more identified with educational records that the only Victor solo by William Wheeler was issued. In November, 1912, his splendid tenor rendition of an old-time ballad, "Marguerite," was announced, coupled with the late Reed Miller singing "The Sweetest Story Ever Told." The monthly supplement said:

"Two old favorites which the Victor has revived in response to requests from many customers who are not in sympathy with the cheap sentiments and coarseness of many popular songs of the day. Both are beautiful songs which in their time were immensely popular, the combined sales being more than a million copies. Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Miller are to be congratulated for their admirable renditions of these attractive old songs."

There is an amusing reference to the Wheeler-Miller coupling in the same supplement. Editor Rous was discussing record 17172, which combined "The Million Dollar Ball," warbled by Billy Murray, with "When I Get You Alone Tonight," dashingy sung by my dear friend, the still living Walter Van Brunt. Sam said:

"Another rousing Hanky Panky success, combined with a song of the 'spoony' type popular just at present, but which can hardly be called refined. It is refreshing to note signs of a change in public sentiment, manifested in an increasing demand for old-time ballads such as 'Marguerite' and 'Sweetest Story Ever Told,' listed on another page of this bulletin."

Since some of the popular songs of almost 50 years ago earned Sam Rous' disapproval, one wonders what, if he were still alive, he would think of rock-'n-roll!

I have an almost lifelong personal association of my own with the "Marguerite" record. As a child, I did not at first identify the William Wheeler who made the record as the tenor who sang with Elizabeth Wheeler. Instead, I imagined him as an impoverished veteran of the Civil War, who still could sing, and who had been engaged to make a record so that his fee would enable him to eat more regularly and often. I imagined him wearing his military cap and uniform as he recorded, and as afterwards being presented by the great-hearted Victor folks with a big Victrola and scads of records. I also imagined, incorrectly, many

details of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler's courtship and marriage.

#### IV. Zonophone, Later Victor and Pathe Records

Although Mrs. Wheeler's services must have been exclusive to Victor after 1910, she and Mr. Wheeler were permitted to sing for the Zonophone records, which Victor rather surreptitiously issued. Zonophone discs sold at 65 cents, a dime less than the standard Victor 10-inch price, and were intended to compete with Columbia's 65 cent record. Many "exclusive" Victor artists appeared on Zonophone records until that label was discontinued, apparently during 1913. My Zonophone lists do not include the last half of 1912 or any part of 1913, so it's possible both Elizabeth and William Wheeler made more Zono discs than are listed at the end of this article. I take Mr. Wheeler's solo, "Oh Lola, Fair as Flowers," to be an English version of the *Siciliana* from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The old ballad, "Sweet Miss Mary," was rather incongruously paired with a popular song, "Curly Head," sung by Byron G. Harlan.

Victor gave Mrs. Wheeler a few popular songs to sing in 1915 and 1916. One, "In Monterey," was paired with "Little Honolulu Lou," sung by Charles Harrison. Two 1916 songs by the former Miss Bess Nicholson were marketed under the assumed name of Jane Kenyon. Mr. Wheeler says his wife doesn't remember anything about that name being used and can't say whether she or some Victor official selected it. Commenting on the list of their recordings which I sent him, Mr. Wheeler remarked: "It is most interesting to be reminded of all those records we made for Victor and the others, records in the latter case which we had completely forgotten. . . . The FBI has nothing on you in the matter of records."

The final Victor record by Elizabeth and William Wheeler came out in July, 1917—"What a Friend We Have in Jesus," which proved to be one of their most popular duets. Mrs. Wheeler had another educational record (18330) a few months later. From then until June, 1920, the Wheeler name disappeared from the monthly supplements. Her last record, issued after the couple had taken up their duties at the University of Michigan was 18665, another contribution of primarily educational interest.

Meanwhile, William Wheeler began singing, late in 1917, for the Pathé hill-and-dale records played with a round sapphire ball. One of his dozen or so sides was "Hawaii and You," which he sang to a Hawaiian guitar accompaniment by Helen Louise and Frank Ferrara. The others were gospel hymns, mostly with organ accompaniments. A few nights ago I played several of these Pathé discs and was impressed not only by the excellent reproduction

but by the artistic restraint with which Mr. Wheeler sang. He was at the opposite extreme from the ranting, ear-splitting type of evangelistic singer. His voice production was marked by clarity, dignity and unaffected expressiveness. "I Walk With the King" is especially good.

Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler's old friend, Percy Hemus, had begun making Pathé records in 1917, and the tenor says he thinks, but isn't sure, Hemus might have suggested that Pathé add him to its list of singers. When Pathé discontinued the sapphire records in 1922 and began issuing the needle-cut Actuelles, many of the older records were transferred to the new type, often with the names of the artists changed. I suspect that some of the records by a tenor, "Paul Hardy," which duplicate titles William had previously made, are dubbings of his sapphire discs.

The last catalog Victor issued before electrical recording was introduced was published early in 1925. Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler by that time had left Ann Arbor and gone to live in Cleveland, but solo records No. 16398, 16401, 16405, 16863 and 18076 by Mrs. Wheeler were still listed. Her Latin version of "Ave Maria" and the "well-nigh perfect" "Last Rose of Summer" had been re-made in 1924 by a young soprano, Della Baker. Duets and trios in which she had sung, exclusive of those with Mr. Wheeler, and which were still available, included 17209, 17987 and 35581. William Wheeler's solo of "Marguerite" was holding its own as one of the most consistent sellers, and duets still catalogued by the husband and wife were 16490, 16500, 16563, 17940 and 18287. Two more of their old numbers still clung to the catalog, but had been re-made. In 1922, "Near the Cross" had been done over by "Alice Green and Raymond Dixon"—disguises for Olive Kline and Lambert Murphy. In 1924, under their own names, Kline and Murphy re-made "Dear Lord and Father."

When the 1926 catalog was issued, a rush to re-record standard numbers electrically was under way. The only Wheeler recording left was their last duet, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

But that was not quite the end of the pair's Victor repertoire. A year later, Victor was moved, "by insistent public demand," to issue a special catalog of Records of Historical and Personal Interest, which music lovers felt should still be available.

Several Wheeler records were resurrected, including Mrs. Wheeler's solos of "Mother Goose Songs" (16863), "Humpty Dumpty," etc. (18076) and "Pull a Cherry" (18330)—all, it will be noted, of the educational type. Wheeler and Wheeler duets brought back to life included 17940, "The Homeland" and "My Jesus, As Thou Wilt," and 16490, "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say." And here we run into another



puzzle. In one place the special catalog says that the Latin version of "Ave Maria" on the other side of 16490 was sung by Elizabeth Spencer; in another, that it was by Della Baker, who had re-made it in 1924. Also restored were the Della Baker "Last Rose of Summer," and the Kline-Murphy, "Near the Cross" and "Dear Lord and Father." These old favorites remained available until the record business came within a gasp of dying for several years during the 1930's, and Victor's special pressing service was discontinued.

Looking back over her long list of discs and cylinders, Mrs. Wheeler says she thinks her best records would include "Elizabeth's Prayer," Hollman's "Love Song," Tosti's "Goodbye," and "The Kerry Dance." She and Mr. Wheeler vote for "Ah Yes, I Love You," from Reginald De Koven's "Fortune Teller," Tosti's "Serenade" and "A Night in Venice," by Lucantoni, as among their more important duets.

So now we have come to the end of our story, but not to the end of the story of Elizabeth and William Wheeler. With a wish that they may enjoy many more vigorous years of installing appreciation and the love of good music and faultless singing methods into their pupils, we may pass to a comprehensive listing of their recorded efforts. No claim is made that the following tabulation is 100 per cent complete, for, as has already been pointed out, there may be Imperial and Zonophone about which I know nothing. It is even possible I have overlooked one or two Victors, but I hope not. However, there is no doubt that most of the best of the recorded work of the "Wonderful Wheelers" will be found here.

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#### RECORDS BY ELIZABETH AND WILLIAM WHEELER

Imperial single-faced discs by Elizabeth Wheeler (1907-08)

10-inch

45581, Dreams; 45582, Goodbye; 45601, Dreams; 45636, Happy Li'l Sal; 45663, Mighty Lak' a Rose; 45685, Romeo and Juliet—In the Calmness.

Victor Solo Records by Elizabeth Wheeler (1909-1920)

10-inch - Single-faced

2980, I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls; 4251, Ave Maria; 4874, Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms; 5215, Rock Me to Sleep, Mother; 5657, The Glow Worm; 5709, Good Night, Dear; 5726, Child of a King; 5739, Last Rose of Summer; 5752, His Buttons Are Marked U. S.; 5759, Happy Li'l Sal.

10-inch - Double-faced

16330, Don't Be Cross With Me; Reverse: Recipe for Love (Elsie Stevenson and Frank C. Stanley.)

16398, I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls; Reverse: Then You'll Remember Me (originally by Harry Macdonough, but later remade by Lewis James.)

16401, Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms; Reverse: Sally In Our Alley (Whitney Brothers Quartet.)

16405, Rock Me to Sleep, Mother; Reverse: In the Gloaming (originally by Corinne Morgan, remade by Elizabeth Spencer.)

16454, Loch Lomond; Reverse: Old Folks at Home (Whitney Brothers Quartet.)

16490, Ave Maria, (in Latin); Reverse: I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.)

16660, Child of a King; Reverse: Abide With Me (Richard Jose.)



An excellent recent snapshot of Elizabeth and William Wheeler.

16813, Last Rose of Summer; Reverse: Tannhauser—the Evening Star ('cello solo by Victor Sorlin.)

16828, Mary (with Hayden Quartet); Reverse: I'm Fancy Free (Inez Barbour.)

16863, Mother Goose Songs; Reverse: 1. The Moo Cow Moo. 2. His New Brother (Henry Allan Price.)

16865, There, Little Girl, Don't Cry; Reverse: Red, Red Rose (John Barnes Wells.)

16893, Cradle Song; Reverse: Dry Yo' Eyes (Marguerite Dunlap.)

16932, Glow Worm; Reverse: Garden of Dreams (Stevenson and Macdonough.)

17004, 1. A Dew Drop. 2. Rain Song; Reverse: Mother Goose No. 1.

17095, A Girl Like Me (with Lyric Quartet); Reverse: Whistle It (Ada Jones.)

17167, May Day; Reverse: Hi, Li'l Feller (Marguerite Dunlap.)

17177, Summer Lullaby; Reverse: 1. The Oriole's Nest; 2. Wind Song.

17187, No Candle Was There and No Fire; Reverse: Silent Night (Dunlap.)

17203, Daddy; Reverse: I'm Wearing Awa' (Wells.)

17210, I Wish You a Very Good Day, etc.; Reverse: See Saw, Margery Daw, etc.

17282, 1. Indian Lullaby. 2. The Ginger Cat; Reverse: 1. Robin's Journey. 2. Goodnight, Pretty Stars.

17283, 1. Under Their Blanket of Snow. 2. Pussy Willow; Reverse: Voice of Spring. 2. Ladybird.

17513, 1. The Cuck-coo Clock. 2. Slumber Song; Reverse: The Secret, etc.

17883, In Monterey; Reverse: Little Honolulu Lou (Charles Harrison.)

18053, My Grandfather's Girl (issued under the assumed name of Jane Kenyon); Reverse: Where the Shamrocks Grow (Geoffrey O'Hara.)

18065, At the End of a Beautiful Day (issued under the name of Jane Kenyon); Reverse: Love Me at Twilight (Herbert Stuart, who was really Albert Wiederhold.)

18076, Humpty Dumpty, etc.; Reverse: Sing a Song of Sixpence, etc.

18330, Pull a Cherry, etc.; Reverse: The Postilion, etc.

18665, Skye Boat Song. 2. The Hills of Tyrol; Reverse: Mother's Prayer, etc.

Victor Solo Records by William Wheeler (1912)

17165, Marguerite; Reverse: Sweetest Story Ever Told (Reed Miller.)

12-inch Victor Solo Records by Elizabeth Wheeler

Single-face

31774, Love Song (Josef Hollman.)

Double-face

35082, Merry Widow - Villa Song; Reverse: Then You'll Remember Me (Macdonough.)

35096, Tannhauser—Elizabeth's Prayer; Reverse: A Night in Venice (Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.)

35102, Goodbye; Reverse: Simple Confession (Sorlin.)

35199, Kerry Dance; Reverse: Asthore (Reinold Werrenrath.)

35225, Mother Goose Songs; Reverse: Vowel Songs.

35595, Primary Songs and Exercises for Teaching—parts 1 and 2.

10-inch Victor duets by Elizabeth and William Wheeler (1909-1917)

16369, I Cannot Sing the Old Songs; Reverse: Forsaken (Whitney Brothers.)

16465, He Leadeth Me; Reverse: Light of the World is Jesus (Whitney Bros.)

16490, I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say; Reverse: Ave Maria (Elizabeth Wheeler.)

16500, Softly Now the Light of Day; Reverse: Beyond the Smiling and the Weeping (Peerless Quartet.)

16506, Abide With Me; Reverse: Some Day (Harry Anthony—James F. Harrison.)

16563, Beautiful Valley of Eden; Reverse: New Born King (Hamilton Hill.)

16688, Near the Cross; Reverse: Some Sweet Day (Anthony and Harrison.)

16700, Dear Lord and Father; Reverse: Beautiful Isle of Somewhere (Wells.)

16705, Oh That We Two Were Maying; Reverse: Story of the Rose (Wells.)

16827, Tales of Hoffman - Barcarolle; Reverse: Fatinitza Selection (Arthur Pryor's Band.)

16869, I've Found a Friend; Reverse: The Lord is My Shepherd (Miller and Werrenrath.)

17423, Serenade—Tosti; Reverse: Serenade—Schubert.

17940, The Homeland; Reverse: My Jesus, As Thou Wilt.

18287, What a Friend We Have in Jesus; Reverse: That Sweet Story of Old (Elsie Baker.)

12-inch Victor single-face

31753, Schubert's Serenade.

12-inch Victor double-face

35096, Night in Venice; Reverse: Tannhauser—Elizabeth's Prayer (Elizabeth Wheeler.)

35192, Ah Yes, I Love You; Reverse: Answer ("That Girl" Quartet.)

Other 10-inch duets and trios in which Elizabeth Wheeler sang

Single-face

4080, The Mocking Bird (Wheeler and Macdonough.)

5733, Mascotte—Gobble Duet (Wheeler and Macdonough.)

5836, Spring Maid—Two Little Love Bees (Wheeler and Werrenrath.)

5863, I Know a Bank (Wheeler and Dunlap.)

5864, "O Wert Thou in the Could Blast (Wheeler and Dunlap.)

Double-face

16361, When You and I Were Young, Maggie (Wheeler and Macdonough); Reverse: Vacant Chair (Hayden Quartet.)

16392, Mocking Bird (Wheeler and Macdonough); Reverse: Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep (Frank C. Stanley.)

16527, Gobble Duet (Wheeler and Macdonough); Reverse: Prince of Pilsen Selection (Souza's Band.)

16986, 1. On the Sea. 2. Gaelic Cradle Song; Reverse: The Foot Traveller (Wheeler and Dunlap.)

17106, Thy Flowery Banks o' Lovely River; Reverse: Voice of the Western Wind (Wheeler, Dunlap and Baker.)

17209, Over Hill, Over Dale (Wheeler, Dunlap and Baker); Reverse: Summer Now Hath Come Among Us (Wheeler and Dunlap.)

17211, Gently Fall the Dews of Eve; Reverse: Lift Thine Eyes (Wheeler, Dunlap and Baker.)

17218, Golden Slumbers Kiss Your Eyes (Wheeler, Dunlap and Baker); Reverse: Swing Song (Wheeler and Dunlap.)

17987, Lady of the Lake—Coronach (Elizabeth Wheeler, Olive Kline and Marguerite Dunlap); Reverse: Soldier, Rest (Olive Kline and Elsie Baker.)

12-inch

35581, Jocelyn—Berceuse (Wheeler, Kline and Dunlap); Reverse: Blow, Trumpet, Blow, for the World is White With May (Orpheus Quartet.)

35617, By the Shores of Gitchee Gumee. 2. Then the Little Hiawatha (Wheeler, Kline and Dunlap); Reverse: Ewa-ya (Elsie Baker.)

10-inch double-face Zonophone solos by William Wheeler (1910-1911)

5629, Forget, Forgive; Reverse: Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender.

5632, Oh Lola, Fair as Flowers; Re-

(Continued on page 58)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

era, remaining one of its leading tenors for 12 consecutive seasons. And from 1932 to 1935 he became a prized member of the Metropolitan Opera forces, returning there for the 1940-41 season.

Meanwhile, he frequently went to Italy and South America, sang in France, gave recitals in England and elsewhere, composed, recorded, made movies in Italy, and in 1957 did what seemed to be the fashionable thing—visited the USSR. Now retired, Schipa teaches singing in Rome.

From the electrical recordings Schipa made for HMV in Milan, Angel has chosen a group fully representative of the famed lyric tenor:

TITO SCHIPA, Opera and Song Recital, Angel Record COLH 117:

Side I - Sento nel Core (Scarlati) (April 19, 1932): Le Violette (Scarlati) (January 1939); Son Tutta Duolo (Scarlati) (January 1939); La Sonnambula: Prendi, l'anel ti dono, w. TOTI DAL MONTE (October 4, 1933), L'Elisir d'Amore: Una furtiva lagrima (December 13, 1929); Don Pasquale: Com'è gentil (October 8, 1932); Don Pasquale: Tornami a dir che m'ami, w. TOTI DAL MONTE (October 4, 1933).

Side II - Orfeo ed Euridice: Che farò senza Euridice (May 9, 1932); Werther: Ah! non mi ridestar (May 4, 1934); Manon: Ah! dispar, vision (May 4, 1934); O del Mio Amato Ben (Donaudy) (October 12, 1933); L'Amico Fritz: Suzel, buon di... Tutto tace (Cherry Duet), w. MAFALDA FAVERO (January, 1937).

Schipa's voice is among those difficult to describe, for it possesses a peculiar fascination all its own. Fine of texture and slightly veiled when not released with brightness, it is amazingly light and agile, yet had enough stamina to fill substantially the parts of Turiddu, Loris and Cavaradossi among weightier fare. His extensive repertoire also included roles in "Mignon," "Lucia," "Sonnambula," "Lakmé," "Mefistofele," "The Barber," "Traviata," "Fra Diavolo," "Bohème," "Zaza," "Favorita," "Rigoletto," "Don Pasquale," "Don Giovanni," "Falstaff," "Manon Lescaut," "Butterfly," "Werther," "Marcella," "L'Elisir," "La Rondine," etc.

However ethereal in *mezza-voca* or nimble in rapid passages, one of the admirable attributes of Schipa's singing was the absence of anything resembling the production or the female voice. Instead of the male *false* *falsetto*, which is the equivalent of the female head voice often used by tenors to ease a high tone, Schipa applied a well-proportioned mixture of the chest, palate and pharynx resonators.

And that is the way it should be. Those pharyngeal (*false* *falsetto*) tones in men make them sound like old-time vaudeville female impersonators. It's good in fun, but not in

serious singing. Let men sing like men, and women like women, and as the French wisely put it—*Vive la difference!*

The Angel COLH 117 is an excellent collection of recordings by a splendid artist—every selection a thing of beauty. He could have changed "Son Tutta Duolo" to "Son Tutto Duolo," though. If a song was written for a girl, no sense keeping it that way when a man sings it.

Both the Battistini and Schipa Long Play Angel discs are superbly recorded and faultlessly set in correct pitch. Could one ask for more?

## ELIZABETH &amp; WILLIAM WHEELER

(Continued from page 37)

verse: Love Abiding (Henry Burr.)

5665, My Soul is Athirst for God; Reverse: When I Know That Thou Art Near Me (Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.)

5691, Sweet Miss Mary; Reverse: Curly Head (Byron G. Harlan.)

5768, 'Tis All That I Can Say; Reverse: Save Up Your Kisses for a Rainy Day (Elise Stevenson and Henry Burr.) 10-inch Zonophone duets by Elizabeth & William Wheeler

5630, See the Pale Moon; Reverse: How d'ye Do?

5631, When Life Is Brightest; Reverse: I Cannot Sing the Old Songs.

5665, When I Know That Thou Art Near Me; Reverse: My Soul is Athirst for God (William Wheeler.)

2-minute Edison Standard cylinder duets by Elizabeth Wheeler and Harry Anthony (John Young.)

10266, Sweet Dreamland Faces; 10290, Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland; 10302, Sweet Bunch of Daisies.

4-minute Edison Amberol cylinder solo by "Miss Elizabeth Wheeler"

376, Dreams.

4-minute Edison Amberol cylinder duets by Elizabeth Wheeler and Harry Anthony

315, Garden of Dreams; 328, Ring o' Roses; 332, Mascotte—Gobble Duet.

4-minute Edison Blue Amberol cylinder duet by Elizabeth Wheeler and John Young

1874, Mascotte—Gobble Duet.

2-minute Indestructible (Columbia) cylinder solos by Elizabeth Wheeler

1239, Last Rose of Summer; 1256, Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms; 1279, Goodnight, Dear.

2-minute Indestructible cylinder duet by Elizabeth Wheeler and Idelle Patterson, contralto

1253, Oh, Morning Land.

4-minute Indestructible cylinder solos by Elizabeth Wheeler

3024, Goodbye; 3038, Bonnie, Sweet Bessie.

2-minute U.S. Everlasting cylinder solo by Elizabeth Wheeler

209, Last Rose of Summer.

4-minute U.S. Everlasting cylinder solo by William Wheeler

1244, Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes.

10-inch double-face Pathe solos by William Wheeler (1917-18)

(Both sides by Mr. Wheeler unless otherwise noted.)

20159, Brighten the Corner Where You Are; Reverse: If Your Heart Keeps Right.

20160, I Walk With the King; Reverse: Since Jesus Came Into My Heart.

20212, Hawaii and You (with accompaniment by Louise and Ferara Hawaiian Orchestra); Reverse: The Glow Worm (Louise and Ferara Hawaiian Orchestra.)

20242, O Holy Night; Reverse: Holy, Holy (Marion Crawford, contralto.)

20251, Ninety and Nine; Reverse: Safe in the Arms of Jesus.

20275, I Need Thee Every Hour; Reverse: One Sweetly Solemn Thought (Rose Bryant, contralto.)

20304, Saved By Grace; Reverse: Softly and Tenderly.

## WANTED

IVES, IVES-BLAKESLEE, Carpenter, Kenton, Hubley, N. N. Hill Brass Co., Gong Bell Manufacturing Co., Shepard Hardware Co., J. & E. Stevens Co., Kyser, Rex and Wilkins. Want any catalogs issued by these companies. See my large ad in the Old Mechanical Banks Department of this issue. — F. H. Griffith, P.O. Box 10644, Pittsburgh 35, Pa. t1x

WANTED: Old iron hitching posts and old tin tobacco tags. — R. F. French, 507½ Highland Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa. f122611

BOTTLES, FLASKS and bitters. Buy or sell. List 25c. Wanted: New England Pineapple only oval dish, handled mugs and cruets. — The Empty Bottle, Box 27, New London, Conn. ap128271

WHISKEY AMERICANA: Bottles, ads, posters, licenses, books, magazines or anything relating to pre-prohibition whiskey business. — Barton Distilling Company, 134 North LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. f120061

AUTO, toy & train catalogs wanted: Old Lionel, American Flyer, Ives, etc., train catalogs; all toy manufacturers or jobbers catalogs; all automobile sales literature, catalogs and service manuals; old toys and toy cap pistols and clipper ship sailing cards. — A. J. Koveleski, 331 Adams Ave., Scranton 3, Pa. Phone 1-717-DL 2-1963. n3008

DENTAL WANTED: Instruments, advertising material and unusual old toothbrushes and dentifrices. — Dr. Francis M. Blauston, 39 Greenridge Ave., White Plains, N. Y. au6407

PLEASE NOTE my display ad in Mechanical Bank Department of this issue, listing various wants. — F. H. Griffith, P.O. Box 10644, Pittsburgh 35, Pa. t1x

MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS: Bleeders, etc. — J. Koelliker, 4610 Wood St., Wilmoughby, Ohio. f12407

WATCHFOBS WANTED advertising contractors, threshers, farm machinery. Buy single or lots. — Howard Shideler, Lathrop, Calif. f12069

LACY SANDWICH, salts, cup plates, lamps, blown glass, flasks, paperweights, historical china, spatter, soft paste, Lowestoft, American pottery, pewter, primitive paintings, fracturs.—Virginia Wood, 4 Hillside Rd., Baltimore 10, Md. f6069

Antique Clothing Wanted: mens, womens, childrens, clothing for years 1850 to 1926. Also accessories, costume jewelry, etc. State price, color, condition, size. — Eve Doyer, 1626 N. 46th St., Phoenix, Ariz. o3027

FANS. Fine old fans, particularly 18th century, early 19th century. Send desc. & price. Send on approval if you wish. Please pack well in crush-proof box and include price. — Mrs. Frank Sanchez, 77 Longview Ave., White Plains, N. Y. o3065

ART BOOKS, also ships, adventure, medicine, Americana, old school books, etc. wanted. — P.O. Box 538, Gloucester, Mass. ja6676

ORNATE HAND MIRROR, shears, lance, preferably pearl.—Dr. F. Blauston, 39 Greenridge, White Plains, N. Y. o3652

HOOR GLASSES. Please state age, price, description.—18th Century Shop, 10 So. Brentwood Blvd., Clayton 5, Mo. s1821



Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Joe Natus and Will F. Denny

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

#### I. After Many Years

Ever since my name first appeared in HOBBIES, I have been wanting to tell the life stories of two unquestionably pioneer recording artists — Joseph Natus and William F. Denny.

I always think of these two long-dead singers together, for there were many resemblances in both their careers and their looks. Both appear to have been born in 1860, so if they were still living they would be 100 or 101 years of age. Both had dark hair parted in the middle, but Denny's was the thicker. Both wore bow ties.

Both were tenors and both were around 40 before they became well known record makers. The recording careers of both ended before double-faced records became common. Natus' name never appeared on a double-faced disc, and Denny's was on just one. Neither made a four-minute cylinder or was listed in a cylinder record catalog after 1912.

There was an element of pathos in the deaths of both at relatively early ages, and neither seems to have left many near relations. Natus was survived by a brother and Denny by his wife.

Neither was much of a "team work" man. Natus made duets with only one other artist, and Denny was always a "lone wolf." But both were featured in a series of Edison "Vaudeville Specialties." Denny's was No. 5 and Natus' No. 6.

There were differences between the two. Natus was of German descent, and Denny presumably was Irish. Except in his duets, Natus was almost entirely a ballad singer, while Denny did little except comedy work. Natus had a clear, robust tenor, Denny's was the high and rather thin typically Irish comic type. But the thing that joins the pair most closely today is the relative obscurity of their lives.

As I said, I have wanted to write about Natus and Denny for many years, but it seemed I should never be able to piece together sufficient information. Finally, I ordered photostatic copies of the scanty material concerning them in the New York Public Library's archives. From this I learned Natus died in 1917 in

Rome, N.Y. I already knew Denny had died in 1908 in Seattle, Wash.

I then obtained copies of the death certificates of both, and along with getting Natus' came a pleasant incident. I received a handwritten note from the Rome registrar of vital statistics, Mrs. Emily M. Boustedt, which said:

"Enclosed is the death certificate, as you requested. . . I do hope this will help you in your writing for HOBBIES Magazine. If you could send me a copy of the magazine with the article I certainly would enjoy it."

During the years I have been writing these HOBBIES articles I have received generally courteous treatment from custodians of death certificates, but this was the first time a registrar had ever shown warm interest in what I was doing. Mrs. Boustedt is obviously the type of person one likes at first sight, and if I should ever visit Rome, N.Y., I shall call on her. During the months that have followed she has become one of my best friends through correspondence.

Meanwhile, you may be sure that this issue of HOBBIES will go with my best wishes to the friendly registrar. With the aid of the photostat she sent, I am now able to tell as much as I am likely to find out at this late date concerning Joe Natus. And after his story I shall set down what I have learned of Will Denny.

#### II. Natus Records for Edison

Joseph Natus was born in Detroit, Mich., on March 1, 1860 — a little more than a year before this nation became embroiled in the Civil War whose centenary is now being observed. His father was John Natus and his mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Hass. Both were born in Germany.

As Joe Natus grew up he developed a tenor voice of more than ordinary quality. He probably was not yet 21 when he began to appear on the stage as a ballad singer and comedian, mostly with minstrel companies.

His recording career began not later than 1900 and conceivably earlier, although I have not been able to find his name in any catalog prior to the beginning of this century. It

is possible that he made Berliner discs in the late 1890's, but I lack Berliner catalogs and have not found any Berliner records by him, with one exception to be mentioned later. And it certainly was not recorded before 1901.

I don't know how it happened that Natus first began singing for phonographs and was soon being engaged by all the important companies of 60 years ago. The late Fred Rabenstein, Edison's recording paymaster for many years, told me he believed Natus was related to Albert Benzler, the versatile gentleman who provided piano accompaniments for Edison artists, recorded bell, xylophone, and piano solos, and even on occasion, played a violin in the Edison orchestra. It may be that Benzler's influence won Natus his chance before the recording horn.

Natus' first solo records were successful and he soon became the first duet partner of one of the most brilliant of recording comedians, Arthur Collins, whose phonograph career had begun in 1898.

The name of Natus' first two-minute Edison cylinder sounds like a comic song instead of the ballad type with which he came to be chiefly identified. The title was "Since I Married That Actor Man," and its number, 7490, indicates it was issued about the middle of 1900. The following other solos were listed before he made his first duet with Collins:

7495, "She Rests By the Suwanee River;" 7496, "Bethlehem" (a sacred number); 7497, "Why Did They Sell Killarney?"; 7518, "Side by Side" (not the song by the same name which became popular in 1927); 7521, "The Afterwhile"; 7522, "My Dorothy"; 7537, "Her Name Is Rose"; 7546, "My Department Store Girl"; 7562, "I'd Still Believe You True"; 7564, "Green Above the Red" (this could be either a song about train engineers' signals or an Irish defiance of England!); 7565, "Vaudeville Specialty No. 6"; 7585, "Little Black Me"; 7586, "Blue and the Gray"; 7587, "A Bird in a Gilded Cage"; 7594, "Star of My Life"; 7601, "Fatal Rose of Red"; 7609, "Garden By the Sea"; 7627, "For Freedom and Ireland"; 7631, "Dear Old Bess and I"; 7632, "A Flower From the Garden of Life"; 7652, "Give Us Another Lincoln"; 7709, "Lovers Once But Strangers Now"; 7736, "Down By the River Side," and 7741, "Where the Mississippi Flows."

Most of these largely trivial tunes are gone and forgotten now, but a few are well remembered. "She Rests By the Suwanee (or Swannee) River" seems to have been one of Natus' stock numbers, for he recorded it extensively.

In the short-lived vaudeville specialty, he sang "You May Forget the Singer," and impersonated the yodler, J. K. Emmett, the Irish tenor, William Scanlan, and J. W. Kelley, the "Rolling Mill Man" monologist.

The first Collins and Natus duet for Edison was announced early in 1901. It was No. 7756, "Coon, Coon, Coon" (a title that today would be



This photo of Joe Natus was taken from a 1906 booklet containing photographs of Edison cylinder record artists. Denny made no Edison records after 1902. On the same page were the great cornet player, Bohumir Kryl, and Cal Stewart, the "Uncle Josh" monologist, who died in December, 1919. Kryl died August 7, 1961, aged 86, at his summer home in Wilmington, N. Y.

barred from public use), which had been written in 1900 by Gene Jefferson and Leo Friedman. The latter is best remembered now as the composer of "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland" and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

Looked at from the sympathetic point of view, there is a touch of tragedy in the plaint of the Negro who says "I wish my color would fade . . . morning, night, and noon, I wish I was a white man 'stead of a coon, coon, coon!" Collins and Natus, however, shouted it in the burlesque, boisterous manner typical of "coon song" interpreters of their era.

But in 1940 an unidentified basso, who sounds like Wilfred Glenn, gave the song real poignancy and pathos when he sang it in a Victor album of Song Hits of 1900.

Three Collins and Natus duets were listed in the May, 1901, catalog, and others followed rapidly during the less than two years in which the team's association endured. Before the end of 1901 they had recorded:

7754, "Marooned and His Bike;" 7755, "Oh, Such a Business" (a Jewish dialect number); 7816, "I Never Trouble Trouble Until Trouble Troubles Me;" 7850, "I must-A Been a Dreamin';" 7889, "I Got Mine" (one of the greatest favorites in their repertoire); 7905, "Tell Us, Pretty Ladies" (one of several parodies or burlesques on "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden" from "Floradora"); and 7935, "Love Me, Lize."

Meanwhile, Natus had recorded these solos:

7752, "Day By Day;" 7775, "A New World;" 7776, "Everlasting Light;" 7791, "Sweet Annie Moore" (an unusual combination of sentiment and frivolity); 7804, "The Village Belle;" and 7871, "I've a Longing in My Heart for You, Louise."

One of the most popular stage attractions in those days was a series of musical plays featuring the Rogers Brothers, specialists in comic German impersonations. Maurice Levi, who had his own band which recorded for Edison from 1908 to 1910, wrote the music for the Rogers Brothers shows. One of the bro-

thers was married to the comedienne, Maude Raymond, who made a handful of Victor and Edison records.

The Phonogram for November, 1901, listed a Collins and Natus duet (No. 7969) of "The Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid," from "The Rogers Brothers in Washington." In that same issue, Natus had a solo, 7994, "When the Lilies of the Valley Bloom Again."

Other duets and solos followed, made by the old-time duplicated process. One of the most popular was No. 7997, an early Harry Von Tilzer composition, "Whoa, Bill!"

Early in 1902, Thomas A. Edison introduced his "gold moulded" method which did away with the duplicating system, and the June, 1902, Phonogram announced "Whoa, Bill!" had been remade by the new process. The duplicating procedure was permanently discontinued July 25, 1902.

The June, 1902, Phonogram also listed 8008, "McManus and the Parrot," by Collins and Natus, and

8031, "Endless Day," a religious solo with organ accompaniment, by Natus. In July, the duo sang one of their most popular comic skits, No. 8045, "Back, Back to the Woods," and there were gold mould remakes of "Tell Us, Pretty Ladies," "The Wedding Of The Reuben and the Maid," and No. 8000, "Tell Me, Dusky Maidens" — another "Floradora" take-off.

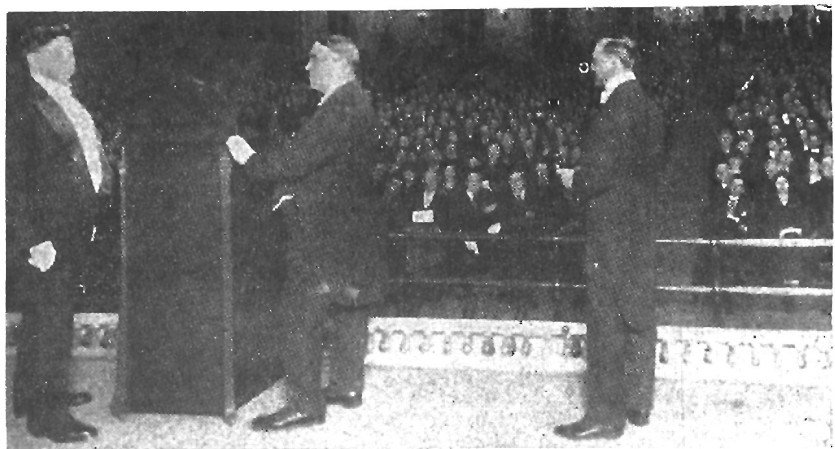
In September, the pair was on hand with another remake, No. 7955, "Love Me, Lize." October was a big month for them. On 8161, Natus asked "Could You Be True to Eyes of Blue?" He also sang 8179, "Rosalie, My Sweet Rosalie," and 8205, which turned out to be his last Edison solo, "Have You Seen My Sweetheart in His Uniform of Blue?"

On 8163, Collins and Natus were heard in "You Couldn't Hardly Notice It At All," and on 8175, in "Nursery Rhymes" — From "The Beauty and the Beast." They also had an amusing offering, No. 8196, called "Marion," about a girl named Marion who lived in Marion, Ohio, and whose sweetheart was dead set on marryin' her.

In the November Phonogram were three more Collins and Natus duets — the last Edison was ever to offer: 8218, "Down the Line With Molly;" 8219, "Jerry Murphy is a Friend of Mine," and 8220, "Shirtwaist Band."

There was also two duets by Collins with Byron G. Harlan, who succeeded Natus as Collins' partner. Collins and Harlan sang together on records for 22 years and had the most successful, long-lasting partnership in the history of the phonograph. Their initial Edison was 8238, on which they sang Harry Von Tilzer's smash hit of 1902, "Down Where the Wurzbürger Flows," and 8239, "The Troubles of the Reuben and the Maid," from "The Rogers Brothers in Harvard."

After this there was never another new Edison record by Joe Natus. During his Edison association of a little more than two years



Joe Natus was the first duet partner of Arthur Collins, shown here at the right of a New Edison Diamond Disc phonograph. Byron G. Harlan, who succeeded Natus, is at the left. This photo was taken in 1923 or 1924 when Collins and Harlan were giving an Edison "tone test" in Portland, Ore. They made records together for 22 years and were the most successful duet team in the phonograph's history.



he had recorded 36 solos and 19 duets with Collins. When Edison discontinued the two-minute wax cylinders in the fall of 1912, only one Natus solo was left, J. Fred Helf's old-fashioned sob-song, "The Fatal Rose of Red." "I Got Mine" stayed on, but had been remade in 1906 by Collins and Harlan.

We probably shall never know why Collins and Natus separated, but the "split" probably was caused by Natus' health, which seems to have been poor for much of his mature life. He did no more duet work after 1902, and his appearances as a soloist thereafter were not frequent.

His relations with Harlan must have been friendly, for I had almost forgotten this — a male ensemble composed of Collins, Harlan, Natus, and A. D. Madeira, calling itself the Big Four Quartet, made five Edison cylinders between October, 1900, and May, 1901. The titles were: 7728, "Goodbye, Dolly Gray;" 7765, "My Charcoal Chamer;" 7766, "There's Where My Heart is Tonight;" 7767, "Ben Bolt;" and 7781, "Corn Bread."

### III. Lambert Indestructible Cylinders

During the period in which he was making Edison Standard records, Natus also was singing for Lambert, the Chicago firm which marketed the first Indestructible cylinder. I have seen only the September, 1903, Lambert catalog, but it contains five Natus solos: 500, "My Creole Sue;" 504, "My Wild Irish Rose;" 505, "The Honeysuckle and the Bee;" 506, "When You Were Sweet Sixteen;" and 508, "Tale of the Kangaroo."

No Collins and Natus duets are listed under their names, but there is a group of miscellaneous duets by unidentified performers, in which three almost certainly are by them: 570, "Coon, Coon, Coon;" 571, "McManus and the Parrot;" and 572, "Whoa, Bill!"

Collins and Harlan have two under their own names: 932, "Nursery Rhymes;" and 935, "Jerry Murphy is a Friend of Mine," both of which Collins and Natus had sung for Edison.

Because of insufficient capital and patent litigation, the Lambert Company was short-lived. I doubt that Natus made any records for it other than those just mentioned.

### IV. Columbia Cylinders and Discs

Trying to trace all the Columbia records which Joe Natus or any other artist made close to 60 years ago is my idea of a tough assignment. It is a job the researcher finds almost impossible to handle satisfactorily, because, for half a dozen years ending in 1907, Columbia didn't publish names of singers in its catalogs.

Instead, "vocalists" were identified simply as tenor, baritone, contralto, and the like. The idea seems to have been that since the records had spoken announcements telling who was doing the work there was no need of repeating that information in the catalogs. The needs of record collectors were given little consider-

ation in that remote era when catalog owners were asked to "destroy all previous lists" as soon as a new one came out.

Faced with this handicap, all I can do is jot down the names and numbers of records that sound as if they might have been made by Natus, giving special consideration to those which duplicated titles he had sung for other companies. I would say, then, it's likely, but I don't guarantee, that the following listed in the 1901 Columbia cylinder catalog, were sung by Joe Natus:

4227, "Why Did They Sell Killarney?;" 4233, "Blue and the Gray;" 4240, "Little Black Me;" 4249, "My Department Store Girl;" 4250, "Bethlehem;" 4251, "Flower from the Garden of Life;" 4273, "She Rests By the Suwanee River;" 4280, "Green Above the Red;" 31418, "Eyes of blue;" and 31420, "For Freedom and Ireland."

It's quite likely, of course, that some of these were sung by other artists — also that, with nothing but "tenor" to guide me, I have missed some that Natus made.

When I turn to the 1906 Columbia cylinder catalog, I find no solos that I can attribute with reasonable assurance to Natus. The 1907 catalog, in which the sensible custom of identifying artists by name was resumed, contains none.

A fair number of titles in the 1906 Columbia disc catalog, however, sound as if they may have been made by Natus, although a majority may be the work of other tenors — among them Henry Burr, Harry Macdonough, George Gaskin, Albert Campbell, and Dan W. Quinn — who recorded for Columbia. Among them are:

113, "Goodbye, Dolly Gray;" 171, "Uncle Harry, What Is Love?;" 326, "He Laid Away a Suit of Gray to Wear the Union Blue;" 352, "Story of the Rose;" 359, "Side by Side;" 688, "As Your Hair Grows Whiter;" 895, "Rosalie;" 913, "Rose of Killarney;" 942, "My Starlight Queen;" 1012, "I Wonder If Your Love Will Last;" 1153, "In the City of Sighs and Tears;" and 1457, "Like a Star That Falls from Heaven."

I can positively identify seven-inch record 1159, issued in January, 1904, as being by Natus, because I have a file of The Columbia Record from 1904 to 1907 in which it is listed. This was Joe Natus' last appearance as a Columbia singer. The title was "Just Remember I Love You."

Besides the solos, the 1906 disc catalog contains several numbers that had originally been recorded as Collins and Natus duets and were taken from what may be considered their "standard repertoire." There is a possibility, however, they had been re-made by Collins and Harlan:

597, "I Got Mine;" 627, "Moriarity;" 763, "Back, Back to the Woods;" 789, "Coon, Coon, Coon;" 790, "Whoa, Bill;" 791, "Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid;" 792, "I Never Trouble Trouble Until Trouble Troubles Me;" 793, "Oh, Such a Business."

The following may also have been by Collins and Natus, but in view of a considerable gap in the numbering it's more likely they were made after the team had become Collins and Harlan:

882, "Shirt Waist Band;" 911, "Nursery Rhymes;" 969, "Jerry Murphy is a Friend of Mine;" and 944, "Troubles of the Reuben and the Maid."

All were cut out in 1908, when Columbia discontinued single-faced records, excepting "The Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid," which was combined on A403 with "Uncle Josh at the Roller Skating Rink," by Cal Stewart.

The "Reuben" song was listed in the double-faced catalog as by Collins and Harlan, which makes it appear more likely the other duets might also have been remade.

The chief reason the various companies had Collins and Harlan remake the more popular Collins-Natus numbers probably was a desire to take advantage of recording improvements, real or imagined. This included substituting dull, clacking orchestral accompaniments for the

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. n6637

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each. — Ric Verdi Antiques, 854 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books. \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3694

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann, Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. d5867

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

ATTENTION! Antique cylinder & disc phonographs bought, sold, repaired. Repairs done on all makes & models, parts replaced, reproducers bought, sold, repaired. I will buy anything in this line. Large list of what I have for sale for stamp. Many rare and hard to find machines in stock. Almost everything in this line available. All machines and parts are perfect. No Junk. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Tel. 2-4985, Brewer, Maine. d38811

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. o3426

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. ja6468

sometimes tin-panny but frequently brilliant piano, played chiefly on the treble keys.

Too, it must be admitted that in the less than two years they worked together, Collins and Natus did not bring their comedy to the unsurpassable peak reached by the succeeding team. They did little of the hilarious dialog work that was to become such a delightful feature of the efforts of Collins and Harlan, who in all their long career never turned out a poor record.

I have reserved for special mention six discs issued when Columbia made its first flat records in 1902. I know two are by Natus because I have the records, and I believe the other four are his because the numbers run together, and it was the custom in those days to issue batches of records, numbered consecutively, by the same artist.

The six are 52, "Sweet Annie Moore;" 53, "When the Harvest Days Are Over;" 54, "The Game of Eyes;" 55, "In the House of Too Much Trouble;" 57, "Good-bye, Sweet Dreams," and 58, "Just for Today."

There probably also had been a No. 56, but, like "Sweet Annie Moore," it had been cut out before the 1906 catalog was compiled.

The "Annie Moore" song, written in 1901 by John H. Flynn and Ludwig Hollander, is an unusual and amusing affair with a catchy tune. While purporting to be sentimental, it flagrantly indulges in punning by saying: "Annie Moore, Annie Moore, we will never see sweet Annie any more."

The second verse reveals the cause of Annie's disappearance. Her father, Owen Moore, had a big grocery store, but couldn't pay his creditors. Each day found Owen owing more, so he had to leave the old neighborhood by stealth. Natus announces "Sweet Annie Moore" himself.

"In the House of Too Much Trouble" is an oddity. It is a seven-inch, and unannounced, but the singer is Natus. This was one of the innumerable "tear-jerker" songs about sick, deserted, and dying children — most of them irritatingly

mawkish and maudlin — that appeared in the 1890's and early 1900's. But, in this instance, the perpetrators, by exercising restraint, have written something I find genuinely touching, much in the manner of Eugene Field's "Little Boy Blue."

The words are by an unusually skilled but unjustly forgotten lyricist, Will A. Heelan, and the pretty tune by J. Fred Half, who became the music publishing partner of a veteran recording director, Fred Hager. Its story tells of a lonely little boy, whose parents objected to the noise he made at play. The chorus goes:

"In the house of too much trouble,  
Little boy was in the way.  
No one ever seemed to reason  
That a boy must sometimes play.  
Soon his baby woes and worries  
Left a trace upon his brow;  
In the house of too much trouble  
There are quiet moments now."

Regardless of what sophisticates may think, I can never hear Natus sing that refrain — especially the last two lines — without a choking sensation, for I know there have been too many children who were treated like the lonely little boy of the song.

I imagine that line, "little boy was in the way," suggested the title of Charles K. Harris' "Always in the Way," also recorded by Natus. Harris pulled out all the stops in his "sob-stuff" and made a career of writing about suffering tots.

#### V. Zon-o-phone and Victor

The Universal Talking Machine Company, which made Zon-o-phone records, was one of the companies for which Natus sang. The June, 1905, Zon-o-phone catalog lists the following nine-inch solos by him, several of which he seems not to have made for any other company:

5881, "I'll Do the Same for You;" 5882, "Man in the Overalls;" 5883, "On a Good Old Trolley Ride;" 5884, "You're the Sweetest Flower That Grows in Tennessee;" 5885, "Always in the Way;" 5886, "Like a Star That Falls From Heaven;" 5887, "Just Remember I Love You;" 5888, "Voice of the Hudson;" 5925, "Dear Old Girl;" 5927, "Down on the Farm;" 5928, "Every Day is Sunshine When the Heart Beats True;" 5931, "For Sale—a Baby;" 5935, "Mississippi Mamie;" 5937, "My Lady Moon."

The titles indicate these songs were recorded in 1903 and '04, when they were popular. Zon-o-phone began making 10-inch records in 1904, but there were none by Natus, who was then in poor health.

The 1905 Zono catalog contains half a dozen records of songs that had been identified with Collins and Natus, but all are listed as by Collins and Harlan.

Since Victor acquired the Zon-o-phone business in 1903, Natus was also recording for Victor when he sang his Zono discs. His Victor career, however, went farther back, for he was one of the first singers to make 10-inch "Monarch" records.

Victor did not begin business as the Victor Talking Machine Company until 1901, but even before that Joe Natus had made records for Eldridge R. Johnson, founder of "His Master's Voice's" fortunes. The oldest Victor catalog I have, dated

February, 1902, contains this list of single-faced discs by "Mr. Natus, sentimental ballads" (his first name isn't given):

676, "She Rests By the Suwanee River;" 677, "There is No North or South Today;" 678, "I'd Still Believe You True;" 679, "All for a Man Whose God Was Gold;" 680, "Calling to Her Boy Just Once Again;" 681, "Where the Mississippi Flows;" 682, "A Flower from the Garden of Life;" 683, "The Fatal Rose of Red;" 684, "The Afterwhile;" 685, "Eyes of Blue;" 1108, "My Lonesome Louisiana Lady;" 1111, "The Village Belle;" V1112, "When the Blue Sky Turns to Gold;" V1113, "I Wonder If It's Spring Time;" 1114, "Day By Day;" and 1115, "Mr. Volunteer."

This line-up corresponds pretty closely to Natus' two-minute Edison cylinder list. All the Victors could be had in either seven-inch or 10-inch, except the two which had numbers starting with V. They were seven-inch only.

Early as this catalog was, the first 10 Natus records had already been renumbered. For instance, I have the Victor Monarch record of "She Rests By the Suwanee River," with its original number, 3107.

Many collectors, examining old record lists, have been puzzled as to why Victor appeared to have issued discs numbered through 2,999, then in 1904 skipped over the 3,000 series and resumed numbering at 4,000. Perhaps this is a good place for a brief explanation.

When Victor first began making 10-inch records in 1901, it decided to give them the name of Monarch and start numbering them at 3,000. Numbers of seven-inch records, which had been made earlier under the Improved label, began at 1.

With the arrival of the 10-inch Monarchs, the smaller "platters" were called Victors. After a few months, however, Victor decided there were many selections it would be advisable to offer in both the seven-inch size for 50 cents and the \$1.00 10-inch version. Therefore, it was decided to change the system by doing away with the 3,000 series and renumbering them.

Each Monarch had also been given a secondary number denoting the order in which it was recorded, and this became the new catalog number. Thus, because "She Rests By the Suwanee River" was the 676th in recorded sequence, it became record No. 676.

I have Monarch 3001, "When Reuben Comes to Town" (we can't seem to get away from those Roger Brothers songs!) by S. H. Dudley, but the 1902 catalog lists it as No. 519. My own copy has 519 scratched on it as an indication of recording order. It has a piano accompaniment, but by the time the 1902 catalog came out, had been remade with orchestral support.

The Monarch label was used through 1904, and records which were supplied only in 10-inch size had numbers prefixed by M. The highest numbered 3,000 series records in the 1902 catalog is M3622, "Somehow It Made Him Think of Home," from "The Chaperones," by  
(Continued on page 40)

#### RECORDS FOR SALE

(Continued from preceding page)

78 rpm GOLDEN-AGE vocals, rare operatics, orchestral and instrumental records, old catalogs, photos of singers — all may be found on our monthly lists. Also large selection of imported European LPs. — Ross, Court & Co., 3244 Yonge St., Toronto, Canada. mh60821

ROCOO RECORDS. Famous Voices of the Past on modern LP. Caruso, Melba, Patti, Marchesi, Eames, Tammagno, De Luca, Gigli, etc., etc. As reviewed in HOBBIES. Send for complete catalog to 3244 Yonge St., Toronto, Canada. d3065

F.R.P. RE-ISSUES of famous singers. Send for free list and name of nearest dealer. — Famous Records of the Past, 2060 First Ave., New York 29, N. Y. ap128271

I BUY, SELL, TRADE 12" & 16" radio transcriptions, all types. — Paul Scriven, Niles, Ohio. d3422

narrow tan velvet ribbon. It has a round neck edged with a narrow white lace ruffle, shirred on, with a heading of tan velvet ribbon.

The front of the dress is trimmed with lace sewn onto a "V" shape at the waistline. Very short sleeves have an embroidered cuff edged with lace. Open skirt and pantalets are beautifully embroidered to match the waist and belt.

This may be seen at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Rendering is by Jean Peszel.

3. A child's dress of 1833. It is of chintz with a dotted ground, floral medallions, scrolls in brown, faded red, and blue on a creamy ground. It is entirely hand-sewn. The hem and bodice are lined with homespun cotton.

The present owner is E. C. Goodwin.

Rendering is by Marie Famularo.

This was a New Jersey state project. The others shown were New York State projects.

4. A child's dress of about the same period as 3. It is of brown linen trimmed with embroidery in the interesting grapevine pattern.

Present owner, Brooklyn Museum. Rendering is by Dorothy Gernon.

5. Child's dress of the same general style as 3 and 4. It is, nevertheless, dated about a decade later—1840. All three of these dresses have full sleeves at the shoulder, tapering down to the wrist. This is a heavy tan cotton three-piece dress with a separate belt.

The high, round neck is finished with piping. The waist is shirred in by a bias fold forming a yoke. Sleeves are finished with a cuff, buttoned with two pearl buttons. The dress is open in front and fastened at the waistband with hooks and eyes.

The long skirt, finished down the front with a tuck, has a two inch hem, the same width as the two tucks over it. The jacket, fastened in front, has the same yoke.

The little costume may be seen at the Museum of the City of New York.

Rendering is by Nancy Crimi.

6. A girl's dress of 1842. It was worn by Charity Maria Banta, aged six years. Judging by the length of the skirt, it probably reached the ankles of Charity and was designed to last a year or two.

It is of printed cotton with a tan ground, pattern of green, red, and black. The straight, tight bodice is shirred in front into a shaped yoke, the shirring drawn to a point at center of waist-line.

A full, shaped sleeve is shirred at the top into a small armhole and trimmed with a narrow ruffle of the same material. The sleeve at wrist is drawn into a narrow double band.

The full skirt has four widths of material. Seams, with the exception of the skirt, and under the arms, are finished with narrow bias piping of the same material as the dress.

Present owner, Mrs. Melville Demorest.

Rendering is by S. Garfinkle.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

a forgotten singer, Walter Jones. After 1904, both 7 and 10-inch had the Victor label.

The discarded numbers of the 3,000 series didn't go to waste. They were transferred to the Victor foreign catalog and used for hundreds of Argentine, Bohemian, Danish, French, French-Canadian, Latin, Norwegian and Swedish selections. Incidentally, for some abstruse reason, Victor's chief rival, Columbia, in 1905 skipped over all numbers from 2,000 to 2,999 in numbering its discs, and at one jump advanced from 1,999 to 3,000.

No Collins and Natus duets appear in the 1902 Victor catalog, but there are four in the dealers' numerical catalog for November 30, 1904. They belong to the pair's already mentioned standard repertoire — 1294, "Coon, Coon, Coon," 1295, "Back to the Woods," 1297, "I Got Mine," and 1298, "Whoa, Bill!" 1299 is a Natus solo, "A Little Boy in Blue."

But here is something odd. The dealers' alphabetical listing, also dated November 30, 1904, says 1295 and 1298 are by Collins and Harlan, and the other two by Collins and Natus! And the catalog issued to the public on August 31, 1904, places all four in the Collins and Harlan column with no mention of Collins and Natus.

As if this weren't confusion enough, I have a Monarch of "Back to the Woods" with a label saying it is by Collins and Natus, but which Collins announces as by Collins and Harlan. And I also have a Grand Prize Victor, made in 1905 after the Monarch label had been discontinued, of "I Got Mine," whose label gives the singers as Collins and Natus. There is no announcement, but the voices are unmistakably Collins and Harlan's.

Apparently, all the Collins and Natus duets were remade by the later team, but through carelessness in labeling and catalog editing their names were sometimes retained. I likewise have a copy of the Monarch version of "Coon, Coon, Coon," announced as by Collins and Natus (Collins again does the announcing), with the recording date, March 15, 1902, scratched on the label. Edison had issued this song by the team a year earlier.

"I Got Mine" is an amusing record. Collins tells of how he went to a colored "crap game." When the place was raided, he grabbed all the money before diving through a window, and he unctuously sums up: "I got mine, boys, I got mine . . . been a leader of society since I got mine!"

In the second stanza, he calls on a girl but another suitor objects to his being there. Again he heads for the window, "but I couldn't get through it in time. Been taking my meals from the mantelpiece since I

got mine!" Harlan inquires, "Well, where do you get it?" and Collins, in coy "embarrassment" replies, "Uh—really I wouldn't care to say."

In the late 1920's the song was revived by a clever South Carolina hill-billy recording artist, Chris Bouchillon, who no doubt had heard the ancient recorded interpretation, and it had a lively sale as a Columbia Viva-Tonal disc.

"I Got Mine" is also introduced hilariously in a 1906 Columbia record, "Seeing New York; A Trip on the Rubberneck Coach." The imaginary sightseers hear men lustily singing, "Yes, I got mine, boys, yes, I got mine!" and the driver—either Len Spencer or Bob Roberts—explains, "That's a banquet of the life insurance directors at the Fifth Avenue Hotel," referring to a then notorious insurance scandal. As the singing is resumed, an Irish "passenger" ruefully exclaims, "Yes, an' be gorra, they got mine, too!"

The Victor catalog for August 31, 1904, contains a few new solos by Natus.

Besides "A Little Boy in Blue," there  
(Continued on page 45)

## DOLL CLOTHES

WANTED: Wholesale market for doll clothes, make them now for outlets from coast to coast. Write for prices, listing your doll costume needs. — Lawana Peetz, P.O. Box 45, Gordonville, Mo.

n3894

## DOLL PARTS

MANY ANTIQUE ball jointed doll parts. Reproduction china and bisque arms, legs, and lovely heads.—Country-side Doll Hospital, Salem, Ind. d4084

## DOLL ACCESSORIES

DOLL STANDS—11 sizes, 40c to \$4.50. Wig Mohair, 9 colors, \$1 per yard. Elastic Cord, 6 sizes, 5c to 30c per yard. Literature, samples. — Bessie Magee, Randolph 4, Vermont. f6069

DOLL HATS. Dress up your doll collection with the addition of attractive doll hats. They're wonderful for gifts for the small fry, too. I also do doll repairing, such as rebuilding bodies, feet, fingers, shoulders (on the German jointed dolls that have bisque heads). I can mend kid bodies, if they can be mended, or make a new cloth body. Satisfaction or your money back. — Mary Upshaw, Doll Repairing, 2601 Forbes St., Jacksonville 4, Fla. s13

DO YOU want your dolls dressed correctly? Research done for each. Patterns made to measure for historic dolls. Stamp please.—Miss Christine Spraker, 304 Arnold Ave., Port Allegany, Pa. n3464

GLASS DOLL EYES MFG. All kinds. Estab. 1892. Inquire Lists. No C.O.D. White Hard Wax Doll Use No. 375 Colored Wax Flesh Dolls, White Beeswax, Glass Eyes Dolls Use, etc.—Schumacher, Halladay St., Jersey City, N. J. f60211

## DOLL PARTS

10,000 ANTIQUE DOLL PARTS—torsos, arms, legs, complete bodies. Over 400 bisque heads. We will repair, restring, and restore your dolls or sell just parts. Stamp please for price. — Dorothy J. Rawlings, 44934 3rd St. East, Lancaster, Calif. d3426

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## PAINTINGS WANTED

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FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

are 1300, "On a Saturday night;" 2335, "Only a Dream of the Golden Past;" 2336, "The Voice of the Hudson;" 2328, "I'll Wed You in the Golden Summer Time;" 2326, "Like a Star That Falls from Heaven;" 2448, "You'll Always Be the Same Sweet Girl;" M2658, "The Man in the Overalls;" M2664, "Always in the Way;" and 2666, "The Sweetest Flower That Grows in Tennessee."

In addition, two of his 1902 offerings had been renumbered — "A Flower From the Garden of Life" as 2192, and "Mr. Volunteer" as 2193 — and others had been cut out.

Among the later issues, "The Man in the Overalls" deserves attention. It was first listed in the April, 1904, supplement, with the brief comment, "dedicated to the working man." "Always in the Way" and "The Sweetest Flower" came out at the same time. The "Overalls" song, by Raymond A. Browne, is a paean in honor of the ordinary working man and its well written words and stirring music are so effective it's a wonder labor groups haven't adopted it as a sort of unofficial Labor Day anthem. The refrain goes:

"Whatever we are, or whatever we'll be,

At home or afar, on the land or the sea,  
There's no brighter star, though of humble degree,

And no one his name recalls.

The man in the blue and the man in the gold

Have done well, that's true — may their fame ne'er grow old!

But greatest of all is the one that we call

The Man in the Overalls!"

Natus sings it splendidly, with plenty of fervor and expression. I have two copies of the record. The first is made with piano accompaniment and has B942 as its index number. By December 1, 1905, however, it had been done over, with index number B2501, and an orchestral

background. The earlier version, with the sparkling piano accompaniment, is more to my liking than the second, but Natus perhaps phrases better in the later attempt.

There were no further Natus records until July, 1905, when 4361, "By-Gone Days in Dixie" was announced:

"Admirers of Mr. Natus will be glad to see that he is once more with us, after many months of serious illness. It will be noticed that his voice did not suffer from the confinement, and that in this ballad of Dixie Land his clear tenor and crisp enunciation are the same as of old."

In August, Natus was represented by 4388, "Waltzing With the Girl You Love," described as:

"One of the best waltz songs of the season, with clever words and a most melodious air. It describes the delights of waltzing with the girl of your heart."

That was the last record Victor was ever to issue by Joe Natus. It also marked his permanent disappearance from the recording studios. Never afterwards, my research indicates, did he make another record.

Only four of his numbers were retained in the January, 1908, Victor catalog — "Always in the Way," "The Man in the Overalls," "Waltzing With the Girl You Love," and "I'll Wed You in the Golden Summer Time." These had all disappeared when the 1909 catalog came out.

One more Natus disc remains for consideration and it is a puzzler. It is a 10-inch, reddish-brown single-faced record with a metal ring in the center, manufactured by "E. Berliner, of Montreal, Canada," and bearing patent date of February 24, 1897. The label says it is sung by "Mr. Jos. Natus," and the title is "Tell Me the Way to Go."

The Victor dog trademark is engraved on the blank side. The 10-inch size and the "His Master's Voice" picture show it was not made before 1901. Berliner records were usually made from Victor matrices, but I cannot find that this sobby song ever appeared in a Victor catalog. It tells of a little girl's asking how she could find the way to Heaven to be reunited with her dead mother.

## VI. Last Days

Twelve years of life remained to Joe Natus after he made his last record. Just what he did during much of that time is a matter of conjecture, but he probably returned to singing on the stage when his health permitted. During the last six years preceding his death he lived in Utica, N. Y.

On April 27, 1917, The Morning Telegraph, a New York City newspaper which specialized in theatrical and racing information, carried this obituary notice:

"OLD-TIME MINSTREL MAN DIES—Joe Natus Was Famous Tenor—Was Ill But Short Time.

"Utica, N. Y., April 26.—Joe Natus, a famous tenor singer and minstrel man, died at the County Hospital at Rome Saturday, after a brief illness. Mr. Natus (Continued on page 55)



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tfc



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 45)

was very popular as a minstrel man for 35 years, being at various times connected with Haverly's, Primrose & West, Lew Dockstader and Al G. Field. He was very popular among his associates, a man who won the friendship of all whom he met. He was one of the first of the famous tenors who sang and worked for the old Edison Phonograph Company. Six years ago he came to Utica as one of the first of the cabaret entertainers here, and he had been heard by thousands in Utica and vicinity. Two years ago his health failed and he retired from the entertainment business and accepted a position as clerk in the Metropolitan Hotel, where he could still

meet many of his friends in the theatrical profession. He was buried in Forest Hill Cemetery. He is survived by a brother."

The death certificate shows Natus was born March 1, 1860, and was single. He died at 12 noon, April 21, when he was 57 years, one month and 20 days of age. Dr. E. Leroy Wilson, of Oneida County Hospital, gave the cause of death as diabetes mellitus, for which he had been treating Natus since March 3.

The certificate said Natus had lived in New York State for 35 years and his last address was the Metropolitan Hotel in Utica. His occupation was listed as actor. He was buried April 24. The name of his surviving brother was not given.

It will be seen that, like Vernon Dalhart, who was just becoming known as a recording artist when Natus died, the one-time minstrel tenor spent his last working days as a hotel clerk.

I wonder if, during those final weeks in the hospital, Natus gave much thought to the time when he had been a singing star and recorded duets with Arthur Collins, who had remained a popular recording artist and was a member of the Record Makers troupe.

As HOBBIES for April, 1957, shows, Collins was with the Record Makers, later the Eight Famous Victor Artists, when they gave a concert in Pulaski, Va., just nine days before Natus's death. On the day he died the troupe was on tour in Pennsylvania.

Probably it didn't occur to Natus that his career would interest a later generation and anyone would go to the trouble, as I have, of trying to find out all that could be learned about him.

I'm sure, though, he would have been pleased if he could have known he would not be forgotten and that, although his old records are growing scarce, some would still be preserved and played almost a half century after his death.

(To be continued)

## BELLS

### BELLS WANTED

BELL CATALOG, \$1. Illustrated with 363 bells and prices I pay. Your \$1 refunded when you sell me a bell. —Altman's Antique Bells of the World, 4703 McPherson Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo. o124891

### BELLS FOR SALE

BELLS FROM INDIA, for elephant, cow, sheep, prayer, worship. Any one \$1.50; dozen assorted \$12. —Motiwala, Third Bhoiwada, 38H, Bombay 2, d9069

BRASS Chinese dinner bells, hand-made, figure handle, 5½" overall, from Taiwan, \$2.—Cook, Box 6023-A, Evansville, Indiana. o1441

HAME BELLS - a fine set of 5 each leader team bells, \$250. —Hap Magee, Danville, Calif. n3652

COMPLETE "Frisco" locomotive bell crated & shipped \$185. —Selma Hennessee, 1614 E. Sunshine, Springfield, Mo. n3422

## NEWS OF 1861

The events and moods of Civil War days are recreated again in reprints of various issues of the Richmond Enquirer, called by many the "Voice of the Confederacy."

It is interesting to note the format of the old newspapers. In size the Enquirer measured 18" wide by 23" long as opposed to 14" wide and 22" long, the size of the Chicago Tribune today. They did not go in for bold large headlines as present papers do. Articles were longer and tended to a more narrative style than today's style of news writing.

An excerpt from the August 13, 1861 issue concerning the Pony Express follows.

"Fort Kearney, August 6. — The pony express passed this point at 8 o'clock this afternoon, with San Francisco dates of July 27.

"The pony express arrived yesterday with Eastern dates to the 18th inst.

"The overland mail continues to arrive regularly. The price of passage from Sacramento to St. Joseph has been fixed at \$150. . ."

Pretty fancy prices for pre-inflationary days, we would say.

A notice for a runaway slave reads as follows: "\$100 Reward For the delivery to me of my carriage driver, Beverly. He is 27 years old; color black; six feet high; face covered with short beard and moustache; large eye-brows and curling eye-lashes. He probably travels in a dark grey mixed summer coat, or blue cloth, with brass buttons and carpet bag. He says he has read Shakespeare, and may travel with a forged pass, and shave off his beard when he reads this. He has relatives at Dr. R. H. Stewart's in King George, and Mrs. Dr. Frank Taliaferro's in Orange, with whom he has been recently corresponding by letter. His object being evidently to escape, he is doubtless lurking about the shore of the Potomac, or making his way Northward, and may be about our encampments. The above reward will be paid if caught over 50 miles from Fredericksburg, otherwise \$50.

A. N. Bernard"

Most of the news is concerned with the progress of the war. Eyewitness accounts of engagements are given and run on at some length. The news, as one may imagine, is rather biased in favor of the South. However, in spite of getting a one-sided view of the war, it is almost like being there when it happened. Truly reading these reprints makes one feel as if he were an eyewitness to history in the making.

Yearly subscriptions of 52 issues at \$12 may be obtained by writing Civil War Enquirer, Inc., Box 9086, Arlington 9, Va. Packets of three newspapers for \$1 are also available.

## OLD VEHICLES

### WANTED

ANYTHING pertaining to early automobile era - cars, trucks, chassis, motors, brass lights, horns, etc. Literature all kinds - catalogs, trade publications, manuals, folders, posters, pictures. Motorcycle, bicycle, horse era literature. —B. J. Pollard, 14300 Prairie, Detroit 38, Mich. o3255

Wanted: Instruction and parts manuals for Sear's Motor Cars, 1910 Buick Model "19," and 1913-1914 Moyer. Also Penna. licensed drivers badges, and brass duster buttons picturing old cars. —Carl M. Rustine, R.D. 3, Stroudsburg, Pa. o122553

WANTED: Automobiles, any condition: Mercer, Simplex, Packard, Rolls Royce, Locomobile, Thomas Flyer, Pope Hartford Losier, Alco. —David Tunick, Brook Dr., Greenwich, Conn. o124431

OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted. —D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. n6675

AUTOMOBILE catalogs, manuals, magazines. Please describe fully, with price for each item offered. —Reverdy Whitlock, 15 Broadway, New Haven, Conn. n6046

OLD AUTO ITEMS WANTED: Brass auto lamps, bulb horns, radiator mascots and ornaments in metal and glass, radiator name plates and emblems, Pennsylvania license plates, old auto books and show-room catalogs, service manuals. Royal Doulton china: Plates, cups, saucers and pitchers; any pieces with old auto pictures. Early toy autos and toy cap pistols. —A. J. Koveleski, 331 Adams Ave., Scranton 3, Pa. Phone 1-717 - DI. 2-1963. n34201

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# FAVORITE Recording ARTISTS

## Joe Natus and Will F. Denny

By JIM WALSH  
PART II

### VII. Early Obscurity

Since the preceding installment was written, I have found a program issued by the Lew Dockstader Minstrel Company, which shows Joe Natus was a member during its 1907 season. The troupe had a remarkable group of singers including several who were famous for their talking machine records.

Besides Natus, there were Will Oakland, W. H. Thompson, and Gus Reed; and Manuel Romain had been with the Company the season before. The back page reproduces the sheet music cover of "I'll Be Waiting, Dearie, When You Come Home," with the statement that it was "being sung with great success by Joe Natus, with Lew Dockstader and His Great Minstrel Company."

Besides singing, Natus appeared in two comic skits. He was "Officer Squadeal, just in time," in "A Quick Lunch," featuring Neil O'Brien, and took the part of "Chief Gezizzerus" in "Joining the Elks," "a good-natured travesty on secret societies." Gus Reed was "First Lieutenant Gezizzerus."

If it has been hard to find anything concerning the early life of Joe Natus, the obscurity surrounding Will F. Denny is worse. I do not even know when or where Denny was born, but seem to have heard that Boston was his birthplace.

The first reference to him I have found is in the July, 1898 *Phonoscope*, under the heading of "Gallery of Talent Employed for Making Records," where he is mentioned as a Columbia artist. Along with the familiar photo of a mustachioed man approaching middle age is this remark:

"Will F. Denny is a very popular vaudeville singer. His specialties are ballads and comic songs. He has a dashing style that gives to all his songs a peculiar freshness, and has made him a favorite with the large public that gets its music through the graphophone."

"Mr. Denny came to New York with the prestige of a high reputation achieved in Boston. He took a place very quickly among the record-makers whose work is always in demand. He has therefore much to keep him employed and is a very industrious worker."

The foregoing may be supplemented by two mentions of Denny which I have found in letters from the late Frank Dorian, a pioneer Columbia Phonograph Co. official. I always inwardly bless Mr. Dorian's name when I think of his unvarying kindness

and patience in answering the letters I wrote to him as an eager-beaver youngster, anxious to learn all I could about the early phonograph days. Much of what he told me has been passed on in these HOBBIES articles. In one letter Mr. Dorian said:

"Will Denny was another one of the real old-timers. His first records were made for the New England Phonograph Co. (Boston) in the early days when Calvin G. Child was the recording expert for that Company. After the New England Phonograph Co. failed, Denny moved to New York and made records promiscuously for any of the numerous cylinder record makers who flourished during the period from 1895 to 1905. As far as I know Denny made few, if any, disc records."

The "high reputation" which *The Phonoscope* said Denny achieved in Boston obviously was with the New England Phonograph Co. I have only one of that Company's catalogs, dated August 1, 1893, and it contains nothing but band, orchestral, and instrumental records. There is a foreword, reading:

"In addition to our instrumental music, we carry in stock a large variety of vocal records obtained from the leading operatic singers and comedians passing through our city. We do not catalog these numbers, as it is frequently impossible to obtain but a limited number from some of our best performers, and we prefer not to disappoint our patrons by presenting to them a long list of songs, etc., which after a few days we would be utterly unable to fill. We shall always be pleased to furnish at any time lists of records on hand not in our catalog."

Denny may have been among the unnamed "best performers."

Mr. Dorian's second reference to Denny covers much the same ground as his first:

"I also remember Will Denny and Edward M. Favor; but do not know whether either of them is still alive. Both of them started their careers as recording artists with the old New England Phonograph Co. In Boston, at the time Calvin G. Child was in charge of that recording laboratory. "Later, some time after Child had left New England Company to join the Columbia organization, Denny and Favor migrated to New York. There they made records for both the Columbia and Edison Companies."

It probably will surprise most record collectors to learn that Child ever was associated with Columbia. His claim to remembrance rests almost entirely on his having been, for many years, the head of Victor's Red Seal department, and the intimate

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

associate and confidante of most of the great "classical" singers and instrumentalists.

During Child's Victor years he assumed a hoity-toity attitude toward the popular performers and inveighed against the "Coney Island influence" in recorded music. Despite, however, his association with, and admiration for Caruso, Paderewski, Schumann-Heink, Melba, and scores of other exalted musicians, it was he who first gave Will Denny his chance to become a popular recording artist.

An interesting article about Denny was published in *The Dramatic Mirror* for May 23, 1903:

"In this issue of *THE MIRROR* there appears a picture of Will F. Denny, the well-known singing comedian. Mr. Denny began his career in Boston in concert work, and followed this line for a long time. He made a brilliant record in Boston, and sang for nearly six years at the most exclusive affairs and the best concerts given at the 'Hub.'

"He came to New York several years ago, and made an instantaneous hit at clubs, musicales, and concerts, getting more work than he could attend to. He remained in this field for some time, and finally made up his mind to go into vaudeville."

"His reception proved that this was a wise move, and he immediately established a reputation that has been increasing ever since. He has toured this country from one end to the other, and has a large following in every city."

"Mr. Denny's methods are original. He believes in changing his songs as frequently as possible, and uses the greatest care in picking out his selections, so that there are never any 'dead ones' in his collection."

"Many of the songs that have been popular during the past 10 years have been introduced by him. He has paid the penalty for this by having to constantly add new songs to his repertoire, as he himself discards a song as soon as it is taken up by those who believe in following rather than leading."

"Mr. Denny is a genuine 'bell-cow,' and will never 'fall in behind,' if he can help it. He is one of the few singers whose services are in constant demand by the phonograph people, as his voice is peculiarly adapted for the making of good records."

### VIII. Denny's Victor and Zono-phone Records

Those quotations constitute the only background I have been able to establish for Will F. Denny. What remains now is to consider his records. Although Victor was by no means the first company for which he recorded, I have a reason for beginning with his Victor output.

It contains several numbers which he sang for other companies and which seem to have been staple items in his repertoire. Going through the old record catalogs, one does not get the impression that Denny was as quick to discard songs as the *Mirror* article suggests. The following titles are in the Victor catalog (with his name misspelled as Denney) for February, 1902:

"953. I Want Someone to Care for Me. V954. How the Irish Beat the Band. 956. Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat Is 'Home, Sweet Home' To

Me. 957. I'm Looking at You, Lize. 958. The Tick, Tack Tocking of the Clocking on Her Stocking. 959. The Shadows on the Door (comic laughing song). 960. Oh, Don't It Tickle You? 961. At the Pan-I-Marry-Can (the Buffalo Exposition Song). 962. Sarah From Syracuse. M3563. The Turkey and the Turk."

All these could be obtained in both 7 and 10-inch, except V954 which was seven inch only, and M3563 which was restricted to 10-inch. The sequence of the other 10-inch records suggests they had originally been in the 3,000 Monarch Series, then had their numbers changed.

That is evidently true, for I have "The Shadows on the Door," numbered 3567. The label is too faded for me to make out the date of recording on this disc "manufactured exclusively by Eldridge R. Johnson, Camden, N. J."

These 10 records were all Denny made for Victor—at least all that were issued. Possibly he had sung earlier for Berliner. And a strange thing is that they stayed in the catalog such a short time. By 1904 all had been discontinued. We must wonder why Victor gave such short shrift to Denny and never again employed him when he went on steadily making records for other companies.

Whatever the reason, it must not have been caused by a falling out, for Denny made records for Zonophone, which was controlled by Victor, after all his waxings for the parent company had been deleted.

The 1905 Zon-o-phone catalog contains the following 9-inch records by the high-voiced comedian:

"5278. Anna, Let Me Hear From You. 5279. Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat. 5336. I Want Someone to Care for Me. 5339. I Was Certainly Dreaming. 5337. Rip Van Winkle Was a Lucky Man. 5410. Turkey and the Turk. 5921. All Aboard for Dreamland. 5930. Follow the Merry Crowd. 5934. Meet Me in St. Louis, Louis."

Denny made no Zon-o-phone records after the Company introduced 10-inch discs in 1904. Possibly he signed a joint contract with Columbia and Edison, although such agreements were a rarity. Ordinarily, an artist with a joint contract made Victor discs and Edison cylinders, but excluded Columbia.

#### IX. Columbia Cylinders and Discs

It is easy to trace Denny's earlier Columbia records through the old catalogs, as long as artists' names were given, but the task becomes harder from 1901 to 1907, when they were omitted. He was one of a group of popular recording artists who signed an exclusive agreement with Columbia on May 1, 1898:

"To the Columbia Phonograph Co.: We hereby accept the proposition you have made us, to give our EXCLUSIVE services as makers of talking machine records to the Columbia Phonograph Company during the ensuing year. Vess L. Ossman, Geo. W. Johnson, Dan W. Quinn, Spencer Trio, and Imperial Minstrels, per Len Spencer, manager; Geo. J. Gaskin, Steve Porter, Columbia Orchestra (Musical Director, Tom Clark); Columbia Brass Quartet (Tom Clark), Len Spencer, Minnie Emmett, Will F. Denny, George Schweinfest, Russell Hunting."

Denny had 59 records in the 1899 catalog of two-minute brown wax Columbia cylinders. The catalog said: "Mr. Will F. Denny's comic songs are sung with dash and spirit and in an entirely original vein. His work is a standard." If you want to see a list of almost completely forgotten passingly popular compositions, cast your eyes down the following, made after he left Boston and came to New York, where Columbia had set up its headquarters in 1897:

6301. Oh, Don't It Tickle You? 6304. You Can't Think of Everything. 6305. She Was There. 6306. I Didn't Know Till Afterwards. 6309. I Couldn't. 6310. Three Girls in a Boat. 6311. They Don't Speak to One Another Now. 6313. Enoch Brown. 6314. Jones, Smith, and Brown. 6315. The Shadows on the Door. 6316. All Doing a Little Bit. 6317. You Can Tell Where He Has Been. 6318. And the Parrot Said. 6319. It's Another Color Now. 6320. Like a Girl. 6321. Never Mind the Moon, John. 6322. I've No Use for It. 6323. He's Got Them Again, By Jingo. 6324. When a Woman Loves. 6325. A Pity to Waste It. 6326. Give My Love to Mary. 6327. Tell Them I'm All Right. 6328. Up Came Johnny With His Camera. 6330. Poor Brother Jonathan. 6331. One Touch of Nature. 6332. Just a Simple Story. 6333. What a Beautiful Dream. 6334. A Song That Will Live Forever. 6335. Oblige a Lady. 6336. She Never Said a Word. 6337. Dear Little Lady. 6338. Can't

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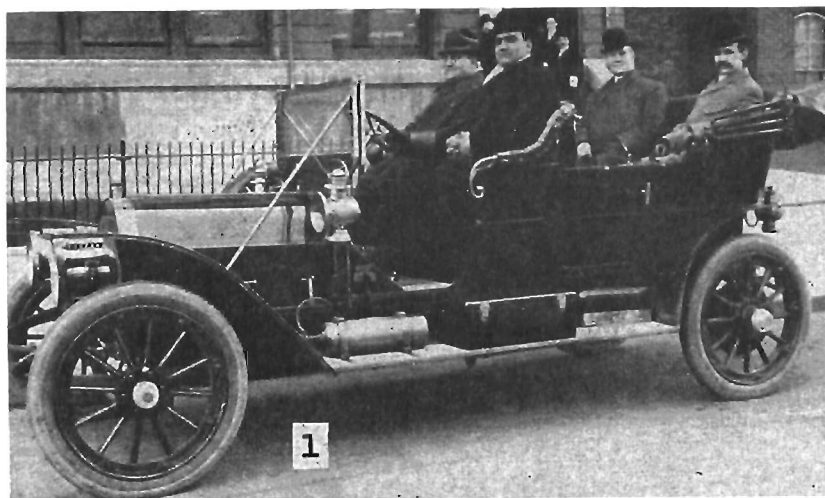
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1. WILL F. DENNY began his recording career in the 1890's with the New England Phonograph Co., of Boston, Mass. Their recording manager was Calvin G. Child, best remembered today as, for many years, the head of Victor's Red Seal recording activities. In this photo, Child is in the front seat, beside Enrico Caruso, whom he had just brought to the Victor Studios at Camden, N. J., in 1909, for a recording engagement. In the rear seat are Harry O. Sooy, then Victor's chief recording expert, and Walter B. Rogers, conductor of the Victor Orchestra.

Stop. 6339. Slap Dab. 6340. Kiss Your Goosie Woosie. 6341. Time is Money. 6342. The Tattered Flag. 6343. Job Like That. 6346. It Came Off. 6347. White Silk Dress. 6348. Baby. 6349. Nora Dear. 6350. Then and Now. 6351. What Ze English Call Ze. 6352. Birds Sing Sweeter, Lad, At Home. 6353. Remember the Maine. 6354. Somebody's Mother. 6355. You Didn't Tell Me That Before We Married. 6356. A Man Took a Girl. 6357. Different Styles of Singing. 6358. Take Care, Beware. 6359. That's When You Learn to Love Them More and More.

Since these records are numbered consecutively, with a few spaces missing, it's likely a few other Denny cylinders had been made earlier but cut out. As will be seen, the list consists largely of comic songs (though how funny they would seem today is a question), together with a sprinkling of ballads, and such a rabble-rousing appeal to patriotic emotion as "Remember the Maine."

I confess this list gives me a depressed feeling. The great days of the American comic song certainly had not arrived in the 1890's!

Denny, it seems to me, specialized in the English "silly" type of comedy. The 1901 Columbia cylinder catalog contains several more numbers in the 6300 series that may be confidently attributed to Denny, although the singer is identified only as "Tenor."

"6344. I Was There. 6345. Mammy's Pickaninny. 6360. Good Old Glory. 6361. I'm Not Particular. 6362. How'd You Like to be the Ice Man? 6364. Mary Ellen Simpkin's Bike. 6365. Miss Helen Hunt. 6366. Kelly, the Bar Man. 6370. My Old Westchester Home. 6372. What, Marry Dat Gal? 6373. Jack Pot. 6374. You're the Only One. 6375. His Little Wife Was With Him All the Time. 6376. Gripman's Grip. 6377. My Family Troubles."

I imagine Denny also made a series of parodies, numbers beginning with 7,000, on the songs listed below:

7000. Moth and the Flame. 7001. Mid the Green Fields of Virginia. 7002. Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee. 7003. One Night in June. 7004. Just One Girl. 7005. Because. 7006. A Picture No Artist Can Paint.

My file of *The Columbia Record* from the beginning of 1904 to early in 1907 makes it easy to determine what records Denny made in that period.

In March, 1905, he was credited with a mock ballad, "Beautiful Dreamy Eyes" on cylinder No. 32632 and disc No. 3057. In April, he sang what sounds like one of the then popular "sob songs." It was called "Skylark! Skylark!; or The Boy's Message," and appeared on cylinder No. 32656 and disc No. 3072.

A more cheerful note was struck in May, 1906, when Denny sang what deserves to be recognized as a comic song classic, "Nothing Like That in Our Family." The extremely amusing words were written by Edward P. Moran and Will A. Heelan, and the music by Seymour Furth.



ALBERT BENZLER  
EDISON AND COLUMBIA



WILL F. DENNY  
TENOR



FRED VAN EPS

2. WILL DENNY'S photo appeared in a booklet published about 1906 describing the Edison laboratories and giving photos of Edison recording artists. On the same page were one of Edison's most versatile musicians, Albert Benzler, also Fred Van Eps, whose life story was told in *HOBBIES* from January through April, 1956. Mr. Van Eps died November 22, 1960, aged 81, while waiting for his driver's license to be renewed in Glendale, Calif.

*The Columbia Record* description said:

"... 10-inch disc No. 3368, cylinder No. 32919. A comic selection by Will F. Denny which cannot fail to provoke laughter, as in this record Denny surpasses himself. His voice is a pleasant one and his enunciation is decidedly good."

I hardly think Denny surpassed himself. His interpretation was adequate, but it falls a long distance short of the unequalled rendition Billy Murray gives of the same song on Victor and Zon-o-phone records.

The July, 1906, Columbia list brought another Denny offering, of which the magazine said:

"Cole and Davis' 'Nonsense'—10-inch disc No. 3427, cylinder No. 32968—sung in Will Denny's clearest tenor, is a musical excerpt from 'In the Land of Nod.' Denny's rendition, with orchestra accompaniment, is very pleasing."

In August, Denny came through with a genuinely amusing number, on the order of "Pol the Rol Lol," a "bunch of limericks," which was extremely popular in those days. It was a nonsensical ditty, "Pol de Iddley Ido," from "The Pearl and the Pumpkin," composed by J. W. Bratton, and sung on 10-inch disc No. 3440 cylinder No. 32978.

Denny must have made records only between coast-to-coast vaudeville engagements, for I don't find another Columbia until August, 1907. He then had two cylinders, No. 33140, "Ask Me Not," and No. 33157, "You'll Have to Get Off and Walk."

The latter song was also made on disc No. 3662, and when Columbia introduced double-faced records it was coupled on No. A489 with "Iola," sung by Frank C. Stanley and Henry Burr. It stayed in the catalog until 1913 and was the only record by Denny that ever appeared in double-face.

Besides the records I have already listed, the 1907 Columbia cylinder catalog contained two more by Denny: No. 4282, "A Little Bit Off





the Top," and No. 32134, "When We Are Married."

Besides those already mentioned, the following Columbia discs can be identified as by Denny:

172. And the Parrot Said. 176. A Little Bit Off the Top. 1241. When We Are Married. His discs, of course, did not begin to appear before 1902, when he had already made the greater part of his Columbia cylinder repertoire. Sixteen cylinders were still listed in the 1907 catalog.

#### X. Denny's Edison Cylinders

There was nothing slow about the way Will Denny turned out two-minute Edison Standard cylinders, once he had begun making them after his one-year Columbia contract expired. By my count, the 1899 catalog contains 34 titles by him, many of which also were included in the Columbia listings.

The three with the lowest numbers did not appear until the Edison supplement dated November 20, 1899, but he had previously made many others. All three were parodies, which, like his Columbia offerings in that branch of humor, had been given a special numerical sequence.

No. 6600 was a parody on "Family Troubles;" No. 6602, a parody, on "A Widow's Plea for Her Son;" and No. 6603, a parody on "Just One Girl." Presumably No. 6601 also was a parody, but it was never issued.

The parody on "A Widow's Plea" probably was the most popular Edison record Denny ever made. It stayed in the catalog—no doubt remade on a good many occasions—until the two-minute cylinders were discontinued late in 1912.

This burlesque of one of the Gay Nineties tear-jerkers was written by Frank North, a vaudeville comedian who himself made a few Edison cylinders. He was a member of the team of Howard and North.

Two of North's records followed

Denny's parodies in numerical order—No. 6604, "Strolling Round the Town," and No. 6605, "J. W. Kelly's Favorite Story." His record No. 8039, a parody on "I've Waited, Honey, Waited Long for You," came out in July, 1902; and No. 8085, a parody on "Goodbye, Dolly Gray," in August. No. 8280, a parody on "Alice, Where Art Thou?" was issued in December, 1902.

Frank North, unlike Denny, lived to extreme old age. He died July 20, 1960, in Red Bank, N. J., aged 89.

The "Widow's Plea for Her Son" desecration was comedy of the hard-boiled type. Instead of a tearful parent pleading with the judge not to impose sentence on a wayward youth, it had the father of the offender, whose gravest misdeeds appears to have been smoking cigarettes, drinking beer, and being a "sport," stand before the judge and declaim:

"Remember I'm his father and his mother is my wife.  
Don't let him off with 20 years  
but send him up for life!  
And if he gets tired of living  
just keep him there for fun,  
For no one wants to feed a sport—  
a father or a son."

The boy's antics so scandalized the jury that all 12 members fell dead. The judge also lived only 20 minutes, but before dying gave the boy this advice:

"My boy, you are a daisy;  
by others don't be done—  
No matter who your father was,  
you are your mother's son!  
And if ever you get married  
just have one boy for fun,  
But if he's a sport don't take him to  
court, but kill the son-of-a-gun!"

This macabre bit of balladry was revived in the late 1920's by a hill-billy performer who called himself "Moonshine Harry." He recorded it on a Supertone record, made by Brunswick and sold by Sears, Roebuck. In its new form it was called "Son-of-a-Gun."

JOE NATUS (No. 24) and WILL F. DENNY (28) were among the 42 Edison cylinder record artists photographed in 1900 near the Edison laboratory at West Orange, N. J. As far as can be ascertained, all the men and women in the photo are dead. The last survivor is believed to have been Fred W. Hager, who died March 31, 1958, aged 83, in Dunedin, Fla.

The group included, besides Natus and Denny:

1. Joe Belmont, whistler. 2. Nick Scholl, trombone. 3. A. Zimmerman, cornet. 4. L. W. Lipp, yodler. 5. Byron G. Harlan, tenor. 6. Fred W. Hager, violin. 7. Arthur F. Collins, baritone. 8. S. H. Dudley, baritone. 9. W. C. Deusing, German baritone. 10. M. Guarini, tenor. 11. William Tuson, clarinet. 12. Will N. Steele, recitations. 13. Jim White, recitations. 14. Walter H. Miller, recording manager. 15. George Broderick, bass. 16. Frank Kennedy, comedian. 17. Al Sweet, cornet. 18. B. Russell Throckmorton, recitations. 19. Harvey N. Emmons, chimes. 20. Ruby R. Brooks, banjo. 21. Samuel Siegel, mandolin. 22. Albert Benzler, piano. 23. Senorita Godoy, Spanish songs. 25. William F. Hooley, bass. 26. May Kelson, contralto. 27. J. J. Fisher, baritone. 29. John Bieling, tenor. 30. Marguerite Newton, soprano. 31. Fred Bachman, piano. 32. George W. Johnson, comedian. 33. A. D. Madeira, baritone. 34. Frank S. Mazziotto, piccolo. 35. Frank P. Banta, piano. 36. Charles D'Almaine, violin. 37. George P. Watson, yodler. 38. Dan W. Quinn, tenor. 39. Harry Macdonough, tenor. 40. Edward M. Favor, tenor. 41. Albert Campbell, tenor. 42. Jere Mahoney, tenor.

Other Denny records which Edison issued up to October, 1899, were:

7101. How'd You Like to be the Ice-man? 7102. I'm Not Particular. 7103. One Touch of Nature. 7104. I Didn't Know Till Afterwards. 7105. Shadows on the Door. 7106. When a Woman Loves. 7107. I Couldn't. 7108. She Was There. 7109. A Job Like That. 7110. Time is Money. 7111. Up Came Johnny With His Camera. 7112. You Can't Think of Everything. 7123. Miss Helen Hunt. 7124. All Doing a Little Bit. 7125. Never Mind the Moon. 7126. You Never Told Me That Before We Were Married. 7127. And the Parrot Said. 7128. My Old Westchester Home. 7134. A Pity to Waste It. 7135. Norah Dear. 7136. Take Care, Beware. 7137. Somebody's Mother. 7153. A Song That Will Live Forever. 7154. Naughty Banana Peel. 7155. I've

Waited, Honey, Waited Long for You. 7156. White Silk Dress. 7157. They Don't Speak to One Another Now. 7158. Enoch Brown. 7159. Like a Girl. 7170. Change Will Do You Good. 7186. Oh, Don't It Tickle You? 7199. Man Took a Girl. 7200. Mandy, Will You Be My Lady Love? 7205. Different Styles of Singing. 7206. Can't Stop.

The resemblance between Denny's Columbia and Edison repertoires is certainly striking.

During the next few years the "Tenor" continued to add steadily to his Edison list. The following were announced between October, 1899, and June, 1902:

7332. All Birds Look Like Chickens to Me. 7379. Parody on "Because." 7380. Parody on "Moth and the Flame." 7534. Just Think This Over. 7536. That Minstrel Man of Mine. 7542. Cold Feet. 7556. Vaudeville Specialty No. 5, naming the rules of a country hotel and ending with the song, "Ain't You My Lulu?" 7582. Such Doings. 7593. Ain't You My Lulu? 7606. I Wonder if He's Waiting. 7671. I'm Looking at You, Lize. 7673. Is There Anything Else You'd Like? 7688. Tick Tack Tocking of Her Stockings. 7692. Sarah From Syracuse. 7711. You Said a Plenty. 7774. Since Malinda Hinda's in the Syndicate. 7801. Big Black Annie's Birthday Ball. 7807. How the Irish Beat the Band. 7808. Three-Thirty-Three in the Morn. 7843. Tact. 7867. Turkey and the Turk. 7875. Ain't Dat a Shame? 7901. Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat. 7923. Go 'Way Back and Sit Down. 7980. Ma Ebony Belle.

In June, 1902, Denny had two new gold moulded records: No. 8015, Rip Van Winkle Was a Lucky Man, and No. 8016, I'm the Man Who Makes the Money in the Mint. He was on hand in August with No. 8091, Aladdin and His Lamp. After this he must have begun to devote more time to long vaudeville tours, for his records no longer appeared frequently.

The next seems to have been No. 8303, I'm Getting Quite American, Don't You Know? issued in January, 1903. It was followed in February with No. 8316, What's the Matter With Sarah? The next No. 8467, When We Get Married, didn't come out until August, 1903. In November, there was No. 8547, Mr. Breeze Was an Easy Mark, from "The Rogers Brothers in Washington." And in December, on No. 8552, he sang "Trixie."

The name of Will F. Denny was then conspicuously missing from the new Edison monthly lists for a long time. In the May, 1905, *New Phonogram*, "G. W. P." of Simpson, Minn., asked, "Are Will F. Denny and Len Spencer dead? I have heard it so stated."

He was told, "They are both living."

In May, 1906, Denny unexpectedly popped up as a performer in one of a series of six "At the Minstrel Show" cylinders issued that month. He appeared in the fourth of the series, No. 9278, which was described as:

"Introducing Will F. Denny in his great monolog entitled 'A Matrimonial Chatter. A bright, crisp comedy talk of the type that is always entertaining, with love, courtship and marriage as the chief topics, concluding with the topical song, 'It's All a Matter of Taste.'"

Two months later, Denny came

through with No. 9306, containing that already mentioned comedy classic which deserves to be immortal, "Nothing Like That in Our Family." *The New Phonogram* said:

"Mr. Denny has favored us with a selection for our monthly supplement. Topical songs have always been his forte and this selection is similar in character. . . . The verses tell of the things that happened when the singer dined in the house of his swell friend.

"The second verse tells of the reception that the tramp met when he called at the house of Dr. Brown and asked for a pair of pants. Dr. Brown proved to be an old maid and her reply is amusing. Another verse tells of his treating experience with some friends."

Will Denny was to make only a handful more of records for Edison or any other company, but in May, 1907, he showed up with a number which elicited the comment, "Mr. Denny sings another of his old-time rapid-fire mirth provokers." This was No. 9581, "Ask Me Not," of which the write-up said:

"This comic song by Cobb and Edwards is one of those topical compositions with which Mr. Denny has been prominently identified in the past. It is written to be sung in race-horse time, and keeps its hearers on the QUI VIVE to catch the story. It tells of the things wifey does from time to time, but why she does them is met with:

Ask me not, ask me not,  
ask me not, I pray,  
All I know, this is so,  
and happens every day.  
Take my wife, take my life,  
kill me on the spot,  
But why she does  
just what she does,  
Oh, ask me, ask me not!

In June, 1907, Denny sang, on No. 9568, "You'll Have to Get Off and Walk," already mentioned as one of the last of his Columbias:

Dave Reed, Jr., must have had Mr. Denny in mind when he wrote the words and music of this comic song, for it fits his voice and style perfectly. Two verses and two choruses are given on the record, one part telling of the singer's lack of success in trying to ride a horse to town and the other of misfortunes that befell him when he took his girl out in an automobile. On the latter trip his rival Jones appeared on the scene just as his gasoline gave out and carried off the girl.

During 1907 a newspaper columnist wrote a limerick about a girl named Nan, who lived at Nantucket, and eloped with her father's cash in a bucket, and soon just about every other columnist in the country was adding his five lines to the saga. A man named Joe A. Budd decided to turn the "Nan" fad into a song, which was recorded by Denny under the title of "The Tale of the Bucket," on cylinder No. 9598. *The New Phonogram* said:

"A comic song something after the order of 'Fol-the-Rol-Lol,' which is so popular in our catalog. The story is told in seven short verses of how 'Nan ran away with a man,' and how they took her father's bucket in which he kept his cash. . . . There is a laugh in each verse. The melody, too, is attractive."

The last Edison record Denny was ever to make came out in August, 1907. It was No. 9620, "My Word! What a Lot of It!"

Dave Reed, Jr., the well-known song writer, in a humorous manner

relates the misadventures that happened to Chauncey, who was inclined to overdo things. His first taste of champagne resulted disastrously because he took such a lot of it. Then he plunged recklessly into matrimony.

This apparently was one of the "silly" type of songs, taken from English models, in which I have already said Denny specialized. It was also his cylinder swan song. He never appeared in a new Columbia or Edison list, as far as I can find, after August, 1907.

#### XI. Will Denny's Death

More than a year went by in which the veteran tenor comedian's name was absent from recording lists. Then, when Denny's friends in the East read *Variety* for October 3, 1908, they must have been shocked by this brief paragraph:

"Just as he was to step upon the stage at the opening performance at Pantages, Seattle, September 21, Will F. Denny, the singing comedian, gasped and fell. When brother artists rushed to his side he was unconscious. Doctors pronounced the seizure a stroke of paralysis. He was removed to the hospital and later was said to be improving."

In the March, 1948, *HOBBIES*, I quoted the late Joe Belmont as telling me that Denny appeared on the stage of the Seattle theater, bowed to his audience and dropped dead, but the foregoing quotation shows either that Mr. Belmont had been misinformed or his memory had tricked him after many years. Denny was fatally stricken, but he did not fall lifeless. The October 10, 1908, *Variety*, however, brought the sad news of his death:

"Word was received by the Actor's Union in New York this week that Will F. Denny, the singer, who has played extensively in vaudeville all over the East, died in Seattle, Wash., October 3. No details accompanied the formal notice.

"Denny's illness began September 22, when he suffered a sudden seizure in his dressing room at Pantages Theater, Seattle. He was immediately rushed to Providence Hospital in that city, but paralysis seemed to have developed, and although he soon

(Continued on page 42)

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. n6637

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each. — Ric Verdi Antiques, 854 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books. \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3694

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann, Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. d5867

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

recovered consciousness, death followed.

"Joe Hardman was with him at the last. Denny's wife was notified. Eddie Tanner, of Gilbert and Tanner, was in the sick room much of the time and is holding the dead artist's personal effects.

So, on a note of pathos, ended the life story of William F. Denny. His contemporary, Joe Natus, had ended his working days as a hotel clerk before dying in a Rome, N. Y., hospital of diabetes. Denny was permitted to carry on his profession until the last, but he was fated to die thousands of miles away from home, in a strange hospital and like Natus with no members of his family near him.

The copy of his death certificate which I received from the Seattle Department of Public Health disappointed me. Denny's age was given as 48. His birthdate was omitted. Probably no one in Seattle knew it, but he almost certainly was born in 1860, the same year as Natus.

Three question marks were used to indicate the physician's uncertainty as to whether he was single, married, widowed, or divorced. His occupation was given as actor, but nothing was told concerning his parents or birthplace.

Dr. John W. Crooks gave the cause of death as arterial sclerosis. The body was removed for burial to Philadelphia, where Denny and his wife presumably made their home.

For a few years after his death, some Denny records were still to be found in the Edison catalog. Columbia discontinued its wax cylinders in 1909, and, as I have already mentioned, only one of his discs was carried into the double-faced catalog, where it remained through 1912.

But in March, 1911, you could still get the following Edison two-minute cylinders by the dead comedian:

"And the Parrot Said," "Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat," "Nothing Like That in Our Family," "The Parody on 'A Widow's Plea For Her Son,'" "You'll Have To Get Off And Walk," and "You Never Told Me That Before We Were Married."

When Edison discontinued wax cylinders about a year and a half later, the list was down to "And the Parrot Said," "Any Old Place," and the "Widow's Plea" parody. With the coming of 1913 it was impossible, so passing is human fame, to pick up any up-to-the-minute record catalog and find the name of Will F. Denny.

Yet today, 52 years after his death, there are Denny records in many collections and through them echoes of a voice that has been stilled more than half a century is still being heard.

## ADDENDA

This will revise, for the sake of accuracy, a statement that I made in the last paragraph of Part VIII on page 33:

Until recently I had thought Denny made no 10" Zonophone records, but

recently a HOBBIES reader, C. L. Quick of House Springs, Mo., sent me some Zonophone supplements for 1908, which list three Denny discs. Possibly there were others. In May, he was credited with 1048, "I'd Rather Be a Little Too Soon Than Just a Little Too Late." In June, he had 1081, "Since My Mariutich Learned 'The Merry Widow Waltz,'" and in July, "All the Girls Look Good to Me." At this stage of his vaudeville career, Denny often did impersonations of the theatre manager and actor, Tony Pastor.

Correction: In the first installment of this series, a cut line beneath a photo of Natus said, "Denny never made an Edison record after 1902." "Denny" should have been "Natus."

## Death of Hughie Flaherty Who Was Husband Of Ada Jones

By JIM WALSH

HOBBIES, readers, I am sure will be both sorry and surprised to learn of the death of Hugh (Hughie) Flaherty, a formerly prominent song-and-dance man in vaudeville and musical comedy, who was married to Ada Jones, the most popular woman recording artist of the pioneer days of recording.

Miss Jones died in 1922 at Rocky Mt., N. C. After her death Mr. Flaherty remarried and, to avoid being bothered by admirers of his first wife's recorded work, encouraged the belief that he had died. He was pleased when newspapers in Huntington Station, L. I., where they had lived, published erroneous statements that he was dead, and welcomed the protection this gave him against intrusions on his privacy. When I wrote my biographical series about Ada Jones, which began in June, 1946, HOBBIES and continued through the following January, I repeated in good faith the information I had been given that Hughie Flaherty, like his wife and daughter, Sheelah, was dead.



HUGHIE FLAHERTY

Mr. Flaherty was born August 11, 1879, in the District of Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland, the son of John Flaherty and Kate Sullivan Flaherty. He died Sunday, July 9, 1961, in Kings County Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y. His funeral was conducted at the Walter B. Cooke Funeral Home and his burial was in Pinelawn Cemetery. So carefully had he concealed his identity that none of the newspaper death notices mentioned his having been married to Ada Jones.

When Hughie was a boy his parents moved to Lawrence, Mass. where the youngster became an expert in tap, clog and buck and wing dancing. His professional career began in 1898, with Clair Evans as his partner. In 1900 he moved to New York and stayed in a theatrical rooming house, at 82 East 10th St., where he met Ada Jones. As a partner of Billy Farrell, he worked as an end-man, did vaudeville routines and danced "solo" with the Byron Spahn traveling tent show. Ada was the feature of the Spahn show, singing with illustrated song slides.

In 1902 Hughie starred in "Huckleberry Finn" and a little later he joined the James Kennedy Repertoire Co. as a between-the-acts dancer. Ada Jones was a member of this troupe, which toured the Midwest out of Michigan. In 1903 he appeared in "The Belle of New York" with Elsie Janis and had the title role in "Jack and the Beanstalk."

Hughie and Ada Jones were married in Manhattan, N. Y., August 9, 1904. In 1904-5 he toured the country as star of "The Forbidden Land," with Ethel Johnson. In 1906, the year Sheelah was born, he was featured dancer and choreographer for "His Majesty" with Blanche Ring. Later productions in which he appeared were "The Rounders," "1492," "Simple Simon," "The Filbuster" and "In Africa." During this period, Flaherty took keen interest in Ada Jones' recording career, which had begun in 1904, and suggested some of the songs and skit situations that appeared in records by Ada and Len Spencer. The Jones-Spencer "Jimmy and Maggie at the Hippodrome" was his idea. He also suggested that Ada record "My Word" after hearing Katie Barry sing it in a theater. He was on tour, when Ada made her first records—aside from tests she had made in the 1890's.

While touring with shows in 1912, Hughie met his second wife, Hannah ("Annie") Lockett, who survives him. She was doing an Apache dance and he gave her a job. In 1916 they teamed as a dance pair, Flaherty and Stoning (Hannah had changed her name to "Jean Stoning") and the partnership continued in vaudeville, playing almost every town and city in the county, until vaudeville virtually died in 1932. Nine years after Ada Jones' death, Hughie and Miss Lockett were mar-

(Continued on page 44)



## A Directory of Births and Deaths

By JIM WALSH

This month completes a 20 year period in which I have been writing for HOBBIES. This department has appeared every month during that period except in February, 1942, and August and September, 1943. I now have my sights set on writing it for at least another 30 years.

Not only that, but since I still have stored away enough information to keep me going another 100 years, I plan to devote much of my time in my retirement years (assuming that I live to retire!) to preparing articles that will keep "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" going for years after I am defunct.

To commemorate our 20th anniversary, I have done something that I have wanted to do for a long time — prepared an alphabetical list of pioneer recording artists, telling when and where they were born, and, if they are no longer with us, when and where they died.

I have done this partly because I think such a list is valuable in itself, and partly because it will take care of many of the questions I am frequently asked to provide answers to by mail. I consequently hope all readers who are seriously interested in record collecting will preserve this article for reference.

Perhaps at some time in the future it will be possible to publish a supplement and also to correct some of the errors which are bound to lurk in this compilation.

Making out this list has been the most arduous and wearisome task I have ever undertaken in preparing my HOBBIES contributions. Set in type, it may not appear to have involved much laborious exertion, but I figuratively sweat blood a good many times seeking for information about some performer whose life story has become obscure. An hour was sometimes devoted to obtaining information that will occupy one or two lines of print.

I was surrounded for a couple of weeks by such reference works as the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the Columbia Encyclopaedia, Pierre Key's Year Books, Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, the MacMillan Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians, the World and Information Please Almanacs, the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary. Also Who's Who in the Theater, back copies of the Record Collector and The Gramo-

phone, old record catalogs, my extensive card index, and other sources made my work room look as if a cyclone had dropped in to wreak some spontaneous and unrehearsed havoc.

Even then, the results frequently were unsatisfactory. When you consult six different reference works and get six conflicting dates for the birth of an Italian opera singer, your temper is frayed. Some of the valuable tomes I consulted give only the years of birth and death, omitting the day and month, which I especially wanted.

I never could find where Marie Dressler and Joseph Jefferson died. Because of factors such as this, the list is incomplete. Of course, no complete listing of all persons who made records could ever be assembled.

I believe only a few explanations are necessary. Wherever the information was available, I have told when and where an artist was born, and when and where he died. If only a part of the information was available, I have given what I could.

As an example, take the first name on the list, Suzanne Adams. I am almost positive I have read of the death of this opera soprano, probably in the late 1930's or early 1940's, but I never could find anything saying she was dead. Consequently, I have used a question mark to indicate my belief she is no longer living, but that I have no positive information.

B., of course, stands for "born" and d. for "died." Ab means "about." I have used "about" as an approximate indication of births and deaths when I could do no better than make what I hoped was a plausible guess. Dates so given may be off several years. When the date of birth is uncertain I have placed a person's age at time of death after the death date. This is in parenthesis.

Artists listed here are mostly of the operatic and "popular" types, with a representative compilation of instrumentalists. Space limitations forbade listing more than a scattering few jazz and country music artists. Names have been restricted almost entirely to persons whose recording careers began in the old acoustic days.

Obviously, by including dance band musicians, hill-billy singers, and

opera singers better known in Europe or South America than in the United States, I could have added a couple of thousand more names which there wouldn't have been room for. Some artists I have included, however, because their obscurity makes it hard for the average collector to find out anything about them.

To save space, listings have been held to a minimum. Where persons are mentioned as having been born or died in famous cities, I have left off the name of the state or country. For instance, New York alone always means New York, N. Y., Chicago, Chicago, Ill.; London, London, England; Rome, Rome, Italy, etc. To further conserve space, I have not indicated what types of voices singers had, or what the instrumentalists played.

In order to get 1962 off with a bang, I shall begin publishing next month an extensive series about the performer who, under several names, has had the most remarkable recording career of anyone who has performed for the phonograph.

Incidentally, I have not tried to list all the assumed names used by such prolific recorders as Billy Jones, Ernest Hare, Vernon Dalhart, Irving Kaufman, and Arthur Fields. In a good many instances, where a performer used more than one name, I have given the "vital statistics" under the name that was most popular, and in other listings referred the information seeker to that name.

As an example, Henry Burr's real name was Harry McClaskey, but he was best known as Burr. Under "Burr, Henry," I have told when and where he was born and died, but anyone looking up Harry McClaskey, Alfred Alexander, or Irving Gillette, is referred to the information under Burr.

### WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS of GREAT SINGERS on ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD, ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS (such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts. Also old record catalogs.

**AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY**

50 Prospect Avenue  
Valhalla, New York  
trx



- ADAMS, SUZANNE, b. Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 28, 1872; d. ?  
 ADKINS, MORTON, b. Oct. 31, 1877.  
 ALBANI, EMMA, b. Chambly, Canada, Nov. 1, 1852; d. London Apr. 3, 1930.  
 ALCOCK, MERLE, b. Des Moines, Ia., ab. 1885.  
 ALDA, FRANCES, b. Christ Church, New Zealand, May 31, 1855; d. Venice, Sept. 18, 1952.  
 ALEXANDER, ALFRED—see Burr, Henry.  
 ALEXANDER, GEORGE, b. Baltimore, July 9, 1867; d. New York, March 2, 1913.  
 ALLEN, EDWARD—see Middleton, Arthur.  
 ALTHOUSE, PAUL, b. Reading, Pa., Dec. 21, 1887; d. New York, Feb. 7, 1954.  
 ANCONA, MARIO, b. Livorno, Italy, Feb. 28, 1860; d. Florence, Feb. 23, 1931.  
 ANDREWS, MARK, b. Gainsboro, England, Mar. 31, 1875; d. Montclair, N. J., Feb. 23, 1931.  
 ANTHONY, HARRY—see Young, John.  
 ARMSTRONG, LOUIS, b. New Orleans, July 4, 1900.  
 ARCHIBALD, VERNON, b. Morocco, Ind., June 30, 1886.  
 ARNDT, FELIX, b. New York, May 20, 1899; d. New York, Oct. 16, 1918.  
 ARRAL, BLANCHE, b. Liege, Belgium, 1864; d. Cliffside, N. J., Mar. 3, 1945.  
 ASH, SAM, d. Hollywood, Oct. 21, 1951 (67).  
 ATTLEE, JOHN YORKE, b. Detroit, Jan. 28, 1842; d. Washington, April 1, 1910.  
 AUSTIN, GENE, b. Gainesville, Tex., June 24, 1900.  
 AUTRY, GENE, b. Tioga, Tex., Sept. 29, 1907.  
 AVERY, VAN, b. Chicago, ab. 1879.  
 BAILEY, MILDRED, b. near Spokane, Wash.; d. Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Dec. 12, 1951.  
 BAKER, ELSIE, b. Philadelphia, Sept. 27, 1886; d. New York, April 28, 1958.  
 BALLARD, GEORGE WILTON, b. Syracuse, N. Y., Nov. 24, 1877; d. Syracuse, April 6, 1950.  
 BANTA, FRANK E., b. New York, Sept. 28, 1897.  
 BANTA, FRANK P., b. 1870; d. New York, Nov. 1903.  
 BARBOUR, INEZ, b. Bradford, Pa., ab. 1885.  
 BARNES, J. FOSTER, d. Durham, N. C., Feb. 9, 1956 (61).  
 BARRERE, GEORGE, b. Bordeaux, France, Oct. 31, 1876; d. New York, June 14, 1944.  
 BARTH, HANS, d. Jacksonville, Fla., Dec. 8, 1956 (59).  
 BARTRAM, GUS, d. Traverse City, Mich., Oct. 7, 1951 (61).  
 BAUR, FRANKLYN, b. Brooklyn; d. Brooklyn, Feb. 21, 1950 (46).  
 BAYES, NORA, b. Joliet, Ill., 1880; d. Mar. 19, 1928.  
 BEARD, BILLY, d. Atlanta, Ga., Nov. 14, 1954 (71).  
 BEAVER, GEORGE—see Kaufman, Irving.  
 BELL, DIGBY, b. Milwaukee, 1851; d. New York, 1917.  
 BELLSTEDT, HERMAN, b. Bremen, Germany, Feb. 21, 1858; d. June 8, 1926.  
 BELMONT, JOE, b. Shamokin, Pa., July 22, 1876; d. New York, Aug. 28, 1949.  
 BENOIST, ANDRE, b. Paris, April 4, 1879; d. Middletown, N. J., June 19, 1953.  
 BENZLER, ALBERT, b. Newark, N. J., Nov. 13, 1867; d. Newark, Feb. 19, 1934.  
 BERGER, KITTY, b. England, 1870; d. 1925.  
 BERGH, ARTHUR, b. St. Paul, Minn., March 24, 1882.  
 BERLIN, IRVING, b. Temum, Russia, May 11, 1888.  
 BERNARD, AL., b. New Orleans, Nov. 3, 1888; d. New York, March 9, 1949.  
 BERRY, W. H., d. Herne Bay, England, May 2, 1951 (81).  
 BIELING, JOHN, b. New York, Mar. 15, 1869; d. Hempstead, N. Y., Mar. 30, 1948.  
 BINGHAM, RALPH, b. Richmond, Va., Aug. 2, 1870; d. Philadelphia, Dec. 27, 1925.  
 BISHOP, GENEVRA JOHNSTONE, b. Van Wert, Ohio, Nov. 12, 1864; d. 1924.  
 BISPHAM, DAVID, b. Philadelphia, Jan. 5, 1857; d. New York, Oct. 2, 1921.  
 BLAKE, EUBIE, b. Baltimore, Feb. 7, 1883.  
 BLAUVELT, LILLIAN, b. Brooklyn, Mar. 16, 1873; d. Chicago, Aug. 29, 1947.  
 BONCI, ALESSANDRO, b. Cesena, Italy, Feb. 10, 1870; d. Viterba, Italy, Aug. 8, 1940.  
 BOS, COENRAAD V., b. Leiden, Holland, Dec. 7, 1875; d. Chappaqua, N. Y., Aug. 5, 1955.  
 BORDONI, IRENE, b. Paris, 1894; d. New York, Mar. 19, 1953.  
 BOURDON, ROSARIO, b. Montreal, March 8, 1889.  
 BOWEN, WILLIAM, b. Dec. 18, 1880.  
 BOWERS, FREDERIC V., b. Boston, June 11, 1874; d. Los Angeles, April 29, 1961.  
 BRICE, FANNIE, b. New York, Oct. 29, 1891; d. Hollywood, May 19, 1951.  
 BROWN, ALBERT EDMUND, b. Derby, England, Dec. 9, 1874; d. Denver, Dec. 7, 1958.  
 BROWN, EDNA—see Baker, Elsie.  
 BROWN, FRED (of Six Brown Brothers), d. Chicago, Feb. 9, 1949 (55).  
 BROWN, TOM (of Six Brown Brothers), d. Chicago, Aug. 29, 1950 (68).  
 BROWNE, HARRY C., b. North Adams, Mass., Aug. 16, 1878; d. Boston, Nov. 15, 1954.  
 BURBECK, FRANK, b. England, Dec. 30, 1857; d. Feb. 20, 1930.  
 BURKHARDT, JOHN F., b. Newark, N. J., March 17, 1879.  
 BURNLEY, MRS. HARDIN, b. South Carolina, May 21, 1880.  
 BURR, CECILIA NILES, d. Chicago, Sept. 17, 1954 (87).  
 BURR, HENRY, b. St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada, Jan. 15, 1882; d. Chicago, Apr. 6, 1941.  
 BURTON, BILLY—see Harrison, Charles.  
 CAHILL, MARIE, b. ab. 1874; d. New York, Aug. 23, 1933.  
 CAIRNS, CLIFFORD IRVING, b. New Jersey, Aug. 30, 1880; d. New Smyrna Beach, Fla., Dec. 14, 1955.  
 CALVE, EMMA, b. Decazeville, France, Aug. 15, 1858; d. Millau, Aveyron, Jan. 6, 1942.  
 CAMPBELL, ALBERT, b. Brooklyn, N. Y., Aug. 17, 1872; d. Flushing, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1947.  
 CANTOR, EDDIE, b. New York, Jan. 31, 1892.  
 CARUS, EMMA, b. Berlin, 1879; d. New York, 1927.  
 CARUSO, ENRICO, b. Naples, Feb. 25, 1873; d. Naples, Aug. 2, 1921.  
 CASE, ANNA, b. Clinton, N. J., Oct. 29, 1889.  
 CASE, CHARLIE, b. Lockport, N. Y., ab. 1858; d. New York, 1916.  
 CAWTHORN, JOSEPH, b. New York, 1867; d. Beverly Hills, Calif., Jan. 21, 1949.  
 CHALLA, ROSALIA, b. Havana, Nov. 17, 1864; d. Havana, Nov. 16, 1948.  
 CHALMERS, DONALD, b. Pittsburgh; d. Asbury Park, N. J., May 17, 1939 (58).  
 CHALMERS, THOMAS, b. New York, Oct. 20, 1884.  
 CHAMLEE, MARIO (ARCHER), b. Los Angeles, May 29, 1892.  
 CHEATHAM, KITTY, b. Nashville, Tenn.; d. Greenwich, Conn., Jan. 5, 1946 (81).  
 CHIAFERELLI, ALBERT C., d. New York, 1945 (61).  
 CHICK, LEONARD T., b. Washington, D. C., ab. 1882; d. Washington, D. C., Oct. 20, 1957.  
 CLARANCE, EDWARD, b. Boston, 1863; d. ?  
 CLARK, CARROLL C., b. Denver, ab. 1885.  
 CLARKE, HERBERT L., b. Woburn, Mass., Sept. 12, 1867; d. Long Beach, Calif., Jan. 31, 1945.  
 CLARK, HELEN, b. Rochester, N. Y., ab. 1890.  
 COHAN, GEORGE M., b. Providence, R. I., July 4 or 5, 1878; d. New York, Nov. 5, 1942.  
 COLLINS, ANNA L. (MRS. ARTHUR), b. Ireland, May 18, 1867; d. Fort Myers, Fla., May 14, 1949.  
 COLLINS, ARTHUR, b. Philadelphia, Feb. 7, 1864; d. Tice, Fla., Aug. 3, 1933.  
 CONFREY, ZEZ, b. Peru, Ill., April 3, 1895.  
 COOK, PHIL, b. Coldwater, Mich., Sept. 27, 1893; d. Morristown, N. J., Sept. 18, 1958.  
 COOMBS, FRANK, b. Bedford, Ia., July 26, 1871; d. Seattle, Wash., Oct. 31, 1941.  
 CORDER, LEOTA, d. New York, Aug. 10, 1956 (66).  
 COUTERIER, ERNST ALBERT, b. New York, Sept. 30, 1869; d. ?  
 COWLES, EUGENE, b. Sanstead, Canada, Jan. 17, 1860; d. Boston, Sept. 22, 1948.  
 CRANE, RALPH—see Dadmun, Royal.  
 CRAVER, AL—see Dalhart, Vernon.  
 CREATORE, GIUSEPPE, b. Naples; d. New York, 1952 (82).  
 CROPPER, ROY, b. Jamaica Plains, Mass.; d. Miami, Fla., May 14, 1954 (58).  
 CROSSLEY, ADA, b. Tarraville, Gippsland, Australia, Mar. 3, 1874; d. London, Oct. 17, 1929.  
 CROXTON, FRANK, b. Paris, Ky., Oct. 7, 1877; d. New York, Sept. 3, 1949.  
 CRUMIT, FRANK, b. Jackson, O., Sept. 26, 1889; d. New York, Sept. 7, 1943.  
 CULP, JULIA, b. Groningen, Holland, Oct. 6, 1880.  
 CZERWONKY, RICHARD, b. Birnbaum, Germany, May 23, 1886; d. Chicago, Apr. 16, 1949.  
 DADMUN, ROYAL, b. Williamstown, Mass., ab. 1890.  
 DALHART, VERNON, b. Jefferson, Tex., Apr. 6, 1883; d. Bridgeport, Conn., Sept. 15, 1948.  
 D'ALMAINE, CHARLES, b. Hull, England, June 13, 1871; d. Newark, N. J., June 17, 1943.  
 DALMORES, CHARLES, b. Nancy, France, Dec. 31, 1871; d. Hollywood, Dec. 6, 1939.  
 DALTON, JACK—see Kaufman, Jack.  
 DAMROSCH, WALTER, b. Breslau, Germany, Jan. 30, 1862; d. New York, 1950.  
 DAVENPORT, EDGAR L., b. Boston, 1862; d. ?  
 DAVIS, LILLIAN—see Dunlap, Marguerite.  
 DAWSON, PETER, b. Adelaide, South Australia, Jan. 31, 1882.  
 DE CISNEROS, ELEANORA, b. New York, Nov. 1, 1878; d. New York, Feb. 3, 1934.  
 DE GOGORZA, EMILIO, b. Brooklyn, May 29, 1874; d. New York, May 10, 1949.  
 DEIRO, GUIDO, b. Salto, Canvonese, Italy, June 10, 1886; d. California, July 26, 1950.  
 DEIRO, PIETRO, b. Salto Canvonese, Italy, Aug. 28, 1888; d. New York, Nov. 3, 1954.  
 DE LEATH, VAUGHN, b. Mt. Pulaski, Ill., Sept. 26, 1896; d. Buffalo, N. Y., May 28, 1943.  
 DE LUCA, GIUSEPPE, b. Rome, Dec. 25, 1876; d. New York, Aug. 26, 1950.  
 DE LUSSAN, ZELIE, b. Brooklyn, Dec. 21, 1863; d. London, Dec. 18, 1949.  
 DENNY, WILL F., b. Boston ab. 1860; d. Seattle, Wash., Oct. 2, 1908.  
 DE PACHMANN, VLADIMIR, b. Odessa, Russia, July 27, 1848; d. Riga, Russia, Jan. 6, 1933.  
 DE RESZKE, EDOUARD, b. Warsaw, Dec. 23, 1855; d. Garkopoland, May 25, 1917.  
 DE RESZKE, JEAN, b. Warsaw, Jan. 14, 1950; d. Nice, France, April 3, 1925.  
 DESTINN, EMMY, b. Prague, Feb. 20, 1878; d. Budweis, Bohemia, Jan. 28, 1930.  
 DE TREVILLE, YVONNE, b. Galveston, Tex., Aug. 25, 1881; d. New York, Jan. 25, 1954.  
 DE VERE, CLEMENTINE, b. Paris; d. Mt. Vernon, N. Y., Jan. 19, 1954 (89).  
 DIETRICH, RENE, b. April 21, 1886.  
 DIXON, RAYMOND—see Murphy, Lambert.  
 DOCKSTADER, LEW, b. 1856; d. 1924.  
 DOHERTY, JIM, d. New York, April, 1936.  
 DONAGHY, HARRY, d. New York, June 1, 1949 (56).  
 DONOVAN, HUGH—see Harrison, Charles.  
 DRESSLER, MARIA, b. Cobourg, Canada, Nov. 9, 1873; d. July 28, 1934.  
 DUDLEY, AUDLEY F., b. Eastern Shore of Maryland; d. Washington, Sept. 1, 1916 (37).  
 DUDLEY, GEORGE N., b. Baltimore, April 24, 1877.  
 DUDLEY, S. H., b. Greencastle, Ind., 1886; d. Los Angeles, June 6, 1947.

- DUDLEY, MRS. S. H., d. Los Angeles, June 7, 1947.  
DUNLAP, MARGUERITE, b. South Carolina, 1883; d. Montclair, N. J., Jan. 7, 1960.  
DUPREZ, FRED, b. Detroit, Sept. 6, 1884; d. at sea enroute to England, Oct. 29, 1938.  
EASTON, FLORENCE, b. Middlesbrough-on-Tees, Yorkshire, England, Oct. 25, 1884; d. New York, Aug. 13, 1955.  
ECKE, FREDERICK W., b. Germany, 1885; d. New Brunswick, N. J., Sept. 17, 1915.  
EDISON, THOMAS A., b. Milan, O., Feb. 11, 1847; d. Orange, N. J., Oct. 18, 1931.  
EISENBERG, HAROLD, b. Prague; d. New York, Aug. 23, 1961 (75).  
ELLERMAN, AMY, b. Yankton, S. D.; d. New York, June 4, 1960 (71).  
ELLISON, GLEN, b. Glasgow, Scotland, ab. 1885.  
ELMAN, MISCHA, b. Tainoie, Russia, Jan. 21, 1931.  
ERROLLE, RALPH, b. Chicago, Sept. 22, 1887.  
EVANS, HENRY and WILLIAM T.—see Williams, Evan.  
FARRELL, MARGUERITE, b. Providence, R. I., Sept. 16, 1883; d. Buffalo, N. Y., Jan. 26, 1951.  
FAVOR, EDWARD M., b. New York; d. New York, Jan. 10, 1936 (80).  
FAVOR, MRS. EDWARD M. (EDITH SINCLAIR), d. Brooklyn, Nov. 27, 1942 (86).  
FIELDS, ARTHUR, b. Philadelphia, Aug. 6, 1888; d. Largo, Fla., Mar. 29, 1953.  
PINNEGAN, JOHN, b. Wilmington, Del., ab. 1875; d. ?  
FIRTH, W. FRANCIS, b. Auburn, N. J.; d. Windsor, Ontario, Canada, June 25, 1943 (75).  
FLAGSTAD, KIRSTEN, b. Hamar, Norway, July 12, 1895.  
FORDE, FLORRIE, b. Sydney, Australia; d. Aberdeen, Scotland, Apr. 18, 1940 (64).  
FOX, HARRY, b. Pomona, Calif.; d. Hollywood, July 20, 1959 (77).  
FOX, LOIS, b. Jan. 17, 1886; d. ?  
FRADKIN, FREDERIC, b. Troy, N. Y., Apr. 2, 1892.  
FRANCHINI, ANTHONY JOSEPH, b. Bologna, Italy, Aug. 2, 1898.  
FRANCISCO, CARLOS—see De Gogorza, Emilio.  
FRANCIS, ADELIN, d. New York, Aug. 11, 1956 (80).  
FRANKEL, HARRY, d. Richmond, Ind., 1943 (60).  
FRANKLIN, ED—see De Gogorza, Emilio.  
FRANKLIN, IRENE, d. Hollywood, June 13, 1941 (65).  
FREEMANTEL, FREDERIC C., b. London, Apr. 20, 1873; d. New York, Nov. 21, 1949.  
FREMSTAD, OLIVE, b. Stockholm, March 14, 1871; d. Irvington-on-Hudson, N. Y., Apr. 21, 1951.  
"FRISCO," LOU CHICA, b. Chicago, July 10, 1891; d. ?  
FROSINI, PIETRO, b. Mascalucia, Italy, Aug. 9, 1885; d. Woodside, N. Y., Sept. 29, 1951.  
FYFFE, WILL, d. St. Andrews, Scotland, Dec. 13, 1947 (62).  
GADSKI, JOHANNA, b. Anclam, Germany, June 15, 1872; d. Berlin, Feb. 22, 1932.  
GALLI-CURCI, AMELITA, b. Milan, Nov. 18, 1889.  
GARDEN, MARY, b. Aberdeen, Scotland, Feb. 20, 1877.  
GARRISON, MABEL, b. Baltimore, Apr. 24, 1886.  
GASKIN, GEORGE, b. Belfast, Ireland, ab. 1860; d. ?  
GATES, LUCY, b. St. George, Utah; d. Salt Lake City, Utah, Apr. 30, 1951 (70).  
GAYLORD, CHESTER, b. Worcester, Mass., Feb. 23, 1899.  
GERHARDT, ELENA, b. Leipzig, Germany, Nov. 11, 1883; d. London, Jan. 11, 1961.  
GERSHWIN, GEORGE, b. Brooklyn, Sept. 26, 1898; d. Beverly Hills, Calif., July 11, 1937.  
GIANNINI, DUSOLINA, b. Philadelphia, Dec. 19, 1902.  
GIANNINI, FERUCCIO, b. Pont-a-Lana, Tuscany, Italy, Nov. 15, 1868; d. Philadelphia, Sept. 17, 1948.  
GILLETTE, IRVING—see Burr, Henry.  
GILLHAM, ART (ARTHUR LEWIS), b. Georgia, Jan. 1, 1895; d. Atlanta, Ga., June 6, 1961.  
GILSON, LOTTIE, b. 1871; d. 1912.  
GIRARD, GILBERT, b. San Francisco, ab. 1868; d. ?  
GLENN, WILFRED, b. San Joaquin Valley, Calif., ab. 1880.  
GLUCK, ALMA, b. Bucharest, Rumania, May 17, 1884; d. New York, Oct. 27, 1938.  
GODDARD, HERBERT—see De Gogorza, Emilio.  
GOLDEN, BILLY, b. Cincinnati, June 9, 1858; d. Newark, Jan. 30, 1926.  
GOLDMAN, EDWIN FRANKO, b. Louisville, Ky., Jan. 1, 1878; d. New York, Feb. 21, 1958.  
GORDON, CHARLES—see Hemus, Percy.  
GREEN, GEORGE HAMILTON, b. Omaha, Nebr., May 23, 1893.  
GREEN, JOE, b. Omaha, Nebr., Feb. 9, 1892; d. New York, Oct. 16, 1939.  
GREEN, LEWIS, b. Omaha, Nebr., Oct. 25, 1909.  
GREENE, GENE, b. Aurora, Ill., June 9, 1877; d. New York, April 5, 1930.  
GREET, BEN, b. England, 1856; d. England, May 17, 1936 (79).  
GRIFFIN, GERALD, b. Chicago, May 19, 1891.  
GUSKOFF, MICHAEL, b. New York, May 15, 1895.  
HACKETT, CHARLES, b. Worcester, Mass., Nov. 4, 1889; d. Jamaica, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1942.  
HAGER, FRED, b. Susquehanna County, Pa., 1874; d. Dune-din, Fla., Mar. 3, 1958 (83).  
HAHL, ADOLPH J.—see Hall, Arthur.  
HAJOS, MIZZI, b. Budapest, April 27, 1891.  
HALL, ARTHUR, b. New York, 1888.  
HALL, FRED, b. New York, Apr. 10, 1898; d. New York, 1954.  
HALL, WENDFELL, b. St. George, Kans., Aug. 23, 1896.  
HAMILTON, EDWARD—see Werrenrath, Reinald.  
HARDING, ROGER, d. 1901.  
HARE, ERNEST, b. Norfolk, Va., Mar. 16, 1883; d. Jamaica, L. I., Mar. 9, 1939.  
HARLAN, BYRON G., b. Paris, Kans., Aug. 29, 1861 (this is being typed on the 100th anniversary of his birth); d. Orange, N. J., Sept. 11, 1936.  
HARRIS, MARION, b. ab. 1896; d. New York, Apr. 23, 1944.  
HARRISON, CHARLES, b. Jersey City, N. J., Sept. 11, ab. 1890.  
HARRISON, JAMES F.—see Wheeler, Frederick.  
HARROLD, ORVILLE, b. Muncie, Ind., 1878; d. Darien, Conn., Oct. 23, 1933.  
HART, CHARLES, b. Chicago, May 16, 1884.  
HARVEY, MORTON, b. Omaha, Nebr., 1886.  
HAVRILLA, ALOIS, b. Presor, Austria, June 7, 1891; d. Englewood, N. J., Dec. 7, 1952.  
HAZEL, JOHN, d. Williamsport, Pa., Jan. 26, 1948 (82).  
HELENA, EDITH, b. Brooklyn, Dec. 23, 1876; d. Mt. Kisco, N. Y., Nov. 27, 1956.  
HEMPPEL, FRIEDA, b. Leipzig, Germany, June 26, 1885; d. Berlin, Oct. 7, 1955.  
HEMUS, PERCY, b. Auckland, New Zealand; d. New York, Dec. 22, 1943 (65).  
HERBERT, VICTOR, b. Dublin, Feb. 1, 1859; d. New York, May 26, 1924.  
HILL, MURRY K., b. New York, Apr. 15, 1865; d. Chicago, Oct. 23, 1942.  
HILLEBRAND, FRED, b. Brooklyn, Dec. 25, 1893.  
HILLIARD, ROBERT, b. May 28, 1857; d. 1927.  
HINKLEY, ALLEN CARTER, b. Gloucester, Mass., Oct. 11, 1877; d. Yonkers, N. Y., Jan. 29, 1954.  
HINDERMYER, HARVEY, b. Easton, Pa., ab. 1882; d. Garden City, N. Y., Oct. 22, 1957.  
HINKLE, FLORENCE, b. Columbia, Pa., 1885; d. Cincinnati, Apr. 19, 1931.  
HOLT, AL S., b. Milwaukee; d. London, Aug. 1, 1924 (50).  
HOMER, LOUISE, b. Pittsburgh, Apr. 23, 1871; d. Winter Park, Fla., May 6, 1947.  
HOOD, ADELYNE, b. Chester, S. C., ab. 1892; d. Pittsburgh, Apr. 11, 1958.  
HOOLEY, WILLIAM F., b. Cork, Ireland, Apr. 16, 1861; d. New York, Oct. 12, 1918.  
HORNSBY, DAN, d. Atlanta, Geo., May 18, 1951 (51).  
HOUSE, JUDSON, b. New York, Jan. 30, 1894; d. Dumont, N. J., Jan. 6, 1945.  
HOWARD, ANNA—see Marsh, Lucy Isabelle.  
HOWARD, FRANK—see Campbell, Al.  
HOWARD JOE E., b. New York, Feb. 12, 1867; d. Chicago, May 19, 1961.  
HUGHES, JOE, b. Chicago, Mar. 21, 1863; d. ?  
HUGHES, THOMAS, d. Long Beach, N. J., Oct. 3, 1947 (82).  
HUMPHREY, HARRY E., b. San Francisco, ab. 1877.  
HUNTING, RUSSELL, b. West Roxbury, Mass., May 8, 1864; d. New York, Feb. 20, 1943.  
IRWIN, MAY, b. Whitby, Ontario, Canada, June 27, 1862; d. New York, Oct. 2, 1938.  
JACOBY, JOSEPHINE, b. New York; d. New York, Nov. 13, 1948 (73).  
JAMES, LEWIS, b. Dexter, Mich., July 29, 1892; d. Western Springs, Ill., Feb. 19, 1959.  
JANIS, ELSIE, b. Delaware, O., Mar. 16, 1889; d. Hollywood, Feb. 27, 1958.  
JARVIS, HAROLD, b. Toronto, 1865; d. Detroit, Mar. 31, 1924.  
JAUDAS, EUGENE A., b. New York, Oct. 11, 1869; d. ?  
JEFFERSON, JOSEPH, b. Philadelphia, Feb. 20, 1829; d. Apr. 23, 1905.  
JELL, GEORGE CLARENCE, b. Wardsville, Ontario, Canada, ab. 1880.  
JOHNSON, ELDRIDGE R., b. Wilmington, Del., Feb. 6, 1867; d. Morristown, N. J., Nov. 17, 1945.  
JOLSON, AL, b. St. Petersburg, Russia, Mar. 26, 1886; d. San Francisco, Oct. 23, 1950.  
JONES, ADA JANE, b. Oldham, Lancashire, England, June 1, 1873; d. Rocky Mount, N. C., May 2, 1922.  
JONES, BILLY, b. New York, Mar. 15, 1889; d. New York, Nov. 23, 1940.  
JONES, ISHAM, b. Coalton, O., Jan. 31, 1894; d. Hollywood, Fla., Oct. 19, 1957.  
JONES, REESE—see Jones, Billy.  
JORDAN, HENRY—see Hart, Charles.  
JORDAN, MARY, b. Cardiff, Nov. 27, 1879; d. San Antonio, Tex., May 15, 1961.  
JORN, KARL, b. Riga, Latvia, Jan. 5, 1876; d. Denver, Dec. 19, 1947.  
JOSE, RICHARD, b. Cornwall, England, June 5, 1872; d. San Francisco, Oct. 20, 1941.  
JOURNET, MARCEL, b. Grasse, France, July 25, 1867; d. Vittel, France, Sept. 5, 1933.  
JUCH, EMMA, b. Vienna, July 4, 1865; d., 1939.  
KAISER, MARIE, b. Kans.; d. New York, Jan. 23, 1950 (63).  
KAUFMAN, IRVING, b. Syracuse, N. Y., Feb. 8, 1890.  
KAUFMAN, JACK, d. Valley Stream, L. I., Feb. 27, 1948 (65).  
KELLOGG, CHARLES K., d. on his Southern California ranch, Sept. 4, 1949 (80).  
KELLY, DAN, b. New York, Jan. 22, 1842; d. ?  
KELLY, WALTER C., d. Philadelphia, Jan. 6, 1939 (65).  
KENNEDY, EMIL, b. Magdeburg, Germany, 1866; d. ?  
KERNELL, FRANK—see Dudley, S. H.  
KERN, GRACE, b. Norfolk, Va., 1886; d. in car wreck near Williamsburg, Va., Sept. 10, 1936.  
KIMMEL, JOHN J., b. Brooklyn, N. Y., Dec. 18, 1866; d. Brooklyn, Sept. 8, 1942.  
KINDLER, HANS, b. Rotterdam, Holland, Jan. 8, 1892; d. Watch Hills, R. I., Aug. 30, 1949.  
KING, ROXY, b. Alliance, O., Feb. 23, 1878; d. ?  
KLAUSEN, HENRIK, b. Kopervik, Norway, 1844; d. Christiana, 1907.  
KOCIAN, JAROSLAV, b. Ustinad Orlici, Bohemia, Feb. 22, 1883; d. Prague, Mar. 8, 1930.  
KREISLER, FRITZ, b. Vienna, Feb. 2, 1875.  
KRONOLD, HANS, b. Krakau, Austria, July 3, 1872; d. ?  
KRUESI, JOHN, b. Switzerland, 1843; d. Schenectady, N. Y., Feb. 23, 1899.  
KRYL, BOHUMIR, b. Horice, Czechoslovakia, May, 2, 1876; d. Wilmington, N. Y., July 7, 1961.

(Continued on page 34)

- LANGE, HENRY W., b. Toledo, O., July 20, 1895.  
 LAPITINO, FRANCIS J., b. New York, June 5, 1879; d. New York, Nov. 30, 1949.  
 LA RUCCA, NICK, b. New Orleans, Apr. 11, 1889; d. New Orleans, Feb. 22, 1961.  
 LASHWOOD, GEORGE, d. Worcestershire, England, Jan. 20, 1942 (79).  
 LAUDER, HARRY, b. Portobello, Scotland, Aug. 4, 1870; d. Strathaven, Scotland, Feb. 26, 1950.  
 LAZZARI, CAROLINA, b. Milford, Mass., Dec. 26, 1891; d. 1946.  
 LAZZARI, VIRGILIO, b. Assisi, Italy; d. New York, Oct. 4, 1953 (66).  
 LBACHMAN, SILAS F., b. Louisville, Ky., Aug. 20, 1859; d. Chicago, Apr. 28, 1936.  
 LENNOX, ELIZABETH, b. Ionia, Mich., ab. 1893.  
 LENT, JAMES I., d. Brooklyn, Mar. 14, 1945 (59).  
 LEVY, JULES, b. London, Apr. 28, 1858; d. Chicago, Nov. 28, 1903.  
 LEWIS, TED, b. Circleville, O., 1890.  
 LLOYD, ALICE, d. Banstead, England, Nov. 17, 1949.  
 LOPEZ, VINCENT, b. Brooklyn, Dec. 30, 1898.  
 LUPSKY, MARSHALL P., d. Milwaukee, Dec. 11, 1948.  
 LUTHER, FRANK, b. Lakin, Kans., Aug. 4, 1905.  
 LYONS, DAUIS, b. St. Paul, Minn., ab. 1870; d. ?  
 MACDONALD, CHRISTIE, b. Picton, Nova Scotia, 1875.  
 MACK, CHARLES E. (of "Two Black Crows"), d. Arizona, 1934.  
 MACDONOUGH, HARRY, b. Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 1868; d. New York, Sept. 26, 1931.  
 MACFARLANE, GEORGE, b. 1877; d. 1932.  
 MALOOF, ALEXANDER, d. Englewood, N. J., Feb. 29, 1956 (72).  
 MANN, ESTELLA LOUISE, b. Nashville, Tenn., Nov. 1, 1871; d. Evansville, Ind., Aug., 1947.  
 MANTELLI, EUGENIA, b. Italy, 1860; d. Lisbon Mar. 3, 1926.  
 MANTIA, SIMON, d. New York, June 25, 1951 (78).  
 MARLOWE, JAMES, d. New York, Mar. 21, 1917 (58).  
 MARLOWE, JULIA, b. Caldbeck, England, Aug. 17, 1866; d. New York, Nov. 12, 1950.  
 MARSH, LUCY ISABELLE, d. Providence, R. I., Jan. 20, 1956 (77).  
 MARTIN, FREDERIC, b. Rhode Island; d. New London, Conn., Sept. 12, 1945 (78).  
 MARTIN, RICCARDO, b. Hopkinsville, Ky., Nov. 18, 1878; d. New York, Aug. 12, 1952.  
 MARTINELLI, GIOVANNI, b. Padua, Italy, Oct. 22, 1885.  
 MARVIN, JOHNNY, b. Butler, Okla., July 11, 1897; d. North Hollywood, Dec. 20, 1944.  
 MATZENAUER, MARGARET, b. Temesbar, Hungary, June 1, 1881.  
 McCLASKEY, HARRY—see Burr, Henry.  
 McCLINTOCK, HARRY, b. Knoxville, Tenn., Oct. 8, 1882; d. San Francisco, Apr. 24, 1957.  
 McCONNELL, "SMILIN' ED," d. Newport Beach, Calif., July 25, 1954 (62).  
 McCOOL, JAMES, b. Philadelphia, 1875; d., 1936.  
 McCORMACK, JOHN, b. Athlone, Ireland, June 14, 1884; d. Dublin, Sept. 16, 1945.  
 McGUIGAN, MADELEINE, d. Philadelphia, Aug. 5, 1961 (61).  
 McQUHAE, ALLEN, b. Bray County, Wicklow, Ireland; d. Corpus Christie, Tex., 1960 (69).  
 MEEKER, EDWARD, b. Orange, N. J., Jan. 22, 1874; d. Newark, N. J., Apr. 19, 1937.  
 MELBA, NELLIE, b. Burnley, Australia, May 19, 1859; d. Sydney, Australia, Feb. 23, 1931.  
 MELTON, JAMES, b. Moultrie, Ga.; d. New York, Apr. 21, 1961 (57).  
 METCALFE, EDWARD, d. Brentwood, L. I., Apr. 2, 1951 (84).  
 MEYER, JOHN H., b. New York; d. Flushing, N. Y., May 3, 1949 (71).  
 MICHALOWA, MARIE, b. Russia, ab. 1866; d. Russia, ab. 1916.  
 MIDDLETON, ARTHUR, b. Logan, Iowa, Nov. 28, 1880; d. Chicago, Feb. 16, 1929.  
 MILLER, BOB, b. Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 20, 1895; d. New York, Aug. 26, 1955.  
 MILLER, POLK, b. Grape Lawn, Va., Aug. 2, 1844; d. Richmond, Va., Oct. 20, 1913.  
 MILLER, REED, b. Anderson, S. C., Feb. 29, 1880; d. New York, Dec. 29, 1923.  
 MOLE, CHARLES, d. New York, Jan. 8, 1905.  
 MOOR, WYATT K., b. Delft, Holland; d. Tajunga, Calif., Aug. 21, 1959 (ab. 73).  
 MOORE, GRACE, b. Jellico, Tenn., Dec. 1, 1901; d. Copenhagen, Denmark, Jan. 26, 1947.  
 MORAN, GEORGE (of "Two Black Crows"), d. Oakland, Calif., Aug. 1, 1949 (67).  
 MORGAN, CORINNE, b. ab. 1875; d. ab. 1945.  
 MORRIS, ELIDA, b. Philadelphia, ab. 1888; d. ?  
 MORTON, EDDIE, b. Philadelphia, May 15, 1870; d. Wildwood, N. J., Apr. 11, 1938.  
 MORTON, FERDINAND "JELLY ROLL," b. New Orleans, Sept. 20, 1885; d. Los Angeles, July 10, 1941.  
 MUNN, FRANK, d. St. Alban's, Queens, N. Y., Oct. 2, 1953 (58).  
 MURATORE, LUCIEN, b. Marseilles, 1878; d. France, 1954.  
 MURPHY, LAMBERT, b. Springfield, Mass., Apr. 15, 1885; d. Hancock, N. H., July 24, 1954.  
 MURRAY, BILLY, b. Philadelphia, May 25, 1877; d. Jones Beach, L. I., N. Y., Aug. 17, 1954.  
 MURRAY, PETE, b. New York, Mar. 28, 1875; d., Dec., 1940.  
 MUZZO, CLAUDIA, b. Pavia, Italy, 1892; d. Rome, May 24, 1936.  
 MYERS, J. W., b. Wales, ab. 1864; d. ?  
 MYERS, WILLIAM F., b. California, 1888; d. San Francisco, Feb. 22, 1892.  
 NASH, HEDDLE, d. London, Aug. 14, 1961 (67).  
 NATUS, JOE, b. Detroit, Mar. 1, 1860; d. Rome, N. Y., Apr. 21, 1917.  
 NIELSEN, ALICE, b. Nashville, Tenn., June 7, 1876; d. New York, Mar. 8, 1943.  
 NOLDI, HELENE, b. Chicago, Feb. 25, 1874; d. ?  
 NORTH, FRANK, d. Red Bank, N. J., July 20, 1860 (89).  
 NORWORTH, JACK, b. Philadelphia, Jan. 5, 1879; d. Laguna Beach, Calif., 1960.  
 OAKLAND, WILL, b. Jersey City, N. J., Jan. 15, 1880; d. on bus enroute to Newark, May 15, 1956.  
 O'CONNOR, GEORGE, b. Washington, D. C., Aug. 20, 1874; d. Washington, Sept. 28, 1946.  
 O'HARA, GEOFFREY, b. Chatham, Ontario, Canada, Feb. 2, 1882.  
 OHMAN, PHIL, b. New Britain, Conn., Oct. 7, 1896.  
 OLCOTT, CHAUNCEY, b. Buffalo, N. Y., July 2, 1858; d. Monte Carlo, Mar. 18, 1932.  
 OLITZKA, ROSA, b. Berlin, Sept. 6, 1873; d. Sept., 1949.  
 OSSMAN, VISS L., b. Hudson, N. Y., Aug. 21, 1868; d. Minneapolis, Minn., Dec. 8, 1923.  
 PARKER, J. DONALD (JACK), d. Westchester, N. Y., Sept. 1940 (47).  
 PARLOW, KATHLEEN, b. Calgary, Alberta, Canada, Sept. 20, 1890.  
 PARSONS, JOSEPH M., d. Long Beach, Calif., Dec. 22, 1947 (66).  
 PARVIS, TAURINO, b. Torino, Italy, Sept. 15, 1879; d. Barcelona, May 9, 1957.  
 PASTERNAK, JOSEPH A., b. Czenstachowa, Russian Poland, July 1, 1881; d. Chicago, Apr. 29, 1940.  
 PATTI, ADELINA, b. Madrid, Feb. 10, 1843; d. Craig-y-nos Castle, Wales, Sept. 27, 1919.  
 PERKINS, RAY, b. Boston, Aug. 23, 1896.  
 PETERSON, MAY, b. Oshkosh, Wis., Oct. 7, 1889; d. Austin, Tex., Oct. 8, 1962.  
 PETERSON, WALTER C., d. Chicago, Mar. 21, 1945 (52).  
 PHILLIPS, JOSEPH A., b. Buffalo, N. Y., ab. 1880.  
 PLANCON, POL, b. Furnay, France, June 12, 1854; d. Paris, Aug. 12, 1914.  
 POLLOCK, FRANK, b. Abingdon, Ill., Nov. 11, 1878.  
 POLLOCK, MURIEL, b. Kingsbridge, N. Y., Jan. 21, ab. 1893.  
 PONSELLE, CARMELA, b. Schenectady, N. Y., June 7, 1892.  
 PONSELLE, ROSA, b. Meriden, Conn., Jan. 22, 1897.  
 PORTER, STEVE, b. Buffalo, N. Y., 1864; d. New York, Jan. 13, 1936.  
 PRICE, GEORGIE, b. New York, Jan. 5, 1900.  
 PRIHODA, VASA, b. Vodnany, Bohemia, Aug. 24, 1900; d. Vienna, July 27, 1960.  
 PRINCE, CHARLES ADAMS, b. San Francisco; d. San Francisco, Oct. 10, 1937 (68).  
 PRYOR, ARTHUR, b. St. Joseph, Mo., Sept. 22, 1870; d. West Long Branch, N. J., June 18, 1942.  
 PUCKETT, GEORGE RILEY, d. Atlanta, Ga., July 13, 1945.  
 QUINN, DAN W., b. San Francisco, d. New York, Nov. 7, 1938 (79).  
 RACHMANINOFF, SERGEI, b. Onega, Novgorod, Russia, Apr. 2, 1873; d. New York, Mar. 28, 1943.  
 RANDOLPH, EMORY B., b. Western New York State, ab. 1878.  
 RAPFOLD, MARIE, b. London, 1880; d. North Hollywood, May 12, 1957.  
 RAYMOND, MAUD, d. New York, 1961 (89).  
 REA, VIRGINIA, b. Kentucky, ab. 1896; d. ?  
 REIMERS, PAUL, b. Lunden, Schleswig-Holstein, Mar. 14, 1878; d. New York, Apr. 14, 1942.  
 RICE, GITZ, LIEUTENANT, b. New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Mar. 5, 1891; d. New York, Oct. 16, 1947.  
 RICE, GLADYS, b. Philadelphia, ab. 1896.  
 RINALDI, MICHELE, d. Jan. 29, 1949, Atlantic City, N. J.  
 RING, BLANCHE, b. Boston, Apr. 24, 1877; d. Santa Monica, Calif., Jan. 13, 1961.  
 RING, JUSTIN, b. New York, June 28, 1876.  
 ROBERTS, BOB, d. Cincinnati, Jan. 21, 1930 (51).  
 ROBERTS, VICTOR—see Jones, Billy.  
 ROBERTSON, DICK, b. Brooklyn, July 3, 1903.  
 ROBEY, SIR GEORGE, b. London, Sept. 20, 1869; d. Saltdean, Sussex, England, Nov. 29, 1954.  
 ROBINSON, J. RUSSELL, b. Indianapolis, July 8, 1892.  
 ROBISON, CARSON, b. Chetapa, Kans., Aug. 4, 1890; d. Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Mar. 24, 1957.  
 RODEHEAVER, HOMER, b. Union Furnace, O., Oct. 4, 1880; d. Winona Lake, Ind., Dec. 18, 1955.  
 RODGERS, JIMMY, b. Meridian, Miss., Sept. 8, 1897; d. May 26, 1933.  
 ROGERS, WALTER B., b. Delphi, Ind., Oct. 14, 1865; d. Brooklyn, Dec. 24, 1939.  
 ROLFE, BENJAMIN ALBERT, b. Brasher Falls, N. Y., d. Walpole, Mass., Apr. 23, 1956 (76).  
 ROMAIN, MANUEL, b. Boston, 1870; d. Quincy, Mass., Dec. 22, 1926.  
 ROSEDALE, LILLIAN, b. Mitchell, S. Dak., May 30, 1888.  
 ROSE, EUGENE C., b. Danzig, Germany, July 26, 1866; d. Freeport, L. I., Aug. 21, 1961.  
 ROSENBLATT, JOSEF, b. Biala Cierkiew, May 9, 1882; d. Jerusalem (51).  
 ROYE, RUTH, d. New York, June 12, 1960.  
 RUBSAM, EDWARD F., d. Newark, N. J., 1946 (71).  
 RUFTO, TITA, b. Piza, Italy, June 10, 1877; d. Florence, Italy, July 6, 1953.  
 SADLER, JOSIE, b. New York, ab. 1873; d., ab. 1934.  
 SALVI, ALBERTO, b. Venice, Dec. 13, 1893.  
 SANDERSON, JULIA, b. Springfield, Mass., Aug. 20, 1887.  
 SASSOLI, ADA, b. Bologna, Sept. 23, 1887; d. Rome, Dec. 3, 1946.  
 SCANLAN, WALTER—see Van Brunt, Walter.  
 SCHENK, JOE, b. Brooklyn; d. Detroit, June 28, 1931 (39).  
 SCHMITZ, E. ROBERT, b. Paris, 1889; d. San Francisco, Sept. 5, 1949.  
 SCHUMANN-HEINK, ERNESTINE, b. Lieben, Bohemia, June 15, 1861; d. Hollywood, Nov. 17, 1936.  
 SCHWEINFEST, GEORGE F., d. Newark, June 8, 1949 (87).  
 SEAGLE, OSCAR, b. Chattanooga, Tenn., Oct. 31, 1877; d. ?

- SEGOVIA, ANDRES, b. Linares, Spain, Feb. 18, 1894.  
SHIELDS, ELLA, b. Baltimore; d. Lancashire, England, Aug. 5, 1952.  
SHILKRET, JACK, b. New York, Oct. 13, 1896.  
SHILKRET, NAT, b. New York, Dec. 23, 1895.  
SILVER, MONROE, b. New York, ab. 1880; d. New York, 1947.  
"SINGIN' SAM"—see Frankel, Harry.  
SISSE, NOBLE, b. Indianapolis, July 10, 1889.  
SMALLE, ED, b. Roxbury, Mass., Nov. 3, 1887.  
SMITH, "WHISPERING JACK," d. New York, May 13, 1950 (52).  
SODERO, CESARE, b. Naples, Aug. 2, 1886; d. New York, Dec. 16, 1949.  
SOUSA, JOHN PHILIP, b. Washington, Nov. 6, 1854; d. Reading, Pa., Mar. 6, 1932.  
SOUTHE, PAUL, d. New York, Aug. 25, 1946 (58).  
SPALDING, ALBERT, b. Chicago, Aug. 15, 1888; d. Great Barrington, Mass., May 26, 1933.  
SPENCER, ELIZABETH, b. St. Louis, ab. 1875; d. Montclair, N. J., Apr., 1930.  
SPENCER, HARRY, b. Washington, Feb. 14, 1875; d. Washington, Aug. 29, 1946.  
SPENCER, LEONARD GARFIELD, b. Washington, Feb. 12, 1867; d. New York, Dec. 15, 1914.  
SPROSS, CHARLES GILBERT, b. Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1874.  
SQUIRE, J. H., d. London, Sept. 18, 1956 (77).  
STAIGERS, DEL, d. North Hollywood, July 12, 1950 (52).  
STANLEY, AILEEN, b. Chicago, ab. 1897.  
STANLEY, FRANK C., b. Orange, N. J., Dec. 29, 1868; d. Orange, Dec. 12, 1910.  
STANLEY, HELEN, b. Cincinnati, Feb. 24, 1889.  
STEPT, SAM H., b. Odessa, Russia, Sept. 18, 1897.  
STEVENSON, ELISE, b. Liverpool, Feb. 9, 1878.  
STEWART, CAL, b. near Charlotte Court House, Va., 1856; d. Chicago, Dec. 7, 1919.  
STILES, VERNON, d. Los Angeles, Dec. 10, 1947 (67).  
STRAIGHT, CHARLEY, b. Chicago, Jan. 16, 1891; d. Chicago, Sept. 21, 1940.  
SUNDELIUS, MARIE, b. Karlsstad, Sweden; d. Boston, June 26, 1958 (77).  
SYLVA, MARGUERITE, b. Brussels; d. Glendale, Calif., Feb. 20, 1957 (82).  
TALLY, HARRY, b. Lee County, Va., June 30, 1866; d. Ocean Park, Calif., Aug. 16, 1939.  
TAMAGNO, FRANCESCO, b. Turin, Italy, 1851; d. Varese, Italy, Aug. 31, 1905.  
TEYTE, MAGGIE, b. Wolverhampton, England, Apr. 17, 1889.  
TETRAZZINI, LUISA, b. Florence, June 29, 1871; d. Milan, Apr. 28, 1940.  
THIBAUD, JACQUES, b. Bordeaux, Sept. 27, 1880; d. Mt. Cemet, France, Sept. 3, 1953.  
THOMAS, BOB—see Hare, Ernest.  
THOMPSON, GEORGE L., b. New York, 1875; d. ?  
THOMPSON, WILLIAM H., d. Chicago, July 24, 1945 (72).  
THUNDER, HENRY GORDON, b. Philadelphia, Dec. 15, 1865; d. Philadelphia, Mar. 19, 1958.  
TIBBETT, LAWRENCE, b. Bakersfield, Calif., Nov. 16, 1896; d. New York, July 15, 1960.  
TIFFANY, MARIE, b. Chicago, ab. 1888; d. ?  
TILLEY, HERBERT C., JR., d. Rye, N. Y., Mar. 27, 1956 (64).  
TILLEY, VESTA, b. Worcester, England; d. London, Sept. 16, 1952 (88).  
TILLOTSON, MERLE—see Alcock, Merle.  
TRIX, HELEN, b. Newsmantown, Pa., Aug. 21, 1892 ?; d. New York, Nov. 18, 1951.  
TUCKER, SOPHIE, b. Boston, Jan. 13, 1884.  
TURNER, JOHN C. ("HAPPY JACK"), d. Denver, Jan. 19, 1949 (50).  
"UNCLE JOSH"—see Stewart, Cal.  
VAN, BILLY B., b. Philadelphia; d. Newport, N. H., Nov. 16, 1950 (72).  
VAN, GUS, b. Brooklyn, ab. 1892.  
VAN BRUNT, WALTER, b. Brooklyn, Apr. 23, 1892.  
VANCE, CLARICE, b. Louisville, Ky., Mar. 14, 1875; d. Napa, Calif., Aug. 24, 1961.  
VAN DER VEER, NEVADA, b. Springfield Center, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1884; d. New York, Sept. 25, 1958.  
VAN EPS, FRED, b. Somerville, N. J., Dec. 30, 1878; d. Glendale, Calif., Nov. 22, 1960.  
VECSEY, ARMAND, b. Hungary; d. New York, Mar. 31, 1949 (70).  
VICTORIA, VESTA, d. London, Apr. 7, 1951 (77).  
VIRGO, WILFRED, b. England; d. Toronto, Mar. 5, 1951 (80).  
WALLACE, JOSEPH (BAN-JO), d. Jamaica, N. Y., May 18, 1961 (79).  
WALLER, THOMAS "FATS," b. New York, May 21, 1904; d. Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 15, 1943 (39).  
WALSH, ARTHUR L., b. New Jersey, d. New York, Dec. 13, 1947 (51).  
WANGEMANN, A. THEODORE E., b. Berlin, Feb. 13, 1855; d. Bath Beach, L. I., Sept. 2, 1906.  
WARING, TOM, d. Stroudsburg, Pa., Dec. 29, 1960 (57).  
WATEROUS, HERBERT L., b. Flint, Mich.; d. Woodstock, N. Y., Aug. 28, 1947 (78).  
WATKINS, BILLY, d. Queens Village, N. Y., Sept. 3, 1946 (57).  
WEBSTER, FRANK—see Campbell, Albert.  
WELLS, JOHN BARNES, b. Ashley, Pa., Oct. 17, 1880; d. Roxbury, N. Y., Aug. 8, 1935.  
WERRENATH, REINALD, b. Brooklyn, Aug. 7, 1883; d. Plattsburg, N. Y., Sept. 12, 1953.  
WESTON, AL H., d. 1946, Revere, Mass. (79).  
WESTPHAL, FRANK, b. Chicago, June 15, 1889; d. Bridgeport, Nov. 23, 1948.  
WHEELER, ELIZABETH, b. Kokomo, Ind., July 20, 1875.  
WHEELER, FREDERICK, b. Boone, N. Y., Oct. 10, 1877; d. Yonkers, N. Y., Aug. 7, 1951.  
WHEELER, WILLIAM, b. Shawano, Wis., July 13, 1879.  
WHELAN, ALBERT, b. Australia; d. London, Feb. 19, 1961 (85).  
WHITE, JOSEPH M., b. New York, Oct. 14, 1891; d. New York, Feb. 28, 1959.  
WHITE, LEE ROY (LASSES), b. Wills Point, Tex., 1885; d. Hollywood, Dec. 16, 1949.  
WHITEHILL, CLARENCE, b. Marengo, Iowa, Nov. 5, 1871; d. New York, Dec. 18, 1933.  
WHITEHOUSE, FRED, b. New York, June 14, 1895; d. Brooklyn, 1955 (70).  
WHITLOCK, BILLY, b. England, 1874; d. London, Jan. 26, 1951.  
WHITNEY, EDWIN M., b. Parma City, N. Y., Mar. 17, 1877; d. New York, June 5, 1957.  
WIEDOEFT, RUDY, b. Detroit, Jan. 3, 1893; d. Flushing, N. Y., Feb. 18, 1940.  
WILBUR, JOHN—see Meyer, John.  
WILDER, MARSHALL P., b. Sept. 19, 1859; d. ?  
WILLEKE, WILLEM, b. 's-Gravenhage, Holland, Sept. 29, 1879; d. Pittsfield, Mass., Nov. 26, 1950.  
WILLIAMS, BERT, b. New Providence, Bahama Islands, 1876; d. New York, Mar. 4, 1922.  
WILLIAMS, BILLY, b. Melbourne, Australia, 1877; d. England, Mar., 1915.  
WILLIAMS, EVAN, b. Mineral Ridge, O., Sept. 7, 1867; d. Akron, O., May 24, 1918.  
WILSON, AL H., b. Mar. 3, 1868; d. ?  
WILLS, NAT M., b. Fredericksburg, Va., July 11, 1873; d. Woodcliff, N. J., Dec. 9, 1917.  
WINSCH, LOUIS J., d. Philadelphia, May 5, 1950 (66).  
WRIGHT, HORACE, b. May 14, 1876.  
YAW, ELLEN BEACH, b. Boston, N. Y., Sept. 14, 1869; d. West Covina, Calif., Sept. 9, 1947.  
YOUNG, JOHN, b. New York, 1870; d. New York, 1954.  
YOUNG, VICTOR, b. Bristol, Tenn., Apr. 8, 1889.  
ZENATELLO, GIOVANNI, b. Verona, Italy, Feb. 22, 1879; d. New York, Feb. 11, 1949.  
ZENTAY, MARY, b. Budapest, July 30, 1897; d. ab. 1922.  
ZEROLA, NICOLA, b. Naples, 1876; d. New York, July 21, 1937.  
ZIMBALIST, EFREM, b. Rostoff-on-Don, Russia, Apr. 9, 1889.  
ZOELLNER, JOSEPH, SR., b. Brooklyn, Feb. 2, 1862; d. Los Angeles, Jan. 24, 1950.

## ADDENDA

These names came to light after this directory was in page form. They are included here, so that the directory may be as nearly complete and accurate as possible, as of this date.

- AMATO, PASQUALE, b. Naples, Mar. 21, 1878; d. Jackson Heights, N. Y., Aug. 12, 1942.  
BERLINER, EMIL, b. Hanover, Germany, May 20, 1851; d. Washington Aug. 3, 1929.  
ROMAINE, MARGARET, b. Ogden, Utah, Sept. 23, 1892.  
SCOTTI, ANTONIO, b. Naples, Jan. 25, 1866; d. Naples, Feb. 26, 1936.



Many artists listed in the accompanying directory attended this banquet given by the old Victor Talking Machine Co. in Hotel Shelburne, Atlantic City, in June, 1917. Left to right: Josef Pasternak; Mrs. Fritz Kreisler; Mr. Kreisler; Marguerite Dunlap; Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley); Mrs. John S. Macdonald; Reinald Werrenath; Mrs. Giovanni Martinelli; Mr. Martinelli; Amelita Galli-Curci; Calvin Child; Louise Homer; an unidentified man; Olive Kline; John S. Macdonald (Harry Macdonough); a sister of Louise Homer; Marquis Luigi Curci; Mrs. Sam Rous; Giuseppe de Luca; Mrs. Pasternak; Mrs. De Luca.







WHERE IT ALL STARTED—If it had not been for Thomas A. Edison's invention of the phonograph, there would never have been a directory of recording artists. This scene was taken in the Edison National Memorial at West Orange, N. J., where the inventor's desk is on display. In the photo are Thomas J. Young, Jr., then a Shrine Potentate in Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Young; Mrs. George E. Stringfellow; and Mr. Stringfellow, who was Assistant Rabbon of the National Shrine. Mr. Stringfellow is an Edison employee.



Birthplace of the "Dean of Ballad Singers," Harry McClaskey, who, as Henry Burr, became the most popular of all pioneer recording tenors. He was born January 15, 1882, in this house on Armstrong St., in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada. The house is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Williams. The tenor, who died in 1941, also made records under the names of Irving Gillette, Harry McClaskey, Alfred Alexander, and Harry Haley.

—Photo by the Harvey Studios, St. Stephen, N. B., Canada

## CORRECTIONS

We list names on which we have made slight changes. (Some of the press run was already off when we discovered these corrections.) We are rerunning the items in question, just in case your listing does not show the changes.

DAWSON, PETER, b. Adelaide, South Australia, Jan. 31, 1882; d. Sydney, Aus., Sept. 27, 1961.

LAZZARI, CAROLINA, b. Milford, Mass., Dec. 26, 1891; d. 1946.

LYONS, DARIUS, b. St. Paul, Minn., ab. 1870; d. ?

McCLASKEY, HARRY—see Burr, Henry.

MURRAY, PETE, b. New York, Mar. 28, 1875; d. Dec. 29, 1941.

PORTER, STEVE, b. Buffalo, N. Y., 1864; d. New York, Jan. 13, 1936.

SASSOLI, ADA, b. Bologna, Sept. 25, 1887; d. Rome, Dec. 3, 1946.

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. my6637

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each.—Ric Verdi Antiques, 854 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. s12698

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

CYLINDER PHONOS. Concert, Grand, Triumphs, etc. Cylinder records, also 5" records. Reproducers, recorders, and parts. Many horns, large, small, flowered. Early Disc phonographs, Berliner, Zonophone, Victor, etc. German Disc music boxes. All items in perfect condition, from my collection. — Neumann, Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. d6867

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

ATTENTION! Antique cylinder & disc phonographs bought, sold, repaired. Repairs done on all makes & models, parts replaced, reproducers bought, sold, repaired. I will buy anything in this line. Large list of what I have for sale for stamp. Many rare and hard to find machines in stock. Almost everything in this line available. All machines and parts are perfect. No Junk. — Antique Phonograph Service, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Tel. 2-4985, Brewer, Maine. d38611

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3426

CYLINDER & DISC horn type phonographs, records, catalogs, horns, reproducers, roller organs, Hurdy Gurdys, player pianos bought, sold, exchanged, repaired. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond 31, Va. ja6468

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books. \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3694

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Peter Dawson

PART I

By JIM WALSH

**FOREWORD:** The most remarkable career in the history of sound recording has been ended by death. Peter Dawson died in Sydney, Australia, on September 27, 1961, at the age of 79, several months after this article had been completed and submitted to HOBBIES.

In order to avoid extensive rewriting and revision of proofs, I have decided to give this sorrowful information at the beginning of this book-length series, then to permit the monthly installments to appear with few, if any, changes from the way they were originally written. Thus, if anything in the biography gives the impression that Dawson is still alive, the reader will know that he died after the articles were written.

I should also mention that when the series was originally done, I did not know that Mrs. Dawson, whose maiden name was Annie Mortimer Noble, had died in 1953. The 1958 edition of the British "Who's Who" says Mr. and Mrs. Dawson were married in 1905.

If this date is correct, the marriage occurred after Dawson began making records in 1904, and some of his recollections about his wife having provided him with bus fare to the Edison Bell studios must be incorrect. I refer in the body of the biography to discrepancies in the singer's accounts of how his recording career began.

It is a source of grief to me that I shall not be able to have copies of HOBBIES containing this account of Dawson's remarkable career mailed to the great bass-baritone. But it is a pleasure to dedicate the series to my friend of long standing, Quentin Riggs, an Oklahoma City resident, who has been urging me for years to write about Dawson.

Quentin, who recently visited me after working two years for the U. S. State Department in Saudi Arabia, has now been transferred to Sydney, Australia, the city in which Peter Dawson died. Since Dawson ranked high among his favorite recording artists, Quentin had been looking forward with anticipatory happiness to meeting and talking with his idol. But "it was not so to be."

Even in far-off Australia, however, Quentin will read, and I hope, enjoy these articles.

Roger, Gray, Nipper, Petey, and Percy the Pitiful Persian, my cats, and I are looking forward to his next visit when he gets a leave of absence in 1963.

JIM WALSH, October 4, 1961

### I. Process of Incubation

In one of their unrefined but undeniably mirth-arousing recorded blackface comedy skits, Ernie Hare admonishes Al Bernard: "Never calculate upon your juvenile poultry before the proper process of incubation has been fully materialized."

Ernie's esoteric way of warning against counting your chickens before they are hatched reminds me that many novelists have said the physical labor of book writing is preceded by a period of incubation during which the author accumulates a stock of ideas and the shape

and substance of the book gradually take form.

My experience of producing these biographical sketches is like that of the novelists'. After toying, often for years with the thought that I should tell the life history of some pioneer recording artist, the time comes when a sardonically observant little man, with a voice of thunder, who seems to be crouching in the back of my head, commands: "Get busy and write about So-and-So!" Moralists, I believe, have given that imperious little man the name of Conscience.

Once the incubation period is "fully materialized," I can hardly wait to impose on my typewriter. So it is now with Peter Dawson. During all the 20 years I have been writing for HOBBIES I have felt I should tell the story of the great Australian bass-baritone.

Always, though, there had been a restraining belief that I didn't yet have sufficient information to do the subject justice. Then, after I had finally assembled enough material for a book, the sheer bulk of reference matter made me put off tackling the job.

But today, the Still, Small Voice is Shouting that the proper process of incubation has been fully materialized, and it is time to put on paper the life story of the man who has had the most remarkable of all recording careers.

I am tingling with that familiar urge to begin, and know I shall not return to normal until my "juvenile poultry" have left the incubator and the Peter Dawson chickens have

come home to roost. (As you will see later, Peter himself used to be a chicken fancier).

So now to the story of the cherished singer whose name is the same as that of a popular brand of Scotch whisky. As a lifelong total abstainer, I have not tasted Peter Dawson whisky or any other alcoholic beverage, and never knowingly shall, but I never tire of Dawson's records, which I'm sure stimulate me more wholesomely than any intoxicant could.

The Australian-born singer has long been one of my greatest admirations, as is proved by the fact that the full name of my beloved cat, Petey, is Peter Dawson Walsh. And I think a good argument could be presented that he has been the most important recording artist in the phonograph's 84-year history—not excluding Caruso or even Elvis Presley!

### II. Unique Career

Since Peter Dawson's records have had their chief sale in the British Empire, he obviously is not so well known in the United States as in his native Australia, or in England, which was his home during the most active part of his recording career.

The question may then arise, "Why write about him for predominantly American readers?" Even though some of his records, notably his Edison cylinders, had good sales on this side of the Atlantic.

That question is partly answered by the statement already made that Peter Dawson has had the most remarkable of recording careers. And the statement may be amplified by several quotations from *The Gramophone*, the English publication which, since 1923, has been at the head of all periodicals devoted to recorded music.

Take this, for instance, from the issue of December, 1947. I should explain that Dawson had returned to Australia in 1939 and during the following eight years, in which World War II had been fought and won, had not been heard on the concert stage in England:

"A most important issue marking the return of Peter Dawson, whom we have not heard since 1939. His gramophone career dates back to 1904 . . . and thereafter month by month he regaled us with that wonderful voice. Moreover, this is more than just a sentimental occasion. 'Fret-Foot' is in the style of the Barrack Room Ballads, and we know that the name McCall is only the disguise which veiled Mr. Dawson for so long as the composer of 'Boots.' This is a fine song about ships, while the reverse ('Walk Down the Road') can be taken as a sequel to Pat Thayer's 'I Travel the Road,' for so long a best-selling Dawson. . ."

In the March, 1949, *Gramophone*, "Oliver King" reviewed a Peter Dawson record with organ accompani-



A pretty Roanoke, Va., girl, Catherine Butler, laughingly admires the huge envelope in which the Peter Dawson Series was mailed to HOBBIES.

ment by Herbert Dawson, who presumably is no relation:

"Peter Dawson, grandest of the great concert singers of any period of recording, has done 'Wandering the King's Highway' in rousing style on H. M. V. B9739, with 'The Dreamer,' quite the opposite type, with fine organ accompaniment by Herbert Dawson. I've been listening to Peter Dawson's records from the earliest to the latest, and he remains top of the tree for sheer ease, fluency and perfection of diction. That is real achievement—and it has been so for 45 years."

Peter Dawson was a mere 67 when Oliver King (Brian Rust) penned those eulogistic lines!

A little more than a year later, in May, 1950, King wrote:

"On H. M. V. B9913, we find Peter Dawson, 69 this year and sounding as young as the best of them, in 'That Lucky Old Sun' and 'The Cry of the Wild Goose.' These would be good from anyone half Peter Dawson's age; from a man who was recording long before even some of today's 'veterans' were born, they are miraculous."

Moving up to comparatively recent times—March, 1956, we find W. A. Chislett saying:

"My last record must surely rank as one of the most remarkable of all time. When I first saw it I assumed it to be a dubbing; but nothing of the sort, it is a new recording—by Peter Dawson. I do not think that any other artist, singer or otherwise, has succeeded in spanning the whole gamut of record-making. My first Peter Dawson record was a cylinder. . . . He made 78 r.p.m. discs by the hundred both by the acoustic and electrical processes, and now we hear him on a microgroove 45EP, one side of which, 'Mandalay Scene,' was recorded binaurally and heard by visitors to the Radio Show last year. Unfortunately, this present disc offers us only monaural sound. The other song is 'Clancy of the Overflow.' . . . Mr. Dawson is still a model to other singers in the matter of

diction and many men young enough to be his grandsons might well try to emulate him in steadiness."

Peter Dawson was 74 when those complimentary lines saw print. In December, Chislett chose Dawson's record as one of the six most outstanding of the year, saying:

"I cannot omit Peter Dawson's historic H. M. V. 7EG8159. He is the only singer to have covered the whole gamut of recording, from cylinder to microgroove."

Present-day admirers of fine voices and impeccable singing who are unacquainted with what Dawson has done, should get H.M.V. long-playing record No. DLP1180, issued in 1958, which contains dubbings of his most popular 78 rpm discs, including the biggest seller of all, 'The Floral Dance.' Here is what Mr. Chislett said about it in the May, 1958, *Gramophone*:

"The dates of the original recordings of 10 songs by Peter Dawson, 'My Life of Song,' are not given, but they cover a pretty long period. They are uniformly well dubbed. Many to whom Peter Dawson is only a name and who are too young to have heard him in the flesh will, I hope, welcome this disc. No one has ever made more records than he did and no other singer has spanned the complete history of recording. His first records were two-minute cylinders and his most recent a stereo tape (as yet unissued.) His versatility is almost unique and the way his voice has lasted is a tribute to the soundness of his production. The titles are 'A Bachelor Gay,' 'The Cobbler's Song' from 'Chu Chin Chow,' 'In a Monastery Garden,' 'Phil the Fluter's Ball,' 'On the Road to Mandalay,' 'Waiaata Poi,' 'The Floral Dance,' 'The Mountains o' Mourne,' 'Waltzing Matilda,' and 'The Trumpeter.'"

Dawson, incidentally says he recorded "The Cobbler's Song," to meet

an emergency need, at 10 minutes notice. He was handed a copy of the sheet music, glanced at it, and 10 minutes later had made the record, which has always been considered one of his best. In sales it has ranked second only to "The Floral Dance."

Coming now to only the day before yesterday, we find this reference in the January, 1961, *Gramophone*:

"At the head of this month's vocal solos are two dubbings from 78's which will have nostalgic memories for many. Peter Dawson is unique. He is the only man, so far as I know, who has covered the whole gamut of recording from the two-minute cylinder to tape. In 'Peter Dawson Requests' on H. M. V. 7EG8623, he takes us back to the ballad, and when well sung on the right occasion how much better many of them are than is generally admitted today! The four requests are 'I Travel the Road' (recorded January, 1932), 'Old Father Thames' (March, 1933), 'The Smugglers' and 'Song and Boots' (July, 1929)."

In the February, 1961, issue, Edward Greenfield, commenting on Owen Brannigan's singing of two Handel arias, says:

"The semiquavers are appallingly difficult for a bass to articulate clearly, but, as it happened, I had Peter Dawson's old disc by me, and there you have an altogether different standard of precision, not to mention a superb top F at the end. This, and other Dawson/Handel performances, would make a fine LP reissue."

The February *Gramophone* is the latest I have received as this page is typed, but most likely March and succeeding issues will have other references to the stalwart bass-baritone, and there probably will be more reissues of his old records.

So now, I imagine, you understand why I consider it time well spent to write about Peter Dawson, even though, as far as I know, he never sang in the States or even visited our shores. He not only achieved the longest recording career of any artist, interrupted only by military service during World War I and a brief return to Australia at the War's end, but he was a consummate artist. (During his absence from England in the years 1939 to 1947 he did some recording for H.M.V.'s Australian branch).

It is a privilege to outline the story of such a distinguished artist and such an amazing career.

### III. Australian Boyhood—Arrival in London

Not many of the gifted men and women whom I have chronicled have written an autobiography, but Peter Dawson told his life story in a book, "Fifty Years of Song," published in England in 1951. I have found it a valuable source of information, but only a relatively small part of the total space is devoted to an account of his recording career.

So far as record making goes, my account will be more comprehensive than Dawson's own narration. I shall even at times correct erroneous statements he made, relying on his memory.



The Roanoke, Va., Times had this photo made for use with a feature story about Quentin Riggs (right), to whom the Peter Dawson Biography is dedicated. Jim Walsh, author of the series, and Riggs, are holding a copy of HOBBIES. The newspaper story told of how their friendship began through Riggs' fondness for Walsh's writings. Riggs, whose home is in Oklahoma City, is now working for the U. S. State Department in Sydney, Australia, where the late Peter Dawson lived before his death last September.

—Photo by Hank Daniel

But I wish to acknowledge with grateful thanks the help that "Fifty Years of Song," published by Hutchinson and Co., of London, at a price of 15 shillings (\$2.10) and presumably still in print, has been to me. I thank Quentin Riggs for my copy, which he sent to me when he was on military service abroad.

Peter Dawson, of Scotch descent, was born in Adelaide, South Australia, January 31, 1882. By a coincidence which I hadn't previously observed, I am typing the pages of this first installment on the night of January 31, 1961—the day on which the almost fabulous singer became 79 years of age.

Peter's father had been a sailor and was a strict disciplinarian of his five sons and four daughters. Peter was the youngest of the boys. On giving up the sea, the elder Dawson established an iron-working business in Adelaide. The firm is still in business, but now operates a canning factory in Sydney.

As a small boy, Peter played "The Blue Bells of Scotland" by ear on a violin at an East Adelaide public school entertainment. He gave what he says was an excruciating performance.

His mother he describes as a sweet singer of Scotch songs, and his talented sisters played, among them the violin, piano, and organ. The boy's first public appearance as a singer was made at the age of eight at a social given in the College Park Congregational Church at Adelaide. His sister Agnes played the accompaniment, but alas! little Peter, whose voice was later to captivate audiences totaling millions, forgot the words.

He did better in his teens. At 17 he joined the choir of St. Andrew's church and took lessons from the late C. J. Stephens. He was 19 when he won first prize for a bass solo at a competition held in Ballarat.

During this time he was working for his father and learning the plumbing business from 7:30 in the morning to 5 in the afternoon. The time from 6:30 to 7 a.m., with an hour in the evening, was reserved for singing practice.

After winning his Ballarat honors, Peter began to obtain occasional local concert engagements. Stephens then persuaded his father that the youth should go to England for training by Sir Charles Santley, a distinguished baritone whose early H. M. V. records (some with "ghost voices" at the end) are hard to find and prized by collectors.

Dawson's brother Jim agreed to go with him on what in those days seemed an endless trip, by boat, from Australia to England. No flying across that yawning Pacific void in a few hours at the turn of the century.

They had meant to go in 1901, but Peter caught typhoid fever and the trip wasn't made until a year later. The brothers left on the S. S. *Afric*, and Peter took a cabin trunk, which he made in 1900, and kept all

his life. They arrived in England on an important day in British history.

It was also an important day in Peter Dawson's life. He had no suspicion that within a mere two years he would become one of the most popular singers for a new-fangled squeaky toy, known as a phonograph when it played wax cylinders, and as a gramophone when it spun flat discs.

He didn't suspect, either, that already living in London was a charming young lady, Annette Noble, who had been growing into womanhood while he was leaving his boyhood behind in Australia, and that, even before he made his first record, "Nan" Noble would have become his wife.

Nan came from a gifted family. Her brother, Tom, was a recording expert, and her sister, Yolande, was a talented comedienne. Some of her Edison and Columbia records were sold in the States.

But when he first saw England at the age of 20, Peter Dawson wasn't thinking of either marriage or record making.

#### IV. Early Days in England

The Dawson brothers arrived in London on Derby Day as the British people were celebrating the end of the Boer War. They took lodgings in Kennington, on the main road to Epsom, the racing center, and Peter spent his first six months of London there.

Each week he paid seven shillings and sixpence (about \$1.88 in American money at the 1902 exchange rate) for a spotlessly clean bed-sitting room. The price included breakfast each morning and free use of the piano.

Hoping to make an imposing appearance when he called on Santley, Peter went to the Elephant and Castle and bought a tail coat, striped trousers, a braided waistcoat, a shining top hat, and a pair of tan shoes. The first song he sang for Santley, who was both impressed and astonished by his appearance, was "O Ruddier than the Cherry," from Handel's *Avis and Galatea*—



Peter Dawson as he looked almost 60 years ago.



Peter Dawson as a member of the Adelaide Choral Society, Christmas, 1901.

an air which he always liked to sing because he considered it his "lucky song."

Santley told him he had an excellent voice, but it would be some time before he could be accepted as a pupil. Sir Charles suggested that Peter study with F. L. Bamford, in Glasgow, Scotland, then return to him.

So the young basso went to stay with his uncle Captain James Dawson, owner of a fleet of sailing ships. His Glasgow cousins soon took him to a shop and had him buy everyday attire more in keeping with the dour Scotch environment.

Dawson describes Bamford as a fine teacher. After six months of hard study, which included opera, oratorio, and classic songs, he was ready to return to London and again seek Santley's aid. This time Sir Charles was ready to accept him, at a guinea (\$5.25) a week. He made excellent progress and Santley arranged for him to take part in a concert tour of the West of England in which Madame Emma Albani and Santley also participated.

Much of Dawson's spare time in London he spent at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. Most of these visits were made in company with a friend, Leonard Young, who was an enthusiast for fine music.

Although Dawson enjoyed the opera, it did not impress him as a way of life that he wanted to follow. He says it struck him as being, for most singers, too much work and too little pay. However, he did make some operatic appearances during his career, including one in *Die Meistersinger*, with an English cast and Hans Richter conducting. He was inclined to believe Charpentier's "Louise," was his favorite opera.



### V. Marriage—More Recitals and Concerts

After six months in Kennington, Peter Dawson moved to Ealing Common — and met his future wife. "Nan" was the daughter of Thomas J. Noble, Sr., for 25 years manager of the Alhambra Theater in Leicester Square. Then he operated the Ealing Theater under his own management, and Dawson met his daughter. They were married 18 months later.

Mrs. Dawson, like her sister, was an accomplished singer, with a fine soprano voice. She had sung, under the professional name of Annette George, in London and many of the large provincial towns. After the marriage she joined Peter in recitals throughout the British Empire.

Within a few years they had toured together in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India. Nan gave up professional singing in 1925 after being gravely injured in a motor car accident.

For a time after their marriage the young pair experienced hard times. Peter wasn't making a living by his concert work and his father insisted, after he had studied for two years, that he return home and go to work in the canning factory.

In the hope of making him come back to Australia, old Mr. Dawson reduced or stopped the allowance he had been sending his deep-voiced

son. But Nan insisted that Peter continue his musical career, and he kept on singing, even though money was slow coming in.

Dawson recalls he was paid seven shillings and sixpence (the same price he was charged a week for room and breakfast in Kennington) for his first appearance in England. He sang at a concert in a church in Burdett Road, Stepney, using such time-honored bass songs as "I Fear No foe," "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "The Bandolero," and "Long Ago in Alcala."

He was 22 when he made the series of public appearances, already mentioned, with Albani and Santley. Their first concert was given in the Guildhall at Plymouth, the town from which the Pilgrim Fath-

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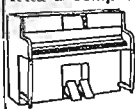
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J. E. Hough, "The Lancashire Laddie," who headed the Edison Bell Co., gave Peter Dawson his start as a recording artist.

ers had sailed nearly 300 years earlier for America.

The critics' reviews of the concert gave him encouragement. One, speaking of Dawson, said:

"The refreshing clearness of his diction, after so much incoherence from so many of today's singers, was most pleasing. This young man has a good future before him. His phrasing in the difficult 'Hybrias the Cretan' was a revelation in its perfection."

Although Dawson received only two guineas a concert, after having previously been paid seven guineas to sing at a musical event in Glasgow, he considered that the publicity and experience made up for the low pay. Later he sang for a good many musical societies at what were known as "smoking concerts," in which the nicotine-tainted atmosphere didn't help keep a singer's vocal chords at concert pitch. Santley advised him to accept the engagements for the sake of the money and experience, but not to smoke and drink with the audience.

Yet, judging from an interview with Dawson which W. S. Meadmore published in the September, 1935, *Gramophone*, Santley's practice didn't precisely accord with his preaching.

"Sometimes Santley would say: 'What are you doing tonight?' and invite me to dinner. Afterwards he would pass me his fierce black Spanish cigars. It took a strong stomach to tackle one of them! But I could smoke anything in those days. Until I was married I used to puff away at coarse Irish twist, but my wife could not endure the smell of it in the house. So Irish twist had to go."

Later, Dawson smoked little, if at all, and in the matter of alcohol he was virtually a tee-totaler.

Meadmore's article contains some interesting reminiscences of Daw-

son's early days from which I extract:

"We stood in his sitting room, looking into a garden jolly with summer flowers and beautifully kept. Erect in every border, like a regiment of soldiers, were rugosa standards, victims of Peter Dawson's passion for budding roses. He is an ardent gardener. But then he is ardent about most things he does. And skillful! Painting, for example. There is something more than the amateur in his oils—mostly landscapes—and there was a little piece of a tree against a wall that it would have given me great pleasure to hang on one of my walls."

"In those (Australian) days," he said, "I was a master plumber—had a certificate for it. Also I was a lead worker, a gas fitter, a champion swimmer—I won a five mile race for boys under 16—I could drive a steam-roller or a steam-engine or any make of car, and I was a horse breaker. I loved horses and have missed them since I left Australia. When I was a boy I milked six cows every morning, and I could make butter, plow and scythe. But when I was a boy my great enthusiasm was for boxing; my ambition was to be a prize fighter. My brother, a well-known Australian boxer, gave me my first lessons, and the old-time fighter, Jack Evans, polished me up. When I was 19 I won the amateur boxing championship of Adelaide."

"The South African war had just come to its long-drawn-out end; peace had been declared the very day on which I arrived in London. I walked out of Fenchurch Street Station in all the glory of a top-hat worn for the first time, but had not got many yards before it was snatched from my head and thrown high in the air. I never saw it again. Men and women were dancing in the street; most of that night I was turning the handle of a barrel organ."

"In 1926, Dixon Rider, the Canadian singer, said to me that it was about time I did something worthy of my voice—I should give a series of West End song recitals. So for three years I studied German lieder with him. When I thought I was ready I gave four recitals at the Wigmore Hall and a further four at the Aeolian. Of course I lost money on the venture, but it was worth it. I'd rather sing those songs than any other, and I enjoyed those recitals immensely. When in 1931 I was touring Australia with Mark Hambourg, it was obvious I could not sing tripe while he was playing classical music, and I venture to think that the songs I did sing during that trip would have been worthy of any singer."

"I've sung in oratorio, opera, at concerts, and in the music halls. To say nothing of making gramophone records"

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"One trip to Australia, on a P. & O. liner, the purser came up to me and said, 'Suite all right, Mr. Dawson?' Fine, I said. 'Got something much better for you.' He showed me a most palatial suite, and I changed over. A few days later he remarked: 'Do you know, Mr. Dawson, we sell more of your whisky up and down the line than any other brand.' When I told him I was only Dawson the singer and not the Dawson of whisky fame, his face was like the fire-proof curtain coming down at a theater!"

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## VI. The Turning Point

While Peter's career was still uncertain, a Russian singing specialist, Professor Kantorez, told the young basso he could teach him how to extend his voice. Dawson placed himself under the professor's guidance, and Kantorez changed him from a basso profundo into a bass-baritone, able to sing four notes higher than he had ever before accomplished.

Kantorez insisted he could give the youngster a still greater range and turn him into "the finest tenor of the age," but Dawson refused, fearing that if he became a tenor he would lose his middle register. However, he said he would always be grateful to the Russian who assured him at parting he was so well trained in voice production techniques that he would still be singing well at 90. "For those interested," Dawson writes in 'Fifty Years of Song,' "my range is Eb to top A. Before the Kantorez episode it was Eb to D."

The turning point in the singer's career came when his father had stopped his allowance and he was without money. Then he received a visit from a man whom he describes as "a charming bearded gentleman"—James E. Hough, managing director of the Edison Bell Phonograph Co.

Mr. Hough asked Dawson to come to the Edison Bell studios in the Euston Buildings in Northwest Lon-

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

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don and take a voice test. In his most impressive graveyard tones, the 22-year-old basso agreed and sped home, he says in his book, to tell the glad tidings to Nan.

Meadmore's previously quoted article in *The Gramophone*, however, has him saying: "I married, on nothing, Annette George, a soprano with a lovely voice who sang in musical comedy and pantomime. We spent our honeymoon at Brighton on five pounds presented to me by my father-in-law. It was a week-end honeymoon, for I was married on a Saturday; on the Monday I was back in town recording for Edison Bell."

Dawson's own account, we may assume, should be more reliable than what Meadmore recollected his saying in the interview. At any rate, Peter relates, he discovered next morning he didn't have enough money to pay his fare to the Edison Bell headquarters!

(To be continued)

### CORRECTIONS IN BIRTHS AND DEATHS DIRECTORY

Despite the most painstaking efforts of the HOBBIES editorial staff and myself, a few errors slipped into the December article giving the birth and death dates of pioneer recording artists.

The worst, perhaps, was printing Jules Levy's birth year as 1858 when it should have been 1838. Marie Dressler's first name was given as Maria; Marguerita Sylva became Marguerite; Darius Lyons was called Daius, and in one place New Orleans was spelled New Orelans. If there were any others, I haven't caught them, and, after all, this wasn't many for such a long list.

—Jim Walsh

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 29)

oletto' at the Metropolitan and Proves Himself a First-Rate Artist: The woeful scarcity of good operatic tenors makes the advent of every new one an event of especial importance. For this reason the performance of 'Rigoletto' on Friday evening of last week is worthy of more than passing mention.

"It introduced to the American audiences the Russian tenor, Smirnov, who, as MUSICAL AMERICA readers will remember has already a firmly grounded reputation in Europe. That he is going to set this city agog cannot yet be asserted with the utmost degree of definiteness, but, on the other hand, he will undoubtedly prove the most serviceable lyric tenor the Metropolitan has possessed since the departure of Bonci from that institution. There was a good-sized audience to receive him and he had every reason to be satisfied with the amount of applause that rewarded the results of his efforts in the role of the Duke.

"Mr. Smirnov is in many respects a first-rate artist. His voice is of lyrical sweetness and is smooth and even in quality. His phrasing is admirable and his breath control astonishing. Few tenors of late years have been gifted with such a capacious pair of lungs, and it is with the most consummate ease that the singer is able to sustain phrases of almost unbelievable length. His desire to put this facility to the utmost use results at times in the practice of prolonging high notes far beyond their written value. His intonation was almost constantly true, and he is fully alive to the value of dynamic shading.

"There is one matter, however, which needs correction in Mr. Smirnov's work. He is addicted to the use of the effeminate 'white voice,' a thing which is doubly unpleasant coming from an individual of such manly and handsome presence and bearing. Musical taste in this country is strongly opposed to this vocal quality."

A great deal more remains to be told about this celebrated artist of Old Russia; the story of his life and career, and perhaps some anecdotes. But these will be in my review of another Smirnov LP which,

I understand, is coming out in the near future.

Meanwhile, here are the correct dates of his birth and death, which I got from his widow, whom I had the pleasure of meeting recently. Dmitri Alekseyevitch Smirnov was born in Moscow in 1882. The charming lady could not recall the full date: "It was so long ago," she said.

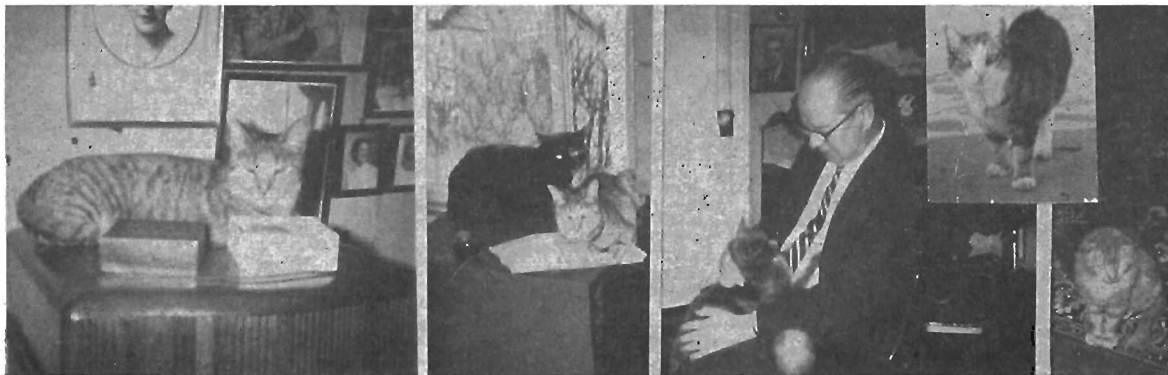
As to his demise—the whole city of Riga, where the famous tenor was deeply admired to the end of his long and colorful artistic life, mourned him on April 27, 1944. And with his passing, another star ceased to brighten the operatic constellation of the Golden Age.

### LIGHTNER MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTED

"The Houghton Line," well-edited and most interesting organ of the E. F. Houghton & Company, Philadelphia, Pa., frequently espouses the cause of hobbies. In the June issue, 1961, Douglas C. Miner of the staff of The Houghton Line reported on his visit to the Lightner Museum of Hobbies, St. Augustine, Fla. Mr. Miner commented: "If you do not have a hobby when you go in, you will get an idea for one before you come out. Two floors of a big Spanish architecture building house everything from buttons to mustache cups, umbrellas, match clips, coins, stamps, phonographs, automobiles, dishes and what have you. Some 50,000 tourists visit the museum yearly. Its management is under a Board of Trustees which includes prominent citizens and city officials interested in history, of which St. Augustine has plenty."

## ONCE MORE

### A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year TO THE GREAT BIG HOBBIES FAMILY



NIPPER, lying on a Pathe phonograph made in France, is taking care to leave an open box of candy for Santa Claus.

Here Nipper is joined by his brunette hero, ROGER. Nips is sitting on a letter they have written to Santa. They have just turned from peering wistfully into the snow-clad outdoors for a glimpse of St. Nick.

Judging by his loving, almost worshipful, expression, PETEY thinks his record collector friend, Albert Via, of South Boston, Va., is Santa in disguise.

Sweet-faced GRAY is keeping a bright look-out for the red-clad old gentleman with the big bag of presents for good cats. Gray is good the year around — Not just at Christmas time.

PERCY, the Pitiful Persian, was crippled, nameless, homeless and friendless, until he timidly came up the hill during last winter's cold, snowy weather. For weeks he hid beneath the porch at 225 North Maple St., Vinton, Va. Now he's one of the family and for the first time in his life expects Santa to leave something for him.

From Roger, Gray, Nipper, Petey and Jim Walsh — and, for the first time, from Percy, the Pitiful Persian. (P.S. Aroma, the Friendly Polecat, and Mike and Ike, the portly 'possums, who live harmoniously together somewhere beneath the house, extend their greetings, too.)



# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Peter Dawson

PART II

By JIM WALSH



### I. At Edison Bell

Nan Dawson saved her aspiring but penniless husband from calamity when he ruefully told her he had an invitation to make test recordings for Edison Bell but didn't have the money to pay his fare to Mr. Hough's London studios.

The young wife remembered she had played the Fairy Queen in a pantomime a year or so previously, and had used pennies to keep her long silk hose attached to the bottom of the Queen's corsage. Inside her trunk she found six pennies twisted into the top of the stockings. Those pennies paid her husband's way to Edisonia.

The first song Dawson sang into what he called "the little funnel" was "Long Ago in Alcalá." He said he could never forget the shock as someone laid a hand on his shoulder and pushed him closer to, or farther from the horn. And he said the experience of hearing the playback remained vivid all his life.

Edison Bell's musical director, Edward Hesse, told him afterwards his face was a study; that he sat open-mouthed and astonished as the record started, but showed clearly before it ended that he thought he was listening to good singing.

The Edison Bell recording expert, Russell Hunting, was an American whose life story was told in *HOBBIES* from November, 1944, through February, 1945. Hunting told Hough that Dawson's voice was "too powerful and very difficult to record" without blasting. Hough replied it could be properly recorded by using a less sensitive diaphragm. He asked Dawson to return for another trial.

As Dawson left the office he heard Hough say to Hesse: "I think his voice is a winner." (Edison Bell later made a disc record called the Winner).

Dawson walked the eight miles to Ealing, impatient to relate the morning's happenings to Annette. I like to imagine him striding briskly along, meditating on the possibilities of becoming regularly employed as a recording artist.

On Peter's next visit, Hunting brought out a different recording horn and made him sing the entire

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

song, so he would know where the heavy notes that caused blast might occur. While the test record was being made Hunting himself stood beside Dawson and pushed him back and forth as the nature of the music indicated.

This time there was virtually no playback blast. And Peter gave a long breath of relief when Hunting said, "Yeah, that's it." Then, in a louder tone: "You've got a darned good voice."

The record which had just been made was not intended for sale. Hesse decided Dawson's first commercial cylinder should be "Navajo," a combination Indian-Negro song contrived by two Americans, Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne. A year later they were to write possibly the greatest song hit of all time, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," which Dawson recorded for Edison Bell.

Hunting maintained Dawson's name must be changed for record use. He doesn't seem to have mentioned the possibility of the basso's becoming confused with the purveyor of Peter Dawson whisky, but he said something about it being too common a name in the States and insisted a given name other than Peter was necessary. So it was decided to borrow the first name of Dawson's music-loving friend, Leonard Young, and Dawson's fledgling records came out as by Leonard Dawson.

Before long, however, Hough insisted that since Dawson was becoming well-known as a concert artist it was bad business not to use his real name. So Leonard Dawson was retired in favor of Peter. The singer said he could still recall the thrill he felt when Harry Bluff, a comedian who served as Edison Bell announcer, intoned: "The Bandolero," sung by Peter Dawson. Edison Bell record!

At first Dawson was paid five shillings a round—slightly more than American companies ordinarily had paid beginning recorders. Edison Bell apparently had not begun making cylinders by the moulded process in 1904, for Dawson said he had to sing songs over and over to make the masters from which duplicated copies were supplied.

When Billy Williams' first comedy record for Edison, "John, John, Put Your Trousers On," swept England like an epidemic, Dawson was engaged, under the name of Hector Grant, to sing it for Edison Bell. For five consecutive days he started singing about "John" at 10 a.m., kept it up until 1 p.m., had lunch, started again at 2:15 and worked through until 5.

For this he received 75 golden sovereigns, worth almost \$400 by the values of those days and between \$1,500 and \$2,000 today. When he

Hector Grant, alias Peter Dawson, as a Scottish comedian in 1906.

reached home he told Nan he was a "budding Rockefeller" and dumped the money down on a table.

They both were very happy. And the next day, this was early in 1907, they went to an auction sale and bought the first furniture they could call their own—a bed, wardrobe, washstand, and dressing table, which cost a grand total of \$50.

Peter must have had a good time during his tyro recording for Edison Bell. Mr. Hough's hired help were a colorful crew whose idiosyncrasies provided ample scope for Dawson's good-naturedly satirical drawings that soon covered the studio walls.

Among them were Ernest Pike, a robust-voiced tenor whose father was the baker at the Royal Family's Sandringham palace. Perhaps because of his father's influence, Pike sang on a number of occasions before King Edward and the other members of the Family. The honor went somewhat to Pike's head, much to the delight of Dawson, who became Pike's recording partner and sang hundreds of duets with him. We shall hear more of Ernest Pike, who died in 1936.

Another Edison-Bell artist, whom Dawson probably knew, was Pipe-Major Henry Forsyth, bagpipe player for the King. A photo taken about the time Dawson's recording career began shows Forsyth striding along, sounding his pipes, followed by the four children of the Prince of Wales, who became King George V.

Two future kings are in the picture—Edward, now the Duke of Windsor, and George, destined to be loved as George VI. Princess Mary, and Henry, Duke of Gloucester, also are there.

Then there was Dawson's fellow Australian, Albert Whelan, the music hall comedian who was one of the first performers to record excerpts from Dickens' books. Whelan always appeared on the stage in

evening attire, and began and closed his act by whistling "The Jolly Fellows Waltz." Some of his records began and ended the same way.

Around 1905, English Columbia used the slogan, "There's Talent In Every Columbia Record," and their advertisements showed Whelan's face, wearing a broad grin, peering from the top of a Columbia cylinder record box. Whelan continued active in music hall and vaudeville until well into his 80's, although he lost a leg in his later years.

He died in London Sunday, February 20, 1961, aged 85. His fellow Australian, Percy Grainger, the noted pianist and composer, died in New York the following day.

Surely it was fun to be young, making a good living. And to know and play pranks on Pike, Whelan, Harry Bluff, Stanley Kirkby, and the other once-famous artists who performed for Edison Bell.

## II. Edison and Other Recordings

I learned long ago most performers are less than 100 per cent accurate when they try to recollect details of their recording careers. Hence it is no wonder that Peter Dawson, though undoubtedly meaning to set down everything just as it happened, not infrequently mixed up dates and other things after relating his first experiences recording for Edison Bell.

Of course, the reader may take the attitude the Negro preacher adopted concerning Robert G. Ingersoll's lecture, "Some Mistakes of Moses:" "All I got to say is, Moses was there when it happened but Mr. Ingersoll wasn't."

It may be argued that Peter Dawson was bound to know more about when, where, and how he made his records than a man living in Vir-

ginia, who has never been to England, or seen the inside of a British recording studio. But such an argument would be misleading, for it

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Top—left

Peter Dawson around 1904, when his career was just beginning and he was recording as "Leonard Dawson."



Top—right

Sir Louis Sterling, who became the head of the great EMI recorded music "combine" in Great Britain, was one of Peter Dawson's employers in the early days of the great bass-baritone's phonograph career.

is possible to trace Dawson's recording career through the *Talking Machine News* and other periodicals and find out where his recollections varied from the published facts.

In correcting any unintentional misstatements by Mr. Dawson, I shall not do so in a critical spirit, since he was one of my greatest musical admirations, but in the cause of historical accuracy.

The basso said he began making records for Edison and other companies about the time he sang all those Edison Bell cylinders of "John, John, Put Your Trousers On," but he had been doing so for sometime before.

At the Edison studios he met a young Irish tenor, who was just beginning a career as a professional singer and who told Peter he wasn't charging enough for his recording services. The tenor, who wasn't paid much for his first records, either, was John McCormack.

Concerning the Edison cylinders, Dawson commented:

"The Edison records sold at a higher price than the others, and they were worth the price. They did not alter their price, when, about this time, another company started making a record which they put on sale for ninepence! That was threepence cheaper than the Edison Bell, and sixpence less than the Edison. . . .

"The Edison Company . . . asked me to sing for them exclusively, and put my fee up to three guineas minimum. The Thomas Edison Company was far more advanced technically in their recording, and took infinitely more pains in securing the best combination of recording diaphragm and funnel for different voices. Only when

the best result was found in various tests did they start to make the master records."

Those who know the legendary slave-driving methods of Edison's American recording technicians will smile sympathetically at that statement. Both here and abroad Edison spared no pains to get the best possible results, even though the artists might be exhausted before the actual recording began.

Musical purists will exclaim with some justice that it's a pity the Edison people were not as careful in their choice of the material they recorded as they were in making sure that whatever was recorded came out right. Dawson's fee of three guineas seems small, since most Edison artists of that period in the States were paid \$40 a recording.

Dawson went on to say that the Sterling Record Company was the one which introduced the ninepence record, and mentioned that the firm was headed by Louis Sterling. He did not refer to Russell Hunting's partnership with Sterling. The firm at first was known as the Russell Hunting Record Co., and made Sterling records. Later it was called Sterling & Hunting.

Dawson described Louis Sterling, who grew up on New York's East Side and was of Russian immigrant Jewish parentage, as "a short, dark, rather small man with an American accent, who at first sight did not impress me as a man capable of fighting companies like the two I have mentioned"—Edison and Edison Bell. But, Dawson said, as he grew to know Sterling better he appreciated the drive, determination, and strong personality hidden behind his frail physique. Dawson said Sterling failed to make a success of his cylinder record because the cylinder was on its way out and was being supplanted by the disc.

Many years later, because of his services to the Empire, plain Louis Sterling became Sir Louis Sterling

and was many times a millionaire, despite having given huge sums to charity, when he died in London June 3, 1958, at the age of 79. Long before that time he had become head of the English Columbia Co. and, much later, of E.M.I., the "combine" which makes H.M.V., Columbia, Parlophone and Regal-Zone phone records for sale throughout the British Empire.

Dawson said that the temporary success of Sterling in bringing out a record for ninepence caused Edison to offer him the exclusive contract which he accepted.

Dawson's next step forward, he said, was in making disc records for two American brothers, Fred and Will Gaisberg, who had come to England as recording experts for His Master's Voice. Meanwhile, he had recorded for a few other companies, including Nicole.

Their recording expert was Arthur Brooks, "who shortly afterwards became the chief recording manager for the powerful Columbia Company. . . . The manager of the Columbia was the little American who had tried to revivify cylinder records by selling them at ninepence each—Louis Sterling."

Dawson said the Gaisbergs persuaded him to sign an exclusive H.M.V. contract in 1906, for a minimum of 25 pounds (\$125) a year. It seems incredible that the young singer would accept a contract with such a paltry guarantee even though H.M.V. paid him, he said, 72 pounds that year.

After all, he made a little more than 72 pounds in five days, singing "John, John" for Edison Bell! But he said, the 72 pounds seemed to him like "a lot of money," and he considered it merely a supplement to concert work. The "John, John" singing was done after the supposedly exclusive H.M.V. contract was signed.

Terming that first one-year contract the first of many with H.M.V., Dawson said he had not sung for any other company since 1906. By 1908, he added H.M.V. was beginning to advertise his records in a fairly big way, and by 1909 he was receiving letters from his native Australia telling him his cylinders and discs were highly popular there.

"I did not realize," he said, "that my records had been 'hailed' in the Australian press, and that I was being acclaimed a star in my own country until I arrived there for my first return visit with Amy Castle's company. . . . The contract I made with H.M.V. was for one pound and one shilling for each solo; 10 shillings, sixpence for each duet or quartet."

Again one wonders: Why did Peter sign an "exclusive" contract for one-third of what Edison would pay him. It seems, according to some accounts, that H.M.V. offered to give him his choice of a flat rate per record, or a shilling royalty on the

sale of each, and, with what hindsight now makes appear poor judgment, he settled for the flat fee. But how was a striving young singer to know his records would become so popular?

### III. Corrections and Emendations

Mr. Dawson was mistaken when he said Edison never reduced the price of its cylinders from a shilling and sixpence to exactly a shilling. True, Edison had sued the *Talking Machine News* for hinting, without saying so outright, that the price of its records was coming down, but that price was cut to a shilling on July 1, 1907.

Sterling did not introduce the ninepenny cylinder. As long as the Sterling record was made, its price was a shilling. In December, 1905, for instance, the makers advertised:

"We take this method of assuring dealers in Sterling records that there will be no change in price. . . . When the Sterling records were first introduced to the British public they were at once recognized as THE BEST SHILLING RECORD ON THE MARKET."

The Sterling business grew steadily until Edison cut prices. Then they were unable to compete on equal terms with Edison's higher quality. The Edison price reduction, not any triumphant sweep of the disc, bankrupted the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd.

The Star record, made by the Phonograph Exchange Co., of Norwich, appears to have been the first cylinder offered for ninepence, as early as 1904. It is suspected of having been dubbed from Edison and other well-known brands.

The first important manufacturer to cut the price of two-minute cylinders to ninepence was Pathé, which did so on most of its catalog in July, 1906, but left cylinders by Caruso, Lauder, and other celebrities at a shilling. Pathé was then about to begin making discs and soon abandoned the cylinder trade in England.

An effort also was made to market for ninepence the Rex cylinder, which had been made by the company that turned out Lambert Indestructibles. On October 1, 1907, Edison Bell announced dealers would allow threepence for each old record turned in on the purchase of a new one. That in effect brought the price down to ninepence.

On October 15, the Premier Co. advertised the new Clarion cylinder at that low price, and Edison Bell followed suit on November 15. In April, 1908, Edison Bell announced a New Process improved cylinder that would sell for a shilling, but Mr. Hough's firm soon afterward began concentrating on making discs and virtually gave up the "rollers."

Despite all the price cuts, and Sterling and Hunting's having gone bankrupt, superior quality caused nearly all the remaining cylinder business to go to the Edison shilling record, especially after the 4-

minute Amberol was introduced late in 1908.

The first mention I find of a Dawson record for any company is in the September, 1904, *Talking Machine News*. Old Mr. Hough had a quaint custom of devoting a full page ad to "Up-to-Date Dealers' Criticisms," in which he honestly quoted unfavorable, as well as commendatory, pronouncements on Edison Bell records.

A dealer in Reading, England, said:

"Mr. Leonard Dawson sings 'To My First Love' with feeling and expression and not, as some of the Yankee artists sing records, which sounds to me like 'sawing wood.' His is a pleasing voice and he is certainly an addition to your clever staff."

I have been unable to find a reference at this period to a "Leonard" Dawson record of "Navajo," which our hero said is the first song he recorded for Hough's company.

In October, 1904, Hough quoted an unfavorable comment:

"One most respected dealer condemns No. 6384, 'because he cannot sing.' Poor Leonard Dawson! . . . This artist has had the honor of singing twice within the last few weeks at the Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts."

A Dawson record of "Navajo" does, however, pop up in the Gramophone (H.M.V.) list for October, 1904. It was 7-inch, single-faced, No. 2-2479. And it is plainly listed as by Peter Dawson, while Edison Bell was still calling him Leonard. Obviously, then, Dawson began making H.M.V. disc records almost as soon as he started doing cylinders for Edison Bell, instead of beginning his disc career considerably later, as he seemed to think.

Almost certainly, the Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd., as it was known in those days, was the first disc company for which Dawson made records. It is equally obvious that his Gramophone work began well-nigh concurrently with his first singing for Edison Bell.

Russell Hunting, in fact, who was soon to leave Edison Bell to become



Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dawson with Niedzielsky during South African tour, 1935.

the head of the Russell Hunting Record Co., "tipped" Fred Gaisberg that Dawson was a singer of exceptional promise. That led to Dawson's making his first discs. Apparently, he also recorded for Nicole at about the same time, but that firm went out of business shortly afterwards.

Louis Sterling certainly was not with Columbia at the time Dawson sang for the semi-flexible Nicole discs. Sterling was at that time manager of the British Zonophone Co., which was shortly afterwards acquired by Gramophone. He was to

Pipe-Major Henry Forsyth was a popular Edison Bell artist when Peter Dawson began making records. Here the official piper to the King of England is leading a "march" of the children of King George V and Queen Mary.

—Nash Photo





be a partner in the Russell Hunting Co. and afterwards to bring out Rena discs, pressed from Columbia masters, before consolidating Rena with Columbia and rising to the top among Columbia's executives.

Dawson's memory deceived him when he said he made no records for any company other than H. M. V. (Gramophone) from the time he signed a contract in 1906. Of course, he may not have included his Zonophone discs, since they were controlled by H. M. V., but what of his many cylinders for Edison and other companies? Actually, he made Edison records as long as the company maintained an English recording laboratory. He could not have made his many four-minute Amberols, which were not introduced until late 1908, if he had been exclusive to H. M. V. since 1906.

Conceivably, he meant he was exclusive to discs, but H. M. V. let him go on making cylinders, which were not considered strong competition. Under a similar arrangement, Billy Murray was exclusive in this country to Victor (and Zonophone) discs, but had a joint contract that permitted him to sing for Edison cylinders.

The first Edison—don't confuse them with Edison Bell!—cylinders I have seen mentioned by Peter Dawson came out in January, 1906. They were the Scotch comic song, "Foo the Noo" (13396), sung by Dawson under the name of Hector Grant and described by the Talking Machine News as "suggestive of Harry Lauder at his best," and 13383, of which the T.M.N. said, "Peter Dawson's deep bass voice is heard to advantage in 'Tomorrow Will Be Friday.'"

If Dawson did sign an exclusive cylinder contract with Edison, it must have been in effect only a short time for he made records during the next few years for nearly all the English cylinder manufacturers. Many of them appeared for several years after 1906. Almost the only prominent company operating in England before 1910, for which he seems not to have recorded, was Columbia.

#### IV. The Advent of Hector Grant

In 1906, Dawson said, he realized he had to find some means of supplementing his income during the summer months when he had virtually no concert work. So he became an imitator of Harry Lauder, who then was rising to the height of his acclaim as one of the most popular music hall comedians in British history.

As Dawson recalled it, he was in the Gramophone Co. studios one day when he gave an imitation of Lauder singing "I Love a Lassie." Fred Gaisberg asked him if he could sing more songs in Scottish dialect. Amused, Dawson replied that he was Scotch by descent and that he could sing any Scot's song with the correct accent.

A little later, according to Dawson's recollection, Gaisberg asked him if he would like to record some of Lauder's songs under an assumed name for the Zon-o-phone label.

After being assured that nobody would suspect from the sound of the record that the singer was Peter Dawson, he agreed, and decided to use the alias of Hector Grant for the Lauder impersonations.

The sale of the Scotch records was so great that he even wrote some songs of his own (among them, "Lassie, Dinna Sigh for Me," which he recorded as the mysterious Mr. Grant. It had a bigger sale than any of the Lauder songs he recorded.

Then our versatile friend Peter got the bright idea of making some money by appearing in the music halls as the Scotch comedian, "Hector Grant." He decided that if he wore a wig, false side whiskers, and bushy eyebrows, and spoke, and sang with a thick Scotch accent no one would ken he was Peter Dawson.

His father-in-law arranged an audition for him with Frank Allen, operator of the Oxford Music Hall. Dawson told Allen he had come down from Scotland for the audition, and that statement wasn't questioned. After he had sung "Lassie" at 11 o'clock he was told to be on hand, made up, to go on the stage at 4 o'clock that afternoon.

His "turn" was a great success. He sang at both the Oxford and Canterbury music halls and then was engaged at the Coliseum in Glasgow at \$75 per week.

When the 12-weeks tour was concluded, Allen offered him a contract for 48 weeks at \$125 per week, then, being told the offer couldn't be accepted, raised it to \$200. Peter had to explain that he had only been "putting on an act," that his name was really Peter Dawson, that he had ambitions for a career as a concert singer and felt he could not have that career if he kept doing music hall work.

Allen replied that his offer would still hold good in the future if the basso-comedian changed his mind. Almost a quarter of a century later, in 1930, he had another successful round of music hall engagements—but not as Hector Grant.

Pete, however, was not yet done with Grant. The Gramophone Co. asked him to make a short tour with some other recording artists. During the first half of the program he was to appear as Peter Dawson and in the second half as Hector Grant. He did, and apparently no

(Continued on page 56)

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EARLY COLUMBIA Graphophone and parts catalog, circa 1905, 40 pages of cylinder, coin-slot and early disc Graphophones. Well illustrated with pictures, machines, parts, supplies and with prices. This will help to identify many of the early machines. Reprinted from the original that I have. Well printed on book grade paper with clear pictures. Postpaid \$2. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap34201

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WANTED: Excelsior, Eclipse, Bijou & other Edison cylinder phonographs, reproducers, parts. — W. Miller, 1017 Westgate Road, Troy, Ohio. mh3272

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

teachers. Neither did the American *prima donna* tell of the following interesting incident quoted by Mr. Eby:

"What might have been one of the best records of my career was one I never made. Alma Gluck and I were to record the Letter Duet from 'Le Nozze;' the date and hour were set; we had rehearsed and felt we would be successful. Then Zimmie (Efrem Zimbalist, the violinist, and Gluck's husband) decided since Alma had previously recorded it with Marcella Sembrich, we would be unfair to rival the version with the elder soprano. We never made that record and I, for one, was disappointed."

True, Gluck did make *Che soave Zeffiretto* with Sembrich (after Eames?!), but the disc remained unpublished. Just the same, it is a pity that "Zimmie" prevented the two sopranos from carrying out their plan. Knowing how they both sang, the loss is indeed to be sincerely deplored.

An odd comment caught my eye in the Ponselle chapter:

"Many record collectors have wondered why there are no recordings of Ponselle and Caruso."

It's difficult to conceive there may be people interested in operatic records who don't know that Caruso died in 1921, and Ponselle didn't start recording for Victor until December, 1923. But reading on about Rosa, we learn that she, like the rest of us mortals, has problems on her hands:

"Servants are a major one. She does not keep them long, probably underpays them, at times demands too much, and at other times spoils them with expansive praise and liberties. She claims they steal from her, abuse her good nature and gossip about her and her activities."

I should have that kind of troubles! As to the latter complaint—it brings out the delicate matter of gossiping. When done in private, I myself am not averse to lending a willing ear.

But to me, "tongue-wagging" is never important enough to be reported in print, at least while the subject of criticism is alive and may be hurt by the reference. Some performers condone daring publicity about their lives, but the majority prefer to keep the intimate details to themselves.

Should my own book ever become a reality, I'll diligently sit up nights proof-reading the copy. But if, after my screening out all the errors, the printer still fluffs—so help me, I'll molder de bum! Among the bobbles, here, I loved the one about Rosa who, like poor me, is constantly fighting the battle of the bulge:

"One thrilling descending glissando or a mellifluous octave indicates that Rosa—the ever-present turning fork in hand—is somewhere in the vicinity.

That's a way to reduce? Undoubtedly the author meant *tuning fork*. Oh yes, the name of De Luca's second wife (in the photo) was Giulia, not Eva. Then, there are the misspelled Italian names and titles, in addition to the questionable grammar in "Rondo alla Vellutato" and "Tempo di Furioso." But cheer up, I have yet to come upon a book free of mistakes, and surely it would be presumptuous to hope that mine will be an exception.

What with all the literature about singers, it has become increasingly trying to write about them without incurring the risk of being repetitious. With fresh material on hand, and by touching up the old with his verby, informal style, Mr. Eby has succeeded in presenting his favorite stars in a new light, and with added appeal to the reader.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

one ever suspected Dawson and Grant were the same man.

I have read stories saying Lauder was furious at having his entire phonograph repertoire duplicated by the elusive Hector Grant and swore to kill him if he ever found out who he was. A variant has him meeting Dawson, expressing his hatred for Grant, announcing his intention of having Hector's heart's blood and receiving Peter's crocodile sympathy.

I have also read Lauder discovered Dawson was the mysterious record maker and on meeting him growled: "So ye're the so-and-so that's been imitating my records? Well, I'll say one thing for ye—ye have a dom'd fine voice."

Dawson's version was different. He said Lauder was always an artist whom he especially admired and that he happened to be making an H. M. V. record on a day when Harry was also present. It must have been in 1920, for the popular Scotch comedian mentioned to him the occasion was his 50th birthday. Suddenly he asked Fred Gaisberg: "Did ye no ken a chap by the name of Hector Grant? He had a grrrand voice. He must have been killed in the war."

Fred grinned and said: "Didn't you know, Harry, that Hector Grant was Peter?"

Harry shot back: "Nah, nah, ye canna tell me that. I saw him in Glasgie. Yon was a much older man. And, besides, I've come doon to make records, an' no tae argue nonsense." He stalked away, convinced Gaisberg and Dawson were trying to play a joke on him.

Several times afterward, Peter tried to convince Harry he actually was Hector Grant, but Lauder always refused to believe it. One thing seems evident: Lauder had no flaming desire to kill Grant or he could have taken the necessary assassination steps when he saw his imitator on the stage at "Glasgie."

No doubt Lauder was fair-minded enough to admit to himself that though the other comedian might be only an imitator he had a finer voice than had fallen to Lauder's own lot. In later years Harry's records were issued under both the H. M. V. and Zon-o-phone labels, and those by "Grant" were deleted.

Probably Mr. Dawson was correct in saying that the idea of having him record Scotch songs under an assumed name came first to Fred Gaisberg. However, the Talking Machine News mentions Grant's name for the first time in listing the already mentioned 1906 Edison cylinder.

It does not appear again until March, 1906, when Percy Henry Levy issued a record of "I Love a Lassie" on his Imperial cylinders, which were copied from original Edison recordings. The first Hector Grant recording on Zon-o-phone was issued April 1, 1906—a 7-inch single-faced version of "I Love a Lassie."

"Grant" showed up again in the Zono list for June with two Lauder songs: "Fou the Noo" (3701) and "She's Ma Daisy" (3702), both 10-inch. From this time the name becomes fairly common in the lists of several recording companies, but judging from the evidence of the printed page, Dawson was "Hector Grant" for Edison before he used the name for Zonophone.

(To be continued)

(Continued from page 25)

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fc

# Peter Dawson

## PART III

By JIM WALSH

### I. More Early Recordings

Peter Dawson's Edison Bell cylinder of "Thy Beaming Eyes" was listed in the *Talking Machine News* for October, 1904, with the title misprinted as "Thy Dreaming Eyes."

A careless error occurred the same month when Zonophone's 10-inch record of "Bid Me To Love" was mentioned as being by "Percy Dawson." "Bid Me To Love" (bass) as sung by Mr. Percy Dawson makes a first-class record and is exactly suited to that gentleman's voice.

Peter Dawson was represented in the November, 1904, Gramophone records with a 10-inch version of Rubens' "When the Stars Were Young." Among other distinguished artists in that month's offerings were Mary Garden, Andrew Black, Stanley Kirkby, Edith Helena, Wilkie Bard, Harry Lauder, and Florrie Forde. Who in this country has heard the Lauder record, "I Took the Prize?" It takes the prize, among his records, for obscurity.

In spite of still being recording chief for Edison Bell, Russell Hunting was making Gramophone records for his old friend, Fred Gaisberg, whom he had known before they both left the United States. He did one of his famous monologs, "Casey as a Magistrate," and with the assistance of another American—the animal imitator, Gilbert Girard recorded "A Visit to the Menagerie," and "Auction Sale of a Bird and Animal Shop."

In time Peter Dawson was to take part in similar records for a firm which, in 1904, had not begun operations. Hunting and Girard likewise teamed up for Edison Bell with a children's record, "Nursery Rhymes No. 3."

Also, in 1904, "Lennard" (another T.M.N. misspelling!) Dawson was responsible for four Edison Bell cylinders, including "Navajo," which, he says, was the first record he made to be sold. The others were "Jolly Fine Company," "Goodbye, My Lady Love, (written by the recently dead American vaudeville personality, Joe Howard), and "The Message of the Violet." The *News* said: "All these are well rendered."

In December the magazine mentioned that the Granville Manufacturing Co., an Edison Bell dealer,

had displayed a "musical menu" in its window. The first item, representing the soup course, was Teddy Morse's great hit, "Blue Bell," sung by "L. Dawson."

That same month Dawson sang a 7-inch Gramophone disc of "Calvary," and there were eight 7-inch offerings of Irish songs by John McCormack, who was two years younger than Dawson. The Gramophone ad spelled his name as McCormick.

A month later Dawson sang Harry Von Tilzer's big hit, "Down at the Old Bull and Bush," as it was called in England. It was known in the United States as "Under the Anheuser Bush." Dawson recorded this beery panegyric for both Zonophone and Gramophone, and the T.M.N. said, "he does this popular song full justice." The title of Dawson's Edison Bell cylinder for March, 1905, "In Zanzibar," suggests it was not of concert caliber.

About this time there was an intriguing mention of Ernest Pike, the tenor who became Dawson's principal duet partner:

"Mr. Ernest Pike, the well known tenor, who is under contract to sing exclusively for the Gramophone Co., has had two royal commands to appear before the King and Queen during their visit to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at Chatsworth. The Duke and Duchess possess a gramophone, which is constantly in use."

It was probably then that the good-natured "joshing" of "King Edward's favorite tenor" began. By this time "Leonard Dawson" had vanished and the cylinders were being issued under the singer's legal name. Late in 1904, however, Edison Bell had sent dealers a poster showing the faces of 80 of Mr. Hough's artists, and the basso's first name was given as Leonard.

Fifty-six years ago an American evangelistic singer, A. L. Alexander, was exhilarating England by his enthusiastic rendition of "The Glory Song," also known as "Oh, That Will Be Glory For Me." In making a Gramophone disc of this "hallelujah hymn," Alexander was assisted by a quintet consisting of Arthur Gilbert and the Gramophone Quartet—Pike, first tenor; Wilfred Virgo, second tenor; Stanley Kirkby, baritone; and Dawson, bass.

The *Talking Machine News* re-

ports Alexander was so impressed with their singing "he invited the quartet to come with him to the Albert Hall and sing 'The Glory Song' with him on the platform." It is not recorded whether the ensemble accepted. The quartet was also called the Minster Singers on Gramophone records and they probably were the Meister Singers for Edison Bell.

P. G. Hurst, the learned English authority on historical records, mentioned in *The Gramophone* for July, 1942, that Gramophone issued a "thrilling version" of the *Faust* Finale, with Alice Esty as soprano, John Harrison, tenor, and Dawson, bass. It was listed in December, 1905.

### II. Words with Madame Melba

Dawson sang on occasion in support of some of the Gramophone Company's most puffed-up personalities. One was his fellow Australian, Nellie Melba, who may have been the most temperamental and high-handed of all opera stars.

Melba's maiden name was Helen Mitchell. She married Charles Porter Armstrong but didn't stay with him long. Then she became the spoiled, arrogant "first lady" of opera. Some say she thought herself a cut or two above the angels. At times her language was viciously sharp.

Peter Dawson stood in no awe of Nellie Melba, or anyone, or anything. Fred Gaisberg, in his book, "The Music Goes Round," recalls that Dawson was one of a group which helped Melba to record a song which Gaisberg calls "My Old Kentucky Home," but which was really "Old Folks at Home."

This probably was the occasion on which Pike, still seeing visions because of being called King Edward's favorite tenor, tried to converse with the prima donna, only to be squelched with: "Oh, shut up! You're just one of the bloody chorus!" This unfeeling characterization hurt Pike badly.

On another occasion, Melba was so contemptuous in her attitude toward the recording orchestra that G. W. Byng, its conductor, who also conducted at the Alhambra Theater, exclaimed, "Really, this woman behaves as if we were scum! I've a good mind to walk out!" The musicians called Melba "Madame Sweet and Low," meaning she had a sweet voice but was careless in her talk.

John McCormack would take none of her temperamental outbursts. One morning, when they were supposed to record duets, she scolded him: "You're late again, you young bad-word!"

He shouted back: "Mind your own business, you interfering old bad-word!" McCormack walked out and refused ever to sing with Melba again.



Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

When she had her encounter with Dawson, the young basso gave her, according to Gaisberg, a look of studied irreverence. Furiously she turned on him saying, "You're from Australia?"

"Yes, Madame Melba," he replied.

"What city?" demanded Melba, who had taken her stage name from her native city of Melbourne.

When he said, "Adelaide," she came out with a sharp remark about the city.

I imagine Peter was taken aback for perhaps 20 seconds. I wish that instead of calling her "Madame Melba" he had replied, "Yes, Mrs. Armstrong." But, I suspect, the atmosphere of H.M.V.'s recording studio would have been ablaze with temperament.

Although it has nothing to do with Peter Dawson, I find a certain amusement in the fact that an American diva, Geraldine Farrar, made a record of "My Old Kentucky Home," assisted by a male quartet, just as Melba had done with "Old Folks at Home."

On October 4, 1909, Miss Farrar, at the Victor studios in Camden, recorded two "takes" of the Foster song, aided by a quartet composed of Harry Macdonough and Reed Miller, tenors; Reinald Werrenrath, baritone, and Frank C. Stanley, bass. On October 6 they came back and made two more "takes." The fourth was given the catalog number 87029, but was never placed on the market. On October 4 the same ensemble also recorded two versions of "The Star Spangled Banner," which languished unissued.

It seems safe to say Miss Farrar was more courteous to the four accomplished gentlemen who blended their voices with hers than Madame Melba was to the Gramophone Quartet. And it's interesting to note that at the time the Farrar-quartet records were made, Victor had not issued any solos by Reed Miller—also that the quartet consisted of two

popular duet teams. Stanley and Macdonough sang many duets together, as did Miller and Werrenrath.

Dawson himself tells of the time a stagehand incensed Melba. She chewed Australian "wattle gum" to clear her throat before going on stage. One night the uncouth stagehand removed the gum and substituted a chew of tobacco. When the diva's teeth clamped down and she realized what had happened, all Gehenna broke loose. She insisted that the entire backstage personnel be fired.

Dawson, as I said, credits the deplorable deed to a stagehand, but if Peter Dawson happened to be back stage that night I'd be far from surprised to learn a young Australian man with a booming bass voice was responsible for the outrage.

Speaking of Australia, it's remarkable how singers and entertainers born in that country dominated early English record lists out of proportion to their numbers. Besides Dawson there were Albert Whelan and that most popular of British recording comedians, Billy Williams. Alfred Charmion and his wife, Violet Cooke, who recorded chimes and organ records under the name of Lyster and Cooke, were Australians. Mr. Charmion, until recently, was living in Belpre, Ohio, and operating a furniture repair shop. He may still be there.

Among opera and concert singers there were Melba and Elizabeth Parkina, and later, Elsa Stralia and Florence Austral—both Elsa and Florence used a shortened form of Australia for their stage names. No doubt there were a good many others who do not occur to me at the moment.

Gaisberg says Harry Lauder never forgave Peter Dawson for making the Hector Grant records—in contrast to Dawson's own statement that Lauder wouldn't believe he sang them. Gaisberg also says Dawson "riled" Lauder more than once with mimicry and general horseplay.

"Chaliapin was furious," Gaisberg adds, "when, at a Trade Conference held in Eastbourne, Peter followed him on the platform before hundreds of gramophone dealers, and, imitating the Russian's mannerisms of waving his arms and striding along, smiled sweetly and announced in broken English in a deep voice, 'Number Forty-Five,' and, after a pause, waved to the pianist to carry on."

Dawson himself recalls another funny happening involving Chalia-

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358 THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS

# SOME ARTISTES

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LILLIAN BOREEN, ARTHUR LEONARD, EDITH TAYLOR, ALBERT PEARCE, OLLIE DARLEY, ALMA JONES, LOUIS BRADFORD, M.M. WHITCH, ALFRED GALEY, WILLIAM HARTLEY

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pin. Peter was standing on a small stool, singing across Chaliapin's shoulder into the horn, when the recorder gently pushed him forward, unmindful of his precarious perch. Overbalanced he fell and grabbed Chaliapin.

When Dawson picked himself off the floor he found he was holding the big Russian's watch and chain. Then, in Russian, Chaliapin said: "You don't have to go to all that trouble to get the time. I would have told you if you had asked."

One of the cornet players laughed so hard he fell off his high chair and was knocked out for 10 seconds. His colleagues counted him out in mock prize-fight style, not realizing he was actually unconscious.

### III. More Early Records

In June, 1905, the *Talking Machine News* praised Dawson's Zonophone record of "Calvary." In July, his Edison Bell cylinder of "Ding, Dong, Bell" ("sometimes entitled 'Mad Willie,'" was described as "a very good record, though the theme is rather mournful; the bells

A 1904 Edison Bell advertisement showing photos of 60 popular recording artists. Peter Dawson is the last man on the fifth row. Jim Walsh has filled in all the artists' names, except for a few on which the print was blurred. From left to right:

are sweet and clear. 'The Diver,' also by P. Dawson, is very good."

I don't find Dawson's name again until November, when another Edison Bell cylinder was reviewed: "Dawson excels himself in 'The Good Rhine Wine'; this record is particularly good."

For Zonophone he sang, "At the Bottom of the Deep Blue Sea." H.M.V. announced two new Dawson discs, "The Gallants of England" and "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind." Of the latter the ad said: "Mr. Dawson's deep tones come out splendidly, and the result is a perfect artistic performance of a fine song."

The following month, Dawson had another Gramophone record, "True Till Death."

The Edison Bell Christmas list

offered the first duet record in which I have observed Dawson appearing. He and Wilfred Virgo sang "Excelsior." Dawson also had a solo, "Simon, the Cellarer."

His Edison cylinders for January, 1906 (one under the alias of Hector Grant) have already been mentioned, and there was a reference to another Edison cylinder, "The Redemption," "an impressive sacred song . . . ably rendered in Peter Dawson's rich bass voice."

Then comes another mention of Hector Grant: "I Love a Lassie," by Hector Grant, is so successful that we would like to hear more records by him." It was this Edison cylinder which the Imperial Company duplicated.

In February, Dawson sang for Edison Bell, the American Civil War song, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," "a song specially suited to his bass voice." For Edison he did what I believe was his first recorded duet with a woman, "Ashore." She was the contralto, Esther Cadman, whose first name is wrongly given by the T.M.N. as Ethel. The write-up said:

"'Ashore' is deserving of special mention. This . . . is the first duet made by these two artistes which has come under our notice. Each voice is a perfect complement of the other, and, judged by the success of this, we hope to meet with other duets by these two singers."

There was another Edison record by "Grant": "Tickle, Geordie" is an excellent imitation of Harry Lauder at his best." In April he sang "I Love a Lassie" for Zonophone.

In May, Dawson and Virgo, who died in Toronto, Canada, March 5, 1951, aged 80, performed "The Moon Hath Raised Her Lamp Above" for Edison Bell. Two other "Grant" records for Zonophone, issued in June, were mentioned last month.

In July, Dawson's own composition, "Lassie, Dinna Sigh for Me," made its appearance with "Tickle, Geordie" for Edison Bell, and both were sung by "Hector Grant." For Zonophone he also did "Tickle Geordie" and another Lauder number, "Safest of the Family." They were described as "typical of Scotch humour" and the laughter in "Geordie" was said to be infectious.

Dawson had four 10-inch discs in the September, 1906, Zono list. *The Talking Machine News* praised them lavishly:

"Peter Dawson excels himself this month with his bass songs. The records are distinct and full-volumed with a purity of tone seldom heard in a bass singer. 'The West's Asleep' is a delightful song and, like 'Bantry Bay' and 'The Memory of the Dead,' is far removed from the general run of songs. 'The Singer Was Irish' is both popular and pathetic, and may be recommended to the many admirers of this song as a first-class record."

### IV. Jim White Enters the Record Business

Now we come to a cylinder record, the White, which Dawson sang for but doesn't mention in his book.

James H. White was a monologist who had made records for Edison in the U.S.A. He was one of

the 42 Edison artists in a group photo taken in 1900 which has been shown in HOBBIES. When Edison decided to seek a share of the British record business, White went abroad as English manager.

After a stint with the Edison Company, he left it and went into the record business on his own hook, making the White cylinder—named, of course, for himself.

Apparently, White's knowledge of Edison recording methods helped him get excellent results. The London correspondent of the *Talking Machine World*, which had been established in New York in 1905, reported in the issue for August 15, 1906:

"I found Mr. White busily engaged in personally supervising recording. . . . Among certain newly recorded selections I had the pleasure of listening to 'Ashore' and 'The Moon Has Raised Her Lamp Above,' both excellent duets by Peter Dawson and Tom Childs, and was particularly impressed by the magnificent blending and natural tone qualities obtained. There was absolutely no blasting or metallic ring."

White's initial T.M.N. ad, in the September 1 issue, said the first list of the new cylinders would be available September 15. The numbers began at 100, and the list contained records by Dawson under three names, including a new one. "Nancy Lee," No. 104, was by Peter Dawson; 105, "Sound Advice," by Hector Grant; 111, "It's a Different Girl Again," by Will Danby and Chorus; and 112, "Sister," by Dawson.

The new name was Will Danby, and that reminds me of another lapse of memory in Mr. Dawson's book. He says he made records under the name of Frank Danby, but he didn't. "Frank Danby" was a pseudonym used by a feminine English novelist, whose real name has escaped me.

When Dawson called himself Danby it was always Will Danby. For comedy, he also used another name, Will Strong. Apparently, "Will Danby" made his first appearance on White records.

The basso turned out comedy records for White of a type that he had not done for any other company. In the October list he was back with his own song, which seems to have been one of his favorites, "Lassie, Dinna Sigh for Me." It was No. 118. On 122 he sang "There's a Man in Manitoba." On 126 he and Arthur Gilbert teamed in a "comic descriptive record," "Let Me Sing."

And now listen to this. He and Alf Holt, an American bird and animal imitator, who had made records with Len Spencer before going to England, where he died in 1924, combined their talents in two sketches which Spencer had written. On 129 Holt and Dawson were heard in "A Barn Yard Serenade," and on 130 in "The Punch and Judy Show."

It certainly requires an effort of the imagination to conceive of Peter Dawson tackling Len Spencer's familiar roles, but he had the versatility and humor to do it successfully.



Hearing a playback of a 1912 recording of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. Left:

Standing, Conductor, George W. Byng. Seated: Bessie Jones, Violet Essex, Sarah Jones, Harold Wilde, and Robert Radford.

Standing: Derek Oldham, Walter Glynne, Ernest Pike, Edna Thornton, Peter Dawson, Edward Halland, George Baker, and Nellie Walker.

The October 15 T.M.N. refers to the first duet I have noticed by Dawson and Ernest Pike—a pretty song, "In the Valley Where the Bluebirds Sing," made for Zonophone. Dawson also had a solo, "A Nation Once Again." It was said to be "well worth hearing, for this singer has a dignified yet hearty manner, and his tone is natural." On a 7-inch record "Hector Grant" sang "Jean McNeill."

In that same issue Edison Bell announced a series of "extra-long" cylinders. The first, No. 10,000, was a Lauder song, "We Parted On The Shore," by a deep-voiced gentleman using an assumed name whose initials were H. G. And Dawson sang and Holt whistled, "Beautiful Birds, Sing On."

When the News reviewed the first batch of White records readers were told:

"In 'The Punch and Judy Show,' by Alf Holt and Peter Dawson, one hears the whole of the comedy tragedy of Punch and Judy from the hurling of the baby out the window to the execution of Punch. 'There's a Man in Manitoba' and 'The Boys' Brigade' are by Peter Dawson. These are full volumed, hearty songs in which the words are as distinct as in a recitation. . . . 'Let Me Sing' is a descriptive comic duet by Arthur Gilbert and Hector Grant. As one would have expected from two such skilled artists, this record is a finished specimen of humour. . . . 'Lassie, Dinna Sigh for Me,' sung by Hector Grant, is reproduced in a pleasant, taking manner."

Another list of White records was announced November 15. They included 135, "We Parted on the Shore" (Hector Grant); 140, "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie" (Will Danby); 142, "Cheer Up, Mary" (Peter Dawson); and 144, "Jingles, Jokes and Rhymes," by Gilbert and Grant.

The Zono list contained two Dawson solos, "Clare's Dragoons" and "Goodbye, Little Sister" — "these are given in clear, powerful tones

and are well above the average of bass records."

The enterprising Gramophone Co. told the public in the same issue it had recorded a relatively complete set of Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado" — the first of several such collections in which Dawson took part. He joined Amy Augarde in a duet of "Miya Sama," described as "a real Japanese air." As a solo, Peter did "A More Humane Mikado."

The catalog description said:

"The song is an excellent bit of social satire, and Peter Dawson gives it that touch of diabolical humor usually associated with this part."

He, Miss Augarde, and a chorus sang "The Criminal Cried," and he probably was a member of the Sullivan Operatic Party, which rendered "See How the Fates Their Gifts Allot" and several other concerted numbers. Finally, Dawson and Amy Augarde had a third duet, "There is Beauty in the Bellow of the Blast."

For the December list, Edison Bell gave Dawson his chance to render the raging hit of the year, although it was rather old by that time, having swept the United States more than a year before. Reviewing the new cylinder, the T. M. N. said:

"Peter Dawson's full rich bass voice is well heard in 'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree.' The birds singing in

the tree, which one hears here and there, add much to the charm of the record."

Dawson's "Apple Tree" became a best seller in Australia and New Zealand as well as in Great Britain.

For that same December list Zonophone either found Pike and Dawson in a devout mood, although Pike usually drank half a dozen bottles of stout during a recording session, or tried to induce one. At least the pair sang six hymns together — "God Be With You," "I Am Praying for You," "I Love to Tell the Story," "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "I Need Thee Every Hour," and "Shall We Meet Beyond the River?"

Readers were told: "These sacred duets are rendered in a fresh and artistic manner, and are first-class specimens of strong yet sweet male voices singing in unison."

(To be continued)

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Peter Dawson

Part IV

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Busy Year

1907 was perhaps Peter Dawson's busiest year as a recording artist.

As 1906 gave way to its successor, the jovial basso recorded "A Gude New Year" on an Edison Bell cylinder, using his now familiar assumed name of Hector Grant. In the January Zonophone list, again as Grant, he sang two more Harry Lauder numbers, "John Mackay" and "A Trip to Inverary."

Dawson's February Zonophone choice was a jolly American composition of 1869, "Little Brown Jug," which Sigmund Spaeth calls "that greatest of all drinking songs." Dawson had the help of an enthusiastic male chorus.

That same month, as Grant, he was in the Edison list with an odd title, "The Tobacconist's Dummy." Also in February he sang for Edison Bell, this time in his proper person, a ballad, "Glorious Devon," described as "a fine English robust song."

I don't believe I have previously mentioned Sterling cylinders by Dawson. In Sterling's March first issue, however, Dawson was present, singing "Bonnie Jean."

The hard-working young man from the Antipodes was prominent in the March Zonophone list. Here are some Talking Machine News quotes:

"Ernest Pike and Peter Dawson make an impressive duet of 'Lead, Kindly Light.' The tenor and bass voices harmonize and contrast in splendid style and the effect is heightened by the organ accompaniment. . . . Peter Dawson is at his best with 'Clementine,' a bass solo with chorus. . . ."

"Hector Grant, who is an adept at singing songs in the Harry Lauder style, makes four rollicking records: 'John, John, Put Your Trousers On' and 'The Referee,' which tells of the singer's experience in the football field. 'Callagan' is full of amusing quips and turns, and 'Jean McNeal' is a lively song with a catchy chorus."

On March 15, the British Sonogram Co. announced its first list of double faced Sovereign discs. These were oddly coupled in the naive belief that a person who bought, for example, a record with a comic song on one side would want, by way of variety, a classical violin solo or an excerpt from a symphony on the other.

Actually, of course, a man who bought a record for the sake of a comic song on one side would prefer more humor on the other. Many of the Sovereign records were made from matrices of the defunct Nicole brand. Said the News:

"Peter Dawson, the well known bass singer, sings 'Eileen Alannah' and sings it well: the delicate voice nuances toward the end of the song have a sweet and telling effect. On the other side is the rousing, patriotic 'Viscount Nelson March,' by the British Imperial Band."

"Another stirring military selection is 'The King of England March,' by the British Imperial Band. On the other side is Longfellow's 'I Stood on the Bridge,' an excellent bass solo by Peter Dawson."

Obviously, a firm with such a poor grasp of the average record buyer's psychology wasn't long for this world. British Sonogram was bankrupt within a few months.

The April Talking Machine News contained a puzzling statement:

"We have it on the authority of the General Phonograph Co. that Peter Dawson is henceforth to sing exclusively for them. Arthur Gilbert, Hector Grant, Will Danby and Johnny Wakefield are also on their exclusive list."

General was Jim White's firm. We have already pondered Dawson's statement that he made no records for any company except H. M. V. after 1906, also that Edison signed him to an exclusive cylinder contract.

Now here we have the General Phonograph Co. making the apparently unfounded statement that he had become exclusive to White cylinders. Since Dawson, Grant, and Danby were the same man, Arthur Gilbert and Johnny Wakefield probably also wore the same clothes.

In April, Peter had two unusual titles for Zono: "The Place Where the Old Horse Died" and "Wrap Me Up in My Old Stable Jacket."

Under the Will Danby alias, he joined his sister-in-law, Yolande Noble, in recording a comic sketch for White: "The First Quarrel" graphically portrays the homecoming of 'hubbie' after a late night at the Alhambra to see the 'Zig-Zags.' The record is particularly clear and distinct.

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

Hector Grant bobbed up again in the May British Zonophone list:

"Hector Grant makes four records. He has never done anything better than 'I Wish I Had Someone to Love Me,' which, for its rich Scottish accent, its shrewd humor, and the quaint mannerisms of the singer, is a master-piece. A rousing song is 'Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching.' By the same singer are 'Arrah Wanna' and Dougal's 'New Aladdin,' both of which are given with gusto."

A new White record list contained a Peter Dawson solo whose title seems to me one of the most haunting and stirring to the imagination of any I have ever read: "Where the North Road Leaves the Minster City." I have never heard this song but I should like to. Dawson and Walter Hyde also sang "Excelsior" as a duet.

In the Gramophone Company's June list, Dawson took part in a special series of recordings from Mendelssohn's "Elijah." Two records were needed for him and Madame Eleanor Jones-Hudson to sing "What Have I To Do With Thee?" Dawson and "Choir" rendered "Call Him Louder," and Dawson, Carrie Tubb, and Choir were heard in "O Lord, Thou Hast Overthrown."

The September list of White cylinders contained Dawson as three men in one. As Hector Grant he sang "Rob Roy MacIntosh;" as Will Danby he was heard in "Following the Ladies," and as Peter Dawson he sang "The Same Old Church." Other White records, issued a month or so later, included "The Regimental Pet," "Calvary," and "Where the Ebb-Tide Flows," by Dawson, and "Swing Me Higher," by Danby.

In November, Dawson's brother-in-law, Tom Noble, was featured in an Edison Bell advertisement, which revealed incidentally that Edison Bell cylinders had been reduced to ninepence:

"The Edison Bell have added to their staff Mr. T. J. Noble, who has been one of the experts of the National Co., Ltd., at their British and some of their continental recording laboratories. Although the Edison Bell record is reduced in price it is manifest the Company do not intend the quality to suffer, but to keep up their usual vigorous policy to please the multitude of their admirers and supporters."

Dawson contributed three records to Edison's December, 1907, list. One was "The Singer Was Irish." He and Walter Hyde sang "Sweet Christmas Bells" and Peter represented himself to be the world's best loved Christmas character in "That's Why I'm Santa Claus."

As 1907 closed, he had two more Edison Bell cylinders, "Rob Roy Mc-

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Intosh" and the American ballad sensation, "Honey Boy."

For Zonophone he, as Hector Grant, joined "Herbert Payne" (Ernest Pike), Frank Miller, and Johnny Wakefield in a sketch, "Christmas Eve in the Barracks." It included "songs and patter and loud cheers . . . The festivities end with a toast to the King and Queen and the National Anthem."

## II. Recording in 1908

As 1908 opened, still another purveyor of wax cylinders issued a January list of records selling for ninepence each. This was the Premier Manufacturing Co., whose brand name was Clarion.

Although the cylinder market was declining and the White record was about to disappear, Premier met with fair success and remained in business until about the time electrically recorded discs were introduced. It made both discs and cylinders until its plant was destroyed by fire in the 1920's.

By that time Premier, aside from Edison, was the only maker of cylinder records left in either the United States or England, and was probably the only company in the world that went on making wax cylinders after Edison discontinued them in 1912.

Dawson sang "The Blind Boy and the Thrush" in Clarion's first list. The T. M. N. described it as

"A good record . . . a pathetic song about a little blind boy who asks the bird why he must leave him, and with a touch of sorrow requests the thrush to return in the summer time. 'When You're Tired of Roaming' is another admirable bird song sung by Peter Dawson in pure, even tone."

Dawson took part in two unusual records which Zonophone announced in January. One was "Consider the Lilies of the Field," sung as a duet by himself and Pike, with a mixed sextet in the chorus. Of the other record, the T. M. N. said:

"That well known ballad, 'The Song That Reached My Heart,' is harmoniously sung by a sextet which includes Peter Dawson, Herbert Payne, and Miss May Loveday. It has an orchestral accompaniment and is a fine example of concerted singing."

Edison Bell recognized Dawson's growing popularity when it bought the cover of the February 1 Talking Machine News. The center of the page was occupied with a photo of "Mr. Peter Dawson."

The March 1 issue showed Dawson had begun using on Edison Bell cylinders an assortment of names like those he had tried out on Jim White's brand. Under his own name he sang "Daddy."

As Hector Grant he reverted to Scotch accent in "You Are Still My Highland Laddie," and as Will Danby he was heard in "Tickle Me, Timothy." He was also Will Danby in the comic skit, "Their First Quarrel," which he recorded with "Miss Dora Whittaker."

Since he and his sister-in-law had already recorded their skit for White records, I think it is safe to assume Miss Whitaker was really

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Yolande Noble — especially since Miss Noble sang for Edison Bell.

In April, 1908, Dawson was heard in two solos for Edison Bell — "Always" (not, of course, the later Irving Berlin song), and "The Bedouin Love Song." Will Danby and Miss D. Whittaker contributed a descriptive sketch, "Waltz Me, Bill." Judging by the description, it bore an affinity to those which Ada Jones and Len Spencer were recording in the States: "An episode at a dance, introducing song and conversation while the couple are waltzing."

The mid-May Edison Bell list contained an elaborate version of "The Village Blacksmith," sung by Dawson, which occupied two cylinders. These records were made by a "new process" (possibly meaning they were gold moulded) and sold for a shilling instead of ninepence.

In June, Edison Bell, realizing how fast it was losing ground in the cylinder competition with Edison, began making disc records as well as cylinders. The Edison Bell line grew to contain both lateral and vertical cut discs as well as the wax "rollers."

The late Joe Belmont, one of the greatest of whistlers, said "Beautiful Bird, Sing On" was the most popular record he ever made. In August, Dawson sang it on an Edison Bell cylinder, with whistling by Al S. Holt. On page 277 of the September T. M. N. there was a mention of a solo Edison Bell cylinder by Yolande Noble, "Who'd Like to Pay for My Holiday?" And on page 278, replying to a correspondent, the editor said:

"We are ourselves not quite certain that Mr. Peter Dawson has not made a record of 'The Wolf.' His disc record of this fine song is excellent, and he should certainly be heard in it on the cylinder as well."

A new brand of disc record was announced in October: "Twins," so called, apparently, because it was double-faced, and records playing on both sides were still a rarity. "Hector Grant" sang on one of the Twins two popular tunes of the day: "Meet Me, Jenny, When the Sun Goes Down" and "If Those Lips Could Only Speak."

Perhaps the exclusive contract Dawson says he had with H. M. V. didn't prevent his making discs for other companies under an assumed name. After a brief career, the Twins record was bought by H.M.V. and combined with Zonophone.

I had believed Peter Dawson didn't make any Pathe records, but have discovered I was wrong. He had a 10-inch, double-face disc in Pathe's December 1908, list: "That Old Sunny Window" and "Bonnie Jean."

It may be that the "exclusive" Gramophone contract didn't forbid his making hill-and-dale discs under his own name! Ernest Pike had several records in that December Pathe supplement.

I would willingly wager a trifle that Dawson didn't remember a song he recorded for the July, 1909, Edison list, "When the Little Birds

Forgot Their Sweetest Tune." The Talking Machine News said:

"Peter Dawson, who has earned (sic) such a reputation as a soloist, well surpasses himself in this tuneful number. His enunciation is unrivalled."

### III. First Australian Tour

We have now reached the time when, after seven exciting and successful years in England, Peter Dawson decided to join the late Amy Castles' concert company in a tour of Australia. He says he went through a wretched time before sailing because he couldn't take Nan, his wife, with him.

But she insisted, "When you sing in Australia you'll be a big success. Then you can make arrangements to take your own company the next time, and I shall be with you." She planned to study with Professor Kantorez, the Russian who had changed her husband's voice from a basso-profundo to a bass-baritone.

The trip to Australia was made on the Orient liner, Otway. Peter recalls that he was almost wild with excitement as the boat neared Adelaide. He was overcome with emotion as he saw his father, mother, and many other relatives waiting on the quay. He could see his mother, tears in her eyes, smiling up at him.

Then, when he reached the bottom of the gangplank, he was somewhat taken aback, but pleased, to be surrounded by a crowd of newspaper reporters and photographers. It was a complete and wonderful surprise to the young chap of 27.

In the train, his father warned him that a bigger welcome was waiting him at the Adelaide passenger station and he would do well to have some appropriate remarks ready. On his leaving the train, the Mayor of Adelaide greeted him and welcomed him to his home town. After returning thanks, Peter was greeted by hundreds of other citizens, many of them old friends, who included

his former music master, C. J. Stevens.

From the station, Peter Dawson was taken to the Adelaide Choral Society's rehearsal hall, where the assembled Society gave him a heart-warming reception. Sir Josiah Simon delivered a speech of welcome and the Society sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

When the party went to Melbourne, Peter's success became greater with each concert. He knew that he was in exceptionally good voice and attributed that to not smoking or drinking, but later decided the climate was the chief improvement factor.

He always found, he said, that his voice was clearer, easier and more resonant in Australia than in Britain, yet, oddly enough, his records made in England are better than the Australian ones. Several times he was compelled to remake in England records he had ordinarily sung in Australia, because the originals were not satisfactory.

As he remarked, recording is a tricky business. His brother-in-law, Tom Noble, told him that when he first joined the Edison Bell Company as recording manager, a recording room was fitted up to duplicate Thomas A. Edison's facilities at West Orange, New Jersey.

The room was the same size as Edison's, designed with the same material, the same horns and the same diaphragms. The wax recording cylinders were kept at the same temperature, but still the tone of the records produced under these conditions was inferior to Edison's. ("The Old Man" had probably kept a few secrets to himself!)

After giving several recitals in his home town of Adelaide and being received with unstinted enthusiasm, the young bass-baritone and the other members of the Castles' party left for England in February, 1910. Dawson had been an unqualified success as a concert singer, but since he was paid only 22 pounds a week, he did not make his fortune. He took part in 81 concerts — many of them given in the roughest and most isolated sections of Australia — within a span of 20 weeks.

### IV. A 1911 Interview

Peter returned home to find that Nan, through study with Professor Kantorez, had greatly improved her voice and singing style. He himself resumed study with the Russian wizard, because he had decided to go in for grand opera and thought he and Nan might present condensed or "potted" versions of some of the favorite operas on another trip to Australia.

The December, 1910, issue of the Talking Machine News showed Dawson's photo on the front cover (but not as an Edison Bell ad this time), and on page 9 there was a paragraph which bore directly on the opera ambitions I have just mentioned:

"Mr. Peter Dawson, who is now study-



The Talking Machine News featured Dawson in its December, 1910, issue.



Peter Dawson in 1910, ready for a concert engagement.

ing to sing grand opera under Professor Kantorez, is the subject of the portrait on our front cover. He is undoubtedly one of the most prolific record artists living. It is now some years since the artiste was first persuaded by Mr. C. J. Stephens, of the Adelaide Choral Society, to take up vocalism as a profession.

"His next stepping stone to fame was reached when he won the Ballarat Musical Competition prize. This incident in the life of the vocalist happened about nine years ago, which fact argues that Mr. Peter Dawson is even now but a young man. In common with Dick Whittington and many another adventurous spirit, he had an impetuous desire to come to London.

"He came, and, like Caesar, he saw and conquered. It was under Mr. J. E. Hough that he first made his acquaintance with recording; since then he has freely contributed to most of the leading makers' lists."

About this time the Talking Machine News asked readers to take part in a contest to choose Britain's most popular recording artists. Dawson came in second.

It must have been some satisfaction to Ernest Pike that he, the "favorite tenor" of King Edward, who had recently died, took first place. Harry Lauder was third, Billy Williams fourth and a dozen others finished in this order: Florrie Forde, Will Evans, Harry Fay, Stanley Kirkby, Harry Dearth, Harry Thornton, John McCormack, Fred Vernon, Billy Whitlock, Edna Thornton, and Evan Williams.

In February, 1911, The Talking Machine News published a long interview with the basso under the heading of "Mr. Peter Dawson: At Home and on the Gramophone (His Master's Voice) and Edison Cylinder." (By this time Dawson does appear to have become exclusive to H. M. V. for discs and to Edison for cylinders.) The article is much too long to be quoted in full, but I feel it is worth while to reproduce some of the more interesting sections:

"It is a far cry from Adelaide, in

Australia, to Mill Hill, on the other side of Harrow, but the voice of the singer is not restricted by distance. Nowadays the talking machine has made the tones emanating from the vocal chords of a celebrity as familiar in Peru as they may be in Peckham.

"I was thinking over little matters of that kind as the train drew rapidly out of London into the clearer breathing-space of historic Harrow and the district beyond. My destination was Mill Hill, a charming locality where our genial basso has made his residence. The bell was answered by a neat Phyllis in cap and apron.

"Yes," she said, in reply to my inquiry, 'Mr. Dawson is at home. If you don't mind going round by the side, you will find him in the garden.'

"I presently descried a rather short, well set-up, clean-shaven figure, clad in a colored shirt, turned-up trousers, and a wide sombrero, hard at work among some young apple trees. His hands were protected by a pair of huge garden gloves, and a bright bandanna was knotted carelessly about his neck. The figure was the exact type of the Antipodean bush-whacker, and I thought to myself that Mr. Peter Dawson employed a most picturesque looking gardener.

"Can you tell me where I can see Mr. Dawson?" I asked.

"He is at your service, sir," replied the representative of the Southern hemisphere in a full, round basso, at the same time doffing his sombrero.

"I beg your pardon," I remarked. 'I had no idea I was addressing the eminent basso profundo.'

"Yes, it's a nice garden." He went on, in response to a remark of mine, 'You see, gardening is my particular hobby now — gardening, and fowls, and a game of billiards if it's wet. Come and see my fowls. Look at Father Peter there! Isn't he a grand old chanticleer? Wakes me up every morning regularly at four o'clock, starting on G natural. No flats or sharps about him.'

"Eight years ago the budding basso set his foot in the Mother Country for the first time.

"Those were the palmy days of the Edison Bell Company. James E. Hough, the manager, always on the lookout for talent, tried his voice, and immediately clinched a bargain by handing him a check for 15 pounds. Peter, poor chap, was so overcome by his first stroke of success, after the dark and dreary time of waiting, that he almost broke down. That gleam of sunshine was the turning point in Peter Dawson's career. Although he was not then making his fortune, his voice as a recorder was worth a regular income to him, and upon the strength of it he married.

"About that time Mr. Dawson fell into the hands of an unscrupulous man, who, taking advantage of his inexperience, treated him very shabbily. He had his revenge, however.

"Some time afterwards he was again approached by this party. 'Would you mind making some more records for us?' he was asked.

"I will do so with pleasure," was his reply, 'providing you pay me my price. My price now is 50 pounds down and 10 pounds per song.' To his intense astonishment he received next day a check for 50 pounds, with an agreement to pay him the sum demanded for every record. When his contract with this firm terminated, he began to sing for the Edison and Gramophone companies.

"Presently his heart gave a mighty bound, and his pulses thrilled with delight. Miss Amy Castles had projected a nine months' tour through Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, and he was asked to join her. It was the opportunity he had longed for. He was going home in triumph to the old folk, to the chums of his boyhood, to the familiar scenes of the land of his birth.

"The tour proved to be a veritable triumphal procession. Everywhere they were received with open arms, and away back in the bush townships people rode scores of miles to hear them. In these remote places their voices had heralded their approach long before their actual arrival, for there is scarcely a home-



Edison Bell featured Peter Dawson in an advertisement on the Talking Machine News cover for February, 1908.

stead in the back settlements which does not possess its gramophone.

"Peter Dawson was astonished at the knowledge which the kindly up-country folk displayed of his favorite songs. When he stepped on the platform he would be greeted with a big-voiced shout of 'Good old Pete! You're the boy! Give us 'Drinking!' Give us 'Shade of the Old Apple Tree!' and such like.

"At one little town, a big, burly bush-whacker, with a great black beard, strode into the hotel and insisted upon seeing the singer. 'I want to see Peter Dawson,' he cried in a voice that shook the rafters.

"I went up to him," says Peter, 'and he towered above me as a gum tree towers above a wattle. 'Excuse me,' I remarked, 'I am Peter Dawson.' He glared at me as if I had been a lamb with three tails or some other natural history monstrosity.

"You?" he exclaimed. 'You, Peter Dawson? Well, I'm d-d! I always thought Peter Dawson was a thunderin' big good-lookin' chap!'

"Having finished our cheerful repast, my kindly host begged me to excuse him for a little while as he had to get into his evening warpaint for a concert in Queen's Hall. It seemed to me that five minutes could scarcely have elapsed before down came Dawson in immaculate evening dress. What a transformation it was!"

The remainder of the article was taken up with a discussion of some of the records Dawson had made as Gramophone discs and Edison cylinders, and a verdict was pronounced that the needle-cut discs were good but the cylinders were better. Of special interest is the comment on his Edison Amberol of "The Bandolero," which was so popular in Dawson's version that Edison issued it in this country as a Blue Amberol as well as a wax Amberol cylinder. The reviewer said:

"I listened entranced. I had heard, of course, dozens of my friend's records, both disc and cylinder, but never anything quite so good as this. It was the real, genuine voice of the consummate artist. There was no subsidiary sound. The notes rolled forth with all Dawson's tremendous volume, rich and true as from the human throat."

Although the Talking Machine News ordinarily was anything but friendly to Thomas A. Edison and his products, its writer could not with-

hold this tribute to the superior excellence of Edison recording. Even today "The Bandolero" remains a brilliant piece of sound depiction.

There are a few inaccuracies in the article. Like W. S. Meadmore's already quoted interview, it says Dawson married on the strength of his Edison Bell recording engagement, whereas the singer himself says he already had a wife when he came to J. E. Hough's attention. Dawson does not mention Hough's giving him a "retainer" check for 15 pounds — and we are left wondering what firm received its come-uppance after having treated him shabbily.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

by Victor, and is an example of impassioned restraint. "Le Roi d'Ys" flows smoothly, as it should; and what can one do to make La donne e mobile sound different?

Now remain the duets, and the Spanish pieces with Brahms among them. There is no need to even mention any of the latter. Fleta was a Spaniard, the style was native to him, and one can almost hear his heart beat inside his throat in the music to which he was born.

And about the duets—on Fleta's part are all tops: Bori, unquestionably, is a worthy match in Parlemoi de ma mere. But Austral, although an excellent artist in her own right, is dominated by Fleta's vivid vocal personality.

In conclusion, it must be noted that, while the recording is fine, a bit more care with the pitch of some of the selections would not have been amiss.

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## Peter Dawson

PART V

By JIM WALSH

### I. 1911 to 1914

During the three years that remained before World War I began, Peter Dawson added steadily to his Gramophone, Zonophone, and Edison lists.

His February, 1911, Gramophone record was an unusual choice, "The Oddfellow's Song," in praise of a well known fraternal order. In the same month, the Talking Machine News came about as close as it ever did to giving him an unfavorable review, in describing his Zonophone record, "The Charmed Cup:"

"It hurts us to say so, but we must confess that we have heard Mr. Peter Dawson in much better voice than he is on this record. We cannot give a better reason than that the song seems unsuited to him.

"Many of our readers, who are unacquainted with Mr. Dawson's grand vocalism, may not agree with us in this outspoken criticism. It is perfectly true that the song is remarkably well sung, but it does not reach Dawsonian heights.

"Had it been a lesser man at a recording horn we might have pronounced this to be a fine achievement, but we look for so much from Mr. Dawson that we cannot, in justice, refrain from speaking our mind. Still, as we say, the record is a good one and will delight whenever placed upon the machine."

To my thinking, this is hardly an "outspoken criticism." Those poor reviewers! How they did hedge and qualify their opinions when they wrote anything they feared might give offense to an advertiser!

In May, 1911, the T. M. N. presented the results of another popularity contest. This time Dawson came third, behind Harry Lauder and Billy Williams. Stanley Kirkby had moved up to fourth, and the former Number 1 man, Ernest Pike, had dropped to fifth. Then, in order, followed Florrie Forde, Harry Fay, John McCormack, Harry Dearth, Enrico Caruso, Clara Butt, and Madame Melba.

Also in May, Dawson paid tribute to Britain's new ruler, George V, on an Edison Amberol cylinder, "Hail! King George." In July there was a puzzling statement that both Dawson and Pike were exclusive to Zonophone for disc records. The comment on his double-faced Zono record, "Young Tom o' Devon," and "Glorious Devon," is entertaining:

"It is a far cry from Adelaide in South Australia to the fair county of

Devon, yet our good friend, Mr. Peter Dawson, has contrived to transport himself across the intervening expanse of ocean without losing a hair. He tells us the story of young Tom and that fickle jade, Nancy, who lost the Devon lad's hand if not his heart, with infinite relish.

"There is a sly humor in Mr. Dawson's rendering which is quite refreshing. Then he sings to us in another style on the back of the disc of 'Glorious Devon,' which he describes as the yeast of which to make old England's bread."

Entertaining, too, is this description of a Zono record of "Little Annie Rooney," and "The Old Cuckoo Clock," by the Zonophone Concert Party, in the September, 1911, issue:

"... In the former a rich bass voice and in the latter a tuneful tenor voice sing the verses, while a quartet supplies the choruses. We would not mind staking our last ha'penny, so to speak, that the bass voice is that of Peter Dawson and the tenor voice that of Ernest Pike.

"The Zono Concert Party are skilled harmony singers, and these records are excellent specimens of what they can do. ... Two charmingly concerted numbers."

In November, Dawson had a Zono record of "The Ringers," coupled with a setting of a poem, "The Ivy Green," which Dickens introduced in "Pickwick Papers." The effects of his operatic studies probably were revealed in a four-minute Edison Amberol cylinder of "The Toreador Song" from "Carmen" which appeared, sung in English, the following month.

Dawson's 1912 recordings were many and varied. For Zono-Twins he sang several duets with a highly regarded concert soprano, Madame Eleanor Jones-Hudson. Two Zonophones from the standard bass repertoire were "A Hundred Fathoms Deep," and "The Mighty Deep." The T. M. N. proclaimed:

"... no more perfect records of male voice duets has (sic) ever been issued than those on record A73 in the Zonophone September list. Mr. Ernest Pike and Mr. Peter Dawson give a full rendering of 'Tenor and Baritone' and 'Albion, On Thy Fertile Plains.'"

Elsewhere, the magazine pronounced this disc:

"... another perfect record in every detail, intonation faultless and the blending of these fine voices being a positive joy. Surely no finer specimens of the recording art can be procured than these exquisite duets."

Zonophone issued two Dawson solos in October, "The Lowland

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

Sea," and "Where the Ebbtide Flows," and the praise in the monthly supplement was as unrestrained as that in the News:

"Notwithstanding the demands made on his time by concert engagements in London and almost every town in the Kingdom, the most perfect voiced of contemporary Bassos never disappoints his Zonophone audience by absence from our lists. His present contributions are outstanding examples of the singing of a great artist at his very best."

A new record company had been formed, the National Gramophone Co., Ltd., which began to manufacture a fine-grooved, hill-and-dale disc that used a steel needle and could play for more than eight minutes on one 12-inch side.

Dawson did not record for it, but in October his sister-in-law, Yolande Noble, had four Marathon titles: "Let's All Go Into the Ballroom," "Joshua-ah," "Jenny McGregor," and "Keep Quite Close to the Railings."

The recording system used on the Marathon records was known as the Packman cut and was invented by D. J. Packman, who had been a recording expert for Clarion cylinders. Marathon records were excellent and probably would have been a success if their development had not been stopped by the first World War.

The gentleman who had asked some time before for a cylinder record of Dawson singing "The Wolf" should have been happy when Edison issued an Amberol version in October, 1912. Toward the end of the year, H. M. V. pressed a single-faced edition of "The Floral Dance," which Dawson said was his most popular record. The T. M. N. said:

"With a catchy accompaniment, and sung in a rollicking style, Mr. Peter Dawson makes the most of the upper notes in this contagious song of Cornwall. The popular recording basso displays quite a youthful brightness and freshness. ..."

There was no reason why the popular recording basso should not have sounded "youthful and bright." He was only 30 in 1912. A Zonophone record of "The Floral Dance," coupled with "The Admiral's Yarn," came out in April, 1913.

In that same month, Dawson's revered teacher, Sir Charles Santley, though past his prime, was represented by a Columbia disc containing his singing of "To Anthea," and "The Rosary."

Dawson's first Edison Blue Amberol cylinder was announced for February, 1913. I can't keep from laughing at the Talking Machine News' over-serious description of Dawson's Blue Amberol of an old-fashioned "sob" song, "The Volunteer Organist," which appeared a month later:

"The glorious, expressive voice of this eminent artist is heard in all its grandeur and dramatic force in this number. The true rendition of the deep sentiment demanded by the song may be gathered from the story it tells.

"The worthy village preacher of the

day is perplexed by finding a substitute for his organist, who is ill in bed; he begs of someone to volunteer. . . . A ragged, decrepit man—a Rip Van Winkle—slowly rises, and with resolute step wends his way to the organ and plays a voluntary.

"Plaintive and soul-stirring melodies follow; in these the poor human dervish tells the story of his own ill-fortuned life. The service closes; the volunteer organist has disappeared. Mr. Dawson's rendition of the song increases his high reputation as an exponent of the highest phase of lyric art."

The review of Dawson's Zonophone record of "The Bellsinger," and "The Village Blacksmith," must be quoted for humor's sake:

"If we could instruct the scholarly musical Pagan responsible for the orchestration of the above titles, we would like to point out to him that there are certain portions of church music in which the bells need not appear.

Mr. Dawson's fine rendering of 'The Village Blacksmith' has to contend with this state of affairs, for in the well-known song we hear the familiar lines, as follows: 'He hears the parson pray and preach; he hears his daughter's voice (clang) singing in the village choir, and it makes his heart rejoice (clang)'.

"Apart from this, it is a fine record and a beautiful song, and the fact that the bells are legitimately used, with splendid effect, in the song where the old bellsinger tells of his pride in his work, makes the introduction aforementioned all the more prominent."

The news that Dawson had begun another tour of Australia was contained in the T. M. N. for May, 1913, when his Zono record of "A Dinder Courtship," and "The Blue Dragons," received attention:

"Mr. Dawson . . . is on his way to Australia, we believe, and our cousins down under will be sure to give him the welcome he so fully deserves."

Again in September, when his Zono duets with Ernest Pike of "Before the Battle," and "The Two Beggars," were up for consideration:

"The great Peter Dawson of our talking machine world is at present doing a starring tour in the land of his birth, but despite the difference of time and space between Australia and here, we are still under the pleasing charms of his voice."

## II. Recording in War Times

When war began in August, 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dawson and their concert company were in Goulburn, New South Wales. Their Australian tour had been highly successful. They had done equally well in New Zealand, a country with which Peter fell in love, which he frequently revisited, and where he said he would like to "settle down."

During the New Zealand tour he became acquainted with the native Maoris and learned something of their music. This resulted a quarter of a century later in one of his most popular records, the fascinating Maori song about the lissome girl dangling a "tiny ball on end of string."

During the rainy season, Dawson was asked if he would take part in a concert the Maoris were organizing to build an English church in Wairoa. He agreed, and after the concert the Maoris presented him with gifts.

The climax was reached when a beautiful brown girl removed her grass skirt and handed it to him as a keepsake. Although disconcerted for a moment, Peter recovered—and no doubt he was gratified he had

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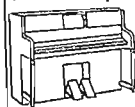
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met a girl so unselfishly generous as to be willing to give him the very skirt off her back!

Not long afterward he appeared before a thousand Maoris and for the first time sang "Waiata Poi" (the "ball and string" song) in their own tongue. As a special surprise he also sang "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary" in Maori.

But on August 4, 1914, that was all in the background and the world's greatest war up to that time was under way. For a while business remained good, but as war casualties mounted it fell off, and, both in New Zealand, which was visited a second time, and Australia, the concerts were given at a heavy loss.

Then a music hall impresario, H. D. MacKintosh, offered Dawson a tour of Australian variety halls. Business was excellent, and he recouped his concert losses.

The Dawson party then went to South Africa, for six weeks in the music halls, before returning to England. Arrived in London, Peter called on the High Commissioner for Australia, and asked his advice about going into military service.

The Commissioner said there was plenty of good war work to be done in England without joining the Army. And Peter was soon busy helping to raise money for War Loan and War Comfort funds.

Meanwhile, his Gramophone and Zonophone records continued to appear, but Edison had abandoned English recording activities. There is to me, an amusing expression in the Talking Machine News' December, 1914, review of Dawson's Zono record of "Devon for Me," and "Onaway, Awake, Beloved."

"If it were not a fact that Peter Dawson hails from 'Down Under,' we should put him down as a Devonian. There are several songs of the West Country in which his rich, strident voice seems to revel, and here is another. When we say that the great gramophone favourite artiste is at his best in both these titles, we are but doing fair justice."

This probably is one of the few times in musical history that "strident" has been used as an adjective of praise when referring to voice quality.

There is nothing half-hearted about the commendation of Dawson's H. M. V. record, "Thou'rt Passing Hence, My Brother," in February, 1915:

"... Of two brothers, one is lying at death's door, while the other addresses the dying man. . . . The brother who is speaking charges the other to take with him a message to heaven to their white-haired father, and to their gentle mother."

"Peter Dawson has magnificently seized the situation, and in strong, resonant, appealing tones he expresses the pathos of the selection in a dramatic manner. The colour of the situation is heightened by the introduction of chimes and an organ obbligato, which latter is masterfully played by Mr. Stanley Roper, famous for his recitals on that monarch of instruments."

I find no mention of Dawson in the Talking Machine News for 1916, but he said in "Fifty Years of Song" that he recorded 40 songs in six weeks, from October 13 to November

23, 1916. I do not have the 1917 issues before December, but records by Dawson were reviewed regularly in 1918, although he appears to have left England late in 1917 to go to Australia and join his homeland's army.

In December there were a number of references to his Zonophone record of "Where the Black-Eyed Susans Grow," and "Down Where the Swanee River Flows," which he sang under the alias of Will Strong. In one mention the magazine did not hint at his identity:

"There is a singer whose name has appeared a good deal of late on Zonophone, who is worthy of far more than a passing notice, although he may not sing the very highest class of song. We refer to Mr. Will Strong, who is the happy possessor of a full, rich, and powerful baritone. . . ."

But, reviewing "Strong's" record of "My Home in the U.S.A.," and "Down Where They Sing the Dear Old Songs," the T. M. N. pointedly commented:

"'Strong baritone'—decidedly so. With a voice singularly in consonance with that of another 'strong baritone' who has recently departed from these shores."

Dawson must have recorded a great many "standard" numbers to be issued during his absence, for his records continued to appear almost every month during that fateful year, 1918, when it seemed doubtful that Britain could survive.

### III. On War Duty—

#### Return to the Canning Factory

As the war dragged on, Peter Dawson decided he could no longer content himself with singing for soldiers or doing other work of "social significance." He felt he had to become one of the fighting force. So he made up his mind to return to his native land and join the Australian Army.

After a short tour of South Africa, he made another tour, at the request of the Australian government, for war loan purposes. Then he became a soldier. This is what the Adelaide Herald said about his enlisting:

"The news that Mr. Peter Dawson, the noted singer, has enlisted, was received regretfully and yet with a certain amount of pleasure by the people of Adelaide. They will miss Peter Dawson, singer and artiste to his finger-tips, but are proud to know he will help represent them at the front."

"Mr. Dawson enlisted at Market Square last evening."

"The announcement was received with cheers. Mr. Dawson was one of the speakers, and he reported phases of the war as he had seen it in England, where he used to visit the hospitals and sing for the wounded."

"After a spirited appeal Mr. Dawson delighted his audience by singing a little soldier song which cheerily predicts that the sunshine will bring through the dark clouds."

Apparently determined to convince the people of Australia that Dawson's enlistment was no propaganda or publicity stunt, the Infantry, in which he had become a foot soldier, showed him no favors.

Fifteen years after he had first arrived in England to begin a musical career, the brilliance of which must have surprised even himself, 35-year-

old Private Peter was assigned to latrine duty. After that he peeled potatoes.

Then he was asked to help in a recruiting drive. This took in some of the more primitive parts of Australia and resulted in enlisting 1,500 men.

Late in 1918, Dawson left Australia for France as a Battalion Orderly Sergeant in the Seventh Division of the Queensland Infantry, but just as the ship was approaching the Panama Canal, word was received over the ship's wireless that the war was over. Many of the men aboard the vessel were disgusted — or said they were — at the prospect of being cheated out of fighting!

After Dawson was granted his honorable discharge, the concert business seemed, for a time, to go to pieces, and he did something which today he can't explain — abandoned his musical career and joined his brothers in operating the factory. Never, probably, did a great musician make a decision less in harmony with his natural impulses.

It could not have been reasonably expected that an artist used to the applause of large audiences and whose records had won him worldwide acclaim would remain long satisfied with the monotonous round of a canning factory, a boiler factory, or any other kind of factory.

After six months of what to him was an unbearably dull life, Peter sent a cablegram to his housekeeper in London, with instructions for her to transmit him the following wire, purporting to be from the Gramophone Company and intended to deceive his business men brothers:

"Return to England immediately stop. Now war is over must hold you to contract stop. Please cable urgently stop Gramophone Company."

The message came back in six hours and, although Peter's brothers argued at first that the Gramophone Company couldn't hold him to any such agreement, they saw the folly of trying to dissuade him and consented to his going back.

Then, the day after the cable arrived, Dawson was offered a six-week singing engagement in Melbourne at \$425 a week. This was followed almost immediately by a request for him to accept a 12-week Southern African tour at \$375.

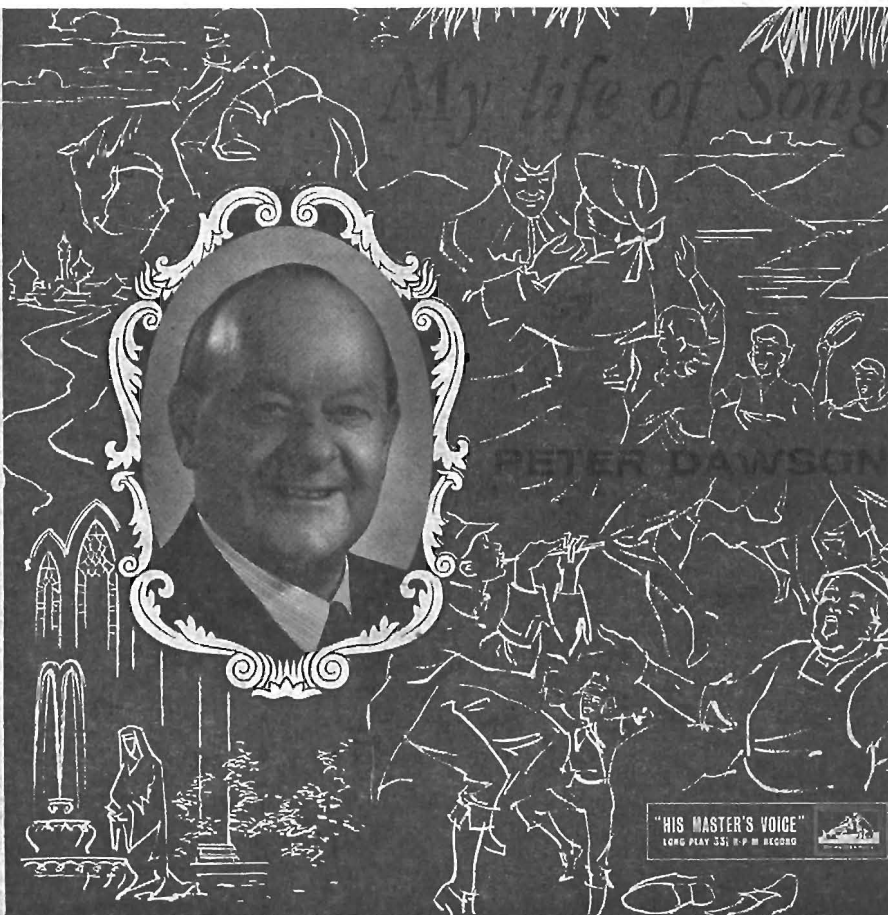
He had lost most of his capital as a result of the war, so these offers were extremely welcome. He played the six weeks in Australia, then headed for England by way of South Africa, where the 12 weeks stretched into 20 at an increase in salary.

### IV. Back in England —

#### More Recording and Concerts

Dawson's first engagement in London, after his return, was at Albert Hall, where he sang in Luisa Tetrazzini's farewell concert. During the next year, besides resuming his regular schedule of making H. M. V. records, he gave concerts all over Britain.

This way of life continued until



1925. Then came the terrible accident in which Mrs. Dawson was so seriously injured she was permanently crippled and it was believed at first she had no chance of living.

Peter and Nan were driving from Glasgow to Newark one Saturday afternoon when their car was in a collision about seven miles from Leeds. The machine turned turtle and skidded 20 yards upside down before it stopped.

Peter was not seriously hurt, but Nan suffered several broken ribs, deep lacerations of one leg, a broken left shoulder, and her head was almost scalped. A few days later gangrene was discovered in the leg and it was saved only by a daring operation.

Naturally, the hospital bills and all the special treatment Mrs. Dawson required struck Peter a crippling financial blow, but his resourceful brother-in-law came to the rescue. Tom Noble persuaded the Gramophone Company to give Peter a special \$20,000 bonus for "past services rendered," and that took care of the money worries.

After Peter's second Australian tour, Tom had talked the Company into giving Dawson better terms—a three-year contract at a minimum guarantee of \$4,000 a year. However both he and Peter realized the basso still was not getting the sort of income he should have from his records.

Some time later a five per cent royalty on the sale of records was added and was still in effect when Peter wrote his book. But before this was done the retainer had been moved up another notch, to \$6,000 a year.

With this guarantee and the royalties, Dawson began to enjoy the handsome income to which he was entitled from his recordings, aside from his concert work.

Incidentally, Peter said Tom Noble, when he was only 18, was an Edison Bell recording superintendent. He had also worked for Edison, and later, under Russell Hunting, was assistant Pathe recording supervisor throughout Europe.

Eventually, Mr. Noble decided he'd had all he wanted of the phonograph and record business and became the managing art editor of the largest group of newspapers in Great Britain—a position he held many years, until he retired.

While I am discussing Peter Dawson's recording arrangements, I should like to question his estimate of the number of his records that have been sold. I do not contend that he exaggerated his sales totals; rather, that he must have woefully underestimated them, according to my calculations.

He said that when "Fifty Years of Song" was written he had recorded about 3,500 numbers and that the

From top to bottom, left to right  
Top left

Peter Dawson, who was a composer as well as a singer, at the piano 30 years or so ago.

Bottom left

Peter Dawson, taken in 1920 when recording at the H.M.V. studios. (Note the old-time recording funnel behind Mr. Dawson's back.)

Right

Peter Dawson's recordings are steadily being reissued in England. These recent issues were sent to Jim Walsh by one of his English record collecting friends, Joe V. J. Cramp of Braintree, Essex.

total sales of his discs and cylinders had reached 13,000,000.

Divide 13,000,000 by 3,500 and, if your figures are like mine, you will get an average sales of considerably less than 5,000 copies per record. To say that the average Dawson record sold only 3,500 or 4,000 copies appears ridiculous.

Even in the fledgling days of the phonograph industry, a 5,000 sale was considered the "break even point." Any figure below that represented a loss.

In view of Dawson's vast popularity (he himself said that many of his records sold in the hundreds of thousands), there must be some-



thing radically wrong with a 13,000,-000 estimate, or one twice that.

Even conceding that many of his records were double-faced, with both sides by himself, the total still seems far too low. Many American performers of the Dawson period, such as Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Ada Jones, and Collins and Harlan, would not have considered 13,000,000 an especially good sales figure for just one year.

#### V. H. M. V.'s Handy Man

During the five years between his return to England and the advent of electric recording, Dawson served as a sort of "handy man" for H. M. V., taking on all sorts of assignments, just as, in this country, Billy Murray had done for Victor, and for instance, he made a set of three 10-inch physical culture records, which were issued without his name.

What could contrast more completely with these spoken physical culture exercises than the Six Australian Bush Songs, which were offered late in 1923? The Talking Machine News critic's review in the December issue was enthusiastic:

"If any singer ought to be able to render these fine songs, it is Mr. Peter Dawson, who was Australian born, and has seen life in the wilds in those youthful days of his before he came to England to place himself under the tuition of the great Sir Charles Santley. . . .

"These are really Australian-made songs from an Australian composer (W. G. James) and we must hail his work as first class. The last two are especially stirring. Good old Peter never sang better."

Well off the beaten path, too, was the February, 1924, record of "The Lament of Shah Jehan," composed by Landon Ronald, an H. M. V. pianist and orchestra conductor for many years:

"... Peter Dawson has a splendid subject for the exercise of his vocal powers. The Shah Jehan . . . was the great Eastern potentate who built the Taj Mahal, the most magnificent tomb in all the world, to the memory of his dead wife.

"The song is one of the finest that Landon Ronald has yet given us. . . . Few singers could give it with such effect as Mr. Dawson."

Another recorded novelty was offered in May, 1924. On a 12-inch record, the Right Hon. W. F. Massey, premier of New Zealand, gave "An Address on the British Empire," on one side, while on the other Peter sang "God Save New Zealand."

No doubt as he recorded the song about the country which he deeply loved, the basso's thoughts went back to his concert tours, his friends the Maoris and the bronzed beauty who went skirtless that he might have a memento of his visit. The T. M. N. said:

"This strikes us as a special record, issued for New Zealanders, but it would apply equally as well to the whole empire. The Right Hon. W. F. Massey makes . . . a thoroughly patriotic speech uttered in dignified tones capable of stirring the most faint hearted.

"On the other side is what may be called the New Zealand National Anthem, sung by Peter Dawson. . . . It has rather a hymn-like tune, but makes a good chorus. . . ."

In the September, 1924, issue of The Gramophone it is interesting to find the veteran critic, Herman Klein, calling Dawson's the best English-sung record of the Pagliacci Prologue. He says, "I like the strong accent and bold diction of the singer."

With the first issue of electrically recorded discs only a few months in the future, the April, 1925, T. M. N. contained what nowadays would be called a "rave review" of an out of the ordinary record. On it Dawson and Robert Radford sang two bass duets: "The Lord is a Man of War," from "Israel in Egypt," and "Sound, Sound the Trumpet," from "Puritani." The critique was unqualifiedly enthusiastic:

"Never have we heard in oratorio such a rendering of 'The Lord is a Man of War' as upon this record. The effect is electrical. The two fine voices are gloriously matched and the weight is balanced until the end.

"It is not often we hear a duet for two basses, and such basses. Were we to search the world through it is doubtful if we could find their compeers. Both understand the management of the voice in singing the music of the old composer, and that is a rarity among modern vocalists.

"On the other side is another grand duet splendidly sung. . . . We have never listened to it half so well delivered as by the two consummate artists who have recorded it upon this disc. . . ."

On the same page was this review of two Dawson solos, "Some Crimson Rose," and "Here's to the Good Old Days."

"After his fine work in duet with Robert Radford, Peter Dawson obliges us with two solos. The first is not in his usual virile style, though his versatility is such that he can infuse almost as much tenderness into his tones as strength and power.

"The second gives him in his more robust and vigorous mood. It suits him better than the other."

Dawson's records were still appearing on Zonophone, while these unusual contributions were being made to the H. M. V. list. In September, for instance, he had a

Zono record of "Bells of the Sea," and "Beyond the Sunset," and in November, "Sleepy Hollow Tune," and "The Song of the Homeward Bound."

Apparently, his more distinctive offerings were reserved for the Gramophone label. The cheaper Zonophones carried his interpretations of popular and semi-popular songs.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Peter Dawson

Part VI

By JIM WALSH

### I. Early Electric Recordings

The year 1925 remained vivid in Peter Dawson's mind, I suspect, for two reasons. One was the traffic accident in which Mrs. Dawson was so painfully crippled she gave up her concert career.

The other was the advent of electrical recording, which made it possible for the basso to sing with more ease and to use the tremendous volume of his full voice. His popularity among British record buyers had been great, of course before microphonic techniques came into use, but it became even greater after the horn method had been scrapped.

One of the most noteworthy of Dawson's early electric recordings is the 12-inch version of the Pagliacci Prologue, which was issued in May, 1926. It replaced the earlier acoustic disc, which Herman Klein had said was the best available interpretation in English. Both sides of the record were required for the complete rendition, concerning which the Talking Machine News said:

"Peter Dawson is one of the finest interpreters of the famous Prologue in English that we know. This is not the

first time we have heard him sing the great solo on a record.

"If we mistake not, it is rather a favorite of his, and we are not surprised, for it gives him magnificent scope for his dramatic power, manly voice, and knowledge of musical color. A fine record."

Equally complimentary were the remarks in June on his 10-inch coupling of "The Gay Highway" and "The Vagabond."

"Our famous bass-baritone, Peter Dawson, is in fine form, but when, may we ask, is this incomparable singer out of form? He is one of the most uniform artists that we know, and one of the most versatile."

In the August issue, Peter contributed a letter to the editor in which he criticized the carelessness of radio singers who did not pronounce their words clearly. This was written some five years before Dawson himself began broadcasting, in 1931, but the letter shows he was already considering the problems of clean enunciation as affected by wireless transmission:

"... It may appear incredible, but it is a fact that there are wireless singers today who actually do not trouble about the words of the songs they sing. They think of the voice, of how they can arrange for a particular effect, and the

result of all this posturing is quite disastrous for the unhappy listener-in.

"Nerves are another frequent cause of failure. I myself do not broadcast, but in my gramophone work I sing into a microphone, and I am never nervous there, unless I have been away for a time, and then I take perhaps an hour before I get into my stride.

"Most wireless singers, on the other hand, do get a fit of nerves when they remember the millions who are listening to them, and that makes them go for a song with too much voice.

"Now, economy in voice is the greatest asset of a wireless artist. A whisper is heard where a shout would become a blur, and the singer from whom the listener-in hears every word is the one who sings quietly at the microphone mouth."

"Yours faithfully,  
"Peter Dawson."

This letter exhibits the careful, intelligent study which Peter Dawson had given to every phase of singing. He realized that, although the microphone made it possible for him to "split the ears of the groundlings," it also made it unnecessary to adopt the shouting style of singing which many artists had been obliged to use if they were to be adequately recorded through the horn.

In June, 1927, another Dawson record was given what might be termed a "rave" review:

"Peter Dawson has made many gramophone records of outstanding quality, but he can never have excelled his renderings of Schubert's 'The Erl King' and Tchaikovsky's 'Don Juan Serenade.'"

"The former song is perhaps the best dramatic ballad ever written, and Mr. Dawson sings it in a way which thrills. The Tchaikovsky, with its lighter subject, is in pleasing contrast."

The February, 1928 T.M.N. contained a note from Dawson, accompanied by a reproduction of his signature, congratulating the editor, Arthur Payne, on the magazine's having attained its 25th anniversary. The title by that time had been changed to The Gramophone and Talking Machine News. Peter used a bit of the Scotch vernacular in his greetings:

"10, Evelyn Grove, Ealing Common, London, W. 5.

"January 26th, 1928

"Dear Arthur Payne: Hearty congratulations for this the 25th year of the publication of Gramophone and Talking Machine News. 'Lang may yer lum reek.'

"With every good wish for continued prosperity from one of the old contemptibles.

"Yours sincerely,  
Peter Dawson."

Another complimentary review was published in March, concerning Dawson's rendition of "Two Old Tramps" and "Captain Stratton's Fancy."

"In the bucolic sentiment of Peter Warlock's breezy 'Captain Stratton's Fancy,' Peter Dawson's fine sturdy methods and downright force of expression are especially well suited, and his rendering of this air is full of bluff heartiness.

"The number on the reverse side is of a more conventional type, but his reading lends it interest and character. As is invariably the case with this fine artist, his recording is splendidly clear



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and natural, and the record is certain of a widespread demand."

Examples of such laudatory critiques of Dawson's earlier electric recordings might be multiplied indefinitely, but enough have been quoted to show that Peter Dawson's prestige was great as the 1920's gave way to the 1930's.

He may have been, on the basis of his recorded performances, the most popular singer in the world. Had he been as well known in North America as he was in the remainder of the globe, his Number One rating could hardly be questioned.

## II. Decline in the Record Business

The depression of October, 1929, caused the sale of phonographs and records in the United States to drop so sharply that a new all-time low was reached in 1932. Record sales that year probably were not 10 per cent of what they had been three years before.

I remember being in a small coal-mine town in Tazewell County, Va., in 1932, and feeling astonished when I saw a sign on a drug store window: "All the new records, 75 cents. Needles, 10 cents a package."

That sign seemed like something out of a past life. All the dealers in my home town of Marion, Va., had given up trying to sell records, and it appeared almost incredible that there still were people who were buying them.

Great Britain was several years later than the States in experiencing a deep decline in record sales, and the drop never was so catastrophic there as it was here. Nevertheless, the trend eventually occurred throughout the British Empire.

Peter Dawson recalled that he was in South Africa during 1934, when the biggest record dealer, McKay & Co., had tied up its stock of discs in "bargain bundles" and was offering them at a few cents each.

And in 1935, Louis Sterling, chairman of the British gramophone "combine," told Dawson the sale of records had fallen off so badly the Company was altering its facilities to manufacture chiefly radio sets. It also turned out some household appliances.

Of course, the record business afterwards came back stronger than it had been. But the 1930's were dark days for manufacturers — and for recording artists.

In a desperate effort to stimulate business, the British companies turned more and more to recording novelties and had their artists undertake assignments off the beaten track. As usual, they showed real enterprise and ingenuity. The Britisher who was still buying records had his pick of a wealth of variety.

However, in the popular records field the American companies produced largely for admirers of crooners or for connoisseurs of the hot jazz and swing bands.

There is a wry amusement in going through The Gramophone from 1934 until the beginning of World War II and noting the off-beat things Dawson was called on to do. Of

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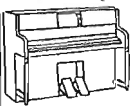
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course he remade many of his acoustic records. In December, 1934, H. M. V. offered an electric version of the most popular of all:

"Peter Dawson has re-recorded 'The Floral Dance,' by Katie Moss, and Al-litsen's 'The Lute Player.' . . . The original record must have sold in thousands, and this new one is magnificent. "This has always been the classic performance of 'The Floral Dance,' while Mr. Dawson's sheer artistry in 'The Lute Player' is overwhelming. Two superb songs, gloriously recorded and magnificently sung."

In April, 1935, the search for novelties was on, and Dawson sang a duet with himself. In so doing he was following the example of Silas Leachman, an American comedian who, in the 1890's, not only recorded duets on cylinders, but on occasion took all four parts of a male quartet:

"Peter Dawson sings the fourth Coleridge-Taylor, the salty 'Sons of the Sea,' backed by a duet with himself, Sergeant's 'Watchman, What of the Night?'"

In December, obviously for the holiday trade, there was a "platter" of "Peter Dawson's Christmas Party."

"Peter Dawson springs a party on H.M.V. C2805. His friends include a famous comedian, and the song, 'The Gendarmes,' as well as some popular hits—new departure for Mr. Dawson. Incidentally, the record lets out the secret as to the composer of 'Boots' and the identity of J. P. McCall."

(In "Fifty Years of Song" Dawson revealed that he published compositions under the assumed names of J. P. McCall, Peter Allison, Evelyn Byrd, Denton Toms, Charles Webber, Arnold Flint, Gilbert Munday, Geoffrey Baxter, and Alison Miller, but in more recent years had dropped all except McCall.)

A year later, in December, 1936, again with the festive season in mind, Peter offered a special record for children:

"Now for the kiddies (and grown-ups, too) a really happy-go-lucky record, 'Uncle Peter's Christmas Party,' with Peter Dawson in a most charming and intimate mood. The children taking part sound full of gaiety and will no doubt spread their high spirits. A spontaneous, happy disc."

By June, 1936, the basso was singing the current popular tunes:

"Peter Dawson . . . records another popular hit in 'There'll Be No South' from the film, 'The Music Goes 'Round.' On the back is an echo of 'Trees' in 'I See a Tree,' by Hodges."

"I do not believe Mr. Dawson could make a dull record if he tried."

One month later, Dawson had entered the pseudo-Western or hillbilly field, undoubtedly not to his complete pleasure:

"The Wild West has already threatened this department, and there is an easy conquest this month with Peter Dawson singing 'Rolling Along' from the film, 'The Music Goes 'Round,' and 'Load the Covered Wagon.'"

"The former is an immediate hit of the rhythmic variety, but even Mr. Dawson is unable to make much of the Wagon. P. D. has for long been the reviewer's solace, but I hope that he is not going to end his career with nothing better than a succession of 'vocal refrains.'"

There must have been rumors that Dawson was thinking of giving up his busy career, for in August The Gramophone said:

"We learn from an evening paper that Peter Dawson has no intention of retiring. This is good news, and to cele-

brate it we can enjoy his recording of 'The Shepherd Boy's Song.' On the back is a song called 'A Song for You and Me.'"

The reviewer was in a deprecatory mood in September:

"As for Peter Dawson. I can only say how sorry I am that he should have fallen for the hill-billy. His songs this month are 'Covered Wagon Lullaby' and 'Empty Saddles,' both from the film, 'Rhythm on the Range.' 'Empty Saddles' is the better, being somewhat out of the rut, and Mr. Dawson makes a huge success of it."

Peter himself said he received hundreds of letters abusing him for singing such songs, but consoled himself with the knowledge that they were selling well by 1936 standards. In October, he presented two numbers from his standard repertory:

"There is a splendid record from Peter Dawson, who emerges unscathed from his sojourn on the prairie. His dramatic powers are fully exploited in two poems by Kipling, the famous 'Mother O' Mine,' by Tours, and 'Danny Deever,' by Damosoh. . . . I shall look forward to more records like this."

Our Australian friend made a return to the land of the hillbillies, or at least of the cowboys, in December:

"Peter Dawson prepares us for the Coronation with a song especially written for the occasion by Ord Hamilton called 'Song of the Grateful Heart.' Here is hope. On the reverse is 'There's a Bride Hanging on the Wall,' by Carson Robison, the pioneer of the hill-billy. Here is despair."

The coronation, of course, was that of King George VI, whose brother, now the Duke of Windsor, had abdicated. The event was obviously the inspiration for Dawson's record in April, 1937:

"Mr. Dawson finds his true form in a glorious medley of patriotic songs: 'Britain's Heritage,' with chorus and orchestra. . . . Here we have 'Hearts of Oak,' 'The Old Brigade,' 'Lads in Navy Blue,' 'Here's a Health Unto His Majesty,' 'Rule Britannia,' 'Soldiers of the King,' 'Private Tommy Atkins,' 'British Grenadiers' and 'Red, White and Blue,' and all magnificently sung, played and recorded."

Peter sang one of his own "McCall" songs in September:

"Peter Dawson presents a new song of his own, called 'Fret-Foot' . . . which is about ships, and a little known song by Cadman . . . 'Builder' is highly effective, especially so in the hands of Mr. Dawson."

In November, 1938, there is this eulogistic comment:

"Peter Dawson, who disappeared last month for the first time within living memory has come back into the fold and once more shows how gramophone records should be made. His record of 'Bless This House,' with organ accompaniment, is a masterpiece of natural recording. . . . On the other side is 'Poor Man's Garden.'"

In January, 1939, with the beginning of the war only a few months away:

"I am happy to welcome a recording of (Geoffrey) O'Hara's fine song, 'There is No Death.' It is surprising that this is not better known for here is a tone picture of immortality unadulterated by individual desire."

"Here is no pious hope, no selfish wish, nor any maudlin sentiment. Peter Dawson declaims this fact of life with due solemnity, yet touched with 'holv gaiety.' . . . On the back of this record is the singer's own 'The Lord is King.'"

Dawson's record for April, 1939, was something of so difficult a na-

ture that the reviewer confessed he couldn't make out what it was about, but still liked it:

"It is something of an event that, in deciding to record music worthy of his voice, Peter Dawson should have chosen a song by (Sir Arnold) Bax. 'Rann of Exile' is a difficult song, both to sing and to understand."

"I myself do not understand it, but that is precisely the reason why such a song should be bought and studied. Every bit of Bax that finds its way onto wax contributes to an understanding of this fine thinker, and hastens the recognition of one of the most distinguished artists of our time."

"But this record will sell because it also contains one of the few songs of a man who is loved wherever music is revered. Elgar's 'Speak, Music!' is not only easy to understand; it is a lovely song."

"I hope that this fine record is an indication that Mr. Dawson is reverting to the practice of those far-off days when he recorded good music, which included not a few first recordings."

I imagine it would be interesting to compare the sales figures for "Rann of Exile" with those for "There's an Empty Saddle!"

Dawson's record for August, 1939, combined a very old song with one relatively new, and both excellent of their kind:

"Peter Dawson sings 'Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes,' but this is not available at the time of writing. However, I can recommend the other side of this record, which contains Haydn Wood's 'Roses of Picardy,' with organ accompaniment."

"This is almost thrilling, and shows that Mr. Dawson can still knock 'em cold when he likes. Records like this will be treasured for years and with good reason."

And then came World War II.

### III. More Patriotic Services

When the second World War began, Peter was in Australia on a concert tour, as he had been at the beginning of the first. Once more the musical business came almost to a standstill, and the singer was too old for active military service.

So he agreed to join his brother's firm of Messrs T. Dawson and Sons, as "Number 1 Handshake," at a salary of \$60 a week. His duties were to pay "courtesy" calls on prospective customers and government officials who would be interested in buying tin containers for food stuffs, tins for oil-drums, and the like. After a while Dawson obtained more orders than the Company could turn out.

Then, in 1942, the New Zealand government had him fly to his "dream country" for a four-weeks tour to aid a campaign for a War Loan of \$75,000,000. The money was raised within two weeks, after which he returned to his hand-shaking performances and helped raise money for Australian War Loans, Comfort Funds, and Food for Britain parcels. He was also active in recruitment programs.

Australia's greatest bass-baritone did not entirely give up recording because of the stress of patriotic duties and his absence from England. The September, 1946, Gramophone contained a list of records made "Down Under" during the war period.

One was a double-faced H. M. V.





Peter Dawson recording in a special studio erected at the Ideal Home Exhibition in 1926.

by Dawson, "The Lord is My Shepherd" and "God Make Me Kind." He may have contributed others during his long stay in his homeland. As soon as he returned to England after the War's end he took up where he had left off and once more recorded frequently.

#### IV. "Waltzing Matilda" and "Waiata Poi"

A disc which may turn out to be the most lastingly popular of all Dawson's records (it has certainly been his biggest seller in the States) came into wide acclaim while he was in Australia, although it had been recorded a few years before.

It was a 10-inch H. M. V. coupling of "Waltzing Matilda," which may be considered the unofficial Australian national anthem, and the captivating Maori song which he had first sung a quarter of a century before, "Waiata Poi," better known nowadays as "Tiny Ball on End of String."

When it was issued in England in September, 1938, the Gramophone reviewer, Roger Wimbush, showed an almost unbelievable obtuseness in not recognizing the disc's remarkable qualities. He gave it about as close to an unfavorable description as Dawson ever got in Gramophone write-ups:

"Peter Dawson comes next, not so much for any intrinsic interest in his

songs, but because the label of the record bears the name of Dr. Thomas Wood, one of the most vital if least known influences in music today.

"Dr Wood's professional life is divided among three loves—music, the sea, and Oxford. . . . His books are a delight, and any who heard his recent series of broadcasts, given under the heading, 'Waltzing Matilda,' will be interested in his arrangement of the song of that name here given by Mr. Dawson.

"Knowing nothing of Australian life, I cannot comment on the song; still less can I tell you anything about its companion except that it is called 'Waiata Poi,' is written by a man called Hill, and is exceedingly noisy on this record. The general racket is not mitigated by the exuberance of the chorus."

In December, 1941, H. M. V., for some reason, reissued "Waltzing Matilda" under a new number, with Dawson singing "The Winding Road" on the B side. The original combination was retained in the catalog, however, and was the better seller.

It was the coupling of the Australian bushranger ballad and the Maori number which RCA Victor made available to the American public on Red Seal disc 10-1025, after the two songs' fame had become world-wide.

Peter Hugh Reed's review in the *American Music Lover* for November, 1942, is especially interesting because it explains some of the strange Australian slang that has puzzled American hearers of "Waltzing Matilda." He also quotes from a second, and more complimentary, Gramophone review which I have not seen:

"It was Richard Dyer-Bennett who first introduced the 19th century Australian Bush Song, 'The Swagman' or 'Waltzing Matilda' to the American public. Dyer-Bennett, it will be recalled, includes this song in his Keynote album. . .

"Matilda, according to Bennett, is no girl, but rather a nickname for the stick of the swagman, or hobo. The hobo captures a jambuck or young lamb while waiting by the billabong (a puddle in a dried up river bed), and in turn is pursued by a stockman and troopers. The swagman jumps into the billabong, and thereafter his ghost can be heard singing the familiar refrain of 'Waltzing Matilda.'"

"There is an irresistible lilt to this song" and a certain nostalgic quality which makes it instantly appealing. As for the other song, it is a tuneful tale about a Maori maiden, written in a familiar occidental ballad style.

"Peter Dawson has long been a singer highly beloved by the English, and understandably so, for he has the same gift of putting a song across that John McCormack possesses. Dawson's singing belies his years in this record. . .

"What The Gramophone said about his 'Waltzing Matilda' can be repeated here: 'He has never made a record more full of the healthy, robust I-sing-because-I-like-it spirit of which he is still the master. 'Waltzing Matilda' is a popular Australian Bush Song, the equivalent of the hill-billy, and is a piece of infectious nonsense sung to a swinging tune."

"Rather reluctantly we admit Dawson makes more of this song than did Dyer-Bennett. We urge readers to hear this recording: maybe after a time one will grow tired of the tune, but in the meantime we believe there is considerable pleasure to be derived from it. The recording here is first-rate."

American soldiers who mingled with Australian troops appear to have been a big factor in making "Waltzing Matilda" popular in the States. The Victor record sold thousands of copies — the only Dawson disc that had a large circulation in this country.



A fairly late photo of Peter Dawson sent to Jim Walsh by Tom Noble.  
—From the collection of the author

Around 1925, however, when Victor was trying to stimulate its dwindling business by importing European records to special order, many of Dawson's H. M. V. productions were made available to American buyers.

#### V. Random Recollections

I have a feeling of relief as I near the end of this extended series. Through no fault of my subject but rather because of the length and richness of Peter Dawson's career, it has been one of the most difficult themes I have ever undertaken and struggled to keep within reasonable bounds.

The actual writing began a year ago last January, although most of the reference materials had been assembled long before. Four installments and a part of the fifth were written before pressure of other matters made it necessary to abandon the project for a considerable time.

Then the little man with the strident voice whom I mentioned in the first installment began nagging me to return to duty. I did, but found it hard, after a lapse of months, to weave the threads of my story together into a smoothly flowing narrative. Because of that difficulty, many pages have been rewritten half a dozen times.

But now, I gratefully see the end approaching. Since Dawson's outstanding records after his return to England in the 1940's have already been mentioned, I feel I can best conclude by giving a few of his random recollections of his recording career, followed by a tribute from his friend, the late Fred Gaisberg.

Peter recalled that when he was giving recitals in Ireland during the Sinn Fein troubles, absent-mindedness nearly caused him to run the risk of being lynched. One night, after responding to many encores, he told his accompanist, Hubert



Peter Dawson's photo was on the cover of the November, 1930, HMV Australian supplement.



PETER DAWSON parting with regret from his dogs when leaving for Australia, 1935.

Barth, to signify that the recital was over by playing 'God Save the King.'

Barth started to the piano, but luckily recalled in time what was likely to happen if a group of irascible Irish were "insulted" by the British national anthem. He merely bowed to the audience.

Dawson himself realized the danger that had been averted when he saw what Barth did.

Peter believed that one of the most important steps in the art of recording occurred in 1912 when, with George W. Byng conducting, H. M. V. recorded the Gilbert and Sullivan operas virtually in their entirety.

Besides himself, the artists who took part were Bessie Jones, Violet Essex, Gladys Jones, Nellie Walker, Edna Thornton, Robert Radford, Harold Wilde, George Baker (who still sings in recorded G. and S. productions), Edward Halland, Ernest Pike, Walter Glynne, and Derek Oldham.

On one occasion, at about the same period, Dawson had what he termed "a narrow escape from a nasty accident" while a group was recording a dramatic production, "The Wreck of a Troopship."

The assistant recorder was using a huge hammer to strike a sheet of tin to produce effects intended to duplicate the distant rumble of thunder. He hit so hard he pulled the sheet loose from its ceiling fastening, and the whole thing, including the heavy hook, fell on Peter. If the iron bolt had struck his head it might have been "curtains." Fortunately, it hit him only on the shoulder.

During that same session a mechanic was arranging an electric light, which depended on a counterweight to achieve varying heights, when it also fell — and struck Our Hero.

He said that after the session was over he discovered his head was ornamented with a large knot.

He also recalled an incident centering around Harry Lauder, who must have been almost as difficult as Nellie Melba to work with. Lauder thought the flute player wasn't following the score, and told him twice, "I want you to play only what's written."

On the third occasion Lauder shouted, "I want you to play only what is in the music, and nothing more." This time the orchestra played the melody, and the flutist solemnly moved his fingers over the keys but didn't breathe a note.

Lauder said, "Thank you, that is exactly how I like it," and then wondered why the orchestra laughed. When he found out what had happened he became much provoked and gave orders that the flute manipulator should never play with him again.

Dawson's fellow Australian, the comedian Albert Whelan, has been mentioned in an earlier installment. Whelan normally had a baritone voice, but he was also able to sing treble. When H. M. V. was about to record a series of choir records, Whelan applied for the part of treble singer, was accepted after a test, and sang falsetto in 20 hymn records.

The basso said that of the 3,500 songs he recorded, he probably enjoyed singing only about five per cent, or 175. Records he especially liked to make were: Stanford's "Songs of the Sea," "The Lute Player," "Largo al Factotum," and several Kipling poems set to music ("Mandalay Scena," which Dawson recorded in stereo, was his own setting of four scenes from "On the Road to Mandalay").

He listed also "The Floral Dance," "The Kerry Dance," "The Song of the Flea," "Pagliacci Prolog," "Lover in Damascus," and "I am a Roamer." And he included the Maori Song, "because I could let myself go in the true Maori fashion."

He had many favorite hymns, besides "Little Prayer I Love," "Bless This House," "I Heard a Forest

Praying," and "None But the Weary Heart."

He said: "I have never taken my recording lightly. Every song I recorded received my full attention and study. In short, I never 'pigged' my work, however unimportant the song may have been."

Dawson was proud of knowing that King George V had an excellent selection of his records, and Winston Churchill is said to have one of the finest Dawson collections.

Dawson was pleased when the crotchety Sir Thomas Beecham said he knew of no other baritone who could equal Dawson in singing Handel's music.

And in 1951, interviewed by the Melbourne Herald, Dawson summed up the accomplishments and potentialities of recorded music in this paragraph:

"Few musicians who can think straight and are not musical Pharisees can fail to admit that... today reproduction has been made almost perfect by electric processes, which have enabled the song and the music of the great geniuses to be preserved for posterity; deathless, imperishable, for ever able to teach students and to charm audiences. To overlook this grand achievement of mechanical progress is to write oneself a fool."

In a lighter vein, an Australian HOBBIES reader has sent me a clipping from a 1956 newspaper, showing Dawson with his face registering displeasure as he listened to an American record of Frankie Laine's "On the Road to Mandalay." The veteran basso was quoted as saying it was

(Continued on page 56)

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy and sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. au3863

SHEET MUSIC, 1900 and up. Over 300. Send for free list. All \$1 each. — Rio Verdi Antiques, 854 Taunton Ave., East Providence, Rhode Island. d6867

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colo. s12698

#### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

Chordaphon table model zither music box, 13 steel discs. Collectors item. — A. Nickels, 1054 La Mesa Pl., Fullerton, Calif. jly3403

#### MISC. MUSIC FOR SALE

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NOTICE: Will be on vacation the month of May. Open for business on June 1st. All orders and correspondence will be taken care of on my return. Thanking you. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. my1882

#### PIANOS & ROLLS

Wanted: Welte, Deluxe, Duo-Art and Ampico rolls. — T. P. Grattelo, 1519 California St., San Francisco, Calif. au3804

#### MISC. MUSIC WANTED

Mills, Virtuoso Rolls with some familiar tunes. Quote price, condition and name of tune. — P. M. Connelly, 710 Washington Blvd., Oak Park, Ill. je3255

#### PIANOS FOR SALE

STEINWAY Duo-Art Planola, electric, 6 foot, 6 inch grand, serial No. C-4539. Originally purchased, ca. 1927; planola rebuilt, ca. 1940. Near perfect condition; rarely used. Performs all planola functions. Mahogany case, generally shiny, some checking, no scratches. Local concert pianists call tone and action excellent. Accompanying brocade velvet mahogany bench and mahogany piano roll console. Over 100 rolls, popular and classical, including two by Paderewski. Altogether a very rare item. — Arthur Lee Homan, 13 Elmgrove Ave., Troy, N. Y. je38421

## PETER DAWSON

(Continued from page 36)

the last time he'd listen to that record.

As a loyal Virginian, I'd like to hear his opinion of Laine's interpretation of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" in which the words and tune, I think, are garbled. I consider it an unfortunate record of Virginia's state song, and I imagine Dawson would agree.

### VI. Fred Gaisberg's Tribute

In January, 1949, after Peter Dawson had temporarily returned to Australia, following an extended English stay, his old friend, Fred Gaisberg paid him a tribute in *The Gramophone*. In part he said:

"Dawson, like his great master, Charles Santley, in the past, continues to produce beautiful music with his voice as the years roll on, to the amazement of everyone. The good master started him in the right direction and that is the reason Peter still is able to give recitals with a fresh and youthful voice after 45 years of career.

"He recorded for the H.M.V. November supplement two of his old favorites, 'There is a Green Hill Far Away' and 'Nazareth,' with another Dawson (Herbert) at the organ. There was the same pathos and throb in the voice that had made the tears well up in thousands of eyes.

"At 20 years of age, in the autumn of 1902, Peter Dawson arrived in England. To keep the pot boiling, Dawson accepted all and sundry engagements, smokers, seaside concert parties, and phonograph recording.

"Russell Hunting, then recording engineer for Edison Bell, immediately spotted the record-making possibilities of this youngster's voice and gave me the tip. Within a few weeks I had him making popular, comic and serious ballads, oratorio and opera arias, Gilbert and Sullivan, solos, duets, trios, quartets, chorus, etc. His weekly cheque amounted to anything from 30 to 50 pounds, and this continued year in and year out.

"The velvety quality of his well-produced voice, his ability to throw pathos, tears, laughter and drama into it, his quickness at reading, musicianship and contagious good humor, made him a recorder's dream come true. At one time the gramophone catalog listed 212 solo titles of Dawson's, not counting the concerted works he took part in.

"Peter and his life-long companion and wife, Nan, sailed for Australia on the Orchideson Tuesday December 14, but on the Friday before, at the Savoy Hotel, he was guest of honor at a cocktail party presided over by Sir Ernest Fisk, managing director of the E.M.I.

"The occasion was a God-speed and the presentation of the latest H.M.V. gramophone, known as Model 2000, indeed a beautiful machine that nearly took Peter's breath away, but more precious still was a gift of an original spring-motor gramophone of 1898 as used in the 'His Master's Voice' picture.

"This captured Peter's heart and he announced that the old relic should accompany him to Australia and the beautiful new gramophone should remain in England until he returned.

"The 30 or so guests present were all friends and colleagues of long standing, and each was required to sign a remembrance plaque for Peter. The climax was when the good-natured Peter sang that evergreen favorite which his voice has made known the world over, 'The Kerry Dance.' Surely there never was such a congenial and enjoyable party, thanks to the ever-youthful spirit of Dawson.

"He still had to sing one last gramophone session, and the following Saturday morning he turned up fresh as a daisy to record the old Scotch song, 'Turn Ye to Me,' and the Handel aria, 'Silent Worship.' I hope the records will

be successful, as I will cherish them greatly."

Peter Dawson returned to England more than once after Gaisberg's article was written, but toward the last he decided to remain in his homeland. Nothing would have given me greater joy than to know him and to have had long talks about his recording days.

I hope, however, HOBBIES readers will read and enjoy these articles, which have at last come into being after a "process of incubation" extending over many years.

### The End.

POSTSCRIPT. April 16, 1962. Since the foregoing was written months ago I have learned that Peter Dawson remarried after the death of his first wife. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mae Bedford Dawson, to whom I know all HOBBIES readers extend sympathy in her sad loss.

Meanwhile, Dawson records continue to be reissued in both England and Australia. In February, 1962, English HMV announced a 45 RPM containing two of the singer's most popular numbers, "The Floral Dance" and "A Bachelor Gay." And I have just received from Quentin Riggs an Australian record supplement for March listing a long-player, "The Boys of the Old Brigade," containing 18 selections, more than half of which are musical settings of Rudyard Kipling's poems.

—O—

I was pleased to see that *The Gramophone's* reviewer, in mentioning the February Dawson record, concurred in my belief that the basso's voice may have been, a generation ago, the best known in the world. The veteran critic, W. A. Chislett, said: "A single in the HMV 'Your Kind of Music' series will have nostalgic memories for older readers, for it brings back the voice of Peter Dawson, probably the most familiar voice in the world for the 30 years or so before the second World War, not even excepting that of Caruso. It is a particularly fitting memento of the man who had the longest and most versatile recording career of any singer. . . ." J.W.

## OLD METALS

(Continued from page 43)

### WOLVINIUS

A Carolingian enameler of the 9th century. An extant example of his work is an altar screen, the Pallotto of St. Ambrogio in Milan. Quite remarkable is the cloisonne ornament which frames the altar-piece.

### WYNN, ROBERT

In accordance with trade practices of the 18th century, various techniques of enameling were generally guarded as personal secrets by master English enamellers. Valuable vocational knowledge was lost when an enameler died without leaving documentary instructions by which his craft could be continued.

Some of these valuable formulas were saved from oblivion, however, by a highly skilled and experienced enameler, Robert Wynn of Wellington Place, Vauxhall, London.

In 1817, Wynn disclosed to the Society of Arts a document containing formulas for making colored enamels such as had long been used for decorating the finest quality enamel box tops. The Society voted a monetary consideration to Wynn and placed specimens of the enamels in its repository.

### WYSSENBACH, RUDOLPH

A 16th century pattern maker who worked in Zurich, Switzerland, an important center of the goldsmith's art. In 1549, Wyssenbach issued his rare pattern book of arabesques for goldsmiths and enamellers.

### YANG TZ'U

Painted enamels on copper are generally known to the Chinese as yang tz'u (foreign porcelain), indicating the introduction of this enamel technique from abroad.

Enamels painted on porcelain, with the same range of colors, are known as yang ts'ai (foreign colors), the word "porcelain" being understood.

### YARDLEY, JOHN (1770-1854)

Grandson of the first Wednesbury enameler, John Yardley was probably the last of the old English master enamellers. He abandoned the craft in 1840. His name was entered in the Directory of 1817 as an "enamel box and toy watch maker."

The toy watches were merely hollow cases, with hands and hours painted on the dials. Miners and iron-workers wore these watches, attached to great rattling chains of tinned wire, with their Sunday-best attire. Similar watches, about a foot in diameter, hung in taverns.

### YARDLEY, SAMUEL I.

The first of the Wednesbury enamellers, and considered by some to have been responsible for introducing new mechanical methods of producing enamel mounts.

Samuel Yardley I developed a certain flamboyancy of color and pattern, and his enamels were characterized by a highly glazed finish.

### YARDLEY, SAMUEL II.

A Wednesbury enameler, son of Samuel Yardley I, who was chiefly occupied in managing the business through the early years of the Napoleonic wars.

The Yardleys were successful in overcoming the war-time depression. They made boxes, buttons, brooches, and breast-plates for frilled shirt-fronts.

### YORK HOUSE

Stephen Theodore Janssen, originator of Battersea enamels, acquired York House, formerly the London residence of the Archbishop of York, in 1753.

Battersea enamels were made at York House during a brief period of artistic brilliance.

Janssen was declared bankrupt in 1756.

### YUAN ENAMELS

The theory that Chinese enamels were first made during the Yuan, or Mongolian dynasty is confirmed by the marks inscribed on certain extant examples. Among the earliest marks noted is that of the last emperor of the dynasty, Chih Cheng nien chih, "made in the period of Chih Cheng" (1341-1367).

### YUNG CHENG

The enamelwork of Yung Cheng (1723-1735) is not unlike that of his predecessor, K'ang Hsi (1662-1722). Splendid sets of ritual vessels and altar-pieces were enameled in the best cloisonne style of the period, with symbolic designs of appropriate character.

These were placed in the great Lama Monastery Yung Ho Kung in Peking. One outstanding set consisted of an incense urn, pricket candlesticks, and a pair of flower vases, over 6 feet in height. These stood on carved marble pedestals.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## A REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS

By JIM WALSH

Long distance runners relish a breathing spell after winning a hard race.

Bearing that in mind, I usually give readers of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists a "break" at the end of a protracted series, such as the one about Peter Dawson, which ended last month.

I expect to begin soon the life story of one of my favorite comedienne, which I am sure HOBBIES readers will find especially interesting, since much of it will be told in the gifted lady's own words.

The fact that I had, for years, feared her to be dead instead of, as she is, in vigorous health and completely active and alert, makes the prospect of the series all the more gratifying to me. For the time being I withhold my future subject's name.

Instead, I shall provide a "break" by returning to the subject I discussed last December, when I published an alphabetical list of the births and deaths of pioneer recording artists. Few things I have done during my many years with HOBBIES have attracted so much attention and won so much approval.

As I had expected, many readers found unavoidable errors and others

filled in many missing details. Several dozen took the trouble to let me know where Marie Dressler and Joseph Jefferson died.

Although so many were helpful, I feel that I should express special thanks to Henry Y. Porter, of Reading, Mass., Ed Manning of London, Ontario, and Samuel Stark, of San Francisco.

Mr. Porter sent many names of artists missing from my list. And Mr. Stark, who probably has the largest file in existence of information concerning theatrical personalities, took the trouble to go through my entire list and let me know every instance in which his own compilation differed from mine.

He undoubtedly will find some differences of time and place when he compares this latest list with his, but, as I said in the December article, it is impossible to obtain absolutely accurate birthplaces, birth dates, and places and dates of deaths when writing about bygone musicians. Even the many reference books one may consult seldom agree.

At any rate, I have decided that it would be well to publish the supplementary, revised list which you are about to read. Because of space

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

limitations, I omitted many artists, mostly famous operatic performers, from my December list. Geraldine Farrar, as an example, was not included because I thought it should be easy for the average person to learn when and where this distinguished diva, who is still happily with us, was born.

Other names were left out because of lack of information. I did not, I remember, give birth and death dates for one of the first women recording artists, Grace Spencer, because I didn't have them. Now, however, I have obtained the information I needed from her daughter, Mrs. Grace Wilson, of Miami Shores, Fla., and Grace Spencer takes her rightful place.

My omission of Olive Kline was a matter of concern to several correspondents, but although this exquisite soprano is one of my great enthusiasms I didn't know, and still don't when and where she was born. I have the impression her birth occurred in upstate New York and would guess she was born about 1888, but place and time are not guaranteed.

As I have indicated, this is intended primarily as a supplementary list, to include artists, mostly of operatic caliber, who were omitted in the December article. However, many about whom I have obtained additional information, or about whom I have discovered my preceding statements were erroneous, are included in the new list.

Wherever a name occurs in both lists it is because of additional information or to correct a preceding mistake. There is one exception.

The information I gave about one of the greatest American operatic tenors, Riccardo Martin, was correct, but I am repeating it to have an excuse for reproducing three excellent photos of Martin which were furnished me by the U. S. District Attorney in Roanoke, Va., Thomas B. Mason. My friend, Mr. Thomas, was a relative by marriage of the Kentucky-born singer. And I greatly appreciate the loan of these family photos from Mr. Mason for purposes of illustration.

I am using the same system of abbreviations in this latest list that I did in the former, with one addition. Following a few names I have written an "I," which means that the artist is still alive and living in whatever place name follows the I.

I hope this list will prove even more useful than the original one. And it may be that in another two or three years I can publish a still more comprehensive one, including not only all the names in these first two but others which will come to my attention later.

I promise to provide soon a list of all the HOBBIES articles I have written about recording artists since my department began in January,



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Riccardo Martin as Johnson in the Puccini opera, "The Girl of the Golden West."

1942. I have many requests for this information, but it has become too burdensome to type individual lists, so I hope this printed one, which will be printed soon, will be preserved.

On this subject, I'd like to apologize to scores of readers whose letters I haven't been able to answer in recent months. My workaday duties have increased to such an extent that I no longer have time to carry on a regular correspondence with anybody.

Not only that, but I have been under doctor's orders for some time to "slow down" because of a stomach ailment that isn't exactly an ulcer but is about as worrisome as the real thing.

Many of my good friends—among them Glenn Crossett, Burns Katzenburg, Wilbur Leverett, Milford Fargo, Steve Gilman, Howard Weilmuenster, Bob Burwell, Harold Smith, and many others too numerous to identify—have been waiting more or less patiently half a year or more for me to write to them. Eventually I shall.

However, many other letters, especially those from people offering to sell me old records or wanting to know where old records can be sold, probably never will be answered—simply from lack of time.

Once more, let me reiterate what I say each month in my HOBBIES advertisements: Please do not send me lists of records and ask what I am willing to pay for them. I do not want to buy old records, except for a few Pathes by one of my favorite comedians, Gene Greene—and I don't want even them if I already have good copies of those same records. And I cannot tell anybody where to sell records. All I can do is suggest that instead of asking me, you write to the people who advertise in HOBBIES each month that they do want to sell records!

Here now is the revised supplementary list of births and deaths.

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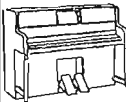

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17x

## A DIRECTORY OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS

- ABOTT, BESSIE, b. Riverside, N.Y., 1878; d. New York, Feb. 7, 1919.
- ACKTE, AINO, b. Helsingfors, Apr. 23, 1876; d. Nummela, Aug. 8, 1944.
- ADAMS, BOB, (of "The Two Bobs"), d. Maidenhead, England, Feb. 29, 1948 (74).
- ADAMS, SUZANNE, b. Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 28, 1872; d. London, Feb. 5, 1953.
- ADKINS, MORTON, b. Cleveland, O., Oct. 31, 1877.
- ALBANI, EMMA, b. Chambley, Que., Nov. 1, 1852; d. London, Apr. 3, 1930.
- ALCOCK, MERLE, b. Andover, Mo., 1890.
- ALLIN, NORMAN, b. Ashton-Under-Lyne, Eng., Nov. 19, 1885.
- ALPERT, PAULINE, b. New York, 1912.
- ANDERSON, MARIAN, b. Philadelphia, Feb. 17, 1902.
- ANSELM, GIUSEPPE, b. Catania, Sicily, Nov. 16, 1876; d. Zoagli, Italy, May 27, 1929.
- ARDEN, CECIL, b. New York, Dec. 15, 1895.
- ATWELL, ROY, b. Syracuse, N. Y.; d. New York, Feb. 6, 1962 (83).
- AUSTRAL, FLORENCE, b. Melbourne, Apr. 26, 1894.
- AVERY, VAN, b. Chicago, ab. 1879; d. Jan. 4, 1937.
- BACHAUS, WILHELM, b. Leipzig, Mar. 26, 1884.
- BAILEY, MILDRED, b. near Spokane, Wash., 1903; d. Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Dec. 12, 1951.
- BAKER, CHARLES ALBERT, b. Akron, O., Dec. 27, 1883.
- BAKER, GEORGE, b. Birkenhead, Eng., Feb. 10, 1885; l. London.
- BAKLANOFF, GEORGES, b. St. Petersburg, Russia, Jan. 18, 1882; d. (?)
- BALL, ERNEST R., b. Cleveland, O., July 21, 1878; d. Santa Ana, Cal., May 3, 1927.
- BALL, RAE ELEANOR, b. Cleveland, O., ab. 1896.
- BARD, WILKIE, b. Manchester, Eng., 1874; d. Eng., May 5, 1944.
- BARDSLEY, JOHN, b. Fainworth, Lancashire, Eng., June 10, 1883; d. Eng., Apr. 6, 1916.
- BARRIENTOS, MARIA, b. Barcelona, March 10, 1884; d. Cibourge, Aug. 8, 1946.
- BARSTOW, VERA, b. Celina, O., June 3, 1893.
- BARTH, HANS, b. Leipzig, Germany, June 25, 1897; d. Jacksonville, Fla., Dec. 8, 1956.
- BATES, THORPE, b. London, Feb. 11, 1883.
- BATTISTINI, MATTIA, b. Rome, Feb. 27, 1857; d. Rome, Nov. 7, 1928.
- BATTLE, REX, b. London, Jan. 4, 1895.
- BAYES, NORA, b. Milwaukee, Wis., 1880; d. Brooklyn, Mar. 19, 1928.
- BEARD, BILLY, b. Columbia, S. C., Sept. 1, 1879; d. Atlanta, Ga., Dec. 14, 1954.
- BEDDOE, DAN, b. Ameraman, Glamorgan, Wales, Mar. 16, 1863; d. New York, Dec. 26, 1937.
- BELL, DIGBY, b. Milwaukee, 1849; d. New York, June 20, 1917.
- BERNHARDT, SARAH, b. Paris, Oct. 22, 1845; d. Paris, Mar. 26, 1933.
- BERRY, WILLIAM HENRY (first recording artist interviewed when Talking Machine News was founded in 1903), b. London, Mar. 23, 1870; d. Herne Bay, Eng., May 2, 1951.
- BLAUVELT, LILLIAN, b. Brooklyn, Mar. 16, 1873; d. Pasadena, Cal., Aug. 29, 1947.
- BONINSEGNA, CELESTINA, b. Reggio Emilia, Italy, Feb. 26, 1877; d. Milan, Feb. 14, 1947.
- BORDONI, IRENE, b. Paris, Jan. 16, 1893; d. New York, Mar. 19, 1953.
- BORI, LUCREZIA, b. Valencia, Spain, Dec. 24, 1887; d. New York, May 14, 1960.
- BOURDON, ROSARIO, b. Longueuil, Que., Mar. 6, 1885; d. New York, Apr. 24, 1961.
- BROOKS, SHELTON, b. Amherstburg, Ont., May 4, 1886.
- BROWN, EDDY, b. Chicago, July 15, 1895.
- BURBECK, Frank, b. Boston, Dec. 30, 1857; d. New York, Feb. 20, 1930.
- BURNLEY, MRS. HARDIN (CURTIS BURNLEY), b. Spartanburg, S. C., May 21, 1880.
- BUTT, CLARA, b. Southwick, Sussex, Eng., Feb. 1, 1873; d. North Stoke, Oxon, Eng., Jan. 23, 1936.
- CAHILL, MARIE, b. Brooklyn, Feb. 7, 1870; d. New York, Aug. 23, 1933.
- CAMERON, GRACE, b. Aug. 1, 1879 (one source says Falls City, Neb.; another, Storm Lake, Iowa!)
- CAMPANARI, GIUSEPPE, b. Venice, Nov. 17, 1858; d. Milan, May 31, 1927.
- CAMPRELL, CRAIG, b. London, Ont., Oct. 18, 1878; l. New York.
- CARUS, EMMA, b. Berlin, Mar. 18, 1879; d. New York, Nov. 18, 1927.
- CASALS, PABLO, b. Vendrell, Catalonia, Spain, Dec. 30, 1876.
- CASE, CHARLEY, b. Lockport, N. Y., ab. 1858; d. New York, Nov. 27, 1918.
- CAVALIERI, LINA, b. Rome, Dec. 25, 1874; d. Florence, Feb. 8, 1944.
- CAWTHORN, JOSEPH, b. New York, Mar. 29, 1867; d. Beverly Hills, Cal., Jan. 21, 1949.
- CHALIAPIN, FEODOR, b. Kazan, Russia, Feb. 13, 1873; d. Paris, Apr. 12, 1938.
- CHAMPION, HARRY, d. London, Jan. 14, 1942 (76).
- CHANDLER, ANNA, d. Hollywood, Cal., 1957 (70).
- CHEVALIER, ALBERT, b. London, Mar. 21, 1861; d. July 10, 1923.
- CLAUSSEN, JULIA, b. Stockholm, Sweden, June 11, 1879.
- CLEMENT, EDMOND, b. Paris, Mar. 28, 1867; d. Nice, Feb. 23, 1928.
- CONNELL, HORATIO, b. Philadelphia, Mar. 15, 1876.
- CONSTANTINO, FLORENCIO, b. Bilbao, Spain, 1869; d. Mexico City, Nov. 19, 1919.
- CREATORE, GIUSEPPE, b. Naples, 1870; d. New York, Aug. 15, 1952 (82).
- CROPPER, ROY, b. Jamaica Plains, Mass., 1896; d. Miami, Fla., May 14, 1954.
- DAMROSCH, WALTER, b. Breslau, Germany, Jan. 30, 1862; d. New York, Dec. 22, 1950.
- DAVENPORT, EDGAR L., b. Boston, Feb. 7, 1862; d. July 26, 1918.
- DE KEREKJARTO, DUCI, d. Hollywood, Jan. 3, 1962 (61).
- DE LUCIA, FERNANDO, b. Naples, Oct. 11, 1860; d. Naples, Feb. 23, 1925.
- DE MURO, BERNARDO, b. Tempio, Sardinia, 1881; d. Rome, Oct. 27, 1955.
- DE SEGUROLA, ANDRES, b. Valencia, 1873; d. Barcelona, Jan. 23, 1953.
- DE VERE, CLEMENTINE, b. Paris, 1865; d. Mt. Vernon, N.Y., Jan. 19, 1954.
- DOCKSTADER, LEW, b. Hartford, Conn., Aug. 7, 1856; d. New York, Oct. 26, 1924.
- DONALDO, PAULINE, b. Montreal, Que., Mar. 5, 1884; l. Montreal.
- DRAPER, CHARLES, b. Odcombe, Somerset, Eng., 1863; d. London, Oct. 21, 1952.
- DRAPER, HAYDN, b. Penarth, Eng., Jan. 21, 1889; d. London, Nov. 6, 1934.
- DRESSLER, MARIE, b. Cobourg, Can., Nov. 9, 1869; d. Santa Barbara, Cal., July 28, 1934.
- DUDLEY, S. H., b. Greencastle, Ind., 1864; d. Los Angeles, June 6, 1947.
- EAMES, EMMA, b. Shanghai, China, Aug. 13, 1865; d. New York, June 13, 1952.
- EASTON, FLORENCE, b. Middlesbrough, Eng., Oct. 25, 1884; d. New York, Aug. 13, 1955.
- EVANS, WILL, b. London, May 29, 1875; d. London, Apr. 11, 1931.
- FARRAR, GERALDINE, b. Melrose, Mass., Feb. 28, 1882; l. Ridgefield, Conn.
- FAVOR, EDWARD M., b. New York; d. Brooklyn, Jan. 10, 1936 (79).
- FIELDS, LEW, b. New York, Jan. 1, 1867; d. New York, July 20, 1941.
- FINNEGAN, JOHN, b. Wilmington, Del., Dec. 25, 1878; d. New York, Apr. 12, 1940.
- FIRTH, W. FRANCIS, b. Auburn, N.Y., d. Windsor, Ont., Can., June 25, 1943 (76).
- FOX, LOIS, b. Austin, Tex., Jan. 17, 1886; d. (?)
- FRANKLIN, IRENE, b. St. Louis, Mo., June 13, 1876; d. Englewood, N. J., June 16, 1941.
- GALVANY, MARIA, b. Granada, Spain, 1874; d. Rio Janeiro, Nov. 2, 1949.
- GASKIN, GEORGE JEFFERSON, b. Belfast, Ireland, Feb. 16, 1863; d. New York, Dec. 21, 1920.
- GAUTHIER, EVE, b. Ottawa, Can., Sept. 20, 1885; d. New York, Dec. 26, 1958.
- GAY, MARIA, b. Barcelona, June 13, 1879; d. New York, July 29, 1943.
- GERVILLE-REACHE, JEANNE, b. Orthez, France, Mar. 26, 1882; d. New York, Jan. 5, 1915.
- GILBERT, CHARLES, b. Paris, Nov., 1866; d. New York, Oct. 12, 1910.
- GILLY, DINH, b. Algiers, July 19, 1877; d. London, May 19, 1940.
- GILSON, LOTTIE, b. 1867; d. New York, June 10, 1912.
- GODOWSKY, LEOPOLD, b. Wilna, Poland, Feb. 13, 1870; d. New York, Nov. 21, 1938.
- GOLDKETTE, JEAN, d. Santa Barbara, Cal., Mar. 24, 1962 (63).
- GOLDMAN, EDWIN FRANKO, b. Louisville, Ky., Jan. 1, 1878; d. New York, Feb. 21, 1958.
- GRAINGER, PERCY, b. Melbourne, July 8, 1882; d. White Plains, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1961.
- GREEN, BURT, d. 1922.
- GREET, SIR BEN, b. aboard a recruiting ship on Thames river, Eng., Sept. 24, 1857; d. London, May 17, 1936.
- HALEY, HARRY—see Burr, Henry.
- HAMBURG, BORIS, b. Vorenesk, Russia, Dec. 27, 1884; d. Toronto, Ont., Nov. 24, 1954.
- HAMLIN, GEORGE JOHN, b. Elgin, Ill., Sept. 20, 1868; d. Chicago, Jan. 11, 1923.
- HARVARD, SUE, b. Wales, ab. 1887.
- HAYES, ROLAND, b. Curryville, Ga., June 3, 1887.
- HILLIARD, ROBERT, b. New York, May 28, 1857; d. New York, June 6, 1927.
- HISLOP, JOSEPH, b. Edinburgh, Apr. 5, 1887.
- HITCHCOCK, RAYMOND, b. Auburn, N. Y., Oct. 22, 1865; d. Beverly Hills, Cal., Nov. 24, 1929.
- HOFMANN, JOSEF, b. Cracow, Poland, Jan. 20, 1876; d. Los Angeles, Feb. 16, 1957.
- HOLLMAN, JOSEF, b. Maestricht, Holland, Oct. 16, 1852; d. 1927.
- HOPPER, DE WOLF, b. New York, Mar. 30, 1858; d. Kansas City, Mo., Sept. 25, 1935.
- HOWARD, KATHLEEN, b. Clifton, Ont., d. Hollywood, Cal., Aug. 15, 1956 (77).
- IRWIN, MAY, b. Whitby, Ont., June 27, 1862; d. New York, Oct. 22, 1938.
- JACOBY, JOSEPHINE, b. New York, 1875; d. New York, Nov. 13, 1948.
- JANIS, ELSIE, b. Delaware, O., Mar. 16, 1889; d. Hollywood, Feb. 27, 1956.
- JEFFERSON, JOSEPH, b. Philadelphia, Feb. 20, 1928; d. West Palm Beach, Fla., Apr. 23, 1905.
- JOHNSON, EDWARD, b. Guelph, Ont., Aug. 22, 1878; d. Guelph, Apr. 20, 1959.



James Melton, favorite opera and concert tenor, was born in 1904 and died in 1961.



Riccardo Martin was an impressive "Faust" in Gounod's opera. —Photos courtesy of Thomas B. Mason, U.S. District Attorney, Roanoke, Va.



The famous American tenor, Riccardo Martin, was born in 1878 and died in 1952.

- JONES, ISHAM, b. Coalton, O., Jan. 31, 1894; d. Hollywood, Fla., Oct. 19, 1956.  
 JOY, LEONARD W., d. New York, Nov. 21, 1961 (67).  
 JUCH, EMMA, b. Vienna, July 4, 1861; d. New York, Mar. 6, 1939.  
 KELLY, WALTER C., b. Mineville, N. Y., Oct. 29, 1873; d. Philadelphia, Jan. 6, 1939.  
 KIMMEL, JOHN J., b. Brooklyn, Dec. 13, 1886; d. Brooklyn, Sept. 18, 1942.  
 KNAPP, FRANK—see Burr, Henry.  
 KNOWLES, R. G., b. Hamilton, Ont., Oct. 7, 1858; d. Eng., Jan. 1, 1919.  
 KREISLER, FRITZ, b. Vienna, Feb. 2, 1875; d. New York, Jan. 29, 1962.  
 KRONOLD, HANS, b. Krakau, Austria, July 23, 1873; d. New York, Jan. 10, 1922.  
 KUBELIK, JAN, b. Michle, Bohemia, July 5, 1880; d. Prague, Dec. 5, 1940.  
 LAMONT, FORREST, b. Athlestone, Can., Jan. 26, 1885.  
 LASHANSKA, HULDA, b. New York, Mar. 15, 1893; d. (?).  
 LAURENTI, MARIO, b. Verona, Italy, 1891; d. New York, Mar. 7, 1921.  
 LAZARO, HIPOLITO, b. Barcelona 1889.  
 LAZZARI, CAROLINA, b. Milford, Mass., Dec. 26, 1891; d. Stony Creek, Conn., Oct. 17, 1946.  
 LAZZARI, VIRGILIO, b. Assisi, Italy, Apr. 20, 1888; d. Castel Gondolfo, Italy, Oct. 4, 1953.  
 LEHMANN, LILLI, b. Wurzburg, Germany, Nov. 24, 1848; d. Berlin, May 17, 1929.  
 LENIHAN, BURTON, b. Saginaw, Mich., ab. 1890.  
 LENO DAN, b. London, 1860; d. Eng., Oct. 31, 1904.  
 LEVY, JULES, b. London, Apr. 28, 1838; d. Chicago, Nov. 28, 1903.  
 "LITTLE TICH," b. London, 1868; d. London, 1928.  
 LLOYD, ALICE, b. London, Oct. 20, 1873; d. Banstead, Eng., Nov. 17, 1949.  
 LLOYD, MARIE, b. London, Feb. 12, 1870; d. London, Oct. 7, 1922.  
 LYNN, FELICE, b. Slater, Mo., 1891; d. Allentown, Pa., Sept. 1, 1935.  
 MacDONALD, CHRISTIE, b. Pictou, Nova Scotia, Feb. 28, 1880; d. Westport, Conn.  
 MacDONOUGH, HARRY, b. Hamilton, Ont., May 30, 1871; d. New York, Sept. 26, 1931.  
 MacFARLANE, GEORGE, b. Kingston, Ont., 1877; d. Hollywood, Feb. 22, 1932.  
 MACK, CHARLES E., b. White Cloud, Kan., 1888; d. auto accident, Mesa, Ariz., Jan. 11, 1934.  
 MARDONES, JOSE, b. Pontechia, Spain, 1869; d. Madrid, May 4, 1932.  
 MARSH, LUCY ISABELLE, b. Ithaca, N. Y., April 10, 1878; d. Providence, R. I., Jan. 20, 1956.  
 MARTIN, RICCARDO, b. Hopkinsville, Ky., Nov. 18, 1878; d. New York, Aug. 12, 1952.  
 MASON, EDITH, b. St. Louis, Mar. 22, 1893.  
 MAXTED, STANLEY, b. Folkestone, Eng., 1895.  
 MAYHEW, STELLA, b. Waynesburg, O.; d. New York, May 2, 1934 (ab. 60).  
 McLEAN, QUENTIN, b. London, May 14, 1896, l. Toronto, Can.  
 McQUHAE, ALLEN, b. Bray county, Wicklow, Ireland; d. Corpus Christi, Tex., July 3, 1960.  
 MEADER, GEORGE FARNHAM, b. Minneapolis, July 6, 1888.  
 MELTON, JAMES, b. Moultrie, Ga., Jan. 2, 1904; d. New York, Apr. 21, 1961.  
 MOORE, GRACE, b. Slabtown, Tenn., Dec. 5, 1901; d. Copenhagen, Jan. 26, 1947.  
 MORGAN, WILLIAM H. (REV.), b. Whiton Park, Eng., 1861; d. (?).  
 MORINI, ERIKA, b. Vienna, Austria, May 26, 1906.  
 MORRIS, ELIDA, b. Philadelphia, Nov. 12, 1886; l. Santa Barbara, Cal.  
 MUNN, FRANK, b. Brooklyn, 1895; d. St. Alban's, Queens, N. Y., Oct. 2, 1953.  
 MURATORE, LUCIEN, b. Marseilles, Aug. 28, 1876; d. Paris, July 16, 1954.  
 NARELLE, MARIE, b. Combanning Station, Australia; d. Chipping Norton, Eng., Jan., 1941 (70).  
 NASH, HEDDLE, b. Eng., June 14, 1896; d. London, Aug. 14, 1961.  
 NORDICA, LILLIAN, b. Farmington, Me., Dec. 17, 1857; d. Batavia, Java, May 10, 1914.  
 NORTH, FRANK, d. Red Bank, N. J., July 20, 1960 (89).  
 NORWORTH, JACK, b. Philadelphia, Jan. 5, 1879; d. Laguna Beach, Cal., Sept. 1, 1959.  
 OLITZKA, ROSA, b. Berlin, Sept. 6, 1873; d. Chicago, Sept. 29, 1949.  
 OHMAN, PHIL, b. New Britain, Conn., Oct. 7, 1896; d. Santa Monica, Cal., Aug. 8, 1954.  
 PADEREWSKI, IGNACE JAN, b. Kurylowka, Poland, Nov. 18, 1860; d. New York, June 28, 1941.  
 PAVLOSKA, IRENE, b. St. Johns, Que.; d. Chicago, Feb. 12, 1962 (72).  
 PERTILE, AURELIANO, b. Padua, Italy, Nov. 3, 1885; d. Milan, Jan. 11, 1952.  
 PILZER, MAXIMILIAN, b. New York, Feb. 26, 1890; d. New York, May 30, 1958.  
 PINZA, EZIO, b. Rome, May 18, 1892; d. Stamford, Conn., May 9, 1957.  
 POWELL, MAUD, b. Peru, Ill., Aug. 22, 1868; d. Uniontown, Pa., Jan. 8, 1920.  
 RACHMANINOFF, SERGEI, b. Onega, Novgorod, Russia, April 2, 1873; d. Beverly Hills, Cal., Mar. 28, 1943.  
 RAISA, ROSA, b. Ballystock, Poland, May 23, 1893.  
 RAPPOLD, MARIE, b. Brooklyn, ab. 1873; d. North Hollywood, May 12, 1957.  
 RAYMOND, MAUD, d. Rockville Center, N. Y., May 10, 1961 (89).  
 REA, VIRGINIA, b. Kentucky, ab. 1896; d. New York, July 7, 1941.  
 REISMAN, LEO F., b. Boston, Oct. 11, 1897; d. New York, Dec. 18, 1961.  
 RENAUD, MAURICE, b. Bordeaux, France, July 24, 1861; d. Paris, Oct. 16, 1933.  
 RICHARDSON, FRANK, b. Philadelphia; d. Philadelphia, Jan. 30, 1962 (63).  
 RIMINI, GIACOMO, b. Verona, Italy, Mar. 22, 1888; d. Chicago, Mar. 6, 1952.  
 RING, BLANCHE, b. Boston, Apr. 24, 1872; d. Santa Monica, Cal., Jan. 13, 1961.  
 ROMAN, MANUEL, b. Cambridge, Mass., Oct. 1, 1872.  
 ROTHIER, LEON, b. Rheims, France, Dec. 26, 1874; d. New York, Dec. 6, 1951.  
 SAMMARCO, MARIO, b. Palermo, Sicily, Dec. 13, 1873; d. Milan, Jan. 24, 1930.  
 SANDERSON, JULIA, b. Springfield, Mass., Aug. 20, 1884.  
 SCHUMANN, ELIZABETH, b. Merseberg, Germany, June 13, 1891; d. New York, Apr. 23, 1952.  
 SEAGLE, OSCAR, b. Chattanooga, Tenn., Oct. 31, 1877; d. Dallas, Tex., Dec. 20, 1945.  
 SEMBRICH, MARCELLA, b. Wiznisowcyk, Galicia, Feb. 15, 1858; d. New York, Jan. 11, 1935.  
 SHEPHERD, BETSY LANE, b. Pennsylvania, ab. 1890; d. Queens, N. Y., Aug. 29, 1955.  
 SHIELD, JEROME, b. Waseca, Minn., Oct. 2, 1898; d. Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Jan. 10, 1962.  
 SHIELDS, ELLA, b. Baltimore, Sept. 26, 1879; d. Lancashire, Eng., Aug. 5, 1952.  
 SILVER, MONROE, b. New York, Dec. 21, 1875; d. New York, May 3, 1947.  
 SLEZAK, LEO, b. Schonberg, Moravia, Aug. 18, 1873; d. Eggen, Bavaria, June 1, 1946.  
 SPENCER, GRACE (Mrs. Willard Foster Doolittle), b. Passaic, N. J., Nov. 6, 1872; d. New York, Aug. 13, 1952.  
 SPENCER, JANET, b. Boston, 1874; d. Hollywood, May 19, 1948.

(Continued on next page)

SUPERVIA, CONCHITA, b. Barcelona, Dec. 8, 1899; d. London, Mar. 30, 1936.  
 STRACCIARI, RICCARDO, b. Bologna, Italy, June 26, 1875; d. Rome, Oct. 10, 1955.  
 SUNDELIUS, MARIE, b. Karlstad, Sweden, 1882; d. Boston, June 26, 1958.  
 TATE, HARRY, b. Scotland, July 4, 1872; d. Eng., Feb. 14, 1940.  
 THOMAS, JOHN CHARLES, b. Meyersdale, Pa., Sept. 6, 1891; d. Apple Valley, Cal., Dec. 13, 1960.  
 THOMPSON, WILLIAM H., b. Liverpool, Eng., Oct. 28, 1869; d. Chicago, July 24, 1945.  
 TIFFANY, MARIE, b. Chicago, ab. 1888; d. New York, Apr. 12, 1948.  
 TILLEY, VESTA, b. Worcester, Eng., May 13, 1864; d. London, Sept. 16, 1952.  
 TRENTINI, EMMA, b. Mantua, Italy, Apr. 10, 1885; d. Milan, Apr. 12, 1959.  
 VALLIN, NINON, b. Montalieu-Vercin, Isere, France, Sept. 9, 1886; d. France, Nov. 22, 1961.  
 VAN, BILLY B., b. Pottstown, Pa.; d. Newport, N. H., Nov. 16, 1952 (72).  
 VAN, GUS, b. Brooklyn, Aug. 12, 1887.  
 VANCE, CLARICE, b. Louisville, Ky., Mar. 14, 1871; d. Napa, Cal., Aug. 24, 1961.  
 VAN HOOSE, ELLISON, b. Murfreesboro, Tenn., Aug. 18, 1868; d. Houston, Tex., Mar. 24, 1936.

VAN ROOY, ANTON, b. Rotterdam, Holland, Jan. 1, 1870; d. Munich, Nov. 28, 1932.  
 VERLET, ALICE, b. Brussels, 1874; d. Brussels, 1930.  
 VICTORIA, VESTA, b. Leeds, Eng., Nov. 26, 1873; d. London, Apr. 7, 1951.  
 WALKER, EDYTH, b. Hopewell, N. Y., Mar. 27, 1870; d. New York, Feb. 19, 1950.  
 WATEROUS, HERBERT L., b. Flint, Mich., Nov. 18, 1869; d. Woodstock, N. Y., Aug. 28, 1947.  
 WESTON, AL H., d. Revere, Mass., Mar., 1946 (79).  
 WHEATON, ANNA, b. Savannah, Ga.; d. Pasadena, Cal., Dec. 25, 1961 (65).  
 WHITE, CAROLINA, b. Boston, 1886; d. Rome, Oct. 5, 1961.  
 WILDER, MARSHALL P., b. Geneva, N. Y., Sept. 19, 1859; d. St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 1, 1915.  
 WILLIAMS, BERT, b. New Providence, Bahama Islands, Nov. 12, 1874; d. New York, Mar. 4, 1922.  
 WILLIAMS, BRANSBY, b. Hackney, Eng., Aug. 14, 1870; d. London, Dec. 3, 1961.  
 WITHERSPOON, HERBERT, b. Buffalo, July 27, 1873; d. New York, May 10, 1935.  
 YSAYE, EUGEN, b. Liege, Belgium, July 16, 1858; d. Brussels, May 12, 1931.  
 ZOELLNER, ANTOINETTE (of Zoellner String Quartet), d. Los Angeles, Mar. 11, 1962 (76).



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WANTED: Rolls made by Art Gillham on Duo-Art, Mel-O-Dee, and Vocalstyle. Also trade sheets and magazines mentioning Art Gillham. — George Blau, 2823 N. Rockwood Dr., Peoria, Ill. au3234

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## HOW IT FELT TO MAKE RECORDS IN THE DAYS OF THE RECORDING HORN

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

"When the orchestra is roaring all around you, and the sound of your voice is lost in the recording-horn so that you have to put your hands over your ears to hear yourself sing; when the song ends and a long minute of dead silence follows, during which the sound of your own heart beat sounds like the bombardment of Ypres . . . and then the operator smiles to the conductor, and the conductor smiles at you and tells you the record is one of the best you ever did—Oh boy, ain't it a grand and glorious feeling!"

—From James E. Richardson's "By the Way—" Department, in the Victor record supplement for October, 1918.

In these days of tape recorders with immediate playbacks, the sound of one's recorded voice is no longer a novelty, though usually a disconcerting experience on hearing it for the first time. But in the pioneer days of recording, when the conditions of record-making were so much more difficult than now, singing into that gaping, expressionless, but all too sensitive horn, constituted, even for experienced performers, a trying, and sometimes frightening adventure.

Because of this it seems to me it should be valuable, from a historical standpoint, to go back to those early days and quote what some of the artists said about their experiences.

Not back to the very earliest days, however, when cylinders were made several at a time, and then copied on a duplicating machine, or even to the succeeding gold moulded stage, when many moulds of the same selection had to be prepared before a sufficiently large quantity of cylinders could be manufactured.

The Edison Company usually made from 10 to 40 moulds of a Standard two-minute record, depending on its probable popularity. Edison's most popular singer, Billy Murray, told me he nearly always was called on to turn out master records for at least 40 moulds—which, with "rejects" and something going wrong with the recording, ordinarily meant singing each title considerably more than 40 times!

Instead, we'll pick up some comments by Maria Jeritza, the gorgeous Austrian operatic soprano, quoted in *The Literary Digest* for May 10, 1924, and note that she makes much the same kind of references as "Jim" Richardson to the "roaring" orchestra and the necessity of cupping hands to hear what one was singing.

However, this experience with surging orchestral sound seems to

have been peculiar to artists who recorded for Victor, which was more insistent on a lavish background of accompaniment than were competing companies.

Thomas A. Edison, at the other extreme, argued that the orchestra should be heard just sufficiently to support the singer but not to make its presence obtrusive. Edison accompaniments, therefore, were "held down," which frequently resulted in the complaint that they were inadequate.

After Mr. Edison became too deaf in 1925 to continue "monitoring" the records, the orchestrations were greatly improved from the standpoint of those who like rich, sonorous accompaniments.

Also it should be mentioned that the hill-and-dale method of recording used by Edison allowed more "land" between the record grooves than did the lateral records; and it was not necessary for Edison artists to advance or withdraw their heads at various distances from the horn in order to avoid "blast" or overcutting of grooves.

Here is part of what the lovely blonde Jeritza said:

"When I journeyed out to the laboratories of the Company (Victor) for which I had agreed to make some opera records, I already knew one thing out of my previous experience: that I must try to sing just as naturally as I would on the stage.

"But when I arrived I knew that the only way I could do so would be to forget my surroundings completely, for my setting was anything but a stage-setting.

"First of all, the records were made in a small room, a room so small that the members of the little orchestra of 10 or 14 men which accompanied me had to sit close together, knee to knee. Then came the actual singing itself.

"With the orchestra so close to the singer the sound of the instruments is so overpowering that it drowns the voice, and I could not hear myself sing. This effect, of course, is never made when the record has been finished and perfected, and the orchestra has been 'toned down' so that the singer's voice stands out above it.

"But at the time it is very distracting. When the singer no longer can hear her own voice, she is at a loss; but I found myself able to overcome this difficulty by holding my hands over my ears, thus shutting out the orchestra. Once I did this, I knew what I was about and had no further trouble.

"Then there is the matter of adjusting your position, as you stand and sing; so that you are at exactly the right distance to the receiver. For deep register tones one comes closer, for high register tones one moves farther away. The receiving mechanism is a delicate one; if the singer produces a powerful high tone too near the machine, its pressure may easily break the receiver. Sudden pressure has to be avoided.

"The first record made is always an experimental one. It enables the singer to hear herself as she should not be, points out to her where she is at fault as regards her distances from the machine, and allows her to make the necessary corrections.

"The second recording already, as a rule, marks an advance. And, then, growing nearer perfection with each repetition, come a third, and a fourth, and as many more recordings as may be necessary to secure perfect results.



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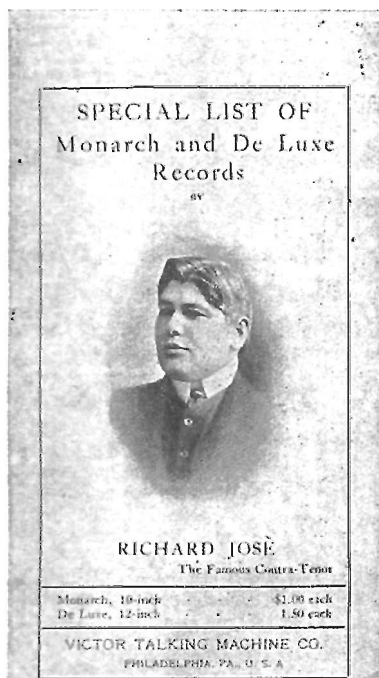
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Maria Jeritza, glamorous Metropolitan Opera soprano, who described her experiences with the recording horn.



Richard Jose admitted he "shook like a frightened child" the first time he heard his recorded voice. This is the front page of a four-page folder which Victor issued to announce the great counter-tenor's first records in 1903. One was the first Victor record of "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

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"One thing apt to be forgotten is that while the receiver is recording, the least sound, a word, a whisper, the noise of a movement, the dropping of a pin, is recorded together with the music. It is for this reason that only the artist herself and those otherwise directly concerned in making the record are allowed to be in the recording room. The precaution is a wise one.

"I remember that on one occasion I secured permission for a friend to accompany me, and watch me make a record. It was Senta's ballad from 'The Flying Dutchman' and my friend had watched with interest the gradual building up of the song into a really fine record.

"When I sang it for the last time, to make the final record, however, she forgot all about the rule of silence, and no sooner had the last note left my mouth than she cried out enthusiastically, 'Oh, you sang that beautifully!' The accompaniment had not yet come to an end, and sure enough, when the record was played this artless cry of 'Oh, you sang that beautifully!' rang out in the most comical way. Of course, the whole thing had to be done over again.

"And in spite of the soundproof walls of the recording room, certain noises, if they are high and shrill enough, manage to get in. I know that all recording came to an end when we neared 12 o'clock, since otherwise, whatever opera air I was singing, would have been punctuated by the sound of the factory whistles which everywhere announced the noon hour.

"There is a fairly certain way of telling whether your record of a song has turned out well, even though you have not heard it. As soon as the record has been made one takes a look at the impression through a microscope. The line of the impression reveals the truth; if the line is irregular, with numerous breaks, the record is worthless; but if the line is smooth and shows no breaks, then the record will be a good one."

Madame Jeritza's reference to the microscope reminds me of something in connection with Edison recordings. Most companies insisted on having three satisfactory masters made of each number. Usually, but not always, they worked from only the copy decided on as best and kept the others as spares.

Edison also made three masters, but almost invariably pressed from all. The masters were lettered A, B, and C, and many collectors have taken this to mean the order in which they were recorded. That is, A would have been sung or played first, B second, and C last.

Actually, the decision as to lettering was made by an expert with a microscope, Harry Getcliffe. The master record whose grooves seemed to him best formed was termed A; the runner-up, B, and the also-ran, C. Sometimes the interpretations on the Bs or Cs were preferable to the As.

Often Edison records would be remade after a time, and the new letterings were F. G. and H. (D and E were skipped). Still later, but not often, I might be skipped and there would be a new series of J. K. and L.

(I have an L of the *Trovatore* Anvil Chorus, by the New York Light Opera Company. And the system seems to have extended as far as M, N, and O, for a friend has told me of having an O version of "The Merry Widow Waltz," by the Peerless Orchestra).

## II. Dick Jose's Experiences

One of the first famous recording artists to describe how he felt when singing into a baleful horn was that great counter-tenor, the late Richard José. Like many other performers, he said it was an agonizing experience.

In 1907 interviewed by Ashton Stevens of the *San Francisco Examiner*, José described recording as "the most secret thing in the world."

"You're locked all alone with the band in a big bare room. Your back is to the musicians and your face to a bleak, blank wall through which protrudes a solemn horn. Into this horn you sing. Not a soul is in sight.

"A bell rings—one. That is to get ready, for the receiving instrument is so sensitive that if you moved your sleeves against your coat the sound would register. Somebody outside presses the button—two.

"The band starts the prelude, then you sing, turning neither to the right nor left, always looking and singing into that protruding horn. And you can't even let out a breath after your last one; you must close your lips on it and wait for the little whirr within the horn to cease.

"When do you hear the result?

"In hardly no time. And if you are new to the game it nearly kills you. When I first heard my own voice I turned clammy all over and shook like a frightened child. I had to be quieted down before I could go on with the next ballad.

"No man knows what his own voice sounds like till he hears it reproduced by a machine: he can't know otherwise: his auditory apparatus is too closely mixed up with his voice machinery—he can't get the distance!"

## III. George Hamlin Writes

If José had been a German, he might, on first hearing his played-back voice, have exclaimed "Mein Gott im Himmel!" — the awe-struck remark made by Thomas Edison's mechanic, John Kruesi, when Edison gave the first demonstration of his tin-foil phonograph and the crude device squeakily recited "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

In the Chicago Herald for October 3, 1915, one of the most esteemed concert tenors, the late George John Hamlin, wrote an account of his Victor record-making experiences:

"I have just spent a week in Camden, N. J., making new records and listening to myself sing — a strange sensation but a valuable one to a singer.

"Only a few years ago, I should say not more than 10 or 12, this great company possessed one little building in Camden, where everything in the line of records, machines, etc., was manufactured. Today the concern occupies buildings valued at several millions of dollars with others in the course of construction, and over 6,500 employees are engaged in the work.

"In preparing for the making of records, the first important question is, What shall I select? When half a dozen songs, more or less, have been decided upon after consultation with the director of the recording department, and dates have been agreed upon, the music is sent to the conductor of the orchestra.

"The records are made in a large room with little furnishing except seats or benches, some high, some low, on which the members of the orchestra sit, arranged in such a way that those in the rear are raised above those in front in order to allow the

sound to reach the recording horns advantageously. These horns connect with the recording instrument in an adjoining room through a partition which entirely separates the two rooms.

"No one is admitted into the receiving room, and what takes place there is known only to the person in charge of that important part of the work. This person communicates with the conductor through a small window and by means of a "buzzer" signal.

"The singer stands about 12 inches from the recording horn and sings in the customary way — if he can, for it is no easy job. He must always bear in mind that when singing a very high or loud tone he must draw back slightly from the horn or the result will not be good.

First the song is tried over with the orchestra to settle the question of proper tempo, phrasing, etc., and then a test record is made which is at once played back from the recording machine to the singer. When all seems satisfactory, several records are made of each selection so that a choice can be made and the best of each retained. After the singer has recorded three or four songs he can feel he has done a good day's work.

"In making a record a great responsibility rests on every one concerned, on each member of the orchestra as well as on the singer, for the slightest slip or error, which in a public performance might never be noticed, is on a record indelibly stamped, never to be removed, and becomes more and more apparent and offensive with each rendition, rendering the record worthless.

"After the records have been made they must be thoroughly tested, and if faults appear the records are destroyed and new ones must be made. Those that appear artistically satisfactory and are accepted must go through several severe mechanical tests before they reach the market."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

*C. casto fior* is eloquent but a bit dispassionate for the longing it conveys. "Triste Aprile," a lovely *romanza da camera*, even got Scotti under its spell; ripples of emotion run through his words, as they also do in Tosti's equally appealing "Invano." The "Messaline" piece, of course, is sung entirely differently. It's romantic enough, but what invests it with *grandeur* are the effective sweeping phrases.

It is an odd thing to say, but Scotti's Neapolitan does not sound "real," neither in style nor dialect. First, the feeling of the Neapolitan song isn't there; and as for dialect, his often leans towards the classical Italian. "Luna Nova," a lilting *barcarola*, resembles a dirge the way he does it. In "Scetate," a serenade, the Neapolitan in him wakes up a bit while he's trying to wake up his sleeping beauty.

An interesting, well-balanced LP of a great Golden Age artist—one which I, myself, enjoyed listening to and am happy to recommend.

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## HOW IT FELT TO MAKE RECORDS IN THE DAYS OF THE RECORDING HORN

By JIM WALSH

### PART II

Especially observant readers will have detected in last month's section of this two-part story on pioneer days of recording, that Jeritza referred to the recording room as small, while Jose and Hamlin said it was large. Of course a number of rooms of different size and design were in use. None of the artists have said anything about the temperature of the recording rooms. Today's air conditioning was unknown in those days, and the atmosphere frequently became oppressive. This led many singers and orchestra members to work in their shirt sleeves.

#### IV. Alma Gluck's Recollections

Next we hear from that captivating Rumanian-born soprano, the late Alma Gluck, who wrote in *Vanity Fair* for October, 1916. Like Jeritza, she was embarrassed by a gushing bystander:

"I believe that the general public has no idea of how difficult it is to create a proper record of one's voice. I myself never realized—until I first sang for the records—how much I had always depended on my audience for its encouragement and support; how much the eyes and the facial expression of those who were near me in my concerts assisted me in my singing.

"Imagine yourself singing into a funnel, as it were (a pyramidal, not a cone-shaped funnel, by the way), with absolutely nothing to inspire you and a great deal to make you conscious of many purely mechanical details!

"There you stand, about a foot from the funnel, careful not to approach too near lest the tone of your voice be thick and muffled; careful, too, not to draw too far away from it lest your voice, in the reproduction, should sound thin or remote.

"And, every moment, you cannot but be painfully aware of how fatal it would be if you made the slightest slip or marred the matrix by any unpremeditated sound. Is it surprising, under these circumstances, that one should feel more nervous in making a record than while singing a song in opera, or on the concert stage?

"On the concert platform one can easily counteract the impression created by one's errors, calling in the assistance, if need be, of facial expression, or pose, or, on occasions, even of gesture.

"Not so when you are singing for the remorseless recording machine. With grim precision it registers every sound—a gentle clearing of the throat, for example, or a smacking of the lip between words, or, what is still worse, the smothered sneeze of a musician in the orchestra near by.

"Under such conditions, of course, you cannot be perfectly spontaneous. You have constantly to be thinking of tone,

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

of breath, of diction, and of a variety of other things. But that is exactly why I consider singing for the machine the essence of bel canto.

"An amusing experience that will serve as a case in point comes to mind at this moment. On a certain occasion my secretary received permission to be present while I was registering an operatic record. She was, nervously, just as much keyed up as I was, or the members of the orchestra.

"In fact, she could hardly wait until I had sung the last phrase successfully. 'That's fine,' she whispered excitedly while the final chord was still resounding in the little room.

"And, alas, an excellent record was spoiled—much to the annoyance of all concerned—by the fact that just as the song was ending my secretary could be heard remarking—in the record—that the song was 'fine.'

"One of the most touching letters I have lately received—and these letters come in a constant stream from unknown friends living as far away as New Zealand—was written by an old man who had lost his wife after many, many years of married happiness.

Artists who made Edison cylinder records in 1907. A full instrumental group is seen here playing a stirring march for the sole benefit of a phonograph. The large metal horn, the all-attentive ear of the instrument, shows in the center. Phonographs were often operated by small electric motors.

Notice that Number 9 is the versatile Albert Benzler, piano accompanist, and orchestra bells, and zylphone virtuoso, this time playing a violin!

Other identified persons are: 1. Edward Meeker, announcer. 2. William Tuson, clarinet. (3. unidentified). 4. Fred Rabenstein, general handy man. 5. Bill Weber, horn. 6. Eugene Rose, flute. 7. Eugene Jaudas, conductor. 10. Fred Burt, drummer. 11. H. E. Getcliffe, microscope expert. 12. Harvey Emmons, chimes. 13. Harry Voorhees. 14. George Werner. At Edison Laboratory, West Orange, N. J.





"It seems that she had sung many of the songs which I had recorded on the Victor, and the only thing that kept him from black despair was to summon the aid of the machine and hear his wife's favorites repeated over and over again.

"There is something peculiarly moving in the thought, brought home to me so often, that I am privileged to carry a certain degree of solace to the young and the old, to the strong and the weak, in such different parts of the world.

"One of the myriad pleasant acquaintances—by correspondence only—which the records have been the happy means of making for me, was a bedridden lady in the heart of Australia who—kind soul—had knitted a shawl for me because of gratitude for making her room, which had once been a prison to her, a bearable temple of music.

"Last Christmas I received the shawl which my bedridden and unseen old friend had made for me hundreds of miles from Melbourne in Australia. I never wear it without wondering anew at the distant and happy vistas of life which my records have been the means of revealing to me."

### V. Making an Edison Instrumental Cylinder

Alma Gluck joined Jeritza in referring to a "small" room! To the gentlemen it was large; to the ladies, small!

So far only Victor artists have been quoted. I don't seem to find any descriptions written by Columbia staff members, so we may now move on to Edison. First, not an account by an Edison artist, but an article published in a 1907 *Musical America*, which described the method of making Edison instrumental cylinders:

"Step across the hall into the recording room, a room bare of furniture, ending in a wooden partition from the center of which projects a long, slender tube. Seated directly in front of this are three musicians, masters of their respective instruments, in fact, as the case happens, members of the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra.

"On a platform, raised to about the level of a man's head, sits the harpist; at the base of the platform and close to it, the flutist; to the fore and behind him, the violinist. All three are huddled close together, so as to focus the body of tone, yet not so close as to interfere with the freedom of motion necessary.

"The relative positions, as to height and distance from the horn, of the various instruments, have been carefully measured and tested by experience. The artists are booked weeks ahead, just as if they were playing at an ordinary concert, only as we shall see, they have to be exceedingly generous with encores.

"The violin is not the ordinary wooden-bellied instrument we are accustomed to seeing, but is a bar of wood with strings, keys, and bridge, and an aluminum diaphragm and horn, the invention of a London musician.

"Step back of the wooden partition. There, on the other side of the aperture, is the end of the horn with the attached needle cutting its careful groove in the cylinder, from which fly glistening clouds of the most delicate wax filaments.

"A tiny electric light illumines the rotary path of the record, which is taken on completion of this stage to another revolving machine where fine camel-hair brushes remove any stray threads of the wax which may have adhered.

"The record is then taken into another 'room' and played to the 'critic,' who passes judgment upon the rendering from a musical point of view and also as regards its reception by the machine. While this is going on, the musicians are making another record of the same selection in the room with the wooden partition.

"This completed, they join the critic and pass upon the records; deciding, perhaps, that some tone ought to sound

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EDISON PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY, NOVEMBER, 1914

187



From top to bottom, top: Lucien Muratore and Lina Cavalieri recording a duet for Pathe, probably about 1906. All Pathe sapphire ball discs were copied from 14-inch cylinders.

Bottom: Thomas Chalmers making an Edison record in 1914.

stronger, another less harsh, etc.; in this way finally making a record that is not only pronounced perfect by the musical critic, but by the record critic as well. The latter examines the finished cylinders with a microscope to see that they are exact in every detail."

## VI. Canadian Tenor's Experiences

The three artists mentioned in the *Musical America* article were the Edison Venetian Trio—Eugene Jaudas, violin; Eugene Rose, flute; and Carl Schuetze, harp.

Now we come to the first description written by an Edison artist—the still living (as far as I know) Canadian tenor, Percy Redferne Hollinshead—in a 1914 *Canadian Journal of Music*. He called it "My First Attempt at Recording Before an Edison Phonograph," and his ner-

vous reaction was almost identical to that of Jose:

"Two years ago I sang my first trial record and that event is inscribed indelibly in my mind. I cannot describe the uncanny feeling which pervaded my whole being when, after finishing the song required, I listened to the record in the 'rough' (as it is technically termed.)

"The very first note sent a chill down my spine, not unlike an electric shock—the sound of my own voice seemed eerie to me, so much so that the Recording Manager remarked on my sudden pallor, thinking I was going to faint.

"Having received notice that Mr. Edison desired to have a trial record made of my voice, I went to New York, and was introduced to the suavest and most courteous of managers, Mr. W. H. Miller. He escorted me into the 'trial' room, which seems to be so designed that the novice's voice shall be heard to the greatest disadvantage.

"It is a bare, barnlike room, devoid of furniture, almost forbidding in aspect, and not conducive to assurance in any singer. The recording machine was ensconced behind a wooden partition in one corner, the horn, or funnel, projecting into the room so as to absorb every sound.

"An assistant gave me a few instructive remarks about refraining from coughing or clearing the throat during the singing, since every sound is irreparably reproduced on the wax.

"With far less assurance and far more trepidation than I should have faced a large audience, I approached this ominous-looking funnel; and the pianist having played the introduction with what at first seemed a much too loud and staccato manipulation of the keyboard, I started Kingsley's 'A Farewell,' and managed to finish the songs without undue trouble.

"But terrible suspense gripped my heart as I followed the unsympathetic assistant into the next room to hear my new record. It did not please me, for I had cleared my throat nervously during the interlude between two verses. The record was condemned; and I had twice to sing it over before it was considered a perfect record. Then I left the smiling manager, whose reassurance failed to satisfy my fears.

"The trial was successful, however, for I received a commission to return to New York and sing master records of two favorite songs of mine. This time I had the assistance of the Edison Concert Orchestra, a splendid aggregation of some 15 first-class musicians, whose inspiration to the singer is incalculable.

"And this time I went into the chief recording room, in which conditions seemed much more favorable from an acoustic point of view. The orchestra was grouped about the recording machine on raised platforms, forming a crescent round me. The conductor, who stood on a raised dais, was very exact in his instructions to his men as to rhythm, light and shade, and attack.

"We commenced the song selected, a Spanish serenade, in which violin, flute, and castanets are orchestrally featured. This time it was much easier, and I experienced genuine pleasure in the beautiful accompaniment of musicians who were really in rapport with me.

"We were stopped several times by the conductor, who wished to correct faults or improve effects; but in an hour's time I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had had two master records passed by the formidable array of critics employed by the company.

"One had criticized articulation, another phrasing, another voice production and tone, while another watched the score very closely. I experienced a thrill of joy when the committee announced that my records had found favor, that the company desired to retain my services for several years and offered me an exclusive contract.

"I have found that several essentials are imperative to the singing of perfect records. In the first place, the production of tone of the singer must be free and open, absolutely devoid of throatiness. The forward nasal resonance, diaphragmatic breathing, flawless diction—all these are absolutely necessary.

"The successful singer of records must also remember that personality, or stage presence, which is so often such a big factor in the success of concert singers, is here not at all in evidence.

"The singer must depend on artistry of the very highest type. He must be sure his tone is brilliant, resonant, and withal sympathetic. With all these essentials, I see no reason why our concert singers should not find record making as pleasant and satisfying work as concert singing.

"In conclusion, I might say that if there is one vowel which should be avoided by the singer who would make a successful record, it is the 'e' vowel, sung tightly on the teeth so as produce a hard, piercing tone. If the singer will use the French 'e' or 'eh' instead, he will gain invariable success, provided, of course, he follows the dictates of 'bel canto.'"

## VII. And, Last, Thomas Chalmers

The light and graceful Spanish song in which Hollinshead and the orchestra found themselves in perfect accord must have been the well-known serenade, "Lolita." Edison issued it by Hollinshead on a Blue Amberol cylinder, but it did not appear on the disc, although several of his other numbers did.

Finally, we come to Thomas Chalmers, who was one of Edison's stars during the entire Diamond Disc period, as well as an outstanding baritone for the Metropolitan Opera House. Through a misfortune, Chalmers lost his splendid voice years ago, but is still prominent as a character actor in Broadway productions.

Here are excerpts from an article he wrote for the August, 1914, *Edison Phonograph Monthly*:

"Many singers, if not all, have felt the particular variety of 'stage fright' that attacks one when making phonograph records. Although it diminishes as one continues to record successfully, it never wholly disappears. There is something about a recording-room—with the devouring horns that face a singer, and the feeling that the sins of commission and omission are never to be forgiven or even forgotten that is more demoralizing than the ordinary 'stage fright' of the theater.

"The unforgivable sin in a record is a 'frog' (slight break or huskiness), a thing which, in the theater, is almost imperceptible, but which, on the record, is a blemish that is fatal.

"It may be easily understood that hearing a singer sing the same song hundreds of times, and always hearing him break on the same spot, is enough to cause the average listener after a few hearings to hear only that one blemish and finish by hurling the record out the window and vow solemnly never to buy another record made by that singer.

"A very real and considerable difficulty in the making of records is that the singer does not hear his own voice in the same way that he hears it when singing in a large auditorium. You hear it—but differently. It is gathered into a horn and never comes back to you as it does under other conditions, a fact which is very disconcerting at first and always makes it difficult.

"You have to sing by 'feeling' alone and are denied the aid of your ears, which aid is very great, as every singer knows. I have sung in many acoustically bad auditoriums, but never in one as bad (from the singer's standpoint) as the recording-room.

"However, in spite of, or on account of, these difficulties (probably the latter) it is extremely interesting work. In these days, when there seems to be a general understanding of the educational and moral influence of music, let us give Mr. Edison the credit and thanks for the greatest work of all—the phonograph.

"In the last few years it has done more to make music a part of every man's life than all the opera houses, symphony orchestras, and musical organizations in the world.

"Recording is one of the greatest aids to a singer's diction. If more singers recorded in English there would be less talk of bad diction, for the primary requirement for a good record is that the text be understood, and unless a singer is able to sing the words distinctly he is useless from a phonograph standpoint.

"The sooner the general public are as critical as the phonograph public in this matter of diction, the better it will be for opera in English, for half of the value of opera or music drama lies in the audience understanding the dramatic value of the text. Without that comprehension it is not complete. When it is sung in a foreign tongue, or in the vernacular indistinctly delivered, it ceases to be music drama and becomes music and pantomime."

And so ends our series of quotations from men and women who sweated, toiled, suffered—but, above all, sang—to make the records of 40 to 60 years ago that an incalculable number of record collectors treasure today. The singers all admitted it was hard work. But if they could have been certain, as they struggled, that discs and cylinders bearing their voices would be treasured in many thousands of homes today, and for generations to come, they could not but have agreed with the last line of "Jim" (Richardson's whimsical paragraph):

"Ain't it a grand  
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## A DIRECTORY OF PIONEER RECORDING GROUPS

By JIM WALSH

Publication of this article will be the attainment of a goal I set myself many years ago.

Since I have been writing for *Hobbies* I have answered hundreds of letters asking for information concerning the members of the various vocal and instrumental groups that made records in the phonograph's pioneer days.

I have long wanted to publish an article that would give this information in brief but accurate form — partly because I believed it would keep me from having to answer so many letters after it appeared, and partly because no such article had ever seen print. Now I have completed my note taking and am glad to present the result.

Obviously, however, no list could very well give the personnel of every trio, quartet, etc., that has made records. Even so, I believe this compilation does include all the really important popular ensembles that recorded up to the beginning of the electric recording era and a few that came afterwards.

A number of "classical" groups — mostly those that played chamber music — also are included. But it should be said that this list does not attempt to include hill-billy organizations, for they do not come within the scope of this department. Neither, with one or two exceptions, does it take in dance groups.

In a few instances, where there was doubt as to the exact personnel of some group, I have made a "shrewd guess," but have made it clear that the identifications are not certain.

If a pioneer recording organization isn't listed alphabetically here, you may be sure it's because I have not obtained trustworthy information concerning it. But here is the list itself, which I hope, and believe, is the most comprehensive thing of its kind ever attempted.

**AMERICAN QUARTET**—An organization by this name appeared in the

Victor catalog as early as 1901. But I have recently been astounded to learn that the Edison Male Quartet, consisting of John Bieling, Jere Mahoney, S. H. Dudley and William F. Hooley, called itself the American Quartet as early as 1898, before it took the Haydn Quartet name for use on disc records.

The late S. H. Dudley recalled the 1901 Victor quartet as being composed of himself as baritone; Albert Campbell, first tenor; W. T. Leahy, second tenor, and Hooley, bass. Some Victor Monarch records which have the American Quartet name on the label are announced as being by the Haydn Quartet.

The American Quartet name disappeared from the catalog after 1904, but was revived in 1909 for a new organization which became the most popular male group specializing in ragtime and comic songs. It originally consisted of Bieling, Billy Murray, Steve Porter, and Hooley. On Edison cylinders, it was known as the Premier Quartet.

Bieling was succeeded in 1914 by John Young. When Hooley died in 1918, the ensemble became Young, Murray, Porter, and Donald Chalmers. It free-lanced during 1919 and 1920, and appeared on various brands of records as the American, Premier, Premier-American, and Murray Quartets — the latter name apparently restricted to one Aeolian-Vocalion record.

When Murray signed an exclusive Victor contract late in 1920, the American became identical with the Peerless Quartet except that Murray sang the lead instead of Henry Burr. Other members were Campbell, John Meyer, and Frank Croxton. The last American Quartet record, "Alabama Bound," appeared in 1925.

Meanwhile, Edison retained the right to the Premier Quartet name, and all Premier Quartet records, after Murray became exclusive to Victor, were made by the Harmonizers Quartet.

**AMERICAN SINGERS** (1927 into the 1930's) — Originally Charles Harrison, first tenor; Redferne Hollinshead, second tenor; Vernon Archibald, baritone; Frank Croxton, bass. After a year or so Hollinshead was succeeded by Lambert Murphy.

**AMPHION QUARTET** — See Harmonizers.

**APOLLO QUARTET OF BOSTON** (Edison, 1916)—William Whittaker, Lyman Hemenway, John Smallman, Alexander Logan.

**APOLLO TRIO** — See Crescent Trio.

**ARKANSAS TRIO** — (Edison, 1924) — Vernon Dalhart, Ed Smalle, John Call (banjo).

**AVON COMEDY FOUR** (Victor and Emerson, 1916; Columbia, 1918) — Joe Smith, Irving Kaufman, Harry Goodwin, Charles Dale. Kaufman later was succeeded by Eddie Miller, and Arthur Fields was a member for a brief period.

**BETHEL JUBILEE QUARTET** (Victor, 1923)—A. C. Brogdon, H. S. Allen, J. C. Eubanks, T. H. Wiseman.

**BIG FOUR QUARTET** (Edison cylinders, 1900) — Byron G. Harlan, Joe Natus, Arthur Collins, A. D. Madeira.

**BISON CITY QUARTET** (New Jersey cylinders, 1892)—Charles C. Miller, Ben R. Cook, Harry C. West, Lester L. Pike.

**BOUDINI BROTHERS** (Pathe, ab. 1913)—Phil and Dan Boudini.

**BROADWAY QUARTET** (Columbia, 1916) — See Columbia Stellar Quartet.

**BROADWAY QUARTET** (Vocalion,

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

1922) — See Criterion Quartet.

**BRUNSWICK MALE QUARTET** (Columbia, 1911)—Audrey Hackett, Arthur Clough, Harry Wieting, A. Duncan Cornwall.

**CHAUTAUQUA PREACHERS QUARTET** (Columbia, 1916)—John Wesley Holland, Fay Arnold Moon, Charles A. Gage, Charles Alfred Briggs.

**CHERNIAVSKY TRIO** (Edison) — Mischel Cherniavsky, violin; Leo, 'cello; Jan, piano.

**COLONIAL QUARTET**—See Rambler Minstrel Co.

**COLUMBIA DOUBLE QUARTET** — **COLUMBIA OCTETTE** (1915) — The monthly supplements did not identify the members of this organization, so only a guess can be hazarded. However, as the only two important male quartets singing for Columbia at this period were the Columbia Stellar Quartet and the Peerless, it is likely that the Double Quartet, or Octette, was a combination of the two.

**COLUMBIA LADIES QUARTET** (1913) — Grace Kerns, Louise MacMahon, Mildred Potter, Clara Moister.

**COLUMBIA MALE QUARTET**—When this group was formed in the 1890's it consisted of Albert Campbell, first tenor; J. K. Reynard, second tenor; Joe Belmont, baritone; and Joe Majors, bass.

In 1902 or 1903, young Henry Burr was substituted for Reynard. Other singers who were in it later included Arthur Collins, Steve Porter, George Gaskin, Frank C. Stanley and "Big Tom" Daniels.

In 1906 it became the Peerless Quartet, which see for further details. The Quartet then began to make records for all companies, but Columbia continued to use the Columbia Quartet name for several years and did not call the ensemble the Peerless until August, 1912. Even then, some Peerless records were issued for years afterwards as by the Columbia Quartet.

**COLUMBIA MIXED QUARTET** (1913) — Grace Kerns, Mildred Potter, Charles Harrison, Frank Croxton.

**COLUMBIA SEXTET** (1902)—This was a group which recorded "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," from "Floradora." It consisted of Harlan, Belmont, Stanley, and three girls from the original Floradora Sextette — nobody seems to know which three.

**COLUMBIA STELLAR QUARTET** (1914)—Originally Charles Harrison, John Barnes Wells, Andrea Sarto, and Frank Croxton. After a couple of records, Wells was succeeded by Henry Burr.

Soon afterward, Reed Miller took Burr's place. Harrison, Miller, Sarto, and Croxton made nearly all the succeeding records, although Lewis James occasionally sang in the place of Miller, and Billy Jones seems to have sung the lead in at least one of their 1922 records.

Under the name of the Broadway Quartet, the group sang lighter numbers for Columbia. As the Stellar Quartet, they made records in the early 1920's for Aeolian-Vocalion and possibly other companies.

**COUNTRY HARMONIZERS** (Pathe and Actuelle, 1922)—See Harmonizers.

**CRESCENT TRIO** (1920) — Charles Hart, Lewis James, Elliott Shaw. On Pathe and Actuelle records they were also called the Apollo Trio and the Orpheus Trio.

**CRITERION QUARTET**—Made records in 1905 and for a year or two afterwards for several companies, including Edison, Columbia, Zonophone, and Leeds. Members were Robert R. Rainey, William A. Washburn, Reinwald Werrenrath (the organizer), and Walter A. Downie.

By 1916 the Quartet had become John Young, Horatio Rensch, George W. Reardon, and Donald Chalmers. In 1921, Frank Mellor, the only living member of the quartet unless Rensch is still



alive, had become second tenor. It was also known as the Aeolian Male Quartet and as the Broadway Quartet on Vocalion records, and as the Strand Quartet on Brunswick. In the late 1920's it became a staff attraction of the Roxy Theater in New York and for several years afterward was better known as the Roxy Quartet.

**CROXTON (FRANK) QUARTET** (1912)—Agnes Kimball, Nevada Van Der Veer, Reed Miller, and Frank Croxton. On one or more Gennett records around 1918, it consisted of Inez Barbour, probably Nevada Van Der Veer, Henry Burr, and Croxton.

**CROXTON TRIO** (Okeh, 1918) — Inez Barbour, Henry Burr, Frank Croxton. **DANN TRIO** (Edison and Brunswick, 1921)—Blanche L. Dann, violin; M. Felicie Dann, cornet; Rosalynd J. Davis, piano.

**DIAMOND FOUR** (Berliner, about 1896) — Albert Campbell, James Kent Reynard, Steve Porter, Will C. Jones. **EDISON COMIC OPERA COMPANY** (1910) — John Young, Steve Porter, Edith Chapman, Edna Stearns, Cornelia Marvin.

**EDISON MALE QUARTET** — Organized about 1894 to make soft brown wax cylinders. Original members were Roger Harding, J. K. Reynard, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hooley.

By 1896 Harding had been succeeded by John Bieling and Reynard by Jere Mahoney. Three or four years later Harry Macdonough took Mahoney's place. The quartet then began to make disc records as the Haydn Quartet (which see for further details).

**EDISON MIXED QUARTET** (1906) — Florence Hinkle, Mary Porter Mitchell, John Young, and Frederick Wheeler. By 1909 Margaret Keyes had become contralto in place of Miss Mitchell.

**EDISON MIXED SEXTET** — I do not know who the six artists were in the first Edison recording of the *Floradora* Sestet. A group that remade it included Corinne Morgan, Ada Jones, Grace Nelson, George Seymour Lenox, Bob Roberts and Frank C. Stanley.

**EDISON MIXED TRIO** — See Metropolitan Trio.

**EDISON SEXTET**—Recorded the *Lucia* Sestet in 1908 for the initial issue of *Amberol* cylinders) — Marie Stoddart, Margaret Keyes, John Young, George M. Stricklett, Frederick Wheeler, and George Bemus.

**EDISON VENETIAN TRIO** (1906) — Eugene Jaudas, violin; Eugene Rose, flute; Charles Schuetze, harp.

**ELECTRIC CITY FOUR** (Edison Blue Amberol, 1921) — George Weaver, Jenkin Jones, Martin Size, Joseph Wetter.

**ELMAN STRING QUARTET** (Victor, 1916)—Mischa Elman, and Messrs. Bak, Rissland, and Nagel of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

**ELSHUCO TRIO** (Brunswick, 1920) — Elias Breeskin, violin; Willem Willeke, cello, and Amello Giorni, piano.

**EMPIRE VAUDEVILLE COMPANY** (Edison, 1907)—Performers varied according to individual needs. Most records included Edward Meeker and the Premier Quartet. This group, with Vess L. Ossman, made the "Laughing Song" record in 1917.

Others, who sometimes were included, were Billy Golden, Albert Campbell, Al Bernard, and Ada Jones. One cylinder, "Casting Bread Upon the Waters", although listed as being by the Empire Vaudeville Company, was by Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. Favor and Steve Porter.

The Empire group was an outgrowth of the earlier Edison Vaudeville Company, whose members were Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, and Steve Porter, with Edward Meeker occasionally added. Murray, Harlan, and Porter were also the original Victor Vaudeville Company.

**EVEREADY MIXED QUARTET** (Late 1920's) — Beulah Gaylord Young, Rose Bryant, Charles Harrison, Wilfred Glenn.

**FIFTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHOIR** (Edison cylinders, ab. 1910) — Mary Hissam de Moss, Cornelia Marvin, Edward Strong, Frederic Martin.

**FISK UNIVERSITY JUBILEE QUARTET** — Began to make Victor records in 1910. Members at that time were J. W. Work, N. W. Ryder, the Rev.

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13c



This group of photos appeared in *The Voice of the Victor* after the four members of the Peerless Quartet, together with Billy Murray, the most popular recording comedian, had signed an exclusive Victor contract in 1920.



The Criterion Quartet personnel changed from time to time. In 1916 it consisted of Horatio Rench, second tenor; John Young, first tenor; George W. Reardon, baritone (looking over Young's shoulder), and Donald Chalmers, bass.

J. A. Myers, and A. G. King. Shortly afterward King was succeeded by L. P. O'Hara.

The quartet made a series of Edison Amberol cylinders in 1912, just before the Blue Amberols were introduced. They were not taken into the Blue Amberol list, and, since they were on sale only a few months, are scarce.

The group then consisted of John W. Work; Roland W. Hayes, the distinguished tenor who recently gave a recital commemorating his 75th birthday; O'Hara; and Charles Wesley. A few Jubilee Quartet records were issued on Edison Diamond Discs under the name of the Southern Four.

**FLONZALEY QUARTET**—Began making Victor records in 1918. Adolfo Betti was first violin; Alfred Pochon, second violin; Ugo Ara, viola, and Ivan d'Archeambeau, cello. Ara was called into military service during World War I and was replaced by Louis Bailly.

**FOUR ARISTOCRATS** (Victor and Edison, 1927) — Fred Weber, Bert Bennett, Ed Lewis, Tom Miller.

**FROLICKERS, THE** (Edison, 1926) — Arthur Hall, John Ryan, Ed Smalle.

**GRAMOPHONE QUARTET** (England, ab. 1906) — Ernest Pike, Wilfred Virgo, Stanley Kirkby, Peter Dawson. They also made Gramophone records as the Minster Singers and probably were the Meister Singers on Edison Bell cylinders.

**HARMONIZERS QUARTET** — Began making records in 1920. — Charles Hart, Billy Jones, Steve Porter, Harry Donaghy. Donaghy told me their first was "Oh By Jingo," for Edison. It was listed under the name of the Premier Quartet. (See American Quartet for explanation.)

It also made Brunswick records as the Amphion and Great White Way Quartets, and sang at least one Pathe Actuelle as the Country Harmonizers. Probably it was called other names on minor brands.

**HARMONY FOUR** (Edison, 1917) — Gladys Rice, John Young, George Wilton Ballard, and Donald Chalmers.

**HAWAIIAN TRIO** (Ab. 1918) — Helen Louise (Mrs. Frank Ferrara), Frank Ferrara, and Irene Greenus.

**HAYDEN (HAYDN) QUARTET** — The early history of this ensemble has been told under the Edison Male Quartet. However, I have recently learned that the Edison Quartet called itself the AMERICAN QUARTET on disc records before it took the Hayden name, and that the first Hayden Quartet on records was made up of Fred Rycroft, Charles Belling, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hooley.

Although this group was known as the Hayden Quartet in 1899, on Victor records the quartet composed of John Bieling, Harry Macdonough, Dudley, and Hooley was called the Hayden until 1913, when the spelling was changed. Dudley was sometimes too busy in later years as assistant manager of the Victor Artist and Repertoire Department to sing in the Quartet, so his place was taken on occasion by Reinald Werrenrath.

The Hayden Quartet disbanded in 1914 when Bieling had throat trouble and quit, to become a salesman for a Victor jobber. Its place was largely taken by the Orpheus Quartet, in which Macdonough and Hooley sang.

**HEIDELBERG QUINTET** (1912) — Same as the American or Premier Quartet (Bieling, Murray, Porter, and Hooley), with the addition of the counter-tenor, Will Oakland.

**HOMESTEAD TRIO** (Edison, 1917) — Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd, Amy Ellerman. In 1921 Miss Rice was succeeded by Elizabeth Spencer.

**IMPERIAL QUARTET OF CHICAGO** (Victor, 1916) — Wallace Moody, C. R. Wood, Ben Q. Tufts, Oliver Johnson.

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION QUARTET** (Edison cylinders, 1912) — Paul J. Gilbert, P. H. Metcalf, C. M. Keeler, Edward W. Peck.

**INVINCIBLE MALE QUARTET (INVINCIBLE FOUR)** — On Edison cylinders, about 1904. Byron G. Harlan, George Seymour Lenox, Arthur Collins, and Frank C. Stanley. On Columbia records of the same period Lenox's place is taken by Albert Campbell. Some Peerless Quartet records were issued on Pathe sapphire discs as by the Invincible Four.

**KALTENBORN STRING QUARTET** (Edison cylinders, ab. 1912) — Frank Kaltenborn, first violin; Herman Kuhn, second violin; Max Barr, viola; Max Droge, cello.

**KAUFMAN BROTHERS** (Edison and others, 1916) — Phil and Jack Kaufman.

**KNICKERBOCKER QUARTET** (Edison, 1909-1915) — When first organized to replace the Edison Male Quartet, which had become exclusive to Victor, the members were John Young, George M. Stricklett, Frederick Wheeler, and Gus Reed.

After the Diamond Discs were introduced it ceased to have a set membership, but Young and Wheeler were usually included. Other singers who filled in on occasion included Reinald Werrenrath, William F. Hooley, Royal Fish, Harvey Hindermeyer, Robert D. Armour, and John Finnegan.

**KNICKERBOCKER QUARTET** (Columbia, 1916) — Had no connection with the Edison organization of the same name. Members: George Eldred, Lewis James, William Morgan, Glenn Howard.

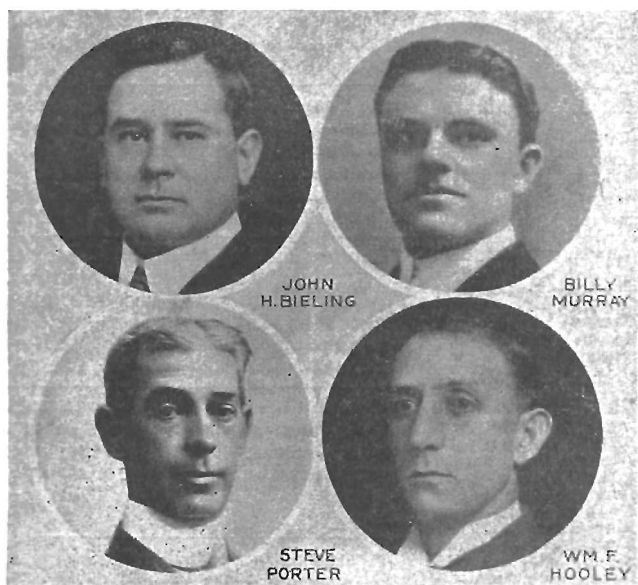
**KNICKERBOCKER QUINTET** — Made a two-minute Edison cylinder issued in 1905: Parvin Witte, Charles H. Bates, Geoffroy O'Hara, Walter C. White, and Leon Parmett.

**LOTUS QUARTET** (Edison two-minute cylinders, ab. 1904) — George Seymour Lenox, George M. Stricklett, Charles Lewis, Frank C. Stanley.

**LOUISIANA FIVE** (Ab. 1918) — This pioneer jazz group consisted of Al Nunez, clarinet; Joe Cawley, piano; Charlie Panely, trombone; Carl Burger, banjo; and Anton Leda, drums.

**LYRIC QUARTET** (Victor, 1906-1918) — Originally consisted of Eliss Stevenson, Corinne Morgan, Harry Macdonough, and Frank C. Stanley. After Stanley died in 1910, Macdonough remained, but Misses Stevenson and Morgan were dropped and Reinald Werrenrath was substituted for Stanley.

For a time Olive Kline was soprano and Marguerite Dunlap, contralto, but Miss Kline says Miss Dunlap was succeeded by Elsie Baker, and the Quartet remained Kline, Baker, Macdonough, and



Werrenrath for the remainder of his active life.

**LYRIC TRIO** (original Lyric Trio) — Began making Edison cylinders about 1898, with Estella Louise Mann, soprano; John Havens, tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass. It also recorded for Miss Mann's short-lived Lyric Record Co.

By 1901 it had begun recording for Victor, but the personnel now was Grace Spencer, Harry Macdonough, and Hooley.

In 1914-15 Columbia issued records by Will Oakland, Albert Campbell, and Henry Burr and called them the Lyric Trio, but they, of course, were not successors to the much earlier group of the same name.

**MANHANSETT QUARTET** — One of the first (if not the first), male quartets to make records under its own name. An 1890 list of Edison "phonograms" contains two male quartet selections, but neither the organization nor its members are identified.

By 1892, the Manhansett Quartet was making cylinders for the New Jersey Record Co. at Newark. Its members then were George J. Gaskin, Gilbert

Girard, Joe Riley, and a bass named Evans, whose first name is not given in the 1892 catalog.

A couple of years later the Quartet was John Bieling, Gaskin, Joe Riley, and Jim Cherry. Still later, Walter Snow succeeded Cherry. The break-up of the Manhansett resulted in the formation of the Edison Male Quartet.



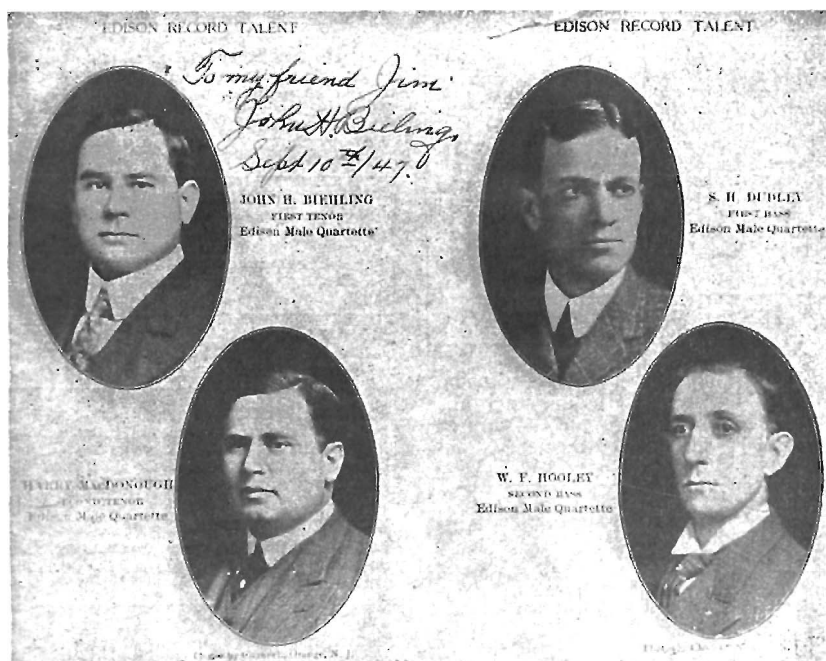
Left, top:

A 1910 collection of photos of the ensemble which was called the Premier Quartet on Edison cylinders and the American on Victor discs.

Right, top:

This photograph of the Shannon Four was taken about 1919. Left to right: Charles Hart, first tenor; Lewis James, second tenor; Wilfred Glenn, bass; Elliott Shaw, baritone. All except James are still alive.

—Courtesy of the author



These four singers made records from 1899 to 1914 as the Edison Male Quartet on Edison cylinders, and as the Haydn, or Hayden Quartet on Victor discs.

**MANHATTAN LADIES QUARTET** (Edison cylinder, ab. 1912)—Irene Cummings, Mabel Meade Davis, Annie Laurie McCorkle, Anne Winkoop.

**MANHATTAN QUARTET**—A German-American organization that made Victor and Edison records for more than a decade, beginning ab. 1912. Arthur Hall was one of the singers, but I have not learned the others' names.

**MANHATTAN TRIO** (Edison cylinders)—See Metropolitan Trio.

**MEISTER SINGERS**—See Gramophone Quartet.

**MEADE (OLIVE) QUARTET** (Edison cylinders ab. 1912)—Olive Meade, first violin; Vera Fonaroff, second violin; Gladys North, viola; Lillian Littledales, cello.

**MELODY THREE** (Late 1920's)—Also made records as the Men About Town for various companies: Jack Parker, Will Donaldson, Phil Duey.

**MENDELSSOHN MIXED QUARTET** (Edison cylinders, ab. 1904)—Edith Chapman, Corinne Morgan, George Morgan Stricklett, Frank C. Stanley.

**MERRYMAKERS**—See The Revelers.

**METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINERS** (Edison, 1926)—Elizabeth Spencer, Chas. Harrison, Ernest Hare.

**METROPOLITAN MIXED TRIO** (Edison two-minute cylinders, ab. 1904)—Corinne Morgan, George S. Lenox, Frank C. Stanley. A few years later the Trio began to make records for other companies, and was then Elise Stevenson, Henry Burr, and Stanley. One of the latter group's Edison cylinders was listed as by the Manhattan Trio.

**METROPOLITAN QUARTET** (Edison cylinders, ab. 1908)—Florence Hinkle, Margaret Keyes, John Young, and Frederick Wheeler. With the introduction of the Diamond Discs, no set personnel was maintained but artists who happened to be available on a recording date were used. Young and Wheeler were usually included, and Elizabeth Spencer was most often the soprano. Mary Jordan was among the contraltos.

**MILLER'S (POLK) OLD SOUTH QUARTET** — Polk Miller, a Richmond, Va., druggist and Confederate veteran, toured extensively with a quartet of Negro men. Edison issued several cylinders by them in 1910, but the only Quartet member whose name was given was the bass, James L. Stamper.

A group called the Old South Quartet, which probably included some of Miller's original singers, made electrically recorded QRS records. Some of the titles duplicated those on the Edison cylinders.

**MINSTER SINGERS**—See Gramophone Quartet.

**MONTAUK TRIO** (Edison, 1924)—Walter Wooley, piano; Henry L. Taylor, banjo; Stanley Brooks, saxophone.

**MOONLIGHT TRIO** (Edison, 1918) — Gladys Rice, George Wilton Ballard, Donald Chalmers.

**MURRAY QUARTET** (Aeolian-Vocalion, 1919)—See American Quartet.

**MURRAY'S TRIO** (Victor, 1927)—Billy Murray, Carl Mathieu, Monroe Silver.

**NATIONAL MALE QUARTET** (Edison, 1924) — Clarence Da Silva, Lloyd Wiley, Harry Jockin, Harry Donaghy. By 1926 Da Silva and Wiley had been replaced by Arthur Hall and John Ryan.

**NEW YORKERS** (Edison, 1929)—Shope, Preston (first names not given), Ed Smalle, Colin O'More, Harry Donaghy.

**NEW YORK TRIO** (Edison, 1923) — Louis Edlin, violin; Cornelius Van Vliet, cello; Clarence Adler, piano.

**OAKLAND QUARTET** (Edison and U.S. Everlasting cylinders, ab. 1912)—The late Will Oakland said he had no recollection of this Quartet, but the members probably were Oakland, John Biel-ing, Steve Porter, and William F. Hooley. With Billy Murray added they would have been the Heidelberg Quintet.

**OLIVETTI TROUBADOURS** (Edison cylinders, ab. 1910)—Michael Banner, violin; Roy H. Butin, guitar.

**ORIGINAL PIANO TRIO** (Edison, 1922)—George Dilworth, Edgar Fairchild, Herbert Clahr.

**ORPHEUS QUARTET** (Victor, 1911-1918)—Lambert Murphy, Harry Macdonough, Reinald Werrenrath, William F. Hooley. Also made records as the Victor Male Quartet.

**OSSMAN-DUDLEY TRIO** (Various companies, 1906)—Vess L. Ossman, banjo; Audley Dudley, mandolin; George F. Dudley, harp-guitar.

**PALACE TRIO** (Victor and other companies, 1920)—Rudy Wiedoeft, saxophone; Mario Perry, accordion; J. Russell Robinson, piano.

**PEERLESS QUARTET** (All companies, 1906)—This organization, probably the most popular and longest lived male quartet in phonograph history, began as an off-shoot of the Columbia Male Quartet (which see).

One Columbia Quartet group consisted of Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, Steve Porter, and "Big Tom" Daniels. When Frank C. Stanley took charge of the ensemble in 1906, he succeeded Daniels and for a short time the Peerless was Campbell, Burr, Porter, and Stanley.

Then Arthur Collins took Porter's place. Stanley died in December, 1910, and Henry Burr, who became manager, engaged John H. Meyer in Stanley's place. The Peerless remained Campbell, Burr, Collins, and Meyer until 1918 when Collins left and was succeeded by Frank Croxton.

There was no further change until late in 1925 when Burr, whose relations had become strained with the other three members, ousted them and replaced them with Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman, and James Stanley. That organization remained intact until the Quartet disbanded in 1928.

The Peerless also made records as the Columbia Quartet, the Invincible Four, the Peerless Minstrels, the U. S. Minstrels, the Victor Minstrel Co., the Victor Vaudeville Co., and in England, some of its Columbia records were listed as being by Prince's Male Quartet, probably as a tribute to Charles A. Prince, musical director of Columbia's American recording laboratory.

Virtually all Indestructible cylinders by the Peerless appeared merely as by "Quartet," with no prefix being given. When Peerless records were issued on off-brands made by Columbia, the name was changed to the Standard Quartet,

the Harmony Quartet, etc., to correspond with the record brand name.

**PEERLESS TRIO** (Indestructible cylinders, 1907-08)—Billy Murray, Byron G. Harlan, Steve Porter. Same as Victor Vaudeville Co.

**PHILHARMONIC STRING QUARTET** (Edison, 1928) — Scipione Guild, first violin; Arthur Lichstein, second violin; Oswaldo Mazzucchi, cello; Leon E. Barzin, viola.

**PREMIER QUARTET** (Premier-American Quartet)—See American Quartet.

**RADIO ACES** (RADIO IMPs) (late 1920's)—Gerald Underhill Macy and Ed Smalle.

**RADIO FRANKS** (Brunswick, 1924)—Frank Wright and Frank Bessinger. Wright was succeeded a few years later by Frank White, and the duet team made (Continued on page 47)

## RECORDS WANTED

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND** me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only, and cannot tell you where to sell them. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amherola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

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(Continued from page 36)

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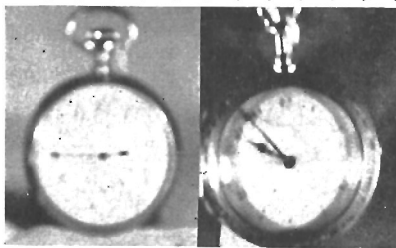
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Frank Kamplain, yodler, and Sam H. Stept, piano. Later, the group was Kamplain, Tom Ford, and Lew Cobey.

REVELERS, THE—Began with Victor in 1925 as an outgrowth of the Shannon Four (which see). At first the personnel was Franklyn Baur, Lewis James, Elliott Shaw, and Wilfred Glenn, with Ed Smalls as pianist-arranger.

A few years later Frank Black succeeded Smalls. James and Glenn remained with the Revelers until the group's dissolution around 1940, but Shaw was in ill health for a time and gave way to Phil Duey. Keeping first tenors was a problem. Among those who succeeded Baur were Charles Harrison, Frank Parker, Robert Simmons, and James Melton.

The Revelers made records for Columbia as the Singing Sophomores and for Brunswick as the Gaiety Musical Comedy Chorus and the Merrymakers. Very likely they sang for smaller companies under various names, and for old-fashioned quartet work they continued to call themselves the Shannon Quartet.

Wilfred Glenn, who now lives in Charlottesville, Va., reorganized the Revelers about 15 years ago with none of the original members except himself, but the group made no records and was not long active in concert work.

ROBISON (CARSON) TRIO (Late 1920's)—Carson Robison, Frank Luther, Phil Crow.

SCHUBERT TRIO (Victor, 1907)—Elise Stevenson, Harry Macdonough, Frank C. Stanley.

SHANNON FOUR (SHANNON QUARTET)—Began with Victor in 1917, with Charles Hart, Harvey Hindermeyer, Elliott Shaw, and Wilfred Glenn. In 1918 Hindermeyer was succeeded by Lewis James.

Hart left to study opera in Germany about the time the Shannon Four (which changed its name to the Shannon Quartet in 1923) was being transformed into the Revelers (which see), and there was a long succession of top tenors.

The Shannons appeared under many names, including the Acme Male Quartet (Pathé), Campus Glee Club (Cameo), Cathedral Quartet (Emerson), Hudson Male Quartet (Pathé), Liberty Quartet (Emerson), Lyric Male Quartet (Edison and Harmony), and Peerless Four (Okeh and Gennett.)

SINGING SOPHOMORES — See Revelers.

SIX BROWN BROTHERS—These were originally the Five Brown Brothers, and, as such, made U. S. Everlasting records around 1912. The original five were Alec, William, Vern, Fred, and Tom Brown. When a sixth member was added to the Saxophone Sextet and the name was changed to the Six Brown Brothers, the new man was Harry Finkelstein, not related to the others.

SOUTHERN FOUR — See Fisk Jubilee Quartet.

SPENCER (LEN) TRIO—Began making cylinders about 1897. Usual members were Len Spencer, Billy Golden (who did yodling as well as blackface comedy) and Steve Porter.

George P. Watson and George W. Johnson may also have participated at times, and a now forgotten blackface comedian, Billy Williams (not the English comedian of the same name) was occasionally called in. When some of the Trio's Columbia records were remade on discs years later, Billy Murray took part.

STERLING TRIO (Virtually all companies, 1916 to 1920, then exclusive to Victor, 1920-25)—Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, John H. Meyer. A Sterling Trio on a 1926 Gennett record may have been Campbell, Henry Moeller, and Meyer.

STEVENS TRIO (Edison, 1922)—Several combinations which always included Ernest L. Stevens as pianist-leader. Charles J. Murray sometimes played a saxophone, as did a man named Thrall. M. Aron was usually the banjoist. As an additional feature, John Sorin gave Chinese block "interpolations" on some records.

STRAND QUARTET — See Criterion Quartet.

TAYLOR TRIO (Various brands, ab. 1914)—One combination consisted of Albert W. Taylor, cello; Alexander Hackel, violin, and William E. Berge, piano. Another was Taylor; Alexander Drasein,

(Continued on page 55)

adorned with red roses.

These original creations were designed and made by Victoria Broadbent, International artist-designer, formerly of London, England, widow of John Howard Broadbent, noted scientist and United States Naval officer, class of 1925. During the past four years one of Mrs. Broadbent's hobbies has been designing original hat creations for horses.

Equine hats from these collections have been donated by the Easter Week Festival Committee to many distinguished horse enthusiasts, among which are President and Mrs. Kennedy, their little daughter Caroline for her pony "Macaroni," Governor Farris Bryant of Florida, together with many T. V. notables including Arthur Godfrey and Allen Young. The Horses' Hat Salon of the Lightner Museum, in addition to tremendous local interest, has recently been the subject of T. V. and radio feature programs, and other wide press coverage.

Included in this salon exhibit is a beautiful float showing a sculptured statue of "St. Francis of Assisi." In keeping with his love of nature, the grouping includes birds, animals and flowers in natural setting. This float was one of the outstanding units in the 1962 Easter Festival Parade in St. Augustine, and is now part of the permanent exhibits in the Lightner Museum. The float was the work of Mrs. Marie Ford, the well known designer of historical and religious creations in many fields, of New York and Florida.

The thousands who have visited the Salon in the Lightner Museum manifest the increasing interest that this glamorous exhibit has inspired. It is felt that this feature illustrates in reality how interesting, educational, and pleasing a hobby can become.

### MIDDLEBOROUGH, MASS., HISTORICAL MUSEUM

In early June, Middleboro, Mass., celebrated its 300th birthday in a most fitting way. It opened a two-building museum. The buildings are two 1820 mill houses.

The success of the project is due to the fine work of the citizens of Middleboro. For 38 years one room in the local library was given over to the relics of the city's past.

The most popular exhibit in the collections is the Tom Thumb memorabilia. The famous midget was labelled General Tom Thumb by P. T. Barnum. Thumb married Lavinia Bump of Middleboro. The collection contains hundreds of the many possessions that made their home after their circus career, as well as gowns and dresses and gifts from famous people who honored them on their visits throughout the world.

A wing on one of the buildings recreates a country store of the 19th century. The store has original counters, bins, barrels and merchandise.

There is also a small room devoted to the tools and products of the Bay State Straw Works, once a local industry that supplied women's hats throughout the country.

Other early American industries represented are: cobbler's shop, blacksmith shop. There are exhibits covering whaling, spinning and lighting to mention a few.

## A DIRECTORY OF PIONEER RECORDING GROUPS

(Continued from page 47)

violin; and Oscar W. Friberg, piano. "THAT GIRL" QUARTET (Victor, Edison, U. S. Everlasting, ab. 1910) — Harriett Keys, Allie Thomas, Precis Thompson, Helen Summers.

THREE KAUFIELDS (Emerson, 1919) — Irving and Jack Kaufman and Arthur Fields.

TOLLEFSEN TRIO (Victor and Edison, ab. 1912) — Mme. Schnabel-Tollefson, piano; Paul Kefer, 'cello; Carl H. Tollefson, violin.

TRIO DE LUTECE (Columbia, ab. 1915) — George Barrere, flute; Carlos Salzedo, harp; Paul Kefer, 'cello.

"TWO BLACK CROWS" (Columbia, 1927) — George Moran and Charles E. Mack.

"TWO DARK KNIGHTS" (Edison, 1927) — Victor Fleming and Phil Cook.

"TWO KAUFIELDS" (Emerson, 1919) — Arthur Fields and either Irving or Jack Kaufman.

UNIVERSAL QUARTET (Zonophone, ab. 1905) — This may be a group with which Geoffrey O'Hara remembers making Zonophone records, but the identification is not certain. O'Hara was first tenor in the group with which he sang; Reinald Werrenrath was baritone, and Walter MacPherson, bass. O'Hara remembers the lead tenor only as "Skutty" Somebody.

VAN EPS TRIO (Victor and Edison, 1913, afterwards all companies) — The first Victor record by the Trio, "Florida Rag," was by Fred Van Eps and his brother, William, playing banjos, and Felix Arndt, piano. The second banjo was soon dropped for a drum played by Eddie King.

In 1916 Frank Banta became the pianist, and in 1917 King's drumming gave way to the saxophone of Nathan Giantz. With Joe Green's xylophone added, the group was known as the Van Eps Quartet or the Van Eps Specialty Four.

VASSAR GIRLS QUARTET (Edison cylinder, ab. 1910) — Katherine Armstrong, Lovira Taft, Florence Fiske, E. Eleanor Patterson.

VICTOR LADIES QUARTET (Ab. 1915) — Probably Elizabeth Wheeler, Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, and Marguerite Dunlap.

VICTOR LIGHT OPERA CO. (Victor Opera Company) (Ab. 1909) — With an ensemble this size, the personnel necessarily changed almost with each recording. A 1912 Victor catalog shows photos of the following as members: Harriett Keys, Reinald Werrenrath, S. H. Dudley, Elsie Baker, William Wheeler, Elizabeth Wheeler, John Bieling, Steve Porter, Walter B. Rogers (conductor), Elise Stevenson, Harry Macdonough, John Barnes Wells, Ada Jones, Billy Murray, George Carre, Marguerite Dunlap, Frederick Gunster, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, William F. Hooley, and Inez Barbour. In later years Olive Kline was a prominent member, and the members of the Lyric and Orpheus Quartets and Revelers were frequently used.

VICTOR MALE QUARTET — See Orpheus Quartet.

VICTOR MINSTRELS — Membership varied over the years. Len Spencer and the Hayden Quartet were included in some of the very early offerings. Afterwards, the group known as the Rambler Minstrels on other brands of records, made a good many.

Most of the minstrels listed by names of states — "Virginia Minstrels," "North Carolina Minstrels," etc. — were by the Peerless Quartet. The last Victor Min-

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strels record, "Victor Minstrels of 1929," included Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Frank Crumit, James Stanley, and a singing group called The Cavaliers.

VICTOR OPERA SEXTET — A 1915 record of the "Lucia Sextet" by this group was made by Olive Kline, Marguerite Dunlap, Lambert Murphy, Harry Macdonough, Reinald Werrenrath, and Wilfred Glenn. An earlier version in 1911 had been made by Lucy Marsh, Miss Dunlap, William Wheeler, Macdonough, Werrenrath, and Hooley.

VICTOR VAUDEVILLE COMPANY (Ab. 1908) — Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, Steve Porter. A 1917 record, combining "Court Scene in Carolina" and "Darktown Campmeetin' Experiences," labeled as by the Victor Vaudeville Co., was made by the Peerless Quartet.

VIENNA QUARTET — Ludwig Schonberger, piano; Licco I. Liggy, violin; Otto Krist, 'cello; Jacques Grunberg, violin.

WEARY WILLIE TRIO (Edison, 1916) — Billy Murray, Edward Meeker, Donald Chalmers.

"WE GIRLS" QUARTET (Edison, 1918) — Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd, Marlon Evelyn Cox, Amy Ellerman.

WHITNEY BROTHERS QUARTET (Victor and Edison, 1908) — Alvin, Edwin M., William and Yale Whitney.

WIEDOEFT - WADSWORTH QUARTET (Victor and Edison, 1920) — Rudy Wiedoeft and Wheeler Wadsworth, saxophones; J. Russell Robinson and Harry Akst, pianos.

ZONOPHONE QUARTET — Same as the Rambler Minstrel Company: Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, Arthur Collins, and Steve Porter. This group made a number of records which were listed in several editions of the Zonophone catalog as being by the Colonial Quartet. In June, 1906, the Colonial name was dropped and the records were re-labeled as being by the Zonophone Quartet.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## PERFORMERS WHO USED MORE THAN ONE NAME

By JIM WALSH

A few months ago one of my record collector friends, Mr. C. L. Quick, of House Springs, Mo., gave me a surprise. He said that pupils in a public school near his home had been given an assignment to study back issues of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* and compile a list of performers who recorded under more than one name.

Mr. Quick sent me a list put together by one student, who evidently had depended largely on my article, "Performers Who 'Doubled Up,'" in *HOBBIES* for May, 1944. Reading that list caused me to smile wryly, for I detected a number of mistakes I had made when I did my own research 18 years or more ago. I still am puzzled as to why school children should receive such an assignment as the one I have just mentioned, but learning of it strengthened a desire I have had for several years to compile another longer, more comprehensive and, I hope, more accurate list.

That I have now done, at the expense of more research and effort than a person who hasn't tackled such a job would readily believe. Even so, I make no claim that this list contains anything like a complete list of all the assumed names used by recording artists in the acoustic and early electric recording days. Nobody could ever piece together an absolutely complete listing or be certain that it was entirely accurate. Obscure record brands, such as Grey Gull, Radiex, Globe and Madison, present the researcher with an especially baffling problem, because their recording was bad and, unless the singer was one like Arthur Fields, with unmistakable mannerisms, it is often impossible to identify the artist by listening alone. All that can be done then is to say that, for instance, Franklyn Baur "possibly" or "probably" was Ben Litchfield, but leave the matter open to doubt.

Before going farther, I should like to clear away some inadvertent errors that were made in the May, 1944, article, even though I imagine

only a comparatively small percentage of *HOBBIES* readers have saved that issue.

I said the late Sam Ash might have been Will C. Robbins. I still don't know who Robbins was, but he wasn't Sam Ash.

I also said George Alexander probably never recorded under any other name. I know now he was Arthur Clifford on Edison cylinders.

Harry Bluff and Billy Whitlock were not the same man, and Thomas Chalmers was not Lawrence E. Gilbert. There was a baritone singer by the latter name whose style resembled Chalmers'. Irving and Jack Kaufman did not make Yiddish records under the names of Gus and Jay Goldstein, and Corinne Morgan was not Grace Nelson. Miss Nelson was a New York church choir singer, Grace Hornby.

M. J. O'Connell was not the late Billy Watkins, who was a vaudeville singer. It is doubtful that Elise Stevenson was "Miss Walton" on a couple of Victor records. The Victor office files don't identify Miss Walton, however. Herbert Stuart was not Frank Croxton, as I suspected, but was Albert Wiederhold. This was told to me by Charles Harrison, who sang duets with "Stuart."

And John Barnes Wells was not De Los Becker, who was a well known church and concert singer and is still living in New York, or was a couple of years ago.

As for the new list, I have not tried to cross-index it completely, because that would take too much space. Only where a performer was about as well known under one name as another have I made a cross-reference. For instance, John Young was as well known under the assumed name of Harry Anthony as under his real name, so I have listed both Anthony and Young. On the other hand, I have not cross-listed the dozens of names used by Vernon Dalhart.

Where a name appears in parentheses immediately following the alphabetical listing, the enclosed name is the person's legal one. As an example, "BURR, HENRY (Harry McClaskey)," means that Burr's real name was Harry McClaskey. In many instances, where artists used comparatively unknown assumed names, I have placed in parentheses the brand of record on which it was used.

That seems about all the explanation necessary to understand the list-

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

ings. But I should like to refer for a moment to last month's article which gave the names of the members of various pioneer recording organizations and make it clearer that there were sometimes temporary substitutions in even the best known and most solidly established groups. For instance, Harry Macdonough sang the lead in the Victor record of "On the Banks of the Wabash," by the American Quartet, in the place of Billy Murray. Walter Van Brunt also took Murray's place in a few American Quartet and Heidelberg Quintet records, and Walter B. Rogers substituted for Steve Porter in one of the Quartet's Victor versions of "Casey Jones."

I mentioned in the article that Reinald Werrenrath sometimes sang baritone in the Hayden Quartet in the place of S. H. Dudley. The only Peerless Quartet record I know of in which Henry Burr does not sing is an Edison cylinder of "Characteristic Negro Medley." Billy Murray took Burr's place in that one — I suppose because his style of singing was better adapted to such a number than Burr's. And in the Edison Amberol cylinder of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," the noted soprano, Inez Barbour, assisted the Premier Quartet, but was given no credit for her work. All of which just goes to show there are exceptions to all rules — and all recording ensembles!

Now, here is the revised and enlarged list of performers who sang or played under more than one name:

ALCOCK, MERLE—Merle Tillotson.  
ALEXANDER, GEORGE (Clifford Alexander Wiley)—Arthur Clifford (Edison cylinders). Possibly Atwood Twitchell on Zonophone.  
ANTHONY, HARRY—See Young, John.  
ARDEN, VICTOR, and WADSWORTH, WHEELER — Bennett Brothers (Lyric).  
AUSTIN, GENE (Gene Lucas) — Charles Keene. Austin and George Reaneau made Edison records as "The Blue Ridge Duo."  
BACON, Fred J. — Ernie Anderson (Edison).  
BAKER, ELSIE—Elsie West Baker, Edna Brown, Nora Watson, Mabel West.  
BALLARD, GEORGE WILTON — George Wilton.  
BAUR, FRANKLYN — possibly Ben Litchfield (Grey Gull).  
BENZLER, ALBERT — probably Albert Henry (Columbia).  
BERNARD, AL — John Bennett (Madison), Jack Clare (Pathe), "Skeeter" Sims (Regal), "Uncle Joe," (Romeo). He and J. Russell Robinson were "The Dixie Stars." The name of John Bennett was also used for other singers.  
BESSINGER, FRANK, and WHITE, FRANK—Radio Franks.  
BESSINGER, FRANK, and WRIGHT, FRANK — Radio Franks.  
BIELING, JOHN — said he made Columbia cylinders in the 1890's under the name of Livingston.  
BOUDINI BROTHERS — Brown and Edwards (Lyric).  
BROWN, EDNA — See Baker, Elsie.  
BROX SISTERS — Wainwright Sisters (Edison).

BURR, HENRY (Harry H. McClaskey) — Alfred Alexander (Pathe), Harry Barr (Harmony), Harry Haley (Cameo), Irving Gillette, Frank Knapp (Harmony and Velvet Tone), Harry McClaskey, Shamus McClaskey (Emerson).

CAMPBELL, ALBERT — A. C. Campbell (Berliner), Frank Howard (Zonophone), Frank Webster (Pathe). Campbell and Henry Burr made some records which were issued in the Scala Record catalog in England as being by "Bellwood and Burr." During his 1926-27 partnership with Jack Kaufman they appeared on Madison records as "Collins & Reynolds" and "Wheeler and Morse."

CARSON, MARY — Kathleen Kingston (Edison).

CHAPMAN, EDITH — Miss Chappell (Edison cylinders), Edith Chapman Gould.

CLARK, HELEN — Sallie Collins (Edison), Emma Johnson (Edison), May Meredith (Columbia), Grace Woods (Edison). She may also have been Ruth Lenox on Okeh, Pathe and other brands.

COLLINS, ARTHUR — is said to have made an indestructible cylinder of "When You're All Dressed Up and No Place to Go" under the name of Hawley.

COOK, PHIL — "Phil and Jerry," "The Radio Chef."

CORRELL and GOSDEN — "Amos and Andy," "Sam 'n' Henry."

COYLE, EDGAR — Arthur Reeve.

COX, MARION EVELYN — probably Marion Crawford on Pathe.

CRAVER, AL — See Dalhart, Vernon.

CROXTON, FRANK — probably Franklin Careau on Emerson.

DADMUN, ROYAL — Ralph Crane, Bruce Wallace.

DALHART, VERNON (Marion Try Slaughter) — Probably no one will ever succeed in compiling an absolutely complete and accurate list of the names used by Dalhart, especially after he began making hill-billy records. I cannot vouch that all the names that follow are correct, but they have been submitted by persons who have made a study of Dalhart recordings — James Ahern, Mack Allen, Wolfe Ballard, Jeff Calhoun, Jess Calhoun, Jimmy Cannon, Ed Clifford, Al Cramer, Al Craver, James Cummings, Charles Dalton, Vernon Dell, Joseph Elliott, Frank Evans, Jep Fuller, David Harris, Harry Harris, Lou Hayes, Joe Kincaid, Fred King, Hugh Latimer, Tobe Little, "Lone Star Ranger," Bob Massey, Guy Massey, Billy McAlee, George McLaughlin, Warren Mitchell, Dick Morse, "Mr. X.," Sam Peters (English Regal), Harry Raymond, Henry Scott, Josephus Smith, Cliff Stewart, Edward Stone, Billy Stuart, Will Terry, Allen Turner, Sid Turner, Bill Vernon, Billy Vernon, Herbert Vernon, Will Vernon, "Vel Veteran," Tom Watson, Bob White, Robert White, Walter Whitlock, George Woods. Several of these names — Frank Evans, David Harris, "Lone Star Ranger," "Mr. X.," Cliff Stewart and "Vel Veteran" — were also used for other singers on off-brand records. Dalhart and Ed Smalle made an Edison record as the Arkansas Trio, with John Cali playing the banjo. They were also the Windy City Duo on Genett, and sang on Pathe and Perfect records as Mitchell and White. Dalhart and Carson Robison made duet records as Jeff Calhoun and Bob Andrews, Mack Allen and Gil Parker, Wolfe Ballard and Claude Samuels, the Cramer Brothers, Evans and Clarke, the Jones Brothers (on Australian Panochord), Sam Peters and Harry Jones (English Regal), and Al Craver and Charlie Wells. With the addition of Adelyne Hood, they were the Jewel Trio, the Oriole Trio and the Regal Rascals.

DAWSON, PETER (Peter Smith Dawson) — Will Danby, Leonard Dawson, Hector Grant, Will Strong.

DE GOGORZA, EMILIO — M. Fernand, M. Francisco, Carlos Francisco, E. Francisco, Ed Franklin (a name also used on Zonophone for other singers), Herbert Goddard.

DEIRO, GUIDO — Carlo Pampini (Cameo).

DEIRO, PIETRO — Pietro.

DE LEATH, VAUGHAN (Lenora Vonderlieth) — Angelina De Marco, Gloria Geer.

DIXON, RAYMOND — See Murphy, Lambert.

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DOUGLAS, FRED (an English comedian, said to have used more other names than any other British recording artist) — Among his 33 or more "aliases" are P. W. Ramsey, Fred Murray, Frank Terry, Harry Vernon, Frank Greene, Charles Vernon, Fred Barney, Tom Gilbert, Stewart Morton and Harry Glenn. In duets he was one of the Barney Brothers, the Two Gilberts, Barney and Buck, Fred and Harry, and the Two Duggies — his partner under the latter name being his son, Leslie Douglas. These names were used in recording for the larger companies. He used many others in singing for minor firms.

DOWNEY, MORTON — James Morton (Edison Diamond Disc).

DUDLEY, S. H. (Samuel Holland Rous) — Frank Kernell.

DUPREZ, FRED — I have not heard any of the Zonophone records made by a comedian, Fred Lambert, but judging by the titles I suspect that they were the work of Fred Duprez.

EMMONS, HARVEY — Henry Nesbit.

FAVOR, EDWARD M. — Made cylinders in the 1890's as Edward Le Fevre.

FERARA, FRANK — Palakiki Ferraira (probably his right name).

FIELDS, ARTHUR (Abe Finkelstein) — One of the more prolific recorders under many names: Jim Andrews, Donald Baker, Andy Britt, Arthur Baldwin, D. Bud Bernie, Eugene Buckley, Harry Crane, Charles Dale, Walter H. Dale, George French, Henry Gray, Larry Holton, Jimmy Kern, Henry King, William Lewis, Arthur Mack, Jack Martin, Arthur Meadows, "Mr. X," Walter Norton, Padric O'Brien, Jimmy Ryan, Arthur Seelig, John Sloane, Fred Stone, Bob Thomas (a name more often used by Ernest Hare), "Vel Veteran," Robert Wood. With a woman whom I can't identify Fields sang a duet on a Romeo record as "Gent and Wheeler." He also appeared, probably with Fred Hall, in groups called the Hometowners and the Lumberjacks. I suspect the foregoing list is far from complete.

FREER, MARCIA — Margaret A. Freer (probably her real name).

GARY, SID — Al Foster.

GENE AND GLENN — Gene Carroll and Glenn Rowell.

GILLETTE, IRVING — See Burr, Henry.

GILLHAM, ART — "The Whispering Pianist."

GLENN, WILFRED — Marion Green (Lyric).

HACKETT, CHARLES — Edwin Dale.

HALL, ARTHUR — Adolph J. Hahl (his real name) Howard Lewis (Black Swan), Cliff Stewart (Domino). He, John Ryan and Ed Smalle were the Frolickers on Edison records.

HALL, FRED — "Old Pop Collins" (Edison).

HALL, WENDELL — "Radio Red."

HANSHAW, ANNETTE — Dot Dare, Gay Ellis, Patsy Young.

HARE, ERNEST — Another with enough assumed names to populate a village. This list is representative, but most likely not complete — Wallace Daniels, Arthur Grant, "Mr. Hare" (on children's records), David Harris, Henry Jones, Robert Judson, Walter Leslie, Frank Mann, Curt Phillips, "Radio Joe," Roy Roberts, Ernie Spencer, Bob Thomas, John Thomas, "Uncle Ernest" (children's records). For information about Jones and Hare duets, see Jones, Billy.

HARLAN, BYRON G. (George Byron Harlan) — Cyrus Pippins (Edison cylinder), "Deacon Treadway" (Pathe), Bert Terry (Actuelle).

HARRISON, JAMES F. — See Wheeler, Frederick J.

HARRISON, SAM — Harrison Latimer.

HARRISON, CHARLES (Charles William Harrison) — Billy Burton, Hugh Donovan, Hugo Donivetti, Charles Hilton, William Rundle (Actuelle).

HART, CHARLES — Harry Curtis, George Gordon, Henry Jordan, James Jordan, Charles Warren, Arthur Wilson.

HARVEY, MORTON — Herbert Morley, Gene Rogers.

HEINRICH, JULIA — Julia Henry.

HEMUS, PERCY — Charles Gordon.

HILLEBRAND, FRED — Charles Foster (Regal).

HINDERMYER, HARVEY — Harvey Wilson, Harvey Wilson Hindermyer.

Hindermyer and Earle Tuckerman were

the "Gold Dust Twins" on an Edison record.

HOWE, ROBERT — Kenneth Walters, Harold Wood.

HUNTING, RUSSELL — Michael Casey.

JACKSON, THOMAS — William Jackson.

JAMES, LEWIS — Robert Bruce (Pathe and Emerson), Charles Cinway (Actuelle), Harold Harvey, Robert Lewis (Columbia), "Uncle Lewis" (Kiddie), Bruce Wallace (Okeh). Royal Dadmun also called himself Bruce Wallace on a Victor record.

JONES, BILLY (William Reese Jones) — Another of the outstanding users of lots of names. Here is a representative listing: Harry Blake, Billy de Rex, Ugeso Gargolo, Eugene Harold, David Harris, William Johnson, "Mr. Jones" (on children's records), Reese Jones, Willy Jones, Tom Moore, Dennis O'Malley, Wm. Rees, Wm. Reese, Victor Roberts, Melvin Strong, Bertram Smith, Bob Thompson, "Uncle Billy" (on children's records), Billy West, William West, Carlton Williams, Frank Williams. Several of these names were used on Pathe and Actuelle records. Frank Williams, on Cameo, was the same name that Dan W. Quinn had used on Columbia years before. Jones and Ernest Hare made duet records for off-brands under such names as The Happiness Boys, Lewis James and John Marron, Lyons and Hellman, the Radio Kings and the Romeo Boys. They unmistakably took part in one Cameo record labeled "Tuning In With Ruby Norton."

KAISER, MARIE — Marie de Kyzer.

KAPLAN, DAVE — Dave Landis.

KAUFMAN, IRVING — Another of the prolific users of many names. Irving says that when he used to start for a recording engagement, his wife would ask: "Well, whom are you going to be today—George Beaver, Frank Harris or Who?" and he would reply, "What do you care, as long as the check is made out to Irving Kaufman?" — George Beaver, George Bronson, Frank Christy, Billy Clarke, Charles Dickson, Frank Harris, John Holmes, Henry Irving, Sidney Mitchell, Happy Jim Parsons, Jack Shea, Harry Smith, Noel Taylor.

KAUFMAN, JACK — Jack Dalton, Happy Martin, "Weary Willie" (Actuelle). Irving and Jack Kaufman made duet records as "Dooley and Shea," Billy Clarke and Burt Green, and Irvings and Jackson.

KENNEDY, WILLIAM A. — Probably William Bonner on Edison.

KERNS, GRACE — Katherine Clark; possibly also Miriam Clark.

KIMMEL, JOHN J. — John J. Kimmel (Edison cylinders).

KIRKABY, ED — Eddie Kirk.

KIRKBY, STANLEY — Charles Holland, John Morgan.

KLINF, OLIVE — Alice Green.

LAYMAN, ZORA — Zora.

LENNOX, ELIZABETH — Louise Ferrell, Louise Terrell, Emily Earle (Brunswick).

LUTHER, FRANK (Francis Luther Crow) — Bud Billings, Frank Evans, Francis Evans, Francis Luther, Bud Thompson, Frank Tuttle. Luther and Carson Robison recorded duets under such names as the Black Brothers, Jimson Brothers, Bud and Joe Billings, and Joe Adams and James Clark. Luther may also have been Pete Wiggins on Okeh records.

MacDONOUGH, HARRY (John Scantlebury Macdonald) — Harry Macdonald, Ralph Raymond.

MacMAHON, LOUISE — Grace Nash.

MACY, GERALD — G. Underhill Macy.

MARSH, LUCY ISABELLE — Anna Howard.

MARVIN, FRANK — Ray Ball (Jewel), "Lazy Larry" (Romeo), Frankie Marvin, Jimmie Price (Romeo), Frankie Wallace (Edison and other brands), "Weary Willie" (Perfect), George White (Okeh).

MARVIN, JOHNNY — "Honey Duke and His Uke." (Harmony), Jimmie May (National Music Lovers), John Marvin (Okeh).

McCLASKEY, HARRY — See Burr, Henry.

McDONALD, EDITH — Edith McDon-

ald Carpenter.

McMICHEN, CLAYTON — Bob Nichols.

MEADOR, GEORGE — Grant Stephens.

MEYER, JOHN H. — John Myers,

John Wilbur. With Henry Moeller, Meyer made duet records as Myers and Fairbank and Harlan and Roberts.

MIDDLETON, ARTHUR — Edward Allen, Eduard Middlestadt.

MILLER, BOB — Bob Ferguson.

MILLER, REED — Henry Pinckney (Emerson), James Reed.

MOELLER, HENRY — Henry Fairbank.

MORGAN, CORINNE — Corinne Morgan Welsh (her real name, on an Emerson record).

MUNN, FRANK — Paul Oliver.

MURPHY, LAMBERT — Raymond Dixon.

MURRAY, BILLY (William Thomas Murray) — Dan Hughey, William Murray, Cy Pitkin, Murray and Walter Scanlan made duets on off-brand records as "Saunders and White."

MURRAY, PETE — Peter Murray (his real name).

NELSON, EDDIE — Ben Linn.

NELSON, ESTHER (Mrs. Charles Hart) — Jane Nielson (Okeh).

O'MORE, COLIN — Arthur Burns, James Harrod, George Wilson.

PARKER, J. DONALD (Horace Ruwe) — "Happy Jack," Jack Parker.

PHILLIPS, JOSEPH A. — Franklyn Kent (Okeh), Harry Lawrence (Rex), Justice Lewis (Pathe), Joe Phillips (Okeh).

PIERCE, BOB — "Old King Cole."

PIKE, ERNEST — Herbert Payne, Herbert Perry.

PRINCE, CHARLES A. — Charles Adams.

QUINN, DAN W. — (Frank Williams), Columbia.

RADIO FRANKS — See Bessinger & Wright and Bessinger & White.

REA, VIRGINIA — Olive Palmer.

RICE, GLADYS — Bettinga Bergere, Rachel Grant, Victoria Marsden.

ROBISON, CARSON — Joe Billings, Charlie Wells. See also Vernon Dalhart and Frank Luther for information about Robison duet names.

RYAN, JOHN — Jack Rhan.

SARTO, ANDREA — Edgar Hall, James Hall, Edgar Stoddard.

SCANLAN, WALTER — See Van Brunt, Walter.

SHAW, ELLIOTT — Edward Burke (Regal), Thomas Edwards (National Music Lovers), Frank Sterling (Pathe), James Jordan (Okeh). Probably also Turner Roe (Pathe).

SPENCER, LEONARD GARFIELD — Len Spencer, Leonard G. Spencer, Garry Allen, Larry Leonard.

STACKS, TOM — Tom Howard (Edison).

STANLEY, FRANK C. (William Stanley Grinstead) — H. C. Parker (English Columbia), George S. Williams (banjo records for Edison in 1898-99 "coon" songs sung for Harms, Kaiser and Hagen). He probably also was William Fredericks on Columbia.

STEVENSON, ELISE — Alice C. Stevenson, Elise Wood.

STEWART, CAL (Calvin Edward Stewart) — "Uncle Josh."

STUART, HERBERT — See Albert Wiederhold.

THORNE, JOHN — Billy Desmond, Marcus Browning.

TIFFANY, MARIE — Betty Barrett (Edison Blue Amberol).

VAN BRUNT, WALTER (Walter John Van Brunt) — John O'Brien (Romeo), Walter Scanlan, Herbert Scott (English Columbia). Van Brunt may also have been Carl Ely on Indestructible cylinders.

VAN EPS, FRED — Edward Boynton (Pathe).

VERLET, ALICE — "Madame X" (Pathe).

WADSWORTH, F. WHEELER — Fred W. Wadsworth. He also made in 1918 a Pathe record as Frank Wadsworth with a piano accompaniment by the late Jean Goldkette.

WELLS, JOHN BARNES — William Barnes.

WERRENATH, REINALD — Edward Hamilton (Victor). An unidentified tenor who also used the name of Edward Hamilton made Puritan records.

WHEELER, ELIZABETH — Jane Kenyon.

WHEELER, FREDERICK J. — James F. Harrison.

WHEELER, WILLIAM — Probably Paul Hardy on Actuelle records.

"WHISPERING PIANIST" — See Gillham, Art.

WHITE, JOSEPH M. — "Silver Masked



Left to right:  
ADOLPH J. HAH, one of the most popular free-lance recording artists of the 1920's, was better known as Arthur Hall.  
BEULAH GAYLORD YOUNG today is Mrs. Charles Harrison. She was also known on records as Molly Ames.

CHARLES HARRISON, one of the most popular tenors in phonograph history, also made records as Hugh Donovan and Billy Burton.

HELEN CLARK (MRS. EVAN CAMERON), shown here, giving an Edison "tone test" in 1916, made Edison records under at least four names.

Tenor," Joe White, J. Malachy White.  
WHITLOCK, BILLY — "Madame Paula," Dudley Roy.  
WIEDERHOLD, ALBERT — Herbert Stuart.  
WILLIAMS, EVAN — Henry Evans, William T. Evans.  
WILLIAMS, IRENE — Irene Audrey (Brunswick).  
WINSCH, LOUIS J. — George Burnside (Crescent), Joe Remington (Pathe), Harry Williams (Lyric). He probably also was George Prescott (Pathe).  
YOUNG, BEULAH GAYLORD (Mrs. Charles Harrison) — Molly Ames (Columbia).  
YOUNG, JOHN—Harry Anthony, Jack Young (Gennett Art-Tone).

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. n3426

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3846

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

FORTY antique phonographs. List 25c, with pictures 50c. Prices reduced again. Some nice banks for sale or trade. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate Rd., Troy, Ohio. n3483

ATTENTION: Antique phonographs, cylinder & disc. All makes, models. Repaired, bought, sold. Almost everything in stock to repair any make or model. Phonographs completely overhauled, cases refinished. Parts duplicated with original parts. Cylinder and disc records for sale. Reproducers repaired. Many complete, like new, cylinder and disc. Phonographs for sale. All workmanship, phonographs guaranteed. Phonographs for sale sheet, 10c. Phonographs parts price sheet, 10c. — Lexington House, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State Street, Brewer, Maine. ja3811

Vol. II No. 9

THE PHONOSCOPE

13

### Talent Employed for Making Records



Miss Estella Mann

Our great show is the picture of Miss Estella Mann, who is a very talented singer and a very successful record artist.

She is the only lady who has successfully recorded songs and ballads by the old masters. She has an extensive catalogue of grand songs, including, among others, the old-time songs of the South, which she sings perfectly with spirit and grace and unusual power. This will be fully understood when it is known that Miss Mann is a graduate of the College of Music of Columbia, where she was a pupil of the eminent master, Eugene Frost. Miss Mann's voice is a soprano, and she has a range of two octaves and a half, singing from low to high. This is a very rare talent, and it is a great honor for her to be chosen to sing for the Lyric Phonograph Company. She is a very talented singer and a very successful record artist.



Joseph Weber

Mr. Joseph Weber, whose record appearances are a singer of German songs. Mr. Weber, as his name implies, is of German descent, being possessed of a remarkably well-trained baritone voice. He is a most master of his art, and his records have a fine, round tone that is always sought after by buyers who want and who know good records when they hear them. Mr. Weber sang with the great famous Glimmer at Manhattan Beach for three successive seasons. He has also been with the famous Thompson, the late Victor and they and a long list of other well-known singers.

Mr. Weber is singing his German songs for the Lyric Phonograph Company exclusively, who have just received a large order for his records. Success to him.



Original Lyric Trio

As will be seen by comparing the two photos on the above-out to the other on this page Miss Mann, Mr. Havens and Mr. Hooley are the three soloists who make up the Original Lyric Trio. These people have been wonderfully successful in their record making. Singing, as they do, selections from the concert numbers from both grand and comic operas, they are beyond the place on the ladder of fame, where they must to face competition. In fact, the Lyric is the only trio in the market having a lady member, which lends more value to their records. They are busy now, day and night, filling large orders.



Jack Simonds

We present herewith a character picture of Mr. Jack Simonds. This gentleman is a new comer in the phonograph world and is making a big picture. He is a very funny and witty story teller under the title of "Muckety." He writes all his stories and is rapidly coming to the front in his line. He does not confine himself to Irish stories, but tells some in "Muckety" dialect. Mr. Simonds, like most

of the phonograph artists, is a graduate from the stage. He has been with all kinds of companies, operatic, dramatic and vaudeville. His last engagement was with W. S. Hart, playing in the "Bells," the "Lady of Lyons," "Man in the Iron Mask," etc., where he acquired a liking for "Shakespearean" readings. He has studied in this line and is now a splendid reader. He also reads from Whitcomb Riley's poems. Mr. Simonds is making records exclusively for the Lyric Phonograph Company.



John Havens

The accompanying picture is a speaking likeness of Mr. John Havens, a well known and popular singer of tenor solo records. Mr. Havens has been very busy making a long list of his records for a number of years and has made a good many friends in that time. Many of these are great home phonograph and take great pleasure in having his records, so that they can hear Jack, as he is called by his friends, sing his favorite songs. Mr. Havens has a keen conception for comedy and sings comic and comic songs in a very pleasing manner. His friends, however, are not his only customers for he is kept busy night and day filling orders for his records. Mr. Havens is manager of the Lyric Phonograph Company.

Mr. Hooley, who is a very well known to lovers of good records to need an introduction from us. Mr. Hooley is a soloist at St. Francis Xavier's Church, where he has been for years. He has studied under the best teachers the country affords and as a result is possessed of an elegant voice, full and rich in tone. He says that he is greatly in love with the phonograph business and that, no doubt, has a good deal to do with the splendid quality of his records.

His catalogue is very large, containing the best numbers of the great masters and selections from grand and comic operas. Mr. Hooley has Irish heritage and sings Irish songs and ballads as only a singer then favored can.

Early in November Lee Spencer's Greater New York Musicals will open in Orange, N. J., under the management and proprietorship of the genial "Len." The roster of the company embraces many artists prominent in the talking-machine business. Among others are the Diamond Comedy Four, Billy Golden, comedian; Vera L. Channing, comedienne; Steve Hunter, in illustrated songs; Roger Hurling, tenor balladist; the Three "Burr" Brothers, musical experts; the Wizard, Gopher; Frederick Rose, descriptive vocalist; the Greater New York Quartette and in conclusion Golden, comedian; and Hurling in their great plantation act entitled, "In front of the old cabin door." We predict crowded houses and a successful trip for the boys.

A photo of the Original Lyric Trio was reproduced on page 13 of the September, 1898, Phonoscope. Members were John Havens, tenor; Estella Louise Mann, soprano, and William F. Hooley, bass. Miss Mann, whose life story appeared in the April, 1952, HOBBIES, organized the Trio and owned the Lyric Record Co. A few months after this picture was taken, Havens, who was business manager of the Company, entered other work, and Harry Macdonough took his place. When Miss Mann gave up phonograph work to return to her home in Indiana, the Lyric Trio became Grace Spencer, soprano; Macdonough and Hooley.



Left: A 1927 recording scene in Okeh's New York laboratory. The singer (center) is Irving Kaufman, who made records under many different names. From left to right, others are:

Charles L. Hibbard, chief recording engineer; William A. Timm, manager of the foreign record department; Peter Decker, assistant recording engineer; Tom Rockwell, recording manager; Rube Bloom, composer and pianist; Bob Stephens, harmonist; Andy San-



nella, saxophone player; Justin Ring, music supervisor; Alex B. Johnson, editor of the *Phonograph Monthly Review*, and Al Taylor, assistant to the engineers.

Right: JOHN YOUNG, at the left in this picture, was equally well known under the assumed name of Harry Anthony. He is with Grace Spencer and Eugene Rose. All are now dead.

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

MELODEONS FOR SALE. Also expert melodeon and reed organ repairing. Reasonable. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, 1365 Bristol, N.W., Grand Rapids 4, Mich. d3023

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. d3234

MIRA, Polyphone, Kalliope, Regina, Stello, etc. Send diameter wanted for complete list and prices. — Bornand, 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n1061

### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only, and cannot tell you where to sell them. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vin-ton, Va. tfx

RECORDINGS NEEDED, will pay high price: "Clarinettski," Johnny Dodds; "Prohibition Has Done Me Wrong," Jimmy Rodgers; WPA-Glenn Miller. Please contact: Aida Favia-Artsay, 60 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

RECORDINGS wanted of pre-1957 radio or TV broadcasts (news, comedy, mystery, adventure). — George Vlasto, 400 North St., Greenwich, Conn. d3063

WANTED: Records, Radio Transcriptions, Films, Photographs, etc. by Guy Lombardo, Sammy Kaye, Blue Barron, Art Kassel, Ink Spots, Jan Garber. Highest prices paid. — Paul Scriven, 238 West State, Niles, Ohio. ja3034

ART GILLHAM records wanted: Columbia 297-D, Bluebird B-5454, and all of his recordings for Pathe, Gennett, and Okeh. Also want his recording under the name Barrelhouse Pete. — George Blau, 2823 N. Rockwood Dr., Peoria, Ill. n3826

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

CLOSE OUT SALE: Opera, vocal, dance and orchestra records, reasonable prices. Price list 10c. — Dave Spahn, 19 Alexander Ave., Bloomfield, N. J. n3863

NEW MUSIC BOX RELEASE: AB-5 "Golden Music Box Favorites" 26 nostalgic familiar airs, Robin Adair, Home Sweet Home, Mocking Bird, Silver Threads, and several Stephen Foster's, etc., from rare old music boxes on 12" Hi-Fi \$3.98 pp. pd. — Bornand Music Box Co., 139 4th Ave., Pelham, New York. n3027

Free Catalog. Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A R G, 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N. Y. d6084

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — David B. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. ja3297

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought. The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N. Y. f128862

Collector's Records, 78's, famous artists, orchestras, vocals, instrumentals, cross section of the past entertainers. Let us know your wants. — Hunt, P.O. Box 407, Chillicothe, Mo. f60021

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MUSIC BOX RECORDINGS made from finest collection, 12" Hi-Fi. AB-3 Christmas Music Box, RCB-4 Music Box Waltzes, AB-5 Golden Music Box Favorites. \$3.98 each. — Bornand, 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. n1272

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N. Y. ja120061

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. ap6276

FOR SALE: Hundreds of disc and cylinder records, many types of early phonographs, 25c for list. Also "Evolution of the Phonograph," by Walter Welch and Oliver Reed, a complete history of the phonograph, 576 pages, regular price \$9.95. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. n3886

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP.—ARG, 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. f6806

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). d3258

OUT OF PRINT RECORDS: Operatic, show business, personalities, instrumental solos, speech, etc. Write for free list of artists you collect - Caruso, Galli-Curci, Melba, Jolson, etc. Also Thomas Edison speaking to the American people. Re-issued recording send \$1. — Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. ja3027

TRY MARCONI'S for rare 78's. Serving collectors for 46 years. Original stock records of operatic, orchestral, popular and jazz. Also cut out lp's. Send for operatic catalog, 25c. — Marconi Bros., 864 Lexington Ave., New York City 21, N. Y. ap66121

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78rpm GOLDEN AGE vocals, rare operatics, orchestral and instrumental records, old catalogs, photos of singers - all may be found on our regular monthly lists. Also large selection of imported European LP's. — Ross, Court & Co., 3244 Yonge St., Toronto, Canada. mh66121

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS. South's store for top condition collectors' 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Collections bought as well as sold. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. ja3065



# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## MORE JOTTINGS FROM "THE PHONOSCOPE"

By JIM WALSH

In HOBBIES for April, 1955, I told of spending several happy hours in the Library of Congress, making notes from "The Phonoscope," a talking machine trade paper for 1896 through 1899.

The magazine was founded by Russell Hunting, recording expert and originator of the once world-famous "Casey" series of humorous talking records, and it was edited by him during most of its life.

I explained that my brief stay in Washington had allowed me time to read only part of the volume, and said that whenever I had another opportunity I should return to the Library and complete my note taking.

That opportunity didn't arrive until Friday, June 15, 1962, when I boarded a train in Roanoke, Va., and rode to Washington to meet my friend, Miss Doris Minards, of London, Eng., assistant secretary of the Dickens Fellowship, and a group of other Dickensians. They had come to the States for the first annual conference of the Fellowship ever held on this side of the Atlantic.

My train was an hour and a half late, and when I arrived at Hotel Washington, where the group were staying, the room clerk told me they had waited until 1:30 p.m. for me, hoping I could go with them for a tour of Mount Vernon. As it was, they had gone and wouldn't be back until about 7:30.

Being unexpectedly "stuck" in Washington for several hours with nothing to do, I thought of the Library of Congress and that volume of "The Phonoscope." So I hailed a cab and was soon in the Library's Music Division.

There I introduced myself to Donald L. Leavitt, head of the recorded music section, and received a cordial welcome. Don said my HOBBIES writings, like those of my brilliant colleague, Aida Favia-Artsay were valuable in his work and he would be delighted to help me in any way.

After he had shown me the recorded music section and the Library's collection of record catalogs, he obtained the "Phonoscope" volume for me, and I set almost

feverishly to work. Reading at top speed, I hastily scribbled notes in Speedwriting, and glanced every two or three minutes at the clock.

Resuming where I had left off years before, I made my last note precisely at 7 o'clock. Then I flagged down another cab, was driven to the hotel and had a delightful evening with the charming Miss Minards, who has been one of my dearest friends by correspondence for many years.

Beginning with the July, 1898, Phonoscope, the Norcross Phonograph Co. offered 179 brown wax cylinders played by the Metropolitan Band and directed by Signor G. Pelaso. The cost to dealers was \$10 a dozen or 75 cents each "in barrel lots."

In those days records could be ordered by the barrel and the purchaser had to take whatever the manufacturer sent him.

The Phonoscope's first mention of the basso, Frank C. Stanley, who was to become one of the most famous pioneer recording artists, turned up in August, 1898:

"Frank C. Stanley, a new aspirant for laurels in the phonograph world, has made a good start. We understand that Mr. Norcross has secured 45 master records out of 75 and, considering this is only the second effort, his work will not be in vain."

It was also announced that another basso, William F. Hooley, had taken the place of Roger Harding as the manager of the Excelsior Phonograph Co.

Nearly every issue had something about the prodigious Len Spencer, undoubtedly the greatest recording artist of that era. This time "Casey" revealed that Len had been robbed of a gold watch and chain which he had left on a horn rack while making Columbia cylinders. Leonard Garfield Spencer had been called downstairs to speak to a lady friend and the robbery was committed while he was gone.

On page 8 of the September, 1898, issue was a story about the late Fred Hager being awarded a gold medal offered by The Phonoscope for making "the most creditable" violin record.

Page 13 featured an article about Estella Louise Mann, whose Lyric Record Co. was the first founded and operated by a woman. There were photos of Miss Mann; the Original Lyric Trio, consisting of her, John Havens, and "Bill" Hooley; Joseph Weber, and Jack Simonds, an Irish comedian who was recording

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

"his famous Mulcahey stories." (I wonder if anybody today has one or more Simonds records.)

I found the following item of exceptional interest:

"Early in November, Len Spencer's Greater New York Minstrels will open in Orange, N.J., under the management and proprietorship of the genial Len."

"Performers include the Diamond Comedy Four; Billy Golden, comedian; Vess L. Ossman, banjoist; Steve Porter, illustrated songs; Roger Harding, tenor balladist; the Three Murray Brothers, musical experts; the Wizard Goldin; Frederick Rose, descriptive vocalist; the Greater New York Quartet, and in conclusion, Golden, Spencer, and Harding in their great plantation act entitled 'In Front of the Old Cabin Door.'"

Another item said that the Greater New York Quartet, composed of Harding, Jones, Porter, and Hargrave, "are furnishing the campaign songs through the State this fall. They are seasoned singers and make a sure hit."

What a treat the patrons of Spencer's Greater New York Minstrels should have had! However, the Three Murray Brothers did not include Billy Murray, who was then living in the West.

"The Wizard Goldin" probably was Horace Goldin, who had a magic act that included pretending to saw a woman in two. Many years later, George L. Thompson made an Okeh record based on the "sawing" illusion.

Frederick Rose must have been the Frederic Rose, who made Edison cylinders for a couple of years, beginning in 1908.

Golden, Spencer, and Harding were one of the variants of the Spencer Trio, which made several records of "In Front of the Old Cabin Door." The Jones in the quartet was Will C. Jones, who had also been a member of the Diamond Four, but I know nothing of Hargrave, the basso.

Len Spencer always seemed to be having trouble. The September issue told of his riding in a cab when the horse became frightened "and dashed up Broadway at frightful speed. The driver was thrown to the ground, terribly injured, and the cab smashed against a cable car. Len crawled out from under the cab, wearing the same old smile. After brushing a few splinters off his coat, he remarked, 'Who got up this party?'"

The article added that Len said he was going to write a song called "Stop Throwing Cars at Your Honey Boy."

I have been puzzled nearly all my life as to the identity of a baritone, Atwood Twitchell, a soloist for Zonophone records in the early 1900's. Of late years I have thought it likely he was Clifford Wiley, who sang under the name of George Alexander. The September, 1898, Phonoscope makes it appear likely,



however, Twitchell was singing under his real name:

"Mr. Atwood Twitchell is one of the new phonograph singers whom Harms, Kaiser and Hagen have introduced and made an impression on lovers of the instrument. Mr. Twitchell possesses a high, clear baritone voice and his musical education is superb.

"In a recent interview with Mr. John Kaiser he submitted a letter from Vice President Hobart which read as follows: 'Gentlemen, your records received and I was very much pleased with the same, especially those by Atwood Twitchell.'"

Garrett Hobart was vice president in the McKinley administration. John Kaiser, who made some of the "Casey" records after Russell Huntington went to England, later became Zonophone recording director. He was an uncle of our present-day piano-playing genius, Frank Banta.

It is still possible that Atwood Twitchell, whose recorded voice sounds greatly like Alexander's, was an assumed name, but perhaps he was a well-known singer under his own legal cognomen.

The October, 1898, issue revealed that George J. Gaskin, then singing for Columbia cylinders, was warbling "Break the News to Mother" 36 times a week to fill the demand for masters. He was singing "She Was Bred in Old Kentucky," 20 times, "On the Banks of the Wabash," 30, and Paul Dresser's latest, "Sweet Savannah," 15 times a week.

In November, Cal Stewart, already famous for his "Uncle Josh" records, received this flattering comment: "Cal Stewart is the most popular man among his fellow artists,

#### HERE ARE YOUR "MUSIC MUSTS"

Collectors & dealers swear by Burton's recorded listings, etc., in B.B. Hollywood & B.B. Broadway Musicals, each \$5.50. Just out is a new Vol. 1 (1776-1910) of his Blue Book Encyclopedia Popular Music, \$10. All 3 this month \$15.50, postpaid. Roach's Player Piano Scrapbook is \$3. Freeman's Melody Lingers On (50 years of song covers with some music) \$6, and The Three Sons Old Music Shop is almost out of print at \$2; all three at \$8.50 on first come basis. CENTURY HOUSE PUBLISHERS, Watkins Glen, N. Y.

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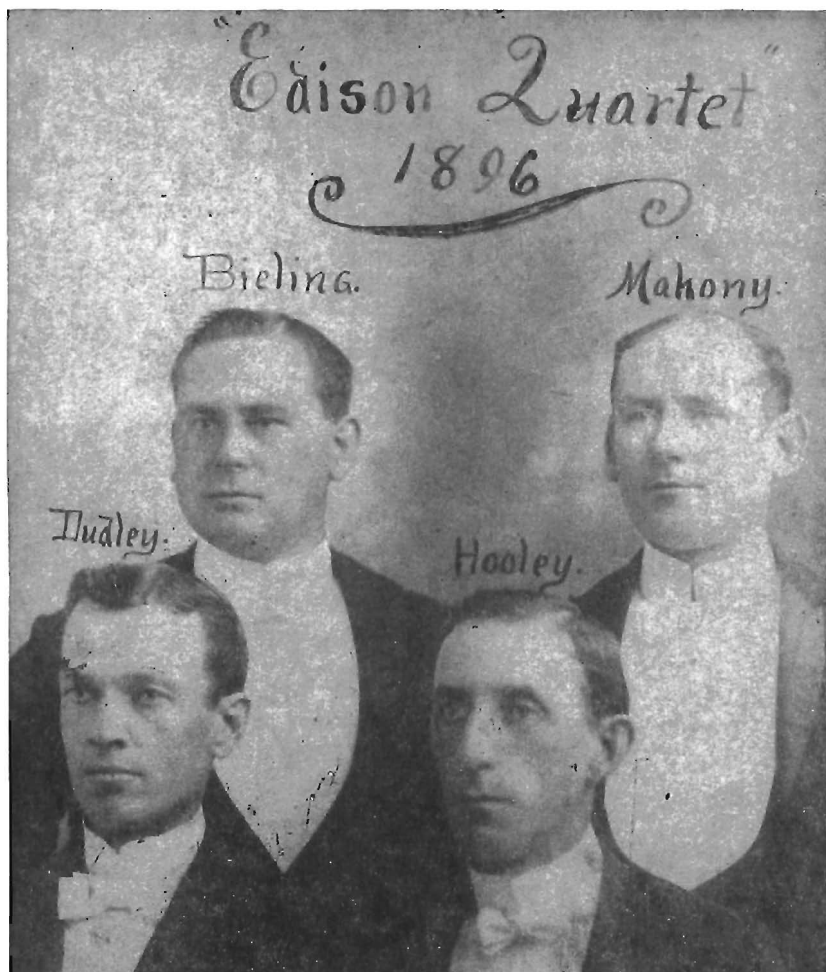
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Jim Walsh was astonished to learn from an 1899 Phonoscope that this Quartet was known as the American before it took the Haydn Quartet name. Members were John Bieling, Jere Mahoney, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hooley.

and we know of no one who gets a better word from all."

The Phonoscope published a number of amusing stories Stewart had told about his experiences and several of his original poems which I didn't have time to copy.

The December issue had an ad of the "artistic whistling solos" by John Yorke AtLee. Two dozen were of whistling alone and eight were singing with whistling refrains. The ad, apparently inserted by AtLee himself, said the records could be supplied by all companies, and gave his permanent address as in care of the Phonoscope.

A brief item said the "talent" of the Columbia Phonograph Co. had presented recording expert Victor H. Emerson with a handsome gold watch. Dan W. Quinn made the presentation. The facetious thought occurs: Did they swipe Len Spencer's watch and present it to Emerson?

It was also said that a song writer, Fred Hylands, "has published his 'Darky Volunteer,' and dedicated it to Vess L. Ossman, 'the foremost banjoist in the country.'"

January, 1899, brought some surprising news about AtLee, who "has undertaken the management of the phonograph department of the Duston-Smith Piano Co., Charleston,

S.C., and is confident of doing a big business."

In February, readers were told that "the home office of Len Spencer's Minstrels has moved to its spacious new rooms at 33 West 27th Street, where Manager Harry Yeager is keeping busy booking this popular attraction."

Speaking of the Phonoscope's readers, it is a sobering thought that all its "latest news" (though the magazine stayed two or three months behind its publication date) was addressed to men and women who are now dead. Few original readers of the Phonoscope of more than 60 years ago can still be alive. A man who was 20 in 1898 would be 84 now.

Moving up to March, 1899, I almost toppled from my chair when I discovered that John Bieling, Jere Mahoney, S. H. Dudley, and W. F. Hooley, who were then making records as the Edison Male Quartet, were also known as the American Quartet, rather than as the Haydn Quartet, which they were called later on Victor records.

In all my reading about the American Quartet, and in conversations or correspondence with Bieling and Dudley, I had never heard of this group being called by that name. As

I have often said, no matter how much one knows about the pioneer phonograph days, there is always something new and surprising to learn. The field is inexhaustible.

In April, it was announced that Harms, Kaiser, and Hagen's list of artists included Fred Hager, Albert Campbell, Hooley, George S. Williams, Quinn, the New York Symphony Orchestra, the Imperial Quartet, Ralph Raymond, Edward M. Favor, Atwood Twitchell, and a now completely unknown name, Robert J. Webb.

This is the first indication I have found that Frank Stanley made vocal records under the assumed name of George S. Williams, although he played the banjo for Edison cylinders in that disguise.

Harry Macdonough told me many years ago he had made a few records under the name of Ralph Raymond, but this was the first time I had learned what company he made them for.

I have just discovered that I overlooked a few February notes. And, by the way, October, 1898, was the last issue edited by Hunting, who left immediately afterward to work in England. The new editor was Emil Imandt.

Going back to February, 1899, I learned that "Fred Hylands, Roger Harding, and Steve Porter are the enterprising young men who have recently organized a song publishing company under the name of the Knickerbocker Music Publishing Co. We wish them success in their new venture."

William F. Hooley, Jr., once remarked that his father used to say, "Steve always had an angle," meaning Porter was always looking for some new way to make money. In one way or another, the versatile Steve made it, and he died a wealthy man from the sale of the Portophone, a hearing aid he invented. But his music publishing house didn't last long.

The firm making "Giant Tone" standard size cylinders, which were supposed to give as much volume as the large concert type, announced that their artists included Diamond and Curry, banjo duettists; John Hazel, cornet; Hooley; Arthur Collins, "coon songs" (the first mention I found of Collins); William H. De Wick, mandolin solos; Campbell, Hager, and Pierre Leo, "clarinet solos."

Some rather astonishing news was given about Len Spencer in April, 1899:

"Len Spencer is trying to acquire avoirdupois on a milk diet of 10 quarts daily, which he brings in with him from his country place. As Len weighs 210 already, he has great hopes of getting into Fred Hyland's 250 pound class before the summer is over."

Also in April: "Mr. Vess L. Ossman, banjoist, is doing his specialty in the orchestra at the Manhattan Theater, New York, after the second act of 'Madame Fifi,' having been engaged there since the opening, and is making a big hit."

Another item said: "Len Spencer and Harry Yeager have joined the forces of the Knickerbocker Music Publishing Co., and the firm hereafter will be known as Hylands, Spencer and Yeager."

Harding and Porter seem to have declared themselves out of music publishing in short order.

Porter had another "angle" by May: "Mr. Steve Porter is manufacturing and selling stereoscopic picture machines."

There was an anecdote about the time Cal Stewart, as an engineer, drove a train that took an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" troupe to fill an engagement. When the actor playing Phineas Fletcher could not perform, Cal took over the part. In his early life he had been an actor, railroad man, and almost everything else.

I found the first mention of the famous French firm of Pathe Freres in June, 1899:

"F. M. Prescott has received samples of original grand, or concert, records made by Pathe Freres of Paris. They are operatic selections in French rendered by Melchissadeuc of the Paris Opera."

"For volume and clearness of tone and artistic finish they excel any records we have ever heard. Finally, they are sold in very artistic boxes. Mr. Prescott has the complete repertoire of all records, both large and small, made by Pathe Freres."

And what a surprise the following was!

"The Hayden Quartet, consisting of Messrs. Fred Rycrofe, first tenor; Charles Belling, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone, and William F. Hooley, basso, are at present receiving more engagements than they can possibly attend to. They have been very busy recently making records for the Gramophone Co. in Philadelphia, Pa."

Never had I heard from any source that singers named Rycrofe and Belling had at one time been members of the Hayden Quartet. And this was the first publication issued before 1913 in which I had ever seen the Quartet's name spelled as Hayden instead of Haydn. Again I nearly fell from my chair. A thought has suddenly occurred—could Charles Belling have been a misprint for John Bielings? It probably was. But the mystery of Rycrofe remains.

In July, 1899, the Phonoscope said:

"Miss Anna Barthold has accepted another engagement with the Sign of the Cross Co. This lady has become very popular as a phonograph singer, having sung for most of the foremost concerns, but as there was not enough work in this particular line to keep her busy she decided to join the company another season."

The editor added that Miss Barthold's services would still be available to any record company wanting them. Long lists of records by this now forgotten contralto were published. Seven by her were listed in the 1899 Edison catalog, but all were cut out the following year.

Still in July, the editor remarked that "one of the most progressive phonograph companies of New York City is Reed, Dawson and Co."

This firm was said to employ the best available talent, including Stewart, Billy Golden, Campbell, Quinn, Ossman, George Schweinfest (piccolo), Hooley, Dudley, C. H. H.

Booth (piano), Signor Peluso, T. H. Reed (violin), Harry Chambers (cornet)—this probably should have been W. Paris Chambers.

Also included were Charles P. Lowe (xylophone), George P. Watson (yodler), A. D. Madeira (basso), Billy Heins (comic songs), George S. Williams (Frank C. Stanley, comic songs), Stanley, Harry Macdonald (Harry Macdonough), Mahoney, A. C. Sweet (cornet), Leo A. Zimmerman (trombone), H. von der Heide ('cello), the Lyric Trio, Original American Quartet, the Metropolitan Band, Reed's Orchestra, Estella Mann, Jessie Ollivier, Miss Fields and Miss Worthington. (Who can they have been?)

"The popular Irish comedian, Joseph R. Gannon, has been engaged to make the celebrated Michael Casey series and is appointed manager of the New York office."

With Russell Hunting out of the country, other comedians were stealing his "Casey" character rights. And what has become of all those Reed and Dawson cylinders?

E. T. Paull, a composer of descriptive instrumental pieces, such as "Napoleon's Last Charge" and "The Burning of Rome," had moved

from Richmond, Va., to New York, and was operating both a music publishing house and a cylinder record studio.

J. Aldrich Libbey, whose singing of "After the Ball" in vaudeville had made it one of the greatest all-time hits, was making records for Paull.

In August, Reed, Dawson & Co., who were at 74 Cortland St., New York, and 516 Broad St., Newark, were advertising that "T. Herbert Reed makes the only successful violin records—loud, clear and distinct." (What about that gold medal Fred Hager had won?) A photo of Mr. Reed, with his violin, was shown.

There was a reference in September to "a ruddy faced young man" with a German appearance who made his living principally by singing yodel songs for the phonograph. This probably was the late George P. Watson.

The Columbia Co. came in for some severe criticism:

"We note that the names of the various talent employed by the Columbia Phonograph Co. have been omitted in a recent catalog issued by them. In the case of one prominent artist whom we have in-

(Continued on page 37)



From left to right, top to bottom:

Top:

An early photo of Vess L. Ossman who was The Banjo King of the 1890's. The small cylinder phonograph was a popular means of home entertainment in the days of *The Phonoscope*. This painting, by the Italian artist, Mazzini, was often used in Edison advertising.

Bottom:

Fred Hager, who won a gold medal awarded by *The Phonoscope* for making the best violin record. His inseparable companion and accompanist, Justin Ring (Justus Ringleben) is at the piano. Hager is dead, but Ring, aged 86, lives in Hollywood, Fla. This picture was taken about 1899.

Frederic Rose, tenor ballad singer, was a member of Len Spencer's 1899 Greater New York Minstrels.

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD SHEET MUSIC, all kinds, etudes, metronomes, etc., organ books. Write wants. — Frank Bailey, Route 3, South Haven, Mich. d1251

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

VOCALSTYLE piano rolls badly needed. "Mr. Jelly Lord" and "Tom Cat Blues." — Montgomery, 722 Spring, Ann Arbor, Mich. d122511

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Recordo. 2) Recordo. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120061

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

ROTARY VALVE ALTO \$50; trombone \$45, both \$85. Tater Bug mandolin, Weyman, flat back, 12-string, each \$35; all in top condition. 15 old violins, all in top restored condition, new strings with rehired bows and cases, \$30 each. Silver cornet \$15. Brass trumpet \$18. All old and in top playing condition. Photos available at 20c. — L. Watson, 501 S. Pershing, York, Pa. d1405

### PIANOS & ROLLS

Wanted: Welte, Deluxe, Duo-Art and Ampico rolls. — T. P. Grattelo, 1519 California St., San Francisco, Calif. f3483

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Recordo. 2) Recordo. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. d126351

### ORGANS FOR SALE

PIPE ORGANS WANTED, and for sale! Organs - new, used, parts, music. — Alden Miller, 3212 34th Ave. South, Minneapolis 6, Minnesota. f3023

### VIOLINS FOR SALE

VIOLIN. Bears inscription "Jacobus Stainer in abam prope Oerupontum 1796." Tiger maple. Black wood carrying case. Nice condition. Make an offer. — Stonebraker's Antiques, Clearfield, Pa. d1002

interviewed, he informed us that the adoption of their new policy is a flagrant violation of the company's contract.

"Much unfavorable comment has been expressed in general. Perhaps the Columbia people do not realize the fact that they employ the best talent available in this particular branch of their business. "This change in the catalog creates a vast amount of dissatisfaction among them. Such names as Spencer, Gaskin, Quinn, Porter, Myers, Cal Stewart, etc. have heretofore been featured in their printing matter."

Notwithstanding this sensible criticism, Columbia continued to omit the names of artists from its catalogs through 1906, and thereby made the research efforts of such specialists as the late Dr. Duane Deakins that much more difficult.

The August issue mentioned a

yodeling record, "Sweet Rose," by Watson; and I was not edified to see Dan Quinn listed as singing a "Ragtime Hymn." That sounds like a forerunner of the attitude of some present-day "liberal" preachers who have jazz recitals as part of their church services.

There was a photo of C. H. H. Booth, who played piano accompaniments on records for several companies. He had thick dark hair and a curling mustache, and was described as a prominent Brooklyn organist who had made some "magnificent piano solos for Messrs. Reed, Dawson & Co."

Pathe Freres was termed the leading European talking machine firm, and the following information was given about an inimitable and apparently indefatigable comedian:

"Steve Porter finds the hard work of singing eight hours for the Columbia Phonograph Co. and putting in eight hours at the Empire Picture Machine Co. so exhausting that pure country air is needed to keep him in good health and wind, so he has purchased a beautiful country place at Dyker Heights, where he can spend the few leisure moments he has in the quiet and peaceful game of golf."

Wonder what became of that country place? It wasn't long before Steve had joined Russell Hunting in England. He even lived a while in India before returning to the States. John Havens probably didn't appreciate one of the references in the following:

"The Lyric Phonograph Co. have returned to their old home, 114 West 34th St. . . . Mr. J. C. Havens, tenor, who has been the general manager for the above firm, has severed his connection to enable him to embark in another business."

"Mr. Harry Macdonough, the well known tenor, has been engaged to sing with the Trio, and no doubt they will make a better record than heretofore."

"Miss Estella Louise Mann deserves credit for the manner in which she has clung to her business as many difficulties have confronted her in the past. This lady possesses a nerve which is seldom seen in the opposite sex. We are confident of her success in the future. She deserves the hearty support of the entire phonograph trade."

A paragraph in another issue quoted Miss Mann's brother, William J. Mann, who had been assisting her, as saying he'd had enough of the phonograph business and was going back to railroading. Miss Mann's father, also a railroad man, was said to be very proud of his daughter and her records.

Advertisements in several issues featured Lyric records by Miss Mann with violin obligatos by Ernest F. Erdmann. Duets by her and Havens were mentioned in November, 1899. In that same issue readers learned:

"Mr. English, well known in early Edison phonograph laboratory work, has taken charge of the new laboratory of the Universal Talking Machine Co. on 24th Street, and is manufacturing a full line of flat disc indestructible records such as the Berliner Gramophone record. The new company expects to have a full line of records on the market shortly."

"Mr. Orville La Dow is said to be the president and financial backer of the Universal Talking Machine Co., and is largely interested in other talking machine enterprises, being secretary and

(Continued on page 53)

## JEWELRY

### JEWELRY WANTED

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ANTIQUE AND MODERN JEWELRY from all over the world, bought and sold. Inquiries solicited. — Kenneth R. Park, 31 West St., Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844). je126351

### MISCELLANEOUS JEWELRY

STICKPIN COLLECTORS! Let's get together! — P. O. Box 104, Dolton, Ill. d6023

### JEWELRY FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Antiques and semi-antiques, gold-filled, silver, etc., 10 articles for \$6. Assortment includes lockets, charms, pins, rings, etc. Good value. — St. Louis Refining Co., 1115 Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. my68801

BEAUTIFUL JEWELRY from our vast gold-buying, rings, pins, chains, etc. 10 pieces for \$5. Better grade pieces. 10 for \$10. — B. Lowe, Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo. f3464

FOR SALE: Beautiful antique brooch made from Sir Isaac Newton's shoe buckle. In our family over 250 years. Best offer takes, if reasonable. — Dorothy Hansen, 2533 Cherry St., Bellingham, Wash. d1042

STAINED GLASS fused into brilliant stones of many hues. All hand fired and mounted on durable gold finish. Cuff links and tie tack \$5; small pendant and earrings \$5; bracelet and earrings \$10; 2½" pendant with leather thong, very unusual, real conversation piece \$6; earrings to match large pendant or cuff links \$3. Matching pieces must be ordered at the same time as all firings are different. Allow several weeks. Postage and tax included in price. State color preference. — Glass Jewels by Downs, R.D. 2, Dillsburg, Pa. d32931

FOR SALE: Old clear crystal intaglios ½" square. For use in making earrings, charms or lavaliers. Price \$1 a dozen. — Gladys Morabito, 372 William St., Stoneham, Mass. ja3234

CAMEO. 14K w. gold diamond necklace, \$50. — Hillcrest Antiques, 411 Waverly Place, Lakeland, Fla. d1021

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## Who Were Currier and Ives?

Why are Currier & Ives lithograph prints widely collected?  
Their prints are a picture record of America of their day—1835-95.

Why are some prints marked N. Currier, others Currier & Ives?  
Nathaniel Currier began prints, 1835; James Merritt Ives joined him, 1859.

Why are Currier & Ives lithograph prints so costly today?  
They have been extensively collected, so are rare. Many of them are wanted by many collectors. Rarity and demand push up price.

What are some favorite Currier & Ives lithograph print subjects?  
American Country Life, especially Winter Scenes. Westerns, with Indians, trappers, or cowboys. Sports, especially horse racing, hunting. Women, especially showing styles, home interiors. Great Americans. Mississippi River Steam-boats. Clipper Ships. Naval Ships. Battles. Railroads. Flowers & Fruits. Comics. Others.

What are some things collectors watch for in lithograph prints?  
American subjects. Fine condition—clean, untorn, unstained; full margins. Preferably unfaded, though a little "aging" or "mellowing" of colors is allowed by some. Many prefer hand painted.

What are LITHOGRAPH PRINTS? HOW ARE THEY MADE? See CHAPTER 49 HOBBIES  
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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

general manager of the National Gramophone Corporation of this city."

Universal soon began to issue Zonophone records. In another place La Dow was severely criticized for starting a new company while still on the payroll of Emile Berliner's Gramophone firm. Editorial comment on disc records was invariably scornful.

Retracing our steps to September, an advertisement indicated the Concert Phonograph Record Co. was operated by the E. T. Paull Music Co., already mentioned.

One of their singers, Charles Clinton Clark (and who today has ever heard of him?) was described as "without any exception the best coon song singer that ever attempted to sing into a phonograph." (They must not have heard of Arthur Collins, whose recording career was just beginning.) "We have the original Casey series of master talking records made by Joseph R. Gannon."

In addition, there were piano solos of Mr. Paull playing his own compositions.

In October, the trade learned that "Pathe Freres are now selling a new Graphophone modeled after the Gem phonograph, with improvements and using a phonograph reproducer."

Also: "T. W. Hager, the well-

known leader and violinist who won the gold medal presented by the Phonoscope Publishing Co. at the Pittsburgh exposition, recently issued a neat card to display in the windows of phonograph dealers.

"Word comes to us from London that Russell Hunting has charge of the record making department of the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., Ltd., of London. We congratulate his employers on obtaining the services of so able a man as Mr. Hunting is in that line."

Len Spencer was in the news again, this time as an inventor:

"'A Picture No Artist Can Paint' . . . has been selected on the list to be adapted to the newly patented Song Illustrator. This new machine, designed by Mr. Len Spencer and owned by him, is a slot device requiring a nickel to operate, and simultaneously with the reproduction of the song by graphophone, the 23 electrically illuminated views follow in succession before the eye. The model is complete and is a credit to the Capps Manufacturing Co. of New Jersey, who made it."

There was also a mention that a Dane (Paulsen) had invented a method of recording magnetically on wire.

The December, 1899, issue was the last in the volume and, so far as I know, the final number of the Phonoscope. Harms, Kaiser and Hagen, of 18 East 24th St., New York, were offering, as special features, records by Joe Natus (I wish I had

known of them when I wrote my 1961 HOBBIES article about Natus) and the Imperial Quartet. I have since learned, too, that Natus made Edison cylinders before 1895. One was "Waiting By the Sea."

The Bettini Co., first to specialize in records by opera stars, was offering cylinders by Ancona, Calve, Plancon, Sembrich, Van Dyck, Sarah Bernhardt, Ritter Sommelthal, Mme. Rejane, Tomasso Salvini, Eleanora Duse, Ellen Terry, Mark Twain, John Drew, Nat C. Goodwin and Henry E. Dixey.

J. Aldrich Libbey was making Lyric records for Miss Mann.

Today, Bettini records are among the hardest to find.

I also examined the Phonograph Record, published in Chicago, for August, 1896, but it had almost nothing about the phonograph. The Hall Music Co. was offering a long list of solo cylinders with piano accompaniment by Miss Jessie Olivier. Among the titles were "McKinley is the Man," "Democracy's Lament," and "Cuba's Appeal."

There was a quotation from the "Edison Phonographic News" in which a Graphophone (the instrument made by Columbia) was said, when compared to an Edison phonograph, to bear the same relationship that a toy tool chest did to a regular carpenter or mechanic's outfit!



Elida Morris, the famous comedienne, appears very happy in this photo taken in her early stage days.

## SIX COMEDIENNES

ELIDA MORRIS

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. "Angel Eyes"

During the years that I have written for HOBBIES, some remarkably heart-warming things have happened, but I believe the most wonder-

ful occurred on the afternoon of Saturday, December 30, 1961.

The unexpected and almost unbelievable event which I am about to describe could not have been better timed. At first sight it appeared I had only received an envelope with a California postmark, addressed in a large and vigorous hand.

However, when I read the letter inside that envelope I was swept from a mood of horrible depression to one of extreme elation, which brought to a happy ending one of the most mis-

#### ELIDA MORRIS APPROVES

"Santa Barbara,  
September 13, 1962.

"Honestly, Jim, your efforts are priceless. Your 'human interest' inserts go beyond describing. The story, I'm sure, will go over immeasurably. . . . 'Angel Eyes,' your lovely cat, intrigued me. I'd forgotten what Willie Solar looked like. I do remember his successful 'Aba Daba' number. He was a clever comedian. . . . I'm very proud and happy the way the story reads. . . . Good luck. Bless you.

"Sincerely,  
ELIDA."

erable days I had ever spent. Now I must relate briefly the story of little "Angel Eyes."

As readers who look for my New Year's greeting in each January HOBBIES may suspect, I love cats better than anything else in the world. So when I learned that a beautiful gray-and-brown, golden-eyed kitten was virtually under sentence of death, I knew I must save it or suffer torments.

The kitten, a seemingly homeless waif, had timidly appeared at the building in which I work during a period of bitter cold weather and begun sleeping in the lobby to keep from freezing.

After a few days someone decreed that it could not be allowed to remain and ordered that it be put to sleep. I could not bear the thought of that.

The little fellow was one of the prettiest, sweetest, and most gentle natured creatures I had ever seen, and its large, golden-colored eyes gave it an angelic expression.

At first I had called it "Brownie" when I stopped to speak to it in passing by. Then I changed to "Golden Eyes."

Finally, what seemed to be the perfect name occurred to me and I dubbed it "Angel Eyes" from the title of the first Victor record made by one of my favorite comediennesses, Elida Morris.

Her version of "Angel Eyes" was a duet with my beloved old friend, the late Billy Murray, and every time I spoke to Angel Eyes, the kitten, I wished once more that I could find out something about Elida Morris.

I had been seeking information concerning her for more years than I have been writing for HOBBIES, but all my efforts had failed. Several sources had told me she was believed to be dead (some said she might have settled down in England and died there), but no one had positive information.

I knew that I couldn't add Angel Eyes to my famous cat family of Roger, Gray, Nipper, Petey, and Percy, or at least I thought I couldn't. They all, with the possible exception of the ever-friendly Petey,



Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

life miserable for a little fellow too small to defend himself.

But I decided I would take Angel Eyes to the animal shelter operated by the Roanoke Valley Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, leave some money to pay for his food, and ask the SPCA to find him a good home.

Above everything else, I would have it understood that he was not to lose his life, no matter what happened. Already I dearly loved that gentle little bundle of fur and was grieved at the thought of giving him away instead of keeping him for myself.

On the night of December 28th, Angel Eyes had been ejected from the lobby, when the front door was locked. I found him shivering outside the door, picked him up, stroked him, talked gently to him and held him close while I walked to a bus stop.

He squirmed and was uneasy at first, but after I entered the bus he snuggled up against me trustfully and purred all the way until we reached Vinton. I then hurried up the hill to my home, hoping that none of my cats had come to meet me and I could slip Angel Eyes in unobserved.

That was not to be. I had gone only a few feet when I heard wails of greeting from Roger and Percy. Percy, who a year before had been the starving Pitiful Persian, saw the kitten, but didn't seem to object.

Roger, however, who considers himself the head of my cat family and is conceded that position by the oth-



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- \* INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- \* FOREIGN LABELS (such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- \* "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

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ers, was furious. He spat at the kitten several times and angrily refused to eat his supper.

I decided to put Angel Eyes in a storage house on my back lawn, so he would at least be protected from the cold wind. I gave him a plate of food and took him another the next morning.

He ate little, but remained there, gentle and uncomplaining, for 24 hours. But on Friday night I decided the unheated building was too cold for him, so I carried him to my bedroom and turned on the electric blanket.

I was determined that he should sleep warm one night before I took him to the shelter the next morning. Little Nipper, who usually sleeps with me, joined me in giving up our regular bed, and we went into another room.

Saturday morning, when I again fed Angel Eyes, he turned the full glory of his wonderful golden eyes upon me in touching gratitude, and I felt myself choking, at the thought of giving him up.

As he sat on my bed, I took a color photo of him, which I hope can be reproduced.

Although I didn't know it, I was about to come down with the flu, and when that ailment starts working on me my nerves go to pieces and I am likely to have uncontrollable weeping spells.

Two of my dearest friends, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Keffer, took us to the shelter in their car. All the way, little Angel Eyes nestled against me, showing no signs of being afraid of a car, as most cats are when they take their first ride.

He purred only a little, but seemed happy as long as he was with me.

Even after we reached the shelter and a girl had placed him in a little cage, he did not meow, but his eyes looked sad.

As I saw scores of dogs and cats, confined to cages, waiting for someone to give them homes, I knew that after a few days, if no homes had been found, they would be put to sleep. I especially remember a large mother cat, with a half dozen kittens that were mostly yellow, all in one large cage.

I made a \$5 contribution to buy food for Angel Eyes, and signed a paper turning him over to the custody of the SPCA. On the paper I printed in capital letters, "Not to Be Put to Death Under Any Circumstances."

Then, as we turned to go and I saw poor Angel Eyes still sitting, uncomplaining in his cage, and not making a sound. With the words choking me, I said "I'm just going to leave you here a week. If they haven't found you a good home by next Saturday, I'm going to take you back, even if the other cats don't want you!"

For hours I thought constantly of those poor caged cats and dogs, waiting wistfully for somebody to "adopt" them, and especially of Angel Eyes.

I was in the depths of despondency whenever I imagined him, sitting in that little cage, uncomplainingly grieving for me. That is why I was in such a sorrowful mood when I went to the Vinton post office and I badly needed something to bring me out of my emotional upheaval.

## II. A Wonderful Letter

As I walked the few blocks between my home and the post office, I thought of the Directory of (re-

cording artists') Births and Deaths I had published in the December HOBBIES. And I wondered, as I had done thousands of times before, if Elida Morris, the vaudeville and musical comedy star whose records had always captivated me, were still alive.

I had long considered her to have more "sex appeal" in her voice than any other woman I had ever heard sing. I had often imagined her standing, charmingly gowned, before the footlights.

She would sing "Stop! Stop! Stop! (Come Over and Love Me Some More)" or "Kiss Me, My Honey, Kiss Me," in such an irresistible way that the management would need a screen between her and the men in the audience to keep them from trying to take her at her word.

I had included her in the Directory, with a guess that she was born about 1888, and had used a question mark to indicate I didn't know whether she was still alive.

My desire for more information was so great I had frequently reflected that if I could hear from only one artist in that Directory I would choose Elida Morris. As I have already said, my search for information concerning the winsome comedienne had been carried on for many years.

Ever since I have conducted this HOBBIES department I have wanted to write about her, but had many a time despaired of ever gaining the knowledge needed to do such a subject justice.

However, I had overlooked few possibilities. Not many months before I had ordered photostats of all the New York Public Library's newspaper clippings concerning her. Some day, I hoped, they might prove useful.



## MERRY CHRISTMAS and a A HAPPY NEW YEAR From Roger, Percy, Nipper, and Jim Walsh!

ROGER knows Santa Claus likes to visit cats who are useful as well as good, so he has been working at putting stacks of unfilled records into place.

PERCY (no longer The Pitiful, but now the Pampered, Persian) has become tired of waiting for Santa, and packed his suitcase to go look for him. But first he's tired and will take a little rest.

NIPPER also is impatient for Christmas, and is about to try to speed it up by calling Santa on the phone.

PETEX (Right, above), 1957-July, 1962, was loved by everyone who knew him, because he loved everyone. Before he went into the impenetrable shadows, he had been looking out the window, eagerly hoping for Santa Claus.

GRAY (Right, below), sweetest and best of cats, probably was born in 1953. He broke our hearts by leaving us forever on September 11, 1962. Always hoping to be useful, he was trying here to help put records away at our home, 225 North Maple St., Vinton, Va. —JIM WALSH

IN DEVOTED MEMORY TO PETEX and GRAY, who have left us to live where it is always Christmas! Eternal peace to you UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS. As long as any of us who knew and loved you survive, the memory of you will be a blessing and a fragrant benediction. We also mourn the loss, but cherish the remembrance of Little Angel Eyes and Mike. The 'Possum.



I opened Box 476 and took out an envelope. It was addressed in a large, distinctively individual handwriting, was postmarked Santa Barbara, Calif., and had been forwarded to me by HOBBIES.

There was no return address, but after I had settled down in a booth in the Dogwood restaurant and was waiting for my supper, I saw that the stationery bore the imprinted name of Elida Morris Cooper.

For perhaps a split second the significance of that name didn't dawn on me. Then all at once I realized that, by an amazing coincidence, I had received a letter from the very lady about whom I had been thinking.

My heart seemed to miss several beats. Then I felt the formerly despondent expression leave my face—and a smile almost cracked it in two.

I had excitedly read only a paragraph before I perceived that Elida Morris, whom I had so often been told was dead, was a living lady of candor and honesty.

She had written to tell me that my HOBBIES listing made her appear two years younger than she actually was! But now I shall share that, to me, historic letter with you:

"Elida Morris Cooper  
"1232 North Nopal St.  
"Santa Barbara, Calif.  
"Dec. 22, 1961

"Dear Sir:

"In your December issue of HOBBIES Magazine I find my name, Elida Morris. To correct the date of birth, I was born in 1886, November 12th.

"I am very alive and just finished playing 'Higa Jiga' (my lines are in Japanese) in 'The Teahouse of the August Moon'; the play before that, the lead in 'The Matchmaker,' as 'Mrs. Levi.' We, the Alhacama Players, with Dr. Frank Fowler our director, put on some dandy shows! — four a year at the Lobero Theater.

"As to records, I really wish I could find some of mine. It was the late Billy Murray who introduced me in that field, and Ada Jones was a most popular recording artist.

"It seemed good to see all those names again. You did a wonderful job in compiling all those names. I did Victor, Edison, Brunswick, Pathe (when playing in London), all lost in storage. It was while playing the Keith Orpheum Circuits (22 years on their books) that I was a recording artist.

"I just heard from Sophie Tucker again. Her Christmas card is tops! Wonderful woman!

"I'm really flattered that someone has been inquiring about me and my records.

"Sincerely,

"Elida Morris (Cooper).

"Twenty-four years married, widow of Lt. Col. Norwood Raymond Cooper (13 years), Army Air Force Intelligence Officer. Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!"

It would be impossible to exaggerate the elation I felt at receiving this letter from the fine artiste whom I had feared for more than 20 years was no longer of this world. Gone, for the time being, was the grief about Angel Eyes and the misery I had been feeling from oncoming symptoms of the flu.

As I walked rapidly home, I recalled that when Billy Murray and his pal (my pal, too!), Jimmy Martindale, visited me in Johnson City, Tenn., in October, 1938, I asked Billy



Elida Morris in the heyday of her vaudeville career, when she "Played the Palace."  
Elida Morris, photographed in 1960, in her garden at Santa Barbara, Calif.

if he knew what had become of Elida Morris.

He didn't, but he did admirably remember her as an attractive brunette girl with a charming personality and an excellent voice for both recording and stage work. He had some idea she had retired after living in England for several years.

As soon as I reached home, I went straight to my typewriter and wrote a four-page letter to Elida Morris, which went to her an hour afterward by air mail, special delivery.

I told her how much her records had meant to me, how hard I had tried to find out something about her, and how her letter, coming like manna from heaven, had lifted me out of the dumps. I also asked how she happened to see the HOBBIES article.

The next day, Sunday, I sent a follow-up, telling her that when I started the imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company in a pencil tablet at the age of 10, she was the first woman who "recorded" for my mythical company.

Walsh record No. 3 contained her version of "Home, Sweet Home" (a song she would not have been likely to record), combined with Arthur Clough's tenor singing of "A Little Bunch of Shamrocks," not a very suitable coupling!

Some time later I sent the almost illegible first page of that time-worn "catalog" so she could see her name in my childish scrawl. (By the way, does any reader know anything about Arthur Clough? I'd like to learn whether he is still alive!)

I told Mrs. Cooper in my first letter that I would gladly send her a taped copy of all her records in my collection.

I also mentioned how I had been eager to write her life's story for HOBBIES and asked that she send me some photographs and further information about herself—a request that was soon fulfilled in good meas-

ure, especially after she received a questionnaire asking loads of questions.

A few nights later, feeling somewhat better, I gave my newly found friend, Elida, a real surprise. I called up "Information" at the Santa Barbara telephone exchange and requested Mrs. Elida Morris Cooper's number.

Hardly more than a minute later, I had dialed that number and heard the voice of Elida Morris saying, "Hello."

I then told her she was talking with Jim Walsh in Vinton, Va., and she said, after a cordial greeting, in a voice that was sweet and musical, that she was taking down her Christmas decorations when the phone rang.

After some more conversation, I put her 1910 Victor record of "You'll Come Back"—one she sang with Billy Murray on the hi-fi, and Elida Morris, in her home in California, 3,000 miles away from where the record was being played, heard her voice coming from a disc she had made 51 years before.

Nearly a year later, on the morning of November 12, 1962, I again phoned to her. This time I sang "Happy Birthday to You" as a greeting to Elida on her 76th birthday.

In the days that followed, our friendship by correspondence flourished. It was not long before I had all the information needed to write this long-anticipated series.

But what, you may be wondering, became of little Angel Eyes? Did the SPCA find him a good home, or did I bring him back to my own home at the end of the week and make him the sixth member of my cat family? I have dreaded reaching this point, for the remainder of the story of the loving golden-eyed little beauty is so tragic, I can hardly bear to think about it.

On Tuesday morning, following that visit to the SPCA, I was in bed with



"Angel Eyes," the golden-eyed kitten who was named for Elida Morris' first Victor record.

This photo of the youthful Elida Morris accompanied the announcement of her first Victor record, "Angel Eyes," in the August, 1910, Victor supplement.



a fully developed case of flu. I was writing in my diary and had just reaffirmed my determination to give Angel Eyes a home if he were still in the animal shelter that week-end when the phone rang.

The caller was Mr. Childress, of the SPCA. He said "The kitten you left with us Saturday is mighty sick, with a temperature of 104. It came down with distemper yesterday, and I don't think it can possibly live more than a couple of hours."

He then asked me what he should do. They couldn't keep Angel Eyes in the shelter he said, because of the danger of giving distemper to the other cats. Even if I took him home, he probably would be dead before I could get there. No Veterinary hospital would accept him, because of the danger to other animals. So, since I had written that he was not to be put to death under any circumstances, what should he do?

There I was, flat on my back, too ill to go to the shelter even if there

were any chance of removing Angel Eyes and saving his life. But finally I said that since he was so ill he couldn't live I would give permission for him to be put to sleep.

Now I understood why Angel Eyes had seemed so abnormally meek and unresisting, no matter what happened to him. He must have been taking the distemper for several days, no doubt from the exposure he had undergone, and had felt so bad he had offered no resistance to anything, not even to being left in a cage in a strange place full of other cats and dogs.

And, by one of the cruelest quirks of fate, I, who had said that he must not lose his life, no matter what the circumstances, was compelled to give the word that brought his innocent existence to an end.

Some time later, I learned that the "waif" hadn't been homeless, after all. He belonged to a blind couple who lived a few blocks from where I work.

They had been obliged to leave town for several days and had been unable, before they left, to find Angel Eyes, who had wandered beyond reach of their voices. So, not being able to get into his home, he had taken to sleeping in the lobby, with the results that I have detailed.

I still grieve as I think of how circumstances conspired to end his life when he should have been somebody's cherished pet for years to come. But as long as I live I shall treasure the memory of the little brown kitten with the loveliest cat eyes I have ever

seen and one of the sweetest dispositions I have ever known.

I've told this because I felt that the story of his brief life belonged with that of Elida Morris, whose first Victor record gave the unfortunate mite the name by which he was known during the few days in which I tried, to no avail, to save him from death.

How many times I have awakened at night, begun thinking mournfully of that luckless little bundle of fur, and found myself haunted by the last lines of the chorus of Elida Morris' "Angel Eyes" song:

"The stars that shine up in the Southern sky,  
They remind me of you, Angel Eyes!"

### III. Rejoicing Among Record Collectors

When the flu tapered off and I began to recover my strength, I searched for a letter George Clarence Jell, the former head of Columbia's artist and repertoire department, had written me in the 1930's. It was in reply to an inquiry of mine for information about Elida Morris. The help Mr. Jell was able to give me was slight:

"Elida Morris pronounced her first name with the long 'i' as in 'hide.' She was a small, dark girl, very petite and attractive. The last time I saw her, I imagine, was about 1912. I have not the least idea what ultimately became of her."

Actually, Mr. Jell must have seen Elida on a number of occasions in 1914 and 1915, for she made Columbia records in those years.

I also wrote to a few of my fellow record collectors, whom I knew to be admirers of Elida Morris, telling them the good, if hardly believable news, that I had received a letter from her. One was Quentin Riggs, who is now working for the U. S. State Department in Sydney, Australia.

Quentin had visited me in September, 1961, before reporting to his (Continued on page 53)

### HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

please give me their addresses so that I might be able to look into the possibility of buying records from them?

When I read such fine articles as yours in HOBBIES Magazine, on Historical Records, I realize why not only historical recordings but also back issues of HOBBIES are considered truly collectors' items.

Very respectfully,  
Francis S. Jackuboski  
S/Sgt. AF6/58555

Dear Sergeant Jackuboski:

Thanks a lot for the nice letter. Glad to hear from you and to oblige, for your benefit and, perhaps, that of others seeking this information.

The Siena address:

Siena Records  
P.O. Box 91  
Boston 12, Mass.

The IRCC address (collectors please note the change):

International Record Collectors' Club  
P.O. Box 1811  
Bridgeport 1, Conn.

Most sincere wishes for good health, and may your hobby continue to be a source of enjoyment.

Yours sincerely,  
Aida Favia-Artsay

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3694

WANTED: Old cylinder phonographs and records. Disc phonographs with outside horns. Cylinder reproducers. Hand roller organs. Want any amount large or small. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. my6829

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ja3864

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

ATTENTION: Antique phonographs, cylinder & disc. All makes, models. Repaired, bought, sold. Almost everything in stock to repair any make or model. Phonographs completely overhauled, cases refinished. Parts duplicated with original parts. Cylinder and disc records for sale. Reproducers repaired. Many complete, like new, cylinder and disc. Phonographs for sale. All workmanship, phonographs guaranteed. Phonographs for sale sheet, 10c. Phonographs parts price sheet, 10c. Lexington House, c/o Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State Street, Brewer, Maine. ja34811

## BELLS

(Continued from page 51)

of the death of HOBBIES' good friend in England, Ernest Morris. Over a period of years Mr. Morris had contributed a number of interesting articles for our column and was widely recognized as an outstanding collector and author on the subject of bells. His last book, *Tinnabula*, dealing as it does with small bells, remains a favorite with collectors.

—O—

Mrs. C. C. Parker of Oklahoma sends us an interesting account about the finding of a 600-year-old Spanish mission bell.

According to the discovery, as reported in the *Wichita Falls Times*, the bell was found while a crew was laying a pipeline in California.

The men found the ruins of an old adobe village, and in the rooms was the discarded bell, grimy from long years of neglect.

No amount of research has revealed what became of the people who once lived in this village, nor how or when or where they acquired the bell. Cast around its sides, however, are these words SAN JOSE-RUECA POR NOSOTROS, and the date August 9, 1356.

—O—

Several collectors have reported acquiring rare and heretofore unavailable Tibetan bells through friends in India. The Tibetan Lamas, now refugees from Communism, are pouring into India by all routes.

Many of them are forced to sell their most valued possessions in order to eat and live. Almost always a Buddhist handbell is among those cherished treasures the Lamas have carried with them as they fled.

Or sometimes it is a beloved set of animal bells, as in the case of the pair of mule bells recently acquired by Mrs. Lee Cody and her son, of Illinois. These particular crotals were worn on the lead mules which a band of refugees rode as they fled into Nepal.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Australian assignment, and had played through my Morris collection. One of her records, the 1912 Victor of "Play Me a Good Old-Fashioned Melody," he had emphatically pronounced a masterpiece.

It did not take him long to write a reply, saying he felt like turning handsprings at learning Miss Morris was living and in good health. During his visit he and I had speculated on whether she was still around and had agreed in hoping she was.

Quentin also immediately wrote to her and asked for an autographed photo, which he received. In a letter dated January 20, 1962, he wrote:

"Have you heard from Elida Morris again? When I got your letter telling me that she was alive I wrote to her and told her how much I have enjoyed her

records. It's really amazing how you came to get in touch with her. Isn't it? Almost a miracle!"

Quentin will return to the States on leave next fall and is hoping to stop in California and go to Santa Barbara to meet the singer whose records have given him so much pleasure over the years.

Another enthusiastic correspondent was Allen Debus, whose name is familiar to HOBBIES readers. He said:

"The 'location' of Elida Morris is good news indeed. As I have written you in the past, I share your enthusiasm for her records. I have one duplicate record by her which I just wrote and offered her.

"I have always been intrigued about the note you put in your article about Bob Roberts years ago of the duet by her and Roberts on Rex. I certainly would like to turn that up. . . . I think 'I've Got Your Number' is the best title by her that I have ever located—a very fine 'conversational duet' indeed.

"I also share your enthusiasm for 'You'll Come Back.' . . . As you can tell, I am delighted to know that she is still alive and well."

Allen not only sent Mrs. Cooper his duplicate record of "Stop! Stop! Stop!" (it seems to turn up oftener than any of her others), but also made a tape recording of "I've Got Your Number," her indestructible cylinder duet with Walter Van Brunt, for both her and me.

David Kemp of Shinglehouse, Pa., wrote:

"I have some records by Miss Morris. She is all that you say, and I, too, am thrilled to hear she is still alive and well. I hope to write to her today."

Jimmy Martindale, who was Billy Murray's most intimate friend for many years, was in Tucson, Ariz., with Ruth, his wife, when he received my letter announcing Elida Morris had been found. He promptly replied:

"Indeed I am pleasantly surprised to learn of Elida Morris. How did you manage to contact her in the first place? If we motor to the coast I should like to look her up, if you would send me her address."

It is a pity that illness kept Mr. and Mrs. Martindale from driving to California, for I know they would have enjoyed meeting the charmingly alert and vigorous Elida. And I am sure it would have pleased her to know the pal of her old friend Billy, who probably gave more fellow artists a start at recording than any other singer.

As for myself, I have never been to California, but how I wish it were possible to tear myself away from my job in Virginia and go to Santa Barbara, to meet the lady whom I admire so much and feel I know so well through correspondence!

### IV. More Letters from Elida

On January 3, I received a 14-page reply to my first letter to Mrs. Cooper, from which I shall quote the more important passages:

"Your splendid letter did arrive New Year's Eve, while I was waiting for a long distance call from my niece in Philadelphia. Both came almost at the same time. Your love for cats is wonderful and I've never been without a dog!

"Now to tell you a few, I hope, interesting moments that occurred during the years you thought I had gone to the Great Beyond.

(Continued on page 54)

# JEWELRY

## JEWELRY WANTED

DIAMONDS, OLD GOLD COINS, watches, stickpins, rings, earrings, etc., regardless of condition. Highest prices paid. Prompt replies. Send by registered mail to: Edward G. Wilson, 1802 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. je12439

ANTIQUE AND MODERN JEWELRY from all over the world, bought and sold. Inquiries solicited. — Kenneth R. Park, 31 West St., Boston, Mass. (Est. 1844). je126351

## JEWELRY FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Antiques and semi-antiques, gold-filled, silver, etc., 10 articles for \$6. Assortment includes lockets, charms, pins, rings, etc. Good value. — St. Louis Refining Co., 1115 Holland Bldg., St. Louis 1, Mo. my68801

BEAUTIFUL JEWELRY from our vast gold-buying, rings, pins, chains, etc. 10 pieces for \$5. Better grade pieces. 10 for \$10. — B. Lowe, Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo. j63634

FOR SALE: Old clear crystal intaglios 1/2" square. For use in making earrings, charms or lavaliers. Price \$1 a dozen. — Gladys Morabito, 372 William St., Stoneham, Mass. ja3234

TERRIFIC CLOSEOUTS (per doz.) - Earrings \$1.50; Bracelets \$2.75; Necklaces \$2.75; Pins \$2; Rings \$1.26 (assorted). Include postage. — Boxer, GPO, Box 975-H, Brooklyn 1, N.Y. ja3863

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## OLD VEHICLES WANTED

OLD AUTO LAMPS, horns, books, old cars, etc., wanted.—D. D. Way, 11 Eastwood Ct., Oakland, Calif. je6445

OLD AUTO ITEMS WANTED: Brass auto lamps, bulb horns, radiator mascots and ornaments in metal and glass. radiator name plates and emblems, Pennsylvania license plates, old auto books and show-room catalogs, service manuals. Royal Doulton china: Plates, cups, saucers and pitchers; any pieces with old auto pictures. Early toy autos and toy cap pistols. — A. J. Kovesleski, 331 Adams Ave., Scranton 3, Pa. Phone 1-717-DI. 2-1963. f3

WANTED: Antique bicycles, tires, catalogs, parts. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. ja3802

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

"Why so many thought I passed on in England was because I played over there six months of the year after I starred at the London Hippodrome in 'Hello, Ragtime,' for Sir Albert de Courville, when Ethel Levey was taken ill. A five year contract was given me, and it was six months there, six months here, and the salary rose each year. Max Hart was my agent-manager.

"During those five years I played South Africa, Ireland, France, Scotland, London and the provinces, billed as 'The American Comedienne.' During 1916-17, J. J. Shubert had me at the Winter Garden in New York City for 'The Passing Shows.'

"It was at the Palace Theater, Chicago, in the show called 'World of Pleasure,' that J. J. had me introduce the song, 'Pretty Baby,' still heard today. Through the success of that song (14 encores opening night) J. J. brought me into the Winter Garden and had me do a song called 'Sweet and Pretty,' and four others.

"Well, I married Ray Cooper in 1923, when I was 36. He went to Detroit, Mich. He was connected with the Detroit Board of Commerce Aviation Division. My interests divided.

"I formed the Women's Aeronautical Association. It is international today. The famous Ninety-Niners (all women) were some of the charter members, and pulled out for themselves. Amelia Earhart was a charter member.

"Mr. Cooper put on the first air show in Detroit, and air tours. The shows were called 'Commercial Airplane Reliability Tours' in 1925-26. Eddie Stinson, Schlee and Brock, Hawks and oh! so many famous flyers were on our tours.

"Jim Ray, who flew the first autogyro for Harold Pitcairn, his backer, took me up Lake St. Clair, the first woman ever in an autogyro.

"As Col. Cooper was so occupied in his field, I studied voice with Thaddeus Wronski in Detroit. (We lived in Detroit 10 years.) He had the Detroit Civic Opera Co., and brought all the stars from the 'Met.' He had me do the Dawn Fairy solo in 'Hansel and Gretel,' my first grand opera appearance.

"Then we were next in Washington, D.C., four and a half years. The Colonel was in uniform and in the Pentagon building, then head of the National Aeronautical Association, with offices in Dupont Circle.

When they asked if there were those who could help during War days I wanted to do something, so out of seven different things they told me I could do they picked me to put on shows for the camps.

"My stationery was labeled 'Volunteer Camp Shows, Elida Morris Cooper, Director.' I handled 330 people. I had my radio program — the artists had to go on my radio program before I would allow them to go on my camp shows—and I have the highest citations for those shows.

"New York sent for me, and some of the artists went overseas, as the U.S.O. wanted them. I knew what to do through knowing how Max Hart ran his office.

"I was treated royally. Mrs. Roosevelt came to several shows and one in the White House, too, for the 'Guard.' Publicity was enormous. One night in July I had seven shows to put on. The Government would send the buses for the performers.

"We'll jump now to when Col. Cooper had a stroke. We went to Los Angeles, then Sherman Oaks, then Encino, where I was soloist for two years in the newly formed Episcopal Church in Edward Everett Horton's 'barn' on his estate.

He and his mother and sister were members. The Colonel got well and went back into uniform, then back to Washington, D.C. Another air show in Detroit. Then West again to Spokane, Wash.

"The Colonel was in uniform at his desk in Galena Airport when again stricken. That was serious, so the

Government sent us here to Santa Barbara (a more even climate) in 1944, and we found this house. He lived four and a half years longer here, and died in 1948.

"I live alone, but during these widowed years I have been co-founder of the 300-member Santa Barbara Choral Society and co-organizer of 'The Romanies,' with the late John Charles Thomas. I was featured soloist doing Victor Herbert's 'Romany Life,' with a wonderful group of over 100 voices.

"I am now doing comedy roles in most comedy shows with the Alhacama Players for Dr. Frank Fowler, director, at the famous Lobero Theater here.

"Have also just been made 'soloist emeritus' after all these years in church choirs.

"I studied Italian with Armando Januzzi while in Washington, D.C., doing excerpts from 'La Traviata' and 'La Forza del Destino.'

"I like your idea of having my records dubbed onto tape. Please do! Yes, I did play the Roanoke Theater — remember it well.

"The HOBBIES was loaned to my sister, a patient in General Hospital. They got it first, before the news stands. She saw my name and pointed it out to me. The hospital has written me up since, in their publication as a morale booster for Sister.

"Her name is Laura Bryde, a beautiful seamstress. She sews for all the patients, nurses, and herself, makes beautiful dolls and toys for their bazaars, sells them and puts the money in the hospital fund. She loves HOBBIES. They let her have the December issue for a Christmas gift. Strange how things come about!

"I know I have some pictures for you, so keep up your good work and believe me,

"Most sincerely,  
"Elida Morris Cooper."

Within a few days I did receive several photos, including two of Mrs. Cooper as she looked in her vaudeville heyday and one, taken in her garden only two or three years ago, on which she hardly looks to be 40, much less in her 70's. They have been submitted for illustration with this installment.

Considering our Heroine's prominence, first as a comedienne, then as a pioneer woman aviator and, finally, as a supervisor of service personnel shows during World War II, it seems almost incredible that I should have had so much trouble getting in touch with her.

I am deeply grateful to whomever it was at the hospital that unconsciously served as an instrument of fate by giving Mrs. Bryde that December HOBBIES.

Next month Elida Morris will relate a detailed account of her early life and professional career.

(To be continued.)

## OLD METALS

(Continued from page 49)

An entry under the same heading appears every succeeding year, with the exception of four years, until 1779, when the amount of tutenag imported was only slightly more than 71 hundredweight.

Unknown is the date when tutenag was first produced in the East. Although it has been extracted in the 20th century in vast quantities in various parts of the world, it is

## Miscellaneous Antiques

a comparatively modern product in the Western Hemisphere.

The first smelting in Europe occurred in England about 1730, and by 1743 the output was about 200 tons annually.

Brass has always been the most useful alloy known to man, and the increase in its production was significant when zinc became obtainable in a pure state.

With the older method of combining zinc ore with copper, it was not possible to measure precise proportions of the metals, as some calamine was naturally richer in zinc than other, and its content was not certain before smelting. The result is apparent in the varying color of early 18th century brass-work.

Thus it is understood that *tutenag* was the term given to zinc when imported into Europe from China and the East Indies. It is also seen that it was a metal of considerable commercial importance, especially in the second half of the 18th century.

Although *tutenag* forms only about one-fourth of the metallic compound *paktong*, this alloy was frequently incorrectly referred to as *tutenag*.

*Paktong*, lighter in color than the usual copper and zinc alloy, is sometimes almost silver-white, with a splendid satin finish.

(This study will be concluded in the February issue)

(Turn to page 55  
for first part of ad)

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89. Old TOY CAP PISTOL. Nickel on iron. Mkd. "VOLUNTEER". It is 5½" long. Original cond. \$9.
90. Early IRON PISTOL. No working parts & open handle. It is 5" long. \$9.50.
91. Iron cap pistol. THE CHINESE MUST GO! Pat. 1878. The early one. One leg of one figure of the back figure is missing. Otherwise fine. It is 4½x5". The Chinese mouth fires the cap when he is kicked by the back figure. \$30.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

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**JIM WALSH**

## I. Elida Hears Her Records

On January 9, 1962, Elida Morris Cooper wrote another letter to say she was sending me some photographs.

"I bought the January **HOBBIES** today," she said, "and, sure enough, your picture and cat family are splendid, also the one with Mr. Riggs. I think that when people love animals, they really stay younger and never look their real age.

"I'm told I do not, but I'm beginning to 'crack' now and then—never steadily but now and then! The papers here have written me up the last two years about being 'remarkable' because of my years. As long as I can make them laugh I don't care!"

The vivacious comedienne also men-

## SIX COMEDIENNES

**ELIDA MORRIS**

**PART II**

By **JIM WALSH**

tioned that Earl Cooper, a famous automobile racer, is her brother-in-law and lives in Atwater, Calif.

With a touch of sadness, she deplored the fact that so many of her theatrical contemporaries are no longer living: "Dear me, so many have gone it's startling. Competition was enormous, wasn't it? We all worked very hard."

And, referring to my having all her Victor and Columbia records, she said: "Finding someone who really has my records is 'sumthin'! I am eagerly awaiting them on tape."

By January 31, she had received the promised tape, containing copies of all the Elida Morris records in my collection, and a few days later I was made happy when I read this letter:

"I'm so excited I can hardly write this! I just can't tell you how happy I am over this tape. I went to the Bennett Music Co. Mr. Bennett said, 'Indeed, you can hear it on our recorder.'

"I was stunned. I wept, I laughed and was completely overjoyed, and it was splendid to hear your real Southern accent in between each recording.

"So many little tricks in some of those records I had forgotten I did, and I do love the one with Billy Murray of 'You'll Come Back.' 'Stop, Stop, Stop!'

was always my favorite. They all were such a surprise to me I could hardly speak. 'Kiss Me, My Honey' is clear and good, too. I'm glad there are so many and it was real sporting of you.

"It's my aim now to record my voice of today and compare the untrained voice of the same person. I'll vocalize steadily for a couple of weeks and see how it sounds. Diction, I thought, was splendid.

"Now to answer some questions. Yes, indeed, I knew Helen Trix and her sister. Helen entertained me in London when I played the Hippodrome. Her pretty sister married over there. We had a delightful visit. I think she was right in claiming you looked like 'a leading man.'

"A letter came today from your friend in Park Forest, Ill., Allen G. Debus. Mr. Debus said he has a duplicate of 'Stop, Stop' and I could have it if I wish. Isn't that dandy of him? You're a good soul to spread the word, Jim.

"I'm hitting on all high tonight. What a grand day!! I'd better take some hot milk and go to bed. I'll never sleep if I don't. Try it some night with a dash of cayenne—Col. Cooper's prescription. It really works. Good night and God bless you! ELIDA."

As a follow-up, Quentin Riggs reported last March 1 from far Australia:

"The day she wrote to me, Elida Morris received the tape from you of her recordings, and she was certainly delighted about it! It's a wonderful thing that you were able to discover her whereabouts and that she now knows how much her records, made half a century ago, are still played and enjoyed by so many people."

The Victor record of "Stop! Stop! Stop!" which Allen Debus sent to Mrs. Cooper has a comic number by Nat Wills, "Song of the English Chappie," on its reverse. In one of her letters she referred to "the Tramp Comedian": "Remember how he made his entrance? In tramp costume he came rolling down to the footlights out of the backdrop. Sensational."

She also asked: "Didn't I do some records for Emerson? Seems I did. Mr. Emerson died, I know, years ago. I don't remember 'I've Got Your Number,' with Walter Van Brunt (Scanlan), but it's wonderful you have it."

I didn't have it, until Al Debus was kind enough to send taped dubbings to both Elida and me.

In another paragraph she said: "Speaking of our mutual friends, I remember Walter Van Brunt very well, and Wolfie Gilbert. Clarice Vance was married to Mose Gumble, manager of J. H. Remick Music Co., if I recall. And of course Marie Cahill, Marie Dressler and oh! so many more."

On March 6, the comedienne wrote to me again. She listed the comedians whom she had played opposite as De Wolf Hopper, Clifton Crawford, Ed

Wynn, Johnny Stanley, Joe Keno, Lew Hearn and Willie Solar, "all tops."

I was especially interested in her mention of the pint-sized Willie Solar, because I met him in 1949 when he appeared in Roanoke with a troupe headed by the late Will Oakland, which gave entertainments in Veterans' Hospitals.

## II. Elida Morris' Story of Her Life

Early in March, Elida Morris Cooper was almost flooded out of her home, but she didn't let that interfere long with giving me the information I asked for in an elaborate questionnaire.

After searching through a large assortment of boxes and other containers, she remarked: "Funny how you keep things. I found a yellow sheet of paper handed me one day when someone on the bill was most unkind, and it reads: 'No one can throw a stone high enough to reach a star.' It's yellow with age, and made me think."

And now, after more than 20 years of wishing, I know enough about Elida Morris to write the story of her life. I can refer to the 27-page letter she wrote me, giving exactly the information needed.

Part of the time I shall tell that story in my own words. But I shall frequently quote directly from my dear new-found friend's own lively phrasing and vivid characterization.

Elida Morris was the daughter of William Steven Morris and Elida Louisa Mertz. Both were born in America.

For many years Elida's father was a foreman over several compositors in the Philadelphia printing establishment of Allen, Lane and Scott. She had an elder sister, Clara, and an older brother, Walter, who died two years ago.

One sister, mentioned in last month's article, is still living. She is 71 years of age, five years younger than Mrs. Cooper, and, as has already been told, her name is Laura Bryde. "I have a grave for sister and me," Mrs. Cooper says, "in Northwood Cemetery, Philadelphia. It is plot 531."

Elida was born November 12, 1886, in the Morris home at Randolph and Thompson streets, Philadelphia. In her stage days her hair was dark brown, nearly black. She weighed about 118 pounds and her height was 5 feet 2 inches. How well suited she would have been to sing the old-time song hit, "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue"! She has blue-gray eyes.

Now we'll let Elida reminisce:

"Mother always dressed us three girls alike. We attended Sunday school at a Philadelphia Methodist church. Father promoted my abilities during the years between 8 and 14. I sang at different churches and German halls, and he gave me my first single concert and debut at the Philadelphia Academy of Music, billing me as 'Elida.' My voice then was a 'boy soprano.'

"The name Elida is the name of an old war vessel at the bottom of the sea. Mother had a sister named Elida who died early. When Mother was born she looked so much like that sister that Grandmother Mertz named Mother the



A 1913 photo of Elida Morris in dancing costume during her vaudeville days.  
—Photo by Apeda, New York

same. Hence my name. I have a namesake niece, Elida Hess, in Philadelphia. "After Father promoted me so far, one Sunday we three girls attended Sunday school, and the teacher said to me, 'Is that one of the dresses you kick up your legs in?' (She didn't approve of my public appearances, it seems.) So I came home crying and told Father, who never allowed us to go back to that church.

### III. Black-Face Minstrel Days

"Then a Mrs. Ramsey in Philadelphia formed a minstrel show. I was an 'end man.' There were six girls and three boys. The late Frank Tinney (Ziegfeld Follies star) and his brother, now a lawyer, I believe, in Philadelphia, were in our minstrels off and on.

"We became popular and would appear on Young's Old Pier (afterwards the New Pier) in Atlantic City, N.J., and the Trent theater, in Trenton, N.J.

"The last time in Atlantic City we were on the bill with Tim McMahon and Edythe Chappell, his wife, who had a corking comedy act. They'd sit on a suitcase (after being supposed to have missed their train) and argue.

"Tim McMahon had another act called 'The Watermelon Girls.' He sought the lady who managed our minstrels and said he wanted only the girls and would take us to New York. My former partner, Lillian Mills, whom you asked about, was with McMahon's Watermelon Girls at the time.

All our parents agreed and we were on the Keith Circuit at once. We, the minstrels, would open the show. McMahon and Chappell were about fourth on the bill, and our Watermelon Girls act with Tim and Edythe closed the show.

"That went on a couple of years and our salaries were sent home to our

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parents, minus our 'American plan' hotel money (\$1 to \$1.25 a day), and we had to buy our own silk stockings, although in black face.

"Tim drank heavily, and we girls became scared. We all wanted to go home. We did!"

Here I cease quoting from Elida's memoirs for a moment to remark that she may possibly be the only woman in all stage history who graduated from doing black-face minstrel work, and singing Negro dialect songs, to afterwards appearing in grand opera.

That puts her in the same class with the famous tenor, Evan Williams, who sang "After the Ball" in a minstrel show in the early 1890's, but was afterwards renowned for his concert and oratorio appearances.

#### IV. "The Minstrel Girls"

Miss Mills, who was 8 years older than Elida and had a young son, asked Miss Morris' parents to let their daughter do an act with her. They agreed on condition that the older woman would serve as a chaperon as well as a singing partner.

They stayed together seven years. Both did blackface, with Morris as the end man and Mills (in sepia make-up) as the interlocutor. Says Elida: "We were known as 'The Minstrel Girls' and were to get big money had we stayed together always on the Keith and Proctor circuits. Oh yes, we played Tony Pastor's, where Burt Green, who married Irene Franklin, was the piano player."

After Miss Mills remarried, Elida had a writer put together a new act for her. It was called "Salvation Mirandy," after a cartoon of the early 1900's. Elida recalls:

"My black-face 'Salvation Mirandy' act was booked at the Trent theater in Trenton. After the first appearance the manager came back and said, 'Miss Morris, do you have an evening gown?'"

"I said, 'yes.'"

"He said, 'Put it on tonight and do your whole act in white face. The Salvation Army doesn't approve of your costume and material.' (Most of the act was Negro suffragette material.) So I obeyed, and it was a knockout—success on and on that season."

"One day Johnny Stanley, clown comedian, came into the office of Max Hart, my agent, and needed a partner. We did 'The Water Boy and the Actress' a season and were very successful. His domestic difficulties broke that up."

"Next was the late Joe Keno, Mitzi Green's father. We had a hotel scene with a dancing finish. It was a great success, but he was so abusive that we split after six months."

"Alone again. I had two colored writers—Henry Creamer and Turner Layton, who became famous as popular song writers—prepare a Negro skit, and Blanche Merrill wrote the other songs."

"In the meantime, I sat in Max Hart's office till 6 o'clock one night. Then in rushed the manager of the Alhambra theater, saying: 'Max, I need an act for tonight. The English Jew, in second, won't appear on Yom Kippur.'"

"Max said, 'Elida says she has an act.'"

"The man said, 'Well, if she can do as well alone as she did with Johnny Stanley, I'll take a chance with her.'"

"I was there at 7 p.m., baggage and all, and it was wonderful. I received \$125 for those six days. From then on it was 22 years on the Keith, then the Keith-Orpheum books."

#### V. Elida Invades England

Mrs. Cooper recalls that a British booking agent, the late Ernest Edel-

stein, booked her for 10 weeks in England while she was playing in 1913 at Hammerstein's theater, 42nd and Broadway.

While she was appearing at the Victoria Palace in London, Ethel Levy, who had been married to George M. Cohan, was taken ill. She was starring at the London Hippodrome in "Hello, Ragtime."

Willie Solar, one of the three star comedians in the show, told the manager, Mr. De Courville (now Sir Albert De Courville), about Elida. That night he and others associated with "Hello, Ragtime" came to see her act and she was engaged in Miss Levy's place. She recalls that this kept her plenty busy:

"The following week I was playing Sir Alfred Butt's beautiful Palace Theater, and I had 20 minutes to change my dress and make-up in a cab and appear at 9 p.m. in the show at the London Hippodrome."

"That was the year American acts flooded England, and a funny thing on the bill at Butt's Palace was the first appearance of the big Ziegfeld star, Frank Tinney, who had been in the olio and minstrel show when we were all very young in Philadelphia. He was a sensation in England, too."

Among those taking part in "Hello, Ragtime" were the man and woman comedy team of Lew Hearn and Bonita, who made some H. M. V. records of songs and skits from the production. Stanley Lupino, father of Ida Lupino, was another member.

Elida had scenes with all the comedians. After her appearance in the revue ended, she went on tour in "Ocean Waves" and "Fiddle-dee-dee," co-starring with Solar.

For several years she was booked for six months in England and six months in America. Her weekly salary, which at first was \$200, grew to \$750, in addition to first class boat fares. She starred in South Africa, England, Scotland, Ireland, and France.

#### VI. First Recording Experiences

Records by Elida Morris first appeared in 1910. They were made while she was appearing in American theaters, although she says she made some for Pathe and perhaps other companies while abroad. Billy Murray saw her perform at a theater in either New York or Brooklyn and caused her to be engaged by the Victor Company. Billy lived in Brooklyn at that time, so it most likely was a Brooklyn house.

The comedienne recalls that when she was playing a theater in the Midwest, a music store had her photographed with the Victor dog. "That picture," she says, "was lost in storage with many other treasures years ago. I would sell my records after my matinee performance." She continues:

"I remember very distinctly it was at the Alhambra or Percy Williams' Colonial Theater that my voice felt so tired for my matinee after I had been recording all morning. I made five quick changes of costume in my 20 minute act—one for each number."

"When I first heard my voice played back I was never pleased, as I was a perfectionist in diction, so recording a number once or twice was never enough for me. The voice sounded O.K., though."

"Most people thought I was a Southern girl because I had the accent through studying the Negro. Creamer and Layton, the two colored gentlemen who wrote my closing material, claimed a salary each week I played, the same as Blanche Merrill did."

#### VII. Experiences Aboard Ship and Abroad

I have always contended our charming friend Elida is a soprano, although Columbia called her a contralto and Victor dodged the issue by labeling her a comedienne. Regardless of voice quality, she has some interesting things to tell of her experiences abroad:

"I first went to Europe in 1913 and last played abroad in 1921."

"Arriving in London the first time for Christmas, the sun shone, and as everybody told me it seldom shone, I followed it, no matter where it went, all around Buckingham Palace."

"I lived at the Cecil Hotel on the



Elida Morris in a charming pose taken by a Seattle photographer during her vaudeville days.  
—Photo by Erna Best Nelson, Spokane



An especially attractive photo of Elida Morris in dancing costume when she was a top-flight vaudeville star. —Photo by Franklin Studio, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Strand, and the day I was to open at the Alhambra. I took a taxi. The driver knew I was new in the country, and he drove me all around town to get to the theater, only two blocks away from my hotel.

"Even though I had a 10-week contract in my possession I still had to go on that stage and do my entire act before those managers and an empty theater to claim the star place on the bill!"

"Going over on the Oceanic that first time, I was standing by the rail to say goodbye to my father. I was weeping.

"A man in morning dress and top hat (oh yes!) tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Why are you crying?'"

"I replied, 'You would, too, if you were leaving your parents for the first time.'

"He turned to a man whom he knew and said, 'Hello, Sir Stanley.' They took me to lunch (I was always at the captain's table), and those two men entertained me royally all the way across.

"When we landed police immediately put handcuffs on Sir Stanley—? Why, I never knew, but the two men were supposed to be brothers-in-law. Naturally, I never answered the other man's phone calls in London. His name was Count—something—both names phony, I guess.

"Ireland was marvelous, especially Dublin. I had met a Canadian lieutenant on the ship. He was going to Paris, then Dublin. He was connected with the principal Dublin newspaper, and he had lunches and dinners all planned for me with 'the powers that be,' 15 and 20 each time. You see, this was during World War I and everyone was still in uniform.

"In Paris, at the Alhambra, a beautiful theater, a group of American soldiers came opening night. I took them all over and had a big party in the Hotel

Moderne, where I was staying, on Place Republique.

"The 'gallery gods' at the Paris Alhambra didn't understand English and they would sometimes get noisy, but when I went into my eccentric dance at the finish they were wonderful. I was there four weeks.

"When playing Brighton (by the sea), England, I saw many armless and legless men in wheel chairs. I asked a few if they were ever allowed to see our show.

"When they said no, I sent my salary over to the hospital and that night down the aisles came all those wheel chairs, and the sight of those men nearly floored me. I choked and they yelled to one another, 'Is that her?'"

"I sang 'The Rose of No Man's Land,' and you can imagine the shouting: 'She's the one red rose the soldier knows.

She's the work of the Master's hand.

'Mid the war's great curse

Stands the Red Cross nurse—

She's the Rose of No Man's Land!"

"When playing London one year I lived at the Victoria Hotel on Trafalgar Square. I gathered all my American performer friends to a dinner party. We were to be in the special private dinner-and-party room.

"To our surprise, we were changed to another room because standing in the foyer were eight men (past 50, I'm sure) and in the center stood the Prince of Wales! He looked so young (and played nervously with his tie) among the elder dignitaries.

"We were compensated for the changing of the dining room by being allowed to shake hands with the Prince, today the Duke of Windsor. That made quite a hit with my friends and raised my 'social standing.' No kidding! The girls were elated and the dinner was fine.

## VIII. Trials and Triumphs in South Africa

"South Africa! Now there is something! I was supposed to be in Capetown for two weeks, but after I played one they immediately sent me on to Johannesburg.

"Boy, what a city and wonderful people! There is quite an American colony. I left London on the Balmoral Castle, and it seemed there was something arranged every half hour for the 18-day trip.

"Here is something I almost forgot to mention. On entering Capetown I hailed an open car to take me to the hotel. We had gone two blocks when an old man, with his horse and cart, pulled out of an alley. He beat the horse, and the horse jumped head and feet first into my car. I can still hear the people on the sidewalk scream, but I was O.K. Some entrance!

"I met the family who owned the Brackpan gold mine in Benoni, South Africa. When I arrived in Johannesburg the temperature was 90 degrees, and I stood in front of the Carleton Hotel aghast. Christmas decorations in all the windows and 90 degrees!

"I was always billed as 'The American Comedienne.' My opening night was sensational. Over the footlights a small powder-puff container was thrown to me containing a beautiful ruby.

"When I came out the stage door six young men in dinner jackets raised me up on their shoulders and carried me to the Carleton, where a magnificent banquet was arranged in my honor. Oh, so many guests—quite a few from the ship—and many dignitaries. The reception everywhere was glorious.

"The family who owned the gold mine in Benoni gave me a beautiful party when I played there and took me through the mine, down the shaft, with the Kaffirs—South African Negroes. I saw how much gold was extracted in one working day and how they examined the workers when leaving the mine.

"After playing there a month I was presented with two unwashed rocks of gold, one containing a beautiful onyx (unheard of). I was also given two papers from the government, allowing me to take them out of the country.

"In Durban, Natal, a seashore town, the rickshaw drivers scared me to death with their crazy headgear. One day, when playing the Criterion, I had to get home quickly. I ran the two blocks and those men all ran after me!

"Something like that happened in London. I had bought two beautiful feathers for my hat, and a windstorm came up on my way home. The feathers stood up and I ran up the stairs to the lobby, only to be followed by a crowd.

"The manager had to quiet them and send them on their way. They thought it was some stunt. The poor kids thought my high-button shoes were extraordinary, too. Theirs had wooden soles.

"Getting back to Africa, I then played Wolfentien, a German settlement. I received a germ and had an abscess in my throat, which a doctor had to lance. I was ill there two weeks. The instrument the doctor used broke in half just as he started to lance the abscess.

"The hotel help consisted of little pigmies. Under the influence of the medicine, I would chase them from my room so I could sleep, and they'd yell and become frightened—but it seemed I was more frightened than they.

When in Durban I was wooed by the son of a sugar merchant and plantation owner, who wanted me to marry and remain there. But I thought it was too far away from home!

"I always handled the ship's concerts and performed in them on my voyages. Many celebrities were going over then, so it wasn't so hard. I had eight voyages to, and from New York City.

"The year 1921 or 1922, Harry Green and his wife, Bunny Granville, and six other Americans, joined me in going to Germany just for fun, and fun it was! We all stayed at the Adlon Hotel on the Frederick Strasse in beautiful Berlin.

"That is where the high wall has been built by Mr. Khrushchev. We all returned to London after visiting Leipzig and Dresden. I took the ship home. Father had passed away."



### IX. What Foreign Papers Said

Proof of the hit that Elida Morris made in South Africa may be found in this review by "Gadabout" in the *Johannesburg Sunday Times* for November 28, 1920:

"Elida Morris, who, with the customary modesty of the music hall, describes herself as 'IT,' is a top-liner and undoubtedly deserves this pride of place. She is an American and can only be described as a real 'live wire.' She is a whirlwind in pink.

"She bursts into negro dialect songs, old and new, but with a vigor and vim that is absolutely irresistible. She gives an imitation of an American Negress who has just been 'thrown down' by Christmas Johnson, and gesture and intonation are alike perfect.

"She is of the temperamental type of entertainer and on her opening night her magnetism and forcefulness were apparent in every way. By snapping of the fingers, by unobtrusive lolling, and by other curious signs, she communicated her time to the orchestra and showed how keen was her zest."

It's a long way from Johannesburg not only to Tipperary but to Dublin, Ireland. Yet this excerpt from *Dublin Sport* for April 30, 1921, shows Elida making the same sort of hit among the Irish that she had in South Africa:

"Now and again a star of outstanding brilliance in the theatrical world shines in Dublin. We discovered one this week at the Royal; and if Elida Morris is not the rage of this continent in the very near future, vaudeville audiences don't know much.

"This little girl is American through and through, and as fine an artist as I have seen and heard. . . I can only describe her as the essence of all that is best in the work of Hilda Glyder and Elsie Janis.

"But, recollect, Elida has qualities which Hilda and Elsie do not possess. She is full of drama, comedy and vocal distinction—and she is a good looker.

"It is remarkable how Dublin audiences recognize the goods. This week they were just moderate in their applause of the turns preceding Elida Morris. When she came along they went wild and didn't want to let her go. What a reception she will get on her return visit!"

### X. Married Life and Aviation

I had asked Mrs. Cooper how she met her husband and her reply revealed that their romance began with a chance meeting in which she narrowly escaped putting out one of his eyes. Since he didn't lose it, I imagine it was love at first sight on Col. Cooper's part, out of both eyes. But theirs was no hasty courtship. As Elida relates, they didn't marry until 12 years after their first meeting:

"I was playing the Orpheum in New Orleans. On the way to my hotel it was pouring rain, and I slipped and fell, nearly putting the Colonel's eye out with my umbrella.

"He picked me up and took me to my hotel. He had just landed with a pilot. That was in 1911. I didn't marry him until 1923.

"He was retired by the Government, and they sent us here to Santa Barbara in 1944—a more even climate for those who have had strokes, of which the third one took him away.

"He is buried at Sawtelle in the Colunburium, a beautiful crescent-shaped building. On the door, where his ashes rest, are his name and record. A wonderful man! A fine soldier!"

Here are some more of Elida Morris Cooper's recollections of her aviation experiences:

"After our marriage, we went to Detroit. We were there one year, when he connected with the Chamber of Com-



Elida Morris Cooper's beautiful home at 1232 North Nopal Street, Santa Barbara.

merce, and he had the Aviation Division and several assistants.

"He managed the first aircraft show for Henry Ford in Detroit and it was an enormous success. The building was so huge, the doors so enlarged, that a plane could go through without dismantling. After that, in 1926-27-28, the Colonel managed the Commercial Airplane Reliability tours which included nearly every important city in America.

"I flew a total distance of over 12,000 miles in two years with only one forced landing. In 1928 I was in the air every day for 28 consecutive days, covering two or three cities a day, from New York to San Francisco and back.

"In between those years in Detroit I formed the Women's Aeronautical Association, with Mrs. Orre Heald Blackmore (a lady who had formed many, many women's organizations) as president. Never being a club woman, I took up studying parliamentary law with the late Emma Fox for three years.

"All these members were wives, sisters, mothers, etc., of flyers and those interested in our future. Amelia Earhart was an honorary member. There were several hundred members. It became international.

"Out of it was formed the famous 'Ninety-Niners' of today. Amelia was their president. All women pilots! I have two lovely photos of Amelia Earhart with her planes. She was always in our aircraft shows, displaying equipment and answering questions."

### XI. And, Finally, Good Advice From a Great Lady

One of the many things I asked Elida in my questionnaire, and I cannot thank her sufficiently for the pa-

tience and painstaking effort she devoted to answering all my queries was, "How did you feel when you saw your name listed in HOBBIES?"

I shall quote her reply, together with the sound philosophy, based on more than 75 years of sane living, with which she ended her response:

"I had heard 'Mrs. Cooper' for so many years that I had to look twice to see my maiden name, Elida Morris. I was startled, but happy, because I immediately corrected the date of birth, and it has brought me many new friends who have my records.

"It seems almost incredible after more than 50 years that I had to look twice to see my maiden name, Elida Morris. I was startled, but happy, because I immediately corrected the date of birth, and it has brought me many new friends who have my records.

"Playing these character comedy roles and hearing audiences laugh is marvelous compensation. Giving radio appearances and so on keeps me looking and feeling younger than I am, I guess.

"Don't humor loneliness, and try to keep out of that rocking chair. Turn on that radio; play your records. Move about as much as you can, make new friends, but don't lose sight of the old friends.

"Don't try the 'Twist.' What a 'honey' that is for chiropractors and brace manufacturers! I have a brace from away back. Had to use it three years because I slipped on my polished floor in Washington, D.C. But I'm fine now—there are no polished floors in my Santa Barbara home!"

\* \* \*

Next month, Elida Morris' recordings will be discussed in detail.

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap3846

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each.—Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3694

WANTED: Old cylinder phonographs and records. Disc phonographs with outside horns. Cylinder reproducers. Hand roller organs. Want any amount large or small. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. my6829

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## SIX COMEDIENNES

ELIDA MORRIS

PART III

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Variety Review

Elida Morris was only 23 when she made her first records in 1910 at the solicitation of Billy Murray, who was not only the most popular phonograph comedian, but always knew a good recording voice when he heard one.

The girlish Miss Morris, of course, was already a theatrical veteran, with more than a decade of experience in Negro minstrel work and vaudeville.

A couple of references to her in the publications of that era are worth attention. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* for May 3, 1910, contained a picture of the comedienne, whose first record for Columbia appeared a

month later. With the cut was the following comment:

"Miss Elida Morris, of the team of singers and dancers, Stanley and Morris, who will be seen at the Orpheum this week in their amusing skit, 'The Actress and the Water Boy,' is this season making her first appearance in white-face, after a 14 year career on the stage as a Negro minstrel miss.

"Miss Morris' theatrical debut was made as end man with Tim McMahon's Minstrel Misses, a well-known act in vaudeville, and since then she has appeared with the act known as Mills and Morris, 'the two minstrel girls.'

"Frequent inquiries from friends and acquaintances as to why she persisted in concealing her pretty features behind cork finally resulted in Miss Morris forsaking the Negro minstrel art and entering into a partnership with Johnny Stanley."

The observant reader will note slight discrepancies between this account of why Elida began working in "whiteface" and her own version published last month. Obviously, the comedienne herself knows best how it happened.

Also going back to 1910 is a "Variety" review of Elida's act as a "single" after she and Stanley ended their partnership. The reviewer, who signed himself "Fred," followed the

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

well established *Variety* policy of praising the good parts of a performance, but pointing out things that he thought could be improved:

"ELIDA MORRIS, Singing Comedienne. 14 Mins.; One. Colonial. Exhibiting two points highly essential to the success of the artist in vaudeville, but yet rarely found, Elida Morris made a favorable impression on the Monday night audience at the Colonial.

"The dual gifts this little comedienne has are personality and a voice. Her repertoire includes several numbers that have long since perished at the hands of the illustrated song singers, but to atone there was her most charming manner of presenting them.

"During the 14 minutes she wears four dainty costumes, the first of which did not harmonize well. It was a pretty pink frock with shoes and stockings to match, but whoever told her to wear a lace coat trimmed with green over it should be taken out and shot at sunrise. The three complete changes Miss Morris makes are done in record time and help the act considerably.

"Her voice is a soprano of rare timbre to be found in vaudeville and she shows it off to excellent advantage in the opening song. The second number is a Negro song, likewise delivered in good style. A bit of 'song plugging' was indulged in for the third song, which could easily be dropped.

"Her closing number, in a boy's costume, is a bit too slow, she employing extra dance music after the second chorus. A good lively number, with chorus music suitable for her dance steps would be more desirable. The act is one that will prove pleasing on any program through Miss Morris' personality and voice alone."

The following, from *The Billboard*, apparently was a later criticism:

"ELIDA MORRIS. Reviewed Monday afternoon, June 30, at Proctor's Twenty-Third Street Theater, New York.

"An artiste whose work is a delight and whose talent in character roles augurs a bright future for her . . .

From left to right:

Lt. Col. Norwood Raymond Cooper, deceased husband of Elida Morris Cooper, (with his brother Earl Cooper, famous auto racer at left side of picture).

Elida Morris as "Violetta" in the Verdi opera, "Traviata."

Elida Morris as Mrs. McCreavy in "First Lady."

—Photo by Antonios Zamouzakis, Hollywood, Calif.



Miss Morris' opening is in the imaginative character of the Goddess of Broadway, who sits on her throne above the white-lit street and gazes down upon its victors and its spoils.

"She sings a song typical of the spirit of Broadway, with its sin and its broken hearts, sketching a picture of the great playground and the game played there in which few are winners. In the final scene Miss Morris is at her best.

"She typifies a 'painted rose' in singing the song of the same name before a scene which supposedly depicts the girl's boarding house. Sitting on the steps in front of the house, in a tired and weary attitude, Miss Morris gives an admirable as well as a touching performance."

This act was written by Blanche Merrill.

## II. First Recordings

Elida Morris has told us that Billy Murray saw her vaudeville act and arranged for her to make records for Victor. However, her first recording seems to have been done for Columbia; at least her Columbia disc of "You'll Come Back" appeared in the supplement for June, 1910.

Files of the RCA-Victor Artist and Repertoire Department show that she and Murray recorded this George W. Meyer number on May 16, 1910, but it was not issued until November. The Morris and Murray duet of "Angel Eyes" is listed only as having been made in May, but it and "You'll Come Back" probably were recorded at the same session.

Columbia was lavish in its praise of Elida's interpretation of "You'll Come Back" (A826) which had Arthur Collins singing a Henry Lodge composition, "Temptation Rag" for its companion:

"Another of Meyer and Drislane's very recent productions, and a Negro song of decided originality and interest, rendered by a new singer whose remarkable talent for this kind of work raises her interpretation to the plane of high art.

"There is nothing we can say for Miss Morris that will be half so convincing as to hear just a few lines of this record. We venture to say that style such as hers in the singing of the present day Negro songs has never before been recorded.

"The song itself concerns the fortunes of Henrietta and Alexander, two Negro

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people at the moment when the latter has declared his unalterable determination to leave without bothering about the formality of coming back.

"Henrietta has had experience, however, and assures him that he will return, when maybe he will find her waiting for him, and then again maybe he won't. This is decidedly one of the best things in our June list. Don't miss it."

Alexander, as the name of the "hero" of a song about Negroes, was used in "You'll Come Back" a year before Irving Berlin produced "Alexander's Ragtime Band." The name, however, had become something of a tradition. Harry Von Tilzer had written a big hit called "Alexander" in 1904, and there probably were earlier examples of its being used.

"Angel Eyes," the first Victor record in which Elida Morris took part, was announced in August, 1910, as a duet between her and Billy Murray. The comedienne and comedian had much in common. Both had done Negro minstrel work—Billy was a member of Al G. Field's minstrels for several years—and both were known as "eccentric dancers" as well as singers.

Victor must have felt that "Angel Eyes," which has such a poignant appeal to me because of the golden-eyed kitten to whom I gave that name, was able to stand alone without having another song on the other side, for it was issued as single-faced record 5782:

"The First Morris-Murray Record. 'Angel Eyes' (Kendis-Paley). An interesting August novelty is the first of a series of duets by a new Victor combination. It is easy to see why Miss Morris is such a success in vaudeville, when we listen to her sing this little Negro song. She pictures the lazy, drawing Southern Negro to perfection.

"This new Victor singer is well supported by Mr. Murray, whose facility of adapting himself to any kind of song is well-known. A most entertaining little number, the odd harmony in the chorus being quite effective."

The reference to Billy's "supporting" Elida in "Angel Eyes" is accurate. She sings the verse and first chorus alone. Billy then takes up the second chorus with his soprano friend harmonizing an obbligato. It is a

charming record. A photo of Miss Morris was included with the write-up.

Rather oddly, both Victor and Columbia withheld their next Elida Morris records until November, 1910. Probably they preferred not to offer them during the dull summer season when record sales were slow.

This time, Victor presented the Morris and Murray duet version of "You'll Come Back," combined on record 16653 with an uproarious Negro minstrel comedy sketch, "J'inin' the Church," by Billy Golden and Joe Hughes. The write-up said:

"The new Morris-Murray combination, which made a success with 'Angel Eyes' in the August supplement, now gives us a new number, also with a Negro flavor, affording Miss Morris another opportunity to reveal her cleverness in this kind of work."

Morris and Murray seemed off to an auspicious start, but "Angel Eyes" and "You'll Come Back" are the only duets Victor ever issued by them. A pity, I think, because their styles were well suited to each other and they should have become an extremely popular team.

Elida's record of "Kiss Me, My Honey, Kiss Me" (a song hit for which Irving Berlin wrote the words and Ted Snyder the music) led the November Columbia supplement. The number was A906, and it was combined with "Come Along, My Mandy," sung by Ada Jones and Walter Van Brunt. The supplement commentary praised both the song and the singer:

"The publishers of this song herald it as the greatest sentimental song success ever introduced in America, and it is evident to all who have heard it that it is a popular number of altogether extraordinary merit. The refrain is destined to be one of the airs that everyone sings or whistles.

"Miss Morris, who made a decided hit in our June list with 'You'll Come Back,' has been appropriately selected to do this number for us in her own engaging manner."

In my opinion, "engaging manner" is putting it mildly. The sex appeal drips from Elida's honeyed lips in this number in a manner that no present day woman singer is likely

to equal. As rendered by Elida Morris, "Kiss Me" might be the song that seductive siren, Circe, sang to the Grecian hero, Ulysses!

Columbia seemed to keep a bit ahead of Victor in issuing Elida Morris numbers. "Kiss Me" appeared a month later in the Victor list on record 16807. The B side was occupied by Ada Jones and Billy Murray, singing an irresistible bit of ragtime, "The Belle of the Barbers' Ball." The comment was rather perfunctory:

"Two up-to-date popular songs given by three talented singers. The remarkable values given by the Victor in its double-faced list has occasioned much favorable comment, and this combination is a good example of the quality and amount of entertainment which is being furnished."

I had overlooked the fact that a two-minute Indestructible cylinder of "You'll Come Back" was listed in the October, 1910, Columbia supplement. Although these cylinders were manufactured by the Indestructible Record Company of Albany, N. Y., Columbia was Indestructible's sales agent and sold them under the Columbia name.

The description of the cylinder, 1414, was the same as that which had appeared in June for the Columbia disc. The cylinder description, however, was surrounded by a "box," to indicate it was considered the most important Indestructible record of the month.

"Kiss Me" appeared in December, on cylinder 1439, and again the previous disc catalog description was copied.

January, 1911, brought a Victor record (16687) that was probably the greatest favorite of all Elida Morris' solo offerings. It was one of Irving Berlin's earliest hits, "Stop! Stop! Stop! (Come Over and Love Me Some More.)" Nat M. Wills held down the reverse side with "Song of the English Chappie:"

"Miss Morris has made many new friends among Victor patrons by her clever presentation of Negro songs; and her January record will increase the number, as her impersonation of the Negro lady who said 'stop' but didn't mean it, is the best thing she has yet done."

This time Victor swept ahead of Columbia, whose "Stop! Stop! Stop!" record didn't come out until February. It was A953. Arthur Collins sang "Lovie Joe" on the other side. Unfortunately, I don't have the February, 1911, Columbia supplement and am unable to quote what it said about the record.

Elida Morris did not appear in the Columbia list again until June, 1914. In fact, she must have been traveling virtually all the time for the next year or more, for her next Victor record was not announced until April, 1912. It was one of her best, but did not sell well and stayed in the catalog only a year.

The titles, on 17048, were "Play Me a Good Old-Fashioned Melody" (the interpretation that Quentin Riggs and I agree in considering a masterpiece) and "The Trolley Car



From left to right:

Elida Morris as Mrs. Watty, a shoplifter turned salvationist, in "The Corn is Green." This is one of her best comedy roles.

Elida Morris Cooper and her 13-year-old faithful Airedale dog, Roxie, photographed in the garden in January, 1962.



Swing." Catalog Editor Sam Rous said:

"Admirers of this popular comedienne will note with pleasure that she has returned from her long Western vaudeville tour and given the Victor two new humorous songs. Miss Morris has a style all her own, and her rendering of certain types of popular songs is inimitable."

The supplement comment was graced by a new photo of Miss Morris, taken by "Marsden, of Seattle," showing her wearing a striking stage costume. A month later, on 17061 the comedienne sang a charming number, "If Every Star Was a Little Pickaninny."

For companions she had Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, vocalizing "Lady Angelina." The supplement said: "Miss Morris gives the little Negro song in the attractive style which she has made all her own."

Apparently, Elida made only one more record for Victor. J. F. Hetherington, of the RCA-Victor Consumer Services department, has checked the files and found no evidence of any unissued Morris records.

Her final Victor offering, 17430, "Happy Little Country Girl," another Irving Berlin song, appeared in November, 1913. On side B the Peerless Quartet harmonized, "Good-Bye, Summer! So Long, Fall! Hello, Winter Time!" The popular records of that month had no supplement description.

Incidentally, Mr. Hetherington says the Victor records of "Kiss Me" and "Stop! Stop! Stop!" were made in September, 1910; "Play Me a Good Old-Fashioned Melody" and "Trolley Car Swing" and "If Every Star Was a Little Pickaninny" in January, 1912, and "Happy Little Country Girl" in July, 1913.

I should have mentioned earlier that an Indestructible cylinder of "Stop! Stop! Stop!" (1414) was issued shortly after the Columbia disc. Elida Morris' four-minute duet with Walter Van Brunt, 3191, "I've Got Your Number," appeared in the February, 1911, list.

### III. Pathes and Later Columbias

When Pathé, then the leading phonograph company of the European continent, opened an American branch in 1914, its first slender catalog contained an 11½ inch record by Elida Morris, "You're Here and I'm Here" and "All He Does Is Follow Them Around."

The singer says she made Pathé records abroad, but this one, B5030, appears to have been recorded in America, for the B prefix was given to the numbers of discs by American artists. On the other hand, it may have been made in England and placed in the American list because of Miss Morris' nationality.

It stayed in the catalog only about a year, which makes it appear plausible that it was taken from imported matrices and was discontinued, like the Gene Greene records, after no



From top to bottom:

The Romany Chorus on the patio of Elida Morris Cooper's home, Santa Barbara, Calif. The late John Charles Thomas, famous baritone, organized and managed the group.

The Romany Chorus presenting a Victor Herbert operetta on Station KEYT, Santa Barbara, Calif. Elida Morris, at the extreme left of the front row, sang "Romany Life."

more were available. It is a scarce record, and I have never found a copy.

The name of Elida Morris does not appear in the Pathé catalog dated September, 1916, but there are two records by her in the 1918 list. One is a solo, "Florabella," on 20081. Its "platter mate" is "You're the Girl," a duet by Roselle Martin, soprano, and Gordon MacHughes, baritone.

On 20088 Miss Morris and that most prolific of duet singers, Henry Burr, harmonized in "Bachelor Girl and Boy." Its companion was an English importation, Jack Charman, "The Versatile Comedian," singing "Hello, Little Miss U. S. A." This record gave our comedienne friend the distinction of having made duets with the two most popular male phonograph singers of 40 to 50 years ago—Billy Murray and Henry Burr.

After an absence of three years, Elida returned to the Columbia lists in 1914. Her reappearance began in June with A1523, "If I Had Someone At Home Like You." The other side offered "Everybody Loves My Girl," sung by the Peerless Quartet.

The supplement referred to the lady's contribution as "another brand new ragtime number, recorded by Miss Elida Morris, a singer whose

work has always been favored by the Columbia clientele." Oddly, the record was described as a "soprano solo," whereas Elida was called a contralto on the Columbia labels. To my ears she was always a soprano.

What I consider the least attractive of the Morris records was issued by Columbia in September on A1564. It is a rather slow, draggy affair, "Some Day You'll Know Who Loves You." Again the Peerless Quartet occupied the reverse with "Don't Go Away."

The description said, "Elida Morris . . . reappears in our list after a most successful season in vaudeville with a ballad that will revive her reputation as one of the best record-makers available."

Miss Morris' October offering was excellent. It was "The Little Things that Count." Once more, on A1581, she was chaperoned by the Peerless Quartet, who sang "Keep Your Eye On Uncle Sammy." The catalog editor remarked that the Morris side "is one of the cleverest bits of sentimental ragtime we have had in many months."

November brought a double-barrel treat for Elida Morris fans, because she occupied both sides of record A1592, singing two catchy songs that

were among the season's hits, George W. Meyer's "The High Cost Of Loving" and Irving Berlin's "I Want To Go Back To Michigan," which Columbia, for no clear reason, called "I Want To Go Back To The Farm." This coupling led the monthly Columbia list.

Elida Morris was heard from one more time, and for the last time, in a Columbia list after more than a year's absence. In October, 1915 on A1801, she and the late Sam Ash sang "Hello Frisco!" from "The Follies of 1915." This side traveled in double harness with "Come Back, Dixie," sung by Billy Burton and Herbert Stuart, who were really Charles Harrison and Albert Wiederhold.

By the time these 1914-15 records were issued, Columbia had ceased to be sales agent for Indestructible cylinders, but Miss Morris recorded two of her Columbia numbers for the Albany firm. One was "The High Cost Of Loving," on two-minute cylinder 1520. "I Want To Go Back To Michigan" received four-minute treatment on 3339.

This concludes my review of Elida Morris records, about which I have definite knowledge. Our Santa Barbara song bird says she thinks she made records for Emerson, Edison, and Brunswick, but I have not been able to trace any. My collection of Emerson catalogs is incomplete, but her name does not appear in those I have. It is not in any Edison catalog, which may mean that she made tests that were not issued. And I have never seen it in a Brunswick list.

Many years ago, my old friend, Osborne H. Parker, of San Francisco, wrote me that he had a Rex sapphire record on which Elida Morris and Bob Roberts sang a duet. I am not sure of the title, but it seems to me it was "Yummy Yum," or something like that.

There is no record I would be happier to find. Since I have no Rex catalogs, it may well be that she sang other numbers for that firm whose headquarters was in her Philadelphia birthplace.

#### IV. More Press Clippings

Since we have just been discussing Elida Morris' last Columbia record, which was issued in October, 1915, this seems a good place to take a "breathing spell" and consider an article about her which appeared in the *Fort Wayne (Ind.) Journal* for October 30, that same year.

"Elida Morris Writing Her Name In Big Letters At The Palace — Elida Morris, the dynamic little singing comedienne, is writing her name in blazing letters at the New Palace this week in one of the best single turns seen at the Keith house this season.

"This happy little breeze blows onto the stage and fairly frolics through a gay assortment of lively song numbers enhanced by some graceful and gingery dancing. She is pretty and she is graceful, besides possessing a singing voice of decided charm. She is scoring and is doing it on a bill of unusual pretension."

#### V. Elida's "Lucky Shoe Heel"

I wonder if Elida Morris Cooper remembers the interview with her that was published in the *Boston Herald* for November 3, 1912. It was one in which, if the reporter quoted her correctly, she frankly admitted to being superstitious and having a "lucky shoe heel layer" as a mascot. In part, the interview ran:

"In the opinion of Miss Elida Morris, the dainty comedienne who is known throughout the West as the Vesta Tilley of America, performers and gamblers are the most superstitious people in the world. This young artist is the charming actress to whom Beerbohm Tree, the great English actor, said: 'Young lady, you make a better boy than some men I have seen on the stage.'"

"Miss Morris is of a superstitious nature herself, and asserts that more than 90 per cent of the performers on the stage, and especially in vaudeville, believe in mental telepathy, only they call it 'hunches.' She will visit Boston this week and will appear at the National Theater in one of the most delightful character impersonations ever presented by any one woman.

"In discussing her ideas on the 'hunches' of performers, Miss Morris said:

"You will probably think it silly of me to tell you that a section of heel from an old shoe of mine is my 'lucky piece.' When I first started in vaudeville I went to New York looking for a position. I had been refused by manager after manager until it seemed as if I just must give up.

"One Friday afternoon — it was not the 13th — I went to a manager and he refused me. As I started downstairs — I was too nervous to wait for the elevator — I lost the top layer of a shoe's heel.

"I started back to find it, and as I went into the office the manager caught sight of me and yelled: 'Say, Miss Morris, just the girl I have been looking for. Come right in. Make yourself comfortable.' And only five minutes before," had he yelled, "Nothing doing today."

"I learned that a producer had called him for a 'type.' I happened to be that type. In 20 minutes I had signed contracts. I always carry that little piece of heel in my purse.

"Here is another example. I was playing on a bill with a sharpshooter. One of the bullets rebounded and struck my pocketbook. The lead became lodged in the piece of heel and did not pass through to my body. There are many who would call this a coincidence. I don't know what to call it, and until someone shows me different I am strong for that little section of shoe leather."

#### VI. Bringing Everything Up-to-Date

The story of Elida Morris Cooper's long and brilliant career has now been told virtually in its entirety. I think it would be well to conclude, however, with excerpts from newspaper discussions of some of her more recent singing and "show biz" activities, which prove that after more than 60 years before the footlights "The Siren of Santa Barbara" is still capable of swaying an audience any way she likes.

Here, for instance, is a comment from a Santa Barbara critic concerning her part in a production of "First Lady," given by the Allied Theater Group in the Alhacama Theater:

"Elida Morris Cooper, who has a gift for broad farce, was ideally cast as Mrs. Louella McCreavy, the leader of five million clubwomen of the Women's Peace, Purity and Patriotism League. She played it for all it was worth—which

(Continued on page 92)

#### MISC. MUSIC WANTED

PIANO ROLLS, Ampico, Duo-Art, all others. Highest prices. I pay shipping. No lists required. — Box 596, Bellevue, Nebr. mh1251

#### MISC. MUSIC FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL Columbia Concert Grand phonograph, 1900 model. Plays 5" cylinders and 2½" cyl. Roll top walnut cabinet. \$299. Description and picture 50c. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate Road, Troy, Ohio. mh1422

FOR SALE or trade for old coins, original history of jazz in 12 records. One book dated 1912 title "Victor Book of the Opera," containing stories of 70 grand operas, 300 illustrations, description of 700 Victor opera records. 375 pages. — J. A. Green, 620 Villa Crest, Macon, Ga. mh1433

#### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. my3694

WANTED: Old cylinder phonographs and records. Disc phonographs with outside horns. Cylinder reproducers. Hand roller organs. Want any amount large or small. — Neumann Miller, 410 W. Lomita, Glendale 4, Calif. my6329

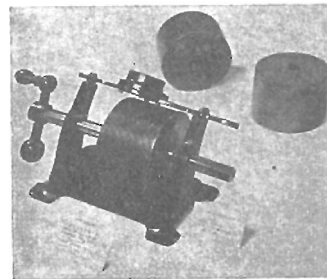
#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. ap3346

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS, outside horn disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold. Record list 75c each. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap120821

REPRODUCER REPAIRING a specialty and have all types of reproducers for sale. Also, have a supply of the original Edison styluses (needle) and can install them in your reproducers. Send stamp for brochure on reproducers. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. my3276

EDISON cylinder phono. Model H. 4 min. play, horn old asphaltum paint. New diamond stylus in reproducer. Excellent condition. Dozen records \$50. Crating, cartage extra. — The Chateau Antiques, Ascutney, Vt. mh1422



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HORSTMAN & MYER

68 No. York Rd., Willow Grove, Pa. mhp

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

is a great deal—and nearly stopped the show."

Writing in the *Santa Barbara Star*, Will Harvey said this about her part in a revived old-time melodrama, "Under the Gaslight," presented in 1952:

"Elida Morris Cooper was the spark-plug. Her voice was as sweet and clear at times as a 20-year-old's, and her ad lib, 'There's still plenty of life in this old gal' was a vast understatement. She sang 'I Want a Man,' and probably could have had her choice of any of those present."

When the Repertory Theater presented Emlyn Williams' noted play, "The Corn Is Green," the reviewer said:

"Elida Morris Cooper, revelling in the rich comedy role of Mrs. Watty, shop-lifter turned salvationist, threatened to steal the show whenever the author gave her opportunity. One degree more of broadness would have been too much, but she stayed just within the bounds of balanced ensemble and still tickled the audience's risibilities."

Ronald D. Scofield reviewed the Alhecama Players' production of "The Matchmaker," by Thornton Wilder, in the *Santa Barbara News-Press* for November 6, 1958, and gave warm praise to the veteran comedienne:

"Elida Morris Cooper soars to a pinnacle of fey artistry as the Irish Mrs. Levi. Mrs. Cooper is a past master of roguish, earthy and stylistic comedy, and she brings her skill to bear on this part—with a characterization that is delightful."

(To be concluded in the April issue)

## OBITUARY

### CLARA WARP JENSEN

Clara Warp Jensen, who with her husband, T. C. Jensen, managed the Harold Warp Pioneer Village at Minden, Nebr., passed away on December 23. Mrs. Jensen was a sister of Harold Warp of Chicago who founded the well known museum.

We quote from the obituary notice of this remarkably energetic and capable woman in the *Minden Courier*.

"When she was asked to begin collecting items to make up the Harold Warp Pioneer Village, she put her boundless energy into the task. These trips, which she so thoroughly enjoyed, added many more friends throughout the nation.

"As co-manager of Pioneer Village, her responsibilities became greater, but she could still take time for a friendly chat with visitors who came to the Village. Those who met her carried away a warm feeling that often made their visit to the museum the most memorable part of their trip.

"She lived with great and infectious energy, whether the day was spent in the office, or with her husband purchasing articles for the Village, painting china, or lunching with visitors. She enjoyed every moment of it. Clara will be remem-

bered most for her boundless energy and sincere love for individuals.

Left to mourn her passing are her husband; four sons, Vearl, Stanley, Omar and Donald; one daughter, Elaine Howland; 23 grand children; two sisters, Lena Johnson, Minnie Christensen; two brothers, John and Harold Warp, Chicago, Ill.; and a host of friends.

Harold Warp's Pioneer Village has had wonderful success and growth, much of which can be credited to the loyalty and devotion of his sister and her husband.

Twenty thousand historic items in 20 buildings, covering two city blocks make up this repository of authentic Americana. It is located on U. S. 6 and U. S. 34 at Minden, Nebr., which is 130 miles west of Lincoln.

—O—

### JOSEPH F. DOWNING

Word has been received of the passing of Joseph F. Downing, one time well-known antique, book, curio and coin and stamp dealer of Mulberry Street, Hartford, Conn., who died on January 12 in Belfast, Me., to which place he retired after many years in Hartford, Conn.

Friends and customers of Mr. Downing in his Mulberry Street (and later his "Tunnel" Building) store in Hartford will recall his long career in that city. Formerly of Holyoke and Springfield, Mass. Mr. Downing went to Hartford in the Twenties. Continuing his regular trade as an evening shift typesetter at a Hartford paper, he established his coin, stamp, curio and rare book business in the Thirties. He made several important discoveries, one of which was the long-lost oil portrait sketch of Gertrude Bell by John Singer Sargent (the "uncrowned queen of Arabia" and a contemporary of Lawrence of Arabia). This painting was sold to Lowell Thomas.\* Downing also came across one or two Thomas Sully paintings which later found their way into the hands of museums or wealthy collectors.

\*E. D. Collins, a contributor to *HOBBIES*, saw the painting in Downing's shop and made the arrangements for its sale to Thomas.

### THE BLIZZARD MEN AND LADIES OF 1888

On March 12, 1888, the country was gripped by one of the first blizzards of history. On March 8, 1963, members of The Blizzard Men and Ladies of 1888, will hold their 34th annual luncheon at the Hotel Statler, New York City, to perpetuate the memory of the occasion.

Historian of the club is R. W. G. Vail of the New York Historical Society. The Society has a sizeable collection of pictures and memorabilia relating to the big storm.

Clarence Edward Heller, officer of the society, is a contributor-friend of *HOBBIES*.

## TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY

### ANTIQUES FOR SALE

Free Egyptian Antiquity Catalog annotated illustrations of genuine: Shawabti (from ancient Egyptian tombs), \$15-\$25; terra-cotta oil lamps (from ancient Palestine), \$5, \$10, and up; bronze age weapons, \$3 - \$100; prehistoric flints, \$1; Egyptian scarabs, \$10-\$25; Coptic textiles, \$5-\$20; Graeco - Roman figurines, \$10-\$50; inscribed papyrus, \$5-\$15; Roman Imperial bronze coins, \$3, silver \$5. Unusual collectors gift, genuine 1,000-year-old inscribed papyrus sealed in magnifying glass paperweight, \$10. Send post card to: Dept. H-3, Aladdin House, 520 5th Ave., New York 36, N. Y. mh16501

STRING of sleigh bells \$6.50. Nice old lock and key \$2. Oval shadow box with wreath \$8.50. Round piano stool \$7. Brass eagle nut cracker \$3.50. Six fancy chairs, weave cane seats \$30. 5 bottle castor, pattern glass bottles, needs replating \$14. Empire one drawer night stand \$10. Nickel plated alcohol burner chafing dish \$9. Pine one drawer wash stand with towel racks, good condition \$11.50. — Edward Sheppard, Catskill, N. Y. mh1006

CHINESE embroidered shawl, silk crepe, basic color creamy white, all over embroidery with the "Forbidden Stitch," standard size, with deep beautiful fringe, museum quality, mint condition, \$100. Also two old Japanese priest robes, one green brocade; the other lighter shades, each \$50. — Marie Grogan, Room 1000, Marshall Field Annex Bldg., 25 East Washington, Chicago, Ill. mh1044

### BACK NUMBER MAGAZINES FOR SALE

THE CHATAUQUAN, 1877, \$1.25 ea.; Scientific American, 1896-1897, 60c each; WW 1 Leslie's, 1917-1919, 50c each; Old favorite magazines, 1896-1914, our choice, 4 for \$1. All good. Postpaid. — House of Memories, Woodville, Wis. mh1082

### BOOKS WANTED

WANTED: Books on book illustrators. State price. — Jack Holt, R. 3, Waverly, Ohio. my3291

CANADIANA, such as Bartlett's Canadian Scenery, Canadian Illustrated News, Hunter's Ottawa Scenery & Eastern Townships, Heriot's Travels in the Canadas, Smyth's Sketches in the Canadas, Grant's Picturesque Canada, county atlases, etc. — Specialty Book Concern, Box 293, Oakville, Ont., Canada. my3426

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by

JIM WALSH

## Clarice Vance

By JIM WALSH

### SIX COMEDIENNES

ELIDA MORRIS

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

Finally, coming up to November 5, 1961, a *News-Press* writer said this, in describing the Alhecama Players' production of "The Teahouse of the August Moon:"

"Back in the role of Higa Jiga is Elida Morris Cooper, who has a theatrical record as long as an arm. Her thespian career began at the age of 14 as Eva in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' and includes multifarious singing and dramatic roles.

"She is co-founder of the Santa Barbara Choral Society, has played in four Fiesta Bowl shows, and has served with the Alhecama Players almost since their inception."

Comedy, however, is only one phase of this remarkably gifted lady's abilities. When the Santa Barbara Choral Society gave a Christmas concert on December 21, 1948, she was one of the principal soloists, singing Tschai-kowsky's "Legende" and Reger's "The Virgin's Cradle Song." (What a contrast with "Stop! Stop! Stop!" and "Kiss Me, My Honey!") And when the Music Society of Santa Barbara presented the Mendelssohn oratorio, "Elijah," the reviewer said:

"The brilliant and clear voice of Elida Morris Cooper showed to full advantage in the famous aria, 'What Have I to Do With Thee?' and in the equally famous duet between The Widow and Elijah (Donald Sykes.)"

Some years ago Radio Station KTMS presented our versatile friend in a series of Holy Week programs of sacred songs. As another evidence of versatility (although surely no more really can be needed), Elida for several months wrote a department, "Broadway Silhouette," for the *Encino News*. All this makes one wonder if there is anything Elida Morris hasn't done—or can't do!

#### VII. And, Finally—

I am writing the final pages of this series on September 8, 1962, while still trying to recover from a long bout of illness. And I am sorry to say that Elida Morris has had her share of hard luck during the past few months. I quote from her letter of August 9:

"Dear Jim: Do you think you have 'de miseries?' Well, you're not alone, so we can at least be sympathetic with one another. On July 14th I went to bed and turned over on my left side to turn off the bedside lamp, and it

tottered and fell off the table. I went to grab it, lost my balance, and my weight (135 pounds) landed on my left forearm and broke both bones.

"I slid on the floor to the telephone and called a taxi and had him take me to the emergency room of St. Francis' Hospital. My arm is in a cast and will be for six weeks, and there will be three months of exercises — physiotherapy — after that. I am in great pain when I don't take the pain capsules. I manipulate the fingers madly all day long.

"Friends have been wonderful. My sister comes every day to keep the house in order and gets my dinner for me."

The ailing Elida had, however, one consolation. Her beloved 13-year-old airedale dog, Roxie, which had undergone an operation for cataracts and other troubles, appeared to have regained his health. But in a later note, dated August 25, she wrote:

"Hello, Jim. My arm has been terrific. Anyway, the cast is moving a little and on September 14th he (the doctor) is supposed to take the cast off. Here's hoping, Jim! What it will look like no one knows until then. Now the hand is peeling and is swollen. The cast had to be tight. It was a very bad break. I exercise my fingers 15 minutes every hour or they'll go stiff. I have to lead Roxie to his food dish now. All senses are affected."

In spite of all her troubles, there is a characteristically bright and optimistic attitude in the letter's concluding sentences:

"Friends have been wonderful to me, Jim. I don't know how to return it. One big party when I am entirely well, with all ladies, I guess. Get well, Jim, and keep me posted. Sincerely, Elida."

Well, this installment cannot appear before April — 7 months from now at the earliest. I hope by that time both Elida Morris and I will be back in top form, and that she will have rejoined the Alhecama Players and again be entertaining large audiences with more of her inimitable characterizations. I wish I could be there to see them.

And I hope my dear friend, Elida, whom I had feared dead for many years before she gave me one of the thrills of a lifetime by so unexpectedly writing to me, will like this necessarily inadequate account of her remarkable career.

Her records have given me so much pleasure over so long a time, that I am deeply grateful I have been able to achieve my ambition of more than 20 years standing to pay her an earnest and sincere tribute in print.

Maybe, in another quarter of a century, I shall be able to write a supplementary article, telling how Elida Morris Cooper, at the age of 100, is still laying 'em in the aisles!

(The End)

(NOTE: This article is dedicated to two of my old friends who are veteran record collectors and admirers of Clarice Vance—Charles M. Sniffin of White Plains, N.Y., and Allen G. Debus, of Park Forest, Ill. Even before I began contributing to HOBBIES, Charlie Sniffin was urging me to gather information about Clarice Vance and to write an article about her.)

A quarter of a century is a long time to wait, but I hope this article will please him, even though the information it contains is not so complete as I would like. Al Debus also has long wanted a biographical sketch of Clarice Vance. I especially appreciate his kindness in lending sheet music covers on which photographs of Miss Vance are shown.)

#### I. A Hard to Trace Lady

When I fulfilled my long-deferred ambition to tell the life story of Elida Morris, I related the efforts I had made to learn something of the great comedienne's life after she ceased recording, only to be balked at every turn.

There seemed abundant reason to believe the vivacious singer of "Stop! Stop! Stop!" and "Kiss Me, My Honey, Kiss Me" was no longer alive. Then came the delightful thrill of a letter from Elida Morris Cooper, penned in the firmest, most vigorous hand, and I was at length able to chronicle her career.

To a considerable extent the same thing has been true of Clarice Vance. Year after year I tried to learn something about what had happened to her, but met, if anything, with less success than I had in pursuing Elida Morris.

Then, when I had almost given up hope, a clue to the information I needed came from a totally unexpected source. I am sorry to say, however, that it was not in a letter from the lady who was for years one of the brightest vaudeville stars.

Even now, as I prepare to tell as much as I can concerning Clarice Vance, there are gaps in my information which I probably shall never be able to fill.

I know nothing of what she did for nearly 40 years, beginning in 1913. However, enough information is available for me to write an account of her life, with a climax that I would never have dreamed of before learning the facts.

#### II. Clarice Vance Marries Mose Gumble

When I met my childhood hero, Billy Murray, in 1938, I asked him if he knew what had become of Clarice Vance. Billy, who had been inactive as a recording artist for several years, wasn't keeping in close



touch with the theatrical world, and he didn't know.

He remembered the once famous comedienne as a tall, heavily-built woman who had been married to "Mose" Gumble, professional manager of the Remick song publishing firm, but said he believed they were divorced.

A few years later, still trying to trace Miss Vance, I wrote to her former husband, who is now dead, asking if he could give me her address and any other information having to do with her later years. In reply I received a friendly, but brief note, saying it looked as if I already knew "more about Miss Vance than anybody else," but telling me nothing.

Then, in 1960, I was lucky enough to obtain a photostatic copy of an article which was published in an unidentified New York paper for December 17, 1904, giving an account of the marriage of the singer and the song writer. It was written in a style of old-fashioned humor which I shall condense:

"Ragtime Artists in Lifelong Duet . . . Moses Gumble and Clarice Vance Think Each Other's Music Good Enough For Steady Diet . . . Wedded in Indianapolis.

"Won't you fondle me? Won't you fondle me?  
Throw your arms around me in dat lovin' way."

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"As Moses Edwin Gumble, the ragtime virtuoso, poured forth these strains to Clarice Estelle Vance, the ragtime diva, a few days ago, it was quite evident to those in the know that there would be something doing soon in the line of orange blossoms.

"On Thursday afternoon Moses hid himself to Indianapolis, where the fair Clarice was filling a \$300 a week engagement, and without further parley slipped the golden hoop upon her digit.

"It is perhaps superfluous to state that Moses Edwin Gumble holds a very enviable position in the field of ragtime players in the community. . . . It is also a well known fact that Clarice Estelle Vance knows a great deal about singing a dialect song, and some vaudeville managers have gone so far as to bill her as the 'Queen of the Ragtime Orioles.'

"That two such individuals should eventually meet their affinity in each other's personality was a foregone conclusion, and it came to pass when Moses touched the 'chord' in the refrain of the song as quoted.

"Miss Clarice Vance has been on the vaudeville stage about five years. She is known in private life as Clara Ella Black. She began her successful career at the Howard Atheneum, and, as an interpreter of Negro melodies and dialect ditties, has few equals.

"A delegation of New York musical celebrities, consisting of James O'Dea, Ira Miller, Charles Daniels, the composer of 'Hiawatha,' E. Van Alstyne, the author of 'Navajo,' Bert Cooper, Ed Carney, Fred Belcher, Ed Laska, Jerome and Schwartz, composer of 'Bedelia,' and others who went with Mr. Gumble to the Hoosier city to act as 'best men,' and incidentally to see that the fair Clarice did not escape, are expected to return with the happy couple to Gotham tomorrow evening."

Judging by the facetious style, in which the probably now long gone newsman appears to be smacking his lips at his scintillating humor, that story must have come from either the *New York World* or the *Tele-*

*graph*, which specialized in theatrical and racing news.

It should have been an impressive sight when those music business "luminaries" descended from the train with Mr. Gumble and subsequently vouchsafed him their moral support as he stood before the altar with—dare I use the unknown writer's favorite phrase once more—"the fair Clarice."

Now that I think of it, I obtained from the Clerk of Court's office in Indianapolis a copy of the marriage record, which makes it seem unlikely that Clarice and Mose said their vows before an altar. They were married December 7, 1904 by William C. Smock, a justice of the peace. She gave her name as Clara Ella Black.

### III. Clarice Vance's First Records

"The Southern Singer," as Clarice Vance was known in vaudeville, had been married only a few months when she made what I take to have been her first record. It was an Edison two-minute cylinder, issued in August, 1905.

The song was "Mariar," one perhaps more closely associated with her than any other. The words were by Harry Williams, who ordinarily wrote lyrics to music composed by Egbert Van Alstyne. Miss Vance's husband, Mose Gumble, wrote the music, and who knows? The success of the song may have had something to do with their romance and marriage.

The *New Phonogram* thus described the cylinder, 9051:

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Illustrated from the collection of Allen Debus.

graph public a new singer in the person of Miss Vance, who is one of the most widely known artists in vaudeville. She is a top line feature in all vaudeville theaters, and is one of their most popular performers. Her work is always finished and never boisterous.

"While this record is not as loud as many others, we feel sure that it will find many admirers. The record shows Miss Vance in one of her big successes, and the song is given in her characteristic style. 'Mariar' is a farmer's serenade."

Miss Vance appeared again in the Edison list for February, 1906. This was the only other record which Edison issued by her, and I doubt that she made cylinders for any other company. Again, *The New Phonogram*:

"9214 'Save Your Money 'Cause De Winter Am Comin' On.' . . . This is a dialect song of the real comic variety, and in the hands of Miss Vance is unusually so. The general opinion of all who have heard Miss Vance's latest effort is that it is superior in every point of interest to 'Mariar,' which we listed last August. . . . Raymond Teal and Hal Godfrey are its writers."

Possibly "Save Your Money" was superior to "Mariar," but it fell into complete obscurity and hardly anybody remembers it now, while there are still thousands of venerable old-time vaudeville patrons who can recall "Mariar" and the way Clarice Vance sang it.

#### IV. Victor Records

After this apparently unsuccessful experience with Edison, Clarice Vance, so far as I know, made no more records until she was engaged by Victor, late in 1906. According to the Victor files, she recorded three numbers in November, 1906—"If Anybody Wants to Meet a Jonah, Shake Hands With Me," "He's a 'Cousin of Mine'" (one of her historic hits), and "I'd Rather Two-Step Than Waltz, Bill." The first two were issued in January, 1907, as 4930, and 4931, respectively, and the third in June, as 5118.

The Victor supplement for January, 1907, contained a photo of "The Southern Singer," showing her to be tall, with dark hair and a broad smile. It was accompanied by the following eulogistic comment:

"One of the greatest favorites of the vaudeville stage today is Clarice Vance. Unassuming, quiet, dignified, and clever; possessed of a droll humor and a sly method of expression that are simply irresistible, she is in a class by herself with her clear-cut delivery of popular dialect songs."

"Singers who depend on mouthing and shouting for their measure of success should study Miss Vance's methods to their profit. She chooses her songs with care and then gets their good points before the audience in a thoroughly clever

er fashion. If there is a laugh in a song it is sure to come out when she sings or talks it as the point demands."

"Miss Vance has made us two records which are an absolute reproduction of her voice and droll mannerisms. Both songs are new and most clever and the records thoroughly delightful ones."

The reference to the quiet manner in which Miss Vance sang, and the subtle manner in which she interpreted humor, was well taken.

Play her record of "He's a Cousin of Mine" in the same room with the phonograph and it seems perhaps a little lacking in volume. But go into another room and listen and, because of her masterly method of voice projection, it seems equally distinct and even a little louder. She had an extremely pleasant, feminine type of voice, bearing little resemblance to the sounds made by some of the stentorian women "dialect shouters."

The description just quoted was retained, in a shortened and modified form, in Victor catalogs for many years.

In June, 1907, Victor announced three Vance numbers—the already mentioned "I'd Rather Two-Step, Than Waltz, Bill;" 5119, "Yo' Eyes Are Open, But You're Sound Asleep" (both 10-inch), and, on 5120, an 8-inch version of "Mariar." The supplement said:

"Miss Vance's Victor records have delighted thousands of her admirers, who voiced only praise for the opportunity of hearing their favorite vaudeville artist at any time. Here are three more of Miss Vance's new hits . . . which will be greatly enjoyed, all being very amusing songs, and rendered in this artist's delightfully humorous manner."

There was an interval of four months before another Clarice Vance record was issued. It was the one destined to remain, as a double-faced disc, in the Victor catalog longer than any other, 5253, "I'm Wise," which had been recorded in August.

It was offered for sale in November. The supplement description was accompanied by a photo of Miss Vance, looking thoughtful, with one hand to her face:

"The announcement of a new record by Miss Vance will be very gratifying to those who have enjoyed her amusing 'Cousin of Mine' and 'I'd Rather Two-Step.' Here is a very quaint and funny little song, and you may be sure that this favorite singer brings out all its good points in the quiet and artistic manner familiar to her audiences."

In December, 1907, another record, which had been sung in August, was issued. It was 5278, "Handle Me With Care." Unfortunately, I lack the December supplement.

One of Clarice's big hits, which she had recorded in January, 1908, was issued in April—Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne's classic "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark." Once more the supplement is quoted:

"The announcement of a new record by Miss Vance will be pleasant news to the many admirers of this popular singer and comedienne. We are sure that none of those who possess her irresistible 'He's a Cousin of Mine' (and many thousands of these have been sold) will fail to get this new Williams-Van Alstyne number. It is a very amusing song (as everyone who has heard the Murray record knows), and the record is the finest Miss Vance has yet made."

The back cover of the May, 1908, Victor supplement shows the still-living Geraldine Farrar listening to a record being played by a talking machine with a large horn, and laughing as if she is being thoroughly entertained. There is this paragraph of explanation:

"Miss Farrar kindly consented to pose in the attitude of listening to her new records, with which she was much pleased. Her highly amused expression in the photograph shown, however, is inspired by a record of Clarice Vance's 'I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark,' and her enjoyment is quite evident."

I was interested to read, in an old issue of *The Voice of the Victor*, that the duet record of the now classic Indian song, "Red Wing," by S. H. Dudley and Harry Macdonough, was the biggest selling Victor record for 1908.

The runner-up was Billy Murray's "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark." This makes it appear likely that if the sale of the comic song had not been divided between the Murray and Vance versions, but had been confined to one, it would have beaten "Red Wing."

Both the comedian and the comedienne's interpretations are extremely good, but the Murray proved the more popular. It was taken over into the double-faced list, where, coupled with another Williams-Van Alstyne number, "I Used to be Afraid to Go Home in the Dark," it remained for years. Miss Vance's version did not receive double-face status.

Another Vance record, which had been sung in January, 1908, appeared in May: 5374, "That Friend of Mine," which also was written by Williams and Van Alstyne:

"Miss Vance is always happy in her choice of songs and invariably picks winners. Her 'I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark' is enjoying a tremendous success and is surpassing in popularity even the famous 'Cousin of Mine.' Here is her latest and it is a good one."

A year passed before Clarice Vance again visited the Victor studios, in January, 1909. The engagement resulted in what I consider one of her best records in spite of its ungrammatical title, 5675, "Love Me Like I Like to be Loved."

It is extremely catchy and lilting, but, although it later appeared in double-face, it seems rather difficult to find as compared to some of her others. The April, 1909, supplement said:

"A New Vance Record . . . A new record by this artist is a welcome announcement, as she invariably sings her numbers with droll humor and a method of expression which is simply irresistible."

"All the disc-record work of this favorite singer of popular songs will in future be confined to Victor records, thus insuring a faithful reproduction of her catchy and amusing style."

I have often puzzled over that second paragraph. If Clarice Vance made any disc records other than Victors, I have not in all my years of research found any mention of them.

Even more oddly, she never made any more Victor records—none, at least, that were issued—after that January, 1909, recording date. Yet the statement that her future disc

work would be restricted to Victor continued to appear in the catalog for several years. Since her records so obviously were popular, I wonder what happened that no more came out.

There were still, however, a few more Vance records to be offered. In August, 1909, one of those which had been recorded in January was issued. It was "Good-Bye to Johnnie," which I consider among her best. Supplement Editor Sam Rous said:

"Miss Vance's Newest Success. 5710, 'Good-bye to Johnnie.' Miss Vance here impersonates, in her inimitable way, the flirt who finally decides to settle down, and bids farewell to Johnnie, Freddy, Harry, and the rest of the 'boys.' Nothing that this favorite artist has so far recorded, possibly excepting the famous 'Cousin,' can equal this amusing song."

June, 1909, brought the last of Clarice Vance's records. It was the first by her in double-face form. On the A side of 16295 she sang a 10-inch version, her favorite, "Mariar." Reversing the record, one found another Williams and Van Alstyne hit (how those boys were turning them out in those days!), "It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight." The supplement was enthusiastic:

"Here is indeed a bargain—two of Miss Vance's current successes on one double-faced record—the convivial 'Big Night Tonight'; and that perennial favorite, 'Mariar,' which the public always insists on hearing each season."

"Mariar" is a delightful record. The last part when the singer gives a clever imitation of someone in the throes of uncontrollable laughter, is especially good. There is some tricky double rhyming by Harry Williams in the words of the refrain:

"Mariar, Mariar, you've set my heart on fire:

It's you I most desire of all the gals around!

Oh, Mariar, riar, riar, of your love I'll never tire,  
For there's not a higher flier than Mariar in this town."

And that, according to a search of the Victor archives, was the last Clarice Vance record. However, in November, 1910, "Good-Bye to Johnnie" was combined with "Fol the Rol Lol," by Edward M. Favor, on record 16672, and "Love Me Like I Like to be Loved" teamed up, on 16802, with "Oh, You Kid," by Ada Jones and Billy Murray.

Finally, in March, 1913, "I'm Wise," which had been highly popular in single-face, joined forces on record 17253 with the equally popular "Frog Song," by May Irwin.

#### V. Why Clarice Became a Comedienne

A few months before she made her last records, *The Hippodrome News* for March 25, 1908, published an interview with "The Southern Singer" in which she said there was nothing except "character roles" or comedy a woman of her height and breadth could do on the stage:

"Miss Vance Says Nature Was Wrong To Make Her So Big . . . Clarice Vance is sorry that nature made her so tall and so heavy."

"When interviewed in her dressing-room at the Hippodrome the other day she said: 'I happened to fall into my



CLARICE VANCE

Illustrated from the sheet music collection of Allen Debus.

particular line of work, and have made good at it, I suppose, because the managers continue to engage me and the audiences applaud my work. But singing a few dialect songs is not the highest ambition of any person on the stage."

"Away back in the distant past (when Julia Marlowe was plain Sarah Frost) and some of the prominent actors of the present day were unheard of, I thought I might develop into a prominent actress myself. In those days I did not sing—some of the critics say I have never sung in my life—but in those days I didn't even try. I was a plain character woman, and did all the things that character women do."

"Then the other people progressed and became famous. I was too big to play a leading part. Imagine a man making love to me on the stage. It would have been hilariously funny."

"Well, I could have kept on playing character parts. But what is there for a character woman? She starts as one and ends as one, and if she isn't so poor that they have to give her a benefit in her old age, after she has spent 30 years on the stage, the most she gets out of it at death is a few posies and a paragraph in the newspapers."

"I decided that I couldn't afford to waste my time at that line of work, so I branched out, and . . . have been singing dialect songs. How long is it? Oh, it's years and years and years, 79 of them, I believe. It's long enough, so I am ready for a vacation. I don't care if I don't sing on the stage again, after my engagement is over at the Hippodrome, for the next two years."

"If I'd have been a sweet little thing, they would have been paying two dollars to see me and my name would have been printed in big letters on the bill-boards—maybe. As Shaw says, you never can tell. But you can make a pretty sure guess when an actoreen is six feet tall and quite wide."

#### VI. More Reminiscences

A bit of background information concerning Clarice Vance's career was published in an interview with her which appeared in the *Terre Haute (Ind.) Tribune* for April 30, 1913. This is the most "recent" clipping I have been able to obtain about the statuesque comedienne, and seemingly was published not long before she was divorced:

"It was Jimmy Thornton who first announced me as 'the Southern Singer,' said Clarice Vance, while waiting for her turn to go on at the Varieties. 'You know I was the with the James and Bonnie Thornton Variety Company when

that organization played the houses now given over entirely to burlesque.

"There was this much justification for the distinction. I was born in Louisville, and I used to make a specialty of Southern songs. Mr. Thornton wanted me to black up, too. And I did, until I had almost worn my face off removing burnt cork after performances.

"Since the vogue of polite vaudeville, I have traipsed the country pretty thoroughly—that is, I have played all the large cities, but I am splitting a week for the first time in my life. No, never have known what it was to play a town for less than a week before.

"But I almost made a one-night stand out of London—dear old London. When I went over to sing at the Palace, my husband, Mose Gumble, went along. He was even more nervous than I was in the opening night.

"When 30 musicians began to play at once, I thought my voice would be lost in the volume of sound. But they heard me and liked my songs, and I stayed at the Palace for 27 weeks. . . . I was the first of the dialect shouting ladies to do the halls in London, but I have only played in one, at that, the Palace.

"Yes, I am singing one of my husband's songs, 'Mariar.' Mose wrote that the year we were married, which means it's eight years old. Whenever I run out of new material I revive it and it always goes. . . ."

In the *New York Dramatic Mirror* for January 30, 1909, Miss Vance discussed her professional standards. She said she never sang suggestive songs, and that when she received sheet music with indelicate references she gave such songs to her husband for cigar lighters.

She further said the songs she sang were invariably clean, funny in theme, but never vulgar—"such as, for instance, those which I am now singing: 'It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight,' 'Good-Bye to Johnnie,' 'Mariar,' 'I Used to be Afraid to Come Home in the Dark,' and similar ditties." She then emphasized:

"I thoroughly despise the singer who 'peddles' songs. In other words, there are a number of singers who go from publisher to publisher in the endeavor to get the best price for singing certain songs to the exclusion of others. This eliminates many good songs and forces lots of poor ones on the long suffering public.

"And, by the way, speaking of suggestive songs, why, any one with the most ordinary ability can sing that sort of stuff. It doesn't take ability to do that—or personality. It only takes a little nerve and a lack of modesty."

The newspaper stories I have just quoted exhaust my fund of information about Clarice Vance in her younger years. After 1913, her name, aside from being in Victor record catalogs, seems to disappear. I have not been able to find any newspaper references to her of later date than the *Terre Haute Tribune* interview.

I did, however, discover the following reference to the comedienne in the late Joe Laurie, Jr.'s book, "Vaudeville"—but I am not sure what a "mirror dress" was, or is:

"Clarice Vance had the first mirror dress. Mindel Kingston (World & Kingston) wore a cloak with mirrors in *Follies* of 1910. Miss Vance sued.

"Miss Kingston claimed her father invented it over 40 years before (1870), that mirror dresses were the natural evolution from a mirror held in the hand against a spotlight for flirtation numbers. Miss Vance won, by proving there were no spotlights in those days."

And in "Show Biz: From Vaude to Video," by Abel Green and Laurie,

Miss Vance is mentioned as one of the "queens of the dialect shouting craze" in the heyday of vaudeville. Her name leads the list.

Others included May Irwin, Elizabeth Murray, and the still active Sophie Tucker and Blossom Seeley. But, as I have already indicated, Clarice Vance was not a "dialect shouter." Her style was quiet, subdued and refined and had no exuberant quality.

#### VII. More Efforts to Trace Clarice

The Victor catalogs added to the bafflement I felt as I tried for years to learn what had become of Miss Vance. For instance, the January, 1908, edition, which listed seven single-faced records by the comedienne, began by saying: "One of the greatest favorites of the vaudeville stage today is Clarice Vance," a statement originally made in the January, 1907, supplement.

When the first completely alphabetical record catalog was issued in January, 1912, the number of Vance records stood at eight—"Good-Bye to Johnnie," "He's a Cousin of Mine," "I'd Rather Two-Step," "I'm Wise," "It Looks Like a Big Night" (coupled with "Mariar"), "Love Me Like I Like to be Loved," and "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark."

In the December, 1912, catalog, only five were still listed. The once vastly popular "He's a Cousin of Mine," "I'm Afraid to Come Home" and "I'd Rather Two-Step" had been dropped. Yet the statement was still made that Miss Vance was "one of the greatest favorites of the vaudeville stage today."

By October, 1914, only two Vance records remained, "Good-Bye to Johnnie" and "I'm Wise." "Johnnie" was discontinued in 1920, and the sole remaining Clarice Vance record, "I'm Wise," was cut out of the 1923 catalog.

In the May, 1917, catalog, the statement that Miss Vance was one of the greatest vaudeville favorites "today" was changed to: "one of the greatest favorites the vaudeville stage ever knew is Clarice Vance." The wording stayed that way as long as the brief commentary was retained.

But what is one to make of it? Probably most readers would take a statement that "Clarice Vance was one of the greatest favorites the vaudeville stage has ever known" to mean that she had retired. But using "ever knew" instead of "has ever known" could easily give the impression that she had died, because it placed her so definitely in the past.

Had Clarice Vance retired from vaudeville when that 1917 catalog was printed? I wish I knew—but I don't. I do know the wording led me to think for many years that more than likely she was dead.

After I obtained photostats of all the material about Clarice Vance in the files of the Theatrical Division of the New York Public Library, I resumed the research I had carried on intermittently for years. The



From top to bottom:  
First and middle pictures:

Three photos of Clarice Vance produced from the Victor Record Supplements of January, 1907; April, 1909; and November, 1907.

Bottom picture:

This amusing picture of the opera star, Geraldine Farrar, enjoying Clarice Vance's record of "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark," appeared in the Victor record list for May, 1908.

Terre Haute interview told me one thing I hadn't known, that the singer was born in Louisville, Ky.

Accordingly, I wrote to the reference department of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and asked if their "morgue" contained anything about Clarice Vance or Clara Ella Black. The librarian, Ralph Shoemaker, replied that he could find no mention of either name.

I also wrote a letter to the editor, which was published in a Sunday (Continued on page 68)

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#### Middle Row

1. CUT VELVET BOWL, butter-scotch color. 5". \$74.
2. AMBERINA PITCHER, appl. amber handle, red to smoky amber honeycomb, 5". \$87.
3. Cut velvet, shiny, pink,  $6\frac{1}{2}$ ". \$55.
4. L. C. TIFFANY, FAVORITE SWEETMEAT JAR, silver rim & cover, handle. Moving the hdl. opens rim! Gold with green leaves.  $5\frac{7}{8}$ " inc. handle. \$125.

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2. RAINBOW SATIN BASKET. Pink, yellow, bluish-white body. Appl. camphor lover's knot hdl.  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " top of handle. \$110.
3. M.O.P. CELERY, blue/white D.Q. tricorn shape. Appl. frosted edge.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " in silver holder. \$148.
4. TIFFANY, signed vase. White with multicolored swirls. Sig. LCT #010610. 6". \$165.
5. MOP DQ TUMBLER, blue/white. Decorated with flying bird in white enamel wheat stalks,  $3\frac{3}{4}$ ". \$140.

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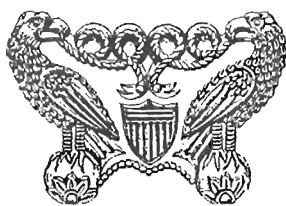
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4. Extra large pink overlay hat, 4 fluted scallops, about 35 yrs. old.
5. Foxy Grandpa, bisque, Celery China boats.
6. 2 Maldens blush wines.
7. 4 sunk Daisy tumblers, Kamm.

app

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

issue of the *Courier-Journal*, asking if anyone who had known "Clara Ella Black or her family could give me some information concerning her early years in Louisville."

No one responded except a man who wrote that he knew nothing of Clarice Vance, but wondered if I were related to a popular song writer named Mabel Walsh. He said he had written the words of some songs and would like to get Miss Walsh to set them to music—but he made it clear he wasn't willing to pay her anything for supplying the tunes. Since I had never heard of Mabel Walsh, I was unable to help him.

(To be continued)

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 Bavarian Ranson pattern 8 -  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " plates \$15.  
 10 6" plates \$12.50.  
 Large meat platter, \$7.50.  
 Kindly include sufficient for P.P. and Ins.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Clarice Vance

PART II  
(Continued from April issue)  
VII A

By JIM WALSH

A letter to the Frederic J. Haskin Information Bureau brought no results. Then I enlisted the aid of Abel Green, the editor of *Variety*, who said he thought Ben Bloom could help me, since Bloom had known all the old-time vaudeville stars.

On December 13, 1960, Mr. Bloom, who operates the Ben Bloom Music Corporation at 1619 Broadway, New York City, wrote me that he recalled Clarice Vance's name and had a rather vague impression that she did a "red hot mama" act, something like Sophie Tucker's. That, of course, was an error. He suggested that I write to Melville Morris, who had been an assistant to Mose Gumble and played the piano during rehearsals at Remick's for most of the women stars of the old vaudeville era.

I received a cordial reply from Mr. Morris. He, by the way, is the Mel Morris who directed the Piccadilly Players dance orchestra that made Diamond Discs in the last year or two of the Edison Company's record activities. He said he had known Miss Vance very well and was her pianist on club dates. Then he added:

"I was also Mose Gumble's assistant at the Remick Music Publishing Co. I know that Clarice and Mose divorced in 1913 or '14. She got stuck on a young pianist, whom I think she married, and had him play for her in vaudeville. After that I lost track of her."

The Actors' Equity Association informed me there was nothing in its files concerning Clarice Vance or Clara Ella Black.

### VIII. The Pitiful Truth

And then, after I had virtually given up hope of solving the mystery that surrounded the last half of Clarice Vance's life, the key came in an unexpected way. Early in September, 1961, I was astounded to see the following two-sentence death notice in *Variety*'s "Final Curtain" department:

"Clarice Vance, vaudeville singer, died August 24 in Napa, Cal., of cancer. She was married at one time to the late Mose Gumble, vet music man with Remick."

So the once vastly popular comedienne had been alive all those years during which I had been trying vain-

ly to learn enough to write a HOBBIES article about her! I at once wrote to Abel Green, asking him the source of the item. He replied that it was sent in by Sam Stark, a San Francisco specialist in theatrical history.

I wrote to Mr. Stark, who has since become a cherished friend, and begged for any additional information he could supply. I also asked the Napa newspaper for copies of the issue with Miss Vance's death notice, and sent for a photostat of her death certificate.

Meanwhile, in a succeeding issue of *Variety*, a letter from Sam Stark was published, headed "What 'Burial by the Actors' Fund' Means." Clarice Vance was not mentioned by name, but after having read the preceding death notice I had no trouble detecting whom he referred to.

I am sure my friend Sam will not object to my reprinting most of his letter. The pathos it contains is heartbreaking:

"... As a theater historian for 25 years I have read thousands of obituaries, of which so many ended with 'Burial by the Actors' Fund.' This became such a stock phrase that I paid it little heed. That is, until last week, when I received a telephone call asking me for some data on an actress who had died at the State Hospital. . . .

"It seemed a routine assignment until I spoke with the hospital director. He explained to me that the only information he had of the deceased was her name, the year of her birth and her profession, because when she entered the institution in 1951 she was in an advanced stage of senility. . . .

"This poor soul didn't know the month or day of her birth; nor where; or whether she had been married or the songs she had sung. She only knew her name, her age, and that she was an actress. . . .

"I gave the director her biographical data and it was considerable, because she had been a star in her day. He told me she left no estate, there were no known survivors, and that he had contacted Actors' Equity to know what funeral arrangements would be made. Today a telegram arrived at the State Hospital reading, 'Actors' Fund has instructed local funeral home at Napa, Cal., to arrange for funeral and burial.' . . .

"So today, for me, 'Burial by the Actors' Fund' is no longer a stock phrase. It's a benediction and a beautiful sentiment. It means, 'Farewell, old-timer, God bless you and may your soul rest in peace. Thank you for your songs, thank you for your laughter and tears, thank you for your lively step, and thank you especially for the twinkle that you gave to us who are left here on this earth.'"

And that is the tragic story of the last earthly days of Clarice Vance. The once happy and prosperous comedienne had quit playing "character woman" roles because "if she isn't so poor that they have to give her a benefit in her old age . . . the most she gets out of it at death

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

is a few posies and a paragraph in the newspaper." She ended her days in an insane asylum, reduced by extreme old age to a state of hardly more than vegetation. No one played a benefit for her, her death brought only a one-paragraph four-line notice in *Variety*, and her funeral cost; were paid by a charitable Actors' Fund.

As Shakespeare said, "The pity is too deep for tears."

### IX. In Conclusion

There is little more that I can tell about Clarice Vance. Portions of her life are still a mystery.

If she married a young pianist, who was he and what became of him? How many years had she lived in California? What did she do after she was no longer a vaudeville star? Perhaps she played "bit parts" or character roles in the films—but she lived in San Francisco, not Hollywood. What caused her to be committed to the State Hospital in Napa county?

These and many more tantalizing  
(Continued on page 59)

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# Six Comediennes

JOSIE SADLER

*Third of the Six*

By JIM WALSH

PART I

## I. A Preliminary Apology

Painstaking writers hesitate to publish biographies marred by loose ends and unanswered questions.

Hence, I have been, and still am, reluctant to print the relatively little I know concerning the once-famous German dialect actress, Josie Sadler. Despite earnest research efforts, much of her life story remains in obscurity or total darkness.

However, she is one of a trio of comediennes—the others are Elida Morris and Clarice Vance—about whom I have longed for many years to write. So I shall venture into type, in the hope that this article will elicit supplementary information from some source now unknown to me.

In the beginning, I face certain handicaps. I know that Josie Sadler was born in New York City, but I do not know in what year. Circumstantial evidence appears to put her into the same age group as Clarice Vance, who was 90 when she died in 1961. That makes it seem almost certain Miss Sadler is dead, but I have not been able to obtain any documentary evidence that she is.

Years ago, Charlie Sniffin, of White Plains, N. Y., in urging me to write about both Clarice Vance and Josie Sadler, wrote that he worked at one time with a nephew of Miss Sadler's, and the nephew told him "Aunt Josie died around 1933 or 1934."

I had the New York Bureau of Public Health check the city death records from 1930 through 1936, but nothing was found concerning Josephine Geddes—to use her latest known married name.

Sam Stark the San Francisco expert on everything associated with theatrical personalities, clings to a hope that the buxom comedienne yet lives. On September 14, 1961, he wrote:

"I still hold that Josie Sadler is alive, as I have fairly complete files on everyone and have for years scanned the obits in Variety, Billboard, New York Times, New York Star and The Stage (England)."

"I spoke with Georgie Caine around 1952 about Josie, as they were in 'Peggy from Paris' together, and she, too, thought Josie was still alive. I have been watching for obits with Josie's real name, Josephine Rauscher. Now, Georgia Caine is at the Motion Picture Home in Woodland Hills, California."

By saying Miss Sadler's real name was Rauscher, I suppose Mr. Stark means that was her maiden name. I believe she was married more than once. And, as I have already said, I think she was a Mrs. Geddes when the latest newspaper item I have in which she is mentioned, was pub-

lished in 1920. Actors' Equity reports its files show nothing about her after 1923.

I do at least have adequate knowledge of Josie Sadler's Victor, Columbia, and Edison recordings, and shall now proceed with this biographical sketch, while apologizing for its limitations. Further information concerning the plump lady with the broad "Dutch" accent will be welcomed.

## II. Josie Sadler's Stage Career

Not long ago I obtained a publicity hand-out concerning Josie Sadler, which was prepared by "the Leslie Newspaper and Magazine Syndicate, supplying newspapers and magazines with dramatic and motion picture news, interviews, and biographies, and photographs."

The typewritten document is not dated, but internal evidence appears

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From top to bottom, left to right:

Scenes from "Josie's Declaration of Independence," one of a series of Vitagraph films in which Josie Sadler was featured. This picture was made in 1914.

Josie Sadler was famous for her comic songs in German dialect. She was a bright star of musical comedy and vaudeville for many years.

This photo of Josie Sadler is reproduced from the Victor record supplement for March, 1909.

Emma Carus, the once famous "Female Baritone," appeared with Josie Sadler in several stage productions. In 1904 Miss Carus made two Columbia discs, which nowadays are almost impossible to find.

to place it around 1917-18. Although little of the information it contains is sufficiently explicit, it gives a list of all the productions in which Miss Sadler had appeared up to the time it was prepared, and also tells the names of the other members of the casts.

In utilizing this information, I shall mention all recording artists who were in companies with Miss Sadler, as well as other men and women whose names today are still remembered. Many names no longer of interest, however, I shall omit.

From this "poop sheet" it appears that Josie Sadler was born in New York to a French mother and a German father. She was educated in New York and Germany, which no doubt helped her acquire her mastery of the vaudeville German dialect.

Josie—I continue to rely on the publicity material for subsequent statements—first was seen on the stage at the age of 9, taking part in Tony Pastor's "Nursery Rhymes" production. Tony Pastor was the great vaudeville impresario of the 1880's and '90's. Unfortunately, we are not told in what year "Nursery Rhymes" was staged.

"Mr. Pastor noticed little Josie at her play and took a fancy to her, shortly thereafter asking her mother to let Josie take part in his 'Nursery Rhymes,' to which she consented.

"After four or five months with Mr. Pastor, Josie continued her education

until the age of 15, when she joined the original 'Erminie' chorus, under Rudolph Aronson's management, later appearing in his 'La Marquise' and 'Madelon.'

"John Russell was traveling manager of these companies, and Miss Sadler's work in the chorus was so good that he gave her a small part in Donnelly and Girard's 'Natural Gas,' in which also appeared Mark Sullivan, Willie Collier, May and Flo Irwin, May Kelso, and others."

Here a bit of speculation may be indulged in. Jacobowski's operetta, "Erminie," was produced for the first time on November 9, 1885, in London. Its initial production in this country was a year or so later—say, late in 1886 or early in 1887.

If Josie Sadler was in the chorus of the original company at the age of 15, she must have been born about 1871, which would make her 91 years of age were she alive today. This figure probably is not far wrong, for she was old enough to have a grown son in 1920.

Surely the Mark Sullivan who appeared in "Natural Gas" was not the late political expert! But May Kelso must have been the contralto who made records listed in the Edison two-minute cylinder catalog from 1899 to 1901. Some were duets with the late John Bieling.

After "Natural Gas," Miss Sadler was given a part in "The City Directory," another play written by John Russell. This was followed by

a short run of still another Russell production, "Easy Street."

"Russell then put on 'Miss McGinty,' and in this Miss Sadler appeared for a short season with Fay Templeton, Fred Lennox, and Sidney Drew. Her next engagement was with Henry Dixey in revivals of 'The Mascot' and 'Patience.' She then appeared with him in 'Mr. Dobbs of Chicago,' which was short-lived."

We are now coming to the time (unfortunately no years are mentioned in this "release") when Miss Sadler began to be recognized as a distinctive comedienne:

"Miss Sadler then created the original Dutch girl of the American stage in 'Prince Pro Tem,' under the management of R. M. Fields at the Boston Museum.

"This play was by R. A. Barnett, author of '1492,' and in the part of 'Wild Rosie of Yucatan,' Miss Sadler sang the song, 'Oh, If I Could Only get a Decent Sleep,' which she wrote herself, making a wonderful hit. . . In this production Miss Sadler starred with Fred Lennox."

Josie soon afterward married Lennox. There is nothing available to show how long the marriage lasted, or whether it ended with divorce or his death. She traveled with him as he starred in "Princess Bonnie."

Next, she accepted an engagement under William Harris' management in "Good Mr. Best." In this she played "Gretchen Slowe"—a part she grew to love. Julius Witmark, Annie Yeamans and Sam Marion were other members of the cast.

So was R. A. Roberts. Could the



latter have been Robert A. ("Ragtime Bob") Roberts, whose disc and cylinder records were so popular for a decade beginning in 1902?

Miss Sadler played the part of "Little Jemima," a cockney role, in E. E. Rice's "Monte Carlo" at the Herald Square Theater, New York. Marie Cahill and Marguerita Sylva were also in the cast.

"She (Josie Sadler) then went with 'Brown's In Town,' at the Bijou Theater. . . In this play Miss Sadler took the part of 'Freda Von Hollenbeck.' Her next engagement was in 'Catherine,' at Weber & Fields' Theater.

"This play was a burlesque, and Fay Templeton had the part of 'Catherine,' Miss Sadler taking the part of the sister—a part which she loved and made a great hit in.

"The cast in this production was practically the same as that in 'Helter Skelter' and 'Hurly Burly,' in which Miss Sadler next appeared, the members being Joe Weber, Lew Fields, David Warfield, . . . Peter F. Dailey, John T. Kelly, Fay Templeton, and Frankie Bailey."

"Broadway to Tokio," at the New York Theater, came next. Music of this play was by Reginald De Koven and A. Baldwin Sloane. Otis Harlan, May Kelso, and Fay Templeton were among those in the cast.

Miss Sadler then moved to "The Supper Club" on the New York Roof Garden. Besides herself, the cast included Donald Brian, Thomas Q. Seabrooke, Ada Lewis and George Fuller Golden.

Miss Sadler remained at the New York Theater for "The Hall of Fame," staged by Ned Wayburn. Among the performers were Charles H. Prince (this is not likely to have been Charles A. Prince, the musical director for Columbia records!), Marie Dressler, Mabelle Gilman, and Ada Lewis.

Another member was Emma Carus, "The Female Baritone," who is said to have been the first vaudeville artist to sing "Alexander's Ragtime Band" in 1911.

As long ago as 1904, Miss Carus had made two 10-inch Columbia records which seem to be among the scarcest of discs. One was 1763, "In Zanzibar," which she had sung in "The Medal and the Maid." She was assisted by a group of girls who had joined voices with her in the stage production. The other was 1765, "Navajo," the first big hit written by Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne.

These two records were issued in April, 1904. Probably Miss Carus also made one which was to have been numbered 1764, but apparently no record with that number went on sale.

In view of the difficulty of recording women's voices in those days, "In Zanzibar," with its chorus of "harmonizing" females, probably didn't come out very well. It had been discontinued when the January, 1906, Columbia catalog was issued.

I have never seen an Emma Carus record. Nor do I recall ever hearing of anybody having one. Yet there must still be a few copies in hiding somewhere.

Miss Sadler then joined "The Silver Slipper" company, still at the Broadway Theater. She played the part of "Jimmer," a cockney, and was also the Duchess of Devonshire. She was featured in this with Sam Bernard and Edna Wallace Hopper.

Now we come to "Peggy from Paris," which Mr. Stark mentioned in telling of his talk with Georgia Caine. This comedy was written by George Ade and was a Henry W. Savage production:

"In this Miss Sadler appeared in one of her greatest parts, that of 'Sophie Blotz,' in which she sang the song, 'Henny,' which she wrote herself and later sang for the Victor Phonograph Company (Sic!)"

According to the press release, Georgia Caine was not a member of the original cast, but joined it later. Fred Lennox, to whom Miss Sadler presumably was still married, was another member. The dark-haired, winsome Josie was with "Peggy from Paris" for two years and four months.

If she made a Victor record of "Henny" it was not issued. However, in her first Victor record, "What's the Use of Working?" one verse and refrain is devoted to a character named Henny, who is supposed to be her brother, with a fine eye for anatomical art.

After a short season with "The Woggle-Bug," under Shubert management, in Chicago, the comedienne joined "Comin' Thro' the Rye." In this she had the principal part.

Her next engagement was with "The Galloper," written by Richard Harding Davis. Among her fellow artists were Edgar L. Davenport and Raymond Hitchcock. This play later was turned into a musical comedy, starring Hitchcock, with the name changed to "The Yankee Tourist."

Miss Sadler next appeared in "The Girl From Paris" at the Manhattan Beach Casino. Another performer was Trixie Friganza. This was followed by a dramatization of Upton Sinclair's novel, "The Jungle." "This play," we are told, "proved to be too morbid in character, and was not a success."

Josie then went into vaudeville, but ended her engagement to join William Harris and Frank McKee's production of Oscar Straus' operetta, "A Waltz Dream," at the Broadway Theater. "In this she had the part of 'Fifi,' the bass drum player, and enjoyed herself thoroughly." Charles A. Bigelow was the leading man. Among his pleasant duties was that of kissing "Fifi" — otherwise Josie Sadler.

Her next appearance was in "A Mimic World." Among her associates was Roy Atwell, who died only last year, well into his 80's, and Vernon Castle. She then rejoined "A Waltz Dream" for a season on the road.

### III. Josie Sadler's First Records

By my calculations, we have now arrived at approximately the period when Josie Sadler's first records were made, so I'll temporarily interrupt the somewhat monotonous recapitu-

lation of her stage appearances. She and Charles Bigelow were featured performers in the 1908 production of "A Waltz Dream," and that is the year when her records began to come out.

Apparently, Columbia was the first company to engage Josie Sadler for recorded comedy work. Indications are that she first appeared on single-faced discs, which were taken into the double-faced compilation when the company began to make double-discs in the fall of 1908.

I have Columbia supplements up to August, 1908, but they mention no Sadler records. Yet the first double-faced catalog for 1909 has a handful.

Too, I have single-faced record 3901, on which she sings "Come and Hear the Orchestra." The label says it was arranged by the Columbia band and orchestra director, Charles A. Prince. This record must have been made a month or two before the double-faced type was introduced.

I can trace only four Columbia records by Josie Sadler. I have three, and they are dully recorded, with little in them to cause a surge of Sadler popularity among the record buyers of 1908-09.

"Come and Hear the Orchestra" was coupled on A582 with "I've Lost My Heart But I Don't Care," sung by James F. Harrison (Frederick Wheeler), baritone. The Sadler side is an imitation of "Under the Anheuser Bush." The orchestra imitates various instruments while Josie invites her boy friend to join her in drinking "lots of good beer."

On A581, Josie sings a lively Dutch dialect number, "I'd Like to Make a Smash Mit You." It has an incongruous pairing, Frank C. Stanley and Henry Burr harmonizing a doleful ballad, "I'm Starving for One Sight of You."

The Sadler song on A604, "One Good Turn Deserves Another," is dull, with no tune to speak of. The recording is bad and the result strikes me as unattractive. But the other side is a "honey" — Bob Roberts singing a lively dialect ditty, "I Ain't Had No Lovin' in a Long Time," with a freshness and vivacity peculiarly his own.

I do not have A596, "A Little German Trouble," which was issued in December, 1908, combined with Elise Stevenson and Frank C. Stanley singing "It's Up to You to Do the Rest," from "Madame Sherry." The title suggests it is the same thing as the Victor "Hilda Loses Her Job."

This was a short-lived record, cut out by the time the 1911 Columbia catalog appeared. All the others were discontinued after 1912. And those four are all the Columbia records by Josie Sadler that I can trace.

### IV. Josie's Victor Records

When we leave the Columbia records and consider Josie Sadler's Victors, we come to better things. The recording shows considerable improvement, and the voice emerges as

a clear and sweet soprano of limited range.

Miss Sadler's first Victor record was announced in March, 1909. It was accompanied by a full-length photograph, showing her to have a width comparable to that of Clarice Vance, but she did not equal Clarice's 6-foot height. The record, 5669, was "What's the Use of Working?" and the supplement said:

"This popular comedienne is repeating the success she made last year in her impersonation of Fifi, the bass drummer, in 'A Waltz Dream,' and her droll dialect and amusing songs are features of the production."

"We have induced Miss Sadler to sing for the Victor one of her best numbers—an 'awful foolish song,' as she expresses it, about the disinclination of 'father' to perform any manual labor. It is a quaint performance, and Miss Sadler's naive comments between verses are most amusing."

The record really is entertaining. "Father's" reluctance to work, of course, had already been described, to better advantage, in "Everybody Works But Father." Miss Sadler's song attributes "the old man's" aversion for honest toil to his inability to get a job in a brewery where he could drink all the contents.

The second stanza is funnier. It describes the slumberless existence of her brother, Henny, who has married a tattooed woman in the sideshow and stays awake all night looking at the pictures. Asked why he doesn't seek his rest, he replies "Vot's der use of sleeping?" and pronounces the tattooings to be "as good as any bargain matinee."

After singing the second refrain, Josie says, "Did you ever hear such a foolish song as this? Vait a minute! I got a funnier verse!" She then sings one which ends, "Laugh and the world laughs with you; snore and you sleep alone!" The Victor archives indicate this record was sung in December, 1908.

Apparently Miss Sadler's next Victor engagement was in April, 1909, when she sang two numbers, 5702, "He Falls for the Ladies Every Time" (a song that is peculiarly identified with her), and 5719, "Come and Hear the Orchestra," which she had already done for Columbia. "He Falls for the Ladies" was issued in July, with this comment:

"Miss Sadler, whose quaint song about the uselessness of things in general has been much enjoyed by those who have heard it, now gives us another number in that same fearful, and wonderful dialect which no one could ever imitate successfully. The song, which tells of a fond wife who is so worried about her susceptible husband that she consults a doctor on the subject, is a most amusing one."

"Come and Hear the Orchestra" appeared a month later.

In June, 1909, the comedienne revisited the Victor studios and made three or four more records. One, a laughable ditty called "Heinie Waltzed Round On His Hickory Limb," appeared in October, on single-faced disc 5729.

Although Victor had angrily begun following Columbia's example of issuing double-faced records before the first Josie Sadler contributions appeared, it apparently thought her

fame as a musical comedy and vaudeville star justified restricting her offerings to the single-sided 60-cent discs. The supplement said:

"Josie Sadler's quaint records are gaining in popularity each month, her dialect being pronounced the most amusing of its kind."

"Here is another funny record, giving a graphic description of Heinie's skill in waltzing with his wooden leg. You not only can hear Miss Sadler describe this, but you can hear Heinie himself thumping the floor with his off leg and shutting with his good one!"

December, 1909, brought what was probably Josie Sadler's biggest selling Victor record, "Hilda Loses Her Job." It appeared as single-faced 5749, but in November, 1910, was combined on 16783 with "Tipperary," sung by Billy Murray.

As a double-faced record, "Hilda" stayed in the Victor catalog longer than any other by Josie Sadler, not being discontinued until 1923, but it is fairly likely that the Murray side (which was not "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary") did most to make it a consistent seller. At the beginning of the record, a man—presumably Len Spencer—takes the part of a policeman.

Catalog Editor Sam Rous wrote:

"The opening scene is a three-corner argument between a policeman, Hilda, and her late mistress. However, the field is soon cleared of all the combatants except Hilda, who remains in possession and tells us all about it in a very funny monolog, in the course of which the servant problem is thoroughly discussed."

"Her speaking voice finally gives out and she sings the rest. This is one of Miss Sadler's most amusing specialties, and that is saying quite a lot."

When I played "Hilda" after not having heard it for years I found it contained several good laughs. Hilda explained that her mistress fired her because she had caught her (Hilda) walking in the park with her (the mistress') husband, "and she said she wouldn't have a girl that kept such bad company." Hilda also explained she left her previous job because she couldn't stand her mistress' cooking. It is a clever monolog.

In February, 1910, Josie was represented by the catchy song she had sung for Columbia more than a year before. "I'd Like to Make a Smash Mit You." It was on single-faced record 5762. We read:

"Miss Sadler is becoming a favorite with Victor owners, as her songs are very funny without containing any objectionable features whatever. This one is especially amusing, with its interpolated remarks in that celebrated Sadler dialect."

Despite the statement about her becoming a favorite with Victor buyers, the company issued only one more Josie Sadler record. And it was the first to be offered in the beginning as a double-faced disc. In June, 1910, on record 16486, she sang "Beerland," a praise of malt beverages. Ada Jones and the American Quartet held down the other side with "Nora Malone."

In November, 1910, "He Falls for the Ladies Every Time" was coupled with "Somebody Lied," by Eddie Morton, on 16784. And that was the

last appearance of Josie Sadler in a Victor list.

By the time the May, 1914, record catalog was printed only the double-faced offerings of "Hilda" and "He Falls for the Ladies" remained. My guess is that most Sadler records had no better than fair sales—partly because there was too much sameness in the type of comedy and partly because many listeners found the German dialect hard to understand. (Continued next month)

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Missing

of this technique in table service can be viewed in the Rockwell collection.

With the rise in popularity during the post World War I period for fine colored glass items, a large portion of the Steuben output was devoted to items in this category, i.e., a complete service would consist of plates, berry bowls, wine glasses, water goblets, and a series of bowls and candlesticks.

The Rockwell collection is unique in that there is complete representation of every color made by Frederick Carder. All are very pleasingly displayed and intermixed with other Steuben wares. The display cabinets are the very ones formerly used in the Corning Steuben showroom.

The rarest colors are the Gold Purple and Gold Ruby. Gold Ruby is a very intense shade of red, acquiring its color from a gold solution. Gold Purple was made from a base of Gold Ruby, with the addition of cobalt, to achieve the proper shade.

It is in the medium of color that Steuben colored crystal achieves its prominence. All are rich, vivid, and yet retain a delicate softness unmatched by any other ware.

It would be almost impossible to give a run down on color description of the various Steuben items made. From a list supplied by Mr. Carder there are 58 colors itemized, and he is certain there were more.

It is interesting to note from the display of colored crystal Steuben items that some are cut, some engraved, some etched, some sculptured, and others enameled.

Frederick Carder was not only a perfectionist, but he had a most keen insight into buying habits of the public. Quality merchandise, attractively varied, produced a continual favorable reaction on the part of consumers.

As one talks with Mr. Rockwell the idea forms that Carder was Steuben. He designed, created, administered, merchandised, developed, experimented, and most importantly, excelled, at each and every phase.

Considering the prolific productivity of this plant, as exemplified by the Rockwell collection, Mr. Carder supplied an important clue. As a particular color was developed, a shape was designed to best show this color to full beauty. This procedure took usually a year. In some instances about two years.

As the color and form finalized into an acceptable mode, production then began. With few exceptions, no one Steuben colored crystal product was ever on the market for more than two years.

Blues and greens, the perennial favorites, were modified several times, accounting for more that are apparently available. However, as was pointed out, they are a bit lighter or darker; and the shapes were varied with each year.

Actually, Mr. Carder was inspired to do this as a result of demand from certain well-to-do ladies. Each wanted a particular set, in a definite color, appropriately trimmed and

would special order this on the condition that no other set like it be made again.

Mr. Carder did many such special orders. He laughingly admits that it took all his wits to do so.

In view of this, it is quite difficult to make any blanket statement as to the rarity of any specific Steuben item. In fact, here, as in no other glass, it can be safely said that each item is a rarity unto itself.

Bob Rockwell unhesitatingly admits that he is spurred on to collect more Steuben by the delight Mr. Carder displays when he brings a new find for him to see.

"Actually," states Bob, "I look upon the collection as a tribute to Mr. Carder, a fine man, great glassworker, friend, and civic leader. I think it only fitting that the display is here in Corning, home of Steuben. The fact that Mr. Carder enjoys it makes the whole idea really doubly enjoyable."

In speaking with Mr. Carder about the prominence his glass is achieving among collectors today, he states that from the standpoint of personal satisfaction, these current years are the best of his entire career.

The Rockwell collection of Steuben, hallmark of Frederick Carder's creative genius, has added greatly to this feeling of Mr. Carder. But more importantly, it is a tribute to him, and will offer enjoyment for all time to come, for any, from all walks of life, who care to see it and remember that it was part of our heritage and growth.

Thus, two men from diverse beginnings, through the intricate and mysterious paths of chance, each in his own way, has made history live, not for the moment, but for all time.

## CLARICE VANCE

(Continued from page 32)

questions are not likely to be answered now.

Naturally, since the hospital authorities had so little information, the death certificate gives little additional help. Her first name is misspelled as Clarise and the time of her death is given as 6:10 p.m., August 24, 1961. Her birth date is written as March 14, 1875, but Sam Stark has established that she was really born in 1871, which means she was 90 years of age when death mercifully ended her sufferings.

Her occupation is given as "actress," followed by "dialect shouter"—a term I would rather not have seen on a death certificate, since it is both unflattering and inaccurate. She had lived in San Francisco before entering the hospital, but how long I don't know. Burial took place August 30 in the St. Helena Public Cemetery.

The cause of death is given as cancer of the left breast, and she was also suffering from "psychosis with cerebral arteriosclerosis."

The death notice in the *Napa Register* for Wednesday, August 30, 1961, also misspells the singer's name as "Clarise," and calls her a

jazz singer, which of course she wasn't. It does, however, say that she did film work:

"Private funeral services were held today at Claffey and Rota Funeral Home for Clarice Vance, well-known Southern jazz singer of bygone days. Miss Vance, who died in a local hospital last Thursday, was active both on the stage and in movies from 1904 until her retirement in 1950 . . . She remained active until her health failed and spent the last few years of her life in the hospital.

"Miss Vance was a member of the San Francisco Theatrical Society, the Actors National Equity Association and the Actors Fund of America. . ."

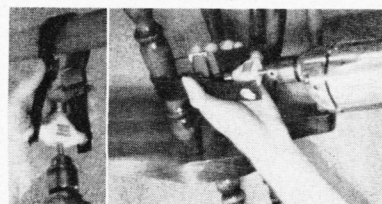
If it is true that the comedienne continued active until 1950, why has it been almost impossible to obtain information about her last years? She of course, was a stage favorite for years before 1904. And Sam Stark says none of the old actors living in San Francisco have any recollection of Miss Vance's having lived there.

I wish I knew that an occasional ray of sunshine entered into the darkened mind of the once gay and sparkling actress, during those 10 dreadful years when she was tortured by agonies physical and mental. I wish she could have known, in some lucid moments, that she was not entirely forgotten; that thousands of collectors treasure the records she made more than 50 years ago.

Most of all, I wish she could have known that a man in Virginia had been trying for many years to learn enough about her to write an article paying a perhaps inadequate, but wholly admiring tribute to her achievements in the days when she was "Clarice Vance, the Southern Songbird." I think such knowledge would have given her some moments of happiness.

(The End)

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# FAVORITE Recording ARTISTS

## Six Comediennes

JOSIE SADLER

(Continued from the May Issue)

### Third of the Six

By JIM WALSH

#### V. Josie's Edison Cylinders

Most of Josie Sadler's Victor records had been made before she began singing for Edison's two-minute Standard cylinders and the four-minute Amberols. Her first, Edison Standard, 10179, "He Falls for the Ladies Every Time," was announced in August, 1909.

The New Phonogram said:

"This selection serves to introduce another well-known vaudeville artist to the phonograph public. Miss Sadler sings in German dialect. For her first record, Miss Sadler has chosen the above selection sung by her in the musical comedy, 'The Music World.'"

Another stock Sadler number was offered that same month in the Amberol list. On 184 she sang "Come and Hear the Orchestra."

"A comic waltz song in Dutch dialect, in which Miss Sadler gives on our record a clever reproduction of one of the acts in which she appears on the stage. Various instruments in the orchestra are featured during the song."

In September, 1909, "Lena From Germany," on two-minute cylinder 10198, got only a brief mention:

"Another vaudeville specialty by this clever singer in German dialect. Miss Sadler has 'caught on' and bids fair to be one of our most popular artists."

The Edison records by Miss Sadler were issued in such rapid succession one suspects they were made at one engagement. In October, on 10229, she dusted off "One Good Turn Deserves another."

"A comic waltz song in German dialect. The title is the exclamation of Wilhelmina as she dances with Heinie Schmidt."

The next two-minute Sadler cylinder came forth in December. It was 10267, "BL-ND and P-G," and seems not to have been in dialect:

"A clever and popular 'hit' of the 'kid' style, in which Mamie Warner explains to Buddie Horner the original and unique spelling she gave to the words, 'blind pig,' at the spelling bee in school."

"Buddie, being in love with Mamie, agrees that her spelling is correct, for 'blind pig' has no eyes. The air is pretty and Miss Sadler's rendition clever, her enunciation being remarkably clear and distinct."

There was a considerable interval before Edison offered another Josie Sadler record, but in June, 1910, her

second four-minute Amberol, 438, "The German Fifth," was in evidence:

"A vaudeville specialty by another artist whose reappearance in our lists will be greeted as that of a long lost friend. In this record Miss Sadler manages to combine an amazing amount of entertainment which well sustains her high standing as a German dialect artist."

"A comic march song, some wooden shoe dancing, a funny dialog with an unfriendly orchestra, and, lastly, an imitation of Heinie, the captain of the 'German 5th,' giving his commands, are included in the record."

Josie's last Edison cylinder, the two-minute 10420, "How Can You Love Such a Man?" was announced in September, 1910:

"In her inimitable dialect the popular German comedienne registers an awful complaint about the laggardly love-making of her best fellow. Asked whether she preferred a book or a kiss for Christmas she told him she couldn't read. Next day he sent a teacher around to the house!"

"She cites several more instances equally as deplorable. 'How can you luff such a man as has got solid ifory on top?' is her pathetic query. Next to her superior character work the distinguishing feature of Miss Sadler's records is her delightfully distinct enunciation."

I wonder if Irving Berlin remembers writing the words of that long-forgotten German dialect comic song to the music of Ted Snyder.

I have now exhausted the list of her Columbia, Victor, and Edison offerings and may return to the interrupted account of her theatrical career. All the Edisons were discontinued when the Blue Amberol cylinder was introduced in the fall of 1912.

#### VI. More Theatrical Engagements—Starring in Movies

After completing her road tour in "A Waltz Dream," Miss Sadler had a pleasant engagement with Lew Fields in "The Jolly Bachelors" at the Broadway Theater. Also in the cast were Emma Carus, Stella Mayhew, Billy Taylor, John T. Kelly, and Joe Welch.

She then joined "The Bachelor Girls" at the Globe Theater. Mae Murray, later to be a movie star, was one of her associates. Afterwards, she appeared in "Over the River," with Eddie Foy and Lillian Lorraine.

Next followed an engagement in the Ziegfeld "Follies of 1912." Star performers included Leon Errol, Harry Watson, Jr., Bert Williams, and Ray Samuels.

On leaving the Follies, Josie switched to another type of enter-

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

tainment. She signed a contract with the Vitagraph Company, then the foremost producer of motion pictures, and for nearly two years was featured in one- and two-reel comedies. I presume the films were made at Vitagraph's Fort Lee, N. J., studios.

Since Josie's voice could not be heard she would not be called on to sing, so I imagine the pictures were slapstick comedy of the type of "Tillie's Punctured Romance," in which Marie Dressler starred. I have a publicity booklet, "Vitagraph Life Portrayals," in which two Josie Sadler films are described, with illustrations.

A one-reel picture, "Josie's Declaration of Independence," must have been meant to catch the 1914 Fourth of July trade. Miss Sadler and Billy Quirk were the featured players. Josie took the role of a maid who had many "run-ins" with the Marshe family for whom she worked, but always won out.

Much the same idea is being used today in the "Hazel" television series starring Shirley Booth. There was also a "special feature in two parts," "Josie's Coney Island Nightmare."

The publicity release from which I have been quoting went into considerable detail about Josie's film exploits:

"She was featured in 'Omens and Oracles,' the Josie series; 'The Slavey's Sacrifice,' with Norma Talmadge; 'Setting the Styles,' with John Bunny; 'Doctor Polly,' with Lillian Walker; 'When Women Go On the Warpath,' with Clara Kimball Young, Rose Tapley, and Sidney Drew.

"Also in 'The Regiment of Two,' with Harry Morey, Sidney Drew, Edith Storey and Rose Tapley; 'The Rival Undertakers,' 'The Midget's Revenge,' with Norma Talmadge; 'Matrimonial Maneuvers,' with Maurice Costello; 'Father and Son,' with Courtney Foote. She was further featured in 'The Coming of Gretchen,' with James Lackaye; 'The Song Bird of the North,' with Anita Stewart; 'The Forgotten Latchkey,' with Harry Morey and Anita Stewart; 'Betty in the Lion's Den,' with Clara Kimball Young and Darwin Karr; 'The Honorable Algernon,' with Hughie Mack and Norma Talmadge.

"And in 'Flaming Hearts,' 'Wanted a House,' with Billy Shea; 'John Tobin's Sweetheart,' 'When Glasses Are Not Glasses,' 'Our Fairy Play,' 'Made in Sweden,' 'The Feudists,' 'Bunny Backslides,' and many others.

"She then went with the World Film Company for one feature, 'What Happened to Jones.'

"She then took a well-earned rest. Her next appearance was at the Cort Theater in 'The Blue Envelope.' She is now appearing in vaudeville with her own sketch, 'Moving Pictures,' which is making a great hit."

The final paragraph tells us:

"Her recreation is cooking, and her fellow artists can testify to its quality and the many new dishes she has invented. She has a wonderful collection of autographed photographs, given to her by her professional brethren and sisters, which she holds very dear."

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## VII. Josie as a Business Woman

We now come to the latest bit of information I have concerning Josie Sadler—though not to the end of her life, if she is really dead. It is a feature story by Helen Rhodes which appeared in the New York Daily Mail for July 9, 1920, under the heading: "Josie Sadler, Favorite Comedienne of Her Day, Forsook Stage for Business and Loves New Job."

Sub-heads are: "Actress of 'Peggy From Paris' Now Keeps Books and Operates Own Plant," and "Theater Taught Me to Know Human Nature, Invaluable in Business," Declares Player." I shall quote the more important parts:

"What's become of Josie Sadler? Whenever theater goers get together and start reminiscing, Josie Sadler comes in for her share of the discussion. The favorite comedienne of her day, rich in talent and humor, idolized by her public—why did she forsake the stage?"

"Josie Sadler left the stage two years ago to go into business—a business as far removed from the life of an actress as could possibly be imagined. She conducts an electrical laboratory—her husband's which she took over at his death. And the name, Josephine S. Geddes, signed perhaps to your own bill for electrical repairs, is none other than that of the famous Josie Sadler.

"When she took over her husband's business, she knew not the first thing about it. Her mind was not scientifically trained and she loathed the mathematics and figures generally.

"She had never known any business in all her life but the theatrical; she had been on the stage since she made her first appearance at the age of 9 with Flo and May Irwin in Tony Pastor's 'Nursery Rhymes.'

"However, she came down to her husband's office in Front street, a neighborhood that reeks of coffee and hides, and established herself. Today she is a highly successful business woman, managing a large force of men and women, with her son, William Geddes, who, like his mother, gave up the stage to enter business as her assistant.

"I found her in her office early this morning, her business waist and skirt enveloped in a huge apron. Josie Sadler has not changed. She has the same ready smile, the same sympathetic humor that endeared her to New York in the old days. And to the stage she ascribes her success in business.

"The stage," says Josie Sadler, 'is the most wonderful institution in the world. It taught me to know people and to judge them quickly. It taught me resourcefulness, perseverance—in fact everything I know.

"By knowing thoroughly the character one portrays, one comes to know people thoroughly. This the stage did for me. The technical knowledge and skill at figures I learned myself, and now I keep a set of books.

"The people who had worked here with my husband were kind to me and helpful; they told me things I needed to know. And there were a few good friends of my husband's who helped me. For the rest, I worked it out myself by merely applying common sense and my sense of humor.

"And what helped me most, I believe, was that same sense of humor. I can always see the ludicrous side of things, no matter how bad they may be. The folks around here used to take this place as a most serious matter; then I came along and laughed at them, and I've got them all laughing now, too."

"She has, indeed. She manages her office, it seems to me, just as if it were a comedy, and she the stage manager. She is down at her office every day, sometimes as early as 8:30. When the business was new to her she got down earlier. Sometimes she works until 6 or 7.

"Far from finding the length of the

business day wearing,' she says, 'I find it easier than theatrical hours. We work earlier in the day, but we don't work Saturdays, and Saturday is the big day in the theatrical business.'

"We don't have matinees on holidays here. And in this business I can have a settled home, which I love better than anything on earth. Do you know what I do all day Sundays? Cook!

"Sunday is my day in the kitchen. I rise early and get into a bungalow apron, put my hair up into a little knot and begin the day with a waffle breakfast and all the fixings. Then when that's over, I start to get dinner, another huge affair with a couple of desserts. Sunday afternoons I get out my machine, as I make all my own clothes."

Truly, an industrious lady was Josie Sadler! I wonder how long she continued to operate the electrical supply company and to spend her Sundays cooking and sewing.

As I conclude an admittedly incomplete biographical sketch, two thoughts occur to me: Josie Sadler may have had only one husband. It may be that Fred Lennox was a stage name and that her husband's real name was Geddes. Perhaps he quit the stage in order to go into business.

And Josie Sadler's appearance with May and Flo Irwin in Tony Pastor's "Nursery Rhymes" had to be somewhere between 1876, when the Irwin sisters joined the show, and 1883, when they left. Say, at a guess, Josie joined in 1881 at the age of 9. That would make her 90 years old today.

Whatever her age may be, in the very remote possibility that she is yet alive, she was a fine comedienne and apparently a lovable woman. I am glad that her voice still survives on records.

The End

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## SIX COMEDIENNES MAY IRWIN

### *Fourth of the Six*

By JIM WALSH

Fifty-six years ago Sumner W. Rose, a Biloxi Miss., dealer in Edison records, contributed a letter to the March 15, 1907, Talking Machine World. Mr. Rose was displeased because he couldn't understand the words of some of his cylinders. He singled out the reigning comedienne, Ada Jones, for special censure.

I hope my friend, Milford Fargo, the Ada Jones enthusiast, of Rochester, N.Y., will forgive my mentioning Mr. Rose's remarks.

The Mississippian allowed that Ada was good in such songs as "Keep a Little Cozy Corner in Your Heart for Me," but he couldn't see why she recorded dialect numbers. He said it was impossible to understand her when she sang such compositions as George M. Cohan's "Virginia Song," "If the Man in the Moon Were a Coon," and "Waiting at the Church."

One must wonder why a Mississippi man had any trouble with recorded Negro dialect. But Sumner Rose must have represented a small minority of record buyers. Ada Jones' Negro dialect songs were among her best sellers and probably more copies of "Waiting at the Church" were sold than of any other of her solo numbers.

Even so, it wasn't easy to turn out successful records in those days, as witness the following from the same issue:

"DIFFICULTIES IN MAKING RECORDS . . . Innumerable instances are known where singers who have been successful before the public are dire failures as record makers. The latest instance is that of May Irwin, whose Negro dialect songs have won her great popularity and a fortune.

"Recently she essayed reproducing one of her vocal hits on a record, but the results were so weak that rejection followed. Not more than 20 people make the rounds of the talking machine companies."

Later, I shall discuss May Irwin's recording failure. Now I take issue with the World's statement that only a score of persons regularly made records in 1907. True, recording was a specialized procedure and there were comparatively few men, and fewer women, who were experts, but the number of successful "popular" performers was far more than 20.

The Channell Studio for Photography at Orange, N. J., advertised in the March 15, 1907, T. M. W. that it could supply photos of these artists who sang or played for various companies, but mostly for Edison:

Ada Jones, Len Spencer, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Harry Macdonough, Richard Jose, Frank C. Stanley, Billy Murray, Bob Roberts, Corinne Morgan, Mary Porter Mitchell, Marie Narelle, Daisy Boulais, Florence Hinkle, Marie Hoy, Edward M. Favor, Cal Stewart, Will F. Denny, Hans Kronold, Frank R. Seltzer, Fred W. Hager, John Hazel, Charles D'Almaine, Frank S. Mazziotta, Eugene A. Jaudas, John Kaiser, Billy

Golden, Edgar L. Davenport, Leo Zimmerman.

Also Frederick W. Ecke, Henry E. Nesbit, George Seymour Lenox, Irving Gillette, Albert Benzler, Fred Van Eps, Edward Meeker, Edward Barrow, Joe Belmont, John H. Bieling, S. H. Dudley, Eugene C. Rose, William Tuson, Andrew Keefe, James F. Harrison, Julian Rose, William F. Hooley, Steve Porter, Vess L. Ossman, William H. Thompson, "Tascott," Harry Anthony, the Edison Quartet, and the duet teams of Bieling and Macdonough, Collins and Harlan, Harlan and Stanley, Anthony and Harrison, and Jones and Spencer.

This list by no means included all the prominent "popular" recording artists of 1907. Since Channell's studios and the Edison recording facilities were in the same city the performers who had pictures taken there were mostly Edison artists. (Richard Jose was an exception.)

Those who didn't visit Orange were not likely to be photographed by Channell. Some years ago I called on Mr. Channell, who I believe has since died. He told me he had destroyed the negatives of those old photos, thinking them of no further value, only about a month before.

I learned one thing from that Channell ad — that Miss Hoy's first name was Marie. This lady, who made a few records as a duet partner of Harry Anthony, was referred to in the Edison catalogs only as "Miss Hoy," with her given name omitted.

Daisy Boulais was the mysterious soprano who assisted Harlan and Stanley in a few vaudeville sketches. Her photos seem to resemble those of Mrs. Frank C. Stanley, but Mrs. Stanley told me she had never heard of Miss Boulais. "Tascott" was a vaudeville comedian, who made just two records and never used his first name.

### II. Mr. Edison's Birthday Party

Before undertaking the life story of May Irwin I shall evince an airy disregard of strict chronology by relating a few more interesting items I found in the Talking Machine World. Many record collectors are eager for miscellaneous information of this sort.

I learned that cylinder 9400, "The Lover and the Birds," a soprano solo by Florence Hinkle, was used at the Edison laboratory to test horns for "blasting." If no jarring sound came through while playing that record it was assumed nothing else would blast.

The Burke Talking Machine and Novelty Company of Brooklyn, successor to Burke and Rous, had made assignment to its creditors and was going out of business. The firm made an unbreakable cylinder, whose principles, perhaps, were incorporated into the Indestructible cylinder which appeared later that year. The



Blanche Ring was mentioned in a 1903 magazine article as a likely rival to May Irwin for the title of Queen of Comedy.

firm had assets of \$6,500 and liabilities of \$4,200. The Rous who had been a partner was the brother of Sam Rous, better known on records as S. H. Dudley.

The Leeds and Catlin Company was making "Radium" cylinders, which Lionel Mapleson, the Metropolitan Opera librarian who used to hide back stage and record snatches of performances, declared to be the best records he had heard. Artists included J. W. Myers, Stanley, Harlan, Henry Burr, Collins, Jones, Spencer, Ossman, Steve Porter, Al Sweet and Edward F. Rubsam — hallowed names in the phonograph's popular pantheon.

Columbia planned to issue 500 "velvet-finish" records, with smoother surfaces than the ordinary kind, to sell for 75c instead of at the regular 60-cent price. These probably were the semi-flexible Marconi's.

On his 60th birthday, February 11, 1907, Thomas A. Edison had been honored with a dinner and entertainment at the Kroger auditorium in Newark. No operatic stars sang for Mr. Edison's pleasure. Instead, established Edison "talent" obliged — the Rambler Minstrels Quartet of Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, Arthur Collins and Steve Porter.

Eugene Jaudas, the orchestra conductor, was there, and so was song writer Henry Frantz — presumably as pianist. The quartet sang a parody on "Everybody Works But Father," which probably paid oblique tribute to Edison's long working hours. Collins and Harlan parodied "Arrah Wanna."

### III. Mrs. Rover's Roving Rover

The most amusing item told of how Mrs. Grace E. Rover heard a high tenor voice coming out of a slot machine and recognized it as that of her estranged husband, Fred G. Rover. Fred had lived up to his last name by leaving the Rovers' once happy home. He had, in fact, become

a charter member of the Rover Boys.

Meanwhile, he had made his only Edison cylinder. "Those Songs My Mother Used to Sing," and it was his tenor tribute to Mother's trilling which Mrs. Rover heard from the 1907 juke box. Immediately, the irate lady did some singing of her own and voiced her version of "The Alimony Blues."

Presumably with the help of the Edison recording staff, she succeeded in running down the rambling Rover, who had been a soloist at the Clinton Avenue Congregational Church in Brooklyn and a member of the Rialto Comedy Four. As a vaudevillian he made big money, \$100 a week.

After Mrs. Rover had plaintively asked (in words foreshadowing a song that became popular half a dozen years later), "Have you seen my roving Rover?" the straying tenor was ordered to show cause why he should not be adjudged guilty of contempt of court.

### IV. Early Career

May Irwin was a stage favorite long before the 20th century arrived — and Irwin was a stage name! The comedienne, of Scottish extraction, had the family name of Campbell.

Meanwhile, here is an interesting account of her before-1900 career and achievements, from "Famous Actresses," by Lewis C. Strang:

"May Irwin is a personality rather than an artist, an entertainer more than an actress. Her career has vacillated between the variety stage and the legitimate until at last she has become identified with that hybrid species of the theatrical amusement called farce-comedy.

"Miss Irwin is a famous fun maker; of jolly, rotund figure, and with a face that reflects the gaiety of nations, she is the personification of humor and careless mirth. . . Her good nature is infinite and her buoyancy of spirits irrepressible.

"Her good-fellowship is infectious, and she has a great facility for getting on intimate terms with her audience, making herself, for the time being, the personal friend of every man, woman, and child in the theater the instant that she appears on the stage; and hers is a whole-souled, generous friendship, even if on the verge of Bohemia.

"May Irwin was born (June 27, 1862) in Whitby, a little town in Ontario, Canada, about 20 miles from Toronto, and she lived there until she went on the stage. When she was only eight years old she was the soprano in the Episcopal church choir in her native village.

"Singing came naturally to me," she said. "My voice never had any cultivation. I harmonized as naturally as I talked, my voice was naturally placed, and I produced tones by the law breathing taught me, not by any other rule. All through my childhood I sang in all the cantatas and such folly that is a part of going to school."

"May and her sister Flora made their debut on the variety stage in Buffalo, N. Y., when they were little tots in short dresses. That was in December, 1875, and the salary they received was \$30 a week. The first thing they sang was 'Sweet Genevieve.'

"Poor Flo was so nervous that after it was over she fainted away, and May had to sing the encore alone, which she did with all the assurance in the world.

"In fact, I do not believe May Irwin could faint if she tried.

"Engagements in variety theaters on a circuit that included Cleveland, St. Louis, and Cincinnati followed, and then the children did their first sketch, which was called 'On Board the Mary Jane.'

"Their third season found them at



A photo of May Irwin reproduced from the 1901 "Players' Blue Book."

Tony Pastor's in New York, and how that came about Miss Irwin tells as follows:

"We were appearing in Detroit. It was late in the season of 1876-77. We had been engaged for two weeks, and had been so successful that we stayed six. Tony Pastor's company was on tour, making, even in the cities, one night stands. On the day the company reached Detroit we had a matinee, and Pastor came to see us.

"He left town that night to go on to the next stand, and he wired back to us. 'Could you open in New York at my theater September 13th? Wire terms.'

"Could we? Weren't we just crazy to? Sister and I sat up all that night talking about it. We made our debut in New York, September 13, 1877—pretty good for two children. We stayed there seven years. We were engaged for \$60 a week, and at the end of our connection there we were getting \$80. It was a small salary compared with what is paid now, and I realized it was small then for what we did.

"Our first sketch was 'A Rural Stroll,' which we played for four years. I own that it was great training, for we had to keep our sketch right up to the times.

"In addition to my turn with Flo, I used to do the leads in the burlesque which always wound up the evening, and those burlesques were not written out. I used just to get instructions and go on and carry them out. It's great training, throws you on your own resources. Why, I played everything from babes in arms to decrepit old women."

"Then came the most remarkable event in Miss Irwin's theatrical experience, her jump from variety at Tony Pastor's to the classic atmosphere of Augustin Daly's temple of dramatic art. 'Oh, I was ambitious,' Miss Irwin declared, when asked how it happened, 'and in an ambitious person's career all advances seem like heavens.'

"Mrs. Gilbert and Miss Rehan used to come to Tony Pastor's very often, and finally we were playing in Chicago at one Theater while Daly's company was playing at Hooley's, and Richard Dorney came up to see me one day and asked me if I would like to join Daly's. The very next morning I met Mr. Daly by appointment and signed for three years.

"At the end of that time I re-engaged, but only stayed another year—four in all. It was very legitimate and delightful, but it was not profitable, and when an offer of three times my Daly salary came, just to do a single



turn with the Boston Howard Athenaeum Star Specialty Company—well, I couldn't resist it.

"While with the Howard Athenaeum Company the Irwin Sisters, as May and Flo were billed, produced John J. McNally's first dramatic work, a sketch called 'Home Rule.' During the summer of 1888, Miss Irwin played on the Pacific Coast, acting Martha in Richard Golden's 'Jed Prouty' Company.

"Another year with the Howard Athenaeum Company followed, and then Miss Irwin became a member of Russell's 'The City Directory' Company, perhaps the finest farce company organization ever got together. In 1891 she (Continued on page 45)

### MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

SWISS MUSIC BOXES, new list of rare collector's items; list of books on music boxes, also article on the repinning of Swiss music box cylinders. — Bornand's, 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N.Y. je3694

FOR SALE, 4 music boxes (large): Drum bell Paillard; double disc Symphonium with 48 discs; 3 cylinder Jacobs; 166-tooth Organo-Piccolo. All in excellent condition. — Mrs. A. W. Thurrow, R.R. 2, Box 115, Yorkville, Illinois. je1082

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs, old disc phonographs with outside horns. Old record catalogs, books, \$7 and up for cylinder reproducers (part that holds the needle). — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. au3694

EDISON Cabinet Model C-19, SM-92912. Patent dates: Nov. 17, 1903; May 23, 1916. Plus 200 thick disc records. Best offer over \$50. — Hensel, 354 Richmond Rd., Cleveland 24, Ohio. au3484

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victor and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. jly3846

CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c, 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. s6468

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

PLAYER ENTHUSIAST'S DREAM: Electric upright player piano with Lowrey Organo attached. Automatic rewind and replay. Standard rolls. Fascinating tone combinations possible as player, or manually. Superb tone and condition. \$350, or make offer! — Piano, Box 344, Pigeon Cove, Mass. au3426

### PIANOS & ROLLS

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Recordo. 2) Recordo. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120061

Wanted: Welte, Deluxe, Duo-Art and Ampico rolls. — T. P. Grattelo, 1619 California St., San Francisco, Calif. je3483

OLD player piano rolls for sale. Free list. Also send wants. — Paula Watson, 6653 Enright, St. Louis 30, Mo. au3023

### MELODEONS FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL rosewood melodeons. Also expert repair service. — C. Lamper, C-Sharp Hobby Shop, (New address 135 W. 10th, Holland, Mich.) Closed Sundays. je3483

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy & sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles 13, Calif. je6046

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. s12698

### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

RECORDINGS NEEDED, will pay high price: "Clarinettski," Johnny Dodds; "Prohibition Has Done Me Wrong," Jimmy Rodgers; WPA-Glenn Miller. Please contact Alda Favia-Artsay, 50 Prospect Ave., Valhalla, N. Y. tfx

RECORDINGS wanted of pre-1957 radio or TV broadcasts (news, comedy, mystery, adventure). — George Vlasto, 400 North St., Greenwich, Conn. au3882

### RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collector's items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. je3084

Free Catalog. Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A R G, 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y. je6806

50 Years of old songs and popular favorites. Also band, instrumental and classical vocal records. Tell us your wants. Send for free lists. — David B. Heyman, 528 East 3rd St., Brooklyn 18, N. Y. jly3297

Comprehensive Monthly Lists of 78's, including hundreds of unusual out-of-print and rare vocals mailed on request. Collections bought. The Record Album, 208 W. 80th St., New York 24, N.Y. f128862

MUSIC BOX RECORDINGS, the original authentic "Old Music Box Melodies" made from finest instruments: RCB-4 "Music Box Medley of Waltzes" and AB-5 "Golden Music Box Favorites," 26 selections on each of these fine 12" Hi-Fi records, \$3.98 each postpaid. — Bornand's, 139 4th Ave., Pelham, N. Y. je3637

I SEE HUNDREDS of records every day. Let's hear your needs.—Ted's Second Hand Store, 1128 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. (Stamp please). je3253

OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records, 1903 to LP.—Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott St., San Francisco 17, Calif. d128801

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N. Y. je120061

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. o6407

Free Lists - 78's, cylinders, popular, operatic, instrumental. Reasonable prices, many rarities.—Soffer, 505 W. 122, New York 27, N. Y. jly3084

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP.—ARG, 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. au6407

FOR SALE: Hundreds of disc and cylinder records, many types of early phonographs, 25c for list. Also "Evolution of the Phonograph," by Walter Welch and Oliver Reed, a complete history of the phonograph, 576 pages, regular price \$9.95. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. au3407

FOR SALE: Disc records, Caruso, McCormack, Tetrassini, Olitzka, Victor Light Opera Company, etc. Send 10c for list. Also Edison console combination radio and record player, walnut cabinet. — Monroe Sands, 303 E. Washington, Urbana, Ill. je3483

SEMI - MONTHLY mail auctions of classical vocal records. 10 years experience with regular listings. Tape and acetates of rare broadcast performances including unusual material of Callas, Corelli, Flagstad, Martinelli, Rysanek, Savaio, Bjorling, etc. — Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. je3046

GREAT VOCAL RECORDS. South's store for top condition collectors' 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. jly3464

RARE record collectors: Send \$1 (refundable first order) for lists of rare items, operatic or show biz. Send \$1 for rare 1915 portrait of Al Jolson. Send \$1 for rare record of Thomas Edison and Gen. Pershing speaking.—Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. au3426

RARE RECORDS at mail auction: The Arthur E. Knight collection will be sold in a series of special auctions. Send for list at once to avoid missing a single one. Contains countless superb items and some almost never encountered in public sales. A group of very high calibre. — Georg Pluck, Waterloo Village, Grass Lake, Mich. jly3088

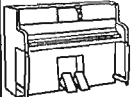

### MISCELLANEOUS

NOTICE: Will be on vacation the month of May. Open for business on June 1st. All orders and correspondence will be taken care of on my return. Thanking you. — Thomas Pollard, 4109 Soquel Dr., Soquel, Calif. je3675

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**TOYS WANTED**

ILLUSTRATED Catalog, 82 typical old toys & prices I pay. Catalog \$1 refunded on purchase of toy for my collection. — Lawrence Altman Antiques, Toys & Bells of the World, 4703 McPherson Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo. au12432

**OLD IRON TOYS:** Especially want Royal Circus giraffe cage wagon, must have large cast iron giraffe in wagon. Circus band wagon, any kind but the Overland. Also want other old cast iron toys. Will pay extra good price. I am no dealer. Ives iron coal car No. 189. Large Ives one-horse horse reel. Weeden live steam fire engine. Camel pulling chariot. — A. H. Mundis, 731 Wallace St., York, Penna. je68422

**EARLY TOYS,** toy catalogs. High grade cast iron horse drawn carriages, wagons and all types of rigs, unusual and elaborate. Nickel plated horse drawn fire pumpers. Live steam toys, bell toys and cap shooters. Bought and sold. — Lloyd Ralston, 1192 Youngstown Rd. S.E., Warren, Ohio. au3407

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Scarce Banks

**FRANK LAUGHLIN**

1134 E. Douglas

Wichita, Kansas  
au36c

**MECHANICAL ANTIQUES****WANTED**

Need old electric train passenger cars, Ives No. 241 to No. 249 or any combination. Also Lionel No. 412 to No. 416, brown or green. — Bert Race, 199 Orange St., Albany, New York. jly128862

**Early Electric Bulbs** wanted. Bulbs must have bases different from those in use today, or be marked Tantalum, Tungsten, or Meridian. — G. R. Brown, 1128 Riverdale Ave., Calgary, Alberta, Canada. je3027

**STILL BANKS****WANTED**

**ANIMAL BANKS** in old original condition, singles or small collections. Describe fully, price. — Sidney Partridge, Marlboro, N. H. au3882

**BANKS WANTED**

Want old toy electric trains, trolleys, street cars. Especially want Ives Locos No. 3245, 1134, 1764, 1694. Also Boucher or Voltamp. — Bert Race, 199 Orange St., Albany, N.Y. Tel. HO 5-0761, except Sundays. my122703

**PLEASE NOTE** my mechanical bank display ad in this section, listing various wants. — F. H. Griffith, P.O. Box 10644, Pittsburgh 35, Pa. tfx

**OLD mechanical and still banks, toys** describe, state price, condition. — Scofield's, Box 457, Ridgefield, Conn. f1206s

**IRON & TIN TOYS** wanted: All types of horse drawn cast iron and large tin toys, including Royal circus wagons and horse drawn trolleys, animated toy cap pistols, all types of steam operated toys, old mechanical banks, early autos, early iron and tin trains. — A. J. Kovaleski, 331 Adams Ave., Scranton 3, Pa. Phone 1-717 - DI 2-1963. jly3864

**OLD mechanical and still banks, collections** bought. — W. Miller, 1017 Westgate, Troy, Ohio. f12238

**MECHANICAL BANKS FOR SALE**

**HAVE** nice selection of still banks and few mechanicals. Please enclose stamp for list. — A. Hotze, 9326 McKenzie Rd., Afton 23, Mo. s12804

**PRIVATE** collection 26 mechanicals and many stills. List furnished. Stamp please. — Ware's Antiques, Clifton Forge, Va. jly3652

**PENNY PINEAPPLE** mechanical coin banks. Brochure and prices. — High, Dept. H-5, 1219 Girard, Wyomissing, Pa. s3042

**FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS**

(Continued from page 37)

joined Charles Frohman's forces, appearing with Henry Miller in 'The Junior Partner,' and after that in a burlesque called 'The Poet and the Puppets.'

"It was in this burlesque that she introduced to the public the famous song, 'After the Ball.' At an after-theater supper in her room she heard Alexander Martinetti pick out the air on a guitar. The melody pleased her, and she had him write it down and fit some words to it.

"Mr. Frohman was opposed to her singing a sentimental song in a burlesque, but he yielded to persuasion and let her try it. The song was a great hit.

"After 'The Poet and the Puppets,' Miss Irwin became associated with Peter F. Dailey in McNally's farce, 'The Country Sport.' For the last three seasons she has starred, producing first Mr. McNally's farce-comedy, 'The Widow Jones,' and incidentally making herself famous through her Negro dialect songs and the broad humor and great unctious that she puts into 'ragtime,' that latter-day syncopated musical freak, whose father is the old-time Negro minstrel.

"Her first 'ragtime' was 'The Bully,' in which she made great sport by bringing a little colored boy on the stage with her. Miss Irwin says the way to learn to sing 'ragtime' is to study the Negro.

"I heard during one of my summer vacations," she continued, "some particularly catchy music sung by Negroes working at the hotel where I was stopping. The idea occurred to me to try it myself. I did try it, and I failed.

"After successive failures I decided to find out from headquarters how it was sung, and I gave a reception to that colored musical talent. That was the best social investment I ever made. By keeping everlastingly at it, I finally discovered that the ragtime was obtained, not by the voice, but by the instrument.

"With the Negroes it had been the result of the use of the 'thumbstring' on the banjo, by thrumming in which

(Continued on page 49)

**MECHANICAL BANKS & TOY PISTOLS**

**ESPECIALLY WANT MECHANICAL BANKS:**

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| ● BOWERY BANK                            | ● MUSICAL SAVING BANK         |
| ● ROYAL TRICK ELEPHANT (Tin)             | (You pay—I play)              |
| ● WIMBLEDON                              | ● PREACHER IN THE PULPIT      |
| ● BOWLING ALLEY BANK                     | ● TARGET                      |
| ● RED RIDING HOOD                        | ● RIVAL                       |
| ● FOOTBALL (Colored man kicks ball)      | ● SMYTH X-RAY                 |
| ● SCHLEY BOTTLING UP CERVEZA             | ● BRITISH LION (Tin)          |
| ● PRESTO (Penny changes to quarter)      | ● TOAD IN DEN (Tin)           |
| ● JAPANESE BALL TOSSEY (Tin wind-up)     | ● PERFECTION REGISTERING BANK |
| ● SEOOT TEAT HAT BANK                    | ● GIANT IN TOWER              |
| ● TOMMY BANK (Prono, Soldier Shoots Gun) | ● DAREY FISHERMAN             |
| ● BULL & BEAR BANK                       | ● FROG ON ARCHER TRACK (Tin)  |
| ● COASTING BANK                          | ● TIME LOCK SAVING            |
|  | ● CLOWN (Bust)                |
|  | ● SNAKE & FROG IN POND (Tin)  |
|  | ● WINNER SAVINGS (Tin)        |

**PISTOLS:**

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ● CAMERA                       | ● TWO DOGS ON BENCH           |
| ● DOLPHIN                      | ● OSCAR WILDE BOMB            |
| ● TORPEDO Shooter              | ● TAMMANY PISTOL (Tiger Head) |
| ● HUMPTY, DUMPTY (Three heads) |                               |
| ● SAILING SHIP                 |                               |

Also want Cast Iron horse drawn carriages, animated bell ringing pull toys, old toy automobiles and old catalogs showing banks and toy pistols.

**F. H. GRIFFITH**

P.O. Box 10644 Pittsburgh 35, Pa. 15236

## BUTTONS FOR SALE

**TEN UNUSED CALICOES** \$1.50;  $\frac{1}{2}$ " Calicoes 35c each. Large Jewels \$1 each. Old glass, large pictures, inlays, Vermont Light Infantry, Vermont Militia. Approvals with references.—Mrs. T. B. Wakefield, 76 Greene St., Burlington, Vt. Je3445

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS**, direct European imports, collectors' items, 18th century buttons, pictorials, crests, dress earrings, sets cuff links.—Mrs. Margot Jacoby, 250 W. 94th St., New York 25, N. Y. au124431

**BUTTON HOOK BOOK**. Pictures, information, patents, \$1.25.—Bertha Betensley, 5042 N. St. Louis Ave., Chicago 25, Ill. s128801

**"WHO'S GOT THE BUTTON?"** Roberts. New book on button collecting, with photographs, \$3.25. "Uniform Buttons," priced, Johnson, \$12.—Ruddell's, Box 461, Washington 4, D.C. jly3263

**OLD BUTTONS**. Various types and subjects. State wants. Approvals with references. Have a few "Indian Hunter," large and medium, Button Classics, page 247-3. And "Chinese Slaying Dragon," large, Nicholls 2896. Stamp please for information.—Rachel Price, 17 So. 8th, Stroudsburg, Pa. je3656

**POKE BOXES**, various priced buttons. Many rare types. Reasonable.—M. Shannon, 8 Compton St., Boston, Mass. n6306

**75 BUTTONS**, different types, all collectable, \$1. p.p.—Mary Caskey, Box 215, Gloucester, N. J. jly12698

**ASSORTMENT 25-50-100** for \$1.10 plus bonus buttons. Approvals with reference. Also poke boxes.—Mrs. Ralph Radosh, 260 Sadonia Ave., Ferguson 35, Mo. jly3483

**MODERN glass paperweight buttons** by Theresa. Hand made. Sparkling colors. Custom designed. No two alike. 10 for \$2 postpaid.—Theresa Rarig, 302 Rothsay, Minneapolis, Kansas. jly3004

**Pipestone**, rare and beautiful. 3 large buttons plus "The Legend of Pipestone," \$2.—Museum, Keystone Rt. 255, Rapid City, S. Dak. my3405

**OLD BUTTONS**. 85 assorted, 75 vegetable ivory or 40 black glass, \$1.—Mrs. Karl S. Gerstenlauer, Pleasant Valley Village, R.D. 2, Milton, Pa. je253

**OLD BUTTONS**. 100 assorted, some goofies, 1 picture for \$1.—Mrs. Martin Dimery, 1235 No. Main, Fremont, Nebr. jly3882

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS** sent promptly on approval. One large picture button and 50 assorted old buttons, including 5 small picture buttons for \$2.50. China, pearl, or black glass assortments, each button different and nice, 50 for \$2. Imported rose paperweights, 50c each or 12 for \$1 (beautiful for bracelets). Closing out goofies at 5c each, 25 for \$1, 50 for \$2, or 100 for \$4.—Minerva M. Miner, Sherburne, N. Y. jly34201

**BUTTON BARGAINS**, \$1.25 each offer. 100 small in 8 different materials: 10 small and 1 large picture button; 20 china including calicoes; 12 calicoes; 15 realistic goofies including sets. Other buttons on approval for reference. Gooftie set items exchanged. Stamp appreciated.—Solberg, Route 2, Stone Lake, Wis. au3867

**ANTIQUE button collection** for sale. Appraised by reputable antique dealer. 7,500 buttons, many carded and all types. Includes large picture buttons and goofies. Priced \$600. Will consider offer. For information write: Mrs. John H. Richards, 352 E. Allen St., Lancaster, Ohio. je1823

Number 10 is a "modern" button, one of a set which features typically American subjects: Indian, Statue of Liberty, etc. It was made in at least two sizes, and with both brass and silvered finish, c. 1935.

Number 12 is a "Goofy," c. 1940, and is made of modern plastic in various colors. There are other "Goofy" Indian heads, some profile and some full-face, and all in the usual range of "Goofy" colors.

Most of the remaining buttons are one-piece, convex, with incised designs.

Numbers 13 and 17, similar in design, are hand-made of copper. They have delicate designs and large, rather crude shanks.

Numbers 14 and 16 bear identical designs, but one is made of copper, the other of silver.

Number 15 is a ceramic button, slightly convex, with the "Thunderbird" hand-painted in brown. On the back is the word "Zia."

Numbers 18 and 21 are hand-made of copper, and are similar in type to 13 and 17.

Number 19 is of silver, one-piece, with turquoise inset, and a large, square-sided shank of copper. It was made by a Hopi craftsman, c. 1930.

Numbers 20 and 24 are also hand-fashioned of silver. Both have small copper shanks, that of 24 being double.

Numbers 22, 23, 25, and 27 are "Redskin Maid" buttons, designed for collectors and tourists. They are made of copper, but the same patterns are found on similar silvered buttons.

Number 25 is Indian-made from a silver coin of Mexico, the star being deeply incised over the original design.

The American Indian of tradition, like the "Old West," is gone for

## BUTTON BRACELETS

We have some lovely bracelets made entirely of buttons. Each \$9, plus 50c postage and insurance.

## MORE BUTTON BRACELETS

1 bracelet made of modern & old Satsuma buttons. Write. 1 made of beautiful, small enamel buttons. Write. Or choose your own design, and we may be able to make it to suit a particular costume. What more stunning than a black glass bracelet for your black and white costume.

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Supplement II and index ..... \$2.75  
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Richmond 30, Virginia tfo

ever, a victim of that "progress" which, while it gives with one hand, takes away with the other.

The warriors and hunters who once roamed over the country, bold and free, are peaceful citizens now. They have been forced to exchange their freedom for "security," and to barter their customs and their heritage for the white man's comforts and conveniences. But their relics and their craftsmanship remain; and the enduring memory of their past helps to obscure the tragedy of their subjugation.

Despite that subjugation, they are a permanent part of American life, and they will continue to influence it, if only through history and hobbies and the place-names they left behind them.

\*I received this button and information about 20 years ago. The Daughters of the American Revolution continue to encourage Indian craftsmen, but whether or not their work is still sold under the auspices of the Worldwide Missions Handicrafts Society, I can't say.—D.F.B.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 45)

there was produced the effect of a weird chant. The fact that the Negroes are so successful in the singing of "rag-time" is because they have learned to sing to this very sort of an accompaniment.

"In the fall of 1897 Miss Irwin brought out 'The Swell Miss Fitzwell,' which she followed last season with another farce-comedy, 'Kate Kip, Buyer.'"

Thanks to Mr. Strang's article, we now have a very good account — which I condensed — of May Irwin's early theatrical days. A couple of "reinforcements," however, have occurred to me.

Miss Irwin's famous song, "The Bully," was prepared for her by a sports writer, Charles E. Treva-  
than, after he had passed by "Babe" Connor's notorious establishment in St. Louis, and heard someone singing unprintable words to the tune which he adapted for "The Bully Song."

From the same dive came the original unpurgated version of "Ta Ra Ra Boom De Re," which, in a cleaned-up form, became the hit to which the once-famous Lottie Collins nightly danced and high-kicked herself into exhaustion.

The late Otis Skinner recalled in his autobiography that he was a member of Miss Irwin's Company when she sang "The Bully" in "The Widow Jones." One night he decided to pester her by crouching high above the stage and joining in her rendition.

He said that as his voice began to blend, or conflict, with May's the portly comedienne was perplexed. She kept rolling her eyes upward, trying to detect the source of the sound, while she moved back and forth across the stage. If I remember right, she never did find out where it came from.

I once had a beautiful copy of Miss Irwin's 12-inch Victor record of "The  
(Continued on page 56)

**DAVID RUBENSTEIN**  
**526 Main St. Rockland, Maine**



Illustrated from our large collection of **FIGUREHEADS**

We also have a sizeable collection of eagles, ships bells, ship pictures, and actually most everything pertaining to ships.

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We have an unusual collection of Lowestoft, all kinds of glassware and china, hooked rugs, etc.

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35 W. Market Street

York, Pennsylvania

JLyp

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 49)

"Bully Song," but in a weak moment traded it to Charles Sniffin of White Plains, N. Y. (Aside to Mr. Sniffin: I'm sorry I did, Charlie, for I never have been able to find another copy.)

"The Bully," in a somewhat modified form, has become a hill-billy classic, "The Bully of the Town." Probably the best version ever recorded of the original "Bully Song" was Vernon Dalhart's two-part interpretation on a hard to find Columbia double-faced record, 15302.

Strang also did not mention that in 1896 May Irwin had made a debut in the movies. For Thomas A. Edison she and the late John C. Rice enacted a scene of torrid (by Gay Nineties standards) love making called "The Kiss."

The ardent manner in which May and John pressed lips through 50 feet of film aroused wide-spread indignation and there were calls for censorship of those new-fangled, soul-destroying living pictures. Making the movie had meant hours of hard work for the supposedly amorous pair.

John C. Rice, incidentally, was a noted vaudeville performer, whose partner was his wife, using her maiden name of Sally Cohen. They were the parents of the charming soprano, Gladys Rice, who is still active in music and theatricals.

Miss Rice began recording for Edison in 1915 and became one of the most popular Edison artists under the names of Gladys Rice, Rachel Grant, and Bettina Bergere. Later, she recorded for virtually all other American companies, often as a singing partner of Billy Murray.

(To be continued in the July Issue)



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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

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JIM WALSH

## SIX COMEDIENNES

## MAY IRWIN

## Fourth of the Six

(Continued from the June Issue)

By JIM WALSH

## V. "The Players' Blue Book"

In 1901 A. D. Storms compiled a volume called "The Players' Blue Book," which gave brief sketches of the day's theatrical personalities. Here is his account of May Irwin—and notice that Storms says May made her debut in Rochester, N. Y., while Strang placed it in Buffalo. That's just another example of the difficulties confronting the bio-

grapher, but Buffalo appears to be correct:

"A general favorite with theater goers, who has won her way to the top by hard work, is May Irwin, by birth a Canadian, and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, of Whitby, Ontario, where May was born. . . .

"May made her professional debut, when but 13 years of age, at Rochester, N. Y., January 8, 1875. The next year she was under the management of Daniel Shelby, and the year following she, with her sister Flo, joined Tony Pastor's company, where they remained until 1883, doing short sketches and singing duets together. The four years following, she was with Augustin Daly's company, playing many roles with great success.

"Laugh and the world laughs with you" is a saying that can truly be applied to Miss Irwin, for who that has seen and heard her in such plays as 'Widow Jones,' 'Courtied Into Court,' 'Kate Kip,' 'Sister Mary,' or 'The Belle of Bridgeport,' has not laughed? Miss Irwin's latest success up to the present writing is 'Madge Smith, Attorney.'"

## Bijou Theatre

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RUDOLPH ARONSON, - - Manager.

NEW YORK, Sept 5th 1898

Howard M. Leitch Esq:  
Dear Sir:

Yours received.  
I want to a rule not  
to allow my photo to  
appear on title page. Except  
for songs I sing myself.  
Thanking you for the  
compliment I remain  
Yours truly  
May Irwin

This letter was written by May Irwin when she was 26, refusing to let her photo appear on the title page of a song which she was not singing.

Sneaking again of "The Widow Jones," in which "The Bully" was featured, I had a letter a few years ago from a niece of Mr. Trevathan, asking my help in tracing recordings of some of his compositions.

## VI. "The Coming Queen of Comedy"

By one of those coincidences that frequently crop up when I am writing for HOBBIES, since I began this sketch I have obtained Everybody's Magazine for June, 1903, in which James L. Ford had an informative article, "The Coming Queen of Comedy." In discussing the comediennes of 60 years ago, Ford devoted considerable attention to May Irwin and mentioned other women who were later to be heard on records.

I think it worth while to quote part of his article and shall take the liberty of occasionally transposing the order of sentences and paragraphs:

"The untimely death of Rosina Vokes in 1894 left the throne of humor vacant. It was not until May Irwin appeared in company with Peter F. Dailey in 'A Country Sport' that it became evident another really humorous star had appeared.

"By virtue of immediate popular recognition, Miss Irwin straightway came into the kingdom and demonstrated, by her marked individuality, her finished art, and her inexhaustible buoyancy and spirits, her fitness for the crown.

"From that time until last season Miss Irwin remained the one distinctively funny woman on the American scene. You might almost say she took the audience into her lap and talked to them like a big sister.

"Blanche Ring's popularity with what is called 'the Broadway public' is merely a matter of six month's growth. She is the breezy maiden who, at the opening of Mrs. Osborn's Play House, bounded into favor with a song, 'The Belle of Avenue A,' which she sang with infinite spirit and humor.

"It is to her credit that with her professional experience her stage work should be so free from vulgarity and offensive suggestion as it is. She is breezy, jolly, exuberant, and has an infectious laugh which never fails to put her on good terms with an audience.

"There is also Marie Dressler, a woman of undoubted humor who astonishes us now and then with some remarkably clever work, who sings Negro dialect songs admirably, and in some respects reminds one of May Irwin.

"Josie Sadler and Edna Aug are also deserving of mention in the category of humorists, and both have the knack of getting on confidential terms with their audiences.

"A candidate whose aspirations are undeniable is Marie Cahill. Miss Cahill is a graduate of the Hoyt farce comedy school, where she was known as a nimble and graceful dancer and a pleasing singer. She does not dance much now, but she sings Negro dialect songs.

"Although not in any way an imitator of Miss Irwin, who is, after all, imitable, Miss Cahill renders these ditties quite as effectively as did her predecessor. It is not her fault that people say as they leave the theater, 'She's a new May Irwin.'

"These admirers of Miss Cahill do not mean to intimate that she is unoriginal, but rather that she has a quality that the other possesses. It is true she is blonde and fat and wholesome-looking, and makes her audience laugh, but it takes something more than all that to

place a woman on a throne which has been occupied by such women as I have named."

#### VII. An 1897 "Broadside"

Allen G. Debus, of Park Forest, Ill., who has graciously contributed to the illustrations for this series, has provided me with a 66-year-old "Sketch of May Irwin" from which I quote:

"Blest with a temper whose unclouded ray can make tomorrow cheerful as to-day" is the temper with which it has pleased Providence to endow May Irwin. She has not, so tradition says, been known to say an ill-natured thing about anyone except May Irwin. She bubbles over with good humor that is catching and puts everyone in her company on pleasant terms with himself and the rest of the world.

"Of Scotch descent, she is practically a citizeness of the United States, who, when she is not playing, delights to fish and boat among the Thousand Islands, where she owns a beautiful summer home.

"No woman in America sings Negro songs like May Irwin. In the first place her mellow voice adjusts itself admirably to the requirements of this class of music, and then the expression she puts into the songs, and, indeed, into everything she does—is the despair of all who try to imitate her.

"The popular mind has associated Miss Irwin so closely with the singing of these dialect songs, and the rendering of these melodies has come to be so generally accepted as the nearest approach to the real thing itself, that one is prepared to believe she made a life-long study of this subject. Certainly one is quite unprepared for the statement which she made in the course of an interesting chat one afternoon recently:

"I was born in Canada, and I never saw a colored man or woman till I came to the States, and I have not seen a great many since. I have never studied the Negro. I think any success that I may have with these songs is the result of intuition rather than anything else."

"The statement can be made, and with justice, too, that May Irwin has made popular more songs than anyone on the American stage today."

Attentive readers no doubt have observed another contradiction. This "broadside" quotes Miss Irwin as saying she had never studied Negroes, and that she sang negro dialect songs well merely through intuition. Yet an article previously mentioned credits her with believing "you have to study the Negro," and saying her attempts to interpret such numbers properly failed until she made a thorough analysis of the Negro personality.

#### VIII. May Irwin's Records

Let's go back to the Talking Machine World's statement that May Irwin had failed to make successful records. I have a poster given to me by a veteran Columbia executive, Walter Forbush, showing photographs of the "talent" employed by that Company in 1906 or 1907. In the lower right hand corner is a likeness of "Miss May Irwin."

Yet I have never seen an Irwin record listed in any Columbia catalog and apparently none was ever issued. It seems reasonable to assume the poster was prepared after May Irwin had agreed to make Columbia records, but before it had been discovered her voice could not be, or had not been, adequately recorded. That would account for the magazine item.

If Columbia didn't market records

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May Irwin sheet music, courtesy Allen Debus.

by the comedienne, Victor soon afterward did. Only six titles were issued, and RCA Victor books indicate all were sung in May, 1907.

The exact days of recording aren't indicated, and perhaps they were turned out at a single session. That appears unlikely, however, considering the difficulty frequently experienced nearly 60 years ago in recording the feminine voice. I imagine Victor offered Miss Irwin a fee to make records of six of her most popular songs and this was decided to be adequate catalog representation.

After that series of performances before the horn in 1907 she appears never to have recorded again for anyone else. Of course, it is possible she had done some experimental cylinder recording in the 1890's, but I have never seen her name in the lists for those days.

Victor's first two May Irwin records were announced in the supplement for July, 1907. They were both single-faced, 12-inch. 31641, "Moses Andrew Jackson, Goodbye," and 31642, "The Bully." The following description was to appear, slightly modified, in the Victor catalog for years:

"This popular comedienne is so closely associated with good humor and droll fun that the mere mention of her name is usually a signal for mirth. She invariably keeps her audience in a laugh-

ing mood with her quaint witticisms and the inimitable way in which she sings her clever songs. Miss Irwin has agreed to make records exclusively for the Victor."

In succeeding yearly catalogs another sentence was added:

"The several records which this favorite entertainer has made for the Victor are delivered in the delightfully humorous manner which has made Miss Irwin famous as a fun maker."

I have never heard "Moses Andrew Jackson," but "The Bully" is not delivered in the raucous, strident style which might be suggested by the term "Negro dialect shout." The record is of good volume, but there is a certain refinement about Miss Irwin's singing of the number with its irresistible tune and reiteration of "when I walk that levee roun', roun', roun', I'm lookin' for that bully an' he must be foun'."

It is an artistic performance. One can understand why it was such a great success in the stage production of "The Widow Jones."

The remaining four Irwin records were rather oddly offered in August, 1907, at the height of "the dull summer season" for the sale of talking machines and records. A small photo of Miss Irwin appeared in the supplement with this commentary:

"To say that Miss Irwin's July records were a great success is putting it mildly indeed. The favorite comedienne's drolleries were laughed at by thousands of her admirers, who have been loudly

calling for 'more.' Miss Irwin therefore consented to give us four more of her famous songs, which are now offered, with the prediction that they will be found to be most pleasing ones."

The July records were 5151, "Mat-ri-mony," 5156, "May Irwin's Frog Song," 5157, "Don't Argify," and 31648, "When You Ain't Got No Money You Needn't Come Around."

When the first list of Victor double-faced records was announced in November, 1908, "Don't Argify" was combined on 16058 with "You Splash Me and I'll Splash You," sung by the English comedienne, Alice Lloyd. In February, 1909, "The Bully" and "When You Ain't Got No Money" were "consolidated" on 35050. And in March, 1913, "May Irwin's Frog Song" was joined in holy wedlock with Clarice Vance's "I'm Wise" on 17253.

"Moses Andrew Jackson," one of the least successful of the records, had a short life. The January, 1910, catalog is the last in which I find it. The same sad fate occurred to the 10-inch "Mat-ri-mony." In double-faced form, the remaining four titles remained in the catalog through 1919.

Perhaps partly because of the popularity of its Clarice Vance coupling, the "Frog Song" proved the most durable of the Irwin records. It kept a place in the catalog until 1923.

After that the name of May Irwin disappeared from Victor lists. Even today thousands of old-timers fondly recall the song which began: "Way down yonder in Yappity-Yank a bullfrog jumped from bank to bank, 'cause he had nothing else to do."

"I am ashamed to recall that as a small boy listening to records in a Victor dealer's shop I tried that sad story of the frog who came to grief because of his vicious propensities, but declined to buy it on the ground: "She don't sing loud enough." The record is sung in an archly confidential style and the volume is not great, but the song is entertaining and deserves its once great popularity.

#### IX. Last Years

After more than four decades as a prime favorite of the theater, May Irwin retired. I have an amusing memory concerned with her later years. A controversy arose in New York as to whether the average theater seat was sufficiently roomy for obese patrons to occupy it in comfort.

Recalling that May Irwin was proverbially broad of beam, one newspaper sent a reporter to interview her and find out if she felt the typical facilities would suitably accommodate her. May and her husband took the interview as a great joke, and May even divulged her seat span.

I have forgotten what it was, but it was impressive, although her husband insisted she had understated the reality. The decision reached was that she could not comfortably ensconce herself in the average theatre chair.

May Irwin had an unusually happy life, and the well-being extended into

her retirement. The one thing that strongly aroused her anger was cruelty to animals. She took legal steps against some theatrical "animal acts," in which she believed the performers to be badly treated.

There was never any fear of her experiencing poverty in her old age. Instead, she was a shrewd business woman. A few years before her death she sold a block of property she owned on Lexington Avenue, New York City, from 54th to 55th street, for a million dollars.

There was wide-spread sadness when it was learned May Irwin had died in New York on October 2, 1938. She was 76. From a death notice in the New York Times we learn:

"... It was the dream of every comedy actor to be with (Augustin) Daly. Miss Irwin stayed with his company four of the greatest years of her long career. Memorable were the names of those in the company with her. There were several Barrymores, John Drew and Otis Skinner, Ada Rehan and Edith Kingdon—she who married George Gould—David Belasco and Virginia Drehr, Mat Fielding, William Gilbert. . . .

"Hit tunes warbled from Miss Irwin's

never slim throat. Among them were such master-pieces as 'Hear Dem Bells,' 'Mr. Johnson, Turn Me Loose,' the foolish 'Frog Song,' 'I Ain't Gonna Work No More,' and 'When You Ain't Got No Money You Needn't Come Around.' It was May Irwin's later boast that she never sang a risqué song or spoke a line that was off color.

"May Irwin was a daughter of Robert E. and Jane Draper Campbell. Her voice was untrained, but a beautiful natural one. Enrico Caruso once said she might go far as a real singer if she studied. Miss Irwin laughed. She said all the technique she needed was to 'take a deep breath and let her go!' To the theater-going public of her day it was enough.

"The climax of her life on the stage, she said, after her retirement to her farm at Clayton, N. Y., near the Thousand Islands, came when she gave what amounted to a 'command performance' before President Wilson in the dark days of the first World War.

"It happened because a press agent for Miss Irwin had published an open letter to Washington officialdom, saying that if the President and his Cabinet would just drop everything, come to her show and laugh, they would feel much better.

"May and her company were in Detroit when 'sources close to the President' telegraphed her, asking if she would come. Elated, the actress and her company cancelled their tour and hurried to Washington.

"There they presented 'No. 33 Washington Square,' Leroy Scott's rollicking comedy. President Wilson and his Cabinet attended. The next day Miss Irwin visited the White House, and the President jokingly made her Secretary of Laughter in his unofficial cabinet.

"When Miss Irwin retired to her farm, where years before she had gone with her ailing sister to find a cure for tuberculosis, she took pleasure in farm management and routine, especially in her blue-blooded cattle, which supplied milk for the neighborhood.

"There, during the long summers, she let life slip by, the advancing years unnoticed. On one occasion she said she did not recall her birthday and did not want to.

"In winter she came often to New York to attend the theater. To her, youth was a thing of the heart, the mind, the soul. Although she talked fondly of the old times, she hated to be thought an old-timer.

"Miss Irwin was married twice. Her first husband, Frederick W. Keller, of St. Louis, to whom she was married in 1878, died in 1886. In 1907 she was married to her manager, Kurt Elsfeldt. He retired from professional life several years ago to breed cattle on the St. Lawrence farm."

The beloved singer also had a winter home at Merritt Island, Fla.

And so, in the style of the old-time movie travelogues, we bid farewell to a gallant trouper, May Irwin, rejoicing that many copies of her records remain to prove her comedy was clean and that, despite the slow onslaught of the years, she remained always young in spirit.

(THE END)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

together by the authors to present a complete picture of the Red Label Series."

Indeed, a work of this sort requires an endless amount of research, not saying anything about the headaches in straightening out the importune snags continuously harassing an author along the way.

This volume is another *must* in a serious collector's library. Now, let us hope that a catalog of the 10-inch DA Series will not take long in making its appearance.

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## SIX COMEDIENNES

### Marion Harris

#### *Fifth of the Six*

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Obscure Early Years

Of the six comediennes under discussion in this series, some, like Elida Morris, had essentially happy lives. The lives of others ended in tragedy.

Marion Harris belongs to the tragic group. The shattering abrupt ending of her life while she was still comparatively young seems almost as appalling, in retrospect, as does Clarice Vance's spending her last

days, hopelessly senile, in a mental institution. But Miss Harris' singing, like that of the earlier comedienne, had given pleasure, while she lived, to millions of admirers.

Even though Marion Harris, whose real name was Mary Ellen Harrison, is said to have come from a prominent Kentucky family, the details of her early life are obscure and hard to trace.

Years ago I read somewhere that she was a grandniece of Benjamin Harrison, the first American President to allow his voice to be recorded (by Berliner) on commercial records. I cannot now find the source of that statement. It may have appeared in *The Voice of the Victor*, but a search of my bound volumes has not turned it up.

A Columbia record catalog of 40 years ago said the comedienne was "a granddaughter of General Harrison of Civil War fame." This may have been a reference to President Harrison, who served in the War and in 1865 was brevetted a Brigadier General of Volunteers. But if so, which is right—grandniece or granddaughter?

After Marion Harris died on April 23, 1944, a newspaper article quoted her daughter as saying the singer's father had been a senator from Kentucky, but that statement is wrong. Kentucky has never had a Senator Harrison. Perhaps, Mary Ellen's father was a member of the House of Representatives or served in the Kentucky Legislature, but he was not a United States senator.

A few months ago I obtained from the New York City Department of Public Health a photostatic copy of Marion Harris' death certificate. I read it at breakfast in a restaurant, but must have lost it on the way home. I have never seen it since.

However, it disappointed me, for it told little I didn't know. And it repeated the erroneous statement newspapers had made that Miss Harris was only 38 when she died.

The name of Marion Harris' father was given as James Harrison. I have forgotten her mother's maiden name, but believe Mrs. Harrison was a native of Indiana.

A death notice in the *New York Daily Mirror* said Marion Harris was born in Henderson, Ky. "A descendant of President Harrison, she started her career after escaping from a convent, at 14." This may be supplemented by the following, in *Variety*:

"Miss Harris began her theatrical career by singing with colored slides that motion picture houses used to use, and it was in an obscure theater that the late Vernon Castle discovered her."

"She was brought to New York by Charles Dillingham and opened in the latter's star-studded production of 'Stop, Look and Listen,' which preemed at the Globe theater, now a film house. She later appeared in 'Ziegfeld's Midnight Frolic,' 'Yours Truly' and other successful musical shows."

"She later diverted to vaudeville, where she was highly popular for years, and toured the bigtime circuits, playing many repeats at the Palace, N. Y."

#### II. Victor Recording Artist

The foregoing scanty information brings us to the period when Marion Harris became a Victor recording artist.

In those days, Vernon and Mrs. Castle supervised the making of Victor dance records, so it is a reasonable speculation that when Castle discovered the vivacious girl in that "obscure theater," he suggested to Victor's artist and repertoire department that she was a good singer



Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

of popular songs and should become a well-liked recording artist.

Or perhaps she was engaged because of her success in "Stop, Look and Listen."

However that may have been, Marion Harris' Victor recording career began late in 1916 and continued approximately three years. Her last acoustically recorded Victor was issued in September, 1919. Nearly nine years later she made one electric Victor disc.

The first two Harris records were issued in the November, 1916, list. Like all the popular song records of that month, they were without individual comment. On 18133 she sang "I Ain't Got Nobody Much" (later usually known as "I Ain't Got Nobody"). It is today something of a popular classic. The other side was "Way Out Yonder in the Golden West," rousing rendered by the Avon Comedy Four.

Her second offering, on 18143, was "I'm Gonna Make Hay While the Sun Shines in Virginia." To help it to success, it had the most popular star of that era, Billy Murray, making everybody laugh by singing on the reverse side, "There's A Little Bit Of Bad In Every Good Little Girl."

Since I shall give at the end of this article the most complete list of Marion Harris records I have been able to prepare, I shall not mention them all in detail. For one thing, the monthly supplements in which the records appeared contained little quotable material and there are almost no personal references to the singer herself.

I may say, now, however, that "I Ain't Got Nobody" may have been her most popular Victor recording, although it possibly was beaten by the 1917 "They Go Wild, Simply Wild, Over Me," or the 1919 "After You're Gone" and "A Good Man Is Hard To Find."

And, in view of Miss Harris' later specialized fame as a singer of "blues" or songs with a bluish tinge, it is interesting that a February, 1917, record offered her interpretation of "The Paradise Blues"—the first song she had sung with "blues" in the title.

In June, 1917, Victor proved its good opinion of the young comedienne by pairing her in a duet with the king of all pioneer recording comedians, Billy Murray. They sang a Jerome Kern song, "I Wonder Why," from "Love o' Mike." And this apparently was the only recorded duet in which Marion Harris ever took part. With that exception, she was always a solo artist.

Another number with a blues flavor, "Everybody's Crazy 'Bout the Doggone Blues, But I'm Happy," was announced in May, 1918. The supplement description is amusing:

"This clever comedienne puts a new complexion on life; she even gives a new turn to the hoary old story of Jonah and the Whale. And the band, not to be behind, does its own little bit, the trombone taking an occasional slide up the scale accompanied by an assorted group of squeaks and clatters."

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This picture of Marion Harris in the September 1918 Victor record catalog, had the sub-title: "Recent Portrait of a Very Popular Little Lady."



Marion Harris' photo appeared on the cover of the Brunswick record supplement for October, 1922, after she had signed an exclusive Brunswick contract.

The Harris record for October, 1918, "Good-Bye, Alexander; Good-Bye, Honey Boy," has added interest because its coupling, "When Uncle Joe Steps Into France," was the last Victor record the veteran comedians, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, ever made. Of the A side, the supplement said:

"Marion Harris sure has a way of her own of singing a song—at least she sings some of the time, but she talks through the music as often as not, catching up with the tune just when she feels like it."

Both sides must have amused all the hearers who were not too ill with "Spanish influenza" to see the funny side of anything.

Miss Harris seems to have been fond of songs by the Negro writers, Henry Creamer and Turner Layton. They wrote "Everybody's Crazy 'Bout the Doggone Blues" and "Good-Bye, Alexander," and were also responsible for "After You've Gone," issued in January, 1919.

This song, whose tune has a marked resemblance to that of "Peg o' My Heart," became instantly popular and is now a standard piece for dance bands. The supplement remarked:

"Marion Harris always manages to make the most of her songs, and she certainly gets all the longing there is into the word, 'away,' with her own inimitable Negro dialect. The song is that of a disconsolate lady of color who cannot bear to part with her sweetheart, and the music, in its yearning tenderness, coupled with the singer's clever skill, makes a very complete little picture of blighted affection that is not without an undercurrent of humor."

Only three more acoustic Marion Harris records were issued by Victor. "A Good Man Is Hard To Find" came out in May; "Jazz Baby" in July, and the last, "Take Me To The Land Of Jazz" in September. It is noteworthy because its mating, "I

Ain't 'en Got 'en No Time To Have Thê Blues," was the first Victor duet record by Billy Murray and Ed Smalle.

Here is an interesting paragraph, which should have been quoted earlier, from the September, 1918, Victor supplement:

"Marion Harris had the unexpected pleasure of hearing the first of her new records at a picnic upon a mountain top in the far West. Learning that she had not yet heard the record, some friends took it and a Victrola along, by way of a surprise."

### III. Marion Sings for Columbia

It isn't clear why Marion Harris and Victor ended their three-year association. Off-hand, I would think it might have been because Columbia offered her a better contract, but exactly a year elapsed between the appearance of the comedienne's final Victor record and her first Columbia.

When her initial Columbia records were announced, however, they were treated as an event. Page three of the September, 1920, Columbia Supplement was headed: "ANNOUNCING MARION HARRIS." This was followed by an enthusiastic commentary, in which for the first time emphasis was laid on her abilities as an interpreter of blues:

"The great constellation of vaudeville stars in the Columbia firmament has added one more of the first magnitude — Marion Harris.

"Marion Harris is the latest Exclusive Columbia Artist and one who brings to her records and artistry which has won love from all who have seen her, a personality which reflects in every note of her singing, a gift of interpretation and impersonation rarely equalled, and a voice—well, a voice which is simply Marion Harris and that's enough.

"Marion Harris is a Kentucky girl and a descendant of Benjamin Harrison. For the last six months she has charmed thousands of music-loving vaudeville fans and now come her exclusive Columbia records to charm more thousands.

"Since the advent of 'Blues' Miss

Harris has risen to preeminent heights as a singer of this character of song. Her four opening Columbia announcements are all 'Blues' and, metaphorically speaking, they range all the way from Baby Blue, Plain Blue, and Indigo, to deep Ultramarine!"

Three of the four Harris songs for September had "Blues" in the title. They were "Left All Alone Again Blues," "The St. Louis Blues" (already regarded in 1920 as perhaps the greatest of all blues numbers),

(Continued on page 49)

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concave brass with applied design. Reverse: "Eingtr. Muster."

5. The tree plays an important part in this Picture button: "Woodland Vows," taken from a painting by J. R. Beyschlag. Pressed brass.

6. Conventionalized tree on a brass "Paris Back." Reverse: "T.W. & W.M - Paris - Breveté."

7. Pine tree and Star: a design emblematic of Christmas and also of the state of Maine. Flat, pressed brass with loop shank. An Overall button.

8. Another Oriental scene, with distant buildings and appropriate trees in the foreground. Pressed brass.

9. Section of a tree, ornamented with flowers. Flat Light Metal with colored flowers and darker background.

10. Livery button with Oak (?) tree and motto ("Through") of the Hamilton Family. One-piece, convex, silver-plated. Reverse: "C. & H. Bullivant - Birmingham."

11. Section of an (unidentified) tree, which serves as background for two woodpeckers. Flat, bronze-finished brass.

12. Giant Cactus, on one-piece, convex copper. This button was converted from a token, made for use in an Arizona city.

13. Oriental scene: pewter Palm tree on tinted brass.

14. Torso of a tree, rendered in pressed brass.

15. Ruined temple with surrounding trees. Convex metal, found with both gilt and silver finish.

16. Livery button: tree stump with branches, the crest of the Balfour Family. One-piece, convex, gold-plated. Reverse: "Firmen & Sons - London."

17. The tree on this Clamp-back Overall button is small and crude, but since the words "Pine Tree" also appear, I think it qualifies as a Tree button. Concave steel.

18. Tree and fence. Tinted brass with nicolite border.

19. Cut-up sections of tree, horizontally arranged. Convex pressed brass.

20. Realistic log of Modern Plastic, with sterling silver axe.

21. Tree branches, rendered in Light Metal. Colored border.

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their location, and whatever the season, trees are always beautiful. Even on buttons, their strength and grace is obvious, and their importance manifest.

Joyce Kilmer's poem, "Trees," is widely known and quoted, but its message can never be overemphasized. For while men have succeeded in doing and making many wonderful things — some of them almost inconceivable — the fact remains that "only God can make a tree!"

\*Drawings of some of these buttons have appeared before, in HOBBIES and "Button Parade." They show greater detail than photographs can convey.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

and "The Homesickness Blues." The coupling of "Left All Alone" was "Nobody But Me."

You probably observed the eulogistic write-up referred to Marion Harris as a descendant of President Harrison, but didn't define the relationship. By way of added interest, the following from the 1922 Columbia catalog may be quoted:

"Marion Harris, who really is Mary Ellen Harrison, is a granddaughter of the late General Harrison of Civil War fame. When asked how she came to choose Negro songs for her type, Miss Harris guessed, 'It just came naturally.' "When you first get over stage fright your one instinctive thought is to please. In order to please you must do your best, and you usually do what comes naturally. So I just naturally started singing Southern dialect songs and the modern blues songs, which closely resemble the Negro folk songs."

As evidence of Columbia's pride in obtaining Marion Harris, a full page advertisement in a December, 1920, *Saturday Evening Post* prominently mentioned her as one of the top Columbia stars.

The titles of the records Miss Harris made during the two years she sang for Columbia speak for themselves so clearly there seems no need to discuss them individually, and the supplement remarks are usually too perfunctory to justify quotation.

It is worthy of note, however, that one of the records combines two great blues songs—"Beale Street Blues" and "The Memphis Blues." It is also noteworthy that the comedienne made both sides of all her Columbia records. She was never coupled with anyone else.

The same thing is true of the Brunswicks which she began making late in 1922.

I have a baffling half-recollection of hearing or reading that Marion Harris and the Columbia Saxophone Sextet made some personal appearances together as publicity for their records, and that she and the Shannon Four shared concerts under Columbia auspices. I asked Wilfred Glenn, the Shannon's basso and manager about this, but he replied: "We worked with so many artists I don't remember whether we ever gave concerts with Marion Harris."

(To be continued)





# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

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JIM WALSH

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## SIX COMEDIENNES

### Marion Harris

#### *Fifth of the Six*

By JIM WALSH

(Continued)

#### IV. Brunswick Recordings

It is odd that Marion Harris recorded for the three leading makers of lateral-cut discs—Victor, Columbia, and Brunswick—one after the other. Her Brunswick association was the longest and perhaps the most successful of the three.

She left Columbia when it was

facing bankruptcy and joined Brunswick as it was gaining the reputation of being the most alert and progressive American phonograph company.

Miss Harris' stage appearances must have grown steadily in popularity during the two years she made Columbia records, for Brunswick treated her engagement as sensational news.

Her photograph was published on the cover of the October, 1922, Brunswick supplement, and a "rave" notice appeared on page 6, under the heading, "Marion Harris, the Biggest Star in Vaudeville Today and Exclusive Brunswick artist."

"The most dazzling singing comedienne on the metropolitan stage today is Marion Harris, and this is her first recording

since she became an exclusive Brunswick artist.

"In both these entertaining songs, 'My Cradle Melody' and 'I'm Just Wild About Harry' (from the big hit, 'Shuffle Along'), she shows her magic in interpretation. In a different kind of mesmerism and in a wonderful ability to make the other fellow 'get the point.'

"Miss Harris is a broadcaster of entertainment, of fun, of health and of happiness—better get tuned-in with her wave-length for her vibrations are reaching all over America."

How ironic those references to "entertainment, fun, health and happiness" seem in view of the way Marion Harris' last days were spent!

Another Harris record was issued the same month—"Sweet Indiana Home," and "Blue." In it, as well as in the one just reviewed, she was accompanied by Isham Jones' Orchestra, a sure indication that Brunswick considered her an acquisition out of the ordinary. When Al Jolson signed an exclusive Brunswick contract in 1924, the Jones Orchestra was assigned to accompany him.

Marion's record for January, 1923, combined two big hits of a rather unrefined order: "Aggravatin' Papa" and "Hot Lips." The supplement said:

"Marion Harris, the ever-applauded comedienne, is up to her habitual tricks of making the world laugh. Whether you are young or old your best medicine for what ails you is Miss Harris' singing about 'Aggravating Papa' and 'Hot Lips.' 'She's musical, witty, droll, whimsical and wholesome, and she carries her points and personality as surely in these song-scenes right through the phonograph horn as she does across the footlights on Broadway."

(How limping, rather than limpid, the writing of all other supplement annotators appears compared to the delightfully graceful prose of Victor's Jim Richardson!)

The complete Brunswick catalog for 1923 gave Marion Harris enthusiastic praise:

"A supreme artist in her own particular field is Marion Harris, vaudeville's darling, known from coast to coast as 'the Queen of Blues Singers.'

"Her voice has a sweetness and sympathy of deep appeal and her charming prettiness and good humor always bring the maximum of encores on the Keith Vaudeville Circuit, where she is a headliner.

"Marion Harris usually wins the house to the point of stopping the show and the popularity of her records may be judged by the fact that one of them broke all records for number of copies sold."

That last statement is puzzling. The reference must be to Brunswick records only, for no Marion Harris record for any company ever ranked with the all-time biggest sellers, much less breaking "all records for number of copies sold." Perhaps one

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was the largest Brunswick seller up to that time, but which?

That 1923 catalog contains only five double-faced records by her. The most likely choice seems the "Aggravating Papa" and "Hot Lips" coupling. Possibly the prize winner may have been the combination of "Carolina in the Morning" and "Home-sick." But probably her duo of "Running Wild" and "You've Got to See Mama Every Night," issued later in 1923, outsold either of those.

The 1924 catalog changed the sketch about the comedienne:

"Marion Harris, the inimitable, enjoys the enviable position of being a reigning favorite in Keith's Vaudeville. Her great popularity is due to a magnetic personality added to a charming and fascinating voice which has a very deep appeal.

"As a singer with great emotional qualities, she is unsurpassed. Miss Harris is largely responsible for the rapidly increasing demand for popular vocal records.

"Her splendid Brunswick records of unusual, though artistic, interpretations are much called for by her many enthusiastic and exacting admirers."

The same descriptive matter was reproduced in the 1925 catalog, which contained 22 double-faced Marion Harris records. But by 1927, after electric recording had become standard, Brunswick seems to have lost some of its enthusiasm for its "blues" specialist and comedy song star.

All but five of the acoustic records had been dropped, and the "editorial comment" was gone. Three electric recordings were listed.

The acoustics which had survived the electrical holocaust were 2610, 2622, 2651, 2735, and 2747. The lowest numbered electrical was 2807, "Does My Sweetie Do—and How" and "I Can't Realize."

When the catalog listing all Brunswick records up to January 1, 1928, made its appearance, every one by Marion Harris was gone. What happened? The singer must have had a disagreement with Brunswick, for it doesn't seem likely her records would suddenly have lost so much popular-

ity it was no longer worth while to offer any.

Meanwhile, after an absence of eight and one-half years, the comedienne returned to the Victor list in March, 1928, singing "Did You Mean It?" and "The Man I Love." The supplement comment was brief:

"Notice the return of Marion Harris; without being technically 'blues' songs these are as blue as the Monday tub, as blue as the ocean three days out. The first is from 'A Night in Spain,' in which she has been starring."

This was the last Victor record by Marion Harris. Her name remained absent from the Brunswick catalog until the depression year, 1930, when records had almost ceased to sell.

Then, if there had been differences between her and Brunswick, they apparently were reconciled. The catalog listing records up to December 1, 1930, has five by her, beginning with "Funny, Dear, What Love Can Do" and "Nobody's Using It Now" (4663), and ending with 4873, "Little White Lies" and "If I Could Be With You." Also included was an electrical remake of "Nobody's Sweetheart."

A thin supplementary catalog, listing records issued from December 1, 1930, to February 1, 1932 (business was so bad it wasn't worth while to print another complete new yearly catalog) had two more Harris records: 4972, "He's Not Worth Your Tears," and "My Man From Caroline," and 6016, "Blue Again" and "He's My Secret Passion."

The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company was about to go out of the record business, although the Brunswick name was transferred to another firm, and, as far as my files in-

dicate, these were the last records Marion Harris made for any American company. Her stage successes continued, but in the early 1930's she went to England.

Apparently the transfer to England was made in 1932, for in that year English Columbia issued records by her. I know of two, but there may have been more. In June, 1932, *The Gramophone* reviewed Columbia record DB 822:

"Marion Harris puts on her best baby voice for 'Is I In Love? I Is,' an epic of triteness, but made amusing by this singer, who never misses a point anywhere."

In July, the *Gramophone* critic said:

"Marion Harris . . . gets every ounce of meaning out of 'Gettin' Sentimental' and 'Spring is Here Again' (Columbia DB851.) Here is an artist who is a master—or mistress—of the recording art."

The next mention I have found of a Marion Harris record is in *The Gramophone* for May, 1934. It was Decca F 3954, and the review is rather unfavorable:

"As Marion Harris is reputed to be responsible for introducing 'One Morning in May' into this country one would have expected her record of it to be the shining example to all other singers of the best possible way to sing the song.

"I was disappointed, therefore, to find that it is not by any means the best I have heard and that I should buy the record for 'Oo-Oo-Ooh! Honey!' rather than for 'One Morning in May,' which she sings disjointedly and with very little of that grace and polish that usually accompanies everything this cabaret queen does."

Even more unfavorable was the October, 1934, review of her Decca record of "Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday" and "Singing the Blues."

"Something strange here. 'Singing the Blues' was the title made famous by Trumbauer's Orchestra some years ago, when it was attributed to him.

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"But the point is immaterial, for Miss Harris does not do it justice, whatever it is. Her voice is pitched too high for this style of singing, and some of her low notes verge on the extraordinary."

*Gramophone* indexes of succeeding years contain no mention of Marion Harris.

I have an old scrapbook clipping, dated October 11, which tells something of Marion Harris' theatrical activities while she was still in New York. I believe it must have appeared in 1930:

"Marion Harris has entered the cast of the 'Second Little Show' at the Royale Theater and will be featured with Al Trahan and Jay C. Flippen.

"She will sing a group of new songs written especially for her by three composers of current hits. Herman Hupfeld, who has already contributed 'Sing Something Simple' to the 'Little Show,' has written a 'blue' number which is called 'One More Night.'

"John Green and Edward Heyman, who are responsible for the popular English number, 'Body and Soul,' have turned out another for Miss Harris called 'Manikin.' Maurice Hamilton and Grace Henry, contributors to the first 'Little Show' score, have done one titled 'I Love to be Blue.'

"The 'Second Little Show' marks Miss Harris' first New York stage appearance in three years, most of which time has been spent in radio work, making records, and in pictures. She is still contracted to Paramount to make a few pictures of the type referred to as 'shorts.'"

I take it that the "shorts" Miss Harris made were "talkie" versions of typical vaudeville singing acts that were popular in the early days of sound films.

#### V. Tragic Last Days

As the 1930's gave way to the '40's the name of Marion Harris began to seem, to those who thought of her at all, like an echo out of the past.

Her records had disappeared from American catalogs; she was no longer seen in vaudeville or on the New York stage; and when her former admirers, who didn't know she was living in England, spoke of her it was probably to wonder whether she were still alive.

They did not suspect how tragic life had become for her since a second World War had begun to take a dreadful toll of the British Isles.

The sad story of the comedienne's last days came to a searing conclusion on the evening of April 23, 1944. Newspaper stories soon afterward revealed she had been burned to death in a New York hotel room.

Marion Harris was one of the unfortunate hundreds of men and women who died that year—and who die every year—from smoking in bed.

While death from a smoldering cigaret does not convey all the overpowering pathos of paralyzed Arthur Fields' being consumed by fire in the ruins of a Florida nursing home, the thought is still enough to cause a feeling of compassionate horror.

The following appeared in the *New York Daily Mirror*:

"Marion Harris, once Broadway headliner, who came here from London to escape the war, was found dead early yesterday in a charred hotel room bed, set afire by a cigaret she had been smoking.

"Registered at the hotel as Mrs. Marion Urry, her real identity was not known until Peggy Hopkins Joyce, who knew her when she was a Ziegfeld Midnight Frolics star, provided police with the information.

"Suffering from shock after Nazi bombs demolished her home in England, and physicians advised her to come here where she could obtain special foods, Miss Harris left her husband, Leonard Urry, actor, two months ago in London and entered Medical Center here on her arrival.

"She was discharged April 15, and took a room at the Hotel Le Marquis, 12 E. 31st St. From there she had got in touch with old friends, including Miss Joyce, and they had planned to have dinner together in a few days.

"When police and firemen arrived, the 38-year-old musical comedy actress, dancer, and blues singer was unconscious and badly burned. Inhalators could not revive her.

"She was a star of Gene Buck's 'Yours Truly,' toured the Keith vaudeville circuit for years, and her appearances at the Palace were considered events."

This article brings up the question of Marion Harris' age. She was certainly far more than 38. Twenty-eight years had passed since she made her first Victor record in 1916. This would mean, if 38 were correct, that her recording career began at the age of 10.

Even if she were only 20 when that first record appeared, she would have been 48 when she died in that hotel room. How ironic that shattered nerves caused her to flee the "blitz" in England only to suffer an agonizing fiery death in New York!

The *New York Daily News* termed Leonard Urry a "theatrical agent." It said the bombed-out home was in London and that Miss Harris had been treated at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center. It added:

"Some time during the afternoon she talked with Miss Joyce. Then, apparently, she fell asleep while smoking a cigaret.

"The fire went undetected until around 6 p.m. when a guest in the hotel smelled smoke. Miss Harris died a few minutes after being removed from her room. Damage to the hotel was minor."

Variety's death notice provided the following information:

"Blonde and slender, Miss Harris' soft-voiced rendition of blues songs gained her nation-wide popularity.

"In the early 1930's she sang over a coast-to-coast radio network regularly and became known as 'The Little Girl With the Big Voice.' She also made many recordings, probably her best known being 'The Man I Love' and 'I Ain't Got Nobody.'"

#### VI. Marion Harris, Jr.

None of the death notices gave any information as to whether Marion Harris' parents were living or whether there were surviving brothers and sisters.

The singer was married three times. According to Variety: "Miss Harris was married in 1924 to Rush Hughes, son of Rupert Hughes, novelist and playwright. They had two children, Rush Jr., and Mary Ellen.

"Divorce ended the marriage in 1928. Miss Harris went to London about 10 years ago to appear in a show, and several years ago she was married to Urry."

In October, 1953, the name of Marion Harris appeared again in theatrical news, but this time the subject was the comedienne's daughter,

who had adopted her mother's name for stage purposes, and was hoping for her own show business career.

An interview with her in the Sunday *New York Mirror* contained some questionable statements, such as the one already quoted about Marion Harrison's father having been a U.S. senator.

It also placed the scene of her death in the Waldorf-Astoria. And, most far-fetched of all, it said Miss Harris, in 1918, was a nude dancer in a New York musical comedy. By that year her career as a comedienne was well established and she was certainly not a nude, nor even a semi-nude, performer.

The article, as witness the following paragraph, said Marion ran away from home because her parents "for some reason" objected to her appearing undraped on the stage. As we have seen, one source said she left a convent at the age of 14 to go on the stage:

"'Mama,' said Junior, in an interview in her new apartment on New York's fashionable East Side, 'had to run away from home, because her family, for some reason, didn't approve of her appearing on the stage as a nude. Her father was a United States senator, and most of the family was in the diplomatic corps, so she changed her name from Mary Ellen Harrison to Marion Harris.'"

It is obvious, however, as witness the old Columbia catalogs, that the singer never concealed her real name, Mary Ellen Harrison. The article continues:

"Junior's father was Robert Williams, a Broadway and movie actor who was starred, along with Jean Harlow, in 'Platinum Blonde.'

"'When I was three years old,' said Marion Junior, 'Mother sent me to England with a governess, to be brought up there. She thought I should be raised in the culture of the Old World. The first time I came here, for six months, was in 1947, after I was released from the British Army, with which I served as an ambulance driver in North Africa and Egypt.'

"Junior had been trained as a dramatic actress at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, in London, and she had played Shakespearian productions at Stratford, and in plays with Noel Coward. After the war she started singing in supper clubs.

"'I've been making as much as 500 pounds a week,' said Marion Junior, 'singing in such chic spots as the Colony, in London, but I came back to America because no matter how successful you are anywhere else, you're not really a success until you've had an American success.'

"Marion has been singing some of the same ballads her mother sang, such as 'Thanks for the Buggy Ride,' 'My Canary Has Circles Under His Eyes,' and others, for considerably less than 500 pounds a week, in her first American appearance at One Fifth Avenue. 'But it's a beginning,' says Junior. 'Maybe not the same beginning as Mother's, but as close to it as I can get.'"

According to Variety, "Junior" didn't want to use her mother's name and preferred to "make it on her own" as Marilyn Williams, but the management under which she was to appear in New York insisted on billing her as her mother's daughter.

Variety further said: "Miss Williams is English, having been born of an English father when Miss Harris played London. He was the late star's second husband." (This



Marion Harris (inset) was Broadway's leading glamor girl in 1918; her daughter, Marion, Jr., right, is trying to follow in her footsteps.  
—From the October 25, 1953, New York Sunday Mirror Magazine

leaves it uncertain as to when she divorced Williams and married Urry.)

*Variety* also mentioned that another blonde girl was making night club appearances as Aileen Stanley Jr., but was not related to the famous comedienne, who had been her professional coach and permitted her to take the name.

I don't know what has become of either Marion Harris Jr., or "Aileen Stanley Jr.," whom I met at the 1948 John Bieling Day party in Hempstead, N. Y., but neither seems likely to become as successful as the distinguished ladies from whom they borrowed their stage names.

However, I can say with certainty that collectors who cherish the recordings of the original Marion Harris will keep her memory green for many years to come.

—0—

#### RECORDS BY MARION HARRIS (VICTOR, 1916-19)

- 18133 I Ain't Got Nobody Much; / Way Out Yonder in the Golden West (Avon Comedy Four)
- 18143 I'm Gonna Make Hay While the Sun Shines in Virginia; / There's a Little Bit of Bad in Every Good Little Girl (Billy Murray)
- 18152 My Syncopated Melody Man; / Paradise Blues
- 18185 Don't Leave Me, Daddy; / Come Along to Caroline (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan)
- 18270 I Wonder Why (duet with Billy Murray); / Nesting Time in Flatbush (Ada Jones and Billy Murray)
- 18343 They Go Wild, Simply Wild, Over Me; / Some Sweet Day
- 18398 When I Hear That Jazz Band Play; / Lily of the Valley (Collins & Harlan)
- 18443 Everybody's Crazy 'Bout the Dog-

- gone Blues; / In the Land o' Yamo Yamo (Gus Van and Joe Schenk)
- 18482 There's a Little Lump of Sugar Down in Dixie; / Story Book Ball, (Murray)
- 18486 When Alexander Takes His Rag-time Band to France; / I'm Gonna Pin My Medal on the Girl I Left Behind (Peerless Quartet)
- 18492 Good-bye, Alexander; / When Uncle Joe Steps into France (Collins and Harlan)
- 18493 Mammy's Chocolate Soldier; / When You Sang "Hush-a-bye, Baby" to Me (Sterling Trio)
- 18509 After You've Gone; / I'm Glad I Can Make You Cry (Henry Burr)
- 18535 A Good Man is Hard to Find; / For Johnny and Me
- 18555 Jazz Baby; / Bring Back Those Wonderful Days (Arthur Fields)
- 18593 Take Me to the Land of Jazz; / I Ain't Got No Time to Have the Blues (Billy Murray and Ed Smalle)

#### VICTOR (1928)

- 21116 Man I Love; / Did You Mean It?

#### COLUMBIA (1920-1922)

- A2939 Everybody But Me; / Left All Alone Again Blues
- A2944 Homesickness Blues; / St. Louis Blues
- A2968 He Done Me Wrong; / Oh Judge, He Treats Me Mean
- A3300 I Told You So; / Sweet Mama, Papa's Getting Mad
- A3328 I'm a Jazz Vampire; / Never Let No One Man Worry Your Mind
- A3353 Grieving for You; / Yankee
- A3367 I'm Gonna Do It If I Like It; / Look for the Silver Lining
- A3371 I Ain't Got Nobody; / Where Is My Daddy Now Blues
- A3433 I Wonder Where My Sweet Daddy's Gone; / I'm Nobody's Baby
- A3457 I'm Looking for a Bluebird; / Sweet Cookie
- A3474 Beale Street Blues; / Memphis Blues
- A3555 Cuddle-Up Blues; / I Wonder Where He Went and When He's Coming Back Blues
- A3593 Poor Little Me; / Some Sunny Day

- A3604 Malinda Brown; / Maybe You Think You're Fooling Baby
- A3630 Fickle Flo; / Who'll Take My Place?
- A3646 Haunting Blues; / Nobody Lied When They Said I Cried About You
- A3659 Away Down South; / Send Back My Honeyman

#### BRUNSWICK (1922-1926)

- 2309 I'm Just Wild About Harry; / My Cradle Melody
- 2310 Sweet Indiana Home; / Blue
- 2318 Dixie Highway; / Brother-in-Law Dan
- 2329 Carolina in the Morning; / Homesick
- 2345 Aggravatin' Papa; / Hot Lips
- 2361 Mississippi Choo Choo; / Who Cares?
- 2370 I Gave You Up Just Before You Threw Me Down; / Rose of the Rio Grande
- 2395 I Ain't Got Nobody; / St. Louis Blues
- 2410 Runnin' Wild; / You've Got to See Mama Every Night
- 2421 Beside a Babbling Brook; / Dearest
- 2434 That Red-Head Gal; / Two-time Dan
- 2443 Waitin' for the Evenin' Mail; / Who's Sorry Now?
- 2458 Dirty Hands, Dirty Face; / Someone Else Walked Right In
- 2470 'Tain't Nuthin' Else; / I've Been Saving for a Rainy Day
- 2494 I've Got a Cross-Eyed Papa But He Looks Straight to Me; / Lovey Came Back
- 2513 Stealing to Virginia; / Your Mama's Gonna Slow You Down
- 2539 Before You Go; / Nashville Nightingale
- 2552 I Don't Want You to Cry Over Me; / St. Louis Gal
- 2610 It Had to Be You; / How Come You Do Me Like You Do?
- 2622 Jealous; / Hey Hey and Hee Hee
- 2651 There'll be Some Changes Made; / I Can't Get the One I Want
- 2672 Go, Emmaline; / Wanted-Someone to Love
- 2735 Somebody Loves Me; / Charleston Charlie

(Continued on page 34)



## HOBBIES 20-YEAR LIST

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

#### 1942-62 Articles

1942—Jan., Introduction; Mar., Edward M. Favor; Apr. through June, Billy Murray; July and Aug., John Bieling; Sept. and Oct., Albert Campbell; Nov. and Dec., Arthur Collins.

1943—Jan., Arthur Collins (concluded); Feb. and Mar., Byron G. Harlan; Apr. through June, Henry Burr; July and Oct., Steve Porter; Nov. and Dec., Harry MacDonough.

1944—Jan. and Feb., S. H. Dudley; Mar., William F. Hooley; Apr., Bob Roberts; May, Performers Who Used More Than One Name; June, Billy Golden; July, J. W. Myers; Aug., Some Minor Artists; Sept., George W. Johnson; Oct., George J. Gaskin; Nov. and Dec., Russell Hunting.

1945—Jan. and Feb., Russell Hunting (concluded); Mar. thru May, Dan W. Quinn; June, Are These the Supreme 15?; July through Sept., Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison (John Young and Frederick Wheeler); Oct. through Dec., Collectors Vote on the Supreme 15.

1946—Collectors Vote on the Supreme 15 (concluded); Feb. through Apr., Edward W. Meeker; May, More About S. H. Dudley; June through Dec., Ada Jones.

1947—Jan., Ada Jones (concluded); Feb., John Bieling Gives a Party; Mar. through Aug., Len Spencer; Sept., Sad News About S. H. Dudley; Oct. and Nov., Eugene C. Rose; Dec., "The Cheapest Talking Machine."

1948—Jan., John Bieling Gives Another Party; Feb., Gilbert Girard; Mar., Joe Belmont; Apr. and May, Grace Spencer; June, The Death of John Bieling; July, Frederic C. Freemantel; Aug., Reinald Werrenrath; Sept. through Nov., Vess L. Ossman; Dec., Another Memorable John Bieling Day.

1949—Jan. and Feb., Vess L. Ossman (concluded); Mar. thru Oct., Frank C. Stanley; Nov., Will Oakland; Dec., Notes from Early Victor Catalogs.

1950—Jan., Notes from Early Victor Catalogs (concluded); Feb., Billy Whitlock; Mar. through May, Richard Jose; June and July, Fred Duprez; Aug., Harry Lauder; Sept. and Oct., Bert Williams; Dec., The Best John Bieling Day.

1951—Jan. through Apr., Cal Stewart; May, Frank Coombs and William H. Thompson; June, Nat M. Wills; July, Manuel Romain; Aug. and Sept., Elizabeth Spencer; Oct., Charles Harrison and Beulah Gaylord Young (incomplete); Nov. and Dec., Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scanlan).

1952—Jan. and Feb., Walter Van Brunt (concluded); Mar., Charles Harrison and Beulah Gaylord Young (complete revision); Apr., Estella Louise Mann; May, First Ten Years of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists"; June and July, Albert Edmund Brown, Frederic Martin, and W. Francis Pirth; Aug., The Phonograph's 75th Anniversary; Sept. through Nov., Eddie Morton; Dec., Charles Adams Prince.

1953—Jan., Charles Adams Prince (concluded); Feb., George N. and Audley F. Dudley; Mar., Peter and Daniel Wyper and Alexander Prince; Apr. and May, More About the Early Days of the Phonograph; June through Aug., Arthur Fields; Sept. through Dec., Frank Crumit.

1954—Jan., Albert Benzler; Feb. and Mar., Albert Spalding; Apr. and May, Helen Trix; June and July, Ada Jones and the Shannon Four Give a Concert in Roanoke, Va.; Aug. and Sept., Guido and Pietro Deiro; Oct. and Nov., Pietro Frosini; Dec., More Early History of the Phonograph.

1955—Jan. through Mar., George O'Connor; Apr., Jottings from Old Catalogs; May and June, Ed Smalle; July and Aug., Silas Leachman; Sept., Vivian and Rosetta Duncan; Oct., Lewis James; Nov. and Dec., Morton Harvey.

1956—Jan. through Apr., Fred Van Eps; May, Murry K. Hill; June, The Champion Duet Singer (Henry Burr); July and Aug., Taurino Parvis; Sept. and Oct., George Alexander; Nov. and Dec., Mary Jordan.

1957—Jan., Sir George Robey; Feb. and Mar., Gene Austin; Apr. and May, The Record Makers Give a Concert in Pulaski, Va.; June and July, Gene Greene; Aug., Harvey Hindermeyer; Sept., Art Gillham; Oct., Edwin M. Whitney; Nov. and Dec., Charles D'Almaine.

1958—Charles D'Almaine (concluded), and Harry C. Browne; Feb., John J. Kimmel; Mar., Reed Miller; Apr., Vaughn De Leath; May, Billy Williams; June, Harry Tally and Harry Mayo; July through Oct., Len Spencer As His Daughter Ethel Lovingly Recalls Him; Nov., Ray Walker Recalls Entertaining Troops; Dec., Charles Hart.

1959—Charles Hart (concluded); Feb., Walter B. Rogers and Jules Levy; Mar. through Aug., Billy Jones and Ernest Hare; Sept. and Oct., Lambert Murphy; Nov., More About Charles D'Almaine and Taurino Parvis; Dec., John Yorke Atties and Dan Kelly.

1960—Jan., Polk Miller; Feb., Geoffrey O'Hara; Mar., Marguerite Farrell; Apr., George Wilton Ballard; May through Dec., Vernon Dalhart.

1961—Jan., Song Writers Who Made Records; Feb., Elise Stevenson; Mar. and Apr., Frank Croxton; May, June, and July, Harold Jarvis; Aug. and Sept., Elizabeth and William Wheeler; Oct. and Nov., Joe Natus and Will F. Denny; Dec., A Directory of Births and Deaths.

1962—Jan. through June, Peter Dawson.

### MARION HARRIS

(Continued from page 33)

- 2747 Tea for Two;/The Blues Have Got Me  
2784 I'll See You in My Dreams;/Why Couldn't It Be Poor Little Me?  
2807 Does My Sweetie Do—and How!;/I Can't Realize  
2836 When You and I Were Seventeen;/No One

#### BRUNSWICK (1931)

- 4663 Funny, Dear, What Love Can Do;/Nobody's Using It Now  
4681 Nobody's Sweetheart;/My Fate is in Your Hands  
4806 Wasn't It Nice?;/You Do Something to Me  
4812 I Remember You From Somewhere;/Nobody Cares If I'm Blue  
4873 Little White Lies;/If I Could Be With You

#### BRUNSWICK (1932)

- 4972 My Man From Caroline;/He's Not Worth Your Tears  
6016 Blue Again;/He's My Secret Passion

#### ENGLISH COLUMBIA (1932)

- DB822 Is I In Love? I Is;/An Evening in Caroline  
DB851 Gettin' Sentimental;/Spring is Here Again

#### ENGLISH DECCA (1934)

- F3954 One Morning in May;/Oo-Oo-Ooh! Honey  
F5160 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday;/Singing the Blues

(The End)

### RECORDS WANTED

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RECORDINGS wanted of pre-1957 radio or TV broadcasts (news, comedy, mystery, adventure). — George Vlasto, 460 North St., Greenwich, Conn. n3023

WANTED: Records, radio transcriptions, films, photographs, etc. by Guy Lombardo, Sammy Kaye, Blue Barron, Art Kassel, Ink Spots, Jan Garber. Highest prices paid. — Paul Scriven, 238 West State, Niles, Ohio. s3084

RECORDINGS, test pressings, and masters of Mario Chamlee and all related paper clippings. I will pay highest prices for any and all material. — Thomas O'Shaughnessy, Box 281, Rochester, Minn. Ja.6829

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## SIX COMEDIENNES

### Aileen Stanley

#### *Last of the Six*

By JIM WALSH

This article is dedicated to a pair of veteran Aileen Stanley admirers—Burns Kattenberg of Bronxville, N.Y., and John W. Black of Wenonah, N.J.

#### I. Introductory

I wish I knew who first induced the lovely stage star, Aileen Stanley, to make records. The entire record collecting fraternity owes him or her a vote of thanks.

The question of how it happened that Aileen Stanley became a recording artist had never occurred to me until I began assembling notes for this sketch.

Then I noticed that at the beginning of 1920 there was not a record by her in any catalog, yet by the end of that year she was singing for nearly all the major American companies and many of the minor fry. But what caused such simultaneous recognition of the charming young lady's record making abilities?

Did Miss Stanley have an agent who decided her voice would record well and who successfully approached the various companies? Did a member of some firm's artist and repertoire department hear her in musical comedy and decide to give her a trial before the horn, after which other companies followed suit?

Or did Miss Stanley herself approach Victor, Pathé, Edison, and the rest? I don't know the answer. However, the fact that her offerings began to be issued by so many companies at about the same time makes it unlikely that one A. and R. man led the way and others followed.

Whatever the reason, I am glad 1920 added Aileen Stanley's name to the roster of active recording artists. She has been one of my special favorites for many years.

The former "Victrola Girl" is the last of the six comediennes in this series. She is also the youngest and one of the two still living. Elida Morris is the other.

Ever since I have conducted this

department I have wanted to write about Aileen Stanley. Now, at last, I can pay this tribute to, and express my admiration of, the greatly gifted exponent of melody and laughter who was loved by millions of English-speaking people during her long career.

#### II. Early Years

My knowledge of Aileen Stanley's family background and early life is not extensive. The following is taken from an article which appeared in the *Sunday Minneapolis Journal* during one of Miss Stanley's visits to the Minnesota city:

"Aileen Stanley is English. Her family was prominent socially in England and her father died from the shock of losing his wealth. Her mother brought her two boys immediately to Chicago,

where Aileen was born. She started singing when only three, and was on the stage at six, helping support her mother and brothers.

"She has won exceptional success in making records, has been given important parts in many noted revues, and is generally acknowledged to be one of the foremost entertainers in this country.

"Incidentally, her real name is Maude Elsie Muggridge, which wouldn't look well in lights; hence Aileen Stanley. Her brother Robert calls himself Stanley and is also on the stage."

That brings up another question: Who gave the singer the stage name of Aileen Stanley, by which she has remained so universally known?

Certainly, it fits her personality, and it is hard to imagine her being called anything else. The first name, by the way, is pronounced Aye-leen, not Al-leen or Eye-leen.

#### III. Victor, Gennett, and Edison Notes

It is odd that during the 10 years in which she was one of the most popular recording stars, Miss Stan-



Popular song of the day, Chili Bean, featured by Aileen Stanley.  
—Courtesy Allen Debus

ley did not receive a biographical sketch in the yearly Victor catalog.

The long list of her records was not accompanied by any account of her career. When her first Victor disc was issued in November, 1920, however, the following comment appeared:

"Miss Aileen Stanley is a new Victor artist. She has been on the stage, intermittently, since she was 6 years old, and she confesses to 23. She has had, for all of her youth, some triumphant big years, her most recent success being in 'Silks and Satins.'"

I do not know the comedienne's birth date, but if she were 23 near the end of 1920, she most likely was born in 1897. An attractive photo was published with the write-up.

As a long-time admirer, I always think of Miss Stanley as looking like the pictures in those old Victor supplements. It is hard to realize time has not halted for her, and that she is now past 60.

The 1923 Gennett record catalog contributes this:

"In spite of her youth Aileen Stanley has had and is still enjoying an envious career in the musical world. She has been on stage scoring in the largest theaters since she was six years of age."

"At present she is only 24 and is now the principal comedienne in one of New York's musical successes of the present season."

"She possesses a beautiful, clear, full soprano voice and at the termination of the production in which she now appears will make a tour of the Keith Circuit."

The annotator must have meant "enviable" instead of "envious." Going by what the Victor supplement said, Aileen would have been 26, instead of 24, in 1923, but I suspect the sketch I have just quoted was written for an earlier Gennett cat-

alog and the age was not changed when a new edition was issued. The production referred to probably was "Silks and Satins."

Considerably more information appeared in the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for March, 1921, on which Miss Stanley's photograph graced the cover. The Edison article refers to the singer as a top vaudeville star, which makes it appear all the more likely the Gennett sketch was written in 1921, before she began to scintillate on the Keith Circuit.

Edison calls her "The Girl With The Personality," but I believe she was usually referred to as "The Personality Girl." A few years later, in American vaudeville she was "The Victrola Girl," and in Great Britain, "The Gramophone Girl."

I agree with Gennett that her voice is soprano, though it has some contralto range. Okeh called her a contralto, and Victor, except on one or two occasions, dodged the issue by terming her a comedienne.

Here is the Edison article:

"In the world of vaudeville, where she is regarded as a top-liner, Aileen Stanley is known as 'The Girl With The Personality.' It has taken her only a few years to achieve the distinction of being a vaudeville magnet."

"Watch her work, and you will be astonished at the apparent simplicity of her manner and method. Simple, unassuming, she faces huge audiences, and by a gesture or an intonation wins them."

"Miss Stanley hails from Chicago. When she was 7 years old, she did a team-act with her brother Bob, a few years older. It was not very long before the Orpheum Circuit claimed her."

"Billed for New York in due time, she won the big town within three months. Now producers are after her for her signature on contracts."

"In the summer of 1919, Miss Stanley was chosen by a committee of Chicago artists as the successful candidate in a

contest to determine who was Chicago's prettiest bathing girl. Describing her at that time, the Chicago Herald-Examiner gave the following statistics:

"Height, 5 feet 8 inches; weight, 145 pounds; hazel eyes; chestnut brown hair; fair complexion."

"The singer is athletic. She gives credit to her two brothers for her mastery of outdoor sports."

"They are both athletes," says Miss Stanley.

"We were always chums. They taught me how to play ball. In fact, I can pitch and catch as well as most men. They also taught me to ride, motor, row, swim, golf and hunt. They took me along on all trips, and I got to be almost as proficient as they in outdoor sports."

"She omits to say anything about her singing, but others will do that for her. As they say in vaudeville, she can 'put over' a song—especially a character song—with the best of them."

I remember seeing an old issue of *The Billboard* published during the early 1920's, when Miss Stanley was known as "The Personality Girl." Each week the magazine printed a chart on which acts at the Palace

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Theater received a rating like those we used to get on our report cards.

Aileen Stanley was rated 100. The reviewer said her personality was so striking and her method of presenting her act so effective he could find nothing to criticize.

Of a somewhat later date, probably 1926, is the following *Washington Post* clipping, revealing that Aileen had returned from a triumphal visit to England with a desire to swim the English Channel:

"MADE A HIT IN ENGLAND. Aileen Stanley, Junoesque beauty, singer of songs for Victrola records, for vaudeville and for productions, recently returned from a truly sensational season in London, scoring particularly at the smart 'Kit Kat' club, will be the headline attraction at B. F. Keith's theater this week.

"New frocks and a new routine of songs, but the same engaging Aileen, a variety star who can be credited with world conquests. Where she hasn't appeared in person her records have represented her. She is known as 'the Victrola Girl.'

"Her latest London engagement was so successful that she is planning a return summer engagement. Singing is not all she is planning to do in England; she is preparing to make an attempt to swim the English Channel!

"Aileen once won a bathing beauty contest. It was in 1919, a contest conducted by the Chicago Herald-Examiner, which established her as 'Chicago's Most Beautiful Bathing Girl.'

"She is an exception to most bathing beauties, most of whom never go near the water, one who, in addition to looking beautiful in bathing attire, is an expert mermaid.

"I don't wish to appear boastful, says Miss Stanley, 'but I do think I can swim the Channel, and if I don't make it the first time I'll try again!'

"Miss Stanley has before jumped out of the spotlight to try some daring stunt. She is known as the first actress to have flown in an airplane. In 1920 she 'planed' from Chicago to Detroit to keep a vaudeville engagement."

Efforts to swim the English Channel were in vogue in those days, just as trying to take 50-mile hikes have been during 1963. (The hiking mania probably is at its peak as I write on Sunday, February 17th). But, as far as I know, Miss Stanley never did undertake to best the Channel. Gertrude Ederle tried, and succeeded.

#### IV. Brunswick, and Paramount

We may now begin to consider Aileen Stanley's records. I have puzzled about how to handle this part of the article, for the comedienne's discs and cylinders are too numerous to mention them all individually.

After consideration, I have decided that since she sang for several companies from 1920 through 1923, but apparently was exclusive to Victor after that, it will be best to dispose first of the recording she did for Pathé, Edison, and the others. That done, we may go into a detailed account of her Victor activities.

Research seems to indicate the first Aileen Stanley record issued by any company is Pathé 22407, which came out in October, 1920, one month before her first Victor. She sings both sides — "Ding-a-Ring-a-Ring" and "I'm a Jazz Vampire"—to piano accompaniment.

The name of the pianist is not given, but he may have been her stage accompanist, Bob Buttenuth, who also became her husband. I am sorry to say he died in 1961.

An undated supplement, but probably for May, 1921, says this, about another of her Pathé records:

"'You Ought to See My Baby' is no fond mamma's triumphal exhibit of her first-born, nor proud papa's boastful advertisement of his new-found happiness. 'In short, this baby — 'the neatest, cutest and sweetest baby of them all,' as the chorus ends it — is nothing more nor less than—But, on second thoughts, Aileen Stanley will tell you about it in her inimitable breezy way, so we may safely leave the secret to her wonderfully revealing powers."

Pathé began making Actuelle needle cut records in November, 1920, but "You Ought to See My Baby" is the only one I have been able to find listed in my incomplete files.

However, Burns Kattenberg says he has an Actuelle of her singing "I'm Nobody's Gal," "just as she did it in her vaudeville act. I can't remember the other side." This also has a piano accompaniment, probably by Buttenuth.

Aileen's one Brunswick recording combined her version of "The Broadway Blues," which she also sang for Victor, with "Chili Bean," by the late Fred Whitehouse, and was issued in December, 1920.

I have been told she considered her side to be badly recorded and asked Brunswick not to put it on sale. When it was marketed she refused to have any more dealings with the company.

Miss Stanley may have made several records for Paramount, but I have none of that company's listings and the only Paramount record by her I know of is one in my collection — "My Home Town is a One-Horse Town." It has a Charles Harrison ballad on its reverse.

(To be continued)

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PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathé discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathé records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

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WANTED: Jolson material. — Dick Bonesteel, 3249 Perkins Lane West, Seattle, Wash. Jy12407

ANY DISC RECORD of the 1894-1901 period wanted. — Bob Foote, 303 Unruh Ave., Philadelphia 11, Pa. o3272

RECORDS WANTED: 2 minute Edison, gold, molded cylinder records, or Columbia, or any other brand, including Busy Bee cylinder records, Columbia, 5" oversize cylinder records. All must be in playing condition. Want certain styles of Edison and Columbia cylinder phonographs. Also want wooden organ rolls, in good condition. — Alton Vogel, Box 1210, Rockdale, Texas. o1234

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## SIX COMEDIENNES

### Aileen Stanley

#### *Last of the Six*

(Continued from the  
October Issue)

By JIM WALSH

This series is dedicated to a pair of veteran Aileen Stanley admirers—Burns Kattenberg of Bronxville, N.Y., and John W. Black of Wenonah, N.J.

V. Edison Discs and Cylinders  
Really interesting material is reached when we come to Aileen Stanley's Edison Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinders. I have all the discs. They are perfectly recorded and do the typically complete Edison justice to her voice and personality.

The first "My Little Bimbo Down on the Bamboo Isle," apparently was offered in December, 1920, a month after her Victor of the same song. It is coupled with what seems to be the last solo record Billy Murray made for Edison before signing his exclusive Victor contract.

Murray's song, "Chili Bean" (a successor to the greatest of all "nut songs," "Oh by Jingo," by the same writers, Lew Brown and Albert Von Tilzer), was introduced in "Silks and Satins," the stage production in

which Miss Stanley had been appearing. She sang it in the show.

Her photo appeared on the "Chili Bean" sheet music cover, but I do not believe she made a record of that clever nonsense song.

"She Walks In Her Husband's Sleep" is an amusing Harry Von Tilzer song about a wise wife who knew how to get the best of her skinflint husband. She walked in his sleep, and her strolling led her to his pants pockets and wallet.

"Where Is My Daddy Now?" is typical of the blues songs of 1921. One of the most entertaining of Aileen's Edison records is "Scandinavia," which she sings irresistibly with a thick Swedish accent.

From the standpoint of melody, "Just A Week From Today" is probably the best of the comedienne's Edisons.

The envelope in which this record was packed says: "We are informed that this song is a favorite with both Aileen Stanley and her vaudeville audiences. It is a high class character song, the music of which was written by Bert Rule, and the words by Al Dubin and Paul Cunningham."

Burns Kattenberg, who almost certainly has more Aileen Stanley records than anyone else (he believes, 188 titles by her are stored away at his old home in Minneapolis), says "Just A Week From Today" is his favorite of all her Edisons.

He tells of an occasion on which Miss Stanley, who was then appearing at a theater in Minneapolis, visited his family.

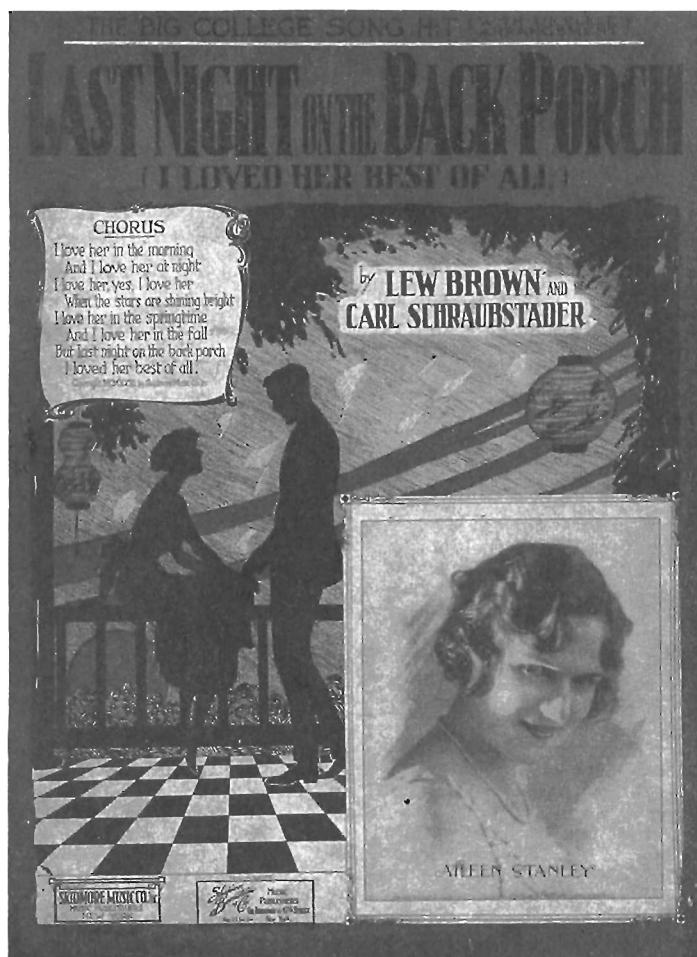
The subject of Edison tone tests came up, and Aileen said she had never made one to determine whether the New Edison "re-created" her voice. Burns suggested that she try singing with the Edison record of "Just A Week From Today."

It had been several years since the Diamond Disc was issued, and the lovely lady didn't remember all the words. However, the record was placed on the red mahogany Chippendale Official Laboratory Model Edison, which Burns and I consider the most beautiful upright phonograph ever made.

After listening to the recording and refreshing her memory, Miss Stanley began singing with the phonograph. The Kattenberg family, at the other end of the room, were unable to tell when she was singing or when she had stopped and let the instrument carry on alone.

From that time, Burns had no doubts, if he had ever owned any, that the "tone tests" were everything Edison represented them to be.

The plaintive "I'm Nobody's Baby" was the Edison record which gave Kattenberg his first strong admiration of the singer. "Anna In In-



This song was a popular one in the repertoire of Aileen Stanley.  
—Courtesy Allen Debus

diana" is as boisterously comic as "Nobody's Baby" is plaintive.

It tells the story of an Indiana farmer's love for a rustic girl who is so fat "she hides the farm when she sits down." Aileen makes the most of every humorous point.

"I'm Looking for a Bluebird" seems to have sold less than any of her other Edisons and is the only one hard to find today. "Boo-Hoo-Hoo" is a "weepy" serio-comic song. It came out early in 1922.

Then there was not another Edison record by Aileen Stanley until the last appeared in September, 1923. Her photo appeared on the cover of that month's record supplement. The song was "On the Isle of Wicki Wacki Woo," a catchy Walter Donaldson number, which, unlike most of that composer's songs, failed to win popularity.

The other side, "What You Was, You Used To Be," was sung by Helen Clark, erstwhile of the Metropolitan Opera, under the disguise of "Sally Collins."

Miss Stanley must have signed an exclusive Victor contract shortly after her last Edison record appeared.

There was no announcement of an exclusive signing, but, from late 1923 on, she made no more records for any American company except Victor.

All the Aileen Stanley Diamond Discs except two were dubbed onto Blue Amberols. The exceptions were "I'm Looking for a Bluebird," and "On the Isle." One of her numbers never appeared on the discs but was issued as a cylinder. It was "There's a Little Bit of Irish in All of Us."

## VI. Aeolian-Vocalion Records

With the start of 1921, the comedienne's name began to appear in Aeolian-Vocalion supplements. The January issue said:

"Miss Aileen Stanley, a brand new Vocalion singer of popular songs, makes her bow to you this month. Miss Stanley has a unique little way all her own of singing jazz songs, so what more fitting than that she asks, 'What Cha Gonna Do When There Ain't No Jazz' in one of her first songs?"

"And its 'side-partner,' 'Look What You've Done With Your Doggone Dangerous Eyes,' is equally well done. There's a dash and go in Aileen Stanley's Vocalion numbers that account for her stage success in 'Silks and Satins,' in which she scored a big success."

I don't think Miss Stanley got especially good recording in this and her other Vocalion offerings.

Aeolian-Vocalion issued some superb hill and dale records for two years beginning in 1917, but after it switched to the lateral cut in March, 1920, the recording became dull and subdued, with a deficiency of overtones. The lateral records didn't have the sparkle and brilli-

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ance that had characterized those with vertical grooves.

The January Vocation supplement used the same picture of Aileen that had appeared two months earlier in the Victor list. In February, another photo was used, with this letter press:

"Aileen Stanley demonstrated in last month's record bulletin the unique ability with which she interprets novelty songs. Her singing of 'Sweet Mama, Your Papa's Getting Mad,' is the newest example of her fascinating style."

"By all means hear 'It's All Over Now,' the reverse recording by this clever comedienne . . . Miss Stanley doesn't keep you guessing as to a single word and the tune is unusually catchy."

In June, 1921, Aileen adorned the Vocation list with another double-faced offering:

"A double header of song hits are these two new numbers by Aileen Stanley. The lively 'I Was Born in Michigan' is sure to appeal not only to those from that state but from Maine to California as well."

"The entertaining Aileen sings her way surely into public favor in this up-to-the-minute recording of 'I'm Nobody's Baby.' There's something that 'gets' everybody in the clever half-talking way she puts over this novel song hit."

You will remember Miss Stanley also sang 'I'm Nobody's Baby' for Edison. The Vocation recording is not at all comparable to the Edison from the standpoint of first class portrayal of her voice.

In July, her Vocation selections were "Hortense," a "rube" song somewhat similar to "Anna in Indiana," and "Honey Rose." The bulletin said:

"She ain't good looking but she's got good sense—that's 'Hortense.' This is a most amusing rube love song. 'Honey Rose' is a Negro lullaby with a charming melody."

Vocation issued other Aileen Stanley records nearly every month through the remainder of 1921. Then a year elapsed before the next offering in December, 1922:

"Aileen Stanley, the popular comedienne, makes her Vocation reappearance after many months, in Irving Berlin's 'Homesick.' One would almost think he had Aileen in mind when he wrote the piece, so well adapted is her voice for singing it."

What appears to be Miss Stanley's last Vocation disc was issued toward the end of 1923. It was 14614, "I'm Going To Hop, Skip and Jump Into My Mammy's Arms," and "Louisiana."

#### VII. Gennett, Okeh, and Olympic

A brief sketch of the comedienne has already been quoted from a 1923 Gennett catalog. Listed in that catalog are eight songs by her (including four—"I Told You So," "I'm Missin' Mammy's Kissin'," "Emaline," and "I've Got the Red, White and Blue Blues"), that I cannot recall her singing for any other company.

It is possible that she made other Gennett records during 1923. But unfortunately, I don't have a catalog covering that year.

Aileen seems to have sung more consistently for Okeh, from 1921 through 1923, than for any other company except Victor. She infused

a surprising amount of variety into her different lists, and apparently tried as far as possible to avoid singing the same songs for several companies.

Of course, there are exceptions. The songs on Okeh 4221, "Look What You've Done" and "What Cha Gonna Do When There Ain't No Jazz?" duplicate those on an Aeolian-Vocalion record already mentioned, but most of her other Okehs were sung for that firm alone.

"I've Got The Traveling 'Choo Choo' Blues" is an especially good one, and "My Man" on the reverse side gives it added value. I don't have her Okeh of "Oh, How He Lied To Me," but I'd like to hear the other side, to try to identify the members of the Okeh Star Trio.

Olympic probably is the most obscure company for which Miss Stanley recorded. She may have made more titles than the seven I am able to list.

Record 14111 was advertised in *The Musical Courier* for July 2, 1921, with the comment: "In A Little Front Parlor" will be on this record what it is on sheet music and music rolls, an unusually popular hit."

A month or two later, Olympic 14113 was advertised as containing two songs reproduced from the comedienne's vaudeville act:

"Miss Stanley is now a headliner in vaudeville, and is on one of her transcontinental tours."

"Before she left New York we had her make for Olympic discs an exact duplicate reproduction of her act in vaudeville, with piano accompaniment. These records are true to life, except for a vision of her charming self."

Her picture appeared at the top of the ad.

That completes my commentary on all the Stanley records, except the most important group—those she made for Victor.

(To be continued)

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## SIX COMEDIENNES Aileen Stanley

### *Last of the Six*

(Continued from the  
November Issue)

By JIM WALSH

This series is dedicated to a pair of veteran Aileen Stanley admirers—Burns Kattenberg of Bronxville, N.Y., and John W. Black of Wenonah, N.J.

#### I. Electrical Recording

Although 1924 had been a bad year for the phonograph and record industry, most of 1925 was worse.

Victor, for which Aileen Stanley now recorded exclusively, was still doing more national advertising than any other American firm, but a touch of desperation lurked in its efforts to convince the average citizen he should buy a Victrola and records rather than blow his money for a battery-operated radio. The company's 1924 sales volume was less than half what it had been in 1920, and the downward trend was accelerating at year's end.

Miss Stanley was among the January, 1925, Victor artists. She sang "Back Where the Daffodils Grow!" The monthly supplement said it was "in fox-trot rhythm."

In April, Aileen had two songs on one record, "When My Sugar Walks Down the Street" and "I Ain't Got Nobody to Love." The "Sugar" side has historic interest, for a reason that should be apparent from the supplement description:

"Two highly popular numbers in a manner which is the contemporary outgrowth of the 'blues.' The first introduces one of its composers, Gene Austin, as an assisting artist. It has a catchy melody and rhythm, and has dicky-bird effects and queer vocal ululations. The companion number, for the soprano alone, is in very much similar style, and, judged by the tests of popular music, is something of a knockout."

It has just occurred to me that I had never before noticed Miss Stanley's being referred to as a soprano in that write-up. This was the first Victor in which Gene Austin, who was to become one of the most popular recording artists and help restore prosperity to the phonograph business, appeared. It was also the first in which Aileen had a partner other than Billy Murray. Gene did not sing a duet with the lovely lady;

his duties were mostly to make "loo-loo-loo'ing" noises. This was the comedienne's last acoustic record.

Electrically-cut discs were introduced in the June supplement. Without the microphone, such vocalists as Austin and "Whispering Jack" Smith, who sang very softly, could not have won the great popularity they were to have. Their "crooning" was unsuited to the acoustic method.

The November, 1925, supplement gave the first opportunity for Aileen's admirers to find out what electric recording did for, or to her singing. It turned out that hers was among the voices that sounded better on lateral cut records when caught by the microphone than when it went into a horn. The songs were "You're in Wrong with the Right Baby" and "Want a Little Lovin'." and the supplement said:

"Could anything be more awful than being in wrong with the right baby—even being in right with the wrong one? Aileen . . . gets into blackface, so to speak, for the record . . . Both songs are to the piano, and they are two of the best, in their especial degree, that Aileen Stanley, pluperfect songstress of the popular mind, has yet put on a record for us."

#### II Aileen and Billy Again

The early electric process was not kind to Billy Murray's voice and style, but he sounded well in two duets which appeared in December, 1925. The songs were the first Aileen and Billy had made together by the new process, and their first teamwork in a year.

One, "Keep Your Skirts Down, Mary Ann," was in the great "fussing" tradition of "Maggie (Come Right Upstairs.)" To quote the supplement:

"Little Mary Ann has been rolling her stockings and letting one dimpled knee be seen when she sits down. In this record she gets her orders from Mother, despite her ejaculations of 'Apple-sauce' and her protestations that skirts are growing shorter. The record is lively and clever. Then Billy and Aileen have a sentimental number in fox-trot style. To forsake the terms of art for a moment, this record is one of the finest jobs these two artists have ever made for the Victor."

In January, 1926, the duo were heard in one of their most amusing records, a Bowery struggled classic, "Down by the Winegar Woiks." On the other side Billy struggled through a lamentable effort to "croon" a solo version of "Roll 'Em, Girls," which also dealt, like "Mary Ann," with the rolled hose problem. Recording Director Eddie King had decreed that since electrical recording had come in, Billy's former "hammering" style was out, and he must conform to the Gene Austin or Jack Smith

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

pattern. Billy protested he was no crooner but gave in of necessity and did the best he could with an unnatural singing method. The result, as he angrily told me years later, was one of his poorest records. It was also his last Victor solo. After that he sang only in duets or with the Billy Murray Trio.

However, the "Winegar Woiks" side was admirable. Said the supplement:

"Aileen and Billy have an interesting time of it in the first song, which is East-side 'tough' style to the typical old East-side waltz. Billy confesses to his new Jane that he lives down past the viaduct, down by the winegar woiks, where the people are so tough they have to chain the children to keep them from fighting the dogs."

That same month, Aileen had a record on which she sang both sides, assisted by Billy "Uke" Carpenter, who not only played the ukulele but made vocal noises like those Gene Austin had produced in "When My Sugar Walks Down the Street." The songs were "Flamin' Mamie" and "Sweet Man."

"Flamin' Mamie" contained the words, "her father's name was Burns—he worked in a mine," and Miss Stanley later told Burns Kattenberg that she thought of him when she sang the word "Burns." Naturally, that made Burns proud, and he was also proud when she returned from an engagement at the Kit-Kat Club in London and brought him one of the seven-inch souvenir records given to patrons at her opening performance. It contained an introductory song and a few spoken words greeting the first night audience.

Miss Stanley came back from her visit to Britain with a ukulele that had been autographed by many notables. Among the signers was Prince George, one of her admirers, who succeeded his brother Edward, the present Duke of Windsor, as King.

February, 1926, was a bad month for admirers of the graceful and humorous style of the Victor supplement writer, James E. Richardson. Although electrical recording and the Orthophonic Victrola were restoring Victor products to prosperity, the company discontinued its beautifully printed booklet supplements and substituted a four-page folder that merely listed the new records with the briefest possible information about them.

Aileen occupied both sides of No. 19863. The titles were "No Man's Mamma" and "Mighty Blue." In the first, there was a spoken passage at the beginning in which she revealed that Aileen was pronounced "Aye-lean." The supplement writer had only space enough to comment: "Clever topical songs; one indignant, one weepy Comedienne." What a comedown from the former delectable descriptions!

In May Miss Stanley was back

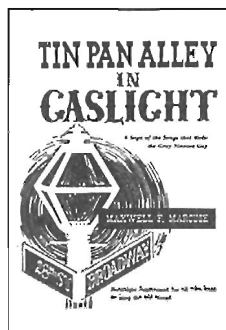


with "I Love My Baby," which again included "ukulele and jazz effects by 'Uke' Carpenter." The rapidly rising Gene Austin was on the other side with "How I Love Her and She Loves Me Is Nobody's Business." The combination was described as "vociferous popular ditties with a 'punch' to them."

The July list contained a double-faced Stanley offering that had a surprisingly short life. The titles were "What a Man!" and "I wonder What's Become of Joe." Both were cut out when the 1928 catalog appeared, but the "Joe" song especially was catchy and attractively sung.

A month or two later came what, taking both sides into consideration,

I would nominate as the best Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray record: "Any Ice Today, Lady?" and "Whadda You Say We Get Together?" The first, with Aileen representing a hardboiled housewife and Billy an iceman with a rasping bass voice, is one of the funniest—probably the funniest duets they ever perpetrated.



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Aileen Stanley with the late John L. Norton, Jr. and Sr., at the 1948 John Bieling Day, Garden City, N. Y.

On the B side the couple meet at a public telephone booth. Billy intercepts a call for Aileen. They discover both have lost their sweethearts and before the record ends they have kissed and consoled each other—probably the shortest and fastest switch from one love affair to another in history.

When this record was issued in England, however, it drew a rather unfavorable review from *The Gramophone*:

"Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray are superbly recorded in frightfully American songs . . . but the telephone is as usual unconvincing."

That "frightfully American" description induces a chuckle. The unmistakable Americanism of "Any Ice Today, Lady?" was what made it so funny to Stateside hearers—just as the intense Britainism of George Robey or Dan Leno bewilders and baffles most Yankees. However, the husky, burlesqued basso profundo in which Billy spoke at the beginning of the record must have confirmed the belief of some of his admirers that he had lost his natural tenor voice—an impression that had become current several months earlier when Victor had him make several records while he was, as he expressed it years afterwards to me, "almost dead with a cold and so hoarse I could hardly gasp."

His duet with Henry Burr, "I Wonder Where My Baby Is Tonight," was among the hoarse-voiced gaspers, and so was "D'ye Love Me?" which he sang with Gladys Rice. He also did the refrains to several dance records, one of which, "In Your Green Hat," sounds terrible, with electrical distortion added to the rasping voice quality. Victor insisted on his recording under such trying conditions because the Eight Famous Victor Artists were soon to leave on a long tour, and the company didn't want to wait months for Billy to return before recording several popular numbers.

I had an amusing personal experi-

ence concerning "Any Ice Today, Lady?" Shortly after I moved in 1943 from Johnson City, Tenn. to Roanoke, Va., I became a friend of John Williamson, who then worked in the Federal Government's war-time rent control office. One day I went into the office and found John singing "Any Ice" to a pretty girl, Marion Mundy. He explained that the Stanley-Murray duet, which had been issued 17 or 18 years before, had always been one of his favorites. I said it was also among my enthusiasms. John and I fell into the habit of greeting each other with "Any Ice Today, Lady?" whenever we met, and the custom has continued to this day.

The December supplement listed a Stanley-Murray combination that attracted more attention than any of their other records. That was especially true in England, where it was a sensation. It was another mother-daughter "quarrel" on the order of "Maggie" and "Keep Your Skirts Down, Mary Ann," and again the antagonists were Irish. The title was "Bridget O'Flynn." On the B side Aileen and Billy sang a love duet, "Who Could Be More Wonderful than You?"

Mr. Richardson wrote:

"Bridget O'Flynn is a sweet little girl, and you will love her. She brings the Boy Friend home from a dance, and, on the front steps, in the first successful spoken whispering record ever made, they exchange some innocent confidences. Bridget's 'Mom' overhears, and she is cross. She even slaps the girl, but is reminded she once did the same thing herself, her ill-humor dissolves and little Bridget is forgiven. Aileen Stanley is Bridget and Billy Murray is both Mom and the Boy Friend."

The whispers at the beginning really are whispered, and you have to listen close to catch what the couple are saying. Billy told me a cat imitation was by Aileen. She exclaims, "Darn that cat! I hope it didn't wake Mother!" and immediately Ma's strident voice is heard vociferating: "Bri-jet! Bri-jet O'Flynn!"

For several months the record was listed as one of Victor's big sel-

lers. Overseas, *The Gramophone* was rapturous. In the February, 1927, issue, "Peppering" said:

"Of duets and such-like, I am glad to be able to recommend a really good effort by Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray in 'Bridget O'Flynn,' with 'Who Could Be More Wonderful Than You?'"

The next month he wrote:

"There's nothing so good to report this month as the 'Bridget O'Flynn' record of Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray."

Compton Mackenzie, the distinguished novelist who then edited and still publishes *The Gramophone*, had a low opinion of most comic records, but he wrote in April:

"How many comic records stand playing half a dozen times? Very few . . . Take these last three months. Apart from one amusing record of John Henry about a cinema film, and a song of Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray called 'Bridget O'Flynn,' I cannot find a single disc worth writing anything about."

Finally, in October, 1927, "Peppering," reviewing some new comic records, spoke nostalgically of "the immortal 'Bridget O'Flynn.'"

Unfortunately, however, despite its initial large sales, "Bridget" proved to be far from immortal. It was cut out of the 1929 Victor catalog after a life of only two years. In England, it was still available through 1933.

### III. A New Partner

Let's go back to November, 1926, and quote Mr. Richardson's description of Aileen's record of "Six Feet of Papa." *The Gramophone* considered it hilarious and reprinted it, but apparently with a half-shocked feeling that it was extremely informal and "frightfully American."

"Aileen Stanley, at least in the world of song, is seeing things just now in a sweet pink light. You have heard her, on past records, yearn for a man, sass the iceman, or make a date for a chowder-club dance with some young citizen of the toughest make nature produces. But this time she is in special luck, for she has fallen in love with a new Papa, who is six feet tall and likely to be a rough kisser."

The sentiment of the "Papa" song is, as Jim Richardson broadly hinted, rather unrefined but Aileen makes it irresistible. Its coupling is a beautifully sung rendition of "Looking at the World Through Rose-Colored Glasses."

One record issued in 1927 but unknown to most Aileen Stanley collectors deserves special mention. It is 20511, "Nay, Nay, Neighbor" and "Gonna Get a Girl." Burns Kattenberg is the only collector I know of in the East who has a copy of this record, which was issued in April, 1927, for West Coast distribution only. Presumably it was pressed at the new plant Victor had erected in Oakland, Calif. Just why it was sold only on a regional basis is something I don't know, but a Victor dealer's numerical catalog for the entire United States omits it. The Stanley record must have been one of five discs restricted to the West, for all numbers from 20506 to 20512 are missing.

During May or June, 1927, one of the back covers of the *Saturday Evening Post* carried a Victor advertisement that featured comedy artists instead of the usual Red Seal stars. Aileen Stanley and Billy Mur-

ray were among them, and there was a picture of the pair.

The Stanley-Murray partnership, however, was about to run out. In July they had a double-faced duet record, "Does She Love Me?—Positively-Absolutely" and "I'm Back in Love Again," but then a change occurred.

Eldridge R. Johnson, who had founded the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1901, was in ill health and sold the company to a firm of New York bankers, J. W. Seligman & Co. I have been told that the new owners, who sold out a few years later to the Radio Corporation of America, assumed control with a determination to get rid of the long established artists who had expensive contracts and to replace them with new singers. "Fresh, young voices" was the watchword. The late Walter Clark, brother of Alfred Clark, who headed the Gramophone Company in England for many years, was given the unenviable job of telling the old-timers their services were no longer required. By the end of 1927 there was a general exodus of Victor's former top-ranking performers, and Billy Murray was among those who no longer had a contract.

In his place, Victor brought in a young tenor from Oklahoma, who, beginning in 1924, had made a few Okeh records, some of them duets with a baritone, Charles Sargent. Marvin first sang for Victor in 1926 while he was appearing in "Honeymoon Lane." Eddie King, who was in charge of the company's "popular" recording activities, paid him \$75 to sing the refrain in a Nat Shilkret dance record of "Half a Moon" from "Honeymoon Lane." Marvin was then recording regularly for Edison and Columbia, but late in 1927, after his work had made a favorable impression, he became exclusive to Victor.

As Billy Murray went out, Johnny Marvin came in not only as a soloist who could play his own accompaniment on the Hawaiian guitar or ukulele (he was known as "The Ukulele Ace"), but as duet partner for Aileen Stanley and Ed Smalle. He had a pleasing but not especially distinctive voice, and his accent showed strong traces of Midwest and Southern influence. For instance, he pronounced "can't" as "kyain't."

Only one of the 1927 Stanley-Marvin duets calls for special comment. It was issued in October and was No. 20822, "I Walked Back from the Buggy Ride." Aileen and Johnny give an excellent impersonation of a wise cracking rustic couple, with the girl a bit suspicious of the boy's intentions.

On the A side, Aileen and Billy sang the last duet they were to record before Victor showed Murray to the door after he had recorded for it a quarter of a century and made it more money than any other singer. It was an excellent "tough life" sketch with the irresistible title of "I'm Gonna Dance With De Guy Wot Brung Me." Just as "Bridget

O'Flynn" had been the first successful needle-cut whispering record, so the new title was probably the first in which the sound of someone—Aileen—chewing gum was reproduced. Said Mr. Richardson:

"Tragedy, comedy and half-cynical farce from common life by popular singers. The falling tears, the bursting of sobs mingle . . . with the audible mastication of chewing gum and the hoof-clatterings of a runaway horse."

#### IV. End of Victor Career

Only four Stanley and Marvin duet titles were issued in 1927. Then something strange happened. The record business was good in 1928 and Aileen Stanley was still popular both on records and on the stage, but not one single Stanley disc was issued all that year. The comedienne seems not to have been a victim of the "get rid of the old-timers" edict, so it's hard to understand why 1928 brought no Aileen Stanley records. Perhaps she was appearing in England most of the time.

Incidentally, 1928 was the year in which Victor's peerless supplement writer, Mr. Richardson, died. His place was taken by the late Charles O'Connell, who lacked Richardson's graceful style and turned the supplement descriptions into undistinguished sales "pitches."

Aileen Stanley's next appearance as a Victor artist was in the supplement for March, 1929. She sang "I'll Get By As Long As I Have You." On the reverse, Johnny Marvin, who had been steadily gaining popularity and now ranked with Gene Austin, Jack Smith and Frank Crumit among Victor's best selling male singers, was heard in "You Wanted Someone to Play With."

March also brought a Stanley-Marvin duet, "Ev'rybody Loves You." This record had an amazingly short career. It was cut out by the time the December supplement (now back in the fine old-time booklet form) was issued.

In April, Aileen had two solos, "Give Your Little Baby Lots of Loving" and "I'll Never Ask for More." (Does the second title indicate she didn't like the "lots of loving" after she got it?)

September produced a surprise. Billy Murray, who had been freelancing for several companies, returned to Victor as a duet partner for Aileen in the last record they made together. It was "Katie! Keep Your Feet on the Ground!" A return to the "mother-daughter" status of "Maggie" and "Bridget O'Flynn." On the other side Billy and Walter Scanlon (with the name misspelled as Scanlon) had an excellent comedy number, "Oh! Baby, What a Night."

Said Charles O'Connell:

"For those who enjoy those comic and tuneful duets so closely associated with music halls, this record will provide a lot of 14-carat entertainment. Billy Murray has long been before the public eye as a Victor artist, although this is his first record for some time. With Aileen Stanley he sings a skit that has to do with aviation. Billy takes the part of Katie's mother, giving her the sound advice, 'You haven't the wings of an

angel, so, Katie, keep your feet on the ground."

Partnered by Walter Scanlon, Billy embarks on another skit, this time laid in the stag line of a party. The tune is catchy and the words clever, with many such passages of wit as the "Biblical dress" that was "low and behold." You'll all enjoy this record . . . The diction's as clear as crystal, and the melodies are snappy."

The depression that began late in 1929 plunged the record business into a downspin that made the one of 1924-25 seem by comparison the peak of prosperity. There were no more Aileen Stanley duets with either Billy Murray or Johnny Marvin, who died in Hollywood, Calif., December 20, 1944. Marvin's health had been impaired by a trip he made to entertain American soldiers in the South Pacific.

Aileen didn't appear again in Victor lists until September, 1930, when she offered two solos, "Swingin' in a Hammock" and "I Love You So Much." Her final Victor appearance was in November, when the titles were "I'll Be Blue, Thinking of You" and "Wasn't It Nice?" After the end of 1930 few vocal records of popular songs were issued, although there continued to be a fairly good representation of dance bands and country music.

#### V. English Recordings

Aileen Stanley continued to be a stage attraction after she ceased making records. Her recording career had lasted almost exactly ten years. I have a clipping referring to her starring in "Messrs. Shubert's 'A Night in Spain,'" but cannot date it precisely. I assume it was published in the early 1930's.

The comedienne remained a great attraction in England and seems for a time to have gone there almost every year. In April, 1934, *The Gramophone* reported:

"That charming American artist, Aileen Stanley, who recently paid a flying visit to this country, made two records in the Brunswick studios while she was here. 'Over On the Sunny Side' she brought over with her and made an instantaneous success with it in both her music-hall and cabaret appearances, so obviously she recorded it. . . . The accompaniment on both sides was really remarkable, and if one did not know that the record was made in this country it would be quite possible to believe that the players were some of America's recording stars of the Dorsey Brothers' calibre."

"This is followed by 'Aileen Stanley Song Successes,' in which she weaves a little story of two lovers into such songs as 'How Do You Do' (which is her theme song), 'My Best Girl,' 'Ain't That a Grand and Glorious Feeling?' 'Somebody Stole My Gal,' 'Souvenirs,' and so on."

"Here is a singer whom you are never likely to mix up with anyone else, whose individuality is more impressive than her

(Continued on page 49)

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**AILEEN STANLEY**

(Continued from page 36)

voice, and whose personality pervades  
even the gramophone record to the ex-  
clusion of all criticism."

Exactly a year later, in April,  
1935, Roger Wimbush wrote in *The  
Gramophone*:

"There should be a big public to wel-  
come back Aileen Stanley (the 'gramo-  
phone girl' of early days) in some of  
her song successes on Decca M461...  
This is a clever piece of presentation  
and is redolent of the singer's person-  
ality."

Unfortunately, Wimbush didn't give  
the title of this record and I don't  
have a Decca catalog of that pe-  
riod, but it has just occurred to me  
that I might find it in the *Talking  
Machine and Wireless Trade News*,  
and I did. The title is "Song Succes-  
ses," which sounds like the same med-  
ley she had recorded for Brunswick.  
Hubert S. Ryan made this comment  
in the May, 1935, issue:

"This selection of 'song hits' is strung  
together in a manner which makes a  
connected story—a novel and rather  
effective idea. As for the singer, she has  
quite the best American soubrette man-  
ner, and gets away with it all vivacious-  
ly enough."

Miss Stanley also made a few His  
Master's Voice records in 1935. Ry-  
an's review of "Rags" and "Don't  
You Ever Fall in Love" in the Au-  
gust T. M. N. of that year sounds  
faintly satiric:

"Two more or less artless ditties sung  
in the most admired transatlantic fash-  
ion by Aileen Stanley, a comedienne  
whose manner and accent leave us in no  
doubt whatever as to her nationality.  
'Rags' will appeal to dog lovers, and the  
number on the reverse side to those with  
a wider amorous scope."

In December, 1935, "M.E.C." writ-  
ing in *The Gramophone*, said:

"Aileen Stanley, an old friend whose  
records are rather few and far between,  
sings 'I'm Livin' in a Great Big Way'  
and 'I'm in Love All Over Again'...  
She still contrives to be quite different  
from anyone else."

(Continued next month)

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## SIX COMEDIENNES Aileen Stanley

### *Last of the Six*

(Continued from the  
December Issue)

By JIM WALSH

.....  
This series is dedicated to a pair of  
veteran Aileen Stanley admirers—  
Burns Kattenberg of Bronxville, N.Y.,  
and John W. Black of Wenonah, N.J.  
.....

Apparently the last record Miss Stanley made in England or, as far as I know, anywhere else, was H. M. V. BD444, issued in 1938. The titles were "It Looks Like Rain in Cherry Blossom Lane" and "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." World War II, which began in 1939, must have ended her frequent visits to England.

The comedienne made a good many radio transcriptions, and I have a couple of them, which reveal her voice at its best. She also made guest appearances on radio shows. In October, 1940, the late Albert Campbell took me to her office in the Brill Building in New York City, but to my sorrow the lady whom I so much admired wasn't in. I was told that she had largely given up stage work to train and manage young women singers.

To this period belongs a clipping from Ben Gross' column in the *New York Daily News*. I think it appeared in 1946:

"Aileen Stanley, the manager, had better find herself a manager. For she'll probably soon be needing one for herself. As the guide of the destinies of the popular Murphy Sisters . . . she recently walked into a new career. Once a singing star in her own right, Aileen, while at NBC on business, ran into Lloyd Egnor, network vice president in charge of radio recording. 'You're the very one I want to see,' he announced. Then and there, remembering her professional work in the past, Egnor signed Aileen for a series of NBC library transcriptions.

"But there was more to come. Having arranged a new NBC contract for the Murphys, their manager proceeded to wind up details for their disc debut on Victor records. Again Aileen's singing triumphs were remembered, and now Victor is considering having her make an album of nostalgic favorites. Also, the Stanley girl is working on a new radio show and Paramount Pictures is paging her for a screen test."

Too bad that neither the Victor engagement nor the screen contract appears to have materialized. Even today a lot of people would welcome a new long-playing record or two by Aileen Stanley!

### VII. And Finally—

Veteran HOBBIES readers will remember that the late John Bieling gave parties at his Hempstead, New York, home in 1946 and 1947, for a few of his fellow pioneer recording artists and their collector admirers. When John died in 1948 it was decided to continue the annual meetings and to call them John Bieling Days.



Photo by Allen G. Debus.  
Aileen Stanley embracing Billy Murray at the 1948 John Bieling Day party,  
while Irving Kaufman looks smilingly on.

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

The first Day was held in September, 1948, at the Garden City Hotel on Long Island. Several months earlier, I wrote to Aileen Stanley and urged her to attend. Her New York studio was then still in the Brill Building at 1619 Broadway, and her letterhead showed she also had a Hollywood studio at 8820 Sunset Boulevard. On May 15, 1948, she replied:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I shall be more than happy to be at your Recording Artists and Record Collectors' Party on September 10th.

"Should anything come up that would necessitate my going out of town, naturally I wouldn't be able to attend—but I am looking forward to meeting you, and seeing my old friend, Billy Murray. Until then, all best wishes, AILEEN STANLEY."

Nothing occurred to keep Aileen and her husband from joining the group that assembled on that historic day, and she captivated everyone. She looked more mature, of course, than in her recording days. She wore glasses and her hair was touched with gray, but the charming personality and the equally charming voice and singing style were unchanged. I remember with pleasure the wave of the hand and the lovely smile she gave me during the dinner, when I was seated at the head table and she was not far away. That afternoon, to the accompaniment of Bob Buttermuth's rhythmic piano playing, she sang several of her favorite record numbers. Her protégé, a beautiful blonde girl known as Aileen Stanley Jr., also sang in a style much like that of her teacher and manager. I have a radio transcription by Junior and the resemblance to Aileen Stanley's singing methods is unmistakable.

One of the high spots of the occasion was the reunion of Aileen and her former recording partner, Billy Murray. They had not met for years, and they were truly happy to see each other. What a shout went up when Aileen embraced around Billy and kissed him, while the master of ceremonies, Irving Kaufman, looked beamingly on!

After I returned to Virginia and had rested from my trip, I wrote to both Miss Stanley and Aileen, Jr., telling them how much I had enjoyed being with them and hoping we should meet again. I received a cordial reply from Aileen in behalf of both, reciprocating my good wishes, but we have not seen each other since. They planned to attend the 1950 John Bieling Day (there have been no more since), but last minute circumstances prevented.

Recently, I learned that Aileen Stanley, who formerly lived on Riverside Drive in New York, now makes her home in Los Angeles. I wrote to Kay Campbell, a *Variety* writer, for information about Miss Stanley's present-day activities, and received this note:

"Dear Jim: Aileen Stanley returned my call a few minutes ago.

"Her husband died in '61.  
 "She bought a house here for her mother in '29 and is occupying it now.  
 "Her permanent headquarters are in L.A. Owns a building at 8820 Sunset Blvd. . . is manager for Gina Ginardi and her niece, Aileen, Jr. Semi-retired, does a bit now and then for films and TV.  
 "Phone: CR 6-4804 (home). OL 2-7011.  
 "She would like to hear from you."

I passed the Los Angeles address on to Aileen's lifelong admirer, John Black. He wrote to her and has received several cherished letters, which he has framed.

Since receiving Kay Campbell's helpful information I have tried several times to talk with Miss Stanley by long distance, but perhaps because of the time lag between Vinton, Va., and Los Angeles, Calif., have not been able to reach her. Miss Campbell, you will observe, refers to Junior as Aileen's niece. I have read elsewhere both that the blonde young lady is her niece and that they are not related, but presumably the statement of kinship came from Aileen in her conversation with Miss Campbell.

I shall have the issues of HOBBIES containing the Aileen Stanley series sent to the comedienne with the hope that she will approve and enjoy them, as I and innumerable other admirers have enjoyed her recorded artistry for so many years.

(The End)

—O—

#### RECORDS BY AILEEN STANLEY (Victor, 1920-1930)

(NOTE: Both sides—separated by a semicolon—are by Aileen Stanley unless otherwise indicated. "B. M." in parentheses denotes a duet with Billy Murray; "J. M." a duet with Johnny Marvin.)

- 15591 Broadway Blues; My Little Bimbo Down on the Bamboo Isle.
- 15703 I've Got the Blues for My Old Kentucky Home; Singin' the Blues (Till My Daddy Comes Home).
- 15760 Home Again Blues; Pucker Up and Whistle (Billy Murray).
- 15774 All By Myself; Anna In Indiana (Arthur Fields).
- 15784 I Wonder Where My Sweet, Sweet Daddy's Gone; Stand Up and Sing for Your Father an Old-Time Tune (Billy Murray and American Quartet).

(Continued on next page)

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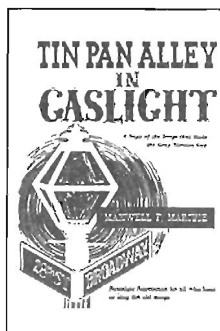
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 3031 Hark, The Herald Angels Sing  
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18799 I've Got the Joys; Strut, Miss Lizzie (American Quartet).  
 18855 Boo Hoo Hoo (B. M.); In My Heart, On My Mind, All Day Long (B. M.).  
 18876 Oh You Beautiful Baby (B. M.); Georgia (Peerless Quartet).  
 18909 Whenever You're Lonesome (B. M.); I Certainly Must Be in Love (Billy Murray).  
 18922 Sweet Indiana Home; Why Should I Cry Over You? (Victor Roberts).  
 18935 Dixie Highway; My Cradle Melody (Peerless Quartet).  
 18943 All Over Nothing at All (B. M.); I'll Stand Beneath Your Window Tonight and Whistle (B. M.).  
 19026 When the Leaves Come Tumbling Down (B. M.); You Know You Belong to Somebody Else (Henry Burr).  
 19027 You've Got to See Mama Every Night (B. M.); Runnin' Wild (Isabelle Patricola).  
 19039 Don't Think You'll Be Missed; No One Loves You Any Better Than Your M-A-Double M-Y (Billy Murray and Ed Smalle).  
 19114 Maggie! (Yes, Ma'am — Come Right Upstairs!) (B. M.); Cut Yourself a Piece of Cake (Billy Murray).  
 19144 I'm a Lonesome Cry Baby; My Sweetie Went Away (Billy Murray and Ed Smalle).  
 19221 Big Hearted Bonnie (B. M.); Not Here — Not There (Billy Murray).  
 19231 Promise Me Everything, Never Get Anything Blues (B. M.); You May Be Fast But Your Mama's Gonna Slow You Down (B. M.).  
 19411 New Kind of Man With a New Kind of Love for Me; Charley, My Boy (Billy Murray).  
 19431 You'll Never Get to Heaven With Those Eyes (B. M.); Dumb Dora (Billy Murray).  
 19443 Put Away a Ray of Golden Sunshine; When I Was the Dandy and You Were the Belle (B. M.).  
 19454 Somebody Loves Me; All Alone With You in a Little Rendezvous (B. M.).  
 19486 Everybody Loves My Baby; De Clouds Are Gwine to Roll Away (Vernon Dalhart).  
 19502 Back Where the Daffodils Grow; Me and the Boy Friend (Jane Green).  
 19585 When My Sugar Walks Down the Street (assisted by Gene Austin); I Ain't Got Nobody to Love.  
 19707 You're in Wrong with the Right Baby; Want a Little Lovin'.  
 19795 Keep Your Skirts Down, Mary Ann (B. M.); If I Had a Girl Like You. (B. M.).  
 19828 Flamin' Mamie; Sweet Man (assisted in both by Billy "Uke" Carpenter).  
 19838 Down By the Winegar Woiks (B. M.); Roll 'Em, Girls (Billy Murray).  
 19863 Mighty Blue; No Man's Mama.  
 19950 I Love My Baby; How I Love Her and She Loves Me is Nobody's Business (Gene Austin).  
 20056 I Wonder What's Become of Joe; What a Man!  
 20065 Any Ice Today, Lady? (B. M.); Whadda You Say We Get Together? (B. M.).  
 20096 Down By the Gas House (B.M.); I Ate the Baloney (Billy Murray and Monroe Silver).  
 20148 I Can't Get Over a Girl Like You (B. M.); Who Wouldn't? (B. M.).  
 20198 Looking at the World Through Rose-Colored Glasses; Six Feet of Papa.  
 20240 Bridget O'Flynn (B. M.); Who Could be More Wonderful Than You? (B. M.).  
 20391 Don't Be Angry With Me; If I'd Only Believed in You (Jane Green).  
 20511 Nay, Nay, Neighbor; Gonna Get a Girl.  
 20643 I'm Back in Love Again (B. M.); Positively—Absolutely (B. M.).  
 20714 Side by Side (J. M.); Red Lips, Kiss My Blues Away (J. M.).  
 20787 Under the Moon (J. M.); Sing Me a Baby Song (Vaughn De Leath).  
 20822 I'm Gonna Dance Wit de Guv Wot Bring Me (B. M.); I Walked Back From the Buggy Ride (J. M.).  
 20825 Broken Hearted; Who Are You Fooling Tonight? (Vaughn De Leath).  
 21839 I'll Get By As Long as I Have You; You Wanted Someone to Play With (Johnny Marvin).  
 21848 Everybody Loves You (J. M.); When the World is at Rest (Chick Endor).  
 21874 Give Your Little Baby Lots of

Loving; I'll Never Ask for More.  
 22040 Katie, Keep Your Feet on the Ground (B. M.); Oh Baby, What a Night! (Billy Murray and Walter Scanlan).  
 22465 Swingin' in a Hammock; I Love You So Much.  
 22524 I'll Be Blue, Thinking of You; Wasn't It Nice?

"His Master's Voice" (England)  
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B1976 Everybody Loves My Baby; Put Away a Little Ray of Golden Sunshine for a Rainy Day.  
 B2606 I Ain't Got Nobody to Love; When My Sugar Walks Down the Street.  
 B2615 My Best Girl; You're in Wrong With the Right Baby.  
 B2022 Alabamy Bound; It Was Only a Dream.  
 B2087 Can't Your Friend Find a Friend for Me? Give Me Just a Little Bit of Your Love.  
 B2338 Any Ice Today, Lady? (B. M.); Whadda Ya Say We Get Together? (B. M.).  
 B2392 Bridget O'Flynn (B. M.); Who Could Be More Wonderful Than You? (B. M.).  
 B2502 Does She Love Me, Positively, Absolutely (B. M.); I'm Back in Love Again (B. M.).  
 B2519 Red Lips, Kiss My Blues Away (J. M.); Side By Side (J. M.).  
 B2521 Don't Be Angry With Me; If I'd Only Believed in You (Jane Green).



In 1923 Oké distributed record brushes featuring a photo of Aileen Stanley.

B2565 Under the Moon (J. M.); Sing Me a Baby Song (Vaughn De Leath).  
 B2578 I'm Gonna Dance Wit De Guy Wot Brung Me (B. M.); I Walked Back From the Buggy Ride (J. M.).  
 B2590 Here Am I, Broken Hearted; Who Are You Fooling Tonight? (Vaughn De Leath).  
 B2991 I'll Get By As Long As I Have You; Everybody Loves You (J. M.).  
 B3014 I'll Never Ask for More; Give Your Little Baby Lots of Lovin'.  
 B3632 Swingin' in a Hammock; I Like to Do Things for You (Grace Hayes).  
 B3690 Wasn't It Nice?; Nobody Cares If I'm Blue (Gene Austin).  
 BD251 Don't You Ever Fall in Love; Rags.  
 BD289 I'm in Love All Over Again; I'm Livin' in a Great Big Way.  
 BD444 I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm; It Looks Like Rain in Cherry Blossom Lane.

English Brunswick (1934)

01706 Over on the Sunny Side; Who Walks In When I Walk Out?  
 01722 Aileen Stanley Song Successes—Parts 1 and 2.

English Decca (1935)

M461 Song Successes—Parts 1 and 2.  
 Edison Diamond Disc (1920-23)  
 50707 My Little Bimbo Down on the Bamboo Isle; Chili Bean (Billy Murray).  
 50729 She Walks In Her Husband's Sleep; No Wonder I'm Blue (Ernest Hare).

50736 Where-Is-My-Daddy-Now Blues?; Play Me a Dixie Melody (Al Bernard).  
 50761 Scandinavia; Strut, Miss Lizzie (Al Bernard).  
 50768 Just a Week From Today; My Budding Rose (Vernon Dalhart).  
 50791 I'm Nobody's Baby; I've Waited So Long (Bert Harvey).  
 50804 Anna in Indiana; Oh, They're Such Nice People (Billy Jones).  
 50825 I'm Looking for a Bluebird; My Daddy (Jim Doherty).  
 50919 Boo-Hoo-Hoo; Carolina Rolling Stone (Vernon Dalhart).  
 51207 On the Isle of Wicki Wacki Woo; What You Was, You Used to be (Sally Collins).

Edison Blue Amberol Cylinders  
 (1920-22)

4147 My Little Bimbo Down on the Bamboo Isle.  
 4204 Where-Is-My-Daddy-Now Blues.  
 4233 She Walks In Her Husband's Sleep.  
 4256 There's a Little Bit of Irish in All of Us.  
 4268 Scandinavia.  
 4293 Just a Week From Today.  
 4327 I'm Nobody's Baby.  
 4349 Anna in Indiana.  
 4487 Boo-Hoo-Hoo.

Aeolian-Vocalion (1920-23)

14124 What Cha Gonna Do When There Ain't No Jazz?; Look What You've Done With Your Doggone Dangerous Eyes.  
 14134 Sweet Mama, Your Papa's Getting Mad; It's All Over Now.  
 14151 O-HI-O; Boll Weevil Blues (Ernest Hare).  
 14161 Timbuctoo; Nestle In Your Daddy's Arms (Elliott Shaw and Charles Hart).  
 14172 I Was Born in Michigan; I'm Nobody's Baby.  
 14188 Hortense; Honey Rose.  
 14202 You Made Me Forget How to Cry; They're Such Nice People (Ernest Hare).  
 14216 It Takes a Good Man to Do That; Melontime in Dixieland (Harmonizers Quartet).  
 14230 Stand Up and Sing for Your Father an Old-Time Song; There's Only One Pal, After All (Ernest Hare).  
 14237 Cry Baby Blues; Who'll Be the Next One to Cry Over You (Ernest Hare).  
 14451 Homesick; Call Me Back, Pal o' Mine (Charles Hart).  
 14614 I'll Hop, Skip and Jump Into My Mammy's Arms; Louisiana.

Brunswick (1920)

2047 Broadway Blues; Chili Bean (Fred Whitehouse).

Gennett (1921-22)

4646 I Told You So; Jinga Bula Jing Jing Jing (Billy Jones).  
 4689 I'm Missin' Mammy's Kissin'; Aunt Jemima's Jubilee (The Harmonizers).  
 4719 Scandinavia; I Was Born in Michigan.  
 4728 Emaline; Nice People (Billy Jones).  
 4819 Boo 'Hoo, Hoo; I've Got the Red, White and Blue Blues.  
 4836 My Home Town is a One Horse Town; Alabamy Mammy (Strand Theater Quartet).  
 5007 Don't Bring Me Posies (When It's Shoesies That I Need); You Tell Her, I stutter (Ernest Hare and Billy Jones).

Oké (1921-23)

4221 Look What You've Done With Your Doggone Dangerous Eyes; What Cha Gonna Do When There Ain't No Jazz?  
 4275 Gone Are the Days; My Mammy.  
 4326 I've Got the Traveling "Choo Choo" Blues; My Man.  
 4358 It Takes a Good Man to Do That; Mimi (Me Me).  
 4409 I Want My Mammy; Tuck Me to Sleep in My Old 'Tucky Home (Billy Jones).  
 4415 Mandy 'n' Me; 'Tain't Nothin' Else But Jazz.  
 4513 Weep No More, My Mammy; Write and Tell Your Mammy I'm Coming Home.  
 4524 Bow Wow Blues; Granny (You're My Mammy's Mammy).

## NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCES MAJOR SERVICE

- Olympic (1921)
- 14104 Anna in Indiana; Puckle Up and Whistle.
- 11109 Honey Rose; Mini.
- 11111 In a Little Front Parlor (On an Old Back Street); I'm Looking for a Bluebird to Chase My Blues Away. (Al Bernard).
- 14113 Ma! (He's Making Eyes at Me); Mandy 'N' Me.

- Paramount (1921)
- 20040 My Home Town is a One-Horse Town; Broadway Rose (Charles Harrison). (This record was also listed as Puritan 719.)

- Pathe Sapphire (1920-21)
- 22107 Ding-a-Ring-a-Ring; I'm a Jazz Vampire.
- 22484 That Taila-Hassee Lassie of Mine; Why Don't You? (Ernest Hare).
- 20509 You Ought to See My Baby; Scandnavia (The Harmonizers).

- Pathe Actuelle needle-cut (1921)
- 620509 You Ought to See My Baby; Scandnavia (The Harmonizers).
- 4513 On the 'Gin 'Gin 'Ginny Shore; Mamma Gone Blues (Elsie Clark).
- 4677 Coal Black Mammy; Mandy (Ernest Hare).
- 4698 True Blue Sam; Tune In With My Heart (Ernest Hare).
- 4736 Away Down East in Maine (with Vincent Lopez's Orchestra); Swanee Smiles (Lopez's Orchestra).
- 4792 Chicago (That Toddlin' Town); Lovin' Sam (The Sheik of Alabama).
- 4791 Lost, A Wonderful Girl; Wanita (Billy Jones).
- 4905 Oh, How She Lied to Me; Down Among the Sleepy Hills of Tennessee (Okeh Star Trio).
- 40017 I'm Sittin' Pretty in a Pretty Little City; Swanee River Blues (Olga Steck).

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HOBBIES Magazine

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Under a grant of \$150,000 from the Rodgers and Hammerstein Foundation, The New York Public Library will for the first time be able to make available to the public its comprehensive collection of more than 90,000 recordings now in dead storage. The collection will be prepared for use in the Performing Arts Library and Museum now being constructed at Lincoln Center, and will be known as the Rodgers and Hammerstein Record Archives.

The Library record collection was started in 1937, but space for accessible storage and a listening room has never been available. In scope, the archives range from the Lionel Mapleson unique wax cylinder recordings of performances at the Metropolitan Opera (1901-1903) to recent LP releases.

Both musical and non-musical recordings are included as are phonograph and phono - wire as well as cylinders and discs.

Some of the great rarities included are the only known complete set of the original celebrity recordings in the Columbia Grand Opera Series, a privately recorded 7-inch disc of Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink, which is earlier than any commercial recording of her voice, the speeches of Dwight Moody, the voices of Ellen Terry and John Burroughs, and an early Sophie Tucker cylinder. Early recording artists represented include Emma Carelli, Olympia Boronat, Victor Maurel, Adelina Patti, Celestina Boninsegna, and many others.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein Foundation was set up for the pur-

pose of giving grants to institutions and individuals engaged in the fields of theatre, music and lyrics, musical plays, and recordings.

Through the generous gift of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Foundation, a large part of this remarkable treasury of recordings will be catalogued for the first time and listening equipment will be provided. After the opening of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Record Archives in the Performing Arts Library and Museum at Lincoln Center, the public will be able to listen to these recordings with the assistance of staff and appropriate attention to the rarity and fragility of the more valuable items in the Archives.

The Library's record collection has been assembled under the guiding hand of Philip L. Miller, Chief of the Music Division. As one of the nation's leading record critics, Mr. Miller conducts a column in The Library Journal and is senior critic for American Record Guide. His reviews and articles have appeared in many periodicals, and he is the author of "The Ring of Words," an anthology of song texts, and the volume on vocal music in the Knopf "Guide to Long Playing Records" series. On November 4, he will leave for a tour of record archives in Europe. While in London he will speak in the lecture series of the British Institute of Recorded Sound.

## A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



1



2



3



4



5

1. Ever-friendly Roger responds to the caresses of Thomas A. Radcliffe of Collingwood, N.J. (Perhaps he thinks Mr. Radcliffe, a noted collector of sheet music and records, is Santa Claus in disguise!)
2. Weeks before Christmas, Nipper mounts guard at the top of the stairs, to make sure he gets the first glimpse of Santa.
3. Even Possey, who lives somewhere in the basement, but comes upstairs to visit Roger, Nips and Jim in their second floor bedroom, is sniffing for traces of the old gentleman in the red suit.
4. Percy shows annoyance because Snappy,

the Turtle, has invaded the porch and eaten from his plate. He thinks Snappy is a bad boy and Santa should strike him off his list.

5. Petey was reported dead a year ago, but his HOBBIES friends will be glad to know he had only left home on an extended journey (perhaps looking for Santa Claus) and returned home in good health after being gone more than six months. He hopes Santa will leave something for him on the old well house in the rear of our spacious yard. Here Petey responds in 1961 to the attentions of his record collector friend, Quentin Riggs.

TO HOBBIES READERS  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD  
FROM ROGER, NIPPER, PETEY,  
PERCY AND JIM WALSH  
(Possey, the 'Possum, and  
Snappy, the Turtle, want  
to be included, too!)

In the midst of the Holiday gladness, all of us at 225 No. Maple St., Vinton, Va., will cherish the memory of the golden-hearted Gray, who was taken from us September 11, 1962. We agree that no sweeter or better cat could have lived and be lost to those who loved him.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Marie Narelle and Berrick Von Norden

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

#### 1. Many Maries

Thomas A. Edison, or his recording experts, had a weakness for women singers or players with the first names of Mary, Marie, or Marie.

Especially Marie. Through the years in which Edison cylinders or discs were issued there were Mary Jordan and Mary Porter Mitchell, contraltos; Mary Zentay, violinist; Maria Galvany, Maria Farnetti, and Maria Labia, sopranos, and the following Maries:

Comedienne—Marie Dressler.  
Soprano (popular)—Marie Hoy.  
Sopranos and contraltos (concert)—Marie Kaiser and Marie Morrissey.  
Sopranos (operatic)—Marie Delna, Marie Rappold, Marie Sundelius, and Marie Tiffany.

And:  
Soprano (ballads and "heart songs")—Marie Narelle.

These photographs of "The Australian Nightingale," Marie Narelle, also known as "the soprano with the perfect recording voice," are reproduced from *The New Phonogram* for December, 1905, and October, 1910.



Even with this impressive list, I may have missed a few Maries. But we have arrived at the heroine of the present study — Marie Narelle, the Australian soprano, whose wax two-minute Edison cylinders were treasured by thousands of proud owners between 50 and 60 years ago as the only "perfect" reproductions of the soprano voice.

We shall consider later the accomplished tenor who in this article shares "top billing" with the "Australian Nightingale." But for the moment our business is with Marie Narelle.

Regardless of whether her records were "perfect," Miss Narelle did have a remarkably sweet and sympathetic voice and a gift for making her sincerity and natural "homey" qualities register through the old-time recording horn.

#### II. First Recordings

Although the Edison publicity writers frequently used rhapsodic terms in describing Marie Narelle's singing, they gave comparatively little information concerning her personal life. About the most enlightening Edison biographical sketch is the following from the April, 1914, catalog of Blue Amberol cylinders.

It mentions that she had sung in concert with John McCormack, but does not reveal that she and McCormack both made their initial appearances before American audiences at the 1904 World's Fair in Saint Louis:

"MARIE NARELLE, DRAMATIC SOPRANO . . . is an Australian, born of Irish parents. She is considered the greatest ballad singer of today, and has



Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

endeared herself to the public for many years. She has toured the entire English-speaking world—making successes in concert everywhere.

"She recently toured the United States with John McCormack, sharing honors with him. She not alone appeals to the ear with her beautiful singing, but to the heart also, for she is a soulful singer, and a true artist, with a wonderful voice, and a thorough technical knowledge of how to use it."

Miss Narelle's initial appearance in the Edison lists was in September, 1905, with 9031, a rendition of one of her favorite numbers, "Killarney." This is the description that appeared in *The New Phonogram*:

"This record introduces a new singer to the admirers of the phonograph. Miss Narelle comes from Australia. She is a well-known concert singer, having taken part in concerts with the best vocal and instrumental artists in her own country, Great Britain, Europe, and America.

"She has a powerful, well-trained soprano voice of adequate range and agreeable quality. Her rendition of our record of 'Killarney' will be recognized as the work of a finished artist."

The cylinder had an introduction by Edward Meeker, who did virtually all the Edison announcing in those days. It said: "Killarney. Sung by Miss Marie Narelle. Edison record."

Meeker pronounced the singer's last name as "Nah-RELL," with a slight emphasis on the second syllable. Photographs which appeared some time afterward showed her to be a young woman with an impressive hair-do and a prominent chin.

"Killarney" was reviewed in the October, 1905 *Talking Machine News*, published in London. The English magazine's description was more eulogistic than the *New Phonogram* writer's rather weak comment about the soprano's "adequate range" and "agreeable" voice. It said:

"... A triumph of art in recording is Miss Narelle's 'Killarney.' It is the only faultless record of this piece we have, and it will charm in every particular by the clearness of its words as well as its magnificent tone and volume. We can do with more records of ladies' voices like this."

More than a decade later *T.M.N.* readers argued as to whether the later Narelle cylinders were "perfect reproductions of the soprano's voice," as their admirers contended, or didn't sound like her, as was insisted by some adherents of needle-cut discs.

Also in the September, 1905, supplement was a cylinder of "The Adieu," which the Australian diva sang with Harry Anthony (the late John Young.) "Anthony" was her only male duet partner until two other tenors came along. One of them was Berrick Von Norden, whose name appears with hers in this article's headline. *The New Phonogram* said:

"9092. This is a sentimental composition of the better class and one of the so-called standard kind that live and are always well liked.

"Miss Narelle's success in making a record of 'Killarney' . . . warranted the belief that she would also be appreciated

in duets with an artist of Mr. Anthony's calibre. We are sure the public will agree with this opinion."

*The Talking Machine News* briefly described "The Adieu" as "a good, clear duet." It was not a big seller, but the near-sensation which "Killarney" caused among the record buyers of 58 years ago made it certain that other Marie Narelle records would be welcomed.

In October, Miss Narelle again touched Irish heart-strings. This time she sang "Weaving of the Green." The *Phonogram* commented:

"Even better than Miss Narelle's record of 'Killarney' in September is her rendition of this song, so dear to the heart of every true son and daughter of old Ireland. The sentiment of the song will appeal strongly to them, but Miss Narelle's artistic singing will cause the records to be sought by all classes."

A month later the *Talking Machine News* termed it "a charming record by Miss Narelle."

November, 1905, brought a Narelle record, 9138, of a less widely known ballad, "The Sweetest Flower That Blows." In December there was an almost full length photo of the lady, together with a listing of her record of "Silver Threads Among the Gold," a ballad that always sold well regardless of who sang it. It elicited this praise:

"9162 . . . An ever popular song, which to render well requires a very sweet and sympathetic voice, such as is possessed by Miss Narelle. There have been constant requests for this ballad and doubtless our friends have often wondered why it was not listed before, but to have it by Miss Narelle is well worth waiting for."

The *T.M.N.* said: "'Silver Threads Among the Gold' is an old favorite. This record by Miss Narelle is very sweet and clear."

January, 1906, brought cylinder 9186 on which Miss Narelle sang "Robin Redbreast," a song which is not very well-known now:

"One of the most popular numbers in 'Happyland,' performed by the Hopper Opera Co. at the Lyric Theatre, New

York City. As sung by Miss Narelle for our record, it makes a dainty and beautiful number. An added charm is the bird imitations by Joe Belmont. It is a new and novel idea and will doubtless be very much appreciated."

*The Talking Machine News* briefly dismissed the record with, "'Robin Redbreast' is a pretty little song." Joseph A. Phillips, who later became a popular Edison artist, was one of the "Happyland" cast.

Another favorite old-timer was announced in February:

"9207. 'Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms.' This old and ever popular ballad needs no description. . . . Miss Narelle's sweetly sympathetic voice is heard to great advantage in this record."

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The *News* proclaimed it "a good song to which Miss Narelle does full justice."

The magazine then became involved in a legal controversy with Edison because of printing a rumor that the price of the company's cylinders would soon be reduced. Edison withdrew its advertising and sued the *T.M.N.* for libel. No more Edison cylinder reviews appeared for several years.

March, 1906, saw Miss Narelle offer a sentimental number not quite so ancient as some of her others:

"9226. 'Answer.' This is another old ballad too well known to need description here. Suffice it to say that Miss

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Narelle . . . does it to perfection and we think we have never made a better record of this talented artist."

In April the soprano gratified her Scotch admirers with 9254, "Comin' Thro' the Rye:"

"Miss Narelle's rendition of this old Scotch song will gladden every Scotchman's heart and be appreciated by all admirers of the song. Miss Narelle's Scotch dialect is perfection itself. Her interpretation of the song could not have been better had she been to the manor born."

A Narelle record, 9273, "Then You'll Remember Me," appeared in May:

"This charming sentimental ballad from 'The Bohemian Girl' . . . is too widely known to call for comment. We have had many requests for it in solo form and it is really a matter for regret that it is only now getting into our catalog. Miss Narelle sings it in a delightful manner. . ."

June and July brought no Narelle records, but the soprano reappeared in August with 9325, "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond:"

"A delightful record of this well-known and ever popular Scotch melody . . . The song is a great favorite of Miss Narelle's and one she takes unusual interest and delight in singing. Her especially fine rendition of the ballad abundantly bears out this statement."

Another three months passed before Miss Narelle sang "Annie Laurie" on 9422:

"Still another of Miss Narelle's beautifully rendered selections, made before she returned to her home in Australia. Miss Narelle's records have been among the most successful ever made for the phonograph."

"Her charming voice has endeared her to many thousand lovers of the phonograph throughout the civilized world. Those who have heard her previous records will appreciate how artistic this one is of that old Scotch song, 'Annie Laurie.'"

After that, there was silence from Marie Narelle for several years, but Edison customers did not lose interest in her. In September, 1907, "J.H.B." of Central Falls, R.I., asked *The Phonogram*, "Will Marie Narelle sing again for you?"

The answer was: "If she makes another tour in the United States probably yes. She is at present singing in her own country, Australia."

In June, 1908, another questioner learned that Miss Narelle did not sing in the cylinder of "It is Well with My Soul."

Someone else wanted to know, "Is your record, 'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' sung in such a low tone of voice intentionally or is it the fault of the record?"

He was told, "It is intentionally sung in a low tone of voice."

September, 1908, brought an inquiry from "N.J.G.," Reedy Creek, South Australia, as to whether Joe Belmont was an Australian? "No." And whether Edison had any Australian artists besides Miss Narelle? ("We believe not.")

A disconsolate Narelle admirer from Atlanta wanted to know in October, 1908, if the soprano still sang for Edison. The reply: "She has returned to Australia and is not likely to make more records."

The same person had the same question answered slightly different-

ly in May, 1909: "Miss Marie Narelle has returned to her home in Australia and it is not likely that she will make further records for us for a long time."

In January, 1910, a correspondent was told Miss Narelle was born in Australia, of English descent. (We have seen the 1914 Blue Amberol catalog which said she was Irish-descended.)

"Cannot say," was the answer as to whether she would again sing for Edison. The time, however, was only a few months distant when the lady's pure soprano would again delight her American admirers.

### III. "The Perfect Soprano" Returns

September, 1910, brought glad news for "G.W.L.," of Atlanta and other admirers of "the soprano with the perfect recording voice." Miss Narelle had made the long journey from her home in Australia to sing again for Edison.

The news was especially good because Edison had introduced the four-minute Amberol cylinders about two years before. This made it possible for singers to use correct phrasing and tempo and not to be hurried because of the limitations of a "roller" that played for only two minutes.

Marie Narelle's first Amberol was 495, a complete version of "Killarney." *The New Phonogram* writer was ecstatic:

"What words so eloquently descriptive of Erin's charm of scenery and days of by-gone splendor, what melody more beautiful and truly sympathetic than this gem of the talented Balfe's compositions?"

"It is a classic that appeals not only to the poetic Celtic nature but to music lovers the world over, especially when sung by an artist of such splendid attainments and international repute as Marie Narelle, 'The Australian Nightingale.'"

"Miss Narelle returns after a long tour abroad to sing exclusively for Edison records, which fact will be welcome news to the public, who have long clamored for more of her records. Her voice seems to have acquired fresh beauty of tone and expression during her absence."

This record received a laughable review in *The Sound Wave*, published in London:

"If furtherance be needed of the ever-green popularity of the title song, it will, of a surety, be furnished by its rendition hereon by one of our most delightful of sopranos. By the way, those who may wish to make acquaintance with 'Killarney' as a contralto solo can do so by procuring this record."

That last sentence is baffling. How could a record by a soprano introduce the song to those who would like to hear it by a contralto?

With excellent judgment, Edison had Miss Narelle sing "Auld Lang Syne" on Amberol cylinder 525, which was announced in October, 1910. Again, the *Phonogram*:

"Truly a beautiful record. A song of all the people, known and beloved by old and young wherever the English tongue is spoken, and sung by a singer who has made a life study of selections of this order."

"Marie Narelle sings the number with fine expression, combining with a voice of resplendent beauty a vocal method which evidences her thorough artistic sense and training. In her rendition she employs a genuine Scotch accent."

"It should be remembered that Miss Narelle can be heard only on Edison records."

Edison also did something in October the judgment of which is open to question. The *Phonogram* published a list of 24 Amberol cylinders which dealers were not allowed to sell, but which would be given, in batches of six, to Edison owners who persuaded their friends to buy phonographs.

One of the two dozen was D12, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," by Miss Narelle. It was described as "a charming old time melody with a plaintive, appealing air, which has again leaped into popularity. Sung by one of the foremost sopranos before the public."

Almost certainly, if cataloged in the usual way, it would have been one of the best-selling Edison cylinders.

Irish characteristics were prominent in 545, "The Dear Little Shamrock," which was offered in November:

". . . Another of Miss Narelle's songs of the people. The history and significance of the shamrock, as outlined in this tuneful old song, are known to every son and daughter of Erin's Isle, who will appreciate Miss Narelle's rendition of the number. Her brogue is as delicate and natural as her voice is fresh and lovely and her style expressive. . ."

The soprano's December offering was one of the old-fashioned ballads in which Mr. Edison delighted, (561,) "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer:"

"This beautiful song, one of the best known and beloved in the English language, was the principal number of the opera, 'Lurline,' produced for the first time at Covent Garden, February 23, 1860. . ."

"Miss Narelle has easily met the exacting demands of this selection, her lovely voice of wide register and velvet quality, combined with an exquisite charm of expression and a finished vocal style, offering a really superb interpretation."

"This is by long odds the most notable contribution to the Edison catalog thus far by this renowned artist. . . It is a selection which will delight the lover of the best in vocal music."

*The Talking Machine News*, which had patched up its quarrel with Edison, said:

"It is not often one has the opportunity of hearing such a sweet, pathetic song as 'Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer,' sung in such an angelic, sympathetic voice as that of Miss Narelle. The number, which is the principal aria from Wallace's opera, 'Lurline,' is indeed finely interpreted and Miss Narelle's beautiful soprano voice is heard to splendid effect."

Almost six years earlier, Marie Narelle had made a duet with a tenor, Harry Anthony. Now, in January, 1911, she joined forces with another tenor, Frederic H. Potter, and a mixed chorus.

Potter was a singer who figured fairly prominently in the Edison catalog for two or three years, but about whom I have never been able to learn much. For once, the Australian soprano sang a currently popular song, "Every Little Movement:"

"The big song 'hit' of the popular musical production, 'Madame Sherry,' which is duplicating in New York the long and successful run it enjoyed in Chicago."

"Every Little Movement," the theme

of which is a satirical description of the new aesthetic dancing fad, has a particularly catchy, infectious air which captivates at first hearing and invites many repetitions.

"Miss Narelle sings the first solo, the chorus is then sung as a soprano and contralto duet, and is repeated by mixed voices. The second solo is sung by Mr. Potter, who is also assisted by a chorus of mixed voices in the refrain."

Edison was generous with Narelle records in January. On 585 she sang "Bonnie Sweet Bessie."

"A popular Scotch ballad which we have been requested time and again to

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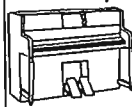
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Box 595, Tujunga, Calif.



my46p



catalog, but which we have purposely withheld for Miss Narelle's return. The theme is the pathetic life story of the 'Bonnie Lass o' Dundee,' who loved and wed her brave Scotch laddie, but from whom cruel fate parted her for all time.

"Sung in Miss Narelle's most finished style, sympathetically and with accent of the best, the simple, direct words and pleading melody of this charming old song will tug at the heart-strings of its listeners and bring moisture to the eye. Many will pronounce it the best of the several lovely numbers she has contributed to the Amberol catalog."

No Narelle record was issued in February, 1911, nor was there one in March, but D.J.B. of Lewisburg, Tenn., was informed, rightly or wrongly, in the February *Phonogram*, "Marie Narelle is her true name. She was born in Australia."

#### IV. Another Duet Partner

In April, 1911, "H.A." of Philpot, Ky., was told "Miss Marie Narelle is not married." I suspect, however, the *New Phonogram* editor was mistaken.

That month brought another Narelle record, 662, "Day Dreams, Visions of Bliss," which she sang as a duet with an accomplished tenor, Berrick Von Norden. The *Phonogram* said:

"This sprightly duet, with its breezy waltz refrain, is the vocal hit of the operetta, 'The Spring Maid,' one of the present season's successes now playing to delighted audiences at the Liberty Theater, New York City . . .

"It would be difficult indeed to conceive a happier or more satisfying combination of vocal talent than Marie Narelle and Berrick Von Norden. Not alone for the tunefulness and popularity of this selection, but for the quality of the rendition and the character of the artists, this is a record to be treasured."

Before dealing "in depth" with Mr. Von Norden, it may be well to complete the list of Marie Narelle records issued before the unbreakable Blue Amberol cylinders were introduced. "Bonnie Doon," 687, was announced in May:

"... If one were asked to define the particular quality of Marie Narelle's singing that has made her the popular idol of three continents, the answer could truthfully be comprehended in one word—sympathy—the ability to feel the song she sings.

"The finest vocal organs and the most perfect technique certainly belong to her, but it is that indefinable something that touches the heart and brain that is responsible for her great success in interpreting the stirring, lovable ballads of the people.

"That quality is present in all its strength in her rendition of this lovely plaintive old melody. It is a record that every Edison owner—and only Edison owners, for this great artiste sings only for Edison records—can number with pride in his collection."

The next Narelle record was made available in September, 1911. It was 10512, the first two-minute Standard cylinder she had made since 1906, a shortened version of "Every Little Movement," which she had already sung on an Amberol with Frederic H. Potter and a mixed chorus.

This time Potter was omitted and Miss Narelle's partner was a contralto, the late Mary Jordan, who

(Continued on page 40)



Veteran Hobbyist Charles W. Cook shows his collection of Civil War bullets at his home in Sulem, Va.

—Photo by Kathy Thornton, Salem, Va.  
Courtesy Salem Times Register

## LIFELONG COLLECTING HAS HELPED KEEP VIRGINIA MAN YOUNG IN SPIRIT

By JIM WALSH

Charles W. Cook, of Salem, Va., is living proof that having hobbies helps to keep you mentally alert and young in spirit even though you have reached advanced years.

Mr. Cook, who is 84, was born in Roanoke county. He has lived at 319 Broad Street, in Salem, the historic county seat, since 1915.

For many years he was county treasurer. During all his active working years he collected things and enjoyed his hobbies. Now that he is retired his interest is still keen.

Perhaps his top-ranking preoccupation during the collecting period, which began when he was a small boy, has been the Civil War and everything associated with it.

Mr. Cook comes by that interest rightfully and naturally since his great-grandfather was a Revolutionary War soldier, and his father and uncles fought for the Confederacy in

the Civil War. As a boy Charles Cook hunted for War relics on the Appomattox Battlefield, less than 100 miles from where he now lives.

Outstanding in his collection is the display of bullets he has discovered on ground where the War Between the States, as Southerners prefer to call it, was being fought a century ago. Mr. Cook has not only visited many of these historic spots, but friends are always glad to look for battlefield mementoes on their travels and bring them back to him.

The bullets, their days of aggressive or defensive usefulness past, rest on red velvet. They repose in small wooden cases, all labeled with information identifying the battlefield on which they were found.

The veteran collector furthermore treasures a large cannon shell from Hanging Rock Battlefield, just outside Salem.

Mr. Cook also collects coins and paper money. As one would expect, he has Confederate money and even script issued by the Continental Congress.

Another of his interests is Indian relics, especially those found in Virginia. He can show you an excellent collection of stone arrow-heads,

(Continued on page 53)

# Corn Husk Dolls

*Courtesy The Brooklyn  
(N.Y.) Children's Museum*

Jane Adams, describes the dolls she played with not so many years ago in Southern Illinois. Miss Adams is presently a student at Antioch College and served as docent at the Brooklyn, N. Y., Children's Museum.

In about July the corn would start getting ripe in the garden, and with the first ears of corn we would make the first cornhusk dolls. About half an hour before supper we'd go into the garden, pick a dozen good fat ears of corn, shuck them, and pop them in the boiling water. I'd put the tender inside husks in a pail of water to keep soft till after supper, then, while it was still light, take them down to the creek where some reed-like grasses grew, to use as rope. Well, the grasses weren't reed and didn't hold too well, so I'd take some twine, too. Then I'd take the leaves individually, turn them so that every other one was facing in the opposite direction. I'd make a little wad or ball of husk for the head, place it in the center of the leaves, and fold them over in half, tying the husks just under the head. Then I'd twist two leaves together to make the arms, tying them at the wrist, and placing this directly beneath the head, between the two halves, and tying them in place by tying a string around the waist. If I was making a woman I trimmed the leaves to make a skirt, maybe taking some berries to color it, making a shawl from the bottom edge of the tougher outer leaves, hooking it with reeds tied through holes and looped around the shoulders. If I was making a man I cut the leaves and tied them at the knees and ankles. He could then be seated on a stool, using other leaves to tie him in place. I could position the arms and legs by tying them in place and removing the string carefully when they were fully dry.

In late summer when the fields with corn was getting ripe I would make whole families: the parents out of the larger field corn, the children out of the sweet corn. They could have brown or yellow hair, depending on whether I used the old silk or silk from the youngest ears. This was glued on or tied in with the head, braided, cut short, curled if I used the old silk, or left hang long. I'd take a fine paint brush or feather or twig and use berry juice for the faces, maybe gather bits of wool from the sheep and mat it into bits of clothing, seat them on rocks and wooden benches, sometimes even making lean-to houses for them and setting up tiny communities. When

acorns started getting ripe I would sometimes enclose one of them as the head, leaving the brown face out with the corn leaves around it. Some of the dolls had twigs or pipe cleaners for arms and legs, or I would put a piece of wire in the center of each limb to shape them. Each doll was different and an individual. Lives would be born, families have great experiences—fighting Indians, riding down fashionable streets, square dancing—live for a few hours, and then be left by the creek when it got full dark and Mother called us home, and we forgot our dolls in the excitement of chasing fire flies across the pasture to home. With luck they would be there in the morning if we remembered to look, and not too bedraggled by the dew, but if they were gone, we could always make more.

More dolls were made of the new young acorns. We'd take a big heavy needle, big heavy thread, take the caps off (since they're impossible to sew through), and sew the acorns together in the shape of a long skinny man. These we saved for the Christmas tree, among the first Christmas decorations. Later in the winter we'd gild them, so they would shine. If the acorns were very small, they would make good lapel pins on coats. Smaller seeds that we gathered out in the fields or retrieved from melons also made good little men, turned into women by the addition of scraps of material for skirts and scarves, glued on.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

probably had sung the alto's music in the longer cylinder.

Miss Narelle was again missing from Edison lists until December, 1911, when she gave, on 862, a four-minute version of "Annie Laurie." Of all the numbers in Miss Narelle's extensive repertoire, this is her favorite, and we have been holding back our record of it to present as a holiday offering to the phonograph public.

After that, there were no more Marie Narelle cylinders for more than a year, and her first blue Amberols were taken from wax Amberol molds.

(To be continued)

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# Marie Narelle and Berrick Von Norden

## PART II

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Distinguished Tenor

For reasons that will soon be apparent, I feel a peculiarly personal interest in discussing Berrick Von Norden and his records.

The tenor's first Edison solo was "The Lord is My Light," 612, issued in February, 1911, with this New Phonogram description:

"... The words of this profoundly impressive sacred number are from Psalm XXVII. The music was written by Frances Allitsen, a contemporary composer and concert singer living in London. Her settings of songs from the Scriptures and poets are much admired wherever they are known.

"Mr. Von Norden, a tenor with a voice of wonderful range and beauty, is well known to the musical public, having toured the United States and Canada with Calve in her successful tours of 1905 and 1906.

"He is now tenor soloist for the Temple Emanuel, the leading Jewish Synagogue in New York City, and also is one of the foremost oratorio and concert singers of the day. This, his first contribution to our catalog of devotional selections, is a record that we commend to the good graces of every lover of sacred numbers."

Here is the Phonogram's comment about the next Von Norden cylinder, 634, "Before the Dawn:"

"This high class sentimental song calls for treatment far beyond the capabilities of a majority of even the best concert singers, and the ease with which Mr. Von Norden meets its exacting demands, particularly in the difficult climax, stamps him, therefore, an artist of the very highest caliber.

"Such commendation will, we are sure, not be necessary with Edison owners who enjoyed his 'The Lord is My Light.' ... The engagement of so prominent and accomplished an artist as Mr. Von Norden testifies eloquently to the high class of talent we aim to provide for friends of the Edison phonograph. This song is an always favorite number on Mr. Von Norden's concert programs."

The tenor's April contribution, 642, "I'm Falling in Love With Some One," was a record of unusual interest:

"The principal song hit in Victor Herbert's latest operatic work, 'Naughty Marietta,' which has had a most successful run during the present season,

and is still playing to crowded houses at the New York Theater, New York City, where it had its premiere.

"The theme of this fascinating number, which swings into a catchy slow waltz air refrain, is heard at intervals during the entire course of the performance. It is the air that the audience hums and whistles as it leaves the theater, and for days afterwards. Mr. Von Norden sings it most artistically and well, accompanied by an orchestra under the personal direction of Victor Herbert, who wrote the music. . ."

The Narelle-Von Norden "Spring Maid" duet also came out in April, and was the last cylinder, apparently, in which the tenor sang. It was certainly the last to be issued. He had such an excellent voice it is surprising that Edison did not persuade him to continue making records and not confine his recording "career" to just three months.

### II. Tracing Von Norden Recordings

My purely personal pleasure in writing about Berrick Von Norden and his records stems from a day in the summer of 1962 when I received a letter from Abel Green, editor of Variety. Mr. Green said that a friend of Syd Silverman, Variety publisher, was eager to obtain records of the voice of her father who had sung under the name of Berrick Von Norden. In his letter dated August 24, 1962, Abel Green wrote:

"Dear Jim: For a good friend of Syd Silverman's, I would like to get a run down on how we can get any information on the available long ago recordings of Berrick Von Norden, who sang with Emma Calve on the old Victor label. These could be circa 1905-1910.

"Syd's friend is Berrick Von Norden's daughter . . . Von Norden's real name was Berrick Schloss, but his professional name was Berrick Von Norden.

"Incidentally, later in his career when he gave up thrashing, he became a conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra, but his daughter is concerned essentially with the records.

"... How could she get a copy, or even have a tape recording made, of these old recordings? I wouldn't be surprised that in that era they were probably made on cylinders rather than flat platters."

For an hour or so after reading this letter I felt somewhat frustrated. The name of Berrick Von Norden seemed vaguely familiar, but I couldn't remember just where I had seen it. I knew he was not one of the artists whose recording career spanned a good many years, and I was positive he hadn't made Victor records, but I also thought I had seen his name in one or more old record lists.

Finally, I tried the 1912 Columbia catalog and discovered one record: 437, "The Kiss Duet," from Oscar Straus' "Waltz Dream," sung by "Miss Marsh and Mr. Van Norden." (For several years, Columbia cata-



Berrick Von Norden, the distinguished tenor, is shown here as he appeared in his Edison recording days. Later the singer, whose real name was Berrick Schloss, became conductor of the University Glee Club of Providence.

logs printed "Von Norden" wrongly as "Van Norden.")

"Miss Marsh" I deduced to be Lucy Isabelle Marsh, who made a few Columbia records before becoming exclusive to Victor for the remainder of her long career, but I didn't believe I had the "Kiss Duet," which was coupled with "As Long as the World Rolls On," sung by Henry Burr.

However, I went to my Burr collection and was surprised and delighted to find a copy in excellent condition. This I copied on tape and sent to Abel Green, with a letter saying it was the only recording I could trace of Berrick Von Norden's voice.

On August 27, Syd Silverman wrote:

"Dear Jim: Many, many thanks for the fabulous find of that Berrick Von Norden side. His daughter, Mrs. Betty Abramson, Chevy Chase, Md., is a good friend and, evidently, at the time of his death everything was donated to the music library at Brown U. in Providence, so she has no record of his voice.

"I'm sure she will be delighted with your wonderful find and undoubtedly you will be hearing from her in the near future.

The following day, August 28, Mrs. Abramson wrote:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I have just listened to the tape of my father's voice and could not possibly tell you how very much it means to me.

"Berrick Von Norden, whose real name was Berrick Schloss, died in 1938, when I was in my late teens. My fondest childhood memories are those associated with a song-filled home.

"My father's voice brought all of us, and more particularly me, many thrills, great excitement, and through his heart as well as his song, a deep devotion. I have not heard his singing since 1938—all of his recordings were accidentally broken the day he died.

"My husband, who never met my father, has searched for some clue to find some of the cylindrical recordings. All of his efforts, until now, had been in vain.

"Now my husband and my children can share this treasure with me . . . I know well there is no way I could thank

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH



you enough for what you have done for me (through Syd Silverman). Gratefully, BETTY SCHLOSS ABRAMSON."

I replied, saying how glad I was that the taped copy of the Columbia record had given Mrs. Abramson so much pleasure. On September 2, 1962, she wrote:

"... I will have a copy of my photograph of my father made to send you—in the meantime I am sending the enclosed program with his likeness on the back."

"He made discs for Columbia from around 1905 to 1912, possibly a dozen or so. He was born January 3, 1882, in New York City. He died on August 23, 1938, in Providence, R.I. (his home)."

"He recorded some of his discs with Lucy Marsh (Gordon), who was a soprano from Providence. The few that I remember are from 'The Chocolate Soldier' and 'Naughty Marietta'—my favorite being 'I'm Falling in Love With Someone.'"

"Of course, I would very much appreciate having any other records you might find."

"And again, I thank you over and over for your thoughtfulness and generosity. I shall keep in touch with you."

Not long afterward, I obtained the Columbia quarterly record supplement for June, July, and August, 1908, and came across the original listing of the Marsh-Von Norden disc of "The Kiss Duet." A cylinder version also was included but, oddly, Columbia didn't have it sung by the same artists.

Instead, the "XP" cylinder, 33225, was by "Miss Elsie Wood (Sic) and "Mr. Henry Burr." "Miss Elsie Wood" was really Elise Stevenson, who in private life was Mrs. Rusling Wood. The disc number was 3766, but this single-face record was afterwards taken over in double-face form, as in my own copy. The supplement said:

"This is undoubtedly the hit of the entire operetta and is the part of the show which has been most talked about from one end of the country to the other. The song is a languorous, dreamy, ecstatic kissing song which would arouse the coldest listener."

As far as I have been able to determine, this is the only Berrick Von Norden record which Columbia ever issued, but possibly others were made

under another name. It antedates his four Edison cylinders by more than two years.

It seems strange that I didn't recall for months that the tenor had made those Edison cylinders. That realization didn't dawn upon me until I was compiling notes to write about Marie Narelle and discovered that I had her duet with Von Norden. Then I checked my Edison cylinder lists, as I should have done earlier, and found the records whose Phonogram descriptions I have already quoted.

Naturally, I decided to copy the "Day Dreams" cylinder for Mrs. Abramson, but it was so brittle that a small section broke and fell off when I slipped it onto the mandrel. However, none of the tenor's part was destroyed, and I was able to copy what remained for Mrs. Abramson, who was happy to get it.

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## The University Glee Club of Providence

Season of 1930-31

Berick Schloss, Conductor  
The University Glee Club

Berick Schloss, the virtual founder of the University Glee Club in 1911, has ever been a most enthusiastic and active member. He served as Director from the inception of the Club until 1914, when absence from Providence made it necessary for him to relinquish his leadership for two seasons.

With the exception of one other season when he was granted a leave of absence, Mr. Schloss has led the Club without interruption since then, and this year marks his seventeenth season as director.

The task of selection and arrangement of music for the programs has been largely his. He has consistently held before the Club the highest ideals in men's chorus singing, and sought to achieve artistic results. To him the Club owes largely its development from a group of enthusiasts, but untrained singers to its present status. His solos have enriched the Club's programs on many occasions, and his efforts in bringing soloists to Providence to appear with the Club have greatly added to the enjoyment of the Club's concerts.

Berick Schloss, as conductor of the University Glee Club of Providence, R.I.—Photos, courtesy of his daughter, Mrs. Daniel J. Abramson of Chevy Chase, Md.

Club of Providence for the season of 1930-31 contains the following tribute:

"Berick Schloss, the virtual founder of the University Glee Club in 1911, has ever been a most enthusiastic and active member. He served as Director from the inception of the Club until 1914, when absence from Providence made it necessary for him to relinquish his leadership for two seasons.

"With the exception of one other season when he was granted a leave of absence, Mr. Schloss has led the Club without interruption since then, and this year marks his 17th season as director.

"The task of selection and arrangement of music for the program has been largely his. He has consistently held before the Club the highest ideals in men's chorus singing, and sought to achieve artistic results. To him the Club owes largely its development from a group of enthusiastic but untrained singers to its present status.

"His solos have enriched the Club's programs on many occasions, and his efforts in bringing soloists to Providence to appear with the Club have greatly added to the enjoyment of the Club's concerts."

I am sure all music lovers will agree it is deplorable that so accomplished an artist and so dedicated a musician died at the early age of 56, and that his list of records is not much longer.

## III. Marie Narelle's Blue Amberol

Edison bought out the almost indestructible Blue Amberol cylinders in November, 1912, but Marie Narelle did not appear until the following March. Her first Blue Amberole was 1720, a transfer of "Wearing of the Green" from the former Amberol list.

The supplement described the number as "one of the favorite marching tunes of the Irish Volunteers of 1782,

and of the Irish rebels of 1798. Her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, regarded it as an especial favorite—a fact which is known to but few even in England." The description continued:

"Marie Narelle, a dramatic soprano of high caliber, has put aside an operatic career to become an exponent of the stirring and lovable ballads of the people.

"Her success and popularity may be judged somewhat by the extract from a Dublin newspaper regarding her performance—'and then came "The Wearing of the Green." Sung with Soul in it! And as she sings on, her eyes, now tender, now tempestuous, her notes deepen and her audience stirs inwardly. No training, nothing but soul and inborn melody could have made her sing as she did that night."

A Blue Amberol of "Bonnie Doon," 1974, was issued in October, 1913; and 2098, "Every Little Movement" (the duet with Frederic Potter) came out in December. "Bonnie Dundee," a song new to the Narelle list, appeared in May, 1914, as 2288. It was accompanied by 2289, "Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane."

"Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer" was added, 2450, to the list in November. And then, after a lapse of more than nine years, came 4809, "Bonnie, Sweet Bessie," in January, 1924. This song, which had been popular as a Diamond Disc for more than a decade, was not a new recording, but a reissue of the January, 1911, Amberol. And it was the last Marie Narelle cylinder.

## IV. British Collectors Disagree

In 1918, despite the havoc wrought by years of war, British record collectors still soothed themselves with the recorded sounds of Marie Narelle's velvety voice.

The *Talking Machine News* for January, 1918, published a tribute to the soprano from the Liverpool and District Recorded Music Society. The following appeared as part of an account of the Society's meeting on October 3, 1917:

"The Last Rose of Summer," by Marie Narelle . . . was played on Mr. Graham's magnificent 'Amberola.' The reproduction on the Amberola (was) perfection; it was, in fact, described by some present as 'uncanny' in its naturalness; the instrument ran absolutely silently, and there was no suspicion of surface noise, the whole effect being as though the singer had been transplanted into the room."

This report annoyed R. Davis, who was stationed in France with the Fifth Field Company Engineers of the Australian forces. Mr. Davis was a consistent advocate of what he considered the superiority of needle-cut records over cylinders and phonocut discs. On February 25, 1918, he wrote:

"I should like to know by what means the Liverpool and District Society came to consider the Blue Amberol record of Marie Narelle so very NATURAL in tone as to be considered by the members as uncanny in its absolute perfection?

"Has ANY member of the Society ever heard Miss Narelle sing in the flesh? . . . I heard her sing 'Kilmarney' at Melbourne Town Hall, and as soon as I arrived home I played the same item on an Edison gold-moulded (2-minute record), and the voice was not the same as I had heard an hour previous; it seemed enriched by the horn, quite 'canny,' and this must have been caused in recording, as I was using a cardboard horn. . ."

This comment seems both naive and unfair, since Miss Narelle's voice might have changed somewhat in quality since she had made the two-minute record many years before. And certainly Davis' "improvement" of substituting a cardboard horn for the one that came with the phonograph was not likely to have improved its tone.

On April 16, 1918, a Luton phonograph dealer, T. A. Foster, wrote a letter in which he asked a question that must have further annoyed Mr. Davis.

The needle-cut enthusiasts, for all their contempt of the cylinder, never could explain why, whenever discs and cylinder records were compared at a meeting of a recorded music society, there was always a heavy majority vote, which was sometimes unanimous, that the cylinders had a more natural tone, better surfaces, and were generally superior to their rivals. I cannot recall ever reading of a meeting at which the majority vote went to the discs.

Said Mr. Foster in his letter:

" . . . Does not Mr. Davis know that to compare the old 'gold-moulded' wax record—played with the old model "C" reproducer—with the Blue Amberol record played with the model "B" reproducer, is like comparing the old flint gun with the latest Enfield?

"I can assure Mr. Davis that the latest and best Edison machines playing Blue Amberols are not the least bit 'canny,' but are beautifully natural in tone. . .

"How does Mr. Davis account for the fact that at every concert where the needle-cut and cylinder have been compared the cylinder has more than held its own? If the cylinder was not natural in tone, does he suppose it would invariably take off premier honors?"

A member of the Liverpool Society, A. W. Cooper, got into the controversy:

" . . . The hon. secretary in his report did not mean to imply that even one percent of members . . . had heard Miss Narelle in the flesh, but that the reproduction was so very natural as to be a perfect rendering of a living human voice. . .

"It was exactly as if the singer in the flesh was before us and, speaking for myself, absolutely satisfying, quite irrespective of whether it was an exact reproduction of any particular singer's voice. There was absolutely no suggestion of a 'machine' about it. . ."

Mr. Davis, who, incidentally, was wrong in his belief that Marie Narelle had not sung in England, replied:

" . . . All I wish to say is that if I purchase a record of a great singer—and Miss Narelle is a great ballad singer—I want more than a record 'like a woman's voice.' I want an exact reproduction of the artist named on the label, and that is in my opinion where the Edison fails. . ."

The only record of those days that could give the "exact reproduction" that Davis yearned for was the Edison Diamond Disc. But this biased Australian probably would not have believed his laterally-attuned ears if he had been inveigled into hearing an Edison tone test.

However, he might well have asked the Liverpool Society where and how it obtained that cylinder of Marie Narelle singing "The Last Rose of Summer." No such record, my re-

search indicates, was ever listed in an Edison catalog. Probably the "hon. secretary's" memory tricked him when he wrote his report, and the members had heard some other Blue Amberol by Miss Narelle.

#### V. Marie Narelle's Diamond Discs

The Australian soprano was one of the artists in Edison's first undated list of Diamond Discs, which appeared either near the end of 1912 or early the following year.

On 50006 she sang "Bonnie Sweet Bessie." The reverse side was devoted to the Metropolitan Quartet's rendition of "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground." "Bonnie Sweet Bessie" also was on 50031. Its coupling was Thomas Chalmers singing "In Happy Moments" from "Maritana."

A revised list was issued August 1, 1913, with most of the earlier numbers cut out. "Bonnie Sweet Bessie" came to rest on 50069, with Chalmers singing "Forgotten." This coupling remained in the catalog through 1929, when Edison quit the record business, but the Narelle side was remade in 1924 by Betsy Lane Shepherd. I suppose the moulds had become defective, and Miss Narelle was not available for re-makes.

A third list, covering the period from October 1 through December 10, 1913, brought Miss Narelle again

#### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

WANTED: All red G&T records of Tamagno; also black G&T, Gramophone, and Victor records of Evan Williams. As always, I will pay the best prices. — Thomas O'Shaughnessy, P.O. Box 281, Rochester, Minn. my3225

WANTED: Johnson material. — Dick Bonesteel, 3249 Perkins Lane West, Seattle, Wash. jly12407

RECORDINGS wanted of pre-1937 radio or TV broadcasts (news, comedy, mystery, adventure). — George Vlasto, 400 North St., Greenwich, Conn. my3403

#### RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collectors' items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. mh3084

SEND STAMP for small monthly list of old records. Always something different at attractive prices. — Martin Bryan, Francis Street, Danielson, Conn. mh3633

Out-of-print records, primarily 78 rpm, some deleted LP's: classical vocal, instrumental, popular, personality, jazz. Monthly sales list of classical vocals. Authoritative appraisals. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 254 W. 81st St., New York 24, N. Y. n122553

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N. Y. jcl20061

FREE "Personalities" catalogs - rare records and broadcasts by radio, stage, screen, television personalities. — Amalgamated Records, 341 Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. ap6407

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP. — A.R.G., 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. my3863

CYLINDER RECORDS 50c each. Discs 25c and 50c each. Send for lists. — Gregory R. Reed, R.F.D. 4, Allentown 5, Pa. my3253

RECORDS: 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. (Formerly Ted's of Philadelphia.) mh3844

RECORDS: Classical, Popular, Personality, Misc. 78s and cylinders. Condition guaranteed. Also phonographs, record catalogs, supplements, other material, bought, sold, traded. Let me know your needs. All corresp. acknowledged. — Dale Miller, Box 668, Yucaipa, Calif. mh3272

RARE 78's. State category. — Record Lists, P.O. Box 2122, Riverside, Calif. 92506. n12407

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FOR SALE: Rare 78's, opera, show biz, orchestral, historical. Send 10c for list. — P. Hanslee, Box 147, Calabasas, Calif. my6896

RECORD COLLECTORS - Who do you like? Gene Austin, Vernon Dalhart, Jolson, Vallee, Caruso? Or? Send \$1 for lists of your favorite artists and we will include a record of Thomas Edison speaking. Send \$2 for Victor 1905 Red Seal Catalog. — Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502 f3487

FOR SALE: Disc and cylinder records, phonographs. 25c for lists. "Evolution of the Phonograph" by Reed and Welch, 576 pages, \$9.95 postpaid. Sound of Fame, re-recording of 13 Edison artists, 33 ½, \$4. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Box 6, Palatine Bridge, N. Y. f3295

COLLECTOR buys and sells rare vocal operatic records. Lists solicited. — Arthur D. Knight, 400 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket, R. I. Phone PA 3-2889. my6407

#### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18 ½" \$3; 15 ½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. jly6468

#### ANTIQUE BAND INSTRUMENTS

WANTED: Over the shoulder or other antique band instruments. — W. A. Holway, 1547 N. Dearborn Pkwy., Chicago 10, Ill. ap3403

#### WANTED MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: 17 ½" disc for Imperial Symphonon Model 106 — J. G. Hardin, 1313 Browne Ave., Yakima Wash. mh3652

WANTED: Old Record Catalogs, Supplements, Books, Magazine illustrations and other literature pertaining to old phonographs. — Dale Miller, Box 668, Yucaipa, Calif. mh3861

#### PIANOS & ROLLS

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Record. 2) Record. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120821

WANTED: Coin operated electric player piano (nickelodeon orchestra) with drums, chimes, etc. Coimola, Seeburg, Nelson - Wiggen, Wuritzer. — Harold Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Md. mh3483

#### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

FOR SALE: old phonographs, phonograph records, needles, supplies, old books, piano rolls. Let me know your needs. All inquiries answered. — Monroe Sands, 303 E. Washington St., Urbana, Illinois. jcl22971

BOOKS on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America. \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N.Y. my32321

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CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c. 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

FOR SALE: Edison phonograph. First patent 1898. Table model 17 ½"x8 ½", 12" high. Serial No. A111 807. Complete with morning glory horn and about 40 cylindrical records. Best offer. Shipping extra. — Mrs. Charles M. Albion, 6939 West Nelson, Chicago, Ill. mh1323

FOR SALE: 1898 Gramophone, by Thomas Edison, working order, with 25 cylinder records. Write: Helen Moshenok, Bellsite, Manitoba, Canada. mh1001

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy & sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 739 San Fernando Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif. 90013. mh3023

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver 5, Colorado. sl2638

OLD POPULAR sheet music. Please write: Robt. Greenlaw, 307 No. Rampart, Rm. 412, Los Angeles 26, Calif. ap3652

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before the growing Diamond Disc public. On 50096 she sang "Chiming Bells of Long Ago" and "I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls." Number 50103 was occupied with her rendition of an old Irish song, "The Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow," while, on its coupling, Vernon Archibald sang "Hear Me, Gentle Maritana."

Also in the revised list were two more Narelle numbers: Number 80070, which was still another of the soprano's versions of "Killarney." It was coupled with "Then You'll Remember Me," sung by Charles Hackett, who became a Metropolitan Opera tenor; and 82511, "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer," the companion of which was Gounod's "Ave Maria," sung in Latin by another soprano, Charlotte Kirwan.

A third list, dated December 10, 1913, brought Miss Narelle again before the tiny but growing Diamond Disc public. On 50096 she sang "Chiming Bells of Long Ago" and "I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls."

Number 50103 was occupied with Miss Narelle's rendition of an old Irish song, "The Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow," while to go along with it Vernon Archibald sang "Hear Me, Gentle Maritana." (Parenthetically, why was Mr. Edison, or somebody else associated with Edison recording activities, so obsessed with issuing excerpts from that moribund opera, "Maritana"?)

On 80101 Miss Narelle was heard in a Scotch ballad, "Angus MacDonald." The reverse was taken up by Elizabeth Spencer in "The Last Rose of Summer." (Could the Liverpool society have played this record, or perhaps the one by Marie Rappold, and mistakenly attributed it to Miss Narelle?)

And finally, on 80124, "The Australian Nightingale" and a chorus, sang beautifully "The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls." Its companion was another "Maritana" relic, "In Turn What Say You?" by still another Marie — Marie Kaiser — and Archibald.

The Narelle records which had numbers beginning with 50 sold for \$1; those beginning with 80 were \$1.50; and those with 82, \$2. There seems no good reason why one should have been more expensive than the other.

For such a highly praised artist, the discs, excepting "Bonnie Sweet Bessie," had a remarkably short life. When the June, 1915, Edison record catalog was published, "Bessie" was the only one remaining.

It is possible that the masters of the others were destroyed in the fire that ravaged the Edison plant in December, 1914. But, despite a popular impression to the contrary, it seems doubtful that any masters were lost.

A 1915 issue of the Edison Phonograph Monthly said none were destroyed. But if they were not, why were the Narelle records and others, such as Ellen Beach Yaw's "Sky-lark" cut out of the next catalog? If Miss Narelle was still under contract to Edison and available to do

more recording, why were not her discs remade?

If the other masters were destroyed, how did it happen that "Bonnie Sweet Bessie" survived, as did all the company's masters of popular songs, dance records, and other good sellers?

I don't know the answers. But it is certain that there were no more Edison records by Marie Narelle and that, after 1924, her name disappeared from the Diamond Disc catalog with Miss Shepherd's remaking of "Bonnie Sweet Bessie."

The last full scale Blue Amberol catalog (dated November, 1920) which Edison considered it worth while to issue listed six Narelle numbers, so evidently there had been no destruction of the cylinder moulds. The six were "Bonnie Doon," "Bonnie Dundee," "Every Little Movement," "Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane," "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer," and "Wearing of the Green."

Finally, as I have already mentioned, "Bessie" was belatedly issued as a Blue Amberol in 1924, just as Miss Narelle's disc record was about to give way to a remake by Betsy Shepherd.

#### VI. An Exciting Discovery (?)

Although Marie Narelle and Edison had called it quits, the soprano's sweet voice was still to be heard on one more record—the only one I know of that she made for any other company.

Late in 1916, Pathe produced a 10-inch record, 20134, of "Dear Old Honolulu," sung by Miss Narelle with an Hawaiian accompaniment. I haven't heard the record but the title sounds like an incongruous combination of song, singer, and musicians.

On the other side, Henry Burr, also to Hawaiian accompaniment, sang "Everybody Hula." Marie Narelle, by the way, is one of the few popular phonograph singers with whom Burr didn't record a duet or two.

Just as I finished typing the preceding sentence, a thought which had never occurred to me before suddenly struck me with dazzling force and caused me to fetch out my old Pathe catalogs. From out of my subconscious mind or heaven knows where came the breath-taking suggestion that Marie Ryan, who made several Pathe records in 1916-17, was really Marie Narelle!

I can't on such short inspiration prove my suspicion correct, but everything seems to point to the likelihood that I have uncovered a well hidden secret of some 46 or 47 years standing. Perhaps my old friend, Harry Hunting, whose father, the late Russell Hunting, was Pathe's recording director, can say for sure. But here is the evidence:

The one Narelle record for Pathe was a song about Hawaii with a Hawaiian guitar accompaniment. Two of the Marie Ryan records are the same type. Furthermore, their numbers indicate they were made about

the same time—within a few months, at least—of the Marie Narelle record.

Almost a clincher to me is the fact that the singer's name appears in its alphabetical place in Pathe catalogs as Marie Ryan. However, when the records are looked up under their individual titles her first name is given each time as Mary.

That suggests that the soprano, probably feeling that the type of music Pathe wanted her to record was unworthy of the reputation of the famous concert artist, Marie Narelle, asked that they be listed as by Mary Ryan. (It could be that her first name actually was Mary, instead of Marie.) This was faithfully done in the body of the catalog, but the compiler, perhaps with the name of Marie Narelle in mind, set it down in its alphabetical position as Marie Ryan, and it was carried that way in several editions.

An odd fact is that, in the comprehensive listing of Pathe artists in the back of the catalog, Mary Ryan is included, but, through some oversight, Marie Narelle is left out.

I am so nearly certain that Marie Narelle was Pathe's Marie, or Mary, Ryan that I shall list the Ryan records:

- 20015. Think of Me; Reverse: The Road That Leads to You (Henry Burr).
- 20018. Have a Heart (duet with Gordon MacHughes, whoever he was); Reverse: When the Lights Are Low (Ella Wells, soprano).
- 20027. Aloha Oe (Hawaiian accompaniment); Reverse: On the South Sea Isle (Sterling Trio).
- 20028. Fair Hawaii (Hawaiian accompaniment); Reverse: My Rose of Honolulu (Gordon MacHughes, baritone).
- 20032. Ireland Must Be Heaven for My Mother Came From There; Reverse: My Honey Lou (Burr).
- 20162. Keep the Home Fires Burning; Reverse: Ask Nothing More (Arthur Grover, baritone).

All were 10-inch, except the 12-inch 29162.

One more thought: Could the "Ireland Must Be Heaven" title have been selected by the singer as a tribute to her reputed Irish parentage?

I still have one more convincing piece of corroborative evidence to present before ending this impromptu exhibition of recorded music detective work.

#### VII. In Conclusion

For many years my knowledge of Marie Narelle's career and life story ended with that 1916 Pathe record. I could learn nothing of what had become of her.

But when my dear friend, Quentin Riggs (who is now stationed in Paris) went to work for the U.S. State Department in Sydney, Australia, it occurred to me that he might be able to find some items about the Australian-born soprano in back files of Sydney newspapers. He did turn up two. *The Sydney Morning Herald* for December 5, 1925, said:

"Madame Marie Narelle, after an absence of 15 years in America, is enjoying a warm welcome home, for she is an Australian, who was born at Com-banning Station, near Temore, a property owned by her grandfather."

"She has been stimulated by many ex-  
(Continued on page 40)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

pressions of goodwill in her decision to undertake a concert tour before going back to America. When Madame Narelle left Australia she fulfilled many concert engagements in the United Kingdom before going across to America to sing at the World's Fair in St. Louis."

The foregoing seems to indicate that the singer had remained in the States, since she returned here in 1910 to sing for Edison, until she went back to Australia in 1925.

The sad news of Marie Narelle's death appeared in the *Herald* for January 31, 1941:

"Marie Narelle, the Australian mezzo-soprano, has died at Chipping Norton, England, according to a cablegram received in Sydney. Miss Narelle, who was 70, achieved her first success at Sydney Town Hall, and toured Australia before going to America, where she gave many concerts. She is survived by two daughters and a son. A sister, Mrs. N. Gaffney, and a brother, Mr. A. J. Ryan, live in Sydney."

The brother's name is the final bit of corroborative evidence. If the soprano were his full sister, then her family name, too, must have been Ryan.

However, when the Narelle-Ryan theory suddenly entered my head, I did not remember that she had a brother, much less know his name. But, even more strongly than before, it seems that Marie Narelle and Marie, or Mary, Ryan of Pathe records must be the same singer.

Obviously, the information in that death notice is disappointingly scant. We don't have the date of birth or death. And we don't know whether the artist was married to a man named Narelle, or, which seems more likely to me, Narelle was a stage name. It certainly has the sound of one, despite the *Phonogram's* disclaimer.

Other questions occur: When and where was Marie Narelle married? If she was 70 in 1941, she was 34 when she made her first Edison records in 1905, and probably was already married and a mother despite the quoted statement that she was single. When and why did she go to England to live after returning to Australia in 1925?

Perhaps later we shall learn the answer to those questions and others that may occur to both you and me. Pending further enlightenment, I think we can agree that the soprano whose records were considered miracles of pure tone quality nearly 60 years ago was a true and sincere artist.

While she never won the operatic acclaim of Marie Rappold or Marie Sundelius, she was their equal, or superior, in concert songs. And she probably could have done equally well in opera if she had wished.

Among all of Edison's many Marys, Marias and Maries, Marie Narelle was not the least.

(The End)

## OLD METALS

(Continued from page 44)

as early as 1750. He, or one of his elder brothers, inherited York House in 1748 from his father, Sir Theodore Janssen, a prominent London merchant who had accumulated great wealth as a promoter of the South Seas schemes.

The Battersea rate book indicates that no rates were collected on York House until late in 1753. The entries for the several preceding years merely record that the House was "empty."

Throughout its three-year life of artistic brilliance, the Battersea enamel workshop never became firmly established as a commercial cause.

Stephen Theodore Janssen was declared bankrupt in 1756. His household goods were sold. And several months later all enamels at York House were sold at auction. Included were enameled pictures, snuff boxes, watch cases; also decanter labels, tiles, stove plates, and numerous other items.

Battersea enamels marked an important advance in enameling techniques, even though, stylistically, they did reflect a trained French taste of the mid-18th century, and designs were dominated by the engravings of Ravenet.

These enamels have invariable intrinsic value simply because they reflect, with unsophisticated ingenuity, the English tastes of their time.

—O—

I regret, because of heavy commitments, not having the time to make appraisals and identifications. —G.K.

## OLD MECHANICAL BANKS

(Continued from page 49)

however, that it is unique and completely different than any other known mechanical bank.

—O—

It is with much regret the writer reports the death of Edward T. Richards of Peace Dale, R.I., on January 14, 1964.

Ed was very well known in the mechanical bank collecting field and both he and his wife, Grace, were most avid and enthusiastic in their efforts of building up an outstanding collection of mechanical banks.

Mr. Richards founded and presided over for many years the Mechanical Bank Collectors Club of Rhode Island and was the prime organizer and president of the Mechanical Bank Collectors Club of America. He was also a well known and leading attorney with offices in Providence, R.I.

We know that many HOBBIES readers who knew him personally will be deeply touched, as was the writer, by the sad news of his untimely death.

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**WAGONWHEEL** patterns: Body, clothing, for china and bisque heads. 1800-1910. Stamp, dime, for list and sample pattern. — Follett Studios, Box 362, Moorhead, Minn. je126351

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## DOLL PATTERNS

**WAGONWHEEL** patterns, national distributor. Stamp and dime for list and sample body pattern. — Elizabeth Kringer, 813 7th Ave. North, Fargo, N.D. je128041

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**ANTIQUE DOLL MUSEUM,** 135 San Francisco Ave., Egg Harbor City, N.J. 08215. (18 miles from Atlantic City). 800 dolls displayed. 16 ft. doll house. 2 hour lecture tours, by appointment. Groups \$1 per person; \$5 minimum. Phone 965-0366. Area Code 609. my3656

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Ralph Bingham

By JIM WALSH

### I. Two Eloquent Tributes

(1) "Bless Bingham and all the apostolic college of humorists. The man that makes me laugh is my benefactor. God bless all skilful punsters, all those who mirthfully surprise us with unusual juxtaposition of words. Theirs is a divine mission.

"They stir into the acid beverage of life the saccharine, and make the cup of earthly existence, which is sometimes stale, effervesce and bubble. They placate animosities. They foster longevity. They slay follies and absurdities which all the sermons of all the pulpits cannot reach."

(2) "Ralph Bingham is funny because he can't help it. If he went into the undertaking business he would be expelled from the union in a week. He was born to drive dull care away—a doctor who cures by the good old rule of 'laugh and grow fat.'

"And he is one of the few doctors who seem to take their own medicine. On the platform or off, with an audience of one or five hundred, if Mr. Bingham's hearers are not shrieking with laughter you may take it for granted they are deaf-mutes who have not yet learned to read lip movements."

That ornate and flowery tribute quoted in the first paragraph came from the pen of the Rev. Thomas DeWitt Talmage, a noted evangelist and editor of the *Christian Herald*. I don't know in what year it was written, but since Mr. Talmage died in 1902 when Ralph Bingham was only 32, it obviously was penned when the portly and genial humorist was still a very young man.

The second laudatory comment, written in plain down-to-earth English, was published in "Talent" with Paul M. Pearson's name attached. Regardless of the difference in diction, they agree that Ralph Bingham was funny.

However, the gentleman whom Sam Rous, the Victor catalog editor, called Bingham's "silver-tongued publicity agent," went Talmage one better. Here is what he wrote, when Bingham's first Victor records were issued in 1915:

"He has now been 37 consecutive years before the public and has made 10,000 appearances on the American Continent. He has traveled more than 300,000 miles.

"Six hundred towns in Uncle Sam's domain have given him, each, five, some of them six, seven and eight audiences, in repeated recognition, confirmation, and commendation of his unequaled artistic and natural accomplishments, skillful platform methods, and his inimitable public demonstrations of wit, wisdom, humor, poetry, sentiment, tragedy, music, melody, drollery, and mirth."

Sam dryly commented: "Certainly we can't add anything to that!"

### II. A Child Prodigy

Many years ago, when I was living in Marion, Va., an old house on Main street was torn down, and I obtained several ancient newspapers and some other printed matter which had been stored in the attic.

Included was a publicity "blurb" for an entertainment that Ralph Bingham had given at Marion Junior College—a still active institution for young women. My learned brother, Dr. Chad Walsh, head of the English department at Beloit College, attend-



Ralph Bingham in varied moods. —From the November, 1915, Victor Record Supplement.

ed Marion College for two years as a town-dwelling "coed."

That "advance" probably is still among my stored away possessions, but I can't remember seeing it since I left Marion in 1934. I wish I could find and quote from it, but I remember that Bingham was 26 when it was issued, which seems to fix the year of his appearance at Marion College as 1896.

Since the age of eight, he had been travelling with his father and was billed as a boy prodigy who not only told funny dialect stories but also played the violin. In those days he apparently performed mostly in educational institutions and under the auspices of churches. Emphasis was laid on the cleanliness of his humor.

The publicity contained quotations from several pastors and presidents of colleges praising Bingham's programs and saying he was steadily improving as a violinist and a humorist.

I don't know whether the comedian

played the violin in the stage and Chautauqua appearances he made by the thousands in his mature years, but I imagine he discarded the instrument and relied on his inexhaustible treasury of funny dialect stories.

However that may have been, it is obvious that if Bingham were alive and vigorous today he would stand no chance as a public entertainer by relying on the repertoire that served him so well during his professional life. His stories were based heavily on the old-time "stereotype" of the Negro as a shiftless, good-natured, drunken, chicken-stealing character, and he would be under fire from the NAACP and "liberal" elements if he dared to tell them.

Bingham also told stories in Jewish and other dialects, and they too would be attacked by pressure groups. I am not sure that today's unofficial but effective ban on dialect comedy is a good thing. In fact, I think it isn't.

In the old days, the Irishman laughed at jokes about the Negro, but the Negro in his turn laughed at Irish jokes. The Jew laughed at Harry Lauder's anecdotes about Scotch

"thriftiness," and the Scot chuckled at similar stories about the Hebrew. There was seldom any malice in the work of the dialect comedians. It was mostly humor in a spirit of good-natured "give and take."

I will concede that some dialect comedy was objectionable. In this category I place some of Walter C. Kelly's "Virginian Judge" material (Kelly was a racial bigot who refused to work on the same vaudeville bill with the colored comedian, Bert Williams). And if I were Jewish I should resent such recorded "comedy" as "The Original Cohens," by Ada Jones and Len Spencer. But anything of a genuinely offensive nature was relatively rare.

Few Negroes disliked comedy of the Bingham type in his day, and many don't object to it now. A few years ago a highly intelligent, well educated young Negro spent an afternoon listening to some of my records. To begin with, he was amazed at the realism of Edison Dia-

mond Disc recordings. After listening to a Walter Scanlan record, my friend, himself a tenor like Scanlan, exclaimed:

"Mr. Walsh, I never heard any recording like that before! That beats anything I ever heard! How did Mr. Edison manage to get such marvelous results?"

A few minutes later he surprised me by picking up a Columbia record of Ada Jones singing "If the Man in the Moon Were a Coon." He asked me to play it. I had carefully refrained from putting on anything that I feared might offend him or hurt his feelings, so I rather dubiously asked if he were sure he wanted to hear that song. He insisted he did and he laughed with unaffected enjoyment as it was played.

"Would you mind playing some more like that? I do enjoy that Negro dialect!" he said.

So I played a number of Al Bernard and Ernest Hare's inimitable blackfaced comedy skits, and some by Jones and Spencer. We even heard a 1901 record of "Coon, Coon, Coon" by Arthur Collins and Joe Natus.

After a time I said: "I'm surprised you like those records. After all, they don't represent colored people in a very favorable light."

Serious for a moment, he replied: "Well, Mr. Walsh, it's like this. Those records are good-natured and they don't reflect on me. I know there are Negroes like those they impersonate in those records, just as there are plenty of others who are self-respecting and hard-working and doing their best to live up to high standards.

"I have no more right to complain about that type of Negro being depicted on records than the Irish have to try to stop 'Bringing Up Father' from being in the funny papers on the grounds that Maggie and Jiggs give a false impression of the Irish."

I have often thought that young man, whom I regard as one of my dearest friends, took a sensible attitude. He would have listened to Ralph Bingham in person and enjoyed his humor completely without self-consciousness, just as he almost went into hysterics over Bingham's record of "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone."

The "live and let live" attitude should prevail in dialect humor as in everything else.

Speaking of "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone," I am reminded of another example of broad-mindedness. I once gave a program of old recordings for a Jewish businessmen's organization and carefully avoided any Hebrew humor that might be offensive.

But the Jewish gentlemen, who constituted, I think, the most intelligently alert and responsive audience I ever appeared before, were disappointed that I hadn't brought "Cohen at the Telephone" and similar records. They said they enjoyed a program of serious music by Jewish artists, but they also wanted Monroe Silver, Julian Rose, Weber and Fields, and other Jewish dialect "comics."

But now to Ralph Bingham's records.

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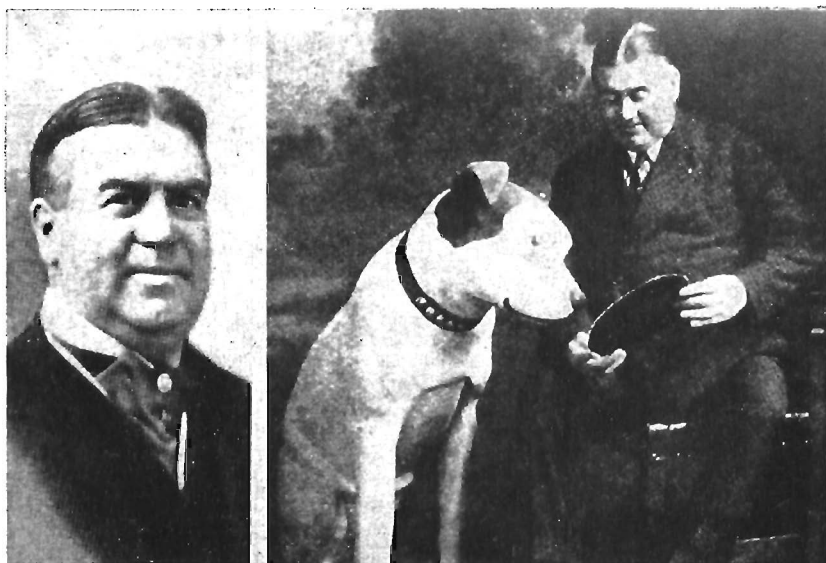
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Ralph Bingham. —Reproduced from the September, 1915, Victor Record Supplement.  
Ralph Bingham displaying one of his records to "Nipper" the Victor dog.  
—From the September, 1919, Victor Record Supplement.

### III. "The Walnut Story"

Several years before Bingham signed his Victor contract, one of his favorite stories was used on a best selling record, although it was not made by him but by his friend, the late Edwin M. Whitney, whose life story appeared in *HOBBIES* for October, 1957.

The anecdote was "The Ducky and the Boys," also known as "The Walnut Story," which Whitney recorded in 1910 for both Victor and Edison. It told of two boys who had been hunting walnuts, climbing over a graveyard wall to divide them. They dropped two walnuts on their way over the wall. Then they began to count them, saying, "I'll take this one! I'll take this one!" as each was laid in a pile.

An old Negro came along, heard the voices saying "I'll take this one" and ran to tell a white friend that the Lord and the Devil were in the graveyard dividing up the souls.

The white man scoffed but went to the cemetery wall with the Negro. As they stood outside, the boys said: "I'll take this one. I'll take this one! . . . New we'll get the two outside the fence and we'll have 'em all!"

The record ended with Whitney's dead-pan comment: "And they tell me that the white man beat the Negro running!"

Mr. Whitney, whom I met in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1927, was the first recording artist I ever talked with. He told me he had been given the Walnut story by Ralph Bingham but didn't know where Bingham got it.

I was distressed when Whitney said Bingham had died a year or two before, from pneumonia which he had taken on one of his tours. I had thought the fat and fun-loving Ralph was still alive and entertaining audiences.

### IV. Bingham's First Victor Record

A 1925 *Who's Who in America* says that Ralph Bingham was born in Richmond, Va., on August 2, 1870, the son of Hamilton and Jane E. (McClintock) Bingham. He was educated in public schools and under "private tutelage," and received an honorary A.B. from Villanova College in 1906.

Bingham married Christine L. Giles on October 14, 1908. He "began on the platform" as a child in Richmond and first toured the United States and Canada under his father's management.

He was founder and president of the International Lyceum Association of America and was vice president of the Boy Council of Philadelphia. He was an Episcopalian and lived in Philadelphia.

The humorist's death occurred December 27, 1925.

Ralph Bingham's recorded repertoire consists of three 10-inch and two 12-inch double-faced Victor records.

The first disc, 17818, combining "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone" and "Jests from Georgia," which were described as "darky stories," was announced in the Victor supplement for September, 1915. The description was accompanied by a small, but excellent, photograph of the smiling comedian. In part, the announcement said:

The Victor announces with pleasure the exclusive engagement of this famous humorist and raconteur for a series of records, the stories to be chosen from the best ones in Mr. Bingham's immense collection. This popular entertainer was born in Richmond, Va., in 1870, and made his first appearance in public in 1876.

"The first two selections, which are now presented, comprise the famous 'Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone,' which never fails to convulse an audience; and two very amusing Georgia stories, which Mr. Bingham has been using a great deal recently."

An old friend of mine tells me he well remembers when that first Bingham record came out. Then a small boy, he had gone to his Victor dealer's, intending to buy Albert Campbell and Henry Burr's record of "Norway," which he had previously heard and considered the prettiest song that had ever mesmerized his ears.

But he happened to hear "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone," and was convulsed. Having only 75 cents, he underwent mental anguish trying to decide whether to invest in "Norway" or take "Mrs. Rastus" home to cheer the other folks in his family.

Comedy won and he did not regret his purchase. But I was glad to learn he went back and got "Norway (The Land of the Midnight Sun)" as soon as he amassed another six bits.

"Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone" is extremely funny. "Mrs. Rastus" (whom one imagines to be as portly as Bingham himself) is talking on the telephone to a doctor and trying to explain why Rastus needs the doctor's immediate services.

All sorts of things have happened to poor Rastus, including overeating, drinking too much Coca Cola, and an over abundance of "corn licker" and gin: "Yas suh, gin, J-I-N-nigger gin!" Rastus has also narrowly escaped drowning and been carved "scandalous" with a razor by an irate acquaintance, before being taken to the police station on a charge of carrying "congealed weepens."

The record ends with Mrs. Rastus saying: "Well, doctor, I guess you'll have to 'scuse Rastus dis time. He's daid!"

Bingham's low-life Negro dialect was excellent, as it should have been.

"Jests From Georgia" includes two "darky stories." The first is funny only if the listener can close his mind to what a horrible thing hanging is, whether done legally or at the hands of an ignorant, infuriated, cowardly mob.

It tells of a hanging that was taking place in an isolated Georgia community — a legal execution since the sheriff and his deputies were officiating. They had fastened a rope to a scaffold and slipped the noose around the Negro victim's neck when a fire alarm signal was sounded. Being volunteer firemen, the sheriff and his "boys" left the prisoner ready to be hanged and went to fight the flames.

While The Law was gone, another Negro came along and saw the man who was awaiting execution. He asked what the prisoner was doing and was told he was "posin' for movin' pitchers" and getting \$10 an hour. But, he said, he was tired of the job. He offered the newcomer the chance to swap with him.

His victim unfastened the rope and then had it tied around his own neck. After a while the sheriff's department returned and went into action. They swung the substitute into the air — but the rope broke! And, as he picked himself up, the angry Negro exclaimed:

"Look here, white folks! You-all keep messin' aroun' with these here movin' pitchers, an' the first thing you know some nigger's gwine to git hurt."

The second, and much shorter story, told of the deacon of a Georgia Negro church who was rebuked by the pastor when he showed up late for Sunday services. He called on the deacon for an explanation and was told:

"Well, parson, you see it was like dis! There was a terrible accident down at my house last night. Somebody left my chicken coop door open an' all de chickens went home!"

A "stereotype" of course — but a funny one if your sense of racial righteousness doesn't overpower your sense of humor.

#### V "My Possum Hunt" — "Possy"

Thousands of record buyers were still enjoying "Mrs. Rastus" when the second Bingham record was offered in November, 1915 — a 12-inch combination (35490) of "The Boy in the Bleachers" and "My Possum Hunt." The supplement said:

"Two more good stories by this popular entertainer are offered this month — an amusing soliloquy by a 'tough kid' in the bleacher audience, and Mr. Bingham's famous 'Possum Hunt,' which he has told some thousands of times, and which always makes a hit. Mr. Bingham, like most of the real good people, makes records only for the Victor."

It is strange that Victor put "The Boy in the Bleachers" on the A side, for "My Possum Hunt" was much more amusing. It tells, through a Negro narrator, the story of an imaginary 'possum hunt in Georgia. Among those taking part, besides assorted colored men and dogs, were Clark Howell, then publisher of the Atlanta Constitution, Senator Hoke Smith, and President William Howard Taft.

The narrator unctuously relates how he climbed a tree, thinking he saw "ol' Mr. Possum's eyes shinin' in de dark," only to discover that he was in the presence of a huge bear. The bear jumped to the ground and the hunters began running.

One Negro was asked by a passer-by where he was going in such a

(Continued on page 46)

### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale, I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

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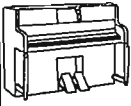
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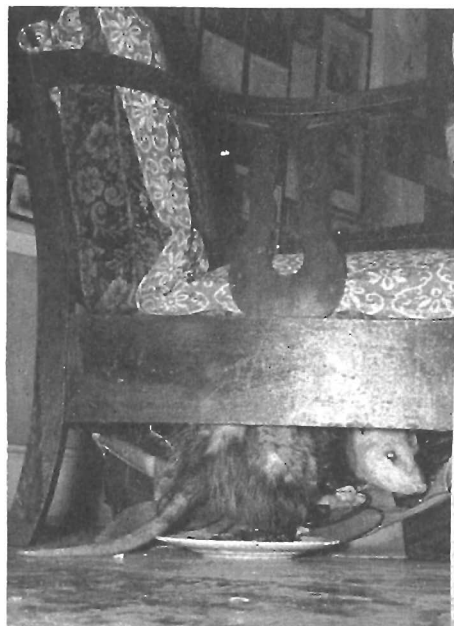


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From left to right:

A PRIVILEGED 'POSSUM, "Possy," Jim Walsh's pet 'possum, made himself a winter sleeping quarters beneath this sofa. He does not approve Ralph Bingham's record of "My 'Possum Hunt."

Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," giving a plate of liver scraps to "Possy." Jim doesn't play any records such as "Possum Pie" for fear of wounding "Possy's" tender sensibilities. —Photos by Glenn L. Robertson.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

hurry and replied that he wasn't "gwine anywhere . . . I'm comin' away from some place." The narrator himself outran some other Negroes who were running like the wind and jumped over four rabbits who were going his way.

Half-way home, he remembered he had left his crippled old "pappy", who had insisted on going to the hunt in a wheel chair, to the "mercy" of the bear, but pity for Pappy didn't arrest his progress. Arrived at his cabin, he used his last breath to push open the door — "an' the first thing I seen was my ol' man sittin' in his chair befo' de fire!"

"How did you git here, ol' man?" I says, an' my pappy says:

"Shut up, nigger! I got here ahead of de dogs!"

"My Possum Hunt," though laughable, is a record I do not play in the presence of my pet opossum, "Possy," whose likeness was reproduced, along with the countenances of my cats, in the January, 1964, HOBBIES.

After that picture was submitted, "Possy" decided he didn't want to spend the winter in a dark corner of the cold basement. So, without asking my permission, he slipped upstairs and made himself a "nest" by removing part of the lining from the bottom of an old sofa and hollowing out a space among the springs.

There he slept at night, enjoying the heat from the hot air register in the hall a few feet away, and within easy foraging distance of the kitchen, where he ate the food the cats had left. For several weeks he visited a neighbor's yard and dined on persimmons while the man of the house and his little grandson stayed

with him and watched while he ate.

When my neighbor mentioned this to me, he said: "I never before saw a 'possum so tame and gentle and sweet as this one. I wouldn't have anybody harm him for anything." (Anybody who does harm him will have trouble with Jim Walsh!)

But because "Possy" is tame and gentle, I know he's sensitive, and I avoid playing "My Possum Hunt" when he is within hearing distance. I also don't play "A Coon Possum Hunt," "Run, Brudder Possum, Run," "Possum Pie," and "Nigger Loves His Possum." And I especially avoid "Carve Dat Possum—Carve Him to de Heart."

I know the sentiments of these songs would prove almost unbearably painful to my beloved and loving "Possy," who comes at my call from the basement when I want to give him a plate of liver scraps. Recently, when two men installed a new water heater for me, "Possy" and a black kitten, "Lucky Jim," sat down near the men and supervised the operation.

"The Boy in the Bleachers" is not particularly funny to me. In doggerel verse, it describes the emotions of a teen-age boy who goes to a baseball game expecting to see the home team win, but becomes disgusted when the visitors clout one home run after another in the first inning.

He decides to go home, then remembers he has spent his carfare for a "Coke" and has "t'ree miles" to walk.

Bingham made his two best records in "Mrs. Rastus at the Telephone" and "My Possum Hunt."

### VI. Other Bingham Records

The third Bingham disc did not appear until April, 1917, although it is possible that the whole series had been recorded at one engage-

ment in 1915, with some reserved for later distribution. The one now under discussion, "Goldstein Behind the Bars" and "Mrs. Rastus Johnson at the Wedding," proved to be the most lastingly popular and to have the longest catalog life.

All other Bingham records were discontinued after the 1925 introduction of electrical recording, but 18231 was carried in the catalog until 1930. This is the supplement description:

"Goldstein finds himself and his wife in jail for 'expeding the seed limit.' His efforts to get in touch with his son Izzy over the telephone and his explanations of his need for bail make an amusing monolog such as will appeal to all who like Hebrew humor.

"A very different telephone conversation is that concerning Mrs. Rastus Johnson at the Wedding. Ralph Bingham has a wonderful facility for varied dialects and the way in which he drops that of the Hebrew for the American Negro is astonishing."

"Goldstein at the Bars" is a record which my Jewish friends would have enjoyed if I had played it for them. Mr. Goldstein's hysterical efforts to raise bond are genuinely amusing, though obviously based on the "Cohen at the Telephone" theme.

"Mrs. Rastus Johnson at the Wedding" is not so funny as she was in telling the doctor what happened to Rastus, but there are some laughs, as when she describes the organist playing "Meddlesome's Wedding March" and says that the bride's five brothers were ushers. Their names were Mathew, Mark, Luke, John, and Revelations. But, unfortunately, the groom didn't show up!

The least successful Bingham record, 35626, was issued in June, 1917. It consists of two stories told in limping rhyme—"Home Run Bill's Defense" and "The Hold-Up at Buck Run."

It is possible to get a smile or two  
(Continued on page 56)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 46)

out of the story of "Home Run Bill," but there is not even one smile in the other side, which is a pseudo-dramatic account of an attempted hold-up at an isolated railway station. But we may quote James E. Richardson, who had by this time taken over as writer of the Victor supplement:

"Anybody who loves a good baseball story will appreciate Home Run Bill's plea in answer to the charge of shooting Tobias 'in strictly self-defense.'"

"If he had not done so—but let Home Run Bill tell it himself. The game would certainly have been lost. Everybody who hears the story will emulate the 'Jedge' who laughed and laughed till tears ran down his face."

"Ralph Bingham is a master of many dialects, but he is naturally most at home with those of the South, where he originated. The exciting story of 'The Hold-Up at Buck Run' is a recitation that will appeal strongly to those who love a good tale of the railroad. Its dramatic character is all the more forceful after the humor of 'Home Run Bill's Defense.'"

If you are wondering what happened in the "Home Run Bill" story, it turns out that a gambler named Jim Jackson had bet six dollars on Bill's side to win and had told Bill that if he lost his money he would consider the game "thrown" and would hold Bill personally accountable.

With the score four and four in the ninth, Bill saw Shortstop Tobias of the other team about to steal second base on a wild pitch and feared the game was about to be lost. So he shot "Tobe" "in de pants," but not "hard enough to kill him," "to keep Jim Jackson from shootin' me." The game supposedly was played in Chattanooga.

Something like this happened years ago in a Negro baseball game in Roanoke, Va. In the ninth inning a runner dashed from third base toward home plate to score the winning run. The catcher, whose name I remember as Taylor, was desperate. The only way he could think of to keep from losing the game was to pick up a bat, hit the runner across the head and knock him unconscious before he reached home. That was what Taylor did. I still remember the headline on the Roanoke Times account: "Nifty Bit of Stick Work Ends Ball Game."

A long wait occurred before the fifth and last Ralph Bingham record was marketed in September, 1919. Once more Mrs. Rastus was back with "Mrs. Rastus Johnson's Joy Ride." The other side was "Brother Jones' Sermon." There was a fine photograph of Bingham showing a record to a large model Victor dog. I am reproducing it with this article. Now let's read Mr. Richardson's description of record 18587:

"Honk, Honk here she comes! Mrs. Rastus is riding in her automobile, which, if it isn't the swiftest, is at least the loudest in the world. And Rastus is with her, volubly, vocally, actively. When the last thing in the world you'd expect to happen happens, and the fivver suddenly stalls, it is Rastus who has to get out and crank."

"But of what happens in the meantime we'll let Ralph Bingham tell you in his own inimitable manner. With it goes a Sunday morning sermon, in which Brother Jones discourses on 'De Divers,' 'Flumonia' and other ills of the flesh. If you never suffered from 'De Divers,' only Brother Jones can tell you the symptoms. The curious sing-song method of delivery is as funny as it is true to life."

Notice that Rastus, after dying in the first Bingham record, has returned to life in the last. He almost dies again after striking a match to see if any gasoline is left in the tank. The gas tank explodes and Rastus is blown into a tree.

"Brother Jones" took his text from "the 14th chapter of Etymology."

As already mentioned, 18231 stayed in the catalog through 1929. All the others had been retained through 1925, but were discontinued in the first electrical catalog. However, three were restored in the 1927 catalog of records of historical and personal interest.

The one failing to make the return grade was that which I have called the poorest — "Home Run Bill's Defense" and "The Hold-Up at Buck Run." The chief thing of interest about the latter side is that it reveals that Bingham, when speaking in his natural rather high tenor voice, used the "broad A" that is common to many persons living in and around Richmond. He said "pahst" for "past."

Ralph Bingham has been dead almost 39 years and his style of humor is no longer in vogue. But it was clean and, dialectic objections aside, wholesome. Our country would be better off today if it had more entertainers of the type of Ralph Bingham and fewer "sick comedians."

If you have Bingham records, play them occasionally. They are an excellent antidote for the blues, and I am sure, from all that I have heard of Bingham himself, that he was a fine, friendly, lovable man.

(The End)

## ON TIME

(Continued from page 51)

no bezel or glass over the beautiful porcelain dial and exquisite hands.

A name, "Lenzkirch," is imprinted on the back movement plate. I do not find this name in the lists of old makers. I am not concerned, however, because it is well-known that the lists are quite deficient in the matter of middle Europe makers.

I am sure this is a Vienna clock and that it dates back to the first quarter of the 19th century. It could be even earlier. Along with all of its very fine features it is a good timekeeper as well.

I do not go along with the thought that age alone makes an antique clock desirable. That is only one of the considerations. There are many others. And certainly one of the most important is beauty of design, proportion, and execution.

I want my old clocks to be beautiful as well as good.

— O —

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## AMERICAN DOLLS

(Continued from page 44)

carry on his trade. In the early 1840's, he founded a factory for making toys, and in 1858 applied for his first patent. In 1872 an extension was granted on the original.

These prim and proper little ladies were made in all sizes, both blondes and brunettes showing various styles of hairdress. There are at least eight different hair styles, that we know of. The original label is usually found on the back of the neck, between the shoulders.

The patent specifications indicate the head molded in two parts, front and back. These are joined by a tape of muslin or calico which is also used to reinforce the nose. Paper, glue, flour and Spanish whiting make up the composition of the Greiner. These indestructible heads were sold separately and industrious mothers usually made the bodies.

All of Greiner's doll, with their broad shoulders, have a placid yet determined expression of a typical German house-frau, who believes in "Kirche, Kinder and Kuchen."

In 1958, nationally affiliated doll clubs throughout the United States celebrated the Greiner centennial. Collectors in all parts of the world highly prize this doll who typifies early Americana. These were dolls that were loved and played with. Little girls were not fearful of breakage.

Ludwig Greiner was one of America's pioneer doll makers. Each succeeding generation has produced good doll makers who help us understand the development and styles of our country.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells

PART I

By JIM WALSH



Grace Kerns from January 1912  
Columbia Records.

### I. A Distinguished Duet Pair

In March I concluded an account of the careers of Marie Narelle and Berrick Von Norden, a soprano and tenor whose only recorded association was singing a duet of "Day Dreams, Visions of Bliss" on an Edison cylinder.

This month I shall begin the stories of another soprano and tenor, Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells, whom I have had in mind for years as subjects of one or more articles. And again the two singers are combined on the strength of having made just one record together.

The record itself, as I shall explain at the proper time, was one of the most ludicrous examples of miscasting that two distinguished concert artists can ever have suffered, although they did well with something that would have been better suited to Billy Murray and the American Quartet or Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan.

I have often laughed, wondering about Miss Kerns' and Mr. Wells' emotions when they were asked to sing the composition I have in mind. John Wells was noted for his sense of humor and as an accomplished practical joker, which may have led him to greet the suggestion with impish delight. Miss Kerns also must

have had a jocular vein or she would not have consented.

"But that is another story," as Rudyard Kipling used to say. Let us proceed now to the story, or stories, of Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells. Ordinarily, the lady would come first, but since I intend to proceed in chronological order and Wells made records before she did, he takes precedence.

### II. A Brief Biography

As a child, endlessly preoccupied with records and recording artists, I had an amusing imaginary conception of John Barnes Wells. I depicted him as a tenor who always took pains to select the worst possible accompanist for his recitals.

Then, if his efforts weren't rapturously applauded, he would later explain to his friends: "Aw, it wasn't my fault. My piano player wasn't no account."

I hadn't then heard any of his records. And I thought of the accompanist as an unskilled high school girl.

But Wells was not a performer who needed to apologize for lack of vocal equipment, inadequate training or deficient musical intelligence. He was not only a tenor with a fine voice and interpretative skill but a minor composer, some of whose songs have merit.

John Barnes Wells was one of the relatively few American singers who "made" *Who's Who in America* for many years. An information seeker who turns to the 1934-35 edition will find him described as a "musician," who was born in Ashley, Pa., on October 17, 1880.

He was a son of John Calvin and Fidelia Alice (Barnes) Wells. (His middle name obviously came from his mother's family.) He was a student at Syracuse University from 1897 to 1901, but didn't graduate. On June 10, 1908, a year or so before his recording career began, he married Ethel Cator Heverin of Dover, Del., and they had one daughter, Dorothy Heverin Wells.

He was described as a concert and oratorio singer and teacher who was a member of Psi Upsilon, the University Glee, Dutch Treat, and Psi Upsilon clubs. His address was 317 West 95th Street, New York.



John Barnes Wells October 1919  
Aeolian-Vocalion Records.

Wells' songs included "If I Were You," "The Dearest Place," "The Owl," "The Little Bird," "The Lightning Bug," "Why I Wish I Was a Little Rock," "I Dunno," "The Morning of Love," "Deep in the Heart of Me," "The Crow's Egg," "Two Little Magpies," "Thumb Marks," "Whoa," "The Turtle," "Wishin' and Fishin'," "Just Smiling," "The Mystery," "Cat-tails," "Mr. Wells," "My Lady Love," "What Care I," and "The Silly Little Fool."

It looks as though Wells frequently had children in mind when he composed his tuneful little pieces. I am not acquainted with his song called "Mr. Wells," but am intrigued by its title. Was it something, I wonder, in which his sense of fun came to the fore and he "kidded" himself?

The *Who's Who* information may be supplemented with a few other items found in the second edition of the "ASCAP Biographical Dictionary," which says that the tenor made his debut in New York with Victor Herbert's Orchestra.

He was also a soloist with Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony and other orchestras, and with choral societies in many cities.

He held "church posts in New York at Divine Paternity and St. Nicholas," and was a soloist in oratorios, recitals, concerts and radio. For 15 years he tutored students at Princeton University in voice culture.

As a further, and inadequate supplement, the 1938 edition of the "MacMillan Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians" briefly described Wells as an "American tenor and composer; . . . pupil of Victor Harris. He made his debut in New York in 1915. He has composed a number of songs."

That statement about the 1915 debut is a mistake.

### III. First Victor Records

John Barnes Wells' first disc records were made for Victor—a company for which Grace Kerns apparently never sang. His initial offering may have been the most popular record he ever made, but its enduring vogue probably was due even more to the B side on which Harry Macdonough was heard in the ageless "Where the River Shannon Flows."

The A side was given over to Wells' interpretation of a much older ballad, "Sweet Genevieve," in which he had the assistance of the once world-famous Haydn Quartet. Such a combination was bound to sell big.

Victor Supplement Editor, Sam Rous, wrote in the issue for February, 1910:

"A favorite old ballad for which there have been many requests. However, there has been a gain in waiting, for in the meantime the Victor has discovered a new tenor, whose voice is especially suited to this old song. For good measure Mr. Macdonough gives a popular ballad of old Ireland."

This was routine treatment, far from what the peerless James Edward Richardson would have written if the record had been published 10 years later.

Another Wells record destined for good sales came along in April. It was "My Garden That Blooms for You" and occupied the B side of 16467. Again, the Wells offering's popularity owed much to its coupling, which this time was "The Garden of Roses," sung by Macdonough, who now had the Haydn Quartet's help. Of course he was its "lead" to begin with:

"Two charming 'garden' songs by two competent and clear-voiced tenors. Mr. Wells has made many friends with his sweetly sung 'Genevieve,' and this new record will increase the number . . ."

If Wells had received only perfunctory attention for his first two records, he was the subject of a splurge on page two of the August supplement. His photograph was reproduced and there was a headline: "Two Songs by John Barnes Wells, Who Now Sings Exclusively for the Victor."

Before this announcement of Wells' having signed an exclusive contract was made, he had recorded his first and only four-minute Edison Amberol cylinder. It was reviewed in the August, 1909, New Phonogram:

"187. 'Good-Night, Dear.' A love ballad by still another singer who now enters the ranks of Edison artists. Mr. Wells is well-known in New York and vicinity. He has a fine tenor voice. The song is the one introduced in the comedy, 'Love Watches,' and sung with great success by Billie (Sic!) Burke. Composer, Will R. Anderson."

I wonder why Wells sang for Edison no more. As often happened, Edison had introduced a promising artist only to have the more enterprising Victor take him over.

To about this same period belongs Wells' first U. S. Everlasting four-minute cylinder, "My Garden That Blooms for You," a song that has

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already been mentioned as his second Victor offering.

His one Indestructible four-minute cylinder, "At the Gate of the Palace of Dreams," came along a couple of years later, in 1912, after Wells supposedly had become exclusive to Victor. It may have been recorded earlier but held for belated release, or the Victor contract may have been changed.

One of the tenor's August, 1910, Victors was a single-faced 10-inch, "In Maytime," a song composed by Oley Speaks. On a single-faced 12-inch he sang "Beloved, It Is Morn." Probably sales statistics would show that both were only poor-to-fair sellers, but here is Editor Rous' supplement description:

"An August announcement of great interest is the exclusive engagement of this noted young tenor by the Victor.

"Mr. Wells, who is a native of Pennsylvania, first became known as a singer while at Syracuse University, where he took a prominent part in the musical life of the college.

"On his graduation he was secured by the Brick Presbyterian Church of East Orange, always noted for its fine choir. New York soon discovered Mr. Wells, and he was promptly captured by the Madison Avenue M. E. Church, where his concert career may be said to have begun.

"The audiences who hear this young singer are always in complete sympathy with him, not only because of his lovely voice and the charm of his singing, but because of the absolute clearness of his enunciation, which enables every word to be heard.

"These unusual qualities are fully apparent in the two numbers he has sung for the Victor—Florence Aylward's impassioned love song and the delightful Ode to Spring by Oley Speaks."

Probably, as a part of signing Wells to sing only for Victor, the company meant at first to give him a bit more prestige by restricting his records to the single-faced type. These, however, steadily declined in popular favor, and he was soon back on the double-faced.

Notice that the sketch just quoted says he was graduated from Syracuse, whereas *Who's Who*, on going upon information provided by Wells, said he didn't. (Just another example of a biographer's troubles in trying to keep his facts straight when he consults differing sources!)

Since the tenor was singing for an East Orange church and the Edison company was at West Orange, it appears fairly obvious why his first recorded offering was an Edison cylinder.

During his early association with Victor, Wells remade 12-inch single-faced record 31394, "My Wild Irish Rose."

It had originally been sung by a now obscure tenor, Robert E. Lennon, who seems to have made no other discs, and was issued in July, 1905. As a sort of consolation prize to the now doubtless departed Mr. Lennon we may quote the supplement description of his lone effort:

"This is the most permanently popular of Chauncy Olcott's songs. No matter how many new ones he sings each year, the public always demands the favorite 'Irish Rose.' Mr. Lennon, who now makes his first appearance on Victor Catalogs, possesses a pleasant tenor voice and interprets this charming song extremely well."

The Lennon "interpretation" was

still in the January, 1910, catalog, but by November had been succeeded by the Wells version with the same catalog number.

#### IV. Exclusive Victor Artist

Even in 1910, achieving an exclusive Victor contract was beginning to be considered a mark of prestige for any musician, so no doubt young John Barnes Wells, who had not yet seen his 30th birthday, was proud of himself.

The tenor was given another "big play" in September, 1910, when two more single-faced black label records by him were announced. An interesting feature of the supplement description was quotations from Southern newspapers concerning a tour of the South he had recently made:

"Those fortunate possessors of Mr. Wells' August records have doubtless noted the remarkable beauty of this young tenor's voice in the Aylward and Speaks songs and have enjoyed the refreshingly clear diction which marked his delivery.

"These records are undoubtedly among the most beautiful reproductions of concert songs which the Victor has issued in its black label class.

"Mr. Wells has just returned from his Southern recital tour, which was remarkable for the enthusiasm which his singing evoked from the audiences. Some of the press comments are interesting.

"A rich tenor of rarely full and sympathetic quality, and the hearts of the audience warmed to him from the first note.—*Memphis Commercial-Appeal*."

"His voice is a pure tenor, with an attractive sweetness in it—and he sings with ease and good taste.—*Houston Chronicle*."

"The new records Mr. Wells has made for the September list are Harriet Ware's enchanting 'Boat Song,' one of the greatest concert successes of 1909-10; and Lassen's well-known 'Mit deinem blauen Augen' ('Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender'), with the best of the many translations."

A new and even more youthful looking picture of Wells appeared in October, together with the announcement of two additional single-faced 10-inch records. One, "The Rosary," probably became, after it was coupled with Alan Turner's baritone version of "For All Eternity," Wells' best selling record next to "Sweet Genevieve." The supplement said:

"This month Mr. Wells gives us two standard songs of more than ordinary beauty, and he sings them quite delightfully. Meyer-Helmund's 'Margaretha' ('O' Thee, I'm Thinking, Margaretha') is next to the 'Thine Eyes So Blue,' the most popular of all his songs, and in Germany it is so beloved that it may well be called a folk song.

"Nevin's impressive 'Rosary' is already represented in the Victor catalog by the records of Schumann-Heink and Mr. Turner, but is now given for the first time by a tenor.

"Mr. Wells has in a few months by his lovely voice and artistic singing placed himself in the foremost rank of the singers who make Victor Records.

"The Victor possesses the exclusive right to Mr. Wells' services for the making of all types of records."

Here, at last, was high praise, but for some puzzling reason the hitherto steady stream of Wells records thinned to a trickle during the months that followed. There were no more single-faced discs.

It must have been discovered that the public was no longer inclined to pay 60 cents for a 10-inch record that played on only one side

when a double-faced one by artists of the same caliber could be had for just 15 cents more. Wells returned to the double-faced class and stayed there.

The tenor's next record was not announced until February, 1911. Then, rather inexplicably, he was allowed to sing "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" in the face of competition from Harold Jarvis' almost legendary 16008, which was then, and remained for years afterward, one of the best selling records Victor ever issued.

The Wells "Beautiful Isle" was combined with "Dear Lord and Father, While I Stray," sung by HOBBIES cherished friends, Elizabeth and William Wheeler, who are still going strong at this writing with their singing classes in Cleveland. The supplement said:

"A new record of the beloved 'Isle,' which has been for years one of the most popular numbers in the Victor's sacred list, combined with a new gospel hymn much used in evangelistic services."

Wells was back in March, singing an Andrew Mack ballad, with words by a mysterious "Alice." The song, whose correct title is "The Story of the Rose," is better known today as "Heart of My Heart, I Love You." It is the theme around which a modern popular tune, "The Gang That Sang 'Heart of My Heart,'" is built. To accompany it, Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler sang "Oh, That We Two Were Maying."

After this, there was silence until July, when Wells was heard in Frank Seymour Hastings' setting of the familiar Robert Burns lyric, "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose." On the other side Mrs. Wheeler sang a setting of a James Whitcomb Riley poem, "There, Little Girl, Don't Cry."

For the July list, Wells made one side of a double-faced 12-inch record. To accompany Reinald Werrenrath's baritone interpretation of "The Charmed Cup," he sang a tenor version of "Murmuring Zephyrs," which received this description:

"... Mr. Wells' contribution is one of the most beautiful of the songs by Adolph Jensen (1837-1879). His 'Murmuring Zephyrs' is a lovely and graceful piece of writing, the idea of the murmuring breezes being conveyed by a delicate figure played by the flute, while the tender theme is carried by the voice."

Soon afterward the single-faced "Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender" was coupled with "Last Night," sung by Helen Clark.

Some historical interest attaches to Wells' record issued in March, 1912, for the A side was the first disc solo by the contralto, Elsie Baker, who was to become a great Victor favorite and remain so for many years. She sang "Pickaninny's Lullaby," a type of composition which she was frequently called on to perform.

Wells' number, "Mammy's Song," was of the same pattern:

"The second selection is the pretty little lullaby which Mr. Wells has been using in his concerts with so much success. The words, by Laura Spencer Porter, first appeared in the Woman's Home Companion, and were afterwards

furnished with an attractive setting by Harriet Ware."

Wells seems to have been fond of Harriet Ware's songs. Was she perhaps, for a time, his recital pianist as well as a composer?

It is strange that the remainder of 1912 went by without another Victor record by Wells. Obviously, his exclusive contract was for not more than two years and perhaps was for only one.

We have already seen that he made an Indestructible cylinder which was issued in that year. He also sang a number of U. S. Everlasting cylinders.

Possibly, as sometimes happened, his contract was amended to leave him exclusive to Victor for discs, but to permit him to make cylinders, which were no longer considered serious competition to the conquering Victrola.

In February, 1913, Wells' "Rosary" was numbered among a list of 15 new double-faced records made up, with one or two exceptions, of popular selections already available in the double-faced list.

A month earlier, he had been heard in "I'm Wearing Awa'," of which the supplement said: "Mr. Wells gives a perfectly sung rendition of Arthur Foote's lovely setting of the heart-stirring Scotch poem, 'I'm Wearing Awa' to the Land of the Leal.'"

Something may have gone awry with the relations between Wells and Victor, for he was represented by only one other record during 1913. Issued in November, it was a frankly popular song, "My Wonderful Dream Girl." As fellow travelers he had Helen Clark and Billy Murray singing "Come On Over Here."

#### V. U. S. Everlasting Cylinders

There is a possibility, though concededly not a likely one, that Wells left Victor in 1912, and signed exclusively with U. S. Everlasting.

It seems improbable that a singer with his prestige would have become exclusive to a minor company that soon went out of business, but it could have been. And the "standard

(Continued on page 44)

#### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926, and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 478, Vinton, Va. ttx

WANTED: All red G&T records of Tamagno; also black G&T, Gramophone, and Victor records of Ivan Williams. As always, I will pay the best prices. — Thomas O'Shaughnessy, P.O. Box 281, Rochester, Minn. my3295

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

songs" issued under the Victor label might have been made earlier.

"My Wonderful Dream Girl," a 1913 popular song, might have been recorded after Wells' contract with U. S., assuming there was one, ended with the death of the firm.

However it happened that the tenor made his U. S. Everlasting cylinders, none of which I have seen or heard, they were, judging by their titles, the most unusual and interesting group he sang for any company.

The first of the lot, "My Garden That Blooms for You," which was issued several months in advance of the others, has already been mentioned. Then followed "Sunset," of which the one U. S. catalog I have said:

"A beautiful poem by Sidney Lanier set to music by Alex Russell. Mr. Wells has made quite a reputation with this song in concert."

This was only the first of several selections which Wells sang for the cylinder company that were anything but hackneyed.

Afterward, one cylinder, coupling "In Maytime" and "The Red, Red Rose," was listed with this comment:

"These two beautiful songs have been successfully featured by Mr. Wells in concert, and we offer them both on one record."

Another two-song combination that looks attractive is "Rolling Down to Rio" and "Ould Doctor Ma'Ginn."

"Two very popular vocal selections. 'Rolling Down to Rio' is a song from the 'Just So Song Book' with words from Rudyard Kipling's 'Just So Stories.' 'Ould Doctor Ma'Ginn' is a typical character song."

Despite the attractive nature of these songs, they were not of the type that appealed to many cylinder record buyers. For that matter, neither would they have taken the fancy of most disc enthusiasts. And I doubt that 1000 copies of the record were sold.

The same may be said with equal regret, but equal justice, of Wells' next cylinder, which contained three of his own short compositions, "If I Were You," "The Elf Man," and "The Dearest Place."

"These three little gems on one record are not only exquisitely rendered by this eminent artist, but composed by him as well."

Harriet Ware's "Boat Song," which had been among Wells' first Victor discs, was coupled with another of her compositions, "To Lucasta."

"Two delightful renditions on one record, in each of which the hearer will be in perfect sympathy."

Wells' final U. S. cylinder, issued during the company's closing months, was more conventional. He chose the much-recorded "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby."

All told, an attractive list, even though mostly composed of short encore numbers.

But John Barnes Wells has been occupying the stage all this time while Grace Kerns has waited in the wings. Now it's time to bring her on.

(To be continued)

## OLD METALS

(Continued from page 42)

enamellers copied rather than created styles of ornament, it is possible to give an approximate date for the introduction of designs in imitation of silver pieces. Boxes of every size, along with tea canisters and caddy sets, were much admired; also mustard pots, cream pitchers, hot-water jugs, and trays.

Some of the trays indicate that they were quickly dipped in liquid enamel rather than carefully coated with a powdered glass paste by means of a spatula. However, many enameled objects were extremely well finished.

Elaborate chatelaines, scent bottles in the form of billing doves, and dainty heart-shaped etuis—for carrying needles, toilet articles, and other trinkets—gained grace.

Egg-shaped nutmeg holders were complete with graters for their customary use with wine. Hand-made thimbles were drilled from solid gold and silver. Bodkins, shaped to contain hairpins; tooth-pick holders; and even game counters, in the form of tiny enameled playing cards, were some of the precious pieces of the colorful art of enameling.

Dresden *bonbonnières* in fanciful form appear to have been popular with the South Staffordshire enamellers of the 1770's. They adopted Dresden designs and made beautiful boxes in the form of human heads, birds, animals, fruits, and flowers. Specimens from the Schreiber Collection of Enamels, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, are illustrated on page 42.

Remembering the current change in taste, it is not difficult to distinguish comparatively early South Staffordshire and Birmingham enamels from the later, more ornate designs.

In the Battersea style, the lid of an enameled box frequently featured an allover picture, and the white enameled sides of the box portrayed printed or painted enamel posies.

Minutely mounted shell-shaped boxes, pleasingly painted with subjects taken from engravings, may be regarded as transition enamels.

Then came a gradual elaboration in the application of colored enamel backgrounds. With a colored ground on a box cover, an enclosing border for the central decoration seemed necessary. This appears to have been achieved with a few touches of gilding. It was followed by a more detailed scrollwork in the style of the French *rocaille*.

The fact that decoration could be enhanced by employing scrolls, shells, and simple flowers in bas-relief enamel seems to have been appreciated at an early date. Around 1761 this technique was applied in white on a white enamel ground supporting a transfer-print. It was soon discovered that gilding on bas-relief enamel scrolls was especially effective.

From the late 1760's until the early 1780's, the period of finest production in the Midlands, a typical

enamel box was a truly handsome piece. The mounts of brilliant gilt metal were tastefully tooled and fitted with carefully shaped hasps and hinges.

The outer surfaces of both box and cover were meticulously enameled in rich royal- or turquoise-blue, pink, or green. A relief diaper pattern of crisscross lines and interspersed dots was often superimposed on the background of colored enamel.

The great diversity of designs detailed by English enamellers is exemplified in the splendid Schreiber collection. Illustrated from that collection is an enamel plaque, printed in black, portraying a tavern scene in the style of Teniers, the Flemish painter (1610-1690).

Teniers paintings were copied not only by 18th century enamellers, but also by metalworkers, particularly in cast and repoussé brass.

Probably made at Bilston or Wednesbury, during the second half of the 18th century, were two painted enamel medallions with Chinese subjects, copied from the *Livre de Chinois*, a book of engravings by P. C. Canot, from designs by Jean Pillement, published in London in 1759. These medallions (see page 42) are comprised in the Schreiber collection.

The entry in the Catalogue of the Schreiber Collection includes the information: "Bought in Paris, November 17, 1881. At Mme. Flaudin's we invested in two fine Battersea plaques, decorated with Chinese figures, but had to give a large price for them, 20 guineas."

It should be noted that, if the designs on these medallions were copied from a book published in 1759—three years after the closing of the Battersea workshop—the enameling is almost surely of Staffordshire origin.

Chinese themes, which dominate some pattern books, were seldom seen on 18th century English enamels but found suitable expression on porcelain and jannan. In contrast, the enamellers of Canton, China, gained increasing favor for their painted enamel copies of European engravings and tapestries.

From 1685 to 1719 the enamellers of Canton produced for export armorial table services of rare elegance. They applied their skills to objects of porcelain as well as compositions of copper.

Typical tea services included both materials in the same set. An ewer for hot water and a teapot enameled on copper would be accompanied by a milk jug, sugar bowl, and tea cups exquisitely enameled on eggshell porcelain.

Certain craftsmen were commissioned to create enamels of special significance for the Court of Louis XIV. These orders were delivered by ships of the Dutch East India Company to England, France, Holland, and other European countries.

Flowers, the most desirable decorating device of English enamellers,

(Continued on page 55)

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. The Lady from Virginia

Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells had careers that resembled in more than one way. Both won critical acclaim for their church and concert work and attained considerable recognition as recording artists. Neither achieved the enduring popularity and almost fanatical following of many other singers with less soundly constructed musical training, but whose methods of voice production were peculiarly suited to the acoustic recording system.

Both, too, made just one Edison cylinder. Both did their last recording for minor companies. Both ended their careers as vocal teachers. And both died comparatively young, in their fifties, little more than a year apart.

Grace Kerns was a Virginian. She was born in Norfolk in 1886 (I have been unable to learn the exact date), where, three years earlier, the more famous bass-baritone, Ernest Hare, also had been born. Her father, Andrew J. Kerns, was a native of Pennsylvania, as was her mother, who had been Miss Catherine Clark before her marriage.

Miss Kerns' first record for any company seems to have been a 12-inch of "My Beautiful Lady," from

"The Pink Lady," issued by Columbia in September, 1911.

I lack the September supplement, but can quote from the one for October, when the soprano and Margaret Keyes, contralto, sang in Latin the "Quis Est Homo" ("Power Eternal") from Rossini's "Stabat Mater." Miss Keyes held the B side alone with another "Stabat Mater" excerpt: "Fac ut Portem" ("I Will Sing of Thy Great Mercy.")

Describing the duet side, Catalog Editor George Clarence Jell wrote:

"It would be difficult to say too much in praise of these new recordings, especially the duet, 'Quis Est Homo,' which contains some of the finest and most finished and artistic vocalism ever reproduced.

"It is natural to look for excellence of phrasing, purity of intonation and exquisite blending of voices in such artists as Miss Keyes and Miss Kerns, but results in this record are almost more than should be looked for."

To anticipate a bit, the complete Columbia record catalog for July, 1912, published a profile portrait of Miss Kerns (judging from the few pictures I have seen of her, she preferred side views to full face "shots"), with a brief sketch. This probably had first appeared in the September, 1911, Supplement:

"This young concert artist who has of late become so prominent in musical affairs throughout the East first became known to the New York public through her engagement as soprano soloist of St. Bartholomew's Church, noted the country over for the unvarying excellence of its music.

"Miss Kerns is an absolute mistress of the art of vocalism and has beyond question one of the best recording voices on the continent. Her admirable musical taste and technical proficiency are splendidly evidenced in the records she has made for the Columbia."

Today, some record collectors think of Miss Kerns as a Columbia counterpart of Victor's better known and more popular Olive Kline. The two sang much the same sort of music, but Grace Kerns did not imitate Victor's Olive. In fact, her recording career began before Miss Kline's.

Grace Kern's list of Columbia records is so extensive that not all can be mentioned. Some of the more outstanding, however, will be chosen for Supplement quotation and discussion.

In January, 1912, her version of Tito Mattei's ballad, "Dear Heart,"

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

was described as "unmistakably one of the best soprano records ever issued in the Columbia list, made so by the exquisite quality of Miss Kerns' voice and her intelligent conception of the interpretative demands of the song."

The April supplement brought a more ambitious undertaking, in which Miss Kerns and "Grand Opera Chorus" sang "Le Vergine degli Angeli" (The Angelic Virgin) from the finale of Verdi's "La Forza del Destino." This was described as:

"Our latest masterpiece of popular-priced operatic recording! . . . The selection opens with several bars by the male chorus after which the soprano takes the main theme as a solo, following which the soloist and chorus combine for the finale."

"Miss Kerns has acquitted herself quite as well as in the many other recordings she has made for us, her vocalism being unexceptionable, as usual, and her Italian diction entirely adequate."

"The choral parts were recorded under the personal direction of Sr. Giulio Setti, Chorus Master of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York."

October brought what the Supplement writer (and, by the way, have you noticed how fond he was of the word, "vocalism?") described as "Two Famous Romantic Opera Solos by Grace Kerns." Both were from "The Bohemian Girl," one being, as you have guessed, "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls" and the other the less familiar "Come With the Gypsy Bride."

It was predicted that "I Dreamt I . . . sung as beautifully as Miss Kerns sings it will surely enter a new period of popularity." In the same issue, Miss Kerns sang "Roses Bloom for Lovers" from "The Rose Maid."

There can hardly be a better place



Grace Kerns from Vocalion Record Bulletin, November, 1922.

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to discuss Grace Kerns' one Edison Blue Amberol cylinder, for it, too, was "Roses Bloom for Lovers." Although the fourth Blue Amberol (1504) in numerical order, it did not appear in the first Blue Amberol list but in the second, which was dated December, 1912. In part the description reads:

"From abroad the merry tunefulness of the Viennese operetta, 'The Rose Maid,' has found its way to Broadway, where all lovers of light opera are enthusiastic over the delicate charm of its music. . . (This) song proved the hit of the production. . . Miss Kerns is a new Edison soprano and the delicate clearness of her voice is displayed to excellent advantage. . ."

The "new soprano," like the "new tenor," John Barnes Wells, however, made one record and never appeared again in an Edison list.

In December, Miss Kerns essayed "Poor Wandering One" from Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance," and received this tribute:

"Miss Kerns has given us an interpretation remarkable in its excellence, her vocalism (!!!) in the coloratura passages as usual approximating perfection."

January brought a record of "Sweetheart, Let's Go A-Walking," from the New York Hippodrome production, "Under Many Flags," sung by a tenor, Harry La Forge, about whom I know nothing, and a soprano, Miriam Clark, whom I suspect of being Grace Kerns in disguise, largely on the basis of voice resemblance, and because Miss Kerns' mother had the maiden name of Clark.

I have an idea that "Miriam Clark" was a forerunner of another name the soprano used several years later.

Mr. Jell, the supplement writer, was lavish in March, 1913, with praise of Miss Kerns' record of "The Last Rose of Summer":

"We issue this month a new vocal record of this immortally lovely song that will easily rank as one of the finest recordings of it ever presented. Miss Kerns, whose singing seems to be increasing in beauty of tone and gracefulness of expression with each succeeding season, has invested the song with a truly wonderful measure of dignity and true artistry. The velvety quality of tone on the high notes is particularly noticeable."

But why was there no mention of the lady's immaculate "vocalism"?

In April the waltz song, "Carmena," was sung by "our all-star quartet," whose members were Grace Kerns, soprano; Mildred Potter, alto; Craig Campbell tenor; and Frank Croxton, bass. The other side was a vocal arrangement of Strauss' "Blue Danube Waltz," by the Columbia Light Opera Company, of which Miss Kerns was a member.

April brought, too, the first duet by the Misses Kerns and Potter. They sang "I Would That My Love," coupled with a Kerns solo, "Just A-Wearyin' for You." Just as Grace Kerns is sometimes thought of as a Columbia rival to Olive Kline (or Lucy Isabelle Marsh) on Victor, so Kerns and Potter are mentioned as opponents of the Victor duet team of Olive Kline and Elsie Baker.

Actually, they began singing together more than two years earlier

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Music is well said to be the  
speech of angels.

—Thomas Carlyle

than the Kline-Baker combination. And Mildred Potter died September 24, 1915, less than three months after the first Kline-Baker duet appeared in the July Victor list.

Cultured Columbia patrons were offered in May "The Celebrated 'Goodnight' Quartet from Martha," as rendered by Kerns, Potter, and Croxton, with Reed Miller taking the tenor part. They were told that "the present record by the best concert artists of New York City bears comparison with any rendition of this number ever given."

As a solo on a 10-inch record Miss Kerns sang "Danube River," described as:

"One of the 'good old songs' that are everlastingly popular is found in this well-known number, which Miss Kerns sings with so much expression and tonal beauty."

## II. Wells Comes to Columbia

It's time now to go back to John Barnes Wells.

When that accomplished tenor's records were last discussed he had sung "My Wonderful Dream Girl" for the November, 1913, Victor list. That same month saw the appearance of his first Columbia record, on which he sang "The Rose of Tralee." Miss Potter was heard on the A side in "Oh Promise Me." The supplement description, accompanied by a rather saturnine looking small photo of Wells, read:

"With this double disc we present also the first Columbia recording by one of the most popular of American tenors, Mr. John Barnes Wells, who sings for us one of the standard Irish ballads that are forever in demand. The skill and finish of Mr. Wells' style could not be more consummately demonstrated."

In January, 1914, the first record by the famous Columbia Stellar Quartet, an organization whose members were especially selected by Mr. Jell, was issued. They sang "Sally in Our Alley" and "The Girl I Left Behind Me." Charles Harrison, was first tenor; Wells, second tenor; Andree Sarto, baritone; and Frank Croxton, bass.

We shall later meet Mr. Wells in a surprising male quartet reappearance on Columbia records, but he apparently sang in only two Stellar Quartet numbers. His place was soon taken by Henry Burr for a few records. Burr gave way to Reed Miller, who remained the quartet's "lead" until he died in 1923.

The Columbia Ladies' Quartet made its first record for the March, 1914, issue. The songs were "Rockin' in de Win'" and "Little Alabama Coon." The artists were Miss Kern and Louise McMahon, sopranos; and Miss Potter and Clara Moister, contraltos.

Miss McMahon also made some records under the name of Grace Nash, and I thought for a considerable time that Grace Kerns was Miss Nash. Later, however, I discovered identical photographs of "McMahon" and "Nash." The description ran:

"This latest of the Columbia Quartet organizations will be voted one of the greatest artistic successes we have ever instituted. The voices are chosen from

among the best of American concert sopranos and altos, each singer an artist and a soloist of note.

"The need of a thoroughly efficient Ladies Quartet has been strongly felt for some time in record work, and this need is now amply supplied. The fine blending of voices and the splendid musicianship shown prove the efficiency of the new combination."

Columbia's Educational Department, a futile rival to Victor's extremely efficient one, offered in March "model records for seventh and eighth grades . . . Two Famous School Songs by the Columbia Trio." The songs were "Stars of the Summer Night" and "The Loreley," and the singers, Miss Kerns, Beulah Gaylord Young (who later became Mrs. Charles Harrison), and Miss Moister:

"The combination of first and second soprano with the alto (when the voices properly blend), forms one of the most beautiful trios, its novelty being not the least of its attractive features.

"All are acquainted with the old German folk-song, 'The Loreley,' sung the world over in every conceivable vocal combination. Opposite this is a most effective arrangement of the old familiar melody, 'Stars of the Summer Night.'"

It is interesting to recall that Mark Twain once wrote he considered "The Loreley" the world's most beautiful melody.

George Clarence Jell was really bringing out new Columbia vocal groups in 1914. April introduced the Columbia Mixed Quartet, consisting of Kerns, Potter, Harrison, and Croxton — the same ensemble as the "all star quartet" already mentioned except for Harrison taking Craig Campbell's place. They sang Dudley Buck's "Te Deum No. 7 (Festival) in B Flat."

In August, Wells made his second and last appearance with the Columbia Stellar Quartet, taking part in a 12-inch version of "Jesus, Refuge of My Soul," described as "an adaptation of the original air of 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul.'" On the other side, the quartet baritone Sarto, was heard in "What a Saviour."

## III. That Remarkable Duet

And now we have come to the historic moment when I can reveal the identity of that remarkable duet by Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells, which I mentioned last month as the reason for my pairing these two distinguished concert singers in this article.

The Columbia record I have in mind came out in January, 1915, and it had the soprano and tenor singing — of all things! — a raging comic song hit, "Chinatown, My Chinatown." Surely, two such accomplished church, oratorio, and concert singers were never called on to sing anything less in their usual "line."

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not taking a supercilious attitude. I love old-time popular music as much as I hate the junk that is foisted on teen-agers nowadays.

The words of "Chinatown," with their references to "the festive Chink," "pipe dreams," and "hearts that know no other land, drifting to

and fro" are ridiculous. But the music is irresistible, and the song is worthy to rank as an American folk classic — Broadway variety, of course.

It may be that Grace and John enjoyed singing it, just as (I have read) Caruso, Scotti, and other Metropolitan Opera stars used to get together after performances and lustily harmonize, "I'm Alabama Bound," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," and other popular hits, most of which have endured.

Caruso was even quoted as saying that good "pop tunes" contained better music than most of the opera he sang and that he actually preferred to sing them. But that may have been a press agent's idea of a "color" story and Caruso may never have said it.

Regardless of what their sentiments may have been, Miss Kerns and Mr. Wells did a rattling good job with "Chinatown."

If there is any criticism, it is that, to me, the soprano's voice is a bit too high pitched and her style slightly too intense and emotional, while Wells sounds, as he usually did in singing popular music, somewhat phlegmatic at times. But they really go to town on the third chorus, when Wells abandons the almost baritone range in which he has been singing and goes 'way up high.

I can think of only one other vocal record of "Chinatown." The American Quartet sang it for Victor, with Billy Murray doing most of the work but Bill Hooley getting in some good bass licks. The duet version may be somewhat superior from a musical standpoint, but the quartet catches the exact spirit of the ludicrous song.

Edison and Pathé passed up a sure thing by not making records of the song. All that aside, the Kerns and Wells rendition of "Chinatown, My Chinatown," once heard will never be forgotten.

Incidentally, the song was what the music trade calls a "sleeper" — one published for years before it becomes popular. Until recently I was puzzled as to when it was composed and printed.

I had seen 1906, 1910, and 1914 given as the copyright dates. "Chinatown" didn't become popular until 1914, but I recently found a copy of the sheet music, and the copyright date is 1910.

In both the Victor and Columbia records, "almond eyes of brown" is pronounced "al-mond" instead of "ah-mond." I suspect it had to be pronounced that way to fit the meter of Billy Jerome's lyrics set to the music of Jean Schwartz.

By the way, my copy of the Kerns-Wells duet is on a Cort record, rather than Columbia. If you have been planning to write me and accuse me of napping because I hadn't mentioned that records by both Miss Kerns and Mr. Wells are found on Standard, United, Harmony, Cort,

Remick Perfection, Consolidated, and other off-brand discs, please don't waste your time.

I have mentioned repeatedly in HOBBIES that Columbia records were pressed for other firms under a variety of labels—probably several dozen altogether. I know about them, but it is impractical, as well as impossible, to find space to list the artists' records under anything but the original Columbia label.

But back to that duet. It is amusing to notice that the November, 1914, Etude had listed Grace Kerns as one of a fairly large number of American singers whose training was American and who had adhered to the highest ideals in opera and concert. It's odd that Wells, who was the better known of the two, wasn't mentioned.

Reinhold Werrenrath appears as Reinhold Werrenrath!

Oh yes, the Columbia Supplement referred to:

"'Chinatown, My Chinatown,' a dainty Oriental melody whose popularity commenced on the Pacific Coast (and) has recently swept across the (Continued on page 44)

## VIOLINS

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

whole country. We have made an excellent duet recording of it by Miss Kerns and Mr. Wells."

Brother, you sure did! But I would like to know what the musical purists thought when they saw that record listed, or if any of them happened to hear it!

### IV. More Kerns and Wells Recordings —Some Mysterious Names

Both the soprano and tenor found new duet partners on opposite sides of a 12-inch record in March, 1915. On one face, Miss Kerns and Harry McClaskey (Henry Burr to you!) sang "When Ye Gang Awa', Jamie," and on the other, Miss Potter and Wells combined in "Land of the Swallows."

Miss Kerns must have felt, after singing with Burr, that she was now one of the Columbia "family." Burr's popularity was so great and his talents so varied that almost every popular Columbia vocalist was called on at one time or another to sing a duet with him.

The Supplement assured Columbia patrons that "for these numbers we have used some of the best artists to be found in our regular list, and the results have amply justified the pains taken in the recording."

In April, a previously unheard soprano joined Burr in three duets—"When My Ship Comes In," "What'll You Do" and "Let's Settle Down in a One-Horse Town."

She was called Frances Fisher, but after listening to her high-pitched duet work I strongly suspect this was just another name for Grace Kerns, especially since she had appeared in a duet under her right name with McClaskey/Burr the month before. Several other Fisher-Burr duets were listed during the following few months.

While I was pondering about Frances Fisher, I found myself wondering, as I had done before, over the identity of the equally mysterious "Miss M. Mayew," sometimes called "Miss Margaret Mayew." And then, what I believe is the solution popped into my mind, as it should have done years before.

The "Mayew" records started to appear about the time the charming soprano, Elise Stevenson, lost her duet partner, Frank C. Stanley, by death, and began to sing with Burr instead. They were issued through 1910 and 1911 until Miss Stevenson decided to abandon her recording career at her husband's insistence. The last Columbia record under Elise Stevenson's name was numbered A1029; the last Mayew duet with Burr, A1057.

Burr made duet records of "Day Dreams, Visions of Bliss" with both ladies — with Miss Stevenson for Victor and Miss Mayew for Columbia. I played them both and the similarities in voice and style seem unmistakable. Pending further revelations, I think we may assume that Misses Stevenson and Mayew (the

latter made no solos but sang only as Burr's partner) were the same person.

Furthermore I also suspect Miss Stevenson was the soprano, Caroline Vaughan, who helped Burr to record "There's a Girl in Havana," a song written by Irving Berlin, but which he permitted to be published under the names of his brother-in-law, E. Ray Goetz, and A. Baldwin Sloane.

Also in April appeared one of the most popular Columbia records, A1686, with Misses Kerns and Potter singing "Whispering Hope" and Miss Kerns and Herbert Stuart (who was really Albert Wiederhold), baritone, being heard in "Somewhere a Voice is Calling."

The Columbia Supplement, beginning with this issue, was printed in larger, more readable type, in which Mr. Jell said:

"Perhaps the best duet combination in both recording and rendition ever issued on record. The familiar melody and appealing sentiment of 'Whispering Hope' are irresistible as sung by Miss Kerns and Miss Potter.

"Somewhere a Voice is Calling," a beautiful new two-part song from England, is now repeating in America its sensational success abroad. It is recorded with striking effect by Miss Kerns and Mr. Stuart."

It is conceivable that this record of "Whispering Hope" induced Victor to issue the Kline-Baker version that came out in July, and the Kerns-Stuart side caused Edison to make the famous Diamond Disc of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" by Elizabeth Spencer, soprano, and Vernon Archibald, baritone.

I have said that Miss Kerns and Mr. Wells made only the one duet, "Chinatown." That statement does not stand, however, if the soprano were really Miriam Clark.

In June, 1915, Miss Clark, whoever she was, and Wells sang "The Flame of Love," coupled with Sam Ash's tenor rendition of "My Own Venetian Rose." And in February, they had sung "Love Moon" from "Chin Chin," coupled with "Calling Me Home," by the Stellar Quartet.

Miss Kerns was present in June, singing "I Feel Thy Angel Spirit" with Wiederhold, doing a solo of "I Love You Truly," and taking part in "Mighty Lak' a Rose," and Brahms' "Lullaby" as interpreted by the Columbia Ladies Quartet.

In July, mysterious Miriam sang the soprano solo in "I'm a Pilgrim," by the Columbia Mixed Quintet. Since Miss Kerns has already been identified as the soprano of the Mixed Quartet, it seems a logical deduction that she was also in the quintet, taking the chief soprano part. But that, of course, is guesswork. And who was the fifth member?

The Virginia soprano received more praise in August for her record of "The Nightingale Song" and "Among the Lilies."

"In the 'Nightingale Song,' Miss Kerns renders, in her own individual style, one of the best recordings it has ever been our good fortune to announce. Equally effective, too, is the rendition of Czibulka's famous composition."

October brought the most ambitious double-faced record in which Grace Kerns had taken part. One side of the 12-inch disc contained the Rigoletto Quartet and the other the Lucia Sextet, sung in English. A sad feature was the appearance in both of Mildred Potter. She had died a week before the October 1 release date. The Quartet was by Kerns, Potter, Charles Harrison, and Wiederhold; the Sextet by the same four with Reed Miller and Frank Croxton added. Certainly a cast of stellar singers, regardless of how well their interpretations may have pleased opera specialists.

The supplement description laid it on thick:

"In this new popular-priced Columbia recording a wonderful treat awaits the thousands who recognize in these two selections the most inspired concertized compositions in all opera . . .

"A description of these selections is unnecessary. The great fact is the singing of them by Columbia artists of such merit that the resulting record can be compared favorably with the most expensive ones that money can buy, and yet sell at a popular price.

"The singers, selected from a long list of Columbia talent, have been trained specially to produce the perfect vocalization and stupendous finales of these operatic masterpieces. Their success can be delightfully heard in every home on this remarkable Columbia record."

"The Flame of Love" was John Barnes Wells' last appearance in a regular Columbia record list. His last solo had been issued in February, 1915, and must have been his most popular Columbia record — the great Ernest R. Ball ballad hit, "A Little Bit of Heaven."

We may now leave Columbia for Victor and consider some Wells records that have not yet come to our attention.

(To be continued)

## OBITUARY

### WILLIAM H. WINTER

Henry Winter of Boston, Mass., HOBBIES' advertiser, has written to tell us of the death of his brother, William H. Winter, on March 25. He was 84 years of age.

The late Mr. Winter was an artist and colorist as assistant to Mr. Tiffany in the former Tiffany Studios.

Many of the late Mr. Winter's murals are in state and public buildings. He also had many paintings to his credit. Of late years he was "dean" of the scenic artists union.

### MARY G. HARPENDING

Mary G. Harpending, Rochester, N.Y., and formerly of Dundee, N.Y., passed away on March 24. Mrs. Harpending dealt in antiques for many years and she and her son, Richard, helped in the liquidation and dispersal of many antiques and fine art estates in the vicinity of Rochester and Dundee. Richard will carry on the business.

Mrs. Harpending is survived also by another son, Abram R. six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

## I. Wells' Later Victor Records

The previous discussion of John Barnes Wells' Victor records ended with the issue for November, 1913, when he began to have his name in Columbia lists. We now return to his Victor activities.

The highly regarded tenor may have signed a one or two-year exclusive Columbia contract, for he was absent from Victor lists for all of 1914 and 1915. He reappeared in February, 1916, singing what appears to have been a new recording of Harriet Ware's "Boat Song," to replace his single-faced one.

Another Ware song, "Joy of the Morning," was on the reverse side. Miss Ware played the accompaniments, which again leads me to think she may have been Wells' pianist for a time.

The record's number is 17693, which indicates that it was originally intended for publication around March, 1915, but had been held nearly a year. Other double-faced discs at the time it was issued were in the 17900's.

The entire page of the March supplement was given over to a description of the record, and to photographs of Wells standing with arms folded, and Miss Ware. Editor Sam Rous wrote:

"... The new records Mr. Wells has made for the February list are Harriet Ware's enchanting 'Boat Song,' a setting of verses by Montrose Moses, and one of the greatest of concert successes; and a new song, also by Miss Ware. An interesting feature of these records is the excellent accompaniments played by the composer.

"Miss Ware merits the grateful thanks of her countrymen for utilizing such fine verses for her song texts.

While one hears much hue and cry about the poverty of good English songs, and many of our native composers turn continuously to German verse thereby adding to a Lied literature already most abundant, Miss Ware hears the music in poems of big thought by authors who express themselves in the English tongue.

"To have written 10 songs of even excellence, all to poems which one may sing or listen to without shame for either sentiment or literary merit, is an accomplishment which should give Miss Ware an enduring place among contemporary song writers. But there is every indication that she will yet do larger and better things toward the enrichment of American music."

Wells reappeared in April, 1916, with a record which probably ranks third, or perhaps second, among his best selling Victors. It was one of the prettiest popular songs ever written, "Memories," and the music was by Egbert Van Alstyne, who also composed "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," "Cheyenne," "Navajo," "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark," and many other great hits. On the B side, Elsie Baker sang "One Fleeting Hour."

A mysterious tenor, William Barnes, made his first appearance in the same list, singing "I Love You, That's One Thing I Know." Those who listened closely and were familiar with the voice of a well-known concert tenor could have little doubt — and need have had none — that William Barnes was John Barnes Wells.

Several other Barnes selections followed, including one — to anticipate a little — in April, 1917, whose cataloging was distinctly curious. It was 18239, "Tho' I'm Not the First

## Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells

### PART III

By JIM WALSH

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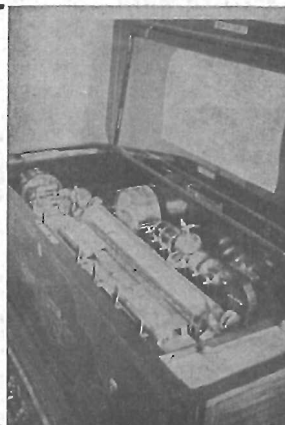
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to Call You 'Sweetheart,' Please Let Me Be the Last."

This record was listed in the supplement as being by the Orpheus Quartet and the label also mentions no one except that group. But the complete catalogs from May, 1917 on, as long as the record was still being made, described it as being by William Barnes and the Orpheus Quartet. Probably, however, not one purchaser in a thousand realized John Barnes Wells was singing the solo part.

That year, 1917, was one of curious Victor catalog procedures, anyway. The May catalog contained record 18233, "Everything is Going Up," sung by Billy Murray. The mating was "With His Hands in His Pockets and His Pockets in His Pants," by Byron G. Harlan.

When the August supplement came out, the record was reissued, under the same number, but with the B side changed to "Rolling in His Little Rolling Chair," sung by Willie Weston. The Harlan song was permanently dropped, although his records of it for other companies were big sellers.

Going back to 1916, a Wells record of more than ordinary interest was announced in August. On one side he sang the delightful "Long Ago in Alcalá," and on the other, three of his own little compositions: "The Owl," "The Crow's Egg," and "Why?" At the top of the page was a reproduction of a drawing of Wells by James Montgomery Flagg. Said the supplement:

"Mr. Wells offers for August a delightful group of humorous songs which he sings in his own inimitable style, with a diction as clear as a printed page. The first is Andre Messager's setting of the famous Weatherly-Ross verses—'charming nonsense,' someone has called the song. It is the best 'take-off' on the modern concert song ever written.

"Mr. Wells has also given three of his own quaint and amusing 'songlets'—attractive titles which his audiences are never tired of hearing."

In November, Wells sang "The Melody of Home" and again had luscious-voiced Elsie Baker as his companion, with a Carrie Jacobs-Bond song, "Today."

The "Pennsylvania tenor" essayed an Irish ballad, "Norah, the Pride of Kildare," for the March, 1917, list. Then, nine months later, the last John Barnes Wells record Victor was ever to issue was announced in the December supplement. "When Shadows Fall" was its title.

It was accompanied by a good picture of Wells sitting at a piano, hands over ears, pretending to be horrified at the "vocal expression" of a portrait of him—probably the one, already mentioned, by James Montgomery Flagg. This was the Victor record supplement's final compliment to John Barnes Wells:

"A lover's pleading cry that 'When shadows fall, then you'll come back to me' is the subject of the song by Harold G. Frost and E. Clinton Keithley. It is admirably sung with impassioned enthusiasm by John Barnes Wells, who rises to great heights in the climax. He nevertheless gets a beautiful, soft tone for the final high note."

It is hard to say why there were

no more Wells records, but he was one of several long-standing artists who made their last Victor appearance in that December, 1917, supplement. Others were Billy Golden, Reed Miller, and Frederick Wheeler.

The nation had been converted to a war-time basis and much of the Victor plant was producing materials for battle. Record and phonograph production had to be curtailed, so a good many artists were let go, probably with warm assurances, "We'll be glad to have you back after things return to normal." But Wells and a number of others never again appeared on Victor lists.

When Victor's last large catalog of acoustic records appeared in 1925 eight Wells titles were still listed: "Boat Song," "Joy of the Morning," "Long Ago in Alcalá," "Mammy's Song," "Memories," "The Owl," "The Rosary," and "Sweet Genevieve." But all were discontinued when electrical recording was introduced.

Two, however, "Memories," and "The Rosary," were included in a 1927 catalog of records of historical and personal interest, "restored to the public by the public's own demand." The most popular Wells record, "Sweet Genevieve," had been re-made electrically by Franklyn Baur.

## II. Wells' Last Records

As best my research indicates, Wells was not heard on records again until October, 1919, when the Aeolian-Vocalion monthly supplement devoted a page to a fine photo of him. On the opposite page was announced his vertical-cut, needle-playing record of "The Lord is My Light," and "Face to Face."

"Another well-known artist has been added to the Vocalion Record staff in John Barnes Wells, tenor soloist of the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, New York City.

"This gifted singer, who has been equally successful on the concert stage and in oratorio, has sung two impressive sacred solos for his initial recordings.

"The Lord Is My Light" by Allitsen gives wide scope for Mr. Wells' vocal possibilities, while his interpretation of the well-beloved 'Face to Face' is immensely appealing. There is a pleasurable sense of repose in the singing of John Barnes Wells that makes listening a joy."

A month later, Wells sang "The Birthday of a King" on another Vocalion record. Then, early in 1920, Aeolian-Vocalion stopped making hill-and-dale records to follow the bandwagon rush to the lateral cut, after a lawsuit had ended Victor's patent monopoly. The Wells records consequently were on sale for only a few months and are hard to find today. I believe they were his last solo discs.

Until a couple of years ago I had thought they were the last records of any kind in which he took part, but then I was astonished to find in a 1961 issue of *Record Research* a list of six double-faced discs which Columbia had made for Reinald Werrenrath through its "Personal Service Department.

The songs were all, apparently, peculiar to the Psi Upsilon college fraternity, the records were for fraternity use, and Werrenrath was assisted by the Psi Upsilon Quartet. The other members were Cyrille Carreau, Harold C. Winston — and John Barnes Wells!

I don't know just when those records were made, but it must have been in the early 1930's, after Vic-

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This picture of John Barnes Wells, "admiring" his vocal expression, was taken in December, 1917, Victor Record Supplement.

tor had declined to renew the exclusive contract which Werrenrath had for many years.

They had to be made before August 8, 1935, for that was the date on which John Barnes Wells died in Roxbury, N.Y. He was not quite 55. I am not certain of the cause of his death, but have an impression that I read a long time ago he succumbed to a heart attack. It's possible, though, that my memory is tricking me.

### III. Grace Kerns' Last Columbia Records

In November, 1915, Columbia made its strongest effort to bring its monthly record supplement up to a standard approaching, if not equalling, Victor's. The size of pages was increased to that of the Victor, better paper was used and more care was used in preparing the text and reproducing photographs.

That first improved supplement listed a record of "Auf Wiedersehn," from "The Blue Paradise," which Grace Kerns sang as a duet with the English tenor, Hardy Williamson, who had been a miner before he became a singer. Williamson soon afterwards signed up with Edison and traveled extensively giving "tone tests."

There was an Edison association, too, with the record's other song, "Molly Dear, It's You I'm After," sung by Edith Chapman, soprano, and a quartet. As "Miss Chappel," Edith Chapman had figured a decade before in Edison two-minute cylinder lists.

And it has just struck me that she must be the otherwise unknown soprano, "Ethel Costello," who appeared in the Columbia lists at about the same time that Miss Chapman

made her Columbia debut.

When artists recorded under assumed names they were fond of using their own initials (for example, Elsie Baker called herself Edna Brown), so Edith Chapman and Ethel Costello almost certainly were the same woman.

In May, 1917, Miss Kerns sang a Hawaiian number, "On the Shore at Le Le Wi," with Reed Miller as her partner. The coupling, "When Cupid Calls," was by Kerns and Miller with Andrea Sarto's baritone added for extra measure.

The same list also had "Miriam Clark" singing "So Long, Letty," with Hardy Williamson. In view of Miss Kerns' previous association with Williamson, this provides more circumstantial evidence that Grace and Miriam were the same.

There should have been a good sale for a June record on which Miss Kerns sang "Kiss Me Again" and she and Miller were heard in "They Didn't Believe Me."

For the August supplement, Miss Kerns, Charles Harrison, and the Columbia Opera Chorus sang the "Miserere" from "Il Trovatore," replacing one which had been made several years before by Elise Stevenson and John Young.

A record that must have been one of the more attractive of Miss Kern's offerings came out in November. It combined "Bonnie Sweet Bessie" and "When the Roses Bloom." The description said:

"The voice of Grace Kerns is familiar on many of the finest choral, quartet, and duet records in our catalog. It is an added pleasure to hear Miss Kerns' solo in such a gem as Gilbert's 'Bonnie Sweet Bessie.' 'When the Roses Bloom' is even more beautiful. . . . Certainly this song is one Schubert himself could well claim, so tender-sweet is the melody."

Miriam Clark disappeared, but in March, 1917, Grace Kerns was listed singing "Poor Butterfly" in the guise of "Katherine Clark." There can be no doubt about her identity in this instance.

We have seen that Katherine, or Catherine Clark was her mother's maiden name, and no doubt it occurred to the soprano that it would be a nice tribute to her mother to make a few records under that lady's name.

Perhaps her mother may also have had the name of Miriam or there may have been a Miriam Clark among Miss Kerns' other kinfolds. Under her own name Miss Kerns sang Margaret R. Lang's "Irish Love Song."

In April, the soprano, whose Columbia days were almost at an end, had another duet with Reed Miller. They sang "Our Star," a vocal setting of Rubenstein's "Monastery Bells."

Meanwhile, a new soprano, a Mormon girl from Utah, Lucy Gates, had been engaged. She began to make many records of the type that had been associated with Miss Kerns. It might be said she became Columbia's "new Grace Kerns."

There were no more records with Miss Kerns' name except for two containing Catholic music, which must have been issued in 1917 but did not appear in the monthly supplements. They were numbered out of sequence; A3055 coupled "O Bread of Heaven" and "Soul of My Saviour," and A3056, "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" and "Hear the Children, Gentle Jesus."

In August, 1917, "Katherine Clark" was present with a song whose title had a prophetic touch, "I'm a Regular Daughter of Uncle Sam," for, with her country throwing its full strength into World War I, Miss Kerns gave up her concert and recording career to go abroad and minister to the needs of service men.

The last "Katherine Clark" record was listed in October. It was called "Hello! My Soldier Boy," was described as "a wireless novelty," and was composed by Fred W. Hager, who wrote more "descriptive specialties" for phonograph use than any other musician. The soprano had Henry Burr as her fellow singer. On the other side the Peerless Quartet sang another Hager number, "The Spirit of '17."

"The wireless novelty song, 'Hello! My Soldier Boy,' is certainly up-to-date. The girl who sends her love 'over and through the atmosphere' is, in this case, Katherine Clark, and her soldier boy, Henry Burr, both favorite Columbia artists. And, by the way, you can hear the wireless ticking merrily throughout the song."

That was the last, for Columbia, of Grace Kerns, Miriam Clark, and Katherine Clark. For some reason, the company soon afterwards proceeded to a wholesale slaughter of her records.

When the September, 1918, catalog was published, she had only

seven 10-inch and two 12-inch solos remaining, although many of her concerted numbers were retained. A new photograph was reproduced showing the soprano in what may have been an operatic costume. Whatever it was, it made her look plump.

By September, 1919, the solos were down to the 12-inch "Bohemian Girl" record and the two 10-inch Catholic couplings. The ensemble offerings also had been drastically pared.

(To Be Continued)

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**VIOLINS:** Josef Guainerius, hand-made (copy), made in Germany, 1884, very fine copy in perfect condition, with wooden case and newly rehalred bow, \$225. Stradivari (copy), mold-made, 1928, and bow, \$95. Plus postage and packing. — Mrs. Ronald E. Nelson, 147 Randolph Dr., Bangor, Maine. au3618

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Outstanding guitar teacher's instruction booklet "Getting Started." Important first steps in learning to accompany singing. \$1. — Guitar Instruction. 9 Mayflower Drive. Yonkers, N.Y. 10710. jly3675

### RECORDS WANTED

PLEASE DO NOT SEND me lists of records or phonographs you have for sale. I am a collector only. The only records I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926 and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

**WANTED:** Jolson material. — Dick Bonesteel, 3249 Perkins Lane West, Seattle, Wash. jly12407

### OLD SHEET MUSIC

(Turn to Page 44)

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### RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collectors' items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

Out-of-print records, primarily 78 rpm, some deleted LP's: classical vocal, instrumental, popular, personality jazz. Monthly sales list of classical vocals. Authoritative appraisals. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 254 W. 81st St., New York 24, N. Y. n122553

**HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS** worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N.Y. jcl24661

**FREE CATALOGS**, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP. — ARG, 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. au3614

**RECORDS:** 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. s3483

**RARE 78's.** State category. — Record Lists, P.O. Box 2122, Riverside, Calif 92506. n12407

**Free Catalog.** Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A.R.G., 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y. au3483

**GREAT VOCAL RECORDS.** South's store for top condition collectors' 78's. Operatic, historical, personality, jazz. Wants located. Free lists, your category. — Record Collectors Service, 2322 Biscayne Blvd., Miami 37, Fla. o6829

**COLLECTORS** or dealers: Hundreds early operatic originals, imports, reissues. Special lists offering certain artists, labels, other classifications, as requested. — Penn Courtney, 4817 Gilbert Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana. jly3614

**RECORDS:** all kinds except classical. Old record catalogs. Back issues of HOB-BIDS. Please list specific wants if possible. — W. Praster, 656 Miami Road, Wenonah, N. J. Tel. 609 - 857-4686. au3084

**FOR SALE:** Disc and cylinder records, phonographs. 25c for lists. Evolution of the Phonograph by Reed and Welch. \$9.95. — Coppernoll's Antiques, Box 6, Palatine Bridge, N.Y. au3004

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**WANTED:** Over the shoulder or other antique band instruments. — W. A. Holmoway, 1547 N. Dearborn Pkwy., Chicago 10, Ill. jly3403

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**WANTED:** Reproducers and reproducer parts for old phonographs. Can repair. Will trade phonographs for banks. — Miller's, 1017 Westgate Rd., Troy, Ohio 45373. S3023

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**WANT** all piano and music rolls, especially Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico, odd or unusual rolls. Lists unnecessary. — Box 787H, Kemah, Texas. my124631

**WANTED:** Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Recordo. 2) Recordo. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120821

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### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**BOOKS** on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America, \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N. Y. n62342

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**PRE 1900** Cable Cottage organ, rebuilt, new bellows, new stops, refinished, if interested will send photo and price — L. E. Burdick, 3161 7th Street, Boulder, Colorado jly1051

### PHONOGRAPHS

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**WANTED:** Cylinder & old Disc phonographs. Parts, reproducers & any catalogs & literature on the Phonographs. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. s3563

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my56p





## Grace Kerns and John Barnes Wells

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

### IV. Last Records

When Miss Kerns returned from abroad she probably found that Columbia, having Lucy Gates and other popular sopranos, did not need her. She did a little more recording, in or around 1919, but chiefly, or entirely, for companies that were making hill-and-dale records that had a limited distribution.

I have a Paramount record on which she sings "The Angel's Serenade," to a violin obligato by Samuel Gardner. "Ave Maria" is played by Gardner on the other side. She may have made more Paramounts, but, lacking catalogs, I am unable to say.

Miss Kerns also made at least three hill-and-dale Okeh records, the Company for which Fred Hager was recording director. The titles were "Kiss Me Again," "Angel's Serenade," and "Poor Wandering One" from "The Pirates of Penzance."

In 1920, the mysterious Arto Company of Orange, N.J., which made briefly both records and piano rolls issued three or more discs by the Virginia soprano.

The three I know of were "Old Folks at Home" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" (in both of which she had the assistance of a mixed quartet and a banjoist), and her old favorite, "Whispering Hope," sung as a duet with Reed Miller's wife, Nevada Van der Veer. Perhaps Miss Kerns made others.

The Arto record, like the Emerson, was represented to be "universal" — that is, it supposedly would play in either lateral or vertical position.

The one Arto record envelope I have contains some amusing statements. After saying that Arto records would play 10 times as long as the usual needle-cut record, the envelope's blurb continued:

"Standard Songs. Your favorite standard selections . . . have been recorded on Arto records by artists you are accustomed to hearing on Victor and Columbia Records.

"In the recording unusual care has been exercised to render the selections as you would want them. No individual eccentric interpretations have been permitted but the artists have made every effort to render the compositions as they were originally arranged. You will find the music 'stays with you' — it just makes you hum to yourself!"

Miss Kerns' final appearances be-

fore the recording horn appear to have been made in 1921 and 1922. Like John Barnes Wells, she ended her career as a phonograph singer by making a few records for Aeolian-Vocalion.

The first appeared in October, 1921, when she sang "The Nightingale Song" as a solo and enlisted the help of her friend, Nevada Van der Veer, in still another duet version of "Whispering Hope." The supplement said:

"'Whispering Hope' is one of the most popular duets for women's voices ever written. Heard with Nevada Van der Veer's splendid contralto is a gifted new Vocalion artist, Grace Kerns, soprano soloist of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, New York City. The clear beauty of Miss Kerns' exquisite voice is well displayed in her first solo Vocalion recording."

The second Kerns solo, "At Dawning," was announced in the summer of 1922, and the last in November, when she sang "In the Time of Roses." That seems to have been the last record she made for anybody.

### V. Grace Kerns' Tragic Death

I have a clipping from a newspaper, which I think was the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, telling of Grace Kerns' tragic death on September 10, 1936, while she was riding in a car driven by her nephew, Howard J. Kerns, who was also killed. The Associated Press article erroneously gives Miss Kerns' name as Kern, but I shall add the missing "s."

"Four persons, one an internationally known singer, died today as the result of motor accidents on Virginia highways.

"Miss Grace Kerns, associate professor of voice at Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, was killed instantly in an auto-bus crash near Williamsburg.

"She had been a member of the R.M.W.C. faculty since August, 1932, and previously was a soloist for 13 years at St. Bartholomew's Church, New York City.

"Miss Kerns' concert work was extensive, and she appeared with some of the world's leading orchestras. Among her engagements was a 15-week tour with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch. During the World War, she served with the YWCA in cantonments and hospitals in Europe.

"Howard J. Kerns, Norfolk, was driver of the car in which the two died in a collision with a Peninsula Line bus.

"W. W. Walker, driver of the Newport News bound bus, said that he ran off the road on a curve in an effort

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

to avoid a crash. None of the bus passengers were injured."

Recently I obtained a copy of Miss Kerns' death certificate, and have already quoted some of the information it contains. The information was supplied by Catherine Kerns (Miss Kerns' mother?), of 622 West Onley Road, Norfolk.

The coroner's report, signed by A. M. Sneed, said that Miss Kerns' "whole body was crushed. Both legs and arms broken, skull crushed."

What a tragic end to a useful, even brilliant, career that should have continued for many more years!

Since Miss Kerns' last years had been spent as a member of the Randolph-Macon Woman's College faculty, I wrote to Dr. James Quillan, college president, hoping to obtain additional biographical detail and perhaps a good photo. My letter was answered on April 12, 1961, by Miss Evelyn Harvey, secretary to Dr. Quillan, who summarized the college's available information:

"Pupil of Louis Caplanni, New York; two years and a half at Institute of Musical Art, New York; pupil of Emma Thursby; opera under Sebastiani in Naples, Italy, and Alfred Giraudet in Paris, France, for three years; on tour for 16 weeks with New York Symphony Orchestra, under Walter Damrosch; soloist with Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other leading orchestras, and many appearances with oratorio societies throughout the country; 13 years soloist at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City and private teaching studio in New York; Associate Professor of Voice, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, 1932-36. . . I regret there is no information about her parents and birthdate."

So, after her national and international successes, Grace Kerns returned to her native "Old Virginny" to live — and to die. It seems too bad that she and John Barnes Wells could not have lived and sung longer, but their records will keep memories of them evergreen for generations yet to be. (The End)

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## 10-Inch Columbia Records

By Grace Kerns (1911-1917)

A1091 Dear Heart. Reverse: Whispering Hope (Beulah Gaylord Young and Clara Moister).

A1103 Banks of Allan Water. Reverse: Irish Lullaby (Beulah G. Young).

A1127 O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast (duet with Bessie Volckmann, contralto). Reverse: Wanderer's Night Song (Reed Miller—Frank Croxton).

A1221 Pirates of Penzance—Poor Wandering One. Reverse: Maritana—Let Me Like a Soldier Fall (Charles W. Harrison).

A1249 Sing, Smile, Slumber. Reverse: A Dream (Craig Campbell).

A1265 Last Rose of Summer. Reverse: The Rosary (Columbia Male Quintet).

A1275 Just A-wearin' For You. Reverse: I Would That My Love (Grace Kerns and Mildred Potter).

A1299 Danube River. Reverse: Kitharney (Andrea Sarto).

A1341 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (duet with Craig Campbell, tenor). Reverse: When I Know That Thou Art Near Me (Elsie Baker and Frederick Wheeler).

A1357 Go, Pretty Rose (duet with Craig Campbell). Reverse: Asthore (Craig Campbell).

A1359 Sweethearts. Reverse: Every Lover Must Meet His Fate (Reed Miller).

A1375 At the Ferry. Reverse: Because (Frank Pollock).

(Continued on next page)

## VIOLINS

VIOLINS: Josef Gualnerius, hand-made (copy), made in Germany, 1884, very fine copy in perfect condition, with wooden case and newly rehired bow, \$225. Stradivari (copy), mold-made, 1928, and bow, \$95. Plus postage and packing. — Mrs. Ronald E. Nelson, 147 Randolph Dr., Bangor, Maine. au3618

## RECORDS WANTED

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Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collectors' items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. s3084

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HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N.Y. je124661

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RECORDS: 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. s3483

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RECORDS: all kinds except classical. Old record catalogs. Back issues of HOBBIES. Please list specific wants if possible. — W. Praster, 656 Miami Road, Wenonah, N. J. Tel. 609 - 857-4686. au3084

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MONTHLY LISTS of classical vocal 78 r.p.m. Many rarities. Operatic 78 collections bought. — The Domart Collection, 400 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket, R. I. Phone PAwtucket 3-2389. my122971

OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records, 1902 to L.P. — Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott St., San Francisco 17, Calif. my128801

Wanted: Radio Transcription Records featuring Russ Columbo, radio crooner in the early 1930's. Will pay highest prices. Needed for research. Roy Steifel, Box 511, Winston-Salem, N. C. s3447

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COIN OPERATED pianos, orchestrations, mechanical dolls, old time arcade and vending items. — Ed. Zelmsky, 120 Sea Cliff Ave., San Francisco 21, Calif. o3253

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WANT all piano and music rolls, especially Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico, odd or unusual rolls. Lists unnecessary. — Box 787H, Kemah, Texas. my124631

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Records. 2) Recordco. 3) Vocal style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120821

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

BOOKS on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America, \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N. Y. n62342

WANTED: Stokowski recordings, off the air tapes, posters, pictures, memorabilia. — David Kendig, 257 W. 91st St., New York City. o3403

EDISON constant speed strobe fits end of mandrel to indicate 160 speed. Kit contains Strobe neon light and cord; one strobe for regular (Amberol); one strobe for Concert 5" size; one strobe for disc records 33 1/3, 45, 78 speeds; instructions. Prepaid \$5, allow two weeks. — Hanson, Box 1168, Leesburg, Florida 32748. o3618

## PHONOGRAPHS

CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c, 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

WANTED: Cylinder & old Disc phonographs. Parts, reproducers & any catalogs & literature on the Phonographs. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. s3863

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BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's 3151 High, Denver 6, Colorado. s12698

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A1436 The Lorelei. Reverse: Stars of the Summer Night (both with Beulah G. Young and Clara Moister).

A1442 Marriage Market—The One I Love (with Charles Harrison). Reverse: The Doll Girl—Come On Over Here (Agnes Kimball and Harrison).

A1624 Chinatown, My Chinatown (with John Barnes Wells). Reverse: Mrs. Sippi, You're a Grand Old Girl (Columbia Stellar Quartet).

A1678 Blue Alsatian Mountains. Reverse: Answer (Reed Miller).

A1686 Whispering Hope (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: Somewhere a Voice is Calling (with Herbert Stuart).

A1744 Nightingale Song. Reverse: Among the Lilies.

A1748 I Love You Truly. Reverse: Until (Reed Miller).

A1782 One Sweetly Solemn Thought (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: Dreams of Galilee (Columbia Male Quartet).

A1819 Blue Paradise—Auf Wiedersehen (with Hardy Williamson). Reverse: Molly Dear, It's You I'm After (Edith Chapman with Male Quartet).

A1833 Violets. Reverse: Hearts and Flowers (Frank Pollock).

A1851 Estudiantina Waltz (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: Funiculi, Funicula (Charles Harrison and Columbia Stellar Quartet).

A1966 Sybil—When Cupid Calls (with Reed Miller and Andrea Sarto). Reverse: On the Shore at Le Lei Wi (with Miller).

A1982 Kiss Me Again. Reverse: Girl From Utah—They Didn't Believe Me (with Reed Miller).

A2028 Bonnie Sweet Bessie. Reverse: When the Roses Bloom.

A2071 Rose of My Heart (with Miller). Reverse: Kilkenny (Charles Harrison).

A2095 My Faith Looks Up to Thee (with Ida Gardner). Reverse: Safe in the Arms of Jesus (Harry McClaskey).

A2139 Irish Love Song. Reverse: Little Irish Girl (Reed Miller).

A2177 Our Star (with Miller). Reverse: The Farewell (Nanette Flack and Miller).

A3055 O Bread of Heaven. Reverse: Soul of My Saviour.

A3056 Holy God, We Praise Thy Name. Reverse: Hear the Children, Gentle Jesus. 10-inch Records by "Miriam Clark"

A1661 Chin Chin—Love Moon (with J. B. Wells). Reverse: Calling Me Home (Columbia Stellar Quartet).

A1713 I'm a Pilgrim (with Columbia Mixed Quartet). Reverse: Lift Up Your Heads (Columbia Mixed Quartet).

A1757 Flame of Love (with John B. Wells). Reverse: My Own Venetian Rose (Sam Ash).

A1969 So Long, Lefty (with Hardy Williamson). Reverse: Cumberland (Henry Burr and Albert Campbell).

#### 10-inch Records by "Katherine Clark"

A2167 Poor Butterfly. Reverse: Century Girl (Inez Barbour).

A2274 I'm a Regular Daughter of Uncle Sam. Reverse: Oh Jack, When Are You Coming Back? (Billy Burton and James Hall).

A2301 Hello! My Soldier Boy—A Wire-less Novelty (with Burr). Reverse: Spirit of '17 (Peerless Quartet).

#### 12-inch Columbia Records

By Grace Kerns (1911-1916)

A5307 The Pink Lady—My Beautiful Lady (with Chorus). Reverse: Pink Lady Selections (Prince's Orchestra).

A5311 Stabat Mater—Quis Est Homo (duet with Margaret Keyes, contralto). Reverse: Stabat Mater—Faci ut Portem (Keyes).

A5312 Mavtana—Scenes That Are Brightest. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me (Reed Miller).

A5329 Doctor Tinkle Tinker—Girl of My Dreams (with Chorus). Reverse: The Siren—Wallflower Sweet (Kerns & C. W. Harrison).

A5367 Forza del Destino—La Vergine degli Angeli (In Italian). Reverse: Tales of Hoffman Selections (Prince's Orchestra).

A5409 Rose Maid—Roses Bloom for Lovers. Reverse: Rose Maid—Sweethearts, Wives and Good Fellows (Chas. Harrison and Columbia Mixed Quartet).

A5410 Bohemian Girl—Come With the Gypsy Bride. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls).

A5445 Oh! Oh! Delphine—Venus Waltz (with Craig Campbell and Mixed Chorus). Reverse: Oh! Oh! Delphine Vocal

Gems (Columbia Light Opera Company).

A5452 Carmen—Waltz Song (with Mildred Potter, Craig Campbell, and Frank Croxton). Reverse: Blue Danube Waltz (Columbia Light Opera Company).

A5462 Martha—Good Night Quartet (with Potter, Reed Miller, and Croxton). Reverse: Martha—Lost, Proscribed (Miller and Croxton).

A5480 Beggar Student—Shall I Tell Her? (with Reed Miller). Reverse: Beggar Student—Vocal Gems (Columbia Light Opera Company).

A5536 Norma—Hear Me, Norma (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: Vesperi Siciliani—Oh Thou Queen of Love and Beauty (with Potter).

A5574 Sari—Love Has Wings. Sari—Love's Own Sweet Song (both with Chas. Harrison).

A5625 The Only Girl. Reverse: When You're Away.

A5636 When Ye Gang Awa', Jamie (with Harry McClaskey). Reverse: Land of the Swallows (Mildred Potter and J. B. Wells).

A5657 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: Don Pasquale—Oh, Summer Night (Caroline Hudson-Alexander and Andrea Sarto).

A5668 I Feel Thy Angel Spirit (with Albert Wiederhold). Reverse: Mavis (Reed Miller).

A5701 Calm as the Night (with Wiederhold). Reverse: I Live and Love Thee (with Potter).

A5709 Rigolotto Quartet (with Potter, Harrison, and Wiederhold). Reverse: Lucia Sextet (with Potter, Reed Miller, Harrison, Frank Croxton, and Wiederhold).

A5745 Ring Out, Wild Bells (with Male Quartet). Reverse: Ring Out, Wild Bells (Columbia Oratorio Chorus).

#### Edison Blue Amberol Cylinder By Grace Kerns (1912)

1504 Roses Bloom for Lovers. 10-inch Paramount Hill-and-Dale (1919)

30054 Angel's Serenade. Reverse: Ave Maria (violin solo by Samuel Gardner).

#### 10-inch Okeh Hill-and-Dale (1919)

1015 Violets. Reverse: Just a Wearyin' for You (Marie Morrissey).

1048 Kiss Me Again. Reverse: Dreams (Frederick Wheeler).

1053 Angel's Serenade. Reverse: Good-bye, Sweet Day (Croxton Quartet).

1055 Pirates of Penzance—Poor Wandering One. Reverse: Under the Greenwood Tree (Inez Barbour).

#### 10-inch Aeolian-Vocalion (1921-22)

14225 Nightingale Song. Reverse: Whispering Hope (with Nevada Van Der Veer).

14359 At Dawning. Reverse: Rock-a-bye Baby (Helen Clark).

14418 In the Time of Roses. Reverse: The Carnival (Helen Barr).

#### 10-inch Arto Red Label

"Universal" Records (1919-1920)

3004 Old Folks at Home (with Mixed Quartet and Banjo Accompaniment). Reverse: Old Black Joe (Wilfred Glenn and Shannon Quartet).

3005 Whispering Hope (duet with Nevada Van Der Veer). Reverse: One Sweetly Solemn Thought (Harry Evans, baritone).

3006 Carry Me Back to Old Virginny (with Mixed Quartet and Banjo Accompaniment). Reverse: My Old Kentucky Home (Shannon Four).

Victor Records by John Barnes Wells  
10-inch single-faced (1910)

5781 In Maytime (Oley Speaks).

5783 Boat Song (Harriet Ware).

5789 Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender (Lassen).

5793 Of Thee I'm Thinking, Margaretha (Meyer-Holmund).

5794 The Rosary (Ethelbert Nevin).

#### 12-inch single-faced

31394 My Wild Irish Rose (originally made by Robert Lerman).

31791 Beloved, It Is Morn (Hickey-Aylward).

#### 10-inch double-faced (1910-1917)

16140 Sweet Genevieve (with Hayden Quartet). Reverse: Where the River Shannon Flows (Harry Macdonough).

16167 My Garden That Blooms for You. Reverse: Garden of Roses (Macdonough and Hayden Quartet).

16700 Beautiful Isle of Somewhere. Reverse: Dear Lord and Father (Elizabeth and William Wheeler).

16705 Story of the Rose. Reverse: Oh, That We Two Were Maying (Elizabeth and William Wheeler).

16865 Red, Red Rose. Reverse: There, Little Girl, Don't Cry (Elizabeth Wheeler).

16929 Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender. Reverse: Last Night (Helen Clark).

17039 Mamma's Song. Reverse: Pickaninny's Lullaby (Elsie Baker).

17203 I'm Wearing Awa'. Reverse: Daddy (Elizabeth Wheeler).

17234 The Rosary. Reverse: For All Eternity (Alan Turner).

17441 My Wonderful Dream Girl. Reverse: Come On Over Here (Helen Clark and Billy Murray).

17693 Boat Song. Reverse: Joy of the Morning.

17968 Memories. Reverse: One Fleeting Hour (Elsie Baker).

17970 I Love You, That's One Thing I Know (sung under name of William Barnes). Reverse: Always Be Honey to Me (Albert Campbell and Henry Burr).

18052 Girl Who Wears a Red Cross on Her Sleeve (as William Barnes). Reverse: Baby Shoes (Edna Brown).

18054 My Own Iona (as William Barnes, with male quartet). Reverse: In the Beautiful Seaside Air (Billy Murray and Chorus).

18062 Long Ago in Alcalá. Reverse: The Owl, (2) Crow's Egg, (3) Why?

18122 Melody of Home. Reverse: Today (Elsie Baker).

18154 Norah, the Pride of Kildare. Reverse: Molly Dhu (Charles Harrison).

18239 Tho' I'm Not the First to Call You Sweetheart (as William Barnes, with Orpheus Quartet). Reverse: Where the Black-Eyed Susans Grow (Albert Campbell and Henry Burr).

18392 When Shadows Fall. Reverse: The Secret of Home, Sweet Home (Chas. Harrison).

#### 12-inch double-faced (1911)

35189 Murmuring Zephyrs. Reverse: The Charmed Cup (Reinold Werrenrath).

#### 10-inch Columbia (1913-1915)

A1409 Rose of Tralee. Reverse: Oh, Promise Me (Mildred Potter).

A1609 Same Sort of Girl (with Inez Barbour). Reverse: Girl from Utah (waltz, Columbia Band).

A1624 Chinatown, My Chinatown (with Kerns). Reverse: Mrs. Sippi, You're a Grand Old Girl (Columbia Stellar Quartet).

A1661 Chin Chin—Love Moon (with Miriam Clark). Reverse: Calling Me Home (Columbia Stellar Quartet).

A1662 Little Bit of Heaven. Reverse: Roses Remind Me of Someone (Henry Burr).

A1757 Flame of Love (with Miriam Clark). Reverse: My Own Venetian Rose (Sam Ash).

#### 12-inch Columbia (1915)

A5636 Land of the Swallows (with Mildred Potter). Reverse: When Ye Gang Awa', Jamie (Grace Kerns and Harry McClaskey).

10-inch Vertical Aeolian-Vocalion (1919)

22032 The Lord is My Light. Reverse: Face to Face.

22037 The Birthday of a King. Reverse: Still Night—Holy Night (Nevada Van Der Veer).

4-min. Edison Amberol Cylinder (1909)

137 Good Night, Dear.

4-min. Indestructible Cylinder (1912)

3311 At the Gate of the Palace of Dreams.

4-min. U.S. Everlasting Cyl. (1910-1912)

1162 My Garden That Blooms for You.

1428 Sunset.

1435 (a) In Maytime. (b) Red, Red Rose.

1458 (a) Rolling Down to Rio. (b) Auld Doctor Maginn.

1481 (a) Dearest Place. (b) If I Were You. (c) Elf Man.

1511 Boat Song—To Lucasta.

1578 I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby.

The End

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by  
JIM WALSH

## Hands Across the Seas!

Major H. H. Annand, of Hillingdon,  
Middlesex, England, Visits  
Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va.

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of HOBBIES Magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

### I. A Series of Surprises

Major H. H. Annand is a veteran British army officer. He has been in many parts of the world and seen his share of surprising things.

But the Major — usually known to his friends by the nickname of "Gerry," pronounced "Jerry" — has retained the capacity to be surprised. So there is no reason for anyone else to be surprised on learning that he was surprised to see the postman

struggling up the front path toward his house, "Whitewell," on Pield Heath Avenue in Hillingdon, Middlesex, England, on the morning of last April 9.

That postman was lugging a heavy box, and he felt a sensible ambition to divest himself of it without delay.

Inside the box were a dozen or so Edison Diamond Discs, which I had sent to Gerry in the hope and belief that they would reach him by his birthday, March 25. Instead, they had dawdled their way across the Atlantic and placed a burden on the postman more than two weeks later than they should have.

Not a great while before the records arrived, Major Annand had experienced another surprise. Two copies of a recently established weekly newspaper, the *Vinton Messenger*, published in the Virginia town in which I live, had mysteriously found their way to Whittier, Calif., some 3,000 miles from Vinton, and had been remailed to Gerry across another 6,000 miles or so.

He is still wondering how they came to the hands of Jesse Jones, his Far West friend by correspondence, who passed them along.

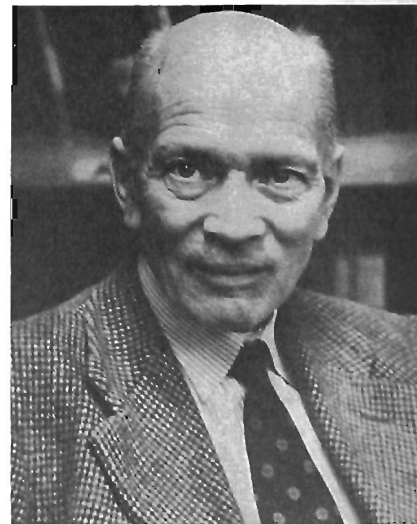
While these surprises were surprising enough in themselves, they were only the prelude to a series of greater surprises for both Major Annand and me — but especially for the Major. In fact, there were several times during a few days of the next several weeks when the genial Gerry probably came close to being the most surprised man alive.

### II. The Major Surprises Me

My own share of the surprises began when I received from the Major a letter, dated April 9. I had corresponded with him, intermittently, for several years. And I had often sent him greetings when writing to his, and my, dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Joe V. J. Cramp, of Chaseway, Penticton Road, Braintree, Essex, England. The very thought of having such an exalted sounding address should give Joe and Beattie a high regard for themselves! But on to the Major's letter:

"My dear Jim: What a wonderful surprise this morning.

"When I saw the postman staggering up the front path, I wondered what was worrying him. I haven't yet had time



Major Annand considers this one of the best portraits ever made of him. —Photo by Oakie S. Asbury, Roanoke Times photographic staff.

to try them all, but they all look interesting.

"Jesse Jones, of Whittier, Calif., sent me two copies of the 'Messenger' which featured your activities, and I rather marveled how he was able to get Vinton papers in California.

"What wonderful pictures of 'Pussy' in the April HOBBIES, which arrived a day or so ago.

"'Pussy' will have to be on his best behavior, as, shortly, I intend my long-wished-for visit to the United States. It will be one of the 21-day economy excursions, and I expect to make it late in April and the first two weeks in May. . . . I hope to have two or three days with you.

"I know that this is inviting myself, but I wouldn't dream of coming to America without seeing you, the fabulous puss-cats and Pussy. . . . Truly, GERRY."

The news that Gerry Annand planned to come to see me was a welcome surprise. Despite years of corresponding with him and Joe and Beattie Cramp (her full given names are Beatrice Mary), it was hard to realize that they were people of flesh-and-blood carrying on the ordinary duties of life thousands of miles away from me.

Gerry, Joe and Beattie seemed more like creatures of my imagination, and I was sure that was the way they felt about me. And now the Major actually was about to make a personal investigation to find out if Jim Walsh really existed; if the cats — Roger, Nipper, Petey, and Lucky

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Jim — had genuine corporeal being; and, most of all, if "Possy," the sweet and gentle-natured opossum whose photographs have lent charm to *HOBBIES* pages, genuinely lived, breathed, and had marsupial existence.

Possy was to prove the one real disappointment of the Major's visit. The admiring Englishman and his four-footed friend never did make connections. In other respects, however, Gerry Annand's descent upon the States turned out to be an unqualified triumph.

### III. The Major Arrives

I was elated at the prospect of having Major Annand, whom I knew to be one of the most highly regarded English record collectors, as my guest. He is serving a lifetime tenure as president of the City of London Phonograph Society, the primary object of which is to preserve Edison cylinder records and acquire all the information possible concerning them.

This information is published in book form, as in the numerical compilations of Edison cylinders which the Major has issued, and in the society's bi-monthly publication, "The Hillandale News." He is generally considered Great Britain's foremost Edison expert.

At the same time I was perturbed by the knowledge that my being obligated to work a lot of overtime and having so many other things to do in extremely limited spare time had caused my big old house to become frightfully untidy, and I feared its condition would offend a fastidious British gentleman.

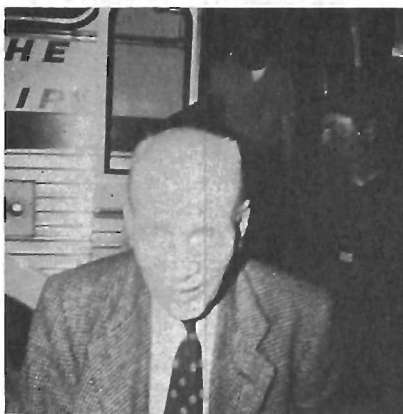
I hoped to find time to do some comprehensive cleaning before his arrival, but it turned out that the "extracurricular" duties became ever more pressing. And when he first entered my door, weeks later, the place was more unsightly than it had been when his letter came.

I was to learn that, in Gerry Annand's estimation, the fact that my living quarters look as if a cyclone had devastated them didn't matter a bit. He explained he had come to see Possy, the cats, and me, and not to make a report to the board of health on whether my premises, my "family," and I should be quarantined.

In one of the few letters that I had snatched time to write in months, I let Gerry know that I was eagerly awaiting his arrival and would do my best to have the Vinton equivalent of a red carpet spread for him.

I also arranged to take my vacation to correspond with the time he would be with me. Since I had left my former radio-television news writing job in June, 1964, to become a staff member of the *Roanoke Times*, I was entitled to only one week.

Time went on and I heard no more from the Major. I began to wonder if anything had happened to make him cancel or postpone his economy-size trip. Then, on the night of Tuesday, May 5, while I was writing several stories dealing with the day's activities of Roanoke's U.S. District Court, my desk phone rang and,



From left to right, top to bottom:

Jim Walsh took this "surprise" snapshot as Major Annand descended from a bus in Roanoke, Va., Friday, May 8, 1964.

Jim Walsh and Major Annand in the Vinton Post Office with Jim's famous Box 476 between them.

"Gerry" soon became a fast friend of Jim's glossy ebony black kitten, Lucky Jim.

Quentin Riggs who had been working for the U. S. State Department in Sydney, Australia, won Nipper's affections last February. Quentin and Evelyn, his wife, visited Jim and his cats before moving on to Quentin's new assignment in Paris. "Nips" became equally loving to Major Annand.

when I answered, the caller identified himself as "Mr. Nugent in Richmond."

I recognized him as A. Nugent, Jr., a well-known mail order dealer in old phonographs, records, and novelties of various sorts, so I had a suspicion of what would happen next. Gerry had told me he intended to spend a few days with Mr. Nugent, with whom he had had pleasant business transactions, before he came to Vinton.

A moment later I was told Major Annand wished to speak with me. As soon as Gerry's voice came over the wire I immediately recognized its soft, typically charming English quality. He had sent me, a year or so before, a recorded tape in which he played some of the records in his collection, commented on them, and said he wished he could see me, "Nipper and Co." Even before they met, "Nips" seemed set apart to occupy an individual spot in the Major's affections.

Gerry and I had a little trouble understanding each other at first, partly because the connection could have been better. But I understood that he planned to reach Roanoke

about 5:45 the following Friday night, traveling by bus. I told him I could hardly wait until he came.

The next day I checked and found that, by taking a later bus, Gerry could journey directly to Vinton and I could meet him at the corner bus stop, within two or three minutes of my house. It isn't a Colonial mansion but from the outside bears a poor-relation likeness to one.

I wrote and suggested that he switch his schedule, but the suggestion reached him too late to be of practical value. I was afraid I should have to work late that Friday night — I frequently am kept overtime on Fridays — and that Gerry would be at loose ends for several hours while I hammered my balky news-room typewriter.

But it "eventuated" that it was best he came earlier, for it gave us several hours more time together.

On that memorable Friday afternoon, I covered my beat as usual and, according to my customary procedure, entered the *Roanoke Times* news-room about 5 o'clock. I wrote as much "copy" as I could, then told the Night City Editor, Dick Han-

cock, that I had to go to the bus terminal to meet the English friend whose impending visit I had mentioned.

The ever-thoughtful and obliging Dick told me to go "right ahead." I said I'd come back later and write what copy I had remaining.

My visit at the terminal was only a short one as I stood alertly looking for an express bus from Richmond. The camera with which I take color slides was vigilantly poised and I prepared to give Major Annand the first of the many surprises he fell heir to during his association with me.

Soon the bus pulled in and down stepped a smiling, rather diminutive, gentleman whom I recognized at once from a picture I had of him at home. But Gerry Annand wasn't burdened with elaborate suit cases or other luggage-transporting contrivances. All he had in one hand was a shopping bag.

Without saying a word, I snapped a picture of him getting off the bus. A couple of other passengers, colorfully adorned in hill-billy mode, were standing in the door just behind him. The unaccredited emissary of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, seemed somewhat astonished but managed a smile and said he had known me at once from my pictures. We shook hands and I suggested that we sit in the waiting-room for a few minutes and become acquainted.

#### IV. Our First Hours Together

During the first few minutes we talked, the Major seemed to have some trouble understanding me. I wondered at first if he had a touch of deafness.

I decided later the trouble probably was caused by the difference in our accents; also, perhaps, from his having undergone "bus fatigue" because of the more than five-hour ride from Richmond to Roanoke.

And at times I had to ask him to repeat something he had said. Since I'm not the least hard of hearing, I suppose my difficulty also was the result of differences in pronunciation and enunciation. Within half an hour the language barrier, which didn't amount to much in the beginning, was out of the way and we had no further trouble.

I asked the Major if he felt that he could eat something. He said that after his long bus ride he certainly could. So I took him to the City Lunch, a popular-priced restaurant a block or so from the newspaper building.

We had a good meal served by an attractive waitress. She was obviously intrigued at being privileged to serve my friend whom I introduced as a distinguished gentleman from England.

When he gave his order the Major presented me with the first of a series of surprises for myself. Instead of asking for tea, as I had anticipated, or even expressing a preference for coffee as a supper bever-

age, he said he would like to have a bottle of Pepsi Cola.

It seemed he had become acquainted with Pepsi during his travels, liked the taste, and had decided to concentrate on imbibing it while he was in the States. I also had a Pepsi.

At the end of the meal, when he lit an American cigaret and offered me one, he seemed mildly surprised when I said I had never smoked in my life.

I explained I still had some writing to do and suggested that Gerry go with me to the news-room, where I would finish my stint and get away as soon as conditions allowed. He willingly consented, and a few minutes later those members of the *Times* news staff on duty at that hour looked up to see me enter with my already cherished friend.

In me, of course, they saw a familiar sight — a tall man, tending to be "heavy-set," my black hair showing tinges of gray here and there but with the black still predominating. In the Major they saw a man with hazel eyes, sparse hair, an impish smile, and a personality that wins new acquaintances on first meeting.

They did not, however, see a large man when they gazed on the heralded Major Annand. If Gerry's legendary fellow Englishman, Jack the Giant Killer, were still alive my friend would be in no danger from him. The Major, I estimate, is about 5 feet 7 inches tall.

The news-room, occupied at differing times of the day by members of the morning *Roanoke Times* and the afternoon *World-News* staffs, is a large place and I was not able to introduce my guest to everyone in it.

He did meet those nearest at hand: City Editor Jim Echols; Dick Hancock, the already mentioned Night Editor; News Editor Jack Carper; Telegraph Editor, Felix Walker; State Editor, Fred Loeffler; and perhaps others. After the introductions, the Major immersed himself in the newspaper environment by gazing around him, while I set to work to write the stories I had not already turned in.

I suppose I worked about as fast as usual, but because of my impatience to get away I had a harassing feeling that I was making no progress. Later, I told Gerry that no one could have a better, more congenial group of fellow workers than mine.

After about an hour I made the last of my trips to Dick's desk to hand him a piece of copy, and he told me to "get going." That he said would be all from me for that night. He didn't want to be bothered by any more of my stuff! It was also all there was to be from me for a little more than a week, for when the Major and I walked out my vacation was under way.

We waited a short time before a bus came to take us to my home in Vinton, about three miles to the east of Roanoke, and we were on our way. At last Gerry Annand was within

realization of his dream to discover whether my house, my record collection, and, most of all, my cats, who extend their New Year's greetings each January to the readers of *HOBBIES*, were real or something his imagination had conjured up.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

Geraldine Farrar, Rococo 5216:

Side I - 1. Mefistofele: L'altra notte 2. Madama Butterfly: Un bel di 3. Donne Curiose: Ah, tutta per te 4. Donne Curiose: Il cor nel contento, w. Hermann Jadlowker 5. Segreto di Susanna: Il dolce idillio, w. Pasquale Amato 6. Segreto di Susanna: Via! Così non mi lasciate 7. Exsultate, Jubilate: Alleluja.

Side II - 1. Rencontre Imprévue: Un ruisseau bien clair (Gluck) (in German) 2. Romeo et Juliette: Je veux vivre 3. Faust: Air des Bijoux 4. Nymphes et Sylvains (Bemberg) 5. Königskinder: Weissst noch das grosse Nest? 6. Königskinder: Lieber Spielmann 7. Liebe Augustin: Der Himmel hangt (Fall).

I guess enough time has elapsed since the release of the last Farrar LP to warrant the issuance of a new one.

After Caruso, the beautiful Geraldine is one of the most popular artists among collectors. And the majority of the items on Rococo 5216 are not of the common kind.

Her "Mefistofele," for example, is not found on every dealer's list, and neither are the two "Donne Curiose" excerpts, on which the duet with Jadlowker is priceless.

The "Segreto di Susanna" recordings are also quite scarce, while the *Alleluja* is downright rare and much sought after.

Then there is the elusive selection from Gluck's "Rencontre Imprévue," as well as the probably even scarcer "Nymphes et Sylvains." Aside from these, neither *Weisst noch* from "Königskinder" nor "Liebe Augustin" are too easy to come by.

Hearing Farrar on LP is like meeting an old friend, and discovering with surprise new things about the person that somehow escaped notice before.

—O—

PATHE DISCS

Couplings

(With piano, unless otherwise noted)

Emma Carelli

4375 Bohème: Mi chiamano Mimi  
4381 Bohème: Addio, senza rancore  
4373 Mignon: Non conosci il bel suol  
4380 Manon: Addio, o nostro piccolo desco  
4374 Cavalleria Rusticana: Voi lo sapete, o mamma

4376 Zaza: Dir che ci sono al mondo  
4377 Aida: Ritorna vincitore  
4378 Gioconda: Suicidio  
4379 Tosca: Vissi d'arte  
4382 Mefistofele: L'altra notte in fondo al mare

4375 Bohème: Mi chiamano Mimi

4383 Jana: Morte di Jana

Maria Galvany

4120 Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa

4132 Barbiere di Siviglia: Io sono docile

4118 Rigoletto: Caro nome

4119 Traviata: Sempre libera

4127 Sonnambula: Rondo allegro (Ah! non giunge?)

4129 Puritani: Rondo (Qui la voce?)

4123 Mirella: Valzer (w. flute)

4125 Dinorah: Ombra leggiara (w. flute)

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Hands Across the Seas!

Major H. H. Annand, of Hillingdon,  
Middlesex, England, Visits  
Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va.

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### V. The Major Meets the Cats and Hears Some Records

I was disappointed that the ever loyal and loving Roger, whose 10th birthday had recently been observed, and who comes down the hill from our house to meet me, regardless of weather when I get off the bus — he can stand in the lower end of our front yard and see me descend — was not on hand to serve as a one-cat welcoming delegation. Since we came in earlier than my usual time, I suppose he had not yet begun preparations for his nightly pilgrimage.

I unlocked the side door, and Major Annand had his first look at a sight that was to become familiar to him — the hall-way with walls covered by bright colored pictures featuring cats.

We went into a large room that used to be the dining-room, before I moved in and changed it to my own purposes. Here the Major was bemused by hundreds of framed photographs. Most of them were personally autographed to me, and many of them have been pictured in HOBBIES, revealing the likenesses of famous recording artists and other notables.

We were soon greeted by Nipper

and Lucky Jim, the latter a shiny black kitten who became a member of my cat family less than an hour after I had sorrowfully buried my poor "Percy, the Pitiful Persian," last November 24.

I was especially pleased by the reception Gerry received from Nipper, who is now 7 years old. For most of his earlier life the impish Nips was timid to strangers and hid when they came to see me. But he made an about-face last February at the time Quentin and Evelyn Riggs spent a few days with us before moving on to Quentin's new U.S. State Department assignment in Paris. He had been stationed for two years in Sydney, Australia.

Nipper liked Quentin and Evelyn and sat in the laps of both — the first time he had ever willingly occupied anybody's lap except mine. He also made friends with Jack Via of South Boston, Va., shortly before the Major arrived, and he has since bestowed the lap-sitting accolade on Don Leavitt, recorded music reference librarian of the Library of Congress.

Nipper and the Major took to each other from the first, as if by some sort of intuitive comradeship. And I obtained some excellent color snapshots of Nipper basking contentedly in Gerry Annand's lap.

Lucky Jim also displayed his customary friendliness, but I shudder to think what would have happened if the energetic Jim had ever caught the Major walking barefooted across the floor. He has found me in that helpless position many a time and has bitten and kicked my undraped

feet with so little mercy I have had to beg him to stop. I told him mere human flesh and blood couldn't endure those fiendish teeth and claws.

Within a few minutes, Roger, my dwelling's "official greeter," appeared. He was, as I had been sure he would be, overjoyed to see Gerry.

Roger is always pleased to have company. I think about the only unhappiness of his warm and rewarding life has been that he lives with a lone bachelor instead of a large family. He would relish lots of human companionship and I suspect he often feels lonely when I am away at work.

Rog stood on tiptoe to have his head patted, his favorite gesture of friendliness. And he "talked" animatedly for two or three minutes, delivering a "welcome to our city" address. The Major developed the habit of stroking him constantly and of referring to him as "my beauty." He also spoke of him as "the peerless Roger."

Like nearly everyone else who sees Roger, Gerry generously praised his gorgeous coloring — a calico-cat mixture of black, red and gold, so glossy it looks as if self-polishing floor wax has been rubbed into his fur.

Petey has returned home to live after 18 months of wandering. He learned somehow that Percy, who had driven him away, was no longer here to molest him. But Petey didn't appear that night. Jim, Nips, and Rog, however, took to my friend so wholeheartedly I decided there must be some secret psychic sympathy between that man and those felines.

Gerry himself explained it by saying: "Cats know at once when people like them, and I have always loved cats. That's the reason why we have become friends from the beginning of our acquaintance. And to think these are the very cats I've seen the pictures of so often in HOBBIES and wondered if I'd ever be privileged to meet! I can hardly believe it!"

While I fed the cats, whom I look on as my children and love as much as if they were my flesh-and-blood descendants, the Major enjoyed looking at the "rogues' gallery" of recording artists.

Afterwards there was a "pilgrim's progress" tour of the rambling old house, in which he received a stop-and-go impression of more pictures, many record players, and many more thousands of records, discs, and cylinders.

I amused him by telling of the time

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of HOBBIES Magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

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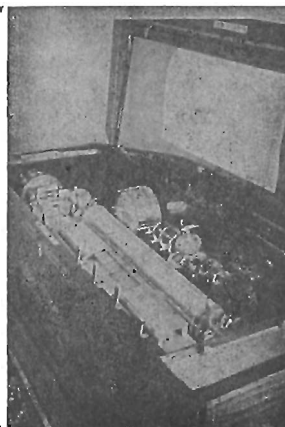
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I moved from one house to another a few years ago and heard a Negro handyman remark to another as he lugged a load of "platters" that he hoped he never saw another dish-dashed record, book, or picture as long as he lived.

Next, of course, came record playing. But at this writing, a month after the event, I don't clearly recall everything that was played.

I do remember that the Major was attracted by a batch of Blue Amberol cylinders I had recently been given, especially after I had mentioned it included several by one of his favorite sopranos, Leola Lucey, who, at last report, was still living and conducting a vocal studio in New York.

He said he had long been searching for her Blue Amberol of "Song of Songs," and I told him that if it were in the assortment he might have it. Unfortunately, it wasn't, but I played for him the Diamond Disc from which the cylinder was dubbed. I also played one of the same song by my old friend, Walter Scanlan, but Gerry preferred the soprano version.

This was reproduced on an Edison, and the Major was rendered almost speechless by the perfect tone quality and more than ample volume of this instrument. Thomas A. Edison brought it out in 1927, two years after Victor had introduced the Orthophonic; Columbia, the Viva-Total; and Brunswick, the Prismatone; all designed for use with the then startlingly new and different electric recording.

The emissary from England had never before seen or heard an Edison. But after his first almost incredulous surprise, he unhesitatingly pronounced it the best acoustical gramophone he had ever given ear to.

He agreed it was a tragedy that Edison kept it on the market only a year. It was withdrawn in 1928, when the combination Edison phonograph and radio was introduced. And only a few thousand were sold.

It was also a typical example of Edison's "too late" policy that the Edison was offered so long after the other companies had scooped most of the "gravy" from the "new style of phonograph" market. The Major asked me to send him an Edison if I could ever find one at a reasonable price.

On our last night together, the Major and I recorded a tape on which he discussed some of the features of his visit and he, among other things, told his impression of the Edison — and the cats. I'll quote from his remarks subsequently.

Meanwhile, on this "enchanted evening," I played my favorite banjo record, Vess L. Ossman's Blue Amberol "Banjo Medley." I told Gerry that Vess Ossman III, grandson of "The Banjo King," lives in Arlington, Va., and that through obtaining a set of the *HOBBIES* articles I wrote about his grandfather in 1948 he had been able to trace some California relatives whom he hadn't seen since he was a small boy.



"Gerry" Annand, beside a sign in the Dogwood Restaurant at Vinton, Va., welcoming him as a distinguished guest. —Photo by Oakie S. Asbury, Roanoke Times staff.

He and Sue, his wife, had gone to California to see them and had been reunited, for the first time in 40 years, with his aunt, Mrs. Annadele Mulligan, and his uncle, Ralph Ossman, who has since died.

I have also provided Vess III with about a score of photographs of the most noted members of the Ossman family. He had not previously had any of their photographs. These included some of his father, Vess Ossman, Jr., who had been a noted banjoist in his own right.

The Edison was used to demonstrate the vast volume of three Goldman Band selections, "The Jolly Coppersmith," "Third Alarm March," and "Stars and Stripes Forever." Gerry said the machine was standing in the most convenient spot on my upstairs sun-porch, but its volume was partly swallowed by thousands of Diamond Discs stored around it. He thought it would sound even better at a location he indicated near the end of the porch. Experimentation proved him right.

He asked to hear any Diamond Discs I had by the California Ramblers. These recordings, which are scarce under the Ramblers' name, were issued, electrically transcribed, during the last months of Edison's recording activities.

I have none — although I lack only a few hundred titles of owning a complete Diamond Disc library — but Gerry has most of them. He wanted to see how they compared on the Edison with his means of reproducing them.

I did have plenty of earlier recordings by the same band made under the disguise of the Golden Gate Orchestra. He was impressed by the volume and sonorousness of "Down South," played by B. A. Rolfe's Orchestra.

As the hours sped on, Gerry was

feeling vigorous and fresh and would have been in his ecstatic element staying up all night listening to records, but I had worked overtime the day and night before, as well as most of the earlier part of the week, so at about one o'clock Saturday morning depleted nature compelled me to suggest that we call a halt.

We agreed to be up reasonably early the next morning and betake ourselves for breakfast to the Vinton Dogwood Restaurant, about a five-minutes walk from my house.

That agreed on, we walked two doors up the street to the beautiful, well-kept home and premises of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Marshall, with whom I had engaged an ideal room for the Major. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall were captivated by their exotic guest and more than happy to have such an unassuming, obliging gentleman in their home.

Little did the Major suspect what would greet his astonished eyes a few hours later at the Dogwood!

#### VI. The Major is Overwhelmed and Mrs. Grose is Surprised

Major H. H. Annand and I arose betimes on the morning of Saturday, May 9, and sauntered toward the business section of Vinton. On our way we were observed by a number of intrigued citizens who had seen an article in the *Vinton Messenger*, telling of his receiving the copies of the paper that gave Kenly Marvin Smith's biographical sketch of me.

We went to the post office, where I pointed out what I think I may rightly call my famous box 476. I jokingly told Gerry I had received so much mail during the past years that the number had been worn from the box. Whatever the cause, the number has disappeared.

When Darnell Vinyard, a friend of mine, came in, I introduced him to



the Major and asked him to snap a picture, with my slide camera, of us standing beside the box. He did, and it turned out splendidly.

On our way to my house the night before I had carefully avoided taking the Major by a route which would bring the Dogwood Restaurant within his observation. There was a reason.

Lloyd M. Grose, with his wife, Katherine — known to everybody in the Vinton geographical area as "Toots" — operates the Dogwood. Several days before Lloyd had told me he wanted to change the display in one of his windows and asked if I had any suggestion.

Lloyd and Toots for a long time have been among my most cherished friends, so I am always glad to do anything I can for them, just as they insist on sending me free meals when I am ill and can't go out to eat.

I told Lloyd I was expecting the Major to come at almost any time and thought it would be a nice gesture to install a window display welcoming him to Vinton. Lloyd seized on the idea at once — and that evening Gerry phoned me he would be in our midst the following Friday.

Quick work was called for. The next day I selected a portable type Victrola and an Edison "Fireside" instrument from my collection, together with a large number of cylinders and discs — the latter all of British Empire make. Australia, India and Canada were represented, but the bulk of the records came from Great Britain.

Lloyd did his usual tasteful job of installing them in the window and induced Warren Huddleston, one of the owners of the nearby Harris-Huddleston grocery, to paint two special explanatory signs.

The window was then complete and for the next couple of days I could hardly wait for Gerry to get his first astonished view of it. I considered it the Vinton equivalent of a royal "red carpet."

Leaving the post office, Gerry and I reached the Dogwood and I stopped in front of the window. Gerry's gaze followed mine, and I have never seen a face register more heartfelt amazement. For a moment it seemed he might collapse.

"Why, where in the world," he exclaimed, "did they find all those old records (which he pronounced RECORDS, as virtually all English do) and gramophones? The last thing I would have expected to see is a display like that!"

"You haven't seen it all!" I said. "Look at those signs!"

The Major looked again, and his gaze took in one brightly colored poster which read:

"HANDS ACROSS THE SEA!  
VINTON WELCOMES MAJOR H. H.  
(GERRY) ANNAND, DISTINGUISHED  
AUTHORITY ON OLD PHONOGRAPH  
RECORDINGS."

The second poster said:

"This Window Contains Typical Examples of Old-time English Disc Records as Well as the Cylinders in Which Ma-

ajor Annand Specializes. Also Shown Are Typical Disc and Cylinder Phonographs of More Than 50 Years Ago."

Major Annand was heard to observe as soon as his breath returned that he had already experienced many agreeable surprises in the States, but this completely unexpected window welcome overtopped everything else that had happened to him.

Inside, "Toots" was introduced to the Major and received his thanks. We were sorry that Lloyd was not in but knew he and Gerry would have the pleasure of meeting later.

The bewildered but beatific Britisher, who is actually more of Scotch than of English descent, told those around him that he had been overwhelmed during the few days he had spent in this country by the way people everywhere, even in large city motels and business places, had gone out of their way to be nice to him.

He had expected to like the States, he said, but his experiences had convinced him more firmly than ever that the greatest hope for the future betterment of our civilization must come from better understanding and increasing friendship between Americans and British. And no one hearing the Major could doubt his sincerity and impassioned belief in what he said.

Once more Gerry ordered a Pepsi-Cola with his meal and I followed his example, although I topped mine later with coffee. He explained he didn't like tea as it is made in America, or coffee prepared in the English mode, but he did relish Pepsi-Cola.

When we had finished, the Major got another surprise. Mrs. Grose said: "Since this is the first time you have eaten with us there isn't any charge. This is on the house."

Toots then fell heir to a surprise of her own. Without warning, the Major grasped her and implanted a sounding kiss on her cheek. He said he enjoyed the experience and hoped Toots didn't mind. As Gerry afterward explained: "I felt I wanted to express my admiration to Mrs. Grose for being so kind, so I kissed her. My travels through much of the world have taught me that most ladies permit an impulsive kiss, and I really think our charming Mrs. Grose deserved my delighted 'thanks.'"

When Gerry and I left the Dogwood we still had a busy morning before us.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 31)

MOOR: Same cast as Dec. 21 except: Melba-Lucia, Sevelhac-Enrico.

January 30, CARMEN: Same cast as Dec. 14 except: Arta-Micela, Sevelhac-Escamillo, Brag-Zuniga.

January 31, RIGOLETTO: Same cast as Dec. 5 except: Melba-Gilda, Giacomini-Maddalena, Ancona-Rigoletto.

February 1, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Russ-Santuzza, Giacomini - Lola, Severina - Lucia, Dalmores - Turiddu, Sevelhac - Alfio, PAGLIACCI: Donalda - Nedda, Bassi - Canio, Sammarco - Tonio, Sevelhac - Silvio, Daddi-Beppe.

February 2, MATINEE, BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Same cast as Jan. 21.

February 2, HUGUENOTS: Same cast as Jan. 18.

February 3, Concert - Occellier - DON CESAR DE BAZAN: Selection & HERODIADE: Aria, Cisneros - FAVORITA: Aria, Altchevsky-PRINCE IGOR: Cavatina & DEMON: Aria, Russ - MEFISTOFELE: Aria & VESPRI SICILLIANI: Bolero.

Tenth Week - February 4, CARMEN: Same cast as Dec. 14 except: Sevelhac - Escamillo, Brag-Zuniga.

February 6, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Same cast as Feb. 1 except: Cisneros - Lola, PAGLIACCI: Same cast as Feb. 1.

February 7, MIGNON: Bressler - Gianoli-Mignon - Pinkert - Filina, Giacomini - Federico, Bonel - Guglielmo, Arimondi - Lotario, Gilbert-Laerte, Mugnoz-Gianro.

February 8, FAUST: Same cast as Dec. 7 except: Melba - Marguerite, Trentini - Siebel, Ingenoff - Marthe, Ancona - Valentin.

February 9, MATINEE, MIGNON: Same cast as Feb. 7.

February 9, AIDA: Same cast as Dec. 19.

February 10, Concert - Donalda, Zeppilli, Lejeune, Sammarco, Dalmores, Gilbert.

Eleventh Week - Feb. 11, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Same cast as Feb. 1 except: Cisneros - Lola, PAGLIACCI: Same cast as Feb. 1 except: Venturini-Beppe.

February 12, SONNAMBULA: Same cast as Jan. 25 except: Severina - Teresa, Arimondi - Conte Rodolfo, (Reschiglian - Alessio? - A.P.-A.)

February 13, HUGUENOTS: Same cast as Jan. 18 except: Zeppilli - Marguerite.

February 14, RIGOLETTO: Same cast as Dec. 5 except: Melba - Gilda, Sammarco - Rigoletto.

February 15, AIDA: Same cast as Dec. 19.

February 16, MATINEE, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR: Same cast as Dec. 21 except: Melba - Lucia, Sammarco - Enrico.

February 16, TROVATORE: Same cast as Jan. 1.

February 17, Concert - Arta, Occellier - FAVORITA: Aria, Donalda, JOCELYN: Berceuse, Altchevsky - MELSTERSINGER: Froisled, Cisneros - PROPHETE: Grand Air - Act II, Max Bendix - guest violinist.

Twelfth Week - February 18, MIGNON: Same cast as February 7.

February 20, DINORAH: Pinkert-Dinorah, Trentini-Caprala, Giacomini-Capralo, Altchevsky - Corentin, Ancona - Hoel, Mugnoz - Cacciatore, Venturini - Mietore.

February 22, MATINEE, CARMEN: Same cast as Dec. 14 except: Arta - Micela, Ancona - Escamillo.

February 22, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Same cast as February 1 except: Venturini sang Turiddu to replace Dalmores, PAGLIACCI: Same cast as February 1 except: Venturini-Beppe.

February 23, MATINEE, TRAVIATA: Same cast as Jan. 2 except: Sammarco - Garmont, Gilbert - Marchese d'Obigny.

February 23, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR: Same cast as Dec. 21.

February 24, Concert - None given.

Thirteenth Week - February 25, RIGOLETTO: Same cast as Dec. 5 except: Melba - Gilda, Giacomini - Maddalena, Ancona - Rigoletto.

February 27, BALLO IN MASCHERA: Russ - Amella, Cisneros - Uirica, Zeppilli - Oscar, Bassi - Riccardo, Sammarco - Renato, Arimondi - Samuel, Mugnoz - Tom, Reschiglian - Silvano, Venturini-Giudice.

March 1, BOHEME: Melba - Mimì, Trentini - Musetta, Bonel - Rodolfo, Sammarco - Marcello, Gilbert - Schunard, Gianoli - Galletti - Benoit & Alcindoro, Tocchi - Farpignol.

March 2, MATINEE, BALLO IN MASCHERA: Same cast as Feb. 27.

March 2, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Same cast as Feb. 1, DINORAH: Act II, same cast as Feb. 20, FAUST: Act V, Occellier - Mephistopheles (Marguerite & Faust? - A.F.-A.)

March 3, Concert - THE CREATION (Haydn), People's Choral Union: Corinne Elder - Kelsey, Helen Marie Day, Daniel Beddoe, Frank Croxton.

Fourteenth Week - March 4, SONNAMBULA: Same cast as Jan. 25 except: Severina - Teresa, PAGLIACCI: Same cast as Feb. 1.

March 5, CARMEN: Same cast as Dec. 14 except: Lejeune - Frasoulia (given as a benefit opera), Between Acts II and III: Russ, Bassi & Arimondi - LOMBARD: Trio.

March 6, BOHEME: Same cast as March 1.

March 8, FRA DIAVOLO: Pinkert - Zerlina, Giacomini - Jady Pamela, Bonel - Fra Diavolo, Gilbert - Milord, Venturini - Lorenzo, Fossetta - Matteo, Arimondi - Giacomo, Gianoli - Galletti-Beppe.

March 9, MATINEE, CARMEN: Same cast as Dec. 14 except: Sevelhac-Escamillo.

March 9, AIDA: Same cast as Dec. 19.

March 10, Concert - Ancona - PAGLIACCI: Prologo & TANNHAUSER: Evening Star, Pinkert - DINORAH: Shadow Song, Bassi - AIDA: Celeste Alda, Cisneros - PROPHETE: Grand Air, Russ - FRESCHUTZ: Aria, Donalda - ROMEO ET JULIETTE: Valse, Russ, Bassi & Arimondi - LOMBARD: Trio, Trentini, Giacomini & Cisneros GOTTERDAEMERUNG: Song of the Rhinemaidens.

(To be continued)

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Hands Across the Seas!

Major H. H. Annand, of Hillingdon,  
Middlesex, England, Visits  
Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va.

### PART III

By JIM WALSH



Jim Walsh and Major Annand in the office of the Vinton Messenger. "Gerry" is holding a copy of the Messenger which told of his plan to visit the author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists."

—Photo by Judy Hill

### I. Two Newspaper Interviews

Major H. H. (Gerry) Annand and I posed for a couple of pictures outside the Dogwood Restaurant window display welcoming him, then walked two blocks up Pollard Street, to keep an appointment with J. Roy Fuller, editor of the weekly *Vinton Messenger*.

An article had appeared in the *Messenger* a few weeks before, telling of the Major's receiving its issues containing K. M. Smith's biographical sketches of me. And Mr. Fuller, who is about the same size as Gerry, had said he would like to talk with the gentleman from England and have his picture taken by the staff photographer, an attractive and intelligent William Byrd High School senior, Judy Hill. I had told him I'd try to bring the Major around at about 9 or 9:30 a.m.

We found Roy waiting, and he asked many questions as the basis for the article which he would write for the following Thursday's *Messenger*.

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of this magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

Being interested in folk music, he asked the Major where in England he might find words and music of an old dance tune he was seeking, "Did You Ever See the Devil, Uncle Joe?"

Gerry promised to help Mr. Fuller try to locate it through English sources, but since then he has discovered it in a new folk music book at the Roanoke Public Library. It has also been recently recorded.

Judy got out her Polaroid, and the Major and I posed for pictures in which he held a copy of the *Messenger* telling of his anticipated arrival. The first shot wasn't especially good, but the second was excellent—so good that I have had a copy made and am sending it to HOBBIES for this issue.

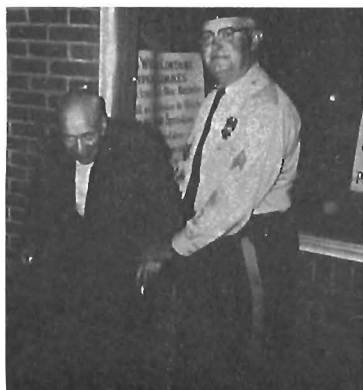
Next on a busy morning's schedule was a visit to the *Roanoke Times* building, where I planned to write an article about my British guest's visit.

I knew it was too late to get a feature into the Sunday paper, but there is always a need for good "filler" material in the Monday morning edition. I planned to help State Editor Fred Loeffler, who would be in Sunday command of the news room, by leaving the story for Monday use.

We boarded a Roanoke bus operated by Clyde Bowles, an affable driver who almost makes a profession of being friendly and obliging to his passengers. When Quentin and Evelyn Riggs were here from Australia last February, Clyde gave the lovely auburn-haired Evelyn a paper cup brimming of coffee and she was captivated by his thoughtfulness.

The morning that she and Quentin were about to leave Roanoke, they caught a glimpse of Clyde as his bus passed their hotel, and waved him a warm farewell. He never sees me that he doesn't have something to say about "that fine young couple."

I introduced Clyde Bowles to the Major and told Clyde we were going down for me to write an article about my guest. I suggested that Clyde read Monday's paper, to make sure he saw it, and said I wouldn't be surprised if the paper sent a photographer down to get a picture of



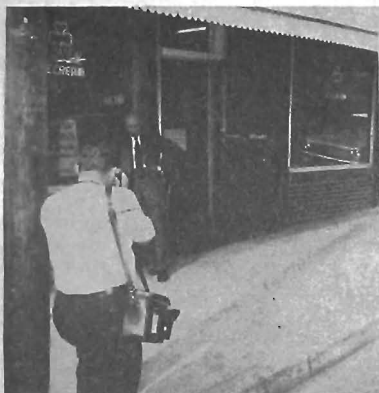
From left to right:  
Vinton Police Sergeant J. R. Renick "Arresting" the delighted "Gerry."



"Gerry" Annand and Jim Walsh outside the Vinton Dogwood Restaurant.



Major Annand demonstrates Thomas A. Edison's way of listening to his Disc Phonograph.



Oakie Asbury takes a picture of Major Annand to accompany Jim Walsh's article in the Roanoke Times. The Major in front of the Vinton Dogwood Restaurant window



displaying the "Hands Across the Sea" poster. Major Annand and the poster mentioning his interest in cylinder records.



the Dogwood Restaurant window display. Driver Bowles and Major Annand parted with warm regards.

I wanted to introduce, into the story about the Major, an excerpt from a speech Charles Dickens made when he was in the United States 96 years ago. He told what a calamity he thought it would be if there should ever be any more serious differences between England and the States.

In view of the Major's sentiments, I thought it would be an admirable quotation. We went to the Roanoke Public Library, and I spent 15 or 20 fruitless minutes looking for the quotation, which I couldn't remember word for word. Afterwards, I introduced it in a paraphrased form into the article, and that probably did just as well.

As we approached the Times-World building, Fred Loeffler was crossing the street. I told him I was going to write an article about Major Annand for the Monday *Times*, and Fred said he sure would be able to use it.

The Major and I took the elevator to the third floor, and went into the newsroom which at that hour was occupied entirely by the afternoon *World-News* staff. I picked up my typewriter and took it into the reference library, where I could ask Gerry questions and do a high-speed writing job without interruptions.

Since the Major was my guest, and the story would appear under my byline, I knew that, in keeping with the paper's policy, I would have to alter my "lead" to conceal the fact that he was visiting me.

So, I trifled slightly with the absolute truth by representing him to be extremely fond of Manuel Romain's Blue Amberol cylinder of "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," and as having journeyed so far to view the world-famous "Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia." The Major says that's the only Romain record he particularly likes.

The story, based on information Gerry had given me, almost wrote itself. Within a comparatively short time it had been typed, read to the Major, had received his approval, and had been left on Fred Loeffler's desk.

That done, I arranged for my photographer "buddy," Oakie S. Asbury,

to take a couple of pictures of the Major in the library. One, which wasn't reproduced in the paper, was nevertheless a remarkably fine portrait and character study, and Gerry had since written me he considers it one of the best pictures he ever had made.

Returning to Vinton, we soon set to work making tape recordings of selections that the Major wanted to take back to England, with special attention to a long-playing disc made by the late Fred Van Eps, and other Van Eps banjo numbers.

The recorder we used, a small one, imported, has frequently compelled me to call it a "she-devil" and other unhallowed names because of its erratic performance and tendency to give trouble at the most inconvenient times, but this time its behavior was flawless and Gerry was delighted with it.

While we were taping away, the phone rang, I answered it and, with the recorder still running, the rings and the conversation were clearly recorded. The caller was Fred Loeffler, who wanted to know if the Major would go to the Dogwood Restaurant and pose for a picture beside the window display.

I assured him Gerry would be delighted, and we arranged that Gerry and I should walk down within the next few minutes and meet the photographer, who again turned out to be good old Oakie Asbury.

When Oakie arrived, there was so much glare and reflection from the window he was afraid he couldn't get a good shot, but he tried several and they came out better than he expected.

Meanwhile, I "sneaked" an excellent color slide showing Oakie taking the Major's picture as he stood with becoming dignity beside the window.

## II. Roanoke Times and Vinton Messenger Articles

Now I'll anticipate a bit. My article about the Major did appear in the Monday *Roanoke Times*, with one of Oakie's snapshots, and Gerry was delighted with the result. The article tells a great deal about Major Annand that I haven't had an opportunity to set down. I believe it would

be a smart, labor-saving device to clip it and insert it here for the sake of the insight it will give HOBBIES readers into my friend's personality and activities.

So here is my story, as it appeared Monday, May 11, under the title, "Songs of Mountains Attract British Visitor":

"The yearning of a retired British army officer to see the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia brought him to the Roanoke Valley where he received a surprise welcome.

"Maj. H. H. Annand, a noted collector of old-time phonograph records, had long been fascinated by the words to the song that sings the praises of the mountains 'On the Trail of the Lonesome Pine.'

"The Major, known to his friends not only in England but throughout much of the world as 'Gerry,' says perhaps the biggest surprise of his life came Saturday morning when he went to the Vinton Dogwood Restaurant for breakfast and saw a window full of old disc and cylinder phonograph records, together with a sign reading:

"'Hands across the sea!'  
"Vinton welcomes Maj. H. H. (Gerry) Annand, distinguished English authority on old phonograph recordings."

"Another sign called attention to the fact that the visitor, who is president of the City of London Phonograph Society, specializes in collecting records of the old-time cylinder or 'roller' type.

"Was I surprised?" Maj. Annand repeated a question that had been asked him. "I was more than surprised! I was shocked! For the first few moments the shock was so great that it didn't sink in. I couldn't understand at first what it was all about.

"But being publicly greeted in such an unexpected and flattering manner was one of the nicest things that has happened to me on a trip that has been full of pleasant happenings."

"How did Maj. Annand of Whitewell, Field Heath Avenue, Hillingdon, England, happen to be in Vinton and receiving unexpected honors?

"The Major, whose home is near Field Heath which has been a privileged encampment place for English gypsies for hundreds of years, explained it this way:

"When he is at home he likes to play Edison Blue Amberol cylinder No. 1743. The record was made in 1913 by a once-famous but now long-dead American tenor, Manuel Romain, and the title is 'The Trail of the Lonesome Pine.'

"The words of that old song, about 'In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, on the trail of the lonesome pine,' have always fascinated me," Maj. Annand said, "and I made up my mind that when the airplane companies got the prices of their economy trips down into my 'price bracket,' I was going

to the States and see those fabulous Blue Ridge Mountains for myself.

"The last of April, the effervescent Englishman went on, 'the price came down to where I wanted it and I paid my first visit to the States. I visited friends whom I had known only by correspondence in Philadelphia and Richmond, then Friday I moved on to Roanoke and Vinton, where I also have friends.

"Mr. and Mrs. Grose learned I was coming and decided it would be a nice thing to give me an unexpected welcome. So they obtained a couple of old-time phonographs — or, as we would say in England, a phonograph and a gramophone — and the surprise materialized."

"What does Maj. Annand, who will return to England May 20 after visiting other American friends, like about the States?

"Just about everything he's seen.

"Your people," he said, 'have been unbelievably friendly and courteous and eager to make a visitor — I won't say a foreigner, for I don't feel like one — seen at home. Over and over I have been told, "You know, we regard England as our motherland."

"And the scenery!" The Major waved an expressive hand. I have enjoyed some of the most wonderful scenery — especially that which I saw Friday on the bus coming from Richmond to Roanoke. At one point, when the scenery was at its most beautiful, my view was obstructed by a coat with a large beaver collar which a woman had draped across the back of a seat in front of me.

"That was too much for me. I spoke pleasantly but firmly. 'Madam,' I said, 'would you please remove that coat? It is obstructing my view of the most beautiful scenery in the world.'"

"The woman, who was paying no attention to the scenery, scowled but removed the coat, and I was able to feast my eyes on the wonderful Virginia mountains."

"Maj. Annand saw military service in both World Wars. During the first he went into service in 1916 at the age of 18 and served the remainder of the time in France and Belgium. He suffered no injuries except for being slightly gassed.

"In World War II his duty was almost entirely overseas, but he assisted at the evacuation of Dover during the tragic Dunkirk days of 1940 and did similar service in other English and French communities. In July, 1941, he was sent to the Middle East and saw service in Palestine, Egypt, Syria, and Transjordan. Four years later he returned to England.

"Long years abroad have taught Maj. Annand the advantage of traveling light. I carry everything I need in a shopping bag. No cumbersome luggage for me!" he says.

"For 16 years the Major was a member of the Metropolitan London Police Reserves — an organization whose primary purpose is to assist the regular police in times of stress — reached the rank of staff sergeant. And he explained:

"When the regular police were confronted by unusual problems that involved handling huge masses of people — the visits of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks to England and the wedding of Princess Mary are good examples — the reserves took over the regular police's normal law enforcement duties. Like them, we wore uniforms and carried truncheons but, of course, no firearms. Peace officers in England are not allowed to use guns."

"The Major also has been a professional concert pianist and has been active in several other ways. He is a devoted cat lover and on his visit to Vinton was gratified that one cat, meeting him for the first time, stood up to have its head patted, then rolled over on the ground as a way of saying 'welcome.' Another sat in his lap and a third on his shoulder.

"But as to what Maj. Annand likes about America, here are a few other things:

"The marvelously cheap bus rates. "The prices of cigarettes — about a third of what we pay in England.

"American coffee. They don't know how to make coffee in England — but I must admit I don't care for the American way of making tea."

"(But when he had his first meal in Roanoke the genial Britisher drank a soft drink.)

"Most of all, though," the Major added, 'I think I like best the friendly spirit of the people and the way men and women who are really perfect strangers urge me to be sure to come back.

"I believe," he said, 'I could best sum up my feelings by quoting what Charles Dickens told a group of American newspapermen on his second visit to the States in 1868. He said it would be better for the world to be ravaged by fire and turned over to the wild fox and the bear than for any future conflict to arise between your country and Britain. That's exactly the way I feel. To me you are not a foreign country. Such a term would be sacrilegious and insulting.'"

While I am quoting, I may well use some excerpts from Roy Fuller's *Vinton Messenger* story which appeared the following Thursday, leaving out the portions covering the same ground as the one I wrote. The *Messenger* article by Fuller was headed "British Rare Record Expert Visits Vinton's Famous Collector."

"A British collector of old and rare phonograph records was a visitor in Vinton the past week-end. He is Maj. (retired) H. H. Annand of Hillingdon, England, 20 miles west of London.

"You guessed it. He was here to visit Vinton's famous record collector Jim Walsh.

"Annand is on the three-week tour of the East and took a side trip by plane to Roanoke and Vinton. He was sorry he missed the Dogwood Festival but he had high praise for the town and its friendly citizens.

"Annand started collecting records in 1902 when his father, proprietor of a candy shop, bought a horn phonograph for his shop. He now has about 5,000 records.

"One of the oldest is the recording of a speech by the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, former prime minister of England, made in 1894.

"And how did he learn about Walsh? The *Messenger* ran an article about his record collection. Somebody in California sent a clipping of it to Annand, and they started corresponding, which led to including Vinton on his trip schedule. Neither of the men have any theory on how the *Messenger* started the cross-country and Atlantic trek.

"A Vinton restaurant put a welcoming sign in a window along with an old Edison phonograph. It read in part, 'Vinton welcomes Maj. H. H. (Gerry) Annand.' The Major, known to his friends in England and abroad as 'Gerry,' likes to play when he is at home the 1913 recording of 'The Trail of the Lonesome Pine,' by the now long-dead American tenor, Manuel Roman.

"Mention has already been made of Major Annand's recording of the voice of the famous English prime minister, Gladstone, who died many years ago. The Major also has been well acquainted with a still-living prime minister, Winston Churchill.

"That happened during World War II when Annand was doing special duty in Egypt. Churchill visited Cairo on a military inspection tour.

"And it was one of Annand's duties to see that anything the prime minister wanted done was accomplished.

"He was very affable, especially since I was a junior officer who couldn't interfere with any of his plans," the Major said.

"He added that he intended to return to Vinton next year or as soon as possible after that.

"He will be certain of a warm welcome from all the Vinton people he has met, as well as from Walsh's cats. The felines became his fast friends before he left Tuesday morning to return to Richmond. He will board a plane in New York on May 20 and expects to reach his home about 11 o'clock that night."

Judy's photograph of the Major and me almost created a scandal among the righteous people of Vinton and impaired my deserved reputation of being a lifelong abstainer from alcoholic beverages.

Several of my friends said the picture looked as if I had a whisky bottle in one pocket. I told them truthfully the suspicious object was my camera with the flash attachment protruding outward, but I'm not sure I convinced anybody.

Incidentally, before going to the *Times* building for me to write my Monday morning story, Gerry and I had gone to the Roanoke Photo Finishing Company and left two rolls of film to be processed into colored "transparencies." I was told I could get them Monday afternoon.

### III. The Major is "Arrested"

After Gerry had done all the posing that Oakie required, we had a late afternoon meal in the Dogwood. Outside again, we ran into a number of men who had read or heard of his arrival and who wanted to shake hands and say a few words welcoming him to Vinton.

Smiling and friendly Sgt. James R. Renick of the town police force drove up and was introduced. He and Gerry had an animated discussion of the attempted German invasion of Britain during World War II, and with a little difficulty I induced the Sergeant to pose for a picture in which he pretended to be arresting the British guest for some unspecified crime.

Later, I took a snap of the Major in a Dogwood booth with another Vinton officer, Patrolman Clarence Jones.

Walking back to 225 North Maple Street, Gerry again expressed his amazement at the way "people who had never seen me or even heard of me have gone out of their way to be nice. It happened in New York and Philadelphia, and when I reached Richmond, Alex Nugent and Mrs. Nugent practically welcomed me with open arms."

The Major recalled that the Nugents' two daughters were fascinated by his accent and one of the girls said to the other: "Shut up and let me listen! I want to hear him talk!"

Gerry had already told me he would have to leave Roanoke Tuesday morning and return to Richmond, to spend more time with Mr. and Mrs. Nugent, who wanted to take him to their "summer place" on the James River. After he had gone, Lloyd Grose remarked:

"If the Major had stayed much longer, I'd have been saying 'RAH-THER' the way he did when anything especially pleased him."

Gerry himself showed signs of becoming Americanized. Once or twice he even said "reck'd" instead of "record." I always preferred the latter pronunciation and used it a long time until I discovered most people



didn't understand what I was talking about.

I mentioned that I had read and re-read old issues of the *Talking Machine News* and the *Sound Wave* so long that I was familiar with the names of scores of English record collectors who were active 60 or more years ago.

Among them were Lindsay A. Wilcox, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who began contributing to the *T.M.N.* in 1903, its first year of publication, and had collected records for 10 or 12 years before that.

(To be continued)

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. ja6468

### RECORDS WANTED

THE ONLY RECORDS I want to buy are sapphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the *Talking Machine World* from 1905 to 1926 and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tix

HELP! De Lucia - ASCO A-105 Band 6 is not "Lu Cardillo." What is it? Note—Pathe NP-89 Side 2 is not "Comme une Fale Fleur." What is it? — Charles Dunning, 312 Northfield Place, Baltimore 10, Md. n3065

WILL PAY \$3 for any 14" single face, black label, De Luxe Special record made by the Victor Company to be played at 60 r.p.m. — Doulou, 1228 Sarkies Drive, Warren, Ohio. n3694

### MUSIC — REPAIRS

EXPERT melodeon repairing. — Lamper, 1072 E. Leonard, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49505. (C-Sharp Hobby Shop). my12698

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### RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collectors' items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. d3084

Out-of-print records, primarily 78 rpm, some deleted LP's: classical vocal, instrumental, popular, personality jazz. Monthly sales list of classical vocals. Authoritative appraisals. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 254 W. 81st St., New York 24, N.Y. n122553

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N.Y. je124661

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP.—ARG, 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. n3483

RECORDS: 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. mh6867

RARE 78's. State category. — Record Lists, P.O. Box 2122, Riverside, Calif. 92506. n12407

Free Catalog. Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A.R.G., 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N. Y. n3683

JOSEPH JEFFERSON - Rip Van Winkle scene. Orig. Col. 385, Exc. comd. to highest bidder. Following record lists available: World War 1 & 2 songs; Recorded songs of Irving Berlin; Old-time musical comedy and Broadway show tunes. Send \$1 refundable first order. 1905 Victor Red Seal Catalog. \$2. — Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. n3848

MONTHLY LISTS of classical vocal 78 r.p.m. Many rarities. Operatic 78 collections bought. — The Domart Collection, 400 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket, R. I. Phone PAwtucket 3-2889. my122971

OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records, 1903 to L.P. — Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott St., San Francisco 17, Calif. my128801

FOR SALE: Phonographs and records. 25c for lists. "Evolution of the Phonograph" by Reed and Welch \$9.95. "History Speaks" 12" L.P. 42 voices from recordings, early as 1888, 2 records, \$6 for set, postpaid. — Coppernoll's Records, Box 6, Palatine Bridge, N.Y. d3886

EDISON, VICTOR, and other disc records for sale. Send 15c to Alan Burton, 22 North West St., Norwalk, Ohio 44857. n1061

AMAZING LIST of out of print operatic and classical vocal 78's. Finest condition. Priced low. List on request.—S. Weiss, 430 Maple Hill Dr., Hackensack, N. J. ja3614

RARE RECORDS & TAPES: My collection of jazz, pops, Latin American, country, western, drama, dance, vocal, sweet, comic, opera, classical, stars of stage, screen, sports, old quartets instrumental solos, personalities, documentary, etc. 1900 to 1960. All sizes including 16". — Jack Argo, P.O. Box 105, Hudson, N. H. 03051. ja3067

### PHONOGRAPHS REPAIRED

REPRODUCER REPAIRING. Have original Edison styluses all types. Reproducers for sale. Stamp for reproducer brochure. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr. Soquel, Calif. ja3253

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. st12698

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy & sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 406 S. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90013. fg046

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

PLAYER REED ORGANS. Private collection of Aeolian Grands and Wilcox & Whites with many rolls for same. All in good condition, also Regina music box with disc cabinet and 69 discs, 15½", excellent condition. If interested contact me now. — Dudley Mellors, 6764 N. Oxford Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60631. Phone NE 1-1541. n3008

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

GLASS HARMONICA wanted; particulars as to price, condition, etc. to I. M. Irving, 16 Manor Lane, Larchmont, N. Y. ja3403

WANT coin-operated Seeburg piano, (model H), stained glass doors. Plays drums, pipes, xylophone. Carved wooden statues on the front. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Md. ja3234

### PIANOS & ROLLS

WANT all piano and music rolls, especially Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico. odd or unusual rolls. Lists unnecessary. — Box 757H, Kenah, Texas. my124631

WANTED: Following reproducing piano rolls: 1) QRS Recordo. 2) Recordo. 3) Vocal Style Reproducing. 4) Imperial Automatic Electric. — Selmer Nielsen, 6323 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. n120821

DUO-ART and old standard piano rolls for sale. Free lists, stamp please.—Vi & Si's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N. Y. ja3863

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

BOOKS on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America, \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N. Y. n62342

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c, 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

WANTED: Cylinder & old disc phonographs. Parts, reproducers and any catalogs and literature on the phonographs. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3863

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. n3276

EDISON PHONOGRAPH, No. S-20795. Reproducers, 204 minute recordings. 200 cylinders Amberols, also Stewart's Uncle Josh, etc. Large horn, separate. All in excellent condition. Price \$300. — Jessie York, Tannery Rd., Box 130, Downsville, N. Y. ja3656

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my56p



Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Hands Across the Seas!

Major H. H. Annand, of Hillingdon, Middlesex, England, Visits Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va.

### PART IV

By JIM WALSH

Gerry had never heard of Mr. Willcox, who almost certainly is dead by now, or of many other once well-known recorded music specialists. He knew nothing of J. T. Wilkins, who was one of the most active members of the City of London Phonograph Society in the 1920's and frequently conducted a "Dutch auction" — whatever that is—of Blue Amberol cylinders.

The Major did tell me that Henry Seymour, an early expert on sound reproduction, had been dead a long time, and that Adrian F. Sykes, one of the most vociferous cylinder enthusiasts of half a century or more ago, died about five years ago. Sykes had been president of the City of London Society.

(I have just looked up "Dutch auction" in Webster's. It is an auction which the auctioneer begins by asking a high price, then keeps dropping it until somebody buys).

My guest continued hoping he could meet "Possy," the lovable 'possum who adopted me last fall, and both boarded and lodged with me, but his hopes weren't fulfilled. That was a pity, for Possy had acquired local celebrity.

Several weeks before the Major's arrival Possy, with my help, announced in the *Messenger* that he was running for town council and expected to be chosen mayor. The paper published his photo, (like the one in the January *HOBBIES*), on its front page, and gave his announcement more space than any of the human candidates received.

But before the June 9 election was held and even before Gerry arrived, warm weather had caused Possy to feel the stirrings of romance. He found himself a girl friend and they are reputed to have set up house-keeping somewhere in the woods not far from my house.

Mrs. Marshall, in whose home Gerry occupied sleeping quarters for the few hours each night that he and I weren't playing records, told me Possy sauntered into her yard a week or so before the Major's arrival. He was escorting what she took to be a lovely lady 'possum, and he calmly

strolled up to the persimmon tree from which he used to feast every day last fall.

"He stood under the tree," Mrs. Marshall said, "looked over his shoulder at the other 'possum and grunted. I could tell as plain as day he was telling her there would be good eating when the 'simmons ripened, and I couldn't keep from laughing."

Mrs. Marshall told me that last autumn, when Possy would be chomping industriously away, she'd say to him, "Don't you know you haven't got any right to eat my persimmons, you little rascal?"

"He would look at me and grunt but keep eating," she continued. "My little four-year-old grandson used to like to watch him eat and would say, 'Pretty 'possum likes 'simmons.' After Possy had eaten all he wanted he'd walk very deliberately out of the yard and go back to your house," Mrs. Marshall said.

The best I could do was show Gerry the sofa beneath which the sweet-faced Possy slept during the winter and the plate from which he ate.

When the election took place he wasn't credited with even one vote! Either all the people who had promised to vote for him decided he was no longer interested in serving his city or, as I darkly suspect, he was "counted out."

Whichever happened, I expect him to be living again with me (but without his "wife," I hope) when cold weather returns.

### IV. Saturday After Supper

The Saturday after-supper hours were largely devoted to more record listening, chiefly by means of the Edison, although Gerry was much impressed by an acoustic Victor record of "American Fantasie," played in 1918 by Victor Herbert's Orches-

tra and reproduced on my Magnavox. The sound boomed out as if it had been imprisoned by the latest electric process and the instruments were reproduced with remarkable fidelity.

I got one of my best pictures of the Major while he was listening to the Edison in the same way that Thomas A. Edison, who was almost deaf, used to concentrate on hearing one of his disc phonographs.

The great inventor, who insisted that by this method he could detect overtones and piano hammer strokes that were inaudible to almost everyone else, took a small horn from a cylinder phonograph and pushed it against the internal horn of the disc machine so that the sound was amplified to a remarkable degree.

The picture I took showed Gerry, an impish smile on his face and a small tin horn in his hand, magnifying the already generous volume of the Edison. Even more flabbergasting results could have been achieved by holding a large wooden horn.

We walked, at about 1 o'clock Sunday morning, to the Marshall home. I carried a flashlight to brighten our way up the dark street and both of us were accompanied by the zealous Roger. The Major gloated, as he had many times, over all he would have to tell Beattie and Joe Cramp about his visit and the reception that had astonished him in Vinton.

"Beattie and Joe keep hoping you'll come over to see them," he said to me, "but I've told them over and over that you couldn't take the cats and Possy with you and you couldn't leave them unattended for weeks at a time.

"The last time I wrote to Beattie," he added, "I told her that if she wanted to see you and the cats she'd just have to get up and move her charming little personality over here instead of looking for you to come over to Britain."

I replied, a little sadly, that all my life the desire to visit England and to spend a long time there had been almost an obsession with me. But as long as I have the cats, whom I treasure more than anything else in the world, and am kept so busy with so many things, I don't see how I can make the trip.

"Now," I told Gerry, "since you're here you know why it happens that I often go so long without writing to you. You've seen the dozen or so pasteboard boxes I have stacked around, mostly containing letters from *HOBBIES* readers, that I haven't found time to answer and probably never shall be able to reply to.

"I have to write thousands of words nearly every working day. I have a big old house to look after, the cats to take care of, and heaven knows how many other things to do that almost nobody suspects I am called on for.

"Sometimes," I went on, "many weeks go by without my having a chance to write even one letter to

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from *HOBBIES* readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in *HOBBIES*. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of this magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

anyone. Many of the letters I receive would take hours or days of research to answer and there is no way I can find the time to do it. So don't feel hurt if I don't write to you as often as I should or as you would like. I'm still your friend, regardless of whether or not you hear from me."

Gerry said he thoroughly understood my predicament and would try to make other people, who write to me but seem doomed to go without an answer, understand it too.

The next day I played a tape recording which had been sent to me by Timothy Brooks, a senior at Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H. Tim gave regular programs over the College radio system, featuring old American popular music.

One Sunday last spring he talked with me by long distance, asking me questions about the history of the phonograph and getting my comments on records he intended to play in a future program.

We talked for more than an hour and he showed himself to be an obviously courteous, considerate, and attractive young fellow.

After the program was given some weeks later, Tim sent me a tape version of it—the one I played for Major Annand—running an hour and seven minutes. It was most thoughtful of him and I enjoyed it, but so far I haven't got around to thanking him, although (I write on Saturday, June 13) I have been intending to do so for these two months or more. If Tim reads this I hope he will accept my apologies.

The Major enjoyed the tape and he and I chuckled over its statement that I knew "more about records than everybody else put together."

Tim left nothing undone to give his listeners the feeling, firstly, that they would hear, and secondly, that they had heard, an unusual program!

#### I. The Major Meets K. M. Smith

A pleasant feature of Sunday, May 10, was Major Annand's meeting with one of Vinton's most remarkable residents — Kenly M. Smith, who, after months of patient persistence, obtained my permission last February to publish the Vinton Messenger articles telling of my various activities.

Mr. Smith is now 86, but his wit is keen and his mind as sharp as a newly-honed, old-fashioned, straight razor blade. He grew up in the mountainous area of extreme Southwest Virginia, only a few miles from John Fox, Jr.'s legendary "Trail of the Lonesome Pine." And he still speaks in a mountain vernacular, but his lack of formal education doesn't show in his writing.

He is widely read and is pointed out by his fellow Vintonites as the man who probably has won more large prize contests than anyone else in Virginia. His achievements have included naming a nationally circulated farm magazine.

Like Gerry Annand, he is small in stature but large of brain. And,



Gerry and Jim at opposite ends of the Dogwood window display. The Major listening to the Edisonic with Lucky Jim sitting like a black statuette behind him.

despite their different environments and accents, they were drawn to each other at once.

Mr. Smith's call took care of two things. It gave him an opportunity to meet the Major, who, Mr. Smith believed, was induced to come to Vinton largely because of reading the articles in the Messenger. This call also made it possible for Mr. Smith to hear some of Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" records — something he had been telling me for the last year or two he wanted to do.

Many years ago, Mr. Smith had told me, he used to enjoy the "Josh" records by his fellow Virginian, who was born near Charlotte Court House in 1856. "But," Mr. Smith said, "it must have been 50 years since I've heard any."

For his obvious pleasure, I used the Edisonic, an Amberola and a Victor machine with a large wooden horn, to revive some of the best monologs and sketches in the repertoire of Cal Stewart, who died in a Chicago hospital in December, 1919.

They included "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," recorded with help of Ada Jones; "Uncle Josh Keeps House," and "Train Time at Punkin Center," also several others.

I took two snapshots of Major Annand and Mr. Smith sitting close together, with the little Japanese tape recorder nearby. Both snapshots were good, but one came out especially well.

Only this morning, June 14, I met Mr. Smith and showed him a picture I took last Monday of him standing beside Clyde Bowles, the bus driver whom the Major liked. Mr. Smith mentioned that he thought he had never seen a more natural looking picture than the one of Gerry taken with him. He and I never meet nowadays without exchanging animated recollections of that Sunday afternoon.

Something else the Major enjoyed was talking by telephone with two of my best friends — Miss Delrhey Fitzgerald, of Pulaski, Va., and Albert (Jack) Via, of South Boston, Va.

There was a little dialectical difficulty among the parties to the long-distancing. But for the most

part they understood what was said and formed favorable impressions of one another.

Of course we went right on playing cylinders and discs. The Major told me he had a record I had long wanted, a U.S. Everlasting Cylinder of Albert Benzler playing a piano version of "Black and White Rag." He promised to tape it for me.

He also said he would send me a taped dubbing of "Pussy's in the Well," sung on an Edison Blue Amberol by the Manhattan Ladies Quartet — a cylinder he said was almost "stereoscopic" in its realism.

There was something else he wanted to make for me and that I would like for him to tape, but neither of us has since been able to recall what it was. He also promised to have back copies of the City of London Phonograph Society's publication, "The Hillandale News," sent to me.

For my part, I was able to give him a dubbing of Billy Murray and Walter Scanlan's Diamond Disc of "Goodness Gracious, Gracie," which he especially liked. I also gave him two rare Edison long-play records issued in 1926 and lent him another, of which I had only one copy. Also into his capacious shopping bag went a Diamond Disc piano solo of "Tenderly," by Duke Yellman.

Gerry enjoyed several of Billy Murray records I played, especially the Diamond Disc of "If I'm Wrong, Sue Me," which is something of an autobiography of "The Denver Nightingale." Gerry asked me to send him a spare copy if I ever found one.

He remarked: "I may be wrong, but Billy sounds very happy on that record (made in 1928) as if he were glad to be back with Edison after his long absence as an exclusive Victor artist."

Another record the Major greatly enjoyed was a U. S. Everlasting of "You're My Baby," sung by a duet team mysteriously listed as Edna Brown and Fred James. This 1913 record came out a few months before the U. S. Company went out of business.

The singers I identified as Elsie Baker and Frederick J. Wheeler, who also called himself James F. Harrison. It is obvious that the assumed



K. M. Smith of Vinton, with Clyde Bowles, obliging Roanoke bus driver who became Major Annand's friend.

Gerry Annand in Mr. and Mrs. Marshall's attractive front yard, Vinton, Va.



Jim Walsh with Catherine Butler whose carefree disposition Major Annand found irresistible.

name, "Fred James" came from Fred (Wheeler) and James (Harrison). This is the only record I have ever heard of on which Wheeler used the Fred James disguise.

I omitted to mention that while we were in the Dogwood, Police Officer Clarence Jones took a picture of Gerry and me clasping hands across the table, as a sort of miniature representation of the "Hands Across the Sea" slogan in the window poster, which provided the title for these articles.

## II. Our Last Day Together

And then came Monday, the last full day of 1964 that Major H. H. Annand and I were to spend together, although I hope there will be many reunions in coming years. I was up early to get the paper. We both were more than pleased with the Oakie Asbury picture of the Major and the Dogwood sign, and the way the article was presented. Several copies of that article went into the Major's shopping bag.

This day, however, brought considerable vexation because of erratic tape recorder behavior. The little Japanese recorder that had performed irreproachably the day before smeared itself with shame by spilling tape, breaking tape, unwinding unevenly, and refusing to do anything that could reasonably be asked of it. Not only that, but my two other recorders developed "bugs" as soon as we tried to use them.

I told Gerry I was "jinxed" when it came to using mechanical contrivances, and I think he was soon convinced. He said he had never seen anything like the perverse way in which all three recorders refused to work.

After devoting more than an hour and a half to trying to copy one record and being unsuccessful, I was so badly flustered that when Mrs. Grose drove up to take us to the Dogwood for a meal with her and Lloyd and asked me what I wanted

to drink with my supper, I replied: "Carbolic acid!"

And I wasn't entirely joking.

After we had eaten, Lloyd obligingly dropped in to see what he could do to put the balky paraphernalia to rights. He tinkered with the Japanese recorder and insisted there was nothing wrong with it.

Concededly, it did work charmingly while he was present, but it went bad again within a few minutes after he left, and I had to take it next day to Elmo Stamper, a repairman friend of mine, for a checkup. He still has it, for I haven't had time to pick it up and bring it home.

I remarked to Gerry I suspected my house was haunted by a malicious poltergeist that delighted to play havoc with all my efforts to use machinery. He seemed inclined to agree.

In mid-afternoon we had despairingly abandoned the tape recorders to whatever gremlins possessed them and gone to Roanoke Photo Finishing Company to get the slides made from snapshots I had taken during the Major's stay.

They turned out to be the best group of pictures I had ever taken. Included in the lot were three I had made of one of my best friends, Catherine Butler, whose picture was shown in the January, 1962, HOBBIES, laughing at the huge envelope in which I mailed my Peter Dawson series to HOBBIES.

We went to the Roanoke City Building Commissioner's office to show the slides to Catherine, and her frank and unaffected pleasure in the ones taken of herself mightily charmed the Major.

After we left the office, Gerry remarked that Catherine, a beautiful vivacious brunette, had one of the most light-hearted, captivating personalities of anyone he had ever met. "She is so completely natural and spontaneous in everything she says and does that I don't see how any-

one could feel out of sorts around her," he remarked.

Young Mrs. Butler giggled happily when I passed that remark on to her the next time we met.

Next we went to the Times newsroom in the hope of obtaining for the Major the original print of the picture in that morning's paper. My lovely blonde fellow staff writer, Carol Almond, looking irresistible in pink, offered to search for the print, and soon returned smilingly from the library, triumphantly waving it.

Gerry was so much impressed by Carol's blonde beauty that I promised I'd take a color picture of her for him the next time I found her again wearing that pink costume. He has since written me a letter in which he sent love to Catherine and "the Blonde Bombshell," as he called Carol.

On our return home I showed large-size versions of the slides. The Major was amazed by their glowing brilliance and the ease with which they were automatically projected. The colors in one that showed him standing in Mr. and Mrs. Marshall's front yard, surrounded by flowers, were breath-taking.

One charming slide depicted the Major, unaware his picture was being taken, listening to the Edison, with little Lucky Jim sitting gravely behind him, looking exactly like a statuette of a black kitten.

But the most remarkable of all, from the color point of view, showed Gerry in a thoughtful attitude, nursing his devoted little friend, Nipper, whose face wore a loving expression resembling that of a trusting baby toward its mother.

Because of some color peculiarity for which we were unable to account, the slide had a rich, deep tone which made it look as if it had been painted by Rembrandt. This was accidental, but it was amazing and should be striking even in the black-and-white illustration which will appear with this installment.



There was one regrettable thing: A slide of Gerry holding Roger became jammed in the projector (the Gremlins again!) and was damaged, so the Major appears to have a black eye. Thus I have no picture to submit of my dear friend fondling the (Continued on page 44)

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. ja6468

### RECORDS WANTED

THE ONLY RECORDS I want to buy are supphire, center-start Pathe discs by Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King." I will pay \$3 for fine copies of Pathe records by Greene, if they are not already in my collection. I need some Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs prior to 1913. Do not need Victor and Columbia catalogs and supplements after that year. Want phonograph trade publications, such as the Talking Machine World from 1905 to 1926 and The Edison Phonograph or Amberola Monthly, Diamond Points, the Columbia Record and the Voice of the Victor. — Jim Walsh, Box 476, Vinton, Va. tfx

78 RPM Del Stargers' Carnival of Venice, Herbert L. Clarke Brunswick No. 2367 Stars in a Velvety Sky. — H. Stuart Kenney, 430 E. Mt. Pleasant Ave., Phila. 19, Pa. d1003

WANTED: Gold Label Edison Long play records, Wilson, Roosevelt records, Duo Art Piano rolls. Many others. Dime for large want list. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. d1422

### MUSIC — REPAIRS

EXPERT melodeon repairing. — Lamper, 1072 E. Leonard, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49505. (C-Sharp Hobby Shop). my12698

### VIOLIN FOR SALE

VIOLIN - William Lewis & Son, Chicago verify as very fine copy Jacobus Stainer made Mittenwald, Germany. Needs restringing and bridge. Wooden case and bow. — Mrs. C. E. Newman, 4003 S. Harrison Blvd., Fort Wayne, Indiana. ja3065

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  - ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
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Out-of-print records, primarily 78 rpm, some deleted LP's: classical vocal, instrumental, popular, personality jazz. Monthly sales list of classical vocals. Authoritative appraisals. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 254 W. 81st St., New York 24, N.Y. n122553

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid.—American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N.Y. je124661

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP.—ARG, 341 Cooper St., New York, N.Y. f3633

RECORDS: 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. mh6867

RARE 78's. State category. — Record Lists, P.O. Box 2122, Riverside, Calif. 92506. d12407

Free Catalog. Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A.R.G., 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N. Y. f3683

CLEARANCE SALE of fine classical, operatic and vocal 78 RPM records dating back to 1908. Assortment of 100 different for \$35, includes Caruso, Galli-Curci, Melba, Gluck, Tetravzzini, Kreisler, Rachmaninoff, etc. All in excellent condition, satisfaction guaranteed. Limited offer. Makes an excellent gift. Order now. — Memory Shop, 183 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. f3848

MONTHLY LISTS of classical vocal 78 r.p.m. Many rarities. Operatic 78 collections bought. — The Domart Collection, 400 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket, R. I. Phone PAwtucket 3-2889. my122971

OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records, 1903 to L.P. — Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott St., San Francisco 17, Calif. my128801

FOR SALE: Phonographs and records. 25c for lists. "Evolution of the Phonograph" by Reed and Welch \$9.95. "History Speaks" 12" L.P. 42 voices from recordings, early as 1888, 2 records, \$6 for set, postpaid. — Coppernoll's Records, Box 6, Palatine Bridge, N.Y. d3886

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AMAZING LIST of out of print operatic and classical vocal 78's. Finest condition. Priced low. List on request.—S. Weiss, 430 Maple Hill Dr., Hackensack, N. J. ja3614

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### PHONOGRAPHS REPAIRED

REPRODUCER REPAIRING. Have original Edison styluses all types. Reproducers for sale. Stamp for reproducer brochure. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr. Soquel, Calif. ja3253

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OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy & sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 406 S. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90013. f6046

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### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Wurflitzer Orchestration Coin operated. Excellent condition. Mills violin single with rolls. — E. S. Laugh-ton, York Beach, Maine. mh3675

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

GLASS HARMONICA wanted; particulars as to price, condition, etc. to I. M. Irving, 16 Manor Lane, Larchmont, N. Y. ja3403

WANT coin-operated Seeburg piano, (model H), stained glass doors. Plays drums, pipes, xylophone. Carved wooden statues on the front. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Md. ja3234

### PIANOS & ROLLS

WANT all piano and music rolls, especially Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico. odd or unusual rolls. Lists unnecessary. — Box 787H, Kemah, Texas. my124631

DUO-ART and old standard piano rolls for sale. Free lists, stamp please.—Vl & Sl's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N. Y. ja3863

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

BOOKS on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America, \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N. Y. my6234

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c, 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

WANTED: Cylinder & old disc phonographs. Parts, reproducers and any catalogs and literature on the phonographs. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3863

PHONOGRAPH with outside horn, any condition, parts, catalogs. Also Berliner, Johnson, Victor or 5" cylinder machine. Price. — Armand Scroby, 125 Western, Mansfield, Ohio. f3863

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3276

EDISON PHONOGRAPH, No. S-20795. Reproducers, 204 minute recordings. 200 cylinders Amberols, also Stewart's Uncle Josh, etc. Large horn, separate. All in excellent condition. Price \$300. — Jessie York, Tannery Rd., Box 130, Downsville, N. Y. ja3656

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clude a large lizard form carved on the door of a rice shed which came from Sumatra. A more curious example, shown here, is an ornament on the outside wall of a house, made by lacing a rope through holes in the wall to form the outline of a lizard.

Frog designs are seen on prehistoric bronze kettle-drums, as shown here. The frog has something to do with rain-magic. One Museum specimen represents a frog on the mouth of a bronze water kettle from Borneo.

The tortoise is well-known in Hindu-Javanese art as a symbol of the earth. Showing Chinese mastery, this symbol of long life is also found in those parts of Indonesia where there has been little Hindu influence. West Borneo wooden dishes are sometimes carved in the shape of a tortoise.

Among the oldest of Chinese symbols, the tortoise is one of the Four Sacred Animals, along with the dragon, the phoenix, and the unicorn. The tortoise, symbol of longevity, strength, and endurance, controlled the North, and influenced Winter.

The Indonesians have a unique creative cleverness in decorative art. They have evolved an immense diversity in methods of expression, techniques, and styles, as will be indicated through this study.

Part III, BIRDS, will appear in the January issue

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

"patriarchal," intellectual head of my cat family.

The Major had asked me to make out a list of English Pathe records I don't have by the American comedian, Gene Greene, for whose "platters" I have long been advertising in HOBBIES, and I eventually got around to preparing it on Monday night.

Pathe is pronounced in England much as it is here (like Path-AYE), the Major told me, but the French of course do not sound the "h," and with them Pathe sounds more like "Pat-teh" or "Patty."

Gerry also said he would try to find a Marathon long-playing record (a hill-and-dale type made in England from about 1912 to 1915, which played as much as eight minutes a side), to replace my only copy, which I recently broke. But he warned Marathons were scarce and hard to find.

### III. The Major Expresses Some Opinions

As Monday night wore inexorably and inevitably away, the Major and I could not conceal a feeling of sadness that his visit, memorable to both of us, would end the next morning when he boarded a Trailways bus to return to Richmond and enjoy more of the Nugent family's hospitality.

We had previously agreed that we would record a tape, discussing some of the things we would long remember about our get-together, and at

precisely 9:25 we began a completely spontaneous and unrehearsed performance.

I am sure those of you who have followed this play-by-play account of the Major's visit to Virginia will find interest in some of the things he said, and I therefore transcribe part of his remarks:

#### Vinton Hospitality

"From the moment I arrived at the bus stop where I was greeted with a flash camera, much to my surprise, everything has moved at surprising amazing speed.

"Early the next morning I was taken to the Dogwood Restaurant, where to my surprise, and shock, and speechlessness, there was a window showing a large sign and posters welcoming me to Vinton, Va. . . . It was an unbelievable sight. . . .

"In this country I have met with unparalleled kindness from everybody, but to think that in Vinton the reception was so overwhelming—I don't think words alone can convey what really went on.

"If I say that at one end of the scale it included a magnificent article in the local newspaper, and an imitation arrest by Vinton police on the other, I think it will be easily understood that the whole picture and the whole suite of works went on from top to bottom."

#### Concerning Cats

"That wonderful quartet of cats! I think they deserve a chapter of their own—and they're getting it.

"There's Lucky Jim—an elongated, jet-black, loving creature.

"There's the peerless Roger—Roger, who acts as the Grenadier Guard to the premises. Meets everybody. Roger, who comes trailing down quite a long way to see them off—a cat of super-intelligence. Roger stands in a class by himself.

"Now, one shouldn't have favorites among cats, but I lost my heart to Nipper and I think Nipper did to me, too. We can't ask Nipper's opinion, but he has only just got off my lap to let me say this.

"Then, of course, that leaves us Petey. Well, Petey I haven't seen much of, but the once I did see Petey he seemed to want fussing. Petey seemed left out. And Petey has had a rather checkered career, I understand.

"These four cats are much publicized, both in photographs and in prose. I'm one of the few people who has been privileged to see them literally both in the flesh, and in their fur, too, and I can assure you, Jim, they don't in any way let down the publicity they have had. They are really four most wonderful cats, but there again I am biased about cats.

"But you couldn't be biased about those four. They are beyond bias. You have really got to come here to see them. It is no use just reading about them. These cats have got to be seen to be believed."

#### The Edison

"The Edison is the last word in acoustic phonographs. . . . In 1927 Edison, in common with other leading manufacturers, brought out a larger type of machine, taking advantage of increased knowledge in acoustics and the principle of the pressure of a column of air, and decided that it would make a very big advance, provided a larger pressure could be put on the sound box.

"Victor and its contemporary, His Master's Voice in England, brought out what was known as the Orthophonic Victrola—or the Re-Entrant in England—and it was a hopeless thing. The advertising used the slogan, 'Listen to the bass,' and how right they were.

"It was an insult to the average listener's hearing because there was no ton at all. The Columbia was rather better but there again it was left to Edison to bring out the last word.

"Using the system of an increased air column with a larger trumpet brought out the finest quality I have ever heard in Edison reproduction. There you have volume without noise: you have a

roundness of tone unknown in anything else.

"Edison was right when he referred to anything else as talking machines. His was not a talking machine. It was a machine that was an exact copy of what was put into it. . . . It was the last word in acoustical reproduction and, in my opinion, equal at least to the first three stages of electrical reproduction."

#### Jim Walsh and His Collection

"Jim's collection of course is fabulous. It would take, I think, at least 60 years to go through it all. It has almost everything, and it's just as well that it is in the hands of a person like Jim.

"His writings of course are well known. . . . and his knowledge, I should say, is superior to that of anyone (else) in the world. He can tell you all about any composer, any libretto, any artist, almost any piece of music written. And that is equivalent to an Edison encyclopaedia. To come here is a revelation.

"Jim has left no stone unturned to see that my stay has been a memorable one. All I can say to him is that he has succeeded beyond all ordinary standards. His home is a marvelous Aladdin's Cave."

#### Why He Came

"I think I gave it to be generally understood when I first came over here that I was not coming to see places—I was coming to see people. And when I said people I wasn't thinking of President Johnson or Dean Rusk or Cabot Lodge or Mr. Stevenson. I was coming to see the ordinary people, and what I wanted to see most were the folk of my beloved Virginia. . . .

"Take the first morning I went into the Dogwood Restaurant. . . . Mr. and Mrs. Grose are wonderful people. Jim tells me they take care of him, and they certainly took care of me."

Major Annand took the original tape home to Hillingdon, but I vanquished my recorder troubles long enough to make a copy for myself. After playing it, a few comments occur to me.

I told the Major it seems to have been pretty well established that where there are as many as three cats in a family one is designated as official head washer of the others. This is not considered a menial task but an honor, and the cat who gets the distinction is proud of it. Among mine, Nipper has always been the specially designated sanitarian.

In the days when my beloved Gray, who died September 11, 1962, was still with us, Nips enjoyed nothing so much as scrubbing Gray and Roger's heads while they ate and, as a rule, would not take his own food until their topknots were sparkling.

More recently, he has begun washing Lucky Jim's head and, since Jim as yet doesn't care much for the idea, this has caused numerous fights between them. The latest, but not the last, occurred a few minutes ago. Roger still accepts the washing as his right by virtue of seniority and being head of the house.

I well remember Gerry's saying, "When I get back home and tell my friends about these marvelous cats, the one who will be most heartsick because she can't see them is Mrs. Beatrice Mary Cramp." I asked him to give Roger, Nipper, Lucky Jim, and Petey's best regards to the Cramp cats, Jim and Sandy.

As for the Edison, since the Major was here I have had another visit from my friend, Donald L.

(Continued on next page)

## OLD PRINTS..PAINTINGS..MAPS

Leavitt, recorded music librarian of the Library of Congress.

Don was critically injured in a two-car accident while returning home from a visit to me in May, 1963. Nadine, his wife, and their two children were also hurt. All are virtually recovered now.

After listening to a piano record on the Edison, Don said he wished he had the Library's recording engineer with him, "because he simply wouldn't believe, without hearing it, that such reproduction is possible from an acoustic instrument."

The Major told me English collectors believed that all Edison Diamond Discs with a serial number of 11,000 or higher were electrically recorded, but I told him that was wrong. I got out an Edison dealer's numerical catalog (the first Gerry had seen) and we went through it, trying to track down just where the electrical process began.

Since I didn't have all the Diamond Discs of that period, we could determine only that the electrical system began somewhere around 11,900, then, after reaching 11,999, skipped to 18,000 and continued into the 19,000's. The 12,000 series was reserved for serial numbers of long-playing records.

(Continued in next issue)

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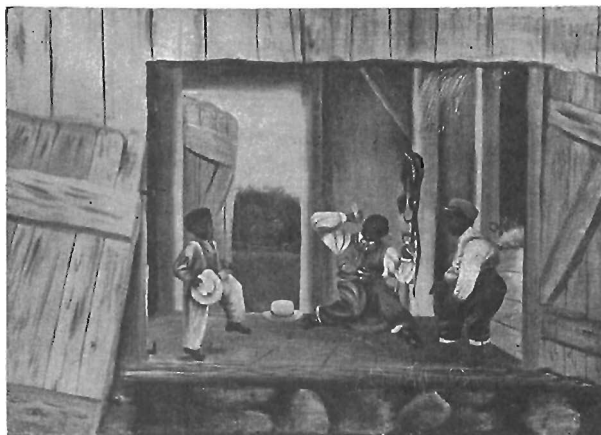
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CURRIER & IVES and other early American prints. State wants, or send \$1 for price list of over 400 prints, credited on order. — Jacques Schurre, 280 9th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001. f64201

FOR SALE: Hand colored artist's proof, 4 1/4"x3 3/4", from set of elegant steel engravings of Benjamin Franklin at the Court of France, 1773. In lovely heavy frame, complete with glass. In top condition. Best offer takes. — Hallett Cole, 191 East Hind Drive, Honolulu 16, Hawaii. f40801

N. CURRIER, large folio. The Cares of a Family. Three small moth holes in border, otherwise perfect, \$450. — Mrs. John Luna, Rt. No. 3, Columbia, Tenn. d1002

FOR SALE: Prints from Ladies' Magazine, Godey's Book, and French Fashion Magazines, dating from 1785 to 1920. — Patricia Robinson, 193 Bartlett Ave., Springfield, Mass. 01202. n12871

### PRINTS WANTED

WANTED: Currier & Ives prints. Give title and condition. Especially want Shakers near Lebanon, Battle of Bentonville, Franklins Experiment, Dartmouth College, Neptune House. — A. R. Davison, East Aurora, N.Y. f6069

WANTED: A. B. Frost prints, sketches, etc., also Lanier's book on Frost. — Henry M. Reed, 270 Broad St., Bloomfield, N.J. f124431

CURRIER & IVES WANTED: Large sizes only. Also large prints of City Views printed before 1855. — Camilla Lucas, Inc., 3 East 28th St., New York, N.Y. ja128271

WANTED by collector: Important Currier & Ives: winter scenes, railroad subjects, clipper ships and sporting. — T. M. Reece, Boonville, N. C. mh120821

### PAINTINGS WANTED

PAINTINGS WANTED: Also bronzes, drawings, water colors, etc. by American & European artists. A particular want is anything of American historical interest especially subjects relating to the West, such as the Cowboy and Indian, western landscape, etc., by artists such as Remington, Russell, Schreyvogel, Kretzschmar, Bierstadt, Catlin, Homer, and lesser known artists. Also American and Canadian artists of the 19th century school. — J. N. Bartfield Art Galleries, Inc., 45 West 57th St., New York 19, N. Y. 212 Plaza 3-1830. d30821

WANTED: Quality oils, water colors, drawings, miniatures by known though not necessarily noteworthy artists, pre-1800 collections of signed etchings, engravings, prints, artist's proofs, special book plates, manuscripts, and early printed pieces of artists, sculptors, gliders, metalworkers, and those supplying them materials. Artists' tools and supplies, paintings by or information about Taylor Baker. Price first letter. — Robert F. Weimann, 4 Prospect St., Ansonia, Conn. f120216

HITLER and other Nazi portraits, also bronzes, etc. Price and stamped envelope please. — Disco, 2503 Third, Milwaukee, Wis. mh6676

Please mention HOBBIES when replying to advertisements.

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Hands Across the Seas!

Major H. H. Annand, of Hillingdon,  
Middlesex, England, Visits  
Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va.

### PART V

By JIM WALSH

#### IV. Gerry Says Goodbye

When Tuesday morning came Gerry and I couldn't conceal that our time together was running short.

He said goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. Marshall and we went to the Dogwood for our last breakfast together there. He then had the painful necessity of parting with Toots and Lloyd Grose, Fay Eversole, Linda Meador, and Edna Kerns.

What little time was left before we boarded a bus for Roanoke was devoted to a hurry, skurry, and flurry of making sure he wasn't forgetting to take with him everything that he wanted to carry in that shopping bag.

Among the contributions were several copies of an alphabetical list of my HOBBIES articles prepared at the Library of Congress.

We were both glad that Petey came up just before we left and sat on the front porch while the Major patted him and told him goodbye. I took a picture of the parting—the only one I got of Gerry and Petey together.

Gerry had previously said his farewells with the other three. Roger had stood on his hind legs to have his head stroked, while the Major once more addressed him as "my beauty," and urged him to go on living for many happy years to come—something that the wonderfully healthy Roger unmistakably intends to do.

On the bus we talked with a man

who had read the article in the Monday paper and recognized the Major by his resemblance to the picture. The driver detected his English accent. We also were compelled to listen to the shrill and strident harangue of a woman who complained to her seatmate about the state of the world in general and her private affairs in particular.

After she had mercifully left the bus, I remarked to the Major: "That woman certainly found a lot to fuss about."

"Yes," he replied, "and she did it through her nose. She has the sort of nasal voice that the English have been led to believe all Americans have—but don't."

I wanted to take a few farewell pictures of Gerry, so I had him pose for one on the steps leading to the second floor of the Roanoke municipal building and for another, still standing on those stairs, but with the Times-World building in the background. The light wasn't good and their quality was not on a par with that of most of the slides I had previously taken.

Still worse were the snaps I made of Gerry as his bus was about to begin the return trip to Richmond. (He said, by the way, that "round trip" was one term he had learned to use while traveling by buses in the States.)

I had no flash bulbs and the shots I took came out so dark they were hardly worth printing. When the Major comes back, I shall be sure to have plenty of blue flash bulbs to match my Ektachrome film.

The bus started pulling out, I saw

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Small 4 tune instruments up to large table models playing 90 tunes, some with bells, drum, organ attachments, dancing dolls, etc. Also the disc type, all sizes, & extra discs. Lists upon request. Expert repairing. All work guaranteed.

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Hundreds of music boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

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NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of this magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.





From left to right:

Gerry Annand and Jim Walsh in a Hands-Across-the-Table exchange. Notice the soft drink bottles—no tea or coffee.



Major H. H. Annand fondling Nipper whose eyes are almost closed from love and drowsiness.

Major Annand with Kenly M. Smith, one of Vinton's best known men.



a smiling face and a waving hand, and then:

It was all over. Gerry Annand's three and a half days of surprise piled upon surprise in Roanoke and Vinton had ended. But I knew further pleasures awaited him in Richmond.

#### V. Since Then

I am such a busy person that I seldom have time for loneliness, but I did feel lonely when I returned home without the fine English gentleman who had shared such a helter-skelter pace with me since the preceding Friday night.

When I reached my house the cats also seemed lonesome. That is, Roger and Nipper did. Lucky Jim, being only a young sprout, leads such a harum-scarum life, romping here and there, that he has, and had, no time or taste for meditation concerning missing friends.

In one way, however, the cats found consolation. They were able to resume their custom of taking daily naps with me. I find it necessary to lie down for an hour or so in the morning or early afternoon before beginning a long day's work, and they know precisely what time they should join me.

During the Major's stay, Nipper, especially, would come to me and wail piercingly at lying-down time, and I knew exactly what he was demanding. But I couldn't beg time off from my revels with the Major to sleep. And the irate Nips had to be disappointed.

The following day I learned that, while Gerry and I were on the Roanoke bus, Kit Johnson, who has the "Profile" program at WSLs-TV, had tried to reach Major Annand by telephone. She was eager to have him as the featured guest on her program, but of course it was then too late. We'll try to arrange an appearance for him with her the next time Gerry comes back.

There was also a phone call from a woman who said she had tried, "off and on all day Monday" to reach us, but had never received an answer. It seemed she had bought an old trunk at an auction sale and had found it filled with "those big

thick Edison records — about 70 or 80 of them."

She thought, as most people do who stumble upon Edison records without previous knowledge, that they were great rarities and had visions of selling the lot to the Major, to be painstakingly chaperoned back to England. I had a ludicrous vision as she talked of his trying to stuff those heavy things into his shopping bag and lug them all the way to London.

Anyway, I told the lady that Diamond Discs were by no means rare — that about four-fifths of the old records and phonographs people try to sell me are Edisons, because they were made so much better than their contemporaries and have been far less subject to wear, depreciation, and breakage — and that she hadn't lost a fortune by not selling them.

Toots Grose gave me a genuine surprise by saying her 10-year-old son, Michael, who is in the fourth grade at East Vinton Elementary School, had come home excited because his teacher, Mrs. Inez Coates, had read my entire Monday article "about that English Major" to the class.

Mrs. Coates had been trying to interest the children in reading newspapers as a means of keeping aware of current history and had chosen the story about the Major as a good example of finding out "what's going on in Vinton now."

And a lady who lives near me asked with indignation, real or pretended, why I didn't bring my "high-toned English friend around and in-

(Continued on page 47)

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3276

TWO EDISON PHONOGRAPHS. No. 1, S. No. 26795; No. 2, S. No. 54810. One has an attached morning glory horn and the other a large separate horn, both in good condition with 250 Edison cylinder records. — Jesse York, Tannery Rd., Box 130, Downsville, N. Y. ja3656

#### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. ja6468

#### MUSIC — REPAIRS

EXPERT melodeon repairing. — Lamper, 1072 E. Leonard, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49505. (C-Sharp Hobby Shop). my12698

#### VIOLIN FOR SALE

VIOLIN - William Lewis & Son, Chicago verify as very fine copy Jacobus Stainer made Mittenwald, Germany. Needs restringing and bridge. Wooden case and bow. — Mrs. C. E. Newman, 4003 S. Harrison Blvd., Fort Wayne, Indiana. ja3065

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. sl2698

OLD POPULAR SONGS. I buy & sell. Big list 10c. — Dean Snyder, 406 S. Main St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90013. f6046

SHEET MUSIC. Old songs 250,000 alphabet order catalogued. No list yet. Price 50c to \$1. Inquiries. Please send self addressed stamped letter to — Robert Greenlaw, 307 No. Rampart, Los Angeles 26, Calif. Rm. 412. my66501

#### ANTIQUE BAND INSTRUMENTS

WANTED: Over the shoulder or other antique band instruments. — W. A. Holloway, 1547 N. Dearborn Pkwy., Chicago 10, Ill. mh3403

#### PHONOGRAPHS REPAIRED

REPRODUCER REPAIRING. Have original Edison styluses all types. Reproducers for sale. Stamp for reproducer brochure. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr. Soquel, Calif. ja3253

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Wurlitzer Orchestration Coin operated. Excellent condition. Mills violin single with rolls. — E. S. Laugh-ton, York Beach, Maine. mh3676

## RECORDS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia cylinder records. Collectors' items. Cylinder machines and parts bought and sold. — James Riley, 156 School St., Norwich, Conn. mh3084

Out-of-print records, primarily 78 rpm, some deleted LP's: classical vocal, instrumental, popular, personality jazz. Monthly sales list of classical vocals. Authoritative appraisals. Collections bought. — The Record Album, 254 W. 81st St., New York 24, N.Y. n122553

HAVE YOU ANY RECORDS worth \$150? "Price Guide" lists 7500 numbers values, \$2.50 postpaid. — American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825 7th Ave., New York 19, N.Y. je124661

FREE CATALOGS, private collection, famous motion picture sound tracks. Available in entirety on 12" LP. — ARG, 341 Cooper Sta., New York, N.Y. f3633

RECORDS: 78's of all kinds. Please let me know all you can about your needs. — T. Thibault, 561 Ferry Ave., Camden 4, N. J. mh6367

RARE 78's. State category. — Record Lists, P.O. Box 2122, Riverside, Calif. 92506. d12867

Free Catalog. Rare Crosby broadcasts. — A.R.G., 341 Cooper Station, New York 3, N. Y. f3683

CLEARANCE SALE of fine classical, operatic and vocal 78 RPM records dating back to 1908. Assortment of 100 different for \$35, includes Caruso, Galli-Curci, Melba, Gluck, Tetrassini, Kreisler, Rachmaninoff, etc. All in excellent condition, satisfaction guaranteed. Limited offer. Makes an excellent gift. Order now. — Memory Shop, 183 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. f3848

MONTHLY LISTS of classical vocal 78 r.p.m. Many rarities. Operatic 78 collections bought. — The Domart Collection, 400 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket, R. I. Phone PAwtucket 3-2889. my122971

OVER 100,000 hard-to-get records, 1903 to L.P. — Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott St., San Francisco 17, Calif. my128801

FREE LIST: Opera, Comedy, Old Jazz, Albums, Seventy Eights — Box 1566, Studio City, Calif. 91604. f3042

MEMORIES of World War I - LP recording with Nora Bayes, George M. Cohan, Irving Berlin, Enrico Caruso, Al Jolson, Gen. John J. Pershing, Billy Murray, John McCormack, etc. with original songs from 1914-1918. Send \$5 to: Memory Shop, 188 Monroe, Grand Rapids, Mich. mh3407

AMAZING LIST of out of print operatic and classical vocal 78's. Finest condition. Priced low. List on request. — S. Weiss, 430 Maple Hill Dr., Hackensack, N. J. ja3614

RARE RECORDS & TAPES: My collection of jazz, pops, Latin American, country, western, drama, dance, vocal, sweet, comic, opera, classical, stars of stage, screen, sports, old quartets instrumental solos, personalities, documentary, etc. 1900 to 1960. All sizes including 16". — Jack Argo, P.O. Box 105, Hudson, N. H. 03051. ja3067

I WILL LOAN my catalog of early vocal discs. Sentimental, humorous, personality, country western, minstrel, children's, sacred, historical. 56c to \$1.12 each. Send deposit of \$1 for 28 long pages. Return and get refund or deduct from first order. You can't lose. No instrumental or classic vocal list at this time. — Ray Hargraves, 8745 Florence Ave., Brentwood, Mo. 63117. mh3449

SHARE large tape collection 20's-30's pops (from original discs). 6-selection sampler tape \$1. 2 track 3 1/2". — Martin, 396 Toler, San Leandro, Calif. f3483

GIGLI complete operas, other vocal or orchestra albums, hundreds acoustic. electric 78's, imports, unusual labels. New lists. — Penn Courtney, 4817 Gilbert Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana. mh3483

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

GLASS HARMONICA wanted; particulars as to price, condition, etc. to I. M. Irving, 16 Manor Lane, Larchmont, N. Y. ja3403

WANT coin-operated Seeburg piano, (model H), stained glass doors. Plays drums, pipes, xylophone. Carved wooden statues on the front. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Md. ja3234

COIN OPERATED nickelodeons, orchestrons, Automatic Regina, Seeburg, Wurlitzer, Coinola, Deagan Una-fon Cal. Maple, band organ, tap organ, large music box with bells, etc. — Frank Curtiss, Saint Louis, Michigan. mh3234

## PIANOS &amp; ROLLS

WANT all piano and music rolls, especially Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico. odd or unusual rolls. Lists unnecessary. — Box 787H, Kemah, Texas. my124631

DUO-ART and old standard piano rolls for sale. Free lists, stamp please. — V. & S. Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N. Y. ja3863

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

BOOKS on player pianos. Rebuilding the Player Piano is the book of complete information on how to do every aspect of restoration on these valuable machines. \$6.95 postpaid. Tells where to obtain all necessary supplies and parts. Player Piano Treasury is the complete illustrated picture history of the mechanical piano in America, \$10 postpaid. Ask for our list of reprints and service manuals. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. — The Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N. Y. my6234

## PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

CYLINDER and disc phonographs, records, parts, bought, sold, repaired. 2 min. list 75c, 4 min. list 75c. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. ap122741

PHONOGRAPH with outside horn, any condition, parts, catalogs. Also Berliner, Johnson, Victor or 5" cylinder machine. Price. — Armand Scroby, 125 Western, Mansfield, Ohio. f3863

## TAPED RECORDINGS

ACOUSTIC and elect. operatic recordings on your tapes, 50c per selection. For information and list send stamp to: "Recordings," 48 Revell Ave., Northampton, Mass. mh3483

**ELECTRIFY** PLAYER PIANOS PUMP ORGANS

YOU CAN QUICKLY END TIRESOME FOOT-PUMPING With a Compact Low-Cost Lee Silent Suction Unit

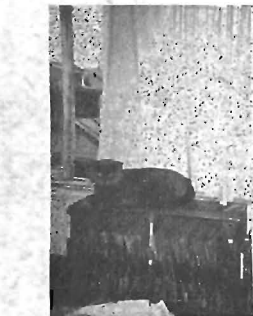
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Box 595, Tulunga, Calif.

my56p

Petey, Roger, Lucky Jim, Nipper, Popsy and Jim Walsh

WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



## LEFT TO RIGHT

- Petey spent more than a year in exile when he was driven from home by the larger and stronger Percy the Pitiful Persian. He returned home after Percy died of a heart attack November 22, 1963 — the day of President Kennedy's death. He hopes Santa Claus will do a better job of finding him this Christmas than during those 18 months when he was homeless and frequently cold and hungry.
- Roger's gorgeous coloring, charming personality and courtly manners assure him plenty of lady friends. Here he responds to the caresses of Mrs. Evelyn Slaydon while Evelyn's sister, Mrs. Elsie Comstock, beams approval and promises to say a good word for him to Santa.

- Lucky Jim joined the family on Sunday, November 24, 1963, less than an hour after his "Papa Jim" had sorrowfully buried Percy. In order to keep a bright lookout for Saint Nick, Jim, Jr., has climbed to a shelf above the senior Jim's typewriter stand. Below him is a typewritten list of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists articles which have appeared in HOBBIES.
- Nipper things the big Orthophonic Victrola is a good place to watch for the patron saint of Christmas. (It's also a good place to keep away from his friendly enemy, Petey, who chased him into it. Notice the photos of recording artists on the wall.)
- Sweet-faced Popsy, who spent the warm months in the open air, returned home in time to vote in the November 3 presidential election. He probably also thought Santa

would do a better job of finding him if he had a permanent address like 225 North Maple Street, Vinton, Va., instead of sojourning in the woods. Popsy hopes Santa will stuff his stocking with sugar plums and persimmons — especially persimmons.

THROUGH ETERNITY WE'LL NEVER FORGET! Grateful that we are still here, we still pause at this Christmas season, as we do every day, to think tenderly of Gray (died Sept. 11, 1962), Percy, Heartaches (a neighbor's friendly cat who died last spring), Angel Eyes and all we have loved and lost.

ROGER, NIPPER, PETEY, LUCKY JIM, POSSY AND JIM WALSH.

fashioned of bronze-finished brass with design in high relief.

The famous picture was painted in 1518. The kneeling figures represent Pope Sixtus II and St. Barbara.

12. "The Finding of Moses," suggested by a painting by Paul Delaroche. The design is rendered in light metal against a dark background.

The story is told in Exodus I:1-10. The woman parting the rushes is usually identified as "Pharaoh's Daughter," but she may have been intended for Pharaoh's daughter's maid-servant, or for Moses' sister.

13. "The Angel of Peace" from a painting by Wilhelm von Kaulbach. Pressed brass with dark background.

14. "Rebekah at the Well." This pressed-brass button shows the meeting between Abraham's servant and Rebekah, who was destined to become the wife of Abraham's son, Isaac. The story is found in the 24th chapter of Genesis.

16. "The Angel Gabriel." Cut-out, bronze-finished brass with black background and scroll border.

Gabriel, one of the Archangels, interpreted his visions to Daniel, Daniel VIII: 16-27 and IX: 21-27, announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias, Luke I:11-20, and was sent to Nazareth as a messenger to the Virgin Mary, Luke I: 26-38.

17, 18 and 19 are modern carved-pearl buttons from Jordan. Number 17, a filigree type, shows the Serpent in the Garden of Eden, Genesis III.

18 pictures three shepherds and the Star of Bethlehem, Luke II:8-15.

19, with filigree background, shows the Holy family, either when fleeing to Egypt to escape Herod, Matthew II:14, or when journeying to Jerusalem, Luke II:20.

Many Biblical and symbolic subjects appear on these pearl buttons, which are of fine workmanship. They make an effective display, but I must point out that they are "Studio" buttons, made for collectors and not for use. The other buttons, except 7, were intended to be worn on garments.

In these days, Christmas has become less of a religious observance than a holiday given over to gifts and good cheer. Such manifestations of "Christmas Spirit" are as pleasant as they are popular, and far be it from me to belittle them.

But we ought also to remember the religious significance of Christmas, that its spiritual values may not be neglected in an increasingly materialistic world.

"Man shall not live by bread alone."

\* I am grateful to Mrs. Russell A. Lovell, Massachusetts, for the loan of several Biblical buttons, and for the Biblical references quoted above.

\*\* For pictures of other St. George items, and for further details of his life, see HOBBIES for November, 1963.

\*\*\* In these "Related Hobby" groups, I endeavor to present as many different hobbies as is practicable. I tried to find a post card version of theistine Madonna; failing that, I had to be satisfied with the illustration from a Christmas card.—D.F.B.

## BUTTONS WANTED

**YELLOW KID buttons wanted.**—Louis Bobel, 194 Munn Ave., Irvington 11, N.J. s12867

**WANTED: Presidential campaign buttons prior to 1932.**—Edward J. Meyer, 4333 46th St., Sunnyside, N.Y. 11104. f3652

**WANTED: Pictures & other pierced metal buttons, 2 or more of a kind.**—Hal Baird, 6128 Louisville St., New Orleans, La. 70124. ja3633

## BUTTONS FOR SALE

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS, direct European imports, collectors' items, 18th century buttons, pictorials, crests, dress earrings, sets cuff links.**—Mrs. Margot Jacoby, 250 W. 94th St., New York 25, N. Y. s122971

**OLD BUTTONS. 85 assorted, 75 vegetable ivory or 40 black glass, \$1.10.**—Mrs. Karl S. Gerstenlauer, Pleasant Valley Village, R.D. 2, Milton, Pa. f3863

**75 BUTTONS, different types, all collectable, \$1. p.p.**—Mary Caskey, Box 215, Gloucester, N. J. fly12698

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS: Old Austrian out glass crystal reflector buttons. From old store stock. Assorted sizes, shapes, colors, 20 for \$2.**—Theresa Rarig, 302 S. Rothsay, Minneapolis, Kansas. mh3234

**ANTIQUE BUTTONS**—sent promptly on approval. One nice large picture button and 50 other assorted old buttons for \$2.50. I also wish to buy good buttons. What have you?—Minerva M. Miner, Box 612, Lake Alfred, Fla. 33850. ap4806

**BUTTON HOOK BOOK. Pictures, information, patents, \$1.25.**—Bertha Betensley, 5042 N. St. Louis Ave., Chicago 25, Ill. s128801

**FOR \$2.25: 75 choice old buttons, assorted materials and sizes, one large picture button and five smaller picture buttons. List of other buttons bargains for stamped envelope.**—Nellie Solberg, Route No. 2, Stone Lake, Wisconsin. 54876. mh3065

**BUTTONS on approval with reference. Assts. 25-50-100 for \$1.10 plus bonus buttons. Agent Brooks buttons.**—Mrs. Ralph Radosh, 260 Sadonia Ave., Ferguson, Mo. 63135. f3614

**\$1.10 BUYS 10, 50 or 100 good old buttons including 10 worth \$1 free. Money-back guarantee.**—Mrs. A. S. Campbell, 788 Bonaventure Ave. N.E. Atlanta, Ga. 30306. f3844

**PRESIDENTIAL campaign buttons being sold. Enclose stamp for list.**—Bob Sellers, 620 Pamilar Ave., San Jose, Calif. 95128. ja3832

**BRITISH MILITARY buttons, 25 assorted \$1.10; 100 \$4. Insignia badges 8, \$1.10; 50, \$5 postpaid.**—McManus, P.O. 561, Groves, Texas. 77619. ja3863

**OLD SOLID BRASS railroad buttons, over 60 years old, silver and gold new condition. For coat, cap and sleeve; motorman, conductor, inspector, porter, B&O, Penn. R.R. and others. Sample 10c each, one dozen assorted \$1. Dealers, \$6 for 10 dozen, all prepaid. Will trade for political pins, coins, medals, weapons (old or new), American or foreign or anything nice. Send check or money order to: Trader Bill Crompton, Antique Fair, P.O. Box 265, Somerset, Mass. ja36121**

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

troduce him to all your poor neighbors, instead of being so exclusive?"

I did my best to explain that our schedule was so crowded I had to content myself with making Gerry known to those persons whom we merely happened to meet rather than trying to subject him to a community-wide round of introductions.

A little more than a month has passed since I had my last 1964 glimpse of Gerry Annand, but his memory lingers. The display stayed in the Dogwood window a couple of weeks after he boarded a plane back to England in New York on May 20 and arrived there some six hours later.

When the records, phonographs, and posters finally were taken out, I mailed the posters to Gerry, together with a quantity of color pictures made from the slides and a couple of enlarged pictures Oakie Asbury had taken but which were not used in the Times.

Within a few days I received a letter from the Major, saying everything had arrived in good order and that he is displaying the posters in his front room, to make sure everybody who enters his house see them.

Sometimes it seems like a dream and I find it hard to believe that Major Annand ever was here. He must have had the same feeling as, back on Field Heath Avenue in Hillingdon, Middlesex, he recalls the faces and places he knew during his stay and reflects that, though so familiar only a few weeks ago, they are now separated from him by hundreds of miles of land and 3,000 miles of Atlantic Ocean—too much either to walk or swim.

But visible reminders yet exist of Gerry's sojourn in Vinton. The records we played still haven't been put away (I just haven't had the time) and the back of the Dogwood Restaurant cash register still displays a clipping of my Roanoke Times article.

And what does 3,000 miles of water amount to nowadays? This is the 20th century and the Major is only an eight or 10 hours flight from his Roanoke-Vinton friends. We are all looking for him to come back soon and stay longer.

We're going to be mighty disappointed, Gerry, if you don't.

What's more, we'll be surprised!

**NICHOLLS BUTTON BOOKS**  
SUPPLEMENT III and Index \$3.95  
Supply limited  
Order now from  
**Mrs. FLORENCE N. APOSTLE**  
4806 Fitzhugh Ave.  
Richmond 30, Virginia

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Three Memorable Days

### *In and Near Washington*

By JIM WALSH

#### PART I

#### I. The Guilty Guys

Donald L. Leavitt, reference librarian of the Library of Congress's Recorded Music Division, and Emlyn Williams, distinguished Welsh actor-author, are the guilty guys. They must share the responsibility of my having to rise by the dawn's early light on Oct. 24, 1964, and stumbling sleepily over inanimate objects in my bedroom as I sought to attire myself in fair raiment before clambering onto a train bound for Washington, D. C.

This early morning stumbling and fumbling came about because Mr. Williams was booked to give his famous readings from the works of my favorite author, Charles Dickens, on the evening of October 26 and had let it be known that he had no objection to my attending. Don, who had several times visited me at my home in Vinton, Va., to confer about plans for leaving my record collection, reference materials, diaries and other hoarded objects to the Library of Congress, had been trying for more than a year to persuade me to spend a few days with him; his wife, Nadine, and their children, Susan and Stuart, but something had always kept me from going.

Then Don came through with an irresistible proposal. He said that if I would come to see him on the weekend preceding the Emlyn Williams recital he would obtain tickets. Moreover, I would have an opportunity to

confer with several Library of Congress officials about my desire to bequeath the records and other things.

I feared that having to report Roanoke City Council's meetings each Monday might stand in the way of my getting off, but Norwood Middleton, the Roanoke Times managing editor, and City Editor Jim Echols generously consented to let me go and to have Tuesday free as well. On my part, I agreed to write an article for the Saturday entertainment section describing Mr. Williams' presentation. So it was that, thanks to Messrs. Williams and Leavitt, I had spent a restless night, making sure I didn't oversleep and miss my train, and was tumbling over miscellaneous articles, including cats and cardboard boxes, as I made ready to go. The cats shrieked indignation; the boxes did not commit themselves.

As I floundered groggily here and there, lines from a song which Billy Murray made popular on records in 1907 echoed through what, at 5 o'clock in the morning, passes for my mind:

"In Washington, dear Washington,  
Where the limit's as high as the Capitol dome,  
And the best thing in the city is the  
train for home. . ."

I drowsily recalled other assertions from "In Washington." They included such unflattering statements as "they charge five dollars for coffee and rolls, but they put Apollinaris in the finger bowls" and "every Senator uses his desk for a bed—if it wasn't for the snoring you would think they were dead." I wondered what the price of coffee and rolls might be nowadays if that plebeian combination set you back half a saw-buck 57 years ago, but I didn't intend to call on any Senators and was indifferent as to whether they were still sleeping at their desks.

The thing that most concerned me was the welfare during my absence of my four cats—Roger, Petey, Nipper and Lucky Jim. Since I have no one to look after them when I go away, I seldom stay apart from them more than a day at a time, and I was a bit worried about the numberless things that could happen between my Saturday morning departure and return home at 6 a.m. Tuesday. However, I left sufficient food available to keep them, I hoped, from feeling hungry before Monday morning, when Lloyd Grose, my friend who operates the Dogwood Restaurant, had said he would come and bait them. And I left the door leading to the basement open for them to go in and out as many times as they liked.

As I began to trek down the hill I carried two suitcases, but was accompanied by only one cat, the exuberant little Lucky Jim. Unlike Roger, who had chaperoned me to the foot of the hill, piteously begging me not to leave on "that New River train," Jim made no objection to my going, but being in the first flush of healthful youth, ran for the sheer pleasure of rapid motion and occasionally rolled over like a whirling dervish to testify his happiness. As I told him goodbye, I wondered how many trips Roger would make, hoping to meet me and walk up the hill with me, before Tuesday morning and how many cats would be waiting to welcome me when I came back.

#### II. The First Few Hours

Some half a dozen hours after my parting with Lucky Jim, Don Leavitt

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of this magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

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## MUSIC BOXES

for sale

MAGNIFICENT ASSORTMENT OF ALL SIZES & TYPES

Small 4 tune instruments up to large table models playing 90 tunes, some with bells, drum, organ attachments, dancing dolls, etc. Also the disc type, all sizes, & extra discs. Lists upon request. Expert repairing. All work guaranteed.

(Orig. Established Switzerland 1825)

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met me at Grand Central station in Washington. Don had been badly injured in a traffic accident during the spring of 1963 while he and his family were returning to their home in Bowie, Md., after a brief visit with me, and was in a hospital for a good many weeks. Nadine, Susan and Stuart were less seriously hurt. Don, who was driving a new red "Mustang" he had just bought, was looking well and showed few, if any, signs of his injuries.

He suggested that lunch was in order, and I agreed. I noticed that extensive preparations were being made at the Capitol for the January inauguration of a President who, I correctly suspected would prove to be Lyndon B. Johnson. One thing Don and I regretted later was that it didn't occur to us that the body of former President Herbert Hoover was lying in state at the Capitol. Since Mr. Hoover for many years had been my greatest admiration as a statesman and a dedicated servant to his fellow men and I had regarded him as the foremost living American, I should have liked to stand beside his coffin as a final gesture of love and reverence. But, as Don pointed out, when the thought occurred too late, there probably were so many men and women in line it would have taken hours to go through, and I wouldn't have felt up to staying on my feet that long.

After eating in a restaurant near the Library of Congress, Don took me to Maryland. Only Stuart was at home, since Susan had gone to a Girl Scout camp and Nadine also was there, not to return until Sunday morning.

I have just been guilty of a misstatement. Not only was 8-year-old Stuart at home, but Ti-Ki and Whimsy were present and accounted for. Ti-Ki is a beautiful Maltese cat, markedly resembling my dearly loved Peter Dawson (Petey) Walsh, while Whimsy is a large, boisterously friendly dog whose native strain I have forgotten. Both welcomed me

and became my friends, although Whimsy had a custom of barking vehemently when I came upon her unexpectedly.

I had to agree it was a good idea when Don, who looks surprisingly like Jim Echols and has a voice resembling my city editor's, suggested that I lie down for an hour or so. After that, he said, perhaps I'd like to take a drive to see the Naval Academy at Annapolis, the historic old town in which Don formerly lived, and take a look at Chesapeake Bay.

I went to bed for a while in a room that ordinarily is Stuart's and managed to doze after trying to send thought waves to my cats informing them that "Papa" was all right and didn't intend to leave them unattended very long.

Back on my feet, I made some phone calls. One of the attractions about my visit to Washington had been the prospect of meeting Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Abramson at their home, 2800 Greenvale Street, Chevy Chase, Md., and being with Mr. and Mrs. Vess L. Ossman III in their apartment at 1400 Joyce Street, Arlington, Va. Betty Abramson is a daughter of the late Berrick Schloss, a tenor who made records as "Berrick Von Norden," and about whom I wrote in HOBBIES last February and March. The present Vess Ossman, of course, is the grandson of "The Banjo King," who died in 1928. I wrote a HOBBIES series concerning him that ran from September, 1948, skipping December, through February, 1949. Guided by those articles, which Sue Ossman's sister found and gave them, Vess had been able to get in touch with and go to California to visit Vess L. Ossman's daughter, Mrs. Annadele Mulligan, and son, Ray Ossman, whom he hadn't seen in 46 years. I had been wishing I could meet both couples and both had said they would like to meet me.

I had written them of my intention to come to Washington and received cordial invitations to call.

As a result of the telephone conversations it was decided that it would be best for Don and me to show up in Chevy Chase at about 2 p.m. Sunday, for Betty and Dan were committed to other engagements for much of the day, and go afterwards to Arlington and the Ossmans.

The visit to Annapolis was interesting. I love to look upon old buildings breathing history from every brick or wooden pore and Annapolis was full of them. It was almost sundown when we visited the waterfront, where I began singing a 1913 popular song hit, "Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay." It was a song Don had not previously heard, but he said that, as well as he could judge from my interpretation of it, it was one after his own heart and of which he meant to look up the music. I have since mailed him a tape recording of the Edison Blue Amberol cylinder of it sung by the Premier Quartet. Don appeared surprised at my ability to sing, or at least articulate the words, of some old song on any subject that came to hand.

In spite of the dim light, I used flash bulbs to take two color slides of the bay. Seen through an ordinary hand viewer, they look foggy, with little detail, but projected on a screen they have a beautiful quality about them as if they had been painted in subdued colors by a fine artist.

Being so tired I was perfectly willing to go to bed early that Saturday night, and, after wafting some more telepathic thought waves to Roger, Nipper, Petey and Lucky Jim, I became unconscious.

Usually, I am such a light sleeper that a fly walking on the ceiling will wake me unless he wears cotton pads

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Left to right, top to bottom:

On the front lawn of Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Abramson's home at Chevy Chase, Md.—Jim Walsh and Mr. and Mrs. Abramson.

Jim Walsh holding tape recorder, with Betty Abramson who almost didn't get in the picture.

Sue Ossman, Jim Walsh and Vess Ossman, in Mr. and Mrs. Ossman's Arlington, Va., apartment.

Sue Ossman, Jim Walsh and Vess Ossman III, displaying records made by "The Banjo King."

on the soles of his feet, but this time I slept so soundly I was not even aware Stuart had been taken ill with a "virus bug" and Don was up most of the night ministering to him. He was really a sick-looking little boy the next morning, and was obliged to stay in bed most of the time Sunday and Monday.

### III. I Call On Dr. and Mrs. Abramson

I'm sure it was a relief to Don when Nadine and Susan came home shortly before noon and began to help look after Stuart and keep him more contented. Since I had come to Washington to witness the performance of a fine British actor, I thought it in keeping with the spirit of the visit to present Nadine with some fine imported English candy.

In the early afternoon Don and I started for Chevy Chase, but stopped on the way to get something to eat at an excellent Chinese restaurant. Not being a connoisseur of exotic foods, I didn't sample any of the Chi-

nese cooking, but ordered an American meal that met my taste.

Betty Abramson had given such explicit directions that Don's Mustang had little difficulty in galloping gaily to her lovely home. Betty and Dan were in the front yard raking leaves, and I received something of a shock when I first saw Betty, who was wearing sunglasses. It was a pleasant shock, however. But no, I have again been guilty of a slight misstatement. When I first saw Betty, I didn't take her to be Mrs. Abramson but thought she was her daughter. The shock came when I learned the lady who looked like a college girl really was Betty Abramson. I don't know Betty's exact age, but, whatever it is, she is the youngest looking woman of that age I've ever seen. Of that I'm sure. If she wished she should have no trouble passing for a high school girl.

Dan Abramson also looks remarkably young to have a son and daughter old enough to be in college. He is a man of wide reputation as a

surgeon, with a gravely courteous manner that attracts one upon first meeting. As for Betty, she gives the impression of bubbling over with enthusiasm and zest for living. She radiantly told Don and me that we had picked an especially appropriate time to call because the occasion was not only her birthday but her wedding anniversary.

A couple of pictures were taken and then we went into the house, where I used my small tape recorder to catch the voices of Betty and Dan. They both thanked me for what I had done about two years ago to obtain tape recordings for her of all the known records made by her father. Abel Green, editor of *Variety*, had written me that Betty and Dan were friends of Syd Silverman, who publishes "The Bible of Show Business," and that they badly wanted to find some Von Norden records. Abel asked if I could help, and it turned out that I had a Columbia disc by the tenor and an Edison cylinder. My dear friend, L. Brevoort O'dell of Branchville, N. J., had the remaining cylinders and generously taped them for Betty.

The only other occupant of the Abramson home for the moment was a dog called Pepsi, because she had "more bounce to the ounce." I think it should go without saying that meeting a dog with such a name made me think fondly of my English friend, Major Gerry Annand, who showed such a capacity for Pepsi Cola when he visited me last May.

Don took a flash shot of me holding the tape recorder and facing Betty across the room. He and I liked this charming couple so much we should have been delighted to spend a much longer time with them, but time was wasting, they had other commitments and we had to get to Arlington. So we left Chevy Chase with the fervent wish that we should be able to meet Betty and Dan Abramson on many future occasions.

### IV. Meeting Vess and Sue Ossman

Mr. and Mrs. Ossman live in an apartment in Arlington. From it they have a breath-taking view of much of Washington, including the Lincoln Memorial and innumerable other historical landmarks. And you may be sure they are like Betty and Dan Abramson in this respect: You could follow the route of the strongest-winged crow for a full day, or even a week or month, and not find a nicer couple. "As the crow flies," both the Abramsons and the Ossmans are unsurpassable.

My meeting with Vess and Sue Ossman was unabashedly emotional. The *HOBBIES* articles not only had led to the discovery of the California relatives - none too soon, for Ray Ossman died ten days after their last meeting, happy at having seen the nephew of whom he had heard nothing for many years - but I had also been able to provide Vess with a dozen of more photographs or ne-

### THREE MEMORABLE DAYS

(Continued from pages 34 & 35)

gatives of his grandfather, as well as of his father, Vess L. Ossman, Jr., also a famous banjo player, who has been dead for 22 years.

Vess, a successful Washington businessman, with an almost startling resemblance to photographs of the distinguished elder Ossman, thanked me warmly for the things I had done, knowingly and unknowingly, and Sue seemed almost overcome. On the basis of this one meeting, I would say that spontaneous sincerity is the keynote of Sue Ossman's character.

Before leaving home I had hurriedly taped copies of half a dozen Vess Ossman records to play for Sue and Vess, who have only a handful of "The Banjo King's" once vastly popular discs. They were not so well done as I could have wished, but my



A youthful photo, with a joking inscription, of Vess L. Ossman, Jr.



Vess L. Ossman, "The Banjo King," as he appeared in the early 1900's.

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friends seemed to enjoy hearing them, and I promised that in what little spare time I could muster I would break my rule of not copying my records on tape for anybody and try to transcribe for them the nearly 200 Ossman records I believed myself to have. (Incidentally, they own two not in my collection — a 10-inch Zonophone of "Donnybrook - mislabeled "Dannybrook" Fair", and a 12-inch Victor of "Banjo Lize," made with Len Spencer.) I have been working on this project in odd moments, but at this writing - Sunday, November 22 - still don't have it completed.

Vess recalled that he formerly lived in Harrisburg, Pa. - I believe he and Sue met and were married there - and that one of the photos I sent him showed five members of the Record Maker Troupe - Vess Ossman, Theodore Morse, Albert Campbell, Byron G. Harlan and Arthur Collins - visiting Troop's Music Store at Harrisburg in April, 1917.

"I had no idea," Vess said, "that my grandfather had been in that store, but not long ago, when I was in Harrisburg I went into it and found that Mr. Troop, who is now 82 years old, has a large framed copy of that group picture hanging upstairs."

Having the recorder along, I took advantage of the chance to preserve for posterity some remarks of Vess and Sue, as well as of Don Levitt, who had modestly declined to speak when offered the opportunity at the Abramson's. I suppose he decided on the second solicitation that he might as well give in and get it over with.

Perhaps you would be interested in some of the comments made in the Ossman apartment that lovely October Sunday afternoon. Vess came first. He said:

"My wife and I will be forever grateful to you, Jim, for what you have done. It's been a pleasure meeting you and Don this afternoon. Next spring we're expecting a visit from my Aunt Annadele. . . and if and when she

does come we'll be only too glad to drive down and spend a few days with you. We're looking forward to it. And thank you once again for everything you have done for us."

Sue was called on next and, in a voice vibrant with emotion, she exclaimed:

"Jim, you're every bit as nice a guy as I thought you would be! If you could only see and know what happiness you have brought to the Ossman family with your articles, your recordings and the pictures you sent me, . . . you'd never know how happy it made them all feel. I also want to tell you it gave my husband, Vess, a chance to visit with his Uncle Ray . . . If we had just cut off that visit ten days we would not have had a chance to see him, for he passed away ten days after we were there. Thanks again, Jim, for all you have done."

Somewhat taken aback, I replied: "Well, Sue and Vess, you make feel awfully good, but a little bit humble and undeserving at that, because I don't know that I deserve all that you have said, but I'm certainly glad

(Continued on page 45)



RUTH HARRINGTON, who became Mrs. Vess L. Ossman, Jr. and the mother of Jim Walsh's friend, Vess Ossman III of Arlington, Va.

## OLD PRINTS--PAINTINGS--MAPS

### (SEE COVER)

This historical and famous painting is illustrated from the collections of the Library of Congress.

The printed inscription at the bottom of the illustration describes it as "Washington Delivering His Inaugural Address, April, 1789, in the Old City Hall, New York." It was painted by Thomas H. Matteson. The engraving was made by H. S. Sadd in 1849.

### PRINTS WANTED

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**WANTED:** A. B. Frost prints, sketches, etc., also Lanier's book on Frost. — Henry M. Reed, 270 Broad St., Bloomfield, N. J. f124431

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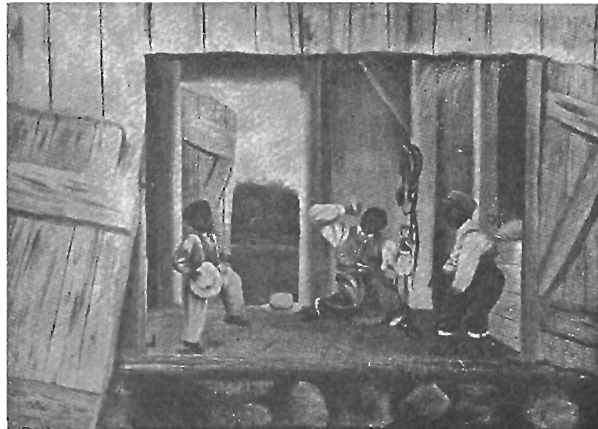
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### OLD METALS

(Continued from page 44)

and finely pointed noses; the bad ones have bulging eyes and bulbous noses. Other wayang figures are made of wood and leather.

The cylindrical brass box in the photograph is a wayang accessory, containing a puppet head-dress of gaily decorated dried buffalo skin. The box is enhanced with carved wayang figures; against foliated background, they are contained in arched panels with alternating panel-details of diaper designs. The cover, with central lotus medallion, is decorated with floral and geometric patterns.

—O—

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### THREE MEMORABLE DAYS

(Continued from page 41)

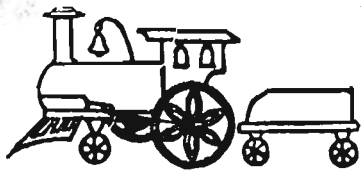
if I have done anything to give you pleasure and bring you into communication with these long-missing relatives." I then called on Don, and he came through with:

"... I have found this entire afternoon fascinating — one of the most fascinating since the last time I went to visit you, Jim, in Vinton. This has been particularly interesting because of ... the very interesting people we have met. And to me it has been doubly interesting to see another facet of your many-faceted personality, in the remarkably fine things you have done for so many richly deserving people."

I thanked Don and said I wished Roger, Nipper, Petey and Lucky Jim were present to say a few words. "I've been sitting here," I said, "wondering what they are thinking about the prolonged absence of their Papa."

"I'll bet they'll have plenty to say when you get home," Vess interposed, and I went on: "I'll bet Roger has gone down the hill a hundred times, wanting to walk home (Continued on page 49)





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STANDARD GAUGE Deluxe toy trains wanted. — Alden Miller, 3212 34th Ave. South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55406. ap6084

## THREE MEMORABLE DAYS

(Continued from page 45)

with me . . . but they won't see my bright and shining face until about 6:00 o'clock Tuesday morning."

Mr. and Mrs. Ossman returned the photographs I had lent them and let me take three of theirs home for copying - one of Vess himself as a small boy; one of his mother, an actress named Ruth Harrington, taken when she was a member of "The Red Rose Company," and one of his father, Vess L. Ossman, Jr., who looks in that youthful picture, to have been a dead ringer for my friend, Bob Haumesser, news director of Roanoke television station WSLs.

There were a few more remarks centering on hopes for future meetings, and then Don and I got up to go, reluctantly, as we had at Chevy Chase. After I shook hands with Vess, Sue and I started to exchange handclaps but thought better of it and kissed. Don and I then drove back, in the now declining afternoon, to the section of Bowie in which he lives. It is known as Leavitt Town. Don, however, admits it wasn't named for him.

Stuart was still a sick boy, but Nadine provided us with a bountiful and delicious supper, after which we played some records of varying degrees of antiquity which they had picked up in Washington area stores. I especially liked the Berceuse from "Jocelyn" sung by Edmond Clement. At a reasonable hour I went to bed, looking forward to the morrow's meeting with the Library of Congress officials, the Emyln Williams recital and, finally, to the soon-to-be reunion with my furry family at home. I tried once more to send them reassuring messages before I dropped off to sleep.

(To be continued)

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Three Memorable Days

### *In and Near Washington*

By JIM WALSH

#### PART II

#### 1. I Visit the Library of Congress

Don Leavitt and I had rather a late breakfast before we left his home in Bowie, Md., on the morning of Monday, October 26, and drove to the Library of Congress. His small son, Stuart, was still ill with a virus ailment, which Susan, Stuart's elder sister by two or three years, was soon to take.

Mrs. Leavitt had been hoping to hear Emlyn Williams give his Dickens recital that evening in the Library's Coolidge auditorium, and said she would still try to make it if Stuart improved sufficiently. However, he didn't and having characteristically forgotten to bring my ticket from home, I used Nadine's that night.

As we rode along, Don and I agreed that October is the best time to visit Washington because the Capitol City's notoriously trying climate is then on its best behavior.

I also mentioned one thing that had helped me make up my mind to come. This was the fact that the Williams recital would take place on the 26th.

My only sizable superstition — which has been proved true so often it actually shouldn't be considered superstitious — is that nearly all the important things in my life happen on the 26th of the month, and most of them in April and October.

Since the date was October 26, the omens, I told Don, seemed truly auspicious.

Arrived at the Library, Don parked and went to his office, but I strolled across the street and took several color slides of the Capitol being made ready for the inauguration. One slide came out exceptionally fine with beautiful, glowing autumn colors. I am sending it for illustration with this article, even though I know it cannot appear to equal advantage in black and white.

During the next hour or so I revisited the Library's recording laboratory and met many staff members. Whenever I was introduced to a lady worker she invariably asked about the health of my cats. It was evident my reputation as a cat lover had been spread throughout the Library of Congress — by, I suspect, Mr. Leavitt.

A bookcase in Don's office contained some rare old record catalogs. I did the best job I could taking notes from them, not only for myself but for the benefit of all record collectors who read my *HOBBIES* articles.

I was also able to examine a file of *The Phonogram*, published by the Edison Company's advertising manager, Herbert A. Shattuck, during the years 1902 through 1922. Most of these I had never before seen. Now

I'll share my notes with you, even though it means some interruptions of this article's continuity.

#### II. Notes from "the Phonogram" Catalogs

The first several issues of the *Phonogram* were remarkably uninteresting to a record collector. Mr. Shattuck seemed to be more inclined to write facetiously about various kinds of remarkable birds than about phonographs and records.

I soon discovered, however, that a good many records had been made on the huge concert cylinders, 5 inches in diameter, that never appeared on the smaller standard cylinders. And in 1900 the larger records were numbered separately.

The July, 1900, *Phonogram* solved a mystery of years standing. When I visited the late John L. Nortons, Sr. and Jr., of Roxbury, Mass., in October, 1946, they played for me a concert cylinder the title of which they understood to be "Pickings from 'Puck,'" and the artist's name as Felix Haley.

Immediately before the clearly announced "Pickings from 'Puck,'" there were a couple of words which John and Jack insisted were "I hollered!"

They contended that the comedian was recording over and over by the "round;" and apparently hadn't spoken loud enough on the preceding try. Then, maintained the Nortons, somebody had said, "Holler louder next time."

So the comedian, before making his announcement had turned and replied, "I hollered!"

I contended that this was ridiculous and that the word "hollered" wouldn't have been used, although I admitted I couldn't say just what those opening words were.

Well, the *Phonogram* revealed that the performer's name was Felix Haney, not Haley; and the record number was B409. As for the title, it was "Hi Holler on 'Pickings from 'Puck.'"

In other words, "Hi Holler" (not "I hollered!") was a "rube" character, like "Uncle Josh," and it was he who was supposed to be reading funny—I didn't find them very funny—passages from "Puck."

Mr. Haney, who was a member of the "Way Down East" Company, also recorded B408, "Hi Holler Out Hunting." I wished that the Nortons could have lived to learn the truth about "Hi Holler."

A month earlier, the *Phonogram* cleared away the mystery of the first name of a whistler who had been known to me only as "Angela." Standard two-minute cylinder 7453, a whistling solo, "I Could Pick de Winner Wid My Two Eyes Shut" was listed as being by Nina Angela.

There's a good chance that Miss Angela was the first woman professional whistler to make a record.

August, 1900, brought eight concert-

The big white house to which Jim Walsh returned after his Washington visit.

The two small black objects are Roger (near the steps) and Lucky Jim, walking toward him. They probably kept many watchful vigils while their master was away.

Two views of the Capitol at Washington being prepared for the presidential inauguration.





Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens.

size banjo records by Vess L. Ossman. And in July, violin records had been listed by "Wallace Fredericks."

I don't think I'm jumping to conclusions when I say this must have been Frederick Wallace Hager. He was Charles D'Almaine's only rival as a cylinder record violinist when the 20th century began.

How many cylinder collectors have heard a record by May Kelso, who made a few duets with John Bieling around 1900? The November, 1900, Phonogram candidly admitted she was known on the stage as Maym Kelso, but this was changed to May for phonograph use because the machine wouldn't clearly reproduce that final "m" when the announcement was made.

Miss Kelso began appearing in farce-comedy in 1888 and spent three and one-half years with the cast of the Russell Comedians in "The City Directory." Becoming tired of the stage, she "retired," but returned in the autumn of 1898 and in 1899 sang in "Broadway to Tokyo."

Will N. Steele, a monologist, was born in New York, June 25, 1871. I learned, and was a partner of Thomas W. Murray in "A Night at the Players Club" and "Talking It Over." He began making Edison records in 1899.

Still in November, 1900, the Phonogram said the first Negro recording artist, George W. Johnson, "The Whistling Coon," was born in 1846 and moved North in 1873. He came close to being the very first recording artist, for he was said to have made tin-foil records in 1877, the year Edison invented the phonograph.

The same issue brought a surprise in a biographical sketch of one of the most popular and famous of old-time recordings artists, Byron G. Harlan.

When Harlan died in 1936 his age was said to be 75 and I have always seen the date of his birth given as 1861. This article, however, said he was born in Kansas in 1857, which would have made

him 42 when he began singing for records in 1899.

He got his first chance in the show business when Gus Brigham, a traveler for "the Yanes Piano House," heard him singing while he was working as a hotel clerk in South Dakota, and told the manager of the Hess Opera Company about him.

Harlan became a member of Newton Beers' "Lost in London" company, then was with Hoyt's "A Texas Steer" for three and one-half years, playing the part of the private secretary. After that he had his own "Lost in London" company before Thomas A. Edison engaged him to make records.

On the basis of photographs and other "circumstantial evidence," I believe the 1861 date, rather than 1857, is correct for the year of Harlan's birth.

Billy Golden and George Diamond were mentioned as the first two "professionals" to sing for the phonograph. They were said to have made 10 steamboat trips from St. Louis to New York as singing and dancing comedians.

Golden had worked on southern plantations, picking cotton, and learned his flawless Negro dialect. He had been on the stage 26 years. And he was to continue to make records for almost another quarter of a century.

In December, 1900, it was revealed that James H. White remade some of the "Casey" monologs after Russell Hunting went to England in 1899. White later was manager of Edison's English business before starting his own White Record Co. He had been a photographer for the early Edison movies.

From the January, 1901, issue I learned, or was reminded, that my old friend, the late Albert C. Campbell, was born in Brooklyn in 1872 and made his theatrical debut with the Philadelphia-Manhattan Opera Company.

The article said Calvin G. Child of the Gramophone Company, who later became head of Victor's Red Seal activities, supervised Campbell's first recording session.

I was surprised to learn that Campbell was soloist in 1900-01 with the Edison Male Quartet, for I had imagined that this ensemble from the beginning had been the same as the Haydn Quartet combination.

The January, 1901, Phonogram also said that Prof. D. Wormser, whose zither solos were recorded by several companies over a good many years, was born in 1850 in Landau, South Germany.

A baritone recording artist of the period, M. A. Guarini, was born in 1865 at Mirabelle, Eclano, Italy, and was said to be a member of the "noble family." He had been admitted to the Naples Conservatory of Music in December, 1883.

A month later came the information that Charles D'Almaine was born in Hull, England, June 13, 1866, to French and English parents, both musical. He began study of the violin at the age of 10, "concertized" for two years through Great Britain, and as a boy prodigy played for Princess Louise at Inverary Castle, Scotland.

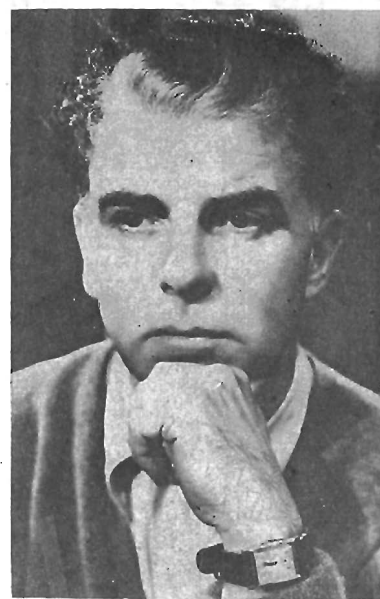
He studied for five years in London with J. T. Carrodus and was his favorite pupil. In 1889 D'Almaine came to the United States with the Balmoral Scotch Concert Party and remained in this country.

I was interested to find that Eugen Ysaye, the celebrated Belgian violinist, had praised the playing of Belle Richards, one of D'Almaine's pupils, and predicted she would become the greatest woman violinist. But I'm afraid this is the first time I ever heard of Belle Richards.

February, 1901, brought the news that W. H. Sedgewick had made a sound-effects record depicting noises made by a train. And in April came the information that A. L. Sweet, who made Edison cornet records, was born in 1875 in Dansville, N. Y.

A photograph of Senorita Maria Godoy (the first time I had seen her given name) was published in August. The month preceding there had been one of Harry Macdonough, who in three years had won wide popularity as a tenor recorder of sentimental ballads.

Also in August was some comment on Marguerite Newton, then a well-known soprano record maker. I remember that



Emlyn Williams as himself.

the late John Bieling told Stephen Fasset that Miss Newton was married to George P. Watson, the yodler. But when she died, more than 20 years ago, the Billboard published an obituary, which I clipped but have lost, and there was no mention of Watson, who had died in 1926.

The Phonogram said Miss Newton sang as a contralto when she was 15 and was known as "The Little Annandale." Two years later she was with Conreid's Opera Company, and a year after that with the Chicago Church Choir Opera Co. She had diphtheria and retired for two years, but then joined Kreling's Road Opera Company in San Francisco.

In 1892, after appearing at Koster and Bial's, she "drifted into vaudeville." While she was in Cleveland in 1893, "Mr. Guion, manager of the Ohio Phonograph Co., decided she would make a good phonograph singer." She had been working four years for Edison in 1901.

Next I came to a Berliner record catalog, which had been owned by Calvin Child. It contained this reference to Vess Ossman II's illustrious grandfather, "The Banjo King," the original Vess, and expressed this opinion of the tone quality of Berliner records:

"Ossman, the Greatest Banjo Soloist, says: 'The tone quality is so nearly like the actual sound of the instrument itself as to deceive the most expert.'"

Artists making Berliner records in—There's a good chance that Miss Antome only as "Angela." Standard two-



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NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry he cannot reply to most of the mail he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and cannot tell anyone where they can be bought or sold, except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot exchange tape recordings or make tapes, cannot supply back copies of this magazine, and has no record catalogs or other phonograph reference material for sale.

cluded "Sousa's own band." It, under the direction of Arthur Pryor, rather than the cantankerous Mr. Sousa who had a contempt for the talking machine and originated the derisive expression, "canned music," had been playing for Berliner for five years.

Also included were the U. S. Marine Band, directed by William H. Santelmann; the Royal Italian Band, conducted by Signor G. Peluso; the Metropolitan Orchestra (a title which Victor took over from Berliner), directed by S. H. Kendle and Frank J. Kelly.

Herbert L. Clarke, Walter E. Rogers, Emil Keneke, Thomas Clark, and John Martin, were cornet soloists. Simone Manita played the euphonium, and Signor Palma, the trumpet.

Among the vocalists and comedians were George Broderick, J. J. Fisher, S. H. Dudley, Press Eldridge, Dan W. Quinn, and Arthur Collins. It was a surprise to find him singing "On the Road to Mandalay."

Others were Harry Macdonough, Edward M. Favor, Joseph Natus, Will F. Denny, F. A. Giannini, E. Francisco (a pseudonym for Emilio de Gogorza), Herr Carl Bernhardt, and Florence Hayward. She was doing duets with Macdonough.

Included, too, were the Haydn Quartet of Rycroft, Macdonough, Dudley, and Hooley; the Original Lyric Trio; and "Messrs. Marion, Miller, Marsh, and Rapp" doing "Blind Tom" on 0647.

There were some "minstrel first parts," by Dudley, Hooley, Macdonough, Frank E. Banta, the Metropolitan Orchestra and Chorus; and some comic sketches and recitations by Billy Golden, William F. Hooley, Len Spencer, and George Graham.

Time was running out, so I didn't try to copy much information about the titles of the Berliner artists' records.

### III. Library Conference and Emlyn Williams Recital

The Library of Congress has a room for visitors who feel tired or ill to lie down in. So I took a brief "rest break" after making all the notes there was time for, and before going with Don to lunch at the restaurant in the Supreme Court building. With us was Bill Lichtenwanger, head of the Library's music reference division.

One of those odd coincidences that seem to occur more often to me than to anyone else was involved in my meeting with the genial Mr. Lichtenwanger, for during World War II he was a government cryptanalyst and worked with my brother, Chad Walsh. In fact, Bill remarked, "Chad broke me in."

I obtained a guard's permission to take some pictures of the Supreme courtroom, but the result was disappointing. The room was locked, and dark and although I used flash bulbs all I got was some vivid coloring from the red curtains at the door.

Since returning home I have had fun telling awe-stricken friends that while I was dining in the restaurant Chief Justice Earl Warren came in, looked intently at me, walked over and asked if I were not Jim Walsh, explaining that his wife had taken HOBBIES for many years and that he never missed reading "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists."

It has been worth relating that whopper to observe the bulging eyes of my listeners and have them say, "Did he really?" But I have always gone farther and saddened them by admitting there isn't a word of truth to the yarn. The court wasn't in session and I didn't see

any of the justices in the cafeteria-style eating place or anywhere else.

In mid-afternoon Don and I had a conference with half a dozen Library officials concerning my desire to bequeath my records, phonographs, reference material, diaries, letters, phonographs, and heaven knows what-all to the Library.

I was assured the Library would be glad to accept it and that a form would be sent to my Roanoke lawyer, Arthur E. Smith, for his guidance in preparing the bequest.

I made careful note of all the names of all the dignitaries with whom I talked, but, with my invariable bad luck in losing things, the sheet containing those notes is the one thing I brought back from Washington that I can't find. So, rather than rely on memory and run the risk of omitting names of any of those who treated me with such courtesy and consideration, I shall omit names altogether.

Don and I had supper in the restaurant where we had eaten lunch the day before, then returned to the Library for the Emlyn Williams recital.

We went into the Coolidge Auditorium. Incidentally it was named, not for President Calvin Coolidge, but for Mrs. Elizabeth Coolidge, a Washington woman who had provided the money to have it set aside as a center for hearing string quartet recitals and other fine music.

Don told me as we entered, that Mr. Williams was appearing under the auspices of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Poetry and Literature Fund, and that the gracious donor, Mrs. Whittall was present. She proved to be a black-clad lady, aged 96, sitting in the rear of the auditorium, the seats of which are arranged in rows sloping gradually downward.

I had hoped to see Emlyn Williams during the afternoon, but had been told he wouldn't be available until after his performance, at which time he could be called on in his dressing room.

At the appointed hour the curtain rose and it seemed that Charles Dickens, complete with red carnation and red watch fob, strode briskly upon the stage. The desk he used was the exact replica of the one used in Dickens' public readings 100 years ago.

"Dickens," of course, was Williams. But now it occurs to me that, to give you an idea of his performance, I may as well quote the account which I had promised to prepare for the Roanoke Times entertainment section, and which I did write within a few minutes after I returned to work Wednesday afternoon.

It was done in haste because Jesse Chapman, editor of the Saturday entertainment section, told me that if he had the article "right now" he could use it the following Saturday, while it was still timely; otherwise there would be a delay of a week or more.

Under the heading of "Emlyn Williams, Dickens Revisited," the piece was accompanied by a picture of "Emlyn Williams, made up as Charles Dickens" and one of another person who was identified only as "Walsh" and as a "Staff Writer."

Here is the text:

"A man dead for more than 90 years came to life in Washington, D.C., last Monday evening.

"The scene of the apparent resurrection was the Coolidge auditorium of the Library of Congress. Before a capacity audience the curtain rose and revealed nothing much except a reading desk whose color ranged somewhere between pink and red.

"There was a few moments wait and then onto the stage strode briskly—so it seemed to the viewers—the greatest English Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens, who died June 9, 1870.

"Dickens" bowed stiffly to his audience, carefully removed and folded his white gloves, which he laid in a special compartment of his desk, picked up a book, frowned — it was not the one he wanted—then picked up another and began reading from an early chapter of 'Our Mutual Friend.' And as he read it was almost impossible to believe that Charles Dickens himself was not on stage, reading from his own books, as he did from 1853 to 1870.

"It wasn't Dickens, of course. The reader was the distinguished English playwright, author and actor, Emlyn Williams, who, like me, is a member of the Dickens Fellowship. He and I had corresponded and he had let it be known that he wanted me to attend his performance.

"That performance, as I have indicated, was truly remarkable. The reading desk was an exact replica of Dickens' own, now preserved by the Dickens Fellowship in Dickens House, London, and Williams' make-up was almost uncannily realistic. He evidently had been at pains, too, to find out all he could about the timbre of Dickens' voice, his characteristic intonations and the manner in which he impersonated his immortal 'brain children.' The result was a work of art.

"Williams read scenes from five of the standbys he has been giving for several years: 'Moving in Society,' from 'Our Mutual Friend'; 'Paul,' from 'Domby and Son'; 'Mr. Bob Sawyer Gives a Bachelor's Party,' from 'Pickwick Papers'; 'Mr. Chops' from 'A House to Let,' and 'The Fancy Ball,' from 'A Tale of Two Cities.'

"Also included were four new adaptations Williams is offering for the first time this season, including 'A Call Upon

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a Strange Man,' from 'The Black Veil,' one of Dickens' first short stories, published in 1836; and 'Once Upon a Time,' from 'The Battle of Life.'

"Emlyn Williams himself is a slightly built, white-haired man with a gentle voice and a friendly manner. Meeting him in person, it was hard to believe he had seemed the veritable Charles Dickens just a few minutes before."

I have just noticed for the first  
(Continued on page 41)

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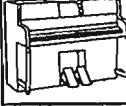
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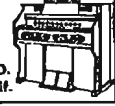
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my56p

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

time that, either because of a printer's error or a desire to make the article fit into an allotted space, a few lines have been left out of the paragraph I wrote describing the four new scenes Williams presented.

They should include "Moving Higher in Society," from "Little Dorrit," and "A Bedtime Story for a Good Child," from the "Nurse's Story" article in "The Uncommercial Traveler." Williams brought down the house with this concluding offering, a masterpiece of serio-comic horror, relating how one of Dickens' childhood nurses had frightened him into hysterics by telling him gruesome stories, then wished him pleasant dreams.

Sitting in front of Don and me during the performance were Edward N. Waters, assistant chief of the Library of Congress Music Division, and Mrs. Waters, a charming lady who seemed pleased that I had brought two books for Mr. Williams to sign — one his autobiography, "George" (his full name is George Emlyn Williams) and the other an account of his acting career.

Mr. Waters is author of "Victor Herbert: A Life in Music," which I have. He asked me if I knew where he could obtain the six 'cello records Herbert made for Victor in 1911-12 (I believe he said he has two), but I don't own any, and couldn't tell him where they could be had.

Two or three rows below me sat a stocky, middle-aged man with a heavy mustache. His appearance seemed tantalizingly familiar. I felt he was someone I should know, and he turned several times and looked at me as if he thought he ought to recognize me.

I mentioned him to Don, who said the man attended most of the events in Coolidge Auditorium, but Don had never known who he was. It seems to me now that the gentleman had a striking resemblance to photographs of the late William Faulkner, whom I never saw in person. Perhaps it was the similarity to Faulkner that gave me the impression I had met the man somewhere.

The audience having reluctantly permitted Emlyn Williams to leave the stage, after giving him an ovation based on admiration for the learning and skill with which he had brought Charles Dickens back to life, Don and I slowly made our way back stage.

Our progress was impeded by the large number of other Williams' admirers who had the same idea. Several persons were ahead of us, but none took up much time. So within a few minutes I was receiving a cordial greeting from Mr. Williams, who graciously autographed the books and photos I had brought. He said he had wanted to see me during the afternoon and would have phoned but didn't know any number that would reach me. I gave him copies of HOBBIES for Decem-

ber, 1958, and January, 1959, which included my article on the recordings from Dickens' works which had been done up to then, including two long-playing records which the accomplished gentleman before me had made and which I have.

I learned that he would be back in Washington in January, and we expressed hope for another, and longer, meeting. Then I left because there were still men and women waiting to tell Mr. Williams how much they had enjoyed his recital.

In the preceding paragraph I said I gave Mr. Williams two copies of HOBBIES, but, to be more accurate, I gave them, then took them away.

I didn't mean to do it, of course, but in picking up the autographed books and photos I also unthinkingly bore away the magazines — something I didn't discover until Don and I had gone to Union Station, where I expected within the next 30 minutes to board the train for an early morning reunion with Roger, Nipper, Petey, and Lucky Jim.

When I told Don what I had unintentionally done he said we would have time to drive back to the Library, a distance of only three or four blocks, and try to find Mr. Williams, to give him the HOBBIES a second time. We did go back, but the dressing room was dark and Emlyn Williams was gone.

I handed the magazines to Don, who said he would mail them, with a note of apology, to Mr. Williams the next day. As always with that sterling gentleman, Don Leavitt kept his word, and both he and I later received nice notes of appreciation from Mr. Williams.

### IV. Home and Reunion With the "Family"

The train came, and Don and I separated with deep regret on my part, although the feeling was lightened by the knowledge that I should be at home somewhere around 6:00 o'clock the next morning, to greet four probably melancholic cats and let them know I didn't mean to leave them again any time soon.

I never can sleep on a train or bus, but there seemed nothing to do but curl up uncomfortably in a seat and try to pass the night. A feeling of intense discomfort still assails me when I think of those half dozen hours, but I added another to my vast collection of personal coincidences.

When the conductor began making his rounds, somebody called to him, and my sleepy-eyed astonishment was great when he replied: "Wait a minute until I can take this ticket from Mr. Walsh!" He then asked if I were still living in Vinton and how my cats were getting along.

Although he knew me I didn't recognize him, but hated to admit it. Many conductors who make the "run" between Roanoke and Washington live in Roanoke, so I assume he was one of the many Roanokers

who knew me by sight but whom I don't know.

Lying curled up and contorted, I remembered that when I was returning on a bus from Washington in June, 1962, I took a seat behind the driver, who knew me at once, though I had believed him a stranger. He talked to me all the way into Roanoke about local politics and other topics with which we were both familiar.

I also remembered that when I had reached home from that bus ride, my dearly loved cat, Gray, who was to live only another three months, was waiting in the yard to greet me. As I had entered the house, Roger, Nipper, and Petey all came joyously, and poor Percy, the Pitiful Persian, had appeared a few minutes later, coming up through the basement door.

Within a month Petey had disappeared to be gone for 18 months, or until after Percy's death. As for Lucky Jim, he wasn't in the world, or even thought of in June, 1962.

I recalled that a picture of Gray was in the January, 1959, HOBBIES I had brought for Mr. Williams, and I kept thinking about a compassionate poem, entitled "A Message," which Dorothy Foster Brown, conductor of HOBBIES' Button Department, had written when she learned how I was grieving over the loss of Gray, whom I almost consider the only angel I have known swathed in cat fur.

This is what Miss Brown wrote:

"Dear friend and master, I am still  
The cat you loved and knew;  
I have not changed but simply wait  
Our friendship to renew  
"Because you cannot see me now  
You think that I am dead;  
But death is just a word, you know,  
So please be comforted.  
"In parting for a little time  
We bow to fate's decree;  
But my heart is filled with joy and pride  
When you remember me.  
"Don't grieve, dear master, but be sure  
Some bright, celestial day  
You will find again your faithful friend,  
Your ever-loving Gray."

I'm sure if Gray knew of those sentiments Miss Brown attributes to him he would be grateful. Gray was so sweet and good there is nothing I can say that would remotely do him justice.

And so, with me intensely tired and intolerably sleepy but unable to drop off, the night wore away. Especially annoying were the long stops at several places, including Monroe, Va., (where "Steve," the engineer hero of "The Wreck of the Old 97" was given his orders); and Lynchburg.

The train stayed so long at these towns that I became familiar, staring gloomily out of the window, with the individual beauty of almost every small rock in the railway road-bed.

Shortly before 6:00 A.M., the train rattled into Vinton. It passed within 200 feet of the side of my house, and I was glad to see the

(Continued on page 44)

shioned in the shape of an elephant's head. The entire body is often portrayed on textiles — alone or with other animals.

Wooden grave ornaments in Sumatra sometimes represent the deceased riding an elephant. A favorite decoration of Hindu-Javanese gold rings is the elephant design.

Designs of the Indonesian kris hilt usually represent the human figure. However, animal-style ornaments are also applied in this manner. Elephant-form kris hilts in the Djakarta Museum are made of silver, iron, brass, wood, and ivory.

These decorative designs are elaborately and artistically carved, engraved, and embossed. Some are encrusted with contrasting metals, enriched by *repoussé* work, *damascened* inlays and/or overlays.

The horse was taken to the Archipelago in ancient times. Bronze kettle-drums of the Dong-Son culture were decorated with designs of horses and horsemen. A stone image of an ancestor often represented a man on horseback.

Sumba Island, east of Java, has, from early times, been a horse-breeding country, so it is only natural to find this domesticated animal reproduced there in decorative design. Shawls worn by Sumba men show stylized figures of horses. These garments were made near Kampera, East Sumba.

Gold open-work medallions of Hindu-Javanese origin represent the sun god, Surya, on his horse. This same figure formed the keystone of a cupola on the sepulchral monument Sawentar, near Blitar, East Java. Museum examples include: Figures of a man on a horse and a kerbau — perhaps castings — superimposed on the upper portion of a bronze kettle from Borneo.

A Balinese iron pinang nut cutter, encrusted with gold, bears a horse-head design with intricately carved diaper designs of swastikas and sun symbols.

Gold kris cases are ornamented with the sun god on his horse, the *naga* (serpent), and the *garuda* or sun eagle.

The lion has never been native to Indonesia, though found in ancient India. Therefore, as a form of decorative design, the lion arrived in Indonesia with the Hindu culture. This vigorous animal was reproduced in bronze, silver, wrought steel, and in splendid wood-carvings.

Handles of Javanese bronze urns were frequently fashioned in the form of a lion — natural and stylized. Silver tripods, resting on three lion supports, were used by priests in Bali to sustain the small vessel containing holy water.

Also the winged lion appears in Indonesian art. From Buleleng, Bali, come elaborate open-work wood carvings which were used as window screens. Two facing lions are represented on each screen. Boldly carved winged-lion capitals have been taken from columns at Sebati in South Bali.

The graceful lines of the stag have

been artistically applied to Indonesian ornament. Prehistoric bronze kettle-drums sometimes carry a cast representation of a man capturing a deer with a lasso.

Early Javanese necklaces were decorated with splendid stag-head designs. Bronze figures of the stag were created in South Malang, Java. Temple shrines in Bali are frequently decorated with the head of a stag carved in wood.

Iron receptacles for preparing dye were sometimes made in the form of an elongated stag. Found in a Balinese manuscript is an interesting interpretation of a *rainbow*, with each end representing a stag's head.

The mythical *makara*, shaped like a fish — with an elephant trunk — was introduced as a decorative design in Indonesia with the Hindu culture. The *makara* — the significance of its art form uncertain — is usually found in the framework of temple entrances.

Gold disks in the form of a *makara* — sometimes two figures — distinctly having the form of a dolphin, are worn on headresses. The *makara* design, on bronze urns from the Hindu period, is sometimes stylized into plant forms, with the elephant's trunk still recognizable.

From the Hindu period, the Djakarta Museum has a bronze lamp in the form of a *makara*. The body serves as container for the oil. The wick is placed in the lower jaw. The lamp hangs from a heavy iron chain, the lowest link of which is embellished with a fine casting of a parrot, the Indonesian god of love.

—o—

Indonesian Decorative Design, Part VI - Geometrical Figures will appear in the April issue of Hobbies

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 41)

lights I had left turned on were still burning, also that the house hadn't burned down.

I strained my eyes in the hope of seeing calico Roger, part-Siamese Nipper, Maltese Petey, or coal-black Jim, but in the dim morning light it was impossible to detect furry objects so small.

Despite this slight disappointment, I was happy, knowing that the family reunion to which I had been looking forward for three days was now about to come to pass.

Leaving the Norfolk and Western passenger station, I got into a taxi. My eagerness to be at home was too great for me to wait for a Vinton bus. Within less than 10 minutes I was at home. But there

was no sign of a cat in the yard or on the front porch.

Vaguely apprehensive, I unlocked the door — and there stood Petey, wailing a greeting, while Nipper peered down from the stairs above, wanting to run to me but fearful of his larger and stronger enemy, Pete.

The first thing Petey did was make it clear that he had hurt himself while I had been reveling and roistering abroad! He held up one paw, showed that he couldn't touch the floor with it, and meowed piteously.

I thought he probably had stuck something in his foot but when I took him to a veterinarian a few days later, I was told nothing was in the foot and he had no broken or cracked bones, but that he apparently strained a shoulder muscle — probably, I suspect, in making a sudden lunge at Nipper!

The vet said the trouble would clear up without any attention other than Pete's sagacity in keeping the foot off the floor, but at this writing he is still limping and still complaining.

A few days after my return, my right arch began to give me so much trouble I could hardly walk, so one night, when Petey met me at the door, I held up my foot to indicate I couldn't bear to touch it to the ground, and meowed to him for some of the sympathy he had expected from me. My trouble soon cleared up, and I wish his would.

Within two minutes after I reached home, Nipper ventured downstairs, and Roger came in from the storage house in which he usually sleeps. They made it clear they were overjoyed to see me. But when I went to bed I was worried because I hadn't had a glimpse of Lucky Jim, who had so frolicsomeness escorted me down the hill that Saturday morning, which now seemed about six months distant, so much had happened since.

A couple of hours later I got up, dressed, and started down the hill to eat breakfast and replenish the cats' food supply. They had almost entirely cleaned up the plates Lloyd Grose had set out for them.

In the yard I met that blessed shiny little Lucky Jim, who went into a spasm of juvenile delinquent hysterics at sight of me, and once more raced ahead to the foot of the hill. He waited for my return and this time he didn't have long to wait.

The cats were fed with their favorite delicacy, beef liver, and I went back to bed, to stay there most of the time until Wednesday morning. I was happy to be at home but glad—in spite of Petey's injury, which probably would have happened anyway if I hadn't left — that I had gone to Washington.

Thanks to Don and Nadine Leavitt, Betty and Dan Abramson, Sue and Vess Ossman, Emlyn Williams, and lots of other fine folks, I had enjoyed a truly memorable three days.

(The End)



# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH



SHIRLEY SPAULDING—  
First American woman to make banjo  
records (for Edison, 1920-21).

This picture appeared with an erroneous  
caption in our January issue

## A QUIZ ON THE PHONOGRAPH'S EARLY DAYS

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

More than a century ago, Charles Stuart Calverley, a witty and learned lecturer at Christ College, Cambridge, England, wrote an examination paper asking difficult and obscure questions concerning Charles Dickens' humorous classic, "The Pickwick Papers." The quiz has been regarded as a model since it first appeared in 1857.

It has occurred to me that HOBBIES readers might find amuse-

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry that he is unable to reply to most of the correspondence he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and is unable to tell anyone where to buy or sell them except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot make tape recordings or exchange tapes with readers, and he cannot supply back copies of this magazine. These have to be ordered direct from HOBBIES, 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605.

ment, interest, and information in a similar questionnaire dealing with the early days of sound recording and the activities and personalities of the pioneer recording artists.

So I have compiled a list of 50 questions which should test anyone's knowledge of the pre-electric period. Reference will be made chiefly to "popular" artists, although there will be some mention of those classed as "personalities" or "celebrities." A few electric records may be mentioned. The questions will first be given, followed by the answers.

To the extent of my specialized knowledge at this time, the answers are accurate. The recorded music field is so vast, that I am frequently surprised to find that information or beliefs which I have relied upon as wholly accurate must be modified in the light of subsequent discoveries.

I have never hesitated to admit my errors. And I shall be equally willing to publish corrections if I learn I have been wrong in any of the answers I publish here.

Some of the information contained in this article may be found by diligent search of HOBBIES during the 22 years I have been writing a monthly department, but much of it, I think, has never been published.

The first 10 questions and answers appear this month. The others will follow in the next HOBBIES.

### Now the questions:

1. What is the rarest record in the world? (Warning: This may be regarded as a trick question.)
2. What is the oldest existing record?
3. Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, Ada Jones, Cal Stewart, and the American (or Premier) Quartet were best known for their comedy efforts. Name one record each in which they sang hymns.
4. Name another record in which Harlan sang the tenor part of a religious composition in a duet with a baritone other than Collins.
5. Who sang in the chorus of Billy Murray's Columbia record (A643) of "The Yankiana Rag?"
6. What famous Victor record by Vernon Dalhart was issued with a certain coupling, then reissued the following month with a different number and another song on the other side?
7. What Victor record, in which Murray and the International Novelty Orchestra participated, had a title seemingly referring to a famous

court action of 1925, but apparently was never officially issued?

8. What Dalhart record, issued near the end of the acoustic period, kept the same number—apparently for "good luck" reasons—when he remade it electrically?

9. Who was the first woman to make a banjo record?

10. What Peerless Quartet record was announced in a monthly supplement but dropped a month later? (To be continued)

—O—

Those are this month's questions.

### Now the answers:

(To the best of my information and belief.)

1. No record is entitled to rate as the "rarest" in the world. There must be a good many recordings of which only one copy has survived, and since scarcity and demand are the determining factors of rarity, one might be as rare as the other. If any of the cylinders Billy Murray made for Bacigalupi Brothers in San Francisco in 1897 have survived they would be among the lot.

Perhaps as rare a record as any was acquired in 1962 by C. Hilding Bergquist of Minneapolis, Minn. This is a 10-inch Monarch, 3296, of "A Frangosa March," played by a concertina virtuoso, Prof. Maccann, and issued by Eldridge R. Johnson before the Victor Talking Machine Co. came into being.

This record is a mystery. It could not have been made before 1901, when 10-inch records were first introduced, and its number belongs to the 1901 period.

However, it is not listed in the complete Victor record catalog for February, 1902, and the Victor files contain no mention of any such disc ever having been made. There is no 3296 in the Victor numerical lists of the period and no indication that Maccann, who was an Englishman, ever made a record.

Yet Bergquist says his copy, which he obtained in apparently unplayed condition, has the customary spoken announcement of the early Victor days. (Who, I wonder, was the bland-voiced gentleman who did the Victor announcing? Could it have been Mr. Johnson himself?) The record seems to be an unsolvable mystery. Possibly it was an imported recording, but why doesn't it appear in any Victor catalog or inventory of master records? Bergquist probably has the only copy.

2. Most likely, the oldest record still extant is a white wax cylinder made October 5, 1888, on which Sir Arthur Sullivan congratulates Thomas A. Edison for inventing the phonograph but says he shudders to think how much horrible music it will cause to be recorded. (Sullivan should be alive today and hear the stuff the teen-agers gulp down!) The cylinder has been dubbed onto a long-playing record, "The Sound of Fame."

3. You'd never guess it from the (Turn to page 36)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

title, but Collins and Harlan sing "Bringing in the Sheaves" on their Victor record of a descriptive sketch, "The Cat and the Fly Paper." Oddly, Collins takes the part of the wife and Harlan of the husband, as he also does in their Victor disc of "The Rooster and the Hen."

Ada Jones sings part of a hymn, beginning "My Days Are Passing Swiftly By," in "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," and Cal Stewart leads in singing "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand" in the Columbia record of "Evening Time at Punkin Center." The Premier-American Quartet sings "Oh, Come All Ye Faithful" at the end of the Aeolian-Vocalion hill-and-dale record, "Christmas Eve in the Old Homestead."

4. In 1902 Harlan and Frank G. Stanley made a Columbia record of Faure's "Palm Branches," also known as "The Palms." Stanley leads with Harlan joining in the chorus.

5. I'd like to be sure of the answer to this one myself. The "chorus" sounds like a lone woman singing with Murray in the last refrain.

Examination of the list of Columbia artists in 1909, the year the record was first sold, makes it appear the "chorus" was a vaudeville comedienne, Stella Tobin, who made a few Columbia and Edison records. The voice strongly resembles hers on the two-minute Edison cylinder of "Will He Answer Goo-goo?" The soprano certainly isn't Ada Jones. Elise Stevenson and Lucy Isabelle Marsh are possibilities, but, lacking definite information, I prefer Tobin. And then maybe there is more than one woman. A similar "chorus" sings with Bob Roberts on Columbia A664, "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

6. Dalhart's Victor record of "The Death of Floyd Collins" was issued in November, 1925, numbered 19779, and with "The Wreck of the Shenandoah" on the A side, indicating the latter was considered the more important of the two.

In December, 1925, it was reissued as 19821 with the Floyd Collins song as the A side, and "Dream of the Miner's Child" on the reverse. Victor researchers today are unable to give any explanation of the change.

Possibly the Shenandoah's fatal crash was considered too "gruesome" for hill-billy style treatment, but other companies issued Dalhart's versions of the song without any apparent protest.

7. Here is another baffler. About a year ago I went into the Rescue Gospel Mission in Roanoke, Va., and looked through some albums filled with old records.

I came to attention when I found one containing Victor 19832, a fox-trot, "Monkey Biz-ness (Down in Tennessee)" on one side, and "She's Drivin' Me Wild" on the other. The first side was played by Nat Shilkret's "International Novelty Orches-

tra," with a vocal refrain by Billy Murray, and the second by Don Bes-tor's Orchestra.

The number indicated the record was intended for issue around December, 1925, but, as an almost life-long Billy Murray collector, I was puzzled, because I couldn't remember ever hearing of such a Victor. Excitedly, I paid five cents for the virtually mint copy and took it home.

Examination of my Victor catalogs and supplements for 1925 and 1926 revealed no trace of any such record. The title obviously was inspired by the John T. Scopes evolution trial at Dayton, Tenn., although the words actually refer only to a young man's annoyance because of the "monkey biz-ness" of which his Tennessee sweetheart was guilty.

It struck me that the record probably had been prepared and a few copies issued, then suppressed at the death of William Jennings Bryan, who had gone to Dayton to help prosecute Scopes for violating Tennessee's anti-evolution statute. But a little checking revealed that Bryan died a few months before the record should have appeared.

I have since written to Victor headquarters in New York and received no helpful information. The company's books show that the two sides were recorded in the autumn of 1925, but there is nothing to indicate they were ever offered for sale.

So how come I found one in a Roanoke Gospel Mission store? And how many copies were sneaked out of the pressing plant, I wonder? Needless to say, I treasure that undeniably rare record.

8. The Dalhart record that retained its original number after being remade was 19427, combining "The Prisoner's Song" and "The Wreck of the Old 97." The acoustic version, issued late in 1924, was the biggest selling vocal record ever made, up to that time.

Perhaps the company—or, more likely, Dalhart—was superstitious and wanted the same number kept for the improved electric version. Many records were electrically remade, of course, but as a rule were given new numbers.

9. No doubt some readers will answer "Ruby Brooks," when asked to name the first woman to make a banjo record, but Ruby Brooks, who died about 1906, was a man and a member of the vaudeville team of Brooks and Denton.

England appears to have the distinction of producing the first commercially issued record by a woman. In July, 1916, His Master's Voice cataloged B648, "Home, Sweet Home" and "Kettledrums," played by Miss Helen Sealy. Like the American banjoist, Fred Van Eps, Miss Sealy also played the violin and, unlike Van Eps, she made some violin records.

The first American banjo record by a woman appears to have been Edison Diamond Disc 80625, "Royal Tourist—Novelette," played by the still active Shirley Spaulding. She

also made a few other Diamond Discs.

10. In March, 1921, Victor announced 18725, "I Used to Love You But It's All Over Now," sung by Henry Burr and the Peerless Quartet, and "Dolly (I Love You)," by the quartet.

The record was dropped from the April supplement and never appeared in a yearly catalog. It is hard to understand why it was summarily dismissed, since "I Used to Love You" became a successful song.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 33)

mother's tutoring, her renown could have been greater than it now is.

According to the notes supplied with the disc, Mignon Nevada (family name: Palmer) was born in Paris, on August 14, 1886. She made her debut at the Costanzi of Rome, as Rosina.

Further, she sang at the San Carlo of Lisbon, the Pergola of Florence, and in other cities, including London where she first appeared as Ophélie at Covent Garden, on October 3, 1910. Other engagements followed at La Monnaie of Brussels and, in 1923, at La Scala of Milan.

So far as I know, this recording of Mignon Nevada made for IRCC in 1938 and announced by her mother, is the only one existent of her voice.

—o—

## A SALUTE TO VETERANS

### Memories of World War I

This column is happy to count among its good friends of long standing the Memory Shop of Grand Rapids, Mich.

Formerly situated in Jackson Heights, N.Y., this pleasant record collectors' meeting place began its existence right after World War II, managed by the genial devotee of the historical disc, Arnold Jacobsen.

We were living in New York City then, and many a Thursday evening (courtesy of our baby sitter) we would dash over to this record haven, anticipating some lucky find.

These recollections stirred in my mind when I received from Memory Shop a Long Play disc commemorating World War I.

Originally, this collection of recordings made during the Great War, was prepared as a program for a Veterans Convention. The rousing reception it received from the boys and all who heard it, prompted the issuance of an LP.

Several scarce recordings are included on the Memory record by such popular celebrities as Nora Bayes (in her famous "Over There"), George M. Cohan, Arthur Fields, Al Jolson, Irving Berlin, and others.

Caruso and McCormack add their contribution to the War effort, and General John J. Pershing is heard in a short address made on a battle-

(Continued on page 43)

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A QUIZ ON THE PHONOGRAPH'S EARLY DAYS

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

11. Name one or more records of "The Arkansaw Traveler" not made by Len Spencer. (This refers to the comic talking sketch, not to country dance recordings.)

12. Name an early record of "Backyard Conversation Between Two Jealous Irish Washerwomen," in which Steve Porter, who is usually associated with this skit, did not take part.

13. Can you name a Columbia "Uncle Josh" record not made by Cal Stewart?

14. George Schweinfest was one of the best known flute and piccolo soloists of early days. Name any records in which he played instruments other than these.

15. What vaudeville comedian and his wife, a comedienne, made Columbia records separately but not as a duet team, in 1910?

16. Name a Columbia record issued one month by a comedian, then reissued the following month by a duet team.

17. In what Victor record does a famous comedian begin some high notes, but lets another tenor with a similar voice complete the notes for him?

18. What was the best selling record by Paul Whiteman's orchestra?

19. What Edison Diamond Disc had the highest sale?

20. In what year did candidates for the presidency of the United States first record campaign talks?

21. What was the best selling Co-

lumbia double-faced record from 1908 to 1911?

22. What was the first record of an act between a ventriloquist and his dummy?

23. Name the first quartet of four women to make records.

24. What famous Italian opera star recorded an American popular song partly in English and partly in French?

25. What operatic basso sang the vocal refrain of a Victor black label band record?

Those are this month's questions.

—O—

### Now the answers:

(To the best of my information and belief.)

11. Zonophone, around 1902, issued "The Arkansaw Traveler" as nine-inch record 5494, but it was done by the "Uncle Josh" man, Cal Stewart, instead of Len Spencer, who is popularly supposed to have held a vested interest in the comic sketch. Spencer died in December, 1914.

In 1923 Edison issued a Diamond Disc of the skit by Steve Porter and Ernest Hare. Porter, an old friend of Spencer's, was engaged at that time in remaking some of Len's old specialties, with Ada Jones and other artists. He also made "The Arkansaw Traveler" for Pathe and perhaps some minor companies.

12. In 1902 "Harlan and Spencer" recorded "A Backyard Conversation" for Columbia, on single-faced 398. Harlan of course was Byron G., but it isn't clear whether the Spencer was Len or his brother Harry, who made the notorious Columbia record purporting to be "President McKinley's Last Speech." When the record was remade by Porter, with whom it had been earlier identified, the 398 number was retained.

13. Another 1902 Columbia record was "Uncle Josh's Huskin' Bee," by "Spencer and Schweinfest." Again, I am not sure which Spencer took part. "Schweinfest" was George Schweinfest, who on this occasion saved a fiddle instead of blowing into his usual flute or piccolo.

14. Besides playing the fiddle in the record just mentioned, Schweinfest made a piano solo, BC cylinder 85083, "Yankiana—March and Two Step," which Columbia issued in November, 1906. Come to think of it, this probably was the first Columbia piano solo of popular music ever issued. It is, in fact, the first Columbia piano record of any sort, excluding those with piano accompaniments, to which I have found any reference.

15. The vaudeville comedian who made Columbia records in 1909-10 was Paul Southe. The comedienne, his wife, was the already mentioned Stella Tobin.

16. In April, 1910, Columbia issued, as record A800, Paul Southe's version of Harry Von Tilzer's great hit, "The Cubanola Glide," which was then sweeping the country. The May supplement announced that Southe's version, which I think was poor, had been replaced with one by Collins and Harlan. No explanation was given.

17. On Victor record 17245, "Beautiful Doll, Goodbye," by the American Quartet, Billy Murray starts several high notes but Walter Van Brunt, who happened to be present, was called on to finish them. Their voices are so similar it is almost impossible to detect the substitution. Ordinarily Billy had no trouble with high notes, but this was one time they just wouldn't respond.

18. Paul Whiteman told me his Victor record of "Three O'Clock in the Morning," issued late in 1922, was his best seller. He said it reached a total of 3,900,000 copies.

19. The biggest selling Edison Diamond Disc was Walter Van Brunt's "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen." Walter says he remade it some 15 times to please Mr. Edison. "Kathleen" was the inventor's favorite song. Total sales went to 1,500,000. Edison dealers made a point of always trying to sell it to a new customer by truthfully representing it to be "Mr. Edison's favorite record."

20. The year in which presidential candidates first recorded campaign talks was 1908, when both William H. Taft, Republican, and William J. Bryan, Democrat, made a number of records for Victor, Edison, and Columbia.

A 1908 Edison magazine advertisement says no presidential candidates had ever before made records. In recent years one or more long-playing records have been issued which purport to contain talks by William McKinley and Grover Cleveland, but it is obvious that these are "studio jobs," with artificial sounding applause.

It was the custom in those days to have staff artists record portions of speeches by noted politicians, and to issue them without giving the artist's name. "Cleveland" on one I have, sounds remarkably like Dan W. Quinn. Harry Spencer, Len Spencer, William F. Hooley and Frank C. Stanley recorded abbreviated versions of the speech McKinley made in Buffalo shortly before he was shot.

21. Old Columbia advertisements say the best-selling record the company had from 1908 to 1911 was A587, "The Herd Girl's Dream," played by George Stahl (he later spelled it Stell), violin; Marshall P. Lufsky, flute; and Paul Surth, harp. It had a banjo solo, "Invincible Eagle March," by Vess L. Ossman, on the other side. This record was remade in 1911 by the same trio, with a different selection on the B side, and

(Turn to page 36)

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry that he is unable to reply to most of the correspondence he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and is unable to tell anyone where to buy or sell them except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot make tape recordings or exchange tapes with readers, and he cannot supply back copies of this magazine. These have to be ordered direct from HOBBIES, 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605.



GILBERT as Boniface in  
"Le Jongleur de Notre Dame"

(This listing corrects an error made on page 32 of our January issue. The caption above erroneously appeared with a picture of Shirley Spaulding, first American woman to make banjo records for Edison—1920-1921)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 33)

His first big chance presented itself in the fall of 1929, when he made his debut at the Berlin State Opera, as Alfredo in "La Traviata," with Gitta Alpar in the part of Violetta.

One season in Berlin led to another important engagement, this time with the Vienna State Opera, as a guest artist. In the meantime, he also made guest appearances in London, Milan, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Brussels, Dresden, Munich, and Hamburg.

At the completion of his tour, he returned to Berlin and established permanent residence in the German capital he so loved.

Roswaenge endured the hardships of World War II, singing in concerts whenever he could after the opera houses in Berlin were closed because of heavy bombings. And as if these

troubles were not enough, he was suspected of being a foreign collaborator and interned in Krasnogorsk, Russia, from where he soon was transferred to Sweden.

Free, finally, the tenor felt the urge to sing more strongly than ever and patiently started anew, in Basel, where he had sung at the outset of his career.

Peace returned, the damaged Vienna State Opera had been rebuilt, and Roswaenge had the great joy of coming back to the scene of his former triumphs. It was then that he participated in the unforgettable presentation of "Turandot," as Calaf to the lovely Chinese Princess of the ill-fated Maria Cebotari.

From 1945 until 1960 he appeared in Vienna, Zurich, and other important music centers of Europe, visiting the United States for the first time in 1963. Roswaenge was married to the soprano Ilonka Holndorner, with whom he sang on occasion.

In closing, this department wishes The Record Collector success in this new enterprise. The manner in which the Roswaenge issue is presented is to be commended. The material on which the records are pressed is excellent, the artist's performance is faithfully reproduced, and the sound is of mirror-like clearness and life-like quality.

Perhaps, after a successful reception of this release, others of similar type will follow. Let us hope so.

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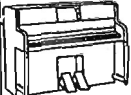
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

was numbered A1157. The 12-inch "Herd Girl's Dream," by Stehl, Lufsky, and Charles Schuetze, on A5378, was the biggest selling Columbia of that size during the same period.

22. The first ventriloquist-dummy act may have appeared on two little-known Edison Diamond Discs, "Phil and Jerry—parts 1 and 2" and "parts 3 and 4," issued in 1928 as 52208 and 52247. They were made by the late Phil Cook and give a realistic impression of a ventriloquism performance like those of Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. It is true that Len Spencer and Alfred S. Holt made a "Punch and Judy" record for Victor, 4554, which appeared in January, 1906. I have not heard the record, but judging from the catalog description it is not a ventriloquist act.

23. The first woman's ensemble to make records apparently was the Paloma Quartet, which had three single-faced offerings in the Victor supplement for February, 1903. They were said to be "not loud, but very good quality."

The titles were 1887, "La Paloma," 1889, "Medley of Popular Songs" (names not given), and 1900, "The Waterfall." I have no idea who the singers were, though they probably were a vaudeville group whose identity might be learned from ancient copies of The Clipper or some other yellowed show business publication. I have none of the Quartet's records, but would especially like to find 1889. Neither do I know of anyone who has ever seen them. They must be among the rarest records.

24. Enrico Caruso recorded "Over There" in a mixture of what passed for English and French. It was announced in the Victor supplement for September, 1918, and to most ears probably sounds more like baritone bellowing than singing.

Billy Murray, who couldn't have approached Caruso in opera, sang "Over There" better than the great Italian. Which reminds me that Billy once told me of eating with Caruso at the Victor Lunch Club.

Billy remarked, "Mr. Caruso, do you know I'd give anything to be able to sing opera like you?"

And Caruso graciously replied, "And don't you know, Mr. Murray, I'd give anything to be able to make people laugh, the way you do?"

25. The basso singing the vocal refrain to the band record of "Madelon," was Marcel Journet, who helped out in Victor 18534, a one-step-march rendition by the Victor Military Band, issued in May, 1919.

(To be continued)

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

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# FAVORITE Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A QUIZ ON THE PHONOGRAPH'S EARLY DAYS

PART III

By JIM WALSH

This is a continuation of the series of questions and answers begun in the April issue.

### Now the Questions:

26. Did the late John Bieling, first tenor of the American and Hayden Quartets, ever sing with Caruso?
27. Gene Greene, the American vaudeville comedian, made many records for English Pathe from 1912 to 1914. Name one in which he changed the locale and customs of the song to conform with British localities and procedures.
28. Name a record by a famous American cartoonist who recently "retired" in order to devote himself to sculpture.
29. Name any records made by other cartoonists for other companies.
30. What was the first record containing a reference to television?
31. What was the first record ever broadcast?
32. Name the first record containing a song with the word "radio" in the title.
33. What "Red Seal" artist probably made more records—not all of them Red Seals—than any other singer of his status?
34. What woman violinist was presented with a bracelet containing miniature models of records she had made?
35. What record issued by Victor,

Columbia, or Edison was the first to contain a reproduction of the harp?

36. Who was the first woman violinist to make a record for Victor? For Columbia? For Edison?

37. Who was the first woman to make regularly issued piano records?

38. Name the first woman to conduct a symphony orchestra on records.

### Now the Answers:

(To the best of my information and belief)

26. Perhaps it wouldn't be correct to say John Bieling sang *with* Caruso, but he sang as a Metropolitan Opera supernumerary in a couple of productions in which Caruso starred. He told of meeting Caruso back stage and saying: "Signor, you were wonderful tonight!"

Caruso smiled, "You liked it, eh!" He bowed his acknowledgements.

27. The English Pathe record by Gene Greene was "Casey Jones." Gene had "the brave engineer" headed for Dover instead of "Frisco." Gene referred to the fireman as the "stoker," and at the end had Mrs. Jones assuring the children that they had "another papa on the Cunard line," instead of the "Salt Lake line."

28. Reuben L. ("Rube") Goldberg, the famous cartoonist, in 1918 made a half-sung, half-spoken Pathe record called "Father Was Right." It would be interesting to know just how that engagement for only one record came about.

29. Among other cartoonists who made records were Harry Herschfeld, Sidney Smith, and Milt Gross. Harry Herschfeld talked a couple of "Abe Kabibble" monologs for Columbia in 1919. They were also issued in abbreviated form as Little Wonders.

Sidney Smith recorded "Andy Gump's Christmas Message" for Gennett. And Milt Gross did a Yiddish dialect specialty on the very obscure Nutmeg brand. The latter was an electrical recording.

30. As far as I have learned, the first record in which the word "television" was used was "Main Street," which Billy Murray recorded in 1929 for both Edison Diamond Disc and needle cut records under the alias of "Cy Pitkin and the Town Band."

31. You can't keep that fellow Murray out of the phonograph's historical events. The first record ever

broadcast, according to an associate of the late Dr. Lee de Forrest, was Billy's 1907 Victor of "College Life."

De Forrest, a pioneer radio experimenter, played it one day in his laboratory and it was heard through earphones by a wireless operator, Arthur Wallis, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

32. The first record containing a song with "radio" in the title may have been Victor 18923, "My Rambler Rose," a fox-trot by Whiteman's Orchestra. Midway it introduced another song, "List'ning on Some Radio."

In that same month, September, 1922, Columbia issued a song *about* radio, but not using the word itself. It was called "I Wish There Was a Wireless to Heaven" and was sung by Billy Jones. The sub-title was "Then Mama Would Not Seem So Far Away—a variant, of course, on "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven."

33. The exemplary baritone, Emilio De Gogorza, probably sang more records than any other artist of celebrity status. He began in the late 1890's, making cylinders for Edison, the American Record Co., Lambert, and others.

In his recording De Gogorza called himself by several names—Carlos Francisco, Herbert Goddard, and M. Fernand, among them. And after making many Victor black label records he became and remained for many years one of the most prolific Red Seal recorders.

34. The lady violinist who received a bracelet of miniature recordings representing titles she had played was the late Marie Hall. She received the gift from H.M.V. Co. of England in 1905.

The bracelet—where is it now? It was of gold and pearls, with miniature models of a gramophone and a violin, and small gold replicas of Miss Hall's discs.

35. The first Victor, Columbia, or Edison to preserve the tones of a harp appears to have been Columbia 3176, "Mazurka de Concert," a duet by the violinist, Walter Biederman, and a harpist whose name is given only as Smith. (I wonder if this was a mistake for Paul Surth, a harpist who frequently played in Columbia combinations.) It was announced in June, 1906, and described as "the first record of this kind ever made."

The first Victor record in which a harp is mentioned is "Tranquility," played by an instrumental quartet, which came out late in 1906. The first Edison was "Memories of Home," 9485, a violin, flute, and harp trio, by the Edison Venetian Trio, issued in March, 1907. Eugene Jaudas played the violin, Eugene Rose the flute, and Charles Schuetze the harp.

Edison's first harp solo was "Angel's Serenade," 9509, played by Schuetze and announced in April, 1907. Victor's first was 70027, "Priere — Valse de Concert," played

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by Ada Sassoli and issued in January, 1911.

The first popular-price black label harp solo came out in September, 1911. The player was Mr. Scheutze, and once more he offered "Angel's Serenade."

And to Charles Schuetze goes the honor of making the first Columbia harp solo, 1055 which coupled his variations on "Annie Laurie" and "Melody in F." It was made available in November, 1911.

36. The first lady violinist to make a Victor record was Maud Powell. She was also Victor's first Red Seal violinist. Prior to her initial appearance in the catalog, about the first of 1905, the only other Victor violin records were by Charles D'Almaine.

Miss Powell's first two Victors were 64027, "Slavonic Cradle Song" and 64028, "Polonaise" (Vieuxtemps). They were afterwards remade and issued with new numbers.

Columbia's first record by a feminine violinist seems to have been 3223, "Hungarian National Dance," played by Jessie Strauss (Who today knows anything about her?) It was published in September, 1905. According to the Columbia Record, Miss Strauss had been appearing as a soloist with Sousa's Band.

No skirt-wearing violinist was represented in the Edison catalog (disregarding any experimental cylinders that may have been made in the 1800's and '90's) until April, 1912, when the Olive Mead String Quartet played Haydn's "Hymn to the Emperor." Two ladies fiddled in this foursome — Olive Mead as first violin, and Vera Fonaroff, as second.

In September, 1912, Edison issued the first four-minute cylinder solo by a woman violinist — the late Kathleen Parlow, who afterwards was heard on Diamond Discs. On 28026 she played two numbers, Beethoven's "Minuett in Gb Major," and Drigo's "Valse Bluette."

37. An English woman, Lillian Bryant, may have been the first woman to make solo piano records issued in the ordinary commercial manner. She played for His Master's Voice in the very early 1900's, and also was making Edison Bell cylinders in 1900 or not long afterward.

In time she became an accompanist for Pathe. Around 1910 a young clarinet virtuoso, Haydn Draper, came to Pathe's London studios to record parts of a Weber Concerto with Miss Bryant as pianist. He brought with him an aspiring baritone, George Baker, who was permitted to record "Tommy Lad."

The meeting led to the marriage of Baker and Miss Bryant. Baker is still making records. Miss Bryant presumably is dead.

Following up the subject of women pianists, Nellie Melba probably was the first woman whose performance Victor recorded in this country. In 1907 she played her own accompaniment while singing Tosti's "Mattin" (Continued on page 35)



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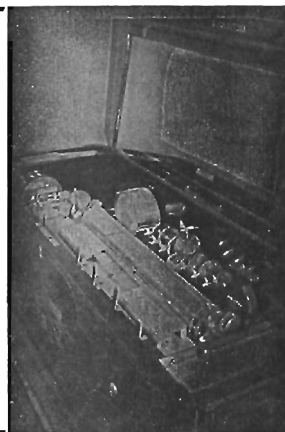
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Ada Jones was best known for comedy work. So was the (Premier) American Quartet. But at least once they did some hymn singing on records.

Arthur Collins (1864-1933), famous recording comedian, presented this photo of himself to a Columbia executive, the late Walter Forbush, in 1904. Many years later Mr. Forbush gave it to Jim Walsh. The 101st anniversary of Collins' birth occurred February 7, 1965.

Walter Lawrence achieved fame as a recording artist at the age of 12 years.

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ata," issued on Red Seal record 88077.

Victor did not have a woman pianist in its catalog until 1921 (aside from accompaniments played by Harriett Ware for John Barnes Wells) until Guiomar Novaes, a Brazilian, and Olga Samaroff, then the wife of Leopold Stokowski, were signed in 1921.

Victor represented the Melba record to be the first ever made in which an artist played his or her accompaniment. However, a veteran Columbia official told me Len Spencer played his when he began making Columbia cylinders in 1889 or 1890.

American Columbia did not wait quite so long as Victor to engage a "pianiste." In March, 1920, Columbia presented Mary Hallock playing three short Chopin numbers on A6136.

Madame Hallock must have been an ingenious lady. She was said to have invented a "light organ which plays 'light waves' in accompaniment to the sound waves of the piano."

Toward the end of 1920 Edison introduced its first woman pianist for Diamond Discs when Lucille Collette played Chopin's "Waltz in C Sharp Minor" and Staub's "Sous Bois" on 80570.

No women pianists were included in the Edison two and four-minute wax cylinders. The Company turned down a request from one enthusiast that it issue "a piano solo by Miss Ada Jones." But a few Blue Amberol cylinders contained dubbings of disc performances by Olga Steeb, Muriel Pollock, and Constance Merling.

38. The honor of being the first woman to conduct a symphony orchestra on records goes, as far as I know, to Lillian Bryant. She conducted the Pathe Symphony Orchestra (and Pathe Military Band) for English Pathe.

(To be Continued)

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Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A QUIZ ON THE PHONOGRAPH'S EARLY DAYS

### PART III

By JIM WALSH

This is a continuation of the series of questions and answers begun in the April issue.

#### Now the Questions:

39. Who was the first boy soprano to make a solo record for Victor? For Columbia?

40. Name any pre-electric American records of "The Preacher and the Bear" not made by Arthur Collins.

41. Who was the oldest person to make a record issued as part of a record company's regular catalog?

42. Who was the youngest whistler to participate in a record?

43. What record made by "The Banjo King," Vess L. Ossman, in 1910, was discontinued a couple of years later but reissued in 1927, four years after Ossman's death?

44. What record did Victor intend to press in gold to commemorate producing the one billionth Victor record? Which one was actually pressed?

45. What famous recording artist didn't know when he was born?

46. Harry Bluff was a comedian, announcer, and traveling salesman for the English firm of Edison Bell. What name did he use in making Edison (not Edison Bell) cylinders?

47. Name one or more records in which a woman sings as a member of, or with, the Premier (American) Quartet.

48. Name a Peerless Quartet record in which Henry Burr does not sing.

49. What record, issued in 1914, was said to contain the lowest note ever recorded of the human voice up to that time?

50. What was the first Victor record made after Victor took over Emile Berliner's patents?

#### Now the Answers:

(To the best of my information and belief)

39. In the "elder days" of recording art, the harp and piano were considered the most difficult instruments to record, and the boy soprano constituted the most vexing voice problem. In February, 1908, Victor announced its first boy voice record, 5329, Handel's "Angel's Ever Bright and Fair," with this comment:

"The voice of a boy soprano is a most difficult one to record, and no successful impressions have been made up to the present time. The Victor, however, now presents a very good record of Handel's air, such by Master (Donald Hugh) MacBride of the Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, L. I., and it will be found a most interesting one."

The MacBride record must have been poorly recorded, for it stayed in the catalog only a short time. In 1915-16 Victor tried again, with records by Masters Claude Isaacs and William Pickels.

Columbia's initial boy soprano offering came in December, 1912, when a record was announced by Waiter Lawrence, soloist of All Angels' Church, New York City. It was A5421, and contained a coupling of "With Verdure Clad" from Haydn's "The Creation" and Dell'Acqua's "Villanelle."

Master Lawrence's photo appeared on the supplement cover. His "exclusive Columbia engagement" was announced on page 3, with the statement that "for the first time, in the annals of the recording art, the perfect voice of a boy soprano has been adequately recorded — by the Columbia Phonograph Company."

Lawrence made several other Columbia records, including a duet with Reed Miller. Edison never issued any boy soprano solos on discs, but Diamond Disc 80452, containing "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" and "Holy! Holy! Holy!" was sung by the Calvary Choir with the assistance of Choir Boys of St. Andrew's Church, New York. Claude Isaacs made a couple of Blue Amberol cylinders.

The one hugely successful boy soprano production in all recorded music history was issued by His Master's Voice in England a year or so after electric recording was introduced.

It was "O For the Wings of a Dove," a song which Lawrence had recorded for Columbia many years before. And, as sung by Master Ernest Lough, it became one of the most

popular records in the English firm's history. It was exported and sold throughout the world.

40. As far as extensive research indicates, Arthur Collins was the only American singer to record "The Preacher and the Bear" from the time the first discs and cylinders of this classic were made in 1905 until he retired 20 years later. (Albert Whelan recorded it in England.)

However, it was included in a few band and orchestral records, though, oddly enough, no instrumentalist seems to have made a solo offering. What a good banjo number it would have made for Vess Ossman!

Sousa's Band played it complete on Victor single-faced, 10-inch 4981, and it was included in the "Bunker Hill Medley" on Edison Standard two-minute cylinder 9025, played by the Edison Military Band.

Other numbers in the medley were "I've Got a Little Money and I've Saved It All for You," "Tammany," and "My Carolina Lady." Surely the medley should have been named for "The Preacher" or "Tammany" rather than the much less popular "Bunker Hill."

In 1918 Columbia issued a "Turkey in the Straw Medley" played by Yerkes' Jazzer Orchestra on A2537. The medley also included "The Arkansaw Traveler" and "The Preacher and the Bear." But in singing, the field was left strictly to Arthur Collins.

The late Ray Walker told me he used to play the piano accompaniment when Eddie Morton sang "The Preacher" song in vaudeville, "and nobody else ever sang it the way he did."

Perhaps it's a pity we don't have at least one Morton recording of the Collins classic. After Collins retired, the song was recorded by several performers, including Ernest Hare, Al Bernard, Riley Puckett, and, in the 1940's, Phil Harris.

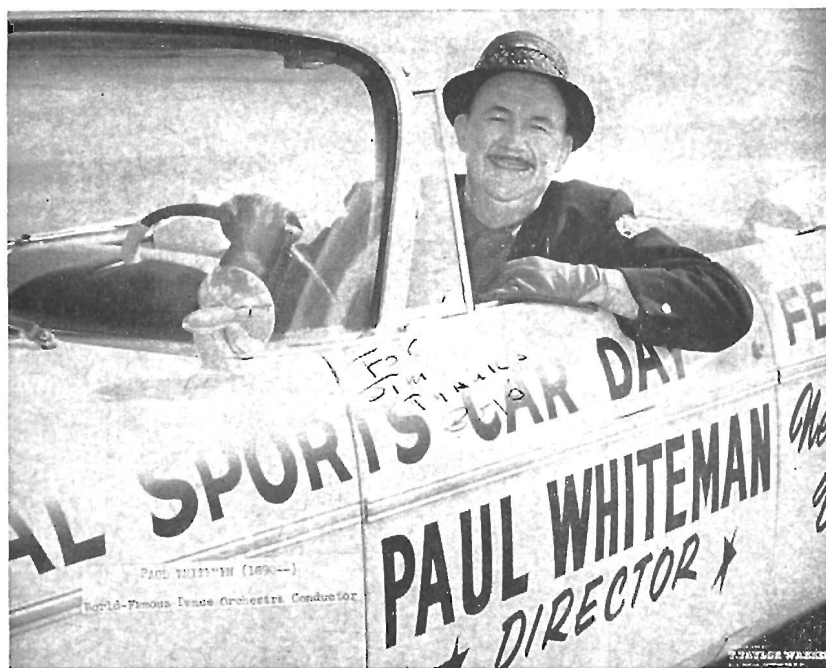
41. The oldest person to make a record for regular release may have been Pope Leo XIII, who was 98 when he made two Columbia cylinders, of a Benediction and Ave Maria, at the Vatican on February 15, 1903. They did not appear on discs, and were said to be rather lacking in volume but faithful reproductions of the Pontiff's voice.

They were recorded by S. Bettini and sold for \$2 each. Probably a few copies of the cylinders still remain in Catholic homes, or, if not there, in religious institutions, or at the Vatican.

42. The youngest recorded whistler

NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry that he is unable to reply to most of the correspondence he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and is unable to tell anyone where to buy or sell them except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot make tape recordings or exchange tapes with readers, and he cannot supply back copies of this magazine. These have to be ordered direct from HOBBIES, 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605.





Paul Whiteman, veteran orchestra leader, affectionately known as "Pops," had many big selling records. What was his biggest?

was not Margaret McKee or Sibyl Sanderson Fagan, as some collectors may suggest, but probably was Billee Osborn who, at the age of 10, whistled some bird imitations in "Swanee Bluebird," a fox trot by the Benson Orchestra of Chicago, which Victor issued in September, 1922.

However, this statement is open to argument, because the Victor supplement insisted Billee didn't whistle: "he vocalizes; he produces in his throat the remarkable bird-imitations which give life to this record."

"When I wrote the question I thought of the youngster (who is now 52 if he still lives) as a whistler. So, in spite of the Victor hair-splitting, I'll let it stand.

43. In October, 1909, Edison made available four-minute Amberol cylinder 250, containing "Wildflower," "The Whitewash Man," and "Yankiana Rag"—the latter, in my opinion, one of the most captivating bits of ragtime ever written. They were played by Vess L. Ossman.

The record was called "Banjo Medley." It was discontinued when the Blue Amberols were introduced late in 1912, but was revived in 1927 on Blue Amberol 5377.

Since cylinder sales in those days, two years before Edison quit the phonograph business, had dwindled almost to nothing, the record is hard to find, but I proudly own a copy and it is my favorite banjo performance.

44. Back in 1948, Victor intended to press a recording of "The Stars and Stripes Forever March" by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra as the one billionth Victor record. (In view of incomplete sales totals I wonder how they arrived at the figure.)

But when the matrix was brought out, through an error the number

reproduced was 624, Vess Ossman's "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," which was said to be the oldest surviving master of a Victor record. It was made in 1901.

The record was gold-plated, after which, as one Victor spokesman philosophically remarked, "it can't be played, anyway, so what difference does it make if it is the wrong one?"

45. The recording artist who didn't know when he was born was Harry E. Humphrey, an elocutionist. He



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recorded many recitations and announced nearly all the "explanatory talks" by Edison celebrity artists. All he knew was that he was born in San Francisco, at some time in the late 1870's.

Humphrey was afterwards prominent in radio as the star of the "Death Valley Days" program. Does anyone know whether he is still living?

46. Harry Bluff called himself Bobby Naish on a couple of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders recorded in England.

47. Inez Barbour sings with the Premier Quartet in the Amberol record (512) "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," although her name is not mentioned on the record box.

Another Premier Quartet record is a mystery to me, 1626, "Patriotic Songs of America," in which the quartet alternates in singing portions of time honored songs with the playing of the National Military Band. A woman assists, and this again probably is Miss Barbour, who was the wife of the late Henry Hadley, for years conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

A man sings part of "The Star-Spangled Banner." He seems to be a baritone, but his voice does not sound like that of any of the Premier Quartet members of that day. He certainly is not "The Canary." First Tenor John Bieling. He is not Billy Murray. In fact, if Billy is in the

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record at any time he is virtually inaudible.

The singer is not the bass, William F. Hooley. That leaves Steve Porter, the baritone, but the style and enunciation seem unlike Porter's. In some respects he sounds like Donald Chalmers, but Chalmers wasn't making records when this number first appeared on an Amberol.

I'd like to look into Edison's files and discover who the members of the quartet were (some of the regulars may have been absent) the day this record was made.

48. The Peerless Quartet record, in which Henry Burr doesn't sing, is Edison Blue Amberol 1876 (previously issued on Amberol 431), "Characteristic Negro Medley," in which Billy Murray takes Burr's place as second tenor. Presumably this was done because Murray was considered better suited than Burr to singing this humorous kind of material.

49. The 1914 record with the lowest note of the human voice up to that time was, on the Edison Company's assertion, 82053, "The Horn," sung by the distinguished Rhode Island basso, Frederic Louis Martin.

50. According to a Victor publicity handout issued in the late 1930's or early 1940's the first recording done by Victor, after Eldridge R. Johnson acquired the Berliner patents, was "I guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby," sung by Johnson himself.

If this record was ever issued, however, I have been able to find no trace of it in Victor printed matter. It certainly would be worth having.

Victor single-faced record 1 was a recitation of Eugene Field's poem, "Departure," by George Broderick. But hundreds of records had already been issued before that in the 3,000 series, not to mention Johnson's 7-inch Climax and Improved discs that preceded the Victor label.

That concludes the list of 50 questions.

But now, for a bonus, I'll add four more, and follow immediately with the answers:

#### Now the Questions:

51. Anna Case is generally believed to have made no acoustic records except Edison discs and cylinders. (She made some Columbia electrics.) And Leonora Sparks is generally identified with Columbia and Pathe. Name a Victor Red Seal record in which both sopranos sang.

52. Who is the small boy shown in the photo accompanying this article wearing kilts or, as the Scotch prefer to term it, the kilt?

53. President Wilson's daughter, Margaret Woodrow Wilson, made several popular Columbia records. What earlier President had a niece who won recording success?

54. A recent Hallmark "reminder" calendar has a reference to a famous pioneer recording artist. Who is the artist?

#### Now the Answers:


51. The Red Seal record in which Misses Case and Sparks (and Marie  
(Continued on page 40)

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By ALLEN DEBUS

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Hold Your Hand Out Naughty Boy.

Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag."

"You Must Have a Little Bit of Fun," was one of her hits of 1925.

Throughout her professional career she made hundreds of recordings from the opening of the new century down through the late 1930s.

One of the last records I have by her is a Medley of her greatest hits made for Regal-Zonophone, MR 2198.

Despite her tremendous popularity on English discs and cylinders she remained relatively unknown to the American record buyer. The only records of her listed in an American catalog that I know of are her Edison blue amberol cylinders: 23006 - "Keep On Swinging Me Charlie;" 23030 - "My Boy;" 23051 - "Keep Straight Down the Road;" 23069 - "Patricia;" 23102 - "Anywhere in Manxland;" and 23118, "Hold Your Hand Out, Naughty Boy!"

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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Mattfeld, mezzo-soprano) assist Johanna Gadske, the star soprano, is 88441, "Du also bist mein Brautigam" ("Oh Dagger! Thou Art My

Goodwill is the one and only asset that competition cannot undersell nor destroy.

—Marshall Field

You can't escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.

—Abraham Lincoln

Bridegroom!"), from Mozart's "Magic Flute." It was issued in November, 1913, and seems to be relatively scarce.

In his "Collectors' Price Guide," published in 1952, Julian Morton Moses gives \$9 as a reasonable figure for this record.

The supplement commented: "The music of the three 'boys' is sung by Mmes. Case, Sparks, and Mattfeld, with voices of clear, youthful timbre which exhibit well the grace and brightness of Mozart's music."

52. The small boy wearing the kilt is veteran recording tenor Charles Hart, whose ancestry is not noticeably Scottish.

Despite several serious and painful operations of the past few years, "Charlie" Hart, whose life story was told in HOBBIES for December, 1958, and January, 1959, is living contentedly at 155 Hudson Street, Englewood, N. J. He observed his 80th birthday May 16, 1964.

53. Mabel McKinley Baer was a niece of President William McKinley. She was successful as a soprano singer in vaudeville and wrote several popular songs, including "Golden Rod" and the great Indian hit, "Anona," both of which she recorded in 1908-09 on Edison Amberol cylinders. In recording she used her maiden name, Mabel McKinley.

54. The artist mentioned on the Hallmark calendar is, again!, Vess L. Ossman. After buying one of the calendars, Mrs. Vess L. Ossman III of Arlington, Va., was surprised to find in the space for May 3, "Memories of Vess Ossman." Neither she nor I know what connection that date has with "The Banjo King's" life and career. Perhaps the Hallmark Company would tell us.

That concludes the pioneer recording artists quiz.

Would you like another some time?



# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Some Mysterious Edison Diamond Discs

By JIM WALSH

The ways of the one-time Thomas A. Edison, Inc., appear beyond understanding.

Edison made incomparably the finest records of the pre-electric period. But the inventor's system of distributing the Diamond Discs was not in keeping with their merits.

Frequently, songs were recorded when they first began to be popular, yet they were not placed on sale until years later when the demand had ceased.

Some songs of World War I, such as "When the Great Red Dawn is Shining," and "The Little Good-for-Nothing's Good For Something, After All," were not issued until 1922-23. A comic talking record, "A Visit to Reilley's," made available during the same period, referred to the 1915 sinking of the Lusitania as a recent event.

But here is something more inexplicable. I learned a few years ago that Edison made many Diamond Discs that were never issued, in the sense of taking their place in the catalog. And I have been baffled ever since, trying to account for the way these records occasionally turn up.

If my old friend, Fred Rabenstein, who used to be my "contact man" at the Edison Laboratories, were still alive he probably would solve the mystery.

Perhaps the eminent New York expert on Edison recordings, Ray Wile, who periodically visits the Edison National Monument at West Orange, N.J., may look into the matter and give us the results of his findings.

Possibly, I, myself, might already have learned the answer by writing to some of my remaining Edison friends. But I have decided, just for fun, to write this article setting forth the mystery, then give the answer later, if I learn it.

The nearest thing to a solution that occurs to me is that the uncataloged records may have been intended solely for use in "tone tests," when Edison artists sang or played in comparison with the Diamond Discs, to prove there was no difference between the living music and the reproduced.

For this purpose, however, it would seem that only a few copies would have had to be pressed. But the letters and numbers on the smooth inside rim of the records appear to indicate the normal number of pressings.

Here, for instance, is one marked C-2-4. This indicates it is made from the second sub-master of a C master record, and that about 8,000 copies have been produced from that sub-master and the four moulds.

Incidentally, the letters A, B, and C do not indicate the order in which different recordings of the same selection were made. Mr. Rabenstein told me that the three original masters (Edison always had the artist make at least three) were examined by an expert through a microscope, and the one with sound wave formations that looked best to him was labeled A; the next best, B; and the remaining one, C.

Thus it sometimes happened that the one made last received the A identification because of what the microscope appeared to indicate. The same thing was true of remakes, lettered F, G, and H.

D and E were very rarely used, although two or three examples have turned up in piano records made by Ernest L. Stevens under Mr. Edison's personal supervision at West Orange. A few examples of mould letters up to O have also been found.

Some of the mystery records were made by popular Edison artists, but not listed under their names in the customers' catalogs. Others were by performers who never received catalog identification as singing or playing for Edison.

The tone-test idea receives slight added plausibility from the fact that the unlisted records are nearly all vocal. No bands or orchestras, which were not used for direct comparison purposes, are included. There are many more women singers than men in the unlisted group.

Somebody who might solve the mystery, and I hope he will if he reads this, is Victor Young, the Putnam Valley, N.Y., antiques dealer who advertises regularly in HOBBIES.

Mr. Young was a staff pianist at Edison in the tone-test days. And his wife, Helen Davis, a charming mezzo-soprano, was an Edison artist and tone-test performer.

Mr. Young sometimes began a tone test by walking to the front of the stage, looking around as if for Miss Davis, and remarking that she seemed to be late. Meanwhile, he would play one of her records.

After the music started, she would be seen walking up an aisle. And she would sing with the machine until she reached the stage and stood beside the Laboratory Model New Edison.

Miss Davis made some of the unlisted records. Many years ago, when I visited Abingdon, Va., I met Mr. Young's aunt, the late Miss Ethel Baugh. She played for me an unsold Helen Davis record, "She Was French and I Was English," with the accompaniment by "Albert Victor," as Miss Baugh called Mr. Young.

After I returned home she wrote me that she would give me that record if I came to see her again, but she died before I again saw Abingdon. I haven't seen the record listed in the group now being discussed.

For years I have hoped that some form of transportation would take me to Putnam Valley, so I could talk with Mr. and Mrs. Young about the old Edison days and write a HOBBIES article about their experiences, but my time for travel is severely limited.

Should this come to the notice of Helen and Victor I hope they will enlighten us concerning the records that were pressed but never issued in the ordinary way.

I first learned of these baffling Diamond Discs when my friend, Herbert W. Schmid of Indianapolis, Ind., sent me an Edison dealer's numerical catalog—the only one, I think, I have seen.

The dealer who had owned it had so arranged it that records still in the catalog were listed on the right side of the page, and cut-outs transferred to the left.

Included among the cut-outs were a fairly large number of Diamond Discs I had never before heard of. There were also a good many spaces containing only a record number, but with no title. They apparently were reserved for records never issued.

When I said I assumed the previously undiscovered titles were records Edison had intended to issue but for some reason didn't offer for sale, Mr. Schmid replied that he had most of them in his collection and owned a fair number of duplicates which he would be glad to let me have.

Naturally, I took him up because I felt I would be acquiring some re-

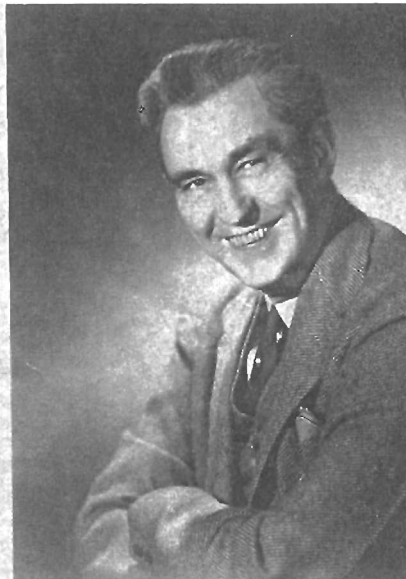
NOTE: Because of the pressure of many other demands on his time, Mr. Walsh is sorry that he is unable to reply to most of the correspondence he receives from HOBBIES readers. He does not buy or sell records and is unable to tell anyone where to buy or sell them except to suggest writing to dealers who advertise in HOBBIES. He cannot make tape recordings or exchange tapes with readers, and he cannot supply back copies of this magazine. These have to be ordered direct from HOBBIES, 1006 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605.





Helen Davis (costumed as Jenny Lind) was one of Thomas A. Edison's favorite singers. She made some uncataloged Diamond Discs.

Victor Young, now a Putnam Valley, N.Y., antiques dealer, played the accompaniment for records by his wife, Helen Davis.



On the other side Odette LeFon-tenay, soprano, sings "I Know a Lovely Garden," and "Yesterday and Today." The serial numbers indicate they were recorded in 1917 and the catalog number that they came out in 1918.

But—this is the mysterious thing! —the dealer's catalog gives the singer of the Lazzeri side as Mabelle Wagner—Shank! Now what on earth happened? Wagner-Shank can hardly be a disguise for Lazzeri, since the two voices are entirely different. Anyway, neither version "made" the customer catalog.

Another surprise was finding one of Edison's most popular comedians, Byron G. Harlan, represented by 50566, "Dancing the Du Da Du Da Dae," and "I'm a Twelve O'Clock Fellow (in a Nine O'Clock Town)." Both were recorded in 1917, but not issued—if that's the right word—until 1919, and never cataloged.

There are also some comic records by a Scotchman, David Duggin, whose name never appears in standard Edison catalogs.

Marie Tiffany, a soprano who travelled extensively doing tone-test work before she married a Brunswick official and became a Brunswick recording artist, has several of these mystery records.

So has Amy Ellerman, contralto. Leeta Corder, a soprano who died a few years ago and was identified in her death notice as an Edison artist, but whose name escaped the catalog, is another.

And why was a double-faced Diamond Disc made of "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and "There's a Long Long Trail" by Ida Gardner, con-

markable rarities. Nearly all the "unissued" Diamond Discs I have came from Mr. Schmid.

Most of these records were made in 1919, though one or two appear to go back to 1918. Three are from early 1925. Nearly all are black label, but, to add to the mystery, one or two have "Recreation" white labels which weren't used until late in 1921 or the start of 1922.

Yet you may search any Edison alphabetical record catalog from 1919 through 1928 and find no mention of these records. The big batch issued in 1919 are not mentioned in any of the monthly supplements for that year, although they are numbered in ordinary sequence. The more I think of it the more I experience a rather pleasing sense of bewilderment.

(I have just patted Nipper's head and told him, in response to his urgent meows, that I must finish this article and can't play with him now.)

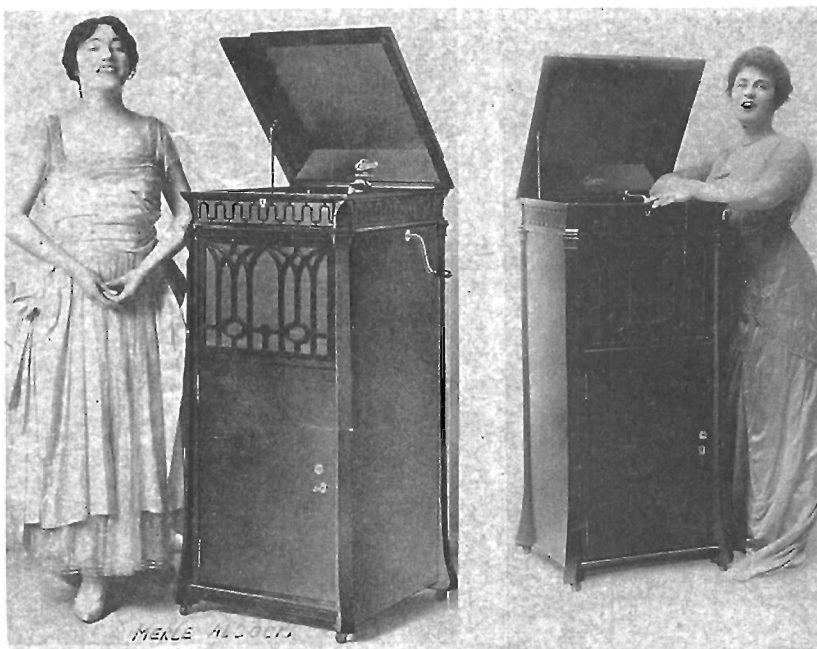
Did you ever hear of a soprano named Mabelle Wagner-Shank? You won't find her name in an Edison catalog, but she is represented by several of these unaccountable records. One in which I was particularly interested was 50561, "Beautiful Ohio," and "When the Evening Bells Are Ringing."

In Edison catalogs "Beautiful Ohio" is listed twice as sung by the Metropolitan Quartet and played by Judas' Society Orchestra. After one playing of the Wagner-Shank record, I could understand well enough why the Metropolitan Quartet version was chosen, but why was the soprano solo made at all?

Then there is another soprano, Florence Ferrell, who was photographed giving tone tests. I have

been unable to find her name in any Edison catalog except the dealer's.

And just now—even as I typed—I discovered something I had never before noticed that increases my mystification. I have a white label Recreation, 80392, on one side of which the great operatic contralto, Carolina Lazzeri, sings two typical encore numbers, "I Am Thy Harp," and "I Love You Truly."



From left to right:

Merle Alcock, the eminent contralto, made a "mystery" record.

Florence Ferrell, soprano, gave Edison tone tests, but her name did not appear in the Diamond Disc catalogs.



Cecil Arden, contralto, made some of the "mystery" Edison records.

tralto, when both songs were well represented in the catalog by other artists?

I could go on and on commenting. Instead I'll copy from the catalog of the old Edison dealer, whoever he was, the listings of the unaccounted for records.

The list probably will not be complete, for the dealer may have overlooked inserting slips covering some of the records that are identified by numbers alone.

Three of the records, issued in February, 1925, by women blues singers, may have been intended as the nucleus of an Edison "race catalog" to compete with those of Okeh and other companies of that time, but they received no recognition in the big Edison catalog even though they appeared in their proper numerical order in the dealer's list.

50551, 52, 59, blank;  
50561, "Beautiful Ohio," and "When the Evening Bells Are Ringing," Mabelle Wagner-Shank;  
50562, 63, 64, 65, blank;  
50566, "Dancing the Du Da Du Dae," and "I'm a Twelve O'Clock Fellow," Byron G. Harlan;  
51476, "Sweet Man Joe," Josie Miles, and "Undertaker's Blues," Rosa Henderson;  
51477, "Mad Mama's Blues," and "Temperamental Papa," by Josie Miles;  
51478, "Don't Advertise Your Man," Rosa Henderson, and "Memphis Bound," Viola McCov;  
80361, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 74, 75, 76, 77, blank;  
80378, "Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night," and "A Pink Rose," Mabelle Wagner-Shank;  
80380, (a) "Rose in the Bud," (b) "I Love You Truly," and "Mattinata," Mabelle Wagner-Shank;  
80392, (a) "I Am Thy Harp," (b) "I Love You Truly," Mabelle Wagner-Shank, and (a) "I Know a Lovely Gar-

den," (b) "Yesterday and Today," Odette Le Fontenay;  
80403, 04, 05, blank;  
80407, "Dreams," and "I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls," Florence Ferrell;  
80421, 22, blank;  
80423, "There's a Long, Long Trail," and "Keep the Home Fires Burning," Ida Gardner;  
80424, blank;  
80473, "Since First I Met Thee," Florence Ferrell, and (a) "When Love is Kind," and (b) "Jenny," Amy Ellerman;  
80475, blank;  
80480, "Coming Home," and "Lover and the Bird," Claire Lillian Peteler;  
80495, "Cantilena," Igor Sokoloff, violon-cello, and (a) "To a Wild Rose," and (b) "Elegie," Madeline MacGuigan Sokoloff, violin;  
80497, blank;  
80533, "Scots, Wha Hae Wi' Wallace Bled," Emerson Williams, and "Hunting Tower," Emerson Williams & Jean MacNeil;  
80534, "Crookit Bawbee," Emerson Williams and Jean MacNeil, and "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon," Jean MacNeil;  
80536, "Ma Little Sun Flower, Good Night," Jean MacNeil, and "Lassie O' Mine," Emerson Williams;  
80540, "Scenes That Are Brightest," and "Always Do As People Say You Should," Leeta Corder;  
80542, (a) "To You," (b) "If I But Knew," and "Danube River," Helen Davis;  
80545 through 80554, blank;  
80557 through 80560, blank;  
80555, "Tatters," and "That's the Reason Noo I Wear a Kilt," David Duggin, Scottish tenor;  
80556, "Oh! You Don't Know What You Are Missing," and "You'd Better Ask Me," and "There Is Somebody Waiting for me," David Duggin;  
80564, "Villanelle," and "Can It Be Love at Last?" Leeta Corder;  
80565, "Ben Bolt," and "Could I," Cecil Arden, contralto;  
80566, "Mattinata," and "Lucrezia Borgia—Il Sergento per esser Felici," Cecil Arden;  
80567, "Blue Bells of Scotland," and "Consider the Lilies," Helen Davis;  
80568, "Dearie," and "The Amorous Goldfish," Helen Newitt, soprano;  
80584 and 85, blank;  
80636, (a) "In Mirrored Waters," and (b) "By the Waters of Minnetonka," Marie Morrisey, contralto, with flute obbligato by Harold L. Lyman, & "Mammy Dear," Marie Morrisey;  
80655 through 80666, blank;  
80708, 09, 14, and 35, blank;  
80739, 40, 41, 43, and 68, blank;  
80903 and 80904, blank;  
82108 through 82112, blank;  
82116, 62, 65, and 66, blank;  
82126, "Forgotten," and "Shadows," Amy Ellerman, contralto;  
82127, "I've Been Roaming," and "Land o' the Leal," Amy Ellerman;  
82137, "Blue Bells of Scotland," and "Florian's Song," Marie Tiffany;  
82141, "Fields o' Ballyclare," and "My Ain Folk," Merle Alcock, contralto;  
82142, blank;  
82143, "Faust—King of Thule," and "The Swallows," Odette Le Fontenay;  
82146, "Good-Bye," and "Some Day," Odette Le Fontenay.

I suspect this list might be added to materially, but it suffices to show that Edison made, and in some manner distributed, at least a few copies of records that were never regularly cataloged. On re-reading, I am struck by several things:

The records were nearly all in the 80000 series, which sold at various times from \$1.50 to \$1.85. There is a remarkable percentage of sides containing two short selections, of the type I have already called "encore numbers." There was a tendency to have the same song recorded by more



Ida Gardner, photographed in 1917 giving an Edison tone-test, made a Diamond Disc of "There's a Long, Long Trail" that was never listed in the yearly record catalogs.

than one artist. Numbers with a Scotch flavor stand out to a remarkable degree. And there seems to be a startling proportion of contraltos.

Now can any well-informed and charitable citizen give us the secret story, whatever it was, behind all these mysterious Diamond Discs?

(The End)

## "A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN TONIGHT" 1886

This famous rollicking tune may be properly listed as a patriotic song, and it has been so accepted by the Army ever since the Spanish-American War. Like "Dixie" it has a minstrel background; it was written in a little Louisiana town by a show musician, Theodore Metz, who was an orchestra leader on tour with one of the smaller companies.

This was in 1886. It had little popularity at the time, and was not published until 1896, when it was brought out by Willis Woodward and Company, with words by Joe Hayden. As Browne puts it: "the catchy, don't care tune carried an irresistible attraction for our fighter lads of 1898, when, as one music critic writes "Theodore Roosevelt catapulted into fame by adopting it as the official song of his Rough Riders."

—Kenneth Rose in the  
August, 1944, HOBBIES

# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## PERFORMERS WHO REMADE TWO-MINUTE EDISON CYLINDERS

### PART I

Record collectors, and especially those who specialize in preserving the now obsolete cylinders, suffered a severe loss when Dr. Duane D. Deakins died in a plane crash in the California mountains.

Dr. Deakins, who was a staff physician at the Bret Harte Sanatorium, Murphys, Calif., had devoted most of his spare time for several years to compiling catalogs of several types of cylinders.

These are already scarce collector's treasures. They included the Edison Standard two-minute, the Amberol four-minute, Blue Amberol four-minute, Indestructible, and U.S. Everlasting.

Although these listings are marred by a number of errors (they were to have been corrected in later editions that may never appear) they nevertheless, represent a genuine passion for the cause of cylinder collecting, and are invaluable for reference.

When Dr. Deakins died he was amassing information concerning two-minute Columbia cylinders issued from 1889 to 1909, in the hope of presenting a complete Columbia listing.

His work was left uncompleted, partly because Columbia catalogs for several years did not give names of artists who made records, but listed them merely as Tenor, Baritone, Soprano, and the like.

Dr. Deakins did not want to publish his Columbia booklet until all numbers, titles, and artists had been identified, but he had not been able to assemble a complete set of catalogs, and there were still hundreds, perhaps thousands of record numbers, still to be accounted for.

If I had time I should like to attempt such a Columbia catalog myself, but time is one thing I don't have. I am a newspaper staff writer, and turn out thousands of words every working day as part of my job. During my little leisure I find it impossible to perform much extended research in addition to looking after a large house, caring for my cats, and trying to do some of the almost innumerable other things I am called on to accomplish.

More and more, it becomes out of the question for me to write let-

ters, even to my long-standing friends. I have on hand hundreds of letters from HOBBIES readers which probably never will be answered, simply because I don't have the time or, if I did, couldn't work 24 hours a day.

I am always glad to hear from readers, commenting on articles I have written or suggesting others that I might write, although I am something like 10 years behind with

subjects about which I have committed myself to write eventually.

Letters I am unglad to receive are those in which I am asked to give information that would take hours of investigation to answer, or wanting to know how much old records are worth and where they can be sold.

As my monthly advertisement says, I do not deal in records, cannot tell what they are worth, or point the way to a purchaser. All I can do is suggest that the would-be seller write to some of the persons who advertise in HOBBIES that they deal in old records.

In spite, however, of saying that I lack time for research, I am about to give the results of some investigations I have painstakingly made.

I believe that Dr. Deakins' catalog of Edison Standard two-minute cylinders has one serious omission. Where a cylinder was afterwards remade by an artist other than the one who originally sang or played it, Dr. Deakins gives only the name of the first performer.

This means that in many instances the listing of records under an ar-

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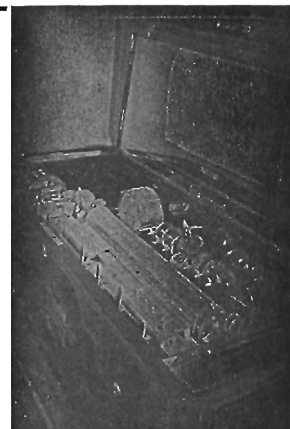
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"Denver Nightingale"—Billy Murray, right, is shown here with his devoted friend, James V. Martindale. When Murray was appearing with the National Barn Dance in Chicago in 1942, he remade several cylinders by other artists, but Billy's popularity was so great none of his remade were by anyone except himself.

—Photos, property of Jim Walsh

tist's name is incomplete, and the person who consults the Deakins' catalog does not have available a complete list of that performer's cylinders. A few, who did only remakes, are not listed at all.

This applies to the two-minute Standards, alone. The wax four-minute Amberols were sold for only four years, from 1908 to 1912, a period too short, apparently, for the supply of moulds to be exhausted by even the best-selling numbers.

And neither are any "remakes" indicated in the Blue Amberol list. But

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there were some, dubbed from Edison Diamond discs. Blue Amberols sold so poorly in the last half dozen years they were made, there was no danger of the moulds giving out.

But the story is different with the two-minutes that appeared from 1896 to 1912. Even after the cylinders began to be gold moulded in 1902, there were no permanent masters.

The master record was destroyed in making the moulds, and after the moulds became damaged from constant use it eventually became necessary to make a new supply.

Where the original artist was available and was considered satisfactory, he or she was used for the re-makes; but if not available, because of having become exclusive to some other company or for any other reason, another artist had to be substituted. These re-makes are not indicated in the Deakins' catalog.

So I have decided that, in order to supplement the dedicated Doctor's

admirable work, I will publish a list of these "make overs."

Dr. Deakins explained to me that he omitted identifying more than one version of a cylinder, and used only the name of the artist first recording it, in order to conserve space, and because he thought multiple listings would be confusing.

My own feeling, however, is that collectors need to know about the many changes that marked the Edison cylinder catalogs.

It isn't fair, say, to a collector who wants to have information concerning every Edison record Ada Jones made, to omit her 1905 rendition of "Little Alabama Coon," simply because George J. Gaskin (and Arthur Collins, who also isn't mentioned by Deakins) had sung it previously.

It is this omission that I feel a holy urge to remedy.

But first, some explanation is called for. Partly because of the pressure of time, I am listing only vocal and instrumental records.

For the moment, I am not trying to report on remade versions of band and orchestral selections. They may come later, but the old-time cylinders of this type are of little interest to most collectors, and I see no need just now to list the many changes that were made in those categories.

After all, the bands and orchestras were mostly house organizations. It makes little difference, as far as the sound is concerned, whether the box, in which the cylinder was issued, called the recording group the Edison Military Band, the Edison Concert Band, or something else.

In giving details of the remade Standards I am following a policy exactly opposite to that of Dr. Deakins. He mentioned the name of the first artist to record a cylinder, but omitted that performer's successor or successors.

I am placing the individual selection under the name of the artist or artists who last made it. Then I go back to the original performer and follow in order with any others.

A good example is the first cylinder in this compilation, "As Your Hair Grows Whiter," which I have put beneath the name of Harry Anthony, who made it in February, 1906.

Next comes George J. Gaskin, who made the first version in 1898 or earlier; then Joe Natus' 1902 interpretation, and finally, that of Albert Campbell, which I found for the first time in the October, 1903, catalog. Campbell's, of course, gave way to Anthony's.

I have tried in every instance to list the first complete catalog or monthly supplement in which I found a particular version offered, but no guarantee is made that some of the cylinders may not have been listed earlier.

I have perhaps the largest collection of Edison cylinder catalogs, but there are gaps. For instance, I have nothing, aside from some monthly listings in the *Phonogram*, between



the October, 1899, catalog, and the one dated "fall, 1902."

Similarly, there are several gaps from 1904 to 1906. A remake that I list as appearing for the first time, to my knowledge, in 1902, may have been issued in 1900 or 1901.

Perhaps all uncertainty will be cleared up when Major H. H. Annand and associated English record collectors publish the numerical list they are compiling of all Edison cylinders.

However, I am not sure whether Major Annand and associates will indicate all artists who made, and remade a record, or whether, the Deakins policy of giving only the first artist to sing or play it, will be followed.

I admit I am somewhat uncertain concerning a few apparently remade records. The Edison system was sometimes peculiar.

For instance, take the second number under Anthony, "Because." I first found it, sung by Anthony, in the complete cylinder catalog for November, 1905.

Previously, it had been listed by Albert Campbell in October, 1899; by Joe Natus, 1902; and then by Campbell again in August, 1904! There are one or two other examples of such oddities.

Going down the list, I find check marks beside the numbers of a few concerning which I felt I should make some comment.

For instance, there is "Home With the Milk in the Morning," which was listed in the March, 1910, supplement as being by Pete Murray, a vaudeville tenor who made only a few Edison records.

The March, 1911, complete catalog, just a year later, says the record is by the much better known and more popular Billy Murray.

Now what happened? Did Pete Murray make the original version, only to have Edison remake it a few months later because it was considered unsatisfactory, or because of damage to the moulds?

Was Billy Murray chosen because Pete—no relation to Billy—was no longer available?

Did Pete really make the record and did it continue to be by him? But was Billy Murray's name (under which it appeared until two-minute cylinders were discontinued in October, 1912) substituted by mistake?

Or was it really made by Billy to begin with, credited to Pete through error, and the error afterwards corrected? I wish I knew, but I don't.

Although the piano record of "Violet," first made by Frank P. Banta, was remade by Albert Benzler, the moulds remained in working order. Edison made a special indestructible pressing of it for Banta's son, Frank E. Banta, when the four-minute Blue Amberols were introduced late in 1912.

"Auction Sale of Household Goods," has its share of peculiarities. It was issued by Len Spencer and Gilbert Girard in August, 1902; by Spencer

and Alfred S. Holt in November, 1905; Spencer and Girard again in April, 1907; then back to Spencer and Holt, in December, 1907; and finally by Spencer alone August, 1908.

A soprano, Nellie Thomas—does anybody now living know anything about her?—made a record of "For All Eternity." It came out in 1902.

Far from lasting for all eternity, Miss Thomas' version was replaced in August, 1904, with one by Corinne Morgan, the well-known and popular contralto. Then, in July, 1906, the Morgan interpretation gave way to one by another much less known contralto, Mary Porter Mitchell.

Incidentally, it may be reasonably assumed that records, the moulds of which gave out so quickly they had to be remade over and over, were good sellers—unless Edison's experts grossly under-estimated the number

of moulds usually ranging from 10 to 40, that would be needed.

Some surprise may be felt at finding that Cal Stewart, the genial delineator of "Uncle Josh," remade George W. Johnson's highly individual "Laughing Coon" and "Laughing Song," in 1902. However, Stewart became exclusive to Columbia in 1903, and both numbers were soon afterwards relisted by Johnson.

As the moulds wore out, Stewart's "Uncle Josh" records disappeared from the Edison catalog. An "iron puddler," Andrew Keefe of Albany, N. Y., was engaged to record a few of them, but since they were not given the original Stewart catalog numbers they do not count as remakes.

It is at least as astonishing to find that Arthur Collins, in 1900, was induced to remake "Turkey in the Straw," to which Billy Golden was



Ada Jones, front, most popular recording comedienne of her day, remade "Little Alabama Coon," which had previously been sung by George J. Gaskin and Arthur Collins. This 1908 picture shows Ada Jones with Beth Boone, who wrote several of the sketches recorded by Miss Jones and Len Spencer.





Conducted by JIM WALSH

## PERFORMERS WHO REMADE TWO-MINUTE EDISON CYLINDERS

By JIM WALSH

PART II

Alphabetical Listing Arranged by Artists

ANTHONY, HARRY (John Young), Tenor—Records Remade by:

1562—As Your Hair Grows Whiter (Feb., 1906). Previously by George J. Gaskin (1898); Albert Campbell (1899); Joe Natus (1902); Campbell (Oct., 1903).

5710—Because (Nov., 1905). Previously by Campbell (Oct., 1899); Natus (1902); Campbell (Aug., 1904).

7537 Bird in a Gilded Cage (July, 1905). Previously by Natus (Oct., 1900).

8517—Down on the Farm (Nov., 1905). Previously by Franklyn Wallace (Oct., 1903).

7871—I've a Longing in my Heart for You, Louise (Nov., 1905). Previously by Natus (1901).

5720—My Wild Irish Rose (July, 1906). Previously by Campbell (1899); Natus (1902).

8038—Ring Down the Curtain (Aug., 1907). Previously by Wallace (July, 1902).

BAKER, SUSANNE, Contralto — Record Remade by:

8014 Down Where the Bluebells Grow (Nov., 1905). Previously by Louise Roberts (June, 1902).

BANJO RECORDS—Remade by Vess L. Ossman:

The following were originally made by Ruby Brooks in 1898 or earlier.

2604—Cocoanut Dance (Aug., 1904).

2607—Darkey's Awakening (1899).  
 2608—Darkey's Patrol (April, 1907).  
 2608—Darkey Tickle (Nov., 1905).  
 2613—Happy Days in Dixie (Aug., 1907).  
 2616—Hot Stuff Patrol (1899).  
 2625—Nigger in a Fit (1899).  
 2631—Sounds from Africa (1899).  
 2635—Yankee Doodle (1899).  
 7679—Salome. Previously by Fred Van Eps (1907).  
 7666 San Toy Selections. Previously by Fred Van Eps (1901).

BANJO RECORDS—Remade by Fred Van Eps:

2605—Darkey's Dream (Nov., 1905). Previously by Ruby Brooks (1898).

2627—Patrol Comique (April, 1907). Previously by (1) Brooks (1898); (2) Ossman (1899).

2632—Stars and Stripes Forever March (1905). Previously by Brooks (1898).

7881—Sunflower Dance (April, 1907). Previously by (1) Brooks (1901); (2) Ossman (1902).

BELLS RECORD—Remade by Albert Benzler:

8379—Pretty Peggy (Dec., 1907). Previously by F. Rubsam (April, 1903).

BUGLE CALLS—Remade by John Hazel:

8144 Infantry Calls (Nov., 1905). Previously by A. L. Sweet (Sept., 1902).

8057—U.S. Cavalry Calls (Nov., 1905). Previously by A. L. Sweet (July, 1902).

CLIFFORD ARTHUR, Baritone (George Alexander)—Remade by:

7013—Carmen—Toreador Song (Oct., 1903). Previously by J. J. Fisher (1899).

COLLINS, ARTHUR, Baritone—Records Remade by:

4011—Turkey in de Straw (1901). Previously by Billy Golden (1899).

6948—Way to Kiss a Girl (Nov., 1905). Previously by Dan W. Quinn (1899).

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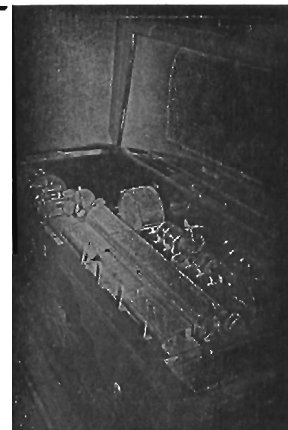
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"Banjo King," Vess L. Ossman, seated with banjo in front of him, is shown here in 1916 with his Banjo Orchestra. The pianist is Max Lichtenstein and the young man with the saxophone may be Vess Ossman, Jr. The elder Ossman remade several cylinders.

**COLLINS, ARTHUR, and HARLAN, BYRON G.**—Records Remade by:  
7889—I Got Mine (Feb., 1906). Previously by Arthur Collins and Joe Natus (1901).  
8018—McManus and the Parrot (Nov., 1905). Previously by Collins and Natus (Dec., 1901).  
7865—Negro Recollections (Nov., 1905). Previously by Collins (1900).  
7474—Old Black Joe (Nov., 1905). Previously by Collins (1900).

**COLLINS, ARTHUR, and NATUS, JOE**—Record Remade by:  
7997—Whon, Bill (1902). Previously by Collins (1900).

**CORNET SOLO**—Remade by John Hazel:  
8882—Last Rose of Summer (July, 1906). Previously by Bohumir Kryl (Jan., 1901).

**CORNET DUET**—Remade by John Hazel and William N. Barstow:  
8898—Two of Us (Dec., 1907). Previously by Hazel and Frank S. Seltzer (Jan., 1904).

**CORNET & TROMBONE DUET**—Remade by Herbert L. Clarke and Leo Zimmerman:  
8382—Alice Where Art Thou? (Nov., 1905). Previously by Clarke and Leroy Haines (April, 1903).

**DRUM and FIFE CORPS**—Remade by U.S. Marine Fife and Drum Corps:  
8058—Forbes' Farewell (Nov., 1905). Previously by National Guard of New Jersey Field Music (July, 1902).

**DUDLEY, S. H., Baritone**—Records Remade by:  
1011—Chin Chin Chinaman (Oct., 1899). Previously by Dan W. Quinn, tenor (1898).  
1084—Put Me Off at Buffalo (Oct., 1899). Previously by Quinn (1898).  
4012—Whistling Coon (1902). Previously by George W. Johnson (1898).  
4013—Whistling Girl (July 1, 1903). Previously by George W. Johnson (1898).

**DUFFY, JOHN H., Baritone**—Records Remade by:  
7839—Bedouin Love Song (Nov., 1905). Previously by J. W. Myers (1901).  
8010—Bridge, The (Nov., 1905). Previously by J. W. Myers (June, 1902).

**EDISON MIXED QUARTET**—Records Remade by:  
8321—Good Night, Good Night Beloved (April, 1907). Previously by Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (Feb., 1903).  
8496—Home, Sweet Home (Aug., 1907). Previously by Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (Sept., 1903).  
8356—Sweet and Low (Nov., 1905). Previously by Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (March, 1903).

**EDISON MALE QUARTET**—Record Remade by:  
8217—Lucky Jim (July, 1906). Previously by Lotus Quartet (Nov., 1902).

**EDISON TRIO**—Record Remade by:  
8503—Attila—Praise Ye (Nov., 1905). Previously by Metropolitan Mixed Trio (Oct., 1903).

**FAVOR, EDWARD M.**—Record Remade by:  
1066—McGinty at the Living Pictures (1899). Previously by Dan W. Quinn (1898).

**FLUTE and VIOLIN DUETS**—Remade by Eugene Rose and Eugene Jaudas:  
8423—Heart's Desire (Nov., 1905). Previously by Jaudas and Louis Atz (July, 1903).  
8495—Mountain Echoes (Nov., 1905). Previously by Jaudas and Atz (Sept., 1903).  
8464—On the High Alps (Nov., 1905). Previously by Jaudas and Atz (Aug., 1903).  
8404—Spring of Love (Nov., 1905). Previously by Jaudas and Atz (June, 1903).

**GILLETTE, IRVING (Henry Burr), Tenor**—Records Remade by:  
2018—Holy City (Nov., 1905). Previously by (1) Roger Harding (1898); (2) Harry Macdonough (Oct., 1899).

1515—Home, Sweet Home (Nov., 1905). Previously by (1) George J. Gaskin (1898); (2) Macdonough (Oct., 1899).  
8233—Palms, The (Nov., 1905). Previously by George M. Stricklett (Nov., 1902).

**HARLAN, BYRON G., Tenor**—Records Remade by:  
5718—Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee (1902). Previously by Albert Campbell (Oct., 1879).  
8020—Where the Silvery Colorado Winds Its

Way (Nov., 1905). Previously by J. Aldrich Libbey (April, 1902).

**HARLAN, BYRON G. and STANLEY, FRANK C.**—Records Remade by:

7540—Baby's Prayer (July, 1903). Previously by Harlan and A. D. Madeira (1900).

7498—I Left Because I Love You (July, 1903). Previously by Harlan and Madeira (1900).

7347—In the Shadow of the Pine (July, 1903). Previously by Harlan and Madeira (1900).

7603—Sweet Antoinette (April, 1903). Previously by Harlan and Madeira (1900).

7475—Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom (April, 1903). Previously by Harlan and Madeira (1900).

7382—While the Leaves Came Drifting Down (Aug., 1903). Previously a solo by Harlan (1900).

**HARRISON, JAMES F. (Frederick J. Wheeler), Baritone**—Records Remade by:

7701—All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name (Nov., 1905). Previously by J. J. Fisher (Oct., 1899).

7005—Calvary (Nov., 1905). Previously by Fisher (1899).

7163—Gypsy Love Song (Nov., 1905). Previously by William F. Hooley (Oct., 1899).

4914—Bohemian Girl—Heart Bowed Down (Nov., 1905). Previously by Hooley Oct., 1899).

7007—In Old Madrid (Nov., 1905). Previously by Fisher (Oct., 1899).

7118—Just as the Sun Went Down (Nov., 1905). Previously by Fisher (Oct., 1899).

7327—Schubert's Serenade (Nov., 1905). Previously by Hooley, bass (1900).

4909—Warrior Bold (Nov., 1905). Previously by Hooley (Oct., 1899).

7014—What a Friend We Have in Jesus (Nov., 1905). Previously by Fisher (Oct., 1899).

**JONES, ADA, Comedienne**—Record Remade by:

1523—Little Alabama Coon (Nov., 1905). Previously by (1) George J. Gaskin, tenor (1898); (2) Arthur Collins (1899).

**KAISER, JOHN, Comedian**—Records Remade by:

8360—Casey and His Gang of Irish Laborers (Nov., 1905). Previously by James H. White (March, 1903).

8069—Casey at the Telephone (Nov., 1905). Previously by James H. White (July, 1902).

8103—Casey Courting His Girl (Nov., 1905). Previously by White (Aug., 1902).

8075—Casey Taking the Census (Nov., 1905). Previously by White (July, 1902).

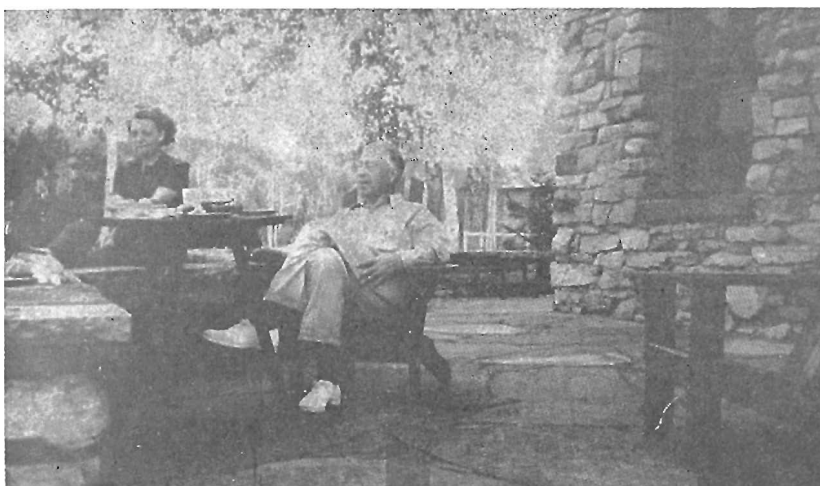
**MACDONOUGH, HARRY, Tenor**—Records Remade by:  
(Continued on page 42)

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The distinguished baritone, Reinald Werrenrath, as a young singer, remade W. H. Thompson's original Edison cylinder of "The Maple Leaf Forever." Werrenrath is shown here with Mrs. Werrenrath, in his later years at his summer home at Chazy Lake, N.Y. —Photos, property of Jim Walsh



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

2003—Almost Persuaded (Oct., 1899). Previously by Roger Harding (1899).

1503—Annie Laurie (Oct., 1899). Previously by George J. Gaskin (1898).

1521—Last Rose of Summer (Oct., 1899). Previously by George Gaskin (1898).

2033—Maryland, My Maryland (Oct., 1899). Previously by Harding (1898).

1530—My Beautiful Irish Maid (Oct., 1899). Previously by Gaskin (1898).

1570—On the Banks of the Wabash (Oct., 1899). Previously by Gaskin (1898).

1539—Safe in the Arms of Jesus (Oct., 1899). Previously by Gaskin (1898).

1574—Sing Again that Sweet Refrain (Oct., 1899). Previously by Gaskin (1898).

1575—Sweetest Story Ever Told (1902). Previously by (1) Gaskin (1898); (2) Campbell (1899).

2021—Sweet Bye and Bye (Oct., 1899). Previously by Harding (1898).

MANDOLIN—Records Remade by Samuel Siegel:

7234—Fairchild Wheelmen (April, 1903). Previously by W. C. Townsend (1898).

7235—Story Teller Waltz (April, 1903). Previously by Townsend (Oct., 1899).

MILLER, REED, Tenor—Records Remade by: (See also record remade by Miller under name of James Reed.)

6504—Lost Chord (Aug., 1907). Previously by Harry Macdonough (Oct., 1899).

7242—Sing Me a Song of the South (Aug., 1907). Previously by Macdonough (1899).

1559—Where is my Wandering Boy Tonight? (Aug., 1907). Previously by (1) Gaskin (1898); (2) Macdonough (Oct., 1899).

MITCHELL, MARY PORTER, Contralto—Record Remade by:

8224—For All Eternity (July, 1905). Previously by (1) Nellie Thomas, soprano (Nov., 1902); (2) Corinne Morgan, contralto (Aug., 1904).

MINSTREL RECORDS Remade by Arthur Collins, S. H. Dudley and Ancient City Quartet. These records, (all Oct., 1899) were listed in 1898 as by Billy Heins and the Ancient City Quartet.

4700—How I Love My Lou.

4702—Laughing Song.

4704—Minstrel Scene.

4705—Three Minutes with the Minstrels.

MORGAN, CORINNE, Contralto—Record Remade by:

8223—Whisper and I Shall Hear (Aug., 1904). Previously by Nellie Thomas, soprano (Nov., 1902).

MURRAY, BILLY, Tenor—Records Remade by:

1027—Girl Wanted (Dec., 1907). Previously by (1) Quinn (1898); (2) Dudley (Oct., 1899).

10325—Home with the Milk in the Morning (March, 1911). Previously by Pete Murray (March, 1916).

8118—In the Good Old Summer Time (Nov., 1905). Previously by William Redmond (Sept., 1902).

8173—Taking a Trip up the Hudson (Nov., 1905). Previously by William Redmond (Oct., 1902).

MYERS, J. W., Baritone—Record Remade by:

5800—Answer (1902). Previously by Jere Mahoney (1899).

PIANO RECORD—Remade by Albert Benzler:

8394—Violets (Nov., 1905). Previously by Frank P. Banta (May, 1903).

PICCOLO RECORDS—Remade by Frank S. Mazziotto (Oct. 1899). (All originally by George Schweinfest, 1898).

2802—Darkies' Jubilee.

2801—Gem Polka.

2805—Irish Reel.

2809—Nigger Feyer.

2810—Nightingale and the Frog.

POTTER, FREDERIC H., Tenor—Record Remade by:

8276—I'll Be With You When the Roses Bloom Again (Aug., 1907). Previously by Harry Macdonough (Dec., 1902).

REED, JAMES—Record Remade by: (See also under Reed's real name, Reed Miller.)

8237—I'm Wearing my Heart Away for You (Nov., 1905). Previously by Franklyn Wallace (Dec., 1902).

SPENCER, Len, Comedian—Record Remade by:

8089—Auction Sale of Household Goods (Aug., 1928). Previously by (1) Len Spencer and Gilbert Girard (Aug., 1902); (2) Spencer and Al S. Holt (Nov., 1905); (3) Spencer and Girard (April, 1907); (4) Spencer and Holt (Dec., 1907).

SPENCER, LEN, and HOLT, ALFRED S., Comedians—Records Remade by:

8077—Auction Sale of a Bird and Animal Store (Nov., 1905). Previously by Spencer and Girard (Aug., 1902).

8061—Bouncer at the Blazing Rag (July, 1906). Previously by Spencer and Girard (July, 1902).

8034—Daybreak at Calamity Farm (Nov., 1905). Previously by Spencer and Girard (July, 1902).

8035—Scene at a Dog Fight (July, 1906). Previously by Spencer and Girard (July, 1902).

8053—Trip to the Circus (July, 1906). Previously by Spencer and Girard (July, 1902).

SPENCER, LEN, and MEEKER, EDWARD, Comedians—Record Remade by:

8941—Krausmeyer and his Dog Schneider (Dec., 1907). Previously by Spencer and Holt (March, 1905).

SPENCER, LEN and HUNTER, PARKE—Record Remade by:

8704—Reuben Haskins' Trip in his Airship (Dec., 1907). Previously by (1) Spencer and Hunter (June, 1904); (2) Len Spencer (Aug., 1904).

SPENCER, LEN, and VAN EPS, FRED—Records Remade by:

8594—Banjo Evangelist (April, 1907). Previously by Spencer and Hunter (Jan., 1904).

8580—Hickory Bill (April, 1907). Previously by Spencer and Hunter (Jan., 1904).

STANLEY, FRANK C., Baritone—Records Remade by:

7838—Asleep in the Deep (Aug., 1904). Previously by J. W. Myers (1901).

7004—Beulah Land (Aug., 1904). Previously by J. J. Fisher (Oct., 1899).

4918—Down Deep within the Cellar (Oct., 1905). Previously by William F. Hooley (Oct., 1899).

4907—Old Sexton (October, 1905). Previously by Hooley (1898).

7840—Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep (Aug., 1901). Previously by J. W. Myers (1901).

7280—Village Blacksmith (Nov., 1905). Previously by Hooley (1899).

STEWART, CAL, Comedian—Record Remade by:

4005—Laughing Coon (1902). Previously by Geo. W. Johnson (1898).

4004—Laughing Song (1902). Previously by Johnson (1898).

NOTE: "Laughing Song" was relisted by Johnson in April, 1903, and "Laughing Coon" in Aug., 1904.

TURNER, ALAN, Baritone—Record Remade by:

7010—Love's Old Sweet Song (July, 1906). Previously by J. J. Fisher (Oct., 1899); (2) Andrew Schneider (Aug., 1904).

VIOLIN RECORDS—Remade by Charles D'Almaine:

6702—Gypsy Dance (1902). Previously by Fred W. Hager (Oct., 1899).

6703—Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana" (1902). Previously by Hager (Oct., 1899).

7192—Schubert's Senenade (1902). Previously by Hager (Oct., 1899).

7195—Spring Song—Mendelssohn's (1902). Previously by Hager (Oct., 1899).

WATEROUS, MR. and MRS. HERBERT, Baritone and Soprano—Record Remade by:

8258—O That We Two Were Maying (Aug., 1908). Previously by Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley (Dec., 1902).

WATSON, GEORGE P., Yodler—Record Remade by:

4021—Hush a Bye, Baby (1902). Previously by L. W. Lipp (1898).

4023—Sauerkraut is Bully (1902). Previously by Lipp (1898).

WERRENATH, REINALD, Baritone—Record Remade by:

8799—Maple Leaf Forever (Dec., 1907). Previously by W. H. Thompson (Sept., 1904).

WHISTLING SOLOS—Remade by Joe Belmont:

7335—Anvil Chorus—Trovatore (1902). Previously by "Angela" (1900).

7334—Bobolink (1902). Previously by "Angela" (1900).

7100—Mocking Bird (1902). Previously by Billy Gilbert (Nov., 1899).

WHITE, JAMES H., Comedian—Records Remade by:

I have been told that the May, 1901, Edison

record catalog, which I do not own, contains 19 "Casey" and four "Hiram Wilkins" monologs by James H. White. These must be remakes of titles previously by Russell Hunting, who left the U.S. in 1899, and went to England.

Fourteen "Casey" records and eight others in the 1898 catalog are credited to Hunting, but no artist's name is given with the same titles in the 1899 issue. If White's records bear the same number as Hunting's they should begin with 3801 and run consecutively. Four titles by White were remade in 1905 by John Kaiser.

XYLOPHONE RECORDS Remade by Albert Benzler:

These records were all previously made by J. Frank Hopkins and appeared in the monthly supplement or catalog on the dates that follow those assigned to the Benzler versions.

Alagazam March (July, 1905)—April, 1903.

8412—Down Where the Wurzbarger Flows (Aug., 1907)—June, 1903.

8476—Hot Scotch March (July, 1906)—Sept., 1903.

8005—I Have Grown So Used to You (Aug., 1907)—June, 1902.

8366—Mr. Dooley Medley (April, 1907)—March, 1903.

8473—Sanlago Waltz (July, 1905)—Aug., 1903.

8586—Uncle Sammy March (Feb., 1906)—Jan., 1904.

8393—Under the Bamboo Tree Medley (July, 1906)—May, 1903.

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# FAVORITE Pioneer Recording ARTISTS

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## VICTOR DOUBLE-FACED RECORDS THAT WERE REMADE

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

In theory, the Victor Talking Machine Co. had permanent master records that would never wear out. Supposedly, as long as these masters were stored in fireproof vaults they would last forever and Victor artists were assured of "immortality" for their vocal or instrumental performances.

Although that was the theory, it didn't hold good in practice.

Red Seal artists, as well as performers of the "popular" type, were frequently called on to remake masters of "big sellers" and the new versions were issued under unchanged catalog numbers.

In the Black Label group, artists often were changed. The record, however, continued to be sold under the number it had originally been given. For Black Label performers, "immortality" many times consisted of a decade, or a little more or less of catalog credit, before some other singer or player was substituted for the original artist.

Recently, I have been going through catalogs of Victor records from the time the first double-faced list was offered in October, 1908, until electric recordings appeared for the first time in the June, 1925, supplement. I have done this to compile a list of acoustically recorded discs which underwent changes before being dropped from the catalogs.

As far as I know and believe, nobody else has ever compiled such a list. And it will appear in HOBBIES in print for the first time.

I knew that a great many changes of recording personnel had been made. But I was surprised to find how large a percentage of big-selling Victor records were made over.

Many poor or fair sellers, of course, appeared in the catalog for a few years and were cut out without undergoing change. But if a record was one of the "standard" type likely to go on selling, the chances were better than even that one side, or probably both, would be remade after a comparatively few years.

I have not yet undertaken to prepare a list of remade single-faced Black Label records, because that would involve digging deep into Victor's earliest history. I may do so later.

And I may as well point out that although many Purple and Blue Label records and a considerable number of Red Seals were remade one or more times by the original artists, new performers were not substituted for them.

There were a number of reasons why Victor remade so many Black Labels. Damage to the original masters was sometimes a factor, and the artist who had made them was no longer available, or his work might have deteriorated.

Many of the remade 10 and 12-inch discs had been first sung or played during a comparatively primitive stage of the recording art, and the recording directors decided the records should be redone to bring them up to later standards.

Quite often, too, the artists may have lost popularity, and it was thought good business to have the records reissued by singers or players whose work was still in strong demand.

This would account for the fact that so many Hayden Quartets were remade, after the quartet had disbanded, by groups such as the Peerless, Criterion, and Shannon Quartets that were still active and popular.

Harry Macdonough, the Hayden's second tenor was for years Victor's most popular ballad soloist. But many of his records gave way to new versions by other tenors.

Corinne Morgan, the contralto, who made no Victor records after 1910 was supplanted on many records by the fresh-voiced, vivacious young Elsie Baker.

Charles D'Almaine, the violinist, who quit fiddling to become a chiropractor, had the humiliation of being replaced by other musicians. And almost all of Vess L. Ossman's banjo records, that remained in the catalogs of the early 1920's, were done over by Fred Van Eps.

Speaking of Macdonough, the remaking of his records must not have caused him any special grief, for he was manager of the Victor artist and repertoire department during most of the "remake" period. He must have approved the changes and selected the artists to make them.

After the electrical process doomed the old horn recording method, many of the popular sellers, of course, were remade through the microphone. But as a rule they were issued under new numbers, regardless of whether the remakes were by the original performers or someone else.

I have not included electrical recordings in my research.



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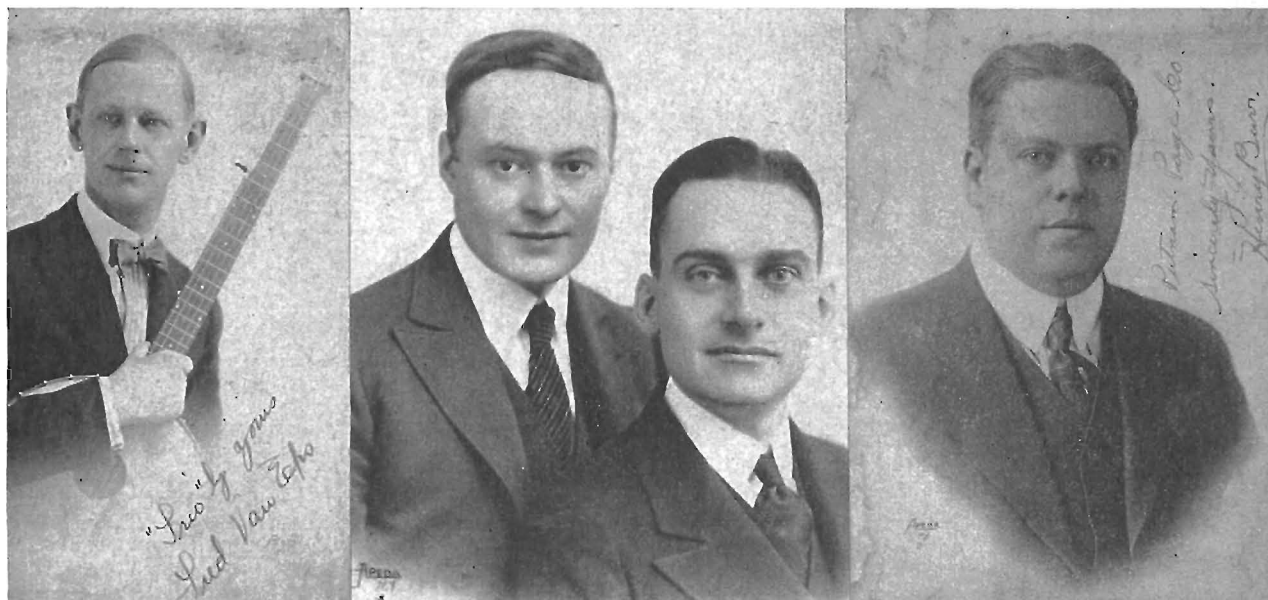
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Fred Van Eps remade several of Vess L. Ossman's banjo recordings for Victor.

Singing both as soloists and in duets, Charles Hart and

Elliott Shaw remade earlier Victor records.

Henry Burr remade earlier recordings by Harry Macdonough and Frederic C. Freemantel.

Occasionally. I came across some things that I found baffling. An example of a real puzzler is 16009 which appeared in the first list of double-faced Victor records. On the A side, the late Dr. Frederic C. Freemantel originally sang "Lord, I'm Coming Home." The B side was occupied by Frank C. Stanley's interpretation of "One Sweetly Solemn Thought."

Freemantel's side remained in the Victor catalog until the 1919 edition. It gave way then to a version by Harry McClaskey, better known under his assumed name of Henry Burr.

The 1919 catalog said Stanley's 10-inch record of "One Sweetly Solemn Thought" had been replaced by a new version sung by Wilfred Glenn, the Shannon Quartet manager and bass, now living in retirement at Charlottesville, Va.

But in 1921 Stanley's name reappeared and Glenn's went out. Two years later, Stanley gave way to Elliott Shaw, the Shannon's baritone.

What was going on? Since Frank Stanley had died in December, 1910, he could not have recorded a fresh version to take the place of the one attributed to Glenn.

Several years ago, Stanley's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Repelow of West Orange, N. J., mentioned to me a misunderstanding that had arisen concerning a record on which her father's name and Glenn's were confused.

Mrs. Repelow either said she and other members of her family once heard a Victor record with Glenn's name on the label but containing her father's voice, or that the label read Frank C. Stanley but the voice was Glenn's.

Stanley also had made a 12-inch record of "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," which was remade by Glenn. Conceivably, Glenn had not remade the 10-inch version, but through

error was credited with doing both.

Then, after the error had carried through a couple of catalogs, it was detected and Stanley's name was restored until his version was replaced by Shaw's. But that is merely a guess.

Another puzzle is why the Peerless Quartet record of "Medley of Foster Songs," 35095, was remade by the Criterion Quartet when the Peerless was the most popular of all recording ensembles.

Possibly, the master or matrices became damaged while the Peerless was on one of its long concert tours. And Victor, needing to press some more copies immediately, wasn't willing to wait until Henry Burr's organization returned.

Frederic Freemantel's records were remade by Henry Burr under his real name of Harry McClaskey. They appeared for a few years in the catalog under the McClaskey name.

Then, in the 1925 catalog—the last Victor issued before electric recording caused the vast majority of old records to be discarded—the name of McClaskey was dropped, and the records were issued as by Burr. This also happened to "Somewhere a Voice is Calling," which the tenor had made in 1914 as McClaskey.

I am wondering whether the Burr versions were the same as those which appeared under the McClaskey name, or whether they involved still another make-over.

When Burr's remake of Harold Jarvis' famous "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" appeared in 1924 it was reasonable to assume that some misfortune occurred to the Jarvis master. But when Victor issued a special catalog of records of historical and permanent interest in 1927 the Jarvis side was restored.

This might indicate that the original master had not been damaged,

but the change was made because Jarvis no longer had a large following and Burr was still popular.

Another question: Why was Emil Keneke's cornet record of "The Rosary" remade by Leon L. Handzlik when Keneke was still Victor's chief trumpeter?

In giving this list of made-overs, I shall set down first the record number, then the title, followed by the name of the original performer, and the year in which the disc first appeared in the double-faced list. Since most of these re-done records had previously been issued single-faced, the actual recording date was often several years earlier than indicated here.

Then follows the name of the artists who did the remaking and the year in which the make-over was first cataloged.

It is safe to assume that, as a rule, the remake was made in the year preceding that in which it entered the catalog. For instance, "1913" means the remake record first appeared in the 1914 catalog, but in all likelihood was recorded in 1913.

Sometimes only one side of a double-faced record was remade, to begin with. But the other followed a year or so afterward.

Where only one side was remade throughout the record's active life, I am not giving the coupling.

—O—  
List of remade records will appear in the December issue of HOBBIES.

—O—

He has a right to criticize who has a heart to help.

It has been my experience that folks who have no vices have very few virtues.

—Abraham Lincoln

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## LIST OF DOUBLE-FACED RECORDS THAT WERE REMADE

By JIM WALSH  
PART II



From left to right:

Elsie Baker, shown here with Allen G. Debus and Ross Keegan at the 1948 "John Bieling Day" party at Garden City, N.Y., made over many records originally sung by another contralto, Corinne Morgan.

16008 Beautiful Isle of Somewhere, sung by Harold Jarvis, tenor (1908). Remade by Henry Burr, tenor (1924). REVERSE: Christ Arose, sung by Hayden Quartet (1908). Remade by Shannon Quartet (1924).

16009 Lord, I'm Coming Home, sung by Frederic C. Freemantel, tenor (1908). Remade by Harry McClaskey, tenor (1919). REVERSE: One Sweetly Solemn Thought, sung by Frank C. Stanley, baritone (1908). Remade by Wilfred Glenn, bass (1919). Frank C. Stanley (1921) and Elliott Shaw (1923).

16019 Widow Dooley, comic Irish sketch by Ada Jones and Len Spencer (1908). Remade by Ada Jones and Billy Murray (1922).

16045 Devil's Dream Reel and Speed the Plow Reel, both by Victor Dance Orchestra (1908). Remade by John Taylor, violinist (1921).

16046 Voice of Love, cornet and flute duet by Emil Kencke and Darius Lyons (1908). Remade by Rosario Bourdon, cello, and Clement Barone, flute (1920). REVERSE: The Rosary, cornet solo by Kencke. Remade by Leon L. Handlik, cornet (1921).

16051 Serenade (Pierrot), violin solo by Charles D'Almaine (1908). Remade by Michael Gusikoff (1920).

16052 In Venice, whistling solo by Mrs. Alice Shaw (1908). Remade by Margaret McKee, whistler (1922).

16060 Hosanna and Holy Night, tenor solos by Harry Macdonough (1908). Remade by Lewis James, tenor (1924 and 1923, respectively).

16061 Florida—In the Shade of the Palm, sung by Macdonough (1908). Remade by Shaw (1921). REVERSE: Tell Me, Pretty Maiden, soprano and tenor duet by Elsie Stevenson and Macdonough (1908). Remade by Victor Light Opera Sextet (1921).

16088 Titli's Serenade, cornet and flute duet by Kencke and Lyons (1908). Remade by Kencke and Barone (1920).

16092 Gay Gossoon, banjo solo by Vess L. Ossman. Remade by Fred Van Eps (1924). REVERSE: St. Louis Tickle, played by Ossman-Dudley Trio (1908). Remade by Plantation Trio (1924).

16105 Bring Back my Bonnie to Me, sung by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1924).

16139 Killarney, sung by Macdonough (1909). Remade by Burr (1921).

16166 Vesper Service and Beulah Land, both by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1924).

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16178 Jesus Christ is Risen Today, by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Shannon Quartet (1924). REVERSE: Bless be the Tie that Binds, sung by Trinity Choir (1909). Remade by Trinity Quartet (1924).

16184 Holy City—Parts 1 and 2 by Macdonough (1909). Remade by James (1924).

16192 My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice, sung by Corinne Morgan (1909). Remade by Elsie Baker, contralto (1912).

16194 Nightingale and the Frog, piccolo solo by Lyons (1909). Remade by Barone (1922).

16195 Home, Sweet Home, by Macdonough (1909). Remade by Charles Harrison tenor (1922).

16196 Sing Me to Sleep, by Morgan (1909). Remade by Baker (1912). REVERSE: O Promise Me by Macdonough. Remade by William Robyn, tenor (1921).

16197 Home, Over There by Macdonough and Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1921). REVERSE: Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1923).

16212 Elegie by Elsie Stevenson (1909). Remade by Elizabeth Spencer (1920).

16216 Saved By Grace, tenor duet by Macdonough and John Bieling (1909). Remade by Albert Campbell and Burr (1924). REVERSE: My Faith Looks Up To Thee by Trinity Choir (1909). Remade by Trinity Quartet (1924).

16217 The Bridge by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1924).

16218 Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Glenn and Shannon Four (1909). REVERSE: Cornfield Medley by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1923).

16230 He Will Hold Me Fast by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1921).

16255 I Need Thee Every Hour by Macdonough and John Bieling (1909). Remade by Campbell and McClaskey (1919), and Campbell and Burr (1925).

16261 Rest for the Weary and Shall We Gather at the River? Both by Hayden Quartet (1909). Both remade by Peerless Quartet (1924).

16266 Keep Off the Grass and Silver Heels, banjo solos by Ossman (1909). Both remade by Van Eps (1920).

16269 Calvary, baritone solo by Stanley. Remade by Edgar Kiefer (1924).

16286 Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?



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by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1923).

16288 Sabbath Morn by Macdonough (1909). Remade by Burr (1921).

16296 Birds in the Forest, trio for two violins and flute by Howard Rattay, Theodore Levy and Darius Lyons (1909). Remade by Rattay, Witzmann and Barone (1921).

16313 Largo (Handel), violin solo by Rattay (1903). Remade by Alexander Schmidt (1921).

16388 Annie Laurie and Ben Bolt, contralto solos by Morgan (1909). Remade by Baker (1922).

16389 Old Folks at Home by Morgan (1909). Remade by Baker (1922).

16390 Turkey in the Straw Medley by Ossman (1909). Remade by Van Eps (1921).

16393 Medley of Old Time Reels by D'Almaine (1903). Remade by Taylor (1923).

16398 Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me sung by Macdonough (1909). Remade by James (1924).

16399 On a Morning Land by Stanley and Macdonough (1909). Remade by Macdonough and Edward Hamilton (Reinold Werrenrath) (1919). REVERSE: God Be With You Till We Meet Again by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Orpheus Quartet (1919).

16402 Dixie by Byron G. Harlan and Stanley (1909). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1921).

16405 In the Gloaming by Morgan (1909). Remade by Elizabeth Spencer (1920).

16408 The Palms by Macdonough. Remade by Robyn (1921).

16410 Angel's Serenade, violin and cello duet by Rattay and Louis Heine. Remade by Rattay and Barone (1923).

16412 Where Is My Boy Tonight? by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1925).

16414 Tell Mother I'll Be There by Hayden Quartet (1909). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1925).

REVERSE: Some Time We'll Understand by Trinity Choir (1909). Remade by Trinity Quartet (1924).

16418 Just Before the Battle, Mother by Macdonough and Bieling (1903). Remade by Campbell and Burr (1922).

16431 Throw Out The Life Line by Macdonough and Hayden Quartet (1910). Remade by Burr and Peerless Quartet (1922).

16448 I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray by Fisk University Jubilee Quartet (1910). Remade by Bethel Jubilee Quartet (1924).

16453 Golden Shippers by Fisk University Jubilee Quartet (1910). Remade by Bethel Jubilee Quartet (1924).

16473 Dollar Princess Waltz, played by Victor Dance Orchestra (1910). Remade by The Troubadours (1925).

16484 Song of the Soul, violincello solo by Victor Sorlin (1910). Remade by Yasha Bunchuk (1924).

16490 Ave Maria by Elizabeth Wheeler, soprano (1910). Remade by Della Baker, soprano (1925).

16495 Hall Columbia by Macdonough and Hayden Quartet (1910). Remade by James and Shannon Quartet (1925).

16531 Tramp, Tramp, Tramp by Harlan and Stanley. Remade by Criterion Quartet (1921).

16532 The Ninety and Nine by Freemantel. Remade by Harry McClaskey (1919) and Henry Burr (1925).

16533 My Mother's Prayer by Freemantel. Remade by James (1924).

16538 Mocking Bird, violin solo by D'Almaine (1910). Remade by Taylor (1923).

16663 Home, Sweet Home, sung by Morgan (1910). Remade by Elizabeth Spencer (1921).

16567 Bunch of Rags, banjo solo by Ossman (1910). Remade by Van Eps (1921). REVERSE: Dixie Girl March by Ossman-Dudley Trio. Remade by Plantation Trio (1922).

16688 Near the Cross by Elizabeth and William Wheeler (1911). Remade by Alice Green and Raymond Dixon (Olive Kline and Lambert Murphy) (1923).

16695 Melody in F by Vienna Quartet (1911). Remade by Florentine Quartet (1922).

16700 Dear Lord and Father by Elizabeth and William Wheeler (1911). Remade by Kline and Murphy (1925).

16741 My Wild Irish Rose by Hayden Quartet (1911). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1923).

16742 Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me by Freemantel (1911). Remade by McClaskey (1919) and Burr (1924). REVERSE: Nearer, My God, To Thee by Hayden Quartet (1911). Remade by Peerless Quartet (1924).

16743 Softly and Tenderly by Freemantel (1911). Remade by McClaskey (1918) and Burr (1925). REVERSE: Old-Time Religion by Hayden Quartet (1911). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1921).

16749 When the Roll is Called Up, Yeoman by Hayden Quartet (1911). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1921).

16813 Last Rose of Summer by Elizabeth Wheeler (Continued on page 45)

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(Continued from page 37)

ler (1911). Remade by Della Baker (1925). RE-  
VERSE: Tannhauser—Evening Star, cello solo by  
Victor Sorilla (1911). Remade by Bourdon (1921).  
16928 In the Gloaming by Will Oakland and  
American Quartet (1911). Remade by Burr and  
Peerless Quartet (1924).  
17012 Cuckoo Song and Papa's Baby Boy, yodeling  
songs by George P. Watson (1912). Remade by  
Frank M. Kamplain (1924). These apparently  
were Kamplain's only Victor records.  
17234 For All Eternity, made by Alan Turner,  
baritone (1913). Remade by Ralph Crane (Royal  
Dadman) (1925).  
17360 Darktown Editors, comic sketch by Billy  
Golden and Joe Hughes (1913). Remade by Gol-  
den and Billy Helms (1920).  
17417 Old Folks at Home, banjo solo by Ossman  
(1913). Remade by Van Eps (1922).  
17446 The Rosary, sung by Turner (1913). Re-  
made by Crane (1925).  
17475 Somewhere A Voice Is Calling by  
McCloskey (1914). Reissued under name of Burr  
(1925).  
18375 Tales of Hoffmann—Barcarolle and Mighty  
Lak' a Rose, both by Boston Quintet (1917). Re-  
made by Shannon Quartet (1924).  
35008 Medley of Old Time Reels by D'Almaine  
(1908). Remade by Taylor (1921).  
35009 Star Spangled Banner by Stanley (1909).  
Remade by Glenn (1921).  
35012 Crucifix by Stanley and Macdonough  
(1909). Remade by Hart and Shaw (1921). RE-  
VERSE: My Faith Looks Up To Thee by Stan-  
ley and Macdonough. Remade by Hart and Shaw  
(1922).  
35014 Glory Song by Hayden Quartet (1909).  
Remade by Criterion Quartet (1925).  
35052 My Old Kentucky Home by Morgan  
(1909). Remade by Elsie Baker (1913).  
35086 Faust—Flower Song by Morgan (1909).  
Remade by Baker (1919).  
35095 Medley of Foster Songs by Peerless Quar-  
tet (1910). Remade by Criterion Quartet (1924).  
35116 Jerusalem by Stanley (1910). Remade by  
Shaw (1921).  
35117 He Shall Feed His Flock by Morgan  
(1910). Remade by Baker (1913).  
35133 Sing Me To Sleep by Morgan (1910). Re-  
made by Baker (1913). REVERSE: Songs My Moth-  
er Used To Sing by Morgan and Macdonough.  
Remade by Edna Brown and Raymond Dixon (El-  
sie Baker and Lambert Murphy) (1921).  
35140 Schubert's Serenade, violin and flute duet  
by D'Almaine and Lyons (1910). Remade by  
Raffay and Berone (1922).  
35141 One Sweetly Solenn Thought by Stan-  
ley (1910). Remade by Glenn (1920) and Shaw  
(1921). REVERSE: Guide Me, O Thou Great Je-  
hovah by Stanley and Macdonough (1910). Re-  
made by Hart and Shaw (1921).  
35270 Merry Wives of Windsor Overture by New  
Symphony Orchestra (1913). Remade by Victor  
Symphony Orchestra (1923).  
35534 Zampa Overture by New Symphony Or-  
chestra (1916). Remade by Victor Symphony Or-  
chestra (1923).

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## EARLY ZON-O-PHONE RECORD CATALOGS

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

Through the helpfulness of the Library of Congress I have been privileged to examine a rare Zon-o-phone record catalog dated May 10, 1901, and issued by a company whose name is given on the cover as the National Gram-o-Phone Corporation of 3 and 5 West 18th Street, New York.

The details of the formation of this company and its litigation with Emile Berliner's Gram-o-phone interests are complex. I shall not try to go into them here.

Instead, I suggest that anyone wishing to trace the history of the Zon-o-phone organization should consult "The Fabulous Phonograph," by Roland Gelatt, or "From Tinfoil to Stereo," by Walter L. Welch and Oliver Read.

This 1901 catalog is the oldest one of Zon-o-phone records I have seen. Apparently the first Zono records were issued in 1900. The catalog has given me some information I had previously lacked.

My next oldest record catalog for this company is dated June, 1905. This leaves a four-year gap during which the numbering system of Zon-o-phone records changed more than once. So did the recording process and the ownership.

The National Gram-o-phone Corporation, in fact, went bankrupt in 1901, after the catalog, from which I shall quote, was issued. A year later the Zon-o-phone trade name had been taken over by the Universal Talking Machine Manufacturing Co.

Victor acquired Universal in 1903 and rather surreptitiously marketed Zono records and talking machines at least through 1912, possibly into 1913.

A number of artists—Billy Murray among them—who supposedly were under contract to make disc records for Victor exclusively, also appeared on Zon-o-phones. These, however, had a limited sale.

The 1901 catalog, which formerly belonged to the late John Secrist, had 24 small pages. Its contents were nothing to fill any serious music lover with enthusiasm.

There were two record sizes—the 7-inch Zon-o-phone, which sold for 50 cents each or \$5 a dozen, and the 9-inch Superba, 75 cents each or \$8 a dozen.

Ten-inch records had not been introduced and there were only eight of the 9-inch, which probably re-

ceived their first announcement in this catalog.

All, of course, were single-faced. Concerning the 9-inchers the catalog said, in capital letters:

"We call especial attention to the first product of our new Superba 9-inch records. They are beautiful in quality, and in richness, and mark the highest achievement in the talking machine world."

Those 9-inch discs were 9826, selection from "The Isle of Champagne," played by Victor Herbert's Band; 9827, "American Marines' March," Herbert's Band; 9828, "Yank-ee Doodle," with variations, Herbert's Band.

Also there were 9867, "When the Harvest Days Are Over," Haydn Quartet; 9871, "Cornfield Medley," Haydn Quartet; 9872, "Farmyard Medley," Haydn Quartet; 9876, "Asleep in the Deep," baritone solo by J. W. Myers, and 9927, "Where the Road Turns at Banbury Cross," tenor solo by Will F. Denny.

No information was given as to why the numbers were not consecutive.

I have a copy of "The Isle of Champagne" selection, numbered 1117. It appears in the 1905 catalog as 5019. By the following year all 9-inch Zon-o-phone records had given way to the 10-inch type, first introduced in December, 1904, and numbered from 1 upward.

During the remaining years in which 10-inch, single-faced Zono records were made, exactly 25 were issued each month.

The 1901 catalog contained 44 7-inch records by Victor Herbert's Band and two on which the band accompanied Bert Morphy, who sang, on 9122, "The Blue and the Gray,"

and on 9126, "Every American Girl is a Queen."

A bit of explanation is in order here. Victor Herbert, the eminent composer, did not conduct the so-called Victor Herbert's Band. He merely gave permission for some of the members of the group, which had formerly been Gilmore's Band, to play in the Zon-o-phone "house" organization conducted by Fred Hager.

Victor Herbert's first direct phonograph participation appears to have occurred in 1903 when his orchestra made a 12-inch, single-faced record of "The Rosary" for Victor. Herbert was then absent from records until 1909 when he signed a two-year contract for the orchestra to make Edison cylinders.

He also became "technical adviser" to the Edison Laboratory and was supposed to suggest suitable numbers to record and to criticize recordings, but his advisory association was purely nominal. In 1911 he signed up with Victor and remained exclusive to Victor until his death in 1924.

During the last two or three years that Blue Amberol cylinders were sold, Edison reissued some of the Herbert Orchestra selections that had originally been made for the four-minute Amberols. Most of the Orchestra's cylinder records were lacking in volume and sold poorly. The Victors were better from the standpoint of being louder.

Some of the 1901 Zono titles by the pseudo-Herbert Band are interesting. There is, for one, 9592, "Zon-o-phone March," composed by Hager and "specially written and dedicated to the Zon-o-phone."

Others include 9823, "Tone Pictures of 71st Regiment Leaving for Cuba;"



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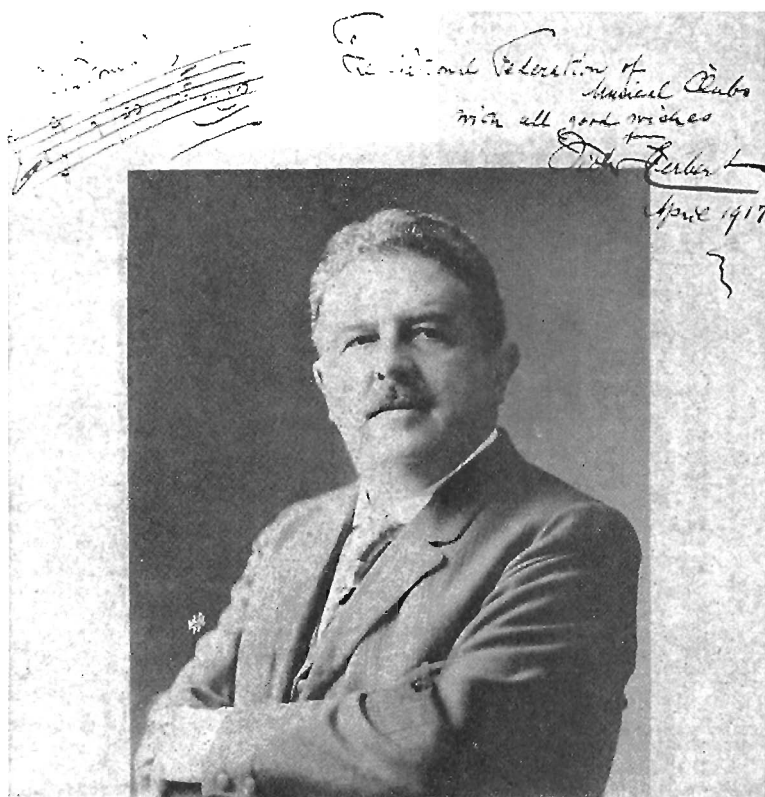
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VICTOR HERBERT, the distinguished Irish-American composer, did not conduct "Victor Herbert's Band" on Zon-o-phone records. He merely permitted his name to be used.

9824, "McKinley's Inaugural March" (not an on-the-scene recording!), and 9825, "Casey and Murphy's Review of St. Patrick's Day Parade."

We come next to 31 7-inch records by the Zon-o-phone Orchestra, "an organization composed of selected

artists from the symphony orchestras of this city. These players are all fine soloists of the highest order; their records are incomparably fine."

The first Zono Orchestra record is "The Jolly Coppersmith," which the late Fred Hager told me outsold, in those early days, all other band and orchestra records combined, "because the banging on the anvil and other noises were so loud they drowned out the scratch."

The orchestra also recorded "The Zon-o-phone March" on 9657. And the catalog said, "This march was written and dedicated to us especially for the Zon-o-phone by our musical director."

There is an irritating note in connection with 9661, "Zon-o-phone Waltz:"

"A bright, melodious waltz movement composed by an enthusiastic and loyal friend of the Zon-o-phone—a composer of considerable note in the Far West. Orchestrated for us by a well-known musician who also arranged the orchestra music for Rogers Brothers in Central Park."

Why couldn't they have said who the composer and the musician who orchestrated it were?

A record I'd like to find was 9658, "Election Night, 1900, at the Club in New York:"

"Election night at one of the prominent New York clubs. A boy is reading the election returns of the recent McKinley-Bryan contest. Music, cheers, yells, hisses, and some commotion follows. The band plays 'Yankee Doodle,' 'A Little Bit Off the Top,' and 'We Won't Go Home Till Morning.'"

Again, however, understand this

was just a "studio job" and not a recording actually made in some political clubroom.

Page seven sets forth seven tenor solos by Joseph Natus, with orchestra accompaniments rather than piano. The Zon-o-phone Reed Orchestra was represented by six selections.

This will interest the opera fans: Five solos by "Sig. Francisco," with Zon-o-phone Reed Orchestra accompaniment. Included were 9509, the "Toreador Song" from "Carmen;" 9510, the "Pagliacci Prolog" ("A masterpiece, sung with wonderful expression, and human beyond any record you have ever heard);" 9511, "Holy City;" 9513, "Evening Star" from "Tannhauser;" and 9514, "Dio Possente," from "Faust."

"Francisco," of course, was Emilio de Gogorza, one of the most accomplished baritones of this century. He became Victor's "contact man" and induced most of the Metropolitan Opera stars of the early 1900's to make Victor records.

In his young manhood, when he was still an aspiring but not especially prosperous singer, Emilio de Gogorza made records under assumed names for nearly all the pioneer companies.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 35)

LO: Jeder Knabe 5. FANCIULLA DEL WEST: Lasset sie glauben 6. DAPHNE: Gotter! Bruder in hohen Olympus.

Born in Skane, Sweden, on January 2, 1901, Ralf studied singing first with Ingebjart, and later at the Royal Conservatory. He began his career in Stettin, as Cavaradossi, in 1930.

His further engagements included opera houses in Chemnitz, Frankfurt-am-Main, Stockholm, Vienna, Copenhagen, London, and Dresden's Staatsoper. He died on April 27, 1954.

Already a German Kammersänger, he created Apollo in the world premiere of Richard Strauss' "Daphne," in Dresden, on October 15, 1938. The last band on the Rococo disc, is, therefore, a creator's recording from this rarely heard opera.

—o—

## CESAR VEZZANI

Some time ago, a biography of César Vezzani appeared on these pages; in view of this, and being pressed for space, I'll omit one this time. Anyway, it will suffice in this famous singer's case to remark that his is a lasting fame and that his records are constantly sought by his many devotees.

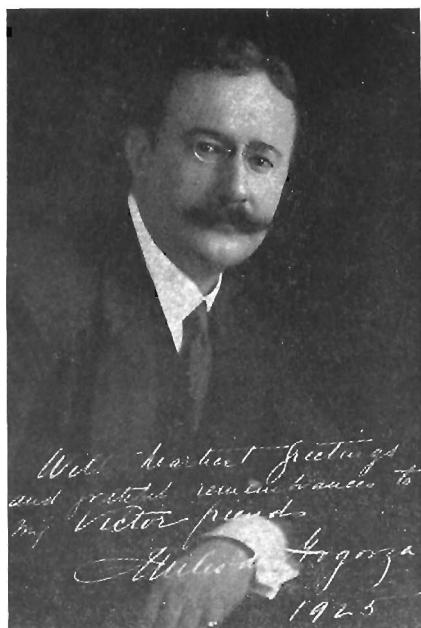
The Rococo LP contains a rich variety of operatic selections in which the Corsican tenor is his own effective self, sparing neither voice nor temperament.

CESAR VEZZANI, Volume II, Rococo 5234:

Side I - 1. HUGUENOTS: Plus blanche 2. PROPHETE: Roi du ciel 3. GUILLAUME TELL: Asile héréditaire 4. SAMSON ET DALILA: En ces lieux (w. Maria Duchene) 5. SAMSON ET DALILA: Air de la Meule

Side II - 1. PECHEURS DE PERLES: Au fond du temple saint 2. PECHEURS

(Continued on page 42)



EMILIO DE GOGORZA, who became one of the greatest concert baritones, made Zon-o-phone records under the names of "Signor Francisco" and "Ed. Franklin."



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artist

Conducted by JIM WALSH



From left to right:

The late "Roger" Smith.

Roger poses for his picture. He is held by Miss Delrhey Fitzgerald of Pulaski, Va.

### A Last Loving Tribute To "The Peerless Roger"

By JIM WALSH

Each year, beginning in 1959, the January HOBBIES has carried photographs of my cats, and, in more recent years, of "Possy," my pet possum, as a Christmas and New Year greeting to our friends throughout the world.

Little Nipper, Petey, Lucky Jim, Possy, and I hope to revive that custom next January. But this year our hearts are too heavy because of the death of the undisputed head of our household, the black and red-gold calico cat, whom our beloved English friend, Major H. H. Annand, termed, when he visited us in May, 1964, "the peerless Roger — a cat of super-intelligence."

As "Gerry" Annand told the cats and me farewell, he patted Roger's gleaming head and said, "Goodbye, my Beauty. Live a long time!"

None of us suspected that within one year and a half Roger would

be in eternal rest beneath a tree in the front yard which had been his favorite sleeping place during hot summer weather.

In paying this tribute to one of the most devoted friends a man ever had, I recall thousands of memories. They began the scorching hot night of June 21, 1954, when, as part of my news-reporting duties, I walked into the detective bureau of the Roanoke, Va., police headquarters and saw a tiny kitten, about six weeks old, amusing the detectives by chasing the paper balls they threw to him.

The kitten had been abandoned at the rear of the municipal building, and had spent the day wailing.

In the early evening it jumped in an open window in the detective

bureau and began playing with the detectives.

I hadn't owned any cats for years because of the grief of losing them. But as this kitten and I looked at each other an impulse seemed to travel from his heartstrings to mine.

I recalled an old record on which Len Spencer recited a poem, "Roger and I," about a homeless, frequently hungry tramp and his faithful dog, Roger. And I knew this kitten should have that name.

Detective Harry Britt turned to me and said, "You can have him, Jim, if you want him."

I replied: "If he's still here when I get off from work I'll take him home. His name is going to be Roger." Before I returned to my newsroom I went across the street and bought the famished little fellow some milk.

He was there at quitting time, in a small room for safe-keeping. Policewoman Rosa Smith placed him in a large brown envelope, with his cream-colored paws in the bottom and his black head above the top. So Roger and I went to catch a bus to my home in Vinton. In Rosa's honor I added the middle name of Smith.

Roger was frightened on the bus and meowed a bit, but by the time we reached Vinton he had made friends with nearly all the passengers. And as we left the bus, the driver and others said, "Good night, Roger!"

Then something occurred so touching I love to think of it. As I walked up the dark street to my home, clutching the envelope and its precious contents, Roger started purring at the top of his infant voice.



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I said, "Well, little fellow, if you trust and love me this much already you'll have a good home as long as you or I live." I kept that promise.

At home I had no food for him except canned milk. Roger would drink a bit from his saucer, then come, rub against me, and purr. At length he jumped into my lap, and nuzzled me, his paws on my neck. We played together about an hour before bedtime and were happy.

For the 11 years that followed, there was no question of our devotion. One of his sweetest traits was his generosity. When I moved to another house, after having had Roger a couple of months a starving gray cat, with a wild, hysterical voice, came pleading for a home.

The cat had such a bad cough I was afraid to take him in for fear Roger would catch it. But the little fellow made it so clear he loved the beggar I finally did, after a veterinarian said the cough wasn't catching.

The first morning the wanderer was admitted to the kitchen for breakfast Roger purred lustily, then got his favorite catnip mouse and gave it to the other cat to play with. The "beggar" became my cherished Gray, who died September 11, 1962. He was one of the best cats that ever lived. And he loved Roger and me with devotion.

Through the years Roger delighted in meeting me at night when I came from work. He'd stand in my front yard, see me leave the bus a few blocks away, then run swiftly down the hill, roll over and over at my feet, and lead the way home.

In recent months he seldom did this. I did not realize he didn't feel up to it.

His memory was amazing. He never forgot anyone, though years intervened between meetings. One friend, Quentin Riggs, an employee of the U. S. State Department, now working in Paris, is changed each two years to a new assignment. He comes to see me between transfers.

Up to now Roger has seen him coming, trotted down the path to meet him, and rolled over to express joy. It is going to hurt, a few months from now, when Quentin and his wife, Evelyn, come to Vinton, but have no Roger to greet them.

Roger died last November 5. I had noticed he was not eating well and took him to his favorite veterinary hospital, where the doctors all loved him. They found he had several bad teeth. Perhaps because the teeth had kept him from eating enough, he had developed anemia, and, it was feared, leukemia. He was given a blood transfusion and seemed for a few days to gain strength rapidly.

Then a second transfusion was given. When my phone rang, I knew the worst. "Mr. Walsh," the

(Continued on page 41)

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costume, for doll clothes reflect the styles of their day.

In the 1870's it was popular to dress "lady" dolls in the height of fashion. These were not necessarily "fashion" dolls; that is, dolls meant to demonstrate the latest fashions in women's clothing, but were "play" dolls for children.

The photograph of the painting marked A is a good example of a doll's dress patterned on mama's "Sunday best." The original of this rendering by Marie Alain may be seen at The Baltimore, Md., Museum of Art.

The dress is of striped purple taffeta silk with lace at neck and sleeves. It formerly was owned by Mrs. H. B. Bray, and was made in Baltimore.

The doll's parasol, A-1, privately owned, is of satin and lace. It bears the same date as the dress. Ernest A. Towers, Jr., is the artist.

Small hats were worn at this time, as shown in the sketch I, "Headgear for a well-dressed doll, 1860-1870."

B shows a doll's costume of 1876 with sketch of the back of the dress, which is of brown taffeta silk with corded-silk trimmings and steel buttons. It may be seen at the Baltimore, Md. Museum of Art. The water-color sketch is by Lillian Causey. The original owner was Mrs. H. B. Bray.

In 1876 hats were still small to accommodate the high and elaborate hairdos of the period. Some of the hats were merely a round patch decorated with trimming around the edge, or a plume and fastened under the chin with bonnet strings.

The 1870's were the heyday of the "fancy" doll heads in so-called Parian bisque; also the era of the French bisque "lady" dolls with slender waists. They were in the height of fashion and were called by their manufacturers, "Parisiennes."

From the Children's Museum of the Detroit, Mich., public schools comes the precious doll's dressing gown (C) of white eyelet embroidery of the 1840 to 1860 period. The beautiful rendering is by James McLellan.

D is a doll's dress of about the same period. It is privately owned. The dress of fine linen is trimmed with hand-embroidered muslin and tied at the waist with a blue ribbon. The bodice is lined with muslin. There are three hand-made button holes with glass buttons.

The attractive little garment comes from Wells River, Vt. The original owner was Mrs. C. W. Rogers. The fine, detailed, water-color sketch is by Edith Tower.

The four sketches marked E are by Rosalie L. Lane and the outfit may be seen at the Cooper Union Museum



in New York City. It consists of a cotton print dress with tiny all-over design, and a pleated collar; a Mother Hubbard type of wrapper with sleeves full at the top, like those of the dress; and two chemises. The original owner was Mrs. Charles Fairchild. Its date is 1830-1840.

The charming little dress, F, rendered by Mary Humes, brings us nearer our own time. Some of our older doll collectors will remember wearing just such a dress about the turn of the century.

It is of printed lawn, lace trimmed, and may be seen at the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Va. Miss Pauline Grand is credited as being the original owner of this doll dress.

G is a doll's navy and white check gingham sunbonnet of 1886 originally owned by Mrs. W. L. Tallman, made

(Continued on page 49)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

veterinarian said over the phone, "I hate to tell you. Roger just gave a sigh, laid his head over on one side, and died. I'm sure he knew you loved him and were doing everything you could for him. As I've often said, he was the smartest, sweetest cat I've ever treated."

Yesterday another veterinarian, who gave Roger distemper shots as a kitten, told me, "I remember him as the sweetest kitten ever in my hospital. I didn't keep him in a cage but let him follow me while I treated the other animals. It hurts to know he is gone."

But after all, what a successful life Roger led — admired and loved by all who knew him! Most cats, like most people, are soon forgotten after they are buried. But I know that as long as I live, the memory of Roger will be one of my most cherished treasures.

And I like to think that in a hundred years, after all of us now alive have turned to dust, some antiquarian or casual reader, will pick up this issue of HOBBIES, read of my pet's death and say:

"Roger must have been a wonderful cat!"

Indeed, dear reader of the year 2066, he was. In my heart, as long as I survive, he will remain what Gerry Annand proclaimed him:

"The Peerless Roger."

## NORTH SHORE DOLL CLUB

The newly organized North Shore Doll Club meets the first Saturday in each month in Evanston, Ill. Diane Hartlap, Chicago, is the club's president. The club has applied for a charter from the United Federation of Doll Clubs, Inc.

One of the members of the new club is married to a descendant of the famous Steiner family who created the now much sought after Steiner dolls. The club's program for December was highlighted by a talk on the history of the Steiner family.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



From left to right:

J. J. FISHER, baritone, who began making records in the 1890's had several discs in the 1901 Zon-o-phone catalog.

EDWARD M. FAVOR, one of the earliest pioneer recording artists, contributed extensively to the 1901 Zon-o-phone record catalog.

## EARLY ZON-O-PHONE RECORD CATALOGS

Part II

By JIM WALSH

Continuing the survey of the rare Zon-o-phone record catalog of May 10, 1901, in the Library of Congress, I found there were a dozen violin solos by Fred Hager, "winner of the first prize (gold medal) at the Pittsburgh Exposition of 1898, for the best Violin Record."

Theodore Pusinelli had nine clarinet solos. There were seven clarinet duets by "Messrs. Pusinelli and Hackett", eight trombone offerings by "Mr. Fred Blodgett," and four cornet and trumpet duets by "Messrs. Keneke and Blodgett."

Emil Keneke soon became associated with Victor and was its first trumpeter through the early electric recording period.

14 cornet solos by Keneke were said to be "of pure cornet tone; in fact, the best records ever made for any talking machine. They are free from scratch and particularly free from blast; Mr. Emil Keneke was soloist of Innes' and Sousa's band."

Keneke and A. Mygrant were represented by six cornet duets. Frank S. Mazziotta had 14 piccolo solos. Samuel Siegel checked in with three mandolin selections, F. W. Isenbarth had six performances on the zither. And Charles P. Lowe, the reigning xylophone recording artist of the early 1900's, had nine titles.

Then came Vess L. Ossman with 10 banjo offerings:

9181, Coon Band Contest; 9184, Hot Corn Jubilee; 9186, Rusty Rags; 9832, The Colored Major; 9811, Mosquito Parade; 9834, Tell Me, Pretty Maiden (the hit from Florodora); 9835, Hannah's Promenade; 9836, Salome—Intermezzo; 9837, Savo, and 9838, Narcissus.

Next were no less than 29 baritone solos by "Ed. Franklin," another assumed name for De Gogorza, although it is generally understood

that not all the Zono records purporting to be by Franklin were sung by the urbane Emilio. I do not believe, though, that he would have cavilled to sing, under an alias, any of the titles listed in 1901.

Harry Macdonough had eight tenor solos and J. J. Fisher exercised his baritone tones in 15, seven of which were hymns with organ accompaniment. J. W. Myers had seven baritone solos. There were nine comic songs by Dick Thomas, a comedian who had not previously come to my attention.

Sig. Roberto Vanni, "formerly of the Metropolitan Opera House Co., New York," contributed nine offerings in Italian. And there were eight in German by Herr Alfred Doria, one of which, 9540, "Abendstern" from "Tannhauser," I have in my collection.

Mme. Sarda, a soprano, sang the "Mad Scene" from "Lucia" in Italian, and "Ben Bolt" in English. Senor Martinez gave three numbers in French and one in Spanish, and William Paull, a Metropolitan baritone who recorded fairly extensively in England, was heard in the "Toreador Song" from "Carmen" and "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond."

Other Metropolitan Opera singers were Lempriere Pringle, a basso with two numbers to his name; also Mme. Meisslinger, represented by two soprano solos. And — this was a real surprise to me — Clarence Whitehill, the bass whose Victor records were so well-known 10 years later, sang "Last Night" on 9689, and "Atta Quarto — Di Fillipo," on 9691. I had not previously known that

(Turn to page 38)

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WILLIAM F. HOOLEY, famous quartet bass, made several spoken Zon-o-phone records, including excerpts from Gladstone's speech on "Self-Help and Thrift."

During Hooley's career, which continued until he died in 1918, he sang regularly or occasionally in the Haydn, Edison, American, Premier, Knickerbocker, Orpheus, and Victor male quartets, and in the Lyric mixed quartet. He was also a member of the Lyric Trio of the 1890's and the early 1900's.

Whitehill had made records before he began singing for Victor and H. M. V.

Joe Natus pops up again with 21 records of popular songs. There are nine tenor solos by George J. Gas-kin, and 32 by Edward M. Favor.

Another surprise was three contralto offerings by May Kelso — "Stay in Your Own Back Yard," "Kentucky Babe," and "Florida Flo." I had associated May Kelso only with Edison cylinders.

Mina Hickman, soprano, and J. J. Taylor, tenor — a new name to me — made four duets. And there were five by Grace Spencer and Harry Macdonough.

Six selections were listed by the Mozart Trio. They were much the same titles that Estella Mann's Original Lyric Trio had sung for other companies.

The ever-faithful Haydn Quartet rallied around with 18 characteristic contributions. A tenor, Charles Renwick, about whom I know nothing, had one song. Billy Heins, later to be known as a partner of Billy Golden, in blackface sketches, had 10 comics. And John Terrell, who had begun recording for Berliner in the 1890's, had 11.

Especially intriguing is the fact that it took two records, 9663 and 9664, to get in Terrell's version of something called "My Little Sign is Gone From O'er the Door."

William F. Hooley gave eight recitations, including "Gladstone's Advice on Self-Help and Thrift," which

most buyers probably thought were by William Ewart Gladstone himself.

George Graham, another of Berliner's Washington discoveries, had 10 comic talking records. And Billy Golden presented four of his famous Negro comedy sketches, but "Turkey in the Straw" was not included.

Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" monologs were already going strong. And the eight familiar titles are enough to make any true Josh admirer drop a reminiscent tear.

Len Spencer does not appear in the 1901 catalog, but his younger brother, Harry, is on hand with 9244, "Bryan on the Philippine Question," 9245, "Bryan on Our National Destiny," and 9249, "Casey Taking the Census." Once more, these records were NOT made by William Jennings Bryan himself, although purchasers generally probably thought they were.

And that brings me once more to the subject of the notorious Columbia "Last Speech of President McKinley" record, which some collectors still insist on believing was made by William McKinley himself although it has been incontrovertibly established that the disc was by Harry Spencer.

Here is one final bit of evidence that McKinley did not make that record or any other.

In the Library of Congress collection is a 1902 catalog of Columbia cylinder records, issued early in 1902, just a few months after McKinley's death. Near the front of the catalog is an announcement that Columbia has succeeded in developing a permanent master for cylinders, with this comment:

"If the late President McKinley had made a record his voice could have been preserved forever" on one of the Columbia masters.

That is an admission that McKinley had not made any records. Not only that, but Columbia did not even begin to make disc records until 1902, after McKinley had been dead for several months.

The "Last Address" disc which has misled so many collectors was numbered 833. That number was not reached until late in 1902, when McKinley had been dead something like a year. And a 1907 catalog lists it under Harry Spencer's name.

The 1901 Zon-o-phone catalog ended with a record by John Kaiser, who made the preliminary announcements at the beginning of records, doing "Casey Taking the Census" on 10003. Why did they have both Kaiser and Harry Spencer make that record?

There were six of Frank Kennedy's once famous "Schultz" (misspelled in the catalog as "Shultz") monologs, and four "miscellaneous selections," nine Japanese. Also add 9517, "When You Are Here, Love," by Miss Mae Cressey; 9599, "King of the Land and Sea," by George Broderick, bass; and 9650, "All' Afflitto," by a mysterious Miss Miller.

I looked in vain for records by the equally mysterious baritone, Atwood

Twitchell, who recorded for Zon-o-phone in 1902 and 1903, but had all his records cut out by 1905.

I looked also for records by the late Frederick Wheeler, who wrote me that he began making Zono records in 1901, shortly before the Company went broke, and had a contract calling for \$1,400 a year.

His records, under the name of James F. Harrison, must have been made shortly after this catalog appeared, and, like Twitchell's, did not survive into the 1905 listings. Wheeler afterwards, however, made some 10-inch Zon-o-phone records on a few of which he sang with Corinne Morgan.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 35)

opened the Knickerbocker Theatre in New York, on September 1, 1906. Later on she also sang in vaudeville.

If memory serves me well, Scheff appeared on Ed Sullivan's show a year or so before her death in 1954. I remember marveling at the wonderful way she looked and sang "Kiss Me Again." If I am right, and if someone has taped that broadcast—may I have a copy of it? Please?

What a pity that Scheff never recorded commercially. Wasn't anybody able to persuade her? Or didn't anybody care to? Judging from the IRCC excerpt—our loss is immeasurable.

—o—

One of the loveliest, best-schooled female voices on records belongs to the scintillating Belgian soprano, Blanche Arral.

Born Clara Lardinois, she studied with Mathilde Marchesi and made her debut at the Opera-Comique, as Mignon, when a mere child of 15. She was in the premiere of "Manon," and her engagements took her throughout Europe, Egypt, and the Far East.

At the turn of the century, she was a tremendous hit in Russia, in French operetta. Of this, I have accounts and photographs from the Russian literature of those days. And the Bolero from "Le Coeur et la Main," on the IRCC LP, is an eloquent example of her charm in the lighter kind of music.

It is too bad Marie Delna left so few examples of her singing for us to hear. Hers is one of the few real contralto voices known on records, and she is a true artist in every sense of the word.

As Marie Ledan, she was born in Paris, on April 3, 1875. She studied with Rosina Laborde and made her debut at the Opera-Comique as Didon in Berlioz' "Les Troyens a Carthage," on June 19, 1892.

She remained a valued member at the Opera-Comique for a number of years, creating several roles there, among them that of Marceline in (Continued on page 54)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## EARLY ZON-O-PHONE RECORD CATALOGS

### PART III

By JIM WALSH

In part II I gave an account of the contents of a Zon-o-phone record catalog dated May, 1901. Now I shall discuss a booklet apparently issued in 1902, which describes Zon-o-phone machines but does not list records. Then I'll pass on to a 1905 record catalog.

By the time the 1902 booklet appeared, the National Gram-o-phone Corporation, as I said in the last article, had gone broke and had been succeeded by the Universal Talking Machine Co., which was acquired by Victor in 1903.

One rather amusing thing about the little 32-page production is the fact that Edouard de Reszke, basso, and Marcella Sembrich, soprano famous in opera, gave testimonials, dated 1902, and accompanied by their photographs, saying Zon-o-phone reproductions of voice and music were "perfect" and the best they had heard.

Both endorsers became, in 1903, among the first singers to make Columbia grand opera records. They probably wished they hadn't given those Zon-o-phone testimonials the year before.

Under the heading of "The New Zon-o-phone" (and where, I wonder, did that name Zon-o-phone come from?) the catalog said:

"Please note that for the purpose of this article the term Zon-o-phone implies and includes:

1. The Zon-o-phone instrument itself.
2. Zon-o-phone records made by the new, and exclusive, Zon-o-phone process.
3. Zon-o-phones and Zon-o-phone records used in combination. Thus defined, the Zon-o-phone stands for what in grand essentials of Clearness, Brilliancy, Power, Freedom from scratch, is absolutely the highest stage of development yet reached by mechanisms in reproducing sound."

Although no Zon-o-phone records are listed, we are given some interesting information about their allegedly miraculous qualities:

"It is . . . only in the actual, practical, audible results that the immense advance is evident; and it is no secret that this is chiefly due to the superiority of Zon-o-phone records—so great, in fact, that we have felt justified in sacrificing completely our entire stock of old Zon-o-phone records representing the expenditure of many thousands of dollars, and substitute the new Zon-o-phone records therefor.

"The present Zon-o-phone record is made by an entirely new process evolved from an accidental discovery in our laboratory through which thousands of sound vibrations wholly lost before are now recorded with most wonderful delicacy, and with a faithfulness to detail absolutely unequalled by any other method."

The following description was given of the 9-inch record, which was now called the Concert instead of the Superba:

"Concert Record . . . can be used

upon any type of Zon-o-phone. The selections are considerably longer than there is room for upon the standard record; owing to certain facts of a purely technical nature not easily explained, the sound vibrations are reproduced with an effect impossible with the shorter circles. The price of the Concert 9-inch record is 75 cents each; 10-inch, \$1."

The reference to a 10-inch record is puzzling, for this catalog almost certainly appeared in 1902, and the only type of 10-inch Zono I have met with didn't begin appearing until December, 1904. Possibly, though, a few 10-inch were made earlier, but gave way to a renumbered group.

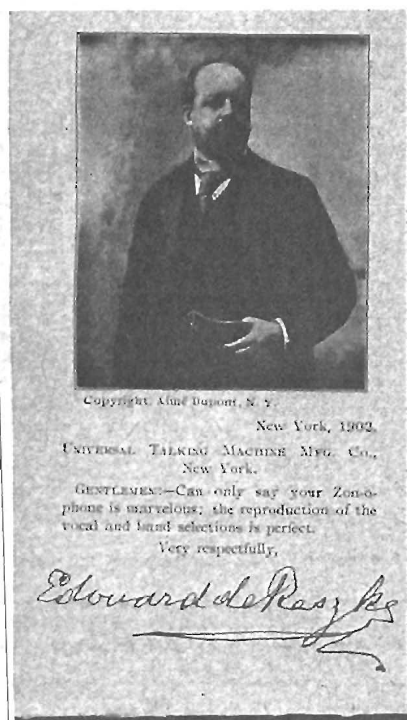
In those early days companies thought little of remaking their record catalogs to get the advantage of "the last word" in assertedly new recording techniques. And the records also were frequently renumbered.

Five models of Zon-o-phone instruments, all with outside horns, were pictured at prices ranging from \$15 to \$45. Page 19 was devoted to showing the labels of 9-inch and 7-inch records.

The 9-inch Universal Zonophone (not hyphenated as Zon-o-phone in the illustration) was of J. W. Myers singing "The Holy City." And the hard-to-read 7-inch label has Myers singing "Way Down Yonder in the Cornfield."

The remainder of the catalog is devoted to description of sound boxes, horns, horn cranes, record cabinets, and other accessories.

The 32-page Zon-o-phone record catalog for June, 1905, is a curiosity, at least in appearance. Its pages are circular in shape, to resemble records, and the cover is a reproduction of Zon-o-phone record 5213, "Zon-o-



From left to right:

Edouard de Reszke. A page from a 1902 Zon-o-phone booklet showing an endorsement by the famous basso who made Columbia Grand Opera records the following year.

Marcella Sembrich. A 1902 testimonial from the famous soprano to the merits of Zon-o-phone records and instruments.

Cal Stewart "Uncle Josh Weathersby." His records brightened the early Zon-o-phone catalogs. This photo shows a 1911 Edison cylinder record supplement.

phone Waltz," by the Zon-o-phone Orchestra, which was mentioned under a different number in the preceding installment.

Those recently introduced 10-inch records come first, beginning with 12 by the Garde Republicaine Band of France. Record 1, "Loin Du Bal," 2, "Marche des Mousquetaires," and 3, Chopin's "Marche Funèbre," were contributed by the French organization. It was described as:

"The National Band of France, consisting of 80 soloists, considered the best band in Europe. . . . The records were made in our laboratory by this great French organization during their recent visit to the World's Fair."

The Zon-o-phone Concert Band was well-represented. Several of its contributions featured cornet solos by John Hazel, who is usually thought of as a performer on Edison two-minute cylinders.

Hager's Orchestra, directed, of course, by Fred Hager, also featured selected instrumentalists, among them Eddie King, who played bell solos. He was afterwards the Zon-o-phone artist and repertoire manager and for many years after that supervised Victor's popular recordings.

Other instrumentalists on the 10-inch records included Vess L. Ossman, banjo; Bohumir Kryl, cornet; Leroy Haines, trombone; Frank S. Mazziotto, piccolo; Theo. Pusinelli, clarinet; and Simon Mantia, euphonium.

Singers were Bob Roberts, Byron G. Harlan, Frank C. Stanley, J. W. Myers, Billy Murray, Arthur Collins, Albert Campbell (several of Campbell's solos were under the assumed name of Frank Howard), Corinne Morgan, James F. Harrison, James Reed (Reed Miller), George W. Johnson, Henry Burr and the Criterion Quartet.

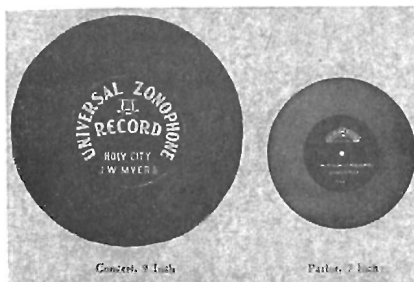
Most of these artists also appeared in the 9-inch list. It likewise included George Alexander, Joe Belmont, Arthur Clifford (another name for Alexander), Will Denny, Ed M. Favor, J. J. Fisher, George J. Gaskin, Billy Golden, Billy Heins, Mina Hickman, Pete Le Mar, Joe Natus, Dan W. Quinn, Len Spencer, Cal Stewart, and Harry Tally.

There was a long list of 9-inch band and orchestra records made for dancing, although the country was not dance crazy in 1904-05, as it was to become a decade later.

There were records for the two-step, mazurka, polka, lancers, quadrille, yorke, schottische, Virginia reel, and waltzes. How old-fashioned they sound now!

When Billy Rose and Con Conrad wrote a comic song in 1923 about Barney Google, the comic strip hero, they may have thought they were doing something new, but they weren't. This 1905 Zono catalog contains an orchestral number entitled "Happy Hooligan."

Instrumentalists on the soon-to-be discontinued 9-inch records included John J. Kimmel, accordion; Vess L. Ossman, banjo; Ed King, bells; Theo. Pusinelli, clarinet; Bohumir Kryl, cornet. Also included were Leroy Haines, trombone; Frank S. Mazziot-



Two Zon-o-phone record labels shown in a 1902 advertising booklet. Concert, 9-inch. Parlor, 7-inch.

ta, flute; S. J. Porpora, saxophone; Fred Hager, violin, and Charles P. Lowe, xylophone.

There was a Zon-o-phone Reed Quintet. And four offerings were listed by the National Guard Drum and Fife corps, including 5214, "An Election District Parade in New York City."

Most of the records I am mentioning could be obtained in both the 7 and 9-inch size, but an asterisk before a record number meant it was available in 9-inch only.

Duet teams included Collins and Harlan, with 26; Harlan and Stanley, six; and Corinne Morgan and J. F. Harrison, one.

Four records were included by the Imperial Minstrels; eight by the Criterion Quartet; and 20 by the Invincible Four (the forerunner of the Peerless Quartet, which sometimes used the Invincible Four name in later years).

And there were 19 recitations and comic sketches by Len Spencer. In some of these he was assisted by Parke Hunter and Al S. Holt.

Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" records were still going from strength to strength and enjoying a popularity that endured long past his death in December, 1919. This popularity con-

tinued among collectors to this day.

Twenty-four of his records were listed on circular-shaped page 25, including 5495, "The Arkansas Traveler," which connoisseurs of old-time records generally feel nobody but Len Spencer had a right to record.

Most of the Stewart titles are ultra-familiar, but there is one virtually unknown today. I have never seen nor heard it, and it probably was never made except on Zon-o-phone record 5911.

This is "The Difference Between a German and Irish Picnic," by Cal Stewart and John Kaiser, the Zon-o-phone announcer who was an uncle of the great popular recording pianist, Frank E. Banta.

Come to think of it, although Cal Stewart took part in that record, it must not have anything to do with "Uncle Josh," any more than "A 'Possum Supper at Darktown Church" (a record that my pet 'possum, Possy, can't abide!) which was written by Stewart. He took part in it but without his usual rustic accent!

A numerical Zon-o-phone catalog of the 1905 period shows the numbering of 7- and 9-inch records began with 5000, "Anvil Chorus" from "Trovatore," by a band. It ended with 6168, an accordion solo (no doubt by Kimmel), "Yankee Doodle Boy"—with variations.

Soon after that the 10-inch, and later, 12-inch records took over. They were issued in single and double-faced form, as long as Victor considered it worthwhile to offer Zon-o-phone records.

(The End)



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## A PHENOMENAL CAREER

### Edna White & Her Trumpet



An early photo of Edna White and her famous trumpet.

By FREDERICK SUMMERILL, M.D.  
PART I

Several years ago Dr. Frederick Summerill, a veteran Edison record collector and enthusiast, of Teaneck, N.J., wrote me he intended to submit for this department an article concerning his friend and mine, the distinguished and greatly gifted trumpet virtuoso, Edna White.

He has at last found time to send me the manuscript, which I have pleasure in publishing. At the end of Dr. Summerill's contribution I shall add a few notes of my own. —Jim Walsh

for admission to high school. But she did get into Brooklyn Manual Training High School.

This was interrupted by an agent from Frank Damrosch who called at her home and had her enter the Institute for Musical Arts which was just starting. It long afterward became Juilliard School.

The brass department of their orchestra was not doing so well as the strings and Mr. Damrosch probably thought such a well-known child protege could attract interest in the school. Edna was given special dispensation to enter, as the age requirement was 16.

Her teacher was Adolph Dubois. He devoted much time to her, not only for routine lessons twice a week, but also he had her come to his home every day for free lessons.

At the Institute she received regular courses in theory, harmony, orchestration, philosophy, history, and appreciation of music. Post-graduate courses were added later.

During her three years at the Institute Frank Damrosch obtained permission from his brother Walter for Edna White to attend rehearsals of the New York Symphony. This she did for several seasons.

In the summer she was taken to

Auditorium was one of the few places in this country where great concert artists were heard in the summer-time. Once Ernestine Schumann-Heink was there. She happened to hear little Edna White play the trumpet. Then this motherly artist gave the girl a thrilling hug with praise for her musicianship.

The opening ceremony for the first transcontinental telephone transmission scheduled Edna White's Aida Quartet. But on the preliminary trial it was found that the telephone could not carry the four instruments well. The music was jangled.

So this was solved by having Edna White play solo trumpet, which was transmitted excellently. She played "Silver Threads Among the Gold" for it in the office of the Brooklyn Eagle. Reception was in that of the San Francisco Examiner. This was in March, 1915.

Not long after this Edna White's concert career was recessed for married life, which gave her one son, who now lives in New York, and whom she sees often.

The son, Douglas Chandler, had a short stage career but it helped him into business. When he appeared in Carol Channing's "Wonderful Time," a man in the audience spotted him and put him into a fine position in the field of public relations with a large firm.

During this period of family life Edna White Chandler continued her trumpet practice. When World War I reached the United States, she appeared many times as trumpet soloist in War Bond appeals.

(To be continued)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### I. Biographical Sketch

One Sunday in February, 1957, there appeared a small framed advertisement: "Edna White—A Farewell to my Trumpet—at Carnegie Concert Hall." For one who had heard Miss White play at Ocean Grove before World War I, and who had her Edison records, this proved to be an enlightening and enjoyable evening.

The program was an eight-page pamphlet, with light-blue cover. Its first notation was from the Bible: "Numbers 10, Verses 1-10." Beneath this, in her own words, Edna White (Chandler) gave her farewell to "my noble friend, companion . . . my life has been rich . . . felt the brushing of angel's wings and have looked upward."

After a salutation, three small, simple songs were sung by Francine Falcon, soprano. The words and music of them were by Edna White (Chandler), who followed by telling about the beginning of her career.

Her father had taught her to play the trumpet and her first public appearance was at Waltham, Mass., before she was eight years old. She was then taken to Ocean Grove, N. J., where the Park Sisters Quartet had become famous. While there Edna studied with Anna Park.

Besides practicing trumpet little Miss White went to school. She finished grammar school before she was 11, and was found to be too young

Ocean Grove, where Tali Essen Morgan was in charge of music. He suggested an instrumental quartet to play in Ocean Grove Auditorium.

So the Aida Quartet was created, with Edna White, first trumpet; Florence McMillan, second trumpet, and Norma and Cora Sauter, cornets. This Quartet soon became popular and successful. It toured the country for several seasons.

Its program was elaborated by Norma Sauter playing the violin; Cora the cello, and Florence McMillan the piano. These were the instruments the three had played until Edna White came to Ocean Grove and taught them the trumpet and cornet.

For a while a baritone was with them. He was C. Pol Plancon, nephew of the famous basso, whose first name was Charlemagne. So was that of the nephew. Miss McMillan later became a famous pianist, as accompanist for Louise Homer, Enrico Caruso, and Leo Slezak.

As these four young girls were taken thru the West they had many thrills. In the winter while riding an open sleigh in Utah they were chased by wolves (not human ones, for in those days teenagers were too young for that).

Then in Texas the girls suffered a hold-up. But since they had little money and were such youngsters, they were freed without harm.

In those early days Ocean Grove

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Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A PHENOMENAL CAREER

Edna White & Her Trumpet

By FREDERICK SUMMERILL, M.D.

Part II

Several years ago Dr. Frederick Summerill, a veteran Edison record collector and enthusiast, of Teaneck, N.J., wrote me he intended to submit for this department an article concerning his friend and mine, the distinguished and greatly gifted trumpet virtuoso, Edna White.

He has at last found time to send me the manuscript, which I have pleasure in publishing. At the end of Dr. Summerill's contribution I shall add a few notes of my own.

—Jim Walsh

After the War Edna White Chandler returned to the stage as soloist and had gratifying success in vaudeville for about nine years.

During this time she was divorced and married a famous concert and operatic baritone, Torcom Bezazian, with whom she had a very successful act in vaudeville. Both did solo work and he also would sing, with her giving trumpet obligato.

In 1927 they went to France and he toured in opera while she studied voice. She was accepted for Opera Comique but they returned to America, for Keith's circuit, in which she did trumpet and vocal solo work with a band of 14 girls.

This was so successful that she then developed, owned, and operated seven vaudeville acts. They consisted of one band and six quartets.

From 1925 to 1931 Edna White was frequently soloist with the Rochester Park Band. Hermann Dossenbach was director. On February 7, 1932, she played as soloist with Henry Hadley's Manhattan Orchestra and after that concert John Phillip Sousa called back stage and asked her to make a concert tour with his band, but he died the next month.

Edna White then started a music school called Gotham Academy but hard times ended it in 1933. So she became soloist with bands under

WPA. Walter Damrosch put her into this without any test, for he knew her work and career.

This she carried on for four years, two of which also had vocal solo work. She was the regular coloratura lead in "Naughty Marietta" and "Fortune Teller," both by Victor Herbert, for the Colin O'More Opera Company.

This was interrupted by Edna being drafted back as trumpeter for productions by Orson Welles, then aged 22, who, with Edwin Denby, produced "Horse Eats Hat." The music was by Paul Bowles, and was orchestrated by Virgil Thomson.

The cast included Arlene Francis, Joseph Cotten and Orson and Sidney Welles. Its Military Ensemble was directed by Edna White, who also played in it. This music was given only between the acts and the audience always stayed for the entertaining intermission.

Early in 1931 Edna White trained and played in a Brass Quartet, which performed chamber music. Regarding this, Frank Damrosch wrote her: "You are opening up a new field of chamber music, which should find popular support."

Later the same year Gena Brancome, Department of Fine Arts, General Federation of Women's Clubs, wrote: "Your superb tone, artistry, and sympathetic musicianship contributed greatly to the success of my recent composer's concert. Until I heard you, I had not realized the gorgeous nuances of which a trumpet is capable."

At what is now City Center, Henry Hadley had his Manhattan Symphony Orchestra, and February 7, 1932, was the first time for a trumpet to appear with a major symphony. For this Guy-Ropartz composed a concerto for trumpet: Andante and Allegro. This was played from the original score,

which has never been published.

Regarding it, Vincent Bach, of the Bach Instrument Company wrote: "I want to tell you again how much I enjoyed your solo with the Manhattan Symphony. You displayed excellent technique, also wonderful tone, and I was proud to know it was with a 'Bach' instrument."

Soon after this, misfortune struck Edna White and she was sick with scarlet fever; for a long time she had to drop everything. Her return was with WPA. Along in the fourth season with this, Giuseppe Creatore had her take three weeks leave to tour with his Little Symphony of 16 women.

Upon her return to WPA at Brooklyn Museum she was not given her regular place in first chair but was seated back in the third row. Most of the men objected to this but the

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TORCOM BEZAZIAN, famous baritone, making an Edison disc recording in 1921 while his wife, Edna White, plays a trumpet obligato. Members of Edison Orchestra are in the background.

one man was kept in first chair. She was the only female in this concert band.

So Edna went on her own in 1938 and engagements to play and to teach came to her immediately. One of the first to call was "Tiny" Mason, an obese trumpeter with an orchestra, who wanted a lesson the very day she left WPA.

She tried to put him off but he said, "Miss White, I must have my lesson today when I have my six dollars. If you put me off until tomorrow, I won't have my six dollars." He had his lesson.

Later in 1938 Edna White wrote and published a book, "The Trumpet Teacher." It was called an "able treatise" by Walter Damrosch and received similar compliments from Arthur Pryor; George Gartland, Director of Music, New York Schools; and Carleton Sprague, Chief of Music, N.Y. Public Library.

In the fall of 1938 Edna White played much on radio. She became the first to play on the trumpet Rimsky-Korsakow's "Bumble Bee," which she did on WOR, October 5.

In 1948 she did trumpet solo work

in a Baltimore theater and here James Burke, the famous cornet and trumpet player, heard her for the first time and introduced himself, complimenting her renditions. He is still soloist with the Goldman band.

On February 9th, the next year, she gave an elaborate trumpet concert in Carnegie Hall. It was augmented by the Andrew Tietjen Choir, with whom she played the opening number: "Wachet, betet, seid bereit allezeit. Cantata 70," by Bach.

Her other numbers on the program were:

Legende .....George Enesco  
Sonatine (American premiere)  
.....Henry Martelli  
Concert Waltz (First performance)  
.....Virgil Thomson  
Midnight Madrigal .....Tibor Serly  
Procession from Symphonic  
Suite, Quebec ....Gena Branscombe

In 1941-1942 she held first trumpet chair in Giuseppe Creatore's American Women Symphonette. The next season she was with The Tone Weavers, which had two trumpets, French horn, and trombone. The following year she was with B. A. Rolfe's Daughters of Uncle Sam. In 1944 she played with La Symphonie Feminine de Montreal, Ethel Stark, conductor.

## II. Recordings

Edna White's recordings for Edison discs began early in 1921 when Arthur Walsh signed her to a contract for recording and "tone tests." She remembers making four recordings. At first only two were issued:

80613 Recollections of 1861-1865. Trumpet with orchestra. Other side, Chester Gaylord, saxophone.  
80650 The Debutante by Herbert L. Clark. / Russian Balalaika Orchestra.

Not until 1926 did Edison issue another, when it was marked as a special issue.

80862 When You and I Were Young, Maggie. Trumpet with orchestra. /Sunshine of Your Smile, Jack Stillman, cornet solo.

The Edison catalogs always carried the following with Edna White's recordings:

"Many of you will remember the Aida Trumpet Quartet, which played in many cities and towns of the country, some years ago. This organization was founded and led by Edna White, at the tender age of 16.

"But, before this, she had appeared in public. Indeed, she made her bow as a trumpeter to the public at nine years of age, at a concert given at Ocean Grove. The father of Miss White was responsible for her early  
(Turn to page 49)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 49)

training and may be said to have fairly brought her up on the trumpet.

"After two years of touring with the Aida Brass Quartet, Miss White retired for rest and study. In 1914 she organized the famous Edna White Trumpet Quartet, which played at the San Francisco-Panama-Pacific Exposition, as well as in concert and church fields.

Some time ago Miss White decided to return to the solo work of her early career, so severed connection with her quartet, which became the Gloria Trumpeters."

The fourth recording by Miss White in 1921 was *Agnus Dei*, by Bizet, but it was never issued. However, two more were made in 1926 and the record was made and issued but it was never listed in the monthly announcements or in the catalogs, as were many others, as recounted by Jim Walsh in a recent issue of *HOBBIES*.

This writer has this record:

52036 Sweet Genevieve/Bohemian Girl: Then You'll Remember Me. Trumpet solos by Edna White, with orchestra.

Edison catalog lists four recordings by the Aida Brass Quartet, made in 1924. However, upon listening to these, Edna White (Chandler) stated that the trumpet was not played by her. The name was apparently borrowed from her earlier organization, which had established such a great reputation.

(To Be Continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A PHENOMENAL CAREER

Edna White &amp; Her Trumpet

By FREDERICK SUMMERILL, M.D.

PART III

Several years ago Dr. Frederick Summerill, a veteran Edison record collector and enthusiast, of Teaneck, N.J., wrote me he intended to submit for this department an article concerning his friend and mine, the distinguished and greatly gifted trumpet virtuoso, Edna White.

He has at last found time to send me the manuscript, which I have pleasure in publishing. At the end of Dr. Summerill's contribution I shall add a few notes of my own. —Jim Walsh

Following her farewell to her trumpet in 1957, Edna White (Chandler) managed a public relations business office on Broadway for Rinn Records, Chicago, providing programs and performers for commercial occasions, political gatherings, and the March of Dimes.

She has retired from this and is working on her autobiography, in which she says she was the youngest to do concert work with the trumpet. Now she is feeling the urge to be the oldest, for she still loves that horn.

In 1962 she did pick up the trumpet and make two fine recordings on tape, with a good piano accompaniment by a friend. One was the famous "Carnival of Venice." This writer heard both. As only three years have passed since those fine recordings, she soon could resume easily her great artistry with her beloved trumpet.

—o—

### COMMENTS BY JIM WALSH

Dr. Summerill does not mention the Columbia records which the Edna White Trumpet Quartet made in 1918, three years before Miss White recorded her first Edison solos.

In July, 1918, Columbia issued the

first of the series of three: A2538, "Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight" and "Fancying You Fancyin' Me" from "Odds and Ends of 1917." The supplement made this comment:

"The Edna White Trumpet Quartet is unique among musical organizations. A trumpet quartet is unusual to begin with and four girl virtuosos of this difficult instrument almost a miracle. The rich, pure toned harmonies of trumpets seem to have more than earthly quality, and add a strange thrilling beauty to the familiar melodies played. These trumpet recordings are remarkably tone true."

Three months later, in October, came A2603, Brahms' "Lullaby" and "The Lost Chord."

"The Edna White Trumpet Quartet is music not only of novelty, but of the highest artistic quality. A musician of high standing recently listened to one of the Quartet's recordings and remarked, 'I seldom use slang, but there is music which "gets" you.' It is true. The full throated harmony of four trumpets gives music of celestial grandeur, unlike that of any other instrument."

January, 1919, brought A2650, "The Lost Chord" and "Nearer My God to Thee."

"The 'Lost Chord,' in reality, tells us as scarcely any other musical composition has ever told, of the inspiration of music itself. The pure, religious tone of trumpets seems created for this very music. The Quartet has recently played for many camps and found, with all their popular numbers, 'The Lost Chord' is a favorite of every soldier. 'The most famous hymn in the world' makes an ideal coupling."

When these records were listed in the Columbia catalog for 1919 they appeared under the heading of "Edna White Trumpet Quartet." If you looked for them under "White (Edna) Trumpet Quartet," you found yourself referred to the heading I have just mentioned.

But when the 1921 catalog was published, if you searched under "Edna White Trumpet Quartet," you were told to look under "Gloria Trumpeters." The name on the record labels also was changed.

I first met the charming Edna White in Roanoke, Va., during the fall of 1949 when she was a starred member of a troupe entertaining service personnel in military hospitals. They gave several performances in the Roanoke County Veterans' Administration institution.

I mentioned her records and she indicated enthusiastically that the Edisons reproduced her playing to perfection.

My only other meeting with Miss White was in September, 1950, when





EDNA WHITE presented this photo to Jim Walsh after their meeting in Roanoke, Va., in 1949

she attended the John Bieling Day party at Hempstead, L.I., and gave an amazing trumpet interpretation of "The St. Louis Blues." I have been hoping for another meeting, but the opportunity has not arisen.

A group photo in HOBBIES for December, 1949, shows her with many other noted recording stars.

Dr. Summerill is mistaken in saying that Edna White's Diamond Disc 52036 was not listed in a monthly supplement and did not appear in a yearly catalog. It was announced in the supplement of July, 1927, accompanied by a photo of the lady. And it had its proper place in the 1928 catalog—the last issued by Edison.

The "Then You'll Remember Me" side was dubbed onto an Edison long-playing record, 10005, issued in 1927. On that side Sodero's Band also played "Selections from 'Iolanthe.'"

The reverse contained "Amoureuse Valse" and "Serenade — Spanish Waltz," by the American Concert Orchestra, and a saxophone solo, "Danse Hongroise," by Rudy Wiedoeft. Both sides, dubbed from ordinary Diamond discs, played 12 minutes.

Three of Miss White's Edison discs were copied on Blue Amberol cylinders:

4250, "The Debutante," 4239, "Recollections of 1861-65," and 5106, "When You and I Were Young, Maggie."

The photograph on page 41 of the June issue of HOBBIES, showing Torcom Bezazian singing for a Diamond disc while Miss White played a trumpet obligato, was taken in 1921. I have gone through the list of Bezazian's Edison records without being able to determine what song the baritone was singing.

The Edison records by the Aida Brass Quartet appeared in the supplements for July and October, 1924. A picture of the ensemble was reproduced in the latter. No indication is given of their names. The discs were not dubbed onto cylinders.

(The End)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued on page 37)

1911 at the State Theatre of Olmutz, and then passed on to Stuttgart.

During his career he sang in Bayreuth, the State Opera of Berlin, in Milan, Paris, London, and Brussels. He also appeared in Munich, Prague, and Amsterdam.

A truly engaging singer is Ruth Miller, wife of the tenor Mario Chamlee. It is indeed a pity that this soprano never recorded commercially, for hers is a lovely voice educated in the best of vocal traditions.

Having studied with such pedagogues as Lloyd d'Aubigne, Emile Bourgeois, and Giovanni Sbriglia, she initiated her operatic career under the name of Francesca Milena.

She sang with the Cosmopolitan Opera, the Aborn Grand Opera Company, and finally was engaged at the Metropolitan where she graced the roster in the 1917-18 Season. As Musetta in "La Boheme," she shared the spotlight with Alda, McCormack, and De Luca; and as Micaela in "Carmen," with Farrar and Martinelli.

As the IRCC L-7029 notes state, "Ruth Miller became Mrs. Mario Chamlee on October 2, 1919, and today they are successful teachers in California." The best of luck to both, for they certainly deserve it.

One of the most neglected singers on records is without a doubt the magnificent Richard Bonelli, endowed with a voice resembling in timbre that of Titta Ruffo (on a smaller scale, of course), and a pupil of none other than Jean de Reszke.

Among all the 78 rpm recordings he made for Vocalion, Brunswick, and Columbia, the only operatics that I can remember off hand are the Good Night Quartet from "Martha" (acoustic Brunswick), the two duets with Chamlee (electric Brunswick) and Chanson Ancienne from "La Basoche" coupled with "Xerxes" Largo (electric Columbia).

He did make an extravagantly beautiful "Visione Veneziana" backed by "Luna d'Estate," (electric Brunswick), which I cannot recommend highly enough. But the fact still remains that a superb operatic talent was restricted at its peak to lighter repertoire by the major recording companies.

Here I must add that in the mid-'50s Allegro Royale brought out an operatic Long Play disc of Richard Bonelli. And a mighty fine LP that was, even though the baritone was then past his prime.

Born Richard Bunn, in Port Byron, N.Y., on February 6, 1894, Bonelli studied with Arthur Alexander, William Vilonat, and Jean de Reszke. His operatic debut took place in Modena, Italy.

Later he sang in Monte Carlo, in Paris (at the Theatre de la Gaite-Lyrique), at the Chicago Opera (1925-31), and the San Francisco Opera (1932-34).

The Metropolitan claimed him in 1932, where, on December 1, he made his debut as the elder Germont in "La Traviata," with Ponselle in the role of Violetta.

Bonelli successfully appeared at the Met from 1932 to 1934, and again in 1944-45. The last I heard is that he now lives in retirement in California.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



Early cylinder phonograph equipment on display in Thomas A. Edison's reconstructed Menlo Park Laboratory at the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich., is being inspected in this picture. From left to right the inspectors are: Donald L. Leavitt, Reference Librarian for Sound Recording, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Walter L. Welch of Syracuse, N.Y., co-author with Oliver Read of "From Tinfoil to Stereo;" and Kurtz Myers, Chief of the Music and Drama Dept., Detroit, Mich., Public Library.

—Photo, Courtesy of The Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich.

## A 1900 ACCOUNT OF THE PHONOGRAPH

Part I

By JIM WALSH

Within the past few weeks I have had the good luck to obtain a copy of a book that previously had been unknown to me, but which contains such an interesting chapter on the early development of the phonograph and sound recording, I feel it deserves re-publication here.

I obtained the book from my friend, E. R. G. Heneberger of Harrisonburg, Va. Mr. Heneberger is city auditor of Harrisonburg. He also conducts a spare time mail order business in old books and magazines.

The title of the volume he sent me is "Progress of Invention in the Nineteenth Century." The author is Edward W. Byrn, A.M., and the publishers, Munn & Co. of New York.

This book, which has long been out of print and is also out of copy-right, appears to be almost completely unknown today, but its chapter on the phonograph vividly brings back the pioneer days of experimenting by Edison, Tainter and Bell, and Berliner.

Accompanying the chapter are a number of cuts of old style recording and reproducing instruments. Some of these I hope can be shown here.

Now I'll let Chapter XXII speak for itself. Its principal heading, "The Phonograph," is supplemented by, "Invention of Phonograph by Edison. Scott's Phonograph. Im-

provements of Bell and Tainter The Graphophone. Library of Wax Cylinders. Berliner's Gramophone."

"Following closely upon the discovery of the telephone, the phonograph came, literally speaking for itself, and adding another surprise to the wonderful inventions of that prolific period.

"It was in the latter part of 1877 that Thomas A. Edison showed a few privileged friends a modest looking little machine. He turned the crank and to the astonishment of those present it said 'Good morning! How do you do? How do you like the phonograph?'

"Its voice was a little metallic, it is true, but here was presented an insignificant looking piece of mechanism which was undeniably a talking machine and one with an unlimited vocabulary.

"So-called talking machines had been made before, of which the Faber machine was a type. These, by an arrangement of bellows to furnish air, and flexible pipes in imitation of the larynx and vocal organs, made laborious and wheezy efforts to imitate the mechanical functions of the throat and tongue in articulate speech, but the method was fundamentally faulty and no success was attained.

"Edison followed no such leading. His phonograph made no attempt at imitating in construction the complex organization of the human throat, but was as wonderful in its divergence therefrom and in its simplicity as it was in the success of its results. The machine was patented by him February 19, 1878, No. 200,521, and its life principle is simply and clearly defined in the first claim of the patent, as follows:

"The method herein specified of reproducing the human voice, or other sounds, by causing the sound vibrations to be recorded substantially as specified, and obtaining motion from that record as set forth for the reproduction of sound vibrations."

"The invention was a striking and interesting novelty and at once attracted the attention of scientific men as well as the general public. Its first public exhibition was about the latter part of January, 1878, before the Polytechnic Association of the American Institute, at New York.

"It spoke English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, and Hebrew with equal facility. It imitated the barking of a dog and crowing of a cock, and then catching cold, coughed and sneezed and wheezed until it is said a physician in the audience proposed sending a prescription for it.

"It was also suggested by an irreverent man that it might take the place of preachers in the rendition of sermons, while another thought that as it reproduced music with equal facility it might take the place of preacher and choir both.

"In the spring of 1878 it was exhibited at Washington by Edison and his assistant, Mr. Batchelor. Mr. Edison was the guest of U. H. Pain-

ter, and in his parlors it was shown to a party of gentlemen.

"From Mr. Painter's house the machine was taken to the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, thence to the Academy of Sciences, in session at the Smithsonian Institution, and at night it was taken to the White House and exhibited to President and Mrs. Hayes.

"The form of the first phonograph is shown in Figure 189. It consisted of three principal parts — the mouthpiece A, into which speech was uttered, the spirally grooved cylinder B, carrying on its periphery a sheet of tin foil, and a second mouthpiece D.

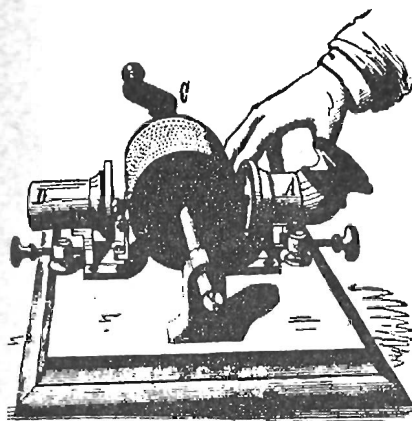
"The cylinder B and its axial shaft were both provided with spiral grooves or screw threads of exactly the same pitch, and when the shaft was turned by its crank its screw threaded bearings caused the cylinder to slowly advance as it rotated.

"The mouthpiece A had adjacent to the cylinder a flexible diaphragm carrying a little point or stylus which bore against the tin foil on the cylinder. When the mouthpiece A was spoken into and the cylinder B was turned, the little stylus, vibrating from the voice impulses, traced by indentations a little jagged path in the tin foil that formed the record.

"To reproduce the record in speech again, the mouthpiece A was adjusted away from the cylinder, the cylinder run back to the starting point, and mouthpiece D was then brought up to the cylinder.

"This mouthpiece had a diaphragm and stylus similar to the other one, only more delicately constructed. This stylus was adjusted to bear lightly in the little spiral path in the tin foil traced by the other stylus, and as the tin foil revolved with the cylinder its jagged irregularities set up the same vibrations in the diaphragm of mouthpiece D as those caused by the voice on the other diaphragm, and thus translated the record into sounds of articulate speech, exactly corresponding to the words first spoken into the instrument.

"In Fig. 190 is shown a further development of the phonograph, in which a single mouthpiece with diaphragm and stylus serves the pur-



The First Phonograph, Fig. 189.

## DOLLOLOGY

Conducted by  
CLARA H. FAWCETT

### The Lure of the Wooden Doll

By CLARA HALLARD FAWCETT

The lure of the wooden doll is understandable. It was the first to be manufactured in quantity.

Although many of the commercially made dolls of wood are not handsome, to say the least, what collector

would not jump at the chance to buy a "Queen Anne" of about 1700; that is, if one happens to have the price. Such dolls are expensive.

Years ago, Laura Treskow of London, England, had quite a thrill when she entered a shop and discovered two beautiful examples of the famous Queen Anne wooden doll sitting pert and challenging upon a shelf.

"How nice," she thought, "if they could be sitting on my shelf." She promptly bought them.

Later the shopkeeper tried in vain to buy them back. By that time they had left Laura's shelf and were on their way to Kimport in America, where many rare and lovely dolls have found a temporary home.

"There are not many rare and beautiful antique dolls left in England," says Laura Treskow, "for the Americans have taken them all."



Wooden "Queen Anne" dolls which sailed the sea from London, England, to Kimport's in America. —Photo, courtesy Laura Treskow, London.

Doll carved, dressed, and photographed by Mrs. Liesing Merrill. It was her first attempt at doll making.

Helen, early 19th century wooden doll with cloth hinges.

pose both of recorder for making the record and a speaker for reproducing it, a trumpet or horn being used, as indicated in dotted lines, to concentrate the vibrations in recording and to augment the sound in reproducing."

We will discuss and show the "second form of Phonograph" (Fig 190, etc.) next month; also the "Graphophone, recording and reproducing devices."

This was not the case 30 or 40 years ago. On one of the good antique-buying days of yore another American collector, the late Mrs. Henry A. Diamant of New York City, while window shopping in London, came upon a shop called "Queen Mary's Shop." There, in the window, was a most intriguing diminutive Maypole of about 1840. (See page 42)

Each gaily costumed wooden girl and boy thereon, 13 altogether, held

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A 1900 ACCOUNT OF THE PHONOGRAPH

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

In the August issue of *HOBBIES*, quoting from "Progress of Invention in the Nineteenth Century" by Edward W. Byrn, A.M., and published by Munn & Co., New York—an old book long out of print and copyright—we told about the first phonograph.

We also introduced the second form of phonograph. In it "a single mouthpiece with diaphragm and stylus serves the purpose both of recorder for making the record and a speaker for reproducing it, a trumpet or horn being used, as indicated in dotted lines, to concentrate the vibrations in recording and to augment the sound in reproducing."

"The phonograph is in reality a development of the phonautograph, which was an instrument invented by Leon Scott in 1857 to automatically record sounds by diagrams. There is a model of Scott's phonautograph in the National Museum at Washington, D.C., and it consists of a chamber to catch the sound waves and an elastic diaphragm with stylus working on a revolving cylinder bearing a sheet of paper coated with lamp-black.

"The phonograph's record-making mouthpiece, with its diaphragm and stylus, is substantially a phonautograph, but instead of simply causing the stylus to trace a record on car-

bon-coated paper and stopping with this result, Edison traced a record in a substance—tinfoil—which was capable of mechanically translating that record into sound again by a mere reversal of the function of the stylus and diaphragm.

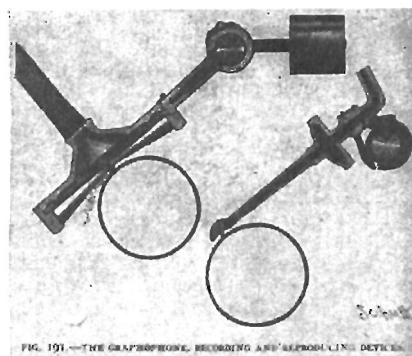
"This was the very essence of simplicity and logical reasoning. All records heretofore had been traced for visual inspection only. Edison's record was not for visual inspection, but was endowed with the mechanical function of reproducing sound.

"From the first Edison believed that his phonograph was to fill an important place in the business activities of the world, since here seemed a silent but faithful stenographer which reproduced the words of the speaker with absolute fidelity, even to the quality of emphasis and inflection. It made no mistakes, was always even with the speaker in its work, and asked no questions.

"For a number of years, however, the invention lay dormant and served no other purpose than that of a scientific curiosity or an amusing toy. The difficulty of its practical application largely existed in the perishable form of the record, which, being in tinfoil, was liable to be mutilated and distorted, and was not well adopted for storage or transportation.

"A few years after the announcement of Mr. Edison's invention, Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, the distinguished inventor of the telephone, with his associates, Chichester A. Bell and Charles Sumner Tainter, directed their attention to the improvement of the phonograph.

"Dr. Bell had received from the French government, upon the recom-



The graphophone, recording and reproducing devices. Fig. 191.

mendation of the French Academy of Sciences, the Volta prize of 50,000 francs as a recognition of his successful work in acoustics and the invention of the telephone, and with this sum he built the Volta Institute in Washington and carried on the work of developing the phonograph.

"On May 4, 1886, Chichester A. Bell and Sumner Tainter obtained patents Nos. 341,214 and 341,288, which covered a great improvement in the record of the phonograph. This invention substituted for the tinfoil sheet a surface of wax, which was finally fashioned into a cylinder.

"Instead of merely indenting the record on tinfoil, the stylus cut a distinct groove or kerf in the wax cylinder as it revolved, dislodging therefrom a minute filament or shaving, and forming a record which was not only far more positive in its translating effect, and more easily transported and stored, but was also less perishable. Besides it could be effaced easily without loss of the cylinder by simply smoothing off the surface of the cylinder again when it was desired to make a new record.

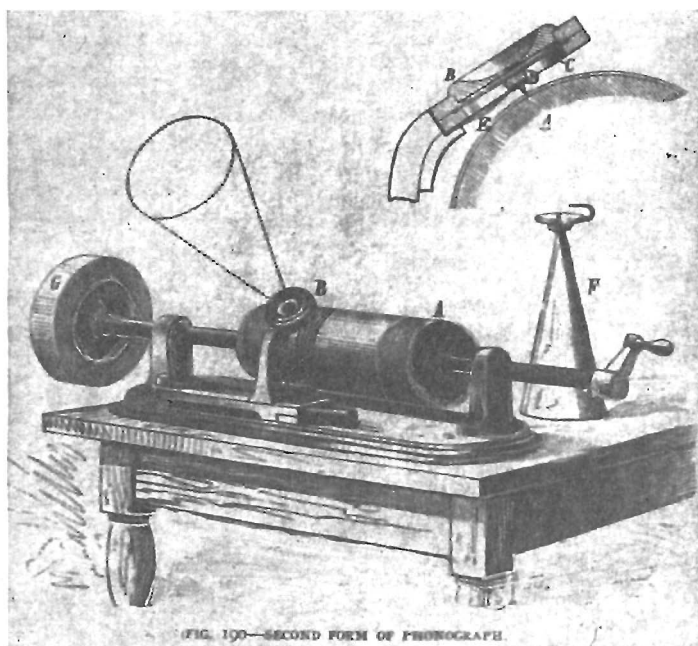
"This invention quickly grew into practical use, and is known as the 'Graphophone.'

"In Fig. 191 is shown on the left a cross section of the diaphragm, recording stylus, and wax cylinder, of the graphophone. The stylus is plowing a tiny groove in the wax cylinder in the act of recording the speech. And on the right is shown the reproducing stylus traversing the record groove in the wax cylinder, and the diaphragm chamber with which the ear tubes are connected.

"The grooves in the wax, although giving forth mechanical movement that is translated into sound, are very minute. They are only 6-10,000 of an inch deep.

"When the possibilities of the graphophone became known, capital was quickly supplied for its commercial exploitation, and the Columbia Phonograph Company was organized.

"At the present time, owing to the great increase in the business, the control of the graphophone business is vested in two branches, the Columbia Phonograph Co., which has charge of the selling, and which has offices throughout all the principal cities of this country and some of the



The second form of phonograph. Fig. 190.



larger ones of Europe; and the American Graphophone Company, which attends to the manufacturing branch. Its factory is located at Bridgeport, Conn., where, it is said, that in 1898 the production of the factory reached the point of one graphophone for every minute of the day, making a total daily output of 600 machines.

"Although the Bell and Tainter patents of 1886 represent the basic principles of the graphophone, its development and perfection have been contributed to in many subsequent improvements by Messrs. Bell, Tainter, McDonald, and others. The more important of these are covered by patents No. 375,579, December 27, 1887; No. 380,535, April 3, 1888; No. 527,755, October 16, 1894, and No. 579,595, March 30, 1897.

"At the beginning of this industry it was thought the principal use of the instrument would be found in business applications, to take the place of the stenographer, but it proved difficult to revolutionize office methods, especially as the earlier machines were somewhat intricate, and the business man had no time to divide in engineering a machine.

"These difficulties, however, have been so far overcome by modern improvements and simplification of the machine that its use in business houses as an amanuensis has become quite common.

#### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**WANTED:** Seeburg, Coinola, Nelson-Wiggen, Mills coin slot pianos, plays large paper roll. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Maryland. n3403

**ALL CYLINDER** and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap126121

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonograph reproducers, any parts to reproducers, jeweled needles (stylus). Don't want steel needles. Describe and price wanted. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. n3614

**WANTED:** Busy Bee cylinder records playing condition, any quantities. 1 Busy Bee cylinder phonograph playing condition. 1 Busy Bee disc phonograph in good playing condition. Busy Bee disc records good condition any quantity wanted. Lambert 5" oversize cylinder records unbreakable. 1 Capworth Williams Sunday school, pump organ in good condition only, size 36" long, 36" high, 12" deep. 1 Sears Roebuck complete mail order catalog with all pages in it, years from 1880 to 1900. Any of these years wanted. — Alton Vogel, Box 12107, Rockdale, Texas. n36731

Old pianos, organs, harpsichords expertly repaired. Museum restorations a specialty. Fine selection of historic instruments for sale. Write for list. — Pro Musica Instrument Co., 53A Maryland Ave., Annapolis, Maryland. s1063

**GUITARS** - Wanted used or new books, pamphlets, brochures, etc. containing information about the first use of steel strings on guitars in the U.S. and foreign countries. Also general information about the history of the guitar in the U.S. and abroad. Please send description of material available and price. — Box JHM, c/HOBBIES, 1006 S. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60605. s38201

#### MUSIC REPAIRS

**NEW PEP** for your reed organ or melodeon. Reeds cleaned, revoiced and tuned. Replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. ja3633

"The greatest use of the graphophone is, however, for amusement purposes. Its songs, orchestral, and solo renditions, and its humorous monologue reproductions, constitute today a great library of wax cylinders, regularly cataloged and sold by the thousands.

"It will be understood readily that the formation of the cylinders must constitute a great business of itself when it is remembered that many record cylinders accompany each graphophone, and that the latter are turned out at the rate of one a minute by a single company.

"Many thousands of these cylinders are made daily. Some are sent out simply as plain wax cylinders, onto which the records are made by the voice of the purchaser, while others have records made for them of popular music, monologues in dialect, humorous speeches, etc.

"The waxy composition, which is in reality a species of soap, is melted in huge pots. It then passes from one floor to another, undergoing a refining process in its progress, and finally reaches the molds.

"These molds are arranged in rows around a horizontal wheel about eight feet in diameter. The wheel is kept revolving, and a man on one side is kept constantly busy in filling the molds with the molten material as they reach him.

"A half revolution of the wheel brings the filled molds to the other side of the room, and by that time the material has hardened sufficiently to enable another attendant, stationed there, to remove the cylinders from the molds. Thus the wheel is kept going, receiving at one side a charge of the melted wax and discharging at the other molded cylinders, which are afterwards turned true on the surface.

"The record-making department is both unique and interesting. Here the records of music are produced. They are made by bands and performers engaged for the purpose, many of which, operating at the same time, producing such a medley as to be scarcely distinguishable to the visitor.

"The records are tested by about half a hundred women, each of whom has a little compartment or booth framed in by glass partitions. The duty of the tester is to decide upon the merits of the record by actually listening to it on the graphophone.

"A very important feature in record-making, from a commercial standpoint, is in means for cheaply duplicating records. If every record cylinder had to be made by the separate act of a performer such records would be very expensive.

"An original record is first made by some celebrated musician or speaker, and this record is afterwards multiplied and reproduced in large numbers. For this purpose an original record by suitable mechanism is made to take the place of the speaker or singer, and so multiplies and reproduces the original record.

(Continued on page 44)

#### PIANOS FOR SALE

**Refinished Mathushek** rosewood square grand piano. Built in 1875. — Lewis Osborn, 321 E. Ninth, Cushing, Okla. 74023. o3693

**GRAND PIANO.** Rose carved legs \$200. — Antoinette DePaola, Blackwood, New Jersey. Phone: CA 7-4593. o3802

**FOR SALE:** Steinway piano, built about 1830. Oblong, rosewood. Fair condition. — Lee R. Chapin, 93 Broadway Ave., Colonia, N. J. s1441

#### PIANOS AND ROLLS

**DUO-ART & Ampico** rolls. New custom reproductions. Money-back guarantee. Send for current list. — Harold Powell, 5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91601. ap128041

**Wanted:** Piano rolls, Ampico or Duoart. Write: Newton, Ingomar, Pa. ja12069

**Wanted:** Duo-Art piano rolls. — T. P. Grattelo, 2614 Central Ave., Alameda, Calif. s4234

**Wanted:** Ampico piano rolls. — T. P. Grattelo, 2614 Central Ave., Alameda, Calif. o3882

**OLD PIANO ROLLS** for sale. Free monthly lists. Duo-Art, Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards. — Vi & Si's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226. n3844

**WURLITZER** nickelodeon rolls wanted every type. Wanted these machines: Seeburg G, H models, Coinola Co., and others. — Jerry Cohen, 11756 Canton Place, Studio City, Calif. 91604. n3483

#### ANTIQUE BAND INSTRUMENTS

**WANTED:** Over the shoulder band instruments and Civil War relics. — W. A. Holloway, 1547 N. Dearborn Parkway, Chicago, Ill. 60610. n3403

#### MELODEONS

**TWO BEAUTIFUL** rosewood melodeons for sale. Thoroughly reconditioned, tuned. Also reed organs, repairing, parts. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vermont. s3023

#### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. s12698

**RARE & STANDARD** all categories. Special price in quantities to dealers. All inquiries promptly answered. Largest stock in the West. Same location 32 years. Expert photostat all sizes. — Music Mart, 3201 West 6th St., Los Angeles 5, Calif. s64811

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** Mills Single Violano Virtuoso. Good playing condition, extra rolls. Must sell, will accept highest offer, write for details. — Judy Haskins, Copper Harbor, Mich. s1002

#### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**BOOKS:** The Fabulous Phonograph, \$6.95; Rebuilding the Player Piano, Givens, \$6.95. — Mid-America Books, Leon, Iowa 50144. n3652

**PHONOGRAPH PARTS,** repair service, accessories, novelties. Everything for the phonograph owner. Giant list 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. o3253

**FOR SALE:** Edison Eclipse coin slot phonograph, complete in very good condition. Send 50c for picture and more information. Wanted to buy: Any outside horn phonographs and parts for same. — Wayne Warren, 24361 Eden Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94543. o3126

## DOLL ACCESSORIES

**DOLL HATS.** Dress up your doll collection with the addition of attractive doll hats. They're wonderful for gifts for the small fry, too. I also do doll repairing, such as rebuilding bodies, feet, fingers, shoulders (on the German jointed dolls that have bisque heads). I can mend kid bodies, if they can be mended, or make a new cloth body. Satisfaction or your money back. — Mary Upshaw, Doll Repairing, 2601 Forbes St., Jacksonville 4, Fla. tfx

**DO YOU** want your dolls dressed correctly? Research done for each. Patterns made to measure for historic dolls. Stamp please. — Miss Christine Spraker, 304 Arnold Ave., Port Allegany, Pa. 16743 n3844

**DOLL WIGS.** List 25c, coin or stamps. Long Curls to shoulder - baby - also Shirley Temple. These are lovely. Mail order only. — Dorothy's Dolls, 2509 Covert Ave., Evansville, Ind. d6698

## DOLL &amp; MINIATURE HOUSE FURNISHINGS

**ORIGINAL OILS.** Professionally done by recognized artist. By mail from the Springridge Farm Studios of Donna B. Reeder, R. R. 1, Farmersville, Ohio, 45325. Introductory price of \$3 each, or enough for the entire doll-house in lots of 10 at the introductory price \$25. s1006

## DOLL BOOKS FOR SALE

**DOLLS, MAKERS & MARKS,** 2nd edition, incl. large addenda with scores of additional marks for the identification of dolls, plus all the material in the popular first edition. Entire book profusely illustrated with marks of makers in business before 1880 and pictures of their dolls. Completely new comprehensive index. Paperbound. \$7 postpaid. Check with order please. "The Age of Dolls," \$6 ppd. Both books by E. Coleman, 4315 Van Ness St., Washington, D.C. 20016. s36311

**DOLL STUFF AGAIN,** 2nd printing, paper back, 320 pages, profusely illustrated. Pattern sheets. All you need to know to get neck deep in dolling. The doller's "bible", \$6.—Toy Trader, Middletown, Connecticut. 06457. d122112

**WONDERFUL DOLLS OF WAX** by Jo Elizabeth Gerken. The only book in any language about wax dolls. Their history. Comprehensive classification. A century and a half of Pierotti. The real Montanari Story. Museums and collections in the United States, Britain, and the Continent. Selected bibliography. Ninety-seven halftones. Clothbound \$10 postpaid. Published by Doll Research Associates, Box 6012 College View, Lincoln, Nebr. 68506 Ja64891

**DOLLOVER'S LIBRARY:** Vol. 1 - How to Dress a Doll & Make Cardboard Furniture 1860 Godey Style, \$1. Vol. 2 - Doll Crochet of Yesterday, \$1.50. Vol. 3 - Butterick Pattern #314 dated 1899, 26" Doll's Long Coat and Cap, \$1. — Grace H. Coutant, publisher, R.D. 4, Box 342, Scotia, N.Y. 12302. c62131

**DOLL BOOKS:** Dolls: New Guide For Collectors, Fawcett, \$11.75; American Doll Artist, Bullard, \$12; The One Rose, (Rose O'Neill) Ruggles, \$7.75; Dolls of the World, White, \$15; Dolls of Three Centuries, St. George, \$7.50; Dolls of Yesterday, St. George, \$12.50; How To Dress A Doll, Morgan (soft bound), \$2.15; On Making, Mending & Dressing Dolls, Fawcett, \$5.95; Dolls, Singleton, \$9.95; History of Dolls' Houses, Jacobs, \$12.50; Age of Dolls, Coleman (softbound), \$5.95; Dolls & People, Mowery, \$6.95. Catalog 25c. — Mid-America Books, Leon, Iowa 50144 n38231

**THE SCHOENHUT DOLL,** 16 pages with pictures, describing wooden jointed dolls made years ago. Every doll collector will want this booklet to add to the collectors' doll knowledge. Just send \$1 to Hobby City Doll Museum, c/o Bea DeArmond, 1238 So. Beach Blvd., Anaheim, Calif. s3697

## MARTHA MILLS' LITTLE PEOPLE OF DRURY LANE"

(Continued from page 40)

doll requires infinite patience. I find basswood and horse-chestnut well suited for dolls, since both are nice for carving, do not chip easily, have an almost invisible grain, and lend themselves well to detail.

"For carving Indian dolls nothing is better than red cedar. It seems to be made just for carving, is exactly the right color and shade, and, with a bit of rubbing with the fingers, takes on a beautiful sheen.

"I ventured into the field of wood carving seriously about 1955 and entered my first wooden doll in national competition at San Francisco in 1957. It won a blue ribbon. This was an Apache Indian carved from walnut that grew on our Indiana farm.

"Other woodens followed in succeeding national competition at Federal Doll Club Conventions—St. Francis of Assisi in Kansas City in 1959; St. John in Cleveland in 1960; St. Christopher in Miami in 1961; and Lincoln, the Rail-Splitter, in Buffalo in 1962. All of them won blue ribbons.

"Moses, as an old man looking over into the Promised Land, is generally considered to be my finest creation. He is 18 inches tall and jointed so he can either stand or sit unsupported. He never has been entered in national competition.

"Recently I have ventured into the field of miniatures, which I find most fascinating. Of these a caricature of Leopold Stokowski has attracted more than a little attention. Two different portrait woodens of Lincoln are considered my very best miniatures. These are about four inches tall. For the present, at least, I plan to confine my efforts to these very small woodens.

"I do not sell any of my creations, but they often are on exhibition. They also are used in connection with my speaking engagements. In fact, 'The Little People of Drury Lane' are well-known in the Chicago area, Indiana, and Florida.

"In all probability, I shall go on carving wooden dolls until my eyes grow dim and my fingers no longer are nimble. These dream children keep crowding into my head much faster than I can keep up with them. In order to accomplish all the things I have planned and dreamed of doing, I will have to attain at least 100 years."

Martha Mills, we salute you! Your name will go down in the history of creative art in doll-making, for future generations to respect.

## ATTENTION

Regional and Odd Material Collectors W. Va. coal miner 8" tall completely made out of coal. Also, two 3" miners made of lead, working in front of a piece of coal. Either selection \$6.00 ppd. No lists, send stamp with inquiries to Mary Christopher.

## THE DOLL HOUSE

229 Grand St., Morgantown, W. Va. sc

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

**HIPOLITA LAZARO** - Roccoco 5246:  
Side I - 1. GLI UGONOTTI: Bianca al par 2. I PESCATORI DI PERLE: Mi par d'udir 3. CARMEN: Il fior che avevi 4. IL TROVATORE: Di quella pira 5. LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST: Or son sei mesi 6. LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST: Ch'ella mi creda 7. TURANDOT: Non piangere Liu 8. TURANDOT: Nessun dorma.

Side II - 1. GUGLIELMO TELL: Corriam 2. IL PICCOLO MARAT: Gran duetto (w. Maria de Voltri) 3. Ay del Ay (Osma) 4. Gitana Mia (Muza y Media-villa) 5. Desde Lejos (Contini).

Born in Barcelona on August 13, 1889, Hipolito Lazaro served in the Spanish army prior to making his debut at the Teatro Novedades of his native city, in 1910. The opera was "La Favorita," and he had practically no vocal training at all.

He later studied under Maestro Colli in Milan, and in 1912 sang in London's Coliseum under the pseudonym of Antonio Manuele.

Under his own name, he appeared at La Scala in 1913, and then in other opera houses in Europe and South America.

Lazaro's debut at the Metropolitan took place on January 31, 1918, as the Duke in "Rigoletto." He remained there until April 25, 1920, when in the season's closing concert he did *Spirto gentil* from "La Favorita" and participated in the Quartet from "Rigoletto."

Until his present retirement in Barcelona, Lazaro continued singing in Italy, France, South America and Spain.

The above Long Play discs may be obtained from Ross, Court & Co., 3244 Yonge St., Toronto 12, Ontario, Canada. The price is \$4.95 plus postage.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

"The duplicating of records was contemplated by Edison from the first, as seen in his British patent, 1,644 of 1878, and later appliances for accomplishing such results are covered under Tainter's patent, No. 341,287, Bettini's, No. 488,381, and McDonald's, No. 559,806.

"The diaphragms used in the recorders and reproducers are made of French rolled plate glass, thinner than a sheet of ordinary writing paper. The recording stylus is shaped like a little gouge to cut the little grooves in the wax, while the corresponding stylus of the reproducer has a ball-shaped end to travel in the groove.

"Both the recording stylus and reproducing ball are made of sapphire, chosen on account of its hardness, to resist the great frictional wear to which they are subjected. When a record is to be effaced from a cylinder, it is turned off smooth on a sort of lathe, and the cutting tool or knife for this purpose is also made of sapphire."

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A 1900 ACCOUNT OF THE PHONOGRAPH

### PART III

By JIM WALSH

This is the conclusion of our story about the phonograph as told in "The Progress of Invention in the Nineteenth Century" by Edward W. Byrn, A.M., and published by Munn & Co., New York. See HOBBIES August and September issues.

"The latest, loudest, and most impressive form of the talking machine is the 'Graphophone Grand.' This has a horn attachment exceeding the big horn of a brass band in size, and the wax cylinder is about four inches in diameter.

"Its reproductions in music and speech are so full and strong as to be clearly heard at the most remote part of a large hall, and its versatile voice lends effective rendition of all sorts and kinds of sounds, from the inspiring chords of 'A Choir Invisible' to the grandiloquent and facetious rattle of a noisy and hustling auctioneer.

"It is not to be understood, however, that the graphophone is the only speaking machine on the market, for about 250 patents have been granted on phonographs and graphophones.

"The National Phonograph Company, under many later patents granted to Mr. Edison, manufactures and sells the phonograph shown in Figure 192, which is a very ingenious and effective instrument.

"This modern form of phonograph is actuated either by electricity or spring power, is regulated by a speed governor, and bifurcated ear tubes connect with the diaphragm case, which tubes are placed in the ears when the instrument is operated.

"The gramophone is also another speaking machine. This is the invention of E. Berliner and covered by him in patent No. 372786, November 8, 1887. An illustration of the gramophone recorder is given in Fig. 193. Instead of a wax cylinder this machine employs a flat disc on which the record is formed as a volute spiral groove, gradually drawing toward the center.

"It is produced as follows: A zinc disc is covered by a thin film acid-resisting material, such as wax or grease, and is placed in a horizontal pan, mounted to revolve as a turntable about a vertical axis. A stylus and diaphragm, with speaking tube attached, are arranged above the disc, and when spoken into the vibrations of the diaphragm cause, through the stylus, a record to be traced through the wax, down to the zinc.

"As the waxed disc and pan are

revolved, the stylus and diaphragm are gradually moved by gears toward the center of the disc. While the record is being traced the waxed disc is kept flooded with alcohol from a glass jar, seen in the cut, to soften the film and prevent the clogging of the stylus.

"The disc, when complete, is then rinsed off and etched with acid, chromic acid being used, to prevent liberation of hydrogen bubbles. The etched disc is then electrotyped to form a matrix, and from this electrotype hard rubber duplicates of the original record are molded, which are capable of giving 1,000 reproductions.

"These rubber discs are placed on the reproducing instrument, which is arranged to cause the stylus to trail freely along in the spiral groove, and when the disc is rotated under the said stylus its record is converted into articulate speech. Such flat disc records give quite loud reproductions, are not easily destroyed, and may be compactly stored and transported.

"In the gramophone the diaphragm stands at right angles to the record disc and the stylus does not vibrate endwise to make a path of varying depth, as in the phonograph and graphophone, but the stylus vibrates laterally and traces a little zigzag line.

"The cost of a talking machine is from \$5 to \$150. The wax cylinders cost from 25 cents to \$3. And the cylinders will hold a record of from 800 to 1,200 words, equivalent to about three or four pages of print in an octavo volume.

"An important part of such machines is the motor, which must maintain a uniform rate of speed, and

much ingenuity has been displayed on this part of the machine.

"Probably the largest use of the phonograph or graphophone is for home amusement and exhibition purpose. The coin operated, or 'nickel-in-the-slot' machine, finds a popular demand, while its utilitarian use as an amanuensis, or stenographer, is as yet a subordinate one.

"Although 21 years of age, and of full growth, the phonograph is ever a wonderfully new and impressive device. When listening to it for the first time the conflict of emotions which it excites is difficult to analyze.

"A voice full of human quality, of clear and familiar enunciation, and speaking in the most matter of fact way about the most matter of fact things, proceeds from an insignificant and insensible bit of metal, presenting the apparently anomalous condition of speech without a speaker.

"When convinced that there is no trick, astonishment struggles with admiration and a desire for a personal introduction. We speak into it, and have the unique experience of listening to our own voice emanating from a different part of the room, instead of our own mouths. It is really difficult to believe one's own senses, and no wonder that it inspires the superstitious with a feeling of awe.

"If Mr. Edison had lived a few centuries earlier, and had produced such an instrument, his life might have paid the penalty of his ingenuity, for without doubt he would have been classed as a wizard, and of close kin to the evil one.

"The phonograph is the truth-telling and incontrovertible witness whose memory is never at fault, and whose nerves are never discomposed

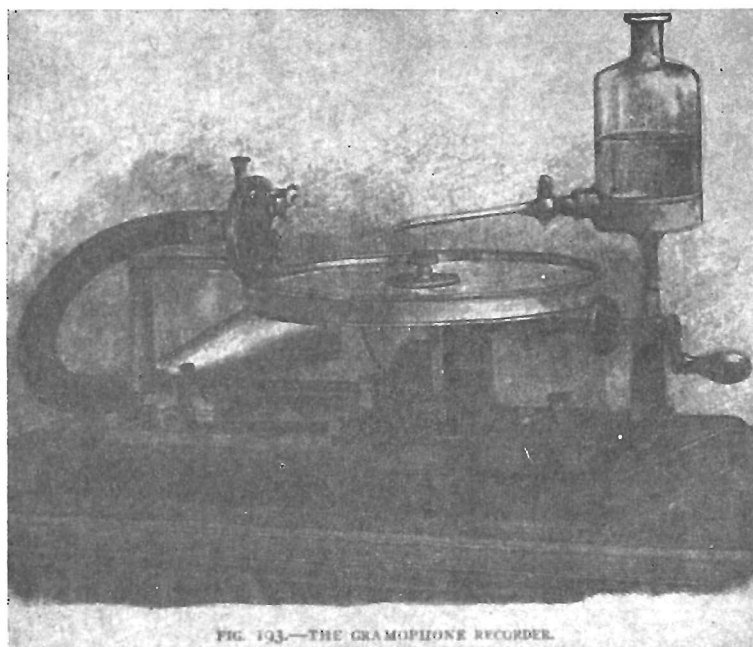


FIG. 193.—THE GRAMOPHONE RECORDER.

The gramophone recorder employed a flat disc, Fig. 193.

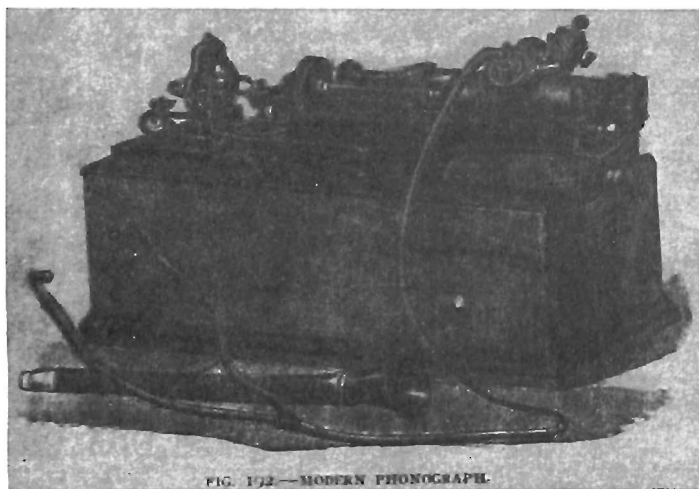


FIG. 192—MODERN PHONOGRAPH.

Modern form of phonograph, Fig. 192.

by any cross-examination. As evidence in court its word cannot be doubted, and the witness confronted by his own utterances from the phonograph must yield to its infallible dictum.

"The dying father, unable to write, may dictate to it his last will and

testament, and leave a message for his loved ones, and long after the sod is green on his grave, that message would still be audible, and fresh and true to all the tender inflections of the heart's emotions. By its aid the Holy Father, at Rome, may give his personal and audible blessing to his children throughout the world, though separated by thousands of miles.

"Who can tell what stories of interesting and instructive knowledge would be in our possession if the phonograph had appeared in the ages of the past, and its records had been preserved?

"The voices of our dead ancestors, whose portraits hang on the wall, and the eloquent words of Demosthenes and Cicero would be preserved to us. In fact, we should be brought into vocal contact with the world's heroes, martyrs, saints, and sages, and all the great actors and teachers whose personalities have made history, and whose teachings have given us our best ideals.

"But perhaps the most practical and best characterization of the phonograph is given in Mr. Edison's own terse words. He says:

"In one sense it knows more than we know ourselves, for it retains the memory of many things which we forget, even though we have said them. It teaches us to be careful of what we say, and I am sure makes men more brief, more business-like, and more straightforward."

## RECORDS FOR SALE

**RECORD COLLECTORS:** We have an assortment of excerpts from Broadway Musical Comedies from 1910-1940; 50 original 78's for \$25. A different interesting category to collect. Free lists of records in other categories, operatic, old-time personalities, etc. available. Mention wants. Also 1905 Victor Red Seal catalog reissue \$2. Record identification and dating chart for labels prior to 1930, \$1. — Memory Shop, 1762 Oxford, S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. d30211

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**WANTED:** Seeburg, Coinola, Nelson-Wiggen, Mills coin slot pianos, plays large paper roll. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Maryland. n3403

**ALL CYLINDER** and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap126121

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonograph reproducers, any parts to reproducers, jeweled needles (styli). Don't want steel needles. Describe and price wanted. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. n3614

**WANTED:** Busy Bee cylinder records playing condition, any quantities. 1 Busy Bee cylinder phonograph playing condition. 1 Busy Bee disc phonograph in good playing condition. Busy Bee disc records good condition any quantity wanted. Lambert 5" oversize cylinder records unbreakable. 1 Capworth Williams Sunday school, pump organ in good condition only, size 38" long, 36" high, 12" deep. 1 Sears Roebuck complete mail order catalog with all pages in it, years from 1880 to 1900. Any of these years wanted. — Alton Vogel, Box 12107, Rockdale, Texas. n36731

**"FROM TINFOIL TO STEREO."** Few copies left. \$9.95 U.S., foreign \$11. Large August list of many musical and other items now ready, 25 cents prepaid. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. o1462

**GUITARS -** Wanted used or new books, pamphlets, brochures, etc. containing information about the first use of steel strings on guitars in the U.S. and foreign countries. Also general information about the history of the guitar in the U.S. and abroad. Please send description of material available and price. — Box JHM, c/o HOBBIES, 1006 S. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60605. d3379

## MUSIC REPAIRS

**NEW PEP** for your reed organ or melodeon. Reeds cleaned, revoiced and tuned. Replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. o3633

## MELODEONS

**TWO BEAUTIFUL** rosewood melodeons for sale. Thoroughly reconditioned, tuned. Also reed organs, repairing, parts. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vermont. s3023

## ORGANS WANTED

**WANTED:** Lap organ, dated around 1830. Mason & Hamlin Piano Harp reed organ, dated around 1876. — Box 3374, Montgomery, Ala. d3403

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

**WANTED:** Two-manual melodeon, prefer octagon legs. Two manual reed organ with pipe top dating between 1865 & 1880. Prefer Mason & Hamlin, Estey, or Smith American. — L. B. Green, 347 Holly Ridge, Montgomery, Ala. d3215

## PIANOS AND ROLLS

**DUO-ART & Ampico** rolls. New custom reproductions. Money-back guarantee. Send for current list. — Harold Powell, 5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91601. ap128041

**Wanted: Piano rolls, Ampico or Duoart.** Write: Newton, Ingomar, Pa. ja12069

**Wanted. Ampico piano rolls.** — T. P. Grattelo, 2614 Central Ave., Alameda, Calif. o3882

**OLD PIANO ROLLS** for sale. Free monthly lists. Duo-Art, Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards. — Vi & Si's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226. n3844

**WURLITZER** nickeloden rolls wanted every type. Wanted these machines: Seeburg G, H models, Coinola Co., and others. — Jerry Cohen, 11756 Canton Place, Studio City, Calif. 91604. n3483

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. s12238

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**BOOKS:** The Fabulous Phonograph, \$6.95; Rebuilding the Player Piano, Givens, \$6.95. — Mid-America Books, Leon, Iowa 50144. n3652

**PHONOGRAPH PARTS,** repair service, accessories, novelties. Everything for the phonograph owner. Giant list 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. o3253

**FOR SALE:** Edison Eclipse coin slot phonograph, complete in very good condition. Send 50c for picture and more information. Wanted to buy; Any outside horn phonographs and parts for same. — Wayne Warren, 24361 Eden Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94543. o3426

**Rare Phonographs:** Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3846

**EDISON 2 & 4 minute** records now both played with same reproducer head. Mail your model "C" or "H" needle head and a dual-speed jeweled stylus will be installed. \$6.50 plus 50c return postage. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. n3886



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A March, 1901, Catalog of Edison "Concert" Cylinders

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

In the beginning, I should like to explain, for the benefit of several inquiring readers, why I appear to have stopped writing biographical sketches of recording artists.

The stoppage, I am glad to report, is only temporary. And the reason for it is this:

More than a year ago I gave my large collection of old record catalogs and other phonograph reference material to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. All these catalogs, books, magazines, etc., have been sent to Washington to be specially bound, then returned to me for my lifetime, after which they will pass permanently into the Library's possession.

But binding on so large a scale is slow work. As I write, I don't have any of this reference material and there is no way of telling when it will come back to me.

Meanwhile, it is impossible to do adequate biographical sketches without being able to consult the catalogs for information about a given artist's recordings. That is the chief reason why I have been filling this department with the sort of thing that can be prepared without an extensive reference library.

But when my belongings are returned I shall go back to writing the life stories of men and women who made records many years ago. And I have promised Wendell Hall, "The Red-Headed Music Maker," that he is the first performer about whom I shall write. There will be many more to follow.

While I'm explaining, I should also like to apologize to a gentleman in Ohio who, more than a year ago, sent me a Victor record of "The Waterfall," by the Paloma Quartet of women. He knew I badly wanted a record by this group, which recorded in 1902 or 1903. And he was kind enough to give me the one he had.

Then I lost the letter and have not been able to remember his name and address. If my generous donor sees this I hope he will accept my apologies and my sincere appreciation.

Now to business:

In the past few days I have acquired a copy of a record catalog which I never had seen before—form No. 199, issued by Edison and dated March 1, 1901.

It is a listing of the large, five-inch "concert" cylinders which were introduced in the late 1890's. It is

of historical interest because of being accompanied by an announcement that after supplies of this catalog were exhausted there would be no more separate listings of concert cylinders.

Instead, the big records would be ordered from the catalogs describing the small, standard-size cylinders. In order to get the concert size, it would be necessary to prefix the small record number with the letter C.

Edison continued to supply concert cylinders for several years afterward. But the demand gradually dwindled to nothing, especially since those that were ordered from the regular catalog were not recorded separately. They were merely dubbed from the small two-minute records, with consequent loss of volume and clarity.

In this unique 20-page catalog—unique to me because I never have seen another like it—the concert records have numbers prefixed by B. However, when I decided to publish the catalog's contents for the pleasure of HOBBIES readers I decided to save space and conserve my energies by omitting that initial letter.

I am not reprinting the catalog in its original form. It starts with band and orchestra records, followed by instrumental solos, talking records, singing in English, and, finally, vocal numbers in foreign languages.

The system of listing vocal records in English is irritating, since they are given in a crudely alphabetical order, with "A" and "The" counted

as part of the title, and the singers' names abbreviated.

Since I am sure most fanciers of these old records are chiefly interested in the vocal numbers and are primarily concerned with knowing what selections the various artists made, I have followed a strictly alphabetical arrangement without regard to band, instrumental, and vocal divisions. All records are listed under names of the performers.

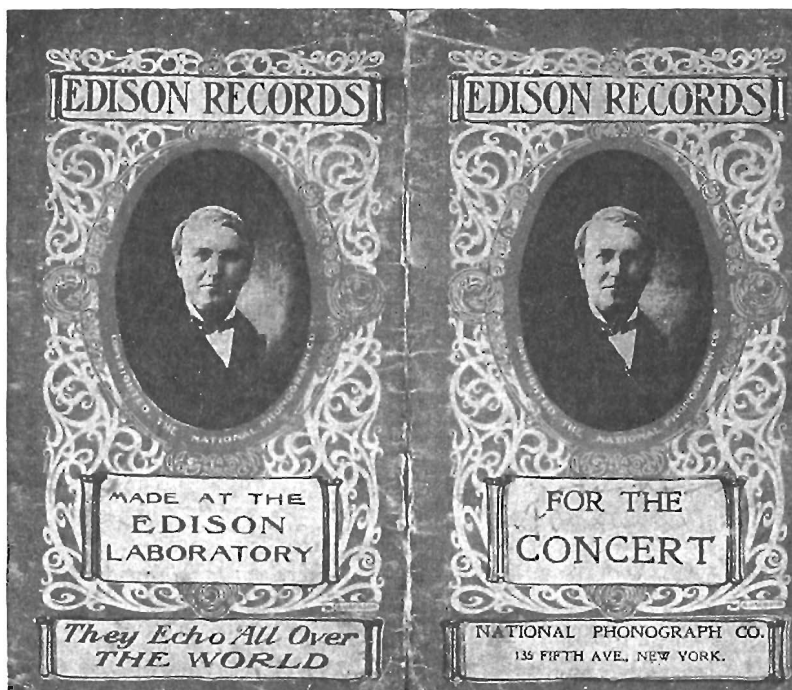
In making out my compilation, I also jotted down some notes that I thought would add more interest. Unfortunately, I cannot say that this is a complete listing of Edison concert cylinders made before the dubbing process was adopted.

I believe the highest number in the English division is 576, but I am able, by my count, to find only 508 cylinders belonging under this heading. That seems to indicate about 68 had been discontinued, but the only cut-out I can definitely identify is 408, "Hi Holler on Hunting," by Felix Haney, a comedian who was with the "Way Down East" Company.

My hurried tabulation gives 78 band records; 60 by orchestras; six by brass quartets; eight banjo solos; four chimes records; seven clarinet solos; cornet, 10; piccolo, nine; trombone, nine; violin, 20; and xylophone, four. In view of the poor violin recording of those days it is surprising that it appears to have been the most popular instrument.

Otherwise, there are 41 talking records; eight whistling solos; and 206 vocal solos. There are also 29 male quartets; two mixed trios; and seven minstrel skits.

The foreign list is virtually complete. It begins with 11000 and ends with 11083, which gives a total of



Back and front covers of the March, 1901, catalog of Edison "concert" size cylinder records.

84. I can find only 83 foreign cylinders however, and believe 11062 either hadn't been issued or had been cut out.

My survey shows Edison, at this time, was using only one banjo player for concert cylinders; one clarinet soloist; one cornettist; one piccolo performer; and one xylophonist. But there were two trombone players and two violinists.

Frank P. Banta, who died in 1904, conducted both the Edison Symphony and Peerless Orchestras.

Since 1900 was a presidential election year, there are several records of political flavor. The Republicans were more extensively represented than the Democrats. Two cylinders, by unnamed artists, purport to be speeches by William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic nominee; and there is one of "McKinley's Letter of Acceptance."

Neither Bryan nor McKinley made these cylinders. They were probably by William F. Hooley, although

George Broderick and Frank C. Stanley are possibilities.

President William McKinley was assassinated in September after this catalog came out in March.

Among the singers, there are two sopranos; two basses; seven tenors; and seven barytones. For this occasion I am following the catalog's way of spelling baritone, although I dislike it.

No indication is given of the quality of George W. Johnson's voice. Cal Stewart is described as "comic," and George P. Watson as "yodler."

Although two sopranos are listed I strongly suspect these ladies wore the same bonnets and slept in the same bed. Notice that both have the first name of Marguerite, and that the last names of both end in "ton."

The inference is irresistible that since Marguerite Newton (Mrs. Geo. Watson) was known chiefly as a singer of comic songs, Edison thought it would be better to give her a different name for her more ambitious numbers, so she became Marguerite Ashton.

There are 26 solos in French; five French duets; nine German solos; 19 Italian solos; two Italian duets; and 22 Spanish solos. I have no idea who Mme. Alba was. I hope nobody confuses her with the later Frances Alda.

Signor Francisco, of course, was Emilio De Gogorza. He did a vast amount of cylinder recording at the beginning of his career. I wonder if the Mme. Noldi, who made a few records, is Helene Noldi, who recorded years later for Victor.

Voice quality of the "foreign" male singers was not given and I had to make a guess at them by the type of operatic numbers they sang. Information concerning most of the operatic records is distressingly scant. I judge that the Lyric Trio's "Attila" is really "Praise Ye!" from Verdi's early opera.

A number of hymns were sung by A. D. Madeira. He was of Spanish descent, the late Joe Belmont told me, and was born at Gibraltar.

A year after this catalog appeared Madeira had quit making records and was in the typewriter business in St. Paul, Minn. Billy Golden also had quit—temporarily—and was "running a fashionable hotel in Washington, D.C."

In listing Frank Kennedy's records I have followed the catalog's style and copied his Dutch character's name as "Shultz." It usually was spelled "Schultz" on records and in catalogs.

I suppose all the artists in this catalog are dead, but, come to think of it, I have never read of Kennedy's death. He made some Okeh records in the 1920's.

George Broderick is an interesting character, partly because he was an uncle of Helen Broderick, the famous actress of later years, and partly because he made Victor record Number 1, "Eugene Field's Poem, 'Departure,'" and four others of the first 10 Victors records.

I have a Berliner record made by  
(Continued on page 62)

## ORGANS

WANTED: Lap organ, dated around 1830. Mason & Hamlin Piano Harp reed organ, dated around 1876. — Box 3374, Montgomery, Ala. d3403

FOR SALE: Walnut pump organ. Shoninger, coupled brass bells. Mint condition. Best offer. — Dan Estes, 501 Wembly Rd., Greenville, S. C. n1061

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

WANTED: Two-manual melodeon, pre-fer octagon legs. Two manual reed organ with pipe top dating between 1865 & 1880. Prefer Mason & Hamlin, Estey, or Smith American. — L. B. Green, 347 Holly Ridge, Montgomery, Ala. d3215

## PIANOS AND ROLLS

DUO-ART & Ampico rolls. New custom reproductions. Money-back guarantee. Send for current list.—Harold Fowell, 5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91601. ap128041

Wanted: Piano rolls, Ampico or Duoart. Write: Newton, Ingomar, Pa. ja12069

OLD PIANO ROLLS for sale. Free monthly lists. Duo-Art, Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards. —VI & SI's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226. n3844

WURLITZER nickeloden rolls wanted every type. Wanted these machines: Seeburg G, H models, Coinola Co., and others. — Jerry Cohen, 11766 Canton Place, Studio City, Calif. 91604. n3483

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. s12238

THE ETUDE, 1905. Young Students' 4-Hand collection, 1897. Kinkel Folio for Piano 1887. On, Wisconsin, 1909. \$2 each. —Brooks, 3901 Zenith So., Minneapolis, Minn. n1481

## MUSIC REPAIRS

NEW PEP for your reed organ or melodeon. Reeds cleaned, revoiced and tuned. Replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. ap6276

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

BOOKS: The Fabulous Phonograph, \$6.95; Rebuilding the Player Piano, Givens, \$6.95. — Mid-America Books, Leon, Iowa 50144 n3652

Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others. Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3846

EDISON 2 & 4 minute records now both played with same reproducer head. Mail your model "C" or "H" needle head and a dual-speed jeweled stylus will be installed. \$6.50 plus 50c return postage. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. n3886

PHONOGRAPH items galore in our spanking new catalog No. 6. Parts, repairs, needle-heads; you name it. Get your copy today, 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. ja3844

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

WANTED: Seeburg, Coinola, Nelson-Wiggen, Mills coin slot pianos, plays large paper roll. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Maryland. n3403

ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap126121

WANTED: Cylinder phonograph reproducers, any parts to reproducers, jeweled needles (stylus). Don't want steel needles. Describe and price wanted. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. n3614

WANTED: Busy Bee cylinder records playing condition, any quantities. 1 Busy Bee cylinder phonograph playing condition. 1 Busy Bee disc phonograph in good playing condition. Busy Bee disc records good condition any quantity wanted. Lambert 5" oversize cylinder records unbreakable. 1 Capworth Williams Sunday school, pump organ in good condition only, size 36" long, 36" high, 12" deep. 1 Sears Roebuck complete mail order catalog with all pages in it, years from 1880 to 1900. Any of these years wanted. — Alton Vogel, Box 12107, Rockdale, Texas. n36731

WANTED: 88-note player piano rolls. Q.R.S. The Modist-Metrolstyle. Classical, operatic, standard, etc.—Paul Woehler, 764 Summit Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio. 45204 n1671

GUIARS - Wanted used or new books, pamphlets, brochures, etc. containing information about the first use of steel strings on guitars in the U.S. and foreign countries. Also general information about the history of the guitar in the U.S. and abroad. Please send description of material available and price. — Box JHM, c/o HOBBIES, 1008 S. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60605. d3879

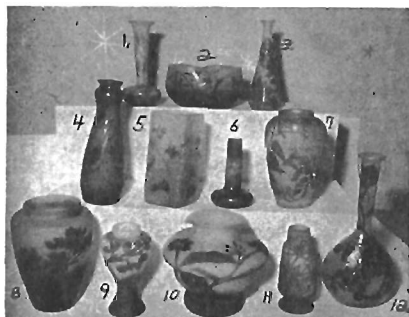
SEEBURG nickelodeons - one piano and one cabinet type, stained glass fronts, lights and drum effects. — Mrs. Harry Roehrig, 1 Whitewood Rd., White Plains, N. Y. ja3004

PLAYER PIANO BOOKS: Rebuilding the Player Piano \$6.95, Player Piano Treasury \$10. Put Another Nickel In \$15 (See review of this, p. 110, Sept. 1966 HOBBIES.) Satisfaction guaranteed. Ask for catalog of other books. Prices postpaid.—Vestal Press, Vestal, N.Y. 13850. o120652

## DOROTHY GALLEY, Art Glass

### Goose Lane Tolland, Conn.

Phone 203 — 875-6795



#### Net Prices:

1. Sgnd. Galle 5" h., 2 1/4" widest. Polished lavender violets on acid pink. \$85.
  2. Sgnd. Daum Nancy, 2 1/4" deep, 4 3/4" w. Blue and wine flowers with green leaves on mottled acid yellow at top; black at bottom. \$70.
  3. Sgnd. Galle, 5 1/4" h., 2" widest. Polished coral red floral on yellow acid. \$75.
  4. Sgnd. d'Argental, 6" h., 2" widest. Double cased. Polished olive-green and apricot on gold acid. \$65.
  5. Sgnd. Daum Nancy, 4 1/2" h., 2" widest. Lavender and rose flowers on textured green, pink and white acid. \$60.
  6. Sgnd. Galle, 3 1/2" high, 2" widest. Polished brown pansies on yellow acid. \$55.
  7. Sgnd. 'Galle. Almost 5" h., 3" widest. Lavender, green and white on white with a wide pink streak. All acid. \$75.
  8. Sgnd. 'Galle. Double cased. Scenic. Polished shades of brown on acid yellow and white. 4 1/2" h., 3 1/4" widest. \$85.
  9. Sgnd. 'Galle. Over 1 1/2" h., 2 1/4" widest. Orange on white. All acid. \$55.
  10. Sgnd. Richard. Almost 4 1/4" h., 4 1/2" widest. Brown on rose-pink. All acid. \$85.
  11. Sgnd. Galle, 3 3/4" h., over 1 1/2" widest. Green on pink. All acid. \$55.
  12. Sgnd. Galle, 7" h., 3 1/4" widest. Two shades of deep crimson on orange. All glossy. \$85.
- Postage & insurance extra. nc

## OLD PLANK ROAD Antique Shop

### Mrs. Sara I. Cliborne

P.O. Box 191 South Hill, Virginia

- Pair Bulls Eye and Diamond Point flint collections, pr. \$70.
- 2 Waffle & Thumbprint champagnes, ea. \$15.
- Opalescent Lacy Sandwich bowl, Roman Rosette, 4", \$18.
- Same as above, short edge crack, hard to find as in design, \$13.
- Canary Diamond Quilted 5 1/4" bowl, \$6.50.
- Rubina Inverted T.P. bulbous water pitcher, good color, square top, applied handle, polished pontil, \$37.50.
- Decal portrait of Lincoln (Mathews) mounted on walnut plaque with brass ring to hang, 3x2 1/4" - \$3.50.
- Rare shagreen etal or sewing case, 5 1/4" long, silver mountings and medallion for monogram; 5 spaces inside; no fittings but modern scissors, nail file, etc., will fit, \$10.
- White Bisque pig. 4 1/2" long; a bank, \$4.
- Blue Beatty Honeycomb 4 1/2" flat sauce (powder blue with raised opal squares) \$6.
- Jade green opaline glass cookie jar, bulbous; good metal cover and handle, \$12.50.
- Spartan pattern, clear glass creamer, lovely fan spout, \$8.50.
- (Many other desirable Pressed glass items - write wants).
- Beautiful and unusual barber bottle, medium green, 7 1/2" tall, melon sectioned base; all-over raised florals with gold trim, \$15.
- Cranberry Inv. T.P. salt; old metal top; enamel florals in blue and green, deep color, \$7.
- Clear Basketweave covered pomade jar, scarce item, \$10.
- 9 1/4" Caledonian china plate, R. M. W. & Co. (not scenic) shades of green plaid, \$5.
- Sterling teaspoon, cut out handle "Jacksonville" \$3.
- Ivory napkin ring, raised silver "N", \$2.50.
- Early Ivory and silk fan; porcelain box in shape of fan; purple marble glass cakestand; rock sand picture in glass bell; unusual sauce, D&B with amber edge; Pattern glass mugs including miniatures. Old watches and movements—stamp for list. Also list of pattern and animal tops.

No reproductions. Add postage, excess refunded. Careful packing. Prompt shipment. Wants solicited Phone 703 (Area) 689-2808 nc

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

him which he announced as "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," by George Brod-er-r-ick," with a strongly rolled "r." Then after the pianist started playing, George remembered he hadn't completed the announcement and hastily blurted "Berliner Record!" to the piano accompaniment. He seems not to have recorded after 1901 or 1902.

It is something of a surprise to find our old friend, Al Campbell, using his light tenor voice to sing Manrico's part of the Miserere from Trovatore, but he probably did it well. Cal Stewart's list of Uncle Josh titles is mostly ultra-familiar, but included is one most obscure Stewart record, "There Ain't a Word."

I wonder why the 71st Regiment Band was called on to make only one record, Chopin's "Funeral March." Perhaps this band was no longer available and had a long cut-out list, which would account for many of the missing numbers, but that is sheer speculation.

Dan W. Quinn should have been called a tenor instead of a "barytone."

Read the list of Spanish solos and you will see that De Gogorza and Senorita Maria Godoy duplicated each other's repertoires to a considerable extent. Both, for instance, made records of something called "El Cafe de Puerto Rico."

Returning to politics, S. H. Dudley managed to be admirably nonpartisan by singing both Republican and Democratic campaign songs.

In my copying I have corrected a number of mistakes. For instance, I substituted "Gioconda" for "Gisconda." However, I have pretty well followed the catalog's system of printing song titles, many of which have a word beginning with a capital letter, but most, or all, of the remaining words are without a capital.

And, in my proofreading, I have caught four amusing typing errors of my own. I have changed "Lead, Kindly Light," "Uncle Josh and the Bunco Steers," "A Bird in a Gilded Cave," and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean" to "Lead, Kindly Light," "Uncle Josh and the Bunco Steers," "A Bird in a Gilded Cage," and "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

After all this prologue I promise the first part of an alphabetical listing of the artists and records contained in Edison's March, 1901, catalog of concert size cylinders will be presented in the December issue. Herewith I give my thanks to my faithful cat, Petey, who has been sitting beside me and closely following the progress of my typing and editing.

(To be continued)

—0—

There were about 100,000 cigar store Indians in the United States in 1900 but only about 3,000 are left says the National Geographic Society.

## ON TIME

(Continued from page 47)

bling discussion of American clocks. When I started it I had no idea it would extend to this length. Actually, we could go on almost indefinitely because new and interesting material turns up all the time. The work, however, would soon become unwieldy and no very useful service would result.

My great hope is that this brief sampling of the field, with the 36 illustrations of clocks, all different in character, will bring home to many people the immensity of the subject. One must make a study of each old clock which turns up, and which has an individuality all its own, in order to determine whether or not it is of interest from a collecting standpoint.

As we mentioned in the beginning, each of the clocks illustrated and described here is representative of a type or group of clocks. It is not complete by any means; and no work of this kind ever will be. Furthermore, it must be remembered that within each type or group there are endless variations in design and workmanship as represented by the manufacturers who made them.

Most of the American clocks that one is apt to come across, however, will be related to one of these types or groups and a little study will make this clear. If it can be related to one of these groups we can then determine where it belongs, what its approximate age may be, what its degree of interest from a collecting standpoint may be, and even get a rough idea of what its approximate value might be.

This is of great importance, especially to the beginning collector, and if it serves this purpose the effort involved will be worthwhile.

From here we will move on to a study of American watches.

(To be continued)

## OLD METALS

(Continued from page 50)

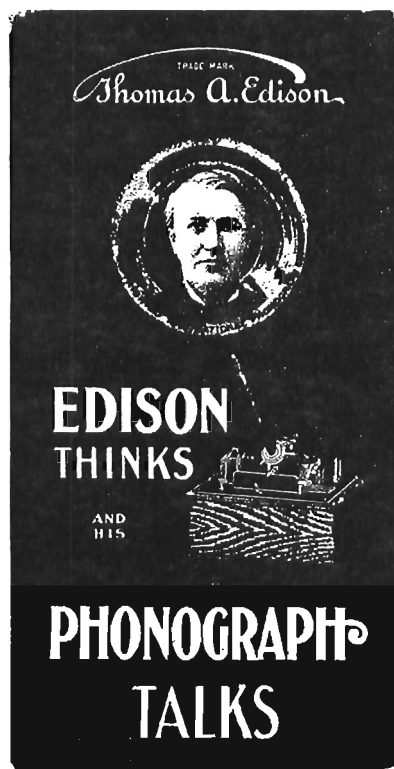
feet in height, and had a diameter of 23 inches. Each vase was decorated with the mystic Nine five-clawed Imperial Dragons. These vases may now be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Modern superstition has further originated the idea of four Dragon Kings identified as the Naga or Serpent Spirits of the Hindus. Each bears rule over one of the four seas which form the border of the habitable earth.

- VICTOR YOUNG ANTIQUES  
Mill St., R.D. 3 Putnam Valley, N. Y.
- Letter opener brass plated owl handle.... \$ 5.00  
Majolica bowl, 3" high, water lilies..... 6.00  
Iron chicken feeder, good for ash tray.... 4.50  
10" Carnival vase green iridescent N.... 9.50  
Mother of Pearl jelly spoon engraved..... 7.50  
Haviland cup & saucer Countess pattern.... 8.50  
Tiffany bronze match box holder on tray 12.00  
Sterling Souv. fork skyline, etc. Chicago.... 6.50  
Transportation extra. Stamp for check return nc

## A March, 1901, Catalog of Edison "Concert" Cylinders

By JIM WALSH  
PART II



Form 200.

March 1, 1901.

### REDUCTION IN PRICE

## Edison Concert Records

IN EFFECT MARCH 1st, 1901.

\$1.00 Each or \$12. per Dozen.

ANTICIPATING an increased demand for Concert Records, owing to reduced price, we will be prepared after March 1st, 1901, to furnish in Concert size, every title listed in small records.

WE will discontinue the issuance of separate Concert Record lists, after the present list No. 199 is exhausted; and thereafter both Concert and Standard Records may be ordered from the one list.

IN ordering Concert Records from Record List No. 150, use the regular catalogue number and check letter C.

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH CO.

135 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK.  
1901 Edison Advertising

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

Following our prologue in the November HOBBIES, here is the first part of an alphabetical listing of the artists and records contained in the catalog of "concert" cylinders.

- MADAME ALBA, Soprano (Songs in French)  
11059 Air Hamlet  
11058 Cantabile  
11062 Ninon  
11060 Mignon (Gounod)  
MADAME ALBA and M. BEGUE (Duets in French)  
11046 Allegro From Il Trovatore  
11045 Grace Contempro From Il Trovatore  
11049 Le Petit Noël  
11044 Mignon, As tu Souffert  
11040 Pardonnez Moi  
SIG. ACHILLE ALBERTI, Barytone (Songs in Italian)  
11052 Aria, 1st Act, Ballo in Maschera  
11053 Barcarolla From Gioconda  
11055 Brindisi From Il Guaranal  
11051 Il Balen From Il Trovatore  
11050 Infelice  
11054 Prologo From Pagliacci  
11056 Romanza L'Ebreca  
SIG. ALBERTI and MADAME NOLDI (Duets in Italian)  
11047 L'Addio By Nicolai  
11057 Miserere  
MARGUERITE ASHTON, Soprano  
440 Creole Love Song  
456 Love in Springtime  
453 Magnetic Waltz  
439 Paterson Waltz Song  
M. BEGUE, Barytone (Songs in French)  
11067 Air de Lucie de Lammermoor  
11063 Arioso d'Hamlet  
11069 Berceuse de Jocelyn  
11033 Enchantment  
11040 Heridiade  
11065 Invocation de Faust  
11064 La Favorite  
11068 La Ronde du veau d'or de Faust  
11039 Les Huguenots  
11034 Les Rameaux  
11066 Le Trouvere  
11035 Ninon  
11032 Toreador From Carmen  
JOE BELMONT, Whistling  
387 American Flag March  
389 At a Georgia Camp Meeting  
445 Ben Hur Chariot Race March  
567 Farmer Boy (Song and Whistling Chorus)  
477 Over the Waves Waltz  
407 Smoky Mokes  
388-Whip-poor-Will Song  
BRASS QUARTET  
37 Come Where Lilies Bloom  
311 Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming  
39 Forsaken  
36 Old Oaken Bucket  
310 Old Folks at Home  
38 Soldiers Farewell  
GEORGE H. BRODERICK, Bass  
359 Absent Minded Beggar (Rudyard Kipling's War Poem)

- 337 Anvil Song  
357 Beer Song From Martha  
345 Cal of Gold From Faust  
352 Cooper's Song From Boccaccio  
342 Down Deep Within the Cellar  
343 Father O'Flynn (A Jolly Song with a Brogue)  
351 Friar of Orders Gray  
347 Heart Bowed Down  
356 How Fair Art Thou (Love Song from the German)  
354 King O'er Land and Sea  
338 Let All Obey  
339 Palms  
355 Red Scarf  
346 Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep  
341 Simon the Cellarer  
344 Since Thou Art Mine  
353 Song of the Turnkey From Rob Roy  
348 Tale of a Whale  
358 Vagabond  
350 Thursday  
349 Who Treads the Path of Duty From The Magic Flute  
ALBERT CAMPBELL, Tenor  
111 Because Sentimental  
108 El Miserere Ah, I have signed to rest me From Il Trovatore  
452 Flower From the Garden of Life  
220 For All Eternity Sacred  
526 For Freedom and Ireland Patriotic  
124 Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee  
223 I Love Thee, I Adore Thee From The Serenade  
112 Just One Girl Sentimental  
221 King's Highway From The Highwayman  
459 Little Black Me  
269 Love Is Tyrant Sentimental From The Singing Girl  
534 Mack's Serenade Sentimental  
458 Mandy Lee  
298 My Dearest Girl Ballad  
444 My Dreams  
109 Oh, Promise Me  
297 Promise of Light Sacred  
110 She Was Bred in Old Kentucky Sentimental  
CHIMES  
(No artist's name given, but probably played by Harvey Emmons, who later made chimes cylinders for Edison under the assumed name of Henry Nesbitt).  
513 Believe Me If all those endearing young charms  
541 Chimes of Trinity  
511 Safe in the Arms of Jesus  
512 What a Friend We Have in Jesus  
ARTHUR COLLINS, Barytone  
499 Blue and the Gray Republican Campaign Song  
557 Cindy, I Dream About You Negro dialect song hit of Pete Dalley's Co., Hodge, Podge & Co.  
268 Darktown Is Out Tonight Negro dialect song  
99 Drill, Ye Tarriers, Drill Comic  
100 Handicap March Song Descriptive  
102 Hello, Ma Baby Comic  
264 I'd Leave My Happy Home for You Negro dialect song  
154 I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby Comic  
556 Just because she made dem goo-goo eyes Negro dialect song



HAPPY HUNTING! This picture originally appeared in the Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel and was taken when Jim Walsh, who this month completes 25 years of writing for HOBBIES, was in Knoxville, looking for old records.

Not long afterwards it was reprinted in the Saturday Evening Post as an illustration for "Meet the Platterbug," an article by J. C. Furnas about record collecting.



- 565 Lam, Lam, Lam Negro dialect sing  
102 Martha Jane Green Comic  
522 Mick Who Threw the Brick Comic Irish song  
521 My Tiger Lily Comic song  
265 My Hannah Lady Negro dialect song  
101 McKinninny's Lullaby Comic  
523 Vaudeville Specialty "B" (Introducing funny sayings, song choruses, dances, etc.)  
505 You Can't Keep McKinley from the Chair Republican Campaign Song

#### CHARLES D'ALMAINE, Violin Solos

- 335 Because  
333 Ben Bolt  
450 Come All Ye Faithful  
368 Down at Finnegan's Jamboree Descriptive  
331 El Miserere From Il Trovatore  
334 Imitation of Bagpipes and Scotch Air  
332 Polish National Dance  
449 Ralf's Cavatina  
336 Scenes That Are Brightest  
369 Then You'll Remember Me

#### M. DEL CAMPO, Bass

- (From Royal Opera, Lisbon; Scala, Milano; Scala, Napoli; Imperiale, Pietroburgo)  
11074 Air de Figaro From La Nozzi de Figaro Mozart  
11070 Air de Vulcain de Philemon et Baucis Gounod  
11077 Air du Cardinal de la Julve  
11075 Chanson a Boire de Martha  
11072 La Marseillaise  
11078 La Serenade de Schubert  
11076 Mephisto's Serenade de Faust  
11073 O Ma Charmante  
11071 Romance du Sommeil

#### WILL F. DENNY, Tenor

- 441 Cold Feet Comic  
216 Different Styles of Singing  
528 Doing His Duty-ooty Comic  
495 Don't It Tickle You Comic  
443 For Old Time's Sake Sentimental  
117 How'd You Like to be the Iceman? Comic  
167 I Couldn't Comic  
219 I'm Not Particular  
106 I've Waited, Honey, Waited Long for You Sentimental  
493 I Wonder if He's Waiting  
442 Just When I Needed You Most Sentimental  
529 Like a Girl Comic  
218 Man Took a Girl  
568 Parody on a Widow's Plea for Her Son  
217 Shadows on the Door  
527 Tick Tock Ticking of the clocking of her stocking Comic song  
176 You Can't Think of Everything

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

**WANTED:** Seeburg, Coinola, Nelson-Wiggen, Mills coin slot pianos, plays large paper roll. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle St., Cumberland, Maryland. n3403

**ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired.** — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap126121

**WANTED:** Cylinder phonograph reproducers, any parts to reproducers, jeweled needles (stylus). Don't want steel needles. Describe and price wanted. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3614

**ATTENTION music instrument collectors:** 2 16-string Gibson Harp Guitars, mint cond.; 2 violins, orig. Stainer - Copia of Mathias; 3 organs - Kimball and Lyon Healey; 1 player piano with rolls; 1 Edison Home Phonograph, complete with cylinders; 1 Seeburg Symphonola type SB10200. Many other instruments, new and old. — Scott's Antiques, Burna, Kentucky 42023. Phone 502 - 988-2266. d1044

**GUITARS - Wanted used or new books, pamphlets, brochures, etc. containing information about the first use of steel strings on guitars in the U.S. and foreign countries. Also general information about the history of the guitar in the U.S. and abroad. Please send description of material available and price.** — Box JHM, c/o HOBBIES, 1006 S. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60605. d3879

**SEEBURG nickelodeons** - one piano and one cabinet type, stained glass fronts, lights and drum effects. — Mrs. Harry Roehrig, 1 Whitewood Rd., White Plains, N. Y. ja3004

**PLAYER PIANO BOOKS:** Rebuilding the Player Piano \$6.95. Player Piano Treasury \$10. Put Another Nickel In \$15 (See review of this, p. 110, Sept. 1966 HOBBIES.) Satisfaction guaranteed. Ask for catalog of other books. Prices postpaid. — Vestal Press, Vestal, N.Y. 13850. o120852

#### HERR W. C. DEUSING, Barytone (Songs in German)

- 11023 Abendstern From Tannhauser  
11079 Am Meer von F. Schubert  
11083 Der Trompeter von Saeckingen  
11080 Der Deutschen Vaterland  
11081 Edelweiss  
11082 Lied des Rattenfaengers von Hameln  
11027 O Schöne Zeit  
11029 Sehnsucht  
11026 Wacht am Rhein

#### DUDDLEY, S. H., Barytone

- 573 Chinese Soler Man From San Toy Comic  
515 Continuous Performance  
497 Democratic Campaign Song to the tune of Marching Through Georgia  
514 Doan yo' cry ma Honey Negro dialect song  
31 Dreaming, Dreaming Comic  
From The Serenade  
30 Father, Won't You Speak to Sister Mary? Comic, as sung in A Stranger in New York  
28 Sporty Widow Brown Comic  
572 Tale of the Kangaroo Comic  
From The Burgomaster  
29 Tattooed Man Comic From Idol's Eye  
516 Vaudeville Specialty "A" Imitation of Amateur Vaudeville Artists  
555 Village Choir Comic  
506 We Stand By McKinley  
Republican Campaign Song  
164 Yuba Dam A Comic Tale of the West  
EDISON GRAND CONCERT BAND

- 10 About the Battle of Gettysburg  
525 American Valor March  
1 Beau Ideal March  
275 Benediction of the Polnards  
139 Black America Two-Step  
471 Blue and the Gray  
162 Blue Danube Waltz  
273 Camplin' on de Old Suwanee  
552 Charge of the Battalion March  
323 Christian Waltz  
2 Columbian Exposition March  
544 Columbia the Gem of the Ocean  
470 Court of Honor March  
564 Dancing With Ma Baby Schottische  
223 Dare Devil March  
553 Favorite March  
373 From Battle to Victory March  
554 From Tropic to Tropic March  
12 Georgia Camp Meeting  
232 Gladiator March  
574 Gloria From Mozart's 12th Mass  
149 Grand March From Tannhauser  
3 Handicap March  
138 Hands Across the Sea March  
274 Hapsburg March  
324 Hello, Ma Baby  
159 Inauguration March  
518 Inflammatus From Stabat Mater  
11 In the Sweet Bye and Bye  
328 Jolly Coppersmith  
276 La Circus  
173 La Marseillaise  
330 La Secret Polka With Cornet Solo  
151 Light Cavalry Overture  
215 Little Kinkles  
141 Love's Dreamland Waltz  
376 Loyal Legion March  
377 Maniot March  
545 Marching Through Georgia  
516 Medley of National Airs  
372 Meyerbeer's Torchlight Dance  
323 'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia  
327 Military Galop  
517 Mr. Thomas Cat  
374 My Hannah Lady  
272 National Fencibles March  
320 Nearer My God to Thee Sacred  
189 Night Alarm Descriptive  
231 Nine Knights March  
4 Off to Camp March  
160 Old Church Organ  
472 On the Levee  
236 Overture to Merry Wives of Windsor  
288 Overture to Poet and Peasant  
289 Overture to Semiramide  
271 Overture to Tancrède  
235 Overture to William Tell  
234 Overture to Zampa  
175 Reeves March  
5 Selections from Bohemian Girl  
375 Selections from Don Carlos Operatic  
8 Selections from Fra Diavolo  
7 Selections from Rigoletto  
8 Selections from Symnambula  
169 Silver Jubilee March  
547 Soldiers in the Park From Runaway Girl  
171 Star Spangled Banner  
325 Storm and Sunshine March  
524 Strike Up the Band  
233 Tambour de Garde  
230 Troubadour With Piccolo Solo  
9 Traumerel  
140 Under the Double Eagle March  
576 Vacant Chair Band with Cornet Solo  
279 Willow Grove March  
326 Zenda Waltz

#### EDISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Directed by Frank P. Banta

- 14 Anvil Chorus From Il Trovatore  
536 At the Circus Descriptive  
438 Battle of Manassas Descriptive  
15 Dancing on the House Top  
16 El Cantan March  
280 Espanita Waltz  
17 Forge in the Forest  
23 Fortuna Teller March  
18 Intermezzo From Cavalleria Rusticana  
437 La Paloma  
229 Love's Whisper  
225 My Estelle Waltz  
19 Selections from The Serenade  
246 Senorita Waltz  
170 Stelebride Gaiety Descriptive  
20 Stars and Stripes Forever March  
22 Titi's Serenade

(Continued on page 50)

### ORGANS

**WANTED:** Lap organ, dated around 1830. Mason & Hamlin Piano Harp reed organ, dated around 1876. — Box 3374, Montgomery, Ala. d3403

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

**WANTED:** Two-manual melodeon, pre-fer octagon legs. Two manual reed organ with pipe top dating between 1865 & 1880. Prefer Mason & Hamlin, Estey, or Smith American. — L. B. Green, 347 Holly Ridge, Montgomery, Ala. d3215

### PIANOS AND ROLLS

**DUO-ART & Ampico rolls.** New custom reproductions. Money-back guarantee. Send for current list. — Harold Powell, 5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91601. ap128041

**Wanted:** Piano rolls, Ampico or Duoart. Write: Newton, Ingomar, Pa. ja12069

**OLD PIANO ROLLS for sale.** Free monthly lists. Duo-Art, Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards. — Vi & Si's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226. f3234

**WILL GIVE Wurlitzer roll changer piano for information leading to purchase of Seeburg H orchestrion piano.** — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle, Cumberland, Maryland. f3633

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

**BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850.** Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. s12238

**SHEET MUSIC,** several thousand old popular songs very low priced, any size order, private party. — McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. f3253

### MUSIC REPAIRS

**NEW PEP for your reed organ or melodeon.** Reeds cleaned, revoiced and tuned. Replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. ap6276

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

**Rare Phonographs: Edison, Columbia, Victors and many others.** Records, horns, horn cranes, reproducers, parts and repairs. Send 25c for list. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. d3846

**FOR SALE:** Edison Eclipse coin slot phonograph, complete in very good condition. Send 50c for picture and more information. Wanted to buy: Any outside horn phonographs and parts for same. — Waynes Warren, 24361 Eden Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94543. f3295

**PHONOGRAPH items galore** in our spanning new catalog No. 6. Parts, repairs, needle-heads; you name it. Get your copy today, 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. ja3844

### MUSIC BOX DISCS

**Mira Music Box Discs:** 18 1/2" \$3; 15 1/2" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage. — Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. mh6219

**WANTED:** Discs, excellent condition for: Komat 20 1/4"; Polyphone 9 1/2"; Amorette 12" & 8 1/2". — S. Leonard, 12 Garden St., Great Neck, N.Y. 11020 f3061

## OLD METALS

Conducted by  
GRACE KALER

### Nagas Their Lore and Legend



The Nagaraja Nanda, King of Nagas.  
Gilt bronze. Tibet. Height 8 inches.  
—Author's collection; photo by Fred Kaler

Like the legendary dragon of Chinese art, the *naga*—serpent demigod of Hindu mythology—is a favorite art form in India. A rightly revered creature of ancient India, the serpent was second only to the sacred cow.

*Nagas*, superhuman in wisdom, were sometimes symbolized with the head or tail of a serpent; more often they typified mermen and mermaids, wearing head-dresses decorated with a serpent—usually a five-headed cobra. An image of Nanda, the Nagaraja, or King of the Nagas, occasionally included the winged and feathered features of a Chinese dragon.

It seems probable that *nagas* were a part of the old folk-lore of Tibet,

which was identical to many traditional legends of India. Pon, a form of nature worship involving divination, magic, the repression of evil spirits, and the worship of good spirits, is to this day associated with the worship of *nagas*.

They are of four species: (1) celestial, guarding the mansions of the gods; (2) aerial, causing winds and rain to benefit human beings; (3) earthly, marking the courses of rivers and streams; (4) guardians of hidden treasures.

All Souls Day, a Tibetan festival function, was celebrated on the 15th day of the fourth month. The rain-deities were appeased on this day,

The lay governor of Lhasa, the high official Lamas, and other officers went in procession from the court at Potala to the great Lhasa Cathedral. Here they honored the imposing image of Buddha and lingered for a lamp-feeding ceremony. Melted butter was poured from silver ladles into the temple lamp. The procession continued along a circular road by way of the Mende bridge to the Dragon Temple.

In an inner sanctuary of the Dragon Temple offerings of gold and silver were deposited among the serpent images, or *nagas*. This shrine was then locked and sealed, not to be opened again until the following year. The object of this ceremony was to gain the good graces of the *naga* demigods and the assurance of sufficient rain for the benefit of crops and animals.

The Chinese dragons or rain-gods have powers and functions similar to those of Tibetan and Indian lore, and the northern Buddhists have assimilated them with the *nagas*. Thus the dragon in Tibetan art is often indistinguishable from the *naga*, but *nagas* are also represented as serpents, and as part human and part serpent, corresponding to the mermen and mermaids of European lore.

It appears that the people had more faith in *nagas* than in most divinities, perhaps because the *nagas* made themselves visible so frequently. Every cloud with a curious formation or serpentine tail was considered a *naga*.

A *naga* community was classified into groups of kings, nobles, and commoners, Buddhists, and non-Buddhists. The Buddhist *naga* kings appear to have been protected from attacks by their constant enemies, the *garudas*.

The *garuda*, a mythological, golden-winged bird of Indian and Tibetan folk-lore, was forever waging warfare against the *nagas*. Legends describe the *garuda* as part bird and part human.

In Indian symbolism the *garuda* represents the Sun, and the *naga* typifies the energy of the waters of the earth. A beneficent being who controlled the rain, the *naga* thus became a guardian of fertility of the soil. He held in his sway serenity and success.

*Naga* kings lived in paradise in the depths of the sea, where they

were nourished on pearls and opals. Their palaces of colored, transparent stones, with crystal doors, are said to have been seen in the early morning by persons gazing into the deep reflective waters. *Nagas* guarded great treasures, some of which they occasionally bestowed upon mortals whom they favored.

There were five of these semi divinities. The principal figure occupied a central position, surrounded by the four "great Guardian Kings of the quarters of the world." These were the White Guardian of the East, king of the *gundharvas* (heavenly musicians); the Green King of the South, lord of the gnomes, and the Red Guardian of the West, king of the *nagas*. The king of the *yaksas* (tree spirits), the god of Wealth, was the Yellow Guardian of the North.

—Grace Kaler

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

249 Under the Polar Star March  
548 Wien Bleibt Wien

ED. M. FAVOR, Tenor

114 Forgotten Words Comic  
118 Her Papa Was There Comic  
113 Ikey Eisenstein Comic  
158 Once Again  
115 What Do You Think of Hoolihan?

J. J. FISHER, Barytone

153 Just as the Sun Went Down  
162 Love's Sorrow Sentimental  
163 Moth and the Flame Sentimental  
165 My Queen Irene

SEÑOR FRANCISCO (Emilio De Gogorza), Barytone  
(Songs in Spanish)

11024 A La Luna  
11038 Caballero de Gracia  
11031 Consejos  
11036 El Café de Puerto Rico  
11042 El Celoso  
11041 La Cocina  
11025 La Golondrina  
11022 La Paloma  
11030 La Tempestad  
11023 Linda Mia  
11043 Milagro de la Virgen  
11037 Quilen Te Llamo

WALLACE FREDERICKS (Frederick Wallace Hager)  
(Violin Solos)

421 Home Sweet Home  
395 Hungarian Dance  
393 La Sompambula  
385 Melody by Sarasate  
403 Old Black Joe  
394 Pizzicati  
396 Scenes That Are Brightest  
404 Second Mazurka  
402 Spanish Dance  
384 Waltz By Chopin

SENIORITA (MARIA) GODOY  
(Songs in Spanish)

11021 Caballero De Gracia  
11013 Como me gusta tu Cuerpo  
11019 Como yo te he Querido  
11020 Dolores  
11015 El Café de Puerto Rico  
11017 El Gorro Frigio  
11014 La Cocina  
11012 La Paloma  
11018 Nina Pancha  
11016 Panchita

BILLY GOLDEN, Barytone and Whistling

531 Mocking Bird  
533 Rabbit Hash  
530 Turkey in de Straw Negro Specialty  
532 Uncle Jefferson Negro Specialty

SIG. (M. A.) GUARANI, Tenor  
(Songs in Italian)

11005 Ah che la morte Canora  
11003 Carmela  
11006 Celeste Alda  
11000 Funiculi Funicula  
11007 Inno di Garibaldi  
11001 La Donna e Mobile  
11010 La Mia Bandiera  
11002 Mattinata  
11008 O Paradiso  
11009 Questa o Quella  
11011 Risveglio  
11004 Toreador Song  
(To be continued)

# A March, 1901, Catalog of Edison "Concert" Cylinders

By JIM WALSH

## PART III

In the November HOBBIES we told of this unique 20-page catalog Number 199, issued by Edison, that listed the large cylinders introduced in the late 1890's.

The December issue of HOBBIES carried the first part of the listing of the artists and records contained in this catalog.

Now we shall continue the listing to its conclusion.

**FELIX HANEY**, Comedian,  
of the "Way Down East" Company

409 Hi Holler on Pickings from Fock

**BYRON G. HARLAN**, Tenor

461 Blue and the Gray Sentimental

463 Please Mr. Conductor Sentimental

569 Sons of the Sea

570 When the Harvest Days Are Over Sentimental

462 Will I Find My Mama There? Sentimental

**BYRON G. HARLAN**, Tenor,  
and **A. D. MADEIRA**, Barytone, Duets

423 He Carved His Mother's Name Upon a Tree

428 I Left Because I Love You

424 In the Shadow of the Pines

426 My Old New Hampshire Home

427 Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom

425 While the Leaves Came Drifting Down

**HOOLEY, WILLIAM F.**, Bass and Recitations

399 Asleep in the Deep

86 Bedouin Love Song

90 Carbine Song From the Serenade

410 Flee as a Bird

415 Gypsy Love Song From Fortune Teller

88 Heart Bowed Down From Bohemian Girl

411 Kathleen Mavourneen

157 Palms Sacred

412 Schubert's Serenade

89 Soldier and a Man

87 Son of the Desert Am I

198 Twenty-third Psalm

**GEORGE W. JOHNSON**, Laughing Comedian

483 Laughing Coon

482 Laughing Song

485 Whistling Coon

484 Whistling Girl

**MAY KELSO**, Contralto

192 Always Sentimental Ballad

520 Beneath the Evening Star Sentimental

161 Honey You's Ma Lady Love

255 Hush Your Noise and Go to Sleep Sentimental

307 Just Suppose Sentimental

160 Kentucky Babe

321 One Little Word Sentimental

519 Side By Side Sentimental

156 Sweet, Sweet Love

**FRANK KENNEDY**, Comedian

199 Shultz's Advice to Men

468 Shultz at Delmonico's

465 Shultz's Attack on the Savage Mosquito

538 Shultz Becomes a Dog Fancier

469 Shultz Has Malaria

200 Shultz's Letter from the Klondike

537 Shultz on a Farm

464 Shultz on the Man Behind the Gun

466 Shultz on the Paris Exposition

571 Shultz on Temperance

467 Shultz's Views on George Washington

**CHARLES P. LOWE**, Xylophone Solos

473 Dinah Polka

474 Happy days in Dixie

475 Pickaninny Polka

476 Dancing in the Sunlight

**LYRIC TRIO** (Probably Grace Spencer, soprano;  
Harry Macdonough, tenor;  
and William F. Hooley, bass)

84 Attila

85 Farewell, My Own

**HARRY MACDONOUGH**, Tenor

121 Good Bye, Sweet Dream, Good Bye Sentimental

120 Holy City Sacred

575 Home, Sweet Home

561 I Can't Tell Why I Love You, But I Do Sentimental

118 Last Rose of Summer

435 Love-Lorn Lily Sentimental

125 'Mid the Green Fields of Virginia

281 My Lady Lou

270 Picture No Artist Can Paint Sentimental

434 Since That Day Sentimental

436 Wait Sentimental

122 Where Is Heaven? Sentimental

119 Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight? Sentimental

**A. D. MADEIRA**, Barytone

260 Comforter Has Come Sacred

258 Come Home Sacred

201 Dream, A Sentimental Ballad

259 I Am Redeemed Sacred

261 I Need Thee Every Hour Sacred

317 Last Night Sentimental

256 Let Us Stand Up for Jesus Sacred

262 Rescue the Perishing Sacred

257 Shepherd True Sacred

# EDISON RECORDS.

## OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER SUPPLEMENTS.

We will gladly secure for you any of the following records, or any records listed in Edison catalogue at the regular prices, to be shipped with other goods.

Both Standard and Concert Records may be ordered from this list.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 7924 Baby Mine. As sung by Marie George in "The Strollers". Waltz song. Price. | 7956 If I Only Had a Dollar of My Own. Coon song.   |
| 7925 The Invincible Eagle. Banjo, O.   | 7957 Vaudeville Whistling and Monologue Specialty. With imitations.                             |
| 7926 Creole Belles. Rag-time March, Band E.                                    | 7958 Uncle Josh Weathersby playing Golf.  |
| 7927 Hurrah Boys. Two-step, Band E.  | 7959 Selections from "King Dodo". Orchestra.  |
| 7928 The Marchionesse. Mazurka Gracieuse, Orch. F.                             | 7960 The American Billionaire. De Wolf Hopper in Weber & Fields' "Hoity Toity". Song, Stanley.  |
| 7929 Ev'ry Darkey Had a Raglan On. Coon song, Co.                              | 7961 Characteristic Baby Polka. With imitations. Band.  |
| 7930 De Beriot's 6th Air. With variations. Violin solo, D'A.                   | 7962 Medley March from Rogers Bros. in Washington. Orchestra.                                   |
| 7931 I Want Some One to Care for Me. Coon song, De.                            | 7963 Medley March from "Hoity Toity".   |
| 7932 My Lady Love. Song, Na.   | 7964 Baby and I. Duet.  |
| 7933 March Arcadia. Dulcimer solo, Gibson.                                     | 7965 De Pullman Porter's Ball. From Weber & Fields' "Hoity Toity". Comic song.                  |
| 7934 I Got Married This Morning. Comic song, Fa.                               | 7966 Mrs. Carter. Comic song, Favor.  |
| 7935 Love Me, Lize. Comic duet, Co. and Na.                                    | 7967 Neapolitan March, "A Frangese! Band.   |
| 7936 March from the Musical Comedy "The Strollers". Orch. P.                   | 7968 Minnie-ha-ha! Serio-comic song by the writers of Dolly Gray.                               |
| 7938 Simple Little Sister Mary Green. Comic song, Q.                           | 7969 The Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid. Duet.  |
| 7939 Einstein at the Vaudeville. Comic recitation, Sil.                        | 7970 My Own Wild Western Rose.  |
| 7940 The Treasures of the Sea are Buried Deep. Descriptive song, My.           | 7971 Creole Belles. Rag-time march, Banjo.  |
| 7941 Lizzie, Is He? Serio-comic song. My.                                      | 7972 Because I Love You, Dear.  |
| 7942 I'll Be With You When the Roses Bloom Again. Sentimental song, Mac.       | 7973 Rozmysli si Marenko Sekstet ze Smetanovy Prodane nevesty. Orchestra.                       |
| 7943 Sleep Well, Thou Sweet Angel. With variations. Piccolo solo, Maz.         | 7974 When the Lilies of the Valley Bloom Again.   |
| 7944 The Spider and the Fly. Sentimental song, Har.                            | 7975 When Two Little Hearts are One. Lillian Russell and De Wolf Hopper in "Hoity Toity". Duet. |
| 7945 Little Darling, Dream of Me. Male quartette, F. Q.                        | 7976 The Tale of a Bumble Bee. Song from King Dodo. Duet.                                       |
| 7946 Drinking Song. From the opera "Martha". Sta.                              | 7977 Not by a Dam Side.   |
| 7947 Hush! Don't Wake the Baby. Song, with yodle, W.                           | 7978 'Way Down Yonder in the Cornfield. New song, Myers.  |
| 7948 Nobody Ever Brings Presents to Me. Male duet, Har. & Sta.                 | 7979 Bessie, My Right Hand Bower.   |
| 7949 Indeed. Sentimental song, Na.   | 7980 Ma Ebony Belle. Negro lullaby.   |
| 7950 'Phemie. Coon serenade, Du.   | 7982 President McKinley's Last Speech. Delivered at Buffalo, September 5th, 1901.               |
| 7951 I'd Lay Down My Life for You. Sentimental song, Mah.                      |   |
| 7953 Schultz on Dogs. Comic recitation, Ken.                                   |   |
| 7954 The Honeysuckle and the Bee. Love song, Mac.                              |   |
| 7955 Bay State Quickstep. Banjo.   |   |

## THE LATE PRESIDENT'S FAVORITE HYMNS.

- 7267 Nearer, My God, to Thee. Male quartette, Edison quartette.
- 7625 Lead, Kindly Light. Male quartette, Edison quartette.

## The Talking Machine Co. 107 Madison Street, CHICAGO

A list of Edison two-minute cylinders issued in October and November, 1901. Notice how Artists' names are abbreviated, for instance, Collins is shortened to "Co."

The record of "President McKinley's Last Speech" was by Frank C. Stanley. Both concert and regular records could be ordered from this list.

- JERE MAHONEY**, Tenor
- 478 Bird in a Gilded Cage Sentimental
- 105 Break the News to Mother Sentimental
- 104 In the Baggage Coach Ahead Sentimental
- 106 Just Set a Light Sentimental
- 302 My Little Georgia Rose Ballad
- 107 My Old New Hampshire Home Sentimental
- 244 One Night in June Sentimental
- 245 She Rests By the Suwanee River Sentimental
- 243 She Was Happy Till She Met You Sentimental
- 303 Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom Sentimental
- MALE QUARTETS** (Artists not listed, but undoubtedly the Edison Male Quartet)
- 32 Annie Laurie
- 282 Break the News to Mother Sentimental
- 418 Camp Meeting Jubilee
- 420 Carry Me Back to Old Virginia
- 197 Cornfield Medley
- 422 County Fair Descriptive
- 267 Creole Sue Sentimental
- 34 Church Scene
- 190 Farmyard Medley Descriptive
- 283 Just as the Sun Went Down Sentimental
- 214 Kentucky Babe
- 308 Lead Kindly Light Sacred
- 367 Louisiana Lou
- 562 Medley of College Songs
- 419 Moonlight on the Lake
- 417 My Lady Lou
- 198 My Old Kentucky Home
- 268 Nearer My God to Thee Sacred
- 314 Old Folks at Home
- 558 Onward Christian Soldiers
- 305 Owl and the Pussy Cat
- 507 Republican Campaign Shout
- 33 Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep
- 290 Sleighride Party
- 308 Soldier's Farewell

- 313 Tenting To-night on the Old Camp Ground
- 35 Tear, The
- 563 Vesper Service
- 366 Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom
- FRANK S. MAZZIOTTA**, Piccolo Solos
- 51 Dance of the Pirates
- 203 Goldfinch Polka
- 543 Little Footsteps With Variations
- 651 Medley of American National Airs
- 52 Nicolai's March
- 53 Robin Adair
- 542 Sand Dance
- 202 Tarantella
- 54 Wren Polka

## MINSTREL RECORDS

- 370 Christy Minstrel, 1st Part
- 265 Echoes of Minstrelsy
- 460 Minstrel, 1st Part
- 204 Minstrel, Pot Pourri
- 371 Minstrel Scene
- 237 Plantation Minstrelsy
- 206 Three Minutes with the Minstrels
- JOE NATUS**, Tenor
- 549 All for a Man Whose God Was Gold Sentimental
- 490 All Things Are not What They Seem Sentimental
- 448 Dear Old Bess and I Sentimental
- 431 Fatal Rose of Red Sentimental
- 550 Good Bye Dolly Gray Sentimental
- 429 Her Name is Rose Sentimental
- 488 I Will Still Believe You True Sentimental
- 433 She is an All Right Girl Sentimental
- 430 She Rests by the Suwanee River Sentimental
- 489 They're Proud of the Irish Now Sentimental
- MARGUERITE NEWTON**, Soprano
- 59 I Don't Like No Cheap Man Comic (Turn to next page)

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap126121

WANTED: Cylinder phonograph reproducers, any parts to reproducers, jeweled needles (styl). Don't want steel needles. Describe and price wanted. — Thomas Pollard, 3100 Fairway Dr., Soquel, Calif. f3614

SEEBURG nickelodeons - one piano and one cabinet type, stained glass fronts, lights and drum effects. — Mrs. Harry Roehrig, 1 Whitewood Rd., White Plains, N. Y. ja3004

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Wanted: Orchestrion, any type. No quibbling, and will answer all correspondence. — John C. Whinnery, R.D. 3, Salem, Ohio. ja1612

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263 Look Out for the Hoo-doo-doo Man Comic  
61 She Lipped When She Said Yes Comic  
60 Take Your Clothes and Go Comic  
VESS L. OSSMAN, Banjo Soles

188 Cotton Blossoms  
46 Darkies' Patrol  
50 Georgia Camp Meeting  
242 Honolulu Cake Walk  
47 Nareissus  
48 Patrol Comique  
187 Pretty Little Queen Song and Dance  
49 Serenade March  
186 Smoky Mokes

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487 Bchemian Life March  
250 Bonnie Briar Bush March  
247 Campin' on de Ole Suwanee  
25 Charlatan March  
535 Cindy Two-Step  
510 Colored Aristocracy A Feverish Inspiration  
457 Coon Band Contest A Trombone Eccentricity  
194 Cotton Blossoms A Characteristic March  
26 Dinah Polka  
226 Elolse Polka  
195 Finale of selections From Il Trovatore  
539 Hall to the Spirit of Liberty Sousa's Latest  
173 Hannah's Promenade  
492 Home, Sweet Home  
227 Jolly Fellows Waltz  
486 Mammy's Carolina Twins  
397 Man Behind the Gun March  
193 Ma Ragtime Baby Two-Step  
491 March From the Ameer  
508 Ma Tiger Lily Cake Walk  
146 Medley Lancers First Figure  
147 Medley Lancers Second and Third Figures

(Turn to page 49)

### PIANOS AND ROLLS

DUO-ART & Ampico rolls. New custom reproductions. Money-back guarantee. Send for current list.—Harold Powell, 5652 Willowcrest Ave., North Hollywood, Calif. 91601. ap128041

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OLD PIANO ROLLS for sale. Free monthly lists. Duo-Art, Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards. —Vi & Si's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226. f3234

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Wanted: Ampico piano rolls. —T. P. Grattelo, 2614 Central Ave., Alameda, Calif. mh3882

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DUO-ART & AMPICO rolls for sale. —Marc Goodman, 4229 Bushnell, Univ. Hts., Ohio 44118. ja1211

### Petey, Nipper, Lucky Jim, Popsy and Jim Walsh

Wish the Great HOBBIES Family A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



1. Petey enjoys nothing better than a red-hot game of dominoes, but his mournful expression seems to indicate he has lost.  
2. Nipper appears somewhat in awe of the bronze bust of his favorite author, Charles Dickens. His favorite Dickens character, naturally, is Susan Nipper in "Dombey and Son." He has many of Susan's impetuous traits.

3. Lucky Jim is an accomplished "Kitten on the Keys" when he indulges in his favorite pastime of playing the chord organ.  
4. Popsy has been clearing his desk to have everything ready for a good time when Christmas comes.  
5. The favorite hobby of Roger, who left us November 12, 1945, was loving and being loved.

He is objecting here to having his picture taken as Jim Walsh holds him. Besides Roger, we cherish memories of the good and gentle Gray. Percy the Pifful Persian and the other dear ones whom we have loved and lost through the years.  
If you want to send us Christmas greetings, we get our mail at Box 476, Vinton, Va., 24179. jax



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| ● ball)                  | ● DAREY BUST          |
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| ● quarter)               | ● REGISTERING         |
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| ● Gun)                   | ● SAVINGS             |
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|                          | ● (Tin)               |

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

B148 Medley Lancers Last Figure  
 B146 opens with the usual announcement, followed  
 by "Are you ready?" After a short overture,  
 the FIRST figure is called, as follows:  
 "Hands to the right; cross over; swing corners.  
 "Hands to the left; cross over; swing corners.  
 "Hands to the right; cross over; swing corners.  
 "Hands to the left; cross over; swing corners."  
 B147 contains the SECOND and THIRD figures. In  
 order to get both figures on this record, the speed  
 was lowered; so, in reproducing, run this record  
 just a little slower, in order to have the correct  
 time.

The SECOND figure is called as follows:  
 "All forward; ladies in centre; balance."  
 Repeated four times.

The THIRD figure is called as follows:  
 "All forward; forward and salute; ladies chain.  
 "All forward; forward and salute; ladies chain.  
 "All forward; forward and salute; gentlemen cross  
 right hands.

"All forward; forward and salute; gentlemen cross  
 left hands."

B148 contains the FOURTH figure, the last one.  
 The following are the calls:

"First couple; chaise; march; right and left.  
 "Second couple; chaise; march; right and left.  
 "Third couple; chaise; march; right and left.  
 "Fourth couple; chaise; march, right and left."

228 Moonlight Kisses Gavotte  
 251 My Lady Lou Schottische  
 142 My Lady Love Waltz

493 On Duty March  
 494 Pretty Peggy  
 24 Rendez-Vous Valse

500 Ripple Dance  
 540 San Toy Two-Step  
 27 Selections from The Fortune Teller

500 Selections from The Rogers Brothers in  
 Central Park Introducing Reuben and the  
 Duchess

252 Senegambian Two-Step  
 291 Singing Girl March From Victor Herbert's  
 Opera

292 Singing Girl Mazurka From Victor Herbert's  
 Opera  
 278 Singing Girl Waltz From Victor Herbert's Opera

178 Smoky Mokes  
 248 Spring Songs Waltz  
 191 Whistling Rufus

POLITICAL TALKS, by unidentified artists  
 500 Bryan's Speech of Acceptance  
 504 Bryan's Speech to Labor

503 McKinley's Letter of Acceptance Speech  
 DAN W. QUINN, Barytone  
 386 In Old Ben Franklin's Day Comic From the  
 Amer

208 Little Bit Off the Top Comic  
 414 My Money Never Gives Out Comic  
 416 No Show Tonight

502 One Good Turn Deserves Another. Parody on  
 Blue and the Gray  
 210 'Raus Mit Him Comic

207 She Knew a Lobster When She Saw One Comic  
 209 You'll Have to Transfer Comic  
 NICHOLAS SCHOLL, Trombone Solos

91 Killarney  
 92 Song of the Turnkey  
 93 The Tar's Farewell

71st Regiment Band of New York  
 123 Chopin's Funeral March  
 FRANK C. STANLEY, Barytone

97 Armorer's Song Robin Hood  
 96 Hosannah Sacred  
 174 Marching Thro. Georgia Patriotic

95 Nazareth Sacred  
 98 One Hundred Fathoms Deep  
 453 Sunday Sally

94 Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground  
 Patriotic  
 (Continued on page 68)

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 19610

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A pair of Oklahoma Indians.

## DOLLOLOGY

(Continued from page 40)

come to include a chapter on the Neapolitan figures of the Precepio in their findings on dolls.

Of special interest in the religious grouping was a small church from Spain. Inside the church, the figures that represent the priest, the acolytes, and the musicians, are small peg wooden dolls.

The next grouping featured craft dolls. Literally dozens of different media were used—mostly nature's own products fashioned into dolls by creative, imaginative minds and hands.

Some craft dolls are whimsical, some are even beautiful like the dainty shell figures, and some have sculptured form like the dried apple dolls. All are amusing and answer a challenge to the ingenuity of the maker.

Products of a more sophisticated doll society were the commemorative dolls. Each figure represented an actual person—some are realistic interpretations; others are caricatures.

Queen Victoria was represented, looking every inch the empire-builder she was; and hefty Henry the Eighth shows all the signs of self-indulgence for which he was noted.

There was a roll-call of presidents—Abraham Lincoln, Dwight Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy—of generals, and of other interesting great and near-great.

The antique dolls carried their own particular impact. They were presented in chronological order against backgrounds and themes designed to conform to rare and interesting dolls which ran the gamut from the so-called Queen Anne dolls, to the elegant Parisiennes, and even to battered and torn rag dolls.

There seems to be a fascination about antique dolls for people of all ages, not just for the serious doll collector.

Proceeding around the exhibit area to the next feature, one came upon

a wonderful old puppet trunk which Mr. Pryor purchased in Thailand a few years ago. It was full of puppets when he bought it and has remained on permanent display in Greenwich just as it was found in Bangkok.

Puppets are especially interesting for they have a life and personality of their own. They always have held grown-ups and children alike spell-bound by their quite human characteristics.

In the exhibit, there was a group of Indonesian puppets, clad in authentic batiks and oftentimes with grotesque heads; Thailand puppets with multiple wardrobes and heads used in changing their roles; and a pair of Sicilian puppets of notable size—50 inches in height—looking very dramatic against the dark wood wall.

Mr. Pryor is justifiably proud of his American Indian collection. The legacy of the American Indian gradually is receiving its belated recognition and anthropologists now speak in glowing terms of Indian culture. Various Indian tribes were represented in the exhibit: Sioux, Seminole, Navajo. Several Kachinas rounded out this category.

The Japanese collection was quite varied. Included were the more traditional figures such as the Emperor and Empress, Kabuki dancers, Bunraku puppets, No players; other figures representing particular Japanese legends; and Japanese play dolls.

There was a Japanese schoolroom scene. This is always of interest to the school children, who come to visit in Greenwich, as they learn of another way of life.

Next was an exhibit feature which might be termed the world of "once upon a time" where fabled friends from childhood live forever in the form of dolls representing legends.

There was a leprechaun, a troll, and a "Pelsnickle" doll regarded as a servant of St. Nicholas. Pelsnickle visited the children prior to Christmas and, with his birch cane, gave a flogging to the children who had been bad.

The old woman who lived in a

shoe was in this fabled group. Her lively brood, in this particular case, consisted of dolls from all lands.

One of the most popular categories of the exhibit was the group of international dolls that represented about 100 countries. These dolls were divided and presented according to continent—dolls in native costumes typical of their nations or countries.

National Geographic's colored photographs of children from the various countries co-ordinated the theme of children and dolls of the world.

Audio-phones were installed in three of the exhibit areas. Anyone viewing these particular exhibits could hear the story of the dolls.

For the benefit of the blind children, half a dozen dolls were selected whose features and clothing were of a texture which, upon being touched, would enable the blind children to relate the story they were hearing on the audiophones to the sense of touch. Several groups of crippled children and blind children were brought to the exhibit.

—O—  
\* The International Doll Library may be visited by appointment only.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 49)

179 When Dewey Comes Sailing Home Patriotic  
CAL STEWART ("Uncle Josh Weathersby"),

Comedian

130 Baptism at Hickory Corners Church  
378 Meeting of School House Directors  
479 Old, But I'm Awfully Tough  
480 There Ain't a Word  
481 Three Little Owls and the Naughty Little Mice  
Comic Song  
363 Uncle Josh's Arrival in New York  
381 Uncle Josh and the Bunco Steers  
129 Uncle Josh at a Game of Baseball  
360 Uncle Josh at the Camp Meeting  
365 Uncle Josh at Delmonico's  
294 Uncle Josh at the Museum  
364 Uncle Josh at the Opera  
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295 Uncle Josh in a Chinese Laundry  
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293 Uncle Josh on a Bicycle  
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A. L. SWEET, Cornet Solos

312 Arbucklelinian Polka  
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43 Commodore Polka  
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447 In Happy Moments From Maritana  
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55 Auld Lang Syne  
58 Ben Bolt  
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57 Comin' Thro' the Rye  
212 Fantasia From Sonnambula  
213 Polonaise Brilliant  
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GEORGE P. WATSON, Yodel

224 Doctor Eisenbein With Yodel  
558 Emmett's Baby Song  
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184 Snyder, Does Your Mother Know You're Out?  
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LEO ZIMMERMAN, Trombone Solos

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The English "Supreme Fifteen"

By JIM WALSH

PART I

Some graybeard readers of this department may remember that in May, 1945, I published an article, "Are These The Supreme Fifteen?" In it I tried to decide which pioneer American recording artists were the greatest.

Consideration was restricted to the so-called "popular" singers and players — those whose performances were not of "celebrity" status but ordinarily would appear on Victor Black Label records and others of similar cost.

During the more than 20 years since that study appeared, my opinions have been modified. I some day may write another article to indicate how they have changed. I may say now that I rate Cal Stewart ("Uncle Josh Weathersby") in higher rank than I gave him then.

Recently it occurred to me that an equally interesting article could be prepared by trying to determine the 15 "top" artists who recorded in Great Britain in the years before electrical methods of capturing sound were introduced.

The idea is so intriguing I have decided to undertake it despite the fact that my knowledge of English artists is not as comprehensive as it is of American.

I suspect my list, which will be based largely on volume of recording, record sales, and continued popularity, will bring derisive hoots from some of my English friends, who

might be able to prepare a better study than I, on the basis of more inclusive knowledge.

One thing I want to emphasize is that my individual preferences will not intrude I hope, into this study. I shall give high rating to some performers whose recordings lack appeal for me, simply because I feel that on the basis of their popularity and volume of sales they deserve it. But inclusion in this list does not necessarily mean high artistry — at least not in my opinion.

As in the American study, I am including only those men and women whose work was of the predominantly "popular" type. So esteemed an artist as John McCormack is omitted because the great majority of his recordings appeared on what was known as the Red Label abroad, and Red Seal in the States, and he was considered a "celebrity" singer.

My group is restricted chiefly to those who, if they recorded for HMV, were assigned to the Plum Label, the HMV equivalent of Victor's Black.

### THE LIST

1. Peter Dawson and Billy Williams. When I first began to ponder my list of the English Supreme Fifteen I had no hesitation in assigning first place to Peter Dawson, the Australian basso whose life story was published in HOBBIES from January through June, 1962. I gave another Australian, Billy Williams, second place. But on further study I decided it would be only fair to make them of equal rank.

Of Dawson's right to stand near the head of the list there can be no doubt. I can think of no other singer who had so long a recording career, and remained so consistently popular.

He began recording in 1904 for Edison Bell, and his career did not entirely close until the late 1950s. His discs and cylinders were sold widely not only in Great Britain but throughout the British Empire, and he made thousands of them.

If a month appeared without a Peter Dawson record in the HMV supplement his admirers wondered what had happened to "good old Pete." He had one of the finest voices of his time and his enunciation was almost perfect.

The only criticism I can make of Dawson's singing is that he occasionally sounded too pompous and heavy.

Billy Williams' story was published in May, 1958, but since then I have obtained more information concerning him which may appear later in HOBBIES.

Leaving out of consideration such latter-day phenomena as The Beatles, it can be said truthfully that England never had any other recording artist who so completely dominated the "popular" scene as Williams did from about 1908 until his tragically early death from overwork in the spring of 1915.

To read advertisements in talking machine trade publications of the 1911-13 period is to gain the impression that there was only one recording artist in England and his name was Billy Williams. (Actually, it was William Banks.) Every company of any consequence strove to obtain his recordings



Stanley Kirkby, a native of Lancashire, probably made more records than any other free-lance English artist.

and to issue them faster than its rivals.

Williams was a comedian of great ingenuity, who, as a rule, did not use current popular songs, but relied either on numbers which he had written himself or that had been composed for him. He had one of the most pleasant of voices, without a trace of harshness, allied to an unfailingly genial manner and original style.

The only objectionable feature about his records to me is the tiresome frequency with which he chuckles. But in view of his unparalleled popularity during his seven-year recording period it seems to me Billy Williams deserves to share first place with Dawson.

2. Stanley Kirkby and Harry Lauder. I have reservations on Stanley Kirkby's singing, and though I do like Lauder's vocal style, his kidding isn't interesting to me, so I like his 10-inch Victor records better than his 12-inch as he talks and laughs less. But there is no doubt that these men were among



Billy Williams, the phenomenally popular English comedian, left, with Fred Godfrey who wrote many of the songs Williams recorded.



Quentin Riggs, American State Department employee, wearing a gray velvet coat which Billy Williams wore during his 1911 tour of Australia. While working in Sydney, Australia, Riggs became a friend of Williams' widow, Mrs. Amy Jennings, who gave him the coat.



Harry Lauder standing beside a gramophone in a 1906 advertisement of His Master's Voice Company.

the most popular recorded-music entertainers the British Isles ever produced.

Kirkby was the champion free-lance recorder among English singers and in spite of being a baritone might be called the British Henry Burr. He made thousands of records under his own name, and under many others, such as Charles Holland. During the 1920s he did comedy numbers for the Imperial Company under the disguise of George Berry.

His records were not especially well-known in the States. But when the vogue for "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary" began, Columbia imported his English Columbia version of the song, made two years before, and for a year or more it was the biggest selling record in the American Columbia catalog.

I consider Kirkby's voice and style too heavy for "popular" work. He lacked flexibility, and his comedy efforts were generally not the kind that appealed to Americans.

Of his great popularity, however, beginning in the early 1900s and continuing into the 1930s, there can be no doubt. He was, by the way, a cousin of the famous contralto, Louise Kirkby-Lunn.

As for Harry Lauder, I have had serious reservations as to whether he should be included in this list, as, like John McCormack, his records usually sold at a higher price than those of ordinary "popular" artists. He even attained Red Seal status in this country after Victor abolished its Blue Label.

But his Edison cylinders were listed at popular prices, and I have decided to include him. Lauder had far greater popularity in the United States than Dawson, Williams, or Kirkby — all of whom were known relatively little over here. There were few homes with a Victrola that did not include Lauder's "Roamin' in the Gloamin'," "I Love a Lassie," and half a dozen other manifestations of his Scotch humor.

Perhaps he shouldn't be in this list. But as long as he is, in view of his world-wide popularity, I can't give him a lower spot than a tie for second place.

3. Ernest Pike. "King Edward's Favorite Tenor," as Ernest Pike long was known, certainly deserves to rank high among British popular recording artists. For a time his popularity as a soloist was even greater than that of Peter Dawson, with whom he sang many duets.

The rather serious-minded Pike, whose father had been one of the King's bakers, was frequently a victim of Dawson's irrepressible pranking. Pike's career faded sooner than the Australian's, and he made fewer records, but until the early 1920s his was a magical name in English collecting circles.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

matic soprano at the Metropolitan, recorded extensively for Edison, and much of the material she left on discs is serious and quite outstanding. I, for one, would like to see an LP completely devoted to this fine artist whose biography appeared some years ago in these pages.

Only recently I wrote about the sweet-voiced Ruth Miller Chamlee. On this disc, she, again, is her delightful self in Debussy's "La Chevelure."

Here I take the opportunity to express our most sincere condolences to Mme. Ruth Miller Chamlee on her recent loss of her beloved husband, the famous tenor Mario Chamlee. He passed away on November 13, at his home in Los Angeles, Calif., apparently of a stroke.

Mr. Chamlee was pleased with the article about him and his IRCC LP, which appeared in this department in 1964. He wrote to me then:

"You cannot know how great a gratification it is for me to find an article such as your splendid one in the July HOBBIES.

"Years dim the memory of what I was privileged to have as a singer, and the pleasure you and Mr. Seltman have afforded me in this LP record is indeed a most happy experience. Thank you from my heart."

We are fortunate indeed that we were able to bring the celebrated artist happiness.

Not until I heard Florence Macbeth's recording of "Linda di Chamounix" did I fully realize what an exceptional light soprano she was. Her *O luce di quest'anima* is a model of pure agility and tone, and her whole vocal demeanor is that of a first-class singer.

Macbeth was born in Mankato, Minn., in 1891. She began her career at Darmstadt, Germany, in January 1913, and subsequently sang in Brunswick and Dresden.

A year later, on January 14, 1914, she made her debut with the Chicago Opera as Rosina, and became, for several seasons, one of the Company's

(Continued on page 51)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The English "Supreme Fifteen"

By JIM WALSH

PART II

As I said in the February issue of *HOBBIES*, I decided to undertake trying to determine the 15 "top" artists who recorded in Great Britain in the years before electrical methods of capturing sound were introduced. I covered Peter Dawson and Billy Williams; Stanley Kirkby and Harry Lauder; and Ernest Pike in Part I. Now I will take up Billy Whitlock.

### THE LIST (continued)

#### 4. Billy Whitlock.

There has been no trouble in choosing names up to now, but the job is about to become increasingly difficult. Probably many readers will question the inclusion of Billy Whitlock, whose real name was Frederick Penna. He took the Whitlock stage name from an American minstrel performer who was popular in the 1840s.

In view, however, of Billy Whitlock's versatility and the thousands of records he made, he is entitled to a high place. His recording career began by 1904, or earlier, and it continued into the 1920s.

One of his specialties was laughing songs—at first solos, then duets with Charles Penrose. He also made uncountable bell and xylophone solos, under his own name and assumed ones, which included Dudley Roy and Madame Paula.

For years a majority of the bell and xylophone records issued in England was made by Billy Whitlock, whether or not they bore his name. In his later years he suffered poverty and became a night watchman.

Then a chance discovery of one of his records, "Scotch Hot," by disc jockeys in this country, resulted in his being called on to record the old number under a new name, "Hop Scotch Polka." The renewed prosperity, which his almost forgotten composition brought him, brightened the year or so of life Billy had left. (See *HOBBIES* for February, 1950.)

#### 5. Jack Charman.

Charman was a very young man when he began making records between 55 and 60 years ago, and I believe he is still alive. Quentin Riggs told me a few years back he understood Charman still was living in England and working, I believe he said, as a singing waiter.

His records were extremely popular for a few years before World War I and during the war period. Most were solos, but there were duets with his sister, Betty, and a lady known as Ida Hamilton, who perhaps may have been Betty under a different name.

I don't really enjoy Charman's records as his baritone voice seems too heavy for comedy. His efforts to sing American ragtime were not "in the groove" though Charman was known as "The Versatile Comedian."

#### 6. Florrie Forde.

Here we have another Australian, and the only comedienne to "make" our list.

Florrie Forde was making records as early as 1903, and she soon occupied a standing in England corresponding to that of Ada Jones in America.

Her hundreds of discs and cylinders included such hits as the British version of "Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?" "Antonio," "Anona," "Hold Your Hand Out, Naughty Boy," "Down at the Old Bull and Bush" (an English variant of Harry Von Tilzer's "Under the Anheuser Bush"), and "I've Got Rings On My Fingers."

She had a clear, strong voice, which she retained to the end of her career. After electric recording took over she was called on to remake many of her old favorites.



The late Billy Whitlock as he looked at the age of 75 after his record of "Hop-scotch Polka" had become a best seller.

Florrie Forde had one of the few women's voices that recorded well enough in the early days of recording to entitle her to consideration in this survey.

#### 7. Sergeant Charles Leggett, 8. Olly Oakley, and 9. Alexander Prince.

Now we have a real three-way tie-up. Billy Whitlock, the only recorder of instrumental music so far admitted to this select company, alternated at making laughing songs and descriptive sketches.

Now we have three skilled virtuosos whose popularity was so great, and who made so many records, it seems to me they should obtain entrance into this British Valhalla. They are Sergeant Charles Leggett, the "cornet king"; Olly Oakley, banjoist; and Alexander Prince, concertina wizard.

In England, where his records were issued regularly for many years, Charles Leggett generally was termed "the world's greatest cornet player"—a title this country preferred to bestow, usually, on Herbert L. Clarke, but with some adherents of Bohumir Kryl.

Leggett recorded voluminously for most of the English companies, usually as a soloist, although for a time he had a trio whose other members were his son and daughter.

I believe the son played a 'cello and the daughter the piano. Being without

reference materials I hesitate to rely on my memory.

Leggett usually chose a somewhat higher type of music than the average popular artist sang. His place, however, as a highly esteemed recording artist of the pre-electric period, was an important one.

(8). Olly Oakley was considered the English equivalent of Vess L. Ossman or Fred Van Eps. There seemed little or no doubt he was the greatest banjoist in England, and his many records for a wide variety of companies were as popular in "Rule, Britannia" circles as those of his counterparts over here.

(9). The popularity of Alexander Prince might be compared to the successes won by the piano-accordion specialists, Guido and Pietro Deiro, in the States. Prince had a long recording career, interrupted by his death at an early age. His records always were sure of a large sale.

#### 10. Harry Bluff.

Back to the comedians. Harry Bluff was a man of almost unbounded versatility. He seems to have served at times as Edison Bell announcer, recording di-

rector, and as a commercial traveler for the firm. In addition he made almost uncountable records under his own name, and an assortment of others.

He recorded Edison Blue Amberol cylinders under the assumed name of Bobby Naish. Bluff was active a long time and still is remembered affectionately by veteran record buyers.

#### 11. Burt Shepard.

This pioneer comedian reminds me in many ways of Harry Bluff. I recently was surprised to learn he was of American birth and had traveled widely with minstrel shows in this country before going to England for a long career.

Shepard became one of the first HMV artists, and his record of George W. Johnson's "Laughing Song" was one of that company's biggest sellers for many years. It was exported to all parts of the world, and travelers reported seeing natives doubled up with mirth in Oriental bazaars and African villages at the sound of it.

The comedian also was popular in the States and for several years he made an annual trip across the Atlantic to record new numbers for Victor. His "Boy and the Cheese," which stayed in the catalog for years, was Victor record number 7.

One of the cherished oddities of my collection is a 10-inch single-faced Canadian Berliner record of "In the Good



Sgt. Charles Leggett was, for many years, England's most popular cornet soloist.



George Baker, veteran English baritone, has had a recording career extending more than 50 years and virtually to the present day.

Old Summer Time." Its label says it is by Burt Shepard, but its sound tells me it was sung by Harry Macdonough.

#### 12. Alan Turner.

If artistic merit were the only criterion, this distinguished baritone would rank far higher. Alan Turner began making records as early as 1906.

In this year he sang an HMV disc in English of the Prolog from "Pagliacci," which old-timers still talk about as something remarkable. I'm sorry to say I never have heard it.

He was a member of the Carl Rosa Opera Company and during the 1920s was manager of the Alan Turner Opera Company of London, which gave operatic performances in English. (I assume that he was the manager of this company and that there were not two Alan Turners engaged separately in operatic activities.)

Some years ago Quentin Riggs wrote to an Alan Turner, who frequently contributed letters to "The Gramophone" magazine, but learned the contributor was not the singer.

Alan Turner was a frequent visitor to America. He made records for most of the American companies while he was a member of the Chicago-Philadelphia Opera Company. I have sought vainly to learn whether he is still alive.

#### 13. George Baker.

A baritone, still living, at this writing, whose recording career has lasted far longer than most, is the veteran George Baker.

Baker once wrote in "The Gramophone" that his recording career began when he went with Haydn Draper, a famous clarinet player, to the Pathe studios in London. While Draper was playing, somebody—probably Russell Hunting—suggested that Baker have a try at recording.

He sang "Tommy Lad" and did so well that Pathe was soon using him regularly, both under his own name and the assumed one of Arthur George. That was about 1910.

In the more than half a century since, Baker has sung for many other companies and taken a notable part in HMV's recordings of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. At one time Baker was married to Lillian Bryant, a pianist who also conducted the Pathe house orchestra.

#### 14. Charles Penrose.

And now we are at the last man on the list, an entry I suspect will cause a bit of controversy. I am choosing Charles Penrose, the laughing comedian because, like Billy Whitlock, made so many comic records for so many years under so many names and they were so widely popular.

Perhaps other claimants whom I consider even more worthy of the honor will occur to me—after this article sees print!

#### 15. Lillian Bryant.

Well, that actually puts us over our suggested English "Supreme Fifteen." However, because I was so dubious about including Harry Lauder, thinking he really belonged in a "higher bracket," I shall take the liberty of adding the name of Lillian Bryant.

True, the lady had no widespread popularity and was largely unknown to the general public, but she did so much important work in a quietly effective way behind the scenes for so many companies that I wish to pay her the compliment of including her in the list. I believe, but don't know definitely, that she has been dead for years.

As a devout Dickensian, I wanted to include among the "Supreme Fifteen" the late Bransby Williams, who made so many recordings from Dickens' works, but couldn't argue myself into it.

Having stuck my neck out with this highly speculative list, I shall now prepare to dodge epistolary brickbats from indignant readers. They will want to know why I omitted Harry Dearth, the great basso; Robert Howe, a versatile baritone under his own name, and several others; Harry Fay, the popular comedian; Tom Kinniburgh, another fine basso; and any number of other perhaps better qualified performers than some of those I chose.

To which I reply that in preparing

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my list of 15 you have to put only a few persons in and leave a lot of others off. I shall be interested to observe the reaction, especially overseas, to this far-from-expert appraisal.

(The End)

#### POSTSCRIPT

Several weeks after the foregoing article was submitted, I was chagrined to realize I had completely overlooked any mention of Albert Whelan, "The Australian Entertainer."

Whelan was one of the cleverest and most popular of British recording comedians from shortly after 1900 until well into the electric era. I should like to add him to my list.

—Jim Walsh

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## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

A BOXWOOD CLARINET in (C), made in London, Eng., by H. Oppenheim, circa 1800. It breaks down into 6 joint pcs. The joints have genuine ivory rings on the end. The clarinet has 6 squared brass keys. This instrument is in perfect playing condition. Appraised at \$1500. Will negotiate. — Bruce T. Scott, 433 Main St., Ripley, Ohio 45167. my3449

VIOLIN FRAME ONLY — "Francesco Ruggeri dett il per in Cremona l'anno 1616" will be sold to highest bidder. — Moore's Antiques, 619 Comal Ave., New Braunfels, Texas 78130. mh1861

## PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

PHONOGRAPH items galore in our spanking new catalog No. 6. Parts, repairs, needle-heads; you name it. Get your copy today, 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 340 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. ap3464

OUTSIDE HORN phonograph, all types. Coin phonographs. Send 25c for list. Records, parts, repairs. Old penny arcade machines, 25c for list. Early battery radios. — Wayne Warren, 24361 Eden Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94543. my3694

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The "24 Best (Columbia) Records"

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

#### I. Unique Scrapbooks

Ten years or more ago it occurred to me that by removing the phonograph and record advertising from all the old magazines I could find, beginning with those issued around 1890 and continuing to 1925 or a little later, and binding them into book form I could produce volumes of unique historical value.

I use that much abused word, "unique", because, as far as I knew or know, nobody else had or has undertaken books of the same sort.

After I had two fat volumes on hand, I was visited by an elderly record collector, now dead, who was captivated by the almost inexhaustible amount of rare information presented in those bulging tomes. He liked them so much he wanted to buy them.

"Tell you what I'll do," my visitor said. "I'll give you \$10 apiece for them there books — cash on the barrel-head. O' course," he added thoughtfully, "I don't reckon they're really worth that much, but I figger you ought to have a little somethin' for your time an' trouble."

I told the gentleman it had cost me considerably more than \$10 each to have the volumes handsomely bound and that the magazine from which the advertising was taken probably had cost me somewhere between \$500 and \$1,000. Under the circumstances, I couldn't accept his offer.

He pondered a moment. "Well, in that case," he said, "I'll raise my offer to \$15 each. I think that's fair because you'll still have the books (magazines) you bought with nothin' missin' but the graphophone advertisin'. You better sell while I'm in the mind to buy."

I again refused with hardly heart-felt thanks. As he left me he said: "Any time you want to take my offer of \$15 apiece just write an' let me know and I'll send the money. "Of course," he added cautiously, "I'd expect you to pay the postage because I'd be payin' you more than they was really worth!"

It so happened that I never did get into the mood to sell the "books." They are still in my possession, but destined to find an eventual resting place in the Library of Congress. And I'm now starting work on a third big volume, although it becomes harder as time goes on to find phonograph and record advertising that I don't already have.

However, one delightful "blurb" has just come my way and furnished the inspiration for this article. Recently I obtained a bound volume

of the Saturday Evening Post for April through June, 1912, and on pages 48 and 49 of the April 6 issue the old Columbia Phonograph Company really spread itself. The advertisement gives a list of the 24 "best records" — all Columbias, of course, and the text is enlightening.

#### II. Columbia's "Best" Records

I'm sure I can't find any better way of doing justice to this 53-year-old specimen of masterful paid publicity than by quoting most of page 48. Under a heading of "An Offer of 'the 24 Best Records,'" the advertisement says: — — — — —

"Every few days we discover that we have again produced 'absolutely the one best record ever made.'"

"First we hear from Mr. Henry Russell, director of the Boston Opera and our Consulting Director of Opera, whose opinion is authoritative; then we open a letter from a Columbia dealer, who judges every record issued—everybody's records—by the sales standard."

"Then the boy brings in a telegram from one of our wholesale branch managers, who is fairly sure to know what he likes, and why. Then we receive an enthusiastic message from our own laboratory superintendent, whose enthusiasm is not at all easily aroused. Then come congratulations from our cold-blooded musical critic, whose business is to find faults. And so on."

"Now: We have been quietly filing these testimonials for some time, and we have listed below 24 records that constitute a musical series entirely unique in the opinion of its several sponsors."

"Every record buyer is entitled to his own opinion—and we have noticed that the average buyer would say so, if we didn't. But a series of records with such endorsements to recommend them must have extraordinary interest for you—and we are paying \$4,000 for this half of this \$8,000 announcement to suggest that you make it a point to have your dealer play them for you, or send them all—or any one of them—to your home on approval, if he operates that way, as many Columbia dealers do."

Notice that this list of Columbia records, like my scrapbooks, is "unique!" The introduction I have quoted is followed by a statement that Columbia Double-Disc Records range in price from 65 cents up to \$7.50, and are intended for "Columbia Grafonolas and Graphophones; and for all other disc talking machines."

Columbia emphasized that Columbia records could be played on Victor machines.

Victor refrained from statements that its "platters" could be played on any instruments other than Victors or "the genuine Victor-Victrola." The word "Columbia" never got mentioned in Victor advertising!

Earlier, Columbia had emphasized that its cylinders could be played on Edison machines.

Then followed the text of the once-familiar Columbia "guarantee:"

"We guarantee to every purchaser of Columbia Double-Disc Records that the material used in their composition is of better quality, finer surface and more durable texture than that entering into the manufacture of disc records of any other make, regardless of their cost. We further guarantee that their reproducing qualities are superior to those of any other disc records on the market and that their life is longer than that of any other disc record, under any name, or any price."

Perhaps by coincidence, this guarantee was dropped after Pathe began marketing in this country a hill-and-dale record guaranteed to play 1,000 times without damage, and after Edison produced the Diamond Disc, which was played 6,000 times in laboratory tests with no signs of wear.

Following the "guarantee" came "the list of 12 Ten-Inch Records" (24 Selections) with the statement that "any one of these Records (will be) delivered by your dealer at the price named—or the complete series for \$8.65."

First was a 65-cent, double-faced record, 587, "The Herd Girl's Dream," which received an impressive "plug." "This selection has already had the largest sale of any record in the world." It was a violin, flute, and harp trio by George Stehl, Marshall P. Lufsky, and Paul Surth; coupled with "Invincible Eagle March," a banjo solo by Vess L. Ossman.

I wonder about the statement that this had been the world's biggest selling record. Columbia, for one thing, couldn't possibly have had the sales figures of all its competitors at home and abroad.

For another, I don't believe any disc record, which had been on sale only from 1909 to early in 1912, could have equalled the totals of some Edison two-minute cylinders during the cylinders' great days.

I also believe the Columbia catalog contained many other titles, such as "The Preacher and the Bear," "Turkey in the Straw," some of the Uncle Josh sketches, and the Collins and Harlan comic duets, that would have appealed to a much larger proportion of the record buyers of that day than "The Herd Girl's Dream."

Columbia, however, advertised it as the Company's biggest seller and, after all, the maker should know. But huge success or not, it seldom turns up nowadays in second-hand stores.

And it's amusing to notice how good old "Plunks" Ossman managed to latch on to outstanding records. It was his 1902 version of "Tell Me Pretty Maiden" that was pressed (by mistake) on the one billionth Victor record. And here he was, holding down one side of "the biggest selling record in the world."

In second place came another 65-cent record, A835, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," and "Nelly Was a Lady," sung by that fine counter-tenor, Frank M. Coombs. On this page 48 were copies of the label of both sides of the Coombs record.

The 10 remaining 10-inch records

were listed in the following order: "Juanita" (A903, 75 cents), sung by Archibald Brothers Quartet, and "The Two Roses," also by the Archibalds.

"Hungarian Dance No. 5 (A1095, 65 cent), and "Hungarian Dance No. 6," both by Charles A. Prince's Orchestra.

"Constantly" (A915, 75 cents), and "I'll Lend You Anything I've Got Except My Wife," comic songs by Bert Williams.

"Cooper's Song" from "Boccacio" (A1070, \$1), and "Vaquero's Song" from "Natoma," both sung by Cecil Fanning, baritone. I never have found a copy of this record, but I hasten to add that it is not an invaluable rarity!

"The Rosary" (A227, 65 cents), violoncello solo by Victor Solrin; and "Motor March," Vess Ossman again. (These were old recordings which had been in the Columbia catalog for years, so their eminence must have been due to something other than perfect sound production.)

"On the Bank of Allan Water" (A1103, 75 cents), soprano solo by Grace Kerns; and "Irish Lullaby," soprano solo by Beulah Gaylord Young, who, today, is Mrs. Charles Harrison.

"Love's Old Sweet Song" (A968, 75 cents), violin, 'cello, and harp trio by Stehl, Richard and Schuetze; with "Song Without Words," harp solo by Charles Schuetze. (Why did this trio cost 75 cents when "the biggest selling record in the world" by a similar group was only 65 cents?)

"Holy City" (A242, 65 cents), tenor solo by Henry Burr; and "Take the Name of Jesus With You," baritone and tenor duet by James F. Harrison and Harry Anthony. This entry gave me pause and caused me to do some investigating.

I knew that "The Holy City" was one of the first records Burr made for Columbia, and when I looked it up I found it was originally single-faced disc 60, among the earliest issued by Columbia when it began making the flat records in 1902.

By the time this ad appeared, however, Burr had remade the record with master number 19355. Even so, the duet side remained unchanged, as it originally had been made in 1906.

"Beauty's Eyes" (A941, 75 cents), and "Forgotten," tenor solos by Reed Miller.

"Liberty Bell March" (A118, 65 cents), and "Manisot March," played by Columbia Band. These also were among the very earliest Columbia discs, but most of the early band records had been remade by 1912, and I imagine that was true here.

(To be continued in May issue)

— o —

#### Plum Joined Up

"Perfect Personality." — Many HOBBIES readers say they enjoy Jim Walsh's incidental references to



"Precious Plum"

his family of cats as much as they do his articles about Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists.

For their benefit we are printing a likeness of "Plum," the latest addition to Jim's family, who is called "The Perfect Personality" because, Jim says, he has been unable to detect any flaw in him.

Plum "joined up" last October 27 and was named for Jim's friend, P. G. Wodehouse, the famous humorist, who is known to his friends as "Plum."

This picture was taken from an oil painting which Ross (Pat) Fortner, a clever young artist of Jonesville, Va., who is studying with the Famous Artists' School, made from a snapshot Walsh had sent to a HOBBIES enthusiast, Mrs. Lucie Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va.

Mrs. Jenkins liked Plum's looks so much she had the painting made as a surprise gift to Jim — "the most appreciated present," he says, "that I received."

## CHICAGO ANTIQUES EXPOSITION & COLLECTORS' FAIR

May 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

at the

Conrad Hilton

Sponsored by HOBBIES

Charles Marston, Show Mgr.

### MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954. ap126121

PLAYER PIANO BOOKS Rebuilding the Player Piano \$6.95. Player Piano Treasury \$10. Put Another Nickel In \$15. (See review of this, p. 110, Sept. 1966 HOBBIES.) Satisfaction guaranteed. Ask for catalog of other books. Prices postpaid. — Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N.Y. 13850. o120652

RARE PIANOLA for sale, good condition, best offer. — Louis Kennedy, 70 Cunningham Drive, New Smyrna Beach, Fla. je3882

### SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 20c. — Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado. 80205. s12238

SHEET MUSIC, several thousand old popular songs very low priced, any size order, private party. — McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. my3253

SHEET MUSIC: 200,000 original copy old popular songs collection A-Z order but no list. Write R. Greenlau, 307 No. Rampart Blvd., Los Angeles 28, Calif. Room 412. je6046

### MUSIC REPAIRS

NEW PEP for your reed organ or melodeon. Reeds cleaned, revoiced and tuned. Replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. ap6276

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

A BOXWOOD CLARINET in (C), made in London, Eng., by H. Oppenheim, circa 1800. It breaks down into 6 joint pcs. The joints have genuine ivory rings on the end. The clarinet has 6 squared brass keys. This instrument is in perfect playing condition. Appraised at \$1500. Will negotiate. — Bruce T. Scott, 433 Main St., Ripley, Ohio 45167. my3449

### PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Wanted: Antique Edison cylinder phonographs any model, complete or incomplete. Also parts, catalogs. State fully what you have and your prices. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. 23231. ap1232

### PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

PHONOGRAPH items galore in our spanking new catalog No. 6. Parts, repairs, needle-heads; you name it. Get your copy today, 25c. — Frick Phonographs, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. ap3464

OUTSIDE HORN phonograph, all types. Coin phonographs. Send 25c for list. Records, parts, repairs. Old penny arcade machines, 25c for list. Early battery radios. — Wayne Warren, 24361 Eden Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94543. my3694

### CLASSIFIED AD RATES

8c per word; three months for the price of 2; twelve months for the price of 8. (Except for change in address, no changes permitted on the low three and twelve months rate.)

All advertisers who submit copy for the first time are definitely requested to furnish therewith banking or other satisfactory references.



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The "24 Best (Columbia) Records"

By JIM WALSH

### PART II

As I reported in the April issue of HOBBIES, 10 or more years ago I collected phonograph and record advertising from all available old magazines dating from around 1890 to 1925, or later, and had these advertisements bound into two fat volumes of unique historical value.

Now I am starting work on a third volume.

It is harder to find phonograph and record advertising as time goes on. But in a recently found bound volume April through June of the Saturday Evening Post, 1912, the April 6th issue, pages 48 and 49, had an old Columbia Phonograph Company advertisement which inspired this article.

Here we come to a list of the 12 best 12-inch records, and it contains considerable material that will interest enthusiasts for the admirable department conducted by my co-laborer, Aida Favia Artsay.

It just happens that some years ago I obtained several large posters of Columbia operatic artists, and can use reprints of some of them to illustrate this article. I'm not supposed to trench on opera, but I'm sure that in this instance Aida won't mind!

Here goes.

"Isolde's Liebestod," from "Tristan and Isolde," (Single-Disc 30652, \$3), sung by Lillian Nordica in German.

"Liberte!" from "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame," and "Il Est Doux, Il Est Bon," from "Herodiade," (Double-Disc A5289, \$3), both sung in French by Mary Garden, soprano.

"Dich Theure Halle," from "Tannhauser," and "Elsa's Traum," from "Lohengrin," (A5281, \$3), both sung in German by Olive Fremstad, soprano.

"The Last Rose of Summer," and "Home, Sweet Home," (A5283, \$3), both sung by Alice Neilsen, soprano.

Alice Neilsen, a native of Nashville, Tenn., was one of the very early recording artists. With her Alice Neilsen Quartet she made Berliner discs in the 1890's.

"Home to Our Mountains," from "Il Trovatore," and "While Yet in Languishment," (what a title!) from "Trovatore," (A5370, \$4), duets in Italian by Giovanni Zenatello and his wife, Maria Gay.

"Mary of Argyle," and "Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes," (A5132, \$1.50), baritone solos by David Bispham.

"Thou Brilliant Bird," from "Pearl of Brazil," and "O Luce di quest' Anima," from "Linda Di Chamounix," sung in Italian by Bernice de Pasquali, soprano.

"Ever Of Thee," and "Angel's Ser-

enade," (A5244, \$1.25), contralto solos by Margaret Keyes.

"Scenes That Are Brightest," (A5159, \$1), trio by Stehl, Lufsky, and Scheutze (those boys really made the list!), with the "Intermezzo," from "Cavalleria Rusticana," by Prince's Orchestra.

"O Terra Addio," from "Aida," (A5331, \$1.25), by the Columbia Italian Opera Company, with "Selections from 'Aida,' by Prince's Orchestra.

"The Last Hope," and "Gloria from Mozart's Twelfth Mass," (A5355, \$1), played by Prince's Band.

"Barcarolle," from "Tales of Hoffman," (A5274, \$1.25), duet by Idelle Patterson, soprano, and Margaret Keyes, contralto; and "Schubert's

Serenade," duet by Miss Patterson, soprano, and George Clarence Jell, bass-baritone.

(Incidentally, my old friend, Mr. Jell, who was living in Memphis, Tenn., the last time I heard from him a good many years ago, was manager of the Columbia artist and repertoire department.)

People who really wanted to spend money on records were informed they could obtain the complete 12-inch set for \$26.25.

And now we have a charming paragraph at the bottom of the page, which I feel it my bounden duty to quote:

"Whether or not there can be such a thing as an authoritative choice of records, certainly no list of similar endorsement has ever been scheduled before. But you will be interested to know that well-informed musical enthusiasts have time and again named to us their one preference among all the records ever made anywhere as the 'Mad Scene,' from 'Lucia Di Lammermoor,' sung by Lydia Lipkowska; the 'Shepherd's Song,' from 'Tannhauser,' sung by Roza Olitzka; 'One Fine Day,' from 'Madame Butterfly,' sung by Carolina White; 'Ave Signor,' from 'Mefistofele,' sung by Jose Mardones; 'Die Beiden Grenadiere,' sung by Alexander Heinemann; 'Prelude in C Sharp Minor,' piano solo by Josef Hoffmann; 'Polish Dance,' piano solo by Xaver Scharwenka; 'Ernani, Fly With Me,'



From left to right, top to bottom:

Alice Neilsen, early recording artist from Nashville, Tenn.

David Bispham, distinguished American baritone, had two renditions of old songs in Columbia's 1912 list of "best recordings."

Florence Constantino's Columbia record of "La Paloma" was highly praised.

Lina Cavalieri, "the most beautiful woman on the operatic stage," was a popular Columbia artist more than 50 years ago.

from 'Ernani,' sung by Celestina Boninsegna; 'Caro Nome,' from 'Rigoletto,' sung by Eugenie Bronskaja; 'Nearer, My God, to Thee,' played by Creator's Band; 'Festival Overture,' played by Russian Symphony Orchestra; Vocal Gems from 'The Mikado,' sung by the Columbia Light Opera Company; 'Saved By Grace,' sung by Gipsy Smith; Liszt's 'Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2,' played by Prince's Band; 'La Paloma,' sung by Florencio Constantino; and 'Maria-Maria,' sung by Lina Cavalieri.

"All these records are listed in the new 200-page book of Columbia Double-Record Records which we will send you free. Write for our 'recommended' list of best records of sacred music, best records of music for the dance, best records of standard ballads, best records of instrumental solos, best comic records and best record novelties."

The page closes with the thrice-familiar assertion that the Columbia Company were "creators of the talking machine industry, pioneers and leaders of the talking machine art, owners of the fundamental patents, and largest manufacturers of talking machines in the world."

Space limitations prevent going into detail about the contents of page 49, which was devoted to an offer to sell the table model Columbia "Favorite" Grafonola and 12 double-disc records for \$59 cash or \$7 down and \$5 a month — "no interest; no extras."

The following appeared in conspicuous type:

"The 24 selections on the 12 double-disc records include the famous 'Rigoletto' Quartet and also the splendid 'Lucia' Sextet, for which two selections alone, many talking machine owners have had to pay \$13. Or your own selection of records to the same value will be supplied. (Record album extra, 10-inch, \$1.50; 12-inch, \$1.75.)"

The reference to the Rigoletto Quartet and the Lucia Sextet of course was a reminder that Victor's price was \$6 for the first, and \$7 for the second, as sung by Caruso and other notable artists.

The Columbia offerings either were sung in English by regular Columbia staff members or in Italian by performers who did not equal in fame, the Victor delegation!

The End

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

We have located a payment notation for Mrs. Rappold's Orchestra on March 15, 1906. This is the only such notation in a span of time from early 1906 through early 1907.

I believe that all titles were made at the same time and held in order to be released as portions of numerical blocks of 10.

New York. Probably recorded on March 15, 1906:

B 21 Ave Maria (Gounod). Released 8/06.

B 33 Lohengrin: Euch luffen, die mein Klagen. Rel.

11/08.

B 43 Tannhauser: Allmacht'ge Jungfrau. Rel. 2/07.

Four-Minute:

Here, again, we have problems. The contract

summarizes that Mr. Hayes kept, state: "Made 8

cylinders in Berlin."

Since Rappold's contract began on April 1, 1910,

it is probable that the following are the recordings.

But we only have listings for 5.

We do not, at present, know what the other titles

were, nor do we know if cylinder masters still exist

for them.

Berlin (?) Probably recorded in 1910 and released

later:

30033 II Trovatore: D'amor sull'ali rosee. Rel. 1/11.

30038 Lohengrin: Elsas Traum. Rel. 2/11.

30039 Aida: O ciel azzurri. Rel. 3/11.

30044 Chanson Provencale (dell'Acqua). Rel. 4/11.

30047 Freischütz: Wie nahe mir der Schlummer.

Rel. 5/11.

New York. Date assignments are tentative as for

title. It is also possible that some of these may be

the missing 3 Berlin titles:

10-19-11 28005 Ave Maria (w. Spalding). Paid \$150

for this and a disc? Rel. 2/12.  
11-28-11 28006 Last Rose of Summer. Paid \$200 for  
this and a disc? Rel. 2/12.  
1-3-12 28008 Agnus Dei. Paid \$200 (probably also  
for a disc or another cylinder) Rel. 3/12.  
1-26-12 28013 Sing, Smile, Slumber. Paid \$200 for  
2 cylinders. Possibly the other was either 28029  
or 28210.  
4-6-12 28024 Tales of Hoffman: Barcarole (w.  
Thomas Chalmers) Paid \$100. Rel. 8/12.  
8/12.  
28029 Robin Hood: Oh, Promise Me. Rel.

With the coming of the Blue Amberol and Royal  
Purple Amberol celluloid cylinders, many of the  
above were renumbered if they were retained. The  
renumberings are as follows:

28024 became 28101  
28005 became 28106  
30047 became 28117  
28029 became 28165  
28008 became 28171  
28013 became 28175  
30038 became 28187  
28006 became 28193

The 23210 O Lord, Be Merciful is obviously not a  
disc dubbing and there is no earlier cylinder listing  
of this title. It probably is either from the 1/13/12  
or the 1/26/12 session.

The remaining cylinder numbers are dubbings  
from discs although some were not published in  
disc form.

## DISC RECORDINGS

Note that the early discs were called Specials to  
segregate them from cylinders.

Mr. Hayes' contract summaries provide some prob-  
lems. Numbers 186 through 274 total 10 recordings  
but seem to fall in 2 to 3 groups. Possibly London  
and Paris.

But Mr. Hayes' summary states [Made] "10  
Specials in Paris."

Paris, 1910. (Contract commenced 4/1/10):

186 Faust: Air des Bijoux. 12". Takes S1 & S2.

188 Tosca: Vissi d'arte. 12". Takes S1 & S2. The

mold exists of S2. There is a test on ED12-59.

189 Tannhauser: Dich, theure Halle. 12". Takes S1,

S2 and S3. The mold exists of S1 & S3.

171 Carmen: Air de Micaela. 12". Takes S1 & S2.

The mold still exists of S2. There is a test on

ED12-62.

Paris or London, 1910. (Surrounding numbers seem

to be of London origin. See above):

195 Lohengrin: Elsas Traum. 12". Takes S1 & S2.

The waxes never were processed and still exist

at the Edison National Historic Site.

198 Aida: O Patria Mia.

204 Tannhauser: Elisabeths Gebet. 12". Takes S1 &

S2. The wax still exists. There is a mold of S2.

205 Aida: Ritorna vincitor. 12". Takes S1 & S2. The

wax still exists of S1.

Recorded in (?) 1910:

232 Ave Maria (Gounod) (w. Spalding). 12".

Paris, 1910:

274 Trovatore: D'amor sull'ali rosee.

New York:

598 Otello: Gia nella notte densa-Pt. 2 (w.

Leo Slezak). 10". Takes S1, S2 & S3. Rel. by

Edison. 6/23/14.

4/ 7/11 607 Otello: Gia nella notte densa-Pt.1 (w.

Leo Slezak). 12". Takes S1, S2 & S3. Master

waxes still exist of S1 & S2; a mold exists of

S3. Mrs. Rappold was paid \$200. Probably for this

and 596 since there is no payment recorded for

596

10/19/11 or

10/30/11 837 Last Rose of Summer. 10". Takes S1

& S2. Mold changed to Rel. by Edison. I cannot

be certain since Mrs. Rappold was paid \$150 for

a cylinder and a disc on 10/19/11 and paid \$200

for discs on 10/30/11.

10/30/11 840 Calm As the Night. Takes S1 & S2.

Rel. by Edison in 1914.

11/ 6/11 845 Otello: Ave Maria. Takes S1 & S2.

1/ 3/12 851 Agnus Dei. Probably made this at the

same time as the cylinder.

Where I have noted that the original mold exists

the molds are currently not usable.

In the mid-1920's it was discovered that many of

the molds were suffering damage in handling and

so it became the Company's policy to plate them

and strip them when needed. Such stripping would

be needed today in order to utilize any of the molds.

(To be continued)

## MUSIC BOXES FOR SALE

SWISS MUSIC BOX. 6" cylinder. Plays  
6 tunes. Walnut inlaid case with hand  
painted flowers in center. 8x16". Fine  
condition. \$116.—Edna Shapiro Antiques,  
37-27 76th St., Jackson Hts., N.Y. 11372  
TW 9-3027. my1652

## MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 1 1/2" \$3;  
1 5/8" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus post-  
age.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way,  
Berkeley, Calif. s6468

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc  
phonographs, parts, reproducers, records,  
bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser,  
203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954. ap12087

PLAYER PIANO BOOKS. Rebuilding  
the Player Piano \$6.95. Player Piano  
Treasury \$10. Put Another Nickel In \$15.  
(See review of this, p. 110, Sept. 1966  
HOBBIES.) Satisfaction guaranteed. Ask  
for catalog of other books. Prices post-  
paid.—Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N.Y. 13850.  
o120652

RARE PIANOLA for sale, good condi-  
tion, best offer. — Louis Kennedy, 70  
Cunningham Drive, New Smyrna Beach,  
Fla. j83882

## SHEET MUSIC FOR SALE

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850.  
Catalog 20c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver,  
Colorado. 80205. s12238

USED sheet music, late 1800's to date;  
choose from thousands, any size order,  
reasonable. — McNeill, 1117 S. Taylor  
Ave., Oak Park, Ill. my3253

SHEET MUSIC: 200,000 original copy  
old popular songs collection A-Z order  
but no list. Write R. Greenlaw, 307 No.  
Rampart Blvd., Los Angeles 26, Calif.  
Room 412. j66046

OLD SHEET MUSIC. 4 for \$1 pp. Com-  
plete, good condition, early 1900's, bal-  
lads, military, stage music. — Merritt's  
Museum of Early Americana, R. D. 2,  
Douglassville, Pa. 19518. jly3614

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE

A BOXWOOD CLARINET in (C),  
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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## "Re-Coupled Victor Records"

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

Nearly 59 years ago on October 20, 1908, the Victor Talking Machine Company issued its first list of double-faced Black Label records — 100 10-inch and 25 12-inch.

Victor had a strong objection to changing from the prevailing custom of making disc records that played on only one side. However, the company felt obliged to enter the double-faced field in order to meet the competition of Columbia, which had revised its entire catalog to double-faced status shortly before.

But with the double-faced list went an irascible form letter, telling Victor dealers the new style of record was being issued only to reduce Columbia's sales volume and urging the dealers not to sell double-faced discs except when they couldn't avoid it.

Three years later the double-faced record obviously was sweeping the field and was well on its way to making the single-faced Black Label type obsolete, although some remained in the Victor catalog in gradually diminishing quantities, until 1920. Double-faced Red Seal records were not announced until September, 1923.

By October, 1911, more than 900 10-inch and over 200 12-inch double-faced records were listed in the Victor catalog. But approximately 140 of the 10-inch were in foreign languages and had virtually no interest for the average buyer.

A hurried count indicates that 48 of the off-beat records were Bohemian; 26, Italian; 17, Hebrew; 11, German; 10, Hungarian; 10, Neapolitan; nine, Finnish; two, French, and one, Swedish.

Up to this time Victor apparently did not have a separate numbering system for double-faced "foreign" records. Now one was adopted, and it became rare for records in languages other than English to appear among the regular Black Label issues.

About this time, too, the Company took stock of its double-faced catalog and decided that many of the records had been carelessly or inappropriately coupled and that the popularity of some which should be big sellers was being handicapped by poor matings.

It was decided to do something about this. Consequently, the follow-

ing appeared in the *Voice of The Victor* for October, 1911:

"THE NEW COMBINATIONS OF DOUBLE-FACED POPULAR AND FOREIGN RECORDS. On September 26th you were mailed an announcement of 47 popular combinations of Victor Double-Faced Records, and also 50 Double-Faced Foreign Records in French, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Bohemian, Hungarian, and Italian, all to go on sale October 28th.

"We want to again call your attention to these two splendid lists. The list of double-faced popular records is made up of new combinations of some of the most popular numbers we have ever issued, and this re-combining of double-faced records is done with the idea of improving the sale of very many of these good numbers whose sale has been handicapped by the selection on the reverse side.

"You will find that we have endeavored to combine two records of the same character, believing that in so doing each selection will help the sale of the other.

"The records heretofore listed with any of these selections, whether single-faced or double-faced, will eventually be cut out and therefore will in all probability be returnable to us on some future record exchange.

"The same idea is carried out in combining the list of double-faced foreign records, which is made up from single-faced foreign records heretofore listed in special foreign lists."

I cannot recall that I ever have seen one of the special supplements which listed the re-coupled Black Label records in the 16000 series. But these new combinations obviously constitute a grouping in the May, 1912, numerical Victor list.

When it occurred to me that it would be interesting to publish a list of the original couplings, followed by the altered group, I was puzzled at being able to find only 46 re-coupled records instead of the 47 mentioned in the announcement.

Eventually I discovered that in



Versatile Performer. For about a decade, beginning in 1898, Harry Macdonough was the most popular tenor ballad singer making records. He was the second tenor of the Hayden, Edison, and Orpheus Quartets. After World War I, he was sales manager and then artist and repertoire department director for the Victor Talking Machine Co. From 1926 until his death in 1931 he was a Columbia recording director. Several of his records were in Victor's 1911 list of re-couplings.

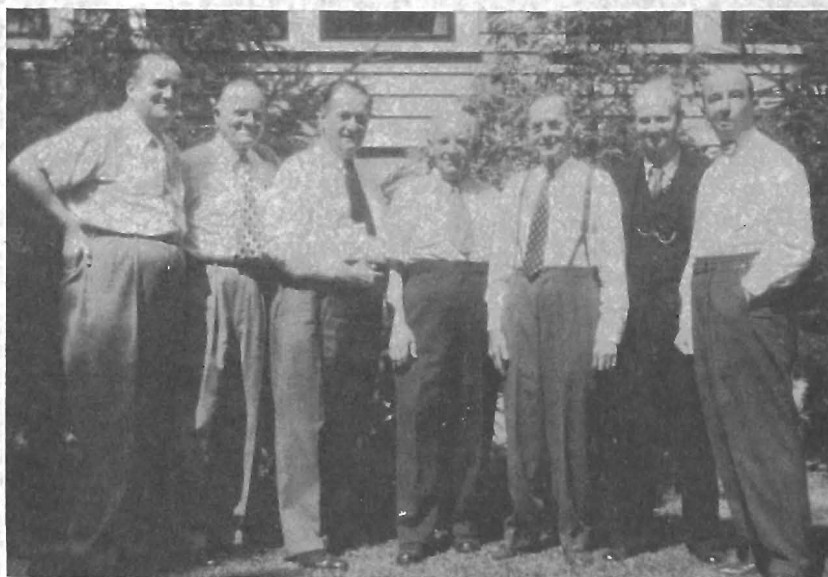
the numerical list, which begins with 16914 and ends with 16960, number 16930 is missing.

That omission presents a puzzle. Presumably 16930 was a part of the special grouping, but it is odd that a record which was popular enough to be given a new coupling was cut out of the catalog a few months later.



Monroe Silver, who recorded hundreds of "Cohen" monologs, is shown here with Frank Banta, pianist, during a tour of the eight famous Victor artists. They are almost dwarfed by the Victor trademark. A record made by Silver in 1911 is in the re-coupled list.





**Talented Group.** This group of six early recording artists and one of their admirers was photographed in September, 1947, at the Hempstead, N.Y., home of the late John Bieling. From left to right: Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scantlan), Billy Murray, Will Oakland, Eugene C. Rose, Mr. Bieling, John L. Norton, Jr., and Irving Kaufman. Only Van Brunt and Kaufman are still living. Records in which Van Brunt, Murray, Oakland, and Bieling took part were included in Victor's October, 1911, re-coupling.

With most of my reference material being rebound at the Library of Congress, I have been unable to find any trace of 16930. Hence, the list which follows is one record short.

A survey of the originally coupled records, when compared to the re-coupled, reveals some interesting things. One is that Arthur Pryor's Band has a dominant place in the re-couplings.

Another point of interest is that, in order to complete the 47 new doubles, more than a dozen previously single-faced records, which had not previously appeared in double-faced form, were used.

One song which apparently had not previously been issued, "They're All Good American Names," and which recited the names of famous baseball players in the chorus, was used as the coupling for a previously issued Eddie Morton record.

I'd like to get a copy of it, number 16938. I believe "I Love It" also had not been previously issued.

Comparatively few of the older titles were dropped. Most merely were given different pairings. Thus, two xylophone solos by William H. Reitz, which had been on the backs of popular medleys played by Pryor's Band, were reissued together.

Incidentally, it seems odd that Pryor's Popular Medleys 2 and 3 were coupled together, instead of Medleys 1 and 2. Number 1 was combined, on 16376, with Will Oakland singing "When the Autumn Moon Is Creeping Thro' the Woodlands" — surely as inappropriate a double as many that were changed. But it remained unaltered.

Similarly, why were minstrel records numbers 14 and 15 combined, instead of 13 and 14? Buyers of double-faced discs must have been puzzled by the order in which the min-

strel series was issued, for 14 came first, followed by 11 and 15. These previously had been single-sided and were picked up rather haphazardly and combined on double-faced.

None of the original Victor couplings reached the incongruousness of many of the early Columbias. As a rule, most, but not quite all, of the new couplings seem more logical than the old.

Especially poor couplings were on 16608, with "That Italian Rag," (Billy Murray), and an old-fashioned sentimental song, "Wait Till the Clouds Roll By," (Will Oakland); 16706, "I Won't Be Back Till August" (Eddie Morton), and "Avenger March" (Pryor's Band); 16768, "It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight" (Murray), and "Christmas Morning at Clancy's" (Steve Porter); 16789, "In the Sunshine Of Your Love" (Harry MacDonough), and "Society Swing" (Pryor's Band); and 16790, "Sweet Italian Love" (Murray), and "Fascinator March" (Pryor's Band).

The two sides of these numbers and several others had no points of resemblance.

It is hard to see why some of the original couplings were dropped. Why should one of Harry Von Tilzer's brightest and catchiest Negro dialect songs, "Oh, Oh, Miss Lucy Ella," sung by Collins and Harlin have hampered the sale of Victor Minstrel 14? And Frank C. Stanley, singing an Ernest Ball ballad, "From Your Dear Heart to Mine," should not have slowed the sale of "Mollie Darling."

Edgar L. Davenport's recitation of "Jim Bludsoe" did not go very well with Bill Hooley's basso profundo "Asleep in the Deep," but it is rather surprising that "Bludsoe," which had

(Continued on page 48)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

been a popular single-faced disc, did not get another mating.

"The Swiss Boy," a cornet duet by such great players as Herbert L. Clarke and Emil Keneke, should have survived after being removed as the partner of a John Kimmel accordion solo.

On the other hand, it is understandable that a poorly recorded saxophone version which I have of "Old Folks at Home" by one of the earliest Victor artists, Jean Moeremans (his instrumental quartet had some records in the February, 1902, Victor catalog) hampered a duet version of "The Larboard Watch."

Probably Murray's "It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight" was discontinued because there was a Clarice Vance record of the same song coupled with her popular "Mariar."

Despite the re-couplings, some of the original combinations remained in the catalog for years afterward. There was enough demand for "Steamboat Bill" to cause both the old number, 16867, and the new one, 16937, to sell steadily.

The same thing was true of 16870, which coupled "The Mississippi Dippy Dip" and "Clancy's Wooden Wedding;" and 16936, that combined the "Wooden Wedding" and "Christmas Morning at Clancy's."

One or two other examples might be cited. But next month we will consider the lists.

(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## "Re-Coupled Victor Records"

By JIM WALSH

### PART II — THE LIST

In the June issue of HOBBIES Magazine we discussed "Re-Coupled" Victor Records. We promised in this issue (July) to consider the lists.

First we have the original single-faced records that were selected as pairings for the revised double-faced list. After them came the original double-faced pairings. Finally we have the revised, double-faced couplings.

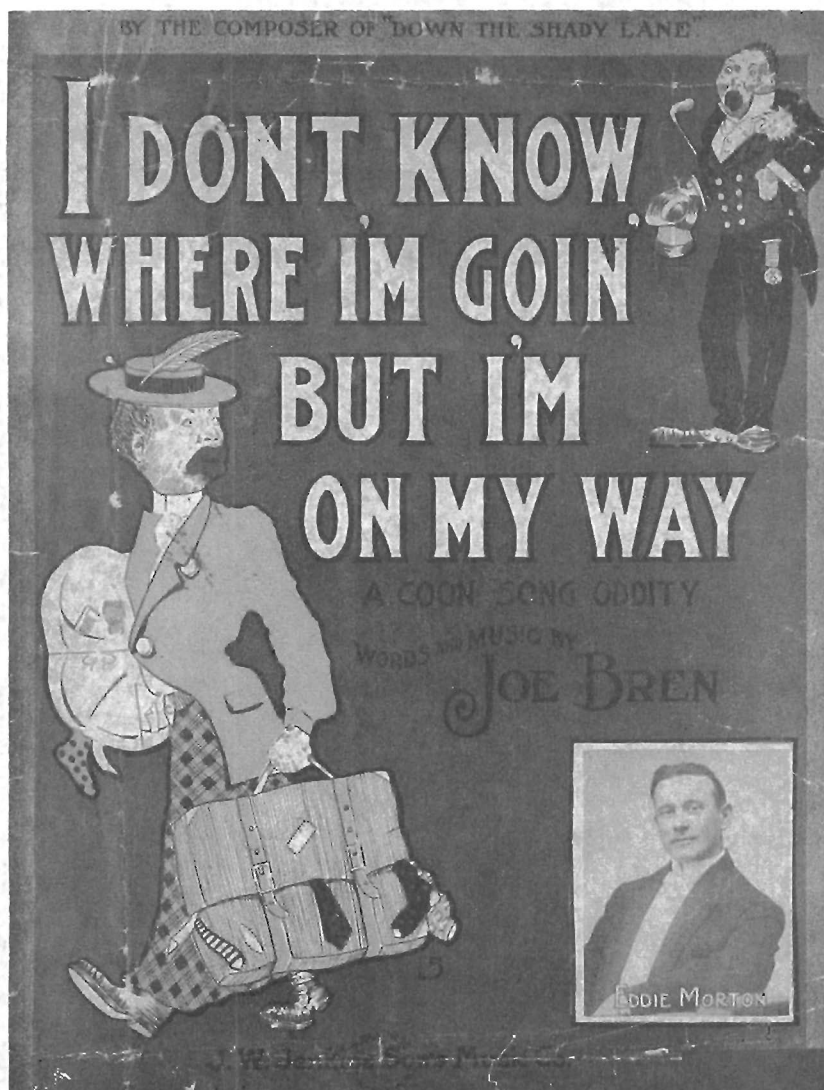
#### ORIGINAL SINGLE-FACED

- 1445 Valse Bleue (Sousa's Band)
- 2693 Indian Medley (Pryor's Orchestra)
- 4678 Lights Out March (Pryor's Band)
- 5000 Uncle Josh at the Roller Skating Rink (Cal Stewart)
- 5369 Dream Waltz — "A Waltz Dream" (Victor Orchestra)
- 5639 Under the Double Eagle March (Sousa's Band)
- 5657 Glow Worm (Elizabeth Wheeler)
- 5685 Amlna — Sereade (Pryor's Band)
- 5690 Marsovia Waltzes (United States Marine Band)
- 5777 Apache Dance (Black Diamonds Band of London)
- 5791 Mr. Rooster (Pryor's Band)
- 5792 Second Chasseurs March (Garde Republicaine Band)
- 5814 Winter (Hayden Quartet)

#### ORIGINAL DOUBLE-FACED

- 16022 Morning in Noah's Ark (Pryor's Band)
- 16042 Oh, Oh, Miss Lucy Ella (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan)/Victor Minstrels 14 (Victor Minstrel Co.)
- 16115 Violette Waltz (Victor Dance Orchestra)/Garden of Dreams (Elise Stevenson and Harry MacDonough)
- 16118 From Your Dear Heart to Mine (Frank C. Stanley)/Mollie Darling (Hayden Quartet)
- 16142 Hard Times (Hayden Quartet)/Artillerist's Oath (Peerless Quartet)
- 16189 Victor Minstrels 11 (Victor Minstrel Co.)/By the Watermelon Vine (MacDonough)

- 16263 Victor Minstrels 15 (Victor Minstrel Co.)/Do You Know Mr. Schneider? (Ada Jones)
- 16285 My Hindoo Man (Xylophone solo by Peter Lewin)/Blondy and Her Johnny (Jones and Spencer)
- 16268 Larboard Watch (MacDonough and William F. Hooley)/Old Folks at Home (Saxophone solo by Jean Moeremans)
- 16358 Ocean Breezes Waltz (Pryor's Band)/Gavotte from Paris and Helena (Victor String Quartet)
- 16400 Jim Bludsoe (Recitation by Edgar L. Davenport)/Asleep in the Deep (Hooley)
- 16421 Swiss Boy (Cornet duel by Herbert L. Clarke and Emil Keneke)/Medley of Popular Reels (Accordion solo by John J. Kimmel)
- 16476 Boccaccio March (Pryor's Band)/Winter Song (Peerless Quartet)
- 16480 Popular Medley 2 (Pryor's Band)/The Charming (Xylophone solo by William H. Reitz)
- 16481 Agnus Dei (Tenor solo in Latin by Leon Boyle)/Stabat Mater — Cujas Animam (Pryor's Band)
- 16485 Popular Medley 3 (Pryor's Band)/Love's Caprice (Reitz)
- 16493 Happy Go Lucky Two-Step (Pryor's Band)/Nalla Intermezzo (Accordion Grand solo by F. Frosini)
- 16527 Macabre — Gobble Duet (Elizabeth Wheeler and MacDonough)/Prince of Pilsen Selection (Pryor's Band)
- 16528 "Red Wing" Medley (Pryor's Band)/Katrina's Valentine (Jones and Spencer)
- 16541 Eternal Father, Strong to Save (Hayden Quartet)/Stabat Mater — Inflammatus (Pryor's Band)
- 16556 Come Be My Sunshine, Dearie (MacDonough)/The Arcadians — Favorite Melodies (Pryor's Band)
- 16559 Anniversary March (Pryor's Band)/Girl With A Brogue (Jones)
- 16561 Robin Hood — Favorite Airs (Pryor's Band)/Andante — Concerto in A Minor (Violin solo by Victor Sorlin)
- 16608 The Italian Rag (Billy Murray)/Walt Till the Clouds Roll By (Will Oakland)
- 16646 Silver Bell (Peerless Quartet)/In the Gloaming (Oakland and American Quartet)
- 16650 If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out (Eddie Morton)/A Coon's Love Song (Pryor's Band)
- 16654 Moonlight in the Forest — Dance of the Nymphs (Pryor's Band)/Old Folks at Home (Marguerite Dunlap)
- 16704 Rest of the Week She's Mine (Billy Murray)/McCarthy's Old Trombone (Recitation by Henry Allan Price)
- 16706 I Won't Be Back Till August (Eddie Morton)/Avenger March (Pryor's Band)
- 16707 Somebody Else (American Quartet)/Watermelon Morals (Price)
- 16708 Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey (Collins and Harlan)/U.S.A. Patrol (Reitz)
- 16710 Lucy-Anna-Lou (Collins and Harlan)/Minstrel Band (Pryor's Band)
- 16714 Last Night (Helen Clark)/Marche Religioso (Pryor's Band)
- 16729 Pretty Black Eyed Susan (Pryor's Band)/Yucatania Man (Collins and Harlan)
- 16768 It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight (Murray)/Christmas Morning at Clancy's (Porter)
- 16776 Iola — Intermezzo (Sousa's Band)/Peter Piper (Cossman)
- 16781 Yankee Land (Cossman)/Uncle Josh and the Fire Department (Stewart)
- 16789 In the Sunshine of Your Love (MacDonough)/Society Swing Two-Step (Pryor's Band)
- 16790 Sweet Italian Love (Murray)/Fascinator March (Pryor's Band)
- 16844 Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine (Jones and American Quartet)/Through the Hole in the Fence (Hill)
- 16846 Bit of Drama (Hill)/That's Yiddisha Love (Monroe Silver)
- 16852 Emmaline Lee (Peerless Quartet)/Entre Acte Gavotte (Reitz)
- 16861 My Yiddisha Colleen (Walter Van Brunt)/Adventures in A Department Store (Hill)
- 16862 Give Your Smiles to All the Boys But Keep Your Heart for Me (Van Brunt)/Rag Pickings (Banjo solo by Fred Van Eps)
- 16867 Steamboat Bill (Collins)/The Old Jokes (Hill)
- 16870 Mississippi Dippy Dio (Collins and Harlan)/Clancy's Wooden Wedding (Steve Porter)
- REVISÉ DOUBLE-FACED COUPLINGS
- 16914 Victor Minstrels 14 and 15 (Victor Minstrel Co.)
- 16915 Mollie Darling/Hard Times, Come Again No More (both by Hayden Quartet)
- 16916 Popular Medley 2 and 3 (Pryor's Band)
- 16917 The Charming/Love's Caprice (Reitz)
- 16918 Stabat Mater — Cujas Animam/Inflammatus (Pryor's Band)
- 16919 Prince of Pilsen Selection/Robin Hood — Favorite Airs (Pryor's Band)
- 16920 Happy Go Lucky Two-Step/Anniversary March (Pryor's Band)
- 16921 Come Be My Sunshine, Dearie/By the Watermelon Vine (MacDonough)
- 16922 Boccaccio March (Pryor's Band)/Valse Bleue (Sousa's Band)
- 16923 The Arcadians — Favorite Melodies (Pryor's Band)/Dream Waltz — "A Waltz Dream" (Victor Orchestra)
- 16924 "Red Wing" Medley (Pryor's Band)/Indian Medley (Pryor's Orchestra)
- 16925 Victor Minstrels 11 (Victor Minstrel Co.)/The Minstrel Band (Pryor's Band)
- 16926 I Won't Be Back Till August (Morton)/The Rest of the Week She's Mine (Murray)
- 16927 Winter (Hayden Quartet)/Silver Bell (Peerless Quartet)
- 16928 In the Gloaming (Oakland and American Quartet)/Walt Till the Clouds Roll By (Oakland)
- 16929 Thine Eyes So Blue and Tender (Wells)/Last Night (Clark)
- 16931 Uncle Josh and the Fire Department/Uncle Josh at the Roller Skating Rink (Stewart)
- 16932 Garden of Dreams (Stevenson and MacDonough)/Glow-Worm (Wheeler)



Eddie Morton, whose picture appears on this sheet music of a 1905 comic song, was one of the Victor artists whose records were re-coupled. During World War I another song called "I Don't Know Where I'm Goin', But I'm On My Way" was published and became a much bigger hit than its 1905 predecessor.

- 16933 Nalla Intermezzo (Frosini)/Entre Act Gavotta (Reitz)  
 16934 U.S.A. Patrol (Reitz)/Rag Pickings (Fred Van Eps)  
 16935 Yankee Land/Peter Piper (Ossman)  
 16936 Christmas Morning at Clancey's/Clancy's Wooden Wedding (Porter)  
 16937 Steamboat Bill (Collins)/Mississippi Dippy Dip (Collins and Harlan)  
 16938 They're All Good American Names/If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out (Morton)  
 16939 Coon's Love Song/Pretty Black Eyed Susan (Pryor's Band)  
 16940 Old Folks at Home/Mighty Lak' a Rose (Dunlap)  
 16941 Avenger March/Marche Religioso (Pryor's Band)  
 16942 Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey (Collins and Harlan)/Give Your Smiles to All the Boys But Keep Your Heart for Me (Van Brunst)  
 16943 Lucy Anna Lou/Yucatan Man (Collins & Harlan)  
 16944 Bit of Drama/Adventures in a Department Store (Hill)  
 16945 That's Yiddish Love (Silver) My Yiddish Colleen (Brunst)  
 16946 Moonlight in the Forest—Dance of the Nymphs/Ocean Breezes Waltz (Pryor's Band)  
 16947 Do You Know Mr. Schneider? (Jones)/Blondy and Her Johnny (Jones and Spencer)  
 16948 My Hindoo Man (Lewin)/Medley of Popular Reels (Kimmel)  
 16949 Larboard Watch (Macdonough and Hooley)/Asleep in the Deep (Hooley)  
 16950 Andante from A Minor Concerto (Sorlin)/Gavotte from Paris and Helena (Victor String Quartet)  
 16951 That Italian Rag/Sweet Italian Love (Murray)  
 16952 Society Swing Two-Step/Fascinator March (Pryor's Band)  
 16953 I Love It (American Quartet)/Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine (Jones and American Quartet)  
 16954 Bit of Grand Opera/Through the Hole in the Fence (Hill)  
 16955 Mr. Rooster/Morning in Noah's Ark (Pryor's Band)  
 16956 Somebody Else (American Quartet)/Emmaline Lee (Peerless Quartet)  
 16957 Winter Song/Artillerist's Oath (Peerless Quartet)  
 16958 Apache Dance (Black Diamonds Band of London)/Second Chausers March (Garde Republicaine Band)  
 16959 Marzovla Waltzes (United States Marine Band)/Amina—Serenade (Pryor's Band)  
 16950 Under the Double Eagle March (Souza's Band)/Lights Out March (Pryor's Band)  
 THE END

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

Continued from page 35)

OVA & N.A. BOLSHAKOV Dubrovskiy: French Duet (Napravnik) 4. A.D. VI-AL'TSEVA What a Glorious Night (Vran-gel) 5. N.N. FIGNER Romeo et Juliette: Ah! leve-toi, soleil (Gounod) 6. N. A. SHEVELEV The Demon: I am he to whom you listened (Rubinstein) 7. O.I. KAMIONSKIY Eugene Onegin: Alas, there is no doubt (Tchaikovsky).  
 Side II — 1. I.V. YERSHOV Profeta: a) Sopra Berta b) Corriam (Meyerbeer)  
 2. V.I. KASTORSKIY Eugene Onegin: Prince Gremin's Aria (Tchaikovsky) 3. M. N. KUZNETSOVA Melodie Tzigane (Tchaikovsky) 4. A.I. MOZZHUKHIN a) The Kiss b) The Fair-Haired Maid-en (Dargomyzhskiy) 5. Ye.I. ZBRUYEVA Unidentified selection 6. A.M. LABIN-SKIY: Snow Maiden: So full of wonders, the mighty nature (Rimski-Korsakov) 7. A.M. DAVYDOV Gayda Troyka (Gyp-sy Song).

To describe this vast conglomeration of admirable talent would require more space than I can afford. I'll just have to postpone giving biographical notes of these artists until some other occasion.

This is a beautiful disc, yet a little better care in its preparation would have added more lustre to its finish. For one thing, the written notes could have been more accurate. For example, some checking would have

disclosed that Figner did not create the tenor role in "Eugene Onegin," and neither did Mikhailova create the female role in "Iolanta." Also, Yershov did not "retire to teach in 1916" but kept on singing at the Maryinskiy until 1929.

Then, it is always best to make sure who the singer is and what selection is being sung. As it turned out, the pseudo V. N. Petrova-Zvantseva is, in reality, Ye. I. Zbruyeva; and the piece this artist sings is not the Song of Lehl from the "Snow Maiden" (in fact, it is neither of the 3 songs of Lehl!) but an unidentified operatic excerpt.

The proper pitch, too, should be observed, as, for instance, Shevelev's *I am he* from "The Demon" is here dropped a semitone. He certainly sang it in the original key of C-sharp Minor.

For my personal taste, opera singers and popular entertainers should not be mixed on the same disc. It is true that Vialtseva tried her hand in opera ("Carmen" and "Samson") and even made a couple of operatic recordings.

But she was primarily an interpreter of Russian and so-called "Russian-Gypsy" songs, and to include her in operatic company just isn't the right thing to do. Incidentally, she was Russian and not a "Gypsy," as it is often stated.

One more personal objection is the selection chosen for Davydov, a first-class opera singer. Admittedly he had a *penchant* for indulging in "Russian-Gypsy," Neapolitan, and other such popular ditties. But his operatic

recordings include pieces of great beauty, and one of these would have been more appropriate in this case.

I hear that soon more such Russian LP's will be released by S.J.G. It will be of interest to know what other Russian celebrities of the past will find their way on this label — celebrities whose recordings are now rare outside of the country where they were made.

— o —

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"Dear Mrs. Favia-Artsay:

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## Edgar L. Davenport

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

For many years I have had a triple-barreled interest in Edgar Loomis Davenport, who was born in Boston, Mass., February 7, 1862, and died there July 25, 1918.

Davenport was (1) a representative American actor of his time; (2) for several years a popular recording artist, specializing in humorous, pathetic, patriotic and melodramatic recitations; and (3) a lineal descendant of "Vincent Crummles," the English provincial theater manager whom Charles Dickens immortalized through his ever delightful show business scenes in "Nicholas Nickleby."

Incidentally, if you have never met Mr. Crummles, "The Infant Phenomenon," Miss Snellicci and the other members of that endlessly diverting troupe, let me urge that you get a copy of "Nickleby" and turn to the theatrical scenes, regardless of whether you go through the remainder of the book. I must have read about Vincent and his thespians at least 50 times, and I laugh as heartily at each fresh meeting with them as I did when I first made their acquaintance at the age of nine.

If you're wondering how Edgar Davenport could be the grandson of an actor called Vincent Crummles, the explanation, of course, is that Dickens used a fictitious name for the character in his book. It is generally accepted among Dickens students that the novelist as a very young man (he was only 26 when he began "Nickleby") met an English tragedian named Thomas Donald Davenport and was so much amused by the actor's genial idiosyncrasies that he incorporated him into the book. It is even pretty widely assumed that before Dickens began to be successful as an author he acted briefly with the Davenport company, which played a circuit including Coventry, Portsmouth (Dickens' birthplace) and several other English towns. That is not certain, but it is generally agreed that Mr. Crummles' small daughter, "The Infant Phenomenon," who had a starring part in the troupe's productions, was based on Davenport's daughter, Jean.

The "Phenomenon" became a well known actress in her own right after she grew up. Jean, who was known during her mature years under her married name of Mrs. Lander, died August 3, 1903, at the reported age of 74. If this age is correct — but it probably isn't — she could have been only about nine at the time



EDGAR L. DAVENPORT,

grandson of the actor who was the original of Charles Dickens' immortal "Mr. Vincent Crummles," as he appeared in 1901, aged 35.

young Dickens began writing "Nickleby."

In the book, Dickens had the Crummles family transfer their activities to the United States, and, surely enough, the Davenports did come to the States, as witness this account of their activities in *The Dickensian*, official organ of the Dickens Fellowship, for December, 1948:

"Among those who had appeared on the stage of this very Theater Royal (in Montreal, Can.) was Jean Davenport, claimed as the original of the Infant Phenomenon in 'Nicholas Nickleby.' She was the daughter of Thomas Donald Davenport. Like many another thespian in those days, Davenport had uprooted himself from Britain to seek fame and fortune in a new land. With his wife and his daughter Jean, he traveled the American continent, finding not unprofitable engagements. The daughter, a child-wonder playing leading Shakespearean parts, proved a considerable attraction in various cities. All went well until it was noticed that the phenomenon was developing rapidly and could no longer pass for an infant. On August 5, 1839, Jean Davenport first appeared at the Theater Royal . . . being seen as Richard III, the role in which she had made her stage debut two years previously in Richmond, Surrey. Naturally, father and mother were in the company supporting her. During the month the phenomenal Jean paraded as Shylock, Sir Peter Teazle, Young Norval in 'Douglas,' Tom in 'The Dumb Man of Manchester' and, incidentally, leading parts in 'Paul Pry in Petticoats' and 'The Child of Nature.' Quite a repertoire for an infant said to be 12 years of age but actually 14. Two years later, in August, 1841, the theater produced a version of 'Nicholas Nickleby' with William Abbott, a one-time Romeo from Covent Garden, in the title role. The Infant Phenomenon of Dickens, or of Davenport, was not in the cast."

If little Miss Jean was 14 in 1839 she was born in 1825 and would have been 78, instead of 74, at her death. This makes it appear more plausible

that Dickens could have known of her and incorporated her into his book. However, the article just quoted gives the impression she appeared on the stage for the first time in 1837, only about a year before Dickens began "Nickleby." But enough about Jean. Our chief interest is with Edgar L. Davenport rather than other members of the family.

Which reminds me that John Parker's "Who's Who in the Theater," published in England, lists the births and deaths of a dozen Davenports, but does not include the subject of this article, although his sister, Fanny, who died September 26, 1898, at the age of 48, and his brother, Harry, are mentioned. T. D. Davenport, Edgar's grandfather, was 59, when he died July 6, 1851. His son, Edward Loomis Davenport, died September 1, 1877, aged 60, and he was the father of Edgar L. Davenport, who was 56 when he died about 49 years ago.

### II Davenport's Earlier Years

I found a biographical sketch of Edgar L. Davenport in "The Players Blue Book," compiled by A. D. Storms and published in 1901. It is worth quoting, for it "fills us in" on Davenport's career up to the time he was 35 and four years before he began making records:

"Edgar Loomis Davenport, for the past two seasons with Viola Allen's company, is the elder son of Edward L. Davenport and brother of Fanny and Harry Davenport. In speaking of Mr. Davenport, Henry Austin, formerly with The Illustrated American, wrote:

"I remember with keen pleasure his Julian Beauclerc in 'Diplomacy'; his Clement Hale in 'Sweet Lavender'; his Charles Courly in 'London Assurance'; and his Jacob McClosky, in 'The Octoroon,' struck me as an exceedingly clever villain. This, in contrast with his Mr. Toots, in 'Dombey and Son,' evidenced Davenport's variety of range. His Captain Molincau in 'The Shaugraun,' was another notable impersonation. One of his later successes was the first part of Chambers in the late Frank Mayo's original production of 'Puddin' Head Wilson,' at the Herald Square Theater, April 15, 1895. Davenport has the reputation of having played more parts than any other actor of his years, and it is only fair to say that the value of the family name seems to be quite safe in his keeping. His artistic preferences are clearly for character work and light comedy, but the superb schooling he has had has made him such an all-around actor that he possesses at all times what, for lack of a better phrase, one might call the audacity of sagacity."

"Mr. Davenport is 35 years old. He has been on the stage really all his life, having played child parts with his father and mother. In 1887 he entered the Boston Museum Stock Company, entirely unknown professionally, remained five years and became leading man, having played over 55 parts there, 15 of them original in this country. After leaving the Museum his impersonation of Oliver St. Aubuyn, in 'The Crust of Society,' was ranked as a most artistic and finished piece of acting. Although a comparatively young man, he is an excellent example of the old school actor, not one thrust into prominence by some accidental part that just fits him."

I was pleased to find that Davenport had impersonated a Dickens character, "Mr. Toots," which gave him an opportunity to be funny and pathetic by turns. Apparently he bore



no grudge against the great novelist if he knew, as he must have, that his paternal grandfather was the original of Mr. Vincent Crummles. But who could object to being the grandson of so genial a gentleman as Vincent! And I wonder why the compiler of the theatrical *Who's Who* didn't consider him worthy of inclusion with the dozen other Davenport.

### III Davenport's First Records

I wish I knew how Edgar Davenport happened to make his first records, but I don't. Did Walter Miller, the Edison recording manager, happen to hear some of his stage work and decide he had a good recording voice or was the approach made by Davenport himself? We can only conjecture.

My research leads me to believe that the first Davenport record for public sale was an Edison two-minute cylinder, "Jim Bludsoe," a recitation of a poem written by John Hay, which appeared in the Edison monthly list for August, 1905. It is described as follows in *The New Phonogram*.

"Mr. Davenport is another late addition to the talent making Edison records, and his first records will show to the phonograph public that he is a most valuable acquisition. 'Jim Bludsoe' is a descriptive Mississippi poem written by the Hon. John Hay, Secretary of State. (Hay was secretary of state under Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt and had been assistant private secretary to President Lincoln. —J.W.) It is rendered by Mr. Davenport in a manner that shows he is a finished elocutionist. It has been many months since we put out a record of this character, and we believe that the public will agree with us that we have been most fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Davenport to make it. Mr. Davenport is an actor of wide repute, having played leading parts in many plays during the past few years. His last appearance in the 'legitimate' was in 'The College Widow.' During the summer season he is playing in vaudeville. He opened at the Empire Theater, Boston, on May 29, and has since been a prominent feature of the best vaudeville houses."

In September, 1905, Edison offered the second, and last, of Davenport's two-minute wax cylinders. This time he was represented by an abbreviated version of his most famous number, "Lasca." Edison gave the name of the author of this dramatic poem as F. Desprez, while Victor was later to call him Deprez. However, other companies that made the record also

spelled it Desprez, so probably Edison was right. Here is the *Phonogram* description:

"'Lasca' is a pathetic poem by F. Desprez. It tells of the affection of Lasca for her lover of the plains. She was ever at his side and ever seeking to protect him. She would hunger that he might eat; she would take the bitter and leave him the sweet. One day the herd stampeded on the Rio Grande with Lasca and her lover in the path of the maddened cattle.

"They mounted a mustang and endeavored to escape. The herd gained on them and the only chance left was to shoot the mustang and crouch under his body. This was done. As the pair fell, Lasca protected the body of her lover so that she bore all the blows of the surging cattle. When the steers had passed, Lasca was dead but her lover lived. Those who have heard Mr. Davenport's recitation of 'Jim Bludsoe,' listed last month, will realize how effectively he has made this record of 'Lasca.' Chopin's Funeral March is introduced at the close."

Truly, the situation of Lasca and her lover was romantic as well as perilous, but it couldn't have happened the same way to me, because I shouldn't have been able to bring myself to shoot the mustang! Nevertheless, this record has produced plenty of tears from sentimentally-minded listeners. The first copies didn't give Davenport's name on the cylinder, and I have had several letters from people who had found it, asking me who had recited the poem. I don't have this Edison record, but I imagine his name is revealed in an announcement at the beginning.

I do have the Victor records of "Jim Bludsoe" and "Lasca," which Davenport made after his first Edison engagement. They are recited in a fine, well rounded voice but the style today would be considered old-fashioned and no doubt harks all the way back to Grandfather Davenport whose stage mannerisms gave "Vincent Crummles" to the world.

Other artists — among them Len Spencer, Harry Spencer, George Broderick and William F. Hooley — had already recorded numbers of the type in which Davenport specialized, and after the Bostonian ceased to make discs and cylinders, Harry E. Humphrey continued the tradition on a larger scale. I don't recall that Dickens' "Infant Phenomenon" included Shakespeare in her repertoire, as did the real life Jean Davenport, and there is not much of Shakespeare in Edgar Davenport's records.

For the time being, Davenport's Edison activities ended with that pair

of two-minute cylinders. But after the four-minute Amberols were introduced late in 1908, he made three of those longer playing records. A full-length, full-dress version of "Lasca," complete with "Hearts and Flowers" and Chopin's Funeral March, was numbered 296 and came out in November, 1909. Thomas Buchanan Reid's patriotic poem, "Sheridan's Ride," was added in March, 1910, as No. 397, and John Greenleaf Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie" No. 603, completed Davenport's Edison activities in March, 1911. "Lasca" was reissued as Blue Amberol cylinder No. 1868 in 1913 and "Sheridan's Ride" came along a few months later. There was no Blue Amberol representation for poor "Barbara Frietchie."

The pattern of Davenport's recording career now is clear. Although an actor of almost unlimited versatility, his phonograph repertoire was to consist of somewhere between a dozen and a score of recitations, short enough to get onto a two-minute record or a four-minute one at most. There probably were not a great many poems of that type with sufficient popular appeal to justify their being recorded, and so Davenport, as he went from one studio to another, (Continued on page 64)

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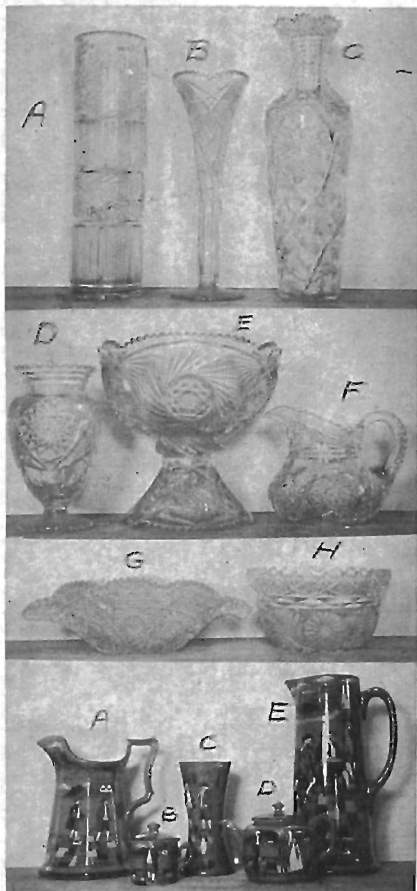
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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

found himself repeating the same old things.

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9. S/F knife rests, also porcelain and crystal - write wants

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Edgar L. Davenport

By JIM WALSH

PART II

### I. Victor Records

We told last month of Edgar L. Davenport's making, in 1905, his first records — a pair of two-minute Edison wax cylinders. Now we may proceed to his first appearance on discs.

In June, 1906, Victor announced a single-faced 10-inch record, 4701, on which Davenport recited "Jim Bludsoe," as he had done for Edison. The monthly supplement description said:

"Mr. Davenport is one of the best character actors in America and is now supporting Raymond Hitchcock in 'The Galloper.' He has given us a rendition of this fine poem by the late John Hay which is a master-piece. Every syllable is so distinct that nothing is lost, even in the portions where Mr. Davenport speaks almost in a whisper."

For the benefit of those not familiar with Hay's poem, it may be explained that Jim Bludsoe was a Negro stoker on a steamship, The Prairie Bell, who sacrificed his life to save other persons during an explosion. Though not great poetry, it is an eloquent plea for racial tolerance and understanding.

A month later, two more Davenport records were issued, 4711, a 10-inch version of the patriotic poem, "Sheridan's Ride," and a 12-inch single-faced offering, 31529, of our old friend, "Lasca." The supplement description was accompanied by a good photograph of Davenport, which I have had copied for illustration herein, together with the descriptive matter concerning the record. (See p. 38).

August brought one of Davenport's less successful offerings, which had a short life in the Victor catalog, although he recorded it a few years later for Columbia. It was 4752, John Boyle O'Reilly's verses, "In Bohemia."

The supplement described it as "a clearly-spoken rendition of . . .

O'Reilly's famous description of the enchanting realm of Bohemia, one of the most popular poems in existence." Popular it may have been, but it did not make a hit with Victor record buyers.

Perhaps the least known of all Davenport's records was issued in September, 1906. On 4809, an eight-inch single-faced record — a size that was discontinued when double-faced discs were introduced two years later — he recited, "Wynken, Blynken and Nod," which was also called "Children's Series, No. 3."

This description was given: "Eugene Field's delightful account of the adventures of three little Dutch children; recorded especially for the little ones." In the complete catalogs that followed, this was identified only as a children's record without Davenport's name being mentioned as the artist. Probably very few people today have it.

The actor also was represented in September by a 10-inch disc of another John Hay poem, "Little Breeches," 4808. Supplement Editor Sam Rous commented:

"Those who have admired Mr. Davenport's splendid record of 'Jim Bludsoe' will note with pleasure that he has given us this month another famous poem by the late John Hay. 'Little Breeches' is familiar to everyone, and Mr. Davenport has recited it most effectively."

I wonder how many present-day

Americans are familiar with that pathetic little poem!

In October, on 4834, Davenport brought out one of his standbys, good old "Barbara Frietchie," and Mr. Rous said: "John Greenleaf Whittier's famous poem which is known to every schoolboy. Mr. Davenport has given us a fine rendition of this patriotic number."

When Edgar finally did get around to giving his admirers a bit of Shakespeare, they received extremely short comments. In February, 1907, on a soon-to-be cut out eight-inch record, 4942, Davenport recited "The Seven Ages." I suppose there are copies of it still around, but I have never seen one.

And that, with one exception, completed the list of Davenport's single-faced Victor records. When the 1909 catalog appeared only four of the titles were left: "Lasca," "Sheridan's Ride," "Jim Bludsoe," and "Little Breeches."

The exception, which came out in 1909, is a disc that few people now living have heard. It was listed in the January, 1910, catalog under the heading of "Special Records," and



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**Dramatic Recitations by Edgar L. Davenport**  
Incidental music by Victor orchestra



Mr. Davenport's distinct rendition of "Jim Bludsoe" has pleased many thousands of Victor owners, who pronounce it the best record of the kind ever made. We therefore take pleasure in announcing two splendid dramatic numbers by this popular actor—Deprez's beautiful poem, "Lasca," in which Mr. Davenport fairly surpasses himself as he describes the cowboy's love for the Mexican beauty, the wild ride for life before the maddened cattle, and the final tragedy as Lasca sacrifices her life for her lover, and the famous "Sheridan's Ride," which is delivered in fine style by Mr. Davenport. The incidental music arranged by Mr. Rogers for both these numbers is most effective, and never becomes obtrusive, as is so often the case in melodramatic records.

Number	Size
4711 Sheridan's Ride	Read 10
31529 Lasca	Deprez 12

This photograph of Edgar L. Davenport and description of two of his records appeared in the Victor supplement for July, 1906.

the following explanation was given:

"On this and the following page are listed a special series of records which are not usually carried in stock by dealers because they are of interest only to certain classes of people — religious communities, societies and persons in certain sections of the country.

"Many novelties will be added to this list in the future. Any of these special records will be promptly ordered by your dealer on request. Every record will be up to the highest standard of Victor quality."

Davenport's "special record" was 5747, "The Power of Habit," which was described as "a temperance recitation," written by John B. Gough:

"A famous dramatic recitation much used in prohibition and temperance work. Mr. Davenport's description of the ultimate end of the drinker, represented by the fatal voyage down the Niagara, is a most thrilling one."

I'd like to hear it!

Meanwhile, with the introduction of double-faced records, "Sheridan's Ride" and "Little Breeches" were combined on 16252. In April, 1909, Davenport was back with a new offering, a "humorous talk" called "Autobiography of a Chicken," issued on double-faced record, 16260.

To me the humor is so forced and falls so flat I have no doubt it materially reduced the sale of an excellent Billy Murray ragtime number, "Jennie," on the B side.

The supplement description of the record, which was cut out by May, 1911, said:

"Mr. Davenport, although best known to the Victor public by his serious numbers, is also a comedian of ability, and his repertoire contains many humorous recitations. Here is the post-mortem history of a familiar domestic bird, which will strike a sympathetic chord in those of us who have been obliged to spend some time in an average boarding-house, where it is frequently necessary to serve Gallus domesticus in as many different forms as possible.

"On the reverse side Mr. Murray gives us an amusing imitation of Eddie Leonard's familiar style of singing, which is something like this: 'Je-heh-heh-heh-heh-ny.' It may not look amusing in cold type, but just listen to Murray sing the song!"

"Jim Bludsoe" was copied on 16400 with William F. Hooley's rousing "Asleep in the Deep," but the Hooley side was re-doubled in October, 1911, with "The Larboard Watch," by Harry Macdonough and Hooley, and "Bludsoe" was dropped from the list. It obviously was considered a handicap to the sale of the Hooley song, but it had been a popular single-faced disc and it is odd that it was not combined with some other Davenport recitation.

"Lasca," always a consistent seller, found its coupling on 35090, with the great cornet virtuoso, Herbert L. Clarke, playing his own "Caprice Brillante." This was a poor combination from the standpoint of suitability, but the record continued to sell and remained in the catalog through virtually the remainder of the acoustic recording period.

Edgar Davenport was to make just one more appearance in the Victor double-faced record catalog. For the November, 1910, supplement, on record 16649, he recited another Eugene Field poem, "Little Boy Blue." The other side was a gospel hymn, "Hiding in Thee," sung by Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison (John Young and Frederick J. Wheeler). Again, this was a poor coupling, but the record sold well for a long time.

The supplement said:

"A rather unusual combination is offered here — on one side a new gospel hymn by those accomplished singers, Anthony and Harrison, and on the other a recital of that most touching of all poems of childhood, Eugene Field's 'Little Boy Blue,' by Edgar L. Davenport,

whose 'Lasca' and other recitations are well-known to record buyers."

That was the last Victor record by Edgar L. Davenport. Presumably, he had exhausted his repertoire of "short take" poetry that was considered suitable for recording. But he was not through with making records.

## II. Other Recordings

Not much space is required to deal with Davenport's recordings other than Edison and Victor. In 1911 he visited the Columbia studios, and a 10-inch record, A933, was issued, coupling "Jim Bludsoe" and "In Bohemia." A 12-inch, A5218, was devoted to — as might be guessed — "Lasca" and a version of "Sheridan's Ride" that perhaps included more stanzas than the 10-inch Victor.

In 1913 another 10-inch, A1371, combined "Barbara Frietchie" with Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade," which Davenport seems not to have recited for any other company.

Apparently he made no Zonophone discs. The Columbias, of course, were listed under perhaps a score of labels, including Standard, United, Climax, Harmony, Star, and others too many to mention.

Davenport appeared briefly in the Indestructible cylinder lists, which were also called Columbia's cylinders until 1913, and were carried in mail order catalogs under several different names. In September, 1910, he was represented by a two-minute record of "Jim Bludsoe," 1396, and a four-minute, 3119, of "Sheridan's Ride." In October, on four-minute 3143, he resurrected "Lasca."

The comedian-tragedian also made four U.S. Everlasting cylinders. A pair of the two-minute type appeared in late 1908 or early 1909, "The Chicken," 268 and 267, "A Tale of a Postage Stamp."

In 1912 came two of the four-minute type, 1381, "Lasca," and 1382, "Sheridan's Ride." It looks as if almost every American record company felt it must have those rather hackneyed recitations in its catalog.

In the U.S. catalog for October, 1912, "Lasca" is described as:

"The story of a Western pioneer whose emotional sweetheart sacrifices her life to save him, overtaken by a herd of Texas steers. A very fitting orchestral arrangement, which, combined with the wonderful rendition, makes it most attractive."

"Sheridan's Ride" received this write-up:

"One of the most popular recitations known to Americans. The poem will always be popular with our patriotic younger people on account of its own poetic inspiration, and the memory of 'Little Phil,' a hero of the great struggle."

"The Chicken" was briefly dismissed as "a comic recitation by one of the best raconteurs living," and "The Tale of a Postage Stamp" with: "The little 'two-center' tells how it got stuck on a blue envelope and what followed."

## III End of Career

As far as I can learn, Edgar L. Davenport made no more records after his last Columbia was issued in 1913. The late John L. Norton Sr., a



lifelong resident of Boston, told me the actor began to suffer from impaired hearing and spent his last years working in a Boston music store.

Mr. Norton had the impression Edgar Davenport succumbed to influenza during the 1918 epidemic, but wasn't certain of that. I do not know whether he was married and had children, or what survivors there were other than his brother, Harry.

Harry Davenport, who was four years younger than Edgar, died August 9, 1949, at his home in Hollywood, Calif., aged 83, of a heart attack. *Variety* described Harry as:

"One of the screen's foremost character actors. He was on the stage and in pictures for 78 years, appearing as a boy on the same bill with Lotta Crabtree. A native of Philadelphia, he appeared at the old Chestnut Street Theater in 'Demon and Pythias' at the age of five. He had just appeared in the Rosalind Russell starrer, 'My Next Husband,' for Columbia.

"Since 1936 he had appeared in 113 films. His father was the well-known tragedian, E. L. Davenport. Survived by a son, Edward L., television producer, and three daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Davenport Reid, Kate, and Ann."

Apparently, Harry Davenport, like his aunt Jean, was an "infant phenomenon!" His daughter Dorothy was married to Wallace Reid, one of the most popular film stars from 45 to 50 years ago, who died tragically from narcotics addiction. For years afterward, Dorothy Davenport Reid carried on a crusade against dangerous drugs. I believe she is still living.

Edgar L. Davenport, within an-

other year, will have been dead a half century. But his voice continues to live on the discs and cylinders of thousands of record collectors.

It's too bad the phonograph hadn't been invented in Dickens' day, to let us hear the voices of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Crummies, "The Infant Phenomenon," Miss Snevellicci, Nicholas Nickleby and the other members of that glorious troupe!

(The End)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 35)

politan was on the matinee of April 12, 1928, as Marina in "Boris Godounov," with Chaliapin in the starring role. Subsequently, a few performances in Europe marked the end of her career in opera.

Gordon's was a beautiful and extensive contralto voice which did full justice to her roles, among them Eboli, Laura, Fricka, Amneris, Carmen, Brangaene, Venus, Dalila, and Margaret in "Le Roi d'Ys."

In the 30's Jeanne Gordon was confined in a private mental institution in Macon, Mo., where she passed away on February 21, 1952.

— o —

Volume 2 of the Canadian Centennial Issue presents the fabled Emma Albani and the superb Pauline Donalda, each in all but one of their recordings — which, again, is a boon to the collecting world.



ALBANI as Desdemona in "Otello"

CANADIAN CENTENNIAL ISSUE - Volume 2, Rococo 5255. Details in foregoing.

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Side II — PAULINE DONALDA 1. Spoken Introduction by Mme. Donalda. 2. Don Giovanni: Vedrai, carino 3. I Pagliacci: Ballatella 4. Boheme: Mi chiamano Mimi 5. Faust: Air des Bijoux 6. Love's way (Tosti) 7. Who can tell me? (Wynne) 8. Si mes vers avaient des ailes (Hahn).

### Emma Albani

The legendary, 24-carat Golden Age representative, Emma Albani (nee Marie Louise Cecile Emylie de La-jeunesse) was born in Chamblly, near Montreal, on November 1, 1847.

She began studying music at the age of five. During her 'teens, after her mother's death, the family moved to Albany, N.Y., where she began singing and occasionally playing the organ in a church.

The young girl's singular talents came to the attention of the Catholic bishop, upon whose initiative funds were raised to send her to Europe to study under Duprez in Paris and, later, Lamperti in Milan.

Albani's debut took place in Messina, Sicily, as Amina in "La Sonnambula," in 1870. Other engagements succeeded in Sicily, Florence, and Malta.

Her London debut came next, at Covent Garden in "La Sonnambula," on April 2, 1872. The following season she sang at the Theatre des Italiens in Paris.

Appearances in Russia followed, and on October 21, 1874, New York first heard her at the Academy of Music, as Amina, apparently a favorite role for her debuts.

On December 23, 1891, she made her initial bow to the Metropolitan audience in "Rigoletto," and then in "Faust," "Otello," "Don Giovanni"

(Continued on page 44)



This is not the Vincent Crummies Troupe. Instead it is an American group which called itself the Superba Miniature Musical Comedy Co. Harry Beane, a St. Petersburg, Fla., HOBBIES reader, found this picture and sent it to Jim Walsh who thought it well suited to illustrate the article about Edgar L. Davenport.

A poster indicated the Troupe was appearing at the Mission Theater in Shelby (state not given) on Monday, January 13. Judging by the costumes, the year was 1913, but January 13 also occurred on Monday in 1907, 1919, and 1925.

Jim is hoping to give some information later about the personnel of the Superbas.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## James Brockman

By JIM WALSH

Many readers, I imagine, will look puzzled when they see the name at the top of this page. "James Brockman?" they will say. "Never heard of him! Who is he?"

It is true that James Brockman does not belong in this department if the title, "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," is construed strictly. He was a pioneer recording artist, but, as far as I know, he made only five records — all little heard, of two-minute Edison wax cylinders. Consequently, he cannot be ranked among the favorites.

Nevertheless, I think Brockman is worthy of a biographical sketch for more than one reason. When he died May 22, 1967, in Santa Monica, Cal., he was one of the very few remaining men and women who had made records in the long gone days when the cylinder was the most popular form of phonograph sound production.

And, as a successful song writer, Brockman had a hand in composing some of the greatest popular hits American musical history ever has known.

I'll begin with a brief account of Brockman's life, based on a write-up in the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Composers, Authors and Publishers. The sketch says Brockman, who was of Jewish descent, was born December 8, 1886. He consequently was about midway between 80 and 81 when he died.

The impression is given that he was born in Cleveland, Ohio, but this is not explicitly stated. He was educated in the Cleveland public schools and at the Cleveland Conservatory of Music, with private tutors who gave him singing instruction.

Brockman apparently was very young, if the given birth date is correct, when he toured with musical shows and in vaudeville and became a dialect comedian who wrote his own special material. It included such songs as "Wop, Wop, Wop," "Gari-baldi," "Marianna," "That's Yiddisha Love," "Abie, Take an Example From Your Fadder," "Yompin Yiminy Yonson," and "Strumberry, Pich, Happle Pies."

After leaving vaudeville, he became a staff member of popular music publishing houses and a staff writer for Hollywood motion picture studios. He wrote the musical show, "Tempotations of 1936."

Among the songs which he helped write, usually doing the lyrics, were "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," "Golden Gate (Open for Me)," "Feather Your Nest," "I'm Like A Ship Without A Sail," "I Faw Down and Go Boom," "I Know What It Means to be Lonesome," "Down Among the Sheltering Palms," "As Long as the Shamrock Grows Green," and "Let's Grow Old Together."

He was living in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles when the ASCAP book was published.

*Variety's* death notice repeats most of this information, but adds that Brockman had been a charter member of ASCAP since 1921. In song

writing he collaborated chiefly with James Kendis and Nathaniel Hawthorne (Nat) Vincent. At one time he headed the music publishing firm of Kendis & Brockman. *Variety* says he was survived by a daughter, but her name is not given.

There will be further consideration of Brockman's songs at the end of this article. New we'll discuss his records.

### II. Brockman's Edison Cylinders

Again assuming that the already quoted birth date is correct (and *Variety* says he was 80 at his death), James Brockman was less than 21 when he began making Edison cylinders. However, the pictures of him, which Edison published in monthly supplements, looked like those of a considerably older man. I would put him down, on the strength of his photographs (one of which I hope to show), as being anywhere from 25 to 30. Probably the pictures do him an injustice or he looked older than his years.

The comedian-composer's first cylinder was listed in the Edison monthly supplement for December, 1907. It was his own Italian dialect composition, "Marianna," and was 9712. The supplement said:

"Our record of this comic Italian dialect song has an added interest because the composer himself sang it for the record."

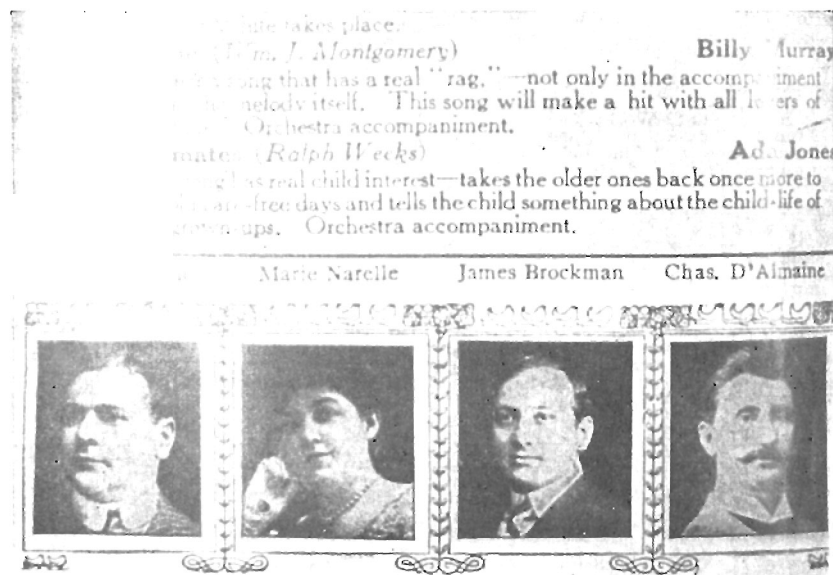
"Marianna" created no great stir, and probably was a poor seller. Record buyers in the small towns and on the farms, where the cylinder was more popular than the disc 60 years ago, did not understand or care for "foreign" dialect such as Italian and Yiddish, and were not likely to buy large quantities of such records.

It is interesting to note that Edison's English affiliate, which refused to import many American comic records on the ground that the humor was unintelligible or offensive to English listeners, accepted only one of Brockman's cylinders. "Marianna" was not among them.

The London house usually turned down such sure-fire sellers in the States as Billy Murray's breathless renditions of George M. Cohan's popular patriotic songs, but nearly always issued the "coon songs" by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, which the English apparently understood and enjoyed.

Perhaps Brockman recorded several songs at one session, for a month later, in January, 1908, he contributed what was probably his best selling cylinder, "Mariutch," 9730, another comic Italian dialect number, the work of Andrew B. Sterling and Harry Von Tilzer, who were the reigning song-writing team of that day.

This is the only Brockman record I have. It reveals a pleasant, but not distinctive tenor voice, and good Italian dialect, judged by vaudeville standards. The rendition, however, lacks the sparkle and brilliance of Eddie Morton's Victor record of the song, listed under the longer title, "Mariutch Make-a the Hootch-a-Ma-Cooch."



DIALECT SINGER JAMES BROCKMAN is included in this group of recording artists whose photos were shown in the Edison record list for July, 1907. The name of John Kimmel, the accordion player, is misspelled as Kimmble.



**"HAPPY HOOLIGAN" MADE HAPPY.**  
In the days when James Brockman was making Edison wax cylinders, Happy Hooligan was the most popular Sunday "funny paper" character. This drawing of him wearing an Edison cylinder instead of his usual tin can for a hat, was taken from a 1903 issue of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly*.

I admit being partial to Morton, whom I consider one of the very finest of the pioneer recording comedians.

In February, on 9750, Brockman was heard in "Garibaldi," described as "a very melodious Italian dialect song, of a sentimental nature, sung for our record by the composer." This was the one that Edison's English branch issued, and the following longer description of it was given in the February, 1908, English edition of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly*:

"A most melodious Italian dialect song, of a sentimental nature, rendered by the composer. It tells of the 'over the sea' wooing of Garibaldi, who makes 'a lot a-money, this country very fine.' He writes to Marie in 'Sunny Italy,' telling of his love, and she answers:

My Garibaldi, good Italian man,  
My Garibaldi, love-a you all I can;  
Good-a-bye, my Italee,  
Fly across the sea,  
Just-a you and me.

Viva my Garibaldi, good Italian man."

"Mr. Brockman's method of singing Italian dialect selections makes comment unnecessary."

I'll comment that the words of "Garibaldi" don't make much more sense than if they were some of the things written nowadays. And that

it seemed a requirement that the heroine, of almost every song about an Italian girl, had to be named Marie.

Irving Berlin published his first song, "Marie From Sunny Italy," in 1907, about the time Brockman's "Garibaldi" came out. And Berlin later used the same idea in "Stay in Italy," and "I'll Take You Back to Italy," in the latter of which the girl, of course, was Marie.

In March, 1908, Brockman had a cylinder, 9776, of another Italian dialect song, "Moolbarri," written by Junie McCree. The title of this record surely was enough to kill its sale. The description said:

"An Italian dialect song, comic in character and telling of an Italian's affection for Mulberry Street, New York, and why he likes it better than Broadway, the Bowery or Fifth Avenue."

With such a specialized regional appeal, it is easy to see why English Edison did not "pick up" this record.

Brockman dropped out of Edison lists until July, 1909, although, for some reason, a photograph of him was published in the April, 1909, supplement. His last offering was 10165, "Abie, Take an Example from Your Fadder," a Jewish dialect song written by himself which Monroe Silver also recorded for Victor, with Arthur Collins singing one of his favorite "coon" ditties, "Below the Mason-Dixon Line," on the other side, 16841. Silver's record, however, was not issued until April, 1911. The Edison supplement said:

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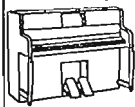

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Music Box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**

tf

"A Hebrew dialect song in which a prosperous Hebrew gives some timely, though humorous, advice to his son. The record will show that Mr. Brockman is quite as good in Hebrew dialect as he is in Italian."

And that was the last of James Brockman's records issued by Edison. I remember, though, that Billy Murray told me Brockman sometimes wrote material in later years for recording artists, and had a part in contriving "Mike" Silver's once enormously popular Victor comic sketch, "Cohen at the Picnic," 18608 issued in November, 1919. Brockman shared in the royalties on the sale of the record, and Billy, who played several small parts in the skit, said he also was "cut in" and his first royalty statement was for \$1,400.

### III. Brockman as a Popular Song Writer

Aside from the dialect numbers already mentioned, Jim Brockman's first outstanding success as a song writer seems to have come in 1912 when he did the words of "As Long as The Shamrock Grows Green" to music by Nat Osborne. This was an amusing example of the frequent

(Continued on page 44)



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 39)

willingness of Jewish composers to write in praise of the homeland of their traditional antagonists, the Irish.

Then came a really big hit in 1915, "Down Among the Sheltering Palms," for which he wrote the words and Abe Olman the music, and which today is regarded as a "standard."

With the success of "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows" in 1918, a series of "hard luck" songs became popular, and Brockman and his associates were among the most skilled writers of these. One, "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," was a much bigger hit than "Rainbows." The words of this composition were credited to Jaan Kenbrovin and the music to J. W. Kellelte.

It is a little-known fact that Jaan Kenbrovin was only a composite name for James Kendis, James Brockman, and Nat Vincent. As can be seen "Kenbrovin" contains the first three letters of each of those names. I have never been able to find out whether Kellelte also was an imaginary composite character, or whether somebody by that name really did write the music then disappear forever from the popular music field.

Even Sigmund Spaeth, the late "Tune Detective," apparently did not know the story behind the name of Jaan Kenbrovin, for he did not mention it in his "History of American Popular Music" and misspelled the name as "Jean Kenbrevin."

"I Know What It Means To Be Lonesome," which also came out in 1919, was credited to Kendis, Brockman and Vincent, though another "hard luck" opus, "I Am Climbing Mountains," bore only the names of Kendis and Brockman.

Early in 1920 the same pair did well with "I'm Like a Ship Without a Sail" — still working the "why was I ever born?" theme for all it was worth, and more. They had another popular number in "Golden Gate (Open for Me.)"

One of Brockman's greatest successes was written in 1920 and began to be a reigning hit in 1921. It was "Feather Your Nest," with him and Kendis doing the words and Howard Johnson the music. It seems the combined genius of Kendis and Brockman should have avoided perpetrating such an ungrammatical rhyme as:

"Love birds there must be in the tree-tops high,  
And, sweetheart, they bring messages  
just for you and I."

On the beautifully sung Victor record by Albert Campbell and Henry Burr (with a saxophone obbligato by Rudy Wiedoeft), the rhyme was changed to: "... high up in each tree ... just for you and me." This was probably done at the insistence of Burr, who was an educated man with no liking for singing something that sounded illiterate.

(Continued on page 68)

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FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 44)

"Let's Grow Old Together" was written in the 1920s — one of many songs with that title. My old friend, the late Will Oakland, the famous recording counter-tenor, and Ira Schuster wrote the words, and Brockman the music. Will featured it for years in his radiocasts, using it as his theme song. "I Faw Down and Go Boom," a comic song in "kid" dialect that was popular in 1929, was by Brockman, Leonard Stevens, and B. B. Berman. And that seems to be about all of Brockman's songs that require mention.

## IV. Conclusion

I hope enough has been said to indicate that James Brockman was an important figure for many years in the American song-writing world, and consequently the fact that he made five Edison cylinders is worthy of remembering. Without being dogmatic, it seems safe to say his recording experience went back about as far as that of almost anybody now alive.

The late Geoffrey O'Hara, whose life story was told in HOBBIES for February, 1960 had recorded in 1905. He died January 31, 1967, in St. Petersburg, Fla. Elise Stevenson, still living at the age of 89 in San Clemente, Calif., began recording in 1906, and Elizabeth Wheeler, still active in Cleveland, aged 91, began not long after that. Outside of them, I can think at the moment of no one else whose recording experience goes back 60 years.

James Brockman's cylinders undoubtedly are scarce and hard to find in good condition. It didn't take much to break that fragile wax. If you should happen upon any you should acquire them and carefully preserve them in remembrance of a gifted man whose talents played a definite part for two generations in the American entertainment scene, and whose death brings mournful reflections about the inevitable passage of time.

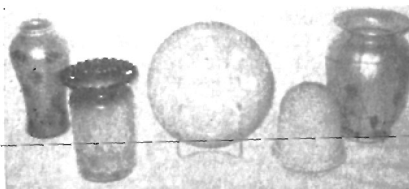
It is hard to realize the boy who was 20 when he made his first records was 80 when he died. But 60 years is a long, long time in our human lives.

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3. Pink Tiffany bowl 7 1/2" dia. signed.
4. Burmese Fairy lamp 5 1/4" tall with pressed Burmese base signed "S. Clark Patent", etc. with clear marked candle holder inside.
5. Unsigned Durand vase, orange-gold with purple green leaf & vine dec. 7 1/4" tall.

Postage &amp; ins. extra. Stamp, please.

## BUTTON COLLECTING

(Continued from page 52)

closely resembles the head on a well-known Hard Rubber button.\* Although three of the backs bear the legend "T.W. & W. - H M - Paris," I suspect that the buttons may be copies of an earlier set. The other three backmarks consist of an anchor, a flaming grenade, and a circle of dots.

6. Iridescent Pearl, slightly convex, with incised pattern. There were a number of Pearl buttons among those Susan sent me; some carved, and some with metal escutcheons and nail-head shanks. This makes me think that such buttons, which are quite plentiful in American collections, may have come from France originally.

7. Flat, one-piece silver with intaglio design. Notice the beetle: I did not discover it until I started to make the drawing.

Buttons are well-nigh indestructible — more so than their wearers — for buttons can survive catastrophes and changes which are fatal to men and women.

What tales buttons could tell, if only they could speak! But since they are dumb, we only can imagine the adventures they have had; we only can picture in our minds the garments they adorned and the scenes of which they were a part.

For the present, these Flea Market buttons will be mounted by themselves, to form an unique group in my collection. But sooner or later, they will set out again on their travels. For buttons are well-nigh indestructible: they outlast the people who wear them, and the people who collect them.

Susan also found some fine old button moulds at the Market. Later on, I will show two or three of these.

\*See "Button Parade," pp. 80 (No. 10) and 136 (No. 6.)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



FRANK CROXTON was one of four famous recording artists who sang leading parts in Sir Edward Elgar's "Caractacus" in a performance given by the Apollo Musical Club in the Auditorium Theatre, Chicago, March 4, 1912.

## The Greatest Quartet Basso

By JIM WALSH

Quentin Riggs is now working for the U.S. State Department in Germany, but hopes to return home to stay in 1968.

The last time Quentin returned to the States on a leave of absence, in the spring of 1965, he visited me, as usual, and we had an interesting discussion concerning the merits of the famous pioneer recording male quartets.

We agreed that the "lead" tenors were the making of most of the ensembles; the American Quartet, for instance, would not have been so popular if anybody but Billy Murray had been second tenor. Nor would the Peerless and Haydn (or Hayden) have been so outstanding without Henry Burr and Harry Macdonough, respectively.

But we also agreed that, next to the star tenor, the bass was the most important man in a good quartet, and we tried to decide who, out of all the honored names that came up for consideration, was entitled to be considered "the greatest quartet basso." Our discussion interested me so much

that I believe the subject will be equally attractive to the average record collector.

Consequently, I have decided to list the various well-remembered bassos in alphabetical order, tell briefly the accomplishments of each, and try to decide which of the lot was greatest. I shall leave out of consideration famous bass singers, such as Arthur Middleton and Herbert Witherspoon, who were concerned with a somewhat more serious type of music, and who did not sing regularly, or at all, in male voice groups.

Here then is the procession:

### DONALD CHALMERS

This fine artist began making records for Edison in 1912, and I cannot recall that he made solos for any other company. Chalmers was the basso of that prolific recording group, the Criterion Quartet, and became the bass of the American (Premier) Quartet when Bill Hooley died in 1918. Chalmers was also bass in the mixed-voice Harmony Four, whose other members were Gladys Rice, John Young, and George Wilton Ballard, and sometimes sang in the Knickerbocker Quartet on Edison discs and cylinders. Donald Chalmers had a splendid voice, but I am not sure whether he was entitled to be considered a true basso profundo, for the record lists sometimes called him a baritone.

He did have one mannerism that was annoying to me. He frequently pronounced English words in an Italianate manner. Thus, in "Out On the Deep," "fisher" becomes "fee-e-sheer."

### FRANK CROXTON

This famous Kentuckian had one of the best voices of any recording basso and certainly possessed one of the soundest musical educations. He could sing any type of song from ragtime to opera and do it well.

Croxton first appeared in record lists around 1912. He was bass of his own Frank Croxton Mixed Quartet on Edison cylinders, and as soloist for Victor and Columbia. Other members of the Quartet were his wife, Nevada Van Der Veer; Agnes Kimball; and Reed Miller. Among other things, the Croxton Quartet recorded the Quartet from Rigoletto.

Later he became bass of the Columbia



THE SHANNON FOUR, 1919. Front, ELLIOTT SHAW; center, LEWIS JAMES and CHARLES HART; rear, WILFRED GLENN.



JOHN H. MEYER, GENIAL BASSO, sang in thousands of records by the Sterling Trio and the Peerless Quartet.

Stellar Quartet. Then when Arthur Collins left the Peerless Quartet, Croxton took over the basso duties in it, and John Meyer, who had been singing bass, switched to baritone.

The Peerless probably was at its balanced best during the years Croxton sang in it and traveled as a member of the Eight Famous Victor Artists. After he left the Peerless he became basso of the American Singers, with Redferne Hollinshead (succeeded by Lambert Murphy), Charles Harrison, and Vernon Archibald as his associates. Croxton, like Chalmers, was sometimes called a baritone by the record companies.

"Big Tom" Daniels was the bass singer of the Columbia Quartet so many years ago, in the early 1900s, that he has faded into obscurity. Not enough is known of him and his work to classify him among the great bassos.

In England, Peter Dawson sang bass in the Zonophone Quartet and some other groups, but was not a regular member of any ensemble of permanent popularity. He was classified as a bass-baritone rather than an out-and-out basso. One critic pointed out that he sounded like a baritone on his HMV discs, while his Edison cylinders, with greater depth and clarity, had "the true basso ring." A great artist, but not one of the great quartet bassos.

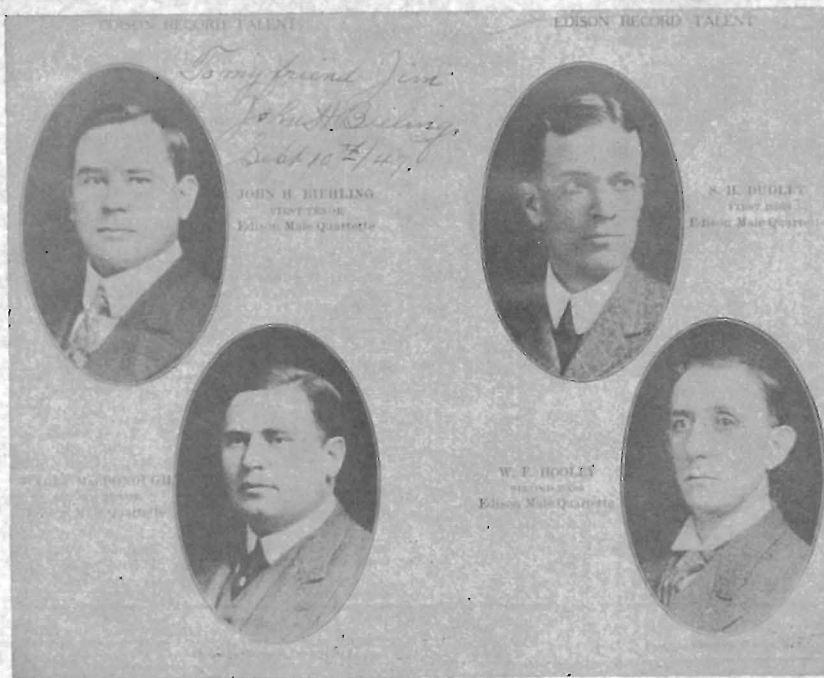
Nor can Harry Donaghy, who sang bass in the Harmonizers Quartet from 1920 to about 1924, be recorded among the leaders. Donaghy did his work well, but I don't think he made any solos, and his career was too brief and his experience too limited to place him among the leaders.

#### WILFRED GLENN

This is the only one of the bassos I am discussing who is still, to my knowledge, alive. He lives in retirement in Charlottesville, Va., but I understand is still active in church singing. Glenn was, and is, a true basso profundo. I don't think any record catalog editor ever called him a baritone.

He became bass of the Shannon Four (later Shannon Quartet) when it was organized in 1917. The other members were Charles Hart; Harvey Hindermeyer, who was succeeded by Lewis James in 1918; and Elliott Shaw.

Glenn remained bass and manager



"BILL" HOOLEY, "THE KING'S" associates in the Edison (Haydn) Quartet considered him the greatest of all quartet bassos.

when it became the Revellers — also known as the Singing Sophomores and the Merry-makers. He likewise sang bass in the Aeolian Mixed Quartet on Vocalion records.

Bill Glenn is a great veteran and one of the real top-notchers among bass singers, to whom all honor is due.

#### WILLIAM F. HOOLEY

The late S. H. Dudley, who sang for many years with Hooley in the Hayden Quartet, referred to him in letters to me as "the King of Quartet Bassos," and Harry Macdonough, the Quartet's star, called him "good old Bill Hooley," and added: "I have never known his equal as the foundation of a male quartet." John Bieling, the Hayden's first tenor, expressed the same opinion in conversation with me.

Hooley's career extended from around 1895 to his death in 1918, and he probably (Continued on page 55)

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GUS REED, BASSO PROFUNDO. This photo  
is copied from the Edison Diamond Disc  
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 39)

ably sang in more ensemble records than any other basso. Very early in his career he was the bass in the Original Lyric Trio, whose other members at first were Estella Louise Mann and John Havens, although their places were soon taken by Grace Spencer and Harry Macdonough.

Hooley was the bass in the Hayden Quartet (known on Edison cylinders as the Edison Male Quartet) until it disbanded in 1914. He was also the bass of the ensemble called the American Quartet on Victor and the Premier Quartet on Edison records.

In addition, he was the basso of the Orpheus Quartet. Other members were Lambert Murphy, Harry Macdonough, and Reinold Werrenrath. The Quartet sang on many Victor Red Seal records with such notables as Alma Gluck, Frances Alda, and John McCormack.

Hooley was the bass of the Victor Male Quartet and the Victor Light Opera Company and probably sang in some of the Lyric Quartet records on Victor. He also sang occasionally as bass of Edison's Knickerbocker Quartet. I am sure he sang with other quartets and ensembles whose names escape me at the moment.

During his earlier years Hooley made many solo records and also was heard in duets with Macdonough and other singers. I do not recall any Hooley solos after 1913. And he was a genuine basso profundo, with a voice of superb quality, nobody ever called the 5-foot-7. "Little Man With the Big Voice," a baritone!

Frederic Martin was a most accomplished basso whose voice was of Red Seal caliber and who made some superb solos for Edison. He also sang occasionally in some Edison groups, but was never a regular quartet basso, and therefore cannot come into competition with artists who were.

### JOHN H. MEYER

This genial gentleman of many amiable peccadillos became bass of the Peerless Quartet shortly after the Quartet's basso and founder, Frank C. Stanley, died in 1910. For the next 15 years John sang in thousands of Peerless Quartet and Sterling Trio records. Though he was the Quartet's bass after 1911, he took the baritone part after Frank Croxton "joined up."

Vocally, Meyer probably was not among the greatest basses, and when he was feeling expansive under the influence of fermented grape or corn juice, his voice was likely to overpower the

tones of his associates in a rather in-artistic manner.

However, he was a skilled arranger, who wrote most of the arrangements for the Eight Famous Victor Artists. He was also an excellent pianist, who often played duets with Frank Banta in the Eight's concert programs.

### GUS REED

From the standpoint of fresh, pure, delightful vocal quality, I am not sure but that this basso, whose real name was Harold Nelson and who died in California early in 1966, was the finest of the lot. However, his career as basso (and he was nothing but basso!) of the Knickerbocker Quartet on Edison cylinders was too brief to give him absolutely top honors.

But he had quality, if not quantity, in a superlative degree. And the late Geoffrey O'Hara told me he considered Reed the finest quartet basso he ever had known.

His one Edison Diamond Disc, made in 1926, and combining "Any Old Port in a Storm" and "The Big Bass Viol," is the finest double-faced-bass record I know of. The superior recording and boundless freshness and vigor of his interpretation of "The Big Bass Viol," especially, make Frank Stanley's Victor record of the same show piece come off poorly by comparison.

### FRANK C. STANLEY

Had he lived longer, Frank Stanley undoubtedly would have carried off the honors as the basso who sang in more records than any other. Unfortunately, he died in 1910 after he had been making vocal records for only 12 or 13 years. Before that he had played banjo accompaniments for some of Arthur Collins' cylinders under the name of George S. Williams. Thus Stanley's career was cut short.

Even so, from the standpoint of both quality and quantity, Stanley ranks among the greatest. He was the bass of the Columbia Quartet, the Peerless Quartet, the Invincible Four, the Metropolitan Trio, the Lotus Quartet, the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, the Lyric Mixed Quartet, and who knows how many other groups. And, as basso, he almost invariably sang the lead, instead of assigning it, as is customary, to the second tenor. He also sang the lead in practically all his duets with such eminent tenors as Harry Macdonough, Byron G. Harlan, and Henry Burr.

Stanley's voice was of gorgeous quality and of truly basso profundo depth when the occasion called for it, although he frequently was referred to as a baritone, and did, in fact, most often sing at a higher than normal bass range.

A truly great artist, he should have lived to be much more than 41 years of age. He soon would be 99 if he were alive today. His 12-inch Victor record of "The Star Spangled Banner" is the finest version I ever have heard.

### JAMES STANLEY

It is a coincidence that the Peerless Quartet was founded in 1906 by Frank C. Stanley, and that another Stanley—James Stanley—should have been its basso when it disbanded in 1928. (Frank Stanley's real name, however, was Stanley Grinstead.)

James Stanley was another singer of real basso profundo type, and was the bass and leader of the Stanley Quartet, which made Pathe records before his Peerless association began. Good as he was, however, he did not make enough records to be considered among the top men in the quartet basso field.

His career as a singer ended when he developed cancer of the throat and was unable to speak above a whisper after the growth was removed. I believe he is dead, but never have obtained positive information of his passing.

So there they are: Chalmers, Croxton, Glenn, Hooley, Meyer, Reed, Frank Stanley, and James Stanley.

And although I personally prefer Gus Reed's voice to all the rest, the greatest of these bassos, in my opinion and on the basis of fine voice quality, length of career, and variety of music sung, is William F. Hooley, with Frank Stanley a close second and Frank Croxton and Wilfred Glenn tying for third.

Which is your choice?

(The End)



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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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## I. Explanatory

The late Fiorella H. LaGuardia is said to have remarked: "When I make a mistake it's a beaut."

New York City's mayor might have made that statement with equal justice concerning Jim Walsh — this writer, that is. When I make a mistake it's also a beaut.

I now have been writing for HOBBIES for 26 years, and always have tried to make my contributions as accurate as possible. It has been impossible to stay free of errors, for in doing research and reporting my findings concerning the early days of the phonograph and sound recording there have been many times when what seemed unquestionable facts have been altered by later information. But I have striven to be accurate and truthful in all statements appearing over my signature.

In spite of which, I now must proclaim that I was guilty of the biggest "beaut" of my entire HOBBIES experience, when I wrote, in the August and September issues, that Edgar L. Davenport, the noted actor and recording artist, was the grandson of Thomas Donald Davenport, an English stage performer whom Charles Dickens is believed to have used as the original of his immortal Vincent Crummles in *Nicholas Nickleby*.

I made that assertion in complete good faith. But I blush to say there was not a word of truth in it. I have learned on unimpeachable authority that there were two families of theatrical Davenports, one English and the other American, and there was not any known relationship between them. I erred sadly when I said

## Edgar L. Davenport

Was Not Related to Dickens' Vincent Crummles

### PART III

By JIM WALSH

Edgar Davenport was descended from Vincent Crummles.

The saddest part is that I committed my colossal "bloomer" by relying on something I read when I was a small boy to the effect that Fanny Davenport, the famous American actress, who died in 1898, was the granddaughter of Vincent Crummles. It didn't occur to me to question that statement.

And since an Edison cylinder record catalog referred to Edgar Davenport as Fanny's brother, it seemed clear that if she were a granddaughter of T. D. Davenport he must be a grandson. I am not sure where I read that erroneous statement.

Had it only occurred to me to do my usual thorough job of investigating, instead of relying on my traplike memory of something I had read many years before, I could have found biographies of Edgar's father, Edward Loomis Davenport, in my copies of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Columbia Encyclopaedia*.

The one reference book I did consult, *The Player's Blue Book*, issued in 1901, contained a biographical sketch and an excellent photograph of Davenport, but I believe said the subject of my article had the middle name of Loomis, whereas his full name actually was Edgar Longfellow Davenport

Since Edgar Davenport's parents were living in Boston at a time when Henry Wadsworth Longfellow generally was regarded as the leading American poet, there is a possibility they were intimate associates of the author and named Edgar for him as a token of friendship. However, present day members of the Davenport family do not know of any such close relationship.

Now, that I have made a suitable apology, I must confess I am glad in some ways the mistake happened. It has brought me the pleasure of letters from Edgar Davenport's niece, Miss May Davenport Seymour of New York City, and his daughter, Mrs. Margery James, who lives in Florida. Both have been genuinely friendly and understanding.

So has Henry F. Porter of Reading, Mass., who has done extensive research on the Davenport family, and who was the first to tell me my assertion of the Crummles-Davenport relationship was completely wrong.

It was Mr. Porter who directed Mrs. Seymour's attention to my article. She in turn wrote to Mrs. James and asked her to provide me with further information concerning her father.

## II. Edward Loomis Davenport

Before resuming our discussion of Edgar Davenport's life and recording career, let's consider some facts concerning his father. The following is taken from the 11th Edition (1910-1911) of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

"Davenport, Edward Loomis (1816-1877), American actor, born in Boston, made his first appearance on the stage in Providence in support of Junius Brutus Booth. Afterwards he went to England, where he supported Mrs. Anna

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Cora Mowatt (Ritchie) . . . Macready, and others.

"In 1834 he was again in the United States, appearing in Shakespearian plays and in dramatizations of Dickens' novels. As Bill Sykes he was especially successful, and his Sir Giles Overreach and Brutus were also greatly admired.

"He died at Canton, Pa., on the 1st of September, 1877. In 1849 he had married Fanny Vining (Mrs. Charles Gill) (died 1891), an English actress also in Mrs. Mowatt's company.

"Their daughter Fanny (Lily Gipsy) Davenport (1850-1898) appeared in America at the age of 12 as the king of Spain in *Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady*. Later (1869) she was a member of Daly's company; and afterwards, with a company of her own, acted with especial success in Sardou's *Fedora* (1883), *Cleopatra* (1890), and similar plays. Her last appearance was on the 25th of March 1898, shortly before her death."

While typing the foregoing, it occurred to me that I own and have read a book about Anna Cora Mowatt, but do not remember any references in it to E. L. Davenport, though there must be some. It was amusing to note that, although Edward Davenport was not the son of Vincent Crummles, he still starred in adaptations of Dickens' novels, and that Fanny was something of an infant phenomenon at the age of 12 to portray the king of Spain.

Incidentally, the name Sykes should have been spelled Sikes.

Davenport's sketch in the *Columbia Encyclopaedia* also helped me:

"Davenport, Edward Loomis . . . began his career at Providence, R.I., in 1836, as Parson Willdo, when he supported Junius Brutus Booth in Massinger's *New Way to Pay Old Debts*. In 1845 he became associated with Anna Mowatt Ritchie, and their tour to England (1848) had great success.

"In 1856 he gave a memorable performance as Hamlet with Fanny Vining (an English actress whom he had married in 1849), as Ophelia. In 1862 he joined James W. Wallack at the Booth Theater and culminated this association in 1876 with his appearance as Brutus in a production of *Julius Caesar*.

"Davenport had great charm and a versatility that enabled him to play roles from William and Jerrold's *Black-eyed Susan* to Edgar in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, in which he made his last appearance (1887). See biography by E. F. Edgett (1901)."

Edward Davenport seems to have been the first member of his family to be interested in theatricals, or to have made a success on the stage.

### III. Letters from Edgar Davenport's Niece and Daughter

On August 10, after hearing from Mr. Porter, I received a letter from Miss Seymour, which read in part:

" . . . What you wrote was absolutely delightful, but, unfortunately, you have given Uncle Edgar the wrong family!

"You are correct—his father was the American actor, Edward Loomis Davenport, born in Boston, whose father was Asher Davenport, an innkeeper in this country. Therefore, Uncle Edgar was in no way related to the English actor, T. D. Davenport, nor to his daughter, Jean Davenport (afterwards Mrs. General Lander) . . . Is it too late to correct your continuing article in the September issue of *HOBBIES*?"

Since the September *HOBBIES* already was mailed, or about to be, I replied that it was too late, but that I would be glad to correct my error as soon as possible and would be glad to have any authentic infor-



DISTINGUISHED ACTOR EDGAR L. DAVENPORT. This photograph was sent to Jim Walsh by the actor's only surviving child, Mrs. Margery James. The inscription on the back says, "To darling Sister May, from Edgar, 1900."

—Photo by Baker's Art Gallery, Columbus, Ohio

mation concerning Edgar Davenport. On August 24 Miss Seymour wrote:

"Dear Mr. Walsh:

"Thank you for your most charming letter. I . . . hope that straightening out the Davenport families won't be a chore for you! As there are some questions about Uncle Edgar that I cannot answer, I am writing his daughter Mrs. William R. (Margery) James. I am sure she will get in touch with you. . . .

"It is possible that Uncle Edgar's mother and father knew Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, as they lived at the same time. Perhaps Cousin Margery will know . . . I do not know whether he worked in a Boston music store or whether he was deaf. He did compose songs.

"Uncle Edgar's grandfather was Asher Davenport, June 8, 1772-July 22, 1838. Born in Coventry, Conn., and died in Boston. His grandmother, Denis Loomis, was also born in Coventry on June 8, 1775, and died in Boston in 1858.

"Fanny Davenport was his oldest sister. Harry Davenport his younger brother. My mother, May Davenport (who married William Seymour), was his sister.

"Their mother was Fanny Vining, who was born in England in 1829 and died in this country in 1891."

Mrs. James was away from home for several weeks when Miss Seymour wrote, asking her to communicate with me. But on September 19 she sent me a cordial letter from which I take the following:

"My mother was Lucy Robinson Davis, born August 19, 1865, in Charlestown, Mass. My mother and father were married August 15, 1891, in Boston.

"I don't know how he happened to make his first record. He also made The

Lord's Prayer and the 23rd Psalm. But I don't know when or which company. He was in the play, *Jack Straw*, with John Drew, also the picture, *Dorian's Divorce*, with Lionel Barrymore. . . .

"One of my sons is named for my father, and his son is named for him. He also has three other children. My daughter has four and my eldest son has two, so you see, as May says, Father's line continues beautifully. . . . I am extremely proud that I am a Davenport. Thank you so very much for what you are doing. . . . I will send you some photos."

### IV. More About Davenport's Records

Mrs. James' statement that Edgar Davenport made a record of *The Lord's Prayer* and 23rd Psalm immediately caught my attention, for I could not remember seeing such a record by him in any catalog.

Now it occurs to me that he probably made Victor record 16362 of these scriptural readings, on which the artist's name was omitted. I have written to RCA-Victor in New York to ask whose name is contained in the company's files as the reader. If a reply comes in time I will add it as a postscript to this article.

### V. Information from Catalogs

When my preceding articles were written, I did not have access to the April, 1914, *Edison Blue Amberol Record Catalog* containing a brief sketch of Edgar Davenport. I now have it and can quote the following:

"Mr. Davenport is the elder son of the late Edward Davenport, and brother of Fanny Davenport, the well-known actress. Although a comparatively young man, he is an excellent example of the old school actor. He has improved his hereditary talent by conscientious study, and has played over a hundred parts since his first appearance on the stage with his father as a child in *Pizarro*.

"In 1887 he entered the Boston Museum Stock Company, entirely unknown professionally, remained five years, and became leading man, having played over 55 parts there. His impersonation of Oliver St. Aubyn in John Stetson's original *Crust of Society* company, was ranked as a most artistic and finished piece of acting."

The *Columbia* record supplement for October, 1913, contains an interesting description of Davenport's record A1371, combining *The Charge of the Light Brigade* and *Barbara Fritchie*. It is accompanied by a small photograph of the actor, showing him as middle-aged and with graying hair:

"Mr. Davenport, as one of the best elocutionists in the United States, has established his reputation as a record maker and his records of these two intensely dramatic numbers are such as to attract attention. On one side is Tenyson's magnificent tribute to the greatest feat of arms in the world's history. . . . The other selection is equally as well known . . . commemorating a happening in our own history in its way almost as heroic.

"The tale of the gentle old lady of Fredericktown, who defied Stonewall Jackson and all of his army, that the flag of the nation might fly upon her window-sill, is one that will never grow old while the United States remains a nation."

Also interesting is this comment from the *Edison Blue Amberol Supplement* of September, 1913, concern-

(Continued on page 55)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

ing Davenport's recitation (1868) of his standby, *Lasca*:

"A pathetic poem, by F. Desprez, of love and heroism on the plains of the Rio Grande, familiar to every high-school boy and girl in the country, who will find Mr. Davenport's dramatic recitation of it a great help in their study of elocution, because of the excellence of his articulation and inflection."

Speaking of *Lasca*, HOBBIES' September installment of the Davenport article brought me a letter I was glad to receive, from Miss Cara Hartwell of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, who recalled she had seen a silent movie based on the story of the poem, in which Jane Bernondy took the title role. Miss Hartwell also recalled that the cowboy movie star, William S. Hart, made a Victor Red Seal record, on one side of which he recited *Lasca* and on the other his own composition, *Pinto Ben*.

I looked up *Lasca* in an old edition of the *Film Daily Year Book* and found a Universal photoplay of that name was issued November 23, 1919. Another Universal picture with a similar title, *Lasca of the Rio Grande*, had a date of December 13, 1931.

Hart's Victor record 9297 of *Pinto Ben* and *Lasca*, with the author of the latter's name spelled as Depres, was issued in March, 1929. It cost \$1.50, and its appearance brought this review from the now long-gone *Phonograph Monthly Review*:

"This record is a puzzler; one has difficulty in surmising what its real raison d'être may be. The famous two-gun man of the early days of the movies delivers his two wild western tales in melodramatic fashion. As examples of Americana this disc is not uninteresting, and possibly an expectant audience awaits it, but one is somewhat surprised to see it appear under a Red Seal label."

And now I have reached the end of the apologetic revision and supplement to my original article about



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Edgar L. Davenport. Mark Twain once said, or is credited with saying, that a lie can go around the world while the truth is putting its pants on.

It does seem that corrections seldom are read by as many people as the original erroneous statements, but I have done my best to get this article into print as soon as possible and shall hope that all who read what I had to say about Edgar Davenport in September and October will also see, digest and profit by what I have set down here.

## The End

POSTSCRIPT — Information is still lacking as to the company for which Mr. Davenport made a record of *The Lord's Prayer* and *23rd Psalm*. A. M. Schilt of the RCA Victor Consumer Services Department says Victor Record 16362, containing these scriptural readings, is shown in the company's files to be by E. H. Humphrey.

This must be a slightly erroneous version of the name of Harry E. Humphrey, who made records of patriotic and religious recitations for all the leading companies. It is by a wide margin Humphrey's first appearance as a Victor artist, for his name does not appear in a Victor record supplement until May, 1913, when he recited *The Blue and the Gray* on record 17310.

Humphrey is one of the pioneer recording artists about whom I plan to write an HOBBIES article eventually.

I wonder if Davenport may have made the original version of this record and it was afterwards remade, because of matrix damage or for some other reason, by Humphrey. Mr. Schilt, however, says the files contain no mention of Davenport in connection with it.

## M. DOUGHERTY

233 Cedar Ave. Long Branch, N.J. 07740

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL!

A Christmas star, smd. Helsey star-shaped relish dish, 5 sections, rayed, 9 1/2" across, unusual \$12.50. Other smd. Helsey: 4 C/S, ribbed, \$20 set; 6 stemmed Colonial goblets, \$32 set; cov. butter dish, etched flrs & fern lvs., star bottom, knob top; 6" diam., \$10; 2 salad plates, etched peacock border, \$3 ea. TOBACCO JAR, purple lustre, striped effect, cover & 2 panels & "Micawber introduces David to London", 4" t., 3 1/2" diam., "L & Sons Ltd" shield mark, \$8.60. ADM. DEWEY STEIN, 6" t., portrait w/cagle & wreath, red, wh & blue striped top, nice hnd! \$10. Ridgways veg. dish, bl & wh, Oriental patt. mint, \$12.00. Cut glass tankard pitcher, 9 1/2" t., 6" base, w/4 matching tumbler, heavy, hob stars & Harvard cutting, \$85 set. Postage extra, stamped envelope, please. dp

## GEORGE O. MEHL

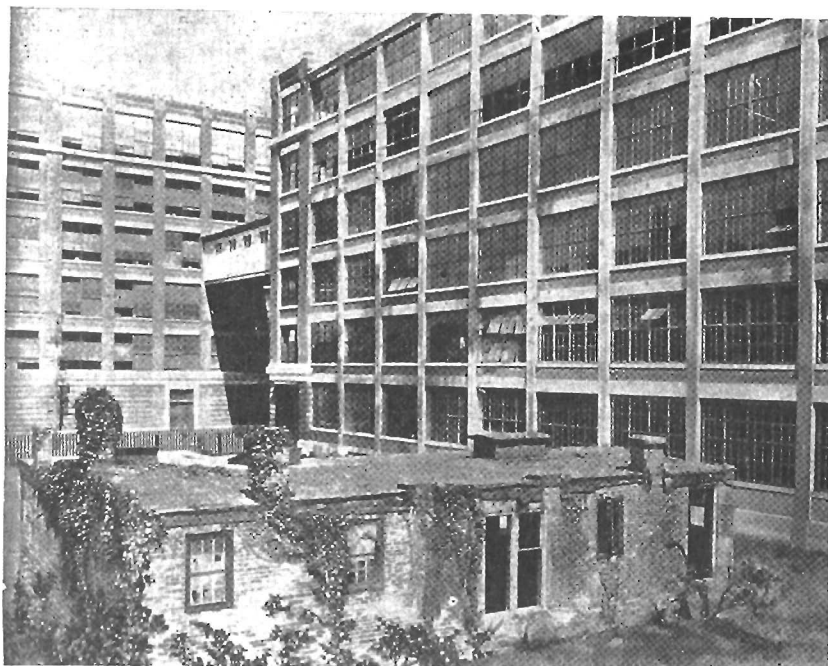
650 Cordova St., Apt. 15 Pasadena, Calif. 91106

12 1/2" light custard vase (See Nov. 66 HOBBIES cover, extreme right). Gorgeous enam. florals, \$48. Magnificent art glass acid finish vase, shades pink to pale yellow. Urn shaped, ear handles, 6 1/2" tall, \$100. 12 3/4" Dnlsy & Bulfin sapphire blue celery boat \$55. Cranberry Hobnail bride's basket in exquisite holder. (See Nov. 66 HOBBIES cover, bottom), \$80. Greentown Caramel slag cactus 3" bowl, \$32; Matching sauce, \$12.50. Cut Glass knife rest, \$10. 7" copper lustre pitcher. Diamond panels around bulbous part, enameled flowers, \$60. Lyro design Whale oil lamp with matching spillholder, \$100. Atterbury Milk glass entwined fish, dated 1889, all intact, red eyes, \$73.50. Postage and insurance additional. dp



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



**VICTOR BIRTHPLACE** — Eldridge R. Johnson began his talking machine career in this ramshackle machine shop in the 1890's by manufacturing motors for Emile Berliner's primitive gram-o-phone. The old structure is seen here, surrounded by modern RCA-Victor factory and buildings at Camden, N.J.

collectors have seen, appears to be sufficient justification for this article.

One of the pictures may be dismissed briefly. It is not really old, as it probably was taken in the late 1940s or early 1950s. It shows the grimy little repair shop in which Eldridge R. Johnson began his talking machine manufacturing business in 1898, three years before he founded the Victor Company.

This ramshackle old building here is seen surrounded by the huge RCA-Victor manufacturing complex at Camden, N.J. Presumably the old building is still standing. It should be preserved as a matter of sentiment and as a tribute to one of the most spectacular growths in all American business history.

I find the second picture more interesting. It depicts four men at the entrance to the Victor Talking Machine Company's office, presumably just after Johnson founded the company in October, 1901. He had registered Victor as a trademark the preceding March. Indications are that the sign which gave the Victor name had been installed only recently, for above it is one saying "Office, Eldridge R. Johnson."

The men appear to be dressed for cool, but not cold, weather. This makes it a reasonable supposition that the picture was made in that same historic month of October. Whatever the month and year, the scene fascinates me. (see p. 39)

I have spent hours staring at that cracked old picture and trying to identify the four gentlemen who dis-

## Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs

PART I

By JIM WALSH

**Antique  
MUSIC BOX SPECIALISTS**  
(Estab. Switzerland 1825)  
Complete Repair Service - All Types  
All Work Guaranteed  
Finest Instruments Bought & Sold  
**BORNAND MUSIC BOX CO.**  
139 4th Ave., Pelham, N.Y. 10803  
tfc

Not long ago I obtained two pictures with an interesting, and rather amusing, bearing on the early days of the legendary old Victor Talking Machine Company, which now, for almost 40 years has lost its separate identity, as a part of the giant Radio Corporation of America.

Still more recently, I have had access to what I believe to be the oldest Victor record lists yet discovered. The combination of pictures and Stone Age recording catalogs, which few

**ANTIQUES LTD.**  
2847 N. Campbell Ave.  
Tucson, Ariz. 85719  
Phone: 326-2791, Eve. 793-2271

VICTOR Talking Machine Company record collection. Includes Caruso.  
List for \$1.00 and large stamped envelope, refundable with purchase jax

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss Music Boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW SPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music Box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS

of GREAT SINGERS on

ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

**AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY**

50 Prospect Avenue  
Valhalla, New York  
tfx

## LARGE HORN

Edison Columbia phono collection.

First time offered.

Also records.

LOUIS MASCIARELLI  
173 Main St. Marlboro, Mass.  
mhp



play what the well-dressed man of 1901 was wearing.

Unless this information is available, however, somewhere in RCA-Victor files, positive identification seems impossible. The man seated on the steps *might* be George Graham, the patent-medicine-vending monologist who made a good many comic talking records for Berliner and Johnson, but was dead by 1908. He looks something like pictures I have seen of Graham, but that is far from a definite identification.

Just behind the seated man are two young fellows who appear hardly more than boys. I am haunted by the feeling that their faces are familiar, but farther than that I cannot go. The one to the left seems to have some resemblance to "S. H. Dudley" (Samuel Holland Rous), the baritone of the Haydn Quartet. But Sam Rous was around his mid-30's in 1901, and this youth couldn't conceivably be that old.

The curly-headed fellow beside him looks a bit like Len Spencer, but Len was 32 when the Victor Company was founded—again obviously too old. I thought of Harry Macdonough, but the Haydn Quartet's second tenor was 30 in 1901. Besides, he was, I believe, considerably shorter than this rather impish looking juvenile.

But if these men were not recording artists, what were they doing in the picture? Could they have been recording technicians? That hardly seems likely, considering their tender years. Is it possible they simply had done the job of erecting the new Victor Company sign and were invited to have their pictures taken beneath it?

As for the fourth man, peering from inside the door, it is a logical deduction that this was Eldridge Reeves Johnson himself. He stands proudly inside his office, and his face, as best it can be seen, bears some resemblance to Johnson's. However,

this man may have a mustache—it's hard to be sure in view of the poor lighting—and I have never heard of Johnson wearing one.

But if he was not Victor's founder, who was he and what was he doing in the picture? He surely can't be Emilio De Gogorza, who recorded for Victor from its very earliest days!

Such speculation is fascinating but fruitless. If anybody at RCA-Victor knows who these presumably long-dead gentlemen of 65 years ago were I'd appreciate the information being given to me, to be passed on in turn to readers of HOBBIES.

Another thought! Could any one of the four have been Frank P. Banta, who directed the Metropolitan Orchestra and who died late in 1903?

Now to a consideration of the old record catalogs, the earliest of which are dated February, 1901. And, as always, when I ponder Eldridge Johnson's earliest recording activities, I have a feeling of bafflement.

Although these lists appear to be the earliest that have come to light, they are not the first to be issued, for their front pages say they are "new lists" of Victor Gram-o-phone 7-inch records, Victor Gram-o-phone records (with reference to 7-inch omitted), and Monarch Gram-o-phone 10-inch records.

Never yet have I found a printed listing of the first 10 Victor 7-inch records numbered from A-1 to A-10, and containing, in order, the following titles:

"Eugene Field's Poem, 'Departure'  
"The Colored Preacher"  
"Fuzzy Wuzzy"  
"On the Road to Mandalay"  
"Birth of St. Patrick"  
"Danny Deever"  
"Limburger Cheese," afterwards retitled "The Boy and the Cheese"  
"Die Reizente Constanz"  
"Strike Up the Band, Here Comes a Sailor"  
"King Gilhooley."

Of the first six, "The Colored Preacher" was made by George Gra-

ham, who previously had recorded it for Berliner. The other five were recitations by George Broderick, who was from a prominent theatrical family and was an uncle of the famous actress, Helen Broderick.

The German number, which seems to bear witness to Johnson's early belief that he could build up a substantial foreign language record trade, was sung by August Kreuder, baritone. And the two comic songs with which the list ends were by my dear old friend, Dan W. Quinn. "Limburger Cheese" was a monolog by Burt Shepard.

These first 10 Victor records could not have been made earlier than 1900, because "Strike Up the Band" was not published until that year. Yet in the October, 1901, list, only two of the 10 remain—"Limburger Cheese," and the German song. The others had been dropped, although Quinn's "Strike Up the Band" had been replaced by one with a higher number, sung by Arthur Collins.

Here's another puzzle. Johnson was using the name Victor in February, 1901, although he didn't register it for copyright until the following month. But I have a few 7-inch discs recorded as late as October, 1900, of Johnson manufacture, called Improved Records instead of Victor.

The label says they are manufactured by Eldridge R. Johnson, Camden, N.J. But a sticker on the back of one identifies the manufacturer as the Consolidated Talking Machine Company, of Philadelphia.

These old record lists, by the way, give Johnson's business address as the Stephen Girard Building, Philadelphia, and it is a fact that, until 1906, Victor's recording studios were in Philadelphia instead of Camden.

Even earlier, but still apparently in 1900, Johnson was manufacturing records in a small way by making a 7-inch, single-faced Climax disc, issued by what he called the Globe

## Jim Walsh's Famous, Fabulous Family of Friendly, Furry Felines

AGAIN WISHES YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



1. LUCKY JIM turns to his diary for proof that he has been a good boy during 1967 and deserves a visit from Santa Claus. (Since he delights to "pick on" Plum, he would do well not to call the "Professor" as a character witness.)
2. You may have it hard to find NIPPER. He has seated himself between dolls dressed to represent the pioneer recording artist, Ada Jones and Billy Murray, in the belief that he can watch Santa without being observed.
3. FOSSY, who lived in the basement at 225 N.

- Maple St., Vinton, Va., as a bachelor for several years, took a wife last spring. He hopes Saint Nick will be good to his beautiful little boys, Fossy-Bill and Fossy-Billy.
4. PLUM, better known as "Professor" because he reportedly has a Ph.D. degree, has taken to the high places to keep a lookout for Santa.
5. PETEY has prepared a program of Christmas music to greet Santa from his ancient Victor talking machine.
6. We mourn the loss of Jim Walsh (Jim-Jim)

Jenkins, beloved cat of Mrs. Lucie Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va., who was born in September, 1966 and died April 23, 1967. When this picture was taken three days before his death he was planning a trip by parcel post to visit his Walsh family friends.

Thanks to everybody who sent us Christmas and New Year cards a year ago. We are sorry that "Papa Jim" was ill and unable to reply to most of them. Jax

Record Company. To settle a suit brought by Columbia, that alleged patent infringement, he turned the Globe Record Company over to his arch rival, and apparently substituted the Improved Record in its place.

Columbia did not begin issuing discs until early in 1902. And some, if not all, of the first Columbia "platters" were from Johnson's Climax masters.

Columbia retained the Climax name. Later it was reserved for Columbia-made records sold by the American Wholesalers of Baltimore, Md. And some of the early Climaxes had what looks like a brass reinforcement ring around the spindle hole.

More than 20 years ago the late J. L. Norton, Sr., and Jr., who operated the Woodmay Record Store in West Roxbury, Mass., showed me Climax records which had the lettering, "V. T. M. Co.," that obviously stood for Victor Talking Machine Company, in the lower left-hand corner of the label, and, if I remember right, enclosed in a circle.

This would make it appear that Johnson still issued Climax records after adopting the Victor name, but he hardly can have done that. Probably the records were made for Columbia after the change in ownership, and the lettering was used to indicate those which had been pressed from taken-over Victor matrices.

One of my Improved Records is A-510 "Minstrels, No. 5," by the Georgia Minstrels — another name for the Haydn Quartet. It appears in the February, 1901, Victor list under the same number.

My Improved Record A-509 also is a minstrel, but the Victor A-509, though still by the Georgia Minstrels, uses different songs from those on the Improved of the same number. Victor A-508 contains the same songs as the A-509 Improved.

I suspect that the first 10 Victor records I have listed appeared earlier under the Improved label and probably began life as Globes. It is evident that more than 500 titles had been listed under the Improved name before Victor came into use, and that Improved records were still being sold up to within three months of the printing of the February, 1901, Victor list.

And can somebody please tell me why a list of Victor Gram-o-phone Records was issued dated February, 1, 1901? And a much longer group of Victor Gram-o-phone Records, which also were 7-inch, was dated the same day?

I shan't copy the shorter list, because all the records it contains are in the longer compilation. Nor shall I comment extensively on what the latter contains, other than to say that the majority of low-numbered Improved records had been dropped.

And, on a closer check, I see that "Limburger Cheese," and "Die Reizende Constanz" which is described as a "comic German song," do not appear in the February, 1901, list,



WHO ARE THEY? — My story surrounds the identity of this group shown, probably in the autumn of 1901, outside the Victor office. See article for comment.

but were reinstated in October. Perhaps flaws had developed in the crude originals and they had to be remade.

The February list contains five minstrel records; nine Negro specialties by Billy Golden; one comic specialty by Burt Shepard, an American-born comedian who lived in London but came to America periodically to make records for Johnson; cornet solos by Walter B. Rogers; and banjo solos by Vess L. Ossman.

Also there were "Alphabet songs" for children by Harry Macdonough; vocal selections by the Haydn Quartet and several favorite soloists; instrumental offerings by Jean Moereman's Woodwind Quartet; and a fair representation of opera and foreign language records by the almost mythical Rosalia Chalia, including solos and duets with a contralto, Miss Frankel.

A couple of De Gogorza offerings were under the alias of E. Francisco (not yet Carlos Francisco) and some songs were by Senor Antonio Vargas who sang in both Spanish and Italian.

(To be continued)

## BINDERS FOR HOBBIES

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The wealth of information contained in each issue of HOBBIES is too valuable to be thrown around with consequent danger of loss.

Holds 12 issues.

HOBBIES Magazine

1006 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



The most wonderful Christmas Gift ever offered for Children. Talks, sings, reproduces the great orchestras, famous bands and story tellers as clearly as many machines costing ten times as much. An inimitable source of pleasure and profit for young and old. The exciting about it is substantial. Nothing to get out of order. A child can operate it. Has a ten inch japanned horn, toy sound box, perfect governor, with speed regulator, nicely polished case board, record with six children's selections, and 100 needles. Uses the regular standard Gram-o-phone record. A wonderful machine at the price. You can't fully appreciate it until you see and hear it. You can't realize how such a machine can be made for the price when you get it. It is the ideal new century gift. To be had of Talking Machine dealers, or sent on receipt of price.

Write for catalogue describing this and other styles of the Gram-o-phone.

CONSOLIDATED TALKING MACHINE CO., Philadelphia, Pa.  
ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON, Manufacturer.

DECEMBER, 1900 When you write, please mention "The Cosmopolitan."

CONSOLIDATED AD — In December, 1900, E. R. Johnson still was advertising as the Consolidated Talking Machine Company. But two months later he was issuing lists of Victor Records. Note that this advertisement refers only to "the regular standard Gram-o-phone record." The word "Victor" does not appear.

## Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs

PART II

By JIM WALSH

### Antique MUSIC BOX SPECIALISTS

(Estab. Switzerland 1826)

Complete Repair Service - All Types  
All Work Guaranteed

Finest Instruments Bought & Sold

BORNAND MUSIC BOX CO.

139 4th Ave., Pelham, N.Y. 10803

Here is the 67 - year - old listing of those 7-inch, single-faced Victor records, which sold for 50 cents each or \$5 a dozen:

THE GEORGIA MINSTREL CO. AND CHORUS  
Assisted by Messrs. S. H. Dudley; Wm. F. Hooley;  
Harry Macdonough; Frank P. Banta and The

METROPOLITAN ORCHESTRA

These Records are full of original wit and Negro humor. The Orchestra overture, the jokes of the funny end men, the brilliant chorus and the fine solos make them a veritable carnival of mirth and melody.

- A506 Minstrel Record, No. 1  
Introducing "Just One Girl," by Mr. S. H. Dudley
- A507 Minstrel Record No. 2  
Introducing "Darktown Is Out Tonight," by Mr. S. H. Dudley
- A508 Minstrel Record, No. 3  
Introducing "Old Black Joe," by the entire Company, and "The Old Folks at Home," by Mr. W. F. Hooley
- A509 Minstrel Record, No. 4  
Introducing the "Old Log Cabin in the Dell," by the entire Company and "How I Love My Lou," by Mr. S. H. Dudley, the phenomenal Baritone
- A510 Minstrel Record, No. 5  
In which Mr. W. F. Hooley, the eminent basso, sings "Massa's in de Cold, Cold, Ground"

## MUSIC BOXES

Antique Swiss Music Boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW SPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music Box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

### FAMOUS ORIGINAL NEGRO SONGS AND SHOUTS

By BILLY GOLDEN

- A 65 Turkey in de Straw
- A 68 Bye Bye Ma Honey
- A616 Roll on de Ground
- A617 Crap Shooting
- A618 The Mocking Bird. (Whistling Solo)
- A619 The Wedding O'er the Hill
- A620 Yaller Gal. (Laughing Song)
- A621 Uncle Jefferson
- A622 Rabbit Hash

By BERT SHEPARD

- A1010 Imitation of a Bird Sale in London

Selections By

THE METROPOLITAN ORCHESTRA

- A537 National Guard Grand Parade Two-Step
- A231 A Trip Through Dixie
- A232 Selection from "The Burgomaster"
- A233 Fiddle-Dee-Dee March
- A234 My Blushin' Rosie (Medley March from Weber & Fields "Fiddle-Dee-Dee")
- A295 My Sun Flower Sue. (From "Hodge Podge & Co.")
- A384 The Gay Golf Girl. (From "Hodge, Podge & Co.")
- A385 The Richard Carvel March
- A386 Selection from "The Mikado," No. 1
- A387 Selection from "The Mikado," No. 2
- A388 Selection from "Patience," No. 1
- A389 Selection from "Patience," No. 2
- A390 Selection from "Patience," No. 1
- A391 Selection from "Patience," No. 2
- A392 Selection from "Pinafore," No. 1
- A393 Selection from "Pinafore," No. 2
- A394 Selection from "Pinafore," No. 2
- A395 The Morning Journal's Waltz. (Strauss)
- A396 Tales from Vienna Woods, Waltz (Strauss)
- A255 Twin Star March
- A289 Who Dat Say Chicken?

Cornet Solos by  
MR. WALTER B. ROGERS  
Cornet Soloist of Sousa's Band

- A524 A Soldier's Dream
- A525 Southern Dance
- A529 Concert Polka
- A531 German Sounds
- A532 War Song with Variations
- A532 Yankee Doodle with Variations

Banjo Solos by

MR. VESS L. OSSMAN

- A623 Oriental Intermezzo, "Salome"
- A624 Selection from "Florodora"

Soprano Solos by

MME. ROSALIA CHALIA

- A542 Caro Nome from "Rigoletto," (Verdi)
- A543 O Patria Mia, from "Aida," (Verdi)
- A544 Il Bacio (The Kiss), Italian (Arditi)
- A547 Pieta Signore, Italian. (Stradella)
- A545 Home, Sweet Home. (Payne)
- A552 "Tu" Habanera, Cuban Song. (Sanchez Fuentes)

- A551 Seguidillas Manchegas, Spanish Folk Song

Soprano Solos by

MME. ROSALIA CHALIA

- With Flute Obligato by Mr. Frank V. Badollet
- A541 Thou Brilliant Bird, French. (Felicien David)

(Turn to page 38)

(See our Music Box listing on page 39 — Lloyd G. Kelley)

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS

of GREAT SINGERS on ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla, New York

LARGE HORN  
Edison Columbia phono collection.  
First time offered.

Also records.

LOUIS MASCIARELLI  
173 Main St. Marlboro, Mass.

- A548 Angel's Serenade. French. (Braga)  
 A549 Gounod's Serenade. French  
 A550 Ave Maria. Latin. (Gounod)  
 Duets for Soprano and Contralto by  
 MME. CHATA and MISS FRANKEL  
 A546 Serenata Melisole. Italian. (Bolto)  
 A555 Sur La Grande Mer. (Night Hymn at Sea).  
 French. (Goring Thomas)  
 A554 Quis Est Homo. Latin. (Stabat Mater)  
 A556 Recitative and Duet, from "Martha." Italian.  
 (Plotow)  
 A557 Lakme. French. (Delibes)

- Baritone Solos by  
 SIG. E. FRANCISCO  
 A625 Romanza. "Lola." Spanish  
 A627 Toreador's Song. French. With Orchestra  
 Accompaniment

- MR. HARRY MACDONOUGH, Tenor  
 A533 I Can't Tell Why I Love You, But I Do  
 A492 The Duchess of Central Park  
 A605 Where is My Boy To-night? (Organ  
 Accompaniment)  
 A609 Side by Side  
 A610 My Sweet Queen. (One of Olcott's new songs)  
 A611 When the Birds Go North Again  
 A612 A Picture Without a Frame  
 A613 The Girl I Should Have Married Long Ago  
 A614 Here's To The Rose  
 A615 Home, Sweet Home  
 A636 My Old Kentucky Home  
 A637 Love Me Phebe

- ALPHABET SONGS  
 By HARRY MACDONOUGH  
 A special series for little folks. Bright, catchy  
 melodies, with a dainty little song for each letter  
 of the alphabet.  
 A628 Alphabet Songs, A B C  
 A629 Alphabet Songs, D E  
 A630 Alphabet Songs, F G H I  
 A631 Alphabet Songs, J K L M  
 A632 Alphabet Songs, N O P  
 A633 Alphabet Songs, Q R S T  
 A634 Alphabet Songs, U V W  
 A635 Alphabet Songs, X Y Z

- Baritone Solos by  
 MR. S. H. DUDLEY  
 A504 Put Me Off at Buffalo  
 A 45 The Village Choir  
 A503 Parody on Just One Girl  
 A505 Vaudeville Specialty  
 A 64 The Tale of a Kangaroo. (From "The  
 Burgomaster")  
 A585 Why Don't the Band Play? (Sung by May  
 Irwin, in "The Belle of Bridgeport")  
 A586 Tommy Atkins. (With Trumpet Calls)

- MR. S. H. DUDLEY  
 Orchestra Accompaniment  
 A511 We'll Never Haul the Old Flag Down  
 A512 Chi Wouldn't That Jar You!  
 A513 Rh-da and Her Pagoda. From "San Toy"  
 A514 Chinese Soje Man. From "San Toy"  
 A515 When the Moon Comes Up Behind de Hill.  
 (Paul Dresser's New Song)  
 A516 A Private in the Ranks  
 A517 My Blushin' Rosie. (Sung by Fay Templeton,  
 in "Fiddle-Dee-Dee")  
 A518 My Sun Flower Sue. (Sung by Peter Dalley, in  
 "Hodge, Podge")  
 A519 When Reuben Comes to Town. (Sung in Rogers  
 Bros. "Central Park")

- Baritone Solos by  
 MR. J. J. FISHER  
 A564 Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep  
 A560 Hosanna  
 A561 Charity  
 A562 Gounod's Nazareth  
 A565 I Heard the Voice of Jesus  
 A568 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name  
 A569 Bless Be the Tie That Binds  
 A570 Blessed Assurance  
 A567 The Sweetest Story Ever Told  
 A563 Drinking Song from "The Rose of Persia"  
 A566 Anchored

- MR. J. J. FISHER  
 With Orchestra Accompaniment  
 A571 A Bandit's Life  
 A572 Armorer's Song, from "Robin Hood"  
 A573 Ashore  
 A580 Believe  
 A574 Plee as a Bird  
 A575 My Queen Irene  
 A576 Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep  
 A577 Since Thou Art Mine  
 A578 Sweet Suzanne  
 A579 The Palms

- MOEREMAN'S WOOD WIND QUARTET  
 Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone and Bassoon  
 A596 Boccherini's Minuet  
 A597 Nearer My God To Thee  
 A598 Traumeri  
 A599 Robin Adair  
 A600 Bridal March, from "Lohengrin"  
 A602 The Palms  
 A603 Annie Laurie  
 A604 Gottschalk's Last Hope

- WESTMINSTER CHIMES  
 A606 Rock of Ages  
 A607 Come, Ye Disconsolate  
 A608 Adeste Fideles

- THE HAYDN QUARTET  
 A107 Mandy Lec. (Solo and Chorus)  
 A 97 Lead Kindly Light  
 A520 College Medley  
 A521 Onward, Christian Soldiers  
 A522 Gottschalk's Last Hope

- Baritone Solos by  
 SENOR ANTONIO VARGAS  
 In Spanish and Italian  
 A587 El Toreador  
 A588 Jerusalem. (The Holy City)  
 A589 Eternamente. (For all Eternity.) Sung in  
 Italian  
 A590 La Verbena de la Paloma  
 A591 Te Amo, Danza Mexicana  
 A592 Cancion del Ruisenor  
 A593 La Serenata de Schubert

- A594 Ave Maria. Italian. From "Cavalleria  
 Rusticana"  
 A595 Campanas de Carrion

- MR. ARTHUR COLLINS  
 Orchestra Accompaniment  
 A538 Every Race Has a Flag But the Coon  
 A539 Strike Up the Band

- RECORDS BY GEO. W. JOHNSON  
 The Original Whistling Coon  
 A581 The Whistling Girl  
 A582 The Whistling Coon  
 A583 The Laughing Song  
 A584 The Laughing Coon

- RECORDS MADE IN MILAN, ITALY  
 By SIGNOR CARLO CAFFETO  
 A1000 Fravol belle brune, from "Manon"  
 A1001 Spirito Gentil, from "Favorita"  
 A1004 Morir si pura e bella  
 A1006 Un di all'azzurro Spazio  
 A1008 Di quella Pira, from "Trovatore"  
 A1009 Tombadiglia avi Miel, from "Lucia  
 Lammermoor"

- By SIGNORINA GRIPPA  
 A1007 Ernani Involami

- By SIGNOR MOREO  
 A1002 O Sommo Carlo, from "Ernani"

- By SIGNOR FRANCHI  
 A1003 Serenata, Mephisto, from "Faust"

- Mandolin Solo by  
 PROF. PALLIVICINI  
 A1005 Le Carnival di Venezia

Next month I'll give the list of 10-inch Monarch records for February, 1901, and the October, 1901, list of both Victors and Monarchs.  
 (To be continued)

## LINCOLNIANA IN 1967

(Continued from page 33)

siege and battle. This battle was exceedingly important to the Union Forces and most discouraging to the Confederates.

The Battle of Winchester hastened the fall of the Confederacy since the important Shenandoah Valley was captured by General Philip Sheridan and General Early's army practically was destroyed. These victories shut off supplies to the Confederacy from the fertile Shenandoah Valley and helped Grant in his campaign to capture Richmond and destroy Lee's army.

## ADDITIONAL CIVIL WAR ARTICLES OF INTEREST IN 1967

"Pickett's Report on Gettysburg," Civil War Times, October, 1967.

The charge of General George Pickett's brigade at Gettysburg has become a famous one. His report of this charge to General Lee was not accepted. He was asked to write another report.

It is not known what was in the first report nor has it been located. Pickett and Lee were not close friends after the war. I assume that the first report was somewhat critical of the strategy employed at Gettysburg.

"A Recollection of Stonewall Jackson," American History Illustrated, June, 1967.

This is a report on Jackson's marriage, his teaching at Virginia Military Institute, and other personal characteristics. During the war, Jackson usually is spoken of as being poorly dressed and not too particular about his appearance.

His picture while at V. M. I. portrays a handsome young man, well dressed, and exhibiting excellent military bearing.

"Jefferson Davis, An Appraisal," by Bill I. Wiley, Civil War Times, April, 1967.

Davis possessed a fine education, was intellectual, and had an excellent background in military and government affairs. He did not seek the Presidency of the Confederacy, but once he was inaugurated he labored hard to insure victory.

His personality and temperament worked to his great disadvantage. His judgment was sometimes excellent, at other times less so. His relations with the Confederate generals left much to be desired. He dictated much of the policy and procedures, and, thereby, it seems alienated some of his best military people.

"Professor Lowe — A Personality Profile," Civil War Times, August, 1967.

Thaddeus C. Lowe was not a professor. He was scarcely an elementary school graduate, as judged by present day standards. According to Carl Sandburg, Lowe was shot at more than any other person during the Civil War. He was a ballon-

ist and his balloon was used to spot enemy troops, artillery emplacements, and other information of value to the Union Army.

## OTHER EVENTS

William K. Alderfer, Lansing, Mich., has been appointed Illinois State Historian. He succeeds Clyde C. Walton who is now Director of Libraries, Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, Ill.

Since he was trained at the Universities of Pennsylvania, Rochester, and Wisconsin, Alderfer has the necessary academic preparation for this important post. An additional qualification is that the newly appointed Historian has accumulated valuable experience as a collector for various libraries and historic sites.

Carl Sandburg, 89, died in Flat Rock, N.C. July 22, 1967. On October 1, 1967, his ashes were scattered about the Remembrance Rock in the Carl Sandburg Park adjacent to his birthplace at Galesburg, Ill.

Also scattered about this large rock is dust from Valley Forge; Sweden, Plymouth, Mass., and other noted places. In addition, there is dust from the 13 schools in the United States that are named after the great poet and biographer of Lincoln.

Sandburg wrote a biography of Lincoln that has been the basis for proclaiming Sandburg as the Dean of Lincoln biographers. This work consists of six large volumes — 2 volumes on "The Prairie Years" and 4 volumes on the "War Years of Abraham Lincoln." Sandburg has the title of Poet-Laureate of Illinois.

The Congress of Illinois Historical Societies held its first meeting at Monticello, Ill., May 19, 1967. Historical societies are growing by leaps and bounds. In 1967, the Illinois State Historical Society added 419 new members. Several counties in Illinois organized historical groups.

Civil War Round Tables tend to be organized by cities. Historical Societies, however, appear to be organized by counties.

The Chicago Tribune Magazine of Sunday, January 15, 1967, contains pictures of Beardstown, Ill. Featured is the City Hall when Lincoln defended Duff Armstrong in the famous Almanac Trial in 1858. The story goes that Lincoln used an almanac to discredit the testimony of a witness and thereby secured the verdict of innocent for his client.

In the same issue of the Chicago Tribune Magazine is the picture of Anthony Trollope, a contemporary of Dickens and Thackeray. The English-born author visited the United States during the Civil War. Later on he returned to England and wrote two volumes on North America. Trollope was impressed by Chicago, liked Boston best, but in general, his books were well written and showed a warm regard for American people.

These volumes long have been forgotten but are to be republished in a short version by Penguin Modern Classics. Trollope's comments about the war, Lincoln, and other items, have proved to be almost wholly true, except Trollope predicted that the United States would be divided by the war into two countries, North and South.

The Boy Scout Pilgrimage to Lincoln's Tomb, conducted each year in April, becomes larger each year. In 1967, more than 4,000 Scouts made the Pilgrimage. Dr. Wayne Temple, editor of the Lincoln Herald, was the speaker for the occasion.

The old Capitol Building in Springfield is being reconstructed to resemble the building as Lincoln knew it. In it he made his famous "House Divided" speech. The exterior of the newly constructed building will typify the structure of 1860, but the underground portion will be very large to accommodate a library storage, and the parking of cars. The reconstructed building will be two stories. The same rocks and other materials will be used as much as possible in the restoration. Completion and dedication date is August, 1968.



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs

PART III

By JIM WALSH



HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

**BURLESQUE.** By 1910 Victor's "His Master's Voice" was the most famous trademark in the world. It frequently was adapted for political cartoons and sometimes burlesqued, as in this English post card of uncertain date.

Eldridge R. Johnson began his phenomenally successful career as a purveyor of talking machines and records in the late 1890s when, still in his tiny machine shop, he began manufacturing motors for the primitive Berliner Gram-o-phones.

There is no space to recount here the story of how, after prolonged litigation among the pioneer phonograph manufacturers, Johnson took over the business from Berliner and set up the Victor Talking Machine Company.

**LARGE HORN**  
Edison Columbia phono collection.  
First time offered.

Also records.

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173 Main St. Marlboro, Mass.

It is worth noting, however, that in 1899 an English artist, Francis Barraud, had painted a picture of a little fox terrier, "Nipper," listening to an early model cylinder phonograph.

Barraud tried vainly to sell Nipper's painting to the Edison Bell Company, but its officials were unable to see its advertising value. Instead, they suggested he try his luck with the Gramophone Company, which an American, Barry Owen, had established in London the year before.

The Gramophone management saw at once that the painting could become a valuable trademark and bought it for \$500. Barraud painted over the original cylinder machine he had drawn, and substituted a small Gramophone. Traces of the cylinder apparatus still can be detected in the original picture.

The Gramophone Company began using "His Master's Voice" as an advertisement, although the picture did not appear on its record labels until 1909.

Meanwhile, Berliner, through his business association with Gramophone, obtained the right to use the picture in the States and registered it as a trademark in July, 1900.

It is odd that Johnson did not immediately begin using the picture, but Nipper and the gramophone do not appear on any of the 1901 record lists or records issued that year. The pictures are present, however, on the supplement for August, 1902. The oldest magazine advertisement I have been able to find with the trademark is dated September, 1902. The trademark is on the back cover of the Victor Record Catalog for February, 1902.

Yet, within another eight years, Victor's business had grown to such proportions that in 1910 *Collier's Weekly* termed "His Master's Voice" the most famous trademark in the world, which it certainly was.

Cartoonists, especially those dealing with political controversies, frequently modeled their drawings after it, and it was sometimes burlesqued, as in the accompanying reprint of an

English post card, just for the fun of it.

The pictures, taken in 1910 and 1916, illustrate graphically the growth of Johnson's business during those golden years. And the manufacturing plant was steadily added to after 1916.

Even in 1924, when it looked as if the phonograph might be about to receive its death sentence from radio, Johnson, apparently unable to believe that calamity could overtake his enterprises, continued to expand. Perhaps, however, electric recording and the Orthophonic Victrola were already past the planning stage, and the new facilities were added to take care of the demand that developed for the improved products.

A victim of failing health, Johnson sold the Victor business to New York bankers in 1927. They, in turn, sold it a year or so later to RCA.

So, even if Johnson is considered to have begun his talking manufacturing activities in 1898, his direct association with the business lasted less than 30 years. And he was able to retire many times a millionaire.

Probably, being well out of it, he gave a wry grimace when Victor's record business dropped in 1932 to less than it had been in 1901. But, of course, it eventually came back and is now, as RCA-Victor, larger than ever.

We already have looked at the February, 1901, list of 7-inch records. Now let's examine the 10-inch Monarch Gram-o-phone Record List of the same date.

It is not long. Again we find the Georgia Minstrels and the Metropolitan Orchestra. Harry Macdonough has five tenor solos. One "The Holy City," he once remarked to me, "paid

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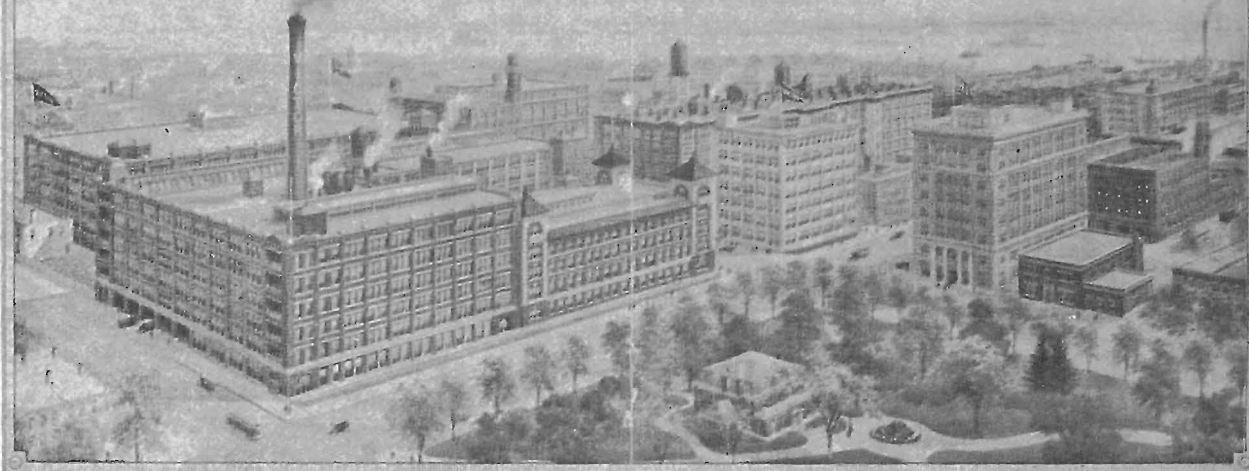
Antique Swiss Music Boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW SPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

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**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**

## The Greatest Musical Center in the Whole World



To one of these modern structures of steel and concrete that house the giant industry of the Victor and Victrola, just across the historic Delaware River from the city of Philadelphia, comes a never-ending procession of the very greatest artists in the whole world. To-day it may be Caruso; to-morrow it may be Alda, Amato, Boni, Calvo, Colpe, de Casoria, Destina, Farrar, Gaddi, Gluck, Hempel, Homer, Marinelli, M. Comas, Melba, Ober, Ruffo, Schimanski, Scotti, Sembrich, T. T. razzini, Whitehill or Williams; or it may be several of them assembling to unite in making a masterpiece like the "Sextette from Lucia." Or it may be Paderewski, Elman, Kreisler;

or Harry Lauder; and then again it might be Sousa and his Band, or some other organization.

But wherever it is, or whatever the organization, it is certain that within the walls of these buildings is heard day in and day out, year in and year out, a variety of music such as no other place on earth has ever heard.

And unlike music that is heard in any other place, which is only a momentary pleasure ending with its rendition, Victor music lives forever. From its beginning in the Recording Laboratory, it goes through the various processes necessary to its perpetuation, and eventually leaves the Shipping Department to be heard again and again in millions of homes throughout the world.

**STILL GROWING.** Continued growth of the Mammoth Victor plant is shown in this picture. Taken from the July, 1916, Victor Record Supplement.

my rent for many years." When he sang it over and over on cylinder records it was described as "unquestionably the finest record ever produced."

To Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley), fell the honor of being represented by the first in numerical order 10-inch record, "When Reuben Comes to Town." I am proud to have a good copy. It was 3001, but this was changed the following year to 519, its serial number, which indicated the order in which it had been recorded.

Evidently, Johnson started out to number records according to blocks, with Dudley's running from 3001 to 3009. So it does not follow that 3001 was the first 10-inch disc the Company made.

Vess L. Ossman had 10 banjo solos. Alec Heindl of the Boston Symphony Orchestra played two 'cello numbers. Sig E. Francisco sang eight selections in Italian, French, and Spanish; and Sig. Antonio Vargas intruded on Harry Macdonough's territory by warbling "The Holy City"—in Spanish.

But here is the list:

### Selections By THE METROPOLITAN ORCHESTRA

- 3014 The Stars and Stripes Forever! (Sousa)
- 3015 A Southern Reverie
- 3016 Impeccious Davis
- 3032 Selections from "Hurly Burly," introducing "Keep Away from Emmeline," and "Little Old New York is Good Enough for Me."
- 3033 The Blue Danube Waltz. (Strauss)
- 3034 "Fanchette"

A charming "Entre Act," by Theo. Benedix.

### By the Tenor MR. HARRY MACDONOUGH

- 3012 The Holy City, with organ accompaniment

This is unquestionably the finest R-record ever produced.

- 3013 The Sabbath Morn
- Chime Bells, Adesle Fidells and one verse of "The Holy City," by Mr. Macdonough.
- 3050 My Dreams (Tosti)
- 3060 My Old Kentucky Home
- 3061 Love Me, Phoebe

### By the Baritone MR. S. H. DUDLEY

- 3001 When Reuben Comes to Town. Whistling Chorus and Clogs.
- The hit of Rogers Bros., in "Central Park."
- 3002 The Tale of the Kangaroo. From "The Burgomaster."
- 3003 Listen to My Tale of Woe.
- Hub Smith's story of Johnnie Jones and his sister Sue.
- 3004 Put Me Off at Buffalo
- 3005 The Village Choir
- Imitations of soprano, tenor and bass voices.
- Very funny.
- 3006 Nothing But Nerves
- Stuttering song from "The Greek Slave."
- 3007 Oh! Wouldn't that Jar You! (Comic)
- 3008 Why Don't the Band Play? (Sung by May Irwin, in "The Belle of Bridgeport")
- 3009 Private Tommy Atkins. With Trumpet Calls

### By the Banjo King MR. VESS L. OSSMAN

- 3041 The L. A. W. March
- 3042 A Negro Band Contest
- 3043 An Ethiopian Mardi Gras
- 3044 The Man Behind the Gun
- 3045 The Stars and Stripes Forever
- 3046 Hands Across the Sea
- 3047 Selections from "San Toy"
- 3048 Oriental Intermezzo "Salome"
- 3049 Tell Me Pretty Maiden, from "Florodora"
- 3050 A Bunch of Rags An original arrangement of popular "rag time" melodies.

### 'Cello Solos By

### MR. ALEX. HEINDL of the Boston Symphony Orchestra

- 3030 Rubenstein's Melody in F
- 3031 Intermezzo, Cavalleria Rusticana

### Baritone Solos By

### STG. E. FRANCISCO

- In Italian, French and Spanish
- 3051 Canzone del Fortor. Italian. (Drinking Song from "Martha")
- 3056 Largo al factotum. Italian. (Barber of Seville)
- 3052 La Paloma. Spanish
- 3053 Consejo. Spanish
- 3054 Les Mersillaise. French. With Orchestra Accompaniment.
- 3055 Torreador's Song. French. From the opera of "Carmen," with Orchestra Accompaniment.
- 3057 The Lost Chord. Organ Accompaniment.
- 3058 Les Rameaux. French. Organ Accompaniment.

### By SIGNOR ANTONIO VARGAS

- 3010 "Jerusalem." (The Holy City sung in Spanish)

### MINSTREL FIRST PART RECORDS

### By THE GEORGIA MINSTREL COMPANY AND CHORUS

Messrs. S. H. DUDLEY, WM. F. HOOLEY, HARRY MACDONOUGH, FRANK P. BANTA, and THE METROPOLITAN ORCHESTRA

These Records are full of original wit and Negro humor. The Orchestra overture, the jokes of the funny end men, the brilliant chorus and fine solos make them a veritable carnival of mirth & melody.

3035 Monarch Minstrel, No. 1  
Opening Overture, Metropolitan Orchestra. Chorus. "Wake Up, Hannah," by the entire company, jokes by the "end men," solo, "I've Gwine Back to Dixie," by the renowned basso, Mr. W. F. Hooley.

3036 Monarch Minstrel, No. 2  
Overture by the Metropolitan Orchestra, "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginie," by the Georgia Minstrel Company; humorous conversation between "Bones" and the Interlocutor, and "My Old Kentucky Home," by the popular baritone, Mr. Samuel Holland Dudley.

3037 Monarch Minstrel, No. 3  
Opening Chorus, "Hear Dem Bells." Some more real minstrel jokes. The sweet voiced tenor, Mr. Harry Macdonough, sings "A Picture No Artist Can Paint."

3038 Monarch Minstrel, No. 4  
Overture by the Metropolitan Orchestra. The End Men again say something funny and the audience laughs. Mr. Macdonough sings "Mandy Lee."

3039 Monarch Minstrel, No. 5  
Opening Chorus by the entire company. "In the Evening by the Moonlight" followed by some more jokes. The announcement that Mr. Macdonough will sing "The Blue and the Gray," is hailed with tumultuous applause.

3040 Monarch Minstrel, No. 6  
Opening Overture, Metropolitan Orchestra, "My Old Cabin Home," by the soloists and chorus. "Tambo" has something to say, and Mr. Dudley sings the popular song, "Fly, Fly, Fly," with full chorus and orchestra.

The front cover of this scanty little Monarch Gram-o-phone 10-inch Record List said: "The results are wonderful, even when compared with our regular 7-inch Record, the greatest sound producing record ever made."

(To be continued)



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- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

Now we come to consideration of Johnson's Record Catalog, including both 7-inch Victor and 10-inch Monarch Records, all single-faced, of course, for October, 1901. That is the month in which Victor Talking Machine Company came into being.

Many titles in the 7-inch List are duplicated in the 10-inch. Emil Muench, a German tenor whose records were among the foreign language mainstays of the Victor Catalogs for many years, is represented in both sizes by solos and duets with August Kreuder.

I never have known anything about Muench, the man. But his career continued through the first few years of the electric recording era.

A "Vaudeville Specialty," by Charles P. Lowe, xylophonist, who played for all the pioneer record companies and Miss Jottie, whoever she was, sounds intriguing. I'd like to find that record. It includes an xylophone solo, a German folk song, and a drum solo — surely the first drum solo ever recorded.

I know nothing of D. E. Hanlon, who had a couple of recitations. But his "The Ravings of a Maniac" is the same thing as "The Mad Ravings of John McCullough," a famous actor, now dead. The recitation was recorded for various companies by a good-sized scattering of elocutionists. Len Spencer's brother, Harry, was prominent among them.

Frank Seiden was probably the first singer to specialize in Hebrew records. He was represented by 10 of the 7-inch size.

Turning to the 10-inch Monarchs, which were offered at \$1 each or \$10 a dozen, it is odd that there were nine discs by the American Quartet, but none by the Haydn. I have some of

these American Quartet records, however, and Bill Hooley, the bass, announces them as being by the Haydn!

The late Sam Rous wrote me many years ago that he recollected the Quartet as being composed of Albert Campbell, first tenor; W. T. Leahy, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone; and W. F. Hooley, bass. It was a different organization from the American Quartet of John Bieling, Billy Murray, Steve Porter, and Hooley, who began singing for Victor in 1909.

"Miss Spencer," of course, was Grace Spencer (Mrs. W. F. Doolittle) who is remembered affectionately by those who attended the John Bieling Day events of 1948 and 1950. The Soprano's recording career had been so far in the remote past that she was not acquainted with any of the other pioneer artists who were present.

Here is the complete 7- and 10-inch List for October, 1901:

### VICTOR 7-INCH RECORDS 50c each, \$2.00 per dozen

#### THE AMERICAN QUARTET

- A910 Medley of Plantation Songs
- A911 Dancing on the Old Barn Floor
- Imitations of various animals.
- A912 Darling Nellie Gray
- A913 Louisiana Lou
- A914 Good Bye Dolly Gray
- With Bangle Calls.
- A915 In Dixie Land
- Sung in unison, giving loud chorus effect.
- A916 The Bridge
- A917 Nationality Medley
- With imitations of different races.

#### THE HAYDN QUARTET

- A656 Carry Me Back to Ole Virginia
- A657 I've Gwine Back to Dixie
- A658 A Sleighride Party. (Descriptive)

#### Duet

#### MISS SPENCER and MR. MACDONOUGH

- A904 When We Are Married

#### MR. MACDONOUGH

- A907 Absence Makes the Heart Grow Ponder
- A908 The Tale of the Bumble Bee. (King Do, Do)
- A909 I've a Longing in My Heart for You, Louise
- A948 The Honeysuckle and the Bee
- A949 He Laid Away a Suit of Gray to Wear The Union Blue
- A950 My Black Pearl
- A951 The Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid
- From "The Rogers Bros in Washington," a sequel to "When Reuben Comes to Town."
- A952 Good Morning Carrie

#### MR. DAN W. QUINN

- A918 Whistling Mike
- A919 Go Way Back and Sit Down
- A920 Good Morning, Carrie
- A921 The Way To Kiss a Girl
- A922 When Mr. Shakespeare Come to Town
- A923 Ain't That a Shame
- A924 Simple Little Sister Mary Green
- A925 Mr. Dingy, Don't Be So Slingy
- A926 A Growler On a String
- A927 Marching to the Music of the Band

#### Comic and Negro Songs

#### WILL F. DENNY

- A933 I Want Someone To Care For Me
- A934 How the Irish Beat the Band
- A936 Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat, Is "Home, Sweet Home," to Me
- A937 I'm Looking at You, Liza
- A938 The Tick, Tack, Tocking of the Clocking on her Stocking
- A939 The Shadows on the Door. (Comic Laughing Song)
- A961 At the Pan-I-Marry-Can. (The Buffalo Exposition Song)
- A962 Sarah From Syracuse

#### German Songs

#### EMIL MUENCH

- A939 Aus Der Jugendzeit
- A940 Sonnenlicht, Sonnenschein
- A941 Dein Gedenk Ich Margaretha
- A942 Wiegenlied. (Mozart)
- A943 Unter dem Lindenbaum
- A944 Im Tiefen Keller
- A945 In Einem Kühlen Grunde
- A946 Lorelei

#### German Duet

- EMIL MUENCH and AUGUST KREUDER
- A947 Die Beiden Zelter

#### Comic German Song

#### AUGUST KREUDER

- A8 Die Retzende Constanze

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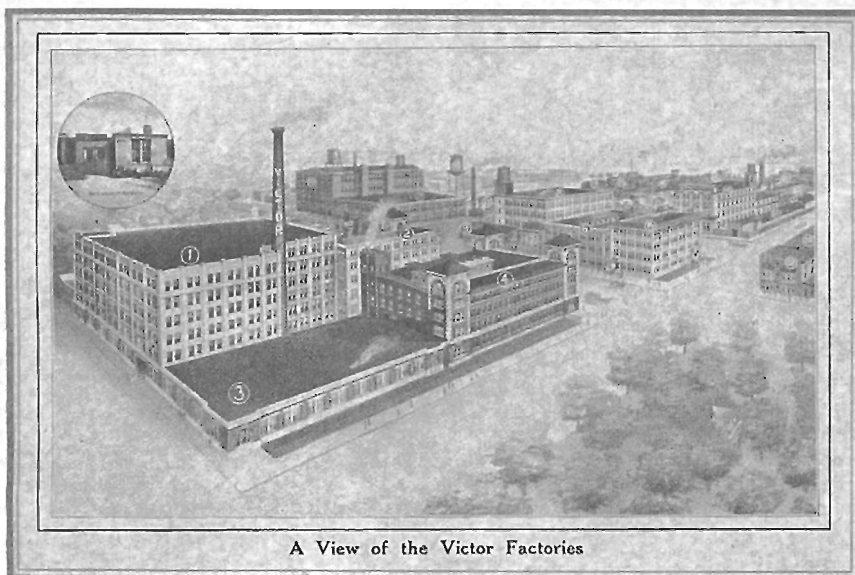
Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those that know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music Box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island

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A View of the Victor Factories

**AMAZING GROWTH.** Eldridge R. Johnson's talking machine and record business, which began in 1898 in a small repair shop, had grown 12 years later to this impressive size. Taken from the July, 1910, Victor Record Supplement.

**CHAS. P. LOWE and MISS JOTTIE**  
A963 Vaudeville Specialty  
(Introducing an Xylophone Solo, a German Folk Song and a Drum Solo). Note: In addition to the above, Mr. Lowe has made new records of his Victor list of Xylophone Solos.

**Recitations**  
**MR. D. E. HANLON**  
A 62 The Ravings of a Maniac  
A938 All the World's a Stage, from "As You Like It."

**Humorous Recitations**  
**MR. BURT SHEPARD of London, England**  
A7 Limburger Cheese  
(The Boy and the Cheese)  
A898 Courtship  
A899 How I Got To Morrow  
A903 Experience as a Dry Goods' Clerk

**Hebrew Records**  
**F. SEIDEN**  
A932 Kol Nidre  
A930 Al Tiru Avdi Jankew von Koenig Lear  
A928 Rosinkes und Mandlen von Schulames  
A929 Das Pastuchil von Bar Kochba  
A931 Min Hamelzar von Blimele  
A933 Hamavdel von ein groben Jung  
A934 Die lustige Chasidem  
A935 Ein Gelechter von Kabzensohn  
A936 Schmendrik's besingen  
A937 Das Polische Jungel

**MONARCH 10-INCH RECORDS**  
\$1.00 each, \$10.00 per dozen  
**THE AMERICAN QUARTET**  
3511 Medley of Plantation Songs  
3512 Dancing on the Old Barn Floor  
With imitations of different animals.  
3513 A Night Trip to Buffalo  
The train starts; humorous conversation between two Irishmen, one of them gets to sleep and disturbs the passengers with loud snoring, falls out of his berth in a troubled dream, believing that he is an A.P.A.  
3514 A Negro Wedding in Southern Georgia  
An original marriage service by the colored parson, with "Hear Dem Belts," and other appropriate hymns by the choir.

3515 Darling Nellie Gray  
3516 Louisiana Lou  
3518 The Sidewalks of New York  
"The East Side," on Saturday Night, the street vendors, the "Hand Organ Man" singing and dancing of the children, the policeman who interrupts the fun and makes them "move on."

3519 The Battle of Santiago  
Sunday morning on board the "Oregon." The call to divine service, Cervera's fleet discovered coming out, the battle, the "Star Spangled Banner."  
3520 Nationality Medley  
Imitations of Negro, Irish, German, Hebrew and Yankee.

**Duets**  
**MISS SPENCER and MR. MACDONOUGH**  
3501 Tell Me, Pretty Maiden, From "Florodora."  
3502 Life's Dream Is O'er  
3503 Home to Our Mountain, "Il Trovatore."  
3504 The Lord Is My Shepherd. (Sacred)  
3505 O That We Two Were Maying  
3506 I Will Magnify Thee, O God. (Sacred)

**MR. MACDONOUGH**  
3507 Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder  
3508 The Tale of the Bumble Bee, from "King Do-Do."  
3509 In the Shade of the Palm, from "Florodora."  
3511 I Can't Tell Why I Love You, But I Do  
3512 The Honeysuckle and the Bee  
3513 He Laid Away A Suit of Gray To Wear The Union Blue  
3514 My Black Pearl  
3515 The Wedding of the Reuben and the Maid  
The sequel to "When Reuben Comes to Town."

The hit of "The Rogers Bros. in Washington."  
3556 Good Morning Carrie  
3510 I've A Longing in My Heart for You, Louise

**Alphabet Songs**  
A special series for little folks. Bright, catchy melodies, with a dainty little song for each letter of the alphabet.  
3557 A, B, C, D, E, F  
3558 G, H, I, J, K, L, M  
3559 N, O, P, Q, R, S, T  
3560 U, V, W, X, Y, Z

**Comic and Negro Songs**  
**WILL F. DENNY**  
3561 I Want Someone To Care For Me  
3562 How the Irish Beat the Band  
3564 Any Old Place I Can Hang My Hat Is "Home."  
Sweet Home To Me  
3565 I'm Looking At You Lize  
3566 The Tick Tack Tocking of the Clocking  
on Her Stocking  
3567 The Shadows on the Door. (Comic Laughing Song)  
3568 O, Don't It Tickle You  
3569 At the Pan-I-Marry-Can. (The Buffalo Exposition Song)  
3570 Sarah from Syracuse

**MR. DAN W. QUINN**  
3521 Go Way Back and Sit Down  
3522 Good Morning, Carrie  
3523 The Way to Kiss a Girl  
3524 When Mr. Shakespeare Comes To Town  
3525 Ahn't That a Shame  
3526 Simple Little Sister Mary Green  
3527 Mr. Dingy Don't Be So Stingy  
3528 A Growler on a String  
3529 Marching to the Music of the Band  
Songs in German

**EMIL MUENCH**  
3541 Aus der Jugendzeit  
3542 Sonnenlicht Sonnenschein  
3543 Dein Gedenk Ich Margaretha  
3544 Wiegenlied. (Mozart)  
3545 Unter Dem Lindenbaum  
3546 Im tiefen Keller  
3547 In einem Kühlen Grunde  
3548 Lorelei

**German Duets**  
**EMIL MUENCH and AUGUST KREUDER**  
3549 Die Beiden Zersit  
3550 Der Spielmann und sein Kind

**Xylophone Solos**  
**MR. CHAS. P. LOWE**  
3573 A Medley of Scotch Airs  
3590 Dancing in the Sunlight  
3573 Da, Du With variations  
3574 Happy Days in Dixie  
3572 Kiss Me, Honey Do, and My Coal Black Lady  
3570 Medley of Popular Airs  
3575 My Old Kentucky Home  
3571 Pickaninny Pokey  
3578 The Carnival of Venice  
3577 The Mocking Bird  
3581 Vaudeville Specialty  
Introducing Xylophone solo, German Folk Song by Miss Jottie and Drum Solo.

**Recitations**  
**MR. D. E. HANLON**  
3540 All the World's a Stage, from "As You Like It."  
3297 The Ravings of a Maniac

**Humorous Recitation**  
**MR. BURT SHEPARD of London, England**  
3500 A Midsummer Night's Dream

**Hebrew Records**  
**F. SEIDEN**  
3534 Kol Nidre  
3532 Al Tiru Avdi Jankew von Koenig Lear  
3530 Rosinkes und Mandlen von Schulames  
3531 Das Pastuchil von Bar Kochba  
3533 Min Hamelzar von Blimele  
3535 Hamavdel von ein groben Jung  
3536 Die lustige Chasidem

3537 Ein Gelechter von Kabzensohn  
3538 Schmendrik's besingen  
3539 Das Polische Jungel

Two interesting announcements appear at the end of the October, 1901, Record List. The first:

"We take pleasure in advising our customers that we have just secured very broad Letters Patent on our Concert Sound Box. As we now own and control all patents on the only successful method ever discovered for making sound boxes, we believe that this feature alone will enable us to fully control the disc talking machine business for the next 10 or 15 years.

"We also have about 60 other applications and patents on the disk talking machine.

"Notwithstanding this, however, it has been our aim from the beginning to secure our trade entirely on the merits of our goods, and the most important of all, the satisfactory treatment of our customers."

A foretaste of the coming of Red Seal records is given by the following, headed: "The Great Master Artists of the Old World Play and Sing for You In Your Own Home."

"The most remarkable, unique and costly selection of records ever offered will soon be presented by us owing to an exclusive arrangement just concluded with the Gramophone Company Limited, of London, Cie Francaise Du Gramophone, of Paris, and the Deutsche Gramophon - Actien - Gesellschaft, of Berlin, which Companies practically control the entire talking machine business of Europe. Never before has it been possible to get records by the great artists of the Old World.

"The entire realm of the Old World's masters and famous artists will be at your command: an unfailing source of delightful entertainment the whole year round. There will be gems from England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Austria, Switzerland, Russia and even Egypt, India, China and Japan, made by experts who visit these countries expressly for the purpose and at a cost of over \$200,000.

"Occasionally some foreign artists are brought to this country at an enormous expense—then, however, they only appear in the largest cities—but you will now be able to listen to them play, sing or recite in your own home and at a very small cost. Send for our Special Foreign Catalog."

Who, today, I wonder, has one of those "special foreign catalogs?"

— o —  
(To be continued)

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**REMEMBER RADIO?** Send stamped envelope for list of tape recordings available from radio's golden age. —Lee Book, Box 6338, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15212 je3253

## MUSIC BOX DISCS

**Mira Music Box Discs:** 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. mh6468



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Early Victor Photographs and Catalogs

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

Now we come to a pair of record lists that especially interest me. Prior to my obtaining the 1901 catalogs, which already have been discussed in HOBBIES' January, February, and March 1968 issues, the earliest Victor record catalog I had seen was dated February, 1902. The next in order was August, 1904.

But now we have supplements for August, 1902, and May, 1903. They contain many short-lived records that had been cut out before the August, 1904 catalog, and of which I never before had heard.

The cover of the 1902 supplement says Victor and Monarch records were awarded a gold medal over all others at the Pan-American Exposition. Columbia, however, contended it received the grand prize award, and a grand prize usually takes rank over a gold medal.

However, judges at expositions in those days often were lenient and companies that sometimes seemed to find ways to "make friends and influence people," were likely to get top honors. Thomas A. Edison believed this and refused to compete.

There is also a photograph of the Kilties Band of Belleville, Canada, and a testimonial from William F. Robinson, its conductor, that "The 'Victor' Talking Machines and Records are the finest I have ever heard."

The supplement contains 10 records by Silas Leachman, known in those days as a famous singer of songs about Negroes. The incidental comment was: "Mr. Leachman has just been elected 'Committee-man' of Chicago," evidently some sort of political job, but I'm not sure what.

Burt Shepard (his name is misspelled as Shephard) apparently had come over from London to make some more records, for nine by him are listed, including a re-instatement of 7, now called "The Boy and the Cheese."

It doesn't seem there would have been much demand in 1902 for Polish records, but there are 10. All were offered in both 7-inch and 10-inch sizes.

The records by the Kilties Band and the band's Pipe Sergeant, David Ferguson, are interesting because they were given special Scotch plaid colored labels. I have a couple of

them and they make an unusual appearance.

Cal Stewart must have had a field day, or a succession of field days, recording his "Uncle Josh" specialties, for 18 are listed in this one monthly supplement. It seems strange that the companies of those days would make a batch of records by one artist, then dump them all on the public at one time. No wonder most soon were cut out!

But to me the most interesting feature of this 1902 supplement is the issuance of a song—a popular song I suppose, though I have never heard it. Before I saw this list, I had never even heard of it. It is called "I Went to See Them March Away," and required three 10-inch records to complete.

Surely this must be the first example of as many as three records being devoted to one composition, aside, perhaps, from overtures of the "William Tell" variety. I wonder if anybody in the world has all three records of "I Went to See Them March Away."

Here are the records in the August, 1902, supplement:

### MR. SILAS LEACHMAN Negro Songs

- 56 I'm the Man That Makes the Money in the Mint. Mr. Leachman has just been elected "Committee-man" of Chicago.
  - 57 I Must Have Been a Dreamin'. He thinks he's King of Spain, and uses castanets.
  - 458 Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home.
  - 459 Johnnie Took the One I Wanted. Even to a dose of castor oil.
  - 460 I Wish They'd Do It Now.
  - 1461 Melancholy Mose.
  - 1462 O. O. Miss Caroline. Try and sing the chorus of this song as Leachman does. You'll have lots of fun.
- New Records of Popular  
Leachman Series With Chimes
- 704 Negro Hymn and Sermon.
  - \*803 Don't You Hear Dem Bells?
  - \*1132 Truculins Brown.

### BURT SHEPHARD of London, England

- \* 883 Has Anybody Seen Cur Cat?
- \* 888 Is There Anything Else You'd Like?
- \* 893 I'd Like to go Halves in That.
- \* 880 Parody On Home Sweet Home.
- \*1503 Fol-the-Rol-Lol.
- \* 885 What, Hot She Bumps.
- \*1504 Take Your Umbrella With You, John.
- \* 887 When the Gentle Breezes Blow.
- \* 7 The Boy and the Cheese (Limburger).

### POLISH RECORDS By Alexandri N. Pnasiliewicz

- \*1499 Walecznych-lyslac opuszcza Warszawe.
- \*1494 Krakowianczek. Spliewka salonowa polska.
- \*1498 Kozak z Ukrainy. Moniuszko.
- \*1501 Na Wawel Na Wawel Krakowiaku.
- \*1500 Jeszcze Polska nie zginela.
- \*1492 Hej Mazury.
- \*1495 Spliew ulanow Polskich.
- \*1497 Duszycko ma. Zoperecki-Posel z Krakowa. Zblierzchowskiego.



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tfc



Once a collector, always a collector. By April, 1912, when this picture was taken in South Boston, Va., the monthly arrival of new Victor records was an event in thousands of American cities and towns. Shown in front of the J. C. Howlett Piano Company are Mrs. Howlett and a boy, Nat Terry, who was employed in the store after school hours.

Terry still lives in South Boston where he is a watch repairman for a jewelry firm. He is still a record collector, as he was in 1912. Several years after this picture was taken, however, Edison Diamond Discs became his great love.

- \*1496 Gdyby ranem sionkiem. Z opery Halka. Moniuszko.
- \*1493 Piesn-3-Maja. Mazur.
- \* Both Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch.
- V Victor 7-inch only. M-Monarch 10-inch only.

#### THE KILTIES BAND

Gordon Highlanders, Belleville, Canada  
Mr. Wm. F. Robinson, Conductor

- This famous Canadian Band has met with great success on its tour of the United States. The Scotch and characteristic selections they have played for us under Mr. Robinson's personal direction are the only talking machine records they have made.
- \*1477 The Bonnie Briar Bush March. (Cud Hume.) Introducing "Annie Laurie" & "Robin Adair."
  - \*1478 The Soldiers of the Queen. (Ellis.) With vocal chorus.
  - \*1479 Reminiscences of Scotland. (P. Godfrey.) "Scots Wha Hae," "Hillan' Laddie," "The Campbells Are Comin'," "Tullochgorum," "Auld Lang Syne."
  - \*1430 Scotland's Pride. (Chas. Godfrey) "Bonnie Dundee," "The Flower of Edinburgh," "Marquis of Huntley's Highland Fling" (Strathspey), "The Wind that Shakes the Barley" (Reel), "Bonnie Charlie's Now Away."
  - \*1435 Ye Banks and Braes. (Bonnieau.) Cornet solo by Mr. Voss. "The Garb of Old Gaul," "On Cissnock Banks."
  - \*1486 Selection. "Robert Bruce." (Bonnieau.) "There's Nae Luck About the House," "Rob Roy, McGregor, O." "Mcneymusk Strathspey," "Blue Bonnets O'er the Border."
  - \*1487 The Maple Leaf. (Alex. Muir.) With vocal chorus. "God Save the King" is added to the Monarch Record.
  - \*1488 John Anderson, My Joe. Introducing "Legio O' Buchanan," "Green Grow the Rushes, O.," "The Brae of Auchterader" (Strathspey).

- #### SCOTCH BAG PIPE SOLOS
- Pipe Sergeant David Ferguson of the Kilties Band
- \*1473 Caller Herra.
  - \*1474 The Cock of The North.
  - \* Both Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch.
  - V Victor 7-inch only. M Monarch 10-inch only.

#### SOUSA'S BAND

- \* 319 The Circus Galop. Descriptive.

#### MR. HERBERT GODDARD

Baritone Solos

- \*1502 The Resurrection. Sacred.
- \* 779 Always.
- M3399 Love's Sorrow.
- \* 781 The Clang of the Forge.

#### MR. J. W. MYERS

Baritone Solos

- M1463 (a) I Went to See Them March Away.
- M1463 (b) I Went to See Them March Away. 2nd verse.
- M1463 (c) I Went to See Them March Away. 3rd verse.
- V1463 I Went to See Them March Away.
- \* 1464 June, My June.
- V1465 In the Golden Field of Grain.

- \* 1244 The Bell Bury.
- \* 1481 Fire as a Bird. Sacred.
- \* 1484 The Treasures of the Sea Are Buried Deep.
- \* 1483 In the Valley of Kentucky.

#### DAN W. QUINN

Comic Songs

- \*1466 Mr. Dooley. Sung by Thos. Q. Seabrook in "A Chinese Honeymoon."
- \*1467 I'll Be Your Rainbow.
- \*1468 I'm Unlucky.
- \*1469 And the Smoke Goes Up the Chimney Just the Same.
- \*1470 If Aladdin Would Lend Me His Lamp.
- \*1471 I Want to be an Actor Lady.
- \*1472 Becoming Lize.
- \* Both Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch.
- V Victor 7-inch only. M Monarch 10-inch only.

#### MR. CAL STEWART

Original Yankee Stories

- \* 668 A Meeting of the School Directors.
- \*1475 Jim Lawson's "Hoss Trade" with Deacon Witherspoon.
- \* 659 Laughing Song. "I'm Old, but I'm Awfully Tough."
- \* 666 The Daily Paper at Pumpkin Centre.
- \* 660 Uncle Josh Weathersby in a Chinese Laundry.
- \* 661 Uncle Josh Weathersby in Society.
- \* 662 Uncle Josh Weathersby on a Bicycle.
- \* 663 Uncle Josh Weathersby's Trip to Boston.
- \* 664 Uncle Josh Weathersby's Trip to Coney Island.
- \* 665 Uncle Josh Weathersby in a Department Store.
- \* 667 Uncle Josh Weathersby and the Lightning Rod Agent.
- \* 668 Uncle J-sh Weathersby's Arrival in New York City.
- \* 670 Uncle Josh Weathersby at the Circus.
- \* 671 Uncle Josh Weathersby at the Opera.
- \*1476 A Meeting of the Annapolis Club.
- \*1489 Uncle Josh Weathersby's Huskin' Bee Dance. The fiddler plays for the dance and "Uncle Josh" calls the figures.
- \*1490 The Last Day of School at Pumpkin Centre. Introducing an Harmonica Solo and German dialect story.
- \*1491 Uncle Josh Weathersby at a Camp Meeting. He hears a Sermon on "Trusts."
- \* Both Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch.
- V Victor 7-inch only. M Monarch 10-inch only.

Finally, we come to the May, 1903, Victor supplement. Its front cover bears the familiar dog trademark, and this statement: "There can be only one BEST. The Pan-American Exposition decided that that one is the VICTOR."

It may be news to most collectors that there was an organization known as the Victor Symphony Orchestra which recorded in 1903. It was represented by 11 single-faced discs.

These ranged from the Anvil Chorus of "Trovatore" and unfailingly popular "Jolly Coppersmith," to "Dancing on the Housetops," "The Nightingale and the Frog," and "Dancing in the Barn." This symphony orchestra wasn't snooty in its repertoire.

Otherwise, the supplement runs pretty true to routine, although there are five solos by Jules Levy, the great cornetist, whose life was drawing to a close. An Arthur Collins record called "Oh, My!", described as "a harrowing tale of a colored belle, a pig and an apple dumpling," sounds worth investigating, if a copy could be found.

S. H. Dudley, disguised as Frank Kernell, is present with his familiar whistling Negro specialty. And the versatile Len Spencer has a Hebrew dialect comic song and an English coster one.

The latter, "Little Nipper," made famous by Albert Chevalier, did not refer to the Victor dog. Nor does it predict the arrival of my cherished cat of the same name.

Spencer also had five recitations that were standard items in his repertoire. And George Graham, whose brother Charles Graham was the song writer that composed "Two Little Girls in Blue" and other Gay 90's hits, returned with six comic monologs.

Our survey well may end by re-printing the titles in that May, 1903, Victor supplement:

All selections in this Supplement are made in both Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch: except those marked "V", which are in Victor 7-inch only, and those marked "M", which are in Monarchs 10-inch only.

#### VICTOR and MONARCH RECORDS

##### VICTOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

- 2146 Anvil Chorus. Il Trovatore—Verdi
- M2152 Anvil Polka.
- 2149 Eloise Polka.
- 2151 Jolly Coppersmith. Anvil effect—Peter.
- V2079 Wein Bleibt Wein.
- 2077 La Media Noche.
- M2162 The Sky Lark. Piccolo solo.
- V2078 Dancing on the Housetops.
- V2148 Nightingale and the Frog. Piccolo solo.
- M2161 Selection from "Three Little Maids."
- M2169 Dancing in the Barn.

##### CORNET SOLOS

- With Piano Accompaniment by Jules Levy
- 1706 Robin Adair—Scotch.
  - M2105 Killarney—Balfe.
  - 2104 Tale of a Bumble Bee. King Dodo—Luders.
  - 2106 Bonnie Sweet Bessie.
  - 1769 Within a Mile of Edinburgh Town.

##### TENOR SOLOS

- Byron G. Harlan
- M2155 Please Mamma Buy Me a Baby. A touching child song.
  - V2154 Just a Line from Jennie.

(Continued on page 52)

#### TAPE RECORDINGS

CLASSICAL vocals, instrumentals, etc. on tape. Stamp for new artist list. Victor Nippers, \$3.50 postpaid. —Recordings, 43 Locust Street, Northampton, Mass. 01060 jly3253

REMEMBER RADIO? Send stamped envelope for list of tape recordings available from radio's golden age. —Lee Book, Box 6333, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15212 je3253

#### MUSIC BOX DISCS

Mira Music Box Discs: 18½" \$3; 15½" \$2.50; 9-5/16" \$1. Plus postage.—Squires, 2328 Channing Way, Berkeley, Calif. je3405



An industrial giant, "The Voice of the Victor." Continued growth of the Victor Talking Machine Company facilities is revealed in this 1922 photo of only a part of the plant.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

### COMIC DUETS

Collins and Harlan

- 2116 The Dude and the Farmer. "One o' them pesky dudes" wanders into the Deacon's pumpkin patch and the conversation becomes animated. The Willy Boy is finally invited into the house and the Deacon fiddles for him. As "Willy" is departing the farmer's dog takes a hand (or a bite) in the affair.
- 2118 The Cat and the Fly Paper. Ezra Hoskin's wife's cat sits right down on a sheet of sticky fly paper—it naturally makes Ezra laugh—the cat doesn't do any laughing. Mrs. Ezra says he is a brute—the cat and the fly paper finally part company after a high old time—the family friction smoothed out by "Bringing in the Shenaves"—the cuckoo strikes and the family retire.
- 2157 They Were All Doing the Same. Comic hit.
- 2159 Backyard Conversation, Hibernian Repartee.

### NEGRO SONGS

Arthur Collins

- 2153 Oh! My! A Harrowing tale of a Colored Belle, a Pig and an Apple Dumpling.
- 660 I've Got a White Man Working for Me.

### BARITONE SOLOS

W. H. Thompson

- 2089 Song Bird of Melody Lane. From Mr. Bluebird.
- M2083 The Rosary—Nevin.
- M2093 Meet Me When the Sun Goes Down.
- M2094 If I But Knew.

### WHISTLING SONG

Frank Kernell

- 1982 Whistling Coon.

### DIALECT SONGS

By Len Spencer

- M2110 Abe Roginsky's Ball. Hebrew dialect.
- 2111 Little Nipper. Coster song.

### RECITATIONS

By Len Spencer

- M2115 Ingersoll at the Tomb of Napoleon.
- V2114 Talmadge on Infidelity.
- 2113 Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg.
- 2109 Twenty-third Psalm and Lord's Prayer.
- 2112 Sermon on the Mount.

### HUMOROUS TALKS

By George Graham

- 2119 George Washington. A patriotic soliloquy.
- M2131 A Day's Walk. An eventful stroll.
- M2167 Imitation of a Street Faker.
- M2165 Woman. An awful roast for the sex!
- 2106 Married Life.
- A solemn warning to single men.
- M2108 Funny Bits. Just nonsense.
- The End

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

he gave his first lecture, in 1866, in San Francisco, at which time he related his escapades in the Sandwich Islands. He made his last lecture appearances in 1895-6 on a world tour. At 60 he was a legend in his own lifetime.

The itinerant actors kept depicting Mark Twain in the sere and yellow. Absent-mindedly, he puttered with the scattered notes on the lectern. He cast an owlish look at the audience, while his lower jaw nibbled spasmodically at the wisps of a tobacco-stained, white mustache.

The take-off of old age eccentricities made the readings more amusing, of course.

Another misconception was the white flannel suit. The humorist began to wear it only at 70. "People ask why I wear a white suit," he said, when advocating dress reform to overcome the gloom of old age. "Well, I wear it because a naked person exerts little constructive influence in society."

The impersonators constantly quoted Mark Twain's quip, "I can give up smoking whenever I want to. I've done it a thousand times."

The thespians kept relighting cheroots with sturdy kitchen matches, holding them like small torches. This bit of stage business called for perfect timing. With a furious putt-putt-putt, they paused to think a moment while the match burned on perilously. But it was arrested in time so as not to burn their fingers. This provoked great laughter.

Yet Mark Twain never had smoked on the lecture platform.

Did Mark Twain's voice resemble in any way those who portrayed him as crotchety, with the twang of a banjo?

As a matter of fact, the Missouri-born humorist spoke with a slow, nasal drawl. He had a habit of rambling on, head jutting forward; his half-closed eyes appeared to peer from under bushy eyebrows, with a puzzled gaze and a submerged twinkle.

It should be recalled that Twain was a master of spacing the tagline for an after-thought. "When a pause was right," he wrote, "the effect was sure; when the pause was wrong in length, by the five-millionth of an inch, the laughter was only wild, never a crash."

His humor exploded in three or four bursts. The last topped the others.

About 50 years ago, the purported voice of Mark Twain could be heard on a nickel-in-the-slot machine, if the rubber hearing tubes were adjusted properly. Actually, the spurious cylinder had been made by either

(Continued on page 68)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



Arthur C. Clough, a photograph reprinted from an Edison record booklet.

## Arthur C. Clough

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Man of Mystery

This will be less a biographical sketch than a plea for help.

I have chosen to write this month about a tenor whose recorded work I have admired since I was a small boy, but concerning whom I know next to nothing. My hope is that the article will come to the attention of someone who has known him and will be willing to share the information with me.

I am not even sure how the tenor's last name should be pronounced, or whether the C. rightly belongs between Arthur and Clough. The initial was used on Edison records, but with Victor and Columbia he was always just Arthur Clough.

As to the pronunciation, I have toyed with the pleasing speculation that my subject may have been of English birth and related to Arthur Hugh Clough, a poet who lived from 1819 to 1861 and is best remembered today for his "Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth."

As a child, the British Clough was taken to Charleston, S.C., but his family later returned to England. I like to think I trace a touch of Southern accent in the recorded voice of

the later Arthur Clough, but that may be imaginary.

The poet, according to Webster's New International Dictionary, pronounced his last name as "Cluff." That is the way I always have pronounced the other Arthur's. George Clarence Jell, who was for years manager of the Columbia artist and repertoire department, wrote me that was the way he remembered the singer's name.

But when I mentioned the tenor to Billy Murray, best loved of all the pioneer recording artists, he looked puzzled a moment and then said: "Oh, you mean Arthur Clow!" and pronounced the surname as if it rhymed with chow. "I remember the Quartet's working with him at Edison," Billy said, "but I really don't know anything about the man himself."

By "the Quartet" Billy, of course, meant the group that was known as the American Quartet on Victor records, and as the Premier on Edison. On the other hand, the late John Bieling, who sang in both the American/Premier and the Hayden Quartets, flatly denied to me that he ever had known Clough or even heard of him, although Clough sang with him on Edison cylinders by the Premier, and on one 12-inch Victor disc with the Hayden.

But then, John, whose memory in his late years was not what it had been, also disavowed that he knew anything about Harry Tally, with whom the Hayden also had sung.

Several years ago, in my eagerness to find out something about Arthur Clough, I published a letter in *Variety*, asking if any reader could tell me anything about him, including whether he was still alive. I received an unsigned note from Milwaukee,

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Missouri song writer Percy Wenrich. Arthur Clough's Columbia record helped to make popular "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," composed by Percy Wenrich, a native son of Joplin, Mo. The inscription on the photograph, not clearly visible, says: "To Ulysses Walsh, from a friend and admirer, Percy Wenrich."

giving me a Los Angeles, Calif., address, which was supposed to be Clough's and I immediately wrote the tenor a letter, which went by air mail, special delivery. There was no reply.

Not a great while afterward, when Quentin Riggs was in Los Angeles, he found an Arthur Clough listed in the telephone directory, and eagerly dialed the number. That Clough proved to be a gentleman of German descent who was much amused at being taken for the singer, but made it clear he wasn't. So I'm still wondering if Arthur Clough, the tenor, is yet alive and in Los Angeles.

I never have read of his death, but if he still adorns this planet he is an old man. His first record I have any trace of was issued by Victor in September, 1908, and the small photo printed with it looks to me like that of a man of 25 or probably more — perhaps as much as 30. It soon will be 60 years since that record came out. A little simple mental arithmetic will indicate that Clough, if he still lives, is in the mid-80's or perhaps as much as 90.

## II. The Little That Is Known

Now let's take the little that is known about the tenor. Mr. Jell told me he sang in vaudeville and was the lead tenor of the Brunswick Quartet, which made a few Columbia records. The other members were Audrey Hackett, first tenor; Harry Wieting, baritone, and A. Duncan Cornwall, bass — all names that mean nothing to record collectors.

Clough also seems to have appeared in musical comedy. A good many years ago a good friend of mine told me he long before had searched through back files of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* for an account of something that had happened in 1914 or 1915. He was inclined to think it was the latter year. He came across an advertisement of a forthcoming presentation of a musical comedy—he had forgotten the name—in which Arthur Clough was mentioned as one of the stars.

From curiosity, he looked up the review of the play and found the paper's critic had "roasted" it mercilessly. This was certainly strange where Clough was concerned.

In the years when, as a youngster, I played at operating the imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company, I was impressed so much by the range and beauty of Clough's voice that I nearly always assigned him exacting tenor operatic arias to be sung in English. He recorded no opera for any other company!

When I asked my dear friend, the late Frank Dorian, for many years a Columbia official both in the States and abroad, if he recalled Arthur Clough, he replied:

"I remember Arthur Clough very well indeed, because he made his first record for the Columbia Company at the time I was in charge of the recording department, in 1909. In fact, it was due to the admiration and appreciation of his voice and singing style on the part of Vic Emerson and myself that he became a Columbia artist. I am trying to get some further information about him and the make-up of the Brunswick Quartet, and if I succeed will give it to you in a later letter."

Mr. Dorian afterwards sent me the names of the Quartet personnel and said he understood Clough at that time (the 1930s) was doing considerable radio singing.

Shortly afterward, Mr. Jell wrote:

"Arthur Clough, as I recall, pronounced his name Kluff. He was very good in his line, but did not last long, his voice and style not being adapted for the strictly popular type of song and the people at that time not in a receptive mood for standard things done by unknown people."

And now that I have revealed how much I don't know about Arthur Clough let's consider his records.

But, first, I'd like to say that I am eager to obtain information about Carroll C. Clark, a Negro baritone who made a number of big-selling Columbia records of old plantation songs. I have been told he is still alive and living in Denver. If any Denver reader can confirm this and give me Mr. Clark's address, I'd greatly appreciate it.

## III. Clough's Victor Records

Never, throughout his seven-year recording career, was Arthur Clough a prolific maker of discs and cylinders. I attribute this to the fact he was on the road much of the time in vaudeville and musical comedy. His records usually were spaced rather far apart, and it is odd that no com-

pany ever issued a double-faced disc on which he sang both sides.

Although he had the assistance of male quartets and a mixed chorus in some of his offerings, he was never a duet partner of anybody in his issued records.

As already said, the tenor's first Victor record was issued in September, 1908. It was single-faced Black Label 5527, and the supplement description said:

"This new Victor singer has chosen for his debut Gardenier and Helf's newest ballad, a very pretty little love song indeed. It is given by Mr. Clough with great clearness in a mellow tenor quite pleasant to hear."

The title was "Somebody That I Know and You Know, Too." That "quite pleasant to hear" strikes me as faint praise. It would have been stronger to say: "It is given by Mr. Clough in a pleasant, mellow tenor," leaving out the "quite." Neither in this brief mention nor any other reference to Clough's records is any information given about the man himself.

The following month, Victor double-faced records were introduced, and the Clough ballad was paired on 16161, issued early in 1909, with "Would You Care?" a Charles K. Harris song which Byron G. Harlan had recorded as a single-faced disc for the September, 1905, list.

Clough's next Victor appearance was in June, 1909, when he sang a Teddy Morse ballad, "When the Meadow Larks Are Calling, Annie Laurie," on the B side of 16301. Ada Jones held down the A side with "Whistle and I'll Wait for You."

The supplement said of this combination:

"A pretty little song with whistling calls which is being much sung in vaudeville, combined with a charming Morse ballad, sung by that sweet voiced tenor, Mr. Clough. . ."

The tenor was present again in December, 1909, on 12-inch record 35085. He had the help of the Haydn (Hayden) Quartet in singing "The Red, Red Rose." The B side was given over to a song the popularity of which bids fair to last forever, "My Wild Irish Rose," by Harry Macdonough and the Haydn:

"Two splendid records of two charming 'rose' songs—the new ballad by Will Marion Cook, sung by Mr. Clough, whose pleasant tenor has been much admired; and a new record of the perennial favorite, Chauncey Olcott's melodious 'Wild Irish Rose,' by Mr. Macdonough. Both numbers are given with pleasing quartet refrains by that sterling organization, the Haydn Quartet."

After that the name of Arthur Clough was seen no more in Victor supplements until January, 1912, when record 17017 was announced. It contained a sugary type of pop song, "A Girlie Was Just Made to Love," sung by Walter Van Brunt. This was combined with a more dignified ballad, "The Hour That Gave Me You," by Clough. With the announcement was published the largest photograph of Clough that Victor yet had used, al-

(Continued on page 68)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 51)

his greatest success in "I Pagliacci." Since there are no bassos in Leoncavallo's pride-and-joy, apparently Delmas also took on dramatic baritone roles.

His vast repertoire included a variety of operas, from the standard to the less common such as Reyer's "Salammbô," Saint-Saens' "Les Barbares," d'Indy's "L'Etranger," Dukas' "Ariane et Barbe-Bleue," Fevrier's "Monna Vanna," etc.

Jean-Francois Delmas died at St. Alban de Montbel September 27, 1933.

At a time when baritones were good and plentiful, Mario Ancona earned for himself a prominent and well-deserved place in the operatic Social Register.

His was a true "Italian" voice — velvet-lined, free-flowing, well-protected. And in *Sei vendicata*—one of the most winning arias for baritone — his exemplary vocal attributes come advantageously to the fore.

Born in Livorno February 28, 1860, Mario Ancona—studied—singing with the famous baritone Giuseppe Cima (teacher of two other renowned baritones, Camera and Fumagalli) in Milan. Ancona made his operatic debut in 1890, at Trieste, as Scindia in "Le Roi de Lahore."

Ancona's big chance came when he was entrusted with the part of Silvio in the momentous world-premiere of "I Pagliacci" at the dal Verme in Milan, May 21, 1892. Stehle, Giraud, Maurel, and Daddi completed the distinguished cast.

Besides acquiring fame in Italy, he was a favorite in England, Portugal, Spain, Russia, Poland, and South America. In the United States, he sang successfully at the Metropolitan from 1893 to 1897, and also appeared with the Chicago and Boston Opera Companies.

Mario Ancona died in Florence February 23, 1931.

A rather neglected Spanish soprano of old is here deservedly given prominence. The reason for this more or less lackadaisical attitude toward Giuseppina Huguët, I believe, is the frequency with which pressings of some of her Milan recordings turn up on the black Victor label.

By all accounts, Huguët was an outstanding artist. Born in Barcelona September 22, 1871, she studied in the Conservatory of her home city and made her debut there in 1889.

After starting her career in Spain, Huguët went on to win the approval of the Italian audiences, and it wasn't long before she was at La Scala in Milan and the Costanzi of Rome.

In the course of her career, she was applauded in England, France, and Portugal. Similarly, in her own country, her appearances always drew the highest admiration.

At the close of her artistic activities, Giuseppina Huguët taught singing in Barcelona, where she died in 1951.

Another Spanish artist from Barcelona on this LP is Francisco Vignas. Much sought on his Fonotopia's,

and positively a rarity on G&T's, he displays enviable vocal endowment in *Sopra Berta*, probably his most heroic record.

Born in 1863, he attended the Barcelona Conservatory and made his debut in that city in 1888, with appearances succeeding in other Spanish opera houses.

Italy followed, and his popularity, in due course, took him to England and France. He became a great favorite in both countries, also, of course, in Spain. There he added Madrid to his previous conquests.

At the Metropolitan, where he was engaged during the 1893-94 season, Vignas' debut had the extra attraction of coinciding with that of Emma Calve, in "Cavalleria Rusticana" November 29, 1893.

Francisco Vignas, considered one of the superlative tenors of his time, died July 13, 1933, in Moya, Spain.

Whoops, I just realized that my space is running short. Selfishly, I first picked out for comment the singers whose recordings on this LP attracted me most.

However, as I recall, some of the remaining esteemed artists already were dealt with on these pages more or less extensively—Hempel, Matzenauer, Clement, Journet.

For the others, I guess I'll have to beg off until some other time.

— o —

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

though the same one, in thumbnail size, had appeared in September, 1908 and December, 1909. See picture.

Another long silence followed, and then in October, 1913, came what was undoubtedly the best selling Victor record by Clough, 17412, "When I Dream of Old Erin." However, its large sale no doubt should be attributed to the other side, with Charles W. Harrison singing the immortal "Peg O' My Heart."

In the same month, Clough was heard on 17399 in a delightful Neil Moret ballad, "The Beautiful Dawn of Love." Walter Van Brunt had, with it, another sugary affair called "You're My Girl." The combination was a poor seller and stayed in the catalog only a couple of years.

By this time Victor had stopped giving individual descriptions of its popular song records, probably on the theory that the demand was so strong they would sell themselves. Consequently, nothing was said about Clough's November, 1913, record, "A Little Bunch of Shamrocks," which would have made an ideal coupling for "When I Dream of Old Erin." As it was, it drew a weak companion, "My Boy," by the Lyric Quartet.

Clough again went into silence until December, 1914, when his final Victor record appeared, 17641. On this he sang "Come Back to Me." On the other side, Edna Brown and James F. Harrison were heard in "When June-Time Brings the Roses."

(To be continued)

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Vaseline glass jelly compote with opaque opal, ruffled edge. Strawberry & grape dec. 5 1/2" x 6" across top, \$16.

Custard glass: Creamer & sugar, footed 4", tiny flake off foot of creamer. Band of leaves & berries, signed McKee, \$18. Toothpick holder, souvenir Seattle, nice pattern, mint, \$12. Salt & pepper, souvenir Detroit, red roses, \$13. Bowl, crimped top, berry dec. 3 1/2" x 5" x 2 1/2" base, \$12.50.

4 Royal Suhl 8" plates, Germany, look like R.S. Prussia. Painted part is shaded and extends over rim into petals, between are gold flowers on white. Centers dec. with lovely flowers, petals green on 2. lavender on 2. \$6.50 ea.

Ridgways Plate 8", Kirk Bradden, Old Church. Brown, green & gold, \$12.50.

Peking glass: Bowl, 2 1/2" x 4", Imperial yellow, deep floral carving, footed tank stand, \$250. Light blue opaque glass cup, very fine "Cameo" cut bird and flowers, with stand, \$47.50.

Lion carved from King ebony, ivory eyes, teeth & claws. Not very old, but very well done, made in Ceylon, 8 1/4" x 2 1/4". Tail comes apart for shipping. 2 claws missing, \$65.

Miniature oil painting of DuBarry, oval 2" x 1 1/2", carved brass border, set in ivory frame 4 1/4" x 3 1/4", \$40.00.

Book of sepia engravings by American artists, 1856, 14 1/2" x 11". 9 pictures, one by Winslow Homer, \$35.00.

Bohemian vase, ruby cut to clear, flower design, 7 1/4", old & lovely, \$17.50.

Signed Kelya hinged jewel box, green with lovely flowers in shades of lavender & white. 8" across base, 7" top, 3 1/4" high. Mint, some wear on lining, \$85.

Japanese Netsuke, ivory with silver face carved with dragons. Heavy brass chains hold brocade bag, which has silver carved dragon on front, \$35.

Cut glass lie down perfume, brass hinged top, with green set, inner stopper, 3 1/2" long, \$7.50.

Black amethyst bowl with silver deposit floral design & rim 8" square x 3" \$12.50.

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## Arthur C. Clough

(Continued from the June Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### IV. Clough's Columbia Records

Arthur Clough was not heard on Columbia records until February, 1909, when he made an auspicious beginning with a ballad of homey sentiment that seems certain to endure as long as, say, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. It was "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," with words by Alfred Bryan and music by Percy Wenrich, a native son of Joplin, Mo.

Wenrich, one of the greatest American song writers, has composed as many numbers of permanent appeal, perhaps more, as Stephen Foster. Besides the "Bonnet" ballad, "Rainbow," "Silver Bell," "Snow Deer," "Kentucky Days," "When It's Moonlight in Mayo," "Moonlight Bay," "The Smiler Rag," "Red Rose Rag," "Sweet Cider Time," and "How Are You Goin' to Wet Your Whistle?" are Wenrich compositions that come readily to mind.

Undoubtedly, Clough's record of "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" helped to give the song a popularity it will never lose, but it probably would have sold still better if it had not been coupled with another number that had already been a big seller on a single-faced Columbia, "The Moon Has His Eyes On You," sung by Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley.

The record was A778, and the supplement said:

"Here introduced is a new record-making artist of superlative merit, Mr. Arthur Clough, whose magnificent tenor voice will figure conspicuously in Columbia recording in the future. Mr. Clough's voice is said to be better suited to recording work than that of almost any other tenor now before the public, and his first Columbia record seems to bear out this opinion.

"The song Mr. Clough has chosen is the latest hit by the author of 'Rainbow,' and it is more than possible that it will rival that selection in popularity. As a combination of graceful and pleasing melody with words of appealing sentiment, it has seldom been equalled in popular music, giving as it does a tender picture of a golden wedding day."

Clough had a gift for selecting songs of lasting appeal. In the following list he had "Daisies Won't Tell," on A792, coupled with Harlan singing "I'd Like to be a Soldier."

But after this auspicious beginning occurred another of those long absences. He was not present again as a soloist until February, 1911, when, on 952, he sang "The Vale of Dreams," with Harvey Hindermeyer's "When a Boy From Old New Hampshire Loves a Girl From Tennessee," as its companion.

A few months later the tenor again showed his knack of selecting "im-

mortals" by recording, on A1047, "Down By the Old Mill Stream," with the help of the Brunswick Quartet, which sang "Sally" on the reverse side.

And then there were no more Columbia solos by Clough until February, 1915, when his final appearance was made on A1665: He sang a forgotten song, "By the Side of the Girl You Love." A vaudeville favorite, Henry Santrey, was heard in the better remembered "Tip Top Tipperary Mary," its "platter mate."

Concerning this record the supplement said:

"Perhaps eventually the biggest hit of the month will be 'Tip Top Tipperary Mary' . . . There is a swing about this number that forcibly reminds one of another 'Tipperary' song that has had such sensational success. On the reverse is a new ballad by Arthur Clough, whose voice, after a long absence from our list, sounds just as good as ever."

The Brunswick Quartet made the following Columbia records, besides the one already mentioned:

A798, "Sing Me a Song of the South" / reverse: "The Artillerist's Oath," Columbia Quartet.

A895, "My Wild Irish Rose" / reverse: "When the Bloom is On the Heather," Columbia Quartet.

A921, "Seeing Nellie Home," Frank M. Coombs and Brunswick Quartet / reverse: "Mollie Darling," Coombs.

A1000, "I'm Looking for a Nice Young Fellow," Ada Jones & Brunswick Quartet / reverse: "Alamo Rag," Columbia Male Quartet.

A1052, "Hard Times Come Again (Continued on page 40)

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VICTOR RECORDS FOR JANUARY—1912

17015 { Southern Melodies Xylophone  
"Kemo, Kimo" Ring, Ring de Banjo "Carry de News" Old  
Folks at Home "Nigger Never Die" Dixie } 10  
Fascination Waltz Whistling Guido Gialdini

Here is a most attractive instrumental combination consisting of a lively medley of southern songs by Reitz, and a charming waltz by that most celebrated of whistlers, Gialdini.

17017 { A Girlie Was Just Made to Love  
Goodwin-Meyer Van Brunt } 10  
The Hour That Gave Me You  
Dempsey-Schmid Arthur Clough

Two pretty ballads by two favorite tenors, both of whom are favorably known for their sweet voices and distinct enunciation.

17016 { On the Neva March (Auf der Neva)  
Victor Military Band } 10  
Birthday Serenade (Lincke)  
Victor Orchestra

A rousing march and a delightful serenade, both of which came to us from Germany, are the pleasing items in this fine instrumental double.

17006 { Alexander's Ragtime Band (Berlin)  
Slippery Place Rag (Hacker) } 10  
Victor Military Band

It seems impossible for the Victor Company to furnish enough records of this great popular success to supply the demand, and therefore, to supplement the Collins and Hadan and Snyder Medley records, there is offered here a spirited band version, and it may be described as a "corker"!

On the reverse is a new "rag" which would almost make a stone statue come to life!

17007 { For Killarney and You (Walsh-Teasdale)  
If This Rose Told You All it Knows (Mahoney-Morse) } 10  
Reed Miller  
Raymond Dixon

Mr. Miller, for his January contribution, sings in fine style a splendid Irish song just issued by Witmark; while on the opposite side the Victor's new tenor, Mr. Dixon, gives us a charming Morse ballad which has been quite popular during the past year.

17008 { Knock Wood (Sterling-H. Von Tilzer)  
They Always Pick on Me (Murphy-H. Von Tilzer) } 10  
Jones-Murray  
Ada Jones

The latest of the songs which takes their theme from the slang expressions of the day, cleverly sung by these popular entertainers, is combined with a novel "kid" song by Miss Jones.



Reitz



Clough

Play your records with Victor Needles

The Victor record supplement for January, 1912, listed an Arthur Clough record and a photograph of him.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

No More," Frank M. Coombs and Brunswick Quartet/reverse: "Chiming Bells of Long Ago," Coombs.

It is interesting to observe that Clough made no Columbia wax cylinders. "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" came out just too late to be offered as a cylinder. The disc was issued just one month after the last monthly list of cylinders had been published in January, 1909.

### V. Edison Cylinders and Discs

Clough added Edison, the third of the great pioneer recording companies, to his list in October, 1909, a few months after he began singing for Columbia.

As far as I definitely know, he recorded for only Victor, Columbia, and Edison, although Indestructible two-minute cylinder 1393, "Beautiful Garden of Roses," sung by a tenor whose name is given as Rome Fenton, sounds enough like Clough to make me suspect he used an assumed name and made this recording.

But I don't know that for a fact—any more than I know that his real name was Arthur Clough. However, we shall see that he recorded this same song, as "Garden of Roses," for Edison.

The tenor's first two-minute Edison Standard cylinder, 10233, "When the Meadow Larks Are Calling, Annie Laurie," was of a song we already have seen he had made for Victor. In November he had 10251, "It is Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Goodbye," and in December, 10261, "In the Shadow of the Carolina Pines." Number 10-311, "A Creole Lullaby," followed in February, 1911, and his final two-minute, 10497, "Garden of Roses," came in June that year.

Arthur picked another undying ballad for his first four-minute Amberol cylinder in March, 1911. It was 637, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." In April, on 654, he had the assistance of the Premier Quartet, for reviving the equally immortal "Little Annie Rooney," one of the few complete records ever made of that old-timer, which was written in 1889 by an

English music hall artist, Michael Nolan.

"Don't Wake Up, I Am Dreaming," followed in June; 787, "Let's Make Love Among the Roses," with the Premier Quartet, in September; 796, "Down By the Old Mill Stream," in October; and 866, "The Hour That Gave Me You," in January, 1912, when, as we have seen, he also sang it for the Victor list.

Clough then disappeared from Edison until October, 1913, when he sang on Blue Amberol 1927, "The Beautiful Dawn of Love," concurrently with the issue of his Victor of that song.

The Edison supplement said:

"Charles N. Daniels (Neil Moret) has written a song of very different type from his previous compositions. He will be remembered as the composer of 'Hiawatha' and 'Moonlight,' two of the most popular pieces of their kind ever written. 'Beautiful Dawn of Love' is a ballad, sentimental in theme, but with a fine dignified melody that makes a most enjoyable and lasting impression on the hearer."

After the lapse of more than a year, Clough was back in December, 1914, with 2481, "Roses Remind Me of Someone." In it he was assisted by a chorus.

The supplement commented:

"A sentimental ballad of exceptional merit—not the 'mushy' kind but one that is really impressive. The lyric is well above the average, set to a rather plaintive melody, very simple, quiet and sweet. Arthur C. Clough, whose clear tenor voice records particularly well, sings in an unpretentious manner, quite in keeping with the character of the selection."

By this time, Thomas A. Edison had introduced his Diamond Disc, and in 1915, Clough was represented by one lone "Re-Creation," that stayed in the catalog until the company went out of the record business in 1929. It was 80215, "Down By the Old Mill Stream," which also included a mixed chorus, and was coupled with "Way Down on Tampa Bay," by Owen J. McCormack and Chorus.

## VI. Final Appearance

After that, the name of Arthur Clough did not appear, as far as I can find, in any record list for seven years. Then, in July, 1922 (and in keeping with Edison's custom of recording many numbers and issuing them later, though sometimes their popularity had gone), appeared Blue Amberol 4538, "A Girl I Know," sung by Clough and mixed chorus.

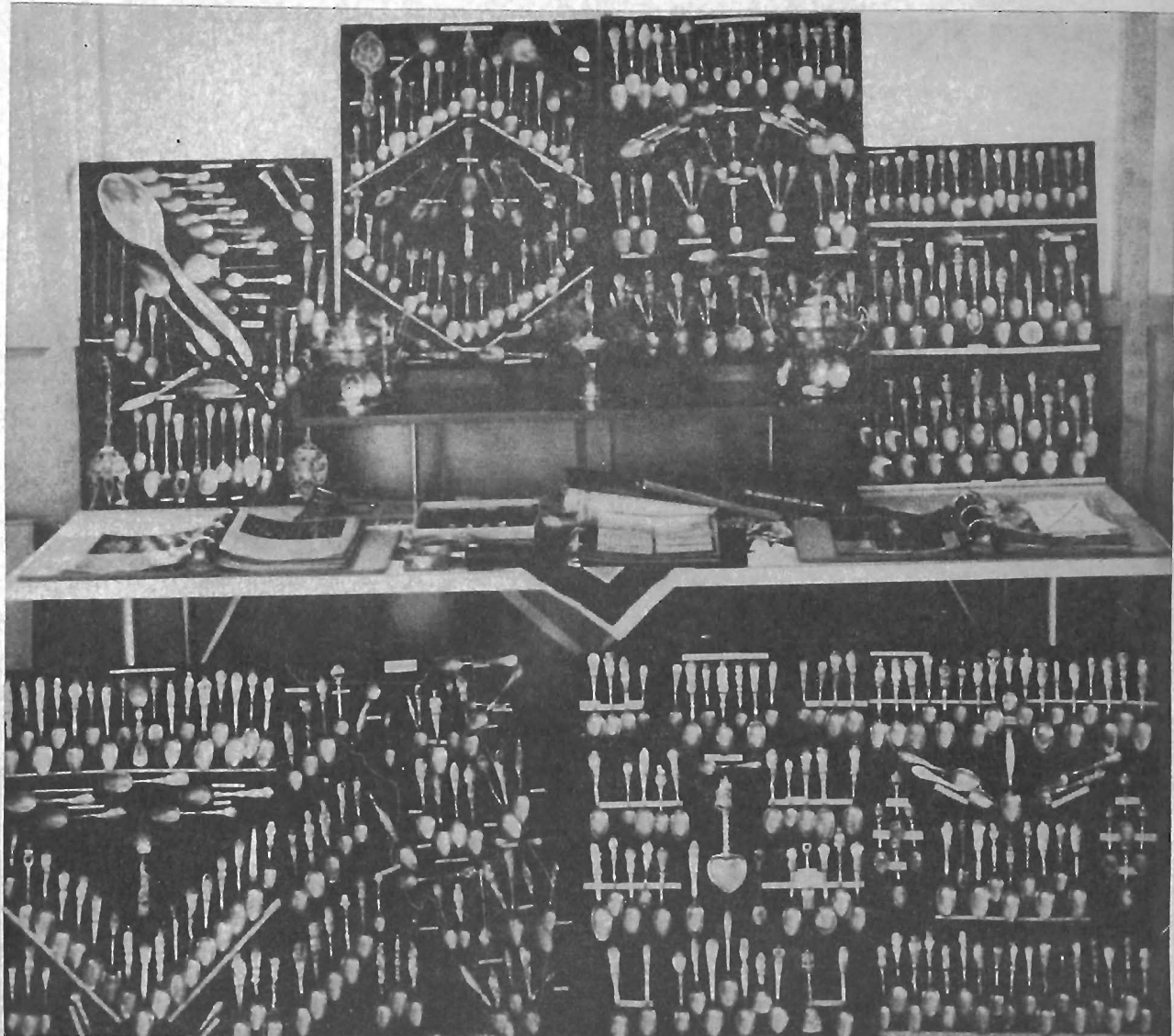
The supplement said:

"Here is a fascinating waltz-song, which Arthur Clough, an unusually good tenor, sings in a delightful and wholly satisfying manner. And, his enunciation, so essential in phonographic reproduction, is perfect."

No mention was made of the composer of the song. It had been recorded in 1915 but never had any popularity. At about the same time it appeared on Diamond Disc 50927, coupled with George Wilton Ballard singing "For You a Rose" which had

(Continued on page 52)





### EFFECTIVE WAYS TO MOUNT SILVER SPOONS

More spoons from the collection of Mrs. Wilbur Gunnerson, Florida.

#### Top Row Includes:

Old, Odd, and Unusual; Around the World and a bit of glamour; Sports; Theatre; Fraternal, and Flowers; Trade; Advertising; Industry, and Health.

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Boards, velvet covered, 18 inches by 24 inches. All spoons hung at eye level for viewing.

#### On the Shelf Includes:

Silver sugar bowl; spoon holders, with sugar shells.

Silver basket with fresh flowers.

#### On the Table Includes:

Mostly books on plated silver, old silver, and Souvenir spoons. Look carefully and you'll see four spoons from Ceylon.

### (SEE COVER)

The cover of this issue shows silver spoons from the collection of Mrs. Wilbur Gunnerson of Winter Park, Fla.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

been recorded in 1917. Naturally, the record did not sell, since both songs were out of date.

And that, according to my information, ends the story of the recording career of Arthur Clough. Why he ceased to make records and how he occupied himself in the years that followed 1915 I do not know.

The man himself remains tantalizing obscure, but I hope he still is living and in good health, if at an advanced age. He was an admirable artist of his kind and if anyone can provide additional information concerning him I shall be happy to share it with HOBBIES readers.

(The end)

### OLD MECHANICAL BANKS

(Continued from page 46)

now turned up in a different type. This new find has a larger size "can" made of cardboard with tin ends. The face of the boy and the lettering "Thank You" are somewhat different than the bank as pictured in the November, 1966, article. Other differences are in the color of the paper can coverings and the printing thereon. So we now have Calumet Bank (Tin), Type I (Metal Can), and Calumet Bank (Tin), Type II (Cardboard and Metal Can).

With the correction of the two Organ Banks and two Owl Banks and addition of the Pelican and Calumet, the "type" bank situation is now up to date and permanent as of this writing. Since, however, there is nothing so permanent as change, it is possible at some future date to have additions to the "type" banks. If and when this should occur readers will be so advised.

## OLD METALS

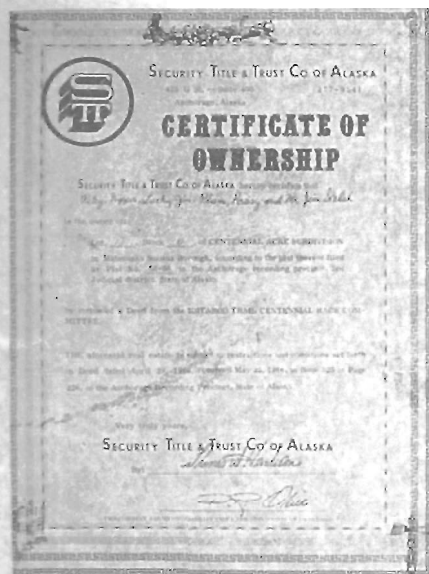
# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## THE ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON MUSEUM & SOME BERLINER, VICTOR & EDISON HISTORY

### PART I

By JIM WALSH



Certificate of Ownership. Landed Gentry. The cats and 'possum that make their home with Jim Walsh, author of HOBBIES' "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," have acquired a possibly unique distinction as the only animals belonging to the Alaskan "landed gentry."

The Nystrom Family of HOBBIES readers in Anchorage, Alaska, has sent Petey, Nipper, Lucky Jim, Plum, and Possy a deed to a tract of land, as well as a certificate of ownership issued by the Security Title and Trust Company of Alaska.

No information was given as to the size of the tract, but Mr. and Mrs. Nystrom and their cats explained they wanted the Walsh family to be the only cats and 'possums in the world who could say truthfully they owned land in Alaska.

The cats and Possy are now talking of using their land as a base for gold prospecting.

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AND a Bow of, I believe, a senna wood with frog exactly as 1st bow on cover of June HOBBIES but with abalone at base & in turnkey end. Lapping has disappeared. Bow \$400 or PAIR to first buyer, \$550. auc

### I. A New Museum

Possy, my cherished pet 'possum is walking about the yard and sniffing the breezes, as if he detects warmer weather not far away. The cats — Nipper, Petey, Lucky Jim and "Professor" Plum — also are active despite summer heat.

Concurrently, with Possy's burst of energy, I have received two letters I consider of exceptional interest to record collectors which deserve mention here. One contains what, to me, is astonishing news.

The first communication is from Leon deValinger, Jr., director of the Delaware State Museum at 316 S. Governor Ave., Dover, Del. Mr. deValinger tells me that on Tuesday, December 14, 1967, a museum was opened and dedicated in Dover to honor the memory of the late Eldridge Reeves Johnson, a Delaware native, who founded the Victor Talking Machine Company and became the most successful of all the pioneer manufacturers of phonographs and records.

"We are assembling," Mr. deValinger wrote, "everything pertaining to Mr. Johnson and the company he founded. Your articles (in the January and February HOBBIES) and the ones to follow naturally will constitute an important part of our reference material."

Mr. deValinger added that he hoped to visit me to obtain any information I could provide about Mr. Johnson and Victor records and sent me a program of the dedication of the

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- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
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Johnson Memorial. Eldridge Reeves Johnson Memorial Building, Delaware State Museum, 316 S. Governors Avenue, Dover, Del., 19901.

Eldridge Reeves Johnson Memorial Building. The program contained the following comments by E. R. Fenimore Johnson, son of the distinguished inventor, industrialist, and philanthropist.

I think these comments are well

worth quoting:

"My father . . . was a Dover boy, son of Asa S. Johnson, a contractor and house builder in Dover. Father was born in Wilmington, Del.

"He was one of the industrialists who played a substantial part in the building of the prosperity of this country to

the point where it has become the envy of the world. . . .

"My father was not the inventor of the talking machine. He was always quick to give the credit to Thomas A. Edison, to whom that honor solely belongs. My father was the inventor of many improvements of the basic device but there were many other talking machine inventors of equal and even greater importance, especially Emile Berliner.

"My reason for regarding my father as deserving to be remembered is that he is the one man who, by personal greatness, halted the petty quarrels which were retarding the progress of the newborn industry, and then by his inventive and business genius made it possible for the first time in the world's history for good music to be heard in even the most humble home.

"In this day in which music is heard everywhere at any time we have no conception of how little music entered into the life of the average person only 70 years ago.

"Soon after he founded the Victor Talking Machine Company of Camden, N.J., talking machines made their way all over the world. Travelers encountered them from the Eskimos' Arctic igloos to the thatched huts of the tropics.

"Talking machines became fixtures in all classes of homes, and they were almost invariably a feature of the plush parlors of the rich and the great. A

(Continued on page 50)

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We also want all types of theatre instruments including SEEBURG and WURLITZER photoplays, American "Photoplays" and Reproducos. Also want OS, NOS, MSR, H and other rolls used for these instruments.

We also want other automatic instruments such as the MILLS VICLANO-VIRTUOSO, HUPFELD PHONOLISZT-VICLANO, WURLITZER AUTOMATIC HARP, ENCORE AUTOMATIC BANJO (we urgently need three of these), etc.

#### BAND ORGANS

We urgently need all types of BAND ORGANS and related instruments. Included are WURLITZER styles 103, 105, 125, 146-A, 146-B, 150, 153, 157, 165, 166, 180; all NORTH TONAWANDA MUSICAL INSTRUMENT WORKS styles; all ARTIZAN styles. All types of European organs wanted including LIMON-AIRE, PRATI, GAVICLI, MARENGHI, MCRTIER, HCCGHUYS, VERBEEK, BORSENS, BRUDER, etc.

Condition is not important. We want to buy them in all grades . . . and are willing to pay well in order to obtain them.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)



Victor Founder. This portrait of Eldridge R. Johnson, founder of the Victor Talking Machine Company, was painted by J. Richards Essig of Philadelphia and is displayed in the museum which the State of Delaware recently opened to honor Johnson.

RCA Victor publicity distributed years ago, said Johnson sang "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby" as the first record ever made by his company. Apparently the record was not placed on the market.

Pictures 2 and 3, courtesy of the Delaware State Archives, Hall of Records, Dover.

majority of these pleasure-giving machines bore the 'His Master's Voice' dog, made famous by placing it on products of only the very finest quality.

"The secret of my father's success was a quality product sold always at a fair price. For this feat of putting 'The Gift That Keeps On Giving' into the homes of the common man, I ask the people of Dover to see to it that Eldridge Reeves Johnson is not forgotten."

I should like to add my own conviction that Eldridge Johnson's greatest contribution to the sound-recording industry lay in his genius for advertising and his unflinching determination to enlist the services of the finest artists, regardless of whether he made, or lost, money by offering their recorded performances.

I believe no other manufacturer entered so wholeheartedly into cataloging the voices of the greatest operatic and concert stars, even though the Victor Company probably made money on the records of only a dozen or so of its Red Seal stars. I understand that the Red Seal department always operated at a loss and that the deficit was charged off to advertising. Red Seal records were made possible only by huge black label sales of "popular" discs.

The Victor catalogs, monthly supplements, and other publicity were incomparably the finest of any company, I think. For all his achievements Mr. Johnson, who was born in

Wilmington on February 6, 1867, and died in Morristown, N.J., November 17, 1945, deserves to be remembered gratefully. I am delighted that the State of Delaware will maintain a memorial building in his honor.

### II. Double Faced Berliners

In the same mail with Mr. deValinger's letter came one from a lady whose name and address I have promised not to make public, in order to prevent her from being besieged by collectors and dealers, since she has nothing she wants to sell.

But what she wrote tied in nicely with this account of the Johnson memorial, for she told me of going into her attic and finding a box containing about 90 seven-inch Berliner, Improved, and Victor records dating back to before the turn of the century. They had been owned by her late husband's uncle who was one of the first recording engineers for Berliner and Johnson.

I almost fell out of my chair when I read that one of the boxes contained a copy of what is considered the first record ever issued by Johnson — number A-1, George Broderick's recitation of Eugene Field's poem, "Departure." I had doubted that a single copy survived.

But, more astonishing! And I haven't got over this yet:

*Three of the Berliner records, made about 70 years ago, which my correspondent found in her attic, were double-faced!*

Think of that! I often have said there is no absolute truth in phonograph research and that, time and again, when I have been sure I have said the last word on a subject, something has turned up to prove me mistaken. So it has now.

I always have assumed that the first double-faced records were made in 1904 by the Fonotopia Company of Italy and Odeon Company of Germany.

The Columbia Company over here also issued a few in 1904, but withdrew them, when Odeon, which claimed world-wide patent rights to records playing on both sides, threatened suit. Later, their differences appear to have been adjusted, and Columbia resumed making double-faced records in 1908.

But now we find Berliner did the same thing around 1899 or 1900! I don't know whether any of these "play on both sides" seven-inch records were actually sold or whether they only were pressed experimentally, but I do know that the knowledge of their existence is amazing news.

And, although the lady doesn't want to sell the records, I hope she will consider willing them to the Eldridge R. Johnson Museum, or to the Library of Congress, where my own collection eventually will go.

Victor, it has been agreed, reluctantly followed Columbia's double-faced records example a few months later. Yet I have one Victor record that has puzzled me for these many

years. It bears the Grand Prize label, introduced late in 1905, but is recorded on both sides, and the titles and dates are scratched into the label as was done with the earlier Monarchs.

One side is numbered 2035 and is called "Victor Talks to Juvenile Customers." The other side is 2036, "Hints to Victor Salesmen." The artist's name is not printed, but beneath the label the handwritten word "Spencer" (for Len Spencer) appears on both sides.

Part of the 2000 numerical sequence was reserved for dealers' demonstration records, of which this disc is obviously one, but I am puzzled by its being double-faced. The scratched-in date is November 3, 1905, which was just a little less than three years before the first list of Victor double-faced records was announced October 25, 1908.

Since I know that several enthusiasts are trying to put together complete lists of Berliner records, which were the first commercial discs, next month I shall quote here the contents of those boxes in the lady's attic. When she has provided the date, scratched into the record label, I shall give it, together with number, title, and name of artist.

(To be continued)

### HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

zically and asked, "Do you know what's on those records?"

"No," I said, "but I'm willing to pay good money to find out."

The man thought for a moment. He probably figured that, since I wanted the discs so badly, they must represent something special. Again he refused to sell them as a separate unit.

What went on after that must have been a sight to behold. I kept on insisting, the man kept on declining. And so we argued heatedly for some 10 minutes, while my husband stood helplessly by not knowing what to do.

Finally, when all seemed lost, something made the owner relent. I really must have worn him out. He picked up the records, examined them one by one and said: "Oh, all right, take them."

I emitted a sigh of relief, quickly paid the man, bid him good-bye, and hurried to the door before he had a chance to change his mind.

Once home, I first tried *O soave fanciulla* and wasn't at all surprised to hear *Caro nome* instead, and not by Melba. I listened to the other recordings. And then came the big question — what on earth did I buy?

I seemed to remember that Ferruccio Giannini made some recordings for Rex, a Philadelphia company dealing mostly in popular discs. But I had no idea what other operatic or concert singers recorded for that firm.

Since then I've asked practically all my friend collectors. But nobody

(Continued on page 46)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH



From left to right:

A GROUP OF PIONEERS—Samuel Siegel, the mandolin virtuoso, made Berliner and Improved 7-inch records before he appeared on Victor and Monarch labels.

Len Spencer, first internationally known recording artist, made both sides of a double-faced disc recorded in 1905.

Billy Golden is said to have been the first professional artist to record for Emile Berliner and was one of Eldridge Johnson's first singers.

## THE ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON MUSEUM & SOME BERLINER, VICTOR & EDISON HISTORY

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

As I promised in Part I of this article, in the August issue of HOBBIES, I now shall list the contents of "those boxes in the lady's attic." Where she provided the date, scratched into the record label, I'll give it, along with number, title, and artist's name.

Beginning with the double-faced

Berliners: one combines "War is a Bountiful Jade," sung by Broderick, with Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg, recited by William F. Hooley. Oddly, the first side is numbered A-72 and the second, A-56. This shows Berliner was using the "A" system of numbering before Johnson adopted it for Improved records.

Both sides of A-111 are taken up with "Sweet and Low," sung by the Haydn Quartet. No number is given for the third double-faced offering, which contains "Nancy" and "I'd Like It," both sung by S. H. Dudley.

The single-faced "E. Berliner's Gramophone" records, bearing patent dates of November 8, 1887; May 15, 1888; May 6, 1890; February 10, 1895; and October 29, 1895, are:

7y, William Tell Overture — Banda Rossa.  
23y, Directorate March — Sousa's Band (Aug. 18, 1897).  
40, Oriental Echoes — (Casey?) Oct. 15, 1896).

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- 47, El Capitan March — Sousa's Band.
- 79, The Crack Regiment March—Sousa's Band.
- 143zz, King Cotton March—Sousa's Band.
- 192x, I've Gwine Back to Dixie—George J. Gaskin (May 9, 1895).
- 196z, Whistling Ccon—George W. Johnson (May 18, 1896).
- 215, Last Night—Cornet solo by W. Paris Chambers (June, 1897).
- 230, Polka—Composed and played by Chambers (May 6, 1896).
- 221y, Miserere from "Il Trovatore"—Cornet and trombone duet by Messrs. Higgins and Pryor of Sousa's Band.
- 237, Nellie Bly Fantasia—Cornet solo by Chambers (Oct. 9, 1897).
- 259, Narcissus—Chambers (Oct. 9, 1897).
- 388, Die Nachtigall (The Nightingale)—German soprano solo by Vioni Eldner.
- 404w, Laughing Song—Johnson (Nov. 18, 1896).
- 646z, Departure, Eugene Field—Recited by George Graham (June 17, 1896).
- 686, Negro Funeral—Graham (June 17, 1896).
- 725w, Roll on de Ground—Billy Golden (Dec. 9, 1896). Golden is said to have been the first artist to record for Berliner.
- 726x, Turkey in the Straw—Golden (Dec. 9, 1896).
- 825, Columbian Anthem—National Hymn (E. Berliner Brass Quartet and Piano).
- 450, Belle of Virginia—Banjo solo by Steve Clement (Oct. 18, 1896).
- 912, Home Over There—J. W. Myers (May 4, 1896).
- 940, Drill, Ye Warriors Drill—Gaskin (Oct. 13, 1896).
- 943, When the Trumpet in the Cornfield Blows—Gaskin (Nov. 6, 1896).
- 993, Put Me Off at Buffalo by Harry and John Dillon—Sung by Dan W. Quinn.
- 2547, Piano solo—Kate Kicker (April 18, 1896).
- 3001, Kathleen (Mora)—Duet by Carrie and Lucie Badiner (April 7, 1897, Washington, D.C.).
- 3007, Selections from "The Fortune Teller" "Gypsy Love Song" and "Hungarian Movement"—Sousa's Band, signed by Harry Higgins.
- 3198, Sonnen Auf Gang Tyrolean—Graus Mountain Choir (June 2, 1897).
- 3003, The Mountain Climbers—Sung by the Graus Dun (July 3, 1897).
- 3406, Killamey—Cornet solo, Chambers.
- 3308, Little Nell, song and dance—Trombone solo by Arthur Pryor (July 27, 1897).
- 3410z, Answer—Higgins and Pryor.
- 3654, Last Night—Soprano solo by Helen Jennings.

A few comments about these Berliner records before proceeding to a list of Johnson's early Improved brand:

I hope the collectors who are trying to fathom the mysteries of the Berliner numbering system will be able to detect what is meant by the small "w's," "y's," "z's," etc., that follow some of the numbers.

You will notice George Graham recorded for Berliner, in 1896, the Eugene Field poem, "Departure," which Broderick did a few years later on Improved record A.1.

The lady's list attributes "The Home Over There" to George Meyers, but I thought she meant J. W. Myers and changed it.

I wonder if "Kate Kicker" is the

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Wall case exhibit in Eldridge Reeves Johnson Memorial Building, Delaware State Museum, Dover.

—Photo, courtesy Delaware State Archives, Hall of Records, Dover, Del.

right name for the damsel who apparently played an unidentified piano solo. I never before have heard of her, or of the Misses Badimer. Miss Jennings was our cherished friend, the late Edith Helena.

The Improved records in the col-

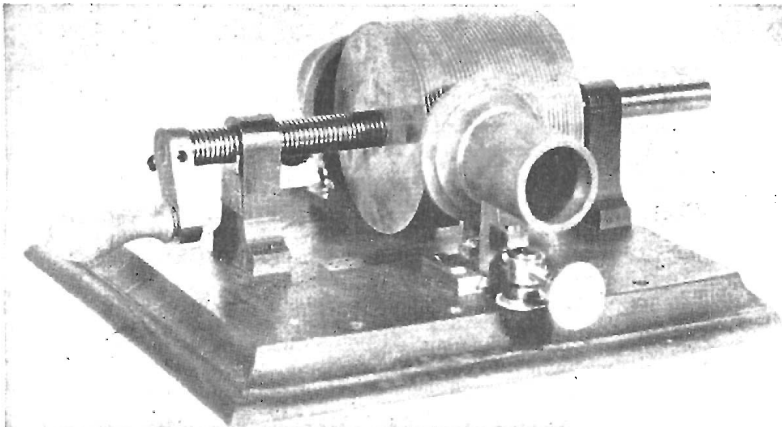
lection are:

- A-1, Departure—Recitation by George Broderick.
- A-20, More Work for the Undertaker—Sung by Dan W. Quinn.
- A-103, The Palms—Harry Macdonough.
- A-153, A Bunch of Rags—Banjo solo by Vess L. Ossman.
- A-186, How Was I To Know?—Sung by Edward M. Favor.
- A-187, They Wanted to Take My Photograph—Favor.

- A-271, Smoky Mokes—Metropolitan Orchestra.
  - A-200, In Old Ben Franklin's Day—S. H. Dudley.
  - A-109, Nearer, My God, to Thee—Haydn Quartet.
  - A-302, March from "The Charioteer"—Sousa's Band.
  - A-306, Stars and Stripes Forever March—Sousa's Band.
  - A-336, Star-Spangled Banner—Sousa's Band.
  - A-430, Mendelssohn's Spring Song—Violin solo by Charles D'Almaine.
  - A-449, Medley of Coon Songs—Mandolin solo by Samuel Siegel.
  - A-474, When Reuben Comes to Town—Quinn.
  - A-286, Jolly Fellows Waltz—Metropolitan Orchestra.
- I omitted to say the foregoing were listed as "Improved Gram-o-phone Records, manufactured exclusively by the Consolidated Talking Machine Co., Philadelphia, Pa." They appear to be later pressings than the following list of "Improved Records, manufactured exclusively by Eldridge R. Johnson:"

- A-7, Limburger Cheese—Burt Shepard.
- A-94, Holy City—Macdonough.
- A-125, Cornfield Medley—Haydn Quartet.
- A-382, American Patrol—Sousa's Band.
- A-391, Selections, No. 2, from "Iolanthe"—Metropolitan Orchestra.
- A-460, Romance from "L'Eclair"—Flute and saxophone duet, by Jean Moeremans and Frank Badollet.
- A-472, Chopin's Waltz—Flute solo by Badollet.
- A-482, Last Rose of Summer—Soprano solo by Rosalia Challa.
- A-506, A-507 and A-509, Minstrels First Part, Numbers 1, 2, and 4—by the Georgia Minstrels.

One Victor record is listed as "manufactured exclusively by Eldridge R. Johnson:" A-642, "Thy Sentinel Am  
(Continued on page 92)



The original tin-foil phonograph, now on exhibition in West Orange, N. J.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

I," sung by Hooley. The following are the "His Master's Voice," type, with dog trademark, made by the Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N.J.

- 118, Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground—Haydn Quartet.
- 119, Tumbling Tonight on the Old Camp Ground—Haydn.
- 619, Wedding Over the Hill—Golden.
- 665, Uncle Josh in a Department Store—Cal Stewart.
- 702, I Need Thee Every Hour—Westminster Chimes.
- 717, Rock of Ages—Trinity Choir.
- 833, Ye Bunks and Braes—Westminster Chimes.
- 1082, Some Time We'll Understand—Trinity Choir.
- 1259, Old Uncle Ned—Haydn.
- 1313, Home, Sweet Home—Haydn.
- 1314, When the Harvest Days Are Over—Haydn.
- 1830, Please Go Way and Let Me Sleep—Arthur Collins.
- 1691, There's a New Cue Coming in the Morning—Shepard.
- 1635, Down Where the Wurzburger Flows—Collins.
- 1723, First Rehearsal of the Huskin' Bce—Collins and Harlan.
- 1728, Closing Time in a Country Grocery—Collins and Harlan.
- 1790, Old Caken Bucket—Haydn.
- 1793, In the Good Old Summer Time—Haydn.
- 1893, Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane—Silas Leachman.
- 2118, Cat and the Fly Paper—Collins and Harlan.
- 2372, Onward, Christian Soldiers—Trinity Choir.
- 2350, Jim Lawson's Hogs—Stewart.
- 2380, Down On the Farm—Haydn.
- 2640, In the Glimming—Haydn.

Before leaving this Victor discussion I'd like to refute the story, common among collectors, that when the Victrola was introduced in 1906 (and who on the Victor staff designed it?) Johnson named it in honor of his wife, whose given name allegedly was Victoria.

Mrs. Johnson's maiden name really was Elsie Reeves Fenimore. Oddly, she and her husband both had Reeves for their middle name. They were married in Philadelphia October 5, 1897.

A more likely story is that when Johnson first heard the new machine with the enclosed horn, he remarked: "Why, it has a tone like a viola." And he combined the beginning of "Victor" and the end of "viola" to form the coined name, "Victrola."

### III. Early Announcement of Edison Wax Cylinder Machine

Now let's conclude this miscellany with one of the first published ac-

counts of what its heading calls "Mr. Edison's Latest Triumph." It describes the inventor's new cylinder phonograph that played wax cylinders, instead of recording on, and reproducing from, a piece of tin-foil wrapped around a mandrel.

I recently have obtained from a lady in Ohio a copy of a yellowed little magazine called "Golden Moments," published in Augusta, Me., and dated September, 1888. On the same page with an account of the death of Gen. Philip H. Sheridan is the following, which shows that even 80 years ago the claim was made that perfect reproduction had been obtained:

"The perfected phonograph is now ready for general introduction. It is a machine of admirable performance, whose utility is so wide and various that it is hard to determine just which work will give it the largest fields of employment.

"And then, too, aside from the practical use, is the wonder—for wonder it is—that not only can the human voice be registered, but it can be duplicated in countless electrotypes. A musician gives thus his experience of the instrument:

"It was proposed by Mr. Edison that I should play some of my own compositions and have them recorded by the phonograph. A funnel-shaped piece of tin, which resembled an exaggerated fish-horn, connected the phonograph and the piano.

"When I began to play, the sound waves entered the mouth of the big fish-horn, and by a curious mechanical contrivance made a little needle-pointed instrument press down upon a wax cylinder, from which it cut a thread of wax finer than sewing silk.

"After playing for four minutes the music was inscribed upon the wax cylinder in lines so fine that they were hardly perceptible to the naked eye, and a few moments later the delighted listeners were applauding a perfect reproduction of the composition I had played as it came from the phonograph.

"Then Mr. Edison laughingly said that he had made another one of his discoveries. This was to the effect that with the phonograph he could play a musical composition backward.

"In this connection he had found that the harmony of the composition was not destroyed, and that it retained enough of its individuality to be recognized. It was impossible to do this with any other instrument than the phonograph.

"On the piano an attempt to play a piece backward would result in discord. After this, a wax cylinder was adjusted

to the phonograph, upon which was inscribed the music of "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," which had been taken from the mouth of a New York baritone.

"The song, words and music, came from the instrument exactly as the singer had rendered it. All his peculiarities of intonation had been recorded, and the grace notes interpolated were reproduced with exact truthfulness.

"So natural, indeed, was it that the singer, in evening dress, seemed in fancy to be in the room, and going down his musical stairs into the caves of the ocean. Surely this century must ever be memorable above others because it is that which first preserved articulate speech for after time.

"All poetry, of every age, is full of yearning, one of the deepest in human nature, for the voice whose gentle greeting could be heard no more, and yet this tender sentiment will be gratified, and each illusive tone and accent now has conferred on it a perpetuity that is not an attribute of even the graven stone or brass."

I pause to remark that I should like to hear those "perfect" recordings of the piano and the baritone voice from a wax cylinder of 1888, and it's interesting to observe the reference to the cylinder's playing four minutes instead of the two-minute length that was standard for many years.

This probably was not an error, for Edison did make early experiments with four-minute records. The Edison Bell Company of England once advertised that it had made four-minute records in 1891, so Edison may have produced a few three years earlier.

I return now to the Victor portion of this article. Next month I expect to begin publication of a series, which probably will run through four or five installments, and will be called "How To Tell When Victor Records Were Made."

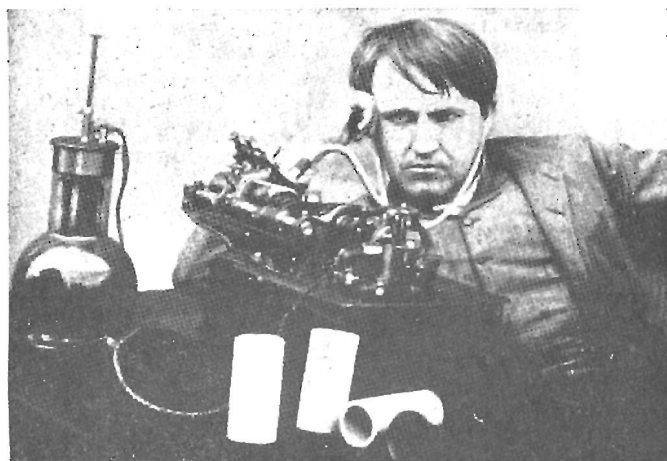
It will give a vast amount of information, never previously assembled, to my knowledge, on ways of telling the year Victor records were issued by such things as label peculiarities, the numbering system, types of accompaniments, and other factors.

In all respects this series should be one of the most useful I ever have written. I hope and believe it will prove helpful to thousands of collectors.

It will not, however, do much for those whose attitude is like that of a gentleman who once put in a long distance call to me after I had gone to sleep. He said he just had found a stack of old records and wanted me to tell him some method whereby, "just by looking at them," he could determine infallibly when a record was made. But, he said, the system mustn't take more than 30 minutes to learn because half an hour was all the time he had to spare.

I regretfully and drowsily replied that I was sorry I couldn't be of help. It had taken me more than 30 years, in addition to close study of thousands of old record catalogs and monthly supplements, to acquire the information I had gained, and if he couldn't spare more than a half hour, I said, there was nothing I could do for him.

(The End)



**TIRED INVENTOR**--This photograph, taken at 5:30 a.m. June 16, 1888, shows Thomas A. Edison sitting wearily beside his first phonograph that played wax cylinders. A contemporary account of the machine is given in the accompanying article.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Recurring Question

Through the years I have received many inquiries as to how the age of disc records, Victors especially, can be told by the label design and number.

Because of the interest in the record age question, I believe this article should prove helpful, as I doubt the information it contains ever has been assembled previously in connected form for ready reference.

For my study of Victor labels I relied largely on a large collection of single- and double-faced discs, sung by the tenor, Henry Macdonough. He was associated with the Company from its beginning and served many years as its artist and repertoire director. He was also, for a brief period in the early 1920s, Victor's advertising manager.

When I reached a period in which Macdonough — who made no Victor records after 1919 — was not represented, I resorted to Billy Murray's recorded repertoire. "The Denver Nightingale" began singing for Victor in 1903 and continued to record into the electric era.

### II. Label Colors

First, let's come to an understanding about when the various colors of

Victor labels were introduced and when they were withdrawn. Unlike its British affiliate, His Master's Voice, Victor never went to extremes in putting out discs with different colored labels, but a fairly wide range originated in Camden, N.J.

The black label, of course, was the most popular. It had been standard from the introduction of Berliner's 7-inch discs and continued through Eldridge R. Johnson's Climax and Improved records before the Victor name was adopted in October, 1901. The black label continued to designate Victor's best selling records as long as 78RPM discs were made, well into the 1950s.

The first "release" of Red Seal records, pressed from matrices imported from England, appeared in the May, 1903, supplement. The first American Red Seal recording was done April 30, 1903, in New York, when an Australian contralto, Ada Crossley, sang four numbers.

Red Seals were single-faced until September, 1923, when the greater part of the celebrity catalog was combined in double-faced form, to give lower prices and, perhaps, to battle the growing popularity of radio.

But as far back as late 1919, the



EARLY LABEL. David Ferguson's 1907 Monarch records of bagpipe solos were issued with special Scotch plaid labels, but the plaid effect does not show in this picture.

price of single-faced Red Seals had been cut about in half.

The double-faced Red Seal records reduced the sale of the single-sided kind as sharply as double-faced black labels had cut into the single-faced business more than 10 years before.

In July, 1925, harder pressed than ever by radio competition, and with electrical recording just introduced, Victor announced that the remaining stocks of \$1 single-faced Red Seals had been reduced to 65 cents; the \$1.50 ones to 90 cents; and so on, in proportion, throughout the "classical" catalog.

This meant, of course, that the single-faced variety, after a career of 22 years, was being discontinued.

Incidentally, what a stroke of genius that Red Seal label was! I wonder who originated it. The bright red label gave Victor's "classical" and "celebrity" records a prestige no other American brand approached. And it led RCA Victor, in the late 1930s, to bring an unsuccessful suit against Columbia and other companies to keep them from using red labels on any type of record.

One of the least known Victor labels was introduced in 1903. A Scotch plaid design, it was used for single-faced discs of the Kilties Band of Canada, conducted by William F. Robinson, and for solos by a Canadian bagpipe virtuoso, David Ferguson.

Most collectors probably never have seen one of these gaily colored labels. Ferguson's two records, however, stayed in the catalog until November 1, 1910.

The single-faced purple label was introduced when 15 new records by Harry Lauder were announced in February, 1910. The first 10-inch purple label was 60,000, "I've Something in the Bottle for the Morning" (also known as "Foo the Noo"), and the

(Continued on page 52)



A TRIO OF PIONEERS. This series, which explains how the age of Victor records may be told, is based largely on label changes in the discs sung by Harry Macdonough (left) during his long career.

Vess L. Ossman (center), "The Banjo King," made records for Eldridge R. Johnson before the Victor label was adopted, and his version of "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden" from "Floradora" is said to be the oldest Victor master record still in the company's vaults.

S. H. Dudley (right) made the first 10-inch record Johnson issued, Monarch 3001, "When Reuben Comes to Town." Dudley also sang a double-faced 7-inch Berliner record.



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

first 12-inch, 70,000, contained a longer version of the same song.

The last purple label, 70,125, "I Think I'll Get Wed in the Summer," also by Lauder, was announced in July, 1920. The following year almost all the purple label records still in the catalog were combined in blue label form.

Double-faced 10- and 12-inch blue label discs were introduced in the May, 1912, catalog. At first they were restricted to imported operatic offerings by artists not considered quite of Red Seal caliber. The label's scope, however, began to be extended in January, 1913, when 55030, which contained two piano solos by Frank La Forge, was issued.

Paul Althouse, whose initial records were announced in July, 1914, was the first American singer to be given blue label status. His introductory record was 45055. It contained "E lucevan le stelle" from "Tosca," and "Vesti la giubba" from "Il Pagliacci."

The blue label grew to feature the offerings of such singers as Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Lambert Murphy, Royal Dadmun, and Lauder. But it survived only a short time after the change to electric recording.

The highest numbered blue label in the regular American list was part of the April, 1926, supplement, 45533 on which Dadmun sang "Father O'Flynn," and "Irish Names."

The last to be issued, however, was 45527, "Waltz in E Minor," and "Prelude." These piano solos by Master Shura Cherkassky, didn't appear until June.

This goes to show that sometimes you can't tell *exactly* by a record's number when it was issued.

Following the appearance of the 11-year-old wizard-of-the-keyboard, the blue label declined into oblivion. Five double-faced Japanese records, 45534 through 45538, were issued in May, 1927. They bore the blue label but were not included in the domestic American catalog.

The last 12-inch seems to have been 55290, "Barber of Seville Overture," by Rudolph Ganz and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. It was cataloged in March, 1926.

The blue label singers already mentioned were "promoted" to a new Red Seal classification that sold at the same price as the blue label had brought. Other artists, such as Walter C. Kelly, "the Virginian Judge," who previously had been among the "blues," were demoted to black label.

Two special records with blue labels and the numbers 300 and 301 were issued in August, 1927. They were "Gene Tunney's Health Exercises," but were not part of the standard 45000 and 55000 series.

In 1926 Victor introduced a green label that attracted little attention. Numbers 50 through 59 contained Prof. Louis Allard's series of "French Through Sound." And 65 through 76, made for educational use, dealt with

"localized American speech . . . to show the vagaries of speech in different sections of the country."

During Victor's earliest days, sample records were provided for salesmen who called on dealers. These had white labels, with the names of titles and artists handwritten in ink.

In the early 1920s a special service was instituted by which single-faced pressings were provided of records that had been cut out of the catalog. Such records were available until some time in the late 1930s, at constantly increasing prices. These discs also had white labels, but all information was typewritten.

### III. Climax and Improved Labels

Eldridge R. Johnson began to call his firm the Victor Talking Machine Company, as has been said, in October, 1901. He previously had done a small and harried business, seemingly confined to the years 1900 and 1901, as a record manufacturer.

He was associated with Emile Berliner, who, in 1894, brought out the first commercially issued disc records. Berliner records, all 7-inch single-faced, continued to be made through part of 1900. I have one, 01021, "In Old Ben Franklin's Day," sung by S. H. Dudley, with the recording date, 2/26/00 (February 26, 1900) scratched into the label.

Records of Victor origin were issued in Canada under the Berliner label and in different sizes for several years longer. Victor records may be considered the grandchildren of the small Berliner discs.

But before the Victor name was used Johnson had made Climax and Improved records, both single-faced, 7-inch. The Climax records appeared in 1900. They were the product of the Globe Record Company which Johnson briefly controlled.

After a few months, Columbia, which was not yet making disc records, sued, alleging infringement of its "Joe Jones" patent. Rather than fight through possibly long, expensive legal action, Johnson assigned all rights of the Globe Record Company to Columbia.

When Columbia began to issue disc records in 1902 most of its first offerings were Climax records and were so announced, even though they bore Columbia labels. Some of these apparently were recorded while Johnson still owned the Climax rights.

As I mentioned in these columns a few months ago, I have seen Climax labels with the letters, V.T.M. Co., in a lower corner. This seems to indicate Victor issued Climax records as a side line for a short time before parting with the label. Some of the single-faced Climaxes have brass rings around the spindle hole. All say they were made *for* (not *by*) Columbia.

Johnson's Improved records had black labels with gold lettering. The words, "Improved Record," are printed in a curving formation around the top. The labels say they were manu-

factured by Eldridge R. Johnson, Camden, N.J.; but some have a sticker on the blank side that identifies the maker as "Consolidated Talking Machine Company, Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A."

Seemingly, few Improved records survive today. They safely may be classified as made in 1900 or possibly 1901. The numbering began with A-1 — George Broderick recited the Eugene Field's poem, "Departure," which another George — George Graham — had recorded for Berliner in 1896.

When Johnson began to issue 7-inch Victor records, he, at first, retained the A numbering system. For instance, "Limburger Cheese" was A-7 on both Improved and Victor, and many of the small Victors evidently were made from Improved masters.

(Continued in November HOBBIES)

## OLD MECHANICAL BANKS

(Continued from page 46)

registering bank as per above, is in the writer's opinion a mechanical bank and not just a registering bank. It in fact registers nothing. The hand on the dial points to the amount of the coin deposited. This action is caused by the weight of the coin. Then when the lever is pressed the coin is released from the inside mechanism and the pointer hand returns to its normal position. Nothing is registered, only the type coin is designated, that is, if a penny, nickel, dime, and so one.

The Try Your Weight Bank is a very attractive item in the following colors: The base of the scale, top, and entire back is red, as is the medallion centered under the face of the scale. The drape effect on each side of the front is also red. There is various gold outlining and decoration of the peak, sides, medallion and scale face. Each side and front has interesting decorative effect in blue, green, brown and red. A small rural scene in circular form appears on each side. The lettering "Try Your Weight and Save Money" and "Cents" is black and the numerals are red. The face of the scale is white and a small white section with "Press Here" written thereon is by the coin release and resetting lever. The scale platform section of the base is a mottled blue, red and black. The picture in each circle on either side, by the way, consists of a German type thatched cottage with tall trees and sunset.

Figure 1 shows the bank front view. In Figure 2 the coin slot and lever are well defined as is the small circular picture referred to in the description of the coloring. Other than "Made in Germany" on the bottom left side, no other markings appear on the bank.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

In the October issue of HOBBIES Magazine we considered Label Colors, also Climax and Improved Labels. Now we continue the discussion on ascertaining the age of Victor records.

#### I. Pre-Dog Victors

At the time Johnson started producing both 7 and 10-inch Victor records in 1901 he called the smaller discs Victors and the larger, Victor Monarchs. Their first labels followed the Improved design except that Victor or Victor Monarch was substituted for Improved.

They flourished this stern warning:

"This record is leased for the purpose of producing sound directly from the record and for no other purpose; any attempt at copying or counterfeiting will be construed as a violation of this condition as a basis for legal proceedings."

No patents were mentioned.

I just said that the 7-inch discs were called Victors and the 10-inch Victor Monarchs, but when you investigate the history of the early talking machine companies you nearly

always turn up exceptions to the rule.

For example, I have a 7-inch record, 125, of "The Cornfield Medley," by the Haydn Quartet. Its label, instead of merely saying Victor, says "Victor Monarch," although Monarch supposedly was reserved for 10-inch. There is no warning sticker on this record.

A possibility I have considered is that the supply of 7-inch labels for "The Cornfield Medley" unexpectedly became exhausted and a 10-inch size (the record was made in both 7- and 10-inch) was substituted. But the label, which has the dog trademark, seems too small for a 10-inch.

Another oddity about this record is that its recording date, February 13, 1902, is scratched clearly into the label, but it already had been listed, under the same number, 125, in the Victor catalog for February, 1902.

This makes it appear that the disc was cataloged before it was made! Perhaps, however, a re-make had become necessary, and the copy I have is one that was sung after the catalog was printed.

A salesman's white label sample record of 3183, "Old Black Joe," also gives cause for reflection. Instead of saying "Victor Monarch," its curvilinear heading reads "Victor 10-Inch Record," and is the only one of its kind, I think, that I have seen.

It contains the warning against infringement, but the title, number, and name of the quartet are written in black ink. The date is scratched into the label too faintly to be read.

At first, the 10-inch Victor Monarchs were numbered in a 3,000 series; however, by the beginning of 1902 other numbers, that began with 1 and continued in numerical order, were substituted. I have a copy of "When Reuben Comes to Town," sung by S. H. Dudley on 3001, but the February, 1902, catalog gives its number as 519. My copy obviously was pressed in 1901. Another change occurred in 1903 when it was given the number of M1912.

Sometimes, the old number was cut into the wax and its successor printed on the label. My guess is that the change began immediately after "Elbridge R. Johnson" gave way to "the Victor Talking Machine Company."

Even during 1901 Victor had begun to remake records. My "Reuben" has a piano accompaniment, but the one in the 1902 catalog is with orchestra.

By the end of 1902, the dog trade-

mark — "His Master's Voice"—was appearing on all new records. The "Victor Monarch" designation for 10-inch discs had been shortened to "Monarch." An example is 1793, "In the Good Old Summer Time," which the Haydn Quartet had recorded November 20, 1902.

Seven-inch records all were called Victor, and the A prefix before 7-inch numbers had been dropped, although it continued to appear on the record's smooth inside rim. 10-inch serial numbers on the rim were prefixed with B, and 12-inch, with C.

The A prefix had been discontinued when the February, 1902, catalog was printed.

A revised numbering system, which also had been established prior to February, 1902, went this way: If a record number was preceded by V (for Victor) it could be had only in the 7-inch size. An M (for Monarch) indicated it was restricted to 10-inch. Omission of a letter before the number meant it was made in both 7- and 10-inch.

Twelve-inch DeLuxe records, introduced in 1903, had a separate numbering system in the 31000s, and 14-inch in the 41000s. A few of the 3000 series 10-inch discs remained in the catalog through August 31, 1904, but all had been discontinued when the November 30, 1904, catalog appeared.

The 3000 series soon afterwards was set aside for foreign language records. Further information concerning its foreign language use is on page 40 of HOBBIES for October, 1961.

Fourteen-inch records were called DeLuxe Special. They all were discontinued in 1905.

—o—

#### Later

Just after I concluded this installment, I received, by a happy coincidence, a letter from a distinguished collector of opera records, M. J. Prospect of New York City. Included were some comments on Climax records and 14-inch Victors that belong here. It is a pleasure to quote:

"I have been reminded of many 'little interests' from your articles, such as the portion dealing with the Climax record. In my talks years back, with Mr. (Emilio) De Gogorza, I got the impression that this was a small outfit of its own standing, as others had mushroomed in that era.

"As was the custom at the time, small companies were taken over by large ones. For some reason, both Victor and Columbia were interested in this Climax outfit, to get it for its own.

"According to Mr. De Gogorza, Victor experimented with many different sizes of disc recordings, from about 6-inch to over 20-inch; but the largest size actually issued was the 14-inch Victor De Luxe, and he recorded in this size.

"Although I have been fortunate to find four of these 14-inch, I have never heard of anyone else having any, and no De Gogorza. The 14-inch first came out in the 2000 series, and immediately after changed to the 4000 series, I sup-

(Continued on page 126)



**DISTINGUISHED BARITONE.** Emilio De Gogorza told M. J. Prospect, a leading collector of opera records, that he made 14-inch discs for Victor in 1903, but it is doubtful they were issued.

De Gogorza also recorded under several other names, including Carlos Francisco, Herbert Goddard, and Monsieur Fernand.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 35)

world, only to find it, finally, a few miles away from home, through a "Wanted" ad in *HOBBIES*!

To be candid, I knew there were vocal riches to be found on hill-and-dale, but I never did realize the immensity of this wealth, nor its full grandeur, until I pored through the Girard-Barnes book. It's really amazing where the authors found all this information.

Of course, data was extracted from catalogs and other such printed material. But when one thinks that some of those old pamphlets are now rarer than the recordings themselves, the difficulty of the task becomes vividly clear.

A note in the preface states: "The Table is far from complete."

With the object of further enriching the work, it would be well if the readers would send whatever additional data they can supply to the British Institute of Recorded Sound at the foregoing address, perhaps an addenda which may be published in the future.

Names familiar to a collector of lateral-cut discs, and others found by him only as dubbings from H&D's, entice the reader's attention while scanning "Vertical-Cut Cylinders and Discs." I, myself, was fascinated completely. Just for the fun of it, suppose I thumb through its pages again and report some of my findings.

Right at the beginning are such lateral-cut friends as Aino Ackté and Agustarello Affre. I thought Affre made many "laterals," but heavens, his "verticals" run a close second. And all the labels his name adorned: Pathé, Columbia, Dutreih, Phrynis,

Pathé-A.P.G.A. Included in this liberal output is his participation in the complete "Carmen," and "Roméo et Juliette."

The name of Suzanne Adams, and of those others who, like her, recorded on H&D solely for Bettini, lend additional lustre to the book. Their inclusion is justified even though the absence of their Bettini recordings appears somewhat enigmatic.

What bothers me in a way is the presence of such names as Milka Ternina, Emilio de Marchi, Jean de Reszke, and their like, who either have not recorded at all or whose recordings never have been traced.

I feel Mapleson's amateur dabbings do not place these singers in the category of "recording artists," priceless though the Mapleson cylinders are for their historic value.

A good many of these cylinders (one of a kind, of course) are now at the Lincoln Center Music Library, including those I had some of which were dubbed on a Herrold LP. A number of the others were dubbed by IRCC on 78 rpm and LP.

To go on with names, there are both Carlo and Emma Albani who are not related; also Henry Albers, Mario Ancona, Albert Alvarez, and Paul Aumonier who is a prolific recorder on various labels.

Amadeo Bassi, Hippolyte Belhomme and Ernestina Bendazzi-Garulli are listed. I wonder if she is as rare on H&D as she is on lateral-cut. A. V. Bogdanovich, Giuseppe Borgatto, and Marianne Brandt are included. To think that, were it not for her three H&D's, we never would know what this fabled contralto sounded like!

Wacław Brzezinski, D. I. Bukhtoyarov, Eugenia Burzio, Ada Crossley, Alice Cucini, and Lelio Casini — Ruffo's eminent mentor. Why, he made more verticals than laterals!

V. P. Damayev, Marcelle Demougeot — just one Phrynis cylinder of the "Mignon" Swallows duet with Nivette? Marie Delna, Marcelin Duclos — only one Paris Edison cylinder, the arioso from "Benvenuto Cellini?"

Dear me, I've just discovered that I'm the proud owner of the "complete Duclos" on H&D! I've always loved that recording, for the artist truly sings the beautiful piece merveilleusement.

Ignacy Dygas, Elise Elizza, Alma Fohstrom — once a super-rarity. Now I know three people who have it. John Forsell, Alfonso Garulli, O. I. Kamionskiy, Heinrich Knote, Janina Korolewicz-Waydowa, Jean Lassalle.

Tadeusz Leliva, Felia Litvinne, Adolphe Marechal, Leon Melchisedec — a venerable name, indeed! Lucien Muratore has an abundant selection of cylinders and discs on different labels.

Antonina Nezhdanova, Varva Panina, "Adelina Patti." Now this I just cannot buy, despite the announcement. Who, ever sings Auber's "Manon Lescaut?" Eclat de rire on that cylinder is no more Patti than I am Confucius.

Remember what De Luca told me? As a student he made cylinders announced as sung by Maurel, Kaschmann, and other established baritones of his day.

Listed also are Aureliano Pertile, G. S. Pirogov, Augusto Scampini, Emile Scaramberg, P. T. Sloutsov, L. V. Sobinov, Berthe Söyer, and Isabella Svicher. Oddly, she made four Pathe recordings but only one G&T, for which she is best known.

J. V. Tartakov is an extra-special rarity. Albert Vaguet made a plethora of recordings for Pathe. So did Ninon Vallin. Cesar Vezzani — only one record-

ing on Phrynis? Giulietta Wermez, the Yuzhin couple and Ye. I. Zbruyeva.

Among the speakers stand out the thrilling names of Sarah Bernhardt, Benoit Constant Coquelin (the elder), Sacha Guitry, Rudyard Kipling — London Pathe, no titles known. Yvonne Prinemps and Adolf von Sonnenthal are included.

And in the instrumentalists' section, the names of Gustave Charpentier (conducting?), Joseph Lhevinne, and Mischa Elman seem the most appealing.

I did my picking, now it's up to my kind reader to choose his own preferences with book in hand, if at all interested in the wonderful world of hill-and-dale.

I recommend "Vertical-Cut Cylinders and Discs" wholeheartedly. Definitely the book is a "must" in every discerning record collector's library. Incidentally, with Christmas coming, it would make a lovely Yuletide gift.

—O—

## REPLIES TO "S.O.S."

Several collectors familiar with H&D discs sent letters regarding the batch of Rex test-pressings I wrote about under the heading "S.O.S."

The basso in *Il lacerato spirito* definitely has been identified, for which I am grateful. I am also thankful for all the other tips, even if they were only suggestions and didn't lead to actual results.

As soon as I can, I'll give all the details. Meanwhile may I be permitted to keep my readers in a suspense similar to that in Pearl White's serials, which I once so dearly loved.

—A. F. A.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

pose to make room for the Red 2000 series just being born. Have you any information on this subject?

"On page 39 of the January issue of *HOBBIES*, referring to the photo of 'Who are they?' the person in the center reminds me of a young Billy Murray, as I remember him."

In reply to Mr. Prospect, I, too, have had the impression that the Globe Record Company, which made Climax records, was acquired rather than begun by Johnson. But I have avoided this phase of the label's history as it was complicated and did not apply directly to the dating of Victor records.

Johnson has been quoted as saying that he knew nothing of the existence of the "Jones patents" when he began issuing Climax records. He was unaware that Joe Jones had acquired a patent on a system of lateral-cut disc recording which he had sold to Columbia. This made it possible for the latter to boast that it controlled "the basic patents of the talking machine industry."

Many years ago I wrote to my dear friend, the late Frank Dorian, who was associated with the Columbia Company from its beginning, and asked him what he recalled about Climax records and the Globe Record Company.

I have been able to find two letters from him treating of this subject, but since Mr. Dorian was in Europe from 1897 to 1909, he had no first-



HEINRICH KNOTE as Rienzi



hand knowledge of Columbia's Globe activities, and his recollections for this reason, as he himself said, may be somewhat hazy. They are worth quoting, however, for their bearing on the subject. One letter said:

"When Columbia first began to make disc records, back in February, 1902, it purchased the presses, matrices and other equipment of the old Globe Co., and records made from Globe matrices were cataloged as 'Climax.' Names of the general runs of artists were omitted from record labels and catalogs, and just the classification given, such as tenor, baritone, male quartet, etc."

But there usually were spoken announcements at the beginning that identified the artists.

Later, Mr. Dorian wrote:

"I'm sorry to say I can't tell you a thing about the Globe Record Company. I have a very hazy memory that about the time you mention (1902) while I was still in Europe, there was a company by that name, and it is probable they pressed records for Columbia at the time the latter first began to do disc recording."

"I also have a memory, also very hazy, that Columbia bought them out in order to use fully their facilities and equipment; but I am not sure enough about that to make any definite statement."

Then follows a generally unknown, but picturesque bit of Columbia history:

"I do know that Columbia eventually bought the Burt Company, makers of various articles made of plastic materials under hydraulic pressure, in order to get their complete pressing plant. For a while the Columbia Company ran the Burt Company as a separate corporate entity — I know because I held stock in it, as did many other Columbia stockholders — but later they consolidated it with Columbia, removed the equipment to Bridgeport, and installed it in their own factories there."

"For a long time after the Burt Company equipment was moved to Bridgeport, Columbia continued to manufacture composition billiard and pool balls, poker chips, and other articles of that character, to complete contracts which the Burt Company had with distributors of such merchandise (such as U.S. Playing Card Company on poker chips); but as soon as the contracts had been fulfilled, Columbia declined any further business of that sort and devoted its pressing plant exclusively to records."

"I still have, in some old trunk, a quantity of beautiful poker chips which were pressed at Columbia's Bridgeport plant."

Mr. Dorian's letters, I think, confirm the impression that Globe was a separate record company afterwards acquired by Columbia — and by Eldridge Johnson before that. But Dorian evidently is wrong in saying Columbia bought it rather than that they received it from Victor in settlement of litigation — something he probably had forgotten if he ever had known.

As for the 14-inch Victor DeLuxe records, I never have seen them listed in any catalog under either the 2000 or 4000 series. I do know that, like the 12-inch, they first were issued in 1903, but, unlike the 12-inch, their life was short.

Unfortunately, there is a gap in my Victor record catalogs between February, 1902, and August 31, 1904. The November, 1904, Victor numerical catalog lists 21 14-inch discs, numbered from 41001 to 41022 (41010 is



1902 CATALOG COVER. Reprinted here is the cover of the February, 1902, catalog of Monarch and Victor records. It displays the labels of both 10-inch and 7-inch size discs. The dog trademark was used on the back cover, but had not yet made its appearance on record labels.

Both records shown in the picture contain "The Stars and Stripes Forever March," played by Sousa's Band under the direction of its assistant conductor, Arthur Pryor. This is one of the few Victor-made records issued before 1905 that gives the name of the composer in parentheses.

missing). Eight are by the Victor Orchestra, 11 by the Victor Band, and two by Jules Levy, the cornet virtuoso. There are no vocal selections by De Gogorza or any other singer, and I never have seen any listed.

In a later message, however, Mr. Prospect has proved beyond question that the 14-inch records did appear for what had to be a very brief period in the 2000 series. His collection includes one of "Mignon Selection," which appeared later as 41006, and bears only the number 2023, which is etched on the smooth outside circle of the record and appears on the label. He also has the two Jules Levy solos, as well as 41001, "Attila Selection," and 41017, "Morgenblatter Waltz."

A sticker on the back of the 14-inch productions reads: "By adapting governor to permit of but 60 revolutions per minute, you will obtain the best results from this record."

Mr. Prospect comments:

"This seems to be the earliest step toward extended play and LPs. Due to the enlarged extended incision in the record, loudness was added to the performance. I believe this is what Mr. De Gogorza meant (by saying they were made) for large audiences and schools, etc., inside or in the open."

In all probability, the necessity of

slowing down the speed from the 72 or so revolutions per minute at which ordinary Victor records were made in those days proved a nuisance and caused the early death of the 14-inch.

Regarding Victor's having experimented with different sizes and types of records, I have read that the Company produced a very heavy, long-playing type around 1916, but it was not marketed and I don't know the size.

Mr. Prospect's suggestion that the young man in the picture might be Billy Murray will not stand up if, as I think, the picture was made late in 1901. Murray was then in the West and did not come East until a year or two later, and his first Victor records were not issued until November, 1903. If, however, the picture was

## CHICAGO ANTIQUES EXPOSITION

at the

Conrad Hilton

Nov. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Sponsored by HOBBIES

Charles Marston, Show Mgr.



taken after Billy's Victor association began, our helpful friend just possibly might be right.

—o—  
Since writing the foregoing I have been informed by Miss Anna Marie Schilt of the Consumer Services Department of RCA's Victor Record Division that there is no information in the Company's files as to the identity of the pictured men.

So, it looks as if their names, and the circumstances that caused the photo to be taken, will remain a mystery.

(To be continued in December Hobbies)

## PLAYING CARDS

(Continued from page 149)

Gettysburg Address as the Civil war drew to a close. Upon re-election for his second term he said: "... As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy."

Five days after the end of the war, April 19, 1865, he was assassinated by a fanatical advocate of secession, John Wilkes Booth. However, tradition has made Abraham Lincoln one of the greatest of all symbols of American democracy.

The Anti-Slavery Amendment to the Constitution was ratified on December 18, 1865, after his death. The Proclamation and Anti-Slavery Amendment stand as a monument to a great and courageous President, and are part of the very life blood of our liberty and freedom today!

Then, there was Robert Edward Lee (1807-1870), commander of the Confederate armies in the Civil war. His courage, military abilities, and generous nature made him a great American figure as well as the symbol of the "lost cause."

With the able co-operation of "Stonewall" Jackson, he defeated the Union Army under Pope in the famous Battle of Bull Run. However, he was repulsed at Gettysburg, and finally surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865.

Lee, too, stressed the importance of unity in these words: "All should unite in honest efforts to obliterate the effects of war and to restore the blessings of peace."

Clara Barton (1821-1912) was an American philanthropist, born in Massachusetts. At the outbreak of the Civil war she resigned from her clerkship in the Patent Office to become a volunteer nurse in the army hospitals and on the battlefields.

Later, she lectured on her war experiences, and then went to Switzerland for her health. During the Franco-Prussian war (1870) she assisted the Red Cross Society, and at the close of the war was decorated with the Golden Cross of Baden and the Iron Cross of Germany.

Upon the organization of the American Red Cross Society in 1881, she was appointed as its first president. Clara Barton, "a ministering angel" to the sick and wounded of the Civil war, left behind a legacy of which we can all be proud — the American Red Cross.



PLUM AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

As some HOBBIES readers already know, Professor Plum Duff Walsh, "The Perfect Personality," and latest addition to Jim Walsh's family of cats, is an independent candidate for President of the United States.

He is running on the "Harmony" ticket, designed to reconcile all differences among existing political factions, and to reconcile instinctive differences among animals.

Rumor says Plum declined to run for either President or Vice President as a Republican or Democrat, but decided his best role would be that of "The Great Harmonizer."

His running mate is Possy, Jim Walsh's pet 'possum. They are confident of winning the November 5 election not only by the vote of men and women but through heavy balloting by dogs, cats, and 'possums.

The photograph printed here shows "Loppy," a "calico" kitten of Rose Hill, Va., carrying a banner reading "Plum Walsh for President" while "Chip," an orange-colored tomcat, looks on approvingly.

Both cats belong to the feline family of Mrs. Lucie Jenkins, an enthusiastic HOBBIES reader and cat lover.

## STAMPS

(Continued from page 133)

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), better known as "Teddy," was not only a great American statesman, but he became the 26th President of the United States. When the war with Spain broke out in 1897, and the 1st regiment of United States Volunteer Cavalry was recruited, he was lieutenant colonel of the "Rough Riders." Later, he was promoted to colonel for gallantry in action.

As President during the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, his action led to the termination of the war and his ultimate winning of the Nobel prize.

Space and time are too limited to cover the many other heroes, including those of World wars I and II, the Korean war, and the present war in Viet Nam. All are heroes worthy of honorable recognition, and certainly they are glorious examples of courage in our constant struggle for a united survival.

There are others, too, whose names may mean little. Yet, in themselves many are great, such as explorers, pioneers, scientists, homemakers, and even the breadwinners.

If those who read this article believe that the democratic mode of government in the United States offers the greatest opportunity for achievement, security, life, liberty, and happiness, and all are worth fighting for, then the foregoing reminders will have fulfilled sincerely their purpose — that:

UNITED WE STAND!

unsought during the War of 1812, so a debt-ridden Trumbull returned home. President Madison commissioned him to execute four large historical paintings which now hang in the Capitol. These took eight years and earned him \$32,000. One of these, "The Declaration of Independence" reveals Trumbull's passion for accuracy in portraiture. To complete it, he painted Jefferson in Paris, John Adams in London and 36 others from life, which required him to visit many locations. Nine of the principals he copied from other artists, two he painted from memory. One stand-in was necessary. Benjamin Harrison had died, so Trumbull painted his son, who was said to be the spitting image.

Trumbull's "The Surrender of General Burgoyne" was reproduced as a postage stamp in 1927. Two of his portraits of Washington became stamps in 1932.

In style, Trumbull was influenced by John Singleton Copley, whose work he admired while a student at Harvard. Young Trumbull, who could read Greek at the age of six, was qualified to enter college at 12, but waited until he had "matured" at 15 to enroll in Harvard's junior class.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

PART III

By JIM WALSH

The November issue of HOBBIES discussed the Pre-Dog Victors. Now we will go on to early prices.

### I. Early Prices

Since "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" is primarily concerned with old "popular" records, emphasis will be laid necessarily in this series on how to tell the age of Black Label Victors. However, I hope the information we provide will be useful to collectors of Red Seals and other types.

The 7-inch, single-faced Victors introduced in 1901 sold for 50 cents each, or \$5 a dozen. The 10-inch Monarchs were \$1 each, or \$10 per dozen. The 12-inch De Luxe, first marketed in 1903, were \$1.50 apiece or \$15 by the dozen. The 14-inch De Luxe Specials, also first offered in 1903, were \$2 each. I never have seen any "by the dozen" discount for them.

Red Seal records sold at from \$2 to \$5 each, single-faced, and were not subject to a discount. Neither were imported Black Label records, which were 65 cents each for the 7-inch and \$1.25 for the 10-inch.

On December 1, 1905, the price of 7-inch Black Labels was reduced from 50 to 35 cents; the 10-inch from \$1 to 60 cents, and the 12-inch from \$1.50 to \$1. "By the dozen" discounts were done away with. Fourteen-inch records had been discontinued before the reduction went into effect.

Thickness of the records, which had weighed perhaps two-thirds as much as the later Edison Diamond Discs, was reduced by something like half when the price was cut. Red Seal prices were not lowered.

The last 7-inch records were issued in April, 1906. The two highest numbers reached before the series discontinuance were 4634, "Grand Old Rag," by Billy Murray, and 4635, "The Old Brigade," a duet by Frank C. Stanley and Harry Macdonough. Collectors who seek to fix dates in their minds may remember that no 7-inch Victor was issued later than April, 1906.

Eight-inch records were introduced in May, 1906. A total of 12 were offered. One was the "Grand Old Rag," under the same number, 4634, it has been given in 7-inch the month before.

Any 7-inch record of this number, which was for a time the biggest selling disc in the entire Victor cata-

log, must be a rarity, since it was offered for only a month.

The lowest numbered 8-inch offered in May was 4160, "The Star-Spangled Banner," by Stanley; and the highest, 4672, "My Old Kentucky Home," by Macdonough.

This makes it clear that it is hard to tell from its number exactly when an 8-inch record was made. If there was already a 10-inch version of the same selection in the catalog by the same singer, the 8-inch was given the same number as the 10-inch, which might have been made years before. Stanley's 10-inch "Star-Spangled Banner," as an example, was issued in 1904, yet here is an 8-inch with the same number that came out in May, 1906.

The following notice accompanied the first list of 8-inch:

"We take pleasure in presenting this month the first 12 of our new eight-inch records. They will be found to be much superior to the seven-inch, owing to the larger circle of sound waves. The seven-inch will now be gradually withdrawn or made over in the eight-inch size. A large demand is anticipated for these new records."

The 8-inch discs, like their 7-inch forerunners, sold for 35 cents each. They remained in the catalog until the first list of 100 double-faced 10-inch and 25 double-faced 12-inch records was announced October 25, 1908.

Since a 10-inch record that played on both sides was available now for 75 cents, Victor logically figured customers no longer would pay 35 cents for 8-inch records with music on only one side, so cut them out.

The final 8-inch list was printed in the October, 1908, monthly supplement. Four of the little records were offered: 5417, "American Polka," by John J. Kimmel; 5455, "Smarty," Ada Jones and Billy Murray; 5434, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," Trinity Choir, and 5460, "Rah, Rah, Rah," from "The Soul Kiss," Peerless Quartet.

As an example of the trickiness of trying to judge the age of 8-inch records by their numbers, the September supplement had contained one with the highest number reached in the series, 5518, "Musette," by the Victor Orchestra. The three others were: 5383, "Bavarian Yodel," by Harry Macdonough and George P. Watson; 5397, "Smile, Smile, Smile," Ada Jones and Billy Murray, and 5377, "Uncle Josh's Letter From Home," Cal Stewart.

A point to remember in dating 8-

inch records is that none was issued before May, 1906, and none after October, 1908.

The new 12-inch double-faced Victor record sold for \$1.25. Victor's prices were higher than those of Columbia, which had brought out double-faced discs several months earlier. Victor followed. Columbias were 65 cents for 10-inch and \$1 for 12-inch. The Victor-controlled Zonophone records sold at the same price as Columbias.

### II. Warning Stickers, Announcements and Composer Credits

Early Victor and Monarch records, made before the "His Master's Voice" trademark was adopted, carried no infringement warning stickers on the unrecorded side. By the way, the Radio Corporation of America last year seriously considered abandoning the trademark but finally decided to retain it for use on records because "old Nipper has tremendous sentimental value."

The earliest date I have seen on these stickers is January, 1904, which means that an early type record without a sticker was made not later than 1903. The latest date for a sticker-type record is February, 1908, but the stickers were used through the monthly list for October, 1908.

Simultaneously, with the issuance of the first list of double-faced Victors, the label was changed to carry the infringements warning that had previously been printed on the back, and the first discs with the new type label, but without reverse-side stickers, came out in December, 1908.

There appears to have been no list of monthly releases for November, 1908, presumably because the factory was fully occupied in turning out the new double-faced "platters." I have no November, 1908, monthly supplement and don't think one was issued, for the December supplement lists in the back pages, the records for October, but says nothing about November.

The lowest numbered 10-inch record to start out with the new label seems to have been 5572, "Could You Learn to Love a Little Girl Like Me?" sung by Dorothy Kingsley, and the lowest 12-inch, 31715, "Uncle Josh Keeps House." The labels of these records were dated August 15, 1908.

On most, or all, of the Pre-Dog records the recording date was scratched somewhere in the upper right side of the label. These numbers can be read on some surviving records, but on others have become too dim. Large and, to my thinking, ugly type faces were used.

Johnson followed the example of Berliner and the cylinder makers in having his earlier records begin with spoken announcements. In the beginning, these were made by a gentleman with a peculiarly bland and ingratiating tenor voice, who sounds something like Harry Macdonough but probably wasn't. Surely, it couldn't have been Johnson himself!

In introducing Jules Levy, the  
(Continued on page 53)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

"great unknown" refers to Levy as "the world's greatest cornet player." Mostly, however, artists announced for themselves. Macdonough and S. H. Dudley did, and Bill Hooley did the honors for the Haydn Quartet, the first American Quartet, and the Georgia Minstrels. Cal Stewart introduced his "Uncle Josh" records.

Unlike Edison and Columbia, Victor did not use the brand name in its announcements. I never have heard an announcement concluding: "Victor Monarch Rec-cord!"

The announcements prevailed, from Johnson's going into the record business in 1900 to the monthly issue for November, 1903. The last announced Monarch I have been able to find is 2451, "It Was the Dutch," sung by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, and announced by Collins.

The next four records in numerical order, 2452, 2453, 2454, and 2455, constitute Billy Murray's historical first list for Victor, and they are not announced. The titles are "I Never Could Love Like That," "Up in a Coconut Tree," "My Little 'Rang Outang,'" and "Under a Panama."

It is odd that the decision to drop announcements was made just when the comedian, who was to become incomparably Victor's most popular pioneer artist, was just starting out.

The next 10-inch discs, numerically speaking, are 2456, "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party" and "Juanita," both by the Haydn Quartet, and both unannounced. I have not been able to find any announced record with a number higher than 2451. My impression is that all records with announcements that remained in the catalog were remade to get rid of the spoken introduction.

*Make a note: Any Victor, Monarch, or De Luxe record with a preliminary announcement, was issued before November, 1903.*

(To be continued)

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From left to right:

**THREE OF A KIND**—These artists had something in common. They all made their first Victor and Monarch records in 1903. Billy Murray's first four discs came out in November, 1903, and were among the first not to have a spoken announcement at the beginning.

Bob Roberts made some of the last "popular" Victor records with piano, instead of orchestra, accompaniment.

Corinne Morgan's duet with Frank C. Stanley of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie" was one of the first records to appear under the Grand Prize label.

**EARLY "GRAND PRIZE" SINGERS**—Ada Jones and Henry Burr were represented in Victor's first list of "Grand Prize" records in September, 1905.

Ada Jones, the most popular of all pioneer women recording artists, sang "My Carolina Lady."

Henry Burr, who became by far the most popular tenor ballad singer, sang "Bonnie Doon."

**LAST ANNOUNCED RECORD**—Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, most popular of early duet teams, sang what may have been the last Victor Monarch record to have a spoken announcement (by Collins). It was 2451, and the title was "It Was the Dutch."



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## A LAST LOVING TRIBUTE TO PETER DAWSON WALSH

By JIM WALSH

I hope that collectors who have been looking forward to another installment of "How to Tell When Victor Records Were Made" will forgive me for postponing the series till the February HOBBIES.

Many of our readers are as much interested in my occasional reports of my cats as they are in Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists. Consequently, I feel I should pay a tribute to the sweet heartwarming characteristics of my beloved Petey, who died September 4, in the same way I reported on the death of Roger Smith in February, 1966.

Also, I should like to apologize to hundreds of readers who have written to me this year but received no response. I have been in poor health for

a long time and have given up my full-time job as a staff writer for the Roanoke Times. It is necessary for me to rest as much as possible, and I seldom am able to write letters.

During the 27 years I have been contributing to HOBBIES, I frequently have said I do not want to buy old records nor phonographs and cannot give information as to where such things can be sold. Nevertheless I continue to receive lists of records for sale, questions as to the value of old phonographs and records, and similar inquiries.

I want to make it clear now that I no longer can reply to such letters, regardless of whether return postage is enclosed. I have given my phonographic possessions to the Library of Congress and am not interested in the financial aspects of collecting.

—O—

### A TRIBUTE TO PETEY

My first acquaintance with the dark gray Maltese cat who was to become one of my most cherished companions began in the summer of 1959, when I was considering buying the large Colonial-type house in which I now live at Vinton, Va.

When I called to inspect the house, Petey (who was unnamed at that time by his owners, although their next door neighbor, Mrs. Wavie Griffith, called him "Gray Boy") was on the back porch and began to follow me about. He wanted to go into the house with me, but one of the elderly ladies who occupied the place made it clear he was not permitted to go inside.

"We just let him stay around here," she said, "but we're not going to move him when we leave. If you take the house you can add him to your collection."

I learned later that Petey, who had a love for human companionship that I have never seen equalled in other cats, was so lonesome he usually fell into step with the mail carrier and made the rounds of the neighborhood with him, just to have somebody to be with.

I bought the house, and made up my mind that the lonely Maltese, who didn't look in good health because there were bare places down his spinal column where fur should have been, was going to be treated just like my other cats. He was to be given the free run of the house, to eat the same things Roger, Gray, and Little Nipper enjoyed and to become in every respect one of the household.

My friend, Miss Delrhey Fitzgerald of Pulaski, Va., had owned a cherished Maltese cat whose name had been Petey Dink. My Maltese looked so much like the Pulaski cat I decided to call him

(Continued on page 40)

From left to right, top to bottom:

**PETEY AND JIM WALSH.** The late Peter Dawson enjoying a rest in my lap. Petey probably was dreaming of Christmas and Santa Claus.

**IN HAPPIER DAYS.** One Sunday in the spring of 1967 Petey went calling on his friend and neighbor, Mrs. Nell Sink. They were photographed together as she was starting for church.

**CHRISTMAS CLEAN-UP.** Plum, "The Perfect Personality," has been using the vacuum cleaner to tidy the house before Santa's arrival. Becoming tired, he has stopped for a rest. He does not seem to be disappointed at not being elected Presi-

dent of the United States on the Harmony ticket.

**NAMESAKE.** Petey was named for the late Petey Dink because they both were Maltese and looked much alike. Petey Dink was the cherished companion of Miss Delrhey Fitzgerald of Pulaski, Va.

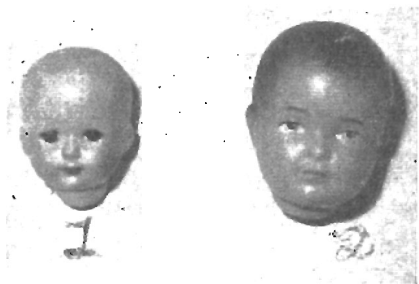
**"BLACK POWER" EXPONENT.** Coal-black Lucky Jim is the leading feline advocate of "Black Power" in his home town, Vinton, Va. This picture shows him being held by Mrs. Lucie Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va., during a visit to relatives in Vinton.

**"HI-FI" ENTHUSIAST.** Nipper is adjusting the record player to have Christmas music ready for Santa Claus' visit.





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#### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Petey Dink in memory of Miss Fitzgerald's Petey.

Some time later I changed his name slightly to Peter Dawson as a tribute to the great Australian bass-baritone, Peter Dawson. But I continued to call him Petey.

Just how old Petey was when I acquired him I do not know. I thought he was probably about two, but Mrs. Griffith since has told me he was more likely four or five in 1959. That would place his age about 13 or 14 when he

died. He certainly appeared years older at his death than Nipper, who is 11, but still looks and acts like a kitten.

I never shall forget the joyful, but almost incredulous look poor Petey turned upon me when I took possession of the house, invited him to come in and make himself at home, gave him as much as he could eat and told him that he was welcome to go into any part of the building. He seemed to understand and the expression he turned upon me was one of sheer gratitude.

And how hard Petey tried to become friends with the cats I moved in with me! He didn't meet with much success. Gray, gentlest and sweetest natured of cats, responded to his friendly advances, but Roger and Nipper resented him.

Nipper, a tiny little rascal to be a full grown cat, had a trick he delighted to play on Pete. He would make sweet, cooing noises—I called them "baby talk"—to tempt Petey to come close to him. Simple, trusting Petey would then try to rub noses with Nips as a sign of friendship, and Nipper would draw back his midge paw and slap Petey in the face. Roger, on the other hand, would hiss a warning for him to keep his distance.

This kept up for a few weeks while Petey patiently tried to win over Rog and Nips. Finally, however, when it was evident they wouldn't meet him half way, he decided to take the aggressive, and he soon had the unfriendly pair hiding from him, for he was stronger than either and was determined to exercise his strength.

Perhaps a feeling of jealousy, together with a question of possession, was involved. Roger and Nipper may have regarded themselves as the new owners of the house and felt that Petey had no right in it, but he, because of prior occupancy, may have considered them unlawful intruders in his home.

Both Roger and Nips returned several times to the house we had formerly occupied, and I suspect they left mostly because of Petey. Gray, by contrast, never went back and continued on good terms with "the old inhabitant."

It didn't take me long to learn that Petey was full of lovable qualities and individual traits. For one thing, he liked to sit in my lap and pound the keys of my typewriter while I was trying to write. For another, he would sit patiently in one spot on the floor for as much as a half hour each morning, waiting for me to dress and put on my shoes. He did all that waiting for the sake of playing with my shoe laces before I tied them.

We had been together only a few weeks before he made it clear he expected me to give him several "piggy-

(Continued on page 92)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

back rides" during the day and evening. He would spring upon my shoulder, get a good tight grip and I would walk up and down stairs with him clinging to me. Sometimes we would make an inspection tour of all the dozen or so rooms in the house. And as he rode he would purr his happiness.

I never shall forget something that happened at around 2 o'clock one morning. Petey was sleeping with me when I woke with violent cramps in my legs. I almost fell out of bed, unable to straighten up, with the intention of walking about until circulation was restored.

My rising woke Petey, and when he saw that I was bent double he decided I had got up at that time of night to give him a piggy-back. So he leaped upon my shoulders, dug in, and I, suffering agonies with cramps, did my best to provide him with his accustomed ride while he purred and thought I was concerned only by a desire to give him a special treat.

One of Petey's most marked characteristics was a desire to welcome everybody who visited our home. He would stand on his hind legs, his front paws touching the caller, look into the visitor's eyes, and "talk" at the top of his voice. He was obviously trying to tell everybody something that was foremost on his mind. I hope he was saying he now had plenty of companionship and food. But who knows what he was seeking to convey?

It may have been that he was begging for a car ride, for, unlike most cats, he had a great fondness for riding and always would purr when being taken to the veterinary hospital for a check up. More remarkable, he seemed to like the hospital and would purr when he was placed on a table for examination and lick the doctor's hand. This led Dr. Barry Emerson to pronounce him one of the sweetest animals that had ever entered the Cooper Veterinary Hospital.

One snowy New Year's Day I went to work about 5 p.m. Petey followed me to within a short distance of the bus stop, then sat down on the sidewalk. When I returned it was almost midnight, but he was still in the same spot, patiently waiting, and covered with snow. Scores of times he tried to go with me when I went to the post office, and I would pick him up and take him back home, because I feared he might be struck by a car in downtown traffic.

During the earlier part of his stay with me, Petey acquired another name, "Thornton," bestowed upon him by my friend, Albert Via Jr., of South Boston, Va. "Jack" Via said Petey was as sweet as a rose but, like a rose, his sharp claws were full of thorns. So Jack always called him "Thornton," meaning that his paws had the piercing power of a ton of thorns.

Petey lived with us almost three years when what seemed a tragedy occurred. I became seriously ill just before my birthday on July 20, 1962, and on that birthday Petey disappeared. As ill as I was, I couldn't go searching for him until several weeks afterward, and I grieved, wondering what had happened to him and wanting him back.

A neighbor told me she had seen him a day or two after he ceased to come home, and he had appeared sick. My searches were unsuccessful, and I mournfully decided he must be dead. In the January, 1963, HOBBIES I reproduced his picture in my cats' annual Christmas and New Year's greeting, and referred to his being gone. By that time Gray had died.

The following spring, Dr. John O. Hurt, a Vinton physician, called to see me on a Sunday afternoon, and I went with him to the front door. I glanced toward the Doctor's car and was delighted when I saw Petey sitting beneath it! He was looking mournfully at his old home. His eyes could express the deepest grief and sense of hurt of any cat's I have ever known.

I called to him, but as the Doctor walked toward him he ran frantically up the street and was out of sight in seconds. Yet what a wonderful feeling

I had to know he was still alive! A few weeks later I saw him just outside the yard. Again he was looking forlornly at the house.

Some time after that Mrs. Griffith told me she had seen him repeatedly try to enter the yard, only to be driven away by "Percy, the Pitiful Persian," a large orange-colored tomcat to whom I had given a home during a deep snow a winter or two before.

Percy, who seemed to have been mistreated cruelly during his long life—he was already an old cat when I took him in—was so timid that, after he had crawled beneath the house to keep from freezing, he had stayed there eight months, afraid to come out, but I fed him.

It was a wonderful day for me when he ventured upstairs, stretched out at the head of the stairs, and showed he wanted me to play with him. I imagine mine was the first human hand that had touched him kindly since he was a kitten. But he had become jealous of Petey and, being larger and stronger, had driven him from home.

As cold weather came on, I discovered that Petey was sleeping at an old well house in the lower part of my lot. Each night, when I came home from work, I would fill a plate with food, take a flashlight and go to the well house.

Petey obviously had suffered during his wanderings what would correspond to a nervous breakdown in people, for he would scurry away when he saw me coming and hide in some nearby shrubbery. But after I had left the food and was nearly to the house, I would send the beams of the flashlight toward the well and see him eating hurriedly and ravenously as if he feared Percy would come along and chase him again.

Then, on November 22, 1964—the day President Kennedy was assassinated—Percy died of heart failure while in a hospital for treatment. Somehow or other, Petey sensed he was dead, for he gradually began coming closer to the house until at last I could feed him on the porch.

My elation was great one morning when I placed food in the kitchen, left the door open, and saw Petey walk in. I quickly fastened both kitchen doors, and he at once began wailing and screaming in a way that showed he was frightened almost out of his senses at the thought of being locked in.

After a while I managed to pick him up. Within a week he had adjusted to his former way of living and was almost back to his normal self.

In a few ways, though, he was changed permanently. He never again "operated" the typewriter or sat waiting to play with my shoe laces. And, to his last days, if one of my feet got what he considered too close to him he would turn and spit at me. I deduced from this that at some time, during his year and a half of homelessness, somebody had given him a brutal kicking that resulted in a permanent phobia against any nearness of human feet.

Petey looked in better health upon his return than he had been before he left home. All the bare patches had gone from his spine and, perhaps from having to be out in cold weather, sleeping without shelter, his fur was much smoother, glossier, and thicker than it had been before. I often have wondered what he ate and where he slept during that long time in which he was gone.

I was to learn after a few weeks that it had been necessary for Percy to die in order for Petey to live. One day while the "prodigal" was eating he stopped swallowing and uttered scream after scream. I at once took him to the hospital, where the doctors found a tumor in his mouth about the size of a 50-cent piece.

They were afraid it was cancerous, but it proved not to be and treatment soon healed it. However, if Percy hadn't died and made it possible for Petey to come home, he soon would have become unable to eat and could have done nothing but lie down and starve.

Only an hour after I buried Percy, a man whom I had never seen before and have never seen since, knocked at my front door. He was holding a coal black kitten, which he asked me to take, "because," he said, "my wife has got

a young baby and she says she can't take care of a baby and a kitten, too."

I at first said I couldn't take the little fellow, but when it jumped out of the man's hand onto my shoulder and began "nuzzling" me I changed my mind. That kitten was Lucky Jim, whom I still have, but, unfortunately, Petey decided he didn't approve of him and gave him the same sort of bullying treatment he had received from Percy. They never did become friends, and I imagine Lucky Jim is happy not to have Petey any longer about the place.

Yet when I brought Plum home in October, 1966, Petey at once became his loyal friend and was always gentle and good to him. To my perception of cat language, Petey always called Plum "Junior" and Plum called him "Pwitty Papa Petey."

About a year and a half ago, Petey seemed not to be feeling well, and a visit to the hospital revealed that he had a tumor in his battered right ear, as well as a punctured ear drum. His remaining teeth had become so bad that the veterinarian pulled them all, and for the remainder of Petey's life he could eat only soft foods instead of his beloved beef liver.

Some time during last August, Petey ceased to meet me at the concrete steps leading to my front yard, to be given his usual piggy-back ride home. I wonder how many hundreds of rides I did give him during all those years.

Instead, he stayed away from home, "visiting" with families living at the foot of the hill. I suppose he felt so bad he didn't want to be where he constantly would have run-ins with Lucky Jim and, to a less degree, with Nipper. I would bring him home and he would stay only long enough to eat a small amount, then go back down the hill.

Finally, alarmed at his thinness and lack of appetite, I took him to the hospital, and he felt too bad to purr during the ride which he had formerly enjoyed. After a quick examination, I was told he probably had cancer of the liver—a statement that wrung my heart strings.

And so it proved. He was given special treatment and I soon brought him home, where for a week or so his appetite seemed much improved and he appeared better in every way. But one morning he wouldn't eat anything, and merely lay around, changing his resting place every few minutes.

I feared the worst and took him back to the hospital, where he died about 15 minutes after he had moved a last goodbye to me. I expected him to die, but I haven't gotten over losing him and don't feel I ever shall. He was placed in a white coffin and sleeps beneath a mulberry tree in my front yard. Roger lies in a separate grave adjoining his. More than any other cat of my knowledge, Petey loved everybody he met and everybody loved him.

Miss Fitzgerald once remarked: "Petey always has such a humble look." And he had. There was no pretense to him. His life was a checkered one. It involved much pain and neglect. But after I gave him a home he never lost an opportunity to show how grateful he was. It must have been an overpowering fear of the big Persian that caused him to run away and stay gone that year and a half.

Yes, Petey—may he have eternal sweet rest—is gone, but as long as Nipper, Plum, Lucky Jim, and I live Petey will not be forgotten. And I hope a hundred years from now somebody will pick up a bound volume of HOBBIES for the year 1969 and read this last loving tribute to him.

If so, Petey, in his small, humble way, will have achieved "immortality," even though his Maltese-colored body, together with the white coffin that now protects it, will have mouldered to dust beneath the mulberry tree.

I doubt that I shall feel well enough to send or respond to Christmas cards this year. But I join Nipper, Lucky Jim, Plum, and Popsy, a sweet "possum still with me, in wishing all HOBBIES readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

(The End)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

In the December issue of HOBBIES we discussed Pre-Dog Victors and their Early Prices. We also started on Warning Stickers, Announcements, and Composer Credits. We will continue this last discussion now by getting back to the Pre-Dog.

Artists' names were given on the label but they were not identified as "tenor," "baritone," etc.

Composers' names usually were omitted. There were occasional instances in which the composer of a "standard" or "classical" composition might be mentioned, as "Largo," might be followed by "Handel" in parentheses. But I can't recall many examples.

Victor did not bother to give parenthetical mention to writers of "popular" music until June, 1905. Even then, some records issued that month had composer identification and some didn't. J. Fred Helf was not mentioned as the composer of Byron G. Harlan's record 4323, "The Waltz Must Change to a March, Marie."

On the other hand, "(Harry) Williams and (Egbert) Van Alstyne" were credited with writing and composing 4337, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," rendered in fine, full harmony by the Haydn Quartet.

Beginning with the July records, composers' names appeared regularly

on the labels. They had been consistently published in the supplements, however.

Another point to jot down: Any Victor Black Label record giving the name of a song writer or composer in parentheses almost certainly (there are a few exceptions) was not issued before June, 1905.

In September, 1905, the custom of identifying records as Victor, Monarch, or De Luxe was done away with. From that time, "Monarch" and "De Luxe" disappeared and every record became a Victor — a designation that previously had been reserved for the lowly 7-inch. Probably the last 10-inch to be identified as a Monarch was 4402, "National Hymn of Ecuador," by Pryor's Band.

And what a month was that September, 1905, which introduced the new "Grand Prize" label! Among other records destined to become famous, Pryor's Band played "The Whistler and His Dog" on 4418; Vess Ossman was heard in "Turkey in de Straw Medley" on 4424; Henry Burr sang "Bonnie Doon" on 4426; Corinne Morgan and Frank Stanley, "When You and I Were Young, Maggie" on 4428, and Ada Jones, "My Carolina Lady" on 4430.

Also, Arthur Collins had two of the greatest Negro songs ever written, on consecutive numbers — "The Preacher and the Bear" on 4430, and "Rufus Rastus Johnson Brown" on 4431.

Try to imagine such a shower of riches occurring in these days!

### III. Piano and

#### Orchestral Accompaniments

A few months before beginning to give the song writers credit for their productions, Victor had completed a transition of having popular song records accompanied by the recently formed Victor house orchestra instead of the piano. Of course, as with "When Reuben Comes to Town," there had been some with makeshift orchestral backing, but they were a small minority.

The change was well under way by the end of 1904, and the last piano-accompanied record of the popular type appears to have been 4134, "Back, Back, Back to Baltimore," another Williams and Van Alstyne

(Continued on page 44)



EGBERT VAN ALSTYNE A.S.C.A.P.  
(In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree)

FAMOUS SONG WRITER — Egbert Van Alstyne was one of the leading popular song writers of the early 1900s. The Haydn Quartet record of his greatest hit, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," was one of the first Monarchs to give the composer's name on the label.

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- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
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**HATHAWAY &  
BOWERS**  
on PAGES  
**98A & 98B**  
of this issue.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

number, sung by that very fine comedian, Bob Roberts.

Roberts and Harry Tally seem to have been the last popular song recorders to draw piano accompaniments. Of course, Red Seal artists continued to be given piano support if the type of song called for it, as did instrumental soloists.

A few years later many of Vess Ossman's banjo solos, such as "Turkey in de Straw Medley," which had originally been made with an orches-

tral accompaniment that at times almost swamped Vess' skilful fingering, were improved by being remade with piano.

This was at the time when double-faced records were being introduced, and most of the discs made earlier were being done over to get the benefit of improved processes and smoother surfaces.

The "Back to Baltimore" record was issued in February or March, 1905. I lack supplements for those

months and can't pin it down more exactly. During this "change-over" period most popular vocal records that seemed likely to keep selling were remade with orchestra.

An example is 2658, "The Man in the Overalls," sung by Joe Natus, which came out in April, 1904, with piano accompaniment. By January, 1906, it had been done over with orchestra.

But, in my opinion, most of the vocal solos, duets, and quartets would have sounded better even with a tinkly piano than with the clacking orchestral accompaniment provided in those days.

With few exceptions, Black Label records with piano backing were no longer being made after 1904. (Some of earlier origin, of course, remained a while longer in the catalog.) If a vocal Black Label record has a piano background it almost certainly was recorded before 1905. The Roberts and Tally records already mentioned probably were made in November or December, 1904.

Frank P. Banta, who conducted the Metropolitan Orchestra for Victor, played many piano accompaniments before his death in 1903. Two other Victor pianists were C. H. H. Booth, who accompanied some Red Seal singers and made the first 10-inch Victor piano record, 2508 (his own composition, "Gavotte in A") and Fred Bachman.

Edison also used Banta and Bachman, and later had 2 other piano players whose names began with B—Albert Benzler and John F. Burckhardt.

Before considering the early "Dog" labels and their successors I'd like to mention an intriguing example of the Monarch 3000 series. It is one of Dudley's whistling specialties, "His Old Familiar Tune."

The number on the label is 1245, but close examination shows the "1245" has been pasted over the original number. In the smooth blank space above the top of the label 1245 appears and below it, separated by a dash, is the original number, 3204.

Also worth mentioning is a 1902 10-inch Berliner Concert Grand Improved Gram-o-phone record, issued by "E. Berliner, Montreal, Canada," and patented February 24, 1897.

The single-faced disc is made of a reddish material, somewhat resembling that used for Vocalion records in the 1920s, and has a raised rim, like those of the old-style Columbias, inside the smooth outer edge. The number is 5585 and the selection, "In the Good Old Summer Time."

According to the label, the 1902 song hit is sung by the American-born comedian, Burt Shepard, who settled in England, but for several years crossed the Atlantic annually to go to Camden and make Victor records. However, my ears tell me the singer is Harry Macdonough and the Berliner record is pressed from a matrix of Victor 1655.

(To be continued)

**NEW RECORDS**

**MONARCH RECORD**

Frank C. Stanley  
In the Shadow of the Pyramid  
from "Mrs Black is Back"  
4210  
VICTOR TALKING MACHINES CO.  
CAMDEN, N.J.  
Patented

**VICTOR**

**Highest Award at St. Louis**

Here are a few from the hundreds of splendid new records made by the world's greatest artists for the Victor.

Partly for their great variety, partly for the superb quality of its tone, the Victor has received the Grand Prize—the highest award—at the St. Louis Exposition.

**Latest Records**

By **Marcelle Sembrich**, one of the greatest artists of modern times. Three brilliant arias in Italian, Bellini's "Ah! non giunge," the "Ah! non giunge," and the famous Strauss Valse "Gnomes' music." "The Jewel Song" by French; two lovely songs in German by Schumann and Strauss; a Chopin song in her native language, Polish, and the special aria from Don Giovanni, "Batti Batti."

By **Sousa's Band**—the greatest of all concert organizations. "The Dying Swan," Sousa's latest in rich brilliant and melody. "Solemn" selections—the special successes of this popular opera, "Zampa" and "Post and Present" Overtures and others.

By **Arthur Pryor's famous Band and Orchestra**—"Humor and Pathos" selections—their "Lullaby" and "The Lullaby," "Love Duet," "The Walkure Fantasy" expanding the most popular.

All superbly rendered in your own home. Write us or ask your dealer for the book of latest Victor records.

**Victor Talking Machine Company, Philadelphia**  
Original makers of the Gram-o-phone.

**MONARCH LABEL**—This Victor advertisement in the March, 1905, issue of *Success Magazine*, shows the type of label used for 10-inch Monarch records just before the Grand Prize label was adopted late in 1905. It was not customary, however, for the artist's name to precede the title of the song.

Ernest R. Ball composed "In the Shadow of the Pyramid," but he was not given label credit.



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

PART V

By JIM WALSH

### I. Blue Sheets From Legendary Victor Talking Machine Company

Tuesday, November 12, has brought the first before-winter snow-storm of 1968 to the Roanoke Valley. Almost 10 inches have fallen — a record for this time of year.

My telephone is out of order, with a stretch of line draped the length of the front yard, but I still have electricity and heat, so this seems a good time to write another article for HOBBIES.

When I undertook this series on "How to Tell When Victor Records Were Made" I completed several installments, which now have been published. These I mailed to the editor, intending to write and submit the remainder in a short time.

Unfortunately, however, my health became increasingly bad, and I have not felt like essaying the considerable amount of concentrated research that remains to be done. Yet, my monthly contributions must be kept going.

Under these circumstances a life-saver has arisen. Some time ago I received an envelope postmarked at Vienna, Va., which contained a large number of blue sheets of paper that obviously came from a loose-leaf binder at one time owned by the legendary old Victor Talking Machine Company.

The envelope carried no return address. But I have deduced, correctly, I hope, that it came from Mrs. Fred Harbaugh of Box 65, North, Va.

Previously, Mrs. Harbaugh had sent me a dozen or so Spanish language Victor catalogs that go back to 1901. They had been salvaged by her husband, who was formerly an attorney for the Radio Corporation of America which took over Victor in the late 1920s.

Evidently the RCA representatives of that day had no interest in, or conception of, historical values as applied to the phonograph's life story, and had discarded a great deal of now valuable reference material.

Thanks to Mr. Harbaugh, some was retrieved, and because of Mrs. Harbaugh's kindness, I have obtained most of it. She still has two or three oil paintings, including one of Enrico Caruso. These would have gone to the scrap pile had not Mr. Harbaugh considered them worth saving.

It happens that the blue sheets, which I was so glad to receive, constitute, in their way, a miniature

history of the Victor Company's early talking machines and records. Consequently, they fit splendidly into this series, although they do not fall into the direct line of telling just when Victor records were made — a subject I hope to resume as soon as this article has been concluded.

The sheets are concerned mostly with specifying when different models of Victors and Victrolas first were introduced, and the names of the jobbers, to whom first shipments were made. This is valuable information. I am glad to preserve it.

But, before I begin quoting from the contents of the old loose-leaf binder, I'd like to say I have many requests for information as to where old catalogs of records and phonographs, such as those I have acquired over many years and from which I frequently quote, can be obtained. Such things nowadays are very hard to find, although they do turn up occasionally, but I am unable to specify any specific source.

However, Allen Koenigsberg of 1532 Ocean Avenue, Apt. 4E, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230, is coming to collectors' rescue with a series of the finest reprints of original old catalogs I have seen. It is virtually impossible to detect these sparkling facsimiles from the catalogs in their original state, and his prices are reasonable.

So far Mr. Koenigsberg is offering the 1899 catalog of the Talking Machine Company of Chicago, with reproduction of cylinder phonographs, and lists of records (including Silas Leachman's output up to that time) for \$2.95; the 1907 catalog of Edison cylinder instruments, \$2.65; and an 1878 article from Harper's Weekly, with illustrations of the first tinfoil model phonograph, for \$1.35. Ten per cent may be deducted from orders for either or both of the catalogs if the Harper's etching is also included.

Mr. Koenigsberg says he plans to reprint a rare 1906 Columbia Graphophone catalog, an 1896 Berliner instruction manual, a portfolio of early etchings of tinfoil phonographs and sheet music, and other interesting items. I hope he will receive the encouragement he deserves, since his offerings up to now are remarkably fine.

### II. Some Victor History

Taking the blue sheets in chronological order, the top of the stack (Continued on page 53)



### Victor Junior Price \$10

A Victor with a tone quality that is surprising, considering size and price. Oak cabinet; nickel plated sound box, combination brake and speed regulator and 8-inch turntable for playing all size records (can be wound while playing). Dark red flower horn with gold stripes.

**CHILDREN'S PLAYTHING** — The \$10 Victor Junior Gramophone, mostly intended for children's use, was announced June 1, 1906.

**FROM THE BLUE SHEET—"VICTOR JR. GRAMOPHONE"** ..... \$10.00

"June 1st, '1906' — First announced to the Trade. First shipment June 8th, '1906' on ticket No. 36802, to J. W. Jenkins Sons Music Co., Kansas City, Mo. Machine No. 182."

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS

of GREAT SINGERS on

ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts. Also old record catalogs.

**AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY**

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla,

New York

rfx

See the ad of

**HATHAWAY &  
BOWERS**

on Page 98A

of the February issue.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

reveals that the Victor Concert sound box was first announced to jobbers and dealers about January 1, "1901." (For some obscure reason, whenever a year is mentioned it is placed in quotation marks. I shall not hereafter follow that practice.)

By the way, the Concert sound box, or reproducer, was used for a few years. Eventually it was supplanted by the better known and more efficient Exhibition.

On November 7, 1917, the Exhibition was succeeded, or supplemented, by the Victrola Number 2, which thereafter was used on all old-style Victrolas except the Number 4, which sold for \$15, and the \$25 Number 6. That held good until the Orthophonic Victrola was introduced in October,

### STERLING SILVER

All sterling new or excellent cond. All knives have stainless blades. Immediate shipment of orders with enclosed money order or cashiers check. Add \$1.25 for postage & insurance on all orders. Residents of Fla. add 4% state tax.

Have many popular, active patterns — Royal Danish, Prelude, Modern Victorian, French Provincial, Damask Rose, Rambler Rose, etc. Have disc patterns — Lucerne & Pantheon — place settings & serving pieces.

Have most patterns sold direct to home—Easterling, fine arts and others. For reply send stamped self-addressed envelope.

#### REED & BARTON

FRANCIS I. New luncheon knives \$11.25 each. Four (4) place place setting (knife, fork, teaspoon, salad fork) new — in plastic, \$45.

BURGUNDY. Conventional 4 place place setting—new — in plastic, \$43.50. Six (6) new cond. iced teaspoons, \$58. Eight (8) teaspoons, \$59.50.

CLASSIC ROSE. 8 luncheon knives, 7 luncheon forks, 8 salad forks, 2 cream soups, 6 iced teaspoons, 1 butter knife, 1 sugar spoon, 1 jelly server, \$9.75 each, 8 teaspoons, 2 cocktail forks, \$7.75 each, 2 tablespoons, 1 meat fork, 1 gravy ladle, \$16.95 each. Above 54 piece set, \$445. Newly polished.

#### WALLACE

GRAND BAROQUE. New, in plastic, 4 place place setting (knife, fork, teaspoon, salad fork), place setting, \$47.50. Four or more place settings, \$45.75 each.

#### GORHAM

CAMELLIA OR STRASBOURG. Six (6) place place setting (knife, fork, teaspoon, salad fork, cream soup, flat-handle butter spreader). Stainless blades, all pieces newly polished, excellent cond. \$52.90 per place setting.

CHANTILLY. New — in plastic — conventional 4 place place setting, \$44.05.

Will pay top dollar for your sterling. Excellent cond. only. Ship insured with price requested. Check or sterling returned within 24 hrs. of receiving.

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#### Silver Thimbles from Mexico

Thimbles with Band, Mother of Pearl—\$2.50  
Thimbles w Band of scalloped applied silver—\$3.50  
Thimbles all over applied silver design—\$4.00

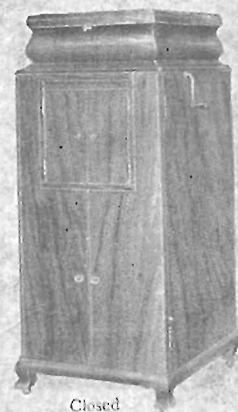
#### From Our Silver Stock

Many souvenir spoons including Anton Hardt Also Birthday spoons, and many patterns of sterling & sterling service pieces by Tiffany, Gorham, etc. 12 Fruit Spoons, mint, by Kirk \$75; Rose pattern Russian cut glass Ice Cream tray & 2 cake stands \$300.00.

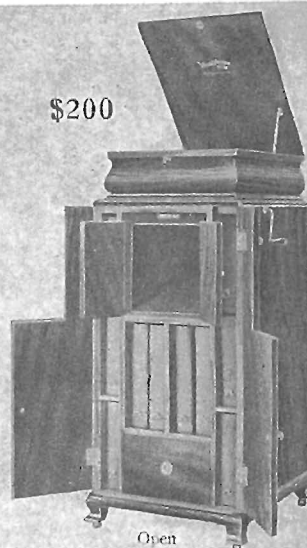
Send pattern of silver (make pencil tracing) and mark, if you do not know the pattern. Perhaps we can help you complete your service. spo

## A New Kind of Victor

\$200



Closed



Open

## Victor-Victrola

### The Ideal Drawing-Room Entertainer

So many people of means and taste demand the character of drawing-room entertainment which only the Victor can supply, that we have designed this superb new instrument, with the horn, all moving parts, and place for one hundred and fifty records and accessories, entirely concealed in a handsome mahogany cabinet—an ornament in any drawing-room.

By opening or closing the upper doors, the music is made loud or soft as desired.

With this Victor-Victrola you can treat your guests to such a refined, varied, complete drawing-room entertainment as no other means can supply.

If you will send us your name and address, we will see that the instrument is submitted for your approval.

All Victor dealers should carry the Victor-Victrola.

Victor Talking Machine Co.  
Camden,  
N. J.

When you write, please mention the Commodities

FIRST VICTROLA—The first Victrola was announced in August, 1906, and its initial advertising (reprinted here) appeared the following month.

1925. There is no sheet for the Exhibition, but it was available by 1906.

Victor 10-inch Black Label records were "first announced to the trade" January 5, 1901.

In May, 1901, Victor announced it had established a "premium department," presumably to furnish newspapers with cheap talking machines as a feature of plans to increase circulation, and to supply merchants who offered machines and records as "gifts" with the purchase of other merchandise.

Victor seems to have been far less active in marketing premium goods than was Columbia, which for many years provided disc and cylinder machines to many firms, especially Chicago mail order dealers.

The first shipment of a Victor external horn machine with a "rigid hollow" tone arm was made October 10, 1902, to the Chicago jobbers, Lyon & Healy. This was a Model 4 Victor, Number 4143.

Victor De Luxe 14-inch records

were first announced March 11, 1903, and discontinued in 1905.

Now that I am on the subject of records for the moment, I'd like to mention an oddity which Quentin Riggs of Washington, D.C., owns. It is a 12-inch DeLuxe record with a 10-inch number, 1949, at the top of the label. At the bottom another number, C106, appears, which indicates that this was the 106th 12-inch Master Victor had recorded.

Its fortunate owner speculates that the record, "Tell Me, Dusky Maiden," sung by Harry Macdonough and S. H. Dudley, either was given a 10-inch number by mistake, or "possibly at first they planned to number the 12-inches in the same series as the 10 and 7-inches."

This record appears in the August, 1904, Victor catalog in 10-inch size under the number M1949, and in 12-inch as 31043.

The famous Victor tapering tone arm was first announced in April,

(Continued on page 98P)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

1903, and on April 14 the first shipment of a machine with this arm was made to the Talking Machine Company of Chicago. This also was a Model 4, Number 5975.

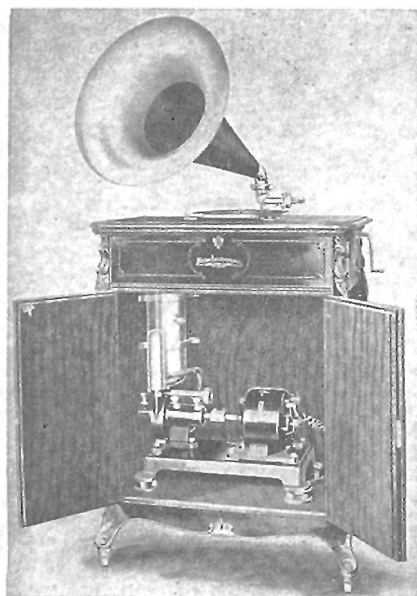
Jobbers and dealers first learned on October 21, 1904, that a \$100 Victor, the Model 6, with a mahogany cabinet and gold-plated fittings, was to be introduced. The first sample shipment was made November 23, 1904, to the Talking Machine Company. The machine was numbered 507.

A reduction in the price of records was announced December 1, 1905. This information, however, has been given in a preceding installment. Victor 8-inch records were publicized in April, 1906.

### III. The First Victrola

On June 1, 1906, an announcement went out from Camden that a \$10 machine, the Victor Junior, intended mostly to be used by children, was being introduced. It had an 8-inch turntable, a dark-red flower horn with gold stripes, and was described as "a Victor with a tone quality that is surprising, considering size and price."

J. W. Jenkins Sons Music Company of Kansas City, Mo., was the first jobber to get a sample. Machine Number 182 was shipped to Jenkins on June 8. Since Victor received only



**BRITISH INVENTION**—The Victor Auxetophone, invented by an Englishman, Chauncey A. Parsons, also was introduced in 1906. It used compressed air to provide an enormous volume of sound. The price was \$500.

**FROM THE BLUE SHEET** — "VICTOR AUXETOPHONE ..... \$500.00

"August 1st, '1906' — First announcement to the Trade. First shipment made August 21st, '1906' on ticket No. 40999, to Stanley & Pearsall, New York City, N.Y. Machine No. 100."

\$3 of the \$10 retail price, it is hard to see how a profit could be made on this toy machine.

That year of 1906 was a big one for innovations. On August 1, the Company announced the Victor Auxetophone, a machine that sold for \$500 and gave enormous volume through the use of compressed air.

It was invented by an Englishman, Chauncey A. Parsons, and was distributed both by Victor and by the Gramophone & Typewriter Company of England. The first American sample was dispatched on August 21, to Stanley & Pearsall of New York City. It was machine number 100.

Of more historic importance was the announcement on August 7, 1906, of the first Victor Victrola. It was the Model 16, which retailed for \$200. In my opinion it is an awkward looking affair, which was rather hard to play because the turntable and tone arm were situated in a deep "well" at the top of the instrument. The first shipment was made August 22. It was Number 505 and went to the Knight-Campbell Company, Denver, Colorado.

It didn't take long to learn that the design of the first Victrola could stand considerable improvement, and in September, 1907, a new Model 16 was introduced, which was easier to operate and bore a considerably greater resemblance to the standardized type which a few years later was famous the world over.

Shortly afterward, *The Voice of the Victor* revealed that the factory still had fewer than a dozen of the original models on hand and these would be supplied to people who insisted on having them as long as the supply lasted.

A Victrola in Louis XV design, the Number 20, was announced February 14, 1908 to sell for \$300. The price afterward was reduced to \$250, but the machine must not have sold well, for a notice went out February 18, 1909, saying it was being discontinued:

"... upon the advice and comments received from our Distributors. Up to date," the notice said, "we have not been able to supply the demand for our regular Mahogany Victrola XVI at \$200, and it is our intention to bend our energies, for the present, to satisfactorily supplying this latter type."

Several months ago, incidentally, I remarked in HOBBIES that I wondered who designed the original Victrola. Since then I have found what appears to be the answer in a clipping pasted in an old scrapbook. The following news item was sent out from Washington, D.C., March 22, 1927:

"The claims of John Bailey Browning, a former mechanic, that he is the true inventor of the modern enclosed horn Victrola cabinet, were upheld by the Supreme Court.

"Lower courts also held Browning the true inventor, and the Victor Talking Machine Company appealed. It was the denial of this appeal by the court today that establishes Browning as the inventor."

Another small horn-equipped Victor talking machine, the Model O, a mahogany cabinet and an amber-hued

flower horn, was announced April 15, 1908. The first shipment, of machine Number 705, was made August 19, to Sherman, Clay & Company, Seattle, Wash. (Victor seems to have liked to scatter the introduction of new models among widely separated jobbers.)

Double-faced records, reluctantly brought out to compete with the already introduced Columbia d-f's, were announced to the trade by telegraph September 17, 1908.

On February 5, 1909, dealers were sent a letter saying:

"We deplore the advent of the double-faced records at any price, because we do not feel that the change is worth the trouble it causes; but we are glad to notify our trade that we are fully prepared and amply able to handle the situation, and that, after the trouble and expense of the change are over, the Victor Trade and the Victor Company will be found more firmly entrenched than ever and with even a larger portion of the disc trade."

Meanwhile, dealers were assured that Victor had no intention to discontinue single-faced records. Rather:

"In all possible cases the new single-faced records will be by artists under our exclusive control, records of unusual quality and strong selling value or especially high musical merit; thus affording the trade protection against duplication of selections at cut prices by means of double-faced records."

"In no event will we change our entire catalog to double-faced records, but will continue to issue a properly graduated proportion of single-faced records at 60 cents and upward, as we know that the growing number of more musical purchasers will always demand single selections to a sufficient extent to warrant a substantial list."

Actually, the last single-faced Black Label record was issued in 1913 and the few that remained afterward in the catalog were cut out at the beginning of 1920. No more new single-faced Red Seal records were announced after August, 1923, when most of those in the catalog were combined in double-face form.

—O—

Postscript: Since the foregoing was written I have been shocked to learn of the accidental death of Mr. Harbaugh. He was killed when a loaded gun for which he was reaching was accidentally discharged.

(To be continued)

## FINDINGS ON R S CHINA

(Continued from page 98M)

price and frantic collection of this porcelain when there is such a vast amount of it. Its beauty and popularity are undisputed, and its popularity seemed to bring a note of surprise from my German informants. They do not feel it is noteworthy, since it is too new to merit attention.

See marks.

I want to acknowledge the help of the following people who are not mentioned in the story:

Dr. Bruno Schrotter, Winchester, Ill., who gave me the name of a curator friend in Dresden, translated my letters, and helped with photography.

Frank Caldwell, Jacksonville, Ill., for the loan of plates.

Mary E. Mewes, Mercantile Library, St. Louis, Mo., for helpful information.

Mary Ruth Gerye, Topeka, Kans., (Geri-Lou Antiques, an advertiser in HOBBIES) for drawing of marks.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## HOW TO TELL WHEN VICTOR RECORDS WERE MADE

PART VI

By JIM WALSH



From left to right:

**FIRST TABLE MODEL.** Victrola Number 12 was the first Victor hornless instrument not to stand upright on the floor. It was announced in June, 1909, and sold for \$125.

**OPERA MODEL.** This is a photograph of the Opera model cylinder phonograph introduced by the U.S. Phonograph Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in May, 1910. It sold for \$65.



### FOR SALE

One of the finest Edisons known, in perfect condition. With 25 records. \$450.00 or best offer.

R. L. JEFFERIES

Harrisonburg, Va.

Phone 434-2797

or write to Box 165, Harrisonburg, Va.

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of GREAT SINGERS on  
ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPIA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla,

New York

tfx

This is a continuation of a series of articles begun in the October 1968 issue of HOBBIES. Revealed last month, and in this issue, are some important dates in the history of the pioneer Victor Talking Machine Company as shown in blue pages from an old loose-leaf binder formerly kept in the Victor files.

On September 15, 1909, Victor announced to its jobbers and dealers that it could supply wooden horns, in oak and mahogany finish, at \$10 each.

The following October 12 a Victrola Number 16 in "Moorish marquetry" was announced. Its price was \$750. It probably set no sales record, since the average salaried employee or wage earner of 60 years ago thought he was doing well to make \$15 a week, and some received a good bit less.

For the first time a table model Victrola was announced June 8, 1909. It had a mahogany finish, cost \$125, and, with some minor differences of design, looked much like the \$50 machine that was introduced in 1911. The first instrument of this type, Number 551, was shipped June 16 to Sherman, Clay & Company of Seattle, Wash.

Victrola Number 9, the \$50 model, which became, perhaps, the most popular of all, was announced April 4, 1911. It could be had in either mahogany or oak finish, but nearly everybody took mahogany.

The first shipment in the United States consisted of 113 machines, and the lowest number was 751. The shipment was received happily by E. F. Droop & Sons Company, Washington, D. C.

On April 29, a sample of Model 9, Number 513, was shipped to the Berliner Gramophone Company of Montreal, Canada, and on May 15, eight machines, with the lowest number commencing at 758, were dispatched — presumably for export trade — to Neuss, Hesslein & Company, forwarding agents in New York City. The destination of these machines was not revealed.

A very important step in Victor's advancement as the industry leader was taken April 20, 1911, when dealers first learned the Company was setting up an educational department, to supply records and machines especially intended for public school use.

For many years afterward Victor dominated the school musical picture, although Columbia, too, soon had its own educational department. Victor's pioneer educational activities were in charge of Mrs. Frances E. Clark, who had been supervisor of music in the schools of Milwaukee, Wis.

The smallest table-type Victrola, known as the Number 4, was first heralded in August, 1911. It had an oak cabinet and sold for \$15. The first shipment to a jobber was made August 28 to Sherman, Clay & Company.

This shipment included 131 machines, and the lowest number was 517. On May 15, sample machine (Continued on page 38)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Number 2151 was shipped to the Berliner Gramophone Company of Montreal, and June 13, seven Number 4s, with the lowest number 2714, went to M. J. Corbett, a forwarding agent in New York.

Also announced in August, 1911, was the Model 6 Victrola, that sold at \$25. The first shipment in the United States went, on October 16, 1911, to W. G. Walz, El Paso, Tex. Mr. Walz really invested, for he bought 470 machines with numbers commencing at 5503.

Four days earlier, on October 13, the Bergstrom Music Company of Honolulu, Hawaii, was sent 10 Model 6s, with the lowest number 5971.

October 16 saw 12 of the little Victrolas shipped to Frazer & Company. The lowest number was 6184. And where do you think Frazer did business; Why, in Yokohama, Japan.

Another new model, introduced in August, 1911, was Victrola 8. It was a little smaller than the Number 9, and cost \$40.

Old Victor dealers say that, for some not very clear reason, it didn't sound as well as the Number 9, and never sold largely. It was offered

only in oak and that may have hurt it in competition with its slightly bigger brother, which, old-timers say gave as good results as any large cabinet Victrola.

The first shipment of the Number 8 in the United States was made September 29, 1911, to Sherman, Clay & Company. Evidently preparing for the Christmas trade, this favored firm received 757. The lowest numbered instrument in the shipment was 501.

A sample, number not given, was sent August 25 to the Berliner Gramophone Company. And September 30 saw 20 machines, with the lowest number 559, shipped to the New York & Cuba Mail Steamship Company, presumably for delivery to some Cuban jobber or dealer.

### II. Other Companies' Products

That concludes the blue pages devoted to Victor Talking Machine Company productions, but probably there were others that escaped being saved. However, I also have a number of sheets devoted to competing firms.

One of these is the U. S. Phonograph Company of Cleveland, Ohio, which began making U. S. Everlasting cylinder phonographs and records in 1909, but went out of business in 1913. Names of the United States Phonograph officials are given as D. K. Bishop, president; G. H. Worthington, vice president; Thomas H. Towell, treasurer, and F. W. Treadway, secretary.

Since Victor contemplated action against the Cleveland firm regarding patents, it is interesting to note that after Treasurer Towell's name the following appears: "Also proprietor Eclipse Musical Co. of Cleveland, O., Victor jobbers." It looks to me as if Mr. Towell might have been about to lose out as a "Victor jobber" for serving as an official of a cylinder manufacturing firm.

Another page, without a photograph, is headed "U. S. Reproducers," and has this comment:

"These reproducers form the regular equipment for the original machines announced in 1910 and are constructed in tandem fashion — one used for the two-minute records and the other for the four-minute records."

There follows a page on which a photograph of a \$30 cylinder machine, the U. S. Junior, has been pasted, with this notation:

"First demonstrated to the trade at and during the Piano Dealers' Convention held in Richmond, Va., during May, 1910."

Another page gives two views of the U. S. Banner at \$45, with the same comment about the Piano Dealers' Convention.

A like procedure is followed with the U. S. Opera, a large external horn machine that retailed for \$65. Its design, I think appears less attractive than the Edison Opera, which sold for \$90.

Then come two photos of the U. S. Peerless — one in mahogany and the other in oak. Both of these were listed at \$200 and apparently were intended to compete with other floor

model phonographs, such as the Victrola, the Columbia Grafonola and the Edison Amberola.

Like those previously mentioned, these Peerless machines were first demonstrated at the Richmond Piano Dealers' Convention in May, 1910. U. S. Everlasting instruments must have had a small sale, for they rarely seem to turn up nowadays.

Next comes a page without a picture, devoted to the "U. S. Grand," with the statement: "This instrument was first announced to the trade in the Fall of 1911."

And, finally, as far as U. S. Everlasting is concerned, another pictureless page in the loose-leaf binder deals with the "U. S. Improved Peerless," a \$200 machine. One wonders about the statement:

"This instrument was first announced to the trade in the Fall of 1911. Model purchased and turned over to the Legal Department."

The last, and latest, dated copy of the blue sheets, is devoted to Edison Blue Amberol records, with the simple statement: "Sep., 1912 — first announced to the trade."

It is hard to see how Edison's unbreakable cylinders could have disturbed Victor, but for some reason they were mentioned, and someone went to the trouble of maintaining the binder.

Finally, there is a page for the Vitaphone Company. Vitaphone officers are listed as C. B. Repp, president; J. H. Greene Jr., treasurer, and H. N. McMenimen, secretary and general manager.

I have just one American Vitaphone record. You may remember that many years later Warner Brothers chose Vitaphone as the name of the process by which their first talking pictures were made. My record is by Billy Murray and is of "Dear Sing Sing." Billy Murray sang this for Victor in 1904.

Next month I hope to resume our more detailed consideration of the problems included in "How to Tell When Victor Records Were Made."

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSIC

ALL CYLINDER and outside horn disc phonographs, parts, reproducers, records, bought, sold, repaired. — Dave Houser, 203 Fifth, Minersville, Pa. 17954 ap120821

PLAYER PIANO BOOKS. Rebuilding the Player Piano \$6.95. Player Piano Treasury \$10. Put Another Nickel in \$15. (See review on this, page 110, Sept. 1966 HOBBIES.) Satisfaction guaranteed. Ask for catalog of other books. Prices postpaid. — Vestal Press, Vestal 2, N.Y. 13850 ap68041

EDISON, Victor, Columbia reprints & many more to follow. Few Tinfoil to Stereo Books left. Will also have Portfolio Books soon. Large Edison Two-Minute Cylinder Record List Cross Indexed, one of the best, only \$8.50 prepaid. Now ready. Keep in touch with the old reliable dealer for many items. Large Sales and Bid Lists now ready, one quarter each. Get your name on my preferred mailing list for one dollar (deductible). — A. Nugent, Jr., 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. 23231 ap1846

78 rpm STEEL phonograph needles, top quality, box of 50. 8 boxes \$2; 25 boxes \$5 postpaid. — Paul Dodington, 138 Eastbourne Ave., Toronto 7, Ontario, Canada. je3614

MUSIC BOXES, horn phonographs, crank organs, singing bird boxes, coin operated and game machines, etc. bought, sold, traded, serviced. Send \$1 for large 4-page sales list, refundable with order. — Stephen Leonard, 12 Garden St., Great Neck, N.Y. 11021. Phone 212-389-4144. je120832

DECEMBER BID LIST now ready. February Sales list in February one quarter. 1969 Cylinder or Disc Record list fifty cents each. Large Wanted to Buy list one dime. All prices on Tinfoil to Stereo books advance January 15, 1969. — Nugent, 3804 Charles City Road, Richmond, Va. 23231 ap3673

WANTED: Welte-Mignon player piano attachment in repairable condition. — Chandler, 50 Deer Pk., Gaithersburg, Md. 20760 ap3652

## BINDERS FOR HOBBIES

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1006 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60605

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Arthur Clough, Lawyer— Death of Edwin Smalle

By JIM WALSH

### I. An Overwhelming Surprise

Once more I must apologize because of postponing for another month the series on "How To Tell When Victor Records Were Made."

I promise faithfully that by the time the next HOBBIES appears I shall have done the necessary research, and the installments for which many collectors are waiting will be resumed.

My decision to delay the Victor series was made partly because I feel it a sad duty to report the death of Ed Smalle, a highly popular recording artist of the 1920s, and also because I wish to give some further information about the excellent lyric tenor, Arthur C. Clough, as a supplement to my June and July, 1968, articles.

I am indebted for my Clough material to Harry Birdoff of New York City, who is familiar to HOBBIES readers as a guest contributor to Aida Favia-Artsay's fine Historical Records Department.

And Mr. Birdoff has knocked me fairly off my tottering feet by revealing that Clough was a lawyer before he became a vaudeville and light opera tenor and recording artist. Also that at one stage of his career Clough

was contemplating seriously going back to the legal profession in the belief that he could sing juries into returning a "not guilty" verdict in favor of his clients.

I doubt that if I had been given 10,000 guesses I ever would have imagined such a bizarre situation!

### II. Recollections of Arthur Clough

Now Mr. Birdoff will enlighten us in his own words:

Dear Mr. Walsh: This is in answer to your plea for help concerning the tenor, Arthur C. Clough.

"First, he was not popularly known with the middle C. In his name. Also, as the romantic lead, Clough usually wore a split moustache, with the ends turned up.

"What operettas! — the glorious airs from the best music factories in Vienna! Clough's voice was of wide range and power, and he sang with such ease, apparently enjoying it is much as the audience.

"In the spring of 1911, he suddenly resolved to resume the practice of law. The call of the footlights had lured him away from his law practice. He was appearing then as the tenor in 'The Prince of Pilsen' Company, the Pixley and Lunders musical comedy that was about to end its tour in Boston. Until the beginning of next season's tour he could find time to practice law again.

"He had been reading about the Texas lawyer who managed to have a criminal acquitted by singing—and he wasn't even a tenor! His client had been charged with murder in the first degree. After a brief summing up of the case the lawyer sang 'Home, Sweet Home' to the jury, thus achieving a verdict of not guilty.

"This decided Clough to embark in the practice of criminal law. He firmly believed that no power of silver-tongued forensic oratory could sway or hold a panel of jurors nearly as much as the ineluctable notes of a song.

"The selections, of course, should be governed by the nature or class of the case, Clough believed.

"Take for example," Clough said, 'The Passion Song' in 'Everywoman.' What an overpowering effect the rendering of that number would have on a court or jury in the case of a wronged woman held on a criminal charge! It would mean her immediate acquittal.

"I have a big repertory of grand and light operas and upwards of a hundred concert numbers from which I would have little difficulty in selecting a solo to suit any case in criminal jurisprudence. At any rate, I'm going to try it—watch me."

(Continued on page 44)

## Wanted to Buy

Nickelodeon Pianos, Music Boxes,  
Band Organs, Other Automatic  
Musical Instruments

We list below some of the automatic musical instruments that are of interest to us at this time. If you have one or more of these, please send us a description. A photograph or two would be helpful. We'll reply with an immediate decision. Of course, we're always interested in the purchase of intact collections also.

**NICKELODIAN PIANOS** — Anything and everything by Seeburg, Wurlitzer, Coinola, Cremona, Western Electric, Hupfeld, Weber, Philipps, Popper, Nelson-Wiggen, Welte, etc. Also any type of orchestron (electric piano with drums, pipes, etc.). The condition is not important — they are wanted in all grades.

**MUSIC BOXES** — All types of disc boxes by Polyphon, Regina, Symphonion, etc. All disc sizes and styles of instruments wanted. Cylinder boxes: Overture boxes, large cylinder boxes, boxes with bells & drums, boxes with interchangeable cylinders, boxes with matching table — all wanted in choice condition.

**PLAYER ORGANS** — Reed organs with roll-players such as the Aeolian Orchestrelle. Also small hand-cranked organs such as the Gem, Celestina, Mandolina, Orguette, Ariston, etc.

**BAND ORGANS, DANCE ORGANS** — All types wanted by Wurlitzer, North Tonawanda, Artisan, Niagara, Gavioli, Marengli, Bruder Limonaire, Mortier, etc.

**REPRODUCING PIANOS** — All types of reproducing pianos — Duo-Art, Welte, Ampico — in ornate or "art" cases. Especially want unusual types such as the Duo-Art "Concertola" roll-changer, Ampicochron, cabinet styles, etc.

**SUPPLIES** — Music box discs in quantities of 25 discs or more; rolls for coin-operated pianos; reproducing piano rolls (in quantities of 25 or more only); NCS, CS, MSR, etc. player organ rolls; nickelodeon and orchestron art glass; literature, catalogues, old trade magazines, etc. relating to player pianos, etc.

**MISCELLANEOUS** — Tangley and National calliopes, Deagan Uga-Fon, Wurlitzer theatre organ, music boxes with moving figures (automata), violin-players such as the Mills Violano-Virtuoso and the Hupfeld Phonoliszt-Violina, theatre photoplayers, Reproduce piano/pipe organs, etc.

Do you have any of these items for sale? If so, write or call us today! A finder's fee paid for leads resulting in the purchase of collections or desirable individual instruments.

**HATHAWAY & BOWERS, Inc.**

The World's Largest Automatic  
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Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670

Dealers: Terry Hathaway — Q. David Bowers  
Tel. 213 - 941-8774

Business by appointment. If you want to buy automatic instruments, send \$2 for our latest large illustrated catalog of music boxes, nickelodeons, organs, etc. for sale.



**THE EDISON PHONOGRAPH**

THERE is nothing so good for the family as laughing. The Edison Phonograph will produce more laughs to the minute than any other form of entertainer. Try it yourself.

### EDISON FUN BOOKLET

1908, 2 1/2 x 4", 16 pages. Postpaid: 30c; 2 for 50c; 5 for \$1; 50 for \$7.50; 100 for \$12.50. Sample page shown here, reduced. Better hurry. We only have a 99-year supply left.

**GOLDEN  
MEAN  
PRESS**

Box 943  
Santa Rosa,  
Calif. 95402 mfp

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS

of GREAT SINGERS on

ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- \* COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- \* VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- \* INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- \* FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPLA, G.&T., etc.
- \* "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts. Also old record catalogs.

**AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY**

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla,

New York

tfx

**DULCITONE FOR SALE:** Made, Scotland, late 1800's. No strings. Hammers strike tuning forks. Legs fold under so 1 man can carry. Was Minnie Maddern Fiske's c. 1900. Make offer.

Shipping extra.



**SCHNORMEIER'S ANTIQUES**  
Lamberton, Minn. 56152 mfp

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

"There is no evidence that Clough actually tried it.

"But later on he did appear in operettas, such as 'Miss Dudelsack' (1911), 'Two Little Brides' (1912), 'The Rose Maid,' (1912), etc. Their scores had the same appeal as 'The Chocolate Soldier' and 'The Merry Widow.'

"The haunting melodies that Clough sang, with their lights and shades, survive today in the too few recordings he left behind."

Mr. Birdoff, you will observe, does not say if he knows whether Clough is still living, but he probably isn't, since his first records were made more than 60 years ago.

If he believed he could sing a defendant out of trouble he must have shared the common opinion that the average juror is a gullible goof. But then the feat of the Texas lawyer would appear to confirm Clough's opinion. Apparently it never occurred to that supposedly hard-boiled Texas jury to reflect that the murdered man never could return to any sort of "Home, Sweet Home!"

I am very grateful to Mr. Birdoff for his fascinating letter, and shall be glad to receive additional information concerning Arthur Clough from any source.

### III. Ed Smalle's Death

In HOBBIES for May and June, 1955, appeared an article concerning Ed Smalle, who then was living in Westerly, R. I., and had been the recording duet partner of such famous stars as Billy Murray, Vernon Dalhart, Johnny Marvin, and Esther Walker. Smalle also had been the pianist and "harmony singer" of the recording and radio ensemble known as the Revelers, who, for many years, had world-wide popularity. Now I am sorry to report that the genial comedian and ballad singer died Saturday, November 23, 1968, at the almost patriarchal age of 81.

The 1955 HOBBIES articles about Smalle, were written by Oliver R. Graham, who lives in Westerly, and was a close friend of the singer, but they carried some additional comments by me. Mr. Graham has sent me clippings from the *Westerly Sun*, telling of Smalle's death. These have been supplemented by one from the *Providence Sunday Journal*, thoughtfully mailed to me by Frank O. Moon of North Kingstown, R.I.

I shall combine information from the two papers, avoiding overlapping as far as possible, in order to provide facts not contained in the preceding HOBBIES articles. I will paraphrase the newspaper articles instead of quoting them directly.

Edwin J. Smalle, (whose last name is pronounced as if it were spelled Smalley) lived at 94 High St., Westerly. His musical career of 62 years included two European tours and an appearance before the King and Queen of England in 1928. He died in the Westerly hospital, where he had been admitted a few days before his death.

A former musical arranger for the National Broadcasting Company, vocal stylist and arranger of many popular songs of the 1920 and 1930s, the tenor had made his home in Westerly since 1940.

He conducted the Ed Smalle Orchestra which played at local functions. And he operated his own music studio. His last public appearance as a pianist was with the Everett Perrin Orchestra at the Stonington Ambulance Corps' annual meeting in Mystic, Conn., on November 16.

In recent years he had spent much of his time giving piano lessons to private pupils, and was stricken with a heart attack on the Tuesday before his death while returning home from a lesson. He was taken to the hospital by the Westerly Ambulance Corps and remained a patient in the intensive care unit until he died.

During his earlier years he arranged such famous songs as "I'll See You in My Dreams," "Alice Blue Gown," "In a Little Spanish Town," and "My Blue Heaven" for stars who included Al Jolson, Fanny Brice, Fred and Adele Astaire, Billy Murray, John Charles Thomas, and the Duncan Sisters.

As already mentioned, Ed Smalle was pianist of the Revelers, who gained world-wide fame for their 1926 recording of "Dinah" and other close-harmony numbers. He toured Europe with the Revelers of the mid-1920s, and also coached the Seven Gs on the Phil Baker Show, did other radio shows, and made film "shorts."

Smalle was popular with Westerly organizations, particularly the Lions Club, for which he played the piano and led the group in singing during many of their meetings and social functions.

Mr. Smalle was born in Roxbury, Mass., November 3, 1887, a son of the late James and Mary (Rooney) Smalle. He began his career as a boy soprano in a church choir, but became a professional in 1906 when he gave up a \$3-a-week job in a Boston shoe store to become a \$7-a-week pianist in "The Old South Music Store" on Washington Street in Boston.

In 1914, at the urging of a colleague, he went to New York City. There he landed a job with the Harry Von Tilzer Music Company as a pianist and demonstrator.

In the summer of 1919 he demonstrated a new song by Andrew B. Sterling and Von Tilzer to Billy Murray, then the most popular recording

(Continued on page 98)



DUET SINGER. Dick Robertson who is still living at Newfoundland, N.J., was one of Ed Smalle's duet partners. Robertson's fine Decca records of old-time popular songs are treasured by many collectors.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(Continued from page 44)



FRIENDLY GREETING: The late Ed Smalle waving to a friend in 1955.



MRS. MAUDE SMALLE and her husband, the famous recording and radio star.  
—Photos, courtesy of Oliver R. Graham



HONORING EDISON

On February 11, Jim Walsh was a guest on Kathy Thornton's *Panorama*, a program telecast from WDBJ, Roanoke, Va., as a tribute to the 122nd birthday of Thomas A. Edison, inventor of the phonograph.

Edison records of the inventor's favorite song, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," were played, and many of Jim's phonographs and pictures of recording artists were shown.

Mrs. Thornton is holding a large autographed photo of Edison in this picture taken during the program.  
—Photo by Ken Weirigo

artist. It was "I Ain't-en Got'en No Time to Have the Blues," and Billy liked harmonizing it with Ed so well he invited Smalle to go with him to the Edison studios and make a trial recording. "I like it, and if I like it I think Mr. Edison will like it, too," Murray commented.

Edison studio officials did like it and had the team record it. They also sang it shortly afterward for Victor and Pathe, and during the remainder of 1919 recorded a number of other duets, which included "Open Up the Golden Gates to Dixie Land," for Aeolian-Vocalion, and "Oh! How She Can Sing," for Pathe and Emerson.

In late 1920, after Murray had become an exclusive Victor artist, he and Smalle began recording regularly together and continued through 1925. Meanwhile, Ed sang with other performers — among them Dalhart, Billy Jones, Dick Robertson, and Gerald Underhill Macy — for various labels, and made the duet arrangements. He was a brilliant arranger as well as a skilled pianist.

Smalle had a serious illness in 1940, while living in a summer home he had bought at Charlestown, Mass. But he recovered and continued active in his profession for another 28 years.

According to Billy Murray, Smalle was extremely nervous, and Billy used to tell laughingly of how, when they were recording a duet, Ed would dig his long fingernails into his palms all the time they were singing. By the time the recording was over his hands would be blotched with blood.

The tenor is survived by his wife, Maude F. (Ruddick) Smalle. Services were held at the Schilke Funeral Home in Westerly, at 2 p.m., Tuesday, November 26. Burial followed in River Bend cemetery.

It is a sorrowful duty to bid farewell to my old friend, Ed Smalle. I call him my friend, although we knew each other only by correspondence. Through the kindness of Maurice W. Wheeler of Nashville, Tenn., who came originally from Rhode Island and used to call on Ed Smalle when he returned to his native State, I have an excellent tape recording on which Smalle talks for a long time.

He tells of how he and Murray came to record that eccentric and original composition, "I Ain't-en Got'en No Time to Have the Blues," and recalls interesting things about his musical life. Finally, he agrees to play and sing "Casey Jones" for Wheeler.

Smalle has a hard time remembering the words, but finally strings them together in reasonably orthodox form, and gives a fine rendition of what Carl Sandburg called "the greatest ballad ever written on the North American continent."

Needless to say, that tape will be treasured as long as I live. At my death it is destined to find a permanent home in the Library of Congress at Washington.

(The End)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Arthur Walsh

By JIM WALSH

March 29, 1969

This is one of a series of "stand-by" articles I am preparing in anticipation of a hospital stay, which I hope will bring a speedy and complete recovery of my health.—J. W.

## Wanted to Buy

Nickelodeon Pianos, Music Boxes,  
Band Organs, Other Automatic  
Musical Instruments

We list below some of the automatic musical instruments that are of interest to us at this time. If you have one or more of these, please send us a description. A photograph or two would be helpful. We'll reply with an immediate decision. Of course, we're always interested in the purchase of intact collections also.

**NICKELODIAN PIANOS** — Anything and everything by Seeburg, Wurlitzer, Colnola, Cremona, Western Electric, Hupfeld, Weber, Philipps, Popper, Nelson-Wiggen, Welte, etc. Also any type of orchestrion (electric piano with drums, pipes, etc.). The condition is not important — they are wanted in all grades.

**MUSIC BOXES** — All types of disc boxes by Polyphon, Regina, Symphonion, etc. All disc sizes and styles of instruments wanted. Cylinder boxes: Overture boxes, large cylinder boxes, boxes with bells & drums, boxes with interchangeable cylinders, boxes with matching table — all wanted in choice condition.

**PLAYER ORGANS** — Reed organs with roll-players such as the Aeolian Orchestrion. Also small hand-cranked organs such as the Gem, Celestina, Mandolina, Orguette, Ariston, etc.

**BAND ORGANS, DANCE ORGANS** — All types wanted by Wurlitzer, North Tonawanda, Artisan, Niagara, Gavioli, Marengi, Bruder Limonadre, Mortier, etc.

**REPRODUCING PIANOS** — All types of reproducing pianos — Duo-Art, Ampico — in ornate or "art" cases. Especially want unusual types such as the Duo-Art "Concertola" roll-changer, Ampico, cabinet styles, etc.

**SUPPLIES** — Music box discs in quantities of 25 discs or more; rolls for coin-operated pianos; reproducing piano rolls (in quantities of 25 or more only); NOS, CS, MSR, etc. player organ rolls; nickelodeon and orchestrion art glass; literature, catalogues, old trade magazines, etc. relating to player pianos, etc.

**MISCELLANEOUS** — Tangle and National calliopes, Deagan Una-Fon, Wurlitzer theatre organ, music boxes with moving figures (automata), violin-players such as the Mills Violano-Virtuoso and the Hupfeld Phonolist-Violino, theatre photoplayers, Reproduce piano/pipe organs, etc.

Do you have any of these items for sale? If so, write or call us today! A finder's fee paid for leads resulting in the purchase of collections or desirable individual instruments.

**HATHAWAY & BOWERS, Inc.**

The World's Largest Automatic  
Musical Instrument Dealer

Dept. 9; 11975 E. Florence Ave.  
Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670

Directors: Terry Hathaway — Q. David Bowers

Tel. 213 - 941-8774

Business by appointment. If you want to buy automatic instruments, send \$2 for our latest large illustrated catalog of music boxes, nickelodeons, organs, etc. for sale. jeo

### I. The Walsh "Cousins"

I can visualize some HOBBIES readers smiling, as they see the name at the head of this article, and telling themselves: "Ol' Jim has decided to write about some of his kinfolks this month."

That would be a reasonable, but not correct, assumption. Although the late Arthur Walsh and I referred to each other as "Cousin Arthur" and "Cousin Ulysses" we could not find that we had any relationship.

I have decided to write about Art because I consider him one of the most colorful personalities that played a part in the history of the sound reproducing industry.

He made his mark as a recording artist, Edison "tone test" specialist, Edison official, song writer, deputy administrator of the Federal Housing Administration during Franklin D. Roosevelt's regime and, finally, as a U. S. senator from New Jersey.

He was something of a prodigy. His Edison career began when he was only 19. Before he was 30 he was the company's advertising and music manager.

### II. Information From "Who's Who"

It is odd that "Who's Who In America" apparently didn't seem to consider Arthur Walsh's Edison career worthy of mention; also that his name did not appear in its hallowed pages until he became a federal official. Perhaps, like many other important men, he was indifferent to being written up.

There is a fairly long biographical sketch of him in the 1946-47 edition, however, and from it I shall extract and paraphrase some information, as follows:



"CUZZIN ARTHUR." Jim Walsh says: "The late Arthur Walsh sent me this autographed photo shortly after he became a U. S. senator from New Jersey in 1943. Although he and I called each other 'Cousin' we were unable to trace any relationship. However, his features in this picture seem to me strongly to resemble those of my late brother, Edward Walsh."

Arthur Walsh was born in Newark, N.J., February 26, 1896, the son of Michael Joseph and Mary Ann (Shane) Walsh. He was educated in Newark public schools and by a private tutor, and attended the New York University School of Commerce.

On June 8, 1920, he married Miss Agnes Milvey, and they had one daughter, Barbara Louise.

He began as a concert violinist in 1915, at 19, and in the same year became a recording violinist for Thomas A. Edison, Inc.

Since West Orange, N.J., where Edison phonographs and records were made, is virtually a suburb of Newark, there is no reason for surprise that the talented young violinist soon attracted the attention of Thomas A. Edison's staff.

Walsh became one of the Edison "tone test" standbys, and toured the nation with such prominent singers as the late Marie Rappold, soprano, and the contralto, Christine Miller.

I am not sure whether Miss Miller is still living, although I never have seen any mention of her death. She retired from singing after marrying a wealthy Pittsburgh, Pa., man, Daniel M. Clemson. Her name used to appear

(Continued on page 98D)

## WANTED FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION RECORDS of GREAT SINGERS on

ALL LABELS

Particularly the following:

- ★ COLUMBIA GRAND OPERA RECORD ten-inch, single-faced, with red and gold and black and silver labels.
- ★ VICTOR, red seal, single - faced, with MONARCH and DE LUXE labels.
- ★ INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE CO., Disco Zonofono, Disque Zonophone.
- ★ FOREIGN LABELS such as ODEON, FONOTIPLA, G.&T., etc.
- ★ "OFF THE AIR," "OFF THE STAGE" and "PRIVATE" recordings by great singers, including complete opera broadcasts.

Also old record catalogs.

**AIDA FAVIA-ARTSAY**

50 Prospect Avenue

Valhalla,

New York

tfx

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

in the Pittsburgh telephone directory, but was not in the latest one I consulted.

The young violin virtuoso would play in comparison with records made by such masters of the bow as Albert Spalding and Carl Flesch, to prove that the New Edison faithfully "re-created" violin tone quality.

At that time he had not made any records — at least they were not listed in the catalog. But he did make one in 1916. It was a Jean Becker composition, "Romance." Critics who heard the tone tests seemed to regard him as a good, if not a great, violinist. Perhaps "promising" would be the better word.

After his tone testing days were over, Walsh was, from 1924 through 1931, successively advertising manager, vice president, and general manager of the Edison phonograph division. Afterwards he was a director and vice president on the general staff.

ARTHUR WALSH  
NEW JERSEY

While still in his 30's he served, in 1934-35, as New Jersey director of the Federal Housing Administration, and, from 1935 through 1938, as deputy and assistant FHA administrator.

I shall omit the long list of companies, mostly Edison affiliates, of which he was a president or director. They would make wearisome reading of little interest to record collectors.

In 1943, Charles Edison, who was a son of Thomas A. Edison and an Edison official, was governor of New Jersey. As governor, he appointed Arthur Walsh to fill the unexpired portion of W. Warren Barbour's term as a U. S. senator. Walsh served from November 26, 1943, to April 7, 1944.

With his senatorial term over, he returned to his Edison responsibilities, and was executive vice president of the company when he died of cancer December 13, 1947. His home was at 332 Redmond Road, South Orange.

Until 1922, Edison Diamond Discs came in an envelope that contained a printed description of the record. The notes from Walsh's record of "Romance" 80336 supplement the in-

formation obtained from "Who's Who."

"Arthur Walsh is one of the younger American violinists who has gained all his musical education in this country. He began the study of the violin at the age of eight, and when still a child appeared in concert.

"He has played with many important musical organizations throughout the country, and in 1916 made a trans-continental tour with Marie Rappold. The selection Mr. Walsh gives here is a charming "Romance" by Jean Becker.

"It is a simple, appealing melody that makes a thoroughly enjoyable record. The piano accompaniment, which adds greatly to the interest of the rendition, is by Robert Gaylor."

"A simple, appealing melody" — how often that term was used to describe Edison records of the artless type of compositions that Mr. Edison loved! And how many times self-styled "connoisseurs" thundered anathemas at Edison for not recording more "high brow" numbers!

The reverse side of the Walsh solo also was "simple and appealing." It was a flute solo, "Amid the Odor of Roses," played by Harold L. Lyman, who was an even more confirmed tone test performer than the senator-to-be.

And I just have noticed something that puzzles me. The record jacket says Robert Gaylor, who was an Edison staff accompanist, played the piano for Walsh, but I have two copies of the record — both with the execrable surfaces associated with the late 1916 and 1917-18 Diamond Discs — and the label of both gives the accompanist as William H. Keller.

Was there really such a player, or was Keller an assumed name for Gaylor? And did the man who wrote the annotation, slip up and give the secret away? I wonder.

"Romance" was not a good seller and was cut out of the catalog in 1924. But I was surprised to find that one of my copies is from an original "B" master take. The second is from a "G" master, indicating that it had been found necessary to remake the original performance, probably in 1918.

There seems nothing to choose between the two. I have never seen Keller's name in an Edison catalog or on any other record.

### III. Advertising and Music Man

I wonder what remarkable business potentialities Mr. Edison found in the young concert violinist that resulted in Art Walsh's rapid ascent up through the company's official ranks. He evidently had unusual qualifications, for it is obvious that he won the inventor's affection and that his services were highly satisfactory.

As an indication of the esteem in which the Edison family held Walsh, newspaper accounts of his death said that he played "the Old Man's" favorite song, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" in 1931 at Edison's funeral. This is rather puzzling, because contemporary accounts of the funeral reported that a New Edison phonograph played Walter Van Brunt's record of "Kathleen."

My guess is that Walsh played a

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 15, 1943

Dear Cuzzin Ulysses :

I have received several thousand letters and telegrams of congratulation, but not one that delighted me more than yours.

Of course I have the happiest memories of our early association, and I hope we can play a return engagement together before long.

The clipping from the Roanoke World-News is a WOW and I shall treasure it among my important souvenirs.

I expect some new photographs next week and when they are received I shall consider it a privilege to autograph one to you.

Thanks a million times for writing me, and every good wish in the world to you.

Sincerely,



Mr. Ulysses Walsh  
Editorial Department  
Roanoke World-News  
Roanoke, Virginia.

AW  
1

FLEDGLING SENATOR — Arthur Walsh wrote this letter of appreciation to Ulysses (Jim) Walsh in his early days as a member of the U.S. senate. Note senate stationery.

violin obligato to the recorded music.

As Edison advertising manager, Arthur Walsh's duties hardly could have been taxing after the spring of 1922. At that time, just when phonograph companies were beginning to realize that radio was likely to cut sharply into their sales of instruments and records, Edison quit advertising in national magazines — after many years of telling dealers that no one could be a successful business man if he didn't advertise.

Presumably, advertising was continued in trade publications like *The Talking Machine World*. But Edison publicity ceased to appear in mass circulation magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Walsh's advertising work consequently involved mostly writing "copy" for the monthly record supplements. As music manager, he also decided what compositions were to be recorded.

By 1924 Victor and Brunswick were the only phonograph companies still advertising consistently. Columbia had gone bankrupt but was still in business, and many firms that flourished before the sharp business recession of late 1920 and 1921 had "folded."

An interesting light on Edison's attitude toward advertising may be obtained from a Diamond Disc called "Holiday Greetings From the Bunch at Orange," sent late in 1924 as a Christmas greeting and morale builder to Edison dealers. Various company officials, including Thomas A. and Charles Edison, made brief "pep talks" on this disc, now eagerly sought by collectors.

Among the speakers was Arthur Walsh, who had a fairly high pitched, rather nasal voice, and a marked peculiarity of emphasizing small words, such as "a," in preference to long ones. Nearly every time he used "a" he pronounced it as if it began with a capital letter, as I shall indicate in the quotation that follows:

"This is Art Walsh, advertising and music manager, broadcasting on A wave of increased business. I'm the poor boob who writes those Saturday Evening Post ads you admire so. Aside from all joking, we are cooking up a lot of plans for next year that may not increase the size of the Saturday Evening Post, but will certainly increase the size of your Saturday night bankroll.

"Among other things, there will be a lot of good old tone tests. And, by the way, speaking of tone tests, A man remarked the other day: 'Say, if you could get A pair of tights to fit that phonograph and teach it to carry A spear you could get A job at the Metropolitan Opera House.'

"I have another confession to make. I pick the hits, so I'm going to beat it before you hit me."

Several "takes" were made, so the words and enunciation may differ slightly, according to the one being played. But why should Walsh — and Mr. Edison himself — have considered it a joking matter to talk about advertising in the late lamented *Post*, then undoubtedly the most effective selling medium in the world, when their phonograph business was rapidly sliding down hill?

Alas, those new plans that were being "cooked up" never were cooked



YOUTHFUL VIOLINIST—Arthur Walsh, age 19, giving an Edison "tone test" in 1915. He later became Edison's advertising and music manager and executive vice president.

to the serving point. A few months after harassed Edison dealers listened to the "Christmas Greetings," Victor, Columbia and Brunswick brought out electrical recordings and improved types of instruments to play the new discs which were louder and had a wider frequency range than Edisons, although the tone was rough and distorted and they wore rapidly.

From that time, almost everybody who bought a phonograph instead of a radio chose an Orthophonic Victrola, a Viva-Tonal Columbia or a Brunswick Prismatone, and a little later electrical reproduction was made available by the Brunswick Panatrope, the RCA Victor Electrola, and the Columbia-Kolster.

Edison finally came around to electrical recording late in 1927 and introduced a new machine, the Edisonic. It was better than any other non-electrical phonograph of the period.

But by that time the other companies had skimmed all the cream, and Edison sales continued to be progressively smaller until the company discontinued the phonograph and record business in the fall of 1929, just as the world-wide depression began to grip the United States.

As music manager, Walsh was handicapped by being encouraged to select many songs that had been popular when "Old Man" Edison was a boy or young man, and to have them

recorded, regardless of whether there appeared to be any public demand.

Some sold well, but most didn't, and I believe Edison acquired a reputation among dealers of making more "unsalable" records than any other company, though I doubt its being any worse in this respect than some others in the sapphire ball era.

As a musician and music manager, Art Walsh also had ambitions to be a popular song writer, and he produced a few songs that were recorded on a fairly extensive scale. One was a fox trot, "What a Smile Can Do," issued in March, 1925, on Diamond Disc 51501.

Walsh is listed as the author of the words, and A. Paganucci as composer of the music. It was played by Billy Wynne's Greenwich Village Orchestra, with singing by Charles Hart. Columbia also recorded the composition, and had it played by Ace Brigode and His Fourteen Virginians. There may have been other versions.

Then came a Walsh-Paganucci comic song, "As a Porcupine Pines For Its Pork (That's How I Pine for You)," issued in March, 1925, on Diamond Disc 51535, and sung by the great duet team of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. They also recorded it for Victor and Columbia.

(Continued on page 98L)



Robert Phillip and the first Canadian clock delivered to Clock Manor in 1964

## ON TIME

(Continued from page 49)

nat movements were among the best. The date 1914 is the dividing line for change of the name Berlin to the city of Kitchener. Previous to the 1914-18 war the city of Kitchener was known officially as Berlin.

The factory was not large and it was always a family business. The passing of this clock factory will recall to collectors the ingenuity that clocks manufacturers always have shown in their products.

Orville Hagans of Hagans' Clock Manor Museum, Bergen Park, Col., is the first Museum to seek out and have on display examples of Canadian, a la Pequegnat, the Office Clock, Canadian Time, and the School Model, Toronto.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 98E)

Finally, in June, 1926, Walsh alone was credited with writing the words and music of "The Prisoner's Sweetheart," a reply to the enormously popular "Prisoner's Song." It was sung by Charles Harrison on Diamond Disc 51735, issued in June, 1926, with a Vernon Dalhart version of "The Lightning Express" on the reverse side.

I never have found this record, but should like to. "The Prisoner's Sweetheart" also was recorded by Henry Burr for Victor and Franklyn Baur for Columbia.

One Arthur Walsh composition which few persons now living have heard is "Say It to the Ediphone," written in 1927 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Edison's invention of the phonograph and as a means of publicizing the company's dictating machines. The composition was recorded on wax cylinders.

Jones and Hare recorded it for a Diamond Disc that was not sold to the public but sent only to Ediphone dealers. On the opposite face, Charles Edison gave a "sales pitch."

"Say It to the Ediphone" may be considered a rhymed history of the phonograph, beginning with its first words:

"'Kreusi, make this,' said Thomas Edison.  
'And I'll record the human voice as soon as it is done.'"

John Kreusi was the mechanic who built the first tinfoil phonograph to Edison's specifications. I have seen only one copy of this record.

### IV. Personal Friendship

My friendship by correspondence with Arthur Walsh began in 1933 when I wrote the first article about record collecting published by any nationally circulated American magazine, as far as I know.

The article was called "On the Trail of the Rare Record." It was published in the *New York Herald*

*Tribune Sunday Magazine* (forerunner of "This Week"), syndicated to many Sunday newspapers throughout the country, and reprinted in abridged form by a Canadian publication, *Magazine Digest*.

Apparently, the late Mrs. William Brown Meloney, editor of the *Herald-Tribune Magazine*, had sent my manuscript to Edison headquarters to have it checked for accuracy, for I received a copy of a letter dated July 17, 1933, which Arthur Walsh had written to her.

Rather, it was "voicewritten by Ediphone." In part it read:

"I must apologize to you for holding up the attached article by Ulysses Walsh. My absence from the office during the past few weeks prevented me from going over the article until today. . . .

"I think Mr. Walsh has written a good article which should appeal to your readers and we do not find anything in the article that is not thoroughly O. K. Faithfully yours, Arthur Walsh."

The carbon copy was accompanied by a letter from Mr. Walsh, inviting me to "come in and see me whenever you are in Orange and let's find out if we are any kin."

After reading, late in 1943, that Walsh had been appointed a senator from New Jersey, I wrote an article for the "Observant Citizen" department of the *Roanoke World-News*, telling something of his remarkable career. I sent him a copy of the column, and on December 15 he replied, using senatorial stationery.

I'll quote the letter, first reminding you that "Ulysses" is the name my parents gave me, and "Jim" only a nickname I acquired later:

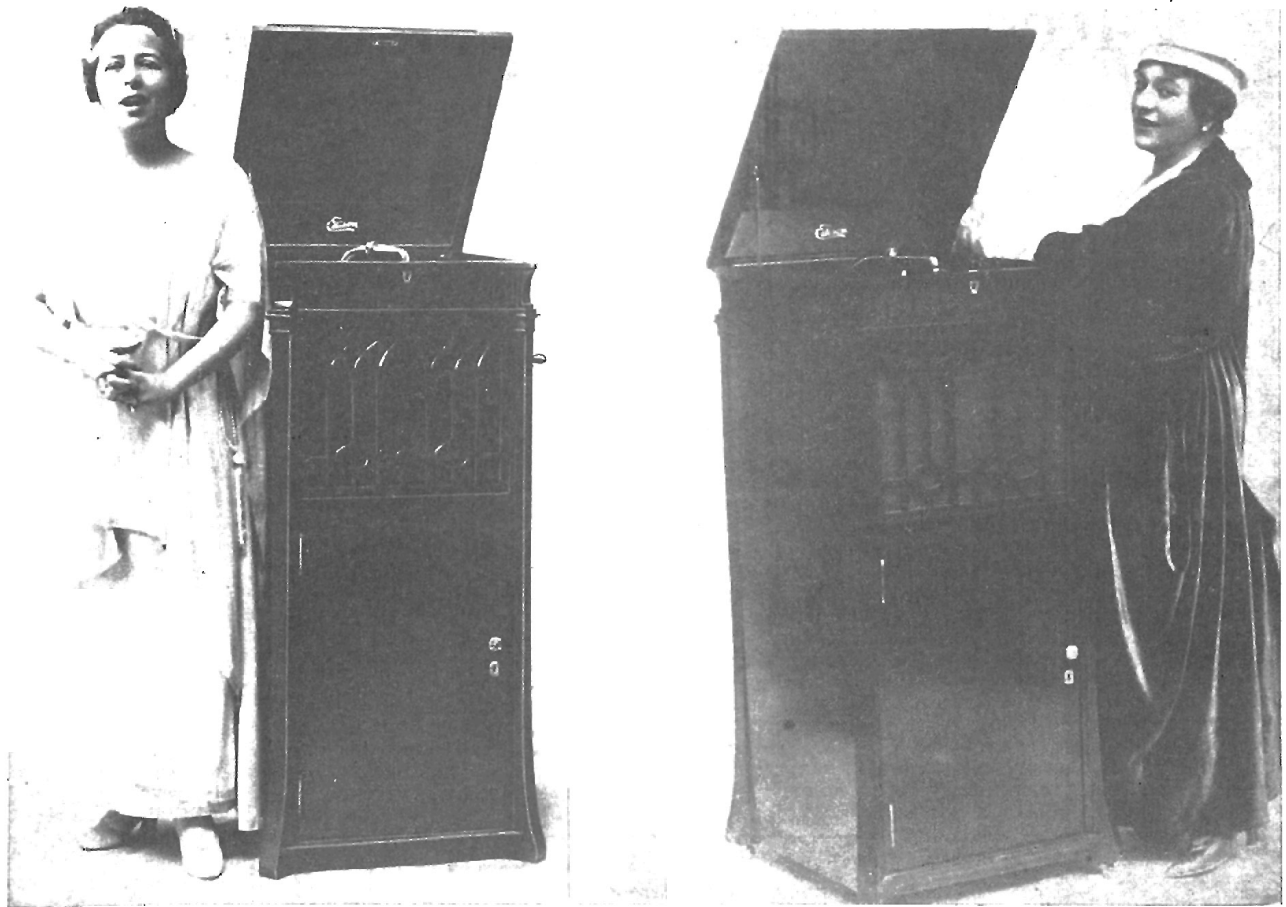
"Dear Cuzzin Ulysses:

"I have received several thousand letters and telegrams of congratulation, but not one that delighted me more than yours."

"Of course I have the happiest memories of my early association, and I hope we can play a return engagement together before long."

"The clipping from the *Roanoke World-News* is a WOW and I shall treasure it among my important souvenirs."





FAMOUS "TONE TEST" SINGERS—Arthur Walsh made transcontinental tours in 1915-16 with a number of noted Edison

artists. Here are Christine Miller, popular concert contralto, left, and Marie Rappold, Metropolitan Opera soprano, right.

"I expect some new photographs next week and when they are received I shall consider it a privilege to autograph one to you.

"Thanks a million times for writing me, and every good wish in the world to you.

Sincerely,  
"Arthur Walsh."

#### V. I Meet "Cuzzin Arthur"

The meeting for which Arthur Walsh and I had long been hoping did not take place until September 8, 1947, when I was on my way to Hempstead, N.Y., to attend one of the late John Bieling's parties for some of his fellow pioneer recording artists and a few of his record collecting friends. On the way, I stopped at West Orange and called on Art, with whom I had previously made an appointment.

An amusing thing occurred when I gave my name to the receptionist as Jim Walsh and told her I had an appointment with the other Mr. Walsh. She phoned to his office and was told he was expecting his "Cousin Ulysses" Walsh, but not anyone by the name of Jim. I hastily explained, and was soon shaking hands with Art.

His photographs, taken as a young man, had shown him as a slender and rather delicate featured, but the man I now saw had grown stout, had heavy jowls, and his voice was rather deep and husky. His manner was cordiality itself, but I thought he had an air of weariness and that he

smiled and made himself seem jovial only by an effort.

I did not suspect that within a few months he would be dead of cancer, and I don't know whether he realized his condition. He made no reference to his health.

Instead, we talked about our ancestry and soon decided there was no evidence we were related even though we had the same last name. He was a Democrat and a Roman Catholic. I came from a family that was Republican and Protestant.

As far back — which isn't very far — as I have been able to trace my ancestry on both my mother and father's sides, I have found no trace of Catholic forbears, although, of course, all of us whose forefathers came from Europe must have had Catholic ancestors at some time or other.

Art's relatives had settled in the North. Mine all seemed to have headed South. But we agreed that our seeming lack of relationship wouldn't interfere with our continuing to be "cousins."

"Cousin Arthur" may not have had any idea that he was seriously ill, for he told me that he and a group of associates were planning to build a new radio station in Newark and that he would like to have my "Walsh's Wax Works" program, which I gave from WDBJ in Roanoke, Va., as a

regular feature, "even though you can't come up here and we have to pick it up by wire."

This gave me hope of a real "break" for myself, but of course it was not to be, since Art died only a little more than three months later. The Associated Press reported death occurred in Memorial Hospital, New York.

The report quoted his brother, Frank E. Walsh, as saying the former senator underwent an abdominal operation December 8 for a growth which the family suspected was cancer, and that his widow had authorized an autopsy "because it might help others, something that Arthur always wanted to do."

And so, at the tragically early age of 51, ended the colorful life story of my friend and "cuzzin," Arthur Walsh. His name may not go down in history as a great violinist, for he seems to have been by instinct more a business man than a musician.

But he accomplished a great deal of lasting worth during the years he was allotted. I wish he had been spared and were still among us today. He would be 73 if he were living yet, and 73 isn't so old, as our generation reckons age!

Editor's Note: Readers of Jim Walsh's Department will be glad to know his cats will be looked after, during his hospital stay, by a friend.

(The End)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Making Doubles Out of Singles

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Play At Matchmaking

Do not be misled by the heading into believing you're going to read something about tennis. Frankly and honestly, this article is merely a makeshift, contrived to fill space until I can do better.

As I mentioned in the January

HOBBIES, I have been in poor health for some time and, as I didn't mention then, I've had an operation and hospital stay, but am coming along fine.

I have not been able to find strength to continue my research on the series I began last year, "How

to Tell When Victor Records Were Made." It looks now as if it will be a few months before I can return to my digging and delving and complete the job.

Meanwhile, "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" must continue to appear, and I have tried to find for this month an interesting subject that would not require much research effort. I hope what I am writing will prove I have succeeded.

### II. Turning Singles Into Doubles

Recently, I was amusing myself during one of my compulsory stays in bed by turning through the numerically arranged Victor record catalog for May, 1914, and was mildly surprised to find that, of the almost 6,000 single-faced 10-inch Black Label discs which had been issued from 1901 through 1913, only 58 remained in their original form. Many hundreds more had been coupled with other selections to make double-faced records, and several thousand had been cut out of the catalog.

I was surprised even more to find that, by a hurried count, there were 243 12-inch single-faced Black Labels still extant in 1914. (All, whether 10- or 12-inch, were discontinued when the 1920 catalog was printed.) It struck me I could have fun by trying to arrange those 58 straggling single-faces into doubles, with as appropriate combinations as possible.

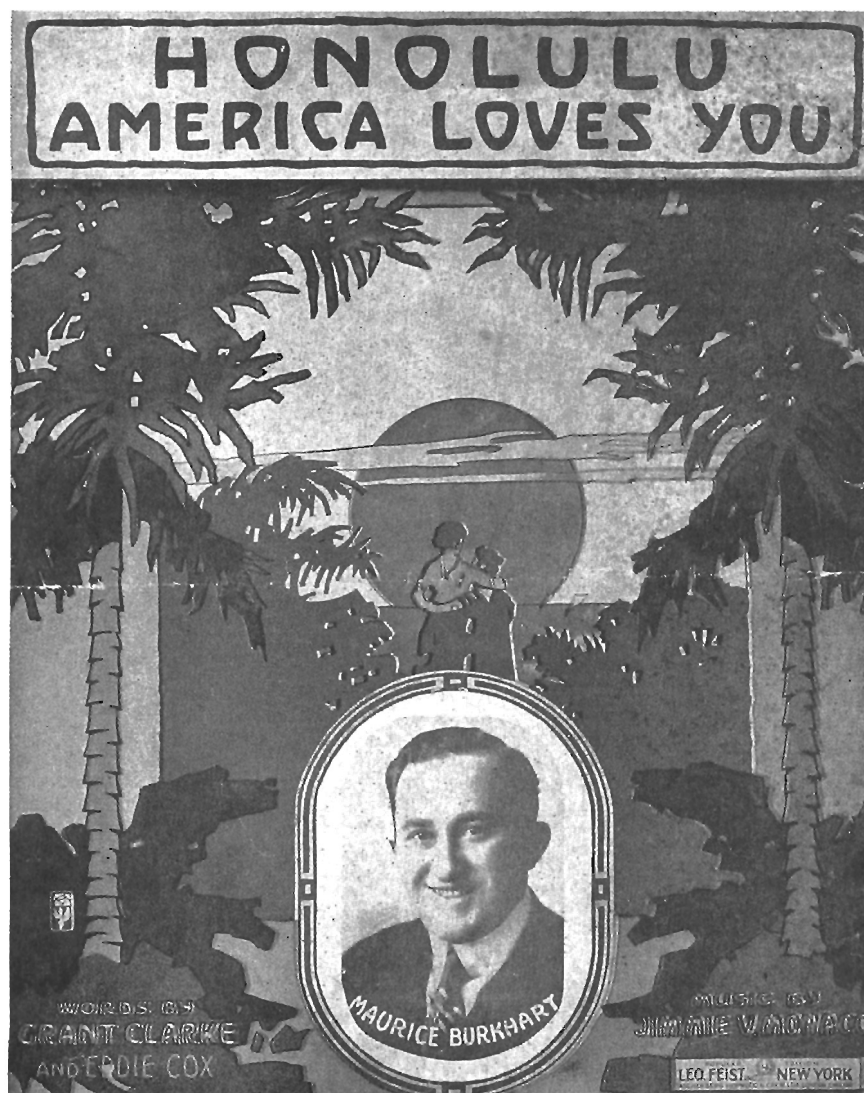
I decided to undertake this, and, whenever feasible, to use the same artists on both sides. Not much investigation was required to learn it would be impossible to turn the 58 single-faces into 29 double-faces and have a suitable coupling for each.

Those remaining records — all of which must have been good sellers in single-faced form or they would not still have been hanging on in the catalog — were of such wide variety I quickly determined there would have to be some rather incongruous matings. But, I resolved to do my best and fill some HOBBIES space by publishing the results.

To begin with, I'll give the list as it appears in the 55-year-old catalog. To save space I'll shorten the frequently recurring Haydn Quartet to HQ; Sousa's Band to SB, and Pryor's Band to PB. Perhaps you might like to try your own skill at making doubles out of singles before going on to read how I handled the problem.

Now, here is the list:

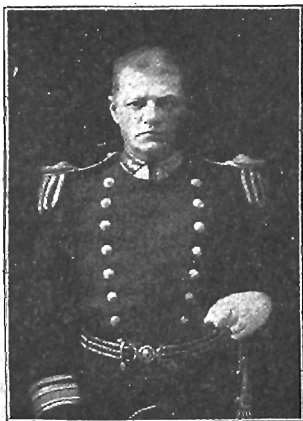
- 114 Annie Laurie. HQ.
- 656 Carry Me Back to Old Virginny. HQ.
- 722 Jesus, Lover of My Soul. Trinity Choir.
- 1168 The Warblers' Serenade. SB.
- 1172 Hearts and Flowers—Intermezzo. SB.
- 1193 Liberty Bell March. SB.
- 1235 My Country 'Tis of Thee. Victor Male Chorus.
- 1258 Anvil Chorus—"Il Trovatore." Victor Male Chorus.
- 1416 Medley of Plantation Songs. HQ.
- 1833 In the Good Old Summer Time. SB.
- 1997 My Old Kentucky Home. HQ.
- 2512 Heidelberg—"Prince of Pilsen." HQ.
- 2518 Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep. HQ.
- 2787 Star Spangled Banner. PB.
- 2813 Old Folks at Home. HQ.
- 2895 Vice-Admiral Quadrille—Third Figure. Dance Orchestra.
- 2896 Vice-Admiral Quadrille—Fourth Figure. Dance Orchestra.
- 2929 Where the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold. Harry Macdonough.
- 4116 Amour et Printemps Waltz. Garde Republicaine Band.



OLD-TIME RECORDING ARTISTS—And here is a 1916 page of sheet music, containing the photo of Maurice Burkhart who suggested the title of "Maybe You Think I'm Happy" to its composer, "Wolfie" Gilbert.

Burkhart, now dead, was a vaudeville singer of dialect songs and for a brief period was recording partner of the still living Walter Van Brunt. An account of Burkhart's latter life, after he gave up vaudeville and recording, would make interesting reading.

## Admiral Evans and the Victor



"Fighting Bob" Evans

GALLANT "SEA DOG"—Admiral Robley D. Evans made a Victor record of his "Farewell Address to the Navy" when he retired. Jim Walsh has coupled it with "Auld Lang Syne," by Frank C. Stanley. This illustration is taken from the back cover of the Victor record supplement for December, 1908.

- 4160 The Star Spangled Banner. Frank C. Stanley.
- 4181 Cavalleria Rusticana—Intermezzo. Victor Orchestra.
- 4200 National Songs of Holland. PB.
- 4201 Spanish Patriotic Airs. PB.
- 4221 Patriotic Songs of Wales. SB.
- 4222 Patriotic Song of Poland. Victor Orchestra.
- 4223 National Air of Bohemia. Victor Orchestra.
- 4312 Sylvia Ballet—Valse Lente. PB.
- 4314 Rakoczy March—Hungarian Air. PB.
- 4328 Auld Lang Syne. Frank C. Stanley.
- 4351 Peer Gynt Suite, No. 1, Part IV. PB.
- 4418 The Whistler and His Dog. Pryor's Orchestra.
- 4643 Serenata—Serenade (Schubert) Spanish. Carlos Francisco.
- 4648 Dance of the Song Birds. Victor Orchestra.
- 4676 The Rosary. Alan Turner.
- 4737 Armorer's Song—from "Robin Hood." Eugene Cowles.
- 4796 Sweet and Low. Lyric Quartet.
- 4845 Traumerel. Cello solo by Victor Sorlin.
- 5333 Barcarolle—"Contes d'Hoffman." Victor Orchestra.

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- 5554 Rise and Progress of the Negro. William H. Taft.
- 5557 Our Foreign Dependencies. W. H. Taft.
- 5558 Irish Humor. W. H. Taft.
- 5614 B.P.O.E. (Elks' Song). Nat. M. Wills.
- 5632 Farewell Address to the Navy. Admiral Robley D. Evans.
- 5680 Akahi Hoi—Hawaiian. Genevra Johnstone-Bishop.
- 5681 Cyrano de Bergerac—"Non Merel." Recitation in French by Ralph Herz.
- 5688 Men of Harlech. (Welsh.) Mountain Ash Party.
- 5689 Soldiers' Chorus from "Faust." Mountain Ash Party.
- 5754 Barcarolle—Les Contes d'Hoffman. Vienna Quartet.
- 5843 Let Me Stay and Live in Dixieland. Elizabeth Erice and Charles King.
- 5847 That's Ever Loving Love. Erice & King.
- 5854 King of the Bungalows. Gene Greene.
- 5863 I Know a Bank. Elizabeth Wheeler and Marguerite Dunlap.
- 5864 O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast. Wheeler and Dunlap.
- 5867 Carmen—Vocal Waltz. Lyric Quartet.
- 5869 Estudiantina Waltz. Lyric Quartet.
- 5871 Natoma—Vaquero's Song. Earl Cartwright & Victor Opera Company.

## III. Arranging the Couplings

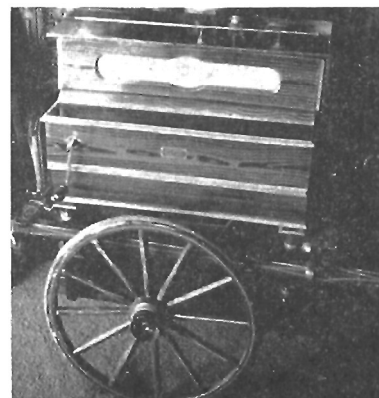
Deciding on combinations for some of the records proved a "snap," though it was impossible to mate others to my satisfaction. And, after I finally had decided on a set of 29 double-faced records, I encountered a mystery that made me almost frantic with bewilderment, and which for a day or two I could not solve.

Repeated counting indicated un-  
(Continued on page 53)



EMINENT BASSO-COMPOSER — Eugene Cowles (1860-1948), famous basso of the Bostonians Opera Company, is represented in the 1914 Victor single-faced record list by "The Armorer's Song" from "Robin Hood." Cowles is remembered best today as the composer of "Forgotten," which he sang for Victor and Edison.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

mistakably that there were only 58 single-faced records — 34 on one page of the Victor catalog and 24 on the next. But, after I had coupled 58, I still had Frank C. Stanley's version of "Auld Lang Syne" drooping dismally without a mate.

"How on earth," I asked myself, "could I have an odd number left out of an even number of records?" Repeated checking finally revealed that I had coupled President Taft's amusing little talk on "Irish Humor," with two discs: Bryan's "Labor Question," and Admiral Evans' "Farewell Address to the Navy."

I, then, solved this problem by combining the Taft talk with Bryan's Labor oration, and — very appropriately, I think — by coupling the Admiral's farewell speech with Stanley's "Auld Lang Syne," which, until I made the change, stood alone in the world.

I had no trouble whatever in deciding to unite the Haydn Quartet's "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" and "Medley of Plantation Songs." I debated briefly about whether I should combine the Victor Male Chorus' rendition of "America" with one of the versions of "The Star Spangled Banner," but decided it would be better to let the male chorus offerings stay together.

I didn't like to join together vocal and instrumental numbers, but there seemed nothing else to do with those classic "sob" pieces, "Hearts and Flowers" and "The Rosary."

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" was a hard one, because it was the only outright, unabashed gospel hymn of the lot, but I decided that "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" has a devotional theme running through it, and both songs are concerned with perils at sea, so they might as well join labels.

I have been wondering whether the Mountain Ash Party's "Men of Harlech" should not have been doubled with "Patriotic Song of Wales." But, they're probably the same thing in different forms, and I decided I'd rather have this Welsh singing group on both sides than to combine them with Sousa's Band.

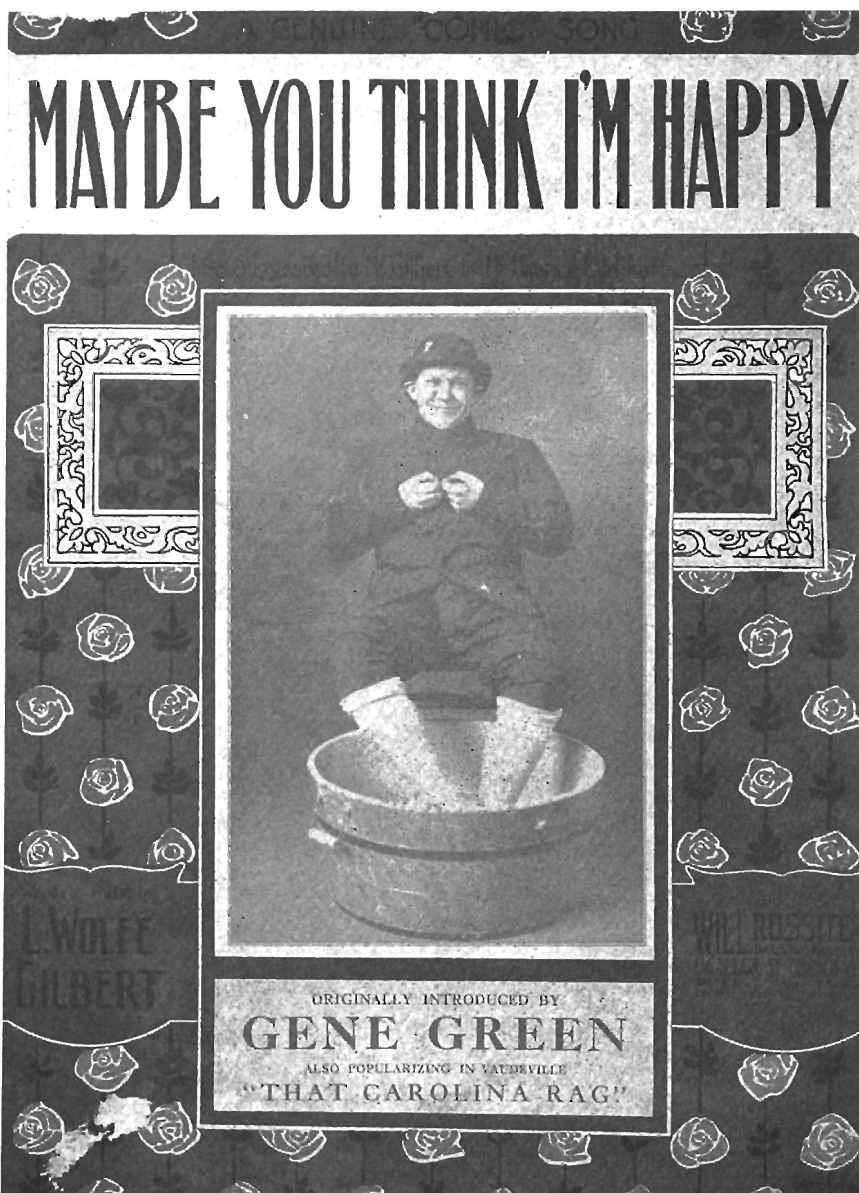
"Where the Sunset Turns" wasn't an easy one, but I, at length, ruled

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**FAVORITE VAUDEVILLIAN**—This amusing picture, on the front page of a piece of sheet music, shows Gene Greene, once popular comedian, whose greatest hit, "The King of the Bungaloos," was on a single-faced Victor record.

Notice that Greene's last name is mis-spelled here, also that another recording artist, the late Maurice Burkhardt, was credited with suggesting the title to the composer of the song, L. Wolfe Gilbert, who is living and active still.

it would go as well with "Heidelberg" as with anything else. There was no effort required to decide the two Brice and King duets should go together, and that "The Armorer's Song" and "The Vaquero's Song," should hit it off. Similarly, the two 'cello solos by Victor Sorlin should be paired.

Which reminds me that until recently I have never known anything about Sorlin except that he had been a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, but now I have come across a copy of the *Voice of the Victor* for January, 1913, which reveals that this accomplished 'cellist died almost 57 years ago. I'll quote

the death notice for the benefit of the many record collectors who admire Victor Sorlin:

"It is with the utmost regret that we inform our readers of the death of Victor E. Sorlin, the distinguished 'cellist. An acute attack of pneumonia was the cause of his death, which occurred November 20th (1912) at his New York home, 77 W. 68th Street.

"Mr. Sorlin was born in Worcester, Mass., 34 years ago. He was connected at different times with several of the largest symphony orchestras of the country. He was also a member of the Mendelssohn Trio, which for several years gave chamber concerts at the Hotel Majestic, and more recently he had conducted an agency for artists.

"Mr. Sorlin's 'cello records are an eloquent tribute to his technical skill and

(Continued on page 98J)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

to the intelligence which actuated it. Through them he has reached a much wider public than was ever within hearing of the instrument which grew so eloquent under his fingers. Thousands of persons to whom "Victor Sorlin" was only a name will learn with regret that the ultimate accident has overtaken him."

There is no need of going into further detail concerning the other choices I made. It was hard to find satisfactory couplings among the "national airs" series, and when I came to Herz's French recitation and Madame Johnstone-Bishop's Hawaiian record — the only one in the list — I simply threw up my hands and

united this disparate couple until death should them part.

So, now, let's go down the line and see what double-faced couplings I effected. (I wonder, by the way, who *did* decide on the Victor combinations and whether an individual or a committee made the decision on which records should be cut out?)

Names of artists won't be mentioned except in the few instances where there was more than one offering of the same selection. We'll start numbering them at 6000.

- 6000 Annie Laurie/Sweet and Low.
- 6001 Carry Me Back to Old Virginny/Medley of Plantation Songs.
- 6002 Jesus, Lover of My Soul/Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.
- 6003 Warblers' Serenade/Dance of the Song Birds.
- 6004 Hearts and Flowers/The Rosary.
- 6005 Liberty Bell March/Patriotic Song of Wales.
- 6006 My Country 'Tis of Thee/Anvil Chorus.
- 6007 In the Good Old Summer Time/Whistler and His Dog.
- 6008 My Old Kentucky Home/Old Folks at Home.
- 6009 Heidelberg/Where the Sunset Turns.
- 6010 Star Spangled Banner (Pryor's Band)/Star Spangled Banner (Stanley).
- 6011 Vice-Admiral Quadrille—Third and Fourth Figures.
- 6012 Amour et Printemps Waltz/Barcarolle (Vienna Q.L.).
- 6013 Cavalleria Rusticana Intermezzo Barcarolle (Victor Orchestra).
- 6014 National Songs of Holland/National Air of Bohemia.
- 6015 Spanish Patriotic Airs/Patriotic Song of Poland.
- 6016 Sylvia Ballet/Peer Gynt Suite.
- 6017 Rakoczy March/Schubert's Serenade. (I grimace at this one!)
- 6018 Auld Lang Syne/Farewell Address to the Navy.
- 6019 Armorer's Song/Vaquero's Song.
- 6020 Traumerl/Angel's Serenade.
- 6021 Labor Question/Irish Humor.
- 6022 Rise and Progress of the Negro/Our Foreign Dependencies.
- 6023 B.P.O.E./King of the Bungaloes.
- 6024 Akahi Hoi/Cyrano de Bergerac.
- 6025 Men of Harlech/Soldiers' Chorus.
- 6026 Let Me Live and Stay in Dixieland/That's Ever Loving Love.
- 6027 I Know a Bank/O Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast.
- 6028 Carmen/Estudiantina.

So there they are! Fifty-eight ancient Victor single-faced records combined into 29 appropriate, or not so appropriate, doubles! I'll be glad to hear from anyone who tackles this job and arrives at any markedly different conclusions from my own.

In the meantime, I rejoice that I have filled my space for the July HOBBIES.

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8. Three Dolls, two large, one medium size, in German Bisque. Dressed very nicely. \$325 special price or will sell separately.
9. Large collection Pitchers, including 15 to 20 pieces copper lustre. Write for price.
10. Extremely old piece Sevres Porcelain. Lady seated at Poudre Table with mirror being coiffured by another lady. Write for color photo and price.
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(Continued from back cover)

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COMIC SONG HERO—In the days when single-face records predominated, a very popular song was "Peter Piper." It told the story of a small boy who cheerfully admitted he was a dunce.

It was sung by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. An even more popular version was a banjo solo by Vess L. Ossman. Its composer, S. R. Henry (Henry R. Stern) died only two or three years ago.

This drawing, pictured here from a 1905 Busy Bee cylinder record catalog, gives the famous cartoonist, Jimmy Swinnerton's conception of Peter Piper who "only grinned when people said all he did was sleep and eat." Swinnerton drew the "Little Jimmy" comic strip that was popular for many years.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Artist Who Sang in Choruses of Edison Amberol Cylinders

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Cylinder Records

Propped up in bed, with a portable typewriter across my knees, it occurs to me that I have devoted so much space during the past year to discussing Victor recordings that I should give the devotees of Edison cylinders a break by allotting one of these fill-in articles to them. And I think I have found a good subject.

Frequently, I have had letters from Edison cylinder owners, asking who

assisted the soloists in records contained in their collections. Much of the time I have been able to give this information, but sometimes I haven't depending on whether the monthly Edison record lists and copies of the *New Phonogram* identified ensemble members.

Such information rarely is asked for about the Standard cylinders, because a 2-minute record was so short there was seldom any need for a

chorus to reinforce the star performer and help fill up space.

When the 4-minute Amberols were introduced in November, 1908, however, the situation changed. More and more it was found that the soloist should have help to give variety to the record and keep it from becoming too monotonous, and increasingly other Edison singers were called on to assist.

The use of choruses seems to have reached its peak in 1911. A great many male or mixed choruses also were used in the indestructible Blue Amberols that were introduced in October, 1912, and, equally, of course, a large number of the Amberols were taken over into the Blue Amberol list. With an eye to space limitations, however, neither the 2-minute nor the Blue Amberol cylinders will be discussed in this article.

#### II. That Popular Premier Quartet

After the "soloist with chorus" system became well established, the Edison recording department used its artists the way an old-fashioned stock company of the legitimate stage operated. The star of one record would be found more or less contentedly singing in the chorus of another issued in the same supplement.

Billy Murray, the most popular of all Edison singers, for example, probably sang in the choruses of more than half the Amberols and Blue Amberols issued from 1908 until he became exclusive to Victor late in 1920.

The reason for Murray's frequent appearance was this: In 1909 he signed a contract restricting his services to Edison, Victor, and Victor's subsidiary label, Zonophone. The male quartet, which nearly all collectors of old "popular" records know well as the American on Victor and the Premier on Edison, had just been organized, and two of its other members — John Bieling, first tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass — also entered into joint Victor-Edison contracts.

The fourth member, Steve Porter, baritone, continued to "free-lance" and be paid by the "date," and it was a source of worry to Steve when Murray was late, as he sometimes was, for recording engagements. Occasionally he forgot them altogether, and Walter Van Brunt, a tenor with a voice much like his, was substituted in his place.

Porter had a habit of wringing his hands when he was worried, and the



**EARLY PHOTO OF COMEDIENNE**—This photo of the beloved Ada Jones recently was discovered by Thomas Pollard of Soquel, Calif. It was taken in Chicago, probably in or around 1897, when Miss Jones was about 24. Although she had made test records, her recording career proper did not begin until 1904.  
—Photo by Moflett, Chicago, Ill.

late John Bieling told me that when Murray didn't appear at the agreed on time, Steve would begin to wring his hands and say:

"Oh, oh, oh, I wish that Lord-blessed Murray would hurry up!"

Then Steve would turn to Bieling and Hooley and say:

"You fellows are doing all right! You've got a contract and you get paid whether you work or not! You get yours regardless. But I don't get mine till I make it!"

The quartet's being under yearly contract was largely responsible for its being assigned to sing in so many choruses.

Because the Premier Quartet pops up so often in chorus singing, I'm going to conserve space by omitting records in which Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Walter Van Brunt, and Will Oakland were assisted by a male chorus.

Murray, as we know, was the leader of the overworked foursome. Van Brunt sometimes substituted for him. Ada Jones was Billy's duet partner and naturally depended on his quartet when she needed chorus help. And Oakland seldom, if ever, worked with any other group.

Actually, the Premier Quartet, with Oakland added, was known as the Heidelberg Quintet. So if you have a record represented to be by any of (Continued on page 98L)



**FAMOUS COUNTERTENOR AND QUARTET**—The late Will Oakland (center) is shown here with the Grenadiers Quartet, which sang with him at his Will Oakland's Terrace night club. The picture was made in 1932.

Oakland often had the assistance of the Premier Quartet in his Edison Amberol records. When the five were not called "Will Oakland and Chorus" they were known as the Heidelberg Quintet.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

these singers and a male chorus you can be virtually certain the ensemble is the Premier Quartet.

To conserve space further, in referring to the quartet, I shall abbreviate its name to P. Qt. I also shall give the names of the personnel of a few relatively unknown quartets who made one or more Amberol cylinders, as well as the members of other miscellaneous groups. The listings will be in numerical order, and necessarily will omit records with choruses about which I have no reliable information.

### III. List of Chorus Records

- 3 Lucia Sextet. Marie Stoddart, soprano; Margaret Keyes, contralto; Harry Anthony (John Young) and George M. Stricklett, tenors; James F. Harrison (Frederick Wheeler), baritone, and George H. Bemus, bass.
- 24 Sword of Bunker Hill. Anthony. Harrison, Stricklett, and Gus Reed, bass. (Knickerbocker Quartet.)
- 63 Elks' Minstrels. Billy Murray, Edward Meeker, Steve Porter, Anthony, and Ada Jones. Eugene A. Jaudas was musical director.
- 79 Battle Hymn of the Republic. Elise Stevenson and Frank C. Stanley, assisted by Edith Chapman, soprano; Mary Jordan, contralto, Anthony and Harrison.
- 119 Casting Bread Upon the Waters. Empire Vaudeville Company (Edward M. Favor, Edith Sinclair Favor, and Porter.)
- 207 Lily of the Prairie. Pete Murray and P. Qt.
- 317 Paddy Duffy's Cart. Favor and P. Qt.
- 431 Characteristic Negro Medley. Peerless Quartet — Billy Murray, Albert Campbell, Arthur Collins, and Frank C. Stanley. This record is listed because Murray was substituted for Irving Gillette (Henry Burr), presumably because of his greater facility with Negro dialect comedy. It is, so far as I know, the only Peerless Quartet record in which Burr did not sing.
- 447 Red Clover. Frederic H. Potter and P. Qt.
- 457 Patriotic Songs of America. New York Military Band with P. Qt., and Inez Barbour, soprano.
- 465 Favorite Airs from "The Mikado." Edith Chapman, soprano; Edna Stearns, contralto; Anthony and Porter.
- 471 Mrs. Clancey's Boarding House. Empire Vaudeville Company, Porter, Meeker, Murray and Bieling.
- 506 Rescued from the Flames. Len Spencer and P. Qt.
- 512 Carry Me Back to Old Virginny. P. Qt. and Inez Barbour.
529. Mama's Boy. Len Spencer, assisted by his daughter, Myrtle Spencer, Ada Jones, Clarence Rockefeller, Steve Porter and P. Qt.
- 541 Red Wing. Potter and P. Qt.
- 552 A Cowboy's Romance. Spencer and P. Qt.
- 562 Valley Flower. Potter and P. Qt.
- 570 Man in the Silvery Moon. Helen Clark and P. Qt.
- 572 Uncle Tom's Cabin — Entrance of Topsy. Len Spencer, with Ethel Harboro, Myrtle Spencer, Ada Jones, and Vess L. Ossman and George and Audley Dudley, banjoists.
- 643 Somewhere. Irving Gillette and Peerless Quartet — Gillette, Campbell, Collins, and Stanley. As the Peerless was not under contract, it got little work compared to the Premiers.
- 654 Little Annie Rooney, Arthur Clough and P. Qt.
- 674 Let Me Live and Stay in Dixieland. Billy Murray, P. Qt. and Elizabeth Spencer.
- 685 Mother Goose Days (also called Jack and Jill Medley). Murray, Hooley, Jones, Anthony, Elizabeth Spencer and P. Qt.
- 700 Uncle Fritz's Birthday. Len Spencer, assisted by Pete Lamar, yodeler, Ada Jones, Myrtle Spencer, Master John Berkes, "and other children," names not given.
- 718 Down at Finnegan's Jamboree. Charles D'Almaine, violinist, assisted by Jones, Porter, Meeker, and George Werner.
- 730 Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls. Gillette with Peerless Qt.
- 755 By the Saskatchewan. Frederick Weld, baritone, assisted by Elizabeth Spencer, Cornelia Marvin, Anthony, and Hooley. Though never a leading recording artist, Weld made a few records for both Edison



**GREAT TENOR'S GRANDSON**—Walter Van Brunt (later known as Walter Scanlan) sometimes was termed "The Boy Wonder" after he became a recording star in 1908 at the age of 16.

Shown above is his grandson, "Jeff" Kerekes of Magnolia, Ohio. Jeff is following the example of Van Brunt, still living at 77, who was Thomas A. Edison's favorite tenor. Jeff has won a local reputation as a singer and made a number of recordings. His mother, Mrs. Ruth Kerekes, was Van Brunt's youngest daughter.

- and Columbia. In the reprint of a 1907 Columbia poster which accompanies this article he is the man on the extreme right of the seventh row. The poster, possibly the only one of its kind in existence, was sent to me more than 30 years ago by the late Walter Forbush, for many years a Columbia recording expert. Many of the men and women shown on it also made records for Edison, Victor, Zonophone, Leeds, and most of the other companies of more than 60 years ago.
- 770 I Want Everyone to Love Me. Anna Chandler, comedienne, and P. Qt.
- 775 Any Girl Looks Good in Summer. Walter Van Brunt, with P. Qt. and Elizabeth Spencer.
- 780 Down in Sunshine Valley. Manuel Romain, tenor, with Bieling, Van Brunt, Porter, and Hooley. This looks like one of the times Walter filled in for Murray. Van Brunt (also known as Walter Scanlan) is still living, at 77, in an Ohio convalescent home. He was only 19 when this record was made.
- 784 When I'm Alone I'm Lonesome. Chandler and P. Qt.
- 787 Let's Make Love Among the Roses. Clough and P. Qt.
- 788 The Vacant Chair. Elizabeth Spencer, Mary Jordan, Anthony, and Harrison.
- 792 I Like the Hat, I Like the Dress, and I Like the Girl That's In It. Edward M. Favor and P. Qt.
- 802 Light Up Your Face With a Smile. Van Brunt and P. Qt.
- 810 Under Southern Skies. Romain and P. Qt.
- 823 Dream Faces. Elizabeth Spencer, with Van Brunt, Anthony, Harrison, and Hooley.
- 825 The Old Town is Looking Mighty Good Tonight. Van Brunt, P. Qt. and Elizabeth Spencer.
- 831 The Owl in the Old Oak Tree. "That Girl Quartet" — Harriet Keyes and Allie Thomas, sopranos, and Presis Thompson, and Helen Summers, contraltos.
- 843 Pinafore Airs Number 3. Elizabeth Spencer, Jordan, Anthony, Van Brunt, Harrison, and Hooley. Three other "Pinafore" medleys were made, with presumably about the same group.
- 876 Music Caressing of Violins. Elizabeth Spencer and Anthony, assisted by Mary Jordan.
- 925 Inflammatus from "Stabat Mater."

Agnes Kimball, with Elizabeth Spencer, Nevada Van Der Veer, Reed Miller, and Frank Croxton.

- 929 Twenty-third Psalm and Lord's Prayer. Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Choir — Mary Hissam De Moss, soprano; Cornelia Marvin, contralto; Edward Strong, tenor, and Frederic L. Martin, bass.
- 941 Pussy's in the Well. Manhattan Ladies' Quartet — Irene Cummings and Mabel Meade Davis, sopranos, and Annie Laurie McCorkle and Anna Winkoop, contraltos.
- 956 By the Light of the Jungle Moon. Van Brunt, with Elizabeth Spencer, Elsie Baker, Anthony, and Croxton.
- 998 When I was 21 and You were Sweet 16. Joseph A. Phillips, with Elizabeth Spencer and P. Qt.
- 1023 They Gotta Quit Kickin' My Dawg Around. Byron G. Harlan and P. Qt.
- 1058 O Gladsome Light and Lord's Prayer. Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Choir. Same artists as for 929.

So there they are. I wish I could give the names of the chorus singers in many other records for which this information was omitted in the lists.

One thing that annoys me is the knowledge that I have seen a listing of an Edison cylinder — an Amberol, I think, in which Bert Fitzgibbons, the old-time vaudeville comedian and song writer, was a member of the chorus, but while doing research for this article I have been unable to find what it was. If I come across the information later, I'll add it as a post-script.

(The End)

— O —

### CHIP JENKINS DIES

I am sure that pet lovers who saw the picture of "Chip," beloved cat of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va., in the November, 1968, *HOBBIES*, will join me in grief at his death last March 5 after more than a month's illness. Chip was an ardent admirer of Prof. Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D., and the picture showed him with a banner reading "Plum Walsh for President." (Plum, who lisps, always referred to him as "Tip Denkins.") Chip was a cat of unusually sweet personality and high intelligence, and, although he lived only a little more than a year, he never will be forgotten and his memory always will be cherished by those who knew and loved him. —J.W.

— O —

### ALLEN KOENIGSBERG'S EXCELLENT REPRINTS

Allen Koenigsberg of 1532 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230, is continuing to issue reprints of phonograph catalogs and other rarities related to recorded music that are the finest I ever have seen.

To me the best of a fine lot is the beautiful copy of the 1909 Babson Brothers catalog of Edison cylinder machines. It contains 16 9- by 11-inch pages and the color work is so fine it would be virtually impossible to detect the copy from an original in new condition.

The catalog is amusing because the compiler of the catalog seems to have made many misstatements, such as its assertion that Edison wax 2-minute cylinders would "last forever," and its praise of Edison pipe

(Turn to page 98K)



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# A Meeting with Tiny Tim

By JIM WALSH

PART I

### I. A Real Dickens Character

It's strange how things work out, sometimes.

During all my life, from the time I reached the age of nine, Charles Dickens has been my favorite author. I suppose I must have read each of his books at least three dozen times. But never, while this reading was going on, did it occur to me that some day I would meet a namesake of one of Dickens' most famous characters, "Tiny Tim," and come to regard him as a dear friend.

Actually, when I first learned of the present-day singing star, "Tiny Tim" through the pages of *Time* and *Newsweek*, nothing would have surprised me more than to be told that within little more than a year I would go to Chicago especially to meet him and talk about our favorite Pioneer Recording Artists.

I had no idea Tim (from here on I'll cease to enclose his assumed name in quotation marks) had ever heard of me, much less that he had been for many years an enthusiastic reader of my HOBBIES articles and that he attributed much of the inspiration of his night club and television act to ideas he derived from my writings.

This article will be devoted primarily to an account of my meeting with Tiny Tim, so I shall not rehash in detail information that already has been published about him from one end of the land to the other.

Most of Tim's admirers know his real name is Herbert Khaury; that he was born and grew up in a New York tenement area; that he is of Lebanese descent on his father's side and Polish-Jewish on his mother's, and that, before adopting his present stage name, he appeared, without much success, under the pseudonyms of "Texarkanna Tex," "Emmett Swink," "Vernon Castle," "Darry Dover," and "Judas K. Foxglove."

He, of course, has undergone a great deal of ridicule from critics because of his long hair, his singing in a falsetto voice, his prominent nose, his eccentric costumes, and his carrying a ukelele in a shopping bag.

I didn't discuss with him anything having to do with his financial affairs, but the Chicago newspapers have said that last year was the first in which he made more than \$50 a week. According to these papers, he earned more than half a million dol-

lars in 1968, and was said to be receiving \$25,000 a week for a two-week engagement at the Sherman House's College Inn, besides having free use of a hotel suite.

So it seems that, after years of being kicked around and thrown out of night clubs and other places where he sought engagements, Tim's genuine talent is paying off at last and his feet are planted firmly on the road to success.

### II. A Meeting By Telephone

That will suffice for background. My first "contact" with Tiny Tim came, not when I met him in Chicago,

but one morning in the autumn of 1968 when I found a telegram in my post office box. It asked me to call him by telephone, collect, at his Hollywood address and give him information about the famous tenor, Byron G. Harlan, whose records were huge sellers from 1899 through 1924.

Swallowing my initial surprise at the entertainer's wanting to talk with me, I put in the call and soon was speaking with Tim. My first impression was that his natural speaking voice is much deeper than it sounds on TV.

My second was that he was one of



CONGENIAL TRIO. "Tiny Tim" and his guests obviously were having a good time when this picture was taken May 24 in his suite in the Sherman House, Chicago. Besides Tim, shown strumming his ukulele, the cast of characters includes Jim Walsh, author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," and Stephanie Muller, Queen of the Chicago Antiques Exposition, which was sponsored by HOBBIES in the Conrad Hilton Hotel.

the most courteous persons with whom I ever had conversed. He called me "Mr. Walsh" throughout our talk of more than an hour, although he would have been perfectly welcome to refer to me as "Jim," just as I spoke to him familiarly as "Tim." And the sincerity and gratitude with which he received the information I gave him about Harlan was unmistakable.

Occasionally, when some of the things I said astonished him he exclaimed "Wow!" or "Bro-ther!" These exclamations he used dozens of times when we had our informal discussion session in Chicago.

Tim explained he was searching for the February and March, 1943, issues of HOBBIES as they contained a biographical sketch I had written of Harlan. Tim later obtained them through HOBBIES' help. He also wanted to find Harlan's 1899 Edison brown-wax cylinder of a "Gay Nineties" tear-jerking song, "Please, Mr. Conductor, Don't Put Me Off the Train."

I told Tim I used to own a copy of the record (a copy of which he has since acquired) but I hadn't been able to find it in recent years and had no idea what had happened to it. But, I said, I well could recall Harlan's high-pitched spoken announcement at the beginning: "'Please, Mistah Con-duc-tah, Don't Put Me Off the Train!' Sung by Byron G. Harlan. Edison Rec-CORD!"

It seemed to astonish Tim when I said Harlan had been known much better as a comedian who specialized in "rube" and blackfaced comedy parts than as a ballad singer.

My new-found friend in Hollywood also mentioned his great admiration for Harlan's 1907 Victor record of "School Days" and sang the song by long distance for me in his conception of the old-time tenor's voice.

Tiny Tim said whenever he heard the Harlan record it affected him so deeply he felt like crying, "because Mr. Harlan sounds so much like an elderly man dreaming over things that had happened to him when he was a child."

My guess is that if Tiny Tim were to prepare a list of his 10 favorite records "School Days" would be well up toward the top.

Besides giving Tim information by phone I also prepared a four- or five-page single-spaced manuscript about Harlan. This I sent to Tim with the information that it was more accurate than my 1943 HOBBIES articles, which I have found need revision in several respects.

A few months after our telephone visit I learned that Tiny Tim was to fill an engagement at College Inn in May, and that he wished very much I could visit Chicago during that time and we could have a "get-together."

Then came the discovery that I needed surgery. The night after I entered the Community Hospital of

Roanoke Valley for an operation I received a telegram from him urging me to "hurry up and get well."

There didn't seem much hope for a few weeks after I had the operation that I should be able to travel any time soon, but my surgeon finally gave permission on condition that I go by plane, to avoid any possibly harmful bumping or jolting.

I hated to leave my cats, but my good neighbor, "Pete" Sink, agreed to feed Plum, Nipper, and Lucky Jim during my absence. And I not only wished to meet Tim but also to see the folks at HOBBIES for the first time since paying them a visit in 1951.

So it came about that on the afternoon of Friday, May 23, I boarded a Piedmont Airlines plane in Roanoke for Louisville, and at Louisville transferred to a Chicago-bound Eastern plane.

### III. I Meet Tiny Tim

My visit to Tiny Tim at his Sherman House suite took place the following Saturday afternoon. Our appointment was for 4 o'clock, but before that I went to the HOBBIES offices and acquired a few gifts to be presented to Tim in behalf of Pearl Ann Reeder, the editor, and myself. These included perhaps two dozen old records; a miniature bust of Charles Dickens, who originated the name, "Tiny Tim," and a pair of miniature antique castanets, which Miss Reeder and I thought he might be able to use in his act.

I was accompanied by a teen-age boy, Rickie Bostrom, whose duty was to hold a heavy old Columbia Graphophone, shown in some of the accompanying photographs. It had been borrowed from Svoboda's Nickelodeon, Chicago Heights, Ill., for "local color" in the pictures that were to be taken.

Because of my operation, I was unable to give Rickie any help in transporting the heavy objects, and he obviously was relieved when he finally was able to stop a cab. So we began our ride to the Sherman House.

After arriving at the hotel a doorman told us no one was allowed to go to Tiny Tim's suite without an appointment. We replied we had one, but were first to wait in the lobby and meet Al Milton, the HOBBIES publicity representative, who would introduce us to Mark Hammerman, Tim's manager.

The tired youth and I stood around a few minutes in company with a photographer engaged for the occasion, before Mr. Milton, who is an efficient, fast worker with glossy black hair, arrived in company with the blonde and beautiful Miss Stephanie Muller. Stephanie was queen of the Chicago Antiques Exposition & Hobby Fair, a twice-yearly event, sponsored by HOBBIES, which was just getting under way, and Mr. Milton had thought it would interest the public to see her with Tim and me.

At 4 o'clock Mark Hammerman appeared and chaperoned the "delegation" up to Tiny Tim's suite, which, I believe, was on the 20th floor. Al



A TALK ABOUT PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS. "Tiny Tim" and Jim Walsh discussed the recordings of their favorite early recording artists and took turns singing old time songs. The Columbia Graphophone in the center goes back to about 1906. It was borrowed for the occasion from Svoboda's Nickelodeon, Chicago Heights, Ill. In the lower foreground is a copy of Tim's second long-playing record.



A PRIVATE RECITAL. Judging by Jim Walsh's expression which seems to indicate astonishment, "Tiny Tim" may have been taking a particularly high note as this picture was snapped. The popular entertainer rendered many numbers from his repertoire during the more than three hours he and Jim spent together.

Milton rushed about, getting the furniture and the old phonograph arranged for the best picture-taking effects, and then Tim was summoned.

Within a few minutes we were in the presence of the face and figure that have been made familiar by television, newspaper, and magazine stories, as well as by personal appearances. I had the usual experience of persons undertaking to interview Tim. At first he seemed a little shy, even timid, but he soon realized I had no wish to be funny at his expense. Instead, I simply wanted to talk with him as a friend about our common interests, and he relaxed and was at ease.

It didn't take long to discover that Tiny Tim is better looking in person than in pictures. True, he has the long hair flying in different directions, but his complexion has an attractive delicacy, and his hazel eyes

are bright and intelligent. As his normal self, he is direct and manly.

Working rapidly, Mr. Milton soon had three photographs taken. One showed Tiny, Stephanie, and me. The other two featured Tim and me, without Stephanie. While the picture-making was in progress, the public relations man asked Tim if he knew anything about Olive Palmer and Paul Oliver, a popular radio singing team of the late 1920s and early 1930s, who were sponsored by the Palmolive Soap Company.

Tim didn't, but I explained that Olive Palmer was really Virginia Rea and Paul Oliver was Frank Munn, two well-known recording artists. This came as a surprise to Tim and he exclaimed "Wow!"

As he had his pictures, Al Milton went off accompanied by Stephanie, the photographer, and the boy, "Graphophone-carrying" Rickie. So,

Tim and I were left together. I had read that whenever Tiny Tim gave an interview he was surrounded by managers and press agents who hovered over him, directed the trend of the conversation and sought to keep him from doing anything that would impair his public "image" which had been so carefully built up.

This wasn't true when I talked with him, Mr. Hammerman said, "Tim's been looking forward a long time to meeting you, Mr. Walsh, and I know you two have lots of things to discuss together, so I'll just leave you to yourselves." Then he retired to his room nearby.

#### IV. What We Talked About

From that time on the conversation was, to use a cliché, "fast and furious." I had come with the intention of taking notes, but we talked so animatedly there simply wasn't a chance to use a pen.

After Tim had expressed his delight with the gifts I had brought and had said he was going to try to get "some of the Gold Diggers" (a troupe of attractive, wholesome-looking girls who appeared as part of his stage show) to teach him how to play the castanets, I asked him how he happened to adopt "Tiny Tim" as a stage name.

He told me that in 1963 his manager was a man named George King, "who was a fan of Charles Dickens. George King decided to give me the name of Tiny Tim, and it caught on."

Concerning his long hair, Tim said frankly it was a "gimmick" he adopted in 1954 when he was a struggling young singer trying to find a way to make himself distinctive so he would stand out among competing performers. The long hair had the desired effect, although it, of course, caused him frequently, in the beginning, to be jeered and hissed. Now, it had become a sort of trade-mark. He said he first began singing in a high falsetto voice in 1951.

Tim told me his first LP album, "God Bless Tiny Tim!" was a big success, with 200,000 copies being sold. His second LP, he said, was not doing so well because it had been undergoing competition from another album, "A Concert in Fairyland," which he sang several years ago under the name of Darryl Dover.

Tim laughed when I told him that a man whom I had met in the hospital had expressed the hope I would be able to go to Chicago "and meet Teeny Tim."

Then Tim soon had me laughing with his account of making a filmed television appearance with Bing Crosby, whom he admires greatly.

"Mr. Crosby," Tim said, "had two strong opinions. He didn't like men with long hair, so he was prejudiced against me to begin with, and he didn't like to work with people who had colds, for fear of taking the colds home to his children.

"Naturally, it had to happen that I began taking a cold a few days before the show was to be filmed." Tim said. "I tried desperately to shake it off, and called up a specialist

(Continued on page 42)



## A MEETING WITH TINY TIM

(Continued from page 39)

(they do everything by phone in California) and asked him for something to make me snap out of it. But it didn't work. The cold kept getting worse."

I have forgotten whether the performance had to be postponed because of Tim's cold, or whether he rallied his forces sufficiently to be able to appear on schedule, but I do remember his mentioning "the funny way Mr. Crosby looked at me and my long hair, and after I had sung my first number he yelled: 'Give this guy a box of Snickers!'"

Nobody, Tim went on, seemed to understand what that cryptic exclamation meant, but after he had sung a second number Crosby exclaimed: "Give this guy another box of Snickers!"

"But," Tim said brightly, "it ended fine. After the filming Mr. Crosby put his hand on my shoulder and told me I was all right and had done a good job. It made me very happy, to receive praise from such a great artist."

This, incidentally, is more evidence that persons who begin by being prejudiced against Tiny Tim and by calling him "a long-haired weirdo," discover, after getting to know him, that they like him very much, indeed.

The principal reason for this liking is Tim's obvious, absolute, and utter sincerity. He is not "putting on an act" when he tells how much he admires and loves the old-time recording artists, or when he expresses his belief that their spirits enter into him when he sings.

Another reason for the admiration that first-hand knowledge of Tim inspires is that he is so unmistakably an idealistic, clean-living man. He doesn't smoke. He doesn't drink. He doesn't swear. And in every way he sets a good example for the young people who love to hear him.

This, he accomplishes by being his natural self. Unlike the bearded Hippies, he has a fetish for keeping himself clean. And he is one of the gentlest of humans. Nothing could be farther from his nature than engaging in demonstrations and committing acts of violence.

He doesn't like to eat in public, and his fondness for such foods as pumpkin seeds mixed with honey may strike most of us as odd. But I have no doubt that if teen-age boys and girls must have a "show business" personality to idolize they can't do better than fasten their affections on Tiny Tim, instead of some of the performers whose lives are public scandals.

Tiny Tim is one of the few persons I have met about whose character I could find nothing to criticize.

—o—  
(To be Continued)

## Phonographs of Yesteryear

(SEE COVER)

The old hand-wound phonographs shown on this month's cover are part of the collection of Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va., author of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists." The phonographs are not for sale since they are to become the property eventually of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Top row, from left to right:

A Columbia Graphophone of about 1906, with an "extra long" mandrel for playing both the standard 2-minute wax cylinder and the 3-minute "B. C." type.

A Model 4 Victor Talking Machine, circa 1906, which cost \$50 with metal horn. A wooden horn, like that in the picture, cost \$15 more. This machine came equipped with an Exhibition sound box, but is shown with an attachment for playing Pathe' hill-and-dale sapphire ball discs.

This "Opera" model Edison cylinder phonograph was at first called the "Concert." It was introduced a few months after the 4-minute "Amberol" cylinders were brought out in the fall of 1908, and played only the 4-minute records. Like all other cylinder models with external horns, it

was discontinued late in 1912, and succeeded by the "hornless" Amberolas. Today the "Opera" is one of the most eagerly sought cylinder phonographs.

Bottom row, from left to right:

An Edison cylinder phonograph which played the huge 5-inch "Concert" cylinders that were introduced about the turn of the century. This model came equipped with a "Polyphone" attachment to use two large horns and two reproducers, but for the sake of clarity only one horn is shown in our picture.

A combination model Fireside phonograph introduced by Edison in 1909 for playing both 2- and 4-minute cylinders. This machine was equipped originally with a metal "Cygnets" horn which could be swung in any direction, but a wooden horn has been substituted here.

An Edison "Triumph" cylinder phonograph that played 2- and 4-minute cylinders and dated to about 1909. Some collectors consider the Triumph gave the best musical results of any external horn Edison cylinder phonograph, though others prefer the Opera.



A Number 8 table model Victrola first announced in August, 1911. It sold originally for \$40.

—From the collection of Jim Walsh  
—Photo by Glenn L. Robertson



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# A Meeting with Tiny Tim

By JIM WALSH

### PART II

#### I. Tim is Surprised

Last month, in describing my visit to Chicago and my meeting with Tiny Tim at the Sherman House, I mentioned his surprise when he learned that "Olive Palmer" and "Paul Oliver," a popular duet team of 40 years ago, really were Virginia Rea and Frank Munn — both now dead.

Tim was to receive other surprises in the course of our three and a half hour "gabfest." He asked me if I knew who James F. Harrison had been. I replied that the famous baritone's real name was Frederick J. Wheeler, and he made records both as Wheeler and Harrison.

I also said that his duet partner, "Harry Anthony," was really John Young; and that another tenor, Reed Miller, sang duets with Wheeler under the assumed name of "James Reed."

At all this information Tim exclaimed, "Wow!"

But his surprise seemed to reach its height when I told him that one of his great favorites, Charles Harrison, also recorded under the names of Hugh Donovan and Billy Burton. "But, Mr. Walsh," Tim protested, "are you sure of that? Hugh Donovan doesn't sound like Charles Harrison!"

I assured Tim they were, nevertheless, the same man, and I ventured a guess that if Donovan records didn't sound like Harrison they probably were played at the wrong speed.

For my part, I was surprised to find that Tim apparently was not acquainted with Arthur Collins' record of "The Preacher and the Bear." This in the South at least, was incomparably the biggest selling piece of recorded music between 1905 and 1920.

To give Tim an idea of its merits, although its words would have to be altered to make it acceptable to present-day integrated audiences, I made a stab at singing it. Since I was slightly hoarse, my rendition came out as a bronchiectic bull-frog baritone, but Tim praised it and said, "It sounds all right to me!"

Tim produced from the famous shopping bag in which he carries his ukulele, an electronic device that he termed a "Mickey Mantle megaphone," and sang several numbers through it. He said he believed its sonorous qualities helped him to achieve a greater resemblance in his

singing to the voices of the bygone recording artists.

One song I remember, was "On the Old Front Porch." This duet he has done often on television, in person, and on records, in the voices of Ada Jones and Billy Murray.

Several times Tim commented excitedly on my having told him I believed my old friend, Charles Harrison was still alive although I hadn't heard from him in several years, and that he was living in New Providence, N.J. I now have information, however, that Charlie no longer lives at New Providence, and I don't know his present address.

I asked Tim if he remembered the song on the other side of the Victor record of "On the Old Front Porch." It is "Ever Since You Told Me That You Loved Me (I'm a Nut)" and is sung by the inimitable Eddie Morton.

Tim replied it was one of the best numbers in his repertoire, and laughed heartily when I told him that, as a young man Eddie Morton was a Philadelphia policeman who lost his job because of sleeping on his beat. Eddie then went into vaudeville as a singing entertainer. I remarked that a few years ago Eddie Morton's son, Paul, was operating Morton's Restaurant in Wildwood, N.J., and I assumed he still was.

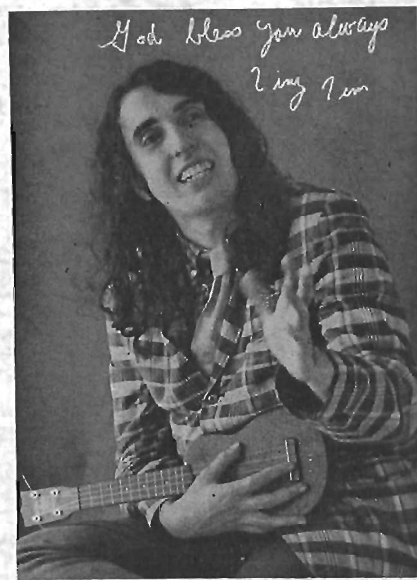
"I'm going to look him up the first time I go to Wildwood!" Tim exclaimed.

#### II. Tiny Tim's Favorite Songs and Artists

I didn't ask my long-haired friend for a list of his favorite songs and singers. But from some of his remarks I could make a pretty fair stab, I think, at guessing them.

Surely, among the songs, "Tiptoe Through the Tulips," which he uses in virtually every performance, usually to end the act, would rank at or near the top. The songs identified with Byron Harlan, "Please, Mr. Conductor," and "School Days," would certainly be up there. Tim also spoke enthusiastically of Charles Harrison's "Roses of Picardy." And, of course, "On the Old Front Porch" is one of the top-liners.

Still another Harlan recording for which Tim expressed great enthusiasm is a Columbia of "Bunker Hill," a patriotic song written in 1905 by the late Albert Von Tilzer. Tim sang



To my dear friend  
Mr. Jim Walsh  
I thank you for all  
the help  
you have given  
me with your  
knowledge of  
old time records and  
artists - You're the  
best!  
Tiny Tim  
5244

AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO—Shown here are both sides of an autographed photo "Tiny Tim" presented to Jim Walsh. The message written on the back in Tim's left-handed scrawl is rather difficult to read, but it refers to "my dear friend, Mr. Walsh," thanks Jim for the information he has provided concerning pioneer recording artists, and says, "You are the best!"

it for me in Harlan's voice and said he believed it could be made into a big hit today. I think he is using, or will use it, in some of his performances.

Yet another patriotic song, "America, I Love You," which he sang through the "Mickey Mantle megaphone," recently has been admitted to the list of Tim's favorites. He used this 1916 flag-waving number the next night in his stage act, and said his interpretation was based on a record by Henry Burr and the Peerless Quartet. I have been wondering since what record that could have been.

The Victor disc was by the American Quartet, and Billy Murray sang the lead ("You'll Be There," by the Peerless Quartet, is on the other side); the Columbia was by Sam Ash, a tenor whom Tim admires highly; and Edison made only a band version of it. Those were about the only record companies that mattered in 1916, aside from Pathe.

My Pathe catalogs are temporarily unavailable, and I can't remember whether there was a sapphire ball record of "America, I Love You." The Indestructible Company made a cylinder of it by Royal Dadrin, but Indestructibles had a very small sale. I can't recall any record of the composition by Burr and the Peerless Quartet.

Another favorite of Tiny Tim's is "Along Came Ruth," which Arthur Fields sang for both Victor and Columbia in 1914. Tim remarked that in one of them Fields had a "cackle" or a "crackle" (I'm not sure which word he used) in his voice, and said he preferred it to the other.

Tim also is extremely fond of Sam Ash's singing, "I Found a Rose in the Devil's Garden," and an Irving Kaufman interpretation of "Peg O' My Heart." Probably his list of favorites is modified almost from day to day.

Among the artists, Kaufman, Harlan, Charles Harrison, and Burr seem to rank at the very top with Tim. Perhaps Fields also comes into the top favorite category, and so may Nick Lucas, whose singing of "Tiptoe Through the Tulips" suggested Tim's own interpretation. He also is fond of Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Rudy Vallee, Bing Crosby, John McCormack, Al Jolson, the still living "Wee Willie" Robyn (pronounced "Roe-bine"), Cliff Edwards ("Ukulele Ike"), and a long list of others.

About the only thing that cast a cloud over our fan-fest was my remark, perhaps too emphatic, that I "couldn't stand" a couple of singers who hardly would be counted among the *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists*.

It happened they were high on Tim's "like list," and his face had a look of distress as he exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Walsh! Why don't you like them?"

I gave my reasons, but I don't think Tim found them convincing.

Someone in Chicago had sold Tim some Edison Diamond Discs, and he



GOOD ADVICE. — Barbara (Bobby) Nelson, pretty waitress at the Drum and Fife Restaurant, Vinton, Va., was one of the happy recipients of an autographed photo of Tiny Tim. He gave her timely advice to "keep serving that good food."

lamented not having an Edison instrument on which to play them. The labels had peeled off of some of the records, but I was able, by reading the numbers cut into the surface, to identify several.

One coupled Billy Murray singing a song with one of the shortest titles in the English language, "O!" with Maurice Burkhart's rendition of a title that Tim found amusing, "Who Ate Napoleons With Josephine When Bonaparte Was Away?" I sang as much of the rapid-fire "O!" as I could recall, and Tim said he thought it would make a good number for his act.

His biggest laugh among the Edisons occurred when I identified one record without a label as the favorite basso profundo solo, "When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings Ding Dong," rendered by an obscure, deep-voiced gentleman named Weltzin B. Blix, who, to my knowledge, never made any other record. It was coupled with "Out Where the West Begins," by Glen Ellison. After laughing about Mr. Blix's distinctive name, Tim jumped up and called to his manager.

"Mr. Hammerman," he exclaimed, "I've got a great idea! Before I come on tonight have somebody come out and announce that Tiny Tim is late, but to open the show the great bass singer, Mr. Weltzin B. Blix, will oblige with 'When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings Ding Dong'! Then I'll appear and sing a little of it!"

Hammerman laughed heartily and said, "Maybe we could work out something like that."

As we shall see, Mr. Blix was mentioned at the ensuing Sunday night performance.

Tim told me he was not trying to acquire a huge collection of old records. "My principal interest," he said,

"is to use them to learn old songs that appeal to me and that I can sing in my act. But traveling as I do I can't transport a lot of records."

Tim and I had the pleasure of discovering we both have been lifelong baseball enthusiasts (he also is a hockey fan), and I was to prove my devotion to the "national pastime" the next day by almost freezing while I watched the Boston Red Sox narrowly defeat the Chicago White Sox.

Tim's favorite team always has been the Brooklyn (now Los Angeles) Dodgers. My favorites, which have included the White Sox, the Red Sox, the New York Yankees, and the Detroit Tigers, always have been in the American League. Now, however, I have added the Chicago Cubs.

It was beginning to grow late, and I suspected Mr. Hammerman was worrying for fear, if we kept talking, Tim would be late for his performance. But several of my friends had asked me to get them autographed photos of the singing star, and I asked him if he would write a message for those admirers on pictures of himself. He graciously agreed, and managed to produce eight photos — just enough to take care of the requests.

In autographing the cards in his hard-to-read, left-handed style, Tiny Tim proved himself a man of quick intelligence. I gave him a few words of information about each recipient, and without hesitation he dashed off personal messages.

One photo went to my HOBBIES colleague, Aida Favia-Artsay, with whom I talked by long distance for the first time that morning, and who had amazed me by guessing my identity as soon as I had said two words: "Hello, Aida!" She laughingly insisted that she had extra-sensory perception, and she must have a touch of it to visualize me making a phone call from Chicago when she had been thinking I was still in a Virginia hospital.

Aida told me she greatly enjoyed Tim's television performances, especially his male-and-female duet of "On the Old Front Porch."

He wrote her a greeting saying how much he enjoyed her HOBBIES articles about operatic stars.

Among the other messages, Barbara (Bobby) Nelson, a pretty waitress at the Drum and Fife Restaurant in Vinton, Va., where I live, was admonished to "keep serving that good food." Beth Ellen Holdren, 8, daughter of Vinton's postmaster, Francis A. Holdren, received an epistolary pat on the head.

So did Bridget Penticoff, 10, daughter of Mrs. Penticoff, an elevator operator in the HOBBIES building. Bridget was urged to "keep smiling that pretty smile." Her mother told me later that after Bridget received the picture she went to bed with it beneath her pillow.

Mrs. Lucie Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va., was so pleased at receiving an autographed photo that she gave the



"SHE NEARLY HAD A FIT"—Beth Ellen Holdren, 8, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Francis A. Holdren of Vinton, Va., was surprised happily when she received an autographed photo of Tiny Tim. Her father, who is Vinton postmaster, says: "She nearly had a fit, and went all over the neighborhood, showing the picture to everybody she could find."

latest kitten to be added to her cat family the name of "Tiny Tim."

And I especially was flattered by the inscription (shown with this article) on the photo Tim gave me.

When I had collected the eight signed cards — others went to Kathy Crumley, a friend of Mrs. Jenkins', and Mike Wingfield, a clerk in a Vinton supermarket — I knew that they would bring happiness to several grown-ups, teen-agers, and children alike.

As he autographed, Tim told me he had been interviewed by a *Playboy* writer a few days before, and had asked that the forthcoming article mention the debt he felt he owed me for the information I had provided about old-time recording artists. I imagine the interview will be published before many months.

The following Sunday afternoon, Tim and Mr. Hammerman were among the guests at the home of *Playboy's* publisher, Hugh Hefner.

When I finally compelled myself to get up and start for the elevator, Tim went with me all the way, telling me that our meeting had been "one of the greatest events" of his life, and that he earnestly hoped we could get together again. He assured me that if ever he found himself in the neighborhood of Vinton he was going to come to see me and listen to some of my old records.

I, too, said "goodbye" with the feeling that the afternoon had been one of the most memorable of my life.

### III. Tiny Tim's Night Club Act

On the Sunday evening following that never-to-be-forgotten meeting,

Miss Reeder, editor and publisher of HOBBIES, and I were guests of Tiny Tim and his manager at Tim's performance in the Sherman House's College Inn. The place, like nearly all night clubs, was lighted dimly and full of smoke, and seemed in those respects rather unsuited to Tim's act.

As the star attraction, Tim, of course, closed the show instead of opening it. He was preceded by Peter Palmer's Orchestra, which also assisted him in several of his numbers, and by the Gold Diggers, a group of attractive girls who often appear as a singing line on the Dean Martin TV show.

When my friend first appeared, wearing his eccentric costume and carrying a shopping bag, there were a few uncertain giggles from the audience. But after he sang two or three numbers he won his hearers completely, and, as I afterwards remarked to Miss Reeder: "He held his audience in the palm of his hand."

There was soon no doubt about the sincerity and enthusiasm of his reception. And there has been no question about the warm welcome he since has been receiving in appearances throughout the country.

Tim did a great deal of informal talking to his audience and used the "Mickey Mantle megaphone" in several numbers. Sometimes he played his accompaniment on the ukulele; at others he was reinforced by the orchestra. He sang through the megaphone in warbling "Chicago, That Toddling Town," which brought down the house.

Without the amplifying device he gave two Ada Jones and Billy Murray duets, "On the Old Front Porch," and "I'm Glad I'm a Boy; I'm Glad I'm a Girl." He also showed his versatility by singing in the voices of Jeannette Macdonald and Nelson Eddy, and in doing a Maurice Chevalier turn with "Living in the Sunlight, Loving in the Moonlight."

With the aid of a mirror, into which he gazed with mock infatuation for his features, he provided a laughable version of "I Love Me," a comic song recorded in 1923 by Murray and



SINGER'S NAMESAKE — "Tiny Tim," the kitten Mrs. Lucie Jenkins named for the famous singer after he sent her an autographed photo. With such a name, it should be obvious that "Tiny Tim" is a long-haired cat!



GRATEFUL TEACHER—Mrs. Lucie Jenkins, a school teacher from Rose Hill, Va., showed her appreciation of receiving an autographed photo from the long-haired singer by giving the name "Tiny Tim" to the latest kitten member of her feline family.

several other comedians. For the tots there were such numbers as "On the Good Ship Lollipop," and "Animal Crackers in My Soup." (The audience included a fair sized number of children who had been brought by their parents to see and hear their idol.)

"America, I Love You" was one of his most effective numbers. "If You Talk in Your Sleep Don't mention My Name," a comic song Billy Murray made popular on a Victor record in 1912, was one of Tim's funniest. Another was "Great Balls of Fire," in which he tore off his tie and rolled on the floor, in a wild burlesque of early rock music.

But it is worth noting that in Tiny Tim's entire production there was not an off-color line; not a single risqué "gag" — a fact that should make it memorable in night club history. The entire production was completely clean.

"Tiptoe Through the Tulips," of course, concluded the program. Sitting near me was a woman whose little boy couldn't have been more than five or six. He sat in her lap throughout the evening and remained quiet until Tim began the "Tulip" song.

Then the boy jumped down and walked forward as close to the stage as he could get. There he rapturously drank in every note. His mother told me he had been waiting expectantly for that song the entire evening.

Before Tim left the stage, he said he wished to express his thanks to several persons, including the orchestra members who had ably assisted him and a number of men concerned with the production of his show. He then went on, in words to the following effect:

"I especially should like to thank



two wonderful people who are my guests tonight. One is Mr. Jim Walsh, who has come all the way from Virginia to see me. He is the world's greatest authority on old popular records and old-time artists.

"When people ask me where I obtained all my information about such things I tell them I wasn't around when the old records were being made, and that I learned what I know from the hundreds of hours I spent in the New York Public Library and other places reading Professor Walsh's articles in HOBBIES Magazine. Those articles were largely responsible for developing my act. Will Professor Walsh please stand up, so we can turn the spotlight on him?"

(Tim called me "Professor Walsh" several times. He evidently confused me with my university-educated cat, Professor Plum Duff Walsh, who is the only member of my family with the right to sport a Ph.D. title.)

I stood, and said, as the spotlight searched me out:

"I'm here, Tim, and thank you very much. But I want to ask you one thing — did you bring the great bass singer, Mr. Weltzin B. Blix, with you tonight, or did he fail to show up?"

Laughingly, Tim quickly arose to the occasion by telling the audience he had bought some old Edison records which he hadn't been able to play. I had sung to him the songs on some of them, he said, and had told him that one was a rendition of "When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings Ding Dong" by the gifted but mysterious Mr. Blix.

"He made only one record," Tim exclaimed gleefully, "and I've got it!"

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See articles about Edna White in Jim Walsh's Dept., May, June, July, 1966. my07

Tim then introduced "... the other one of my wonderful guests, Pearl Ann Reeder, Editor of my favorite magazine, HOBBIES." And Miss Reeder unassumingly took a bow.

I still was standing, so I asked Tim if I might sneak in a "commercial." "I'm going to write an article about our meeting," I said, "for the September HOBBIES, and I hope some of the audience will buy it and help us to sell a few more copies."

Tim replied he'd be looking forward to this article, which is having to appear in two installments instead of the one I planned. Then Tim closed his act with the "Tiptoe" song.

Tiny Tim had worked so hard I should not have been surprised, when I dropped in, with Miss Reeder, at his dressing room, to find him in a state of collapse, but he was in full command of himself. In the dressing room we met a man who introduced (Continued on page 98)

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Phones: 918—CA 5-1390 or CA 5-0638

Dear HOBBIES Family:

"Into each life some rain must fall . . ." BUT THAT SHOULDN'T NECESSARILY MEAN A "DAILY GULLY WASHING DELUGE!" Which is just about what I have had since my last big Doll ad in the March issue of HOBBIES. And for this reason, I haven't been able to get an ad in since. Even now, I don't have time, space, or money to "visit" with you as I really like to do, and this peeves me more than "somewhat" for, as most of you know by now, I do love to talk! Thought you might like to know, however, that most of my troubles have been due to the fact that I have been remodeling a little grocery store and a five-room house just across the street from my home, to be a "Country Store" Annex and a DOLL HOUSE AND MUSEUM in addition to my present place of business it is now almost complete. And I soon plan to write you a full account of the many experiences involved therein. You won't BELIEVE IT!

But for now, I must just say, I've missed you, and am very happy to be back. Now I must get rid of gobs of stuff to make room for those 1500 dolls. So, how about a little help?

Am listing various and sundry items, hit or miss, just looking around my place from ONE SPOT, and calling them as I see 'em.

This ad will be continued for the next 3 or four months, so don't miss a word. If you don't see what you want, write me. I probably have it! Better yet, come find it yourself—cheaper that way. No postage etc. And now, for starters, I offer the following:

## ADVERTISING ITEMS:

COCA COLA: a. Hanging wall clock, electric, from grocery store, enameled sheet iron. "Drink Coca Cola" emblem in center, 18" dia. works. \$35. b. Rect. tin tray, pretty girl drinking from coke bottle, excellent paint \$55. c. Hanging outside thermometer: Shaped like Coke bottle, painted tin, dated 1924, \$15. d. Another not so old, but nice, undated 17" L, 5" widest part, \$7.50. e. Still another gold colored metal approx. 6" L, 3" W. \$3. f. Coke glasses, clear with white enameled Coke emb. 5c size. (remember?) When have you seen a Coke glass? 6 for \$5.

## BEER:

a. Ash tray, cream colored china, red "Coors" \$3 p.p. Miniature amber beer bottles "Falstaff" (salt & pepper shakers) \$1.50 each, p.p. Miniature yellow CHINA beer bottle salt shaker, cork bottom. Red "Coors" \$5. Round Tin tray, good paint, Falstaff \$3.50. (no picture).

## AUTOMOBILE ITEMS:

a. Wrought iron extending fender luggage rack \$25. b. Ancient straight WINDSHIELD frame (iron) and with glass intact but cracked across one corner, photo available, \$50 (don't know exact date but could be early as 1912 maybe earlier. c. Orange and white slag gearshift knob \$8.50. d. Book: Dykes Automobile & Gasoline Engine Encyclopedia. 20th edition, approx. 1500 pp. "The Elementary Principles, Construction, Operation and Repair of Automobiles Gasoline Engines, & Automobile Electric Systems: including Trucks, Tractors, Motor Coaches, Automotive Diesel Engines, Aircraft Engines & Motorcycles. (the very thing in the world included in this huge volume. Pictures, sketches, working drawings. Old fire engines, locomotives, etc. Beginning with 1910 and continuing through 1943 or '45. Cover stained but ALL THERE, \$50.

## BOTTLES:

Clear glass round qt. milk bottles, \$3.50. Cl. gl. round pt. (cream) bottle, \$3.50. Cl. gl. 1/2-pt. cream bottle \$1. Whiskey, Amber "Four Roses" pt. embossed roses etc. \$5. Clear gl. fifth, "Hayner" dated, \$8.50. Cobalt blue violin flask, tabs, \$6.50. Deep emerald green violin flask (no tabs) blown BUBBLY GLASS with embossed music staff and notes on front, \$18. Amber "Mrs. Butterworth, large, \$5, same, small, \$3.50. Cl. glass clown, bottle bank, slotted top, (Grapette) Camden Ark. 1933, \$5. Avon Pony Post Decanter (tall) \$12.50. Cl. glass McGreagor Horse head \$5. Cl. gl. "Haig & Haig" pinch bottle, white enamel, \$6. Miniature perfume bottle, figural "ROSE O'Neill Kewpie," no top \$20.

## BANKS:

Tin "Happy Days" Barrell (Chain) \$12. White China Standing Pin with Oklahoma State profile on tummy, \$10. Cast iron elephant with howdah, silver paint, \$10. Gold pirate sitting on chest, metal, \$12. Bronzed metal saddle & cowboy boots \$12. Bronzed metal Stage Coach \$12. HUGE CHALKWARE COCKER SPANIEL DOG, black with beautiful brown GLASS EYES, \$20. Huge Chalkware TURKEY, natural colors, \$17.50. Huge Chalkware LAMB, white with cole slaw type wool, big blue eyes looking to side, small chip off one foot, no harm, easily fixed, \$15.

## DOLLS &amp; TOYS:

17" blonde "Terri Lee" orig. clothes, \$18.50. Rare COLORED 17" "JERRI LEE", face retouched, nude, \$37.50. 13" "Betsy McCall" nude, \$15. 15" "Linda Williams" original clothes, \$20. 19" Cissy, Madame Alexander orig. organdie party dress and shoes etc. \$30. 8" Cissette, Mdm. Alex. nude, \$10. Story Book "Muffie" orig. clothes \$8.50. Vogue "Ginny" orig. clothes, \$8.50. Vogue "Ginnette" in diaper, \$6.50. Colored "Amosandra" shows some wear, dressed, \$10. "Gerber Baby" \$17.50. "Chatty Cathy" orig. clothes \$15. "Chatty Baby" orig. clothes \$12.50. 15" comp. "Toni" orig. clothes \$20. "Toni" nude, \$15. Madame Alex. 8" "Wendy" orig. clothes, \$15. "Wendy" nude, \$12.50. "Sonja Heine" (face retouched) chip off one heel, as is \$25. Orig. McGuffy "Anna" Mm. Alex. 18" orig. clothes, face retouched but good, \$18. Orig. 15" "Ann Shirley" Effanbee, orig. clothes perfect, \$37.50. Orig. cloth "Alice in Wonderland" 1924 issue by Madame Alex. as pictured August HOBBIES, \$27.50. Orig. Mdm. Alex. "Alice in Wonderland" 1937 issue pictured same page, perfect but nude, \$37.50. 15" orig. "Scarlett O'Hara" 12" comp. 1937 issue Madame Alexander, all orig. clothes, but faded, very good cond \$35. Orig. label still intact. Scarce rare collector's doll. 17" bisque "Bonnie Babe" sgd Georgine Averill, dressed in real baby christening gown hat, booties, etc. The rarest of the rare, \$285. All bisque frozen Charlotte type, movable arms only 5" L. blonde molded hair, huge blue eyes to side, nude, \$10. (Japan) Toy Schoenhut GRAND PIANO. Mahogany finish case with American Sheraton style legs, excellent cond. with most of orig. label \$50. Cast iron HUBLEY FIRE TRUCK with heliometer driver ladder missing, otherwise all there, cast iron wheels etc, \$37.50. Painted tin COW, move tail and she "Moo's". Excellent paint, \$15. Real BABY SHOES, new but OLD, from old store stock, black Mary Jane type straps, all sizes, \$5 pr. Draw outline of your doll's foot for size. Postage paid on these. Toy wash board, tin panel, wood frame, old, \$7.50 p.p. Miniature solid walnut rolling pin, one-piece, turned handles, approx. 2" L. \$5. Old woven reed doll buggy with eisenglass windows on sides, (one cracked) movable hood, very good cond. \$25 crated.

## TOOTHPICKS:

Starch Blue & Maroon Slag (Marble glass) straight panels, very old, \$18.50. Clear gl. straight panels, very old, \$28.50. Clear gl. slide container sgd. \$25. Deep amber "Holly Band" pattern. (Like Holly Amber) but NO Opaque panels \$40. Maybe Chocolate amber(?) Blue & white slag footed urn, \$15. Cobalt blue glass hat (stippled) \$10. Vaseline Oaken Bucket with bail, large, toothpick or match, \$17.50. Cl. gl. handled barrel - stippled, \$6.50. Pr. of fine PORCELAIN toothpicks one with Revolutionary period costumed man on front (George Washington style) the other with befruffed wigged lady some style (Martha) on front. \$15 ea.

## CLEAR &amp; COLORED GLASS:

Almond Thumbprint flat saucer. Finest flint \$6.50. Ruby Thumbprint water tumbler, finest flint, \$17.50. GIANT SQUARE ASH-BURTON MUGS. Set of 6, extremely heavy brilliant glass with bluish tint, sham and kickup, faint signature in bases but can't make out, \$15 ea. Flute (Flint) goblet, \$20. Set of 6 Flute Flint HANDLED FOOTED tumblers, flaring sides, \$17.50 ea. Carnival "Tree of Life" saucer, \$5. Green "Tree of Life" large bowl with wide foldover rim, \$27.50. Green Tree of Life saucer, \$5. Vaseline "Tree of Life" saucer \$6.50. Clear "Tree of Life" plate, \$10 (have 2). Green "Tree of Life" Footed saucer or Master Salt \$7.50. Clear glass Diamond Sunburst plates (2) \$10 ea. PINK BALTIMORE PEAR LARGE BOWL. SANDWICH. STIPPLED. RARE.—\$65. STARCH BLUE OPAQUE FIERY OPALESCENT LARGE BOWL. SIGNED MCK. (McKee) \$50. Custard glass creamer, Blackberry band, signed McK. (McKee) \$17.50. Silver Deposit on cl. gl. open sugar and interior ribbed creamer, \$15 set. Mercury glass spooner or urn, footed, on low standard with gold lining \$25. Mercury gl. witches ball which exactly fits top of above and looks great, \$10. An extra ball identical same price. Fostoria "American" double shot whiskey glass, also makes fine toothpick or match holder, old, finest flint, sunburst base, \$8.50 ea. (have 4) "SANDWICH STAR" square pint decanter, ground neck, no stopper, FINEST FLINT rare find, perfect, \$75. Sandwich green "Cabbage leaf" creamer \$35. Miniature cobalt free blown cruet, \$17.50. Postage extra, stamp please. 5 day return privilege.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

himself as a lawyer from East Tennessee.

When I remarked that many years ago I lived in East Tennessee as a reporter and editorial writer for the *Johnson City Press*, he exclaimed:

"I knew your face was familiar! I'm Ernie Ballou from Bristol! My brother, Bill Ballou, was a Johnson City lawyer, and so was my father, W. W. Ballou! I used to see you there and I knew your face, although it's probably been 30 years since we've met!"

I remembered Mr. Ballou's brother and, especially, his father, very well indeed. With the latter, who was an elderly man when I knew him, I used to engage in many long street-corner literary discussions. I especially remember one heated argument we had concerning which great author had given the world the largest number of immortal comic characters, Shakespeare or Dickens? "W. W." declaimed strongly in favor of Shakespeare, but I spoke up with equal fervor for Dickens.

I forgot to mention in its right place that, before I left Tim's hotel suite, he gave me a copy of his new book, "Beautiful Thoughts," which consists mainly of philosophical utterances he has saved because they appeal to him, although there is also a poem of his own in praise of the film star, Elizabeth Taylor.

The book is inscribed: "To my friend, Mr. Jim Walsh, a pleasure to know you. Tiny Tim, 52469." That number is Tim's abbreviated method of writing "May 24, 1969."

The following Monday evening concluded Tiny Tim's engagement in Chicago. He since has been making the rounds of several cities, appearing in bookshops and autographing copies of "Beautiful Thoughts." But he is soon to return to Hollywood and appear in a movie called "Good Guys, Bad Guys," in which the star will be his favorite actor Robert Mitchum. Tim will sing the title tune for the show.

As I returned to Virginia, where I found all my cats well and radiantly happy to be reunited with me, I had a well defined feeling that Tiny Tim is no "flash in the pan," but that he is a truly talented, clean-living gentleman who deserves his success and is likely to go on being a stellar attraction for a long time to come.

Whatever may be in his future, I hope to meet him again and he always will have my best wishes in whatever he undertakes. "Show Business" would rank much higher in my regard if it had more unpretentious, sincere, clean-living performers like Tiny Tim.

(The End)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Ferdinand Himmelreich, "The Blind Pianist"

By JIM WALSH

#### I. A Mystery Solved

Last spring, when I was in Chicago, I went to the Public Library on North Michigan Avenue and found the answer to a question that had been puzzling me.

For some time I had been planning an article about Ferdinand Himmelreich, who was known during his lifetime as "The Blind Pianist." However, I had been baffled by the problem of how Himmelreich, who was said to have been blind since he was 5, could have studied with a number of eminent teachers and profited by their instruction.

It seemed impossible that the teachers could have taught him to read conventional music, yet how otherwise could they have helped him? I knew nothing of piano technique, but I wondered if he merely had memorized the music as his instructors played it, or whether they had used a system of "translating" ordinary music into something like Braille. Even if they had, Himmelreich obviously could not have "read" such music while his fingers were traversing the keyboard. So, I was left wondering.

The mystery was solved, however, when I found, in the New York Times for Monday, December 13, 1937, an account of Himmelreich's death two days earlier and learned

he was not totally blind. Instead, he had sufficient vision to be able to see the keyboard with the aid of specially installed, powerful lights.

Also brought out in the death notice was something which most collectors of Himmelreich records probably do not know — that, aside from his recording work, he was known better as a pipe organ player than as a pianist.

Incidentally, I believe that Himmelreich is the first pianist about whom I have written a HOBBIES biographical sketch. But now I shall let the obituary notice tell its own story.

It was headed:

FERD. HIMMELREICH,  
NOTED ORGANIST, 57  
Played 9 Years at Wanamaker's  
Here and in Philadelphia —  
Nearly Blind Since Birth

Now I quote:

"LAUREL SPRINGS, N.J., Dec. 12.—Ferdinand Himmelreich, who became widely known as an organist in spite of almost total blindness since boyhood, died at his home here last night in his 58th year.

"Born in New York, he was blind in one eye and had only about 10 per cent vision in the other after the age of 5. Specially designed, powerful lights focused on the keyboard helped him to overcome his impairment of vision.

"For nine years Mr. Himmelreich played the organ at the John Wanamaker stores in New York and Philadelphia. He played also at the Strawbridge and Clothier and Gimbel stores, and for four seasons was at Haddon Hall, Atlantic City. Known also as a pianist and composer, he frequently had appeared with Rudy Vallee's Orchestra and had done considerable recording.

"Surviving are his widow; a son, Kenneth H., of Gloucester, and a stepson, Franklin K. Chandler of Laurel Springs."

#### II. Early Recordings

"The Blind Pianist" obviously was of German descent, at least on his father's side. One of my friends who knows German says his family name may be translated as "Kingdom of Heaven."

Even before Himmelreich began making talking machine records, his name appeared both as a composer and a player in catalogs of music rolls. My collection of player piano reference material is scant, but in a clothbound catalog issued by the Aeolian Company in July, 1905, I find a roll 8094, "Valse Brillante," the composer of which is given as F. M. Himmelreich. He probably also played it, but names of the artists who cut the rolls were not included.

In a 1925 catalog of Ampico rolls appears 51663E, "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," with the comment: "This favorite old Irish air is charmingly set forth in one of Mr. Himmelreich's well-known transcriptions."

There will be a reference later to an Edison Diamond Disc by Himmelreich of this beloved old song.

What seems to have been the pianist's first disc record was issued by Victor in May, 1912, as 17055, and combined his transcription of "The Rosary" with Lange's "Flower Song," by the Neapolitan Trio.

The monthly supplement contains a small profile photograph of Himmelreich. It shows him as a delicately featured, sharp-nosed man. He is wearing glasses, but nothing about the picture suggests blindness. The annotation reads:

"An attractive instrumental double is here offered, the first selection being a fine transcription of the favorite Rosary, by Ferdinand Himmelreich, the well-known pianist. Mr. Himmelreich is a most unusual player in many respects, one of his accomplishments being his great skill in improvisation.

"His technique is quite brilliant, difficult double-finger passages in thirds and sixths being played with ease. On the opposite side is a new Trio record of the popular Lange number."

Most of this description afterwards was published for years in the annual or semi-annual Victor record catalogs. The side view photo was also used briefly, but soon was replaced by a full-faced view shown with this article. It depicts him as an older man.

Since the great majority of the record-buying public liked "The Rosary" and did not agree with Ernest Newman, the eminent English critic, that "its greasy chromatics" made it "the worst song ever written," the Himmelreich record had large and steady sales until the advent of electrical recording in 1925.



AT THE KEYBOARD.—This picture of "The Blind Pianist" is reprinted from the Victor record supplement for February, 1917.



FULL-FACED VIEW.—Himmelreich's photograph appeared in the large Victor record catalog through several editions. The one shown here is from the 1920 issue.

Actually, I cannot recall a record he played for any company that was cut out of the catalog as long as the acoustic method of recording prevailed. He possibly may have made some Okeh hill-and-dale records that were discontinued when Okeh switched to lateral-cut recording late in 1919, but I lack catalogs to confirm or disprove this possibility. I merely seem to have a dim recollection of having read somewhere, years ago, a mention of him as an early Okeh performer.

In July, 1912, Victor coupled, on another Black Label 10-inch record, two favorite salon-type transcriptions by Himmelreich: Nevin's "Narcissus," and Gottschalk's "The Last Hope," which music is known nowadays as the melody of "Softly Now the Light of Day." The supplement comment was:

"Mr. Himmelreich's brilliant and clean-cut transcriptions of favorite light classics have greatly pleased Victor owners, and the announcement of this double, containing two highly popular numbers by Nevin and Gottschalk, will doubtless be most welcome."

But I have got a bit ahead of myself. In June, 1912, Victor had announced a 12-inch record, 35223, "Lucia Sextet — Transcription," played by Himmelreich, one of his favorite recording numbers. It was paired with "Caprice Espanol," rendered by the pianist-composer, Charles Gilbert Spross. This is what the catalog editor said:

"Mr. Himmelreich's mastery of improvisation is well exhibited in this superb rendition of the great Lucia Sextet, while Mr. Spross gives Moszkowski's beautiful Caprice in splendid style. Two most attractive pianoforte records, happily combined."

Despite the popularity of these first Himmelreich records, a long

time elapsed before he made any new ones, so this seems a good place to pause and consider his choice of music and technique. Victor obviously did not consider him a celebrity pianist, like Paderewski and De Pachmann, who then recently had begun making records that only imperfectly mirrored their art, or Himmelreich would not have been restricted to the double-faced, Black Label category and to performing "light classics."

He was a player, however, whose delicate style of playing recorded better than that of the giants. Their Herculean performances simply could not be coped with by early recording methods.

Imagine, for instance, any effort to record Moriz Rosenthal's hammering technique if he had been alive in 1912! There probably were no truly representative recordings of a great pianist of the classical school until Sergei Rachmaninoff made his remarkable Edison Diamond Discs in 1918-19.

But Himmelreich's gentle methods and his choice of old familiar music did not overtax the recording techniques of the acoustic period. As for his improvisations, they seem, to a far from expert listener, to consist largely of a fondness for arpeggios and frequent sweeps of his hands across the keyboard as variations of the straight melody.

Without going deeply into that, he seems to me to have been recorded better than any other pianist of his time. I find little to choose from between his Victor and Edison discs when both are in good condition.

### III. Later Victor Records

It seems strange that, since Himmelreich's first records achieved so much

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See articles about Edna White in Jim Walsh's  
Dept., May, June, July, 1966. my07



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- 3026 Come Hither Ye Children (Xmas)
- 3028 White Christmas
- 3029 Jingle Bells
- 3030 Noel
- 3031 Hark, The Herald Angels Sing
- 3032 Santa Claus is Coming to Town
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Mr G. Schirmer, Music Publisher & Dealer,  
701 Broadway, has just published for the author, the latest  
newly (herewith find specimen copy) entitled:—

### "The Song of Mister Phonograph."

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It is just long enough to be sung into one sheet of  
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James Redpath,  
General Manager.

EDISON PHONOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS.

popularity, his name did not appear again in a Victor supplement until February, 1917, when he played, on 18194, "Carnival of Venice — Variations," and his own composition, "Whispering Winds — Reverie."

The supplement contains an excellent photo of him, shown with this article. He was seated at the piano. However, there was no sign of the powerful lights he was accustomed to use. The description reads:

"In offering the old 'Carnival of Venice,' with variations of his own, Mr. Himmelreich will bring pleasure to many who remember his operatic and other transcriptions in the past. The tune is decorated with sparkling arpeggios, rippling scale passages and fairy-like trills, such as reveal the special idiom of the pianoforte.

"The artist's own composition, 'Whispering Winds,' appears to be in the nature of an improvisation, for it has a captivating air of being unpremeditated."

"The Blind Pianist" next was heard from on Victor record 18245, when he played what captious critics would term "two old chestnuts," "Silver Threads Among the Gold," and "Listen to the Mocking Bird." The catalog editor made this sensible comment:

"The world of music ought to be grateful to Himmelreich for restoring to popularity a style of piano playing that almost died out with Sigismund Thalberg. Before the overpowering, passionate romanticism of Liszt and Rubenstein, Thalberg's pearly runs, clean-cut arpeggios, even trills, and singing legato tone had perforce to go, but though music gained immeasurably in emotional expressiveness, it lost something of grace and technique.

"Listen to the Mocking Bird" is an old coloratura air of Jenny Lind's day, and Himmelreich has allowed his transcriptive fancy to turn it into its natural pianistic paraphrase—a bravura salon-piece. Similar treatment has been accorded to 'Silver Threads Among the Gold.'"

Himmelreich's final Victor record was announced in August, 1917, and coupled two more cherished "old-timers," "The Last Rose of Summer," and "Blue Bells of Scotland." It is always a pleasure to quote James Edward Richardson, who in 1916, began serving as Victor's best catalog editor and supplement editor:

"18305. Berlioz, the famous French composer, singled out 'The Last Rose of Summer' as the one number worthy of praise in Flotow's 'Martha'—the work in which it was first introduced. 'The delicious Irish air,' he says, 'was so simply and poetically sung by Patti that its fragrance alone was enough to disinfect the rest of the work.'"

"Mr. Himmelreich's piano improvisations are very tasteful, the free use of arpeggios serving to suggest the Irish harp which might have accompanied the old melody in the days before Moore wrote his familiar verses which are now universally associated with the tune. Himmelreich precedes his variations on the old Scottish tune, 'Blue Bells of Scotland' with some striking bell imitations. The melody is then decorated with brilliantly played ornamentations."

Probably the fact that the United States by this time was "up to its neck" in World War I, and recording artists were being dropped instead of added to the Victor payroll, was responsible for Himmelreich's making no more discs for the Camden company. His records, however, continued to be in steady demand.

#### IV. Edison Cylinders and Okeh and Edison Discs

Ferdinand Himmelreich first became known as an Edison recording artist in February, 1913, when he played "Nearer, My God, to Thee" on Blue Amberol cylinder 1647. In all probability this hymn was selected because the band of the Titanic, known as the largest steamship in the world, had played it while the great steamer sank after colliding with an iceberg. Here is part of the supplement description:

"... The wonderful love that everyone cherishes for this beloved old hymn has been graphically shown twice within the last few years. When President McKinley lay dying from an assassin's bullet it was on his lips to the very last, and when the great steamship, 'Titanic,' sank in mid-ocean in April 1912, it was



**IN LATER LIFE.**—This photograph, taken a few years before Ferdinand Himmelreich died, appeared in a 1935 issue of the musical magazine, *The Etude*, which said that the pianist had "an amazing gift for improvisation."

being played by the band and sung by the doomed passengers even as the boat took her final plunge.

"This piano rendition by Ferdinand Himmelreich is particularly impressive, as he introduces a series of chords giving a most interesting effect of chimes."

A month later, on 1726, Himmelreich played variations on another of his favorite numbers, "Annie Laurie." The Blue Amberol catalog for April, 1914, published a thumb-nail cut of (Continued on page 49)

#### SHEET MUSIC

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850. Catalog 25c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado 80205 o12698

**SHEET MUSIC:** Old popular, 250,000 songs. A-Z. No list yet. — Robert Greenlaw, Room 412, 307 No. Rampart Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90026. d6276

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

him, with this informative biographical reference:

"FERDINAND HIMMELREICH, PIANIST. This artist was born in New York City, November 15, 1880. He seemed fascinated by the piano even when a child, and when hardly 4 years old would pick out the notes of any melody he heard. At the age of 7 he had already played in public, and attained a considerable fame.

"He studied the piano, harmony and composition under Xavier Scharwenka, Henry Holden Huss, Raphael Josefy, and Alexander Lambert. Himmelreich's playing, while distinguished for brilliancy and accuracy of technique, does not, however lack expression, and his interpretations of many famous compositions are exceptionally impressive."

It is intriguing to recall that one of those distinguished teachers, Henry Holden Huss, as a boy of 15 wrote, in 1878, perhaps the first musical number ever composed about the phonograph. It was called "The Song of Mister Phonograph," and the youthful Huss' name was disguised as "H. H. H. von Ograph." The cover design of the sheet music of this 91-year-old song is shown with this article.

These named in this Edison cylinder section, were Himmelreich's only Blue Amberol records in 1913, but

some 10 years later two of his Diamond Discs were dubbed onto the cylinders. They were 4719, "Variations on 'Swanee River,' and 4749, "Lucia Sextet Transcription."

In 1922, Himmelreich made two Okeh records. One, on 4506, combined the familiar "Lucia Sextet Transcription" with "Silver Threads Among the Gold." The other, 4491, coupled "The Lure of Spring" — a composition unfamiliar to me, at least by that name — with "Transcription of 'Swanee River.'"

Probably the Okeh records were made about the same time Himmelreich began playing for Edison discs, for the "Sextet," and "Swanee River" transcriptions were issued by both companies.

Himmelreich first appeared in the Edison disc supplement dated February, 1923. Once more he offered ultra-familiar music. The record number was 51096, and its contents were "Lucia Sextet — Transcription," and "Variations on 'Swanee River.'" The supplement said:

"Ferdinand Himmelreich is known as the blind pianist. His sad affliction, though, does not appear to handicap him, for his technique is well nigh impeccable.

"There is no need to comment on the selections Mr. Himmelreich offers on this disc. They are known and admired by all lovers of real music. The arrangements given here are by Mr. Himmelreich and are wholly original."

During a period of about a year Himmelreich added several other time-tested numbers to his Diamond Disc repertoire. I'll give a list of them here. On two of them he played both sides, but where one of his performances was coupled with that of some other artist, I'll so indicate:

51107, "Annie Laurie," and "Love's Old Sweet Song."  
51254, "O Sole Mio" — Transcription; "Frühlingsergen" (Victor Young).  
51285, "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," & "Last Hope."  
51350, "Melodie in F" — Transcription; "Humoreske" (May A. Meyer).  
51395, "Dance of the Elves" (a composition by Himmelreich); "Elegie—Concert Transcription" (Houston Ray).

Concerning the record of "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," Compton Mackenzie, the editor of "The Gramophone," who is still alive and active in his late 80's, wrote in the issue for April, 1924:

"I have been enormously impressed by my first experience with the Edison instrument and the Edison Re-creations. The first thing that got me was the piano record by Ferdinand Himmelreich, 'Oh, Tell Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms' (sic) or, as I prefer to call it, 'My Lodging is on the Cold Ground' (I don't see why Tom Moore should have the credit of the melody), and I have never heard any piano record to touch it for realism."

Evidently, Mr. Mackenzie, whose magazine still is being published in England, didn't keep the name of the old song straight, but he did like Himmelreich's playing. And, apparently, he hadn't heard the Rachmaninoff records or he would have given them equally high marks for realism.

And so we come to the end of the story of Ferdinand Himmelreich. As we do, I find myself wishing that

(Continued on page 52)

DOLLS I HAVE HAD. Three different proof sheets of 126 rare dolls, sizes 12x9" and 17x9". Price \$2 for the set.—Goldie Schnelder, 1047 W. Main St., Galesburg, Ill. 61401 ol20291

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HAND-MADE DOLLS: Western Settler, 10", antique look! \$4.25. Real Peanut Baby, \$1. — Second Chance Dolls, The Forks, Ukiah, Calif. 95482 d3023

ENGLISH WAX \$60. Carved ivory doctor doll \$100. A&M \$70, 18" & 22", \$80 ea. Effenberg family, 4 dolls, \$25. Nude Patsy \$17.50. Shirley Temple Ideal \$25. Ideal mint 11" ladies \$5. Mint original Alexanders, elaborate Queen Elizabeth 21", 50: 10", \$25. Cissettes & Jeffs, \$20 pair. Others \$10 up. List 4 stamps. — Meme Claffee, 955 46th St. West, Birmingham, Ala. 35208 ja3069

CANADIAN composition, felts, china, rubber, foreign & domestic. List and photostat pictures 50c. — Tex, Box 522, New Westminster, B.C., Canada. ol26121

SEND 50c for list of reasonably priced antique dolls and related articles.—Mrs. Dorsey J. Linn, R. 1, Linn Acres, Bucyrus, Ohio 44820 ja3863

ITALIAN DOLLS: Hand-carved, non-commercial Nativty groups, Shrine figures, 1700's and 1800's. Most in original costume. Each a work of art. \$1 cash covers each list, photos, postage.—Kathryn Kleinecke, Via San Marino 36, Rome, Italy. ap64811

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eton Bank, Coffin Bank, Fingers Bank, Mystery Bank, How To Get Wealthy, Musical Automobile, various musical Swiss Chalets, two types of Musical Dancing Clowns, and the Hippo Bank. The Hippo is one of the writer's favorites. A coin, when placed in position and the lever pulled, is automatically propelled forward into the opening and closing mouth of a hippopotamus.

The space banks provide another interesting group and those include the First Interplanetary Space Bank, several Rocket Banks, Flying Saucer Bank, Satellite Bank, Destination Moon Bank, Strato Bank, Plan-It Bank, Space Launcher, and Rocket Launcher. The space banks at this time have particular appeal since our great accomplishment of the Moon Landing. Some of the earlier space type banks are already hard to come by.

Speaking of modern mechanicals that are as of today quite difficult to add to a collection we would include the Hitler Pig, Dog Coin On Nose, Jack Benny's Bank Vault, The Lone Ranger, Dog House Bank, Mr. Peanut Vending Bank, Bomb-It Bank, Owl With Moving Eyes, Alligator Swallowing Coin, Woodpecker With Sound, and three Chein Banks — The Church, Uncle Wiggily, and 2nd National Duck Bank.

As with the old mechanicals there is a wide variety of subject matter utilized in the action of the modern group of mechanical banks. Now, of

course, we have added interest of of the numbers of battery operated types and the space group. To this can be added such recent subject matter as the juke box, television, jackpots, gum ball banks, and others.

The earlier types of modern mechanicals that are closer to the 1935 and World War II period are already quite desirable collector's items and will become increasingly so as time goes on. Then too some mechanicals made in the 1950's were not produced in large quantities and these are difficult to find today.

In closing it bears mention that unlike the older mechanical banks that were mainly made in cast iron, the modern group are largely made of either tin or plastic, or in combination. A limited number of the modern mechanicals are made in cast iron, aluminum, and wood. Four of the cast iron mechanicals worthy of mention are the Mary Roebling (Trenton Trust), Birdie Putt, The Catboat, and the Strike Bank (Bowling). The last three made by Utex-qual more or less for collectors.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 49)

we had been left some records of his organ playing. But making decent recordings of the pipe organ was an impossibility when Himmelreich first began playing for sound recording devices, and he seems to have made no records of any kind after electric recording came in.

I suspect he probably played a great many piano rolls about which I have no information. For a man who had been virtually without sight since he was 5, he accomplished a great deal. His mastery of the organ, I think, is especially remarkable. He deserves our genuine admiration. I am sure Ferdinand Himmelreich would be pleased if he could know that, 32 years after his death, many collectors still enjoy his acoustic recordings.

(The End)

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COLLECTOR wants mechanical banks. Call collect 203-633-4984 after 5 p.m. — Bob McCumber, 201 Carriage Dr., Glastonbury, Conn. 06033. Member Mechanical Bank Collectors of America. d3255

Mechanical banks wanted by private collector. Highest prices paid for rare banks. No reproductions. State condition, including paint, and price desired. Free appraisal of collections or individual banks. All inquiries promptly answered. Member Mechanical Bank Collectors of America. — Max Berry, 388 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. au122154

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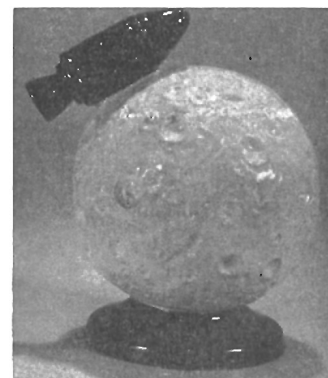
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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### History of

# The Peerless Quartet

By JIM WALSH

#### I. A Truly Peerless Quartet

In my opinion, there can be little doubt that the Peerless Quartet was the most popular, successful and long lived of all singing organizations that made records. There are listeners who prefer the Hayden, the American, or some other four-man group, but the Peerless made more records than any of the others and, with changes of personnel, kept going longer — from 1906 through 1928.

When I was in Chicago last May, "Tiny Tim" told me he would like very much to have a history of the Peerless, whose leader through most of its history, Henry Burr, he greatly admires. Other collectors have said the same thing.

It is true that though a great deal of information about the ensemble has been published in scattered HOBBIES articles, it would be difficult to bring them all together and piece out a history. Consequently, I have decided to prepare this concise sketch to give the wanted facts.

The late Frank C. Stanley, whose real name was William Stanley Grinstead, and who was a New York church singer as well as an alderman of the town of West Orange, N.J., organized the Peerless in 1906 and served as its manager until his tragic death from pneumonia at the age of 41 in December, 1910.

In essence, the Peerless was an offshoot of the old Columbia Quartet, in which Stanley also had sung, and a successor to the Invincible Quartet (also called the Invincible Four), one of several vocal groups that Stanley organized, managed, and controlled.

The Columbia Quartet, whose personnel changed a great deal over the years, went back to the turn of the century before. The late Al Campbell, who was a member through most, or all, of its career, and who frequently sang "lead" in the early days, said one group consisted of himself, first tenor; James Kent Reynard, second tenor; Joe Belmont, baritone; and Joe Majors, bass. Another, a little later, included Campbell, Henry Burr, Steve Porter, and a basso, "Big Tom" Daniels, who, like Majors, now almost entirely is forgotten.

Before Burr came in, shortly after he began making Columbia records in 1902, George J. Gaskin had sung the lead. Daniels was succeeded by Frank Stanley, who, although a bass-bari-

tone, did nearly all the lead singing after he joined.

With most quartets, the singing lead is the second tenor's prerogative, but Burr had little chance to function as head man until Stanley died, and he also took a subordinate part in the many duets they recorded. But after Stanley's death there were few records in which Burr didn't occupy the dominant role.

The Invincible Quartet, which Stanley had organized in the early 1900s, was making Edison cylinders by 1904. When working for Edison it comprised Byron G. Harlan, first tenor; George Seymour Lenox, second tenor; Arthur Collins, baritone, and Stanley bass.

On Columbia, American, and other disc records, Campbell or Burr sang the lead in the place of Lenox, who

seems to have been exclusive to Edison. I never have seen his name in any other company's catalog.

The Peerless may have been primarily intended as a "revised edition" of the Columbia Quartet. At any rate, it was called the Columbia Quartet on Columbia records for six years after Stanley organized it. The Peerless Quartet name did not appear in a Columbia list until August, 1912, when it was credited with a disc of "That Raggedy Rag." Strangely, Victor also had the Peerless sing the same song, but didn't issue the record until May, 1913—nine months behind Columbia.

Even after Columbia had begun regular use of the Peerless Quartet name, the foursome occasionally was called the Columbia Quartet. The latter name still was used now and then through World War I.

#### II. Original Peerless Personnel When First Records Were Made

A few years ago, while reading some old Zon-o-phone record supplements, I was surprised to learn that the original Peerless Quartet personnel was not composed, as I long had believed, of Campbell, first tenor; Burr, second tenor; Collins, baritone; and Stanley, bass. Instead, I learned from the July, 1907, supplement that "each member of this quartet—Messrs. Burr, Howard, Porter, and Stanley, are soloists of marked ability and long experience."

"Mr. Howard," I may explain, was Albert Campbell, who made most of his Zono solo records under the assumed name of Frank Howard. But I had not realized that Stephen Carl Porter, better known as "Steve" Porter, ever had been a member of the Peerless.

Then I found myself wondering, as I still wonder, why Stanley, in organizing the Peerless, discarded Collins and Harlan his neighbors in West Orange, who had been singing in the Invincible Quartet, and replaced them with Campbell and Porter. Stanley remained on friendly terms with Collins, who afterwards became a member of the Peerless, as well as with Harlan, and they recorded duets until Stanley's untimely death.

I long had assumed that Porter stayed with the Peerless only a few months, for I never have seen a photograph showing him as a member of



**PEERLESS FOUNDER.**—Frank C. Stanley, an Orange, N.J., native, founded the Peerless Quartet in 1906. Stanley, who began his recording career playing banjo accompaniments, under the name of George S. Williams, for blackfaced comedy solos by Arthur Collins, organized and managed several other vocal groups, including the Invincible Quartet, the Metropolitan Mixed Trio, the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, and the Lotus Glee Club. He died of pneumonia in 1910.



**FAMOUS DUET PAIR.**—Arthur Collins (upper) and Byron G. Harlan (lower) sang in the Invincible Quartet, which preceded the Peerless. Collins then was baritone of the Peerless from 1909 to 1919. He and Harlan recorded together from 1902 through 1924—the longest and most successful career of any duet team in phonograph history.

the quartet, but lately have come to the conclusion that he must have remained until some time in 1909. I have a Columbia record by "The Peerless Minstrels," (that is only another name for the Peerless Quartet which was made late in 1908), and in which Porter serves as master of ceremonies.

My guess is that he left, and Collins took his place only after Billy Murray formed the American Quartet in 1909 (there had been another organization by that name on Victor records in 1901-02), and Billy prevailed on his old friend, Steve, to join the American. Its other members were John Bieling first tenor, and William F. Hooley, bass. So, according to my theory, as Porter went out of the Peerless, Collins came in.

When did the Peerless make its first records for the various companies? I have been turning through old catalogs, and have come up with some answers, but it is impossible to clarify that question where Columbia is concerned, for it continued to use the name of the Columbia Quartet, as we have seen, exclusively until 1912.

However, the Peerless Quartet name first appeared in a Zon-o-phone supplement in February, 1907, on record 673, "Where Is My Boy Tonight?"

Nevertheless, I suspect that the Universal Male Quartet, which began making Zono records in 1906, was really the Peerless, and that, since Zon-o-phone records were the product of the Universal Talking Machine Company, the Quartet was at first called the Universal Quartet, just as it was the Columbia Quartet on Columbia discs and cylinders.

The lowest numbered Universal Quartet record was 512, "Alice, Where Are Thou Going?" issued in August, 1906, and described as "a baritone solo with quartet chorus." That certainly sounds as if Frank Stanley were leading and that the ensemble was really the Peerless.

Three other Universal Quartet records were announced that same month: 520, "Nearer, My God, to Thee"; 521, "The Rosary," and 522, "Sweet and Low." It is worth observing that as Peerless Quartet records began to be listed, the Universal Quartet disappeared.

The Peerless was slow catching on with Victor, probably because the Camden Company had the Hayden Quartet under exclusive contract and felt it didn't need a competing organization. However, the new group achieved its first Victor appearance in April, 1908, with record 5392,

"Women!" from "The Merry Widow," and soon became a prime favorite that made more Victor discs than any other singing group.

I confidently am expecting someone to arise and gleefully inform me that the Peerless had made a Victor record earlier than this, because its name appears on single-faced record 1806, "Moonlight on the Lake."

The answer to this is that the Hayden Quartet originally recorded the "Moonlight" selection in 1902, and it remained in the catalog under the Hayden name until January, 1908. Then, at some time during the next few months, the Peerless remade it (I wonder why, for the Hayden was still active) and it was cataloged under the Peerless name in September, 1908.

The first appearance of the Peerless on Edison Standard 2-minute records was in April, 1909. It recorded on 10106, a comic sketch, "A Meeting of the Hen Roost Club," written by the famous "Uncle Josh" impersonator, Cal Stewart.

In the same month the Peerless was represented by its first 4-minute Amberol cylinder 110, "Choruses of Six Popular Songs — an attractive compilation in which the boys gave unaccompanied renditions of "Roses Bring Dreams of You," "In Grandma's Day," "When the Sheep Are in the Fold," "Mandy Lane," "Sweetheart Days," and the whirlwind hit of that time, the famous Indian song, "Rainbow."

The Peerless never was called anything except "the Quartet" on Indestructible cylinders, and seems to have made all the Indestructible Quartet records. Its first 2-minute Indestructible, "The New Parson at Darktown Church," also written by Stewart, was made available about November, 1907.

Its first U.S. Everlasting cylinders had the lowest numbers in that Company's list and came out in 1908. They were 201, "Peerless Minstrels 1," and 202, "Lady Love," the latter issued under the Peerless Quartet name. The Quartet also, of course, made records for American, Imperial, Talkophone, and other long-departed concerns whose lists are hard to trace, but I can't say just when their first efforts for those concerns were offered.

### III. John Meyer Becomes the Basso

The first check to the Peerless Quartet's uninterrupted popularity and prosperity occurred when Frank Stanley died. There were no new Peerless records for a few months, but an agreement was reached under which Burr took Stanley's place as manager. He engaged John Meyer with whom he had been associated in church work, to take over as bass.

The new combination of Campbell, Burr, Collins, and Meyer soon had all the work it could handle. This was true particularly after 1914, when many new companies sprang into being, and the Quartet's services were sought by practically every record





AT THE PEAK OF ITS CAREER.—This photo, from a 1919 Aeolian-Vocalion catalog, shows the Peerless Quartet at the height of its popularity, when its members were Albert Campbell, John H. Meyer, Henry Burr, and Frank Croxton. Meyer's name is misspelled beneath his picture.

manufacturer in the Eastern United States.

In those days, when few popular recording artists worked exclusively for any one company, it was important to "get the jump" on competitors, and when a song that seemed to have popular appeal turned up, to record it for as many firms as possible before the opposition "got wise."

"The Pussy Cat Rag" is a good example of this. Late in 1913 the Peerless obtained the assistance of Ada Jones to take the part of an "old maid sister," and, with her help, recorded that comedy skit for Victor and Columbia discs and Edison Blue Amberol cylinders — about the only companies that amounted to anything then.

A year later they were called on to sing it for an Edison Diamond Disc. As far as I can find "The Pussy Cat Rag" was not recorded by any other individual or group.

From 1915 on, the number of record companies grew rapidly, and, until late in 1920, the Peerless recorded for virtually all of them on the Eastern side of the continent, except Edison, with which Burr had quarreled in

1915 over a contract, and Brunswick, which began recording activities in the United States late in 1919. (It had made hill-and-dale records in Canada as early as 1917.)

Albert Campbell told me there was so much work to be done, especially since Burr had formed, in 1916, the Sterling Trio, which was the Peerless quartet with Collins omitted, that the group had to work three shifts a day to take care of its recording engagements. "We might," Al said, "sing for Victor in the morning, Columbia in the afternoon and Pathe, or some other company, at night."

Burr even added to the multiplicity of record companies by issuing his own Paroquette brand, a 7-inch hill-and-dale cut record, with music on both sides, that sold for a quarter; and the Peerless made so many records for Pathe that some were issued under the old name of the Invincible Four.

But, if all the quartet members were busy, Burr was the busiest of all, for he recorded hundreds of solos a year in addition to singing duets with Campbell and other artists, besides leading the Sterling Trio and Peer-

less Quartet. It seems impossible that one man could do so much and still find time to head the Record Maker Troupe—later the Eight Famous Victor Artists—on concert tours.

In order to get away, the group would record enough numbers to "carry over" until they returned from their tours, which sometimes lasted three months.

#### IV. Frank Croxton Succeeds Collins

Late in 1918 or early 1919, Arthur Collins left the Peerless, of which he

(Continued on page 130)



FIRST PEERLESS BARITONE.—Steve Porter was the first baritone to sing in the Peerless Quartet. He had previously sung in the Columbia Quartet and, after leaving the Peerless, was a member of the American and Harmonizers Quartets.

#### MUSIC BOXES

HURDY GURDY music box with 5 rolls, on wheels. Good playing condition. — Rafferty, 1615 W. 87th St., Chicago, Ill. 60620 f3023

#### SHEET MUSIC

BACK POPULAR sheet music to 1850. Catalog 25c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado 80205 o12693

SHEET MUSIC: Old popular, 250,000 songs. A-Z. No list yet. — Robert Greenlaw, Room 412, 307 No. Rampart Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90028. d6276

SHEET MUSIC, choose from thousands of popular, late 1800s to date. We also buy. — McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. 60304 d3253

#### TAPE RECORDINGS

REMEMBER RADIO? Send stamped envelope for list of tape recordings available from radio's golden age.—Lee Book, Box 6338, Pittsburgh, Pa. ap6276

NEW 40-page catalog now ready, thousands of recordings, etc. \$2.50 refundable. — Holyoke Gardens 4B, Holyoke, Mass. 01040 ja3882

#### VIOLINS

Violin for sale: 1 Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis, Faciebat Anno, 1715.—Phone 912-233-5420. my70001

#### MUSIC BOX DISCS

NEED 13 3/4" discs for Symphonium music box. — Herman Unger, Jr., 209 W. Jackson, Chicago, Ill. 60606 d3272

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)



Peerless Quartet

**FINAL PEERLESS QUARTET.** — Taken from the January, 1926, Victor record supplement, this photo is believed to be the only one showing the Peerless in its final stage. In the front row are Henry Burr, its manager and second tenor, and Carl Mathieu, first tenor. Back row: Stanley Baughman, baritone, and James Stanley, bass. The quartet began in 1906 with Frank Stanley as basso and ended in 1928 with James Stanley filling the same part.

had been a member for approximately 10 years, and Burr obtained Frank Croxton, a genuine basso profundo, to take Collins' place. Meyer, who had been singing bass, changed over to being the baritone. When I asked Al Campbell why Collins quit, he replied, "It was a personal matter. He just couldn't get along with Burr."

I wonder, however. Collins and Byron Harlan, his duet partner, for many years had been among the most popular Victor and Columbia artists. Yet no more of their records appeared after October, 1918, when both Companies issued discs of them singing "When Uncle Joe Steps Into France."

It was about then that Edison engaged them to travel from coast to coast, giving the famous "tone tests." I wonder if their being dropped by Victor and Columbia was because those Companies resented their giving the tests, or whether Edison insisted that they not sing for the country's two largest record Companies while traveling and demonstrating the Diamond Discs.

Collins and Harlan continued to record for Pathe, Emerson, Gennett, Okeh, and most of the other companies of the time. Seemingly only Victor and Columbia took offense at their Edison demonstrations, if there really was offense.

At any rate, Collins, whose talents were suited better to being a "coon song" shouter than a quartet member, left the ensemble (perhaps he had resented being crowded out of the Sterling Trio), and with the golden-voiced basso, Croxton, coming in, the Quartet reached probably its highest

point of efficiency and popularity.

There was more free-lance work than ever to be done, and it eventually became more than could be handled well. This led Burr to negotiate an exclusive contract with Victor in 1920, by which he and his associates were relieved of the harrying responsibility of rushing about to fill one "date" after another. Henceforth, they could record only for Victor and have ample time in which the Eight Famous Victor Artists could make long Atlantic-to-Pacific and Mexico-to-Canada concert tours.

### V. The Final Change

This happy state of affairs continued for several years. The electrical recording process was introduced in 1925. Record 35753, "A Miniature Concert by the Eight Famous Victor Artists," in which Campbell, Burr, Meyer, Croxton, Billy Murray, Monroe Silver, Rudy Wiedoeft, and Frank Banta (all dead now) took part, was the first electrically made 12-inch record that Victor issued.

It appeared in June, 1925, two months or so after the group had given a special radio program to advertise their Victor records. Burr was called on for electrical re-makes of some of his best selling old records; Campbell and Burr sang several new duet recordings; and the Quartet produced a number of re-makes of its big sellers.

Then came a change that shocked most of the ensemble's admirers. The January, 1926, Victor record supplement announced a double-faced disc by "the new Peerless Quartet," of which only Burr remained from the old group.

Carl Mathieu, an excellent first tenor and comedian, who was not, however, well-known, replaced Al Campbell; Stanley Baughman, baritone, took the place of Meyer; and James Stanley, best known for his Pathe records, succeeded Croxton. It seemed especially shocking that Burr should oust Campbell, with whom he had been associated intimately for so many years and in association with whom he had made thousands of records.

When I talked with Al Campbell in 1940 I couldn't bring myself to ask him why such a sweeping change had been made in the Quartet, but Billy Murray told me many Victor dealers had complained that when John Meyer was in high spirits he "cut in so strong that he spoiled the record." Burr eventually decided to make a complete change of his supporting personnel. It must have been a fairly sudden decision involving a great deal of ill feeling but Mathieu, Baughman, and Stanley were taken into the Quartet and participated in another Victor radio concert given early in 1926.

Campbell, Meyer and Croxton remained for a time in recording work. Campbell, at the age of 54, formed a partnership with Jack Kaufman, and for a year or two they sang comic duets for Edison and a number

of minor brands, including Harmony and Grey Gull.

Meyer entered into a partnership with Henry Moeller, who called himself "Henry Fairbank" on their records. They sang duets for some of the smaller companies. Before long, however, Meyer decided to return to personally managing his florist shop on Third Avenue, N.Y., which he had owned all the time he was a recording artist. He gave up singing.

Croxton became a member of another male quartet, the American Singers, which at first consisted, besides himself, of Charles Harrison, first tenor; Redferne Hollinshead, second tenor; and Vernon Archibald, baritone. Hollinshead was succeeded in the late 1920s by Lambert Murphy.

Even though there seemed no reason to suspect it, the Peerless Quartet's balmy days were already over by the time Burr decreed his sweeping personnel change. For one thing, the old Victor Talking Machine Company was sold to new owners, who decided not to renew the contracts of nearly all their high-salaried popular stars.

Lacking the prestige of a Victor contract, the stage show no longer could be given under the name of the Eight Famous Victor Artists. Then, too, talking movies were taking over and the demand for elaborate, expensive "live" performances, such as the Eight had given, was rapidly diminishing.

In 1928, with no contract and little demand for stage productions, Burr gave up and disbanded the troupe. And that was the end, after 22 years, of the Peerless Quartet.

All the fine artists who, at one time or another were proud to be members of the Peerless now have entered into their last, long sleep, except possibly Mathieu, who is living still in New York City.

"Jim" Stanley died a few years after developing cancer of the vocal chords, and Steve Porter passed on of a heart attack, in 1936. Collins had died in 1933, and his partner, Harlan, in 1936.

Burr followed in 1941, of a combined heart ailment and Bright's disease; Campbell in 1947, and Meyer in 1948. But their voices will live on dispensing mirth and melody, as long as their thousands of records survive.

(The End)

— o —

White gold is produced by the addition of 25 per cent of platinum or 12 per cent of paladium to a quantity of pure gold.

— o —

The oldest surviving self-propelled vehicle in America is a steam carriage built by Richard Dudgeon in New York about 1868.

— o —

The blowing of big conch-shell horns takes the place of church bells in Kyoto, Japan.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# A Monumental Catalog of Edison Cylinders



**PIONEER TENOR**—George J. Gaskin was one of the first recording tenor singers. Besides making innumerable solos, he was the leader and manager of the Manhasset Quartet.



**EARLY OPERA SINGER**—This drawing of a prima donna, Marie Rose, singing into an Edison tinfoil phonograph, first appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* for April 20, 1878. It is reprinted on the cover of Allen Koenigsberg's comprehensive catalog of Edison two-minute cylinders.

EDISON CYLINDER RECORDS, 1889-1912. Edited by and obtainable by mail only from Allen Koenigsberg, 1532 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230, \$12.95.

During the 28 years that I have been contributing to *HOBBIES*, I have written articles describing the contents of old record magazines and pioneer phonograph publications such as *The Phonoscope*, but this is the first time I have devoted my monthly department to a review of a recently published book.

Allen Koenigsberg's new compilation of Edison two-minute cylinder records, however, is such a remarkable achievement and has been done at the cost of so much hard work and heavy expense that I feel it is entitled to all the help I can give it. Never before has there been gathered between two covers such a monumental list of the wax cylinders produced in America by the Edison Company. And the manner in which the task has been accomplished is worthy of unstinted praise.

Mr. Koenigsberg tells me he has spent "a small fortune" in compiling and publishing the book, and I imagine about the most he can hope for is to get his money back. I admit \$12.95 seems a high price for a loose-leaf volume of approximately 200 pages, but prices of books, like those of everything else nowadays, have been sent soaring upward by our economy's inflationary process.

Koenigsberg himself had to pay inflated prices before he could bring the book to publication. It is worth more than \$12.95 of any serious record collector's money.

In effect, the handsome, beautifully printed red-covered book is an expansion and extension of the catalog of two-minute Edison cylinders published in 1957 by the late Dr. Duane D. Deakins, which has long been out of print. It goes farther, though, by giving much information that was unavailable to Deakins, and contains the names and numbers of hundreds of records about which the earlier research worker knew nothing.

For instance, the Deakins catalog mentioned only one record, 7753, "Mike, Mike, Mike," by the obscure comedian, Joe Bonnell, who was listed only as "Mr. Bonnell." Koenigsberg gives his full name and adds three

more Bonnell records made in 1901: 7899, "Casey's Wedding Night"; 7833, "I Don't Like the Irish," and 7834, "That's What the Germans Sang."

There are even one or two turn-of-the-century artists I never before had heard of and a large number of previous unknowns who were making records in 1889 and the early 1900s that never appeared in a printed catalog. Among the mysterious artists is Myra Price (a soprano, judging by her repertoire) who made half a dozen cylinders in 1901.

Here I might mention that I am sorry Koenigsberg's listings do not indicate the voice quality of singers. It should not have been much more trouble, and would have taken little space, to add such things as "baritone," "tenor," or "contralto" after the performers' names.

I am sorry, too, that some factor—probably space limitations—caused the compiler to follow the Deakins example of listing records only by



**PROLIFIC SINGER**—Dan W. Quinn (1859-1938) was one of the most popular of pioneer record makers. Two pages are required in the Koenigsberg book to list his two-minute Edison cylinders.



the names of the first artists to make them. After all, anybody who is trying to get a complete list of cylinders by, say, Billy Murray, will be missing something if he is not told that Billy remade, in 1906, the record of "In the Good Old Summer Time" that was originally made by William Redmond.

This practice also causes the contralto, Suzanne Baker, to be omitted from the catalog because her only contribution was a re-make of "Down Where the Blue Bells Grow," first sung by Louise Roberts. Her name appears, however, in an alphabetical list of artists.

I wish, too, that the four-minute Amberol records had been included, but perhaps Mr. Koenigsberg intends to combine them later with Blue Amberol listings in a separate book that would not require anything like the research that has gone into his present volume.

Perhaps I should mention that the lack of names of "re-make" artists is mitigated to a considerable extent by my article in the September and October 1965, *HOBBIES*, "Artists Who Re-Made Edison Two-Minute Cylinders." I did not undertake to deal with hands and orchestras, but did list singers and instrumentalists, although it is quite likely I missed a few re-made titles.

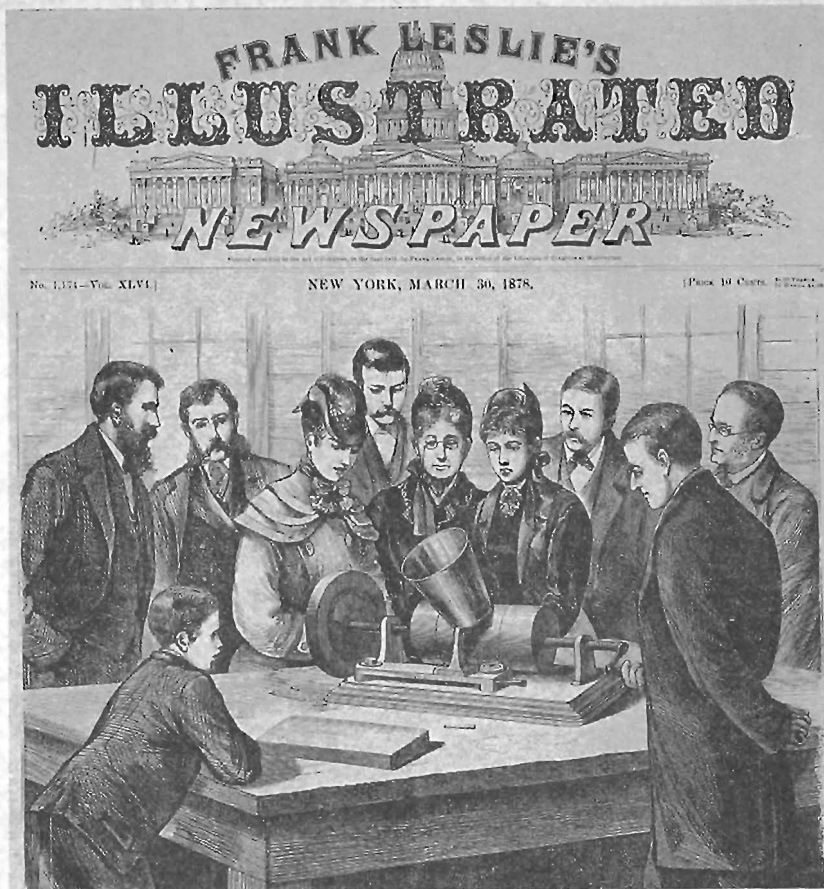
And, speaking of instrumentalists, I wish such performers were given separate listings under their own names instead of being lumped together under the instruments they played. To find the names of all of Vess Ossman's cylinders, for instance, you have to look under "Banjo" instead of "Ossman."

That is the extent of my adverse criticism, and such considerations become trivial indeed when weighed against the sheer comprehensiveness of the catalog, its relative freedom from typographical errors (the Deakins catalog contained large numbers of mistakes) and the amount of information that never before has been available.

To begin with the cover, there is a beautiful reprint of a drawing from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* for April 20, 1878. It shows a prima donna, Marie Rose, singing an aria from "Faust" into Edison's tinfoil phonograph, which had been invented only a few months before. The same illustration appeared on the cover of one of the first pieces of music written about the phonograph, Charles D. Blake's "Phonograph — March Brilliant," which is illustrated with this review.

The book, dedicated to the memory of Dr. Deakins, gives an absorbing history of the cylinder phonograph, beginning with John Kruesi's making the first working model from Edison's instructions on November 29, 1877. (Edison also designed a disc machine early in 1878.)

I should mention that the book is the more interesting because of many fascinating illustrations. Also it contains a numerical listing of the huge "concert" cylinders that were made from 1898 to 1901.

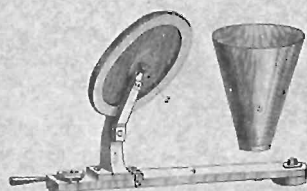


#### SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

Edison's Phonograph. — Dr. Thomas A. Edison, the greatest American, has invented a tinfoil phonograph, which speaks with great distinctness and loud enough to be heard at a distance of 150 feet. The speech is also repeated for twenty or a hundred feet, so that it can be heard by the ear and by the eye. The instrument is said to be unique, but it is not a record of the original, particularly as it is not a record.

#### THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC WONDER.

Edison's Speaking Phonograph. — If you are one of those who have been looking for a way to hear the voice of the dead, or to hear the voice of the living, you will find in Edison's Speaking Phonograph a way to do so. The instrument is said to be unique, but it is not a record of the original, particularly as it is not a record.



NEW JERSEY—Professor Edison exhibiting the phonograph to visitors at his laboratory, Menlo Park.

To me, however, the most interesting section is that reprinting the contents of the original Edison ledger sheets and giving names of the artists who made experimental records from 1889 to 1892.

Closely following is the listing of brown wax cylinders issued by the North American Phonograph Company from April 1, 1892, to August, 1894, when the firm went into bankruptcy and the right to sell phono-

graphs and records reverted to Edison. There are many blanks in the numerical North American list, but presumably the Company was using the "block" system, as did other early manufacturers, and many cylinders with missing numbers never were issued.

Almost 50 years ago the late Ada Jones gave an interview in which she recalled that when she was a girl her stepmother took her to the North

Jersey. — Professor Edison exhibiting the phonograph to visitors at his laboratory, Menlo Park.

Edison's Phonograph. — Dr. Thomas A. Edison, the greatest American, has invented a tinfoil phonograph, which speaks with great distinctness and loud enough to be heard at a distance of 150 feet. The speech is also repeated for twenty or a hundred feet, so that it can be heard by the ear and by the eye. The instrument is said to be unique, but it is not a record of the original, particularly as it is not a record.





**EARLIEST CYLINDER RECORDING ARTIST?**—Mrs. Harriet Atwood, who will be 105 years of age on March 23, 1970, believes she was the first person to record for the white wax cylinders which Thomas A. Edison developed in 1887-88. Mrs. Atwood, who was then Miss Harriet Haddon, a young piano teacher of West Orange, N.J., was summoned to Edison's laboratory to make experimental piano recordings. She later married Edison's assistant, George Atwood, who persuaded her to make the records. Mrs. Atwood has lived in a Richmond, Va., nursing home since 1956. This picture was taken on her 100th birthday.

—Photo courtesy of Richmond Times-Dispatch



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BAILEY'S MIDGET PIANO - 1881**

For information write:

**NORMAN PERRY**

Plymouth, N. H. 03264

American laboratory and she made some test recordings. Two are listed here, 1289, "Sweet Marie," and 1292, "The Volunteer Organist." Both were made in 1894, when Ada was only 20 or 21, and they preceded the beginning of her professional recording career by 10 years. Hers is the only woman's name in the list of North American artists.

Edward M. Favor, vaudeville and musical comedy star, who later became a highly popular recording artist, also sang for North American. But its most prolific vocalist was a baritone or bass, Thomas Bott, of whom I never before had heard.

Another untiring contributor to the baritone repertoire was Edward  
(Continued on page 50)

### PHONOGRAPHS

**OLD PHONOGRAPH** catalogs! Beautifully illustrated reprints. For example, 1899 Talking Machine Catalog, 64 pages, only \$2.95 postpaid. Free illustrated list available.—Allen Koenigsberg, 1532 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230 ap6829

**MAINSRING** repairs for any phonograph. Let a specialist do it.—Keith Frick, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105 ja3882

**FOR SALE:** 78 rpm vintage records. Most categories: Caruso, Jolson, Melba, etc. Also Edison disc and cylinders, many to choose from, some Berliner records. Books: Zane Grey, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Bobsey Twins, and many more. Please let me know your wants. No lists, please send self-addressed stamped envelope for reply.—Monroe Sands, 308 S. Ellen St., Homer, Ill. 61849 ap6029

### SHEET MUSIC

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850. Catalog 25c.—Fore's, 3151 High, Denver, Colorado 80205 o12698

**SHEET MUSIC:** Old popular, 250,000 songs. A-Z. No list yet.—Robert Greenlaw, Room 412, 307 No. Rampart Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90026. je6276

**SHEET MUSIC,** choose from thousands of popular, late 1800s to date. We also buy.—McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. 60304 mh3253

### TAPE RECORDINGS

**REMEMBER RADIO?** Send stamped envelope for list of tape recordings available from radio's golden age.—Lee Book, Box 6338, Pittsburgh, Pa. ap6276

**NEW 40-page** catalog now ready, thousands of recordings, etc. \$2.50 refundable.—Holyoke Gardens 413, Holyoke, Mass. 01040 ja3882

**SOUND** reflections of Thomas A. Edison. Five choice selections including "Preacher and the Bear" from an Edison cylinder phonograph. Professionally recorded on three-inch real of tape at 3 3/4 IPS. \$1.95 postpaid. No stamps please.—Worster Audio/Visual, 1622 Cruce St., Norman, Okla. 73069 mh3407

**FABULOUS** old time radio, on tape. Quality work at reasonable prices. Detailed catalog free.—The Great Radio Shows, Inc., Box 2511, Denver, Colo. 80201 ja1291

### VIOLINS

**Violin for sale:** 1 Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis, Faciebat Anno, 1715.—Phone 912-233-5420. my70001

SEASON 1887-88.

ENTIRELY RECONSTRUCTED. SUPERB COSTUMING. MAGNIFICENT PRINTING.

**Edith Sinclair Comedy Co.**  
AND  
CELEBRATED CHINESE  
BRASS BAND & ORCHESTRA,  
(A DECIDED NOVELTY.)  
In the Original Musical Comedy, by Frank Dumont,  
adapted:

**"A Box of Cash"**

MISS EDITH SINCLAIR as Grace Ford.  
Under the Management of J. H. WASHBURN.  
MR. ED. M. FAVOR as Timothy O'Hair.

*Weymouth Mass.  
Feb. 25, 1888.*

*Dear Sir:*  
*What open time can you offer*  
*above Co. in week of March 13, and*  
*very best showing terms. Carry over*  
*own Orchestra & Brass Band, &*  
*give very novel street parade, then*  
*like to arrange for one night.*  
*Very Respectfully*  
*Ed. M. Favor*  
*week of 27*  
*Fall River*  
*Mass.*

FAMOUS COMEDIAN—Edward M. Favor, famous vaudeville and musical comedy performer, made cylinder records in the early 1890s and did not make his last until 1914. This is a printing of a letter written by him to a theater manager in 1888. Edith Sinclair was Favor's wife.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

Francis, and since Emilio de Gogorza called himself "Ed Franklin" on some of his earlier records, I am wondering if Francis may have been a variant of Franklin.

One of the greatest surprises I received came when I learned that the great bass singer, Frank C. Stanley, who founded and managed the Peerless Quartet, made Edison cylinders of banjo solos in 1891 under his real name of William S(tanley) Grinsted. On October 22 he played 12 different numbers and probably recorded each eight or 10 times. He was also one of the artists for North American.

It was natural that Grinsted should be given a try at recording for Edison, since he was born and lived in West Orange, N.J., where the Edison laboratories were situated. He is said to have won the banjo playing championship of New Jersey in 1890, at age 21. Neither he nor anyone else seemed to realize then that he had a remarkable voice.

The Manhansett Quartet, one of the first, if not the first, male vocal organizations to make records, spent a

busy Sunday, September 27, 1891, singing cylinders of 20 different songs. The members' names are not listed, but the 1892 catalog of New Jersey records identifies them as Gaskin, Girard, Riley, and Evans.

Gaskin, of course, was George J. Gaskin, the tenor, who made so many solo records. Girard, presumably, was Gilbert Girard, later best known as an animal imitator. Riley was Joe Riley. But I can't place Evans. There was also a unique Male Quartet, whose members are unknown to me.

One reprint of the early Edison ledger sheets was probably of more interest to me than it will be to anyone else who reads it. On a visit to Philadelphia in 1945 I met a talented writer, Edna Hyde McDonald, whose maiden name had been von der Heide, later Anglicized to Hyde.

She knew of my being a collector and asked if I had any records by a relative of hers (an uncle, I think), who had recorded in the very early days. I remember his last name being von der Heide, but can't recall his given name.

I told her I never had heard of Mr. von der Heide, but the page for December 6, 1890, shows him taking part in a very special recording engagement. He was a violinist, and together with A. T. Van Winkle (a

descendant, I take it, of Rip Van Winkle), who played the xylophone and metalophone, whatever that may have been; George Schweinfest, the flute virtuoso; D. B. Dana, cornet, and Edward Issler, pianist, made 68 cylinders to be shipped to Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany.

Mrs. McDonald died in 1962. But I have learned that she has a sister, Miss Eleanor Hyde, who is still living, and if I can obtain Miss Hyde's address I shall try to learn the violinist's full name and relationship.

One of the remarkable things about Edison's earlier recording activities is the extent to which piano records were attempted although the piano was, and remained for many years afterward, the most difficult common instrument to record properly.

And it is amazing how many times a composition called "Slightly On the Mash," which probably almost no one now living has ever heard, was recorded by the piano and other instruments. Max Franklin was the pianist whose services seemed most in demand. "The Cat Song" was another favorite.

There were almost no vocal records made in 1889 and 1890, compared to those by instrumentalists, even though on July 19, 1889, "Miss Amy Murray and Master L. Fairlamb" sang "Merry June" and "God Keep You Safe, My Little Love."

On June 1, 1891, George W. Johnson, who must have been the first Negro recording artist, spent two and a half hours singing his laughing songs. Mr. Issler, the conductor of Issler's Band and Orchestra, which made so many records in the early 1890s, played the piano accompaniment.

Duffy and Imgrund's Fifth Regiment Band seems to have been the musical organization most often used. On September 27, 1889, it recorded "The Night Alarm." This for many years was a big selling descriptive specialty under all sorts of labels and by different bands.

George Schweinfest seems to have been almost as versatile a musician as Josef Pasternak, many years later the Victor recording director, who was said to be able to play every orchestral instrument except the harp. Schweinfest made flute, piccolo, piano, and violin cylinders. He was still active as late as 1915 when he took part in Edison tone tests, playing in unison with Diamond Disc "Re-Creations" of the flute. He didn't die until 1949, when he was 87.

One oddity is that the records on several ledger pages were listed as being "made for South America and Minneapolis." What was the connection between these two widely separated areas? Or did phonograph exhibitors from South America and Minnesota just happen to order records about the same time and the same instrumental offerings were recorded for both?

Most readers undoubtedly will be astounded to learn that one of the

(Continued on page 122)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

first persons to make records for Edison in 1887 or 1888, when he brought out his phonograph to play wax cylinders, is still living. She is Mrs. Harriet Atwood, who was a music teacher as a young unmarried woman, Miss Harriet Haddon.

One of Edison's assistants, George Atwood, asked her to make some experimental piano records. She did, and she later married him. Mrs. Atwood, who is now 104 and living in a Richmond, Va., nursing home, believes

she was the first musician to perform for wax cylinders.

I do not find her name in the ledger pages reproduced in Koenigsberg's catalog, but there is a mention of a "Miss Hangs," who was a pianist. I wonder if this is a misreading of a handwritten entry for "Miss Haddon."

The question of why certain musical selections were recorded was as pertinent in 1889 as it is today. Why was something called "Ballet Music from 'Mathias Sandorph'" supposed to be attractive to the long ago handful of cylinder buyers? It was a clarinet solo played by William Tuson, and afterwards was issued on a North American cylinder by R. K. Frank-

lin. Was "Mathias Sandorph" a now-forgotten opera? I confess my ignorance.

The late Eugene C. Rose, flute and piccolo virtuoso, told me in 1946 that he made Edison cylinders which were played in 1889 at the Paris Exposition. On the ledger page for Thursday, June 6, 1889, I find that "Weinert, Rose and Gast," who played soprano, alto and bass flutes, respectively, made 76 records to be sent to Paris, and on June 13 a total of 654 cylinders was shipped there. On June 15, the recording director, A. T. E. Wangemann, left for Paris, to be in charge of the demonstration.

In his introduction Mr. Koenigs-

## ONCE MORE LUCKY JIM, NIPPER, PLUM, POSSY, AND JIM WALSH WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



From left to right, top to bottom:

1. WAITING—LUCKY JIM has climbed to a bedroom mantel to keep watch for Santa Claus. Immediately below him are typewritten reference lists of Jim Walsh's HOBBIES articles.

2. TIRED BOY—Nipper, the "old man" of the Walsh cat family, is now 12 years of age, but has never been ill and is as lively as a kitten. When this picture was taken, however, he was tired after writing a letter to Santa. On the far right of the bed was his idol, the late "Peerless Roger."

3. IRISH DOCTOR—The beauty, intellectual, and spiritual qualities of the famous Prof. Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D., are shown in this snapshot, where he is being admired by Mrs. Quentin Riggs. When Evelyn Riggs was a girl in Ireland her family physician was Dr. P. D. Walsh, and she immediately "recognized" Plum as her former medical man. That accounts for the affectionate pose.

4. GONE BUT STILL LOVED—This picture is a memorial to two beloved cats of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va. Both cats have died this year. In the foreground is Chip; in the background, looking as if she is wearing suspenders, his sister, Lucie-Jim. Chip died in March and the sorrowing Lucie survived him by only a few months.

5. FAITHFUL GUARDIAN—It seems only right to give Mister Jenks, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins' cherished Boxer dog, a Christmas mention. Mister Jenks constitutes himself the guardian of every kitten born on the Jenkins' Cedar Crest Farm. This picture shows him with his inseparable white companion, Wynkyn.

6. INVENTOR'S NAMESAKE—"Thomas A.," who lived with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Via Jr. of South Boston, Va., died after being struck by a car on Christmas Eve, 1968. His going made Christmas anything but a happy time for Albert and Alice Via. He was named for Thomas A. Edison.

berg makes a statement which I take to mean that no company issued any two-minute cylinders after Edison quit making them in the autumn of 1912. This, however, is not correct.

Indestructible two - minutes were made as late as 1918. The Clarion Company of England made wax two-minute cylinders for several years after that, actually until 1923 or 1924. "Horsie, Keep Your Tail Up" was one of the last two-minute Clarion titles.

Incidentally, Koenigsberg points out that although all Edison cylinders made before the autumn of 1908 are referred to as being of the two-minute type, many of the records made in 1889, and a few years following, played for four or five minutes.

No effort has been made to catalog the cylinders made by Edison distributors who were unable to obtain sufficient quantities from the factory at West Orange. Included in this category would be the many solos and duets that Billy Murray and Matt Keefe sang in 1897 for Bacigalupi Brothers, Edison distributors in San Francisco.

Murray said some of these records were shipped to Hawaii, China, and Japan, but none found their way to Eastern United States, and probably none are still extant. Another distributor made records by an unknown soprano and represented them to be by Mrs. Thomas A. Edison.

I could go on and on writing about Koenigsberg's masterly achievement in producing this badly needed and thoroughly fascinating catalog, but space limitations must prevail. Once more I urge every collector who possibly can do so to invest \$12.95 in this catalog, which almost certainly will become more valuable as time goes on.

Let's do everything in our power to assure that Allen Koenigsberg has not expended his "blood, sweat and tears" at a sacrifice and to encourage him to go forward with the other research projects he has in mind.

Koenigsberg deserves all the applause — and all the support — he can get.

(The End)

P. S. I have not obtained Miss Eleanor Hyde's address, but since the foregoing was written I have found, in the MacMillan Encyclopaedia of Music and Musicians, a mention of John Frederic Von der Heide, who probably was the violinist referred to in this article. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, February 28, 1857, and, besides studying voice, played many instruments. Von der Heide was director of the Buffalo School of Music from 1882 to 1884, then taught at the New York Conservatory of Music. The date of his death is not given.

## DEATH OF THE PIONEER SOPRANO, ELISE STEVENSON

I have learned belatedly and with sorrow of the death of the famous pioneer recording artist, Elise Stevenson, on November 18, 1967, in the South Coast Community Hospital, South Laguna, Calif.

The soprano's maiden name was Elise Stevens, but she changed it to Stevenson for professional work, probably thinking the longer name had a more musical sound. She was born February 9, 1878, in Liverpool, England, and was the daughter of William Stevens, a native of England, and his wife, the former Miss Ann Meehan, who was born in Canada.

Miss Stevenson began making records in 1906, as the protegee of Frank C. Stanley. In the same year she was married to Rusling Wood at the Little Church Around the Corner in New York City. She sang with Stanley until his death in December, 1910, then as a duet partner of Henry Burr and other tenors and as a member of the Lyric Quartet. After the birth of her son, Rusling Wood, Jr., in 1912, she retired from record making and concert work. Her son survives.

The singer lived in East Orange, N.J., for many years, but moved to San Clemente, Calif., in 1950. A death notice in a San Clemente newspaper said that she sang in the beginning of her career with the Metropolitan Opera Company. Her death certificate gives the cause of her death as acute myocardial infarction. She was cremated and her funeral took place November 21, 1967, at Melrose Abbey Cemetery, Orange, Calif.

A biographical sketch of Elise Stevenson was published in *HOBBIES* for February, 1961.

—Jim Walsh

## OLD MECHANICAL BANKS

(Continued from page 52)

extra fine condition of this rare bank is clearly visual in the photo.

Another Try Your Weight Scale turned up, as well as a fine example of the Signal Cabin, both tough tin banks to add to a collection. A Motor Bank, fair condition with the top missing, came to light, as well as another Presto — exterior parts only, all interior operating parts missing. This is the illusion bank where a penny changes into a quarter.

Among new finds during 69 were the World's Banker, Clown & Dog previously mentioned, Indian Chief Bust, Magic Safe, and, of course, Mickey Mouse as per December, 1969, *HOBBIES*. We should also include the Watch Bank (dime disappears), as while this was privately owned, it was not generally known and it changed hands during the year receiving recognition and exposure.

Another example of the Regina Musical Savings Bank showed up, a

Robot, and a near mint Pelican With Rabbit. The excellent original condition of this Pelican With Rabbit makes it worthy of note as evidently the one with the rabbit is the really difficult Pelican to add to a collection.

And last, but certainly not least, we come to Figure 3 and the Tommy Bank. Here again in an outstanding year is an outstanding bank. It is the finest all original Tommy so far known to exist. This bank and the Wimbledon are the two most desirable of the English banks. Together they are a great pair with the soldier in prone shooting position on each. Prior to this Tommy it had been some years since the last one turned up and this bears out the fact that the bank was made in limited quantities during its limited production period.

That about winds up 1969 for now and here's hoping we can all look forward to a great 1970 in mechanical banking.

## GLASS SALT SHAKERS

(Continued from page 115)

ter as having "profuse raised scrolling and cloud bands enhanced by floral motifs of various sorts, sometimes touched up with color or gilt."

Everglades shakers have been noted only in a "clambroth" color with fiery opalescence. Such shakers are difficult to photograph by either direct or indirect illumination. Other items in this pattern have been noted in custard glass and in clear, light blue or light green, with some opalescence.

Iris with Meander

This pattern was produced by the Jefferson Glass Company, beginning in 1904. (See *HOBBIES*, October, 1967, p. 98N.) Items were made in gold decorated: crystal (clear), blue, green, wine, opalescent, and canary.

Isabella

This design is a bust of Queen Isabella of Spain with exquisite detail. Her name is embossed near the base. This shaker, a companion to the Bearded Columbus, apparently commemorates the Columbian Exposition of 1892-3.

These opaque shakers have been observed in blue and in green. Like the Bearded Columbus, they are puzzlingly rare.

Tennessee

This attractive pattern — and the Iowa Pattern — were brought out by the United States Glass Company in 1900. Most items in this pattern are scarce. The shakers apparently are very rare.

—O—

Only one specimen of the rare Arctic bumblebee ever has been found in the world.

—O—

"Art . . . has seven philosophical faces: it is adventure, escape, necessity, creation, individual expression, projection of history, and utilitarian function."

—Felix Marti-Ibanez, M.D.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# The (Premier) American Quartet

PART I  
By JIM WALSH

### I. A Long History

Musical organizations usually undergo changes of personnel if they stay active a long time. That is true of the male-voiced group which was known as Victor records as the American and on Edison as the Premier Quartet.

Use of the American Quartet name on discs and cylinders goes back a long way—into the 1890s. In March, 1899, a pioneer talking-machine trade organ, *The Phonoscope*, mentioned that John Bieling, Jere Mahoney, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hooley, sang for Edison as the Edison Male Quartet, and were later better known on Victor as the Haydn. They also were making records for other companies under the name of the American Quartet.

And in July, *Phonoscope* readers were told that among the artists recording cylinders for Reed, Dawson and Company, of 74 Cortland st., New York, and 516 Broad st., Newark, was "The Original American Quartet." This presumably was the same ensemble as the one referred to in March.

After Harry Macdonough succeeded Mahoney as the Quartet's second tenor, these artists in 1900, had a manufacturing firm of their own, the American Record Company. It specialized in making cylinders of any desired title to the customer's order.

Then, when the Haydn Quartet went to England in 1902, it presumably sang a series of records listed in the Edison Bell catalog as being by the American Quartet. The titles were largely those of numbers which the singers already had made in the States under the Haydn and Edison Male Quartet names. Presumably, these singers were not allowed to make records under the Haydn name for any companies except Victor over here and Gramophone over there.

### II. Early Victor Records by the American

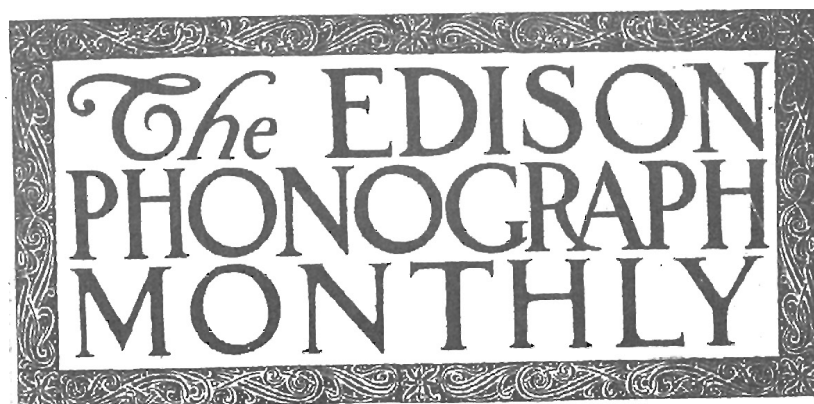
That is one phase of the appearance of the American Quartet name on early records. Another was its use in 1901, on some of the earliest Victor and Monarch discs. The name possibly may have been used also on the 7-inch Berliner and Improved records, which were the forerunners of Victors, but I have not seen it in any Berliner or Improved lists.

The late S. H. Dudley recalled this version of the American Quartet as being composed of himself as baritone; Albert Campbell, first tenor; W. T. Leahy, an Englishman whom he described as a "fine fellow," but about whom nobody seems to know anything nowadays, second tenor; and Hooley, bass.

The October, 1901, Victor catalog contained the following 7-inch discs by the America Quartet:

A916. Medley of Plantation Songs; A911,

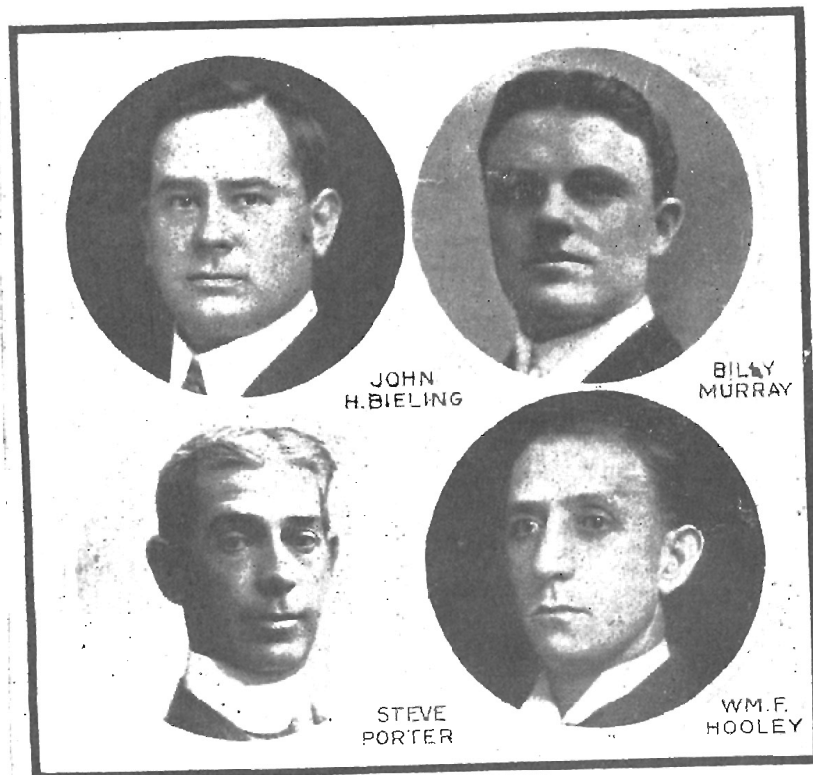
(Continued on page 40)



VOL. VIII

October, 1910

No. 10

JOHN  
H. BIELINGBILLY  
MURRAYSTEVE  
PORTERWM. F.  
HOOLEY

### PREMIER QUARTET

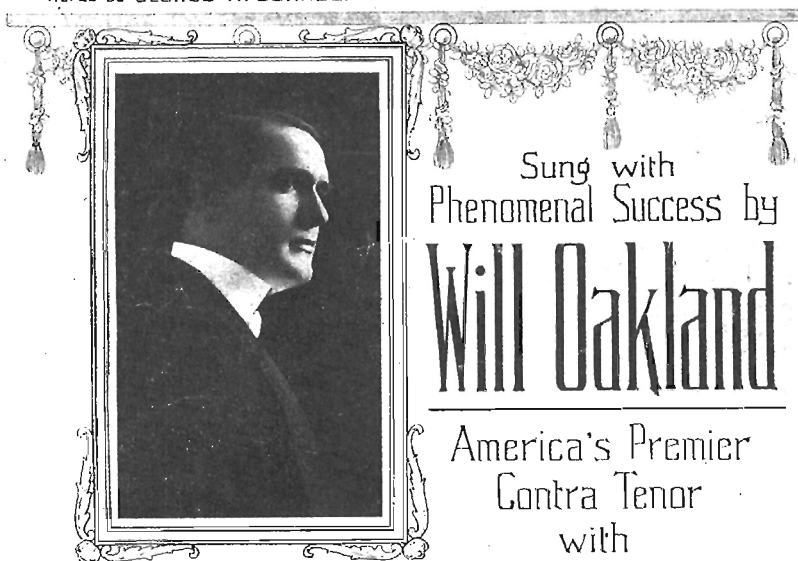
Their Records Are Always Popular Numbers in the Edison Catalog

**QUICK POPULARITY**—The (Premier) American Quartet gained acclaim so rapidly after being organized in 1909 that in October, 1910, the members' photos appeared on the front page of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly*.

# WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG, MAGGIE

Words by GEORGE W. JOHNSON

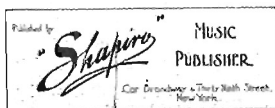
Music by J. A. BUTTERFIELD



Sung with  
Phenomenal Success by  
**Will Oakland**

America's Premier  
Contra Tenor  
with

## COHAN & HARRIS' MINSTRELS



5 SOUTHERN CALIFORNI  
MUSIC COMPANY  
1000 10th St. BROADWAY  
N.Y.C. 10011

TOP TENOR—When Will Oakland's high counter-tenor voice was added to the (Premier) American Quartet the five-man ensemble was called the Heidelberg Quintet.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Dancing on the Old Barn Floor; A912, Darling Nellie Gray; A913, Louisiana Lou; A914, Good Bye, Dolly Gray; A915, In Dixie Land; A916, The Bridge, and A917, Nationality Medley.

When the February, 1902, catalog was issued, "Good Bye, Dolly Gray" and "The Bridge" had been remade by the Haydn Quartet. But the following additional American Quartet titles were included:

42, A Negro Wedding in Southern Georgia; 43, A Night Trip to Buffalo; 1071, Quotation from the Last Speech and Favorite Hymns of President McKinley (another in the series of spurious "McKinley records"); 48, Sidewalks of New York; M3519, The Battle of Santiago; and 1068, The Yale Boola Girl.

All these could be had in both 7- and 10-inch versions, except "The Battle of Santiago," which was 10-inch only.

I suspect that Steve Porter may have taken part in one or more of these records, because I remember seeing him and Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley) credited somewhere with being co-authors of the "Santiago" sketch.

At any rate, although the American Quartet was one of the earliest names in the Victor catalog: it was also one of the first to disappear. By August 31, 1904, the Quartet's records no longer were listed, and its titles that remained in the catalog had been remade by the Haydn Quartet.

An oddity is the fact that I have two or three Monarch records with labels that say they are by the American Quartet, but which Hooley announces as being by the Haydn. Records frequently were remade in those days. My guess is that when Victor assigned the Haydn to re-do the selections, the Company had some labels still on hand with the American name, and put them to thrifty use.

I just have noticed something that previously had escaped my attention. The "Battle of Santiago" was listed in Victor catalogs from 1904 through 1909 as being by the Haydn Quartet. However, the catalog for January, 1910, gives the artists as the American Quartet, just as the lists had, prior to 1904.

I doubt, though, that the "new" American Quartet, which was organ-

ized in 1909, had remade the Haydn versions, for artist credit reverts to the Haydn in the issues for November, 1910, and May, 1911. It could have been the catalog editor's mistake.

### III. The "Big" American Quartet

The American Quartet that disappeared from the catalog in 1904 was not an important part of sound recording history. On the other hand, the ensemble of the same name which was organized in 1909 carved out a lasting niche for itself in the talking-machine's hall of fame.

(Continued on page 50)

### PHONOGRAPHS

OLD PHONOGRAPH catalogs! Beautifully illustrated reprints. For example, 1899 Talking Machine Catalog, 64 pages, only \$2.95 postpaid. Free illustrated list available.—Allen Koenigsberg, 1532 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230 ap6829

MAINSRING repairs for any phonograph. Let a specialist do it. — Keith Frick, 940 Canon Rd., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105 ap3882

FOR SALE: 78 rpm vintage records. Most categories: Caruso, Jolson, Melba, etc. Also Edison disc and cylinders, many to choose from, some Berliner records. Books: Zane Grey, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Bobsey Twins, and many more. Please let me know your wants. No lists, please send self-addressed stamped envelope for reply.—Monroe Sands, 308 S. Ellen St., Homer, Ill. 61849 ap6029

EDISON STANDARD cylinder phonograph, with morning glory horn and 30 records, good condition \$120. Piano rolls \$1 each. Large amount of old sheet music. Banjos, etc. Transportation extra. Write me your wants. — Edward Sheppard, Antiques, Catskill, N.Y. 12414 f1023

PHONOGRAPHS Repaired: New spare parts for Edison phonographs. Send stamp for list. — Gerichten, 23 Waldo Ave., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003 ap3403

### PIANOS AND ROLLS

COLLECTOR will pay top prices for Ampico piano rolls, especially the large Jumbo B Model rolls. — Kuykendall, 2510 Kenmore Ct., Austin, Tex. 78703 f122741

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs & records, open horn disc phonographs, music boxes & discs, piano & organ rolls, player organ, pathe operatic records. — T. Grattello, 2614 Central, Alameda, Calif. my122971

AMPICO rolls original, in black boxes wanted. Mint condition, no torn edges. Up to \$10 each. — Lacy, Caltech Library, Pasadena, Calif. 91109 my123041

\$100 IS YOURS for information which leads to purchase of paper roll-playing piano with pipes, drums, xylophone, etc. — Shaner, 1042 Myrtle, Cumberland, Md. ap6867

OLD PIANO ROLLS for sale. Free monthly lists. Duo-Art Ampico, Welte, blues, foreign, rags, 88-note standards, Aeolian pipe organ & grand. — V.I. & S's Antiques, 28 Clifford Heights, Amherst, N.Y. 14226 f3464

KNABE PIANO. Grand old square, going close to 100 years old. Call (814) 613-0802 or write. — Mrs. Kenneth E. Hileman, 2401 Brumbaugh Ave., Huntingdon, Pa. 16652 f1002

COLLECTOR buys Art Echo, Apollo, Ampico and Duo-Art rolls for own enjoyment. — T. Grattello, 2614 Central, Alameda, Calif. mh3403

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

a contract restricting his services for disc records to Victor and for cylinders to Edison.

For several years he had been singing frequently on Victor records with the assistance of the Haydn Quartet, but now it was decided there was a need for a foursome in which he would star. So John Bieling and Hooley were borrowed from the Haydn Quartet (in which, however, they continued to sing) and Porter was brought in from the Peerless, where he had been singing baritone.

The resulting combination of Bieling, first tenor; Murray, second tenor; Porter, baritone, and Hooley, bass, was christened the American Quartet for Victor use. I don't know why Edison didn't want to use the same name, but it didn't. So the group was called the Premier Quartet on the great inventor's cylinders.

It is interesting to note that Murray, without whom there would not have been a new American Quartet, was much the youngest of the group. He had been born in Philadelphia in 1877, had lived as a boy in Denver, and was 31 when the new group was formed. Bieling, a native of New York City, was hovering around 41; Porter, who was born in Buffalo, N.Y., was 44; and Hooley, born in Ireland, was 47.

Murray must have seemed "just a kid" to the others. They sometimes found his professional behavior rather scatter-brained and irresponsible, even though they conceded he was a genius at interpreting and singing popular music.

The Haydn Quartet's repertoire relied heavily on sentimental ballads, old standard songs, and gospel hymns. But the American was formed to specialize in ragtime, comic songs, and humorous descriptive numbers.

The new Quartet's first record was presented in the Victor monthly supplement for May, 1909. The song, "Denver Town," paid tribute to the pioneer's day of the community in which Billy Murray had spent his boyhood.

One of the countless "cowboy songs," inspired by the great success of Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne's "Cheyenne," was composed by George L. Botsford. He was to arrange most of the songs recorded by the American for several years. The supplement said:

"A new organization of male voices which makes its bid for popular favor with a 'cowboy' number, now quite in vogue. No praise for this new quartet is needed here, as the record speaks for itself—the voices being well-balanced, the words distinct and the music sung with spirit and precision."

"Denver Town" was a 10-inch single-faced record which cost 60 cents. Its number was 5683. A few months later it was combined on double-faced 16521 with a re-make of "A Night Trip to Buffalo." This first had been recorded for Victor by the



**BIELING'S SUCCESSOR** — John Young ("Harry Anthony") took John Bieling's place as first tenor of the (Premier) American Quartet in 1914. Young, who lived until the early 1950s, also sang in the Criterion Quartet.

earlier American Quartet, then remade by the Haydn and now appeared, in a much improved and funnier form, by the new American.

"A Night Trip to Buffalo" has special interest for me because it was the first record I ever heard. I was 2 and being held in my mother's arms when I listened to its sounds emerging from the external horn of a neighbor's Victor. Through all these years I never have forgotten it!

One month after this New American record appeared, Edison also used "Denver Town" as the means of introducing the new Quartet, which it called the Premier, to its cylinder customers. The description in the *New Phonogram* for June, 1909, provides us with a puzzle, as you will discover:

"10155 Denver Town, Premier Quartet . . . Another cowboy song, telling how a cowboy wooed and won his bride. It is sung by a new combination of artists, including Will Oakland, John H. Blehling (sic!), Billy Murray and W. F. Hooley. Unaccompanied. Music, George Botsford; words, Harry Breen."

The puzzling thing about this annotation is that it mentions Will Oakland, the counter-tenor, as one of the members of the Quartet, but omits Steve Porter, the baritone. I never have heard the cylinder of "Denver Town," but Oakland certainly doesn't sing in the Victor disc, and it doesn't appear likely that a quartet would be composed of a counter-tenor, two tenors, and a bass.

Probably the use of Oakland's instead of Porter's name was just a mistake, but it may have been that Porter was missing when the recording date was scheduled, and Oakland was substituted. Of course, two or three years later a good many records were made in which Oakland was added to the American, and the resulting organization was called the Heidelberg Quintet.

I seriously question, however, that my old friend, Will, took part in the Edison cylinder of "Denver Town."

## IV. Recorders of "Hits"

From the start of its recording career the new American Quartet was brilliantly successful. During the five-year period from the announcement of its first record in May, 1909, to John Bieling's leaving in the spring of 1914, the Quartet cut into wax many of the greatest song hits in American musical history, and a large number of its discs and cylinders had sales that were remarkable for that period.

When Victor issued its first alphabetically arranged record catalog in January, 1912, photos of Bieling, Murray, Porter, and Hooley were published, and the following comment was made under the American Quartet heading:

"This popular organization is composed of four singers well known to Victor audiences . . . and who have had a long and successful experience in the making of talking machine records. In their renditions of popular songs of the day and humorous specialties they are unequalled. 'The American Quartet makes disc records exclusively for the Victor.'"

A glance down the list of American Quartet records in the Victor catalog for November, 1914 (issued a few months after Bieling left because of throat trouble), gives a revealing idea of the number of hit tunes it recorded during its first five years.

This is by no means a complete list of the organization's early recordings. It is, however, an accounting of songs sufficiently popular to have been considered hits:

"All Aboard for Dixieland," "And the Green Grass Grew All Around," "Any Little Girl That's a Nice Little Girl," "Baby Rose," "Casey Jones," "Come, Josephine, in My Flying Machine," "Grizzly Bear," "Hitchy Koo," "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," "I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl that Married Dear Old Dad," "Mary Was My Mother's Name," "Moonlight Bay," "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," "On the Banks of the Wabash" (a revival of a great 1898 hit), "On the Mississippi," "Ragtime Violin," "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "Row, Row, Row," "Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay," "That Mysterious Rag," "That Old Girl of Mine," "When I'm Alone I'm Lonesome," and "You're My Baby."

Most of these were made on Edison cylinders 2-minute Standard, 4-minute Amberol, and 4-minute Blue Amberol, as well as Victor discs. Whoever made the decisions as to the songs the Quartet would record proved he knew a hit when he heard one. And George Botsford's arrangements helped them to even greater popularity.

As the Heidelberg Quintet, with the addition of Will Oakland's tree-top high tenor notes the ensemble sang such genuine successes as "By the Beautiful Sea," "Floating Down the River," "Harmony Bay," "In Apple Blossom Time," "In the Heart of the Kentucky Hills," "My Little Lovin' Sugar Babe," "Teasing Moon," "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" (one of the great hits of all time), "Way Down South," and "You're a Great Big Blue-Eyed Baby."

Of all the American Quartet records, "Casey Jones," which swept the Nation in 1910, was the biggest seller. Its popularity was so great it had to be re-recorded twice after the orig-

(Continued on page 130)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

inal version was placed on the market. Walter B. Rogers, the conductor of the Victor Orchestra, sang the baritone part in one of the remakes as a substitute for Steve Porter, who had not received a notice sent him to be present.

*Variety* said in an October, 1940, issue, when Billy Murray was emerging from retirement and making a recording comeback, that the Victor record had sold more than 2,000,000 copies. The Edison version, on both 2- and 4-minute wax cylinders, and the Blue Amberol, must have done almost equally well.

Probably the runner-up to "Casey Jones" was "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," which was issued in November, 1914, after Bieling was no longer in the Quartet. "Tipperary" most likely would have equalled "Casey" except for competition.

Besides the Quartet record, Victor also issued it by John McCormack and a male chorus (probably the Orpheus Quartet), as a march version by the Victor Military Band, and as a 12-inch dance record. The Quartet's record of "Casey Jones" had no such rivalry.

"Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee," of course, was a huge seller. So was "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," among the many others I have mentioned.

Billy Murray used to tell an amusing story about the "Doll" song, which was a favorite of the austere President Woodrow Wilson. One day the Quartet received a disagreeable letter from an irate someone whom Billy (who wasn't a student of literature) remembered as Walt Whitman, the poet. The correspondent began by saying he simply would address them as "sirs" because he couldn't consider them either men or gentlemen. He then demanded, in pungent terms, to know how they could have played false to their artistic consciences by recording "such abysmal trash" as "Oh, You Beautiful Doll." The writer said they should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves and he hoped they wouldn't sing such rubbish any more.

The Quartet laughed over the letter, then dispatched a reply saying that the Victor record of "Beautiful Doll" already had sold half a million copies and the Edison cylinder also was going big. With this sort of a sale, they said, their artistic consciences weren't bothering them in the least.

Billy told this story to me in person in 1938. A few months later he used it on a nationwide radio program. I am sorry I didn't tell him its fatal flaw—that Walt Whitman had died in Camden, N.J., in 1892. This was 20 years before the "Beautiful Doll"

record was made, and therefore he couldn't have criticized it except through a spirit medium or an ouija board.

The indignant letter-writer probably was Walt Mason, who wrote a syndicated newspaper column in verse. He frequently insisted in his column that the phonograph companies would do a much bigger business if they would stop recording comic specialties, ragtime, and Negro songs, and issue nothing but opera, chamber music, and symphony.

Mr. Mason used to expound his quaint ideas in letters to the recording companies. So I have no doubt it was he who took the American Quartet boys to task.

As far as I have learned, no one who heard Billy's broadcast referring to Walt Whitman as writing the letter realized that "the good gray poet" had gone to his glory many years before the irascible writer's communication gave the Quartet a good laugh.

By the irony of how things work out, "Oh, You Beautiful Doll," despite its undeniably crude words and cheaply expressed sentiment, has now perhaps on the strength of its irresistible tune, established itself as a popular song classic.

(To be continued)

### CORRECTION

Through an error in make-up, the following three lines precede column 1, on page 130:

The evidence indicates that the new "big" American Quartet was formed largely because Billy Murray signed

JONE VAN VLEET  
600 33rd St. West Des Moines, Iowa 50265  
LeGras cameo vase, 5" barrel shape, 3" dia., purple cut & enam. flowers on peach, \$65.  
Wheat & Barley cov. butter, creamer, spooner, cov. sugar: clear, few minor chips, \$48.  
King's Crown spooner, \$8.50.  
R.S. Germany, grn. mk., hatpin holder, yel. & white roses on white, brn., & grn, \$18.50  
Deer & Pine Tree bread tray, sm. chip on bottom rim, \$17.  
Single FGMM milk glass plate, grn. paint, \$6.  
Trans. extra, SASE please. fp

### CORNER CUPBOARD

52 N. Main Street

E. Hampton, Conn. 06424

Phone 203 - 267-2678 - By appointment.  
RARIETY in cut glass: Vaseline footed bowl with rolled rim, knob stem, exceptionally fine cut, write. Cut bowl 8 1/2" diam., 3 1/2" h. Daisies, hobstars, cross-hatching, etc. \$38. Lacy Sandwich 8" plate, peacock feather w. thistle & scroll center, \$40.  
Flint goblets: Horn of Plenty \$36; Diamond Pt. \$25; rare Minerva pattern water pitcher, slight base roughness, \$35.  
Roy. Vienna demi-tasse pot, covered sugar, creamer w. Angelica Kauffman scenes, 2 signed, cream, red, green, MUCH gold, excel. cond. Beehive, Austria mark, \$80.  
Staffordshire: Canova soup plate 10 1/2" diam. pink w. green border, T. Mayer, \$20.  
Salt glaze pitcher 8 3/4" h. allover raised design, applied handle, \$40.  
S lopian nides, c/s blue and white deer pattern \$85. Pr. soft paste 6 3/4" blue and white plates, fisherman, cottage scene, \$18 ea. Pr. 6" med. dk. blue plates, R. Hall, Hospital near Palissy, France, \$16 each.  
Porcelain: late 18th, early 19th cent., no mark, white w. baskets of flowers in shades of purple, gold excel. (a) bowl 6 1/2" diam, \$14; pr. c/s w. applied hdlcs., \$12 ea.  
Coin silver: Serving spoon, Richards & Williamson, Phila., Pa. 1790s, excel. cond. \$35; pr. tspns. J. Shoemaker, brite-cut, tips of bowls worn, 1790s, Phila., Pa., \$28 pr.  
Eagles on backs of bowls worn on all three. Tablespoon by Peter & Ann Bateman, London, 1803, \$55.  
List coin & English silver 30c.  
Post. and ins. extra. PLEASE, SASE for replies or check return. fp

### THE DALTONS

95 Ellery St. Providence, R.I. 02909  
Phone 401 - 331-3486

Brass rooster nutcracker, \$5.  
Cute grey and white iron kitty with blue bow doorknob, 8" high, \$10.  
Iron still bank, black & white puppy with bee on rear, \$15.  
Iron cottage door stop, paint flaked some, \$7.50.  
Iron door stop, sm. basket of flowers, 5 1/2" high, flaked, \$4.  
Iron tobacco cutter, National Specialty Mfg. Co., #1, 15" long, original yellow and red trim, \$8.50.  
D... .. porcelain figurine, dog pulling skirt of little girl, \$5.  
Cloisonne cig. box, "China" blue with white flowers, white round jade insert on cover, bottom row of cloisons missing on back, \$6.50.  
Two Chinese figurines, men in green robes, one carrying basket of flowers, one a long pipe, China, \$15 the pair.  
Imari 8" plate, blue vase with terra cotta flowers and butterfly in center, \$12.  
Miniature unglazed gray teapot, 2" high, h.p. cherry branches and sheaf of wheat, rattan hdlc., no mark, \$10.  
Darling Japanese sugar bowl, 4 1/4" high, green handles, Jap. girls chasing butterflies, no mark, \$5.  
Postage and insurance extra. fp

### THE OLD HOUSE

Buzzards Bay, Mass. 02532

Pittsburgh Daisy wine ..... \$6.75  
Horn of Plenty honey dish ..... 7.50  
Loop & Dart Diam. orna. goblet ..... 8.50  
Ripple 6" plate ..... 9.50  
Diag. Band with Fan wine ..... 9.50  
Beaded Swirl Band 10" tray ..... 9.50  
Daisy & Button V orna. celery vase ..... 12.00  
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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# The (Premier) American Quartet

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Mr. Murray's Caprices

As I hinted last month, the other members of the male quartet known as the Premier on Edison records, and as the American on Victor, sometimes found Billy Murray's carefree behavior rather upsetting. This was especially true during spring training time for the major league baseball clubs.

Victor or Edison at that time might send out an emergency call for their star comedian only to find he was no where near the recording studios, but was making the rounds with the New York Yankees (then called the Highlanders) as they played their exhibition games.

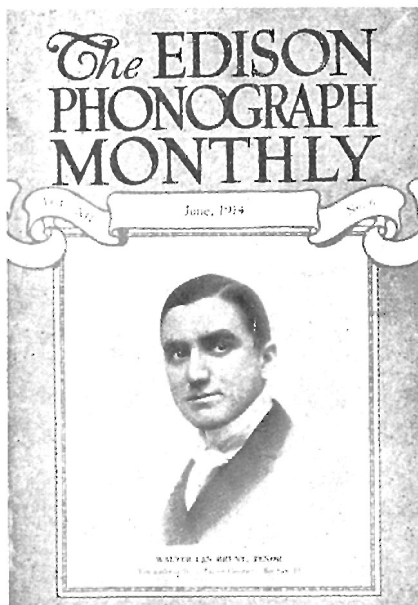
Once in a while the Highlanders let Billy play right field on these jaunts, and then his happiness was beyond computing. He was such a baseball enthusiast that for many years he prided himself on knowing personally every player in the American and National Leagues, and when on tour he was a welcome visitor to the "dug-out" of any big league team.

One result of this happy-go-lucky attitude was that Murray sometimes failed to appear for recording dates and concert engagements, of which the Quartet had a great many in and near New York. When this happened young Walter Van Brunt (he is still living and better known today as Walter Scanlan) was called on to substitute for "The Denver Nightingale."

The 19-year-old Walter sang the lead in the American Quartet's Victor record 16962, "I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl That Married Dear Old Dad," and in 17030, "Mary Was My Mother's Name." He also took part in 17245, "Beautiful Doll, Goodbye," and finished several high notes that Billy began but found, for the time being, beyond his reach.

Harry Macdonough sang the lead in the Quartet record 17397, "On the Banks of the Wabash." I long have wondered why it was not labeled as sung by the Haydn Quartet, of which Macdonough was second tenor. Considerably later, in 1919, George Wilton Ballard took Murray's place in the Edison Diamond Disc of "Mammy's Lullaby" cataloged as being by the Premier Quartet.

The lovable Mr. Murray's proneness to be a "no-show" for concerts was so great that Bieling, Porter, and Hooley made an arrangement with Van Brunt to pay him \$5 each to come to the theater or other place where



**PINCH-HITTER** — Young Walter Van Brunt (known today as Walter Scanlan) sometimes was called on to substitute for Billy Murray in the (Premier) American Quartet.

the concert was to take place and sit in the audience. If Murray appeared, Walter just sat and listened. If the star tenor stayed elsewhere, Van Brunt filled in and received Murray's share of the fee.

Harvey Hindermeyer recalled that one time he went with the Quartet to Albany as second tenor for an engagement that found Murray among the missing.

Once in a while when Billy did show up his attitude was a source of vexation. John Bieling told me a hilarious story of an occasion when the Quartet had an engagement to sing in New York before some sort of group of wealthy men.



**EDISON GROUP**—This photo of the Harmonizers Quartet, which made many Edison records under the Premier Quartet name, appeared in the Victor record supplement for February, 1921. Left to right, members are Charles Hart, first tenor; Billy Jones, second tenor; Steve Porter, baritone, and Harry Donaghy, bass. Jones made Victor records under the assumed name of Victor Roberts.

"They were all millionaires," John said. And he recalled that well in advance of the concert the other members admonished Billy to be sure to come in formal attire, "because these rich guys expect us to be dressed up. They're not looking for a vaudeville quartet with a tramp comedian as one of the members."

"Sure, sure," Billy assured them, "I'll be there all dolled up in my soup and fish."

"But," said John, taking a deep breath and obviously living the experience over again, "he didn't show up at all until about 10 minutes before the show was to start. And, Jim, I wish you could have seen him! He had on a ragged old green sweater and a pair of shabby brown pants caked with grease and mud, and he looked like something no self-respecting cat would have dragged in. Of course, Steve, Bill and I jumped on him and asked what he meant by turning up for a millionaires' concert in a get-up Nat Wills would have been ashamed to wear in his "Happy Tramp" act. And Billy said:

"Well, boys, it was this way. I had some time to kill this afternoon, so I decided to go to my friend Joe's garage and work on my car. I dressed in these old clothes for the occasion. After I got my car fixed another one was brought in that needed some work, and you know me—I'd rather work on a car then eat—so I fixed it, too.

"Then, I started home to change clothes, but on the way I met some boys playing ball in a vacant lot and of course I couldn't pass up a chance to get in the game. The lot was muddy and I did a lot of sliding, so that's why I'm so dirty. Well, by the time the game was over it was too late for me to go home and put on my glad rags, so I just came on here."

"But, Billy," his associates protested, "what good are you going to be to us now? You can't go on the stage before all these rich men looking the way you do!"

"Oh, that's easy," the star tenor replied, "I'll just walk down to the footlights and tell these guys how I happen to be looking the way I do, and they'll eat it up!"

"And," said John, "he did and they did! He strolled down front and told those big shots about the way he had spent time working on cars and then got into a ball game with a bunch of kids when he started home to dress, and they almost fell out of their seats! I never heard men howl so! Billy had them eating out of his hand, and he was a lot bigger hit than if he

had looked like a decent human being! He had such a personality he could pull that sort of a stunt and get away with it, but none of the rest of us could!"

## II. Recordings on English Zonophone

Although Murray's contract permitted him to make solo and duet records for the American Zonophone Company, which was operated by Victor, the Quartet seems not to have sung for Zon-o-phone on this side of the Atlantic. Some of its recordings, however, were issued in England on discs, and most of its Edison cylinders sold well abroad.

I have a copy of HMV Record 2-4029, "That Hypnotizing Man," issued in Great Britain in 1912, which has the Victor record number, 17031A cut into it. Unlike the American version, it is single-faced.

Late in 1913, The British Zonophone Company began to splurge with reissues of records originally made in the States for Victor. In November, on 1163, it combined "And the Green Grass Grew All Around" with "Mary Was My Mother's Name" and bragged with a fine disregard of the literal truth:

"Absolutely and unreservedly exclusive to Zonophones! The name may look like some complicated names concocted by competitive firms to mislead you, but listen to the record and you'll hear the difference! The four famous singers have no equal in the world for part singing and make no disc records but Zonophones. Remember the simple name — American Quartet. There's not a pin to choose between the two exhilarating titles they open the ball with: for effective and pointed singing, clear diction, and general brightness and 'go' there's not a record on the market to beat 1163. And it's exclusive, let us repeat."

In February, 1914, Zonophone combined on 1228 the American Quartet version of "On the Banks of the Wabash" with "Goodbye, Summer," by the rival Peerless Quartet. On the American side the supplement said:

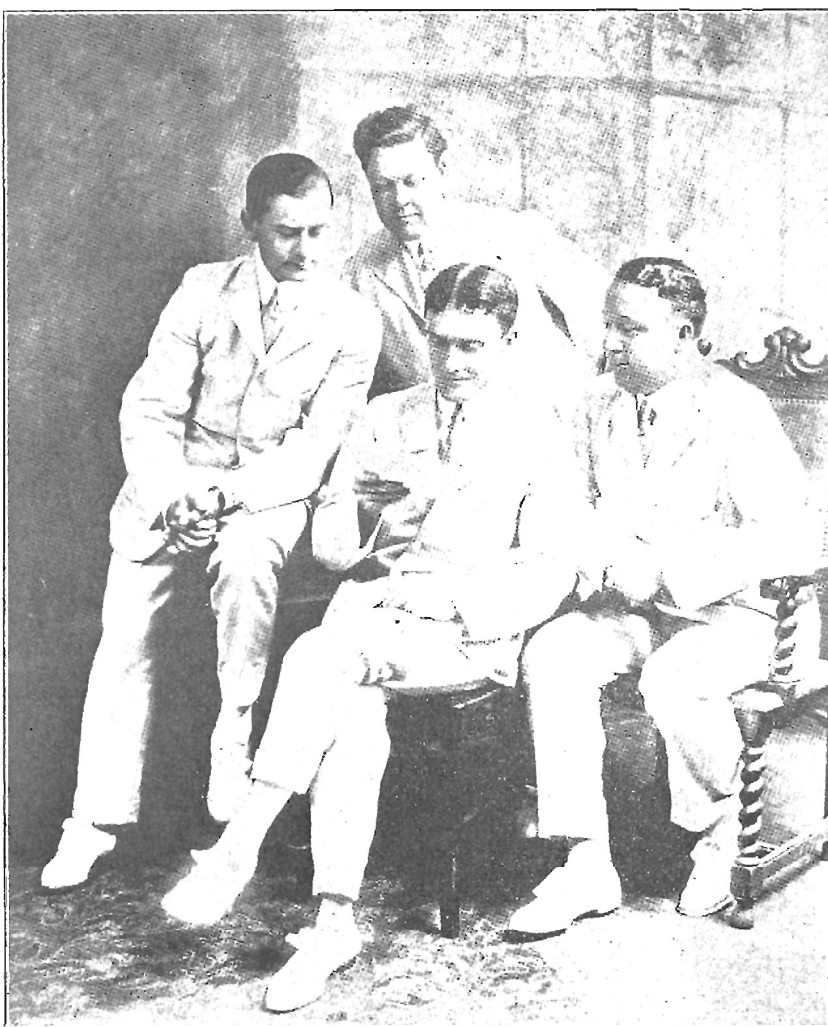
"The finest vocal quartet in the world—the American Quartet, exclusive to Zono—are responsible for the harmonious 'On the Banks of the Wabash.'"

In the same supplement Ada Jones and Billy Murray were called "perhaps the finest comedy duettists in the world," which, no doubt, they were, if only "mixed teams" were being considered. Zonophone ceased to import Victor matrices after World War I began, a few months later.

## III. John Young Succeeds Bieling

I mentioned last month that first tenor John Bieling—known to his associates as "The Canary," because, as Billy Murray said, "he never blasted"—stayed with the Quartet for five years but was compelled to leave in the spring of 1914 because of throat trouble. His last records as a member of the Haydn Quartet seem to have been two issued in April—17544, "The Woman Thou Gavest Me" and 17545, "Cross the Great Divide (I'll Wait for You)." His final American Quartet record was announced in May—17554, "Do You Take This Woman for Your Lawful Wife?"

It is likely, however, that he also sang in the Heidelberg Quintet record



## The Criterion Quartet

Come in and Hear Them Sing "Lucky Jim"—  
Ask For It

TENOR AND BASS—Two of the members of the Criterion Quartet also sang in the (Premier) American. John Young (center, holding music) took John Bieling's place, and Donald Chalmers, at extreme right, became the bass when William F. Hooley died in 1918. Other members were Horatio Rensch, tenor, and George W. Reardon, baritone.

This photo is reprinted from the back cover of the *Edison Amberola Monthly* for October, 1921.

17560, "By the Beautiful Sea," which was held back until August for appropriate summer-time issue. It contains what I consider the trickiest line in any popular song: "I Want to be beside your side, beside the sea, beside the sea-side, by the beautiful sea."

Just possibly he was also in two Quintet sides couped in August on 17599, "They're On Their Way to Mexico" and "Across the Rio Grande." Both songs referred to border troubles the United States was having with Mexico.

Bieling's place was taken by John Young, then better known as the tenor of the gospel hymn-singing duet team of "Harry Anthony and James

F. Harrison," whom Billy Murray used to refer to facetiously as "the Come to Jesus Twins." Young also sang in the Criterion Quartet, whose other members then were Horatio Rensch, second tenor; George W. Reardon, baritone; and Donald Chalmers, bass.

No announcement of the change in personnel was made when Bieling quit to become a traveling salesman for a Victor distributor in New York, but the following appeared in the March, 1915, issue of *The Voice of the Victor*:

"John H. Bieling, who has been a member of the road staff of the New York Talking Machine Company . . . for the past year, resigned from his position



**FINAL PHASE**—This grouping shows the American Quartet in its final phase (1920-1925), when it was the same as the Peerless, except that Billy Murray was substituted for Henry Burr to sing with Campbell, Croxton, and Meyer.

recently in order to enter business himself as a Victor dealer. Before commencing work in the retail field Mr. Bieling will take a short vacation, which he has well earned after his many years of active participation in the talking machine industry."

Bieling opened a Victrola shop in Hempstead, N.Y., and operated it until he retired.

In November, 1913, shortly before Young succeeded Bieling, Edison formally introduced the Diamond Disc phonographs and records. The Edison Company naturally wanted to offer Diamond Discs by Billy Murray and the Premier Quartet, but was unable to do so at first because Murray was under exclusive contract to Victor (and, by extension, Zonophone) for discs, and was allowed to sing for Edison only on cylinders.

It required some time to persuade Victor to renegotiate his contract. At length this was done, and Murray's first Edison discs, "California and You," "I'm Goin' Back to Louisiana," and "My Creony Melody," appeared late in 1914.

The Premier Quartet's first Dia-

mond Discs — 50233, "Tennessee, I Hear You Calling Me"; 50245, "I'm On My Way to Dublin Bay"; and 50258, "Moonlight Bay" — appeared a few months later. From then until Murray signed an exclusive Victor contract in 1920, the Quartet was a prominent feature in both Edison Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinder lists.

Of course, the Quartet had been making the cylinders all along. It is worth noting that its Standard cylinder 10575, "Skeleton Rag," was the last 2-minute record Edison issued before discontinuing the 2-minute series in November, 1912.

The combination of Young, Murray, Porter, and Hooley remained intact until "Bill" Hooley, who was born in Cork, Ireland, April 16, 1861, died in a New York City hospital, October 12, 1918. He had remained active until a few weeks before his death, and filled his last Victor recording engagement on August 1, 1918.

Like the earlier group, the revised Quartet recorded and helped to make

popular many songs that were recognized as hits. Its first Victor record, 17639, "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," issued in November, 1914, probably was its biggest seller, but "Tipperary" must have had a run for its money from 17652, "When You Wore a Tulip and I Wore a Big Red Rose," which came out in December.

The Quartet's other hit titles included "America, I Love You"; "Chinatown, My Chinatown"; "Gasoline Gus and His Jitney Bus"; "Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, France"; "Keep Your Head Down, Fritzie Boy"; "Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny, Oh"; "On the 5:15"; "Over There"; "Where Do We Go from Here?" and a revival of "You're a Grand Old Flag." Virtually all its records could be considered big sellers.

#### IV. Don Chalmers Becomes the Basso

Hooley's death made it necessary to find another bass, and Donald Chalmers, who sang with Young in the Criterion Quartet, was chosen. The new group's first Victor Record did not go on the market until July, 1919. It was a Theodore Morse composition, "Lullaby Blues," and was followed in September by "Anything Is Nice If It Comes From Dixieland."

Meanwhile, Billy Murray's 10-year joint contract with Victor and Edison expired early in 1919. He decided not to renew it, but to free-lance, since some singers, like Henry Burr, who worked for virtually all the numerous record companies of the day on a free-lance basis, were doing better financially than he.

The Quartet also free-lanced and sang not only for Victor and Edison, but many other companies, including Columbia, Pathe, Aeolian-Vocalion, Emerson, Gennett, Okeh—just about all that were of any consequence, excluding Brunswick, whose recording activities began late in 1919. Most companies called them the Premier-American Quartet, a combination of their Victor and Edison names, but Columbia used both American and Premier-American, and Okeh preferred American Quartet.

On the Aeolian-Vocalion record of "Anything Is Nice If It Comes From Dixieland," it was called the Murray Quartet. This shows the Company believed that without Murray there really would have been no Quartet.

#### V. Advent of the Harmonizers

The ensemble with Chalmers as the deep-voiced "foundation" remained active for only about a year, when Murray was offered a lucrative exclusive Victor contract in the summer of 1920. The Peerless Quartet also was signed exclusively, and under the terms of the new arrangement it was provided that the American Quartet would be the same as the Peerless of Campbell, Burr, Meyer, and Croxton, except that Murray would sing the lead in the place of Burr.

The last Victor record by the group that included Chalmers was "Floatin' Down to Cotton Town," issued in Jan-

(Continued on page 44)

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2. Early French Fashion. 19" t., finest pale bisque swivel neck head on bisque shoulders, unmarked, a real lady doll, blue paperweight glass eyes, closed mouth, pierced ears, old blonde human hair wig with orig. pale blue satin hat with flowers, old black and white checked wool dress, completely dressed even to the shoes, all hand stitched kid leather body in fine cond., separate toes and fingers with wires, a gem.
3. Marked E. D. 28½" tall, large composition jointed body in fine condition, lovely bisque head w huge blue paperweight glass eyes, closed mouth, pierced ears, dark brown human hair wig with long curls, completely dressed in pink cotton print dress, old shoes, jointed wrists, impressed E 13 D on head, boot shoes with girl and Depose trademark, a lovely large doll.
4. Marked Tete Jumeau. 15" tall, bisque head w closed mouth, pierced ears, blue paperweight glass eyes, marked "Depose Tete Jumeau Bte. SGD" in red on back of head, good composition jointed body, jointed wrists, body marked "Jumeau Medaille d'Or Paris," completely dressed in white cotton dress, old shoes, good auburn human hair wig, a sweet doll.
5. Marked Jumeau Fashion. 17½" tall, fine bisque swivel neck head on bisque shoulders, blue paperweight glass eyes, pierced ears, puffed dark brown human hair wig, good all kid leather hand stitched body w. body marked "Jumeau Medaille d'Or Paris," separate fingers and toes with wire, head has red Jumeau check mark, dressed in cotton dress, red top and tan plaid bottom, cute high button shoes, closed mouth.
6. Marked Phoenix Bebe. 20" t., has impress-

ed star and No. 93 on bisque head, closed mouth, blue paperweight glass eyes, pierced ears, auburn human hair wig, fine jointed composition body, jointed wrists, completely dressed in navy blue wood sailor outfit complete even to shoes.

7. Marked Eden Bebe. 19" t., bisque head impressed "Eden Bebe Paris L." closed mo., pierced ears, blue paperweight glass eyes, brown human hair wig, fine composition jointed body, jointed wrists, completely dressed in old white cotton eyelet dress w. blue underdress, old shoes, very nice doll.
8. French Fashion. 18½" t., beautiful bisque swivel neck head on bisque shoulders, unmarked, pierced ears, closed mouth, blue paperweight glass eyes, old original blonde human hair wig, dressed in old blue wool suit, all kid leather hand stitched body, separate toes and fingers with wires, old shoes, a very beautiful fashion doll.
9. Marked Depose 8. 17" t., a fine early Jumeau doll with only the word Depose 8 impressed on neck, fine bisque head with brown paperweight glass eyes, closed mo., pierced ears, good compo. jointed body, jointed wrists, original auburn human hair wig with ribbon, old checked black and white dress, old shoes.
10. Marked Mascotte. 17" t., bisque head has large letter M impressed on neck, closed mouth, pierced ears, brown paperweight glass eyes, fine composition jointed body, jointed wrists, dressed in lavender satin trimmed in lace with a maroon bow, old shoes, auburn human hair wig.
11. Marked F. G. 12" t., marked impressed F 4 G on head, fine bisque head, closed mouth, pierced ears, human hair wig, good composition jointed body, jointed wrists, white cotton dress, old shoes.
12. Marked Tete Jumeau. 20½" t., marked "Depose Tete Jumeau Bte. SGD" in red on bisque head, brown human hair wig, closed mouth, pierced ears, good composition jointed body, jointed wrists, pink cotton dress with fancy ecru lace collar, dressed even to old shoes with girl and Depose trademark, body marked "Jumeau Medaille d'Or Paris."

Visit the Cedar Rapids, Iowa Antique Show on April, 9, 10, 11, 12. mhc

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

uary, 1920. The first by the drastically revised Quartet was "Stop! Look! Listen!" which came out in January, 1921.

Meanwhile, Murray's new Victor contract made it necessary for Edison to obtain another quartet to take the place of the Premier combination of Murray, Young, Porter, and Chalmers. So Edison formed an ensemble composed of Charles Hart, first tenor; Billy Jones, second tenor; Porter, baritone; and Harry Donaghy, bass.

These singers were known as the Harmonizers or Harmonizers Quartet on other makes of records, but since Edison retained the right to the Premier Quartet title, they became the Premier on Edison and their records were lumped together in the catalog with those that had been made by the Murray-dominated organization.

Those by the separate quartets may be distinguished as follows:

All Edison discs by the Premier Quartet up to and including 50601, "Alexander's Band Is Back in Dixieland" were by the old group.

All, beginning with 50607, "Floatin' Down to Cotton Town," were by the Harmonizers, excepting 50644, "Hippity Hop," in which Murray sings the lead; 50944, "Huckleberry Finn," which had been sung by Murray Young, and Hooley in 1917, but was not issued until 1922, and 50750, "Land of Minstrelsy," by the Premier Quartet Minstrels. This combination seemed to have been the one in which Chalmers sang with the addition of George Wilton Ballard and Edward Meeker.

Perhaps I should mention that several records by the Harmonizers, masquerading as the Premier Quartet, were issued on Blue Amberol cylinders, but not on discs. These were: 4185, "Down in Chinatown"; 4207, "Lindy"; 4112, "Polly"; 4163, "Sally Green"; and 4126, "Sunny Southern Smiles."

I am puzzled by another cylinder, 4540, "Blacksmith Rag." This was issued in 1922, when few ragtime songs were being written, and may have been something by the original Premier Quartet, which, like many other Edison recordings, was kept in the files for years before being issued. I never have heard it or I would know the answer.

Edison ceased to use the Premier Quartet name after 1922, when the Harmonizers apparently disbanded. They never had become widely popular.

## VI. The American's Final Phase

There seems no need of discussing in detail the Victor discs made by Murray, Campbell, Meyer, and Croxton as the American Quartet. They sang some big-selling records—"Carolina in the Morning"; "In the Little Red School House"; "Strut, Miss Liz-

(Continued on page 124)



## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 50)

in the 1883-84 Season when the Metropolitan first opened. It was Sembrich, also, who did Lakme during the 1906-07 Season! and de Hidalgo was the Amina, April 2, 1910, before Barrientos took over.

After leaving New York, the prima donna made operatic appearances in France and Monte Carlo, concertized extensively, and then taught singing at the Conservatory of Buenos Aires from 1939 to 1945.

A year later, Maria Barrientos passed away in Paris, France, at 63, August 8, 1946.

These O.A.S.I. LP's are nice collections of Barrientos' Columbia recordings. But they would have been even nicer if the pitch were given correctly all the way through, and not set sharper, in a number of instances, than the pitch in which the selections were originally recorded.

— 0 —

## CONCHITA SUPERVIA



Might as well go Spanish all the way and conclude with Supervia, whose records seem to sell like the proverbial hot cakes.

CONCHITA SUPERVIA — O.A.S.I. 524, Volume IV. Address and price as above: Side I — 1. Mal de Amores (Serrano) 2. La Farigola (Verdaguer) 3. Juena (Lopez) 4. Vidalita (Lugones) 5. Pandereleta Andulaza (Ochoa) 6. Solea (Prado). Side II — 1. Lola la Manola de Escayola (Cotarelo) 2. El Amor Es Como Un Nino (Nin) 3. La Del Panuel Rojo (Tabuyo) 4. Las Meninas (Capella) 5. Cantiga (Marques de Santillana) 6. Porque Me Beso (Alcazar).

I've said all I had to say about the gorgeous Conchita before. So, as the one and only Ethel Barrymore once so well put it: "That's all there is, there isn't any more."

FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 44)

zie"; and "Old McDonald Had a Farm," are examples. But the Quartet, in its final phase, never had the popularity of its forerunners.

This was perhaps, partly because Billy Murray's popularity declined sharply a few years after he became an exclusive artist. It also was partly because, during most of the ensemble's active period, record sales were declining owing to the craze for radio.

The last American Quartet apparently made no electrically recorded discs. Victor introduced its first electric records in June, 1925; and the American's final record, 19680, "Alabama Bound," did not appear until August. It was made by the acoustic method and must have been withheld several months before being announced. It had been cut from the catalog by October 1, 1926.

At that time the Peerless Quartet personnel had been changed almost completely. Campbell, Meyer, and Croxton had given way to Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman, and James Stanley, with whom Murray did no quartet work.

Curiously, some of the "last ditch" American Quartet records sound to my ears more as if they had been made by Young, Murray, Porter, and Chalmers than by the later group. It sounds to me, for instance, as if Young, rather than Campbell, sings first tenor in "The Brown High Blues" and "The Little Red School House"; and the bass seems more like Chalmers than Croxton.

It may have been that these records were made at a time when the Peerless Quartet personnel was unavailable, and Murray was teamed with members of the Criterion Quartet. Or it may be my ears are tricking me.

The American Quartet's career lasted for 16 years, from 1909 through 1925. During that time, throughout its different phases, it made its mark as one of the greatest of popular singing organizations, and as long as acoustically recorded discs and cylinders exist it probably will have many admirers and collectors.

I hope before long to write a his-

tory of the Haydn Quartet. For the time being its earliest days are shrouded by so much obscurity I hesitate to undertake the task. But if I ever find out what association those obscure gentlemen, Fred Rycroft and Charles Belling, had with the Quartet in the late 1890s I shall undertake to tell all I know about the Haydn.

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Commemorative Mug "Peace 1919" showing scenes of war and peace 2 1/2" h. \$8.

Comm. pressed glass deep dishes. Pr. 9" diam., "The 60th Year of Queen Victoria's Glorious Reign" crown in middle w crossed sceptre and sword. Perf. one \$15; One with sm. chip on edge, \$10.

Doulton Lambeth 9" h. pitcher. Chocolate & tan colored relief pattern. Medallion showing early sailing vessel and decorative scrolls. "Christopher Columbus" & "Sighted America October 12, 1492". Impressed mark & #8693.

Minute flake under spout & tiny chip on base rib, unnoticeable. Collector's item, \$30.

Doulton Art Nouveau 8" h. vase. Beautiful green mottled & blue & green relief pattern under heavy glaze. Imp. mark & sgd. by potter, \$18.

Doulton bulbous vase 4" h. & wide. Imp. mark & potter's initials. Dark blue 1" band arnd. rim then small light blue hearts in band. Overall gilded curlicue design. Unique piece, \$16.00.

Satin Glass oil lamp white shading to lemon. Base 4 1/2" h., 3 1/4" w. brass fitting for chimney 1" h. Nicely paneled & pinched in near base, \$40.

Knife Rests set of 4 in velvet lined case. Silver plate heavy dumbbell shape, \$15.

Gaudy Dutch or Welsh? very fine beautifully decorated cup & saucer. Cup has hairline age crack in base, only noticeable from underside. Lots of dark blue & lustre. Carnation patt. \$28.

Lap Desk of rosewood with inlaid brass corners & name plate. 20x10 1/2 x 8 1/4". The key is missing & the top has wood-drying crack. Concealed drawer in false bottom is opened by one of the brass handles on side. Very interesting, \$50.

Basket of vaseline glass shading to opal. white cased rubina. Silver plated holder 7" across. \$35.00.

Kate Greenaway hand-painted scenes on 5" diam. old silk dollies, with 1" handmade lace border. 11 diff. scenes, ea. one a beautiful group of delicately painted children. 11 dollies ea. \$12.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Harriet and George Atwood



**OLDEST LIVING PIONEER RECORDING ARTIST**—The January *HOBBIES* contained a photograph of Mrs. Harriet Atwood who is almost certainly the oldest living recording artist. It was taken on her 100th birthday in the Richmond, Va., nursing home where she has lived for several years. Mrs. Atwood's 105th birthday is March 23, 1970.

#### I. Hobbies Kindles A Friendship

As I often have remarked, "It's strange how things work out!"

Most readers of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* will remember that we published, in the January, 1970, issue, a photograph of Mrs. Harriet Atwood, who lives in the Terrace Hill Nursing Home, Richmond, Va.

In commenting upon the picture, basing my statements on published accounts, I said Mrs. Atwood may have been the first person to record experimentally for Thomas A. Edison in 1887 or 1888 after he produced his first phonograph for playing wax cylinder records.

I also said that, at the time she recorded, Mrs. Atwood was a young music teacher, Miss Harriet Haddon, who later married Edison's assistant, George Atwood. He had persuaded her to make the records. Finally, I said Mrs. Atwood would be 105 years of age on March 23, 1970, a longevity

#### PART I

By JIM WALSH

achievement which surely must make her the oldest surviving pioneer recording artist.

After the article appeared, I mailed a copy of *HOBBIES* to Mrs. Atwood, thinking she would enjoy seeing her printed likeness. Because of advanced age and impaired health, she is not able to engage in correspondence, but the Magazine and my accompanying letter were given to Mrs. Atwood's daughter, Mrs. Samuel (Margaret) Keil of Richmond, Va.

I was surprised and delighted to receive, while I virtually was snowbound the day after Christmas, a warmly worded 3-page letter from Mrs. Keil. She thanked me for the attention I had paid to her mother, and gave much fascinating information about both her parents.

At once it occurred to me I should write another *HOBBIES* article for the sake of historical interest and tell more about Mr. and Mrs. Atwood. I immediately suggested to Mrs. Keil that I do this. She agreed.

We since have carried on a constant correspondence, during which she has told me many things not only about George and Harriet Atwood, but concerning herself and her surviving sister and brother. She also has corrected some errors I made in January because I relied upon other published material. This article is the result of our collaboration and the friendship that was kindled by my January contribution.

In presenting the first installment of the Atwood series, I will rely largely upon quotations from Mrs. Keil's letters. However, I reserve the right to skip from one paragraph to another without regard for chronological order, and to make occasional changes in wording where, writing in haste, her phrasing was a bit repetitious. I also plan to quote a brief, unfinished, autobiographical sketch which Mrs. Atwood began at the age of 98.

Here goes, then, for excerpts from Mrs. Keil's first letter:

#### II. Mrs. Keil's Letter

"Dear Mr. Walsh:

"I found your envelope containing the *HOBBIES* magazine, along with your letter and very welcome Christmas greetings to my dear mother, Mrs. Harriet Atwood. Since she is too old and feeble to answer, I shall try to do my best.

"There are a few corrections to be made. . . . My mother's maiden name was Harriet Hedden, not Hadden, or Haddon. She was born March 23, 1865, in Orange, N.J. She was married before she was 18 and was a widow when she was 21.

"At the time she went to Edison's Laboratory she was the widow of Charles

Brokaw. My mother and father married approximately in 1889. My oldest brother was born May 23, 1892, but there had been a baby born before who died in infancy.

"My brother, Robert Atwood, now is living in Kingsport, Tenn.; is an artist, and plays the 'cello. I, the youngest one in the family, was born February 9, 1898.

"It is true that my father worked with Thomas Edison. Father had a pack of letters written to him by Mr. Edison, which inadvertently were left in the attic of a home in Newark that was demolished shortly afterwards.

"There was also a picture of my father, with Mr. Edison and Samuel Insull, taken in front of the laboratory. They were standing in front of the old trolley car chassis, which is still there, but that picture also has been lost.

"Some months ago I wrote to the curator of the Edison Laboratory Museum to inquire if they had more information about my mother and father. They had no record that my mother had made any recordings, but informed me my father had a very important position there. He had charge of the machine shop, with 12 or 14 men working for him.

"The Museum sent me a copy of their payroll dated September 12, 1889. At that time my father was earning \$36 per week, working 60 hours at 60 cents per hour.

"The lowest paid man received 10 cents per hour. Working 62 hours he received \$6.20 per week. The highest paid machinist received 27.2 cents per hour. One man worked 68.2 hours and received \$18.84. Another worked 79 hours, at the same rate, and received \$21.74. Still another worked 75 hours at 25 cents per hour and received \$18.75. So it appears that my father earned a fabulous salary at that time, and he was only 25 years of age.

"It is true my father, who was born in Rushville, N.Y., helped Mr. Edison perfect the phonograph. When it appeared they had it to the point of perfection. Mr. Edison said he wished they could get someone to play into the piano to test its results. My father then told him there was a young piano teacher living down the street, so my father was sent to bring Mrs. Brokaw to the laboratory.

"One published account has it that mother played 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' but I have no way of knowing how true this is. She might just have played that as an experiment. However, mother did considerable composing and one of her numbers is 'American Triumphant March,' which was dedicated to Edison.

"I have in my possession her handwritten manuscript. She never had any of her compositions published. She has told me she played this composition for an Edison recording, but I doubt if any of her recordings ever were commercialized; maybe they just were used for experimental purposes."

Here I cease to quote Mrs. Margaret Keil for the moment to say, I doubt Mrs. Brokaw (later Atwood) rendered "Mary Had a Little Lamb" for Edison. If it was done, the inventor probably suggested jokingly that she play it because the nursery rhyme about Mary and her lamb was the first thing he recited into his original tinfoil phonograph.

It may be that the writer of that published story knew Edison had recited the verse and decided it would





FIRST HUSBAND—Mrs. Harriet Atwood is shown in this old tintype picture, made about 1885, with her first husband, Charles Brokaw, and their baby daughter, Clara. It was taken two or three years before she recorded for Edison.

be a suitable number to represent Mrs. Atwood as having played.

Mrs. Keil's sister, Mrs. Irene Atwood Branin, who, with her husband, Franklin H. Branin, operates the Branstone Studio in Stanhope, N.J., also doubts the "Mary Had A Little Lamb" story. On January 13 she wrote to me:

"Dear Mr. Walsh:

"My sister, Mrs. Keil, has sent me copies of your letter regarding the article about my mother, Mrs. Atwood. We are very much interested in it and have written to subscribe to HOBBIES and have four copies of the January issue sent to us so that our children can enjoy it also.

"I do not recall any other information about the recording, but do agree that Mother would have played something much more important than 'Mary Had A Little Lamb.' This is a story that has come out recently. But the march she composed was the one played for Mr. Edison.

"Mother has given us the rich legacy of a musical family. All of her great-grandchildren play different instruments at family gatherings in a family orchestra.

"Thanking you for your interest in our dear mother, I am,

"Very truly yours,

Irene Atwood Branin."

Having gone thus far with quotations from the letters of Mrs. Atwood's daughters, I now shall devote a separate section to getting into print the remarkable old lady's unfinished autobiographical sketch.

### III. Mrs. Atwood's Manuscript

"I was born March 23, 1865, and was one of 7 children, but only two of us lived—my sister, 11 years older, and I. My mother and father were both gray. I never saw them otherwise.

"My mother had her hair parted in the center with a pretty wave. My father had grown a long white beard and rather long hair on his head, which I used to braid and tie with red ribbons. They were a fine looking couple. The youngsters used to call him Santa Claus.

"God gave a talent for music and I can't remember the time I couldn't play. We had an organ, and before I took a lesson I played by ear everything I heard.

"I played in a school for the youngsters to march in and out of school, and after a while I started taking music lessons, which was hard, as I had played by ear so long. But with hard work I did learn to play by note, and though I still play by ear I also read and play by note.

"I seemed to have a little talent for composing, and if I had written down all the melodies that entered my mind, they would run into the hundreds. As I grew

older I did write some music; but, being so busy, I couldn't spend too much time in writing music.

"My mother was a hard-working woman, and after two years of high school I decided it was my duty to get busy and make some money and help my dear mother. My Aunt Mary kept boarders, and one of her daughters did dress making, and I went to learn dressmaking.

"In the meantime, I had a cousin who wanted me to teach her to play, so I gradually had more pupils, and when my time with my cousin was up I could make a dress. I made my own dresses, and I soon got busy making dresses for others. It all lifted a load off my mother's shoulders, and eased my conscience.

"My precious mother and I were real pals through life, and I always have felt she had an undeveloped talent for music. Evidently she passed a wee bit onto me. How I love it, and how I thank God for helping me still to play though I am 98."

Unfortunately, that is where Mrs. Atwood's incompleting manuscript ends. I hope all of you who have read it find it as charming as I did, especially the pen picture of her mother, and of her father who had the long white beard that made youngsters call him "Santa Claus."

### IV. Mrs. Atwood's Ancestry

Now I resume quoting from Mrs. Keil. The following is from her letter of December 31, in reply to the one I wrote her. It contains some information about Mrs. Atwood's ancestry that will be of special interest to students of genealogy:

"Dear Mr. Walsh:

"I was as surprised and pleased to receive your letter as you were to receive mine. I had no idea it would be of such value. Your letter really was like receiving an orchid.

"That story referring to 'Mary Had a Little Lamb'—I have no idea who the reporter was, but I do believe the interview was at a time when my sister Clara was alive, and at that time both my mother and sister knew what they were talking about. Clara was the daughter born of my mother's first marriage, to Charles Brokaw, but Clara was just about the dearest sister one ever could have. She was about five when mother remarried, so I am sure she would have known what had been talked about in her early years. I doubt if any of the young reporters down here would have known about Edison and his speaking that poem into the phonograph, as I never had heard of that myself.

"However, since it is more than a coincidence, I feel sure that mother must have played that tune when she made her first 'sample' for Mr. Edison. As I know my mother, she most likely would have asked him what he wanted her to play, and undoubtedly he might have suggested 'Mary Had a Little Lamb.'

"If the music had not been composed and copyrighted at that date, I would not be surprised if my mother might not just have played that tune herself. I cannot prove this, but since there always had been good music in our home as long as I can remember, I can remember that tune and the words as long as I remember anything.

"I think I was about 5 when we lived in a large house in East Orange. There always was company, all musical people, gathering at our home, and each one performed his or her art.

"I am getting together various pictures, etc., to send to you. There is one picture of my father. I believe it was taken about the time he worked for Edison. He was quite a handsome man, and a 'dandy.'

"If you are able to print this picture, would you be able to make up one or two for me? I would like to send one to the Edison Laboratory Museum, as they are making a collection of photos of Edison and his friends.

"Another is a tintype picture of my mother with her first husband, with Clara as a baby. It was not long after that picture was taken that Charles



**YOUNG ENGINEER** — George Atwood, age about 25, when he was in charge of Thomas A. Edison's machine shop, earning a princely \$36 for a 60-hour week. This picture was made around the time he married a young widow, Harriet Brokaw.



**ANOTHER ANNIVERSARY**—Mrs. Harriet Atwood on her 103rd birthday, with her daughter, Mrs. Margaret Keil.

Brokaw died, so this will give you some idea what my mother looked like when she first played for Edison. This is a keepsake in the family, as it is an only one, so I surely would like to have these returned.

"I also have found two pictures taken of my parents when they were about 65. They are both good pictures. My father died in 1933.

"There is something a little special

about my mother, a fact that she never has known all her life. The only thing she knew about her ancestors was that one of her great-great (etc.) grandfathers was a Scotchman.

"Little has she known she had some very illustrious grandparents. I only have learned about this within the past five years, when I learned the names of some of the ancestors and borrowed a copy of 'The Lyon Memorial' from a

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*By Harriet Atwood*

I was born on March 23rd 1884 and was one of seven children but only two of us lived my whole life span older than my brother and father were both young men when we were born. They both had their hair parted in the center with a pretty wave. My father had grown a long white beard and mother long hair on her head with a French braid and the white ribbon and they were a fine looking couple. The youngsters used to call him Santa Claus. God gave me a talent for music and I can remember the time that I could play and had an organ and before I took a lesson, I played by ear everything. I played in school for the youngsters to march and out of school and after a while I started taking piano lessons which was hard having played by ear and singing but with hard work I could learn to play by note and while I still play by ear I also read and play by note. I seemed to have a little talent for composing.

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT—A part of an unfinished biographical sketch begun by Mrs. Atwood at the age of 98.

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cousin.

"It would take too long to go into full detail as to the origin of the Lyon family, but three brothers, Richard, Thomas, and Henry Lyon, were members of Oliver Cromwell's army. While they were on duty at the Banqueting House at Whitehall, England, they witnessed the regicide of King Charles I. They had to flee from England immediately, and sailed for the New Haven Colony shortly after January 30, 1648.

"Many years prior to that, one John Lyon, who was secretary to King Robert II, the first Stewart and founder of that dynasty, married his daughter Princess Jean, and was brought into the reigning family. And in 1372 he was given lands and Thanedom of Glamis in Scotland.

"These three brothers who fled to America came from Glen Lyon in Perthshire. Henry Lyon first settled in Milford, Conn., then, several years later, he joined Robert Treat, the Rev. Abraham Pierson, Deacon Azariah Crane, the Baldwins, and many others, and sailed up the Passaic river.

"They were the first settlers and founders of Newark, N.J., in 1666. They bought the land from the Indians. At that time Newark covered a much great-

(Continued on page 50)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER

## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

er area than now.

"Henry Lyon was the first tax collector, and served without pay. The Rev. Abraham Pierson was the only one of the settlers who received any pay. My mother's mother was Clarissa Lyon, and was one of the seventh generation from this Henry Lyon. All the above mentioned men were ancestors, as there was inter-marriage among their children.



MRS. ATWOOD'S DAUGHTER—Mrs. Margaret Keil of Richmond, Va., provided Jim Walsh with the information in this article about her mother and father. She is one of Mrs. Atwood's three living children.

"The Rev. Abraham Pierson was the founder of the First Presbyterian Church in Newark. It still is standing, but greatly improved. He was also its first pastor.

"His son, the Rev. Abraham Pierson, Jr., was pastor of that church. Later, he returned to New Haven, where he was founder of the Collegiate College of Connecticut, now known as Yale, and served as its president.

"I had heard of these names when I was going to school in Newark, but never had any idea that they were my own ancestors.

"I wish you knew how much I enjoyed HOBBIES. Had I known people collected old buttons, hat pins, etc., I never would have thrown or given away anything in my life!

"In 1918 I bought a phonograph and had many good records, but when Dad converted the phonograph into a radio I gave all those good old records away. Dad had arranged the needle on the phonograph so it also could play Edison disc records, of which I had many.

"I noted on page 160 of HOBBIES that Ballards' Antique Costumes in Indiana wanted old clothes of any time prior to 1935. I wrote them about a beautiful georgette crepe (plain) dress I had, heavily designed with black jet beads. Also of two white silk skirts my cousin had given me, as they had been in one of about six trunks her grandfather's sister had left in a bank vault in New York. They are really museum pieces.

"This old lady died without leaving a will. Her first husband had been a diamond merchant, and there was a fortune of diamonds in the trunk, including a diamond tiara. Most of these were sold and many of the old clothes were thrown away or given away.

"The old lady never had parted with a thing. She had lived in some hotel in New York for years, and thought of leaving her money to the manager, but when she found it would cost her \$50 to make a will she was too frugal to pay that much. My cousin and her brother, and their mother's sister, were the only living relatives, so they received everything she left.

"My black dress, I mentioned above, I wore to a sister's-in-law wedding 45 years ago, and had bought it prior to that. It still hangs in the closet, but if I live long enough maybe the style will come back again, as these mini skirts can't go any higher; they soon will begin to go to the extreme opposite direction next, and everything again will be out of style. Maybe I am a pack rat, too, as some things I think are too valuable to discard."

I have quoted the last few paragraphs of Mrs. Keil's letter primarily for the benefit of HOBBIES' lady readers, who certainly will be fascinated by the account of the old dresses and other things left behind by their venerable owner who had a prejudice against spending money to make a will. Although I have no interest in dresses as such, I found this section of the letter both intriguing and amusing.

Next month I shall give, among other things, more of Mrs. Keil's recollections of her father.

(To be continued)

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J. Keil	7 1/2	2 1/2	19	75		80	15.33											
E. Keil	7 1/2	2 1/2	18	75			50	5.62	9.75	50	23.7							
B. H. H. H.	7 1/2	2 1/2	21	75					21.73									
E. G. H. H.	6 1/2	10	6	20	100		100	1.65	2.55									
H. B. H. H.	6 1/2	2 1/2	18	98					9.35	2.20	3.88	3.85						
E. H. H. H.	7 1/2	2 1/2	17	63	1.38				16.25									
B. H. H. H.	6 1/2	2 1/2	18	84					5.33	2.89	10.32							
A. H. H. H.	6 1/2	2 1/2	18	01	1.51		1.23	9.63		2.48		3.16						
B. H. H. H.	6 1/2	2 1/2	13	40	20												60	12.60
J. H. H. H.	7 1/2	16 1/2	12	00					12.00									
J. S. H. H.	4 1/2	2 1/2	10	69					4.62	5.06	10.1							
			241	96	40.09	80	20.13	8.57	91.57	18.65	17.76	3.88	3.16			60	12.60	

INVENTOR'S PAYROLL—A page of the Edison machine shop payroll, for the week of September 12, 1889, when George F. Atwood was the foreman. The items listed are examples of what

the well-paid American workman was earning 80 years ago. The original of this page is in the Edison National Monument at West Orange, N.J.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Harriet and George Atwood

PART II

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE.—This is the concluding installment of an article which began last month, in which, at the request of Jim Walsh, Mrs. Margaret Keil of Richmond, Va., reminisces about her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George F. Atwood. Mrs. Keil's mother, Mrs. Harriet Atwood, who is now 105 years of age and a resident of a Richmond nursing home, made experimental piano records for Thomas A. Edison more than 80 years ago. Shortly afterward she married Mr. Atwood, who was then an engineer in charge of Edison's machine shop).

#### I. Praise From the "First Lady"

One of the memorable events of Mrs. Harriet Atwood's long life occurred when she was 96. In October, 1960, she was a special guest at the annual convention of the American Nursing Home Association in the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C. She played the piano for the delegates and made a brief talk, in which she said:

"My dear Friends: I am so grateful to meet you all in Washington today and to tell you how I feel toward the nursing homes and, as I look over this vast audience, to know that most of you have nursing homes where you welcome God's aged sick souls.

"I don't know of any business one can enter and receive more blessings and happiness than making homes for elderly sick people, with the help of doctors and kind nurses.

"As we grow older and become sick and need a nurse, in some cases 24 hours a day—and very few can afford that—the nursing homes are a blessing.

"It is not an easy life for the heads of these homes, but the blessing and happiness received makes it worth while.

"When my daughter Clara, a sufferer from arthritis, and myself, with exhausted nerves, entered the Terrace Hill Home (in Richmond), we were made welcome by Mr. Maslan and kind nurses, who relieved me of the care of my daughter, and I began to improve.

"One day Mr. Maslan introduced me to a guest and told my age (91 at that time) and said that I had all of my faculties. There isn't a pill in the drug store that could help me as much as those words said by the head of the home. In a short time I was playing the piano for the patients, and received a great blessing to see them enjoying the music.

"I am enjoying this lovely home, and my prayer is that God will bless each one of you having these homes."

The Washington Post for October 18, 1960, published a photograph of Mrs. Atwood at the piano, playing one of her own composition, with two-year-old Jeryl Lynn NeMarow stand-

ing by. The little girl's father was executive director of the Aurora Health Institute in Rye, N.Y.

Together with the picture, the Post had a news story, written by Marie Smith, about the convention, in which

this laudatory mention was made of Mrs. Atwood:

"Star performer at the luncheon which was a highlight of the opening day program was Harriet Atwood, 96 . . . Introduced as 'the Grandma Moses of the

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

October 18, 1960

Mrs.  
Dear Miss Atwood,

*It has just come to my attention that at the young age of ninety-six you are composing beautiful music. I am also told that your special composition "Victory and Peace" which you dedicated to the President provided the guests at the American Nursing Home Association meeting with inspiration and pleasure. My compliments to you together with my best wishes for your happiness always.*

Sincerely,

*Mamie Doud Eisenhower*

Mrs. Harriet  
Miss Maria Atwood  
American Nursing Home Association  
Mayflower Hotel  
Washington, D. C.

GREETINGS FROM FIRST LADY.—Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote this cordial greeting to Mrs. Atwood in October, 1960, after this 96-yr.-old Richmond, Va., resident had spoken and played the piano at a meeting of the American Nursing Home Association in Washington, D.C. Two errors made by Mrs. Eisenhower in Mrs. Atwood's name have been corrected.

keyboard,' she played three of her original compositions on the piano.

"One of them, 'When I First Met You,' was dedicated to the idol of the teenagers, singer Pat Boone, and his wife, Shirley. A 'Victory and Peace' march was dedicated to President Eisenhower.

"The spry, talented nonagerian, who taught piano for 35 years, said she presents a concert daily for other residents of the Home in Richmond, and also plays for their church service on Sunday. She expressed hope that some of her composition will be published and provide her an income as she approaches a century of living.

"She began playing the accordion at the age of 5 and played for dances 'my older sister and her crowd used to have in the kitchen' in the family home in New Jersey. Later she studied the piano."

Subsequent newspaper stories credited Mrs. Atwood with composing her "Victory and Peace" march when she was 96, but Mrs. Keil said it was composed "many years ago. I do not know when it was. She played this at the convention and then dedicated it to President Eisenhower. Eighteen hundred people attended this meeting and she stood before them and read the speech she had composed herself.



LATE MIDDLE AGE. This photo was taken of Mrs. Atwood when she was 65. She has since lived an additional 40 years.

A gratifying sequel to Mrs. Atwood's star performance was her receiving a letter from Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, dated October 18, 1960. Mrs. Eisenhower erroneously referred to Mrs. Atwood as "Miss Maria Atwood," but there was no mistaking the complimentary tone of her greeting:

"Dear Miss Atwood:

"It has just come to my attention that at the young age of 96 you are composing beautiful music. I am also told your special composition, 'Victory and Peace,' which you dedicated to the President provided the guests at the American Nursing Home Association meeting with inspiration and pleasure. My compliments to you together with my best wishes for your happiness always.

"Sincerely,

Mamie Doud Eisenhower  
Miss Maria Atwood  
American Nursing Home Association  
Mayflower Hotel  
Washington, D.C."

We'll return a little later to Mrs. Atwood and discuss her present-day life. Meanwhile, Mrs. Keil has some

interesting things to say about her father, who was born June 19, 1864, and died in 1933:

## II. George Atwood's Achievements

"My father had a very brilliant mind, and though he never had a college education he was a fine electrical and mechanical engineer. He invented and installed the fog bells on the Erie and Lackawanna Railroad ferry slips in Hoboken and New York, on the Hudson River. These fog bells have different signals for the captains of the ferry boats to hear in order to guide the boats into the proper slip during a heavy fog on the Hudson River.

"During World War 1 my father was sent to Nahant, Mass., to experiment on submarine detectors. I do not know whether this was in conjunction with Rear Admiral Bradley A. Fiske, who had invented a submarine detector. My father was working for the Western Electric Co. at that time, and I noted in Admiral Fiske's books about his inventions that they were made up by Western Electric, so they must have all been working in conjunction with each other. I recall my father having said that he would have been washed overboard, had it not been for the quick thinking of someone who threw his own body at my father's feet to keep him from going over. That was in the winter time, too.

"Admiral Fiske had also invented the galvanometer. One of his books that my father had was about this instrument. I have no idea what its purpose was, but when I was about five years old I used to see my father watch and study the workings of this equipment during the evenings at home, as he had one in the house to study. I suppose all this was in line with his 'helping solve many of the perplexing problems' that Admiral Fiske thanked him for in that book he presented to him. I guess Dad was too modest to brag about the many things he worked on, but I do recall that before the dial telephone system was released to the public he had worked on the mechanics of that while at Western Electric. I do not say that he invented it, but merely say that he helped with the problem of getting it to work. I think he was assistant superintendent of the model shop before he retired. It just about broke his heart when he had to retire, because he loved his work so dearly."

"Just tonight Sam reminded me that Dad installed the electric chimes in Trinity Church, New York. I guess there were many other things he did that we have never known about or had forgotten. One sort of Ruhe Goldberg gadget he made was for turning on the furnace in the morning. He had an alarm clock (set for a certain time), and when the alarm went off it triggered a mouse trap which, in turn, opened the damper in the furnace pipes, and so when he got up in the morning the house was warm and no one had to go down cellar to turn on the furnace."

In another letter, Mrs. Keil says:

"I correspond with a daughter of a man who had worked with Edison at the same time my father worked there. She has written me that her father left Edison's because credit for all the ideas his engineers had contributed went to Edison. Well, I suppose that is to be expected, as that is why they are employed. While working for the Western Electric Co., my father was paid \$1 for each of his inventions but that was the agreement. . . . Last August I personally presented three of Admiral Fiske's books to the U.S. Naval Academy Museum at Annapolis. One book was printed in 1894, one in 1896, and the one for which he won a gold medal, his Prize Essay, 1905, 'Policy of the U.S. Navy.' In the latter Admiral Fiske had written on the fly page:

"To George F. Atwood, who has helped the writer in solving many perplexing problems, this little book is presented with the cordial regard of Bradley A. Fiske, April 14, 1905."

"I must say that Admiral Fiske was generous in giving credit and appreciation where it was due. I treasured this book and felt that the proper place for it was in the Museum.

"One of the inventions my father had was the speedometer for use on bicycles, but he never had it patented. Then about 50 years ago he fixed up a sort of washing machine in the kitchen. He used the frame of an old bicycle, fastened it to the ceiling over the wash tubs, attached those vacuum plungers with long handles to the peddles of the bicycle, and had a motor attached so that the washing was done that way, instead of on the old rubbing board. Many years later the Easy Washing machine used improved suction plungers on their machines.

"Another thing, which might have been the first central system of vacuum cleaners in the home, was rigged up by using one of those large old dairy milk cans, fastened to the ceiling in the cellar, with motor attached of course, and a pole, approximately two inches in diameter, going through the floors to the second floor, with an outlet on the first and second floors of the house, to which a flexible hose could be attached, and with equipment could be used for vacuum cleaning the first and second story floors. These, of course, were just simply to make cleaning easier than using the old broom or carpet sweeper. He had some kind of a suction pump in the basement. There might have been many more ideas and things he did that I never heard about.

"My father recognized the artistic ability my brother had, so used to take him to art galleries in New York City."

## III. Mrs. Atwood's Recent Years

Returning to Mrs. Atwood when her 100th anniversary was observed March 23, 1965, newspapers throughout the nation printed feature stories about her, and now each year, as another birthday comes around, there is more publicity, so that, in her own laughing words, she has become "a notorious woman."

On January 13, 1970, Mrs. Keil wrote:

"It is too bad that my mother is unable to realize all the publicity she is receiving at this time. It is interesting to know how many people have kept up their correspondence with me since I wrote to thank them for the letters and cards they sent to mother on her last birthday, many of them requesting her autograph. I had to use her signature from old canceled checks. One is Dean Oliver, a junior in Madison Heights High School in Michigan, who is interested in Edison. He is a very fine boy. Last week I received a very nice letter from Nancy Sittig, a little 12-year-old girl in Columbus, Ohio, enclosing her picture. She wrote and said that she wished she had known Mr. Edison. I answered her letter and told her that if she would like to write to Mr. Theodore Edison or Mrs. Madeline Edison Sloane, they could be reached by sending the letters to Llewellyn Park, West Orange, N.J."

Mrs. Keil says that Nancy and her eight-year-old brother, Freddie, wanted to buy an Edison cylinder phonograph, which they were offered for \$80, and shoveled snow to earn the money. At latest report they have two records, one, "Nearer, My God, to Thee," by the Knickerbocker Quartet, and the other "a song about a man wanting to give a woman a ring." She wrote a letter to The Edison National Monument, asking how they could get more information about their records, and the archivist, Miss Kathleen G. McGuirk, replied, suggesting that they read HOBBIES, "which," she said, "is much used by people wishing both to buy and sell old records and machines."

(Incidentally, Mrs. Keil also says that when she and her husband lived in New Jersey, they used to see trucks going from the plant of the Celluloid Company in Newark, to the Edison factories at West Orange, loaded with



tubing for the Blue Amberol cylinder records. That, of course, was after the wax cylinders had been discontinued. The unbreakable Blue Amberols had a celluloid-type surface.)

Continuing with the discussion of her correspondence:

"Some of these people with whom I correspond are the nicest people one would want to meet. Dean Oliver, in his first letter, told me about his grandmother taking him to Greenfield Village many times, and he hopes to work there when he is able. He is a very intelligent and clean living boy, religious, and interested in patriotism and trying to improve the image of the 'teen agers that are ruining the reputation of the school systems. There are many good ones that we do not hear about, and that is too bad, because they all have to be punished by the reputation of the radicals."

On January 27, Mrs. Keil wrote:

"I told you about Buck Shaffer, who phoned me from Porterville, Cal., three weeks ago, and wanted to know if I could get my mother to play 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' on a tape recorder, so he could use it in his spring concert and in his next Americana record. That school band he has trained is just terrific. His brother, Melvin Shaffer, who works at the Audio-Visual department of the Medical College of Virginia is going to bring a small hand-size tape recorder for me to see if I can get mother to play, but I have no idea how successful I shall be. It all depends on how she is feeling at the moment."

Two days later I received this follow-up report from Mrs. Keil:

"Last night, Melvin Shaffer stopped by here with the tape recorder. He showed me how to use it, so this morning I phoned the nursing home and found that mother was the same, so decided to go over and try my luck. Mother's lunch was just coming up, so I fed her, and told her about what we wanted her to do, and asked if she felt up to it. She said 'I guess so,' so we went down and wheeled her to the piano. Since her cataracts prevent her seeing the keys on the piano, I played the tune of 'Mary.' put her finger on the first note to strike, and we were in business. It was rather feeble, and after a couple of tries she ended up with part of 'Jingle Bells.' I asked her if she could play 'God Bless America,' and she said she couldn't recall the tune, so I played it for her. She made a little try, and then I asked her if she wanted to try her 'American Legion March,' and she could play a few notes of that. Then I read off, a few words at a time, a greeting which Buck Shaffer thought he could use at his spring concert and on his next Americana band record, but when we got to the words, 'Panther Band,' she couldn't get that quite clear, but we managed to get through with most of it.

"Melvin Shaffer stopped by this evening and picked up the recorder. I asked him if he could make an extra tape, as I thought maybe you would like to have it, and I told him you were the one who had told us about Edison talking 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' into his tinfoil recording, and he said he would make a couple for me, even though I don't have a tape recorder. He said maybe some day I would have one or else could use it on someone's recorder. He seemed very grateful, and I was happy to be of any assistance. If a man took the time to make a day call from California in an effort to have my mother's voice on one of his records, I felt I would do everything in my power to accommodate him. I told him about what you are doing and he was interested in that, too.

"Buck Shaffer must do a tremendous job with those children who play in the band. He starts the children with music when they are in grade school. Porterville is not a very large town, and is quite isolated. Melvin says it takes a day to get there from either Los Angeles or San Francisco. These children have plans for traveling all over the country. When I had time to listen to a record he sent me of the band's playing, I was really flabbergasted. It was fantastic! They sounded like professionals . . . I have



**FAMILY GET TOGETHER**—Mrs. Harriet Atwood's children had a reunion in October, 1959, and were photographed together. In the front row are Mrs. Samuel Keil, Mrs. Robert Atwood and Mrs. Franklin H. Branin. Husbands are standing behind their respective wives.

been busy digging out mother's manuscript copies of her music, and have had three copies made of her marches (one dedicated to Edison) and will send them to Mr. Shaffer to see if his band can use them. It was always mother's ambition to have her marches played by a band and I hope I can be instrumental in having that done."

In another reference to Buck Shaffer's Band, Mrs. Keil says the youngsters 'have played at concerts all over the country. The State Department sent them to Japan and Korea last year, and every year they play at the White House. Mr. Shaffer used to play the saxophone in Glen Miller's and Benny Goodman's Bands, but became tired of 'one night stands,' went back to teaching music in high schools, and has had wonderful results. Some of the older members of the Panther Band are now playing in Lawrence Welk's Band and other orchestras, so he has done a remarkable job for teaching good music to these children."

#### IV. Mrs. Atwood's Children

This article would be incomplete if I ended it without some further reference to Mrs. Atwood's three surviving children.

There cannot be many other women still alive at the age of 105, and with three living children all in their 70's—children, too, of whom any mother should be proud.

Mrs. Keil modestly disavows possessing any special talents, but her brother, Robert Atwood of Kingsport, Tennessee, who is himself an artist and a 'cello player, says she is "the writer in the family," and certainly the excerpts I have quoted from her letters testify that she has a gift for clear, coherent narration.

Her sister, Irene Atwood Branin, and her husband, Franklin Huling Branin, who operate the Brandstone Studio in Stanhope, N.J., celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 24, 1966. Mrs. Branin plays the piano and harp, and she and her husband are greatly interested in antiques,

which she buys and sells. She also makes lamp shades, while Frank Branin buys, repairs and sells antique clocks, and refinishes old furniture.

Robert Atwood, the oldest of the children, has had a long and successful career as a painter. Although now living in Tennessee, a few years ago he had a studio in Phoenix, Ariz., and an issue of Arizona Days and Ways Magazine for December 3, 1961, shows a picture of him with one of his landscapes. He, Mrs. Branin and Mrs. Keil have proved themselves worthy descendants of their gifted musician mother and their brilliantly talented inventor father.

#### V. And, Finally

I'm sure it goes without saying that I hope to receive the tape recording of Mrs. Atwood's voice and piano playing, and shall cherish it as a priceless remembrance of the lady who was perhaps the first person to perform for Edison's wax cylinders. I am writing on February 1, when Mrs. Atwood's 105th birthday is still almost two months distant, but I hope it will be a wonderful one and wish her improved health and great happiness in the years to follow. It is almost impossible to realize the length of her life span. She was born about two weeks before Lee surrendered to Grant and was a tiny baby when Lincoln was killed.

One other thought occurs to me in closing: Among the great pleasures of writing for HOBBIES for so many years has been the knowledge that I have brought happiness through my articles to many pioneer recording artists or their surviving relatives, as well as winning a multitude of friends among HOBBIES readers. When I wrote a series about Frank C. Stanley (William Stanley Grinstead) in 1949, his widow was so pleased that she "adopted" me as her son, and now, even though Mother Grinstead is gone, I still seem to be considered a member



Talented daughter, Mrs. Irene Atwood Branin has inherited her mother's musical gifts. She plays both the harp and the organ. This photo was taken in 1950. (See page 130 for photograph of Irene Atwood Branin and her husband on their golden wedding anniversary.)

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of her family. The late Mrs. Margaret E. White, of West Newton, Mass., became such a devotee of my writings that she proclaimed me to be her godson, and I made two trips by plane to visit her during the last years of her life, when she was far into her 80's.

I just wonder what my chances will be, after this article appears in print, of being "adopted" by the Atwood family!

THE END - NO. 325  
P. 130

### PIANOS AND ROLLS

WANTED: Cylinder phonographs and records, open horn disc phonographs, music boxes & discs, piano & organ rolls, player organ, pathe operatic records. — T. Grattelo, 2614 Central, Alameda, Calif. my122971

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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### Real Names of

### Edison Cylinder Performers

By JIM WALSH

One of the many interesting features of Allen Koenigsberg's new book, "Edison Cylinder Records — 1889-1912," is a list of assumed names used by singers and players who made Edison 2-minute cylinders.

The compilation, however, is not complete, and it has occurred to me that it would be a good idea for me to supplement it by an article including not only the artists the book mentions but others who are omitted. Of course some of the examples are almost overly familiar. It is generally known, for instance, that "Irving Gillette" was really Harry H. McClaskey and "Frank C. Stanley" was William Stanley Grinstead.

On the other hand, few collectors seem to know that Will Oakland's legal name was Herman Hinrichs and that Sophie Tucker's maiden name was Sophie Kalish, even though, her father, for personal reasons, changed his last name to Abusa. Information of this sort, I think, will be welcomed by serious collectors.

It is also true that many other artists used shortened or altered forms of their genuine names. Billy Murray's parents named him William Thomas Murray, and Byron G. Harland turned around his original name of George Byron Harlan. Bob Roberts more formally was Robert A. Roberts.



"RED HOT MAMA." — Sophie Tucker's maiden name was Sophie Kalish, but she changed it three times by marriage. This photo is from a circular issued by a theater in Sydney, Australia.

I think it will also be interesting to give the married names of some of the women members of the Edison "talent," but in a good many instances, I don't have such information. And, while the following list may be considered fairly comprehensive, there undoubtedly are artists who used pseudonyms that I have not detected. I am including those who recorded for the 4-minute wax Amberol cylinders as well as the Standard 2-minute, but lack of space precludes dealing now with the large number of relative newcomers who made their debut on Blue Amberols.

The arrangement is this: First, the artist's recording name is given, followed by a colon. Then comes the real name or a longer form of the legal name and, in a great many instances, women singer's married names. The latter will be enclosed in parenthesis.

Here goes, then, for the "low-down":

BESSIE ABOTT: Bessie Pickens.

HARRY ANTHONY: John Young.

BLANCHE ARRAL: Clara Lardinois.

ELSIE BAKER: Elsie West Baker.

INEZ BARBOUR: (Mrs. Henry Hadley.)

JOE BELMONT: Joseph Walter Fulton.

SARAH BERNHARDT: Rosine Bernard.

JOHN H. BIELING: John Henry Bieling.

LUCREZIA BORI: Lucrezia Borja.

DAISY BOULAIS: (This lady is a mystery. She made no solo records, and worked only with Frank C. Stanley and Byron G. Harlan in a few "rube" sketches. The one photo Edison published of her name seems to resemble early pictures of Mrs. Stanley. I knew Mrs. Harlan in her last years and the photo certainly isn't of her, but I am wondering if it could be Mrs. Elizabeth Grinstead. If I can obtain information about this from one of Mrs. Grinstead's surviving children I'll pass it on.)

GRACE CAMERON: Grace Kerr. (Miss Cameron was living at Long Beach, Calif., in 1962, and presumably is still there. I assume she was married, but don't know her wedded name. She was the first theatrical performer to buy advertising in the initial issue of Variety, back in 1905.)

ALBERT C. CAMPBELL: Charles Campbell.

ANNA CASE: (Mrs. Clarence Mackay.)



BELOVED COMEDienne.—Marie Dressler was one of the most deservedly popular artists of her time. But her real name was far removed from her stage one.

(Photo from March, 1910, New Phonogram.)

THOMAS CHALMERS: Thomas Hardie Chalmers.

MISS CHAPPEL: Edith Chapman.

HELEN CLARK: Helen Price Clark (Mrs. Evan Cameron.)

HERBERT L. CLARKE: Herbert Lincoln Clarke.

ARTHUR CLIFFORD: Clifford Alexander Wiley.

ARTHUR COLLINS: Arthur Francis Collins.



SHE WAS UP TO TRIX!—Comedienne Helen Trix was known to her family as Helen Yeiser.





**LADY OF MYSTERY.**—Who was the mysterious soprano, Miss Daisy Boulais? Could she have been the wife of a famous recording star? (See the accompanying article for speculation on this interesting subject.) This photo is from *The New Phonogram* for October, 1905.

**RAY COX:** That seems to have been this clever vaudeville comedienne's real name. She had a sister, Hazel Cox, who was also on the stage, but they never worked together. I think Ray Cox's cylinder of "The Baseball Girl" is the funniest record I have heard by a woman.

**EDGAR L. DAVENPORT:** Edgar Longfellow Davenport.

**ELEONORA DE CISNEROS:** (Eleonor Broadfoot.)

**MARIE DRESSLER:** Leila von Koerber.

**S. H. DUDLEY:** Samuel Holland Rous.

**EDWARD M. FAVOR:** Edward M. Le Fevre.

**CARLOS FRANCISCO:** Emilio De Gogorza.

**IRENE FRANKLIN:** (Mrs. Burt Green.)

**FREDERIC C. FREEMANTEL:** Frederic Charles Freemantle.

**P. FROSINI:** Pietro Frosini.



**"THE BASEBALL GIRL."**—Ray Cox was a vaudeville comedienne who made only one record, but many hearers consider her 1909 monolog, "The Baseball Girl," made with the help of Edward Meeker, one of the funniest skits ever recorded by anybody.

(Picture from the September, 1909, *New Phonogram*.)



**"MISS CHAPPEL."**—Edith Chapman, soprano, made her first Edison cylinders as "Miss Chappel." Later she used her own name. She was also called Ethel Costello on Columbia discs.

(Photo from February, 1909, *New Phonogram*.)

**IRVING GILLETTE:** Harry Haley McCaskey.

**BILLY GOLDEN:** William B. Shire.

**FRED HAGER:** Frederick Wallace Haga.

**BYRON G. HARLAN:** George Byron Harlan.

**CHARLES HARRISON:** Charles William Harrison.

**JAMES F. HARRISON:** Frederick James Wheeler.

**EDITH HELENA:** Helen Jennings (Mrs. Domenico Russo).

**MURRY K. HILL:** Joseph T. Pope, Jr.

**HARVEY HINDERMEYER:** Harvey Wilson Hindermeyer.

**FLORENCE HINKLE:** (Mrs. Herbert Witherspoon).

**JOE HUGHES:** (Joseph Savory).

**GEORGE W. JOHNSON:** George Washington Johnson.

**ADA JONES:** (Mrs. Hugh Flaherty).

**MARY JORDAN:** (Mrs. Charles Clement Cresson).

**MAY KELSO:** May Kelso. (Her name was announced on records as "May," because the early cylinder phonographs couldn't record the following syllable.)

**JOHN J. KIMBLE:** John J. Kimmel.

**HARRY MacDONOUGH:** John Scantlebury Macdonald.

**A. D. MADEIRA:** (I'm just wondering. Can anybody tell us what Madeira's initials stood for?)

**RICCARDO MARTIN:** Hugh Whitfield Martin.

**STELLA MAYHEW:** (Mrs. Billie Taylor).

**MABEL McKINLEY:** (Mabel McKinley Baer).

**EDWARD MEEKER:** Edward Warren Meeker.

**REED MILLER:** (This is only a guess, but Miller's full name probably was James Reed Miller, since he made records also under the name of James Reed. It is interesting to know that he was a cornettist in the Spanish-American War.)

**CHRISTINE MILLER:** (Mrs. Daniel Clemson).

**CORINNE MORGAN:** Corinne Morgan Welsh (Mrs. C. W. Dumont).

**BILLY MURRAY:** William Thomas Murray.

**J. W. MYERS:** John W. Myers.

**MARIE NARELLE:** Mary Ryan.

**GRACE NELSON:** Grace Hornby.

**HENRY NESBIT:** Harvey N. Emmons.

**MARGUERITE NEWTON:** (Mrs. George P. Watson).

**WILL OAKLAND:** Herman Hinrichs.

**VESS L. OSSMAN:** Sylvester Louis Ossman, Sr.

**HERBERT PAYNE:** Ernest Pike.

**CYRUS PIPPINS:** Byron G. Harlan.

**STEVE PORTER:** Stephen Carl Porter.

**MARIE RAPFOLD:** Marie Winterroth (Mrs. Julius Rappold, Jr.; Mrs. Rudolf Berger.)

**GUS REED:** Harold Nelson.

**JAMES REED:** Reed Miller.

**BOB ROBERTS:** Robert A. Roberts.

**EUGENE C. ROSE:** Eugene Carl Rose.

**FREDERIC ROSE:** (Eugene?) Schmachels.

**JOSIE SADLER:** Josephine Rauscher (Mrs. Josephine S. Geddes.)

**ELIZABETH SPENCER:** Elizabeth Dickerson (Mrs. Otis B. Spencer; Mrs. E. B. Southworth, Jr.)

**GRACE SPENCER:** (Mrs. Willard Foster Doolittle.)

**HARRY SPENCER:** Henry Caleb Spencer, Jr.

**LEN SPENCER:** Leonard Garfield Spencer.



**BORROWED FROM ROYALTY.**—Opera Singer Marguerita Sylva adapted her stage name from her own first name and from Queen Carmen Sylva of Rumania. Her first name really was Marguerite, as it is shown on this sheet of music.



FRANK C. STANLEY: William Stanley Grinstead.

ELISE STEVENSON: (Mrs. Rustling Wood.)

CAL STEWART: Calvin Edward Stewart.

A. L. SWEET: Albert L. Sweet.

MARGUERITA SYLVA: Marguerite Alice Helene Smith (Mrs. W. D. Mann and Mrs. Bernard L. Smith.)

TASCOTT: Years ago, someone—I think it may have been the veteran song writer, the late Warren Raymond Walker—gave me the remainder of "Tascott's" name, but I cannot find it now. I should be grateful if any student of old-time vaudeville would supply it.)

STELLA TOBIN: (Mrs. Paul Southe.)

HELEN TRIX: Helen Yeiser (when very young she was married to a noted actor, Frank Fogarty, but they were soon divorced.)

SOPHIE TUCKER: Sophie Kalish (Mrs. Louis Tuck, Mrs. Frank Westphal and Mrs. Al Lackey.)

WALTER VAN BRUNT: Walter John Van Brunt known after 1916 as Walter Scanlan.)

CLARICE VANCE: Clara Ella Black (Mrs. Moses Edwin Gumble.)

NEVADA VAN DER VEER: Mrs. Reed Miller.)

BERRICK VON NORDEN: Ber- rick Schloss.

"MR. AND MRS. WATEROUS." This couple was Herbert L. Waterous & his wife, Jayne Herbert Waterous.

GEORGE P. WATSON: The German yodeler's death certificate gives his father's name as Philip Zint, so presumably Watson was a stage name and the singer's real name was George P. (Philip) Zint.

ELIZABETH WHEELER: Bess Nicholson (Mrs. William Wheeler.)

WILLIAM WHEELER: Wheeler told me he had a middle name, but discarded it. His father's name was William Watson Wheeler. Perhaps the tenor's middle name also was Watson.

BILLY WILLIAMS: William Banks.

GEORGE S. WILLIAMS: William Stanley Grinstead.

NAT M. WILLS: Louis McGrath Wills.

And so there they are: The most comprehensive list of assumed names, full names and married names I could prepare, based on my present stock of information. Perhaps some other time I can get around to compiling a similar list of other artists who made Blue Amberol cylinders and Edison Diamond Discs.

#### IDENTIFY YOURSELF

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### HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

up to his voice category — organ-like, ample, a real Viking vocal instrument.

Nothing surprising, since its possessor was born in Oslo, Norway. What's more, he studied in Stockholm, Sweden, and began his operatic career in that city.

Unavoidably, opera houses in Germany and Austria soon claimed him, as did those of other countries, including the United States.

On records, the sonorousness of his large voice is most impressive. His Long Play disc very well attests to that.

#### IVAR ANDRESEN—Rococo 5313:

Side 1—1. Der Skrek en Fugl (Singing)  
2. MEISTERSINGER VON NURNBERG: Num hort . . . Das schone Fest 3. GOTTERDAMMERUNG: Hagens Ruf 4. PARISAL: Titirel der fromme Held 5. TRISTAN UND ISOLDE: Der ode Tag zum letzten Mal (w. Graarud, Sattler) 6. TRISTAN UND ISOLDE: Dies wundervolle Weib 7. ZAUBERFLOTE: In diesen heiligen Hallen.

Side 11—1. EUGEN ONEGIN: Envar pa jorden 2. HUGENOTTEN: Choral 3. MACBETH: Come dal ciel (in Swedish) 4. REQUIEM: Confutatis (Verdi) 5. Der Selt'ner Beter (Lowe) 6. Der Doppelganger (Schubert).

Although familiar with Andresen's singing, I was again impressed by its vastness, but also, this time, by what seemed to me its monotonousness.

The vocal "coloring" appeared the same in almost everything he sang. There was no Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Meyerbeer — there was good vocalizing, but that's not enough.

The plethora of beauty in his singing is of a rather phlegmatic nature; seldom does the subject come to life through the music with clarity. Once only, in Lowe's "Selt'ner Beter," did the tonal picture break through the musical background well delineated and with conviction.

#### GITTA ALPAR

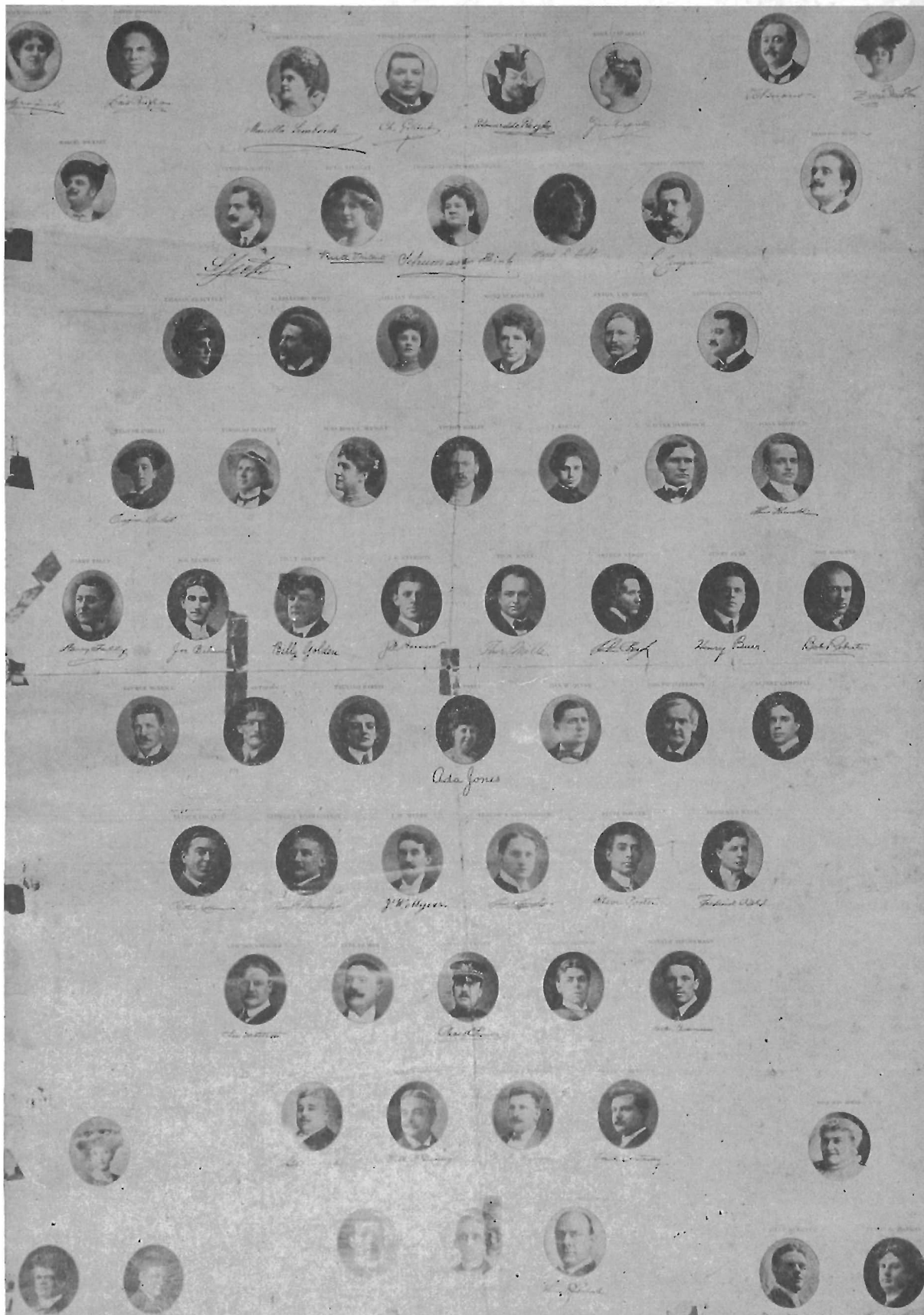
A light soprano gifted with a pure-textured voice and ability to convey a musical thought gently but also energetically when underlining a phrase, is certainly a rare specimen among singers. But when her coloratura is not always immaculate, nor her trill spontaneous, nor attack and intonation unerring, the performance becomes less attractive.

I gathered these impressions from Alpar's LP. She is a fine artist and I do appreciate her art, but I also wish she sang more evenly.

#### GITTA ALPAR—Rococo 5303:

Side 1—1. FIGAROS HOCHZEIT: Sagt, holde Frauen 2. BARBIER VON SEVILLE: Fragst du mein bekomm'nes Herz 3. TRAVIATA: Ah fors'e lui 4. RIGO-

# SOME COLUMBIA TALENT



OLD POSTER—Many men and women who made Edison Amberol cylinders are shown on this 1907 Columbia poster, which may be the only one of its kind in existence. It

is owned by Jim Walsh.

Among the 68 artists are the rather obscure baritone, Frederick Weld (last man in the seventh row) and Pete La Mar,

yodeler (second man in eighth row from top). Note the clarity of Ada Jones' bold signature.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# "A Matter of Identification"

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Title From Dickens

In the June issue, you read, I hope, my article commemorating the approaching 100th anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens. To "tie in" with this observance, I have chosen the title of this month's Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists from one of my favorite Dickens books—"Our Mutual Friend," which many present-day critics are becoming more and more inclined to consider perhaps the finest novel the great English author wrote. It is also the last book he lived to complete.

Those of you familiar with "Our Mutual Friend"—and every lover of fascinating fiction should know it—will recall the scene near the end of the story in which John Harmon is asked by a police inspector to remain concealed until the inspector, talking with some other men, utters the words, "a matter of identification." Harmon, the nominal hero of the book, is then to show himself, as an important step toward clearing up a murder mystery. He does, with gratifying results, while his beautiful young wife, the former Bella Wilfer, looks on uncomprehendingly.

I shall now explain how this article is also centered around "A Matter of Identification." And to explain, I must tell something about a visit my friends, Quentin and Evelyn Riggs, who now live in Huntington Beach, Calif., paid to the beloved baritone singer and recording artist, Elliott Shaw, at his home in Sharon, Conn., during the summer of 1969.

### II. Remarkable Group Photo

During a conversation between Quentin and the artist he had ardently admired for many years, Elliott remarked that he'd like to show an unusual group photograph. He produced it, and Quentin at once saw that the term "unusual" was not exaggerated. The picture, in fact, included perhaps the most remarkable group of recording artists ever photographed together, and Quentin could hardly control his excitement as he gazed. The performers were all men, and he recognized some at first glance, but others baffled him.

Elliott Shaw, himself, unfortunately was not able to be of much help. Now 82 years of age, he has extremely poor eyesight and could not see the picture well enough to identify most of the men. Nor could he say exactly when, where and why the

photo was taken, but he did remember that he was in the group (Quentin had no trouble identifying him) and he was sure the man at the extreme left of the top row was Clifford Cairns, who was the Victor Artist and Repertoire Department manager when the photo was made.

Quentin and Evelyn visited me shortly after their call on Elliott Shaw, and he was full of discussion about the picture from which he had a negative made, and promised to send me a print after he had become settled in his new home.

True to his word, he mailed me a copy of the photo. I became as excited as he, and thought at once what a "find" it would be to share with readers of HOBBIES, as I am now doing. But I too found myself perplexed by some of the faces and could not identify them no matter how hard I tried. Others I knew at once, but I am ashamed to say that I jumped to the conclusion that the man standing between Shaw and Lewis James in the top row was Reinald Werrenrath, although "Werry" was a much larger specimen than the one shown in the picture.

I was especially tantalized by a very young looking fellow in the rear row of seated men. He looked exactly like my present-day friend, Glenn L. ("Whitey") Robertson, a photographer at television station WSLs in Roanoke, Va., who took the pictures of my old phonographs that were displayed on the cover of the September, 1969, HOBBIES. Even though I now know who this man was, I keep thinking of him as "Whitey" Robertson, which he couldn't be, since the picture was taken some 45 years ago, a long time before "Whitey" was born.

Quentin and I were determined to identify every one of the 20 men shown in the group, and he had a batch of copies printed of the picture. He sent one to every man whom he knew to be still living and whose address he could obtain, as well as to some other surviving recording artists who might have known these singers. For my part I deduced, correctly, that the ensemble was the Victor Male Chorus and that its members were gathered in front of old Trinity Church in Camden, N.J., a building with remarkably fine acoustic qualities, which Victor used for large-scale choral and symphonic recording. I also guessed that the picture was taken in 1926, but am now

inclined to think it was done in September, 1925, when the Male Chorus made some records in the old church. I chose this date because some of the men are holding topcoats (the others probably had hung theirs up inside the building), which makes it seem the weather must have been rather chilly which it might have been in mid-September. My fellow sleuth in California did not hear from all the artists to whom he had written, but he did receive enough replies to make it possible to pin-point some of the men who were puzzles to us. In a few instances, however, those who replied gave differing identifications, which served to increase our bewilderment. Carl Mathieu, first tenor of the Peerless Quartet in its final phase was especially helpful, since he supplied the names of four men who had perplexed us, despite the fact that Richard Crooks had already tentatively identified two by their last names.

There was still some uncertainty, however, so in an effort to resolve it I made a long distance call on Sunday, February 22, to Wilfred Glenn, the 89-year-old basso, founder and manager of the Shannon Quartet and the Revelers, who now lives in retirement at Charlottesville, Va. I had previously written "Bill" a letter, telling him I was trying to complete the job of identifying the members of the choral group and asking him to have his copy of the picture before him at the hour I said I would call.

I am sorry to say, though, that Bill had been feeling bad for two months and hadn't opened his mail of the past week, so my letter had gone unread. Nevertheless, he entered enthusiastically into the project and, basing his opinions on his vivid recollection of the picture, told me precisely who was who as he recalled them. By the time we finished talking, I felt that I had sufficiently positive identifications to proceed with writing this article, although, since Mr. Glenn didn't have the picture before him, there are a few instances in which I still feel a little shaky as to whether we have the right man. Anyway, here goes to identify the group as you see them in the accompanying photograph. (See next page):

### III. Who They Are

I was especially concerned to ascertain definitely who was the first man on the left in the group standing



**REMARKABLE PHOTO**—This is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable pictures ever taken of a group of famous recording artists. It was made some 45 years ago and shows the Victor Male Chorus, assembled in front of old Trinity Church, Camden, N.J., for a recording session. Members of the group are identified in the accompanying article.

just in front of the church door. Elliott Shaw said positively it was Clifford Cairns, and Olive Kline had gone along with that identification. Carl Mathieu, however, had taken him to be Hugh Herndon, a booking agent.

When I asked my friend, Bill Glenn, he said boomerily there wasn't "a bit of doubt in the world about it—it's Cliff Cairns. I suggested to Cliff that he send for a photographer and get a picture made, because it was so unusual to have so many leading singers together at one time. He agreed with me, and the picture was taken." Mr. Glenn said he hoped Cairns was still living and added that he had never heard of his having died. Then he commented: "He was certainly a fine fellow. The first time I ever saw Cliff Cairns was shortly after I went to New York to live and heard him sing bass in an oratorio."

I am sorry to have to place on record the fact that Mr. Cairns is dead. He was born August 30, 1880, and died in New Smyrna Beach, Fla., December 14, 1955, at the age of 75. A death notice in the *New York Times* gives his full name as Clifford Irving Cairns, and terms him a composer of sacred music, whose most noted work was a musical arrangement of the 23rd Psalm. Beside his artist and repertoire work for Victor

and, later, RCA Victor, and his singing in many records made by Victor male and mixed voice groups, he had also directed the "Firestone Hour" on radio. The accomplished basso had lived in Florida for eight months preceding his death after having previously made his home in Montclair, N.J. (he was a native of New Jersey), and Scarsdale, N.Y. He was survived by his widow, Mrs. Greta Cairns; a brother, Edward, of Upper Montclair; a stepson, Lindsey M. Donaldson of Miami, and a stepdaughter, Mrs. Robert Postle of Buffalo, N.Y. I am now convinced, in view of Bill Glenn's account of the picture's origin, that the first man on the left is Clifford Cairns and that our good friend, Carl Mathieu, was mistaken in his Hugh Herndon identification.

Quentin and I were puzzled concerning the tall, rather thin man next to Cairns, but Olive Kline revealed that he was James Stanley, a Peerless Quartet bass. He continued to sing in Victor groups for several years after the Quartet disbanded, but at some time in the 1930s developed a cancer on his vocal chords. The growth was successfully removed, but after that "Jim" Stanley was able to speak only in a hoarse whisper. He has been dead for many years.

This back row must have been re-

served primarily for men with deep voices. I was somewhat surprised to find, standing with one hand to a derby hat that shades his face, another basso, the late Frank Croxton, whom Henry Burr dismissed from the Peerless Quartet late in 1925 in favor of James Stanley. There must not have been any ill feeling on Croxton's part toward his successor for them to be together. A book of Victor Master Records, compiled by an English record authority, Brian A. L. Rust, for the years 1925-36, shows that Stanley and Croxton sang together in many concerted Victor engagements until well into the 1930s.

Next in order is Elliott Shaw, to whom we are indebted for calling this picture to Quentin Riggs' attention. Then comes the rather small man whom I at first mistakenly took to be Werrenrath, but who is really Rosario Bourdon, skilled violoncellist and pianist, and assistant conductor of the Victor Orchestra, Bourdon of course, directed the recording session for which the singing group had been engaged.

The rear row ends with a tenor, the late Lewis James—the only high-voiced man of the lot, unless Bourdon also was a tenor.

Let's turn now to the gentlemen who are standing in the foreground. On first sight I identified the man



wearing the light colored hat, and with walking stick propped behind him, as the late Charles Hart, who was the original first tenor of the Shannon Four, but who left it in 1923. Quentin was doubtful about its being Hart, but several other persons said it was, and Bill Glenn said so, positively and unmistakably. He even described just where and how my old friend Charlie was standing. It is odd that Hart, who had been one of Victor's most popular soloists until late in 1923, never again made any records alone, although he sang for several years in choruses. He went to Germany in 1925 to study for opera, and there is a question in my mind as to whether he returned in time to take part in a picture made in September of that year. If not, this group snapshot must belong to 1926. Pending further information, that will remain a matter of uncertainty.

There is no doubt concerning the man beside Hart. He is Royal Dadmun, the famous baritone, who is still living in Williamstown, Mass. Quentin sent him a copy of the picture, but I believe has had no reply.

Passing by the seated singers for the time being, we come to the two men standing on the right. The rather short, burly man holding the top-coat, was the first I recognized. He could be no one but the late Henry Burr, most popular of ballad singers and second tenor of the Peerless Quartet, who had a larger personal following than any other singer in the convocation.

The identity of the man beside Burr, however, was, and still may be, uncertain. Quentin had an idea he might be Robert Simmons, a tenor who sang in the 1930s with Wilfred Glenn's Revelers. I couldn't remember having seen a picture of Robert Simmons, but I did remember that an old Pathe record supplement contained one of William Simmons, a baritone. My Pathe reference material is at the Library of Congress, but from what I remembered of the picture, Burr's companion resembled William Simmons. My viewpoint received support when he was identified as "Bill Simmons" by Carl Mathieu.

But when I mentioned the mix-up to Wilfred Glenn he said the rather stocky, young-looking singer was "Bob Simmons." "He did a lot of work with us," Bill remarked, adding that he couldn't recall that William Simmons ever had any Victor connections.

Unfortunately, since that conversation, I have become muddled again, because Robert Simmons' name does not appear in the Victor Master Book, so far as I can find, until October 25, 1932. To make it more puzzling, William did have Victor "connections" and was for a time a member of the Victor Mixed Chorus. On September 3, 1926, he sang with a group that also included Helen Clark, Della Baker, Mrs. Charles Hart (Esther Nelson), James Price and Frank Croxton.

So now, since Bill Glenn was speaking without having the picture be-



**OLD AND NEW RECORDING METHODS**—The top photo shows Rosario Bourdon, assistant conductor of the Victor Orchestra, supervising a recording session by the acoustic method which was discontinued in 1925. Note the Stroh trumpets on the violins to amplify the sound and throw it into the recording horn. In the far background, the gray-haired man playing a cornet is the famous trumpeter, Emil Keneke. William H. Reitz, bell and xylophone soloist and drummer, who played in thousands of Victor records, stands at the extreme right.

The lower picture shows Bourdon conducting a microphonic recording session, with members of the orchestra comfortably seated. Reitz is at the drums, on the extreme right-hand side. Bourdon also directed the recording session of the Victor Male Chorus, shown in the accompanying large photograph.

fore him, I don't know what to think. Tentatively, I'm sticking with his identification of Robert Simmons, although there is a chance we may find it was really William. I'd like to hear further from Mr. Mathieu about that.

I'll skip for the moment the first seated man in the front row, and pass on to half a dozen artists whom Quentin and I had no trouble identifying. The second man on the steps is the late Lambert Murphy, one of Victor's popular soloists and first tenor of the Orpheus Quartet and the American Singers. Next comes our friend, Wilfred Glenn, the renowned bass who was 89 in April, and who

instigated the taking of this photograph. He is smiling broadly as if he is well pleased with the favorable reception of his picture-making suggestion to Cliff Cairns. We come next to Carl Mathieu, who has been so helpful in the identification work, and last, on the end, is Stanley Baughman, baritone of the final Peerless Quartet, who was also sometimes called a basso cantante, meaning a bass singer with a high range. Just behind Mathieu and Baughman is Richard Crooks, who is still living in California, in poor health but who helped Quentin with his identifications. This famous tenor was mostly

a Red Seal artist. Then, next to Crooks and within touching distance of Simmons, is the late Franklyn Baur, wearing an unhappy expression and a hat that seems too large for him. Baur was only 21, if this picture was made in 1925, so must have been the youngest man of the lot.

#### IV. The Mysterious Four

Finally, we come to the four singers whose identification gave more trouble than all the others, because none was a regular recording artist or well-known record-making soloist, although all turn out to have been prominent in concert and oratorio. We were stumped by the seated man between Dadmun and Murphy, until Carl Mathieu identified him as Foster House. When Quentin informed me of this, I couldn't recall any singer by that name, but did remember Judson House, a tenor who made a few Columbia records in 1915-16 when he was only 21 years of age.

It occurred to me that Carl might have remembered House's first name incorrectly, and when I looked up Judson House's pictures in a couple of 1916 Columbia record supplements, I decided he almost certainly had erred, because the 1916 House wore his hair in the same style as the man in the group photo. When I talked with Wilfred Glenn, he said the fellow in the big picture certainly was Judson House, who did a great deal of ensemble work, but Bill declared that he had never heard of a Foster House. He described Judson House as "sort of heavy-set," but the man in the group photo doesn't appear of abnormal size.

I decided that the man beside Murphy certainly must be Judson House, and when I turned to Rust's book I was pleased to find that this tenor did frequently sing in Victor choruses. But—oh, my aching head!—I also found a couple of entries for "F. House," who took part in occasional concerted work. That certainly seems to indicate that there was a Foster House. So now I'm wondering which is right, Mathieu or Glenn? On the strength of Judson House's much more frequent appearances, I'm tentatively identifying the smiling singer as Judson, but maybe he was really Foster.

Richard Crooks had referred to the man sitting immediately behind Murphy as "Price." Carl Mathieu made the identification explicit by saying he was "Jimmy" Price—otherwise James Price, a well-known New York tenor of the 1920's, who, Rust's book shows, often sang in Victor groups. *The Musical Blue Book of America* for 1921 describes him as a "lyric tenor" and as a member of the Oratorio Quartet, whose other members were Vera Curtis, soprano, Alice Moncrieff, contralto, and J. Campbell-McInnes, baritone.

Carl Mathieu identified the genially smiling man beside Price as Justin Lawrie, and Bill Glenn agreed. I had imagined that Lawrie, about whom I knew nothing, was a baritone, but

Bill said he was a tenor. A day or two after the talk with my Charlottesville friend, I received a letter from Quentin, saying he had been looking through some old Columbia record lists and had discovered that in 1926 Justine [sic] Lawrie had made double-faced disc 721D, "My Lord and I" and "Sometime We'll Understand." That made me remember having seen that record in Columbia catalogs and, since no indication was given of the singer's voice quality, I had wondered whether "Justine Lawrie" was a man or a woman. Rust's book, which lists him variously as John Lawrie, James Lawrie and Justin Lawrie, shows that he did a great deal of singing in Victor groups.

And now, to complete our identifications, we have the very young looking man whom I think of as "Whitey" Robertson. Carl Mathieu referred to him as "Fred Baer," and Wilfred Glenn said that was right. In a musical reference book I found that Frederic Baer, native of New York City, was a bass-baritone (I had taken him to be a tenor by his appearance), who was a pupil of Adelaide Geschmidt, Cesare Sodero (who directed the Edison recording orchestra for years and afterwards was conductor at the Metropolitan Opera), and Charles Albert Baker, a pianist who played recording accompaniments for many famous singers. One book said that Baer "has appeared with several of the leading symphony orchestras and choral organizations; also at many music festivals."

I have no information as to whether House, Price, Lawrie and Baer are still living, but have not learned of the deaths of any. If they are living, all are probably 70 or more.

So there we have the entire ensemble at least tentatively identified. Besides Bourdon, the conductor, it includes 11 tenors (counting the uncertain Simmons as Robert instead of William); four basses, one bass-baritone, and three baritones. I'd like to have copies of this issue of HOBBIES sent to all living members of the group whose addresses I can ob-

tain, because I'm sure they'd be interested in seeing this picture reproduced so many years after they posed for it.

#### V. Victor Male Chorus Recordings

And now alas! we come to more mystification! Rust's book is supposed to list every Victor record, issued or unissued, made from the beginning of the electrical recording era in 1925 through most of 1936, but I have been unable to find any offering by the Victor Male Chorus that uses exactly the artists shown in this picture. Baer is invariably omitted, and neither William nor Robert Simmons appear.

For interest's sake I'll mention the various ensemble recording sessions briefly and tell who took part in them, even though none corresponds exactly to the picture personnel.

On April 2, 1925, the Victor Male Chorus recorded "Homeland" and on April 17, "Winter Song." This was done in Camden, and the songs were issued on record No. 19650, but the artists are not identified.

The next engagement was July 30, 1925—certainly not topcoat weather—when, with "Rosy" Bourdon conducting the orchestra, two concerted numbers were recorded, "The Soldiers' Chorus from Faust," and "Chorus of Bishops and Priests," from "L'Africaine." The Soldiers' Chorus was issued on No. 19783, but the other number was never offered for sale. The singers were Murphy, James, Baur, Albert Campbell, Burr, Shaw, Dadmun, John Meyer, Glenn, Croxton and Cairns. This record was obviously made before Campbell, Meyer and Croxton were dropped from the Peerless Quartet in the autumn of 1925, and while most of the mentioned singers are in the group photo, the picture obviously was taken at a different recording session.

Three efforts were made to record Sir Edward Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory" before a satisfactory result was obtained on September 15, 1925, which I am assuming to be the day the picture was made. On July

### Two Ballads by Judson House

A 2011 (10-inch 75c.) I KNOW A LOVELY GARDEN. (D'Hardelot.) Judson House, tenor. Orchestra accompaniment.  
FORGOTTEN. (Cowles.) Judson House, tenor. Orchestra accompaniment.

It seems almost unbelievable that a man just turned twenty-one, the age of Judson House, could sing with the perfection of detail shown in the month's offerings by this artist. D'Hardelot's exquisite gem is very short but very perfect; each word, each note has its own individual beauty, and House sings with complete understanding of each perfection.



House

**YOUTHFUL TENOR**—This picture of Judson House is illustrated from the July, 1916, Columbia record supplement. House may be one of the men in the group photo reproduced with this article.

30, the singers were Baur, Mathieu, Campbell, Judson House, Murphy, Price, Shaw, Glenn, Croxton, Cairns, Meyer and Dadmun. On the next, September 9, trial, Crooks, James, Burr and Lawrie replaced House and Price. The personnel remained the same on September 15 except, according to the book, Charles Harrison replaced Mathieu.

Now, what are we to think? Charles Harrison isn't in the picture, but Charles Hart is. Could the Victor files mistakenly have identified Hart as Harrison? Perhaps so, but then Mathieu, whose place Harrison is supposed to have taken, was also present in the photo. Anyhow, the successful "Land of Hope and Glory" was issued on the reverse side of the Soldier's Chorus.

On Sept. 9, the chorus unsuccessfully attempted to record a Medley of War Songs, but managed on September 15 to make an acceptable

(Continued on page 50)

### TAPE RECORDINGS

**REMEMBER RADIO?** Send stamped envelope for list of tape recordings available from radio's golden age. — Lee Book, Box 6338, Pittsburgh, Pa. o6276

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**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS** before 1900 wanted. Strings, brass, clarinets, flutes, drums, mechanical, novelties. — William Kugler, 1124 Dionne, St. Paul, Minn. 55113 n6445

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### SHEET MUSIC

**BACK POPULAR** sheet music to 1850. Catalog 25c — Fore's 3151 High, Denver, Colorado 86205 o12698

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**DICK HAYMES** Collection 78 rpms — For Sale, any reasonable offer. — E. Maren, 588 Pelton Ave., Staten Island, N.Y. 10310 au3403

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 41)

version, which was listed as No. 35844. The book says the personnel was the same as that already given for this date.

Our next mention of the Victor Male Chorus is for August 20, 1926, —again most certainly not topcoat weather—when records were made, for educational purposes, of "The Duke of Marlborough," and a combination of "War Songs of the Normans" and "The Crusaders' Hymn." This was issued on No. 20152, but the group taking part was much smaller than the one in the picture. It consisted of Burr, Mathieu, Baughman, Stanley, Price, Shaw and Glenn.

The Male Chorus seems not to have recorded again until September 13, 1928, by which time Burr was no longer singing for Victor. This was a vastly changed group, including Frank Crumit, Frank Luther, Croxton, Jackson Kinsey, Murphy, James Melton, James, Shaw, Glenn, Carson Robison, and—surprisingly—Geoffrey O'Hara, whose name hadn't previously appeared in a Victor list since 1918. They sang two medleys, "Over Here" and "Over There," which were issued on record No. 35937.

And, finally, on December 20, 1928, the male chorus recorded "Dixie" and "Maryland, My Maryland," which were combined on No. 21919. Many familiar names are here, but this wasn't the group shown in the photo. Members were Murphy, James, Hart, Harrison, J. House, F. House, Lawrie, Dadmun, Shaw, Baur, James (Jackson?) Kinsey, James Stanley, Glenn, Croxton and Baughman. Which leaves us wondering whether Judson and Foster House were brothers. And, by the way, an oddity of the photograph is the fact that Richard Crooks is between two men whose names were almost identical—Baer and Baur.

Perversely, Rust's book doesn't say when the male ensemble version of "The Pilgrims' Chorus" from "Tannhauser," which was issued on record No. 20127, was made, nor who was in it, although it was certainly electrically recorded. The other side is the "Anvil Chorus" from "Trovatore," which was made May 5, 1926, with 26 blended male and female voices. Do you suppose the men in the group picture were waiting to "join the ladies" and that the Pilgrims' Chorus was recorded the same day? That's another mystery. But early May could easily have called for topcoats.

And that seems to be it. I can only surmise that, after the picture was made, some other artists arrived or were summoned, and changes were made in the recording personnel. However that may be, I think we can justly say that the photo is one of the most remarkable in recorded music history.

One thing more: I am sure that Quentin Riggs, whose address is 18321 Delaware St., Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646, would be willing

to have glossy prints, 8x10 or larger, made of the group picture for any enthusiasts who would like one for framing. He, of course, would expect to receive a price that would allow him a fair profit for his time and trouble in having the copies made. Anyone who feels he would like to have a print should write direct to Mr. Riggs.

APRIL 25—Since the foregoing was written several weeks ago, "Ollie" Kline has positively identified the two men who were in doubt as Judson House and her old friend, Robert Simmons. In the meantime, I have found a picture of the Revelers with William Simmons as one of the members, and he was too young appearing when the picture was taken in 1935 to be the Simmons shown in the Male Chorus photo. William Simmons did, however, sing "The Rosary" in a Victor Red Seal album of Ethelbert Nevin's music issued in November, 1929.

I have also learned that Judson House, who was known in his later years as "The Silver Voice of Radio," died January 6, 1945, at his home in Dumont, N.J. He was 50. House had sung with the Chicago and San Francisco Opera Companies. He was survived by his widow, Ethel May Atkinson House of Dumont, and his brother, Foster House, who lived at Chappaqua, N.Y., and who, as we have seen, sometimes was heard in Victor ensembles.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

his voice and singing — ah, yes, those were all that and more!

I'm digressing, but this play on words reminds me of a musician, relative of Leoncavallo, and I simply must tell the story, even if it will lose some of its zest in translation.

While playing in an orchestra under the baton of Leopoldo Mugnone, the chap put out some sour notes. Reprimanded by the conductor, he indignantly inquired: "Do you know who I am, Maestro?" "No," said Mugnone, assuming a tongue-in-cheek attitude, "so, let's hear who you are."

"I am related to Ruggiero Leoncavallo," declared the musician with pride swelling his chest that wide. Here Mugnone thought for a moment, and with his inimitable Neapolitan sense of humor replied:

"I bow before your relative — he is a *leon* (lion) and a *cavallo* (horse). But you are not even a donkey!"

But coming back to Granforte and his gran-forte vocalizing — he really was a vocal marvel at the tail end of the golden-age era. It's fine for a purist to worship at the shrine, but when listening objectively, some of the late-comers could very well have been definite assets to the haughtiest of early phonograph labels.

I, myself, was once a stubborn, unreasonable conformist. There was no one outside Caruso, Ruffo, Chaliapin, and a few other name I was brought up with, to be even considered as vocal material. And no amount of convincing by friend or foe would

help, until it dawned on me that some of these idols' successors, then "operating," indeed were worthy of utmost attention.

And so it was that I "discovered" singers entirely new to me, among them Granforte. At first it felt as if I was betraying Ruffo. Imagine, liking other baritones! But, then — didn't Verdi set to music something about the woman being fickle? It's hard to resist when the voice is as captivating as the one that peals forth from Apollo's LP.

APOLLO GRANFORTE—CL 99-47:

Side I—1. GIOCONDA: O monumento  
2. ANDREA CHENIER: Nemico della patria  
3. CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Turiddu mi tolse l'onore (w. Manna)  
4. AMLETO: Brindisi  
5. TOSCA: Già, mi dicono venai  
6. TRAVIATA: Di Provenza  
7. La Leggenda del Piave (Mario)  
8. Inno a Roma (Puccini)  
Side II—1. BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Largo al Factotum  
2. DON SEBASTIANO: O Lisbona  
3. ZAZA: Zaza, piccola zingara  
4. ZAZA: Buona Zaza  
5. RIGOLETTO: Ah, veglia o donna (w. Saraceni)  
6. RIGOLETTO: Piangi, Fanciulla  
7. Trovatore: per me ora Fatale W. Masini, b.s.)  
8. Alma Llanera (Gutierrez).

Born in Legnano, near Verona, Italy, July 20, 1886, Apollo Granforte traveled to Argentina at the age of 18. There he and his brother worked together as shoemakers.

Some connoisseur of voices must have heard his rare vocal instrument, and advised him to place it in expert hands for proper polishing. He did just that, and after a period of studying in Buenos Aires under professors Guido Capocci and Nicola Guerrera, he was ready for his operatic debut. The event occurred in Rosario, Argentina, and the role was that of Germontpère in "La Traviata."

He returned home to serve in the Italian army during World War I, but somehow managed to squeeze in some operatic performances.

In 1916, he reportedly sang in Malta and Zurich. In 1917 he was at the Costanzi of Rome, and in 1918 at the dal Verme of Milan. It's a wonder he found the time to do any fighting at all.

The war over, he finally joined the forces at La Scala in 1921, and sang there repeatedly later on. Paris heard him in 1922, and in 1934 he visited Australia with a company directed by Nellie Melba.

In the course of his career, Granforte also sang in England and in South America. There, as everywhere else he appeared his enormous vocal beauty and skill evoked the deepest appreciation from audiences and critics alike.

At the end of World War II, he lived and taught in Milan. Then, oddly, he managed for a while the National Opera of Prague, Czechoslovakia. While there, I'm told, he died. I'll try to get the details.

For those who have or will acquire this LP, please note that the Spanish song on the last band (see my listing above) is missing from both the record and envelope labels. Vocally, it's a very effective item, and I certainly was no end surprised when the spirited cancion came on while I was getting up to take off the disc.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Chauncey Olcott

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### 1. A Stage Irishman

Chauncey Olcott's real name was Chauncey John Olcott, and, despite a widely held belief, he was not a native of Ireland, although his ancestors may have been from there.

Two generations ago, the tenor, a native of Buffalo, N.Y., was almost certainly the most popular man on the stage who starred in productions with so-called Irish backgrounds. The plays were no more truly representative of Ireland than the sweet-voiced Olcott was typical of the average Irishman, but they had a large and loyal following among persons who wanted to believe in an Eire of song, story and romance that was as mythical as its "befo' the Civil War" Southern American counterparts. Olcott, an accomplished singer, was an ideal performer of the synthetic material he was called on to deal with.

This being true, it was inevitable that he should receive, at the peak of his career, an invitation to make phonograph records. As far as I know, his voice had never been recorded for commercial use until he signed a contract with Columbia in 1913, though of course, there is always the chance that he did a little experimental work for some of the obscure cylinder manufacturers who quickly came and went in the 1890s.

Even so, Olcott's name, if not his voice, had been heard on records 10 years before he himself began making them. In 1903 Billy Jerome and Jean Schwartz wrote a song hit, "Bedelia," which was described as "an Irish coon song serenade." Its refrain contains the line, "I'll be your Chauncey Olcott if you'll be My-Molly-O." ("Molly-O" was the name of the heroine of one of Olcott's plays.) The song was sung on Victor Monarch discs by the Haydn Quartet; on Columbia by George J. Gaskin and there were two Zonophone records, one a baritone version by Arthur Collins, and the other a tenor rendition by Gaskin.

The impish Billy Murray sang "Bedelia" on an Edison 2-minute cylinder, issued in December, 1903, just four months after he had begun his professional recording career as a specialist in what were then called "coon songs"—an offensive term nowadays. Concerning Murray's performance of "Bedelia," whose publishers modestly called it "the song of the century," the Edison Phonograph Monthly said: "In No. 8550, 'Bedelia,' Billy Murray

has broken away from the singing of coon songs in which he has found many admirers among the users of Edison Records. This song has made a big hit throughout the country. Mr. Murray's rendition of it is even better than his coon Records."

In the recording, however, Billy's never-failing sense of humor got the best of him, and instead of singing, "I'll be your Chauncey Olcott . . ." he sang "I'll be your Chauncey Oil-cloth"—something Chancellor John Olcott may not have appreciated if he heard the record.

At least twice in much later years, Olcott's name was mentioned on records—both times in medleys of Irish songs sung by the still living tenor who began recording under his real name of Walter Van Brunt, then changed to Walter Scanlan when he sang leading roles in Irish musical productions. In "Famous Songs in Irish Plays," on an Edison Diamond Disc made in 1915 but not issued until 1921, he refers to the times when "Chauncey Olcott, Andrew Mack, Bill Scanlan and the rest would sing those good old Irish songs, the ones you love the best."

This was followed in 1929 by "Walter Scanlan's Irish Medley," which was issued a few months before Edison quit the record business. This fine electrically recorded medley refers to "the days of Bill Scanlan, my friend Andrew Mack, and Olcott, the 'Wild Irish Rose.'"

Incidentally, in my opinion, Van Brunt/Scanlan sang the songs associated with Bill Scanlan and Olcott better than Olcott did—or John McCormack, for that matter. I consider him the best of the "Irish tenors"—and in view of his Dutch ancestry

perhaps he should be called "the Dutch Irishman."

For this occasion I shall depart from my usual custom of giving first a biographical sketch of the artist, then concluding with a discussion of his records. I am sure most readers of *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* are more interested in Olcott's recorded work than a detailed listing of his performances on the stage, so I will tell first about his Columbia discs—not a long list—and follow with accounts of his career as an actor and singer, taken from reference works of varying periods.

(Continued on next page)

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OLCOTT'S FORERUNNER. — William J. (Bill) Scanlon was for years the most popular American tenor singing and composing "Irish songs." He gave way in the 1890s to Chauncey Olcott.



A BIG SEND-OFF.—The Columbia Co. went all-out to publicize Chauncey Olcott when his first records were issued in June, 1913. His photo, showing him in a typical Irish musical play costume, was reproduced on the front cover of the monthly record supplement.

## II. Olcott's 1913 Columbia Records

The tenor, who was also a song writer ("My Wild Irish Rose," which he composed in the '90s, will always be inseparably associated with his name) made his first Columbia records in 1913, and three double-faced blue label discs were listed in June. Since he sang on both sides of all and they sold for 75 cents instead of the ordinary price of 65 cents for a 10-inch black and silver label Columbia double-faced disc, it is likely that he was paid royalties in addition to standard recording fees.

Columbia was so proud of signing Olcott to compete with Victor's much more impressive roster of stage stars that it went all out to publicize his engagement. The front cover of the June supplement (reproduced with this article) contained a photo of him, sharing the "spotlight" with the great German symphony orchestra conductor, Felix Weingartner. In addition, all of page two and half of page three was devoted to a description in small type of the singer and his songs. Not many other recording artists ever received such a "send off." Since few readers probably have seen this supplement and it tells a great deal about the tenor, who was then world-famous at the age of 53, I think the write-up worth quoting:

"Another Columbia surprise and one that will gladden the hearts of the millions of admirers of the most popular Irish tenor that ever trod the boards in this country! Chauncey Olcott's position in the theatrical and musical affairs of America is absolutely unique. No other singer of popular Irish ballads has occupied the stage so long and so uninterruptedly or with anything approaching such unvarying success. Year after year with a new play for each season he has scored in a manner that makes other successes seem tame in comparison. During his latest engagement in New York City in January and February of this year (1913) in the Grand Opera House, the largest auditorium devoted to theatrical productions in New York, his audience twice broke the records of this theater. No other Irish singer has ever combined such ability as an actor with a voice of so much charm and personality.

"Olcott's career as a singer commenced when, as a boy, he sang with Billy Emerson's Minstrels in the Bush Street Theatre, San Francisco. His voice showed so much promise that a few seasons later he went abroad to study for opera and was heard in London by Charles Wyndham, who engaged him to appear in a light opera, 'Miss Helyet.' In this production he attracted the attention of the American manager, Augustus Pitou, who engaged him to take (William) Scanlon's place in a projected production of an Irish play, 'Mavourneen.' This was Olcott's introduction to a long list of Irish plays, with songs interpolated by himself, which he has produced year after year throughout the United States and Canada. Among the most popular of these are 'Sweet Inniscarra,' 'Ragged Robin,' 'The Irish Artist,' 'Old Limerick Town,' 'A Romance of Athlone,' 'Macushla,' 'Terence' and 'Barry of Ballymore.' His production this year is 'The Isle of Dreams,' one of the most successful of all the successes he has had.

"Mr. Olcott's singing appeals irresistibly to the Irish temperament and almost equally so to all who like to hear a good ballad well sung. It is his polish and finish of style almost equally as much as the natural beauty of his voice that has gained Mr. Olcott such a universal following. The numbers he has recorded for the Columbia are amongst the best in his repertory, these including, it is almost needless to say, the famous Olcott ballads, 'My Wild Irish Rose,' 'Molly O,' 'Sweet Inniscarra,' and practically all of

the real hits of his early stage successes, as well as the hit of his present production, 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling.'

These were the records included in that first Olcott list: A1308, "My Wild Irish Rose" and "I Used to Believe in Fairies"; A1309, "Molly O" and "Sweet Inniscarra"; and A1310, "I Love the Name of Mary" and "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." It was certainly a grouping of outstanding interest to lovers of pseudo-Irish balladry, for most of the songs have proved in the many years since they were written to be of lasting worth.

Two months later, in August, 1913, another Olcott record was announced: A1337, the world-famous "Mother Machree" and one of Olcott's own compositions which is not well remembered today, "My Beautiful Irish Maid." Under the heading, "Two More Irish Ballads by Chauncey Olcott," the supplement annotator, George Clarence Jell, said:

"The wisdom of the Columbia in inducing Chauncey Olcott to record a series of his Irish-American ballads has been amply proven in a most phenomenal sale of those already issued. In this double disc we have two more and many will say that we have kept the best selections for the last, that is to say the last of the present series, as Mr. Olcott has already promised to make a number of additional records for next season. 'Mother Machree' is an old-fashioned song and incidentally one of Mr. Olcott's greatest successes. Its popularity is simply phenomenal (again!) and though many other singers have sung it, it requires Mr. Olcott to do it justice. The sympathy, sincerity and expressiveness of his rendering of it as recorded will prove an unfailing source of pleasure and satisfaction. 'My Beautiful Irish Maid,' another characteristic Olcott number, is as Irish as Mr. Olcott's admirers like his songs to be and as tuneful as anyone could wish."

In December, 1913, just in time for the Christmas trade, Columbia announced the last two Chauncey Olcott records it was to issue for almost seven years. They were A1410, "Too-Ral-Loo-Ral-Loo-Ral" ("That's An Irish Lullaby"), coupled with "Dream Girl of Mine," and A1411, "Me Little Duden" and "Peggy Darling." Of these four songs only the "Irish Lullaby" won any real popularity, and the records did not sell so well as those that had gone before. The supplement annotation said, "Chauncey Olcott Sings the Hits of His Latest Production," and Editor Jell commented:

"In his entire career, successful as few others have been on the American stage, Mr. Olcott has never before had a production that has to quite such an extent caught the popular fancy as his 'Shameen Dhu,' in which he is now starring. A sufficient cause, quite apart from Mr. Olcott's fine acting and singing, is found in the songs themselves, which are quite exceptionally tuneful and catchy in an unmistakably Irish way. We lost no time in securing by Mr. Olcott recordings of the most successful numbers in the production and have combined them as listed below, one double comprising a charming lullaby, 'Too-ral-loo-ral-loo-ral' and a quietly tuneful reverie, 'My Little Duden.' In the other almost enticing love song, 'Peggy Darling,' and a melodious serenade, 'Dream Girl of Mine.'"

## III. Final Recordings

I suspect that Columbia had entered into an agreement with Olcott for him to sing only 12 of his favorite numbers, for, despite the asserted "phenomenal" popularity of his records, not another was issued until

November, 1920. By that time descriptions in the Columbia supplement had been shortened, and No. A2988, "Macushla Asthore (Pulse of My Heart)" and "Tis an Irish Girl I Love and She's Just Like You," both from the musical play, "Macushla," were dealt with briefly:

"Blarney and love and Ireland are forever young—so also is Chauncey Olcott. Olcott has made Irish songs and ballads a part of America's musical life for half a century. A thousand welcomes await Chauncey and Macushla."

Despite the statement that Olcott was "forever young," he was nearing the end of his long and honorable career when this disc was announced. The last of his records that Columbia ever issued, although I have an impression that a few more were made but not placed on the market, came out in March, 1922. It combined two more songs, composed, like those just mentioned, by Ernest R. Ball for the "Macushla" production, and the titles were "That's How the Shannon Flows" and "I'll Miss You, Old Ireland, God Bless You, Goodbye." The number was A-3525, and the supplement description went:

"Chauncey Olcott is a name close to the hearts of all lovers of the poetry and melody of Irish songs. To hear him sing the songs of the Emerald Isle would fairly wring tears from the hardest rock.

"That's How the Shannon Flows" and "I'll Miss You, Old Ireland, God Bless You, Goodbye," from his latest play, "Macushla," give you Olcott at his imperishable best.

"What an appropriate record for St. Patrick's Day is this one!"

I have found it intriguing to leaf through old Columbia catalogs and decide upon the relative popularity of the Olcott records. All six 1913 couplings held their place through September, 1917, but a year later the comparatively unknown "Me Little Duden" and "Dream Girl of Mine" had succumbed. And now I have just noticed that the writer of the December, 1913, supplement made an error in saying that "Too-ral-loo" was coupled with "Me Little Duden," and "Peggy Darling" with "Dream Girl of Mine." Perhaps that was the original intention, but actually "Too-ral-loo" had "Dream Girl" as a partner, and "Me Little Duden" was wedded to "Peggy Darling." It's a wonder the error wasn't caught.

Now prepare for a surprise. By 1922 only three of the six original Olcott recordings were still doing duty. Beside the one just mentioned, "Too-roo" and "Dream Girl" had been excused, and—this is the surprise—so had "My Wild Irish Rose" and "I Used to Believe in Fairies." It seems more than a little strange that "My Wild Irish Rose," the song most indelibly associated with Olcott should have undergone the indignity of being cut out of the catalog, although there was a fine record of it (No. A1855) remaining by the Columbia Stellar Quartet. Just how intimate was Olcott's musical association with his untamed Irish rose is indicated in the following comment from the Victor record supplement of December, 1914, when John McCormack's version of the tuneful number was issued (No. 64426):

"This is the most permanently popular of Chauncey Olcott's songs. No matter how many new ones he sings each year, the public always demands the melodious 'Irish Rose.'"

Today, 38 years after Olcott's death, I think it would be well-nigh impossible to say whether "My Wild Irish Rose" is still the top ranking number of all he ever sang, or whether "Mother Machree" and "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" share equal billing or possibly are even a bit more popular than their predecessor. All have now established themselves as musical classics that are likely to endure as long as the best of Stephen Foster, Franz Schubert or Hugo Wolf.

In 1925 the remaining three 1913 records were still being catalogued and so were the two dating from 1920 and 1922. Electrical recording took over in 1925 and made the greater part of the laboriously built up catalog of former years obsolescent, if not obsolete. In 1927, however, one of the Olcott records still remained under its old number. It was the most enduringly popular of the lot, A1310, "I Love the Name of Mary" and "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling."

But that was not all. Columbia had set up a special division to supply records of songs, dances, and sketches of predominantly Hibernian appeal to the Erin-go-bragh residents of Irish sections of such large cities as New York, Boston and Chicago, and many of the old acoustic discs of Irish songs had been transferred to this restricted series. The new records had numbers beginning with 3300F and were outfitted with special green labels. And all the Olcott records that had still been current in 1925 were decked in the new Irish regalia. They were 33011F, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "I Love the Name of Mary," which was still, as we just saw, available under its old num-

ber; 33012F, "I'll Miss You Old Ireland" and "That's How the Shannon Flows"; 33018F, "Tis an Irish Girl I Love" and "Macushla Asthore"; 33022F, "Sweet Inniscarra" and "Sweet Molly O"; and 33024F, "Mother Machree" and "My Beautiful Irish Maid."

In 1929, "I Love the Name of Mary" and "When Irish Eyes" could still be had under the A1310 number, but 33011F had been dropped. In its stead, William A. Kennedy, a nasal-voiced Irish tenor reminiscent of John McCormack, had recorded an electrical version of the two songs, which was issued under two numbers, 1003D and 33167F. No. 33018F had been discontinued, but the others held on. Olcott was in poor health and, probably, poor voice by 1929, which may account for his not being asked to do electrical re-makes, and the job being turned over to Kennedy.

Then came that never to be forgotten worldwide depression, which virtually killed the record business, although the corpse was destined to be raised from the dead after a few years and become stronger than ever. The 1929 catalog was the last complete edition issued by Columbia in that trying period. Supplementary lists appeared in 1930 and 1931; there was no catalog in 1932, and by the time 1933 arrived, Columbia ownership had changed, and the once bulky yearly catalog had been succeeded by a sleazy, poorly printed, paper-bound pamphlet which listed only a tiny fraction of the records that had formerly been available. None were left by Chauncey Olcott, who had died the year before.

That, I think, takes care of Olcott's recording activities. Next month I will do some digging into "ancient" musical history and tell more about the man himself and his long career.

(To be continued)

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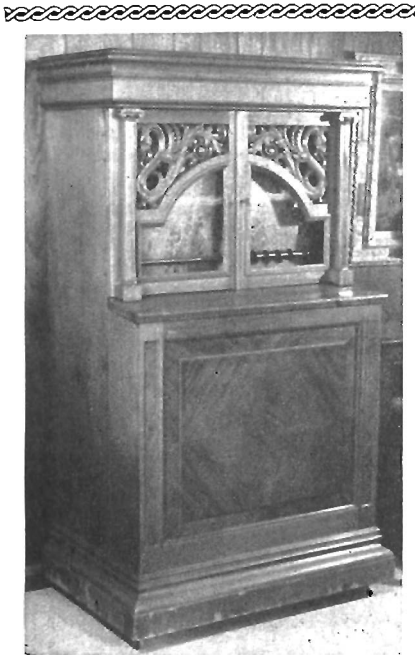
# Chauncey Olcott

PART II

By JIM WALSH

### I. 1901 Biographical Sketch

Last month, you will remember, I published the first installment of this series about Chauncey Olcott, whose real name was Chancellor John Olcott, and who, beginning in the 1880's, was the most popular "Irish stage tenor" for a period of more than 40 years. Attention was centered on discussing the singer's Columbia records and not a great deal was said about the man himself. Now I intend to go through several reference works in which he is mentioned and try to give some idea of his long career.



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The first source is a hard to find volume, "The Players Blue Book," compiled by A. D. Storms in 1901. It contains a fine photograph of Olcott as he appeared when a comparatively young man (it is reproduced with this installment), and the following fairly informative sketch:

"CHAUNCEY OLCOTT . . . Mr. Olcott has attained an enviable position both as an actor and singer and continues to grow in popular favor. He is the son of Mellon W. Olcott, a well-known resident of Buffalo, N.Y., in which city Chauncey was born on July 21, 1860. He received his education in public-school No. 36 in his native city.

"His first appearance on the stage was with Emerson and Hooley's Minstrel Company, in the city of Chicago. He was 19 years old at this time and was billed to sing ballads. His talent was of so pronounced a nature that it was impossible for him to remain long in obscurity, and soon after his first appearance he was seen in roles which showed his talent to more advantage. For three years he was in London, where he was received and acknowledged as a singer of great merit. During his stay in London he devoted a great deal of his time to study.

"Mr. Olcott has been seen in large number of successful plays, but probably the most notable ones have been 'Mavourneen', 'Sweet Inniscarra', 'Romance of Athlone' and 'Garrett O'Magh.' The latter named play is his latest and has been acknowledged by many critics as the best play in which Mr. Olcott has been seen as a star.

"Besides being a member of several clubs Mr. Olcott is a member of the Knights of Columbus Lodge."

### II. Olcott as a Minstrel

Now let's move up about another ten years to 1910 and examine a second scarce book, "Monarchs of Minstrelsy: From 'Daddy' Rice to Date," by Edward Le Roy Rice. This is a slapdash, slipshod, carelessly written production, which I have found not overly reliable, but it gives some information

concerning Chauncey Olcott that I have not seen anywhere else.

Don't blame me if any of its statements seem to contradict others that already have been quoted, or remain to be. I am not attempting the almost impossible task of reconciling discrepancies in these bygone reference works. Here is what this compendium of information concerning one-time minstrel show performers says about Olcott:

"CHAUNCEY OLCOTT, the favorite singing Irish comedian, was many years a minstrel.

"On the 21st day of February, 1876, Mr. Olcott, full of hope, became a member of the Alabama Serenaders, a minstrel (Continued on next page)

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strel company, which closed at St. Thomas, Canada, at the end of the third performance. Had the treasurer of the organization been as good as the show, they might still have been traveling.

"In the fall of the same year he joined Lew Benedict's Minstrels. Mr. Olcott's banner year as a minstrel was in 1879; here's the record. September 13, opened with Simmons and Slocum's Company in Philadelphia; November 27, he played a full season with the Three Rankins' Minstrels, opening at Columbus, Ohio, on the above date, and closing with the Company (which also closed) November 27, 1879, after a consecutive run of one consecutive night. Was Mr. Olcott discouraged? Not much; he became a member of Haverly's Mastodons at Buffalo, N.Y.; prior to which he was with Hooley and Emerson's Megatherians. July 31, 1880, he opened with Haverly at the Drury Lane Theatre, London, England.

"October 17, 1881, he opened in San Francisco with Billy Emerson's Minstrels. About January, 1884, he married Miss Carrie Armstrong in Philadelphia.

"Mr. Olcott was with Carnecross' Minstrels in Philadelphia, where he remained about two or three years. Seasons of 1884-85-86 he was with Thatcher, Primrose and West's Minstrels. September 11, 1886, he again joined Simmons and Slocum's Company in the Quaker City.

"A short time after that he became a member of the 'Old Homestead'; later he played 'Nanki Poo' in the 'Mikado'; subsequently entering the field of Irish drama.

"Chauncey Olcott was born July 21, 1857, at Providence, R.I."

In that concluding sentence we have the makings of one of those discrepancies that render difficult the path of the researcher. "The Players Book" said Olcott was born in Buffalo on July 21, 1857, and now here comes Edward Le Roy Rice, giving Providence as the birthplace and putting the date three years earlier. Both "authorities" agree that July 21 was the day of the month.

Well, the Blue Book must have been right and the minstrel compilation wrong, for Olcott himself said, in the brief sketch that he prepared for the 1918 edition of "Who's Who in America," that Buffalo was the place and July 21, 1860, the date. Next we come to another discrepancy, for there is no mention in "Who's Who" of the Miss Carrie Armstrong whom Rice says the tenor married "about January, 1884."

Instead, we are told, after learning that Olcott received his education in "Buffalo common schools" and was "brought out as a singer by the late R. M. Hooley" in 1880, that he married Margaret O'Donovan of San Francisco on September 28, 1897. Was there really a Carrie Armstrong of Philadelphia whom he married in his early twenties, and if so, did she die or were they divorced before he wed Miss O'Donovan? As a Catholic he would have found divorce rather difficult.

"Who's Who" goes on to say that Olcott was with Hooley's company for two years, then consecutively with Haverly's company, the Carnecross Minstrels, Denham Thompson ("The Old Homestead") and the Duff Opera Company for several seasons. He sang two years in England in comic opera, then succeeded W. J. (Bill) Scanlan as the star in Irish musical dramas; and 'has since appeared in various



**YOUNG TENOR** — This photo of Chauncey Olcott is copied from "The Player's Book," which was published in 1901. Olcott was then 41, but the picture probably was made some years earlier.

leading roles in U.S. and England." Olcott's 1918 address was given as 43 East 62nd St., New York City.

(The many HOBBIES readers who like to receive the latest information about my cats will be interested to know that the two paragraphs just preceding were typed under hardships, because Little Nipper, the 12-year-old patriarch of my feline family, who had been sleeping outside, came in while I was writing, jumped into my lap, began biting my fingers and butting my hands with the top of his head, and striking some of the keys himself. Nips is the eternal kitten, even at his relatively advanced age, and I regret to say I was obliged to escort him out of the room in order to go on with my work.)

Now we come to the 1952 edition of the "ASCAP Biographical Dictionary," published by the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers, of which Chauncey Olcott, who joined the society in 1914, was a charter member - and again we have discrepancies. For the ASCAP volume says Olcott was born July 2 (not 21) in Buffalo and gives the year as 1858, not 1860. He died abroad, in Monte Carlo, on March 18, 1932, somewhere in his 70s, depending on what you accept as his birthday.

I have an old scrapbook containing a newspaper clipping, which I imagine goes back to 1929 or 1930. It shows a picture of Olcott, looking old and worn and wearing a derby hat, with this cut line: "CHAUNCEY WELL.

—Chauncey Olcott, ballad singer, whose life was feared for recently, sailed for a two years' vacation in Europe, apparently in good health." This makes it appear that he was still taking that "two years vacation" when he died at the famous European gaming resort.

Continuing with the ASCAP biography, we again are told that Olcott

was educated in Buffalo public schools and by the Christian Brothers, which I take to be a Catholic educational group. After being with minstrel show, he was a member of the male quartet that in 1888 sang in Denham Thompson's original production of "The Old Homestead." (Thompson played the part of the lovable New England rustic, Uncle Josh Whitcomb, and it was this that gave his understudy, Cal Stewart, the idea of making comic talking records about Uncle Josh Weathersby.)

After going to London in 1890 to study voice and make stage appearances, Olcott returned to the States in 1893 "for three decades of starring in Irish romantic plays." Songs which he had a hand in composing are listed as "My Wild Irish Rose," which he published in 1899; "Mother Machree," "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," "In the Sunshine of Your Love," "Good-bye, my Emerald Land," "Every Star Falls in Love," "Your Heart Alone Must Tell," "Wearers of the Green," "Laugh With a Tear in It," "The Last Long Song," "Tic Tac Toe," and "Day Dreams."

Harry Macdonough made a fine 12 inch Victor record of the latter, and Miss Pearl Ann Reeder, editor-publisher of HOBBIES presented a copy of it to me when I was in Chicago. Aside, perhaps, from "Day Dreams," the only remembered Olcott compositions now are the first three mentioned — "Irish Rose," "Mother Machree" and "Irish Eyes."

The late Sigmund Spaeth, in his "History of Popular Music," terms Olcott

"unquestionably one of the most popular musical figures of all times, important enough to be mentioned in a contemporary song, 'Bedelia,' as a



**PRAISE FROM AUTHORITY** — The late Sigmund Spaeth (1885-1965), famed radio "Tune Detective" and author of many books on music, termed Chauncey Olcott "unquestionably one of the most popular musical figures of all times."

paragon to be desired by every right-thinking woman . . . He wrote a number of songs, besides singing them in a most attractive style, but 'My Wild Irish Rose' remains his one great hit." Spaeth also said:

"Chauncey Olcott continued for nearly 20 years to appear in his own shows, getting valuable co-operation from Ernest Ball, who wrote the popular 'Mother Machree' for him (1910), as well as 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling' (1912) and other hits. Rida Johnson Young supplied him with three of his books (the words for his shows), 'Barry of Ballymore' (1911), 'Isle of Dreams' (1912) and 'Shameen Dhu' (1913). She also wrote the words of 'Mother Machree.' Theodore Burt Saye was responsible for the text of 'Edmund Burke' (1905), 'Eileen Asthore,' (1906) and 'O'Neill of Derry' (1907). The final show of the series was 'Terence' (1914), with a book by Mrs. Edmund Nash Morgan."

### III. Help From "The Silent Swede"

No account of Chauncey Olcott's theatrical career would be complete or fair without some reference to Ernest R. Ball, known to his friends as "the silent Swede," because of his lack of conversational qualities, but one of the greatest popular song writers the North American Continent has ever produced. Ball was a master of the waltz rhythm as a medium for expressing sentiment, and he was the greatest writer of the so-called "Irish ballads," though he was no more Irish than my cherished friend, "Tiny Tim."

Ernie Ball was born in Cleveland, Ohio, July 21, 1878, and died, aged 48, in Santa Ana, Calif., May 3, 1927. He studied at the Cleveland Conservatory and when he was 13 gave lessons to acquire money for his own musical education. At 15, he composed a march, and from 1907 to 1927 he was a staff composer for the pioneer music publishing house of M. Witmark & Sons.

Ball's first hit tune was "Will You Love Me in September As You Do in May?" the words of which were written by a young fellow who became one of New York's most colorful mayors, James J. (Jimmy) Walker. In 1906 Ball composed "Love Me and the World is Mine," one of the all-time great hit songs, which was translated into many languages. (Dave Reed, Jr., wrote the words.) It was also one of the most deceptive in construction, for although it actually covers a slightly less range than the average popular song, it is so cunningly contrived that a singer seems to be taking an extremely high note when he jumps from "I only know to 'LOVE YOU—love me and the WORLD is mine."

Beginning in 1905, Ball, with Maude Lambert, his wife, starred in major vaudeville theaters throughout the United States. Meanwhile, his ability to write sweetly sentimental "Irish songs" with haunting, well constructed melodies, was a godsend to Chauncey Olcott.

"Mother Machree" already has been mentioned. Although Olcott is credited as a co-writer of the music, I doubt that he had anything to do with it, and suspect his name was printed on the sheet music, as many singers' were, because his rendition helped make the song popular. (Al Jolson is an example of a singer who wanted

his name to appear on music he introduced as one of the writers, although he had nothing to do with composing it.)

Similarly, it is unlikely that Olcott, although capable of writing songs of his own, helped Ball with the music of such other numbers as "I Love the Name of Mary" and "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," the words of which were written by my friend, George Graff, Jr.

Other great Ball successes included "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," which sounds to me as if it were suggested by Bayard Taylor's older "Bedouin Love Song," "Allah, Give Me Mine!" "Dear Little Boy of Mine," "I'll Forget You," "A Little Bit of Heaven (Shure They Call It Ireland)," which I have heard massacred by more than one tenor; "Let the Rest of the World Go By," "In the Garden of My Heart," "My Dear," "Who Knows?" "Goodbye, Good Luck, God Bless You," "Turn Back the Universe and Give Me Yesterday," "To the End of the World With You," "Roll On, Beautiful World, Roll On," "As Long as the World Rolls On," and "West of the Great Divide."

You probably have observed that several of these songs were variants of the enormously successful "Love Me and the World is Mine" theme, but Ball was at his most successful and melodious when he wrote ditties for Olcott dealing with the romantic charms of Ireland.

Not long before Ernie Ball succumbed with tragic suddenness to a heart attack in his dressing room in a Santa Ana theatre, John McCormack, who seemingly never tired of singing the Ball ballads, proclaimed that "The Silent Swede" was a musical genius who had done an incalculable amount of good with his clean, lyrical melodies.

McCormack expressed the belief that when Ball died (which nobody had any idea would occur for many years to come) Franz Schubert and the other great by-gone composers would hurry to grasp his hand and thank him for the good he had done with "Mother Machree" and his other great songs. McCormack scorned the self-constituted "highbrows" who sneered at Ball's music because it was tuneful and popular.

No one had greater reason to hold Ball in high esteem than did Chauncey Olcott, for his songs were the making of more than one Olcott show. I am sorry that I have been unable to find an adequate photograph of "the American Tosti," as Ball was sometimes called, to reproduce with this article.

I was grieved to read a short time ago that his grave in Cleveland had been neglected and was completely overgrown by brush and weeds. Cleveland should do better than that by its distinguished native son, who was, is, and will remain a substantial figure in American musical history.

I trust that better care has been taken of Chauncey Olcott's final resting place. Both he and Ernie Ball, as well as George Graff and the other



**CHAUNCEY WELL—**  
Chauncey Olcott, ballad singer, whose life was feared for recently, sailed for a two years' vacation in Europe, apparently in good health. (International Newsreel)

**NEAR THE END** — This newspaper clipping, telling of Olcott's going to Europe for a two-year rest, was published a few years before the tenor died at Monte Carlo in 1932.

creative personalities associated with them, were a wholesome influence in their day. Their art gave unpretentious pleasure to millions, and I wish that their type of music, rather than the dissonance of rock 'n' roll, were in vogue today. From Ball to the Beatles has been a tragic plunge downward, I think.

The End

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(Continued on next page)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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## Seven Bygone Edison Singers

Part I

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Bit of History

Thomas A. Edison contended for years that it would be impossible to make an "unbreakable" cylinder record without distorting the sound and marring the delicacy of tone.

But by 1912 Edison's wax "rollers" were losing ground steadily to the flat disc records and the U.S. Everlasting and Indestructible cylinders. And in October Edison announced he had developed and perfected a cylinder that was virtually unbreakable. It could be played 3000 times, or more, without wear. The two-minute wax Standard and four-minute Amberol records were discontinued, and the first list of 55 Blue Amberol cylinders went on sale in November, 1912.

At the same time, Diamond Disc phonographs and records (later to be called Re-Creations) began to be produced in tiny quantities, but were not formally announced until a year later, in October, 1913, when increased production made it possible to turn them out on a larger scale.

With new types of records and phonographs in production, Edison also began to look for new artists, and during the four-year period from 1912 through 1916 a fairly large number of singers and players who had not made wax cylinders were engaged and recorded on both discs and Blue Amberols. Most of these men and women, though some were not widely known, were excellent performers, but none enjoyed long careers as recording artists, nor were any active beyond 1917.

Over the years, five men and two women, all singers, have been of special interest to me, because their recorded work was confined to the period I have mentioned, and, with one exception, they appear, so far as my research goes, to have sung only for Edison.

Once their services ceased to be required at the Fifth Avenue studios in New York, they seem to have made no more records. Yet as singers they were all good and some were excellent.

In deciding to write about "the long-silent seven," I hit upon the term "Seven Bygone Edison Singers," to describe them, but this does not mean that they are deceased. Nor does it mean they are still living. I never have read of the death of any of them, but neither do I know that even one of the seven has survived until today.

The odds against their survival are great, for the youngest probably is

80, or more, if still living. I simply know nothing whatever concerning these artists except what I have read in old Edison catalogs, which must be my authority for the statements I shall make.

One reason for preparing this article is the hope that it may be read by somebody who can give more specific information about the Seven: Mary Carson, Charlotte Kirwan, Emory B. Randolph, Owen J. McCormack, Royal Fish, Arthur C. Lichty, and Burton Lenihan. Anybody with knowledge of the latter years of these artists may be assured that information will be welcome.

I am inclined to consider Randolph the most important of the group from the standpoint of possessing a superb voice and having made the most outstanding list of records, with Mary Carson ranking second. However, ladies should come first, so in considering the group I shall lead with the Misses Carson and Kirwan. Then will come the five men in the order I have named them in the preceding paragraph.

Following the biographical information concerning each will be a list of her or his Blue Amberols and Diamond Discs, but, although I have searched the Edison catalogs diligently, I do not guarantee that no records have been overlooked. And of course the list does not include concerted work, such as Gilbert and Sullivan, in which they may have taken part.

First, then, the dark-haired, vivacious, and, judging by her pictures, very attractive Mary Carson.

### II. Mary Carson and Her Records

Mary Carson was born in Houston, Tex., and as the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for September, 1914, says

she "made her first public performance as a songbird when but six years of age."

She continued to sing, and journeyed, obviously as a very young lady, to Italy where she underwent "a vigorous course of study under some of Italy's greatest masters." Her professional debut was made, at some time prior to 1912, in Italy, when she appeared as *Amina* in "La Sonnambula."

"The Italian papers with one accord proclaimed her fascinating and highly artistic in every endeavor, and the public greeted her performance with tremendous applause. Her extensive repertoire consists of about 25 operas in Italian, French, and German, together with almost innumerable English songs. Miss Carson has participated in many notable musical events, but perhaps one of her greatest achievements was the singing of 'Barbiere di Siviglia' twice in one night—a feat which the average opera singer would scarcely dare attempt.

Returning to America, Miss Carson

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"COVER GIRL" — Mary Carson's photo adorned the cover of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for September, 1914.

began to give recitals and was generously praised. In fact, one unidentified newspaper really went overboard in paying her the following tribute:

"Mary Carson is superb, and no one who heard her in her recent debut can justly deny her rank among the famous singers of the day. A brilliant career will be hers, for the gifts of the gods have been showered upon her in generosity. Artistic, dramatic, temperamentally gifted to the highest degree, she sways her listeners at will.

With an intellectual development of the greatest capacity she interprets, losing no opportunity of technical import to secure the very finest effects. While listening to her there is but one thought — that of the absolute delight she gives through the sweet sounds, which are as free and unconstrained as from a bird.

"But when one recalls the experience from a recital viewpoint the foremost thought is of the marked intelligence and judgment displayed by the singer. Naïve, graceful, with the charming simplicity of a child, she seems like a fragile bit of exquisite, rare china, or perhaps even more like a lovely flower; but as she sings the glorious womanhood finds expression.

"The years of patient, faithful determination to develop to the fullest the gifts God has placed at her disposal seem to have come to the fullest fruition, for she has even yet in her youth more than realized the outcome of the unyielding ambition which has ever been hers and has justified the faith of the hundreds of friends who have believed that a world-wide fame would crown her efforts."

Miss Carson's photograph was published on the front cover of the September, 1914, *Edison Phonograph Monthly*, which also contains some remarks that should interest our friend, Aida Favia-Artsay, and other lovers of opera:

"In speaking of how it feels to sing to children, Miss Carson said: 'I find that all "kiddies" who are brought to hear Grand Opera by their parents love to hear the story first. They seem to be more thorough in what they want in the way of enjoyment than "grown ups." They do not seem to be particularly interested in whether your singing is that of an angel or not. I am speaking, of course, only of the child under 10 years of age.

"I have always envied the European children their delight in going to hear Grand Opera. It is a part of the family training in Europe, and it is surprising to the American, when in various European countries, to hear the little children singing arias from operas with the same ease that you hear American children whistling or singing ragtime.

"This is of great assistance to the child who may later develop her voice, because he or she has become so thoroughly saturated with the great arias of operas that when they come to study them it is like acquiring a dormant second nature.

"I think it would be ideal if the American parents, now that Popular Grand Opera in English seems to have become an institution within the reach of all, would take their children to see and hear the productions of the masters, thereby making it part of their education."

Alas for Miss Carson's ardent belief in the universal European enthusiasm for opera! Information from Europe today is that, even in Italy, love for opera is virtually dead among the younger generation. Italian children for the most part no longer sing, hum, or whistle operatic arias, but have succumbed to the world-wide popularity of "rock 'n' roll."

Miss Carson's first Blue Amberol cylinder was included in the initial list for November, 1912. In typical Edison fashion, instead of being asked to oblige with bit of opera, she was assigned to interpret "O Dry Those Tears." The supplement description is interesting:

"An old favorite by a new Edison singer. Music lovers will be charmed by the rare purity and beauty of Mary Carson's delightful soprano. With the exquisite violin and cello obbligato forming an additional artistic setting to that of the piano, the voice shows to exceptional advantage.

"During her comparatively short musical career Miss Carson has sung in practically all the principal operas in Italy, and has given many notable performances in this country. . . . The most precious criticism which the gifted singer has ever received, and the one which she treasures most, is that of a little fisher boy who, upon hearing her sing in Devonshire, England, told his mother that Miss Carson's singing was sometimes 'like a lark in the sky' and sometimes 'like a thrush on the ground' . . ."

So far as one can judge from the catalogs, all Miss Carson's records were sung in English. This may have been because of a reputed decree by Mr. Edison that none of his artists would be allowed to sing excerpts from opera in foreign languages unless they were members of the Metropolitan or Chicago-Philadelphia Opera Companies. Actually, nothing in the Texas soprano's recorded repertoire classifies as grand opera. It consists mostly of ballads and waltz songs.

One of the latter, "The Kiss Waltz," was her biggest seller on Diamond Discs and was listed among the 300 most popular Edison records. Its runner-up was "I'll Change the Shadows to Sunshine," which she sang with Emory Randolph, but probably the duet's reverse side, "Sing Me the Rosary," which was the only solo Diamond Disc by "Irving Gillette" (Henry Burr), was more popular with the average buyer.

There are a couple of rather surprising items in the Blue Amberol list. One is a duet with Walter Van Brunt of Irving Berlin's great 1915 hit, "The

Simple Melody." Another is a duet with Billy Murray, in which she is called "Kathleen Kingston." They sing a tuneful Jerome Kern number, "You're Here and I'm Here," which came out in 1914.

But apparently Mary Carson was considered too much of a "highbrow singer" for the taste of the predominantly rural customers who bought Blue Amberols. When the 1920 catalog was issued only one of her cylinders remained: "The Lover and the Bird," and it is hard to understand why it was more lastingly popular with country patrons than "O Dry Those Tears," "The Kiss Waltz" or "The Simple Melody." Perhaps it was because of the bird imitations by my dear old friend, the late Joe Belmont. One of her cylinders, 23398, "Spring's Awakening," was made primarily for sale in the British Isles.

Miss Carson's Diamond Disc held their popularity better. Three were still available in the 1927 catalog, "The Kiss Waltz," "I'll Change the Shadows," and "Violet." The first two remained until Edison quit the record business on November 1, 1929.

And, by one of those characteristic Edison decisions, another Blue Amberol cylinder was resurrected from the files and issued in the fall of 1923, after Mary Carson had done no recording in many years. It was 4785, "When Love Is Young," and probably almost nobody bought it, even though Edison had dropped the price of the Amberol from 60 to 35 cents in an effort to salvage the tottering cylinder business. (Another such move involved selling cylinders direct from the factory to the individual customer.) "When Love Is Young" was not issued on a disc.

Now here is the listing of Mary Carson's records:

#### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS By MARY CARSON

- 1751 La Paloma (The Dove).
- 2181 Madcap Duchess—Love is a Story That's Old (with Chorus).
- 1593 O Dry Those Tears.
- 2665 The Kiss Waltz (Il Bacio) (with Chorus).
- 2418 Lover and the Bird (Bird imitation by Joe Belmont).
- 2607 Watch Your Step—The Simple Melody (duet with Walter Van Brunt, tenor).
- 2733 Spring Flowers.
- 23398 Spring's Awakening.
- 2521 Chin-Chin-Violet (with Chorus).
- 2260 The Girl On the Film — Won't You Come Waltz With Me? (duet with Harvey Hindermeyer, tenor).
- 2800 Alone at Last—Pretty Edelweiss.
- 4785 When Love is Young.

#### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDER By "KATHLEEN KINGSTON"

- 2253 You're Here and I'm Here (duet with Billy Murray, tenor).

#### DIAMOND DISCS By MARY CARSON

- 80189 Chin-Chin — The Grey Dove. Reverse: Love's Melody (Elizabeth Spencer and Emory B. Randolph).
- 80192 I'll Change the Shadows to Sunshine (duet with Randolph). Reverse: Sing Me the Rosary (Irving Gillette and Chorus).
- 80061 Kiss Waltz (with Chorus). Reverse: Silver Threads Among the Gold (Elizabeth Spencer and Chorus).
- 82056 Palomita—Ah! This Heart With Joy is Bounding. Reverse: Parla — Vocal Waltz.





**EDISON GROUP**—Four of the singers discussed in the accompanying two-part article were present when this photo was taken in September, 1914, before a series of records from Gilbert and Sullivan operas was to be made.

Front row—Marie Kaiser, soprano; Agnes Kimball, soprano; Elizabeth Spencer, soprano; MARY CARSON, soprano; Mary Jordan, contralto; Helen Clark, contralto; E. Eleanor Patterson, contralto, and CHARLOTTE KIRWAN, soprano.

Second row—Albert Farrington, baritone; Edward Meeker, comedian; Frederick Wheeler, baritone (John Young, tenor, is just behind Wheeler); Harvey Hindermeyer, tenor; Harvey N. Emmons, recording expert; ROYAL FISH, tenor; William F. Hooley, bass; Vernon Archibald, baritone; John F. Burckhardt, pianist and bells solist; and EMORY B. RANDOLPH, tenor. Fred Rabenstein, Edison paymaster, is behind Archibald and Burckhardt. To the rear of Emmons are Walter H. Miller, recording manager; H. Voorhis, technician, and W. H. A. Cronkhite, recording director.

Back row—Donald Chalmers, bass; Andy Webber, of the Edison technical staff; George Agnew, technician; Robert A. Gayler, piano and celesta, and Eugene A. Jaudas, violinist.

82054 The Butterfly — Vocal Waltz. Reverse: Ecstasy—Vocal Waltz.

82052 Manola. Reverse: Villanelle (Oft Have I Seen the Swift Swallow).

80289 Alone at Last—Pretty Edelweiss. Reverse: The Girl Who Smiles—Teach Me to Smile (duet with George Wilton Ballard, tenor).

80275 Spring Flowers. Reverse: Carmina —Vocal Waltz (Metropolitan Quartet).

80188 Chin-Chin—Violet (with Chorus). Reverse: Chin-Chin—Love Moon (Spencer — Van Brunt).

### III. Charlotte Kirwan

Considerably less space will be required to discuss Charlotte Kirwan and her recordings. Like Mary Carson, she was a soprano, and in a group photo of Edison artists taken in September, 1914, she looks to me like a plump, smiling, good-natured German *fraulein*.

We have, however, the April, 1914, Blue Amberol catalog's word for it that:

"This favorite artist is a native of Newark, N.J., of English and Welsh ancestors, many of whom were musicians and actors of fame. She received her musical training in New York City, where she studied under Emma Thurby.

She has appeared in many light operas, singing principal soprano roles, and has sung in all the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. In addition, she is a well-known concert and church singer, and in the church work has held many prominent positions."

Miss Kirwan's first Edison record

was Blue Amberol 1717, on which she and Harvey Hindermeyer, a favorite Edison tenor, sang Rudolf Friml's beautiful "Sympathy." It was contained in the undated sixth list of Blue Amberols, which must have come out in the spring of 1913.

The soprano made only one other Blue Amberol, or at least just one more was listed, 2117, "The Lord Is

My Shepherd," a duet with Katherine N. Staats, contralto, about whom I know nothing. Miss Kirwan's list of Diamond Discs was not much longer, but one, 82024, "Ave Maria," sung in Latin, was included in the first preliminary list of Diamond Discs issued late in 1912 or early 1913. It was coupled with a flute and clarinet duet, and this combination stayed in the catalog only four months before giving way to a new coupling with "Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer," sung by Marie Narelle, the Australian soprano and chorus.

Miss Kirwan's "Hark! What I Tell  
(Continued on page 44)

—★—



**CHURCH SOPRANO**—Charlotte Kirwan was a well-known Newark, N.J., church and concert singer who recorded for Edison at the time the Diamond Discs were introduced in 1912-13.

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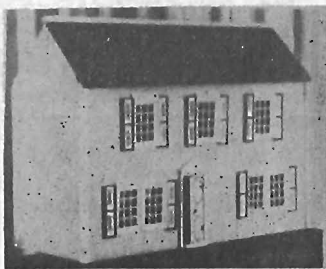
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### SEVEN BYGONE EDISON SINGERS

(Continued from page 37)

"To Thee" had the distinction of being doubled with a Spanish number by the great Metropolitan soprano, Lucrezia Bori. But Miss Kirwan's one record of lasting popularity was "When the Robins Nest Again," which was combined with Christine Miller's version of "The Rosary." It was one of the 300 most popular Diamond Discs.

Notes have survived in Mr. Edison's handwriting indicating that something about Charlotte Kirwan's singing did not appeal to his defective hearing, and this is probably the reason her Edison association was a short one. Here is a list of her records:

#### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS By CHARLOTTE KIRWAN

2117 Lord is My Shepherd (duet with Katherine N. Staats, contralto).  
1717 Sympathy (duet with Harvey Hindermeyer, tenor).

#### DIAMOND DISCS By CHARLOTTE KIRWAN

82511 Ave Maria (in Latin). Reverse: Lullaby—Sweet Spirit, Hear My Prayer. Marie Narelle, soprano, and Chorus).  
80102 Hark! What I Tell to Thee (The Spirit Song). Reverse: Malaguena (Lucrezia Bori, soprano).  
82024 Ave Maria. Reverse: Norma, Hear Me Norma (Flute and Clarinet duet by Julius Spindler and A. Giamatteo).  
80100 When the Robins Nest Again (with Chorus). Reverse: The Rosary (Christine Miller, contralto, and Chorus).

That takes care of the two bygone sopranos. Coming, Messrs. Randolph, McCormack, Fish, Lichty, and Lenihan!

(To be continued)

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# Seven Bygone Edison Singers

Part II

By JIM WALSH

### I. Emory B. Randolph

Last month's installment of this series discussed the recordings of two accomplished sopranos, Mary Carson and Charlotte Kirwan. This month we have for consideration the tenor Emory B. Randolph, who, in virtue of his artistic accomplishments and longest list of records, takes pride of place.

Emory Randolph's first Blue Amberol cylinder was announced in January, 1914, and was a ballad of the old-fashioned type, "When the Song Birds Sing No More." The record was given an advance listing in the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for December, 1913. A photograph of the tenor also was published, accompanied by the following biographical mention:

"One of the finest church and oratorio singers in New York, Mr. Randolph has for the past 10 years been identified with the best known artists in concert, oratorio and church work. His success at every appearance is assured, because of the unusually beautiful quality of his voice, and the sound musicianship which he brings to his work.

"Mr. Randolph was born in Western New York State. As a child he displayed a great interest in music; at the age of 14 he played the cornet and other instruments in the orchestra.

"For many years now he has been a notable figure in church musical work. For 12 years he has been soloist in leading metropolitan churches; soloist at Ocean Grove, Thousand Island Park, and with many choral and oratorio societies.

"In addition he has organized numerous male quartets, glee clubs, etc. His special work is oratorio and English songs teaching voice development. At present he is singing in the Calvary Methodist Church of East Orange, N.J.

"Mr. Randolph's voice is eminently suitable for recording purposes. It is rich, warm and powerful and possesses that even steadiness of tone so desirable."

This comment from the Edison publication does not in the least exaggerate Randolph's abilities. To me he is one of the best tenors Edison

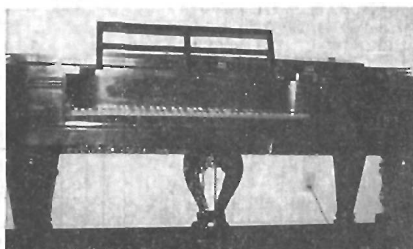
ever had. His voice was both sweet and powerful and his enunciation virtually faultless. It is hard for me to understand why his services were not retained for a longer period.

That Emory Randolph was not only a singer, but a student of musical art is evident from an article by him, "Save Your Breath," that appeared in the *Edison Magazine, Along Broadway*, for July, 1921. It reveals how carefully he had studied and analyzed the technical problems of voice production, and I think it is worth reprinting for the benefit of ambitious singers:

### II. Advice on Breath Control

"One of the greatest problems that confronts the singer, or the student of singing, is the management of breath. Numberless books and lectures have been written and given on the subject of deep breathing and proper breath control, but the subject is still mooted.

"There has always been a tradition among singers and teachers of singing that it was necessary to take in a full breath before each phrase sung. Like many another tradition, this can be proved false and unfounded. Such laborious breathing is the cause of a great deal of unnecessary effort on the part of the singer, and will prove a serious drawback.



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**EARLY "TALKIE" ARTIST**—Royal Fish was a member of a sextet that recorded The Lucia Sextet for Mr. Edison's "talking pictures" in 1912 or 1913. From left to right the artists are Charles Harrison, Mary Jordan, Agnes Kimball, Fish, Frederick J. Wheeler, and Donald Chalmers. The sound was recorded on large concert-size cylinders of the Blue Amberol type, and the phonograph and film projector were geared to synchronize when the picture was shown.

"This recommended 'full breath before each phrase' has a tendency to tighten the throat, restrict the tongue, push up the larynx, and spread out the voice in a mouth formation, so preventing true placement of tone. Indeed, it is a dangerous stumbling block in the roadway of vocal progress.

"When the necessary development and facility have been acquired in the muscular machinery which controls the voice, the 'problem' of breath control will disappear and the breath will not have to be 'taken in,' but will function as easily, quickly and silently in singing as in speaking, working or playing.

"The origin of the idea that a great breath must be inhaled before singing is something of a mystery. Although a harmful habit, the practice seems to be quite universal. By this I do not mean that deep breathing is wrong—I merely speak of its wrong indulgence.

"Real, deep breathing, and the development of the muscles for breath control, are of the utmost importance for voice, as well as for health. It should be strictly a muscular operation, performed without thought of breath.

"The 'elastic' of properly developed muscles should enable the singer, skilled in this work, to sustain a long phrase, and then, without stooping for breath, or taking away from the length of the notes sung, to go right ahead with another long phrase in this way. It is possible to start the phrase with tone instead of starting with a breathy sound and sliding to the tone. Thus will be obtained a clear, pure tone, free from that objectionable breathy quality so common, and eliminated also will be the waste of breath which the average singer experiences.

"Breath management is of greatest importance in making phonograph Records. A breathy tone is the prime cause of much trouble. In recording,

the tone must be clear, pure and freely emitted for successful result.

"When properly controlled, the coordination of the various muscles of cheeks, lips, throat and diaphragm produces pure tone. How frequently we see singers gasping for breath, raising the chest and shoulders, and making more effort in 'taking in' the breath than should be necessary in the actual singing of the phrase. Sometimes their breathing can be heard the length of a hall or theatre.

"This same effort would certainly be ridiculous if used in speaking, or in playing an instrument, or, in fact, in any kind of work or play. If singing is to be enjoyed by the average listener, it must not appear to be an effort, for this ruins esthetic pleasure.

"Watch your muscles, develop them, and so be able to 'save your breath.'"

Not being a singer, I shall not try to pass judgment on the foregoing advice, but it certainly reads as if it makes sense. Incidentally, although published in 1921, this article must have been written several years before, probably about 1916, for the tenor long had ceased to make records when it was printed.

### III. Randolph's Records

Randolph's fairly long record list does not call for extended comment. Although he was described as a specialist in oratorio, music of that type is absent from his recordings. I had thought I perhaps had a copy of each of his Diamond Discs, but I took inventory and found I lack two "Love's

Melody" (a duet with Elizabeth Spencer) and "Spirit Flower."

It may be interesting, however, to know that his most popular Diamond Disc, issued in 1915, was "Irish Love" (Continued on page 50)

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 38)

it lavishly, but she also knew when and how to use only the interest. Ardent, like the Vesuvius under which she was born, she nevertheless gave of her temperament in singing only when necessary, and then sparingly, in good taste.

In other words, she was an all-around exceptional artist, something that may be deduced at once from her first utterance—*Suicidio!*—on her new Long Play record.

MARIA CANIGLIA—OASI-538:  
Side 1—1. GIOCONDA: Suicidio! 2. ANDREA CHENIER: La mamma morta (not from set) 3. CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: Voi lo sapete, o mamma 4. AMICO FRITZ: Non mi resta che il pianto 5. MANON LESCAUT: In quelle trine morbide.

Side II—1. BOHEME: Donte lieta uscì 2. TOSCA: Vissi d'arte (not from set) 3. LOHENGRIN: Sola ne' miei prim'anna 4. LOHENGRIN: Aurette a cui si spesso 5. SIBERIA: Qual vergogna tu porti 6. Mi Madre, Se Mi Date Giovannino (Florentine Song) (Composer B. E. Giuranna at the piano).

Born in Naples, May 11, 1906, Maria Caniglia studied singing there at the San Pietro a Majella Conservatory, under Pietro Agostino Roche, distinguished vocal coach, pianist, and composer.

She made her debut in Turin as Chrysothemis in "Elektra," January 1, 1930, and before the year was over, Milan's La Scala presented her for the first time as Rosaura in "Le Maschere." Following that happy event, she remained at the Italian opera temple for the duration of 18 years.

Although a permanent member of La Scala, she made guest appearances elsewhere in the course of those years. The audiences of the 1935 Salzburg Festival, Teatra Colon of Buenos Aires, London's Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, and other important opera houses, in Italy and abroad, heard and applauded the state-prima donna for her excellent performances.

Our Metropolitan had her listed on

its roster only for 1938-39. But it thought enough of the diva to let her open the Season on November 21, as Desdemona in "Otello," with Martinelli and Tibbett as the other principals.

Maria Caniglia continued her career until the mid-fifties. At present she is retired, living in Milan, but unlike some of her colleagues, is not reported to be engaged in passing on her vocal knowledge to others. And that is a real pity, if true—for good vocal pedagogues are now most difficult to find.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Song," which was written by a Boston composer, Margaret Ruthven Lane, who is, or was, a year or so ago, still living, although considerably past 100. (She was born in 1867). "Irish Love Song" was one of the much publicized 300 best selling Edison discs.

Other consistently popular Randolph records were "The Bubble," in which Miss Spencer assisted him in the refrain; "I'll Change the Shadows to Sunshine," a duet with Mary Carson; "In the Gloaming," and "Macushla." Most of his Re-Creations were issued from 1914 through 1915, but three "Lorna," "Spirit Flower," and "What Have I to Give?" appear to have been made somewhat later and were placed on sale in 1917.

The tenor was heard in six Blue Amberol duets with Helen Clark, but only two of these "In the Candle Light" and "Love's Golden Dream" were issued on the discs. And, like Mary Carson, sang one cylinder that was not made public until long after his recording career ended. This was 4542, "Faithless Heart," which was announced in July, 1922. It strikes me as a very dull song.

Again like Mary Carson, Randolph made one Blue Amberol especially for sale in the British Isles, 23366, "Make Me King of Your Heart." In my opinion he was a superb tenor and I

wish his recording days had been much longer extended.

### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS By EMORY B. RANDOLPH

- 2740 Ah, Could I But Once More So Love, Dear.
- 2692 Beautiful Lady in Red.
- 2621 Bid Me to Love.
- 2211 The Bubble.
- 2522 Dear Old Songs of Long Ago.
- 4542 Faithless Heart.
- 2341 Farewell.
- 2399 I Seem to Hear You Gently Calling.
- 2852 In the Gloaming.
- 2315 In the Valley Where the Bluebirds Sing.
- 2635 Little Gray Home in the West.
- 2844 Lorna.
- 2452 Love's Sorrow.
- 2955 Spirit Flower.
- 2875 What Have I to Give.
- 2120 When the Song Birds Sing No More.
- 3207 Would You Take Back the Love You Gave Me?
- 23366 Make Me King of Your Heart.

### BLUE AMBEROL DUETS

By RANDOLPH and HELEN CLARK

- 2254 In the Candle Light.
- 2398 In the Palace of Dreams.
- 2198 Love Has Done Wonders for Me.
- 2592 Love's Golden Dream.
- 2333 On the Banks of Lovelight Bay.
- 2302 When the Maple Leaves Were Falling.

### BLUE AMBEROL DUET

By RANDOLPH and MARIE KAISER

- 2535 One Wonderful Night.

### BLUE AMBEROL DUETS

By RANDOLPH and ELIZABETH SPENCER

- 2502 Love's Melody.
- 2497 When the Roses Bloom.

### DIAMOND DISCS

By EMORY B. RANDOLPH

- 80288 Ah! Could I But Once More So Love, Dear. Reverse: Nightingale — Vocal Waltz (Metropolitan Quartet).
- 80235 Bid Me to Love. (Reverse: In the Garden of the Gods (Thomas Chalmers, baritone).
- 80131 High Jinks — The Bubble (with Chorus). Reverse: Little Cafe—Just Because It's You (Elizabeth Spencer and Chorus).
- 80228 For You Alone (with Elizabeth Spencer). Reverse: Little Grey Home in the West (Randolph with Chorus).
- 80126 Good-Bye, Rose. Reverse: When the Song Birds Sing No More.
- 80132 I'll Change the Shadows to Sunshine (with Mary Carson). Reverse: Sing Me the Rosary (Irving Gillette and Chorus).
- 80151 In the Candle Light (with Helen Clark). Reverse: We'll Always Be the Same Sweethearts (John Young and Frederick Wheeler).
- 80145 In the Gloaming (with Chorus). Reverse: When the Twilight Comes to Kiss the Rose Good-night (Helen Clark and Vernon Archibald).
- 80152 Irish Love Song. Reverse: Love's Dream After the Ball (Spencer).
- 80149 Let Me Rest Where the Loved Ones Are Sleeping (with Chorus). Reverse: Sally in Our Alley (Knickerbocker Quartet).
- 80167 Love's Golden Dream (with Helen Clark). Reverse: Little Daisy's Evening Prayer (Merle Alcock, contralto, and Chorus).
- 80189 Love's Melody (with Spencer). Reverse: Chin-Chin — The Grey Dove (Mary Carson).
- 80175 Love's Sorrow. Reverse: The Spanish Dancer (La Spagnola). Elizabeth Spencer).
- 80133 Macushla. Reverse: Land of Golden Dreams (Spencer and Archibald).
- 80156 O Happy Day, O Day So Dear. Reverse: Nightingale's Song (Christine Miller, Contralto).
- 80191 One Wonderful Night (with Marie Kaiser). Reverse: You Are the Rose of My Heart (Archibald).
- 80134 When the Roses Bloom (with Spencer and Chorus). Reverse: Boat With My True Love's Name (Clark and Archibald).
- 80330 Lorna. Reverse: Sweet Genevieve (Ida Gardner, contralto, and Chorus).
- 80314 Spirit Flower. Reverse: Song of Hybrias the Cretan (T. Foster Why, bass).
- 80335 What Have I to Give? Reverse: Cradle Song (Ida Gardner).

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Seven Bygone Edison Singers

PART III

By JIM WALSH

This month we will consider Owen J. McCormack, a baritone, and the tenors, Royal Fish, Arthur C. Lichty, and Burton Lenihan.

As far as Randolph (told of last month), or Fish, Lichty, and McCormack are concerned, it is doubtful if they are still living. Judging by their photographs, published from 1912 to 1916, all then were nearing 40, if they had not reached it.

If still living, they must be somewhere near the 90's. Lenihan's photo appears to be that of a man about 25, but at least 55 years have passed since it was taken, so he hardly can be under 80 if he has survived.

#### I. Owen J. McCormack

It happened that Owen J. McCormack, the only baritone in this group of bygone Edison artists, made his first record about the same time as Emory Randolph, and it, too, appeared in the January, 1914, supplement. The December, 1913, *Edison Phonograph Monthly* referred to him as follows:

"Born in Utica, N.Y., son of the late O. F. McCormack, famous bandmaster and cornetist, Mr. McCormack started his professional career as a violinist. After several years he decided to train his voice (a most promising natural baritone), and studied under White, Stevens and Mazzio, all prominent vocal instructors of New York City.

"He became connected with the Aborn Grand Opera Co., where he sang many baritone operatic roles. He also sang in several Klax and Erlanger productions, and was with the Henry W. Savage 'Everywoman' company.

"In addition to his stage work, Mr. McCormack has sung in many of the leading New York Church Choirs, and for the Edison Talking Pictures, with which latter he has made a notable success. His first record (is) an Irish ballad called 'The Lass From The County Mayo.'"

The title of McCormack's first record will interest record collectors be-

cause it was a revival of a song which had been published in 1897. It was the first number Billy Murray and his boyhood singing partner, Matt Keefe, the yodeler, recorded when they were engaged to make experimental cylinders for the Bacigalupi Brothers of San Francisco, the year the song came out.

A generation ago, a man insisted to me he had heard John McCormack give an Edison "tone test" and he refused to be convinced by my truthful statement that the tenor couldn't have done anything of the sort, since he never made any Edison discs and was under an exclusive Victor contract that didn't expire until February, 1938.

I'm wondering if he heard Owen McCormack instead. And McCormack, by the way, is the only one of the group of Edison artists who, to my knowledge, sang for any other company.

I have one of the little-known Rex hill-and-dale records that came out in 1915. It is 5203, and on one side McCormack sings "Back to the Carolina You Love," a popular tune he also recorded for both Edison cylinders and discs. The label gives his name as "O. J. McCormac." The reverse side is one of Byron G. Harlan's typical "rube song" renditions, "When He Gets to New York Town."

McCormack was a good singer, but

\*\*\*\*\*

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Owen J. McCormack



Royal Fish

with, it seems to me, nothing especially distinctive about his style except rather Italianate pronunciation of vowels. During his brief career, which ended in 1915, he was assigned mostly to sing genuinely popular songs.

The Company must not have anticipated the large demand for his Diamond Disc of "Goodbye, Girls, I'm Through," as about a year after it was issued, the supply of moulds apparently was exhausted. It was remade by another baritone, Joseph A. Phillips, best remembered as a recording and "tone test" duet partner of Helen Clark.

#### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS

By OWEN J. McCORMACK

- 2562 Back to the Carolina You Love.
- 2201 Dixie Days.
- 2543 Goodbye, Girls, I'm Through.
- 2304 In the Town Where I Was Born.
- 2142 Lass From the County Mayo.
- 2541 Way Down on Tampa Bay.
- 2703 Welcome to California.
- 2163 When It's Springtime in Virginia.

#### DIAMOND DISCS

By OWEN J. McCORMACK

- 50220 Back to the Carolina You Love (with Chorus). Reverse: There's a Bungalow in Dixieland (Morton Harvey, baritone, and Chorus).
- 50214 Goodbye, Girls, I'm Through (with Chorus of Girls). Reverse: My Lady of the Telephone (Joseph A. Phillips and Chorus).
- 50313 In the Land of Love With the Song Birds (duet with George Wilton Ballard, tenor). Reverse: She's the Daughter of Mother Machree (Burton Lenihan).
- 50215 Way Down on Tampa Bay (with Chorus). Reverse: Down by the Old Mill Stream (Arthur C. Clough, tenor, and Chorus).
- 50272 Welcome to California (with Chorus). Reverse: Sweet Kentucky Lady (Arthur C. Lichty, tenor, and Chorus).
- 50245 When It's Moonlight in Mayo (with Chorus). Reverse: I'm On My Way to Dublin Bay (Premier Quartet).

## II. Royal Fish

Many recording artists had unusual names, and there is something about Royal Fish that strikes me as particularly distinctive.

The April, 1914, catalog of Blue Amberol records has the following to say about this tenor, whose voice does not seem to have been especially powerful, but was peculiarly soft and sweet:

"This American artist was born in the Middle West. His early musical training was received under his father, Stephen Fish, who was a well-known

tenor about 20 years ago. Later he studied with some of the best teachers in Chicago and New York.

"For some years Royal Fish has sung leading tenor roles of all the standard operas. His repertoire also includes standard oratorios and classic and modern songs.

"He has sung for many of the leading societies of the country, and has sung as soloist at the First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, and at the Marble Collegiate and Grace Methodist Episcopal Churches, New York. At present he is engaged in concert and oratorio work, and in teaching."

Royal Fish may have been familiar with all the standard operas and oratorios, but that was not the sort of music he was called on to sing when he began with Edison in 1913. His first Blue Amberol was that great "barber shop quartet" hit of 1903. "Sweet Adeline" which, of course, is just as immortal in its way and will live as long as any "classical music." The supplement description told nothing about Fish, but gave the following description of the cylinder:

"This ballad needs no introduction to the American public . . . So popular a few years ago, (it) has received a new lease of life by being sung persistently during the recent season at the baseball games . . . Elizabeth Spencer and Donald Chalmers, both so familiar to all Edison owners, can be heard in the chorus of this rendition, which is particularly melodious . . ."

Fish's most popular Blue Amberol seems to have been "In the Shadow of the Pines," which he sang as a duet with Vernon Archibald. Most of his Diamond Discs, were steady sellers for years. "Where the Morning Glories Twine," "Marguerite," and "On Yonder Rock Reclining" probably were the leaders. The latter excerpt from "Fra Diavolo" was so popular that, after Fish no longer was recording, it had to be remade by Marie Kaiser and Vernon Dalhart.

In the first list of Diamond Discs, purchasers were given their choice of couplings for "Where the Morning Glories Twine," and "Marguerite." By paying \$1 the buyer could get "Morning Glories" combined with a tarantella, "Forsetta," played by the American Symphony Orchestra. For \$1.50, it could be had doubled with Frank Croxton's vigorous bass rendition of "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."

Both these combinations were offered for only four months. After that "Morning Glories" settled down to long-time popularity as the coupling for "In the Valley Where the Blue Birds Sing," by an English tenor, Alfred D. Shaw.

"Marguerite" was first offered with "Dolores Waltz," by a Reed Orchestra, as the coupling. After that four months this was withdrawn, and "Where the Water Lilies Grow" was placed on the other side. The latter song previously had been wedded to "Forest Whispers," by the Reed Orchestra.

It was one of Mr. Edison's ways, when he began his disc business, to offer records in several couplings, and sometimes it was possible to pay \$1, \$1.50, or \$2 for the same selection, de-



Arthur C. Lichty



Burton Lenihan

pending upon what was on the other side. This obviously resulted in unnecessary duplication of stock, and the scheme soon was abandoned when there was objections.

Like Owen McCormack, Royal Fish was a successful singer for the Edison talking pictures that flourished from about 1912 through 1915. Among other things, he and five other Edison artists recorded a "talkie" version of the Lucia Sextet.

#### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS

By ROYAL FISH

- 2077 If We Were On Our Honeymoon (duet with Elsie Baker, contralto).
- 2226 Love Divine, All Love Excelling (duet with Marie Kaiser).
- 2735 Where the Water Lilies Grow (with Chorus).
- 2193 The Battle Eve (duet with Vernon Archibald, baritone).
- 1625 You're the Flower of My Heart, Sweet Adeline (with Chorus - naturally!).
- 2073 In the Shadow of the Pines (duet with Vernon Archibald, baritone).

#### DIAMOND DISCS

By ROYAL FISH

- 50070 Marguerite (with Chorus). Reverse: Where the Water Lilies Grow.
- 50042 Marguerite. Reverse: Dolores Waltz (Reed Orchestra).
- 50121 Fra Diavolo—On Yonder Rock Reclining (duet with Marie Kaiser). Reverse: Soldiers' Chorus (English Opera Co.).
- 50088 Roses, Roses Everywhere (duet with Marie Kaiser, soprano). Reverse: Maritana—Scenes That Are Brightest (Agnes Kimball, soprano).
- 52040 Silent Night (with Elizabeth Spencer, soprano, and Thomas Chalmers, baritone). Reverse: Bird on the Wing (Metropolitan Quartet).
- 50094 There Is No Love Like Mine (duet with Marie Kaiser). Reverse: I Wish That You Belonged to Me (Walter Van Brunt and Chorus).
- 50062 Where the Morning Glories Twine Around the Door (with Chorus). Reverse: In the Valley Where the Blue Birds Sing (Alfred D. Shaw, tenor, and Chorus).
- 50136 Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm (duet with Elizabeth Spencer, soprano). Reverse: When the Haying Time is Over (Spencer and Van Brunt).
- 50174 Ring On, Sweet Bells (with Vernon Archibald, baritone). Reverse: Song of Steel (Donald Chalmers, bass).
- 50157 Iolanthe—Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady (with Archibald and D. Chalmers). Reverse: Pirates of Penzance—Stay, Frederick, Stay (with Kaiser).
- 50024 Where the Morning Glories Twine. Reverse: Forsetta—Tarantella (American Symphony Orchestra).
- 50023 Where the Morning Glories Twine Around the Door (with Chorus). Reverse: Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep (Frank Croxton, bass, and Chorus).
- 50033 Roses, Roses Everywhere (duet

with Kaiser). Reverse: Tancredi Overture (American Symphony Orchestra). 50041 Where the Water Lilies Grow (with Chorus). Reverse: Forest Whispers (Reed Orchestra).

### III. Arthur C. Lichty

This tenor's name strongly resembles that of another better-known recording artist, Arthur C. Clough, and their voices are so much alike that, if it were not for the difference in their photographs, one would be tempted to take them for the same man.

Lichty had a remarkably brief Edison career. With the exception of one Blue Amberol issued early in 1913, his activity appears to have been confined to a couple of months in 1915. His first cylinder, No. 1617, was of a sentimental song, "Sleepy Rose," and the following description was given in the supplement:

"This song ballad, whose peculiar rhythm and graceful melody have made it such a pronounced success, has never been more beautifully rendered on this record. Arthur C. Lichty, an American baritone of exceptional ability, made his debut in the opera 'Faust,' singing the part of Valentine in Savannah, Georgia, in 1909.

"Not only is he famous as a singer, but he has done good work as a concert pianist as well. His voice is exceptionally smooth and clear of tone, and is displayed to good advantage in 'Sleepy Rose.'"

Although Lichty is called a baritone in this annotation, he was described as a tenor when his disc records were made, and his recorded voice is unmistakably tenor in quality.

It's worth noting that just as Emory Randolph played the cornet and other instruments and Owen McCormack had been a violinist, so Lichty was a pianist. He was also—which the supplement doesn't mention—a writer of movie scenarios. I have a film exhibitor's magazine for 1915 which describes the plot of a scenario he had written.

After "Sleepy Rose" there were no Edison records by Lichty for more than two years. Then, in October, 1915, two Blue Amberols by him were issued. Each contained a reigning hit of the time: No. 2700, "My Little Girl," and 2707, "It's Tulip Time in Holland." Both were sung with the help of a chorus.

The "Tulip Time" record is by far the most attractive version issued by any company of Richard Whiting's lovely song. Its harmonized chorus "makes" it.

During this same period three Diamond Discs sung by Lichty were issued. They were 50282, "It's Tulip Time in Holland," combined with "There's a Little White Church in the Valley," by Irving Kaufman and Chorus; 50283, "My Little Girl," with "Circus Day in Dixie," by the Premier Quartet; and 50272, "Sweet Kentucky Lady" (with Chorus), whose coupling was "Welcome to California," by Owen J. McCormack and Chorus. After that, no more was heard, Edisonically speaking, of Arthur Lichty.



Edison Enthusiasts. Thirteen-year-old Nancy Sittig and her eight-year-old brother, Freddie, of Columbus, Ohio, are ardent collectors of Edison cylinder records, and Nancy avidly reads HOBBIES. Their father, John Sittig, is head of the radio and audio-visual education department of the Columbus public school system.

### IV. Burton Lenihan

And now we come to the last of our Seven Singers. Burton Lenihan, who began making Edison records in 1915, was born in Saginaw, Mich., and studied music in Boston for several years. Then he went to New York and obtained minor parts in several Broadway musical productions.

His big chance came when he was engaged to sing the leading tenor role in "The Firefly," an operetta in which Emma Trentini was starred. His brief Edison career followed. Lenihan's photo reveals him as a boyish, clean-cut looking young fellow.

His first two Blue Amberol records were made public in January, 1916, and both, "Auf Wiedersehn" and "Chin Chin," were duets with Gladys Rice, who was just beginning what was to be a long and successful recording career. These songs were also issued on Diamond Discs.

Lenihan sang mostly the popular ballads of 1916, but recorded a good version of Schubert's "Serenade"—which I doubt Schubert wrote. Lenihan was a capable, if not especially outstanding tenor, but his record of Egbert Van Alstyne's beautiful ballad, "Memories," is disappointing, for he doesn't make as much of the exquisite high notes at the end of the refrain as some other tenors—say, Walter Van Brunt or Emory Randolph could have.

By the end of 1916, Lenihan did no more Edison work, and apparently

(Continued on page 50)

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

I confess, I was taken by surprise when Plancon came one with *Le veau d'or*, but then I realized that to enrich the "Faust" set, two of his solos from this opera were included in the disc.

### POL PLANCON

And here is the French basso on his own LP. What I said about Eames, goes for Plancon as well. New superlatives would have to be found in order to describe anew his superiority in the art he practiced with so much grandeur.

POL PLANCON—Cantilena 6220:

Side I—1. FLAUTO MAGICO: Possenti numi 2. FLAUTO MAGICO: Qui sdegno non s'accende 3. SONNAMBULA: Vi ravviso, o luoghi ameni 4. FAUST Le veau d'or (B1051) 5. FAUST: Vous qui faites l'endormie (B992) 6. DAMNATION DE FAUST: Devant la maison 7. DON CARLOS: Je dormirai dans mon manteau royal 8. MIGNON: Del suo cor calmai le pene.

Side II—1. Le Vallon (Gounod) 2. Le Soupir (Bemberg) 3. Le Lac (Niedermeyer) 4. Embarquez-Vous (Godard) 5. Si Tu Veux, Mignonne (Massenet) 6. Le Lazzarone (Ferrari) 7. Le Flibustier (Georges) 8. Minuit, Chrétiens (Adam) 9. Les Rameaux (Faure). (Please note that the "Faust" recordings are different from those on the Eames LP.)

While I was writing, I listened to Plancon and marveled at what he does on records. How did they go about acquiring so much vocal refinement in the olden days, anyway? Then it dawned: they had no records, radio, movies, or television to entertain them, so they had to make their own music. And they did just that—but well.

This is the Season when people unite in prayer for Peace On Earth Among Men. May I join my prayer for this much-needed blessing, and also wish my kind readers a Joyful Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 39)

he sang for no other company. Here is a list of his records:

### BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS By BURTON LENIHAN

2840 In Monterey.  
2877 Memories.  
2910 Serenade (Schubert).  
2805 She's The Daughter of Mother Machree.  
2775 Auf Wiedersehn (duet with Gladys Rice, soprano)  
2788 Chin Chin (duet with Gladys Rice).

### DIAMOND DISCS

By BURTON LENIHAN

80280 The Blue Paradise — Auf Wiedersehn (with Gladys Rice and Chorus). Reverse: The Blue Paradise—Waltz of the Season (George Wilton Ballard, Frederick J. Wheeler and Chorus).  
80281 Hip-Hip-Hooray—Chin-Chin (with Gladys Rice and Chorus). Reverse: Two Is Company—In the Land of Lorraine (Frederick Wheeler, baritone).  
50328 In Monterey. Reverse: Along the Rocky Road to Dublin (Premier Quartet).  
50375 Ashes of My Heart. Reverse: There's a Garden in Old Italy (Irving Kaufman, tenor).  
50345 Memories. Reverse: What a Wonderful Mother You'd Be (Van Brunt).  
80303 Serenade (Schubert). Reverse: Bells of Lee (Helen Clark, contralto).  
50313 She's the Daughter of Mother Machree. Reverse: In the Land of Love With the Song Birds (Ballard and McCormack).

So here we are, at the end of the list of Mr. Edison's one-time Singing Seven. It surely would be interesting to know how many, if any, of these bygone popular artists still are living at a necessarily advanced age.

## DOLLOLOGY

(Continued from page 48)

Japan. The doll was dressed by a group of girls at the YWCA who did hand-work for charity bazaars. She was accompanied by other Japanese toys and playthings.

Mabel has a kid body, made in Germany. The name is on her neck. Snow White is with one of the Dwarfs.

Baby Doll, large, is wearing a baby dress of Margaret's and is in the doll carriage. (Compare it with Rhoda's.)

Red Riding Hood, 15 years old, is a later purchase of Mrs. Drake. Note the basket filled with flowers for Christmas.

Meet the Teddy Bear. Margaret was born during T.R.'s administration so teddy bears were the order of the day. This one was much beloved. It suffered tragedy in the loss of one eye. But Margaret's dad, was a doctor. He replaced it with a "glass eye" although it was not quite the same color as the original.

Louise, along with Teddy, was Margaret's favorite doll. It was thought when the larger and more beautiful Janet came Louise would take second place but she never did. Beloved probably because she was "earned," she was the reward for three subscription to the *Ladies Home Journal*.

The chair in which Teddy and Louise sit is a small black Pennsylvania Dutch one which was brought from New York State by the Waggoners. It was used both by Rhoda and her daughter Margaret.

Baby Bumps, one of the early realistic baby dolls, is much beloved. She is wearing one of Margaret's baby dresses which is more than 60 years old.

These Negro dolls, four of them I am sure kept me from developing any so-called "race prejudice." This first is a happy, pig-tailed youngster. The second gay little clown, unfortunately, now "blind," as it has lost both eyes. I'll have to replace them soon. The third, a large rag Mammy doll is much beloved. The fourth, best of all, is an upside-down doll—black, and when tipped up—white.

This clown, white with a gay flannel suit, has misplaced his pointed cap.

Mabel, a larger doll, 21 inches tall, also came from Germany. She was renamed Gertrude.

Mildred, was a reward for Sunday School attendance. She was given by the teacher, a leading merchant in town.

Note this large baby doll. Mostly Margaret took good care of her dolls but this one bears the marks of carelessness. He was left outside and a shower came up. He is speckled with the "first drops" and remains disfigured, but is nonetheless beloved.

Meet Peter Pan. With all the girl dolls, I did so want "a boy." Then, one Christmas he came. Peter Pan wears a smart sailor suit, plain blue knickers, and a blue-and-white plaid blouse with plain blue collar. He really made a hit and with his gay red tie has been a joy.

Many other small dolls are a part of this "family." Some are on the wall shelves, and one is in a wee cradle in front beside Rhoda's old cupboard. A pair of Chinese dolls are under the Christmas tree.

The tree itself is about 70 years old. It is German-made, with feather-wound branches. Toys, the blocks, Noah's ark, the cooking utensils, stereoptican, sideboard, and three ornaments all bring back Christmases past.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# In Justice to George Washington Johnson

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. Defining an "Old-Timer"

Back in the 1920's, a writer of editorial page paragraphs for a Virginia newspaper remarked:

"An old-timer is anybody who can remember when Billy Murray wasn't making Victrola records."

If that paragraph still were writing today he very well might change his definition to read:

"An old-timer is anybody who can remember when Jim Walsh wasn't writing for HOBBIES."

"The Denver Nightingale's" primary recording career lasted from 1903 to 1931, a span of 28 years, although he made a brief comeback in 1940 and '41. On the other hand, I now am completing my 29th year of editing a HOBBIES department and have grandiose ambitions of extending the stretch to 50 years at least.

So, from a longevity stand-point, my writing career already parallels Billy Murray's recording activities, and the paragraph's definition of an "old-timer" would apply equally well to anyone whose memory takes him back to the days when my name didn't appear in this magazine.

Before I conclude this article, I intend to mention a surprising discovery I have made about the beginning of Murray's recording career—one that seems to disprove a statement that Billy himself, in all good faith, gave me. But now I must get down to the prime purpose of this contribution, which is to apologize to the memory of a man to whom I unintentionally did an injustice 26 years ago in HOBBIES for September, 1944.

### II. Doing Justice to George

The man I have in mind is the late George Washington Johnson, who called himself "The Laughing Coon" and "The Whistling Coon." According to Frank Dorian, a pioneer Columbia Phonograph Company official, Johnson was born into slavery on a Virginia plantation. He was burly and coal black — and I said in my brief sketch of him that his life ended in tragedy, because he was hanged for killing his wife.

That statement was made on the authority of a book written by the late Fred Gaisberg, which was called "Music On Record" in England, and "The Music Goes Round" in the States. Gaisberg, a gnome-like little man, had

begun his professional career around 1890 as a piano accompanist at Columbia's Washington studios. He was then 16.

Later he became associated with Emile Berliner, and in the late 1890's went to England, where he helped establish the Gramophone Company and came to be its director of artists. His book was published in 1942, and he died September 2, 1951, at 77.

Among the early recording artists whom Gaisberg had known well, Johnson was one of the more outstanding. In putting together his book, Gaisberg recalled playing accompaniments for Johnson and other performers and wrote:

"The late nineties can be rated as the 'high spot' of the phonograph cylinder as an entertainer, brought about, strangely enough, through the vogue of the slot machine. Automatic Phonograph Parlors, as they were called, sprang up like mushrooms on the busy streets of most towns in the United States. They did a flourishing business for just two years and then the craze vanished.

"A singer with a loud voice could record to five machines simultaneously . . . Favorite records of those days (included) the tragic Negro, George W. Johnson, in 'The Whistling Coon' and 'The Laughing Song.'

"George achieved fame and riches with just these two titles. His whistle was low-pitched and fruity, like a contralto voice. His laugh was deep-bellied, lazy like a carefree dandy. His life ended in tragedy."

Farther over in the book, Gaisberg discussed Burt Shepard (whose name he misspells as Sheppard) an American comedian born in New Orleans, who went to England as a young man and spent most of his professional life there.

Shepard began making Gramophone (H.M.V.) records about 70 years ago, and his "Boy and the Cheese" was 7", Improved and Victor single-faced record 7. From about 1901 to 1907 Shepard crossed the ocean once or twice a year to make Victor records in addition to those he was recording in England for Gramophone, Zonophone, Pathe, and other companies.

He declared that "fat, jolly Burt Shepard, with his powerful tenor voice and clear diction, gave us our most successful results" (in England). Then Gaisberg went on to say:

"Burt Shepard's 'Whistling Coon' and 'The Laughing Song' were world-famous. In India alone over a half million records of the latter were sold.

"In the bazaars of India I have seen dozens of natives seated on their haunches round a gramophone, rocking with laughter, whilst playing Shepard's laughing record; in fact this is the only time I have ever heard Indians laugh heartily. The record is still available there, and I believe that to this day it sells in China, Africa, and Japan.

"I brought these songs over from America, having transcribed them from memory, and taught them to Burt. I had acquired them from George W. Johnson, the tragic Negro mentioned earlier, who was hanged for throwing his wife out of a window when in a drunken frenzy."

Shepard's association with "the Laughing Song" record was mentioned in an interview with him published in the *Talking Machine News* of London for April 1, 1907:

"Mr. Shepard is confident he has made more records for the Gramophone Company than any other artist, and all 'big sellers.' Take that laughing song of his, for instance. He has repeated his visits to their laboratory over and over again to make fresh masters of this popular record.

## Music Boxes

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**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**



**SEVENTY YEARS AGO** — George W. Johnson (32) was the only Negro in this group of Edison recording artists, photographed in 1900, at West Orange, N.J. It is believed that everyone shown in the picture is now dead. Jim Walsh says that if a Pioneer Recording Artists' Hall of Fame ever is established, he believes the performers whose names are preceded by an asterisk should be elected to membership.

Quentin Riggs, P.O. Box 415, Midway City, Calif. 92655, will supply copies of the photo, size 8 by 10 or larger, at a reasonable price to anyone who would like to have a copy for framing or permanent preservation. The artists, identified by number, are:

1. \*Joe Belmont, whistler. 2. Nick Scholl, trombone. 3. A. Zimmerman, cornet. 4. L. W. Lipp, yodler. 5. \*Byron G. Harlan, Tenor. 6. \*Fred W. Hager, violin. 7. \*Arthur Collins, baritone. 8. \*S. H. Dudley, baritone. 9. W. C. Deusing, German baritone. 10. M. Guarini, tenor. 11. \*William Tuson, clarinet. 12. Will N. Steele, recitations. 13. Jim White, recitations. 14. \*Walter H. Miller, recording manager. 15. \*George Broderick, bass. 16. Frank Kennedy, comedian. 17. Albert C. Sweet, cornet. 18. B. Russell Throckmorton, recitations. 19. Harvey N. Emmons, chimes. 20. Ruby E. Brooks, banjo. 21. \*Samuel Siegel, mandolin. 22. \*Albert Benzler, piano, bells,

and xylophone. 23. Senorita Maria Godoy, Spanish songs. 24. \*Joe Natus, tenor. 25. \*William F. Hookey, bass. 26. May Kelso, contralto. 27. J. J. Fisher, baritone. 28. \*Will F. Denny, tenor.

29. \*John Bieling, tenor. 30. Marguerite Newton, soprano. 31. Fred Bachman, piano. 32. \*George W. Johnson, comedian. 33. A. D. Madeira, baritone. 34. Frank S. Mazzotta, piccolo. 35. \*Frank P. Banta, piano. 36. \*Charles D'Almaine, violin. 37. \*George P. Watson, yodler. 38. \*Dan W. Quinn, tenor. 39. \*Harry MacDonough, tenor. 40. \*Edward M. Favor, tenor. 41. \*Albert Campbell, tenor. 42. \*Jere Mahoney, tenor.

(Continued from page 37)

14

Songs—Johnson

Geo. W. Johnson

IN HIS

TWO GREAT SPECIALTIES



Up to date, over 25,000 records of these two songs have been made by this artist, and the orders for them seem to increase instead of diminish. Mr. Johnson's laugh is simply irresistible. Whole audiences are convulsed by simply hearing these songs reproduced. No exhibition box is complete without these two records.

Laughing Song  
Whistling Coon

**JOHNSON'S EMPLOYER** — Len Spencer used Johnson as a doorman at his Lyceum during the Negro comedian's last years. Spencer and Johnson sometimes worked together in recorded minstrel shows and comic sketches.

"More than one dealer has told me that it sells like wildfire. The natives of various parts of India especially would seem to like it very well. Friends write and tell me that all a native wants out there is a loin-cloth, a machine and my laughing record," said Mr. Shepard."

### III. The Facts in the Case

Gaisberg's book is so demonstrably inaccurate in so many ways that ever since my 1944 article appeared, I have had qualms about having reported, on the strength of the book, that George Washington Johnson was hanged for murder. For one thing, I understood that Johnson was living in New York City when the alleged murder occurred, and the statement that he was hanged sounded like an anachronism. How long has it been since New York has executed convicted persons by hanging?

For another, none of my friends among old-time recording officials and artists who mentioned Johnson ever said anything about his being put to death. One thing I knew: If he was executed, it must have been later than 1909, for I have a record that Johnson apparently made in that year.

Of another thing I was certain: The hanging, if it ever took place, must have been around 1910, for all Johnson's records disappeared that year from the Victor catalog. I



**PHONOGRAPH PIONEER** — The late Fred Gaisberg, author of the book, "The Music Goes Round," in which it wrongly was said that Johnson was hanged for killing his third wife.



thought Victor must have decided it would not be good "public relations" to continue to offer the discs of a convicted wife-killer.

I still think Johnson died around 1910. And for reasons to be shown I am positive he could not have been living as late as 1914. But I also have learned beyond dispute that he was not put to death as a common criminal.

This article, therefore, is to set the record straight. It is my hope and belief that 100, or 200 years from now researchers in the early history of the phonograph will be conning bound volumes of HOBBIES, and I don't want to pass out of this world knowing that I helped to blacken permanently the name of a presumably innocent man. Hence this act of retribution, 26 years after my original statements about Johnson appeared.

I only can assume that Gaisberg, after so many years abroad, suffered a lapse of memory that made him believe Johnson had been executed. Or possibly some visitor to England gave Gaisberg false information.

But my first unshakable proof that he was wrong came through the merest chance when a California record collector—Harold A. Layer of San Francisco—courteously sent me some "antique" Columbia reference material he had found stored away in an old barn that burned a month after he salvaged its contents.

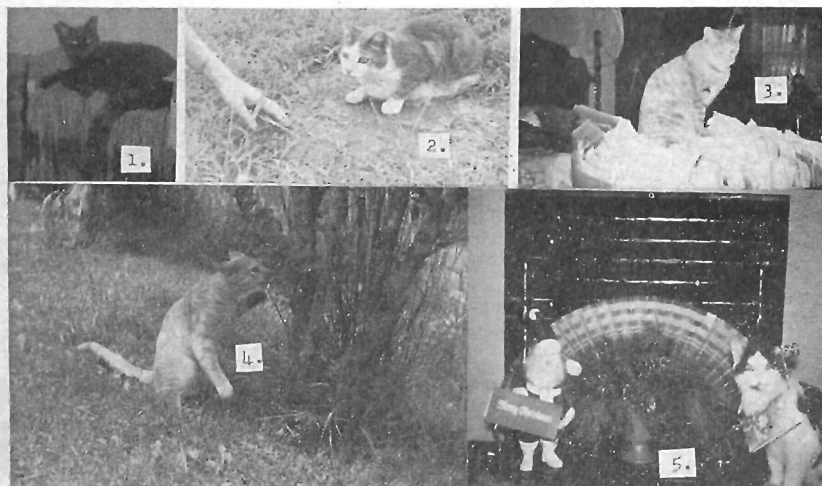
Many of the items Mr. Layer so kindly lent me will provide material for a series which I believe will be

(Continued on page 50)



Edward Issler played the piano accompaniments for Johnson's first experimental Edison records in 1891 and afterwards accompanied him on Columbia records.

### LUCKY JIM, PLUM, NIPPER, POSSY AND JIM WALSH AGAIN WISH THE GREAT HOBBIES FAMILY A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



1. LUCKY JIM has been looking through his records, to select a program of Christmas music with which to greet Santa Claus.
2. PROFESSOR PLUM DUFF WALSH, Ph.D., besides holding high rank as a statesman and poet, also operates a detective agency in conjunction with another cat, Siamese Marshall. The Professor here is industriously sniffing out a clue.
3. NIPPER has been making an industrious search in his letter files, to check up on past correspondence with Santa. Although he is now 13 years of age, Nips still

- believes in the patron saint of Christmas.
4. This picture is a memorial tribute to the late CHIP JENKINS, beloved friend of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins, of Rose Hill, Va. Chip is shown "laying" for H. C. Haley, the mail carrier, intending to throw rocks at him if he hasn't brought the latest issue of HOBBIES with Chip's picture somewhere inside it.
5. In memory of THOMAS A., cherished pet of Mr. & Mrs. Albert Via Jr., of So. Boston, Va. Thomas always entered thoroughly into the spirit of Christmas. jax

### PUBLIC NOTICE HUGE MUSIC BOX COLLECTION — Being Sold! —

We are now offering for sale on a piece by piece basis the fabulous Marvin Collection of music boxes. You can take your pick of dozens and dozens of Regina, Polyphon, Symphonion and other disc boxes; Swiss cylinder boxes of all kinds and descriptions including overture boxes, bell boxes, orchestra boxes, and instruments with matching tables.

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SHEET MUSIC, choose from thousands of popular, late 1800s to date. We also buy. — McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. 60304. mh3253

OLD popular sheet music, 250,000 songs in A-Z order. — Robert Greenlaw, 307 N. Rampart, Room 412, Los Angeles, Calif. 90026. d126121

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 39)

of outstanding interest and will appear later in HOBBIES. But at the present time I chiefly am concerned with issues of *The Columbia Record* for September, 1907, and *The Columbia Salesman* for the following month.

One of the features of these numbers was a continued article on "The Making of a Disc Record," written by Victor H. Emerson, then manager of Columbia's recording department, who, in 1916, founded the Emerson Phonograph Company. Emerson took his memory back to 1890 and recalled:

"I was with the New Jersey Company at that time and believed the future of our business lay in the exploitation of the musical record branch and endeavored to get our board of directors to see it . . . I set up ten recording machines and one day heard on the street a 'mud gutter band' of four pieces playing 'Boulanger's Patrol.'

"The leader said that they couldn't work cheap — no use asking him. We finally closed the bargain at \$3.50 for all of the four men for the afternoon. We made 500 records and sold them for two dollars each . . .

"Geo. W. Johnson, who sings the 'Laughing Song' and 'Whistling Coon' was the next to make records, and I believe the first man who made commercial records for the public. George got twenty cents a song.

"The price paid the talent in those days was from twenty cents to one dollar per song. There were no duplicating methods: at that time and all records sold were original . . ."

In October Emerson continued, with information that bore directly on the question of whether George Washington Johnson was a murderer:

"My manager . . . finally allowed me to make nine more laughing songs by Johnson and that increased our stock 100 per cent . . .

"Speaking of Johnson recalls to my mind the famous case of the State of New York versus Johnson in which he was arrested for murdering his wife. Two wives prior to this last one had met with violent deaths, and in New York when the third wife meets with a violent death the police sometimes become suspicious and so the poor man was arrested.

"Johnson was always sober, industrious and gentlemanly, and nobody believed that Johnson would do it on account of the risk involved.

"Some of the talent held a meeting to provide ways and means to help him, and after the object of the meeting was stated one of them said, 'Well, boys, we ought to all chip in because there is no telling when some of us might be in the same fix.' The subscription after that speech was \$2,100 on paper and we afterwards borrowed \$100 real money . . .

"Johnson was acquitted by the judge upon the recommendation of the district attorney."

So there you have the truth, on the word of Victor Emerson, who was writing while Johnson still was alive and making records. Columbia issued, in fact, a six-inch BC cylinder, No. 85130, of "The Laughing Song" the same month this article appeared.

The supplement described the song as: "... the most famous and laughable of all Negro specialties. The first time ever recorded on BC records. The most cheerful lyric since the word began, with the quaintest conceivable words and melody sung



FROM 76-YEAR-OLD CATALOG — The pen-and-ink drawing of George W. Johnson shown here is reproduced from a catalog of New Jersey cylinder records dated March 31, 1894. Formerly owned by Len Spencer, it is now the property of Jim Walsh.

by their genuine African originator. The hearty laugh and good humor this song provokes is worth much more to you than the price of the record. A perennially popular selection positively without equal."

### IV. Effort to Learn the Details

I experienced considerable excitement as I read Emerson's recollections, thanks to Mr. Layer. Here was proof positive that Johnson was not hanged for murder, and the year of the alleged "hanging" could not have been 1910, as I had speculated. Johnson still was alive and working at his specialty in 1907, but he hardly could have been said to gain "riches" in addition to fame, despite what Gaisberg had said.

What of the threads left dangling? When had his arrest on the murder charge occurred? Had it been in the early 1900's or, more likely, in the 1890's? Emerson wrote as though the trouble had occurred a considerable time before 1907, but, provokingly, gave no dates.

My best guess was, and is, that the murder charge was brought in the '90's. But I wondered what was the name of Johnson's wife? Under what conditions had she met her death? What were the suspicious circumstances under which two preceding wives had died? And just when did Johnson himself pass on?

These questions are still unanswered. However, that is not my fault. Almost immediately I wrote to Frank S. Hogan, District Attorney of the County of New York, and asked for any information his files contained regarding the Johnson murder case. I imagined a card index was kept of all cases and it would not be hard

to ascertain the needed information.

The result of my efforts, however, was a note from Kathryn E. Zenoff, Mr. Hogan's law assistant:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I am sorry to inform you that without an exact date of Mr. Johnson's trial, the information you have requested will be almost impossible to locate."

That stumped me, for I was asking the D.A.'s office for the date of trial. And, without its help, I know of no way to get it. I told Abel Green, editor of *Variety*, about my effort to track down the truth, and he said he thought he would publish my letter in the hope that some reader possibly might know something about it. *Variety* used the letter as an article in its August issue. Then, a few days ago, I happened to be looking through some letters I had received from the late Fred Rabenstein, who was Edison's recording paymaster for a great many years—letters I hadn't glanced at in some 20 years. Suddenly, in the midst of a discussion of the great pioneer recording comedian, Len Spencer, I came across the following:

"When Len opened his Lyceum he had a doorman in full regalia — he was none other than George W. Johnson (who made the old laughing song records). George was something to behold in his full dress admiral (or was it general?) uniform.

"It was all right for a while — George had a room at the Lyceum, but after they moved, from 14th Street to 28th Street things caught up with George. He used to run errands and always being a little short of cash he used to borrow money from the clients. He never paid back and after a while he was afraid to go to some of the places.

"George could only do the 'Laughing Song' and therefore it was hard for him to pick up extra money. Then he liked to drink. After George died Len started to clean out the room and in a closet they found remains of many lunches (bread, bottles, ham, etc.), including roaches and other livestock.

"Len did not get another doorman, but had an office boy. We understood that Len treated George all right, but was afraid to let him have much money because the 'doorman' would be indisposed for several days afterward."

Writing many years after Johnson's death, Fred Rabenstein, like Gaisberg, gave the impression that Johnson was a heavy drinker, but Victor Emerson, commenting while Johnson still was alive, says he was sober and gentlemanly. For the sake of a reputation that already has been blackened sufficiently and unjustly, I prefer to believe the latter.

At any rate, we know now that George Washington Johnson did not depart this life at the end of a hangman's rope, but that he was working when he died for the great Len Spencer, with whom he had participated in making more than one record.

Spencer himself died December 15, 1914, and Rabenstein made it clear that he had outlived Johnson. I still think 1910 the most probable year of Johnson's death, for I have found no records by him after 1909.

And it is not true that his repertoire consisted of only "The Laughing Song" and "The Whistling Coon." In addition to these, which were by far the best and most popular of his

(Continued on page 91)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

recorded offerings, he also sang "The Laughing Coon" and "The Whistling Girl," two numbers that were mediocre by comparison with the "top two" which he sang thousands of times.

I am wondering where Johnson got the words and music of "The Laughing Song." "The Whistling Coon" is no mystery. It was written by a minstrel performer, Sam Devere, but I never have seen any composer credit for its popular companion.

It seems unlikely that Johnson, who presumably was almost illiterate, could have written it. There are expressions in it, such as "fearful gap," "he would have been the apple of their eye if he had not been a quince," "simple little lay" and "a quiet bit of chaff" that seem unlikely to have been thought of by an uneducated Negro.

For old-time's sake let's quote the words of this Laughing Song, which Johnson was singing on records 80 years ago:

"As I was coming around the corner  
I heard some people say,  
'Here comes the dandy darky.  
Here he comes this way.  
His feet are like a snow plow,  
His mouth is like a trap,  
And when he opens it gently  
You will see a fearful gap.  
'They say his mother was a princess,  
His father was a prince,  
He would have been the apple of their eye  
If he had not been a quince.  
He'll be the king of Africa  
In the sweet bye and bye.'  
And when I heard them say it  
Why, I'd laugh until I'd cry.  
'So now, kind friends, just listen  
To what I have to say.  
I've tried my best to please you  
With my simple little lay.  
So whether you think it funny  
Or a quiet bit of chaff,  
Why all I'll try to do is  
Just end it with a laugh."

I have omitted the refrain, which begins "And then I laughed," and is followed by one "Ha Ha Ha!" after another. Rereading the lyrics, I feel confident that a man born as a slave on a Virginia plantation never could have acquired enough knowledge of literate English to compose them. The words sound like the production of some vaudeville writer.

Late in 1906 the *Music Trades Review* of New York published an amusing short article about Johnson, which is worth reproducing here 64 years later, although it may not be entirely accurate:

"One of the most unique characters in the talking machine world is George Johnson, who is now working for all the companies, doing 'laughing' songs. Johnson is said to be the most infectious laughter in the country.

"He is described by the talking machine men as the original 'haw-haw' man, and practically every laughing song heard on the phonograph is sung by him. He even figures in some songs which have only a few bars of laughing chorus or a laughing line.

"Johnson is a Negro who has been making a living by his exuberance for years. In the old days, it is said, he once sang the same song 56 times in



The interior of the Lyceum.

one day, and his laugh had as much merriment in it at the conclusion as when he started.

"A talking machine man tells of Johnson that he was in a Western City one day in a gallery at the theatre. A black comedian came out and did a laughing song. Johnson snorted after the first chorus. He moved about restlessly and at the end of the second verse shouted a protest.

"'You ain't singing dat song right!' he cried.

"'What's the reason I aint?' declared the singer from the stage angrily. 'Praps you can sing it better!'

"'I sure can,' declared Johnson.

"'Well, come down and try it.'

"Johnson left the gallery, slipped into the stage entrance and took up the dare. He scored his usual success."

### V. Some More Questions

In thinking of George W. Johnson's life story, many fresh questions arise. How old was he when he began making records? And how old was he when he was dismissed on the charge of murdering his wife? When was he born? How did he make a living before he began to singing "The Laughing Song" and "The Whistling Coon" into recording horns?

These are questions to which we never may know the answers. But I'll hazard a guess that Johnson was born somewhere around 1847, the year of Thomas Edison's birth, consequently was about 18 when the Civil War ended, and was no longer a slave. And I also guess that he became a street musician, singing his limited repertoire—the smallest ever possessed by any successful recording artist—and passing the hat.

If Johnson really had been a slave he certainly was born well before 1865. A catalog of New Jersey cylinder records, dated March 1, 1894, contains a pen and ink drawing of him that makes him appear to be more than 40. In the 1900 photo of a group of 42 Edison artists, reproduced with this article, he looks to be over 50.

This picture also was published with the September, 1944, article in which I quoted Gaisberg's statement that Johnson was hanged, but it is so sharp and clear I think it deserves to be used again. Of all of the "turn of the century" artists shown, Johnson was the only Negro.

Should a Hall of Fame for pioneer recording artists ever be established—and I think there should be one—about half of these 42 men and women, in my opinion, should be elected to membership. I have indicated by asterisks before the individual names in the cut lines those whom I think deserve the honor.

Again, a photo from the 1907 Columbia record supplement makes the Negro comedian then appear to be 60 or more. It probably would be a safe guess that he was close to 70, if he had not reached a "borrowed time" age, when he died.

Next month I shall give as nearly complete a list as possible of Johnson's recordings, beginning with the start of his phonograph singing some 80 years ago.

(To be continued)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# In Justice to George Washington Johnson

PART II

By JIM WALSH

### I. Johnson's Career Begins

I said last month that I would do my best to give as nearly complete a list as possible of George W. Johnson's recordings, but no claim is made that the compilation which follows includes all.

For one thing, Johnson surely must have been called on to sing his popular specialties for some of the manufacturers of cylinder records who sprang up in the 1890's, but were in business only a year or two. Those were companies whose catalogs I don't have.

It is possible that Johnson did his first recording work in Newark, N.J., for the United States Phonograph

Company, which made New Jersey records. We quoted Victor Emerson on this last month. However, Johnson might have sung earlier in Washington, D. C., for Columbia.

One wonders, among so many other things, where he lived. He seems to have been available equally to Columbia in Washington, New Jersey in Newark, and Edison in West Orange. Still later he sang for Victor in Philadelphia or Camden, and for Columbia in New York.

Johnson's first recorded work for Edison seems to have been June 1, 1891, when he spent two and a half hours singing and whistling, and making cylinders to Edward Issler's piano accompaniment. Issler was a band and orchestra conductor for New Jersey during Victor Emerson's stay with that ill-fated firm, which was absorbed by Columbia in 1897.

Judging from what Emerson said, the comedian began with New Jersey in 1890. In the 1894 catalog, which listed "George W. Johnson In His Two Great Specialties" (the "Laughing Song" and "Whistling Coon," of course), this statement was made:

"Up to date, over 25,000 of these two songs have been made by this artist, and the orders for them seem to increase instead of diminish. Mr. Johnson's laugh is simply irresistible. Whole audiences are convulsed by simply hearing these songs reproduced. No exhibition box is complete without these two records."

And Johnson had made those records, remember, by singing them over and over, with not more than five copies turned out at a time! It is likely that Issler usually played the accompaniments, as he had done at Edison.

The first Columbia mention I find of Johnson is in the cylinder record catalog for August, 1896, but it is likely he had sung repeatedly for Columbia before then. Columbia catalogs in those days contain statements that they had made records of which the stock was too limited to be included in the "book." Under the heading of "George W. Johnson's Great Specialties," the catalog said:

"Johnson is the original 'whistling coon.' The two records listed below have had a wider sale than any other specialties ever made. Johnson's laugh is simply irresistible."

The two were No. 7601, "Laughing Song," and No. 7602, "Whistling Coon."

On May 1, 1898, after the New Jersey Company had gone bankrupt, Johnson was one of a group of artists who signed a contract to make Columbia records exclusively during the coming year. If the signature reprinted in the 1899 catalog was written by him and not for him, he was not altogether illiterate, for the "Geo. W. Johnson" is small and neat and does not look like the effort of a person unaccustomed to penmanship.

Other artists who signed the contract were Vess L. Ossman, Dan W. Quinn, George J. Gaskin, Steve Porter, Tom Clark (conductor of the Columbia Orchestra), Len Spencer, the Columbia Brass Quartet, George Schweinfest, Will F. Denny, and Russell Hunting (who went to England to live later in the year).

The 1899 catalog contained four records by Johnson — the two that had been listed in 1896, plus No. 7603, "Laughing Coon," and No. 7604,

(Continued on page 39)

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Of particular interest are the large music boxes that once were owned by financier J. P. Morgan and actress Sarah Bernhardt.

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Music Box and bird cage bellows restored and birds refeathered.

**Barrington - GEORGE A. BIDDEN - Rhode Island**

tic



(Continued from page 37)



**JOHNSON IMITATOR** — Records of the "Laughing Song" by the American comedian, Burt Shepard, were highly popular throughout Great Britain and the British Empire. This photo is reprinted from the *Talking Machine News* of April 1, 1907.

### ORGANS—MELODEONS

REED ORGANS, melodeons, bought, sold, repaired. Reeds tuned, revoiced replacements. — C. H. Gunzinger, Box 276, Williamsville, Vt. 05362. mh6675

### SHEET MUSIC

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SHEET MUSIC, choose from thousands of popular, late 1800s to date. We also buy. — McNeill, 1117 South Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Ill. 60304. mh3253

OLD popular sheet music, 250,000 songs in A-Z order. — Robert Greenlaw, 307 N. Rampart, Room 412, Los Angeles, Calif. 90026. d126121

GROUP of 24 unbound songs etc., 7 Civil War period. 2 bound volumes of songs & dances of 1850's. 1 bound volume of songs & dances of 1830's. Volume of drawing room dances (with figures & calls) arranged by Elias Howe, 1861. Volume of piano practice studies & "Art of Fingering" about 1850. Please make offer on above items. Postage extra. — W. Ford Haviland, 462 N.E. 70th Ave., #2, Seattle, Wash. 98115. fl865

OVER 5,000 different sheets of music. Era of 1895-1920. All in Mint Condition. Send \$1.00 for 70 page catalogue, credited on 1st order. — L. Koenig, 345 S. 8th Ave., LeGrange, Ill. 60525. ja122112

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS before 1900 wanted. Strings, brass, clarinets, flutes, drums, mechanical, novelties. — William Kugler, 1124 Dionne, St. Paul, Minn. 55113. my68801

### PHONOGRAPHS

OLD PHONOGRAPH catalogs! Beautifully illustrated reprints. For example, 1899 Talking Machine Catalog, 64 pages, only \$2.95 postpaid. Free illustrated list available. — Allen Koenigsberg, 1532 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230. ap6829

500 OLD TIME loud steel needles. \$2.00 postpaid. — Norris Dullum, Colfax, N. Dakota 58018. mh3291

"Whistling Girl." They stayed in the cylinder catalog for several years, but No. 7603 and No. 7604 were gone by 1904, and "The Whistling Coon" by 1905.

It is interesting to note that the Bettini Company, which specialized in cylinders by famous operatic stars, listed "Geo. W. Johnson in His Specialties" in its catalogs dated June, 1898, and April, 1900. The records cost \$1.00 each and were — have you guessed? — "The Laughing Song" and "The Whistling Coon." A photograph of George, who looked somewhere around 50, was included.

Not only that, but Bettini's French catalog for "Juin, 1901" included Johnson "dans ses specialites Americaines." The selections were "Le fou rire" and "La Chanson du sifflet — otherwise, "Laughing," and "Coon." The price of the French cylinders was three francs — about 75 cents in those days.

Another cylinder firm that issued Johnson's records was the Kansas City Talking Machine Company. In an undated catalog that probably was issued in 1899, the comedian's four stock selections are listed, but this concern handled both Columbia and Edison cylinders, and its Johnson records probably were made by Columbia. The numbers are blurred, but appear to be: No. 101, Laughing Song; No. 102, Whistling Coon; No. 103, Laughing Coon, and No. 104, Laughing Girl.

The Talking Machine Company of Chicago, operated by the Babson Brothers, made its own records by Silas Leachman, a Chicago comedian and ballad singer, but also stocked



"DENVER NIGHTINGALE" — Billy Murray remade George W. Johnson's Columbia record of "The Whistling Coon," and, with S. H. Dudley (Sam H. Rous) also sang the song for Victor. It was Rous who gave Murray the nickname of "The Denver Nightingale." This photo was reprinted from the May, 1908, issue of the English edition of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly*.

...the week, but  
...to church on Sunday, so  
...that he's an honest man!"



GEO. W. JOHNSON  
Laughing Song George W. Jo  
BC Cylinder

**IN LATER LIFE** — This photo of George W. Johnson, in which he appears to be around 60, was published in the *Columbia Record* for August, 1907, in which his BC cylinder record of "The Laughing Song" was announced. The magazine is owned by Harold A. Laver of San Francisco, Calif.

Edison and Columbia cylinders. Its 1899 catalog included the standard four titles — are you becoming as tired of them as I am? — which probably also were Columbias in disguise; No. 459, Laughing Coon; No. 454C, Laughing Song; No. 458C, Whistling Coon; and No. 462, Whistling Girl.

### II. Johnson's Edison Cylinders

We have seen already that George Johnson put in a few hours in 1891 singing for Edison cylinders. By 1898 his four titles were in the Edison catalog: No. 4004, Laughing Song; No. 4005, Laughing Coon; No. 4012, Whistling Coon, and No. 4013, Whistling Girl. They also were listed, in the foregoing order, in the 1900 catalog of the large concert cylinders, under the numbers of No. B482, No. B483, No. B485, and No. B484.

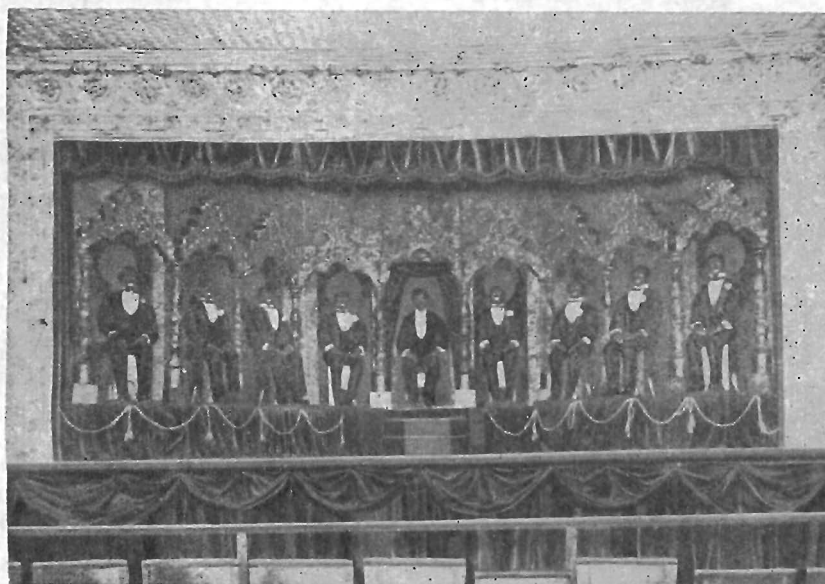
Johnson must not have been available for a while when Edison switched to the gold moulded process, for the catalog dated February 1, 1902, contains "The Laughing Song" and "The Laughing Coon" by — of all people, Cal Stewart, the "Uncle Josh" specialist. And S. H. Dudley had been engaged to render "The Whistling Coon!"

Perhaps this change was made during the period of Johnson's marriage trouble that led to the charge of murder. However that may be, by August, 1904, he was back in the Edison catalog, under the old numbers, with "The Laughing Coon" and "Laughing Song."

Dudley, however, still had "The Whistling Coon" and had added "The Whistling Girl." Perhaps he was considered a more skilled whistler than Johnson, but not a better laughier.

I should have mentioned earlier





A ROW OF DUMMIES — "... Although George Johnson sometimes worked with Len Spencer in Columbia minstrel records, he was not included in Spencer's Columbia Minstrels' display at Coney Island in 1907. The troupe, or group, consisted of models of nine famous Columbia artists. Music was provided by Sound-Magnifying Graphophones with their horns hidden behind the "dummies" white shirt fronts.

From left to right, the models were replicas of Billy Murray, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Steve Porter, Frank C. Stanley (interlocutor), Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, J. W. Myers, and Spencer. All the representations lost their "lives" during a great fire that swept Coney Island.

— Photo reproduced from the *Columbia Record* for August, 1907.

that in the April 1, 1903, catalog the "Laughing Coon" was still by Stewart, but Johnson had taken over "The Laughing Song." By November, 1905, "The Laughing Coon" and "Laughing Song" by Johnson, and "The Whistling Coon," still by Dudley, had been remade with orchestral accompaniments, instead of piano. "The Whistling Girl," by Dudley, remained with piano.

These four records, by Johnson and Dudley, stayed in the catalog until Edison issued the first list of Blue Amberol cylinders in October, 1912, and quit making the fragile wax records. "The Whistling Girl" retained its piano accompaniment until the end.

However, it seems rather odd that Edison never had Johnson make four-minute records of his tried-and-true specialties. Probably it would have been hard to stretch them to run that long, without considerable elaboration.

Even the U. S. Everlasting Company, which engaged Johnson in 1908 or 1909 to make an indestructible cylinder, No. 324, of "The Laughing Song" was contented to issue it in two-minute form, with the comment: "You are compelled to join in with this record. If it does not make you sing, it will certainly make you laugh."

In 1917, long after Johnson's death, Edison issued a Diamond Disc of the Laughing Song, by Edward Meeker, assisted by the Empire Vaudeville Company (in this instance the Premier Quartet and Vess L. Ossman,

"The Banjo King"). The disc which was dubbed on to Blue Amberol cylinder No. 3427, was not placed on sale until 1921, but was a good seller.

It was combined, on No. 50745, with one of Len Spencer's famous old-time sketches, "Flanagan's Night Off," enacted by Ada Jones and Steve Porter. A couple of months later Meeker and the Vaudeville Company recorded "The Whistling Coon," which was issued on Diamond Disc No. 50478 and Blue Amberol No. 3466.

Oh, here is something else I have been about to overlook! Even as early as 1894, the "Laughing Song" had been made a feature of a series of minstrel recordings.

That New Jersey catalog, from which I already have quoted, lists minstrel performances by Len Spencer, Dan W. Quinn, and Billy Williams — the latter a now forgotten comedian not to be confused with Billy Williams, the Australian singer of comic songs who came along later. The catalog said:

"These gentlemen have together produced a most decided novelty in their new minstrel records. Spencer and Quinn are well known to all users of the Phonograph. They are ably assisted by Mr. Billy Williams, the aged Negro delineator and comedian, as well as by Geo. W. Johnson in his inimitable laughing specialty. . . . They have been arranged in a series of six records. . . ."

The catalog mentions that something in the first record "strikes the audience as being a witty sally, and they applaud and laugh vociferously, Mr. Geo. Johnson's hearty laugh par-

ticularly being heard above the din and confusion."

Johnson is not mentioned as taking part in any of the other records except No. 6, which "embraces the great 'Laughing Song,' by Geo. W. Johnson." Minstrel skits that featured "The Laughing Song" were issued afterwards by Columbia and other companies.

### III. Johnson's Berliners and Other Discs

Obviously, since Emile Berliner invented the lateral cut disc, he was the first maker of "flat records" to engage George W. Johnson. On November 18, 1896, the roly-poly comedian recorded "The Laughing Song," but he apparently had sung "The Whistling Coon" several months earlier, for its number was 196.

And on record No. 403 he sang and whistled "The Mocking Bird," a number ordinarily associated with another Gay Nineties whistler, John York Attlee. That brings Johnson's known repertoire to five selections. I wonder why he seems not to have recorded Septimus Winner's classic "Mocking Bird" for anyone else.

A catalog issued, apparently in 1899, by the Wonder Bell Company, which made a phonograph with two large horns, contains these same records. They are unmistakably of Berliner origin, though it isn't clear whether the Berliner name was left on the label or Wonder Bell was substituted.

The numbers are the same as the Berliners except a "1" has been placed in front; thus, "The Whistling Coon's" Wonder Bell number is No. 1196 instead of No. 196; "The Mocking Bird" No. 1403 instead of No. 403; and the "Laughing Song" No. 1404 instead of No. 404.

The Wonder Bell instrument, which must have been sold only a year or two, was invented by G. C. Conn, who operated a band instrument company at Elkhart, Indiana. He obviously made a deal with Berliner to supply the Berliner records, then the only discs available, for use with his eccentric looking machine.

When Berliner began to do business in England, both "The Whistling Coon" and "The Laughing Song" appeared in a list dated November 16, 1898. "The Mocking Bird" was there, too, but the performer's name is given as W. M. Clark, so Johnson's original presumably had been remade. Artists were changed frequently in those days.

Burt Shepard already has been mentioned as having made one or more records of Johnson's "Laughing Song" that had a remarkable vogue in the Orient. In January, 1902, The Gramophone Company issued a seven-inch version, No. 2-2030, and for some reason a new edition was offered in October as No. 2-2164.

But — and this is strange — in February, 1902, 10-inch records of "The Laughing Song" and "The Whistling Coon" were offered (under the numbers 2-2584 and 2-2585) by

(Continued on page 50)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

another laughing and singing comedian, Wilson Hallett.

Shepard's 10-inch "Laughing Song" didn't come along until June, 1903. It was numbered 2-2803. In December, 1905, his "Whistling Coon" (3-2361) was announced. During that same period Shepard also recorded the Laughing Song on a Pathe cylinder.

When The Gramophone Company belatedly decided to market double-faced H. M. V. records, Shepard's "Laughing Song" and "Whistling Coon" were made available on No. B468. And for many years an English Zonophone double-faced record, No. 553, of his "Laughing Song" could be had, coupled with "Tickle Me, Timothy," by Johnny Wakefield.

Before dismissing Burt Shepard I'll mention, for the sake of comprehensiveness, that in September, 1907, Victor issued the first of a series of 10-inch, single-faced records, numbered in the 52000s and consisting of selections imported from its English affiliate.

This record, No. 52000, was called "Laughs You Have Met," by Five Famous Comedians, and about six years later it was coupled in double-faced form with "Ticklish Reuben," by Cal Stewart, on No. 17232. This is the 1907 description of "Laughs You Have Met:"

"Laughter is always contagious, and if hearty and genuine is sure to spread among the listeners. Here are some examples of the art of laughing as expounded by well-known laugh-makers.

"Mr. Will Evans illustrates the ordinary every-day laugh; Fred Moule, the man who laughs at everybody's misfortune; Miss Amy Augarde, the old maid's laugh; Mr. Maurice Farkoa, the Frenchman's laugh; and finally Burt Shepard, who exemplifies the well-known 'Laughing Coon.' A very funny record and a complete novelty."

As his part of the skit, Shepard sings part of the "Laughing Song." One odd thing about the record is that, all the way through, it contains indistinct noises as though persons not taking part in the performance are talking in the background.

### IV. Zonophone Victor and Columbia Discs

I do not find anything by Johnson in the Gramophone record catalog issued in December, 1899, by the National Gramophone Corporation, the company which obtained control of Emile Berliner's disc business and put him out of business the following year. National then changed the name of its record and talking machine to Zonophone.

Neither is the Negro comedian listed in a Berliner catalog issued at some time after the spring of 1900, just before the National takeover, nor in a list of Zonophone records dated November-December, 1900. He also is missing from a catalog of "Superba" nine-inch Zonophones issued May 10, 1901.

The familiar name popped up, however, in 1902-03, when George W.'s four standby tunes were issued on the nine-inch, single-faced Zonos. In order of issue they were: No. 5432, Whistling Coon; No. 5631, Laughing Song; No. 5697, Laughing Coon, and No. 5852, "Whistling Girl."

Zonophone 10-inch records were introduced at the beginning of 1904, and in March that year Johnson presented, on record No. 71, the "Laughing Song," which he must have grown heartily tired of singing. It was described as "by the originator of this song."

No other Johnson specialties were made available on the 10-inch Zonophones, but when the Company (controlled since 1903 by Victor) began issuing double-faced records in 1908, the "Laughing Song" was doubled on No. 5141 with "A Singer Sang a Song," by Eddie Morton.

Meanwhile, Eldridge R. Johnson's infant Victor Company announced in its record list for February 1, 1901, seven-inch versions of all the well-known Johnson numbers. They were No. A581, "Whistling Girls;" No. A582, "Whistling Coon;" No. A583, "Laughing Song;" and No. A584, "Laughing Coon."

A year later only the seven-inch records still were available. But by August, 1904, all four could be had both in seven and 10-inch size, with the same numbers, except that the A prefix was dropped from the 10-inch.

When the 1909 record catalog appeared the "Whistling Girl" had been cut out, and by November, 1910, the three others were gone. None was taken into the double-face catalog.

It was this abrupt procedure that made me fancy for years that Johnson must have been executed in 1910. As I have said, although I know now it wasn't so I still suspect he died in 1910. Probably the masters were beginning to show signs of wear and since there was no satisfactory substitute for Johnson to remake them it was considered best to remove them from the list.

In the November, 1910, catalog a double-faced record, No. 16821, of "The Whistling Coon" was issued, but the singing was by Billy Murray and the whistling by S. H. Dudley. On the B side Pryor's Band played "The King of Rags."

I am unable to identify the minstrel record Quentin Riggs mentions in a letter which reached me just as I was completing this article. He says:

"The last time I visited Ernie Bayly in England, on my way home from Germany, he played an old minstrel record that I wish I owned. Johnson has a bit of conversation with Sam Rous (S. H. Dudley) and they tell a couple of jokes. Then Harry MacDonough sings 'Goodbye, Dolly Gray,' assisted by the Haydn Quartet in the chorus. It was an excellent minstrel record, especially because of Johnson's appearance. As I recall it was called 'The Christy Minstrels.'"

A search through old Victor and Berliner catalogs does not reveal any record on which Macdonough sang

"Dolly Gray," which became popular in 1900. He does sing "Goodbye, Little Girl, Goodbye," on an "Olden Time Minstrel" disc, No. 4082, made in 1904, and I am wondering if Quentin has confused the songs.

The name, "Christy Minstrels," didn't come along until about 1907. It was used for records by a quartet consisting of Murray, Porter, Collins, and Harlan.

Columbia cylinders by Johnson already have been discussed. The Company began disc operations in February, 1902. Within a short time the "Negro Laughing Song" (described as "an old standard") had been issued on No. 210, and "The Whistling Coon" on No. 211, in both seven and 10-inch sizes.

In the fall of 1908 Columbia aroused Victor's angry emotions by bringing out double-faced records and dropping all single-faced listings. The "Laughing Song" was issued on No. A297, with piano accompaniment, and coupled with George J. Gaskin singing "Little Alabama Coon." The latest patent date on this version of the "Laughing Song" is February 11, 1908.

Johnson does his own announcing and pronounces "Laughing" as "Lah-fing," which seems to indicate he came from the part of Virginia around Richmond, where the broad A is common. In singing, however, he usually pronounces it as "laffing."

Some years ago I picked up another copy of the "Laughing Song," still with the No. A297 number and with the Gaskin song on the reverse side, but was astonished when I played it to find there was no announcement. Instead of the piano an orchestra accompanied, and the tempo had been quickened so that Johnson sang four verses and choruses instead of the three the piano-accompanied record had.

Obviously he had been called on to remake the classic old song in 1909, for the latest patent date, missing from the earlier record, was November 30 that year. I imagine this was the last record Johnson ever made. I would think he made it at the same time he recorded the six-inch cylinder with its longer playing time, except that the cylinder had a piano accompaniment.

I received another surprise when I picked up a copy of a double-faced record No. A292, which contained "The Whistling Coon." I thought I should hear Johnson sing it, as he had done on single-faced No. 211. But when the record started it was announced as by Billy Murray, and the announcement was by Murray himself. (The other side was "Ma Pretty Chloe From Tennessee," by the Columbia Male Quartet.)

Well, I thought, this record helps to pin-point the period of Johnson's death. Obviously his "Whistling Coon" was taken out of the Columbia catalog because the jovial comedian had died, I thought, a felon's death, and Billy Murray had been assigned to remake it. Now I know better.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

For one thing, Columbia didn't issue any discs with announcements after 1904, so Murray could not have remade a Johnson record in 1909-1910 and told its name, his name, and the brand of record, before he began to sing. Furthermore, the speaking voice in which the announcement was made was identical in sound with that in which Billy spoke at the beginning of his Columbia records, such as "Navajo" and "Meet Me in St. Louis," made in 1903-04.

Obviously, the Johnson version, issued in 1902, had been considered unsatisfactory and was scrapped after only a couple of years. The double-faced records of "The Negro Laughing Song" and "The Whistling Coon" stayed in the catalog through November, 1914. Presumably one was still by Johnson and the other by Murray when they were discontinued, but the artists' names are not given in the catalog listing.

Another Columbia disc in which Johnson participated was single-faced No. 644, "The Laughing Song Minstrels", in which he was assisted by "Mr. Henry" (Henry Spencer) and "Mr. Spencer" (Len Spencer.) It is evident that this was a re-do of the "Laughing Song Minstrel" that New Jersey had issued in 1894.

Columbia, incidentally, had listed the "Laughing Song Minstrels" as early as 1898, No. 13004, and it was still available under that number, in gold moulded form, in 1907. I imagine it was retained until Columbia quit making wax cylinders in 1909.

One other Columbia disc remains to be mentioned. It is No. 3374, issued in May, 1906. The title is "The Merry Mail Man" and the artists are Len Spencer and his Lyceum doorman, George W. Johnson. The supplement said:

"This jocular record depicts the postman (Len Spencer) delivering letters and jests. Passing from door to door he finally encounters George W. Johnson (The Laughing Coon), whose merry laugh concludes the record."

As far as I have found, this comic sketch was not made by any other company.

And now I have just remembered hinting last month that I had made a surprising discovery about Billy Murray's first records. Billy himself told me emphatically long before his death that the first records he made after he came East with the Al G. Fields Minstrels in 1902 were the Edison records that were issued in August, 1903.

His first Victors weren't announced until December, and I had thought his initial Columbias came a little later than that. But now a California collector, Ed Foster, writes me that he has a Columbia disc record, No. 1163, of Murray singing "Tessie (You Are The Only, Only)."

Ed's statement seems to prove that Billy had forgotten the sequence of his recording dates, for "Tessie"

(which was the "official song" in 1903 of the Boston Red Sox baseball rooters, who sang it before every game in the Red Sox's World Series that year with the Pittsburgh Pirates) also was issued on cylinder No. 32099.

I have a Columbia cylinder list for February, 1903, and the highest number is 32095, "Strike Out, McCracken," by Collins and Harlan. I don't have the March supplement, but it is obvious that No. 32099 should come immediately after No. 32095 and that the disc version of the same song, by the same singer, would have been issued almost concurrently. Probably both were cataloged in March.

Consequently, it now appears that "Tessie" was Billy Murray's first record, aside from the cylinders he sang in San Francisco for Bacigalupi Brothers in 1897. And "Tessie" antedated his Edison cylinders by several months.

I long had known there was a record of "Tessie" in the old Columbia catalogs, but from 1899 to 1907 they did not give the names of artists and it was described only as a tenor solo. It never had occurred to me that my old friend, Billy, was the soloist.

Oddly enough, there appear to have been no more Columbians by him until the 1600 series was reached, though I may be mistaken about that, too. It just goes to show you that in this business of record research you never can be sure you have achieved the last word! It is, of course, possible that "Tessie" was at first sung by another tenor, and Murray was called on to remake it a year or two later.

With this digression we have reached the end of the story of George W. Johnson's life and recording career. If more information about his family life should crop up later I'll be glad to share it with HOBBIES readers. In the meantime, I am glad to do him justice after 26 years.

THE END.

Edna White's Son,

DOUGLAS CHANDLER, Dies

Douglas M. H. Chandler, well known actor and hotel executive, and son of Edna White Chandler, known professionally as Edna White and usually regarded as the foremost woman trumpet player, died of cancer October 22, 1970, in Franklin County Public Hospital, Greenfield, Mass.

Mr. Chandler, whose father was the late Myron Hall Chandler, was born July 23, 1917. A graduate of Roosevelt College, he obtained a Ph.D. degree in psychology and was an accomplished linguist who could speak fluently in 11 languages, including Chinese. He was cast in feature roles in 14 Broadway plays, including "The Hasty Heart" and "Wonderful World," with Carol Channing. He was also a radio and television actor and writer. Other activities included being an expert on radiography, driving racing cars professionally and

management of hotels in Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo.

Besides his mother, he is survived by his wife, Mrs. Nora Nartowicz Chandler; a stepson, Richard Dunn of Holyoke, Mass.; and two stepdaughters, Dianne Torres, Boston, Mass., and Mrs. Patricia Heidler, Sandoval, Ill.

Shortly before his death, Mr. Chandler began a mail order business offering "Letters of Bequest." The letters, 8½ by 11¼ inches in size, are printed in black and gold on parchment, with photographic mount, and are described as: "A beautiful message to send to your son or daughter, using the words you have always held in your heart without quite knowing how to say them," and are designed as an ideal gift for any occasion during the year. Space is provided for a father or mother's signature.

Douglas Chandler's mother, whose life story was told in HOBBIES for May, June and July, 1966, is carrying on her son's mail order business.

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

a beautiful old portrait that has become partly faded and discolored.

The following story is told of Jenny Lind when she was attending an outdoor party held on Lady Burdett-Coutts' lawn. A gentleman conversing with one of the guests remarked on the merits of Christine Nilssen, and alluded to her as the "Swedish Nightingale."

A thin, aged woman sitting nearby overheard this. She arose, and in a quivering, sweet voice said, "You are wrong, sir — you are grossly wrong. I am the 'Swedish Nightingale' — I am Jenny Lind."

To the enduring fame of the singer, moss-encrusted cylinders continually turn up, her name scratched into the wax on the rim. An oddity about the "finds" is that more often than not they are described as having been found in an old Salem attic.

I once received a long-distance call from a collector, who said he had come across an unusual record. He could hear distinctly not only the voice of Jenny Lind, but also those of Otto Goldschmidt and Signor Belletti! He read the label in an excited voice. This find proved to be "Trio," a number sung in Guy Bolton's biographical operetta of 1926, "The Nightingale."

The bonafide Nightingale has not been snared as yet, but the pulses of record-hunters quicken at the mention of it. The game is afoot!

Everybody, of course, is certain that the record exists.

This is a witness in point. I was attracted one afternoon to a junk cart at the curbstone. The peddler watched me curiously as I tried to decipher the inscription on a wax cylinder, pitted by mold, nibbled by mice. He queried wryly, "Mebbe you're looking for Jenny Lind?"



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Sam Ash

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Shortest Name

Our personality this month has an individual distinction: He used the shortest professional name of any recording artist about whom I have written or am likely to write. Although some record labels spell out his name as Samuel Ash, he ordinarily was known both on the stage and on records as just plain Sam Ash.

There also is about as little known concerning Ash's early life as that of any performer whom I have discussed. His death certificate shows his full name as Samuel Howard Ash and he was born in Kentucky (name of the town not given) on August 28, 1884. He died in Los Angeles, Calif., October 20, 1951.

I find that date easy to remember because of recalling that I was in Chicago in October, 1951, and bought a copy of *Variety* in which I found Ash's death briefly mentioned. When I showed the notice to Pearl Ann Reeder, publisher-editor of HOBBIES, I mentioned my sorrow at the tenor's passing and said I intended to write an article, some time, about him. This is that article, but it has taken me almost 20 years to begin it.

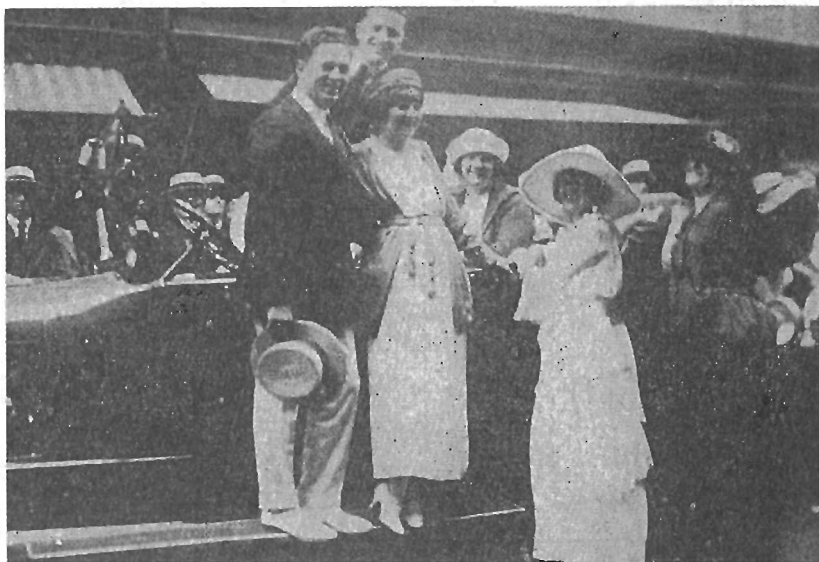
The *Variety* obituary notice did not do justice to Ash's achievements. It simply said:

"Samuel Howard Ash, 67, screen actor, died Oct. 20 in Hollywood.  
"He appeared in a number of Broadway musicals before becoming a character player in the films. His wife and two sons survive."

There was no mention, you observe, that he had been, for several years, one of the most prolific and popular recording artists.

Returning to the death certificate, the information it contains was given by the singer's widow, Emma Sloane Ash. It reveals that his father's name was Samuel Thomas Ash, and his mother had been Martha Swan. Both parents were natives of England, which makes it appear likely they met and married there before they came to the States and settled in Kentucky.

Sam Ash had lived for three years at 715 North Sweater Ave., Los Angeles, and Russell L. Jones, M.D., gave the cause of his death as "cardiac arrest" (heart failure), induced by coronary thrombosis from which he had suffered for five years. He also during the same period had had angina pectoris, another heart condition, and emphysema. His body was cre-



CENTER OF ATTRACTION — The Aeolian-Vocalion record supplement for August, 1920, contained this informal photo of both Mr. and Mrs. Sam Ash.

mated October 23, 1951, at the Chapel of the Pines.

This information concerning the end of Sam Ash's life is sufficiently specific. On the other hand, I know nothing about him from the time he was born in Kentucky until he is revealed, in 1915, as already married, a vaudeville and musical comedy star, and a Columbia recording artist.

It's obvious that he married young, when he was not more than 22, for *Variety* of February 22, 1960, recorded:

"Sam Ash, Jr., 53, son of the late Sam Ash, musical comedy and film actor, died Feb. 18 in Hollywood of a heart attack. He had been paralyzed by polio from the age of nine."

What a sad conception of a lifetime of handicaps and suffering that short death notice provides! But if Sam Ash, Jr., was 53 in February, 1960, he must have been born in 1907 or, more likely, in 1906, and since his father's birth year was 1884 a very early marriage of his parents is indicated.

#### II. Beginning of Recording Career

I have no idea as to what sort, or how much, formal musical training Sam Ash received before he began his professional career. When I talked with the late Lewis James, another famous recording tenor, about Ash a few days after the latter's death, "Lew" recalled that he had sung with Sam and described him as having "an untrained, but a very musical and attractive voice."

However that may be, by 1915 Ash was well-known in vaudeville and musical comedy. He was singing one of the principal roles in "Katinka,"

(Continued on page 39)

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(Continued from page 37)

a successful operetta with words by Otto Hauerbach and music by the distinguished Czechoslovakian composer, Rudolf Friml, who is still at it, though past 90, and who, incidentally, has numbered among his several wives Elsie Lawson, a beautiful girl from my former home town of Marion, Va.

Daniel Blum's large volume, "A Pictorial History of the American Theatre," contains a photo of Ash and another actor, Franklyn Ardell, with the leading lady, May Thompson, as one of the scenes in "Katinka."

It was at this period of his career, apparently, that Sam Ash, then a slender, good looking young man of 31, first made records, unless he previously had recorded under an assumed name. The earliest Ash record I have been able to trace is a Columbia, announced in April, 1915.

No detailed comment is given concerning the records in that month's supplement. There is a statement, however, that "A special feature of the list is that several excellent new singers are introduced."

The new tenor was represented by two selections. On No. A1697, he sang "Goodbye, Virginia," assisted by a quartet, presumably the Peerless, which was heard on the other side in the then raging hit, "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier." The disc was a big seller, undoubtedly because of the Peerless side.

On another record, No. A1701, Ash insisted, "I'm Not Ashamed of You, Molly," the sort of song that music publishers call a "dog"—one that attracts no notice and doesn't sell. Turning the record over you found another unsuccessful number, "Sweetheart of Mine," by the Columbia Stellar Quartet.

Although the fledgling Columbia artist had not received a preliminary "send-off," by the time the June, 1915, record catalog appeared he had three more songs—"Virginia Lee," "My Own Venetian Rose," and "Moonlight On the Rhine," to his credit. And the catalog editor gave him a big plug:

"The moment Mr. Sam Ash demonstrated in the Columbia Laboratories that he possessed rare ability to sing popular music, not only in a popular but thoroughly masterly way, the Columbia Graphophone Company made an exclusive contract with him.

"Mr. Ash sings songs of sentiment with a complete grasp of every musical value and a beautifully clear natural voice. He has made a sudden and meteoric career before the best vaudeville footlights in the country, and is rapidly becoming recognized as a headliner in his profession."

Ash's Columbia association began in the spring of 1915. It continued, with scores of records to his credit, until his last for that company was issued almost exactly six years later. It was No. A3374, "Over the Hill" and "I Found a Rose in the Devil's Garden." By that time Columbia, which had plunged into unwise expansion activities, was suffering financially from the 1920-21 depression, and dropping some of its more expensive artists.

### III. Ash as a Free-Lance Singer

There is no need of discussing at length the many hundreds of records made by Sam Ash. He was simply, for the most part, a singer of popular ballads, and seldom undertook humor, although he did record, "I've Been Floating Down the Old Green River," and "Huckleberry Finn" for Columbia. He was seldom assigned to sing duets with other singers, but he did a few with two Columbia sopranos—Edith Chapman and Louise McMahon.

And I especially want to mention that he and my dear friend, Elida Morris, sang "Hello, Frisco!" from "The Follies of 1915" on Columbia record No. A1801. I am glad to say that Elida, who observed her 84th birthday last November 12, is still active, alert, and singing each Sunday in a church in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Sam Ash's exclusive Columbia contract probably was for two years. I have not found him making records other than Columbia until 1917, when he began to sing for almost every well-known company from then until 1922.

His name was never in the Victor catalog, and if he made Victor tests they were not issued. Neither did he work for Brunswick, which began making lateral-cut records in 1919. But he had a try at just about every other label that amounted to anything.

It is specially noteworthy that Ash made more of the 5½-inch, single-faced Little Wonder records sold for 10 cents in a dime store than any one



"HONEYDEW" — Dorothy Follis and Sam Ash.

else, with the possible exception of Henry Burr. These fragile discs were recorded by Columbia for a company headed by Henry Watterson, the New York music publisher.

Some time after Little Wonders were discontinued around 1921, Watterson started the Cameo Record Com-

(Continued on page 49)



PATHE STAR — In 1920 the Standard Phonograph Company of Chicago, which sold Pathe products by mail, issued an elaborate catalog. On page 7 were photos of star Pathe recording artists, including Sam Ash.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 39)

pany, which made double-faced, 10-inch records that sold for 35 cents. I can't be positive, but I believe Ash had stopped recording before the first Cameos were announced in 1923. No artists' names were given on Little Wonder records, but if you have one marked "tenor solo" and can't recognize the voice as Burr's the singer is probably Sam Ash!

A quick check of my own collection reveals lateral-cut recordings of Sam Ash's voice on the following brands, and there probably are others I didn't catch: Columbia, Cleartone, Emerson, Gennett, Grey Gull (made in 1921 when Grey Gull was competing in the standard priced record field instead of turning out the cheap discs it offered during most of the 1920's), Little Wonder, Okeh, Silvertone (made by Columbia), and Supertone (another Sears, Roebuck record, but probably from Gennett masters).

Ash's song on my one Supertone by him is "I'm Falling in Love With the Girl of My Dreams." The words are credited to "Ash" and the music to "Cormack," so I take it that Sam himself wrote the lyrics and Rennie Cormack composed the music.

My hill-and-dale records by Ash include Aeolian-Vocalion, Brunswick of Canada, Edison, Okeh, Pathe, and Rishell. The Brunswick and Rishell records, however, are Rex discs under a different label. I don't have any Lyric records sung by the tenor, but I think his name appeared on them.

Recently, Frank Johnson of Chicago sent me a taped copy of the Lyric hill-and-dale record of "There's a Long, Long Trail," sung by "James Tree," a tenor he couldn't identify. After several playings I decided that Tree was really Sam Ash. With reasoning worthy, perhaps, of Sherlock Holmes, I called Mr. Johnson's attention to the fact that Ash is a variety of Tree, and said I imagined somebody with a sense of humor had decided to give him Tree for a fictitious last name.

Aside from Columbia, Ash probably recorded more for Aeolian-Vocalion, Okeh, and Emerson than for any other companies. In 1947 Lou Stevens, a young collector who knew the tenor in Hollywood, wrote me Sam had said he considered that the Okeh Company got the best results of any lateral-cut record manufacturer he had worked for.

Sam Ash made only one Edison Diamond Disc, which was not dubbed onto the Blue Amberol cylinders. In fact, he appears to have made no cylinders—at least not under his own name. His one Edison solo was issued in May, 1921, on No. 50721, and had for its companion, a baritone version by Thomas Chalmers of "Wondering." Four months earlier he had sung the same song for Vocalion.

This is the description Edison gave of the Ash offering, on which his voice sounds slightly lower-pitched and with more fullness and depth than on the needle-cuts:

"It is appropriate that the first Re-Creation bearing the name of the well-known tenor, Sam Ash, should be that of a song from the musical comedy, 'Poor Little Ritz Girl,' for he is a musical comedy star. . . Mr. Ash sings, 'When I Found You,' the principal number from the 'Poor Little Ritz Girl.'"

"It is a song with an appealing lyric and an ingratiating melody, offering Mr. Ash a fine opportunity to display his delightfully fresh voice. The pleasure we get from this Re-Creation is intensified by the fine tone of the orchestra in their playing of the interlude."

"The music is the composition of Sig-mund Romberg, long known as the possessor of unusual melodic gifts. The words are by Alex Gerber."

It seems odd in view of Ash's widespread popularity, that Edison did not engage him for more records, but perhaps Mr. Edison, whose word was law, just didn't like Ash's voice. And this probably is a good place to mention that the Edison "fan magazine," *Along Broadway*, for February, 1921, showed a photo of Ash with Dorothy Follis, as they appeared in the operetta, "Honeydew," for which the still-living great Russian violinist, Efrem Zimbalist, wrote the music. Zimbalist was the husband of the famous opera soprano, Alma Gluck, and the father of the present-day novelist, Marcia Davenport.

One more record catalog description clamors to be reprinted here, for the sake of its amusing misprint of a word. In the Gennett catalog for 1923 there is a photo of Ash, with the following commentary:

"Sam Ash has the envious faculty of pleasing everybody. The possessor of a clear, rich and smooth tenor voice, he sings in a manner truly inspirational to the hearer who finds himself humming or whistling the songs as soon as the record is finished. His past recordings are always in big demand so look for his latest Gennett releases."

To me that use of "envious," which means a feeling of envy, in the place of "enviable," is priceless.

### IV. Who Was Will C. Robbins?

One question that has intrigued me a great deal is: "Who was Will C. Robbins?" Robbins' name began to appear in the Columbia record lists for 1915, mostly as a duet partner of Ada Jones, and he sounds a great deal like three other tenors who also sang for Columbia. His voice resembles those of Billy Watkins, M. J. O'Connell and Sam Ash. I often have wondered if Ash, who ordinarily did not go in for assumed names, may have been Will Robbins.

Quentin Riggs and I once made a series of comparative tests, and it seemed to us that Robbins sounded more like Billy Watkins, a vaudeville singer who died 20-odd years ago, than he did like Ash or O'Connell. We considered the possibility that Will C. Robbins was his real name and Watkins a stage one.

Worthy of attention, too, was the fact that both Robbins and Watkins sang duets with Miss Jones, and that



INFORMAL SNAPSHOT — A picture of Sam Ash taken from the Aeolian-Vocalion record supplement of February, 1920.

the name of Watkins ceased to be used just before that of Robbins came into the monthly Columbia lists. In other words, as Robbins came in, Watkins went out.

I still think Watkins the more likely choice—assuming that Robbins was anybody but Will C. Robbins himself. Sam Ash did no duet work under his own name with Miss Jones, but the Ash records and those by Robbins began appearing almost simultaneously and for a time usually were in the same supplements.

As we have seen, the number of Ash's first record was A1697. That of Robbins' first duet with Ada Jones, "He'd Keep on Saying Goodnight," was A1680. And as long as the name of Robbins continues to appear, his numbers run right along with Ash's. That, considering the similarity of the voices, is a suspicious circumstance.

As for "Mike" O'Connell, he didn't begin making records until 1916, when the name of Robbins had dropped out. So he's the least likely possibility of the three.

There are one or two other factors to be considered, however. Will C. Robbins made an Indestructible two-minute cylinder, No. 811, "If You Cared for Me," which was issued in 1908. Sam Ash was then only 24. And on file at the Edison National Monument in West Orange, N.J., are some scrawled comments by Thomas A. Edison himself, who wrote on February 2, 1915, after listening to some test records by Will Robbins:

"The 2nd record is a great improvement, but he is not good enough for us. He appears unable to interpret. He is like a school boy reciting 'The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck.' in usual monotonous drone without accent. Voice is pretty good but his interpretation is dull and monotonous."

"Tell him to put some action in his singing, not one continuous, monotonous intonation, without change of volume. He could be a good singer when he can put snap in."

It should be kept in mind, in con-

(Continued on next page)



**VETERAN ACTOR** — Sam Ash sent this autographed photo to Jim Walsh in 1947. At that time Ash was playing character roles in Hollywood films.

sidering this criticism, that Mr. Edison was almost totally deaf and probably didn't hear "Robbins" the way the tenor sounded to listeners with normal ears. At any rate, since he is listed as Will Robbins on the Edison test sheet, maybe there's a good possibility, after all, that he was singing under his own name and was neither Watkins, O'Connell, nor Ash. Some of these days I'm going to get ambitious and write Columbia to ask if their files show who Will C. Robbins actually was. If I get that information I'll pass it along.

#### V. In the Movies

I can't pinpoint the exact date at which Sam Ash stopped making records, but it seems to have been in 1922 or '23. Since he was a popular artist, and was singing for many companies, it's likely that the decision to quit was made by Ash himself, rather than by a simultaneous decision on the part of all the manufacturers that they didn't need him any longer.

My guess is that he had decided to give up recording and stage appearances and go to Hollywood to try his luck in the movies. However, in an old scrapbook that I so far haven't been able to turn up, I have an advertising picture taken of him in 1924 or '25, in which his address, I believe, is given as Elmhurst, L. I., N. Y. He is shown sitting in a barber's chair and smoking a cigar, the merits of which he is endorsing. If my recollection is correct, this indicates that he didn't go to California immediately after he stopped making records.

Eventually, however, he did go, and remained there until his death. I can't find the letter Lou Stevens wrote me about him, but it seems

to me Lou said his friend Sam had played character roles in hundreds of movies, though perhaps the word was "scores" instead of "hundreds."

Lou, from whom I haven't heard in more than 20 years, told Ash I admired him and would like to have an autographed photo. The result was that he sent me a picture, together with a note, dated October 30, 1947, which I quote, with spelling and punctuation as in the original:

"Dear Mr. Walsh. At the request of Mr. Lou Stevens I am sending you under separate cover a photo of myself. I understand you have played some of my records on your 'Wax Works', thanks very much. If and when you see some of my old recording pals say 'Hello' for me. Yours very truly, Sam Ash. 753 1/2 North, Hayworth Ave., Hollywood 46, Calif."

Besides acting in films, Sam also was operating Ash Woodcraft, a firm that manufactured tackle boxes and line dryers. His letter was written on the Company's stationery. The business was at 8524 Beverly Boulevard, Hollywood, and the photo showed the tenor and veteran character actor as a rather grizzled-looking, middle-aged man with a mustache.

I never would have recognized it as that of the young singer whose picture had appeared in record supplements a quarter of a century before. Four years later he was dead, at the age of 67.

Sam Ash made many fine popular song discs during the seven years in which he faced the recording horn, and he deserves to be remembered affectionately for the pleasure his singing has given and still affords.

#### JIM WALSH'S "NIPPER" DIES — DEATH OF "TINY TIM" JENKINS

The multitude of cat lovers among HOBBIES readers will be sorry to learn that Jim Walsh's oldest cat, "Little Nipper," whose Christmas and New Year's greetings have been a year-end feature of the magazine since 1959, died suddenly, January 9, at the age of thirteen.

Nipper had seemed in good health until ten days before his death when he became unable to eat and the Cooper Veterinary Hospital discovered he had cancer of the stomach. Previously, four other of Jim's cats — Gray, Percy, Roger and Petey — had died of the same ailment, which kills more cats past the age of 10 than any other disease. By a coincidence, his death occurred on the 93rd birthday of his staunch friend, Kenly M. Smith, widely known as "Mr. Vinton," who died last May 26.

We are also sorry to report the death, from pneumonia, of "Tiny Tim," cat belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins of Cedar Crest Farm, Rose Hill, Va. He succumbed to pneumonia last December. A picture of Tim, who was named for the famous singing entertainer, "Tiny Tim," appeared in HOBBIES in October, 1969, as an illustration of an article about

his namesake. Tiny Tim had grown up to be a huge strong cat with luxuriant long hair, and his death came as a shock to his bereaved owners.

As soon as Jim is able he will write "A Last Loving Tribute to Little Nipper" for publication in HOBBIES.

#### HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

be ambiguous. Under "Baritone" it has: "If the voice approaches the bass in quality or compass, it is often termed a bass-baritone." And under "Bass" the explanation is practically repeated, only the other way around: "... the variety slightly higher than normal is the bass-baritone."

According to these definitions, the term can be applied equally to a high bass or low baritone — voices which in Italy are labeled Basso cantante and Baritono drammatico. Capable basses have been known to take over, on occasion, baritone parts and vice versa, but in the transition the identity of each voice invariably remains intact.

Unhappy with the information, I sought the answer in the recordings of Michael Bohnen, one of the best known exponents of bass-baritone singing. I listened carefully to his LP. As the selections rolled by, it became increasingly apparent that his was, by nature, a limited basso, which he resourcefully lengthened at both ends to well over two octaves. On the LP, he reaches from second E below middle C (in "Zauberfloete") to G above the same note (in "Hamlet") — a truly enviable extension for any low male voice to encompass.

Agreed, the worked-out notes lack power and/or freedom, as the case may be, but considering they are there, such as they are, thanks to the amazing know-how of their intelligent possessor, it becomes a rare experience to hear how skillfully they are produced.

Practically every scanty voice has latent possibilities at the extremities, but it takes much understanding and perseverance to materialize them. I remember reading with awe that Malibran added height to her short contralto voice with the aid of papa Garcia, but I never expected to come across a similar feat more recently accomplished.

Oh, dear—I've just noticed there is no room left for a biographic sketch. But then, Bohnen's unusual voice is too fascinating a subject to be disregarded in favor of a few notes about his career, which can be postponed until some time in the future.

—o—

The religions of the world are the ejaculations of a few imaginative men. —Emerson

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Assisting Artists in Edison Cylinders

Part 1

By JIM WALSH

### I. Unheralded Helpers

In August, 1969, this department carried an article called "Artists Who Sang in the Choruses of Edison Amberol Cylinders." Since then it has occurred to me that it would be equally interesting to publish a list of performers who gave assistance to the "name" performer on Edison records, usually without their own names being included in the preliminary "announcements."

Such incidental aid was not uncommon in the early days of recording, not only on Edison cylinders but on other makes of records as well. For instance, in September, 1913, Victor issued, on No. 17377, a record of Arthur Collins singing "That Baseball Rag."

Near the end there is a snatch of sound supposed to be coming from a ball park, and the voice of Collins' partner, Byron G. Harlan, can be heard addressing an imaginary player: "Hey, you're running like an ice wagon!" There is no mention on the label of Harlan's helping his buddy.

It often happened that some such assistance was needed, and, presumably, whatever other artists happened to be in the studio when the recording was being made were asked to lend their hands, or, rather, their voices. To me it is fascinating to track down these assisting performers on the old two-minute Edison Standard, or Gold-Moulded, cylinders, and, to a less extent, on the four-minute Amberols. I think the result of my investigation is worth preserving.

The information to be given here is not represented as all-inclusive. Most of it is taken from files of The New Phonogram, but some has been determined by listening to the records themselves. Undoubtedly, there are many other cylinders in which

the principal artists have the benefit of friendly assistance, but which I have not heard and whose unheralded helpers are not mentioned in published descriptions of the records.

Generally speaking, the cylinders reviewed here were issued from the beginning of the Gold Moulded process in February, 1902, to the adoption of the "unbreakable" four-minute Blue Amberol in October, 1912. Those with numbers from 8000 upward are two-minute; those below 8000, with one or two exceptions, four-minute Amberol. Blue Amberols are not included because there are too many of them to be easily considered, but many of the Amberols to be discussed here were later reissued in Blue Amberol form.

Since the wax cylinders frequently were remade, there is a possibility that some of those I list were done over afterwards with different assist-

ing artists than those to be mentioned.

For convenient reference, I have arranged the different subdivisions of this article alphabetically, either by the name of the assisting artist or by a descriptive title such as "Christmas Records." But before the subject headings begin, suppose we consider the assistance rendered to his fellow artists by that undisputed king of helpful intervention, Edward Meeker.

### II. The Helpful Mr. Meeker

Ed Meeker lived all his life in an "Edison environment." He was born in 1874 in Orange, N. J., the city in which the Edison manufacturing works were situated, and died in nearby Newark in 1937. By the time the Gold Moulded cylinders were well established, he had become known as the man who made the announcements at the beginning of records. But although he was an excellent

(Continued on next page)

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comedian, it was not until March, 1906, that his first solo record, No. 9234, "What's the Use of Knocking (When a Man Is Down)?" appeared.

From that time until Edison went out of the phonograph business in the autumn of 1929, Meeker was associated in some capacity with the firm's recording activities. During this period he made only one record for any other company, Victor No. 16291, a comic song called "Broke," which came out in 1909. Perhaps his most popular records were "Clancy's Wooden Wedding," and "Steamboat Bill," which he made both on cylinders and the Diamond Discs.

Probably because he announced nearly all the Edison cylinders until the spoken introductions were done away with late in 1908 and was consequently always on hand for a recording date, Meeker had hardly any rival as an unbilled assistant to other performers. As an example, he did the talking in the Gold Moulded version of No. 597, "Virginia Skeddaddle" (earlier there had been a brown wax offering), by the Edison Symphony Orchestra. (What a composition for a "symphony orchestra" to play!)

Charles D'Almaine, the violinist who hung up the fiddle and bow in 1914 to become a chiropractor in Newark, was credited with making No. 8146, "Down at Finnegan's Jam-boree." But he merely played its dance tunes.

The Irish dialect talking was done by Meeker. When cylinders were made to provide music for dancing lancers and quadrilles, he called the figures. These included Nos. 8247 to 8251, "U. S. Army Lancers"; Nos. 265 to 267, "Superba Lancers," and

Nos. 268 to 270, "The Petunia Quadrille."

Meeker gave Len Spencer help in No. 9119, "The Musical Yankee," sang with a German accent in No. 9354, "Old Heidelberg," by the Edison Concert Band, and took the part of "the man with a laugh like a goat," in No. 9864, Steve Porter's comic sketch, "The Laughing Spectator."

Ed Meeker was helpful also to Porter in No. 9970, "Pat O'Brien's Automobile" and was one of a group assisting the vaudeville comedienne, Stella Tobin, in No. 9758, "Will He Answer 'Goo Goo?'" The other helpers sound like the Edison Male Quartet.

Another record in which Meeker worked unbilled with Porter was Amberol No. 4, "Flannagan and the Reillys at a Baseball Game," in which he seems to have taken the part not only of the umpire but also of a spectator who objected to Mrs. Reilly's stream of inane questions. He impersonated a footloose fiddler in No. 1110, "Two Rubes and the Tramp Musician," by Porter and Harlan, and was "the hot corn man" in No. 518, "Bear's Oil," by Billy Golden and Joe Hughes.

One of Meeker's outstanding anonymous performances was in Amberol No. 196, "The Baseball Girl," by the comedienne, Ray Cox, in which he did a take-off on "Silk O'Loughlin, a major league baseball umpire who was famous for the way he bellowed: "Ball tuh!" for "ball two."

"'Ball tuh?' The Baseball Girl exclaims in disgust. "What sort of language is that? He doesn't care what he does to the king's English, does he?"

In Amberol No. 401, "Rastus, Take Me Back," Meeker carries on a conversation with Marie Dressler, who is pretending to be drunk, and in No. 1049, when Murry K. Hill is telling a purportedly sad story about 14 children who were "Seated Round an Oil Stove," he is called on to exclaim "Fourteen!" on several occasions.

Going back a moment to the "U. S. Army Lancers" records already mentioned, No. 8248 contains whistling by "Mr. Nightingale," who almost certainly would have been Joe Belmont. Number 8249 has a "rube monolog" by "Squire Hawkins," probably Harlan, and No. 8250 a singing and whistling duet by "Nightingale and Hightops." Most likely they were Harlan and Belmont, who frequently worked together around 1902-03. Later these records were reissued without the incidental musical features.)

I have no doubt there are many other records in which Edward Meeker took a helpful, if unchronicled, part. This would apply to Diamond Disc and Blue Amberols as well as the wax cylinders. In "Cohen On His Honeymoon," for example, he asks John F. Burkhardt, the pianist, to play "She May Have Seen Better Days," and laughs fre-

quently at Monroe Silver's humorous remarks.

In at least two records, "When My Baby Smiles At Me," by Rachel Grant and Billy Murray and "I Want a Jazzy Kiss," by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, Meeker does an imitation of Harry Raderman's once famous "laughing trombone." He also frequently imitated animals in other records.

But here is a brow-wrinkler: who worked with Meeker in record No. 9984, "I'm a Yiddish Cowboy," which was issued in November, 1908, and included "a cowboy chorus and cowboy and Indian yells?" The Edison Male Quartet by that time had signed up exclusively with Victor, the Premier Quartet hadn't been organized, and the Knickerbocker Quartet didn't go in much for comedy.

(Continued next page) 2

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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# Assisting Artists in Edison Cylinders

PART II

By JIM WALSH

### III. These Also Assisted

**ACCORDION INTERLUDES AND ACCOMPANIMENTS.** Since John J. Kimmel (whose name Edison misspelled as Kimbble) was the only accordion player making cylinders in 1907, he almost certainly played the musical interlude in Steve Porter's comic Irish specialty, "Thim Were the Happy Days," issued in January, 1908.

All Kimmel's accordion solos for Edison cylinders are recorded with piano accompaniment. The pianist isn't named, but must have been Kimmel's inseparable associate, Joe Linder, who worked with him from the beginning until virtually the close of his recording career.

**FRANK P. BANTA.** This pianist, who died November 30, 1903, was the father of the better known Frank E. Banta, a member of the Eight Famous Victor Artists. The younger Banta died in 1969. The Edison Phonograph Monthly for January, 1904, said the elder Banta had played the accompaniments for more than half the cylinders then in the Edison catalog.

**GEORGE H. BEMUS.** This little known singer took the bass in "When It's Moonlight on the Prairie," which Byron G. Harlan sang on No. 9850 with the assistance of an otherwise unidentified male quartet. Mr. Bemus also sang bass in Amberol No. 3, "Sextet From 'Lucia.'"

**BIRD IMITATIONS.** Joe Belmont, already mentioned for his work in the lancers dance series, whistled bird imitations in several records. These included No. 8643, "Dance of the Song Birds," by the Edison Symphony Orchestra; No. 9170, "The Choristers," Edison Concert Band, and No. 9186, "Robin Redbreast," soprano solo by Marie Narelle.

**DAISY BOULAIS.** A few months ago I speculated on the possibility that this mysterious soprano, who never had a record to herself but worked mostly with Byron G. Harlan and Frank G. Stanley, might have been Mrs. Stanley. Since I knew Mrs. Harlan, I can say without hesitation that Miss Boulais' previously reproduced photograph does not resemble her. She probably was not Mrs. Stanley, either, but the theory

that she could have been is intriguing.

For the Gold Moulded cylinder list in 1903 Harlan warbled on No. 8409, "In the Valley Where the Bluebirds Sing." The catalog description mentioned "an echo effect sung by a soprano voice." A few years later someone asked the New Phonogram who sang soprano in that record and was told "Miss Daisy Boulais."

Our baffling lady friend also sang in No. 9061, "Violette," and No. 8736, "Two Rubes at the Vaudeville" with Harlan and Stanley. She gave a beautiful rendition of part of "Blue Bell" in the "rube" act. Miss Boulais also helped Harlan in No. 9004, "Down in Blossom Row," which is likewise represented to contain voices of a group of children.

She and Harry Anthony remade two duets that previously had been sung by "Miss Chappel" (Edith Chapman) and Harry Anthony. They were No. 8395, "Life's Dream is O'er," and No. 8601, "Far Away," which presents a puzzle.

The Chappel Stricklett version of "Far Away" was issued in February, 1904. By February, 1906, it had been remade by Boulais and Anthony, and by July that year it was cut out of the catalog. The puzzle: Why go to the trouble and expense of doing over a record that was such a slow seller it was discontinued a few months after being remade?

**CHILDREN'S VOICES.** Byron G. Harlan, as I have said, sang a record of "Down in Blossom Row," in which he purportedly was helped by a group of children. "H. B. L." of Harrodsburg, Ky., asked the New

Phonogram who the youngsters were and was told "a children's group that sings in church choirs."

Another inquirer was informed that Daisy Boulais took the soprano part. Still another Harlan record with a "chorus of children" was No. 8919, "I've Got My Fingers Crossed (You Can't Touch Me)," which he recorded in 1905. This song was written by Joe Maxwell, a tenor with a walrus mustache, who himself became an Edison recording artist a few years later.

Speculation as to the identity of the children no doubt is useless, but I wonder if Harlan used the same group of tots when he made Victor and Columbia records of "I've Got My Fingers Crossed." Personally, I have a lurking doubt that children actually were involved, and suspect the assistants may have been sopranos who sang in a "kiddish" way. Children's voices were hard to record.

See also the entry under "June Rossmore and Stella Tobin" for other "child voice" cylinders.)

**CHRISTMAS RECORDS.** In De-

(Continued on next page)

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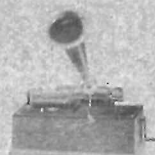
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Model A



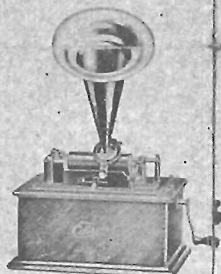
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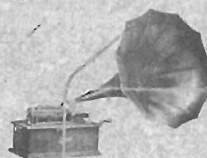
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**TRIUMPH**  
Model B



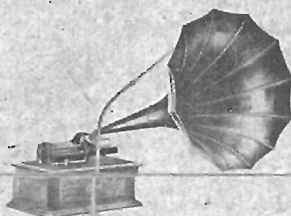
**STANDARD**  
Model B



**HOME**  
Model C and D



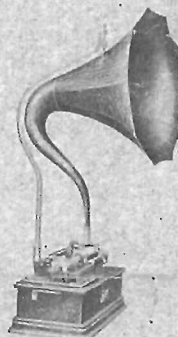
**GEM**  
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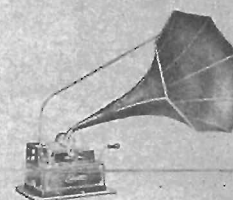
**TRIUMPH**  
Model C and D



**STANDARD**  
Model C and D



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Model E, F and G



**GEM**  
Model D and E



**TRIUMPH**  
Model E, F and G



**STANDARD**  
Model E, F and G



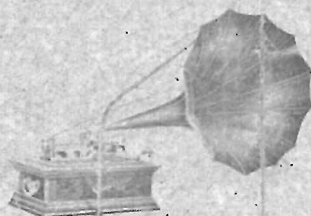
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**OPERA**

**CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS** — These are the Edison instruments in vogue during the period when two-minute Standard and four-minute Amberol cylinders were played in millions of homes. Edison issued this circular in 1926 when the Company was offering attachments to equip older model phonographs to play Blue Amberol records.

(Continued on page 40)



## ASSISTING ARTISTS IN EDISON CYLINDERS

(Continued from page 38)

cember, 1907, Edison issued a rather ambitious cylinder, No. 9703, "Ring Out the Bells for Christmas," by the Edison Concert Band, in which two distinguished concert artists, Reed Miller and Reinald Werrenrath, sang a Christmas carol without being credited on the record with their help.

This happened too in December, 1910, when the Concert Band played "The Angels' Song" and was assisted by James F. Harrison and a mixed chorus, whose other members probably were Harrison's associates in the Edison Mixed Quartet—Florence Hinkle, soprano, Margaret Keyes, contralto, and Harry Anthony, tenor.

Similar combinations of the Concert Band and the Mixed Quartet were offered in December, 1909, on Standard No. 10257, "While Shepherds Watched," and Amberol No. 305, "Angels From the Realms of Glory."

This has nothing to do with Christmas, but on Amberol No. 594, Anthony was helped to sing "Girl of My Dreams" (not the later song of the same name associated with Gene Austin) by a chorus, which probably included the other members of the Mixed Quartet. In his Amberol No. 82, "The Song That Reached My Heart," he was assisted by Misses Hinkle and Keyes.

**CORNET VIRTUOSOS.** The combination of xylophone and cornet certainly sounds unusual, but in Gold Moulded record No. 8931, "Come Take a Trip In My Airship Medley," John Hazel, one of Edison's star band and orchestra virtuoso, plays variations on the melody which Albert Benzler hammers on the xylophone. A cornet duet is featured in Amberol cylinder No. 443, "Foxy Kid." The featured instrumentalists are M. Schlossberg and W. N. Bar-tow of the Edison Concert Band.

**"DARKIES' DREAM."** In the pioneer phonograph days, the descriptive specialty by this name was almost as popular a band record as "The Jolly Coppersmith." Edison issued, in January, 1905, a remake of its old brown wax version, with incidental talking by Billy Murray and Harry West.

The later is almost as much a mystery as Daisy Boulaïs, for he made only one Edison solo record, No. 8445, "I Could Love You in a Steam-Heat Flat." I'm sorry it never occurred to me when Billy was alive to ask him what he remembered of West. Near the beginning, one of the speakers addresses Frank R. Seltzer, who was then the director of the Edison Military Band, by saying: "Cut 'er loose, Frank!"

In passing, Frederick W. Hager was the director of the Edison Con-

cert Band, and conducted when the band played his own popular Indian composition, "Laughing Water." Hager also directed the Zonophone house bands and orchestras, including the so-called "Victor Herbert's Band." Eugene A. Jaudas was the conductor of the Edison Symphony Orchestra, which as a rule played anything but symphonic music.

### IV. A Helpful Foursome

**EDISON MALE QUARTET.** John Bieling, Harry Macdonough, S. H. Dudley, and William F. Hooley became legends in their lifetime because of their singing in the Edison Male Quartet, which was known even better as the Haydn or Hayden. Until they left Edison, late in 1908, to record exclusively for Victor, they were second only to Ed Meeker in the amount of incidental assistance they gave other artists.

The English-born tenor, Edward Barrow, made three two-minute cylinders. In one, "Lorna" (No. 9147) he was helped out by the quartet, which also sang with Byron G. Harlan in No. 9562, "School Days."

Billy Murray probably received more Edison Quartet assistance than any other singer. Murray records in which the quartet participated include No. 9204, "Lazy Moon;" No. 9474, "Alice, Where Art Thou Going?;" No. 9496, "Waiting for a Certain Girl;" No. 9547, "San Antonio;" No. 9938, "Starlight Maid;" No. 9968, "Pride of the Prairie;" and No. 10022, "My Rosy Rambler," besides Amberol No. 130, "I'm Awfully Strong for You." The foursome also did a great deal of singing with Murray on Victor discs before the American Quartet in which he starred was organized.

Another tenor, Frederic H. Potter, was supported by the Edison Quartet in No. 9622, "Red Wing," and No. 9882, "Topeka." Both the ensemble and Edward Meeker seem to have helped Stella Tobin give a properly coquettish touch to "Will He Answer 'Goo-Goo?'" The boys sang with Edward M. Favor in No. 9831, "The Girl Who Threw Me Down," and with Allen Waterous in No. 9835, "Summertime." I have little doubt there were other examples of quartet assistance that have not caught my eyes or ears.

**BYRON G. HARLAN.** This genial ballad singer-comedian gave unheralded aid to Len Spencer and Gilbert Girard when they recorded two-minute cylinder No. 9779, "Auction Sale of a Stranded Circus," which was issued in March, 1908. Using his squeaky "Cyrus Pippin" "rube" voice, Harlan pretended to buy the animals traveling with the Circus, so he could present them to the town for a "zoo-a-mo-logical park."

### V. Others Who Helped

**PARKE HUNTER,** a versatile musician, was not only a brilliant ban-

joist but also played many other instruments. He assisted Len Spencer in several comic sketches, playing the banjo, violin, or something else, while Spencer did the talking. These included No. 8202, "The Arkansas Traveler" (Eugene A. Jaudas probably played the fiddle in Spencer's four-minute record, No. 181, of the same skit), and No. 8361, "Making the Fiddle Talk."

Hunter also played banjo in No. 8844, "Down Tennessee Barn Dance," by the Edison Symphony Orchestra, in which Bieling, Macdonough, and Hooley sang. Another record in which he "picked" is No. 8772, "The Wanderer's Return." Spencer and the Edison Male Quartet do the talking and singing.

**ADA JONES.** It is likely that the phonograph's most popular comedienne assisted Len Spencer in a number of records for which formal acknowledgement was not made. She sang part of "De Gospel Train Am Comin'" in No. 8975, "Parson Spencer's Discourse on Adam and Eve," and assisted in a remake of No. 8190, "Marty Maloney's Wake." Spencer, in turn, helped her in No. 9859, "All She Gets From the Iceman is Ice" and Amberol No. 54, "When Grandma Was a Girl." He impersonated an ice wagon driver and a street car conductor.

**CORINNE MORGAN,** beginning in 1902, was one of the few early women singers who made satisfactory records. Two of her three Gold Moulded cylinders had violin obligatos by Charles D'Almaine: No. 8499, "Happy Days" and 8543, "Once in a While."

**"MOZARTO."** A European vaudeville entertainer whose specialty was playing two instruments at once. His name appeared with Spencer's on some of their cylinders, but he also played, unbilled, in No. 9815, "Si and Sis (the Musical Spoons)," by Jones and Spencer. His stunts included blowing two clarinets simultaneously and playing two ocarinas in unison.

**BILLY MURRAY.** "The King of Comic Song Singers," as S. H. Dudley called him, made himself useful in many ways. On No. 9615, "Street Piano Medley," August Molinari was credited with manipulating the instrument, but Murray, also known as "The Denver Nightingale," did the talking in Italian dialect.

I wonder whether there really was an Italian musician named Molinari who went about with a street piano, and if so, whether he was the "Signor Grindolino" and "Signor Hurdigurdi" who made Victor and Columbia discs, respectively. I also have seen the name of P. Molinari in some record catalog as a street piano operator, but can't remember which.

**VESS L. OSSMAN.** "The Banjo King" played accompaniments for several vocal records, but he was such a notable I think his name always was announced. These included No. 7817, "All Coons Look Alike to Me" and No. 7779, "I've Got a White



Man Working for Me," sung by Collins; No. 7665, "Negro Recollections," by Collins and Harlan, and No. 8969, "My Little Dinah Lee," by Bob Roberts. It is probably also he who is heard in No. 1117, Collins and Harlan's "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo."

In the late 1890's, Frank C. Stanley played banjo accompaniments, under the name of George S. Williams, for some of Collins' solos on brown wax cylinders, but I cannot find a list of them.

**STEVE PORTER.** Although he specialized in Irish roles, Porter was almost as versatile a comedian as Len Spencer. He assisted Spencer by impersonating an Irish woman in "Pedro the Hand Organ Man." And I wonder if Porter himself was helped by Stella Tobin in No. 9888, "He and She in Vaudeville." Miss Tobin took part in Indestructible cylinder No. 818 of the same skit. She is not mentioned on the Edison.

**PEERLESS QUARTET.** I have said more than once in *HOBBIES* that "Characteristic Negro Medley" (Amberol No. 431 and Blue Amberol No. 1876) is probably the only record by the Peerless Quartet in which Henry Burr didn't sing. (Burr of course was known always on Edison cylinders as Irving Gillette.)

The statement was made because someone wrote to the New Phonogram and asked the names of the artists in the record, and was told: "Mr. Campbell, Mr. Murray, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Stanley." It looked as if Murray had been substituted for Burr because of his greater facility in comic Negro dialect.

Since beginning this article, however, I have played the record and found that Burr unmistakably appears in it, although so does Murray. In fact, Burr does a bit of his favorite stammering act in the talking near the beginning. Murray apparently was called in as the "lead" to reinforce the quartet members, but Burr is still in the cast.

**PREMIER QUARTET.** Since it was not organized until late in 1909, Billy Murray's Quartet did less incidental work in two-minute cylinders than in four, but it probably sang with Murray in No. 10213, "Take Me Up With You, Dearie," and certainly did in No. 10281, "Funny Nursery Rhymes," and No. 10354, "He's a College Boy."

It also assisted Frederic H. Potter in No. 10452, "Goodbye, Betty Brown." As I mentioned in my August, 1969, article, it is almost certain that any Edison record made after 1909 by Murray, Ada Jones, Walter Van Brunt, or Will Oakland, which has the assistance of a "male chorus," includes the Premier.

The Quartet takes a prominent part in Amberol No. 361, "Darkies'

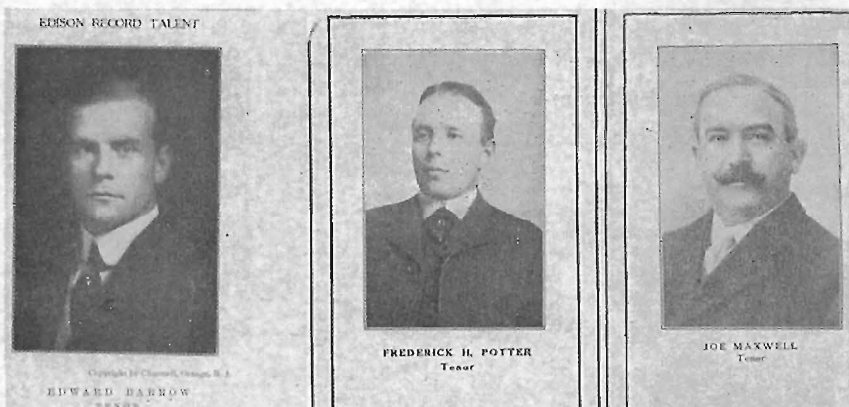


LEFT TO RIGHT:

**EDISON MUSICIANS** — Charles D'Almaine (left) did the fiddling in "Down at Finnegan's Jamboree," but the talking was by Edward Meeker. He also played violin obligatos to Corinne Morgan's contralto solos. This picture was taken in 1900. D'Almaine was smooth shaven in later life.

Frederick W. Hager (center) was conductor of the Edison Concert Band, but had made violin solos on brown wax cylinders in the late 1890's. He directed the band when it recorded his popular Indian song, "Laughing Water."

John Hazel (right) was Edison's staff cornet soloist. Hazel played a cornet obligato to a xylophone record by Albert Benzler.



LEFT TO RIGHT:

**THREE EDISON TENORS** — English-born Edward Barrow, left, who made three Gold Moulded cylinders, was assisted by the Edison Male Quartet in his record of "Lorna." The Quartet also sang with Frederick H. Potter in his highly popular record of "Red Wing." Joe Maxwell (right), made several cylinders around 1910. He also wrote the song, "I've Got My Fingers Crossed," which Byron G. Harlan recorded in 1905 with the help of "a group of children's voices."

Jubilee," by the American Symphony Orchestra, and I think Ed Meeker is also included.

**GUS REED.** I was surprised to learn recently that this splendid basso made one Amberol cylinder that was sold in England but not in the States. It was No. 12088, "The Song of the Turnkey," from "Rob Roy," and appeared in the English list for November, 1909. I wonder whether Reed made the record during a visit to England or whether Edison's British branch imported the moulds. If the latter, why was it never offered over here?

**JUNE ROSSMORE AND STELLA TOBIN.** These ladies had two things in common: Both were better known as vaudeville singers than recording artists, and both provided "child voices" in Gold Moulded cylinders by Byron G. Harlan.

Miss Rossmore, who made only one solo cylinder (No. 10062, "I Don't Like You") assisted in the refrain of No. 10151, "Schoolmates," by Harlan. Earlier, Miss Tobin, who also made No. 9824, "Tipperary" and No. 9852, "Daddy's Little Tom-Boy Girl," in addition to "Will He Answer 'Goo-Goo?'," helped Harlan in No. 9834, "Hoo-oo! Ain't You Comin' Out Tonight?"

Stella Tobin, by the way, was the wife of the late Paul Southe, a vaudeville comedian who made a few very poor Columbia discs. Like most vaudevillians, Southe could not make good records, and his Columbia A800 of "Cubanola Glide" was so bad it stayed in the catalog only a month before being remade by Collins and Harlan. Southe's wife's voice sounds to me much better on records than his own.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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### VICTOR RECORD SALES

(From 1901 to 1942)

By JIM WALSH

#### 1. Court Action Over Color

From January 4 to April 28, 1943, Hon. John M. Woolsey judge of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York, was occupied in hearing an interesting court action.

The Radio Corporation of America, which had acquired the old Victor Talking Machine Company some 15 years before, was seeking an order prohibiting the Columbia Recording Corporation from issuing a 50-cent popular series record with a red label, and Decca Records, Inc. from making a 75-cent red label "Personality Series" disc.

RCA contended that because it had inaugurated the famous Victor Red Seal records in 1903, the fame and prestige of that series entitled Victor to the exclusive use of red as a label color, and maintained that people were buying the cheaper Deccas and Columbias in the belief they were getting "genuine Red Seals". This claim was made despite the introduction of evidence showing that scores of companies other than Victor had been using red labels throughout the Red Seal era.

Judge Woolsey made it clear throughout the hearing that he considered the RCA case flimsy. He referred to "the judicial cliché that there can be no trademark in color." When his decision was given he had no hesitation in finding against the plaintiff and ordering it to pay the defendant companies' costs.

An amusing incident occurred during the trial when Clifton Cooper, one of RCA's lawyers, repeated an oft-made but not strictly true argument:

"It shows how valuable the Red Seal is that the greatest artists in the world insist on recording on it and won't record on anything else."

The old Victor Company had contended the same thing in the acoustic era of recording, despite the easily ascertained fact that most of the artists who made Red Seal records had performed at one time or another for other companies.

In this instance, Judge Woolsey skeptically retorted:

"There isn't any artist great enough in the world, if he was offered adequate pay, who would not take any color record."

This was true, as anybody who knows recording artists well understands. It is the amount of payment rather than the color of label that determines whether a contract will be accepted.

#### 11. Victor Record Sales Chart

I have mentioned this rather ridiculous court procedure because one of the curiosities of my collection of phonograph reference materials is a set of four volumes of arguments and evidence given during the hearing. And perhaps the most interesting page of the entire collection is one on which RCA listed the sales of Victor records by classes from the beginning of the old Victor Talking Machine Company in 1901, through the first seven months of 1942.

So far as I know, these figures never have been published, and I am certain they will be of great interest to collectors of old records. That is why I have decided to write this article discussing them.

It will be impossible to mention each year's sales totals in detail. I hope, however, I can obtain a clear facsimile of the page to be reprinted with what I write.

For the years spanning 1901 through half of 1942 a total sale of 797,437,131 Victor records was claimed. A few years later the billion mark was reached, and a special gold-plated record was pressed to commemorate it.

One side was supposed to be "Stars and Stripes Forever March", played by Sousa's Band, but the wrong matrix was picked up. The result was a

pressing of Vess L. Ossman's banjo rendition of "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden", from one of the oldest masters still left in the Victor vaults.

It is not clear whether the 1901 totals included the entire year or merely the three-month period, from October, 1901, when Eldridge R. Johnson founded the Victor Talking Machine Company, to the end of that year. In view of the small aggregate, 256,908, followed by the much higher total, 1,696,296 for 1902, the latter assumption seems more likely.

## HELP!

### VOD-VIL QUARTETS:

#### Records & Illustrated Sheets

I'm writing a discography and short biography of the quartets that predated the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America—started in 1938.

Need info on the following groups in form of newspaper clippings, records, sheets, music, etc.: Aeolian, American, A&P Gypsies, Amphion, Apollo, Aristocrats, Avon Comedy Four, Blue Dandies, Binghamton Kiwanis Quartet, Broadway, Brunswick, Cameo Male Quartet, Chicago Glee Club Quartet, College Four, Clover Quartet, Columbia Stellar, Criterion, Deep River Boys, Diplomats, Edison Quartet, Cities Service Quartet, Elm City Four, Empire Staters, Eton Boys, Harmonizers, Haydn, Heidelberg, Imperial, Invincible, Knickerbocker, Metropolitan, Merry-makers.

National Male Quartet, National Music Lovers Stellar Quartet, Orpheus, Peerless, Eton Boys, Premier, Quixy Four, Revelers, Shannon, Southern, Sportsmen, Sterling, Universal, Church City Four, That Quartette, Stanford Four, Electric City, The Big Four.

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EXHIBIT  
SALES BY CLASS OF RECORD  
AND TOTAL SALES OF RECORDS BY UNIT  
TRANS 1901 AND 1941 INCLUSIVE  
SEVEN MONTHS PERIOD ENDING AUGUST 1, 1942

U. S. Dist Court  
S. D. of N. Y.  
JAN 25 1943  
670  
JAN 26 1943

(V 10-412)

Year	Red Seal	Black Label	Bluebird	Miscellaneous	Total
1901		244,065		12,845	256,910
1902		1,611,451		84,845	1,696,296
1903	306,312	1,561,422		98,302	1,966,036
1904	404,308	2,060,952		129,751	2,595,011
1905	555,540	2,531,855		178,284	3,265,679
1906	1,098,680	3,600,306		338,289	5,037,275
1907	1,197,604	6,104,770		384,335	7,686,709
1908	817,671	4,168,069		266,407	5,252,147
1909	722,857	3,684,653		231,973	4,639,483
1910	932,942	4,755,662	No	299,400	5,988,004
1911	966,895	4,928,738		310,296	6,205,929
1912	1,425,646	7,267,209		457,519	9,150,374
1913	1,727,296	8,804,869		554,324	11,086,489
1914	2,115,450	10,775,286		678,249	13,568,985
1915-a)	4,054,947	13,431,394		1,168,688	18,655,029
1916	4,045,127	20,619,981	Sales	1,298,164	25,963,272
1917	4,225,714	22,040,072		1,387,568	27,753,354
1918-a)	5,761,848	14,004,062		1,781,157	31,547,067
1919-a)	6,023,014	21,842,914		2,989,799	30,855,727
1920-a)	9,516,052	24,074,141		1,836,402	35,426,595
1921-a)	12,594,212	39,655,577		2,871,066	54,920,855
1922-a)	6,049,348	29,202,897	Until	1,910,472	37,162,717
1923-a)	6,318,070	32,287,417		1,699,995	40,295,482
1924	5,115,866	26,067,865		1,641,144	32,824,875
1925	3,921,784	19,991,240		1,238,380	25,151,404
1926	4,965,971	25,315,968		1,597,681	31,879,620
1927-a)	2,984,501	34,234,957		405,991	37,625,449
1928-a)	2,921,414	32,677,018	1933	2,166,474	37,764,906
1929-a)	2,060,666	27,798,769		4,634,012	34,493,447
1930-a)	1,245,350	15,365,999		1,101,171	17,712,520
1931-a)	544,044	6,117,241		422,632	7,083,917
1932-a)	505,876	2,469,013		348,160	3,323,049
1933-a)	257,347	1,648,214	678,469	1,051,685	3,635,715
1934-a)	368,509	1,679,253	1,267,651	1,105,842	4,431,255
1935-a)	770,679	2,365,108	1,225,287	592,145	4,953,219
1936-a)	865,770	3,519,695	2,691,720	599,541	7,076,726
1937-a)	1,305,678	4,117,917	3,868,707	1,204,308	10,496,610
1938-a)	2,207,453	5,850,592	4,454,000	695,321	13,207,366
1939-a)	3,504,365	9,447,474	10,575,158	721,792	24,248,789
1940-a)	5,778,273	13,948,330	14,096,089	1,735,795	35,558,487
1941-a)	15,092,727	16,194,507	23,409,916	1,611,285	55,808,435
7 Nov. July 1942	7,008,884	11,076,464	17,410,691	470,688	35,966,727
Total to Date	131,736,650	541,671,542	79,697,688	44,331,251	797,437,131

SALES CHART. This is the chart, depicting the year by year sale of Victor records, that was introduced as evidence in RCA's 1943 court action against Columbia and Decca.

### III. Onward and Upward—Until 1908

One thing publication of the chart will do is dispel some common misconceptions about the trend of record sales from the turn of the century. Writer after writer has said that, prior to 1900, the cylinder record dominated the field, but that from 1900 on, the disc began to take over, moved steadily forward with greater sales every year, and the cylinder went immediately into a decline. Such statements simply aren't so.

It is true that Victor record sales showed a progressively upward trend from 1901 until, strangely, a peak was reached in 1907. That was a year with a severe panic. But sales dropped off sharply in 1908 and the 1907 level was not regained until 1912.

From that time the trend was upward again until the nation became involved in World War I. Then the

greater part of the Victor manufacturing plant was used for making submarine detectors and other War work.

With the end of the War, a remarkable new high level was set in 1921. Competition of the radio resulted then in a downward trend.

It was not until 1941 that the 1921 total again was equalled or beaten. Even then nearly half of the sales were of the 35-cent Bluebird disc.

In considering Victor sales for 1901, I find myself puzzled by one thing. Records in those days were almost entirely single-sided and seven inches in size, though a small quantity of 10-inch Monarchs may be included in the total. But since there were no Red Seals and no Purple and Blue labels, what sort of record was included under the heading of "12,845 miscellaneous?"

It is odd, too, to find that the sale

of Black Label records, which were always Victor's mainstay "bread and butter" line, dropped from 1,611,451 in 1902 to 1,561,422 in 1903. Perhaps the introduction of Red Seals had something to do with the lower 1903 black label total.

That first year's Red Seal sales figure was 306,312—a respectable total considering how much the records cost. The average man, with a weekly income of \$7.50 to \$15, wasn't buying Red Seal records, one of which would cost him two or three days' pay.

Again there is a mystery as to what the "miscellaneous" series included, with 98,302 of these being listed for 1903. Victor controlled Zon-o-phone records, but I imagine their accounts were kept separately.

Total record sales for 1905 were 3,565,679, but 1906 and 1907 really saw a jump. I think I know why. On December 1, 1905, both Victor and Columbia reduced the price of their 10-inch, single-faced Black Label records from \$1 to 60 cents, and of the 12-inch from \$1.50 to \$1.

This lower price made it possible for more people to buy more records. The aggregate shot up to 7,051,775 in 1906, and 7,686,709 in 1907. On the other hand, there was no over-all reduction in Red Seal prices, but their sales increased in the same proportion as the Black Labels—from 555,540 in 1905 to 1,197,604 in 1907.

Perhaps the gain was caused largely by increased factory facilities. We know Mr. Johnson constantly was adding to the record pressing plant, as well as to the remainder of the Victor organization.

But why did record sales drop in 1908 to 5,248,147, nearly 2.5 million less than in 1907, then take another tumble to 4,639,463 in 1909? In 1910 things were better, with 5,988,004; 1911 was still better with 6,205,929; and 1912 finally surpassed 1907 with 9,150,374. From then on, with the dancing craze getting under way, records were needed for home dancing, so they went up and up until 1918.

Going back to 1908, my guess is that Columbia's action in converting its entire "popular" catalog to double-faced records had something to do with the decline in Victor sales. On October 25, Victor, to meet competition, issued its first list of 100 10-inch and 25 12-inch double-faced records. However I understand they asked dealers to do their best not to sell them, and explained: "We don't want to sell double-faced records, but we want to keep Columbia from selling theirs."

Apparently, the Columbia move had taken Victor by surprise, just as Edison, it seems, had been caught off guard half a dozen years before when Columbia cut the price of its 2-minute cylinders from 50 cents to 25 cents in a vain effort to outsell Edison.

On October 31, 1908, a trade paper, *The Musical Age*, commented on the feud that Columbia's price-cutting had set off when 10-inch double-faced

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Columbias sold for 65 cents, against 60 cents for a single-faced Victor):

"Today we doubt if there is a single talking machine owner in the United States who does not know that he can get a double-sided record for practically the same price he was paying for a single disc.

"This brings about a peculiar condition: The dealer in Victor machines and records is instructed to meet this competition with the 125 double-faced records just issued by the Victor Company, but in the same breath is instructed not to push them. Reliance, of course, is placed by the Victor Company in the single-disc records, large stocks of which are held by every Victor jobber and dealer.

*"As the situation exists today it appears that the Columbia Company has the whip hand, and that the scope of the Company must be immensely broadened in the near future."*

Perhaps that last paragraph, which I have placed in italics, is the answer

to the problem. With its usual proud attitude of being beyond competition, Victor refused to meet Columbia's double-faced prices but charged 75 cents for a 10-inch record and \$1.25 for a 12-inch. (Columbia's 12-inch were \$1.)

It may be, as *The Musical Age* said, that, for a time, Columbia acquired "the whip hand."

From 1908 to 1912 Columbia sales may have been greater than Victor's, despite the belief, held today invariably that Columbia was an "also-ran." Considering the fact that Columbias were pressed under perhaps 50 different labels—Standard, United, Harmony, Diamond, Oxford, Lakeside, Thomas and innumerable others it doesn't appear especially improbable.

### IV. Cylinder Versus Disc

Meanwhile what of the belief that, throughout the early 1900's, the disc record was driving the cylinder to the wall?

There is no doubt that during those

years many small cylinder manufacturing companies, as well as many disc concerns, were forced out of business. It is also true that Columbia found it increasingly impossible to compete effectively against the better quality Edison cylinders, and gave up the fight in January, 1909, rather than try to buck Edison's new 4-minute Amberol cylinder.

But Edison was not suffering any decrease in business. Like Victor, it constantly was building factory additions. In November, 1904, Edison issued no new monthly record supplement as it was trying to catch up on back orders for cylinders already in the catalog.

By 1906, the inventor's Company was according to its own figures, turning out 1,000 phonographs each day, and about 100,000 cylinders six days a week. A few years later this asserted total had grown to 1,500 phonographs daily and 150,000 records.

In 1910, totals of more than 50 million records, and nearly half a million phonographs a year were claimed. Such totals make Victor's 1910 record sales of a little less than 6 million seem small by comparison. They certainly do not substantiate the belief that the disc remorselessly was putting an end to the cylinder and that Victor was a colossus bestriding the record business.

I admit I am somewhat skeptical about these Edison statements. Certainly, I do not believe the American people were buying 50 million Edison cylinders and half a million Edison phonographs a year.

The Edison factory, however, made records for virtually the entire world. Thus the quoted figures, which appeared in American publications and the *Sound Wave* in England, may have been on a world-wide basis.

In offering cylinder records and phonographs, Edison, of course, was sponsoring a much lower-priced line than the disc. Therefore, it may be that, in spite of the greater sales volume, the cash return from the sale of Edison instruments and cylinders was not as great as that of Victor's from a smaller unit business.

Obviously, it can't be denied that the cylinder business did decline, as time went on, until it had dwindled to almost nothing by its last year, 1929. It probably was on the downgrade in 1910, for Edison already had begun experimenting with the Diamond Disc, although the factory worked day and night shifts, six days a week, to meet the demand.

My own feeling is that Edison doomed the cylinder when he introduced the 4-minute Amberol. It required a special gear shift and a new reproducing point for it to be played on an ordinary cylinder machine.

Customers had been clamoring for a longer record, but probably the vast majority of owners of old instruments didn't bother to buy attachments to convert their machines for playing the new records. These soon wore out because the grooves were too close together.

Owners realized that, with a disc



FABULOUS ITALIAN TENOR. ENRICO CARUSO for many years dominated Victor's Red Seal catalog of great opera singers. This photo was published in "The Voice of the Victor" shortly after the tenor's death in August, 1921.





**RED SEAL STAR. JOHN McCORMACK** was born in Athlone, Ireland, but was of Scotch descent. He was probably the most popular of Victor's Red Seal singers during the acoustic recording period. This photo is one that was sent to persons who wrote to Victor to praise McCormack's 1925 and 1926 radio programs.

machine, all you had to do to play any size record was to put it on the turntable and lower a needle. There was none of this gear shift, special reproducer business.

Too, Edison had begun to meet bothersome competition from the Indestructible and U.S. Everlasting Records. These virtually were unbreakable and unwearable, whereas the Edison cylinders were fragile, easily could be broken by dropping or pushing them too far onto the mandrel, and they were subject to considerable wear.

This led Edison, in October, 1912, to introduce his Blue Amberol Cylinder, which was better than its competitors, but required a special diamond point to be played properly. Again, innumerable owners of cylinder machines just didn't bother to make the change over, and when Edison quit making records for 2-minute phonographs a vast percentage of his business was lost.

As an example of how the cylinder business declined: at the height of the wax 2-minute vogue, the factory kept a reserve of 2 million records in stock. By 1916, only Blue Amberols were being made, and the reserve was down to 400,000—a fifth of the former total. Yet, even in 1918, during World War I, an Edison spokesman said the factory was more than a million records behind in filling orders for Blue Amberols, and the demand was increasing.

However, by 1923, cylinder sales were so badly on the wane the price

was dropped from 60 cents to 35 cents in a desperate effort to stimulate business, and the factory began to fill direct mail orders from rural customers instead of relying on local dealers.

Even so, it is abundantly clear the disc records, and particularly Victor records, did not start to knock out the cylinder from the very beginning of the 20th Century.

#### V. Some Red Seal Surprises

One of the most interesting features of the Victor sales chart is the column devoted to the sale of the higher-priced Red Seals records by opera singers, famous pianists, violinists, and other celebrated artists. The chart contains a good many surprises.

Most lovers of "classical" music do not realize that Victor's Red Seal business never was a paying proposition, and that losses on its operation were charged off to the advertising account. There perhaps were a dozen or so highly paid singers and virtuosos who made money for Victor despite their expensive contracts, but the remainder were carried at a loss.

Everybody, of course, knows that Enrico Caruso was one of Victor's great Red Seal money-makers. However, John McCormack's discs probably outsold Caruso's, partly because they were cheaper and partly because they were sung mostly in English. They were largely favorite old ballads and Irish songs, and had a greater mass appeal than operatic arias in Italian and other foreign languages.

Alma Gluck also specialized in sweetly sentimental ballads. Her record No. 74420, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," another big seller, is said to have been the first Red Seal to sell more than a million copies. Tetrizzini and Galli-Curci were tops among coloratura sopranos.

Fritz Kreisler's and Mischa Elman's violin solos of simple, melodious pieces like "Humoresque" and "The Meditation from 'Thais,'" always met with a ready sale. And there were a few other profitable artists. But mostly the Red Seals didn't pay their way.

Eldridge R. Johnson's attitude towards records of this type was exactly opposite to that of Thomas A. Edison. Johnson was willing to lose money on the sale of Red Seals for the sake of prestige and effective advertising.

Edison started out making a great many "celebrity" records on his Diamond Discs. But when he found he was losing money he reduced that type of recording to a minimum and frankly admitted he wasn't interested in selling good music at a loss. The same attitude had been taken by Edward D. Easton, president of Columbia, when his series of records by famous operatic stars in 1903 was a financial failure.

Victor's Red Seal sales passed the million point in 1906 with 1,098,680, but by 1908 the decline in sales had begun and they were down to 817,671. The million mark was not attained again until 1912, when 1,425,646 was reached. There was a terrific increase



**BIG BLUE LABEL SELLER. OLIVE KLINE** was one of Victor's best selling artists on double-faced Blue Label records. Her biggest hit combined "An Old-Fashioned Garden" and "The Japanese Sandman." She autographed this photo in 1969 to Quentin Riggs.

by 1915, up to 4,054,947.

In 1918, a year when fewer records were being produced, the total went to nearly 5,800,000 as compared to almost 4,324,000 the year before. On the other hand, Black Label records, which had sold over 22 million in 1917, dropped to just over 14 million.

This is puzzling. Perhaps it can be accounted for on the assumption that the factory had large stocks of Red Seals on hand, and dealers, desperate because they couldn't get as many popular records as they needed, decided to try to sell Red Seals instead.

There was a big gain in Red Seal sales in 1919-20, and in 1921 the total went to a new high figure that would remain for years to come, 12,194,212. No doubt this increase was caused largely by Victor's having drastically reduced the price of most of the single-faced Red Seals in 1919, and by dealers ordering heavily of records the factory could not produce in war-times.

But how are we to account for the drop in 1922 to 6,023,014—less than half the 1921 figure? True, radio was beginning to be talked about widely, but few homes had it—certainly not enough to cause such a drastic reduction.

In September, 1923, Victor, apparently alarmed by radio competition and the decline in Red Seal sales, offered them for the first time in double-faced combinations, at great savings. The sales went up slightly for the year to 6,318,070. But alas! in 1924 they were only a little more than 5 million.

In 1925 Victor began to sponsor radio broadcasts by John McCormack, Lucrezia Bori, Frances Alda, and other Red Seal stars on the theory that hearing these singers on the air would induce listeners to buy their records.

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

'Tis evening from "The Queen of Spades," in which Miliza again sings a duet with herself, only to find out once more why this LP had to wait so long on my shelves to be reviewed.

To begin with, of the 3 stanzas in the Lisa-Pauline meditation upon the beauty of nightfall, only 2 customarily are given. For some reason, each is done here twice, and this version becomes a 4-stanza drag.

Also, the accompaniment of repeated inverted chords has been changed, into appoggiolos for the greater part. I could not even recognize the instrumental introduction when it began.

Further, in the score Lisa and Pauline have different musical lines throughout the duet. Instead, while Miliza-Lisa's principal melody is followed to perfection, Miliza-Pauline's harmonizing is mostly unison singing one octave lower.

And in addition, the turn by the two voices in the Finale is not executed in full, as required.

I can just picture the face of Margaret Eichenwald, creator of Prilepa in "The Queen of Spades" at the Bolshoy and my vocal teacher, had she heard these innovations!

Next, I sought solace in Joan of Arc's poignant Farewell, but found more liberties. The aria is sung minus its dramatic recitative and middle section, with only touching adieus left for the artist to interpret. And that she does very admirably.

Then I went on through "The Gypsy Baron" and one more Farewell in "La Traviata," to the "Nightingale and the Rose," another of those Oriental cantilenas in which Miliza so eminently excels.

Here darling William is in all his glory. His impersonation of the nightingale is very pretty indeed, but had Rimsky-Korsakov wanted a bird in this song, I'm sure he would have indicated it.

Dear me, with all the space I used up on subjects that interested me most, all I can do now is give the contents of the remaining 2 LP's with only an over-all comment for each.

NIGHT IN VIENNA WITH JOHANN STRAUSS—Stereo 933:

Side I—1. The Beautiful Blue Danube 2. A Night in Venice.

Side II—1. DIE FLEDERMAUS: Klänge der Heimat 2. Die FLEDERMAUS: Excerpts 3. DIE FLEDERMAUS: Mein Herr Marquis 4. DER ZIGEUNERBARON: Wedding Cake Polka, which is in Russian. All in German on both sides, except the Wedding Cake Polka, which is in Russian.

Miliza's all-around excellence in these numbers shows that she still is unrivaled in this field. For admirers of Johann Strauss' lilting tunes, the above record is a must.

DIVINE MUSIC—Stereo 966:

Side I—1. ORFEO ED EURIDICE: Che puro ciel! (Gluck-in German) 2. Two Worlds (Offenbach-in German) 3. Ave Maria (Gounod-in Latin) 4. Stille Nacht (Gruber).

Side II—1. MESSIAH: He shall feed his flock (Handel-in German) 2. Panis Angelicus (Franck-in Latin) 3. Ave Verum (Mozart-in Latin) 4. Open My Eyes (Scott).

Apparently this album was meant to represent music of a more or less religious nature, although how "Or-

pheus in Hades" in Offenbach's "Two Worlds" can be considered as such, I'll never know. The last song is dedicated fervently to "The Whole World" by Miliza Korjus.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

The house organ, *The Voice of the Victor*, was filled with copies of letters from ecstatic tuners-in, asking for the good work to continue.

But most of these appreciative souls seemed to take their gratitude out in listening and didn't buy records. The 1925 Victor Red Seal sales were only 3,921,784 — this despite the lower-priced, double-faced combinations.

One element in the downward trend may have been the fact that Victor had authorized dealers to clear out single-faced Red Seals at low prices—65 cents for a 10-inch and 90 cents for a 12-inch. Many customers may have preferred buying the cut-rate old discs which were already in stock and would not count as records sold by the factory during the year.

### VI. Red Seals in the Electric Era

Mid-1925 brought the Orthophonic Victrola and electric recording. This generally is believed to have caused a great renaissance in American interest in "classical" music and the sale of Red Seal records.

For the first time it became possible to give reasonably adequate recordings of symphony orchestras and to make piano records that called into play the full resources of the keyboard. *The Phonograph Monthly Review*, which was founded in 1926, proclaimed that the nation was being swept by a demand for high-class recordings by the greatest artists, and sales were increasing by "leaps and bounds."

But again it just wasn't so. True, the novelty of the Orthophonic and electric recording did cause Red Seal sales to reach nearly 5 million in 1926. But the novelty wore off and in 1927 they were down to less than 3 million. A year later, despite the greatly lowered prices and double-faced combinations, they were only 2,921,414, and, this seems almost incredible, in 1929 were just a little over 2 million fewer Red Seals than had been sold, single-faced, in 1914, at much higher prices.

I remember how incredulous I was when an Edison jobber told me in 1929 that "nobody ever made any money out of classical records" and that Victor's Red Seal department always had operated at a loss.

"But," I objected, "surely sales are going up now, with all the great symphony orchestras recording and better records all the way around!"

"Son," the jobber said, with a smile of pity for my misguided juvenile ignorance, "they're nothing like what they used to be. Victor's not even selling as many Red Seals as they did 15 years ago."

How he knew I don't know, but he did know.

From 1929 until 1933, as we all know, the depression caused the record business to go into a tailspin. The sales for 1932 were only 305,876 Red Seal, 2,465,013 Black Label, and 348,160 miscellaneous—which included Blue Label and a few odds and ends.

Throughout the period of the sales chart, the sale of Red Seals was estimated to average 16 to 18 per cent of the total (nowadays "classical" records account for only about 5 per cent of the various companies' sales totals), and Blue, Purple, and other miscellaneous labels, 5 per cent.

Harry Lauder was one of the best selling Blue Label performers. Others were Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Reinald Werrenrath, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Royal Dadmun, Lambert Murphy. "Ollie" says the combination of "The Japanese Sandman" and "An Old-Fashioned Garden" brought her more royalties than any other record.)

Victor's 1932 sales total for all classes of records was only 3,119,049—less than the figure for 1905. In 1933 it went up to 3,635,713, but this was largely because 678,469 of the 35-cent Bluebird records, introduced that year, were included. Take away the Bluebirds, and the Victor sales were less than in 1932.

But from 1933 the trend was upward again, and, as you can see, remained that way through the life of the chart—that is, through July, 1942. A great deal of the gain, however, was attributable to the lower priced Bluebirds.

Why did Victor's Red Seal sales fall off so drastically in the early electric era? There may be several reasons. For one thing, most recordings of complete symphonies were made in Europe, and the rejuvenated Columbia Company again got the jump on Victor by importing large numbers of such records from its English affiliate. Brunswick also imported foreign matrices. Such competition may have cut deeply into Victor's business.

For another thing, most of the Red Seal singers with huge popular followings were dead, past their prime, or inactive. Caruso was gone, McCormack's electric recordings didn't have the vogue of his acoustics; Schumann-Heink was "over the hill," and Galli-Curci was peaking out.

Too, the electric process put what the *Phonograph Monthly Review* called "an almost unbearable edge" on the voice of many singers. Lawrence Tibbett's "Pagliacci Prologue" was singled out as an especially glaring example of this objectionable quality.

And, more and more, the average man or woman who just wanted to hear a tune without the trouble of cranking a phonograph and changing a needle or going to the expense of buying records, was turning to radio. This trend continued until "juke boxes" made recorded music enthusiasts of a new generation of youngsters.

And now, in the year 1971, the record business is again in a precarious condition. More discs—45's and 33-



RPM's—are being made than ever before, but *Variety* estimates only about 5 per cent sell enough to cover production costs.

Dealers, who, in the old days of 78-RPM's were allowed to return for credit 5 or 10 per cent of their unsold records once or twice a year, now have a 100 per cent return privilege. And, according to *Variety*, one company almost went broke last year when it was swamped at one time by 18 million dollars worth of returned discs.

Moreover, with tape cassettes already competing for the buyer's dollars and television playbacks just a matter of time, the record business again seems headed for hard times.

Meanwhile I hope this survey of long-ago Victor record "sales trends" has proved both interesting and enlightening.

THE END

## DOLLS

(Continued from page 40)

Collectors are able, from time to time, to find characters from the



Schoenhut doll from the collection of Frances Merrit Boudey.

—Photo by St. Joseph's Portrait Studio, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Schoenhut circus. Sometimes lucky collectors find the whole circus. We understand one sold recently for as much as \$300 for a complete set.

At the time of Teddy Roosevelt's exploits in Africa, Schoenhut produced a likeness of the great "rough rider," and also many jungle animals.

Collectors who specialize in baby dolls will enjoy the carved wooden babies of Schoenhut which were so popular in the early 1920s. There are many little girl and boy dolls of the "teens and twenties" of this century.

The accompanying photographic print by Joseph of St. Petersburg, shows dolls which belong to Frances Merritt Bowdey (Mrs. John A. Bowdey). They are typical. The dolls are beautifully and authentically costumed. They represent the period of dolls about 1911-1912.

For further information about Schoenhut dolls see the Coleman book, "Encyclopedia of Dolls."

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Porcelain Pitcher, 4", embossed leaves & flowers, pretty pink & yellow dainty flower decor, \$4.

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6 1/2", HP Nippon, flower wreath, yellow roses, \$2.00.  
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For Sale: Cigarette lighter collection approximately 700 lighters. Some date back to late 1800's up to modern lighters. Also one of a kind hand-made lighters including microscope, glass, bolt, lighters and other odd table and pocket lighters. Call or write — R. Ferraro, 310 Westminster Pl., Lodi, N.J. 478-3659. je1006

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1,000 GUMMED address labels \$1. Free gift included — Rosato, 3438 Newton Ct., Fremont, Calif. 94536 au3042

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PLEASE NOTE: From April ad. p. 120, following items still valuable: Nos. 3 (Webb Brides Basket), 4 (Moser Vases) & 7 (Parlin-Bisque Bonnet Bowl).

1. ENGLISH EPERGNE, green opalescent, 2 lilies with applied rigaree, 2 twisted crystal arms w. hanging baskets, 10" center bowl, overall 22" l. Pictured on cover of Lagerberg's "British Glass" \$165.
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4. MIDWESTERN AMBERINA Celery Tray, "Pineapple & Fan" pat. by Higbee. Sawtooth rim. Unusual. \$55.
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9. DOLLS: 21" bisq. hd. A.M. Ger. shldr.-hd. on kid body, bisq. hds. Slip. brn. eyes, molded eyebrows, new wig, beaut. face & coloring, wine velvet dress \$70; 16" baby girl, bisq. hd. 12" circum. mkd. "ABC" (Alt. Beck. & Gottschalek), slip. blue eyes, blonde wig, compo. body w. curved legs, adorable face, orig. clothes, \$95.00.
10. SGD. FRENCH BRONZE & MARBLE GARNITURE, clock & 2 covered urns. Excell. detail on girl figurine. Sgd. "F. Moreau," also inscribed "La Fontaine, Aux Mesanges Medal 'd Or.'" Photo available. Set \$400. jec

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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### CORINNE MORGAN

PART I

By JIM WALSH



**VIVACIOUS CONTRALTO**—This photo of Corinne Morgan is reprinted from the English edition of the Edison Phonographic Monthly for September, 1907. She was then 32.

#### WILLIAM H. WARD

2110 Elm Ave. Rapid City, S. Dak. 57701

MARIE MICHALOWA, Soprano, in Russian. "Let Joy Abide," Baialaika accompaniment. Recorded in St. Petersburg; Victor Red Seal 61181. 10" single side w/crown imprint in matrix. Very good playing condition, \$100 minimum.

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HOT RECORD SOCIETY ORIGINALS: 2 12" doubles, 2001 & 2003. BECHET-SPANIER BIG FOUR. Fine condition, each record \$20 minimum.

Columbia, 35686, Boyce Brown (Brother Mat-thew), Mares, Suncon, Pecora. "Maple Leaf Rag," in fine condition. Flip has objectional flaw last 1/2". 35880, same personnel, fine condition, \$20 & \$30 respectively.

Decca Album 144. 6 records "New Orleans Jazz." Fine condition, \$36 minimum.

Columbia Album C-40, "Comes Jazz," 4 records, fine condition, \$25 minimum.

Columbia Album C-43, Frank Teschemacher, 4 records, but only 3 are in playable condition, and they are almost like new. Price open.

Columbia Album C-29, Belderbecke. Fine condition. Price open.

Hot Record Society Album, "Belderbecke and the Wolverines, 5 records, good to very good. Price open.

Columbia Album C-82, Boswell Sisters, 4 records, fine condition, \$25 minimum.

Victor Album P-56, "Chamber Music Society Lower Basin St.," 3 records, fine condition, \$20 minimum.

Decca Vol. 2, "Gems of Jazz." Price open.

Decca Album 17-5, Vincente Gomez, guitar. 3 records, fine condition, \$18 minimum.

Columbia Album C-34, "Jerome Kern," Al Goodman Orch. 4 records, fine, \$20 min.

25 STANDARD RECORDS skipping from No. A9 thru A953. Include 2 "Uncle Josh," a possible Harry Lauder, Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Arthur Collins, Byron Harlan, Frank Stanley, Carroll Clark, Arthur Clough, Henry Burr. At least 4 records have 2c or 4c royalty stamps affixed. Willing to correspond. All letters answered. Money back guarantee. jlyp

#### 1. Bookbinders With Musical Names

Sixty-some years ago, the late Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley went frequently to Camden, N.J., where they recorded solos and contralto and baritone duets for the Victor Talking Machine Company.

On their way to the recording studios they must have passed a building mostly occupied by the "steam printing" plant of the West Jersey Press, but it displayed a sign in a ground floor window that probably made them smile or even laugh. The sign said:

"MORGAN & STANLEY

Bookbinders

BLANK BOOK MAKERS"

I can imagine Frank Stanley looking at that sign, chuckling, and saying: "Well, Corinne, it looks like we're in business!"

This duplication of names was rather a remarkable coincidence. It would have been an even more striking one if the bookbinders had possessed the same legal names as the singers, who were really Corinne Morgan Welsh and William Stanley Grinstead.

As I write, I am possibly the only person now living who recalls that

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there once was a Camden printing firm of Morgan and Stanley within a block or so of the Victor plant. Frank Stanley has been dead more than 60 years. He died December 12, 1910; and Miss Morgan has been gone for about a quarter of a century.

The grimy structure in which the bookbinding firm had quarters was demolished in the spring of 1913, after Victor had bought an entire block of buildings, torn them down and used the space for an addition to its cabinet manufacturing facilities. There may be a few ancient residents of Camden who remember that Morgan & Stan-

## HELP!

### VOD-VIL QUARTETS:

#### Records & Illustrated Sheets

I'm writing a discography and short biography of the quartets that predated the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America—started in 1938.

Need info on the following groups in form of newspaper clippings, records, sheets, music, etc.: Aeolian, American, A&P Gypsies, Amphion, Apollo, Aristocrats, Avon Comedy Four, Blue Dandies, Binghamton Kiwanis Quartet, Broadway, Brunswick, Cameo Male Quartet, Chicago Glee Club Quartet, College Four, Clover Quartet, Columbia Stellar, Critterion, Deep River Boys, Diplomats, Edison Quartet, Cities Service Quartet, Elm City Four, Empire Staters, Eton Boys, Harmonizers, Haydn, Heidelberg, Imperial, Invincible, Knickerbocker, Metropolitans, Merry-makers.

National Male Quartet, National Music Lovers Stellar Quartet, Orpheus, Peerless, Eton Boys, Premier, Quixy Four, Revelers, Shannon, Southern, Sportsmen, Sterling, Universal, Church City Four, That Quartette, Stanford Four, Electric City, The Big Four.

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**DUET PARTNER**—James F. Harrison who today is better remembered under his real name of Frederick J. Wheeler, sang duets with Corinne Morgan for Zon-o-phone, but apparently not for any other company.

ley was a firm of bookbinders, but there surely can be very few.

(Another amusing coincidence involving names occurred in a 1916 issue of *The Voice of the Victor*. A man living in Brooklyn, N.Y., advertised he had some money he would like to invest in a Victrola shop. His name was Dudley and he lived on McDonough Street. Such a combination automatically brings memories of the duet team of "Dudley and Macdonough"—S. H. Dudley and Harry Macdonough, baritone and lead tenor of the Haydn Quartet, whose real names were Sam H. Rous and John Scantlebury Macdonald.)

Now, having started with a smile, let's consider as much as we can of the life and recording career of the

once famous contralto, Corinne Morgan.

## II. Writing A Biography

Occasionally I write about an artist of whom I know little in the hope that my efforts will bring further information from some unexpected source. That is the procedure I am following with this sketch of Corinne Morgan. I am well acquainted with the details of the recording career of this dynamic and effervescent contralto who sometimes indulged in a cyclonic, or volcanic, burst of temperament, but of the woman herself I don't have a great deal of reliable information.

I find myself thinking that the anonymous person who wrote the biographical sketches in the "Our Artists" department in the English edition of the Edison Phonograph Monthly in the early 1900's relied too much on his imagination for details.

A good example is the article concerning Corinne Morgan in the issue for September 1907 which I quote now. (I have omitted the list of the contralto's Edison cylinders since I intend to publish as nearly a complete list of her records as I can compile at the conclusion of this installment.)

"The subject of our biography, Miss Corinne (Sic!) Morgan, is one of the most popular contraltos now before the public.

"As a little girl, Miss Morgan showed a decided taste for music. Discarding her doll—and other delights of infancy—she would beg her mamma to let her listen to the piano, while even the street organ delighted her beyond measure. As she grew older a better class of music claimed her childish attention, and she became an ardent admirer of the splendid orchestral societies which are so important a feature in the musical life of the United States.

"In due course she developed a voice of such extraordinarily fine quality that her relations and friends were unanimous in declaring that so great a gift should be cultivated to the utmost. After some pressure the little girl's parents agreed to the proposition, and after a while she was handed over to the care of a voice-producer.

"After studying assiduously for some months Miss Morgan had made such progress that she was permitted to make a public debut, and shortly after this

interesting and successful event she joined the ranks of singers.

"Her voice is a contralto of exceedingly fine quality, while the weight which she gets on her low notes is something out of the common. In fact, the voice is good right through, the upper notes being in every way the equal of the lower ones.

"Miss Morgan's motto in artistic matters is 'thoroughness.' She never dreams of singing a song in public till she has thoroughly mastered all its details, and even then she does not care to face an audience till she has submitted her rendering to the judgment of some reliable critic. It is artists such as Miss Morgan who uphold the honor of their profession, and who are a credit to artistic America.

"Like most singers, Miss Morgan has her favorite songs, and, happily for those who possess an Edison Phonograph, she has sung them for the benefit of her countless admirers. Amongst these are 'Happy Days' and 'Whisper And I Shall Hear,' both of which are furnished with a violin obbligato. The list also includes a number of charming duets which she sings with Mr. Stanley Chief amongst these are 'By the Old Oak Tree,' 'In the Starlight,' 'Juanita,' an old-time favorite; and 'Just My Style.' The gifted pair also sing 'Listen to the Mocking Bird,' 'Nobody's Looking But the Owl and the Moon,' 'O Tell Us, Merry Birds,' 'O That We Two Were Maying' and 'Sweet Maid Divine.' . . ."

It is logical that when it was discovered Corinne Morgan had a good voice admiring friends and relatives insisted it should be cultivated and her parents agreed. That she was "handed over to the care of a voice-producer" was a safe guess since she must have had music lessons.

Naturally, she studied assiduously, made her debut, and became a singer but would not sing in public until she had mastered a song and tried it out on a reliable critic. She was a singer predominantly of concert and classical training.

Most of her records were intended for buyers of popular music. I have wondered if this is why that gifted contralto sang under an assumed name.

## III. Recording Career Begins

Of Corinne Morgan's parents I know nothing, but it appears likely that they were well-to-do, to be able to give their daughter a musical education and launch her upon a successful career. It also seems probable that her mother's maiden name was Mor-

(Continued on page 40)



**PANTOMIMING "PAGLIACCI"**—"Grace Nelson," a contralto who took Miss Morgan's place for a short time as Frank C. Stanley's duet partner, is shown here with Umberto Sorrentino, impersonating characters from the opera, "Pagliacci," during a Victrola demonstration in Wanamaker's Auditorium, New York City. Miss Nelson's real name was Grace Hornby.

## CORINNE MORGAN

(Continued from preceding page)

gan, to account for her full name of Corinne Morgan Welsh. Both Morgan and Welsh are Welsh names, so this would point to the singer's being of predominantly Welsh extraction—an assumption that seems confirmed by her dark hair and, judging by her pictures, equally dark eyes.

I know nothing of Miss Morgan's life until the year 1902, when she became the duet partner of Frank Stanley and also began making solo records. Their association probably resulted from her singing with Stanley in a New York church. She also sang in church with John Young ("Harry Anthony"), who was to begin making records about the same time.

When her recording career began, Corinne Morgan was 27. According to Stanley's widow, Corinne then was living in a New York apartment with her sister, whose name I don't know.

And now, for a special reason, I shall do something that I never have done before—publish a list of an artist's recordings before completing the biographical sketch concerning him or her. Because of illness I have fallen behind with my HOBBIES schedule, and desperately need to get copy to the printer.

Thus, it is fortunate that some time ago I compiled as nearly complete a list as I could put together of Corinne Morgan's discs and cylinders, although it omits some brands, such as Leeds and Imperial, for which I lack catalogs. However, it is relatively comprehensive and should interest the contralto's many admirers, who I believe will be willing to wait for the continuation of the biographical notes.

I also have included one solo by "Grace Nelson", whose real name was Grace Hornby, and the duet records she made with Frank C. Stanley, when she briefly succeeded Miss Morgan as Stanley's singing partner. By a fortunate circumstance, I am able to reprint probably the only photos of the rather mysterious Miss Hornby ever to appear in a talking machine publication.

These photos are copied from the February, 1913, Voice of the Victor, and show her and a man, Umberto Sorrentino, impersonating Nedda and Canio in "Pagliacci." They pantomimed the action of the opera in Wanamaker's Auditorium in New York City, while a concealed Victrola discoursed the music.

Next month I shall begin a detailed account of Corinne Morgan's recording career.

## Records by Corinne Morgan

M-H after the title indicates a duet by Miss Morgan and James F. Harrison; M-Mac, a duet with Harry Macdonough; M-S, a duet with Frank C. Stanley, and M-Stc, a duet with Elise Stevenson; M-D'A denotes a solo by Miss Morgan with violin obbligato by Charles D'Almaine.

TWO-MINUTE EDISON CYLINDERS  
(1902-05)

- 8223 Whisper and I Shall Hear.
- 8224 For All Eternity.
- 8256 O That We Two Were Maying (M-S).
- 8265 Oh, Tell Us Merry Birds (M-S).
- 8390 When Our Lips in Kisses Met (M-S).
- 8419 In the Starlight (M-S).
- 8435 'Deed I Do (M-S).
- 8469 It's a Lovely Day for a Walk (M-S).
- 8494 Though It Was Within This Hour We Met (M-S).
- 8499 Happy Days.
- 8543 Once in a While.
- 8577 Nobody's Looking But the Owl and the Moon (M-S).
- 8715 Listen to the Mocking Bird (M-S).
- 8727 My Kangaroo (M-S).
- 8751 Without Your Love, Ah, Let Me Die.
- 8761 Doan You Cry, My Honey (M-S).
- 8776 How Can I Leave Thee? (M-S).
- 8876 By the Old Oak Tree (M-S).
- 8916 Juanita (M-S).
- 8997 Just My Style (M-S).
- 9018 Sweet Maid Divine (M-S).

## EDISON MIXED SEXTET

- 8260 Tell Me, Pretty Maiden.

## MENDELSSOHN MIXED QUARTET

- 8321 Good Night, Good Night, Beloved.
- 8356 Sweet and Low.
- 8422 Refuge.
- 8427 Lord's Prayer and Gloria Patri.
- 8461 Onward, Christian Soldiers.
- 8496 Home, Sweet Home.
- 8701 Evening Chimes.
- 8834 What Shall the Harvest Be?

## METROPOLITAN MIXED TRIO

- 8503 Attila—Praise Ye.

TWO-MINUTE BUSY BEE CYLINDERS  
(1904-05)

- 179 What Color Eyes Do You Love (M-S).
- 272 Sweet Maid Divine (M-S).

COLUMBIA 10-INCH RECORDS  
(1902-06)

(Numbers in parenthesis indicate XP cylinders of same title)

- \* 816 When We Are Married (M-S).
- \* 1134 (32119) Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-S).
- \* 1261 (32129) 'Deed I Do (M-S).
- ± 1461 (32209) It's a Lovely Day for a Walk (M-S).
- 1460 (31611) Reuben and Cynthia (M-S).
- 1811 (32520) Cupid Has Found My Heart.
- 1832 (32532) Nobody's Looking But the Owl and the Moon (M-S).
- 1833 (32531) Listen to the Mocking Bird (M-S).
- (32594) What Color Eyes Do You Love? (M-S).
- (32595) Has Your Mother Any More Like You? (M-S).
- 3226 (32765) Sweet Maid Divine (M-S).
- 3271 Pantana—Just My Style (M-S).
- 3359 So Long, Mary (with Chorus).
- 3379 (32973) The Umpire—Cross Your Heart (M-S).
- 3471 (32935) Mexicana—I Was Just Supposing (M-S).
- 3412 (32955) The Moon Has His Eyes On You (M-S).
- 3432 Last Night.
- 3437 (32956) The Tale of a Stroll (M-S).
- 3466 Homeward.

All Columbia records with numbers preceded by \* could be had in both seven and 10-inch sizes. The one preceded by ± was available only in seven-inch. The remaining discs were made in 10-inch only.

## COLUMBIA DOUBLE-FACED 10-INCH RECORDS

(Coupled, beginning in 1908, from single-faced discs)

- A270 'Deed I Do (M-S). Reverse: Ground Hog Day at Punkin Center (Cal Stewart).
- A271 Cross Your Heart (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh and the Fire Department (Stewart).
- A276 Moon Has His Eyes On You (M-S). Reverse: Last Day of School at Punkin Center (Stewart).
- A278 Listen to the Mocking Bird (M-S). Reverse: Address by the Late President McKinley at the Pan-American Exposition.

- A325 Last Night. Reverse: Maryland! My Maryland (George Alexander).
- A341 So Long, Mary (with Chorus). Reverse: Mona (Henry Burr).
- A393 Sweet Maid Divine (M-S). Reverse: No Wedding Bells for Me (Bob Roberts).
- A394 Nobody's Looking But the Owl and the Moon (M-S). Reverse: Hickory Bill (Len Spencer).
- A395 Just My Style (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh at the White House (Stewart).
- A396 When We Are Married (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh's Courtship (Stewart).
- A400 Tale of a Stroll (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh's New Year's Pledge (Stewart).
- A405 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh's Huskin' Bee Dance (Stewart).
- A417 Mexicana—I Was Just Supposing (M-S). Reverse: Uncle Josh's Experience on a Sweet Car (Stewart).
- A573 Reuben and Cynthia (M-S). Reverse: Home, Sweet Home (Alexander).
- A778 Moon Has His Eyes On You (M-S). Reverse: Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet (Arthur Clough).

ZON-O-PHONE NINE-INCH RECORDS  
(1902-04)

- 6033 Bonnie, Sweet Bessie.
- 6036 Dixie.
- 6048 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-H).
- 6064 Home, Sweet Home.
- 6121 Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me.
- 6146 Just For Tonight (M-H).

ZON-O-PHONE 10-INCH RECORDS  
(1904-05)

- 42 Home, Sweet Home.
- 50 Old Folks at Home.
- 69 In the Starlight (M-H).
- 96 For All Eternity.
- 144 Just My Style (M-H).
- 173 There's Nothing New to Say (M-H).
- 233 Life's Dream is O'er (M-H).
- 297 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-H).
- 318 I Will Magnify Thee, Oh Lord (M-H).
- 323 Still as the Night (M-H).

ZON-O-PHONE 10-INCH  
DOUBLE-FACED RECORDS

(coupled in 1903-09 from previous single-faced discs)

- 5142 I Will Magnify Thee, O Lord (M-H). Reverse: Life's Dream is O'er. Alice C. Elise Stevenson and Frank C. Stanley.
- 5409 Just My Style (M-H). Reverse: There's Nothing New to Say (M-H).
- 5410 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-H). Reverse: Calm as the Night (M-H).

## SINGLE-FACED 10-INCH VICTOR RECORDS (1903-08)

(A number in parentheses indicates a 12-inch version of the same disc.)

- 1360 Il Trovatore—Home to Our Mountains (M-Mac).
- 2533 Oh, That We Two Were Maying (M-S).
- 2555 'Deed I Do (M-S).
- 2569 It's a Lovely Day for a Walk (M-S).
- 2578 (31473) St. Paul—But the Lord is Mindful of His Own.
- 2655 Honey.
- 2665 Winsome Winnie—I Love Only You.
- 2721 (31203) Babes in Toyland—Toyland (with Haydn Quartet).
- 2751 (31211) In Dreamland.
- 2756 (31213) Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me.
- 2808 (31231) Old Folks at Home.
- 2831 (31237) Home, Sweet Home.
- 2845 (31232) Happy Days (M-D'A).
- 2846 Bonnie Sweet Bessie (M-D'A).
- 2909 Cupid Has Found My Heart—Yankee Consul.
- (31270) Faust—Flower Song.
- 2980 (31285) Bohemian Girl—I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls.
- 2981 O Hush-a-Bye, Baby (M-D'A).
- 4039 Annie Laurie (M-D'A).
- 4040 (31296) My Old Kentucky Home.
- 4080 (31316) Mocking Bird (M-S).
- 4095 Love's Old Sweet Song.
- 4096 (31313) Sing Me to Sleep (M-D'A).
- 4097 Beyond (M-D'A).
- 4171 Pantana—The Farewell Waltz (M-S).
- 4284 (31338) In Sweet Killarney (M-D'A).

- 4321 (31374) Ben Bolt (M-D'A).  
 (31375) Repentance (M-D'A).  
 (31376) Star of Love (M-D'A).  
 4322 Fantana—Just My Style (M-S).  
 4396 Dearie (with Haydn Quartet).  
 4397 In Dear Old Grandma's Days (with Haydn Quartet).  
 4423 When You and I Were Young, Maggie (M-S).  
 4493 (31398) Erminie—Lullaby.  
 (31456) Messiah—He Was Despised.  
 (31457) The Garden of Sleep.  
 4609 What Would You Say, Dear?  
 4682 In the Gloaming.  
 4696 The Moon Has His Eyes On You (M-S) (8-inch).  
 4708 Fantana—Just My Style (M-S) (8-inch).  
 4740 By the Light of the Honeymoon (M-S) (8-inch).  
 4751 Songs My Mother Used to Sing (M-Mac).  
 4764 We Parted as the Sun Went Down (M-S).  
 4835 Flee As a Bird.  
 4964 O Promise Me (8-inch).  
 4976 Forever and Forever.  
 4984 The Only One.  
 4985 She Wandered Down the Mountain Side.  
 (31468) Irish Folk Song.  
 (31472) Elijah—O Rest in the Lord.  
 (31526) The Moon Has His Eyes On You (M-S).  
 (31534) Songs My Mother Used to Sing (M-Mac).  
 (31541) Samson—Return, O God of Hosts.  
 (31554) Messiah—He Shall Feed His Flock.  
 (31555) Il Trovatore—Home to Our Mountains (M-Mac).  
 (31584) Lullaby (Pond).  
 (31629) Maritana—Holy Mother, Guide His Footsteps (M-Ste).  
 5263 Homeward.  
 5328 Bohemian Girl—Bliss Forever Past.  
 5357 Bid Me Goodbye (Tosti).  
 5381 Tyrolean—The Nightingale's Song.  
 5414 Samson and Delilah—My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice.  
 5415 In Old Madrid.

#### VICTOR RECORDS BY LYRIC QUARTET

- 120 My Faith Looks Up to Thee.  
 4796 Sweet and Low.  
 5198 The Kerry Dance.  
 5199 Rock of Ages.  
 51524 Incline Thine Ear to Me.  
 51669 Good Night, Beloved.  
 51589 Gloria From Mozart's Twelfth Mass.  
 51664 The Radiant Morn.

#### TEN-INCH DOUBLE-FACED VICTOR RECORDS

- (Coupled, 1908 through 1910, from single-faced discs)  
 16119 Tyrolean—Nightingale's Song.  
 Reverse: Climbing the Ladder of Love (Stevenson-Macdonough).  
 16148 Erminie—Lullaby. Reverse: Dear Heart (Elise Stevenson).  
 16185 Fantana—Just My Style (M-S).  
 Reverse: I Was a Hero, Too (Billy Murray).  
 16192 Samson and Delilah—My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice. Reverse: Laughing Song from "Manon" (Edith Helena).  
 16195 My Old Kentucky Home. Reverse: Home, Sweet Home (Harry Macdonough).  
 16196 Sing Me to Sleep. Reverse: Oh, Promise Me (Macdonough).  
 16245 Bonnie Sweet Bessie. Reverse: All Through the Night (Macdonough).  
 16388 Annie Laurie. Reverse: Ben Bolt.  
 16389 Old Folks at Home. Reverse: My Old Kentucky Home (Macdonough).  
 16405 In the Gloaming. Reverse: Rock Me to Sleep. Mother (Elizabeth Wheeler).  
 16549 So Long, Mary (with Haydn Qt.).  
 Reverse: Golden Trumpets Schottische (Victor Dance Orchestra).  
 16663 Home, Sweet Home. Reverse: Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming (Peerless Qt.).  
 16660 Love's Old Sweet Song. Reverse: Oh, Dry Those Tears (Arthur Pryor and Pryor's Band).

#### TWELVE-INCH DOUBLE-FACED VICTOR RECORDS

- (Coupled, 1908 through 1910, from single-faced discs)  
 35062 My Old Kentucky Home. Reverse:

- Day Dreams (Macdonough).  
 35086 Faust—Flower Song. Reverse: Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes (Macdonough).  
 35089 Elijah—O Rest in the Lord.  
 Reverse: Messiah—Comfort Ye My People (Macdonough).  
 35117 Messiah—He Shall Feed His Flock.  
 Reverse: Messiah—Every Valley Shall Be Exalted (Macdonough).  
 35118 Trovatore—Home to Our Mountains (M-Mac). Reverse: Huguenots—Benediction of the Poignards (Sousa's Band).  
 35136 Sing Me to Sleep. Reverse: Songs My Mother Used to Sing (M-Mac).  
 35162 Ben Bolt. Reverse: The Old Brigade (Stanley and Macdonough).

#### TEN-INCH EMERSON DOUBLE-FACED RECORD (December, 1921)

- 10464 Just A-Wearyin' for You. Reverse: The Last Rose of Summer (Vivian Holt).

#### TEN-INCH DOUBLE FACED VICTOR RECORDS BY THE LYRIC QUARTET (1908)

- 16038 God is a Spirit. Reverse: Christ Receiveth Sinful Men (Haydn Quartet).  
 16269 Rock of Ages (Buck). Reverse: Calvary (Stanley).

#### TWELVE-INCH DOUBLE-FACED VICTOR RECORD BY THE LYRIC QUARTET (1908)

- 35014 Radiant Morn—Anthem. Reverse: Glory Song (Haydn Quartet).

#### GRACE NELSON (Edison)

- 8858 My Little Canoe.

#### NELSON and STANLEY

- 8814 What Colored Eyes Do You Love?  
 8831 Has Your Mother Any More Like You?  
 9043 Sambo and Dinah

#### VICTOR

- 4653 Sambo and Dinah. ....  
 4688 We'll Wander in the Bright Moonlight. ....  
 4852 Bye, Bye, Ma Honey. ....  
 (To Be Continued)

### HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

reproduction. The bell clangs, whistles toot and the boat pulls away from the levee amid the shouts and laughter of the happy dardies.

"After the singing of 'Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane' and 'Dixie' to a banjo accompaniment, the familiar conversation between the well-known characters of the play ensues and Topsy appears upon the scene and displays her accomplishments as a singer and dancer, banjos also serving as her accompaniment.

"Everybody who has seen *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—and who hasn't?—will thoroughly appreciate this Record."

The following year, Edison Amberol, Record #765 offered the Edison Concert Band in "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*—A Dream Picture," by J. Bodewalt Lampe. This number reappeared about 1916 as by Conway's Band on #17493.

"At Uncle Tom's Cabin Door"—Trot, on #17324, was played by the Victor Military Band. The latter vied with the Edison Concert Band, who recorded "Uncle Tom's Cabin" on #3459 and a #35751.

Blue Amberols, advertised for August, 1912, mentioned #1070, "The Troupe at Pumpkin Center," in which Cal Steward said: "Uncle Josh relates his experience as Uncle Tom, when he becomes leading man with the show troupe."

About 1915, Bransby Williams enacted "The Death of Uncle Tom," #29026, for (English) Columbia.

A decade later, the Duncan Sisters, while portraying the title roles in *Topsy and Eva*, a Broadway success, recorded their songs for Victor.

"Topsy" (Durham-Battle), a fox trot, was conducted by Benny Goodman's orchestra for Victor #26107-A. Count Basie soon rivalled it with Decca's #1770.

From a long-run musical, *Bloomer Girl*, in 1944, two scenes from an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sequence in the play were transcribed by Decca's #DL 8015: "Liza Crossing the Ice" and "Never Was Born," with Toni Hart and Joan McCracken in the leads.

"A Showboat Version with Music of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" was recorded by Audio Drama, LP-3080. It had such stars on the disc as Bill Forrest, Joel Ashley, and Dana Kraus.

Most exciting for collectors of Stowiana, however, was the Music Center Theatre of Lincoln Center's album of *The King and I*, by RCA Victor (Mono LOC-1092, Stereo LSO-1092). It included, for the first time on records, the high spot of the Rodgers and Hammerstein's hit: the imaginative ballet of "The Small House of Uncle Thomas."

\* We wonder if Jim Walsh's letter, page 101 of the June issue of HOBBIES, may help. Jim tells us, among other things about cylinder records, that Edison did not come out with his cylinder playing machine until 1888.

But the story of these efforts to authenticate the voice of Harriet Beecher Stowe on a wax cylinder is an example of the painstaking work spent in authenticating most antiques and collectors' items.

#### IN THE MAIL

Dear Madam:

I've exhausted all personal sources of information on my problem, so I turn to you in the hope that your broader awareness may help to shed some light on the matter.

I have a number of single-faced, 14 inch 60 RPM Victor records. The complete list of my holdings is attached. They are in mint condition and have never been played by me, lacking the proper equipment.

(Continued on page 48)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### CORINNE MORGAN

PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Scant Biographical Data

Perhaps I should be ashamed to admit it, but I am resorting to a lazy man's method of typing this second installment of the series about Corinne Morgan. I am propped up in bed with my 36-year-old Underwood Noiseless portable typewriter on my knees, and an accumulation of notes beside me.

Well, after all why shouldn't I type in bed? Mark Twain did most of his writing garbed in a white nightshirt and with a pillow behind his back. But he used a pen, and I am enlisting the services of the ancient little old typewriter that has been a faithful companion to me for all these years.

Last month I gave a list of Miss Morgan's records, which it might be a good idea to keep handy for reference. I also quoted a ludicrous purported biographical sketch of her that appeared in the English edition of the *Edison Phonograph Monthly*. Now I think I shall tell as much more as I can concerning this singer before proceeding to a discussion of her recording career.

In rounding up my reference materials I came across a letter from Keith Moyer of Everett, Wash., which

is undated but was written before I left Johnson City, Tenn., for Vinton, Va., in 1943. That places the age of the letter as 28 years or so, but it is interesting to note that Mr. Moyer, a veteran HOBBIES reader, still lives at the same address. Midway of his letter, he said:

"I am particularly interested in getting the birth year of Corinne Morgan Welsh, who married C. W. Dumont of the American Law Book Company in 1924. I assume she is Corinne Morgan of old Victor record fame, as I have seen her name listed both ways, and I know that Corinne Welsh was a leading contralto around 1906. They must be the same person."

And of course they were the same person. Most church and concert singers of the 1890's and early 1900's preferred not to make records under their legal names. Miss Welsh simply used her two given names for phonograph work.

Keith Moyer's letter made stronger a desire I already had to write about Corinne Morgan whenever I could obtain sufficient information to undertake the task. But gathering material has proved a vexingly slow process during the virtual generation that has passed since he wrote to me. I still don't know the exact date of the contralto's birth, or when, and where she died.

When I met the late Harvey Hinder-

myer at John Bieling's home at Hempstead, N.Y., in September, 1947, he laughingly referred to the traditionally explosive nature of the colorful singer's temper and said she had been dead "two or three years." He expressed belief that she died somewhere in the Middle West, perhaps in Cincinnati. But I have not been able to obtain more specific information.

As to Miss Morgan's birth date, I have learned that she was born either in 1875 or 1874, so she must have been around 70 years of age at her death, if Hindermyer's statement was approximately correct. My old friend, Milford H. Fargo, of Rochester, N.Y., who is the leading authority on Ada Jones and her recordings, had a

## HELP!

### VOD-VIL QUARTETS:

#### Records & Illustrated Sheets

I'm writing a discography and short biography of the quartets that predated the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America—started in 1938.

Need info on the following groups in form of newspaper clippings, records, sheets, music, etc.: Apollo, American, A&P Gypsies, Amphion, Apollo, Aristocrats, Avon Comedy Four, Blue Dandies, Binghamton Kiwanis Quartet, Broadway, Brunswick, Cameo Male Quartet, Chicago Glee Club Quartet, College Four, Clover Quartet, Columbia Stellar, Criterion, Deep River Boys, Diplomats, Edison Quartet, Cities Service Quartet, Elm City Four, Empire Staters, Eton Boys, Harmonizers, Haydn, Heidelberg, Imperial, Invincible, Knickerbocker, Metropolitan, Merry-makers.

National Male Quartet, National Music Lovers Stellar Quartet, Orpheus, Peerless, Eton Boys, Premier, Quixy Four, Revelers, Shannon, Southern, Sportsmen, Sterling, Universal, Church City Four, That Quartette, Stanford Four, Electric City, The Big Four.

DON DONAHUE

65 Mountain Ave.

Cedar Knolls, N.J. 07927

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RESEARCH HELPER. Keith Moyer of Everett, Wash., provided Jim Walsh with information about Corinne Morgan. This snapshot of Mr. Moyer was taken on a street in Vancouver, British Columbia.

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## SACRED NUMBERS

NUMBER

SIZE

31770 Messiah—Hallelujah Chorus (with Sousa's Band; Victor Chorus) 12

The "Messiah" continues to endure wherever the English-speaking race has gained a foothold, and is now regarded as almost a sacred service.

Several numbers from this noble oratorio are presented, including the tremendous Hallelujah Chorus, perhaps the grandest and most sublime composition of its kind. It is splendidly given by the carefully chosen chorus which the Victor has brought together. A noble accompaniment is furnished by Sousa's Band, and the record deserves to rank with the most remarkable of the Victor's productions.



PERCY HEMUS

This Victor singer has been warmly greeted by his beautiful voice and inspired accompaniment much admired. The splendid records he has given the Victor have achieved a great artistic success.

4818 Nearer My God to Thee Richard José 10  
109 Nearer My God to Thee Haydn Quartet 10

4755 Ninety and Nine, The Richard José 10  
This beautiful hymn is perhaps the favorite among the hundreds of Mr. Sankey's compositions.

The number is beautifully sung by Mr. José, with a soft accompaniment by a quartet of strings.

2725 O Come All Ye Faithful—Adeste Fideles (with organ) José 10

31386 One Sweetly Solemn Thought (Ambrose) Stanley 12

2373 Onward Christian Soldiers (Sullivan) Trinity Choir 10

2724 O Paradise (J. Barnby) (with organ) Richard José 10

108 Palms, The Faure; Macdonough 10  
Macdonough 12

31601 Palms, The (Faure) Macdonough 12  
Splendid records of this noble sacred song; Mr. Macdonough's rendition being beyond criticism, while the accompaniment is unusually effective. Both verses are given on the twelve-inch.

4993 Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour (Doane) Stanley-Macdonough 10  
4913 Praise Ye (Music from "Atila") (Verdi) Schubert Trio 10

4462 Rescue the Perishing (Doane) Werrenrath 10  
717 Rock of Ages (Haatings) Trinity Choir 10

4782 Rock of Ages (with organ) Richard José 10  
4271 Safe in the Arms of Jesus Trinity Choir 10

4470 Shall We Meet Beyond the River (Rice) Stanley-Macdonough 10

2686 Softly Now the Light of Day Richard José 10  
1082 Some Time We'll Understand (McGranahan) Trinity Choir 10

723 Stand Up for Jesus Webb, Trinity Choir 10  
2669 Sun of My Soul Richard José 10

5823 Teach Me to Pray (Jewett) Macdonough 10

The new sacred song just published by M. Witmark & Sons, who have been devoting much attention of late to their issues of high class songs and other serious compositions.

4654 Tell Mother I'll Be There Haydn Quartet 10  
4516 Tho' Your Sins be as Scarlet (Doane) Stanley-Macdonough 10

4689 When the Roll is Called up Yonder (Black) Haydn Quartet 10  
1315 Where Is My Boy To Night (Lowry) Haydn Quartet 10



MORGAN

**FASHIONABLE CHAPEAU.** A page from the May, 1911, Victor record catalog, with a thumbnail picture of Corinne Morgan. The contralto seems to be wearing headgear of the "Bird on Nellie's Hat" type that was so popular more than 60 years ago.

search made for me by the New York State Library at Albany.

The Library's records show that on June 1, 1915, Corinne Morgan Welsh was living in New York City at 226 Central Park West. (Many years later, when I met and talked with the great violinist, Mischa Elman, in the early 1960's, his address was 100 Central Park West.) Corinne was described as "head of family, white, female, 40 years of age, born in the United States, citizen, singer. No other persons are listed as being in her household."

Thus it follows that if the singer was 40 in June, 1915, she must have been born in 1875 or 1874.

Over the years I have made intermittent efforts to find out more about Miss Morgan, but not with a great deal of success. On August 15, 1957, I had a letter from Philip L. Miller of

the Music Division of the New York Public Library in reply to one I had written to him, asking for any information he could give.

I shall quote from it, but preface the quotation with a speculation that the "Jimmy Price" he refers to is the James Price, who was mentioned as a member of the Victor Male Chorus in my article, "A Matter of Identification", published in HOBBIES for July, 1970. My friend Phil Miller wrote:

"I have held up your question on Corinne Morgan in hopes I could get more information for you. I called Elsie Baker, who said she had not known her personally, then Jimmy Price, to whom the name Corinne Morgan meant nothing.

"At this time I mentioned (what I did not know before you wrote me) that she was also known as Welsh. Of course he remembered Corinne Welsh! She used to sing in a quartet with John Young.

"John Young, it seems, is still around—over 90 and Price said he'd try to find him. What was last week and I still hope to hear . . . We have a folder of clip-

pings, pictures, etc., but all it tells is that she was well known, sang with Damrosch, etc., and studied abroad with Mrs. Carl Alves."

Apparently Mr. Price was not able to find John Young, who was not really over 90 at the time, for he wrote me in 1950 that he was then in his 80th year. Too, I have a belief that he died before 1957, but have no positive evidence. At any rate, I heard no more from Mr. Miller on the subject.

Phil's letter reminded me, however, that, years before, John Young's duet partner, Frederick Wheeler, had written to me that although he had made records with Corinne Welsh for Zonophone, Mr. Young knew her better than he did because Mr. Young had sung regularly in church with her. I wrote to Young, but in answering my letter he omitted any reference to my questions about the contralto. It was from Mr. Wheeler that I learned her full name was Corinne Morgan Welsh.

## II. Help From Keith Moyer

During recent months I have corresponded with Keith Moyer concerning other matters. In the course of our writing I recalled the letter he wrote to me in 1942 about Corinne Morgan, and asked if he had obtained any additional information.

On December 12, he replied, quoting some clippings he had saved from 1922 and 1923 issues of *Musical America*. A 1922 excerpt said:

"Corinne Morgan Welsh, who has appeared throughout the country in concert and as one of the principal soloists on the transcontinental tour of the New York Symphony, Walter Damrosch, conductor, is to be heard this season in concert and oratorio. She will sing under the management of Charles Pearson, who entered the managerial field last spring to direct the tour of Mme. Olive Fremstad."

The 1923 clipping dealt with the singer's marriage and incidentally revealed that it took place in 1923, rather than in 1924, as Mr. Moyer had written in his earlier letter. The clipping said:

"Corinne Welsh, church and concert contralto, was married to Charles Walter Dumont in the West Park Presbyterian Church on December 22. Mrs. Dumont, who studied singing both in this country and in Europe, was for a number of years contralto at the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas in New York. She has toured with the New York Symphony and has appeared as soloist at the Maine Festivals and in numerous recitals. After a honeymoon in California and Hawaii, Mr. and Mrs. Dumont will make their home in New York."

A year or so ago, in one of my tries at obtaining information about Corinne Morgan, I wrote to the American Law Book Company, of which her husband had been an official, and asked if he was still living or if the Company had any information concerning the time and place of her death. To my disappointment, I received no answer.

*Musical America's* statement that the couple would make their home in New York appears to contradict Harvey Hindermeyer's belief that Mrs. Dumont was living in the Middle West when she died. Of course, however, it may be that her husband, in the development of his business, was transferred from New York to Ohio



A CYLINDRICAL TRIO. Jim Walsh recently came across this picture which he had forgotten existed, and decided that since Corinne Morgan was a popular maker of cylinder records it would be suitable to illustrate this article. The snapshot was taken in South Boston, Va., more than 20 years ago and shows Nat Terry and Jim Walsh, who apparently are trying to "play" their cylinders as musical instruments, and Albert Via, Jr., who seems to be using his as a sea-shell. The records belonged to Mr. Terry.

or some Western State. The New York State Library birth record indicates she was 49 or 50 at the time of her marriage.

### III. Alan Grinsted's Recollections

One of the most interesting things concerning Corinne Morgan and her marriage was told me quite incidentally by a naval commander, Lt. Alan D. Grinsted, when he and his wife, Betty, and their two children stopped to see me as they were passing through Roanoke, Va., 15 years, or more, ago.

Alan, who is now retired and living in Pensacola, Fla., was the youngest son of William Stanley Grinsted, the famous basso known on records as "Frank C. Stanley". It was Frank Stanley who organized the Peerless Quartet and who was Miss Morgan's duet partner for several years.

Lt. Grinsted wasn't sure of the year, but the evidence suggests it was in 1923, that he, as a teen-aged boy, had reason to call at the office of a New York music publishing firm, or some other business house. (I've forgotten the exact details.) When he said his name was Grinsted, a vivacious, middle-aged woman of attractive appearance turned to him and asked if he were Stanley Grinsted's son.

Upon being told he was, she identified herself as Corinne Welsh, recalled her recording associations with his father, and said that she gave up making records after Frank Stanley died, "because I just didn't have the heart to go on."

Then she revealed that she was soon to be married. It looks as if she had her share of the average musician's superstitions for she said that she recently had been to a fortune teller, who told her she was to meet a wealthy, distinguished looking man with white hair, and would marry him.

Sure enough, within a few weeks after the fortune teller did her sooth-saying, Corinne met Charles Walter

Dumont. They immediately were attracted to each other, and were engaged then. She showed Alan Grinsted a snapshot of her future husband. He was a distinguished looking man with white hair.

The naval commander-to-be never again saw Miss Welsh, but, as we know, she and Dumont were married in December, 1923. I am not sure, by the way, that she used Dumont's name in the conversation, but I do recall clearly that my friend told me about her showing him the photograph.

Miss Morgan was wrong in saying she gave up recording after Frank Stanley's death. Her phonograph career came to a close some two years before he died.

As far as I know, she sang for no more records until Emerson issued one solo by her late in 1921, but I admit the possibility she may have made other Emersons that have not come to my attention. And she also may have recorded for Rex, Opera-phone, and other obscure brands for which I have no catalogs. That, however, I think is hardly likely.

I just have found a note from Milford Fargo which I previously had overlooked, saying the Manhattan and Bronx City Directory for 1916 gave the home address of Corinne Welsh as 225 Central Park West, not 226, as the New York State Library had it.

The note also shows that the mysterious contralto, Mrs. A. Stewart Holt, who made so many Columbia records, and about whom I wish I knew enough to write for HOBBIES, was living in 1913 at 1962 Fulton Street, Brooklyn. She was a widow, as she had been at the start of her recording career.

The late Frank Dorian, a veteran Columbia official whom I often have quoted told me Mrs. Holt—sometimes known as Marie L. Holt—gave up

phonograph work when she remarried about 1914 or soon thereafter.

And now I have found another note, written to me June 14, 1946, by Barbara F. Turner, secretary of the Brick Presbyterian Church at Park Avenue and 91st Street, New York. Mrs. J. W. Hulihan, known on Victor records as the beloved soprano, Olive Kline, had written me she believed that Corinne Morgan had sung at some time in the Brick Church, and I wrote to ask what the Church records said. Miss Turner replied:

"Corinne Welsh (Mrs. C. W. Dumont), contralto, is not a soloist at the Brick Church, and I understand never has sung in this Church.

"Mrs. Hulihan (Olive Kline), however, has sung in the Brick Church. It is possible that Mrs. Hulihan has confused the name of Corinne Welsh with that of our soprano soloist, Corleen Wells.

"I regret that I cannot give you any assistance in locating Corinne Welsh."

If Corinne Morgan died in New York, it is strange that *Variety* did not publish an obituary notice and that *The New York Times* informed me its files held nothing concerning her. Had her death occurred in some other part of the country it would have been much easier for it to have escaped the attention of metropolitan periodicals.

### IV. Edison Cylinders

I have little doubt that Miss Morgan owed the start of her recording career to being associated with Frank C. Stanley in church singing. He already was established by 1898 in the phonograph world as a singer of bass and baritone solos.

The Edison record catalog for that year contained 12 cylinders by him, all patriotic songs, numbered from 5000 to 5011. In addition, he had won a contest in banjo playing and been acclaimed the best banjoist in New Jersey, with the result that, beginning in 1899, he played banjo accompaniments for eight Negro songs by Arthur Collins.

In this banjo work Stanley disguised his identity by calling himself George S. Williams, but as early as 1892-3 he had made a few banjo solos for the old North American Phonograph Company's brown wax cylinders under his real name, W. S. Grinsted. The tunes he played are forgotten now—No. 128, "Joyful Hour Schottische;" 129, "Lumber Yard Jig;" 431, "Carrie Polka," and 432, "Darkies" Banjo Club."

Ever on the alert for new ways to increase his recorded repertoire and income, Stanley must have decided there would be a demand for good contralto and bass, or baritone, duets, especially since these deeper voices recorded better in those pioneer days than tenors and sopranos. I imagine he mentioned this belief to Miss Morgan and suggested that he try to round up some work for them.

In this he was successful. I cannot be sure whether the pair did their first recording for Edison or Columbia—the problem of their first Columbia duetizing is a tricky one—but I am sure they were given a trial

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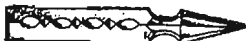
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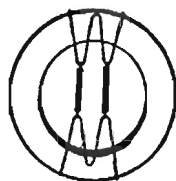
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- #6 for 12½" to 17½"

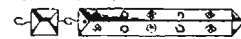
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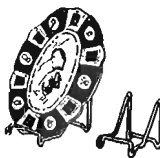
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 41)

seems to indicate that if she really walked out after being accused of flitting there was a reconciliation a little later.

Among other activities, the two sang together on Victor records in the Lyric Quartet, whose other members were Elise Stevenson, soprano, and Harry Macdonough, tenor. Corinne and Stanley did cease to make duets, however, before the brunette contralto's recording career ended.

And now it occurs to me I have neglected to mention that Miss Morgan sang as a member of a number of Edison ensembles. She was one of the Edison Sextet, which consisted, besides herself, of Ada Jones, George Seymour Lenox, Grace Nelson (Grace Hornby), Bob Roberts, and Stanley. They sang a re-make of "The Floradora Sextet." Corinne also sang with "Miss Chappell" (Edith Chapman), George M. Stricklett and Stanley in the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet, and was a member of the Metropolitan Mixed Trio, her associates being Lenox and Stanley.

In the autumn of 1947 I called on Stanley's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Repelow, at her home in West Orange, N.J. She pointed out to me the old Grinstead residence, where her father lived when he was serving as a town alderman besides making records, and took me to see Mrs. Byron G. Harlan.

Mrs. Repelow also gave me a handsome poster with pictures of Victor Red Seal artists of the period around 1907, which had belonged to Frank C. Stanley. It now hangs in the downstairs hall of my home, and I still am hoping to find a companion poster with likenesses of the "popular" artists of that time.

Finally, she presented me with two or three sheets of music which had belonged to Corinne Morgan Welsh and on which the contralto had written her name. I have them put away somewhere, but don't know just where they are, or I would show you the cover of one with this article.

(To Be Continued)

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## MORE ABOUT VICTOR BLUE LABEL RECORDS

By a slip of the pen, I gave the impression in my "Victor Record Sales" article published in the June HOBBIES that Victor was still making Blue Label records for domestic sale in 1929.

That is incorrect. The Blue Label was discontinued within a couple of years after electric recording was introduced in 1925, and artists in that classification—such as Harry Lauder, Olive Kline and Elsie Baker—were transferred to Red Seal status. Their records, however, were sold at the former Blue Label prices and they were termed "Junior Red Seal Artists."

It would have been better if I had brought out the fact that Victor's Red Seal record sales in 1929 of a little more than 2,000,000 copies actually included what had formerly been the Blue Label series. Thus, even with the help of such a popular performer as Lauder, sales, in effect, of both the former Blue Label and Red Seal double-faced categories were less than the 1914 sales of single-faced Red Seals had been alone.

—Jim Walsh

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### CORINNE MORGAN

PART III

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Miss Morgan's Zonophones

Last month Corinne Morgan's comparatively short list of Edison two-minute cylinders (she made none of the four-minute type) was discussed. This time, because the Zonophone list also is short and requires little research, I shall begin with it. And we are destined to discover something surprising about her Zono duet discs.

I lack Zonophone supplements for 1903 and 1904, but I do have a numerical catalog dated July, 1904. By doing some "figuring" backwards I have decided the contralto's first record for the Victor subsidiary was issued in February of that year.

As a rule, Zonophone listed exactly 25 records a month, so by counting back from 6168, the highest number in the catalog, to 6033, Miss Morgan's earliest number, I determined that February was the month it came out.

The title of this first Morgan record was "Bonnie Sweet Bessie." Previously, the Company had been making discs in both 7-inch and 9-inch sizes. But by the beginning of 1904 no new 7-inch were being added, so all the Morgan records were 9-inch, until that size was discontinued in favor of the 10-inch in December, 1904.

Another Morgan record also was

issued in February. It was "Dixie." This seems a rather unsuitable and uncharacteristic number for her to sing, although Frieda Hempel later recorded it for Edison, and Mabel Garrison and the Orpheus (Victor) Quartet sang it for Victor.

The Garrison version was one of the few records of "Dixie" ever issued by any company that proved a poor seller. It was announced in April, 1917, and was discontinued after 1922.

In March came that Morgan and Stanley duet favorite, "O That We Two Were Maying." But—and this is the surprise to which I referred—it wasn't sung by Corinne and Frank, but by Miss Morgan and Frederick Wheeler, who then was using the assumed name of James F. Harrison.

As long as the contralto made duet records for Zonophone her partner never was Frank C. Stanley. It was always Harrison—who, incidentally, a few months earlier, had recorded "O That We Two" as a solo on Zonophone 9-inch record No. 5939!

Now how are we to account for the fact that Zonophone eschewed the Morgan-Stanley combination when Frank Stanley regularly was recording solos for them? I can only surmise, but my guess, I think, is a good one.

Stanley was not under contract and

was working by the date, but Harrison was being paid \$1,400 a year for his exclusive services—an amount which, he told me long years later, "seemed big to a struggling young singer." By using him instead of Stanley, the Company was obliged to pay only Miss Morgan a fee for her services. Harrison's work was included in his contract.

The free-lancing Stanley Grinstead, therefore, was excluded from duet performances with the lady, although he and Byron G. Harlan were recording comic ("rube") sketches written by Stanley.

Miss Morgan also had a solo, "Home, Sweet Home," in March. She seems not to have been present in April or May, but in June she was represented by "Then You'll Remember Me." And in July she and Harrison sang "Just For Tonight."

My catalog of 9-inch records ends with the July list, so there may have been a few other Morgan solos and duets before the 10-inch records were introduced at the end of 1904.

The June, 1905 Zonophone record catalog is the only round one I have seen. It is shaped like a Zonophone record, and the front and back covers are facsimiles of the label of No. 5213, "Zonophone Waltz," played by the Zonophone Orchestra. It lists a number of Morgan solos and duets, for which I have been able to deduce the date of issue:

"Home, Sweet Home" and "Old Folks at Home" were placed on sale in January, 1905, as Morgan solos, and were followed in March by "For All Eternity"—one of the two songs she had remade for Edison after they had been recorded first by Nellie Thomas.

A Morgan-Harrison duet, "In the Starlight," came out in February; another, "Just My Style," in May; and,



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76

## CONTRALTO SOLOS

By Corinne Morgan with orchestra	
31629 Dreams	Strelezki 12
31270 Flower Song—Faust	Gounod 12
4976 Forever and Forever	Tosti 10
5263 Homeward	Lane 10
31554 He Shall Feed His Flock	
31456 He Was Despised	Messiah Handel 12
2831 Home, Sweet Home	Payne 10
31237 Home, Sweet Home	Payne 12
4493 Lullaby from Erminie	10
31338 Lullaby from Erminie	12
2880 I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls	Bohemian Girl Balfe 10
31285 I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls	Balfe 12
4632 In the Gloaming	Harrison 8-10
31584 Lullaby (Violin obbligato)	Pond 12
4635 Love's Old Sweet Song	Molloy 10
4040 My Old Kentucky Home	Foster 8-10
31296 My Old Kentucky Home	Foster 12
2808 Old Folks at Home	Swanee River Foster 8-10
31231 Old Folks at Home	Swanee River Foster 12
4964 O Promise Me	De Koven 8
31472 O Rest in the Lord	Eliah Mendelssohn 12
31541 Return, O God of Hosts	Samson Handel 12
4985 She Wandered Down the Mountain Side	Clay 10
31457 The Garden of Sleep	De Lara 12
31473 The Lord is Mindful of His Own—St. Paul	12
4984 The Only One	Herbert 10
2756 Then You'll Remember Me	Balfe 10
31213 Then You'll Remember Me	Balfe 12
By Corinne Morgan with violin obbligato	
4039 Annie Laurie	Lady Scott 10
4321 Ben Bolt	Kneass 10
31374 Ben Bolt	Kneass 12
2846 Bonnie Sweet Bessie	Old Scotch 10
2845 Happy Days	Strelezki 10
31232 Happy Days	Strelezki 12
2081 O Hush-a-by Baby	J. C. Bartlett 10
4036 Sing Me to Sleep	Greene 10
31313 Sing Me to Sleep	Greene 12
31376 Star of Love	Robaudi 12
Miss Morgan and Hayda Quartet—See pages 94 to 99	
By Florence Hinkle with violin obbligato	
4874 Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms	10
By Pearl Beahm with orchestra	
5187 In Maytime	Speaks 10

**TALENTED CONTRALTO.** This photo of Corinne Morgan appeared in the Victor catalog for January, 1908, on a page listing her records.

"There's Nothing New to Say," in June. These were mostly numbers the contralto sang with Stanley for other companies.

There was then a gap of five months during which no solos or duets by Miss Morgan appeared. Finally, in November, she and Harrison sang "Life's Dream is O'er" and the perennial "O That We Two Were Maying." A month later they had two more duets, "I Will Magnify Thee, O Lord," and "Still as the Night."

The end of 1905 seems to have marked the conclusion of Miss Morgan's Zonophone association. I have not been able to find that she made any more Zono records after "Still as the Night."

When double-faced discs were introduced, none of her solos was taken into the catalog, but No. 5409 combined "Just My Style" and "There's Nothing New to Say," also 5410, "O That We Two Were Maying," and "Still as the Night."

The 1909 catalog contained several records by the Mendelssohn Mixed Quartet (you recall that Miss Morgan sang with a group by that name on Edison cylinders). But the Zonophones were made in 1907 and 1908, when she no longer worked for that Company, so I have not included them in the previously published list.

## II. Columbia Cylinders and Discs

I do not think it necessary to discuss Corinne Morgan's Columbia records in detail. As a glance will show,

it largely duplicates the discs and cylinders she and Frank Stanley made for other companies.

Nevertheless, I'm wondering whether their first duet offering, on both types of Columbia records, was "O That We Two Were Maying." These have low numbers for both the disc, 1184, and the cylinder, 32119, which indicates a probable 1903 recording date.

But! The January, 1904, catalog also lists a disc No. 816, "When We Are Married," as by "contralto and baritone" (the catalogs prior to 1907 seldom gave the artists' names) and when this song was carried over into the double-faced list it was specified that it was sung by Morgan and Stanley.

If they made the original single-faced record, which came out, apparently, in the summer of 1902, then this seems to have been the first duet they sang for any company. Their version in the double-faced form may be a re-make of the original, but I can't think of any other pre-1903 contralto and baritone who would have been suited to record it.

Also, there is the puzzle of cylinder No. 31611, "Reuben and Cynthia," the couple's only genuinely comic number. They certainly recorded it late in 1903 on disc No. 1460. Their cylinder, however, seems to have been a re-do of one previously performed by other singers, for both the 1902 and 1904 cylinder catalogs say it is by a soprano and baritone.

In 1905 the identification is changed to contralto and baritone. Who the soprano was is something of a mystery. Minnie Emmett is the only high-voiced woman I can think of. She was making Columbia records in 1902, and was capable of comedy, as she proved by her solo. "If Money Talks It Ain't On Speaking Terms With Me." The baritone may have been Stanley—or somebody else.

As with Edison, "Deed I Do" followed closely behind "O That We Two Were Maying," and from there on the Columbia Morgan-Stanley duets take on a familiar appearance.

Miss Morgan made few solos for Edison. That is also true of Columbia. In January, 1904, three cylinder solos were offered by her: 32339, "Happy Day"; 32340, "Angel's Serenade," and 32341, "Whisper and I Shall Hear," which she sang a little later for Edison.

All had violin obbligatos, presumably by Charles D'Almaine, who also played in some of her Edison and Victor records. They must have been a bit too highbrow for the average cylinder record buyer, for all were cut out from the 1906 catalog, which contained not a single contralto solo.

Either the music was too "high class," or the combination of female voice and violin sounded, as it frequently did by the recording methods of those days, too much like a harrowing cat fight.

Other solos by Miss Morgan were "Cupid Has Found My Heart" and "Toyland" (the latter with a male chorus), issued in August, 1904. "So



**SINGING ASSOCIATE.** We already have reprinted an early photo of Frederick Wheeler (James F. Harrison), who made Zonophone duets with Corinne Morgan. Here is one taken several years later.

Long, Mary," also with a chorus, came in May, 1906. *The Columbia Record* said of "Mary," "it is a faithful reproduction of the song exactly as presented by Fay Templeton and chorus in the new musical comedy, 'Forty-Five Minutes From Broadway.' Sung by Miss Corinne Morgan with chorus, making it one of our most attractive numbers."

In November, 1904, the Morgan-Stanley partnership temporarily was interrupted when the genial basso sang two numbers with another contralto, Grace Nelson, who, you remember, had taken part in the Edison "Floradora Sextet," otherwise known as "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden." The titles of both numbers asked questions: "What Color Eyes Do You Love?" "Has Your Mother Any More at Home Like You?"

Perhaps Miss Morgan was spending the summer in Europe. She often did. And Miss Nelson may have been called in to take her place, as she also did later in some Victor records.

Some time afterward, a woman named Grace Nelson was killed in an accident in Chicago. The news of her death must have been widely published, for the *New Phonogram* reported the Edison Company had been swamped with inquiries as to whether the deceased Miss Nelson was the contralto singer.

With a touch of impatience, the editor explained that "our Miss Nelson" was still alive and in good health and, anyway, "Grace Nelson is a *nom de plume*." As we know, her real name was Grace Hornby.

By October, 1906, Miss Morgan had ended her Columbia activities. In July, she had a solo of "Last Night," and her final Columbia duet with Stanley, "A Tale of a Stroll," was offered.

Her October record also was a solo, described as "a most agreeable contralto record of Gerald Lane's delight-

(Continued on page 40)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

ful ballad, 'Homeward,' investing the beautiful theme with wonderful depth of sentiment." She also sang "Homeward" for Victor.

Corinne Morgan's departure from Columbia may have been caused by Mrs. A. Stewart Holt being engaged as the Company's staff contralto. Too, she apparently had "split" amicably with Frank Stanley, for a few months later he began to record extensively with a soprano, Elise Stevenson, as his feminine partner, in addition to making innumerable duets with the popular young tenor, Henry Burr.

There is also a possibility that Miss Morgan had signed an exclusive Victor contract, for during the two years remaining of her recording career she sang for no other company.

The Busy Bee cylinders included in the list of Morgan records were made from Columbia originals.

### III. Miss Morgan's Victor Career

Now we come by way of climax to incomparably that most important of Corinne Morgan's recorded activities. Her Victor record list was much longer than any other, and Victor was the only company that allowed her to do a serious type of work in keeping with her established reputation as a concert and oratorio artist.

This is not to say that her Victor repertoire did not duplicate much of the music she and Stanley Grinstead were singing for other companies, only that, in addition, Miss Morgan was permitted to sing oratorio and operatic music that the others did not record.

I do not have Victor supplements

for the first few months of 1904. My system of "back checking," however, indicates the first Morgan-Stanley record came out in, or about, that January, perhaps a month before their first Zonophone disc.

It was "O That We Two Were Maying." Its number was 2533. Twenty-two numbers later the equally ubiquitous "Deed I Do" turned up on 2555. Both were made during the period of piano accompaniments.

Following close behind was 2569, the already mentioned Harry Von Tilzer song, "It's a Lovely Day for a Walk." All three were made in both 7-inch and 10-inch sizes.

Then came Miss Morgan's first solo, "The Lord Is Mindful of His Own," from Mendelssohn's oratorio, "St. Paul." Its number, 2578, was prefixed by an M, indicating "Monarch," to show it was available only in 10-inch. However, it soon was issued on 31473, in the 12-inch size.

There seems no need of mentioning individually the remainder of Miss Morgan's 1904 Victor solos. By January, 1905, she had made 15. But the following is something that probably will surprise you as much as it did me.

Despite Frank C. Stanley's well-established reputation as a leading recording artist, he was not permitted to make any solos for Victor until his contralto partner, whom he presumably had introduced to talking machine work, had those 15 to her credit.

His first solo, No. M4079, "The Birthday of a King," was announced in December, 1904. It was not a great success and was cut out of the catalog in April, 1908. Traveling in tandem with it was another Morgan Stanley duet, 4080, the familiar "Listen to the Mocking Bird."

This ditty by Septimus Winner, which has been said to have sold more copies in sheet music than any other song ever written, had the distinction on Columbia of occupying the reverse side of double-faced disc No. A278. This disc was the purported recording of President McKinley's Address at the Pan-American Exposition, but I will prove in a succeeding article that it was not.

Another surprising thing about Corinne Morgan's early Victor recordings was the large number with violin obligatos by Charles D'Almaine. The January, 1906, catalog contained 14 of these, with the comment:

"No selections in our catalog have been more popular than Miss Morgan's records with violin accompaniment. She has one of the most beautiful contralto voices in America, and sings with exquisite taste."

Despite these eulogistic remarks, the combination of female vocalist and violinist (D'Almaine really played a Stroh viol, with a metallic amplifying horn attached), frequently sounded terrible in those days, as I already have mentioned. And the evidence indicates the Morgan-D'Almaine discs were not so popular as the catalog said.

By September, 1907, the 14 records had dropped to 11. In September, 1908, there were only nine. And just three remained in 1909—4039, "Annie Laurie"; 2846, "Bonnie Sweet Bessie," and 2845, "Happy Days."

Returning for a moment to the December, 1904, list, that month, which brought Frank Stanley's first Victor solo, also was marked by his first duets for the Company with Byron G. Harlan. They sang two favorite old Civil War songs, M4099 "The Battle Cry of Freedom," and M4100, "Dixie." They also did two of the highly popular "rube" skits written by Stanley—M4106, "Scene in a Country Blacksmith Shop," and M4107, "A Rheumatism Cure in Jayville Center."

From that time, until his lamentably early death in December, 1910, Frank Stanley was one of Victor's most popular soloists and duettists. He worked not only with Miss Morgan, but indefatigably with Harry Macdonough, Henry Burr, Harlan, and Elise Stevenson. Miss Morgan never had more than a fraction of his sustained popularity.


In discussing her Columbia records I mentioned that the Morgan-Stanley combination temporarily was interrupted in 1904 when the basso sang two duets with Grace Nelson. A similar interruption occurred in the Victor lists, but in 1906. The month of May brought two duets by the changed pair: 4652, "Would You Like to Change From Miss to Mrs.?" and 4653, "Sambo and Dinah."

The first song must have been a flop, for it was gone by May, 1907, although the dealers' monthly list had described it as "a semi-sentimental song which has been one of Eddie Foy's successes in 'The Earl and the

(Continued on page 50)

THE NEW PHONOGRAM

EDISON RECORD TALENT




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WANTS HIS PHONOGRAM EARLIER

A subscriber asks to have his copy of the Phonogram mailed to him earlier each month. The Phonogram is mailed as soon as each subscriber's order is filled. The new Phonogram arrives at dealers' stores and by its descriptions of these records to assist Phonogram buyers in making selections. It cannot be mailed earlier even to individual names.

THE NEW PHONOGRAM

EDISON RECORD TALENT




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SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHERS

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THE NEW PHONOGRAM

EDISON RECORD TALENT



CHARLES D'ALMAINE  
VIOLINIST

one of the music solos. The smaller one was a moving picture film of him singing the solo.

I took the film or picture to a dealer, and one we put in a Phonograph, the other is a moving picture machine. Then we declared the film, and we started the machine and the Phonograph simultaneously. By doing this, the actor might have been passed personally. There he was on the screen, singing up and down the stage and controlling, and there was his voice coming from the machine and from the big Phonograph horn. I got from it an extraordinary idea of the music talent as I could have gotten it in had visited me in Washington, D.C.

ASSISTING ARTISTS. These three mustachioed gentlemen, all of whom became smooth shaven in later life, played a part in Corinne Morgan's musical career. John Young, left, never recorded with the contralto, but sang with her in a New York church. Frank C. Stanley, center, introduced her to Phonograph work and was her recording partner for four years. Charles D'Almaine, right played violin obligatos in many of her records. —These photos were reprinted from *The New Phonogram*.





**FAMED CONDUCTOR.** Walter Damrosch, shown here as a young man, conducted a symphony orchestra with which Corinne Morgan was a featured soloist. ....This photo is reprinted from a 1904 Columbia Record

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

Girl.' A most catchy little number and quite a novelty."

Of "Sambo and Dinah," a "coon song" on the order of "Deed I Do," the editor said:

"One of Cole and Johnson's inimitable darky numbers, which are always interesting because they are true types of real Negro songs. This duet is very attractively arranged, and Miss Nelson's pleasant contralto and her soft darky talk as Dinah contrast agreeably with Stanley's manly voice."

In June, the Nelson-Stanley combination again was present with "We'll Wander in the Bright Moonlight." It elicited this comment:

"The two duets by Miss Nelson and Mr. Stanley which were issued last month were very much liked. Here is a charming number, rather more sentimental than the May selections, which was one of the successes of 'Babes and the Baron.'"

Rather oddly, Miss Morgan also was very much present in the June supplement. She had a solo, "In the Gloaming," and she and Stanley did 8-inch and 12-inch duets of one of their most popular numbers, Albert Von Tilzer's "The Moon Has His Eyes On You." This was described as:

"A charming sentimental duet in Von Tilzer's happiest vein. Those who are familiar with the other numbers by Miss Morgan and Mr. Stanley will know what is in store for them. The arrangement is a delightful one, particularly in the refrain, where Miss Morgan holds a sustained note while the baritone sings the melody."

August, 1906, brought the last Victor duet by Morgan and Stanley, "We Parted as the Sun Went Down." This probably is the last record the pair made together, since their final Columbia had come out in July. Thus their duet recording partnership had lasted about three and one-half years, from late in 1902 to the summer of 1906.

One more Nelson-Stanley duet was

to be issued in November: 4852, "Bye, Bye, Ma Honey." It was described as:

"A little darky song with rather a pretty melody. The words are quite distinct and the record is an attractive one."

I have all the Victor records by Nelson and Stanley except this. I wonder if their version of "Bye, Bye, Ma Honey" is the same song that Billy Golden recorded so uproariously.

Meanwhile, to go back a bit, June, 1906, was an important month in Corinne Morgan's recording chronology. Besides the solos and duets already mentioned, there were two discs by the newly organized Lyric Quartet, which consisted, besides Miss Morgan, of Elise Stevenson, soprano; Harry Macdonough, tenor, and Stanley, bass. The songs were "Evening Chimes" and "Incline Thine Ear to Me."

Miss Morgan seems to have remained a member of the quartet until she stopped making records. The original ensembles last single-faced disc was No. 31664, "The Radiant Morn," issued in October, 1907. But presumably the same group sang an anthem, "God Is a Spirit," No. 16038, one of the first 12" Victor double-faced records issued in a special list October 25, 1908. I imagine, by the way, that the contralto participated in most, or all, of the Trinity Choir records made while she was singing for Victor. No more Lyric Quartet records were made until 1911, when a new group with that name was organized.

In September, 1906, Miss Morgan sang another 12-inch oratorio record, "He Shall Feed His Flock," from "The Messiah." There was a new Lyric Quartet record, "Sweet and Low," and she and Macdonough sang in English a 12-inch version of "Home to Our Mountains," from "Trovatore."

They also remade the much earlier 10-inch version, No. 1360. In it a soprano, Grace Spencer, had taken the part of *Azucena*, the gypsy mother, with Macdonough as her tragic son, *Manrico*.

This was not the contralto's only operatic effort. Toward the end of 1904 she had recorded Siebel's "Flower Song" from "Faust" on 12-inch record No. 31270.

And, apparently, she held no grudge against Elise Stevenson, the soprano who succeeded her as Stanley's duet partner. In May, 1907, Victor issued a 12-inch duet by them, "Holy Mother, Guide His Footsteps," from Wallace's "Maritana." It did not sell well, however, and was out of the catalog by 1909.

### IV. Last Victor Records

Perhaps the contralto's fondness for spending her summers abroad was one reason for the wind-up of the Morgan and Stanley partnership. For instance, the Victor supplement for October, 1906, in listing her record of "Flee As a Bird," said:

"Miss Morgan, who has been in Europe during the summer, has returned in fine voice, and has given us a splendid record of Dana's well known sacred number."

Corinne Morgan's last two Victor records were issued in May, 1908,



**RECORDING EXECUTIVE.** Victor H. Emerson was a recording manager of the United States Phonograph Company that made New Jersey cylinders in the 1890's, and afterwards held the same position with Columbia. In 1916 he founded the Emerson Phonograph Company which is believed to have issued the last record ever made by Corinne Morgan Welsh.

and virtually brought an end to her recording career, which had begun less than six years before. One of the numbers was 5414, "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice," from "Samson et Dalila," which was described as:

"A really beautiful delivery of the famous Samson air, one of the loveliest of operatic numbers."

The other was the familiar Trottere ballad, "In Old Madrid."

But although no more new Morgan records appeared in the monthly supplements, this seems not to have been quite the last of her visits to the recording laboratory. In September, 1909, *The Voice of the Victor* gave a list of records which had been remade by what was termed the Company's "new improved recording process." Among these were Miss Morgan's 31456, "He Was Despised," from "The Messiah," and 2980, "I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls."

But in the meantime some of her numbers were suffering the indignity of being remade by other artists. Victor had advertised in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the Morgan-Stanley duet, No. 4428, of "When You and I were Young, Maggie" as one of the best records in the catalog. But the issue of *The Voice of the Victor* from which I just quoted revealed that "Maggie" had been remade by Elizabeth Wheeler and Macdonough. And all stock and all the matrices of the Morgan-Stanley version had been destroyed.

"The Mocking Bird" also was re-done by Wheeler and Macdonough. And—crowning insult—that virtual trademark, "O That We Two Were Maying," had been done over by Elise Stevenson and Macdonough. The new version, No. 5491, appeared in August, 1908.

Within the next few years too, most of the Morgan records had been made over by Elsie Baker, a contralto, who acquired a much greater following than Miss Morgan had ever had. By

(Continued on page 93)

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WANTED: Carnival glass bowl or plate, Northwood Peacock. Napkin rings with animals. — Maxine, 44646 Cedar, Lancaster, Calif. 93534 s1821

## MART FOR SALE

GENUINE old stock certificates, 3 western gold silver copper mines \$1, 2 early Eastern Railroads \$1, 1 Street car \$1.25, 1 horesdrawn car \$1.50. — Jerry Rillahan, 808 Park, Worland, Wyo. 82401 n3084

FOR SALE: Largest carving knife & fork set in the world. Fork, overall length 6-ft, 6-inches; Knife overall length 9-ft, 7½-inches. Handles solid carved ivory. Write for details. — Philip T. Champlin, Rt. 1, Little Valley, N.Y. 14755 s1023

WE HAVE 386 World War I doughboy steel helmets. Excellent condition. Collectors item. They average retail for \$12.95. Will sell all or part to the highest bidder. Write — Atlas Army & Navy Surplus Sales, P.O. Box 1186, August, Ga. 30903 o1823

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FOR VOODOO Cults & devil worshippers: "For sale from private museum" ancient sacrificial table; human bone necklace; ancient blood letting vessel; Judas devil doll; Ancient necklace est. 2000 years old; devil fish (human-devil in appearance). Send for brochure & prices \$2.50, 8x10" photo-prints; Explained. — Pan Vu, Box 2383, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110 aul22933

## MINIATURIA FOR SALE

IDEAL Petite Princess doll house furniture for sale or trade. SASE for list. — S. B. Linder, 22831 Marlboro, Dearborn, Mich. 48128 s1061

## STAMPS

RARE inverted error. Inverted postal die worth \$1750.00 by catalog value, \$200. Mint. — Lester Cook, 19 Purdue Rd., Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542 s1651

THE CLASSICS, Issues of 1840-1940 on approval. Priced below Scott catalog plus discount. — Norstamp, Box 7284, Norfolk, Va. 23509 aul20821

## PRINTING

PERSONALIZED parcel post labels. Only your name and address printed on white gummed paper, blue border, black printing. 2x2¼", 125 for \$2.00. Larger size 4x3" 50 for \$2, 100 for \$3.50 or 500 for \$14.50. Packed in plastic box. — Mrs. Pauline Vick, 817 E. Pillsbury, Lancaster, Calif. 93534 o3867

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

1923 none of the Morgan-Stanley duets were left in the catalog, and only two Morgan solos remained.

Double-faced disc No. 16800 combined her rendition of "Love's Old Sweet Song," with a trombone solo, "Oh, Dry Those Tears," by Arthur Pryor. And No. 16195, her version of "My Old Kentucky Home," which originally had been coupled with "Home, Sweet Home," by Macdonough, now had the Macdonough side remade by Charles Harrison. When the 1924 catalog came out, just after Miss Morgan's marriage to Charles Walter Dumont, both these records were gone.

V. And, Finally—

Corinne Morgan's final appearance, so far as I know, in any record list came more than 13 years after her name last appeared in a Victor supplement. A few years ago I was amazed to find an old Emerson record booklet for December, 1921, which listed record No. 10464, on which she sang "Just A-Wearyin' for You," to a piano, violin, and 'cello accompaniment.

And this is the only record I ever have heard of on which she used her full name of Corinne Morgan Welsh. The other side was "The Last Rose of Summer," sung by a soprano, Vivian Holt, who was best known for her duets with Lillian Rosedale. The supplement said:

"The first number is a soprano solo of marked clearness in enunciation. The second is a perfectly modulated contralto solo by an artist new to the Emerson catalog."

But if Miss Morgan was new to the Emerson catalog she was not new to Victor Emerson, who had been Columbia's recording manager before he started the Emerson Record Company in 1916. Before that he had been head of the recording activities of the United States Company, that made New Jersey cylinders in the 1890's. "Vic" Emerson seems to have had a sentimental fondness for his one-time associates. He probably was glad to call Corinne Morgan in for a record or two, since she had worked for him at Columbia.

I wish we knew more about the talented contralto's later years, but since we don't, I'm sure we all can join in hoping that she and C. W. Dumont had a happy married life during the 20 years or so they probably were privileged to pass together. Corinne Morgan deserves to be held in grateful remembrance for the pleasure she gave, and still gives, through her many fine records.

## PAINTINGS WANTED

Drawings, watercolors by American artists. Am interested in cowboy and Indian paintings, horse paintings and bronzes. Landscapes of the old West and animal paintings, by Tait and others. I am interested in anything good in American art. Please send pictures, artists name, condition and size. Also asking price. Write: — Reginald S. Courtney, 75 Rte. 208, Wyck-off, N.J. 07481 d32721

## NUMISMATICS

(Continued from page 132)

signed with similar reverse, but Liberty facing left on the obverse.

Patterns of the ten-dollar gold piece were struck in gold, copper, and aluminum. The gold ones are extremely rare.

When the bill was presented to Congress, this, too, did not meet approval and the project was dropped.

In 1879, John A. Kasson, Minister of the United States, at Vienna, and formerly chairman of the Committee of Coinage, Weights, and Measures, suggested to the Secretary of State that a coin near the value of the Austrian 8-florin piece be issued.

The Florin had an exchange value at the time of \$3.88 and the nearest approximation in our money would be 400 cents or four dollars. As there was considerable agitation for the adoption of a metric system for coin weights and the four-dollar piece fitted in the category, the coinage committee favored the coin.

It also was near the value of the French 20 franc, Italian 20 Lire, Spanish 20 Peseta, and Dutch 8 Florins. The committee decided the name of the coin would be the "Stella."

Charles E. Barber, designer of the Liberty Head series of coins of the 19th century, designed the "Stella." The obverse had the Head of Liberty facing left, with two varieties, one with flowing hair and another with coiled hair. Legends around were "6G. 3S, 7C.-7 Grams" (and the date). The reverse had a large star in the center with the inscription "One Stella, 400 cents" "E Pluribus Unum, Deo Est Gloria."

Though patterns were struck in copper, aluminum, and white metal, the commonest patterns and most prolific are those struck in gold. It is recorded that over 500 were struck of the 1879 issue. Sufficient, almost to take them out of the category of patterns even though they never were approved as a regular issue.

We therefore can see, that although several attempts were made to "systematize" monetary coinages, none ever succeeded. If they had, they would have been of little value today with the changes in values the moneys of the world have gone through.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### My Last Words Concerning The Controversial McKinley Record

#### PART I

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Martyred President

Seventy years ago—long enough for a child to have been born, reach the Biblical age allotment of three score and ten, and die—President William McKinley was shot fatally by an anarchist, Leon Czolgosz. The shooting occurred at 4:07 p.m., Friday, September 6, 1901, while McKinley was shaking hands with visitors to the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, N.Y.

The President died between 2 and 3 a.m. on Sunday, September 14. Almost his last words were: "It is God's way. His will, not ours, be done." And during his dying moments McKinley whispered the words of the hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

The day before—Thursday, September 5—116,000 persons had visited the Exposition. That afternoon 55,000 had gathered, despite intensely hot weather, in the Esplanade to hear the chief executive deliver a speech in which he advocated a broad and enlightened policy of commercial reciprocity with other nations, as well as the expansion of the merchant marine, and the construction of the Panama Canal.

I have a book in which the complete text of the speech is given, and my estimate is that it would take between 30 and 40 minutes to speak in its entirety. It frequently was delayed by enthusiastic applause and cheering, which lengthened the time of delivery.

Less than two months after McKinley's death the talking machine companies of the time—Victor, Columbia, Edison, and possibly others—began to issue records containing excerpts from the address. Edison's two-minute cylinder, No. 7982, was recorded by Frank C. Stanley, and announced in the record list for November, 1901.

It had a short life, because Edison introduced his new gold moulded process in the spring of 1902, and the McKinley cylinder was not carried over into the improved recording. It was not mentioned in the Edison record catalog dated "Fall, 1902," and is so scarce I never have seen a copy.

The 10-inch Victor Monarch listed in the Victor Catalog for February, 1902, was numbered M1070 and was called honestly "Portions of the Last Speech of President McKinley." Thus the buyer knew he was getting only some excerpts, and not the complete address. This version, by William F. Hooley, was soon remade, probably in

1903, and appeared in the August, 1904, Victor catalog, under the number of 2170.

The next record was spoken by Len Spencer. The catalog lists it as "President McKinley's Pan-American Speech," with this description: "Pithy Extracts from the last speech of our late President."

Conceivably, Zonophone also may have offered a disc containing selected segments from the Martyred President's last address, but I never have found such a record in a Zono catalog.

#### II. That Controversial Columbia Record

Columbia made it. Its disc was not available until a good many months after Victor's. But Columbia, for reasons best known to its officials of 70 years ago, omitted the recording artist's name from the label and left out the preliminary spoken announcement that was customary in those days.

The result has been that thousands of persons in later years have found copies of a Columbia record called "Address by the Late President McKinley at the Pan-American Exposition." Nearly all those persons have been convinced the record was spoken by the President himself and was worth a fortune. Many owners of copies of the disc still believe that and refuse to be persuaded otherwise.

If I may indulge a bit of ill temper, such a refusal to listen to reason has been a source of recurring irritation and annoyance to me in the 30 years I have written for HOBBIES. Over and over I have told collectors the so-called "McKinley record" wasn't, and couldn't have been made by the President, only to have them write indignant letters in return and say they knew better.

Such collectors, however, are not alone in their delusion. National Vocarium, a company that specialized a quarter of a century ago in issuing re-recordings of the voices of famous

personalities, included this Columbia record as among its "authentic" offerings. And more than one LP record, purporting to include the voices of all American Presidents from McKinley on, has used it, simply because the artist's name was not given by Columbia, as it was by Victor and Edison.

One correspondent maintained he knew "positively" that McKinley made the Columbia record because he was acquainted with "an old gentleman who was at the Exposition and saw President McKinley talking into the mike as he did the recording."

I replied that the old gentleman was either senile, or a victim of bad memory or of delusions, because there was no electrical recording until 1925, and President McKinley would have had no mike to talk into.

If he had made a record he would have spoken into a horn gaping from the recording studio wall. There may have been some sort of amplifying device to carry McKinley's voice more distinctly to the 55,000 persons who were trying to hear him as he made his speech, but outdoor recording wasn't feasible in those days, and the orator certainly was not talking into a recording microphone.

I told the correspondent there was every reason to believe that, just as the second Victor version of portions of the McKinley address was made by Len Spencer, the Columbia was the work of Len's younger brother, Harry. But before I proceed to the purpose of this article, which is to demolish for all time the belief that William McKinley made a record of his last speech, suppose we consider the text of the address as I have copied it from the Columbia disc by Harry—or, possibly, Len Spencer.

It plays two minutes and 55 sec-

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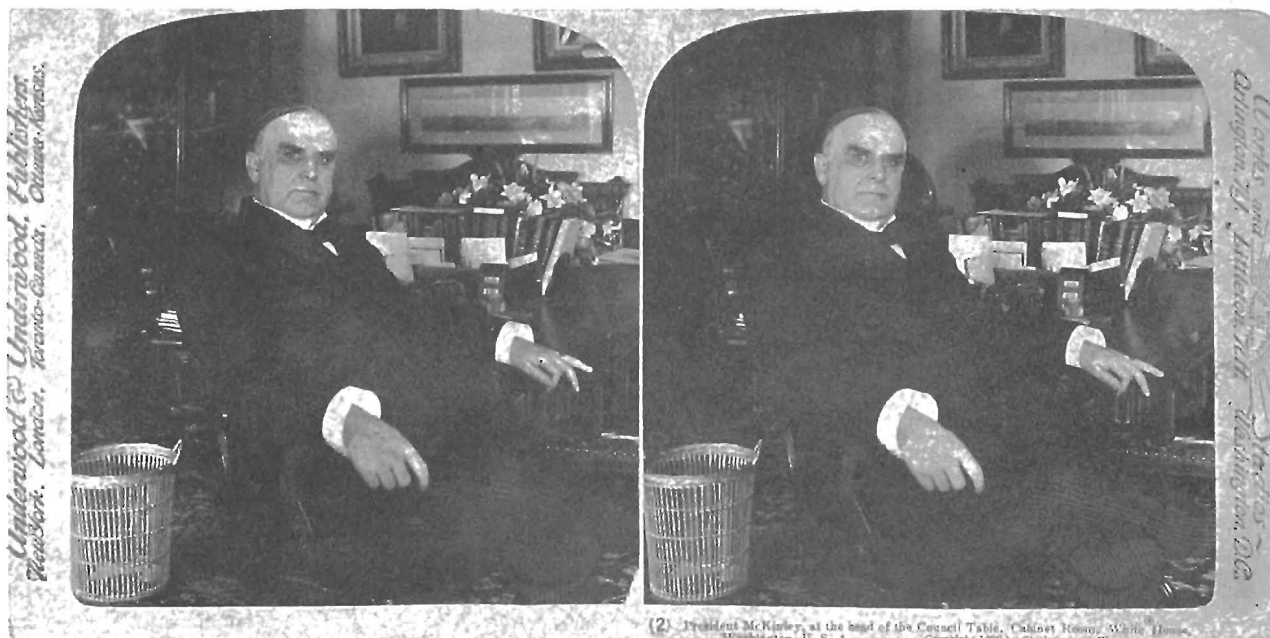
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A YEAR BEFORE HIS DEATH—This remarkably fine photo of President McKinley was taken at the Council Table in the Cabinet Room of the White House in 1900. Like most of the other illustrations this month, it is from an old stereoscope view.

onds—20 seconds longer than the Victor, which omits a few words in the Columbia version and is spoken at a slightly faster pace. Some "liberal" professors who make a fetish of writing political histories defaming Presidents over the years seem to have delighted in representing McKinley to be a hidebound, reactionary troglodyte with a narrowly partisan attitude and a caveman mentality.

McKinley was nothing like what so often he has been made out to be. He started out, perhaps, as a typical conservative Mid-Western politician, but he grew in mental breadth and stature the longer he stayed in office. And his last address was an eloquent plea for cooperation and peace among the nations.

One thing some professional thinkers seem to resent is that he presided over the greatest prosperity the American nation had known up to that time. Another criticism is that the discreditable Spanish-American War, which he did his best to avoid, was fought during his administration.

But here are the words of William McKinley, as recorded by somebody else's voice on that much debated Columbia record, to speak for themselves:

### III. Text of the Columbia Record

"My fellow citizens: Trade statistics indicate that this country is in a state of unexampled prosperity. The figures show that we are furnishing profitable employment to the millions of working men throughout the United States. Our capacity to produce has developed so enormously and our products have so multiplied that the problem of more markets requires our urgent and immediate attention.

"By sensible trade arrangements, which will not interrupt our home production, we shall extend the outlets for our increasing surplus. What we produce beyond our domestic consumption must have vent abroad. Extension of our trade and commerce is our pressing problem.

"Next in advantage to having a thing to sell is to have the convenience to carry it to the buyer. We must increase our

merchant marine. We must have more ships. They must be under the American flag, built and manned and owned by Americans. They will not only be profitable in a commercial sense, they will also be messengers of peace wherever they go.

"Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times. We must build the Isthmian Canal, which will unite the two oceans and give a straight line of water commerce with the west coast of Central and South America and Mexico. The construction of a Pacific cable cannot be longer postponed. In the furtherance of these objects of national interest and concern you are performing an important task.

"The good work will go on. It cannot be stopped. These buildings will disappear. This creation of art and beauty and industry will perish from sight, but who can tell the new thoughts that have been awakened, the ambitions fired, and the high achievements that will be wrought through this exposition!

"Gentlemen, let us ever remember that our interest is in concord rather than conflict, and that our real eminence rests on the victories of peace—not those of war."

That is the recorded speech on the Columbia record, only a small fraction of the address the President delivered to that vast audience in Buffalo 24 hours or so before he was assassinated.

Here it will be interesting, I think, to compare the Columbia with the slightly shorter Victor Monarch. Len Spencer's version begins, "Fellow Citizens," instead of "My Fellow Citizens."

The Victor moves the sentence, "Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times" up to the end of the second paragraph, following "Extension of our trade and commerce is our pressing problem." In referring to the Isthmian Canal, it omits "and give a straight line of water commerce with the west coast of Central and South America and Mexico."

(I find myself wondering who decided what excerpts from the chief executive's speech should be included on records.)

The Columbia is much louder than

the Victor and seems to be clearer and better recorded all the way through—something that was by no means invariably characteristic of Columbia records of the 1902 period.

Since I never have heard Frank Stanley's Edison, I don't know just what is on it, but the wax cylinders could not play more than 10 seconds or so past a two-minute limit, so it must have omitted some things that the Victor and Columbia discs contained.

Incidentally, the single-faced Columbia disc, the number of which was 833, was made in both 7-inch and 10-inch sizes. This brings up the pleasing picture of President McKinley, if he made the record—which he didn't—being called on to record a smaller snippet of his address, to play for a minute and a half to two minutes, in the 7-inch size and genially consenting. I wonder just how much of the oration they managed to crowd on to that 7-inch!

The Columbia "McKinley record" was marketed under many of the dozens of off-brand labels for which the Company furnished matrices. Standard, United, Harmony, Marconi, Climax, Aretino, Oxford, Silvertone, Lakeside, Thomas, and almost countless others.

It must have been available on them all.

(Continued on page 40)

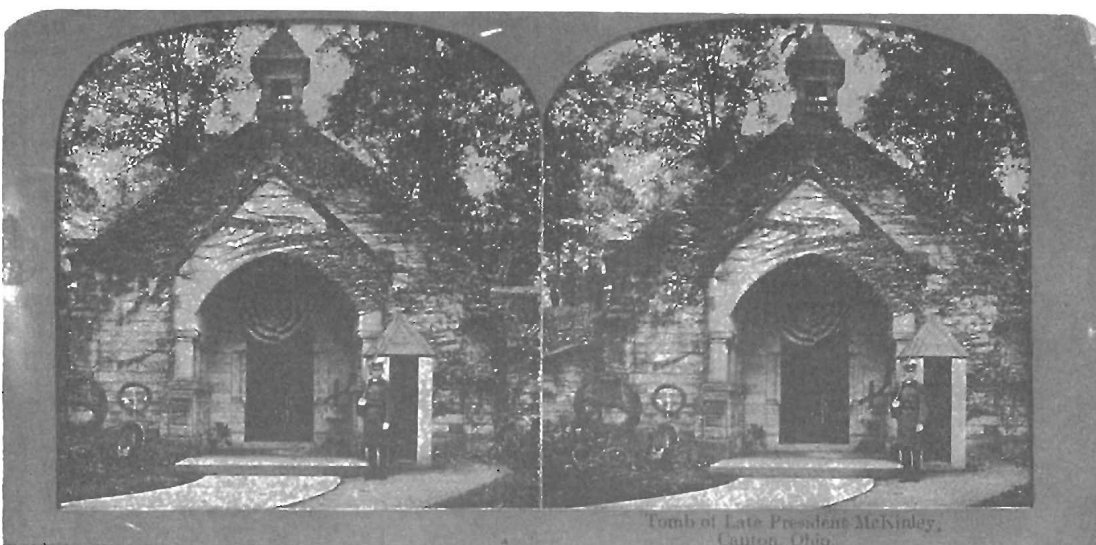
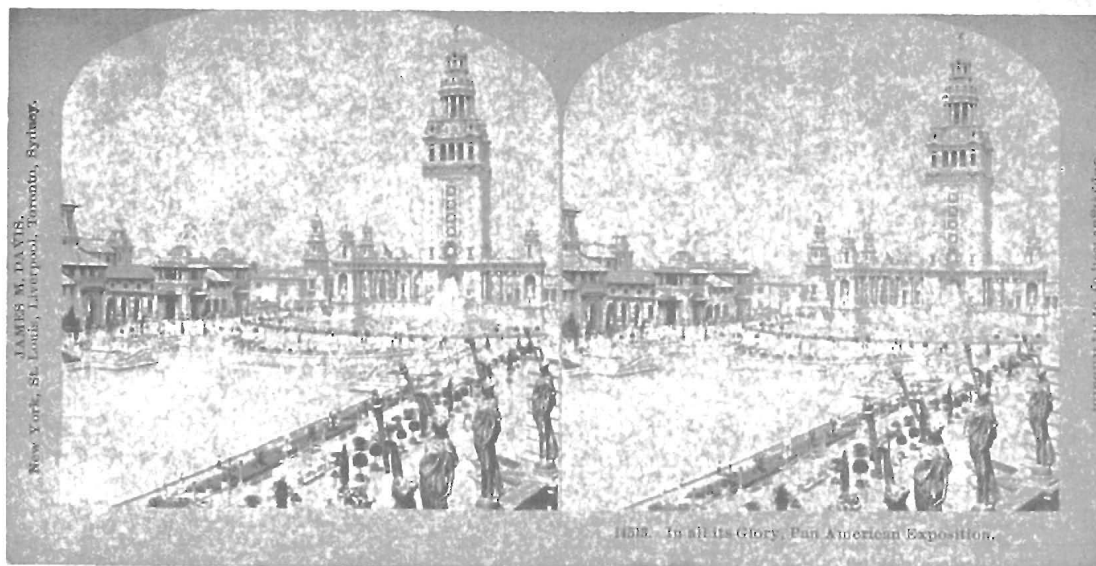
### PIANOS & ROLLS

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(Continued  
from  
page  
38)



TOP: SEVENTY YEARS AGO—The Pan-American Exposition as it appeared when President McKinley was murdered in 1901.

MIDDLE: EXPOSITION SCENE—Crowds at the Temple of Music where President McKinley was assassinated, Pan-American Exposition.

BOTTOM: PRESIDENT'S RESTING PLACE—This photo, from 1901 stereoscopic view, shows President McKinley's tomb at Canton, Ohio. (Continued on page 48)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)



EMINENT BASSO — "Bill"

Hooley, the famous Haydn Quartet bass, made the first Victor record of President McKinley's last address. After a few months it was succeeded by one by Len Spencer.

I have it on a Silvertone and on a Diamond, the latter of which has the title, in red ink, supplied by a rubber stamp. This is mentioned to keep anybody from writing to me to say he has a McKinley speech I haven't said any thing about, and, secure in the belief that it must be the "real McCoy," or, rather, the real McKinley, to ask how much it is worth.

I recall one man who paid \$50 for a Standard record of the address and wrote to tell me glowingly what a bargain he had got. He was considerably let down when I felt it my duty to inform him the thing was not authentic and hardly worth 50c.

### IV Why McKinley Couldn't Have Recorded

Over the years, I have said several times in HOBBIES that the slain President could not have made the so-called "McKinley record" before he was shot. And I have given my reasons. As long ago as 1947 the *New Yorker Magazine* published an article I wrote presenting the same information.

The HOBBIES references, however, are in past issues widely scattered and therefore are not easy to locate, so I continue to receive letters from readers asking the record's value. Occasionally, too, a dealer who sells by mail may offer it at an exorbitant price through lack of information.

So I have decided to assemble, once and for all, the mass of information I have bearing on the subject. After this I shall not go into detailed explanations in personal correspondence as to why the record is a humbug, though certainly a harmlessly meant

one. I simply shall refer inquirers to this article.

That being said, let's proceed to a consideration of President McKinley's stay in Buffalo during the Exposition and what he did while he was there. This can be followed easily with the help of Margaret Lesch's detailed and informative book, "In the Days of McKinley," published by Harper's in 1959.

To begin with, the President's visiting schedule did not allow him time to make a record, and if it had the equipment would not have been available. Actually, neither Columbia nor any other phonograph company had any interest, before McKinley was assassinated, in making a record of his Pan-American speech.

### V. Last Word About McKinley

His appearance at the Exposition was merely a courtesy affair, and the speech was not expected to be of any special importance. Nobody knew, in advance of the killing, that it was to be his last public address. It was only after the popular President had been murdered that it occurred to the recording companies there would be a demand for excerpts from his last speech.

And bear this in mind: Even if Columbia had wanted to make a record of the address and McKinley had consented, it would have been necessary for the President to visit the Company's New York studios in order to put it on a wax master. Disc recording equipment weighed hundreds of pounds, and had to be bolted to the floor to prevent jarring and vibration.

Columbia certainly would not have uprooted its equipment, if it had had it, and shipped it all the way to Buffalo in the expectation of catching less than three minutes worth of speech. But, as I shall show, Columbia didn't have the equipment to send.

As I have said already, the speech could not have been recorded in the open. In those days there were no tape recorders to catch an orator's words in their entirety, and leave the best parts to be snipped out later.

Assuming recording equipment had been set up somehow in front of the speaker, McKinley would have had to address his remarks into a horn and not to the audience of 55,000. The effort to record his voice would have been marred by cheers and other background noises—none of which can be heard on the Columbia record.

The maximum it was possible to record at one time was approximately four minutes. And the engineers could not possibly have put on one master after another and taken down all the speech.

It has been argued that McKinley might have spoken into an easily transported cylinder machine with a home recording device, and then the sound from the cylinder was transferred to the disc. I ask you if you can conceive of the President of the United States speaking into a small home-type recording horn while an audience of 55,000 people tried vainly



TOP: "GRANDFATHER OF PHONOGRAPH"—LEN SPENCER, the first internationally known recording artist, made the second Victor disc of portions of William McKinley's Pan-American address. This picture was taken January 1, 1903.

BOTTOM: LEN SPENCER'S YOUNGER BROTHER—Henry Caleb (Harry) Spencer, Jr., is believed to have made the Columbia "McKinley record," which many collectors have taken to be by the President himself.

to understand what he was talking about.

True, Columbia did issue a cylinder record (No. 31666) of "President McKinley's Last Address." But the disc could not have been taken from it, because the "platter" played for virtually three minutes and a cylinder could run for only a few seconds more than two minutes.

And it takes a wild surge of imagination to believe that McKinley could have prepared, before he spoke, a brief excerpt from his address and recorded it at some stage during or after the proceedings, especially since the excerpts issued by Columbia varied. They consisted of a cylinder playing about two minutes, a 7-inch disc of less than two minutes duration, and a 10-inch disc running two minutes and 55 seconds.

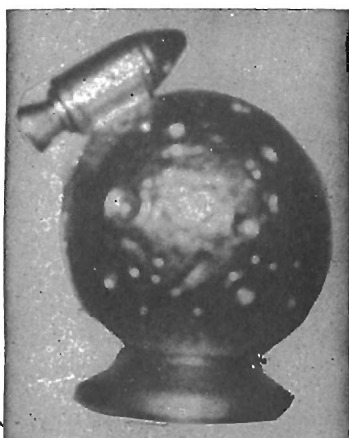
What, then, of the alleged possibility that heavy disc recording equipment somehow had been transported from New York to Buffalo, and that the President graciously spoke into it af-

(Continued on page 50)



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ol863

MAGICIAN BANK—original; slightly damaged. Vest of magician is separated from body. Make offer. — Robert Gaulding, 2918 Myra St., Jacksonville, Fla. 32205

ol671

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 48)

ter he had addressed his wildly cheering audience?

Turn to Miss Leech's book and you will find that the formal address contained many utterances not included in the records. McKinley reminded the audience that the telegraph and cable, swift ships, and fast trains practically had done away with distance.

He said, "We must not repose in fancied security that we can forever sell everything and buy little or nothing... Isolation is no longer possible or desirable... God and man have linked the nations together... The period of exclusiveness is past.

The conclusion of the speech asked a blessing on "all neighbors of the United States and all the peoples and powers of the earth." And, the book says, "a tempest of cheering swept the Esplanade." Those certainly were not the sentiments of an archetypal reactionary. After he made the speech, did a Columbia representative lead the President to some hastily erected recording studio and have him make a speech? No. McKinley held an impromptu public reception at the foot of the stand, then moved on to attend a military review at the Stadium.

After that he gratified the commissioners representing other countries by touring their buildings and exhibits. Then he attended a luncheon at the New York State Building, and a card reception at the Government Building.

Afterwards he sat down to sip coffee at the Porto Rican Building. Then he posed at the Agricultural Building with James Wilson, his Secretary of Agriculture, and a group of Latin American Commissioners.

Miss Leech says the President was weary when he returned, late in the afternoon, to the home of John G. Milburn, president of the Exposition, with whom he was staying. Following such an afternoon, that reads like an understatement.

After an early dinner, the President and Mrs. McKinley returned to the Fairgrounds. There they witnessed a display of fireworks and were occupied fully otherwise for several hours until their carriage rolled along the Lincoln Parkway, taking them back to the Milburn home.

Now we come to the fatal day on which President McKinley was shot. He got up early in the morning to board a special train of parlor cars that carried him, members of his party, diplomats, and other distinguished guests, on an excursion to Niagara Falls.

The time was spent at Niagara and in its vicinity, until the President and his party again boarded the special train and returned to the Exposition station. With Mr. Milburn and his

(Continued on page 93)

## TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY

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ADVERTISING Watch fobs wanted by collector. Top prices paid. — Yartz, 628 N. Main Extension, Meadville, Pa. 16335 s128801

BRITISH Military medals, purchased for private collection. — George Hammerschmidt, P.O. Box 3066, Tecumseh, Windsor 30, Ontario. d3082

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MINI Milk bottles, 4 for \$1.25 scrapbooks each different subject, 1865 to 1945. Photos, mementos, reference items, write — Scrapbooks, 420 East Second St., Long Beach, Miss. o1612

MATERIAL ON your favorite movie star. Send name for free list. — James Kirk, 2636 Hawthorne, Orlando, Fla. 32806 d3234

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

personal secretary, George B. Cortel-yon, the chief executive entered a carriage called a Victoria and they started off through the fairgrounds.

There was half an hour to spare before he was to hold a 10-minute public reception, beginning at 4 p.m. in the Temple of Music. So the President stopped for refreshments at the Mission Building.

Just before 4 o'clock William McKinley stepped from the victoria and, accompanied, of course, by guards, walked into the auditorium of the Temple of Music, where he began the scheduled reception and handshaking. He was within three minutes of the conclusion of the wearisome task when an unimpressive looking, short, slender, young man moved toward the President, who extended his hand.

The man was Czolgosz, the assassin. He struck McKinley's hand aside, produced a short-barreled, .32-caliber Iver Johnson revolver from his pocket, and fired two shots.

As horrified onlookers rushed to help McKinley to a chair, the wounded President saw that his assailant was in danger of being mobbed, and

pleaded: "Don't let them hurt him."

It was 18 minutes past 4 o'clock when the President was received in the Exposition's emergency hospital. There it was found he had a comparatively trivial wound in the ribs around his chest, but a grave one in the abdomen.

An immediate operation was decided upon. As ether was administered, McKinley's lips were forming the words of the Lord's Prayer.

After the operation, the mortally injured President was returned to the Milburn home, the second floor of which was turned into a hospital. Physicians were optimistic that he would recover. But, as we know, he died on the early morning of September 14.

Having proved, I maintain, that William McKinley could not possibly have made a record at the Pan-American Exposition, I will proceed next month to consideration of evidence provided by the record itself. I plan to present other facts which should prove to the satisfaction of any reasonable person that the anonymous Columbia disc contains the voice of someone other than the President.

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(Continued on next page)

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### My Last Words Concerning The Controversial McKinley Record

PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### I. First President to Record

Collectors who believe, mistakenly, that William McKinley made the controversial Columbia record of the speech which he delivered at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, N. Y., on September 5, 1901—nine days before his death—argue it is worth “a lot of money because McKinley was the first American President to have his voice recorded.”

As I showed conclusively last month, McKinley didn't make a record at Buffalo. Both the time and the equipment were lacking. But even if he had he still would not have been the first President to record.

It's impossible to be sure at this late date, but the likelihood is that Rutherford B. Hayes, who was Pres-

ident when Thomas A. Edison invented the phonograph late in 1877, was the first chief executive to have his recorded voice played back to him. On April 18, 1878, Edison took one of his tinfoil phonographs to the White House and demonstrated it to President Hayes.

It certainly seems likely that, after talking into the machine and having it play back in a squeaky tone, Edison would have said genially: “And now, Mr. President, let's record your voice!”

I'm confident Hayes would have had sufficient curiosity as to what his recorded voice would sound like to speak into the recording tube. Of course, if the record was made, it was on a strip of tinfoil which prob-

ably was discarded after one or two playings.

I have a book containing the text of the diary Hayes kept while he was in the White House. Strangely, he makes no mention of the phonograph demonstration, although one certainly would expect him to have written something like: “Had my voice recorded tonight by Prof. Edison's wonderful new invention, the phonograph. It didn't sound a bit like me.”

Nobody hearing his recorded voice for the first time thinks it sounds like him!

Actually, the first President, whose name was mentioned commercially as having recorded, was Benjamin Harrison, who was in office from 1889 to 1893. In the late 1890s the Bettini

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**YOUNG INVENTOR**—Thomas A. Edison is shown here with his tinfoil phonograph which he demonstrated to President Rutherford B. Hayes on April 18, 1878. Hayes may have spoken into the machine and become the first President to hear his recorded voice.

Company of New York, which made records by many celebrities, announced that former President Harrison had recorded for it, but no information was given as to the number and title of the cylinder.

Perhaps it was recorded only for Lieut. Gianni Bettini's private collection, for I never have seen it listed in a Bettini catalog. I doubt that any copy of the fragile wax Harrison

cylinder has survived.

## II. Fake Records

Some collectors argue naively that the Columbia record "had to be by McKinley, because they couldn't have got away with recording his speech

if he hadn't made it." These collectors overlook that fact that Victor made versions by William F. Hooley and Len Spencer; also Edison's was revealed openly as by Frank Stanley.

The truth is that faked records were common throughout the early days of the phonograph. William Ewart Gladstone recorded a message of congratulations to Edison on his invention of the instrument. The original stayed in Edison's possession, but copies by other speakers were played on coin-in-the-slot machines throughout the country.

An Edison record catalog for October, 1899, contained the following cylinders, none of which were spoken by the men whose names, they bore:

No. 7611, Bryan's Speech of Acceptance; No. 7621, Bryan's Speech to Labor; No. 3906, Bryan's Crown of Thorns and Cross of Gold Speech;

(Continued on page 40)

## PIANOS & ROLLS

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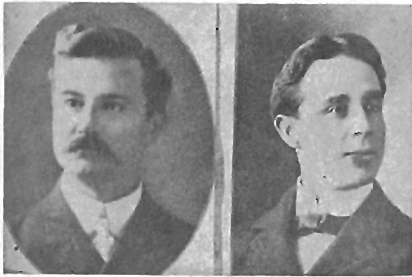
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)



Left to Right:

Left: EDISON RECORDER — FRANK C. STANLEY spoke the short-lived Edison cylinder containing a fragment of President McKinley's last speech.

Right: ALBERT CAMPBELL sang with Stanley in the Columbia Quartet record of "Funeral Service over President McKinley."

No. 7612, Roosevelt's Speech to Labor; No. 3905, McKinley's Inaugural Address, No. 7620, McKinley's Speech of Acceptance.

As you see, McKinley's voice had been feigned years before Columbia recorded an imitation of it after his death.

If anyone believes Columbia would not have dared to record a speech by a person other than its original deliverer I wonder who is supposed to have made the many records of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address? For that matter, who recorded Edison cylinder No. 3829, The Sermon on the Mount? (The catalog said clearly that it was by the powerful voiced basso Bill Hooley.)

### III. What Frank Dorian Said

I first learned, in my youthful record-collecting days, that William McKinley hadn't made the record associated with his name when I asked a veteran Columbia official, the late Frank Dorian, who then was assistant to the Columbia president, W. C. Fuhri, under what circumstances our President happened to record.

Mr. Dorian, always friendly and understanding with an eager youngster who must have tried his patience a great deal, replied that Columbia never recorded McKinley's voice. Dorian's recollection was that the record of a fragment of the Pan-American Speech was by Len Spencer, "who usually did that sort of thing."

Mr. Dorian added that Columbia made no claim that the record was by McKinley. The speaker's name was left off because of a belief that the record would sell better if some buyers took it to be by the late President.

And it did.

It remained in the catalog years longer than the Victor, which was credited to Spencer.

For many years I accepted Mr. Dorian's identification of Len Spencer as the artist because the voice sounded to my ears exactly like his, but then I obtained a copy of the 1907 catalog of semi-flexible Marconi rec-

ords that were made from Columbia masters. And this catalog, the only one I ever have seen in which the name of the man who made that record is given, says it was done by Harry Spencer!

That very well may be. Henry Caleb Spencer, Jr., like his older brother Len, did considerable spoken record work. For instance, the Zonophone catalog for May 10, 1901, contains two records on which he speaks portions of speeches William Jennings Bryan had made in his unsuccessful campaign against McKinley in 1900.

These records are: No. 9244, Bryan on the Philippine Question, and No. 9245, Bryan on Our National Destiny. There is no reason why Henry Caleb Spencer, Jr., should not have impersonated McKinley as well as Bryan.

Nevertheless, on playing both the Victor, admittedly by Len Spencer, and the Columbia, supposedly by Harry, I found myself wondering if the Marconi catalog might mistakenly have listed the wrong Spencer brother. Allowing for the differences in the two Companies' recording techniques, the voices sound identical.

Too, they both use a pompous, pretentious manner of speaking, lavishly garnished with broad A's, that I am sure never would have been affected by an unpretentious Ohio politician like McKinley. He kept his ears "close to the grass roots" and would have had a horror of "putting on airs."

On both records, "advantage" is pronounced "advahntage"; "task" is "tahsk", and "problem" is "proBLEM". The recorded speakers obviously were trying to sound as meticulous and dignified as they believed the public would expect a President to be.

Incidentally, the voice and intonation sound exactly like Len Spencer's on "a record of pure gold" which Edison jobbers had him make to be presented to Thomas A. Edison in 1906.

Because of the extreme similarity of voice quality and diction, I should not be at all surprised to learn that the Columbia record was made by Len Spencer. The Marconi catalog, however, says Harry. Certainly, my opinion is that neither it nor any other catalog attributes the record to McKinley.

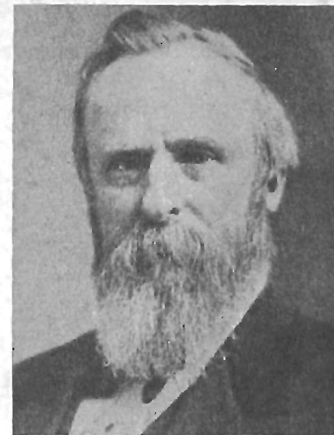
### IV. Piling Up the Evidence

From this point on I shall pile up the cumulative evidence in "short takes":

1. A fact that seems to have been entirely overlooked is that no Columbia catalog ever listed the record under McKinley's name to indicate he was the speaker.

Records by identified artists always were placed beneath their names in their proper alphabetical place in the catalog.

But there was no listing of: "McKinley, William, Late President of the United States, Record By," followed by the title. The record simply was cataloged alphabetically by its name "Address of the Late President McKinley At the Pan-American Ex-



FIRST PRESIDENT TO HEAR PHONOGRAPH — RUTHERFORD B. HAYES, to whom Thomas A. Edison demonstrated his tinfoil phonograph in 1878, 93 years ago.

position," with no speaker credit.

2. And this is a devastating fact I withheld last month: The Columbia Company had no disc equipment that could have been taken to Buffalo to record McKinley's last speech—which nobody knew would be the last.

McKinley died on September 14, 1901. But Columbia didn't go into the disc record business until February, 1902, after he had been dead five months.

And the first Columbia disc records were not even made by the Company. They were made for it, under the Climax label, by the Globe Record Co., which Columbia had acquired from Eldridge R. Johnson, the founder of Victor.

Columbia's earliest discs, in addition to being called Climax and having a metal ring around the spindle hole, read: "Mfg'd. solely for the Columbia Phonograph Co. by G. R. Co." (Globe Record Co.). It was only later in the year, after McKinley had been in his grave for many months, that Columbia began to do disc recording of its own.

And when Columbia did issue a disc record of McKinley's address, it did not come out, as its number, 833, indicates, until late in 1902, when the martyr President had been dead something like a year!

### V. McKinley Funeral Record Came Before Speech Recording

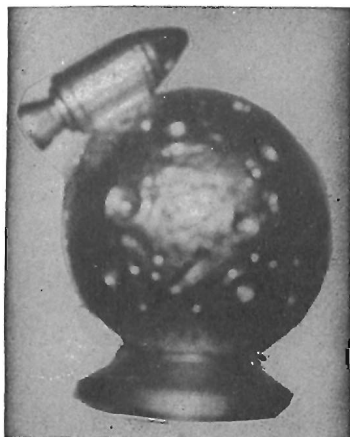
3. An odd thing, that no one except me seems to have noticed, is that Columbia disc records, having to do with McKinley's death, were issued months in advance of the unauthenticated speech recording supposed to be by him.

On No. 453 (and on cylinder No. 31654) the Columbia Male Quartet recorded "Hymns and Prayers from Funeral Service Over President McKinley." This is a studio job, in which the voices of first tenor Albert Campbell and basso Frank Stanley are unmistakable, but I suspect some people have bought the record thinking it was made during the funeral rites in the church.

(Continued on page 50)

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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 48)

like the then 20-year-old Henry Burr, forcing his voice to a lower pitch than usual, intones the following prayer:

"O Lord God, our Heavenly Father, a bereaved nation cometh to Thee in its deep sorrow. We thank thee, O Lord, that Thou didst give to this nation the man whose loss we mourn today. We thank Thee for the faithful and distinguished services that he was enabled to render to Thee, to our country and to the world.

"We pray Thee for that dear one who has been watching by his side through these years, sharing his triumphs and partaking of his sorrows. Help us to say with him whose loss we so deeply mourn: 'It is God's way. His will, not ours, be done.'"

This prayer, I take it, was a repetition of one of the officiating ministers at the McKinley funeral. The "dear one", of course, was McKinley's invalid wife. And the final line was taken from the President's dying words at Buffalo. The record, which was made in both 7-inch and 10-inch sizes, ends with a bit of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," the words of which McKinley murmured just before his death.

After Columbia began issuing double-faced records late in 1908 the Funeral Service representation was coupled on No. A251 with a violoncello solo of "The Evening Star" from "Tannhauser," played by Hans Kronold.

Shortly after the record just described was announced Columbia issued on disc No. 639, but apparently not on a cylinder, a production called "McKinley's Memorial." It was by the Columbia Band with some vocal assistance.

I never have heard it, but the old catalogs say it introduces "President McKinley's Last Speech" and "Lead, Kindly Light," played by the Columbia Brass Quartet. Of course only a snatch of the speech could have been included, and surely nobody will argue that the dead President was on hand to take part in a recorded memorial service to himself!

Then, a few months later, came No. 833. This probably was issued about September, 1902, or a year after McKinley's death, to become perhaps the most controversial record in history.

With the advent of double-faced records, it was coupled on No. A278 with "Listen to the Mocking Bird," sung by Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley, which originally had been issued on single-faced record No. 1833 in August, 1904. It is rather a remarkable coincidence that the McKinley side, No. 833, and its mating, No. 1833, were separated by exactly 1,000 numbers!

Len Spencer's Victor record of the speech never was issued in double-face. It remained in the catalog until May, 1911. The double-faced Columbia record made its last appearance in the May, 1914, catalog, but had

(Continued on page 92)



Left to Right:

Left: FIRST COMMERCIALY RECORDED PRESIDENT — BENJAMIN HARRISON was the first American President advertised as having made a phonograph record. He recorded for the Bettini Company at some time after leaving the White House in 1893, but the title and subject of the cylinder are not known.

Right: THE "MARTYR PRESIDENT" — WILLIAM McKINLEY, who was fatally wounded while shaking hands with visitors to the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 50)

been cut out when the next, November, semi-yearly catalog was issued.

#### VI. Columbia's Admission

I have saved the most devastating proof, that McKinley didn't make the Pan-American Speech record, for the last. On March, 1902, Columbia issued a catalog of cylinders—this was just before it began recording its own discs—which gave a glowing account of a new type of master record that had been developed. The words, "gold moulded," are not used, but this was the type of master used for producing gold moulded cylinders. Under the heading, "A Revolution in Record Making," the catalog said:

"A permanent master record, permanent in fact as well as in name, has been invented.

"We have been making these records for over a year and have only delayed the formal announcement until the great and costly plant necessary for a record business covering the entire world should be well established.

"In addition to the catalogued records, this process will enable us to furnish at a price within the reach of all, as time goes on, the work of the greatest living speakers, singers and instrumentalists.

"Had President McKinley delivered a speech to the Graphophone during his life, perfect facsimiles could now be made without limit and at a small cost."

Here you have the final proof. In a catalog dated March, 1902, but of course prepared earlier — one issued less than six months after McKinley's death — you have a statement from the Columbia Company itself that McKinley never made a Columbia record.

It is interesting to note that this 1902 Columbia catalog contained the

following records of "celebrity" interest:

No. 31666, the unauthenticated McKinley address which had not yet been issued on a disc;

No. 11105, Ex-Gov. Bob Taylor, of Tennessee, on Ingersoll (it's not clear whether "Our Bob", as Tennesseans call him, was praising Ingersoll or denouncing him for his unorthodox religious views, but of course the record wasn't made by Taylor himself);

No. 11007, Ingersoll at the Tomb of Napoleon;

No. 11040, Ingersoll on "Truth" (Bob Ingersoll had died in 1899, and there was still a great interest in his speeches);

No. 11004, Lincoln's Speech at Gettysburg (but not by Lincoln!);

No. 11088, Bryan's "Crown of Thorns and Cross of Gold" Speech;

No. 11001, "Gladstone's Message to Edison."

#### VII. Political Affiliations of Recording Artists

In concluding this survey, which I hope, and believe, has demolished any remaining faith in the opinion that William McKinley himself spoke the posthumous Columbia record of his Buffalo Exposition address, it occurs to me it will be both interesting and amusing to set down the political affiliations of the artists who recorded portions of that speech.

I do not know Bill Hooley's political sentiments, but he was an Irishman with such a hatred of the British government that, so the late John Bieling told me, he refused to join the other members of the Haydn Quartet in singing "God Save the King" when the Quartet went to

England to make records in 1902. Virtually all American Irishmen of that type were Democrats, so I have a strong suspicion that Hooley had voted for Bryan instead of McKinley.

The Spencer family was Republican. Len and Harry's parents were especially warm friends of Senator James A. Garfield of Ohio, who, like McKinley, was murdered after he became President, and Len was named Leonard Garfield Spencer in the Senator's honor.

Frank C. Stanley was a Democrat. Under his real name of William Stanley Grinstead, he was a Democratic member of the Board of Aldermen of his home town of West Orange, New Jersey, when he died in December, 1910. How he could have found time to record for a score of companies and still have a political career is hard to understand, but he did it.

As I said last month, 70 years have passed since that good man, William McKinley, who was one of the most popular of American Presidents, was shot down by a crack-brained assassin, and records of the last McKinley speech were issued to commemorate his death.

I wish we had genuine recordings of his voice, but since we don't have, I have felt it a duty to tell the real story of the controversial Columbia record, made nearly a year after he died, as I know it to be.

And those are my last words on the subject.

Postscript: September 16, 1971. — Well, after all, those were not quite my last words. I have just found, after not having seen it for many years, a letter that Frank Dorian wrote to the late William H. Seltsam on March 23, 1931, and which Seltsam agraph that pertains to Seltsam's presented to me. I will quote the paragraph that pertains to Seltsam's inquiry as to whether President McKinley made a Columbia record:

"We cannot find that we ever had any actual records of Mr. McKinley's voice, although at one time we made records of a great many other famous men of political or other public interest. We had, at one time, records reproducing some of Mr. McKinley's speeches, but the recording was done by one of our professional artists and the records themselves were never represented as the actual voice of McKinley."

The prosecution rests!

### CORRECTION

Reader, please add these lines at the beginning of the continued line on page 50.

After the quartet sings "Lead, Kindly Light," one of the hymns used at the funeral, a speaker, who sounds

### "AT The SIGN Of The CREST"

(Continued from page 141)

3854 Want ances. Benjamin T. Kinnicutt, (possibly of Barrington, R. I.) father of Henry Clay Kinnicutt b. Taunton, Mass. 1832 who md. 1st Ambrosine McAlvoy of Manchester, Eng.; and 2d Julia Hyde. Corres. inv. Pauline Graham, 2675 Simas, Pinole, Calif. 94564.

3855 ROGERS. Want info. Abigail, dau. John and Ann (Churchman) Rogers, born ca. 1641; md. John Richmond. Corres. inv. See 3854.

3856 PFELL. Want ances. Clara Louise Pfeil, to Charlotte, N.C. 1855 & md. George Herrlein 1864 in Philadelphia; Bladina (Pauline) Pfeil md. C. W. Query in Charlotte, N.C.; and Adolph Pfeil of Camden, N.J. Was their

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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# Baseball Recordings

By JIM WALSH

(Dedicated to my fellow baseball lover, Walter Jenkins, of Cedar Crest Farm, Rose Hill, Va.)

### I. A Baseball Zealot

This article is intended to give winter-time reading pleasure to that ancient and honorable group of sports addicts known as "The Hot Stove League."

My mother used to tell me that when I was an undersized little boy I was completely infatuated with baseball. Before I had learned the alphabet, I begged her to read me the newspaper accounts of the major league games, and when she had time she did, although she knew and cared nothing about "the national pastime."

Frequently, I would talk in my sleep about playing ball, she said. One night she heard me murmur "Shortstop!" then call the names of several players whom I admired.

Today, as an oversized "big boy," my love for the game continues. I am convinced that big league ball is as close to perfection as anything devised by mere humans very well can be. Unfortunately, I seldom have an opportunity to see it played, except on TV. But when I was in Chicago two years ago I went to see the White Sox play the Boston Red Sox and the Cubs take on the Atlanta Braves, even though I had undergone surgery only the month before and it was hard for me to climb up the ramps and find a seat. To make it worse, the White Sox game was played in almost freezing weather.

Because of this preoccupation with the game, I have been intending for more than 20 years to write an article listing records of songs and

sketches that have to do with baseball. However, I have kept postponing it because of the dread of going through a multitude of catalogs in search of the scattered titles which have some association with the sport.

Furthermore, compiling such a list requires an extensive knowledge of old popular songs, as many numbers that may be considered to come under the baseball heading have titles which indicate no connection.

At last, however, the job is done. But I must qualify this statement by saying I do not represent my list to contain every recording that refers to baseball. Undoubtedly there must be some titles I have missed. On the other hand, I have included others that probably almost no one but me

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would have recognized as having baseball significance.

Here is an example: After I had typed the list which concludes this article and thought the list complete, I lay down for a nap. I almost had gone to sleep when the words, "Bobby the Bomber," seemed to ring in my ears.

I sat upright and recalled a Columbia record made in 1918 by Byron G. Harlan of a song by that name. It told of how a baseball pitcher named Bobby went into military service and hurled bombs at the enemy with as much precision as he had tossed strikes across the plate.

Of all the songs ever written, I wonder if any are more forgotten than "Bobby the Bomber" and its companion on the record, "What Yankee Doodle Says He'll Do, He'll Do." However it was, in its way, a baseball number, so I got up, typed an insert, and added it to the list.

Again, who would consider "They're All Good American Names," which Bob Roberts, Eddie Morton, and Fred Duprez, recorded in 1911 had anything to do with baseball? Yet its second chorus consists of the names of big league managers and players of 60 years ago who were of Irish descent. I should like to point out, however, that "Walsh" really means "A native of Wales.")

I never have heard "They're All Good American Names" on a record, but that chorus is worth quoting from the *New Phonogram*.

"Jennings and McGann, Doyle and Callahan,

Hanlon, Scanlon, Kirk and Donlin, Devlin, Keeler, Walsh and Conlin. Joe McGinnity, Shea and Finnerty, Farrell, Carroll, Darrel and McAmes, Connie Mack and John McGraw, all together shout hurrah!  
They're all good American names."

Roberts recorded for Victor, and Edward M. Favor for Edison, an amusing song, "The Umpire Is A Most Unhappy Man." It describes the baseball arbiter as "a cross between a bullfrog and a goat; he has a mouth that is flannel-lined, with brass tubes in his throat. Work like his is merely play; he doesn't even have to ask for all the things that come his way."

One of the cleverest and most amusing baseball songs had a title that would not suggest the game except to initiated fans. It was "Brother Noah Gave Out Checks for Rain," written in 1907 by Arthur Longbrake and recorded by Arthur Collins.

Couched in that deplorable "coon song" style, it told of a Negro church with a leaky roof that let rain drop on the parson's head. A deacon suggested that the church sponsor a baseball game to obtain funds with

which to have the roof repaired.

When the deacon's wife remonstrated that baseball was "sinful," the deacon quoted Scripture to prove it was played in Biblical times. The chorus, interspersed with shouts of "Strike one!" "Strike two!" "Foul ball!" "You're out!" and "Slide, doggone ya, slide!" goes:

"Eve stole first and Adam second;  
St. Peter umpired the game.  
Rebecca went to the well with a pitcher, while Ruth in the field won fame.  
Goliath was struck out by David; a base hit made on Abel by Cain.  
The Prodigal Son made one home run; Brother Noah gave out checks for rain!"

Probably it could be contended that Longbrake had the gift of prophecy and that in writing, "Ruth in the field won fame," he was looking long years into the future and seeing "Babe" Ruth at the height of his achievement. Of course, however, "Babe" was more celebrated for his stick work at the plate than for his exploits in right field.

Collins' incomparably unctuous delivery of this classical composition could not be bettered.

"Der Babe" himself was called on to do a bit of recording. After he clouted 54 home runs in 1920, the Pathe' Company engaged him to make a Perfect record of "Babe Ruth's Home Run Story."

The resulting disc was mostly a piece of very obvious clowning, and one or two hearings would be enough for the average listener. It appears not to have been sold largely, but a magazine article years ago said Ruth was paid \$8,000 for making it.

According to the story, he stuck the check into his inside coat pocket, went home, and changed suits. Since his memory was notoriously bad, he didn't think of the check any more until he wore the suit again months later and found the check still in the pocket.

In 1928 Perfect had Ruth and his team mate, "Lou" Gehrig, make a double-faced record, "Babe and Lou, the Home Run Kings." In it "Babe" appears self-assured and confident, but Gehrig seems nervous and his voice trembles. This also is a piece of forced comedy, and the record seldom is found. Some mail order dealers ask \$30 for it, which I consider too much.

A year earlier, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare had made, for Victor and Edison, records of a song called "That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness," in

which Jones says his idea of happiness is to be at a baseball game, because "When the bags are full it's great, And 'Babe' Ruth walks to the plate." Ruth's name, at least, is used on the Victor, but on the Edison he is referred to only as "the Home Run King."

## II. "Casey" and "Take Me Out"

The most famous rhymed verse with a baseball theme is "Casey at the Bat," written in the 1880's by a San Francisco newspaper man, Ernest L. Thayer. By the same token, the best known popular song based on the pastime is "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," published in 1908, with words by Jack Norworth and music by Albert Von Tilzer.

My old friend Jack Norworth was a "fan." Legend says, however, that Von Tilzer never even had seen a game when he composed the irresistible waltz tune.

It was a proud moment for the young Victor Company when it announced that De Wolf Hopper, a famous stage star, had been "persuad-

(Continued on page 48)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued on page 38)

ed" to record his famous recitation of "Casey at the Bat." The back cover of the September, 1906, Record Supplement was devoted to a "plug" for the Hopper disc, which was described as "the most life-like rendition that could be imagined."

Hopper had recited the Thayer poem thousands of times on the stage. It was said to have become so much a habit that sometimes he didn't even realize what he was saying. Nevertheless, he recited it "to the second," as some of his admirers proved by using stop watches.

Despite the claim about "the most lifelong rendition" Victor had Hopper remake "Casey" by a new process in 1909, and the July *Voice of the Victor* assured dealers the new record was so much better than the old that "you will be simply astonished." This epitomizes the history of the recording industry. At all stages of its progress, it has claimed perfection, only to maintain, a few years later, that new developments have made the old methods obsolete.

After electric recording was introduced, Victor engaged Hopper to rerecord his famous recitation by the new process on August 25, 1926. It was coupled with a football number, "O'Toole's Touchdown."

I never have heard the electric record, but, although Hopper is remembered today almost entirely for "Casey at the Bat," I consider his



"RAGTIME BOB." Bob Roberts made records of two baseball songs, "The Umpire is a most Unhappy Man" and "They're All Good American Names."



ALL-TIME GREATS. Lou Gehrig (left) and Babe Ruth (right), made a Perfect record in 1928. They joked about their home run exploits.

acoustic version to be execrable and more proof that vaudeville and musical comedy performers usually, as the phonograph companies themselves admitted, made bad records. Hopper "hams" the Thayer poem unmercifully, and indulges in wild burlesque where a reasonable amount of restraint would be more effective, I think.

For almost a decade "Casey" stayed in the Victor catalog in single-faced form. Eventually though, it was doubled with a "reply," "The Man Who Fanned Casey." This was recited by Digby Bell, another actor who was a fanatical rooter for the New York Giants.

Bell also did the same recitation for an Edison cylinder, as well as another baseball specialty, "The Tough Kid on the Right Field Fence." "The Man Who Fanned Casey" was, at first, also single-faced, but in 1909 it was coupled with an Ada Jones number, "I'm in Love With the Slide Trombone." Still later, it was paired with "Casey."

"O'Toole's Touchdown" reminds me that in the early days of recording songs and sketches about football were much less common than those concerning baseball. Football in that era was a comparatively minor sport, with its interest largely concentrated in college students and graduates, and had little or no attraction for the average man.

Times have changed. Among early

football records I may mention Berliner No. 691 "Football," a comic talk made by George Graham before 1900; Columbia cylinder No. 82910, issued in April, 1906, "Football," a song by "Frank Williams," who was really Dan W. Quinn; Victor No. 5701, and Edison Amberol No. 182, "The Day of the Game," recorded in 1909 by the Peerless Quartet; and Victor No. 19468, issued late in 1924, on which Frank Crumit sang two of his own compositions, "Buckeye Battle Cry," and "Hi-Hi-O-Hi-O." This record was intended primarily for sale in Columbus, Ohio, where Ohio State University, which Crumit had attended, is situated.

### III. "Take Me Out to the Ball Game"

Although "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" has been, so to speak, the "national anthem" of organized baseball virtually from the date of its publication, I do not consider it the cleverest baseball song. Norworth's words seem to me crude.

The swinging, lilting tune, however, is enough to keep it perennially popular. The chorus describes the unfailing charm of the sport, mingled with references to "peanuts and Crackerjack." (The verses are seldom sung.) For this reason, when *Variety* asked me in 1955 to select the 10 greatest popular songs of the past 50 years I felt justified in making the Norworth-Von Tilzer "standard" one of my list.

(Continued on page 52)

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10. 2½" t. silver bell w/kewpie standing on top of it. Sgd. Kewpie & Rose O'Neill in back of Kewpie. \$45.
11. 1¼" t. silver Kewpie charm, sgd Kewpie & Rose O'Neill on back of base. Loops to put on chain or charm bracelet. \$35.
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- 5S) 13" t. bisque socket head, blue glass stationary eyes, open mouth, very old body, straight arms and legs jointed at shoulders and hips, honey blonde human hair wig, nicely dressed, unusual mark. Mkd., R.A. dated 1909. \$35.00
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- 9S) 18" t. molded black hair china shoulder head, blue painted eyes, red eyelids, closed mouth, original cloth body, china arms, dressed. \$48.00
- 10S) 14" t. molded black hair china shoulder head, blue painted eyes, closed mouth, original cloth body, china arms and legs, right foot crack, undressed. \$38.00
- 11S) 16" t. bisque shoulder head, brown glass stationary eyes, open mouth, blonde wig, kid body, compo. arms, undressed. Mkd. A. M. Germany. \$42.00
- 12S) 20" t. bisque shoulder head, brown glass stationary eyes, open mouth, brown human hair wig, pierced ears, kid body, bisque arms, except pretty, dressed, unusual mk. Mkd. D.E.P. L&H. \$65.00
- 13S) 23" t. bisque shoulder head, blue sleep eyes, open mouth, brown wig, kid body, celluloid arms, dressed, Mkd. A.M. (Marked on body, Miss Millionaire). \$48.00
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 48)

The Victor disc of "Take Me Out" was announced as a "special" for October, 1908. It was issued at that time, of course, to "tie in" with the World Series. Sung by the Haydn Quartet, it is only fair, for the Haydn's singing style was not adapted to the serio-comic type of song.

The Columbia, by Harvey Hindermyer, is dull, I think, for again the singer was not suited to the song. Someone like Billy Murray, the most rock-ribbed baseball fan of all recording artists, would have been much better. I have not heard the Edison cylinder by Edward Meeker or the Zon-o-phone by "Fred Lambert" (Frank C. Stanley), but both may be better renditions than the Victor and Columbia.

One of the best records of "Take Me Out" is an electrically recorded Columbia by Dan Hornsby's Quartet, issued in 1929 as part of the "Familiar Tunes, Old and New" series. The Decca rendition by Frank Luther, Zora Layman, and the Century Quartet is also excellent.

In 1909, Al Von Tilzer, who knew and cared so little about baseball, produced another song, "Did He Run?" In it the pastime is referred to. The words were by Junie McCree.

As sung on the Columbia record, the second verse and chorus perhaps refer to the most famous incident of baseball history, the game played near the close of the 1908 season between the New York Giants and the Chicago Cubs. In it the 20-year-old Frederick Charles Merkle neglected to touch second base when the Giants' winning run crossed the plate.

Eventually the neglect resulted in the Giants losing the pennant and gave young Mr. Merkle the nickname of "Bonehead" by which he ever afterwards was known, but I consider it unfair treatment because Merkle, who still may be alive, was an intelligent player. The song also ridiculed William Jennings Bryan's unsuccessful efforts to beat William Howard Taft for the American presidency.

After more than a generation of strained listening, I found myself unable to understand all the words of the chorus, sung in unison by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet. But then James R. Smart, reference librarian of the Recorded Sound Section of the Library of Congress, came to my rescue. He found the sheet music and copied for me the words which I quote as sung on the record:

(See page 53)

HOBBIES Magazine reserves the right to reject any advertising.



"A ball game was played at the  
Polo Grounds  
In Nineteen Hundred and Eight,  
'Tween the Giants and the Cubs  
one day,  
And it sealed the Giants'  
fate, fate, fate.  
They had the game in their hands  
all right,  
With a man on first and third,  
Then a hit brought in the tally  
to win,  
But Merkle's brain was blurred!  
CHORUS:  
Did he run? Did he run to second,  
as he should that day,  
Or did Mr. Merkle semi-circle away?  
Did he run? Did he run?  
A playwright grabbed his ink  
and quill  
And wrote a play called  
"The Man Stood Still."

Several other companies also made records of "Did He Run?" I haven't heard them, however, except the Victor which, for no apparent reason, omits the baseball portion, the best part of the song.

Jim Smart, I should add, says it is printed as an "extra verse and chorus" and not a part of the song proper. He also said Merkle is not referred to by name in the sheet music but is called "a Giant" and "Mr. Giant," and the title of the play is given as "The Man That Stood Still." (I wonder if there really was such a play?) I think all the changes made by Frank Stanley and his quartet associates are for the better, even though they may have caused Merkle a little additional embarrassment.

At any rate, I haven't included the Victor "Did He Run?" in the list of baseball recordings. I have listed Edison Amberol cylinder No. 45, "Waltz Medley," though, because it ends with "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

#### IV. Comic Monologs and Sketches

Perhaps, glancing over that list, you may wonder why two Murry K. Hill monologs are mentioned. "A Talk on Grand Opera" gets in because Hill begins: "Ladies and gentlemen, tonight I'll sing you a little grand opera — from the opera, 'William Tell.' Written by Wagner. The great Wagner, greatest shortstop that ever lived."

It's hard to see where Mr. Hill got his idea that Richard Wagner (which he didn't pronounce "Vaagner"!), rather than Gioacchini Rossini, composed "William Tell." The Wagner he referred to, however, was "Hans" Wagner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, who still is considered the greatest shortstop.

"Thro' the Hole in the Fence" compared life to a baseball game. It likewise referred to Wagner, saying "The Dutchman, I hear, gets ten thousand a year." But Hill pointed out the moral that in another 10 years, when Wagner's batting eye had died and he had slowed up, the only way he would be able to see a ball game would be by paying admission, or by peeping through "the hole in the fence."

Of all comic monologs about baseball, the one called "Uncle Josh Playing (or "Plays") a Game of



FAMED MONOLOGIST. Digby Bell. Vaudeville comedian and baseball "fan" recorded "The Man Who Fanned Casey" for Victor and Edison.

Baseball," was recorded the most widely. It is likely Cal Stewart made several records of it which I have missed.

"The Baseball Girl," by the vaudeville comedienne, Ray Cox, which has been previously mentioned in HOBBIES, was one of the funniest. Miss Cox took the part of a female "rooter" who arrived during the seventh inning and vehemently expressed her displeasure with everything about the game, especially the umpire, portrayed by Ed Meeker.

The only other baseball record by a woman was "That Fascinating Baseball Slide," which Elsie Janis, of fragrant memory, composed and sang on a 1912 Victor. It told the story of a damsel named Mamie Lee who loved a pitcher, "Spitball Mike."

In "Jimmie and Maggie," Ada Jones sang part of "It's Great at a Baseball Game," and Billy Murray recorded it for Zon-o-phone.

The two-part Columbia record of "The Bully Song," has Adeleyn Hood ask Vernon Dalhart: "Papa, what's all dem out yonder with red, white and blue caps on?"

He replies: "Dem's baseball boys, gal!"

"Abe Kabibble at the Ball Game" features Harry Hershfield's cartoon character of that name. It is in Yiddish dialect. Hershfield, who still is living at this writing, was, for years, one of the comedians on the "Can You Top This?" radio program with "Senator" Ford and my late friend, Joe Laurie, Jr.

Joe once planned to have me move my record collection to New York and join him in putting on a disc jockey show. He recorded "Casey's Revenue" for Decca around 1938, with Taylor Holmes' recitation of "Casey at the Bat" for its pairing, as part of a baseball album.



CAL STEWART, FAMED MONOLOGIST. Made several records of "Uncle Josh Playing Baseball."

A very funny record is the electrically recorded Broadway, "Axel at the Ball Game," by Axel Christensen, who was known best as a pianist and had a school in Chicago for teaching ragtime and jazz styles of piano playing. Christensen impersonates a deep-voiced Swede with a thick accent who tells of playing his first baseball game.

He calls a batter a "clunker" and

(Continued on page 118)

Recitation by De Wolf Hopper  
Twelve-inch size, \$1.00  
31559 Casey at the Bat

De Wolf Hopper is the most popular of comedians. Always funny, he is more entertaining than ever in his new opera, "Happyland," in which he is now appearing. Mr. Hopper's delightfully humorous curtain speeches are not the least part of his performances, and no audience ever lets him escape without laughing. He is so compelling that he repeats "Casey at the Bat." No one could ever recite this perfect gem but Hopper — that would be impossible. Certainly after hearing him no living man should ever attempt it.

Mr. Hopper has been persuaded to make us a twelve-inch record of this famous baseball classic, and it is the most life-like reproduction which could be imagined. Shut your eyes and you can imagine the whole scene — five thousand of Mumtaz's fans yelling for their favorite — the redoubtable and mighty Casey standing proudly at the bat — the pitcher gripping the ball — then a moment of hushed expectancy — and then . . . and then the tragedy begins!

Let us draw the veil — suffice to say that you can actually feel the breeze on your face when the great Casey fans the air as he strikes out!

Mr. Hopper is so much pleased with this record that he has willingly agreed never at any time to make this selection for any other company than the Victor.



IMMORTAL RECITATION. The back cover of the Victor Record Supplement for September 1906, was devoted to a "plug" for De Wolf Hopper's rendition of "Casey at the Bat."



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

says: "And then the clunker he clunk the ball and 20 thousand people yell 'Home run!' Then the umpire say, 'Foul ball!' and 20 thousand people say 'Aw, hal!'"

Axel himself clunked a ball into the stands and stood watching it. The spectators screamed, "Run home, Axel, run home!"

But he called back: "Why in hal should I run home? I got money to pay for the ball!"

In "We're the Sunday Drivers," Billy Murray and Monroe Silver are stopped for speeding. They explain to the "cop," also portrayed by Billy, that they are on their way to the baseball game but "haven't got their tickets yet."

The officer retorts: "I'll give you a ticket right now!"

The same idea is used in "If I'm

Wrong Sue Me" in which Billy again is going to a game and is given a ticket for speeding. Compton Mackenzie said in *The Gramophone* that "We're the Sunday Drivers" This obviously was suggested by Harry Tate's famous English music hall sketch, "Motoring." However, it wasn't as funny as the original, he said.

I never have heard "An Englishman at a Ball Game," but I should like to find a copy of this little-known record. "Flanagan and the Reilleys" is a laughable Irish sketch.

### V. Odds and Ends

"Slide, Kelly, Slide" has been included on the assumption that it refers to Michael Joseph "King" Kelly, a star player for the Chicago National League team. He died in 1894, around the time the wax cylinder was made.

"Slide, Kelly, Slide," which Al Bernard and Ernest Hare recorded for Edison in 1921, is a different song. Its hero is a virtuoso trombone play-

er. A song with a title that suggests baseball but has nothing to do with it is "Strike Out, McCracken," recorded by Collins and Harlan for several companies in 1903. It tells of McCracken, a sailor, who got into predicaments and had to strike out for the shore.

One record that never was issued deserves mention. It is "The Christy Mathewson Memorial Song," written in honor of the Giants' great pitcher, known as "Big Six," who died October 7, 1925, of tuberculosis. On August 24, 1926, the Peerless Quartet, with Frank Banta at the piano, made five attempts to record an acceptable master of the memorial tribute, but was unsuccessful. On September 9, three more attempts were made, but the record remained unavailable to the public. Early electric recording was tricky and uncertain.

A favorite song in Byron G. Harlan's recorded repertoire was "Can't You Take It Back and Change It for a Boy?" in which a tot objects to a baby sister, "'cause I'd rather have a little baby brother who could play a game of ball with me."

Another record that deserves mention for its baseball associations, is Victor No. 17093, "Remember Me to My Old Gal." It was sung by the late Walter Van Brunt and issued in July, 1912.

The supplement said:

"The first selection on this double might be called a baseball ballad, although it is a sentimental number with no reference to our national game, because it was written by George Moriarity, captain of the Detroit, and introduced by "Chief" (Charles Albert) Bender. ("Jack") Coombs and ("Cy") Morgan, who made a great hit in their vaudeville sketch during the past winter. The boys can entertain an audience almost as well as they play ball."

The record must have been a poor seller. I never have found it.

Baseball enthusiasts who would like to specialize in collecting records about the pastime, will find exceptional value in Decca Album No. A-120, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." On three 10-inch discs Frank Luther, Zora Layman, and the Century Quartet sing the title song twice.

They also are heard in:

"It's Great at a Baseball Game,"

"Home Run Bill,"

"Take Your Girl to a Ball Game!"

"Let's Get The Umpire's Goat,"

written by Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth,

"I Can't Miss That Ball Game,"

"Oh, Didn't It Rain?"

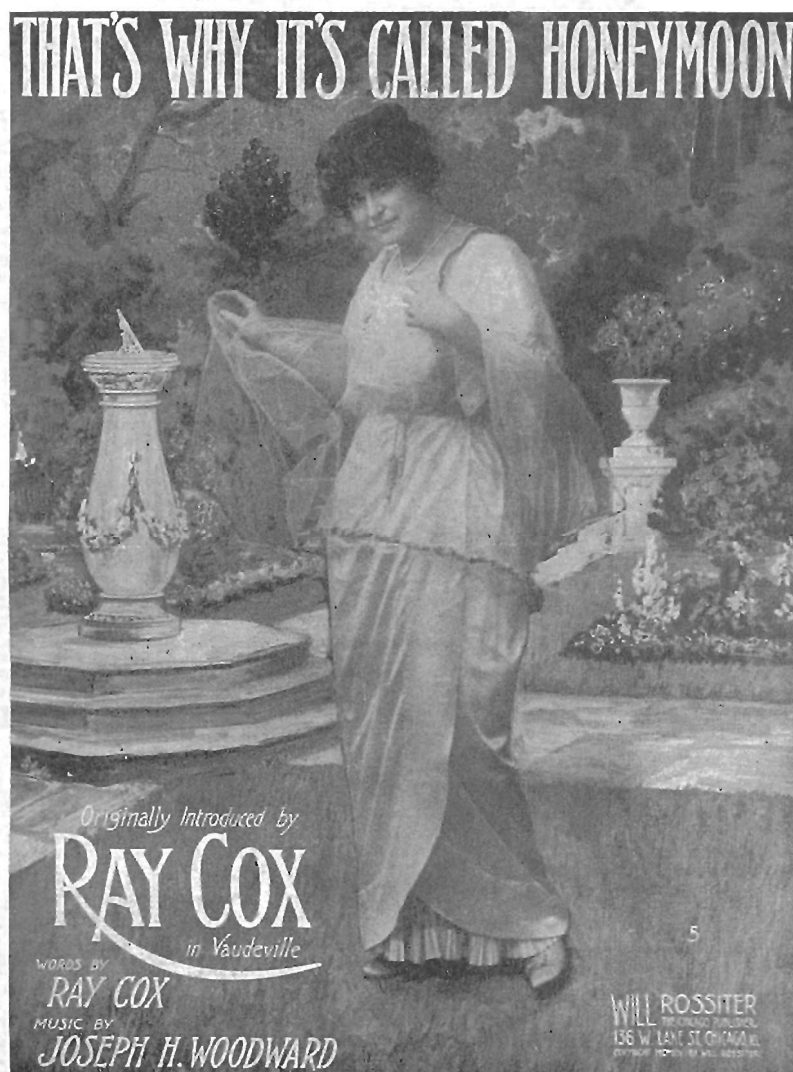
"That Baseball Glide," by Andrew B. Sterling and Harry Von Tilzer,

"He's a Fan-Fan-Fan,"

"I Want to Go to the Ball Game."

Mostly these songs are forgotten now. The album likewise includes the 12-inch recitations by Holmes and Laurie.

In comparatively recent years there have been a few recordings of baseball songs. I have "Joltin' Joe DiMaggio," by Les Brown's Orchestra. Also, I have stashed away somewhere



"THE BASEBALL GIRL." Ray Cox, vaudeville comedienne, made her famous record of "The Baseball Girl" for Edison in 1909. As this sheet music cover, reprinted by courtesy of Allen G. Debus, shows, she was also a song writer. "That's Why It's Called Honeymoon" was published in 1913.

a copy of "Did You See Jackie Robinson Hit That Ball?" but can't remember the label or who recorded it. I don't have "Leave Us Go Root for the Dodgers, Rogers." I have made no effort to include 33 and 45 RPM recordings.

Of course many songs have been written about baseball, but not recorded. One of these, published more than 60 years ago, is, "You've Made a Home Run With Me." The words were by Thomas J. Gray and the music by Edna Williams. Herbert Marks, president of the Edward B. Marks Music Co., sent me two copies of it. On the cover of one he wrote: "For Jim Walsh, connoisseur of songs and records and an all around good sport. Herb Marks."

I wonder if the Baseball Museum at Cooperstown, N.Y., has a collection of sheet music and records of baseball interest. If not, it would be a project worth while for somebody who combines love of record-collecting with a passion for baseball to try to put such a collection together and present it to the Museum.

I would contribute my own baseball records, but they already have been given in my will to the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. If an effort should be made to gather records for Cooperstown I hope that what I have written will prove helpful.

#### Baseball Recordings

Note: The figures in parentheses, following the record number, indicate the approximate year the disc or cylinder was issued.

#### North American Brown Wax Cylinder

146 (1893) Slide, Kelly Slide. (George J. Gaskin.)



**FABULOUS HURLER.** Christy Mathewson, the legendary "Big Six" pitcher of the New York Giants, died in 1925. About a year later the Peerless Quartet recorded a "Christy Mathewson Memorial Song" for Victor, but the record never was issued.



**BELOVED COMEDIENNE.** Elsie Janis, one of the best loved musical comedy stars, composed "That Fascinating Baseball Slide" and recorded it for Victor in 1912.

#### Edison Two-Minute Wax Cylinders

- 3881 (1897) Uncle Josh Playing A Game of Baseball (Cal Stewart.)
- 9352 (1906) The Umpire is a Most Unhappy Man. (Edward M. Favor.)
- 9642 (1907) Brother Noah Gave Out Checks for Rain. (Arthur Collins.)
- 9889 (1908) Cubs on Parade March. (Edison Military Band.)
- 9926 (1908) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. (Edward Meeker.)
- 10139 (1909) Did He Run? (Edward Meeker)
- 10168 (1909) Uncle Josh at a Baseball Game. (Stewart.)
- 10172 (1909) The Fans' March. (John J. Kimmel.)

#### Edison Grand Concert Cylinder

- B129 (1900) Uncle Josh at a Game of Baseball. (Stewart.)

#### Edison Amberol

##### Four-Minute Cylinders

- 4 (1908) Flanagan and the Reilleys at a Baseball Game. (Steve Porter.)
- 45 (1908) Waltz Medley. (New York Military Band.)
- 156 (1909) Tough Kid on the Right Field Fence. (Digby Bell.)
- 196 (1909) Baseball Girl. (Ray Cox.)
- 430 (1910) The Man Who Fanned Casey. (Digby Bell.)
- 722 (1911) They're All Good American Names. (Bob Roberts.)

#### Edison Blue Amberol

##### Four-Minute Cylinder

- 1747 (1913) Baseball Girl. (Ray Cox.)

#### Columbia Two-Minute Wax Cylinder

- 14005 (1897) Uncle Josh at a Baseball Game. (Stewart.)

#### COLUMBIA GRAND CYLINDER

- 14041 (1899) Uncle Josh's Football and Baseball Game.

#### U. S. Everlasting Two-Minute Cylinder

- 372 (1911) They're All Good American Names. (Fred Duprez.)

#### Indestructible (Columbia)

- .... Two-Minute Cylinders
- 923 (1908) Uncle Josh at a Ball Game. (Stewart.)
- 1063 (1909) Did He Run? (Peerless Quartet.)
- 1065 (1909) Fan's March (Kimmel.)
- 1137 (1910) Blitz and Blatz at the Ball Game. (Duprez and Roberts.)
- 1433 (1911) They're All Good American Names. (Roberts.)

#### Victor 10-Inch Single-Faced Records

- 2348 (1903) Uncle Josh Playing Baseball. (Stewart.) (Also 8-inch.)
- 4746 (1906) The Umpire is a Most Unhappy Man. (Roberts.)
- 4865 (1906) Jimmy and Maggie at a Baseball Game. (Ada Jones and Len Spencer.)
- 5204 (1907) Brother Noah Gave Out Checks for Rain. (Collins.)
- 5510 (1908) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. (Haydn Quartet.)
- 60090 (1912) That Fascinating Baseball Slide. (Purple Label.) (Elsie Janis.)

(Continued on next page)



FAMOUS HUMORIST. Joe Laurie, Jr., star vaudeville and radio comedian, recorded "Casey's Revenge" as part of a Baseball Album for Decca. One of his partners in the "Can You Top This?" program, Harry Hershfield, made a record of "Abe Kabibble at the Ball Game" for Columbia.

#### Victor 12-Inch Single-Faced Records

- 31559 (1906) Casey at the Bat. (De Wolf Hopper.)  
 31733 (1909) The Man Who Fanned Casey. (Bell.)

#### Victor 10-Inch Double-Faced Records

- 16228 (1909) Uncle Josh Playing Baseball. Reverse: Uncle Josh on a Fifth Avenue Bus. (Stewart.)  
 16241 (1909) Brother Noah Gave Out Checks for Rain. (Collins.) Reverse: Dew Drops Intermezzo. Bell solo by Chris Chapman.  
 16837 (1911) A Bit of Grand Opera. (Murry K. Hill) Reverse: I Love It. (American Quartet.)  
 16844 (1911) Thro' the Hole in the Fence. (Hill.) Reverse: Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine. (Ada Jones and American Quartet.)  
 16938 (1909) They're All Good American Names. (Eddie Morton.) Reverse: If He Comes In I'm Goin' Out. (Morton.)  
 16954 (1911) A Bit of Grand Opera. Reverse: Thro' the Hole in the Fence. (Both by Hill.)  
 17377 (1913) That Baseball Rag. (Collins.) Reverse: Rolling. (Peerless Quartet.)  
 19469 (1924) Oh, Didn't It Rain! Reverse: No One Knows What It's

- All About. (Both by Frank Crumit.)  
 19741 (1925) The National Game March. Reverse: Black Horse Troop. (Both by John Philip Sousa's Band.)  
 20500 (1927) That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness. Reverse: Cock-a-Doodle (Both by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.)  
 20517 (1927) We're the Sunday Drivers. (Billy Murray's Trio.) Reverse: Oh, How We Love Our Alma Mater! (Billy Murray and Monroe Silver.)

#### Victor 12-Inch Double-Faced Records

- 35139 (1909) Man Who Fanned Casey. (Bell.) Reverse: I'm in Love With the Slide Trombone. (Ada Jones.)  
 35290 (1913) Casey at the Bat. (Hopper.) Reverse: Man Who Fanned Casey. (Bell.)  
 35490 (1916) Boy in the Bleachers. Reverse: My Possum Hunt. (Both by Ralph Bingham.)  
 35626 (1917) Home Run Bill's Defense. Reverse: Hold Up at Buck Run. (Both by Bingham.)  
 35783 (1926) Casey at the Bat. Reverse: O'Toole's Touchdown. (Both by Hopper.)

#### 9-Inch Single-Faced Zon-O-Phone Records

- 5848 (1903) Uncle Josh Playing Baseball. (Stewart.)

#### 10-Inch Single-Faced Zon-O-Phone Records

- 493 (1906) It's Great at a Baseball Game. (Murray.)  
 1699 (1908) Cubs on Parade. (Zon-o-phone Concert Band.)  
 1185 (1908) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. (Fred Lambert.)

#### 10-Inch Double-Faced Zon-O-Phone Records

- 5184 (1909) The Fan March. Reverse: Tipperary March. (Accordion solos by John J. Kimmel.)  
 5371 (1909) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. Reverse: Bird on Nellie's Hat. (Both by Fred Lambert.)

#### Columbia 10-Inch Single-Faced Records

- 71 (1902) Uncle Josh at a Baseball Game. (Stewart.)  
 3917 (1908) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. (Harvey Hindermeyer.)

#### Columbia 10-Inch Double-Faced Records

- A286 (1908) Uncle Josh At a Ball Game. (Stewart.) Reverse: Every Little Bit Helps. (Jones and Spencer.)  
 A586 (1908) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. Reverse: Come to the Land of Bohemia. Both by Hindermeyer.)  
 A664 (1909) Did He Run? (Columbia Quartet.) Reverse: The Yama Yama Man (Ada Jones and Chorus.)  
 A2587 (1918) Bobby, the Bomber. (Byron G. Harlan) Reverse: What Yankee Doodle Says He'll Do. He'll Do. (Peerless Quartet.)  
 A2907 (1919) Abe Kabibble At the Ball Game. Reverse: Abe Kabibble Dictates a Letter. (Both by Harry Hershfield.) The "ball game" side was recorded in abbreviated form on a Little Wonder.  
 15302D (1928) The Bully Song — Part 1 and 2. (Vernon Dalhart, assisted by Adelyne Hood.)  
 15440D (1929) Take Me Out to the Ball Game. Reverse: Hinky Dinky Doo. Both by Dan Hornsby Quartet.)

#### Edison 10-Inch Double-Faced Diamond Discs

- 51973 (1927) That's My Hap-Hap-Happiness. Reverse: I've Never Seen a Straight Banana. (Both by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.)  
 52611 (1929) If I'm Wrong Sue Me. (Billy Murray and His Merry Melody Men.) Reverse: My Old Man. (Bob Pierce.)

#### Okeh 10-Inch Double-Faced Records

- 40305 (1924) Oh, Didn't It Rain! and, Dear Old Lady. (Both by Ernest Hare.)  
 6377 (1938?) Joltin' Joe DiMaggio, and, Nickel Serenade. (Both by Les Brown and His Orchestra.)

#### Gennett 10-Inch Double-Faced Record

- 5092 (1926) An Englishman at a Ball Game. Reverse: An Englishman's Idea of American Wit. (Both by Harry A. James.)

#### Perfect 10-Inch Double-Faced Records

- 022443 (1920) "Babe" Ruth's Home Run Story By "Babe Himself." ("Babe" Ruth.) Reverse: Abadele Fox Trot. (Duane Sawyer and His Novelty Orchestra.)  
 12382 (1928) "Babe" and "Lou," the Home Run Twins. (Parts 1 and 2, by "Babe" Ruth and "Lou" Gehrig.)

(Continued on next page)



(Continued from preceding page)

**Broadway 10-Inch  
Double-Faced Record**

8079-A (1926) Axel at the Ball Game.  
Reverse: Axel Receives a  
Letter. (Both sides by Axel  
Christensen.)

**Decca Album of Baseball  
Songs and Recitations**

Album A-120 (1939) Records No. 3210,  
3211, and 3212. (By  
Frank Luther, Zora  
Layman, and the  
Century Quartet.)

**Decca 12-Inch Double-Faced Record**

15048 (1939) Casey at the Bat. (Taylor  
Holmes.) (Included in Album  
A-120.) Reverse: Casey's  
Revenge. (Joe Laurie, Jr.)

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2. LENOX BELLEEK: Palette mark (CAC) Wine jug, Green w. scene of Monk on side. Elderly man other, A rare beauty! -----\$65.00
3. CUSTARD: Geneva Spooner, Red & Green for Christmas. (Much other Custard, both souv. and non-souv.) -----\$40.00
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5. CHOICE AMBERINA: 11" Vase-decorated with gold leaves & 2 enamelled insects (probably Moser or Webb). Swirl pattern. Bulbous bottom ruffled top. Never again this quality at -----\$175.00
6. GREEN DELAWARE: Creamer & sugar w. gold metal collars & handles - never seen any like this. (Lots of Emerald green glass.) What do you need? pr. \$75.00
7. STEUBEN VDS: Creamer & Sugar with lovely Hawkes engraving & Sterling pedestals: sgd Hawkes - My Pride & Joy! (Other choice Steuben) -----pr. \$175.00
8. RSP Red Mark 10" bowl, molded flower edges, decoration of pink and white roses with fuschia shadings. -----\$75.00
9. COLLECTION RUBY SOUV.: 34 pcs. collected by date from 1893 thru 1923 (2 dates missing). Includes tumblers, mugs, punch cups, wines, toothpicks, pitchers, etc. We scoured the hi-ways & by-ways to ferret out these consecutive dates, proudly present it for -----\$450.00 (Other Ruby Flashed; both souvenir and non-souvenir)
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12. CARVED IVORY FAN: with Chantilly Lace -----\$20.00
13. SANDWICH XMAS SALTS. In very rare Amethyst -----pr. \$65

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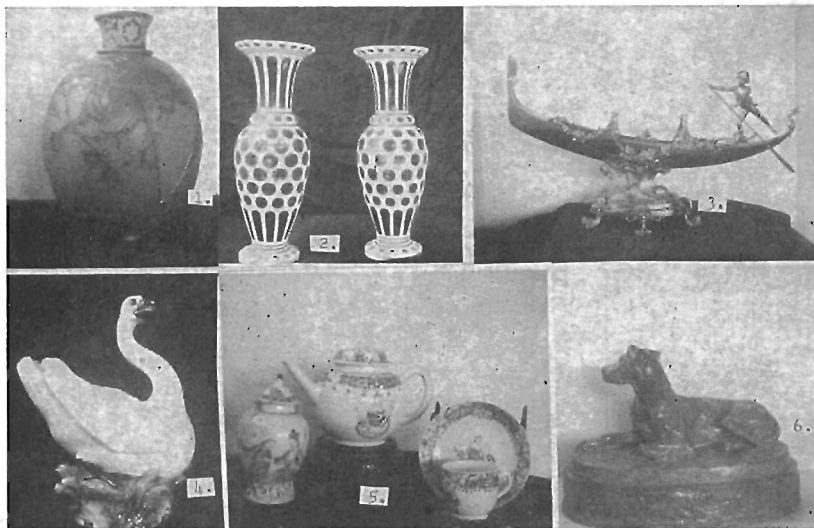
1. "States" open sugar, clear. 4" dia., 3" h. \$9.50.
  2. Swirl and Ball creamer, spooner, cov. sugar. Minor roughness inside cover, set \$40
  3. Rosette jelly compote. Open. 4 1/2" h. \$14.
  4. Roseville double vase. 5 1/4" h. Brown, tan and green. Floral center attached to vases. 3 1/4" long. \$14.
  5. Dresser tray. Royal Saxony. Germany. 7 1/4" x 10 1/2". Raised gr. leaf with raised grape decor. floral center, open work edge. Much gold. \$24.
  6. Schwarzenhammer, Bavaria G. U. T. D. plate. 9 1/2" dia. Autumn leaf and grape decor with gold, open handles. \$14.50.
  7. H. P. Nippon china shoe. 3 1/2" l., 1 1/4" h. \$6.75
  8. Northwoods Diamond Point vase. 10" h., Green. Lovely Irid. \$21.50.
  9. Dietz police lantern. 7 1/4" h. orig. \$27.50.
- Postage and ins. extra. Excess refunded. Stamp please, Wis. res. add 4% sales tax. do

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1. 11" Royal Flemish vase, gilt griffon & dragon front & back, stained sections of maroon & raisin subdivided by gold tracings w. Clusters of stars in between. Four figures.
2. Pr. 12 1/2" cranberry Sandwich glass overlay vases, bulls eye faceting all over, one in a lifetime find.
3. 15" Victorian center piece of gondola complete w. gondolier, ruby glass liner, white metal double dolphin stem, the rest heavy brass w. elaborate ormolu trim, a true attention getter.
4. Meissen statuette of swan after J. J. Kaendler, 19th century, nestling amidst bull rushes w. high twisted neck, turned head, marked w. crossed swords in underglaze blue.
5. Jesuit Lowestoft teapot & c/s of Juno & her peacock, tea canister has couple pouring wine & angel w. flyswish.
6. Handsome 15" bronze sculpture signed Giraud, verdi-gris patina, base frieze of wild beasts in combat w. hounds.

dc



Left to Right:

Fabulous, sgd. Clark, Tray, 15".

Pair Royal Worcester Figurines "Water Carriers," purple mark Worcester shot enamels.

Rare Steuben acid cut back green on yellow jade 6 1/4" h., sgd.

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2. Grover Cleveland portrait hanging plate, has eagles, flags, dates. Back-edge flakes. \$28.
3. Large print Ulysses S. Grant, "West-point to Appomattox." \$85.
4. Xmas tree ornament, (no color) old staffordshire, spaniel in belted uniform, saluting. \$8.
5. Frozen Charlotte dolls (2) 4 1/4" and 3 1/4", high-glaze china, black hair. Old and mint, each \$25.
6. Miniature bisque figure, little girl in Empire style dress, bonnet, holding fan. 2 1/2" French. \$20.
7. Cut glass tooth-pick holder, footed. stemmed. \$22.50.
8. Souvenir booklet, (hard-back) "New Haven and Yale College" 1886. Ten pages, 45 scenes (from lithographs) each page worthy of framing. Binding loose. \$20.
9. Art glass. Pink basket amber twisted handle, Amberina bowl, applied handles, Durand low bowl, pinched edge. Write for photos. dp

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**SPOONERS:** Stippled medallion (flint), \$17.50, 101 - \$10, Loop & Fans, \$10, Beaded dewdrop, \$10.50, Dakota (Plain) \$12, Minerva, \$16, Fleur de Lis & drape, \$9, Cottage, \$7.50, Tokyo (Opal), \$13.50, Psyche & cupid, \$21, Chandelier, \$10, Swan, \$14.50, Massachussets, \$9.

**CREAMERS:** Loop & Fans, \$10.50, Paneled cane, \$10.50, Sunk Daisy, \$9.50, Block & Fleat, \$9.50, Bungalow, \$10.50, Paneled Forget-me-not, \$16, Minerva, \$28, Bird & Strawberry, \$23, Flamingo Habitat, \$23, Pittsburg, \$13.50, Hummingbird, \$24, Hickman, \$13.50.

Postage & Insurance extra. Stamp please, Lge stock of pattern glass.

**WANTED:** Hartley Wines & Colored pieces (no amber). Princess feather master salt. Classic, flint early paneled grape band. dp



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### *The Facts About*

## *“The Only Recording of Mr. Edison’s Voice”*

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

*NOTE:—“Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists” is written entirely by Jim Walsh. Unsolicited contributions to this department cannot be accepted.*

#### I. “The Rarest Record in the World”

The date has escaped me, but one Saturday afternoon, from 10 to 15 years ago, I was at work in television station WSLs, in Roanoke, Va., when an announcer strode hurriedly into the news room.

“Jim,” the announcer exclaimed, “tune in the radio network! They’ve just said that in a few minutes they are going to play the rarest phonograph record in the world! I know you will want to hear it!”

I sprang from my chair. Then I

said: “Wait a minute! I can tell you what they’re going to play before it even goes on the air! Some goof has come up with a recording of ‘Let Us Not Forget—A Message to the American People,’ by Thomas A. Edison, and has told them it’s the only record of Mr. Edison’s voice. They’ve believed him.

“The fact is, there are thousands and thousands of Edison discs and cylinders of that record still kicking around, but they’ll say it’s the only one in the world! Just listen and see if I’m right!”

I switched on the network radio channel. In a few minutes came the announcement, to this effect—I don’t recall the exact words:

“And now we are proud to bring you the rarest phonograph record in the world—the only recording of Thomas A. Edison’s voice!”

Next there was a statement that the record was “an old-fashioned cylinder,” so I knew Blue Amberol No. 3756 was about to be played. Then came an explanation that since it would be reproduced with a makeshift pick-up it might not sound as clear as it would if played on the original Edison phonograph.

A few seconds later there was a bumping sound as the pick-up began traversing the cylinder’s uneven surface, and I heard the rather distorted, rasping, nasal voice of the late William Maxwell. He, at the time the record was made, was second vice

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*—Aida Favia-Artisay (Hobbies Magazine)*

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*Viking Nightingale (Stereo 969)*

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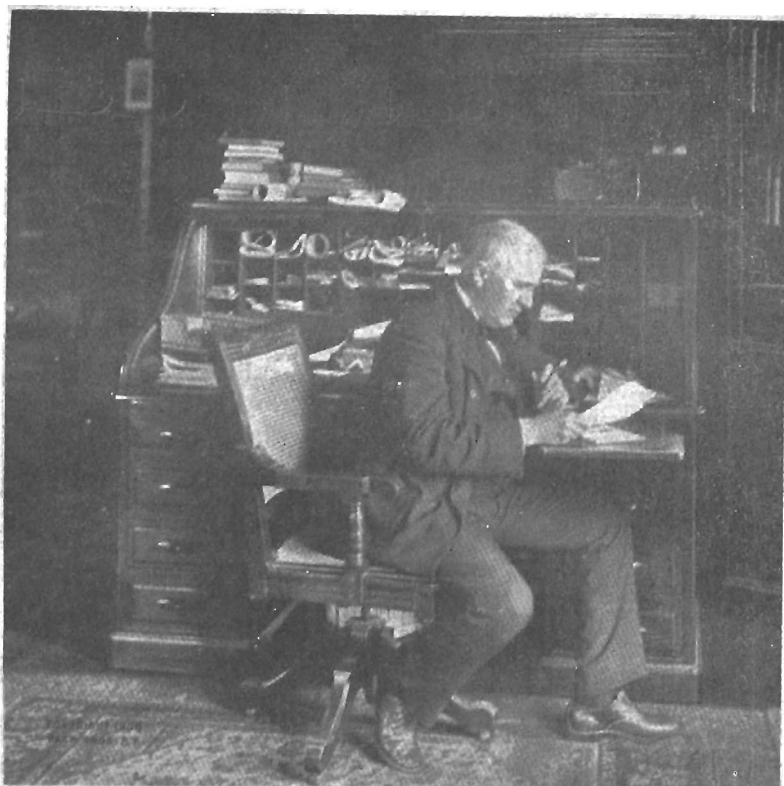
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**READING HIS MAIL** — Mr. Edison, shown here at his desk in the Edison laboratory, answered much of his correspondence with a dictating machine, the Edison. The mails brought him many requests to make a record.

Jim Walsh, author of this article, uses a roll top desk which belonged to his father and resembles Mr. Edison's.

president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., and head of the Edison musical phonograph division. Mr. Maxwell, whose voice would never have won him acclaim as an Edison singer, solemnly intoned words with which I was already familiar:

"Thomas A. Edison, the inventor of the phonograph, has never before permitted his voice to be recorded for the public. Today, however, he has a message for you that is important enough to cause him to break his long established rule. Mr. Edison will now give you that message. I beg to introduce Mr. Thomas A. Edison."

I had read in Edison's monthly musical publication, *Along Broadway*, that when Maxwell heard his recorded voice played back he refused to believe it was his, and I don't blame him. He admitted that Mr. Edison's part of the record was "just like him," but refused to believe friends who told him his own share was perfectly natural.

Mr. Maxwell was a good example of the well-known fact that almost nobody recognizes his own voice when hearing it reproduced for the first time. And that virtually no one, under such circumstances, is pleased with what he hears.

There was a lapse of perhaps 10 seconds. Then an elderly voice, with which I also was familiar, was heard. It said:

"This is Edison speaking. Our boys have made good in France. The word, 'American,' has a deep meaning in Europe. Our soldiers have displayed courage,

generosity, self-restraint, and modesty. We are proud of the North Americans who risked their lives for the liberty of the world.

"But we must not forget, and we must not permit demagogues to belittle, the part played by our gallant Allies. Their casualty list tells the story. However proud we may be of our own achievements, let us remember always that the War could not have been won if the Belgians, the French, the British, and the Italians had not fought like bulldogs in the face of overwhelming odds. The great War will live—live in the minds of Americans for the next hundred years. I hope that when we do reverence to the memory of our brave boys who fell in France we shall not forget their brothers-in-arms who wore the uniforms of the Allies. I believe that the national anthems of France, Great Britain, Italy, and Belgium should be as familiar to us as our own 'Star-Spangled Banner'."

The distorted reproduction then came to an end. It left me thinking that "the only record of Mr. Edison's voice" was probably the shortest in

the Blue Amberol and Diamond Disc catalogs.

Most Edison records made after the wax cylinder period, played four minutes or more, but I since have timed "Let Us Not Forget." On my disc copy, from a B master, Maxwell speaks for 25 seconds. Mr. Edison's brief address takes a minute and 20 seconds, so the complete running time is less than two minutes.

After the record had been played and its owner, no doubt, was proudly beaming at having provided such an earth-shaking rarity, there was a panel discussion by persons in the network studio. They tried to decide why, as they thought, only one copy of the record had been made.

I remember a woman suggested the recording was withdrawn because Mr. Edison had mispronounced a word. He had pronounced "Italian," as "Eyetalian." It seemingly didn't occur to anyone that there could be plenty of other copies of the record extant.

The announcer who had entered the news room in such haste ever afterwards proclaimed that I was gifted with extra-sensory perception to know what a record would be before it even was played in New York. But I, of course, wasn't so gifted. I just knew a lot more about old records than anybody on the program, and I was fully aware that no other recording has had so many silly stories associated with it as the one by Thomas A. Edison.

Not even the many people who cherish that William McKinley record, which I recently discussed, in the October and November issues, believe they are the only owners with copies. But the odd thing about the Edison cylinder and disc, particularly the cylinder, is that its average possessor not only thinks it is "the only record ever made of Mr. Edison's voice," but that he has the sole copy ever made of that one recording! Few things could be farther from the truth.

If I had not been so busy putting a newscast together that Saturday afternoon I would have given the New York network headquarters a long distance call and informed the staff members that they had been misinformed. I would have said I had no doubt the person owning the record

(Continued on page 40)

## Music Boxes

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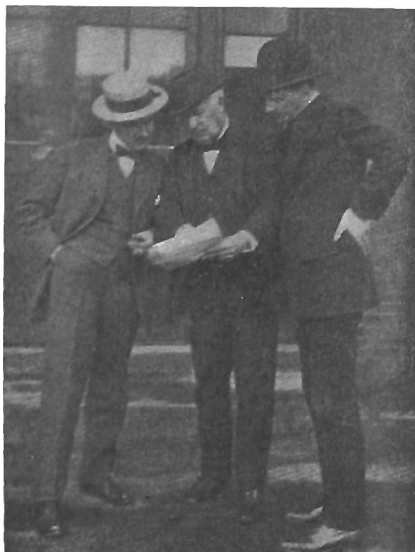
Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those who know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)



**THREE EDISON OFFICIALS** — This picture, taken Dec. 30, 1915, outside the Edison laboratory and reprinted from the *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for February, 1916, shows Mr. Edison (center) conferring with two officials of Thomas A. Edison, Inc. At the left (wearing a straw hat in December!) is C. H. Wilson, vice president and general manager. William Maxwell, second vice president, is on the right. It is Maxwell who introduces Mr. Edison in the record of "Let Us Not Forget."

was sincere, but he was mistaken in believing it the only one of its kind. As I was busy, I didn't call.

The purpose of this article is to tell the facts I know about "the only record of Mr. Edison's voice." It isn't the only record. I have three others myself. But before getting down to cases it will be interesting to consider how the demand for a record by Mr. Edison developed over the years.

### II. "It's Up to Thomas A. Edison to Make a Record"

Preoccupation with the thought of Thomas A. Edison's voice being recorded is nothing new. During the first 20 years of this century the one-time "Wizard of Menlo Park" probably was the best known man in the world.

Although he had little formal education and his personality perhaps was not highly polished, average Americans looked upon him as a demigod, whose invention of the phonograph, the electric light, and the motion picture had resulted from supernatural inspiration. Because of this attitude of awe and near-reverence there sprang up among owners of Edison cylinder phonographs, a craving to possess a record on which the Wizard himself spoke, preferably revealing "How I Invented the Phonograph."

It was a longing that the inventor for many years declined to gratify.

Today, however, Mr. Edison's fame, though enduring, is not so great, I fear, as it was in, say, 1906. A few years ago I met an elderly woman, now dead, who had lived for many years in West Orange, N.J., near the Edison manufacturing plants. She described how she used to see "The Old Man" leave "the place where they made the records," (by which I suppose she meant his red-brick laboratory) and start walking up the street.

"He always would be looking down at the ground," the old lady said, "but every few feet he'd stop and bow, without looking up whether or not anybody was close to him, then walk on again. He was deaf, and I guess he thought people he couldn't hear were speaking to him, so he'd bow to be polite."

It was odd, though, that the woman who lived in West Orange nearly all her life repeatedly spoke of the inventor as "old John Edison." She hadn't even bothered to get his name straight. I doubt there were many Americans in 1906 who didn't know the great man's first name was Thomas.

A more surprising thing happened about 10 years ago. I had a letter from a young man in American military service, who told of finding a disc record he believed might be the only one of its kind in existence. Several friends had assured him it was "worth its weight in gold." He described it as "three times as thick" as an ordinary record. Then he made an astonishing statement:

"There is a picture of a person named Edison on the label, but since I have never heard of this person I wonder why they put his picture on the record." The young soldier asked how much the Diamond Disc (a medley of Hawaiian airs played by Helen Louise and Frank Ferrara) was worth "to the nearest thousand dollars," and whether I thought any other copies had been made.

I replied that the picture was of Thomas A. Edison, the eminent inventor whose company issued the record; that a good many thousand copies of the Hawaiian medley were sold, and that if the disc was in good condition it should be worth about 50 cents.

I imagine he was disappointed bitterly at my statement or consoled himself with the belief that I didn't know what I was talking about. But here was a supposedly educated young American soldier who never had heard of Thomas A. Edison. Again, that wouldn't have been possible in 1906.

Sixty-five years or so ago most owners of cylinder instruments lived on farms or in villages and small towns, and the desire for a recording of Mr. Edison's voice was especially strong among those largely isolated persons.



**WHAT WERE THEY HEARING?** — These two young gentlemen, photographed in the very early days of the wax cylinder record, could not have been listening to Thomas A. Edison's voice, but no doubt they would have been glad to hear it through the ear tubes.

It is amusing to leaf through the files of *The New Phonogram* for the years 1905-10, and observe the frequently reiterated requests that Mr. Edison make a record, and the off-hand way with which the appeals were rejected. It is noteworthy, too, that most of the beseeching letters came from communities remote from large cities.

Here is an example. In August, 1905, "W. G.," of Barrow Bay, Canada, wrote:

"Why do you not get Mr. Edison himself to make the announcements on a few records? I am sure they would be good sellers."

Other correspondents at various times were certain that records containing songs played on penny whistles, or Jew's harps, or sung in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect would "sell big."

"W.G." received this answer:

"We realize the selling possibilities of records made or announced by Mr. Edison, but he would not consider such a suggestion."

The subject of announcements came up again in January, 1908, when "J. F.," of Winterset, Ohio, inquired:

"Is it Thomas A. Edison who makes the announcements on the records?"

There was a touch of indignation in the reply:

"Certainly not. They are made by a member of our recording department."

It was revealed the following month that the announcer was Edward Meeker.

In October, 1905, "E. H. C.," of Owatonna, Minn., made a typical request:

"Can Mr. Edison be persuaded to make a record in his own voice with the title, 'How I Invented the Phonograph,' and accompanied by a few telegraphic dots

(Continued on page 53)

# EDISON RECORD TALENT



**BYGONE ARTISTS** — These performers were headliners in 1909, when there was an insistent demand for a recording of Thomas A. Edison's voice.

**TIME-HONORED SHRINE** — Thomas A. Edison's laboratory and library, now maintained as a memorial to the great inventor. A woman who lived for many years in West Orange, N.J., recalled seeing Mr. Edison walking up the street from the library and stopping every few feet to bow to admirers, real or imaginary.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

and dashes? I have a Standard, and when giving entertainments frequently hear expressed the wish to hear Mr. Edison's own voice. Should Mr. Edison do this, and the music and science-loving public find it out through the Phonogram, I am sure the demand would be great."

With an overtone of weariness, the editor replied:

"We realize the popularity that a record would have if made by Mr. Edison personally, but we know that Mr. Edison will not consent to making such a record."

Still the inquiries kept coming. In July, 1906, the following was published, from "T.M.," of Philadelphia, Pa.:

"I have been told by several of my friends that Edison Record No. 1 was made by Mr. Edison himself. Was this the case? I notice that No. 1 does not now appear in your catalog."

"T. M." was told;

"No, Mr. Edison did not make Edison Record No. 1 nor any other record placed on the market. Record No. 1 has the most prosaic title of 'All Coons Look Alike to Me,' and it was played in schottische tempo by the Edison Concert Band. When we began to make Edison records by the gold moulded process in 1902, No. 1 was dropped from our catalog."

The impression that Mr. Edison made the first cylinder record probably derived from the well-known story that when he produced his experimental tinfoil machine in 1877, he recited into it, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Of course the tinfoil wore out after a few playings and was thrown away.

But a good many years ago I heard from a record collector in the Far West, who said, "I have been looking 30 years for the Edison record of 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' recited by

Thomas A. Edison, and I'll never stop till I find it."

I cynically replied that he would be a tired boy if he didn't stop looking, because the Edison Company never issued any such record, and there was no chance of finding the original tinfoil.

"P. W.," of Adelaide, New South Wales, in far away Australia, weighed in with a question, April, 1907, which showed a misunderstanding of what previously had been published about the possibility of Mr. Edison recording. "P. W." asked: "When might the promised record of Thomas A. Edison's voice be expected by his many admirers?" The reply was stiff:

"No such record has ever been promised by anyone with authority to do so, and there is no likelihood of one being put on the market."

In the same issue, "R. D. M." of Chelsea, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), came through with a bright idea:

"Why cannot we have a record of Mr. Edison's own voice? It looks as though it would more than pay to make it."

The huffy response was:

"We do not think it compatible with a man of Mr. Edison's standing to make a record of his voice, even if he was willing to make such a record, which he is not."

But *Phonogram* readers never tired of asking the same old question. In August, 1907, "C. I. B.," of Alliance, Ohio, wanted to know:

"Why can we not hear a speech from Mr. Edison himself? I know that if there was a record made by him everybody would want one."

The irritated reply was:

"We cannot furnish a record made by Mr. Edison because he refuses to make a record of this character, especially one to be sold to the public."

Viewing the matter from a distance of 64 years, I cannot see why Mr. Edison considered it beneath his dignity to record something for the gratification of his innumerable humble admirers.

However that may have been, an amusing article bearing on the public's desire for a cylinder of the great inventor's voice appeared in the *New Phonogram* for November, 1907. I will quote some of its juicier paragraphs:

"... One oft repeated request is for a 'Message from Edison.' A man from Kansas City says briefly and compellingly, 'It's up to Thomas A. Edison to make a record.' A Vermont lady who is good enough to give her family history in full and the many and severe illnesses from which she has recovered, says, in conclusion, 'After this letter I expect Mr. Edison to make a record.' There are many similar letters and although we appreciate the interest evinced in the phonograph's inventor, we must say there is no likelihood of such a thing happening. No living American has been made the subject of so many newspaper and magazine stories as Mr. Edison, but he prefers to remain in his laboratory and keep out of the limelight. He shrinks from the idea of making a record to be distributed broadcast. He is not a professional record maker, but an inventor; and if our friends only think for a moment, every phonograph is a 'message from Edison.'"

"Another thing frequently demanded is that we make records of verses submitted, on the grounds that they would

(Continued on page 89)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

'sell well.' A contributor from the Middle West wants us to make a record of a song that was sung a great deal in her younger days. She does not call to mind its title or author, but thinks the first verse opened in this spirited manner, 'O little bird, I would I were thy mate!' and there is a line whistled by the little birdie in every one of the verses. The tune has escaped her but she says we could easily find out what it was or 'compose fresh music.' Another writer says his life has been a thrilling one and a record of it would be instructive to all. He enclosed a few details of his younger days commencing thus:

"The schools that were when I was young  
Did oft my heart annoy;  
And so I made a strong resolve  
To be a sailor boy.  
Yo! ho! for the briny deep."

"The few details took seven minutes to read aloud and as they foreshadowed a life of extreme complexity there is no telling how many hundred records it would take to do his career justice."

"We can afford to put out only such records as our experts feel will be popular. Furthermore, we do not keep poets or composers for the purpose of setting words to music or writing verses to stray airs."

### III. Other Questions

The curiosity about Edison as a man and a personality continued un-

abated. In that same November, 1907, *Phonogram*, "S. F. H." of Atlanta, Ga., asked: "Is it true that Mr. Edison has retired from working?" And "C.S." of Halifax, Nova Scotia, inquired: "Is it known who first spoke into the phonograph and what was first said?" I'll combine the answers to the two questions:

"Anyone with the working habit so strongly developed as Mr. Edison would find it very hard to break himself of it. You have probably read magazine stories about his giving up work but it simply means that he will attempt no other commercial inventions, preferring rather to keep on improving his existing inventions—the phonograph particularly—and experiment in scientific matters for his own amusement."

"Mr. Edison spoke the first words into it. They took the form of the classic verse commencing, 'Mary had a little lamb.'"

In January, 1909, "G. N. S." of Mount Desert, Maine, who must have been somewhat behind the times, asked, "Is Mr. Edison still living?" and received the assurance: "Mr. Edison is still living at Orange, N.J."

I wonder how "G. N. S." could imagine Mr. Edison might have died without the entire world's blazing with the news.

Finally, in November, 1909, we get back to familiar territory, with an

inquiry from "T. McD." of Springston, Idaho:

"Has Mr. Edison ever made any records: if not do you think he ever will?"

I can imagine the *Phonogram* editor's drawing a deep breath of annoyance as he replied:

"Mr. Edison has never made a record for commercial purposes. He, of course, made several during the experimental stages of the phonograph, but none later."

During the years that followed 1909 until *The New Phonogram* was discontinued in 1914, little space was devoted to answering questions. In consequence inquiries about the possibility of Mr. Edison's making a record disappeared.

But the demand was still there. It was gratified in the spring of 1919 by the issuance of both Diamond Disc and Blue Amberol cylinder versions of "Let Us Not Forget."

Now, having traced thus far the never-ceasing demand for a record by Thomas A. Edison, next month I will give the history of "Let Us Not Forget" and show that this "message to the American people" is by no means "the only recording of Mr. Edison's voice."

(To be continued)

## LUCKY JIM, PLUM, "TWISTY", POSSY, and JIM WALSH EXTEND SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL THEIR HOBBIES FRIENDS



Happy

Holidays

1. Coal black LUCKY JIM, photographed by Quentin Riggs in September, already is keeping close lookout for Santa Claus.
2. A splendid "close up" of Professor Plum Duff Walsh, Ph. D., poet, politician and philosopher. Like Lucky Jim, he is on the alert for the first sight of his old friend, Santa.
3. The handsome, orange colored, gentleman shown here (right) is Chip Jenkins III, better known as "Fwee," who makes his home with Mr. & Mrs. Walter Jenkins of Rose Hill, Va. He, too, is looking for Santa, but judging from his expression

is fearful that the Man in Red may not appear. The young lady with the strongly marked face on the left of the picture is Midge Moore.

4. The Professor relaxes from his labors as adviser to diplomats and statesmen by rolling in catnip while Lucky Jim looks enviously on.
5. Christy Mathewson Walsh, always known as "Twisty," is the latest addition to the Walsh cat family. She was about 3 months old when this picture was taken last September, so this will be the frolicsome little lady's first Christmas.

6. In memory of Thomas A., beloved pet of Mr. & Mrs. Albert Via, Jr., South Boston, Va. Thomas was struck and killed by a car during the 1968 Christmas Season. With another Christmas and New Year approaching, we here at 225 N. Maple St., Vinton, Va. 24179, cherish tender memories of Roger, Gray, Little Nipper, Percy, Petey, Chip Jenkins and other dearly beloved cats who have left us. "Through Eternity We'll Never Forget." Though we have no picture of Possy, the handsome 'possum, he still lives in the Walsh basement.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### *The Facts About*

## *“The Only Recording of Mr. Edison’s Voice”*

### PART II

By JIM WALSH

*NOTE:—“Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists” is written entirely by Jim Walsh. Unsolicited contributions to this department cannot be accepted.*

#### 1. “Only Record” One of Thomas A. Edison Myths

Last month’s introductory portion of this survey told of phonograph owners for years beseeching Thomas A. Edison to make a record. They preferred one that described how he invented the sound-reproducing device. We are told, too, of his refusal, perhaps because he thought record making would be out of keeping with his scientific status.

There was also discussion of the wide-spread belief that the record of “Let Us Not Forget—A Message to the American People,” issued in both disc and cylinder form in 1919, is not merely “the only recording of Mr. Edison’s voice”—which it isn’t—but of the delusion of most owners of the record that they have the world’s sole specimen of it.

It is amazing that anyone seriously can hold such a belief. The record was placed on the market in the spring of 1919 and stayed in both the Edison disc and cylinder catalogs for more than 10 years, until the Company quit the phonograph business on November 1, 1929. But that belief certainly exists.

Some years ago a collector from another state stopped to see me on his way home after a visit to the deep South. His eyes were bulging with excitement as he intoned:

“You know what, Jim! While I was in Florida I met a man that has the only record in the world of Thomas A. Edison’s voice!”

I groaned. Then I told him there were thousands of copies of that record still around, and that it was not much more scarce than “The Preacher and the Bear.”

“Oh, my visitor protested, “you’re bound to be wrong. This fellow showed me an Edison catalog that said it was the only recording of Mr. Edison’s voice.”

“Yes,” I wearily replied, “the catalog said that, but what it meant was that it was the only record Thomas A. made to be offered for sale. And it certainly doesn’t mean there’s only

one copy in the world. How could it have been on the market for 10 years with just one copy being made?”

I don’t think I convinced him. But maybe, one of these days, he’ll find a copy for himself and change his mind.

While I am on this subject of “only recordings” I am reminded of an amusing incident that happened two or three years ago when a Western collector wrote me he believed he had the only recorded specimen of Mrs. Thomas A. Edison’s voice. This collector had picked up a copy of Edison two-minute cylinder No. 9202, containing “Daddy’s Little Girl,” a “kid song” written by Edward Madden and Teddy Merse, and issued in February, 1906.

Toward the end of the record a woman’s voice, he said, asked: “Thomas, where have you been?”

There was a reply, “Down on Grant Avenue.”

The woman then said something like, “Come on to supper before it gets cold.”

My correspondent had decided, or at least hoped, that Mrs. Thomas A. Edison had entered the studio while Byron G. Harlan was singing the song, that she had asked Mr. Edison where he had been, and had told him to come to supper.

This collector said he was planning to advertise in HOBBIES and ask for bids on “the only record of Mrs. Thomas A. Edison’s voice.”

I am not poking fun at my Western inquirer, who had a certain amount of logic in his favor, even though it had led him to a wrong conclusion. I told him no one would have been allowed to walk into the studio while a record was being made. And, further, if Mrs. Edison had come in and spoken during the performance the cylinder would not have been placed on sale.

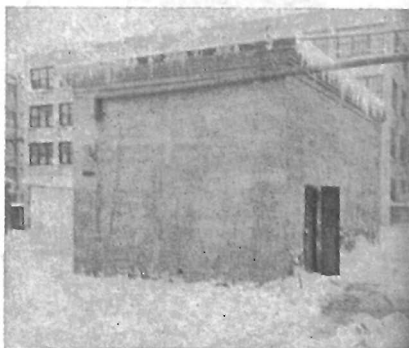
Not only that, but the record was made at Edison’s Fifth Avenue studio in New York, where Mr. Edison seldom or never went, and where his wife certainly would not bob up to summon him to supper in West Orange. The fact that the child in the record was called “Thomas” had mis-

led my correspondent.

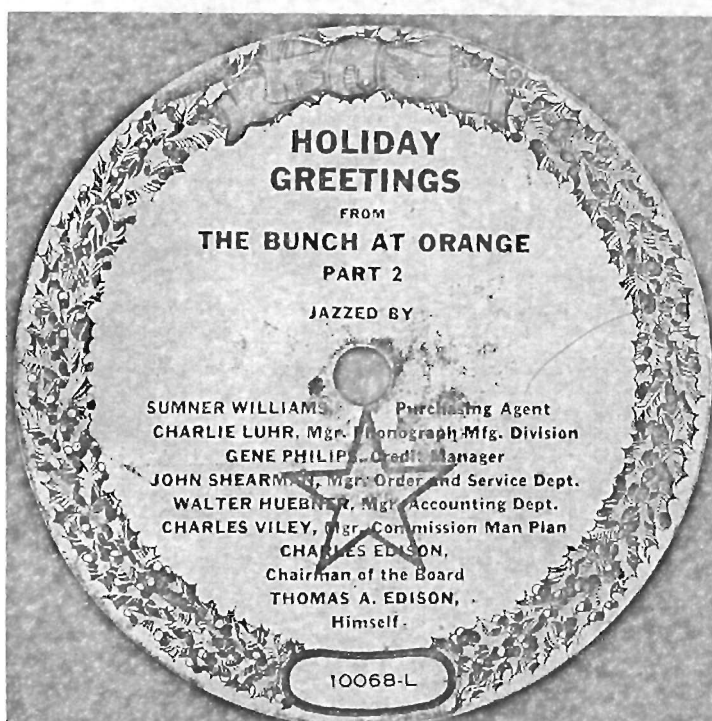
Of course the talking purposely was inserted to give “kid atmosphere.” I don’t know who the woman assisting Harlan may have been. Chances are she was Daisy Boulais, who worked with Harlan and Frank G. Stanley in several descriptive sketches.

The *New Phonogram’s* description of the cylinder mentions nothing about a feminine participant. It merely remarks that the song “tells a pathetic little story of human interest set to a melody lingeringly attractive. That Mr. Harlan’s work in this record is in entire sympathy with the intention of the composer goes without saying.”

No, Mrs. Edison’s voice was not caught in that record, any more than



**STORAGE VAULTS**—Contrary to a widely held belief, no master records or working moulds were destroyed in the great Edison factory fire of Dec. 9, 1914. The fire did cause the Company to build vaults for storing the records—one for storing the Edison Blue Amberol Cylinder records, and one for storing the Edison Disc records.



"A MERRY CHRISTMAS" — Shown here is the label of the record "Holiday Greeting From the Bunch at Orange" sent to Edison dealers in December, 1924, and containing brief spoken passages by Thomas A. Edison and his son, Charles. The black label of the inventor's 1919 record, "Let Us Not Forget," could not be reprinted.

it was in certain cylinders that dealers in the Far West sold in the early 1890's. They would engage a woman to sing some standard number such as "Ave Maria" or "The Last Rose of Summer" and have it announced as "soprano solo by Mrs. Thomas A. Edison." Of course this practice was done away with when the factory in West Orange began to supply records for the entire country.

The ludicrous belief among so many collectors that there is only a single record of Edison's voice in the world, "and I've got it," is just one of a number of myths associated with that illustrious inventor and his activities. For instance, it has been published repeatedly that many valuable master records were destroyed in the great fire that swept the Edison plant on the night of Wednesday, December 9, 1914.

Ellen Beach Yaw's coloratura performance of "The Skylark" most frequently is mentioned as one whose masters and moulds were destroyed. But that isn't true. "The Skylark" stayed in the Diamond Disc catalog through 1917, and then was discontinued, probably because only a small number of moulds had been made and they were no longer in good condition.

Then, either because Mme. Yaw was no longer available, or because it was believed the record would have only a future small sale, it was decided not to have her remake it. But the original recordings weren't destroyed.

The Edison Company announced repeatedly that masters and moulds escaped the flames. On Dec. 30, 1914,

C. H. Wilson, vice-president and general manager of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., said:

"All of our master records and master and working moulds were saved. Consequently, we will not have to go through the delays that their loss would have entailed. . . Our Master Recording Department, being located in New York City was not interfered with."

The late Billy Murray told me that when recording artists learned of the fire they anticipated a bonanza which would result from being engaged to remake the destroyed masters. But when the artists asked, they were informed all the originals had been saved, and their services would not be required. Billy said he was assured that all the moulds, even, of the discontinued two-minute wax cylinders, had been preserved.

One result of the fire, however, was the decision to build vaults for stor-

ing disc, and cylinder masters, and moulds. These were made fireproof, with automatic control of temperature. The cylinder vault was designed to allow space for 60,000 moulds. The one for discs accommodated 40,000.

A bad effect of the fire was that it caused Edison to decide to give up direct recording of Blue Amberol cylinders in favor of copying them from the discs. The dubbing equipment was crude and intensified the Blue Amberol's annoying tendency toward pitch waver. It resulted also in two levels of scratch—that on the disc, as well as the cylinder's own usually slight surface noise.

In 1916 and 1917, too, the Blue Amberols frequently were dubbed at a wrong speed. So, in order to make them sound fairly decent, instead of unbearably nasal, it is necessary to play them at considerably less than the standard 160 revolutions per minute.

Some of Billy Murray's records especially suffered from this defect. Among them were "Arrah, Go On, I'm Gonna Go Back to Oregon," "Here Comes the Groom," and "You Wake Up in the Morning in Chicago."

The Amberols were frequently fuzzy and mushy. English collectors gave them the name of "Damberols" to express their disgust with the dubbing system. Yet, ironically, while these inferior records were being turned out, Edison dealers were being assured, I understand, that the Company was spending large sums "to improve the Blue Amberol."

Even more ironically, there are collectors of Blue Amberols who insist, in the face of all logic and listening, that the cylinders are better than the discs from which they were copied. The surfaces usually are better, for Diamond Disc surfaces were mostly terrible from late 1916 to a round

(Continued on next page)

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t20



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

1923. But for realism and true recording, the dubbed Blue Amberols don't compare even remotely with the original "Re-Creations."

From the manufacturer's standpoint, however, the dubbing system had the advantage of paying artists for only one recording, instead of for separate cylinder and disc engagements.

Another myth with an Edison flavor is no longer current, but was popular 60 years and more ago. A woman named Grace Nelson had been killed in an automobile accident in Massachusetts, and newspapers published accounts told of how her faithful dog sat listening to records of her voice, played on the family phonograph, and whined for "the touch of a hand that is still."

The catch was that the dead woman was not the Grace Nelson who had made records. As I revealed in the Corinne Morgan series, "Grace Nelson," the contralto, was really Grace Hornby, who continued in good health and had no devoted dog bewailing her loss.

Then there was, of course, the purely false story that used to recur every few weeks to the effect that Ada Jones, the most popular record-

ing comedienne, had died. Edison and the other record companies, one time after another, denied these stories, but they continued to be circulated until Miss Jones finally did die in a Rocky Mount, N. C., hospital, in May, 1922.

All in all, the recording industry has had its full share of myths.

### II. Why Was Edison's Voice Finally Recorded?

Perhaps by this time you are wondering, as I have wondered, why Thomas A. Edison finally acceded to the pleas of his admirers and made a record.

If you will re-read the text of his short talk, which was published last month, you will see that William Maxwell, in making the introduction, said that Mr. Edison had a message of such importance he had broken his long-established rule against permitting his voice to be recorded for the public.

Actually, however, the record contains no "message" of vital importance. Mr. Edison simply asks his hearers to remember that World War I could not have been won if the Allied soldiers had not "fought like bulldogs." He also expresses the hope that the National anthems of France, Great Britain, Italy, and Belgium "will become as familiar to us as our own 'Star-Spangled Banner.'"

Customers who bought the cylinder

version of the talk, which was dubbed from the Diamond Disc, must have found it almost completely pointless, for the national airs to which Mr. Edison referred were not included on the Blue Amberol. To obtain them it was necessary to buy another cylinder, No. 3757.

The Diamond Disc contained Mr. Edison's talk on one side, and on the other the "house band," the New York Military Band, gave a lifeless and lackadaisical performance of the Allied Airs, but ended with some heavy brass work and more pep on the concluding number, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

France's "La Marseillaise" led off. It was followed by Britain's "God Save the King," Italy's "Royal Italian March," and Belgium's "La Brabanconne."

Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., informs me that on the Blue Amberol version, the space after Mr. Edison's talk concludes is filled by a band repetitiously playing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Since the original version of this article was written, I have received several splendid letters from Mrs. Dan Wolf, of Indianapolis, Ind. Mrs. Wolf, the former Marcia Silverstone, is a daughter of the late Mark Silverstone, who was the Edison phonograph and record jobber in St. Louis. He was widely regarded as the most progressive and alert of all Edison wholesalers. In one of her letters Mrs. Wolf sent me a copy of an article in a 1919 issue of a St. Louis newspaper, in which Mr. Silverstone revealed that he was responsible for Mr. Edison's making the record of "Let Us Not Forget." Since his statement has genuine historical value, I am glad to revise this article and include it:

"Possibly the only time Mr. Edison ever tried to make a record was in 1877, when he used the sentence, 'Mary had a little lamb,' in his first attempt to record and reproduce sound. When he heard the words repeated by the tinfoil phonograph upon which his experiment was made, he himself was astonished, although the reproduced sound was far different from the actual voice.

"For years numerous attempts have been made to have Mr. Edison record his voice, which requests were always refused by Mr. Edison. His answer was: 'The public will not be interested in my voice, and I have heretofore kept back because of the fact that the voice was not being reproduced in its natural tones. My voice is of such character, being high-pitched, that any alteration would affect it and it would therefore be unpleasant to the ear.'

"Since the advent of the New Edison there has been quite an insistent demand by Mr. Edison's admirers that a record of his voice be made, to be handed down to posterity. Last February the writer broached the subject to Mr. Edison, suggesting that 'now, since the New Edison records the overtones, bringing out the voice in a quality true to the original without alteration, you should have no hesitancy in permitting the public to hear your voice to be handed down to posterity.' He modestly asked, 'What could I speak about?' My reply was, 'Say something of a patriotic nature. Tell the people that the National Airs of The Allies should be played in conjunction with our own and that we should give credit to the Allies for their work.'


"Induced by his patriotism, he jumped at the idea and immediately prepared a speech which was taken into the phonograph. Upon hearing the reproduction

(Continued on page 52)

**THE OLDEST RECORDED VOICES OF HISTORY!**

# HISTORY SPEAKS:

*now listen to the actual voices of these famous people recorded as early as 1888 !!!*



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**VOL. 1**

**GOTHAM RECORDS**  
HI-FIDELITY RECORDINGS

**PIONEER RECORDING SOUNDS** — This long playing disc contains a reproduction of what is said to be the oldest record in the world—a wax cylinder made in 1888 on which the great composer, Sir Arthur Sullivan, congratulates Mr. Edison on inventing the phonograph. The inventor's voice also is heard in a brief talk, recorded to be played in 1908 at a convention of electrical engineers.



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

thereof, he gave his O.K. to the record, saying, "That is my voice." The writer has brought with him from his last trip the record, from which a number of duplicates have been made."

### III. How Rare is "The Only Recording?"

I have no copy of the Edison disc and cylinder record supplements for the month in which "Let Us Not Forget" first was made available to the public. The catalog numbers, 50509 and 3756, however, do indicate a time around April, or perhaps May, 1919.

As I have said, "the only recording of Mr. Edison's voice" remained in both catalogs as long as Edison was in the record business. For years each cylinder supplement carried this inquiry at the bottom of a page:

"Does Your Collection include the only recording of Mr. Edison's Voice? 'Let Us Not Forget—A Message to the American People,' by Thomas A. Edison, 3756."

Imagine going to so much trouble to advertise a cylinder of which only one copy supposedly had been made! The truth is that dealers were under special pressure to sell both the disc and cylinder versions, just as they were instructed to push the sale of Walter Van Brunt's recording of "Mr. Edison's favorite song, 'I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen.'"

This being true, how many copies of Mr. Edison's "address" are likely to have been sold? I don't imagine even the McGraw-Edison Company, successors to Thomas A. Edison, Inc., could come up with exact sales figures now, but I think it is reasonable to guess that 100,000 copies of the cylinder were disposed of, and between 25,000 and 50,000 of the disc.

In 1919, Edison probably was selling more cylinders than discs because the rollers were considerably cheaper and there were more instruments to play them. Besides, the demand for a spoken record by the inventor was particularly strong in the more sparsely populated areas where the cylinder clung to its popularity.

One thing that may have had an unfavorable effect on the sale of the record in either disc or cylinder form was that it played for such a short time—less than two minutes. Moreover, it wasn't something one would want to play over and over. Emphatically it was the type of record that would be held mostly in reserve to impress visitors.

Next, you may ask, if thousands of copies of both styles of records were made, why do they so seldom turn up nowadays in second-hand stores and places of that sort? My answer is that the records still exist.

After all, both Edison cylinders and discs were well-nigh unbreakable. They didn't wear out if played only with their diamond reproducers. But some of the people who have them are

hoarding their copies in the belief that they are worth a mint of money and will be worth more.

A few mail order dealers and a few antique shops seem to have the same idea. Most such owners set a minimum price of \$10 or more for "Let Us Not Forget." This, I think, is too high, but pricing is not my line.

Oddly enough, although I have had several copies of the disc version and have passed them on to friends, I saved one for myself, but I never have owned the dubbed Blue Amberol job, even though I suspect its sales were the greater. Nor have I found a white label copy of the disc, which would mean a pressing made after 1921.

It should be remembered that three masters—A, B, and C—were made of the disc. They will vary slightly. On my B copy, Mr. Edison "fluffs" by saying "live" twice. He may not do this on the A and C versions.

Presumably only one disc master was used for the cylinder dubbing and all cylinders will sound exactly the same. But I am not sure of this. Because they were recorded separately, the disc pressings may vary a few seconds in playing time. This would depend upon which master was used.

At any rate, I think I have proved my case that no one copy is "the only recording in the world of Thomas A. Edison's voice."

### IV. Address to Electrical Engineers

I have said that, besides "Let Us Not Forget," I have three other recordings of Thomas A. Edison's voice. We will consider them in the order in which they were spoken.

I feel, however, that I first should point out that Mr. Edison handled some of his correspondence by talking into the "Edison Voice Writer" or "Ediphone," as it was called later. I should say there is at least a chance that some of the dictated cylinders which contained his voice have escaped destruction.

Perhaps the first record "The Old Man" ever made for any sort of public use was one intended to be played in 1908 at a convention of electrical engineers in Boston. That was more than 10 years before "the only recording of Mr. Edison's voice" came out. The 1908 cylinder has been preserved and is re-recorded on a series of long-playing records called "History Speaks."

The long-play record, however, reproduces only one sentence of the cylinder as Edison made it. The entire brief "speech" was reproduced in the *Talking Machine News* for Dec. 1, 1908, as follows, with this comment: "We have it on the authority of 'the Edison Monthly' this is positively the first record for public use made by Edison."

"Those of us who began our labors at the operator's key 50 years ago have been permitted to see and assist in the whole modern development of electricity. Since the remarkable experiments of Morse in 1841 and the unsuccessful efforts of Field in 1858, there have come with incredible rapidity one electrical art after another, so that in practically every respect civil-

ization has been revolutionized. It is still too early to stand outside these events and pronounce final judgment on their lasting value, but we may surely entertain the belief that the last half of the 19th century was as distinct in its electrical inventions and results as the first was in relation to steam. The lesson of the jubilee of the Atlantic Cable of 1858 is one of encouragement to all who would add to the resources of our race and extend our control over the forces of nature. Never was failure more complete, never was higher courage shown, never was triumph more brilliant than that which since 1866 has kept the Old World moored alongside the New by pulsating cables of steel and copper—the 'family ties' of the civilized world. When I look around at the resources of the electrical field today as shown in this exhibition, I feel that I would be glad to begin again my work as an electrician and inventor; and we veterans can only urge upon our successors, the younger followers of Franklin and of Kelvin, to realize the measure of their opportunities and to rise to the height of their responsibilities in this Day of Electricity."

### V. Holiday Greetings to Edison Dealers

In 1924, because of the growth of radio, the talking machine business was in a bad way. Many merchants were giving up the sale of phonographs and records. Edison officials evidently decided their remaining dealers, several thousand of them, needed a "pepping up," so a special record of Christmas holiday greetings was made and distributed to loyal Edison men. It, of course, was not sold to the public.

As a futile gesture of defiance to radio, the record begins with an imitation of static, after which various company officials make short talks. For our purpose, the most interesting voices are those of Thomas A. Edison and his son, the late Charles Edison, who was afterwards Governor of New Jersey.

The Edisons come at the end of side two of the record, which is called "Holiday Greetings From the Bunch at Orange." Young Charles Edison speaks first:

"This is Charles Edison speaking, chairman of the board of directors. It has been almost 50 years since Mr. Edison handed John Kruesi a rough sketch and said, 'Kruesi, make this.' It was the phonograph. That night saw also the beginning of a ceaseless striving for greater perfection in product and organization, of toil and effort unbroken through the intervening years. Who knows what greater rewards are just around the corner of our science? The midnight oil still burns in the Edison laboratory. The products that have survived the commercial storms of nearly half a century can face the future with unflinching confidence—and so, a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all, and here is my promise, with the best that is in me, to help you make it just that."

Despite his brave words about facing the future "with unflinching confidence," we believe Charles Edison already had begun to contend that Thomas A. Edison, Inc., should give up losing money through manufacturing phonographs and records. Five years from the time the disc was made, Edison was no longer in the recorded music business.

As was his wont, the aged inventor spoke only briefly and in a voice more quavering than he sounded in "Let Us Not Forget." Also, as in the earlier record, he begins by identify-

## "MOUNTAINEER AND RURAL BALLADS"

We have had such an enormous demand and so many inquiries about this type of record sung by Vernon Dalhart with Violin, Harmonica and Guitar accompaniment that we are listing them this month for your convenience in ordering:

Wreck on the Southern Old 97 . . . . .	No. 4898
Ain't You Comin' Out Tonight? . . . . .	No. 4951
Prisoner's Song . . . . .	No. 4954
Way Out West in Kansas . . . . .	No. 4955
In the Baggage Coach Ahead . . . . .	No. 5011
Many, Many Years Ago . . . . .	No. 5013
The Time Will Come . . . . .	No. 5015
Doin' the Best I Can . . . . .	No. 5016
Rovin' Gambler . . . . .	No. 5027
The Runaway Train . . . . .	No. 5028
New River Train . . . . .	No. 5032
The Death of Floyd Collins . . . . .	No. 5049
She's Comin' Round the Mountain . . . . .	No. 5052
Jesse James . . . . .	No. 5057
The John T. Scopes Trial . . . . .	No. 5059
The Little Rosewood Casket . . . . .	No. 5062
The Wreck of the Shenandoah . . . . .	No. 5078
Stone Mountain Memorial . . . . .	No. 5080
The Convict and the Rose . . . . .	No. 5081
Dream of the Miner's Child . . . . .	No. 5085
The Letter Edged in Black . . . . .	No. 5088
Mother's Grave . . . . .	No. 5096

Does Your Collection include the only recording of Mr. Edison's Voice?

**Let us not forget—A Message to the American People,  
by Thomas A. Edison, No. 3756**

Consult your Large Catalogue for your Favorites.  
If you do not have one, write us.

Tear off this Page and Add it to Your Catalogue

before I began to look for records. I'm not sure, but I think I paid only 10 cents for the Edison disc.

I still remember with pleasure the extremely friendly young man with a charming personality, Mr. Rosenblatt's son, who seemed to find so much enjoyment waiting on me.

I remember his telling me that until a few months before my visit the store had had more than 5,000 cylinders still in stock. This "Holiday Greetings" record I afterwards gave to one of my best friends, Albert R. (Jack) Via, of South Boston, Va.

A few years ago I ordered a third copy from a New York mail order dealer, who asked, and received, \$5 for it. Nowadays dealers generally demand, and collectors pay, sums ranging from \$30 to \$50 per copy for "Holiday Greetings."

There must be a good many of the records in hiding, for each Edison dealer received one. The Diamond Discs were not broken easily, and it is hard to imagine anybody callously throwing away one with Edison's voice. But no doubt most of the owners are holding them for an anticipated rise in price.

### VI. Mr. Edison Recites "Mary Had a Little Lamb"

My fourth record on which Thomas A. Edison's voice is heard is another long-player. The title is "The Sound of Fame." It was issued by the Thomas Alva Edison Memorial Foundation.

At the start of side one there is a brief spoken passage by Mr. Edison, taken from a film sound track made in Llewellyn Park, N. J., in 1927, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph. The inventor, then 77, says:

"...The first word I spoke into the original phonograph - - a little piece of poetry:

Mary had a little lamb.  
Its fleece was white as snow,  
And everywhere that Mary went  
The lamb was sure to go."

There is a laugh in the "Old Man's" voice as he recites the verse, and his audience laughs with him. It occurs to me that if the Western collector who said he never would stop looking until he found a record of Edison reciting "Mary Had a Little Lamb" will obtain this LP, his long search will be over.

And that is the story of the various recordings of Thomas A. Edison. I hope you will bear it in mind and not be overwhelmingly impressed the next time somebody tries to awe you by saying he now will play "the only record in the world of Thomas A. Edison's voice."

—O—

Nature, in the main, vindicates her law. Skill to do comes of doing; knowledge comes by eyes always open, and working hands; and there is no knowledge that is not power.

—Emerson

**REPEATED QUESTION** — For years each monthly supplement of Edison Blue Amberol cylinders asked, "Does your collection contain the only recording of Mr. Edison's voice?" meaning the only record the inventor had made to be sold. Thousands of copies were sold, but many collectors believe they have the only one in the world. This page is from the supplement for February, 1926.

ing himself and stumbles by pronouncing a word more than once. He says:

"This is Thomas A. Edison speaking. I'll see that they do what they say. I would sing for you, but my wife says my voice sounds like a Klaxon horn. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!"

So far, I have owned three copies of the "Holiday Greetings" record, which collectors generally consider among the rarest of rarities. My first I bought for 50 cents in the store of the Grubbs, Cathcart Company, former Edison dealers in Montgomery, Ala. Mr. Grubbs showed he was not a sentimentalist about Mr. Edison's voice when he set the price.

I gave the record, a few years ago, to the late Herbert A. Schmid, of Indianapolis, Ind., who had the most nearly complete collection of Diamond Discs in the world, but didn't own this specially issued greeting. Before his death poor Herbert Schmid sold his huge Edison collection to pay his hospital bills, and I suppose "Holiday Greetings" went with his other records.

My second copy was found Dec. 24, 1938, in Rosenblatt's store at Greenville, Tenn., during a trip on which my mother and my brother Edward, now both dead, and I, visited President Andrew Johnson's tailoring shop

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## MONROE ("Mike") SILVER

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Brief Biography

Monroe Silver, the famous comedian who made hundreds of sung and spoken records in the Yiddish dialect, was born December 21, 1875, in New York City. After suffering an attack of coronary sclerosis on May 3, 1947, he was dead on arrival at the city's Knickerbocker Hospital. His age was 71 years, four months, and 12 days.

Like Sam Ash, whose career as a recording artist was discussed in March, 1971, the humorist's parents were born in England. His father was David Silver. His mother, before marriage, was Sarah Cowan.

Despite his Jewish background, Monroe Silver was known for much of his life by the Irish nickname of "Mike." It was bestowed upon him by Billy Murray, the most popular of pioneer recording artists, and Silver's long-time friend. During the years they toured as members of the "Eight Famous Victor Artists," the Hibernian Murray and the Hebraic Silver were roommates.

Although he grew up in New York's poverty-stricken East Side, "Mike" Silver was like innumerable other poor Jewish boys—Irving Berlin, Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, George Jessel, and Jack Benny, to name a few—who did not feel they were victims of a heartless society and forever doomed to be "underprivileged." Instead, they were willing to work hard to make something of themselves.

Such boys were idealistic from the standpoint of meaning to grow up to be substantial, self-respecting citizens, with money to show for their efforts.

All his life Monroe Silver was clean-living, and a total abstainer from alcohol. As Billy Murray once said: "Mike deserves a lot of credit. He's been around Broadway all his life, but he's never taken a drink."

The unmarried impersonator of "Cohen" lived at 80 Riverside Drive, New York City. He told me he had "a little niece" who kept house for him. Information on his death certificate was given by his brother, Joseph Silver, of Hackensack, N.J.

### II. Resume of Career

A few years before his death Mike Silver sent me a biographical sketch of himself which I shall quote, but alter his errors of spelling and grammar. Later, I will correct a number of misstatements contained in the resume:

"I was born on the East Side in New York. When I was 7 my family moved to Harlem. At that time the horsecars ran only as far as 65th Street, and to finish the trip to 106th Street, where we lived, you had to take a stagecoach.

"After leaving high school, at the age of 14, I was getting laughs always from watching Jewish storekeepers in the old neighborhood when they would use the telephone.

"I put a lot of it together and did it around at some of the affairs I worked for. I did not have a name for it, but later on it became known as 'Cohen on the Telephone.' That was about 1912.

"My dad wanted me to take a business course, but I wanted to be a comedian. He got a job for me with a printing firm, and I became a printer's devil, and, believe me, I was a devil. Every time the boss came in I was telling funny stories to a group of fellows.

"I then started rehearsing amateur shows. Between working in the daytime at the printing business and rehearsing the shows at night, I was so tired in the daytime that I was asleep most of the time. Many a time the boss found me asleep, standing up. He finally fired me. I then went into show business and began playing clubs and banquets.

"It was then I met Billy Murray, who was making records. He took me to the

Victor Company, and I made two song records for them: 'Abie, Take an Example From Your Fader' and 'Becky, Stay In Your Own Backyard.'

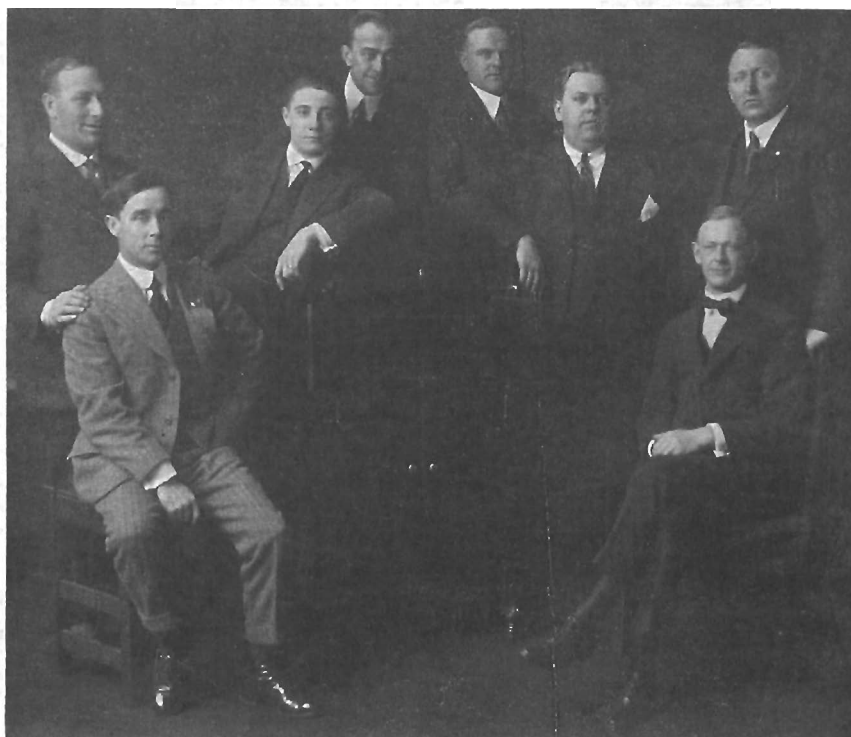
"It was a little later I made 'Cohen On the Telephone' famous and also made a series of the 'Cohen' records, which sold in millions.

"I then went on tour with the 'Eight Famous Victor Artists.' This group included Henry Burr, Billy Murray, Rudy Wiedoeft, Frank Banta, and Albert Campbell, who, with Burr, were the Peerless Quartet. We toured the country from coast to coast for 12 seasons, playing all the principal cities in the country, also most of the big theaters.

"Before going on one of these trips I received a call from the De Forrest Phono Film Company to make a talking picture of 'Cohen on the Telephone.' It was the first picture where the voice was recorded on the film.

"I remember the day was very hot. They put make-up on me, and every minute the make-up man would come over and dab me with the powder puff. It got so hot they put an electric fan on each side of the stage, and they blew in my face.

"It took all day to make four minutes of this picture. Most of the time was taken in trying to get the noise out of the electric fan.



IN A DEALER'S STORE—The "Eight Famous Victor Artists", taken in 1919, at Akron, Ohio, in a Victrola shop. Seated—Albert Campbell, left; and Fred Van Eps, right. Standing—Monroe Silver, Frank Banta, John Meyer, Billy Murray, Henry Burr, and Frank Croxton.



FOUR OF THE FAMOUS "EIGHT"—A group photo made in the store of Block and Kuhl, Victor Dealers in Peoria, Ill., in 1920. From left to right: youthful Frank Banta, pianist; Fred Van Eps, banjoist; Monroe Silver, comedian; and John Meyer, basso.

"I made many comedy records and from then on every company wanted me. I recorded for Brunswick, Emerson, Vocalion, Pathe, Banner and His Master's Voice in Canada. I became internationally known.

"At the outbreak of the War I entertained at all the camps for the sick and wounded soldiers. A committee came up from Hampton Roads, Va., and took me down to rehearse a show for the Naval Base.

"I had 195 men in that show. Among them was Freeman Gosden, who is known as 'Amos' of 'Amos 'n' Andy,' also Brooke Johns, who later became a star with his banjo in the Ziegfeld Follies. The show was called 'The Frolicking Tars.'

"I then went to the Missouri Theater in St. Louis and was the first man to do comedy talk in the big picture house.

I played three return dates in one year. I then joined Rudy Vallee, and played all the one-night stands, also the big theaters for two seasons.

"I have been on all the big hours in radio, such as 'Rudy Vallee', 'Show Boat', the 'Alka-Seltzer National Barn Dance', the 'Gay Nineties', 'Hammerstein Hour,' and 'Bi-So-Dol Hour.' I have appeared in television and written material for most of the great artists."

Mike's summary contained some inadvertent, I am sure, mistakes. Undoubtedly, he was amused by storekeepers' efforts to master the new-fangled 'phone, but he did not originate the "Cohen on the Telephone" idea—certainly not in recorded form.

"Cohen" records first were made in England around 1910. They were unknown in this country until the spring of 1914, when Columbia imported Joe Hayman's version from its English affiliate.

Soon after that, George L. Thompson recorded it for Edison and Genett, and for Indestructible cylinders; Barney Bernard for Victor, and Lewis Piotti for Pathe. I suspect Thompson may have made it for Rex and other minor companies.

Monroe Silver made no early "Co-

hen on the Telephone" records and no records using the name "Cohen" until 1918. (Incidentally, I once read a statement by a noted American author—I believe it was Claude Brion Davis—that listening to cylinder records of "Cohen on the Telephone" around 1900 was one of the joys of his boyhood. He was mistaken, for there weren't any "Cohen" records then. He probably had them confused with Russell Hunting's "Casey" monologs.)

Some day I may write a history of "Cohen on the Telephone" records, beginning with the first British versions.

Billy Murray seems to have been exceptionally generous in getting fellow performers try-outs with the Victor Company. Elida Morris, Morton Harvey, Walter Van Brunt, and Ed Smalle are among those who, indirectly or directly, owed their first recording chance to "the Denver Nightingale."

Silver's first two records for Victor will be discussed in the next section. I feel sure he did not record "Becky, Stay in Your Own Backyard," or if he did it wasn't issued. Besides the "Abie" song, his other early Victor recording was "That's Yiddisha Love."

The "Eight Famous Victor Artists" ("Famous" seems to have been changed to "Popular" in 1922 or 1923) appear to have been on the road 12 seasons, from 1916 through a part of 1928. However, Mike was not with them all that time.

He did not join the group until late in 1918 or early in 1919, when Frank Croxton took the place of Arthur Collins and Silver was substituted for Byron G. Harlan. Mike does not mention that Fred Van Eps, the banjoist, was the instrumentalist when he began, and that Wiedoeft took Van Eps' place in 1923.

A considerable time before he became a member of the troupe, Silver, with his ready wit, had dubbed them "The Pallbearers," because Burr, as the manager, insisted on their appearing in formal evening attire. Delighted with this sly crack, members of the "Eight," who disliked the full dress formality, took to calling themselves the Pallbearers and other theatrical people usually referred to them by that tag.

Burr, afterwards, decided the entertainers would be more comfortable in street clothes. Their performances are said to have taken on an added zip and sparkle after that.

I don't know enough about talking movies to affirm or deny the statement that Mike's "Cohen" recording was the first to contain sound on film. Did it come before Al Jolson's "Jazz Singer?"

Some years ago I learned that the entire "Eight" made a Warner Brothers Vitaphone movie during the early days of sound recording. The film that showed the artists was said to be still in existence, but the late L. Wolfe Gilbert, the veteran song writer, who made an investigation for

(Continued on page 40)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

me, reported that the huge disc containing the sound had been lost.

Mike thought he recorded for Brunswick, but I have not been able to find his name in a Brunswick catalog, nor apparently, did he do any work for Columbia. But he did record for almost every other company of the early 1920's.

### III. Recording Career

There seems no need to devote a great deal of space to an elaborate survey of Monroe Silver's phonograph activities. Most of his recorded material consisted of talking records about "Cohen," with the various titles duplicated for assorted companies.

I have not attempted in my own collection to form a comprehensive

representation of Silver recordings. I do, however, have all his Victor's except "Abie, Take an Example." I also own his two Edisons.

Likewise included are "Cohen at the Movies," and "Cohen Talks About the Ladies," on Okeh No. 4145; "Cohen Talks on Prohibition," and "About the Ladies," Gennett No. 9066; "Cohen Takes His Friend to the Opera," by Silver and Steve Porter, in two parts, Vocalion B No. 14282; and a singing recording I'd forgotten I had and doubt I ever have played, "No Hot Water in the Bronx," on Cameo No. 915. The other side is "I'm Goin' South," by Maureen Englin.

I have Silver's two last records, the General Tavern Tunes No. 1708, of "Cohen on the Telephone," and "Jake the Plumber," made in 1940; and "Casey and Cohen in the Army," by Billy Murray and Silver, made late in 1941 or early in 1942 for Beacon No. 2001. This was Billy's last recorded appearance.

It seems that a sufficient review of the comedian's recording career may be obtained by quoting the supplement descriptions of his Victor records, made from 1911 to 1927.

Silver's first Victor, the already mentioned "Abie, Take an Example From Your Fader," was issued on No. 16841 in April, 1911. On the A side Arthur Collins sang "Below the Mason-Dixon Line," which he also did on the first Edison Diamond Disc, No. 50901, with "Moonlight in Jungle Land," as its companion. Beginning with the Collins side, the supplement said:

"One of the best songs Mr. (Dave) Reed has yet produced. Collins sings entertainingly about the famous Southern ragtime jubilee, being assisted by a large company of alleged darkies, who are heard in the distance. On the reverse, Mr. Silver, that famous murderer of the English language, gives us one of his celebrated Hebrew character songs."

Silver's second Victor record came out in May, 1911. It combined a humorous monolog, "Through the Hole in the Fence," by Murry K. Hill, with Silver's "That's Yiddisha Love," written by James Brockman:

"Mr. Hill gives us here one of his famous mock melodramas, in each act of which he forgets all his characters and invents new ones. It is all very funny. As a companion piece the favorite Yiddish comedian offers another of his amusing dialect songs, in which true love (the Yiddish variety) is explained at great length."

On October 28, 1911, the Silver side was recouped on No. 16945 with "My Yiddisha Colleen," by Walter Van Brunt, to get a more suitable combination, and "Through the Hole in the Fence" was doubled with Hill's "A Bit of Grand Opera," on No. 16954.

Records sung in Yiddish did not appeal to the masses of buyers and usually had a short life. "Abie" was no exception. It made its last appearance in the May, 1912, catalog. "Yiddisha Love" stayed around until November, 1914.

Monroe Silver's next appearance in a Victor supplement was not made until November, 1918, some seven and a half years after his first record had been published. The disc combined "Cohen Gets Married," and "Cohen on His Honeymoon," and proved a big seller. It was described brilliantly and humorously by that most gifted of all record writers, James Edward Richardson:

"The peculiar brand of humor so characteristic of the lower East Side of Broadway has come to have a definite place in the American world of entertainment. And Monroe Silver is a past-master in the art. In this monolog he gives a vivid picture of his wedding, and various occasions and personalities connected therewith.

"Typical of the style is the philosophy which led to marriage. The prospective bridegroom had been earning the comfortable income of \$18 a week, and found that he could have a perfectly swell time on six of them, thus saving 12 each week. Being told that 'two could live as easily as one' on the same income he decided to make the experiment.

"But the high cost of living gripped him in its iron grip. Do what they

(Continued on page 48)

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Jake the Plumber 10" record 75c  
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ONE OF SILVER'S LAST RECORDS—A 1940 advertisement of the Comedian's General Tavern Tunes recording of "Cohen on the Telephone."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

would the moderately happy couple discovered that the old order could not continue . . . at the outside all the husband could save was \$10 a week! From this to an account of the wedding is an easy stage, and the drollery of the stories is, of course, greatly enhanced by the manner of telling.

"Monroe Silver has a perfect American-Yiddish accent. His tones are the tones of the Bowery, and as he speaks one can see his dark eyes gleaming and imagine the expressive gestures so typical of this canny, humorous race of Orientals with an Occidental heritage of experience."

If Mike Silver's Yiddish accent was perfect—and it was—that was because it was the way he naturally talked. He did not have to impersonate "Cohen" at all. Mike whom I met in New York in October, 1940, while visiting Billy and Madeline Murray, spoke precisely like his character, saying "vell" for "well," "ve" for "we," etc.

Never, in his long theatrical career, did he lose his East Side dialect. I suppose he realized it was a valuable humorous asset, and made no effort to rid himself of it. And I imagine the record just described was made about the time Mike became a member of the "Eight Famous Victor Artists."

He came along with another "Cohen" record in November, 1919. This

time it was No. 18608, and both sides were required to tell about "Cohen at the Picnic." It was made on a royalty basis, and Billy Murray, who played more than one minor part in it, told me his share of the first royalty "split" was \$1,400. This record was a big seller for years.

It is a delight to quote anything by Jim Richardson, whom I consider one of the finest literary stylists of his time. Here is how he described it:

"Those who went to Cohen's wedding and followed the course of his honeymoon (1850!) will learn in this record that he now has a raft of children. Many of them crowd onto the 'flivver' of Abe Levy, the butcher, to go to the Buttonhole Makers' picnic. It 'busts' on the way, and they have to take the train. Cohen doesn't like to pay fare for the youngest, and he and the conductor 'hand one another a few.'"

"Tribulation continues at the picnic grounds. Mr. Levy, who lost his 'baggage' when the cork came out of it, wanders by the Cohens' spread at lunchtime, and Mrs. Cohen turns her back on him. Called upon to explain, she thought he said he was 'hungry' when he said 'angry.'"

"Cohen bears out the good old principle of thrift by some absurd bargaining with side-show and attraction-men. He is a good husband and father, protecting his flock shrewdly and with humor."

Silver's next Victor record was a singing one, "Rebecca (Came Back From Mecca)." Mr. Richardson refers to it as Mike's first song record. Apparently Mr. Richardson did not know of the two Mike had made 10 years before. "Rebecca" was coupled with a Billy Murray masterpiece, the side-

splitting "My Old New Jersey Home," which he sang in mock-operatic style. Here is the Richardson description of "Rebecca":

"'Rebecca' is Monroe Silver's first song record. The song is a 'wolf.' Rebecca stayed two years in Mecca. She came home, discarded a few conventional garments, smoked Turkish 'tebekah' in a bubble-pipe, danced the Midway dance, and otherwise scandalized the neighborhood."

"Oriental strains open the song, with grotesque but musically beautiful effect. The 'Oy, Oy, Oy, Oy's become queerly mixed with strange echoes of Stamboul and Pera, the crescent and the pentacle blend wildly. . . . Silver's style and accent are notable."

In spite of this flattering description, the record, like most Yiddish dialect songs, sold poorly and was cut out of the catalog by 1924. Probably "Rebecca" impaired the sale of the Murray side.

The Yiddish comedian's next appearance in a Victor list came in November, 1921, when he and Murray made their first duet record, "Irish Home, Sweet Home," a Harry Von Tilzer song. It was combined on No. 18794 with "Melon Time in Dixieland," by Murray and the American Quartet. The description:

"Billy Murray (you remember) sang several months ago of his 'Old New Jersey Home,' and now he rings in Monroe Silver to sing of an ancestral Irish one. Mileasian tunes are played by a Yiddish band; differences of opinion lead to an insurrection."

"Monroe sings in Yiddish dialect, Billy in Irish, and the 'Wearing of the Green' is sadly mixed up with 'Hatikvah,' and 'Mazzeltov' with 'Killarney.' This is a highly original humorous record."

"Irish Home Sweet Home" also appealed to comparatively few customers and was cut out in 1924. On February 24, 1943, Mike wrote to me and asked if I knew where he could get a copy of the song, which he apparently wanted to use in a night club act, and I was glad to have a spare copy of the record to send him.

There were no more Victor records by Monroe Silver until after the beginning of the electric recording era. In the summer of 1926 he and Murray sang "I Ate the Baloney," coupled with "Down By The Gas House," by Aileen Stanley and Murray, which was issued without description.

"I Ate the Baloney" is an amusing story, set to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel," of how an Irishman and an Italian, (both portrayed by Billy) and a Hebrew (impersonated by Mike) tried to get access to a piece of bologna to keep from starving. The Hebrew, of course, won.

Silver's last Victor record appearance was on No. 20517, in which he and Murray sang an amusing burlesque of a college song, "Oh, How We Love Our Alma Mater!" It was issued in May, 1927, coupled with a satire on careless motorists, "We're the Sunday Drivers," by Billy Murray's Trio—Murray, Silver, and Carl Mathieu.

The genial humorist made two Edison Diamond Discs, which were issued in the summer of 1920. One was a singing number, "Pittsburgh, Pa.," on

(Continued on page 52)



MIDDLE-AGED PHOTO—Monroe Silver autographed this photo for Jim Walsh in 1940. It was taken during the years Silver was a member of the "Eight Famous Victor Artists." He was better-looking as an elderly man than in his younger days. Jimmy Martindale told him: "Mike, your face has more character now."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 48)

No. 50655, and the other, "Cohen On His Honeymoon," in which he was aided by Edward Meeker, No. 50667.

The first was dubbed onto Blue Amberol cylinder No. 4004, and "Cohen" onto No. 4029. "Pittsburgh" was combined with "My Friends, Morris and Max" by another Yiddish dialect comedian, Maurice Burkhart, and the "Cohen" number with the old classic, "Backyard Conversation Between Two Jealous Irish Washerwomen," by Ada Jones and Steve Porter.

The Edison description of "Pittsburgh, Pa.," was diverting:

"Another Yiddish number. This one is highly hilarious. It details the events of a golden wedding anniversary at which all the 'bergs' in the world seem to be gathered: 'Greenberg, Romberg, Blumberg, Bromberg, Danberg, Hanberg, and Goldberg, too; Timberg, Bimberg, Ginsberg, Linsberg, Weissberg, Iceberg, and Silverberg, too.'

"It wound up in a free-for-all, scrap in which the 'bergs' got mixed up and inflated.

"The affair took place in Pittsburgh, Pa."

### IV. Experiences With the "Eight"

I first saw Monroe Silver when Billy Murray and I walked into Lindy's famous New York restaurant (now, alas! closed) where all the show business celebrities congregated. There we found Billy's pal, Jimmy Martindale, at a table with two men who smiled broadly at us as we entered.

One, a black-haired little chap, not much more than 5 feet tall, was Albert Campbell, who had been an outstanding pioneer recording tenor. The other, short, stocky, white-haired, and with a benevolent smile, was 65-year-old Mike Silver. He was wearing dark glasses and explained he was using them because he had got a piece of steel in one eye.

It was appropriate to find Al and Mike together, for Billy recalled that, in the days when the "Eight Famous Victor Artists" were touring the country, he saw little of Silver, his roommate. He explained that as soon as a concert had been given, Silver and Campbell, both tee-totalers, set out together, walking, to "see the town."

They would stroll for hours until they became tired, then look for what they guessed would be the worst silent movie in town. Once a choice had been made, they would go in, and one would watch while the other went to sleep.

When the watcher became sleepy he would wake the other, whisper briefly what had happened so far in the film, and then go to sleep while his companion watched. Usually, they would alternately watch and sleep through three or four showings, without taking the trouble to return to their hotel rooms and go to bed.

Most of the members of the "Eight" had special duties in addition to taking part in their stage offerings. John Meyer, for instance, made all the musical arrangements, and Billy Murray bought gifts for the backstage workers who helped put on their shows.

As for Mike, his job was to keep a scrapbook of newspaper accounts of the troupe's various performances. I often have wondered if those books are still in existence, perhaps in the custody of his "little niece." They would be worth more to me than I possibly could afford to pay, as an invaluable and unique source of information about the "Eight".

Other members of the group said that the opening act for their shows, which featured Mike Silver, was one of the funniest things they had ever seen, and audiences always seemed to agree. It was used for years. Mike would come to the front and pretend he was trying to tell an improper story. Billy would rush up to him and exclaim: "Mike, Mike! You can't tell that story here!" Mike would make a second attempt, and another performer would run up and remonstrate. All did, except the pianist, Frank Banta, who remained in position.

Eventually, almost everybody on stage had a try, culminating with the obese Burr, who waddled out, and exclaimed:

"Mike, I'm the manager of this troupe and I tell you, you can't tell that story here!"

But Mike still insisted. Finally, Billy said: "Now, Mike, I'm going to leave it to your sense of decency. You know my wife, don't you?"

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

vero but to become once more its "umile ancella." Hampered by the effects of her prolonged absence, and the appearance of new and younger sopranos, she nevertheless soon established herself anew as a leading prima donna.

Besides her successes throughout Italy, Olivero also dazzled opera audiences in Lisbon; Cairo; Helsinki; Edinburgh; Berlin and Wiesbaden; London; Paris; Brussels; Anvers and Enghien; Vienna; Amsterdam; Malta; Bern; Madrid; Bilbao and Oviedo; Caracas; Buenos Aires; Rio de Janeiro.

For one with a truncated career, the soprano certainly managed to get around!

As for Olivero's roles, they were as numerous as they were varied. Her presence had adorned operas such as Puccini's "Bohème," "Butterfly," "Fanciulla del West," "Turan-dot," "Manon Lescaut," "Suor Angelica," "Tosca."

Mascagni's "Iris," "Cavalleria," Monteverdi's "Incoronazione di Poppea," "Ballo delle Ingrate," "Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda."

Alfano's "Risurrezione," "Ultimo Lord," "Cyrano de Bergerac," "Sakuntala." Wolf-Ferrari's "Amor Med-

And Mike replied: "Oh, sure, I know Madeline."

"Well, she's in the audience," Billy said. "Do you mean you would tell that story before her?"

"Heck, yeah Billy!" Mike answered. "She was the one that told it to me!"

This brought down the house and the show proper got under way. Frank Banta said he must have watched that routine 500 times, and laughed equally hard every time he saw it.

When the "Eight" broke up in 1928, Billy Murray, Walter Scanlan, and Monroe Silver united themselves in an act called "The Three Wise Fools." They planned to make records, make personal appearances in theaters and night clubs, and undertake a tour of overseas music halls.

Before long, however, sound films began closing vaudeville houses, and things became worse when the big depression came. Silver dropped out of the trio, but Murray and Scanlan remained together as a duet team. They made records and sang on radio, until 1932, when there was no record business left to speak of.

Mike Silver returned to night club work and appeared before many civic clubs. He also, as has been reported, was frequently on radio, and continued to be employed pleasantly for the remainder of his life, though he was semi-retired when he died in 1947.

It would be impossible to estimate how many wholesome laughs he gave to millions of listeners during his lifetime; and the amount of good he did as a teller of clean, wholesome stories, and a singer of amusing dialect songs.

ico," "Campiello," "Quattro Rusteghi.

Without listing composers: "Faust," "Mefistofele," "Adriani," "Traviata," "Manon," "Fedora," "Don Giovanni," "Penelope," "Rosenkavalier," "Lohen-grin," "Mazeppa."

Also "Francesca da Rimini," "Giulietta e Romeo," "Celestina," "Notturno Romantico," "Assunta Spina," "Caverna di Salamanca," "Medea," "Monacella della Fontana," "Misteri Gaudio," "Guerra," "Medium," "Mercante e l'Avvocato," "Cleopatra," "Orfeide," "Dialogo delle Carmelitane," "Voce Umana."

I am sure there were more, but these works give a fairly good idea of the soprano's versatility. Most of them, of course, are of the *verismo* type, and in several she created the principal female parts. But, judging from the obscurity of some titles, it appears that not all have enjoyed lasting success.

Fortunately for the United States, Olivero came to Dallas in 1967 to sing in Cherubini's "Medea." To be exact, she originally was scheduled for "La Fanciulla del West," to be staged in 1968 there. But due to a change in plans, she was invited to do Medea instead, one year earlier.

And that, in the very same Dallas where Callas had come, sung and conquered with her Medea only a few

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## VERNON ARCHIBALD

By JIM WALSH

PART I

(NOTE: "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" is written entirely by Jim Walsh. No unsolicited contributions will be accepted.)

### I. Two Quartets of Brothers

In HOBBIES for October, 1957, I told the life story of Edwin M. Whitney, a well-known elocutionist. He had been the second tenor of the once famous Whitney Brothers Quartet.

Other members were Alvin Whitney, first tenor; William, baritone; and Yale, bass. At the time I wrote Yale was a resident of California, but Alvin, William, and Edwin had died. A fifth brother, Casward Whitney, who lived in Pittsburgh, had not been a Quartet member.

Now I am in the mood to consider the career of another noted recording artist, who also had been a member of a Quartet of brothers—so far as I know, the only one other than the Whitney Brothers that made records besides appearing in concert. I am thinking of Vernon Archibald, the baritone of the Archibald Brothers Quartet.

Vernon also won fame as a soloist. Concerning his brothers, I must confess ignorance. I never have learned their given names and don't know whether they are still living.

Unlike Edwin Whitney, Vernon Archibald did not do humorous work. There is scarcely a trace of comedy in any of his records, except the quaintly amusing Edison of "Why Adam Sinned," in which the baritone is heard as a member of the American Singers.

In private life, however, Archibald seems to have had a strong sense of fun. I base this belief on a letter I received in June, 1964, from Elmer Moore, a well-known member of a Record Collectors' Society in Southern California. Writing from Santa Monica on June 12, Mr. Moore said:

"... Vernon Archibald passed away on May 24 at San Marino, California. We had a date for a taped interview with him a few days after he died. In fact, we had a date for an interview a year ago but could not get to it. Of all the recording artists I have met I think Mr. Archibald was the greatest. I had him on a program several times for a speaker and the audience could hardly stay on their chairs with his hilarity."

One thing that impresses me as I begin to write about Vernon Archibald is his unusual recording career. He began, as a soloist and a member of the Quartet, with Columbia in 1911. Late in 1912 he made just one Victor record—or at least only one was issued.

Then, in 1913, he began making Edison Blue Amberol cylinders and was soon on the Diamond Disc list. As far as I know, he never again, with one exception, sang for any company except Edison, unless he took part in the American Singers' Columbia records. He did not participate in the Quartet's Victor discs.

The exception was an 8-inch hill-and-dale Operaphone disc of "For All Eternity," which he apparently sang around 1915. Of course, there is a chance he made more Operaphone records of which I have not learned and that he also recorded for Phonocut, Keenophone, Rex, and other obscure manufacturers.

# The EDISON PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY

VOL. XIV

MAY, 1916

NO. 5



VERNON ARCHIBALD, BARITONE

VERNON ARCHIBALD, baritone.





**GIFTED FAMILY**—The four Archibald Brothers—see bottom of page—were natives of Indiana who became well-known as a concert and record making male Quartet. This page is reprinted from a Columbia booklet of about 1912.

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There were some years in which Archibald's name did not appear in an Edison supplement, but he may have been on salary throughout all that time. Perhaps, he did some singing in choruses without receiving label credit.

Edison went out of the record business November 1, 1929. It may be that Archibald's contract, if there was one, had not expired yet and he was still

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unable to sing for another company.

#### II. A Bit of Biography

By combining information contained in an Edison cylinder record catalog for April, 1914, with that in Archibald's death certificate we learn he was born June 30, 1886, on a farm near Morocco, Ind. His father was W. L. Archibald and his mother's maiden name was Matilda Maller.

The singer's vocal training was received under Professor L. A. Torrens, dean of the Cosmopolitan School of Music, Chicago. Archibald spent six years "studying the piano under some of the finest teachers in America," and was considered a brilliant pianist. He was always at the keyboard when the American Singers rehearsed.

The baritone made many concert tours of the United States and Canada. During his early career he was soloist for two years at the Union Park Congregational Church in Chicago. Later he was baritone soloist of the Madison Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City, a position he still held when the 1914 catalog was printed. His large concert repertoire consisted of more than 200 songs, besides the standard oratorios and cantatas.

I remember seeing a mention in an issue of The Billboard, published in the 1920s, of a recital he gave in New York. His accompanist was Bertha Ball Archibald. I imagine she was his wife. The death certificate lists him as a widower.

According to the certificate, Archibald had worked all his adult life as a voice teacher. He had been living at 402 East Las Tunas in San Gabriel. Although Mr. Moore said Archibald died in San Marino, the certificate gives the place of death as the Los Angeles County General Hospital, 1200 N. State St., Los Angeles. He had been living in California 14 years.

Cause of death was said to be a carcinoma of the tongue, complicated by an arteriosclerotic heart condition. The body was cremated May 29, 1964, five days after his death.

#### III. Archibald's Columbia Records

We now need to go back a long way to October, 1910, when the name of the Archibald Brothers Quartet first appeared in a monthly Columbia supplement. The boys were given an effusive sendoff.

Their first record combined unaccompanied versions of "Juanita" and "The Two Roses." It sold for 75 cents, whereas most other 10-inch double-faced Columbians were only 65 cents. This additional price may mean that the Quartet was getting royalties in addition to a recording fee.

Said the supplement:

"It will take you less than one hearing to discover that this is the greatest quartet record ever issued. In it is set an entirely new standard in quartet recording, such as only Columbia records by these same singers to be issued in the future can equal. In these recordings are to be found effects of harmony and blending that transcend anything of like nature presented in the past, and which attain to the supreme height of musical expression."

(Continued on page 40)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

"The Archibald Brothers Quartet is an organization that is almost unique in the character of its formation, and altogether so in respect to artistic excellence. It is composed of four brothers, each of whom is a soloist and a vocalist of the highest rank. It is as a quartet, however, that they are best known to concert audiences throughout the country, and it is in male part-song work that they have attained the wonderful proficiency which distinguishes their performance as being unequalled by that of any other organization. The most remarkable features of their work are the absolutely perfect balance and blending of the four voices, and the rich, organ-like harmonic effects that throughout all of their interpretations charm and delight the musical ears . . . The Archibald Brothers Quartet sings exclusively for the Columbia."

I suspect Columbia was moved to issue Archibald Brothers records because Victor and Edison already were recording the Whitney Brothers. Both groups specialized in an old-fashioned type of unaccompanied singing, and the Archibalds may be regarded as forerunners of the Columbia Stellar Quartet, which the Company's artist and repertoire manager, George Clarence Jell, formed in 1914.

The styles of singing were much the same. And when Charles Harrison organized the American Singers in the late 1920s, with Vernon Archibald as the baritone, the group's style was much like that of the Stellar Quartet, of which Harrison had been first tenor. Other Archibald Quartet records were issued a few months following the initial "release," and the last appeared in March, 1912.

Meanwhile, the Quartet's baritone made his Columbia debut as a soloist in February, 1911, with a coupling of "The Heart Bowed Down" from "The Bohemian Girl" and "In Happy Moments" from "Maritana," a half-forgotten opera with which Archibald was to be peculiarly associated during his recording career.

In March there was another double, "In Old Madrid" and "Mother o' Mine," and in May appeared the last

of Archibald's Columbia solo offerings, a 12-inch combination of "The Lord Is My Shepherd," and "Beyond the Gates of Paradise." The supplement said: "Both (songs) are rendered by Mr. Archibald with the smooth and beautiful intonation and tone quality that has distinguished his work in former records."

Just why Vernon Archibald ceased to sing as a Columbia soloist, and the brothers' Quartet made no more records is a matter for speculation, but it is unlikely that the unaccompanied ensemble had much appeal for 1911 record buyers. They were much more likely to call for "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Casey Jones," or the perennially popular "Preacher and the Bear."

I wonder, but don't know, how much longer the brothers sang together. Probably not long, for Vernon seems to have decided to make a reputation for himself as a soloist rather than as a member of a group.

### IV. Just One Victor

Vernon Archibald made his next appearance in a record list when the Victor supplement for October, 1912, was issued. He sang a setting of the verses, "Thou'rt Like Unto a Lovely Flower" (Du bist wie eine Blume), by the German poet, Henrich Heine. The beloved Olive Kline's rendition of George H. Cluttsam's "Creole Cradle Song" was its companion. After discussing Miss Kline's soprano solo, the new supplement said:

"On the opposite side Mr. Archibald, a new baritone, makes his first appearance in the Victor catalog with a splendid rendition of Wilson G. Smith's lovely setting of Heine's poetic gem."

Smith was, for many years, music critic of the *Cleveland Press*. I have a reprint of an article he wrote for the *Press* October 12, 1916, issue, in which he reviewed an Edison "direct comparison" recital and admitted he had been amazed to find he could not distinguish Marie Rappold's recorded voice from her living tones.

The Victor record obviously was a poor seller—probably a bit "above the head" of the average buyer of black label discs—for it was discontinued in November, 1914. The Columbians had a longer life. All by the Quartet and by Vernon Archibald were still in the June, 1915, catalog.

In September, 1917, two double-faced Columbians by the soloist and three by the brothers still could be had, but by September, 1919, all the solos were gone. Only one Archibald Brothers Record, "I Love to Tell the Story" and "I Need Thee Every Hour," remained. Even it disappeared in 1921.

It is rather odd that no more Victor records were issued by Archibald. Perhaps the small sale of No. 17157 discouraged further attempts. The supplement contains a small picture of him, in which he looks to me rather like a young Franklin D. Roosevelt. It depicts a thin, "hatchet-faced" man, with dark hair parted in the middle, and somehow gives me an impression of not being very strong.

Yet, the singer lived to be almost 78. Photographs of him at various stages of his life, however, always made me feel he was not physically robust. In most of the later "shots" he is shown wearing nose glasses. When he doesn't have on glasses his eyes, I think, look weak.

### V. Blue Amberol Cylinders

The most important part of Archibald's recording career began in September, 1913, when he started singing for Edison's new indestructible cylinders. He came along just too late to make any old-style wax "rollers." However, he soon was contributing liberally to the Blue Amberol output, and when the Diamond Discs were introduced he became a disc standby.

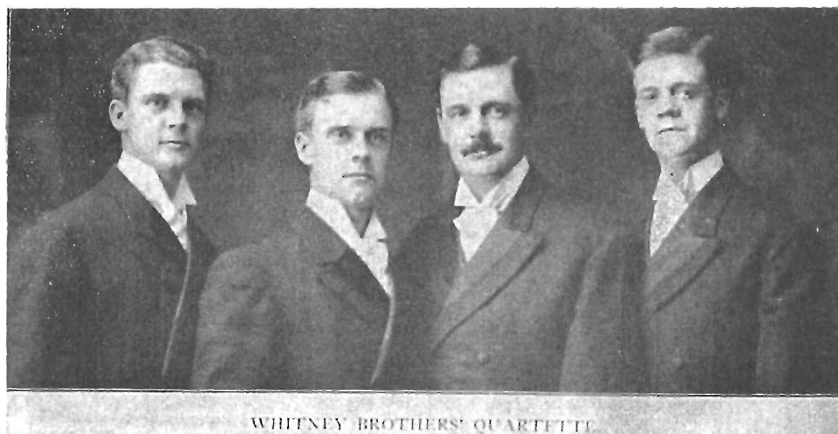
Actually, the baritone already was doing disc work before his first cylinder was announced. I just have come across a note sent to me many years ago by the late Fred Rabenstein. He was the "paymaster" for Edison artists.

In his note he mentions that Diamond Disc No. 80169, "Pinafore" Airs, was recorded July 3, 1913. The artists were Elizabeth Spencer, Helen Clark, Harvey Hindermeyer, Emory B. Randolph, William F. Hooley, Thomas Chalmers, and Archibald.

Since I plan to publish what I hope is a complete list of Archibald's recordings at the end of this article, I do not intend to review all of his Edison cylinders and discs individually. But I shall mention some of the more outstanding. The list does not contain mentions of his concerted work, such as the singing he did with the New York Light Opera Company, which made the "Pinafore" record, because accurate information could not be obtained without minutely inspecting the Edison books of recording dates.

Archibald's first Blue Amberol was No. 1829, "Down By The Old Mill Stream." It now is recognized as an evergreen barber-shop Quartet and community-sing classic.

(Continued on page 48)



THE WHITNEY BROTHERS (shown here) preceded the Archibalds as a popular male Quartet. From left to right they were: Alvin, first tenor; Edwin M., second tenor; William, baritone; and Yale, bass. All were dead in 1957 except Yale, who was living in California.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

The *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for September, 1913, referred to the singer as having "an especially pleasing baritone voice of wonderful compass, sweetness and quality. He has done much oratorio work, and also shown marked ability as an interpreter of popular songs. His enunciation is clear and distinct."

The monthly supplement gave this description of the record:

"Tell Taylor, who wrote both the words and music of 'Down By the Old Mill Stream,' is better known as a publisher of popular music than as a composer. He has, however, written several of these sentimental ballads and has been successful with them. 'Down By the Old Mill Stream' was originally sung in vaudeville by Don Heath. The baritone of Vernon Archibald is well suited to this selection as a change from the tenors who usually choose this sentimental style of melody to sing. The soprano voice of Marie Kaiser is heard in the refrains."

The supplement writer seemed to intimate that the public was tired of hearing tenors sing the song. However, when a Diamond Disc was made of it the assignment went to a light opera tenor, Arthur Clough, although Archibald was being employed steadily by Edison.

Archibald's next Blue Amberol was another old standby, "In the Shadow of the Pines," a type of rather mawkish sentimental song said to be beloved by Mr. Edison and perhaps recorded at his demand. The record was a duet between Archibald and the tenor, Royal Pish, with the baritone leading throughout and the high voice harmonizing. One amusing fact is brought out in the last sentence of the supplement description, which I have shortened:

"In the Shadow of the Pines' is one of the 'big hits' of the Middle West and probably more copies of it have been sold than of any other song published west of the Mississippi River, with the possible exception of 'Answer,' by Robyn. The lyric of this song was incidental to a story published in *Godey's (Lady) Book* about 1880."

Although the description gives the impression that the song was a current "big hit," it was published in 1895.

In February, 1914, Archibald was represented by what then was regarded as "the unofficial state song" of his native Indiana, Paul Dresser's "On the Banks of the Wabash." Originally published in 1898, the song had another surge of popularity in 1913, and a Blue Amberol recording was in order.

I cannot determine from a small map whether or not the Wabash River flows through Morocco, Ind., near which Archibald was born. However, he probably felt some emotion as he sang the beautiful refrain:

"Oh, the moonlight's fair tonight along the Wabash.

From the fields there comes the breath of new-mown hay.

Through the sycamores the candle lights are gleaming,

On the banks of the Wabash, far away."

The record was described as being sung with the assistance of a chorus, but the only other voice I can detect is that of a soprano. Perhaps Marie Kaiser was once more helping him out.

Again, when a Diamond Disc of the "Wabash" song was wanted (in 1924), a tenor, James Doherty, was called on to sing it, even though Archibald still was available. But, as will be shown later, one of the last pieces of recording work the baritone did for Edison involved Archibald taking part in a disc version of "The Banks of the Wabash."

Most of Archibald's Blue Amberols after December, 1914, were dubbings from Diamond Discs, although in some instances the disc itself was not issued. And not all the discs were transferred to cylinders.

Before the dubbing system began, an interesting Blue Amberol was announced in September, 1914. It was "The Rose of the Mountain Trail," in which Archibald was assisted by Clementine de Vere, a soprano who had been popular in opera, oratorio, and concert work, but whose career then seemed in eclipse. The supplement said:

"This selection marks rather a new departure in record making, for seldom, if ever before, has a vocal obbligato been made the feature of a record. It is especially pretty and gives very novel effects of harmony. Clementine de Vere was, a few years ago, a very well-known concert and oratorio singer in the United States. On this record her voice blends with that of Vernon Archibald beautifully."

Oddly, this attractive record was not made available on the discs.

Archibald's duet version of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling," with Elizabeth Spencer, was one of the most popular Diamond Discs. It was correspondingly popular on cylinders.

One Blue Amberol that induces head-scratching was No. 4761, "Sound Now the Trumpet Fearlessly," a duet from "Puritani" which Archibald sang as a duet with Harvey Hindermeyer. It was not issued until September, 1923, when the cylinder record business was virtually dead except in some rural areas. In a desperation move to stimulate sales, the price of the records had been dropped from 60 to 35 cents, and Edison was arranging to sell them by mail to individual users who had no local dealers.

I wonder just what attraction an excerpt from a little known Italian production was supposed to have for country listeners who never had been inside an opera house. True, the duet was sung in English and had a lively tune that made it sound almost as catchy as a good popular song.

To add to the confusion, the supposedly more sophisticated purchasers of Diamond Discs never had a chance to buy "Sound Now the Trumpet." I have a copy of the "Puritani" cylinder, though I can't remember when or how I obtained it, but my guess is that, even at 35 cents, its sale was less than negligible and there are only a few copies around. Even so, it's a good record.

Another oddity was the issuing, a few months later, of an excerpt from "Maritana," which must have been

one of Mr. Edison's favorite operas in English. This excerpt was "In Turn What Say You?" In it Archibald again was assisted by Marie Kaiser who had changed her name during World War I to Marie de Kyzer. The cylinder was a dubbing from Diamond Disc No. 80124, which had been announced in January, 1914.

Finally, in 1915, Archibald made a Diamond Disc of an English patriotic song, "Fall In!" This was dubbed on to Blue Amberol No. 23365, primarily for British sale.

Next month we'll consider Archibald's Diamond Discs and his activities with the American Singers.

(To be Continued)

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### VERNON ARCHIBALD

By JIM WALSH

PART II

(Note: "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" is written entirely by Jim Walsh. No unsolicited contributions will be accepted.)

#### I. Archibald's Edison Discs

THERE is something exceptional about this article. Some two years ago I compiled a list of Vernon Archibald's records and wrote the first installment of this biographical sketch, which was published last month.

I put it temporarily aside and then other subjects, which seemed of more timely interest, occupied my attention. But a few days ago I came across the abandoned manuscript and became possessed of a desire to complete it.

So, here I am. And here it is.

Never before, however, have I submitted an article to HOBBIES with its two installments spaced so far apart in the writing.

I do not think it necessary to undertake an elaborate discussion of Archibald's Edison Diamond Discs. As I read down the list, it is easy to see that Thomas A. Edison's influence was strong in the selection of the numbers the baritone recorded.

Solos from obsolescent light operas, and old-fashioned ballads that had been popular when Mr. Edison was a child or when his parents were children, predominated. There was also a smattering of gospel hymns (I imagine Archibald sang in New York churches throughout his recording career). But there were not many popular songs.

Almost certainly Archibald's most popular Diamond Disc was his duet with lovely-voiced soprano, Elizabeth Spencer, of the beautiful English ballad, "Somewhere a Voice is Calling." This was coupled with "A Perfect Day," by the Metropolitan Quartet.

The same two titles were combined on a higher-priced record by Anna Case. But, to me, the less pretentious offerings have more attractive singing.

In the Edison booklet, "Music That Lives," this description was given of the Spencer-Archibald version:

"Arthur F. Tate is best known in England; he is a composer of songs and instrumental numbers that are generally simple and unpretentious in character, and yet of exceptional merit. 'Somewhere a Voice is Calling' is one of Tate's best duets, and has been popular with the London public for some time. It is a quiet melody, almost religious in character, with beautiful harmony in the blending of the voices. This record shows both these artists at their best. Miss Spencer's voice,



ORIGINAL QUARTET—This newspaper picture probably appeared originally in the *New York Times* in 1927 or 1928. It shows the American Singers before Lambert Murphy replaced Redferne Hollinshead as second tenor. From left to right the newspaper says: "Charles Harrison, first tenor; Redferne Hollinshead, second tenor; Vernon Archibald, baritone; and Frank Croxton, basso—will sing from WEAJ tomorrow night at 9:15 o'clock."

a soprano, is so flexible and of so great a range that in this rendition it sounds almost like a true contralto—a characteristic that makes it especially suitable for this quiet, beautiful melody."

The booklet's author might have added that the words of the song were credited to a lady named Eileen Newton, and that the construction of "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" is unusual for a popular ballad. There is no refrain, but the verses are repeated, with minor changes in the melody.

It happens that "Somewhere" was the first Edison disc I ever heard "close-up." I had heard a few others as I walked past homes in which there were Edison instruments. And I didn't hear it played on a New Edison, but on a Brunswick.

I was a small boy when I heard that Edison disc but, although the loud scratch of a bad pressing distressed me, I had to admit to myself that I never before had heard two reproduced voices blend so beautifully, yet with each syllable coming from the throat of the individual singer clearly distinct from the notes of the other.

I prided myself in those long-ago days on being a "strong Victrola man". Nothing could have made me admit publicly that the Edison re-

cording was so superior to the Victor, as I think it certainly was, but I detected the difference just the same.

In fact, Edison well might have said of the perfect blending of voices in "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" what it did say concerning another Spencer-Archibald duet, "The Land of Golden Dreams";

"Neither Elizabeth Spencer nor Vernon Archibald need introduction to Edison owners, for both are favorite artists that have a large following among concertgoers and in the phonograph field.

"It is in duets like this one that the excellence of the Edison recording is displayed. You do not hear the confused nasal tones of two singers, but the actual blended voices of Miss Spencer and Mr. Archibald exactly as they sounded in the recording room."

Both Miss Spencer and Archibald, incidentally, did a great deal of Edison tone test work.

The testimony of my own ears eventually made me as strong an enthusiast for the Edison as I had been for the Victrola, but for the time being then I "stood pat". The first Edison disc I ever heard as I was standing beside a New Edison was "All By Myself," sung by Helen Clark. That record, and others I listened to that morning, made a permanent Edison zealot of me.

Other big-selling Archibald records were "When It's Apple Blossom Time





SECOND EDITION—The American Singers after Murphy took the place of Hollinshead. Standing are Charles Harrison, first tenor, and Frank Croxton, bass. Murphy is seated near Archibald, who is at the piano.

in Normandy," that he sang with a mixed chorus; "In the Valley of the Moon," and "When the Twilight Comes to Kiss the Rose Goodnight," duets with Miss Clark; also "Leaf By Leaf the Roses Fall," and "Shall We Meet Beyond the River?" in which he and Lewis James sang together. Nor should we overlook his "Song of Love," from "Blossom Time," a duet with Betsy Lane Shepherd.

Two of the baritone's popular Edisons were remakes of numbers previously sung by other artists. One was "Ever of Thee I'm Fondly Dreaming," a tearful slab of, to me, vapid sentimentality, said to have been beloved by Mr. Edison, that went back to 1852.

Writing in 1865, Bret Harte irritably referred to it as "that maddening ballad," which his neighbors in San Francisco sang and played almost without ceasing. This Edison record probably was aided from a sales standpoint by having "Darling Nellie Gray" on the other side.

Until the 1922 Edison catalog appeared "Ever of Thee" was listed as by Miss Spencer and Thomas Chalmers, but in the remake Archibald took Chalmers' place. Why, it is hard to say, as Chalmers, whom Mr. Edison considered one of the half dozen best baritones he ever had heard, was still one of the leading Edison artists.

Perhaps Chalmers was on tour and not available when the necessity arose for replacing the worn moulds. "Sweet Genevieve," until 1918, was a tenor solo by Charles Hackett, the Metropolitan Opera singer. On the remake however, Archibald sang it with a mixed chorus.

The familiar Christmas hymn, "Silent Night," had the most checkered career of any record with which Archibald was associated. Originally, it was sung by Miss Spencer, Royal Fish, and Chalmers and was combined with "Bird on the Wing," by the Metropolitan Quartet. "Nazareth," by Thomas Chalmers and Chorus, occupied the other side.

But, in the 1922 catalog the record was by Spencer, Archibald, and John Young. In 1925, Charles Hart took Young's place. "Silent Night," was a popular record, to go through so many transitions.

In 1928 a few electrically recorded numbers by Archibald were listed. These included "Memories of the Past," a duet with Charles Harrison, lead tenor of the American Singers; "Lord, I'm Coming Home," a hymn by Archibald and the Calvary Choir, and a duet, "What Must It Be to Be There?" with the American Singers' first tenor, Redferne Hollinshead.

You will observe I have listed Archibald's Edison discs by categories according to the year in which they made their first appearance in the catalog.

## II. The American Singers

I don't know just how the American Singers Quartet, of which Archibald was baritone, came to be organized around 1927. My old friend, Charles Harrison, appears to have taken the initiative in bringing it together.

Charlie Harrison died in New Providence, N.J., February 2, 1965. His wife, Beulah Gaylord Young, died later in Silver Springs, Md., where she lived at 2722 Dawson Avenue with Gaylord Young, her son, by her first marriage.

The first record I can discover by the American Singers, "Why Adam Sinned," and "When the Little Ones Say 'Good-Night,'" was an Edison Diamond Disc issued in December, 1927. After that, there were no more Edisons by the ensemble until three others were announced during the Company's last days, in 1929.

Some puzzling questions occur to me concerning the American Singers.

(Continued on page 40)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Continued from page 38)

One is, when did the late Lambert Murphy succeed Percy Redferne Hollinshead as lead tenor?

Hollinshead, a native of England, came to Canada as a child. He made Edison records as far back as 1912. Said to have been a pleasant, genial fellow, he was so fat, some old associates say, he was rather unattractive in appearance, they thought, so the change may have been largely for esthetic reasons.

Murphy was certainly a member of the Quartet by early 1930, but was he included when the 1929 Diamond Discs were made? Moreover, did he take part in the somewhat earlier Columbias? I doubt it.

From 1911 Murphy had been an exclusive Victor artist, and his contract probably was still in effect in the late 1920's. He continued, in fact, to make Red Seal records during the first few years of the 1930's. It appears likely, then, that Hollinshead was the lead tenor in the Columbia and Edison dates.

Another question: Did Archibald sing in the Quartet on the Columbia dates? Again, it appears doubtful. As I speculated last month, he may have been contracted to Edison, and a substitute would have had to be found when the ensemble recorded for other companies.

He certainly did not take part in the Victor records by the American Singers made in 1930. The Company's Master Book shows the Quartet was composed of Harrison, Murphy, Croxton, and Walter Preston, a baritone who still is living.

On March 13, 1930, the American Singers made Victor No. 22387, "On the Banks of the Wabash," and "Dear Old Girl." This obviously was an electrical remake of No. 17397, by The American Quartet and Harry Macdonough and the Hayden Quartet, respectively, which had been issued in October, 1913. It had stayed in the catalog through 1925.

According to Brian Rust's Victor Master Book, the National Cavaliers had sung the same songs on November 8, 1929. Their versions also were listed on No. 22387. However, there is no mention of the Cavaliers' recording in any Victor catalog.

Amazingly, considering the established popularity of the songs and the previous acoustic recording, the American Singers' offering was no longer available when the 1933 record catalog was issued. But records almost had stopped selling by that time.

Harrison, Murphy, Preston, and Croxton also took part in record No. 22487, "Quand Madelon," and "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," by the International Novelty Band, made July 22, 1930. The vocals on both sides were sung by a male octet which consisted of the American Singers plus James Price, Judson House, Jackson Kinsey, and Stanley Baughman.

On December 23, 1930, the Quar-



OCCASIONAL MEMBER—Walter Preston, baritone, took Vernon Archibald's place when the American Singers made records for Victor in 1930.

ter helped record "To the Legion," and "Songs of the Navy," by Rudy Vallee and his Orchestra. Vallee and the American Singers do the choruses on both sides of this record, No. 24075.

### III. Other Activities

During their active period, which extended into the 1930's, The American Singers did much more radio and concert work than recording. This applied both to the earlier period when Hollinshead was lead, and to the Murphy era.

I have an undated clipping, apparently from the New York Times, which tells of a concert the original foursome was to give from WEAf, New York. It includes a group photo. I believe the foursome was being sponsored by Atwater Kent, at that time (probably 1928) the largest manufacturer of radios.

An obviously later, but still undated clipping, said the Quartet, which then included Murphy, was broadcasting every Sunday, with Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, "The Tune Detective," at 7 p.m. over WEAf and associated stations. Brief descriptions were given of the four singers. Archibald was described as:

"... The perfect disciple of Izaak Walton. He went two weeks without a bite and never gave vent to profanity."

In a letter written in 1948, Charles Harrison recalled:

"We serviced the Columbia Broadcasting System the first year of its life, contracting for ten hours of broadcasting per week at a very handsome salary for each one of us, and then two women to make a sextet. We then free-lanced and then did a four-year stretch for Lehigh or Old Company Coal and various other spot commercials. The war ended all that, and it ended me for radio, too, as I would not hang around the offices looking for a job. I took to business, as did Lambert Murphy."

Harrison didn't give the names of the two women who were used to help form a sextet. I will guess they were Beulah Gaylord Young, soprano, and Rose Bryant, contralto.

### IV. Archibald's Last Days

In 1951, Fred Rabenstein, the veteran Edison worker who was so helpful in my research, wrote me that Vernon Archibald recently had visited the Edison laboratory. I can't find Fred's letter now, but I remember he said Archibald didn't look well and told his Edison friends he had been suffering from an ailment resembling amnesia, or loss of identity.

It seems Archibald said something about having a son in naval service, who was to "be in next week," and would look after him. Perhaps he was living with this son when he died in California.

However that may have been, the baritone seems to have recovered his health and his memory and to have preserved his sense of humor—as witness Elmer Moore's remarks about Archibald being a hilarious speaker on some of Moore's programs in California.

I had hoped to obtain more personal information concerning Archibald for this article, but Quentin Riggs reported that Archibald's death appeared to have gone unrecorded in California newspapers and I was unable to communicate with his immediate survivors. A letter to Emily J. Wood, who gave the information in his death certificate, brought no reply.

Nevertheless, Vernon Archibald was an excellent baritone of concert caliber. His name, especially among collectors of Edison records, remains an esteemed one in the history of recorded music.

The End

### RECORDS BY VERNON ARCHIBALD

#### COLUMBIA DOUBLE-FACED DISCS (February through May, 1911)

- A962 In Old Madrid. Reverse: Mother of Mine.
- A5240 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Maritana—In Happy Moments.
- A5278 Beyond the Gates of Paradise. Reverse: The Lord is my Shepherd.

#### COLUMBIA DOUBLE-FACED DISCS BY ARCHIBALD QUARTET

(October, 1910, through March, 1912)

All unaccompanied and both sides by the Quartet unless otherwise noted.

- A903 Juanita. Reverse: The Two Roses.
- A914 I Love to Tell the Story. Reverse: I Need Thee Every Hour.
- A916 Hunter's Farewell. Reverse: Soldier's Farewell.
- A942 Shepherds' Chorus and Hear Dem Bells. Reverse: May, Dearest May.
- A1115 Love Divine, All Love Excelling. Reverse: My God and Father, While I Stray (Mrs. A. Stewart Holt, contralto.)

- A5232 That Beautiful Land. Reverse: Work for the Night is Coming.

#### VICTOR DOUBLE-FACED DISC BY VERNON ARCHIBALD (October, 1912)

- 17157 Thou'rt Like Unto a Lovely Flower. Reverse: Creole Cradle Song (Olive Kline, soprano).

#### EDISON BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS BY VERNON ARCHIBALD (1913-1928)

- 1829 Down By the Old Mill Stream (soprano obbligato by Marie Kaiser).
- 2073 In the Shadow of the Pines (with Royal Fish, tenor).
- 2086 Miss Caprice—Look In Her Eyes.
- 2147 On the Banks of the Wabash (with mixed chorus).
- 2193 Battle Eve (with Royal Fish).
- 2257 Ring Out, Sweet Bells (with Fish).

(Continued on page 48)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 40)

- 2300 In the Valley of the Moon (with Elizabeth Spencer, soprano).  
2330 Love's Hesitation (with Spencer).  
2388 Rose of the Mountain Trail (soprano obbligato by Clementine de Vere).  
2453 Somewhere a Voice is Calling (with Elizabeth Spencer).  
2472 Come to Me (with Helen Clark, contralto).  
2485 Boat With My True Love's Name (with Clark).  
2516 For You (with Clark).  
2551 Let Bygones Be Bygones (with Clark).

- 2572 Someone (with Elizabeth Spencer).  
2916 Love's Adieu (with Lewis James, tenor).  
3948 Shall We Meet Beyond the River? (with James).  
3956 Leaf By Leaf the Roses Fall (with James).  
4761 I Puritana—Sound Now the Trumpet Fearlessly (with Harvey Hindermeyer, tenor).  
4765 Silent Night (with Elizabeth Spencer, soprano, and John Young, tenor).  
4818 Maritana—In Turn What Say You? (with Marie de Kyzer, soprano).  
5588 Lord, I'm Coming Home (with Calvary Choir).  
23365 Fall In! (British patriotic song).

### EDISON DIAMOND DISCS BY VERNON ARCHIBALD (1914 catalog)

- 50103 Maritana—Hear Me, Gentle Maritana. Reverse: Pretty Girl Milking Her Cow (Marie Narelle, soprano, and chorus).  
50114 When It's Apple Blossom Time in Normandy. Reverse: We Have Much to Be Thankful For (Walter Van Brunt, tenor, and chorus).  
80109 Bendemeer's Stream (with chorus). Reverse: Just Plain Folks (Archibald and Spencer).  
80124 Maritana—In Turn What Say You? (with Marie Kaiser). Reverse: Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls (Marie Narelle and chorus).  
82044 Heart and Hand—Your Pardon, Darling, Forgive Me (with Marie Kaiser). Reverse: Lurline—Sweet Form That In My Dreamy Gaze (Albert Quesnel, tenor).

June, 1915, catalog

- 80125 Somewhere a Voice is Calling (with Spencer). Reverse: A Perfect Day (Metropolitan Quartet).  
80133 Land of Golden Dreams (with Spencer). Reverse: Macushla (Emory B. Randolph, tenor).  
80134 Boat With My True Love's Name (with Helen Clark). Reverse: When the Roses Bloom (Spencer, Randolph and Chorus).  
80137 Drifting (with Clark). Reverse: Charge of the Light Brigade (Knickerbocker Quartet).  
80138 Summer Days (with Clark). Reverse: I Love You, California (Spencer and Knickerbocker Quartet).

- 80147 Miss Caprice—Look In Her Eyes. Reverse: Oh! Oh! Delphine—Can We Forget? (Spencer and Hindermeyer).

- 80162 In the Valley of the Moon (with Clark). Reverse: When the Angelus is Ringing (Hindermeyer and Chorus).

- 80165 I Love You (with Clark). Reverse: There's a Warm Spot in My Heart for Tennessee (Young & Wheeler).

- 80174 Ring On, Sweet Bells (with Royal Fish, tenor). Reverse: Song of Steel (Donald Chalmers, bass).

- 80191 You Are the Rose of My Heart. Reverse: One Wonderful Night (Kaiser and Randolph).

- 80196 I'm Longing for My Home, Sweet Home (with Chorus). Reverse: Tell Mother I'll be There (Frederick J. Wheeler and Chorus).

April, 1916, catalog

- 80145 When the Twilight Comes to Kiss the Rose Goodnight (with Clark). Reverse: In the Gloaming (Randolph and Chorus).

- 80148 For You (with Clark). Reverse: The Bugler (Thomas Chalmers, baritone).

- 80155 Beautiful Isle of the Sea (with Clark). Reverse: Nancy Lee (Chalmers and Chorus).

- 80157 Iolanthe—Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady (with Royal Fish and Donald Chalmers). Reverse: Pirates of Penzance—Stay, Frederic, Stay (Kaiser and Fish).

- 80163 Let Bygones Be Bygones (with Clark). Reverse: In Dreams, My Own (Van Brunt).

- 80166 Come to Me (with Clark). Reverse: Someone (with Spencer).

- 80231 Fall In! Reverse: John Bull's Catechism (Arthur Crane, baritone, and Male Chorus).

1918 catalog

- 80069 Sweet Genevieve (with Mixed Chorus). Reverse: Alice, Where Art Thou? (John Young and Frederick Wheeler).

1920 catalog

- 80500 Love's Adieu (with Lewis James, tenor). Reverse: There's Not a Song That Trembles (Betsy Lane Shepherd, Helen Clark and Mixed Chorus).

- 80521 Leaf By Leaf the Roses Fall (with James). Reverse: Dixie Lullaby (Homestead Trio).

- 80522 Shall We Meet Beyond the River? (with James). Reverse: Heaven Is My Home (Thomas Chalmers and Male Chorus).

1922 catalog

- 80010 Ever of Thee I'm Fondly Dreaming (with Spencer). Reverse: Darling Nellie Gray (Metropolitan Quartet).

- 80643 Silent Night (with Spencer and Young). Reverse: Nazareth (T. Chalmers and Chorus).

1923 catalog

- 50873 Blossom Time—Song of Love (with Shepherd). Reverse: Love Letter—I'll Return for You (with Shepherd).

- 80699 Leonore. Reverse: Pilot Brave. Reverse: Charles Hart and Fred East).

1925 catalog

- 80643 Silent Night (with Spencer and Hart). Reverse: Nazareth (Thomas Chalmers and Chorus).

Issued in 1928

- 52235 Memories of the Past (with Harrison). Reverse: Sweet Elaine (Arthur Hall and Chorus).

- 52308 Lord, I'm Coming Home (Archibald and Calvary Choir). Reverse: What Must It Be to Be There? (Archibald & Redferne Hollinshead).

### EDISON DIAMOND DISCS BY THE AMERICAN SINGERS (1927-29)

- 52179 Why Adam Sinned. Reverse: When the Little Ones Say Good-Night.

- 52512 When Song is Sweet. Reverse: Vale. 52615 Carry Me Back to Old Virginia. Reverse: My Old Kentucky Home.

- 52636 On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away. Reverse: Darling Nellie Gray.

### EDISON LATERAL-CUT RECORD BY THE AMERICAN SINGERS

- 11036 Vale. Reverse: When Song is Sweet.

### COLUMBIA DOUBLE-DISC RECORDS BY THE AMERICAN SINGERS (1928-29)

- 1128D First Nowell. Reverse: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.

- 1163D I Need Thee Every Hour. Reverse: Rescue the Perishing.

- 1417D Auld Lang Syne. Reverse: My Old Kentucky Home.

### VICTOR RECORDS BY THE AMERICAN SINGERS (1930)

- 22387 On the Banks of the Wabash.

- Reverse: Dear Old Girl.

- 24075 To the Legion. Reverse: Song of the Navy. Both sides by Rudy Vallee's Orchestra, with Choruses by Vallee & the American Singers.

### EDISON BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDER BY THE AMERICAN SINGERS

- 5509 Why Adam Sinned.

### 8-INCH OPERAPHONE RECORD BY VERNON ARCHIBALD (1915)

- 1806 For All Eternity. Reverse: The Rosary (Marie Brook).

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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### ADA JONES SINGS IN MARION, VIRGINIA

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE - Biographical details and other information concerning Ada Jones and her husband, Hughie Flaherty, may be found in *HOBBIES* for June, 1946, through January, 1947; June and July, 1954; July and August, 1958, and November, 1961.)

#### I. Ada Jones Comes to Town

When Marion, Va.'s, weekly papers the *News* (Republican), and the *Democrat* (which lived up to its name), published paid announcements that "Ada Jones, the world-famous phonograph star and her concert company" soon would appear in person at the Court Square Theater there was no wild excitement but a considerable amount of public interest.

Perhaps the most "carried away" of all the town's residents was a boy whose name was Ulysses Walsh, but who usually was known to his friends as "E". He had not acquired yet the nickname of "Jim", by which he is known today much better.

Switching to the first person writing style, Marion is a town beautifully surrounded by the often-sung about "Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia," and it's a place I dearly love. Frequently, I find myself wishing I could have spent my life there. At that time, when the acoustic, hand-cranked phonograph was still the dominant means of home entertainment, Marion, county seat of Smyth County, had less than 4,000 population (today it is about twice as large), and its people were not accustomed to receiving visitors as famous as the legendary Ada Jones.

Since nearly everybody had heard her records the chances were good, although her popularity had been declining for half a dozen years, that the theater—really a large auditorium in the center of the second floor of the county court-house—would be packed. Not only was Ada Jones herself to sing, "auspices of the American Legion," but her supporting company included Beth Hamilton, violinist; Mabel H. Loomis, soprano and pianist; and "Armstrong, the Man of Mystery."

A day or two before the evening of the concert, circulars and sepia photographs of the famous comedienne were distributed throughout the town, and the City Drug Store, operated by Dr. James A. Thompson, which handled Victrolas and Sonoras, and Victor, Okeh, and Emerson records, had a run on the Victor disc of "When Francis Dances With Me." It was sung by Miss Jones with her

veteran partner, Billy Murray, and had been issued the month before.

This was the first record, aside from "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove," which Miss Jones had made with Cal Stewart, that Victor had announced by her in almost four years. Visitors to J. K. Fisher's jewelry store heard her Edison Re-Creation of the "Francis" song and "On a Little Side Street." Both were duets with Billy Jones and both were on the same record.

Meanwhile, large posters had appeared quoting *The New York Times* as saying: "Ada Jones is without question the most popular entertainer in the record field." This undated "without question" statement certainly was questionable. If the comedienne ever was the most popular recording artist it was in the first few years, say from 1905 to 1910, when she made discs and cylinders, and even then she probably was second to Billy Murray.

Certainly, her solo records as a rule did not have the huge sale of such Murray masterpieces, as "The Yankee Doodle Boy," "The Grand Old Flag," "Everybody Works But Father," and "Cheyenne." In 1911 Edison proclaimed Murray "by long odds, the most versatile and popular of all Edison artists," and a year later Victor catalogs began making the statement that he entertained a larger audience than any other singer who ever had lived.

When the concert was given, with her fame in decline, Ada's following was only a shadow of that of Murray or Henry Burr. Burr, by that time,

perhaps, had passed "The Denver Nightingale" in record sales.

Nevertheless, I was all keyed up over the prospect of seeing and hearing the great Ada Jones, and I was to see her sooner than I expected. Early in the afternoon before the concert, I found Hubert Wolfe behind the City Drug counter. Standing a few feet farther back, toward the rear of the store, were three women whom I at once recognized as Ada Jones and her associates.

Ada was a stout, rather short woman, whom I took to be in her 40s, who was chewing gum rhythmically. She was wearing a hat, but my recollection is that her companions were bareheaded.

One was a rather short, pretty, brown-haired girl who looked to be not more than 25. I learned at the concert that she was the violinist, Beth Hamilton. The other "girl" was taller, slender, and pleasant-faced. I guessed her to be "around 28 or 30." She was Mabel Loomis.

I don't know where "Armstrong," the magician, was keeping himself. Presumably the ladies had arrived in town early, found time hanging heavy on their hands at the Marion Hotel where I suppose they stayed, and had come down to watch ticket sales, pass the time, and get an idea of how things were likely to go that evening.

Hubert Wolfe spoke.

"Hello, Walsh," he said. "What'll you have, kid?"

I replied: "Give me a ticket to that concert tonight."

I heard the younger girl whisper: "Listen!"



SCENE OF CONCERT. Ada Jones and her company gave their concert in the Smyth County courthouse, shown here. The "Court Square Theatre" was on the upper floor in the center of the structure. —Photo by Greear Studio, Marion, Va.





ADA JONES in the stage costume she wore at her Marion concert.

Hubert handed me the ticket, which cost 75 cents, and, before going out, I turned and faced the three women, all of whom were looking at me with friendly smiles, but in Miss Hamilton's glance I thought I detected a lurking, quizzical amusement. I noticed especially how white and even Ada Jones' teeth were as she appeared to be thinking of saying something friendly to the young ticket buyer.

Here was where I missed the opportunity of a lifetime. I had no idea that Ada Jones in less than three months would be dead of uremic poisoning and that this was the only chance I ever would have to speak to her.

However, I was anything but a self-assertive boy. It didn't occur to me to walk up to the obviously gracious lady, tell her how much I had enjoyed her records since I was an infant, and how I already had founded, in a pencil tablet, the imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company for which she was one of the principal stars.

I also could have told her I knew the Victor catalog by heart and could have proved it if she had questioned me concerning any of her records. All this I could have done, and I imagine it would have been welcome news, but I didn't. I carefully placed

the ticket in my inside coat pocket and walked out of Ada Jones' life.

## II. The Concert Begins

This thought just has occurred to me: Who, knowing Ada Jones as a child in Oldham, England, where she was born and where her father, James Jones, operated a public house called "The British Flag," could have looked into the future and foreseen her more than 40 years later filling a small-time concert engagement in a Virginia mountain town over 3,000 miles from Lancashire?

I don't recall much about the remainder of the afternoon preceding the entertainment. I do remember I told my mother I had seen Ada Jones in the drug store and, with unfailing, feminine curiosity, she asked, "How old did she look?"

I gave Ada a break by saying "About 40." I really thought, however, that she looked nearer 50 than 40. She was actually 48.

It was only a few years ago that I learned the maiden name of Ada Jones' mother was Ann Jane Walsh. Had I been aware of it the idea might have occurred to me, as I walked in the evening to the Court Square "concert hall," that the portly comedienne smiled at me so warmly because she had heard Hubert Wolfe call me "Walsh," and had thought perhaps I was a distant relation of hers.

When I reached the court-house, which had been built in 1905, considerable time remained before the concert was to begin, but I climbed the broad flight of steps in front of the building, went upstairs, and reached the entrance to the "theater." A man whom I didn't recognize as a resident of Marion was seated at a table, taking tickets and dispensing programs.

He had a young-looking face, although, I never have seen any one more completely bald. The man asked me in a tenor voice if I would like a program and I said I would. After the performance I brought it home, and it still is preserved carefully. I imagine it is the only one of the lot printed by the Marion Publishing Company that has survived.

Beside the man stood a woman whom I took to be Ada Jones but who looked more juvenile than the drug store lady. If it was Ada, she still was chewing gum, but she had an extremely fair, unlined complexion, and appeared young. In after years I speculated that the fair one might have been Ada Jones' daughter,

Sheelah, but that could not have been.

Sheelah was barely 16 at that time, and this woman was certainly more than that. The foremost authority on the life of Ada Jones—Milford Fargo of the faculty of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y.—has told me that while her mother was traveling Sheelah remained in their home at Huntington Station, Long Island, with their faithful housekeeper, Rosina Burns Mackie, who still was living in 1958.

No, the lady wasn't Sheelah. Neither was it Miss Loomis nor Miss Hamilton. It must have been Ada Jones "got up" for the occasion.

The Court Square Theater led a double life. When it wasn't in use as a place of entertainment it served as the assembly hall in which the Smyth County public schools held their declamation contests and spelling matches. With a large balcony overhead, it could accommodate an audience of considerable size. But after a new theater, The Lincoln, was built a few years later, the Court Square ceased to be a place of public entertainment.

I took my seat about midway of the lower floor and looked around to see whom I could recognize. I saw Mrs. Nannie Pruner, the intellectual looking principal of the Marion Grammar School, accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. Florence Lorenzen.

There was the postmaster, James Blaine Richardson. Somewhat nearer the front, and to my left, I saw J. K. Fisher, the Edison dealer, and his assistant, Neal Wright. They evidently had come to check up on how Ada Jones' actual voice sounded in comparison with her Edison Re-Creations. The year before, by the way, a dealer in Illinois had engaged Miss Jones to attempt an Edison-type "tone test" with a Columbia Grafonola, but the result was a failure.

It occurred to me, as I looked around, that the town's phonograph dealers were missing a bet by not having their instruments displayed on the stage. There were, however, only two dealers whose business amounted to anything. Whenever any of the townspeople decided to buy a machine that cost not more than \$75, the would-be purchaser went to the City Drug Store and invested in a Victrola.

If somebody from the country wanted a record player in the same price range he called at Fisher's and got an Edison cylinder Amberola. The person with \$100 or more to "put into" a phonograph almost invariably bought an Edison Diamond Disc.

At that time I never had heard an Edison, except at a distance. The town still buzzed, however, with talk of how Fisher had sold 14 instru-

(Continued on page 52)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

ments, most of them the \$295 Official Laboratory Model, in one day by placing samples in a car and going from house to house, giving brief demonstrations.

Families who esteemed themselves as among Marion's social leaders nearly always felt it to be due their "prestige" to buy an Edison. Even those who were not society leaders sometimes took the same attitude.

I remember an obviously uneducated man remarking to me, as we stood in front of the drug store, listening to a record being played inside: "Ain't gonna buy me a graphophone untwell I kin git money enough for one of them there new Edisons. They're the onliest kind wuth havin'."

Dr. Onyx C. Sprinkle's Marion Drug Company had carried the Pathé line briefly, but soon had given it up. Similarly, the D. M. Smyth Drug Company had tried selling the Aeolian-Vocalion and Columbia, but had been unable to make headway.

When the Ada Jones concert was given Victor and Edison were the town's only lines of any consequence. And, although no phonographs, were on display, Dr. Thompson had inserted a Victrola advertisement in the program.

Seated a row or two in front of me was a chubby boy whom I knew as David Buchanan. David's father, the handsome, courtly, and intellectual B. F. Buchanan, was probably Marion's most highly regarded resident. He was a leading lawyer and had been state senator and lieutenant governor of Virginia.

With David was a girl who wore glasses and whom I couldn't remember ever seeing before and never saw again, so I suppose she was from "out-of-town." David himself was the youthful uncle of a golden-haired little lady who, a decade later, was to become my "best girl" and to retain that status after I left Marion.

Her name was Eleanor Buchanan, and after she was in her teens she told me that a Columbia advertising display of the popular tenor, Oscar Grogan, looked so much like me that if I were wearing a hat she would believe it was intended for my picture. That led to my having my likeness taken beside the cardboard man, to ascertain if there really was so much resemblance.

I have sent the picture to be reproduced with this article, so you may decide for yourself. Eleanor eventually became Mrs. George Crounse and now lives in Paducah, Ky. We haven't seen each other in more than 30 years, but are still warm friends by correspondence. And she is an enthusiastic reader of HOBBIES!

As the time dragged on while we waited for the concert to begin I developed a severe headache and began to feel abnormally depressed. I remember I kept debating inwardly how the word, "lyceum," should be pronounced and couldn't decide between "lie-SEE-um" and "LIE-seum."

Then, suddenly, a stir ran through the audience. Turning, I saw three women—Ada Jones and the Misses Hamilton and Loomis—walking down an aisle near me. It was cold weather, and they were wearing heavy wraps. Since there was no stage door entrance at the rear of the court-house, performers had to enter at the same door as the audience, walk down an



SMILING LIKENESS. Ada Jones here shows the same warming smile she gave the boy, Jim Walsh, as she saw him buy a ticket to her concert. Copies of this photo were distributed before the performance.

aisle, then ascend a flight of steps that led to backstage.

This, the ladies did. A few minutes later the curtain went up and a slightly built young man with a small mustache, which I suspected to be artificial, appeared on the stage and extended a welcome. He was "Armstrong, the Man of Magic and Mystery."

He told us the first selection would be a violin solo by Miss Hamilton, with piano accompaniment by Miss Loomis. In a moment the smiling Miss Hamilton appeared, tucked her instrument beneath her chin, and the concert was under way!

### III. Miss Hamilton, Miss Loomis, and Mr. Armstrong

It soon became evident that the young women of the supporting cast played and sang a more serious type of music than their famous star. Miss Hamilton's first number was "Fantasia Appassionata," by Vieuxtemp. I wonder how the Marion Publishing Company made out to spell that name correctly.

Through an error, the second number was omitted from the printed program, but I remember it as St. Saens' "Le Cygne" ("The Swan.") Miss Hamilton smiled in a faintly amused manner all the time she played. She received respectful, but not enthusiastic, applause, for her



ELEANOR BUCHANAN (left) was a small girl in Marion, Va., when her uncle David Buchanan took an incidental part in the Ada Jones production. A decade later, as a high school girl, at about the time this picture was taken, she told Jim Walsh he resembled the popular Columbia recording tenor, Oscar Grogan.

To check on the resemblance, Jim had a picture made (right), posed beside a cardboard advertising display of Grogan's records and trying to imitate the singer's expression.

Miss Buchanan became Mrs. George Crounse and now lives in Paducah, Ky. Her mother, ANNABEL MORRIS BUCHANAN (Mrs. John P. Buchanan) is a noted composer and an authority on folk music.

(Continued on page 110)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 52)

type of music was over the heads of most of her listeners.

Ceasing to caress her violin, Beth Hamilton moved to the piano bench and Miss Loomis came forward to sing. The old program says she was heard in the popular Scotch ballad, "My Laddie," but I have no recollection of it or of whatever she used for an encore.

My head was aching and I was impatient to hear Ada Jones. My impression, I do recall, was that Miss Loomis had a sweet, clear, but not powerful voice. Of course, she had not chosen a Wagnerian aria "to split the ears of the groundlings."

The lady artists retired, and W. J. Armstrong, the magician, took over. He performed several card tricks that baffled me, although a friend who was an amateur magician told

David, who was obviously a pre-arranged "plant," arose and, chuckling with embarrassment, asked: "Does my lady friend love me and will she marry me?" Whereupon his glasses-wearing companion looked pleasurably self-conscious.

The sealed slate was opened. Armstrong held it up for the audience to see. The "unassisted" crayon had written in bold letters: "I'll say she do, but you'll have to use speed!"

I believe there were several other questions and "miraculous" answers, but this is the only one I recall. David Buchanan, some years later, entered military service and remained in the United States Army all his life. He was a retired Major General when he died last New Year's Day in his home at Washington, D.C.

Finally, after more "merry moments of magic and mirth," Armstrong said: "And now, my friends, the one and only Ada Jones!"

### IV. An Ada Jones "Recital"

From the wings strode the buxom lady whom I had seen that afternoon in the drug store. She was wearing an elaborate gown, the same as, or similar to, one shown in a photo submitted with this article. I may be remembering wrong, but I have the impression it was dark blue or perhaps some shade of purple, but it's possible the color was black. Somehow I had a belief she was very tired and didn't much feel like performing.

The world-famous singer gave the audience the briefest possible bow, then, with no preliminaries, she began singing "Just Plain Folks," an old-fashioned "sob song" that had been one of her popular cylinder records. But to put it without exaggeration, it was more designed for farm dwellers than for sophisticated tastes.

Her Edison Standard cylinder of the tear-jerker had been issued more than 16 years before, in September, 1905, and had proved so popular she had sung it later for a four-minute Amberol. In turn it was taken into the Blue Amberol catalog.

She also had recorded "Just Plain Folks" in 1911 for a Columbia disc, coupled with another of her offerings, "You'll Have to Sing an Irish Song." This, likewise, had appeared by her on U.S. Everlasting and Indestructible cylinders.

The ballad told of an old couple from the country who had come to visit their citified son. The son was a cad, because "but coldly did he greet them, for his friends were by his side, who often heard him boast of home so grand."

Heartbroken at this callous reception, "the old man sadly looked at him and said in modest pride, as he gently took his dear wife by the hand":

"We are just plain folks, your mother and me,  
Just plain folks, like our own folks used to be.  
As our presence seems to grieve you  
We will go away and leave you,  
For we're sadly out of place here  
'cause we're just plain folks."



ASSISTING ARTISTS. After seeing this photo reproduced in an Edison record catalog, Jim Walsh identified Rosalind Davis (left) and Blanche Dann, center, as "Beth Hamilton" and "Mabel Loomis," who participated in the Ada Jones concert at Marion.

—Photo, courtesy of Edison National

Most likely that song caused innumerable tears to be shed in isolated farmhouses and many lectures against ingratitude to be preached to growing rustic boys and girls. I found myself trying to decide on Ada Jones' voice quality.

The record companies disagreed. On Edison cylinders she was termed a contralto, but Columbia called her a soprano. Victor compromised with "comédienne," but Sam Rous, the catalog editor, once said she had "an almost boyish voice." When I later saw my first Edison disc catalog, I found it evaded the question by giving no description of her voice. My own opinion is that she was more nearly a contralto than a soprano.

If I ever remembered what Ada's second song was, I now have forgotten, but I think it may have been a Negro ditty song going back to the 1890's, "I Don't Like No Cheap Man." I do recall clearly that the third was unmistakably a Negro song, which I had not heard previously. It was written by two black men—Henry Creamer and Turner Layton—and called "Oh Lawdy! Something's Done Got Between Ebecaneezer and Me!" It was Ada's hit of the evening.

The not overly refined lyric told of how Ebecaneezer Darktown Jones, was on his way to be married, "when he butted into a razor fight" and "died right on his wedding day." The song dealt with the unhappiness of his intended bride.

She lamented that "he might have waited till I got the insurance in my name. And they say he fought so nice—that's why he's now on ice!"

The biggest laugh came at the end of the final chorus, when Ada sang:



"GAY NINETIES" PICTURE. Ada Jones as she appeared in 1899.

—Photo courtesy Milford Fargo

me later they were "just elementary." Something the young man said in his patter gave me the impression he was only 16 years old but I probably misunderstood.

Then Armstrong produced a slate and had it passed around the audience for inspection. Its surface appeared perfectly clean with no writing upon it. I'm not sure, but I believe a "committee" was called to the front to seal the slate after the magician first had placed a crayon (which he called a "cray-ON") inside it. He then said he would ask for questions from the audience, and the cray-ON inside the slate would write a reply.

Looking toward David Buchanan, Armstrong pointed his finger and said: "You, sir, do you have a question?"



"Cause somethin's done got (here she placed one hand to her mouth and half-whispered: "Twas a razor!") between Ebcaneezer and me!" The audience roared and the singer, after bowing her thanks, exclaimed: "I'll be back!" and hurried off the stage. She had "been on" from 10 to 15 minutes.

After an intermission Miss Hamilton returned to play three standard violin numbers, "Serenade Espagnole," "Forsaken," and Rehfield's "Spanish Dance." Then Miss Loomis was heard in "The Low Backed Car" and "Smilin' Thro'."

I don't remember anything about her singing of the first number, composed by Victor Herbert's grandfather, Samuel Lover. I do recall, however, the expression which she imparted to "Smilin' Thro'," especially the lines, "There's a lock or two of gray in the



**AUTHORITY.** Milford Fargo, the foremost student of Ada Jones' life and recordings, discovered the identity of the members of the Dann Trio.

brown of the hair; there's some silver in mine, too, I see."

I felt that, although Miss Loomis lacked Ada Jones' ebullient personality and ability to do dialect work, she had a better voice, a more comprehensive musical education, and was a more artistic singer.

Then came Armstrong in more magic, none of which I remember, and Ada returned to end the rather brief program with "character songs." She used the Hibernian number, "You'll Have to Sing an Irish Song." It appears on the back of her Columbia record of "Just Plain Folks" which she also recorded for Victor and Edison.

This dialect ditty, written by Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer, was used in "The Follies of 1908." The singer tells of how she rebukes a "Dootchman" who serenades her with "Die Wacht am Rhein" when she

wants to hear "The Wearin' o' the Green."

Following "You'll Have to Sing an Irish Song," Ada resurrected one of the first numbers she recorded for Edison cylinders: another Negro dialect composition, "You Ain't Half the Man I Thought You Was," which had been issued in May, 1905. The comedy in this song, with such lines as "take back your cheap beef stew," was rather crude, but it brought a laugh. Then the curtain came down and the concert was over!

That curtain, however, may have been lowered prematurely, because in a few moments it came up again, and Miss Loomis was seen on the stage with some music in her hand and peering with what seemed a near-sighted gaze, at the audience. But by this time everybody was leaving.

I remember hearing the postmaster ask the grammar school principal: "Well, what did you think of Ada's last song?" Mrs. Pruner laughed, but I didn't catch her comment. I still had my headache and still felt depressed.

On the outside I ran into another boy who was a recorded music enthusiast. He began lamenting that he had to get up early the next morning to go to school, but when I asked him what he thought of "the show," he said: "Oh, it was pretty good, I guess! But, and here his face brightened, oh boy! how good it would have been if they had just brought Billy Murray along!"

#### V. A Startling Discovery

Looking back, it seems to me that Ada Jones' part of the concert was too short and poorly chosen. Probably none of the five songs she used was well-known to a majority of the hearers. Three never had any real popularity and were forgotten almost entirely. "Just Plain Folks" was known mostly to users of Edison cylinder machines, and "Oh Lawdy!" to Edison disc and cylinder record buyers.

Why didn't she use a solo version of her latest recording "When Francis Dances With Me?" It was then a very popular song. And why did she not include some of the real hits, such as "Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee," which she had sung with Billy Murray? Why not "Waiting at the Church?" This had been one of her most popular solos. But perhaps its theme was considered too similar to that of "Oh Lawdy!" which had the line, "His bride was waiting at the church."

For two or three weeks I was haunted by Ada Jones' version of "Oh Lawdy!" and dreamed one night of hearing an Edison disc machine play it. (I had found it listed in an Edison cylinder catalog, so assumed it was also on the disc.) I even heard, in my sleep, a click as the reproducer passed over the line "and lay him on his bier."

Then, one morning I met Neal Wright, who lived near me, as he was going to work. I told him I had read so much about Edison tone tests that I had a great desire to hear a New Edison Diamond Disc phonograph. "But," I admitted, "I haven't got the money to buy one."

Neal laughed good-naturedly. "Well, some day," he said, "you will be able to buy one and we'd like to sell it to you. Come along with me. I'll show you how to run the machine and you can play all you like."

As we were walking along, he said: "I saw you at the Ada Jones' concert. Did you remember that 'Ebcaneezer' piece she sang when she put her hand up before her face? Mr. Fisher's got a record of that and I want you to hear it so you can judge for yourself how much it sounds like Ada."

That really excited me.

In the jewelry store Neal put on a record. It was "All By Myself," sung by Helen Clark, and I realized I never before had heard a phonograph with such a completely natural, human tone. He played "Anything is Nice If It Comes From Dixieland," by the Premier (American) Quartet, and I was amazed to find I could understand every word with no trouble.

I had a Victor record of that song by the same Quartet, but although I had played it hundreds of times there were parts I never had been able to make out. One part that had puzzled me turned out to be: "Just thank old Carolina—that's where Bull Durham grows."

I was disappointed, however, because of the bad surfaces of some of the records. I had imagined the Edison had no "scratch" at all. "Mr. Fisher," I said, "how can they give those tone tests with so much scratching noise?"

"J. K." laughed. "All the sound but the music drops out before it reaches the audience," he said. "Walk up toward the front of the store and you'll find you can't hear any scratch."

I did as he suggested and found it was true. The scratch soon ceased to be audible. Standing near the machine the "scratch" might be severe, but, unlike the surface noise of lateral cut records, it had little carrying power.

We found the record of "Oh Lawdy!" and I realized as soon as it began that I was hearing the unadulterated living voice of Ada Jones. "Walk around the corner," Neal said, "and see if you possibly could tell without first knowing, that Ada Jones herself is not singing."

I went around the corner and, out of sight of the phonograph. My ears wouldn't have known I wasn't listening to the woman herself, even when she did the bit of placing her hand before her mouth and half-whispering, "'Twas a razor!"

That morning changed me from the Victrola zealot, which I had been previously, into an even more ardent New Edison advocate. About a year later I earned enough money at part time jobs to buy a second-hand Chalet table model and felt I now belonged to the musical aristocracy.

But the most memorable thing about that long-ago morning was my picking up an Edison record catalog and making a breath taking discovery. A section at the back contained photos of artists, and while I was turning casually through I came upon a picture of three young women who were called The Dann Trio.



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**CONCERT PROGRAM.** (Top) A reproduction of the front and back pages of the program distributed at the Ada Jones concert. (Bottom) The two inside pages. This program, owned by Jim Walsh, was printed by the Marion Publishing Co., and is perhaps the only surviving copy.

One held a cornet, but it was the other two who riveted my attention. For there, smilingly clutching her violin, stood Beth Hamilton, and in the center was the soprano-pianist, Mabel Loomis! There was no possible mistaking those girls, whom I had seen less than a month before. The veritable Miss Hamilton and Miss Loomis stood revealed!

Only one record by the Dann Trio was listed in the catalog, and I wondered for many, many years how it happened that the violinist and pianist detached themselves from the cornet player and went "small-timing" with Ada Jones. Then, in 1958, Milford Fargo wrote me he had come upon a picture of the trio in the Edison laboratory, and the name of the cornet player was given as M. Felice Dann.

But what stumped me was his further statement that the pianist was Blanche L. Dann and the violinist was Rosalind J. Davis! How could this be when I knew by the evidence of

my eyes that they were the women who had been with Ada Jones as Mabel Loomis and Beth Hamilton?

The only solution seemed, and seems, to be that the ladies wished to safeguard their reputation in the field of serious music and did not want to be associated under their own names with the popular type of composition in which Ada Jones specialized.

Perhaps, I thought, since Blanche Dann's middle initial was L., her middle name might be Loomis. Could her mother, I wondered, have been Mabel Loomis before marriage, and had Ada's Mabel Loomis "borrowed" the mother's maiden name? Under the assumed name, if it was assumed, Ada's Mabel Loomis "borrowed" the Loomis. Could that H stand for Hamilton and indicate a kinship between her and Rosalind Davis? Was Rosalind's mother a Hamilton? Miss Davis, by the way, made an Edison disc of "The Swan," the number she had used for an encore in Marion. I have

it and can hear her playing as she did that night so many years ago.

These are questions to which I still don't have the answers, but when I began making notes for this article I wrote to the Edison National Historic Site, formerly the Edison Laboratory, asked for any information the Edison files contained on the Dann Trio, and requested that I be supplied with a copy of their picture. It is reproduced with this article. The assistant archivist, Mrs. Leah S. Burt replied:

"... We have only one copy of an approximately 5x7 sepia print of the Dann Trio, labelled: in memory of an Edison Tone-Test Recital, Blanche L. Dann, M. Felice Dann, and Rosalind J. Davis."

Mrs. Burt quoted an entry in the Edison talent card file dated November 26, 1919, which said: "Dann Trio, The—Cornet, Violin, Piano. With mellow tones, plaintive, these sound very good." On December 5, 1919, the trio recorded "Extase—Reverie" and "Ballet Egyptian No. 3." Both sides soon were approved by Mr. Edison and issued on Diamond Disc 80525, which came out sometime in 1921.

On the next day, Felice Dann played "The Lost Chord" and "O Dry Those Tears," which was assigned to number 80526. I have a copy, but this record never appeared in an Edison catalog and must have been reserved for tone-test use. Seemingly, the trio, of which Blanche Dann/Mabel Loomis, appears to have been manager, must have done considerable "tone testing."

Rosalind Davis, on December 8, played "Le Cygne" and "Melodie," by Rudolf Friml. This was passed, given the number 80527, and issued in 1921. December 5, 1919, was a Friday; 6, Saturday, and 8, Monday, so the trio's recording engagement was spread over a period of four days.

On April 18, 1921, the trio recorded two more numbers—Ethelbert Nevin's "Venetian Love Song" and "Love Song," by A. Flegier. The disc received the number 80660, but was given no catalog listing. It also must have been meant only for tone-test use, but there probably are a few pressings still to be found.

And that is all I have been able to find out about the ladies who constituted the Dann Trio. I hope they are all living and happy, but there is no way to stay the inexorable pace of time and if they have survived they must be well into their 70s just as there probably are only a handful of persons still living who heard the Ada Jones concert as "grown-ups." I probably am the only member of the audience still retaining a clear recollection of that night's proceedings, and I was a long way from being old enough to vote.

A few weeks after my introduction to J. K. Fisher's New Edison, "Gene" White, a young fellow, now dead, who had a local reputation as a skilled violinist, invited me to call at his home and hear the Hepplewhite New Edison he had bought recently. My brother Chad went along, for his initial hearing of an Edison, and was entranced by the first record Gene played.

Naturally, it was the biggest selling Edison disc—Mr. Edison's favorite song, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," sung by Walter Van Brunt and chorus. Drawing a deep breath at its conclusion, little Chad said: "I never heard a phonograph sound natural like that before!"

During the course of the impromptu "concert," Gene remarked to me: "I saw you the night Ada Jones was in town. And, by the way, Mr. Fisher got a telegram today from the Edison headquarters in New Jersey. It said Ada Jones had died, yesterday or today, in a hospital in North Carolina."

I was shocked at the news, which proved to be true. Milford Fargo has quoted Rosina Mackie, the housekeeper, as saying Ada was reluctant to begin the concert tour.

Ada had remarked wistfully: "Everything looks so pretty here I hate to go." No doubt though, she pictured herself returning home to Huntington Station after a few months and didn't suspect that her life story, which had begun in Oldham, England, was about to end in Rocky Mount, N.C.

I wish she could have known that the boy at whom she directed a warm, blue-eyed smile when she saw him buying a ticket to that night's entertainment would live to write, so many years later, this eye-witness account of what was said, sung, and done when she, "Beth Hamilton," "Mabel Loomis," and W. J. Armstrong, appeared before the residents of Marion, Va., in the historic old Court Square Theatre!

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 46)

well. In 1960 she began to grow weaker and had to give up rehearsing "Lakmé" for the Opéra-Comique. The inexorable killer was claiming its victim, and on December 10, 1960, a bright star of the French opera drew her last breath. Mado Robin was then only 41 years old.

Robin recorded excerpts from "La Traviata" for Pathé-Marconi on DTX 30189. It was her fond dream to sing Violetta on the stage. Alas, this never was to be realized.

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## MORE ABOUT BASEBALL RECORDINGS AND THE NATIONAL BASEBALL MUSEUM

By JIM WALSH

*This article, like its forerunner in December, is dedicated to Walter Jenkins, of Rose Hill, Va.*

### I. An Unexpected Sequel

When I wrote an article about baseball recordings for the December, 1971, *HOBBIES*, I had no idea that a few months later I would be preparing a sequel to appear as near as possible to the opening of the major league's new season. The original survey, however, received such an enthusiastic response and brought so many reminders of songs I had overlooked or hadn't known about, that a follow-up seems necessary.

But the most important factor in persuading me to write a supplementary article was the acclaim with which the first was greeted at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, N.Y. Also I received a request by Ken Smith, the Museum director, for me to issue an appeal to record collectors either to contribute original recordings about baseball to the Institution or to supply taped copies. Mr. Smith says the Museum will be glad to pay transportation charges and taping costs for any one obliging enough to supply recorded material.

Ken Smith has provided the photographs of the combined Museum and Hall of Fame, shown with this article. Farther along, I shall quote extensively from his initial letter to me. First, however, I want to comment on some of the baseball "fan mail" from record collectors.

Before I begin to quote, it will be well to mention that shortly after my intended exhaustive survey was published I discovered I had overlooked Zonophone double-faced record No. 5644, "Hurrah for Our Baseball Team!" This record was made in 1910, a few months prior to his death, by "Fred Lambert," who was Frank C. Stanley. I have never heard this disc. The other side, by the same artist, was "Mary, You're a Big Girl Now."

Then, at around 2 o'clock one morning, I roused from near-sleep to sit up in bed and say to myself: "I believe there's something about baseball in that worn-out old Edison Amberol cylinder of 'Summer Days.'" I stayed awake a long time, itching to get up and play the record and see if my trance-like impression was correct, but that would mean going to another room and disturbing my cats, "Twisty" and Lucky Jim, who were sleeping near by.

By a great effort I postponed hear-

ing the record until the next morning, but when I did, I was rewarded. The song was sung by Billy Murray and a male quartet in which the basso voice of Bill Hooley was unmistakable. By straining hard I could detect that the second chorus of the battered wax cylinder, made in 1911, dealt with "the national pastime."

The chorus begins, "Summer days, those good old summer days—time for baseball weather—see them get together!" The chorus ends: "Gee, I'm always itching to see Matty pitching, in those summer days."

"Matty," of course, was Christy Mathewson, the fabled New York Giant hurler, whose photo was printed in the December *HOBBIES*. Anyway, just as Billy, or the song writers, had itched to see Matty pitching, so I had itched to play the record and confirm my suspicions.

Murray and the American Quartet also recorded "Summer Days" on Victor No. 16979, but that is one of the two Victor records by the Quartet which I never have found—No. 16787, "Stop That Rag!—Keep on Playing, Honey!" A 1910 Irving Berlin song, is the other.

I don't know whether or not the Victor version contains the baseball reference, though I imagine it does. Billy also sang it as a solo on Zonophone No. 5759, coupled with "I Tell Off The Water Wagon!" But the baseball chorus is not included.

I was surprised to find I had a Columbia record, No. A1033, of "Summer

Days" sung by the sweet-voiced soprano Edith Chapman and the even sweeter-voiced tenor Henry Burr, and combined with "Any Girl Looks Good in Summer," by the Columbia Quartet. I imagined that in a male and female duet the baseball part would be omitted, but was wrong.

In fact, to fill out the record, Miss Chapman and Mr. Burr sing it twice. It is amusing to hear Burr's cultivated voice proclaiming that "gee, 'he's' always itching to see Mat-tee pitching!" The record is attractive, but lacks some of the zip of the Edison by "Murray and Chorus"—otherwise the Premier Quartet.

### II. Letters from Readers

One of the first letters I received was from Frank Johnson of Chicago. He reminded me I should have included the records of "Eleven More Months and Ten More Days," which Vernon Dalhart made for Columbia and other companies. The Columbia was under the name of Al Craver.

I have been familiar with that song, written by the noted recording artists—Arthur Fields and Fred Hall, ever since it came out in 1929. My overlooking it was inexcusable since I had included another Columbia Dalhart record, "The Bully Song," in which the baseball reference was much less obvious.

Anyway, one stanza of Columbia, No. 15572-D purportedly sung by a prison inmate, goes:



SHRINE TO IMMORTALS. Exterior of the National Baseball Museum and Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, N.Y.



**BALL AND BAT ENTHUSIASTS.** Members of the Eight Famous Victor Artists used to engage in impromptu baseball games when they were traveling between concert dates. In this picture, reproduced from the January, 1919, *Voice of the Victor*, some of the troupe are shown enjoying a day's outing as guests of T. B. Windsor, Victor dealer at Tarentum, Pa.

The first man to the left, standing, is Albert Campbell. Beside him, Henry Burr holds a bat. The large man, with the catcher's mitt, at the extreme right, is probably Arthur Collins. The first seated man is Fred Van Eps and next to him is John H. Meyer. The other men are probably Windsor and his employees.

"Now, we play baseball once a week  
And you should see the score.

Ev'ry player steals a base—

They've stolen things before.

There's lots of folks would like to come

And see us when we play,

But they've built a wall around the place

To keep the crowd away!"

I am grateful to Frank Johnson for recalling the song to my attention. But when an article is written largely from memory it's impossible to keep from overlooking some things the writer knows well enough.

From a historical point of view, perhaps it is worth recalling that in 1929 it was permissible to write comedy songs about prisons and prisoners. Today, if this were done, the writers might feel disapproval of some "liberals" in the country.

I received an informative letter from an old friend of HOBBIES readers, Allen G. Debus, of Deerfield, Ill. He wrote:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the baseball excursion this month—and it was nice also to see Ray Cox smiling at me in the back pages. I had a feeling that you

would reproduce that picture some time.

"Let me add one oddball piece of baseballiana to your list. In 1952 Golden Records released a 7-inch children's record (78RPM) (No. SR107), sung by the baseball stars of the day. On one side is 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game' and the other is the less well known 'The Umpire,' by Loeb. The Quartet is made up of Phil Rizzuto, Tommy Heinrich, Ralph Branca, and Roy Campanella. It is a rather interesting item and it came in a very colorful special envelope at the rather high price (for this type of record) of 35 cents.

"I have the electric De Wolf Hopper (of 'Casey at the Bat.') I doubt whether you would like it. Personally, I rather enjoy the way he hams it up."

The statement in the December article that I had never heard Hopper's electric recording of "Casey" brought an appreciated letter from Irving Rotman of Elkins Park, Pa. Mr. Rotman said:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Please accept the enclosed record as a gift . . . You mentioned that you had never heard the electrical version of 'Casey at the Bat,' and I recalled having it stored away in the accumulations that I occasionally come by in hunting out my own interest,

opera. I hope it will be an addition to your collection."

I am sorry to say this story has a sad ending. Although Mr. Rotman did some of the most careful packing I ever have seen, when I removed the beautifully clean, virtually unplayed disc it had been broken into two approximately equal parts.

Since then, though, I have come across a Victor long-play record, No. 1112, called "The Old Curiosity Shop"—a title probably taken from Charles Dickens' novel. At the end of one side Hopper's "Casey" is reproduced, but the LP does not contain the other side of the 78 rpm, "O'Toole's Touch-down," which I believe is in the same rhyming scheme as "Casey."

Perhaps Hopper "hams" the electrical version a little less unmercifully than he did the acoustic. But there is not much difference. It still is exaggerated so wildly I think that, as Allen Debus guessed, I don't like it.

I felt like kicking myself when I received the following letter from Charles A. Riddell, Jr., of Redwood City, Calif.:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: I have just finished reading your latest article in HOBBIES magazine, about Baseball Recordings. Although I enjoyed it very much, I was surprised to find my favorite baseball recording had been omitted. It is acoustical Columbia record No. A2092, titled 'The Baseball Game,' recorded by Joe Weber and Lew Fields. I believe that this double-sided record must have been recorded around 1912 when Weber and Fields were reunited in a show called 'Hokey Pokey.' This was their first time together (and last, except for a film in 1932) since their separation in 1903. Anyway, I was wondering if you had any knowledge of this recording. The other side . . . is titled 'The Marriage Market Scene,' also by Weber and Fields.

I wrote to Mr. Riddell that while I was making notes for the article I had a bothersome feeling that Weber and Fields had recorded something about baseball, but I also was thinking that all the Columbias by this pair of dialecticians were issued around 1912-13. When I found no title about baseball in the 1913 and 1914 Columbia catalogs I decided my memory had tricked me.

But I should have kept looking until I came to the record supplement for December, 1916. In this "The Baseball Game" is listed, accompanied by a picture showing Weber and Fields talking into a recording horn.

Like Mr. Riddell, I suspected the

(Continued on page 48)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

disc was made about 1912, but was held over for later issue. A check of the serial numbers of Columbia masters, however, does not confirm this supposition. The serial numbers of A2092 were 46879 and 46834, respectively.

During 1912, Columbia used numbers in the 19000's for a while, then inexplicably jumped to the 38000's. (Probably the numbers in between had been reserved for foreign recordings.) On the other hand, by the time 1916 was reached the domestic serial numbers were in the 46000's, just as the two Weber and Fields offerings are. This makes it appear that the legendary pair was persuaded to get together and make a special recording in 1916 even if the two no longer were appearing publicly together.

### III. "Old Pete" Gets Mentioned

Fred Harrington of Traverse City, Mich., sent me a taped copy of Edward Meeker's 1908 Edison cylinder, "Take Me Out To The Ball Game." However, a repairman has been trying, without success, to get my recorder back to working order for more than a year, so I have not yet heard the tape. Though I haven't, I asked Mr. Harrington to copy this and any other baseball records he has for Ken Smith, and I am sure he will be glad to oblige.

One of the most interesting baseball records I knew about, but forgot to mention, was brought to my mem-

ory by David Kemp, of Shinglehouse, Pa. Dave, who is an old friend of mine, wrote:

"... There is a good specialty put together by Robert Hood Bowers, and the Columbia Band is directed by him to perform it on both sides of Columbia A2936. One side is titled, 'Fourth of July, 1880' and the other is 'Fourth of July, 1920.' (The first side) is full of patriotic music, and a speaker comes on to give us part of the Gettysburg Address, after he says, 'Fellow citizens, on this anniversary of that glorious day when our forefathers proclaimed freedom for this beloved United States, what is more fitting than a quotation from the words of the immortal Lincoln?' Then there is a three-gun salute and the band plays 'America,' ending in another gun shot. The other side is full of jazz and ragtime, even in the playing of 'Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean,' and a rather croaking voice of an announcer says: 'Ladies and gentlemen, batteries for today's game, for New York: Bonds and McCarty; for Chicago, Alexander and Killefer.' Then there is a march during which the spectators cheer as the game is played, then the sound of a train, and 'Columbia' jazzed up."

Dave admitted he wasn't sure how the players' names were spelled, so I'm sure he won't mind my pointing out that the Giant pitcher was Barnes, not Bonds. His full name was Jesse Lawrence Barnes, and the New York catcher was George Lewis (Lew) McCarty.

Neither of these players is remembered especially well today, but that is not true of the Chicago battery of Grover Cleveland Alexander and William Lavier (Reindeer) Killefer. The record surprised me by being historically accurate. If I had been asked I should have said that "Old Pete" Alexander, whose picture is shown with this article, and "Reindeer Bill"

Killefer both were playing for the Philadelphia Phillies in 1920, but, actually, as the record has it, they had travelled to the Chicago Cubs.

(While I was writing this article it occurred to me that I had a two-volume set of records of historical interest, issued by Columbia under the number, MM88-, and called "I Can Hear It Now," with Edward R. Murrow as narrator. I suspected a baseball item or two might be included).

I was right. There are the sounds, taken from radio broadcasts, of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig saying farewell to the sport in which they had starred. I believe these 78 rpm albums later were issued in long-play form.

Burns Kattenberg, of Boston, whom I never have met, but who became a friend of mine by correspondence in the long-gone days when I still was living in Marion, Va., wrote to tell me he has Actuelle needle-cut record No. 022443, in which "Babe" Ruth gives his "Home Run Story." The other side, as Burns points out, is "a nondescript fox trot, 'Abadele,' by Duane Sawyer's Novelty Orchestra."

Strangely, my Boston friend overlooked the fact that the December article discussed this record in considerable detail, but mentioned it as issued under Pathé's Perfect label. I don't think it appeared on a Pathé sapphire ball disc.

Burns says too that in 1961 he presented the Baseball Hall of Fame with two RCA Victor records, "How to Play Baseball," by Joe E. Brown. Burns mentioned also some fairly modern records with which I am unfamiliar, PV-800 through 803.

In these Ralph Kiner describes effective ways of hitting; Phil Rizzuto tells how to bunt; "Yogi" Berra talks on catching, and Bob Feller on pitching. This series appears in a catalog dated July, 1952.

C. A. Ackart of Philadelphia offered to send me a 45rpm record of "Did You See Jackie Robinson Hit That Ball?" by Count Basie's Orchestra. However, I have a 78 of this number somewhere, so I asked him to mail his copy to Ken Smith at Cooperstown, and he graciously has done so.

One correspondent said he believed the famous Abbott and Costello comedy sketch, "Who's On Second?" appeared on a long-play, but I was not attempting to cover that era in my article. Finally, A. J. Franck, who now lives in Media, Pa., but who used to operate the International Records Agency at Richmond Hill, N.Y., wrote to offer me a copy of "A Brooklyn Baseball Fan," by Phil Foster. I gratefully accepted and asked Mr. Franck to send a tape of the number to Ken Smith.

Al Franck is the first record collector with whom I ever corresponded. In his days of record importing he used to give me slightly imperfect discs he received from all parts of the world. Now he has sent me a record made in Iceland along with the Dodgers fan "platter!"

"A Brooklyn Baseball Fan" is a 7-inch Coral 45rpm record, No. 9-61200.

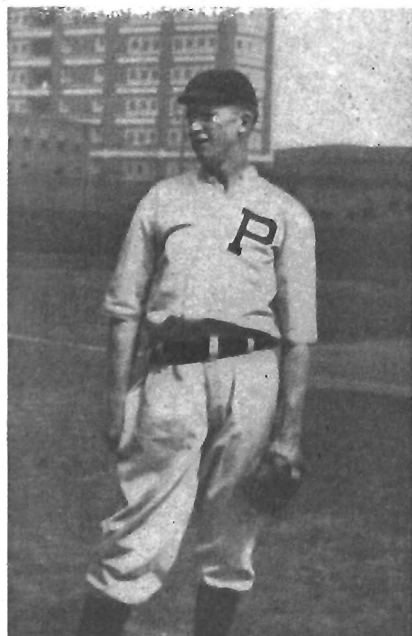
(Continued on page 52)



GRAND SLAM PITCHER. Dave McNally, Baltimore Orioles hurler (center) hit a home run with bases full into the left field bleachers, seen in the Memorial Stadium background, on October 13, 1970. The next day McNally presented the ball to the Baseball Hall of Fame. He is shown here with Ed Stack, Hall of Fame secretary, and Ken Smith, its director.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 48)



"OLD PETE". Grover Cleveland Alexander, one of baseball's greatest pitchers, gets prominent mention in a record made in 1920.

Phil Foster, who is called "Brooklyn's Ambassador to the U.S.A.," gives a highly laughable impersonation of a typical Dodger addict of the days when there still was a National League team in Brooklyn, and a chorus of supposed "bleacherbums" howls its way through part of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," which is heard in instrumental form throughout the disc.

Pitcher Carl Erskine also receives considerable publicity. The other side, "Kids On the Corner," is by Foster and introduces the same weird chorus singing "That Old Gang of Mine."

### IV. Praise from the Baseball Hall of Fame

The crowning moment in my baseball correspondence came when I received a three-page letter from Ken Smith, who, as I have mentioned, is director of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, at Cooperstown, 70 miles west of Albany. Smith's attention had been called to the article.

He wrote to say the Museum would be delighted to have HOBBIES readers and other collectors present gifts of original recordings or taped dubbings, as well as sheet music and any other items of baseball interest. With Mr. Smith's permission, I am quoting the greater part of his letter:

"... HOBBIES is an absorbing publication, replete with information and attractive writing, advertisements and pictures. . . . Indeed you must be the world champion authority in the recording field. The magazine and your biography are being placed in the National Baseball Library here, part of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

"The Museum does have a collection of sheet music and recordings, but limited. I would be delighted if it could be worked out for recordings to be sent to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Of course they would be protected and catalogued with immaculate care. I would like to work with somebody in taping old records, in cases in which the owner is reluctant to part with the records he saved so long. I am intrigued by the paragraph in your article reading in part: 'it would be a project worth while for somebody who combines love of record-collecting with a passion for baseball to try to put such a collection together and present it to the museum.' I hope this idea will blossom into action.

"Your article is breath-taking in its extent. A list of the music you mention, alone, is worth while to have in the Museum, to start with. Later as the collection is accumulated it will be broken down into departments. For instance, parodies. The New York Baseball Writer's show, annual since 1923, has presented hundreds of verses cleverly written by Bill Slocum, Bill Matthias, Arthur Mann and Leonard Koppett, who first come to mind. Some were recorded when presented on the stage of the Waldorf Hotel.

"There is the category of march music given a baseball title such as 'Home Run Polka,' written by a Mrs. Bodell in 1867. Harry Dichter of Philadelphia sent several pieces of that ilk and they were displayed at the Hall of Fame. There is an exhibit, presently on view, of sheet music contributed by Tommy Ferris, a Chicago entertainer. Seen in the case are colorful covers such as ladies with their big feathered hats and this music: 'Where the Shy Little Violets Grow,' sung by Waite Hoyt at the Palace in New York. 'Come Out to the Baseball Game,' by Lou Silvers. 'Remember Me to My Old Gal,' by George Moriarity, Detroit third baseman. 'Babe Ruth He is a Home Run Guy,' by A. Atkins and Harry W. Trout. 'I Want to Go to the Ball Game,' by Al W. Brown. 'It's a Grand Old Game,' by Harry S. Faunce, 'Cubs on Parade,' two step by H. R. Hempel. 'That Baseball Rag,' 1913, by Dave Wolff and Clarence Gray.

"Elsewhere framed is 'Take Your Girl to the Ball Game,' by George M. Cohan. And of course 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game,' original copy by Jack Norworth. In the 'Rube' Marquard exhibit is the sheet music of 'The Marquard Glide'."

"There has been so much baseball music that when it is all catalogued some time it will be a formidable undertaking.

"As for non-musical recordings, in the first place there are thousands of taped interviews with ball players. I have made nearly 500 myself. Russ Hodges' radio description of Bobby Thomson's home run in 1951 is a classic. No doubt you are familiar with the Columbia record, 'Greatest Moment in Sports,' Edward E. Murrow's 'I Can Hear It Now,' Joe E. Brown on 'How to Play Baseball,' Lawrence Ritter's 'Glory of Their Times' interview, Lou Gehrig with Charley McCarthy; seven long 78RPM records, both sides of Ty Cobb talking informally; Gehrig and Ruth's farewells, Babe Ruth making a boys' club recording for his manager Christy Walsh.\*\*\* I remember him (Ruth) making a record, a line in it going: 'When the psychological mind meets the psychological moment, the psychological wallop follows.'

"I have a recording of Giants manager Charley Fox singing 'I Left My Heart in San Francisco.' Twenty-five years ago I wrote a piece on music for Baseball Magazine, so you can know that the museum director is minded in that direction. The best baseball quartet I ever heard was Al Mamaux, Pittsburgh and Brooklyn, first tenor; Jack Conlan, White Sox, second tenor; Bill Terry, New York Giants, baritone; Jack Bentley, New York Giants, bass. There are several baseball musicians and they used to be great on harmony singing. Ring W. Lardner wrote a story about how a quartet of players contrived to break up a deal by a manager to trade off their second tenor.



BASEBALL ENTHUSIAST. Until he was past 50, playing ball was Billy Murray's favorite recreation. The great recording comedian usually played right field, but in this picture he appears to be holding down an infield post. Billy was a member of the "Lights" club at Freeport, L.I., where he lived. The team, composed of theatrical personalities, was sponsored by the Long Island Good Hearted Thespians Society, from whose initials it took its name.

"It has taken me all these paragraphs to say thanks. I enjoyed your article so much and the museum would be pleased to acquire a recording collection. Sincerely, Ken Smith, Director."

I hope this article will result in many HOBBIES readers making contributions to Mr. Smith at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, Cooperstown, N.Y., 13326, as well as in their visiting the "shrine" itself. If my broken-down tape recorder ever returns to active service, I shall copy all the material I have in recorded form concerning the game and send it in.

I am sure the Institution would welcome not only recordings and sheet music, but any thing of baseball interest, such as cards with pictures of ball players that used to come with packages of cigarettes and wrapped candy bars and were so popular during the early years of this century. When I was a boy I had more than a thousand cards, given to me by a man who collected them when he was half-grown, but years later they were all lost in moving, except one of Frederick Alfred Parent, long-ago infielder for the Boston Red Sox and Chicago White Sox. It probably survived because it was used as a book-mark.

### V. Final Wind-Up

I just have recalled that one song, the recordings of which should have been mentioned, is "Tessie (You Are the Only, Only)," a hit of some 70 years ago. The words had nothing to do with baseball, but it was the "official song" of the Boston Red Sox's "Royal Rooters" of that period, who sang it before and during each game.

I have seen a picture of this old-



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### JOHN H. MEYER

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE: The Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists department is written entirely by Jim Walsh. No unsolicited contributions will be accepted).

#### I. The Colorful "Old Rogue"

The Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor Artists concert company reached the peak of its success in the first five years of the 1920's. Four of the members then were natives of the metropolitan New York area. They had been born within the environs of Greater New York and

were to live there all their lives.

Henry Burr, Billy Murray, Frank Croxton, and Rudy Wiedoeft were not among the "native sons." Burr had been born in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada. Murray was born in Philadelphia, but his parents moved to Denver when he was a baby, and he remained there until he was 16 when he ran away from home to join Harry Leavitt's "High Rollers" show troupe.

Croxton came from Paris, Ky., and Wiedoeft from Detroit, Mich. Fred Van Eps, who preceded Wiedoeft as the group's star instrumentalist, was born in Somerville, N.J., virtually a suburb of New York.

Of the other four, Albert Campbell originated in Brooklyn, which for many years has been a part of New York, and Monroe Silver, John H.

Meyer, and Frank Banta all were born in New York. These four Gothamites were a colorful group.

Perhaps the average observer would select Silver as more "colorful" than any of the others. But John Meyer, "the Old Rogue," as Frank Croxton affectionately called him, would be a close second.

In after years Meyer's former associates delighted to tell stories of some of his antics and escapades while he was touring as a member of the "Eight." Meyer, who was tall and slender, had lost most of his hair, which helped to give him a noticeably high forehead, and he never entirely lost the German accent picked up from his parents. He was a constant source of amusement to his fellow artists, who considered him lovable but a bit eccentric.



THE IMMORTAL "EIGHT"—This unusual picture is reprinted from a cardboard poster that was part of a window display sent to Victor record dealers in the autumn of 1925. It shows the members of the Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor Artists. From left to right, they are Billy Murray, comedian and master of ceremonies; JOHN H. MEYER, baritone; Rudy Wiedoeft, saxophone; Frank Croxton, bass; Henry Burr, tenor and manager; Frank Banta, pianist; Albert Campbell, tenor, and Monroe Silver, comedian. This group made the first electrically recorded Victor disc, No. 35753, "A Miniature Concert," issued in June, 1925.





HENRY MOELLER, tenor, made duet records with John Meyer in 1926, under the assumed name of Henry Fairbank.

There was the time, for example, that the "Eight" was traveling in Texas, and John managed to have words with a Mexican cabman. The Mexican was so incensed he swore to "get" the thunderous-voiced basso.

A day or two later Meyer entered a room where the remaining performers were gathered, with something red trickling down the front of his shirt. Billy Murray told me the troupers said among themselves: "Oh, oh! That Mexican has got John! Look at that blood! He's been stabbed!"

Then John inquired, in an angry roar: "Say, how in the so-and-so can a man open a bottle of tomato ketchup without spilling it all over his white shirt?" He escaped any attentions from the affronted Mexican.

On another occasion, unwise indulgence in his favorite beverage had caused the basso to suffer an upset stomach, and he decided to take something for it. He bought a bottle of pills, one tablet of which was supposed to deal efficiently with his problem, but when he looked at the tiny pellet he snorted with disgust.

"Heck!" John boomed. "One of these little things couldn't do a man any good!" So he dumped the entire contents of the box into a bottle of beer and drank it down.

"After that," Billy Murray said, "we agreed John couldn't be human, to take a dose like that and live without suffering any uncomfortable effects!"

And so it went. Life was never dull with John Meyer around.

## II. Biographical Details

The man who succeeded Frank C. Stanley as the bass of the Peerless Quartet was born in New York, July 12, 1877. He was nearly 72 when he died, May 3, 1949, in his home, 160-03 Sanford Ave., Flushing, L.I.

Albert Campbell also lived in Flushing, and Rudy Wiedoeft was living there when he died in 1940. Meyer was about six weeks younger than Billy Murray, who was born May 25, 1877.

Meyer's death certificate describes him as a "vocalist," gives the first name of his father as John, and his mother's maiden name as Barbara Willburger. Unfortunately, the certificate does not tell what the H. in the middle of the singer's name stood for. I imagine it was for Henry, since John Henry is a common arrangement, but it might have meant Herman, Harold, or any number of other names.

Edward Ward, the physician who filled out the medical part of the certificate, did not give the cause of death except to indicate that it was due to natural reasons. He said he had been treating Meyer from October 1, 1947, to the time of his death. The funeral was held at Fresh Pond Crematory, Queens County, May 6, 1949.

A puzzling question occurs to me. On the one occasion that I met John Meyer he told me he made his first records under the name of John Wilbur, in memory of his uncle by that name, who had left him the florist shop on Third Avenue, New York, which he operated all through his singing career. Yet how can the uncle's last name have been Wilbur, since Meyer's mother's name was Willburger and his father's, of course, was Meyer?

But now the obvious solution occurs to me, as I type, and I wonder why I have not thought of it before. "John Wilbur" simply must have been a shortened, Anglicized form of "John Willburger." Of course! And it makes me marvel at how dumb I can be at times!

When Meyer died, a biographical sketch in the *New York Herald Trib-*



JOHN MEYER peeps roguishly around a door in this picture reprinted from the June, 1920, Aeolian-Vocalion record supplement.

une said he left home when he was 16 (the same age at which Billy Murray absconded from Denver) to become pianist and arranger of a 72-man band that toured the country. On his return to New York, he became bass soloist for the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Incarnation at 209 Madison Ave., and remained there 15 years.

Presumably, he gave up his church work at some time after he joined the Peerless Quartet and became "up to his ears" in recording work. He also appeared with Henry Burr's Record Makers (later, the Eight Famous Victor Artists) troupe. Besides his wife, Mrs. Minnie Meyer, he was survived by a daughter, Mrs. Adelaide Steinkamp, a granddaughter, and a great-grandson.

## III. First Recordings

Until recently, I have taken it for granted that John Meyer did no recording until he was engaged to sing in the Peerless Quartet after Frank Stanley's death in December, 1910. Burr took Stanley's place as the Quartet's manager.

I believe he and Meyer had done

(Continued on page 48)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

Continued from page 38)

church work together, and this led him to select Meyer as the successor to the great bass singer who had died at the age of 41. At any rate, I had thought it well established that Meyer did his first recording as a member of the Quartet.

But it seems I was wrong. In looking through the late Dr. Duane D. Deakins' compilation of U. S. Everlasting indestructible cylinders, I was surprised to find Meyer apparently made records in 1908 and 1909, two or three years before he became associated with the Peerless.

A two-minute duet with Burr, No. 217, of the gospel hymn, "Why Do You Wait?" goes back, judging by its number, to 1908. So do two solos, No. 232, "Beulah Land," and 233, "Abide With Me," by Meyer. These, like all the other U.S. Everlasting records the basso made, were issued under the name of John Wilbur.

It seems likely that 1909 was the year in which his two four-minute cylinders were announced. They were 1010, "There'll Come a Day," another duet with Burr, and 1013, "It's Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Goodbye," which Wilbur sang with the soprano, Elise Stevenson.

Meyer's working with Miss Stevenson and with Burr at this time provides another puzzle. Both these artists were duet partners of Frank C. Stanley, who still was living. Why, then, was Meyer selected over Stanley to take part in these duets?

The fact that he was chosen at least indicates that Burr had his eyes on Meyer, so to speak, even before Stanley's untimely and unfortunate death. But, so far as my research indicates, these cylinders were the only records made by Meyer before he joined the Peerless Quartet.

### IV. First Peerless Quartet Records

Just when did John Meyer's association with the Quartet begin? It could not have been later than March, 1911, and probably was as early as February, because the first Victor record by the Peerless Quartet went on sale April 28.

Since it took from six weeks to two months to press a record and include it in the monthly supplement after the master was made, this seems to indicate the recording probably was done at some time in February. That first Victor was No. 16852, "Emmaline Lee" and Catalog Editor, Sam Rous, gave away Meyer's efforts to disguise himself as John Wilbur by writing:

"The first record by the reorganized Peerless, Mr. Meyer having taken the place made vacant by the late Frank Stanley."

You will notice Meyer's full name was not given and in several of the ensuing semi-annual record catalogs he was referred to only as "Mr.



INSCRIBED PHOTO—John H. Meyer presented this autographed picture to a Victor dealer, "Bill" Nolan, when the Eight Victor Artists appeared Oct. 3, 1922, in a concert at Appleton, Wis.

Meyer." "Emmaline Lee" proved popular, but apparently Victor believed its sale was somewhat reduced by having a xylophone solo, M. Gillet's "Entre Acte Gavotte," played by William H. Reitz on the other side.

After a few months, the Peerless side was recoupled on 16956, with the American Quartet's version of "Somebody Else," and "Entre Acte" received a new partner on 16933—P. Frosini's accordion grand interpretation of "Naila Intermezzo."

May also brought the first Columbia record by the Peerless, which, however, was still known only as the Columbia Quartet on that firm's records. With bad proofreading, the Columbia supplement gave the title as "Emmalina Lee." No mention was made that Meyer had taken Stanley's place. The reverse side was "It's Got to be Someone I Love," sung by Ada Jones and Walter Van Brunt.

My guess is that the first Edison cylinder in which Meyer sang was "The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls," issued in July, 1911. This was a solo by "Irving Gillette" (Burr) with male chorus, and the bass voice supporting Burr sounds more like Meyer's than that of Stanley, although, of course, the record could have been held over a few months before being placed on the market.

Edison's first mention of the Peerless Quartet came in March, 1912, when record No. 947, of "In the Golden Afterwhile," a song composed by Stanley, was announced. In the quotation which follows from *The New Phonogram*, Stanley's name is wrongly given as Frank Stanley Grinstead. His first name should be William.

"The many friends of the late Frank Stanley Grinstead (Frank C. Stanley) will perhaps be surprised to learn that he was a song writer of no little talent. In the *Golden Afterwhile* is from his pen

and has always been one of the great favorites of the Peerless Quartet, singing in concert. By special arrangement 'the boys' of the quartet have turned over the money earned in making the record to Mr. Grinstead's widow and four children. We have also arranged that full royalty for every record sold shall be sent them through the courtesy of M. Witmark & Sons, New York, Mr. Grinstead's publishers. The purchase of the record will give added satisfaction to the buyer through knowledge that the act is contributing to a very worthy cause."

The Columbia version also appeared on No. A1111 in March, 1912, but with no mention of a royalty payment. Three months earlier, in December, 1911, Victor had announced the song on record No. 16991, coupled with "Don't Blame Me for Loving You," also by the Peerless.

The Victor announcement, through an error, said royalties would be paid to Stanley's "widow and two children." Edison was right in saying there were four. Two of the children still are living—Mrs. Elizabeth A. Repelow in West Orange, N.J., and Lt. Alan D. Grinstead, a retired naval commander, in Pensacola, Fla. William Stanley Grinstead, Jr., died many years ago, and the singer's youngest child, Elaine, died in 1970 at Pensacola.

Not long after Meyer joined the Peerless, his assumed name of Wilbur faded into virtual disuse. It is heard, however, in Victor record No. 35274, "Military Minstrels," issued in March, 1913. A roll of the "troops" is called and the members are introduced as Corporal Burr, Lieutenant Wilbur, Sergeant Campbell, and Private Collins. It then is explained that Collins is not present, and he takes the part of the bullying unnamed colonel. As the feature of the record, Burr, a Canadian, sings "Bunker Hill," an American patriotic song nowadays beloved of Tiny Tim.

The name of Wilbur reappeared for the last time in December, 1915. Victor then presented record No. 17889, "When You Sit Beside the Fireside in Winter," a duet by George Wilton Ballard and Meyer.

### V. Recording Career

Few recording artists who became as well-known as Meyer did so little solo work, although John Bieling, the first tenor of the Hayden and American Quartets, would fall into the same class. Aside from the Indestructible cylinders, I am not absolutely sure that Meyer made any other solo records, though, as I shall show, he probably sang at least one for the Paroket brand, which Henry Burr issued from 1916 to 1918.

This being true, it is not necessary to trace Meyer's career in detail from the time he joined the Peerless in the winter of 1911 until he left it in the autumn of 1925. As a member of the Peerless Quartet and the Sterling Trio, which came into being in 1916, he sang in thousands of records, and also made many duets with Burr. During this period he frequently saw his name misspelled on record labels and in catalogs as Meyers or Myers, just as Harvey Hindermeyer's last name usually appeared as Hinder-meyer.

(Continued on page 52)

P R O G R A M		P R O G R A M	
PART ONE		PART TWO	
Opening Chorus	Entire Company (Words and Music by Ray Perkins)	1. PIANO SOLO	Frank Banta
1. BARTONE AND BASS DUET	John Meyer and Frank Croxton "Not in a Thousand Years"	"Cubist" (A Futuristic Rag) "In Babylon" (New Broadway Novelty)	Duet with John Meyer
2. COLEN STORIES AND SONGS	Monroe Silver "Selected"	2. TENOR DUET	Campbell and Burr
3. STEERING TRIO	Campbell, Burr and Meyer "Oh My Lady"	"Feather Your Nest"	
4. BASSO SOLO	Fred Van Eps "Down South"	3. COLEN STORIES AND SONGS	Monroe Silver
5. TENOR SOLO	Henry Burr "Blue Diamonds"	"Selected"	
6. TENOR SOLO	Billy Murray "My Little Bunko Down on the Bamboo File"	4. BASS SOLO	Frank Croxton
		"Dah! Gwinter Be a Lan'lide"	
		5. BASSO SOLO	Fred Van Eps
		"So Long! Go-Long"	
		6. PEERLESS QUARTET	Campbell, Burr, Meyer, Croxton
		"Swanee"	
		7. TENOR SOLO	Billy Murray
		"A-B-C-D Blues"	
		Closing Chorus	Entire Company
		FRANK BANTA, Accompanist	

INFINITE VARIETY—A reprint of a program of concerts given by the Eight Famous Victor Artists in New Masonic Hall, Cleveland, O., November 16 and 17, 1920. Observe that John Meyer sang a duet with Frank Croxton and assisted Frank Banta in playing the piano. The artists of course gave encores besides singing and playing the numbers on the program.

## JOHN H. MEYER

(Continued from page 48)

Although Frank Stanley, as the organizer and manager of the Peerless Quartet nearly always sang the lead in its records, Meyer almost never was given that opportunity. Burr became the manager and reserved lead-singing for himself. I know of just one Quartet record on which Meyer does the solo—Columbia A2336, a song of World War I, "Somewhere in France is Daddy."

It is odd, too, that Victor and Columbia never issued any Burr-Meyer duets, although most other companies, including Aeolian Vocalion, Pathé, Okeh, Gennett, and many more did. By contrast, every company that used Burr as a soloist—as virtually all but Edison and Brunswick did, until he signed exclusively with Victor in the summer of 1920—recorded his duets with Albert Campbell.

But Meyer was a man of versatility and varied accomplishments. From 1911 through 1918 he sang bass in the Peerless Quartet, but when Arthur Collins dropped out Meyer took the baritone part and left Frank Croxton to sing bass. And, just as Meyer made arrangements for the 72-man band he had conducted in his youth, he also did the arranging for the Quartet and Trio records. He kept a piano in his florist shop, and it was there that the ensemble met to do its rehearsing.

A skilled pianist, he sometimes played duets with Frank Banta during concerts by the Eight Famous Victor Artists—which seems to have changed

its name to the Eight Popular Victor Artists in 1922. Sometimes Meyer and Croxton added an unusual touch to the Eight's programs by singing baritone and bass duets. Meyer's favorite solo for a long time was "Keep the Home Fires Burning."

The five years from 1915 to 1920, when the Quartet was free-lancing, probably were the busiest of Meyer's life. The group's services were wanted by so many companies, it usually worked three shifts a day—making records, say, for Victor in the morning, for Columbia in the afternoon, and for Pathé or some other company at night. There was a welcome let-down of course, after the group's members became exclusive Victor artists, an arrangement which also left them with more time to travel and give concerts.

Like Frank Stanley, Meyer had some ability as a composer. In March, 1923, Victor issued a Peerless Quartet record, No. 18999, of "Sunset Valley," the words of which were by Ray Sherwood, (Can Sherwood have been an assumed name for Ray Perkins, who was associated with Burr for a time in the music publishing business?). The music was by Meyer, described in the supplement as "first bass of the Peerless Quartet."

Then, early in 1924, Edison issued a Diamond Disc, No. 51276, on which Ernest L. Stevens' Trio played a fox trot, "Along the Rainbow Trail," composed, the label said, by "John Meyer." The Edison dealers' numerical catalog, however, listed the writer as "Meyer, of the Peerless Quartet and Sterling Trio."

Meyer hadn't made Edison records since 1915, when Burr quit the Company because he considered its payment rates too low. The officials, however, seemingly retained a friendly feeling for John and went out of their way to give his song a boost with dealers.

## VI. "John E. Meyer" & "John Myers"

Old-time phonograph companies frequently did baffling things. Until recently I had felt certain that three Columbia records issued in 1912 and containing solos by a baritone listed as John E. Meyer actually were by John H. Meyer, the Peerless Quartet bass, and that the Columbia company had merely got his middle initial wrong, just as Edison had placed an H. midway of Albert Campbell's name when his middle name really was Charles.

I had not heard the records, but since John H. Meyer had become the Peerless basso only a short time before they came out it certainly seemed reasonable to assume the records were his. The titles were "Bonnie, My Highland Lassie," issued in March, 1912; "The Song That Reaches Irish Hearts," which came out in August, and "I'd Like to be in Peachland With a Peach Like You" (an obvious borrowing from "I'd Love to Live in Loveland With a Girl Like You"), October.

But then Quentin Riggs found a copy of "Bonnie" and wrote me that the singer was not the Peerless Quartet bass, but John W. Myers, the baritone native of Wales whose recording career had begun in the early 1890's. I wondered if he could be right, but within the past couple of days I also have got a copy of that record, and there is no doubt that "John E. Meyer" was John W. Myers.

Yet I can't understand what possessed Columbia to change the name of a well-established singer and give him one almost exactly like that of a newcomer. It seems silly but the change was only temporary. The name of John W. Myers returned to Columbia lists in 1914-15, but in the latter years the false one of John E. Meyer popped up in English Columbia's catalog of Regal records, when the Charles K. Harris song, "Break the News to Mother," was issued. Apparently the old tear-jerker had been revived in England because World War I had begun.

The record was not issued in the States, and that leads me to believe the English affiliate had saved matrices of the single-faced Columbia No. 689 by Myers, which had been issued many years before, and reissued it. When first made in 1902 the disc of "Break the News" was announced as by J. W. Myers, but the name was changed to John E. Meyer when Regal "resurrected" it.

I mentioned that John H. Meyer may have made solo Paroket records for Henry Burr. I have Paroket No. A100 on which a deep-toned singer is heard in a popular song of 1917, "Tho' I'm Not the First to Call You Sweetheart Please Let Me Be the Last."

The other side is one of Albert Campbell's last solo records, a Chauncy Olcott "Sweet Girl of My Dreams."

To me it seems likely the "Sweet-heart" song was sung by John Meyer, but alas! the label says "John Myers." Obviously, since nearly all the vocal Paroket records were made by Burr and members of his concert troupe, the chances seem strong that he would have called on the Peerless Quartet basso rather than the almost forgotten J. W. Myers, whose recording career was virtually over.

My copy of the record is not in good condition and the recording is poor, but the voice sounds heavier than Myers' and the intonation does not seem the same, except that "last" at the close of the chorus is pronounced exactly as the older artist would have enunciated it. Yet the label says "Myers," and one would think that Burr would have made sure the name of his basso was spelled correctly!

Nevertheless, I am inclined to the belief that John H. Meyer made the record, and perhaps he sang others for Paroket. If so, they were, to the best of my knowledge, his only solo discs. And, come to think of it, when he sang on an Edison record in 1926, his name came out on the label as John Myers!

#### VII. Personal Characteristics

Despite his versatility, his skill at arranging, and other valuable characteristics, John Meyer was something of a "problem child" for the Eight Victor Artists. During the time he was the Peerless Quartet bass, Billy Murray jokingly would introduce him

to audiences as "the only member of our troupe who has ever been able to go a week without taking a drink," and Meyer would smile broadly. This was an "inside joke" that could be fully understood and appreciated only by the members of the company, for John, though certainly not an alcoholic, was neither an advocate nor observer of total abstinence. This sometimes was shown by the manner in which he "came in too loud" on the Quartet and Trio recordings.

After Croxton joined the group, they were the two members, so a Victor "advance man" told me, who asked, "Where can we get some liquor?" as soon as they reached a new community on their trips. Wiedoeft also gave Burr some trouble by drinking, but the remainder of the Eight were virtually tee-totalers throughout their active years.

As Billy Murray told me: "One of the things we used to watch for was for John to show up looking a little glassy-eyed. Burr would look at him reproachfully, and John would boom: 'It's a d----- lie, Harry! I haven't had a drop—not a drop!'"

Perhaps it was because of this problem and the complaints of dealers that Meyer sang too loud in some records, that Burr decided, in late 1925, to make a complete change in Peerless Quartet personnel. He let Campbell, Meyer, and Croxton all go, and replaced them with lesser known Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman, and James Stanley. Whatever justification Burr may have felt for dismissing Meyer and Croxton, this treatment seemed unjust to Campbell, who didn't drink and had been intimately

associated with Burr for nearly a quarter of a century.

#### VIII. Last Recordings

No longer a member of the Peerless Quartet (there was no Sterling Trio after the shake-up), Meyer continued to do recording work for another year or so by forming a duet partnership with Henry Moeller, best known as the featured tenor soloist on Gennett records. For duet purposes Moeller called himself Henry Fairbank. The pair made one double-faced Edison record that contained two of the best "popular" duets the Company ever issued: "There's a Blue Ridge In My Heart, Virginia" and "I'm Leaving You" (No. 51774). Meyer told me they also sang "Bye Bye, Blackbird" for Edison, but if they did it was not issued. "Anyway," he said, "we got paid for it!"

Meyer and Fairbank also made Grey Gull records and Gennett. On at least one disc of Gennett origin they were called "Meyers and Nelson," and on another "Harlan and Roberts." This sounds like an effort to make customers think the old-time favorites, Byron G. Harlan and Bob Roberts, had resumed recording and were working together.

There was so much competition in free lance recording, however, that apparently the duet team gave up within a year, and Meyer returned to managing his florist shop. It must have been well operated by someone, to be still in business, after all the years Meyer had spent in recording and concert work.

Sometime later he closed the shop and went to work at Thorley's, "The House of Flowers," where he was employed when I met him. He was regarded as one of the most skillful floral designers in New York City.

#### IX. My Meeting With John Meyer

My one meeting with the genial and colorful basso occurred on an afternoon in October, 1940, when Al Campbell took me first to the offices of Billy Jones (who dropped dead on Broadway three weeks later from a heart attack) and Aileen Stanley (she was out), then to Thorley's.

When Al said to a couple of gentlemen sitting near the entrance, "May we speak with John Meyer, please?" they replied, "Yes," and called "John!" "John!"

A few moments later John Meyer stuck his head around the door and smiled impishly in a manner that reminded me of a picture of him in a 1920 Aeolian-Vocalion record supplement. When Al told him who I was, he turned to me and said: "I heard you were in town."

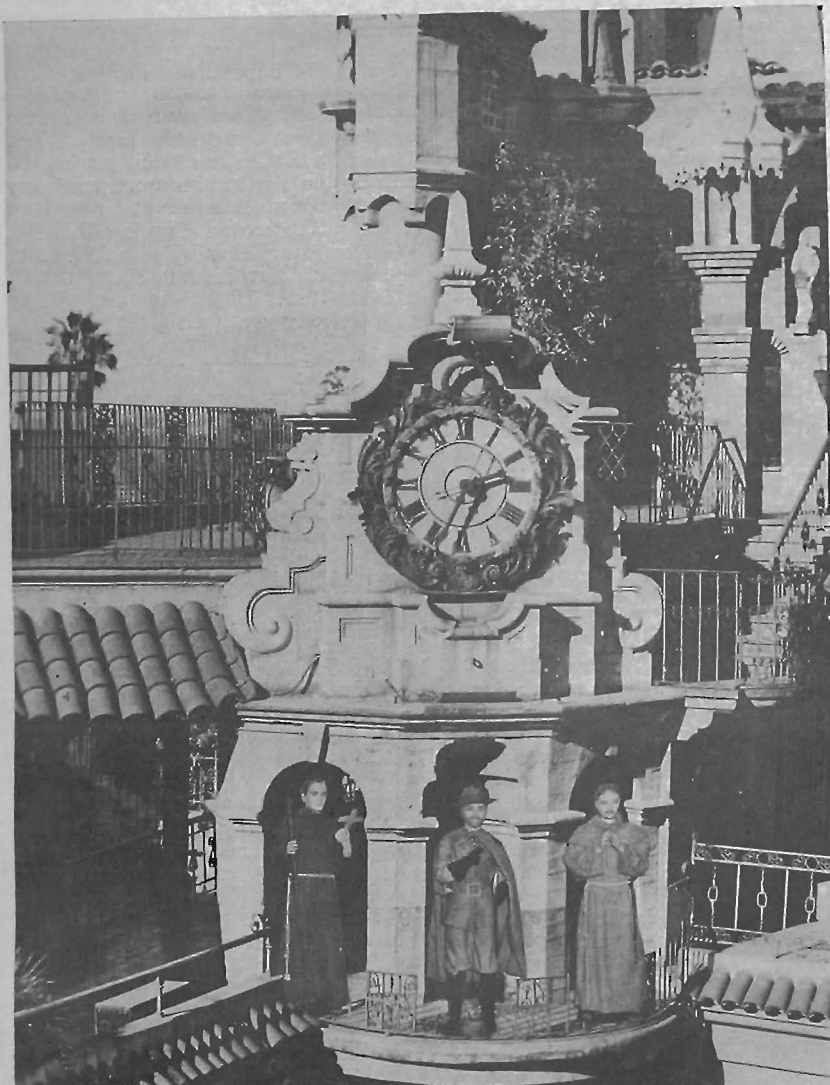
I wondered how on earth he could have learned anything about the presence in that huge city of a newspaperman from Johnson City, Tenn., but decided Billy Murray might have called

(Continued on page 125)



**PAINSTAKING REHEARSAL**—These pictures, reprinted from 1920 and 1919 Victor record supplements, but obviously taken on the same day, show the Sterling Trio performing a song for recording purposes. The scene probably is John Meyer's florist shop on Third Avenue, N.Y., and the artists are Henry Burr, standing; Albert Campbell, atop the piano, and Meyer, at the keyboard. The song, "I Think I'll Wait Until They All Come Back," apparently was never recorded by the Trio for Victor or any other company. "The Invincible Four" (Peerless Quartet), sang it, however, for Pathe.





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My first glimpse of the movement was a shock. I had expected to see

an ancient clock mechanism. My eyes beheld an old Seth Thomas tower clock movement which had been electrified, coupled with equipment to trip motors which operated the figures.

To say the least, I was disappointed. But the exterior was beautiful and no doubt cost more than an original ancient clock. It was completed in 1951.

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

ed him and mentioned that I was visiting. Or perhaps the smiling Al Campbell had seen him and said something about it, since both John and Al lived in Flushing.

I told John I thought he looked exactly like the pictures of him that had been published 20 years before, and he seemed pleased, but expressed disgust at the crumpled condition of a photo of himself which Billy had given me so I could have him autograph it. He signed it, anyway, and then went on to ask if I knew he did his first recording under the name of John Wilbur. Of course he explained that he took the name from his uncle who left him the florist shop.

"You were in the florist business, weren't you, before you began to make records?" I asked.

He drew a laugh by the emphatic manner in which he replied: "Yes, thank God!" and added he had been looking through an old Victor catalog a few nights before and had come upon the mention of his succeeding Stanley as the Peerless Quartet basso.

John Meyer was the last recording artist I met on that trip, for I boarded a homeward-bound train a few hours later. I didn't see him on my next trip in 1946, and a year later Harvey Hindermeyer told me that within the past year or so John had begun "to look awfully bad. He walks almost bent double."

Hearing this, it did not come as a surprise when I read of his death a year and a half later.

I hope no one will take too much to heart what I have said about John Meyer's personal failings. We all have our faults. As for myself, I have a long-standing admiration for him as an accomplished singer and musician, a "good fellow," and a colorful character whose personality added much to what must have been the fun of being a member of the Eight Famous Victor Artists.

Thanks to his recordings, John Meyer's memory is certain to remain green for generations to come.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### THEO KARLE

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Top Brunswick Tenor

After some experience at building cabinets for New Edison phonographs, the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company, of Chicago, decided, in 1916, to construct its own brand of talking machines. The new Brunswick had excellent tone quality and most students of recorded sound rank it second only to the Edison. That realism, Brunswick frankly admitted in early advertising, it was striving to equal, or, in Brunswick phraseology, to "duplicate the absolute Edison tone."

Brunswick didn't succeed, so far as Edison recordings were concerned, but its rendition of Pathé sapphire ball discs was splendid and its reproduction of lateral-cut records above the average. Also the Brunswick's U-tona reproducer, introduced at the beginning of 1918, was the most convenient ever devised. It included three diaphragms: one equipped with a sapphire ball for Pathé records; one with a diamond for Edison's, and a third with a steel needle-socket for records like those of Victor and Columbia.

To play needle-cut hill-and-dale discs you took out the sapphire ball and inserted a needle in the Pathé position. The Edison diamond point could not be removed.

For the first three years of Brunswick's phonograph activities, its dealers in the United States stocked Pathé records, but in Canada vertical cut Rex discs were marketed with a Brunswick label. Then, toward the end of 1919, Brunswick decided to manufacture its own brand of lateral cut records, since Victor's original patents apparently had expired.

Maintaining that the patents were still in effect, Victor sued Gennett, Brunswick, and perhaps other companies that had begun making "needle-cuts." The suits, however, came to nothing.

There was then a stampede by companies that made hill-and-dale records to switch to the lateral type, which was inferior in tone quality but could be played on a much larger number of machines. Aeolian-Vocalion, Okeh, Paramount, and Lyric were among others that joined the "zig-zag" procession.

Pathé began making lateral cuts late in 1920 and in 1922 discontinued issuing sapphire discs in the States. That left Edison as the only American

company still making vertical-cut records.

Brunswick phonographs and records were splendid productions for their period of recorded history. During the early 1920's the Company gained a reputation as the most progressive talking-machine manufacturer.

By 1923 Brunswick had succeeded Edison as the third largest record manufacturer. Victor and Columbia, of course, had been first and second. And Brunswick probably went ahead of Columbia when that pioneer Company began to have grave financial troubles.

Brunswick had a reputation among recording artists as a good Company to work for. A 1924 issue of the *Billboard* said: "It is surprising how many big names are angling for Brunswick contracts."

One of the "big names" who got a Brunswick contract, whether he "angled" for it or not, was Al Jolson.

After 10 years with Columbia, during which his records never were especially good sellers, Jolson went to Brunswick at a contract reported in the newspapers to call for \$30,000 a month for the next four years—a total of \$1,440,000.

According to the *Billboard*, however, Brunswick found it had made a losing deal. Jolson's first record, "California, Here I Come," and "I'm Goin' South," had been counted on to sell 200,000 copies in its first pressing. But, again, according to *Billboard*, the record reached only 90,000.

Not until Jolson's success in the talkies and the issuance of his record combining "Sonny Boy" and "There's a Rainbow Round My Shoulder," did Brunswick begin to recoup something of its expensive investment. However, without any proof to the contrary, I frankly, don't believe that "\$30,000 a month" story.

When the progressive Chicago manufacturer decided to enter the record business a young tenor whose real name was Theo Karle Johnston, but who was known professionally as Theo Karle, was one of the first artists to be engaged. Not only that, but during the period from 1920 to 1925, he made a larger number of Brunswick records than any other artist. He was one of the Company's most highly praised "New Hall of Fame" performers.

Then, all at once, after he had made scores of records, his Brunswick career ended just before electric recording came into use. This tenor, who stood 6 feet 2 inches and was said to be a descendant of "Old Hickory,"



CONCERT ARTIST—THEO KARLE as he appeared at the height of his career.



OPERATIC ROLE—THEO KARLE is shown here taking the tenor part of *des Grieux* in Massenet's opera, "Manon."



This picture was taken in 1916 in the Victrola Department of Rorabaugh-Wiley Dry Goods Company, Hutchinson, Kan. From left to right are ROYAL DADMUN, baritone; MAXIMILIAN PILZER, violinist; THEO KARLE, tenor; H. H. Paterson, manager Victrola department; Le Roy Plank, Victor representative for Kansas, and Mrs. A. A. Rickert, Hutchinson soprano.

Andrew Jackson, never again had an important recording role.

When Theo Karle died Sunday, May 7, 1972, in his Seattle, Wash., home, he was almost 79. His death received little national attention, for he had been in contented retirement for many years and had made no effort to keep before the public. But in his day he had been one of America's leading concert singers as well as a prominent recording artist.

## II. Theo Karle, the Man

Theo Karle was born in Perry, Iowa, July 30, 1893. After receiving his general education in public schools and with private tutors he studied for many years with Edmund J. Myer, both in Seattle and New York. Before he went East, the tenor appeared in concert on the Pacific Coast and also took leading tenor roles in operas produced by one of the Pacific Coast companies.

Karle's first New York appearances were made with the Rubenstein Club in January, 1916, under the leadership of William H. Chapman. A few months later Karle signed a Victor recording contract which resulted in his making two double-faced discs.

His recital debut was made in Octo-

ber, 1916, when he sang in Aeolian Hall. The same season he toured as soloist with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and appeared with Geraldine Farrar at the Maine Festival, also with Alma Gluck at the Worcester Festival.

During the years that followed, Karle was heard as soloist with leading symphony orchestras and sang before many leading clubs in coast-to-coast appearances. In 1919, just before his Brunswick career began, he appeared as leading tenor in "The Wayfarer," given in New York's Madison Square Garden. He estimated that in his first six years of concert work he sang before more than one million persons.

In 1936 a Seattle newspaper published an interesting feature article about Theo Karle, from which I shall quote for the sake of its "background color:"

"It was back in 1910 that a boy named Theo Karle Johnston came to Seattle from Olympia to see if his dreams of fame could come true. He was only 16 years old, and, though he had sung in a church choir for a dollar a week, he knew nothing of music. But he thought, with the optimism of youth, that somewhere, some day, audiences might applaud him.

"He was introduced to a man named

Edmund J. Myer, when he came to Seattle. Mr. Myer, a retired singer, told him that he was not dreaming in vain. But he told him, also, that years of study lay ahead.

"The boy studied, and found fame. A manager shortened his name to Theo Karle, and as Theo Karle he became known as a great tenor. He was back in Seattle today—back for a much different reason than when he came here to study in 1910. When his season ended several weeks ago, he felt an urge to see the green hills and the lakes and salt water of the Northwest again . . .

"I guess this country gets into your blood," he said today. "I've seen Italy and Monte Carlo, and I've sung in a lot of places all over the world, but I still want to come back. I'm going to stay until September and loaf—as much as a singer can let himself.

"I'll have to sing two or three days a week, and I'll probably have a lot of new repertoire to learn, but except for that I'll just be seeing the country."

"Theo Karle went east with his teacher in 1916, and made his debut at the Rubenstein Club in New York City. The war interrupted his work. He joined the Army and was at Camp Lewis when the Armistice was signed.

"Since then he has sung in the Opera Comique in Paris, with the Monte Carlo Opera Company, and has appeared in most of the capitals of the world. He has sung also for the radio, and on Broadway in Earl Carroll's Vanities."

A program distributed at a Karle recital in his "home town" of Olympia on Friday evening, September 18, 1936, amplifies some details of the newspaper account:

"... Theo Karle is that rara avis, a tenor with a man's voice and a man's

(Continued on page 48)

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## RECORDING ARTISTS FAVORITE PIONEER

(Continued from page 38)



**NEPHEW AND UNCLE**—This photo, reproduced from the February, 1917, *Voice of the Victor*, shows Theo Karle and his Uncle O. S. Johnston of Cedar Rapids, Ia., listening to a Victrola in the George A. Mullen Company's Cedar Rapids store.

ways. His straight-forward style of delivery, that neither shouts nor sentimentalizes, reflects the high standard of the art. Through a sonorous vocal gift that breathes freshness and fervor into his interpretations, Karle makes every aria an adventure in song.

"This genial artist, who leapt into fame when barely out of his 'teens' and who is now in the prime of his powers, has appeared with virtually every concert course, oratorio society, festival and symphony orchestra in America. Following triumph after triumph in this country, Theo Karle went to Europe in 1926 where, after a period of study with several of the leading coaches on the continent, he made his debut at the Opera Comique in Paris. There followed three years of operatic engagements culminating in a series of appearances with the Royal Opera at Monte Carlo.

"Returning to America in 1930, Karle was retained by the Columbia Broadcasting System and, during a period of four years, was featured in some 600 programs, more than half of them being with symphony orchestra. For the past year, however, he has been making only guest appearances on the air, for he has decided the time has come to resume concertizing.

"Today, Theo Karle's voice is richer and sweeter than it ever has been, investing his repertoire, which ranges from Italian classic through German lieder to modern songs, with a memorable melodiousness."

The program quoted some critical appraisals of Karle's art, including the following from the veteran W. J. Henderson of the *New York Sun*. Henderson was never "easy" on singers. He did not hesitate to say that when Enrico Caruso sang as well as he could he sang extremely well. But, Henderson added that, more often than not, Caruso's singing was "extremely bad."

"He (Karle) is a singer of merit and of power to hold the interest of an audience. The best features of his art (are) a finely spun legato, admirably sustained phrases, tenderness of feeling, clear pronunciation and a style appropriate and finished. On the whole . . . a singer of worth, who has the uncommon ability to get his songs effectively over the footlights and to an audience."

Of interest also is the following from the *Washington Post*:

"The great natural beauty of Karle's voice, the poignancy of its appeal, its flawless cantilena, his good taste in phrasing, artistic discretion in the use of light and shade—in fact, his splendid singing, received an ovation."

I learned of Theo Karle's death from my long-time friend, Keith Moyer, of Everett, Wash., who also had been a friend of the tenor's for many years. Mr. Moyer sent me a copy of this death notice in the *Seattle Times* of Monday, May 8:

**"THEO KARLE, RETIRED TEACHER, SINGER DIES.** Memorial services for Theo Karle, retired voice teacher and former opera singer, will be at 1 p.m. tomorrow at the Butterworth Mortuary. He died of a sudden illness Sunday afternoon at his Olympic Peninsula retreat . . .

"Mr. Karle made his singing debut in New York City in 1916. His first concert appearance was with the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra just before World War I. Service with the Army interrupted his career. After the war Mr. Karle spent eight years with the Columbia Broadcasting Company. Then he and his wife, Nora, a pianist, turned to the international concert circuit, traveling as much as 30,000 miles a year. Mr. Karle returned to Seattle in 1941 to teach voice. He has been in semi-retirement since 1952."

Keith Moyer provides this additional information:

"Mr. Karle . . . sang in the leading tenor roles with the Standard Opera Company on the coast when only 19 years old . . . He made records for the Ginn Company for educational purposes under his Seattle friend, Henry Hadley, who conducted the orchestra of some 30 men. He left Brunswick after canceling his contract so that he could sing at the Paris Opera Comique for a number of years and at Monte Carlo. He was offered opera contracts in Germany and Scandinavia, but due to the trouble of re-learning his roles in German and Swedish he turned them down and on returning to America became a staff artist for the Columbia Broadcasting System for eight years. He mentioned he made the first experimental television show from the Columbia studios with Barbara Maurel."

The educational records to which Mr. Moyer refers must be three made for Gennett, about the time Karle left Brunswick, and which are listed along with his Victor and Brunswicks at the end of this article. All were 10-inch, sold for \$1.50 each, and were accompanied by "members of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Henry Hadley." Their description in a 1926 Gennett catalog corresponds to what Mr. Moyer says about the educational records made for Ginn.

Quoting further from Moyer's letter:

"He (Karle) had a contract with Victor, but recorded only four selections, under his friend, Walter Rogers (1865-1939) who induced Karle to go over to the newly formed Brunswick Company in 1920. He did this at a yearly salary. He told me that he made the first experimental electric records for Brunswick with some British equipment, but it was a failure. Strangely, he never made any commercial electrics for Brunswick, but made a few electrics on the Linden label, a Seattle radio station that had them pressed in California. I have only one of his Linden records. It is No. 08, 'Mother Machree.'"

### III. Brief Victor Sojourn

In November, 1912, Victor issued a Red Seal record by its young tenor star, John McCormack, of a song that has been a favorite of mine almost

as long as I can remember. It was "I Know of Two Bright Eyes," with words reputed to be by a mysterious Abd-ul Mejid and the music by an English composer, George H. Clutsam.

My fondness for this lovely number was not based on the McCormack record, No. 64255, but on Columbia, No. A769, by Henry Burr, which was poorly recorded but beautifully sung. The Victor supplement description of the song as "a pretty little trifle" is rather condescendingly annoying, at least to me:

"A pretty little trifle by a well-known song writer, which Mr. McCormack sings charmingly. The number is from a set of Clutsam songs entitled 'Songs From the Turkish Hills,' which has been much in vogue in England. The delicate pianissimo note in the second verse is an exquisite ending to a highly pleasing rendition by this favorite tenor."

Almost three years earlier, in February, 1910, Columbia had announced a double-faced disc, No. F130, of the same song by McCormack, coupled with Liddle's setting of Charles Kingsley's poem, "A Farewell." Columbia was then American sales agent for the Fonotipia Company of Italy, whose English branch for a time had McCormack under contract, and which made this recording. The Columbia supplement description is more interesting than the Victor:

"One of a group of six 'Songs From the Turkish Hills,' collected and arranged by the distinguished English composer, George H. Clutsam. Though each of the songs in this collection is remarkable for its beauty and individuality, this one has been chosen from the first by critics and singers alike as the gem of them all. The charm exercised by this song is so subtle and intangible that it is difficult to say wherein its chief beauty lies, though the simplicity and dignity of its exquisite air may be held largely responsible. In both words and melody is found a suggestion of the mysticism of the East."

I never have heard McCormack's Columbia record. I have his Victor, but prefer Burr's rendition. A noteworthy thing about the Victor, however, is its amazingly short life, for a McCormack recording. It stayed in the catalog just a year. Its last appearance was in November, 1913. By May, 1914, it was cut out. What caused it to sell so poorly?

This reference to the McCormack recording points up the fact that, notwithstanding a first disappointing experience with the song, "I Know of Two Bright Eyes" was selected as one of the selections with which Theo Karle made his Victor debut in June, 1916. It was coupled with Leoncavallo's "Mattinata," also known as "Tis the Day."

I will quote the supplement description, although it largely, and inaccurately repeats information already given:

"This young tenor, who is making a success on the concert platform, was born in Seattle, and received much of his musical training in the West. Edmund J. Meyer, the New York teacher, heard him, and being much impressed by the young man's voice, urged him to come to New York for further instruction. Upon entering the concert field he was at once pronounced an acquisition, and is now in much demand, some of this

(Continued on page 52)



## THEO KARLE

(Continued from page 48)

season's engagements being at the Worcester Festival, joint appearance with Alma Gluck; with Mme. Farrar at the Maine Festival; soloist on the New York Philharmonic Orchestra tour, and many recitals.

"Mr. Karle's voice, as will be noticed in these two fine records, is a pure robust tenor of even register and much color and flexibility. He will make Victor records exclusively."

This write-up has its share of errors. Karle was not born in Seattle; "Meyer's" name was Myer, and he did not have the tenor "come" to New York, but taught him in Seattle, then accompanied him East.

Karle's second and last appearance in a Victor list was in April, 1917, when he sang the *Siciliana* from "Cavalleria Rusticana" and, a rather odd coupling, an obscure song called "Her Heart." Soon afterward he went into military service, and that may be the reason why no more of his records appeared.

There were occasional references to Karle, both during and after his Victor recording period, in the *Voice of the Victor*. For instance, a photograph in the August, 1916, issue (reproduced with this article) was taken in the Victrola department of the Rorabaugh-Wiley Dry Goods Company of Hutchinson, Kans.

This photograph showed Karle, Royal Dadmun (a baritone born 1886 and died 1964, who was to become a Victor artist six years later, but who at that time had made only one Columbia record and some indestructible cylinders), and Maximilian Pilzer (1890-1958), the violinist, with three other persons. A couple of years ago I sent Mr. Karle a copy of the picture, and he seemed delighted to get it.

In February, the *Voice* used a photo of Karle with his uncle, O. S. Johnston, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, listening to a Victrola in the Victor parlors of the George A. Mullen Company, of that city. The caption said:

"Both Mr. Karle and Mr. Johnston are enthusiastic Victor boosters. Mr. Johnston having purchased a new XVI for his nephew's use while in this city."

The December, 1917, number carried this brief note:

"Felicitations to Theo Karle, who sang in his home town of Seattle, Wash., September 5, and got married the same day."

Miss Nora Christof, the lady who became Karle's wife is reported to have been his "childhood sweetheart." It sometimes is said they were married "while they were still children," but the tenor actually had passed his 24th birthday when he wed, so was not exactly a "teenager."

In June, 1919, the *Voice* revealed:

"Theo Karle, the tenor who has made some excellent Victor records, having completed his military service, is planning to return to music. He will be heard in recital during the coming season."

Karle's two Victor discs came to be singled out for special treatment. In the December, 1917, record supplement, under the heading of "Some Interesting Records," appeared a description of "I Know of Two Bright Eyes."

A shortage of popular Victor records was beginning to develop, and such listings were intended to help dealers sell numbers they already had in stock but "which may have been overlooked in the pages of our monumental Victor record catalog. Our selections may not always be new to all our readers, but they will always be good—according to our view."

"Just who exactly is Abd-ul Mejid? His poem, 'I Know of Two Bright Eyes,' should bring him a greater fame, now that it has been set to music by George H. Clutsam. For tenderness and purity of sentiment his simple little poem might be written by an Irishman such as Tom Moore. Clutsam has caught the spirit of it nicely. Without straining for Oriental effects he gives us a feeling of wide sandy deserts mystically glowing under the moonlight and the starry sky. And Theo Karle sings—well, like an Oriental lover."

I disagree with that last statement. Karle's interpretation sounds to me so restrained that he seems more like a Scandinavian than an Oriental.

In the *Voice of the Victor* for June, 1919, these notes were given to aid dealers in selling the other Karle record.

"'Siciliana,' one of the favorite airs from 'Cavalleria.' 'Her Heart,' a tender love song. Fine tone quality."

"In Mascagni's opera *Turiddu* sings the 'Siciliana,' a delightful Sicilian serenade, before the curtain goes up, his voice gradually dying away as he retires into the distance. It is sung to his beloved, Lola, who has married Alfio, during his absence at the war. 'Her Heart' is a tender song telling simply and directly a lover's reverence for his sweetheart—a theme as old as the hills and as fresh as a spring flower."

### IV. Karle's Brunswick Career

Walter B. Rogers was Victor recording director during the 1916 period in which Karle's records were made, but left shortly afterward to become associated with Henry Burr's short-lived Paroquette Record Company. In 1918 he seems to have been working for Paramount, for I have a 1918 hill-and-dale Paramount disc by Walter B. Rogers and His Band. But by 1920 he was with Brunswick, and it probably was he who persuaded Theo Karle to become a featured soloist for the new company. Karle himself said Brunswick "bought" his contract from Victor, but as he had made no records since 1916 it seems rather doubtful that a contract was still in effect. Moreover, Victor had sued Brunswick, alleging patent infringement. Would it be likely to "sell" the newcomer one of its artists?

Without laboring that point, I can say that Karle's long list of Brunswick records calls for no extended analysis and comment. The program I have quoted said his repertoire ranged from "Italian classic through German lieder to modern songs," but he was not given much opportunity for recording classics.

Instead, Brunswick used him almost entirely in ballads of the type that McCormack sang prolifically for Victor; Colin O'More for Aeolian-Vocalion; Charles Harrison and Henry

Burr for Columbia; Henry Moeller for Gennett, and Walter Van Brunt for Edison. There were old Irish songs; semi-Irish, recently composed numbers; sentimental compositions of almost every description, and just a touch of oratorio, "Bohemian Girl," and Gilbert and Sullivan.

One of his most interesting recordings combined the "Good Night Quartet" from "Martha" with the "Madrigal" from "The Mikado," and was sung by the Music Arts Singers, a mixed quartet consisting of Karle, Richard Bonelli, Marie Tiffany and Elizabeth Lennox. Both ladies had been Edison "tone test" artists. Miss Tiffany had married a Brunswick official and switched her recording affiliation from Edison.

The attached list of Karle records speaks for itself, but I will point out some of the oddities of his catalog listings. He had only eight double-faced records in the 1921 catalog. By 1922 the list had grown so long it began on page 87, continued to the lower half of page 89, jumped from there to 90, and ended on page 94. I have never seen any other catalog with such a hop, skip, and jump arrangement.

In the 1924 list, most of Karle's 13000 series records were renumbered, apparently because some had been selling for \$1 and some for \$1.25. It was decided to bring them all into the \$1.25 price range.

But the most baffling treatment occurred in 1925, when Karle and all his records were expunged from the catalog as if they had never existed. His only mention is in a pronunciation guide at the back, where it is said that "Karle" is pronounced like "Karl." But why did all Karle's waxings vanish at the beginning of the electric recording era?

Then comes another question. Why, after they seemingly had been cut out, did they reappear in 1927 with a few new titles, including three duets with Miss Tiffany?

Karle's waxings continued to be listed through the January, 1929 catalog, but in a special section of "mechanically recorded" discs, with the statement that they would not be available after December, 31, 1930. And none were. By that time the depression had hit and there was little demand for records, new or old.

Another oddity about Brunswick catalogs was the way biographical sketches of artists were changed annually. Victor catalogs, for example, carried the same write-ups year after year, with, perhaps, an occasional shortening or change of phrase, but Brunswick's were rewritten each year. I'll quote examples but, first I should mention that Brunswick used the assumed name of "John Congdon" for a couple of Karle's early numbers.

In the 1921 catalog Brunswick patrons were told that:

"Theo Karle, who won such exceptional praise from the press and public through his singing of the chief tenor role in the New York presentation of 'The Wayfarer,' is one of America's greatest artists. He is a tenor whose voice and



**LISTENING TO HIMSELF—THEO KARLE** hearing one of his own records in the Everett Department Store, Everett, Wash. (Reproduced from the January, 1918, *Voice of the Victor*.)

interpretative gifts reflect musicalness, mentality and manhood—a combination rarely to be found and one which, in this instance, has brought honor and praise to his professional work.

"Still in his early twenties, the future holds fame for this young, upstanding American. The range, power and quality of his voice has (sic) already been compared with that of the world's greatest tenors."

In 1922 this was altered to:

"America has come to be and, indeed, is proud of her son, Theo Karle. No tenor before the people has received such consistent praise and honor. Karle's voice and interpretative endowments come under the highest classification; they reflect musicalness, mentality and manhood. (The supplement writer must have been proud of that alliterative phrase . . . J.W.) Karle is still in the 20's and has more engagements to sing, both before the public and in the recording laboratory, than he can—even with his joyous health—ever fill. He is an exclusive Brunswick artist and daily his audiences are increasing, a fact which is demonstrated vividly whenever a Karle recording is released."

An enthusiastic description was published in the Gold Label Artists section of the 1923 catalog:

"The beautiful lyric tenor of this popular and talented American concert singer is known and loved wherever real music lovers foregather. In his six surprising seasons on the concert stage Karle has won for himself a unique place in the hearts of his audiences. It is no wonder that he is popular—this engaging young man with the voice that thrills you by its very artistic sincerity. As a singer of heart songs he is pre-eminent in his particular field. His voice, of extraordinary power, yet capable of the tenderest delicacy of feeling, is a splendid natural instrument such as one hears but once in a generation. But over and above his technique (technical?) accomplishments of voice is the magnetism of his pleasing and gracious personality. Karle is youth, exultant, over-riding obstacles, looking for more worlds to conquer. His abundant and youthful enthusiasm compels you to his mood, drawing you up and away from sordid care by the sheer power of his artistic vitality."

"Theo Karle records exclusively for Brunswick Gold Label Records. Hear him sing 'Macushla,' 'Mavis' and 'Little Mother of Mine' and his reason for selecting Brunswick becomes apparent. Only Brunswick recording methods could reproduce for him the high standards of tone, the niceties of shading and phrasing, which have made him so famous on the concert stage."

But, of course, he *had* made Victor records!

The 1924 write-up was based largely on the information given in the already quoted program, so I shall not copy it. However, it mentions that Karle had been "tenor soloist at the famous Brick Church on Fifth Avenue" and had made "about twenty concert tours from coast to coast—a remarkable record for so young an artist."

Then came 1925 with no records listed and virtually no mention of Karle. In the 1927 catalog his records were back but demoted from the "celebrity section" and there was no biographical description.

In 1928, however, he was once more among the Gold Label luminaries, with the same description that had been used in 1924. Considerably shortened, this appeared again in 1929, but in 1930 all "mechanical" records had been sentenced to death and his name was no longer mentioned.

#### V. I Hear From Theo Karle

After learning from Keith Moyer of his friendship with Theo Karle, I decided that the eminent retired tenor would be a good subject for a HOBBIES article, so wrote to him, enclosing a copy of the Karle-Dadmum-Pilzer photo. On October 19, 1970, I was delighted to receive the following letter, which he had written four days earlier:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Thank you so much for your very kind letter. It was good of you to take time to drop me a line."

"You really reached into the past with your picture of Royal Dadmun and Max Pilzer. I am highly flattered and great(ly) pleased. The picture was taken on my first tour with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra during which we did 69 concerts in five weeks. At that time I had made only two Victor records, and shortly after that Brunswick bought my contract from Victor and after that I had over 100 records in the Brunswick listing."

"As I wrote a friend in California recently, I haven't any current photographs and I am not sitting for any new ones as I do not like what I see. However, I will be glad to send what I have if you want it."

"As you can see, I am the poorest typist in the world and can only hope you will overlook the mistakes. You see, my machine makes the mistakes. I punch the right key and the wrong comes up. Thank you again for your nice letter. I really appreciated it. Sincerely, Theo Karle."

On November 5, 1970, Mr. Karle wrote to me again and sent me two photographs, one in operatic costume. Both are reproduced with this article. He said:

"Under separate cover, I am sending a couple of photographs of earlier days which I hope may interest you. At the time when I was very active I had stacks of current pictures, but in the recent days they would have to get a team of mules to get me in front of a camera. However, I know you will understand. I am in excellent health and, strange enough, I feel as well as ever vocally. I guess that is the way all 'old timers' feel."

"We are as busy as we wish to be, teach a little and sing in church each Sunday. The rest of the time we spend at a house we have on the Olympic Peninsula, walking on our beach and gazing, when it is clear, at the mountains from our front window. Our winters are very mild and we spend most of our



**FAMED CONDUCTOR—HENRY HADLEY** (1871-1937) conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, directed members of the Philharmonic in accompanying some Gennett records made by Theo Karle.

time outside. There always seems to be plenty of yard work, etc., to keep me occupied. Mrs. K. works with me as she has done these many years we have been married. We were married when we were almost children and I am most grateful. Well, I won't bore you with details, but it has been a great life."

"Please overlook the mistakes in typing. As I told you in a former note, I am the world's worst. With kindest regards, Theo K."

There, apparently, our correspondence ended, probably through my fault, for I have always more letters on hand than, with my limited strength, I can take care of. But I did intend to write a HOBBIES article "one of these days" about Theo Karle.

At last I have done so. I am grieved to reflect that my genial, distinguished friend did not live to read this tribute to an accomplished artist and a fine man.

#### THEO KARLE RECORDINGS

(Both sides by Karle unless otherwise noted)

##### VICTOR RECORDS (1916-17)

- 18021 I Know of Two Bright Eyes.  
Reverse: 'Tis the Day.
- 18061 Cavalleria Rusticana—Siciliana.  
Reverse: Her Heart.

##### BRUNSWICK RECORDS

(1921 Catalog)

- 5005 Dear Little Shamrock. Reverse: Where the River Shannon Flows (with male trio.) (Both under the name of John Congdon.)
- 13001 I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby. Reverse: Little Mother of Mine.
- 13002 Christ in Flanders. Reverse: The Lord is My Light.
- 13006 Macushla. Reverse: Mavis.
- 13007 Bells of St. Mary's. Reverse: Evening Song.
- 13010 My Wild Irish Rose. Reverse: That Tumble Down Shack in Athlone.
- 13011 From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water. Reverse: Venetian Song.
- 13013 Bring Back the Golden Days. Reverse: When You and I Were Young, Maggie.

(Continued on page 118)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 53)

### BRUNSWICK (1922 Catalog Additions)

- 35001 Ah! Moon of My Delight. Reverse: When My Ships Come Sailing Home.  
13016 Kathleen Mavourneen. Reverse: Killarney.  
13018 Come Back to Erin. Reverse: Mother Machree.  
13021 I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen (with Crescent Male Trio). Reverse: Lass O' Killeen.  
13024 A Dream. Reverse: Until.  
13025 Hard Trials. Reverse: Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen.  
13026 Minstrel Boy. Reverse: When Irish Eyes Are Smiling (with Crescent Male Trio).  
13028 Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming (with Criterion Male Trio). Reverse: I Hear a Thrush At Eve.  
13029 Love's Garden of Roses. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me.  
13030 Sing! Sing! Birds on the Wing. Reverse: 'Tis an Irish Girl I Love (with male trio).

### MUSIC ARTS SINGERS

(1923 catalog addition)  
(Marie Tiffany, Elizabeth Lennox, Theo Karle, and Richard Bonelli)

- 13051 Martha—Good Night Quartet. Reverse: The Mikado—Madrigal.  
**BRUNSWICK (1923 Catalog Additions)**  
5082 Because. Reverse: The Great Awakening.  
5123 In the Moonlight. Reverse: Mother, My Dear.  
5127 It Is Only a Tiny Garden. Reverse: Roses in June.  
5134 If You Would Love Me. Reverse: Just That One Hour.  
13031 I'll Forget You. Reverse: The World is Waiting for the Sunrise.  
13033 Lassie O' Mine. Reverse: Little Town in the Old County Down.  
13050 Nonever ('Tis Not True). Reverse: Within the Garden of My Heart.  
13052 Bonnie Wee Thing. Reverse: Good Night, Little Girl, Good Night.  
13054 Oft in the Stilly Night. Reverse: The Snowy Breasted Pearl.  
13055 Elijah—If With All Your Hearts. Reverse: Elijah—Then Shall the Righteous Shine Forth.  
35002 Requiem Mass in C Minor—Ingesimo. Reverse: Stabat Mater—Cujas Anlmam. (Both in Latin.)

### BRUNSWICK (1924 Catalog Additions)

- (NOTE.—This 1924 list consists mostly of previously issued Karle records that had been renumbered, apparently to bring all in the 10-inch size within the \$1.25 price range. Some had been \$1.00.)  
13058 Heaven at the End of the Road. Reverse: A Little Bit of Heaven.  
13060 I'll Sing Three Songs of Araby. Reverse: Little Mother of Mine.  
13061 Christ in Flanders. Reverse: The Lord Is My Light.  
13062 Macushla. Reverse: Mavis.  
13063 Bells of St. Mary's. Reverse: Evening Song.  
13064 My Wild Irish Rose. Reverse: That Tumble Down Shack In Athlone.  
13065 From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water. Reverse: Venetian Song.  
13066 Bring Back the Golden Days. Reverse: When You and I Were Young, Maggie.  
13067 Kathleen Mavourneen. Reverse: Killarney.  
13068 Come Back to Erin. Reverse: Mother Machree.  
13069 I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen. Reverse: Lass O' Killeen.  
13070 A Dream. Reverse: Until.  
13071 Hard Trials. Reverse: Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen.  
13072 Minstrel Boy. Reverse: When Irish Eyes Are Smiling.  
13073 Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming. Reverse: I Hear A Thrush at Eve.

- 13074 Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me. Reverse: Love's Garden of Roses.  
13075 Sing! Sing! Birds on the Wing. Reverse: 'Tis an Irish Girl I Love.  
13076 I'll Forget You. Reverse: The World is Waiting for the Sunrise.  
13077 Lassie O' Mine. Reverse: Little Town in the Old County Down.  
13078 Because. Reverse: The Great Awakening.  
13089 If You Would Love Me. Reverse: Just That One Hour.  
13095 All Through the Night (with Male Quartet). Reverse: At Dawning.  
13096 Fallen Leaf. Reverse: Smile Through Your Tears.  
35003 Onaway! Awake, Beloved! Reverse: Spirit Flower.

### BRUNSWICK (1927 Catalog Additions)

- 13089 Alice, Where Art Thou? Reverse: O That We Two Were Maying. (Both duets with Marie Tiffany, soprano.)  
13099 I Need Thee Every Hour (with Marie Tiffany). Reverse: Where Is My Boy Tonight? (Tiffany and Chorus.)  
13100 Kingdom Within Your Eyes. Reverse: Some Time You'll Remember.  
13102 Deen in My Heart. Reverse: Somewhere in the World.  
**GEMNETT (About 1925)**  
2624 Meistersingers—Prize Song. Reverse: Samson et Dalila—My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice (Nevada Van Der Veer).  
2800 Elijah—If With All Your Hearts. Reverse: Hansel et Gretel—Sleep Music (Members of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra).  
2901 Sing Not, O Fair Circassian Maid. Reverse: The Mikado—The Sun Whose Rays Are All Ablaze (Inez Barbour).

### PICTURE CAPTIONS REVERSED In June Ada Jones Article

Through a mechanical mix-up, cut lines of two photos in the June article, "Ada Jones Sings in Marion, Virginia," were reversed.

The picture on page 38 is identified as showing the singer in her stage costume, but should have said it was a photo taken in 1899.

On page 110 Miss Jones appears in stage attire, but the picture is termed one made in 1899. —Jim Walsh

### THE END

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

speaker was enclosed in a cabinet, and it was then that the term "Victrola" came into use.

Barraud's inspiration survived. Added, however, was the slogan, "Will There Be a Victrola in Your Home This Christmas?"

The artist lived out his last years at Hamilton Gardens, St. John's Wood N.W. His diversion, besides billiards, was walking. He was a familiar sight on the road: The head bent forward, massive eyebrows and granite beard, that seemed over-sized for his frail body.

He remained a bachelor, with a long-standing attachment to an invalid, Dorothy Dalziel, who came from a family of engravers. She survived him by several years.

Francis Barraud died on August 29, 1924, aged 68, at the Dalziel house which he had visited daily. The Gramophone Company sent a floral cushion patterned after his master-piece to Hampstead Cemetery, London, where he was buried. In his will Barraud left the gross value of 701 pounds.

What became of Barraud's original work? It bore, under the over-painting of the glistening gramophone, a phantom phonograph and the faint outlines of the old wax cylinder. Brush marks had obliterated almost completely the Edison name.

The original hung in a recess over the fireplace of the oak-paneled room in the head office at Hayes. An alarm system controlled by photo-electric cells protected it. In case of fire it had priority in being saved.

The Gramophone Company honored the site of "Nipper's" grave with a plaque in 1949.

When R.C.A.-Victor set July 1st, 1952 as the inauguration day for releasing long-playing records in the United States, "His Master's Voice," insured at \$15,000, was brought from England by J. David Bicknell in a cultural exchange.

Mr. Bicknell described to reporters how a group of Gramophone men paid a pilgrimage to Kingston-on-Thames to adorn the grave of "Nipper" with a new bronze plaque. To their mingled pride and dismay they discovered that a bank had been erected on the site where "Nip" had been interred.

The bank director paled when informed of the desecration. He agreed that the plaque be affixed on the façade of the edifice. And there it remains on display to this day.

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Phone: (713) 336-6893 after 5 p.m.

1. Lady's sm open face 14K Waltham watch w. fleur de lis design on back. Design is outlined w. rose diamonds. \$125.
2. Victoria glass novelty, amber fire cut vase-line, \$25.
3. Flower pot design p.g. pitcher, \$45.
4. Cut glass juice glass. Brilliant period, \$25.
5. Old g.f. band bracelet. Engraved, circa early 1900's, \$35.
6. Old toy iron stove w. iron utensils, and implements, complete \$75.
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13. Child's small iron w. trivet, complete \$12.50.
14. Gold stickpin w. intaglio in amethyst, \$35.
15. Toy soldiers, prior to World War II: A. rifleman, \$7.50; B. Pair stretcher bearers w. stretcher, \$15.
16. 35-year old 10K opal ring, oval stone, surrounded by spirals(?) \$75. sc

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Phone: (904) 824-2341

Brown agate snuff bottle, one side rust yellow skin, carved in long life symbols pine tree, deer, crane, circa 1821-1850, \$245.  
Hain crystal snuff bottle dragons one side gold-threads of reptile, circa 1880-1920, \$180.  
Vignette Geo. III Birmingham 1817 Joseph Willmore rectangular with bright cut herringbone motif, grill depicting a vase with foliage have others, write.  
Dozen fruit spoons Vermeil bowls Alvin's Lilly circa 1900 beautiful cond. Set \$98.

Stamp please. sc

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### JOSEPH A. PHILLIPS

PART I

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Man Without A Following

Many singers achieved successful careers as pioneer recording artists without developing an individual personal following.

In the acoustic era thousands of "fans" would go to their dealers each month and ask for the latest record by, say, Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Ada Jones, Collins and Harlan, Harry Lauder, Alma Gluck, John McCormack or Enrico Caruso. These fans would buy the record, probably without bothering to listen. There was more interest in the singer than the song.

Later, innumerable buyers, mostly romantically inclined young women, would ask for and take "Gene Austin's new one." Or they chose Jack Smith's, Art Gillham's, Bing Crosby's, or Frank Sinatra's. And dance band fanciers wanted almost anything by Paul Whiteman, Ted Lewis, Guy Lombardo, and many others.

I doubt, however, that anybody ever approached the sales counter and said, "Let me have Joseph Phillips' new record, please."

The reason? Well, Joe Phillips was a capable, even an accomplished baritone, with a pleasing voice. But many other equally well-trained singers had voice quality similar to his, and there was nothing sufficiently outstanding about his style to win him record buyers' fanatical devotion.

Besides, listeners who went "hog-wild" about an artist were more likely to choose tenors than the middle-of-the-road baritones.

Nevertheless, most of Phillips' Edison records were good sellers, according to Diamond Disc and Blue Amberol standards, and his Okeh and other needle-cuts did reasonably well. He had a few mannerisms in singing some types of "popular" music that jar upon me, but, even so, I think most hearers would agree that he was a good, if not a great, baritone.

#### II. Recording Debut

Joseph Phillips had had considerable stage experience and was in his early thirties when he made what appears to have been his first record. It was a single-faced Victor, No. 5806, of a popular ballad, "All That I Ask is Love." It was announced in the January, 1911, Victor supplement. The write-up, accompanied by a small photo of the singer, said:

"This new Selden-Ingraham song is one

of the best of the year and bids fair to equal the success of Mr. Ingraham's 'Roses Bring Dreams of You' and 'You are the Ideal of My Dreams.' The number has been selected as a means of introducing a baritone who is new to Victor audiences. Mr. Phillips is likely to create a favorable impression with his agreeable voice, his manly delivery and good diction."

That, we must agree, although favorable, is not a "rave notice." A month later, Phillips' second — and last — Victor record appeared, No. 16702. The A side contained "The Moonlight, the Rose and You," by Frank C. Stanley, who had died a little more than a month earlier, and Henry Burr.

On the B side Phillips was heard in "Afar From Thee, My Love," by Linne, whoever he was. The description was brief:

"... Mr. Phillips presents his second

selection, which will deepen the impression already made by his fine rendition of 'All That I Ask is Love.'"

Again, the praise was restrained. That was the last time Joseph Phillips' name appeared in a Victor supplement.

#### III. Beginning of His Edison Career

The baritone's next bid for the favor of record buyers was more successful. He began in the February, 1912, Edison cylinder record supplement, an association with the great inventor's Company that extended through 1925, with the exception of a puzzling three-year gap from September, 1916, to December, 1919, when nothing by him was issued.

On wax Amberol four-minute record No. 907 Phillips sang, with the assistance of a mixed chorus, "Come

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST  
November 8, 1921

From actual photograph

CHAMBERS  
IN  
SURROGATE'S COURT  
BRONXVILLE, N. Y.  
June 2nd 1921

Mr. Thomas A. Edison,  
Orange, New Jersey.  
Dear Mr. Edison:

I want to tell you how highly impressed I was by the realism which the New Edison showed in the comparison test which was given before the Barville Hall of the American Legion.

The quality, tone, and homogeneity of Miss Clark's recorded voice were the same as the quality, tone and homogeneity of Miss Clark's living voice. With my eyes shut, I could not tell one from the other. The same is also true when Mr. Young played in comparison with a Re-Creation of his own piano-playing, — and when Mr. Phillips sang in comparison with the Re-Creation of his own voice.

Very truly yours,  
Simp. Albert Wingate

General Wingate

GENERAL WINGATE commended the New Edison during the Great War. He is Chairman of the Metropolitan Picture Committee of the American Legion. At Judge Wingate, he is now Surrogate of Brooklyn.

The test which General Wingate heard was made May 25th, 1921, in the 2nd Field Artillery Armory, Brooklyn—before Judge Fort St. 127, American Legion, and 1000 people. The photograph shows part of the audience at the moment when Miss Helen Clark and Mr. Joseph Phillips were singing a duet in comparison with the Re-Creation of their duet by the New Edison.

**The NEW EDISON**

DIRECT COMPARISON. A November, 1921, Saturday Evening Post advertisement showing HELEN CLARK and JOSEPH PHILLIPS giving a New Edison tone test.





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Major Collection**

The estate of the late Prospect Mastrangelo, (M. J. Prospect), announces the sale of the Prospect collection. This will be implemented through the issuance of a series of periodic auction lists. In this way the records can be offered to the greatest number of collectors and provide the fairest opportunity for purchase internationally.

The collection consists of over 30,000 discs and cylinders. Among these number international rarities; records from before the turn of the century and into the electrical era. Included are major artists on such labels as Berliner, G & T, Zonophone, Fonotipia, Odeon, Pathe, etc. and also important discs in the categories of Personality, Instrumental, Music Hall and Jazz.

All collectors interested in receiving lists are invited to send their names and addresses to the following:

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c/o Prospect  
467 Second Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

oml

to the Ball" from "The Quaker Girl." The supplement said:

"Mr. Phillips, a baritone who makes his debut on Edison records this month, spent much time to perfect himself in the rendition of this song as it is given in the show, and a superior record is the natural result. . . ."

A brief biographical sketch was printed in the back of the supplement:

"Mr. Phillips is a native of Buffalo, N.Y., and studied singing under Thomas Karl, Gustarvars Hall, Francis Drake and Pasquale (sic) Amato of the Metropolitan Opera House.

"At various times in the past few years he has appeared with De Wolf Hopper in 'Happyland,' with James T. Powers in 'Havana,' and at one time sang 'In the Shade of the Palm.' in Florodora, where he took the part of Lord Abercoed. At present he is soloist in St. Michael's Episcopal Church, New York. His voice is of true tone and robust quality, and adapts itself admirably well to the making of records."

The statement that Phillips studied singing with Pasquale Amato perplexes me, for, as we shall see, Amato was the younger man of the two. Reference books say the great Italian baritone made his Metropolitan Opera debut November 20, 1908, when he was 30, and he presumably never before had been in this country.

Phillips was, by the end of 1908, a supposedly mature singer of 32. It seems rather unusual that Amato,



**Phillips**

**BEGINNING OF RECORDING CAREER.**

This photo of JOSEPH PHILLIPS, in his early thirties, has been enlarged from a small photo in the Victor record supplement for January, 1911.

who was enjoying a successful career at the Metropolitan, would have taken time to give instruction to a lesser known artist in a different sphere of music. There appears no doubt, however, that Phillips, at some time prior to 1912, did receive lessons from him.

As to Phillips' singing in "Florodora," that long-lived musical comedy first was produced in this country in 1900. I do not imagine Phillips was a member of the original cast, but he probably sang the baritone role in one of the touring companies that presented the Leslie Stuart extravaganza in the early 1900's.

Also, in the February, 1912, supplement, on record No. 901, Phillips sang a number that I dislike and can't bear to play, "The Chase." This is a hunting song whose narrator expresses bloodthirsty pleasure at the prospect of slaying a noble stag and iterates and reiterates, "He shall die!" One playing of that song was enough for my animal-loving self.

There was then a jump to May, 1912, when, on cylinder 988, Phillips sang the well-remembered "Mary Was My Mother's Name," and the charming rural ballad, "When I Was Twenty-One and You Were Sweet 16." In this he had the assistance of Elizabeth Spencer, John Bieling, Billy Murray, Steve Porter, and William F. Hooley.

The record was so successful it was issued in July in two-minute form as a solo without the chorus. One oddity about "When I Was 21" is that as long as the Victor version by Harry Macdonough and the American Quartet stayed in the catalog, the name of the composer was given as Harry

(Continued on page 126)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Von Tilzer. The melody however, was really the work of Egbert Van Alstyne. Edison credited it to the right man.

### IV. Blue Amberols

Phillips' records continued to appear after Edison introduced the indestructible Blue Amberol cylinder in November, 1912. His first of the new "unbreakable" type was 1575, "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," which, in the three or four years since it was published, had become a popular song classic.

Here we have another puzzle. There was already an Amberol of the song by the tenor, Frederic H. Potter, and male chorus. Why was it not reissued on the Blue Amberol instead of having a new version made by Phillips and a "chorus?" The chorus consisted of a woman's voice, presumably Helen Clark's.

This was probably Phillips' best selling cylinder. The Edison Phonograph Monthly for July, 1915, had an interesting story of the "watery grave" experience of one copy:

"Theodore O'Hara, a Nova Scotia lobster-trapper, sends us the following, through Babson Bros., of Winnipeg, Canada:

"I wish to tell you about the wonderful toughness of the Edison Blue Amberol record, and the experience I have had with one. I am a lighthouse keeper and do some lobster fishing. About the 15th of November last a ship sank three miles from (the) lighthouse station. This ship had an Edison phonograph aboard, and on the 20th of April, after a heavy storm, while hauling my lobster traps, I was surprised to find a Blue Amberol record in one of my traps. It had been in the water five months, beating and rolling over the rocky bottom of the Atlantic during the winter storms.

"I brought it home and put it on the Edison cylinder machine, and was surprised to hear it bring out distinctly the words of 'Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet.'

"I consider this wonderful. I could not help telling you about it. Of course, it is scratched up a lot, but one can understand the words and music perfectly."

Probably Phillips never made a record that had a more unusual experience than this sea-tossed cylinder.

Early in 1920 Edison issued a Diamond Disc, No. 50606, of "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," sung as a duet by Phillips and the late Helen Clark and combined with "Daisies Won't Tell," by the same artists. Both sides had been recorded in 1915.

My question is: Why hold two numbers of permanent, steady appeal for five years before placing them on sale? But such actions were characteristic of Edison's unique selling tactics. This most likely was Phillips' best selling Edison disc.

There is no need of reviewing the baritone's Blue Amberol records in detail. They were typical, popular song solos adapted to his voice.

Some, however, such as "Gray Bon-



Helen Clark



Joseph Phillips

**DUET TEAM.** These pictures of HELEN CLARK and JOSEPH PHILLIPS are reproduced from the Edison record supplement of June, 1925, the last in which PHILLIPS' name appeared. He was then 48.

net," "Soldiers of the King," "Tip Top Tipperary Mary" (in which Phillips is completely overshadowed by Billy Murray in the vocal choruses), "Wake Up, America!" "There's a Quaker Down in Quaker Town," and "Sweet Cider Time, When You Were Mine," were better than ordinary sellers.

In 1914 Phillips' first duets with Miss Clark appeared—at least the first with credit to both artists. They continued to work together, both on records and on the concert stage, for the next 11 years. They were among the most popular of Edison "tone test" performers.

Miss Clark wrote me a few years before her death that she had known Joe Phillips a long time. She said they first met when she was a little girl and he was a grown man—at a guess, when she was about 12 and he was around 24 or 25.

The contralto added that there was an amusing story connected with their initial meeting which she would like to tell me if I should visit New York and come to see her. Alas, that meeting never took place!

I had asked her if she knew anything of Joe's latter-day whereabouts. She replied she hadn't the least idea whether he was still alive or where he was. I since have found he had been dead a few years when she wrote.

One of the oddities of the Diamond Disc catalog is that it lists No. 50365, "Sweet Cider Time," as a solo by Phillips, both alphabetically and under his name. Helen Clark's name does not appear on the record label, either, notwithstanding, she sings in the refrains, and if you look it up in the catalog under "Clark, Helen," you will find it described as a duet by her and Phillips!

The record was discontinued in 1924. After that year it no longer occupies its alphabetical place nor is it found under Phillips' name, but

the 1925 catalog still carries it under the name of Helen Clark.

One of Phillips' Blue Amberol solos, 23395, "Nothing at All," was made in 1915, primarily for sale in the British Isles.

A couple of interesting statements were made in 1922 cylinder supplements. In July, Blue Amberol No. 4551, "Goodbye, Dear Old Bachelor Days," was issued. This had been a rather popular song when Phillips and a chorus recorded it in 1916, but its vogue had faded when the record finally was made available. Anyway, the supplement remarked:

"We haven't had many solo numbers by Joseph Phillips, strange to say, for he is a remarkable (sic) good baritone. Usually he is heard in combination with Helen Clark in those splendid duets which have endeared both artists to all Edison owners. This, however, will be equally acceptable, we predict."

In December, Phillips' offering was "That Old-Fashioned Mother of Mine," a mawkishly sentimental ballad sung to Robert Gayder's piano accompaniment and dubbed from a Diamond Disc. The supplement said:

"This is the first time that popular Joseph Phillips has been heard in this type of song. He is known primarily for his ability to put over popular and musical comedy songs. Your opinion of Phillips' artistry will be enhanced when you hear him in this favorite concert song."

### V. Diamond Discs

To a considerable extent, the titles of Joe Phillips' Edison Diamond Discs and Blue Amberols overlapped. Some of the discs, however, were not issued on cylinders, and a number of the cylinders were not available on discs.

All Phillips' cylinders, made after the disastrous Edison factory fire of December, 1914, of course, were copied from discs, because Edison gave up separate cylinder recording after the holocaust.

The Buffalo baritone's first Edison disc was issued late in 1914. It combined the popular British marching



song, "Soldiers of the King," with the reigning hit of that year, "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," sung by another baritone, Albert Farrington, an Englishman. A second Phillips song with a war-time flavor, "Tip-Top Tipperary Mary," was issued in the spring of 1915.

That year also brought one of his most popular records, "My Lady of the Telephone," in which he had the assistance of an all-star chorus of Helen Clark, John Young, Harvey Hindermeyer, Steve Porter and Donald Chalmers. The popularity of the record, however, probably was chiefly due to the tuneful number on its other side, "Goodbye, Girls, I'm Through," sung by Owen J. McCormack and a chorus.

The McCormack side was used until 1921, when the supply of moulds became exhausted, and Phillips was called on to remake it. His is probably the best recorded version of the song. It is certainly far better than the dull, heavy-sounding Victor by "Raymond Dixon" (Lambert Murphy). This version just goes to show that operatic and concert singers seldom know how to sing the lighter types of popular music.

With Miss Clark, Phillips recorded one of the first songs protesting World War I, "Don't Take My Darling Boy Away." In their earlier period, however, as a duet team, he and she were used largely to sing hit tunes from current musical comedies. One of these, "Teenie, Eenie, Weenie," was a number they liked to use in their tone tests. I have read a description somewhere of how Phillips pantomimed a kiss to his contralto partner as they sang it on the stage.

The pair essayed a good many "conversational duets" of the types in which Ada Jones and Billy Murray were unequalled. They never were able to master the down-to-earth, colloquial touch achieved by Ada and Billy, who had never had the serious musical training of Clark and Phillips, but knew exactly how to sound like an ordinary middle class, or sometimes, "tough" couple.

Helen and Joe usually were stilted and unnatural in this sort of song. Billy Murray recalled to me that he never could tone down Miss Clark's tendency to be over-dramatic in singing popular music. He said that the lady, whom he called "Clarkie," was extremely tense while recording and that as they sang he would pat her back in an effort to calm her down. "But she was always too emotional for my sort of song. Her opera training got in the way," Billy said.

He told me, too, that he had trouble with Gladys Rice's tendency to be too dramatic, but she improved considerably, from his point of view, as they became more accustomed to working together. Ada Jones and Aileen Stanley, on the other hand, always could sound colloquial and of the earth, earthy.

One charming Clark and Phillips duet in which they do sound considerably like ordinary people and even laugh naturally is "A Little Love, A

Little Kiss, Would Go A Long, Long Way." This is not the familiar ballad the refrain of which begins "just a little love, a little kiss," but a different song only Edison seems to have recorded.

It begins with a flirtation between the singers. In the second verse they have been married for many years, and Phillips calls the roll of their children: "Willie, John and Ray, Mabel, Grace and May." Then he adds: "You can blame them all on me!" at which they laugh.

Their colloquial work is very good, too, in "How Sorry You'll Be," one of their tone test numbers. Mrs. Charles M. Loftis, Sr., of South Boston, Va., told me of hearing them sing this song in comparison with their Edison recording, and said: "They were just alike. You couldn't tell any difference."

A frequently affected, stilted sound was, I think, Phillips' greatest shortcoming as a popular recording artist. His spoken Edison record on which he tells the story of Little Red Riding Hood for children, is almost unbearably, unpleasantly artificial and mannered. He seems to be ill at ease and "talking down" to the youngsters all the way through like a "bachelor uncle."

Phillips had an excellent voice and sound musical training. It was hard for him, however, to strike the right style in singing serio-comic popular music.

I already have mentioned a period of three years during which Phillips did no Edison recordings, and I find his absence puzzling. For a time I thought perhaps he was in military service, but he was 41 when the first World War began, so that seemed unlikely.

He had not given up recording for he did considerable work during 1917 under his own name and the assumed name of "Justice Lewis" for *Pathe*. He also was singing for Rex.

When the Rex Company in late 1917 or early 1918 went out of business and his old friend, Fred Hager, changed from it to become recording manager for the new General Phonograph Company, which made Okeh records, Phillips also began singing for Okeh.

Perhaps he signed an exclusive Okeh contract that did not expire until late in 1919, and then he returned to Edison. But that is only speculation.

Phillips' return to Edison appears to have been with an understanding that he and Miss Clark would tour the country giving highly paid comparisons of their voices with the New Edison. It, as Edison advertising emphasized, was "the only phonograph able to sustain the test of direct comparison with the living artist."

All others gave what Edison called "only approximate reproductions—mere mechanical mimicry." Beginning toward the end of 1919 or early in 1920, they made frequent personal appearances, singing with the Official Laboratory Model Edison.

I do not mean to review Phillips'

Edison discs in minute detail, but, looking down the list, I observe some interesting things. One is record No. 51000, a recreation of which probably no collector owns a copy.

This Diamond Disc never appeared in a catalog. It was scheduled for sale and assigned a number, but, like several others, was never issued—possibly because of flaws detected at the last minute. One side was "I Know Why," by Clark and Phillips; and the other, "Just Like the Rose You Gave," by Elizabeth Spencer and Emory B. Randolph.

Both probably were recorded several years before the decision to issue them was made, then withdrawn, in 1922. Randolph had done no singing for Edison since 1917.

Perhaps it would be interesting to devote a few lines to other Edison Diamond Discs that were given numbers but which no one ever had a chance to buy. They were: 51025, "Beautiful May," and "Namyslowski's Dance," by the Warsaw Polish Orchestra; 51185, "Mighty Lak' a Rose," and "Last Rose of Summer," piano solos by Ray Perkins.

The Discs also included 51675, "Show Me the Way to Go Home," "Who?" and "D'ye Love Me?" also by Perkins; 51932, "A Tree in the Park," and "Sweeter Than You," Ray Nichols' Four Towers Orchestra; 52265, "Flower Song" from "Carmen," and "On With the Play," from "Pagliacci," Charles Hart, tenor; and 52360, Dance of the Hours—Gioconda, parts 1 and 2, American Concert Orchestra.

In 1924 Edison introduced a novel type of record—one on which a dance orchestra first played a number in fox trot or waltz time, and a singer, or singers, followed by a rendering of the same thing, also in dance tempo. Phillips, as a soloist, took part in a number of these. In others he was joined by Miss Clark.

They sing a vocal refrain in No. 51323, "Cuddle Me Up," but are not given label credit. In No. 51499, "My Mother's Humming Lullaby," they do not sing but hum harmoniously and are given credit. The label says, "humming by Helen Clark and Joseph Phillips." This is the only record I can recall of any brand that gives artists label credit for humming.

The pair's last record together, and Phillips' final appearance in the Edison catalog, was 51540, "Moonlight and Roses," issued in June, 1925, as a fox trot by Polla's Clover Gardens Orchestra, followed by a Clark-Phillips duet. By this time the Edison record business had declined so drastically that many formerly favorite artists were being let go, and Phillips was one of them.

Besides making the Diamond Discs I have mentioned, Phillips also sang in the chorus of many records and took part in ensemble recordings by the Metropolitan Mixed Chorus and the New York Light Opera Company. He sang "Just as the Sun Went Down" in "Songs of Other Days," No. 80344.

An interesting record in which the

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Hall's Excelsior mech. bank, head missing  
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6½" l., 5¼" h., beautiful patina not sgd.,  
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Strawberry hobstars w. beaut. vesicas cut,  
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Frosted lion (Head) patt. butter dish, \$34.  
Gothic patt. creamer, \$48.  
Daisy & Button patt. 8x11" tray in blue, \$30.  
Vict. hi-boot bouquet holder (Lee's Victorian  
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9" plate, \$20. 7½" plate \$15. c/s, rim  
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baritone took part was "Naughty  
Marietta Airs," recorded by the New  
York Light Opera Company on Feb-  
ruary 14, 1924. Phillips was one of  
the soloists on side one. The artists  
seem to have been paid according to  
the length of the number they sang.  
Billy Jones received \$50; Gladys Rice,  
\$40; Phillips, Amy Ellerman and  
Esther Nelson, \$30 each; and the four  
members of the Criterion Quartet—  
John Young, Frank Mellor, George W.  
Reardon, and Donald Chalmers, \$25  
each.

Ernest Hare sang on side two, but  
his payment was not recorded. Eliza-  
beth Spencer and Charles Hart got  
\$30 each; Helen Clark, \$25; Ellerman  
and Nelson, \$20; and the Quartet,  
\$25 each.

TO BE CONTINUED)

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Marcel Franck, Made in France, plus Pat.  
numbers. Ea., \$10.  
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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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### JOSEPH A. PHILLIPS

#### PART II

By JIM WALSH

#### VI. Other Records

Last month I discussed Joseph Phillips' Victor and Edison records. His work for other companies may be disposed of more briefly.

I lack Rex catalogs, but imagine he made more Rex records than the one I have listed. I learned of it from David Kemp of Shinglehouse, Pa. When Rex "folded," Phillips began recording for Okeh. Sometimes he used his own name, and sometimes he called himself Franklyn Kent.

I have one of his Okeh records, with the Kent name, issued under the Rishell label. He was one of four recording artists I can think of who used the first name of Franklyn.

The others were Franklyn Wallace, a tenor who made Edison cylinders that were issued from June, 1902, to February, 1904, and who was a music publisher in Newark, N.J.; Franklyn Baur, another tenor, of the 1920's, and Franklyn Ferris, a pipe organ player of the same period.

You will observe that during the time he was making Pathe records, most of them as "Justice Lewis," Phillips did not sing duets with Miss Clark. She had become an exclusive

Edison artist in 1914 and did not resume free-lancing until 1918.

Phillips' Okeh records in 1918-19 were the hill-and-dale type played with a steel needle. In 1920, however, the Company began issuing the better selling, but technically inferior, lateral cuts. About half of these were duets with Miss Clark. In turning through old Okeh catalogs in search of Phillips records, I was surprised to find the number of other artists with whom he sang.

One was an obscure tenor, Carroll Shannon, probably was some well-known singer in disguise; another, Marion Evelyn Cox, contralto, was best known for her Edison's; and another artist was the mysterious Virginia Burt, who sounds like a soprano on some records and a contralto on others.

I suspect this Miss Burt that sang with Phillips was Helen Clark, who also used the name of Ruth Lenox. On the other hand, Elliott Shaw, who did a duet or two with Virginia Burt, says he has a vague recollection of her being a fat woman, who was married to a Hawaiian guitar player.

That certainly wouldn't be Helen Clark. The Burt name may have been used for more than one singer.

And, just as Phillips recorded "Little Red Riding Hood" for Edison, he also made a couple of children's records which I haven't heard, for Okeh.

#### VII. Later Years

After his last Edison record was issued, Joseph Phillips appeared to drop completely from sight, and other artists whom I asked had no idea what had become of him. I remember Billy Murray, in turning through a book of Edison artists' portraits, came to one of Phillips (which is shown with this article thanks to Quentin Riggs' marvelous copying camera), and said: "Here's a fellow I haven't seen in a long time—Joe Phillips!" Last month I quoted Helen Clark (Mrs. Evan Cameron). She said she didn't have the least idea where he was or whether he still was living.

For many years I wondered about Phillips and wished I could find out enough about him to write an article, but it seemed hopeless. One thing I did discover when I obtained a copy of Brian Rust's book of Victor master recordings for the years 1925 through 1936 was that the baritone may have taken part in two unissued records made in Camden, N.J., February 2, 1927.

Henry Burr, who was always full of recording ideas, had formed an eight-



**PIONEER TENOR—FRANKLYN WALLACE** who made Edison cylinders from 1902 to 1904. I consider him one of at least four recording artists who used the first name of Franklyn. Joseph Phillips was called Franklyn Kent on Okeh records.

man singing group, the Henry Burr Octet, which made four "takes" of "Swing Along" and "Lass O' Mine," but apparently did not turn out an acceptable one. The eight men were the members of the Peerless Quartet, Burr, Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman, James Stanley, and four others listed as J. E. Phillips, T. C. Muir, W. C. Pitts, and George H. Miller.

Joseph Phillips' middle initial, as we know, was A., but Victor easily could have put down E. in its place. If that Octet member really was the Buffalo baritone, this was probably his first visit to a Victor studio since he began recording in 1910, and, as far as I know, his last to any recording place. It also would have been the only time he took part in electrical recording.

A few months ago it occurred to me that Joe Phillips very well might have decided to return to his "home town" of Buffalo at the end of his recording career, there, perhaps, to sing in church and give voice instruction.

Acting on this "hunch" I wrote to the Buffalo—Erie County Public Library, and received two extremely nice letters from Miss Norma Jean Lamb, librarian in charge of the *Music Department*. She had had a search made of the files of the *Buffalo Courier-Express*, and found two articles concerning him, of which she sent me copies. I had been correct in



**ESTABLISHED ARTIST**—This picture of JOSEPH PHILLIPS is reproduced from a 1920 book of photographs of Edison performers.

my belief that Phillips had returned to Buffalo.

One of the articles was an interesting "feature story" interview with Phillips, written by Isabelle W. Evans and published in the *Courier-Express* for August 11, 1940. This story revealed that the singer had had a more interesting and colorful career than I had thought:

"One of the most enjoyable and interesting personalities in the music world of Buffalo is that of the well known baritone, Joseph Phillips. Mr. Phillips appears frequently in recital and his art is so well known that many take the merit of his career for granted without knowing of the many fascinating experiences he has enjoyed.

"While still a very young man, Joseph Phillips was heard by the great Pasquale Amato at a musicale in New York. Amato was so impressed by the beauty of the young man's voice that he immediately accepted him as a pupil under the most flattering circumstances. After comprehensive study with Mr. Amato, the young vocalist

continued his work in Berlin and Paris with Frank King Clark.

"After having spent several seasons in light opera in New York, Mr. Phillips made one of the most interesting contacts of his career—he was heard and immediately engaged as an artist of the Edison Phonograph Company by no less person than the famous Thomas A. Edison, pioneer in the art of sound recording.

"I never ceased to enjoy the fascination of touring the country and singing to unspoiled but discriminating audiences who were interested in the best in music and who were anxious to judge the merit of the early recordings," Mr. Phillips said. "It was great fun to begin a beautiful number and when the lights were darkened leave the platform and hear the amazed exclamations of the listeners when the brightened lights disclosed a recording providing the conclusion to the number. Of course that was the novelty angle of the program—the audience insisted that at least half of the program should be conducted as formal concerts.

"Mr. Phillips, now a member of the quartet of the Richmond Avenue Methodist Church of Buffalo, formerly was soloist at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in New York.

"Another experience the artist enjoyed several years ago took place in Eastbourne, England. Mr. Phillips happened to be at the Cavendish Hotel, where the royal family of Greece was also stopping. Upon hearing Mr. Phillips rehearsing the princess sent an urgent invitation, asking him to sing for her and the crown prince. After the program, the princess thanked him charmingly with enthusiastic praise for the beauty of his voice.

"Buffalo may well be proud of listing among her musicians a vocalist of the attainments of Joseph Phillips."

When this article appeared, Joe Phillips was 63, so he had continued singing until a pretty advanced age. I observe he had nothing to say of his recording work except that for Edison.

The "dark scene" he described was one in which the artist would begin singing, the lights suddenly were turned off, and the singer left the stage. The new Edison would carry on the music and the audience never detected, until the lights were restored, that it had been listening to a phonograph rather than to the artist himself.

#### VIII. And, Finally

Death came to Joseph Phillips at his home in Buffalo, July 25, 1958. It found him single—apparently he had never married—and living alone. On the following day the *Courier-Express* published an article headed: "J. A. Phillips, Singer, Found Dead in Home." It said:

"Joseph A. Phillips, 81, renowned baritone and musical comedy star, was found dead yesterday afternoon in his home, 110 College St.

"His body was discovered by friends who became concerned when they were unable to contact him by phone. He lived alone.

"Mr. Phillips, a native of Buffalo, was a leading man in a number of New York musicals for nearly 30 years.

"His appearances included the lead in 'Two Little Brides,' 'Happyland,' and 'Wang.' In the last two he starred with famed comedian DeWolf Hopper.

#### Made European Tours

"He made a number of concert tours to Europe and performed before the King and Queen of Greece, who gave him a pair of black pearls.

"He studied in England under King Clark and in New York under Metropolitan Opera star Pasquale Amato.

"He was 20 when he left Buffalo for New York and was immediately signed by Jake and Lee Shubert who booked him for touring musicals.

"Many of the tours brought him back to Buffalo and the old Tack Theater which was owned by the Shuberts.

#### Gave Vocal Lessons

"He left New York and the stage 32 years ago and returned to Buffalo to give private singing lessons which he continued until two weeks before his death.

(Continued on page 126)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)



PHILLIPS' SINGING TEACHER—JOSEPH

PHILLIPS took vocal instruction from Pasquale Amato, the great Italian baritone, although Amato was younger than Phillips.

"Ill health in recent years, however, had forced him to limit his lessons and concert appearances.

"Mr. Phillips was single and the last survivor in his immediate family.

"Funeral services will be held at 8:30 Tuesday morning at the John J. Ray and Sons Funeral Home, 615 Elmwood Ave., and at 9 at Immaculate Conception Church.

"Burial will be in the German-French Cemetery, Pine Hill."

Perhaps you, like me, have observed discrepancies in the newspaper stories. In the earlier he sang for the crown prince and princess of Greece and was thanked with "enthusiastic praise." In the second, it was the King and Queen and he received a pair of black pearls.

Similarly, in the first, he studied in Paris and Berlin with Frank King Clark, but in the second it was England. He could not have been a "very young man" when he studied with Amato, for Amato was 30 when he came to this country in 1908, and Phillips was then almost 32. Also I question that he was a "leading man in a number of New York musicals for nearly 30 years."

At Miss Lamb's suggestion I sent to the Buffalo Department of Vital Statistics for a copy of Mr. Phillips' death certificate. As he died without surviving relatives, I doubted that the document would contain his date of birth.

### VICTOR SINGLE & DOUBLE-FACED (1911)

- 5806 All That I Ask Is Love.  
16702 Afar From Thee, My Love. Reverse: The Moonlight, the Rose and You (Frank C. Stanley & Henry Burr).

### EDISON FOUR-MINUTE AMBEROL CYLINDERS (1912)

- 901 The Chase—Hunting Song.  
907 Come to the Ball—From "The Quaker Girl" (with mixed chorus).  
988 Mary Was My Mother's Name.  
998 When I Was 21 and You Were Sweet 16 (with mixed chorus).

### EDISON TWO-MINUTE STANDARD CYLINDER

- 10564 When I Was 21 and You Were Sweet 16.

### EDISON BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDER SOLOS (1912-1923)

- 1575 Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet (with chorus).  
1613 At the Gate of the Palace of Dreams.  
2461 Soldiers of the King (with chorus).  
2526 My Lady of the Telephone (with chorus).  
2555 Tip-Top Tipperary Mary (with chorus).  
2588 I'm a Millionaire—from "Tonight's the Night" (with chorus).  
2919 Wake Up, America!  
2953 There's a Quaker Down in Quaker Town.  
2962 Sweet Cider Time, When You Were Mine (with Helen Clark in the refrain).  
4551 Goodbye, Dear Old Bachelor Days (with chorus).  
4633 That Old-Fashioned Mother of Mine.  
4652 Smile Through Your Tears.  
4696 Pal of All Pals.  
4729 Sweet Roses.  
23395 Nothing at All.

### EDISON BLUE AMBEROL DUETS WITH HELEN CLARK (1914-1925)

- 2540 Suzi.  
2575 After the Roses Have Faded Away.  
2585 It's Written in the Book of Destiny.  
2622 Don't Take My Darling Boy Away.  
2661 Goodbye, Everybody—from "A Modern Eve".  
2719 Daisies Won't Tell.  
2841 A Little Love, A Little Kiss (Would Go a Long, Long Way).  
2940 So Long, Letty.  
2974 You're a Dangerous Girl.  
3878 What Could Be Sweeter?  
3885 I've Made Up My Mind to Mind a Maid Made Up Like You.  
3960 Linger Longer, Letty.  
3994 How Sorry You'll Be.  
4015 Underneath the Moon.  
4062 That Naughty Waltz.  
4073 Sunshine and Clouds.  
4089 I Know Why.  
4143 I'd Like to Take You Away.  
4273 Playmates.  
4367 The Isle of Love.  
4544 Just Suppose.  
4590 In Our Bungalow.  
4858 I'll Say She Is.

- 5018 Moonlight and Roses (with Polla's Clover Gardens Orchestra).

### EDISON DIAMOND DISC DUETS WITH HELEN CLARK (1914-1925)

- 50247 Don't Take My Darling Boy Away. Reverse: Humoresque Song (Walter Van Brunt).  
50370 You're a Dangerous Girl—from "Robinson Crusoe, Jr." Reverse: Dublin Mary Brown (Irving Kaufman and chorus).  
50390 So Long, Letty. Reverse: On the South Sea Isle (Helen Clark).  
50592 What Could Be Sweeter? Reverse: Everybody's Crazy Over Dixie (Vernon Dalhart).  
50606 Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet. Reverse: Daisies Won't Tell.  
50611 I've Made Up My Mind to Mind a Maid Made Up Like You. Reverse: My Desert Love (Lewis James).  
50646 How Sorry You'll Be. Reverse: Was There Ever a Pal Like You? (Ballard).  
50664 Underneath the Moon. Reverse: Pickaninny Blues (Crescent Trio).  
50680 I'd Like to Take You Away—from "Betty, Be Good." Reverse: Keep the Love Lamp Burning—from "Betty, Be Good" (Gladys Rice).  
50682 That Naughty Waltz. Reverse: So Long, Oo Long! (Clark).

- 50752 Playmates. Reverse: Bright Eyes (Ballard).

- 50903 Isle of Love. Reverse: The Little Good for Nothing's Good for Something, After All (Harmony Four).

- 50948 In Our Bungalow—from "The Rose of China." Reverse: Mountain Maid (Ballard).

- \*51000 I Know Why. Reverse: Just Like the Rose You Gave (Elizabeth Spencer and Emory B. Randolph). (unissued.)

- 51296 Thrill of Love—from "I'll Say She Is." Reverse: Tho' Shadows Fall (Clark and James).

- 51323 Cuddle Me Up—Fox Trot (Kaplan's Melodists with refrain by Clark and Phillips). Reverse: The Raindrop and the Rose—Fox Trot (Kaplan's Melodists).

- 51451 Tomorrow's Another Day—Fox Trot—from "Artists and Models." with Jack Stillman's Orchestra. Reverse: That's My Girl—Fox Trot (Arthur Hall and Stillman's Orchestra).

- 51499 My Mother's Humming Lullaby — Waltz Played by the Top Notchers, with humming by Clark and Phillips). Reverse: Take Me Back to Your Heart—Waltz (The Top Notchers, with singing by Charles Hart).

- 51540 Moonlight and Roses—Fox Trot and Song, with Polla's Clover Gardens Orchestra. Reverse: When You and I Were Seventeen—Waltz (Charles Hart and Polla's orchestra).

- 80213 Teenie, Eenie, Weenie—from "Suzi." Reverse: In My Dreams of You—from "The Crinoline Girl" (Spencer and Van Brunt).

- 80218 After the Roses Have Faded Away. Reverse: When You Wore a Tulip and I Wore a Big Red Rose (Van Brunt and chorus).

- 80219 Who Cares?—from "Papa's Darling." Reverse: When You're Away—from "The Only Girl" (Marie Kaiser).

- 80244 Goodbye, Everybody—from "A Modern Eve." Reverse: Quiet Little Evenings at Home—from "A Modern Eve" (Van Brunt).

- 80248 Mister Love Will Catch You Yet—from "The Lady in Red." Reverse: Where's the Girl for Me?—from "The Lady in Red" (Frederick Wheeler).

- 80279 A Little Love, A Little Kiss (Would Go a Long, Long Way. Reverse: They Didn't Believe Me (Gladys Rice and Van Brunt).

- 80308 Ratchet Cool—from "Katinka." Reverse: I Want All the World to Know—from "Katinka" (Spencer and Van Brunt).

- 80690 Sunshine and Cloud. Reverse: Could I See My Boy Again (Elizabeth Lennox and Chorus).

### EDISON DIAMOND DISC DUET

- WITH ELIZABETH SPENCER (1915)  
80285 The Temptation Waltz—from "The Girl Who Smiles" (with chorus). Reverse: Love's Garden of Roses (Reed Miller).

### EDISON DIAMOND DISC SOLOS (1914-1925)

- 50184 Soldiers of the King (with chorus). Reverse: It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary (Albert Farrington and male chorus).

- 50227 Tip-Top Tipperary Mary (with chorus). Reverse: The Little Ford Rambled Right Along (Billy Murray).

- 50347 Wake Up, America! Reverse: Played By a Military Band (Murray).

- 50356 There's a Quaker Down in Quaker Town. Reverse: Where Did Robinson Crusoe Go With Friday on Saturday Night? (Murray and Chorus).

- 50365 Sweet Cider Time When You Were Mine (Helen Clark in the refrain). Reverse: My Grandfather's Girl (George Wilton Ballard).

- 51051 Pal of All Pals. Reverse: While the Years Roll By (Spencer and James).

- 51329 Little Red Riding Hood. Reverse: Songs of the Birds (James).

- 51366 Won't You Dream of Me?—Vocal waltz with Harry Raderman's



- Dance Orchestra. Reverse: The First is the Last (Atlantic Dance Orchestra).
- 51372 Ev'rything You Do—Fox Trot and song, with Raderman's Orchestra. Reverse: Radio—Fox trot and song (Arthur Hall and Atlantic Dance Orchestra).
- 51433 All Alone—Waltz and song, with Raderman's Orchestra. Reverse: Let Me Call You Sweetheart (Raderman's Orchestra).
- 80214 Goodbye, Girls, I'm Through (with chorus of girls). Reverse: My Lady of the Telephone (with chorus).
- 80229 I'm a Millionaire—from "Tonight's the Night." Reverse: The Same Sort of Girl—from "The Girl From Utah" (Elizabeth Spencer—Walter Van Brunt).
- 80736 Smile Through Your Tears. Reverse: That Old Fashioned Mother of Mine.

**REX RECORD (1917)**

- 5425 Jerusalem. Reverse: The Palms.

**PATHE RECORDS BY****JOSEPH PHILLIPS (1917)**

- 20115 Samoa. Reverse. Hawaiian Sunshine (Sam Ash).
- 20138 Inari—Japanese Song. Reverse: The Trail to Sunset Valley (Albert Campbell and Henry Burr).

**PATHE RECORDS BY****"JUSTICE LEWIS" (1916-17)**

- 20007 You're a Doggone Dangerous Girl. Reverse: Soldier Boy (Burr).
- 20010 Meet Me in Havana, Anna. Reverse: Never Let the Same Bee Sting You Twice (Arthur Collins).
- 20100 My Skating Girl. Reverse: There's a Little Bit of Bad in Every Good Little Girl.
- 20156 I've Got the Sweetest Girl in Maryland. Reverse: Where the Black-Pyed Susans Grow.
- 20204 My Sweet Hawaiian Rose. Reverse: Hawaii, I'm Lonesome for you. Both accompanied by Helen Louise and Frank Ferrara's Waikiki Orchestra.
- 20205 Somewhere in Ireland. Reverse: The World Began When I Met You (Gordon MacHughes).
- 20221 From Me to Mandy Lee. Reverse: The Ragtime Volunteers Are Off to War (Leonard T. Chick).
- 29178 They Can All Hit the Trail With Holiday. Reverse: You'll Always Be the Same Sweet Baby.

**HILL-AND-DALE OKEH RECORDS****BY JOSEPH PHILLIPS (1918-19)**

- 1009 Keep The Home Fires Burning. Reverse: There's A Long, Long Trail (Harry McCluskey).
- 1019 The Holy City. Reverse: Attila—Praise Ye (Croxtan Trio).
- 1020 Crucifix (Duet with Charles Hart). Reverse: O Morning Land (John Meyer and Irving Gillette).
- 1047 Asthore. Reverse: O Promise Me (Marie Morrissey).
- 1086 Smiles (Clark and Phillips as "Ruth Lennox" and "Franklyn Kent"). Reverse: Since I Met Wonderful You (Ash).
- 1123 Have a Smile For Everyone You Meet (as "Franklyn Kent"). Reverse: Sometime (Ash).
- 1154 The Americans Come (as "Joe Phillips"). Reverse: The Statue of Liberty is Smiling (Sterling Trio).

**LATERAL CUT OKEH RECORDS (1920-23)**

- 4008 For All Eternity. Reverse: Sweet and Low (Shannon Four).
- 4011 Forgotten. Reverse: Old Black Joe (Shannon Four).
- 4013 In Flanders Fields. Reverse: Goodbye (Lewis James).
- 4053 I Am Climbing Mountains (duet with Carroll Shannon). Reverse: Let the Rest of the World Go By (Campbell and Burr).
- 4067 When Two Hearts Discover That They're One (duet with Marion Evelyn Cox). Reverse: Pickaninny Blues (Crescent Trio).

(Continued on page 129)

## GEMS and MINERALS

Conducted by H. DOUGLAS BROWN

### CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF 1872 MINING LAWS

By H. DOUGLAS BROWN

In June, 1872, the United States Congress passed a mining law which enabled this nation to become the richest and the most advanced in technology on this earth.

The reason this law produced such fantastic results was that it offered true incentives to the American individual with strength and initiative. These incentives were simple and direct.

The potential mineral developer, call him miner or prospector, as you will, was invited by the 1872 mining act to "go thou into the wilderness and search for minerals and if you find them you may locate a claim embracing them, and mine, and market them."

The act continued by advising there was no limit to the number of claims that might be filed, but that the locator was required to do \$100 worth of work each year, on each claim, or it reverted to the public domain and was open to location by others.

A brief review of the circumstances in 1872 may serve to indicate how, just following the Civil War, the country was largely a wilderness west of the Mississippi. Magnesium and beryllium were unknown in trade and industrial use.

Miners were active in the gold fields, especially in California. Many a townsite is built on old mining claims.

The gold claims, of course, became the basis of the tremendous rapid growth of California and the establishment of San Francisco as a world trade center. For those who would enjoy the romance of the California Gold Rush and the history from Sutters Mill to 1920, the Bureau of Mines for the State of California has a number of fine books.

But to get back to the results of the 1872 mining laws, we must realize they provided the incentive, which, in turn, stimulated the production of metals to supplant the "Iron Horse." In 1872 there were no automobiles, no pneumatic tires, no storage batteries as we know them, no portable radios, no electric irons, and the list goes on and on and on.

The 1872 mining laws stimulated the tremendous copper discoveries and industry of Michigan, Montana, Arizona, and other states and produced the great lead and zinc industry of

(Continued on page 129)

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All kinds of Ivory animal netsukes, polychrome netsukes of native folks, all kinds of Ivory snuff bottles, lady on buffalo, also fully carved ones, also horn and turtle ones. Amber with flies \$5.50 to \$25 each, also very rare types. Pretty amber pendants having colorful parts of flower blossoms. All kinds of 18th century jade pendants. 2" plants saints, animals, etc. Rare mutton fat jades, 2½" Buddhas and butterfly pendants. Moonstone necklace, bracelet from Ceylon \$16. Also turquoise and garnet necklaces. Cultured black pearl necklaces \$12. Also pretty freshwater pearl necklaces. All kinds of nice cut gems. Blue and hyacinth zircons, pretty cinnamon garnets, rare sea-green aquamarines, nice tourmalines, sapphires, spinels, etc. Rough star rubies and tourmalines. Will send on approval to reliable people.

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Germany. It is, (I think) a lithographic adaptation of a photograph; its soft colors and decorative quality give unusual charm and distinction to its subject.

All the buttons shown are "Goofies." Circus buttons may be found among 19th century Picture buttons, but they are not plentiful, and I do not own any. They include Clown buttons, and buttons, which show horses and other animals in what could be thought of as "circus circumstances."\*

At least two "Circus sets" (of five or six buttons each) were made of Modern Plastic, about 1940-50. They were made in several colors, and are superior in design to many buttons of their time and type.

No. 1 - The Cowboy or Rodeo Rider is found in the usual range of "Goofy" colors.

Nos. 2 and 3 - The two clowns—one in profile and the other facing front—are earlier than the sets, as is the Circus Horse (No. 10). They were made in all-white, decorated white and some solid colors.

No. 4 - The elephant, c. 1936, is made of pink china, embellished with silver lustre. (Jumbo, "Barnum's famous elephant, appears on an Over-all button).

Nos. 5 thru 9 - A Circus set in white and brown. No. 5 - Clown; No. 6 - Performing Lion; No. 7 - Bareback Rider; No. 8 - Caged Lion; No. 9 - Performing Elephant.

The automobile, television and other forms of mass entertainment have hurt the circus, as they have hurt the theatre. A few years ago, too, its "image" was further damaged by a disastrous fire, where numerous lives were lost and many people were injured. (Strange, that deaths caused by a circus fire should have such far-reaching effect when loss of life due to the automobile is taken for granted as a necessary evil!

But the circus survives, after a fashion, although performances are now comparatively few and far between. Often, they are reduced to the offerings presented by State and County Fairs, traveling Carnivals or local shows, held for the benefit of some Charity. I am glad that I attended one of the last performances given by "The Greatest Show on Earth:" it was an experience I wouldn't willingly have missed.

For years, the government of ancient Rome kept a majority of its citizens contented by providing them with "bread and circuses." Present-day Welfare States substitute more up-to-date amusements for the circuses. The system works—for a while.

But we all know what happened to ancient Rome!

—Dorothy Foster Brown

\*See the author's *BUTTON PARADE*, pp. 26 and 154. "Goofy the Clown," a fancy mounting with a circus background, appeared in *HOBBIES* for July, 1959.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 127)

- 4068 Climbing the Ladder of Love. Reverse: Linger Longer, Letty (duet with Helen Clark).
- 4083 Venetian Moon. Reverse: An Old-Fashioned Garden (Ash).
- 4097 Irene (duet with Clark). Reverse: Alice Blue Gown (Clark).
- 4127 Tripoli (duet with Clark). Reverse: I'd Love to Fall Asleep and Wake Up In My Mammy's Arms (Peerless Quartet).
- 4151 Close to Your Heart (duet with Clark). Reverse: Down the Trail to Home, Sweet Home (Burr).
- 4185 When I Found You (duet with Clark). Reverse: Feather Your Nest (Campbell-Burr).
- 4189 Rock of Ages (duet with Clark). Reverse: I Need Thee Every Hour (Charles Henry and James Jordan).
- 4200 The Holy City. Reverse: The Voice of the Chimes (Shannon Four).
- 4344 God Be With You Till We Meet Again. Reverse: Let the Lower Lights Be Burning (duets with Clark).
- 4454 Just Suppose (duet with Clark). Reverse: Sweet Lady (Vaughn de Leath and Billy Jones).
- 4603 Flee As a Bird. Reverse: Abide With Me (duet with Clark).
- 4604 Mr. and Mrs. (duet with Virginia Burr). Reverse: Mo-Na-Lu (Burt and Elliott Shaw).
- 4957 Cinderella. Reverse: The Pied Piper.
- 4958 Hansel and Gretel. Reverse: The Three Bears A-Singing Go.

THE END

## GEMS & MINERALS

(Continued from page 127)

the tri-state area. The developing iron industry in turn, resulting from the 1872 mining law, produced six-foot saw blades which would saw up 30 inch diameter logs.

The light metal industry, in turn, was set in motion by the 1872 mining laws and became the main factor in the aeroplane and aerospace industry. In Pennsylvania, the 1872 mining laws stimulated the discovery of coal and iron, which made possible the greatest industrial development of that and several adjoining states.

The 1872 mining laws produced the incentive that induced miners to go into the far, untracked regions of Montana and Idaho and made the latter state the greatest silver producer of the Nation. It is also worthy of note here that Alaska, in 1872, was an almost totally unknown territory, but the 1872 mining laws provided the incentive for discovery of gold, copper, and other minerals.

The aggregate of these minerals has run in billions of dollars and stimulated the building of the Nation's largest state, as well as a civilization which started with the ice igloo, and now, in 1972, has 14 story modern buildings and the urban civilization that goes with them.

This is one of three articles on the Centennial Celebration of the 1872 mining laws.

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Arthur Hall, John Ryan and The Manhattan Quartet

By JIM WALSH

#### I. After All These Years

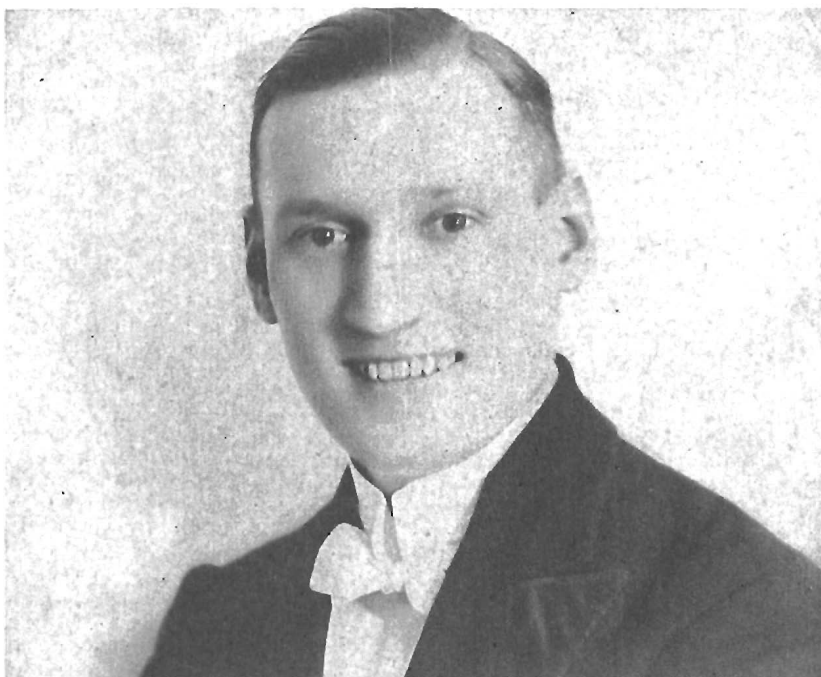
This is an article that I wanted to write for something like a quarter of a century—ever since I met the late Arthur Hall at the "John Bieling Day" parties that were given in the Long Island area of New York to honor pioneer recording artists.

Writing it was something I postponed, however, because I lacked information concerning my friend Arthur's last years and didn't know just when and where he died. E. Bryant Burke, of Hempstead, who is now also dead, wrote me in the late 1950's or early 1960's that Arthur had been gone for some time, and Mrs. Hall had moved to Florida. That was the most specific information I was able to obtain, and I have nothing more definite today as I set about writing this long delayed tribute.

newspaper, the *Floral Park Gateway*, Recently I asked a Long Island if its files contained an account of Arthur Hall's death. The publisher, Robert Rennie, did his friendly best for me. He replied that there was no obituary notice and that he had called a community funeral home, only to be informed that it had not conducted the singer's burial service. Mr. Rennie suggested that I communicate with the Town Clerk's office at Hempstead and request any information it might have. I have done so, but it was unable to help me except to suggest that I write to the State Health Department.

I wrote to the *Gateway* because on Aug. 19, 1948, it published an article about Arthur Hall's having accepted an invitation to attend the John Bieling Day observance in the Garden City Hotel. The article was illustrated with a photograph of the tenor as a young man, and quoted part of a letter to him. Since I had not read the "story" since pasting it in my huge "press book," I found it interesting and, inasmuch as it contains some information concerning the singer who began life as Adolph J. Hahl, I believe it is a good idea to quote part of what Mr. Rennie's paper said:

"Arthur J. Hall of 244-39 90th Avenue, Bellerose Manor, will talk over the old days with other surviving performers of the recording industry's pioneer days, at an all-day party, September 10. The party will give record collectors an opportunity to meet early recording stars, including Mr. Hall, Billy Murray, Will Oakland, Frank Banta, Grace Spencer and many others. The occasion will be called John Bieling Day, in honor of John H. Bieling, first tenor of the old-time American, Edison and Hayden Quartets, who gave similar, but smaller, parties



ARTHUR HALL gave Jim Walsh this autographed photo at the 1948 "John Bieling Day".

for some of his friends at his home in Hempstead in 1946 and 1947. Mr. Bieling died last March 30, at the age of 79.

"Mr. Hall, an early Edison artist, was second tenor of the old Manhattan Quartet and member of the Metropolitan Mixed Sextet. He also sang with the Cliquot Club Eskimos, and made nine trips to Europe on singing engagements. Currently he is doing special singing engagements in local and Manhattan churches.

"The letter addressed to Mr. Hall by Jim Walsh, of Vinton, Va., veteran record collector, inviting Mr. Hall to be an honor guest at the party, said in part:

"You have been for many years one of my favorites. Some of the records you made for Edison were among the best Diamond Discs ever issued. I'm thinking not only of your solo work, but those fine duets with Johnny Ryan—"I Wanna Go Where You Go," and many others. Then there was the remarkable record of 'Sweet Adeline' by the Metropolitan Mixed Sextet, in which you sang the lead, as well as 'Sweet Elaine,' in which the late Don Chalmers shares honors with you by doing a remarkable bass solo . . . I mention your Edison records especially, because to me they do you much more justice than the acoustic recordings you made for other companies. But I have many of your records on other brands, and recently obtained your 1918 Columbia of 'The Beast of Berlin.'"

"Harry F. Selinger, of Clark Avenue, Oceanside, said this week he already had requests for reservations from many record collectors from all parts of the country."

The *Gateway* article then listed some of the artists who were expected to be present, including besides those already mentioned, Eugene C. Rose, Joe Belmont, Fred Hager, Walter Van Brunt (Scanlan), Reinald Werrenrath, Al Bernard and Aileen Stanley. All came, as did Olive Kline, Elsie Baker, Lucy Isabelle Marsh, Edith

Helena and others, but the 24 years that have since passed, have taken a great toll, and, as I write, on March 24, 1972, only Miss Kline, Miss Stanley and Mr. Kaufman remain.

In the late afternoon of the day before the party, Harry Selinger took me to the moderate sized house in which Arthur Hall lived with his wife, their son and daughter-in-law. Arthur was employed by a New York City bank and had not come home, but Mrs. Hall, a friendly, brown-haired woman of middle age, made us welcome. She told me that my letter "has meant so much to Arthur and me. We've read it over and over and talked and talked about it, and it makes him feel so good to know that he's not forgotten and a lot of people still enjoy his records."

I met Arthur Hall himself the next day. But now I think a good way to pick up the beginning of his career would be to quote an article from the May, 1917, *Edison Amberola Monthly* in which his first Blue Amberol cylinder was announced. In those days, he was still calling himself by his true name of Adolph J. Hahl, but, because of its German sound, he switched to the Anglicized form of Arthur Hall shortly after the United States entered World War I. Here is the *Monthly* article, which was illustrated with a fine smiling photograph of the young tenor:

"Adolph J. Hahl, who makes his first appearance as a Blue Amberol soloist on the June list . . . is a tenor widely

known in American musical and vaudeville circles. He was born in New York City in 1888 and inherited his ability as a vocalist from his mother who at one time was a favorite soloist of Baden, Germany. Mr. Hahl attended the public schools in New York and secured the greater part of his musical instruction under the direction of New York instructors. Before he left the public schools he had gained a reputation as a concert and vaudeville artist and was engaged in professional work.

"For a number of years Mr. Hahl has been on the stage, appearing in vaudeville, concert and lyceum work. His work has been heard before by Amberola owners, for he is a member of the Manhattan Male Quartet, an organization that has made a number of popular Blue Amberol records. As second tenor of this quartet, Mr. Hahl has toured the United States and Europe. During two concert trips through Europe Mr. Hahl appeared as soloist of the organization, singing in both German and English."

Rather a remarkable career, isn't it, for a young man who was then only 28 or 29 years of age? His first Blue Amberol was No. 3192, "Where the Black-Eyed Susans Grow." It is strange, in view of the song's popularity, that it was not also issued on an Edison disc. Neither were the tenor's next two—No. 3201, in which he showed his patriotism by pleading "Let's All be Americans Now," which was announced in July, and the hauntingly catchy, 3210, "Hello, I've Been Looking for You," which seems to have come out about the same time but didn't receive the usual supplement listing.

Adolph's willingness to record songs which denounced his parents' German fatherland is the more noteworthy, since one of the Manhattan Quartet's two Blue Amberol records, No. 2469, was sung in German and contained "Die Wacht Am Rhein" and "Deutschland Über Alles." The other, 2399, was an English version of the inescapable "Kentucky Babe."

"Kentucky Babe" had a clever banjo imitation that probably was sung by Hall. Both these quartet records also were issued as discs, but, as was to be expected, the one of German patriotic numbers disappeared from the catalog in 1918.

Meanwhile, young Adolph Hahl had changed his professional name to Arthur Hall, and in 1918 he sang for Columbia two of the "patriotic" war songs that were being ground out by the thousands. One was "That Grand Old Gentleman, Uncle Sam." The other, apparently suggested by a crude propaganda movie, "The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin," was called "The Beast of Berlin," and was full of the personal attacks that were levied against Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany. Probably more good songs were written during World War I than in any other in which the United States was engaged. There were also more bad ones, and "The Beast of Berlin" was among them. It referred to crossing the Rhine and, speaking of the German emperor, said: "We'll herd him with the swine. We'll trample on his dirty rag and cause him to salute our flag." Actually, Wilhelm, if not the best of men, was not the worst, and in spite of such boastful threats, he died in peaceful retirement in Holland.

Amusingly, Arthur sang the Kaiser denunciation with a strong German accent. In the decade of recording that followed, his German enunciation became much less apparent, but he never lost it entirely, in singing or in conversation. For one thing, he always pronounced "all" as if it were "oil."

And now that we have brought Arthur Hall's career up to the wartime period when he "Americanized"



**GERMAN-AMERICAN SINGERS —**  
The photo of the Manhattan Quartet shown here is from a 1928 Catalog of Edison cylinder records. Arthur Hall is at the left. The second man is unidentified. Others are Nick Lat-  
tner and Frank Schwarz.

his name, let's consider the activities of the Manhattan Quartet, with whom he made his first records and with whom he was so long associated.

## II. The Manhattan Quartet

I have not been able to ascertain when the quartet began recording, since most of its work was done for special foreign language lists not included in catalogs intended for ordinary American use. Incidentally, I have often wondered how it could have been commercially worthwhile for companies to compile long lists of vocal records in almost every foreign language, including Chinese, Russian and Japanese as well as French, Spanish, German, Italian, etc., when hardly one dealer in a hundred stocked such offerings and their sale was restricted almost entirely to people of alien birth. It doesn't seem that enough could possibly have been sold to return a profit. Yet during the 1920's, as radio began to cut sharply into sales, The Voice of the Victor constantly urged dealers to go after foreign record business. This apparently was on the theory that radio didn't give first and second generation Americans the music they wanted, but records could. In most small communities, with little or no foreign population, such things of course were unsalable.

The Victor numerical catalog for May, 1912, which included the "foreign" records as well as those for domestic use, mentioned three by the Manhattan Quartet—No. 63266, 63431 and 68290. That, however, doesn't tell when they were made, so the actual recording might have been done a few years earlier. And that brings up the question of whether Arthur Hall sang in them. If he did, he became a member of the group at an early age, for he was only 24 in 1912. You will remember, though, that the Edison announcement of his first solo Blue Amberols said he was already established as a concert and vaudeville singer while still in school, so it is quite possible that he took part in these early discs. Judging from pictures of the quartet, he was much younger than his associates.

In May, 1924, when the Voice of the Victor was carrying on its crusade to induce more dealers to stock foreign language records, it published a

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(Continued on page 118)

## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

photo of the ensemble with the following comment:

"The Manhattan Quartet is one of the best-known German male quartets in the country. The organization has been before the public for many years, having appeared at four of the great expositions in the United States, and having twice made successful European concert tours. The quartet not only specializes in German songs, but has an English repertoire as well, which has been used during the present year in a tour of the leading picture and vaudeville houses. The personnel . . . is as follows: Henry Weiman, Arthur Hall, Nick Latterner, Frank Schwarz."

Presumably, the gentlemen were listed in the order of first tenor, second tenor, baritone and bass. The basso's last name, incidentally, appears originally to have been Schwartzkopf, but had been shortened.

This of course was the group that was making personal appearances and singing for records in 1924. One change had been made. Edison publications of the period from 1916 to 1920 show one of the members as a man with a heavy mustache. In the 1924 group he has been succeeded by a clean-shaven singer, but the others remain the same. I, of course, recognize Arthur Hall, but am not sure of the identification of the remainder. Nor do I know the name of the man who flaunted the mustache, but I imagine he was a first tenor.

Another puzzle results from the statement that the quartet had sung at four major expositions. What were they? The Philadelphia Sesqui-Centennial and the New York World's Fair were still in the future, and surely this same group could not have appeared at the 1892-93 Chicago World's Fair. Perhaps there had been a Manhattan Quartet going that far back, but if so its membership must have changed over the years. No doubt the four, probably including Arthur Hall, appeared at the 1914-15 Panama-Pacific Exposition, and perhaps the older members also had sung at the Buffalo, Portland, and St. Louis fairs. Just possibly, Hall could have taken part at St. Louis, but it is unlikely, since he would have been only 16.

The quartet's German recordings seem to have been made chiefly for Victor and Edison, but they may have been employed by other companies whose foreign language catalogs I don't have. Judging by its number, the Diamond Disc containing the two "Hoch der Kaiser!" songs was made in 1914, but the June, 1915, catalog is the first in which I find it.

An interesting record in which the quartet sang was Diamond Disc 82103. They assisted Otto Goritz, the Metropolitan Opera Wagnerian baritone. The selection, to use an English title, was "Like an Infant at the Mother's Breast," from Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor." On the reverse side Goritz sang in German, of course—"The Bird Catcher Am I" from Mozart's "Magic Flute." Goritz also sang on the reverse side of the Manhattan's Germanic rendition of "Silent Night" on 80266.

Herr Goritz had made himself enormously unpopular with Americans in 1915 when he assertedly gave a dinner party to celebrate the sinking of the Lusitania, in which hundreds of lives were lost. He had been a Victor artist, but Victor never made any more records by him, and it is rather surprising that Edison engaged him. But it did and he even gave "tone tests." (Years before he had made two-minute cylinders.) Goritz was born June 8, 1873, in Berlin and died April 11, 1929, in Hamburg.

When the 1918 Victor catalog came out, all Goritz records had been discontinued. They were never reinstated. Half a dozen years later Victor issued a "special pressings" catalog, which purported to contain all discontinued Red Seal records, but Goritz still wasn't forgiven and his discs were not included. Probably the masters had been destroyed. Another missing name was that of the Italian tenor, Nicola Zerola, and I wonder why.

I think it a reasonable assumption that the period from America's entrance into the War in April, 1917, though its duration and for a year or so later, meant trying times for the Manhattan Quartet. Anti-German feeling was high, and in many cities orchestras were stupidly forbidden to play the music of the classical German composers, so obviously there was no demand for a German language quartet. We have seen that Arthur Hall met the crisis successfully by changing his name and singing the current patriotic tunes, but just what the other quartet members did is a question. They must have been good Americans, but probably they were nevertheless under suspicion of not being entirely loyal.

### III. Made-to-Order "Red Asterisks"

The fighting over, Edison in 1919 began to build up repertoires of foreign language records, which were assigned special numerical blocks, but were not listed, either alphabetically or under the names of the artists, in the main body of the catalog.

Something of this sort must have been contemplated before our entrance into the war put a stop to German language recording, for two of the special 57000 series selling for \$1.00 each, were listed as by Adolph J. Hahl and their master numbers indicate they were made about the time in 1917 that his three Blue Amberol cylinders were announced. They were 57006, "Autolieben—Das haben die Madchen so gerne," coupled with "Die Lorelei" ("The Lorelei"), by the Manhattan Quartet, and 57009, "Puppchen," which had a comic number by a German comedian, Ernest Balle, for its reverse. The Balle side's German title is translated as "The Widow and Her Seven Husbands." Both Hahl songs were by a composer named Gilbert.

Another German record, issued in June, 1925, offered a solo, by Arthur Hall, this time, of a song called "Bedinklichkeiten," a title I am unable to translate. The number was

57019. Harvey Hindermeyer, not usually thought of as a German language singer, held down the other side with "Tief im Bohmerwald."

The 57000 series comprised both vocal and instrumental numbers, but there was also a 73000 group in the \$1.50 classification, containing nothing but vocals. Manhattan Quartet records were all in the lower price range. They began making them in 1920. But—and this should especially interest collectors who specialize in Edison discs by noted operatic and concert artists—the 73000 compilation included records by famous singers that were never listed in the catalog beneath their names. These artists included Goritz, Karl Jorn, Arthur Middleton (under the assumed name of Eduard Middlestadt), Marie Rappold, Paul Reimers, Elizabeth Schumann and Jacques Urlus.

Many of the German discs were described as being "made to order," and were identified as "custom-made" by red asterisks stamped on their white labels. This was a clever bit of flummery devised to help ease the storage problems of dealers who complained that large stocks of the thick Diamond Discs took up a lot of space.

Dealers were instructed to tell customers that certain records in the monthly supplements — mostly old standard numbers, instrumental novelties and foreign issues—were not kept in stock, "but we'll be glad to have a copy especially made for you at the factory." If the customer said, "O.K., get me one," the dealer ordered it from his jobber and a week or so later the customer would be handed a Red Asterisk copy that he was told had been pressed at West Orange for him alone. The truth was, the jobbers stocked these records just as they did the regular "releases," and, more than that, most dealers preferred to carry them as part of their regular supply rather than to have the bother of sending for "made to order" copies. This amiable chicanery began in 1922 and was discontinued three years later.

While this was going on, the Quartet was not entirely unknown to the domestic section of the Edison catalog. In October, 1923, it was represented on record No. 51214, "Pickaninny's Lullaby," coupled with "Ten Thousand Years from Now," by Lewis James. The quartet side was dull and probably impaired the sale of its mating, a beautiful Ernest R. Ball ballad. However, James' interpretation lacked the sweetness of voice and expressiveness of Henry Burr's Victor. The record stayed in the catalog only through 1926.

Obviously, not all the Manhattan's German Diamond Discs can be mentioned in detail, but I'll select a few of the more interesting. Record No. 57015 coupled two numbers "mit Yodeler Adolf Schrein." There was also a German version of "When the Swallows Homeward Fly" and one of that doleful dirge, "Ritters Abscheid," known to most of us as "The Soldier's Farewell."

The quartet helped Arthur Middle-



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ton sing "Bummel-Petrus" (Jolly Peter") and it recorded the old nonsense song, "Die Schnitzelbank." In 1927, the boys sang a comic song, "Where Is My Meyer?" in German and about the same time Arthur Hall was singing it in broken English as the refrain of a Victor dance record.

For the most amusing title of all, they made in 1927 Record No. 57023, which contained on one side "Studentenlieder," a medley of German student songs, and on the other, "Volkslieder," a folk song medley, both sung in fox trot time. Just for meanness, I shall quote the titles, but this is not likely to endear me to the linotype operator who has to follow the copy.

"Studentenlieder" was composed of "Bier her, Bier her," "Was kommt dort von der Hohl," "Am Brunnen von dem Tore," "Krambambuli," "Madel Ruck, Ruck, Ruck," "O Alte Bur-schenherrlichkeit," "Ein freis Leben fuhren wir," "Es ist ein Wirtshaus an der Lahn," and "Ca, Ca, geschmauset."

The "Volkslieder" included "Stimmt an mit hohen Klang," "Guter Mond du gehst so stille," "Nun ade du mein lieb Heimatland," "Leise zieht durch mein Gemut," "Ein Jager aus Kurpfalz," "Das Wandern ist des Mullers Lust," "Steh ich in finst'r Mitternacht," and "Ach wie ist's moglich dann."

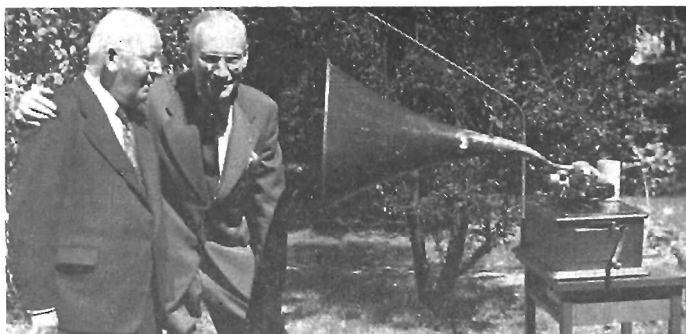
Mr. Linotyper, I apologize!

For a final laugh, Edison listed as one of its German records, No. 51909, containing a hill-billy tune, "My Little German Home Across the Sea," sung (in Appalachian area English) by a Southwestern Virginia mountaineer, Ernest V. Stoneman.

The Mannhattans, who had made Victor acoustics records over a long period, continued to do foreign language work for that company after the electrical process was introduced. Several of their numbers are included in the 1931 Victor numerical catalog. One, issued May 10, 1929, on 12-inch record No. 56017, combines a vocal march in honor of President von Hindenburg of Germany (these, remember, were pre-Hitler days!) with a "Konig Karl Marsch."

I was amused to find, in Brian Rust's Master Book of Victor Records from 1925 to 1936, evidence that the Quartet ran into difficulties in trying to record for Victor's English repertoire. On Jan. 25, 1927, they made three "takes" with pipe organ accompaniment, of "The Holy City" and "The Palms." On March 3, they sang "The Holy City" three times more. Came March 16, and they had another three tries at "The Palms." None was accepted, and Victor apparently gave up. In those early days of electric recording, the process involved so much distortion that artists had to come back and sing repeatedly before they could get a passable record.

The Quartet, however, was less harassed than Henry Burr, who, on May 8, 1925, sang four unacceptable versions of "Heaven Is My Home." On four other occasions, ranging from



VETERAN RECORDERS. Eugene Rose (left) and Arthur Hall, making a cylinder record in 1949.

May 12 to June 11, he recorded three more takes each time until finally No. 16 made the grade and Burr, who probably had used some unheavenly language during the process, at last went to Heaven—at least on the record. But even his torments were exceeded by those of Frank Banta, who had to make 25 masters of his piano version of "Nola" before one was obtained that could be used.

I imagine the Manhattan Quartet's recording career, ended, like Arthur Hall's, when the depression hit the record business a terrific wallop. And now let's return to Second Tenor Hall.

## IV. Soloist and Dance Band "Plugger"

Arthur Hall seems to me a more than ordinarily interesting recording artist, because he is the only one I can think of who sang hundreds of popular ballads and comic songs while living a "double life" as a recorder of foreign language material. I find myself wondering how he managed at the peak of his activities, say from 1923 to 1927, to do so much "popular" singing in English while at the same time functioning as a member of the German language Manhattan Quartet and going on concert tours. And the Manhattan was not the only ensemble in which he sang.

There was not much recording for him to do in the war days of 1918, but a year later he was busier. For a brief period in 1919-20, he was a duet partner with Jack Kaufman, brother of the better known Irving Kaufman. A 1923, Gennett catalog lists three duets by them—4593, "That Wonderful Kid From Madrid"; 9016, "They're All Sweeties," and 1503, "We Must Have a Song to Remember." (I can't make any sense of the record numbering system, since they were all turned out about the same time.) Gennett did little national advertising, but "We Must Have a Song to Remember" was featured by a display in the *Saturday Evening Post*, with an assertion that in it "the voices of Kaufman and Hall blend serenely pure." This was a classic example of backing the wrong horse, for the chosen song achieved no popularity, while the other side, ignored in the advertising, was Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw's rendition of the classic Ballad, "Let the Rest of the World Go By."

That Gennett catalog also contained a dozen Hall solos. Another Kaufman and Hall duet record was Okeh 4062. They occupied both sides with "Floatin' Down to Cotton Town" and "Lucy Dancing Around the Cabin Door." Since Irving and Jack Kaufman and Arthur Fields had signed exclusive Emerson contracts in 1919, I am puzzled as to how these records were made after that contract apparently had become effective. Perhaps it did not restrain Jack from making duets for other companies with artists other than his brother and Fields.

Because most of Hall's recordings were of songs of a short-lived type I will not attempt a detailed analysis of his recorded repertoire. Most of his acoustic discs were poorly recorded, and he himself remarked at one of our meetings: "My Edisons are the only horn-records by me worth collecting. As a general thing, the others don't sound much like my voice, but the Edisons caught me exactly as I was." As an example of bad recording, the Columbia of "The Beast of Berlin" has a distorted voice quality.

One amusing Hall record is his Globe of "Feather Your Nest," which seems to show a condition of near-illiteracy on the part of the lyric writer. As Arthur recorded the song it contained these lines: "Hear the lovebirds cry in the branches high, and, sweetheart, they bring messages just for you and I."

When Albert Campbell and Henry Burr recorded the song for Victor and other companies, the ungrammatical portion was changed to: "Lovebirds there must be high up in each tree, and, sweetheart, they bring messages just for you and me." Probably the well educated Burr demanded the change, insisting that he wasn't going to sing such ungrammatical stuff as "for you and I."

As the 1920's advanced, more and more dance records were made with vocal refrains (they had been almost unknown before 1919), and the majority of Arthur Hall's records from 1920 to 1930 were those in which he did not sing the entire song, but merely a refrain to an orchestra's accompaniment. He was one of several artists who were called on hundreds of times to be dance band "pluggers." Irving Kaufman almost certainly did more of this work than

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anyone else, followed, probably, by Arthur Fields in second place and Hall in third. Jack Kaufman may have been No. 4. After the electrical era began, a young singer known as Harold ("Scrappy") Lambert became one of the most popular pluggers, but his career lasted only three or four years, and did not bring him up to a numerical par with the others. He faded out when the record business went to pieces after 1929.

One intriguing Arthur Hall record is a Black Swan, on which he sings "Yes, We Have No Bananas," with his name given as Howard Lewis. Black Swan was a Negro-owned company, and supposedly employed only black artists. The record, however, is the same as the Olympic issued as by Arthur Hall and the Original Georgia Five (probably the Original Memphis Five), and both labels probably leased it from the original manufacturer.

Going hurriedly through the Arthur Hall section of my own records, I find that I have him singing solos or dance refrains on the following labels, and very likely there are others I missed: Banner, Bell, Black Swan, Clarion, Columbia, Domino (under the name of Cliff Stewart), Edison, Gennett, Globe, Grey Gull, Hy-Tone, Madison, Olympic, Perfect, Playtime (a seven-inch record for children), Supreme and Victor. Then I have duets by him and John Ryan, who became his recording partner in 1925, on Bell, Domino, Edison, Everybody's, Grey Gull, Pathe needle cut and Radiex. They also did some singing for Columbia and other brands missing from my collection.

It is rather strange that Victor never permitted Hall to sing a complete record by himself, but, aside from the Manhattan Quartet, used him only in dance numbers. Two of his Victor vocal refrains called for a German accent and he may have been selected for that reason—No. 19586, "O Katharina!" and 21025, "Where Is My Meyer?"

An interesting Victor in which he participated is 19901, "Song of the Vagabonds," by the International Novelty Orchestra conducted by Nat Shilkret, in which the incidental singing is done by Hall, Wilfred Glenn, Theo Alban and Clifford Cairns, who afterwards became manager of the Victor Artist and Repertoire Department.

### V. Edison Solos

Arthur's Edison discs (only a few of which were dubbed onto Blue Amberol cylinders) deserve a bit more attention. In 1919 he appeared in the Edison catalog for the first time as Arthur Hall when, on No. 50537, he sang "Have a Smile for Everyone You Meet," in which he was assisted by a male chorus. After that he was missing from the English language section until July, 1924, when No. 51351 was issued, with Harry Raderman's Dance Orchestra playing a fox trot version of "Paradise Alley," after

which Hall sang the same song. During the next year a good many of these "two in one" records followed. The titles included "Radio," a satire on the static-producing qualities of early wireless sets, with the fox trot portion played by the Atlantic Dance Orchestra (Dave Kaplan's Melodists) and Teddy Morse's last song, "Monkey Doodle," with the orchestral part by the Merry Sparklers, whoever they were. Then came the partnership with John Ryan, which also rates a separate section.

### VI. Hall and Ryan Duets

I know as little concerning John Ryan as I do about almost any other popular recording artist of his era. As far as I have learned, he first appeared in the recording picture in 1924. After that, he made hundreds of discs, but his career was over four years later.

Johnny may still be living. In 1948 I mentioned to Arthur Hall that a man using the name of John Ryan had been making some risqué records for Victor. "But," I said, "he doesn't sound like your old partner."

Arthur seemed shocked at the idea. "No, no," he said. "Johnny was a good Catholic boy. He wouldn't sing anything like that."

"Is he still living?" I asked, and Arthur replied, "Yes, he's somewhere down in New Jersey."



DUET PARTNER. Gerald Underhill Macy (above) did some Edison duet recording with Arthur Hall's principal singing associate, John Ryan. Macy and Ed Smalle also sang together as "The Radio Aces" and "The Radio Imps".

Ryan had a pleasant tenor voice, a bit higher than Hall's, but so closely resembling it in texture it is hard to tell them apart in solo lines except for their different accents. He appears to have made his recording start as a partner of Jack Kaufman—yes, the same Jack Kaufman with whom Arthur had sung briefly five years before.

Kaufman and Hall made three 1924 Okeh duet records that I can trace:

40013, "Happy-Go-Lucky In My Old Kentucky Home," coupled with "I'm Goin' South," by Earl Rickard (I have often wondered who this baritone was. Could he have been better known under some other name?); 40117, "Somebody Stole My Gal," doubled with "A Man Never Knows When a Woman's Gonna Change Her Mind," by Ernest Hare and Harry Reser; and 40164, "The Grass is Always Greener in the Other Fellow's Yard," with "Skin-a-Ma-Rink-a-Rink-a-Ree," by Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.

They also made at least three for Emerson, of which I have copies: 10681, "Roaming to Wyoming," coupled with "I Love You," by Jack Boyle (who was he?); 10710, "When Mother Sings Sweet and Low," with "Me No Speak-a Good English," a solo by Kaufman; and 10756, "Any Old Time At All," with "Jimmiey Gee," by Fields.

There may have been more, for I have never seen any Emerson catalogs of those days when the company had gone bankrupt and was limping along under court supervision.

The Kaufman-Ryan partnership did not last long, and in 1925 Ryan teamed up with Arthur Hall. Their first Edison duet coupling appeared in March, No. 51473, "Hawaiian Nightingale" and "I'm Someone Who's No One to You." The duo's work immediately became so popular that for the next couple of years they were strong features of the monthly supplements.

There were good reasons for this. Their voices blended beautifully; they sang sentimental ballads expressively, and when they did comedy numbers their interpretations had a "snap" and "pep" that would have been worthy of Jones and Hare. No higher praise could be given than that! In fact, a number of the songs they sang are the sort that most recording managers would have assigned automatically to the unbeatable Billy and Ernie. Among these splendid humorous records are "There Ain't No Flies on Auntie," a title which English record companies always changed to "There Are No Flies on Auntie," "I'm Gonna Let the Bumble Bee Be," "I Don't Want to Get Married (I'm Having Too Much Fun)," "Out in the New Mown Hay," "Ukelele Lady" and "Clap Hands, Here Comes Charley." For real pep and personality their Diamond Disc of "I Wanna Go Where You Go . . . Then I'll Be Happy" was miles above any competing record, and especially made Jack Smith's whispered version on Victor sound dull.

Some of Hall and Ryan's more serious duets, such as "I Wish You Were Jealous of Me" and "Truly I Do," would make an unfailing appeal to any lover of well-sung, melodious sentimental ballads, and they even revived the beautiful 1912 hit, "A Garland of Old-Fashioned Roses"—probably at Thomas A. Edison's "suggestion."

Not only did both Arthur and John record solos as well as duets, but, with Ed Smalle, they called themselves The Frolickers and made four

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Edison Discs: "Dinah," "I Love My Baby," "I Wonder What's Become of Joe," and "Talkin' to the Moon." They took part in the records—many of them humorous—by the National Male Quartet, whose other members were Harry Jockin, baritone, and Harry Donaghy, bass. One of their amusing quartet offerings—"Meet Me in Old Philly, Billy," a "blurb" for the 1926 Philadelphia Sesqui-Centennial celebration, was on the back of their duet of "Out in the New Mown Hay." They also were members of "That Singing Four," whose record of "That Certain Party"—an Americanized imitation of the German "Die Schnitzelbank," which the Manhattan Quartet had recorded years before—is a sidesplitter.

Mrs. Leah S. Baird, assistant archivist of the Edison National Historic Site, says "That Singing Four" consisted of Hall and Ryan, tenors; Steve Porter, baritone, and Donald Chalmers, bass. This gave its personnel a strong resemblance to the Premier-American Quartet of an earlier period, in which Porter and Chalmers had sung with John Young and Billy Murray. And that brings up something that has puzzled me. Brian Rust's "Victor Master Book" lists two unissued recordings by the American Quartet, both made Nov. 11, 1925. The titles are "Tomorrow Morning" and "That Certain Party," and the artists are given as Ryan, Murray, Porter and Chalmers. I had considered this probably a mistake because there is no other mention of John Ryan singing for Victor, and John Young had been the quartet's first tenor.

In view, however, of the fact that the "Singing Four" group, with Ryan, Porter and Chalmers in its membership, did "That Certain Party" for Edison on Nov. 18, 1925—a week after the Victor was made—I am now inclined to think that Ryan instead of Young was in the Victor version, and that Porter and Chalmers suggested to Billy Murray, the quartet leader, that he be used. Even so, in our many conversations Billy never mentioned Johnny Ryan to me.

The first "That Singing Four" record "Sweet Romona"—was sung July 30, 1925, and for that occasion the quartet consisted of Hall, who was its manager, Ryan, Nick Latterner, and Chalmers. All its succeeding records had Porter as baritone. "That Certain Party" was the last. It's obvious that the boys didn't get rich working as a quartet, for they were paid only \$30 each per song. The same rate prevailed when "That Singing Four" gave way to the National Male Quartet, whose first selections, "Bye, Bye, Blackbird," and "Honey Bunch," were recorded May 10, 1926. Hall, Ryan, Jockin and Donaghy each got \$60 for singing in the two sides. Dave Kaplan, who played the piano on the first side, and John F. Burckhardt, the pianist on the second, had yearly contracts and were not paid by the job. In later records, such pianists as Ray Brown, Milton J. Rettenberg

and Bill Werges got \$15 for playing the accompaniment on one side or \$25 for two. The 1925-26 Edison quartet rate was not much above that prevailing in the early days of gold moulded records when each singer was paid \$20 a cylinder.

Incidentally, there was an earlier National Male Quartet, which made four sides, two of them unissued, in September and October, 1924. Jockin and Donaghy were the baritone and bass, and the tenors were Clarence daSilva and Lloyd Willey.

With their Edison solos and duets being issued regularly (Ryan played his own piano accompaniment in some of his individual efforts), their appearances in the Quartet and their work for other companies, Hall and Ryan seemed to have an increasingly successful partnership. But, toward the end of 1926 something—I don't know what—appears to have happened to impair their popularity. The last record to bear their names as duettists, No. 51801, was issued in September, 1926. It was "Out in the New Mown Hay." In October, Ryan (who, by the way was called Jack Rhan on Madison records), sang the refrains of "How Many Times," and "Adorable," by the Golden Gate Orchestra (the California Ramblers). In December, Hall and Ryan reappeared, to sing in "My Pal Jerry," by Duke Yellman's Orchestra; in January, Hall alone did the refrains of "Mother Dear" and "My Mother's Lullaby," by Jack Stillman's Orchestra, but in January, 1927, Johnny Ryan surprisingly turned up with a new partner, whose name was given only as Sherman. I wonder if he was Al. Sherman, the song writer. The new duo sang both sides of 51892, "Sandy McPherson (The Meanest Man in Town)" and "I Must Have an Italian Girl," with Johnny at the piano. The singers' voices are so much alike it is hard to tell one from the other. Ryan also sings in "That Saxophone Waltz" and "Love Me All the Time," by Jack Stillman's Orchestra (No. 51940), but without label credit and I am uncertain as to whether his partner is Hall or Sherman. On No. 51984, he has the famous Helen Clark as a "song plugging" partner in "You Only Want Me When You're Lonesome," another waltz by the Stillman Orchestra.

In April, 1927, Sherman and Ryan were back again with a duet version, on 51961, of that Irish comic song classic, "Bridget O'Flynn (Where've You Been?)," with Ryan again serving as pianist. The other side is a fine "Down in the Old Neighborhood," by the National Quartet. I had forgotten how good this interpretation of "Bridget O'Flynn" is until I played it while writing this article. If not quite so good as the Victor Masterpiece by Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray, and perhaps not entirely so amusing as the Columbia by Jones and Hare, it is still superb.

Meanwhile, in March, Edison had revived, on No. 51922, the immortal "Sweet Adeline" and the almost equally popular "Maggie Murphy's Home," sung by the Metropolitan Mixed Chorus, with Arthur Hall taking the tenor

lead in both. The supplement comment was amusing:

"Barber Shops are no longer exclusive retreats for men desiring whisker bobs or 'home runs,' so, in recording 'Sweet Adeline' with modern 'barber shop' harmony, we, of course, had to use the ladies' voices also. We are sure you will like the arrangement. The rehearsal was held at Maggie Murphy's Home."

"Yankee Rose," issued in April, was the final National Quartet record, and Johnny Ryan appears to have made his last appearances in Edison lists in June. He and still another new partner, Gerald Macy, sang the refrain of "My Regular Gal," by Duke Yellman's Orchestra; did a duet of "Sa-Lu Ta!" and Ryan had a solo refrain in "Beedle Um Bo," a fox trot by the Golden Gate Orchestra.

After a long silence, Arthur Hall was back in December, 1927, on No. 52131, an electrically recorded medley, "Christmas Songs for Children." For its companion, Vaughn deLeath, recited "The Night Before Christmas" to a piano accompaniment. In January, 1925, Arthur had cultivated the "kiddie trade" with double-faced record No. 51465, "Songs for Little Boys," and in February, 1926, he proved he played no sexual favorites by singing "Songs for Little Girls" on 51626.

Following the Christmas disc, Arthur Hall appeared on one more Edison record. In May, 1928, he was heard in a charming ballad, "Sweet Elaine," which he sang with the help of Fred Vittel, first tenor; Arthur Ballard, baritone, and Don Chalmers, bass. This record was mentioned in my letter quoted in the Gateway article. "Sweet Elaine" was written by Richard Gerard and Harry Armstrong, author and composer of "Sweet Adeline," to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the publication of that greatest of barber shop quartet favorites. They hoped the new song would do equally well, but it was only a moderate success.

After that, Edison issued no more Arthur Hall records, and his recording career was virtually over, except for a few German selections with the Manhattan Quartet.

## VII. I Meet Arthur Hall

As Harry Selinger and I were on the way to Arthur Hall's home the afternoon before the 1948 John Biebling Day, I asked him if the singer appeared comparatively young.

"No," Harry replied. "He's gray, and he looks his 60 years, but he gets a lot of fun out of life."

The next day, when I met Arthur, he handed me an autographed photo of himself taken many years before. I found the man before me to be rather small. He was short, gray, quiet and unassumingly friendly. I liked him very much.

I asked if he recalled the Arto Company of Orange, N.J., that made lateral-cut records in the early 1920's. He seemed to have a vague recollection, and mentioned a man, whose name I have forgotten, whom he believed to have been at the head of it.

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not too difficult to come by, either, if one makes a serious effort to collect them.

But jails and prisons, apparently, are not considered suitable subjects for post cards. Unlike Capitols, Post Offices, and Churches, post cards do not pleasantly publicize the cities and states where the jails and prisons are located. Chambers of Commerce are not proud of them; and makers or sellers of souvenirs are not anxious to advertise their attractions, if any.

I looked through thousands of post cards—it seemed like thousands anyway—before I found the card reproduced here. It shows the Old Prison House at Fortress Monroe, Va., where Jefferson Davis was confined at the close of the Civil War.

Perhaps this "Old Prison" was thought worth showing *because* the president of the Confederate States of America once was imprisoned there. The card is one of the "Local Views" published by Louis Kaufmann & Sons, Baltimore, c. 1905?

Like post cards, stamps seldom commemorate places of detention, and the stamp shown may seem a little "far-fetched." But it *does* depict a prison—probably the largest prison ever used to keep one man in captivity: the Island of St. Helena, where Napoleon I was imprisoned from 1815 until his death in 1821.

The stamp is one of a set issued in 1934 to celebrate the Island's centenary as a Crown Colony. ("Longwood House," where Napoleon actually lived, is shown on a 10-shilling stamp of 1953).

I could not find anything that faintly resembled a prison on a playing card. But a notable prison is pictured on a cigarette card, the Tower of London. It was built by William the Conqueror in 1078, and many famous people were imprisoned there over the centuries. The card is No. 38 of a "Coronation" set of 50, published c. 1937 by Godfrey Phillips Ltd., and Associated Companies.

The buttons and badges pictured here, are gilt unless otherwise noted.

No. 1, I was told, came from H. M. Prison at Exeter. The design features a cheval-de-frise and fetters, in addition to the Royal Arms of Great Britain. Convex, silvered, with raised design, and flexible shank.

Nos. 2 and 5 were in use at the Worcester County Jail many years ago. They display the Seal of the County: a deer, surrounded by the legend, "Sig. Com. Worces. N. Ang." ("Seal of Worcester County, New England") and the date, "1731" (the year the county was organized). The buttons are convex with designs in relief. No. 2 is marked on the back "F. M. Batchelder - B. & C.," but No. 5 was made by "D. Evans & Co. - Attleboro, Mass."

No. 3, which displays the State Seal of Massachusetts, was worn by an attendant at the Lyman School, a reform school for boys, at Westboro, Mass.\* The friend who gave it to me was, for many years, head farmer at the School.

He enjoyed telling about the many "Old Boys" who came back to see him from time to time, to tell him

"Superior Quality."

how they were getting along, and how grateful they were for the good treatment they had received. Convex, silvered, with raised design. Reverse: "Oak Hall Clothing Co. - Boston."

No. 4, United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kans. Flat with letters in low relief against a lined field. Reverse: "Superior Quality."

No. 6, a rampant lion is depicted on this collar badge of Kenya Prisons.\*\*

No. 7, Kansas State Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kans. This button is similar in type to No. 4, but the letters are in higher relief. Reverse:

No. 8, an elephant and a palm tree are displayed on this cap badge of H. M. Prisons, Gold Coast.\*\* Silvered finish.

No. 9, a cap badge of Uganda Prison Service.\*\* (The bird is a Kavirondo Crane).

No. 10, New York State Prison. There are several State Prisons in New York, and I have no way of knowing from which one this button came. Convex with lined field, raised design. Reverse: "Scoville Mfg. Co. - Waterbury."

No. 11, Great Britain: a cap badge of the Military Prisons Staff Corps. This monogram of Queen Victoria was in use for a short time in 1901-02. It became obsolete soon after the Queen's death.

No. 12, Pennsylvania Industrial Reform School, Huntingdon, Pa. A staff-type button, convex, with design raised against a lined field. Reverse: "Waterbury Button Co."

There is a famous quotation which assures us that:

"Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage."

The author, Richard Lovelace, was a political prisoner, and a poet; a man of high ideals, courage, and imagination. For such prisoners, there is truth in the assertion, for they are able to ignore the bars and to look beyond the walls.

But most prisons *are* cages. They generally are considered necessary for the protection of Society.

\* The Lyman School was closed early in 1972.

\*\* These badges became obsolete in 1953.

## BUTTONS WANTED

WANTED: Old buttons, badges, jewelry. — Earl Romey, Box 291, Bluffton, Ind. ja12407

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BUTTONHOOK BOOK, loaded with information, \$1.50, includes free buttonhook, 104 Spoon Patents: information on Medicine spoons, measuring, mustache, juvenile, kitchen, etc. \$2.—Bertha Belensley, Rt. 1, Westville, Ind. 46391 ap6698

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 121)

When I spoke of the long-gone Grey Gull Company, which made a low-priced, not very durable record from about 1920 to 1931, he termed it "a cheap outfit. They still owe me some money," he said.

That afternoon, when he was introduced at the recording artists' party, Arthur sang one of Ernest Ball's 1912 successes, "Here's Love and Success to You," and dedicated it to John Bieling's widow, Mrs. Meta Bieling. He repeated the song and the dedication at the next party, two years later. There was no official John Bieling Day program in 1949, but a number of old-time recording artists gathered at the Bieling home, and Hall and Eugene Rose, who had made flute solos for Edison in 1889, enjoyed talking and singing into a cylinder home recording outfit.

The time I was able to spend with Arthur Hall was too brief, for I recognized him not only as a gifted artist but a true gentleman.

## VIII. In Conclusion

This article was begun weeks ago, and I have withheld its conclusion, hoping to obtain specific information about the time and place of Arthur Hall's death.

Up to now the effort has been futile. At the suggestion of the Hempstead Town Clerk, I wrote to the New York State Department of Health at Albany, explaining that I needed to know when and where the singer died and should like to obtain a copy of his death certificate, to get this information. My letter was returned with no reply other than a printed form saying that if I would inform the Department of the time and place of death, give the "deceased's" social security number and some other information, the application for a death certificate would be taken under consideration. That is, in order to obtain the certificate and the information I needed I would have to furnish the information to begin with! This maddening example of bureaucratic inefficiency reminded me of the Circumlocution Department in Dickens' "Little Dorrit."

For the present, I am stymied. But if the information should become available through other sources I promise to share it, HOBBIES readers, with you.

THE END



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## "That Girl" Quartet and other Women's Groups

By JIM WALSH

### I. How It Started

If HOBBIES had not published, in October and November, 1971, my article proving that President William McKinley did not make the controversial Columbia record associated with his name, this survey of women's recording groups probably would have remained unwritten.

Shortly after the first McKinley installment appeared I obtained from Lillian and Dulcina McNeill, Oak Park, Ill., sheet music dealers who advertise in HOBBIES, a copy of the music of "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," which the Euterpean Quartet sang at the President's funeral. The women of the Quartet lived in Canton, Ohio, where McKinley also made his home, and because of "home town" associations they were selected to sing at the memorial service. Since the funeral took place more than 71 years ago, I suppose they all are dead now.

Few people can still be alive who remember anything about that sad occasion. The average American of today has no conception of how popular McKinley was when an assassin's bullet cut him down. He probably was the best loved, at the time of his death, of all American Presidents who have been murdered.

Abraham Lincoln had presided over a bitterly divided country and much of the population hated him. James A. Garfield had not been in office long enough to stir strong emotions. John F. Kennedy was only moderately popular, I think, and very likely as many people disliked as admired him when his death came with dramatic swiftness.

McKinley, too, had his detractors, but the overwhelming majority of citizens felt a deep affection for him, and his passing brought nation-wide grief. When Victor issued a record of "Nearer, My God, To Thee," sung by Richard J. Jose, in October, 1906, the supplement said that the song:

"Of late years . . . has been much associated with the memory of our late President McKinley, whose favorite hymn it was. It is said that with his last breath he tried once more to sing the beautiful words. The day of his funeral at Canton, all trains, trolleys, and machinery in the United States were stopped for five minutes, and 'Nearer, My God, to Thee' was sung in nearly every church in the land."

McKinley was a truly beloved man



"THAT GIRL" QUARTET. This photo of the singing group is made from the cover of the sheet music of "Peggy Gray," a song recorded on a United States Everlasting cylinder. It also was published in Victor and Columbia record supplements and catalogs.

who was to become, in later years, the victim of slander by "historians" who were not even alive when he was killed.

Photos of the Euterpean Quartet members were copied with a picture of McKinley, on the sheet music cover of "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" and made me wish I had owned it in time to use it with my article. Then the thought occurred that I could write about women's singing groups and use that cover as an illustration. True, the Euterpean ladies didn't make records; however HOBBIES readers probably would like to see what those four long inactive singers looked like. And I also could use pictures of "That Girl Quartet" and other singing groups.

Hence, this article. But if I hadn't wanted to share my picture of the Euterpeans with other collectors it most likely would not have occurred to me to write about feminine singing ensembles.

### II. Some Minor Groups

So far as I know, no commercial records had been made by women's quartets at the time the Euterpean singers won brief acclaim. In those days, even recorded solos by women,

particularly sopranos, usually came out as a screech or a squawk.

Some time around 1896 Berliner made some seven-inch discs by the Alice Nielsen Double Quartet, but I assume the octet was composed of both male and female vocalists. A copy of one of the records, "The Bridge," has a note signed by Miss Nielsen pasted on its back. The Nashville, Tenn., girl, who began as a light opera star and went on to win grand opera laurels, said:

"I regret that I neglected to sign the records recently made by me for the Gram-o-phone, and hasten to send this line of assurance, for the benefit of those who may be interested, that the records purporting to be mine were made by me personally. Very respectfully, Alice Nielsen."

One owner of this record said it was so bad that when playing it he could never make up his mind whether to laugh or to cry.

Possibly the first records by an all-female ensemble were three issued by Victor in February, 1903, which must have been recorded more than 70 years ago. They were sung by the Paloma Quartet, an organization about whose personnel I know nothing. They were announced thus:

"Although the record of a quartet of women's voices has long been regarded

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SANG AT PRESIDENT'S FUNERAL. The Euterpean Women's Quartet sang at the funeral service for President William McKinley in September, 1901. Their pictures, and that of the President, are copied from the cover of a 1901 sheet music edition of "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere."

E. O. Excell, its publisher, was a well-known gospel hymn singer and composer. He made a few records for Homer Rodeheaver's Rainbow discs.

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as an impossibility, we have succeeded in producing some pleasing records—not loud but very good quality."

The discs were No 1887, "La Paloma" (the Spanish song from which the Quartet must have taken its name); 1889, "Medley of Popular Songs," the most interesting sounding title of the three; and 1890, "German Song — 'The Waterfall.'" (Wonder what No. 1888 was? and what songs were in that medley?).

A few years ago an Ohio reader of HOBBIES saw a statement by me that I had never heard any of these records and doubted that any copies had survived, and kindly sent me one of "The Waterfall." It has a spoken announcement at the beginning by a deep-voiced gentleman whose tones sound much like those of S. H. Dudley, but the enunciation is perhaps, more like William F. Hooley's.

The record is not exactly a thing of beauty. There is a suspicion of pitch waver, the words are rather silly, and the tune is nothing to brag about, but the recording is still surprisingly good for 1902. Prominent in the harmonizing is a contralto who sounds like a masculine bass.

After this I was not able to trace a women's quartet record until Edison in February, 1907, issued a two-minute cylinder, No. 9460, of that perennial standby, "Kentucky Babe." The artists were the Vassar Girls Quartet, who were identified later as Katherine Armstrong and Lovira Taft, sopranos, and Florence Fiske and E. Eleanor Patterson, contraltos. *The New Phonogram* write-up said:

"A selection by a quartet of women is a new feature in Edison Records, this being the first ever put out by this company. This quartet is well known on the vaudeville stage. Its members have been brought together with special reference to the harmonizing qualities of their voices. The artists have been fortunate in selecting 'Kentucky Babe' for their initial presentation, for it fits their voices finely and they could hardly fail of success in any good selection. They sing without accompaniment. Adam Geibel wrote the music and Richard Henry Buck the words."

Geibel was a blind musician. Buck penned the lyrics for several popular songs that have become classics, including Theodore Morse's "Dear Old Girl" and "Where the Southern Roses Grow." E. Eleanor Patterson later was to become an Edison staff artist, although the Vassar Girls Quartet made no more records.

There is a photograph at the Edison National Historic Site in West Orange, N.J., of a group called "We Girls" Quartet, in which Miss Patterson and Margaret Keyes are identified, but the other women were not. Afterwards Edison issued two records by a "We Girls" Quartet, but, as will be shown, this was a different ensemble.

Moving up now to 1912, in March of that year, Edison issued a cylinder by another women's group. This was a four-minute Amberol No. 941, "Pussy's in the Well," and the singers

(Continued on page 118)

## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

called themselves the Manhattan Ladies' Quartet. This was the *New Phonogram's* comment:

"The old familiar nursery rhyme in an unique musical garb. A quartet of female voices is always a novelty. This organization, composed of Irene Cummings, first soprano; Mabel Meade Davis, second soprano; Annie Laurie McCorkle, first alto, and Anna Winkoop, second alto, is a favorite one in the East. The first Edison Record by these artists is highly enjoyable, and is greatly enhanced by orchestral accompaniment. Music, George B. Nevin."

This is the type of record that one ordinarily would consider of only limited interest and likely to be a "dud." It was successful enough, however, to be reissued in 1913 on Blue Amberol No. 1905.

### III. "That Girl" Quartet's Victor Records

Now we come to the most successful women's recording ensemble, the oddly named "That Girl" Quartet. Just how the ladies happened to choose this designation is not authentically known, at least by me, but one story says that when they were to report for their first concert engagement, they had not yet decided on a name. They were a few minutes late, and somebody remarked, "I wonder what's happened to that girl quartet?" The singers overheard the comment just as they were entering and immediately decided to call themselves "That Girl" Quartet. The story may, or may not, be true.

Nomenclature aside, they were a success, and late in 1910 Victor signed them to a contract. They were Harriet Keyes, soprano; Allie Thomas soprano; Presis Thompson, contralto, and Helen Summers, contralto. The first "That Girl" Quartet record was issued in January, 1911. That month's Victor supplement contained a photograph of the "girls," like the larger one shown with this article. The description of their recording, a raging "Indian Song" hit, "Silver Bell," which was coupled with "Honey Love Me All The Time," by a vaudeville comedienne, Lois Fox, read:

"For some unknown reason a successful women's quartet is one of the rarest of novelties. (Some mere man has said it is because they can never agree who shall be the star!) The Victor, however, has discovered an organization which has achieved a well deserved success, and now offers the first of a series of records of popular and standard quartets."

"Silver Bell" is one of the big successes of 1910 and this fine record will doubtless be as popular as the Peerless reproduction, especially as it is accompanied by a pretty little dinky song, cleverly given by Miss Fox, whose work as an entertainer is well known."

The first paragraph of this description was printed in the complete Victor catalog for the next half dozen years or so. "That Girl's" record of "Silver Bell" was popular—any recording of Percy Wenrich's Indian song classic would have been—but it was handicapped by competing with an already issued male voiced version by the Peerless Quartet, which was more to the taste of the average record buyer.



EDISON VERSION. This picture of "That Girl" Quartet is taken from the Edison publication, *The New Phonogram*, for June, 1911. It is much the same as the larger one shown elsewhere in this issue except that the two women in the center have changed places.

The Peerless' interpretation remained in the catalog under two couplings through 1919, and then in one until after electrical recording was introduced in 1925, but the one by "That Girl" Quartet was dropped in 1920. Probably the weak side by Lois Fox, who made no more records, impaired its popularity.

As for the Peerless offering, until 1920 you could take your choice of No. 16646, on which it was coupled with "In the Gloaming," by Will Oakland and the American Quartet, or of 16927, combined with "Winter," by the Haydn Quartet. After 1920 you could get it only with the latter coupling.

Speaking of the statement that women's quartets never could agree who was to be the star, if "That Girl" had a star, Harriet Keyes (I don't know whether she pronounced her name as *Keys* or *Kize*) was it. For a time she was a member of the Victor Light Opera Company. She also made a few solo records for Zonophone, and perhaps some of the other smaller recording firms. Almost a decade after the Quartet's first Victor records were announced, she was given an Edison "voice trial." I often have wondered if she were related to Margaret Keyes, the contralto.

The Victor catalog did not say who

the Quartet members were. I obtained that information a comparatively few years ago from a copy of *The New Phonogram*. As a child I used to study the photo that appeared in the Victor catalog and try to identify the singers.

The first woman (clad, like all the ladies, in a white frock and white hat and with a white parasol) puzzled me. I couldn't make her look like my conception of Oliver Kline, but thought she might be Lucy Isabelle Marsh. The second I took to be Elsie Baker, or perhaps Marguerite Dunlap, but I had no doubt as to the third and fourth being Elizabeth Wheeler and Helen Clark, because there seemed to be a strong resemblance to them in other pictures.

Of course I couldn't have been more wrong! The singer on the extreme left, I can tell now, by comparing the picture with one of the Light Opera Company, was Miss Keyes. But I can't be sure which of the remaining three, who seem never to have tried to make solo records, is Miss Thomas, which Miss Thompson, and which Miss Summers. One reason for my uncertainty will be explained later.

In February, 1911, the Quartet was represented, on No. 16703, with another favorite number in their repertoire, "Honeymooning, Honey, in Bombay." It was coupled with a typical Collins and Harlan "coon" duet, "Slip On Your Gingham Gown."

In March, on single-faced record No. 5827, the Quartet sang one of the great hits of the day, "Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey." This was also rendered, in Negro dialect, by Collins and Harlan. The supplement said:

"This tuneful number, which is one of the new additions to 'Madame Sherry,' is growing in popularity so rapidly that it bids fair to become the hit of the year. To supply the inevitable demand for records of this charming song, it is offered this month in both single and double styles—the women's quartet furnishing a thoroughly musical version which makes an unusually attractive record; while those who prefer a comedy version are referred to the double-faced reproduction by Collins and Harlan."

As it later turned out, "Alexander's Ragtime Band" was "the hit" of 1911.

The comedy interpretation proved more popular than the Quartet's. The latter sold well, however, and was coupled in 1913 with "Cuddle Up A Little Closer, Lovey Mine." sung by Edna Brown (Elsie Baker) and James F. Harrison (Frederick Wheeler).

I do not mean to comment individually on each "That Girl" record. The Quartet's Victor recording covered a span of exactly three years, from January, 1911, through January, 1914. Many of their discs were good sellers, some sold moderately well, and others didn't "get off the ground."

A complete list appears at the end of this article. Probably the best sellers were "Silver Bell," "Put Your Arms Around Me," "On San Francisco Bay," "Kentucky Babe" (handicapped, however, by its more expen-

## RECORDING ARTISTS

sive 12-inch size and a weak coupling); "Answer," also handicapped by its 12-inch size; "Down at Mammy Jinny's," "My Little Persian Rose," "We Have Much To Be Thankful For," and "When It's Springtime in Virginia."

The sales of "Mammy Jinny's," "Persian Rose," "We Have Much," and "Springtime in Virginia," were aided materially by being doubled with equally or more popular songs such as "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag," "Sympathy," "If I Said Please," and "I Love You, California."

"Weak sisters," according to my reckoning, were "Nightingale," "Night Time's the Right Time," "Haying Time," "Make Me Love You," and "I Want to be Somebody's Baby Girl," which was probably the poorest seller of the lot. The remainder fit into the "fair to good seller" classification.

It appears probable that the Quartet had a three-year Victor contract, which was not renewed when most of their later records fell into the "fair" or "poor" sales class. As perhaps was to be expected, "Kentucky Babe" proved the most consistent seller over the years and remained in the catalog until 1924 when the name of "That Girl" Quartet disappeared.

## IV. Other "That Girl" Records

The Quartet's contract apparently was not an exclusive one, for in May, 1911, Edison issued a two-minute Standard cylinder by the ladies of "Honeymooning, Honey, in Bombay," which they already had sung for Victor. Following is the *New Phonogram's* description:

"... The first Edison Record made by 'That Girl' Quartet, a well-known organization, very successful in vaudeville and in high class concert work. Their repertoire includes both standard and popular numbers, of which latter this song with its pretty, lilting melody is a prime favorite. The voices of the singers—first and second sopranos, contralto and alto—are finely balanced, and the quality of their work can safely be judged from this initial Record, which we feel sure will be appreciated as much for its musical qualities as for the novelty of owning a Record made by an entirely female quartet. . . ."

In June, the *Phonogram* published a picture of the Quartet, which is virtually the same as the one Victor used except that the two women in the center have changed places. This makes it difficult to identify the singers by their positions.

Going by the Victor photo, which is the same as the larger one shown with this article, I would take it that they are in order, with the high voices to the left and the deeper ones to the right: Harriet Keyes, Allie Thomas, Presis Thompson, and Helen Summers. But if the person who identified them in a later issue of the *Phonogram* was looking at the photo Edison used the order may be Keyes, Thompson, Thomas, and Summers.

Also in June, Columbia issued double-faced record No. A1001, both sides of which were sung by the Savoy Girl Quartet. I have no way of knowing positively, but I suspect this was



"DOUBLE QUARTET" LEADER. This picture of Alice Nielsen is from a Columbia record poster of about 1911. Miss Nielsen, who later became a noted grand opera singer, had a "double quartet" that made Berliner records in the 1890's.

really "That Girl" Quartet, and Victor consented to their singing for Columbia only in "disguise." Here is the Columbia supplement description:

"It is so seldom that a thoroughly acceptable women's quartet can be found for recording purposes that this new Columbia Double-Disc is certain to attract much attention for its fine balance of voices, its unusually musical blending and the fine organization work displayed. No one who has heard Leslie Stuart's charming new musical comedy, 'The Slim Princess' . . . can fail to be interested in the selection, 'Let Me Live and Stay in Dixieland,' which has been given clamorous applause at every performance, forming indeed the most spectacular part of the production. It is assuredly one of the cleverest songs of the kind ever written. The selection coupled with this, 'Don't Wake Me Up, I Am Dreaming,' bids fair to be the great sentimental ballad success of the present season. . . ."

The names of the composers of "Let Me Live and Stay" are given erroneously as Price and King. The song was written, actually, by the musical comedy stars, Elizabeth Brice and Charles King, who recorded it and a few other numbers for Victor.

Somewhere about this time, "That Girl" recorded "Peggy Gray" on United States Everlasting cylinder No. 1274. As their photo appeared on the sheet music of this song, it is strange they didn't record it for Victor or Edison. Perhaps they wanted to, but the Victor and Edison artist and repertoire departments thought the ballad wouldn't "go." It was not a hit.

In May, 1911, the Quartet made another appearance in the Edison cylinder list. They sang on four-minute Amberol record No. 831 a very pretty song, "The Owl in the Old Oak Tree," which Walter Van Brunt (who died, aged 78, April 11, 1971) and John Bieling recorded as a duet for Victor. Said the *New Phonogram*:

"The first Amberol Record by this favorite organization of female singers . . . 'The Owl in the Old Oak Tree' is a dainty little number, particularly as arranged for this record, and is sung with excellent taste and harmony. The repetition of the refrain by the orchestra with the introduction of a dance effect furnishes a pleasing variation."

The "Owl" song was quite success-

ful, so much so that Edison decided to relist it in 1913 as Blue Amberol cylinder No. 2113.

In April, 1912, Columbia issued its only "That Girl" Quartet record which appeared under the ensemble's name. It coupled "Honey Love," which the Quartet had sung for Victor almost a year before, with one of the prettiest popular songs ever written, Percy Wenrich's "Moonlight Bay." Since the "Bay" side was sung by Dolly Connolly, who in private life was Mrs. Wenrich, the record should have had a big sale. Here is the description of the Quartet side:

"The work of 'That Girl' Quartet has of late attracted such attention by its excellence as to warrant the favorable consideration of Columbia recording experts, whose standard of criticism in musical affairs is perhaps the most rigorous in the world. The ensemble of this quartet is really remarkable and the popular little plantation serenade which they have sung for us is a selection which shows the fine blending of their concerted work to perfection."

This was high praise but there were no more appearances by "That Girl" Quartet in Columbia lists. The supplement showed a picture of the "girls" which was the same as the one used by Victor and that was on the sheet music cover.

## V. The Quartet's Last Records

After Victor issued "When It's Spring Time in Virginia" in January, 1914—the month that brought a distinctive change in the design of Victor labels—the name of "That Girl" Quartet disappeared from record supplements for almost a decade. Then, at some time in 1923, after the price of Blue Amberol cylinders had dropped from 60 to 35 cents, the Quartet surprisingly popped up in an Edison supplement and sang an obscure song, "I'm Yours With Love and Kisses."

For many years that record—I have a copy, and the one on the Blue Amberol is indistinct and squeaky—puzzled me. When was it made? Because it contained two levels of surface noise I could tell it was dubbed from a Diamond Disc. This meant it originally was sung some time after the process of dubbing cylinders from discs began, early in 1915, but still that didn't indicate the year.

The song was so little known I couldn't date the record approximately by the time the music was published. However, I guessed it was made somewhere between 1916 and 1919 and, like hundreds of other Edison recordings, was held back until any chance of its becoming a popular seller was past.

Finally, when I began to make notes for this article, I wrote to Mrs. Leah S. Burt, the assistant archivist of the Edison National Historic Site (formerly the Edison laboratory) at West Orange, N.J., and asked what she could tell me about any Edison records by "That Girl" Quartet. Always cooperative and courteous, Mrs. Burt wrote me on March 3, 1972:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: . . . On the cards made at the recording studio, the following information is available:

(Continued on next page)



## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

## "THAT GIRL QUARTET"

"Title, 'My Flower Girl'; Serial No., 5998; Date, Feb. 5, 1918; Passed: Hold; Blue — Comments, Hold. Edison.

"Title, 'I'm Yours With Love and Kisses'; Serial No., 6002; Date, Feb. 6, 1918; Passed: Hold; Blue, 4730; Comments, Passed, Edison.

"On the title cards for the various songs, only the following can be found:

"My Flower Girl," Pierce-Basketette-Little, published by Leo Feist, New York; passed by R. D. Disc; "That Girl" Quartet, serial No. 5998.

"I'm Yours With Love and Kisses," Herbert Spencer, published by Jerome H. Remick & Co., passed by Recording Department. Disc, "That Girl" Quartet, serial No. 6002; Blue Amberol, serial No. 4730.

"Miss Harriet Keyes, soprano, was the only one of the group that made a voice trial for Edison. Her voice trial was on Jan. 3, 1918, with these comments by Mr. Edison: 'Pretty good voice.'

"There was one disc record made by 'That Girl' Quartet, but never issued, (ED-643): serial No. 6002, 'I'm Yours With Love and Kisses,' paired with serial No. 6946-B, 'Up Above the Clouds,' Yvette Rugel, recording artist.

"We have no record as to the members of the Quartet: Helen Summers, Presis Thompson, Allie Thomas are mentioned nowhere in our files . . .

"Among our photographs of recording artists, there is one photograph of an all-female quartet, labeled as follows: 'We Girls' Quartet, or 'The Girl Quartet,' Eleanor Patterson and ? Keyes, the other two members unidentified.

"I sincerely hope that this meager information will help you in your forthcoming article. With best wishes, I remain, Sincerely yours, Leah S. Burt."

I suspect it may be in order to clarify the chart given in Mrs. Burt's letter. The serial number, 5998, for "My Flower Girl," is the number of the Diamond Disc master record.

It was recorded on Tuesday, February 5, 1918, but never was issued on either the disc or a Blue Amberol. Mr. Edison had ordered it "held," so there must have been something unsatisfactory about it to him. "R.D." stood for the Recording Department, which had approved it.

"I'm Yours With Love and Kisses" had Diamond Disc serial No. 6002. This means that three master records were made by other artists between it and "My Flower Girl." It was sung on Wednesday, February 6, 1918.

After first being ordered held, Mr. Edison eventually passed it and, some five years later, it made its debut on a Blue Amberol. Farther down in Mrs. Burt's letter, we learn that the intention also was to issue it as a disc, paired with a number sung in 1919 by a vaudeville artist, Yvette Rugel, but this was never done.

"Pierce, Basketette and Little" were the writers of that completely unsuccessful song, "My Flower Girl," and Herbert Spencer composed the equally unknown "I'm Yours." The words probably were by his wife, Fleta Jan Brown, who wrote most of his lyrics.

Spencer was a composer of considerable distinction and was known among his fellow practitioners as a "clean writer" — that is, one who always wrote his own original tunes and didn't steal them from some older

song. However, around 1925, he produced a successful number called "Me Neenyah" described as "a Spanish serenade," with the title meaning "My Little One."

He was chagrined to find, after it was published, however, that its melody was, note for note, the same as that of a song which had been issued in Germany a considerable time earlier, but which he had never heard. The identical melodies were purely coincidental, but Spencer's publishers had to settle a damage claim from the German Music Company.

The "all-female" quartet, with E. Eleanor Patterson and Margaret (not Harriet) Keyes, which Mrs. Burt mentions, seems to have been an early version of another group that afterwards made Edison records under the "We Girls" name. Miss Patterson, you may remember, was also a contralto in the Vassar Girls Quartet.

The ladies appear to have made their final recordings of sentimental ballads at a singularly unpropitious time. In February, 1918, the American people had plunged wholeheartedly into participation in World War I, and the successful musical numbers were nearly all war songs. They included "Over There," "Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, France," "Where Do We Go From Here?" "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and innumerable others. In those stirring times there was little sale for "sugary" love tunes. And, so far as I know, after 1918, there were never any more records by "That Girl" Quartet.

VI. Jimmy Martindale's  
Reminiscences

My dear friend of 35 years standing, "Jimmy" Martindale, spends most of his time nowadays at Daytona Beach, Fla., where he is in retirement with his wife, Ruth. For many years he lived in Brooklyn and operated the Martindale-Hubbell law directory business which came to him as a family inheritance, but in his early 20's he had theatrical ambitions and appeared in several stage productions. In one of them he met "That Girl" Quartet!

I recently asked Jimmy to refresh my memory as to how this came about, and he did so to such good effect that I quote from his letter:

"Dear Old Buddy: It was in March, 1919, at the Orpheum Theater in Newark, N.J., where I was making my maiden appearance as a professional actor with the Corse Payton Stock Company. I was enacting the role of 'Sam' in the famous rural drama, 'Way Down East.'

"Besides doing the above mentioned 'bit' in the first act, I also filled in as assistant stage manager, which kept me busy, among other things, ringing the curtain up and down.

"As to the girls in the quartet, I didn't actually become aware of them until the last rehearsal of 'Way Down East.' They did not appear in the play proper, but had been engaged by Corse to sing between the acts as sort of an 'added attraction.'

"I had the opportunity of talking with them during the week they were performing and found them most charming and friendly. I remember telling them I was a bit surprised to see them appearing with what was, to say the least, a

second run attraction, and one of them remarked, 'Well, we must eat.'

"I do not intend to use 'second run' in a derogatory sense at all. Let us just say that the company wasn't of Broadway caliber. But, then, the Payton companies never strove to be, anyway.

"The ladies were 'thrilled' that I had so many of their records (in fact, all they made for Victor) and said they would love to autograph one for me, but I never got a record to them.

"Incidentally, the 'girls' looked, as the British would say, a bit 'long in the tooth,' even in 1919, so I would assume if they are still extant they would be by this time, as Arthur Collins said, (in 'Bake Dat Chicken Pie'), 'very old ladies.'

"Weren't their recording days about over at that time (1919)? . . . I vividly recall that their vocalizing was just as sweet and harmonious as it was on their records, and I stood in rapt attention in the wings as they performed. . . ."

It is possible, but not probable, that some of the Quartet members are still "extant." The odds, however, are against it. Consider. It now has been 62 years since their first records were made, and in order to have achieved a reputation they must have started singing together a considerable time before that.

Say they began in 1907—that would be 65 years ago. And, since probably none of the members were under 25 when their association began, they must now be 90 or more, if still alive. It would be interesting to know what happened in their later years.

Were any of them married during their singing era, or did they take husbands afterwards? I wish I knew, but I don't. I at least hope that if they are no longer with us their last years were happy.

In a subsequent article, we will consider the Homestead Trio, which made many Edison records, beginning in 1917. I also will give incidental mention to some other women's singing groups.

## THE END

VICTOR RECORDS BY  
"THAT GIRL" QUARTET

- (January, 1911, through January, 1914)
- 16695 Silver Bell. Reverse: Honey, Love Me All the Time (Lois Fox).
  - 16703 Honeymooning, Honey, in Bombay. Reverse: Slip on Your Gingham Gown (Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan).
  - 5827 Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey.
  - 5833 Nightingale.
  - 16848 Honey Love. Reverse: On San Francisco Bay.
  - 35188 Kentucky Babe. Reverse: Knee-Deep in June (Henry Allan Price).
  - 16880 Hold Me Just a Little Closer. Reverse: Don't Wake Me Up, I Am Dreaming (Walter Van Brunt).
  - 35192 Answer. Reverse: The Fencing Master—Ah, Yes I Love You (Elizabeth and William Wheeler).
  - 16886 Night Time's the Right Time. Reverse: Peek-a-boo, Mister Moon, Peek-a-boo.
  - 16906 Haying Time. Reverse: I'm Just Pining for You (Van Brunt).
  - 16990 Make Me Love You Like I Never Loved Before. Reverse: I Want a Regular Pal for a Gal (Van Brunt).
  - 17032 Senorita—A Cuban Romance. Reverse: In Dixie Land With Dixie Lou.
  - 17118 Down At Mammy Jinny's. Reverse: When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo (Collins).
  - 17146 My Bombay Maid. Reverse: Way Down South (Heidelberg Quintet).
  - 17219 Rosalie. Reverse: Under Many Flags—Temple Bells (Lyric Quartet).
  - 17267 Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey.

## RECORDING ARTISTS

- Reverse: The Three Twins—Cuddle Up a Little Closer, Lovey Mine (Edna Brown & James F. Harrison).
- 17270 My Little Persian Rose. Reverse: The Firefly—Sympathy (Helen Clark & Van Brunt).
- 17409 We Have Much to be Thankful For. Reverse: If I Said Please (Ada Jones—Billy Murray).
- 17421 I Want to be Somebody's Baby Girl. Reverse: Love Me While the Lovin' is Good (Peerless Quartet).
- 17437 When It's Springtime in Virginia. Reverse: I Love You, California (Elsie Baker).
- COLUMBIA RECORD (1912)
- A1128 Honey Love. Reverse: Moonlight Bay (Dolly Connolly).
- EDISON STANDARD TWO-MINUTE CYLINDER (May, 1911)
- 10494 Honeymooning, Honey. in Bombay. EDISON AMBEROL FOUR-MINUTE CYLINDER (November, 1911)
- 831 Owl in the Old Oak Tree.
- EDISON BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS (1913-1923)
- 2113 Owl in the Old Oak Tree.
- 1730 I'm Yours With Love and Kisses. U.S. EVERLASTING CYLINDER
- 1274 Peggy Gray.



## "Tops"

VIRGINIA—Thanks a million for informing me my subscription is expiring. I just can't have that happen, so I'm enclosing my check for \$6.00. This entitles me to another year of information and educational material. I must say HOBBIES is tops on every subject. I highly recommend it to my customers. Yes, I have an antique shop and specialize in dolls. So you see I can't do without it. Keep up the good work—you are helping me and many others who are eager to learn more about our past.

—Margaret L. Smith



## HOBBIES—Number 1

PENNSYLVANIA—We enclose photos for our January ad. Our results have been terrific. We have tried others but you are Number 1.

—Richard Wright



## Weekend Relaxation

ILLINOIS—I would like to tell you at this time how Very Much I enjoy your magazine. You cannot imagine how nice it is to come home from work on Saturday and relax by reading about—Just About Anything! Please accept my five year renewal.

—Wm. Piech



## Satisfied New Reader

CALIFORNIA—I have been a reader of your fine magazine for about four months. now.

—Robert S. Haines



## Improving

TEXAS—Thank you for the reminder. I enclose check for another year of your wonderful magazine. It gets better as the years roll by and I've learned so many things from the fine articles and your advertising.

—Ms Pagett



HE KNEW QUARTET. Jimmy Martindale (right), shown here with Billy Murray (left) and Jim Walsh, appeared with "That Girl" Quartet in a Corse Payton production of "Way Down East."

He was Billy Murray's closest friend during the great comedian's last years. This picture is unjust to Murray, because, from some quirk of lighting or the angle at which it was taken, it makes him appear bald and years older than he actually looked.

"LUCKY JIM, CHRISTY, THE PROFESSOR, POSSY AND JIM WALSH  
AGAIN WISH THE GREAT HOBBIES FAMILY  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR"



1. Just to make sure we don't miss the deadline, the residents of "Plummy's Palace" (also known as "Twisty's Towers") are preparing our annual Christmas & New Year Greetings on August 23, 1972, while our home town of Vinton, Va., is undergoing a sweltering heat wave, to which we may look back longingly in December and January. The first picture shows LUCKY JIM, also known as "Black Power," the patriarch of the Walsh feline family. Apparently he is sniffing for tracks of Santa Claus. Or perhaps he's trying to qualify for a job with the Professor's detective agency.
2. CHRISTY, who always prefers to be called "Twisty," is turning a somersault in glee at the thought that Santa Claus soon will visit her. This picture was taken by Quentin Eggs in September, 1971, but Twisty insists on remaining a kitten and apparently hasn't gained on ounce or grown an inch since she posed for this picture.
3. Shown here are two newcomers to these greetings, Hugh W. Sigmon, a Roanoke, Va., architect, and his venerable cat "Mac." Mr. Sigmon and his wife, "Jackie," are devoted cat lovers. So are their children.
4. PROFESSOR PLUM DUFF WALSH, Ph. D., the intellectual "feline Einstein," is shown at peace in the lap of his "Papa" Jim Walsh. Rumor has it that the Professor, who is famed for his "grouch

poems," accompanied President Nixon to China and Russian as his highest-ranking top secret adviser, and also was active in the Democratic and Republican national conventions. He recently sent some of his poems to Mrs. Tricia Nixon Cox and received a charming letter of thanks, saying she and the President had enjoyed them together.

5. This young gentleman is one of the cats' (and POSSY'S) favorite personalities. His name is Ishmeal Foster Wright, but he usually is known as "Ish." He is shown slicing beef liver into cat-sized bites in the Mick-or-Mack meat department where he is employed. After the liver is sliced, LUCKY JIM, TWISTY, THE PROFESSOR, AND POSSY will eat it.
6. Last but anything but least, in their own estimation, are TOP (white) and "FWEE" (orange colored), who live with Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins at Cedar Crest Farm, Rose Hill, Va. They are displaying a sign advocating Professor Walsh for President. But, although he appreciated the compliment, The Professor declined to run as an independent. Finally, in extending good wishes for a Happy New Year, we looked back into the past and are filled with tender memories of cats and dogs that we, and our friends have loved and lost. Through Eternity we will Never Forget!

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## The Homestead Trio and "No Girl" Quartet

By JIM WALSH

### I. "Indiana" And Other Hits

Early in 1917 Thomas A. Edison's recording experts decided they needed a trio of women's voices to sing old-fashioned, sentimental "heart songs." Such musical offerings were loved by a large proportion of Edison record buyers and were especial favorites of Mr. Edison himself.

The ensemble was to be called the Homestead trio. For its members the experts chose three young women with harmoniously blending voices, none of whom had been making records for much more than a year.

All, however, had established themselves as valuable staff artists, contracted to record only for Edison. All made solo records as well as duets with other singers, and all not only had good voices but attractive personalities.

The three were Gladys Rice, first soprano, who was then only 20 or 21 and who is still theatrically active today; the slightly older Betsy Lane Shepherd, second soprano; and Amy Ellerman, contralto. It also was decided that a woman's quartet occasionally would be needed, and this could be managed by adding to the trio a second contralto, Marion Evelyn Cox. The larger group would be called "We Girls" Quartet, a title probably copied from the name of "That Girl" Quartet, whose recording career previously has been discussed.

Before the singers became staff members, they had to make trial recordings approved by Mr. Edison. On July 17, 1915, he wrote, after hearing Miss Rice's test: "Fair voice. Thin. Little scrapey at points. Possibly you could use her." I emphatically do not think the inventor's deafened ears were fair to Gladys Rice.

His remarks about Mrs. Shepherd (the Edison Company often called her Miss, but Shepherd was her married name) were more favorable. On June 1, 1916, Mr. Edison commented: "She has a very good coloratura voice and is very promising." He added a warning, however, that her trial records were not loud enough and must not be issued.

Of these ladies, Miss Rice, as already said, still is living and is in



"SECOND EDITION." This picture, reproduced from a 1921 Edison Amberola Monthly, was taken after ELIZABETH SPENCER (left) succeeded GLADYS RICE as a member. AMY ELLERMAN is in the center and BETSY LANE SHEPHERD at the right.

good health. Mrs. Shepherd and Miss Ellerman are dead. I have no information concerning the latter years of Miss Cox. Brief biographical sketches will be given of them later, as well as of Elizabeth Spencer who took Miss Rice's place as the trio's higher voiced soprano in 1921. But first their records must be considered.

The trio's recording career had an auspicious start. Their first Re-Creations were listed in the 80,000 series, roughly equivalent to Victor's Blue Label, and sold at first for \$1.50. When prices advanced after our entrance into World War I the cost became \$1.70, then was increased to \$1.85, but dropped back to \$1.50 at the beginning of 1922.

One disc went into the most expensive category, 82,000, which corresponded to the Victor Red Seal, sold at first for \$2, later increased to \$2.25, and still later returned to the

\$2 level. And their first four records all were among the Edison "best sellers," though in at least two instances this remarkable showing, I think, was caused by their offerings having extremely popular numbers on the reverse sides.

Homestead "Girls," in Edison publicity is in *Diamond Points* for June, 1917, when Diamond Disc dealers were told: "The Homestead Trio of female voices is one of the finest organizations of its kind in the country. Their first Re-Creation - 'Indiana' - is scheduled for the 72nd supplement.

(Edison in those days had the annoying habit of numbering, but not dating, record supplements, so it's hard to tell exactly when this disc was made public, but it probably was in July.)

That month's *Diamond Points* said:

"The Homestead Trio is a new name to you. Who are they?" asks a dealer in



**FIRST—**  
Miss Shepherd sang "In the Gloaming." The New Edison stood on the stage by her side

*185 times —*

**O**NE hundred and eighty-five times, Miss Betsy Lane Shepherd has stood on a public concert platform, and sung the old heart-songs with all the exquisite fervor of her art. One hundred and eighty-five times, a New Edison has stood by her side, and brought her RE-CREATED voice into direct comparison with her living voice. One hundred and eighty-five times, her audience has found no difference between the two voices, either in quality, or in feeling, or in emotional influence.

**A**T Dallas, Texas, on April 26, 1920, Miss Shepherd, who is a famous concert soprano, stood before her 185th audience. She started to sing:

*"In the gloaming, oh! my darling—"*

With a soft, rounded loveliness, the beloved melody filled the auditorium. Pulsing through its theme was the soul of a

great artist. Its message reached the hearts of the hushed listeners, and sped their imaginations back to cherished memories.

It was the magic of music!

Suddenly Miss Shepherd's lips went absolutely still. But her lovely voice went smoothly on—

*"—it was best to leave you thus—"*

The audience was puzzled. Then it awoke. Miss Shepherd's voice was now coming from the New Edison. For the 185th time, an audience had heard the Betsy Lane Shepherd test—and had been unable to tell the difference between her living voice and her RE-CREATED voice.

More than 4000 other audiences have heard more than fifty other vocalists and instrumentalists make this same test of

**The NEW EDISON**  
*"The Phonograph with a Soul"*

"TONE TEST" ARTIST. Shown here is the first half of a two-page 1920 Edison ad depicting BETSY LANE SHEPHERD singing in direct comparison with one of her records.

## Music Boxes

Antique Swiss Music Boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW SPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those who know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

Music Box and Bird Cage Bellows Restored and Birds Reforeathered  
**Barrington—GEORGE A. BIDDEN—Rhode Island 02806**

tfo

Please mention HOBBIES when replying to advertisements

Arkansas. Who do you think? Betsy Lane Shepherd, Amy Ellerman, and Gladys Rice. If you have ever heard anything sweeter than their "Indiana," please notify the editor. "Indiana" is another "On the Banks of the Wabash." Take our tip and get your order in promptly."

The statement that "Indiana" was another "Banks of the Wabash" contained more than a grain of truth. In fact, it was an open and undisguised imitation of the older song.

Ballard Macdonald wrote the words and James F. Hanley the music. They evidently had in mind the popular song writer's adage that the best way to write a hit is to turn out something that is not a slavish copy of an old tune, but that, nevertheless, will remind the hearer pleasantly of an earlier success.

Almost 20 years before, Paul Dresser had written "On the Banks of the Wabash," which had become an enduring classic. Macdonald and Hanley evidently decided the time had come for another ballad in praise of Indiana. Four years earlier, Macdonald had represented himself, in writing the words of "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," as longing for the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Now he quite as easily became nostalgic for the flat lands of Indiana.

As Dresser had mentioned the moonlight on the wabash, the fragrance of new-mown hay, and candle-lights gleaming through the sycamores; so did Macdonald; and Hanley even "lifted" a few bars of the "Wabash" music for the refrain of his song. Compare the refrains of the two ballads and you will see how they resemble in sentiment.

First, consider "On the Banks of the Wabash":

"Oh, the moonlight's fair tonight along the Wabash.  
From the fields there comes the breath of new-mown hay.  
Through the sycamores the candlelights are gleaming,  
On the banks of the Wabash far away."

Now check "Indiana":

"Back home again in Indiana, and it seems that I can see  
The gleaming candlelight still shining bright through the sycamores for me.  
The new-mown hay sends all its fragrance from the fields I used to roam.  
When I dream about the moonlight on the Wabash then I long for my Indiana home."

Despite the frank resemblance, "Indiana" was not a "steal," and many hearers considered its melody even lovelier than that of the earlier song. An immediate hit, today it is enshrined, like "On the Banks of the Wabash," as an American classic.

It did so well that seven years later Macdonald and Hanley reworked the theme by writing "At the End of the Road," which speaks of "going back to Indiana." This, too, was a success and was recorded by all the companies, but fell short of equalling the acclaim of "Indiana."

The Homestead Trio's record was one of the 300 best selling Edison discs. Its popularity, however, probably was caused to a large extent by its being coupled with the first record

(Continued on page 118)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Edison issued by Vernon Dalhart, William H. Gardner, and Caro Roma's "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin' Caroline?"

Dalhart had made voice tests and had been announced as an Edison artist in 1915, but this 1917 record was first to reach the market. He had been recording for Columbia and Emerson, but himself said that "Caroline" was the first record on which the true quality of his voice was caught.

In my opinion his interpretation is the best ever recorded by anybody of this charming song. It shows Dalhart is shown, not in his later role as the greatest singer of country music, mostly of a pseudo-commercial type, but as a beautiful voiced tenor interpreting a Negro dialect to the life.

There is no vaudeville or minstrel imitation of the Negro accent in his work, but his pronunciation is precisely like that of the black friends he had known in Texas. The record is a masterpiece.

The envelope in which "Indiana" was sold contained the following description:

"The Homestead Trio is composed of three artists who are each popular as soloists. This organization aims to present the old-fashioned 'homey' sort of pieces—real heart-songs of which the present selection is a fine example. In this rendition, notice how the strains of 'On the Banks of the Wabash' are introduced. Also listen for the harp that has several beautiful passages. This whole presentation is in sharp contrast to the garish tunes that are generally in vogue."

The trio's version of "Indiana" is delightful, but although "women's lib" advocates probably will call me a "male, chauvinist pig" for this, I prefer the male voiced rendition by the Sterling Trio (Campbell, Burr, and Meyer) on Victor and Pathé records. But then I personally don't think any women's group generates as fine harmony as does a splendid male trio or quartet.

Blue Amberol cylinders could be turned out more rapidly and were made with less care than the Re-Creations, so they usually were on the market before the disc version of the same selection was available, but that appears not to have been true of "Indiana." It was not listed as a cylinder until September, 1917.

Even though "Indiana" was a resounding success, the Homestead Trio was not heard from again on the discs until almost a year later, when "Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight," one of the big war-time song hits, was offered. The Blue Amberol version came out in June.

In November, 1917, however, the cylinder of "Old Virginny Days," had appeared. The disc of the tear-jerker "Baby's Prayer" had another Dalhart number, "Lorraine (My Beautiful Al-sace Lorraine)" for its "other-side" companion. It is splendidly sung, but



**LEADING COMEDIAN.** This picture of BILLY MURRAY, duet partner for GLADYS RICE on Edison, Victor, and other records, appeared in Edison Amberola Monthly for March, 1920. "The Denver Nightingale," as Murray was called, was then the biggest selling recording artist and was considered the world's most popular comedian.

purists will find amusement in the fact that Dalhart mispronounces "legions" as "legends." He sings, "Come, you legends to command."

The disc of "Old Virginny Days" was issued in the summer of 1918, and became one of the 300 best Edison sellers, I think, chiefly because a more popular song, "When I'm Gone You'll Soon Forget," was sung by Helen Clark and Walter Van Brunt on its reverse. This mournful ballad was so successful on Edison that it compelled all other companies to issue "cover" versions, and the Victor became one of the best sellers the Peerless Quartet ever had. After electrical recording came in they had to remake it.

Theodore Morse, who composed the music of "Old Virginny Days," visited Virginia as a member of the Peerless Record Makers in the spring of 1917, and, as a Virginian, I should like to believe that the visit inspired the song. The words, however, were written by William H. Gardner, who had done those of "Caroline." I can't think of any of the hundreds of songs by Teddy Morse for which he wrote his own words.

The fourth disc by the Homestead Trio had their singing on both sides. This disc was issued in the 82000 series and was the one that cost \$2.25. It coupled Ivor Novello's war-time classic, "Keep the Home Fires Burning," with a less successful Novello song, "The Laddie in Khaki." The record envelope said:

"The Homestead Trio, composed of Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd and Amy Ellerman, makes a specialty of singing a certain type of songs in just a certain style—real heart-songs sung in a heartfelt way that is tremendously

appealing. All three of these artists are well known to Edison owners. They are all equally popular, and to have them sing on one record has already proven a great treat for their many admirers. They made the selection, 'Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight,' one of the most popular numbers ever listed. Have you heard it?"

(Again I stick in my personal "two-cents worth" and say that although the ladies' interpretation of the ditty about the baby's praying at twilight "for her daddy Over There" is good, Henry Burr's solo versions on Victor and other records is better. Nobody could beat our Hank at extracting the last ounce of sentiment from a "tear-jerker!"

Most of the Homestead Trio records that followed their first "big four" showed a declining trend in popularity. They will be discussed in the next section.

## II. Elizabeth Spencer Returns

Among the remaining trio records made by the combination of Rice, Shepherd, and Ellerman, only one calls for special mention. That is "Dusky Lullaby," issued in Blue Amberol form in or about February, 1919.

The disc is interesting because its coupling is "The Glow Worm," Paul Lincke's famous intermezzo set to words. This was the first record by the "We Girls" Quartet.

To anticipate a little, the only other "We Girls" record was a Charles Wakefield Cadman song, "Goodbye, My Baby," issued on a Blue Amberol in August, 1922, and on Diamond Disc No. 50944 at some time that year, it had "Huckleberry Finn," by the Premier Quartet, for its mating.

This, I think, was a characteristic example of Edison's withholding records until their sales value was lost. "Huckleberry Finn" was recorded in 1917, when it came close to being a hit, but who wanted it in 1922 after it almost was forgotten?

In 1920, Gladys Rice, who must have had an exclusive four or five-year contract with Edison, began to sing for other companies. So the issuing of Homestead Trio records came temporarily to an end, perhaps because Miss Rice was so busy with free-lance she no longer had time to participate.

About the middle of 1921, however, Elizabeth Spencer, who had been one of the most popular Edison artists but had left early in 1917 to become exclusive to Victor, returned to her original affiliation and soon was booked for an entire season of tone-testing about the country. Apparently, Elizabeth, who in private life was Mrs. E. B. Southworth and lived in Montclair, N.J., had repented of leaving Edison, since Victor did almost nothing to promote her records and she never gained a Victor following comparable to the one she had on Edison.

Admirers of her Edison records said her Victors were so inferior that if they had not seen her name on the label they would not have known it for the same voice. Regardless of whether this was true, Miss Spen-

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

cer seemed glad to be back with Edison and Edison was glad to have her back. She was named immediately as first soprano of the revived Homestead Trio.

One of the new group's discs, issued toward the end of 1921, about the time Edison changed from black record labels to white, was a revival of an old "sob song," "There's a Mother Always Waiting You at Home, Sweet Home," which James L. Thornton had written in 1903. It probably was recorded under Mr. Edison's orders, and first appeared with a black label, but a white label edition came out almost immediately afterward.

And that brings up a question I often have puzzled about. What became of the huge numbers of black label records the Edison factory and jobbers must have had in stock at the time the switch to white labels was made?

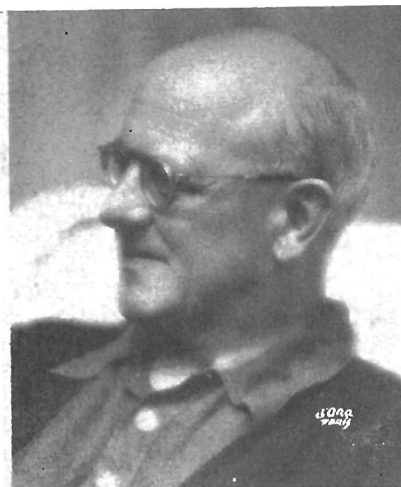
From the beginning of 1922 retail dealers' orders were not filled with anything but white label discs, yet the dealers' orders were not filled with anything but white labels, yet the black labels still must have been around. It has been suggested that the white labels were pasted over old stock with black centers, but, as every Edison collector knows, the white labels peeled off very easily—too easily—yet I never have found a "peeler" with a black label beneath it. And what a job it must have been to print new white labels and make fresh pressings for the thousands of records in the catalog!

It is hard, I think, to see how "There's a Mother Always Waiting" could have any appeal for record buyers other than the most unsophisticated, as the words are crude, only semi-literate, and the tune nothing to brag about. But something made it sell.

For years, as sung by Will Oakland, it had been one of the most popular Edison four-minute cylinders, and in 1924—perhaps inspired by the Edison example—Victor issued it by Lewis James and the Shannon Four. The lyrics told of a country mother who predicted all sorts of dire things if her bumpkin son, "Jim," left the farm—calamities that all came true. But she assured him that: "When friends you haven't any, in your pocket not a penny, there's a mother always waiting you at home, sweet home."

The Prodigal Son returned in rags, laughed at by children and snapped at by dogs and found that Mother had kept her word. She still was waiting. Jim Thornton could do better than this doleful dinge. He did with "My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon," and "When You Were Sweet Sixteen." But the old song was a good seller on both the cylinder and disc.

Also interesting is the fact that the revised trio assisted Thomas Chal-



*To Jim Walsh  
All the best from Plum  
P. G. Wodehouse - Oct 19*

**FAMOUS HUMORIST. P. G. WODEHOUSE**, generally considered the world's foremost author of humorous stories, wrote the words of several duets recorded by Gladys Rice and Billy Murray. These included "I'm So Busy," "Nesting Time in Flatbush," "You Said Something," and the hilarious "Bungalow in Quogue."

Mr. Wodehouse is a regular reader of **HOBBIES**.

mers, the Metropolitan Opera baritone, to sing another of Thomas A. Edison's favorite old-time tear-jerkers, "Do They Think of Me at Home?" It became one of those 300 best-selling Edison discs.

I often have regretted I never had the opportunity to meet Chalmers. The closest I came was on a visit to New York, when Billy Murray and I were taking a walk, and Billy said: "Look over there, going through that door into Radio City, Jim. That's Tom Chalmers."

I looked and, as I remember, saw a rather short, gray-haired man. But I had no chance to speak with him, as I wished I could.

In 1923, the trio helped a musical comedy star, J. Harold Murray (no relation to Billy), to record "Faded Love Letters of Mine." And, in their last record, made in 1925, they were assisting artists to Walter Scanlan (Van Brunt) in a mawkish ballad that had some popularity, "Pal of My Cradle Days." After that Miss Spencer's health began to fail, and there were no more Homestead Trio records.

### III. An "Amberola Monthly" Write-Up

The time has come now to give biographical sketches of the five ladies who sang in the Homestead Trio and "We Girls" Quartet. I think a good way of starting is to quote most of an article that appeared in the *Edison Amberola Monthly* for September, 1921:

"Elizabeth Spencer was born in St. Louis, Mo., a daughter of William Gilpin, at one time Governor of Colorado. (Gilpin was Colorado's territorial Governor in 1861-62, and she was his stepdaughter. —J. W.)

"Though born in St. Louis, most of her young life was spent in Denver. Miss Spencer studied in Paris, under (Jacques) Bouhy, an eminent teacher. Her experiences ranged all the way from vaudeville to musical comedy and concert work. Always she has been a most versatile artist and her voice possesses the unusual quality which enables her to sing equally well in soprano, mezzo soprano and contralto regions. Thomas A. Edison once declared that he thought Elizabeth Spencer had the finest soprano voice in the country."

(Here I stop quoting long enough to say that since Elizabeth Spencer's life and recording career were detailed in **HOBBIES** for August and September, 1951, I shall not repeat information already given. Although she was Mrs. Southworth during most of her recording career, when she began singing professionally she was married to Otis B. Spencer, whom she divorced in 1912, and always afterwards used the Spencer name. She died April 22, 1930.

"Betsy Lane Shepherd is of New England ancestry, although born in Pennsylvania. All her musical training was American. Both Frank La Forge and Sergei Klubansky taught her. For a time she was the soprano soloist in the Calvary Methodist Church of New York. Betsy Lane Shepherd is positive that if the opportunity were created Americans would prove to have as much natural genius for music as any other people. She insists genius (is) largely a matter of hard work and perseverance, anyway.

"Other countries," she declares, "provide the best teaching possible for children who show any musical talent. America neglects this. Many poor children who might become great artists never have the slightest encouragement from anybody. There is a child in almost every community who has every quality to make a great artist, but lacks the opportunity for education. There is only one way to give that child a chance—to provide a thorough training in music for all school children."

"Miss Shepherd began singing when she was 17. Of her work, she said: 'My first church position paid for my lessons; my next more than paid for the lessons. My voice has always, I might say, paid its own way. I'm not only happy, therefore, to have been given it, but, if possible, more so in that it has taken care of itself and now takes care of me.'

"Amy Ellerman was born, like Elizabeth Spencer, in the West, but, unlike her, she was raised on a ranch. She could drive a horse when she was three years old, and could rope and brand cattle, shoot ducks, and hunt deer and husk corn before most kids are out of the kindergarten. From these facts you would rightly infer that she was the daughter of pioneer settlers. Indeed, South Dakota was their choice.

"Amy Ellerman evinced musical talent in early childhood, and began the study of the piano when a mere child. Her first musical work was in instructing piano pupils. Later she discovered that she had a promising contralto voice. She studied voice under Holmes Cooper, of Chicago, and later was graduated from the American Conservatory of Music, where, under the instruction of Ragna Linne, she was twice chosen for appearances with the Philharmonic Orchestra under Adolph Weidig. Also, she was the youngest member of the Musical Arts Society, of Chicago. Miss Ellerman supplemented her studies with three years work in Berlin, and, after returning to America, she studied with William Wade Hinshaw and Herbert Witherspoon (a famous bass soloist on Victor records, husband of the soprano, Florence Hinkle, and later manager of the Metropolitan Opera. —J. W.) Critics have agreed that Miss Ellerman possesses one of the finest contraltos

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

18671 {Who'll Take the Place of Mary?  
10in. list  
price 85c {Marion (You'll Soon Be Marryin' Me

This double-faced vocal record serves to introduce a new Victor artist, Miss Rachel Grant. She appears in the second song with our



Rachel Grant

old friend Billy Murray. These are two admirably contrasted numbers. The first is a man's lament for a lost sweetheart. The Crescent Trio sings it in tender and affecting style.

**ASSUMED NAME.** GLADYS RICE'S first Victor record, issued in July, 1920, was made under the assumed name of RACHEL GRANT, which she had been using for three years in her Edison duets with Billy Murray.

voices among American singers.

"The picture on the back cover of the present number of the *Amberola Monthly* shows the Homestead Trio during a summer day's outing. (The picture is reproduced with this article.—J.W.) One of the trio—we suspect it was Amy Ellerman—wrote the following verses to accompany the picture:

"There were three crows sat on a wall.  
They could not sing at all, at all.  
The Homestead Trio sat on a fence—  
And some folks think they sing  
Immense.  
They love to sing, they love to chaff,  
But most of all they love to laugh."

Another bit of doggerel by Miss Ellerman paid tribute to Miss Spencer's coffee-making abilities:

"You think we mind prohibition?  
Not so, say we,  
When Elizabeth makes such coffee  
As she served us three."

Amy Ellerman was born in Yankton, S.D. She died in New York, June 4, 1960, aged 71.

### IV. Mostly About Gladys Rice

Marion Evelyn Cox, the second contralto of "We Girls" Quartet, is an artist about whom I have virtually no information. Although her photograph twice was published on the cover of the *Edison Amberola Monthly*, no biographical details accompanied it.

The nearest thing to a personal account I have found comes from the jacket in which her duet version,

with Gladys Rice, of "Alabama Lullaby" was issued in 1919. Ray Cummings' comment, as usual, tells little about the record he is supposed to be describing:

"Gladys Rice and Marion Evelyn Cox are two of the littlest girls who ever sang a duet. Both of them together hardly weigh 200 pounds. But when it comes to music they're there! . . ."

As far as I can judge by the catalog, Miss Cox's Edison career ended in 1921 or 1922. She seems, as far as a hasty search reveals, not to have made records under her own name for any other company, but I think she almost surely was Marion Crawford, a contralto who recorded for Pathe'. Probably she did Edison tone test work, but I have seen no advertisements of such public appearances.

Betsy Lane Shepherd and Amy Ellerman, on the other hand, were tone test standbys, and Mrs. Shepherd also was one of the first women to give radio recitals. Along Broadway for February, 1922, showed a picture of her and one of the Shannon Four, broadcasting from a New-ark radio station—probably WOR.

Betsy Lane Shepherd has been dead, I believe, for 30 years or more.



**FAVORITE EDISON SINGER.** BETSY LANE SHEPHERD was a popular Edison Soprano. She also made some Aeolian-Vocalion records. This picture was taken from a book of photographs of Edison singers and musicians.

I think it was in the early 1940's that Charles M. Sniffin of White Plains, N.Y., wrote me he had learned from a nephew of Mrs. Shepherd's that she had died some years before, but Mr. Sniffin did not know just when or where. Miss Cox still may be living.

An already quoted Edison's record jacket said that all the members of the original Homestead Trio were equally popular, but, judging by the amount of work they were given to do, Gladys Rice was easily first, with Mrs. Shepherd second, and Miss Ellerman third. Miss Rice certainly

was the most versatile of the three, and could sing well anything from down-to-earth comedy to serious music. Her comedy singing was mostly under the assumed name of Rachel Grant.

She was personally one of the most popular recording artists. I can't recall ever hearing any Edison singer discuss having worked with Shepherd, Ellerman, or Cox, but several have mentioned Gladys Rice and have spoken warmly of her charming personality and infectious, youthful sense of humor.

Incidentally, when she began recording, in the summer of 1915, she took away Walter Van Brunt's distinction of being the youngest Edison artist. Gladys, who appears to have been born in 1896, is said to have been only 19 when she started making records. Walter was only 16 when he began, but he started in 1908.

Miss Rice first had her name on a record label when "My Hula Maid," which she sang as a duet with Irving Kaufman, was issued as a Blue Amberol in November, 1915, and about the same time as a Diamond Disc. Her first record appearance, however, probably was in "She Lives Down in Our Alley," which was labeled as being by "Irving Kaufman and Chorus."

(The chorus seems to have been Miss Rice and the Premier Quartet).

In this record she takes the somewhat difficult part of a Jewish girl (herself) impersonating an Irish girl, impersonating a French girl. Something about her impersonation, or perhaps her facial gestures, seems to have got the best of my old friend, Irving, for he is unable to repress a laugh toward the end of the record. She also takes a French part in the 1918 duet with Billy Murray, "Oui, Oui, Maria."

Within a short time Gladys Rice was one of the most frequently used



**NOTED CONTRALTO.** MARION EVELYN COX was "second alto" of "We Girls" Quartet, which consisted of the Homestead Trio with Miss Cox as a fourth member.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

and best selling Edison artists. In October, 1916, the Edison Phonograph Monthly said:

"Gladys Rice, whose splendid soprano has created a strong demand for her records, is a Philadelphian. She was educated at 'Ivy Hall,' Bridgeton, N.J. While very young she displayed a natural aptitude for music and she was given the best advantages that New York could afford. Among her teachers was Karl Breneman, a pupil of the renowned Sibulga. Her professional debut was made at the Palace Theatre in New York, and it was marked by great success. Her dramatic ability inclined her toward the stage and she has appeared in both dramatic and musical stock. Her voice is a clear and sweet soprano, and her numbers are rendered with the expression and sentiment that only may be found in the renditions of singers who have had stage experience."

This "write-up" did not mention that Miss Rice was the daughter of the famous vaudeville pair, John Rice and Sally Cohen, who took their infant with them as they traveled. I recall seeing an interview with Miss Rice years ago in which she said: "A theatre trunk was my cradle."

Her father was also one of the first stage personalities to experiment with movie making, and a film in which he and May Irwin kissed each other was something of a sensation, almost a scandal, in 1896. Who says "The Gay Nineties" were so gay!

According to the book, "Monarchs of Minstrelsy," written by another Rice, Edwin LeRoy Rice, and published in 1911, John C. Rice's real family name was Hildeberg. This book says he was born in Beaver Kills, N.Y., and he and another comedian, James H. Griffin, became a black-face song-and-dance team in 1873.

They later appeared with famous minstrel troupes, but in 1883 Rice switched to playing a German comedy role in "Over the Garden Wall." Subsequently he became a member of May Irwin's Company.

Edwin LeRoy Rice remarked, "Mr. Rice excels as a neat dancer and as a light comedian leaves nothing to be desired." He married Miss Cohen in the early 1890's.

Gladys Rice's first duet records were with Irving Kaufman, Walter Van Brunt, and Burton Lenihan. (Lenihan was a native of Saginaw, Mich., and Ms Elaine Frueh of that city recently informed me he still was living when she wrote, but in a nursing home.)

In 1917, Miss Rice virtually superseded Ada Jones as Billy Murray's Edison duet partner, possibly because both she and Billy were under contract and worked on a salary basis, but Miss Jones was paid separately by the "date." All the Rice and Murray duets were issued under her assumed name of Rachel Grant except for one Diamond Disc, "That's You, Baby," which was pressed, but never sold appreciably, just before the Edison Company quit record

making in the fall of 1929.

I am one of the few collectors lucky enough to have a copy of this Rice-Murray duet, No. 52642. The pair specialized in recording duets from musical comedies. One of their most amusing songs was "The Bungalow in Quogue," from "The Riviera Girl," which they did in 1917.

The music was by Jerome Kern and the words by P. G. ("Plum") Wodehouse, who used the utmost ingenuity in finding rhymes for Quogue. Mr. Wodehouse, the greatest living writer of humorous novels and creator of the immortal Jeeves, still is writing, and as funny as ever, although past 90. And he reads HOBBIES each month!

Miss Rice also made comedy solos as Rachel Grant—"Jazz Baby" is one—but on Edison records she never used the Grant name in duets except those with Murray and one Diamond Disc she made in 1923 with Billy Jones, who called himself "Eugene Harold" for that occasion. The song was "My Old Girl," which had been fairly popular in 1910, and probably was one of the old-timers Mr. Edison wanted in his catalog.

Here is a list of Edison artists with whom Miss Rice sang duets, in addition to those already mentioned: George Wilton Ballard, Helen Clark, Marion Evelyn Cox, Vernon Dalhart, Lewis James, Elizabeth Lennox, J. Harold Murray, Betsy Lane Shepherd, and Frederick Wheeler. She made one duet with Ballard on which she was called Bettina Bergere.

She and Misses Clark and Cox, sang a trio version of a World War I song, "Knit! Knit! Knit!". She also was the soprano of the Harmony Four, whose other members were John Young, George Ballard, and Donald Chalmers; and of Moonlight Trio, which was the same as the Harmony Four with Young omitted.

She sang soprano as well in many Metropolitan Quartet records. The Metropolitan personnel varied, but probably those who sang most often with her were Ballard, Miss Cox, and Chalmers.

When Miss Rice began to freelance she used the Rachel Grant name for duets with Billy Murray on Victor, Aeolian-Vocalion, and probably some minor brands. Its last appearance seems to have been in 1923 on the Victor duet by Grant and Murray of "I Gave You Up Just Before You Threw Me Down." In later years she always called herself Gladys Rice when singing for Victor.

For some reason, Miss Rice seems not to have worked for Edison from early 1924 until the Company was on the verge of going out of the record business. Meanwhile, she had become extremely popular on radio as a member of Roxy's Gang, broadcasting from the Capitol Theatre in New York City, and her duets with Frank Munn were among the most popular features of that weekly program.

She returned to Edison just as that Company began its short-lived experiment of making lateral cut discs, and the September, 1929, supplement

of "the new Edison needle records" said:

"One of the earliest, and still one of the most popular of radio features is 'Roxy's Gang'—a pleasantly informal weekly program of music, song and laughter. One of the best known and best loved members of Roxy's Gang is our own Gladys Rice, whose low laughter and soft, mischievous replies to Roxy's banter are no less pleasing than her lovely singing. On this record you hear Miss Rice at her entrancing best, singing 'To Be in Love'—her voice all a-thrill with delicious excitement . . ."

Another needle-cut Edison by Miss Rice was "I Faw Down and Go Boom." The soprano, incidentally, never married. One of the Edison publications reported during World War I that she was engaged to a young soldier and they were planning on marriage as soon as he returned from military duty, but the wedding did not take place.

Within the past few days, while turning through old Columbia catalogs, I was surprised to discover something I never had noticed before—that in 1921 Miss Rice and the Harmonizers Quartet remade No. A1297, Shelton Brooks' 1912 hit, "All Night Long," which originally had been recorded by Ada Jones and the Peerless Quartet.

(Miss Jones was still singing, so why wasn't she called upon for the remake?)

In 1924, Miss Rice also made a new version of A1076, "Star of the East," which Roma Devonne had recorded in 1911.

Otherwise, the soprano, Miss Rice, did little Columbia work. In 1919, she and Charles Harrison sang a duet of a song called "Sweethearts"—their only duet I can recall. And in 1927, on No. 998D, she and Franklyn Baur joined forces in "Hallelujah!" and "Sometimes I'm Happy," from "Hit the Deck."

From 1920, through the early 1930's, Miss Rice sang for most of the major and minor record companies. They ranged from Victor to National Music Lovers.

\* \* \*

I regret to say I never have met Gladys Rice, but in 1950, when I was in the now demolished old Pennsylvania station in New York, on my way to the John Bieling Day party at Hempstead, I dialed her telephone number and soon was hearing the lovely voice I remembered so well from her records.

Miss Rice expressed her regret that previously made engagements would keep her from attending the party and being reunited with "my old pal, Billy Murray, and my other recording artist friends." She surprised me, however, saying she never had met Aileen Stanley, Murray's other feminine duet partner of the 1920's.

Miss Rice said she had returned to her first love, acting, and was appearing regularly in stage performances. She also told me she had mailed me an autographed photograph of herself, and I found it wait-

(Continued on next page)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

ing when I returned to my home in Vinton.

We talked until a noise came on the line which Miss Rice laughingly told me meant I needed to drop in another nickel. I couldn't find one, so had to hang up, but was left with the impression of talking with a vivacious, very charming lady.

The picture she sent we was framed and it hung on one of my music room walls for years, but then it disappeared and I never have been able to find it. I can't understand what happened. Surely, I never was visited and victimized by a Gladys Rice admirer so ardent that he filched that photo while my back was turned!

However that may be, I hope Miss Rice happily will be with us for a long time yet, and if I can obtain her present address I'm going to write and ask for another signed photo to replace the one that so mysteriously vanished!

### THE END

#### EDISON DIAMOND DISCS BY THE HOMESTEAD TRIO (1917-1920)

(Gladys Rice, Betsy Lane Shepherd and Amy Ellerman)

- 80334 Indiana. Reverse: Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline? (Vernon Dalhart).
- 80406 Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight. Reverse: Lorraine (Dalhart).
- 80411 Old Virginny Days. Reverse: When I'm Gone You'll Soon Forget (Helen Clark and Walter Van Brunt).
- 82149 Keep the Home Fires Burning. Reverse: Laddie in Khaki.
- 80469 Dusky Lullaby. Reverse: The Glow Worm ("We Girls" Quartet).
- 80514 Aloha Sunset Land. Reverse: When the Corn in Waving, Annie Dear (Criterion Quartet).
- 80521 Dixie Lullaby. Reverse: Leaf by Leaf the Roses Fall (Vernon Archibald and Lewis James).
- 80512 Hearts. Reverse: Bye-Lo (Dalhart).
- 80699 Moonlight in Mandalay. Reverse: Tripoli (Clark and George Wilton Ballard).

(Elizabeth Spencer, Betsy Lane Shepherd and Amy Ellerman) (1921-1925)

- 50770 Little Tin Soldier and the Little Rag Doll. Reverse: Little Crumbs of Happiness (James).
- 50773 Wandering Home. Reverse: Somebody's Mother (Crescent Trio).
- 50788 Thinking of You. Reverse: Love Me (James and Mixed Chorus).
- 50796 Carolina Lullaby. Reverse: In a Little Front Parlor (Clark).
- 50860 There's a Mother Always Waiting You at Home, Sweet Home. Reverse: When Honey Sings an Old-Time Song (Ballard).
- 50915 Granny. Reverse: Mammy Lou (Criterion Quartet).
- 80677 Do They Think of Me at Home? (with Thomas Chalmers). Reverse: Dreaming of Home and Mother (Thomas Chalmers & Mixed Chorus).
- 51110 Faded Love Letters (with J. Harold Murray). Reverse: I'll Take You Home Again, Pal O' Mine (Walter Scanlan & Helen Clark).
- 51119 Just an Old Love Song. Reverse: We're Nearing the Day (Scanlan and Spencer).
- 51121 Amazon. Reverse: Sands of Sandy Hook (Billy Jones and Male Chorus).
- 80755 Hush-A-Bye-Bay. Reverse: King Love (Betsy Lane Shepherd and Chorus).
- 51272 Memory Isle. Reverse: Mammy's Little Silver Lining (Dalhart).
- 80754 Two Little Eyes (with Elizabeth Spencer). Reverse: Honey, Dat's All (Spencer & Criterion Quartet).

80839 Pal of My Cradle Days (with Scanlan). Reverse: Rose Dreams (Scanlan and Mixed Chorus).

#### EDISON BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS BY HOMESTEAD TRIO (1917-1923)

- 3249 Indiana
- 3355 Old Virginny Days
- 3504 Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight
- 3962 Dixie Lullaby
- 3643 Keep the Home Fires Burning
- 3684 Dusky Lullaby
- 3984 Aloha Sunset Land
- 4313 Wandering Home
- 4361 Carolina Lullaby
- 4488 Granny
- 4504 Thinking of You
- 4567 Little Tin Soldier
- 4831 Memory Isle

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## Joe White, "The Silver-Masked Tenor"

By JIM WALSH

### PART I

#### I. A Meeting With Joe White

Over the years I have had frequent occasion to mention the two weeks I spent in October, 1940, as Billy Murray's guest at his home in Freeport, N.Y. The object of my visit was to obtain enough first-hand material to write a book about Billy. "The Denver Nightingale," however, displayed an odd shrinking from personal publicity and preferred to talk about any subject other than Billy Murray. From the book standpoint my visit was a failure.

Billy, however, introduced me to a large number of other recording artists, and I often have mentioned my first New York sojourn, in writing about many performers I met during that trip. One of those newly-made friends was Joseph M. White, who had been famed as "The Silver-Masked Tenor."

My 1940 diary reveals that Tuesday, October 15, was an interest-filled day. Billy and I talked by phone with the famous tenor, Albert Campbell, and agreed to meet him next day at Lindy's restaurant, where so many theatrical notables ate.

Then Billy, Jimmy Martindale, and I went to Victor's New York recording studios. Billy made a Bluebird record of "The Irish Were Egyptians Long Ago," and "When Paddy McGinty Plays the Harp." Jimmy and I helped to shout: "Too roo loo! Too roo li!" in the chorus of the latter.

At Billy's request I also slightly had edited the words of the "Egyptian" song. In one place I changed "And all the Hooligans and all the Dooligans" to "and all the Donovans and all the Monohans must have been Egyptians long ago."

I was amused to see that Billy Murray already had become such a tradition of the recorded music history that, when it was learned he was about to have a recording session, virtually every studio employee came to watch him in action.

It took him less than 30 minutes to make three "takes" of each song. He told me afterwards though that he had been uncomfortable while singing, because the music had been orchestrated in too low a key.

After leaving RCA Victor the three

## I STILL GET A THRILL (THINKING OF YOU)

Words by  
Benry Davis  
Music by  
J. Fred Coots



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"THRILL"

FEATURED SINGER—Joe White still was known as "The Silver Masked Tenor" when his photo appeared in 1930 on the cover of this sheet music.

of us went—I don't remember why—to the National Broadcasting Company Studios where we met two men who had been popular recording artists from 10 to 15 years before.

One was Jack Smith, widely known as the "Whispering Baritone." His popularity had begun with microphonic recording. The other was Joe White, whom I already have mentioned as the "Silver-Masked Tenor."

I remember Joe White as a stocky, short, rather florid man with a friendly manner. He was the most casually dressed notable I met. I don't remember what he was wearing, but I do remember that Jimmy, Billy, and I commented on his informal attire after he left us. We agreed that Joe must feel so sure of himself he didn't have to worry about what he wore.

Another thing I remember is that when he learned I lived in Johnson

City, Tenn., he jokingly asked me if I had brought "any good Tennessee moonshine corn liquor."

He seemed to be a bit skeptical when I replied that I was, as I still am, "one of those Southern prohibitionists and total abstainers, who neither drinks nor transports liquor." He good-naturedly chided me for not living up to my responsibility as "a Southern gentleman" who in duty bound was obligated to supply illicit liquid refreshment for Yankee friends.

(I encountered two problems on that first visit to New York. One was difficulty in convincing my Northern friends that I was not an Irish Catholic and did not obey any Friday dietary regulations. And the other was making some understand that I didn't, under any circumstances, drink.)

I remember being taken by my dear

(Continued on next page)

**BOWBITE**

*This was taken when he was 10 years old. 1947.*

*Selected with 100 best U.S. Navy pictures over ABC*

*Played part of "CONRAD" in "Hillbilly House" CBS weekly series.*

Bobby White, boy singing-actor of Radio—Television—Transcriptions—Recording—Stage & Concert—Vaudeville—*Featured as boy actor on Helen Hayes Radio program.*

Heard on Fred Allen Radio Program, NBC and Television; Lanny Ross Mutual "WOR" Broadcasting System; American Broadcasting Co., Radio and Television, ABC; Columbia Broadcasting System, Radio and Television, CBS; Dumont Television. *Featured with Bing Crosby & Charley Booth on Fred Allen Radio Program, NBC.*

Bobby White, age 13, from 3 to 15 years and he also characterizes the Average American Boy, Young Cowboy, Hillbilly Comedy Singer and Actor, Scotch Boy, Irish Boy, English Boy, and *on Catholic & Air America Hour.*

For Information, Phone, or *Radio Station*

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**GIFTED SON**—Joe White's son, Bobby, began singing as a child of five and majored in music after making many radio and television appearances. The notes reprinted here are in his father's writing.

## Music Boxes

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friend, Al Franck, who operated the International Records Agency, to an (I think) Italian restaurant. There the waiter asked if I would like a cocktail.

When I replied that I wouldn't, the man looked at me half incredulously and asked: "Why, what's the matter? You on the wagon?"

I replied I had been "on the wagon" all my life and didn't intend to fall off.

Then Al Franck very emphatically said: "The gentleman does not drink!"

I wonder what I did imbibe in New York restaurants. The only two things I drank were milk and Pepsi-Cola, and I doubt that the soft drink was available. Probably I ordered a glass of milk.

Joe and I talked of his recording activities. He was amused to learn that S. E. Levy of Shanghai, China, who had been considered the foremost authority on old recordings and pioneer recording artists, had given me an unqualified assurance that the mysterious "Silver-Masked Tenor" was the old-time singer, George J. Gaskin, "who is making a comeback." I had questioned Frank Dorian of the Columbia Company about this assertion.

Mr. Dorian had replied that although he didn't know who the masked tenor was, he could say positively, after looking at the singer's photograph in a Victor supplement, that it couldn't be George Gaskin. There was no resemblance between Gaskin and the masked man, Frank Dorian said.

Joe also recalled having made some Edison records "around 1915" under the name of Joseph M. White. (His full name was Joseph Malachy White.)

Three days after that morning, on Friday, October 18, I went with Billy, Jimmy, and Walter P. MacDonald to a room at a street address I have forgotten. In this spacious chamber a group of recording artists rehearsed for a series of minstrel programs they hoped to give on radio.

Mr. MacDonald was an ardent record collector who made his living posing for advertisements in which pictures of cowboys and Southern colonels were required. His professional name was "Buffalo Scott."

When I got off the train and headed for the Pennsylvania station waiting-room upon my arrival in New York, Mr. MacDonald was in the station and recognized me from my picture which the *Saturday Evening Post* had published the year before. After asking me if my name wasn't Walsh, he took me to his home for supper and a meeting with his wife, Elizabeth; his charming daughter, Dorothy, who was a gifted amateur writer; and his son, Walter, Jr. Afterwards I met his other daughter, Katherine.

The MacDonalds disliked New York life and were hoping to settle on a farm in Missouri, but seven years later they were still in the same apartment, which I believe was at 312

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

West 20th Street. I wonder if Walter still is living there. He was in ecstasies at seeing so many famous recording artists for the first time.

Probably the names of some who were present have escaped my memory, but there was Billy Murray, of course, and I well remember the delight Mr. MacDonald and I felt at hearing him sing "Bill Bailey," a number that had been a favorite in his Al. G. Field minstrel days.

Also present and taking part in the singing were Gus Van, who, a few years before, had been interlocutor of the radio Sinclair Minstrels; Charles Harrison; Everett Clarke, who was best known from having made some duet recordings with Harrison; Frank Croxton; Harry Donahy (The Harmonizers Quartet bass, who was at the piano), and Joe White.

Albert Campbell and Monroe Silver also may have been there, but I am not sure. On the preceding Monday, by the way, Walter Scanlan had gone with me to the NBC Studios, where I had seen a rehearsal of a radio program, "Harlem Quiz." It was somewhat similar to the minstrel show, and in it Irving Kaufman and Al Bernard were featured.

I had an opportunity to talk with the various artists, including Joe White, who at once recognized me, and said, "Hello, Jim! Got me any moonshine yet?" I also met Charles Harrison, with whom our meeting established a friendship that lasted as long as he lived.

Frank Croxton autographed a photo of himself which Billy had given me to bring along. Harry Donahy told me that the first record in which he participated was the Edison of "Oh By Jingo!" by the Harmonizers, disguised under their Edison name of the Premier Quartet.

Although I lost contact with Joe White after my return to Tennessee, I carried away a lasting impression of a friendly, down-to-earth fellow with a complete absence of swank, who was, in the words of the time-tattered cliché, "as plain as an old shoe." But I was to resume communication with him years later after I moved to Virginia.

### II. Biographical Data

Having, so to speak, given this "in person" introduction to Joe White, I think I can tell much about the man and his career by using information contained in the 1952 edition of the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of Authors, Composers and Publishers. It was published while "the Silver-Masked Tenor" was still alive.

The book reveals that "Joseph M. White, composer, author, singer, radio and recording artist, "was born October 14, 1891, in New York City. This means he now would be 81 if living.



YOUNG TENOR—JOE WHITE sent Jim Walsh this autographed photo in August, 1953. It had been taken about 30 years earlier when he was touring with a Chautauqua company.

He became a member of ASCAP in 1939.

The sketch says he came from a musical family, was educated in New York public schools, and was a boy soprano in New York churches. (Since he was a Catholic, I suppose his singing was in churches of that faith.) At 10 he sang as a "village urchin" in a play called "Checkers."

After two years of a commercial life he gave up business to "pursue a musical career." At 19 he was a member of Denman Thompson's "Old Homestead" Quartet. (Does this mean the Double Quartet?)

In 1917 Joe White enlisted in the 102nd Engineers, 27th Division. When he returned to the States in 1919, he became a soloist with Neil O'Brien's Minstrels.

In 1922 he took up activity in radio, and from 1925 to 1930 was the Silver-Masked Tenor with the Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra. He was credited with having a hand in the writing of the following songs:

"In Flanders," "Mammy's Little Kinky Headed Boy," "Bells of Killarney," "Jes' a Lonesome Little Pickaninny Baby," "Maureen Mavourneen," "Say That You Care for Me," "Hold Me In Your Arms," "Rose in the Moonlight," "Drifting in the Moonlight," "McGuire's Musketeers," "Old Prairie Wagon," "Our Graduation Waltz," "St. Patrick's Bells Are Ringing," and "Ireland, Your Homeland."

The 1966 edition gives a shortened account of White's career and mentions fewer songs, but reveals that he died in New York, February 28, 1959, at 68.

A *Variety* death notice gave the additional information that White "was one of the first radio performers to use a promotional gimmick, namely the donning of a silver mask during his appearance as soloist with the Goodrich Silvertown Or., over WEA, N.Y., now WRCA. This program was sponsored by the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company. Masked Routine was continued long after he signed off with the show.

"On July 4, 1922, White was the first singer before a mike in the United States



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

to be heard in England with the program originating from the old WJZ (now WABC) studio in Newark.

"White retired from radio after suffering serious injuries in an auto accident. He continued, however, as a vocal coach until last year. He wrote many ballads, several of them among the songs he recorded for Victor.

"Survivors are wife, two daughters and three sons."

Later, when I quote from Joe White's letters, it will be seen that during his last years he was plagued by bad luck but kept his courage instead of giving in to the buffetings of fate.

### III. Recording Career Begins

Joe White, the Irish tenor seems to have had his first recording experience when he was a young fellow of 23. On January 19, 1915—some five weeks after the disastrous Edison factory fire of Wednesday, December 9, 1914—Thomas A. Edison scribbled some comments on a test recording White had made. Apparently he had sung a fast tempo song in Irish dialect, as Mr. Edison, with a touch of sarcasm, remarked:

"Can't judge from a dialect song. He seems fair for songs of (Walter) Van Brunt type—I can't understand a word he says. Let him sing a pathetic song that's not all talking and in dialect. How can anyone judge a man's voice from such a song? I'm no mind reader like you people in New York."

Probably, in view of the date of the inventor's criticism, the test had been made just before the big fire or it may have been done shortly afterward. At any rate, it took place in the New York recording laboratory, which had not been affected by the fire.

No issued records were forthcoming from this try-out, but the tenor must have tried again early in 1916. This time "The Old Man" gave a more favorable report. On March 13, 1916, he wrote:

"Has tremolo. Think you might do business with him. His interpretation of this is good, and has fine mellow (tone?) on highs and generally."

Of all vocal flaws, as he considered them, Mr. Edison most disliked "tremolo" or vibrato. Otherwise, however, this criticism was distinctly favorable.

Not so, however, was one of April 21, 1924, when the one-time "Wizard of Menlo Park" progressively had grown more deaf and was 77 years of age. No admirer of Joe White, therefore, need be upset by his brief remark: "Awful singer—oh, no!"

By that time, Mr. Edison, regardless of his own opinion of his critical abilities, was considered by many as not capable of judging recorded music and Victor showed a year and a half later that it had a different opinion of White.

The first Joe White recording to appear in an Edison list was an Irish song, "Molly Brannigan," which was on a Diamond Disc, serial No. 5662,

a. IN UNIFORM—JOSEPH M. WHITE served in the American Armed forces, and was wounded during World War I.

—Photo from March, 1918, Columbia record supplement.

b. YOUNG TENOR—This photograph of the youthful "J. Malachy White" (Joe White), appeared in the Columbia record supplement for November, 1917.

January 4, 1917. It was not issued on the disc, but was announced in August as Blue Amberol cylinder No. 3253.

On February 17, 1917, White sang "The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Halls," which probably was intended as a coupling for the rejected disc of "Molly Brannigan." However, the well-loved old Thomas Moore song was not issued until April, 1927—more than 10 years after the recording date—when it made one side of Diamond Disc 51942.

Its back-up was a recently made recording of "The Birth of the Shamrock," by Charles Harrison. It was not made available on a Blue Amberol.

Joe told me he made "one or two Edison discs in 1923 or 1924," and his recollection was correct. On December 4, 1923, he sang "Ireland is Ireland to Me," which was transcribed on Diamond Disc master No. 9277, but never placed on sale.

It probably was a test of this recording that caused "The Old Man" to jot his "awful singer" condemnation. And that seems to have been the end of Joe White's association with Thomas A. Edison, Inc.

The *Variety* obituary said he signed a Columbia contract in 1915, but 1917 probably is the right date. His first Columbia double-faced disc appeared in November that year as No. A2348, and coupled "The Harp That Once," which he had already sung for Edison, with another Thomas Moore Irish song, "The Minstrel Boy."

The supplement published the photo of "J. Malachy White" as a very young looking, black-haired fellow and gave the following description:

"In the words of his own 'Minstrel Boy,' (it) is certainly true Thomas

Moore's songs were 'made for the pure and free, they shall never sound in slavery.' The deep unfathomed love of the Irish for Ireland is tragically sung in the song of the Minstrel Boy who tears the strings from his harp as he falls on the battlefield to keep his beloved instrument from coming into the hands of his enemies. "Through Tara's Halls," however, set to the plaintive air, "Grannmachree," is Moore's most famous ballad. It refers back to 900 B.C. when King Ollav Fola held his conclaves of chieftains and bards at Tara where the "Psalter of Tara" was written and sung."

In February, 1918, on Columbia record A2445, J. Malachy sang another Irish song, "Over in Erin," coupled with M. J. O'Connell's version of "I Want to Go to the County Mayo." O'Connell had been a very busy recording artist during two years in which he sang for virtually all companies, but this may have been his last recording.

The supplement said:

"J. Malachy White, be it known, sings the good old Irish songs in the good old American uniform."

This statement was accompanied by a not very clear picture of White, holding a rolled-up paper, presumably sheet music.

The last J. Malachy White record, No. A2453, which came out in March, was one on which he sang a completely forgotten song that never "did anything"—"That's Why I Love You And Call You Machree." Its companion also was a "dog"—"There's Another Angel Now in Old Killarney," sung by Sam Ash.

Concerning the White side the supplement said:

"The melody sung by J. Malachy White has in it the tang of the auld sod, and is one in which the soldier-tenor has delighted his comrades in the Spartanburg Camp where he is serving his country."

The photo of White in uniform

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

again was reproduced, and on the second try, was good and clear. But by this time the tenor probably had gone overseas. At any rate, there were no more "J. Malachy White" Columbia records, although he told me he made 10.

### IV. Victor Recording Career

Joe White's longest and most important recording period was the one he spent, beginning in late 1925, with Victor. During that time he not only sang the vocal refrains in many records made by Joseph Knecht's Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra, but also did a number of solos without the dance band.

The orchestra's first Victor, No. 19793, combined "Brown Eyes, Why Are You Blue?" and "A Kiss in the Moonlight." It was recorded September 22, 1925, and was announced in the December supplement. There were two photos, one of Knecht and the other of the "Silver-Masked Tenor" wearing his facial disguise.

Supplement Editor James E. Richardson's comment was characteristically felicitous:

"Practically all of the East has heard the Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra over the radio; here is its first Victor record—two fox trots; and, by way of added surprise, the mysterious 'Silver-Masked Tenor' is singing the vocal refrain in both records. The Masked Tenor (who, unmasked, is the most agreeable company you'd meet in a day's travel), puts sentiment into his part of them. Here at last, for you, are the organization, and the singer, you have been demanding on Victor records."

On the same supplement page were two more numbers by the Goodrich Orchestra and the Masked Tenor. They had been recorded on September 29. Coupled on No. 19798, were "I Wonder Where We've Met Before," and "Carolina Sweetheart."

Mr. Richardson's remarks again were flattering:

"The orchestra presenting these numbers is fortunate in including dance musicians of very unusual skill; that is why its records will dance so well. Both numbers have refrains by the tenor voice whose fine quality you will be certain to remark—as we did when we first heard it. There is no need to tell you that here is an artist-organization—which can play dance music for you in musicianly style."

After its initial recording dates in September, the Goodrich Orchestra seems not to have had another Victor engagement until April 6, 1926. Then it played a waltz, "A Night of Love," and a fox trot, "Reaching for the Moon," both with Joe White vocal interludes.

They appeared, No. 20016, in the June supplement, but, beginning in January, 1926, Victor had ceased to issue monthly lists that gave detailed information about all the new records, so as a rule from now on there will be little comment to quote. It may be understood, however, that all the rec-



BOOKING AGENT—"Uncle Jim" Harkins, former vaudeville performer who did some recording, was booking agent for Joe White's son, Bobby, "Uncle Joe" also was for many years the "right hand man" to Fred Allen, radio comedian, in arranging Allen's programs.

ords to be mentioned had "Silver-Masked Tenor" refrains.

On May 26, 1926, the Orchestra recorded "Burgundy," which was combined, on No. 20074, with "Cherie I Love You," by Waring's Pennsylvanians. I can't seem to find it in a supplement, but it must have been placed on sale in July or August.

On the same day the boys made five "takes" of "I'm Lonely Without You," but the tricky new electric recording didn't do a satisfactory job. They came back on June 21 and made four more, one of which was issued on No. 20095, with "Do You Believe In Dreams?" by Irving Aaronson's Commanders, as its coupling.

The next date was September 14, and the selections were "Petrushka" and "Mary Lou." They appeared in November on No. 20204. On September 23 the Goodrich/White combination recorded two waltzes, "Falling in Love With You" and "Trail of Dreams." These were listed in December as No. 20238.

Early in the New Year, on January 6, 1927, the Orchestra played "Moonbeam, Kiss Her for Me" and "So Will I." "Moonbeam" was issued in March as No. 20419, combined with "Sweeter Than You," by Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra. Franklyn Baur sang the refrain.

"So Will I" also came out in March, on No. 20436. Its coupling was "High, High Up in the Hills," by the Shilkret ensemble with the singing by Charles Harrison.

A date on January 27 resulted in a fox-trot, "Silver Song Bird," and a waltz, "Love Me All the Time," issued in June as 20591. The next session,

on February 11, brought No. 20491, "If All the Stars Were Pretty Babies," a fox trot placed on sale in May and combined with "A Lane in Spain," by Jean Goldkette's Orchestra.

The Goodrich players also made four "takes" of "Au Revoir (But Not Goodbye)." None was issued.

Then a five-month interlude ensued. On July 11 the Orchestra and tenor made three "takes" of "Lenora," but they were unsatisfactory. Three more were done, August 4, and this time the selection was approved as No. 20911, but I can't find it in any supplement, nor is it in the 1928 Victor catalog.

Perhaps for some reason it was withdrawn immediately after publication. The reverse side was "Springtime," by Ben Black and His Orchestra, with singing by Lewis James. Judging by its number, it was intended for issue in November or December.

Also on July 11, the group made three takes of "Charmaine!" but they were rejected. Another effort, on August 4, was more successful, and was issued on No. 20892, coupled with "Roam On, My Little Gypsy Sweetheart," by Ted Weems and His Orchestra. August 4 also saw an effort to record a catchy tune called "Nothin'," but it remained unissued.

We are now nearing the end of the Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra's recordings. On December 7, they, and Joseph M. White, recorded "He Loves and She Loves," which went unissued, and "Is There Someone for Me?" This was combined with another waltz, "Tomorrow" by "Johnny Hamp and

His Kentucky Serenaders," and issued in March as No. 21167.

The final session for the orchestra was January 31, 1928, when it played "Ya Gotta Be Good to Me" and "The Church Bells Are Ringing for Mary." The former was combined on 21439 with "Tell Me You Love Me," by Waring Pennsylvanians, and received belated issue in August, as did "Church Bells," with coupling "It Was the Dawn of Love," by Paul Whiteman's Orchestra, and a chorus by Bing Crosby, Jack Fulton, Charles Gaylord, and Al Rinker.

Meanwhile, Joe White sang the refrains in a couple of numbers by Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra, both recorded February 2, 1928. One, "Moments With You," was combined, on No. 21327, with "I Can't Do Without You," by Waring's Pennsylvanians, and issued in June.

The other, "The Bells of St. Mary's," appeared on No. 21371, with "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life," also by the Shilkrets, but with a refrain by Lewis James as its coupling, and also had a June issue.

It is possible that Joe sang in some other dance records that I have overlooked.

#### V. Victor Solo Records

My guess is that most HOBBIES readers like me, will be more interested in "the Silver-Masked Tenor's" solo records than in his incidental singing with a dance band.

On December 7, 1925, Joe White had three "takes" of "Kathleen Mavourneen" and four of his old standby, "The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Hall," but they were rejected. He tried again on December 23, and this time produced satisfactory versions that were issued in March, 1926, with this terse description:



IN DISGUISE—JOE WHITE'S photo as "the Silver-Masked Tenor" is from the Victor supplement for December, 1925.

"Agreeable tenor numbers. A delicious touch of brogue when needed."

October, 1926, brought two favorite Ernest R. Ball ballads, "Mother Macchree" and "A Little Bit of Heaven" (No. 20134.) They had been recorded June 29.

Joe White's next solo recording was January 5, 1927, when he sang his own song, "Mammy's Little Kinky-Headed Boy" and "Dear Heart, What Might Have Been." They were paired on No. 20438 and must have been issued in May, although the disc does not appear in the monthly list.

On June 21, 1927, the tenor made unsuccessful efforts to record a new Ernest Ball song, "Watching the World Go By," and his own composition, "The Bells of Killarney." A second trial on July 7 brought approval and the record was issued in October.

On December 2, 1927, the "Silver-Masked Tenor" sang "My Stormy Weather Pal." This was issued on 21144, coupled with "Mother of Mine, I Still Have You," which he had recorded on November 28.

On February 2, Joe White observed "Groundhog Day" by singing "You'd Rather Forget Than Forgive." He was brought back on February 14 and obliged with "Dream Kisses." These two numbers were combined on record 21257 and were placed on sale in May.

Joe White's final efforts as a Victor soloist took place in the summer of 1929. On June 24 he made four "takes" of "My Sin" and on July 1 turned out three more, but all were rejected.

He made three of "Wonderful You" on June 28 and two more on July 1. But again neither he nor the recording equipment could achieve anything acceptable.

That was almost, but not quite, the end of "The Silver-Masked Tenor's" recording career. Sometime later, probably toward the end of 1930, he sang the refrain in a Romeo (Cameo) record of "The Waltz You Saved For Me," by the Society Night Club Orchestra (No. 1578.)

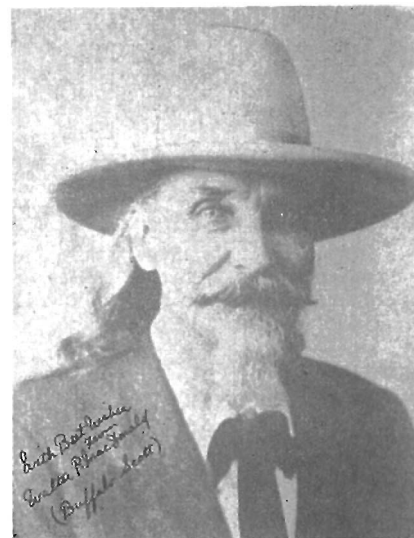
The other side was "Would You Like to Take a Walk?" by Jack Berger's Hotel Astor Orchestra, with chorus by Chick Bullock. And on Romeo No. 1590, Joe did two solos—an Irving Berlin song, "Reaching for the Moon," and "When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver."

It is not unlikely that he made other electrically recorded "off-brands." However they have not come to my attention.

The Romeo records used the shortened form of Joe White for the singer's name. On Victor he was always "The Silver-Masked Tenor," with no clue to his identity.

#### VI. Joe White's Letters

After I returned home from New York I had no further direct contact with Joe White. I did learn, probably from a mention in *Variety*, that he had suffered a fall in the offices of the Shapiro, Bernstein & Company music publishing firm that caused



ARTISTS' MODEL—WALTER P. MacDonald, who impersonated Southern colonels and Western cowboys in national advertising, was a record collector who enjoyed being a guest at a radio minstrel show rehearsal, in which JOE WHITE and other recording artists took part.

one of his legs to be amputated.

Then I was surprised to receive a letter from him dated July 10, 1953. My surprise was the greater because he wrote as if he were addressing a stranger instead of someone whom he had known.

By ill luck, a part of the left hand corner of the letter is missing, but I shall quote it and fill in what I take the missing words to be:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: My good friend Dan McNamara of ASCAP told me about the fine article you have written (in HOBBIES—J.W.) about my dear old pal, Arthur Fields, God rest him. I am enclosing a letter he wrote me a month before his sad and untimely passing. Please accept it with my compliments.

"I used to sing on radio and was known as the Silver-Masked Tenor—soloist with B. F. Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra over NBC, 1925 to 1931. I made many Victor records during that period of time. I went out on the RKO vaudeville circuits for two years and was a headline attraction. I played all over America and Canada.

"I am trying to locate any Victor recording of 'Kathleen Mavourneen' which I recorded with the Victor Salon Orchestra directed by Joseph Pasternack and am also looking for all these recordings I made with the B. F. Goodrich Orchestra. I collect John McCormack records and have about 100. I lost my left leg above the knee in 1943, the aftermath of a wound I received in W. W. #1 (World War I), where I saw active service with 27th N.Y. Div., A.E.F. With good wishes, cordially yours, Joseph M. White, ASCAP.

"P.S. Where can I obtain HOBBIES magazine?"

I wonder if I sent Joe a record of "Kathleen Mavourneen." Although I have a copy now I am not sure whether I owned one in 1953.

I did give him an immediate reply, which began: "Dear Joe: I was glad to get your letter . . . but how come you didn't realize that you were writing to an old friend?" I then recalled our New York meetings and his kidding me about bringing "a

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

suitcase full of 'white lightning' " the next time I came to New York.

Then I said: "I had a long article about Arthur in *Variety* (for which I write regularly) a week or so after his death. I am wondering if you ever see any of my *Variety* articles."

Joe replied on August 4, and I'll quote parts of what he wrote:

"Dear Jim: Of course I remember you and meeting you with Billy Murray—at those minstrel rehearsals I got all the old-time singers together for at that time. I just didn't associate the name Jim Walsh as being the one—whom I had the pleasure of meeting.

"Thanks for the 'Music Views' magazine you sent me, autographed. It's an interesting little book and 'chuck full' of informative items of great interest to folks like you and me. I don't get 'Variety' at the news stands in my neighborhood. It's strictly a 'local yokel' district and unless I get downtown, which is very seldom, since my siege of bronchial-virus-flu in February, followed later by shingles, which put me in the Veterans Hospital from June 13 to the 30th. I still am bothered, but they are disappearing.

"By the way, how is the 'corn likker' down your way? I like a drink of it, if it's at least five years old and 'ripened' in an oak charred keg—'medicinally,' of course.

"Dan McNamara of ASCAP sent me a copy of the July issue of *HOBBIES*, but your articles on Arthur Fields had been torn out for his files. I must try and get another copy to read about our dear old friend Arthur. Enclosed is an old Victrola catalog of 1922 for your collection. Gosh, what prices they charged for these machines back in those days when a 'buck' was a 'buck'.

"Do you know where I can pick up an old Edison Home cylinder phonograph with reproducer and recorder in good working condition? I had one, which I haven't seen about the house for the past three years. It needed a reproducer and strap for cylinder—perhaps my kids, who don't seem to like old things, I collect, threw it out.

"It's disappointing to me that my three sons and two daughters are not interested in their father's hobbies. The only son I had who was 'sympatico' was killed in a C-47 U.S.A. Force plane that crashed in Oklahoma on November 11, 1948, as he and 11 other brave American service men were en route home for a four days furlough. God rest them all. Graham McNamee White was his name. His godfather was my old radio pal, Graham McNamee. He was only 18, a handsome 6 feet 1, curly haired, happy, blue eyed lad, who sang like an angel and loved people. Mother and I miss him so. Write soon, Jim. God bless you. Your friend, Joe White."

Joe's stationery described him as a member of ASCAP and as a dealer in books, music, and Americana at 281 Alexander Ave., New York City.

Along with this letter Joe sent an autographed photo of himself, accompanied by the following explanatory note:

"Dear Jim: This is the only photo I could find at present. I'll send you another one with Silver-Mask on it as soon as I can find one. This was taken for my tour on the White and Brown Chautauqua Circuit—through the South and Middle West, May 15 to September 9, 1924. My company at that time consisted of Hon. Granville Jones, former State Senator of Arkansas, a retired minister who was our lecturer; Miss Meekie Ruth Smith, soprano, of a Kansas City radio station; Agnes Knocklikova, a Czechoslovakian violinist of a Chicago radio station, (and) Norman

Goodbrod, pianist of a Lincoln, Neb., radio station. He also drove the eight-cylinder Oldsmobile touring car we traveled in. We did four months of one-nighters under canvas, two shows daily. We were the first radio artists to make a Chautauqua tour. It was a lot of fun."

The photo is reproduced with this article.

I'm ashamed to say I didn't get around to writing to Joe again until February 14, 1954. I was working on a very busy schedule then at TV-radio station WSLs in Roanoke, Va., getting only one Sunday off each two weeks, and, as always, was so swamped with correspondence that it kept piling up.

I explained this to Joe and contritely said:

"I am thoroughly ashamed of what must appear to be the bad treatment I have given you, and I do hope you will forgive me. One of these days, to make amends, I should like to do an article about you for my 'Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists' department in *HOBBIES*. Since your recording career goes back at least to 1917 and you were so popular as the Silver-Masked Tenor I'm sure a lot of my fans would like to read about you."

Joe replied on February 17 and seemed more interested in having me write about his son, Bobby, who was beginning to make a career for himself as a singer than about himself, but of course, Bobby, who was only 17, was out of the scope of my *HOBBIES* department, since he was a boy and not a pioneer recording artist.

Joe's stationery had been changed and now described him as a singing teacher and a dealer in music and antiques. Here are parts of his letter:

"Could (you) mention my son, Bobby, who has been in college since he was 16; he is now 17 and will be 18 October 27? He is six feet tall and very handsome, and his voice, which I have brought safely through its difficult period of transition, is now a lovely lyric tenor. He is majoring in music at Hunter College here in New York. My 13-year-old daughter, Eileen Anne Frances White, won a scholarship at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament High School at Goshen, N.Y., where she has room and board and education for four years for free. It costs at least two grand a year to send a girl to this wonderful Catholic school. She is very happy there and a very brilliant student. She is a very lovely, tall, beautiful, young lady with a grand sense of humor, and I guess she'll have a lot of beaux by the time she decides to get married.

"You sure have a very busy schedule and I do wonder how you are able to accomplish all the things you have assigned yourself. If you have any old *HOBBIES* magazines, send me a couple. They are splendid things to have around. I expected a two-year subscription from one of my relations, who wanted to give me a Christmas present, so I'm still waiting to hear from him about it. That's why I've delayed in subscribing. Yes, Jim, I recorded for Columbia, 1917-18, as J. Malachy White. I made 10 records for them, with Robert Hood Bowers conducting the orchestra most of the time. I have 'The Harp That Once Thro' Tara's Hall,' backed up with 'The Minstrel Boy.' Gosh, I didn't know much about the fine art of 'bel canto' at that time—just a good, natural, tenor voice.

"I trouped for three seasons as tenor soloist with Neil O'Brien's Super Minstrels on the Klaw & Erlanger Circuit, 1921-22,23, all over America, eight months each season. Dear old Neil was like a father to all of us young lads on his show. I called him up on New Year's Eve last and talked with him and sang a couple of his favorite old songs over the telephone. He said at the time that he felt all right, only arthritis kept him

more or less bedridden. Then he passed on to his heavenly reward 13 days later. God rest his wonderful and kindly soul. He was 85 years old.

"I've been in the 'Vets' Hospital again since I last wrote you. I had septicemia or blood poisoning. I got a dizzy spell and they sent an ambulance and took me to the hospital on November 17, for 10 days. If I had gone there when I fell and broke my leg in April, 1943, the fine orthopedic doctors there would have saved my leg, as there was no evidence of cancer in the bone. A 'big shot' surgeon at Roosevelt Hospital, New York, cut the leg off."

With this letter Joe sent a photo of Bobby, which I am submitting to be reproduced. Writing accompanying the picture says it was taken in 1947 when Bobby was 10. On the reverse side Joe wrote that Bobby had been in radio and TV since he was six, "appearing first on Madge Tucker's famous Kiddy radio program over WJZ, 'The Lady Next Door,' and 'Coast to Coast on a Bus,' with Milton J. Cross as M.C. and announcer." Joe continued:

"He was on Arthur Godfrey's TV and radio CBS shows for 10 appearances after he won first prize for professional children on the Godfrey TV show, December, 1949. He is attending summer classes now in music at Columbia University. I have taught him voice culture since he was five."

I suppose Bobby is still in "show business," but I do not keep up with present-day professional activities and have lost track of him. You will notice that the printed matter accompanying the photo lists "Uncle Jim" Harkins as Bobby's agent.

During my memorable trip to New York, the late "Uncle Jim" was assistant to Fred Allen, the famous radio comedian. He held that position for many years. Billy Murray introduced me to him and "Uncle Jim" booked me to appear with Allen as a guest artist. Unfortunately, however, when the program arrived, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was running for his third term, chose to make a campaign speech that preempted all radio network time. The Fred Allen show wasn't given and Jim Walsh lost his opportunity to impress radio listeners throughout the country with his knowledge of old records.

The last letter I am able to find from Joe will make present-day collectors of cylinder phonographs and records gnash their teeth. On August 7, 1954, Joe wrote:

"Dear Jim: I picked up 450 old Edison wax and Amberol cylinder records and an Edison Home cylinder phonograph, with a large brass horn and stand to hold it, all for \$9. The reproducer is no good, so I need a Model C. Edison wax record reproducer and an Amberola reproducer to play four-minute records. Can you help me? I have some good radio program ideas concerning these old records.

"Had a strange dream one night last week about our dear old pal, Arthur Fields. I guess he needs our prayers, so I remembered him in my prayers last Sunday at mass. Bobby is now a sophomore at Hunter College. His voice is a warm, rich, lyric tenor, reminiscent of our immortal John McCormack. I also got an old golden oak Edison cylinder record cabinet that holds about 200 records for the \$9.00."

Bargains like that Joe described are not likely to turn up now-a-days in



cylinder phonographs and records!

I am sorry that I didn't get around to writing about The Silver-Masked Tenor during his lifetime, but I'm sure this article will interest his present-day admirers. They will join me in affectionate remembrance of the Irish singer with the warm personality and we will hope that things are going well for the surviving members of his family.

THE END

## OLD METALS

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Theodore Morse a Centenary Tribute

By JIM WALSH

#### PART I

##### I. The Dying Composer

Almost half a century ago, on the afternoon of Sunday, May 25, 1924, Theodore Morse, one of the greatest American composers of popular songs, lay dying.

"Teddy's" strength was ebbing and his mind was clouded with the shadows of death, but he clung feebly to his weakening grasp on life. Half-consciously, he prayed to live just a few hours longer so that he could hear a radio program which would be broadcast to lighten his suffering.

But his efforts were unavailing. Five hours before the program, featuring song hits he had written, went on the air, Teddy Morse died.

On June 3, *The Roanoke Times*, for which I became a staff writer more than a generation later, published a news story under the heading, "*Morse's Old Songs Radioed Too Late . . . Composer Died Just Before Concert to Cheer Him Was Given.*" It read:

"New York, June 2—When Broadway learned that Theodore Morse was ill with pneumonia, it thought up the best ways of cheering him in his illness. The idea of Samuel Rothafel, of the Capitol Theater, was finally voted the best. It was to have the ballet at the Capitol sing Morse's songs, some of the best known ballads the country has ever known, and broadcast them over the radio.

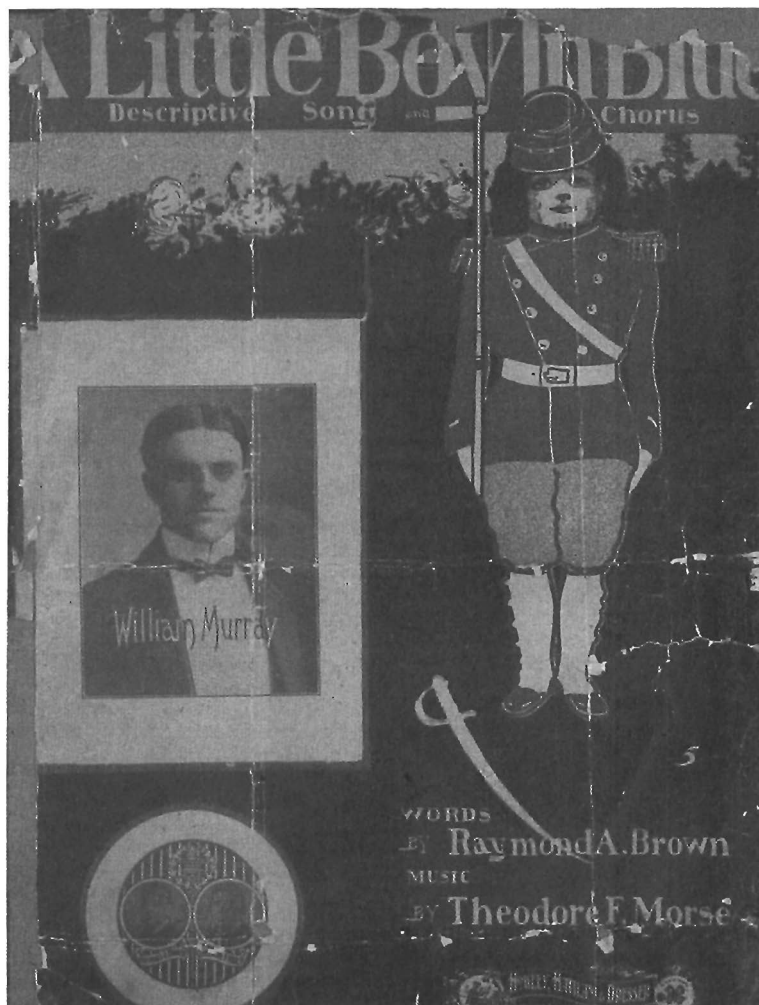
"The songs they were to sing, and did sing, were 'Blue Bell,' 'Goodbye, Dolly Gray,' 'M-O-T-H-E-R,' 'Jungletown' and 'Dear Old Girl.' A radio set had been put at the bedside of Mr. Morse in his home, 8 Fort Washington Place. The family had hoped he might enjoy the concert, and although physicians feared he was sinking the song writer prayed that he would live until the evening for the radio serenade.

"The concert was scheduled for Sunday evening at 8 o'clock and it was given at that hour. But Mr. Morse had passed away at 3 o'clock.

"Mr. Morse was vice president of the Association of Song Writers, and a member of the committee that went to Washington recently to take up with Congress the matter of royalties and radio use of songs and artists."

##### II. A Centenary Tribute

So Teddy Morse died without hearing the radio tribute intended expressly for his dulling ears. But—this thought recently occurred to me—suppose he had not died. Suppose he had heard and been stimulated by the broadcast and overcome the pneumonia. Suppose he was living now. He would be an almost incredibly ancient man, who would observe his 100th birthday on April 13, 1973. This year, in fact, marks the cen-



"THE DENVER NIGHTINGALE." As this damaged copy shows, the sheet music of Teddy Morse's first song hit, "A Little Boy in Blue," bore the likeness of a gentleman known as William Murray, but who, a year later, became famous as Billy Murray, the star recording comedian.

tenary of his birth. It is also the centennial year of the great comedienne, Ada Jones, who was born June 1, 1873, seven weeks after Morse.

Then, I thought, since he could not hear the program which was designed to lift his spirits as he lay dying, would it not be appropriate to pay him a centenary tribute this year in *HOBBIES*? If Teddy's personality and consciousness have survived beyond the grave and he should learn that admirers whom he never knew were keeping his memory green 49 years after his death, would he not feel a gleam of happiness in his "spirit world?" But if he knows nothing of earthly affairs, his memory still deserves to be cherished for the sake of the pleasure his music gave, and still gives, to millions of his fellow humans.

Reasoning thus, I decided to write

this centenary tribute to the memory of Theodore Morse and to schedule it to appear as closely as possible to the anniversary of his death. I wish that his devoted wife, "Dolly," who was my good friend during the last year or two of her life, were still living and knew of how I hope to honor her Teddy. Since she has gone to join him as a member of the vast "silent majority," I wish I knew that her daughter, Annette, whose age was only five when her father died, is still with us and will learn of what *HOBBIES* and I have done.

##### III. Comments and Corrections

Meanwhile, the article I have quoted requires a few comments and corrections:

First: I wonder why it was sent out under a June 2 deadline when Morse's death occurred on May 25, (Continued on next page)



"TUNEFUL THEODORE". THEODORE MORSE, great popular song writer, who was born 100 years ago, on April 13, 1873.

more than a week earlier. Surely the death of such a well known man would have been reported within a few hours after it occurred.

Second: Teddy Morse was not the composer of "Goodbye, Dolly Gray," which was written by the noted lyricist, Will D. Cobb, and a vaudeville performer, Paul Barnes. It was, however, published in 1900 by Teddy's firm, the Morse Music Co., which he sold at a good profit that same year.

Third: The correct title of "Jungle town" is "Down in Jungle Town."

Fourth: When the news story says Morse was vice president of "the Association of Song Writers," "the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers" (ASCAP) probably is meant. In 1914 "the tuneful Theodore," as Sigmund Spaeth called him, helped his close friend, Victor Herbert to found ASCAP, and both he and Mrs. Morse, of whom we shall hear more, were charter members.

And, by a pathetic coincidence, Victor Herbert died on Monday, May 26, 1924, one day after Teddy Morse's passing. He succumbed to acute in-

digestion a few hours after having learned of his fellow song writer's death.

#### IV. At the Funeral

The funeral of Theodore Morse was a somber, emotion-choked occasion. The Eight Famous Victor Artists, whose pianist he had been for two years, from 1916 to 1918, attended in a body and as they left the church the tension and grief were almost unbearable. Then it occurred to the impish Monroe Silver that something should be done, as he told me years later, "to clear the air." So he fell into step beside Billy Murray and said, in a subdued voice that nevertheless was clearly audible to the remainder of the Eight:

"Bill, wouldn't you like to make a phone call?"

This brought a laugh and the tension snapped. Billy's fellow artists said that his favorite pastime, aside from watching and playing baseball, was to leave his beautiful two-story, white home at Freeport early in the morning, ride into New York on the Long Island train, get a five-dollar bill changed into nickels and spend the remainder of the day in a Pennsylvania station phone booth, calling everybody he could think of. They said, too, it was odd that while he didn't have a particularly good memory for most things, he never forgot a phone number that he had dialed once. A year later, if he had occasion to call that number, he would confidently ring it without consulting the directory.

Billy, by the way, bought his home from Albert Von Tilzer, the famous song writer and brother of Harry Von Tilzer, who also lived in Freeport. And his first car he obtained, second-hand, in 1908, from Theodore Morse, who wanted to replace it with a new one.

It is worth mentioning, too, that the Victor record of Morse's last song, "Monkey Doodle"—one of the many he had written with a simian cast of characters—was issued on May 23, 1924, just two days before his death. Its words were by Leo Wood and Teddy's wife, "Dolly." The number, de-

scribed "as a jingly, jungly dancing song," was sung on the Victor disc by the American Quartet, with Billy Murray taking the lead. Murray and Morse had been intimately associated ever since Billy "came east" in 1902, and were always warm friends.

#### V. Some Biographical Notes

The life that ebbed away that Sunday afternoon had begun a little more than 51 years previously in Washington, D. C., where Theodore Morse was born April 13, 1873. It probably would be impossible to start out now and find out for sure where he was on each of his succeeding birthdays, but there is no doubt of his whereabouts on one. By referring to HOBBIES for April and May, 1957, you will see that on April 12, 1917, the group that later was called the Eight Famous Victor Artists gave a concert in the Elks Theatre at Pulaski, Va., and Morse was the pianist. There was no way for the troupe to leave town by train until the next morning, so at least a few hours of Teddy's 44th natal day were spent in Pulaski.

The remaining time probably was passed enroute to New York, for it was understood that the performers had consented to appear in Pulaski only to break a long "jump" from Atlanta to New York. They all—Murray, especially—wanted to get back for the opening of the big leagues' baseball season.

Teddy Morse and John Philip Sousa had two things in common. They were born in the Nation's capitol and both were skilled violinists while in their early teens. The undersized Morse youngster seems to have been a "problem child," however, in spite of his musical accomplishments, and his parents sent him to Maryland Military Academy. He loathed wearing a uniform and being under strict discipline, so at the age of 14, just about the time that Thomas Edison was introducing his improved wax cylinder phonograph, he ran away to New York City, just as Billy Murray deserted his home in Denver when he was 16. A Mr. and Mrs. Rucker, who were friends of his parents, let him work in their music store on 125th Street. He received no salary, but the Ruckers gave him room and board. A year later he became a clerk for the Charles W. Ditson Company, the New York branch of the Oliver Ditson music publishing company of Boston. According to Jack Burton, author of "The Blue Book of Tin Pan Alley," he composed several instrumental numbers that Ditson published, and headed a trio of piano, violin and cello that played at weddings, dinners and other social functions. It is not clear whether he played the violin in the trio or chose the piano on which he had become accomplished. Teddy may also have had some talent as a singer. Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr., say in their book, "Vaude," that in his early song writing years he sang his own composi-

(Continued on page 118)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

tions on the Variety stage.

In 1898 he founded a music company of his own, and two years later published "Dolly Gray," which is said to have sold about a million copies. He then sold out and accepted a position with Howley, Haviland and Dresser. The firm's star composer was huge Paul Dresser, brother of Theodore Dreiser, who became a famous novelist of the seamy side of American life.

The first recorded song by Teddy Morse that I have been able to trace was "In the Moonlight with the Girl You Love," which was published in 1902, and sung on an Edison cylinder by William H. Thompson. It was not a strong success, but his next, "A Little Boy in Blue," one of the pathetic "war ballads" popular in those days, was a hit. A surprising thing is that on the cover of the sheet music there appeared the likeness of a gentleman called "Wm. Murray," who was to win world-wide fame a little later as Billy Murray, most popular of early recording artists. At that time he was still with Al G. Field's Minstrels and hadn't taken Field's good advice to get rid of the stiff sounding "William" and change to Billy, thus giving an informal quality to his name. It seems rather startling to find Billy Murray singing an old-fashioned "sob song," but he did the same thing in 1904 when he recorded for Victor Morse's pathetic "child ballad," "Please Come and Play in My Yard." Both Murray and Morse were short, stocky men whose faces wore broad smiles when the occasion called for them, but in most of his photographs bespectacled Teddy looks downright morose. Bill, I estimate, was about five feet six, and Morse probably around five feet three or four.

The words of both "A Little Boy in Blue" and "Please Come and Play" were written by Morse's first lyricist, Raymond A. Browne. So far as I know, Teddy never wrote the words for any of his songs. In that respect he differed from Irving Berlin, Charles K. Harris, Paul Dresser and some of the other great "tunesmiths."

### VI. The Most Recorded Song Writer

My narrative having reached this stage of Theodore Morse's professional development, I pause to say that any relatively detailed account of his song writing activities must wait until later when some of the recordings of his works will be discussed. I think it interesting, however, that a photograph of Richard J. José, the famous counter-tenor, not only was reproduced on the music of "Dear Old Girl," but that José sang the ballad for both 10-inch and 12-inch Victor records. It was also recorded for Victor by Harry Macdonough (who sang many Morse numbers) and the Haydn Quartet, and they revived it ten years later, on double-faced



**EARLY VICTORS.** These records, by Bert Williams and his partner, George Walker, show what Victor record labels were like before the dog trademark was adopted, at the time Theodore Morse was beginning to be known as a song writer. These white labels, with handwritten information, were either factory test pressings or salesmen's samples.

record No. 17397. On the other side of the 1913 version was Dresser's "On the Banks of the Wabash," sung by what was represented to be the American Quartet, but with Macdonough, instead of Murray, taking the lead.

One thing I wish to point out here is that Morse's remarkably successful career began at a time when the phonograph and record industry was undergoing changes. Late in 1901 Victor 7-inch and Monarch 10-inch records began to bear the name of the Victor Talking Machine Company instead of Eldridge R. Johnson, and the famous dog trademark appeared. Early in 1902 both Columbia and Edison started making gold moulded cylinders and Columbia began to record its own discs instead of selling the Globe Record Company's Climax brand.

An idea of what Victor labels looked like before the fox terrier, "Nipper," began to listen to his Master's Voice coming from the primitive "gramophone," may be obtained from the accompanying illustrations, provided by Ed Foster, a California collector, of records which Bert Williams and George Walker made in 1901.

Harry Von Tilzer is usually considered the most successful popular song writer of the first 10 years of this century (Irving Berlin took over the title after "Alexander's Ragtime Band" appeared in 1911 and was followed by an epidemic of other Berlin hits), but my research indicates that Teddy Morse wrote more songs that were recorded from 1902 to 1910 than Von Tilzer or anyone else. Perhaps he had fewer raging hits than Von Tilzer but his energy was boundless and he turned out an amazingly large number that were considered worthy of being recorded.

Not only was "Dear Old Girl" Morse's greatest 1903 success, but it probably remains his most durable composition—a classic in the repertoire of all "barber shop" quartets. The words were by a cultured, blind poet, Richard Henry Buck, who wrote the lyric of Adam Geibel's "Kentucky Babe" and also did the words of at least one other successful Morse song,

"Where the Southern Roses Grow." Years later, when Morse would play a medley of his old songs for the Record Makers' concert audiences, Billy Murray would facetiously remark: "He had to rehearse this one a week before he could play it," but it wasn't clear whether Billy meant Teddy had trouble mastering technical difficulties or was overcome by the pathetic sentiment of the number—one of those old-fashioned "sob ballads" whose heroine died in the second verse. There is a Tin Pan Alley tradition that Paul Dresser died of a broken heart in 1906, before his last great hit, "My Gal Sal" was published, because the vogue of "Dear Old Girl" and other Morse songs indicated that the young composer was outshining him as the Howley, Dresser Company's star writer.

Another 1903 song, "Up in a Coconut Tree," is interesting because of its being the first of the almost innumerable "jungle" or "monkey" songs that Morse composed. It was also one of Billy Murray's first three Victor records, issued in December, 1903. The Edison cylinder of the song came out a month earlier, after Murray's Edison career had begun the preceding August.

And here I think it well to say that the Morse songs were not only popular in his native United States and, of course, Canada, but also were widely sold and sung wherever English was spoken. In 1906, for example, the Russell Hunting Record Company of England issued Sterling cylinders within a couple of months of three Morse songs: No. 409, "Daddy's Little Girl," sung by Florrie Forde; 424, "Starlight," by Hamilton Hill, and 434, "Just a Little Rocking Chair and You," by Ella Retford, whose real name was Nellie Flanagan. Judging by her records, she had one of the sweetest voices any woman ever possessed. A few months later, a Sterling record of one of Morse's greatest hits, "Arrah Wanna," was made by a popular comedian, Fred Vernon.

### VII. "The Woodchuck Song"

The chances are that, unless you are "a real old-timer," you have never



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

heard that cheerful composition, "The Woodchuck Song" but in 1904, nearly 70 years ago, a lot of people were singing its nonsensical refrain:

"How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck would chuck wood?  
And how much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck only could?"

Now, a woodchuck could make good, and would,  
But there ain't no reason why he should—  
So how much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck would chuck wood?"

(Soaring to the realms of pure poetry, I think one line could be improved by changing it to "but there's no good reason why he should," thus obtaining the euphonious effect of a double rhyme.)

Teddy Morse wrote the tune of "The Woodchuck Song," but the words were the inspiration of no less a personage than Robert Hobart Davis, for many years editor-in-chief of Frank A. Munsey's magazines—Munsey's, All-Story, Argosy, Top Notch, etc. In a book called "The Amazing Bob Davis," by Fred S. Mathias, Davis told of a call he and Morse paid upon Fay Templeton, the musical comedy star, which induced her to use the number in "The Runaways," a production in which she was to be starred. Morse gets rather cavalier treatment in Davis' account as reported by Mathias, because he is not mentioned by name, but is referred to only as "the fellow who wrote the music." As far as I know, Miss Templeton never made any records, and all the discs and cylinders of "The Woodchuck Song" that I have learned about were by "Ragtime Bob" Roberts. In other words, for recording purposes Roberts "owned" the song. His Indestructible cylinder of it also contained another comic ditty, "Henry Hudson Was a Bold Jack Tar."

Mathias quotes Davis as saying he made \$20,000 from the sale of "The Woodchuck Song" (this must have been from sheet music, for royalties were not paid on record sales in those days) after he and Morse called at Fay Templeton's home and found her in bed, behind a screen. She told them to "go to it" and Davis began singing the song while Teddy accompanied. After the rendition she agreed to "plug" it, and a scene was introduced in the "Runaways," with half a dozen Negroes standing on an elevated platform and vociferating the ditty. Everything went well until the platform crashed and some of the black performers were hurt and sued for damages. After that the chorus was brought down to the stage level, and there was no more trouble. Bob Davis, incidentally, maintained the words of a popular song are more important than the music, but, except for comic and topical songs, I wholeheartedly disagree. There are few more depressing occupations than reading the lyrics of one sentimental tune after another. Without the music



THEY SANG MORSE SONGS. William H. Thompson (left) made one of the first records of a Theodore Morse song, a 1902 Edison cylinder of "In the Moonlight with the Girl You Love." Bob Roberts (right) made several records in 1904 of "The Woodchuck Song."

they nearly all seem banal, trite, unimaginative, with only a limited range of emotions and, more often than not, hardly literate. The only reading that is even more depressing is that of the words of operatic arias translated into English. But, as the writers of "Long Ago in Alcala" remarked:

"So long as a tune has a right good swing  
It doesn't much matter what words you sing."

And now, if you will forgive a purely personal reminiscence, I'll devote a separate section to telling of the time I unexpectedly met Bob Davis.

### VIII. Meeting the Amazing Bob

Before I started working as a newspaper, radio and television news writer, I was employed for two years as a clerk-carrier in the Marion, Va., post office—an occupation that caused the late Christopher Stone, assistant editor of "The Gramophone," to dub me "the literary postman." One morning I was on duty at the money order and registered mail window when a stocky, rather florid-faced man of about average height asked to have a thick envelope sent by registered mail. He wore a cap and I seem to recall that his face was somewhat freckled.

I observed that the envelope was addressed to a department of the "New York Sun" and that the name of the sender in the upper left hand corner was Robert H. Davis, so I casually remarked: "That's the name of the man who used to edit the Munsey magazines."

My customer appeared startled. He stammered slightly as he replied: "Eh. What's that? What did you say?"

"I said your name is the same as that of the man who used to edit the Munsey magazines."

"Oh," he answered. "I—I'm—the man!" Then, looking at me curiously, he inquired:

"Are you an author?"

"Well," I replied, "I can't exactly say that, but I have sold a few things."

"Did you ever send me anything?"

"Yes," I said, "and I apologize. I was just a teen-age kid and I had no business bothering a busy man like

you, but I sent you perhaps a dozen short stories, and you kept some of them long enough to make me think maybe you were going to buy them. Sometimes they were gone a month, but I know now they were all hopeless."

He shook his head. "No," he said, "I never kept a story more than a week before giving a decision." (But, in my case, I knew he had.)

I told him I was a collector of old phonograph records and had a 1904 Victor of Bob Roberts singing his "Woodchuck Song."

He looked amazed. "Great Scott!" he said. "I wouldn't have thought there was a copy left in the world!" He added: "I'd sure like to hear it." Then he told me that since leaving the Munsey publications he had been acting as a "roving reporter" for the "Sun", going wherever he liked and writing accounts of what he saw and did on his way "from nowhere to nowhere." (I have wondered sometimes if he mentioned the post office encounter in one of his articles.)

Another man came up to Davis and I deduced they were travelling companions.

"Well, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_," "The Amazing Bob" said complacently, "the gentleman here recognized me."

The other man seemed rather cynical. "Oh, yeah!" he said, and that was all his comment. As Davis accepted his receipt and turned to go, he remarked to me: "I'm glad to have met you." And I was glad to have met him.

On another occasion, while on post office duty, I waited upon the Russian-born composer, Louis Gruenberg, who had become famous because of his opera, "The Emperor Jones." He was visiting Sherwood Anderson, the novelist, who, with his son, Robert L. Anderson, at that time published the Marion weekly papers. Gruenberg was outlandishly attired, by Southwestern Virginia standards, and looked to me more like a Swiss mountain climber than anything else. When I mentioned the opera to him, he gave a shout of laughter and said:

"Here it is again! He knows me! Everybody knows me!"

Apparently his fame didn't displease him a bit.

And, on an earlier occasion, while I was in the music department of a furniture store, I sold a Ruth Etting record to a young man who, I later learned, was Roger Wolfe Kahn, a famous dance band leader of the 1920's, and son of Otto Kahn, the multi-millionaire banker. Although I had no idea who the customer was, I was impressed by his quiet courtesy and by his asking for "Miss Etting's new record." He was visiting Bob Anderson. A little later I created a bit of sensation in Marion of my own when T. S. Stripling of Clifton, Tenn., the famous novelist and Pulitzer prize winner, came to see me.

### IX. Teddy Morse's Reminiscences

In 1908 Edward Madden and Theodore Morse wrote a comic song with an unforgettable title, "I'd Rather

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

Be a Lobster Than a Wise Guy," which was the only successful number in a musical comedy called "Playing the Ponies." It was recorded by Billy Murray on Victor double-faced record No. 16036 and was a consistent seller for years. The song maintained that, in the long run, the simple, unpretentious human is likely to come out better than the sophisticate who thinks he knows it all, and the last part of the refrain went:

"Don't worry about the man who gets the lemon;  
He's bound to get the peaches when they fall—

And the more of life I see it really seems to me  
That the lobster is the wise guy, after all."

I mention this song because the August, 1920, issue of the Edison publication, "Along Broadway," contained an interview with Teddy Morse, who at that time was chief manuscript reader for the Leo Feist Music Company. His duty was to select songs that he thought had the elements of popularity and improve them when necessary. He was still composing, but not so actively as he had done in the early 1900's. The writer of the interview said Morse called his tiny office "the lemon and peach room," because it was there that "peaches" were accepted for publication and "lemons" were rejected. And I wonder if he got that title from the words I have just quoted in the "lobster" and "wise guy" song.

The article is worth reprinting, but, like Morse's death notice, it calls for some comments and corrections:

"You probably are well acquainted with the name of the song publishing house of Leo Feist. Its motto, an internationally known one, is 'You Can't Go Wrong With Any Feist Song.' Its song successes have been many.

"In the rear of the Feist headquarters, on West 40th Street, New York City, there is a little office which its occupant has chosen to designate as 'the lemon and peach room,' for there the many lemon products of would-be composers are rejected and the few peaches for Feist's song garden are picked.

"Theodore Morse, 'Ted,' as his friends call him, presides over 'the lemon and peach room.' There he picked or whipped into shape many of the songs you know best — songs, like 'K-K-Katy,' that brought \$20,000 to Jeff O'Hara, its composer; 'Over There,' 'Jazzola,' the quartet hit, and 'When You Look in the Heart of a Rose.'

"Mr. Morse is himself the composer of those good old-time numbers, 'M-O-T-H-E-R,' 'Blue Bell,' 'Arrah Wanna,' 'Up in a Coconut Tree,' 'He's a College Boy,' 'Keep a Cozy Little Corner in Your Heart for Me,' (Sic!) 'Bobbin' Up and Down,' 'Uncle Joe and His Old Banjo,' and many others.

"It is easy for me to write songs," said Mr. Morse recently. "I can sit down any time and compose something. All I need is a title and words and a sense of the rhythm."

"Most of the popular song composers do not work enough. They only compose when the fancy strikes them or they need the money. A good song writer should make at least \$10,000 a year. We are always seeking new song writers. When we find the right kind we do not contract for their services for a certain period of time, but instead give them a drawing account of \$75 a week. They have no regular office hours and can

work as they please."

"Song composers do not have to be known or live in New York for us to consider their compositions. 'Alabama Lullaby,' one of our biggest hits, came to our office via the mail route and from an unknown composer."

"A song composer to be successful must watch the market, the trend of the popular fancy, and then write for that. Ed. Madden and I wrote the first monkey song, 'Down in Jungle Town,' because we believed the public wanted a song of that character. The market was then flooded with that type of song."

"Madden and myself composed 'Blue Bell,' our biggest hit, because we knew a girl by that name. And here's the way 'Arrah Wanna' got its name. Jack Driscoll (Sic!) and myself were writing an Indian song. Jack was sitting in a hammock at his home, trying to think of a name for it."

"He must have thought too hard, or in some way lost his balance, and the hammock turned over. On the bottom of the hammock he saw its name, 'Arrah Wanna,' and that's where the title of that song came from."

"How did I get my start in this business? Well, I was first an errand boy for C. H. Ditson, the music publisher. My connection there made a retail song salesman of me. I studied the piano and found, as they say, that I had 'an ear' for music. One day I composed my first song, 'Up in a Coconut Tree,' and that started me on my way."

This article is dotted with factual errors, which perhaps could be attributed to Morse's having a faulty memory, but more likely were caused by the writer's inaccurate note taking. After all, only 18 years had elapsed in 1920 since the beginning of Morse's career, and he should have been able

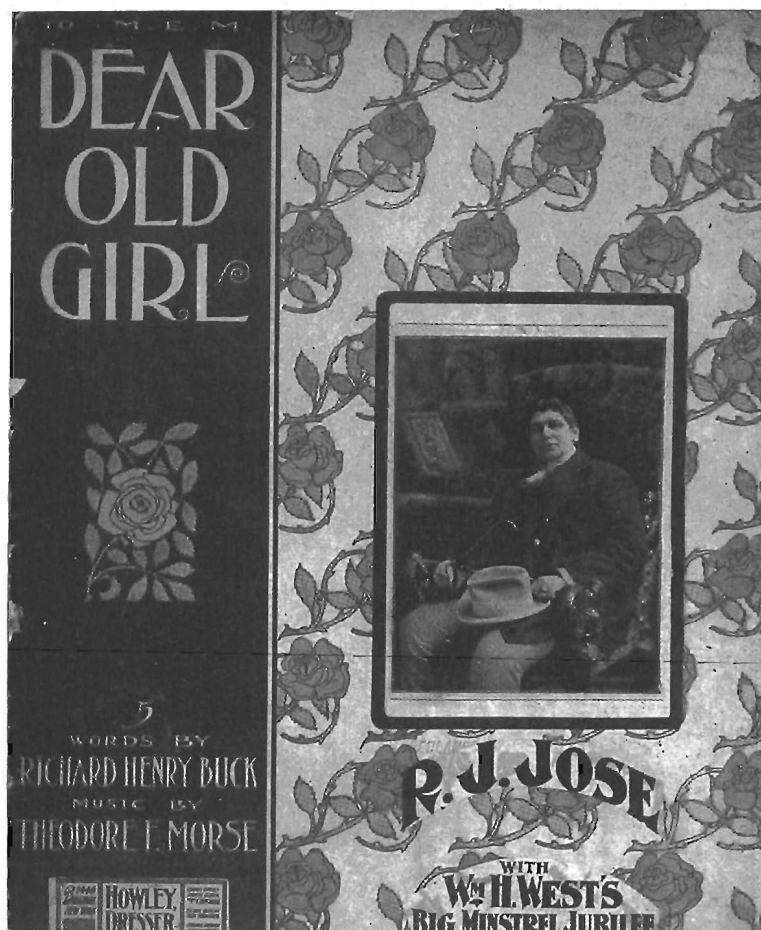
to remember clearly for such a short period.

To start the comments and corrections I'll say that I never heard any of the composer's old friends speak of him as "Ted." They invariably called him "Teddy."

"Jeff" O'Hara should have been "Geoff," or "Geoffrey." The correct title of one song is "Keep a Little Cozy Corner in Your Heart for Me" and of another, "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo." Perhaps in Morse's time song publishers welcomed manuscripts from unknown writers, but in a little later era they had suffered so many suits from amateur composers who alleged their compositions had been "stolen" that a policy was adopted of returning, unopened, all unsolicited manuscripts.

"Down in Jungle Town" was Madden's and Morse's most successful "monkey song," but not their first. It came out in 1908, after—as will be seen by the recordings list at the end of this article—the pair had written numerous others on the same theme. The first appears to have been "Up in a Coconut Tree" which Teddy is quoted as saying was the first song he wrote. Of course, it wasn't. It came out about the same time as 'Dear Old Girl,' and after Morse had already written several successful numbers, including 'A Little Boy in Blue.'

The man who wrote the words of



GREAT 1903 SONG HIT. "Dear Old Girl" is probably the most enduringly popular of Theodore Morse's songs. Richard J. Jose, the famous counter-tenor, made records of it in both the 10-inch and 12-inch size.

"Arrah Wanna" was Jack Drislane—not Driscoll—and the account Morse is quoted as giving of his beginning as an employe of the Oliver Ditson Company seems somewhat shortened.

#### X. Morse's Composing Methods

Teddy's statement that he could compose at any time, and without the help of a piano, receives confirmation from an account in the Edison Blue Amberol record list for January, 1914, of the way one of his numbers, "In the Land of Plinkity Plank," was written:

"Mr. and Mrs. Morse made a trip down the Mississippi River recently, through the region they have so often put into song. They were steaming slowly along past the levees of the lower river, one bright moonlight night, and the sounds of the banjos came to them from the many little cabins nearby. Mrs. Morse was inspired by the plinkity plank, plank of the music to pen the lyric of this song, and Mr. Morse had the music written before they even got back home to New York. It has made a great success, especially in quartet form, to which it is best adapted. The Premier Quartet, always a favorite with Edison owners, has never given a better performance than this one."

An even more intriguing account of Morse's composing methods was contained in a letter written to me on November 10, 1952, by "Dolly," his widow. It deals with the way that great hit, "Down In Jungle Town," which surely must have one of the most irresistible melodies ever written, came into being:

"Yes, my Teddy did write a lot of jungle songs. 'Down in Jungle Town' was written without a piano in a camp in New Hampshire. Ted had the lyric Eddie Madden had sent. He tapped out the melody on a table, wrote a lead sheet, sent the lyric and lead sheet to Haviland, and before we returned to New York City in the early fall it was on its way to be a hit."

Those of us who are not trained musicians must marvel at the way a man could read a set of words and then, with no musical accompaniment, tap-tap an undying melody on the top of a table. And now that I have introduced Teddy Morse's brilliant helpmeet, there will be an intermission until next month when her contribution to his career, and her other achievements, may be discussed at greater length.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## THE GLAMOROUS CHICAGO ANTIQUÉ SHOW and COLLECTORS' FAIR

Meet your old friends and make new ones at this twice yearly event. The next one is

APRIL 27 - MAY 1  
at the CONRAD HILTON  
Exhibition Hall

## HISTORICAL TAPE RECORDINGS RADIO AND TV

By LOU DUMONT

Welcome to the club!

When you turned the page to this department, you joined the club. A club which started with a handful of engineers, announcers and broadcast production people several years ago. It has grown to the point that it now includes a number of radio and television "buffs," production people, home-makers, students, educators, and the list goes on and on. Both in this country and abroad.

I like to think of myself as a charter member of this "club." I began collecting radio programs in 1943 when I was signed as a staff announcer at a small radio station in New Hampshire.

In those days tape recorders were few and far between. Most of the national radio networks had been recording—on acetate, 16-inch discs—programs for later broadcast. The consumer might have used a "Wilcox-Gay Recordio" or a "Motorola Discorder" and, with a microphone placed in front of the radio loudspeaker, the home-recording specialist "cut" his own discs. Often, there was a "rumble" to the turntable which was picked up by the recording stylus and preserved for posterity.

The Motorola I used was a combination record/playback unit, with the "playing-back" done through the radio. There was a small transmitter inside the unit which beamed the sound signal to your radio. It might travel as far up the street as two or three houses. I remember being reprimanded once for "broadcasting" my home recordings over the frequency of a Boston radio station, blotting out "One Man's Family."

I never realized, during those early radio years of my career, that the fun of recording off-the-air would become a hobby which consumes many hours weekly and many dollars annually.

This hobby has introduced me to a number of people, both inside and outside the profession who share a common interest.

Membership in this so-called club is not sophisticated. There are no dues. We have no boards of directors. We correspond with one another, either by letter or tape-recording. Some of my colleagues even save the tape-recorded letters for their factual content. (I wonder how much the tape-recorded letters of Lou Dumont might bring at auction in the year 2024?)

Call me a historian, if you wish. Most of us whose collections begin with those early radio shows feel we are documenting interesting years in American entertainment history. Many of our tapes should be used in education. All of us agree that our hobby takes more time than we can spare, but who wants to stop?

By 1960 I had collected some 500 reels of tapes. These included home-made discs, transcriptions of radio programs, quarter-track, half-track, full-track, "air checks" of shows I did. Many of these tapes contain 6 hours of information per tape.

At about this time, "the nostalgia wave" hit America!

Some young people called it "camp," others referred to this magic as "trivia." We more-serious, dedicated, collectors cared not what it was called. We—like Old Man River—just kept rolling along, trading tapes, meeting friends, spending many pleasant hours in front of the hi-fi.

The idea of this hobby is to continue the flow of information about the radio/tv pioneers.

I was on the staff of WBZ in Boston at about the time the radio-nostalgia took hold. I appeared on a program hosted by Bob Kennedy, now in Chicago, and played excerpts from some of the old programs from my collection as well as from the collections of colleagues. Interest was high... the audience responded... and the station has since repeated the series, a number of times, with results!

Since this is the first of a series of columns, I have attempted to give the reader a background on the writer and his hobby.

In future columns, as space permits, we'll turn back the hands of time to memorable radio broadcasts. We'll include historic television shows and much behind-the-scenes information. One of the more interesting of the latter was the Dave Garraway show called "Tempo/Boston." (And would you believe our cat was named "Tempo"?). A number of historical audio tapes of Garraway's series from Boston will be discussed in future articles in this column.

I have been corresponding with the widow of one of radio's pioneer performers and she will offer interesting notes about her late husband.

Those of you who were connected with the industry in radio's golden years are most welcome to correspond with your writer. Your memories are really the foundation of this hobby and it would be pleasant to share them with the legion of collectors around the world.

I offer thanks to Pearl Ann Reeder, editor of HOBBIES, for seeing the possibility of interest in our hobby. If reader response indicates high interest, we'll be encouraged to continue on.

Letters to me, from our readers will be acknowledged, if at all possible, and, while the secretarial staff is small, somehow, some way, we hope to manage to keep you posted.

Next installment: radio's first singing troubadours.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### Theodore Morse a Centenary Tribute

By JIM WALSH

#### PART 2

##### I. The Girl From Brooklyn

Picking up this centennial tribute to the song writing genius, Theodore Morse, where we left off last month:

I have never heard any of Teddy's former associates speak of him except affectionally and with warm liking.

Neither have I read any unfavorable remarks about him other than some statements made by Eddie Cantor in a *Saturday Evening Post* article years ago. The comedian told of how, as a small boy with show business ambitions, he was trying out some songs in the Howley, Haviland and Dresser audition rooms when Morse yelled at him to shut up. According to Cantor, the fat, soft-hearted Paul Dresser replied to Morse's outburst with some such words as: "Oh, let the kid sing, Teddie! He's not doing any harm!" Morse then put on his coat and hat and, glaring balefully at the boy, stormed out of the office. Possibly the tuneful Theodore couldn't stand Eddie's juvenile singing style or maybe something else had gone wrong with him.

This incident probably occurred in 1904, when Cantor had not much more than reached his twelfth birthday. Dresser died in 1905 after a long illness, so the alleged unpleasantness probably antedated his death by a good many months. Aside from it, accounts of Teddy Morse agree in describing him as a genial, warm-hearted, diminutive dynamo of energy.

As far as I know, Morse went well into his thirties without marrying. Then one day in 1905 a 15-year-old Brooklyn girl named Theodora Teris, who was born July 11, 1890, and who had song writing ambitions, asked his opinion of a lyric she had penned called "Girlie, I Love You."

Her reception was more friendly than that Eddie Cantor had received. Teddy was favorably impressed by the verses, and "carried away" by the vivacious girl. He agreed to set music to the song, whose words were no worse than those of the usual popular ballad. In fact, they were better.

True, the opening stanza does give the impression that the hero, who is ardently addressing the heroine, may



"RECORD MAKERS" TROUPE.—THEODORE MORSE is the short, stocky man at the extreme right of the front row. Others in front are Billy Murray, two unidentified men and Henry Burr. Vess L. Ossman is just behind Burr, and John H. Meyer behind Morse. In the rear row are Byron G. Harlan (only partially shown), Arthur Collins and Albert Campbell. It is not known where the picture was taken.

not be quite a gentleman, for we are told, "Her cheeks are red at things he's said." The refrain, however, makes it clear that his intentions are honorable:

"Little girlie, I love you!  
Tell me truly what to do!  
Shall I buy the wedding ring?  
Shall we marry in the spring?  
Let me buy a home for you.  
There'll be lots of room for two.  
Bye and bye we'll buy the cradle—  
Girlie, I love you!"

The teen-ager's maiden effort not only was published, but Billy Murray made a Victor record of it which sold very well. The year of publication was 1906, and in that year the 33-year-old composer and the 16-year-old girl were married. However, they did not need to buy a cradle until 1918 or 1919, after 13 years of wedded life, when their only child—their daughter, Annette—was born. Perhaps Teddy fell for Theodora partly because their names were so nearly alike. However that may have been, they became the first husband and wife song writing team in Tin Pan Alley's history.

Not, however, for a few years. Howley, Haviland and Dresser was going down hill before Dresser's death, although the success of such Morse songs as "A Little Boy in Blue," "Dear Old Girl" and "Blue Bell" kept it in business for a while. But after Dresser's death the company collapsed, and Morse went to F. A. (Kerry) Mills, composer of "Red Wing," "At a Geor-

gia Camp Meeting," "Happy Days in Dixie" and many other hits, as the highest paid song demonstrating pianist in the music business. A year later F. B. Haviland revived the firm for which Morse had previously written, and Teddy was made a full partner in the business and its head composer. Its success during the next few years was attributed largely to Morse's energy and creative ability.

Despite her teen-age song writing ambitions and her one successful ballad, Theodora Morse seems to have done little or no lyric writing for the first four or five years of her marriage. From 1904 to 1911 her husband worked mostly with Edward Madden, a graduate of Columbia University, whose father was the house detective at the Marlborough Hotel; Jack Drislane, who, with Bert Fitzgibbons appeared with Morse in vaudeville, and Jack Mahoney. Madden, Drislane, Mahoney and Mrs. Morse, were the most important of Teddy's collaborators, but from 1902 until 1924 he was associated with a good many others, including the already mentioned Browne, Buck and Davis, and Dick Richards, William Cahill (who made some comic "Dinny Donahue" monologs years later for Edison records), Orr O'Connor, Howard Johnson, Arthur Fields, Earl Carroll, John O'Brien, Al M. Kendall, J. Russel Robinson and Leo Wood.

(Continued on next page)





HE SANG MORSE BALLADS.—Harry Macdonough, shown here at his desk, recorded many Theodore Morse songs, as solos or with the help of the Haydn Quartet.

Teddy Morse and his associates, like all other craftsmen who wrote popular songs for a living, were students of market trends. Madden and Morse gave monkey songs their first popularity, but had a horde of imitators, and they probably were the foremost writers of popular tunes in march time. In fact, when Victor issued a record of Frank C. Stanley singing "Dream On, Dear Heart, Dream On," which Morse had written in 1908, the supplement said:

"Theodore Morse, although he once wrote a march ballad and had to keep on writing other songs of the kind because the public demanded them, is at his best in ballads of a higher class, such as this beautiful number, one of the most striking of the year."

The "beautiful ballad," however, was not a good seller compared to Morse's many songs in march tempo.

But, if Teddy and associates could be originators, they also didn't mind being imitators. When Harry Von Tilzer produced the first highly successful "cheer up, sweetheart, the sun will soon be shining" type of song in "Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie," Drislane and Morse came through a

few months later with "Keep On The Sunny Side." Two Mahoney and Morse "Indian songs" - "Blue Feather" and "Red Clover" - obviously owe a lot, including their titles, to "Red Wing." But the granddaddy of all Indian songs was Neil Moret's "Hiawatha," which came out in 1903 and was followed by hundreds of imitations.

Ballads about "Mother" were always a sure bet among the more sentimental types of popular music buyers, so Howard Johnson, lyricist, and Teddy Morse, composer, had a hit in 1915 with "M-O-T-H-E-R, A Word that Means the World to Me," which probably has been one of the most parodied songs ever written. The words are unabashedly crude and pathetic - a fact which is explained by the statement that the narrator has "been around the world a lot, but never went to school." However, there is one word he has learned to spell and that "dear word" is "Mother."

## II. The Theodore Morse Music Company

As we said last month, Teddy Morse founded the Morse Music Company

in 1898, published one hit, "Goodbye, Dolly Gray," and sold out two years later to become associated with Howley, Haviland and Dresser. Around 1909 or 1910 he decided to return to the music publishing business. Perhaps one reason was that Congress had just enacted a copyright law, providing that phonograph record manufacturers must pay royalties to publishers and composers of songs which they issued on discs and cylinders. It may be that Teddy thought it would be nice to have all the royalties of his new songs for himself. However that may be, he set up the Theodore Morse Music Company at 143-145 West 40th St., New York, with himself as president and Herman Snyder, secretary-treasurer. And within a year or so, Mrs. Morse, under the assumed name of D. A. Esrom, was writing the words for nearly all the company's songs. Madden, Drislane and Mahoney all transferred to working with other composers, notably Percy Wenrich, who for most of the ten years from 1910 to 1920 was an even more consistently successful hit writer than Morse.

Teddy was not the only song writer with ambitions to be his own publisher. Wenrich had a fling at it, but soon returned to J. H. Remick. Morse's old associate, Raymond Browne, was a publisher in 1913. Seymour Furth was another "write 'em and publish 'em" man, and so was Tell Taylor, who composed "Down By the Old Mill Stream" and "When the Maple Leaves Were Falling." And of course there was Irving Berlin, who broke away from Waterson, Berlin and Snyder to have his own firm.

When I began doing research for this article, I thumbed through an assortment of old sheet music and

(Continued on page 118)



MUSICAL COMEDY STAR—FAY TEMPLETON introduced "The Woodchuck song" in "The Runaways". Words of the song were by Robert H. Davis, editor-in-chief of the Munsey magazines, and music by Theodore Morse.

## Music Boxes

Antique Swiss Music Boxes restored like new. All wheels, worm gears and pinions made right in my shop on NEW SPECIALLY DESIGNED MACHINERY. NO WORK "FARMED OUT" hence you are money in pocket when you get my low prices for guaranteed work.

Hundreds of Music Boxes of every conceivable type right in stock. Just ask for any specific item and I'm sure I will have it. Every item offered rebuilt like new, as to those who know, all machines need plenty of work on them to be in flawless condition.

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tfo

## ROSES IN HISTORY & ART

(Continued from preceding page)

interest." The *Saturday Review* wrote of *Rose Recipes*: "For the most part uncomplicated basic recipes with the addition of roses. Information about rose products and where to buy them is given. Rose lore entwines the recipes, bearing out the books subtitle 'Customs - Facts - Fancies.'"

These three books, so closely tied in with Jean Gordon's collection, will some day be collector's items. Red Rose Publications, Woodstock, Vt., who sells the editions, have discovered that the rose is a popular subject.

Each book is proof positive of . . . The Subject is Roses, and tributes to the rose.

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 30)

found some publications of the Theodore Morse Music Co., which I didn't know I had. On the covers of all are the photos of two smiling persons—"D. A. Esrom" and Theodore Morse. It is well known that "Esrom" is "Morse" spelled backward, but I don't know just where Mrs. Morse got the initials, "D. A.," and what they represented. Since her mother's name was Dorothy Terriss, and Theodore afterwards wrote songs under that name, perhaps D. A. were the initials of her mother's Christian names, or perhaps the A. stood for her father.

Like all prominent publishers of popular music, the firm issued many successful songs and probably a greater number that didn't do well. I was especially intrigued by the title of one of which I had never before heard, "The Teddymorse Tango," which was described as "New York's latest Craze. A positive sensation." However, it was never recorded. Another now forgotten number was "Texico," declared to be "the finest of all Turkey Trots." The Peerless Quartet made a Columbia record of "Texico," but it proved to be a "lemon" instead of a "peach."

Morse songs bearing the name of D. A. Esrom as collaborator were numerous. Beginning in 1911 they included "Another Rag (A Raggy Rag)," "Lizbeth Ann," "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo," "In the Land of Plinkity Plank," "Bobbin' Up and Down," "Salvation Nell," "Luella Lee," "Whistling Jim," and "Way Back Home." One of their most successful and enduringly popular collaborations was an openly acknowledged "Steal"—"Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," published in 1917 after Teddy had closed his publishing business and joined Leo Feist as composer and manuscript editor. This number, highly popular during World War I, set new words to a slightly modified version of the Pirates' Chorus from Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance"—which

itself is a parody of Verdi's "Anvil Chorus" in "Travatore." "Hail, Hail" was published "with apologies to Sir Arthur Sullivan." It was one of the last numbers on which the name of D. A. Esrom appeared, for the still very young Theodore had already begun writing as Dorothy Terriss. Incidentally, it's amusing to observe that in his "History of American Popular Music," the late Sigmund Spaeth did not realize that "Esrom" was Mrs. Morse, but thought it just another name for Teddy himself.

The Theodore Morse Music Publishing Co. was in operation until sometime in 1914 or perhaps early 1915, when Morse joined Feist and transferred publication rights of his songs to that firm, which issued his 1915 productions such as "Auntie Skinner's Chicken Dinner," "Doodle-Dee Means 'Won't You Marry Me?'" (another "monkey song") and "M-O-T-H-E-R."



BRITISH COMEDIENNE.—Charming Ella Retford made a Sterling cylinder in 1906 of a Teddy Morse song, "Just a Little Rocking Chair and You".

### III. With the Record Makers Troupe

If Teddy Morse had retained control of his publishing company he probably could not have managed to go on three-month concert tours, beginning in 1916, with Henry Burr's Record Makers Troupe—afterwards the Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor artists. He found it worth his while, however, to accept Burr's offer and his congenial disposition made him popular with his associates.

As a member of the concert he at first remained at the piano, wearing a fixed smile as he accompanied the vocalists or the banjoists, Vess L. Ossman or Fred Van Eps. In 1918 a reviewer for a Uniontown, Pa. newspaper referred to him as "Teddy Morse, composer, piano virtuoso and accompanist extraordinary . . . the smiling man at the piano, whose proud and pleased grins were a sure tip

that something new was being pulled off."

Somewhat later, the programs included "A Few Words From Theodore Morse." This seems to indicate that besides playing a medley of his songs, Teddy also spoke to the audience, but I don't know whether he came to the center of the stage or remained at the piano. Perhaps his discussion was of the "and then I wrote—" kind.

Despite his popularity, Teddy was dropped as a member of the troupe in 1918, in favor of young Frank E. Banta, whose father, Frank P. Banta, had played more than half the piano accompaniments on Edison cylinders before his death in 1903. The late Fred Van Eps told me he was responsible for Burr's engaging Banta, who was a member of the Van Eps Trio. "Teddy Morse," Fred said, "was a swell fellow, but he just couldn't play the piano that Frank could, so I told Burr I thought he ought to hire the kid, with whom I was used to working." Thus young Frank, who died a few years ago, was engaged, and passed his 21st birthday in 1918 on tour with the Eight in Texas. The change, however, seemed to make no difference in Morse's friendship with Burr, Murray and the other members of the troupe.

Strictly speaking, Teddy Morse may not qualify as a recording artist, but in 1918 he made one record that I know of. It was a Pathé sapphire ball disc, No. 20430, of "Jazzin' Around," on which he played a piano duet with another song writer, Abe Frankl. There was also an unidentified drummer. On the reverse side was "The Jazz Dance," by Eubie Blake's Jazzzone Orchestra. (Eubie Blake is still living and playing ragtime and jazz, at this writing, although he was born February 7, 1883, so is now 90.)

Also in 1918 Teddy wrote part or all of two "realistic" war sketches for recording—"A Submarine Attack" and "A Battle in the Air." The former was recorded for Edison by the Premier (American) Quartet, on disc 50490 and cylinder 3497, with the assistance of a woman who sounds like Helen Clark. "A Battle in the Air" was also recorded by the quartet and issued on Blue Amberol cylinder 3618, but did not appear on the Diamond Disc. Columbia issued both titles on double-faced record No. A2626, but credited the authorship of "A Submarine Attack" to the Peerless Quartet, which made both sides. The "Battle in the Air" was said to be the work of "(Albert) Campbell, (Arthur) Collins and Morse." Edison credits Morse alone. It may be that Morse composed the music of the introduced songs, while Campbell and Collins, who of course were members of the troupe, wrote the dialogue.

What was perhaps Teddy Morse's most successful so-called "high class concert song" was published during the 1916-17 period when he was traveling with the Eight. It was "Sing Me Love's Lullaby," which had "Dor-

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othy Terriss" words set to a charming melody. Frances Alda liked the song so well she sang it on a Victor Red Seal record, and another Metropolitan Opera soprano, Marie Rappold, recorded it for Edison. These are the only examples I can recall of Morse's compositions gaining "celebrity" recognition.

Mrs. Morse did not restrict the Dorothy Terriss name to songs written with Teddy. She also worked with other composers, and in 1922 wrote the English language words of one of the greatest of all popular song hits, "Three O'Clock in the Morning," to the music of Juan Robledo. The late Paul Whiteman told me a few years ago that his Victor record of "Three O'Clock" sold close to four million copies, but I am skeptical of those sales figures. Another hit of which "Dorothy Terriss" provided the words was "Wonderful One," with music by Whiteman and Ferdie Grofé, who died April 3, 1972. Victor issued a Red Seal record of it by John McCormack November, 1923, and in May, 1924, after McCormack supposedly had "skimmed off the cream," announced a Black Label version by Burr, with a Rudy Wiedoeft saxophone obbligato and Frank Banta's piano accompaniment. Billy Murray quoted Victor recording officials as saying the Burr record sold twice as many copies in its first month as McCormack's had in the six months preceding. Mrs. Morse mentioned to me that she had the Burr record.

After Teddy's death, Theodora relinquished the Dorothy Terriss disguise, as Dolly Morse, wrote the words of many of the hits of the 1920's.

Record companies liked to issue medleys of Theodora Morse compositions. An example is Victor 17394, "Morse's Medley," played by Conway's Band late in 1913. It included "The Village Band," "Dear Old Girl," "When Uncle Joe Plays A Rag," "Luella Lee," "That's Why the Violets Live," and "Bobbin' Up and Down." At about the same time Columbia issued A1417, "Morse Medley," a banjo solo by Fred Van Eps. Fred plays "Salvation Nell," another number I can't identify, and "Bobbin' Up and Down," which is certainly an attractive "raggy" piece. Even earlier, in 1911, U.S. Everlasting had made a cylinder, No. 1329, "Medley of Theodore Morse Songs," by U.S. Military Band. And in May, 1924, the month Teddy died, Victor came along with 19287, "Ted Morse Medley Fox Trot," played by the Manhattan Merry-makers, and including "Way Down in My Heart," "Arrah Wanna," "Blue Bell," "Down in Jungle Town" and "Dear Old Girl." The choice of selections, you will notice is almost identical to that of the Capitol Theater chorus in the program broadcast five hours after Morse's death. The reverse side, by Ted Weems and His Orchestra, is Paul Dresser's posthumous hit, "My Gal Sal."



"BANJO-EYED" COMIC—EDDIE CANTOR as a boy of 12 or so, annoyed Teddy Morse by his singing of popular songs.

Teddy, himself, on occasion used the medley idea. His 1905 song, "What the Brass Band Played," included snatches of "I've Got a Feeling for You," "A Little Boy in Blue" and "Blue Bell." Other composers have resorted to the same idea to make use of their old tunes—for instance, Harry Von Tilzer in "The Songs of the Ragtime Boy"; Charles K. Harris with "Songs of Yesterday," and Irving Berlin with "They've Got Me Doin' It Now," also known as "the Berlin Medley."

### IV. My Friend, "Dolly" Morse

Toward the end of October, 1952, more than 28 years after the death of Teddy Morse, I was greatly surprised and even more delighted to receive a letter from "Dolly," his widow. I have mislaid the letter and can't remember why she wrote, but I learn



COMPOSER'S WIFE.—This photo of Theodora Morse was made in 1941. Note that she autographed it for Jim Walsh under her three song-writing names—D. A. Esrom, Dorothy Terriss and Dolly Morse.

from my diary that she made this amazing statement: "I feel like a fool writing to a smart man like Jim Walsh." I remember she told me that she and her sister had taken HOBBIES for years and always looked forward to my articles. And she almost took my breath away by sending me a photograph of the Record Makers which had belonged to Teddy and was taken when he was with the troupe. By a remarkable coincidence, I received in the same mail a brief note and an autographed photo from Eddie Cantor, whose boyish singing had angered Teddy Morse nearly 50 years before. I suppose I must have written something about the Record Makers which included a reference to Teddy, to cause Theodora, or "Dolly," as she was always known in her later years, to send me the group snapshot.

I have found a later letter from the brilliant lady, who had too modest a conception of her own merits, and shall copy the portions that are still of general interest. Last month I quoted a part in which she told of how Teddy composed the music of "Down in Jungle Town":

"Lucky you to have seen and heard Cornelia Otis Skinner in 'Paris: 90', even though you did have to ride 175 miles and back (to and from Richmond, Va.), and then to say 'Hello' to Nat Shilkret. There is one fine chap. We did see a lot of both him and his charming wife when he was in charge of recording at Victor. I don't see much of my old friends in the music business since I retired and moved to White Plains. Have a bad heart, and now the eyes are going bad, too. Haven't been into New York City in over seven years or to an ASCAP meeting, which hurts more than I can tell.

"... I had forgotten a picture I had taken in 1941. I don't care for it too much. My family says it looks like someone punched me in the jaw, but it's the best of the lot, so am sending it on. Sorry I can't send one to your young friend (Quentin Riggs), but really haven't any more. Others are 30 to 40 years old, and I am not sending them out.

"Yes, I do have a daughter. Too bad Ted couldn't have lived to enjoy her as much as my sister and I have, and do. She was only five years old when our Teddy left us. Her name is Annette (we call her Ann); she is named for my sister. She has a daughter, Theodora (Teddy) Ann, 10 years old, and it looks now like she is going to follow in her grandma's steps, only with a better education.

"I have a lot of William W. Delaney song books (he was at 117 Park Row, N.Y.C.). Have No. 1 to 89 (No. 14 is missing, as it was out of print when Mr. Delaney said he was going to close up shop.) That was in 1922, I think. Maybe they would be of some use to our friend, Dan McNamara (public relations director of ASCAP), when he wants to find some old songs.

"I've sold our little house on Beech Street and expect to move into a garden apartment, first floor. Doctor's orders: Can't climb stairs any more, so must start to get rid of a lot of things as we are taking a small apartment, 3½ rooms. Sincerely yours, Dolly Morse."

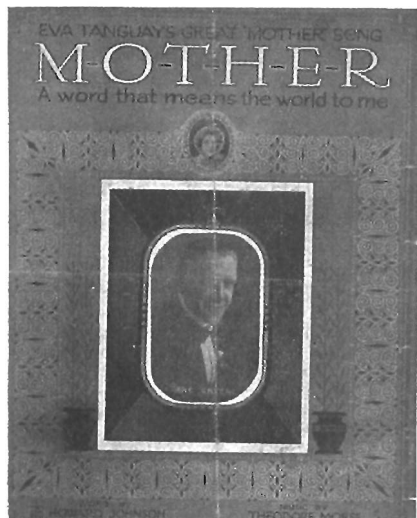
In my reply, I told Dolly that I should like very much to have that set of song books, which "Willie Wild-wave" Delaney issued at four month intervals from about 1891 through 1921, if she had not already arranged to give them to our friend, Dan. On December 30, she wrote:

(Continued on next page)

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(Continued from preceding page)

"I haven't said a word to Dan M. about Delaney Song Books, so they are on the way to Jim Walsh, and do hope they arrive in good condition and he gets a kick out of them. Here's hoping 1953 will bring you and yours all the good things and thoughts you are wishing everybody else."



1915 HIT.—Theodore Morse's ballad, "M-O-T-H-E-R, A Word That Means the World To Me" was a big success 58 years ago. It is probably one of the most parodied songs ever written. Gene Greene, "The Ragtime King," whose photo is shown, was a vaudeville favorite who made many records.

If I remember correctly, that was the last letter I received from Dolly, whose heart ailment grew progressively worse. Less than a year later I received a letter from her sister, telling me Dolly had died November 10, 1953. After 29 years of separation she had gone to join Teddy.

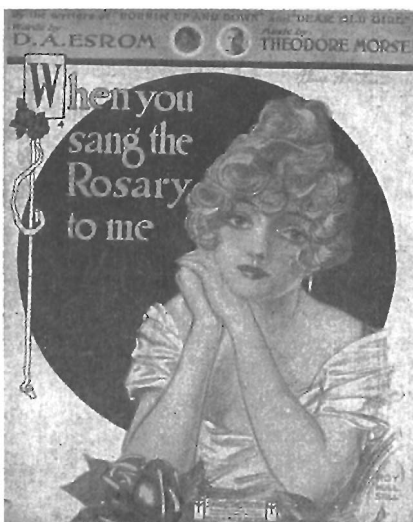
It pains me to report the sad fate of the Delaney Song Books. The paper-backed pamphlets were printed on the cheapest grade of paper and were so brittle with age they were ready to fall apart, but I was proud of having a virtually complete set that had belonged to Theodore and Theodora Morse, and took good care of them. They remained safe for five or six years, packed in a cardboard box which I kept on a top closet shelf. Then one night, without my knowledge, my athletic kitten, "Nipper," climbed to the top shelf and decided to make himself a sleeping place in that box. Using his sharp claws, he had shredded about a score of the song books into ragged slivers before I discovered his villainy. I was broken-hearted, but didn't punish "Nips," because he had no idea he had done anything wrong. On another occasion I received from the late Rev. Harlan B. Kishpaugh a newspaper clipping which he emphasized I should return promptly, as it was vitally important to him. I read it, heard the door bell, and laid the clipping down on a sofa while I went to the door. When I returned "Nipper" had torn the printed matter

into small pieces and was swallowing the last bit—a feat of devilment that got him into the minister's bad graces! However, I still have most of the song books put away, and should like to replace the ones "Nipper" destroyed.

### V. The Morse Recordings

When the thought of writing this centenary tribute to Theodore Morse occurred to me so forcefully that for a time I could think of nothing else, I at first intended to publish a list of recordings of his songs, from the beginning to the close of his career. But I soon discovered this would be impractical. Even using small six-point type for the listing would take all my departmental space for several months.

So I finally hit upon a compromise. I would write a biographical sketch and tribute, but give details of the recordings of Morse songs for only about the first half dozen years of his activity—say, from 1902 to the time in 1908 when Edison brought out four-minute cylinders and Victor, Col-



TYPICAL MORSE BALLAD. — This now forgotten song was published in 1913 by the Theodore Morse Music Co. The music was by Teddy Morse and the words by Mrs. Morse, writing under the assumed name of "D. A. Esrom".

umbia and Zonophone started issuing double-faced discs. Just possibly, I thought, I might later be able to provide a supplementary listing of his recorded productions from 1909 to 1924. Meanwhile, a tabulation of earlier recordings would be useful to collectors who decided it would be unusual and fascinating to put together a representative assortment of the songs of Theodore Morse.

In effect, that is the system I have followed. Records in the accompanying list are arranged, roughly, in the order they were issued, beginning with the Edison cylinder of "In the Moonlight With the Girl You Love," which came out in 1902. Companies are arranged in alphabetical order, with their names abbreviated. As a rule

Columbia comes first, with cylinders preceding discs. Columbia numbers of 30000 or higher are cylinders. Comparatively low ones, like 1562, are discs. Then come Edison two-minute cylinders; then Indestructible and U.S. Everlasting cylinders, if any; and, finally, Victor and Zonophones.

I made one slight exception to the rule of ending at the close of 1908. Many single-faced Victor and some single-sided Columbia records were taken into double-faced lists, and, in the case of Victor especially, this "picking up" continued well into 1910. Thinking I should include those double-faced versions. I also listed any double-sided records containing Morse compositions that came out about the same time as the re-issues.

Obviously, since Theodora Morse began working with her husband only in 1911 (with the exception of the 1906 "Girlie, I Love You") songs with her lyrics are missing from the accompanying list, but those of Browne, Buck, Davis, Madden, Drislane, Mahoney and others are well represented. I have not, however, thought it necessary to include names of the writers of the words of the songs in the accompanying list. It is published in the hope that it will cause lovers of good American music to realize they owe a deep debt of gratitude to Theodore (and Theodora) Morse, on the centenary of his birth and the approaching 83rd anniversary of hers.

### THE END

RECORDINGS OF  
THEODORE MORSE'S SONGS  
"In the Moonlight with the Girl You Love"  
(1902)  
Edi. 8044 William H. Thompson  
"A Little Boy in Blue" (1902)  
Col. 31701 Tenor. (Probably Harry  
Macdonough.)  
Col. 1562 J. W. Myers  
Edi. 8040 Byron G. Harlan  
Vic. 1299 Joseph Natus  
Vic. 1394 Macdonough (piano accompaniment)



MORSE'S FRIEND. — VICTOR HERBERT, famous composer of light operas, was an intimate friend of Theodore Morse, who helped him found the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers. Morse and Herbert died within one day of each other.



- Vic. 1407 Macdonough (orchestra acc.)  
Vic. 1435 Walter B. Rogers (cornet) and Sousa's Band  
"Hurrah for Baffin's Bay" (1903)  
Col. 32173 Baritone (probably Myers)  
Col. 32217 Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan  
Col. 1491 Collins and Harlan  
Edi. 8447 Collins and Harlan  
Vic. 2442 Dan W. Quinn  
Vic. 31074 Collins and Harlan  
Zon. 5598 Collins and Harlan  
"Dear Old Girl" (1903)  
Col. 32282 Myers  
Col. 32948 Columbia Quartet  
Col. 1573 Myers  
Edi. 8613 Macdonough  
Vic. 2643 Macdonough & Haydn Qt.  
Vic. 4226 Richard Jose  
Vic. 31172 Jose  
Zon. 5925 Natus  
"Lizard and the Frog" (1902)  
Edi. 8049 Edison Military Band  
"It's the Man Behind the Gun" (1902)  
Edi. 7802 Frank C. Stanley  
"Up In A Coconut Tree" (1903)  
Col. 32284 Myers  
Col. 1574 Myers  
Edi. 8564 Billy Murray  
Vic. 2453 Murray  
"Isn't It Nice To Have Someone Love You?" (1903)  
Col. 32478 Tally  
"Woodchuck Song" (1904)  
Col. 32666 Bob Roberts  
Col. 1858 Roberts  
Edi. 8617 Roberts  
Ind. 3046 Roberts (with "Henry Hudson Was a Bold Jack Tar")  
Vic. 2624 Roberts  
Zon. 5795 Roberts  
"Marriage Is Sublime" (1903)  
Col. 32185 Baritone (probably Roberts)  
Col. 1420 Roberts  
Edi. 8429 Collins and Harlan  
Zon. 3037 Roberts  
Ind. 5599 Collins and Harlan  
"It's the Man In the Soldier Suit" (1903)  
Edi. 8384 William H. Thompson and Albert Campbell  
"Great Big Kickapoo Chief" (1904)  
Edi. 8763 Collins  
"It Takes the Irish to Beat the Dutch" (1904)  
Col. 32355 Murray  
Col. 1647 Murray  
Vic. 2493 Murray  
Vic. 16247 Murray, Reverse: Under the Anheuser Bush  
"Blue Bell" (1904)  
Col. 32515 Macdonough  
Col. 1813 Henry Burr  
Col. A323 Burr, Reverse: "I've Got My Fingers Crossed, You Can't Touch Me." (Harlan and Chorus of Children.)  
Edi. 8655 Harlan and Stanley  
Edi. 8736 Harlan and Stanley—"Two Rubes at the Vaudeville" (Daisy Boulals sings refrain of "Blue Bell.")  
Edi. 8829 Albert Benzler and James Hager (xylophone and bells)  
Vic. 2750 Macdonough & Haydn Qt.  
Vic. 16179 Macdonough & Haydn Qt. Reverse: Teasing (Murray & Haydn Qt.)  
Vic. 2791 Blue Bell Medley, Haydn Quartet  
Vic. 4142 Pryor's Band  
Vic. 31328 Pryor's Band  
Vic. 4326 Blue Bell—Humoresque. Sousa's Band  
Vic. 4309 Blue Bell Medley No. 2 Haydn Quartet  
Vic. 31377 Blue Bell Medley No. 2 Haydn Quartet  
Zon. 5808 Burr  
Zon. 6127 Bohumir Kryl (cornet)  
"I've Got A Feeling For You" (1904)  
Col. 32540 Roberts  
Col. 1872 Roberts  
Edi. 8561 Collins  
Edi. 8841 Ossman Banjo Trio  
Vic. 2956 Harry Tally  
"Why Hello, Bill, Who's Your Friend?" (1904)  
Col. 32542 Collins  
"Oysters And Clams" (1904)  
Col. 32541 Collins  
Col. 1871 Roberts  
Edi. 8730 Collins  
Vic. 2915 Roberts  
"Make A Fuss Over Me" (1904)  
Col. 32565 Collins  
Edi. 8833 Collins  
Edi. 8859 Ossman Banjo Trio  
Vic. 4104 Dan W. Quinn  
Zon. 6094 Roberts  
Zon. 48 Roberts  
"She Was A Good Old Soul" (1904)  
Edi. 8821 Stanley  
"Brotherhood of Man" (1904)  
Vic. 2631 Jose  
"Come Down From the Big Fig Tree" (1904)  
Edi. 8666 Collins and Harlan  
Vic. 2679 Collins and Harlan  
Vic. 2735 Arthur Pryor (trombone) and Sousa's Band  
Zon. 5914 Collins and Harlan  
"A Little Boy Called 'Taps'" (1904)  
Col. 32586 Harlan  
Col. 1876 Harlan  
Col. 3225 Medley (Columbia Qt.)  
Col. A458 Medley, Reverse: "Scots Wha"
- Hae Wl' Wallace Bled" (Burr)  
Edi. 8846 Harlan  
Vic. 4135 Harlan  
Zon. 6045 Murray  
Zon. 99 Harlan  
"What the Brass Band Played" (1904)  
Col. 32614 Myers  
Col. 3030 Myers  
Vic. 4151 Murray  
Zon. 6083 Murray  
Zon. 6104 Murray  
"Goodbye, Sis" (1905)  
Col. 32686 Murray  
Col. 32690 Columbia Quartet  
Col. 3064 Murray  
Edi. 8908 Macdonough  
"Rare Old Bird" (1905)  
Edi. 8925 Roberts  
"Can't You See My Heart Beats All for You?" (1905)  
Col. 3102 Murray and Roberts  
Edi. 8942 Murray and Roberts  
Vic. 1152 Len Spencer and Murray  
"Longing for You" (1905)  
Col. 32719 Harlan  
Col. 3187 Harlan  
Edi. 8961 Harlan  
"Where the Southern Roses Grow" (1905)  
Edi. 8976 Edison Male Quartet  
Vic. 4277 Macdonough and Haydn Quartet  
Vic. 16167 Macdonough and Haydn Quartet, Reverse: Sweetheart Days (Macdonough)  
"She Waits By the Deep Blue Sea" (1905)  
Edi. 9023 Irving Gillette  
Vic. 4341 Myers  
"Please Come and Play In My Yard" (1904)  
Col. 32781 Ada Jones  
Col. 3236 Jones  
Edi. 8778 Harlan  
Vic. 2987 Murray  
Zon. 21 Burr  
"Keep A Little Cozy Corner in Your Heart for Me" (1905)  
Col. 32798 Murray  
Col. 3261 Murray  
Col. A317 Murray, Reverse: "Ben Bolt" (Burr)  
Edi. 9080 Jones  
Edi. 9097 Medley, Edison Military Band  
Vic. 4390 Macdonough and Haydn Qt.  
Zon. 245 Murray  
Zon. 279 Hager's Orchestra  
Zon. 5293 Zonophone Orchestra, Reverse: Parisian Model (Zono. Orch.)  
"My Yankee Irish Girl" (1903)  
Zon. 284 Murray  
Zon. 336 Medley March Two-Step, Hager's Orchestra  
"Leader of the German Band" (1905)  
Edi. 9115 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 4555 Collins & Harlan  
Zon. 292 Roberts  
"In Timbuctoo" (1905)  
Edi. 9127 Murray  
Zon. 291 Collins & Harlan  
"Starlight" (1905)  
Col. 32813 Harlan  
Col. 3266 Harlan  
Col. A347 Harlan, Reverse: "Moon Dear" (Stanley)  
Edi. 9166 Harlan  
Vic. 4523 Haydn Quartet  
Zon. 287 Myers  
"Paddle Your Own Canoe" (1906)  
Edi. 9184 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 4602 Collins & Harlan  
"Daddy's Little Girl" (1906)  
Edi. 9202 Harlan  
Vic. 4604 Harlan  
Vim X2088 Harlan  
"Just A Little Rocking Chair and You" (1906)  
Britannic 1253 Murray, Reverse: After They Gather the Hay (Baritone)  
Col. 32860 Murray  
Edi. 9222 Jones  
Vic. 31501 Murray & Haydn Qt.  
Zon. 346 Murray  
"When Mose With His Nose Leads the Band"  
Col. 32934 Collins & Harlan  
Col. 3384 Collins & Harlan  
Edi. 9280 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 4626 Collins & Harlan  
Zon. 424 Collins & Harlan  
"Girle, I Love You" (1906)  
Vic. 4792 Murray  
"Keep On the Sunny Side" (1906)  
Col. 32942 Harlan  
Col. 3398 Harlan  
Col. A324 Reverse: "Message of the Violet" (Myers)  
Edi. 9271 Harlan  
Vic. 31507 Murray  
Vic. 35034 Murray, Reverse: "Scene in a Country Blacksmith Shop" (Harlan and Stanley)  
"Crocodile Isle" (1906)  
Vic. 4817 Murray  
"One Called 'Mother' and the Other 'Home, Sweet Home'" (1906)  
Col. 32969 Harlan  
Col. 3428 Harlan  
Col. A451 Reverse: "Barnyard Serenade" (Spencer and Alf Holt)  
Edi. 9360 Edison Male Quartet  
"Good Old U.S.A." (1906)  
Col. 32997 Harlan  
Col. 3463 Harlan  
Col. A346 Harlan, Reverse: "Soldier's Farewell" (Columbia Qt.)  
Edi. 9350 Harlan
- Vic. 4761 Myers  
"I'll Fold Up My Tent and I'll Steal Away" (1906)  
Zon. 590 Murray  
"You Never Can Tell By the Label"  
Zon. 599 Murray  
"Yimminy Yee, I Yumped My Yob for You" (1906)  
Zon. 625 Collins & Harlan  
"Arrah Wanna" (1907)  
Col. 33050 Collins & Harlan  
Col. 3534 Collins & Harlan  
Col. A771 Collins & Harlan, Reverse: "Mike's the Boy" (Collins)  
Edi. 9447 Collins & Harlan  
Edi. 9481 "Arrah Wanna Medley," Edison Military Band  
Edi. 9615 "Street Piano Medley," (Includes "Arrah Wanna.") August Molinari, with talking by Murray)  
Vic. 4907 Murray and Haydn Qt.  
Vic. 4960 Collins & Harlan (8-inch)  
Vic. 16223 Murray & Haydn Qt. Reverse: "Since Arrah Wanna Married Barney Carney" (Collins & Harlan)  
Vic. 31613 Medley Two-Step, Victor Dance Orchestra  
Vic. 35058 Medley Two-Step, Victor Dance Orchestra, Reverse: Barcarolle Waltz  
Zon. 616 Collins & Harlan  
Zon. 734 Hager's Orchestra  
Zon. 5296 Zonophone Orchestra, Reverse: Winona Two-Step  
"Take A Little Ride with Me" (1907)  
Col. BC 85105 Ellise Stevenson & Stanley  
Edi. 9989 Dorothy Kingsley & Edward Meeker  
Vic. 4994 Stevenson & Stanley  
Zon. 7023 Stevenson & Stanley (12-inch)  
Zon. 4042 Stevenson & Stanley, Reverse: "Shine On, Oh Stars" (Burr)  
"Lovin' Time" (1907)  
Col. 33120 Collins & Harlan  
Ind. 826 Harlan  
Zon. 775 Collins & Harlan  
"Don't Be So Mean" (1907)  
Col. BC 85018 Roberts  
"Nobody's Little Girl" (1907)  
Col. BC 85123 Harlan  
Edi. 9539 Harlan  
Vic. 5147 Harlan  
"Dream On, Dear Heart" (1907)  
Col. 3699 Stanley  
Col. A481 Stanley, Reverse: "Southern Girl" (Columbia Qt.)  
Vic. 5323 Stanley  
"When Her Beauty Begins To Fade" (1907)  
Vic. 4966 Haydn Quartet  
"It's Great To Be A Soldier Man" (1907)  
Edi. 9600 Harlan  
Vic. 5161 Murray  
Zon. 739 Murray  
Zon. 5087 Murray, Reverse: "Lanky Yankee Boys in Blue"  
Zon. 5295 Zonophone Orchestra, Reverse: "Uncle Sammy", (Probably also made in single-face)  
"Since Arrah Wanna Married Barney Carney" (1907)  
Vic. 5148 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 16223 Collins & Harlan, Reverse: "Arrah Wanna" (Murray & Haydn Qt.)  
"Take Me Where There's A Big Brass Band" (1907)  
Vic. 5216 Murray & Haydn Quartet  
"No One Knows How Much I Miss You" (1907)  
Zon. 694 Harlan  
"In Monkey Land" (1907)  
Edi. 9700 Collins & Harlan  
Edi. 9745 Medley, Edison Military Band  
Vic. 5270 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 18517 Collins & Harlan, Reverse: "When We Are M-A-R-R-I-E-D" (Jones & Murray)  
Zon. 5397 Jones & Murray, Reverse: "Wouldn't You Like to Have Me for a Sweetheart?"  
Ind. 671 Collins & Harlan  
"Two Blue Eyes" (1907)  
Col. 33205 Murray  
Col. 3733 Murray  
Col. A354 Murray, Reverse: "I Can't Find Another Girl Like You" (Columbia Minstrels)  
Edi. 9716 Werrenrath  
Ind. 626 Harkab  
Vic. 5310 Harlan  
Zon. 5382 Harlan, Reverse: "School Days" (Mako Bellevue) (1908)  
Col. 33210 Stevenson & Stanley  
Vic. 5308 Jones & Murray  
"I've Got A Tiddling Sensation Round My Heart"  
Col. 33212 Roberts  
"She's the Fairest Little Flower Dear Old Dixie Ever Grew" (1908)  
Col. 3785 Stanley & Burr  
Col. A414 Stanley & Burr, Reverse: "Under Any Old Flag At All" (Murray)  
Zon. 5414 Stanley & Burr, Reverse: "When Summer Tells Autumn Goodbye"  
"Two Little Baby Shoes" (1908)  
Edi. 9766 Harlan  
Vic. 5349 Harlan  
Vic. 16095 Harlan, Reverse: "Why Don't They Play With Me?"

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

- "Stupid Mr. Cupid" (1908)  
Edi. 5516 Jones  
Zon. 1109 Jones
- "Lanky Yankee Boys In Blue" (1908)  
Edi. 9860 Meeker  
Vic. 5472 Murray  
Zon. 1074 Murray  
Zon. 5087 Murray. Reverse: "It's Great To Be A Soldier Man."
- "The Family Tree" (1908)  
Ind. 700 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 5361 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 16221 Collins & Harlan. Reverse: "A Friend of Mine Told a Fried of Mine" (Tally)
- "I've Taken Quite A Fancy To You"  
Col. A589 Stevenson & Stanley. Reverse: "Angel's Serenade" (Francesco Daddi)  
Edi. 9933 Jones & Murray  
Ind. 801 Jones & Murray  
Vic. 5515 Jones & Murray  
Vic. 16788 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "Put On Your Slippers, You're In for the Night" (Jones)  
Zon. 1130 Jones & Murray  
Zon. 5106 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "Wouldn't You Like to Flirt With Me?"
- "I Want To Be A Merry, Merry Widow" (1908)  
Ind. 707 Jones  
Vic. 5473 Jones  
Zon. 5378 Jones. Reverse: "Waiting at the Church"
- "When You Were A Pinafore"  
Ind. 832 Stanley & Burr  
Vic. 5508 Stanley & Macdonough
- "Down In Jungle Town" (1908)  
Col. A5072 "Down in Jungle Town" and "We Won't Go Home Till Morning, Bill" (Peerless Minstrels). Reverse: "Down in Georgia On Camp Meeting Day". (Collins & Harlan)  
Edi. 9941 Collins & Harlan  
Ind. 816 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 5484 Collins & Harlan  
Vic. 16805 Collins & Harlan. Reverse: "Uncle Josh and the Lightning Rod Agent" (Cal Stewart)  
Vic. 5695 "Jungle Town" Parody. Nat M. Willis  
Zon. 1143 Collins & Harlan
- "Little Black Lamb" (1908)  
Col. 4327 Carroll C. Clark  
Col. A805 Carroll C. Clark. Reverse: "As the Ivy Loves the Oak" (John Dunsmure)  
Ind. 733 Jones  
Vic. 16040 Jones. Reverse: "If the Man in the Moon Were a Coon"
- "I Love You As the Roses Love the Dew" (1908)  
Col. A642 Stanley & Burr. Reverse: "The Heart Bowed Down" (Alan Turner)  
Vic. 16078 Macdonough & Haydn Qt. Reverse: "Little Annie Rooney" (Haydn Qt.)
- "Won't You Be My Honey?" (1908)  
Col. 3682 Jones & Murray  
Col. A463 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "I'm Wearing My Heart Away for You" (Burr)  
Vic. 16041 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "It's the Same Old Girl" (Stanley)  
Vic. 5624 Murray & Haydn Qt.
- "I'd Rather Be A Lobster Than A Wise Guy" (1908)  
Ind. 728 Murray  
Vic. 16036 Murray
- "Old-Time Rag" (1908)  
Edi. 9956 Meeker  
Vic. 16011 Murray. Reverse: "Music Makes Me Sentimental" (Eddie Morton)  
Zon. 1183 Murray  
Zon. 5375 Murray. Reverse: "Gee, Ain't It Tough to be Poor?"
- "I'll Be There With Bells On" (1909)  
Vic. 16285 Stevenson & Stanley. Reverse: "Flanagan at the Vocal Teacher's" (Steve Porter)
- "Cupid's Wedding Bells" (1908)  
Ind. 752 Jones & Murray  
Zon. 1047 Jones & Murray  
Zon. 5398 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "Don't You Think It's Time to Marry?"
- "When the Meadow Larks Are Calling, Annie Laurie" (1909)  
Vic. 16301 Arthur Clough. Reverse: "Whistle and I'll Wait for You" (Jones)
- "Good Old Dollar Bill" (1909)  
Vic. 16311 Murray. Reverse: "Victor Minstrels No. 16"
- "Wise Old Indian" (1909)  
Vic. 16319 Murray. Reverse: "Isn't Love A Grand Thing?" (Jones & Murray)
- "Keep A Little Feeling In Your Heart for Me" (1909)  
Vic. 16327 Stevenson & Stanley. Reverse: "My Cousin Caruso" (Murray)

- "Blue Feather" (1909)  
Vic. 16370 Jones & Murray. Reverse: "Run, Brudder 'Possum Run" (Collins & Harlan)
- "On A Monkey Honey-moon" (1910)  
Vic. 16426 Collins & Harlan. Reverse: "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now?"

- (Murray)  
"Molly Leo" (1910)  
Vic. 16437 Murray & Haydn Qt. Reverse: "Little Miss Golden Curly" (Harlan)
- "He's A College Boy" (1910)  
Vic. 16492 Murray & American Qt. Reverse: "Coleville Coon Cadets" (Collins)

## HISTORICAL TAPE RECORDINGS RADIO AND TV

By LOU DUMONT

Radio's first singing "troubadours" are—for the most part—forgotten today. The great voice of the Saturday afternoon Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, for instance, Milton Cross, actually began his career as a tenor soloist for WJZ, then in New York City, in 1921.

And, if you wish, to call them troubadours, pioneering prima donnas brought grand opera to radio in 1922. It is very possible that Mr. Sokol conductor of the Department of "Historical Records" in HOBBIES—may include some of the early radio recordings of opera in his collection.

A number of favorite early radio performers qualify for the title of "troubadours." And in subsequent issues of HOBBIES, I hope to offer a closer look at the life style of these lyric poets and poet musicians.

A very warm letter in early September, 1972, from Mrs. Helen ("Smiles") Frankel, wife of the late Harry (Singin' Sam) Frankel, included a transcript of a talk given by Mrs. Frankel at Richmond, Ind., recently. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the Richmond Women's Club.

She captioned her talk: "The Biography of a Troubadour." With her permission I would like to quote a few passages so that you, too, may know more about the man whose voice was heard by thousands of radio listeners in this country from the late 1920s through the late 1940s.

Mrs. Frankel said Singin' Sam's voice was "a solace to the old and lonely, a pleasure to the young and happy, a voice children wanted to hear at bedtime."

"This is the story of a man who achieved world fame and recognition and to whom it was a constant source of surprise. He excelled at many things besides singing. His photography won many prizes. Numerous homes in his hometown of Danville, Ky., contain furniture he made in his workshop."

Actually, based on information supplied by Mrs. Frankel, Harry Frankel was born in Hillsborough, O., January 27, 1888. But his earliest memories were of Danville, Ky., where his family moved when he was 3. She writes:

"The South got into his soul and remained there all his life. Harry had happy memories, always, of his Old Kentucky Home. It colored his thinking. It framed his language and his way of talking."

"When Harry was 9, his father moved the family and his men's clothing business to Richmond, Ind.

Harry's early training—as with so many pioneer radio performers—came via vaudeville, burlesque, minstrel shows and singing with silent films.

In minstrel shows, "Sam sang his way around the country year after year, but always sang the songs everyone loved. These were the old tunes which were to become his trade-mark."

For example, here's the format of an historical radio tape from my collection:

*Theme:* "Refreshment Time." (Estab., fade under for:)

*Sharbutt:* Opening and intro. Singin' Sam.

*Sam:* Opening remarks, intro. song.

*Music:* "Avalon." Sam and Orchestra.

*Sam:* Commercial (Coca-Cola).

*Music:* "Hawaii Sang Me To Sleep." Sam and Orchestra.

*Sam:* Intro. to song.

*Music:* "After The Ball." Sam and Orchestra.

*Sam & Del Sharbutt:* Commercial for Coca-Cola, introducing the new handy 6-pack.

*Music:* "Out Of The Dusk To You." Sam and Orchestra.

*Theme:* "Refreshment Time." (Estab., fade under for:)

*Sam:* Closing Remarks.

*Theme:* Up to time.

I'm sorry that I don't have the date of this tape. "Smiles" Frankel wrote me that the theme was written by the president of the Company (Coca-Cola) and to her knowledge, it never had a title.

I do know, however, that the "Refreshment Time" programs were not the first Coast-to-Coast broadcasts for Singin' Sam. "Smiles" figures the Barbasol Program, over CBS from New York City, began either late in 1931 or early 1932.

This series continued on for 7 years and for a long time, Sam was number one on radio along with Amos 'n Andy."

In 1936, Singin' Sam began a pleasant association with Coca-Cola. He would fly to New York every other week, record programs for three days, then return to his Richmond farm.

In 1945 he formed "Transcription Sales Company" with headquarters in Springfield, O., and produced more than 250 quarter-hour shows which he called "Reminisce" with Singin' Sam.

He sold his farm, "Trouper Hill" in Richmond and moved to Florida a

(Continued on next page)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich

### PART I

By JIM WALSH

*(Gratefully dedicated to Mrs. Helen Noteboom, of Richland, Mich., and Louis Cohn, New York City attorney. Without their help this article would still be unwritten.)*

### I. A Human Interest Story

Teachers of "creative writing" instruct students that a good method of beginning the usual type of article is with a "human interest" anecdote that will grip the reader's interest and keep his senses alert to find out what's coming next.

In view of this theory, perhaps the best way of starting to tell the stories of Dolly Connolly, vaudeville singer and recording artist, and her husband, Percy Wenrich, who wrote some of the greatest popular song hits this country has known, is to begin with a clipping that I came across in an old scrapbook. From the style of type I can tell that it originally appeared, 50 years or more ago, in the Washington Post's theatrical section. It is undated, but must go back to somewhere between 1920 and 1924. Its homey, heartwarming quality will be more effective by contrast with the sorrows that later darkened the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Wenrich.

"A Record Letter Home. Vaudeville audiences—always fond of good music—will be interested in the announcement that Dolly Connolly, the popular contralto, with Percy Wenrich, celebrated as a song writer, will come this week to the Belasco Theater.

"Miss Connolly is from Chicago, where, early in life, the remarkable quality of her voice was recognized. It is a rich contralto and has been immortalized in phonograph records as well as enjoyed in the theatrical world.

"Only a few years ago Miss Connolly conceived the happy idea of registering on a record a letter to her mother, insisting there was a personal touch not obtainable in the mere writing of messages of love to the dear ones back home.

"The letter, beginning with 'Dear Mother,' and proceeding just as the daughter would talk to her mother if the opportunity came, concludes with the singing of one of her mother's favorite songs. And now, when mother feels lonely and letters do not arrive often enough, she gets out the priceless record and again enjoys her daughter's conversation and song.

"Mr. Wenrich hails from Joplin, Mo. Wenrich is a household word out in that locality, where the composer's parents were not only prominent musicians, but where 'Father' Wenrich had his own glee club and was known as the poet laureate of Jasper county."

To me there is special interest in the fact that this clipping has been occupying a spot in a scrapbook for half a century or so, mutely waiting

for the time to come when it would be quoted and do its humble part toward making a bit more real the characters of Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich. Certainly, it causes one to have a liking for the famous young woman who made that record in the hope of removing some of her mother's loneliness and longing to be with her daughter.

I have compiled a list of Dolly Connolly's records to be published as part of this article, but the disc she made for her mother is not included. I wonder if more than one copy was made—it probably was a Columbia

"Personal" recording — and whether the one her mother treasured still exists.

### II. How It Came About

I never cease to marvel at the way in which time takes care of the problems that confront me when I long to write certain artists, but lack sufficient information to go ahead with the job. For years I wanted to put something on paper about Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich, and a number of my readers asked me to tell their life stories, but I didn't know enough about the subject to undertake



UNRECORDED VERSION. DOLLY CONNOLLY made a great hit in vaudeville during 1914-15 with her husband's song, "When You Were a Tulip." However, since she made no records that year, her version went unrecorded.

that project. And if I hadn't written a sketch about "That Girl" Quartet, which appeared in *HOBBIES* for January, 1973, I still would be handicapped by insufficient knowledge.

But I wrote that article and casually mentioned that a Columbia record by the quartet had a song by Dolly Connolly on its reverse side. This reference caught the eye of Mrs. Paul Noteboom, of Richland, Mich., and that lady, to whom I shall always be indebted, wrote to me.

The things Mrs. Noteboom told me in her letter were of great interest. She said—but perhaps the fair thing would be to quote what she wrote instead of trying to summarize it. So here goes for Mrs. Noteboom's initial letter to me:

"January 8, 1973. Dear Mr. Walsh: For some time I have enjoyed your articles in *HOBBIES* although I have no musical training or ability. Perhaps it is because the names bring back forgotten memories.

"In the January issue of *HOBBIES* you mentioned the name of Percy Wenrich and his wife, Dolly. For many years I was a close friend of Percy's sister, Nell Snyder of Battle Creek, Mich., who is no longer living. At the time of her husband's death in 1950, she lived with us for a while. I never met Mr. Wenrich, but had talked with him on the phone. Nell used to travel with them when they were in vaudeville. She helped Dolly change between songs. This was before she married Mr. Snyder.

"Nell left some of her things with us. Later she said she did not want them. In going through the box I found some things about Mr. Wenrich. Here is a list:

"Two songs, 'Missouri, My State' and 'Keep Your Eye on the U.S. Waves.'

"Two portraits of Mr. Wenrich.

"Handwritten lyrics, and signed, of 'The Great Fisherman.' This was written for his brother-in-law, Leon Snyder, who loved to fish.)

"A gray and blue paper bonnet put out by the Joplin, Mo., Chamber of Commerce.

"Four clippings: *The Billboard*, Sept. 17, 1949, his life story; *New York World Telegram and Sun*, January 25, 1950, his birthday; and two about his writing 'Missouri, My State.'

"As I have no use for these things, I would be most happy to mail them to you. I remain, sincerely yours, Helen Noteboom."

If you have guessed that I lost no time in writing to Mrs. Noteboom and gratefully accepting her generous offer, you have guessed right. I also asked her for any information she could give me about Dolly Connolly's last years. Even before Percy Wenrich died in 1952, the late Daniel I. McNamara, public relations director of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, had written me that Dolly had lost her mind years before and Percy had been obliged to have her committed to a mental institution. He had also told Mr. Winrich of my lifelong admiration of him as one of the greatest American popular song writers, and Percy had sent me a broadly smiling photo, in which he looked a great deal like the conventional depiction of Dickens' Mr. Pickwick. It was autographed, "To Ulysses Walsh, from a friend and admirer, Percy Wenrich." (The photo is reproduced with this article, but the writing is



UNTIRING HELPER, LOUIS COHN, retired New York city attorney, who was Dolly Connolly's guardian in her later years, has been of invaluable assistance to Jim Walsh in preparing this article. Mr. Cohn was admitted to the bar in 1905. Shortly afterward he became assistant to John Vernon Bouvier, Jr., a trial counsel for the Travelers Insurance Company. Mr. Bouvier was grandfather of Mrs. Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, now Mrs. Aristotle Onassis.

not clear against a dark background and may not be visible in the reprint.)

"Do you," I asked Mrs. Noteboom, "know what happened to her (Dolly) to cause her mind to fail, and just when she died? Or anything else that would be helpful in writing an article . . . I remember," I continued, "writing an appreciative article about Mr. Wenrich for *Variety* shortly after his death . . . Perhaps you will be pleased to know, and perhaps Mrs. Snyder would have been, that the articles you have offered to send will be preserved in the Library of Congress as part of the Jim Walsh Collection. If you can suggest any way in which I might find out more about Dolly—date of birth and death, parentage, what caused her illness, etc.—I would be very glad to write an article about her and her highly gifted husband."

On January 22, Mrs. Noteboom replied:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: First I am going to give you a brief lesson in the Dutch language. 'Note' means 'nut', and 'boom' means a small bush or shrub. I retired this year from 22½ years of teaching fourth grade.

"As to Dolly's mental trouble, she mistrusted people and thought they cheated her in making change, and created scenes. So Percy kept her from shopping for a while. But she became so much worse that he reluctantly had her committed to some New York sanatorium. I believe she was forbidden to have visitors because they upset her. I am almost certain that she outlived Percy, because I remember asking Nell, Percy's sister, what would become of Dolly after Percy's death, and Nell said ASCAP would provide for her, but at her death the money would quit.

"I was talking to a friend who also knew Nell, and she reminded me of what Nell said after taking Percy to Joplin for his funeral. Quote: 'I know you will be shocked at what I will tell you, but I never had such a good time in my life as when I got to Joplin. The mayor

met me and the casket and gave me an orchid. He made a speech about how Percy had come home at last and how proud Joplin was of their boy who made good. And I was royally entertained until I finally left for home (Battle Creek, where she had remarried to Dr. H. R. MacNary.)"

## IIa. Contents of the Package

A day or two before Mrs. Noteboom's second letter arrived, I received the package and was pleased even beyond my anticipations. There were two photos of Percy Wenrich, taken, apparently, near the end of his life, for his hair was white. Judging by the drawn expression of his face in both, they were made after he suffered a stroke. Also included was the manuscript of "Missouri, My State," which he had written in his declining years, hoping that it might become the official Missouri state song. Another "find" were some humorous verses about fishing, which, as Mrs. Noteboom had said, were written to "kid" his brother-in-law. On reading the lyrics one must concede that Percy's strong point was composing lively or lovely melodies. He was not an artist in the use of words.

I was especially glad to receive the replica of a bonnet, issued by the Joplin Chamber of Commerce to advertise the fact that the composer

(Continued on page 98F)

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

GIBSON MANDOLIN WANTED, any style, condition. State price. 212 981-1808. — Musician, Box 85, Staten Island, N.Y. 10304 au3652

## MUSICAL ANTIQUE BOOKS

INTERESTING stories, pictures and research about restored musical antiques, in 52-page book. \$1.25 postpaid from — The Musical Museum, Deansboro, N.Y. d128041

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WANTED: Melodeon pedals, or, information where I can purchase them. — Florence Dahlberg, 900 Gaskill Dr., Ames, Iowa 50010 au3213

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PHONOGRAPHS repaired: New spare parts for Edison phonographs. Send stamp for list. Phone: (201) 748-8046. — Gerichten, 23 Waldo, Ave., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003 jly124431

ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH Books, Instruction Manuals, Catalogs for sale. Send 2 stamps for free list.—Allen Koenigsberg, 250 East 45th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11203 s6867

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

BANJOS and Gibson Mandolins Wanted. Collector will pay cash for Gibsons in any condition. Also old C. F. Martin guitars. — Mr. Jay, Box 65, Staten Island, New York, 10304, or call (212)-981-1808. jly3215

Please mention *HOBBIES* when replying to advertisements.



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

of "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" was a Joplin native. This probably was distributed at some time from 1909 to 1911, when Percy's simple "rustic ballad" was a big hit throughout the English-speaking world.

One item that delighted me, but which Mrs. Noteboom had not mentioned, was a photograph of two women seated in a horse-drawn vehicle, with "old Dobbin" hitched to what we may, for the sake of the song, call "the shay" (chaise). Written on the back were the words, "Mrs. Wenrich driving in Joplin." I gazed long at the picture, trying to find any resemblance to Dolly Connolly in the woman holding the reins, but was able to detect none. I also could not understand Dolly's looking so middle-aged at the time the picture was taken, which presumably was when "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" was popular. Nevertheless, I did not doubt that Dolly had posed for a photo intended to publicize her husband's song.

I wrote to Mrs. Noteboom to express my joy at having this unexpected specimen of "Wenrichiana" and saying I surely would reproduce it in HOBBIES. Within a few days I had a card in reply saying:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Sorry to disappoint you, but the lady with 'Old Dobbin' is Percy's mother—Mrs. Wenrich, Sr., who I understand was quite prominent in Joplin society. Best ever, Helen Noteboom."

So that was it! It seems strange now I had never suspected that "Mrs. Wenrich" was Percy's mother.

Receiving the package stimulated my longing to write about Percy Wenrich and his wife and made me recall that some time ago Quentin Riggs had told me he had learned—I have forgotten how, but perhaps through ASCAP—that a New York lawyer had been Dolly's guardian and the administrator of her estate. After some searching I found the information that the attorney was Louis Cohn, whose office was at 291 Broadway.

The same day the package came I wrote to Mr. Cohn, explaining my desire to write an article—this article about Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich, and asking for any information he could give me about Dolly's birth and death dates, when she and Percy were married, the cause of her reported confinement in a sanatorium—"anything that would help give the needed information for my article." "I am thoroughly familiar," I said, "with Mrs. Wenrich's recording activities, but need to know more about the lady herself. I especially should like to know just when her death occurred."

### III. Mr. Cohn's Information

I wrote on Saturday, January 20.



Percy Wenrich (above) composed his undying hit tune "Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet," in 1909. Dolly Connolly did not make a record of it. She was only 22 when it was published, and probably had not then married Wenrich. The inscription on this picture says: "To Ulysses Walsh, from a friend and admirer, Percy Wenrich."

On January 29, Mr. Cohn took the trouble to write me two pages in longhand, explaining that he had closed his office after undergoing a serious operation, but my letter had been forwarded. He also revealed that his age was 88 and he had practiced law 66 years before retiring. I was almost overcome at his having gone to so much trouble, when he was not in good health, to give me all the information he could, and one sentence in his letter determined me to try to get the Connolly-Wenrich article written as soon as possible and rush it into print. I already had enough articles prepared for HOBBIES to go through the first half of 1974 but decided I would ask the editor to use this one sometime this year—preferably just after the one dealing with another song writer, Teddy Morse, who also had a wife called Dolly, appeared. I wanted Mr. Cohn to be able to read it without having to wait until the latter part of next year.

Here is what this remarkable gentleman of the legal profession wrote:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Sorry I cannot be of much service to you in reply to your letter, which was forwarded to me. Little over a year ago I underwent a serious operation and while recuperating I came to the conclusion to retire, after 66 years of active practice.

"Dolly's estate was wound up several years ago and the file was disposed of with the other terminated matters. I can tell you it did not have any record of the date and place of birth, only the date of her death. I believe you can receive this information from Variety, the theatrical weekly, or from the Lambs, who are now receiving all the royalties collected from Percy's songs, in accordance with the latter's will.

"I was the attorney for Mae, her sister, who lived in this hotel (Mr. Cohn lives in the Hotel Beacon, 75th Street and Broadway, New York—J.W.), and was

Dolly's guardian. Mae was Mrs. Mae Brewick. Eventually, Mae, Dolly, and her other sister, whose name I don't remember, moved into the Manhattan Hotel, Broadway and 76th Street.

"That is where I met Dolly. Mae I knew for years. After Mae died I became her executor and also Dolly's guardian. After that I saw her regularly and, in my opinion, she was far from an insane person; she was alert and keen, and a stranger who never knew the story would never (have) suspected any mental disturbance. From hearsay I learned that something happened and that as a result of that they had her committed as insane. This was only hearsay, and I don't know the persons involved.

"Dolly and the surviving sister led a quiet life at the hotel until her death and, as far as I know, everything seemed normal, and I saw her once a week. I cannot help you as far as her life and doings before I met her.

"Hope you will be able to read what I have written, but this is the best an 88-year-old (I) can do. I wish you success in your quest and plenty of good luck, and if you do write as you intend to, would appreciate a copy of the story. "Very best wishes to you. Sincerely, Louis Cohn."

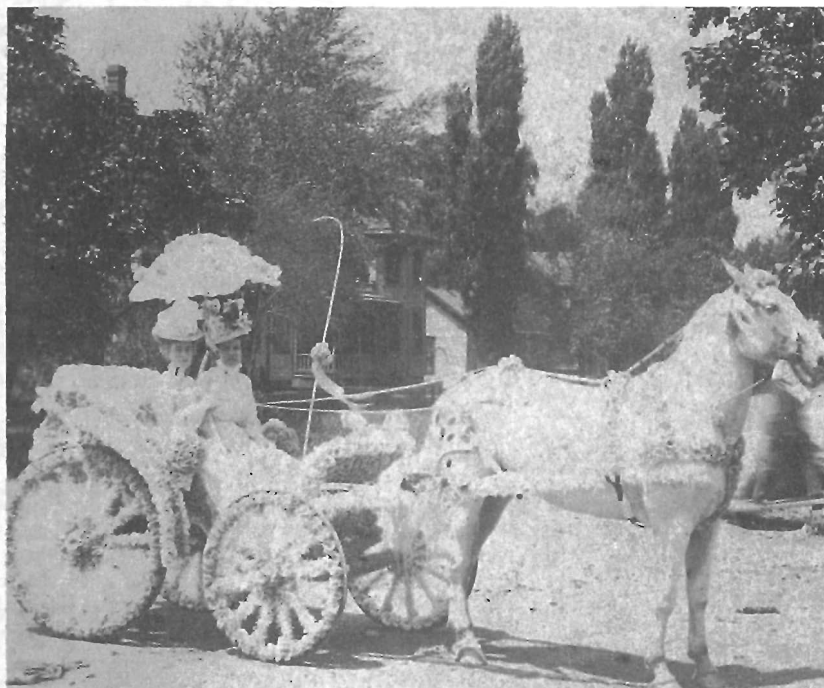
In the same mail I received a card from Mr. Cohn saying:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: Mrs. Wenrich died November 30, 1965. Her date of birth is unavailable, but she was 78 years old. You will not be able to receive the birth date from the people I mentioned."

I already knew that Variety (for which I served as "diskologist" and "musicologist," writing about phonograph and popular music history for some 20 years) could not supply Dolly Connolly's birth date. Her death apparently did not come to the attention of "The Bible of Show Biz," because it published nothing concerning her passing. I have written ASCAP, of which Percy was a charter member, asking what information its files contain about Dolly, and if I learn anything from that source it will be included somewhere in this survey. Meanwhile, it is obvious that if she was 78 when she died at the end of November, 1965, she must have been born in 1887, or, if her birth



DOLLY CONNOLLY wears a pensive expression in this photo, dated 1921.



DRIVING "OLD DOBBIN." PERCY WENRICH'S mother, accompanied by an unidentified friend, and driving a horse that presumably represents the one in her son's classic "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet." The photo was taken in Wenrich's home town, Joplin, Mo., probably as part of a parade.

occurred in December, in 1886. Possibly, since the Washington Post article said she was a native of Chicago, the Cook County Clerk's office might have an exact record of her birth date, but 1887 was so long ago that I don't think it worth the trouble, time and expense to have a search made.

Let's turn now to a discussion of Dolly's records. But before engaging in recorded research I want to say that I'll get a copy of the HOBBIES issues that contain the Connolly-Wenrich survey to Mr. Cohn as fast as they can be sent. I hope he will realize that I have done my best in the absence of a more abundant supply of first-hand information concerning the lively little comedienne.

#### IV. Dolly Connolly's

##### Columbia Recordings

Since Miss Connolly's first Columbia record appeared in 1911 and her last in 1916, it would seem logical to assume she had a five-year contract that was not renewed. However, there is this oddity about her recorded work: It was concentrated in 1911-12, with only two records issued in 1913, none in 1914 and 1915, and finally the two that came out in 1916. If she had a five-year contract, why were there no records by her for three years? During her recording era, the Columbia catalogs said:

"The talented wife of Percy Wenrich, well known all over the American continent as the writer of some of the most successful of American popular songs, makes records exclusively for the Columbia. Mrs. Wenrich's art in the singing of the cleverest rag-time hits of the day is altogether unequalled."

Even a casual study of Dolly Connolly's Columbia repertoire reveals that she preferred to record songs written by her husband. That was particularly true of her earlier discs. But, after all, why shouldn't she have? Percy was one of the most gifted popular song writers of his day, and she had a natural desire to keep the composer's royalties in the family!

Dolly's first Columbia record, combining two Wenrich songs, "My Hula Hula Love" and "The Red Rose Rag," was issued in September 1911. Unluckily, that month's supplement is missing from my collection, but I imagine the record was given an effusive description and Mrs. Wenrich a cordial welcome as the latest Columbia star.

If I can't quote the supplement description, I can say that there are more oddities associated with recordings of Percy Wenrich's songs than with any other "cleffer" (as Variety calls song writers) that I can think of. For instance, Ada Jones and Billy Murray recorded the "Hula Hula" song for Victor, and when the last chorus was sung, Ada caroled away about the beautiful Hawaiian dancer while Billy, somewhat in the background, sang in perfect time the chorus of Charles L. Johnson's 1907 Indian song hit, "Iola." (In the late 1930's Saxie Dowell "penned" a song called "Playmates," whose tune was identical with "Iola," and its publishers were compelled to pay the profits to the owners of the Johnson song.)

Similarly, Ada and Billy recorded

Wenrich's great Indian song hit, "Silver Bell," for Edison on an Amberol cylinder that afterwards was taken into the Blue Amberol list, and while Ada sang the chorus — refrain, I should say—Billy harmonized with a modified version of "Home, Sweet Home." I wonder how it happened that two Wenrich songs were selected for this stunt—one by Victor and one by Edison—and who detected that an older song could be melodiously blended with them. For a long time the Jones-Murray "Silver Bell" was the biggest selling record in the Edison catalog. The peak of its popularity had been passed, however, before Dolly began singing for Columbia, so she had no chance to record it. Frank Stanley and Henry Burr took care of the Columbia version. Victor made it two ways—by the Peerless Quartet and "That Girl" Quartet. (This is the kind of incidental information I like to scatter through my articles. Where else would you find out about such things?)

The Victor arrangement of "My Hula Hula Love" is more interesting than Dolly's Columbia, and the Edison cylinder by the Metropolitan Quartet (Edith Chapman, Mary Jordan, John Young and Frederick Wheeler) is superior musically. The description of the Edison version is interesting:

"'My Hula Hula Love,' an American ragtime idea of native Hawaiian melody, was composed by Percy Wenrich, writer of 'Silver Bell' and numerous other pieces of similar character and popularity. The song was introduced to metropolitan audiences by Toots Paka, a native Hawaiian dancer, who has made quite a success in vaudeville in this country. The last chorus is sung in subdued tones with the air alternately sung and then played by zither and guitar."

A few years after this Toots Paka's Hawaiians were a popular recording group for Victor, Columbia and Edison. I believe "My Hula Hula Love" was the first American song hit based on a Hawaiian theme. It anticipated the musical epidemic that swept the country for 10 years or so after 1914 and resulted in hundreds of pseudo-Hawaiian songs, as well as much genuine native music, being recorded.

Edward Madden, who had previously been a lyricist for Theodore Morse, wrote the words of "Hula Love." Madden also did the lyrics of "The Red Rose Rag," which Dolly recorded on the reverse side of her first Columbia disc. The words of this infectious ragtime composition are senseless and no doubt were meant to be. The refrain is a study in alliteration:

(Continued on page 98X)

The highest reward for man's  
toil is not what he gets for  
it but what he becomes by  
it.

—John Ruskin

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 98G)

"Pick a pinky petal for your  
papa's pride.  
Beg a burning blossom for  
your budding bride—  
Woe me with that wonderful  
wiggle wag—"

Dolly's Columbia record is good, but Billy Murray's Victor is better, I think. I have never heard the Edison two-minute cylinder (No. 10535) by the Premier Quartet. It is worth noting that another Wenrich composition, "The Skeleton Rag" (No. 10575), also by the Premier Quartet, was the last two-minute cylinder Edison issued. An unusual feature of the Columbia "Red Rose" is that after Dolly finishes singing the orchestra plays the entire refrain.

The second record by the comedienne whom Columbia called a contralto, but who sounds to me more like a mezzo-soprano, was announced in December, 1911. It contained two Wenrich songs that can truthfully be described as failures. They did not sell well and hardly anybody remembers them now. The titles were both about eyes—"Spanish Eyes" and "Open Your Eyes." They remind me that when I was a small boy I knew a youngster named Roy Stafford, who constantly sang the last two or three lines of another forgotten Wenrich song featuring eyes—"Naughty Eyes." Over and over Roy would declare that "Father Adam was wise, but he was hypnotized by Mother Eve and her naughty eyes." I wonder where he heard the song, because his warbling was done years after its publication, and I know of only two records of it, both on small-selling brands. Zonophone coupled it on No. 5478 with "Gee! But You Look Awfully Good to Me," both by Billy Murray, and Walter Van Brunt sang it on Indestructible cylinder No. 1079. It seems unlikely that Roy, whose family had a Columbia Graphonola, had heard either recorded version.

Here is the supplement description of Dolly's second record:

"Two New Wenrich Numbers by Dolly Connolly. Miss Connolly, the latest vaudeville headliner to be introduced by the Columbia, undoubtedly made the one biggest hit of the popular section of our September supplement with her 'Red Rose Rag' and 'My Hula Hula Love,' both new compositions of her husband, Mr. Percy Wenrich, as are also the two songs Miss Connolly sings for us this month. Miss Connolly is a vaudeville singer who can really sing, whose style is inimitably attractive, who knows what she is singing about and has the faculty of making others appreciate it. 'Spanish Eyes' is Percy Wenrich's very latest song—a thoroughly up-to-date ragtime number now being sung with immense success by Miss Connolly throughout the Eastern circuit. 'Open Your Eyes' is written rather more in the ballad style, is most effectively melodious and charmingly sentimental."

In January, 1912, Dolly was back with another unsuccessful Wenrich

song, "I've Got Feathers On My Head," which the supplement writer most inaccurately predicted would be more popular than "I've Got Rings On My Fingers." This again proved her preference for recording Percy's compositions. A few days ago, incidentally, I was glad to find that I had the sheet music of Wenrich's smash hit of 1914, "When You Wore a Tulip and I Wore a Big Red Rose," with Dolly's photo on the cover. It is surprising that Columbia did not have her record it, but assigned the job to the Columbia Stellar Quartet. (The Victor record was by the American Quartet and the Edison by Walter Van Brunt and Chorus.) It struck me that the "Tulip" photo would be ideal for beautifying the first page of the initial installment of this article, and I am submitting it in the hope and belief that it will turn up on time-honored page 37.

Quentin Riggs, to whom I am indebted for the photographs of Dolly Connolly reproduced with this article, reminds me that the Columbia Stellar disc of "When You Wore a Tulip" was remade by the Peerless Quartet under serial No. 78811. Other records with serial numbers within a few digits of this were announced in the April, 1920, supplement, which makes it seem likely that the Peerless re-make was done in January or February of that year. The Stellar Quartet of course made the original in 1914. I agree with Quentin that the Peerless did much the better job. Labels of the remade records carried the Peerless identification but the disc, No. A1685, stayed in the Columbia catalog through 1925 and was always listed under the Stellar Quartet name.

The reverse side of "Feathers On My Head" was a somewhat more successful composition by James V. Monaco—"Oh, Mr. Dream Man, Please Let Me Dream Some More". The description read:

"Mrs. Wenrich contributes to our list this month two current successes to which all who like the best in up-to-date songs will give a ready welcome. The fresh and buoyant style of this young artist has captivated everybody who has heard her Columbia records so far, while her voice, diction and technique are more than adequate for an artistic rendition of the style of songs she essays. 'I've Got Feathers On My Head' is Mr. Wenrich's latest composition and its success will recall that of 'I've Got Rings On My Fingers,' though undoubtedly this new number will be more popular. As distinguished from 'I've Got Rings On My Fingers,' this song tells a story of a young Irishwoman who went out to sing and pray for the heathen in Timbuctoo, but finds that she cannot get along without her 'gosssoon,' whom she left away back in Ireland. There is a jingle to the music that will surely catch on everywhere. 'O Mr. Dream Man' is a quaint little ragtime conceit just published by Harry Von Tilzer and very popular at present in high class vaudeville."

In February, Dolly occupied both sides of a disc that contained Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne's "Oh, That Navajo Rag," written as a successor to their big hit, "Navajo" of eight years before, and coupled

with "Honey Man," a product of the genius of Joe McCarthy and Al Piantadosi. Both songs were done for Victor by the American Quartet, who achieved some "barber shop chords" that were beyond the power of one little woman, although Dolly's Columbia interpretations were excellent. Hers was a big-selling record. Dolly came back in March with another hit, "If You Talk In Your Sleep Don't Mention My Name." The music of this number was written by Nat D. Ayer, who also composed the immortal "Oh, You Beautiful Doll" (an excellent specimen of a song with a beautiful melody handicapped by trashy words), "You're My Baby" (for which he borrowed part of the tune from "Frankie and Johnny"), and "If You Were the Only Girl in the World And I Were the Only Boy." Ayer soon went to England and remained there, starring in musical productions. The coupling of "If You Talk In Your Sleep" was an unsuccessful Harry Von Tilzer number, "Counterfeit Bill." The idea of calling a man named Bill a "counterfeit" seems to have had an attraction for Tin Pan Alley tunesmiths. In 1923, Billy Jones recorded for Edison another got-nowhere song, "Counterfeit Bill (From Louisville)," the work of Ray Henderson. Concerning the Connolly record, the supplement said:

"With her peculiarly attractive art, Mrs. Wenrich has recorded for us this month two hits representative of two of the largest New York publishers, Von Tilzer and Remick. In the first we have a genuine present-day coon song, presenting the vociferous argument of a dusky dame, who, although she is well aware that her William is spurious coin, declares in heart-rending accents that she 'will never change her Bill.' The music is the most syncopated kind of ragtime, well adapted to the capabilities of this clever young artist. The Remick number tells a tale of a flirtatious husband, who finally learns with a shock that his wife is quite human enough to play the same game."

This, by the way, was the first record by Dolly that did not have a Wenrich song on either side.

A month later, in April, a song by Dolly was part of another novel coupling. On the reverse side of the disc was a band rendition of no less an immortal hit than "Alexander's Ragtime Band"—certainly one of the greatest popular songs ever written. Its composer, of course, was Irving Berlin, and he also wrote the number that Dolly sang, "The Ragtime Mocking Bird." This coupling was destined to stay in the Columbia catalog through 1925—longer than any other Dolly Connolly record—but its long life was the result of Prince's Band's rendition of "Alexander." "The Ragtime Mocking Bird" was one of Berlin's less successful numbers. The supplement said of "Alexander's Ragtime Band":

"Though we recorded this extraordinary hit as a vocal number several months ago, demands for it in instrumental form have been so urgent that we have made up a splendid band record, issued herewith. It is unnecessary to say anything further about 'Alexander's Ragtime Band'—the greatest ragtime success of the

century. As a band march it will be equally as popular as in the vocal arrangement."

"The Ragtime Mocking Bird" was described as:

"A new light and amusing ragtime number in which a girl's desire to be given a mocking bird which she hears on the street furnishes opportunities for some novel and diverting effects from both the orchestra and the singer. This is a characteristic Irving Berlin selection and is sung with all of her customary art by Mrs. Wenrich."

In that same April supplement Dolly sang one of the best numbers Percy Wenrich ever wrote, one which is probably familiar to most Americans of this generation "Moonlight Bay." (In 1916 he tried to follow up its success with another "moonlight" song, "In the Glory of the Moonlight," which has a beautiful melody and was brilliantly sung by the Sterling Trio on a Victor record, but, like most follow-ups, it did not attain the success of the original. In 1917 Percy used the same theme with another lovely song which was called "Silver Bay," but it too lacked something of the appeal of "Moonlight Bay.")

Victor issued "Moonlight Bay" by the American Quartet and Edison, on a cylinder, by the same group, using, of course, the Premier Quartet name. Pathe, which invaded the American market in 1914, offered a sapphire ball version by Jack Charman, the English music hall singer, and in 1915 Edison had the Premier Quartet sing it for a Diamond Disc, which became one of the most popular records in the catalog and is, I believe, the best version ever recorded—one of the finest of all old-style male quartet records.

Miss Connolly's Columbia rendition was coupled with "Honey Love," by "That Girl" Quartet. Here is the description of "Moonlight Bay":

"A new song by Percy Wenrich is more or less of an event in the popular music world as is shown by the way in which this latest number has been received. The song has all the virtues of fluent, graceful, singable melody which has distinguished all of Mr. Wenrich's popular compositions, and the words are altogether of a much higher class than those usually found—romantically—reminiscent and sentimental in character. With Mrs. Wenrich to sing the song, an unusually attractive record is the result."

That April, 1912, Columbia supplement shows how Irving Berlin had begun to dominate popular music throughout the English-speaking world. Besides the numbers already mentioned, there was a record of "That Mysterious Rag" (for which Berlin wrote the words and Ted Snyder the music) by Prince's Band; a vocal version of another smash-hit, "Everybody's Doing It," by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet, and "You've Got Me Hypnotized"—not a big success—by Collins and Harlan. Oddly enough, both the quartet and the duet were coupled with marches played by Prince's Band. Columbia must have figured that a vocal record of any Berlin song was likely to sell so well that it didn't much matter what kept it company. But I wonder

why they didn't couple Prince's performances of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and "That Mysterious Rag."

This same feat of combining a singing number with a band piece occurred again in May when Dolly's record of Albert Von Tilzer's weird composition, "That Hypnotizing Man"—one of the "spooky" numbers that were popular in 1912—was combined with Prince's Band's rendition of "The Black Diamond Rag." The Connolly records, by the way, were blue label rather than black, and sold for 75 cents instead of the standard 65 cent price. This suggests that the artist was paid a royalty.

July brought a new record by Mrs. Wenrich of one of her husband's songs—a number which is forgotten now. It was called "Ragtime Chimes," and was coupled with "That Raggedy Rag," by the Peerless Quartet. (Another oddity is that Victor did not issue its record of this song by the Peerless until May, 1913.) The disc has a touch of historical importance, for I believe it was the first Columbia to carry the Peerless Quartet name. Prior to that time the group was called the Columbia Quartet on Columbia labels. The Columbia Quartet name still was used occasionally afterwards, but most of the time "Peerless" took over. This was the description of "Ragtime Chimes":

"In looking for new ideas for ragtime composition, Mr. Wenrich has produced a song that has unusual features of novelty. A characteristic chimes melody with bell effect, cleverly fashioned in rag tempo with Mr. Wenrich's customary skill, furnishes more than ordinary light entertainment. This song will be one of the hits of the year." (It wasn't!)

Three years later Ivan Caryll used much the same idea in "Ragtime Temple Bells," which was introduced in "Chin Chin" and recorded for Victor by Billy Murray.

Dolly was permitted to "wax" a sock-dolager of a hit in October—one as sure of musical immortality as "Alexander's Ragtime Band." It was "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee." Back in 1955, when Variety asked me to select the 10 greatest songs of the past 50 years, I included both of these. "Robert E. Lee" was coupled with "That Aeroplane Glide," by the Peerless Quartet. The supplement description shows its writer's peculiar fondness for the word "nervous" to describe popular music. It was a term he used over and over:

"Among the thousands of new songs constantly being published there appears every little while one which, by reason of some peculiar combination of causes, becomes a country-wide hit over night. Such is the history of this new and extraordinary popular song, of which Mrs. Wenrich has made an excellent record this month. 'Waiting for the Robert E. Lee' is more than a popular song—it is genuine music. It combines a plantation atmosphere with the nervous ragtime swing and energy of the North and its melody is altogether irresistible. This is, without doubt, one of the biggest hits of the year."

Alas! Why don't we have geniuses who can write such songs now?

On that same page there was a

listing of a Wenrich song, "Buddy Boy," combined with another Irving Berlin success, "The Ragtime Soldier Man," and both sung by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan.

There were no more Dolly Connolly records until June, 1913, because of a reason that the supplement explained. For the last time a double-faced coupling was issued of which she sang both sides — "I Miss My Mississippi Man," a Wenrich song that flopped, and "My Raggyadore," by Jean Schwartz, which also was not a success. I quote:

"A new double by Mrs. Wenrich, whose continuous vaudeville engagements have kept her for some time out of the Columbia list. Her first number is a new ragtime song by her husband, Percy Wenrich, and written in Wenrich's very best style of sentimental ragtime. The song is scarcely published and is already a tremendous seller. (Try to find a copy of it now!—J.W.) Opposite this is the novelty song, 'My Raggyadore,' from the latest Winter Garden production, 'The Honeymoon Express,' in the singing of which Fanny Brice has created a sensation. It is a clever travesty on the Spanish type of music, as found in 'Carmen,' several themes from which are adapted to its ragtime measures."

In August appeared the last Dolly Connolly record Columbia was to issue in almost three years. Could her vaudeville engagements have been so taxing that she could not spare time throughout 1914 and 1915 to make records? On one side of this August record Dolly sang another Jean Schwartz song, "The Flower Garden Ball." The coupling was something genuinely unusual—Manuel Romain (whom Columbia called a counter-tenor, although he wasn't) singing, with the help of the Peerless Quartet, "There's One in a Million Like You," which also was composed by Schwartz. This is the only record I can recall on which the Peerless Quartet worked with Manuel Romain:

"That most popular team of song writers, Jerome (William B. Jerome) and Schwartz, have seldom written anything more attractive and more effective than the new song featured by Blanche Ring in 'When Claudia Smiles.' It is a clever conceit in light and fanciful style, treating of an imaginary ball given by Springtime, to which all the flowers are invited and dance together. It is entirely a song in Mrs. Wenrich's best style and she makes a wonderfully effective record of it."

A sad thought has suddenly occurred to me. How long ago all this was! The song writers, the artist, the supplement annotator, even nearly all the grown-ups who read the description of the record when it first appeared, a year before World War I began, now are dead. Even a child who heard the record in 1913 at the age of 10 is now 70 or verging on it. Verily, we deal in ancient history!

Also in that August supplement was a record by Albert Campbell and Henry Burr of another Wenrich smash-hit—his latest Indian song sensation, "Snow Deer."

The next Dolly Wenrich record was in the Columbia supplement for May, 1916. It was another of her hus-

(Continued on page 98FF)



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 98Y)

band's genuine ballad hits, "Sweet Cider Time When You Were Mine," in the same style as "When You Were a Tulip." Its coupling was "Give a Little Credit to Your Dad," by "Burr and Campbell." There was no description of the record, but a new photo of Mrs. Wenrich was reproduced.

And now we come to the last Columbia record by Dolly Connolly. It was issued in November, 1916, and mated her rendition of a catchy Percy Wenrich song, "Way Out Yonder in the Golden West," with "For Dixie and Uncle Sam," by the Peerless Quartet. After that, a long and unbroken Connolly silence as far as Columbia was concerned. Why?

### V. Dolly's Emerson Records

At some time late in 1915 or early 1916, Victor H. Emerson, who had been Columbia's chief recording expert since the late 1890's, decided to go in business for himself. Emerson had an idea that the average 10-inch record, playing less than three minutes, was too long for the taste of most buyers, and that there would be a vast demand for a double-faced, seven-inch disc playing about two minutes each and selling for 25 or 35 cents.

True, Victor and Columbia had a stranglehold, which ended about three years later, on patents for making lateral-cut records, but Emerson got around that by designing a "universal" cut, which was supposed to sound equally well in either lateral or vertical positions, but really didn't sound very well in either. This grooving change didn't keep his old employer, Columbia, from suing him in 1918, but apparently without success.

Emerson, who was rumored to have taken some Columbia master records with him when he left, at first issued mainly double-faced, seven-inch records, but also offered some single-faced 5½-inch, presumably meant to compete with the same size Little Wonders and sell for 10 cents each. By 1918, however, his business had switched mostly to nine-inch double-faced, and these in turn gave way to 10-inch, with a smattering of 12-inch.

When the recording expert began issuing his own Emerson discs, some artists who had sung for Columbia during his long stay there, left and began recording for Emerson. Manuel Romain and Eddie Morton were among these. I would think that Emerson's departure also caused Dolly Connolly to give up her Columbia association, except for one fact that seems to refute this theory—as far as I know, she didn't make any Emerson records until 1920 when that company had become well established, although it went into the hands of a receiver toward the end of the year. If Dolly, who was still starring in

vaudeville, made any Emerson discs of less than 10-inch size, and earlier than 1920, they have not come to my attention.

My Emerson lists are incomplete, but, so far as I know, her contributions numbered only two. If there were more I should be glad to learn of them. On one, she sang Fred Fisher's tear-jerker, "Daddy, You've Been a Mother to Me," coupled with the Sterling Trio's rendition of "The Pickaninny Blues," and on the other a Wenrich song, "One Loving Caress," whose pairing was "I Found that I Can't Live Without You," sung by "Wee Willie" Robyn, then a singer of popular songs, but, at this writing, a cantor restricting himself to Jewish religious music. ("Robyn," by the way, is pronounced "Roe-Byne.") He is now the Rev. William R. Rubin, of 20 West 72nd St., New York City. After recording those two sides, Dolly, to the best of my knowledge, did no more phonograph work. Edison recorded "One Loving Caress" by Gladys Rice and Marion Evelyn Cox, but with characteristic tardiness did not issue it until 1922, when it was coupled, on No. 50947, with "Dear Old-Fashioned Irish Songs," which George McFadden had sung in 1917. (While I think of it, there will be no need for anyone to write to me saying he has Dolly Connolly records with Standard, United, Harmony, etc., labels and asking why I didn't mention them. They were all made from Columbia masters. Similarly, her Emersons probably appeared with such labels as Medallion, Regal, Symphonia, Arto and Meteor, and her name may have been changed on some, especially Regal, which nearly always gave an Emerson artist a new designation. I have her "Honey Man" and Navajo Rag" with both Columbia and Harmony labels, and "Way Out Yonder in the Golden West" as a Standard.)

### VI. In Conclusion

For some years more—I don't know just how many—Dolly continued her successful career on the stage, while Percy was still writing songs, but producing fewer hits than formerly. Then came whatever trouble it was that caused her no longer to make public appearances, and the long twilight period that ended in her death.

I have had to give primary attention to Dolly Connolly's recording activities, because of my comparative lack of trustworthy information concerning the woman herself. I'm sure we'd all like to know how she and Percy Wenrich happened to meet, and whether she was already singing in vaudeville or began her career after marrying him. And when were they married? She was already Mrs. Wenrich in 1911, when she was 24. It doesn't seem likely that she was married before 1909 at the earliest, to a man who was seven years her senior, but that is speculative. If any more information is received after this installment has gone to press, I

will include it in next month's section.

Meanwhile, there is more to be said about Percy Wenrich as a person than I have been able to tell concerning his wife. The July installment will be devoted largely to the story of the great song writer's life, but with considerable discussion of recordings of his songs. Until next month, then, here ends the present discussion of the careers and achievements of Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich.

Postscript. After this article was rushed to Hobbies, Mr. Cohn learned, from his lovely wife, that Dolly Connolly was born December 16, 1888, which means that she was a little less than 77 years of age when she died. He also ascertained that her father was Thomas Connolly and her mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Meehan.

**COLUMBIA DOUBLE-FACED (1911-1916)**  
(NOTE:—Both sides by Dolly Connolly unless otherwise indicated.)

- A1028 My Hula Hula Love. Reverse: Red Rose Rag.
- A1061 Open Your Eyes. Reverse: Spanish Eyes.
- A1083 I've Got Feathers On My Head. Reverse: Oh, Mr. Dream Man, Please Let Me Dream Some More.
- A1102 Honey Man (My Little Lovin' Honey Man). Reverse: Navajo Rag.
- A1116 If You Talk In Your Sleep Don't Mention My Name. Reverse: My Counterfeit Bill.
- A1126 Ragtime Mocking Bird. Reverse: Alexander's Ragtime Band (Prince's Band).
- A1128 Moonlight Bay. Reverse: Honey Love ("That Girl" Quartet).
- A1140 That Hypnotizing Man. Reverse: Black Diamond Rag (Prince's Band).
- A1177 Ragtime Chimes. Reverse: That Raggedy Rag (Peerless Quartet).
- A1197 Waiting for the Robert E. Lee. Reverse: That Aeroplane Glide (Peerless Quartet).
- A1312 I Miss My Mississippi Man. Reverse: My Raggyadore.
- A1346 Flower Garden Ball. Reverse: There's One in a Million Like You. (Manuel Romain and Peerless Quartet).
- A1963 Sweet Cider Time, When You Were Mine. (Reverse: Give a Little Credit to Your Dad (Henry Burr and Albert Campbell)).
- A2084 Way Out Yonder in the Golden West. Reverse: For Dixie and Uncle Sam (Peerless Quartet).

### EMERSON (1920)

- 10159 Daddy, You've Been a Mother to Me. Reverse: Pickaninny Blues (Sterling Trio).
- 10180 One Loving Caress. Reverse: I Found That I Can't Live Without You (William Robyn).

To Be Continued)

WATCH FOR THE  
CONCLUSION OF  
THIS ARTICLE IN  
THE JUNE ISSUE  
OF HOBBIES

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Dolly Connolly and Percy Wenrich

### PART 2

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Enduring Melodies

Percy Wenrich was not only the husband of Dolly Connolly, singing comedienne, whose life story was told last month, he was a notable in his own right as one of the greatest popular song composers of the early 1900's. His contributions to American musical history, in fact, were much more permanent and important than his wife. Incidentally, Quentin Riggs has reminded me that the Edison publication, *Along Broadway*, for June, 1921, contains a picture of Dolly appearing in a musical comedy, "The Right Time Girl." It is not clear enough to reproduce.)

Wenrich may not rank with Beethoven, Bach and Schubert, nor even with Verdi and Puccini, but the man who coaxed from a piano keyboard the melodies of "Rainbow," "Silver Bell," "Snow Deer," "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," "Moonlight Bay," and "When You Wore a Tulip" left a history of genuine achievement. These songs, like those of Stephen Foster, virtually have become folk music, and are likely to be sung in secluded nooks of the Appalachian mountains long after opera lovers have discarded the "Recondita Armonia." Wenrich's music gave easily grasped enjoyment to millions of hearers for whom classical composers will never be more than foreign-sounding names.

When I attended the Southwest Virginia White Top folk music festivals in the early 1930's and heard mountaineers playing "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" with such instruments as fiddle, banjo, and guitar, I overheard citified observers talking about "how Elizabethan" the music was. Of course, genuine folk music authorities, like my friends, the late John Powell and Annabel Morris Buchanan, who founded the White Top festival, knew when they were hearing age-old melodies and when they were listening to passé popular tunes, but the faddists who were present didn't.

There have been occasions, however, when even students have been fooled. A good many years ago I read an article by a Frenchman, name now forgotten, who told of having visited the Southern mountains of the United States in search of folk music and of the thrill he felt when he heard two or three barefoot girls

singing a song about "you pick'd me time." It undoubtedly, he said, went back to the days of Queen Elizabeth. Well, it went back to the 1918 days of Woodrow Wilson, and the music came from the improvising fingers of Percy Wenrich, who had no thought of the song being anything but a follow-up to the success of his other "rustic ballads," like "Gray Bonnet," "Kentucky Days," "Sweet Cider Time" and "When You Wore a Tulip." "Berry Pickin' Time" was not a hit, and few records were made of it, but I have it sung by Louis J. Winsch on one of Pathé origin.

and I picked you, in berry pickin'

#### II. Biographical Notes

Percy Wenrich was born in an environment that should have influenced him to write not only ballads with a suggestion of "folksiness," but livelier compositions of the ragtime type. After he grew up he did produce ballads and rags impartially, and probably the surroundings of his early life had an irresistible impact upon his music.

Joplin, Mo., where Percy was born January 23, 1880, was no effete Eastern metropolis. It was wholly and



**ELDERLY LIKENESS.** Another photo of Percy Wenrich apparently taken after he was confined most of the time to a wheel chair. It is inscribed to his sister and brother-in-law, Nell and Leon Snyder. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Helen Noteboom)

overwhelmingly Middle Western and authentically American.

Toward the end of Wenrich's life, after he suffered a stroke and was confined to a wheel chair, he did some reminiscing which Rudi Blesch and Harriet Janis published in their book, "They All Played Ragtime."

The enfeebled composer, who then had only two years to live, recalled that he left Joplin at the age of 21. He said it seemed he had always played the piano and practiced syncopation. His mother, who called herself "the Berry County pianist," taught him. His father, Daniel K. Wenrich, sang tenor, and was a down-the-line Republican who wrote campaign songs. The elder Wenrich was postmaster of Joplin from the beginning of William McKinley's first term in 1897 through the administration, ending in 1909, of Theodore Roosevelt. Percy, his older brother and his little sister, who presumably was Mrs. Nell Snyder, were all pianists.

Wenrich described the Joplin of his boyhood as "a Western gambling and mining town," and said, "The North end of Main Street was as wide open as a barn door." At the age of 17, after hearing Negro ragtime pianists play in joints that a boy his age shouldn't have known existed, Percy decided he could do some composing of his own. He wrote a two-step called "L'Inconnu" and paid Sol Bloom, a Chicago music composer, to print one thousand copies. Mr. and Mrs. Wenrich's enterprising boy then sold the sheet music from door to door.

When Percy was 21 he enrolled in the Chicago Musical College operated by the father of Florenz Ziegfeld, who years later, annually produced the "Ziegfeld Follies." After going broke and returning to Joplin, he soon went back to Chicago and got a job playing piano in a winery, but, he said, "I was too good for the place—I could read music." He afterwards played at Charlie Smith's Utopia Cafe and Bar and at Jack Crawford's elegant establishment on Wabash Avenue. In 1902 he was the pianist in Freddie Train's place at 2008 Wabash, where all patrons were compelled to be on good behavior and no bad language was tolerated. At Train's he never made less than \$100 a week. During this period he probably knew Axel Christensen, who managed a Chicago school for teaching ragtime piano playing.

It was while at Train's palace of law and order that Wenrich wrote his first song with words. He knew James O'Dea, who had written the lyrics for the first of the great Indian song hits, Neil Moret's "Hiawatha," and insisted that O'Dea produce verses that he could set to music. O'Dea finally handed him a "poem" called "Wabash Avenue After Dark," in which some of the famous or notorious refreshment places of that part of Chicago were mentioned. Wenrich wrote music for it, and he and O'Dea made a hit singing it in Train's, although it was never published.



**Local Boy Makes Good:** Shortly after "Put on your Old Gray Bonnet" became one of the greatest American popular song hits, the Joplin, Mo., Chamber of Commerce distributed this replica of a gray bonnet with blue ribbons to advertise that Percy Wenrich, composer of the song, was born in Joplin.

After that, Wenrich said, he wrote "hundreds of little pieces" for the McKinley Music Company, whose headquarters was in Chicago, and was paid five dollars apiece. McKinley published mostly cheap music intended to be sold in five-and-ten stores, and Percy ground out the sort of stuff the firm wanted.

Then followed a period of working for the Walker Company, a Chicago "song shark" that advertised it would set music to your song lyrics at a cost of \$10. Percy was paid \$1.50 for each song to which he "wrote" music, and turned out 15 completely unoriginal tunes a day. None of these "sucker songs" of course, was ever published by a reputable firm.

In 1903, "the Kid from Joplin" wrote "Ashy Africa," which was published by Buck and Carney and was somewhat on the order of the jungle songs that Theodore Morse made famous. As far as I can find, nobody recorded it. What he termed his "first real rag," a composition called "Noodles," came out in 1906, and also went unrecorded, although by that time one or two of his songs, as will be seen later, had made their way onto cylinders or discs.

The still well remembered "Smiler Rag," a favorite display composition for such banjoists as Vess Ossman and Fred Van Eps, appeared in 1907. When the Forster Music Company, of Chicago, published "The Smiler," it was given a sub-title, "A Joplin Rag." This referred to the fact that Wenrich was a product of Joplin, Mo., but if the prospective buyer took it to mean it was a number written by Scott Joplin, the famous Negro composer of ragtime, that was all right with Forster!

In 1908 young Percy Wenrich went to New York and before that year was over millions of persons throughout the English-speaking world were singing and playing his Indian song classic, "Rainbow," which is as sure of immortality as anything in popular music. He never went back to Chicago to stay and never again lived in Joplin. Years later, Wenrich admitted

he made the tune of "Rainbow" as much like that of its enormously successful forerunner, "Hiawatha," as he

(Continued on page 98F)

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

could without perpetrating an outright "steal." It is one of the many oddities associated with Wenrich's compositions that there was already a successful song called "Rainbow," which had been published and recorded in England, and when the British record companies found it necessary to issue the American tune, they called it "Come Be My Rainbow," to distinguish it from the English number with the same shorter title. There had also been a successful English song called "Put On Your Old Green Bonnet" before Percy introduced a certain "old gray bonnet" to worldwide fame.

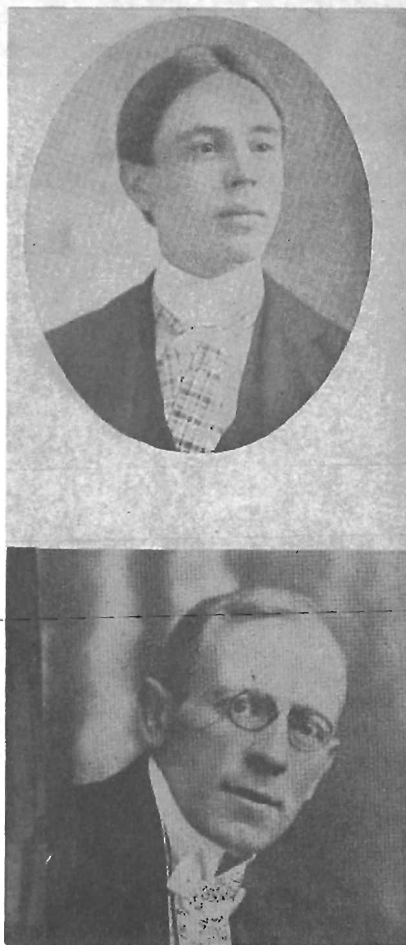
### III. More Biographical Data

A good example of how hard it is for one doing this type of research to pin down the exact facts may be found by comparing the information just taken from "They Played Ragtime," with statements made by Jack Burton, who was writing a series of biographies of popular song writers in *The Billboard* during 1949 and '50. These articles were published later in a volume called "The Blue Book of Tin Pan Alley." Wenrich was the 37th "clefver" to be written about, and I have the page from *The Billboard* that had belonged to his sister and perhaps originally to Percy himself. It is another of the appreciated Wenrich items sent to me, as I mentioned last month, by Mrs. Paul C. Noteboom, of Richland, Mich.

Burton begins by saying Wenrich was born January 23, 1887, when the year really was 1880. He says that the composer's father was the postmaster in Joplin, but describes him as a Democrat who wrote songs that "eulogized such Democratic stalwarts as Grover Cleveland and William Jennings Bryan." Wenrich, however, told of his father being an ardent Republican, and certainly only a Republican would have been postmaster through the McKinley-Roosevelt presidential terms.

The Burton biographical sketch says that Percy's mother, an accomplished musician, taught the boy to play both the organ and piano while he was still in his early teens, and that he went to Chicago when he was 21, ostensibly to study the pipe organ at the Chicago Musical College. He was more interested, however, according to Burton, in composing and selling popular songs.

Still following the Burton version, Wenrich's first two compositions, "Ashy Africa," and "Just Because I'm From Missouri," of which more will be heard later, were named by Frank Buck, the senior member of Buck & Carney. Wenrich never understood why the adjective "Ashy" was applied to Africa, but the "Dark Continent" was one part of the world that fascinated Frank Buck, and he later won worldwide fame by his



**RAGTIME PROFESSIONALS:** Two musicians who studied, taught and composed ragtime are shown here. Top—Percy Wenrich, as he appeared about the time he left Joplin, Mo., to study music in Chicago. Bottom—Axel W. Christensen, who had a school of ragtime piano instruction in Chicago. In the 1920's, Christensen made a number of records, the most popular of which was a "piano specialty" called "The Girl I Kissed on the Stairs." He also recorded "Axel at the Ball Game" and other comic monologs in a thick Scandinavian accent.

African jungle explorations that gained him the nickname of "Bring 'Em Back Alive" Buck.

Although writing songs, Percy had not yet turned out anything that ranked as a hit, so when he met Fred Belcher, the general manager of the Jerome Remick music publishing house, he talked Belcher into getting him a job as a song plugger at Gimbel Brothers' music department in Milwaukee. While there he wrote "Under a Tropical Moon," which met with some local success, but was not nationally popular. Wenrich then decided to go to New York and make connections with the leading song publishers.

The going was rough at first, but when he wrote the music of "Rainbow" to the words by Alfred Bryan, which begin, "While the rain was softly falling in a forest glade beyond the prairie far away," he achieved

one of the most resounding song successes of the first decade of the Twentieth Century. The next year, 1909, was to bring another equally great hit in which he had the help of Stanley Murphy.

Murphy, a professional lyricist who, during his short life of 44 years, wrote words for the music of such well known composers as Henry Marshall, Harry and Albert Von Tilzer, Benjamin Hapgood Burt, Harry Carroll, Lewis F. Muir and, of course, Wenrich. Murphy was born in Dublin, Ireland, November 29, 1875, and died in New York City, January 10, 1919. The one song I know for which he is credited with writing both words and music, was a 1915 hit, "I'm On My Way to Dublin Bay"—an Irish fighting man's tribute to Murphy's birthplace.

It was Murphy who handed Wenrich, according to Burton, the words of a song that he called "Put On Your Old Sunbonnet." Wenrich, the story goes—and, frankly, I doubt it, for it sounds incredible—liked the words and wanted to write a melody to go with them, but couldn't get access to a piano to work out the tune. The man who had composed perhaps the biggest song hit of the day unable to get the use of a piano!

Continuing this improbable story, Wenrich made the rounds of the Tin Pan Alley music publishers, beseeching them to lend him an upright piano, but without success. Finally, at Remick's, the publisher of "Rainbow"—and why didn't he try Remick's first?—he persuaded the manager to allow him the use of a professional room and a piano for just half an hour. At the end of that time, Percy wasn't satisfied with the melody he had contrived and pleaded for more time, but the hard-hearted manager told him to get out!

Now really! Doesn't it stand to reason that the manager, knowing Wenrich had composed the biggest hit in the Remick catalog, would have replied: "Sure, Percy boy! Take all the time you want!" But—again according to this highly unlikely story—Wenrich and the manager got into such a heated argument that Jerome H. Remick himself stopped and asked what the racket was about. He graciously permitted the composer of his top hit to use the instrument for 30 minutes more. At the end of the half hour, Percy had a tune that pleased him and handed it to Remick, who was about to leave for a weekend in Atlantic City. The publisher said he would take the manuscript with him and give his verdict Monday afternoon.

When Monday came, Remick expressed belief the number would be a hit. He said he'd never been able to carry a tune, "But here's a song even I can sing." When he sang his way through the ballad, he changed the first line of the chorus from "put on your old sunbonnet" to "put on your old gray bonnet," saying the latter version sounded better—and it



"Yes, sah." does. Probably Mr. Remick didn't know, or care, that, across the Atlantic, English residents had already been singing that ditty about "put on your old green bonnet."

As I have perhaps too abundantly indicated, when it comes to believing the story about Wenrich having difficulty in obtaining the use of a piano to compose a hit. I am, like Percy himself, "from Missouri" and I'd like to be shown the proof. I also question the statement attributed to him in "They All Played Ragtime" that he always had to "beg" his publishers to accept songs of simple, homey sentiment, such as "Gray Bonnet," "Moonlight Bay," "When You Wore a Tulip," "Sweet Cider Time," and the like, because they always doubted that such songs would sell. Successful publishers like Jerome Remick would certainly have better judgment than that.

But from this point, Percy Wenrich was well on his way to becoming one of the top Tin Pan Alley writers and to marrying Dolly Connolly somewhere in the process. Burton lists many of Wenrich's song hits, but omits some of the big ones and includes one or two, such as "Under a Tropical Moon" and "If It's Good Enough for Washington It's Good Enough for Me," which today are virtually unknown.

Also mentioned are four stage productions for which Wenrich wrote the score—"The Crinoline Girl," produced in 1914; "The Right Girl"—the one in which Dolly Connolly appeared—1921; "Castles in the Air," 1926, and "Who Cares?" 1930. Songs used in these musicals are detailed, but I can't remember ever hearing any of them. Seemingly, Percy lacked ability to write memorable melodies when he was composing for the stage.

For musical history's sake, it may be noted that "Rainbow" came along just too early for the publisher and composer to share in royalties from the sales of many hundreds of thousands of phonograph records. "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," however, being published in 1909, came under the royalty provisions of the new copyright act that went into effect that year. So, obviously, did every later Wenrich song.

Now, having brought Percy Wenrich thus far along in his successful song writing career, let's consider the earliest records of his compositions.

#### IV. Early Wenrich Records

From time to time I have given you faithful HOBBIES readers examples of the almost miraculous way in which my subconscious mind concentrates on Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists even when I seem to be thinking of something else. Here is another specimen.

When I began this article I thought, as I had believed for years, that the first recording of a Percy Wenrich tune was Arthur Collins'

rendition of a so-called "coon song," "What's the Matter With the Mail?" on Edison two-minute cylinder No. 9015, issued in June, 1905. The second, I thought, was Bob Roberts' rendition of "Just Because I'm From Missouri," No. 9088, in the following September.

Then, on the morning of February 24, 1973, after I had worked my way through the first five triple-spaced pages of this installment, I was at the Drum and Fife Restaurant in Vinton, Va., reading my mail. And, without advance warning, my subconscious personality spoke up.

"Hey, listen!" it said, out of nowhere. "Didn't Percy Wenrich write a song called 'Down In Blossom Row' and didn't the Edison cylinder of it come out before 'What's the Matter With the Mail'?"

Taken aback, I couldn't reply. But I borrower Lena Ryman's, the waitress' ball-point pen, picked up a paper napkin and wrote "Down In Blossom Row" on it, then stuffed it into my pocket as a reminder to look up that waltz song when I returned home.

Upon investigation I found that the Edison cylinder of "Down in Blossom Row," sung by Byron G. Harlan and "a chorus of children," came out in the same month, June, 1905, as "What's the Matter With the Mail?" but its number, 9004, was slightly lower, so that seemed to give it top ranking as the first Wenrich song to be recorded. I laid a note of that fact beside my typewriter, to be incorporated into my next writing.

But late that afternoon my subconscious again made itself heard. "Chum," it said, "you've checked Victor, Columbia and Edison catalogs for records of Percy's early songs, but you've forgotten Zon-o-phone. Better see what they did!"

Groaningly, I got up, consulted the 1905 Zono catalogs and supplements—and discovered that Collins also recorded "What's the Matter With the Mail?" on single-faced, 10-inch Zon-o-phone record No. 147—and it came out in May, 1905, one month before the Edison cylinder of "Down in Blossom Row" was made available.

So I had been right, it now appears, about the "mail" song being the earliest Wenrich composition to be impressed upon a disc or cylinder, but had been wrong in thinking the Edison was first. As far as I can tell now, that Zono "platter" led the procession. The supplement description said briefly:

"Poor Mr. Tagg is without a cent and is waiting for Liza's salary day, but Liza is late in sending him money."

A month later, discussing its cylinder version, Edison said:

"A coon song by Percy Wenrich (music) and Fred J. Hamill (words.) Long after Liza's salary day, Mr. William Jackson Tagg is anxiously waiting the mail that should bring him part of her salary. Bill spies the postman coming. Stocks are now up with Bill. "Are you Mr. William Jackson Tagg?" "Well, Mr. Tagg, will you kindly de-

liver this letter to the family on the top floor?"

Collins also recorded the budding writer's "coon" ditty on Columbia cylinder No. 32745, which came out in July, a month later than the Edison, but was not issued on a disc. You perhaps have observed that Zonophone and Edison disagreed on whether the "hero's" last name should be spelled "Tag" or "Tagg." Columbia evaded the issue. It described its record as:

"An amusing reverie of a colored individual who has been patiently awaiting the postman. As the latter approaches, you hear his familiar whistle, then follows a dialog on the order of that contained in Collins' famous 'Any Rags' . . ."

Apparently, "Old Joe, the Pirate," as his fellow recording artists used to call Collins because he was tall, heavy and swarthy, couldn't talk Victor into recording the song. I have never heard any of the versions, but should like to. Arthur Collins never made a poor job of the difficult art of singing a "coon song" and I am sure he was good in this.

Getting back to "Down in Blossom Row," which only Edison seems to have recorded, The New Phonogram describes it as:

"A new descriptive summer song, the music of which was written by Percy Wenrich and the words by F. J. Hamill. It is written in waltz time and its publishers predict for it wide popularity in the coming season. The song introduces a chorus of boys and girls, giving a fine coloring to as pretty and catchy a little song as has been turned out in recent years."

Just who was Fred J. Hamill? He soon passed entirely out of the Wenrich picture.

Edison thought highly enough of "Down in Blossom Row" to have Albert Benzler make a xylophone recording of it (No. 9044), which was issued in July. The medley also included "Susan Van Doozen" and "On a Summer Night," but "Blossom Row" was the featured number. My eagle eye detected the fact that Percy Wenrich was the only popular song writer with two of his numbers in the Edison supplement for June, 1905. Since only 25 cylinders were issued each month, scoring two out of 25 was something of a distinction. Better known men, such as Charles K. Harris, Theodore Morse, Harry Armstrong and Egbert Van Alstyne, had to be satisfied with one each.

The next record of a Wenrich song that I have been able to find was Bob Roberts' Edison cylinder of "Just Because I'm From Missouri," which came out in September, on Edison cylinder 9088. The supplement said:

"A new coon song descriptive of a colored gentleman's woes just because he was born in Missouri. It is rendered in Mr. Roberts' inimitable style, with the same clear articulation that has been so much admired. Percy Wenrich wrote the words and music of this song."

I was amused at the review of Percy's "Missouri" song in the Eng-

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued on page 98G)

lish record collectors' publication, *The Talking Machine News*, for October, 1905:

"In 'Just Because I'm from Missouri' Bob Roberts sets forth the woes of a native of that State, and the record is a good one, but perhaps some of our American friends will enlighten us as to exactly what stigma it is which attaches to natives of Missouri, and why."

Earlier, the T.M.N. had dismissed Collins' "What's the Matter With the Mail?" as "a very fair coon song with orchestra accompaniment."

In September the English periodical said:

"Quite a novelty is the waltz song, 'Down in Blossom Row,' for a chorus of boys and girls is effectively introduced."

Who, I wonder, were those "boys and girls" singing by Byron G. Harlan, and are any still alive? At about the same time that he recorded "Down in Blossom Row," Harlan made, for most of the prominent companies, records of Joe Maxwell's song, "I've Got My Fingers Crossed (You Can't Touch Me)" in which he was assisted by a similar group. Maxwell, himself a tenor singer, made Edison cylinders for a year or so beginning in May, 1910.

Another thing I wonder is whether Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan and Bob Roberts (Bob was about Wenrich's age) had met or knew anything concerning the young song writer whose composition they had begun to introduce on records. Collins, especially, must have formed a high opinion of "What's the Matter With the Mail?" to have "adopted" it and recorded it for three companies we know of, and possibly to have sung it also for Leeds and some of the other minor brands.

### V. That "Old Gray Bonnet"

Manifestly, it will be impossible to discuss, in a survey of this limited scope, all the hundreds or thousands of musical compositions Percy Wenrich produced in his career of virtually a half century. It is out of the question even to mention all his songs that found their way onto records, or even every version of the more popular ones. In some instances, as in Collins' monopoly of the not particularly popular "What's the Matter With the Mail?" the various companies used identical artists to record the same number.

There are some intriguing and, sometimes, amusing facts to be brought out, however, about the different recorded editions of the Wenrich repertoire. For instance, when Columbia issued "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," sung by Arthur Clough, on double-faced disc No. 773, the recording officials must have been as confident that the song would be a hit as Jerome H. Remick had been. Columbia showed its confidence in the "Bonnet's" selling qualities by

combining it, not with another new composition, but with "The Moon Has His Eyes On You," a duet by Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley that had been in the catalog for several years. Possibly the idea was to put a non-royalty old song on the back of a new one for which a royalty must be paid.

Not a great while after the "Bonnet" song, which may perhaps be Wenrich's most durable hit, swept the country, the Chamber of Commerce of his "home town" of Joplin, decided it was proud of its local boy who had "made good." For community advertising purposes it distributed a replica of an "old gray bonnet, with the blue ribbons on it," such as is mentioned in Stanley Murphy's words, and like the one reproduced in an accompanying photograph.

But here is something ironical. Although Victor had begun years earlier to list the names of song writers on the labels of its discs, for some reason there was no mention of Wenrich (or Murphy) on the label of Victor No. 16377, coupling "Gray Bonnet," sung by the Haydn Quartet, with a relatively obscure ballad, "It's Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Good-bye," by Walter Van Brunt, whose brilliant recording career was just getting under way. Here is the description of the coupling in the December, 1909, Victor supplement:

"Unusual value will be found in this attractive double, consisting of the new Remick hit, 'The Old Gray Bonnet,' a sort of Darby and Joan ballad with a swinging march refrain, clearly given by the quartet; and a sentimental ballad written by those popular writers, Roden and Mills, and sung by Mr. Van Brunt, whose sweet tenor and remarkably clear diction are winning him friends very rapidly."

What Mr. Roden's first name was, I don't know, but "Mills" was Frederick Allen (Kerry) Mills, composer of "Red Wing," "At a Georgia Camp Meeting," "Kerry Mills' Barn Dance" and other one-time popular favorites. (Since writing the foregoing, my subconscious has told me that Mills' lyric writer was Robert F. Roden.) At any rate, Roden and Mills got their names into this supplement write-up, and so did the Remick music publishing firm, but Murphy and Wenrich, the men who originated the "Old Gray Bonnet," were left out. Neither did their names appear as writer and composer in the complete Victor catalogs issued once or twice a year and, apparently, as I have said, label credit was never given. I have copies of "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" with the type of label Victor used both before and after 1914, and on neither are Murphy and Wenrich mentioned. It seems strange treatment.

Edison issued a four-minute Amberol cylinder of the great hit, but not a two-minute Standard. The issue was rather belated, since the record was not announced until March, 1910. It was sung by Fred-eric H. Potter, a tenor, who also

made some Zon-o-phone records, and a chorus. As a rule, so popular a record as this would have been taken into the Blue Amberol catalog, when the "unbreakable" cylinders were introduced late in 1912, but Edison decided to have the song re-recorded by Joseph A. Phillips, a baritone who, like Steve Porter, was a native of Buffalo, N.Y. (Buffalo is a city that has special significance for me nowadays because of being the abiding place of my fellow old records enthusiast, and "brother by adoption," Merritt F. Malvern.) Helen Clark assisted Phillips in the refrain, but wasn't given credit. Later, when Edison found a persistent demand for "The Old Gray Bonnet" in disc form, Miss Clark and Mr. Phillips were engaged to record it. Readers of last year's article about Joe Phillips probably will recall that one of the Blue Amberols of his "Gray Bonnet" rendition was lost at sea, but turned up in good playing condition in a lobster net, after bouncing around for months on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

There have been innumerable hill-billy recordings of the song, including a 1929 Columbia by a gentleman called James Johnson, who sings a woeful ballad, "Papa, Please Buy Me an Air Ship," for its coupling.

### VI. Those Indian Songs

Beginning in 1901 with "Hiawatha," at first an instrumental piece to which words were later added, the American popular song scene for the first ten years of this century was deluged with ditties about the American Indian, many of which proved to have permanent appeal and are still frequently sung. It has already been said that when Percy Wenrich composed "Rainbow" he used "Hiawatha" as his model. The composer of "Hiawatha," Charles N. Daniels, who wrote under the pseudonym of "Neil Moret," said he conceived the melody of his hit song by listening to the clicking of the rails as he was riding on a train in the Far West to a town called Hiawatha, but some critics have contended that the Moret melody has a resemblance to Siebel's "Flower Song" in "Faust." Whatever the truth of that is, by 1904, with James O'Dea's words added, "Hiawatha" had become so popular as to be a national nuisance, and Len Spencer and Parke Hunter satirized it in their Victor record of "An Auction Sale of a Music Store." Every time an instrument is offered for sale, "Will-yam" plays a tune upon it and the tune invariably is "Hiawatha." This leads to a riot at the end of the record.

"Hiawatha" was followed by innumerable others, among them the well remembered "Anona," "Tammany," "Silver Heels" (also by Moret) and "Red Wing," the big hit of late 1907. (By this time the country was also being swamped by cowboy songs, the great pioneer of which was "Cheyenne," in 1906. They were almost as popular as the Indian tunes.) And then came Alfred Bryan, one of the

most prolific of all writers of popular song lyrics, and Wenrich, with their "Rainbow." For the record, Bryan was born in Brantford, Ontario, Canada, September 15, 1871, and died in Gladstone, N.J., April 1, 1958.

The Victor supplement for December, 1908, listed four single-faced discs of songs that were so popular the records had been specially pressed and rushed to dealers in October. They were: 5570, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," by the Haydn Quartet; 5571, "Rainbow," Billy Murray and the Haydn Quartet; 5573, "You'll Have to Sing an Irish Song," Ada Jones (she used this number in her recital appearances until her death in 1922), and 5592, "Taffy," by Jones, Murray and the Quartet. The supplement said:

"These four records were put out as a special addition to the October list, but were not issued in time to be included in the printed supplement. Although all four have had large sales, at the present counting 'Rainbow' is in the lead with 'Taffy' a close second."

"Taffy" today, however, is forgotten, while "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," of which the quartet record was rather poor, ranks as the unofficial "national anthem" of baseball.

"Rainbow" not only sold big when first issued, it continued to be in so much demand that in 1913 Victor coupled it with the equally popular "Red Wing," by S. H. Dudley, Harry Macdonough and the Haydn Quartet, which had been issued, as single-faced 5368, in March 1908, and proved to be that year's biggest seller. The double-faced record was No. 17233, and "Red Wing" and "Rainbow" probably were among the most popular Victors ever made during the acoustic recording era. Apparently, the original working masters became damaged from constant use, for in 1925, both sides were remade by the Shannon Four and coupled under that same number. This was at the tag-end of the acoustic period. A year later they were re-done electrically by the Shannon group and numbered 20173. As far as I know, "Rainbow" was the only Billy Murray record ever to be remade by someone else.

Not much was lost, however, when the Murray-Haydn "Rainbow" was done over. Despite its popularity, this version of the Wenrich song is one of the worst records Billy Murray ever made. He was not in the habit of making bad ones, but something about the recording makes his voice seem insufferably nasal unless the speed is run far back, and the tempo sounds wrong all the way through. It actually appears as though the artists are ridiculing the tuneful number, especially at the end when they speed up the final chorus unmercifully. Despite the bad rendition and recording, however, this must have been one of "The Denver Nightingale's" most popular records.

The Edison two-minute cylinder of "Rainbow," No. 10049, was announced in January, 1909. It was sung by Ada Jones and Billy Murray, who did a better job than Billy and the quartet.

Oddly, the box in which the cylinder was packed described the artists as "contralto and baritone." Ada did sound like a contralto on Edison cylinders, but Columbia called her a soprano; Victor skirted the question by terming her a comedienne, and the Edison disc catalogs gave no description of her voice. Billy Murray, however, certainly was not a baritone. The *New Phonogram* said of the "Rainbow" cylinder:

"This composition is sweeping the country from coast to coast and is destined to be as popular as 'Hiawatha,' which it resembles, being sung in Indian style and much the same tempo. It is a bright and dashing two-step and a fascinating ballad. It is sung by Miss Jones and Mr. Murray in the conversational style."

In February, "Rainbow" was played on No. 10066 as an intermezzo by the New York Military Band. The supplement mentioned the popularity of the Jones-Murray rendition, but said that the melody "is such an attractive composition that it will bear repetition as a band number. 'Rainbow' is similar in style to the famous 'Hiawatha,' and its popularity ought to be none the less enduring."

The first four-minute Amberol cylinders had been brought out in October, 1908, but Edison patrons who wanted a longer version of "Rainbow" had to wait until June, 1911, when it was sung again by Ada and Billy. The longer record, in effect, was a combination of singing and the band effects that had been featured in the intermezzo. The Amberol became Blue Amberol No. 1884 in July, 1913. Continued demand from Diamond Disc users caused Edison to have the Jones-Murray combination record "Rainbow" again in 1919, but the disc, No. 50746, was not issued under October, 1921. It was coupled with Miss Jones' "Put On Your Slippers, You're In for the Night," a comic success of 10 years earlier. The supplement said:

"Requests have come to us for a Re-Creation of 'Rainbow' from many parts of the country. Everybody will be glad to hear the two good old standbys, Ada Jones and Billy Murray, in this one-time favorite number with the public."

The same day that they recorded "Rainbow" in disc form, Ada and Billy also sang "Snow Deer," Wenrich's fourth Indian song. It is obvious to an attentive listener that Billy had a cold when the two Indian songs were waxed. "Snow Deer," which had originally come out in 1913, was coupled (on No. 50516) with perhaps the most successful of all Wenrich's Indian song hits, "Silver Bell," but the singers were Gladys Rice and Vernon Dalhart, who had recorded their version in 1918. The coupling was issued in 1919, and became one of the 300 best selling Edison discs. I have a peculiarly personal interest in Record No. 50516, because, a good many years after it was issued, it was the first Edison record I ever bought. I didn't yet have an Edison instrument on which to play it, but, boy-like, I wanted to be able to say I owned at least one Diamond Disc.

The Columbia record of "Rainbow," was issued, on No. A600, in December, 1908, as a duet by Frank C. Stanley and Henry Burr, with Burr's rendition of "Honor Bright, I Loves Yer Right, Old Pal" as its companion. In January, 1909, it was announced in the Columbia supplement as an Indestructible cylinder, No. 960, with the comment:

"The extraordinary popularity of our Double-Disc record of this beautiful number has led to our issuing it in Indestructible cylinder form by the same singers. 'Rainbow' has fairly captured the country—the greatest success since 'Red Wing,' and generally conceded to be in every way superior to the latter."

That closing statement probably did not please Messrs. Thurland Chat-taway and "Kerry" Mills, author and composer of "Red Wing," if it came to their attention. "Red Wing," also by Stanley and Burr, had been issued in single-faced form as Columbia record No. 3681, in September, 1907, but was soon afterwards coupled on No. A468 with "The Virginia Song," by J. W. Myers. It stayed in the catalog through 1926, after the electric recording era had begun.

But here are a couple of the many oddities I have discovered in studying the recordings of Wenrich's songs. Although "Red Wing" was listed in the catalog as sung by Stanley and Burr during all the years in which it was available, it was re-made in 1917 by Burr and Andrea Sarto, calling himself Edgar Stoddard. Names of the artists were changed on the labels of discs pressed after the new versions were recorded, but no catalog mention was ever made of the alteration.

"Rainbow" underwent the same treatment. Probably because of damaged working masters, Stanley and Burr's 1908 version was remade early in 1913 by Sarto—this time using his real name—and Burr. Their names appeared on records of "Rainbow" until it was cut out in September, 1919, but no indication ever was given in the catalog that Stanley and Burr had been succeeded by Sarto and Burr.

I have copies of both the original Stanley and Burr and the later Sarto and Burr pressings of "Rainbow." On the former, Wenrich's name is misspelled, in capital letters as *Wendrick*, but on the latter the spelling is correct. This is a peculiar thing about the early black and gold Columbia disc labels; The composer's name was printed, in large capitals, immediately beneath the title of the song, but the name of the artist was given in small type near the bottom. This must have been poor policy, for the average buyer of a record was certainly more interested in who sang or played it than he was in who wrote the words and music.

After the Jones-Murray Amberol cylinder No. 576 of "Silver Bell" had made a phenomenal success, Edison issued a Standard two-minute version, No. 10492, in May, 1911. The supplement description is long, but interesting, and worth quoting:

"The popularity of this bewitchingly tuneful Indian love song is unprecedented

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 98V)

among selections of its kind. Today, six months after its appearance, it is in greater demand than any record in the Amberol catalog. It is here sung by the same artists and with exactly the same arrangement as on the Amberol, the only difference between the two records being that the Amberol presents the entire song, while the Standard is necessarily restricted to one verse and two choruses—a difference in amount of entertainment that is an unanswerable argument for the Amberol record. The same pretty violin and bell effect and the same novel singing of the refrain are here given as on the Amberol."

Wenrich's third Indian song, "Golden Deer," which came between "Silver Bell" and "Snow Deer," was not a great success. Off-hand, I believe Edison was the only company that recorded it. In June, 1912, it was issued, sung by the Metropolitan Quartet, on Amberol cylinder No. 1027, with words by Harry Williams, who had written the lyrics of many of Egbert Van Alstyne's big hits. *The New Phonogram* said:

"Percy Wenrich won undying fame with his great 'Silver Bell,' which has never lost its hold upon the public. This new Indian love of his is similar in style to his earlier triumph, and is easily its equal in popular favor."

Despite that closing statement, "Golden Deer" did not win the favor of the public as "Rainbow" and "Silver Bell" had done, and as "Snow Deer" was to do a year later, and did not sell well enough to be taken into the Blue Amberol catalog.

### VII. "Missouri, My State"

Probably I should not have undertaken to confine a survey of Percy Wenrich's compositions to one-half of this two-part series. Space limitations make a comprehensive study out of the question. I now must hasten to the closing portion of Wenrich's life.

Before briefly considering the composer's elderly years, however, I must pause long enough to say that I consider "Moonlight Bay" one of the most beautiful of his songs, and believe the Edison disc of it made by the Premier Quartet in 1915, three years after the song was published, is perhaps the finest of all old-style quartet recordings. In 1917 Percy tried the same theme with "Silver Bay"—the title seems a combination of "Silver Bell" and "Moonlight Bay"—but although a pretty number it somehow lacked the appeal of its forerunner.

A few words need to be said, too, about Wenrich's "rustic ballads" which got off to that smashingly successful start with "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet." In 1912 he composed "Kentucky Days," which had a resemblance to "Dixie Gray," a march song Teddy Morse had produced two years before. One line of the first verse of "Kentucky Days" was even the same as a line in the Morse song: "Old Kentucky borrowed all its sunshine from you!"

But before anybody is accused of

plagiarism, it should be brought out that the lyrics of both songs were written by Jack Mahoney—like Steve Porter and Joe Phillips, a native of Merritt Malvern's Buffalo, N.Y.—and he obviously had the right to go back and pick up a line from one of his former efforts. "Kentucky Days" was a try-out for the 1914 smash hit, "When You Wore a Tulip," and, as has already been indicated, still others in similar vein followed—"Sweet Cider Time" and "In Berry Pickin' Time," for example. In 1915 Percy wrote a pseudo Irish ballad in the style Ernest R. Ball had made popular. It was called "When It's Moonlight in Mayo," and was one of Will Oakland's favorite numbers. When this country entered World War I, Wenrich did the music for "Where Do We Go From Here?" and "A Rainbow from the U.S.A.," and he greeted the advent of national prohibition with "How Are You Goin' to Wet Your Whistle (When the Whole Darn World Goes Dry)?" Twenty-seven years later, when his career was long past its peak, he and a new lyric writer, T. Cowgill, produced a novelty number, "Let's Wear Our Whiskers

Long." Apparently they looked far into the future and foresaw present-day American streets thronged with bearded young males.

Another nugget of knowledge that should be preserved for our posterity's posterity: The Premier Quartet's rendition of Edward Madden and Percy Wenrich's "eccentric" number, "That Skeleton Rag," was Edison's last two-minute wax cylinder. It was issued in September, 1912, on Standard No. 10575. "Sail Along, Silvery Moon," with words by Harry Tobias, seems to be the last Wenrich song that attracted measurable attention. It came out in 1939.

And now that unsleeping subconscious self has just reminded me of something else. Last month, in discussing Dolly Connolly's Emerson record of the Wenrich ballad, "One Loving Caress," I mentioned that Edison recorded it by Gladys Rice and Marion Evelyn Cox, but didn't issue it until two years after the song was published. I forgot, however, that Edison also had the song sung by a soprano, Mabelle Wagner-Shank, and coupled it with "I'll Be With You In

IN PRAISE OF "The Show Me" State. This is the first part of the manuscript of a march song, "Missouri, My State," which Percy Wenrich wrote in 1947, hoping it would be adopted as the State song.



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 98EE)

march time and called it "Missouri, My State." My friend, Mrs. Helen Noteboom, to whom I repeat, I am so much indebted for helping me obtain pictures of, and information, about Wenrich and his wife, Dolly Connolly, sent me a copy of the manuscript. I have submitted its first page for reproduction. Mrs. Noteboom also sent me clippings from two Missouri newspapers, concerning Wenrich's state song efforts, and I shall quote parts of them. The longer article, dated March 23, 1947, was written by Vaun Benjamin, and appeared in the Joplin Newspress. Under the heading of "Percy Wenrich Composes a Tribute to His Home State," it says:

"For the last 35 years in the state legislature the subject of a state song has come up at different times. Now, the nationally famous Missouri song writer, Percy Wenrich, has written a song about his home state entitled 'Missouri, My State.' It is 32 bars of one of the oldest and greatest of lively tempos. The mood is indicative that Mr. Wenrich, long a New York resident because of his profession, is a bit homesick.

"When he first decided to write a Missouri song, it was simple, along the type of 'America,' Mr. Wenrich told the News-Press. It was a song that he thought the school children would sing and remember. About that time Ella Herbert Bartlett, daughter of Victor Herbert, conducted a poll of school children on the type of song they liked best. Best of all, the children liked a song that had spirit in it. Wenrich tossed his first Missouri song aside and came up with a march. One that was good for schools, marching feet, parades, and football games. The words go:

"Missouri, My State! Missouri my State!  
Where ev'ry rock and rill is dear to me,  
And every heart is filled with loyalty,  
Missouri, My State! Missouri, grand and great,  
And you will always be  
The pride of the Middle West to me,  
Missouri, My State!"

"Mr. Wenrich is in no hurry to have his song made official. 'I think all songs considered for state songs should be played and sung over a period of time and let the people choose the one they like best.' He also thinks the song should be written by a Missourian for Missourians.

"Wenrich's song, 'Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet,' was the favorite of President Woodrow Wilson. After his success in song writing he entered vaudeville with his wife, Dolly Connolly. For 15 years they toured the leading vaudeville circuits.

"Music was a part of the Wenrich family life. Although his father was a postmaster of Joplin, the latter wrote the words and music to the old ballad, 'Sing to Me Those Good Old Songs.' Percy was assistant postmaster for his father in 1899. The state legislature is considering the song 'Missouri, the Show Me State,' which was written by Idele Hillbrand of Vandalia. The House has approved the song. In the last legislature a bill favoring 'The Missouri Waltz' was passed by the house, but died in the Senate."

An article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* obviously was based on the same press release as the one used in the *News-Press*, so there would be no point to quoting it. I'm sorry that I don't know whether the legislature finally chose a state song, and whether it was Wenrich's or some other.

## VIII. Seventieth Birthday

On January 25, 1950, the *New York World-Telegram and Sun* published a feature story by a staff writer, Edmund Leahy, telling of Percy Wenrich's seventieth birthday. (He died on March 17, 1952, a little more than two years later.) The rather misleading heading was "Forgotten, His Melodies Linger On," and there was a sadly quiet air of resignation about the article:

"Times have changed. There was a day when Percy Wenrich could go to any music publisher, hand him a song, and the song was sold. Today things are different.

"Celebrating his 70th birthday in his room at the Park Sheraton Hotel day before yesterday, Mr. Wenrich gazed out the window and explained, 'Today I am not known to the publishers.' His voice was low and gentle and there was no rancor in it. He smiled pleasantly.

"I'll give you an example. One day I was in Hollywood talking to a friend in the music business. He called in a stenographer. 'This is Percy Wenrich,' he said. 'Know who he is?'

"She shook her head. 'Ever hear the song, 'Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet?'' The girl's face lighted up. 'Sure, she said happily. 'Of course I know that.'

"Well, Mr. Wenrich wrote it."

"She was very sweet about not knowing me. But she is only one. People remember songs of mine. But they don't know me."

"Getting a new song accepted today isn't easy," Mr. Wenrich said. 'People love the old style songs, and kids love them, but today there's a new style, a new trend. The younger element want bebop and ragtime.' (Rock 'n' roll was unknown then.—J.W.) He's always been a great guy for melody."

"He feels that if he could get around he could still sell some songs he has written recently. 'It's no use just sending them in,' he smiled gently. 'You've got to sit down and play them for a publisher; make him like them.'

"But he can't get around as he would wish. Fate has been cracking down pretty heavily on Percy Wenrich, vaudevillian and song writer, since 10 years ago when he had to leave Hollywood to go to Saranac.

"He licked TB. But a year and a half ago he had a stroke. On the road to recovery he fell and broke his hip. His hip is healed now, and he is regaining the use of a paralyzed hand. He gets about with a crutch and a wheel chair, but ventures no farther than the sidewalk in front of his hotel. However, he'll be up and around soon. He's sure of that.

"The belief helped brighten his birthday, spent quietly in his room. He was not alone. Many people phoned and dropped in with good wishes. For though the world may have forgotten Percy Wenrich he has many friends."

Among the many great popular song writers of the early Twentieth Century there are a few for whose memory I have an especially warm affection, even though I never met any of them. When I was a small boy I worshipped Harry Von Tilzer, and when my father bought me a small portable typewriter, "Harry Von Tilzer" was the first name I wrote with it.

In recent years, however, Von Tilzer's songs for the most part do not appeal so strongly to me as do those of a number of his contemporaries. My favorites today are: Theodore Morse, whose life story was told here in April and May; Egbert Van Alstyne, who wrote my all-time sentimental ballad favorite, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," and two of my other prime favorites, "Cheyenne" and "Memories," and Percy Wenrich,

whom we have just been discussing. I would include Ernest R. Ball in this group, but "the Silent Swede's" songs usually came out with black-and-white covers and seemed a cut above the usual Tin Pan Alley standard. To use a recorded music comparison, he was more like a Blue Label than a Black Label artist. And there is no other old-time composer whose songs reduce me to such sniffling nostalgia as those of George M. Cohan.

But Percy Wenrich ranks right up there among my favorite three. I have already expressed the conviction that his songs came about as close to being genuine folk music as anything that has been composed in this country, and I cannot imagine a time when "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," "Moonlight Bay," "When You Wore a Tulip," "Rainbow," "Silver Bell," "Snow Deer" and many others will be forgotten.

Joplin's "favorite son" was a public benefactor. I only wish happier endings could have been written to the life stories of Percy Wenrich and Dolly Connolly.

## THE END

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Edison's Obscure Cylinder Makers

By JIM WALSH

PART I

### I. Gone and Nearly Forgotten

Is anyone now alive who made Edison two-minute cylinders from 1896 to 1912? I doubt it.

When the company stopped issuing Standard cylinders more than 60 years ago Walter Van Brunt was Edison's youngest artist. He was then only 20, but was almost 79 when he died April 13, 1971. (In 1914 a Greek mandolin player, Demetrius C. Dounis, who was born in 1895, succeeded him as the youngest record maker.) Since Walter Van Brunt has not survived, what chance is there that any of the other performers, all older than he, are still here?

I have been looking at a list of the men and women who sang, talked or played into a recording instrument during that 16-year period, and have not found a name of anyone whom I know to be alive. However, Grace Cameron, the vaudeville comedienne whose real name was Grace Kerr, just possibly may be. She was said to be living in retirement in California about ten years ago, and I have never read of her death. She was one of *Variety's* first advertisers when "The Bible of Show Biz" was founded by Sime Silverman in 1905, and I am sure Editor Abel Green would record her death—if it came to the trade paper's notice.

Then there is Elizabeth Wheeler. My old friend Elizabeth was still here half a dozen years ago, when she wrote, in a firm, legible hand, to tell me of the death of her beloved husband, Will, but I have heard nothing from this wonderful lady in recent years. "Bess," however, was born July 20, 1875, so if she has survived she is around 98.

Aside from Miss Cameron, Mrs. Wheeler, and Arthur Clough, I can think of no other makers of Edison two-minute cylinders who may still be living, but the names of many others occur to me who are not only dead but virtually forgotten. While many of the more popular makers of two-minute cylinders, such as Cal Stewart, Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Harry Macdonough, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan and Len Spencer are still vividly remembered and their records avidly collected, there are large numbers of other performers who made only one or two cylinders and about whom almost nothing is

known today. Realizing this, I think it will be a worthy gesture of appreciation to devote an article to telling what little I can about them.

I don't mean, however, that every artist who made only a handful of two-minute cylinders is obscure. On the contrary, well remembered people, among them Eddie Morton, Harry Tally, Alan Turner and Clarice Vance, are scantily represented in the Standard cylinder catalog, although they made many records for other companies. But there were a large number who appeared once or twice before Walter Miller's recording instruments, then were heard from no more. It is of them that I shall write.

Looking back, I think the "inspiration" of this article was my obtaining from Oliver Johnson, of St. Louis, a copy of the sheet music of Paul Dresser's 1900 song hit, "The Blue and the Gray," with a photo of Joe Bonnell on the cover. Probably 99 record collectors out of a hundred have never heard of Bonnell, but when I saw his name in Mr. Johnson's auction list I recognized him as one of the most obscure Edison artists and bid enough to obtain his photo, which I had never before seen. Then I decided I must find some excuse for reproducing it in *HOBBIES*, and this article is the result.

Referring to Allan Koenigsberg's book, "Edison Cylinder Records, 1889-1912," which should be owned by every collector, I find that one Bonnell record, No. 7753, "Mike, Mike Mike," was issued in April, 1901. Then in June came 7833, "I Don't Like the Irish" and 7834, "That's What the Germans Sang." His last contribution, 7899, "Casey's Wedding Night," came in September, 1901. These cylinders were all of the old engraved, soft wax kind and were discontinued on July 25, 1902, after the Gold Moulded type was introduced. Obviously, cylinders by Joe Bonnell are not easy to find. I have never heard one, but the now forgotten—well, almost forgotten—comedian's photo is reproduced herewith. He was probably a typical vaudeville performer of his time in appearance, but to me he has a bit of a "gigolo" appearance. Incidentally, Bonnell seems to have been something of a "mystery man" to the compiler of the Edison record catalog, for in the May, 1901, edition he was listed only as "Mr. Bonnell."

In one or two instances chance has helped me to learn something about these old-time artists. I was looking

through a musical encyclopaedia in search of information on another subject, when I saw the name, "Louise LeBaron," and recalled that I had seen this lady's name in the Edison two-minute list. Judging from what the encyclopaedia said, she was a singer of some distinction. It described her as an American mezzo-soprano, who was born in Winchester, Mass., (date not given), and who died in Lincoln, Neb., February 11, 1918—which was Thomas A. Edison's 71st birthday. She is said to have studied in New York and Boston, then to have sung extensively throughout the country in grand opera, light opera, recital, concert and oratorio, "and was the original Alan-a-Dale in 'Robin Hood' with The Bostonians in 1904."

That last statement puzzles me. The Bostonians first began performing Reginald De Koven's opera in 1890 and sang it more than 4,000 times. How then could Miss LeBaron have been the "original Alan-a-Dale in 1904?" I am not familiar with theatrical presentations of "Robin Hood," so I can only guess that perhaps the role of Alan-a-dale was not included when the opera was first performed, but was added in a 1904 revision.

Louise LeBaron's one appearance in *The New Phonogram* was in April, 1907, when she was represented by 9518, "That's What the Rose Said to Me." The cylinder was given the following description:

"This record is really a formal introduction of Miss LeBaron to the Edison clientele although she acquired a limited acquaintance from having made over record No 8223, 'Whisper and I Shall Hear,' formerly sung by Miss (Corinne) Morgan. Miss LeBaron has a clear, powerful, resonant contralto voice. She will at once become a most useful addition to the list of Edison artists . . ."

However, the lady with the "clear, powerful, resonant" voice made no other Edison appearance. In view of her unusual family name, I wonder if she may have been related to William LeBaron, who did the librettos and lyrics for several musical productions, including some by Victor Herbert, as well as "Apple Blossoms," presented in 1919, which he wrote with another Victor—Victor Jacobi.

Miss LeBaron's having remade a Corinne Morgan record brings to mind another contralto, Mary Porter Mitchell, who owes her sole appearance in the Edison catalog to having sung in 1906, 8224, "For All Eternity," which had previously been by the dynamic Corinne. On the other hand, both "For All Eternity" and

"Whisper and I Shall Hear" had been made originally by a soprano, *Nellie Thomas*, and issued in November, 1902. Both were so popular that the supply of molds was soon exhausted, and Miss Morgan did them over in time for her name to be used in the March, 1904, catalog. Meanwhile, what had become of *Nellie Thomas*? But, even though Miss Mitchell sang only one record, and that a "re-make," she did get her picture into the *New Phonogram*.

Now, I shall refer to the alphabetical list of artists in Mr. Koenigsberg's remarkable compilation and mention briefly some of the "small fry" who made a few records.

## II. Angela to Butler

*Nina Angela*. This is the name of a whistler mentioned in a 1900 *Phonogram*, who must have been feminine, unless Edison was playing a trick and assigning a misleading name to, say, Joe Belmont, who made most of the whistling records 70-odd years ago. Miss(?) Angela was represented by three cylinders, issued around December, 1899: 7334, "The Bob-o-link;" 7335, "Anvil Chorus" from "Trovatore," and 7336, "The Devil's March." In June, 1900, Angela had one more offering with an undignified title, 7453, "I Could Pick de Winner Wid My Two Eyes Shut." But who was "she"? Perhaps reference to *The Clipper* or some other old-time theatrical paper would solve the mystery of *Nina Angela* and many other artists listed here, but I lack the facilities and the inclination for such extensive research. Instead, I am writing this article in the hope that someone who reads it may have information about at least a few of the performers and share it with me.

*Susanne Baker*. This contralto came to what Edison attention she received by remaking, in 1905, a cylinder, No. 8014, "Down Where the Blue Bells Grow," which had originally been sung by another one-record lady, Louise Roberts, for sale in June, 1902. Although *Susanne Baker* made only the one Edison record, she also did a little work for Zonophone discs. Her first 1905 10-inch Zonophone was 188, "Ben Bolt," issued with this comment:

"Miss Baker is a new singer in the talking machine line. This is the first disc record of her voice. We consider it the best contralto record ever made."

A few months later, the contralto made another record, 222, "Rockin' in the Win'," described as "a raccoon lullaby." In 1908 these two numbers were combined on Zonophone double-faced record No. 5350. But why was no more heard from *Susanne Baker*?

*Edward Barrow*. The first of this tenor's three records was issued in November, 1905. Its number was 9140, and its title, "The Irish Girl I Love." Following is *The New Phonogram's* description:

"Mr. Barrow is a well known English tenor and he here makes his first record for the Edison phonograph. Mr. Barrow commenced his first musical studies when but a youth. Going to London, he entered the Royal Academy of Music, placing himself under Arthur Thompson, an eminent professor at the Conservatory, and later under Signor Alberto Randegger,



MISS DAISY BOULAIS, Soprano. She was an assisting artist to Byron G. Harlan, Frank C. Stanley and Harry Anthony.

and graduated with the highest honors. Coming to this country he continued his studies with Victor Harris. He now makes New York City his home. He is solo tenor at the Central Congregational Church, New York City and he has appeared in concerts with the most prominent singers of the country. His first Edison selection is from 'The Rogers Brothers in Ireland,' which opened at the Liberty Theater, New York, in August. The song is one of the gems of the play. It has a slow waltz movement . . ."

Barrow's second cylinder, in December, 1905, was "Lorna." He was assisted by the Edison (Hadyen) Male Quartet. His last, in January, 1906, No. 9190, was "Take Me to Your Heart Again."

*Anna Barthold*. Contralto voices reproduced better than sopranos in the early recording days, and the deep-voiced damsels were used more often. *Anna Barthold's* first four wax cylinders were issued in May, 1899: 6400, "Don't Be Cross"; 6401, "My Baby's Kiss"; 6402, "Old Jim's Christmas Hymn," and 6403, "Whose Pretty Girl Are You?" Between June and October, 1899, she had three more: 7182, "Think Once Again Before We Part"; 7183, "Nightingale," and 7184, "Rosie Carey." It has now been about 74 years since those records were issued, and if *Anna Barthold* were living she probably would be past the century mark. She may have been a singer of some consequence before the turn of the century, but does anybody know anything about her now?

*James Bernard*. Probably as many persons with the last name of Bernard have made records as could be found of any other family. The most important, of course, is Al Bernard, about whom I have been promising myself for so many years to write a HOBBIES series, but putting it off because I dread sorting through my large collection of material about him. *James Bernard* was a comedian who had three talking records listed in the October, 1899, Edison cylinder catalog. He told stories originally made popular by J. W. Kelly, "The Rolling Mill Man." They were: 3861, "The A. P. A."; 3862, "The Topsy Man," and 3863, "The German and Irish Races."

*Daisy Boulais*. This soprano is truly "a woman of mystery." She never made a solo record, but worked mostly as an incidental assistant to Byron G. Harlan and Frank C. Stanley in their duets. I have played with the idea that she was Stanley's wife, but that probably is wrong. In 1903 she sang an obligato to Harlan's record, No. 8409, "In the Valley Where the Bluebirds Sing." She sang the chorus of "Blue Bell" in No. 8736, "Two Rubes at the Vaudeville," by Harlan and Stanley; helped Harlan in 9004, "Down in Blossom Row," and harmonized with Harlan and Stanley in 9061, "Violette." In addition, she and Harry Anthony (John Young) remade two duets that had previously been sung by "Miss Chappell" (Edith Chapman) and George M. Stricklett. They were 8395, "Life's Dream Is O'er," and 8601, "Far Away." But no one seems to know who *Daisy Boulais* was. Edison merely described her as "a serio-comic" singer.

*Frank Bush*. In December, 1905, Edison issued No. 9163, "Short Stories," by Frank Bush, who, *The New*

(Continued on page 119)

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

GIBSON MANDOLIN WANTED, any style, condition. State price. 212 981-1808. — Musician, Box 85, Staten Island, N.Y. 10304 au3652

## VIOLIN

VIOLIN—Owned since 1923 with paper label that states "Nicola Amati fecit Cremona sub titulo Santa Teresia 1657". This instrument had been owned by the family of T. M. Bell from 1856 to 1923. \$3,450, or trade for signed Tiffany and/or Steuben art glass. — Scarlett, (317) 962-6756 au1673

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PHONOGRAPHS repaired: New spare parts for Edison phonographs. Send stamp for list. Phone: (201) 748-8046. — Gerichten, 23 Waldo, Ave., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003 jly128041

ANTIQUÉ PHONOGRAPH Books, Instruction Manuals, Catalogs for sale. Send 2 stamps for free list.—Allen Koenigsberg, 250 East 45th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11203 s6867

For Sale Victor oak cabinet phonograph \$125.00. — Mrs. Mable Dear, Box 41, Grand Cane, La. 71032 Ph: 318-858-3362. au1612

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

BANJOS and Gibson Mandolins Wanted. Collector will pay cash for Gibsons in any condition. Also old C F Martin guitars. — Mr. Jay, Box 65, Staten Island, New York, 10304, or call (212) 981-1808. jly3215

EDISON "Idelia" phonograph wanted. Offering \$650.00 if in excellent condition. — E. Mathewson, 141 Fourth St., Toronto 14, Ont., Canada. s3403

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

*Phonogram* said, "is one of the best known vaudeville artists on the American stage. The stories are extremely funny, and the manner in which Mr. Bush tells them adds to their humor. The stories given on this record have been written for this special purpose and have not been published in any form." Perhaps the National Association of Variety Artists has some information in its files concerning Frank Bush.

**Amy Butler.** This vaudeville comedienne seems to have been known as "Little Amy" Butler. Her sole Edison two-minute cylinder was issued in November, 1908, and was No. 9974, "It's the Pretty Things You Say." She was described as:

"A new Edison singer in one of the catchiest of songs. Miss Butler's method is that of the typical Broadway musical comedy star. Her voice is most musical and she sings with rare vivacity."

The comedienne recorded the same song on Indestructible cylinder No. 897. Her photo appears on the sheet music cover of two Irving Berlin songs in my collection—"San Francisco Bound" and "Kiss Me." The latter is reproduced with this article, and may cause you to wonder why she was called "Little Amy."

### III. Chalfant to Godoy

**Chalfant.** Edison two-minute cylinder No. 1, issued in 1896, was "All Coons Look Alike To Me," a schottische played by the Edison Grand Concert Band. It was not a dignified beginning for a long list. The last, which went on sale in September, 1912, was No. 10575, "The Skeleton Rag," by the Premier Quartet—not an especially dignified conclusion. This does not mean, however, that more than 10,000 different titles were issued. From 1896 to September, 1899, records were numbered in a block system instead of strict numerical order, and it's likely that fewer than half the available numbers were used.

But of all the hundreds of performers who appeared on the two-minute records, none seems more obscure than "Chalfant," whose first name was not even given. A list for March, 1898, identifies him as a whistler who was Billy Golden's duet partner in four cylinders: 4016, "Minstrel Scene"; 4017, "Roll On, Silver Moon"; 4018, "Three Minutes With the Minstrels" (shouldn't that have been "Two Minutes"?); and 4079, "Whistling Medley." These records were gone by November, 1899, and so was Mr. Chalfant's name.

Another artist whose last name only was given came along in 1905. He was a vaudeville comedian known as "Tascott," who made two records: 9033, "Shame On You," and 9091, "You Must Think I'm Santa Claus." Nor must we forget "Mozarto," supposed to be a European music hall performer on more than one instrument at a time, who assisted Len Spencer in several records. "Mozarto" may have existed, or perhaps was a



MARIE HOY, Soprano. She sang three duets with Harry Anthony. Neither, Miss Boulais nor Miss Hoy made any solo records.

figment of Spencer's ingenious imagination.

**Edward Clarence.** A pen sketch of this baritone, with a moustache and a hair style that would look at home among young men of today, appeared in *The Phonogram* for March, 1902, with this biographical note:

"Edward Clarence was born at Boston in 1863. At an early age Mr. Clarence developed considerable vocal talent. His singing has met with the approval of the public, and he has appeared in nearly every prominent vaudeville theater in the United States and Canada. His enunciation is clear and distinct and his records for the phonograph are deservedly popular."

Clarence had four records under his name by mid-1898. He had been assigned the 5500 series in the block system, and his titles were: 5500, "The American Toast"; 5501, "MacMahon Grenadiers"; 5502, "Gallant Emmett Guards," and 5503, "Irish Volunteers." No numbers between 5503 and 6000 were issued.

**Arthur C. Clough.** A musical comedy and light opera tenor who does not really belong in this list for he made a fairly large number of records for such companies as Victor, Columbia and Edison, but little is known about him personally, although he is said to have been a lawyer who turned singer. He is one of the few Standard cylinder artists who may conceivably still be living. His five two-minute records, ranging from 1909 to 1912, are: 10233, "When the Meadow Larks Are Calling, Annie Laurie"; 10251, "It's Hard to Kiss Your Sweetheart When the Last Kiss Means Goodbye"; 10261, "In the Shadow of the Carolina Hills"; 10311, "Creole Lullaby," and 10497, "Garden of Roses."

**William Craig.** A fiddler who made a few cylinders of Scotch dance tunes: 9893, "Lady Binnie" and "Shores of Lake Erie"; 10120, "Stirling Castle" and "Harvest Dance"; 10357, "Farintosh" and "Jenny Dang the Weaver"; and 10440, "Highland Whiskey" and "Craig's Reel." These range in date of issue from August, 1908, to November, 1910. Craig died at his home

in Glenburnie, Scotland, July 10, 1911.

**Lilian Doreen.** I assume Miss Doreen was a vaudeville singer. She made one Standard cylinder, No. 9666, "Take Me Back To New York Town," issued in October, 1907. Her version of this well remembered Harry Von Tilzer song hit was not imported by Edison's English branch, because an English revision had been issued called "Take Me Back to London Town" and the American words were considered too regional.

**John H. Duffy.** A baritone who in 1905 remade two records that had previously been sung by J. W. Myers. They were No. 7839, "Bedouin Love Song," and 8010, "The Bridge."

**Press Eldridge.** A once noted comedian who made ten Edison cylinders in 1898 and another, No. 10121, "A Confidential Chat," which was issued in May, 1909. By that time even the Edison personnel had forgotten, apparently, that he had recorded previously, as witness this description in *The New Phonogram*:

"A heart-to-heart talk by 'the Commander-in-Chief of The Army of Fun,' as Mr. Eldridge is everywhere known. This is one of his most popular monologues. It is always a 'hit' at the leading vaudeville houses of the country. This record marks Mr. Eldridge's entry in the phonograph field, and we predict that he will be no less popular than he is on the stage."

There were no more Edison cylinders by Eldridge, but he had made four seven-inch records that were included in a 1900 catalog of Berliner discs: 0924, "Johnny Took the One I Wanted"; 0925, "My Girl's a Hawaiian Maiden"; 0931, "Let Them All Come," and 0932, "La La Palizer."

I have the sheet music of a song published in 1893, "I'm the Man That Wrote 'After the Ball,'" the cover of which shows Eldridge in blackface. This now forgotten ditty of course was designed to cash in on the raging popularity of Charles K. Harris' great hit, "After the Ball," which achieved almost unprecedented success in 1892 and 1893.

**Harry Fay.** One of the most popular English comedians before World War I, Fay was little known in the States. Two of his British cylinders were imported and issued: 10133, "I Don't Care if There is a Girl There" (May, 1909), and 10283, "Have You Got Another Girl At Home Like Mary?" (10283).

**Minnie De Rue Fay.** I know nothing about this singer, whose one cylinder, a "coon love song," "Moon, Moon," was issued in January, 1903. Presumably, since she was an American performer, she was not any of Harry Fay's "kinfolks."

**Elene Foster.** This clever comedienne made one appearance in the Edison list. She did a humorous monolog, "The Village Seamstress," (No. 9103), which came out in October, 1905. Quoting from *The New Phono-*

(Continued on next page)



gram:

"This selection is something entirely new in the way of a phonograph record. Miss Foster . . . is a well known elocutionist, having given readings and recitations before many of the leading clubs and at select entertainments in various parts of the country. She is an unusually clever mimic. Her portrayal of the garrulous village seamstress, with the latter's characteristic repetition of the gossip of the day, will be readily recognized as lifelike by all familiar with country life. This selection is adapted by Miss Foster from Kate Douglas Wiggin."

Somewhere I have a copy of the *Literary Digest* issued, I believe, in 1915, which contains a reprint of an article Elene Foster wrote for another magazine in which she humorously described her first day's experience as a character actress in the silent movies. I don't know how long her film activities continued.

**Guido Gialdini.** This German-born whistler with the Italian sounding name really does not belong in this compilation, for he made no Edison two-minute cylinders, but he did record for Edison during the period the shorter records were being issued. Including him, gives me a chance to say I'd like to write an article about Gialdini, who was probably the greatest whistler that ever lived, if I only knew more about the man himself. An old Edison catalog says he was a dry goods clerk before taking to the stage and becoming a headline attraction in music halls throughout the world. He made many records for American companies when he toured this country from 1910 to 1912, and afterwards recorded electrically. Obviously, his act was of a wider appeal than that of the average singer, for good whistling knows no language barrier and can be appreciated in virtually any country. Gialdini's recorded repertoire, in America and Europe, included such diverse items as "Musetta's Waltz" from "Boheme," "My Hero" from "The Chocolate Soldier," "Most Noble Marquis" from "Die Fledermaus," down to "Call Me Up Some Rainy Afternoon" and "The Whistling Bowery Boy." He made Nicole discs in England as early as 1905.

**Roy Gibson.** The dulcimer seems to be an odd instrument to have been recorded in the early days of the phonograph, but a player named Roy Gibson made four solos in 1901: 7769, "Gibson March"; 7770, "Radetzky March"; 7771, "Seventh Ohio Regiment March," and 7933, "March Arcadia." Another dulcimer player, *William Moriarity*, made two, No. 8021, "Ain't Dat A Shame?" (1902) and 8665, "Llewellyn March" (1904).

**Senorita Maria Godoy.** A Spanish singer, who made five records in 1899, and no doubt was called on to remake them at intervals. She is one of a group of 42 Edison artists photographed in 1900. Her titles were: 7138, "La Cocina"; 7139, "La Paloma"; 7140, "El Cafe de Puerto Rico"; 7141, "Nina Pancha," and 7142, "El Gorro Frigo." She may have also been recorded for Edison foreign language catalogs.



JOHN KAISER, talking artist. He remade several "Casey" records that had previously been made by Russell Hunting and James H. White.

#### IV. Heins to Keefe

**Billy Heins.** This genial comedian was still living about 20 years ago and I can't swear that he isn't still. In 1898 he made two Edison cylinders: 1136, "I Want Them Presents Back," and 1137, "Hugh McCue." A year later, in May, 1899, the catalog contained six cylinders by Heins and the Ancient City Quartet, all part of a minstrel series: 4700, "How I Love My Love"; 4701, "Elsie From Chelsea"; 4702, "Laughing Song" (probably George W. Johnson sang in this); 4703, "Remus Takes The Cake"; 4704, "Minstrel Scene," and 4705, "Three Minutes With the Minstrels."

Heins also was an early Zonophone recorder. In 1904 he made the following: 5954, "Dis-pos-zes Means Move"; 5955, "Down On The Brandywine"; 5958, "Follow The Merry Crowd"; 5965, "Hooray for a Holiday," and 5972, "Meet Me in St. Louis, Louis." These records were in both 7-inch and 9-inch. In 1917 Heins became Billy Golden's partner for blackface comedy after the death of James Marlowe, and they worked together a couple of years, recording for most of the important companies. Still later, Golden's original recording partner, Joe Hughes (Joseph Savory) took Heins' place.

**Ethel Hepburn.** A mezzo-soprano who came along late in the wax cylinder recording field. In the December, 1911, supplement she had two records of the same song, "Will the Roses Bloom in Heaven?" one of Charles K. Harris' mawkish "sob ballads" about dying children. On Amberol 860 she sang a four-minute version and on Standard 10527, a two-minute interpretation. *The New Phonogram* said of her:

"Ethel Hepburn is a native of New York and studied music under the tutelage of Madame Louise Von Feilitzsch. She has enjoyed an enviable and varied career as a dramatic soprano, for in addition to singing in church and private

concert work, she has appeared with Frank Daniels in 'The Office Boy,' in 'The Girl From Kay's,' 'The Vanderbilt Cup' and in Eva Tanguay's 'Sambo Girl.' During the seasons of 1908 and 1909 she starred as Ethel Morton of the opera company of the same name in an extensive repertoire which included 'The Mikado,' 'H. M. S. Pinafore,' 'Chimes of Normandy,' 'The Mascot,' etc."

Here we have a puzzle. Which was the assumed name, Ethel Hepburn or Ethel Morton?

**Mina Hickman.** Here we have a "mystery woman" who fascinates me. Mina Hickman must have been "somebody" 70 years ago, but what was her claim to fame aside from making a fair number of records? She seems to have been on only a couple of the Edison two-minutes: 7975, "When Two Hearts Are One," and 7976, "Tale of the Bumblebee," both duets with Harry Macdonough, issued in November, 1901.

She did more, however, for other companies. For Zonophone, from 1902 to 1904, she sang: 5292, "Come Down, Ma Evenin' Star"; 5413, "Under the Bamboo Tree"; 5414, "Under the Deodar"; 5778, "Laughing Water"; 5875, "In Dreamland," and 5892, "Navajo."

Besides the foregoing solos, the soprano sang four duets for Zonophone with a completely forgotten tenor, J. J. Taylor, about whom I know nothing. These records were No. 9570, "The Kiss Duet"; 9575, "Lola"; 9577, "None Shall Part Us," from "Iolanthe," and 9578, that perennial duet which Corrine Morgan and Frank C. Stanley were soon to make almost their own private property, "Oh That We Two Were Maying."

I have not found any Berliners by Miss Hickman, though she may have made some, but she had a fairly impressive Victor list, beginning in 1902 and continuing into 1904, when it looks as if her recording career ended.

The Hickman Victors included M-3294 (the number was later changed to 1916), "For All Eternity"; M3292, "Lullaby from 'Erminie'" (number changed to 1917); 748, "Killarney"; 751, "When I Think of You"; M2374, "Congo Love Song"; M2500, "My Em-maleen," from "Peggy From Paris"; M2511, "The Miller's Daughter," from "Three Little Maids"; M2532, "The Maid From Timbuctoo"; 1918, "Under the Bamboo Tree"; 2908, "Good-bye, Little Girl, Goodbye" and 2907, "There's Nothing New To Say." I wonder if Mina Hickman was better known by some other name.

**J. Frank Hopkins.** The first xylophone player of any prominence for Edison, Victor and Columbia was Charles P. Lowe, about whom little or nothing seems known today. His place was taken for Edison around 1902 by J. Frank Hopkins, who made a considerable number of records for the next two years, when he was succeeded by Albert Benzler, a versatile musician who played xylophone, orchestra bells, piano, and organ and occasionally grabbed a violin and helped out in the Edison Orchestra. Benz-

(Continued on next page)

ler remade most of the Hopkins records. Who now knows anything about the man, J. Frank Hopkins?

**Marie Hoy.** This soprano was referred to only as "Miss Hoy" in the Edison catalog, but a 1906 advertisement of the Channell Studio of Orange, N.J., which sold photographs of recording artists, gave her first name as Marie. I called on U. G. Channell, owner of the studio, in 1947 or 1948, and he told me he had destroyed all his negatives and photographs of old-time record makers only a month before. "Too bad you didn't come a little sooner," he said. "I would have given them to you."

Miss Hoy's Edison activities were confined to singing in three duets with Harry Anthony: 9248, "I Would Like to Marry You," which came out in April, 1906; 9282, "Anxious," in May; and 9299, "Why Don't You Try?" in July. When the first record appeared Miss Hoy was described as "a new soprano to our list, whose distinct articulation and clear, well-schooled voice will no doubt be appreciatingly (!) received." I wish that on the one occasion I met "Harry Anthony" I had thought to ask him: "Just *who* were Marie Hoy and Daisy Boulais?"

**Parke Hunter.** It is surprising that so little is known today of a man who had the prominence of Parke Hunter in the early years of this century. He was the banjo duet partner of Vess L. Ossman in vaudeville and apparently he could play almost any other instrument. He frequently assisted Len Spencer in the latter's recorded comedy sketches, such as "Con Clancy and the Whistling Newsboy," and in the Victor disc of "Auction Sale of a Music Store," he maddens the crowd of onlookers by playing "Hiawatha" on one device after another. Yet the only picture I have ever seen of Hunter was reproduced from "B. M. G.," an English publication for banjo, mandolin and guitar players, in which one writer expressed the opinion that Hunter was a better banjoist than the great Vess himself. The question arises, if he was better why didn't the companies engage him, instead of Vess, to make most of their banjo records? Hunter's only appearances in Edison lists are as a member of the Ossman Banjo Trio composed of Ossman, Hunter and William Farmer. In 1904 they played two Theodore Morse compositions: 8841, "I've Got a Feeling for You," and 8859, "Make a Fuss Over Me."

**George W. Johnson.** I mention the favorite singer of laughing songs only because I overlooked something when writing "In Justice to George W. Johnson" for January and February, 1971, *HOBBIES*. Although I said I had been unable to learn his date of birth, some notes I made several years ago in Washington from a 1900 *Phonogram* in the Library of Congress reveal that he was born as a slave



ANDREW KEEFE was an imitator of Cal Stewart, who made a few Edison "Uncle Josh" cylinders.

in 1846 on a Virginia plantation. He "went North" in 1873, at the age of 27, and is said to have made a tinfoil recording of his "Laughing Song" very shortly after Edison invented the phonograph in 1877. I also neglected to list his 9-inch Zonophone record, 5290, of "Carving the Duck." Johnson, like several other artists mentioned in this survey, is shown in the 1900 group photo published in *HOBBIES* for January, 1971. Prints of this picture may be obtained from a *HOBBIES* advertiser, Quentin Riggs, of Huntington Beach, Calif.

**John Kaiser.** This artist served for a time as announcer on Zonophone records. I have been told he was an uncle of my friend Frank Banta, the pianist of the Eight Famous Victor Artists, who died about four years ago. In 1905 Kaiser remade four "Casey" monologs that had previously been made by James H. White, who had gone to England to be manager of the Edison phonograph and record business there. On Zonophone 9-inch record 5911 he assisted Cal Stewart to make a hard to find record, "The Difference Between a German and an Irish Picnic," in which, presumably, Cal for once got away from his familiar "Uncle Josh" impersonation.

**Andrew Keefe.** A stove repair man in Albany, N.Y., some 70 years ago, Keefe acquired some local notoriety by being able to imitate the voices of recording artists. Learning that he could sound very much like Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh," Edison engaged him to record some of Stewart's monologs, since the latter was then exclusive to Columbia. The first, 9152, "I'm Old But I'm Awfully Tough," came out in December, 1905. It was followed by 9221, "Uncle Josh in a Department Store," March, 1906, and "Uncle Josh in a Chinese Laundry," February, 1907. Keefe also made some Leeds records. More about him may

be found in the Cal Stewart articles in *HOBBIES*, for March, 1951. Stewart's imitator ceased making records when the great man himself returned to Edison.

**Matt Keefe.** This tenor-yodeler was Billy Murray's singing partner when the 19-year-old future "Denver Nightingale" made his first records in 1897 for Bacigalupi Brothers, Edison distributors in San Francisco. Their first cylinder was "The Lass From the County Mayo." With another duet partner—the elusive George M. Stricklett—Keefe recorded his composition, "Mother's Lullaby," for the September, 1908, Edison list. In October they did 9963, "Matt Keefe's Yodel Song," which was thus described:

"Something new and decidedly different in a yodel(!) song. The song (by Stricklett) and the yodel (by Keefe) alternate throughout. There are no less than 10 different yodeling parts, some of them entirely unique. It is easy to understand Matt Keefe's success on the stage after hearing his latest yodel. His notes are as clear as a mocking bird's and reproduce perfectly."

In 1914 Keefe made Columbia record A1604, "Mountain High" and "The Strolling Yodeler," and in 1917, A2378, "Roll On, Silvery Moon" and "Sleep, Baby, Sleep." In 1919 he sang a double-faced Pathé disc, No. 22186, of "Mother's Lullaby" and "Roll On, Silvery Moon."

P.S. Abel Green, editor of *Variety*, is mentioned in the third paragraph of this article. Since it was written more than a year ago, Mr. Green has dropped dead of a heart attack. He was born in New York City on June 3, 1900, and died in the lobby of the apartment building in which he lived on May 10, 1973. The veteran editor had been with the theatrical publication since 1920 and served as editor beginning in 1933.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

*Let every man honor and love the land of his birth and the race from which he springs and keep their memory green. It is a pious and honorable duty. But let us have done with British-Americans, Irish-Americans, German-Americans and so on, and all be Americans . . . If a man is going to be an American at all let him be so without any qualifying adjectives; and if he is going to be something else, let him drop the word American from his personal description."* .....

—HENRY CABOT LODGE

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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# Edison's Obscure Cylinder Makers

By JIM WALSH

PART II

### I. Beginning with May(m) Kelso

Last month's installment of this survey of Edison's lesser known cylinder recording artists began with *Nina Angela* and ended with *Matt Keefe*. This month we'll begin with *May Kelso* and end with *Bessie Wynn*.

A good way to begin, I suppose, is by saying that Miss Kelso's first name really wasn't May. It was Maym (which I take to have been pronounced Mame) but the recording apparatus of the 1890's wouldn't reproduce the final "m" when her name was mentioned in spoken announcements. The sound came out as "May," so it was decided to let her name appear that way on the records and in the catalogs.

May(m) Kelso's career goes back a long time. She began appearing in farce comedy in 1888—85 years ago—but retired temporarily after three and one half years of appearing with the Russell Comedians in "The City Directory." In 1898-99, about the time her recording career began, she was seen in "From Broadway to Tokyo." She appears to have been good-natured and easy-going. The late John Bieling, with whom she had made a few Edison duets, used to smile as he recalled that his first wife would scold him for spending too much time "sitting around and drinking beer with that May Kelso."

I was surprised when a correspondent whose memory goes back a long way, wrote me that around 1913 to 1915, he saw a series of movie "shorts"—pictures of one or two reels—called "The Mutual Girl," and featuring a young actress called Dorothy Phillips. Apparently the films had a central theme concerned with the girl's adventures while shopping, and a prominent member of the cast was Maym Kelso, who took the part of Dorothy's aunt. The aunt, it seems, was both puzzled and amused by the articles her niece bought and brought home and by her experiences buying them. And that is as nearly up-to-date as I can bring the life and career of May(m) Kelso, except that "Bill" Hayes, the veteran Edison recording expert wrote me in July, 1946. "Miss May Kelso died a few years ago."

Her Edison activities covered two years or so—from mid-1899 to September, 1901, during which time she made 17 solos. The one with the lowest number, 7176, was "Because,"



**FORGOTTEN MAN**—Joe Bonnell made a few Edison cylinders in 1901, but is almost entirely forgotten now. He must, however, have had some vaudeville prominence for his photo to be used on the cover of Paul Dresser's song hit.

followed by 7177, "Kentucky Babe." The highest number, 7913, had her interpretation of that captivating melody, "The Honeysuckle and the Bee."

The Kelso-Bieling duets were made in 1900 and 1901. They were: 7644, "You'll Know"; 7645, "The Hymn You Loved the Best"; 7672, "One I Love," and 7749, "Just the Same as Long Ago." I imagine not many copies have survived.

The National Gramophone Com-

pany's record catalog for December, 1899, contained a seven-inch record by Miss Kelso, "Kentucky Babe," which must have been one of her favorite songs. In May, 1901, the following were included in a Zonophone list: 9414, "Stay In Your Own Back Yard" (which she also sang on Edison 7566); 9415, "Florida Flo," and 9418, "Kentucky Babe." After that I find no more Kelso records.

(Continued on next page)

## II. Kenney Through Newton

**William H. Kenney.** This baritone was one of the first singers to make, in 1902, the new-fangled Gold Moulded cylinders. He contributed two: 8011, "The Heart of a Sailor," and 8030, "Past and Future."

**Henry Kessler.** A completely forgotten tenor whose four cylinders go back to 1899: 7222, "Just Behind the Times"; 7223, "After the War"; 7224, "When the Sweet Magnolias Bloom," and 7228, "One Night in June."

**Dorothy Kingsley** was a "soubrette" singer with a singularly unattractive vaudeville type of voice. (Many of the world's worst voices were possessed by vaudeville and light opera singers, and some of them were heard on at least a few records.) Once I played on a radio program Miss Kingsley's Victor recording of "Could You Learn to Love a Little Girl Like Me?" and after it was over my announcer said: "Well, Jim, considering the voice the lady has got, the answer to her question is 'no!'"

Miss Kingsley made two Edison cylinders: 9892, issued in August, 1908, "It Always Comes With the Summer," and 9989, a duet with Edward Meeker, "Take a Little Ride With Me," which came out in November. During the same period she sang for Victor No. 5572, "Could You Learn to Love—?" and was also on one of the first 11 Victor double-faced discs. Her side of No. 16010 was "I don't Want the Morning to Come." On the reverse, Byron G. Harlan warbled "Everybody Loves Me But the One I Love." She also made one single-faced Zonophone, No. 1078, "Do You Know Mr. Schneider?"

But the company for which the "soubrette" sang most was Indestructible. She made five two-minute Indestructible cylinders: 853, "It's Only Me In My Nightie"; 860, "Move On, Mr. Moon"; 884, "Everyone's In Love With Someone"; 927, "The Old Swing On The Lawn," and 985, "Call 'Round Any Old Time." Not one of these songs is well enough known to be easily dated today, but they all fall into the 1908-09 period.

**Stanley Kirkby.** This baritone, who died about ten years ago, probably made more records than any other English singer. Two of his English cylinders were imported by Edison: The two-minute 10534, "Brown Wings," and the four-minute 781, "Your Eyes Have Told Me So." The former was issued in January, 1912, and the latter in September, 1911.

**Roxy P. La Rocca.** He was a harp player, who was partner in vaudeville with Manuel Romain. His first cylinder, 10368, "Annie Laurie," was issued in June, 1910, and his second, "The Mocking Bird," in October.

**George Seymour Lenox.** This tenor was associated with Frank C. Stanley in the Lotus Quartet. Stanley's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth A. Repelow, of West Orange, N.J., says that Lenox was about the only recording artist



J. Aldrich Libbey

"AFTER THE BALL"—J. Aldrich Libbey won great vaudeville popularity for his singing of Charles K. Harris' song hit, but his Edison cylinders did not include it.

who used to visit overnight in the Stanley home and recalls that she called him "Uncle Seymour." He made four Edison solo cylinders: 8323, "No One But You," and 8344, "The Message of the Rose," January-February, 1903; 8605, "A Dream," February, 1904, and 8793, "The Bloom Is On The Rye," September, 1904.

**Maurice Levi and His Band.** Levi was famous at the turn of the century as the composer of songs about a rustic character called "The Reuben," which were introduced in Rogers Brothers' productions. They included "When Reuben Comes To Town" and "The Wedding Of The Reuben And The Maid." These two numbers were included in four-minute Amberol cylinder 169, "Levi's Famous 'Reuben' Songs," issued in July, 1909. "When Reuben Comes To Town," sung by S. H. Dudley on M3001, was the first 10-inch Monarch (Victor) record. Two-minute cylinders by Levi and His Band were: 10097, "Happy Days March"; 10128, "A Coon Band Contest" and 10148, "Rolling Chair March." Other four-minutes besides the "Reuben Songs" Medley were: 134, "Fair Harvard Waltzes," and 149, "Frau Luna" Overture.

**J. Aldrich Libbey.** Libbey, once, was a famous vaudeville baritone who is credited with having given Charles K. Harris' 1892 hit, "After The Ball," its enormous vogue. Another artist who featured "After The Ball," and accepted "payola" from Harris for singing it, was Evan Williams (1867-1918), who was then a minstrel show tenor but many years later became a favorite Victor Red Seal artist. Harris paid him \$2.50 for each time he sang the hit.

Unfortunately, Libbey didn't record "After The Ball" — the tune was passé by the time he began making records—but he made six cylinders in 1902 and 1903: 8018, "On A Sunday Afternoon"; 8019, "The Song The Soldiers Sang"; 8020, "Where The Silvery Colorado Wends Its Way"; 8171, "Only A Summer Girl"; 8204, "Marie-Louise," and 8300, "In The Sweet Bye And Bye"—the latter not the doleful old gospel song that Mark Twain hated but a pretty waltz number by Harry Von Tilzer, who also wrote "On A Sunday Afternoon."

**Long Acre Quartet.** This quartet made one record, "That Fussy Rag," for the September, 1910, supplement. No information was given concerning the personnel.

**Jack Lorimer.** He was one of the many British comedians who imitated Harry Lauder. His one record, 10102, "Hello There, McIntyre," was issued in April, 1909.

**A. D. Madeira.** Madeira was a baritone who was popular for about two years, then faded out of the recording picture. Nobody seems to know what his initials stood for. The late Joe Belmont told me that Madeira was of Spanish-Jewish descent and was born at Gibraltar. He made 20 Edison solo cylinders, beginning in late 1899. His last, 7817, "Tempest Of The Heart," from "Trovatore," was issued in June, 1901. Although Jewish, Madeira sang

(Continued on page 118)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

several numbers of a Christian devotional nature, including "Beyond The Gates Of Paradise," "Jerusalem" and "Old Jim's Christmas Hymn." He and Byron G. Harlan made 14 duets, seven of which were made over in gold moulded form.

Madeira is called a bass in the February, 1902, Victor catalog, which lists nine solos by him, including "Calvary" and "The Lost Chord." Six of his Victor numbers were also made for Edison. He and Harry Macdonough made eight duets for Victor, including 1075, "While The Leaves Came Drifting Down," which was remade by Macdonough and S. H. Dudley and remained a standard seller for many years. Madeira obviously didn't grow rich at recording, for the March, 1902, *Phonogram* said he was no longer singing, but was operating a typewriter business in St. Paul, Minn. All his Edison solos were cut out when the gold moulded process was adopted in 1902, and all his Victors were gone by August, 1904. Judging by the picture, Madeira was a middle-aged man when the Edison group photo was taken in 1900. "Bill" Hayes said, in 1946, "he had passed away some years ago."

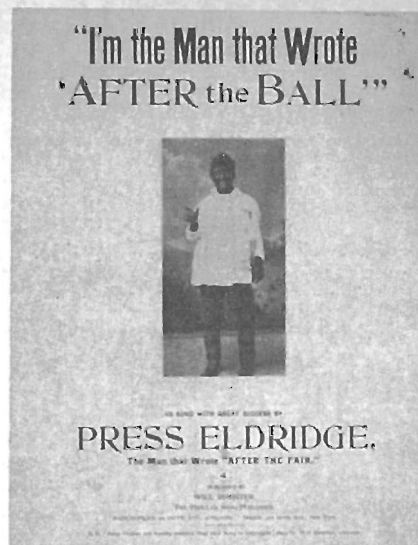
**Madge Maitland.** This vaudeville singer of "coon songs," made one record, "Is Everybody Happy?" (not the song of the same title frequently played by the late Ted Lewis' dance band), which was issued in February, 1906. The record description said: "Miss Maitland's 'coon' dialect has never been excelled by an Edison singer, and she injects an individuality into the song that stamps her as a clever artist. Miss Maitland is well known on the vaudeville stage."

**Manhattan Mixed Trio.** This group, composed of Elise Stevenson, Irving Gillette (Henry Burr) and Frank C. Stanley, had one record, 10315, "Long, Long Ago," in the February, 1910, Edison supplement. As the Metropolitan Trio, it also did considerable recording for Victor, Columbia and Zonophone.

**Cornelia Marvin.** Miss Marvin was a contralto who sang with Harry Anthony in No. 10355, "Some Day," issued in May, 1910. She also took part in some of the records by the Edison Mixed Quartet.

**Joe Maxwell.** Perhaps better known as a song writer than a singer (he wrote "I've Got My Fingers Crossed," which Byron G. Harlan recorded for several companies), Maxwell had a pleasant tenor voice. He made seven four-minute Amberal records and five Standard cylinders.

**James McCool.** McCool was a tenor who sang with Frank Dumont's minstrels in Philadelphia. He made one two-minute cylinder, "Just Next Door," catalogued in August, 1902. He also sang for Victor and other



ONCE FAMOUS COMEDIAN—Press Eldridge, vaudeville performer, made ten humorous Edison cylinders in 1898 and returned in 1909 for another called "A Confidential Chat." (Right) "Little Amy"—Amy Butler, vaudeville singer, made a cylinder in 1908 of "It's the Pretty Things You Say."

companies.

**Mabel McKinley.** This soprano was a niece of President William McKinley. She wrote at least one famous hit, "Anona," which was among the first of the "Indian songs," and the well-known, "Karama—A Jap Rhapsody," in addition to "Golden Rod," which she recorded for Edison. Her two-minute record, No. 10289, "Ma Little Sweet Sunbeam," issued in January, 1910, was also one of her compositions. Her four-minutes, all issued in 1909, were: 122, "Golden Rod,"; 150, "Anona," and 157, "My Rancho Maid."

**August Molinari.** A player of the street piano, Molinari cranked the organ on 9615, "Street Piano Medley," issued in August, 1907, while Billy Murray did the descriptive talking. Perhaps he was the "Signor Grindolino," who made the "Harrigan" medley for Victor. Molinari's brother, P. Molinari, recorded a "Street Piano Medley," on Indestructible 1159. Major H. H. Annand says the Molinaris operated a street piano factory in Brooklyn.

**Pete Murray.** Murray was a vaudeville comedian who made two Standard cylinders, 10223, "I'm Crazy When the Band Begins to Play," issued in September, 1909, and "Home With The Milk In The Morning," No. 1035, March, 1910. He also sang Amberal 207, "Lily Of The Prairie," September, 1909. Murray made at least one Zonophone disc, "I'd Rather Have An Automobile," and in 1915 sang an Edison Diamond Disc, No. 50234, of "On the 5:15," whose reverse was "Happy, That's All," by a blackface dialect comedian, Van Avery. The record was so popular it was necessary to remake it, and it stayed in the catalog as long as Edison was in the record business. (Mur-



ray's side was also Blue Amberol 2561). I sometimes hear from Pete Murray's charming granddaughter, Mrs. Ann Mongelli, of Babylon, L. I., N.Y.

**Marguerite Newton.** Information about this soprano may be found in "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" for March, 1965.

### III. Noll to Price

**Agnes Noll.** Miss Noll was a soprano whose one cylinder, 10487, "Sweet Red Rose," was issued in April, 1911. The supplement said she was "a soprano well known in church and concert work. Miss Noll possesses a clear, strong, sweet voice, a refined vocal style and a delightfully distinct enunciation—a combination which will undoubtedly insure her immediate favor with Edison owners."

**Frank North.** *Variety* reported this comedian's death, July 20, 1960, in Red Bank, N.J., at the age of 89. He had been a partner in a vaudeville act called "Howard and North." North's phonograph specialty seems to have been recording parodies, and he was assigned the 6600 block of Edison cylinder numbers for that purpose. By 1900 he had made parodies on the following, No. 6600, "Family Troubles"; 6602, "A Widow's Plea For Her Son" (afterwards remade by Will F. Denny), and 6603, "Just One Girl"; had sung "Strolling Round the Town" (6004), and made a talking record of "J. W. Kelly's Favorite Story" (6605). He came again in July, 1902, with gold-moulded No. 8093, a parody on "I've Waited Honey, Waited Long For You"; in August No. 8085, "A Parody on 'Goodbye, Dolly Gray,'" and finally, in December, 1902, a parody on "Alice, Where Art Thou?" (8280).

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

North also made, in 1904, a Zonophone, No. 6156, of "Didn't Father Adam Have An Easy Time?"

*Arthur Osmond.* Another British importation, Osmond was a comedian who, on No. 10209, sang, "I Played My Concertina," in the list for September, 1909.

*Fred A. Parker.* Parker was a tenor who made two records, both for the July, 1902, list: 8046, "Sometimes, Dear Heart," and 8053, "The Stein Song."

*Herbert Payne.* This is an assumed name for Ernest Pike, "King Edward's favorite tenor," who was one of the most prolific English recording artists. He made 10125, "Ayesha, My Sweet Egyptian," issued in May, 1909.

*Jack Pleasant's.* An English dialect singer, Pleasants was known as "The Shy Comedian." His most popular song was "I'm Shy, Mary Ellen." He had a cylinder, "I Said 'Hooray,'" in the January, 1910, Edison list.

*Frederic H. Potter.* Potter was a tenor whose first record appears to have been "Dearie" (No. 514), which was part of the August, 1906, Zonophone list. The supplement said: "The first record made by Mr. Potter. He has a clear tenor voice, and we feel sure his records will become popular." "Dearie," however, is the only Zonophone I have found by Potter, whose initial Edison, No. 9548, "Let Me Hear The Band Play 'The Girl I Left Behind,'" came out in May, 1907. *The New Phonogram* said:

"... This record introduces a new tenor singer in Mr. Potter, although he has made over one or two catalog selections originally made by other artists. He has a fine tenor voice and promises to be an excellent addition to the corps of Edison artists."

The one "catalog record" which Potter remade was 8276, "I'll Be With You When The Roses Bloom Again," which originally was sung by Harry Macdonough and issued in December, 1902. Other two-minute Potter cylinders were No. 9588, "You'll Not Be Forgotten, Lady Lou" (July, 1907); No. 9622, "Red Wing" (August, 1907); 9882, "Topeka" (July, 1908—why such a long gap between recordings?) and 10452, "Goodbye, Betty Brown," in which he had the assistance of a male quartet, which probably was the Premier (December, 1910). A quartet, no doubt the Edison, sang in "Red Wing."

Potter's four-minute Amberols were: 366, "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet" (March, 1910); 405, "Betsy Ross" (April, 1910); 447, "Red Clover" (June, 1910); 541, "Red Wing" (November, 1910), and 562, "Valley Flower" (December, 1910). After that Potter disappeared from the Edison list. In all these four-minute records he is aided by the quartet, and I wish I had thought to ask Billy Murray, whose voice can be clearly heard in "Red Wing," what he remembered of this obscure singer. *The New Phonogram's* description of the latter

song is interesting:

"The phenomenal popularity of 'Red Wing' in the Standard list induced us to respond to the general demand of the public to issue it as an Amberol number. In doing so we have added greatly to its attractiveness by the novel manner in which it is arranged—the band alternating with Mr. Potter and chorus with band accompaniment. If you enjoyed this song on the Standard list your appreciation of it as an Amberol record will be infinitely greater, for the amount of entertainment is more than doubled. Mr. Potter sings with spirit and style and both chorus and band accompaniment are all that could be desired."

When an Edison Diamond Disc of "Red Wing," by Walter Scanlan and chorus, was issued in 1927, the style of the Potter four-minute cylinder was followed. The disc begins with the orchestra playing Leo Friedman's "Sun Dance" before the first strains of "Red Wing" are heard. Having sung "Red Wing" in Standard, Amberol and Blue Amberol form gives Potter a claim to making one of the most popular Edison cylinders—perhaps the most popular, although such a claim could well be contested by "The Preacher And The Bear," "Casey Jones," "Rainbow," "Silver Bell," Fred Van Eps' "Dixie Medley" and several others.

Potter also made, in 1910, a pair of two-minute Indestructible cylinders: 1350, "Red Clover," and 1362, "He's A College Boy."

*Myra Price.* I can't find anything to indicate whether this singer was a soprano or a contralto. Her six cylinders were made from June to November, 1901, and none was taken over into the gold moulded list. They were: 7836, "Then You'll Remember Me"; 7849, "I Dreamt That I Dwelt In Marble Halls"; 7854, "Home, Sweet Home"; 7886, "Last Rose Of Summer"; 7924, "Baby Mine," and 7972, "Because I Love You, Dear." These titles seem to belong to the soprano repertoire.

### IV. Raymond to Van York

*Maude Raymond.* A popular comedienne, was a contemporary of Clarice Vance, May Irwin and Josie Sadler and a forerunner of Sophie Tucker. Her first Edison cylinder was Amberol 505, "Phoebe Brown," issued in September, 1910. The description said: "Everybody who is at all familiar with high class vaudeville and musical comedy knows that Maude Raymond is one of the country's bright particular 'stars.' Her work is always pleasing, due especially to her natural buoyant, vivacious manner and the amount of energy and intelligence she puts into her work."

In January, 1911, Miss Raymond's only two-minute cylinder, No. 10463, "Rag Baby's Gwine To Be Mine," went on sale. The supplement spoke of "Maude Raymond, the perennial vaudeville and musical comedy favorite. If you have heard her, you want this record; if you haven't, better get the record and become acquainted with one of the *real* stars of the American stage."

Maude Raymond also made some Victor records: 5671, "The Dusky Salome"; 5678, "Bye Bye, My Caro-

line" and 5715, Good-Bye, Molly Brown." The "Caroline" song was coupled on double-faced disc 16780 with "Take Me Out For A Joy Ride," by Billy Murray and the Haydn Quartet.

*William M. Redmond.* He was a tenor who was a duet partner of Murray's before Billy began making records. Redmond sang eight Standard cylinders from September, 1902, to May, 1904. The most popular was 8118, "In The Good Old Summer Time," which Murray remade in 1906. As late as 1916, Redmond did some singing in the choruses of Edison discs.

*Leon Rice.* A tenor, Rice made one record, No. 10479, "When The Roses Bloom," issued in March, 1911. *The New Phonogram* gave this information concerning him:

"Mr. Rice, who here contributes his first record to the Edison catalog, is a singer with an international reputation. Beginning with a recital at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, he has made 1,500 appearances in the United States, Canada and England, and his audiences during that time have aggregated more than 2,000,000 people. He possesses a pure tenor voice of tremendous power, remarkable evenness and great depth of feeling . . ."

*June Rossmore.* Miss Rossmore was a singer who made one solo record, No. 10062, "I Don't Like You," issued in February, 1909. She was introduced as "a new artist, who is well known on the vaudeville stage. Miss Rossmore sings . . . in a different style from any other singer now in our catalogs, introducing some of the effects that have made her such a success in vaudeville." The comedienne also sang the refrain of Byron G. Harlan's "child ballad," No. 10151, "Schoolmates," for the June, 1909, list.

*Fred G. Rover.* A tenor in a vaudeville quartet, Rover made one record, 8911, "Those Songs My Mother Used To Sing," which went on sale in February, 1905.

*Andrew Schneider* and *Franklyn Wallace.* This duet team recorded 8555, "Tell Me With Your Eyes," issued in December, 1903. I know nothing of Schneider except that he was a baritone prominent in concert work, but Wallace, a tenor, sang in minstrels and vaudeville and had a music publishing business in Newark, N.J. He made eleven two-minute cylinders in 1902-03.

*Louis Schnepel.* Schnepel was a baritone with three records of the 1899-1901 era to his credit: 8500, "Answer," originally made by Madeira and still later remade, when gold moulding came in, by J. W. Myers; 5801, "For You," and 5802, "Daddy."

*Samuel Siegel.* I really doubt that Sam Siegel belongs here, for he was recognized as the greatest mandolin player of the 1890's and early 1900's, and made records for virtually all the companies. As late as 1926, he did several electrically recorded numbers for Columbia. Siegel was for many years president of the Siegel-Myers School of Music in Chicago,

(Continued on next page)

which gave correspondence courses in playing the more popular instruments. He made ten Edison two-minute solo records, beginning in August, 1900, and continuing through October, 1905. He also played a duet with a guitarist, M. Lloyd Wolf, 9014, "Autumn Evening," issued in June, 1905. He and William Smith, another guitar player, made Amberol No. 30, "Castilian Echoes"; later, he made two duets with Roy H. Butin, and he made one Blue Amberol duet each with Butin and a ukulele player, Marie Caveny.

**J. Scott Skinner.** A Scottish fiddler, Skinner made record No. 10402, "Berlin Reels," issued in August 1910.

**Will N. Steele.** Steele was a monologist who made eleven comic talking records, from August, 1900, to March, 1903. Most of his records were about a Jewish character, "Einstein," who may be considered the predecessor of "Cohen." Steele's photograph can be seen in the 1900 Edison group picture.

**Sallie Stembler.** Miss Stembler was a vaudeville comedienne who for a generation or more entertained audiences with laughing specialties. Probably her first record was a Victor, 2466, "Laughing Song," which came out about January, 1904. In March, 1909, Edison issued 10081, "Ev'rything's Funny To Me," with the statement:

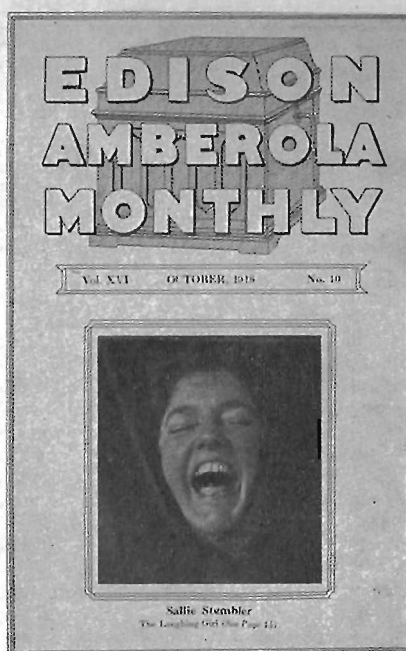
"This record is by a new Edison performer, Miss Sally Stembler, who has a high soprano voice finely adapted for recording. The title of this song should convey some idea of its nature. It is one of the most infectious laughing songs ever written. Music, Theo. H. Northrup; words, Charles Noel Douglas."

Genuine old-timers among magazine readers may like to be reminded that Douglas was a bedridden man who for many years edited a department in *Comfort Magazine*, published at Augusta, Me., and founded *Comfort's League of Cousins*. He had two nurses whom he called "Maria" and "Billy, the Goat."

A second two-minute cylinder by the "laughing girl," No. 10119, "Oh, La, La, La, La, La," was issued in May, 1909. She was then unheard from until October, 1918, when she made Blue Amberol 3587, a four-minute version of "Ev'rything's Funny To Me." And in 1923, she and Edward Meeker, with the assistance of a cornet player, made one of the most popular Diamond Discs, No. 51063, "Henry's Music Lesson" (an imitation of the Okeh Laughing Record), which was coupled with one of Mr. Edison's favorite old-timers, "Porters On A Pullman Train," by Collins and Harlan.

I remember reading an article in *The Billboard* quoting her brother as saying that on their first trip to Europe, "Sallie cried all the way over and laughed all the way back"—probably getting into practice for her vaudeville engagements.

**George M. Stricklett.** This tenor was a puzzling in-and-out performer. He seems to have made no solo cylinders, and only two duets with another man—those already mentioned with Matt Keefe. Most of his work



**LAUGHING SPECIALIST**—For more than a generation Sallie Stembler entertained vaudeville audiences with her laughing songs. She made Edison records in 1909, 1918 and 1923.

was as a quartet member. He sang in the Invincible and Lotus Quartets managed by Frank C. Stanley; in 1908, when a new ensemble was needed to replace the Edison (Haydn) Quartet, which had become exclusive to Victor, he became second tenor of the new Knickerbocker group whose other members were John Young, first tenor; Frederick Wheeler, baritone, and Gus Reed, bass. He also sang three duets with "Miss Chappell" (Edith Chapman): No. 8395, "Life's Dream Is O'er" (May, 1903); 8446, "Farewell, Beloved" (July, 1903), and 8601, "Far Away" (February, 1904). The latter was later remade by "Harry Anthony" (Young) and Daisy Boulais.

**Albert C. Sweet.** Some years ago I read of the death of this cornet player and am sure I clipped the news story, but can't find it. In a book entitled "We Called It Culture" he is mentioned as a native of Chicago and the conductor of an orchestra that filled Chautauqua engagements. Sweet was a very young man when he made his Edison cylinders: 7190, "Russian Fantasia" (1899); 7294, "Prismatic Polka" (1899); 7411, "In Happy Moments" (1900); 7436, "Sea Flower Polka" (1900), and 7604, "Love's Old Sweet Song" (November, 1900). He is in the 1900 Edison group photo.

**B. Russell Throckmorton.** An eloquist at the turn of the century, Throckmorton made much the same sort of records that Harry E. Humphrey did a decade or so later. Four of his cylinders appear in the October, 1899, catalog: 4857, "Columbus"; 3858, Kipling's poem, "The White Man's Burden"; 3859, "Hoch der Kaiser," and 3860, "Shamus O'Brien." Two others—7244, "The Declaration Of

The Free," and 7351, "Barbara Frietchie" came toward the end of 1899. Throckmorton may be seen in the group photo.

**Stella Tobin.** She was one of the few performers who recorded jointly for Edison and Columbia rather than Edison and Victor. She was the wife of Paul Southe, who made some terrible Columbia records, and they appeared together in vaudeville for more than 20 years. Southe was found dead, of a heart attack, at the age of 58, in his New York hotel room, on August 22, 1946. His wife apparently had already died.

Stella Tobin's first Edison cylinder, 9758, "Will He Answer Goo-Goo?" was listed for February, 1908. Others were: 9824, "Tipperary" (May, 1908), and the third and last, 9862, "Daddy's Little Tomboy Girl" (June, 1908). Like most vaudevillians, she did not make good records and hers had little sale. She made two Columbias in 1909-10: A647, "Now I Have To Call Him Father" (coupled with "Say No, That's All," by Arthur Collins), and A787, "I'm Going To Do What I Please" (with "Wild Cherries Rag," by Eddie Morton).

**Theo Van Yox.** This tenor was advertising in *The Etude* in the early 1930's, so he had a long career. He made a pair of two-minute cylinders. The first, No. 9102, "I Wait For Thee," was issued in October, 1905. *The New Phonogram* commented:

"This sentimental song by C. B. Hawley and Ida Whipple Benham introduces to the phonograph clientele a new singer in Mr. Van Yox, who is one of America's best oratorio and concert tenors, and is tenor soloist of St. Thomas' Church, New York City."

A month later Van Yox was represented by 9123, Frank E. Tours' familiar setting of Rudyard Kipling's "Mother O' Mine." The description commented: "Mr. Van Yox's fine voice is winning him a host of phonographic friends," but this was his last record.

#### V. Waterous to Wynn

**Allen Waterous.** He was a tenor whose first cylinder, No. 9814, "The Message Of The Eyes," came out in April, 1908. *The New Phonogram* committed a boo-boo by referring to him as a baritone and saying:

"A sentimental song by the composer of 'Love Me and the World is Mine' (Ernest R. Ball), introducing a new baritone soloist to our catalog, although Mr. Waterous has sung duets with Mrs. Waterous."

The Waterous who had sung duets with his wife was Herbert Waterous, and *The Phonogram* ran a correction in May, when the tenor's next record, No. 9819, was issued, by saying: "Allen Waterous, by the way, is a brother of the Mr. Waterous who has sung duets with his wife, and not the duet singer, as stated last month." He made two more cylinders: 9835, "Summer Time" (June, 1908) and "If I Had A Thousand Lives To Live" (July, 1908). Thus his recording career covered four months.

**Mr. And Mrs. Herbert Waterous.**

(Continued on next page)



Mr. Waterous, who was sometimes called a baritone and sometimes a bass, was a distinguished light opera singer, specializing in Gilbert and Sullivan, but later becoming a member of the De Koven Opera Company. The September 2, 1947, *Variety* contained this note of his death:

"Herbert L. Waterous, basso of the grand and light opera stages for many years, who was best known for his Gilbert and Sullivan roles, died last Friday, August 29, at his home in Woodstock, N.Y. He was 78.

"Waterous was born in Flint, Mich., and began his stage career early in life. He sang with the Metropolitan Opera for two seasons before going to light opera, also singing with Fritz Scheff, appearing with the De Koven Opera Company in 'Robin Hood' and touring in concerts and recitals. He went to London in 1926 to sing the role of Dr. Engel in Shubert's production of 'The Student Prince.' In 1929 he was seen in New York in 'Lady Fingers' and in 'Naughty Marietta.'

"Of his many Gilbert & Sullivan roles, Pooh-Bah in 'The Mikado' was the one he was best known for and most often appeared in, supporting such light opera stars of the period as DeWolf Hopper, William Danforth and Frank Moulan. In 1936 Waterous appeared with Danforth and Moulan in a revival of 'The Mikado' at the Majestic. Other G&S operettas in which he had often appeared were 'The Pirates of Penzance,' 'Iolanthe,' 'H. M. S. Pinafore' and 'The Yeomen of the Guard.'

"Surviving him are his widow, Mrs. Jayne Herbert Waterous, with whom he appeared in concerts and recitals, and two sons, Allen and Donald Waterous."

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Waterous made any Edison solos. Their first duet, 9731, "O Moment That I Bless," was issued in January, 1908, with the comment:

"This attractive selection of the semi-operatic class introduces two new artists to our catalog. Mr. Waterous has a rich baritone voice, and Mrs. Waterous sings in a soprano voice, which shows to particular advantage in the duets."

Their next regularly issued Standard cylinder was 9969, "Ecstasy," was announced for October, 1908. The description said:

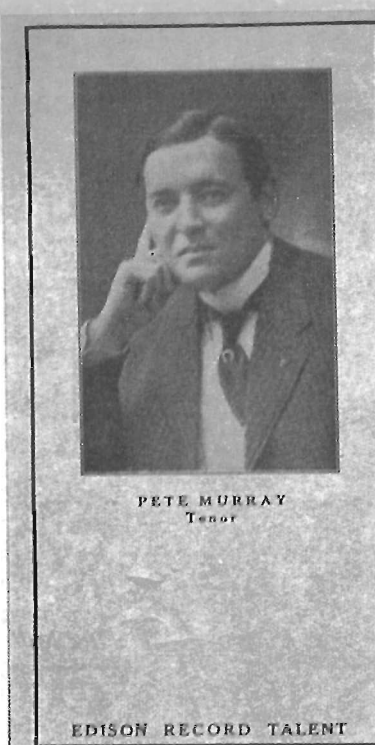
"This record will recall the ovation won by the same singers in 'O Moment That I Bless.' 'Ecstasy' is a glorious semi-classic love song and has a charm that constantly grows on one. The record will prove a fine model for ambitious students of concerted singing."

Mr. and Mrs. Waterous also remade 8258, "O That We Two Were Maying," which, sung by Corinne Morgan and Frank C. Stanley, had been issued in December, 1902. When the first four-minute Amberol cylinders were announced in October, 1908, they recorded a longer version of the same song on No. 44. The description is interesting:

"As a two-minute record by the same singers this selection won the distinction of being one of the most favored duets in the Edison catalog. The song is now given complete, the singers are in better voice than when the two-minute record was made, and the recording process has been greatly improved. The record, therefore is in every way better than its famous predecessor and should meet with a phenomenal demand."

Mrs. Waterous and a contralto, *Mia Weber*, sang a duet in the April, 1909, list: No. 10113, "Jesus, Thy Name I Love."

While a member of the De Koven Opera Company in 1916, Herbert Waterous made the following 12-inch



PETE MURRAY  
Tenor

EDISON RECORD TALENT



BESSIE WYNN  
Soprano

EDISON RECORD TALENT

"VARIETY" STARS—Pete Murray and Bessie Wynn did not sing with each other, but both were popular on the vaudeville stage around 1910 and for years afterward, and both made Edison two-minute cylinders.

Pathé records:

"50004, 'Asleep in the Deep' and 'Down Deep Within the Cellar'; 50006, 'The Indifferent Mariner' and 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep'; 50007, Robin Hood—'The Armourer's Song' and Robin Hood—'The Tinkers' Chorus' (De Koven Opera Company); 50008, 'Gypsy Love Song' and 'The Indifferent Mariner'; and on 50010, he sang 'The Crow Song' from Robin Hood, with the assistance of the De Koven Male Chorus, while on the other side Cora Tracey, contralto, was heard in 'The Legend of the Chimes' with the De Koven Mixed Chorus."

*Harry West*. Mr. West was a comedian, whose one solo, 8445, "I Could Love You In A Steam Heat Flat," was part of the July, 1903, list. He and Billy Murray did the talking in 8878, "Darkey's Dream" by the Edison Military Band, issued in January, 1905. I never heard Billy mention West, and know nothing of him.

*Walter Wheatley*. An American tenor, had a solo, 8497, "Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes," in the list for September, 1903. More than a decade later, while singing with the Century Opera Company, he made some Columbia discs.

*Hallie White*. This completely obscure lady fascinates me, although I have never heard the one soprano solo she made, 8289, "I Am The Merry Postilion," issued in January, 1903. I imagine her a joyous-faced, sparkling-eyed, black-haired girl, who had a fine time making the record. I wonder if she really did enjoy it—and how long she has been dead.

*James H. White*. This comedian took over the "Casey" records that had been made by Russell Hunting after Hunting went to England to live in 1898. White made seven of the "Casey" series, beginning with 7255, "Casey At Dinny Murphy's

Wake" in late 1899, and ending with 8360, "Casey And His Gang Of Irish Laborers," in early 1903. White then, like Hunting, went to England. He may be seen in the 1900 group photo. Before making records, Jim White was a photographer for the early Edison movies.

*George S. Williams*. This was an assumed name used by Frank C. Stanley (William Stanley Grinstead) in playing a banjo accompaniment in some of Arthur Collins' turn of the century "coon song" records.

*Professor D. Wormser*. A zither player whose Edison recording activities began in 1899 and continued to January, 1903. Wormser also made records for other companies and played for Victor as late as 1913. The professor was born in 1850 in Landau, South Germany.

*Bessie Wynn*. This comedienne was described, when her first record was issued in January, 1910, as "winsome Bessie Wynn, one of the best known and most popular stars of the vaudeville stage." The cylinder was 10278, "It's Hard To Find A Real Nice Man." A four-minute Amberol, No. 346, "My Little Piece Of Dresden China," was announced in February. Then came two-minute 10329, "Not For Me," in March, and 10441, "I'd Love To But I Won't," in November. Edison had predicted Bessie Wynn's records would be big sellers, but these were all she made.

And that concludes this list of Edison's more or less "obscure" two-minute recording artists. I hope it has been interesting and, at least to some extent, informative.

The End



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Royalty and Recorded Sound

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE: This survey is dedicated to a captivating example of the Blood Royal: Princess Christy Faye Jenkins, cherished feline companion of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jenkins, Rose Hill, Virginia. Princess Christy loves to sit in "Miss Rocky," her favorite rocking chair and listen to recorded music.)

### I. Two Kinds of Royalty

"Royalty" is a word for which, over the years, recording artists have entertained an almost reverential regard—especially when it is written in the plural as "royalties." Belief that a royalty is of well-nigh sacred significance especially characterized those exalted performers whose records were listed in the "Red Seal" or "celebrity" class.

In this sense, of course, "royalty" denotes a sum paid to the artist as a percentage of the retail selling price of the records he makes. Set at five, ten, fifteen percent, or even higher, it frequently amounts to a considerable sum. Enrico Caruso, John McCormack, Alma Gluck, Amelita Galli-Curci, Fritz Kreisler and others of their high rank felt no sense of insult when they received annual royalty payments that, for the two tenors at least, sometimes amounted to several hundred thousand dollars a year. As for Gluck, it has often been told that she built a house costing more than \$100,000 and paid for it from the royalties of one record alone, her "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny."

Huge royalty payments were not a feature of the earlier days of sound recording. Caruso did not receive them until after his reputation as the world's most popular operatic tenor was firmly established. In 1902, when an expert for the Gramophone Company of England visited Italy and engaged him to record ten numbers, he asked, or was offered, the equivalent of \$100 each, and Gramophone officials indignantly cabled to their man:

"Fee exorbitant. Forbid you to record."

He recorded, anyway, and the records sold so well that Gramophone and its American affiliate, Victor, had no reason to regret paying the "exorbitant fee." A few years later Caruso was receiving, through his contract and royalty payments, thousands of dollars for each disc he made.

"Popular" artists were seldom showered with such largesse, although



**ROYAL GROUP.** This photo of Queen Victoria (Center); her son, the Prince of Wales, who became King Edward VII, and his wife, Princess Alexandra, was taken March 10, 1863, on the young couple's wedding day. Queen Victoria made one cylinder record, which she ordered destroyed after it was played. Edward seems to have made no records. Alexandra had poor hearing but enjoyed recorded music.

their records probably outsold those of the "classical" group ten to one. If they "free-lanced," the more plebian performers were paid a specified amount each time they made a record; if under contract they received yearly salaries paid on the installment plan. But seldom did their earnings approach the astronomical sums that cheered the Carusos and McCormacks. Yet sometimes they did extremely well after establishing their appeal.

Gene Austin, for one, told me he "never made any real money" out of recording until his Victor discs became so remarkably popular that the company rewarded him by giving him an exclusive contract with generous royalty payments. The discs on which he received royalties were those upon which he sang both sides. Obviously, he made small fortunes out of "My Blue Heaven," "Ramona" and their couplings. Brunswick paid Al Jolson

fabulous amounts, newspaper accounts of the 1920's indicate.

Certainly, it was the distribution of mouth-watering royalties that caused the majority of the world's most highly publicized singers and instrumentalists to record for Victor, or perhaps Columbia or Brunswick, rather than—as an example—for Edison, whose process had superior tonal fidelity. But the sale of Edison Diamond Discs, compared to those of Victor records, was small, and the thick "platters" could not be sold in sufficiently large quantities to offer most performers tempting royalties. Many of the Edison artists may have been as good, or better, than the extravagantly advertised coterie who restricted their services to Victor, but their names lacked comparable selling appeal. And most of Edison's luminaries "jumped" to Victor or some other company as soon as possible. Even Sergei Rachmaninoff, the Russian composer-pianist, signed an Edison contract in 1918 only because most of the Victor manufacturing plant was being used for war work and "His Master's Voice" wasn't taking on expensive new artists. Unable to arrange a Victor contract, his manager insisted that Rachmaninoff be exclusive to Edison for only two years. The virtuoso then went to Victor for much more money.

Most of the traffic was from Edison to Victor, not the other way. Artists like Frieda Hempel, who quit Victor for Edison, simply because she was dissatisfied with Victor recording and wanted to have Edison "Re-Create" her voice, were the exception. She disregarded the money question for the sake of having greater justice done to her singing. With nearly all others the money was the important thing and tone quality was secondary.

The purpose of this article is not primarily however, to discuss financial arrangements between artists and recording companies, but to tell of the phonograph's association with another type of royalty—the members of reigning families in Europe and elsewhere who owned sound reproducing devices and in many instances themselves made records. There are two kinds of royalties, and we shall now be concerned with men and women who were royal by inheritance rather than with payments of professional performers.

## II. "Records by Rulers"

It strikes me that a courteous way of beginning our discussion of records by, or associated with, royalty will be to start with the "small fry" among kings and queens, then advance up to those who were more high and mighty.

In the August, 1910, *Sound Wave and Talking Machine Record*, published in London, I found an article that fits extremely well into this plan. Headed "Records By Rulers," it reads:

"Who would think that a king would unbend so far as to make a record for commercial sale? Yet we find in the Edison catalog two records—'Akahi Hoi.' No.



"MOST BEAUTIFUL GRAPHONE." This picture is reproduced from *The Columbia Record* of February, 1905. It shows what was termed "the most beautiful graphophone ever constructed," which had just been sent to the Emperor of Japan.

11504, and 'Koleo,' No. 11501, both by King Kalakana of the Hawaiian Islands. Whilst it is true that King Kalakana's dominions do not stretch from 'Pole to Pole,' yet he is a king in very truth, and we believe we are correct in stating that these are the only records made for sale by a royal personage. There is also one, No. 11502, 'Moani Ke Ala,' made by Prince Leliokoku, who, we understand, is heir apparent to the Hawaiian throne.

"The list of Edison foreign selections contains no fewer than 13 records by past or present heads of Republics. No. 20315, an address made by President Diaz of the Mexican Republic, to Senor (Thomas A.) Edison, is especially interesting, in view of the fact that it was the first record made for commercial purposes by the head of an important State. The remaining 12 are by the President of the United States, Mr. William H. Taft, and they deal with every phase of American life and politics."

The *Sound Wave's* belief that the Hawaiian king's records were the only ones made by royalty for commercial sale was not quite correct. Queen Elizabeth of Rumania (1843-1916), a German by birth and daughter of Prince Herman of Wied, was an author who wrote under the pen name of "Carmen Sylva." In 1903 the queen made H.M.V. record No. 1235 on which she recited her poem, "A Friend." Marguerita Sylva, the Edison soprano, took the "Sylva" in her professional name from the Queen's pseudonym.

The Hawaiians are a musical people, and probably Queen Liliuokalani would have made records if the phonograph had been available in her time. As it is, she is credited with composing "Aloha Oe" in 1878, the year after Edison introduced his first tin-foil playing phonograph. Actually, Her Royal Highness showed little originality as a music writer, for part of the melody of "Aloha Oe" is taken from a now forgotten ballad, "The Rock By the Sea," which Charles Crozat Converse wrote in 1852. The remainder of the tune comes from a favorite college song, "There's Music in the Air," composed by George Frederick Root in 1854.

A later presumably authentic member of Hawaiian royalty who did a great deal of recording was Prince Lei Lani, who was also known professionally as E. K. Rose. The prince

was a member of the original Hawaiian Quintet that made a series of Victor records in 1913, and for a few years after that he was employed by Victor as a "demonstrator." Since Victor was unable to give "tone tests" like those made familiar by Edison, the prince would visit Victor dealer's stores or, sometimes, go to homes of distinguished persons and compare his voice with the recorded tones of John McCormack and Ernestine Schumann-

(Continued on page 115)

**FOR SALE:** Heavy stock record sleeves (40 lb. Craft 10" size.) Prices: 1-100 each 7c; 100-300 each 6c; 300-1000 each 5c; 1000 up each 4c. Post. extra. Write for rates. -- Quality Record Jackets, 2512 West Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90016 d3886

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**ALL MATERIAL** relative to history of dancing. Lithograph music covers, ballet scores, playbills, photographs, autographs. — George Verdak, Butler University, Indianapolis, Ind. 46208 d3253

(Continued from page 38)

Heink to "prove" that it was identical, in part of its range, with the tones of the two more famous singers. Edison dealers' publications never tired of jeering at "this ridiculous performance," as they termed it, and on one occasion told of Lei Lani's calling on the Governor of a Mid-Western State, giving his variant of a "tone test" and trying to sell the executive a Victrola. The Governor told him, however, he had already decided he wanted nothing but a New Edison.

After ending his Victor association, the prince became one of the popular Okeh recording artists. His coupling of "Love's Old Sweet Song," and "Red Wing" sold especially well, and the acoustic version was remade electrically. Lei Lani's command of English seems to have been a bit imperfect, for in the first song he pronounced "twilight" as "twi-leet" and "weary" as "weh-ry."

Another small-time member of royalty who recorded was "Princess Wahtawaso," daughter of a Penobscot Indian chief. The princess made a number of Victor educational records. When she died at the age of 86 in Bangor, Maine, on March 19, 1969, the *Associated Press* gave her name as Lucy Poolaw, but she was always known as Princess Wahtawaso.

### III. Prince George's Joke On Papa

One of the most amusing stories dealing with royalty and recorded music is that of the joke played by Prince George of Greece upon his revered father, King George. The King, a Dane by birth, was a brother of Queen Alexandra of England and was what today would be called a "playboy." He never permitted the duties of his exalted position to interfere with having a good time, and performed the minimum of high-level labor. Prince George was perfectly aware of his sire's shortcomings, and, as related in the *Talking Machine News*, of London, for January 1, 1908:

"When some English warships were cruising in the Mediterranean, Greece's 'Sailor Prince' visited one of them. The officers set going a gramophone which, among other tunes, played 'Everybody Works But Father.' Prince George, who, like his father, speaks English and half the languages of Europe, was highly delighted with the air and words. 'I must get that record,' he exclaimed, 'and play it for my father. I know it will suit him down to the ground.'

"The Prince obtained the record, and gave a dinner in Athens to some of his intimate friends, at which he invited his father to be present. After the banquet a concert was arranged, and Prince George worked some gramophone records into the program. 'Everybody Works But Father' was inserted first. Everybody present who understood English appreciated the criticism of King George, but no one laughed more heartily at the joke than he did."

Alas! the jovial "good time King's" life ended in tragedy. A Greek named Schinas assassinated him at Salonica on March 18, 1913.

"Everybody Works But Father" began as an English music hall comic song written by Charles W. McClintock.

It came to the attention of Jean C. Havez, "advance man" for the Lew Dockstader Minstrels, who rewrote the words for American use and, on this side of the Atlantic, was credited with being the song's composer. It was one of the biggest hits Dockstader ever had, and Columbia had him record it. Billy Murray made it for Victor and Bob Roberts for Edison and Zonophone. I wonder what recorded version Prince George played for his royal father. Most likely it was none of the American renditions, but one made in England for the Gramophone Company by some popular comedian such as Burt Shepard.

### IV. Queen Victoria's Broken Record

We come now to that most exalted lady, Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India. The dumpy but doughty little queen was born in 1819, so was 58 years of age when Edison produced his initial tinfoil instrument in 1877. She had been on the throne exactly 40 years when the first phonograph made its funny squeaking noises, and she was to be queen for more than 63 years before she died in 1901.

If you have ever wondered what your chances are of finding a record containing the sound of Queen Victoria's voice, the answer is that the chance is exactly as great as that of finding an authentic cylinder by Jenny Lind—which is none at all. Jenny Lind died in 1887 when there was not a single cylinder recording instrument anywhere in England, which for many years had been her home, so she had no chance to record. The Queen made one record, but gave instructions that it should be smashed immediately after being played, and her orders were put into effect.

The *Edison Phonograph Monthly* for February, 1904, gave the following account of Queen Victoria's one essay into record making:

"Sir John Harrington—(for he has been knighted by King Edward)—is the only person who ever succeeded in inducing the late Queen Victoria to talk into a phonograph. And she did this reluctantly, merely because he explained to her the immense weight that a message from her to the Emperor of Abyssinia conveyed to her in that fashion would have upon the monarch of Ethiopia."

"Queen Victoria, however, stipulated that once her message had been delivered to the negus the record should be destroyed, and pledged Sir John Harrington to see to this in person. Menelik was so delighted at hearing the Queen's voice that he promptly demanded that the record should be handed over to him. But Sir John naturally was obliged to defer to the commands of his royal mistress, and, taking hold of the record, he stamped it to pieces in the presence of the negus."

It seems rather hard-hearted of the Queen to deny the world even one record of her high-pitched voice, but of course the soft wax cylinder would have worn out or been broken long before now. In a long letter published by the *Sound Wave* for July, 1910, J. E. Hough, the crusty and peppery head of the Edison Bell Company, gives some further history concerning Queen Victoria's recorded message to the negus of Abyssinia:

"... Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, imposed a drastic condition when she made a speech upon a record to be forwarded to Menelik, the King of Abyssinia. It may be remembered that some years ago, closely following upon the Italian defeat at Addis-Ababa, the favor of the Ethiopian Emperor was sought by both the French and the English. A special envoy was sent to the Abyssinian Court, and by the influence of the Earl of Denbigh (at the time chairman of the Edison Bell Company), the company provided a phonograph which formed one of the presents to the Emperor, and her Majesty the Queen spoke a diplomatic message, dictated by the late Lord Salisbury, in which the name of Menelik and his Queen was embodied, but the drastic condition was that after listening to the message, the record was to be destroyed, and the injunction was imposed upon the honor of the Earl of Denbigh, which injunction was faithfully carried out—the record was destroyed and no copies of any kind, or any publication of the matter it contained, was made. Thus the nation has been deprived of what might have been considered a valuable memento of her late Majesty."

I have what I suspect is one of the few surviving records of "God Save the Queen," as compared to the more familiar "God Save the King," made during Victoria's reign. It is a seven-inch, single-faced Berliner, No. 1800, sung by George J. Gaskin, a tenor who was born in Northern Ireland and felt that area's traditional loyalty to the British crown. Its latest patent date is October 29, 1895, so it presumably was made in 1896. Incidentally, the battle of Addis Ababa, in which the Abyssinians badly defeated the invading Italians, occurred late that year, so Queen Victoria's spoken greeting to Menelik probably was recorded early in 1897, when European diplomats were courting the favor of his government.

### V. Queen Wilhelmina's Demonstration

Another feminine European ruler who had an association with recorded music was Queen Wilhelmina of Holland. Details of a demonstration to which the Queen listened were published in the June, 1905, *Talking Machine News*:

"General gratification was felt in talking machine circles some time since, when it was announced that some half-dozen Royalties, including Queen Alexandra and the King of Spain, had invested in gramophones for their own use. It is this sort of tribute that raises the talker in the estimation of the general public. Many other people, too, in high places hold it in esteem, among them the Pope, King Menelik, the Shah of Persia and Queen Wilhelmina of Holland."

"Mr. P. A. Smithurst, now of the Russell Hunting Record Company, had the privilege, when with the World's Phonograph Company at the Hague, of playing some records to Queen Wilhelmina."

"In '95 I exhibited a machine and played records to Queen Wilhelmina. She was then, of course, very young—about 16 only."

"She spoke English?"  
"Very little, and that little not very well, but I had a fair amount of Dutch in those days, though I have forgotten most of it since, and we got on very well."

"And the records—of what kind were they?"

"Various: Band pieces, Casey's, and some Dutch records by the Dutch Dan Leno, a comedian whose name I can remember, but would find it hard to pronounce and quite impossible to spell."

(Continued on next page)

But that did not affect his records, which were very good ones."

"And your impressions of the Queen personally?"

"Pleasant and frank in manner and, as you know, extremely attractive in her personal appearance."

Wilhelmina Helena Pauline Maria of Orange-Nassau was born at the Hague on August 31, 1880, and became Queen when her father, William III, died November 23, 1890, but her mother, Adelheid Emma Wilhelmina Theresia, served as queen-regent until September 6, 1898, when her 18-year-old daughter was "inaugurated." The Queen consequently was only 15 when recorded music was played for her in 1895. Wilhelmina, who died in 1962, remained Queen until she abdicated in 1948 in favor of her daughter, Princess Juliana.

Russell Hunting's "Casey" monologues were spoken in such a thick Irish accent that I find them hard to understand, so it is hard to perceive any reason why they were played for a tenn-age Dutch girl, who had "very little" English. What amusement or enjoyment could she find in them? But "Casey" cylinders were also among those chosen to entertain King Edward VII of England when a phonograph was demonstrated for him.

#### VI. A Concert for King Edward

The burly, bearded Edward succeeded his mother on the throne of England when she died in 1901 and was destined to serve only eight years before his death led to the crowning of his eldest son as George V. Edward was already in his sixtieth year when the aged Queen finally relinquished the sceptre.

In May, 1903, the first issue of the *Talking Machine News* appeared in London, and page six displayed an article, "King Edward and the Phonograph." It was headed by a reproduction of a telegram sent by an Edison Bell Company representative, named Limb, to the contumacious, irascible James E. Hough, head of the concern which was then at 39 Charing Cross Road, London. The hand-written "post office telegram" dated March 31, 1903, said:

"Showed His Majesty phonograph for one hour last night. He stated the machine and records were the best he had heard. LIMB."

The article then gave a list of the 48 concert size cylinder records played for the King. (Question: How could 48 cylinders have been played in the hour that the Edison Bell man was allotted for his demonstration?) Since the recital apparently took place on the evening of March 30, the *Talking Machine News* showed considerable enterprise by giving its readers an account of the event in that first issue dated May 1. Here is what was said:

"It is by no means generally known that His Majesty, in common with his subjects delights in the phonograph. On the occasion of the Royal visit to Portugal a representative of the Edison Bell Company was commanded to supply a special machine of the Concert size for

use on the Royal yacht, the 'Victoria and Albert.'

"The phonograph, which was specially made for the Coronation time, but its delivery delayed owing to the King's illness, was highly finished throughout; the machine was nickel-plated instead of janned; the trumpet was also nickel-plated and burnished.

"The machine was duly installed on board, and His Majesty spent a full hour with Mr. Limb, of the Edison Bell, and the machine. He expressed his satisfaction with the records, 48 in number. All loyal subjects will be interested, as showing His Majesty's musical tastes, to know the names of those selected. We give it therefore in excelsis."

The following list of records played for the King was then given:

"Marches — El Capitan; Imperial Edward; Salvation Army Patrol; and New Century.

"Waltzes — Amoreuse; Tres-Jolie; My Dream; Il Bacio; Over the Waves, and The Guards.

"Selections — from 'The Toreador,' 'Three Little Maids,' 'A Country Girl,' 'Merrie England,' 'H.M.S. Pinafore,' and 'The Belle of New York.'

"Songs — The Huntsman; The House Agent; Mrs. Kelly; Mammy's Carolina Twins; The Midshipmite; The Pilgrim of Love; Pickaninny Mine, Goodnight; Husheen; The Lily of Laguna, and The Laughing Girl.

"Overtures—Morning, Noon and Night. Dances — Whistling Rufus; My Little Topsy; Away to Espana; and Cock of the North.

"Violin Solo — Cavalleria Rusticana (the Intermezzo?); Viola Solo—Simple Aveu; Flute Solo—Scotch Airs; Piccolo Solo—Light and Free; Bassoon Solo — Charlie Is My Darling. Banjo Solo — Tarantelle; Xylophone Solo—Souvenir of Eournemouth.

Descriptive Selections — Down South; Departure Of A Troopship; and a Southern Jubilee; Quartet — Old Black Joe. 'Coon' Song—Lucky Boy.

"Dialogues—Casey Riding a Bicycle; Casey Crossing the Channel; Casey as a Magistrate; Casey Taking the Census; and Casey as a C.I.V."

The large number of "Casey" records played for King Edward is about as surprising as the fact that some of them were chosen to amuse the girlish Queen Wilhelmina. And if the foregoing list is a fair sample of Edward's taste, it is obvious that His Majesty's likings in music were as plebeian as those of almost any of his subjects. The King, however, never pretended to be a "highbrow" and disliked persons who were self-consciously intellectual. Actually, if he had preferred a less trivial type of music it would have been hard to supply from the concert cylinder repertoire of 1903.

Edward's wife, Queen Alexandra, was hard of hearing, and the condition became worse as she grew older. However, she owned a Gramophone and, as has been told in a preceding article, at her request Edward Lloya, the distinguished tenor, made a special recording of "Fleeting Years," a song the Queen liked.

After King Edward died there was speculation as to whether his voice had been recorded. Arthur S. Dunlop, Editor of the *Sound Wave*, wrote to Thomas A. Edison in July, 1910, asking for information about any recordings by the late King, and on July 16, received this reply from H. F. Miller, Mr. Edison's secretary:

"Dear Sir: Your letter of the 7th instant received. Mr. Edison directs me to write you that, if he remembers right,

one of his assistants took a record of King Edward, Lord Kelvin, Gladstone and also Bismarck. These records were in his possession for many years. Some three years ago he was killed on a railway, and Mr. Edison has never been able to locate the records, which is a great pity as we could now, by making masters, preserve them for all time."

The assistant was Professor A. Theodore E. Wangemann, who was born in Berlin, Germany, February 13, 1855. He was instantly killed June 2, 1906, when he tried to board a moving train at Bath Beach, N. Y. The missing records afterwards were found, but Mr. Edison's memory seems to have tricked him, for there was none by King Edward, and all the evidence seems to indicate that, if the King's voice was ever recorded experimentally, the cylinder did not survive.

A letter written by J. E. Hough has already been quoted, concerning the cylinder Queen Victoria sent to the Emperor of Abyssinia. In another part of that letter, written June 21, 1910, "J. E." had this to say:

"... I have made researches and find that in January, 1899, records were sent to Mr. Edison of the voices of Mr. Gladstone, Sir Morrell Mackenzie, Mr. James Knowlton, the Earl of Aberdeen, Earl of Meath, Lord Rowton, Sir John Fowler, Sir William Hunter and Sir Roland Prothero. At the Paris Exposition of 1889 we find amongst the visitors to view the phonograph were the late President Carnot, Mr. Gladstone, the Prince and Princess of Wales Prince of Monaco, Buffalo Bill, and various others, but we do not find it stated that the Prince of Wales (who became King Edward—J.W.) or any of the personages mentioned made records at that time. Whether they did or not is a matter of comparative insignificance, if the registered tones are reserved for private use and withheld from any public utility."

Mr. Hough then described the efforts he had made to have the British Museum form a collection of recordings of the voices of distinguished personages, only to receive an icy reply that "The subject is not one that can be entertained by the British Museum." With his exhaustive knowledge of all the recording done in England since Edison's first wax cylinder instrument was brought over in 1888, he was confident that no record by the King existed.

#### VII. Records by Kaiser Wilhelm

However, if King Edward's guttural tones were not transferred to wax, the voice of his flighty nephew, Wilhelm, the Kaiser of Germany—whom Edward detested and who despised his uncle in return—was "immortalized." The *Talking Machine News* for December, 1911, contained the following:

"It may not be generally known that three records of the Kaiser's voice exist, and that one is actually on the market. Two of the records are said to be in the possession of Mr. Edison and are not accessible to the public while either the Kaiser or Mr. Edison is alive, and the other is a record made by Professor Scripture in about January, 1904. As this gentleman, however, had no practical experience of recording the cylinder is not of the best from an artistic standpoint. Nevertheless, as being a record of distinct interest, it is put on the market by the American Trading Company of Nachfolgwr, Hamburg, who retail it at five marks."



There was an earlier reference to the Kaiser's recordings in the *Talking Machine News* for May, 1904, but it probably was rewritten from a longer discussion in the *Columbia Record* that immediately preceded it. Part of the Columbia publication's article, headed "Emperor William's Voice," is quoted below. The Kaiser, it should be understood, was the son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's eldest daughter, "Vicky," and spoke perfect English:

"Records of Emperor William's voice on metal matrices will be the first deposit made in the phonetic archives that are to be kept at Harvard University and in the national museum at Washington. The emperor upon the application of Dr. Edward W. Scripture, the psychologist of Yale University, has given two examples of his voice for permanent preservation.

"The emperor received Dr. Scripture after the morning church service on Sunday. During the making of the record the emperor was alone. He spoke twice into the apparatus. The first cylinder, made especially for Harvard University, contained observations on Frederick the Great. The other was a short disquisition on 'Fortitude in Pain.'"

The *Talking Machine News* said the first recording was a portion "of the oration on Frederick the Great, which His Majesty delivered some time ago at the camp of Doberwitz." I admit the *Columbia Record* article somewhat confuses me. Was Dr. Scripture really "the psychologist at Yale University?" And if his association was with Yale, why was he collecting records for Yale's arch rival, Harvard? How could he face Frank and Dick Merriwell after being guilty of such treachery?

I believe the Kaiser's recorded messages to Mr. Edison are still preserved at the Edison National Historic Site—formerly the Edison laboratory—in West Orange.

Back to King Edward—Ernest Pike, the most popular recording tenor in England at the same time that Henry Burr was tops in the States, was proud of being "King Edward's Favorite Tenor." Pike was the son of a baker at Sandringham Palace. After he gave a command performance before the King he was so "carried away" that he never quite recovered from the eminence he had achieved, although his mischievous duet partner, Peter Dawson, worked long and hard to cut him down to size. Pike, who died in the late 1930's, thought of himself as "King Edward's Favorite Tenor" as long as he lived.

#### VIII. The Gramophone Company's "Appointments"

Near the end of 1908, *The Gramophone News*, "house organ" of the Gramophone Company of London, published an article, "Royal Appreciation of the Gramophone... A Chat About Our Appointments," which gave an account of the members of royalty who had purchased or sometimes been given for advertising purposes the instrument known then as a gramophone in Europe and as the Victor talking machine in the United States. It makes interesting reading:



The Shah's Elaborate instrument. This picture, from the *Talking Machine News* of October, 1904, depicts a hydra-headed Columbia Graphophone which was sold to the Shah of Persia.

"Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Alexandra was one of the earliest amateurs of the Gramophone. The first Gramophone bought by Her Majesty was in 1903, when the Earl Howe came to choose the instrument. Incidentally, we may say the Earl de Grey forwarded a check in payment as soon as the Gramophone was delivered. Since then very many instruments have been delivered by royal command, the latest being a Sheraton Grand which proudly occupies a foremost position in the large drawing room at Sandringham. (This model was known as the Victrola XVI in America—J.W.)

"It will be of interest to know that with the exception of Princess Victoria, no one is allowed to play the Grand. Her Majesty keeps the key of it herself. Princess Victoria generally superintends the Gramophone recitals herself and takes the keenest interest in Gramophone matters.

"His Majesty King Alfonso of Spain purchased his first Gramophone in 1903. A deputation of His Majesty's suite visited our leading dealer in Madrid to inspect the models and a very interesting snapshot photograph was taken of the royal visitors.

"Her Majesty Queen Victoria Eugenie had often heard the Gramophone played by her royal mother, the Princess Henry of Battenberg, and the Gramophone that is now installed at the palace is very popular with the royal family.

"When the doctors and state officials were awaiting the birth of Prince Jaime, the Gramophone was utilized to entertain them. We have in our possession an excellent photograph taken of the assembly in the anteroom listening to the Gramophone with evident interest. This photograph appeared in the illustrated London News.

"The Gramophone has welcomed their Majesties on more than one visit to this country when they have driven in procession through the streets of London. On one occasion, King Alfonso, turning toward the direction where the Gramophone was rendering the Spanish national anthem, which happened to be Gamage's in Holborn, smiled and then saluted.

"The story of how we were granted the royal warrant from the King of Italy is very interesting. A command was sent us for a Gramophone concert at the court. The concert had lasted about half an hour when our Maestro Sabaino asked their Majesties whether they were tired and if they wished him to stop. Whereupon the Queen replied that she was so pleased with the magnificent instrument that she would like to continue playing it until the next day. Maestro Sabaino then had to play all the records he had taken with him, including some magnificent records by the celebrated tenor (Francesco) Marconi, who is well known in the best society in Rome and a great court favorite. After a concert of two hours, during which the court listened with the greatest interest, His Majesty the King asked Maestro Sabaino a number of technical questions about the Gramophone, and the recording, and on leaving the salon he closed the Bijou Grand himself, saying: 'One is never quite sure that the servants will not touch the machine,' and, with a smile, handed the key to the Queen, saying: 'You had better keep this.' We are informed that the Gramophone is very often roomed by their Majesties in their private rooms.

"In regard to the queen mother, she expressed the desire to hear the records of her own quintet, directed by Professor Sgambati, and arrangements were made in consequence with the celebrated professor for the recording of this famous quintet. One record has already been made and will shortly be published. So pleased was Her Majesty that through the officials of her suite she appointed us warrant holders.

"The Khedive of Egypt is quite a Gramophone enthusiast and is the possessor, among other of our styles, of an Auxetophone. (This was an instrument that magnified sound through the use of compressed air.—J.W.)

"His Majesty the late Shah of Persia had a Gramophone, the case of which was specially made for him and is of a very elaborate style.

"The royal warrant itself is a curious document in Persian characters, printed in many colors and resplendent in gold, and is to be seen at our offices, City Road.

"It is the custom—in fact, the law—in Persia that those standing in the royal presence may not laugh or applaud without a signification being given by the Shah first, the penalty being the decapitation of the unfortunate courtier shortly after.

"On one occasion the Shah and his courtiers were gravely listening to the record of 'Stop Yer Tickling, Jock,' by Harry Lauder, when after a few moments some of the courtiers could no longer restrain themselves and the smiles broke into laughter, in which the Shah joined. When those present realized what they had done they were filled with consternation at the thought of the dire results, but we are happy to record that on this occasion the Shah did not invoke the law."

"Stop Yer Tickling, Jock" is a laughing song, so no wonder the poor courtiers followed the record's example and burst into mirth. It is about the only Harry Lauder record that could make me laugh in the presence of the Shah of Persia (now Iran) or anybody else. Lauder possessed a fine singing voice and his songs usually had good, swinging tunes, but I find his spoken patter unspeakably boring. Seemingly, the only way Lauder knew to try to make one of his characters funny was to cause him to sound like a half-wit. I think Glen Ellison's Edison records of Lauder songs are better than those by Sir Harry himself, because the Scotch dialect is not so extreme, nor is the "comedy" so strained.

Speaking of the Shah, the *Talking Machine News* and *Cinematograph Chronicle* (what a name!) for October, 1904, shows a picture of a "multiplex grand graphophone" which was bought by the Persian ruler. It was initially built for display at the Paris Exposition of 1900, and we are told:

"The original model was bought by the Shah of Persia. This was the largest talker ever constructed. The cylinder is of giant size, and there are three records on each cylinder. There are three horns which amplify the sound, which comes simultaneously from three reproducers tracking round the same cylinder. The machine is constructed so that the music may be divided into parts, one playing bass and contralto, the second tenor, and the third a piano or orchestral accompaniment. It can be used with equal readiness with only a single record. A Grand Record runs on it for over 20 minutes. (This must have been the first long-play record.—J.W.)

"The possession of the largest machine in the world, it is to be supposed, led the Persian potentate to desire to have the smallest in the world. So the Columbia Company were asked to construct one. So quickly does the talking machine world move that in four years the Shah's purchases wear an antique air."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

The *Columbia Record* for February, 1905, contained a large illustration of what the accompanying reading matter termed "the most beautiful graphophone ever constructed, forwarded to the Emperor of Japan, by the Columbia Phonograph Company." The article continued:

"We present, above, a cut of the graphophone recently forwarded by the Columbia Phonograph Company to the Emperor of Japan. It not only speaks for itself but it sings and plays the music of the smiling land where the chrysanthemum grows as plentifully as the daisies in our own beaming fields, and is the emblem of royalty, but it likewise reproduces the songs and the music of all other lands for the edification of mankind in the under world.

"Nowhere beneath the skies of blue has the graphophone won a firmer place in the affections of the people than in Japan. Every hospital ship connected with the Japanese navy has its graphophone and an unrestricted collection of records. The sick and injured are amused and entertained by the musical strains that reach their ears, even as the heavy hours in camp are brightened by the music, native and foreign, that the graphophone supplies. Quite recently Columbia machines and records have been presented to the leading commanders on sea and land and the popularity of Columbia goods is universal throughout the Empire. The Japanese seem, as one man, to have given their adhesion to the theory that: 'Whatever delights us physics pain.'"

I recall with amusement that, a good many years after the *Gramophone News* article was published, H. M. V. again boasted that the King of Spain owned a gramophone. The Edison Company retorted in one of its dealers' publications that King Alfonso XIII had two New Edisons and had said that after acquiring the Edisons he almost never listened to any other instrument.

Whatever his listening preference may have been, the Spanish King made a double-faced Victor record, issued in May, 1925, one side of which was called "Saludo a las Repùblicas Americanas (Greeting to the Spanish-American Republics)," and the other, "Alocucion al Pueblo Espanol (Address to the Spanish Nation.)" The supplement description said:

"Addresses recorded in the Royal Palace at Madrid by King Alfonso XIII of Spain. The first is to the Latin American Republics, so many of them founded by Spanish pioneers, and the second to the Spanish people. The records are in the Spanish language. The Spanish Royal March is played. The royalties from the sale of these records purchase comforts for the Spanish troops in Africa. The records are splendidly clear and distinct."

The number of this double-faced disc was 19619, but this is surprising—although the 19000 series was reserved for 10-inch records selling at 75 cents, the price of this specimen was \$1.50! This is the only record in the 10-inch Black Label series I can recall that sold at more than the current price for that series. Probably the extra 75 cents was the royalty used for the benefit of the troops doing African duty. When Victor issued 10-inch Black Label



GAVE ENDORSEMENT. The American-born Lady Randolph Churchill, mother of Winston Churchill, wrote an endorsement praising the tone quality and fine cabinets of the New Edison phonograph.

records by members of the British Royalty Family, the price was the standard 75 cents.

Although the American-born Lady Randolph Churchill, mother of Britain's war-time Premier Winston Churchill, was not a member of royalty, she did belong to the exalted circles of British aristocracy. It is historically interesting, consequently, to record that she gave a testimonial to both the tone quality and the artistic correctness of New Edison instruments. On May 23, 1919, the former Miss Jennie Jerome of New York City wrote:

"What an extraordinary man Mr. Edison is. He perfects his phonograph to a point where its realism is astounding. Then he determines to make each Edison Phonograph, even the least costly, an attractive piece of furniture. Instead of the usual dentist-like looking cabinet, his designers have succeeded in putting the character and the feeling of the best periods into his phonograph cases. These graceful and artistic productions will be hailed with delight by all who can afford them, and will cause Mr. Edison's new phonograph to be received in many homes where less worthy machines have not been welcomed heretofore."

Finally, before we dismiss the subject of the Gramophone Company and its many "royal warrants," let's have a chuckle. In May, 1913, Edison Bell published an advertisement in the *Talking Machine News* which was headed by an illustration of the Royal Arms. In June, a pungently worded "apology" appeared, which must have been written, judging from its style, by J. E. Hough himself. It admitted that Edison Bell did not hold Royal Warrants, but bitingly added:

"Why! Great Scott, if we had sent half a dozen records into the Royal Palace and wheedled the Lord Chamberlain . . . we should have had Ramping Lions

and Unicorns . . . Royal Standards, Union Jacks—and all the other glories . . ." The ad. ended: " . . . Unsought glories are so far denied us, but we have the great consolation — We Know We Deserve the Honour, for we make the World's Best Records . . ."

I am submitting a facsimile of the original advertisement and the subsequent "apology" and hope they can be reproduced.

### IX. Coronation Recordings

When Queen Victoria died the phonograph was in an undeveloped condition, and little recorded attention was paid to her being succeeded on the throne by her son, the Prince of Wales. During the next few years there was of course, a spate of discs and cylinders with the words and music of "God Save the King," which hadn't been sung in masculine form during the 64 years of Victoria's reign. During this period one indignant Australian lady wrote to *The New Phonogram* and asked why Edison Standard two-minute cylinder No. 2, played by the Edison Military Band, was called "America" when everybody knew the title should be "God Save the King." The editor explained that the same tune was used for both "America," which has near-national anthem status in this country, and "God Save the King," and that the version she questioned had been made for American use.

Then came the death, on May 6, 1910 of King Edward and a year later companies broke their backs and almost broke their necks issuing recordings of special descriptive sketches, standard patriotic songs and transiently popular numbers commenting on the change in Kings. There must have been hundreds of such records, but only a typical few can be considered here.

Perhaps the most impressive recording made as a result of King George's coronation on June 22, 1911, was violet label Gramophone 0492 of the *Homage Anthem*, "Rejoice in the Lord," which was written especially for the occasion and was sung during the ceremony "as the Princes and Peers of the realm paid their homage to His Majesty." Edward Lloyd, the veteran tenor who had made the disc of "Fleeting Years" for the new King's mother, emerged from retirement to sing the solo part, and was assisted by the Westminster Abbey Choir and an orchestra conducted by Sir Frederick Bridge. The record, of course, was not made during the ceremony—such "live" recordings were impossible 60 years ago—but was done later as a "studio job."

Most outstanding of the many recorded versions of "God Save the King" must have been that sung by the incredibly deep-voiced contralto, Dame Clara Butt, on 12-inch Gramophone record No. 03240. This was sold, single-faced, for "the modest sum of six shillings, sixpence." Dame Clara was accompanied by "the full band of His Majesty's Coldstream Guards, conducted by Lt. Dr. J. Mack-

(Continued on next page)

GENUINE VELVET VP EDISON BELL  
GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

MANUFACTURED UNDER



ROYAL LETTERS PATENT,  
No. 26639—1912.

ENSURING THEM  
**FREE**  
from all  
**CLICKS, SCRATCHES**  
and  
**OTHER FOREIGN SOUNDS.**

TWO TWO  
ON ON  
ONE **2/6** ONE

10in. Double Discs.

**The World's  
Best  
Records.**

GENUINE VELVET VP EDISON BELL  
GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

GENUINE VELVET VP EDISON BELL  
GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

THE  
**WORLD'S BEST**  
Smoothest, most Natural, Matchless,  
Scratchless, and No Distortion.

A  
**COMPENSATION  
AND  
APOLOGY.**

We used a design of the  
**ROYAL ARMS**  
in our "T.M.N." Advertisements last  
month and have been reminded that  
we are  
**Not Royal Warrant Holders.**

We have undertaken on our own good-  
will to advertise this fact as prominently  
as we need the design, we did not under-  
take to apologize. We do **Apologize**  
to all Gramophone Owners who could  
by any stretch of imagination possibly  
have been misled.

**Why! GREAT SCOTT**  
IF WE HAD  
sent half a dozen Records into the Royal  
Palace and  
Whooled the Lord Chamberlain  
There would have been no mistake—  
WE SHOULD HAVE HAD  
**Ramping Lions and Unicorns**  
— Tall high as Aeroplanes—  
**Royal Standards, Union Jacks**  
— and all the other glories —

**"ALAS and ALACK a DAY"**  
the unsought glories so far as depicted in  
But we have one  
**Great Consolation**  
**WE KNOW**  
WE DESERVE THE HONOUR  
For we make the  
**World's Best Records**  
And others know it too.

**J. E. HOUGH, Ltd.,**  
Edison Bell Works, London, S.E.

# ROYALTY AND THE GRAMOPHONE.

H.R.H. The Crown Princess of Germany bought a Melba Gramophone on June 24th.

H.R.H. The Crown Princess of Sweden bought a Gramophone on June 24th.

Supplied already to

H.M. Queen Alexandra.

H.M. King Alfonso XIII.

H.M. King Carlos.

H.M. King George.

H.R.H. The Princess Henry  
of Battenberg.

H.R.H. The Crown Princess  
of Germany.

H.R.H. The Crown Princess  
of Sweden.



The "MELBA"

Supplied already to

H.H. The Pope,  
whose private secretary writes as  
follows:—

*To the Honorable, The Gramophone Co.,*  
I beg to inform you that H.H. The Pope has  
received with much pleasure the Gramophone  
sketches you have sent him, and the pictures  
of the records. The Gramophone is a most  
valuable and useful invention, and the pictures  
are most interesting. I am sure that the  
Gramophone will be a great success, and  
that it will be a great help to the  
Church. I am sure that the Gramophone  
will be a great success, and that it will  
be a great help to the Church. I am sure  
that the Gramophone will be a great  
success, and that it will be a great help  
to the Church. I am sure that the  
Gramophone will be a great success, and  
that it will be a great help to the Church.

Yours faithfully,  
CARLOTTA MERRY DEL VAL

## Three Kinds of Gramophone Needles.

3s. per 1,000.



The GRAMOPHONE.

7.6 per 1,000.



The MELBA.

3s. per 1,000.



The PIANISSIMO.

SARCASTIC "Apology". These two advertisements from *The Talking Machine News* throw an amusing light upon the sound recording business as it used to be conducted in England. The first (left) appeared in May, 1913, headed by a picture of the Royal Arms. When other companies complained that Edison Bell, not being a Royal Warrant holder, had no right to use the illustration, the company's peppery, sardonic president, J. E. Hough, replied with the second ad, which is a masterpiece of sarcasm. It was published in June.

enzie Rogan, M.V.O."

Peter Dawson, then probably the most popular "serious" singer in the King's Dominions, sang, "Hail! King George!" on Edison Amberol cylinder No. 12300, and Billy Williams, the reigning comic song virtuoso, who was even more popular than Dawson, recorded a coronation song, "Where the Crowd Goes," for several companies. His Columbia version, No. 1645, was coupled with "Wake Up, John Bull!" a plea for preferential tariffs between the Mother Country and her outposts.

H. M. V.'s lower-priced affiliate, Zonophone, proudly offered a "Great Coronation Novelty—the Wonderful Zonophone Puzzle Plate." Selling at two shillings and sixpence, this record, No. 598, contained six musical selections on its two sides—"Coronation March," "Hearts of Oak," "God Bless the Prince of Wales," "Rule, Britannia," "The British Grenadiers"

This ADVERTISEMENT appeared in the *TALKING MACHINE NEWS* for July, 1905. It shows that Royalty was already taking a lively interest in recorded music.

and "God Save the King." The grooves were so arranged that the needle might choose to track any one, and there was always doubt as to which of the three brief selections on a side it would play. The following year, Victor issued a similar type of record, also of British origin, in this country. It was called "The Conundrum—What Will I Play Next?" and there have since been many imitations, embodying simulated horse races and other novelties.

Columbia's June, 1911, list included nine double-faced discs with a coronation flavor. A descriptive specialty, "The Coronation Procession" and "Coronation Night in the Barracks" (No. 1646 sounds interesting:)

"An absolutely unique record, depicting first the scene as the procession passes through the streets, bands playing, crowds cheering and, finally, the grand welcome to the King. The other is a celebration in barracks with 'Tommy' toasting the King he has sworn to fight for. This will sell in its thousands."

Homophone, one of the German companies that was trying to get a stranglehold on the British record industry, largely through foul means, presented a "Coronation Day" Sketch (6060) that sounds as if it might have been colorful. *The Talking Machine News* described it as:

"A fine sample of the descriptive

sketch so popular at present. There is the London crowd exceedingly well done, shouting, cheering and chaffing in the usual manner. All the principal characters in the procession are recognized as they come past—Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener and the young Prince of Wales, all of whom receive an ovation. Then an old man steps up and wishes to have a sight of the King. He is an old soldier who has seen King Edward many times, and who had fought for Queen Victoria. Bands play, and after that King George and the Queen pass amidst vociferous cheers. As a finale of course, we have 'God Save the King,' and the record ends . . ."

Pathé's several coronation records included a disc coupling a song in tribute to the departed Edward, "That's Why the British Loved the King," with another patriotic number, "The Islander," sung on No. 8387 by "Arthur George" who was really George Baker. Then there was 8384, "When Our Good King George Is Crowned," with a bellicose, jingoistic song, "Two Keels For One," as its companion. Both were sung by Walter Field.

One of the most unusual of the records of the coronation period must have been Rena 10-inch, No. 998, of a recitation, "The King is Dead," written and spoken by a bearded eccentric, Ogilvie Mitchell, who was chief record reviewer for the *Talking Machine News*, and who had an unequalled genius for using ten words:

where only one was needed. Strangely, I haven't been able to find a review of Mitchell's recording in the paper for which he wrote, but its chief rival, *The Sound Wave*, said:

"We must felicitate Mr. Mitchell upon his really fine poem, which expresses in some seven stanzas the universal sorrow evoked by the death of our beloved Monarch. Not less is he to be congratulated upon the splendid record he has succeeded in making. It should be mentioned that a copy of the poem accompanies every copy of the record. The record label, by the way, is printed in royal purple, and bears the words, 'In Memoriam,' together with the dates of birth, accession and death of King Edward VII."

For the other side of "Ogie" Mitchell's tribute, George Alexander's old Columbia version of "Abide With Me," described as "one of the late King's favorite hymns," was resurrected.

King George V died January 20, 1936, and was succeeded by his eldest son, the Prince of Wales, who served only about eleven months before abdicating on December 12 and yielding his hereditary office to his brother, who became George VI. George, in turn, died February 6, 1952, and his place was taken by his daughter, who was crowned Queen Elizabeth II on June 2, 1953.

Of course, in the days that followed George V's accession to the throne, there was no need to "fake" recordings of such things as coronation proceedings. Beginning in the mid-twenties, electrical recording, sound films, radio and television made it comparatively easy to catch historical events as they occurred, both in sight and sound, and to present and preserve them thereafter. No doubt, for example, London TV stations' shelves are filled with stacks of recorded material depicting the present Queen in her many activities in behalf of the peoples over whom she reigns.

#### X. British Royal Family Recrodings

The first record of the voices of British royalty to appear in an American catalog was issued by Victor in August, 1923, and the description of the disc, spoken by King George and Queen Mary, occupied the second page of the monthly supplement. Excellent photos of their Majesties were reproduced. The record, No. 19072, sold at the usual Black Label price of 75 cents. On the A side the King and Queen delivered an "Empire Day Message to the Boys and Girls of the British Empire." On the reverse, the Band of the Coldstream Guards played "God Save the King" and "Home, Sweet Home." The description was:

"The whole of the world, wherever it gives allegiance, will be interested to hear the voices of the reigning King and Queen of England, and of the great British Commonwealth of Nations. The record embraces short addresses recorded at Buckingham Palace and requested by the King to be first played on Empire Day, May 23, 1923, in the schools throughout the British Empire. Two quotations will suffice. The King: 'Get knowledge, be brave, honorable and kind, thinking of others before yourselves, and always play the game.' The Queen: 'The home which fosters clean minds and kind hearts is God's temple; the spirit of the good home, whether it be rich or poor, is one of the best things in the world.'"



King George V broadcasting at Sandringham in 1934, two years before his death. Several of the King's broadcast addresses were issued on H.M.V. records.

All royalties accruing from the sale of this record are held for later distribution for charities to be designated by the King."

The King's remarks are reminiscent of those in a familiar quotation, copied in his own handwriting, which he always kept on his dressing table. Most of us probably are familiar with this sentence, but may be surprised to learn how much it seemed to mean to George V:

"I shall journey through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show any human being, let me do it now: let me not neglect nor defer it, for I shall not pass this way again."

In October, 1924, Victor issued another royal record, this time in 12-inch size. It was No. 35746, "Sportsmanship," spoken by H. R. H. The Prince of Wales, who afterwards reigned so briefly as King Edward. The coupling was "God Bless the Prince of Wales," played by the Band of H. M. Coldstream Guards and sung by a male chorus:

"A talk on sportsmanship, personally recorded by H. R. H. The Prince of Wales; then his 'own song' and the regimental marches of the Household Brigade. The record will recall to mind those made by the King and Queen of England, and issued in America by the Victor; and with them it will preserve for future time the voices of two generations of a great dynasty."

I have this record and I think anybody with normal hearing must concede that on the strength of the acoustically recorded disc, Edward had an extremely high, rather effeminate voice. When he delivered his Abdication Speech, explaining that he could not continue the burden of being

King, without the help of "the woman I love," a number of companies—some of the fly-by-night type—recorded the radio address broadcast at Windsor Castle and placed it on the market for "a quick buck." My record of his abdication remarks bears no trademark or manufacturer's name. Electrically recorded, it gives a more resonant sound to the voice, but to me there still seems a touch of effeminacy.

The King and Queen's record was issued in Great Britain as H. M. V. No. RE284, and the one by the Prince as RD887. I take it that "R" stood for "Royal."

In May, 1930, Victor issued as 10-inch Black Label record No. 22338, King George's Speech at the Opening of the Five-Power Naval Conference in London on January 21, 1930. The recording was done in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords and the disc was issued at home in February before making its American appearance. "His Master's Voice" supplement for February, 1930, listed it as RB3290, said it went on sale February 5, and continued:

"It was the great privilege of 'His Master's Voice' to make a record of H. M. The King's Speech. Millions heard the Speech (at the opening of the Naval Conference), and millions heard the record, made in the morning, broadcast the same evening. The Gramophone Company, Limited, will devote their profits arising from the sale of this record to the British 'Wireless for the Blind' Fund, which has been nominated for this purpose by H. M. The King. This record of world-wide interest is a triumph of recording and one that should take a place in everyone's library."

I have the Victor pressing. The King's speech is delivered simply with



a complete lack of affectation, and obvious deep sincerity. I think it would give anyone the feeling that George V was a good and generous man.

Now, please forgive a brief digression. Recently, after polishing off lunch in the Drum & Fife Restaurant in my "home town" of Vinton, Va., I asked Lena Ryman, the waitress, if she could spare me some cornbread to take home for a "cornbread and buttermilk feast" in mid-afternoon. Lena passed the request on to Nellie Johnson, who made the bread, and Nellie said: "I'll see if it's ready." A moment later she smiled at me and said: "Jim, you came to our rescue! I'd forgotten about that cornbread, and if you had waited a minute longer it would have burned up!"

The memory of that sizzling cornbread (I took some home and enjoyed it) came back to me when the question arose in my mind as to how I was to prepare a list of recordings by the British Royal Family. Suddenly it occurred to me that I had a stack of old H. M. V. catalogs of 78 RPM discs—and those catalogs came to my rescue just as I had saved Nellie Johnson's cornbread from a fiery death.

Turning first to the catalog dated 1937-38, I found the following in addition to the three I have already discussed:

**H. M. KING GEORGE THE FIFTH**  
10-inch double-faced  
RB3669 Speech at Opening of Indian Round-Table Conference, Nov. 12, 1930  
RB4465 Speech Opening World Monetary and Economic Conference, June 12 1933  
RB8101 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1933)  
10-inch single-faced  
RBS4359 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1932)  
12-inch single-faced  
RCS2717 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1934)  
RCS2811 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1935)  
RC7247 Silver Jubilee Message to the Empire (Broadcast May 6, 1935) and Welcome to their Majesties (recorded during the Procession to St. Paul's)  
RC2748 Speech in Westminster Hall, May 9, 1935

**KING EDWARD VIII**  
10-inch double-faced  
RB8417 Message to the Empire (Broadcast March 1, 1936)  
12-inch double-faced  
RC2360 Speech at Meeting Organized by National Council of Social Service, Jan. 27, 1932, in Royal Albert Hall, London. Reverse: "Jerusalem" and "National Anthem," sung by the audience  
10-inch double-faced  
RB2628 Speech on Armistice Night, Nov. 11, 1927 recorded at the Daily Express Remembrance Festival in Royal Albert Hall. (This and No. RC2360 were recorded when Edward was Prince of Wales.)

**H. M. KING GEORGE THE SIXTH**  
12-inch double-faced  
RG15 Message to the Empire. Broadcast on Coronation Day, May 12, 1937. (The entire Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey was also recorded on records RG1 through RG14, inclusive)  
12-inch double faced  
(Recorded as DUKE OF YORK)  
RC1804 My Camp: Its Purpose. Reverse: Camp Songs, Recorded at the Duke's Camp, New Romney

When the 1945-46 catalog was issued the records by King George V, Queen Mary and King Edward had

been discontinued, but the following had been added. An asterisk in front of a number means that record was to be cut out of the next catalog:

RC3429 Today We Give Thanks (Broadcast VE Day, May 8, 1945)  
RC3432 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1944)  
RC3374 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1943)  
RC3329 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1942)  
\*RC3272 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1941)  
\*RC3213 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day 1940)  
\*RC3147 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1939)  
RB8969 The King to His Peoples (Broadcast Sept. 3, 1939)

**H. M. QUEEN ELIZABETH**  
(Mother of the Present Queen Elizabeth II)  
RC3133 Message to the Women of the Empire (Recorded Nov. 11, 1939)

**H.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH**  
(now QUEEN)  
RBS9111 Message to the Children (Broadcast Oct. 13, 1940)

The following new titles are in the catalog from 1946-47 through 1950-51:

**H. M. KING GEORGE THE SIXTH**  
RC3893 Colonial Exhibition, London (Broadcast June 21, 1949)  
RC3958 The King to His Peoples (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1949)  
RC3852 The King to His Peoples (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1948)  
RC3698 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1947)  
RC3555 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1946)  
RC3481 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1945)  
RC3452 Victory Message to the Empire (Broadcast Aug. 15, 1945)  
RC3429 Today We Give Thanks (Broadcast VE Day, May 8, 1945)  
RC3422 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1944)  
RC3374 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1943)  
RC3329 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1942)  
RC3272 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1941)  
RC3189 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Sept. 23, 1940)  
RC3147 Message to the Empire (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1939)  
RC3007 Speech at Opening of the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow, May 3, 1938

**ROYAL SILVER WEDDING**  
RB9654 Broadcast April 26, 1948

**H.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH**  
RB9650 Broadcasting from Cape Town on her 21st birthday, April 21, 1947

The following additional titles are found in my latest catalogs of 78RPM HMV records for 1956-57 and 1957-58:

**KING GEORGE VI**  
RB10209 The King to His Peoples (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1951)  
RB10090 Festival of Britain, 1951 (Broadcast May 3, 1951)  
RC4063 The King to His Peoples (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1950)

**H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II**  
DA2042 Coronation Day Speech (Broadcast June 2, 1953)  
RB10412 Christmas Message to the Commonwealth (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1952)  
DA2056 Christmas Message to the Commonwealth (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1953)  
DA2075 Christmas Message to the Commonwealth (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1954)  
DA2023 Christmas Message to the Commonwealth (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1955)  
DB21627 Christmas Message to the Commonwealth (Broadcast Christmas Day, 1956)

The Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth was available on three long-play records, ALP1056 through ALP1058. A selection from the service could also be had on four 78RPM discs, numbered from DB21881 through DB21884. Another long-play, BLP1020, called "Memories of Coronation Day, 2, June, 1953," contained excerpts from the ceremonial and procession.

In the 1956-57 catalog there was a set of three 78RPM discs, DB9794-95 and 96, entitled "Through Childhood to the Throne," which was produced in collaboration with the British Broadcasting Company. It was described as "a record of the eventful years preceding the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II," and consisted largely of excerpts from such broadcasts as King Edward's Abdication Speech and addresses by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, etc. These records were cut out of the 1957-58 catalog, but the same material was on a long player, ALP1043, which remained available.

Since *Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* is concerned primarily with recordings of the acoustic period, I have not attempted to carry research farther into the present-day electrical long-play era. I also lack latter-day British catalogs, but I presume Royal Records are still being regularly issued. I also imagine that more records by rulers of non-English speaking countries might have been found by an intensive search of foreign language lists, but that would be beyond the scope of this survey.

THE END

Postscript. Within a few days after this article was submitted to HOBBIES I received from an English friend a copy of *The Phonogram's* British edition for May, 1893, and was surprised to find an article casting a different light on the question of whether King Edward VII recorded.

Earlier, I have quoted from magazines published after the King's death in 1910, saying his voice was not captured on wax cylinders, but *The Phonogram* makes it appear likely that Mr. Edison was remembering correctly when he said that, as Prince of Wales, Edward did record for one of his representatives. It seems that the voice of the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Alexandria, was also waxed. Here from the 80-year-old *Phonogram* is a "List of Some Eminent Voices Recorded by the Phonograph":

"Living. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. The Emperor of Germany. The Emperor of Russia. The King and Queen of Sweden. The King of Saxony. His Holiness the Pope. H. R. H. The Duchess of Teck. H. R. H. the Princess May of Cambridge. The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M. P. Dr. Arthur Pierson.

"Dead. Lord Tennyson. Robert Browning. Cardinal Manning. Carlo Pellegrini. General Boulanger. General Sherman."

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### *RUDY WIEDOEFT and OTHER SAXOPHONE PLAYERS*

By JIM WALSH

#### I. Greatest in the World

Fifty years ago you would not have run much risk of inciting a riot by mounting a soap box on any street corner and shouting that Rudy Wiedoeft was the greatest saxophone player in the world.

Not that there weren't other fine performers. F. Wheeler Wadsworth, whose first name sometimes appeared in Pathé supplements as Frank and sometimes as Fred, and who played in the All-Star Trio and the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet, was one.

Then there was Nathan Glantz of the Van Eps Trio, who a few years later had a dance orchestra that made Edison records as the Tennessee Happy Boys; Duane Sawyer, who recorded mostly for Pathé; and in the ensemble field, there were the members of the Six Brown Brothers Saxophone Sextet—five of whom actually were brothers. (The real name of the sixth was Harry Finkelstein). And there was H. Benne Henton, a virtuoso who starred with concert bands like Conway's and Kryl's and seldom played "popular music."

Until the vogue of Rudy Wiedoeft, Benne Henton was usually considered the foremost master of the saxophone; in fact, the Victor record supplement for October, 1916, virtually bestowed the "greatest" title upon him in its description of his record of "Laverne—Waltz Caprice."

"While there is considerable difference of opinion regarding the merits of the great singers, violinists, cellists, pianists, etc., critics, musicians and the masses seem to be united in pronouncing H. Benne Henton the greatest American saxophone soloist. Mr. Henton, who has been called 'The Paganini of the Saxophone,' has delighted thousands of hearers on the Slayton and Chicago Lyceum Bureau Circuits at the head of his concert company, and has been soloist with many famous bands including Conway, Kryl, Weldon, Pullman, etc. His execution is really marvelous, and his tone exquisite . . ."

Perhaps Henton was as good as, or even better than, Wiedoeft. I am no student of the saxophone and feel incapable of taking sides. But it is certain that within two or three years after the foregoing was published, Wiedoeft was making records for almost every American company and seemed to have established himself as the greatest master of his instrument.

Like many other men of great talents, the blond Germanic-looking, Rudy Wiedoeft did not have a long life in which to develop his abilities to their utmost. When he died in his Flushing, N. Y. home, he was just a few weeks past his 47th



**YOUTHFUL GENIUS.** Rudy Wiedoeft autographed this photo for William H. Nolan, an Appleton, Wisc., record dealer when the Eight Popular Victor Artists gave a concert in Appleton, on Monday, October 2, 1922.

birthday. Recently I came across "A Tribute to Rudy Wiedoeft," which appeared in a Joliet, Ill., newspaper, on February 22, 1945, five years after his death. The clipping was sent to me by my old friend, Angus Joss, who then lived in Joliet, but, the last time I heard from him, was in Montreal, Canada. The brief letter, signed "C. M.," does such a good job of summarizing Wiedoeft's life and achievements that I shall quote it:

"Five years ago, February 18, 1940, marked the passing of Rudy Wiedoeft, the greatest saxophonist the world has ever known. Wiedoeft was born January 3, 1893, in Detroit, Mich. At the age of 11, he played first clarinet in his father's orchestra. Soon after he became interested in the saxophone—then a little used instrument. His experiments and suggestions to manufacturers led to the perfection of a similar instrument, having five extra keys that had not existed on the previous saxophone, and a modifying of its curves, the result being an improvement of its four lowest tones, previously regarded as not melodious.

"These changes made, he proceeded to astound the world with his unbeatable technique, tone and lightning staccato. Gifted with what is termed a snake-tongue, contributed to his staccato being the fastest ever known on a reed instrument.

"He more than any other person lifted the saxophone into its own and seriously encroached upon the sacred realm of the noble violin, if indeed it did not trespass it. No passage however rapid or intricate in tone or color was too difficult for the talented Rudy.

"Concert numbers such as the 'Melodie' by Tchaikowsky were given a striking rendition which surpassed efforts of famous string artists. From the tuneful dance numbers, the technical concert waltzes, the heart songs, to the inspired works of the great masters and back again, Rudy had no peer. I do not know

of one saxophonist in the field today to equal Wiedoeft and doubt if there will be any to excel him.

"As a composer his work displays originality and depth of feeling in ever-recurring beauty. His composition, 'Saxophobia,' has defied the efforts of the greatest saxophonists of today to do it full justice.

"World fame came to Wiedoeft before the twenties. He was the most sought after man in the recording studios and his indefatigable efforts of a quarter century ago cause collectors to bid dozens of dollars on rare items pressed in shellac."

That closing paragraph contains two questionable statements. Wiedoeft may possibly have been the most sought recording instrumentalist, though I don't think he was, for I believe Harry Reser, the banjoist, for one, did far more recording work. But Wiedoeft's record output was certainly far smaller than the total of many free lance singers of the period. And I don't believe any Wiedoeft discs were then, or are now, rare enough to cause collectors to bid "dozens of dollars" for them. Otherwise, the letter is an admirable tribute to a fine artist.

The Joliet writer's survey certainly is better than the obituary that appeared in *The Billboard* shortly after Wiedoeft's death. While the latter gives some useful information, it contains a ludicrous error in reference to the Eight Famous (or Popular) Victor Artists, of which Wiedoeft was a member for four years, and his age is wrongly given as 46. Whoever wrote the following apparently thought that the Eight was an orchestra instead of a predominantly vocal group with five singers, a monologist who also sang, an instrumentalist and a piano accompanist:

"Rudy Wiedoeft, 46, saxophonist and composer, died of a stomach ailment February 18 in Flushing Hospital, Queens, N.Y. Musicians credit him with having brought the saxophone out of obscurity into its present important position in modern dance orchestras. In the trade he was looked up to as a teacher as well as a musician and composer, numbering among his pupils Rudy Vallee, who later took his instructor's name for his own Christian name, Hubert Prior.

"At the age of 11 Wiedoeft was entrusted with a post in his father's orchestra in Denver. He played the clarinet, but soon began to experiment with the saxophone, and following a tie-up with a musical instrument manufacturer brought out a sax which improved upon that invented by Antoine Joseph Sax in 1846. Wiedoeft had added five keys to the sax stem and modified the curve to soften the lowest notes. His personal appearances on vaude stages with the instrument and recordings helped to popularize it simultaneously with the added interest in jazz.

"He went to New York about 20 years ago and later joined the Victor Artists, the orchestra which toured the country for the Victor Talking Machine Company. Among his compositions is 'Saxophobia,' known to be a 'must' in every saxophone player's student days.

"Wiedoeft had retired about three years ago, devoting himself primarily to teaching. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Mae Wiedoeft."

(Continued on page 122)

The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary adds no information to the foregoing except that Wiedoeft remained in New York after coming there in his early twenties, aside from a brief residence in California. (Perhaps he lived in the far West during the period when he conducted an orchestra called Rudy Wiedoeft's Californians). I am wondering if the *Billboard* statement that Wiedoeft played in his father's orchestra in Denver at the age of 11 is not a mistake for Detroit. I do not know enough about his early life to be able to say whether his family may have moved, when he was a boy, to Denver, which was the home town of such recording artists as Billy Murray, Paul Whiteman, Fred Stone and Carroll Clark, the baritone who was the first Negro singer to do serious recording.

While biographical material concerning Rudy Wiedoeft is being quoted, it perhaps will be as well to include what was said about him in the 1923 Gennett record catalog and the Brunswick volumes for 1923 and 1924. First the Gennett:

"Rudy Wiedoeft is declared by many authorities to be one of the world's greatest saxophonists. His playing is known to thousands of music lovers through his records.

"Rudy Wiedoeft was born in Detroit 29 years ago. His father was an accomplished musician, and when Rudy was still a little boy the famous Wiedoeft Family Orchestra was formed and the young virtuoso was set to studying the clarinet seriously. Ten years later he was occupying the first chair in the clarinet section of Porter's famous Catalina Island Band of San Francisco. Taking up the saxophone in 1914 as an experiment, he soon fell in love with the instrument and has dropped the clarinet altogether. You'll thoroughly enjoy his Gennett Records."

Only one Wiedoeft record—"Valse Yvonne"—was listed in that Gennett catalog, which makes some interesting statements. Apparently Rudy had lived in San Francisco as a boyish member of Porter's Band before coming to New York. And it appears that he had been playing the saxophone less than four years when he made his first Edison record in 1917—an astonishingly short time in which to achieve such consummate mastery.

The 1923 Brunswick catalog contains a small photo of Wiedoeft. With the picture is the following:

"There is only one Rudy Wiedoeft, but there is a small army of saxophonists who would be Wiedoefts if they could be. Everybody knows this gifted young saxophonist and composer, for he is simply the best player of that instrument in the U.S.A., but his modesty won't permit him to admit it. His records prove it, however, and the public cannot, nor ever will be, sufficed with Wiedoeft's records for he is a genius and, with it all, a gentleman, a student and a worker. This reads like an appreciation and that is just what it is and of one who deserves it."

In 1924 Brunswick said:

"Rudy Wiedoeft is a saxophonist of national repute and stands as an ideal for thousands of student saxophonists. His many engagements in concert have tended to more firmly establish his reputation as being one of the greatest recognized masters of that instrument—then, too, his many beautiful Brunswick records have made for him thousands of steadfast admirers, who have not had the opportunity of hearing him in person.

Predominant in his playing is the apparent ease with which he performs the most difficult passages yet still retaining a perfect technique and beauty of tone.

"Lovers of saxophone music will thoroughly enjoy him on Brunswick records."

Now, having disposed of the far from comprehensive supply of available biographical material, we may consider the history of the saxophone as a recording instrument, then proceed to a discussion of Rudy Wiedoeft's record making career.

## II. Early Saxophone Recorders

The point has already been made that, although he may have been the greatest, Rudy Wiedoeft was only one of many accomplished saxophone players of his time. And, of course, he was not the first sax virtuoso to make records.

As far as I can ascertain, probably the first—and certainly one of the first recorders—was a female performer. Allen Koenigsberg's beautiful and invaluable book, "Edison Cylinder Records, 1889-1912," reveals that on April 23, 1892—more than quarter of a century before Wiedoeft made his first record—Miss Bessie Meeklen produced twelve Edison wax cylinders of saxophone solos with piano accompaniment. The instrument the lady played obviously was less elaborate in range and tonal quality than the one Wiedoeft designed and developed. The titles Miss Meeklen rendered, probably several times each, were "Ave Maria," "Sweet Lullaby Waltz," "Eugenia — Waltz Song," "Nightingale Song," "Easter Song," "Love's Old Sweet Song," "Christmas Song," "Grand Fantasie," "Dreaming," "Afterwards," "In Old Madrid" and "Palm Branches"—mostly slow-paced and comparatively simple numbers.

Following Bessie Meeklen's introductory efforts, Edison fought shy for a long time afterward from making saxophone records. No other appeared in the American domestic list until March, 1910, when H. Benne Henton was heard on two-minute cylinder 10320, in his own familiar composition, "Laverne—Waltz Caprice."

When the four minute Amberol cylinders were introduced, four saxophone titles gradually found their way into the catalog, beginning with Henton's No. 400, Cavatina from "La Favorita," in April, 1910. This was followed in May by "The Kiss Waltz" (Henton), and he, the leading player of that day, also made Record E, "Scenes That Are Brightest," which was not sold but was one of ten cylinders given to Edison owners for inducing a friend to buy a phonograph. Finally, in November, 1911, a lesser known player, Henry S. Barbour, was represented by a "Tyroliene Sere-nade."

Before Wiedoeft made his first Edison record, two of the Henton titles were reissued on the unbreakable Blue Amberols. "The Kiss Waltz" was No. 1966, and "Scenes That Are

Brightest" retained its E designation. Henton made his last Blue Amberol appearance in 1919, with 3737, his tried and true "Laverne." After Wiedoeft came into the picture other saxophonists playing for Edison were Wheeler Wadsworth and Chester Gaylord. The latter, some years later, made vocal records for Brunswick. Rudy Vallee received an Edison trial, but was unable to give a satisfactory performance of the fast display numbers the recording experts wanted.

Turning back to the ancient days of the phonograph, the earliest Columbia saxophone records I have been able to find are played by Eugene Coffin and listed in the August, 1896, cylinder catalog, which says:

"The Saxophone is an instrument un-

(Continued on page 122)

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# FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

rivalled in sweetness of tone, and Mr. Coffin's work on it is of an extremely high order. These records are among the most pleasing novelties we have ever presented."

Coffin's solos were numbered from 3501 through 3508, and the titles were "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep"—with variations; "Sea Flower Polka" ("with Marvelous Triple-Tongue Execution"); "The Palms"; "Polonaise"; "Fantasie for Saxophone"; "Culver Polka"; "Say Au Revoir, But Not Good-bye," and "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp."

Columbia saxophone recording before the Twentieth Century began and for some years afterward must have left a good deal to be desired, for no Coffin records were in the 1898 catalog. Three sax solos by an unidentified performer - 12700, "The Heart Bowed Down"; 12701, Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana," and 12702, "Schubert's Serenade" are in the 1901 cylinder catalog, but they were dropped by 1904, and in 1907 the yearly listing was still without any saxophone performances.

The saxophone made its first appearance on Columbia double-faced discs in December, 1908, when No. A597, the oddly titled "Morceau D' Elevation," a solo by Steve Porpora, was coupled with Vincent Buono's cornet version of Gounod's "Berceuse." Porpora must have had some prominence, because he was afterwards chosen to make an almost unknown Edison Diamond Disc, No. 80095, on which he played "Alice Where Art Thou?" as a duet with a clarinet performer, Antonio Giammatteo. The reverse side was the Treasure Waltz from Strauss' "Gypsy Baron," by Armand Vecsey and His Hungarian Orchestra.

The once famous and vastly popular Brown Brothers appeared in the Columbia monthly list for October, 1911, and received a big send-off. They were then the Brown Brothers Saxophone Quintet rather than the Six Brown Brothers. (Obviously, Harry Finkelstein had not yet been added to the family). Their first offerings were two numbers they seemed to delight in playing, No. A1041, "American Patrol" and "The Bullfrog and the Coon Medley." Said the supplement;

"One of the finest and most uniquely attractive novelties we have offered in many months. The peculiarly mellow and beautiful tone of a single saxophone is most impressive at all times, but a quintet of these instruments, forming a combination from which all orchestral harmonic effects can be obtained, forms one of the most delightful sources of musical entertainment imaginable. The Brown Brothers Saxophone Quintet is an organization practically unique and has been heard everywhere throughout the United States in vaudeville in one of the most successful musical specialties now on the boards. The selections recorded will prove unusually popular; the 'American Patrol' being well-known as a selection that is as distinctively and typically American as music can be made. 'The Bull-Frog and the Coon' introduces some very popular airs, including 'Cubana Glide,' 'When the Moon Plays Peek-a-Boo,' 'Chicken' (Reel) and 'The Bull-Frog and the Coon.' Such perfection in saxophone playing has seldom if ever

been recorded before."

"The Bull-Frog and the Coon" was a "coon song" which Ada Jones had made popular on records, but which had long passed its popularity when the Brown Brothers' Columbia record was waxed. They apparently liked to play it because it gave the bass sax an opportunity to produce humorous "bullfrog grunts," and it was one of the numbers they recorded when, as the Six Brown Brothers, they began playing for Victor in 1915. In 1919 they went to Emerson, but returned to Victor a couple of years later.

About the same time as the Columbia record was issued, the Quintet made some Everlasting Indestructible cylinders. The October, 1911, catalog contains two-minute 407, a solo, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" (which Eugene Coffin had played for Columbia 15 years before) by the leader of the troupe, Tom Brown. The Quintet was heard in 408, "The Bull-Frog and the Coon Medley"; 409, "The Billboard" and "Independencia Marches," and a four-minute, 1321, of "The American Patrol."

I don't know whether any of the Brown Brothers are still living, but I have death notices of three from *Variety* and *The Billboard*. William (Bill) died at the age of 66 in Chicago on June 25, 1946. By that time the Sextet had broken up and he was working in a Loop restaurant. Surviving were his father, and the four other Brown Brothers — Thomas, Verne, Alex and Fred.

Fred Brown, who was perhaps the youngest of the group, died, aged 55, in Chicago, on February 9, 1949. He was survived by three brothers and a sister. Tom died August 29, 1950, in the Illinois Masonic Hospital, Chicago. He was 68. *The Billboard* mentioned that the Sextet had appeared in the *Ziegfield Follies* and on the *Orpheum Circuit*. The June, 1915, Victor supplement which described their first Victor record, "That Moanin' Saxophone Rag," said they were then being featured in Charles B. Dillingham's production of "Ohin Chin." The Victor supplement showed a photo of the group, with five looking like brothers. I take it that one disguised in blackface and clown costume is Finkelstein.

After that October, 1911, record by the Brown Brothers' Quintet, no more saxophone records appeared in the Columbia catalog until May, 1917, when the astonishing statement was made, or at least implied, that until that time Columbia had never made a saxophone disc. The new offerings were by the Saxo Sextet, which I suspect was the same group as Harry A. Yerkes' Saxophone Sextet. Yerkes seems to have had some sort of a Columbia recording association. A photograph of the players is given, but I can't be sure of the identity of any, although one man looks like Wheeler Wadsworth. Record No. A-2203 combined "Poor Butterfly" with "Allah's Holiday Medley" and No. A2195, the standard show-piece, "American Patrol," (previously play-

ed by the Browns) with "Call of a Nation." The Saxo Sextet afterwards made many more Columbia records. Here is part of the announcement that gave the impression Columbia had never before distributed saxophone records:

"Announcement of saxophone recordings by the Columbia Company has been delayed until this time owing to its principle to issue no records until practical perfection is reached in reproducing the instrument or voice in question. In all recording experience no instrument has presented the difficulties of the saxophone . . . (The) singular, dim, rich tone of the saxophone has at last, and we believe for the first time, been absolutely reproduced in all its fidelity on the initials records by the Saxo Sextet. . . ."

Three months later, in August, Columbia issued the first saxophone solos it had announced since Pompora's 1908 effort. No description was given except for the heading, "Popular Saxophone Solos by Fred Allen," but the catalog number was A2099, and the titles, "The Sunshine of Your Smile" and "Somewhere a Voice is Calling."

This record has been the cause of much amusing speculation as to the identity of the "Fred Allen" who played it. That greatest of radio comedians, the late John Florence Sullivan, who used the stage name of Fred Allen, was asked so many times if he had made saxophone records for Columbia that he came to consider the question extremely annoying. He assented profanely that he never had played the saxophone and had no desire to learn.

In October, 1917, the same nonchalant treatment was given to another saxophone coupling. Under the heading, "Saxophone Selections By Brown," but with no descriptive matter, record A2320 was listed. On it Fred H. Brown (obviously one of the Six Brown Brothers) tootled "Love, Here Is My Heart" and "Kiss Me Again."

And now I think I have solved the mystery of the identity of the saxophone player, "Fred Allen." I have both the Allen and the Brown discs and have discovered an interesting fact. Their serial numbers show the recording was done in 1916, although they were not listed until late 1917. Of the two Allen numbers, "Sunshine of Your Smile" was 46985 in serial order, and "Somewhere a Voice is Calling," 46986. Fred Brown's "Kiss Me Again" was 46992, and "Love, Here Is My Heart," 46993.

In other words, Allen's highest serial number and Brown's lowest are only six digits apart, indicating they were recorded within a day or two of each other. Taking into consideration that both players had the first name of Fred, the conclusion is irresistible — Fred Allen and Fred Brown must have been the same man! Probably the numbers between 46986 and 46992 were given to unissued saxophone solos.

Now, before beginning our study of Rudy Wiedoeft's recording career, let's go back once more to the elder days of recording, and deal briefly with the only pioneer saxophone recorder



who may be considered to have won even a small personal following for himself. I am thinking of Jean Moeremans, whose name suggests French descent, and who was star saxophone soloist for the U. S. Marine Band of Washington in the 1890's and early 1900's. He began making Berliner records well before the turn of the century and did Victor recording for a number of years after the 1890's had become history.

By the end of 1899 the National Gram-o-phone Corporation had been set up to obtain control of Emile Berliner's talking machine and record business and, by shocking and unorthodox methods, it soon succeeded. Its December, 1899, catalog contains 15 solos by Jean Moeremans, eight of them bearing Berliner numbers ranging from 0521 through 0607 and the remaining seven numbered from 3900 to 3908. There also are three saxophone and flute duets by Moeremans and Frank Badollet, another Marine Band soloist, and two sax and clarinet duets by Moeremans and a gentleman (first name not given) rejoining in, or handicapped by, the unusual family name of Vompoucke.

Every time the saxophone is mentioned in the National Gram-o-phone catalog the word is spelled "saxaphone." The same misspelling is followed in Berliner's catalog for the spring of 1900, issued a short time before the inventor of the lateral cut disc had to turn over his business to the National charlatans. I'll correct the spelling in the following catalog quotation:

"This talented young musician stands at the head of the saxophone soloists of the world.

"Mr. Moeremans' brilliant playing and the full rich tone he obtains from his instrument, makes his records a very pleasing addition to the Gram-o-phone catalog."

Eight of the records have the same numbers, 0521 through 0607, as those in the National catalog, but there is an addition, 0829, "Carnival of Venice — with variations," one of Moeremans' most popular numbers. The number of saxophone-flute duets by Moeremans and Badollet has grown from National's three to a total of ten. Badollet also has three flute solos.

When Eldridge R. Johnson reached an agreement with Berliner whereby he began to issue seven-inch Improved discs made under Berliner methods, he obtained the services of "Mr. Jean B. H. Moeremans, soloist of the U. S. Marine Band—Saxaphone (still spelled wrong!) Solos." These were shortly afterward issued with Victor labels and numbered as follows: V 401, "Little Nell," an Arthur Pryor composition whose name sounds as if it were suggested by the heroine of Dickens' "Old Curiosity Shop"; V 464, "Felice Waltz"; V 465, Gounod's "Serenade"; V 466, Fantasie on "Old Folks at Home"; V 467, "Carnival of Venice," and V 468, "The Star—Concert Mazurka."

There were also ten "saxaphone" and flute duets by Moeremans and Badollet, issued with the comment:



**ANNOYED COMEDIAN.** The late Fred Allen, famed radio humorist, and his wife, Portland Hoffa, autographed this photo for Jim Walsh. Allen was frequently irritated by being asked if he played saxophone solos issued on Columbia records under the name of "Fred Allen." He made it clear he didn't. Jim Walsh solves the mystery of the Columbia "Fred Allen" in this article.

"Note - The above records are the most pleasing and musical instrumental duets ever made."

By August, 1904, Moeremans' Victor representation had fallen to two discs, No. 2854, "Carnival of Venice," which could be had in either seven or ten-inch size, and V 2847, "Old Folks at Home — with variations," seven-inch only. By this time the spelling of "saxophone" had been corrected, and there was this brief comment: "Mr. Moeremans is considered the best saxophone player in America, if not in the world, and has made for us some very artistic records."

A year and a half later, in January, 1906, the list of Moeremans' solos had grown to five, four of which were available in both sizes. A 10-inch version had been added of "Old Folks at Home—Variations"; "The Carnival of Venice" was still available, and also included were 2971, "The Merry Postillion," and 4034, "The Gypsy's Serenade," a melodious air played without variations. The fifth record, available in only seven-inch, was 4035, containing Moeremans' own composition, "Swell of the Day—air and variations." By May, 1907, "Swell of the Day" had been dropped because seven-inch records no longer were being made, but the other four were still cataloged.

When double-faced records were introduced late in 1908, three of the Moeremans solos were taken over.

"Carnival of Venice" was coupled on 16244 with "Sylvia," a piccolo solo by Darius Lyons; "Old Folks at Home" was given an incongruous coupling on 16268 with "The Larboard Watch," sung by Harry Macdonough and William F. Hooley, and, on 16272, "The Gypsy's Serenade" was paired with "By the Watermelon Vine," played by Arthur Pryor's Band.

In 1911 Victor decided the dull and poorly recorded "Old Folks at Home" (I have it, so I know whereof I speak!) was impairing the sale of "The Larboard Watch." The latter was recoupled on 16949 with a bass solo, "Asleep in the Deep," by Hooley, which made a much more suitable combination, of two sea songs.

The double-faced couplings were Jean B. H. Moeremans' last appearances in the Victor catalog. I wonder how long he remained with the U. S. Marine Band and what finally became of him. "Jimmy the Greek" who makes bets on presidential elections and sporting events probably would give odds of 100 to one that the most popular saxophone player of the 1890's is no longer alive.

And now having traced in some detail, the history of early saxophone recordings we will turn next month to the delayed discussion of Rudy Wiedoeft's brilliant career.

(To be continued)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

### RUDY WIEDOEFT and OTHER SAXOPHONE PLAYERS

#### PART II

#### I. Rudy Begins Recording

Something rather surprising happened a few months later, when another of Wiedoeft's waltz compositions, "Valse Llewellyn," was announced in the February, 1918, list. I find it odd that Rudy's photograph appeared on the cover of the January *Edison Amberola Monthly*, with the caption: "Rudy Wiedoeft, Saxophone, new Edison artist who makes his debut in the Blue Amberol list of February," overlooking the fact that a record by him had been placed on sale four months earlier. How could a record company, or its publicity writers, be so forgetful?

The *Monthly* gave no biographical information concerning its cover subject. The only mention of him on the inside pages was in the following:

"Everybody likes instrumental records, so you won't have any trouble whatever in disposing of any of the seven band, orchestra and instrumental solo records on the February list. If any of these instrumental records stands out above the others it is the 'Valse Llewellyn,' played on the saxophone by Rudy Wiedoeft. No matter how many of this record you have ordered, we are frank to state that we do not believe you have ordered enough to meet the demand it will create."

Another Blue Amberol, "Saxophone Sobs," markedly different from the waltzes that had preceded it, went on sale in March and was numbered 3421. With it Wiedoeft's recording career came to a halt, for he had gone into military service. The August, 1918, *Edison Amberola Monthly* published a fine photograph of him in uniform, which is reproduced with this article, accompanied by the following comment:

"Another Edison Artist Joins Marine Corps . . . Here is a picture of Rudy Wiedoeft who has made a number of Edison saxophone records, in his uniform as a U.S. Marine.

"Rudy is another patriotic member of our staff of artists who didn't have to go but who voluntarily gave up a number of profitable engagements to join Uncle Sam's Sea Soldiers. He is now a sergeant stationed at Mare Island, California. Wiedoeft has promised to do some more recording for us when the rumpus is over and we hope he keeps out of the way of the Big Berthas, because Rudy is the best saxophonist before the public today."

The Edison Diamond Disc catalog, dated November, 1918, contains a picture of Wiedoeft in Marine uniform, showing him full face. This is the only photo I have seen of him wearing glasses.



IN MILITARY SERVICE. Rudy Wiedoeft was stationed in California, as a member of the U.S. Marines, during the final year of World War I. He is shown here in his uniform as a Marine sergeant.

#### II. Virtuoso Freelance

When the 26-year-old Rudy Wiedoeft was released from Marine Corps duty in 1918, he immediately went back to recording. He seems not to have played again for Edison until 1920, but his name was soon appearing in Brunswick, Emerson, Aeolian-Vocalion and Pathé lists, and perhaps others. Columbia did not use him until 1926, and then the records were made in England. He first appeared in Victor supplements in 1920, as a member of the Palace Trio and the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet, and in the January, 1921, list he played a saxophone obligato to Albert Campbell and Henry Burr's duet (No. 18721) of "Feather Your Nest." His first Victor solo coupling combined "Saxophobia" and "Valse Erica."

Although he joined Burr's Eight Popular Victor Artists in 1922, Wiedoeft probably remained a free-lance artist throughout his recording career. Beginning in 1926 and continuing through 1929, Columbia called him an "exclusive Columbia artist" on the strength of the English-made records, but it is doubtful that he had a contract to make only Columbia rec-

ords. He continued to record for companies other than Victor while touring with the Eight.

Little needs to be said about the records Wiedoeft made for nine or ten years after his Edison debut. They were mostly his own compositions, such as "Saxophobia," "Valse Erica," "Valse Llewellyn" and "Saxarella," together with standard numbers that let him display his unfailing beauty of tone and flawless technique. But some interesting things can be told about the recording groups with which he was associated.

Particularly worthy of attention are the Palace Trio and the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet. The former was composed of Wiedoeft, saxophone; Mario Perry, accordion, and J. Russell (he spelled it with only one "l") Robinson, piano. The quartet included Wiedoeft and his great rival for saxophone honors, Wheeler Wadsworth, and two pianists — Robinson and Harry Akst. Both ensembles seem to have been organized in 1919, but were most active in 1920.

An interesting Victor record, announced in May, 1920, had the quartet playing "The Crocodile—Fox Trot" on one side and the Trio giving forth with "I'll See You in C-U-B-A Medley" on the other. A Washington, D.C., record firm, Ansell, Bishop and Turner, Inc., which advertised that it carried in stock "every record in the Victor catalog," was so impressed by "The Crocodile," that it placed a sign in its display window terming it "the livest record ever made" and urging passers-by to come in and hear it. To make the invitation more impressive, it ordered several crocodiles from Florida and had them swimming around (unhappily, no doubt) in a suitable window aquarium. As can be seen by the accompanying photograph, pedestrians really stopped and gawked at the display.

Another amusing incident occurs to me in connection with the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet. In October, 1962, I published in HOBBIES a directory of early recording groups in which I said the quartet members were Wiedoeft, Wadsworth, Robinson and Akst.

(Continued from preceding page)

A veteran, usually well informed, record collector, from whom I enjoyed hearing occasionally, wrote to tell me I was wrong. He said the members were Wiedoeft, Wadsworth and two accordion players who, he thought, were Guido and Pietro Deiro. I replied that I had before me the Victor supplement with a photograph of the quartet and each player identified by name, so knew what I had written was right. I also said that in 1920 the Deiro brothers, who didn't get along very well, probably were not on speaking terms and certainly were not playing together. I have never since heard from my correspondent, but I am reproducing combined pictures of the Palace Trio and the Quartet, so that, if he still reads HOBBIES, he can see for himself that I was right.

### III. Wiedoeft's Associates

Two of Wiedoeft's fellow players in the trio and quartet won considerable distinction for themselves as song writers. And that reminds me that in 1919 Wiedoeft himself composed music to the words of songs written by Al Bernard, one of the most brilliant comedians who ever made records. I have been promising myself for something like 30 years that one of these days I shall write a series about Bernard for HOBBIES and I really must get around to it. The trouble is that I have so much material concerning my old friend Al that I dread going through it. Anyway, Bernard, who was fully capable of composing his own tunes, although he couldn't read music, and who seldom took more than half an hour to write both the words and the melody of a song, penned some numbers for which Wiedoeft did the music. Among them were "Lone Star" and "The Saxophone Blues." (In those days, before Negro women "blues singers" such as "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith and Mamie Smith, had been heard of, Al Bernard was regarded as the only "blues" singer of any importance.) But, strangely, instead of recording these Bernard-Wiedoeft songs himself,

Al let his blackface comedy partner, Ernest Hare, sing them for Pathé, Aeolian-Vocalian and other companies.

Russel Robinson also was a song writing partner of Bernard's. He wrote the music of the first Edison duet by Bernard and Hare, "I Want to Hold You in My Arms." After Hare ceased working regularly with Bernard, to become the partner of Billy Jones, Robinson, who had a fine deep voice, took his place as the pompous blackfaced basso who quarreled with Bernard impersonating a falsetto voiced "wench." Bernard and Robinson sang on radio and in vaudeville, calling themselves "The Dixie Stars," and wrote many songs together. Among them were "Blue-Eyed Sally," "Let Me Be the First to Kiss You Good Morning" and "When Dixie Stars are Playing Peek-a-boo." They also made a laughable, double-faced, electrical Brunswick disc of two of their Negro dialect sketches, "It Takes a Cincinnati Yellow to Satisfy a Georgia Brown" and "My Time is Charlie's Now." Robinson may not have known Bernard's full first name, for in one of their records he calls him "Albert" when it was really Alfred. By a reverse twist, the Victor record supplement for June, 1925, refers to Albert Campbell as "Alfred."

Robinson was born at Indianapolis, Ind., July 8, 1892, and died September 30, 1962, in Palmsdale, Cal. As a small boy he taught himself to play the piano, then, when he was 11, began study with private tutors. His first compositions, "Sappho Rag," and "(Hold Me, Parson, Hold Me) I Feel Religion Comin' On," were published when he was 17, and the "Religion" song was recorded by Arthur Collins for Columbia and Edison. He was at one time a member of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and claimed authorship of the "Original Dixieland One-Step." Robinson also maintained he was the first American performer to introduce jazz music abroad. Among songs for which he wrote either the words or music were a number of hits—"Margie," "Mary Lou," "Singin' the Blues," "Memories of France," "Ag-

(Continued on page 119)



WIEDOEFT ORGANIZATIONS. This combined picture shows two ensembles that Rudy Wiedoeft headed in 1919-20. On the left is the Palace Trio, of Wiedoeft, saxophone, Mario Perry, accordion and J. Russel Robinson, piano. The Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet is on the right. F. Wheeler Wadsworth and Wiedoeft, saxophones; Robinson and Harry Akst, piano.

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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS (Continued from page 38)

Again") and "Beale Street Mama." Besides Bernard, song writers with whom he worked included Addy Britt, Con Conrad, Benny Davis, Noble Sissle and Roy Turk.

Harry Akst was born in New York City August 15, 1894, and died in Hollywood, Cal., March 31, 1963. He came of a musical family, and his father was a violinist at the Metropolitan Opera. When he was five he began studying the piano, and before he had graduated from grammar school he gave a recital in Mendelssohn Hall. Akst became a professional pianist in his second year of high school. For four years he was Nora Bayes' accompanist. While at Camp Upton in military service during 1918 he became an associate of Irving Berlin and served for a time as a writer of musical notations for Berlin, who could work out melodies at the piano but couldn't put them on paper. He appeared in the films, "June Moon" and "42nd Street," and went abroad with Al Jolson to entertain American armed forces in 1943. Among the songs in which he had a hand were "A Smile Will Go A Long, Long Way," "You Don't Need the Wine to Have a Wonderful Time," "Dinah," "Am I Blue?" "Home Again Blues," "Laddie Boy," "Birmingham Bertha" and "I'm the Medicine Man for the Blues." He, like Robinson, made large numbers of player piano rolls, and he and Frank Banta recorded several piano duets.

I know little of Mario Perry except that he was one of the leading piano-acordion players of the 1920s, but I have said enough, I think, to show that Wiedoeft associated himself with performers of outstanding quality in the Palace Trio and the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet. But who, I wonder, were the members of the Rudy Wiedoeft Trio that made a Brunswick record in 1924? And who played in Rudy Wiedoeft's Saxophone Sextet that recorded two numbers for Aeolian-Vocalion in 1923? Mention of A-V reminds me that when Wiedoeft made a sax solo of "Valse Erica" for that company late in 1919 his full



**"LIVE" ATTRACTION.** After the Victor record of "The Crocodile," by the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet, was issued in May, 1920, Ansell, Bishop & Turner, Inc., Victor dealers in Washington, D.C., proclaimed it "the livest record" ever made. As an advertising stunt, the firm imported live crocodiles from Florida to be displayed in the store windows. Large crowds were attracted. In this picture you can't see the crocodiles for the crowd.

name was not used either in the catalog or on the hill-and-dale record. He was merely called "Wiedoeft." Another amusing thing is that when Rudy's name appeared for the first time in a Victor yearly catalog—the one for 1922—a ludicrous misprint appeared. Typographical errors were rare in Victor's beautifully printed publicity matter, but in that 1922 catalog his name was given as "Ruby Wiedoeft." If the Victor catalog compiler had ever heard—which he probably hadn't—of Miss Bessie Meeklen having made Edison saxophone records in 1893, he might have thought there was nothing out of the ordinary about Miss (!) "Ruby" Wiedoeft playing "Saxophobia" and the recurring "Valse Erica." Then, too, Ruby can be a man's name. Edison had a banjo player, Ruby Brooks, who died about 1906.

Only one record of Wiedoeft's saxophone solos was in that 1922 Victor catalog. It consisted of the titles just mentioned. The record, No. 18728, quickly became a standard seller and was listed in the September, 1924, supplement as one of the "Ten Victor Records That Should be in Every Home." The supplement description of the coupling was accompanied by a good photo entitled "Rudy Wiedoeft Tunes Up." It showed him blowing a saxophone while with one hand he was fingering a piano keyboard.

The supplement said:

"Interest in the saxophone has of late so increased that Rudy Wiedoeft has made these two numbers just to show its possibilities as a solo concert instrument. The 'Valse Erica' is in serious, the 'Saxophobia' in comic vein, and both are the artist's own compositions. The 'Valse Erica' is of course in waltz tempo, and 'Saxophobia' can be adapted to any one of a number of grotesque steps—or even to the one-step. All the possibilities of the instrument—difficult intervals, change of register, tremolo and other tongueing effects—all the things which so test the courage of the player and so amaze the hearer!"

#### IV. Incidental Performance

I have already mentioned that Wiedoeft played a sax obbligato in Campbell and Burr's Victor of "Feather Your Nest." During the next few years he made a number of other "incidental" appearances in both vocal and dance records, some of which probably haven't come to my attention. Among these was a 1921 Brunswick of "Bright Eyes," by Carl Fenton's Orchestra, in which he performed a solo passage. Then there was a 1924 Vocalion of the Irving Berlin hit, "What'll I Do?" beautifully sung by another Irving—Irving Kaufman—with a sax obbligato by Wiedoeft and a remarkably well recorded piano accompaniment by Frank Banta, the Eight Victor Artists pianist. This was made after Wiedoeft had been made a member of the troupe for about two years.

Interesting, too, is the fact that Wiedoeft played an obbligato in Henry Burr's May, 1924, Victor record, No. 19282, of Dorothy Terriss, Ferdie Grofe and Paul Whiteman's hit song, "Wonderful One," which was "adapted from a theme by Marshall Neilan," a Hollywood movie director. John McCormack had recorded this song the previous November, but Billy Murray quoted Victor officials as saying the Burr version sold twice as many copies in its first week as McCormack's had during all the preceding period. One reason, perhaps, was that it had a "strong" coupling, Wendell Hall singing his own composition, "Land of My Sunset Dreams." As usual on most Burr recordings of the late acoustic and early electric period, Banta played the piano accompaniment.

In January, 1925, Victor issued No. 19509, a fox trot record of a Wiedoeft composition, "Sax-o-phun," by George Olsen and His Music, with incidental stunts by Rudy. Its companion was "Hey! Hey! and Hee! Hee!" by the International Novelty Orchestra. The supplement description shows James Edward Richardson's invariable felicity of style:



"A happy-hick sort of fox trot featuring Rudy Wiedoeft, the composer, and his famous saxophone, in laugh and slap-tongue effects; and a companion with a vocal duet refrain, a harmonica solo and novelties. 'Sax-o-phun' has been played by Wiedoeft on his concert tours as an exhibition piece; it makes a remarkably fine fox trot, humorous but a splendid demonstration of skill. 'Hey! Hey! and Hee! Hee!' is a good companion. 'Sax-o-phun' is an excellent training number for exhibition dances and an excellent model for young saxophonists. Wiedoeft himself wriggles a bit when he plays it."

Two interesting discs I have not so far mentioned are Rudy's 1919 Brunswick of another Berlin song, "Nobody Knows (And Nobody Seems to Care)," and "Lonesome Road," both of which he plays in fox trot time with a two-piano accompaniment by Carl Fenton and Harry Akst.

In 1919-20 Rudy made some duets with the late George Hamilton Green, the xylophone wizard of the All Star Trio and Green Brothers Novelty who in his later years gave up his favorite instrument to become a cartoonist for *Collier's* and other magazines. (I wonder why Wiedoeft was chosen instead of Wheeler Wadsworth, Green's All Star partner.) One of their Emerson records combined two of the greatest hits ever written, "Beautiful Ohio" and "Till We Meet Again." Speaking of the "Ohio" side the supplement said: "The greatest waltz of the century meets its finest interpretation right here." George Green's brother, Lewis Green, who was a member of the Novelty Band, is still living in Arlington Heights, Ill., and is an unfailing HOBBIES reader. Another xylophone playing brother, Joe Green, died many years ago.

Late in 1925, when his association with the Eight Popular Victor Artists was nearing its end, Wiedoeft played obligatos to one of Henry Burr's early electric recordings — a double-faced combination of the big Irving Berlin (again!) hit, "You Forgot to Remember" and "Alone at Last." Considerable effort was required to produce this record. On August 19, four takes were made of "You Forgot to Remember" and three of "Alone at Last," but the microphones must have behaved badly for none was acceptable. On August 31, four more tries were made to record "Remember" and three more of "Alone," before an acceptable version was obtained of the latter. Finally, on September 14, another four "takes" were made of "Remember" before No. 12 achieved a passing grade. Wiedoeft played the sax in all of these, and Lou Raderman the violin in "Alone at Last." Frank Banta was the pianist in the two August "dates," but, for some reason, he was not present on September 14, and his place was taken by one of the Victor orchestra conductors, LeRoy Shield.

At some time during 1921, Wiedoeft got together the orchestra known as Rudy Wiedoeft's Californians, which made a sizable number of dance rec-



HERO WORSHIPPER. Rudy Vallee (above), as an aspiring young saxophone player, admired Rudy Wiedoeft so greatly that he changed his name from Hubert Prior Vallee to pay tribute to his idol.

ords for companies including Edison and Pathé, but considerably more for Brunswick and Aeolian-Vocalion than any other recording concerns. I do not know who the members were, but I am almost certain, from a picture of the group in a 1922 Vocalion supplement, that a cornet player was Jules Levy, Jr., son of the more famous Jules Levy Sr., who was ranked as the world's greatest cornetist in a period that extended from the 1870's to his death in 1903. (He made tin-foil records at exhibitions of the original Edison cylinder phonograph in 1878.) The Californians stopped recording in 1922, perhaps because Rudy had signed up with the Eight Popular Victor Artists and needed to be available for concert tours.

Not a great while afterward, another dance band, Herb Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra, which was based in Los Angeles, began to record. Since Wiedoeft is an uncommon name, I imagine Herb was Rudy's brother, and suspect Rudy may have turned the orchestra over to him when he decided to accept Burr's offer to become the Eight's star instrumentalist.

#### V. Rudy Joins the Great "Eight"

These questions are now before the meeting: (1) When did Henry Burr's brilliant light concert company become the Eight Famous Victor Artists? (2) When was the word "Famous" changed to "Popular?" (3) Why was it changed? (4) When did Rudy Wiedoeft join the organization?

I don't know when the group, which had been known as the Record Makers, first became the Eight Famous Victor Artists, but the change took place before any of the members were exclusive Victor artists. Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Albert Campbell, John Meyer and Frank Croxton signed exclusive contracts in the autumn of 1920, but several months earlier the troupe was already being advertised

as the Famous Victor Artists. I have recently acquired a program which shows them giving a concert under that name in Steinway Hall, Boston, Mass., on Sunday, May 16, 1920.

*The Voice of the Victor*, a monthly magazine published for Victor dealers, frequently, but not always, gave the travel schedules of recording artists. I tried to determine from it just when the name was changed to the Eight Popular Victor Artists, but found it couldn't be relied on. *The Voice* called them "the Eight Popular" for the first time in September, 1923. Prior to that "Famous" had always been used. However, when the ensemble gave a concert in Appleton, Wis., on October 4, 1922, an advertising sign beneath which they were photographed called them the Eight Popular Victor Artists. But when they had appeared again in Boston in October, 1921, they were still the "Famous." The change probably occurred early in 1922. And why was it made? Most likely the idea was to emphasize the fact that they sang and played popular music and there was nothing classical about their offerings.

When did Wiedoeft join? I don't know precisely, but it was in 1922. The late Fred Van Eps told me he left the Eight that year, and, when the Appleton concert was given in October, Wiedoeft was one of the performers.

(Going back to September, 1923, when the *Voice* first referred to "the Eight Popular Victor Artists," it was the first month in many years in which the Victor supplement contained no Red Seal records. That was because the company was combining its single-faced Red Seals for the first time in double-faced form and preferred to issue no new titles until the couplings were complete. Later in September the monthly supplement began to be replaced with four-page weekly folders in which Red Seal discs were included, but the monthly booklets returned the following April. The annual Victor catalog for 1924 omitted Red Seal records, but there was a separate red covered catalog of them.)

If the time of Wiedoeft's joining the Eight is not precisely known, the event that led to his becoming a member is not in doubt. It goes back to the fact that Burr and Fred Van Eps, the troupe's star instrumentalist, from 1918 through part of 1922, owned the Van Eps-Burr Company, which manufactured banjos to Fred's special design.

Billy Murray, said that, one night, a few minutes before a concert was to begin, the partners received a telegram from Lyon & Healy, Chicago musical instrument jobbers, canceling an order for banjos. I think Billy said the order was for 50,000, but perhaps it was for only 10,000. No reason was given for the cancellation, but Burr and Van Eps became furiously angry and engaged in a shouting match peppered with strong

language that probably was heard, and amazed, the expectant audience in front of the curtain.

Van Eps blamed Burr's business methods. "Hank" in his turn said the banjos must not be of proper quality and blamed Van Eps. Meanwhile, the other members of the Eight were trying to conceal that they were in hilarious hysterics.

When Fred's turn came to perform before the crowded theatre, he looked, Billy said, as if he were sleep-walking, but played two numbers mechanically. Then, without bothering to bow his thanks, he raced back-stage to resume his riot with Burr. The latter had been watching from the wings and when Van Eps approached, he snarled: "Go back and bow to your audience, you slab-sided son of Satan!"—or words to that purport.

Burr always followed Van Eps in the program. He went out, sang two songs mechanically, neglected to bow, and waddled back-stage, thirsting for blood. Van Eps met him and snapped: "Now, you go back and bow to your audience, you slab-sided son of Satan!" The upshot was that Van Eps left the troupe and took over undivided operation of the banjo factory, while Burr engaged Wiedoeft in his place.

During the, something like, four years that Wiedoeft was a member, the Eight reached the peak of its popularity, and its members' salaries were at their highest. Billy Murray was paid most, followed by Wiedoeft and Banta, with Silver, Campbell, Meyer and Croxton on a somewhat lower equality. Burr, of course, kept more for himself than for any of his "hired help," which was only fair, since he had the financial responsibility and the worries of arranging and managing.

Some time after Wiedoeft "joined up," young Rudy Vallee, not then a famous dance orchestra leader but an aspiring saxophone student who worshipped Wiedoeft, witnessed a performance, then came back-stage to say the Eight were the most polished and professional entertainers he had ever seen. Billy Murray quoted him as saying, "You are my ideal of show business." He attended many more performances—chiefly, no doubt, to study Wiedoeft's technique. As *The Billboard* said, his intense admiration for his hero led his friends to give him the nickname of "Rudy," by which he has ever since been known.

Although he was a member of the famous concert organization for a considerable period, Wiedoeft does not seem to have been an especially gregarious type and did little to establish himself as one of the happy-go-lucky "gang." Billy Murray, Al Campbell and "Mike" Silver, with all of whom I did much talking about the Eight, seldom mentioned him.

While he was a member, however, some amusing things happened. To go back to an early recollection of my own, when I was barely a teenager, reporting for a weekly news-

paper, I was astonished to meet a farmer called Billy Murray. When I commented on his famous name, he told me he had a brother who, as a young man, had "done a right smart of bumming around the country." In the course of his bumming, the brother fetched up at a ranch in the Far West and, when asked his name, said it was Murray. The cowboys, all of whom were fanatical admirers of "The Denver Nightingale's" records, asked whether he was "any kin to Billy Murray." Thinking of his relation on the Virginia farm, he replied: "Sure, he's my brother!" After that nothing was too good for the wandering Mr. Murray. He remained a guest of the cow-punchers for several months, regaling them with stories about the great comedian from his fertile imagination and never being detected in an untruth. "My brother," the Billy Murray I talked with proudly told me, "always was a powerful good liar. He still is."

What am I leading up to is this: While the Eight was so extremely popular, Billy Murray's life sometimes had a nightmarish tinge because nearly everywhere the troupe went he learned there was "some drunken bum" in the city jail, pretending to be Billy Murray, the famous recording artist. Billy recalled that when he arrived in an Ohio city a Victor dealer came up to him and gasped: "Thank God you're here! There's a drunk in jail claiming he's you, and the jail people believe it. They've been phoning to the Victor offices in Camden, telling them to come down and get their star comedian before he drinks himself to death." This was especially annoying to Billy because during his recording career he was something of a physical fitness fanatic, who did not drink, smoke or do anything else that might impair his voice or well being.

The climax came when a circus performer who may be called "Xantippe, the lady lion tamer," got it into her head that Billy Murray, the world-famous recording artist, had married and basely deserted her. She kept phoning to his home at Freeport, threatening to horsewhip him with the instrument she used to control the lions, or even to shoot him, if he didn't come back to her. Matters became so serious that Billy at length agreed to meet her.

Billy, his wife, and Monroe Silver drove together to the meeting place. When they arrived and confronted Xantippe, who was more than six feet tall and broad in proportion, Mrs. Murray asked: "Now, which of these men is the Billy Murray who married you?"

Xantippe's lip curled contemptuously. "Huh!" she said, "I didn't marry neither one of these middle-aged little shrimps! The Billy Murray I married was a tall, good-lookin' young guy!"

While Wiedoeft was a member of the ensemble, he played in the first electrically recorded Victor disc, No. 35753, "A Miniature Concert by the

Eight Popular Victor Artists," announced in the June, 1925, supplement. (The troupe appears previously to have made an unsuccessful attempt to record the two-part specialty acoustically.) Part 1 included an opening chorus written by Ray Perkins; "Strut, Miss Lizzie," as a piano solo by Banta; the Sterling Trio singing "Love's Old Sweet Song"; Silver in some "Cohen" jokes; Burr singing "When You and I Were Young, Maggie" and Murray and Chorus in "Casey Jones."

Part 2 included a bit more piano music; "Sweet Genevieve," by Campbell and Burr; Wiedoeft playing part of "Saxophobia"; "Gypsy Love Song," by Croxton, and snatches of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" and "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground," by the Peerless Quartet.

A couple of months before the record came out the Eight gave one of the nation wide radio concerts Victor had inaugurated in an effort to improve record sales, and Wiedoeft played a solo. All other artists in the radio series were Red Seal stars.

The "Miniature Concert" was issued in England in October, 1926, under the Zonophone label, as No. A302, but the performers were not called "The Eight Popular Victor Artists." *The Gramophone and Talking Machine News'* review amuses me:

"In issuing this 12-inch record Zonophone gives the public something quite new and entertaining. It is nothing less than a variety show in miniature by well-known American artists. Why American and not British we cannot quite understand unless it be that English artists are not now appreciated by their own countrymen. We sincerely wish that this American ramp would end. Still, we must confess that these Americans do very well, though by no means better than could be accomplished by the home product."

Good old *Talking Machine News!* It never missed an opportunity to take a grudging attitude toward American artists, and it overlooked the fact that there was no sort of light concert company in England to compete with the Eight.

I have already mentioned Wiedoeft's playing obbligatos in two Henry Burr solos made September 14, 1925, shortly after the introduction of the electric recording process. Within a few weeks afterwards, there was a shake-up in the Eight Popular Victor Artists personnel, and Campbell, Meyer and Croxton were replaced by Carl Mathieu, Stanley Baughman and James Stanley. Sam Herman, a gifted xylophone player, took Wiedoeft's spot. The reorganized Peerless Quartet recorded three numbers on October 23, so the alteration in personnel obviously occurred at some time between Wiedoeft's September 14 appearance with Burr and the October date.

It isn't clear whether the change was the result of a sudden flare-up of temper or whether Burr had been contemplating it for some time. The last record by the "old" Peerless was made July 2, 1925. They sang "Beau-

tiful Isle of Somewhere." On the same day the Sterling Trio (Campbell, Burr and Meyer) recorded "Down Deep in an Irishman's Heart." It is interesting to note that Campbell, Burr, Meyer and Croxton were among the members of the Victor Male Chorus that recorded the Soldiers' Chorus from "Faust" on July 16 and 30, 1925, and that the same group took part in male chorus versions of "Land of Hope and Glory" recorded on September 1 and 15 only five weeks before the "New" Peerless made its first record. Carl Mathieu also participated, so perhaps Burr had already reached an agreement with him, Baughman, Stanley and Herman.

At any rate, the change was made, and Sam Herman succeeded Wiedoeft as the solo instrumentalist. I remember hearing Herman in the spring of 1926, during another of the Victor-sponsored radio programs, and recall Murray's remarks that during a recent coal strike Herman hadn't worried about obtaining fuel to heat his house: "He just kept warm by playing his next number, 'A Bunch of Roses,' on his xylophone."

Herman and Carl Mathieu are, at this writing, the sole surviving members of the Eight Popular Victor Artists. Monroe Silver told me that he and Herman were the only ones who attended Burr's funeral at Mt. Kisco, N.Y., in April, 1941. A short sketch in the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary refers to a Samuel Herman, whom I take to be the xylophonist. He is described as a "composer, author and business man," who was born in New York City, July 9, 1891. He obtained a B.A. degree at Columbia College; had his own mail order business until 1940, and was manager of another mail order business from 1940 to 1954. His songs included "It's Great to be an American." There is no mention of his being a xylophone virtuoso, but I assume the ASCAP Sam Herman and the player are the same.

## VI. After Years

It may be that Wiedoeft decided to leave the Eight because he felt he could earn more by giving recitals "on his own," and because he wanted to visit Europe. Visit it he did, for the October, 1926, *Gramophone and Talking Machine News* said:

"Rudy Wiedoeft's Laughing Saxophone. Rudy Wiedoeft is acknowledged by all players as the master saxophonist. The Columbia Co. wirelessly him in mid-ocean on his way to London to secure his services for a series of recordings by the electric process. The first record, 'La Cinquantaine' and 'Sax-O-Phun,' is just announced. It is a unique record, for here is a new artistry in Marie's daintily tripping 'Cinquantaine.' But it is the reverse side that will tickle public fancy, for Mr. Wiedoeft transforms his instrument into a giggling, guffawing, hysterical, laughing buffoon. . . ."

In January, 1927, reviewing another Wiedoeft record, the British magazine said: "Rudy Wiedoeft is regarded as the finest saxophone player



**TALENTED TRIO.** A HOBBIES reader whose name has been lost sent Jim Walsh this rather battered snapshot a good many years ago. Probably taken about the time Rudy Wiedoeft was a member of the Eight Popular Victor Artists, it includes, left to right, Wiedoeft; Zex Confrey, composer of "Kitten on the Keys" and noted pianist; and Tommy Dorsey, "Swing Band" conductor.

in the world." I think it will be interesting to list the double-faced, dark blue label, 10-inch Columbia records Wiedoeft made during his English stay, since some of them were not issued in America:

4037, La Cinquantaine and Sax-O-Phun; 4076, Souvenir and Llewellyn Waltz; 4083, Adorable and Gloria, fox trots with Percival Mackey's Band; 4237, Sax Serene and Sweetest Kiss of All, with Mackey's Band; 4363, Song of the Volga Boatmen and La Paloma; 4508, Serenade (Drigo) and Melodie; 4839, Minuet (Beethoven) and Valse Manzanetta; and 5063, Serenade (Tchaikowsky) and Serenade-Badine."

The last Wiedoeft records I know of were made for Victor after his return to the States. On December 2, 1927, he played "Marilyn" and "Sax-ema," with piano accompaniments by Nat Shilkret's brother, Jack. That same day he also recorded "Rubenola," one of his compositions, with an accompaniment of violin, banjo and guitar, the latter played by Carson Robison." He likewise recorded "La Golondrina" as a duet with another accomplished saxophonist, Arnold Brilhart, and with Robison's guitar accompaniment.

From that time, his name seems to disappear from record supplements. I was amused to find, some years ago, a late 1927 issue of *The Billboard*, whose back cover was devoted to the advertising of a manufacturer of wind instruments. Included were testimonials from various prominent artists, including Rudy Wiedoeft, with accom-

panying photographs. *The Billboard* must, however, have mislaid Rudy's picture or got it mixed with that of someone else, for the photo represented to be his was that of a "heavy-set" middle-aged man with a bushy black moustache. Whoever the man was he wasn't Rudy Wiedoeft.

After that came teaching and increasingly poor health which led to an early death in 1940. But one thing is certain: Rudy Wiedoeft was regarded in his day as a genius; he is still remembered as one, and as long as records of his playing are collected, his memory will live as that of the wizard who during his lifetime was *The King of the Saxophone*.

## The End

### AMERICAN RECORDS BY RUDY WIEDOEFT

- EDISON DIAMOND DISCS (1917-1924)  
(Numbers of Blue Amberol Cylinders in parentheses)  
50154 (3421) Saxophone Sobs. Reverse: New York Blues (P. Prossini, accordion.)  
50162 (3276) Valse Erica. Reverse: Light as a Feather (John F. Burckhardt, orchestra bells.)  
50862 (4005) Saxema. Reverse: Return of Spring Waltz. (The Three Vagrants—accordion, clarinet and guitar.)  
51339 Saxarella. Reverse: Valse Vanite.  
80398 (3393) Valse Llewellyn. Reverse: My Waikiki Mermaid (Waikiki Hawaiian Orchestra.)  
80578 (4519) Velma—Capriccio. Reverse: Where the River Shannon Flows (Bohumir Kryl, cornet.)  
80589 (4145) Saxophone Fantasie. Reverse: Fantasia from "Simon Boccanegra" (Pietro Caso and Anthony Giammatteo, flute and clarinet.)  
**VICTOR (1921-27)**  
18728 Saxophobia. Reverse: Valse Erica.  
19167 Saxarella. Reverse: Souvenir.  
19771 Vanity (Valse Vanite). Reverse: La Cinquantaine.  
20086 Dans l'Orient. Reverse: Serenade Badine.  
21152 Marilyn. Reverse: Saxema.  
21598 La Golondrina (saxophone duet with Arnold Brilhart.) Reverse: Rubenola.  
**AEOLIAN-VOCALION (1919)**  
Hill-and-Dale  
12239 Valse Erica. Reverse: Migliavacca—Mazurka de Concert. (Perry and Peppini, accordion duet.)  
**AEOLIAN-VOCALION (1920)**  
Lateral Cut  
14088 Valse Erica. Reverse: Saxema (Sic).  
**RUDY WIEDOEFT'S SAXOPHONE SEXTET (March, 1923)**  
14504 Pan-American. Reverse: Country Dance.  
**EMERSON (1919-21)**  
10152 Pretty Little Rainbow—Waltz. Reverse: Mavis—Waltz. (Both duets with George Hamilton Green, xylophone.)  
1043 Valse Erica. Reverse: Saxophobia.  
1050 Llewellyn Waltz. Reverse: Fluffy Ruffles. (George Hamilton Green's Novelty Orchestra.)  
1077 Beautiful Ohio. Reverse: Till We Meet Again. (Both duets with George Hamilton Green, xylophone.)  
10240 Saxema. Reverse: Do Another Break.  
1061 The Moonlight Waltz. Reverse: My Desert Love—Fox Trot (Both duets with Green.)  
**WIEDOEFT-WADSWORTH TRIO**  
10249 Liver and Bacon. Reverse: Don't Take Away Those Blues (Eddie Kuhn's Dance Specialists.)  
**GENNETT (1922)**  
4834 Valse Yvonne. Reverse: Pyramids Polka (Pietro Capodiferro, cornet.)  
**OKEH (1924)**  
4984 Valse Yvonne. Reverse: Page Paderewski—Fox Trot (Piano solo by Pete Wendling.)  
**PATHE' (1919-21)**  
22073 Drigo's Serenade. Reverse: Waltz Llewellyn. (issued on Pathe' Actuelle as 022073.)  
22129 Valse Erica. Reverse: Silver Threads Among the Gold.  
22492 Velma. Reverse: Marriage Bells

(Van Eps-Banta Trio.) (Issued on Pathe's Actuelle as 020492.)

# COLUMBIA (1927-28)

- 761D Sax-o-phun. Reverse: Valse Manzanetta.  
1053D Melodie (Dawes.) Reverse: Song of the Volga Boatmen.  
1204D Llewellyn Waltz. Reverse: Serenade (Drigo.)

# BRUNSWICK (1919-1925)

- 2015 Saxophobia. Reverse: My Cairo Love (All Star Trio.)  
2016 Lonesome Road (Piano accompaniment by Carl Fenton and Harry Akst. Reverse: I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now (Palace Trio.)  
2019 Lewellyn (Sic) and Erica.  
2025 Nobody Knows—Fox Trot. Reverse: Come to the Moon (Gene Rodemich's Orchestra.)  
2041 Saxema. Reverse: Rigoletto Humoresque (Lakesonian Sextet.)  
2071 Saxophone Fantasie. Reverse: Velma.  
2415 Valse Vanite. Reverse: Narcissus (The Wiedoeft Ensemble—saxophone sextet.)  
2534 Vision D'Amour. Reverse: The Rosary (Wiedoeft Ensemble.)  
2825 Danse Hongroise. Reverse: Saxarella.

- 2945 Manzanetta. Reverse: Melodie.  
3325 In the Orient. Reverse: Sax-O-Trix.  
**RUDY WIEDOEFT TRIO**  
(Saxophone, Guitar and Piano) (1924)  
3103 Sax-o-Phun. Reverse: Gloria.

# RECORDS BY THE

- WIEDOEFT-WADSWORTH QUARTET**  
Edison Discs and Blue Amberols (1920)  
50685 (4066) My Sahara Rose—Fox Trot. Reverse: Karzan—Fox Trot (Green Brothers Novelty Band.)  
50696 (4049) Bow-Wow—One-Step. Reverse: Amorita—Fox Trot (Lenzberg's Riverside Orchestra.)

# VICTOR (April, 1920)

- 18663 The Crocodile—Fox Trot. Reverse: I'll See You in C-U-B-A Medley (Palace Trio.)

# PATHE' (1919)

- 2278 I Left My Door Open and My Daddy Walked Out—Fox Trot. Reverse: Oh! Medley. (NOTE.—This record is listed as by the Saxo-Piano Phields, but this probably was the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth group.)

# BRUNSWICK (1920)

- 2042 Tell Me, Little Gypsy—Fox Trot Medley. Reverse: Lone Star—Fox Trot.

# AEOLIAN-VOCALION (1920)

- 14091 Just Like a Gypsy—Fox Trot. Reverse: The Moan—Fox Trot.  
14115 A Mouthful of Kisses—Fox Trot. Reverse: Bow-Wow—One Step (Star Trio.)

# RECORDS BY THE PALACE TRIO

- Edison Blue Amberol (1920)  
4098 Jean  
4119 Missy Medley

# VICTOR (1920)

- 18663 I'll See You in C-U-B-A Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: The Crocodile (Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet.)  
18682 Hold Me Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: Wond'ring—Fox Trot (Selvin's Novelty Orchestra.)  
35695 Nobody But You Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: Oh! By Jingo Medley—Fox Trot (All Star Trio.)

# PATHE' (1919-20)

- 22205 Just For Today—Fox Trot. Reverse: You'll Be Sorry Medley—Fox Trot.  
22243 I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now—One-Step. Reverse: I Want a Daddy—Fox trot.

# BRUNSWICK (1919)

- 2014 Where the Lanterns Glow Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: Lucille—Fox Trot. (Carl Fenton's Orchestra.)  
2016 I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now Medley. Reverse: Lonesome Road (Rudy Wiedoeft, saxophone.)  
2017 You'll Be Sorry Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: Fluffy Ruffles—One-Step (Green Brothers Xylophone Orchestra.)  
2034 Desert Dreams—Fox Trot. Reverse: Missy—Fox Trot.

# AEOLIAN-VOCALION (1920-21)

- 14053 Missy Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: Unlucky Blues.  
14126 Hop Skip and Jump—Fox Trot. Reverse: Beautiful Faces Medley—Fox Trot.  
14115 Bow-Wow—One-Step. Reverse: A Mouthful of Kisses (Wiedoeft-

Wadsworth Quartet.) NOTE.—"Bow-Wow" is listed as by the Star Trio, but this is probably another name for the Palace.

# EMERSON

- 10156 Missy—Fox Trot Medley. Reverse: Oriental Stars—Fox Trot (George Hamilton Green's Novelty Orchestra.)  
10203 The Love Nest—Fox Trot. Reverse: Close to Your Heart Medley—Fox Trot.  
10216 Red—Fox Trot. Reverse: In Sweet September—Fox Trot (Plantation Jazz Orchestra.)  
10218 Spanish Eyes—Fox Trot. Reverse: Anytime, Anyday, Anywhere—Fox Trot (Plantation Jazz Orchestra.)  
10219 Spanish Moon—Fox Trot. Reverse: Bells Medley—Fox Trot (Merry Melody Men.)  
10240 I Love You Sunday—Fox Trot. Reverse: Murder—One-Step. (Plantation Jazz Orchestra.)  
10309 I Want to be Somebody's Baby—Fox Trot. Reverse: That Cat Step—Fox Trot.  
1062 Where the Lanterns Glow Medley—Fox Trot. Reverse: You'll Be Sorry Medley—Fox Trot

# OKEH (1921)

- 4211 Coral Sea—Fox Trot. Reverse: Margie—Fox Trot (Rega Dance Orchestra.)

# RECORDS BY

# RUDY WIEDOEFT'S CALIFORNIANS

- Edison Diamond Discs & Blue Amberols (1922-23)  
50891 (4452) Georgia Rose—Fox Trot. Reverse: It's You—Fox Trot (4461.)  
51020 (4660) Rose of Bonbay—Fox Trot. Reverse: Say It While Dancing—Fox Trot (Vincent Lopez's Broadway Orchestra.)

# PATHE' SAPPHIRE

- (Hill and Dale) (1921)  
22467 Beautiful Faces—Fox Trot. Reverse: Show Me How—Fox Trot.

# PATHE' ACTUELLE

- Lateral Cut) (1922)  
020656 Wabash Blues—Fox Trot. Reverse: Everybody Step—Fox Trot (Vincent Lopez & His Orchestra.)  
020771 Swanee Bluebird—Fox Trot. Reverse: Rustic Ann—Fox Trot.

# BRUNSWICK (1921-22)

- 2056 Beautiful Faces—Fox Trot. Reverse: Grieving for You—Fox Trot (Green Brothers Novelty Band.)  
2065 Hop, Skip and Jump—Fox Trot. Reverse: Hula Blues—Fox Trot (Green Brothers Novelty Band.)  
2072 In the Dusk—Fox Trot. Reverse: Midnight Blues—Waltz, composed by Al Bernard and Ernest Hare (Carl Fenton's Orchestra.)  
2081 Humming—Fox Trot. Reverse: Na Jo—Fox Trot.  
2096 I'll Keep On Loving You—Fox Trot. Reverse: I Lost My Heart to You (Fox Trot.)

- 2102 Jabberwocky—Fox Trot. Reverse: Tea Leaves—Fox Trot.  
2139 Say It With Music—Fox Trot. Reverse: South Sea Isles Medley—Fox Trot.

- 2157 Somewhere in Naples—Fox Trot. Reverse: When Buddha Smiles — Fox Trot.

- 2175 Broken Toy—Fox Trot. Reverse: The Sheik—Fox Trot.  
2191 Song of India—Fox Trot. Reverse: Gray Morn—Fox Trot.

- 2248 Lonesome Hours—Fox Trot. Reverse: Old Fashioned Girl — Fox Trot.

- 2275 Little Thoughts—Fox Trot. Reverse: Sing Song Man—Fox Trot.  
2283 Suez—Fox Trot. Reverse: Where the Volga Flows—Fox Trot.

# AEOLIAN-VOCALION (1921-22)

- 14193 My Man—Fox Trot. Reverse: Tiddle—Fox Trot.

- 14206 Listening—Fox Trot. Reverse: Shivaroe—One-Step.  
14251 June Moon—Fox Trot. Reverse: When Buddha Smiles—Fox Trot.

- 14263 April Showers—Fox Trot. Reverse: Stars—Fox Trot.

- 14285 Dear Old Southland—Fox Trot. Reverse: Song of India—Fox Trot.

- 14290 Blushes—Fox Trot. Reverse: Old-Fashioned Girl—Fox Trot.

- 14320 Mr. and Mrs.—Fox Trot. Reverse: Rosy Posy—Fox Trot.

- 14345 Swanee Bluebird—Fox Trot. Reverse: Sweet Indiana Home—Fox Trot.

# THE COLLECTOR READS:

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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# "COME TAKE A TRIP IN MY AIRSHIP" (Seventy Years Of Aviation Songs)

By JIM WALSH

(Note: This article is dedicated to Bill Knowlton of Syracuse, N.Y., an Air Force Lieutenant who collects records about fliers and flying.)...

### I. All in a Lifetime

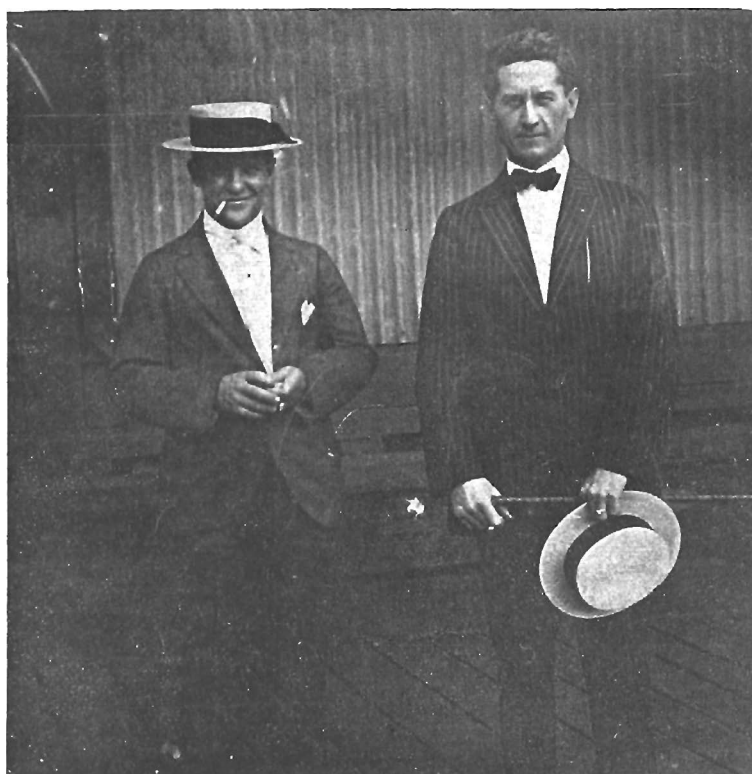
Seventy years is the generally accepted normal span of a human life. To an individual, three-score years and ten may seem a long time, but, viewed as a part of recorded history, they are hardly more than the blinking of an eye. Even so, 70 years is a period long enough for great changes to occur between its beginning and end. To illustrate, let us consider the development of the now thrice familiar airplane.

This survey is intended for the January, 1974, HOBBIES, and should come to the attention of readers about the middle of the preceding December. That will be approximately 70 years since Orville and Wilbur Wright made their first experimental flights at Kitty Hawk, N.C., on December 17, 1903. Their pioneer plane remained aloft, during four attempts, from 12 to 59 seconds. Most American newspapers ignored this historic achievement.

Obviously, aviation did not have an awe-inspiring beginning. But within little more than 10 years from the Wrights' first fumbling efforts, planes were dropping bombs on cities in the first World War. Within less than a quarter of a century Charles A. Lindbergh had flown across the Atlantic to France. Within 40 years air travel around the world was commonplace. And in less than the traditional life span, men had soared 250,000 miles to the moon and safely returned. All this had been done within an average lifetime.

Which brings us to the subject of this scholarly dissertation. During the 70 years since the Wright Brothers made history, there have been many songs written about man's new-found ability to fly, and the more outstanding ones have been recorded. Not only that, but old record catalogs include a fair-sized sprinkling of comic and descriptive specialties dealing with air travel. Knowing this, it seems appropriate to observe the 70th anniversary of that epoch-making happening on the Carolina sand dunes by discussing aviation recordings.

No claim is made that the list will



RAGTIME KING. Seventy years ago GENE GREENE (left) was known in vaudeville as "The King of Ragtime." In 1911 he wrote a song about flying, called "I'm Going to Stay On Solid Ground," which he recorded for Victor. This picture of him about to leave solid ground for the briny deep was taken by Albert Deane in 1912 on the Olympic Steamship Lines pier at Sydney, Australia. To Greene's right is Fred Niblo, noted theatrical producer.

be absolutely complete. Titles of songs and records have been jotted down almost entirely from memory, and it is likely that some, worthy of being included, haven't been recalled.

One record, however, did come to mind after being initially overlooked. A week or more after I had made notes of all the airplane songs I could think of, I fell asleep, but woke about 15 minutes later, seeming to hear a voice intoning, "I'm Going to Stay on Solid Ground." Sleepily sitting up in bed, I recalled those words as the title of a song recorded by Gene Greene, the famous vaudeville comedian, for Victor, and issued in July, 1911, on single-faced record No. 5848. Gene wrote the words and Chris Smith the music. The supplement said:

"Don't fail to hear the darky tell about his trip in the aeroplane, and learn why he is willing to leave such aerial stunts to the white man hereafter."

Unquestionably, my sub-conscious mind had worked while I slept. I have since recalled a few other numbers that at first didn't occur to me.

In early flying songs, and through the 1920's, the word "airplane" was seldom, if ever used. At first "airship" was preferred, but "aeroplane" soon took its place. No doubt some songs in old record catalogs mention flying machines, but their titles do not suggest anything having to do with air travel. The most I can say is that this symposium is a generous representative, if not all-inclusive.

One more point: I don't intend to

(Continued from preceding page)

mention *all* the recordings of some popular numbers, such as the songs hailing Lindbergh after his successful journey to Paris. These were pressed under many obscure labels as well as the standard brands. Preference will be given to the production of the larger record companies, with less attention to minor firms.

## II. The First "Airship" Recordings

Even before the Wright Brothers were born there had been songs describing the joys of flying, but with balloons as the medium of transportation. Let's go back more than one hundred years. In 1869 an Englishman, G. W. Hunt, wrote a cheerful ditty called "Up in a Balloon," which referred to flying "over the Monument" on Fish Street Hill and over St. Paul's. An American version with different words, written by George Leybourne, was issued in this country. Still another had words by H. B. Farnie. I can think of only one recording of "Up in a Balloon." It is sung at the beginning of "Songs of the Past, No. 19," issued in 1917 on Victor 12-inch record No. 35585, and sung by the Victor Mixed Chorus. I am amused that the other side, No. 20, begins by way of contrast with "Down in a Coal Mine."

James L. Thornton, one of the leading popular song writers of the Nineties foresaw the possibility of a trip to the moon in a balloon when he wrote "My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon," in 1892. The singer is supposed to be a girl who is in love with the mythical occupant of the sterile, rocky orb that shines at night.

Since Edison's tinfoil phonograph was only 15 years old in 1892 and his instrument playing wax cylinders had been brought out just four years earlier, I doubted that any contemporary recordings had been made of the Thornton song. Research showed, however, that the North American Phonograph Company, which mismanaged Edison's talking machine business for a few years, made a cylinder, No. 484, the year the song came out. It was sung by Edward Clarence, a baritone and one of the first performers to gain popularity through recordings. *The Phonogram* for March, 1902, contained a pen-and-ink drawing, showing him with a moustache and hair parted in the middle. A brief description said:

"Edward Clarence was born at Boston, Mass., in 1863. At an early age Mr. Clarence developed decided vocal talent. His singing has met with the approval of the public and he has appeared in nearly every prominent vaudeville theater in the United States and Canada. His enunciation is clear and distinct and his records for the Phonograph are deservedly popular."

Mr. Clarence must have passed on years ago, but I don't know when. Probably Columbia also made a brown, white, yellow, or some other color wax cylinder of "My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon," but I haven't been able to find it listed.

The song had a long rest, so far as record companies were concerned, until 1926, when Manuel Romain, then slowly dying of the cancer which took his life later that year, sang it on Edison Diamond Disc 51837. It was coupled with another old-time Jim Thornton number, "She May Have Seen Better Days." There is nothing about the sound of the record to denote that Romain, who was then 56, was a dying man. His voice sounds as strong and well as it had on cylinders made nearly 20 years before.

Perhaps some older readers would like to have the hitting chorus recalled to their memory. The first refrain goes:

"My sweetheart's the man in the moon. I'm going to marry him soon.  
"I would fill me with bliss just to give him one kiss,  
But I know that a dozen I never would miss.  
I'll go up in a great big balloon to see my old man in the moon.  
And behind a dark cloud, where no one's allowed,  
I'll make love to the man in the moon."

The first successful air travel song written after the Wrights put their pioneer plane through its preliminary paces was "Come Take a Trip in My Airship." This melody was published in 1904, a few months after the Kitty Hawk experiment, with words by Ren Shields and music by George "Honey Boy" Evans. Two years earlier they had produced the big hit of 1902, "In the Good Old Summer Time."

As far as I could ascertain, the first recording of the "Airship" song, from which this survey takes its title, was the Victor single-faced disc, No. 2986, which came out in September or October, 1904, and was sung by — as you've probably guessed — Billy Murray, then just beginning to win recognition as the most popular of pioneer recording artists. It is amazing how many recording "firsts" the Denver Nightingale had to his credit. Among others, he apparently was the first singer to make a record mentioning television. This was done in a song called "Main Street," issued on Edison Diamond Disc No. 52609 in the summer of 1929. Billy's name does not appear on this side of the disc, which is labeled as being by "Cy Pitkin and the Town Band." On the other side, and under his true name, he sings "In Old Tia Juana." The video reference is, "If there should be television, I have made a firm decision" — to tune in the doings on the Main Street of his home town.

But back to "Come Take a Trip," Billy's two-minute Edison cylinder version, No. 8874, was issued in January, 1905. The description is worth quoting, especially since it includes the words of the refrain:

"A serio-comic waltz song that has recently become very popular. The theme is a new one as will be seen from the chorus:

"Come take a trip in my airship;  
Come take a sail 'mong the stars;  
Come have a ride around Venus;

## OBITUARY

### ELLIOTT SHAW

Elliott Shaw, a leading recording artist from 1917 through the 1930's, died August 13 in Lawrence Hospital, Bronxville, N.Y., near his home in Eastchester.

Mr. Shaw, who was 86, was born April 10, 1887, in Davenport, Ia. He was following a musical career in the New York City area in 1917 when he learned that the Victor Talking Machine Company had asked Wilfred Glenn, the famous basso, to organize a new quartet for making Victor records.

Shaw, a baritone, applied for a post in the quartet, which became known as the Shannon Four. Other members were Charles Hart, first tenor, and Harvey Hindermeyer, second tenor, but Hindermeyer left after about a year and was succeeded by Lewis James. All members of the quartet are deceased.

In 1925, the quartet, with Franklyn Baur as first tenor, instead of Hart, who had gone to Germany to study for opera, added Ed Smalle as pianist and "harmony man," and began to specialize in jazz-style singing. The group, with some changes of personnel, was popular all through the remaining 1920's and 1930's. It made hundreds of records under more than one name, but was best known as the Revelers, and was a featured radio attraction for many years. For several years Hart and Shaw were among the most popular recording teams.

After retiring, the baritone lived in Sharon, Conn., but upon the death of his wife, who had been Miss Abigail Schauf, he moved to Eastchester to be with his daughter, Barbara, who is Mrs. Joseph C. Denmark. He was almost blind and deaf at the time of his death, but had been considered in good health. His death occurred just three days after the beginning of his illness.

Besides Mrs. Denmark, Mr. Shaw is survived by a son, Douglas T. Shaw, of Pawling, N.Y., and three grandchildren — Elliott, Abigail and Filomena Shaw.

Jim Walsh intends to write a biographical account of Mr. Shaw's life and recording career for *HOBBIES' Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists* department.

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(Continued on page 120)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Come have a spin around Mars.  
No one to watch while we're kissing.  
No one to see while we spoon.  
Come take a trip in my airship,  
And we'll visit the man in the moon'.

"George Evans, composer of 'In the Good Old Summer Time,' wrote the melody and to its catchy swing may be attributed its quick jump into popular favor. . . . Billy Murray does both writers full justice with his fine phrasing and distinct articulation."

Zonophone made a nine-inch disc of this first airplane song, which came out in February, 1905. It was No. 6035 and was sung by "Frank Howard," who was really Albert Campbell.

J. W. Myers, a baritone who was then one of the leading recording artists, sang "Come Take a Trip" on both a cylinder and a disc for Columbia's combined November and December, 1904, list. Evans, its composer, when singing it on the stage, would ask the audience to join in whistling the chorus, and Myers does the same stunt. As he is about to begin the second refrain he says, "Will the audience kindly join me in whistling the chorus?" and he receives assistance, presumably from the orchestra. The disc was No. 1878 and the cylinder, 32589.

A quarter of a century later, in 1929, Columbia revived the song for its country music series, on record No. 15385D but under the erroneous title of "I Once Loved a Sailor." It was sung and played by a North Carolina hill-billy, Charlie Poole, and the North Carolina Ramblers. Poole probably had picked the song up by hearing other country musicians sing it and didn't know the correct title, but it seems somebody in the Columbia artist and repertoire department should have. His knowledge of the words was faulty, probably because of their being learned at second or third hand.

In 1907 there was a return to a song about the balloon as a travel mode. Harry Tally sang a number called "Ballooning" on Zonophone 10-inch record No. 863 and on Victor 5213. The Victor supplement didn't give the composer's name, but said the composition was introduced in a musical comedy, "Fascinating Flora," which starred Adele Ritchie.

### III. More Airplane Songs & Sketches

A few paragraphs farther up I gave the unintendedly misleading impression that Billy Murray's "Airship" record was the first inspired by the Wright Brothers' stunt. So far as songs are concerned the statement may stand, but the very first aviation record appears to be Victor Monarch 2803, "Reuben Haskins' Trip 'Round the World In His Airship." (A month or two later it was available in a longer version on 12-inch disc No. 31215). The smaller size was announced in June, 1904—less than six



"DENVER NIGHTINGALE." BILLY MURRAY, the greatest name among early "popular" recording artists, probably was the first singer to record an airplane song when he sang "Come Take a Trip in My Airship" for Victor and Edison in 1904.

months after the Kitty Hawk escapade. No one who is familiar with the alert mental processes of the astonishing Len Spencer, and who knows how quick he always was to seize upon any popular topic as a subject for a descriptive record, will be surprised to see how quickly he introduced his "rube" character, Reuben Haskins, of Skowhegan, Me., to the airplane. He had previously had Reuben ride in a "cyclone auto" and take a steamship voyage to Europe. No wonder the man from Maine now became the first aviator to circumnavigate the world—and to do it all within the confines of a phonograph record that played about two minutes and 40 seconds.

Spencer was assisted in making the record by Parke Hunter, a skilled banjoist who could also play nearly every other instrument. The supplement description is amusing:

"The Air Ship is all ready to fly from Skowhegan — 'All ready, Ezra?' 'Yes, dad!' 'Then let 'er go!' Skowhegan's prominent citizens give the great inventor an ovation as he flies Eastward.—Ocean liners look like flies — they pass over Ireland — Ezra whistles an Irish tune—'What's that smell? Limburger and Germany, b'gosh!' — 'Look out for the Alps, Ezra!' 'Turkey is crossed as Ezra whistles a celebrated dance. Full speed—the wind rises — the Philippines — across the Pacific in four seconds — the Golden Gate — the Mississippi — 'Don't butt into the Capitol, Ezra!' Statue of Liberty — Home again — 'Yankee Doodle,' by Ezra — 'Three cheers for the greatest country on earth!'"

I wonder if Len Spencer intended the Reuben Haskins series as a rival to Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" stories about the people of Punkin Center. It's amusing to note that in one of the series—"Reuben Haskins' Ride on a Cyclone Auto"—on Columbia double-

faced disc No. A375, the label says the record was made by Len Spencer, with no mention of anyone else, but when it is played the preliminary announcement describes it as "by Len and Henry Spencer." Why wasn't younger brother Harry mentioned on the label? Harry takes the part of the wealthy motorist who gives Reuben a ride to "Tall Trees Center," and Len is the countryman from Skowhegan frightened almost into convulsions by the speed of the car, which destroys everything in its path. How did so terrified a rustic, blossom into the inventor of an around-the-world airplane! Toward the end of the record, as the motorist lets Reuben out of the car, he says: "Hope to have the pleasure of running across you some time!" and the squeaky-voiced Reuben replies: "Run across me? No, by chowder, I guess not—not if I see you fust!"

In 1909 Len had another try at writing an airplane skit, which he recorded with the assistance of Ada Jones. On Victor it was called "Zeb Green's Airship" and was combined on record No. 16342 with "Oh, You Lovin' Gal," by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. The October record supplement commented: ". . . A new airship record by Miss Jones and Mr. Spencer. Cast of characters: Circus Manager; Zeb Green, inventor; Bridegroom and Parson — Len Spencer. Bride and Vocalist — Ada Jones." Thus it will be seen that the endlessly versatile Len played four parts.

A month later, Edison issued the sketch on two-minute cylinder, No. 10254, but the name of "Zeb" was changed to "Zep." The supplement said:

"Zep Green is making his initial trip as a navigator of the air as well as of the sea of matrimony. They take the parson up with them in the airship — and down again when it collapses and falls into the river. Mechanical devices, a band, singing, cheering, and remarks from the crowd contribute to the novelty of the record."

What a long distance there was between this satiric "rube" sketch and a disc issued in the late 1920's by English Columbia! On No. 9161, Sir Alan Cobham, who flew from England to Melbourne, Australia (not non-stop) in 1926, used both sides of the 12-inch record to tell "How to Fly an Aeroplane." How would you like to be a passenger in a plane whose pilot had learned to fly by listening to a phonograph record? Sir Alan's flight began June 30 and he returned to London October 1.

English Columbia came through with another unusual one in mid-August, 1930, when Amy Johnson, C. B. E., told on 10-inch record No. DB189, "The Story of My Flight." (The other side was taken up with "The Royal Air Force March," played by the Band of H. M. Royal Air Force, conducted by Flight Lieutenant J. H. Amers.) I don't recall anything about Miss Johnson's aviation fame, but the supplement ecstatically exclaimed:

"The record of the year. The story of her flight from England to Australia told by Amy Johnson herself — simply but eloquently narrated in a girlish voice, but thrilling in its impressive simplicity. A historic record that all will treasure. It was recorded in Sydney (N. S. W.) by special permission of the 'London Daily Mail' and is exclusive to Columbia."

"Columbia is proud to announce that they have recorded the very charming and confident voice of Miss Amy Johnson, narrating her thrilling flight from England to Australia. The story is quite exciting and modestly told. It reveals clearly the splendid personality of the world's most intrepid air-girl. This issue is timely, for Miss Johnson has just been experiencing her national welcome on her return to England."

I can't think of any recordings about Amelia Earhart, the most famous American woman aviator of 40-odd years ago, but surely there must have been a few "hill billy" tunes dealing with her baffling disappearance, just as there was a song written to praise a now forgotten aviatrix, Ruth Elder, who tried unsuccessfully to fly from the United States to France, a few months after Lindbergh's historic flight.

In February, 1928, Edison issued a Diamond Disc, No. 52183, of "Flaming Ruth," sung and spoken, to the accompaniment of various airplane noises, by Arthur Fields. Four Tin Pan Alley denizens appear to have had a hand in composing this far from remarkable number, which termed Miss Elder "a Yankee Joan of Arc." One was Lyn, whose first name I lack, and the others were Alfred Bryan, Harry Axt and Carl Mendoza.

Until I consulted the 1928 World Almanac I couldn't have told you anything about Ruth Elder's airborne adventures. It seems that, riding in "The American Girl," with George Haldeman as pilot, she left Roosevelt Field, N. Y., at 5:04 p.m., on Tuesday, October 11, 1927, in an attempted trip to Paris. On the following Thursday a broken oil line caused the plane to land near the Dutch oil tanker, Barendrecht, about 350 miles northeast of the Azores and after a flight of some 2,623 miles. And then, the almanac says, "The fliers proceeded to France, via the Azores, where they were given an enthusiastic welcome similar to those accorded their more successful predecessors."

Since Miss Elder was not piloting the plane, but was only along for the ride, and since the flight was unsuccessful, it seems to me she was acclaimed as "Flaming Ruth," a heroine of the air, on rather unsubstantial grounds.

#### IV. More Old Songs and Sketches

Two years or so after the Wright Brothers' flight, Monroe H. Rosenfeld and Alfred Solman wrote a song that may, or may not, have had a relationship to airplaning. It was called "I'm Up in the Air About Mary," and was sung by Billy Murray on Edison two-minute cylinder No. 9329, issued in August, 1906. Nearly a quarter of a century later, in 1929, Columbia revived the song for its hill-billy cata-

log, as it had "Come Take a Trip in My Airship." I heard the country music version by Riley Puckett a good many years ago, but don't remember whether there was any reference to aviation.

There is no doubt about the meaning of "Up In My Aeroplane," sung by Harry Macdonough and the Haydn Quartet, which was issued in September, 1909, on Victor No. 16340—just two numbers ahead of "Zeb Green's Airship." The supplement described it briefly as "the latest aeroplane ballad."

In June, 1910, Arthur Collins was represented in the Victor list, on No. 16498, with what would have been called in those days "a coon aeroplane song." The title was "Let Me Down Easy" and the amusing words described how Sam Johnson who was of an inventive mind, built a device which is called in one place an "airship" and in another a "balloon." Sam was flying high, wide and handsome when the apparatus exploded, and the angels heard him proclaim that if his life was spared he would "go to church and read the Good Book like it's never been read before." Sam also promised that he would "never build no more machinery things till the Good Lord gives me a pair of wings." The other side of this Collins classic was "I'll Make a Ring Around Rosie," sung by the Haydn Quartet.

Another excellent comic song about "aeroplaning" is "Take Me Up With You, Dearie," sung by Billy Murray and the Haydn Quartet and issued on Victor single-faced disc No. 5718, in August, 1909. Afterwards it was made available on double-faced disc No. 16769, coupled with Murray's "I Love My Wife, But Oh You Kid." The supplement remarked:

"The recent success of the Wright Brothers has made a crop of aero songs a foregone conclusion. Here is the best of these numbers, which describes the aerial courtship of two fond lovers. A 'patter chorus' by Murray, a remarkable feat of enunciation, is alone worth the price."

That concluding sentence is an understatement. Billy runs through the patter chorus so rapidly, but with such perfect distinctness, that I always begin gasping when I hear it and feel as if my own supply of breath has been abruptly cut off.

"The Denver Nightingale," alias Murray, also sang this number on Edison cylinder No. 10213. The supplement does not indicate whether it contains that rapid-fire "patter."

I have an idea that a song issued in 1930 on Columbia record No. 15453D (the "familiar tunes old and new" series), appeared originally as a popular song of the early 1900's, although I have been unable to trace it. The name is "Papa, Please Buy Me an Airship," and its style is like the maudlin "kid songs" that Charles K. Harris and other Tin Pan Alley writers turned out in such profusion. Despite its naivete, it is still too sophisticated in treatment to be a

genuine "folk ballad." The tear-jerking lyrics tell of a little girl asking her father to buy her an "airship," so that she and he can fly to Heaven and bring her dead mother back home. The completely unknown singer of this dirge is listed as James Johnson. On the reverse side Mr. Johnson sings that perennial standby, "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet." I imagine both songs were of about the same period, 1909.

This idea of a child wanting to communicate with her dead mother was used on a 1929 Edison disc, No. 52507, "I'd like to Send a Message Up to Heaven," composed by Fred Hall and sung and played by "Pop Collins and His Boys." (Hall probably was "Collins.") Two years earlier, on Edison No. 52096, the Radio Franks (Frank Bessinger and Frank White) had sung another song with the same worn-out idea, "Mister Aeroplane Man (Take Me Up to Heaven.)"

In December, 1909, Columbia marketed an amusing skit by Fred Duprez and Bob Roberts called "Blitz and Blatz in an Aeroplane." The supplement description brings a smile:

"Our distinguished German friends, Blitz and Blatz are here depicted in a novel situation and one which Blitz finds extremely disconcerting. He runs across Blatz, who is preparing to make an aeroplane flight, and is inveigled by the latter into joining him. He does so, though not without some misgivings, and when they finally get up into the clouds his condition of 'cold feet' becomes pitiable. After a series of spectacular adventures, the machine finally catches fire and the closing scene is extremely amusing."

#### V. The Biggest Aviation Song Hit

The year 1911 brought recordings of what was probably the most successful of all aviation songs, "Come, Josephine, In My Flying Machine." Victor's first version was announced in March, sung on Purple Label disc No. 60032. The artist was the popular vaudeville comedienne, Blanche Ring, whose photo also appeared on the song's sheet music. (See the accompanying illustration).

"Josephine" was such a success that in May, Victor issued it as a Black Label, double-faced record No. 16844. It is by Ada Jones and the American Quartet, according to the label, although it is really a duet between Miss Jones and Billy Murray, with the quartet coming in for the refrain. The coupling was "Thro' the Hole in the Fence," a humorous discussion of baseball by Murry K. Hill. A few months later Victor decided the airplane song needed a more suitable companion than a comic monolog and paired it, on No. 16953, with "I Love It," by the American Quartet.

Ada and Billy, with the quartet, also made the Edison cylinder versions—No. 10506 on the two-minute Standard and 659 on the four-minute Amberol. After the indestructible Blue Amberols were introduced, the four-minute was taken into that catalog as No. 1949, and for years was one of the most popular Edison cylinders.

(Continued on page 127)



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 121)

It is hard to concentrate on writing when you have to get up every ten minutes of a cold November day and let a cat go outdoors or come inside, but I am trying. Having just returned upstairs after acting as doorman for Professor Plum Duff Walsh, Ph. D., I can say that Ada Jones had a near-monopoly of participating in records of "Come, Josephine." She was not able to use Billy Murray as a partner in U. S. Everlasting cylinders, but substituted Henry Burr on No. 1186. She also sang the "flying machine" melody as a solo on Indestructible cylinder No. 1468. The Columbia disc, however, was made by Harry Tully, the lead tenor of the Empire City Quartet, and was incongruously paired with "The Washington Grays March," by Prince's Band. Shortly afterward, Columbia, like Victor, decided to do some recoupling, and gave the Washington Grays a more appropriate companion — "The National Emblem March," on No. A1025, also by Prince's Band. Now, no thanks to constant feline interruptions, I have lost the notes from which I have been working and can't keep going until I find them.

Thirty-six hours later. I have at last found the notes, beneath my bed and so far beyond reach I had to rake them out with a yardstick. How they managed to leave my typing stand, while I was referring to them and hide beneath that bed, I don't think I shall ever understand. But to resume:

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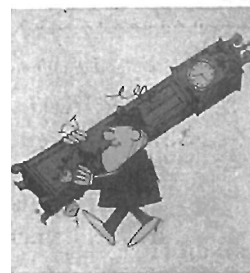
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"There is a sun-dial in the garden of old St. Mark, near Venice, with this inscription 'Horas non numero nisi serenas.' Translated, the motto would be: I count only the sunny hours."

Koven's "The Wedding Trip." Five months later, in October, Columbia came through with "The Air King March," played by Prince's Band on A1200. It had one of those frequently remarkable Columbia couplings, "Fiddle Dee Dee," a comic song written by E. Ray Goetz and Irving Berlin, who had married Goetz's sister, Dorothy. (She lived only about a year after the marriage and Berlin wrote "When I Lost You" as a tribute to her memory). The singers were Lew Dockstader, the minstrel impresario, and the Peerless Quartet.

Meanwhile, in August, Victor had issued No. 17113, "That Aeroplane Glide," sung by this same Peerless and coupled with "That Sneaky Snakey Rag," by Collins and Harlan. I find Catalog Editor Sam Rous' sour summing up somewhat amusing:

"Even the aeroplane cannot escape the universal tendency of the song writers to seize upon anything in the universe for a subject for a 'glide,' 'swing' or 'trot.' With this new 'glide' is another 'rag'—and the catalog editor refuses to comment further!"

Other "aeroplane" recordings, issued just before, or shortly after, the beginning of World War I, include: "The Aeroplane Tango," a Charles A. Prince composition, played by the Municipal Band of Buenos Aires, on Columbia A1464; the same piece, but this time by Prince's Band, on No. A1541, with a tango dancing lesson on the other side; and "The Aeroplane Slide," sung by that ubiquitous Peerless Quartet on No. A1600, and coupled with a very popular Collins and Harlan "monkey" offering, "The Aba Daba Honeymoon." Edison got into the act of putting out a dance number, "The Aeroplane Dip," played by the National Promenade Band, on Blue Amberol 2385.

(To Be Continued  
Next Month)



BIG SONG HIT, "Come, Josephine" was probably the most widely popular of all aviation songs. When it was published in 1911 it was recorded by such artists as Ada Jones, Billy Murray and the American Quartet; Harry Tully, and Blanche Ring, whose photo is shown on this print of the sheet music cover.

In May, 1912, Columbia issued one of the most obscure airplane recordings — No. A1135, the "Aeroplane Duet" from "Little Boy Boy," a musical comedy whose composer's name is given as Bereny. It was sung by Charles Harrison and Beulah Gaylord Young, who some years later became Mrs. Harrison. On the other side was another Harrison-Young duet "Awakened Love" from Reginald de

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# "COME TAKE A TRIP IN MY AIRSHIP" (Seventy Years Of Aviation Songs)

(Continued From January Issue)

By JIM WALSH

### VI. The War and Afterward

I have not searched intensively through British catalogs of the First World War period, but it seems a reasonable assumption that some of the English companies issued patriotic songs or descriptive specialties in which aviation as a means of warfare played a part. Songs of this type were recorded by American companies in World War II—"Johnny Zero" and "He Wears a Pair of Silver Wings" are examples—but considering anything issued much after 1930 is beyond the scope of this survey.

I have one wartime English record that I doubt is possessed by many, if any, other Americans. It is Edison Bell Winner No. 2828, and was made in 1915. On one side Jack Judge sings "Paddy Maloney's Aeroplane," and on the other, "Have You Heard of Michael O'Leary?" An odd thing about the disc is that the aeroplane side has the Winner label, but its reverse is a Beta—a brand otherwise unknown to me. (Obviously, Winner records were pressed for some private trader with his own Beta label). The disc has a touch of historic significance, because Jack Judge was the author of the First World War marching song classic, "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary," and, although the labels don't say so, he presumably also had a hand in writing these two now forgotten tunes.

Another airplane recording in my collection, which I doubt could be duplicated in the States, is an eight-inch Broadcast disc, No. BA20, from Australia. This so-called "electrically recorded long play record" probably was made about 1929. Both sides are by a comedian, Keith Desmond, who seems to have specialized in portraying Cockney types, and neither is highly amusing to American ears. One of the monologues is "Gimme the Ground," an expression of the Cockney's aversion to airplaning, and the other is "A Cockney Version of 'The Death of Nelson.'"

After the United States entered World War I, American song writers paid small attention to the "aeroplane's" part in conflict, but an aviation sketch or two was recorded with some success. I have in mind especially "A Battle in the Air," which came out in November, 1918, just as



HIGH UP. FRED DUPREZ, famous vaudeville comedian, assisted by BOB ROBERTS, recorded a humorous sketch for Columbia called "Blitz and Blatz in an Air Ship." The man in this picture is not Fred Duprez, but his brother Charles, who was recognized as one of the best daredevil photographers in New York City. He seems to have gone about as high here to get a picture as Blitz and Blatz ascended in their plane.

the war was ending, on double-faced Columbia A2626, and was also issued on Edison Blue Amberol 3618. The Columbia was by the (again!) Peerless Quartet of Albert Campbell, Henry Burr, Arthur Collins and John Meyer, and the cylinder was made by "the Premier Quartet and Company." The quartet was John Young, Billy Murray, Steve Porter and William F. Hooley, and the "Company" was Edward Meeker, who chuckled occasionally and issued some military commands. On the reverse of the Columbia was "A Submarine Attack Somewhere at Sea," by the Peerless, which also was made (by the Premier and Company) on Edison disc as well as Blue Amberol. Edison's files show that the quartet making the submarine attack record was Young, Murray, Porter and Donald Chalmers, and the "Company" consisted of Meeker and Helen Clark, who takes the part of a Red Cross nurse, with two sentences to speak.

According to the Edison lists, both sketches were written by Theodore Morse, one of the greatest popular song writers, but Columbia credits the "Submarine Attack" to the entire Peerless Quartet, and "The Battle in

the Air" to Campbell, Collins and Morse—all of whom were members of the troupe soon to be known as the Eight Famous Victor Artists. The Columbia supplement description of this coupling is rather interesting:

"Eight bells and all's well" opens 'The Submarine Attack,' but the singing of the boys in the forecabin is soon stopped when the sub is sighted. Then the fun begins and you get all the thrills in this clever descriptive, which only stops with the 'direct hit.' Only more exciting is the 'Air Raid' over the trenches where the very hum of the motor is heard amid all the excitement of the bombardment. There is a lot of realism in the atmosphere and a lot of human nature in the conversations and singing of the soldiers in both these descriptives."

Another sketch of the same period was Edison No. 50478, "The Colored Recruits," in which Billy Heins, as a recruiting officer, seeks to enlist Billy Golden as a Negro soldier. When Heins asks Golden if he would like aviation duty, the "raw recruit" replies to this effect: "No, sir, no indeedy, not for dis nigger! Terra cotta is good enough for me!"

I have already said that I am not taking recordings of the World War II period into consideration, but I will modify this assertion by remark-

(Continued from preceding page)

ing that the last record ever made by Billy Murray (and Monroe Silver), "Casey and Cohen in the Army," on Beacon No. 2001, contains somewhat similar dialog. On this 1942 disc, Billy tells "Mike" that aviation service really isn't dangerous, "because, Cohen, every man has a number and you don't go until the good Lord calls your number"—to which the skeptical Cohen replies, "Yes, Casey, but what if the good Lord calls your pilot's number?"

In 1919, Lew Brown and Albert Von Tilzer wrote a successful comic song, "Wait Till You Get Them Up in the Air, Boys." It advised the young swains of 50-odd years ago who were not making enough "court-ting" progress to take their girl friends for plane rides, because: "You can make them hug and kiss you, too, for if they don't, just say you won't come down until they do... There never was a girl who'd fall that far for any man," the song writers said. Billy Murray recorded this song for Victor and Columbia, and Irving Kaufman for Emerson. About three years later Murray made for Victor a record of what may be considered a sequel: "I Was Married Up in the Air (I've Been Up in the Air Ever Since.)"

Another song with the same idea as "Wait Till You Get Them Up" came out in 1927. It was called "You Can't Walk Back From An Aeroplane (So What Are You Girls Gonna Do?)" Billy Jones & Ernest Hare sang it for Columbia, and Jack Kaufman for Edison. No doubt there were other recordings, but it doesn't seem worth while to try to trace them all.

This seems a suitable place to mention "Katie, Keep Your Feet on the Ground," which Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray recorded for Victor on June 13, 1929, and which was issued on No. 22040, with "Oh Baby, What a Night!" by Murray and Walter Scanlan as its coupling. "Katie" is a fine comic song in which Billy, as the girl's mother, objects to her joy riding in the air with her boy friend, "Clancy." It is the same type of skit as "Maggie (Come Right Upstairs!)" and "Bridget O'Flynn," and is equally amusing. On that same June day Billy and Aileen recorded "Please Don't Cut Out My Sauerkraut," but it remains unissued.

#### VII. Recorded Tragedies of the Air

Vernon Dalhart's recordings of "The Wreck of the Old 97" swept the United States in 1924-25 and established a pattern of commemorating railway fatalities. Airplane crashes were a less fertile field for writers of the country music school, but they were not overlooked.

Perhaps the first aviation tragedy to be related on records was that of the Shenandoah, which wrecked over Ohio on September 2, 1925, and caused the deaths of 14 members of the crew. With remarkable speed, Carson Robison ground out a ballad about the sad event under the dis-

guise of Maggie Andrews, which was his mother's maiden name. With equally startling speed, Dalhart recorded it in Victor's New York studios on September 9—exactly a week after the wreck. Lou Raderman played the violin accompaniment and Robison took the guitar part.

Victor announced the record, coupled with one of Dalhart's greatest successes, "The Death of Floyd Collins," in the November supplement as double-faced disc No. 19779. Supplement Editor James E. Richardson thus described it:

"Popular songs of recent American tragedies. They belong with the old-fashioned penny-ballad, hobo-song or 'come-all-ye.' The curious will note that they are even in the traditional 'ballad' metre, the 'common metre' of hymnodists. They are not productions of, or for, the cabaret or the vaudeville stage, but for the round-house, the water tank, the caboose or the village fire-station. They have splendid simple tunes in which the guitar accompanies the voice, the violin occasionally adding pathos. These songs are more than things for passing amusement; they are chronicles of the time, by unlettered and never self-conscious chroniclers."

Mr. Richardson's concluding sentence is somewhat misleading. Carson Robison was not an "unlettered chronicler," but a song writer with his share of cynicism who had the knack of dashing off crudely worded "hill-billies" and did because there was money in it. For the same reason, Dalhart, an artist with opera training, sang them.

You may be surprised to learn, after the supplement's high praise, that the "Shenandoah" song stayed in the Victor catalog just one month. It was removed almost as soon as issued because, according to a story in the *Talking Machine World*, relatives of the dead crew members objected to the airplane's loss being musically commercialized. In December the "Floyd Collins" side was recoupled on No. 19821, with "The Dream of a Miner's Child" for its companion.

Columbia, Edison and other companies for whom Dalhart recorded "The Wreck of the Shenandoah" did not follow Victor's example and remove it because of family objections, but let it run its normal term of life. Incidentally, as a free-lance performer, Dalhart recorded the same titles for so many companies, many of them minor, that it would be a waste of space to try to list all the versions.

When I began this article I had a vague impression that I had seen the name of another airplane song, "The Lost French Fliers," in some record catalog or catalogs, but a hurried search through Victor, Columbia, Edison, Brunswick, Okeh, Vocalion and a few others failed to turn it up. Then I looked among my Dalhart records and was surprised to find that I had it on Brunswick No. 3572, doubled with "Lucky Lindy," of which we shall hear more. The song, also written by Robison, sorrows over the loss of Captains Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli, famous French flying aces, whose plane, "The White

Bird," left Le Bourget, France at 5:19 a.m., May 8, 1927, headed for New York. The craft was reported sighted over England, but no further trace of it was ever found.

One of the most gripping and memorable of all radio broadcasts resulted from the crash of the German dirigible, the Hindenburg, at Lakehurst, N. J., as it was completing its first 1937 trans-Atlantic voyage, on May 6. Herb Morrison, an announcer for WLS, Chicago, was on hand to describe the dirigible's arrival and the recording of his broadcast as he sees the Hindenburg burst into flames is almost unbearable in its intensity. He gasps, gulps, loses his voice, breaks down and cries—no one but the most confirmed sadist could listen to the record with pleasure. I have a copy on Romeo (another name for Cameo) No. 7-08-76. The label says Morrison is assisted by a WLS engineer, Charles Nehlsen. This disc is worth having and keeping as a historical document, but it is not something to play for soothing jangled nerves.

#### VIII. The "Lucky Lindy" Era

Charles A. Lindbergh's successful first unaccompanied transatlantic flight began at Roosevelt Field near New York at 7:52 a.m., Friday, May 20, 1927, and ended at 10:24 p.m. (Paris time) the next day. Naturally, the "Lone Eagle's" unprecedented achievement resulted in history's greatest outpouring of aviation songs. Lindbergh landed on Saturday, and, the following Monday, Vernon Dalhart was in Victor's Liederkrantz Hall studios in New York, recording Howard Johnson and Al Sherman's hastily contrived "Lindbergh, The Eagle of the U.S.A." to an accompaniment of cornet, clarinet, violin, violoncello, piano, guitar, tuba and drums. It was coupled with Vaughn De Leath singing "Like An Angel You Flew Into Everyone's Heart," which "The First Lady of Radio" recorded two days later. The record pressing plant

(Continued on page 122)

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 38)

of course went into high gear and large quantities of the timely disc were rushed to dealers.

Dalhart was not alone on Monday, May 23, in making a Victor record of a Lindbergh song. That day, at the company's Camden studios, Ernest Rogers, a "folk music" artist from Atlanta, Ga., recorded his own composition, which was at first called "The Flight of the 'Flying Fool,'" but the label of record No. 20671, gives the name as "The Flight of 'Lucky' Lindbergh." On the other side Ernest V. Stoneman, a mountaineer from Galax, Va., told of "The Mighty Mississippi," which had produced a terrible flood.

On Thursday, May 26, Not Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra played for posterity another Lindbergh song, "Lucky Lindy," assisted by a distinguished vocal group including Richard Crooks, Franklyn Baur, Lambert Murphy, Frank Luther and Fred Patton. Notice the predominance of tenors! I know nothing of Patton, but assume his was the only deep voice in the group.

Now here is an example of how memory can play tricks, especially after 45 years. L. Wolfe Gilbert wrote the words of "Lucky Lindy" and Abel Baer the music. In a 1972 *Variety* interview, Baer said the song was written immediately after the flight and got off to a slow start until the (once more!) Peerless Quartet made a best selling Victor record of it. Actually, the Peerless did not record the song for Victor or anyone else, and Victor's master books show that the Shilkret version was the only one recorded for that label.

Moreover, the song, like "Lindbergh, the Eagle of the U.S.A.," had to have been written before the flight and kept on hand in the event "Lindy" achieved his mission, for Okeh had on sale a disc combining the best versions of these two numbers just ten days after "The Spirit of St. Louis" landed at Paris. I know. I bought one, and I still remember how a music store played a copy over and over on an electrically amplified Brunswick Panatrope. The Okeh was probably the most heavily amplified vocal record ever made up to that time. Its number was 40826, and the artist was "Noel Taylor"—another name for Irving Kaufman. It had an enthusiastic and Yankee-Doodle-Dandy atmosphere that no competing version managed to achieve. I still have my copy.

Of the group that sang in the Shilkret version, Franklyn Baur and Lambert Murphy have been dead for years, and Richard Crooks died in California of cancer, October 1, 1972, aged 72. Frank Luther is living at this writing (Monday, November 20, 1972). I don't know about Patton. Both "Lucky Lindy" and "Lindbergh, the Eagle" were recorded for virtually every company, mostly by Dalhart.

Another Victor recording of a Lindbergh song was No. 20741, "When



"FIRST LADY OF RADIO." VAUGHN De LEATH, said to have been the first woman to sing on a radio program, made an Edison record in 1927, which she began by telling of having just been on the roof of the Edison building in New York, watching the huge parade, which welcomed Charles A. Lindbergh on his return from France in 1927.

Lindy Comes Home," which Billy Jones and Ernest Hare did June 14, 1927, to Dave Kaplan's piano accompaniment.

Lindbergh's homecoming resulted in what to me is one of the most interesting recorded references to his flight, although it is done only incidentally. Miss De Leath begins her Edison disc (52044) of "It's a Million to One You're In Love," by saying: "Here we are down at the Edison Company. We have all been up on the roof, watching the Lindy parade. And was it marvelous? Oh, I'll say so! Very sentimental, with thousands of automobiles coming up Fifth Avenue and the crowds cheering! It was simply wonderful! So I said to my accompanist, 'Come on, Bill, let's sing a little song for the folks!' So here we are." (The accompanist was Bill Regis.) Vaughn's remarks indicate the date of the recording—Monday, June 13, when 10,000 troops preceded Lindbergh and his mother in the parade up Fifth Avenue (the Edison studios were at 79 Fifth Avenue), during which 750,000 pounds of torn paper were dropped.

Two days before the New York celebration, Lindbergh had arrived from France aboard the U. S. Cruiser "Memphis," at the Washington Navy Yard, from which he was driven to the Washington Monument, where he was greeted by President and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, and the President presented Lindbergh with the Distinguished Flying Cross—the first of its kind. Victor recorded the proceedings, and issued, on No. 20747, "Actual Moments in the Reception to Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh at Washington, D. C.," with Graham McNamee announcing. One double-faced record, No. 35834, was taken up with Lindbergh's Address Before the Press

Club, and No. 35835 and 35836 were devoted to President Coolidge's welcoming remarks and Lindbergh's reply. The recordings were taken from NBC broadcasts.

More than a year after the history-making flight, Victor issued another record with "Lindbergh" in the title—"The Lindbergh Hop." This was recorded in Memphis, Tenn., on September 9, 1928, by a group called the Memphis Jug Band, and had "Sugar Puddin'" as its coupling.

Early in June two other astronauts received publicity for flying the Atlantic. A monoplane, "The Columbia," piloted by Clarence D. Chamberlain, and with its owner, Charles A. Levine, as its passenger, left Roosevelt Field on June 4, bound for Berlin. The plane ran out of gas at 5:30 a.m., June 6, and refueled near Eiseleben, Saxony. They flew to Klinge, where their gasoline again gave out, and landed in a muddy field. After being repaired, the craft reached Berlin at 6 p.m., June 7.

I am positive that I have, somewhere, a record of Jones and Hare singing "Chamberlain and Lindy (Our Hats Are Off to You)," but haven't been able to find it in a hurried search, so I assume it must be filed under the name of its other side.

But unsuccessfully looking for it in a Brunswick catalog caused me to make an interesting discovery. I found mentioned a Lindbergh record of which I had never before been aware. It is No. 40219, with both sides sung in Yiddish by J. Feldman. One side is called "Charles Lindbergh" and the other "Charles Levine"—the latter obviously a tribute to Mr. Levine's nationality. Wonder how many readers have this record, which I have never seen.

Levine also gets a mention in one of the funniest of all singing records—"Since Henry Ford Apologized to Me," which Jones and Hare recorded in thick Yiddish dialect for Victor, Columbia, Perfect and other companies. Jimmy Hussey sang it on Brunswick 3654, with "Rose of the Studios" as its coupling. Edison did not issue the satiric number, written by Dave Stamper, Ballard Macdonald and Billy Rose, presumably because of Thomas A. Edison's intimate friendship with Mr. Ford.

The song resulted from a libel suit in which Aaron Sapiro, a Chicago lawyer and Jewish cooperative marketing head, sued Henry Ford for a million dollars, alleging that Ford had falsely accused him, in his notoriously anti-Semitic *Dearborn Independent*, of being a Communist. The trial began March 15, 1927, but during it a settlement was arranged in which Ford retracted, admitted the *Independent* had published false charges against the Jews, and apologized. In the side-splitting comic song, Jones and Hare sing: "He's got an aviator for his new machine; instead of Charley Lindberghs he's got Charles Lewine!" As an example of how completely Ford has been forgiven for his libelous publications, Hare asks: "Are you glad he changed his point of view?" and Jones replies: "Sure, I like even Edsel, too, since Henry Ford apologized to me!"



In 1928 two German aviators and one Irishman reversed Lindbergh's procedure by flying east to west from Ireland to Newfoundland. Their names were Herman Kohl, J. C. Fitzmaurice and G. von Hünefeld. Edison issued double-faced record No. 52283, containing two songs in honor of this achievement. Both were sung, to the accompaniment of airplane noises, by Arthur Fields. One, composed by Roy Turk and Fred E. Ahlert, was "Well, the Irish and the Germans Got Together," and the other, by Tom Kennedy and J. O. Donovan (nothing German about those names!) was "They Landed Over Here From Over There."

Colonel Lindbergh again became the hero of popular songs in 1929 when, after flying to Mexico, he met Anne Morrow, daughter of Ambassador Dwight Morrow, and married her. I have a Silvertone record No. 1611 on which Dalhart sings a number called "Lone Eagle (Lindy to Mexico)," which must have been made in 1928, because its reverse side is "That Old Wooden Rocker," by Dalhart and Carson Robison. Since this team had "split" by 1929, the recording cannot be later than some time in 1928.

Then, in the summer of 1929, there was a spate of recordings of "Plucky Lindy's Lucky Day," an account of the flier's marriage to Miss Morrow. Most of the records were by Dalhart, but Irving Kaufman sang the Columbia. The song was written by Charles Abbot and Dale Wimbrow. (Wimbrow made some Columbia and Edison records). Victor offered it two ways, on No. 40086, as a solo by Dalhart, recorded March 26, and a dance version by the High Hatters, made on March 9, with singing by Leonard Stokes, Frank Luther and Randolph Weyant.

Today, 44 years later, despite the tragedy of his small son being kidnapped and murdered, Charles Lindbergh no doubt agrees that it was his "lucky day" when he married the ambassador's daughter. Theirs has seemed an ideal union, in which both husband and wife have won distinction—he as a scientist and she as an author. And on this happy, if slightly sentimental note, we have come to a good place to end our survey of aviation recordings made since Orville and Wilbur Wright first flew at Kitty Hawk in mid-December, 1903.

### THE END

P.S. I was preening myself on being through with this laborious effort when it occurred to me that I had better go through all my Dalhart country music records to see if there were any about airplanes that I had missed. I found three. One is Perfect 12349, "The Last Flight," which, on being played, proved to be the same thing as "The Lost French Flyers."

Then there was Banner 6114, "Mildred Doran's Last Flight," composed by Carson Robison and apparently recorded in 1927. I gather that Miss Doran and two male companions embarked on a flight from San Francisco to Japan, but their plane was lost at sea.



HE PRAISED "THE LONE EAGLE." Irving Kaufman, shown here with his wife, who is a noted organist under her professional name of Belle Brooks, made one of the best records celebrating Charles A. Lindbergh's 1927 flight to Paris. The Okeh disc was sung under the assumed name of Noel Taylor and combined "Lucky Lindy" and "Lindbergh, the Eagle of the U.S.A." When this article was written, Mr. and Mrs. Kaufman were living in Palm Desert, Calif.

Finally, I found Romeo No. 893, of two songs dating from about the time of Lindbergh's marriage. Dalhart sings "Charley Boy (We Love You)" and on the coupling "Harry Smith" (Irving Kaufman) addresses the hero's bride in "We Know You'll Take Good Care of Lindy (Little Girl of His Dreams)."

And I have also recalled—in what I hope will be my wind-up recollection—a Capitol record of the early 1940's (No. 103) on which Johnny Mercer sings "The Air-Minded Executive," coupled with "The Strip Polka."

## OBITUARY

### MARJORIE HOWE DIXON

Marjorie Howe Dixon, wife of Eric Dixon, well known writer on antiques, and co-owner of Blue Spruce Antiques, Kenosha, Wis., passed away recently.

Mrs. Dixon was a graduate of the Chicago Academy of Art, and the Pratt Institute, New York. She operated her own commercial art business in Chicago at one time. She taught art in the Glen Ellyn, Ill., schools for a number of years.

She was a writer of comedy and biblical plays suitable for women's club audiences.

In 1959 she and her husband moved from Illinois to Wisconsin, where they continued their long time shop, Blue Spruce Antiques.

Mrs. Dixon took a deep interest in her husband's writing activities and accompanied him on many of his sojourns in writing about antiques and visiting the people who make the antiques fraternity.

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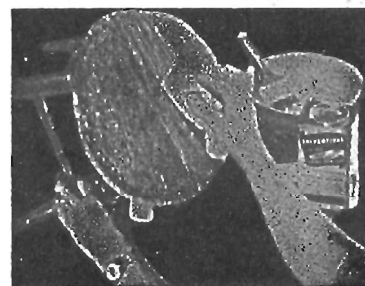
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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART I

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE.—This Al Bernard tribute is dedicated to a pair of my friends who are long-time Bernard admirers—Albert Via, Jr., and N.G. Terry, Jr., of South Boston, Va.—and a new friend, but an equally enthusiastic Bernard devotee, Miss Pamela Ochojski, a Monsey, N.Y., college girl.)

### I. "The Boy From Dixie"

Since boyhood I have admired Al Bernard, brilliant comedian and song writer, who in the last decade of his life became my valued friend. I am certain he deserves high rank among the greatest "popular" recording artists in a 20-year period beginning just after the end of World War I. And I am glad that, following a quarter of a century of postponed good intentions, I have at last buckled down to the pleasant task of bringing his personality and achievements before HOBBIES readers.

Harking back some 15 years, all the "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" space in Volume 64 of HOBBIES (March through August, 1959) was devoted to the life stories of two of the greatest recording and radio comedians — "The Happiness Boys," Billy Jones and Ernest Hare. In the series I mentioned that Ernie Hare had begun record-making as a partner of Al Bernard in blackface comedy sketches, but said I would refrain at that time from a detailed account of the Bernard-Hare association because I planned to prepare an equally comprehensive survey of Bernard's career. In April, 1959, I wrote:

"I could devote a great deal of space to relating in detail the professional association of Bernard and Hare. However, since Bernard, as the author and composer, was the 'top man' of the Bernard-Hare duo, I shall withhold that information for a later series which will give that brilliant comedian's life story."

I had not read the Jones and Hare survey since the days when it appeared in HOBBIES, but when I turned back to see what I had written, I was glad to find that I had treated Hare and Bernard's working agreement with restraint, because it left more good material for the present undertaking. Particularly am I glad that I did not include descriptions of the many duets the pair recorded for Edison (their best work was done on the Diamond Discs) and for other companies. Such information will be useful now.

When I was telling my HOBBIES



THE YOUNG AL BERNARD. Al Bernard as he appeared at the beginning of his recording career in 1919.

—Photo from Quentin Riggs

friends everything I knew about Jones and Hare I thought I would soon follow with Bernard, but I am only now essaying that long-contemplated task, on Monday, October 29, 1973. Harry Truman was President when I wrote concerning Billy and Ernie, but he gave way to Dwight D. Eisenhower and is now dead. Eisenhower, also dead, has been succeeded by John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson, who likewise have died, and the officiating President, Richard Nixon, is up to his neck in trouble. A lot can happen in 15 years.

There are a number of reasons why I have been so long about undertaking the life story of Al Bernard. As I have previously said, I have dreaded the physical and mental labor of searching through my overflowing reference files and beginning to shape an article dealing with Bernard that bids fair to occupy three or more installments.

Another drawback is that many of the comedian's records were in "blackface" dialect, and gave exaggerated impersonations of the less cultured and educated types of blacks—a kind more common 40 or 50 years ago than today.

Al Bernard, despite his Louisiana birth and his calling himself "The Boy From Dixie," was no bigoted, narrow-minded racist. The last time I talked with him, in 1949, he asked me not to play on my radio programs any of his records that latter-day black

men and women might find offensive.

"In the old days," Al said, "we didn't mean any harm by 'taking off' the lower-class Negroes and using such words in records as 'nigger,' 'coon' and 'shine,' because that was what they called each other. But today it's different. Black people are better educated and things that used to be all right aren't right any more. Forty years ago the blacks laughed as much at my 'coon songs' and comic sketches as the whites. Today, though, I don't want to hurt their feelings, so please be careful which old records of mine you play."

I told Al that I made a point of not playing anything offensive to any group, but said that when I was growing up his records were popular among my black friends and that I particularly remembered going to the home of a Negro boy who was one of my best friends and finding him and his family convulsed over a recorded rendition of "The Nigger Blues." The comedian, who was to be dead within another six months, smiled, but suggested that I restrict myself mostly to his later Brunswick discs, which were largely devoid of any offensive terms. "My Edisons," he said, "were my only acoustic records that were really good. Edison caught my voice perfectly, but the other companies did only a so-so job. My best electricals were the Brunswicks, and they're the ones I'd rather you'd use." My own opinion was that his electrical Columbias and Okeh's were as good as the Brunswicks, if not a little better, but I promised to observe caution whenever I played his records.

(Incidentally, although I am a native Virginian, I have never used such words as "nigger" or "coon" except in speaking of the old-time "coon songs." When I was a small boy my mother told me that if she ever heard me refer to a Negro as a "nigger," in or out of a black person's hearing, she would "whip you till you can't stand up," and I never have. Words like "nigger" indicate contempt that I don't feel. But, as Al said, I have frequently heard quarreling, or joking Negroes address each other as "nigger" or, less frequently, "coon." I well remember hearing an indignant Negro boy shouting to a group of blacks who were using bad language: "All you niggers up on this street is jes' heathens!")

Al Bernard, who in later life gave up being known as "The Boy From Dixie" and was called "The Gentleman

From the South," was just that—a Southern gentleman who strived only to entertain his hearers, white and black, and was guiltless of feelings of malice or spite toward any population segment. And that may well bring us to some facts concerning the man himself.

## II. Al Bernard, the Man

If Al Bernard were still alive he would be an aged man of 85, but he was a young fellow barely turned 30 when he made his first record, shortly after World War I came to a merciful close. Perhaps the best way of telling something about the personality of the debonair, irrepressible comedian is to quote things published about him in the early days of his recording career. But first, let's turn to the end of his life, and see what a newspaper said about him when he died at the comparatively young age of 60. I am about to quote a death notice that appeared in the March 7, 1949, "New York Times":

"Al Bernard, radio singer and song writer known as 'the boy from Dixie,' died yesterday in St. Clare's Hospital at the age of 61. His home was at 305 West Forty-fifth Street.

"Mr. Bernard recorded 4,000 songs. He was one of the first to make a record in the United States, for which he received an autographed picture of Thomas Edison.

"The singer wrote 125 songs, including 'Let Me Be the First to Kiss You Good Morning.' He and Russell Robinson wrote 'When Spring Comes Peeping Through' and 'Blue-eyed Sally.'

"Mr. Bernard was a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. Surviving are his widow, Gertrude Bernard and two daughters, Mrs. Richard Douglas and Mrs. Charles Blanchard."

"The New York Times" boasts that it publishes "all the news that's fit to print." It preens itself on its high standards of accuracy, but this obituary leaves much to be desired.

To begin, Al was 60, not 61, when he died. I seriously doubt that he made 4,000 records, though this possibly may be true. My doubt was somewhat shaken when I went through my own Bernard collection and found records he made under his own name and various disguises on 35 labels, and I may have missed a few. They included Actuelle, Aeolian-Vocalion, Arto, Banner, Brunswick, Cameo, Columbia, Celebrity, Diva, Domino, Edison Blue Amberol cylinder, Edison Diamond Disc, Emerson, Gennett, Globe, Grey Gull, Harmony, Hy-Tone, Lincoln, Lyric, Madison, Melotone, Okeh, Paramount, Pathé (sapphire), Perfect, Radiex, Regal, Romeo, Silvertone, Triangle, Victor, Velvetone, and Vocalion.

This does not mean that he was singing for 35 different companies. Actuelle, Pathé and Perfect records, for instance, were all made by Pathé Freres. Emerson made Regal and probably Arto, and Diva, Harmony and Velvetone were from Columbia presses. Some of the other "off-brands" were disguises for Cameo, Gennett and Grey Gull. But, regardless of label trickery, it is apparent that Al Bernard did a lot of recording, so perhaps after all his total reached 4,000.

The statement that Bernard was "one of the first" to make a record is ridiculous. Recording had been done for 41 years before he first appeared—on tinfoil, wax cylinders, magnetized wire, discs, and indestructible cylinders. Thousands of persons had preceded him to phonograph studios. And while he may have received an autographed photo of Thomas A. Edison, who was no enthusiastic admirer of Bernard's singing, that was not, as the article seems to imply, the only payment he received for his first Edison recordings. Too, "Russell Robinson's" real name was J. Russel Robinson.

The "Times'" obituary may be supplemented by the following entry from "The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary of 1952":

"BERNARD, AL, composer, author, minstrel, radio and recording artist, actor in vaudeville, musical comedy, television and motion pictures, born New Orleans, La., Nov. 23, 1888. Died New York, N.Y., March 9, 1949. Organized own troupe of amateur minstrels as schoolboy; professional entertainer at 18. Radio artist continuously from 1923. Author of books of minstrel songs, comic songs and spirituals. Songs: 'Let Me Be the First to Kiss You Good Morning,' 'Shake, Rattle and Roll,' 'Read 'em and Weep,' 'Blue-eyed Sally,' 'Sugar,' 'Birmingham Papa,' 'Twenty-five Years From Now,' 'I Got Horses and Got Numbers On My Mind,' 'Pick That Bass.'"

My information concerning some phases of Bernard career is not so comprehensive as I would like it to be. I know nothing about his appearances in moving pictures. He and J. Russel Robinson, I believe, appeared together in vaudeville, and possibly at one time or another Al came on as a 'single'. Billy Murray told me he believed that Bernard had never been a member of any minstrel troupe, but this may have been wrong. The ASCAP list of Bernard's songs is far from indicating the scope and quality of his work, and one of those mentioned, "I Got Horses," must have been completely unsuccessful, for I have never seen it mentioned elsewhere and don't think it was recorded. "Pick That Bass" is a novelty among Bernard's compositions, for it seems to have no words and may have been intended as a guitar solo. I have a record of it by the Hoosier Hot Shots. Since Al could not read or write music, it is surprising to find him producing a rather elaborate and tricky instrumental number.

For the past 45 minutes I have been going crazy, trying to find the copy of Al Bernard's death certificate, which I ordered from the New York City Department of Health. It must be here somewhere, for I had it in my hands only two or three days ago, but now, although I have before me the envelope in which it was mailed I can't find the certificate itself. It should turn up, however, and I'll postpone mention of its contents until I begin to discuss the large "family" of Bernard's who made records.

## III. Published References

Meanwhile, I obtained years ago, from some source I do not now recall, a ragged, torn page of "Stage World"

for October 20, 1920, with a discussion of the work of Al Bernard, who had been making records about a year and a half. Since almost no HOBBIES reader is likely to have seen this article by Mark Vance, it is worth reprinting here. It appeared in a department called "In the Song Shops," with the sub-title, "Al Bernard's Fame Growing":

"Al Bernard is a worthwhile chap. And you can stick a pin right here that you will hear a lot about young Bernard before the year is out for he has forged to the front in regular Man O' War fashion. We use the name of Man O' War advisedly for the simple reason that he is the fastest horse of the times and a great money maker. Not only do we believe that the present popularity of Bernard will shoot to amazing bounds but we do know he will become a mighty big money maker as he continues his making of records for the different 'mechanicals' and keeps up his song writing hits.

"Bernard hails from the City of New Orleans, where he obtained his start in the amusement business. He had a natural inclination to imitate the dialect of the buck Negro and having a voice of high range and quality seemed to find it natural to sing his way through life. Eventually he joined a minstrel show and learned the ways of the actor man. Then he landed on all fours in gay New York, now the city of 'buys' and 'drys', and modestly awaited his turn at opportunity's door. Then the song hit came: You remember 'Sugar,' which made such a furore less than two years ago. Bernard wrote it. There were many others, but one of his latest is 'Read 'em and Weep.' Then there is 'See Old Man Moon Smile.' And last, but not least, another brand new one called 'Midnight Moon.' And he has others up his sleeve. But that isn't all.

"Bernard and Ernest Hare have made a series of 'double records' for the 'mechanicals', and we heard them sing 'Read 'Em and Weep,' and then realized that in Al Bernard, New York had a real treasure, a music-writing genius, one who understands his lyrical properties, and that Bernard has a bright and glorious future. Whether it be Emerson, Okeh, Federal, Victor, or what not, the answer is the same. The Bernard-Hare records are worth two dollars of any man's spending money. One of the first 'mechanicals' that established Bernard as out of the ordinary was 'St. Louis Blues' and 'Beale Street,' which he sang some time ago and which had such a phenomenal sale that 'remakes' are now in order. Keep your musical and popularity eyes upon Bernard. He is going to make you sit up and listen."

Certainly this is unstinted, even fulsome, praise, but like the "New York Times" obituary, it is not a model of accuracy. The statement that Bernard joined a minstrel show may be true, despite Billy Murray's contrarary impression, or perhaps it refers to the troupe Al is alleged to have organized as a teen-ager. "Sugar" came out only a year or a little more before this article appeared and was not even a hit, much less creating a "furore." "Midnight Moon" apparently died without shining on the popular song loving public, for I have never heard of a record of it.

Vance gives the impression that Bernard and Ernie Hare recorded duets of "Read 'Em and Weep," but all the records of this amusing song that I have seen listed were by Bernard alone. He mentions Federal as one of the companies for which the tenor-comedian recorded, but omits Edison for which he was doing his

(Continued on page 120)

and that you might even be interested in buying some. If you have any interest in them, I would be happy to show them to you at any mutually convenient time. I would be most grateful for any assistance you might give."

He signed himself, "Caspar Wistar Davis", and enclosed a list. When we saw the name, we wondered—could he possibly be a descendant of Caspar Wistar, the Colonial maker of the famous South Jersey glass?

Sure enough, he is one of the few living descendants to bear the illustrious name. Because of this, he had inherited the collection of buttons from a great-aunt, who had long cherished it. Most of the collection had been handed down through the family from Revolutionary days.

Were we interested? It is not often that one is offered six such rarities, even if two of them are listed as "alike". We replied at once, giving directions how to reach our home, and suggested that he come Saturday, the 13th. Instead, he telephoned that he would arrive Sunday. He lived on one of the three Puget Sound Islands we see from our west windows, from which we can watch the ferries plying back and forth from Seattle.

Sunday came: he arrived, bringing the buttons in a paper bag. They were mounted on three very old cards, with the ones attributed to Caspar Wistar identified in fading ink. Only a few of the others we had not seen before. The two "Inaugurals" listed as being alike we recognized as being different dies. We knew at once we would buy them all if we had to, but we felt it would not be right for him to let the buttons, hand-made by Caspar Wistar, leave the family. We asked his price and agree to meet it, but made a counter offer to buy all those not made by Caspar Wistar. He considered it but wanted to talk it over with his wife.

He left, taking the buttons with him. We wondered if we had been too enthusiastic about Button Collecting—something with which he was not familiar.

However, on Monday, he telephoned to say that he had decided to keep the Caspar Wistars, and to accept our bid for the others. He said he would bring the buttons next day. He brought them, and we gave him our check.

"George Washington Inaugurals" are not Campaign buttons, as collectors of Political buttons sometimes insist. Campaign buttons are issued when more than one candidate is in contention. George Washington was the candidate of all the people—he had no opposition. These many different buttons were issued to commemorate his inauguration as President of the United States.

We could have wept when we saw the verdigris imbedded in the "Linked States". However, we were able to remove it, and a final polish with

jeweler's rouge restored the luster. The cards had been lying in Mr. Davis' attic, unwrapped, for the last three years; the heat of summer and the damp of winter had caused the mold, which we spent a whole morning removing. But the buttons did polish beautifully. Two are copper and the others brass. It is seldom that one of these "Memorable Era" buttons (No. 6) is found in mint condition. But regardless of condition, all the buttons add greatly to any Presidential collection.\*

\*Identification of the separate buttons is given below the illustration. The numbers given in parenthesis are those attached to the different design by A. H. Albert ("The Record"), David F. Johnson ("American Historical Buttons") and J. Harold Cobb ("George Washington Inaugurals and Medalets").

No. 1—"GW" in oval. (Albert No. 11b. Cobb No. 5c.)

No. 2—"Linked States" border. (Albert No. 1a. Johnson No. 871. Cobb No. 9.)

No. 3—"Linked States" border. Same design as No. 2, but button was struck on a larger planchet. (Albert No. 4A. Johnson No. 871. Cobb No. 9.)

No. 4—"GW" in plain script, with "Long Live the President" border. (Albert No. 10A.)

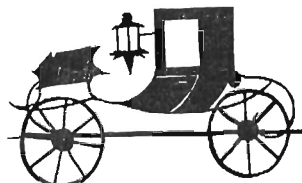
No. 5—"GW" in dotted script, with "Long Live the President" border. (Albert No. 9A. Johnson No. 974. Cobb No. 10.)

No. 6—Eagle with date and legend: "March the Fourth 1789—Memorable Era." (Albert No. 1A. Johnson No. 892. Cobb No. 4.)

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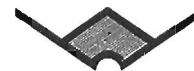
## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

AL BERNHARD

(Continued from page 38)



BLACKFACE DUO. A cartoonist with the *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch* drew this picture, showing how he imagined Billy Jones and Ernest Hare would have sung a "mammy song," to illustrate an article about Hare by Jim Walsh. Actually, it would be more appropriate to consider it a sketch of Al Bernard and Hare, for Jones and Hare almost never did Negro comedy impersonations, while Bernard and Hare made no other type of record.



most important work. I didn't find in my collection any Federal records by Bernard, but Silvertones of that period were generally made from Federal masters, and my Silvertone of "Can't You Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" (a fine rendition, but not so good as Vernon Dalhart's Edison) has an F. beside the serial number, and I take the F. to stand for Federal. "Read 'em And Weep," by the way, was introduced in "Come Seven," a musical comedy featuring the Negro characters about whom Octavus Roy Cohen was then writing in the "Saturday Evening Post," and Bernard, corked up, took the part of the hero, Florian Slappey.

The mention of "The Beale Street Blues" and "The St. Louis Blues" is puzzling. It gives the impression that they were coupled on the same record. If this is a reference to Bernard's Edison records, it is an error, for W. C. Handy's "Beale Street Blues" was combined on Edison with "Jazz Baby," by Rachel Grant (Gladys Rice) and "St. Louis Blues" had Bernard and Hare singing Bernard's funny blackface composition "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon Is Over," for its companion. I don't understand the

Continued on next page)



(Continued from preceding page)  
reference to "remakes" being in order. I have copies of these "blues" records made in the mid-1920's and both are from B. masters. If the original versions had been done over, the remakes would have been from masters F. G., or H.

It is amusing that in his classic humorous novel, "Leave It to Psmith," P. G. Wodehouse described Miss Peavey, an American poetess, who would also steal anything that wasn't nailed down, strolling along an English country road and singing "that curious composition known as 'The Beale Street Blues.'" And I have long wondered why Bernard, in the Edison record of the "St. Louis Blues," exclaims: "So, Memphis Blues, be on your way!" Why didn't he say, "So, St. Louis Blues, be on your way!" instead?

#### IV. The Bernard Death Certificate

I stopped at the end of section three because of nervous exhaustion, the consequence of my unavailing effort to find the certificate of Al Bernard's death. A few hours later I spied it lying beneath the chair in which I had been sitting. Evidently it had slipped unnoticed out of my grasp while I was leafing through a stack of reference items. Now that I have the elusive thing, I have decided to refer to it before it disappears again rather than wait for my promised discussion of the Bernard "family".

The certificate shows that Bernard's first name was Alfred, even though he was always called Al. His middle name began with A., but it is not revealed what the name was. His associate, J. Russel Robinson, probably didn't know Bernard's first name, for in one of their records he calls him "Albert".

According to the certificate, Bernard was born November 23, 1887, rather than in 1888, as the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary said. If this is correct, and it should be, since the information came from Mrs. Bernard, he really was 61 (as the "New York Times" said) rather than 60 at the time of his death, and began making records when he was 31, instead of 30, as I wrote earlier. Which reminds me, I meant to point out, but it slipped my mind, that the death date, March 9, in the Biographical dictionary, is wrong. March 6 is correct.

The certificate says Al had lived in New York for 25 years, but since he was recording there in 1919 this figure should have been 30, or more. His occupation is given as "radio artist" and his birthplace as New Orleans. He was never in the armed services, no doubt being excused in the first World War on the ground that he was a public entertainer whose services were necessary to the national morale.

The comedian's father also was Alfred Bernard and his mother's maiden name was Katherine Tuett. He died in St. Clare's Hospital, Man-

hattan, at 11 a.m., of natural causes, not described. When I met him September, 1948, he was suffering terribly from phlebitis, and some of his letters, to be quoted in a succeeding installment, may give a clearer idea of his last illness.

Al Bernard was buried March 9, 1949, in the Gate of Heaven Cemetery at Mt. Pleasant, N.Y. The funeral directors were Stafford & McGlynn, of 307 West 51st St., New York. And that is the extent of the certificate's information, except — which we already know—that he was married and his wife's name was Gertrude.

#### V. "Along Broadway" Article

For several years Thomas A. Edison, Inc., published a "fan magazine" for buyers of what the Library of Congress has called "the incomparable Edison Diamond Discs", which almost every critic now admits were the supreme masterpieces of acoustic recording. Under the heading of "Tales of Tin Pan Alley," the periodical presented an interesting article, in its December, 1919, issue, concerning Al Bernard and his recording partner, Ernest Hare:

"Ernest Hare asked Al Bernard for an egg and that gave 'The Boy From Dixie' the idea for his big success, 'I Want to Hold You in My Arms'."

"When a song is recorded at the Edison recording studios no vast audience greets, applauds and inspires the singer. No elaborate setting nor elaborate costuming helps to 'put the number across.' Instead, the artist faces a great, yawning, somber throated horn, projecting from the wall. Standing on a pedestal, by the artists, is the music director. Back of the artist is the orchestra, one of the best in America. Only those who take part in the recording work are allowed in the big, bare room, high up on the top floor of a New York office building. So acute is the hearing of the horn that a faint shuffling of feet, even a whisper, would be recorded and thus spoil the Recreation. 'Ready,' whispers the music director. Everyone expectantly watches a little red globed lamp above the horn. 'Hush,' whispers the director as he raises his baton; the little red globe suddenly lights up, twinkles for a moment and dies. The baton descends, the artist sings and in a few minutes the great horn has swallowed and digested the last note. Again the light twinkles, announcing that the recording process is finished. The orchestra, the artist, all cough — that seems the proper thing to do. The tenseness of the performance is past."

"Only two artists have ever committed the serious offense of interrupting a recording. Ernest Hare, famous for his delineations at the Winter Garden, New York, and Al Bernard. 'The Boy From Dixie,' were the offenders."

"Do you remember their smile-provoking Recreation, 'I Want to Hold You in My Arms,' on the September list? They recently made one even more humorous, 'See Old Man Moon Smile,' which will appear in January. The humor in 'See Old Man Moon Smile' so appealed to the members of the orchestra that they stopped playing and laughed during the recording. (We shall see later what made them laugh.—J.W.)"

"These two hundred per cent comedians write their own comedy skits, and Al Bernard composes his own songs. He sings but cannot play any instrument or write music. Concerning his songs, Bernard says:

"I never 'work' at song composition, but wait until the idea comes to me. Usually I think of a title first, then build the words and music of the song. I have composed words and music within fifteen minutes, and usually the composition of a song does not take me

more than half an hour."

"Ernest Hare and myself live in Henri Court, New York City. My apartment is just above his. We had written the lines for the Recreation, 'I Want to Hold You in My Arms,' but had vainly hunted New York for the proper song to use. Also, then, we had no name for it."

"One night Ernest shouted up: 'Say Al, have you an egg I may borrow?' I said, 'I've got it.' 'All right, drop it down,' answered Ernie. 'Not the egg, but the song idea. Come on up!'"

"Honestly, the idea came to me while I was standing at the dumb waiter. I pictured Ernest as a colored soldier seeing his honey up in the window for the first time since he had gone away. I just pictured what that chocolate colored baby would say to him and that was 'I Want to Hold You in My Arms.'"

Regardless of this "inspiration", however, The Boy From Dixie didn't write both the words and music of "I Want to Hold You in My Arms" within that seemingly incredible 30-minute time limit. Possibly he turned out the words that fast, but for the music he relied on his friend, the already mentioned J. Russel Robinson.

A somewhat similar article about Bernard and Hare appeared in the "Edison Amberola Monthly" for April, 1921. In part, it repeats what has just been quoted from "Along Broadway", but, with repetition omitted, here is the remainder:

"Al Bernard and Ernest Hare are almost too well known to our readers for us to be able to tell them anything new about these laugh artists. Their records speak for themselves."

"Both Hare and Bernard hail from the Sunny South. Hare was born in Norfolk, Va. and as a boy distinguished himself for high soprano voice. Who would ever think it now, when they listen to his profound bass? The show business called him early, and his first theatrical adventures were in a summer musical stock company. From that time he worked steadily up the ladder until he became one of the principals of the Winter Garden Show in New York."

"Al Bernard is known as 'The Boy From Dixie.' He sings the 'blues' type of song so well that people think he invented it. Also, he writes the words and music of songs."

"Beginning with April 4th, Al Bernard is to have a 'Music Week' in his honor in New Orleans. During that time every orchestra in the city will play some of his best known numbers, among them being 'Read 'Em and Weep.' . . ."

A little more than a year earlier, the same publication, intended for dealers in Blue Amberol cylinders and Edison Amberolas, had reproduced on the back cover of the January-February, 1920, issue, a photo of Bernard and Hare, apparently slipping or skating on ice. Bernard, somewhat the taller, is wearing a derby hat and looking morose. Hare, sporting a felt hat, is smiling broadly. Both have on overcoats and both clench cigars in their mouths. The caption says:

"The World's great fun makers whose original style of conversational singing in Negro dialect is a sensation in the field of music. If you haven't heard them sing 'I Want to Hold You in My Arms,' 'See Old Man Moon Smile,' 'You're My Gal' and 'Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon is Over,' you have missed one of the funniest experiences of your life. The Edison Amberola dealer will play them for you."

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART II

By JIM WALSH

(NOTE.—This Al Bernard tribute is dedicated to a pair of my friends who are long-time Bernard admirers—Albert Via, Jr., and N.G. Terry, Jr., of South Boston, Va.—and a new friend, but an equally enthusiastic Bernard devotee, Miss Pamela Ochojski, a Monsey, N.Y., college girl.)

(PART I CONTINUED)

New Orleans is famed the world over as the cradle of ragtime and jazz, so it was appropriate that Al Bernard's home city should present a week-long celebration honoring its native son, especially since his forté was impersonating the old-fashioned type of Negroes who brought those characteristically American types of music into prominence. The Bernard music week was again mentioned in the Edison record supplement for April, 1926, when Al's lively disc of "Hot Coffee," with a "hot" accompaniment, was announced:

"Al Bernard, the popular songster and composer, is known as 'The Boy From Dixie.' He hails from New Orleans, where they are so proud of Al that they conducted an entire music week in his honor several years ago. But Al's popularity isn't confined to his home town, No, Sir! Al is a whale of a success everywhere, and his popularity has been enhanced greatly by his radio broadcasting as one of the 'Record Boys,' a jolly group of entertainers, organized by Al. Try 'Hot Coffee' for your musical diet this evening."

The Record Boys, who will be discussed later in this series, were Bernard; Frank Kamplain, a yodeler with whom Al began making duet records in 1920, and Sam H. Stept, composer and pianist. Bernard's photograph was reproduced on the front cover of the supplement.

Speaking of the comedian's association with Kamplain, my collection includes duets by Bernard with him, Billy Beard, Vernon Dalhart, Frank Ferrara (playing a guitar or ukulele accompaniment, but not singing); Wilfred Glenn (called for the occasion "Charles Aubrey"; (Al remarked to me that Glenn was "awfully slow learning to do blackface dialect"); Ernest Hare, and J. Russel Robinson. Bernard also sang in a few Columbia records by the Lasses White Minstrels. It has only recently occurred to me that never in his career, so far as I can recall, did he record with a woman as a duet partner.

### VI. Brunswick and Gennett Publicity

Despite his great popularity, Al Bernard was never the subject of many write-ups in the record com-



THEY MADE THE EDISON ORCHESTRA BREAK DOWN AND LAUGH. Al Bernard and his blackface comedy partner, Ernest Hare, in 1920.

panies' yearly catalogs. He recorded so little for Victor that he was given no special attention; Columbia also listed his records under his name and let it go at that, and Edison, whose biographical notes were usually restricted to artists recording "serious" music, also told record buyers nothing about him in the annual catalogs. He was frequently praised, however, in the monthly supplements.

About the only exceptions to the "no biography" rule were Brunswick and Gennett. In the 1922 issue the Brunswick catalog published a picture of Bernard, with this comment:

"Al Bernard ought to be happy for he gives loads of laughs to thousands. Bernard is a singing-comedian or a comedian singer (according to the song you hear and see him in) of the first water. Of course, he is a wonderful artist, but he's human and funny and fine on or off the stage. He's always got a new song or scene in his head which means entertainment to Bernard fans everywhere. In Rip Van Winkle's words we part with Al Bernard—"May he live long and prosper!"

There was no Brunswick descriptive comment about Bernard in 1923 and 1924, but in 1925, under the heading of "Dixie Stars," appeared a photo of the comedian and J. Russel Robinson, his associate in song writing, a skilled pianist and the possessor of a ponderous deep voice somewhat similar to Ernest Hare's. The catalog said:

"Our old friends, Al Bernard and Russel



CORKED UP. Al Bernard's first recording partner, Ernest Hare, in blackface make-up. Bernard and Hare always used burned cork on their faces, to "get the right atmosphere," before making a comedy record.

Robinson (sic). The Dixie Stars, are touring the entire country and broadcasting by radio in most of the larger cities.

"Their songs are individual, cleverly arranged, and most are of their own composition."

"You will thoroughly enjoy Brunswick Records by the Dixie Stars, and then, too, you'll find some highly entertaining tenor solos in this catalog by Al Bernard."

Nothing Brunswick said, you will observe, really told anything about Al Bernard, the man.

The 1923 Gennett commentary, illustrated by a rather poor cut of Bernard, was no more explicit:

"Al Bernard is better known as 'The Boy From Dixie,' and certainly needs no further introduction. He is known throughout the country as the originator of the 'Blues' records and is also a song writer of note. He has written many successes among which is 'Read 'Em and Weep' which has been recorded on Gennett Record 9077."

That Gennett catalogue offers only three double-faced Bernard records: 4544, coupling "Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar" and "Bluin' the Blues"; 9077, combining "The Broadway Blues" and "Read 'Em and Weep"; and 4651, teaming two Bernard-Hare duets, "Change Your Name, Melinda Lee" and "See Old Man Moon Smile."

It was not strictly true, as the Gennett catalog asserts, that Bernard originated "blues" vocal records. The

first such record about the "blues" appears to have been "The Memphis Blues," sung by Morton Harvey and issued by Victor in January, 1915. Columbia made the same song by Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan some time later. The Columbia version is good, but the Victor is a fiasco because Harvey had one of the strongest Mid-Western accents I have ever heard and his heavy voice was totally unsuited to that type of song.

## VII. Weird "American Weekly" Story

One more bit of publicity about Al Bernard remains to be quoted, before attention is paid next month to the large number of persons with the family name of Bernard who have made discs and cylinders. Then we can proceed to a detailed discussion of the recording career of the most important Bernard.

On hand for the amused consideration of Bernard admirers is a wild and incredible "story" published in the "American Weekly", a magazine supplement that was a part of the Hearst Sunday newspapers. In the piece I am about to copy, it turned its attention to Al Bernard and made the absurd statement that in order to become well known and establish himself as an entertainer he sang seven years on radio without pay.

This article saw print in 1929 or 1930, and was illustrated with the same photo of Bernard as a young man that accompanies the present installment of the comedian's life story. When it appeared Al had been for 10 years one of the most popular recording artists and had been established in radio almost that long. Anybody who believes that he had sung all that time on radio without remuneration, either as a soloist or as the leader of the Record Boys, must be naive.

My copy of the article is torn, and some of the heading is gone. The part that remains says, "Worked 7 Years," and the remainder must have been "Without Being Paid," or something similar. Anyway, here is the article for what it is worth:

"The millions of 'listeners in' who hear the singing of Al Bernard, of New York, in today's ambitious radio programs probably picture this performer before the microphone as another of the fortunate artists who went in for entertaining over the ether because it is easy, pleasant work that commands big pay. It is true that Mr. Bernard is fairly paid, but it was a long, hard battle during which he faced the 'mike' for seven long years and never got a cent for his services. The Biblical character who worked seven years in order to marry the girl of his heart and then didn't get her was no less determined than Mr. Bernard, who tenaciously set out to make a place for himself in the world of radio.

"Mr. Bernard saw the possibilities of radio for entertainers when the industry was in its infancy, and did his first singing into the 'mike' in 1921 when radio was looked on as an impractical fad and receiving sets were few and far between. He broadcast over one station for two years and collected not a cent for his long hours of vocalizing.

"Then he toured the country with a writer of popular songs (J. Russel Robinson—J.W.) and sang—free of charge—over almost every station then operating. A music publisher paid his railway fare,

but he had to sing in clubs and behind music counters to earn his board and lodging. But never once did Bernard doubt that his day would come, any more than did some 200 other popular radio entertainers of the moment who put in years of unpaid work in studios in order to build their reputations and put them in line for well-paying positions.

"Bernard believes that a radio performer must serve an apprenticeship of hard work, just as movie stars do, in order to know how to please radio audiences. To him singing into the 'mike' is an art that requires a distinct technique, which, thanks to his seven years' work without remuneration, he mastered."

## PART II

### I. The Bernard Recording "Family"

This series was prefaced by a dedication to a new friend of mine, Miss Pamela Ochojski, of Monsey, N.Y., and two old friends, A. R. Via, Jr., and Nat G. Terry, Jr., both of South Boston, Va.

As this is written, neither the young lady nor the mature gentleman know that they are the recipients of a dedication; nevertheless, both Miss Ochojski and Mr. Via have made useful suggestions concerning this survey of Al Bernard's life and recording achievements.

Miss Ochojski has written that it would be particularly appropriate to have the series appear as early as possible in 1974, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the great comedian's death on March 6, 1949. The commemorative aspect had not occurred to me, but I am glad that I asked HOBBIES to begin publication of the Bernard material in the March issue, which is only a few weeks after the anniversary of my old friend, Al's, too early passing.

Mr. Via has suggested that Al, with his genial personality, ready wit and never-failing sense of humor, would have been an ideal member of the Al's Club, a burlesque type of organization I founded many years ago, in which each member had a title beginning with Al. Both "Jack" Via and his wife would be entitled to belong on the strength of their given names, for his is Albert, which was the title bestowed upon the Al's Club president. The vice president was Alfred, and the string of "Al" designations continued down the line, with — Mrs. Via will be displeased to learn — the mere rank and file having the "title" of "Alice," which is her Christian name. The Al's Club was one of a number of more or less subversive "secret orders" I have originated, of which the most important was the Ancient, Honorable and Independent Order of Liver-Flingers, whose members prided themselves on being more independent than ancient and more ancient than honorable; the Association for the Abolition of Wedlock and, most recently, the Amalgamated Hail Hearers of America, whose primary purpose is to "hear hail to beat hail!" Having said which, I hereby declare Al Bernard posthumously elected to full membership in the Al's Club, with the title of Alfred, which, as was revealed last month, was his full first name.

I doubt that any family name has appeared more often on record labels than

Bernard and its variants, such as Bernardo. There have been other popular names, of course. "Spencer," for instance, has popped up in the never-to-be-forgotten Len Spencer; his more easily forgotten brother, Henry (Harry); Janet Spencer, a contralto who made a few Red Seal records, and Elizabeth Spencer, the popular soprano, who was Mrs. E. B. Southworth when she began making records, but had started her professional career when she was married to Otis B. Spencer. Ernest Hare was even called "Ernie Spencer" on some records.

Then there were the Stanleys, although "Frank C. Stanley," the first famous bearer of that name, was really William Stanley Grinstead, and Aileen Stanley's maiden name was Elsie Maude Muggridge. James Stanley, a basso, like Stanley Grinstead, seems to have used his real name, and so presumably did Helen Stanley, a member of the Chicago Opera Company who made records. The populous Jones family was represented, among others, by Ada Jones and Billy Jones, and the Smiths did especially well among black women "blues" singers — of whom Mamie, Bessie and Clara come to mind. But none of these family names had so many representatives as the Bernards, perhaps a majority of whom were Jewish.

Because of this Hebraic prominence, many collectors have the idea that Al Bernard was Jewish, but he was not. Instead, he was of Louisiana French descent and, in a part of the sketch of his life in the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary, which I unintentionally neglected to quote last month, it was mentioned that he obtained his education in Catholic schools. Another omitted statement said he made "one of the first talking and singing film shorts." I believe I quoted the reference to his having been a "pioneer in television, writing and directing his own programs."

I am gradually working my way toward a discussion of the beginning of Al Bernard's recording career, but, meanwhile, let's give at least passing mention to some of the other persons by the same last name who made, or tried to make records. One, of whom few of us probably have ever heard, was Alfred Bernard, a tenor, who on December 20, 1920, received the following brusque dismissal at the hands of Thomas A. Edison: "No. Dead interpretation. Barytone timbre." Despite the fact that this aspiring tenor was named Alfred Bernard, he surely cannot have been our friend Al, who at that time was one of the most successful Edison singers.

Much farther back, Miss Marguerite Bernard, described as a lyric soprano who had sung at Nice and Monte Carlo, earned the great, half-deafened inventor's disapproval: "Bad tremolo. High notes ragged — bad. No."

No more fortunate was Giuseppe Di Bernardo, a lyric tenor described as having sung in Milan. This note

(Continued on page 120)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

from Mr. Edison is undated, but is followed by a 1915 entry about Rhoda Bernard, a singer of Yiddish and Italian dialect songs. Concerning Signor Di Bernardo, Mr. Edison snorted:

"Scale: Awful tremolo, 'Girl of Golden West' — Don't compare with Martinoli. Not desirable."

I don't understand the reference to the Puccini opera, "The Girl of the Golden West," unless it means Di Bernardo had made a test recording of an aria from that not overly successful production. It was not easy to elicit a favorable opinion from Thomas A. Edison, but he never doubted that he could judge a voice's recording qualities better than any-

one else.

Rhoda Bernard was a comedienne who made a few records for the four leading American companies — Victor, Columbia (she also, I believe, sang some Little Wonders, of Columbia origin), Edison and Pathé, but Mr. Edison's analysis of her work on July 29, 1915, was not highly favorable.

"The thing is odd, but her articulation is very bad. I couldn't get a word. My wife could not get it all. If she can be got to articulate, think she would be good. Try her on this and caution about articulation."

It is not indicated what Rhoda Bernard had sung on this occasion. Possibly it was "I'm Looking for Antone," but this was not recorded until October 11, 1915, when masters were made that resulted in the song being issued on Diamond Disc No. 50324

(with "Ballymooney and Billy McGee, by Billy Murray, as its coupling,) and as dubbed Blue Amberol No. 4182. The disc came in an envelope with the following description of the two sides, beginning with "Antone."

"Al Piantadosi has made his biggest success with sentimental ballads, several of which have been 'heard round the world.' He seems to be able to write character songs also, as the present number will attest. Of course the main interest of the selection lies in the words, so we must mention Joe McCarthy, who wrote them. The whole idea of the song is an amusing conception, but it would fall pretty flat if a less accomplished artist than Rhoda Bernard presented it. The Italians of New York — the lower classes — have a unique manner of talking English, and it is by no means easy to imitate them. 'Billy Murray is certainly clever in the way he 'puts over' his wide variety of songs. So long as it's funny, Billy Murray can sing it and make even a mediocre song sound like a winner. Mr. Murray's popularity with Edison owners dates from his first record, for nobody since has ever been satisfied with hearing him only once."

Regardless of the Edison writer's praise, the Bernard side of the record was a "dog." It had no tune worth mentioning, and the words were too hard to understand for the average Diamond Disc buyer to find them amusing. Rhoda Bernard's must successful record probably was a Victor of a genuinely funny Jewish dialect song, "Cohen Owes Me Ninety-Seven Dollars," with words and music by Irving Berlin.

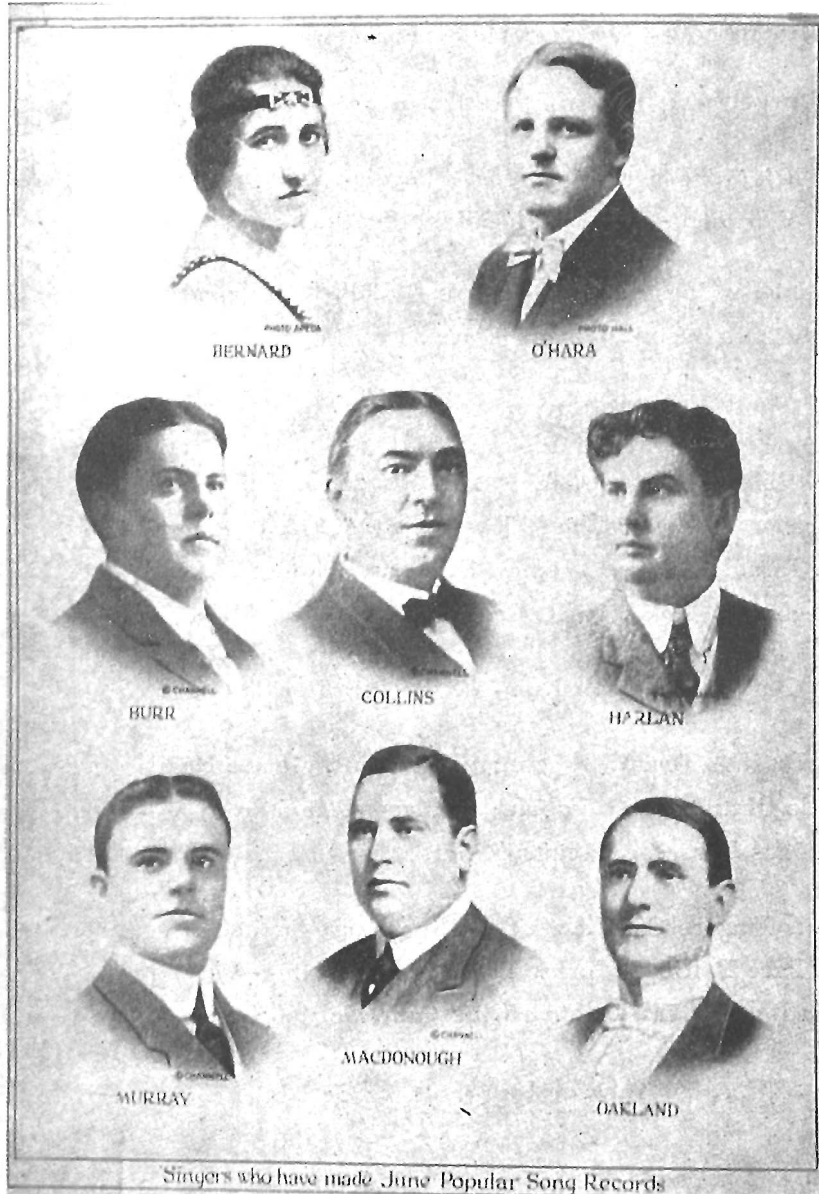
Lester Bernard, whom I take to be Rhoda's husband, although perhaps he was her brother, made some Edison tests, and received this verdict from Mr. Edison on November 19, 1915:

"Hebrew—Not good dialect. Not funny.  
"Italian—O.K. and good in the Italian record. Get it?"

The Italian dialect record to which Mr. Edison referred probably was "Italian Rosa," which was not issued on the disc but became Blue Amberol 2939. I have a copy of this recitation and often have wondered why it was approved for sale. Hardly anything could be duller, and I imagine it had one of the poorest sales of any Blue Amberol, despite Mr. Edison's commendation. Possibly there was a slight demand in the Italian areas of large cities, but I can't imagine small town and rural purchasers, who were the backbone of the Edison cylinder business, handing over 50 or 60 cents for something they found unintelligible.

Lester and Rhoda Bernard did teamwork in a Columbia record that puzzles me. I saw it in a mail order auction list, but have been unable to find it in any Columbia supplement or catalog. The number was E2994, and one side was called "The Delegate and Shop Girl of the Cloak and Suit Makers' Union." The other was "The Speechmaker." (Note to my friend, Tim Brooks, who has access to the Columbia files: How about checking this record and seeing just how it was issued and what happened to it?)

Some of the recording Bernards are shrouded in mystery. Who knows anything about Milton Bernard, a tenor making two Pathé sapphire discs in 1917? On No. 20220 he sang "A Tear, A Kiss, A Smile" and on 20268, "Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder," a ballad first popular



**ANOTHER BERNARD** — A large number of men and women with the family name of Bernard made records. One was Rhoda Bernard, who specialized in Yiddish and Italian dialect numbers. She is shown in this page from the June, 1916, Victor record supplement. With her are other top-ranking popular singers of that day: Geoffrey O'Hara, Henry Burr, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray, Harry Macdonough and Will Oakland.



in 1900. The words of this melodious composition were by Arthur Gillespie and the music by Herbert Dillea, of whom Isaac Goldberg records, in "From Ragtime to Swingtime":

"Dillea was the director of the orchestra playing at the ill-fated Iroquois Theater of Chicago on the day of the noted fire. With real heroism he remained in the orchestra pit until his baton was singed, trying to keep up the public morale by having his orchestra play until it was driven out by the flames. He practically gave his life that day, for he was never the same thereafter."

For many years the "Absence" song was one of the most popular numbers, on Victor discs and Edison cylinders, in Harry Macdonough's recorded repertoire.

Another tenor who did a little recording was Don Bernard, whom I believe to have been a member of the vocal staff of the National Broadcasting Company in the 1920's. I once had a Puritan (Paramount) record on which he sang "I Passed By Your Window."

Probably the earliest Bernard to win phonograph recognition was James, who in the late 1890's made three comic monologues for Edison: No. 3861, "The A. P. A."; 3862, "The Tip-sy Man," and 3863, "The German and the Irish Races."

A better known humorist was Barney Bernard, who was represented in the Victor monthly list for June, 1916, with No. 18029, "Cohen at the Telephone" and "Goldstein Goes in the Railroad Business." The "Cohen" side, of course, was made to compete with Joe Hayman's amazingly successful Columbia version, which George Clarence Jell, for many years manager of the Columbia artist and repertoire department, told me sold more than two million copies. Edison made it by George L. Thompson. Concerning Barney Bernard the Victor supplement said:

"The Victor has engaged a well-known dialect comedian, Mr. Barney Bernard, who is now playing Potash in Montague Glass' 'Abe and Mawruss,' to make a series of Hebrew dialect records, the first two of which are now presented. Mr. Bernard has given us a very old, but very good, story of an attempt by Mr. Cohen to use the telephone for the first time, and two funny episodes in the life of his friend Goldstein. The issue of these two amusing impersonations is likely to be followed by requests for more."

I have no doubt the record sold well; any version of "Cohen on the Telephone" would have, but there were no more Victor discs by Barney Bernard.

Another famous impersonator of Jewish characters was Sam Bernard. I don't, however, know of any recordings by him. It was for Sam Bernard's special use that Irving Berlin, at the age of 21, wrote a comic dialect song called "Oh, How That German Could Love!" of which Irving himself made a record for Columbia — his sole issued Columbia recording. He has told me that he occasionally plays it and "laugh my head off, not at how funny I was, but at my having the nerve to record it." Berlin had a thin, piping voice that was in no sense musical, and this record brings out all its shortcomings.

## II. Mike Bernard and His Columbia Records

One more record-making Bernard remains for discussion. So does another Bernardo. Then I'll proceed at last to narrating the early phases of Al Bernard's Edison career.

Aside from Our Hero, Al, Mike Bernard, the ragtime pianist, is probably the most important member of the Bernard recording "family." He was for many years a highly regarded instrumentalist, and when Columbia issued his first double-faced record in March, 1913, he was given an elaborate description. The record was No. A1266, and combined "Everybody Two-Step" with Bernard's arrangement of a descriptive number, "The Battle of San Juan Hill." This was probably the best record Mike Bernard made and contained what certainly was the most authentic recording of a "popular" piano performance up to that time. The following year Victor began to make piano versions of popular music played by Felix Arndt, but Columbia's piano recording was consistently better than Victor's, though not nearly so good as that Edison produced eight or ten years later with such performers as Ray Perkins, Ernest L. Stevens and Henry W. Lange. The supplement said:

"The Columbia has added to its list of vaudeville headliners the name of Mike Bernard, king of all ragtime pianists and one of the highest priced entertainers in vaudeville at the present time. Mr. Bernard's name has been associated with the ragtime craze in America since its very beginning. For many years manager of Tony Pastor's original Fourteenth Street Theater, New York, he early recognized the possibilities of this form of musical entertainment and was one of the first writers of ragtime in the United States. He later gave his entire time to exploiting it in piano performances in vaudeville and is now admitted to be unapproached in this field. He has made an exclusive recording arrangement with the Columbia and gives us as his first double disc a remarkable rendering of the popular 'Everybody Two-Step,' combined with an extremely clever fantasy suggestive of a battle scene, in which the strains of 'Dixie' mingle with the boom of cannon and rattle of artillery. Some of the effects he obtains in this record are truly remarkable."

That concluding assertion is not overstated. Bernard did achieve some remarkable effects, including representations of bugle calls and the firing of cannon, all done by judiciously forceful manipulation of the keyboard. If you run across this brilliantly recorded disc it is worth picking up, even at an inflated price.

Mike Bernard recorded fairly regularly in 1913, '14 and '15, but then there was a long silence, broken only by the issuance of one more double-faced disc in 1918. Of recent years, jazz enthusiasts have hit upon him as a sort of pioneer patron saint of their cult, and seek his records zealously — so much so that they are becoming hard to find. Since they all are fine examples of unusually good early piano recording, they are worth having, and I shall list them here. In each instance both sides are by Mike Bernard.

- A1266 Battle of San Juan Hill. Reverse: Everybody Two-Step.  
A1276 Fantasia on Mendelssohn's Spring Song and Rubenstein's Melody in F. Reverse: Fantasia on Pilgrims' Chorus

- from "Tannhauser" and Finale to Rubinstein's Concerto in E. Flat.  
A1313 Medley of Ted Snyder Hits. Reverse: That Peculiar Rag.  
A1286 Medley of Irving Berlin Songs. Reverse: Tantalizing Tingles.  
A1427 Maori. Samoan Dance. Reverse: 1915 Rag.  
A1590 Tango Bonita. Reverse: A Trip Across the Pond.  
A2577 They Were All Out of Step But Jim—Medley Fox-Trot. Reverse: Blaze Away March.

As will be seen by the titles of A1276, Bernard did not scruple to play "classical" compositions, and to give them a ragtime touch.

I have a peculiarly personal interest in Mike Bernard's recordings because in June, 1955, I received a letter from his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Esther Bernard, then of 1517 42nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y., asking my help in finding some of the pianist's increasingly scarce discs. Under date of June 14 she wrote:

"Mr. Ray Walker, of ASCAP, has suggested that I get in touch with you with reference to recordings made by the late Mike Bernard. He thought you might have some or know where I can find some."

"Mike Bernard was the father of my husband, and my two sons are very anxious to hear some of his recordings. We happened to come across some of his musical history in a book which also mentioned several of his recordings. I have written to Columbia, who made them to Variety and Billboard and to several record dealers, but have not been able to locate one. Thank you very much for any help you can give me in this. Sincerely, ESTHER BERNARD."

Replying, I told Mrs. Bernard that I had several Mike Bernard records (I still don't own, which I should like to have, the medley of Irving Berlin songs), with which I didn't want to part, and sent her a list of several possible sources from which they might be obtained. Then I added:

"I am a great admirer of Mike Bernard, and should very much like to have a photo of him in my large collection of pictures of famous recording artists. If you could find one of him suitable for framing that you could give me, or lend me, to have a copy made, I'd greatly appreciate it."

In a letter dated July 2, 1955, Mrs. Bernard thanked me for my suggestions, but said:

"As to a picture of Mike Bernard, I am sorry to say that my husband was completely out of touch with Mike for years before Mike's death and there does not seem to be anything at all of his in the family. However, there is one possibility which I will try to run down. If a picture does turn up I would be very pleased to send a copy on to you. Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness."

Apparently Mrs. Bernard was unable to find a picture, for I didn't receive one. I did, however, acquire an extra copy of "The Battle of San Juan Hill" and "Everybody Two-Step," which I sent to her, with an offer to have my other Mike Bernard records copied by a radio station engineer if she wished to pay for them. I am sure she wrote to thank me, but can't find any more correspondence with her. It was, at any rate, a genuine, unexpected pleasure to hear from Mike Bernard's daughter-in-law.

Now we come to the remaining "Bernardo" record, and what a record it is! I have no idea how I happened to obtain it, but it is a Polyphone disc made in Germany and bearing the catalog number 31238. The two sides have serial numbers of Z-23318 and Z-23319.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART III

By JIM WALSH

(HISTORICAL RECORDS: By Martin Sokol, usually appearing on this page, will be found on page 120 of this issue.)

Although recorded in Germany, the disc obviously was intended for export to English-speaking countries, for the dialogue of one side is in what passes for English, but a weird type of English it is. The title is given on the record label as "Die Gesangsprobe," which I translated as "The Singing Lesson," and it is described as a "humoristische scene," which I also take to mean "humorous scene." The artists are listed as "Lucie Bernardo, mit ensemble." That, naturally, means "with chorus" or "ensemble."

I take this record to have been made shortly after the end of World War I, perhaps in 1920. Obviously, during the war, the Germans weren't exporting records to English-speaking countries. The "Singing Lesson" side begins by a gruff-voiced, very Germanic sounding gentleman urging "Miss" to hurry up and sing something, because "time is money." Miss Bernardo then begins trying to render "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles" (which was a world-wide hit in 1919, hence my guess of 1920 for the date of the recording), but pretends to become confused and sings "I'm forever blowing boogles" (bugles). This exasperates the music teacher, who shouts at her to try again. She does, but each time she sings "bugles," or "boogles," instead of bubbles." Before long the disc follows the pattern of the familiar Okeh Laughing Record, although it apparently was made years before the Okeh classic, and everybody breaks up in hysterical laughter. Lucie Bernardo appears to have been a laughing specialist, like Sally Stembler and Irene Young in this country.

The second side also is a laughing skit, but I can't translate the title, "Die laches de Tafelrunde." If any English is spoken I can't understand it. The gruff-voiced man delivers what appears to be an oration of some length; Miss Bernardo begins laughing hysterically, and the thing ends in a whirlwind of synthetic merriment. I prefer the singing lesson side, because I, at least, can tell what it's about. There are, I imagine, precious few copies of that record on this side of the Atlantic.

So now, let's end our research into the Bernard "family" on a note of mirth and investigate the beginning of Al Bernard's recording career.



"DADDY OF THE BLUES." William Christopher Handy (1873-1958) was the foremost composer of "blues," and Al Bernard was the leading interpreter of his songs in the pre-electric recording period. The great black song writer is holding a copy of his immortal hit, "St. Louis Blues." He was blind when he autographed this photo to Jim Walsh on May 28, 1956, a fact that accounts for the illegible scrawl.

In passing, if any of you would like to learn more about the history of the French descended Bernard family, an article on this subject by Hazel Kraft Eilers begins on page 146 of HOBBIES for November, 1969.

For a bit more family history, I have come across a notice of Al Bernard's death from a 1949 issue of The Billboard. It mentions that he made his radio debut over WEA, New York, in 1922, and says that beside his wife and two daughters, his father and his brother (whose name was Joe) survived him.

### III. Al Starts With Edison

So far as I have been able to learn, Al Bernard did his first recording

work in January, 1919, or perhaps in the declining days of 1918, when he sang for Edison what is described only as a "Negro blue song." As was customary, Thomas A. Edison, on hearing the test, was not eulogistic. It may be true that sometime later he presented Bernard with an autographed photo, but on January 24, 1919, he wrote concerning the comedian's maiden effort:

"This is only an imitation of a Jewish cantor applied to (a) Negro song. Don't think much of it."

If this opinion of "the Old Man's" was passed on to Bernard he had no reason to be especially depressed. Mr. Edison, although he had a remarkable knack for selecting singers with good

recording voices, likewise rejected the services of many, such as Amelita Galli-Curci, who became outstanding stars. On hearing Al Jolson's first Victor record in 1912, he pronounced Jolson to have a peculiarly metallic, irritating voice—a verdict with which, although I frequently differ with Mr. Edison's opinions, I happen to be in accord.

One of the legends of the Edison Shop, which Charles Edison, son of the inventor, operated for many years across the street from the public library on Fifth Avenue in New York, is that Enrico Caruso frequently "dropped in," listened to Edison Diamond discs and lamented that his exclusive Victor contract prevented his making Edison records, "so I could hear what my voice is really like." John McCormack and Mischa Elman are also said to have been Edison Shop habitués. Whether the Caruso story is or isn't true, even if the Italian tenor had been at liberty, he probably would have found it hard to obtain an Edison contract. At some time, Mr. Edison listened to Caruso's Victor disc of "Una furtiva lagrima" ("A Furtive Tear") from "Elisir D'Amore" and scrawled this comment:

"Scratchy. Accompaniment good type. Terrible metallic sounds on strong notes. Spill by these. Tremolo bad. Fair tune."

Concerning the duet of "Crucifix" by Caruso and Marcel Journet, Thomas A. remarked that the tune was good, but said the record was "scratchy." He termed the accompaniment "fair" but said, "Caruso has bad tremolo." Caruso and Scotti, he added, were "not a good combination. Both have tremolo." Since tremolo was a singer's cardinal sin, in Mr. Edison's opinion, there is little chance that he would have extended a contract to Enrico Caruso, regardless of the little Italian's being the most highly acclaimed opera tenor in the world, and said, "Sign here."

I had mislaid my copy of the inventor's opinion of the Jolson record, "That Haunting Melody" and "Rum Tum Tiddle" (Victor No. 17037), but now it has made itself visible, and for the sake of greater accuracy, I shall quote it:

"'Haunting Melody.' Accompt. no good. Abnormally sharp voice. Extra sounds in voice. No scratch. Disagreeable voice. Metallic. Tune not good. Volume good. Other side — same results — not so loud."

So if Al Jolson, Marcel Journet and



"THE MAMMY MAN." Here is another "Al" whose voice and singing style Thomas A. Edison did not regard with favor. After hearing the first record by Al Jolson (above), the Father of the phonograph dismissed him by saying he had a "metallic, disagreeable voice."

Enrico Caruso could earn nothing but condemnation from Thomas A. Edison, what reason was there for Al Bernard to be downcast because he was accused of singing a "blues" as if he were a Jewish cantor?

Edison's most popular "classical" violinist, Albert Spalding, once remarked to me: "Old man Edison was an awful crank. Walter Miller, the manager of the New York recording studios, was a nice fellow, but he and all the other staff members were scared to death of 'The Old Man' and dreaded his sarcastic notes about the records they made."

Probably what Albert Spalding said was true. Miller, "Bill" Cronkhite, Bob Gayler and other recording officials had no desire to risk the displeasure of the phonograph's inventor, but they did sometimes engage an artist for whom Mr. Edison lacked enthusiasm. His attitude toward Al Bernard did not keep them from beginning to make "blues" recordings by "The Boy From Dixie." Al's first "official" date was February 14, 1919, when he sang "The Hesitation Blues," and I wonder if he had sung this number previously on the "test" which

(Continued on next page)

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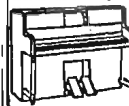
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gave Mr. Edison the impression that he sounded like a Jewish cantor in blackface. The "blues" side was provided with a rather incongruous coupling, the mournful "Don't Cry, Little Girl, Don't Cry," well sung by Irving Kaufman.

On February 25, Al essayed "The Nigger Blues," which George O'Connor, a Washington, D. C. lawyer who was called "the favorite White House Entertainer," had made popular on a Columbia record two years before. To keep it company, Edison rather oddly had the deep-voiced Ernest Hare, who, you will remember, was then living above Bernard in a New York apartment house, sing the plaint of a Negro woman, "Satan, I'm Here (I Couldn't Stand for No Triflin' Man)." Both sides were genuinely funny, and sold well, both as discs and as Blue Amberols.

Bernard recorded his first "blues" composed by W. C. Handy on March 18. This was "The Beale Street Blues," which celebrated life as it had been on that world-famous Negro street in Memphis before prohibition came along and damped its vivacity. The lyrics asserted that on Beale Street, "You'll find that business never closes till somebody gets killed." At the end, the singer expressed his intention of "goin' down to the river, oh maybe bye and bye. Goin' down to the river, an' here's the reason why - because the river's wet, an' Beale Street done gone dry." The coupling was "Jazz Baby," sung by "Rachel Grant" (Gladys Rice).

In my opinion, Bernard sang all three of these blues superbly—fully bringing out the rhythm and their humorous qualities. For years it has been the fashion of collectors who consider themselves "connoisseurs" of "blues" and "spirituals" to sneer at Bernard's interpretations. Their ears, such as they are, tell them that no "blues" are worth hearing unless they are lugubriously howled, wailed or shrieked by Negro women or, less frequently, intoned by black men. They have a right to their opinions, but I resent their condescendingly superior attitude, and wouldn't give one Bernard record for fifty by Bessie Smith or Ma Rainey. Still, I'd like to know how well Handy liked Bernard's singing.

Eight days after Al recorded "The Beale Street Blues," Bernard and Hare made their Edison duet of "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," which, as was related last month, was inspired by Hare's peering down the dumb waiter shaft and asking Bernard to lend him an egg. This suggested to Bernard the vision of a Negro soldier, newly returned from France, standing beneath his girl friend's window and receiving anything but the rapturous welcome he had anticipated.

"I Want to Hold You in My Arms," though funny, is not, I think, so



CRITICAL INVENTOR. Thomas A. Edison (above, in his chemical laboratory) did not have a high opinion of Al Bernard's first recording efforts. Pictures of other singers, whose voices and styles didn't please Mr. Edison, are reproduced with this article.

mirth-inducing as some of its successors, but I'll stick my neck out again by saying, or repeating, that I consider the Bernard and Hare duets the most amusing blackfaced comedy records ever made. To my perception, they are far funnier than Amos 'n Andy or The Two Black Crows, whom I have always found tiresome. Portions of some of the comic dialogues by Billy Golden and Joe Hughes come close to matching them, but, on an overall basis, as delineators of Negro dialect comedy, Al Bernard of New Orleans, La., and Ernest Hare of Norfolk, Va., have no equals.

At the same time it should be set down, for the sake of historical accuracy, that the Bernard and Hare duets were essentially a throwback to the "coon sketches" which Ada Jones and Len Spencer had begun recording in 1904. These usually involved, as did the Bernard-Hare records, acrimonious repartee between a quarreling black woman and man, but more often than not followed by a reconciliation.

To me perhaps the funniest exchange in any record occurs in the Jones-Spencer "Every Little Bit Helps." Len, as a swaggering young black, accosts Ada as she is walking past and says: "Where you a-gwine, huh?" The girl replies: "Ain't gwine nowhere. I done been whar I'm gwine." To which he masterfully exclaims: "Don't give me none o' dat noise! Come to me - ya heah me?" She then retorts with this crusher: "Who you talkin' to? Go count yo'-self, nigger, you ain't so many!" — the funniest line, I think, I have ever heard on a record, and one probably the result of Spencer's script-

writing genius. Considerably subdued, Len says: "I don't understand yo' talk, lady!" and she replies: "You don't? Then I'll sing it to you," whereupon she begins caroling her sentiments. Len interrupts by saying, "Oh, honey, don't be cross; I'll let you be the boss." She snaps back: "Say, nigger, I ain't for let—on yo' way!" Crestfallen, he begins pleading for her affections by singing a then new Fred Fisher song, "Every Little Bit Helps."

Another laughable Jones and Spencer sketch is "Mandy and Her Man." It begins with Len's supposedly banging on his lady love's door, to seek refuge, and asking her; "Has that nigger Jackson been here?" She replies: "Nobody's been here since you've been gone." Quaveringly, Len asks, "Did you heah him say he was gwine to knock me silly?" and Ada acidly retorts: "Why, no, I thought you was silly enough already!" To which he responds, with heavy sarcasm: "Is that so?"

Ada insists that her swain has nothing to worry about, because, "You're a bigger man than Jackson." "I know," Len comes back, "but Jackson carries the difference in his hip pocket. That nigger's got a gun!" She sweetly says, "Well, you've got a razor. That'll win in the long run." Still frightened, he retorts: "Yes, but I'm afraid it'll be the longest run I'll ever have." Convinced that he is a coward, Ada contemptuously exclaims: "Skeered, are you? Jim Johnson, you ain't the man for me!" then begins singing a song of dismissal, "On Yo' Way." They make up at the end, however, and "Jim" goes to buy the marriage license after borrowing a dollar from his beloved to pay for it. We are left wondering whether Mr. Jackson barged in and broke up the wedding. These sketches admittedly are not refined, but I think they are undeniably funny.

I have "Mandy and Her Man" on both eight and ten-inch Victor records. The eight-inch contains most of the dialogue of the ten-inch, but the artists speak more rapidly. Oddly, on the eight-inch, Spencer says: "Jackson carries the difference in his hip pocket," while on the ten-inch this becomes, "the difference in his pocket," with "hip" omitted.

Having traced the ancestry of the Bernard and Hare duets, let's divert ourselves by considering the spoken exchanges in "I Want to Hold You in My Arms." It is as well to do this, because I intend to quote the dialogue of all the Edison duets in which Bernard plays the "wench's" part and Hare is a beseeching, or blustering male. Whenever I write "*She*" the speaker is Bernard; "*He*" is Hare:

SHE—Who is dat knockin' at dat do?  
HE—It's me, honey.  
SHE—Who's me?  
HE—It's me, yo' papa.

(Continued on next page)



SHE—Is dat ole frog head?  
 HE—Naw, I ain't no frog head. Say, listen here, blacker than me, open up the door!  
 SHE—Blacker than you? You know what they say?  
 HE—What do they say?  
 SHE—"The blacker the berry the sweeter the juice."  
 HE—Come on, honey, open up the door or I'll bust it open.  
 SHE—Go on, you ain't no young Sampson.  
 HE—I know I ain't no Sampson, but I'm some tough man.  
 SHE—How tough is you?  
 HE—I'm so tough that when I come from canary birds sing bass.  
 SHE—You is bad, ain't you?  
 HE—You better believe I'm bad!

Then they begin to sing as a duet, "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," with some rapid-fire exchanges in the singing. After the chorus, the following dialogue is heard:

SHE—He's gone now. Guess I can open the window and git a little atmosphere. (HE knocks again.) Fishmouth, is you out dere still?  
 HE—I'm out here, but I ain't still. Come on, honey, open up the door or throw my trunk out, one or the other.  
 SHE—Huh? You're standin' in the middle o' yo' trunk right now.  
 HE—How come dat?  
 SHE—When you button yo' vest yo' trunk am locked!  
 HE—Oh, honey, don't talk to me like dat. You know I loves you, an' I fought my way all the way back from France, just to—

He resumes pleading, "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," and the chorus is sung to its completion, with interchanged wisecracks but no indication of whether the maiden's heart will soften and lead her to admit her returned soldier man. The marital status of Bernard and Hare couples is sometimes obscure. Since the "hero" had left his trunk in the house, he may have been addressing his estranged wife instead of a girl friend.

A hearing of the song makes it evident that Bernard was no purist when it came to rhyming, and confirms his statement that it usually took him about 15 minutes to write a lyric. My intellectual cat, Prof. Plum Duff Walsh, Ph. D., shook his head disapprovingly when I told him Bernard coupled "arms" with "false alarm" and "brain storm," which, "Pony Boy" said, cannot by any stretch of poetic license be considered rhymes.

As was related last month, Bernard wrote the words of "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," and he and Hare probably collaborated on the dialogue. The music was the work of J. Russel Robinson.

Bernard made two more Edison discs during the spring of 1919. The first, recorded April 15, was one of the innumerable prohibition songs of that period, the clever and catchy "Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar," which was issued on both the disc and cylinder. The second, made April 29, was a paean to "crap shooting," "Shake, Rattle and Roll (Who's Got Me?)" composed by Bernard himself. It was made available on Blue Amberols but not on the disc.

There were no more Edison recording dates until September 4. Meanwhile, the young comedian's songs were beginning to be recorded by other artists and sung for a variety of companies, and his own first record of the immortal "St. Louis Blues"

came out on an Aeolian-Vocalion hill-and-dale disc in July, 1919.

The Vocalion supplement gives the impression that Bernard had previously made records for that company, but I have been unable to trace any. Under the heading of *Novelty*, it lists "The St. Louis Blues" and "Venus Blues," the latter a composition by Robinson, with whom Bernard was closely associated. The words possibly were by Bernard, since some record companies gave only the names of the composers of the music and omitted authors of words. Accompaniments were by the Novelty Five, probably the original Dixieland Jazz Band. The description of this disc, No. 12148, was:

"Another novelty record by that synopated songster Al Bernard. He admits that he comes from 'down south,' the land of the blues — and certainly his singing of the 'St. Louis Blues' with its tango rhythm and the 'Venus Blues' would indicate it. The Novelty Five supply an irresistible accompaniment."

The comedian's next Aeolian-Vocal-

ion disc was issued in October, and contained two Bernard compositions—"Sugar" and "Big Chief Blues"—on No. 12191. "Sugar" is the song referred to in the article quoted last month from *Stage World* as having been a big hit. "Big Chief Blues" was something of a failure, for I can't recall any other recording of it. A photograph of Bernard was reproduced with the description of the record:

"It isn't everyone that can write popular songs and sing them too, but that is what Al Bernard does, and the two listed above prove his ability along both lines.  
 "Oh you 'Sugar!' This is one of the most tantalizing tunes of the season. It tells the tale of the impatient suitor who wants 'Mr. Hack-man' to make his old horse show some pep so he can catch a train that takes him back to sweet 'Sugar' down among the sugar-cane in old 'L.A.' (Irsumably, 'L.A.' stands for 'Louisiana' not 'Los Angeles.' —J.W.)  
 "Everybody's had the musical blues of late, and now 'Big Chief' has taken them in Al Bernard's clever Indian Prohibition song. The prospect of 'no more firewater' was too much for him, so he couldn't be blamed for getting blue about it."

(To be continued)



**THUMBS DOWN ON CARUSO** — Not even Enrico Caruso (right), most popular opera tenor of all time, could win Thomas A. Edison's approval. Edison maintained that his voice had a "bad tremolo" and probably would not have recorded him if his services had been available. In this photo Caruso and Titta Ruffo are listening to their first duet on a Victor record.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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## AL BERNARD

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

(HISTORICAL RECORDS: By Martin Sokol, usually appearing on this page, will be found on page 117 of this issue.)

### I. More Edison Recordings

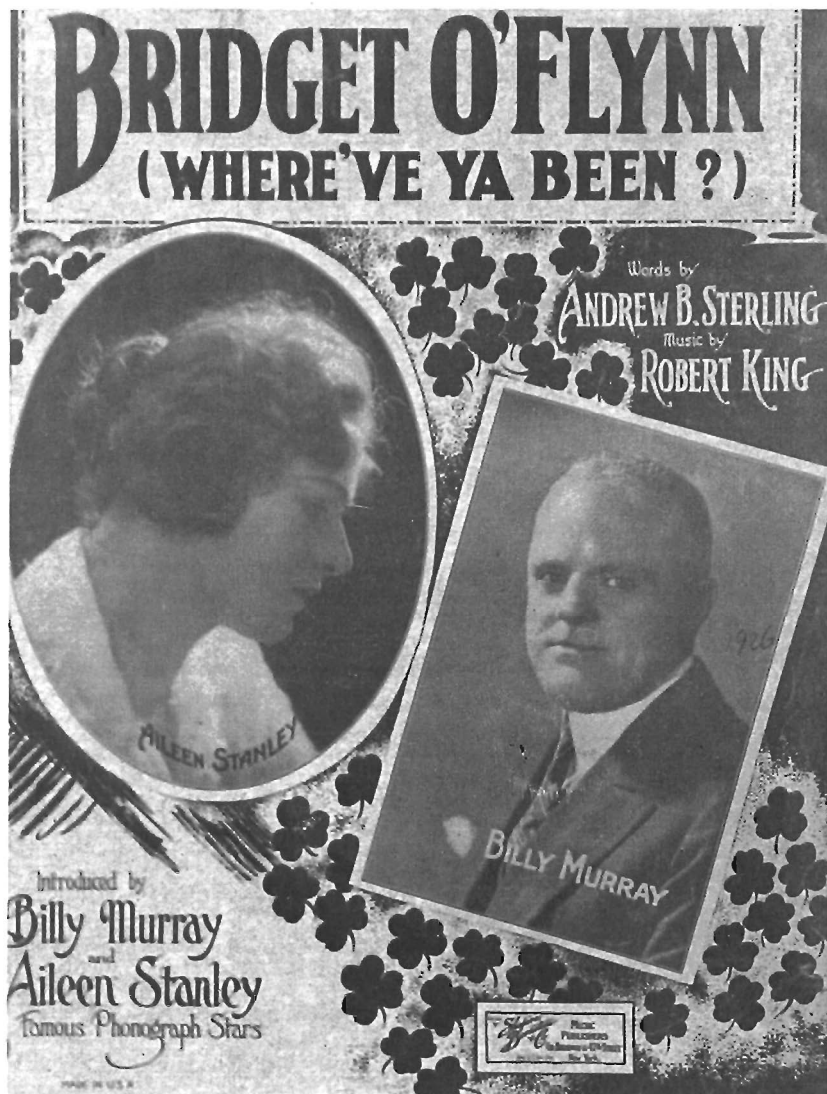
In my preceding discussion of Al Bernard's early Edison records, I forgot to mention that his first "Re-Creation" headed the list in a special "blues special" supplement. Although undated, it came out in the spring of 1919. Besides Bernard's record, "The Hesitation Blues (Oh, Baby, Must I Hesitate?)" the monthly list included "The Alcoholic Blues," sung by Vernon Dalhart, and coupled with "Every Day Will be Sunday When the Town Goes Dry," by Edward Meeker. These titles, of course, referred to the imminence of national prohibition. Dalhart thus shares honors with Bernard as among the first Edison singers to make a "blues" record. On investigation I find that Dalhart actually ante-dated Bernard since the "Alcoholic Blues" serial number was 6577 and that for the "Hesitation Blues," 6621. On the other hand, the catalog number of the Bernard record was 50524 and of Dalhart's 50529. What this means is that Dalhart's "blues" was recorded a month or so before Bernard's, but was not issued quite so promptly. Dalhart's interpretation of the "dry law wail" is good, but either Bernard or Billy Murray, who sang it for Victor and Columbia, could have done it better.

Concerning the Bernard disc the supplement said:

"They call Bernard 'the Boy from Dixie' and all over the country he is popular as a singer of this style of song. This is unquestionably the cleverest and best of all the blues songs written so far. It is a real novelty."

This was a sweeping statement considering that W. C. Handy had already written, among others, "The Memphis Blues," "the Beale Street Blues," and "The St. Louis Blues." The "Hesitation Blues" was not a new number when Bernard recorded it. Some companies had offered dance versions of it in 1916.

The rising young comedian made no Edison records from April 29, when he recorded "Shake, Rattle and Roll" until he and Ernie Hare joined forces on September 4, 1919, to wax a Diamond Disc of "See Old Man Moon Smile," which you will remember was so amusing, the Edison orchestra members burst out laughing and the singing and talking specialty had to be done over. I should have, in my files, but can't find, an account



**POPULAR SONG.** "Broadway Blues" was one of Al Bernard's best selling Edison records. Aileen Stanley (above), shown with Billy Murray, her duet partner for comic songs, recorded the same lament about life on Broadway for Victor and Brunswick. "Broadway Blues" was on the first Stanley record issued by both companies. "Bridget O'Flynn" is one of the best remembered Murray-Stanley recordings. Victor called it "the first successful whispering record ever made." The sheet music cover is reproduced by courtesy of its owner, Miss Pamela Ochojski.

of how amused the Edison recording committee was at hearing a test pressing of the record, and how Bernard and Hare beamingly agreed that it was better than their initial duet, "I Want to Hold You in My Arms." From this point, Bernard had frequent Edison recording engagements for the next few years. Meanwhile, before "Old Man Moon" was made, his first Aeolian-Vocalion records, in-

cluding "The St. Louis Blues," had appeared.

### II. "See Old Man Moon Smile"

Al Bernard apparently wrote both the words and music of "See Old Man Moon Smile," and the humorous dialog was mostly or entirely his. Being the composer should have entitled him to royalties on the sale of this, and similar, mirth-inducing productions,

and considerably added to the fee he was paid for the record making itself.

Now, as we did last month, with "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," let's read the words of "See Old Man Moon Smile" and see if we can decide what made the orchestra break up in merriment. Again Bernard is referred to as "She" and Hare as "He":

He: I wonder where dat gal is? I just walk up an' down here so much dat my socks are spats . . . O dere she is now. Hello dere, honey!

She: Hello, son!

He: Where you been, honey?

She: Oh, I been out lookin' after the cows.

He: Well, how is all the cows an' little cawlets?

She: Oh, dey're all well. How's all yo' folks?

He: Oh, my folks is well. Here, here, honey, my folks ain't no cows! Say, baby, papa's gonna take you to a party tonight.

She: Ain't gonna take me to no party. The last time you took me to one you disgraced me.

He: How come I disgraced you?

She: What did you do when that nice lady asked you to pass her the nut cracker?

He: Well, what did I do?

She: You turned right around and passed her a beer bottle!

He (laughing): Well, dat was de best nut cracker I could find! But what did you say when dat nice lady passed you the ice cream?

She: What did I say?

He: You say, "Lady, I always likes my puddin' hot."

She: Oh, I ain't said dat. I ain't dat ignomious!

He: Gal, you is so ignorant you ain't got no brains.

She: Yes, and if brains was a disease you'd have the leprosy!

Here the song begins, and is devoted, with plenty of give-and-take, to His unsuccessful efforts to persuade Her to go to the party. After some close harmony in the chorus, the bickering resumes:

He: Why won't you go with me to the party, honey?

She: Because you're a coward. You come from a running family. I saw yo' ole daddy run so fast one day that when he turned a corner his vest pocket dipped sand.

He: Yeah, an' yo' ole pappy runs so fast dat dey see de bottom of his feet so often dey think he's laying down!

She: Is dat so? Keep on an' I'm gonna hit you so hard dat yo' shirt will run up an' down yo' back like a window shade!

He: Yeah, an' if I ever swing dis wicked left o' mine at you an' miss you de breeze from it will give you pneumonia!

She: Keep on peticatin' an' one more clean swat's gonna do you!

He: Uh, uh! Dat woman means dat! I better square myself! Say, honey, come on an' give me a little kiss!

She: Well, coax me!

He: Coax you! Yas suh. I'm a nigger dat don't have to coax no woman to kiss me, because de ladies call me "Tree top Charlie," an' black but sweet, O Lord!

She: Yeah, an' don't forget dat I'm some high yaller, an' choc'late to de bone!

He: You is dat, honey, I will admit it!

The singing resumes, but no meeting of minds is reached and she does not agree to go to the party.

As best I recall, Edison was the only company to record "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," but Bernard and Hare made the rounds of the various studios with "See Old Man Moon" and it was liberally represented on other labels. Neither Victor nor Columbia used it, however; in fact, they never, for some hard to understand reason, ever issued a Bernard and Hare duet.

One of the companies marketing "See Old Man Moon Smile," was Pathé, which issued it on a sapphire ball version, No. 20471, and combined

it with another Bernard composition, "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee." The Pathé label misquoted the name as "Change Your Name to Malinda Lee." I remember being puzzled when I first learned of the Pathé version as to why two unknown artists, "Jack Clare and Frank Mann," had been selected to do the recording, when the originators, Al Bernard and Ernest Hare, were available. When I heard the record, however, I realized that the singers really were Bernard and Hare, and that Pathé had given them assumed names instead of profiting by their growing popularity. Both songs were credited to Bernard as composer, but I don't believe any Pathé duets by the team were catalogued under their real names. They were always "Clare and Mann."

Summing up the "See Old Man Moon" discussion, my guess is that the orchestra broke down and laughed when Bernard said the cows were all well — "How's all yo' folks?" Obviously, because of shorter playing time, the versions of this song on other discs included a reduced amount of "cross-talk." I believe most of us will agree that the repartee in "See Old Man Moon Smile" is funnier than that in "I Want to Hold You in My Arms" and that it's no wonder the orchestra laughed.

### III. "You're My Gal"

Only eleven days intervened between Bernard and Hare's Edison recording of "See Old Man Moon Smile" and their next duet. They were back in the studio at 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, on September 18, and romped through another "Darktown" opus, "You're My Gal," which followed the pattern of the two preceding sketches. On October 10, to move up a bit, Bernard sang a solo of his composition, "I'm a Dancing Fool," but although this was accepted as Blue Amberol No. 3920, it apparently was not considered good enough for the disc, the standard for which were higher than those for the cylinder.

Now, back to our routine of quoting the funny, if not refined dialogue between He and She — or, I suppose I should say, Him and Her. But first it may as well be pointed out that "You're My Gal" is the first Bernard song in which his famous dusky "hero," Henry Jones appears and this ditty about a picnic may be taken as a follow-up of "See Old Man Moon Smile," with its references to going to a party. The mention of a mysterious "Charlie" may also be the forerunner of a Bernard song that came several years later, "My Time is Charlie's Now."

This record, unlike its forerunners, begins with singing, after which there is the following exchange:

She: I'm a singer, ain't I, son?

He: You is dat—an' you's my gal.

She: Your gal? I wouldn't have you 'cause you got can't you — don't you hair.

He: What you mean — can't you — don't you hair?

She: You can't comb it and don't you try.

He: Is dat so? Well, don't forget dat I'm a handsome fastidious gentleman!

She: Handsome! Why, coon, if I was as ugly as you I'd look up to de good Lord and ask to be dismissed!

He: You might do dat, but still you is my gal.

She: Never count yo' chickens before they are hatched.

He: Now dat's a fine way to talk! Dat ain't de way to say dat!

She: Well, how should I have said it?

He: You should have said, never cacaleate upon your juvenile poultry until the proper process of incubation has been fully materialized.

She: Man, you're a cat's uncle when it comes to talk, ain't you?

He: Gal, I knowed Mr. Webster well.

She: Say you did?

He: Yeah, I usta run with his dog!

She: Aw, come on, coon, you've got de swinny(?)

He: Only horses git de swinney.

She: No, but mules git it, too.

He: Well, I ain't no mule.

She: No, your ears are too long.

He: Yeah, my ears are gal, my ears ain't too long.

She: Well, dey'll grow.

He (confused): Well, they—no they won't grow.

After singing about the picnic to which Henry wants to take Sal, the argument is resumed:

She: Yo' sho' is a persistent coon. You make me sick!

He: Well, you don't make me feel any too well!

She: Is dat so? Another thing, coon, you don't know how to love!

He: I don't know how to love! Listen, what it takes to love I'm broke out with! An' you know you only run dat other guy in to make me jealous, 'cause you know — (He resumes singing "You're My Gal," and the song ends with the "wench" confessing "Yes, I'm yo' gal!")

The reference to "running in dat other guy" relates to "Charlie," of whom She said in the chorus: "Charlie's name is Sampson, an' he sho' can fight." His reply is, "If I ever swing my wicked left at him he'll die of fright." In the second chorus, the damsel asserts that "Charles was born in Texas, raised in Tennessee," which elicits the retort, "And he'll die in Alabama if he messes with me!"

"You're My Gal," which was coupled on the Edison record with "Floatin' Down to Cotton Town," sung by the Harmonizers, who were then called the Premier Quartet on Diamond Discs, was as successful a comic specialty as "See Old Man Moon Smile." It also was extensively recorded by other companies.

I am uncertain about the word, "swinny," after which I have placed a question mark. "Swinny" is what it sounds like, but I can't find such a word in Webster's. Perhaps it is a Negro slang term unfamiliar to me.

### IV. "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon Is Over"

None of the Al Bernard solos or Bernard-Hare duets so far discussed were included in the book, published in 1925, of the 300 best-selling Edison discs, but they all sold well for years and most stayed in the catalog as long as Edison was in the record business.

"See Old Man Moon Smile," was discontinued, however, in 1927, and "You're My Gal" in 1928. "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," the first duet, which had not been considered so funny as the others, went the entire route, partly, I suspect, because of having as its companion, Ada Jones' "Oh Lawdy! (Somethin's Done Got Between Ebecaneezer and Me.)"



"The Boy From Dixie's" Edison activities were in high gear through the remainder of 1919 and from 1920 through 1924, after which, perhaps because of his radio and vaudeville work, they tapered off, although extending through 1927 . . . And here let me add something I have just discovered that the list of record-making Bernards, published last month should have included Anthony Bernard, who conducted the London Chamber Orchestra on a Brunswick record or two.

There was also a Miss Isolda Bernhard, who on July 19, 1926, made an Edison test recording of Tosti's "Goodbye." By that time Mr. Edison's deafness had so increased that he was no longer criticizing, but Arthur L. Walsh, who was vice president in charge of the Edison recording division, wrote: "Fair singer — high tones best — would only do for the highbrow type of song — not what we need now."

Our Hero's solos seem to have been even more popular among cylinder record buyers than with those who used the Diamond Discs, for a fair number made their appearance on "rollers" but remained unissued on "platters." One of these was "I'm a Dancing Fool," which Al recorded on October 10, 1919.

Six days later Bernard and Hare got back together for an Edison recording that made history. This was "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon is Over," which brought back the nominal hero of "You're My Gal," and proved the most successful of all the team's duets up to that time. Its popularity was made even greater by the fact that on October 29, Bernard, alone, made his famous Edison record of "The St. Louis Blues," which received the easily remembered serial number of 7000. As we know, Aeolian-Vocalion had announced a record by him of the same blues classic in July, but it attracted little attention as compared to the Edison, which was destined to find its way into that book of the 300 best sellers. "Henry Jones" was coupled with "St. Louis Blues," and, with two such good sides, it would be hard to say which was most responsible for its large sale.

The Blue Amberol of "Henry Jones" came out in February and that of the "St. Louis Blues" in March. I well remember going on an errand to the home of an elderly man who owned an Amberola. He and his wife were being entertained by a young man who had brought about a dozen of the latest Edison cylinders. As I was made welcome, they were playing "Uncle Josh's Birthday," by Cal Stewart and Company. This was followed by Bernard's "St. Louis Blues," and I can still hear the old man exclaim, as the smooth-surfaced, clear-toned cylinder was tracked by the diamond point: "Don't that soun' jes, exactly like a nigger?" We all agreed that the blackface dialect was remarkably natural.

The "Re-Creation," as Edison discs were called up to 1923, must have been issued about the same time as the cylinders, though, because of a slower manufacturing process, perhaps a month or so later. Many years afterward I came across a review of "Henry Jones" and "St. Louis Blues" in "The Best of the New Records" department conducted in *Judge* by "Disco." His critique required just two words: "Perfect recording." Which was perfectly true.

In "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon is Over" we find the male character married to some ladylove, but it isn't clear whether she is the "Sal" of "You're My Gal." As the record begins, "She" is singing "doo-doo-da do," while "He" is snoring. Then the dialogue begins:

She: What's dat nigger tryin' to do - sing bass with me? Wake up, coon!  
He: Aw, go 'way, go 'way, woman, an' let a good man sleep!  
She: Huh! Yo' mammy sh' mus'a been fond of children to raise you!  
He: Listen here, woman! One-two-three, an' I'm gonna hop right at you!  
She: Yeah, four-five-six, an' you'll hop right back!  
He: Look here, gal, don't you realize dat where I come from dey call me 'Bad Bill'?  
She: Huh! Fool with me an' they'll call you Sweet William!  
He: Keep on, gal, an' I'm gonna sew up yo' eyes!  
She: 'As you sew, so shall ye reap.'  
He: Say, what you tryin' to do, make a fool out of me?  
She: No, nature done beat me to it! Listen, here, coon, I wanna tell you somethin'.

When this stage is reached the couple begins singing. Mrs. Jones complains that she can't live on love. Henry, she says, has been "living in clover" for three months, but since he's taken his uniform back to the government she no longer gets "that thirty bucks that used to pay the rent." In his defense he says, "Gal, you know I was a hero over dere!" also, "but I didn't live in clover over dere!" She, however, insists that she has had more than enough of an unsatisfactory married life. The back-and-forth exchange resumes:

He: Aw, listen, gal, you know you ain't treatin' me right.  
She: I know, son, but I can't live on dat cupid stuff. You know, if I don't get somethin' to eat real soon I'm gonna mildew.  
He: Oh gal, don't be so officious!  
She: I wish I wuz!  
He: Wuz what?  
She: Full o' fishes. I'm so hungry my stomach's done sent up two wireless messages to send some Ree-freshments!  
He: Oh, gal, you ain't hungry!  
She: Coon, if I was to see a beefsteak my tongue would slap my brains out. And, believe me, coon, I done drank so much water since I been with you that my stomach thinks I'm takin' in washin'.  
He: Don't exasperate yo'self, baby.  
She: Don't baby me, coon! I'm so dawgone hungry that my skirts is draggin' my tracks out! An', believe me, I done eat so many beans since I been with you that I'm ashamed to look a bean in the face!  
He: Oh, quit tantalizin' me!  
She: Coon, if I was to see a hambone layin' on de ground I'd pick it up an' eat it!  
He: Dat ain't nothin', gal! Show me where it's layin' and I'll eat de ground!  
She: Well, it's no use talkin'. Let's quit!

They sing again, and Henry says: "Well, all right, I'm gone!" She laughs, and he asks: "What you laffin' at?" She replies, "You is been a good nigger, ain't you?" He says, "You know I has, honey," and receives the honeyed assurance, "Well, I'll forgive you dis time! Give me a

little kiss!" He murmurs, "Awright!" and they kiss, after which he exclaims, "Oh, honey!"; she, "Oh, man!" and they end in harmony, singing, "We'll let it go at dat!"

"Henry Jones" is one of the most amusing of the Bernard-Hare duets, and I hope that no black readers of *HOBBIES* will be offended at my perpetuating the dialog, which, as I have previously pointed out, contains some words now considered offensive. The talk is quoted as a good example of bygone humor. Incidentally, there seem to be a few, if any, collectors of records by pioneer recording artists among Negro Americans. I can't recall ever receiving a letter from any reader who identified himself as black. I imagine many Negroes, however, collect "blues" and "spirituals," while others prefer the same type of music as do whites.

#### V. Bernard's Victor Records

The fact that the Edison disc of "Henry Jones" and "St. Louis Blues" was made available about March, 1920, reminds me it was in that month that Bernard's first Victor record was announced. It consisted of the only two solos by him that Victor ever issued, and neither was his own composition.

For some hard to explain reason, Al never was able to obtain a firm Victor foothold. As I have said, Victor issued no Bernard and Hare duets, and Al's experience with the leading record company of that day was somewhat like that of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare after they became famous on radio as "The Happiness Boys." Jones had made some Victor solo records from early 1920 until September, 1922, but they all appeared under the name of Victor Roberts. Hare never recorded any Victor solos, or if he did they remained unissued. The duet team made one double-faced combination of "Oh! Eva" and "Hard-Boiled Rose," which appeared in the summer of 1924, but were unable to break into the Victor list again until they did some electrical recording late in 1925. After that their popularity was soon established, and they made Victor discs fairly regularly for about five years.

Bernard's initial Victor record, was No. 18644, which contained two rather unsuccessful numbers — "You Know What I Mean" (a phrase he had introduced in "Henry Jones") and "The Bell Hop Blues." The description in the monthly supplement began:

"Al Bernard, the 'Boy From Dixie,' has come into a well-deserved place as one of the best 'blackface' comedians ever developed. Here are his first records as a Victor artist."

There followed a description of the two songs, which it is hardly worth while to quote. An excellent photograph was reproduced, in which Bernard's eyes appear to be dark brown. Nearly all pictures of him make him look dark-eyed, but my recollection — which may be wrong after a quarter of a century — is that his eyes were blue.



Bernard's name, by the way, should be pronounced *Ber-nard* not *Bern-ard*. He did so little work for Victor that it will be as well to dispose of it now.

He did not reappear in a Victor supplement until August, 1921, and then only incidentally, when he sang the refrain in a fox trot version of "The St. Louis Blues," by the original Dixieland Jazz Band. The record, No. 18772, was combined with "Jazz Me Blues," also by the Dixieland group, but with no refrain. I wonder if Al's friend and associate, J. Russell Robinson, was then playing in this, the first jazz band to become famous on records.

It is beyond me why Victor didn't think it worth while to devote an entire record to a vocal rendition of the "St. Louis Blues." Anyway, here is the description of the dance version written by one of my favorite authors, James E. Richardson:

"Saint Louis of France or Saint Louis, Missouri, here are two great fox trots! If East and West Saint Louis declare they give one another the blues, that's a family matter. The number (in modernistic language) is a live one, with plenty of lemon yellow oboe squeals for shivery dancers. In the middle of it Al Bernard sings a vocal refrain of the kind vaudeville idiom used to call a 'coon-shout.' The number is by W.C. Handy. 'Jazz Me Blues' is by Tom De-laney. It is a slowish, even stately, fox trot with the occasional neuralgia effects that so delight lovers of the 'blues.'"

In November, 1921, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band returned with both sides of No. 18798, "Dangerous Blues" and "Royal Garden Blues," in each of which "The Boy From Dixie" sang. I'll quote the introductory part of the description:

"Blue records have been compared to musical mixed pickles, containing, as they do, as many flavors. This double-faced one has then, all, with a few acid condiments not usually sold in the musical delicatessen shops. Every instrument of the dance-orchestra is heard, the rhythm gloriously hawking a way through. Al Bernard sings a refrain in each number . . ."

After that Bernard's name appeared no more in a Victor list, but on October 10, 1925, he recorded three songs under the serial numbers 33568, 33569 and 33570. None was issued, probably because the early electric recording was unsatisfactory. Three "takes" were made of 33568, "On a Slow Train Through Arkansas," which Bernard had written to cash in on the growing market for hill-billy tunes. Edison also recorded this number and issued it, as did a few other companies. Frank Ferara played a steel guitar accompaniment, and James Harrington was at the piano. The next two selections had Har-

rington again providing a piano accompaniment. Two "takes" were made of each. One, "They're Always in the Way," sounds from its title as if it were also hill-billyish, but I have never heard it. The third, "Pretty Little Honey Lou," was one of his compositions that Al had recorded for Edison about three years before, with a yodeling obligato by Frank Kamplian, of whom we shall be hearing considerably more.

This song puzzled me for years, because the Edison catalog listed it as being written by "A. and J. Bernard," and I wondered who J. Bernard was. I finally asked Al, and he replied that it was his brother—the one who survived him. The other Bernard had nothing to do with writing the song, he explained, but he had an affectionate habit of sometimes adding the names of relatives or friends to the credits of songs he had composed, and this time he had chosen to honor his brother. Unfortunately, "Honey Lou" as one of Al's less successful efforts, so if his brother was "cut in" on the royalties they probably didn't make him rich.

Later, I acquired a copy of the record, and it credits co-authorship to Joe Bernard, which makes me wonder if I had remembered incorrectly and the brother's name was Joe instead of John, as I may have given it last month. Perhaps I can arrive at a firm decision toward the end of this series, when I begin to publish excerpts from Al's letters.

Now back to our play-by-play analysis of his Edison recording career.

#### VI. "I Come From Get-It Land"

Obviously, if Al Bernard made anything like four thousand records, I

(Continued on page 119)

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**OLD AND NEW PARTNERS.**—By mid-1921 the partnership between Al Bernard and Ernest Hare for recording blackface comedy sketches had passed its peak. They worked together occasionally for another two years, but Hare meanwhile had met and teamed with William Reese (Billy) Jones to record more conventional types of popular songs. On radio Jones and Hare became "the Happiness Boys" and had the first sponsored program. Quentin Riggs copied these pictures from a 1920 book of photographs of Edison artists. Left to right: Al Bernard, Ernest Hare, and Reese Jones.

(FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS—Cont. from page 38)

am not going to list and discuss them all. My plan is to work my way through the Bernard and Hare duets on Edison "Re-Creation," then deal in only general terms with the remaining discs and cylinders, but pointing out some of the more interesting and unusual titles. After all, I can't let this series extend through all eternity, which would be almost necessary if I were to undertake a summary of every record in which the genial comedian had a part.

After recording the "St. Louis Blues" on October 29, Al returned to the Edison studios on November 20 and sang "Chasing the Blues," another of his compositions that was approved for Blue Amberol sale, but not for the disc. On December 9, he was heard in a song by Andrew B. Sterling and Harry Von Tilzer, "He Went In Like a Lion and Came Out Like a Lamb." This comic discussion of unhappy married life received a fair interpretation, but it was not the sort of song Al did best, and his rendition was inferior to that of Billy Murray on a number of brands, including Victor and Aeolian-Vocalion. For one thing, he did not, as Billy did, make his voice sound like that of a roaring lion, "which," as the Victor supplement said, "ought to be heard for a good three miles on a still night," and he did not develop the comedy so effectively. But Murray always sang songs of this type better than anyone else.

Then, five days before Christmas, 1919, on December 20, Bernard and Hare brought their year's busy partnership to a temporary close by recording the fifth of their blackface specialties, "I Come From Get-It-Land."

This record turned out a comparative failure. It was as funny as its forerunners and had, moreover, a catchy banjo accompaniment (I wonder who played it?), but it remained in the catalog only through 1923. One possible reason for its short life is that the moulds might have become damaged and it was not considered worth while to remake them. A more

probable supposition is that the record's sale was impaired by the weak coupling—a not very amusing Jewish dialect character song, "Snoops, the Lawyer," by Maurice Burkhart. Burkhart had a small voice and most of his records suffered from lack of adequate volume. This helps to explain why "Snoops" became the dull affair that it was.

"I Come From Get-It-Land" was another of Bernard's original compositions. Here is how the dialog goes—but first let's quote the description on the envelope in which the record was packed:

"Black-face comedian patter is usually funny, but when Bernard and Hare are the performers there is no doubt of its 'de-splitting quality.' They are a genial team with a species of dialog tending to tie them up in knots as well as their listeners. When they come in the door, care flies out of the window.

"The banjo in this dialog has its own say too, and its part in the conversation is worth noting. Did you ever think of how a banjo can punctuate a remark?"

After listening to the record two or three times, I am inclined to believe the patter may be the funniest in any of the Bernard and Hare records. Whether or not it is, here it is:

He: Here's where I'm gonna serenade my baby  
She: Here, here, here! What is all dat noise?  
He: Why baby, dis is yo' honey bunch singin' to ya!  
She: Singin'? You call dat singin'? Be on yo' way, Midnight!  
He: Midnight! Why, gal, you ain't no half past eight o'clock in de mornin' yo' self!  
She: Don't argue with me today, coon!  
He: I ain't arguin', but when I got somethin' to say it must be said!  
She: By dat you means to interrogate dat you is bad?  
He: Gal, you learns quick, don't you?  
She: Is dat so? I bet I'll drop dis skillet on yo' head an' separate yo' ideas from yo' appetite!  
He: Yeah, an' I'll take my shoe an' half-sole yo' eyes!  
She: Any time you do I'll jump from dis window an' run you so fast dat you'll turn de corner in de middle of de block.  
He: Now, listen here, lop-ears—!  
She: Here, keep my ears outa yo' mouth, coon, 'cause if ears was snowflakes you'd be a blizzard!  
He: I'll bet I'm gonna draw my Smith an' Eastern, an' shoot up dis place!  
She: Huh, dat thing won't shoot!  
He: Why, gal, my gun shoots 82 miles an' den stops an' begins to throw bricks!  
She: Yeah, but don't forget dat I has a razor inlaid with pearl. If I ever chase you with it you'll be inlaid with a crowd walkin' slow behind va, and I claim de music they

play you won't be able to ball the jack by!  
He: Now, honey, don't get riled! You know I was only jokin'. I'm not only a man dat's turned over a new leaf—  
She: I guess you're gonna tell me dat you turned over a tree!  
He: Aw, noney, let's not argue any more. I got a proposition to make to you, and I'm gonna sing it to ya!  
She: Let'er go! I ain't blind!  
He: Well, here goes, and I craves yo' polite attention!  
She: Man, you're a reg'lar Chesterfull Brummeifield, ain't ya?

The ardent suitor then begins to make musical love to the "gal," whose name is Malinda Johnson. He assures her that he is a natural "go-getter," as high pressure business men used to be termed, and that, being a "go-getter," he comes from "Get-It-Land," an assertion that provides the song's title. Bernard again shows his disregard for exact rhymes by pairing "Malinda Johnson" with "orange blossom." Then follows a brief, but amorous, discussion:

She: Son, I claim dat yo' singin' an' yo' inducements is irresistible. You sho' has won dis time!  
He: 'Course I has. An' you know dat what it takes to get it I got it, an' my middle name is Get-It, an' I come from Get-It-Land! That's why I'm gonna take you down to Parson Blake's—

The chorus is then sung again, with characteristic close harmony.

Again, I think that from the standpoint of rapid-fire repartee, this may be the funniest of the Bernard-Hare records, which means the funniest of any records by a pair of blackface comedians. I am, however, inclined to think that the sketches Bernard wrote are not so true to traditional Negro life as the dialect work by such comedians as Billy Golden and Joe Hughes and Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan.

Billy Golden was born in 1854 and died in 1926. His Negro characters, consequently, were based on his knowledge of blacks who had grown up before the Civil War, and there is virtually no trace of exaggeration in the way he depicts them. Collins (1864-1933) and Harlan (1861-1936) also knew the older type of Negroes of the plantation era and modeled their impersonations accordingly.

By contrast, Bernard's blacks seem



of the big city type for the most part and they are what literary critics call "larger than life" — that is, their traits are exaggerated to make them more amusing. No Negro couples ever quarreled with such unflagging scintillating humor and with such sustained brilliance of invective as do the male and female brawlers of Bernard and Hare. That fact does not diminish in the least the delightfully humorous quality of their recordings, but does mean that they should not be accepted as historically accurate portrayals of Negro life a half century or more ago.

## VII. Frank Kamplain Joins Bernard

Another performer who was to take an important role in Al Bernard's recording and radio career made his Edison debut just as 1919 was about to give way to 1920. He was an accomplished yodler, Frank Kamplain.

I am not sure but that Kamplain should be called the most important of Bernard's recording associates. While the Bernard-Kamplain singing and yodeling duets did not have the immediate run-away popularity of the Bernard and Hare comic sketches, they sold well, and Bernard's partnership with Kamplain was maintained for seven years. He worked with Hare for only four, and during the last two of those, after Hare increased his popularity as the singing sidekick of Billy Jones, Al and Ernie recorded together only infrequently. All told, Bernard and Kamplain probably made a considerably larger number of duet recordings than Bernard and Hare.

(Perhaps it is worth drawing attention to here, as I had meant to do earlier, how often "Henry Jones" or what other male is concerned in the Bernard-Hare sketches is proud of the devastating quality of his "wicked left" and how frequently he boasts of the death-dealing merits of his weapon that went by the name of Smith & Wesson, but which he invariably calls "my Smith an' East-ern.")

Of Frank Kamplain, the man, I know remarkably little, for I never had an opportunity to question Bernard about him. I recall, however, that a radio announcer whom I knew in Johnson City, Tenn., told me that he formerly had worked at a station in another State from which Kamplain frequently broadcast, and said he knew the yodeler well. He described him as pretty much of an irrepressible, fun-loving fellow. He may still be living; I, at least, have never seen any mention of his death.

After Bernard, Kamplain and Sam H. (Sammy) Stept, pianist and song writer, had begun to call themselves "The Record Boys" in 1925 and to broadcast regularly from New York, a writer in *The Billboard* said they spent most of their spare time "just sitting around and arguing. They'll argue about anything." I don't have the clipping for reference, but I remember the *Billboard* man went on to point out that he had mentioned

Kamplain's name first of the three, "and after this issue comes out they'll spend the rest of the day arguing about why Kamplain's name precedes the other two."

Kamplain's recorded work was mostly confined to his duets with Bernard, with, or without, the accompaniment of Sammy Stept's piano. (We shall hear more about Stept later.) However, he made a few Edison solo discs, one of which "Roll On, Silver Moon," won a place among the 300 best sellers. Victor also had him, in 1924, re-make record No. 17012, that had contained two yodel specialties—"The Cuckoo Song" and "Papa's Baby Boy"—by George P. Watson. Since Watson was still living and active—a little later he did a bit of electrical recording for Victor — I wonder why he wasn't called upon for the re-makes. (He died in 1926.) Bernard and Kamplain did nothing together for Victor—at least nothing that was issued.

The pair's initial Edison offering was George Gershwin's first song hit, "Swanee," which they recorded on December 27, 1919. Strangely, the record seems not to have been a success, but its lack of popularity could not be blamed on the coupling, a fine rendition of "When My Baby Smiles at Me," by "Rachel Grant" (Gladys Rice) and Billy Murray, with some incidental imitations of a "laughing trombone" by Edward Meeker. Despite this seemingly strong pair, the disc, No. 50651, was deleted from the catalog after 1923. You will notice that it was recorded exactly a week after "I Come From Get-It-Land," which also had a short catalog life.

As a rule, all the talking in the Bernard-Kamplain duets was done by the "senior partner," with Kamplain restricting himself to yodeling.

## VIII. The "Moonshine" Song

Bernard's first Edison recording in 1920 was "The Unlucky Blues," which he sang into the horn on February 19. This was another of his offerings that was considered suitable for cylinders but not for discs. It was not one of his compositions, but was listed as the work of Lewis (probably Sam M. Lewis) and J. Russel Robinson.

On April Fool's Day, Bernard and Kamplain sang "Oh Joe, Please Don't Go," a "coon song" for which Bernard provided the words and Larry Briers the music, although only Briers got label credit. (I wonder if Bernard had his brother in mind when he wrote the lyrics.) Twenty-eight years later, the aging erstwhile "Boy From Dixie" sang this song a few months before he died, at the John Bieling Day observance in September, 1948.

Then on April 29, Bernard and Hare got together again to record an amusing version of a then currently popular song lamenting the "horrors" of prohibition. It was "The Moon Shines On the Moonshine." The words were by Sidney de Witt and the music by Robert Hood Bowers,

who was then conductor of the Aeolian-Vocalion recording orchestra. The plea for "Joe" not to go was combined with the "dry law" lament on Diamond Disc No. 50672. They also entered the Blue Amberol list.

Both the words of "The Moon Shines On the Moonshine" and the dialog are laughable. There is less talking than usual, however, and much of it is worked in as a part of the song. There is also a duet mid-way between a "boozeeon" (bassoon) and a "trambone" (trombone.) "Henry Jones" again is the "hero." And this, by the way, was the first conventionally written popular song that Bernard and Hare had recorded. The others had been produced by Bernard alone or with a collaborator, and with the special requirements of the Bernard-Hare duets always uppermost:

She: What's the matter with you, Henry Jones? For the last month you've been moping aroun' here. What's the matter with you anyway?  
He: I ain't myself, gal. I'm DE-pressed.  
She: What makes you DE-pressed?  
He: Well, listen tuh me an' I'll tell yuh.

Here Henry begins singing his mournful plaint about being robbed of the solace of alcohol, while She makes jeering comments. After the first chorus they have this conversation:

He: It might be merry, but not for me. I'm DE-pressed. Oh well, I guess I'll play me a little section on my instrument. (He begins playing "How Dry I Am.")  
She: Say, Henry, what is dat instrument you're playing?  
He: Why, gal, dat's a boozeeon.  
She: 'Course you'd have to have booze in it.  
He: Oh, hush yo' mouth, gal. Don't bother me.  
She: Wait a minute, Henry, and I'll play with ya.  
He: What's dat you gonna play on?  
She: Why, I'm gonna play dis trambone.  
He: A trambone? Why, you'd play better on a hambone!  
She: Nevertheless, I'm gonna help you out. I don't b'lieve you think I can play dis thing.  
He: Oh well, all right. Come on, le's start.  
She: Say, Henry, what is dat tune we is playin'?  
He: We is playin'? Where you git dat 'we is' at? The melody dat I is playin' is 'John Barleycorn's Swan Song.' But you ain't helpin' me a bit. You're just maldin' it mizzable fo' me.

They resume singing, and the chorus ends with Henry taking a deep bass note on the last word of "out where the moon shines on the moonshine so stillily." She giggles and exclaims, "Dat's some still!" and then the record ends. While the dialog in this number is hardly so funny as in the duets that preceded it, the total effect, with the bassoon-trombone duet included, is amusing.

## IX. "Slide, Kelly, Slide"

On May 12, Al and Frank Kamplain recorded another of their singing and yodeling specialties composed by Bernard, "My Lovin' Sing Song Man," into which the old song, "Sweet Evalina, My Evalina" is effectively introduced. This was combined sometime afterward with one of Bernard's best solos, "The Broadway Blues," which, however, was not written by him. Neither was it by Handy or any other Negro composer, but by Grant Clarke and Carey Morgan. "The Broadway Blues" was on one side of Aileen Stanley's first Victor

record issued in November, 1920, and was also her only issued recording for Brunswick.

May 12 brought another Bernard and Hare recording, "Slide, Kelly, Slide," which had the subtitle, "The Trombone Blues." It was a comedy number written by George F. Briegel and had nothing to do with the "Gay Nineties" tune of the same name always associated with J. W. Kelly, "The Rolling Mill Man." I wonder, by the way, if George F. Briegel was merely a disguise for Bernard's song writing friend, Larry Briers. Perhaps it was Briers' real name. I know nothing about Briers, who isn't listed in the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary, but have considered the possibility that he might have been a member of some phonograph company's recording staff. I remember that I once saw a disc of Irish jigs and reels played by a violinist, Joseph Samuels, with Briers' piano accompaniment, but can't recall the label. It is interesting that there were a few comedy trombone effects in "The Moon Shines On the Moonshine," and that, in its follow-up, the "slide" has a leading part. Possibly Bernard wrote the words of this number, but no one but Briegel is mentioned in the "credit" part of the Edison record label.

Again, "Henry Jones" is the man in the song, as he is also in "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee," another Bernard-Hare duet recorded on September 14, 1920, and combined on Diamond Disc No. 50731 with "Slide, Kelly, Slide." This was the first time that two blackface skits by Al and Ernie had been coupled on one record to give their admirers double value.

Between the combined duets, however, Bernard had, on June 24, sung an amusing solo, "Mississippi Bound," composed by Charley Straight, who was for years Gene Greene's accompanist in vaudeville. On August 6 Al made a record of "Read 'Em and Weep," his own composition, which he sang in the musical comedy, "Come Seven." Its "hero" is a dedicated gambler, "Old Bill Flat from New Orleans." There is an entertaining "crapshooting" scene, which results in arrests, followed by the dice tossers being hauled away in a "paddy wagon." An unidentified man, possibly Edward Meeker, impersonates a policeman.

Al Bernard told me that many of the characters in his songs, such as "Old Bill Flat," were taken from well known Negro personalities in the New Orleans of the 1890's and the first decade or so of the 20th Century. "Parson Jenks," "Brother Low-Down," "Stavin Change (the Meanest Man in New Orleans)" and others in the Bernard mythology were flesh and blood people before they passed into his songs, according to Al.

Now, we'll discuss the dialogs in the two duets just mentioned. First, "Slide, Kelly, Slide," and then "Change Your Name Malinda Lee":

She: Well, dawgone, if yonder ain't ole

Henry!  
He: Yeah, here I is!  
She: You know, I ain't seen you since you had de fluanna!  
He: Aw, gal, you means fluenna. Listen here, Kelly, I want—  
She: Heah, heah, heah! What you callin' me Kelly about? Kelly is a man's name. Why do you do it?  
He: I calls you Kelly because you reminds me of a fellow I knows named Kelly. You know, you an' him both are great musicians. You plays de same insterment.  
She: I don't understand what you mean.

"Henry" sings an explanation about "Kelly" being a trombone virtuoso. At its conclusion his lady love exclaims:

She: Stop a minute! Say no more! Desist! Now I knows what you means! Kelly is the new trombone player in town!  
He: Ah, now, I sees that you is usin' de thinkin' matter dat habitates yo' cranium!  
She: Very singular! Let you know about dat later. But, say, can Kelly play like dis?

A long slide is heard from the trombone, and they sing a song discussing the lady's musical genius. The trombone is heard throughout. Then:

He: Gal, you plays a mean trombone!  
She: Ain't it so? But, you know, you ought to be able to play a trombone.  
He: Why?  
She: 'Cause you got a big mouth.  
He: A big mouth? Huh, yours ain't no buttonhole!  
She: No, but when de good Lord was makin' yours if He'd a-made another cut He'd a-cut yo' head off!  
He: Dats all right about my mouth. But, say, Kelly, you is good at slidin' de trombone, out how is you on technique?  
She (laughing): Why, I speaks it fluently!  
He: Speaks it? I'm gonna try you out. What is four-four, six-eight?  
She: Dat ain't technique, fool. Dat's hist'ry!  
He: Dawgone, I can't fool you, can I?  
You know, when I was talking about technique what I should have said was "conspirato, di capo."  
She: You tel: 'em, ragtime, I'm syncopated!  
He: All right. Let's go! (The record ends with repetition of the chorus.)

Now, here is the characteristically funny conversation in "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee":

He: Yo ho, Malinda! Yo' sweet baby has arrived!  
She: Well, if it ain't my own blackberry!  
He: Blackberry? Listen here, gal, you ain't no glass of buttermilk yo'self!  
She: I know, son, but you're so dawgone black dat de lightnin' bugs follow you aroun' in de daytime!  
He: Aw, honey, let's not argy today, 'cause I'm a man dat's fell in love!  
She: In love! Listen, coon, you on away from me! You know you're just tryin' to trifle with my affections!  
He: No, I ain't honey. I'm a man's dat's fell heavy in love!  
She: In love!  
He: Sure, ain't you never fell in love?  
She: No, but I fell in de river once!  
He: Oh, but dat's diff'rent. You know, when you falls in de river dey fishes you out, an' when you falls in quicksand dey drags you out, but when you falls in love you is utterly an' eternally submerged!  
She: Henry, I must confess dat you has worked it out in an obnoxious manner.  
He: Worked it out! Why gal, yo' language ain't fit to eat! Let me explain mo' explicit-like what love is.  
She: Well, go on.  
He: Love is a circumrotary pitty-patty bumpification of de heart which produces a condition of de mental cerebellum dat causes complete oblivion to de delinquencies of yo' inamorara.  
Shh: Oo, oo, oo! Hit me flat on de head with a brick! Coon, you know you're a reglar Dickster's Websterary himself.  
He: 'Co'se I is! Wait till I ignites my see-gar! I wants to say somethin' to ya!  
She: Don't say it to me, Henry. Sing it.  
He: Aw right, stay right where you is!

Henry sings a plea to his ebony "Inamorara" to "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee."

She: Henry, you know you sings jes' like a bird!  
He: Does you think so, baby? What sort of a bird does I sing like?  
She: A blackbird!  
He: Aw, hush yo' mouth, gal!

They reach an amorous agreement

that after they are married she will do the cooking and he will chop the wood — an understanding which he qualifies by singing at the bottom of his bass range, "I mean de kindling wood!" But everything is harmonious at the record's end.

By the time this disc, providing a double helping of Bernard and Hare's humor, was issued, the comedians' partnership had reached, and was about to pass, its peak. Not long before, Ernest Hare had met Billy Jones in the Edison recording studios and they had amused themselves by singing opera in a burlesque fashion, as they did in their 1922 record of "Operatic Syncopation." The pair soon proved to be the Damon and Pythias of "show business." They seemed to have everything in common except that Jones was a bachelor (he took a wife after his mother's death) and Hare was married, with a little girl named Marilyn, who was to serve for a short time as Jones' singing partner after her father's death in 1939. Hare was six years older to the day than Jones; both had mothers whose maiden name was Roberts; both were five feet and seven inches tall; both had voices of operatic calibre that perfectly complemented each other, and both had had operatic experience. In every way they seemed "twin souls" and they achieved a perfection in comic duet singing that, after their first experimental months, probably has never been equalled.

The result might be called fore-ordained. Hare continued to be on good terms with Bernard and to work with him occasionally, but, looking into the future, he could see there was a sameness to the Bernard-Hare duets that militated against their long-range popularity.

Funny as they were, it would become increasingly a case of "more of the same." He correctly foresaw brighter prospects in teaming up with William Reese Jones to sing a wider variety of popular music. For a while, however, he remained the partner of both Bernard and of Jones.

Before I end this installment, I think it well to point out that Jones was not known as Billy Jones on Edison records until he sang "Casey Jones" (No. 50747), recorded February 8, 1921, and announced in October, 1921. Previously, he had been called "Reese Jones" when singing for Edison. Incidentally, the reverse side of "Casey Jones" was "A Scene On the Old Plantation," by Billy Golden and the Empire Vaudeville Company, and it is the only comic sketch I can think of in which Al Bernard took an incidental part—that of "Aunt Dinah." Other members of the "cast" in this skit, recorded February 17, 1921, were Edward Meeker; three members of the Harmonizers Quartet — Charles Hart, Steve Porter and Harry Donaghy — and a banjoist, Billy Pryor.

(To be continued)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART V  
By JIM WALSH

### I. Biography of A Genius

When this series was just getting under way, I quoted an article from "Stage World" for October 30, 1920, in which Mark Vance referred to Al Bernard as "a song writing genius." The farther I proceed with research bearing upon the life and achievements of "The Boy From Dixie," the more I feel those words of praise were justified.

During the almost century-long history of the phonograph there have been many recording artists with highly developed, if sometimes narrowly specialized talents, but the number to whom the word "genius" can accurately be applied is, in my judgment, few. Len Spencer, I maintain, was a creative genius, and his recording partner, Ada Jones, might be termed a genius of interpretation and mimicry. So might Billy Murray and, so, I think, might Arthur Collins, with Byron G. Harlan perhaps just a step below his long-time associate. Cal Stewart might be added to the genius list because of his creation of the mythical "world" of Punkin Center, with the personality of "Uncle Josh" as its focal point. Frank Crumit both as singer and song writer might be admitted to the genius grouping, and the combined comedy accomplishments of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare add up to genius, regardless of whether their separate efforts qualify. Possibly you have nominees of your own. But the number of geniuses in any branch of artistic endeavor is small. If the possessors of genius were not exceptional they wouldn't be geniuses, and the term is not one that should be loosely applied to recording artists, no matter how clever, or to anyone else.

As for Al Bernard's right to belong in the ranks of the exalted, consider his achievements. He wrote the most sparkling, scintillating minstrel-type humor ever put on records. He composed scores of simple, but tuneful and unforgettable songs. He was one of the pioneer popular performers on radio. He was successful on the legitimate stage, in minstrel work and in the films. He was the author of much published minstrel material. He had an excellent high tenor voice although some record companies occasionally were misguided enough to refer to him as a baritone, and as a singer of "blues" from a more sophisticated standpoint that that of cottonfield Negroes, he had no equal. The man did well everything he attempted, and I sincerely believe that, from both the creative and interpret-



MINSTREL MAN.—Al Bernard is shown both in blackface and as he really looked on the cover of this book published in the early 1930's.

ative standpoints, the accolade of "genius" is rightfully his.

After completing the third part of this survey, I came across a large paperback book called "Al Bernard's Complete Minstrel Folio, for stage, radio and home entertainment." I knew I had the book, but had never done more than glance at it and didn't realize that it contained a brief biographical sketch of Bernard, which provides a few details concerning him that I had not previously mentioned.

The "folio" was published in 1933 by Bibb and Lang, Inc., of New York,

after Al's recording career was virtually over, even though he remained popular in radio for years afterward. The foreword, giving information about Bernard, who wrote, or at least edited the book, is worth quoting:

"This Minstrel Book is the brain child of Al Bernard—who is Al Bernard? It would take pages to tell you of his career in the world of show business.

"However, we shall endeavor here to give you briefly a resume of his accomplishments, mainly to convince you of his qualifications to authorship of this marvelous book.

"From the time he was old enough to walk, Mr. Bernard's one ambition in life was to be an actor and essentially a comedian. His first

opportunity came in 1907 when he obtained a job singing at a picture house in New Orleans, La. From there Al went right on. He organized a road tab show and here got his fundamental experience in minstrelsy. He played through the country continually, until in 1919 he arrived in New York City.

"He immediately became an Edison record artist and he continued recording for the different companies until he became so famous he organized the Record Boys, one of radio's first sensational attractions.

"During his radio career, Mr. Al Bernard has been featured with the Record Boys—Dutch Masters Minstrels—Raybestos Twins—and today is featured on the N. B. C. network as Al Bernard, the Minstrel Man.

"Over the period of years he has originated and compiled the wealth of incomparable material contained in this book and it is his earnest wish that you may derive the fun and pleasure from it that he has so sincerely endeavored to give you. Sincerely, THE PUBLISHER."

The book contains "The Sunflower Minstrels," "a complete 2-hour show with original songs, jokes and situations"; much other dialect humor; and ten of Bernard's songs. Only two of these, "Prancin' Dancin' Yodelin' Man" and "Yodelin' Bill" were well known on records, as duets between Bernard and Frank Kampain, but Al made one or two records of three others—"At the Pumpkin Fair in the Old Town Square," "Mister Black Boy, Good Night" and "Stay Away From My Man." The other five are relatively obscure: "Henceforth I'll Call on Friday," "If He Enters That Door," "It's Not Funny When It Happens to You," "My Ole Mule's Name Is 'Iz'" and "The Race Track Blues."

No doubt the Bernard songs and sketches helped to extend the life of minstrelsy, which was even then a vanishing form of entertainment and has now almost completely perished. Even many Lions' Clubs no longer present their traditional annual minstrel shows, and Al Bernard, if he were alive today, would, I am sure, be saddened by the disappearance of his favorite entertainment medium.

Now, let's return to consideration of the records that Al and Ernie Hare were making for Edison while their partnership still flourished.

(Parenthetically, I wonder about the statement that Bernard sang in movie theaters in 1907. That was a time when there were no film shows except in primitive store front "nickelodeons," which projected split-reel "rainy" pictures over and over. At five cents admission, it doesn't seem they would have been sufficiently profitable to permit a "vocalist" being used as a supplement to the filmed "attractions." Perhaps, however, Al sang between changes of film and, since he was only 17, he wouldn't have been paid much. I believe, too, that the year in which he came to New York should be 1918, instead of 1919. As was revealed in an earlier installment, he recorded "The Hesitation Blues" for Edison on February 14, 1919, and he had made tests, which did not meet with Mr. Edison's approval, before that. He and Ernest Hare were living in the same apartment building when they sang "I Want to Hold You In My Arms" on March 18, and must have been there for some time to become acquainted and work as partners. So 1918, seems the more likely date.)

## II. "Satisfied"

Last month's discussion of Ber-

nard-Hare recordings ended with an account of "Slide, Kelly, Slide" and "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee." Perhaps because of its double value, the Diamond Disc (No. 50731) containing these two Bernard compositions was one of the pair's most successful offerings and found its way into the list of "300 best sellers." So did their next, which had the brief title of "Satisfied" and was combined with Bernard's solo, "Read 'Em and Weep." The words of both "Satisfied" and "Read 'Em and Weep" were by Bernard, but the music of the first was by the elusive Larry Briers, and that of the second by Walter Haenschel, who at that time was an orchestra conductor for Brunswick. Again I wonder: Why did Bernard, who had such a well defined gift for composing attractive, catchy and easily remembered tunes, so often "farm out" the musical portion of his songs to someone else?

The description printed on the record envelope said truthfully:

"'Satisfied' is entertaining and amusing, both in the song itself and in the conversational interlude. Al Bernard and Ernest Hare give a realistic performance of the colored people."

Of "Read 'Em and Weep" the description went:

"That branch of gambling commonly known as 'rolling the bones' is more or less familiar to all, but seems to be particularly appropriate to the colored race. At any rate, there have been a great many funny stories about their activity in that line. 'Read 'Em and Weep' tells about Old Bill Flat, a veritable genius of the dice. When he rolls them out his opponent has only one thing to do—'Read 'Em and Weep.' But, before the end of the story, the long arm of the law plays its hand and somewhat spoils Old Bill's triumph."

"Al Bernard has a happy faculty for impersonating colored folks. The dialect is natural and sustained throughout."

"Satisfied" is a humorous song in which considerable down to earth philosophy is expressed. It is a discussion between two far from affluent blacks as to what they would do if they had their "druthers" and what it would take to make them satisfied with their existence, which they realize can never be on the higher plane to which they wistfully aspire. (George M. Cohan used the same idea in his earlier song, "Then I'd Be Satisfied With Life.") In "Satisfied" the man, who apparently is again "Henry Jones," for he is called "Hen," has only low-life materialistic desires, introduced for comedy effect, but there is a touch of pathos in the woman's yearning to be of a higher social status. Here is the first chorus, sung by "Henry," with the feminine comment on his remarks in parentheses: "If I could find some work to do (You work?) Den I'd be satisfied. I mean some nice hard work fo' you! (Dat's diff'runt!) Den I'd be satisfied. If you would come right home to me with all de weekly salary— If I could spend our money free (our money?) Den I'd be satisfied. If I could live a life of ease, Den I'd be satisfied. Eat all de chicken dat I please, Den I'd be satisfied. If I could figure out some way to always throw a four and trey— If I could lay aroun' all day (Humph!) Den I'd be satisfied."

"She," portrayed by Bernard, reveals in the second refrain that she has high society aspirations:

"If I could dress like quality, Den I'd be satisfied. Have all de wimmin envy me, Den I'd be satisfied."

If I could own a big sedan,  
Have lots of di'monds on my han',  
Could hear dem say, 'Now ain't she gran'!'  
Den I'd be satisfied.  
If I could lead de upper set,  
Coon, I'd be satisfied.  
If I could be de social pet,  
Den I'd be satisfied.  
If I could only wear silk hose,  
If I could wear silk underclo'es—

(Continued on page 117)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

If I could smell jus' like a rose,  
Den I'd be satisfied."

The last remark is followed by a bit of repartee that if used today on television or radio would bring a storm of protest. Henry says: "Why, baby, you does smell like a rose." She replies: "Does I? What kind of a rose does I smells like?" and he returns: "You smells jes' like the Neg-rose"—meaning, of course, "Negroes."

They both laugh at this, and then join in singing the last few lines of the song, which sum up what it is about:

"HE—If I could be what I am not  
SHE—Now, listen man, I'll tell you what—  
BOTH—If we could have what we ain't got,  
Den we'd be satisfied!"

The conversational give and take between the first chorus and the second verse is up to the usual Bernard-Hare standard, although it perhaps is not their most laughable:

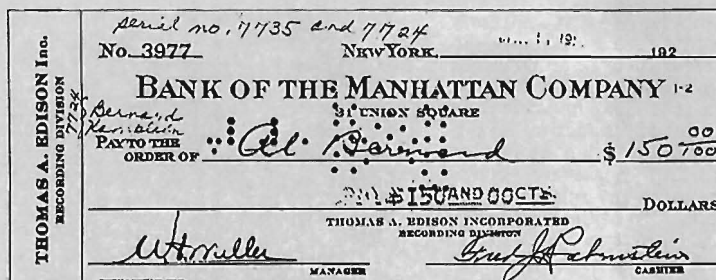
"SHE—Now I know why dey calls you 'Hen.'  
HE—Why does day call me 'Hen'?  
SHE—'Cause you're always layin' aroun'.  
HE—Oh, gal, igno'ance is eatin' you up!  
SHE—Is dat so? Coon, you gonna keep on insultin' me until some mornin' you're gonna wake up in de graveyard an' find somebody patten' you on de face with a spade!  
HE—Yeah, and I bet I take dis here brick an' make it fit yo' mouth like a toothpick!  
SHE—Well, go on, senseless!  
HE—Senseless! Say, isn't here, gal! If you had just one o' my ideas in yo' head it would bust yo' skull!  
SHE—Coon, you flatters me!  
HE—Aw, you keep argyvin' with me an' we dona forgot what we was doin'.  
SHE—Whut wuz we doin'?  
HE—Why, we wuz singin' a song.  
SHE—Wuz we? We wuz, wuzn't we?  
HE—An' I got some mo' to sing.  
SHE—Wait till I git the music-kins together.  
Mister Director, will you start yo' jazz hounds?"

The orchestra then begins playing for the second stanza, and there is no more spoken repartee except for the assurance near the end that "She" has a rose-like fragrance.

The next Bernard and Hare duet for Edison was not recorded until May 24, 1921, by which time Hare had met Billy Jones and struck up their ever memorable friendship and team work agreement. Between the recording of "Satisfied" on November 10, 1921, and the singing of the next duet, "Ain't You Comin' Out, Melinda?", Al did some solo work. On November 23, he recorded "Play Me a Dixie Melody," an unusually serious song to be sung by him, which was issued both on the Diamond Disc and the Blue Amberol cylinder.

This was followed on December 17, with a highly amusing tongue-twister tune, "Timbuctoo," written by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby telling of the adventures and misadventures of a family named Buckingham. At one point, in my copy of the record, the usually fluent tenor gets slightly mixed and refers to a "bucking broncho" as a "brucking boncho." This record was coupled with "I've Got the Blues for My Old Kentucky Home," by the Harmonizers, using their Edison name of the Premier Quartet, and was a good seller.

Bernard began his 1921, Edison activities by recording one of his compositions, "Dew Drop" (music again by Larry Briers) as a duet with his yodeling sidekick, Frank Kamplain. This was on January 6. Ten days later



"TALENT FEE."—One of the many checks received by Al Bernard for making Edison records is shown here. Bernard's endorsement, written on the back of the original check, here is reproduced at the right. Signatures on the face of the check are of Walter Miller, manager of the Edison recording studios, and Fred Rabenstein, cashier and paymaster.

he made a lively solo version of the Creamer-Layton hit, "Strut, Miss Liz-zie," and on February 4, recorded another fine "nut song," "Ump Pah-Pah," written by Walter Donaldson, which told of how "old man McNally's" daughter Sallie suffered from his insistent and incessant playing of a bass horn or trombone, I'm not sure which. Next on February 24, came another yodel song with Kamplain, "Oh, Yeedle Ay," which was combined with an already mentioned Bernard solo, "Mississippi Bound." This coupling, No. 50785, also was taken into the list of the 300 most popular Edison discs.

Here is the description that came with the disc:

"Few Edison owners need an introduction to the artists of this record. Both Al Bernard and Frank M. Kamplain have done similar work for us, in which yodeling is used as an embellishment of a song. The words of the lyric are pure nonsense, and serve to drive away dull care. The song is the work of Fred Fisher and Irving Maslof.

"There is a great deal of light comedy in 'Mississippi Bound,' and you can feel certain that Al Bernard, 'The Boy From Dixie,' is peculiarly fitted by birth and nature to sing the longings in the heart of a ducky who wants to get back below the Mason-Dixon line. A train effect is introduced, and a bit of dialog, which emphasizes the loneliness of the unfortunate ducky who misses his railroad connection. Charley Straight wrote the music of 'Mississippi Bound,' and the words are the work of Spencer Williams."

Williams, by the way, was black. Probably you will have observed that the Edison writer twice used "ducky," a word frowned on today, but which in those times usually had an affectionate meaning.

### III. "Ain't You Comin' Out, Melinda"

On April 5, 1921, Our High-Spirited Hero—he was young and high-spirited in those long ago days—made a Diamond Disc of a new "blues" song, "The Boll Weevil Blues," written by Cliff Hess. It appeared on No. 50787, combined with another of Bernard's compositions, "I Ain't Afraid of Nuthin' Dat's Alive." The latter record, however, was not sung by Al, but by his buddy, Ernie Hare.

Evidently Al lacked the stiff-necked self-esteem that might have led him to insist on one but he should record his compositions. Not only did Hare make the Edison record of the song on the threadbare theme about the Negro who feared nothing except "ha'nts," but the great black comedian, Bert Williams, recorded it for Columbia. A little later, Williams also recorded another Bernard song, featuring a cantankerous, gin-swinging, real life old Negro preacher known

in New Orleans as "Brother Low-Down."

As was brought out in the two-part article on Rudy Wiedoeft, published in November and December, 1973, HOBBIES, Bernard collaborated with the legendary saxophone virtuoso in writing a number of songs, the words of which were by Bernard and the music by Wiedoeft. Among them were "Lone Star," of which Hare made an Aeolian-Vocalion record, and "The Saxophone Blues," which Ernie recorded for Pathé, Emerson and perhaps other companies, with a saxophone obbligato by Wiedoeft, himself. And late in 1919, Byron G. Harlan, the premier singing delineator of "rube" types on records, waxed for Emerson a version of Bernard's amusing rustic production, "That's the Feller!" (No. 9221) which was coupled with "Oh, Oh, Oh, Those Land-lords," by Irving Kaufman. The cheerful ditty relates the colorful exploits of a one-time "rube," and the refrain ends: "That's the feller, used to be the teller, in our home town savin's bank."

Al Bernard himself was an admirable interpreter of "rube" comedy numbers. He did an electrically recorded Okeh of Ben Hapgood Burt's classic, "Wal, I Swan," that is better than the Victor that Harlan had sung years earlier. Bernard's 1928, impersonation of the conceited, self-satisfied, fatuous old yokel is irresistible.

While I am sweeping up these loose odds and ends, I'll mention that Bernard and Hare collaborated in writing at least one number. In 1921, a song called "Midnight Blues Waltz" and credited to them was played on Brunswick record No. 2072 by Carl Fenton's Orchestra. Hare probably did have a part in the writing, but it is possible that Bernard followed his previously mentioned custom of sometimes adding the names of relatives or friends to his effort as a gesture of affection.

It might also be mentioned that some of the numbers Bernard wrote in the 1920's—among them, "Blue-Eyed Sally" and "When Dixie Stars Are Playing Peek-a-boo," were extensively recorded by dance bands. His "Le Wanna" was played by the All-Star Trio in 1919 for Brunswick.

It is also worth mentioning that Al sang the vocal parts of only a few dance records, as compared to such tireless "pluggers" as Irving Kaufman, Arthur Fields, and Harold



(Scrappy) Lambert. We have already seen that he did the vocalizing in some Victor records by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, and I have a Brunswick fox-trot disc in which he sings the refrain of "Paddlin' Madeline Home." No doubt other examples could be found, but, relatively speaking, his appearances in dance records were infrequent. His "Coon Songs" of the Bernard-Hare type, of course, were not suited for dance music.

And now we come to the next duet on Edison records by Bernard and Hare, "Ain't You Comin' Out, Malinda?", which was recorded May 21, 1921, and coupled with a comic Negro talking specialty, "Aunt Phoebe's Wedding Day," by Billy Golden and Billy Heins.

This time, although Bernard wrote the dialog, the song was the work of Andrew B. Sterling and one of the greatest composers in the history of American popular music, Harry Von Tilzer. And what a coincidence that only a few months after Al himself had written a highly successful song about a Negro maiden named Malinda ("Change Your Name, Malinda Lee") Von Tilzer and his veteran collaborator should have struck upon the same given name for a similar song! Bernard, however, was not the first to use "Malinda" in a song title. There had been a "Malinda's Wedding Day," recorded by Collins and Harlan for several companies in 1912, and no doubt other examples could be found. I have just thought of one. A few years before the wedding day song, Collins and Harlan had sung "Some Day, Malinda." It seems to have been something of a stock name for Negro women characters, just as "Alexander" and "Rastus" were for males.

There are some funny moments in "Ain't You Comin' Out, Malinda?", and we shall proceed to consider them now.

HE—Well, here I am, still in front of de same gal's house an' still on de outside. I'll call her. Oh, baby!

SHE—Who kin dat be? Who is dat addressin' me in such endearin' words?

HE—Oh, gal, you knows who dis is.

SHE—Huh, You sho' matters yo'self.

HE—You know, baby, tonight's de night!

SHE—Travel on, useless!

HE—Useless? Say, listen here, gal, you gonna keep on messin' with me till some mawnin' you're gonna wake up an' find yo'self asleep in a marble orchard.

SHE—Marble orchard! Whut's dat?

HE—A marble orchard is where de roots of trees grows in yo' face!

This ends the spoken colloquy, and He (presumably, once more, Henry Jones), begins singing an invitation to Malinda to come out into the moonlight. After the first chorus is sung, the acrimonious conversation is resumed:

SHE—Son, speakin' of honeysuckle vines reminds me of dem roots of trees you was speakin' about. By dat you means to insert dat you is terrifically bad?

HE—Bad? Why, gal, dat ain't no name for it! I'm so bad dat if I ever hitcha de only way yo' folks will be able to communicate wid ya will be through a weedy board!

SHE—Nigger, move on while you is all together!

HE—Is dat so? Well, after dat remark I'm 'sposed to teli ya dat I'm gonna hop on you like a duck!

SHE—You is, is ya? Well, when you do you better have web feet!

HE—Now, baby, let's don't confab any more, 'cause I got mo' poetics to unfurl.

SHE—Well, go on an' unfold!

They sing the remainder of the song, but no apparent decision is



GREAT BLACK COMEDIAN.—Bert Williams (1874-1922), shown, left, with his partner, George Walker, made Columbia records of two of Al Bernard's songs. (Photo from Quentin Riggs.)

reached as to whether Malinda will leave her window and join her swain. At the last, however, she calls him "mah dear," so presumably she is in a more amenable mood.

The Von Tilzer song was extensively recorded in differing styles of interpretation. Among the various versions, the Peerless Quartet sang it on a Victor record in close harmony, but not "cooned up" as in the Bernard-Hare rendition.

#### IV. First Columbia Record

The time is approaching when because of space limitations and the vast number of Al Bernard recordings that I must end these "play by play" descriptions. However, I do intend to quote the dialog passages in the remaining Edison duets by Bernard and Hare.

After "Ain't You Comin' Out, Malinda?" there was a lapse of four months before Bernard again faced the Edison recording horn. This time, on September 5, 1921, he sang "I Wants to Stand on Dixie Land," which went forth in Blue Amberol form, but not as a disc. Sixteen days later, he was heard in another of his songs, which has already been mentioned more than once, "Brother Low-Down." Its music was by Larry Briers, who has also had more than one mention. This was issued in 1922, combined with an Italian dialect comic song, "Spagoni's Wedding Jubilee," which Billy Murray had recorded three years earlier as a successor to the popular "In the Land o' Yamo Yamo."

Bert Williams must have made his Columbia version of "Brother Low-Down" at about the same time Al was waxing the some song for Edison, for the Columbia disc came out in January, 1922, on No. A3508, cou-

pled with "Unexpectedly," a number that Perry Bradford had written especially for Williams. The supplement held forth as follows concerning the Bernard song side:

"Brother Low Down" was a colored preacher down in New Orleans. He was anxious to save souls—for a money consideration. His text was—"If you want to keep from sin, drop your little nickels in and help poor 'Brother Low Down.'"

Of all the major recording companies, Columbia proved the hardest nut for Al Bernard to crack. His name was not seen in a Columbia list until this same February, 1922, supplement, when he joined Vernon Dalhart, who had not then begun his "country music" career, in singing one of the "mammy" songs written by the hundreds in the early 1920's. It was called "I Want My Mammy" and Dalhart's name was placed before Bernard's. Oddly, Columbia described the record as a "tenor and baritone duet," apparently assigning the baritone role to Bernard. Their teamwork had rather distinguished company on the disc's other side, for it contained "Edwin Dale" singing "That's How I Believe in You." "Dale" was Charles Hackett, Metropolitan Opera tenor. (While I have Hackett in mind, I wonder who was "William Morgan" who joined "Dale" in a duet listed in the January, 1922, Columbia supplement—an Irish dialect number called "Maggie Maguire" and written by Harry Von Tilzer. It was not one of Harry's successful songs. Since Columbia was in financial difficulties in 1922, and went bankrupt a year later, its staff of artists was limited, and Oscar Seagle seems to have been about the only baritone who was being used regularly. I have never heard the "Maggie Maguire" disc, but I'm guessing that Seagle joined Hackett in singing it. Hackett had made some opera duets with Riccardo Stracciari, the fabulous Italian baritone, but I strongly doubt that the latter luminary lowered his sights down enough to sing "Maggie Maguire." Having never heard the record, I can pass no aural judgment as to the baritone singer's identity.)

Al Bernard was given no special "send off" in the brief description of his duet with Dalhart, and there was no mention of this being his first Columbia appearance. The supplement said:

"No, this isn't just another 'Mammy' song—it's a beautiful new lyric written around a theme deserving of the best and sweetest there is in musical expression. Dalhart and Bernard bring out, with a depth of feeling and a wealth of harmony, the words of this melodious piece."

(Returning to the "Maggie Maguire" matter, I have just noticed that George Reardon, the baritone of the Criterion Quartet, did some duet work with "Dale" under his real name, so it is quite possible that he was "William Morgan" of the dialect song.)

(To be continued next month)

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

—Apostle Paul (Corinthians 13:2)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART VI  
By JIM WALSH

More than a year elapsed after Bernard's inconspicuous beginning before he was again heard on Columbia discs, but at some time in 1923, he recorded "Parson Jenks," another song about a "street corner" black preacher, which was combined on A3918 with "Sweet Mama, Tree Top Tall," sung by the famous minstrel performer, "Lasses' White, its composer, with whom that song will always be identified. Bernard was also featured in No. A3871, a two-sided offering by the Lasses White Minstrels coupling a "Plantation Scene" and a "Levee Scene." After electrical recording took over in 1925, he sang "Pretty Puppy," on No. 452D, combined with "Ev'ry Sunday Afternoon," by the Shannon Four. On No. 470D he presented his own song, "Old Uncle Bill," with a German dialect frivolity, "Dot's Vot Looie Uses," by Art Lennick, for its companion. Other numbers followed and established Al Bernard as a popular Columbia artist for the first few years of the electrical recording period.

But back to his Edison activities. Bernard's Columbia duet with Dalhart must have been made about the same time as the one they did for Edison. These are the only two records I know of in which this pair of tenors sang together. Unlike Columbia, Edison placed Dalhart's name after Bernard's. Their song was a lively thing called "I've Got My Habits On," about a black woman who delighted to strut on the ballroom floor. Isabelle Patricola made a good record of this ditty for Victor, but it is not so attractive to my ears as the tenor duet. Bernard and Kamplain achieved their one Edison example of recorded duet work on November 25, 1921.

Within the next few months there followed three duets with Frank Kamplain: "You've Had Your Day," which was not issued either on cylinder or disc; "Tyrol," which went into the list of 300 best sellers; and the several times mentioned "Pretty Little Honey Lou," in which his brother shared composer credit by courtesy of Al's good heart. This period also included two solos: "Broken Hearted Blues" and "I'm Gonna Buy a One-Way Ticket to a Little One-Horse Town." The latter is one of the few Edison records I can recall in which the comedian had the assistance of a male chorus. Another is "What Has Become of Hinky Dinky Parley Voo?" This was recorded in 1924.

Then came the next of the dwindling series of Bernard and Hare duets:

V. "Hurry Along, Liza, With Me"

The Edison National Historic Site has provided me with facsimile copies



RISING STAR.—Al Bernard, a newcomer, was included in photos of a group of established recording artists, on this page from the Aeolian-Vocalion supplement for March, 1920.

of handwritten lists of all Al Bernard records, but recording dates are omitted for some of the titles of the 1922, period, and internal evidence suggests others may be inaccurate.

At some time during that year, either shortly before or after Bernard and Hare recorded "Hurry Along, Liza, With Me," which will shortly be up for "analysis," they also sang a Bernard composition called "The Picnic" in the Edison files, but which was known as "Picnic Time" when they recorded it for Brunswick.

The Diamond Disc version became the only Bernard-Hare duet I know of to be rejected by Thomas A. Edison. A slightly blurred note concerning the record exists in his handwriting. It is dated August 1, 1922, but I am not certain whether this refers to when the record was made or to when "The Old Man" wrote the note. After having previously permitted all the duets we have discussed to be issued, he wrote unfavorably of "The Picnic":

"Rejected. Don't want singing set to funny talk when singing is not melodious and with

proper singg(?) like Collins and Harlan."

I am not sure of the word after which I have placed a question mark. It looks like "singg" and perhaps was intended for "singing," although that had already been used a little earlier in the sentence. It appears Mr. Edison was saying that Bernard and Hare did not sing melodiously, like Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, in their duets, and that he didn't want singing with funny words unless the melody element was there. The pair's singing in the "Picnic" record, however, judging by the Brunswick version, was as harmonious as in any of their earlier Edison records, so if this one was banned by Edisonian edict, why had he let the others go on to wide popularity?

Mr. Edison's surviving handwritten comments on Al Bernard's work all seem to be unfavorable, but that surely was not his over-all attitude toward the comedian whom, according to the "New York Times", he presented with his autographed photo. Under date of January 11, 1924, the inventor, who was then 77, wrote concerning a rendition of Bernard's comic song, "De Ducks Done Got Me," which had been submitted for his approval: "Bernard very weak. No. Edison." I have never heard a record on which Bernard's voice was weak, but "The Old Man's" hearing undoubtedly was. I wonder if he could hear the ukulele accompaniment by Frank Ferara?

Then, on July 22, 1924, Mr. Edison tested some unidentified selection that had been recorded by Bernard and Russel Robinson, but without reaching an absolute decision. With a casual disregard for good English, he wrote:

"Don't seem there was anything funny in this. Let Walsh decide. I don't hear all the words. E."

The Walsh referred to was not the author of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists, but Arthur L. Walsh, a vice president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc., who was then choosing music to be recorded and supervising the company's record-making activities. Apparently, in view of the old gentleman's obvious lack of enthusiasm, he decided against issuing the tested disc, for no Bernard-Robinson duets ever made their way into the Edison catalog. Mr. Edison's hearing began to fail so badly about this time that he had to give up passing judgment on records, and Walsh took over that responsibility. One result of this was that the accompaniments were improved, for Art Walsh, who was later to be a Senator from New Jersey, was himself a musician and did not hold with his employer's belief that there should be just enough accompaniment to support the singer's voice, and that the orchestra should be almost inaudible while the record was played.

Because Bernard and Hare recorded "Picnic Time" for Edison, even though it never reached dealers' stocks. I think its dialog, as given on the Brunswick record, belongs here, so shall quote it. You will note that in such things as the reference to a "marble orchard," they repeat lines that had already been used in some



**RUSTIC CHARACTER IMPERSONATOR.**—Cherubic faced BYRON G. HARLAN, foremost singer of "rube" songs in the early days of the phonograph, made an Emerson record of Al Bernard's amusing "That's the Feller." (Photo from L. and D. McNeill.)

of their Edison recordings.

Notwithstanding Mister Edison's thumbs down, the "Picnic" song is a laughable piece of nonsense, not erring on the side of delicacy of sentiment. The couple are still the same blustering, but essentially timid, deep-voiced male braggart, and his shrill toned beloved with a comparable taste for threats of bloodletting. They begin, however, in a more amiable mood than usual as he portrays the delights of the coming outdoor event.

"Picnic Time" must have been suggested by its predecessor, "You're My Gal," which also has such a gathering for its theme. The hero, "Henry"—presumably once more Henry Jones!—promises to dance with the dusky damsel, and asserts that he will "take along my razor and my gun," to which she replies, "A little bit of 'citement will be fun." Then they hold a conversation, peppered, as those in earlier sketches had been, by gibes at each other's oversized ears. The largest hearing organs in the world must have belonged to the men and women inhabiting the make-believe world of Bernard and Hare:

HE—Listen to me, woman. It's a good thing you sung back sweetly at me.

SHE—If not, what den?

HE—Why, I'd a-took my razor an' cut dem big black ears o' yours off.

SHE—Don't talk about my ears, coon, 'cause you have to tie a towel round yo' head to keep yo' ears from knockin' the biscuits off the table!

HE—Aw, go on, lampblack, an' sell yo' stove polish!

SHE—Meanin' I'm black, huh? Well, believe me, you is so black dat you is unhealthy!

HE—Keep on makin' remarks about my manly beauty an' you'll wake up in a marble orchard!

SHE—Marble orchard? Whut's dat?

HE—A marble orchard is a place where de roots of trees grows in yo' face.

SHE—Aw, go on down the street, small change!

HE—Come on, come on, woman! I'm tired o' standin' here, chewin' de rag with you! If you're going to de picnic, come on, let's go!

SHE—Well, coax me!

HE—Coax you! I bet I'll coax you with a brick! Me coax you! Why, woman, I got fair yellows, high browns an' chocolate fightin' to pay my board—an' den me coax you!

SHE—Well, dat may be true, but don't forget dat Mr. Webster terms me no a . . . woman entitled a 'ox blood beauty.'

HE—Oh, Lawd, help me to git right! After dat remark you takes the cake. Come on, sweet mama, an' lead sweet papa to dat sweet picnic!

Here the singing is resumed. The words where I have left a row of dots in the woman's final repartee are un-

intelligible—at least to me. I never have been able to understand them.

"The Picnic" was not one of Al and Ernie's more spectacular successes. So far as a casual survey reveals, Brunswick was the only company to publish a record of it, though perhaps one or two minor firms did.

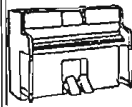
Judging by my own collection, Bernard and Hare's second duet specialty, "See Old Man Moon Smile," was recorded more extensively than any other, but "Henry Jones, Your Honey-moon is Over" was a good second. For the "man in the moon" song I have the Edison disc, which probably was the first version they made; the Blue Amberol cylinder; the Pathé sapphire and its dubbing on Actuelle lateral-cut; Brunswick; Aeolian-Vocalion; Emerson, Gennett, Grey Gull, and Paramount. The latter offered good value, for it had "Change Your Name, Malinda Lee" for the coupling. The Brunswick was one of the first issued records of that brand. Its number is 2004, and it has Bernard's solo of his song, "Sugar" on its reverse side.

I don't have the Okeh record of "See Old Man Moon Smile," but it also was coupled with a Bernard's

(Continued on page 120)


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DIAMOND POINT WINE—Flint, mint condition, \$20.00

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**FAVORITE PIONEER  
RECORDING ARTISTS**

(Continued from page 38)

solo, "Chasin' the Blues." Okeh treated the duet in an unconventional way. It put Hare's name before Bernard's—something that seldom happened—and described the record as a "baritone duet," which it certainly wasn't. "Chasin' the Blues" is termed a "baritone solo." Anybody who called Al a baritone must have been tone-deaf.

The foregoing list includes virtually all record brands of any consequence in 1919-1920. Federal is missing, and it's possible that the duet may have been recorded for it, but I have no lists to check. Bernard and Hare, however, were never represented on the Indestructible cylinders which Federal issued. In 1920, Bernard made just two Indestructible solo records—"So Long, Oo Long" and "Swanee," and Hare's name never appeared in the company's lists. These were Al's only cylinder records, aside from his numerous Edison Blue Amberols. He came along too late to make two- or four-minute Edison wax cylinders.\*

The song on the other side of "Picnic Time" was another Bernard-Hare duet, "Hurry Along, Liza, With Me." "Liza" was their next issued Diamond Disc duet, for Mr. Edison, who had rejected the picnic foolishness, let it get by. This, like many of his actions, was inexplicable, because one was as worthy of being placed on sale as the other.

The Edison "Liza" was handicapped by a weak coupling and did not sell so well as some of its forerunners. It was combined with Collins and Harlan's melodious (Mr. Edison's word) singing of "With His Umpah Umpah On the Umpah Isle," one of the many unsuccessful songs Harry Von Tilzer wrote in the 1920's, when his star was waning. It was another novelty number, like "Ump-Pah Pah," which depended for its humor on describing an unskilled player's performance on a slide trombone. Although a good comic song, it just didn't catch on.

"Liza," of course, being by Bernard and Hare, has some mirthful moments. The hero once more is named Henry, but this time he is Henry Green, not Jones. As the record begins he speaks:

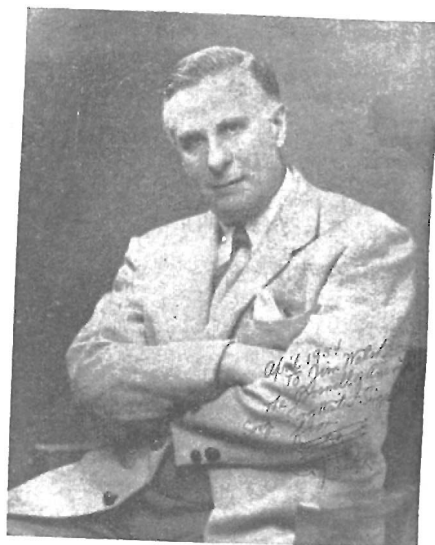
"Well, suh, here I is and dere she is. I got a s'prise for her. It's a very important event. I suppose I should a-told her about it. Well, de easiest way is de sweetest way. I'll address her in my most melodious and pleasant manner."

He then sings, "How do you do dis mornin', Liza Johnson?" and she

**HORSE SENSE**

*A horse can't pull while kicking.  
This fact I merely mention  
And he can't kick while pulling.  
Which is my chief contention.  
Let's imitate the good old horse  
And lead a life that's fitting  
Just pull an honest load, and then  
There'll be no time for kicking.*

—Author Unknown



"BLUES" WRITER.—Apparently the first Edison vocal recording of a "Blues" song was made not by Al Bernard, but by Vernon Dalhart. Words of the song, "The Alcoholic Blues," were written by Edward Laska (above). Laska sent this photograph to Jim Walsh in April, 1954. It is inscribed, "To Jim Walsh, the Boswell of American Songs, Song Writers and Singers, from Ed Laska." "Ed" is in musical notation.

replies, "I'm feelin' middlin' tol'able, Mister Green." Still singing he informs her that he is going to take her down to "Parson Lee's" with matrimonial intent. Her attitude is receptive; in fact, this has the "friendliest" dialog of any Bernard and Hare record up to that time. He tells her to hurry into the house and get ready to go to the minister's, and after the first refrain is concluded, they have the following discussion:

SHE—Listen, Henry, befo' I hurries into de house to dress I want to ask you a question.

HE—Well, what is de question, gal?

SHE—If I go down to Parson Lee's with ya, are you goin' to take me down to Florida on my honeymoon?

HE—Why, certainly I is, honey. But if it so happens dat I don't—

SHE—Yeah?

HE—I'll buy you a bottle of Florida water.

SHE—You will?

HE—I sho' will, honey.

SHE—Henry, you is so good to me!

HE—Well, now, hurry up, gal, 'cause it's gittin' late, an' I want you to go upstairs an' bedeck yo'self in yo' finest of finery.

SHE—Well, Henry, what might dat be?

HE—How 'bout puttin' on dat orchard colored organdy gown?

SHE—Orchard? Oh, orchid! Dat's jes' what I was goin' to advocate. I was afraid, dough, you was goin' to ask me to wear my cerise grenadine.

HE—No, gal, I think you looks modistey(?) in de orchard—I means, orchid! (They laugh.) How about ya, gal? Is ya ready?

SHE—Uh hch.

They then sing the second chorus and all is harmony.

Frankly, I am baffled by the word that I have written as "modistey" followed by a question mark. As best I can make out, it sounds like "mo'dicty," or "mo'disty," and I can't imagine what it means if that is what it is. I played both the Edison and Brunswick records and they were equally unintelligible. The reference to the "orchard" colored gown reminds me of the times, "Marble Orchards" had been mentioned in other Bernard and Hare specialties.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART VII  
By JIM WALSH

### I. "Samuel Johnson, Get Thee Gone"

As I peg away from month to month, telling the world—or at least that part of the globe which reads HOBBIES—all I know about Al Bernard, I occasionally find myself learning something new relating to the song writer, comedian, singer and actor.

This morning, Monday, December 10, 1973, as I was about to begin writing this installment, I received a letter from Quentin Riggs, who has supplied some of the photographs to illustrate the Bernard series. It said:

"Glad to hear the Al Bernard article is coming along so well. I have intended to ask you if you are familiar with a song called 'A Basso Profundo Am I', which was written by Al Bernard and George Bolstord and published in 1932. I have never heard it sung and have never heard of a record of it, but I picked up the sheet music years ago and have thought that it's really a delightful song. The singer supposedly has had a lifelong ambition to become a tenor, to be able to sing love songs and to hit high Cs. Unfortunately, his voice became a bass and the only kind of songs he can sing are things like 'Down Deep Within the Cellar,' 'The Big Bass Viol' and 'Davy Jones' Locker.' The music is excellent and the words are very clever."

So far as I can recall, I had not before heard of this song and, like my California friend, have never seen it listed in a record catalog. When it came out in 1932, record sales were at their lowest ebb, and those companies that had remained in business were issuing little popular music except dance tunes. It's odd that Bernard, himself a tenor, should write a song with a basso profundo range, just as it was strange—I mentioned this months ago—that he composed a number without words, "Pick That Bass," when he played no instrument and could not read music. This basso song sounds like something that would have been ideal for his old partner, Ernest Hare, and I wonder if he was thinking of Ernie when he wrote the words. Perhaps he was; or, since he did some recording work with Wilfred Glenn, he may have had Glenn in mind. It is something I should like to hear.

During this series it has been brought out repeatedly how often Ernest Hare played the part of "Henry Jones," the blustering swain who has so much trouble in winning the affections of his lady love. It has just occurred to me that he was occasionally called "Henry Jones" on off brand records. I have a Regal (made from an Emerson master) on which he and Bernard sing "I've Got the Wonder Where He Went and When He's Coming Back Blues" with their names appearing on the label as "Skeeter" Sims and Henry Jones. They also recorded this song, under their own names, for Brunswick.

Another oddity of the late 1922,

or early 1923, period is a Banner record on which Bernard and Hare sing "Aggravatin' Papa," the lively, irresistibly catchy music of which was by their old friend, J. Russel Robinson, under the names of Bernard and Thomas. Hare was often called "Bob Thomas" on the lower priced, off-brand records which he made with Billy Jones, who, in turn, was usually disguised as "Billy West" when singing duets with Hare on such labels as Banner.

Still another 1923, novelty was a duet version by Bernard and Arthur Fields of "Maggie! Yes, Ma'am (Come Right Upstairs)" with which Aileen Stanley and Billy Murray made a memorable hit on Victor. I have the Bernard and Fields performance on a Pathé Actuelle disc as well as on a Regal. I believe that in those days the Emerson company obtained some of its master records from Pathé, and suspect this is one. I have not, however, played the Actuelle and Regal copies to ascertain if they are identical.



"COVER BOY." Al Bernard's photo, identifying him as a member of the Record Boys, appeared on the front of the Edison record supplement, for April, 1926, when his Diamond Disc of "Hot Coffee" was listed.

Yet another 1923, Al Bernard record worthy of special mention is his Cameo of Wendell Hall's big hit, "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'," but that will come later. Mention, however, of the "rain" song, which became a nation-wide epidemic late in 1923, brings us to the next Edison Diamond Disc duet by Al Bernard and Ernest Hare.

I have in mind one of the last, and best of the lot, "Samuel Johnson, Get Thee Gone From Here," which was announced in December, 1923, as No. 51261, and coupled with "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'," sung by Hall himself. Wendell also recorded his sensational, but not really original, hit for Gennett about October 1, 1923, and for Victor on October 12. The Edison obviously belongs to the same period. In it, Hall combined parts of both "It Ain't Gonna Rain" and his "Red-Headed Music Maker," with rather unsatisfactory results. The tune of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" is one of considerable antiquity. My father told me it was a country tune when he was a teen-age boy and that he had often square danced to the music of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo.'" Hall took the old fiddlin' number, gave it new and amusing words, and had himself a hit. I have recently learned that Hall died in 1969 while living in Fairhope, Alabama.

In the following month, January, 1924, the last Bernard and Hare duet on Edison records appeared. It also was one of the best — No. 51271, "Cindy, It Am Weddin' Time" — which happens to be "Jack" Via's favorite of the lot. Actually, "Cindy" was made first, but was issued a month later than "Samuel Johnson." "Cindy's" serial number was 9203, and "Samuel's," 9208, indicating they may have been made on the same day, or with perhaps a day or two in between. I have been unable to find the recording date, in the Edison list. The supplement in which "Cindy" was listed contains a picture of Hare, wearing a black felt hat, about to kick a football, which Bernard, sporting a derby, is putting into place. After these last performances with his old friend Al, Hare must have been too busy making records, singing on radio and making personal appearances with Billy Jones to do any more recorded blackface work. Jones and Hare were for several years easily the most popular radio feature.

There is ambiguity concerning the marital status of the male and female protagonists in "Samuel Johnson." Although this is the name of the nominal "hero," he addresses the ram-paging object of his affections as "Miss Tildy Brown." The question then arises: Is he calling his wedded



wife by her maiden name or are they cohabitating without the formality of marriage? No answer is forthcoming, but Tildy makes it clear that she craves no more of Samuel's society. (Just as his last name is Johnson, so was "Liza Johnson" the heroine of "Hurry Along, Liza, With Me.") As the song begins they alternate in singing:

"SHE—Wake up, you good-for-nothin' an' start travelin'!"

HE—Who is you talkin' to, Miss Tildy Brown?

SHE—You know right well to whom I'm talkin', egghead!

HE—Woman, you don't mean you've turned me down?"

She retorts, "Yo sho' have got my meanin' proper, lampblack!" and reminds him: "You know I handles razors an' I handles them with class, an', boy, I sho' cuts long an' deep when'er I make a pass!" He tries to remonstrate, but she interrupts, saying: "When you're gone I'll shed no tear, so, Samuel Johnson, get thee gone from here!"

Perhaps you have observed that Tildy refers to Samuel as "egghead." This reminds me of an amusing incident in my own life that I had forgotten until I began leafing through a mass of Al Bernard information. In its issue of October 8, 1956, "Newsweek" published a long article about "eggheads," and credited John Alsop with originating the term in 1952, to describe "superficial intellectuals, the kind who deserted General Eisenhower for Adlai Stevenson."

Upon reading a follow-up reference to that article in "Newsweek" for May 12, 1958, I was moved to write a letter saying that "egghead" was in use much earlier than 1952, for it is heard as a derogatory term in the record now under discussion. The letter was published with a heading, "The First Egghead?" in June 9 "Newsweek".

"I have a 1923 Edison Diamond Disk (sic) featuring two comedians, Al Bernard and Ernest Hare. On it, Hare asks: 'Who is you talkin' to, Miss Tildy Brown?' Bernard replies: 'You know right well... Egghead!' In justice to John Alsop, who is credited with originating that term... It must be admitted that 'Miss Tildy Brown' doesn't use 'Egghead' to her husband as a token of intellectual superiority, pseudo or genuine. On the contrary, he is plumb dumb. —JIM WALSH, Vinton, Va."

After the first refrain has been sung, the orchestra plays a few bars of an appropriate "theme song," Ed Rose and Ted Snyder's 1905 masterpiece, "Nothin' From Nothin' Leaves You," and then the customary dialogue, full of high-sounding bluster and threats, is heard:

HE—Say, woman, after dat gob o' talk I got a good mind to muss you up with dis yere coat scuttie!

SHE—Go ahead! Who's holdin' you back?

HE—You think I'm skeered o' yo' razor, don'tcha?

SHE—I ain't talkin'.

HE—Now, don't talk 'cause if I ever gits my Smith 'n' Eastern blood up, you hyena-faced baboon, you gonna have the buzzards waitin' fer you out on yo' front porch!

SHE—Keep on talkin' an' the next thing you'll be runnin', an', man, I claim dat I'll run you till you git so thin you'll be able to sit on a dime an' show eight cents change!

HE—Woman, in a few minutes I'm gonna git up outa dis yere rockin' chair an' hit you so hard.

SHE—You is?

HE—Yes, I is, an' if you don't fall after I does hitcha, I'm gonna walk all aroun' you to see what's holdin' you up.

SHE—Yeah, an' be careful where you look, 'cause, man, I carries undertaker, hearke an' coffin right heah in dis meat chopper!

HE—Oh, Lord! Say, gal, can't we patch dis thing up?



**FUN-LOVING TRIO.** Pictures of the group known as "The Record Boys" are hard to find. Here is one taken from a 1927 "Radio Program Weekly." The artists are, left to right: Al Bernard, comedian; Frank Kamplain, yodeler, and Sammy Stept, pianist-composer.

SHE—Patch! You talk 'bout patchin'! Why, man, I done patch my clo'es so much since I been with you till folks think I'm a crazy quilt!

HE—Aw, honey, don't take on so!

SHE—Don't take on so! Dey gonna take you on outa here in a minute! An', as I said befo'—

They sing the second refrain, and the song ends without reconciliation and still on a note of hostility, even though Samuel expresses his willingness to "work hard for you, out in de cold, cold snow."

II. "Cindy, It Am Weddin' Time"

The mood of the final Bernard and Hare duet on Edison records, and perhaps their last for any company, "Cindy, It Am Weddin' Time," is much more amiable. It ends with marriage seemingly just ahead. The first stanza and refrain are devoted to a courtship with affection expressed on both sides. Then comes this dialog:

HE—Say, Cindy, does you like hot cawn on de cob?

SHE—I adores it!

HE—Well, does you like fried spring chicken with country gravy?

SHE—Co'se I does, fool!

HE—An' does you like big fat red tomatoes an' cucumbers with new potatoes, an' on de side some candied yams what am?

SHE—Boy, is you tryin' to tantalize my stummick?

HE—No, gal, I wuz just tryin' somethin'.

SHE—Well, do you have to git me hungry to try it?

HE—No, no! An' I wants to ax you one mo'.

Does you like po'kechops?

SHE—Hyah! hyah! hyah! Stop dat talk!

You'll have me in my kitchen in a minute!

HE—Why?

SHE—'Cause all dat sounds so good!

HE—Well, I'm glad o' dat, 'cause I done bought me a little piece of land with all dat on it.

SHE—Henry, is you fabricatin'?

HE—Gal, you knows right well I wouldn't fabricate to you.

SHE—No tellin' what a man might do! But, say, Henry, why you tellin' me all dis?

HE—'Cause it's all for you, Cindy!

SHE—For me? Well, slap me down, den pick me up! Come hyah, boy, an' hug an' kiss yo' baby! An', say, son, sing me some mo' about Cindy!

HE—Aw right!

Henry and Cindy then join most harmoniously in singing the final refrain. Incidentally, when I heard the deep-voiced swain called "Henry" I thought that "Henry Jones" must be making another of his many appearances, but this belief was dispelled at the end when Cindy warned him that there must be "no more hangin' round the town with sweet Henry Jones." Since the suitor is Henry, this bringing in another man of the same first name is confusing and, inasmuch as Cindy so obviously has a low opinion of the absent Mr. Jones, "sweet" is a bad descriptive word to apply to him.

The thought that two Henrys were confusing must have occurred to Bernard after the Edison record had become popular (it was included in a supplemental list to the original 300 "best sellers"), for in versions made later for other companies the name was changed. On Pathé Actuelle No. 021001 it becomes "sweet Billy Jones." I imagine Bernard and Hare had a good laugh at the thought of thus slandering Ernie's other recording and radio partner—the tenor half of the "Happiness Boys." And Billy Jones probably also was delighted if he heard the disc.

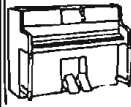
On the reverse of this Actuelle disc, which calls the artists Jack Clare and Frank Mann, Bernard and Arthur Fields sing "Maggie! Yes, Ma'am (Come Right Upstairs)" which I mentioned in a preceding paragraph. Upon playing it and the Regal record of "Maggie," also by Bernard and Fields, they seem to be from the same original recording. In both, Fields begins by singing, "Al, I've Got a Great Idea."

A Vocalian record of "Cindy," dating from the early electric period, is by Al Bernard and "Charles Aubrey" (Wilfred Glenn), with piano accompaniment by Sammy Stept, which shows that it was made in the last half of the 1920's, when Bernard and Stept were members of the Record Boys. It has "Samuel Johnson," by the same performers, for its coupling. In this "Cindy," too, the absent Mr. Jones, whose ears must have burned because of the talk about him, is "sweet Billy."

(Continued on page 117)


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### MISCELLANEOUS MUSICAL ITEMS

**PHOTOS!** The three most remarkable group photos ever taken of early recording artists: Edison artists of 1900, Edison artists of 1914, and Victor Male Chorus of 1925 (reproduced in HOBBIES January 1971, October 1970 and July 1970). One 8x10 enlargement for \$2, two for \$3.50, all 3 for \$5. Other 8x10 photos of recording artists available at \$2 each: Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Collins, and Harlan, Henry Burr, and many others. Write for list. — Quentin Riggs, 21171 Greenboro Lane, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92644 n1494

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

On the other hand, an Okeh electrically recorded disc, No. 41388, which couples "Cindy" and "Henry Jones" and is by Bernard and a well-known minstrel comedian, Billy Beard, changes the name to "Jonathan Jones." This record came out in the spring of 1930. In January, 1929, Bernard and Beard, who died November 15, 1954, in Atlanta, Ga., aged 74, occupied both sides of Okeh record No. 41140, with two comic talking skits, "Black Opinions" and "Fowl Talk." They received this brief review in the "Phonograph Monthly Review".

"Beard and Bernard are a long way behind the Two Black Crows, but there are several amusing moments in their 'Black Opinions' and 'Fowl Talk.'"

There is no use of making a scene 45 years after this verdict was published, but I vehemently dissent from it. However, as I have already made clear, I never have liked the Two Black Crows. I couldn't find a review of "Cindy" and "Henry Jones."

Before dismissing the Bernard and Hare partnership and passing on to other phases of "The Boy From Dixie's" career, I think it may be well to mention a few more records they did for companies other than Edison's.

One, made in 1922, combines two Bernard songs, "I'm a Demon On My Old Jew's Harp" and "Lindy Lou." The first number introduces what purports to be a duet between a Jew's harp and a flute, but the flute sounds to me more like someone whistling. There is no doubt about the authentic quality of the harp.

Another Brunswick, which I have not heard, is No. 2347, coupling "I'm Done, Done, Done With You" and "Sweet Mandy." Both sides were written by Al. Some years later "Sweet Mandy" made another appearance on a Domino record, No. 424-A, which has a Negro woman, Bessie Williams, singing "Deep River Blues," for its mating. I bought a second-hand copy of this disc many years ago and recently found it in an album of Bernard and Hare duets. I doubt that I had played it during the entire 33 years I have been writing "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists," but when I put it on the turntable it soon became obvious that neither Bernard nor Hare is in this recording, whose performers are termed on the label, "Lucy Johnson and Dixie Gray." "Dixie Gray," whoever he was, had a tenor voice and was a poor singer. His enunciation was indistinct and his phrasing bad. I can't decide whether "Lucy Johnson" was a woman or a man speaking and singing falsetto. Both "Lucy" and "Dixie," I think, were black. The label credits Bernard as the song's composer. This record is all singing with no comic value.

I neglected to mention when discussing the Edison record of "Cindy" that its coupling was "The 31st Street Blues," written by Harry Giese and Wendell Hall, and sung by Bernard and his yodeling accomplice, Frank

Kamplain. As you may remember, "Samuel Johnson," which came out a month before "Cindy," had Hall singing "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" for its companion. I recall being in a second-hand store in Jonesboro, Tenn., about 35 years ago, looking at some old records, when I entered into conversation with an elderly man.

"Want to know the prettiest record I ever heard?" he asked me. "I'll tell you. It was on one of them thick Edison records and it was a piece called 'The Thirty-First Street Blues' by this here Al Bernard and a feller that yodeled. Prettiest piece I ever heard. But I always thought Edison made more pretty records than anybody else and had the best singers." This was an unsophisticated view, but not an uncommon one.

III. Othe Edison Records by Bernard  
Something I haven't yet mentioned about the "Cindy" record now occurs to me. In the first half of the song these lines occur:

"All de little birdies am a-sayin' It's spring.  
An' Pahnson Jones done axed me if I've bought  
the ring."

This adds more confusion and makes me wonder if the frowned-upon Henry Jones has turned parson, but still retains his shiftless ways.

Some back-tracking is now in order, to mention a few Bernard records made between "Hurry Along, Liza" and "Cindy." One was a solo, "At the Honky Tonk Steppers' Ball," which is undated on my list provided by the Edison National Historic Site, but apparently was made in the autumn of 1922. It remained unissued as either a cylinder or a disc. Then came "When the Moon is Shinin' Down in Alabam'," words by Bernard and music by Nat Vincent, and sung by Al with yodel embellishments from Frank Kamplain. It was coupled with "Down Old Virginia Way," by Walter Scanlan and Helen Clark, and was not one of the better sellers.

"The Boy From Dixie," however, soon had two more that hit the Edison "big time." One was a partly sung and partly spoken humorous

number with touches of pathos, "My Dawg," the composition of which was credited on the label to Bert Murphy, who is somebody about whom I know nothing. (I wonder if this could be a misprint for Bert Morphy, an old-time comedian who made a few records in the phonograph's early days. I also wonder if the words may have been by Bernard.) The Bernard side was combined with "Down By the Old Apple Tree," a popular comic song by Billy Jones and Ernie Hare, who somehow just can't be kept out of this narrative, and was included in a supplement list of "best sellers" after the original grouping of 300 was compiled.

When Bernard came to the John Bieling Day party held in September, 1948, "My Dawg" was one of the numbers with which he entertained his admirers. Although he was not a well man—in fact, he was suffering considerable pain—he gave an excellent account of himself, and his voice and style were exactly like what they had been on the Diamond Disc made more than a quarter of a century before.

Next was another Bernard-Kamplain duet, "O-Le-O-Lady," which became one side of a highly unlikely coupling, with—of all things!—Walter Scanlan and a chorus singing "The Wearing of the Green" for its companion. Despite the obvious incongruity of titles, this too was added to the supplementary steady seller list.

Bernard's character delineation of a Louisiana "bad guy," "Stavin' Change (The Meanest Man in New Orleans)" took its place in the chronological order and was mated with an oddity—a comic blackface dialect talking sketch with no singing, "From De Old Town (the Meeting of Lincoln and Glasco)" by Billy Jones and—again!—Mr. Hare. I can't recall Billy and Ernie having made any other all-talking record in Negro vernacular. It was the sort of thing that might have been expected from Billy Golden and Joe Hughes, but not from the Jones-Hare partnership.

Another singing and yodeling duet, "When Dixie Stars Are Playing Peek-a-Boo," had an exceptionally pretty tune and was the joint handiwork of Bernard and J. Russel Robinson, who was soon to join Al in teamwork under the name of "The Dixie Stars." It was combined with a resurrected comic song that had been popular twelve years earlier, "Oh You Circus Day," but called "Circus Days" on the record label. Why it was thought that there would be a demand for this long defunct song by Edith Maida Lessing and Jimmie V. Monaco is hard to imagine. The Edison sales gaugers apparently thought it would have a limited circulation, for it was one of those "red star" discs that dealers were not required to keep in stock but could obtain on "special order." Nevertheless, the combination went so well that it too appeared in the supplementary "best seller" compilation. Which probably just goes to show there was no way of telling what records Edison enthusiasts would choose to fancy. "Dixie Stars,"

(Continued on page 124)



AL IN BLACKFACE. This photo reproduced from the November, 1927, Edison record supplement, shows Al Bernard "blackened up" for minstrel show work. He and Ernest Hare are said to have used this type of make-up before recording their comic specialties.

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### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 117)

however, was, as I have indicated, an unusually pretty number, and "Circus Days," as sung by "Robert White" (Vernon Dalhart) with animal imitation by Edward Meeker, was genuinely amusing; so there was a reason for the popularity of the disc.

And now it has occurred to me for the first time that Bernard and Robinson must have taken their team name, "The Dixie Stars," from the song on which they collaborated. It was one of their numbers that was extensively recorded by dance orchestras.

#### IV. Bernard's Later Edison Period

Al Bernard always had a keen scent for profitable trends in vernacular music; consequently, when Wendell

Hall's "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" set the nation to singing, whistling, and dancing toward the fag-end of 1923, Al decided to get into the pseudo-country music act. He cultivated this remunerative field of popular melody to some extent during the remainder of his career.

To begin with, he himself made a record of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" for the cheap Cameo label, which sold for 35 cents as compared to 75 cents for standard lateral-cut discs like Victor, Columbia and Brunswick and \$1 for Edison. It was a huge seller, even though the makers, sure of its appeal, crippled it with a "dog" for a coupling — something called "Daddy, Change Your Mind," wailed by a black blues singer, Blanche Klaise. An advertisement published by a Roanoke, Va., Victor dealer in the spring of 1924 said Hall's Victor version had already sold the seemingly incredible total of more than two million copies, but nowadays Bernard's Cameo seems to turn up more often in second-hand stores than the historic Hall disc. Many listeners prefer Bernard's singing of the rain song to Hall's because Al's style is so rhythmic you almost feel that he is dancing as he lfts away to a ukulele accompaniment by Frank Ferrara, with whom he was to have a considerable recording association for the next few years. Hall's rendition, by way of contrast, is deliberate and slow-paced, but with strong emphasis upon humorous effect.

Bernard and Ferrara also sang and played "Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" on Paramount No. 5102. The reverse side was one of Al's few experiments with Italian dialect, "Me No Speak-a Good English," likewise with Ferrara's accompaniment.

Considering the great popularity of "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" it is interesting to look down the list of artists who recorded it. Hall, who made the Victor, Gennett and Edison versions, told me when I met him in Chicago in 1951, that he thought he

sang it for four companies. He said he thought the fourth was Okeh. Possibly he did make a trial Okeh recording, but the published one was by Ernest Hare. Jones and Hare made it for Columbia. Brunswick missed the "gravy train" by not issuing a vocal record of the hit, but did provide a dance performance by Cal Fenton's Orchestra with singing interludes by Jones and Hare. Victor also offered a dance version by the International Novelty Orchestra with incidental singing by Billy Murray and Ed Smalle. No doubt other brands likewise offered "cover" renditions, but I don't know who made them except that Ben Selvin's Bar Harbor Society Orchestra played it in fox trot tempo for Vocalion.

When Hall wrote a second edition of his greatest success a year or so later he recorded it for Victor, and Jones and Hare followed suit for Edison. Most companies appear not to have made discs of the second version which had the same tune as the first but different words. After electrical recording came in, Victor of course had Hall remake his fabulous No. 19171.

Not only did Bernard record "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" for Cameo and Paramount, he also began to write songs in similar style. One which he turned out early in 1924, was "Twenty-Five Years From Now." It was labeled as the fruit of collaboration between him and Frank Ferrara, who provided the ukulele accompaniment, as he had on the Cameo "Rain No Mo'." Ferrara, although of Portuguese descent, was a native of Hawaii, who, according to old Edison record supplements, came to this country in 1900, and was the first person to introduce Hawaiian music to American listeners. He had a long and successful recording career with his wife, professionally known as Helen Louise, and after her death, with another Hawaiian guitar player, Anthony Franchini. He also managed the Waikiki Hawaiian Orchestra, which frequently played for Edison, and, all told, in various combinations, he must have taken part in thousands of records issued by practically every company. Among other things, he played the guitar accompaniment in Vernon Dalhart's Edison record of "The Wreck on the Southern Old 97," which led the way to Dalhart's stupendously successful rendition of the same hill-billy song for Victor.

In "Twenty-Five Years From Now," we find Al Bernard in the role of prophet, relating the changes that would have taken place by 1949—a year that now seems part of the remote past. Among other things he said there would be "nothin' but sky-writin'" and he foresaw the advent of "taxi aeroplanes"—a reference that I forgot to include in my article about aviation songs, published in this year's January and February HOBBIES. By virtue of hindsight, there is a touch of pathos in the concluding words of the song: "We'll help Gabriel blow his horn twenty-five years from now"—for 1949, the year of which he was singing, was also the one in which the then carefree comedian died.

(To Be Continued)



"PLATTERMATE."—William ("Wee Willie") Robyn was a popular tenor recording artist of the early 1920's. He sang "At the End of the Road" on the reverse side of one of Al Bernard's records of "Blue Eyed Sally." Today, the tenor is known as the Rev. William R. Rubin and is a cantor for a New York Jewish temple.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# AL BERNARD

PART VIII

By JIM WALSH

Bernard recorded "Twenty-Five Years From Now" for more than one company besides Edison. It was combined on the Diamond Disc with what I consider one of the cleverest and most genuinely amusing satiric comic songs ever written, even though it did not become a popular success—"Since Ma is Playing Mah Jongg," written by Billy Rose and Con Conrad to ridicule the mah jongg craze that swept fashionable circles during the early 1920's. The Edison record was by Jim Doherty. Among the amusing lines are: "Ma left dishes in the sink; pa went out and killed a Chink—Ma's playing mah jongg now." In the second stanza it is revealed that Ma's enthusiasm for things Chinese has become so intense that she is driving a laundry wagon. The final portion is perhaps the funniest of all in the way it introduces reminiscences of John Greenleaf Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie":

"General Stonewall Jackson learned this game somehow. 'He who touches yon gray head dies like a dog. Mah jongg!' he said. Ma's playing mah jongg now!"

This record also was not expected to have widespread appeal, for its label was provided with that red star, which (supposedly) meant that the dealer wouldn't stock it but would have a copy "specially made at the factory" for any customer who wanted one. This, as I have previously pointed out in HOBBIES, was sheer nonsense, for the "custom built" red-starred records were not ordered by local dealers from the factory, but were kept in stock by jobbers, and most retailers also stocked them as they would any other Edison discs.

A few months later, Alfred A. Bernard again paraded his gifts of prophecy with "In 1999," a cheerful ditty forecasting how things would be in another 25 years from this present time and half a century after Bernard's own death. He visualized that the end of this century would bring a woman president; the custom of drinking kerosene; rapid-fire divorces and a forecast that seems to be coming true, that women would "be wearing less and less." However, the added prediction that "for ten or twenty cents or less you can buy the wife a dress" does not appear likely to come to pass. Perhaps the most cheering prediction was that "they won't write any 'mammy songs' in 1999." The country then had been suffering from a tidal flood of mawkish ditties praising the "befo' de wah" Negro mammy and all of them patterned after Gus Kahn and Walter

Donaldson's smash-hit, "My Mammy," which Al Jolson had led to a runaway success. For a time it seemed as if the "popular" sections of record lists for years to come would be devoted almost entirely to the threadbare "mammy" theme.

Mr. Ferara (pronounced "Fe-RAY-ra") was not Bernard's accomplice when "In 1999" was recorded. Instead, there was orchestral backing.

"In 1999," like "Twenty-Five Years From Now," sported one of the red stars denoting limited circulation. On its reverse side Billy Jones sang a number with considerable topical interest and one that would intrigue today's delvers into radio history—"Tune In On L-O-V-E." This opus by Leonard Whitcup contained many references to the amazing novelty of radio, and mentioned the two leading stations of half a century ago—KDKA and WEA.

Another 1924, Edison record by the inimitable Al was considerably removed from his usual vein, a lament for a well remembered unrefined song popular with American service men during World War I, "What Has Become of 'Hinky Dinky Parlay Voo'?" This was a laugh-provoking song splendidly sung by Bernard and a male chorus—one of the few records in which he had such help.

On May, 1925, after a rather long absence from the Edison studios, Al was back with another funny effusion that was different from his usual style, "The King Isn't King Any More." This was followed on September 18, with one of Al's own songs in mock hill-billy style, "Old Uncle Bill," which, as we saw in an earlier part of this series, he also recorded for Victor but without having the pleasure of seeing it issued. On October 5, he essayed the country music mode again with another of his compositions, "On a Slow Train Through Arkansaw." I was playing this record in the second-hand store when the countryman told me that the Bernard-Kamplain duet of "Thirty-First Street Blues" was the "prettiest" thing he had ever heard. Sixteen days later Al sang something called "The Hand of Fate," which I take to have been also a hill-billy, but it was not published and remained unheard.

The foregoing reference to "The King Isn't King Any More" reminds me that I recently came across an old scrapbook, of the 1931-34 period that I hadn't seen in years, and found a clipping that gives further light on something I wrote in my October,

1973, article, "Royalty and Recorded Sound." I said that Queen Victoria of England made a cylinder record that was sent to the Emperor of Abyssinia as a token of friendship, but that it was destroyed after being played once. However, this clipping of a news item dispatched by the Associated Press from London says that a copy of Victoria's recorded greeting to Emperor John had been found in the Edison Bell recording company's archives, and experts were striving to "restore" it so that the Queen's voice once more could be clearly heard. I wonder if they succeeded and where the "restored" cylinder, if it still exists, is now. Apparently the Edison Bell staff, who made the record, tricked the Queen by running off a copy to be preserved).

### V. Work With Russel Robinson

This account of the late years of Al Bernard's Edison recording career has picked up so much steam that it has bypassed one or two subjects that call for attention. One is the fact—barely touched upon before this—that after Bernard and Ernest Hare made their final duet recordings the tenor half of the team found a vaudeville, radio and recording partnership with Russel Robinson, the pianist, who had been his collaborator in writing a number of popular songs, among them the first Bernard-Hare duet, "I Want



This photo of Al Bernard is reproduced from a minstrel show folio, for the use of amateur performers, which the comedian wrote in the 1930s.



to Hold You in My Arms."

Robinson had been a member of Rudy Wiedoeft's Palace Trio and of the Wiedoeft-Wadsworth Quartet, and some information concerning him was included in my December, 1973, HOBBIES article about Wiedoeft. Photographs of Robinson were also shown. The information given there perhaps should be briefly repeated. Robinson, described in the "ASCAP Biographical Dictionary" as "composer, author, radio, television, phonograph and piano roll recording artist," was born July 8, 1892, in Indianapolis, Ind. He taught himself to play the piano as a small child and at 11 began to study with private tutors. His first compositions were published when he was 17. He appeared with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in concerts in the London Palladium. Among the big song hits in which he had a hand were "Margie," "Mary Lou," "Aggravatin' Papa," "Beale Street Mama" and "Palestena," in addition to the specialty numbers he wrote with Bernard. He died in Palmsdale, Cal., September 30, 1963.

The foregoing information is supplemented by notes in the "Complete Entertainment Discography," edited by Brian Rust and Allen G. Debus, which relate that Robinson formed a youthful piano-and-drum act with his brother, and toured vaudeville circuits in the South and Midwest. During this period he was composing ragtime, such as "Eccentric" and "Dynamite Rag." He went to Chicago to play in a jazz band, then joined the Original Dixieland Jazz Band as a replacement for its first pianist, and appeared with them, as we have seen, in London. He left London because of his wife's poor health and returned to this country, where he worked with the Palace Trio and the already mentioned quartet, but rejoined the band in July, 1920, and left again in April, 1921. He was again a member of the jazz band when it was reorganized in 1936. After the Dixieland ensemble broke up in January, 1938, he moved to California and began composing incidental music for films.

Robinson teamed with Bernard in 1924 and 1925, but seems to have ceased to be Al's partner for a two-year period during which Al was working with the Record Boys trio of himself, Frank Kamplain and Sammy Stept, pianist-arranger-composer. After Bernard left the Record Boys in 1927, he and Robinson were partners again for a year or two.

As a whole, the songs Bernard and Robinson wrote while they were singing together (Robinson had a good deep recording voice but without the basso profundo quality of Ernie Hare's) were less boisterous than those which had been contrived to fit the Bernard-Hare partnership's special needs. One, "Blue-Eyed Sally," which had a considerable success in 1924-1925, was a quiet, dainty number about the singer's shy little mountain sweetheart. Many dance bands played and recorded it, among them, Billy Wynne's Greenwich Village Inn Orchestra, which made it for Edison. It seems strange that Edison did not also have Bernard

and Robinson record their song hit, later, on December 7, Bernard and

as a duet, but Robinson's name never appeared as an Edison recording artist. Earlier in this series a note written by Mr. Edison was quoted, saying he could see nothing funny in a test duet by Al and Russel. The name of the song to which he listened was not given, but perhaps it was "Blue-Eyed Sally."

Other successful songs that Bernard and Robinson wrote and recorded together in the mid-1920's, included "Let Me Be the First to Kiss You Good Morning," "Let My Home Be Your Home (When You're Down in Dixieland)," and, a return to their earlier rowdy style, "Birmingham Papa (Your Memphis Mama's Comin' to Town)." They sang these for several companies, and it is noteworthy that their Cameo of "Blue-Eyed Sally" had, on the other side, "Wee Willie" Robyn's tenor rendition of "At the End of the Road," which Ballard Macdonald and James F. Hanley had written as a sequel to their 1917 classic, "Indiana." It in turn harked back to "On the Banks of the Wabash." William Robyn, who made hundreds of records as a free-lance artist, is still living. He is known today by his real name, the Rev. William R. Rubin, and is cantor for a Jewish temple in New York City. Robyn, by the way, should be pronounced as ROE-BINE, not as "Robin."

When electric recording came in, Russel Robinson assisted Bernard to do re-makes of some of the old Bernard-Hare specialties, such as "Henry Jones, Your Honeymoon is Over." Bernard up-dated the version of this ditty, which they recorded for Brunswick in 1927, by having Henry's wife, or girl friend, advise him to "jine the army; they kin use you now." To which Henry replied: "Aw, gal, me and them Nicaraguans ain't had no quarrel!" This was a reference to the trouble the Coolidge administration was experiencing because of insurrections in some parts of Latin America, especially Nicaragua.

#### VI. Era of "The Record Boys"

We have reached that period when the Record Boys trio had come into being and were beginning to star weekly on radio as well as to make records. This, however, is not the time and place to consider the group in depth, for Bernard, Kamplain, and Stept made no Edison records under the Record Boys name. Of course, Bernard and Kamplain had been making duets for years, and the trio was only them with Sam H. Stept's piano added. For some reason, although Al and Frank continued to sing for Edison, Stept was never called on to use his piano for background music. An orchestra invariably furnished the accompaniment.

On November 6, 1925, Bernard and Kamplain recorded one of Al's compositions written especially to enable his partner to display his remarkable talents as a yodeler. The title was "Yeedle Deedle Lena," and it was one of the numbers frequently broadcast on the Record Boys' programs. When it was made for companies other than Edison, Stept usually provided the accompaniment and it was labeled as being by the Record Boys. A month

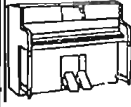
Kamplain did another song on much the same model, "Prancin' Dancin' Yodeling Man." It also was a broadcast favorite.

One of the best songs Bernard ever participated in writing was recorded by Edison on March 9, 1926, but was left unissued, although Columbia, Brunswick and perhaps some other companies gave it a chance to be heard. It was called "Sally's Not the Same Old Sally," and the words were by Bernard with the irresistible tune being the brain child of Sammy Stept. Apparently this unissued Edison version was a solo by Bernard with orchestral backing. The Columbia also was by Bernard, with Stept at the piano. The Brunswick brought in


(Continued on page 120)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

Kamplain to yodel and was catalogued as by the Record Boys.

"Sally's Not the Same Old Sally" was a sequel to "Blue-Eyed Sally," which, as we have seen, Bernard had written a year or more earlier with Russel Robinson. But in the later number the tempo and style have undergone change. "Blue-Eyed Sally" was a tender tribute to a shy little sweetheart living a secluded life in the Ozark Mountains. But, with what many hearers must have considered shocking cynicism, "Sally's Not the Same Old Sally" relates how the narrator had to leave home for a while and when he returned found that his bashful blue-eyed beloved had become the highest-stepping "flapper" in all the hills. The lively refrain tells the story, as the singer laments:

"Sally's not the same old Sally I left on the Ozark trail!  
I returned to find my Sally ridin' roun' in swell coupe's—  
Say, she's forgot those one-horse shays!  
When I left home she never had been kissed,  
But now there's not a boy in town she's missed!  
Sally's not the same old Sally I left on the Ozark trail!"

The second refrain is much the same except that the words are changed to bewail that Sally had been "runnin' roun' with country sheiks—I know that gal; she read 'Three Weeks' and to add: 'When I left home she was a bashful miss; now she's a vamp, and let me tell you this—Sally's not the same old Sally I left on the Ozark trail!'"

There are two amusing topical references in that last set of words. "Three Weeks" was a novel written in the early 1900's by an English author, Elinor Glyn. It was considered terribly shocking and immoral, but compared to the filth spewed on every side today and accepted as literary art it was as innocent as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." The "vamp" statement of course was inspired by the "sultry" type of seductive women—the most notable of whom was Thedda Bara—who appeared in the old-time silent movies. While I agree that it was perhaps deplorable for Bernard to transform his erstwhile blue-eyed heroine into a victim, or a high priestess, of the "jazz age," I still think "Sally's Not the Same Old Sally" is altogether a more ingenious and attractive song than its predecessor. And that isn't something that ordinarily can be said about sequels to books, songs or anything else.

But I am a bit ahead of schedule. Before "Sally" was recorded, Al had sung on February 16, 1926, a lively song called "Hot Coffee," which was mentioned in the first installment of this series. It had a "hot" accompaniment and was issued on Diamond Disc No. 51700, with "I'm Gonna Let the Bumble Bee Be," sung by Arthur Hall and John Ryan, as its coupling. Although an unusually good comedy record, it must not have sold well for it was dropped when the 1928 catalog was issued.

Bernard's next Edison disc was recorded April 28, 1926, and was more successful from the sales standpoint

than "Hot Coffee," although by this time the output of Edison records had declined so drastically that the company's distribution totals were slight as compared to Victor, Columbia and Brunswick and probably were well behind Okeh's. The title of the new number was "Hokum Smokum (Yodelin' Indian Man)," another in the series written especially to utilize Kamplain's gifts. Of its kind it was a corker. The words were by Bernard and the music by Sammy Stept, who was born in Odessa, Russia, September 18, 1897, and was brought to this country as a tot of three. He was a musician from his childhood in Pittsburgh, Pa., and became staff piano player for a Pittsburgh music publisher. In vaudeville he was accompanist for such stars as Jack Norworth, Anna Chandler, Esther Walker and Mae West.

While living in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1920, Stept organized a jazz band. The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary credits him with bringing together the Record Boys in 1925, but Bernard almost certainly was the founder of the group and simply added Stept to himself and Kamplain as an accompanist and for his ability to arrange and set words to music. Stept went to Hollywood in 1929, to write songs for movies and afterwards established his own music publishing business. Films for which he wrote the scores included "Big Boy," "Baby, Take A Bow," "Having A Wonderful Time," "Nothing But the Truth," "Syncopation" and "Laughing Irish Eyes." He also composed the music for several stage shows and among his song hits not written in collaboration with Al Bernard were "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree With Anyone Else But Me," "I'll Always Be in Love With You," "That's My Weakness Now," "Congratulations" and "Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone." The ASCAP Dictionary does not mention Bernard as one of the lyric writers with whom the gifted little Russian worked, but lists Bud Green, Charles Tobias, Lew Brown, Ned Washington, Sidney Clare, Herb Magidson and Herman Ruby. Stept died December 1, 1964, in Los Angeles.

"Hokum Smokum," as its sub-title suggests, lyrically relates the yodeling prowess of an Indian chief by that name. Stept fitted Bernard's clever words with a fascinating tune and Kamplain was given full scope for his falsetto effects. Apparently figuring that the lively song was certain to do well, Edison gave it for backing an "old standard" or "old chestnut," depending on which term you prefer—Al H. Wilson's already ancient yodel song, "In Tyrol," sung by Kamplain alone. Frank's record of a famous Wilson composition, "Roll On, Silver Moon," was one of the most popular in the catalog, so perhaps it was thought another offering from the same hand would do equally well.

Having done well with a song about an Indian who was skilled at the "Oh le-oh lady!" type of vocalizing, Bernard a year or so later turned to the Red Man's traditional enemy, the cowpuncher, and contrived a liltin' affair called "Yodelin' Cowboy Joe." It showed a marked kinship to

the 1912, hit, "Ragtime Cowboy Joe," and obviously was suggested by its popular predecessor. He and Kamplain recorded it for Okeh.

Again, mostly because of the haphazard way in which Edison listings of Bernard's later records were kept, I have gone ahead of myself. Nine days before "Hokum Smokum" was sung and yodeled into the big horn in Edison's Fifth Avenue recording plant, Bernard and Kamplain had recorded, on April 19, 1926, another specialty, "Yodelin' Bill," written by Bernard, both words and music, without any acknowledged help from Stept. And for a coupling exactly the same sort of stunt was resorted to as with "Hokum Smokum." Kamplain was called on to do another solo, "The Alpine Yodeler." "Yodelin' Bill" is a catchy song, but the record obviously wasn't in demand, for it was listed in only one yearly catalog—the issue for 1927.

A six-month period of inactivity then followed. It was broken on October 26, when Al returned to his old comic "coon song" vein with one of his own compositions, "If You Think Your Luck is Hard (Mister Black Boy, Goodnight.)" This is one of the few Edison records by Bernard that I don't have, but I heard it many years ago, and have a vague impression that somebody who did not get label credit helped with the dialog. "Mister Black Boy" was combined with an Irving Berlin hit, "I'm On My Way Home," sung by Johnny Ryan.

On December 20, Bernard recorded another of his songs, "Stay Away From My Man," in which he had the assistance of Jim Doherty. This was one of the Bernard records that the public never had a chance to buy as a Diamond Disc, although some other companies issued it.

We have now reached the final year in which Bernard did Edison recording. On February 2, 1927, he sang a carefree composition that many hearers found laughable, "All Men Are Devils," but the majority of buyers probably were even more diverted by the song Billy Jones tendered on the other side. Its title was "I Wonder How I Look When I'm Asleep."

What a pity that Bernard's Edison version of the classic New England "rube" ditty, "Wal, I Swan!" which he waxed on March 30, wasn't issued on the disc. Luckily, as has previously been mentioned, it was made available on an Okeh red label disc and some others. And the handful of persons still buying Blue Amberol cylinders could get it on No. 5412.

The last Edison record by Al Bernard to be added to the catalog was "Who's That Knockin' On My Door?" which he sang on September 27. It was his only electric Edison and was combined on No. 52110, with "You Can't Walk Back From an Aeroplane," warbled by Jack Kaufman. Then on October 24, followed one more unissued number, "My Special Friend is Back in Town."

With that final failure to win approval, Al Bernard's eight-year Edison career was over.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART IX  
By JIM WALSH

### I. Daylight Ahead

Eight months ago, March, 1974, when I began this survey of Al Bernard's life and recording career, I said that I had been "thinking" of writing it ever since I started contributing to HOBBIES, but had kept putting it off because I dreaded the hard work involved in studying and analyzing all the reference material I had accumulated.

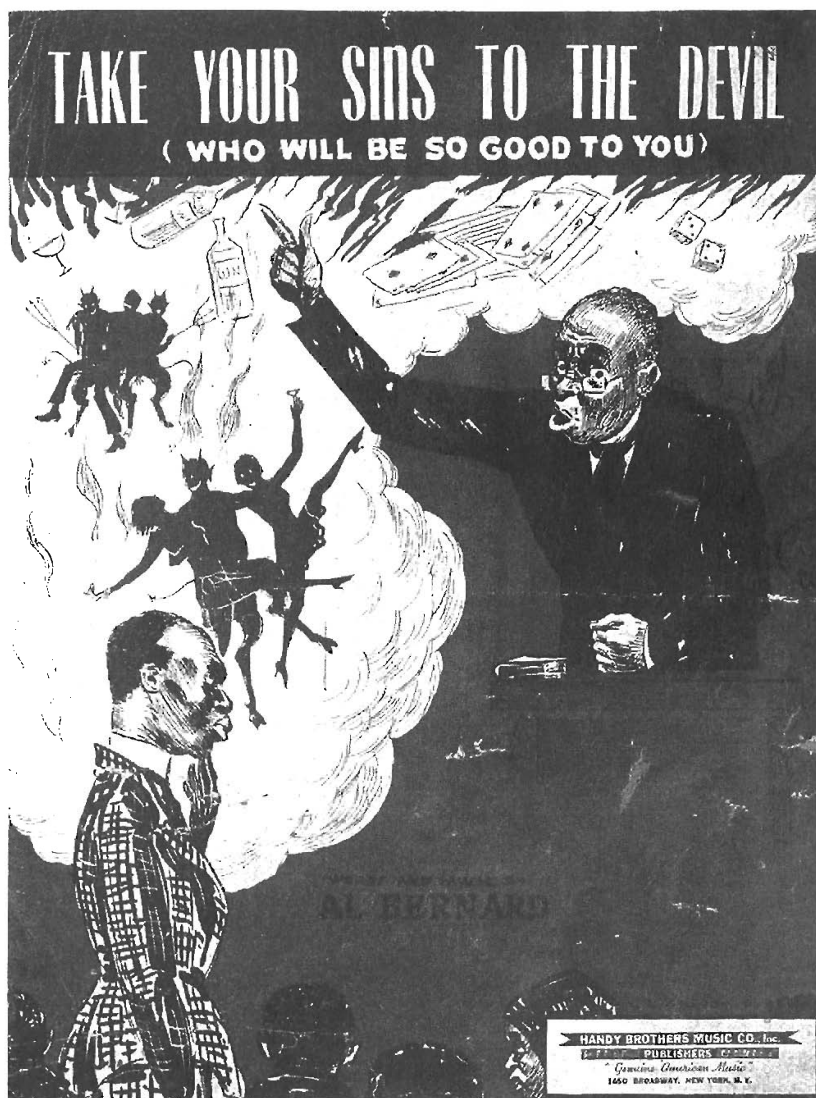
Today, I know that dread was justified. For weeks, while trying to organize and present my notes in the most attractive form, I felt like a man trying to slash his way through a dense jungle with no better weapon than a toy store hatchet, or like one groping uncertainly down a seemingly endless pitch-black tunnel. During all this time, even when I haven't been writing, my mind has been on the task I assigned myself, and I have been puzzling over how to tell Bernard's "story" in the most effective way.

At this stage of the proceedings, however, I am beginning—if I may use a cliché—to see daylight ahead at the end of that tunnel; now that I have almost completed the long account of Bernard's Edison recordings the worst is over. About all that remains to be done is to give some account of his association with the other members of the Record Boys; to discuss briefly some of the more interesting records he made for companies other than Edison; to describe my two meetings with him, and to quote from the letters Al wrote to me during the last part of his life. I hope to reach the end of the tunnel with this installment, although one or two more may be required.

### II. Records With Animal Interest

Perhaps I may as well start by discoursing about some odd and unusual Bernard recordings, and one of them is remarkable not so much for the song Al sings as for its bizarre coupling. My reference is to Harmony disc No. 226-H, which was made in 1925 or 1926. Bernard's contribution is one of his typical Negro dialect songs, "Don't Fail Me, Dice," which he wrote in collaboration with Sammy Stept, the Record Boys pianist, who presumably plays the accompaniment.

It is the reverse side, however, that brings astonishment, for it purports



FINAL EFFORT—Illustrated here is the cover of perhaps the last dialect song Al Bernard wrote. It was published only a few months before his death by W. C. Handy, the famous composer of the "St. Louis," "Memphis," and "Beale Street" Blues.

to have been recorded by a dog! Yes, the title is "Fifi's Serenade," and the label asserts with mock, or real, solemnity that it is by "Fifi the Bark-ing Dog With Her Laughing 'Companions.'"

When I came across this indisputable novelty in my Bernard collection I couldn't remember ever hearing it, but placing it on the turntable revealed that it is a variant of the old Okeh Laughing Record,

which had so many imitations. "Fifi's Serenade" begins with a seemingly unskilled cornet player squawking his way through "The Last Rose of Summer." He begins to blow sour notes and "Fifi"—either a real dog or somebody imitating one—barks in heartbroken tones. This soon leads to laughter by whoever is lurking in the background, and the record ends with a wild explosion of mirth. Who made it? I have no way of knowing,

but my guess is that the laughing effects were by Al H. Weston and Irene Young, who made more such records half a century ago than anyone else.

It has already been brought out that Al's Edison record of "My Dawg!" a black man's rather touching tribute to his dog, "Toby," was extremely successful, and it may be that was the reason Al himself, a few years later, wrote a "doggie number" called "My Puppy Bud." It was issued on Vocalion No. 5262, and for its mating had a much better comedy song, Ben Burt's "Wal, I Swan!" whose absence from the Edison disc catalog I have already lamented. Still another offering with a canine atmosphere was Brunswick No. 2762, "My Poodle-Oodle Dog," with "Keep On Going" for its coupling. Both were by Bernard and Robinson. Another of my friend Al's animal songs does not meet with my approval, nor will it be cherished by any sensible person who loves cats—as I am convinced all intelligent people do. It is called "You Better Get Rid of That Cat!" and Russel Robinson was responsible for its tune. The singer purports to be a black man who is very much displeased because of his spouse's giving living quarters to a feline, and who orders her to disperse with it forthwith. It's all in fun, of course, and for all I know "The Boy From Dixie" may have been as much a cat worshipper as I am. Its companion on Cameo record No. 496 — the only version I have found — is Bernard and Frank Ferrara's rendition of the Italian dialect song, "Me No Speak a Good English," which I have already mentioned on a Paramount disc. I do not play the "Cat Song" within hearing distance of my Professor, Lucky Jim or "Twisty."

Bernard and Ferrara also made a Vocalion record of a song they wrote jointly, called "De Ducks Done Got Me" (they likewise recorded it for several other companies), but the "ducks" to which it refers are not web-footed creatures. Instead, "de ducks" are deductions from the troubled singer's pay. He complains that "de ducks done got me; de ducks dot got me strong," and that there is little left of his income after "de ducks" have been taken out. You may recall that Thomas A. Edison played a test recording of this number, but rejected it because he said Bernard was "very weak." Its Vocalion backing was "Twenty-Five Years From Now," which was discussed in the red-star Edison version.

Is it unduly belaboring the animal theme to mention that Bernard sang the refrain of a 1924 dance number, "Go 'Long, Mule," played on a Cameo record by Bob Haring's Orchestra? A horse named Napoleon is, by the way, a prominent character in "Wal, I Swan!" because of the repeated catch phrase, "Giddy-up, Napoleon, it looks like rain!"

Finally, it might well be argued that Bernard's several recordings of

the evergreen "Preacher and the Bear" should be dealt with under the animal heading, but I'd rather wait and talk about them when I expatiate about how some companies called on him to record old, well-established popular songs. Which is something I may as well do next.

(But first a digression, which has nothing to do with the subject of this article except that Al Bernard usually impersonated black characters and that I have been discussing some of his odd and unusual records.)

While I was writing this section I received information concerning one of the most unusual discs—not by Bernard—of which I have heard—one that must be a genuine rarity. Morgan Seymour, a retired police officer of Box 442, Carmel, N.Y. 10512, sent me a facsimile of the record's label. Beginning on the left and continuing across the top in a half circle, are the words: "The Jack Johnson Record." Below this in smaller type appears: "My own story of the big fight in Reno, Nevada," followed by a replica of Jack Johnson's signature, and then, "Heavyweight Champion of the World." Next is given the price, \$2.50. At the bottom is, "the Jack Johnson Record, 124 East 24th Street, New York, N.Y." Numerals scratched on the label are the kind that appeared on records of Columbia origin.

The fight which the record commemorates took place July 4, 1910, with Johnson knocking out Jim Jeffries, his white opponent, in the 15th round. Probably Johnson was far less boastful in his account of whipping Jeffries than "Henry Jones" of the Bernard-Hare duets would have been, but those were the days of bitter race prejudice and most white devotees of prizefighting cordially hated "Li'l Arthur," as Johnson was called, for having the audacity to beat Jeffries. Threats against Johnson's life were frequent.

I don't think I had ever before heard of this record, although possibly there is an excerpt from it on "I Can Hear It Now," or some other such long-play series. Obviously, at \$2.50, its sale was small, for few white persons would buy it, and the average Negro, no matter how great his pride at having a black champion, couldn't afford to. This was probably the first record to be issued by a company which, ostensibly or actually, was controlled by Negroes. It preceded the pioneer Negro record company, Black Swan, by about a dozen years. Mr. Seymour says his copy was given to him by an uncle some 55 years ago. He is willing to sell it, but only for a price consistent with what he believes to be its extreme scarcity.)

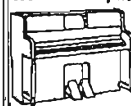

### III. Assumed Names and Old Songs

Immediately after I wrote what you have just read, an idea seized me that my next step should be to discuss the names under which Al Bernard's records found their way to the

(Continued on page 119)

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**HARP-PICCOLO** Music Box 22" long 6" high. Inlaid floral design on top. Eight classical melodies. Lever-wind, glass inner lid, two-section comb. Fine condition. \$675. — Basil's Antiques and Art, 1736 South Main, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115 ja3207

### PHONOGRAPHS

**WANTED:** Silvertone Upright Phonograph, oak, waffle-effect grille, flush motor board. Cecilian table model, mahogany, both circa 1920. Send for photocopy. — Miller, Box 668, Yucaipa, CA. 92399 d3684

**PHONOGRAPHS repaired:** New spare parts for Edison phonographs. Send stamp for list. Phone: (201) 748-8046. — Gerichten, 23 Waldo, Ave., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003 jly124851

**"DIRECTORY OF Phonograph and Record Collectors,"** lists 250 collectors and their wants. \$3.50 postpaid, satisfaction guaranteed. Two stamps for free list of antique phonograph catalogs, books, magazines. — Allen H. Koenigsberg, 3400 Snyder, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11203 mh63621



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

public. Such a discussion will not take long, for Bernard's pseudonyms were relatively few as compared to those used by such prolific recorders as Vernon Dalhart, Irving and Jack Kaufman, Arthur Fields, Billy Jones and Ernest Hare.

As you already know, Bernard and Hare were called Jack Clare and Frank Mann in Pathe discs, and were "Skeeter" Sims and Henry Jones on the Regal label. Al was disguised as "John Bennett" on some Madison records from Grey Gull presses (the Bennett name was used, as well, for other artists), and perhaps he made some of the Grey Gulls by "Vel Veteran," a "catch-all" term of concealment applied at one time or another to several singers.

I also have a Madison record of a song called "Eva," with his name given as "Dave Sanborn." (He sang the refrains in some dance records made by Grey Gull without receiving label credit). And there is a Cameo of "My Sweetie Went Away" on which Al Bernard is metamorphosed into "Al Simpson." The other side is a song of which I'll bet you've never heard, "That Sweet Somebody of Mine," sung by "Arthur Baldwin," who was really Arthur Fields.

On Romeo record No. 506 Al sings "At the Pumpkin Fair (In the Old Town Square)," which was one of his compositions, with the other side held down by "The Preacher and the Bear." On both sides he is called "Uncle Joe and His Banjo." This brings up a rather interesting question: Did Bernard himself choose that name or was it applied without his knowledge? And if he made the choice, was he perhaps thinking of his brother Joe, whom he "cut in" on "Pretty Little Honey Lou," or was the name suggested by Teddy Morse's 1912 song hit, "When Uncle Joe Plays a Rag On His Old Banjo?"

It, of course, has already been mentioned several times that Bernard and J. Russel Robinson called themselves "The Dixie Stars" on records and radio, and it will be mentioned now that Cameo and Perfect (the latter was one of Pathe's lateral cut labels) issued "When Dixie Stars are Playing Peek-a-boo," with the names of the performers given as the "Dixie Trio." Perhaps this designation was used for other song titles and other record labels, but I haven't come across examples. It has been established that some Cameo masters were bought from Pathe, so both these records probably originated with that company. The Perfect is No. 12083 and has "Mama Goes Where Papa Goes," by Vernon Dalhart, for its companion. The Cameo, No. 448, is coupled with an oddly haunting ditty of no cultural significance, "Lovey Came Back," sung by Martha Pryor, who probably was a vaudevillian.

We might be justified in concluding that The Dixie Trio was an earlier name for the Record Boys, except that the discs seemingly were made before Bernard's association with Sammy Stept began. Since the artists were unmistakably Bernard and Kamplain with piano accompaniment, and since Russel Robinson wrote the music of "Dixie Stars" to Bernard's words, it seems almost certain that the pianist was the composer, Robinson, himself.

Inasmuch as he was such a prolific recorder, I imagine that Bernard discs were published under other names which have not come to my attention and which he more than likely knew nothing about.

Coming now to the subject of Bernard's sometimes being called on to record old-time popular songs, this service seems to have been required of him most often by Grey Gull, Brunswick and Vocalion, which became a Brunswick subsidiary in 1925. It is well known that Grey Gull was able to sell records at an extremely low price partly because of using inferior materials and partly because it would couple a late "hit tune" either with an old-time number, published before the royalty payment provision of the copyright law went into effect in 1909, or with something ground out by an obscure writer, for which a flat fee of 50 dollars was given with an agreement that there were to be no royalties. I have, to cite examples, a 1929 Grey Gull supplement, listing three "hit" tunes played by unidentified dance bands. (Names of dance groups were seldom given on Grey Gull records and their many affiliates). "Mean to Me" is coupled with something called "Close Fit Blues," which nobody but owners of this record ever heard of. "Broadway Melody" is combined with the equally obscure "Burma Girl," and "Dance of the Paper Dolls" with the unheralded, "I'm That Way About You."

Among the popular vocal numbers are No. 2477, "I Want to Be Bad," by "Betty Brown," whom I will guess to have been Vaughn de Leath, combined with "Play Dat Rag," by Al Bernard. The latter may have been something that Al himself wrote, but since ragtime was passe' by 1929, it may also have been a revival of a "coon song" which Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan had recorded in 1909 on Victor No. 16124, coupled with "Mr. Dinkelspiel," by Collins. The Victor was called "Play That Rag," but it was probably the same song as Bernard's Grey Gull.

Likewise in this list Al sang two old songs on No. 2467, "Down Among the Sugar Cane" and "Let Me Down Easy," a laughable song about a black man who experienced calamity after trying to operate a home-made flying machine. I mentioned Arthur Collins' Victor version of "Let Me Down" in my "Fifty Years of Aviation Songs" last January, but overlooked Bernard's. And here permit me to

mention a few other flying songs I didn't include. On the back of a Bernard's Grey Gull No. 2338 of a comic ditty, "No, No, Positively No!" Arthur Fields is heard in "Lindy, Lindy, How I'd Like to be You," a more than ordinarily obscure song about Charles A. Lindbergh. Several correspondents, including Captain Bill Knowlton, to whom the aviation series was dedicated, have informed me that in the late 1930's "Red River Dave" McEnry recorded a tearful contrivance called "Amelia Earhart's Last Flight," which Bill says is a hit today among college students, "Because it's so bad it's good." Joe Drochetz, of St. Louis, says "Montana Slim" sang "The Hindenburg Disaster" for a Bluebird record issued in Canada. And Allen G. Debus recalls that a book written by Miss Earhart contained a pocket inside the cover with a short talk by her on a small flexible record. I, of course, had emphasized that I couldn't possibly include every aviation song in writing "Come Take a Trip in My Airship." One I forgot was "My Sweetheart's the Man in the Moon," by Will Oakland and William H. Thompson, on U. S. Everlasting cylinder No. 1485.

Lacking a comprehensive supply of Grey Gull printed matter, I cannot undertake to list every more or less ancient song that Bernard recorded for the Boston company, but I have a few in my own collection. On Radiex 4198 Al sings "Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider," with John Ryan's rendition of Harry Von Tilzer's first hit, "My Old New Hampshire Home," for its companion. On Madison No. 1932, Al brings back "Good Evening, Caroline," which he sings as ("John Bennett"), in an irresistibly lilting manner, with "There's a Mother Always Waiting For You at Home, Sweet Home," by "Jack Rhan" (John Ryan) for the coupling. On Radiex 4177 "The Boy From Dixie" is heard in "Steamboat Bill," and "Vel Veteran" (on this occasion, Irving Kaufman) occupies the reverse with "Everybody Works But Father." Two old minstrel numbers, which Harry C. Browne had made popular on Columbia records and which also had some vogue among country music singers, are on Grey Gull 4240, "Jordan Am a Hard Road to Trammel" and "De Gospel Train Am Comin'." Bernard's real name is used on both.

The 1928 Brunswick catalog listed under (ha! ha!) "folks songs and ballads" a double-faced disc on which Bernard sang two songs that had won some notice years before. Both were said to be by "Al Bernard and His Gully Jumpers," an ensemble whose membership is unknown to me. One side was "On a Good Old-Time Straw Ride," and the other better known, "I'm a Twelve O'Clock Feller in a Nine O'Clock Town," which had been passingly popular in 1917 when Byron Harlan recorded it for Victor, Columbia and Edison. This was No. 191 and was listed as part of Brunswick's "Dixie Series." On No. 178

which, in its many versions by Arthur Collins for nearly all companies, was probably the most popular pre-electric recording. (Strangely, Pathe never had Collins sing it, but this was almost a lone exception). And if Collins had remained in good health and active throughout the 1920's it's likely that Bernard would never have been permitted to record the folk classic of the preacher who went hunting on Sunday and, as punishment for his transgression, had a terrifying encounter with "a great big grizzly bear." There was an unwritten law among American record companies that Arthur Collins "owned" that song and only he could make vocal records of it. (In England it was recorded by Albert Whelan and other comedians). This celebrated bit of composition was composed in the early 1900's by George Fairman, a native of Front Royal, Va., while he was working as a pianist in an unedifying establishment called The Harp in Columbus, O. Fairman sang and played it to amuse his uncultured clientele. He wanted to seek bigger opportunities in Chicago, so one night when a man named Joe Arzonio dropped in and made him an offer, he disposed of all rights to "The Preacher" for 500 dollars. The song was published under Arzonio's name and all record catalogs show him as the composer—the only song with which his name is connected. In actions similar to Fairman's, Stephen Foster sold some of his immortal songs to Edwin P. Christy, manager of a well-known minstrel troupe, and they were published under Christy's name.

At an earlier stage of these proceedings, Bernard's Romeo record of "The Preacher," made under the name of "Uncle Joe and His Banjo," was mentioned. Two other examples in my collection are Vocalion 15643, which has "The Old Gray Mare" for a coupling—another to be added to the comedian's animal songs list. It's odd that Vocalion made the mare song the A side, because "Preacher" was certainly the more popular of the two. Brunswick also issued the "Preacher" tune, coupled with "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?" on No. 312.

Then there was Harmony 649-H, with the Fairman masterpiece on one side, and "Bill, You Done Me Wrong," also sung by Bernard, on the other.

Now, while I think of it, let me correct at least a semi-misstatement in a preceding article, when I said that Bernard's first Aeolian-Vocalion record was No. 12148, "St. Louis Blues" and "Venus Blues," both with a jazz accompaniment by the Novelty Five. It is true that this disc was the first A-V that Bernard made with the accompaniment subordinated to the singer, but he had appeared in three earlier dance records by the Five, singing the incidental refrains.

The first was No. 12117, "Bluein' the Blues," which appears in Aeolian-Vocalion record supplement No. 11. The list is undated, but apparently was issued somewhere around the middle of 1919. Bernard is not heard

in the reverse side, "Don't Cry, Frenchy, Don't Cry." I have been wondering if the Novelty Five was some small organization better known under another name, and now it suddenly occurs to me that it very likely was the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. That ensemble did some A-V recording under its own name, and Regas, the composer of "Bluein' the Blues," I believe was one of its members.

After this initial number, came No. 12124, "Shake, Rattle and Roll," one of Al's own songs. He went unheard in "Idol," the coupling. Then, on 12135, he sang the refrain of "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," which, as we already know, was the first duet he and Ernest Hare recorded for Edison, and which was written by Bernard and Russel Robinson. The other side, with no refrain, was "Lonesome Road Blues." I am also on record as saying that the Bernard-Hare duets were not suitable for use as dance music. As a rule they were not, but in this record "I Want to Hold You" was successfully given fox trot treatment. But why didn't Aeolian-Vocalion have Bernard and Hare sing and talk it in their inimitable fashion! Perhaps Al had an agreement that he would record the number as a blackface sketch only for Edison.

Now, still another correction. I had forgotten that I owned the A-V "I Want to Hold You in My Arms," and hadn't played it for many years. I have just put it on the turntable and found that, although he gets only incidental label credit, Bernard dominates the record. It begins with him doing some of the comic talk he and Hare had done on the Diamond Disc—and Bernard takes the part of both the man and woman, although not attempting to speak in Hare's sepulchral bass tones. In singing the song he also takes both roles, but changes the words somewhat from those in the Edison version. The result is a swinging fox trot with a lively, captivating melody, but the recording is many degrees below the Edison standard.

#### IV. Talking Specialties and "Blues"

We already know that what the English call "cross talk"—that is, a rapid-fire exchange of repartee—was a prominent feature of the Bernard-Hare duets, but on a relatively few records Bernard also made comic talking specialties without the help of a partner. One of these is Radiex No. 4256, on which he tells about "Rufus Green at the Schoolhouse." It is backed with "The Trial of Josiah Brown," by Harlan E. Knight, Steve Porter and Byron G. Harlan, a "rube" sketch which this group, with the assistance of Ada Jones, had done more effectively for Edison.

Al also wrote and recorded a few monologs in which he impersonated a black preacher of the type he had known in New Orleans. The minister was called "Brother Pollasses," a word that sounds as if it were suggested

by "molasses," and his routine involved preaching "sermons" about letters of the alphabet. Brunswick 406 combined "Brother Pollasses' Sermon on the Letter 'S'" with the old standby song, "Read 'Em and Weep." On Harmony 319-H Brother Pollasses discoursed on the letter "F," while for a coupling the Record Boys sang, played and yodeled, "Stay Away From My Man," a typical Bernard song which he and Sammy Stept had written.

As a soloist the comedian of course was preeminently a "blues" singer, and the "St. Louis Blues" was probably the number he recorded most often. In one of his letters he told me he sang it for 19 different companies, and in my own collection I have him singing it on Edison, Victor, Aeolian-Vocalion, Brunswick, Emerson and Madison discs. His acoustically recorded Brunswick was one of that company's earliest records and was coupled on No. 2062 with "The Beale Street Blues," also by Bernard and truly a good value for admirers of the "blues." Both songs were written by "the Daddy of the Blues," W. C. Handy. His "John Bennett" version for Madison was combined with a legendary "hobo" song, "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum," whose tune was taken from a rousing old camp meeting hymn, "Revive Us Again." The Brunswick record was so popular that when electrical recordings supplanted singing into a horn, he was called on to re-make it on No. 3547. The Emerson, No. 10296, was combined with "The Broadway Blues," sung by the popular black comedian, Noble Sissle, who at this writing is still alive at past the age of 90. Also yet living and giving recitals of ragtime music is Sissle's pianist-partner, Eubie Blake. We have already seen that Bernard recorded "The Broadway Blues" for Edison and it is rather odd that he should be on one side of another disc upon which Sissle sang the same song. On the other hand, the "Crazy Blues," by the Negro writer, Perry Bradford, was usually associated with Sissle, who recorded it for Edison and Emerson, but Bernard sang the refrain in a dance record of that number played by Bennie Krueger's Orchestra on Brunswick 2977.

Bernard also made several records of one of Handy's earlier songs, "The Memphis Blues," which many students of this art form like even better than the "St. Louis Blues." One little known "Memphis Blues" recording is on a Silvertone disc, probably made from a Federal master, in which he is assisted by Ernie Hare. On the other side they sing "The Alabama Jubilee." This looks like an effort to "cover" the big selling 1915 Columbia record, No. A1721, on which the songs about Memphis and Alabama were sung by Arthur Collins and Byron Harlan.

Unfortunately, Edison never issued a vocal "Memphis Blues." Brunswick's acoustic recording was by Bernard and Carl Fenton's Orchestra, with "Frankie and Johnny" on the



other side. This is a vaudevillized arrangement of the traditional Negro song about the "gal" who "killed the man that had done her wrong," which in its turn seems to stem from an older, simpler number called "Frankie and Albert." The vaude version is attributed to the Leighton Brothers, best known as the composers of "Steamboat Bill." The Brunswick "Memphis Blues" was such a good seller that it was re-made electrically, on No. 3553, by Bernard and the Fenton Orchestra, but "Frankie and Johnny" was dropped and "The Hesitation Blues" substituted.

While we are on the subject of "Frankie and Johnny," Bernard's was probably the first version of the song both recorded and issued in this country. The very first record of it, however, almost certainly is the one Gene Greene made in London in 1912 on Pathe sapphire disc No. 5370. Small quantities were imported into the States after Pathe began business over here in 1914, and I am lucky to have one. Its coupling was a "rube song," "Go Back." "The Ragtime King," as Greene was called, also sang "Frankie and Johnny" for Victor on March 9, 1917, but it remained unissued.

While Bernard believed himself to have been the first singer who recorded "blues" songs he, of course, was not. The true pioneer was Morton Harvey, whose Victor record of "The Memphis Blues" came out in January, 1915. Collins and Harlan followed a few months later with the same song for Columbia, and there were other vocal records of "blues" numbers before Bernard came along. Without trying to be too specific, Irving Kaufman made a Victor of "The Chinese Blues" in 1916, and Gene Greene sang the Chinese ditty on both five-inch and seven-inch Emersons. And Vernon Dalhart's Edison of "The Alcoholic Blues" was recorded before any of Bernard's "blue numbers. Nevertheless, in my opinion, Al was far and away the best of the "blues" singers.

Among Bernard's other records with a "blues" coloration are Gennett 4544, "Bluin' the Blues," on which he is accompanied by the Kansas Jazz Boys, whoever they were, and which has him singing "Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar" for its teammate. On Hytone record 73 (Hytone seems to be a disguised Cameo) he sings "The Anticipatin' Blues" and "I'm Looking for a Bluebird to Chase My Blues Away," and on Madison 1927 he does the vocal refrain in a dance version of a Handy number, "Deep River Blues."

By diligent, prolonged and patient research it probably would be no insuperable task to lengthen considerably this list of Bernard's "blues" recordings, but it is at least representative as it stands. Obviously, too, the tenor also recorded his share of the more conventional types of popular songs, but I don't think they call for special mention.

(To be continued)

## HISTORICAL RECORDS

(Continued from page 36)

59. B 25321-4 5/27/21 V 87328; V 546 (33); G 7-53049; G DA 133 (3)  
Unpublished takes: B 2521-1, 2, 3 5/27/21  
When Love Is Kind (Moore)  
60. B 26472-2 5/12/22 V 87344; V 898 (45); G 2-3677; -;  
Unpublished takes: B 26472-1, 3, 4, 5 5/12/22
- Group IV - Viktor Electric  
Acis v Galatea (Lites): Confiando Jilguerillo  
61. BSO 17091-1 11/19/37 V 2201 (62); -;  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17091-1A, 2 11/19/37  
Amantes Chasqueados (Lacerna): Jilguerito con pica de oro  
62. BSO 17092-1 11/19/37 V 2201 (61); -;  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17092-1A, 11/19/37  
Amour Mouille (Varney): Valse d'oiseau  
63. BVE 30275-6 12/30/27 V 1333 (66); G DA 981 (66)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 30275-5, 7 12/30/27  
Il Bacio (Arditi)  
64. BVE 28619-11 5/27/27 V 1262 (71); G DA 900 (71)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 28619-6, 7, 8 5/27/26; BVE 28619-9, 10 5/27/27  
Bohème (Puccini): Mi chiamano Mimì  
65. CVE 14477-13 5/5/28 V 6790 (81); V 14206 (reverse: Martinelli); G DB 1644 (81)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 14477-12, 14 5/5/28  
Bohème (Puccini): Musetta's waltz  
66. BVE 28620-11 12/30/27 V 1333 (63); G DA 981 (63)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 28620-7, 8 5/27/27  
BVE 28620-9, 10 12/30/27  
Bohème (Puccini): Addio di Mimì  
67. CVE 33476-5 11/21/25 V 6561 (80); -;  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33476-1, 2, 3 10/16/25; CVE 33476-4 11/21/25  
Bohème (Puccini): Sono andati (with Tito Schipa)  
68. CVE 33943-3 11/24/25 V 8063 (69); G DB 911 (69)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33943-1, 2 11/24/25  
Bohème (Puccini): O Dio, Mimì (with Tito Schipa)  
69. CVE 33944-2 11/24/25 V 8063 (68); G DB 911 (68)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33944-1, 3 11/24/25  
Calm as the Night (Goetze): (with Lawrence Tibbett)  
70. BVE 38854-3 6/1/27 V 1747 (73); V 3043 (73); G DA 912 (73)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 38854-1, 2 6/1/27  
Canto Andaluz (nin)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17715-1, 2 12/24/37  
Ciribiribin (Pestalozza)  
71. BVE 28643-8 5/27/27 V 1262 (64); G DA 900 (64)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 28643-4, 5, 6 5/5/26; BVE 28643-7 5/27/27  
Clavelitos (Valverde)  
72. BVE 15823-5 6/1/27 V 1385 (83); G DA 1043 (83)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 15823-3, 4 6/1/27  
Con Amores/El Vito (Obradores/Nin)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17713-1, 1A 12/24/37  
Contes d'Hoffmann (Offenbach): Barcarolle (with Lawrence Tibbett)  
73. BVE 38855-3 6/1/27 V 1747 (70); V 3043 (70); G DA 912 (70)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 38855-1, 2 6/1/27  
Coplas de curro dulce (Obradores)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17712-1, 1A 12/24/37  
Cruz de Mayo (Valverde)  
74. BVE 33977-2 12/8/25 V 1190 (89); G DA 799 (89)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 33977-1, 3 12/8/25  
Don Giovanni (Mozart): Battì, battì  
75. CSO 11414-2 7/22/37 V 14614 (88); G DB 3820 (88)  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11414-1, 1A, 2A 7/22/37  
Don Giovanni (Mozart): Vedrai carino  
76. BSO 11715-1 8/13/37 V 1846 (85); G DA 1894 (85)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 11715-1A, 2, 2A 8/13/37  
Don Quijote de la Mancha (Obradores): Consejo  
77. BSO 17093-1 11/19/37 V 1978 (78); -;  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17093-1A, 11/19/37  
In the Woods (Schumann): (with John McCormack)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 34167-1, 2, 3, 4 12/18/25  
It's You (Green)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 33853-1, 2, 3 6/1/27  
Jota (De Falla)  
78. BSO 17090-1 11/19/37 V 1978 (77); -;  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17090-1A, 2 11/19/37  
Little Damsel (Novello)  
79. BVE 33478-3 11/21/25 V 1162 (95); -;  
Unpublished takes: BVE 33478-1, 2 10/16/25; BVE 33478-4, 5 11/21/25  
Louise (Charpentier): Dupuis le jour  
80. CVE 33475-6 12/2/25 V 6561 (87); -;  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33475-1, 2, 3, 4 10/16/25; CVE 33475-5, 7 12/2/25  
Madama Butterfly (Puccini): Un bel dì  
81. CVE 38061-5 1/4/28 V 6790 (85); G DB 1644 (85)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 38061-1, 2, 3 5/27/27; CVE 38061-4 1/4/28

- Note: Many copies of this record will show a take 2. This is an error. Only take 5 was issued.  
Malaguena (Nin)  
82. BSO 17094-1 11/19/37 V 1984 (94); -;  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17094-1A, 2 11/19/37  
Malaguena (Pagans)  
83. BVE 14343-4 1/13/28 V 1385 (72); G DA 1043 (72)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 14633-3, 5 1/13/28  
Manon (Massenet): Adieu, notre petite table  
84. CSO 11718-1 8/13/37 V 14618 (92); -;  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11718-1A, 2, 2A 8/13/37  
Manon (Massenet): Gavotte  
85. BSO 11416-1 7/22/37 V 1846 (76); G DA 1894 (76)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 11416-1A, 2, 2A 7/22/37; BSO 11416-3, 3A, 4, 4A 8/13/37  
Mignon (Thomas): Connais-tu  
86. BVE 45153-2 5/18/28 V 1361 (87); G DA 1017 (87)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 45153-1, 3 5/18/28  
Mignon (Thomas): Ma voisi dans son boudoir  
87. BVE 45154-3 5/18/28 V 1361 (86); G DA 1017 (86)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 45154-1, 2 5/18/28  
Night Hymn at Sea (Goring-Thomas) (with John McCormack)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 34166-1, 2, 3 12/18/25; BVE 34166-4, 5, 6 12/24/25  
Nozze di Figaro (Mozart): Deh vieni non tardar  
88. CSO 11415-1 7/22/37 V 14614 (75); G DB 3820 (75)  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11415-1A, 2, 2A 7/22/37  
Patotero Sentimental (Joves)  
89. BVE 33978-1 12/8/25 V 1190 (74); G DA 799 (74)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 33978-2, 3 12/8/25  
Primavera d'or (Glazunov)  
90. CVE 33959-4 12/2/25 V 6699 (96); G DB 1168 (96)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33959-1, 2, 3 12/2/25  
Rondine (Puccini): Ore dolci e divine  
91. CSO 11716-1 8/13/37 V 14615 (99); -;  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11716-1A, 2, 2A 8/13/37  
Secret of Suzanne (Wolf-Ferrari): O gloria la nube  
92. CSO 11417-3 8/13/37 V 14618 (84); -;  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11417-1, 1A, 2, 2A 7/22/37; CSO 11417-3A 8/13/37  
Seguidilla (arr. Reimann)  
93. BVE 45165-2 5/22/28 V 1348 (100); G DA 1039 (100)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 45165-1, 3 5/22/28  
Seguidilla Muricana/Jota (De Falla/Nin)  
94. BS 17095-2 11/1937 V 1984 (82); -;  
Unpublished takes: BS 17095-1, 1A 11/19/37  
Simonetta (White-Rumbold)  
95. BVE 33477-7 12/8/25 V 1162 (79); -;  
Unpublished takes: BVE 33477-1, 2 10/16/25; BVE 33477-3, 4, 5 11/21/25; BVE 33477-6, 8 12/8/25  
Tales from the Vienna Woods (Strauss)  
96. CVE 33960-10 5/27/27 V 6699 (90); G DB 1168 (90)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 33960-1, 2, 3 12/2/25; CVE 33960-4, 5 12/22/25; CVE 33960-6, 7, 8 5/5/26; CVE 33960-9, 11 5/27/27  
Tomba y le (Obradores)  
Unpublished takes: BSO 17714-1, 2, 3 12/24/37  
Traviata (Verdi): Ah fors'è lui  
97. CVE 41441-3 6/20/28 V 7438 (reverse: Fonselle); G DB 1606 (reverse: Fonselle)  
Unpublished takes: CVE 41441-1, 2 1/4/28; CVE 41441-4, 5 6/20/28  
Traviata (Verdi): Sempre libera  
98. CVE 41442-1 1/4/28 V 11-8569 (reverse: Caruso); -;  
Unpublished takes: CVE 41442-2, 3, 4 6/20/28  
La Vida Breve (De Falla): Vivan los que rien  
99. CSO 11717-1 8/13/37 V 14615 (91); -;  
Unpublished takes: CSO 11717-1A, 2, 2A 8/13/37  
La Violetera (Goetz-Padilla)  
100. BVE 45164-2 5/22/28 V 1348 (93); G DA 1039 (93)  
Unpublished takes: BVE 45164-1, 3 5/22/28
- All records of Victor origin with a B prefix matrix number are 10"; those with a C prefix are 12".
  - The conductors on the Bori records are as follows:  
2/12/14, 3/27/14, 4/2/14, 4/8/14, 3/23/15, 4/16/15 Walter B. Rogers  
4/6/21, 4/7/21, 4/8/21, 5/10/21, 5/12/21, 11/2/21, 11/23/21 Joseph Pasternack  
5/12/22, 5/16/22, 9/26/22, 10/2/22  
10/13/22 Rosario Bourdon  
3/28/23 Nat Shilkret  
9/27/23, 9/28/23 Rosario Bourdon  
10/8/23, 1/14/24, 6/13/24 Nat Shilkret  
10/16/25, 11/21/25 Rosario Bourdon  
11/24/25 Nat Shilkret  
12/2/25, 12/8/25 Rosario Bourdon  
12/18/25, 12/22/25, 12/24/25 Nat Shilkret  
5/5/26, 5/27/27, 6/1/27, 12/30/27, 1/4/28, 1/13/28, 5/18/28, 5/22/28, 6/20/28  
7/22/37, 8/13/37, 11/19/37, 12/24/37  
George Copeland (pianist)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART X  
By JIM WALSH



Al Bernard gave Jim Walsh this autographed photo of himself on September 10, 1948, when he was one of the honored guests at a party for pioneer recording artists.

LAST DAYS:—Al Bernard at the John Bieling Day party for early recording artists, at Garden City, N.Y., in September, 1948, a few months before his death. He is holding the published music of his song, "Oh Joe Please Don't Go!"

—Photo by Allen G. DeBus

### IV. "The Record Boys"

Throughout this series there have been scattered mentions of the Record Boys, the recording and radio trio of which Al Bernard became the principal member, probably in 1925, and some of their records, such as "Hokum Smokum" and "Yodeling Bill," have been touched upon. Now it appears time to consider their association and recordings in somewhat more detail.

Granted, it already has been made clear that the ensemble was nothing but the old partnership of Bernard and Frank Kamplain with Sammy Stept added as pianist-composer. Bernard and Kamplain had been working together since 1919 (it would be interesting to know how, when and where they met and decided to form a partnership), but how long they had known Stept there seems no way to determine. At any rate, they became the Record Boys and they were almost immediately popular, from the time they began their broadcasts and phonograph work.

I have found, in an old scrapbook, a few clippings dealing with this talented trio. One which I can identify as from the *Washington Post* and which I judge was published in 1926 says:

"The Record Boys, nationally celebrated as radio favorites and phonograph stars, are the special added attraction at Crandall's Metropolitan theater this week in conjunction with first local presentations of Colleen Moore's production for Elster National of 'It Must Be Love.' This clever trio is comprised of (sic) Al Bernard, Frank Kamplain and Sam Stept. Two are solo vocalists, all three sing in their humorously concerted numbers and one is an expert pianist. This information probably will impress the reader as redundant because these boys have captivated audiences in all parts of the United States by the verve and speed of their work not to mention its genuinely artistic quality."

Another clipping, also apparently from the *Post*, is amusing because of the ludicrous way it mixed up the artists' individual functions:

"The Record Boys will be heard in a quarter hour of serio-comic songs and straight ballads, with Al Bernard at the piano and Frank Kamplain and Sam Stept serving as solo vocalists."

How amused the "boys" must have been, if they saw that item, to learn that Bernard, despite his inability to read music, had become the pianist while Stept had taken his place as a singer! I do not recall Stept's singing in any of their recorded offerings.

My guess is that the following is from a 1926 *New York Herald Tribune*:

"Record Boys To Rest From Radio Programs. WJZ and WRC Stars Will Broadcast Wednesday in Closing Recital. To Return September 1."

"The Record Boys, who have been broadcasting through WJZ and WRC will close the season with a final program from

that station at 10 o'clock Wednesday night. Frank Kamplain, Al Bernard and Sammy Stept feel that they must have at least two months rest this summer to prepare themselves for the fall season. The boys have promised the management of WJZ that they will rejoin the ranks of the station's entertainers shortly after September 1."

The news item adds the following which presumably had nothing to do with the Record Boys, but is worth quoting for its historical radio interest:

"On a postal card received from Maj. Lester D. Gardner, the editor of *Aviation*, by Charles W. Popenoe, manager of station WJZ, he makes the statement that WJZ was heard clearly in the ancient city of Jerusalem. The card is postmarked June 3, 1926."

Having written the foregoing, I believe that the reference to WRC indicates that the article was not, as I had thought, taken from a New York paper. I am not familiar with those call letters, but perhaps WRC was a Washington station.

The next brief, clipping is unmistakably from *The Billboard*:

"Record Boys Sign for 1927. Al Bernard, Frank Kamplain and Sammy Stept, songwriters, record and radio artists, have signed a contract to broadcast every Monday evening over WJZ from 8 to 8.30 p.m., beginning January 3. During each broadcasting period they will be accompanied by a crack orchestra."

This item, you observe, refutes the *American Weekly* statement, quoted at the beginning of this series, that



Al Bernard sang on radio for seven years without getting a cent for his services. It would not have been worth his while, nor that of Kamplain and Stept, to sign a contract to appear each week for nothing. But why was an orchestra needed to supplement Stept's piano?

Now, some discussion about the discs made by the Record Boys. Certainly one, off the beaten path, was Vocalion B15265, on which they sang and played "When a Kid Who Came from the East Side Found a Sweet Society Rose." This pretentiously naive and unsophisticated number, which had only slight popularity, was not one of Bernard and Stept's compositions. It was written by Al Dubin and Jimmy McHugh, and the lyrics celebrated the courtship and marriage of Irving Berlin, greatest popular song writer of his day, to Ellen Mackay, daughter of Clarence Mackay, the Postal Union telegraph magnate. (Mackay afterwards married Anna Case, the Metropolitan Opera soprano and Edison recording favorite. My knowledge of family relationships is shaky, but I suppose that made Anna Berlin's step-mother-in-law). The other side of this disc, which has genuine historical interest of a humble kind, was a Bernard-Stept composition, "When Spring Comes Peeping Through."

"When Spring Comes Peeping Through," a pretty little number, was also issued on Harmony 130-H, coupled with "Come Back, Marguerite," which was not one of Bernard and Stept's compositions but was credited to "Fischer and Bryan." "Marguerite" is an Italian dialect song, and I am unable to convince myself that Bernard sings the lead. The voice and style do not seem to be his on either side of the disc.

Another Harmony disc by the Record Boys, No. 154-H, combines their singing of a Bernard-Stept song, "Hello! Are You There? Hello!" with one of Bernard's superb solo renditions of "Wal, I Swan!" Harmony recordings also appeared under several other labels, including Diva, and I have Diva No. 2465-G, on which the trio records still another opus, "Troo-Le-Oo-Le-Ay," written by the prolific Bernard and Stept, and obviously concocted to display Kamplain's yodeling. The other side contains a comic number, "All Men Are Devils," a Bernard solo which he also sang for Edison.

One of the most frequently recorded Record Boy offerings was "Hokum-Smokum Yodelin' Indian Man," which they did for Edison, Pathe, Vocalion and other companies. The Vocalion, No. 15308, sports still another Bernard-Stept cooperative effort, "Harmonica Joe."

Stept occasionally played the piano for Bernard in records that did not include Kamplain. One was an electrically recorded Vocalion on which Al revived his 1924 success, "Twenty-Five Years From Now." The label credits the composition to Bernard, (Frank) Ferrara and "McHugh" —

presumably Jimmy McHugh. The other side is one of the numerous downpour songs suggested by "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" — Phil Cook's "It Don't Do Nothin' But Rain." Bernard also made an electric Okeh of "Twenty-Five Years" which was issued on No. 4124. There is a guitar accompaniment by an unidentified player, possibly Ferrara. Its coupling is one of Bernard's original ditties, "Times Am Gettin' Hard," which I do not recall having seen elsewhere.

I wish I had thought to ask Al why the original Record Boys "dissolved partnership" late in 1927. Could the incessant arguing which *The Billboard* said went on among them have been responsible? Probably not, for there is some indication that the parting was friendly. At any rate, Bernard and Stept withdrew, and Kamplain probably became manager of the new trio composed of himself; Tom Ford, baritone, and Lew Cobey, pianist. "Ford" was really Lester O'Keefe, who did a little singing under his right name for Edison. He had what sounds to me like a strong Mid-Western accent and I find his voice and style rather unpleasant.

The new group continued, I suppose, to do radio work and also engaged in a small amount of recording, but their association seems not to have lasted long and probably ended with the 1929 depression. In December, 1927, they appeared on Edison disc No. 52127, singing "Mock the Mocking Bird" (words by Mort Dixon and music by Sammy Stept) and "Try to Behave, Mister Moon."

A few months later the new Record Boys sang four numbers which were issued on two Brunswick double discs. No. 3857, which came out in July, 1928, combined "Hokum Smokum" and another Bernard-Stept song, "Yeedle Deedle Lena." Their being permitted to record these numbers after Bernard and Stept had left the trio seems to indicate that the parting was amicable, but leaves me wondering why Brunswick did not have the original group sing them two years earlier when they were being issued by so many other companies.


In September, No. 3858 offered the trio in the same two songs they had sung for Edison nine months earlier. Again, there is room for wonderment as to why Brunswick was so late. The songs, of course, may have been recorded a long while before they were issued, but held back because they had no special timelines.

Those are all the recordings I have been able to find by the reorganized Record Boys. Meanwhile, whatever his reasons were, Bernard had ceased to be a member of the trio that had been popular on records, in radio and in vaudeville and had returned to his old associate, J. Russel Robinson. Once more "The Dixie Stars" were twinkling together. We shall now consider some of the records they made, both before and after the Record Boys era.


(Continued on page 119)

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f34941

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

### V. "The Dixie Stars"

A Bernard-Robinson duet with pronounced individual qualities is "My Sweetie Turned Me Down," on Columbia 389D, issued in 1925. It begins with Bernard saying something to "Russel" and Robinson in return calls him "Albert," as he had on one previously mentioned record. Didn't Robinson, I can't help from wondering, know that Al's first name was Alfred, and if he didn't, why hadn't Bernard told him? The catchy song is the lament of a poor soul trying to pretend that he doesn't care because his best girl has rejected him, but letting his true sentiments betray themselves, in the laughable lines near the end:

"While in this terrible rage  
I think I'll go on the stage.  
I'll sing 'Mammy' and I'll get shot—  
But what do I care? What do I care?  
My sweetie turned me down!"

That reference to singing "Mammy" shows how weary everybody had become of the tidal wave of "mammy songs" that "My Mammy" had touched off in 1921. And, incidentally, "My Sweetie Turned Me Down" was the work of Gus Kahn and Walter Donaldson, whose souls bore the guilt of having written "My Mammy."

The reverse side is "New York Ain't New York Anymore. It too is labeled as by Bernard and Robinson, but after listening I find myself not fully convinced that the singer really is our friend Al. If it is, the early electric process has thickened his voice—distorted it perhaps would be the better term—virtually beyond recognition.

The lyric tells of seeing George M. Cohan standing on Broadway, tearfully lamenting that his favorite street has changed for the worst. (What oh what? would he think now of Times Square?). Billy Rose and Lew Brown, who wrote the words to Ray Henderson's music, must have known better, but the meter compels the singer to pronounce "Cohan" as "Co-hen," whereas the Irish George M. called his family name "Co-han."

If the artist actually is Bernard, he achieves a startling *tour de force* by shucking his natural New Orleans accent and reciting a lament for Broadway's past glories in tough Bowery-like tones that are excellent mimicry of the way George M. Cohan talked nasally, from the side of his mouth. Since the label says the disc is by Bernard and Robinson, "The Dixie Stars," I suppose we must take its word, but there's something wrong with the recording if it is. The piano sound is as distorted as the vocal. As a novelty, however, the record is one all Al Bernard fans should own.

An attractive, but not well known melody is "Never Gettin' No Place Blues," written by Bernard, Frey (presumably Hugo Frey) and Robinson, and issued on Brunswick 2689. Bern-

ard's singing invests it with a genuine touch of pathos, almost entirely devoid of comic effect. Robinson accompanies him at the piano, but they also have the backing of an orchestra. The coupling is "Blue-Eyed Sally," which, as has been several times mentioned, was one of the most successful Bernard and Robinson compositions. "Never Gettin' No Place," also sung and played by Bernard and Robinson, likewise appeared on Columbia 309-D, with another Bernard song, "Birmingham Papa," for its teammate.

Worthy of mention, too, among "Dixie Stars" recordings is the Cameo of a nostalgic song about World War I, which you have already been told Al sang for Edison with help from a male chorus, "What Has Become of Hinky Dinky Parlay Voo?" It is No. 572 and is combined with "Believe Me" by the Radio Franks—Frank Wright and Frank Bessinger.

A Brunswick record which I have not heard that combines two Bernard and Robinson duets is No. 4121. One side is "Bless You! Sister." No composer's name is given, but I suspect it was the work of Bernard. The other face is "By the Watermelon Vine," which I imagine is the melodious ballad of that name written by Thomas S. Allen in 1904.

I have reserved for the last one other double-faced duo by Bernard and Robinson, which I feel deserves extended discussion, for I consider both sides to be among the funniest numbers Bernard ever recorded. Robinson takes the male role formerly filled so brilliantly by Ernest Hare and does splendidly. One side is "My Time is Charlie's Now," and the other, "It Takes a Cincinnati Yellow to Satisfy a Georgia Brown." Brunswick discs of this period omitted the names of authors and composers of popular songs, but it's virtually a certainty that Bernard not only wrote the highly entertaining dialog, but also contrived the lyrics to Robinson's ear-tickling tunes. I feel that these duets belong in the great Bernard and Hare tradition, so shall quote the conversational give-and-take in both. The talk, with blustering threats of violence, is about the "roughest" of that in any of Bernard's humorous skits.

"My Time is Charlie's," background is one of humble life. Bernard portrays a washerwoman who, after three years with her husband (Henry Jones?) has firmly determined that she wants nothing more to do with him and that thenceforth her affections will be lavished upon "Charlie." (Perhaps this is a throwback to "Charlie Sampson" who was described in "You're My Gal" as having been born in Texas and reared in Tennessee, to which "Henry" replied, "An' he'll die in Alabama if he messes with me.") Not even the husband's protests that he has brought his spouse so much washing that she has become known as "the Queen of Suds and Tubs" quenches her ire. During the singing she concedes: "You totes good washin," I'll confess, but when compared to Charlie you're an awful

mess."

Robinson, as *he*, instigates the repartee:

He—Woman, you is jes' fixin' to git yo'self battered up! My fist is jes' itchin' to leave its trademark of love on dat thick lower lip!

She—Try it! Jes' try it! You know whut dey sav: 'He who hesitates is beyon' redemption!

He—I'm gonna redeem you! But on second thought, I'm gonna protect myself ag'inst yo' corroded skin. I'm jes' nacherly gonna git myself a young oak tree an' beat you down to a black puddle!

She—Why, you lynx-eyed zebra, take dat! (The sound of something thrown is heard.)

He—Jes' missed me! On third thought, I'm gonna take my knife dat I hunts lions with an' strip yo' ears from dat oblong haid you totes aroun'!

She—I don't throwed my bes' washbo'd atcha! Now I'm gonna take this here clothesline an' put a noose aroun' yo' neck an' play in an' out de winders widya!

He—You'll need help, so run out to de zoo an' git Charlie an' de rest of dat monkey family outa de cage!

She—Don't lude to Charlie dat way, you baboon-faced slicker!

He—Lay low on dat slicker stuff, gal. I know not what it means.

She—You know what I mean, you fly slicker.

He—Who's a fly slicker?

She—You, dat's who! Take dat! (Sound of a crash.) I hope de oil in dat lamp lights de way to yo' uncle, de devil himself!

He—Well, I'm goin', but I will return, an' when I do it will be too bad!

She—J'n huh. If my Charlie sees ya—sees ya—it sho' will be too bad!

He—Have my slippers laid out an' my easy chair settin' by de fire, 'cause when I git through with you dere's only gonna be me an' you an' de graveyard left.

She—Dat'll be fine, 'cause you can tell yo' frien's dat I've buried de last man!

He—Aw now, honey—

The orchestra strikes up and they continue their acrimonious discussion to its accompaniment. As it ends, however, she is still ungoddingly determined to replace her laundry-toting husband with the scintillating "Charlie."

In an article submitted to HOBBIES more than a year ago, but not yet published, I pointed out that Bernard did something unusual in this recording. He "fluffed" by repeating "sees ya" and wasn't required to make the record over. I have previously mentioned his singing "brucking boncho" for "bucking bronco" in "Timbuctoo." In a minstrel record, to be considered later, he speaks of "blowing off the foam" instead of "foam." I am not sure about the words I have written as "fly slicker." Perhaps they should be "sly slicker." The meaning of "fly slicker" eludes me.

As "It Takes a Cincinnati Yellow" begins, the feminine half of the duo is at great pains to be explicit as she, with devastating frankness, informs her deep-voiced admirer that his love is hopeless because he cannot compare favorably with an Ohio Adonis whom she has recently met. There are a few words in the dialog that I never have been sure I understood:

She—Refleck befo' you argues with me, refleck, 'cause I am a woman dat has had de picasures!

He—Woman, unfold yo' remarks! Make dem light, 'cause when you talk dere is a dark error!

She—In plain words, I went, I came an' has been conquered!

He—You been readin' history?

She—No, but I met de man dat wrote de hist'ry of love!

He—Whom? Romeo?

She—Romeo! Dis man I 'hudes to is a Donna Wanna par excellence (?) an' his way o' coolin' makes a turtle dove soun'



like a bullfrog!

He—Woman, you is gonna keep dis ti-radin' or till you finds yo'self laid out in yo' fun real dress!

She—I fear thee not, dark ages, I fear thee not! I am a woman dat has met de man dat taught Cupid how to use his bow an' arrow!

He—An' while we is holdin' dis euology on dis said Antonius, may I inquire who an' whom an' where an' when dis sudden combustion of poetic extravaganza is?

She—Dat you may, blacker than all others, dat you may!

He—I know I'm black, but dat's not de question, O Lily of Midnight!

She—Well, ask on, darkness! I should have said, Africa darkness! Interrogate me if you wish!

He—Whenceforth is dis pusson dat you have put upon yo' sweet Georgia cruller?

She—Draw up yo' chair so you'll be puff-lickly at ease while I unloads myself an' mojolates!

He—Mojulates?

She—Yes, mojolates, 'cause I'm like a songbird in de radio when I gits to goin'—I must be mojolated.

He—Unload yo' baggage, woman. I am to say the least, affectedated.

The song begins with her account of a trip to Cincinnati, where she met an irresistible "Buckeye man." The "Cincinnati yellow" could not read or write, but his brand of "lovin'" was just what the enamoured "wench" required. Her Georgia lover pitifully says, "Why, gal, you know I'd beg for you; I'd even steal." She retorts, "But, Papa, you ain't never had no sex appeal!" He tries once more, asking, "Don't I do black bottom? Don't I sing dem blues?" only to be told that the distant charmer has "got lots of talents dat he's never used!" There the colloquy ends.

I am not at all sure about the part which I have quoted as "Donna Wana par excellence." I take it that she is mispronouncing the name of "Don Juan," the legendary captivator of fair ladies, but I may have misunderstood. A little farther down, what sounds like "euology" may be a mispronunciation of "eulogy" and I doubt that "dis said Antonius" is accurate. "Africa darkness" and "affectedated" may also not be correct. These skits, although earthy, are not off-color and they certainly are funny. Bernard's comedy always was clean.

Having reached this point, I have decided that a few more installments are necessary to tell about Al Bernard's later life and to quote from his letters. Here, then, we bivouac until succeeding months.

(To be continued)

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"THE GOOD SHEPHERD": Gunnarsson. 1910 First Edit. Bobbs-Merrill. DJ. Illustr. Masha. 84 p. \$3.00

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"The Yearling": Rawlings. 1938 Scribners FIRST. illustr. Shenton. \$3.00

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Large "THE BOYS FROM DICKENS". Sweetser. 1951 Harper. 223 pages. 11 fullp. illus. George Alfred Williams. Superb. \$8.00

#### EXPERIENCES OF A BOTTLE COLLECTOR

(Cont. from page 121)

family had used over the years.

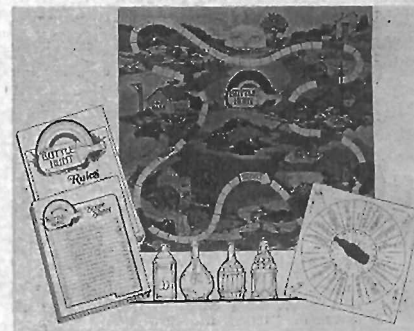
Eventually, though, the finds became scarcer, and I realized that my explorations were coming to an end. However, the memory of the many pleasant "digs" I had there will linger on for years to come.

Recently I have been exploring a city dump, abandoned since the early 1940s. Such dumps offer a wider variety of finds, but little feeling of personal acquaintance with those who have "donated" them. In time, though, such explorations will give an observant bottle hunter a knowledge of a community's past tastes in foods, medicines, cosmetics, beverages, implement, tools and toys. Which, by the way, is a facet of local history usually ignored by historians.

Bottle hunting, it should be added in closing, is a relatively safe hobby. Gloves should be worn to protect the hands from cuts due to coming in contact with sharp pieces of broken glass. Occasionally one may dig up a snake. But then he usually is more scared of you than you are of him, and will make a hasty retreat. Personally, my most painful accident resulted from disturbing a nest of exceedingly ill-tempered bumble bees. That hat-flogging melee resulted in the temporary loss of my eye-glasses and the acquisition of sundry swellings, including one on the end of my nose.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## AL BERNARD

PART XI  
By JIM WALSH

### I. Radio Minstrels

As a confirmed skeptic, I have an almost unshakable lack of belief in the supernatural. I place no credence in reports of landings on this planet by visitants from outer space. I do not believe in spiritistic "phenomena" or in ghosts. Yet things happen in my old "mansion" that batter this hard-headed incredulity, and make me wonder sometimes if I am entertaining unawares those prankish blobs of ectoplasm known by persons who believe in such things as poltergeists.

When I began this Al Bernard series, which will be concluded in two or three months, I thought I recalled that I had in an old scrapbook a newspaper clipping telling of Bernard, Percy Hemus and Steve Porter being starred in a radio minstrel series. I made several searches, but although I found a number of scrapbooks I couldn't locate the one supposed to shield the clipping. At length, one bitterly cold day a week or so ago, I went into a storage closet adjoining an unheated back room, and did some more rummaging around. Again I came upon an ancient scrapbook or two, but couldn't find the item that I thought I recollected. My hands became numb, and I returned to my bedroom and snuggled beneath an electric blanket, seeking to dispel the chill from my shivering frame.

Less than an hour later I glanced at the floor below the bed and saw lying there what appeared to be a yellowed page from an old scrapbook. With idle curiosity, I picked it up, and there, staring at me was the clipping for which I had searched off and on for weeks! This discovery was, and is, uncanny because the page certainly hadn't been there 60 minutes earlier, much less during all the weeks I had been looking for it, and I hadn't brought it out of the closet. Where did it come from? For the moment I was tempted to believe that the playful poltergeists had tired of teasing me by keeping the old scrapbook concealed, and had decided to prove their kind hearts by leaving beside my bed the one page I needed. Of course they were delighted to baffle me or they wouldn't have been poltergeists!

Whatever the explanation for the page's mysterious emergence, and I have so far been unable to decide upon a rational one, the clipping I wanted to quote apparently is from



**FAMOUS END MAN.** Percy Hemus is shown teaching American sailors to sing, in this picture reproduced from the Victor record supplement for April, 1918. Originally a distinguished concert baritone, Hemus was one end man in a 1928 radio minstrel show. Al Bernard was the other, and Steve Porter was interlocutor.

a 1928 *New York Herald Tribune*, and is as follows:

"New Minstrel Radio Series To Open Soon . . . Hemus, Bernard, Porter Featured in WJZ Tuesday Evening Broadcasts."

"A weekly series of minstrel programs will be inaugurated on Station WJZ and a hook-up of associated chain stations on September 4, continuing every Tuesday at 9:30 p.m. thereafter."

"Percy Hemus, Al Bernard and Steve Porter, minstrel comedians of long experience, will be featured in the series. An orchestra, under the direction of Hugo Mariani, soloists and a male quartet will support the entertainers."

"Guest soloists will appear occasionally, while the members of the entertainment cast will be featured in new specialties each week. The feature will be known as the Dutch Masters' Minstrels."

"Although each program will present a regular three-part minstrel show, made up of the usual opening, the olio and the after-piece, the specialties that will be introduced will give each week's presentation a separate flavor."

"The program will open with the band tuning up just before 'the rise of the curtain' and as it proceeds the minstrels swing into an opening chorus of an old familiar tune. Much of the first part of the program will be devoted to the amusing experiences of the two end-men, Hemus and Bernard, as told by them at the insistence of Interlocutor Porter."

"As in all old-time minstrel shows, there will be a real olio, made up of vocal and instrumental specialties. Banjos and tambourines, will be in evidence. Guest artists and the featured members of the cast will be heard in songs which will range from such perennial favorites as 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie' and 'Asleep in the Deep' to hits from the latest Broadway productions. The orchestral music will be varied."

"Comedy skits will take place in the afterpiece. Carson Robison is scheduled to present 'The Arkansas Traveler' in the inaugural program, and he and other entertainers well known to radio and theatre audiences will be featured in following programs."

This certainly seems to have been

a rather ambitious undertaking, and there is no question that star talent had been recruited. Steve Porter was one of the real veterans of record making, having begun in 1895 while still engaged in a successful vaudeville career. For a time in the late 1890's he and Russell Hunting were engaged in turning out the crude types of moving pictures made in those days. Both soon afterward went to England, where Porter became recording manager of a small recording firm — probably Nicole Freres. He then went to India as manager of the Gramophone Company's Calcutta recording plant. Apparently feeling homesick, he returned to the States in 1906 and soon was again a successful recording artist, whose comic talking specialties about "Flanagan" were almost as popular as Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" monologs. He was a member of the Rambler Minstrel Company, consisting, besides himself, of Billy Murray, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan; became baritone of the Peerless Quartet and left it for a similar place in the American quartet. Porter had an inventive turn of mind. He originated and manufactured a hearing device called the Portophone, which was sometimes advertised in the *Saturday Evening Post* (he is said to have developed it to relieve his mother-in-law's deafness) and he designed a system of lateral disc recording which he either presented or sold to Thomas



A. Edison, Inc., but which that company never used. Still later he was baritone of the Harmonizers Quartet. He died in New York, aged 72, on January 13, 1936.

Hemus, like Porter, a baritone, was born in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1880, and died December 22, 1945, in the first aid room of the RCA building in New York. He came to this country at an early age and lived for a time in Kansas. By 1906 he was making Columbia and Imperial records under the assumed name of Charles Gordon. For five years he was soloist at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and also appeared in concert with such artists as Ernestine Schumann-Heink and Louise Homer. During World War I he was song leader at the Pelham Bay training camp and later appeared on the stage in such productions as "The Love Song" and "The Vagabond King." Hemus, who was one of Elliot Shaw's vocal instructors made a number of Victor records from 1908 to 1919, and a larger total for Pathe. I suspect that he was also Turner Roe, another Pathe baritone.

In view of his successful concert experiences, being a minstrel end man must have seemed a "come down" to Hemus, but he was equipped with his share of theatrical "ham." In 1913 he recorded for Victor a two-part recitation of Poe's poem, "The Raven," on a 12-inch double-disc, and he "hammed" that unfortunate poem, to Gladys Craven's piano accompaniment, even worse than DeWolf Hopper mangled "Casey at the Bat." "The Raven" is one of the most ludicrous records I have ever heard.

My old friend, the late Cecil C. Smith, of Perham, Minn., who was a devout admirer of Collins and Harlan, once wrote me that when initial plans of the Dutch Masters Cigar Company to sponsor a radio minstrel series were published, it was announced that the end men would be Collins and Harlan, and Porter would serve as interlocutor. Cecil said he was bitterly disappointed when he tuned in the opening program and found that Bernard and Hemus had been substituted for his favorites. Probably the reason was that Collins' health was failing and he was about to retire, or had already gone to live in Tice, Fla. Had the original plan been carried out, with Collins, Harlan and Porter, it would have meant the revival of the Phonograph Rambler Minstrel Company of more than 20 years before except that Billy Murray would not be included.

I don't know how long the radio minstrel series was presented, but doubt that it was for more than one season. In the early 1930's Dutch Masters sponsored a program starring Billy Murray, Walter Scanlan and Marcella Shields, and the only minstrel program of any consequence was the Sinclair presentation with Gene Arnold, "Big Bill" Childs, Cliff Soubier, Fritz Clark and others.

Bernard seems to have done almost no recording after the 1929 depres-

sion began, but I have one record by him that came out somewhere in the early 1930's. It is a Melotone, made by the Brunswick Recording Corporation, which had taken over the record business of the Brunswick-Balke-Coller Company. On one side Al sings his own composition, "Stay Away From My Man," and on the reverse another of his tunes, "That's What I'm Gonna Do To You." He is assisted in both numbers by artists who get no label credit. In "Stay Away" a man with a high voice takes a contrasting "wench" role as he and Bernard squabble over a male person coveted by both. In "That's What I'm Going To Do To You" there is a deep-voiced singer who may have been Russel Robinson, Wilfred Glenn or somebody else. The piano accompaniment, similarly, may have been by Robinson or perhaps Sam Sept, but I believe Sept had gone to Hollywood to write for the movies before this record was made. The "tough" dialog on both sides is funny and in the Bernard-Hare tradition. But public taste was changing and there was little sale left for records of that type.

Al Bernard, however, was not through with broadcast minstrel work. We shall find him popping up again years later, but on TV instead of radio. On the Melotone record label, by the way, instead of being called "The Boy From Dixie" or "the Gentleman From The South," he is referred to as "the Minstrel Man."

## II. A Letter from Al Bernard

While I was still living in Marion, Va., I must have written a letter to Bernard, expressing boyish enthusiasm for his recorded work, but received no immediate reply. After I had gone to live in Johnson City, Tenn., however, I received a note which had been forwarded from my Marion address. The letterhead had a photo of Bernard at the upper left, and to the right the statement that he had made recordings for all phonograph companies and was a writer of popular songs. In the top center was his name, followed by "The Gentleman from the South" and below that "Radio's Black Face Singing Comedian" and his address, 345 West 55th Street, New York City. Above his picture was his phone number, CO-lumbus 5-6311.

Although the letter appears to have been personally typed with a blue ribbon, it was essentially a form, which had no bearing on, and was not a reply to, whatever I had previously written. Instead, it was a "pitch" to sell the sheet music of his latest song. Under date of January 27, 1936, the letter said:

"Mr. Ulysses Walsh,  
"Marion, Virginia.  
"Dear Radio & Record Friend:  
"Just a line to let you know that my new song, "Sixty-Seven Men in Savannah," is now out on the music counters. Sure wish that you would call on your local music dealer and have them (sic) play it for you. Please tell your friends.  
"In the event that your dealer cannot

(Continued on page 119)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

supply you with copies and you would like to have a copy. I will be glad to take your order direct. Forty cents per copy, or my 'Al Bernard's Complete Minstrel Book' and a copy of my new song both sent postpaid for \$1.10.

"Should you order from me and wish your copies autographed, please state in your letter.

"Thanking you in advance, I am,

"Sincerely,

AB/h "AL BERNARD."

I don't recall that I ordered an autographed copy. But I wish now that I had. That letter was the last I ever heard of the "Sixty-Seven Men" song. It was not one of Al's successes.

### III. Meeting Al Bernard

After receiving this rather impersonal letter, almost five years went by during which I cannot recall having heard of, or from, Al Bernard. Then, as I have often mentioned in these pages, I took my first trip to New York in October, 1940, to spend two weeks with Billy Murray at his home in Freeport. I arrived on Friday, October 11, and on the following Monday went to the National Broadcasting Company studios. Walter Scanlan took me into a room where a radio transcription was being made of a program called "Harlem Quiz" — one of the innumerable questions and answers shows of that time. Walter pointed out Irving Kaufman, who was short, freckled and rather bald, and also showed me Al Bernard.

Most of the artists taking part in the recording, or it may have been only a rehearsal, were standing in a line. Al was near the bottom end of the line and Irving near the top. I retained an impression that Bernard was rather short — perhaps about five feet seven — and that he had light sandy hair. I believe he was wearing glasses, but I don't think Kaufman was. None of the other performers were mentioned by name, but there was a woman whose part was to cackle hysterically at the jokes and, as I have said in an article not yet published, I have wondered if she might have been the laughing specialist, Sally Stembler.

When the time came for a concerted number to be sung, Al moved up from the end of the line and stood directly behind Irving. I observed that he held a lighted cigaret all the time he sang. This surprised me because the pictures I had seen of him smoking always showed him with a cigar. I felt that the fumes from the cigaret couldn't be good for his throat or the voices of the other artists.

When the performance was over, Walter led me up to Irving, but Al, who seemed to be in a hurry, as though he had to keep an engagement, had begun walking rapidly away. "Irving," Walter said, "here's one of your admirers — Jim Walsh."

Irving started and a surprised look came into his eyes. "From Tennes-

see?" he asked. (I had written him several letters from Johnson City and he had sent me autographed photos of himself). "That's right," I said.

Irving sprang into action. He started running toward Bernard, and exclaimed: "Al! Al! Come back here a minute! Here's somebody I want you to meet!" I thought Al looked rather reluctant to return, but he did, and Irving told him my name and where I lived, then added: "And he writes the most marvelous letters!"

"And I've written to you," I told Al. His reply seemed rather snappish, and I was certain he was under some sort of strain. "Well, I answered them, didn't I?" he asked. I told him he did without mentioning that the only thing I had received from him was not an answer to what I had written, but an effort to sell one of his songs.

Al left a moment later without my having had a chance to become really acquainted, but I couldn't expect him to stay when there was obviously something he needed to be doing. I promised Irving that I would try to call on him the ensuing Thursday at his home, but wasn't able to do it because Billy Murray and Jimmy Martindale had made plans to take me to the World's Fair. I proved a poor sightseer, for my feet soon developed blisters and I became sick from the overheated air of an exhibit showing how automobile tires were made. Billy, who had the endurance of a blacksmith, which his father had been, was keen to go on walking miles more when I was completely fagged out and had to beg off from further traipsing. I was glad when we left the exhibition center in a special bus, but suffered — to Billy and Jimmy's exquisite delight — a spell of acute embarrassment when a heavily made-up fat woman, complaining of the cold, asked permission to warm herself by snuggling up under my warm overcoat, then made an unsuccessful effort to "date" me that night. For no discernible reason she called me "Sailor," but I had seen an ocean for the first time in my life when I arrived in Freeport.

Another eight years were to elapse before I again saw Al Bernard, for the second and last time, and only a few months before his death. As I have explained earlier, this was at the September, 1948, John Bieling Day party in Garden City, Long Island. I was so busy giving newspaper and radio people information about the party that I had scant opportunity to talk with the artists whom I had been wanting to meet; however, I did manage a few minutes with Al. His face was lined with pain — he told me phlebitis was causing him a great deal of suffering — and those eight years had greatly changed his appearance, but I decided that he was somewhat taller than I had remembered, perhaps about five feet nine or ten. His voice was unaltered from the old recording days, and he revealed when he sang "My Dawg!" and "Oh Joe, Please Don't Go." He presented

me with an autographed photo, and, as I have already related, asked me to play his records on my Walsh's Wax Works radio program, but not to use those containing expressions that would be offensive to black listeners. Because, I suppose, of his physical afflictions, he seemed almost painfully serious, seldom smiled and there was no trace in his talk of the exuberant fun of his earlier, record-making days. Nevertheless, although Al looked ill, I was shocked to learn of his death on the following March 9.

(To be continued)

## OBITUARY

### FRANK J. TART

Frank J. Tart, St. Augustine, Fla., a member of the Board of Trustees of the Lightner Museum of Hobbies, since its inception in that city 25 years ago, passed away on October 22 at his home.

Mr. Tart once served his city as mayor, and he also was on the city commission in various civic capacities through the years.

Since the time that O. C. Lightner, publisher of HOBBIES Magazine and well known collector, negotiated with the City of St. Augustine, to accept the Museum for the City in trust, Mr. Tart had been an enthusiastic member of the museum board.

Mr. Tart and other fellow St. Augustinians, including the then mayor, other members of the city commission, and the then president of the St. Augustine Historical Society, spent a long week-end in Chicago visiting the museum and Mr. Lightner.

The Lightner collections then were housed in a three-story Victorian house on South Michigan Avenue, Chicago. The landmark home had previously been the subject of a chapter in the book on old Chicago houses by John Drury, a noted Chicago newspaper man.

The Lightner collections filled the house beautifully and appropriately. Collections were vast and included comprehensive categories of Rogers groups, coins, stamps, jewelry, Indian relics, old advertising art, musical instruments, one of the world's most outstanding crystal collections, etc. etc.

Mr. Tart's great enthusiasm for the Lightner collections and their importance in the history and art field on that original visit, was reflected through the years of his service on the Board of Trustees of the Museum. He was a friend of the Museum and collectors everywhere.

Survivors of our friend include his wife, Mrs. Virginia Claire Tart, St. Augustine; two sisters, Mrs. John H. McManus, Monroe, N.C., Mrs. Leland McManus, Monroe, N.C., Mrs. Leland E. Thomas, St. Augustine; two brothers, Walter H. Tart, St. Augustine, Wallace H. Tart, Orlando; and several nieces and nephews.

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# AL BERNARD

PART XII  
By JIM WALSH

### III. "Dear Al" and "Dear Jim"

That meeting at Garden City between Al Bernard and me took place because I had written to Al a few months earlier, sending the letter to the address he had used in 1936. I told him about the forthcoming John Bieling Day honoring early recording artists and asked him to be present. He replied on a blue letterhead, with "Al Bernard, Radio's Minstrel Man, Author-Composer" at the top center. To the left was his address, 305 West 45th Street, New York 19, and to the right his phone number, Circle 6-3555. At the bottom of the page was "Minstrel Shows Coached and Produced," and down the left hand margin was printed: "Scripts—Minstrel First Parts—Afterpieces—Monologues—Black Face—Rube—Hill Billy—Eccentric—STUMP SPEECHES—COMEDY SERMONS—DOUBLE ACTS for Male and Female—MINSTREL END MEN SONGS—Special Material for Stage and Radio." Obviously, Bernard was still keying his "show biz" activities to the fading Minstrel art.

In quoting from his letters, beginning with this one, of June 8, 1948, I shall use only parts that I consider of general interest. Accurate typing and correct spelling were not Al's strong points, so I shall also make corrections where they seem called for. He wrote:

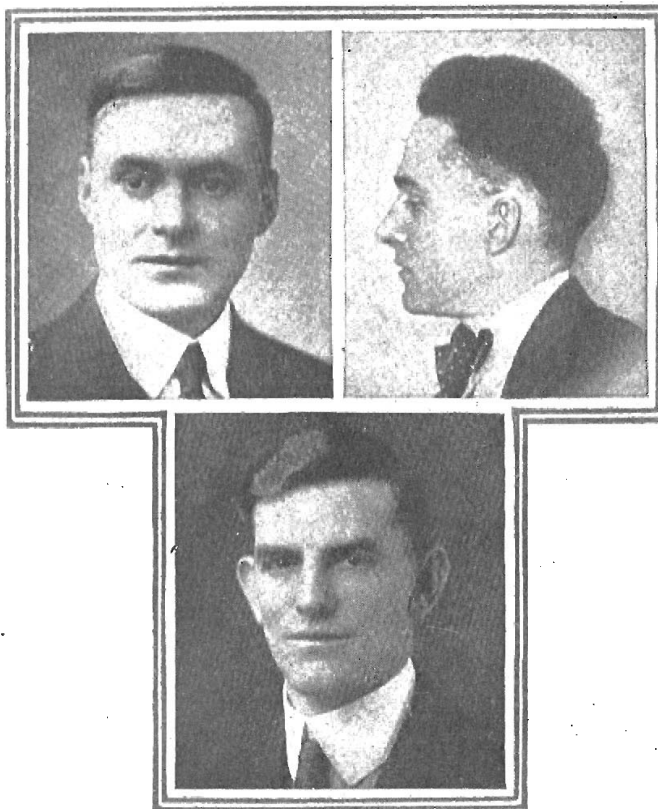
"Dear Jim: Yours of June 2 just received this morning. This was due to the fact that you mailed same to my old address on 55th Street. I have been away from there now some 12 years. It was great to get your letter, and thank you very much for all the nice things you say about me.

"As you will note from the attached literature, I write minstrel shows for clubs all over the U.S.A., keeping the spirit of minstrelsy alive.

"Just before Petrillo put the ban on recordings, I made a complete minstrel show for Celebrity Records, which they intend releasing this coming season. . . . It is made up of an album (four sides), two recordings, and it has everything in it from the quarter, gags, jokes, and songs, ballads and trombone solo. The two records run about 13 minutes and make up a swell show. I shall advise when they are released. Incidentally, I just recorded some records for my personal use, and was wondering if you could run them and see what the reactions would be in the way of mail, etc. Anyway, it will give you a good idea of how much better after so long a time I am doing my particular stuff. If you think well of the idea I will send them on to you.

"Regarding the Affair, you can just bet I will be there . . . I just recently had my minstrel show on television (WABD), which went over very good indeed, and I am told that we will go back again in September. Anyway, regardless, I am sure I will be there and talk over old times with you.

"By the way, I am giving you the name of a collector who is also a great admirer of my recordings—Quentin Riggs, 2035 N.W. 81st St., Oklahoma City, Okla.



AL BERNARD

CHARLES HART  
(Upper left)

ELLIOTT SHAW  
(Upper right)

PAGE OF STARS. The photo reproduced here from a 1919 Aeolian-Vocalion record catalog is probably the first of Al Bernard to be used in any phonograph publication. Also included are the popular duet team of Charles Hart and Elliott Shaw. The latter died in August, 1973, at the age of 86.

"Just how many records have you of mine? I hope you have my recording (Brunswick). "What the Engine Done," also "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Go (sic) Home?" These went over very big; and, of course, "St. Louis Blues." I made "St. Louis" for about 18 different companies. In fact, I was the first to record it on any record, back in 1919. Handy and I are still good friends . . . He is now publishing my new song, "Take Your Sins to the Devil," and I expect copies this week. If there is any live talent on your station, I will be glad to send a copy for them to sing. Keep the good work going. All good wishes, as ever. Yours sincerely, AL BERNARD."

A few comments are necessary. Perhaps it should be explained for readers too young to remember that in the 1940's James C. Petrillo, head of a musician's union, imposed for a time a ban against union members playing for recordings on the ground that "mechanical music" was depriving

musicians of employment. I had already met Quentin Riggs in September, 1947, and knew about his admiration for pioneer recording artists—an admiration that has grown with time. Al did send me several copies of "Take Your Sins to the Devil (Who Will Be So Good to You)" and I imagine it was the last song he composed. It was not a seller, but I retained one copy for myself after distributing others among staff members of Radio Station WSLs in Roanoke, Va., where I was a news writer.

I am submitting the cover for reproduction with this series. In the accompanying circular I was interested in seeing that among the Lions Clubs for which Al had provided

songs and skits was one in Bedford, Va., about 20 miles from Vinton, the town in which I live.

I replied immediately to the foregoing letter, and on June 12 Al wrote again:

"Dear Jim: . . . Sure was surprised to learn that Quentin Riggs is so young. Must have been a great kick for him on that story you wrote about him. Today I had the publisher send you four copies of my new song, 'Take Your Sins to the Devil.' Sure appreciate your cooperation in plugging this for me. During this week I am making up four records. On one side I will do 'Take Your Sins' and on the other side, 'There's a Kitchen Up in Heaven.' On the other record I will do 'Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider,' and 'You Gotta Stop.' I am also having my co-writer record 'Just a Fair Weather Sweetheart' and 'My Mother's Bible.' These are all new and would appreciate very much if you could use them as much as possible."

Al then added a long list of his electrically recorded Brunswick records, asking if I had them (I did have most), and also including the Columbia of "New York Ain't New York Any More" and "My Sweetie Turned Me Down." Last month I said that the Columbia recording sounded so little like him I doubted that it really was Al, but here we have his own statement, which I had forgotten (not having read these letters in a quarter of a century) that it was. He commented:

"These Brunswick records are among my best work and sure wish you could get hold of them. My 'St. Louis Blues' and 'What the Engine Done' are really swell. Well, I will sure be glad to see you in September. Sincerely, AL."

To this day (Monday, January 7, 1974) I do not, I am sorry to say, own a copy of "What the Engine Done" and have never heard it.

I wonder who the "co-writer" was who was about to record two songs in the composition of which Al presumably had a part. If he did help write "My Mother's Bible" it was probably his only song of a religious type.

On July 5, 1948, I heard again from the one-time "Boy From Dixie":

"Dear Jim: Yours received and would have answered sooner, but was thinking that I could have sent the records before now. I made some, but they are not just what I want. When I do make what I think are A-1, will shoot them on to you along with a photograph. Regarding (Vernon) Daihart, I have not run into him for quite some years. Do not know his address. If I do hear will shoot it on to you."

"Note what you say about the Edison records. . . . That is why I say my Brunswick records are okay for today. If you run an Al Bernard program, be sure to use 'St. Louis' and 'Beale' and the duets with Russel Robinson. Would like to hear any response you get on them. Best as always. Sincerely, AL."

The next letter from my friend Al was dated November 16, more than two months after we met at the Bieling Day party, and was written after his physical condition had begun to fail. Unlike the others, it was not typed, but was done with pen and ink, as were all letters I afterwards received from him.

"Dear Jim: . . . I would have answered your letter sooner, but I have been ill for the last few weeks—down with phlebitis—very painful. Could not walk or get out of bed for ten days. I am up and around the house, but have not as yet made the street."

"Sorry to know your blood pressure is kicking up. Hope you are okay by now."

"Whenever you run the program of Al Bernard will be okay, and I will appreciate it and a copy of the script. Write soon. Best wishes."

Sincerely, AL."

That reference to blood pressure "kicking up" puzzles me. In those long-gone years I was constantly troubled by my pressure being too low and by occasional bouts of anemia, and I am sure that whatever blood problem I may have had then involved the pressure "kicking down" instead of "up." It is only in recent times that it has insisted on going too high and that I have had to take measures to bring it down to where it should be.

During this period I gave an Al Bernard show on the Walsh's Wax Works program at WSLs, Roanoke, and sent my friend a copy of the script. He thanked me in a letter written November 25:

"Dear Jim: Today is Thanksgiving and I do hope it will be a happy one for you and yours. I received the script and your letter. That was a swell show and I am indeed thankful. You can bet I appreciate it a million."

"As soon as I can use my typewriter I will answer your letter in detail. The swelling is still in my left arm and I cannot use it at present. I go to the hospital every day for therapy treatments. They say I will be O.K. in about a week. I do hope so."

"Joe Bernard is my brother. He is an actor—used to do an act in vaudeville (dramatic). He has been in pictures out in Hollywood since 1927."

"I used to put folks on some of my songs as a compliment, so when I wrote 'Pretty Little Honey Lou' I put his name on it and it gave him a surprise. I will write you a long letter in about a week."

Al's next letter was dated December 8:

"Dear Jim: Unable to use typewriter as yet. Just wanted to let you know that I received the HOBBIES Magazine. Thanks very much—swell story (about the John Bieling Day affair). Hope we will all be together again next September."

"I am still tickled over the script that you put on about me. I read it to some of my co-writers, and they roared. By the way, I will soon have a new record for you of a new song of mine, 'Fair Weather Sweetheart.' Looks good. I am coming along—go every day to the hospital for therapy treatment. Write soon. Sincerely, AL."

On December 13, Al mailed me a Christmas card, and on December 30, I received the following letter:

"Dear Jim: . . . Believe me, it sure was a surprise to know that you are giving me another Bernard program. Received a letter (from a collector) and he tells me that a dealer in St. Louis has my records listed at \$75 to \$90. Can this be true? If so my record of George M. Cohan singing 'Life's a Funny Proposition' must be worth something real. Cannot use my typewriter as yet. Rheumatism in my shoulder and left arm, and I have been going through something."

I imagine I replied that prices of \$75 to \$90 for Al's old records were plain insanity, and that Cohan's "Life's a Funny Proposition" was not of great value. Of the seven George M. records that Victor issued, only this one was a good seller and at that time it was easy to find.

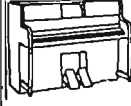
A day later, on December 31, Al again wrote:

"The 'Al Bernard's Merry Minstrels' is now released. Heard it today and it is a swell show. Don't know whether your dealer in Roanoke handles them or not, but you can tell him it is the Celebrity Record, owned by Joe Davis, 1619 Broadway. I am really proud of this album and look for it to go over in a big way. Be sure and send me a copy of the Monday night script. Happy New Year."

I evidently replied, suggesting that Bernard have the recording company dispatch me a copy of the minstrel album to be played on the Wax


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**"DIRECTORY OF Phonograph and Record Collectors,"** lists 250 collectors and their wants. \$3.50 postpaid, satisfaction guaranteed. Two stamps for free list of antique phonograph catalogs, books, magazines. — Allen H. Koenigsberg, 3400 Snyder, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11203 mh60621

Works, for on January 4, 1949, he wrote:

"Dear Jim: Attached please find my check for \$2.50. That is what the album costs. I would rather do it this way, so send for it and accept it as a gift from me."

"Do me a favor and get it on as soon as you can, and let me know the reaction. You have been a good friend and I appreciate it. I am figuring on this album getting me personal appearances. Will write you in the morning about the script. In haste, AL."

I did order a copy of the album, but didn't cash Al's check, which I

(Continued on page 119)



## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

preferred to keep as a memento of our friendship. When I opened the letter I have just quoted I found the check tucked inside the envelope where it had remained for almost precisely 25 years.

As he had said he would do, Al wrote on January 5:

"Dear Jim: I wanted to get my letter off to you yesterday and did not say anything about the script. It is swell, and I do hope you have some good reaction on it. Yes, 'Stavin' Change' and 'Brother Low Down' both were real live characters, so you hit it right. Thanks a lot.

"I do hope that when you put the Minstrel Show on the air you will tell the folks it is my new album and can be purchased at their dealer. I am still at home, walk as far as the corner and back. Phlebitis has not yet left entirely, nor the rheumatism, but I am hoping. Regards to Mel and always best to you. Sincerely, AL."

"Mel" was Mel Linkous, an announcer who worked with me on the Wax Works program. My old friend Mel is still with WLSL-TV, but as an executive.

On January 15 Al once more penned a note:

"Dear Jim: Wrote you two letters last week and up to date I have not heard from you. I sincerely trust that you are not ill. I am still doctoring and can walk as far as the corner and back. Legs still weak and the tired pains are awful.

"I heard my records last Sunday over one of the stations here, and they came over swell. I am enclosing a circular on them. By the way, I met a lot of collectors at the affair, but I do not have their full names and their addresses. Can you give me a list of their names, etc.? I want to send them circulars. Do trust you are well. Let me hear from you. Sincerely, AL."

Then on February 2—exactly nine weeks before his death—Al penned the last message I was ever to receive from him:

"Dear Jim: This is the first day I've been out of bed in two weeks, and I am trying to write you a few lines.

"I wrote to the man there at the Lions some time ago, but never heard so far. Thanks for sending me his name. I want to answer your letter and post card in full, so pardon me this time. The old aches have sure got me. Sincerely, AL."

I suppose I must have sent Al the name of whoever was in charge of producing the Vinton Lions Club Minstrels at that time (the club ceased giving the shows a few years ago), and he had written, trying to sell his services. The reference to the "old aches" sounds as if he were thinking of his song, "De Ducks Done Got Me." From that time, I imagine, Al was so bedridden and in so much pain that writing anything was beyond his powers—a sad ending to the life of an artist who had given so much pleasure to millions of his fellow men.

That was not quite the last letter I was to receive, however, from a member of the Bernard family. On March 29, 1953, his widow wrote to me saying she would like to sell Al's record collection "to someone that would appreciate them as Mr. Bernard did." She asked me, as so many other people have done in attempting to dispose of old records, where she could sell them and what prices she should ask. While she hoped to sell most of the collection as a lot, she preferred to deal separately with a

Phone COLUMBUS 5-6311



AL BERNARD

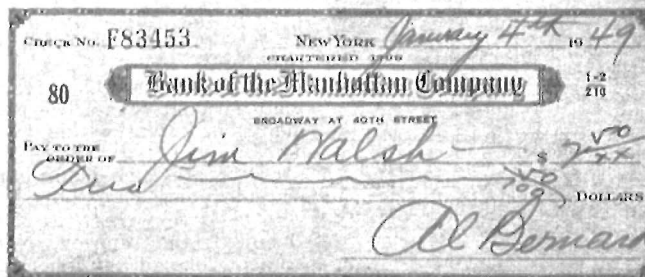
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COMEDIAN'S PERSONAL PAPERS. Shown here (top) is the upper portion of a printed letterhead Al Bernard used in 1936. Below is an uncashed check which he made out to Jim Walsh for purchase of an album of "Al Bernard's Merry Minstrels."

number of records that she thought were rarities—the Cohan disc, and others by Sir Harry Lauder, Bert Williams, and John McCormack, as well as DeWolf Hopper's "Casey at the Bat" and Digby Bell's "The Man Who Fanned Casey."

I regretfully replied that records of the type she mentioned were not rare enough to bring prices out of the ordinary, and suggested that she might easily dispose of them by inserting a classified ad in HOBBIES under some such heading as: "Record Collection of Famous Recording Comedian, Al Bernard, for sale. Includes both popular and classical music. Send offers to Mrs. Al Bernard, 305 West 45th Street, New York 36, N.Y." I also gave her the names of a dealer or two who might buy them. The ad never appeared, and I heard no more from Mrs. Bernard. I don't know whether she is still living.

"Al Bernard's Merry Minstrels," the two-record, 10-inch album which Al was eager for me to broadcast and which became available such a pathetically short while before his death, was a bright and sparkling compilation of old-fashioned entertainment. Besides Al the artists included Henry Swope, tenor, who sang "Truthfully"; the Sunflower Quartet, heard in the chorus, "There's Nothing Like a Minstrel Show"; and the Home Town Minstrel Band, playing "Trombone Jitters." Tom Shirley was the interlocutor. Bernard himself sang the old favorite, "Bill Bailey," which is said to have been President John F. Kennedy's favorite song, and his voice sounded as fresh and youthful as when his recording career had begun almost 30 years before. The record gives the impression that it was taken from a radio broadcast, but it may have been at first intended for, or dubbed from, an electrical transcription, or perhaps it was a "straight"

recording job, artfully designed to sound as if the performers were on the air. Whatever it was intended to be, it is a fine production, on unbreakable discs, and should be sought by any Al Bernard admirer who doesn't have it. I imagine its sale was limited and that the album is hard to come by today.

Obviously, Al's health had deteriorated so badly by this time that he would not have been able to fill the personal appearance engagements he hoped the minstrel album would bring him.

## IV. Bernard's Television Minstrels

Al's reference in one of his letters to a television appearance made me wonder if he had in mind one that was not "recent" when he wrote in 1948, since it was given on Tuesday, March 7, 1945. I recalled that I had a clipping of a review of the program written by Joe Koehler and published in "The Billboard," which I had laid carefully aside with the intention of quoting it. I decided to fit it into this space and sought for it on my desk, where I was sure I laid it down. There ensued six hours of intensive searching, spread over two days, during which I seemed to have looked at every piece of paper in the room, without finding what I wanted. Then, just as I was ready to cry quits, I riffled through several letters lying on the foot of my bed, and, mixed up among them, I was flabbergasted to find the review, where I suppose the spooks, who had hidden it, had decided to leave it and astonish me. On the whole, it gives the television minstrel production very favorable treatment, and here, before it disappears again, it is:

"Al Bernard's Schooldays was pure and unadulterated corn direct from Dixie by way of Gus Edwards, via Bob (WOR) Emery's Rainbow House. If there is any wonder how a

completely delightful half hour came forth from under the wing of the Emery, it is respectfully explained that Bob had the sound idea of taking innumerable gags directly from Al Bernard's collection and stringing them together. Although they all smelled from overuse, they came so fast and furious that the viewer was laughing at himself for laughing at what he knew were old, old minstrel routines in white-faced.

"Al Bernard played the Negro porter who took over the teacher's desk while she was a-missing, and played the role in a combination interlocutor-and man manner. In the school-room were all the Gus Edwards characters—from the tough guy with a derby to the sweet and dumb young thing who never had the right answer in her life. There was plenty of movement—plenty of color, not a dull moment in a carload—and not a sophisticated one, either. Through the use of a blackboard idea they were able to get across the WOR credit without pushing and the camera work was ace—only once or twice missing a person on a routine.

"Credit Mrs. Bob Emery at the producer's console for this, and Bob, who acted as floor manager in the studio, keeping things moving—and the white-faced minstrel routine rolling along.

"How often a schooldays telecast could hold an audience is questionable. Al Bernard's act used to travel and he didn't have to have new material every week. However, based on the evidence of this one show—and hope that the corn will continue green—this rates the top Emery to date."

That, remember, was 29 years ago, when American television was still primitive. Judging by the description, this program must have been something like Avon Comedy Four's "New Schoolteacher" routine, rather than a "straight" old-fashioned minstrel. That makes it seem less likely that Al was referring to it when he said he had "recently" staged a minstrel show on WABD. On second thought, it couldn't have been the same show, for the 1945 production was on WOR.

### V. And Finally—

At last, after many months, we are reaching the conclusion of this Al Bernard series. I greet it with a feeling of relief for, let me confess, I have had qualms about devoting so many months of space to what is virtually a book-length biography. Naturally, I realize that all-out Bernard enthusiasts have "eaten it up," but there must be less dedicated readers who crave a change of menu. However, during the many years in which I have been assuring myself that I would some day take the time and trouble to write about Al Bernard, I have informed my nagging conscience that I would undertake the task only when I was prepared to prepare as comprehensive and complete account of his life and achievements as it was within my power to do.

One of the "no holds barred" Bernard devotees who I hope has enjoyed what I have written is Miss Pamela Ochojski, the Monsey, N.Y., college student, one of my friends to whom the series has been dedicated. It was a letter I received from Miss Ochojski in July, 1973, that finally pushed me over the line and made me resolve to bring into being the series about which I had been hesitating so long. Because of its, so to speak, historic importance, I think portions of her communication deserve to be quoted:

"Dear Mr. Walsh: When my HOBBIES Magazine came I was very excited to see the mention of Al Bernard, who is one of my favorite people on old records. It would be really nice

If some time you did an article on him, because the articles are interesting, with all sorts of information, and because I would like to know more about him. All I have right now is the 'New York Times' obituary and what the 1966 ASCAP Biographical Dictionary says about him, plus previous mentions in HOBBIES, which I have taken since 1963. I also have some assorted old issues and am always looking for more.

"Although I only started collecting records about a year and a half ago (and started reading your department), from the beginning I have enjoyed your cats and 'possum's Christmas greeting and news about them. They are really nice animals, especially The Professor. (The latest news at this writing about the Professor, Pam, is that he has had four abscessed teeth extracted—J.W.) I guess that Popsy wouldn't approve of Al Bernard singing 'Mississippi Bound' with the reference to 'good old roasted 'possum' with baked potatoes. Three of my Al Bernard records . . . are minstrel sketches with Ernest Hare, and I really enjoy them even if they aren't exactly approved of today. Actually, it was because of Ernest Hare that I got my first Al Bernard record, 'See Old Man Moon Smile' (Brunswick). I was just starting out, and really didn't know who anyone was, when I recognized the name Ernest Hare from my mother's telling me about 'The Happiness Boys.' She was a loyal fan of theirs and still likes to listen to my records by them.

"Did you ever get to meet Al Bernard? Since he was mentioned as going to one of the old artists' parties in the Arthur Hall article, I guess you did. He was also mentioned in the 'Silver-Masked Tenor' article as being on a radio show with Irving Kaufman. I only wish I could find more of his records, especially the sketches with Ernest Hare, because they are really good. He really should be written about. Seeing that mention of Al Bernard 'inspired' me to write to you. Your articles have helped me a lot, just learning about different people. A lot of the records I bought were bought because I had read about the people in HOBBIES. I know you are busy, researching Al Bernard (I hope). If you can't answer just keep the stamp and consider it eight cents worth of liver for Popsy and the cats. I really like all of them and enjoy reading their Christmas messages!"

Well, young lady, see what you accomplished! You proved that, when wielded by you, the pen is mightier than the sword, because simply by writing a letter you drastically changed the subject matter of "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" for an entire year and received the biography you had been wanting! . . . Pamela, by the way, detests some of the rubbish that passes among many of today's young people for Music. She recognizes it for the nerve wracking trash it is, as would Al Bernard. Billy Jones and Ernest Hare if they were living today.

Since I typed the reference to my charming friend, Pam, whom I have now met in person, a couple of matters have come to my attention and should be referred to here. Oliver Graham, of Westerly, R.I., has sent me a death notice from the Hartford (Conn.) "Courant" of Wednesday, June 16, 1971, revealing that Bernard's yodeling associate, Frank Kamplain, had died the preceding day. Kamplain then made his home in Coventry, Conn. The article read:

"Frank M. Kamplain, of Fitzgerald Boulevard, one-time recording artist for RCA-Victor and Brunswick recording companies, died Tuesday at Windham Community Memorial Hospital, Willimantic. Born in Vincennes, Ind., he made a number of recordings and entertained in hotels and night clubs in the U.S. and Europe until he retired in 1950. He moved to Coventry several years ago.

"He leaves his wife, Mrs. Ann Kamplain, of Coventry, and a brother, the Rev. William H. Kamplain, of Montgomery, Ala. The funeral will be Thursday at 11 a.m. at the Potter Funeral Home, 465 Jackson Street, Willimantic. Burial will be in Coventry Center Cemetery. There are no calling hours."

The obituary, you will observe, did not mention Kamplain's having re-

(Continued on next page)

## AT LAST!! SOMETHING NEW IN A RECORD ALBUM —

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RECORDS

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LAST RECORDING. An album of a "Merry Minstrel Show," featuring Al Bernard, was issued only a few weeks before the comedian's death. This is a copy of a circular advertising it.

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OLD STERLING souvenir spoons of Wisconsin cities. Describe and price. — William Parks, 4715 Sheboygan Ave., Apt. 303, Madison, Wis. n120441



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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from preceding page)

corded for such companies as Edison, Columbia and Okeh, nor did it give his age. However, he had begun recording duets with Bernard 52 years before his death, so if he was in his early 20s when he started, he must have reached the mid-70s in 1971.

In a preceding installment, I said that Bernard made a Federal (Indestructible) cylinder of "The St. Louis Blues," which was issued by mistake under Irving Kaufman's name. This was a slip of the typewriter, for the song was really "The Alcoholic Blues."

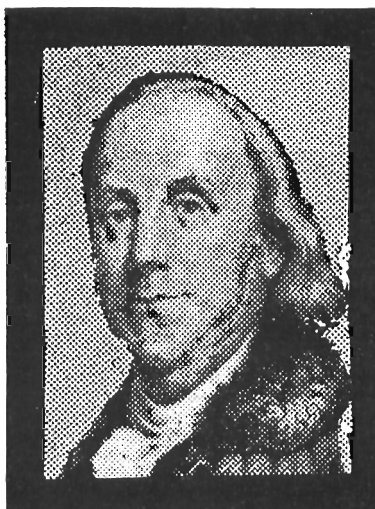
So here we are at the jumping-off point. Over all these years I have feared that, in spite of my good intentions, I would only think of writing about Al Bernard and not get down to the actual work, and I knew that it would be a source of vain regret if I found myself going to my ultimate accounting without having paid tribute to one of the most accomplished recording artists of his time. At last, though, the job has been done and I have the satisfaction of knowing that by waiting all these years I have been able to publish a better and more informative series than I could have if I had undertaken the task 25 or 30 years ago.

The story of Al Bernard has now been told as well as I can tell it, and I am very, very glad.

THE END.

## FRANKLINIANA

(Continued from page 119)



BEN FRANKLIN

even before the ship carrying Franklin arrived in the colonies.

Franklin was chosen as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress soon after his return from England. He drew up the first plan for the Union to be presented to the Congress; he organized the first postal system and was to become the first Postmaster General; he served with George Washington on a committee to arrange for the engraving and printing of the first Continental paper

money; he was a member of the committee which drafted the Declaration of Independence.

In 1778, Franklin was instrumental in the treaty alliance with France which provided the colonies with financial assistance, armament for war, etc. He was named minister plenipotentiary of France and served as president of the board of trustees of the University of Pennsylvania.

In 1787, Franklin was seated as a representative at the Federal Convention. Although he was not prominent in the ensuing debates, nor did he approve of all of the provisions, he signed the Constitution, "as the best instrument available under the circumstances."

Franklin's last public act was the signing of an anti-slavery petition to Congress as president of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

After a lifetime of service to his fellowman, Franklin passed away on April 17, 1790.

The dates January 17, 1706, and April 17, 1790, may not be commemorated nationally, but they shall not be forgotten in the annals of American history. Yes, these are the dates of the birth and death of a GREAT MAN, whose efforts made the world a better place for all mankind.

It is not surprising that one finds innumerable mementoes of this great American. Books, magazine articles, and hopefully this story may set off some boy or girl on the trail of acquiring Frankliniana.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## An Evening In Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory

By JIM WALSH

(Dedicated to Leah Stenzel Burt, without whose original inspiration and hard and dedicated work the twice yearly Edison Site meetings might not have come into being.)

### I. A Great Night

Thomas A. Edison's historic laboratory at West Orange, N.J., was jumping on the evening of Friday, October 18, 1974. And it should have been. The quaint building, where the greatest of inventors conducted many experiments that resulted in epoch-making discoveries, was host to a meeting of several former Edison recording artists and more than a hundred enthusiastic collectors of early recordings.

I was guest of honor and one of the speakers at the get-together, held in the auditorium of the veritable shrine, now maintained by the National Park Service as the Edison National Historic Site. Knowing that Mr. Edison had been a master of electrical experimentation and development, I could well believe that flashes and sparks from his own dynamic personality had remained alive in the laboratory. Perhaps some of them came from the in-the-flesh presence of Mr. Edison's surviving daughter and son, Mrs. Madeline Sloane and Theodore Edison. Whatever the explanation, I seemed to sense a warm electrical current flowing from me to my audience when I spoke and an equally vibrant response coming back. Interest and enthusiasm appeared to be unbounded, regardless of whether the participants were several boys and girls aged 12 or so, teen-agers, young men and women in their 20s, or middle-aged or elderly "senior citizens."

The meeting was one of several which have been organized and managed by Mrs. Leah S. Burt, the Site's assistant archivist. They are held six months or so apart, and the next probably will be a few months from now, in May. This, the fourth of the series, was the first I have attended, but Leah says the interest grows greater each time, and I can well believe it does.

Of primary importance, of course, was the fact that although Thomas A. Edison, Inc., went out of the phonograph and record business a little more than 45 years ago, five former Edison artists graced the occasion with their presence:

Edna White Chandler, known on records as Edna White, renowned trumpet player and leader of the



HELPFUL FRIENDS — Left: The Rev. John A. Petty, of Rutherfordton, N.C., who gave Jim Walsh transportation to the Edison meeting. He is standing beside a photo of Jim, which was on display in the Historic Site. Right: Merrill Malvern, of Buffalo, N.Y., who recorded the entire Site program. He and his wife, Phyllis, returned the HOBBIES writer to his home in Vinton, Va.

—Photos by Tim Brooks

Gloria Trumpeters, once famous in concert.

Rosalynd Davis Kaplan (Rosalynd Davis on records), violinist of the Dann Trio, which in 1922 went on "tone test" tours with Harvey Hindermyer.

Gladys Rice, soprano and one of the most popular Edison artists, who in the 1920's and '30's was a member of "Roxy's Gang" on radio and at the Capitol Theater, New York.

Douglas Stanbury, baritone, also of Roxy's Gang, who made Edison test recordings in 1924, and

Ernest L. Stevens, pianist, who recorded at West Orange under Mr. Edison's personal supervision.

Mrs. Hazel Dann Burleigh, sister of Blanche and Felice Dann, pianist and cornet virtuoso of the Dann Trio, was also among us and, by her warm, outgoing personality, won the affection of every one who met her. The opportunity to meet, clasp hands and chat with Edison artists, and, in my case, be kissed by the ladies, as well as to have the privilege of speaking with the immortal inventor's own son and daughter made the occasion one that nobody who was present is likely ever to forget.

There were some regrettable absences. Mrs. Victor Young, the contralto, who made records as Helen Davis and with her husband, a skilled pianist, gave "tone tests" learned of the meeting too late to attend, since she had a conflicting engagement. The Rev. William A. Rubin, known in the old phonograph and radio days as William ("Wee Willie") Robyn,

had been asked by Doug Stanbury, his intimate friend and associate of Roxy's Gang, to be on hand, but was visiting a nephew in Texas and did not get back in time. The beloved Victor soprano, Olive Kline, although not an Edison artist, had nevertheless been invited, but has been crippled since suffering severe injuries in a fall and was physically unable to make the trip from her home in Pelham, N.Y. There are other presumably surviving Edison artists whom we should have been delighted to honor, but whose addresses were not known. Dick Robertson and Frank Luther are two whose names come to mind. M. J. O'Connell may also be a possibility. And I have recently heard that Lester O'Keefe and Lew Cobey, who were partners of the late Frank Kamplain in the second edition of the Record Boys, are believed to be living in New Jersey. Anna Case (Mrs. Clarence Macky) also would have received a tumultuous welcome.

All these we wish we could have had with us. However, regardless of the absent ones, it was a great evening.

But, perhaps you are wondering, how was Jim Walsh persuaded to leave his home and his cats in Vinton, Va., and travel to "the effete East" to take part in such an occasion? I will explain.

### II. Beginning the Journey

During the summer, Leah Burt, Wally, her husband, and Sally, her daughter, had come to see me after



taking Sally's sister, Candy, to Durham, N.C., where she entered Duke University. During their gingery inspection of my dusty, cobwebby, old, one-time white house, Leah showed interest in an Edison Diamond Disc phonograph, which she said was a model not included in the collection at the Historic Site. I told her I should be glad to present this model, and she went home excited about the prospect of its being added to the Site's possessions. After she returned to her Edison duties I received a letter from James W. Coleman, the Site's superintendent, expressing pleasure at the prospect of acquiring the 18th Century Model Edison for the collection, and saying arrangements would be made to have it transported from my home to West Orange. A little later, it occurred to me that I could also arrange to contribute a Sheraton model Edison that was in the home of a friend living 80 miles away. This, too, was accepted, and on Sunday, October 13, just five days before the historic meeting was held, a driver for the National Park Service, called at my home, put, with my help, the Louis XVIII into a large van, then proceeded westward to take possession of the Sheraton. One of the legs of the XVIII was weak, so we had to lay the heavy old phonograph on its side. When he returned to his headquarters at Harper's Ferry, W. Va., it was discovered that some repair work was needed, and the machines consequently were not transferred immediately to West Orange, N.J.

A week or so before I was visited by the driver, who wore a broad-brimmed cowboy-styled hat and evinced a vividly vigorous vocabulary when he held forth on the trouble he had experienced finding my house and on the excessive weight of the 18th century Edison, I had talked by long distance with Warren D. Beach, chief of interpretation and protection for the Historic Site, and had been invited to be present at the forthcoming meeting, where I would "receive a handshake" and be thanked for presenting the phonographs. Mr. Beach said I also would be allotted time to speak to the gathering and describe some of the high-lights of my long writing career in HOBBIES.

The prospect of being present attracted me, but at first I feared I

should not be able to go. One important drawback was the 10 cats, the 'possum in my basement and the tiny black mouse in a rear room who receive their daily nourishment from me. Transportation, too, was a problem. But then my "adopted brother," Merritt Malvern, of Buffalo, N.Y., who was going to record the program, wrote me that he and his charming wife, Phyllis, would be willing to drive all the way to Vinton and take me with them for the sake of having me present. My friend and neighbor, Robert G. Sink (whom nobody in Vinton calls anything but "Pete"), said he would come down once a day and leave food enough to keep the cats from acute hunger. The cats know and love Pete, so that took care of that, since I decided I could put enough food in the basement and the back room to do "Possy," the 'possum, and "Squeaky," the mouse, until I returned. So I agreed to journey northward with Merritt and Phyllis, and word began to circulate that I was likely to attend. Allen Koenigsberg mentioned the likelihood of my coming in his publication, and Tim Brooks, who took most of the pictures reproduced with this article, wrote to Merritt asking him to drive carefully while I was in his car. "Jim Walsh," Tim said, "is a national institution."

Meanwhile, Leah Burt, who is now my "adopted sister," had been urging me to take the trip and to be her house guest during my stay. That made me all the more inclined to go, although I always dread traveling, especially by car, and easily become exhausted. Car-riding aggravates my inner ear ailment.

And then something happened to relieve Merritt and Phyllis of driving hundreds of miles out of their way. The Rev. John A. Petty, a Methodist minister of Rutherfordton, N.C., and one of the most ardent collectors of Cal Stewart's "Uncle Josh" records, learned that I planned to be there, and said that since he was also going he would be glad to have me as a passenger. He kindly offered to drive

to Vinton to pick me up and thereby ease the burden for the couple from Buffalo. This was a generous gesture on John's part and the most practical solution to the transportation problem. There was one drawback however: John would have to leave early Saturday morning to be at home in time to occupy his pulpit the following Sunday, and I didn't want to go that soon, for it would make my visit with the Burt family too short. Besides, I hoped to go into New York City to see my dear friend by correspondence, Louis Cohn, the retired 90-year-old lawyer who was so generously helpful to me when I was writing the article about Dolly Connolly and her husband, Percy Wenrich, that appeared in HOBBIES for June and July, 1973. We had taken a great liking to each other through our interchange of letters, and I had promised Lou that whenever I was near New York, I would come to his apartment in Hotel Beacon at 75th Street and Broadway and visit with him, his wife, Lillian, and "Chris," their devoted nurse from the West Indies.

Here, Merritt again, came to the rescue. (The kind things that Merritt Malvern has done for me in the three years or so that we have known of each other's existence are almost beyond counting.) He said that if John Petty brought me to Morristown, the home of Wally and Leah Burt, he and Phyllis would be happy to get me back to Vinton, a community they very much like. In fact, Merritt toys, more or less seriously, with the idea of living here some day.

On the early morning of Thursday, October 17, I had given my house key to Pete Sink, so he could enter and minister to the appetites of three "inside" felines, Professor Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D., Lucky Jim and Twisty, and had left a dozen or so cans of cat food on the back porch, which he would open for the "outsiders" - Donna, Donna's daughter, "Barney," and Barney's four beautiful babies - Fwee, Tige, Lou (named

(Continued on page 119)



**MAIL FRIENDS MEET** — Left: Peter Digg, ardent young record collector of Baldwin, N.Y., with Jim Walsh. They had previously known each other only by correspondence. Right: Jim, in a specially posed picture, proclaiming his determination to have "law and order" while he spoke. He is menacing his audience with a nightstick sent to him by Morgan Seymour, a retired policeman of Carmel, N.Y.

—Photo by Tim Brooks



## MISCELLANEOUS MUSICAL ITEMS

**PHOTOS!** The three most remarkable group photos ever taken of early recording artists: Edison artists of 1900, Edison artists of 1914, and Victor Male Chorus of 1925 (reproduced in HOBBIES January 1971, October 1970 and July 1970). One 8x10 enlargement for \$2, two for \$3.50, all 3 for \$5. Other 8x10 photos of recording artists available at \$2 each: Ada Jones, Billy Murray, Collins, and Marian, Henry Burr, and many others. Write for list. — Quentin Riggs, 21171 Greenboro Lane, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646 mh1747

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## RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 38)

in honor of Mr. Cohn and Pete Sink, Jr., as well as a young black tomcat, "Junie," who stays beneath my house much of the time. I also had filled two plates heaping high with dog food for Squeaky, and left what I hoped was an ample allowance down the cellar for Popsy. My bags were packed, and by the time the Rev. Mr. Petty, who had risen in the middle of the night to drive from Rutherfordton to Vinton, made his smiling appearance, I was ready to "pull freight." I had already gone to breakfast, but had decided to let any mail remain in my post office box until my return.

The Rev. John seemed intrigued, or, perhaps I should say, bewildered because I had included among my baggage an impressive looking nightstick sent to me by my friend, Morgan Seymour, a retired policeman of Carmel, N.Y. Mr. Seymour, who was mentioned in HOBBIES a few months ago as having a record by Jack Johnson, the Negro prizefight champion, that he was willing to sell, had presented me with the "billy" for use in controlling my rambunctious "enemies" at the Vinton post office, but an impish impulse had made me decide to take it along to New Jersey, to be brandished before I delivered my prepared "address" as a sign that I meant to have a law and order administration while I spoke. John was amused when I explained that I intended to use it to rap the head of anybody who showed signs of dozing after I began discoursing.

So, on a beautiful autumn day, with the inviting prospect of a long drive through the Shenandoah Valley before them, the Rev. John A. Petty and Jim Walsh set forth with light hearts on their pilgrimage. But as I am writing, on Sunday, December 15, this account of the journey, my heart is heavy because yesterday morning I found one of the most beautiful of Barney's kittens, Tige, lying dead on the back porch about half an hour after I had given his brothers, Fwee and Lou, and his sister, Petunia, (Pete) their breakfast. When Tige did not come with the others I called him three or four times and it breaks my heart to think now that the poor little suffering fellow may have heard me and used his fast ebbing strength to crawl from wherever he lay and somehow manage to reach the back porch where he died in answer to my call. He had appeared well the evening before, his body showed no sign of injury, and I am at my wit's end to imagine what tragic thing happened to him. Tige, gray with black stripes, had a perfect personality and loved me devotedly. His greatest pleasure was to walk down the hill from my home with me when I started to the restaurant for breakfast and to roll over and over at my feet. Never in his short life did he lose his temper or show resentment of anything I did.



EDISON RECORDING ARTISTS — Left: Rosalyn Davis Kaplan, violinist of the Dann Trio, who made Edison records and gave "lone tests," with her husband, A. Milton Kaplan. Mr. and Mrs. Kaplan accompanied Merritt and Phyllis Malvern and Jim Walsh on a tour of Thomas A. Edison's historic home, "Glenmont." Right: Edna White Chandler, great trumpet and cornet player, with her 19-year-old friend, Roy Puffer, who brought her to the meeting from her home in Massachusetts.

—Photos by Leah Burt

I was privileged to have him only six months and 10 days, but in that brief period sweet Tige (short for "Tiger," his original name) won my heart so completely that as long as I have memory he will never be forgotten. Of one thing I am glad: that he didn't die while I was gone away, for I could never have forgiven myself if I had returned and found his lifeless body.

I hope editor and readers will forgive my using space for this farewell tribute to a beloved friend, who returned my love with heaping measure. Now I'll resume the account of our trip to Morristown and West Orange.

## III. New Jersey Bound

Probably it should go without saying that as John Petty and I progressed steadily out of Southwest Virginia into the Shenandoah Valley we indulged mostly in "record collector talk," about Cal Stewart and other well-loved pioneer recording artists. When I travel there is usually at the back of my mind a "theme song" with some bearing on where I am going and what I am doing, so occasionally I found myself humming or singing a few lines of Charles K. Harris' 1898 hit, "Mid the Green Fields of Virginia":

"Mid the green fields of Virginia,  
In the vale of Shenandoah,  
Stands an ivy-covered homestead that  
I love . . ."

Part of the time I found hidden entertainment in providing John with a middle name, since I don't know what the "A." sandwiched between "John" and "Petty" represents. No doubt he would have told me if I had asked him, but I preferred to use my imagination and assign something highfalutin', Biblical or otherwise impressive for his mid-way cognomen. Among them were Absalom, Abijah, Aristides, Abimalech and Antidishmentarianism. I hope my traveling companion will be amused, rather than indignant, when he reads this confession of my secret mental activities.

As the morning wore away and we neared the West Virginia border, we

decided it was time to have lunch. John said he had a liking for eating in truck stops, "because truck drivers always insist on having good food," so when we reached Winchester, Va., we went into a combined Union 76 stop and restaurant on U.S. 81. While we were waiting to be served (John may remember what we ordered, but I don't have the slightest recollection), a waitress who was not in charge of our table came up to my ecclesiastical companion and asked if he were, or were not, a country-Western singer named Don Reno, whom she esteemed highly. "You look just like him," she said, and pointed to a picture on a wall nearby, of Mr. Reno, of whom I admit — not being a country music fan — I had never before heard. The Reverend modestly disclaimed the eminence to which the waitress wished to elevate him, and she appeared genuinely disappointed. "I thought sure you was him," she said. She did not say whom, or what, she thought I looked like!

Cal Stewart is said by some accounts to have been born on a farm near Charlotte Court House, Va., and since my geographical conceptions have always been vague, I asked our waitress if she knew whether we were anywhere close to that town, but she said she had no idea where Charlotte Court House is. I have since learned from Albert (Jack) Via, Jr., that we were nowhere in the vicinity of Cal Stewart country, but that Charlotte Court House in Charlotte County, is not many miles from South Boston, Va., where Jack lives.

John had parked his station wagon just outside the restaurant, and we chose a seat where we could keep an eye on it, for it contained a large quantity of recording equipment he planned to use the following day in copying Edison records at the Historic Site, which has five nearly complete sets of Diamond Discs, graded, in order of their playing condition, from one to five. And John, really did put in a heavy taping schedule Friday, before the evening meeting took place. After we had eaten and were taking our dignified departure, I saw a display of ball point pens reading

"*Virginia Is For Lovers*," and bought one, which I am still using. It cost me 49 cents.

As the afternoon progressed, we passed through a part of West Virginia and continued into Maryland. I am not sure whether we entered Frederick or only skirted it, but I remember thinking of John Greenleaf Whittier's poem relating how old Barbara Fritchie defiantly waved a Union flag at "Stonewall" Jackson and his invading Confederates:

"Shoot if you must this old gray head,  
But spare your country's flag!" she said."

I also recalled Frederick as the home of my old friend, Ed Thomas, who was a newsman with me when I worked for Roanoke television station WSLI. Ed, I understand, is now a Maryland State Senator and is active in politics.

When we got into Pennsylvania, the Rev. John Aristotle Petty, who is an enthusiastic "ham radio" operator and listener, began talking with his fellow "hams," trying to find someone in the vicinity of West Orange or Morristown who would communicate by phone with the captivating red-haired Leah Burt and let her know that the pilgrims from the South were on their way and making steady progress. Although he had many conversations with affable operators, to whom he identified himself only by his first name, as they also did in replying, I don't recall that he succeeded in making the connection he desired.

Our route led through Chambersburg, Pa., and I remembered that as a boy I was walking near the Norfolk and Western Railway station in the town of Marion, Va., where I then lived, and observed two men and a woman standing near a car which they had parked nearby. One of the men looked about 40 and was tall and thin. The plump woman, no doubt his wife, appeared about the same age. The second man, probably the father of one of them, was elderly and short and wore a large checked cap. As I passed them the older man remarked, with what I took to be a

strong deep Southern accent: "We ought to be in Chambersbu'g early t'morrow mawnin'." I don't know who those people were or where they were from, but the memory of that chance meeting has remained with me. I remember wishing wistfully that I too were traveling and would be in "Chambersbu'g t'morrow mawnin'."

We passed through Easton, Pa., and I recollected that a pioneer recording artist, Harvey Hindermeyer, was born there, and tried to visualize him as a short, stout boy walking Easton's rather quaint-looking, old-fashioned streets. (That at least was how the ones I saw impressed me.) I also recalled Harvey's surprise the first time we met when I mentioned his having come into being in Easton. "How did you know that?" he asked, and I told him old Edison record catalogs mentioned Easton as his birthplace. I also remember coming to Harrisburg, the Pennsylvania capital.

The afternoon declined and we passed out of Pennsylvania into New Jersey and knew that we now were bearing down upon our destination. And, sure enough, after waging a losing battle with the sinking sun, we found ourselves past dusk inside the historic old city of Morristown, where the Burt family lives and where, half a century ago, a great recording artist, Frank Croxton, basso of the Peerless Quartet, made his home and, in addition to his phonograph work, operated a successful school of vocal instruction.

Now we had to find our way to the Burt home at 47 Woodlawn Avenue. John parked beside a supermarket and began to make inquiries, but unfortunately he asked the way to Woodland, not Woodlawn, Avenue, and couldn't seem to get much information. Leah afterwards told me, laughingly, that 47 Woodland Avenue was the address of the city police department!

So, John decided, there was nothing to do but phone to Leah, let her know the Southern delegation had arrived, and ask her: "How in the heck do we get to Woodlawn Avenue? To

which the always helpful Leah replied that she would drive to our parking place and guide us. Within a few minutes I was made happy by the beaming countenance of the lovely lady whom I consider one of my dearest friends.

With Leah as an efficient auburn-topped escort we soon reached her home in a wooded, rather secluded section of Morristown. John did not tarry, but continued on to Whippany, N.J., a few miles away, where he was to be the guest of one of his record collector friends.

Shortly after our arrival, Merritt and Phyllis Malvern drove up and were warmly greeted, as I had been, by all the residents of the Burt household, including "Smoky," the family cat. Merritt and I discussed what use we should make of our time the next day before the evening meeting began, and decided that we would devote the morning to looking for homes of pioneer recording artists who had lived in West Orange in the early 1900's. Since I knew two of the addresses from which Byron G. Harlan had addressed his mail, his name was placed first, but we also hoped to find the house which Frank C. Stanley had occupied. I had seen it in 1947 when Stanley's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth G. Repelow, had taken me for a view of the large two-story dwelling with, I believe, a porch extending around most of its exterior, but didn't remember what street it was on. I thought Mrs. Repelow was still living in West Orange, but her name was not in the telephone directory, and we didn't know how to find her. The afternoon would be partly devoted to visiting Thomas A. Edison's historic home, "Glenmont," a short distance from his former laboratory, in company with Rosalynn Dann Kaplan, violinist of the Dann Trio which made Edison records and gave tone tests more than 50 years ago, and her husband, A. Milton Kaplan, and I planned some research at the sight. It was agreed, at Leah's suggestion, that we would return to her home for an early supper so that Merritt would have ample time for going back to the Historic Site and setting up his recording equipment. With all this settled, it was not long before we felt the urge to go to bed and recuperate from our long day's exertions.

#### IV. Hunting for Mr. Harlan's Home

Early Friday morning Merritt, Phyllis and I rode in his eccentric vehicle, "Crazy Mazie," from Morristown to West Orange, which I hadn't seen since I had last visited the Edison Laboratory on Thursday, September 7, 1950, in company with a Canadian record collector, and "disc jockey," Ed Manning, and Edith, his attractive wife. We then set about searching for Byron Harlan's homes.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



"AL BERNARD GIRL" — Left: Pamela Ochojski, of Monsey, N.Y., who had a major part in persuading Jim Walsh to write the HOBBIES series about Al Bernard, which ended last month, was snapped shortly after her arrival with her father, Dr. Paul M. Ochojski, professor of comparative literature at Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J. He collects records of Asian music and also Asian instruments. The Rev. John A. Petty is at their left. Right: Ed Daly, a guide at the Edison National Historic Site, who described a tone test given by the flute virtuoso, Harold Lyman.

—Photo by Leah Burt

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## An Evening In Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory

PART II

By JIM WALSH

(Dedicated to Leah Stenzel Burt, without whose original inspiration and hard and dedicated work the twice yearly Edison Site meetings might not have come into being.)

Obviously, there wouldn't be much point in asking anyone we met, "Do you know where Byron G. Harlan used to live?" for the genial comedian has been dead since 1936 and his wife since either 1949 or 1950. Few West Orange taxpayers would remember him now, though Mrs. Repelow told me that during his lifetime residents of the city, seeing him walking down the street, would point him out to strangers and say, "There goes Byron G." And the out-of-towners usually knew exactly who was meant.

Before I began corresponding with Mr. Harlan a few years before his death, I had asked Frank Walker, a Columbia recording official, for the singer's address, and he informed me that Harlan was then living at 167 South Valley Road. When the correspondence began, however, his address had changed to 4 Lawrence Avenue. So we set forth in search of South Valley Road.

That street wasn't hard to find, but it didn't look as I had imagined it for so many years. Somehow, the name had given me a mental image of a steep, shady road, thickly covered with fallen leaves, and I visualized Mr. Harlan driving his car down the hill until he reached a valley in which his home had been built. There is something of a descent to South Valley Road, but not so much as I had imagined, and the street has much more of a commercial appearance than the rather secluded area of my depiction. I suspect it has not changed for the better since Harlan's day.

Although South Valley Road was easily located, finding No. 167 was not. The truth is, we never did identify it. We drove down the 100 block until the trail ended at No. 164. There was no house anywhere in the neighborhood numbered 167 and, to make our search more baffling, there appeared to be no adjacent site on which a dwelling had once stood but been pulled down. Our attention became fixed upon an attractive large house colored pink which stood where it seemed 167 should have been. Merritt, however, talked with a lady and her daughter living there and they said it did not have a South Valley Road number, but was considered as being on an adjoining street. After



HISTORIC HOMES (?) — During their stay in New Jersey, Merritt and Phyllis Malvern and Jim Walsh went looking for homes of pioneer recording artists who had lived in West Orange, N.J. Left: Pink-colored house that may have been occupied by Byron G. Harlan, one of the most famous old-time artists. Right: A dwelling at 4 Lawrence Ave., in which Mr. Harlan lived when he and Jim corresponded.

—Photos by Merritt Malvern

the conversation ended, Merritt and I came to a tentative conclusion that this house, which looked as if it had been one in which Harlan had lived, probably had been numbered 167 in the remote past, but the numbering system had since been changed.

Finding 4 Lawrence Avenue was no problem. It was just across the road from the "pink palace" and was a less pretentious building, but it stimulated my imagination to recall that Byron G. Harlan had once written me letters that originated in that house. Since my return home, Quentin Riggs has written to say Mrs. Harlan told us when we called on her in 1947 at the Christian Science reading room in West Orange that she and her husband had also lived on Lincoln Avenue, but I had forgotten that, so no search for their one-time Lincoln Avenue residence was made.

Someone suggested that a man who operated a neighborhood super-market might know something about the Harlans or at least where 167 South Valley should be, but he didn't. He did suggest that if we drove a block or two farther down the street we might find it in a group of houses situated at a considerable elevation above the road, but when we obediently followed his advice we discovered the numbers all ran far higher than 167. Where the former Harlan home could have been remains a mystery, although I still like to think he lived in a pink house. Of course there is the possibility that Frank Walker gave me a wrong number.

The morning was now about to

yield to afternoon, and there was no time for further house hunting. Merritt and Phyllis had to drive to a outlying Holiday Inn some miles away to pick up Roz and Milton Kaplan for the tour of the Edison home, so he took me to the Historic Site, where I intended to do my research in Leah's office. And John Petty had been having himself a busy day, using the recording equipment he had brought to copy large quantities of Diamond Discs and Blue Amberol cylinders in the Site's collection. Leah had arranged for him to do this, as she had originally brought the twice-yearly meetings into being and has since done the bulk of the work connected with having them successfully staged.

### V. A Surprising Discovery

Soon after I entered the historic old building, which looked little changed from my visit 24 years earlier, Leah introduced me to Warren ("Denny") Beach, who was to thank me that evening for adding the two Diamond Disc instruments to the Site's collection. He proved to be the likeable, genial fellow I had visualized after talking with him on the phone. We then went to Leah's office, where I showed her something else I intended to present — a cartoon by the late Jimmy Hatlo, who originated the "They'll Do It Every Time" comic panel, humorously depicting Thomas A. Edison as the first disc jockey. The picture showed Mr. Edison demonstrating his newfangled cylinder phonograph to an unenthusiastic group of sour-faced ladies and gentlemen, who were making snide comments.



The inventor was calling their attention to the beauty of a recording "Snookums," sung by "Smiling Billy Tonsils." When Jimmy Hatlo, with whom I occasionally corresponded, sent me the drawing he said he had Billy Murray in mind when he gave "Billy Tonsils" his name. Record collectors know that you can frequently hear Billy Murray smile as he sings.

I had been with Leah only a few minutes when I made a discovery that astonished me. On a table were stacked a miscellaneous group of Edison Diamond Discs, and topmost was a white label pressing of one of Ernest L. Stevens' more popular piano solos, "On a Little Side Street." (Ernie says the best seller of all he made for Edison was "Three O'Clock in the Morning.") The only trouble was — and this was what set my hair on end — that the label said the record was not by Ernie Stevens but by someone of whom I had never heard, *Clifford Murray*.

I at once called this to Leah's attention and told her we were in the presence of a mystery. How did a record by Ernest L. Stevens come to be labeled as by Clifford Murray? She had no immediate idea, so I tentatively suggested that, since Edison issued other Stevens recordings under assumed names such as Franz Falkenberg, it might have been intended to make this one available under still another *nom de disque*. But why have labels printed with the Clifford Murray name, then withdraw the pressings and substitute Stevens? I kept on being baffled, and when I spoke that evening I interpolated some remarks about the mysterious recording and asked Mr. Stevens if he knew how it came about. He didn't and said he had no knowledge of the name Clifford Murray being used for his records. (By a lapse of memory, each time I referred in the talk to the pianist, I called him Malcolm, instead of Clifford Murray.) Then, to anticipate a bit, on Saturday afternoon, when I was again in the Site, Leah and I examined the card files of recording dates, or at least she

did, and we discovered that Clifford Murray has no assumed name. He had lived at 48 South 7th St., Newark, N.J., and had been Ernie Stevens' predecessor in making experimental piano records under Mr. Edison's personal supervision. On October 4, 1921, he played "The Twelfth Street Rag." On the following December 19, he obliged with "All That I Need Is You," and on January 3, 1922, with "On a Little Side Street," the one I had seen and which Ernie was soon afterward to remake. On January 4, he played "There's a Down in Dixie Feeling Hanging Over Me," and on January 11, "Ma" (introducing "Glow, Little Lantern of Love"), also remade by Mr. Stevens, and which became popular. His final effort was on January 13, when he recorded a waltz medley incorporating "Little Lost Flower" and "Hawaiian Rainbow." Then, for some unknown reason, Clifford Murray passed out of the Edison picture and Ernie Stevens took up where he had left off. When I visited my friend Ernie at his home Saturday afternoon he said he had never heard of Clifford Murray and had not known Murray had preceded him as Mr. Edison's staff pianist at West Orange. None of Murray's records were issued — only the two which Ernie remade.

Leaving the Murray mystery for a while, I plunged into making notes from bound volumes of such Edison trade publications as "Diamond Points" and the "Edison Phonograph Monthly" and was vastly enjoying myself in my favorite kind of research when the phone rang and we were told that Merritt was waiting downstairs for me to accompany him to "Glenmont." My heart was in what I was doing, so I abandoned it with some reluctance, but I also wanted to see the inventor's home, so I lost no time in going down and joining Merritt and Phyllis and meeting Milton and Rosalynn Kaplan, who, I soon decided, were among the warmest, most immediately likeable persons I had ever met. Since the former Rosalynn Davis had been an Edison

recording artist I was of course specially interested in her. She had a sweet face and a soft, cultured voice, as well as a lively sense of humor. On our way to Glenmont she told of some hotels she had endured while tone testing that could appropriately be described as "flea bags." In one there was hanging in the lobby a comb and a tooth brush, with a sign saying they were for community use, "but use at your own risk."

The visit to the Edison home was extremely interesting even though I was under the handicap that my inner ear imbalance occasionally caused me to have seizures of giddiness. I remember once, when I stumbled slightly, the lady who served as guide and explained the details of the various rooms caught me by the arm and said, "Be careful, dear."

As we visited the various rooms — the library, drawing room, dining room, master bedroom, children's rooms, etc., recordings were played, calling attention to the various features. These had been made by Mr. Edison's surviving children, Theodore and Madeline. We saw the bed in which the great inventor died in 1931 at the age of 84 and also visited the plot at the side of the house where he and his second wife now rest. Merritt and Phyllis made a number of snapshots of our group standing outside the doors of Glenmont.

And so the afternoon waned until it was time to return to the Burt abiding place for that scheduled early supper, then go back to the Site for the final arrangements, including Merritt's formidable task of setting up his recording equipment in what he hoped would be in perfect running order. It was. With that expert recording engineer at the controls it couldn't well be anything else.

While Merritt worked I ambled about, viewing the photos, including one of me, that were on display; the old posters advertising early moving pictures, such as the 1896 production of "The Kiss," starring Gladys Rice's father, John C. Rice, and the comedienne, May Irwin, which aroused a storm of puritanical indignation because it actually showed, on a large screen, a man kissing a woman! (I wonder what those blue-noses of nearly 80 years ago would have thought of today's filthy films!) There was also an interesting display of Mr. Edison's 1912 "talking movies," produced by means of a projector being geared to synchronize with a phonograph playing Blue Amberol records of the large concert type — the oversized cylinders being used, of course, because they gave great volume. I also made sure from time to time that I still had the nightstick Mr. Seymour had given me so that law and order could be maintained after my dulcet tones began to be heard from the rostrum.

About half an hour after our arrival, record collectors began to trickle in. But I'll reserve for next month more detailed mention of them as well as an account of the evening's proceedings.

(To be continued)



PRESENTATION — Jim Walsh, left, shaking hands with Warren D. Beach as he hands the Edison Site official a framed "They'll Do It Every Time" cartoon by the late Jimmy Hatlo, showing Thomas A. Edison as the first disc jockey.

—Photo by Tim Brooks

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## An Evening In Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory

PART III

By JIM WALSH

### 1. They Begin to Arrive

The triumphally successful meeting of Edison recording artists and record collectors, held at the Edison National Historic Site on the evening of Friday, October 18, 1974, was formally opened with brief welcoming remarks by Warren D. Beach, the Site's chief of interpretation and protection. But before Mr. Beach told his audience how glad he and other Site officials were to have them present, much preliminary work had been done. Merritt Malvern had installed his recording equipment, with which he planned to tape the entire program, and Leah Burt had arranged for copies of a neatly typed program to be placed upon all the chairs. Mr. Beach thanked several staff workers by name for their aid.

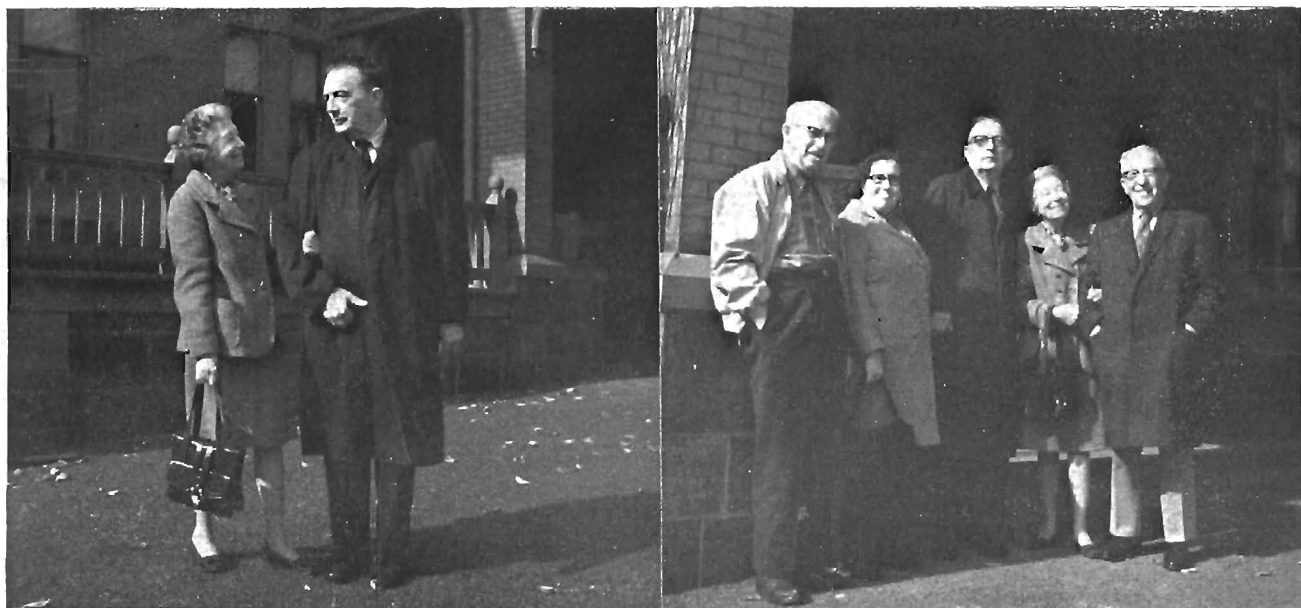
Included in the program proper was information as to who was to speak and on what topics and a list of the Edison Diamond Disc which Prof. Raymond R. Wile would play on a Chippendale Official Laboratory Model Edison as the concluding part of the entertainment. Other items of genuine record collecting interest

were attached to the program, however. One was a facsimile of an advertisement in a Carrollton, Ga. newspaper, heralding a "tone test" which Gladys Rice had given in 1920, and saying that Gladys had signed certificates attesting that all the Official Laboratory Model New Edisons which the Carrollton dealers had in stock could successfully meet the same test of "direct comparison" as the instrument that had been used in the demonstration.

Also provided was a facsimile of a "tone test" schedule followed by Helen Davis and Victor Young in Georgia and Florida during December, 1922, and a copy of an article in a Mt. Vernon Ind., newspaper for October 16, 1924, announcing that Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan (whose West Orange homes Merritt and I had sought that morning) would give a tone test "in the armory building in this city on the night of Monday, October 27." The news story went on to say that Collins and Harlan had made a similar appearance five years earlier, "and their program at that time constituted one of the very finest musical attractions ever

brought to this city. The visit of Collins and Harlan again this year will mean the renewal of friendships with local music lovers, friendships which their recreations on the New Edison have preserved fresh and fine since their last appearance. As singers of funny songs and catchy tunes the country boasts no higher class combination than Collins and Harlan." The article doesn't say so, but both comedians were "getting on in years" at the time of their second Mt. Vernon visit. Collins was 60 and Harlan 63. This was toward the very end of their recording career, for Collins' health was failing and he retired soon after returning from the tone testing tour.

Of more than ordinary interest to me was a letter from H. G. Parker, manager of the Montana Phonograph Co., "distributors, the New Edison and Amberola Phonographs, Records and Supplies," to Arthur L. Walsh, then head of Edison's musical phonograph division. The letter was dated October 26, 1925, at a time within a few weeks after Victor had announced the New Orthophonic Victrola and electrical recording, and Brunswick,



"MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY." Left — Rosalynn Davis Kaplan and Jim Walsh author of "Favorite, Pioneer Recording Artists," HOBBIES Magazine, photographed in front of Thomas A. Edison's historic home, "Glenmont," in West Orange, N. J. Both seem to be saying, "Gee! You're wonderful!"

Right — This group, also posed at the Edison home, includes Fred Harrington, Phyllis Malvern, Jim Walsh, Rosalynn Davis



TYPICAL SCENES AT THE EDISON MEETING. — Left, Gladys Rice, having autographed a record for Martin Bryan, publisher of "The New Amberola Monthly," sings a bit of the recorded song. In the background are "still pictures" of scenes from the movie,



"The Kiss," which May Irwin and Miss Rice's father made in 1896. Right — A part of the gathering in the refreshment period. Note the mixture of all ages.

the Panatrope, both said to be inventions that had "revolutioned" recorded music. It told of a tone test given in Helena by Elizabeth Spencer, soprano, and Lucille Collette, pianist, and said: "... We had 2,200 attending. The Tone Test was a big success in every respect, Miss Collette sharing equally with Miss Spencer in the applause."

Then Mr. Parker's concluding paragraph plaintively asked:

"Is there any possibility of Mr. Edison awakening to the necessity of national advertising at this crucial moment when all conditions seem to be playing into his hands? Must the Edison continue to stay hidden in the dark while the 'Dear Public' is informed with flare of trumpet of the marvelous new Phonograph 'Panatropes,' 'Heliotropes,' and other 'tropes' which reproduce with a perfection unapproached by any Phonograph heretofore? It is most exasperating and discouraging to both jobber and dealer."

This letter touched upon a sore spot with Edison jobbers and retailers. From 1915 until early in 1922 the New Edison was regularly advertised in the *Saturday Evening Post* and most other important magazines. Then, in the spring of 1922, just after introducing the white label record and when radio was gaining its first hold on public attention, Mr. Edison abruptly stopped advertising. So, for that matter, did most other phonograph and record companies, aside from Victor and Brunswick. Edison seems to have decided to rely entirely on tone tests as an advertising medium—a method that convinced the minority of persons who attended them, but said nothing to the millions who didn't. Sales of New Edison phonographs and Diamond Discs fell sharply and progressively and, as business became consistently worse, the company lost large numbers of its retail dealers and many jobbers despairingly ceased to distribute the line. For the last few years of Edison's activities, it relied largely on its own branch offices set up to take the place of franchised wholesalers.

One thing that surprised me about the Parker letter was the fact that tone tests were being given toward

the end of 1925. I had believed they were discontinued in 1924. "Cousin Arthur" (as I used to call him) Walsh passed the letter on to Mr. Edison and received it back with this terse scrawl: "Walsh. Noted. T.A.E." This meant that the phonograph's inventor had read it, but was making no promises. Edison did do a little national advertising the next year, however, "plugging" the heavier "dance reproducer" to help meet the demand for greater volume from Edison records, and placed them more nearer on a loudness equality with Orthophonic Victrola and Brunswick "light ray" discs.

Then, in 1927, Edison published a series of advertisements in which Mr. Edison purportedly answered questionnaires concerning the differing methods of sound recording and reproduction and scientifically explaining the superiority of his hill-and-dale system over the lateral type.

Those who arrived early had ample time to read the programs and related matter before the speaking began, but probably few did. The first delegates to enter the room, I believe, were three young gentlemen with a New England flavor, each of whom is making a name as a recorded music researcher. In the forefront was Tim Brooks, who now lives at Jackson Heights, N.Y., but is a native of New Hampshire. I once recorded a program for him by long distance telephone when he had a disc jockey show while attending Dartmouth College. Tim I recognized at once, for he had visited me a few years ago.

With the smooth-shaven, Mr. Brooks were Martin Bryan of St. Johnsbury, Vt., publisher, and William R. Bryant, of South Harpswell, Me., who is trying to compile complete listings of Imperial and Zonophone discs. I used to hear fairly often from Martin when he was in his early teens. He, like Tim, was smooth of face but wore glasses. Bill had written me that he flaunted a "spade-type" beard that made him look somewhat like Lenin, the long gone Russian political

leader, and he had not exaggerated. He had written to me shortly before I left home, asking to borrow my old Zonophone catalogs, and I had brought them with me. When I handed the set to him he pronounced them "fabulous" and said they would be of great help in his research, as I hope they are proving to be. All three "boys" were genuinely pleasant and friendly, and I am sorry that I couldn't talk with them as much as I should have liked, but I was constantly being sought by new claimants for my time and attention, and it was not possible to speak long with anyone.

Shortly after the "Down East" contingent made itself manifest, I was approached by a charming young lady, accompanied by a handsome, distinguished looking gentleman. They were Pamela Ochojski, of Monsey, N.Y., and her father, Dr. Paul M. Ochojski, who teaches comparative literature in a South Orange, N.J., college, within a few miles of where the meeting was being held. He specializes in collecting Asiatic instruments and recordings of Far Eastern music. Pam, as faithful readers of this department know, was, with Albert Via, of South Boston, Va., largely responsible for my writing the recently concluded HOBBIES series about Al Bernard. A letter from her expressing great admiration for my old friend Al and urging me to tell his life story had the effect of pushing me over the border line at which I had long been hesitating, and turning out a book-length manuscript which ran from March, 1974, through last February, the longest series I have ever published.

Pamela had written me that she was working on an article about black racial "stereotypes" for her college paper, and I had brought her a tape cassette containing recordings of songs displaying prevalent misconceptions about Negroes. A little later, Pam and Dr. Ochojski seated themselves behind Gladys Rice and Douglas Stanbury, who had by this



EMINENT SPEAKERS. — Left, Prof. Raymond R. Wile, of City College, New York, describes arrangements made for Edison "tone tests." Right — Ernest L. Stevens, Edison staff pianist, tells an amusing story about his encounter with a burglar.

time made their entrance and with whom I had had a few moments of enjoyable conversation. Leah Burt said they asked her, "Did Mr. Walsh come?" but expressed fear that the trip had been too long for me to take. They were informed that Mr. Walsh had come and was "receiving" in the auditorium where the program was to be given. Pam has since written me that she was thrilled at meeting and talking with Gladys, and kept thinking: "There is somebody who sang with Billy Jones, and actually made records with Billy Murray!"

I can of course more easily recall my meetings with my old friends of the U.S. mail than I can with others who introduced themselves but I had not previously known my correspondence, and whose names I do not now in many instances recall, although they were nice people with whom I was glad to shake hands and exchange a few words. Even if I could recall their names it would be impossible to mention them all.

I can't think of his name, but I do recall vividly a very likeable young man—I believe he said he was from Pennsylvania—who told me he had several thousand records by Collins and Harlan and Billy Murray, and remarked wistfully: "Of course, I came along too late to see Billy Murray, but you were lucky. You knew him!" It was obvious that of all the dead and gone recording artists "The Denver Nightingale" was, to many collectors present, the towering legendary figure. I felt especially sorry for a man from Indiana, a correspondence friend of the Rev. John Aloysius

Petty, who had misunderstood, I believe, something John had said in a long distance conversation, and had come to the meeting in the belief that Billy Murray was alive and would be present. He had not known that Billy died August 17, 1954, and would be 97 if he were still here.

Also among early arrivals was Allen Koenigsberg of Brooklyn, publisher of many valuable reprints of early talking machine catalogs and other publications. Allen was accompanied by Peter Dilg, of Baldwin, N.Y., an enthusiastic young fellow with a large collection.

Another friend by correspondence from Brooklyn was Paul Charosh, who advertises each month in HOBBIES for certain types of old single-faced records. After I returned home Paul sent me some color snapshots of himself and his cat, "Mickey."

The Rev. Mr. Petty, tired from his strenuous day of taping records in the Site, showed up at about the same time as Dr. Ochojski and Pam, and Leah photographed him beside them. He was accompanied by his host from Whippany. Another of my friends by correspondence whom I was meeting in person for the first time was Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich. Fred formerly gave programs of old recordings over a chain of educational radio stations. They were heard by Merritt Malvern, and it was this that led to the rewarding friendship between Merritt and me, for he wrote to Fred, asking where he ob-

tained his information on pioneer recording artists. Fred replied that he got much of it from my writings in HOBBIES, and Merritt then communicated with me. Since I returned home I have been grieved to learn that Fred Harrington has become seriously ill, but am hoping fervently to receive, before long, better reports of his health.

The undisputed long distance attendance champion was an interesting 22-year-old youth from British Columbia, Canada. Michael Eert is the young man's name, and he used to write to me about his idol, Bob Roberts, when he was in his early teens. Quite recently he has been to "Ragtime Bob's" home town, Cincinnati, looking for surviving relatives of the great comedian, and was fortunate in meeting Roberts' stepdaughter. He learned that Bob was operating a poolroom and also appearing in a comedy act over a Covington, Ky., radio station at the time of his death in 1930.

I believe it was after the program had been given and a refreshment period was being observed that I talked with Irving Levin, of New York. Irving is an ardent admirer of the great saxophone virtuoso, Rudy Wiedoeft, and told me how much he had enjoyed my article about Wiedoeft in HOBBIES for November and December, 1973.

(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## An Evening In Thomas A. Edison's Laboratory

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

*In the last issue (May, 1975, page 37), I mentioned talking with Irving Levin at the memorable evening. I repeat that Irving is an ardent admirer of that great saxophone virtuoso, Rudy Wiedoeft, and told me how much he had enjoyed my article about Wiedoeft in HOBBIES for November and December, 1973.*

He said he sent Xerox copies of it to Rudy Vallee, who was called "Rudy" because of his great admiration for the king of saxophonists, and received a "rave letter," as he termed it, in which Vallee asked how he could get HOBBIES each month. I told Irving I had written a follow-up article, based largely on information given to me by Miss Irene Smith, of Seattle, Wash., who knew more about Wiedoeft than I did, and it should be published within the next few months. After I came home, Mr. Levin sent me a huge amount of informative material he had accumulated concerning Rudy Wiedoeft, and it is a treasure I greatly appreciate.

Perhaps the youngest enthusiast with whom I talked was a boy whom I took to be about 11 or 12. (I think he is shown in a group photo I am submitting for publication with this installment). The youngster was a great admirer of Leola Lucey, a soprano, now dead, who made many Edison records and gave "tone tests." He proudly showed me Miss Lucey's scrapbook, which he had found in a second-hand book store, and asked me to tell him all I could about her. When the record playing began, he had the pleasure of hearing one, "It Might As Well Be You," by his favorite.

Of course, by this time the special guests of the evening were coming in. Leah Burt introduced me to Ernest Stevens, the Edison pianist whom I had wanted for many years to know. Ernie lived up in very way to my expectations, and I was glad to promise to call on him the following day at his music studio in Montclair. Rosalynd Davis Kaplan and Milton, her husband, I had already met that afternoon when we toured Thomas A. Edison's home, and it was a joy to be with them again. Mrs. Hazel Burleigh, sister of Felice and Blanche Dann, the ladies who had played with Mrs. Kaplan in the Dann Trio, also came, but somehow I did not meet her

before the scheduled session began. When I began speaking, however, and asked if she were present, she smilingly identified herself.

Finally, Edna White Chandler, accompanied by her young friend, Roy Puffer, who had served as chauffeur on their trip from her home in Massachusetts, warmly greeted me. We had kept up a friendship by correspondence since first meeting in 1949, when Edna was a member of a theatrical company headed by Will Oakland, which entertained service men in Veterans' Hospitals, but had not met in person since we both attended the "John Bieling Day" held in 1950 in Hempstead, N.Y.

Edna's exclamation upon seeing me was especially gratifying. "Why," she said, "you look younger and handsomer than you did the last time I saw you!" I fear Edna's remark was not strictly factual, but, being human, I was glad that she felt I was holding my own in the face of the inevitable ravages of time. I thought that Edna, in spite of having had more than one serious illness, was looking fine.

But now it was time for the "official" program to begin. As it got under way I was seated about midway of a row near the center of the auditorium, awaiting a call to the speaker's stand. Wally Burt, Leah's husband, was at my left, and Douglas Stansbury and Gladys Rice on my other side. Pamela and her father and Harold Anderson, retired head of the Site, were behind me. All in all, I couldn't have had better company.

### II. Jim Walsh "Orates"

As was said in the beginning, Warren Beach called the assemblage to order with some introductory words of welcome. He then referred to the Historic Site's having received through my "most gracious generosity," a gift of two Diamond Disc phonographs needed for its collection. He went on to mention that I was among those present, told something about my long association with HOBBIES and revealed that I planned to discuss some phases of my work for the magazine. In conclusion he said, "Jim, the floor is yours for as long as you like."

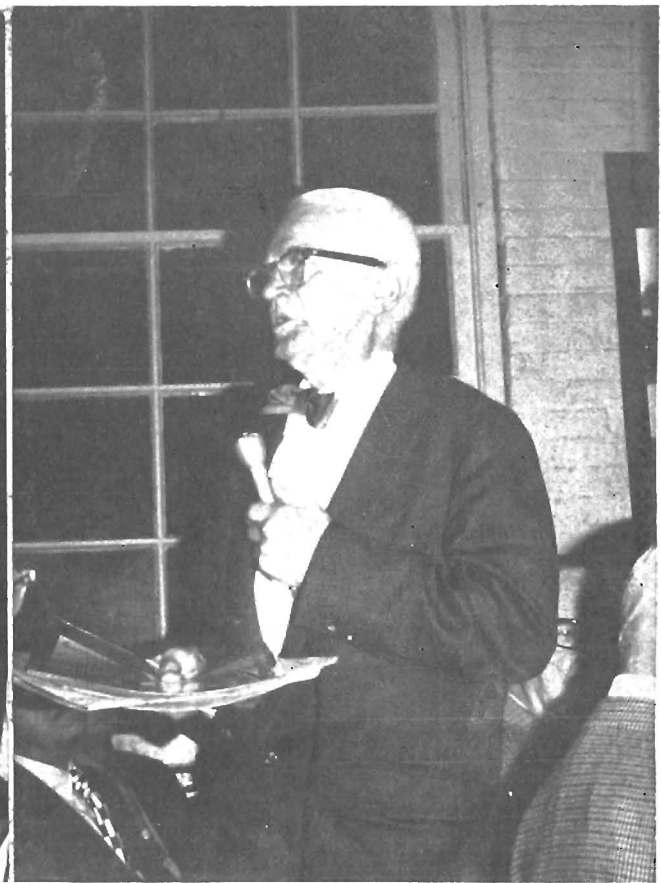
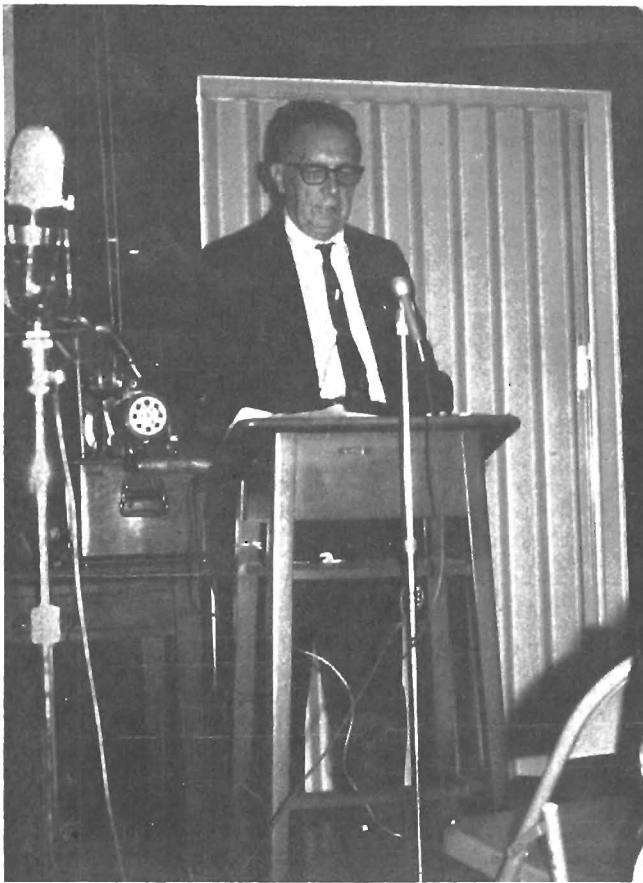
This was the signal for me to walk majestically down to the speaker's platform. Acting on Merritt's instructions, Phyllis Malvern had fastened

a small microphone around my neck, so I was technically all set to "orate." As I started down the aisle, however, I became entangled with some wires, as, being me, I would, and vociferated as I made my bumbling way forward, "Well, here I come, trailing clouds of glory!" This brought a laugh, and my wiring difficulty was remedied after I reached the rostrum. With an inquiry to Merritt as to whether he was recording, and getting an affirmative reply, I began my remarks, which, of course, I can present here in only a shortened version.

Although "Denny" Beach had said I could have all the time I wished, I felt that I was supposed to "speak your piece and git" within 20 minutes so as not to cause the program to run overtime. I had marked some paragraphs that could be omitted if necessary, but since I wanted to get everything in I read at a rapid-fire clip, which I fear was too fast for comfortable listening. Nevertheless, the audience responded without fail to the humorous passages and I felt a warm response from my hearers all the way through, so I suppose I did well enough. At any rate, I was given many assurances that my dissertation had been enjoyed.

I started by recalling that Murry K. Hill, a brilliant recording comedian of 65 years ago, used to begin his vaudeville act by saying: "Thank you for your very generous applause . . . I was expecting more! What's the matter with you people? Are you handcuffed?" But added that I shouldn't follow Murry's example. I mentioned that Pamela Ochojski, who started me on the long road toward writing the Al Bernard series, then running in HOBBIES, was with us and asked: "Pam, how about stepping up here beside me and taking a bow?" Not expecting this invitation, Pam didn't come forward to join me, but rose from her seat, curtsied, and received hearty applause.

After displaying Morgan Seymour's nightstick and explaining that I had brought it to assure law and order while I held forth, I expressed my pleasure at the presence of Ernest Stevens, Gladys Rice, Douglas Stansbury, Edna White Chandler, Rosalynd Davis Kaplan and Mrs. Hazel Burleigh, and said that an article would soon appear in HOBBIES, explaining that I was mistaken when I wrote, in 1972, that Mrs. Kaplan and the



**HOBBIES' SPOKESMAN.**—Left, Jim Walsh telling of the things he has tried to accomplish during his 34 years of writing for **HOBBIES**. Right—Dr. Fred Summerill relates his experiences attending "tone tests."

late Blanche Dann were members of Ada Jones' party that gave a concert in my home town of Marion, Va. I had noticed that Gladys' name was one that could be resolved into its component parts better than any other that had come to my attention, so I said:

"... Since I was a small boy the name of Gladys Rice has carried magic for me. You and Rachel Grant were among my dream girls . . . and you and Rachel turned out to be the same girl . . . Your distinguished parents, John C. Rice and Sally Cohen, certainly know what they were doing when they chose your given name . . . Let's analyze the name of Gladys as we used to have to break down sentence construction in school. The first letter G., and that stands for several fine things - Gentle, Gifted, Gracious, Glamorous, Gorgeous and GREAT! . . . The next four letters in your name - L-A-D-Y - spell Lady. Great lady of stage, radio and records, that's you! And, of course, the concluding S stands for Sweet Soprano Singer, just as the first four letters, G-L-A-D spell out your sunny nature.

Edison used to call you 'the Glad Girl.' But, Gladys, I don't much like your last name. Instead of being Rice, it should be Nice."

Miss Rice wrote to me after I returned to Vinton that my tribute gave her "a wonderful, wonderful feeling." She told me when I resumed my seat that her assumed name was taken from her grandmother's—Rachel from one and Grant from the other. Laughingly, she said that she was "a mongrel—part Jewish, part Scotch and part Swedish." (I hope I have remembered those racial strains correctly). She also said that she liked to make records for Edison, "because they always paid us before we did the work. When we walked into the re-

cording studio we were handed our money before we sang."

I served notice that I expected all the lady artists to kiss me when we said goodbye, and, to anticipate, they all did, with Roz Kaplan setting the example. When Edna White Chandler and I embraced, Tim Brooks missed getting a "shot," so asked us to repeat the performance and put "some real passion" into it. Edna said, "My pleasure!" and we went into a clinch that would have brought the censors down upon us in the days of May Irwin and John C. Rice, as the accompanying illustration will attest.

After saying how glad I had been to see so many of my friends by correspondence, I pointed out that West Orange was a historical city not only because Thomas Edison's laboratory and factories had operated there, but because some of the most popular pioneer recording artists once lived inside its boundaries.

"I often think," I said, "how fortunate the people of West Orange were 65 to 75 years ago . . . Almost every day they might see men and women whom today's record collectors look back upon as figures larger than life . . . If you and I had been living in West Orange in 1905 we might have gone into a grocery store and seen Arthur Collins buying the family food supply and, no doubt, beetling about the high cost of eating. We might have strolled into a barber shop where Byron Harlan was getting a haircut. We might have stepped into a corner grog shop and observed Edward Meeker, who announced the Edison two-minute cylinders, lubricating his vocal chords with a modest quencher. A little later we could have attended a wrangle of the West Orange board of Aldermen and seen Frank C. Stanley serving as one of the city fathers. To the denizens of West Orange this great bass singer, writer of comic rube sketches and organizer of the Peerless Quartet, was

known as Alderman Grinsted . . . And, crowning touch, we could have loitered in the vicinity of this very building and seen Thomas A. Edison himself, walking from his laboratory to his home . . . I also mentioned that many Edison artists had lived in the adjoining city of Newark.

Taking up the subject of my **HOBBIES** writing, I mentioned that I have received any number of letters asking me to collect "all your articles" into a book, but said I had no intention of trying to do so because it would take 30, 40 or 50 books, depending on word count, to contain all I have already written, and that I preferred to build up the largest possible back-log for future use rather than to devote much precious time to editing my already published articles in the hope of seeing them between cloth covers. I also pointed out that the articles were not written with book publication in mind and that a great deal of their contents as published in **HOBBIES** would have to be altered or taken out to make them suitable for book use. Another point I made was that if such a book, or series of books, could be published it would begin to be obsolete before seeing print because new articles would still be coming out each month in **HOBBIES** and would not be included.

I said I doubted that I could achieve my ambition of supplying **HOBBIES** with enough material to keep "Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists" going through the year 2,000, but I was trying and my supply of articles was now a few years ahead of current publication. I also said I could not



"A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL."—Left, Jim Walsh, Gladys Rice and Douglas Stanbury having an animated conversation as Pam Ochojski looks admiringly at the artists. Right—Jim and Edna White, although old friends, hadn't seen each other for 24 years. In this picture, posed at the request of photographer Tim Brooks, they indulge in "passionate" endearments while Irving Levin looks smilingly on.

use articles by anyone other than me, for if I accepted some unsolicited contributions but turned down others I would be accused of unfairness and favoritism, and didn't want that to happen.

Toward the end of my discourse, I referred to record collectors here and abroad who, I knew, were wishing they were among those assembled in the Historic Site. In my manuscript I referred to Lucie and Walt Jenkins, who, I said, lived "in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, near the Trail of the Lonesome Pine." (I didn't say "on the trail," for they live *near* the trail, not *upon* it). I had originally intended merely to read this quotation from the old popular song, but an impish impulse seized me to sing those two lines instead of reciting them. I did, and the startled response was gratifying, especially when I asked if my rendition would have qualified me as an Edison tone test artist. In conclusion, I said: "The officials of the Edison National Historic Site are doing a great work in sponsoring these informative sessions . . . I hope the meetings will keep on being held for many years to come. Thank you very much."

As I turned to go back to my place in the audience, Warren Beach asked for my manuscript, saying it should be preserved in the Site's archives. He promised to send me a facsimile copy. He did, and I have had the benefit of referring to it in quoting from my remarks.

### III. Professor Wile Takes Over

When I had finished, Mr. Beach again spoke briefly, saying my talk was "a tough act to follow," but that

we would next hear from one person who could follow it, Prof. Raymond R. Wile, who would speak on Edison tone tests and play records of the type used in the "direct comparisons." Mr. Beach also mentioned that the Site had recently acquired \$2,000 worth of taping equipment and would soon be able to supply copies of recordings in its archives.

Ray Wile was late in arriving. I didn't meet him before the program began, but as he walked past me on his way to the speakers' stand, I greeted him and we exchanged a cordial handshake.

In beginning his remarks, Professor Wile told of discovering, in a second-hand store a few years ago, copies of the *Music Lover's Guide* and the *American Music Lover*, magazines which contained articles I had written before I became a monthly contributor to *HOBBIES*. "We are very grateful to Jim," he said, "for everything he has done."

Discussing tone tests, Ray told how these were arranged. Many tests were given by famous

(Continued on next page) 127

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

artists whose names appeared regularly in Edison record lists, but some were by lesser known performers, whose discs did not appear in the catalogs but were used for the tone test comparisons. Something I found especially intriguing was his discovery that tone tests were given in Australia by Stella Power, a soprano who had been a protégé of Nellie Melba. Miss Power seems to have made five double-faced Diamond Discs. Three were afterwards included in the American catalog, but sale of the other two was restricted to her native Australia. Prof. Wile also described a film "The Voice of the Violin," which was used to advertise the tone quality of Edison phonographs and discs. He then called upon Ed Daly, a guide at the Historic Site, who began working for Thomas A. Edison, Inc., in 1913. Mr. Daly, a genial gentleman, gave a most interesting account of hearing a tone test performance by Harold Lyman, the flute virtuoso who, when he was not playing on tour in comparison with the New Edison, returned to other duties as a member of the Edison staff. One of his jobs in the final days of Edison records was to listen to Diamond Discs before they went on sale and write criticisms listing the qualities, good or bad, of recorded performances.

Ernest L. Stevens was introduced as Mr. Edison's personal pianist, and told of what a privilege he had considered it to work closely with the inventor, and how impressed he was by Mr. Edison's "sincerity and interest." As an example of the value of painstaking work he related that he had once heard Ignace Jan Paderewski, perhaps the greatest of all pianists, practice the opening measures of his "Minuet" for five straight hours. Ernie brought down the house with a story about how, after he and his wife bought an old house, Mrs. Stevens constantly thought she heard someone walking about on the floors below their bedroom and sent him three or four nights a week to investigate. After years of fruitless gumshoeing he went down one night and came face to face with a burglar. When the robber ordered him to hold up his hands, he replied: "Wait till I call my wife! She's been wanting to meet you for the last 25 years!" Ernie's lively remarks were followed by the playing of a Diamond Disc, "Dirty Hands, Dirty Face!" by his dance orchestra.

After this, came an unpublished record of World War I by Gladys Rice and the Shannon Quartet, "Sweet Little Buttercup." This had one of the most unusual arrangements I have ever heard, and the record was so attractive I don't understand why it wasn't issued. The Quartet sang the entire first verse and chorus before Gladys' soprano voice was heard.

Douglas Stanbury came next with his Edison test record, also never issued, made on July 17, 1924, of "June," a tuneful song with commonplace words. Before it was played Doug said he couldn't remember making it and would listen with considerable trepidation. This, one of the two tests he made for Edison, was greeted with warm applause.

Doug, I observed, pronounced "record" in the British manner as "rek-cord," and some other characteristics of his speech made me wonder if he were of English birth, but I had no chance to ask him.

Dr. Frederick Summerill told of attending a tone test given in 1915 by Elizabeth Spencer at New Brunswick, N.J., and also mentioned hearing Gladys Rice sing many times in the Capital Theatre.

Edna White Chandler was called upon. Perfectly poised and obviously accustomed to public speaking, Edna described her Edison record making experiences and told of her surprise at learning from me that her trumpet solo of "When You And I Were Young, Maggie" had been dubbed onto one of the first Edison long-play records. When Professor Wile said that the next musical selection on the

program would be her unissued Diamond Disc of "Agnes Dei," she exclaimed: "I hope it's better than the one I made of the same song for Columbia; It sounded horrible!"

A sombre note was added by the playing of "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," sung by Julia Henrich, a young soprano who met a tragic death in St. Louis during a tone test tour. She was waiting for a train near a spot where a baggage truck had been left projecting over the rails. The train came along, smashed into the truck, and it was hurled across the platform, killing Miss Henrich.

Rosalynd Davis Kaplan recalled her tone testing experiences as a member of the Dann Trio, with Harvey Hindemyer as tenor soloist. "We traveled most of the States," she said, "and were presented with candy and flowers everywhere we went. We were to go to Europe to give tone tests, but I met Friend Husband and decided not to go. 'But,' she added roguishly, 'I haven't regretted it!'"

In playing the last Diamond Disc of the evening, Glen Ellison singing a Harry Lauder song, "It's Nice to Get Up in the Morning (But It's Nicer to Lie in Bed)," Professor Wile

Gladys Rice, the popular soprano, gave an extraordinary recital Friday night, October 1st, at the city hall.

Miss Rice walked on to the stage and stood beside a stately cabinet. She began to sing "Forever Is a Long, Long Time." The audience immediately yielded to the spell of her beautiful voice. Then suddenly there was a stir—a subdued murmur of surprise—and a perplexed rubbing of eyes. The voice continued to fill the auditorium with undiminished sweetness—your ears were proof of that—but her lips had become absolutely silent—your eyes told you that.

What a wizardry was this? It was the test of direct comparison with the living artist, which Thomas A. Edison has developed to demonstrate that the Official Laboratory Model of his new phonograph will sing any song exactly as it was sung by the artist, and that his RE-CREATION of a singer's voice, as it comes from his wonderful new phonograph, positively cannot be distinguished from the singer's actual voice, when both are heard in direct comparison.

Miss Rice made repeated comparisons—always with the same result. It was truly wonderful. This master achievement of the great wizard, Edison, marks a new epoch in music.

## The New Edison

"The Phonograph With a Soul"

You can have a duplicate of the wonderful instrument used at the city hall and, if you act quickly, we can furnish you with an engraved certificate (signed by Miss Rice) certifying that it is an exact duplicate in tonal quality of the instrument she used in her amazing comparison; also that it will sustain precisely the same test.

We have ten of the famous Official Laboratory Models and Miss Rice has certified every one of them. Come to our store at once and ask to see and hear the Official Laboratory Models on which Miss Rice has issued her Certificates of Authenticity.

**O. S. Miller Piano Co.**

Worthy Drug Store—Carrollton, Ga.



## AUDIENCE MYSTIFIED BY PHONOGRAPH

Hears Famous Soprano Compare  
Voice With RE-CREATION By  
Edison's New Phonograph--Could  
Not Tell The Two Apart.

GLADYS RICE "TONE TEST."—This reproduction of an advertisement from a Carrollton, Ga., newspaper, was distributed as part of the program at the Edison National Historic Site meeting. It tells of an Edison "tone test" Gladys Rice had given several days before the ad appeared.



recalled an article about Lauder which I published in HOBBIES more than 20 years ago, and quoted me as saying that some people prefer Ellison's singing of Lauder songs to their originator's. I am one of those who like Ellison best.

This concluded the program. After it ended, I knew for a while what it was to be a faint approach to a celebrity. I was approached repeatedly and asked for my autograph, was assured by many smiling ladies and gentlemen that they had enjoyed my talk, and was asked how many years ahead of current needs my HOBBIES articles now stood. A high spot was a brief, but enjoyable, talk with Theodore Edison. He told me he had not, as I had believed, helped to develop the Edison, an improved Diamond Disc phonograph brought out in 1927, but that he had designed the reversible pick-up for the Edison electric phonograph, which permitted both lateral cut and hill-and-dale records to be played. I thought Mr. Edison looked very much like the photos of his father reproduced on the boxes in which two-minute wax cylinders were packed. I also had a brief chat with Ray Wile and told him I didn't consider that he and I were rivals in Edison research, since he was concerned primarily with business and legal aspects of the company's activities while I concentrated on learning all I could about the artists. Agreeing, Ray said: "Nobody could ever hope to be your rival where the artists are concerned." Another pleasant meeting was with Mrs. Warren Beach.

Breaking-up time came, and as I was riding home with Leah Burt I told her I was sure it would be nice to be a millionaire, "but rather than be a rich man interested in nothing but making money and whose only recommendation is the money he has made, I'd choose to be plain Jim Walsh and receive the heart-warming reception and attention I got at this meeting tonight." And I still say that. Leah replied: "This meeting was the best yet! What worries me now is how we'll ever be able to have another to equal it!"

#### IV. Winding It Up

What remains to be told of my eventful "voyage" to New Jersey must be "capsuled." Syd Silverman, the editor of *Variety*, had asked me to write an account of the Site program and to bring it to his office on West 46th Street in New York City the following Sunday, so some of the forepart of Saturday was spent in Leah's office struggling to master an unfamiliar typewriter and write the "story." Leah watched with delighted amusement as I writhed in the throes of composition, but the article at length was done. However, because I told in it of some of the things I had said during my "spiel," I felt it should not appear under my byline and, to tease Leah, signed it as being by "L. S. Burt." That was the way it appeared, at full length and un-

changed, in the next issue of *Variety*. On Sunday morning, Merritt and Phyllis Malvern and I rode into New York, and I presented the article to Mr. Silverman, who is one of the most charming persons I have ever met. I also enjoyed meeting *Variety*'s managing editor, Robert J. Landry, and the editor of its music section, Leonard Traube. Len told me, "You are a legend around this place!" After that, Merritt, Phyllis and I called on my dear friend, Louis Cohn, and his lovely wife, Lillian, at their quarters in Hotel Beacon at 75th Street and Broadway, about a block from Gladys Rice's apartment, and had a most enjoyable visit with my wonderful 90-year-old friend.

But I am getting ahead of myself. On Saturday afternoon, with the *Variety* article written and out of the way, Leah and I went to Montclair and had a delightful hour with Ernie Stevens in his elaborately equipped music studios, where he does a thriving business in piano instruction. That evening Leah, Wally, Merritt, Phyllis and I were dinner guests of Fred Harrington, Dorothy, his wife; their daughter, Valerie, and their son-in-law, Thomas Burke, in the Burke home at Short Hills, N.J. The food was excellent and the hospitality overflowing, so we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Mr. and Mrs. Malvern and I arose early Monday morning, to get started for my home in Virginia as soon as possible. As I followed Leah into her kitchen to say goodbye, she evidently was thinking my performance at the Friday evening session, for she was singing:

"In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia,  
On the Trail of the Lonesome Pine!"

She told me she wished I didn't have to go home and could stay in New Jersey, with both of us doing research at the Historic Site.

The trip to Virginia got off to a bad start on an interstate highway when Merritt missed a turn into, I believe, Highway 78, which connected later with No. 81 leading straight into Vinton, and we had to stay on 76 and take a longer route by way of Philadelphia. It was, however, a beautiful, bracing day, and Merritt said that he liked to take wrong routes for the sake of enjoying new scenery. On the outskirts of Carlisle, Pa., we stopped for lunch in an attractive restaurant, the Dutch Kitchen, where the pretty waitresses were attired in traditional Dutch costumes. While waiting for our meal we made a long distance call to Olive Kline at her home in Pelham, N.Y., and told "Ollie" how sorry we were that she hadn't been able to come to the meeting, but hoped her crippled condition would steadily improve. Afterwards we drove into Carlisle, where I mailed a card to "Chuck" Summers, my enemy-in-chief in the Vinton post office, saying: "Having fine time. Thank God you're not here." But to Chuck's intense disgust, I reached Vinton ahead of the card.

As the afternoon wore away, I

began to feel elated at the thought of soon being at home and again seeing all my furry family. Merritt wanted to obtain some Virginia legal forms, so we made a couple of unsuccessful stops in towns along the way in search of them, but still managed to reach Vinton at about dusk. My heart was beating high as we drove into my back yard. I soon found that both the "inside" and "outside" cats were present and accounted for and seemingly showing no ill effects from my absence. Merritt went upstairs with me to replace a couple of defective light switches — another example of his unfailing thoughtfulness — and to connect an attachment to my tape cassette outfit so that it could reproduce through a "hi-fi" record player for better tone and increased volume. When we went back downstairs, Phyllis gave me a five dollar bill, saying she wanted to help take care of the cats' food bill — "buy them some beef liver," she urged — and told me that while she was waiting Possey had emerged from beneath the house and taken a long drink of water out of the supply I keep on the porch for the cats. I soon discovered that both he and "Squeaky," the back-room black mouse, had disposed of most of the food I had put out for them, so gave them a fresh supply.

Now it was time for Merritt and Phyllis, having brought me safely home, to begin the long ride back to their abode in Buffalo. Cordial good-byes and waving of hands, and they were gone. I went early to bed and soon fell asleep, after reflecting happily upon all the wonderful things that had happened to me during the past five days, and thinking how lucky I had been to attend that evening in the Edison National Historic Site — a joyful experience I hope to repeat at some not distant date.

#### THE END

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## William J. Halley (Judge William Joseph Hanley, Sr.)

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. A Unique Artist

Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists has been appearing for 33 years, and during that long span I have written about a multitude of unusual, gifted and outstanding men and women. Never before, however, have I chronicled the life story of a singer who began his recording career before he was old enough to vote, continued as a public entertainer long enough to work his way through law school, then abandoned that career to become, first, a lawyer, and, afterwards, a highly regarded judge.

That is the story of the talented comedian who made records from 1913 through 1915 under the name of William J. (or Will) Halley, but whose real name was William Joseph Hanley. The nearest parallel I can recall to his career may be found in Arthur Clough, who, as recorded in *HOBBIES* for June and July, 1968, is said to have been first a lawyer, and then a singer who planned to return to law practice and win his cases by singing, instead of speaking, his arguments. But, whereas Clough reputedly was a lawyer turned singer, Hanley was a singer who developed into a lawyer-judge.

For years I had "William J. Halley" in mind as a subject for a *HOBBIES* biography, but couldn't write about him because my information was scanty.

A few years before I began writing for *HOBBIES* I asked Billy Murray and his close friend, Jimmy Martin-dale, if they knew Will Halley and what had become of him. Neither apparently had known him personally, but they told me his real name was said to be Hanley and they believed he had quit singing "to go into politics into New Jersey." That was more nearly accurate information than some I have been given at various times about early recording artists!

The years went by without bringing any more information concerning the somewhat mysterious singer. Then, in August, 1973, I received a letter from Albert Kuechle of Newark, N. J., saying he knew of two bygone recording artists who were still alive — William J. Halley and Fred Hillebrand. Mr. Kuechle said he understood Halley became a judge "somewhere around Hoboken" and that Hillebrand lived at the Lambs Club in New York.

My correspondent was misinformed. Hillebrand, with whom I corresponded briefly some 20 years ago, was born

in Brooklyn, N. Y., December 25, 1893, and died in New York City, September 15, 1963. He was in his youth a vaudeville partner of Walter Van Brunt (Walter Scanlan), with whom he did a little recorded duet work and, from about 1919 to 1924, he made records for a number of companies, including Edison, Emerson and a few minor firms. And "Will Halley," as you are about to learn, had been dead almost 12 years when I received Mr. Kuechle's communication.

A 1913 Victor record supplement had described Halley as a "young comedian and singer, who is making a success in vaudeville." The statement that he was still living and had "graduated" from "show business" to a judgeship fired my imagination, and convinced me that Will Halley would be a colorful, attractive subject for an article. I passed the information on to my friend, Quentin Riggs, of Huntington Beach, Calif., who is always as delighted as I am to receive news about still living pioneer recorders, and I either suggested, or it occurred to him, to turn through indexes to back files of the New York Times and see if he could find anything about Judge William J. Hanley. Quentin, as I recall, began researching during his lunch hour, and almost immediately experienced a mixture of good and bad. The good was that he soon found a reference to Judge Hanley; the bad, he learned that the Jersey jurist was not still alive, as we had hoped and believed, but had been gone since the autumn of 1961.

Quentin's account of his experience is worth quoting. In a letter dated August 28, 1973, he wrote:

"You asked how I found Hanley's obituary in the New York Times. Well, it was a matter of luck that I found it so quickly. If he was a Judge in Hoboken I figured that such a distinguished person would have been mentioned at one time or another in the Times. A library near my office has a complete set of the New York Times index, so I planned to systematically go through them until I found something about him. The indexes of 1960 to the present are on the main floor and the earlier ones are in the basement, so I thought I'd start with the most recent ones. I started with 1960 and looked under both 'Hanley' and 'Deaths,' but didn't find anything. The second volume I picked up was the 1961 index, and under 'Deaths' I learned that an obituary for William J. Hanley appeared in the November 15, 1961, edition. I immediately asked to see the roll of microfilm that contained that edition, and copied the obit that I sent you. I managed to do all this during my 45-minute lunch period."

Never one to overlook any way of obtaining more information, Quentin, having learned from the death notice that Judge Hanley had a son, Patrick, living in Hoboken, wrote him a letter

and sent it to the address given in the obituary. It was returned, marked "Moved — Not Forwardable," to his considerable mystification. He then found the name of Patrick Hanley in a perhaps outmoded telephone directory and tried to make a long distance call, but the information operator told him there was no longer a Patrick Hanley listing for Hoboken. Mr. Hanley, however, is still living and active — he is a space salesman for Barron's Weekly, the noted New York financial paper — and I have heard his voice on a tape which my Buffalo, N. Y., friend, Merritt Malvern, recorded when he called on Judge Hanley's other son, William J. Hanley, Jr., at his home in Upper Montclair, N. J. But I am getting ahead of my subject. I have the most unholy ill luck in misplacing items to which I mean to refer, and I can't find that New York Times death notice. Fortunately, this matters little, for I have obtained more detailed information from another source.

After learning of Judge Hanley's passing, it occurred to me to write to the *Jersey Journal*, a newspaper published in the area in which he lived, and ask for any information its files contained about Judge William J. Hanley. The *Journal* did not reply directly, but referred my letter to the Free Public Library of Jersey City, whose director, Ben E. Grimm, obligingly wrote to me:

"August 29, 1973 . . . Dear Mr. Walsh: The enclosed obituaries of William J. Hanley are in response to your request to The *Jersey Journal*."

"I am very sorry that we were unable to locate any photographs in the library files. Sincerely, yours, BEN E. GRIMM, Library Director."

I must express my gratitude to Mr. Grimm for the trouble he took to find the obituaries and have them copied for me, and I hope the appearance of this article, which certainly should interest many patrons of the Free Public Library of Jersey City, will lead him to believe that his kindly efforts were not wasted.

Now it may be as well to consider the obituary notices, which I shall edit to avoid needless repetition. After that will come a discussion of the "William J. Halley" records and after that, in a succeeding installment, an intimate depiction of the singer-lawyer as his surviving relations describe him.

### II. What the Newspapers Said

First, The *Jersey Journal*, to which I applied for information. On Novem-

## VICTOR RECORDS FOR MAY—1913

- 17316** {At Uncle Tom's Cabin Door  
(Bayha-Cowan) Wm. J. Halley } 10  
Kentucky Days (Mahoney-Wenrich)  
Billy Murray
- A melodious Southern number in which Mr. William Halley makes his Victor debut. This young comedian and singer, who is making a success in vaudeville, delivers Cowan's lively song with much clearness, exhibiting a pleasant tenor voice.
- On the reverse a gentleman by the name of Murray offers Mahoney and Wenrich's melodious ballad of Kentucky, which is meeting with great favor.
- 35278** {Firefly Waltzes (From "The Firefly") Victor Concert Orchestra } 12  
When a Maid Comes Knocking at Your Heart (From  
"The Firefly") (Friml) Olive Kline
- Two records containing the principal melodies in Rudolph Friml's new opera, in which Emma Trentini is starring.
- The waltz melody is made up of a half dozen of the most popular airs, and the number Miss Kline has given is Mile. Trentini's best song in the opera.
- 35292** {Eva Waltzes—For dancing (On Motives from the Operetta  
"Eva") (Lehar) Victor Dance Orchestra } 12  
Sands of the Desert Medley Waltz—For dancing  
(Ernest Ball) Victor Military Band
- An attractive pair of records for dancing purposes. "Eva" is a new operetta by the composer of "Merry Widow," and it contains some of the finest music Lehar has written, especially the waltz, "Love is a Pilgrim," which is featured in this selection.
- "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," the principal number in the medley waltz on the reverse side, is a tremendous hit everywhere, and this fine dance record is sure to be much in demand.
- 17319** {Haunting Rag—Turkey Trot (Lenzberg) Victor Military Band } 10  
Sunshine Girl Tango (Argentine Dance from "Sunshine Girl")  
(Rubens) Victor Military Band
- And still the cry is TURKEY TROTS! Here is another lively one, but not quite as fast in tempo as those recently issued.
- On the reverse is the fine tango which is one of the hits of "The Sunshine Girl," now playing in New York.
- 17320** {Daddy Has a Sweetheart and Mother is Her Name  
(Buck-Stamper) Edna Brown } 10  
Those Ragtime Melodies (Hodgkins) Peerless Quartet
- An attractive song in which a little girl naively tells of "daddy's" affection for "mamma."
- On the reverse, the Peerless gives a kind of review of the various ragtime songs which have been successful. Bits of these numbers are introduced in an ingenious manner.



Halley

## NEW RECORDS FOR JULY

## Twelve New Popular Songs

The list of popular songs for this month is an unusually complete and attractive one, and contains twelve of the latest sentimental ballads and ragtime songs, topical ditties and "geographical" numbers.

The talented corps of singers whose services the Victor commands have made special efforts in their presentation of this July list, which contains none of the objectionable songs that have aroused such unfavorable comment of late.



Oakland



Campbell



Burr



Murray



Halley

**17344** {You're a Great Big Blue Eyed  
Baby (Brown) Heidelberg Quintette } 10  
And the Green Grass Grew All  
Around (Jerome H. Von Tilzer)  
American Quartet

**17347** {Give Me Your Hand (Havez-  
Botsford) (with WRL Oakland) Heidelberg Quintette } 10  
Let Me See Your Rainbow Smile  
(Havez-Barron) Campbell-Burr

**17349** {Sail on Silvery Moon (Downs-  
Erdman) Campbell-Burr } 10  
Georgia Land (Fields-Carroll)  
Peerless Quartet

**17354** {Harmony Joe (Taylor-Schiller) Peerless Quartet } 10  
The Old Maid's Ball  
(Irving Berlin) Billy Murray

**17353** {Love Her, Oh! Oh! Oh!  
(McCarthy-Monaco) William Halley } 10  
I'd Do as Much for You  
(Von Tilzer) Jones-Murray

**17355** {There's One in a Million Like  
You (Clarke-Schwartz) Brown-Harrison } 10  
Then I'll Stop Loving You  
(Piantadosi) Chas. W. Harrison



Porter



Collins



Bieling



Hooley



Porter

Victor Fibre Needles, 50c. per 100

**RECORDING DEBUT.** — Two pages from 1913 Victor record supplements are reproduced here. "William J. Halley's" first record was announced in May and was accompanied by his photo. In July he was shown with ten other famous Victor artists.

ber 15, 1961, this Jersey City paper published an article under the heading of "Ex-Judge W. Hanley, 66, Hoboken." This was headed by a photograph of Judge Hanley. The article read:

"The funeral for William J. Hanley, former Hudson District Court judge, will be Saturday at 9 a.m. A solemn requiem mass will be held at Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Church at 10 a.m.

"Interment will be at Holy Cross Cemetery, North Arlington.

"Mr. Hanley, of 1000 Hudson Street, Hoboken, died yesterday of a heart attack at the Veterans Hospital in East Orange. He was 66.

"A graduate of St. Peter's prep and Holy Cross College, Mr. Hanley was famous for his singing voice. He turned down a singing career for the law, but used his voice to work his way through New York Law School.

"He was a hard campaigner for Gov. A. Harry Moore and Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City. His work earned him a seat in the Assembly in 1918, but he resigned his post to enter the U. S. Marine Corps a year later. He was appointed to the district court bench in 1923, and served for 10 years.

"He refused a higher paying job as assistant U. S. attorney to keep his \$3,000 a year board of education post. He continued his private law practice at 84 Washington Street.

"Mr. Hanley strongly advocated a legalized state lottery and maintained this would block criminal elements from games of chance. He also espoused capital punishment as a deterrent to murder. Mr. Hanley's wife, Anne, died in 1953. He is survived by two sons, William J., Jr., and Patrick, and three sisters, Mrs. Grace Blake, Mrs. Beth Coyle and Miss Eleanor Hanley.

"The Bosworth Funeral Home, Hoboken, is in charge of arrangements."

You observed, probably, that the Jersey Journal gave Judge Hanley's age as 66. Another notice, still to be considered, makes it 67, and still a third, 68. This latter, which also was

used in the New York Times death notice, appears to be correct, for it would tie in well with his beginning to make records early in 1913, when he was still attending law school. His birthday therefore may be set down as January 17, 1893, which means that young "William J. Halley" had just become 20 or was drawing near it when he made his first record.

A questionnaire filled in by his son, Dr. Hanley, says that William J. Hanley was born in Hoboken, N. J., the city in which he lived virtually all his life and in which he died. His father was Timothy Joseph Hanley, a plumber. Timothy Hanley was born in Providence, R. I., and married Miss Mary Elizabeth McHenry, a native of Ireland. William was their eldest child. Dr. Hanley says he doesn't know whether there were any children besides his father and the three already mentioned sisters. Timothy Hanley died prior to 1913, and his wife, on April 11, 1946, at the age of 83.

The boy who was to become known as singer, lawyer and judge attended Sacred Heart Academy in Hoboken and St. Peter's Preparatory School in Jersey City, before going to Holy Cross College, from which he was graduated in 1913 — apparently at about the time his first records came out. Sports in which he participated while in school were football and baseball.

Young Hanley first began singing

in high school when he was 15 or 16 years of age. He had no formal musical training, played no instrument, and could not read music, but was gifted with a good, strong natural voice. His musical career was confined to singing at Shanley's restaurant, or cabaret, in New York City, and to making records. He never toured in vaudeville. Dr. Hanley described him as having been about six feet one inches tall as a young man and weighing around 185 pounds. In those days he had "titan-red" hair. His wife, whose maiden name was Anne McGahy, was a native of Rye, N. Y.

In view of Will Hanley's later ardent campaigning for Governor Moore and for Frank Hague, whose Hudson County organization was one of the most powerful political groups in the country, there seems no doubt that he, like most Americans of Irish descent, was an ardent Democrat.

Now, let's return to the newspaper obituary notices. There appears, by the way, an error in the one previously quoted. It said Hanley was elected to the New Jersey Assembly in 1918, but left to join the Marines. As the story immediately to follow shows he probably was elected in 1917, but left the following year to take officer training at the Marine Base in Quantico, Va.

And, speaking of his becoming a member of the New Jersey Assembly, I don't think it out of place to men-

tion here that one of the present day's most enthusiastic record collectors, and a regular reader of Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists, is the clerk of the New Jersey Senate, Henry H. Patterson, of Asbury Park. Mr. Patterson tells me he has between 50,000 and 60,000 records and is especially interested in the most ancient discs, such as Berliner, Climax, Monarch and Zonophone.

### III. A Personality Sketch

I said we would return to the obituary notices, but the article now to be quoted actually is not a death notice, but a summary of Judge Hanley's personality, character and achievements. It appeared in The Jersey Journal for Thursday, November 16, 1961, under the heading, "William J. Hanley, Ex-Judge, Was a Man of Many Parts." It was written by Thomas Howell, who apparently knew the jurist well. Though it pays tribute to Judge Hanley's many fine qualities, Mr. Howell erred in his arithmetic. He says the one-time recording artist was 67, then gives his birth year as 1891. A little ciphering will show that if he were born in that year he would have been 70 in 1961:

"The classic Renaissance ideal of 'a man of many parts,' in this day and age so rare, came to fit the description of William J. Hanley when he was yet a young man. He kept these qualities throughout his life.

"Artist, scholar, soldier and man of affairs, former Hudson District Judge William Hanley was instantly recognized in Hoboken and throughout Hudson County. His career included a year as state assemblyman.

"At his death on Tuesday, at 67, the judge was still active in civic affairs as attorney for the Hoboken Board of Education — a job he held since 1933, and maintained despite the inducement of a \$2,000 a year raise if he would become assistant U. S. attorney.

"William Hanley was born in Hoboken in 1891. After completing primary school, Mr. Hanley attended St. Peter's Preparatory School in Jersey City. Upon graduation he enrolled in Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass.

"He had a fine singing voice and when he was graduated from Holy Cross and went to New York Law School, he took a job as a troubadour in Stanley's (This should be Shanley's — J. W.) night club after school hours. This was, however — apart from recording a few popular ballads — his only professional use of his singing talent.

"Mr. Hanley entered Hudson County politics after being admitted to the Bar. His support of the late Governor A. Harry Moore and of the mayoralty campaign of the late Frank Hague in 1917 resulted in his own nomination for a seat in the New Jersey Assembly. He was elected, but resigned his seat to join the U. S. Marines. Sent for officer candidate training to Quantico, Virginia, he received his commission too late to join the fighting. The Armistice had already been signed.

"Returning to Hudson County politics Mr. Hanley was appointed as judge to the Hudson District Court in 1923, and remained on the bench 10 years. On his retirement from the judiciary, Judge Hanley took the post of attorney for the Hoboken school board. He also resumed his long-suspended career in criminal law, and came to the defense in many cases.

"Notable examples were his defense of ex-Judge James Pellachia of Newark, and of Sylvio Devito, one of a trio who held up the Universal Supermarket in Newark in 1951 and killed special guard James Law during the robbery. The Pellachia case concerned the embezzlement of \$600,000 from the Columbia Trust Company in 1948. Pellachia's father was president of the bank, and Pellachia's conviction seemed certain. He got off with a much lighter sentence than anticipated.

"Devito's case ended also in conviction, but he escaped the death penalty that was the fate of one of the other two bandits. Notwithstanding Judge Hanley's eloquence in his client's defense, the judge was an advocate of capital punishment as a deterrent to murder. He also backed a legalized state lottery, which he firmly believed would exclude criminal agencies from games of chance.

"Judge Hanley lost his wife, Ann, in 1953. He is survived by two sons, Dr. William Hanley, Jr., a dentist in Montclair, and Patrick Hanley of Hoboken. He also leaves three sisters, Mrs. Grace Blake, Mrs. Beth Coyle and Miss Eleanor Hanley, all of Hoboken."



YOUNG ATTORNEY. — William J. Hanley ("William J. Halley") as he appeared after he gave up a musical career to practice law.

I am sure that it had nothing to do with Judge Hanley's advocacy of legal lotteries, but, coincidentally, in 1933 his sister Eleanor won \$150,000 in the Irish Sweepstakes and went to Ireland to be paid her money. Miss Hanley, a school teacher, had about \$40,000 left after the British and American governments levied tribute on her winnings.

An account of Judge Hanley's death in the Hudson Dispatch for November 15, 1961, reads for the most part like a rewrite of the one already quoted from the Jersey Journal, and it would be a waste of space to quote it in full. However, it mentions the judge's saying that "every unpunished murderer takes away something from the security of a man's life," and ends with the following fresh information:

"Just two years ago Mr. Hanley appeared on a New York television show for a 30 minute interview which included playbacks of his recordings of 'You Made Me Love You,' 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' and other popular songs. Always a campaigner, he took the occasion to 'innocently' give Mayor John J. Grogan a political plug.

"Mr. Hanley had a brief introduction to the newspaper world, circa 1910, before entering the political arena. Working for the Hudson Dispatch in those days, he enjoyed recalling a mission he made to New York on behalf of the paper. He was sent to the city to bring back an immense roll of paper via the West Shore Ferry for the next day's edition. After that experience he decided the legal profession offered an easier life."

Finally, in this round-up of newspaper publicity concerning Judge Hanley's death, the following from the

Jersey Journal's paid announcements column of November 17, 1961, may be copied:

"HANLEY — Judge William J., on November 14, 1961, of 1000 Hudson Street, Hoboken; beloved husband of the late Anna (nee McGahy); (father of Dr. William J., Jr., D.D.S., and Patrick R. Hanley; brother of Mrs. Edward (Beth) Coyle, Mrs. Grace Blake, and Miss Elinore Hanley. Funeral from Earl F. Bosworth Funeral Home, 311 Willow Avenue Hoboken, on Saturday at 9 a.m. Solemn High Mass of Requiem, Our Lady of Grace Church, at 10 a.m. Interment, Holy Cross Cemetery.

"HANLEY — SUMMONS — Brothers of Hoboken Lodge No. 74, E. F. O. Elks are invited to attend funeral services. Friday, November 17, 1961, at 8 p.m. at Bosworth Funeral Home, Hoboken, to pay our last tribute of respect to our deceased brother William J. Hanley, Francis Bertotti, Exalted Ruler Anthony Amoroso, Secretary."

It probably will not have escaped your attention that in the first of these notices, Judge Hanley's wife's name was incorrectly given as Anna instead of Anne, and his sister's as Elinore when it should be Eleanor.

(Continued on page 130)

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than is buying stocks and bonds which many people paid good money for, and now they find they can get back only a portion of what they spent. The organization that sells Christmas Seals is in business to sell as many of them as they can. They print hundreds of millions, perhaps even billions, and it is rumored that they keep the plates going so that if they ever run out of a certain year, they can print more. They even sell these in quantities to dealers to encourage them to handle them, by giving them at less than one dollar per sheet. (After all, their sole desire in issuing them is to raise money.) And if the dealers in Seals can buy them any time they want for less than one dollar per sheet, they are hardly likely to pay a speculator more than that. If there is any monkey business involved, it is the old story of someone buying stamps without first finding out from someone who knows if what he is doing is wise.

#### QUESTION

I have an upside down air mail stamp on a letter. Where can I sell it?

#### ANSWER

There is a stamp which appeared in 1918 on which the airplane in the center is printed upside down, while the balance of the stamp is normal. It is quite unlikely that you have this. There were only 100 originally sold over the counter at the Washington Post Office. Today we know the whereabouts of approximately 90 to 94 of them; the balance is lost, or in unknown collections. The stamp in fine condition sells for about \$42,000.

We suspect that what you have is

an ordinary, common air mail stamp, which someone carelessly affixed to the envelope upside down. It would have no particular value. If it were to, why would not everyone in the country start putting stamps on envelopes upside down?

#### QUESTION

I have had a lot of pleasure showing friends an envelope which came through the mail recently. It is postmarked November 31. November has only 30 days, so this is an error. I would like to sell it.

#### ANSWER

The error was made by a postal clerk. There are over 30,000 Post Offices in this country. Many have up to several dozen branches. Many have hundreds of clerks. Every day a Post Office is open, perhaps 100,000 postmarking devices are being changed from the date of the previous day. It is a tribute to the care that as few errors occur as do happen. This particular clerk did not realize that he should have changed the date to December first since November does have only 30 days. If such an item were of value why would not clerks do this intentionally, and provide tens of thousands of rare philatelic items?

You have an interesting curiosity, but no more than that. "Errors" of this sort are by no means unusual. Study the postmarks on any incoming mail and you will see an occasionally upside down date, the month name inverted, or the like. Just last week we had a November 52, 1974 date. What happened is that the clerk inserting the numerals in the postmarking device reversed the position of the "2" and the "5".

## Joint U.S.-Soviet Stamps To Mark Apollo-Soyuz Linkup

The U. S. Postal Service and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Soviet Union have announced joint plans to issue a twin pair of postage stamps honoring the Apollo-Soyuz space mission.

These stamps, one of U. S. design and one of Soviet design, will be issued on the day of the launches, now scheduled for July 15.

The U. S. design is by noted space artist Robert McCall, of Paradise Valley, Arizona. The U.S.S.R. design is by Soviet artist Anatoly M. Aksamit.

McCall has been closely identified with the U. S. space program since 1958. McCall's space art combines the weight of reality with the weightlessness of outer space in a convincing and dramatic way.

Aksamit has been a professional artist since 1946. For many years, he was chief artist for advertising for Aeroflot, the Soviet airline.

The United States stamps will have their first day of issue at Kennedy Space Center.

First day cancellation requests should be addressed to "Apollo-Soyuz Stamps, Postmaster, Kennedy Space Center, FL 32815." The cost is ten cents per stamp to be affixed to the self-addressed envelopes which must accompany orders. Remittance should be by check or money order, instead of cash, or postage stamps.

Because of the size of the stamps, the return address should be written low and well to the left. Orders must be postmarked no later than July 15.

## MINI-THOUGHTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 122)

out to Valley Forge on our bikes.

To see it all again and then to reflect back upon those years of 1776 and those who suffered to give us our blessed freedom!

Edna and I went in town (downtown Philly) once a week—and how great that was as we went by train (my second love!) and we did see again Independence Hall and Christ's Church. Here again we could almost hear the shouts of victory as the old Liberty Bell rang out Freedom For All! We met so many friends of HOBBIES but we didn't get many stories. We did enjoy so much the Perelman Antique Toy Museum. We were a little disappointed that there were so few Doll Houses and so few miniatures in that great collection of old toys. Somewhere along the way we saw tiny narrow pads of scratch paper and at the very top was printed "For Those With Narrow Minds!"

Guess we should have tiny pads for those of us with MINI MINDS! Wherever you go, you are always on the lookout for miniatures! We saw so few of them in any of the many

places we visited. Our last stop was with our dear oldest granddaughter in Lawrence, Kans., and on Easter Monday our Margie took us over to Kansas City to visit the beautiful and outstanding Crown Center. I am sure I could spend a week there and never tire of it! We were happy to see the shop of Bits and Pieces. What a display of miniatures! We obtained some of those tiny apple taffies for our soda parlor. We enjoyed seeing the one room on display by the John Blauers. It was a Victorian Parlor and had the most impressive copies of the famous Belter arm chairs. That day was a joyous day!

We had bought so much (not miniatures, but we do have an antique shop!) that we even had to rent a trailer from Iowa City.

More next month about so many helpful ways of making those houses for dolls! Does anyone know of a good more or less simple plan for a doll house? So many have asked for plans for doll houses. Also we hope you will share with our many readers the story of your MINI collection or your doll house. Take care!

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

to all parts of America, imprisoned in the grooves of phonograph discs.

Yet I wonder. How did it happen, if it did, that no one, living in Hoboken and knowing Mother Hanley, picked up a copy of the monthly Victor record shipment, saw a picture of young "Billy" Hanley (his name misspelled as Halley) and showed it to the good lady, saying: "Mrs. Hanley, this Victor book has got a good picture of your boy Billy in it!" But, as far as I know, no one did.

There is a possibility, of course, that Mary Elizabeth Hanley did know her son was earning tuition money by exercising his voice, and that she acceded to his singing so long as he did not openly parade his "shame" by using his real name, but I doubt that this occurred.

"Will Halley's" recording activities appear to have been confined to Victor and Columbia labels, with Victor coming first. He also did a little singing for Victor after he had ceased to work for Columbia, but the total number of his Columbia discs was greater than of his Victor, even though they were confined to a period of eight months.

(To be continued)

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## William J. Halley (Judge William Joseph Hanley, Sr.)

PART 1A

By JIM WALSH

(Continued from the July issue)

No Halley records were issued on Edison discs or cylinders, but in the Edison National Historic Site there is a note in Thomas A. Edison's handwriting, showing that the crotchety and deafened inventor, who seldom liked any recorded voice submitted for his opinion, ruled unfavorably concerning "William Halley." On January 14, 1915, "The Old Man" wrote:

"Mr. William Halley, Baritone. Explosive—not a good interpreter—don't get the funny lisping accent that Collins out in. Articulation not extra good."

Just what Mr. Edison meant to indicate, other than that he didn't care for Halley's singing isn't clear. He evidently didn't write what was in his mind for "that Collins out in" makes no sense. In the note printed previously, the inventor even criticized his favorite Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan. After listening to one of their records, he scrawled: "Can't hear a word. Awful sharp." The fault undoubtedly was in his hearing, for Collins and Harlan's articulation and enunciation were invariably fine. Mr. Edison probably was under mental strain when he wrote the Halley note, for his great factory fire had occurred the month before.

There is nothing to indicate that "Halley" had made a test Edison record. In all probability Mr. Edison was listening to one he had made for Victor or Columbia. It was his staff's custom each month to buy the latest records of competing companies and have the old gentleman listen to them, to see if he heard any artists he would like to engage to sing for him. (He seldom did.) Probably a majority of the critical comments in Mr. Edison's notebook are based on listening to Victor and Columbia recordings, so the likelihood is that he based his opinion of Halley on the young man's reproduced voice.

But what record did he listen to? This was January 14, 1915, remember, and Halley had not had a Victor disc issued since August, 1914, when he sang the boisterous "I Love the Ladies." He had not been in a Columbia supplement since September, 1914, when he was heard in three songs—"All He Does Is Follow Them Around," "They're On Their Way to Mexico," and "He Was Always Fooling Round." I am familiar with all these records, and in fairness I must say that none contains, to my ears, a trace of "the funny lisping accent"

of which the Wizard complained.

In February, 1915, Victor did issue a Halley record, "I'm Glad My Wife's in Europe," but it could not be obtained before January 28, the nationwide date for beginning the sale of new Victor records, so Mr. Edison could not have heard it two weeks earlier. There is one indication that the record, whatever it was, was a Columbia. Victor had begun by calling the law student-singer "William J. Halley," but in August, 1914, had switched to "Will Halley" and thereafter kept the shorter name. Columbia called him consistently "William Halley," without the middle J., and that is the way he is referred to in Thomas A. Edison's note.

How ever all this may have been, there is no doubt that "William J. Halley's" first Victor record was announced in the May, 1913, supplement, and it was something of a plume in his cap that he was given the A. side (usually considered to indicate the probably better selling number) with the veteran Billy Murray, then the most popular recording artist in the world, consigned to the B. The Halley song was "At Uncle Tom's Cabin Door," while the Murray, a tuneful Percy Wenrich ballad, "Kentucky Days," was a sort of trial run for "When You Wore a Tulip and I Wore a Red, Red Rose." It was a more sentimental type of composition than Billy ordinarily sang. The supplement published a small photo of Halley, in which he appeared to be wearing a rather grim expression, and the description of his initial offering was:

"A melodious Southern number in which Mr. William Halley makes his Victor debut. This young comedian and singer, who is making a success in vaudeville, delivers (Ruby Cowan's lively song with much clearness, exhibiting a pleasant tenor voice. On the reverse a gentleman by the name of Murray offers Mahoney and Wenrich's melodious ballad of Kentucky, which is meeting with great favor."

This record (No. 17316) was a combination that seemed to have all the characteristics to insure popular success, for the Wenrich ballad, especially, was being extensively advertised and sung, and the coupling was a lively number with an attractive swing. Yet "Kentucky Days" did not win the overwhelming vogue that was destined to be accorded to "When ou Wore a Tulip," and the record was out of the catalog by November, 1915.

You will notice that the supplement described Halley as a tenor. The com-

plete Victor alphabetical catalogs always called him a "tenor-comedian." Columbia, however, invariably referred to him as a baritone, and my ears tell me Columbia was right. His voice was too low-pitched to be tenor. But then Victor also called Arthur Fields a tenor, and Arthur wrote me that he always wondered why it did.

One month later, in June, 1913, the fledgling recording artist had been promoted to the status of a "favorite Victor singer." On No. 17323 Collins and Harlan sang "Roll On, Missouri," and were accompanied on the B. side by Halley's rousingly catchy "In the Golden West." Supplement space was limited that month, and the description was brief:

"Two attractive 'locality' ballads, praising the gr.at but muddy Missouri and the glorious West, are effectively given by favorite Victor singers."

Continuing his pace of a record a month, the "tenor-comedian" was represented in the July, 1913, Victor supplement with the A. side of No. 17353. He sang a rapid-fire number, whose keynote was exuberance, "I Love Her Oh! Oh! Oh!" The young fellow must have laughed to himself at the concluding lines of the song, which proclaimed: "She has red hair, but I don't care—I love her oh! oh! oh!" for the imaginary heroine's locks were the same color as his own. He had good company on the B. face with Ada Jones and Billy Murray singing "I'd Do As Much for You."

Record buyers who obtained these early "William J. Halley" records discovered that the singer, about whom most of them knew nothing, had a voice and style that was typical of the vaudeville, cabaret and musical comedy vocalists of the time. There was nothing subtle about his singing, but his delivery was strong and spirited, and his enunciation clear even if, as Mr. Edison had said, he had at times a tendency to be a bit "explosive"—a characteristic he shared with most vaudeville singers. There was also a marked resemblance in his voice and style to the singing methods of Al Jolson, although he lacked the eccentric mannerisms which made multitudes admire Jolson and a smaller number dislike him.

This resemblance to Jolson was especially marked in Halley's September, 1913, record. (He was not included in the August Victor record list.) This time he sang one of the big hits of 60 years ago, "You Made

Me Love You (I Didn't Want to Do It)," which was coupled with a song composed by Irving Berlin, then already the reigning king of popular song writers. The Berlin number, "Somebody's Coming to My House," was sung by Walter Van Brunt, and had the A. side. This was an example of misjudgment, for "You Made Me Love You" swept the country, while Berlin's contribution was not particularly successful. "You Made Me Love You," written by Joe McCarthy and James V. Monaco, was Halley's most successful Victor record and stayed in the catalog longer than any of his others.

There was a wait of three months before another Halley disc was announced. He had the A. side of No. 17453, "Pullman Porters on Parade," which was combined with the Peerless Quartet's "My Lovin' Melody Man" in the December supplement. "Pullman Porters" was as lively and rhythmic as the name suggests. Its music was by Maurice Abrahams and the words by a mysterious character who called himself Ren G. May. Never heard of him? Well, if you will scramble the letters of "Ren G. May" and rearrange them you will find that they spell "Germany." And what is the capital of Germany? Why, Berlin! In other words, the lyric writer's alleged name was an anagram for "Germany" and a disguise for Irving Berlin, who wrote the words for his friend, Maurie Abrahams, husband of the vaudeville star and future recording artist, Belle Baker.

"Halley" by this time was through law school, assuming that 1913 is the correct date of his graduation, and must have been trying to establish his law practice. Probably he found money from cabaret singing and record making to be still acceptable while he was getting started at his chosen profession. But there were no more Victor records by him until August, 1914, although he had begun singing regularly for Columbia. And when his next Victor appeared, his name, in the supplement and on the label, had been shortened to "Will Halley"—probably on the theory that "William J. Halley" sounded rather stiff for a comedian and that the short form gave a pleasing touch of informality. On the A. side of No. 17560 he sang a current comic song hit, "I Love the Ladies," while for its coupling the Heidelberg Quintet harmonized the irresistible "By the Beautiful Sea," whose chorus offers probably the trickiest line ever included in a popular song: "I love to be beside your side beside the seaside by the beautiful sea."

This combination seemed to have everything from a sales standpoint and, in view of the popularity of both songs, should have stayed in the catalog for many years, but it vanished when the May, 1917, catalog was published.

Half a year went by before "Will J. Halley" again showed up in a Victor list. This time, on No. 17683, he sang "I'm Glad My Wife's in Europe (For She Can't Get Back to Me.)" The B. face was the tuneless "I'm Goin' Back to Louisiana," by Collins

and Harlan. This record of course was issued when World War I had been in progress only a few months, and when there was thought to be something funny about American wives being stranded abroad and unable to return to their rejoicing help-meets. Halley, who presumably was not married when he made the record, expressed the hope that if the wife of whom he was singing "should come to London town I hope that London Bridge will break down."

"Will Halley's" final Victor record, and his last, apparently, for any company was a part of the April, 1915, list. He sang, on the B. side, "Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band," while on the A., Collins and Harlan gave one of their inimitable renditions of a Teddy Morse "jungle song"—"Doodle Oodle Dee (Means Won't You Marry Me?)" Sam Rous, the supplement writer, said this disc contained "two comedy favorites by Halley and the Colossal Comedy Twins"—the latter one of his frequent sly digs at Collins and Harlan's pronouncedly excess avoirdupois.

After "Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band" was issued, the name of Will Halley ceased to appear in Victor supplements, meaning, I take it, that he had given up singing and settled down with determination to his future career in the legal profession. But there was to be one more mention of this "swan song" disc.

In June, 1917, Victor announced a new record of "Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band," sung by Gene Greene and coupled with his famous nonsense song, "The King of the Bungaloes." The description of the Greene disc said:

"An admirable record of 'Ruff Johnson's Harmony Band' is already in the Victor catalog, but we just had to get out Gene Greene's variation of it for the sake of his imitation of the musical instruments. Flute, drum or loud bassoon—it's all the same to Gene."

The "admirable record" already in the catalog of course was Halley's. It remained there through 1919, along with two of his others, "You Made Me Love You" and "I'm Glad My Wife's in Europe," but when the 1920 edition came out the name of Halley had disappeared.

#### V. Halley's Columbia Records

Although William Halley, to use his Columbia designation, made a few more records for Victor's chief competitor than he had for the rival largest manufacturer of discs, their period of issue was confined to a shorter span. The aspiring young legal student's name was seen for the first Columbia time in February, 1914, and for the last time, so far as the monthly supplement went, in the following September.

Halley's initial Columbia contributions were contained on two double-faced records, his song in each instance being coupled with something by other performers. First, numerically speaking, was No. A1455. Columbia discs did not use the A. and B. system of indicating which side was considered the more likely seller, but A1455, as listed in the supplement, began with "The Little Church Around the Corner," sung by Nora

Watson (Elsie Baker), contralto, and Henry Burr, tenor. Its mating was "I'm Afraid I'm Beginning to Love You." Supplement descriptions of Columbia records were brief. This is what was said of the one just mentioned:

"A new song by the writers of 'The Trail of the Lonesome Pine,' 'There's a Girl in the Heart of Maryland,' etc., entitled 'The Little Church Around the Corner,' promises to become one of the sensational successes of the month. It is combined with a record by a new singer, Mr. William Halley, whose voice and style will undoubtedly please our patrons greatly."

The second Halley offering was mentioned before its coupling. On No. A1457 he sang a genuine comedy hit, "He'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under," with another almost equally successful humorous composition on the other side, "The Pussy Cat Rag," by Ada Jones and the Peerless Quartet. This amusing ditty proved a bonanza for Ada and the Quartet. They also sang it for Victor and for Edison discs and cylinders. Concerning this combination the supplement said:

"In new up-to-the-minute ragtime we have the great Winter Garden hit, 'He'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under,' sung in splendid style by Mr. Halley. It is coupled appropriately with the 'Pussy Cat Rag,' a song by the composer of 'What Do You Mean You Lost Your Dog?' sung by Miss Jones with the support of the 'Peerless Quartet.'"

The motor vehicle song's full title was "He'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under (And Fix Up His Automobile)." It was written by Grant Clarke, Edgar Leslie and Maurice Abrahams, and was recorded also by Billy Murray on Victor 17491, and Edison Blue Amberol 2194, as well as by Arthur Collins on Pathe' B5023. (A B prefix on a Pathe' seems to have indicated that it was recorded in the United States.) I haven't heard the Pathe' version, but it is interesting to compare Murray's Victor with Halley's Columbia and observe how markedly the words they sing differ. In the absence of the sheet music it is hard to determine which comedian, if either, is "singing straight" and which is changing the words whenever he thinks he sees a chance to improve them. Murray, however, was probably doing the more changing because he never hesitated to try to better a lyric, and Halley sings the chorus three times without variation.

There are too many differences in words to list them all, but they begin with the first line, which Halley sings as "Johnny O'Connor owned an automobile" and Murray as "bought an—." Halley says "He was dressed up in his best Sunday clothes," but with Murray this becomes "all toggled up—." Halley says "off came his hat and coat," and Murray "off went." Halley begins the chorus with "So he got out and got under," and Murray with "He'd have to get under, get out and get under."

One of the most noticeable differences is that Halley sings, "Every time that he would reach for a kiss the darned old thing would miss," while with Murray it's "darned old engine" one time and "sparkplug" the

(Continued on next page)

next. In the second stanza, "Millionaire Wilson" is quoted as telling Johnny, in Halley's version, that his daughter "likes to ride, by the way." Murray has it, "She likes to ride ev'ry day." Halley sings at the end of each chorus, "and fix up his little machine," while Murray makes it, "and fix up his automobile." Since the latter was given by Victor as the sub-title of the song, it appears probable that in this instance Murray was singing the printed words and Halley wasn't, but, if he wasn't, why the change?

All of this is of no importance to the ultimate well-being of the world, but it is worth observing as an indication of how hard it is to know the exact words of a song by listening to a record. Popular artists, especially those with marked individuality, usually reserved the right to make any changes they considered for the better in comic songs.

Came March, 1914, and Halley sang both sides of No. A1479. One was "Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat," which Murray had offered in the February Victor list and which he also sang for a Blue Amberol. The other side of Halley's "Sit Down" was a now completely forgotten number composed by Albert Von Tilzer, "Stop Thief." The supplement mentioned them briefly as "two bright and lively flirtation songs in ragtime style."

April brought "Do You Take This Woman For Your Lawful Wife?" a Harry Von Tilzer comic song by Halley, paired with "Don't Blame It All on Broadway," by the Peerless Quartet. The description was:

"Two comic songs now everywhere sung . . . recorded respectively by Mr. William Halley and the Peerless Quartet are among the most interesting offerings of the month and will be received with the sort of welcome their snap and humor deserves."

No more William Halley records were announced until July, when two of his comic songs took care of both sides of A1535. One was "He'd Push It Along" and the other, "They Don't Hesitate Any More." "He'd Push It Along" was composed by Maurice Abrahams, for whose songs Halley seems to have had a special fondness. The supplement said:

"Mr. Halley gives us two more facetiously clever numbers in 'He'd Push It Along' and 'They Don't Hesitate Any More,' songs in which the spirit of the present dancing craze is a most successful factor."

There were two more Halley songs in August. A1551 mated his "Do They Love It?" (another Maurice Abrahams number) with "You Can Tango, You Can Trot, Dear, But Be Sure and Hesitate," by Ada Jones. On A1552, Halley's rendition of a big comic hit, "When You're All Dressed Up and No Place to Go," which Billy Murray had recorded some months earlier for Victor and Edison, was combined with "Goodbye, Broadway," by Eddie Morton and the Peerless Quartet. This was the comment:

"At the head of the list is the great comedy song hit, 'When You're All Dressed Up and No Place to Go,' introduced in Raymond Hitchcock's new musical comedy success, 'The Beauty Shop.' The song is one of the best of its kind ever brought out, and Mr. Halley knows just how to sing it . . . No less certain to become a popular ragtime hit is the fac-

etiously humorous 'Do They Love It?' in which Mr. Halley again shows his ability to 'put over' songs of this type."

September brought Halley's final bow in the Columbia list, with no less than three titles. On A1563 his "All He Does Is Follow Them Around" (still another song by Abrahams!) kept company with Ada Jones and Billy Watkins singing "By the Beautiful Sea." (Probably you remember that Halley's Victor record of "I Love the Ladies" had the "Sea" song, by the Heidelberg Quintet, as its coupling.) A1565 brought an Irving Berlin number, "They're On Their Way to Mexico," dealing with a dispute the Wilson administration was having with the Mexican government, and "He Was Always Fooling Around," both sung by Halley.

And that ended the chapter. The young man presumably applied himself diligently to his law practice and felt no more urge to have his voice "immortalized" on records. During the period in which he was recording, Columbia brought out "A Night Scene In Maxim's," which was recorded December 27, 1913, and sung by a mixed quartet called "The Maxim's Cabaret Singers." Columbia files do not give the names of the artists, but some collectors have fancied that the man who sings "Down in Chattanooga" one of three musical numbers in the record—is Halley. I, however, have never been able to detect any special resemblance, and Dr. Hanley, Jr., after hearing the recording, emphatically denied that the voice is that of his father. He also says that "William J. Halley" never sang in Maxim's, but made all his night club appearances at Shanley's. Halley did, however, sing for the imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company which I founded as a small boy, but, like all my other artists, he was unaware that he was working for me.

For some hard to fathom reason, the Columbia records by the young lawyer from Hoboken appear to have been especially popular in Detroit, Mich., where he must have been known personally to almost nobody. The Columbia branch office in Detroit published large newspaper advertisements calling attention to his records, and the Max Strausburg Co., "The Finest Talking Machine Shop in Detroit," proclaimed that entertainment seekers could "Hear Will Halley, in your own home, sing the big hit, 'I Love the Ladies,' and many other popular songs in his character-

istic and entertaining manner on your Victor and Grafonola." It would be interesting to know why Halley achieved such disproportionate popularity in Detroit since, as I pointed out, it could hardly have been on a basis of Michigan residents' personal acquaintance with him.

Halley's name remained longer in Columbia catalogs than it had in Victor. Five of his numbers—"All He Does Is Follow Them Around," "Do You Take This Woman for Your Lawful Wife?" "He'd Have to Get Under," "He Was Always Fooling Around" and "When You're All Dressed Up" remained available until the September, 1919, catalog, after which only "He'd Have to Get Under" was left. This stuck around through 1922 under Halley's name, but in that year it was remade—probably because some damage had occurred to the

(Continued on page 130)

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tury, all of our stamps were done by the flat plate process. Little by little rotary presses were brought in, although as late as the 1940s, we were still using the flat plate presses to print the dollar values of the 1939 series.

Today with the great advances in printing there are many different processes used some of which enable the Bureau of Printing and Engraving to produce multicolored stamps in a single operation. (In the old days, each color required a separate run through the presses). However, the large number of stamps required today, and the short time in which they are produced means that virtually every process used is some sort of adaptation of the rotary press.

It takes careful measuring to tell a flat plate stamp from a rotary press stamp. Just as an acre of hilly farm land covers more ground than an acre of flat land, so is a rotary stamp a tiny bit larger than a flat plate, for the design has been printed from a curved (hilly) plate rather than a flat one. It is not the paper that is measured but the design of the stamp itself, i.e., the inked portion.

There are also differences which informed collectors have picked up which enable them to tell the difference without measuring. The ink on a flat plate stamp takes longer to dry, for it is impressed for a longer time than the quick running rotary. (The latter has a heat dryer which dries the ink almost instantaneously.) One can turn a stamp over, and if a green stamp and if there are tiny specks of green on the back, from where one wet sheet lay on another, it usually is flat plate. If there are no specks, meaning that the ink dried immediately, it is usually rotary. There are often other differences, such as in perforation, as the flat plate stamps were perforated on entirely different equipment than was used on the rotary. (There are exceptions to this, but they involve stamps of such great rarity, such as the thousand dollar 1c green Franklin Perf. 11, that the rule of thumb in the foregoing may be safely followed.

#### Question.

How many collectors are there in the United States?

#### Answer.

This is a question philately has wrestled with for generations, but until someone defines the word "collector," it is anyone's guess. The Post Office sticks by its figures of sixteen million, although 40 years ago Postmaster General James A. Farley claimed 20 million. If by a collector one means someone who buys a plate number block or a sheet of stamps at the Post Office, and puts it away as an "investment," their figure may be correct.

However, if by "collector," one means someone who is interested enough in the hobby to buy a stamp catalog, join a stamp club, or buy literature pertaining thereto, the figure is vastly on the high side. The largest stamp society, the American Philatelic Society, has about 35,000 members and 5-10% of these live in Canada or abroad.

If one ignores completely the factor of duplication, and adds up the membership of every club in the country, the subscription list of every magazine, and the roll of every one of the national societies, he will still be a long way from a million collectors.

We have often wondered how many read this feature. In an effort to find out some months ago we offered a free perforation gauge, a device used to identify postage stamps to anyone who sent in a stamped addressed envelope. We had about fifty requests.

The offer is renewed at this time. If you would like a free perforation gauge, together with instructions for its use, send a stamped addressed envelope to Herman Herst, Jr., P.O. Box 1583, Boca Raton, Fla. 33432. We are not in the stamp business, so no approvals nor stamps will be sent you although a circular or two to improve anyone's knowledge of the hobby may be included as a protection to keep the gauge from being folded or bent. We are curious to see how many requests a second mention of the offer will bring.

### FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

master—by Frank Crumit. (Crumit also made over Walter Van Brunt's "And the Green Grass Grew All Around" and Arthur Fields' "The Little Ford Rambled Right Along.") Halley's name thus was, after 1922, no longer in either Victor or Columbia catalogs. Oddly, after Crumit did the remake, the "Get Under" record stayed in the catalog only one year. Why go to the trouble and expense of making it over if it was to be cut out so soon!

Some Halley records were issued in England by Victor and Columbia's British affiliates. In March, 1914, Zonophone offered No. 1254, "I Love Her Oh! Oh! Oh!" by "W. J. Halley," combined with Billy Murray's "Let Her Go, Let Her Go, Let Her Go." The supplement said: "W. J. Halley makes a bow and a hit together! His big, round, humorous, vigorous voice is humour itself — it records astonishingly well—and with his first song he bids fair to convulse the nation. Hear it, and when you have finished guffawing feel for that half-crown; it will put you in possession, also, of Billy Murray's latest success, perkily performed."

In December, 1915, Zonophone's parent company, H.M.V. announced, on No. B515, Halley's "I'm Glad My Wife's In Europe," paired with "My Croony Melody," by Collins and Harlan.

English Columbia issued Halley records on its cheaper Regal label, corresponding to H.M.V.'s Zonophone. The following came out in 1914 and early 1915: G6044, "He'd Have to Get Under," coupled with "Noah's Ark," by Arthur Collins; G6699, "I'm Afraid I'm Beginning to Love You," with "Molly Dear," by William Thomas; G6780, "Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat" and "Stop Thief"; and G6831, "Do They Love It?" with

#### "When You're All Dressed Up."

It may be that some Halley records also were issued in India, Australia and New Zealand, but I lack catalogs for checking.

We have now reached the point where we must part company with the mythical "William J. Halley," tenor (Victor), baritone (Columbia), and comedian. When next we meet we shall talk about Counselor and Judge William Joseph Hanley, Sr., and give an account of his personality, achievements and character, based on a large scrapbook kept by members of his family and on the recollections of his surviving relations.

(To be continued)

#### Attention, Jim Walsh readers:

Due to an oversight in making up the following paragraphs were inadvertently omitted from the July issue. This section should have followed on page 37 of the July issue. We apologize to both Jim Walsh and the readers for this omission. — Sorry.

Make mental note, too, of this: Although William J. Halley did sing a Victor record of "You Made Me Love You," in competition with Al Jolson's Columbia (his interpretation sounds a great deal like Jolson's), he did not record "Tipperary," or at least no records by him of the great World War I hit were issued. Victor offered two vocal versions — a Black Label by the American Quartet and a Red Seal by John McComack assisted by a male chorus that sounds like the Orpheus Quartet. The Columbia was by Stanley Kirkby, with the master imported from England, and the Edison was sung by another English baritone, Albert Farrington. Pathé issued only an orchestral interpretation, also of English origin, with a vocal refrain.

#### IV. Will Halley's Victor Recordings

When, before he was old enough to vote, young "William J. Hanley" took an assumed name for his night club and recording work, he obviously made the minimum change in his own legal signature. The first "n" in Hanley was replaced by "l," and the disguise was effected. His surviving sisters say they believe he altered his name because his devout Roman Catholic mother objected to her son having anything to do with "show business" and he saw no harm in keeping her in ignorance of the way in which he was paying his law school expenses. Apparently, Mrs. Hanley did not learn, throughout his brief entertainment career, that her son was singing, if not on the stage, at least in a "cabaret," and was having his voice shipped

(The article from here, then, continued on page 130 of the July issue.)



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## William J. Halley (Judge William Joseph Hanley, Sr.)

PART IIA

By JIM WALSH

### I. Getting In Touch

As was mentioned earlier, I discovered from Quentin Riggs' research in the New York Times that the late Judge William J. Hanley, Sr., who as a youth made Victor and Columbia records under the slightly changed name of William J. Halley, was survived by two sons. One son lived in Hoboken, N. J., and the other in Upper Montclair.

Like Quentin, I tried to communicate with Patrick Hanley by telephone, but "Information" said there was no phone under his name in the Hoboken directory. I then decided to try the other son, Dr. William J. Hanley, Jr., a practitioner of dental surgery. After obtaining the doctor's home and office numbers I dialed the one for his residence on the evening of Tuesday, September 4, 1973. The ring was answered almost immediately — and I now quote the entry I made in my diary at 7:15 p. m.:

"I have just phoned to Dr. Hanley's home, but I didn't find him in. His teen-age-sounding son said he is on a vacation, but will be back about 10 o'clock tonight. He said he is sure his father will be delighted for me to write an article, but I told him I was sure Dr. Hanley will be tired out when he gets in and I will call again tomorrow night. The boy was pleasant. He said Patrick Hanley is still living in Hoboken, but at a changed address."

Later I learned that the teen-ager is Peter Hanley, a high school sophomore who is fond of sports and plays baseball and football.

Peter said he would tell Dr. Hanley I had called about writing a biograph-

ical sketch of Judge Hanley, and he was confident his father would be waiting the following night to hear from me.

Of course, I did call Wednesday night. I can't be sure now whether Peter answered the phone, then handed it to his father, or whether I communicated directly with Dr. Hanley. At any rate, he said Peter had told him about my trying to get in touch with him the preceding night, so after a few remarks about how hot the weather had been both in my Virginia and his New Jersey — the town of Vinton, in which I live, was undergoing a heat wave — I got down to business and explained why I would like to write an article about his noted father for HOBBIES.

I asked Dr. Hanley a number of questions about Judge Hanley, and the answers he gave me have been incorporated into a preceding part of this article. He said that instead of trying to give information by phone he would prefer for me to send him a questionnaire, which he could complete after conferring with his father's surviving sisters. I agreed to this, and promised to type a list of questions. He was interested to learn that I had reasonably good copies of all of "William J. Halley's" Victor records and some of his Columbias, and said that the ones he had were badly worn and no longer gave much idea of his father's voice. I replied that I would be glad to make a tape recording of the ones

I had to send to him and also said I would include a couple of copies of HOBBIES so he would be able to see just what type of magazine the singer-judge's biography would appear in. I kept my word and within a short time went to Television Station WSLs in Roanoke, where an old friend, Mel Linkous, taped the Halley records with my introductory comments. I also sent the promised HOBBIES and added facsimiles of 1913 Victor record supplements showing listings of the first Halley records. Of course, I likewise sent the questionnaire. Mel used reel-to-reel tape to copy the records and, unfortunately, Dr. Hanley didn't have a recorder of that type nor did he know anyone who did, so it went unplayed for weeks. The light weight pick-up on the studio record-playing equipment didn't bring out some of the numbers clearly, and I now know that I could have done a more satisfactory recording job by playing them on my Credenza model Orthophonic Victrola. I plan to do this and to copy them on a tape cassette that Dr. Hanley can use. A few of the discs that sounded worn-out at the studio seem almost like new on the Orthophonic.

After I mailed the various things to Dr. Hanley, weeks went by without my hearing from him, but I waited, in the hope that he was putting together the information I needed. Then my "adopted brother," Merritt Malvern of Buffalo, N. Y., drove to West Orange, N. J., to attend a lecture given by Prof. Raymond Wile in Thomas A. Edison's old laboratory, which is now the Edison National Historic Site. Knowing of my plans to write an article about "William J. Halley," he decided to go a few miles to Upper Montclair, taking a cassette tape recorder, and to question Dr. Hanley for me. He and Phyllis, his wife, were cordially received by Dr. and Mrs. Hanley and those of their children who were at home, and Merritt's visit resulted in a lively tape with many intriguing recollections of the late Judge Hanley's character and personality. I am relying largely on that recorded tape in writing this article and am grateful to "Brother Merritt" for obtaining it.

I think Merritt must have spoken a few words in my praise as an honest and reliable character who was not engaged in racketeering, for Dr. Hanley entrusted him with the big family scrapbook about his father to be passed on to me. It remained unopened for weeks while I was writing



Judge William J. Hanley in early middle age.

the Al Bernard series, but I have since scanned every page and made notes of many interesting and intriguing items to be included in this survey. For the taped interview and temporary possession and use of the scrapbook I am gratefully indebted to both the Hanley family and to my brother by adoption.

## II. The Taped Interview

Now let's turn to that taped discussion and set down, in no particular order, some of the always interesting and sometimes amusing things that Dr. Hanley recalled concerning his notable father.

In 1915, when World War I had been ravaging Europe for only a few months, an English comic song that became popular in this country was "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers." It was a tongue-twisting ditty that required great skill in articulation for singing properly, as you may judge for yourself by the words of the chorus:

"Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers;  
Such skill at sewing shirts our shy young Sister  
Susie shows,  
Some soldiers send epistles — said they'd rather  
sleep in thistles  
Than the saucy, so! short shirts for soldiers  
Sister Susie sews."

As Patrick Hanley recalls, Al Jolson featured "Sister Susie" in his act and after singing it without stumbling over the tricky syllables would offer a \$20 bill to anybody in the audience who could come upon the stage and go through it without a mistake. Young "Will Halley," himself then, like Jolson, a Columbia recording artist, learned of the offer and took advantage of it. He appeared several times, sang the song without a hitch. He would even have the orchestra speed up the tempo, so he sang faster than Jolson. Before long, however, his face began to appear ultra-familiar to the fabulous blackface comedian, and when Hanley would get up and offer to render the song Jolson would tell him to get lost for his services were not required.

Jolson, naturally, made a Columbia record of "Sister Susie," in which he has the assistance of a male chorus that, although given no label credit, almost certainly is the Peerless Quartet. He uses the prize "gag" in the record, but instead of offering \$20 says he will present a hat to any male volunteer who sings the refrain flawlessly, while successful lady contestants will be given a 10-pound box of candy, their choice of — I am not sure of all the brand names — Huyler's, Liggett's or Park and Tilford. (This is an excellent instance of the way some fortunate manufactured products used to get free publicity on records.) Someone, probably Henry Burr, volunteers to sing the chorus, but Jolson declares him "out" when he says, "Some soldiers sent a pistol —"

The Jolson record is amusing, but far from being as good as the Edison by Billy Murray, in which bystanders also are invited to participate and — of course by pre-arrangement — develop twisted tongues and sing "Sister Susie" for "Sister Susie." At any rate, it is amusing to know that young Will Hanley had the skill to call Jolson's bluff and collect his money until

the irate comedian, recognizing him as a "repeater," ruled him out of bounds.

Dr. Hanley described his father as "a great guy," but one with a rather abrupt manner. He was extremely fond of sports and served as lawyer for the New York Americans in the early days of professional football.

Sometimes, Dr. Hanley said, his father would phone to him and say he had tickets for some important sports event, bark, "Meet in the lobby!" and hang up without giving his son time to explain that other things, such as studying for examinations, were looming large in his immediate future. His attitude seemed to be like that of an army officer — he gave instructions and they were to be obeyed, or perhaps his manner was the same as a judge who makes sure his courtroom instructions are carried out.

During his long legal career, William Hanley was attorney for Jack Kearns, the manager of heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Dempsey, and he was also the lawyer for a middle-weight champion, Mickey Walker. He was a warm admirer of Joe Louis and, his son says, went to all of Louis' fights. One of his particularly warm friendships was with Dan Parker, sports writer of the New York Daily Mirror.

"Somehow," Dr. Hanley recalls, "he could always get good seats. I remember one fight where he arranged for me to sit in the press section beside Parker, who agreed on condition that I would keep my mouth shut and not do anything to distract his attention from the story he was writing. Another time, at a game between Army and Notre Dame, Father fixed it for my brother and me to sit on the Notre Dame bench. Of course he himself was athletically inclined and had played football and baseball, but not as a professional, while he was getting his education."

As evidence of his fondness for sports, Judge Hanley was a member of the New York Athletic Club. He was fond of dining at Toot Shor's and Dinty Moore's restaurants, where many sports notables ate. One of his close friends was Robert L. Ripley, who drew the famous "Believe It Or Not" cartoons.

William, Jr., and Patrick were Judge Hanley's only children. Asked about their father's personal characteristics, they recalled that he had no hobbies of the collecting type. He usually owned a Lincoln car and had a chauffeur, but never himself learned to drive. Although he smoked cigarettes for years, he eventually gave up the habit. Dr. Hanley said he could recall three Hoboken houses and two apartments in which the family lived during his father's lifetime. He described the lawyer-jurist as being six feet or so tall during his later years and weighing about 210 pounds. His photos show that he gradually lost most of his Titian-red hair, and was graying and becoming bald by late middle age. Both he and his wife had blue eyes, and they are buried in the same plot in the North Arlington cemetery.

Dr. Hanley said his father didn't talk much about his recording career, but sometimes his sons would get out what badly worn "William J. Hanley" records the family owned and play them to tease him. "Father said the old records didn't sound like him," his son said — and, considering their condition, they probably did lack a great deal of fairly representing his voice.

One thing his sons proudly recalled was that their father was such a good speaker and had such a fine personal presence that other lawyers on occasion engaged him to plead their cases. His ability to speak effectively also was put to frequent use when he campaigned for Democratic candidates seeking local and state offices.

Shanley's, the New York night spot, in which the young William J. Hanley sang, was at 1525 Broadway, where the Paramount building now stands. Dr. Hanley says that in later years his father liked to take the family for vacation stays at the Spring House Hotel at Block Island, R. I., and would frequently sing "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," the favorite song of the proprietor, Ray Payne.

Now it seems time to turn to the large old family scrapbook and see what light it sheds upon the personality and career of the man who "graduated" from being a recording comedian to becoming a lawyer and then a judge.

## III. Early Days as Judge

From the beginning of his legal career William J. Hanley was a successful attorney, or counselor, as trial lawyers usually seem to be called in New Jersey. He won acquittal for a number of clients who seemed almost certain to be convicted and obtained prison sentences for others who appeared on their way to the death penalty. And while making an outstanding record as a man of law he was also active in Democratic politics and was regarded as one of the party's most forceful, effective campaign speakers.

Undoubtedly, these factors were taken into consideration when Gov. George S. Silzer was confronted by the necessity of appointing a judge for Hoboken District Court. Hudson County political leaders were torn by dissension and unable to agree upon a suitable man to recommend, so, keeping in mind Hanley's reputation for hard work, capability and party loyalty, the Governor chose the former recording artist. The new judge was then barely 30, and some critics considered him too young for the job.

This attitude was commented upon editorially by the Hudson Dispatch, for March 15, 1923. Under the heading of "Hanley's Opportunity" the paper pointed to the young lawyer's singing career as evidence that he had the qualifications to succeed in anything he undertook:

"Out of the political confusion that has attached to the selection of a man for the Hoboken District Court Judgeship has come the appointment of Counselor William J. Hanley at the hands of Governor Silzer.

"It is pretty generally known that the Governor has had a deal of trouble in reaching a decision in the Hoboken case; he has given more than ordinary attention to the selection, possibly due to the fact that names presented by the political organization in Hoboken failed

(Continued on next page)

to measure up to the importance of the position. "In the selection of Mr. Hanley the matter of age is looked upon as a handicap; he is too young. But these are times when young men are assuming big responsibilities these are times when responsibilities are developing young men, these are times when young men are expected to measure up to responsibilities rather than waiting to grow up to the responsibilities."

"Ten years ago, after leaving high school, this young man became a singer in one of the big restaurants of New York. He was making big money; he could have gone on the stage and anybody who knows his capabilities would hardly fail to predict that he would have been one of the big comedians of the stage. At any rate, that was his outlook. But he had ambitions for more serious things; one might say for bigger things, except that such a statement would be a reflection on those comedians, those real artists, whose worthwhile mission it is in life to make the world laugh. The life of a comedian is not a loss, not by any means. Take William H. Crane, Eddie Foy, Thomas Q. Seabrooke, Louis Mann, Jimmie Powers, William Hodge and a hundred others; by the happiness they have radiated from the stage they have dispensed happiness to thousands — millions. . . . If Mr. Hanley had elected to remain on the stage his life would not have been wasted. The fact is, however, that he chose to give up the glamour of an attractive life, and the big money he was already making, and the bigger money which no doubt lay ahead, for his ambition to be a lawyer."

"He still has a wonderful keenness for humor as those who have heard him in after-dinner speeches know so well; but it is impressive that he works hard at the law, it is impressive that he is a genuine hustler. This young man will now sit in judgment on the civil litigations of his fellow citizens. When he gave up the stage to become a lawyer, he sought the serious side of life, sought responsibility. He now has an opportunity to make good in a big way, has an opportunity at an age long before most young men get their chance. He has a rare opportunity, and he no doubt will make the most of it."

On Tuesday, April 3, Counselor Hanley's title became Judge. The Dispatch published an article relating the details of his being sworn in to office, illustrated with a photo of the young judge, looking stern and business-like, and holding a gavel with which he had been presented. Excerpts from the news story follow:

"William J. Hanley, new judge of the Hoboken District Court, marched into his new position yesterday amid a bower of flowers, mostly roses. At the same time Counselor J. Raymond Tiffany marched out of the judgeship in a most graceful fashion. The whole affair was like a big family party."

"The family touch was heightened by the appearance in court of Judge Hanley's mother, Mrs. Mary Hanley, who is a member of the faculty of the Hoboken Vocational Training School, his wife, and two of his sisters, Miss Eleanor Hanley and Mrs. T. A. Blake."

"Judge Hanley in a modest and straightforward little speech gave his mother the credit for his success so far in life. When he was a careless lad not fully aware of the importance of his school work it was the firm and kindly influence of his mother, he said, which kept him plugging on up the upward path of education."

"Colonel Clement de R. Leonard, the white haired 'Dean of the Hoboken Bar,' and known as the only 'grand old man of the Republican party in Hoboken,' stepped forward and expressed his appreciation of the youthful judge."

"He had watched 'Bill' Hanley's progress from the time he was a small boy, he said, and congratulated Governor Silzer and Mayor Patrick H. Griffin on their good judgment in backing him for the judgeship. . . . Counselor Harold Halpern, who has been connected with Judge Hanley's law office for the past five years presented him with a gavel with an engraved silver band around it."

"Among the floral presentations was a stunning basket of roses from Mayor Griffin. . . . a veritable fountain of blossoms from the Hoboken Jitney Owners Association, which Judge Hanley has represented as counsel, a large pot of climbing roses from the Second Ward Democratic Club, and baskets of flowers and potted plants from many other individuals and organizations."

The tribunal over which Governor Silzer had chosen William Hanley to preside was generally known as "the poorman's court" because it could not try suits involving more than \$500. In the majority of cases, as a newspaper article pointed out, when suits were brought for smaller



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amounts than the maximum, the persons involved were poor and long waits for a decision would work a hardship upon them.

With this in mind, the former recording artist was determined from the beginning of his tenure to dispose of cases as rapidly as was consistent with justice, and he soon won a reputation as a fair-minded, efficient judge who ran "a tight court" and stood for no nonsense or intentional delays.

In the Hanley scrapbook is a newspaper clipping dated November 21, 1932 — more than nine years after Judge Hanley ascended to the bench — in which leading jurists at the second annual dinner of the Hoboken Lawyers Club praised the judge and the conduct of his court: Of Judge Hanley, Vice Chancellor John J. Fallon said:

"Those who have had occasion to appear before him during the period of years he has been on the District Court bench are aware that he has done his level best to dispose of his cases in a manner to reflect credit on the court and himself."

Concerning Judge Hanley's performance, an undated clipping from an unidentified newspaper, but probably the Hudson Dispatch, remarked:

"The law's delay, now being made the subject of discussion by the Hudson County Bar Association, as well as similar organizations in this State and elsewhere . . . is virtually unknown in the Hoboken District Court. Speed in the determination of cases is one of the things that is foremost there, but speed consistent with justice as the cases require."

In March, 1925, under the heading of "HANLEY TO BEGIN HIS THIRD

(Continued on page 53)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

YEAR AS LOCAL JUDGE" the Dispatch reported:

"When Judge William J. Hanley sits tomorrow in the Hoboken District Court he will celebrate his second anniversary as a judge in the Mile Square City Court. Two years ago he was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of Judge Raymond Tiffany. Since then he has heard and decided hundreds of cases, but up to the present time not one has been reversed. Since he took up his duties the business of the Court has greatly increased and today it is one of the busiest district courts in the State."

On occasion, associates and admirers of the popular judge honored him with testimonial dinners. Typical is an account of one in a column-long, undated article which I take to be from the Dispatch. It obviously was published in 1928, because it mentions predictions that A. Harry Moore would be the next Governor of New Jersey and Moore took office for three years in January, 1929, after Judge Hanley, who was an intimate friend of the candidate, had proved himself probably the most effective pro-Moore speaker in the entire State. The news story was headed, "HONORS HEaped ON JUDGE HANLEY AT BIG DINNER":

"Members of the Bench and Bar, state officials and statesmen sang the praises of Judge William J. Hanley at a banquet given in his honor at the Hotel Astor, New York City, Saturday night. Honored and respected by his fellow barristers, the admiration and affection in which the Hoboken District Court Judge is held by his many friends was forcefully demonstrated by the 350 men who gathered to honor him."

"Incidentally, City Commissioner A. Harry Moore, who was toastmaster was repeatedly hailed by the speakers as the next Governor of New Jersey, and although the general atmosphere was akin to a Democratic organization rally political shades of opinion were obliterated in the general demonstration for the guest of the evening, and the enthusiasm was as sincere as it was wholehearted."

"In paying his tribute, Commissioner Moore stressed 'his qualities of loyalty and the fine humanity of 'Bill' Hanley as a man, a lawyer and a judge'. Judge Thomas F. Meaney of the Juvenile Court said: 'When Bill Hanley was elevated to the bench the human element was placed there'."

"A humorous talk was given by Judge Hyman Lazarus, of Bayonne, in the course of which he paid a sincere compliment to Judge Hanley . . . and predicting that there was in store for him still higher honors. On behalf of his friends he presented the judge with a gold mesh bag for Mrs. Hanley and a diamond ring set in platinum for himself."

"In responding to the eulogies that had been showered upon him . . . Judge Hanley made a typical Hanley speech. . . . That he had had serious misgivings as to his adaptability for the bench, he admitted, but in his characteristic manner said: 'Candidly, I wanted that job as Judge of the Hoboken District Court. I wanted the opportunity to show that I could make good in a serious role. You know all my life I had made my money being funny. I have tried to make good, and you men, gentlemen of the bar, know how far I have succeeded.'"

### IV. In Judge Hanley's Court

One of the quoted speakers referred to the "human" quality that "Bill" Hanley brought to his court. Like most such institutions dealing chiefly with small claims and litigation of the poor, less educated classes, Judge Hanley's court had its share of colorful cases, which sometimes gave him an opportunity to make Solomonic decisions and brought out the warm and sympathetic heart beneath his judicial demeanor.

A case that the reporter appeared to find highly amusing involved a woman of Irish descent who was one of the occupants of a five-story tene-

ment building. The lady, whose name of Sypheers certainly doesn't sound Irish, was charged by her American landlady and by Spanish, Swedish, Italian and German fellow tenants with keeping six canaries that constantly annoyed them by whistling "The Wearin' o' the Green."

According to the reporter, the complainants appeared in deadly fear of Mrs. Sypheers, who was described as "a tall, thin woman with angry, blazing eyes." The story continues:

"They testified that just to annoy them Mrs. Sypheers fed about 40 cats and dogs in the hallway of the house every day. Mrs. Sypheers said she did it out of the kindness of her heart. She said she fed a hungry dog one day, and it returned the next day with three other dogs and two cats. The third day there were seven cats and a dozen dogs and after that the hall was always full of them."

The clipping is torn and ends at this point, but the heading says "5 NATIONS WIN HOBOKEN WAR AGAINST IRISH." This sounds as if the Judge ordered the feeding stopped.

Another torn clipping, with the beginning gone, gives evidence of Judge Hanley's own goodness of heart. The dispute involved two women — Mrs. Mary Jacopac and Mrs. Sadie Jacopac, who, despite their odd names, were not related. Mary owned a house in which Sadie and her four small children occupied an apartment. Mary told the court she had been patient and had waited six months for her rent without being paid. She wanted the other Mrs. Jacopac evicted because she needed income from the apartment.

On the other hand, Sadie Jacopac had been deserted by her husband seven weeks. She came into court and had no means of support for herself and her frightened children. She was described as "a small and undernourished woman" who "stood in apathetic silence while Judge Hanley debated the question of what might be done." He understood full well that Mary Jacopac was entitled to \$180 for the six months rent on which nothing had been paid for five months before Sadie's husband deserted her, but at the same time, he was concerned by the pitiful plight revealed in the newspaper account:

"On \$5 weekly she receives from the poor-master, Mrs. (Mary) Jacopac said she has succeeded through the winter months in providing meager fare for herself and her little brood, whose ages run from two to six years. She has had little fire in her home. There has been no milk. Even now, she said, there was only a little wood in the house to provide some slight warmth."

"Affected by the woman's pathetic story, Judge Hanley asked the landlady if she would wait a little longer. She wouldn't. So he deferred action and after court gave Mrs. Jacopac money for groceries and for her immediate needs. He spent some time then in telephonic communication with various firms in an effort to obtain employment for the woman, who expressed an eager willingness to work if she could find some place where the children might be left during the day."

Poor, poor women! — the landlady with not much income of her own, who needed to have some money coming from her apartment, and the mother of four small children, penniless and not knowing where to turn. Probably the earthly troubles of both are over by now. But this incident shows Judge Hanley's warmth of heart. And it is not the only clipping in the big old scrapbook telling of his digging into his own pocket to help

unfortunate people who came before his court.

### V. Back to Practicing Law

William J. Hanley was appointed judge of the Hoboken District Court for five years. In 1928, after he had done yeoman service to elect his friend, Harry Moore as Governor, Moore re-appointed him for another five years. But when the question of the judgeship came up again in 1933, some quirk of Hoboken's internal Democratic politics kept the Governor from renewing the appointment.

Judging from newspaper reports, the District Court incumbent was not friendly with the Mayor of Hoboken, Bernard H. McFeely, and because of this ill-feeling Governor Moore found, or felt, himself unable to ask his old friend, who had campaigned so hard for him, to continue in office. That is the impression I get, at least, from an editorial, "The Irony of Organization Politics," in the Hudson Dispatch, for Mon., December 5, 1932:

"The irony of fate — or the irony of organization politics — has decreed that Judge William J. Hanley should not be reappointed by Governor Moore. It was Judge Hanley who made the speech in South Jersey, in 1930 that gave notice of the fact that Moore would again be a candidate for Governor, in 1931. It was one of those 'significant' speeches. Much had been written predicting that Moore would run again, but when Judge Hanley, close friend of the then former Governor, projected him into the race, the people of New Jersey knew it was real. . . . That Hanley would not be making a speech unless he knew exactly what he was talking about. . . . But Judge Hanley close personal friend of the Governor, is not in the good graces of Mayor McFeely, leader of his party in Hoboken. Appointments cannot materialize without the O. K. of the leader. That is organization politics, whether it be Democratic or Republican. It works strangely in some cases, but seldom more ironically than in this case."

Shortly after Judge Hanley returned to his law practice, a columnist wrote of meeting him and finding him without bitterness at having lost the judicial post in which he had served with fairness, intelligence, integrity and distinction. Part of the tattered clipping is missing, but the newsman wrote:

"Thank God, in private he's the same old Bill. And after a few more years of the serious life maybe he will be so well established that he can be natural again in public. And when that time comes this world will be a lot brighter and a lot happier, for Big Bill Hanley is in a class all by himself in spreading laughter. And after all I wonder if Will Rogers is not as useful in his way as Elihu Root is in his way. There are many great lawyers, but there are only a comparatively few really great comedians."

There is much to reflect on in that concluding remark!

We are now through with Judge Hanley's judicial career. But I have just come across the tag end of the story about Mrs. Sypheers being accused of feeding all those cats and dogs in the tenement hallway, and perhaps it should be quoted to tell how the controversy ended:

"The neighbors then told of a barrage of tomato cans and bottles that always awaited them outside the door of the Sypheers flat on the second floor."

"Mrs. Sypheers is awaiting action by the grand jury on a charge of beating one of her neighbors, Mrs. Lena Hoogreff, with a bottle. Sypheers testified that his wife was 'the most peaceful woman in the world.'"

"Judge Hanley gave the Sypheers three days to get out of the house."

At some time after he ceased to be a judge, William Hanley moved his

(Continued on next page)

law office to Jersey City. An undated clipping from the *Hudson Dispatch* (which was published in Union City, N. J.) says:

"HANLEY TO RESUME LAW PRACTICE IN HOBOKEN. . . . Former Judge William J. Hanley, who has engaged in the practice of law in Jersey City for the past five years, will move back to Hoboken within the next few days, and establish his offices at 84 Washington St. Hanley was judge of the Hoboken District Court 10 years and is a former assemblyman. He lives at 1213 Bloomfield St. The former judge will take an active interest in the campaign to reelect President Roosevelt."

I said this news item is undated, but the words, "Thursday, October" appear on the back. The figure indicating the day of the month has been trimmed off. Circumstantial evidence indicates the story appeared in October, 1940. Hanley did not give up his judgeship until 1933, so could not have practiced law in Jersey City for five years before a period ending, at the earliest, in 1938. Roosevelt won his second term in 1936. Probably, then, Hanley was preparing to work for him in the few remaining weeks before the election when he tried for a third term in 1940. (In 1939 the President indicated he would not seek a third term, but later changed his mind.) Just possibly the year was 1944, when Roosevelt was elected for the fourth and last time, but 1940 seems more logical.

The chronology of Hanley's post-judgeship days becomes more puzzling when another news story is considered — this time, one headed, "HANLEY CHOSEN AS COUNSEL TO SCHOOL BOARD. . . . Succeeds Greenberg, New Judge of the District Court." Only a few lines of the long story, dealing mostly with routine matters that came before the school board, are worthy of quoting:

"Former Judge William J. Hanley, who was for ten years on the Hoboken District Court bench, was last night appointed counsel to the Hoboken Board of Education, succeeding Judge Joseph Greenberg, resigned, who last year replaced him in the District Court. . . . He (Hanley) became associated in practice with Norman R. Wynne nine years ago."

According to stories quoted during the earlier part of this series, Hanley was chosen to be attorney for the Hoboken Board of Education in 1933 and held that position until his death, at one time refusing to give up the post although he was offered \$2,000 more a year to serve as U. S. District Attorney. The clipping from which I have just quoted, however, shows that his school board appointment was made in May, 1934, for on its reverse side is a column of death notices about people who had died from May 19 through 22 in that year.

Throughout his entire legal and judicial career, "Bill" Hanley was active in politics and was one of the speakers most frequently called upon by the Democratic organization. He was extremely active in the 1925 campaign to elect A. Harry Moore Governor, and Moore did win, by a statewide margin of 25,000. The majority reported for him in Hanley's Hudson County was 104,000. This indicates that Moore lost the remainder of New Jersey by 79,000, and shows how badly he needed Hudson County, and Bill Hanley's oratory, in order to win.

In the 1928 campaign for Governor, Hanley actively campaigned for the

Democratic nominee, William L. Dill, but, Morgan F. Larson, a Republican, was elected. A year or so later Moore selected Hanley to make the first public announcement that he would try again for the governorship in 1931. He did, with Judge Hanley's enthusiastic support, and won his second term. (That year was a good one for Democrats everywhere, just as 1928, when Dill ran, had been bad.) Then, as we know, in 1933, Moore, unable to bring himself to break with the mayor who headed the Hoboken Democratic organization refused to reappoint Hanley to the bench.

Here is an interesting story from the *Dispatch* of October 21, 1936, telling of Hanley's taking the place,



LATER LIFE. — Judge William J. Hanley as he appeared in the last years of his legal and judicial career.

as a party campaigner, of an old classmate who had become ill:

"Comradeship that began 31 years ago held true again yesterday for former District Court Judge William J. Hanley of Hoboken and Representative Edward J. Hart of Jersey City."

"For last night Hart, considered one of the most effective political speakers in the State was 'curing a cold,' by resting at his home. . . . Both Hart and Hanley have long been front line speakers in Democratic county and state campaigns and so last night it was Hanley who was selected by Democratic headquarters to go with (State Senator William H. Smathers, Democratic candidate for U. S. Senator) to Elizabeth, Rahway, Summit and Plainfield on the Union County tour. U. S. Senator A. Harry Moore, of Jersey City (the former Governor — J. W.) and Allen Barkley, of Kentucky, were in the same touring party. For Hanley (sic) it was a particularly pleasant assignment, because it meant not only an opportunity to 'bat' for his boyhood friend but to maintain his unbroken record of state campaigning since 1932."

"Hart and Hanley were classmates at St. Peter's Prep Jersey City, from 1905 to 1909, and always they were friendly rivals and the leading orators in an institution which has prepared some of the best public speakers in the state. In the annual elocution contests at the school in their four years, Hanley and Hart divided top honors — each was twice winner and twice runner-up. . . ."

I pointed out the misprint of Hanley's name as Haley, but did you observe that Alvin Barkley, who was to become U. S. Senator from Kentucky and Vice President of the United States, was referred to as Allen Barkley? More than one person on the *Dispatch* staff must have been napping.

Besides delivering political addresses, Hanley, both as attorney and judge, also spoke before many other groups. He urged high school pupils

to get the best educations they possibly could, arguing that the time when an adult could win success with only grammar school instruction had gone by. He delivered Armistice Day addresses to his fellow veterans of World War I and, since there were still men living who had fought in the Civil War, spoke before them in praise of their old commander, General Ulysses S. Grant. He obviously led an unceasingly active and useful life throughout his recording career, and no doubt was full of plans for the future when he died at the age of 68.

## VI. Dr. Hanley's Family

All that remains to be done before concluding this account of "William J. Hanley's" life is to tell something about his son, Dr. William J. Hanley, Jr., who has been my chief source of information about his father; Dr. Hanley's wife and their five children. I should also mention that Dr. Hanley described his mother as "a beautiful woman," who before her marriage was a hat model in the famous Hattie Carnegie salon, where two of Judge Hanley's sisters also were once employed.

Dr. Hanley was graduated from dental school in 1950. His wife before her marriage was Miss Kathryn Sanger, a native of East Orange, N. J. When they were married she was living in New York City and was a member of the New York Ballet Company. The wedding took place in a New York City church affiliated with Xavier High School, which Dr. Hanley had attended.

Their oldest son, Christopher, was a senior at Amherst College, Amherst, Mass. He has been, his father said in the taped interview with Merritt Malvern, "all over the world." An expert photographer, he has a large "side-line" income from taking wedding pictures and finds the money a valuable aid to his travels. He has played the guitar since he was a small boy, has a hobby of re-finishing and re-stringing old instruments, and periodically takes a few of his restored guitars to England, where he sells them for enough to pay his flight expenses. He has studied architecture and creative writing and served as art director of the college literary journal.

A daughter, Barbara, who is a year younger than Chris, attends Wheelock College in Boston. Peter, with whom I talked by phone while I was trying to reach his father, was in his senior high school year. He plays football high school year. There are two sons younger than he — William James (Jamie) and Robert Terence (Terry.)

The Hanley family has reason to be proud of the bearer of that name who came before them and advanced from being a student and part-time public entertainer to a leading attorney and widely admired and honored occupant of a judge's bench. I hope they will find pleasure in reading this recital of their forebear's achievements and knowing that some of the details of his outstanding life will be preserved for further generations in HOBBIES.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## ALAN TURNER

PART I

By JIM WALSH

The late Alan Turner today is a man of mystery—he is, at least, to me, but from 65 to 75 years ago he was among the leading singers of the British Isles and was generally regarded as one of the best English operatic baritones. This one-time prominence makes it the more difficult to understand why it is now so hard to obtain trustworthy information concerning the man and his life.

In writing "the late" before Turner's name, I took a certain amount of license. I don't know when and where Alan Turner was born, and I don't know when he died—if he is dead. There is a remote chance that he still is living, but, if he is, remorseless arithmetic proves that he is nearing the century mark, if he has not yet reached it. Since such a long life is uncommon, I assume that the once famous baritone has died and the news of his going has not come to my attention. I know that he was alive and active 40 years ago, in 1935, but of his life after that I have learned nothing. He is, as I began by saying, a mystery man.

What then, do I know of Alan Turner that justifies my undertaking this study of his recording career? I'll try to relate the scanty facts in some sort of order.

First, I know that his first records apparently were issued in 1906, although some probably were recorded in 1905. He was then already noted for his English language interpretations of certain operatic arias, such as "The Heart Bowed Down," from "The Bohemian Girl"; "The Toreador Song" from "Carmen"; "Even Bravest Heart," from "Faust"; "In Happy Moments," from "Maritana," and the Prologue from "Pagliacci." Photographs of him, published in record lists shortly after he began recording, depict him as a man who perhaps was as young as 25, and, possibly, though not probably, as much as 10 years older. Most likely, the best guess is that he was 27 or 28 when his first records were made. Say 27. That would make him 96 now.

The thumbnail photo of Turner which appeared in Victor record catalogs for many years and was also reproduced in the lists of some other firms shows him as a man with a rather high forehead, dark hair and a black mustache that curled upward at the ends. The face appears the same in an almost full length picture in a catalog published in 1913 by the minor English company, Diploma, but shows him wearing a high, stiff white collar, a cravat and a white

B45 Silver Bell  
Yesterday you called me  
sweetheart, by Robert Carr

Mr. ALAN TURNER,  
Baritone.

B52 Until  
Your eyes have told me so

B53 Yeoman's Wedding  
In Happy Moments

B58 O, Star of Eve  
She is far from the Land



B51 Love's Old Sweet Song  
Queen of the Earth

ARTISTIC BARITONE. — This almost full length photograph of Alan Turner was copied from a 1913-14 catalog of Diploma records issued in England by a German firm. As far as is known, it was never used in any other record list.

vest, a dark jacket, probably of some checked material, and a pair of trousers of the same type. He has one hand in a trouser pocket. Another rests upon the arm of a chair. His appearance seems typical of that of the concert and operatic singers of his day, and I fancy a resemblance between him and the Italian baritone, Battistini. Regardless of whether you like mustaches—and I don't—the impression his photo makes is that of a man of intelligence, culture and character. Another picture, which was used in an advertisement in the *Talking Machine News* makes his eyes appear light in color—probably gray or blue.

From my childhood until recent days I have had a fixed mental image of Alan Turner—always the same

rather distinguished looking man with the upward curling mustache. Not until I began to assemble information for this biographical study did it occur to me that the man, who appears in the full length picture to be short and somewhat slender, had parents, like everybody else; that he was once a baby, then a small boy; that he was sent to school and perhaps attended a university, and somewhere along the path to manhood learned that he had a fine baritone voice and was able to put it to successful professional use. Yet all these things obviously are true. It had not even occurred to me to wonder whether he married and had children of his own, but, rightly or wrongly, I persist in imagining him a bachelor.

I have known for years that Turner at one time was a member of the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, which traveled throughout England, presenting English language productions of famous operas. I obtained this information from a brief letter written by A. W. Sutton, of Old Brompton, Kent, England, which appeared in the *Sound Wave* for June, 1910:

"I heard Mr. Alan Turner sing in 'Maritana' with the Carl Rosa Opera Company in this town twice last spring, and I should like very much to have records of 'The Heart Bowed Down' and 'In Happy Moments,' sung by him on Ambersols."

Mr. Sutton should have owned a disc, rather than a cylinder, talking machine. He would have learned that it was almost impossible to find an English or American brand of disc records that did not have Alan Turner's renditions of those arias from "The Bohemian Girl" and "Maritana."

(Though it was for many years of high repute in England, where, for all I know, it may still be operating, few American music lovers know much about the Carl Rosa Opera Company. It was founded in 1875 by a German who was born in Hamburg and whose real name was August Nicolaus. He changed his name to Carl Rosa after coming to England with his plan of establishing an opera company that would sing in the native tongue. Rosa died in 1889. His wife then carried on the company and it was afterwards under the management of Walter and Alfred von Noorden and, after them, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Phillip. It almost certainly was the inspiration of the company giving operas in English which Alan Turner managed in the 1920s and '30s and perhaps into the '40s, though most likely its activities ceased after World War II began in 1939.)

I thought, until I was well along with this article, that Turner, who almost certainly during his career must have sung some roles in foreign tongues, made records in no language except English. One Sunday, by painstakingly clipping and pasting, I put together, in the exact order I wanted it, what I considered to be the most nearly complete list of his recordings it would be possible to prepare. Then on the next day, Monday, I received from William R. Bryant, of Portland, Me., a list of discs Turner had made for small short-lived American companies, such as International—records of which I had known nothing. And Bill called my attention to there being in a Spanish language Zonophone record catalog dated May, 1906, a rendition of "Pro peccatis" from "Stabat Mater," sung in Latin

by—Alan Turner! I have that Zonophone catalog, but it just didn't occur to me that a list of records compiled almost 70 years ago and printed in Spanish would contain anything by the English baritone.

The only other Turner record I can think of that might possibly be in a foreign language is his famous 12-inch rendition of the prologue from "Pagliacci," which the Gramophone Company issued in England in February, 1907, and which many collectors, especially those in the British Isles, still consider one of the best Prologue records ever made. I have never heard it, although I have his shortened 10-inch version on Victor and sung in English. The Gramophone disc *may* be in Italian, but I think it more likely that it, too, is in Turner's mother tongue.

Bill Bryant, who said he learned through a "grapevine" named Martin Bryan that I was assembling the ingredients of a Turner series, told me something amusing about two Rex vertical-cut records he owns which play with a sapphire point. These short-lived, small-selling discs were made from about 1915 to the beginning of 1918. The first, No. 5290, contains on one side a ragtime song, "Alagazam," written by Harry Von Tilzer. The label says the singer is Alan Turner, but it is really Arthur Collins. Then record No. 5291 of "The Bedouin Love Song" is, according to the label, by Collins, but the singer really is Turner! Whoever printed the labels got mixed up and assigned the artists' names to the wrong songs. But I'd be willing to bet that Arthur Collins, who had a fine baritone voice, could have done a better job of singing Bayard Taylor's pseudo-Bedouin ditty than the dignified Mr. Turner could have done with "Alagazam."

I thought that the first record by Alan Turner issued by any American manufacturer and perhaps by any company anywhere was his single-faced Zonophone of "I'll Be Waiting In The Gloaming, Sweet Genevieve," which came out in April, 1906. But then Bill Bryant's list showed that one month earlier, in March, a Turner rendition of the "Letter Song" from "Veronique" had been published on one of those 10½-inch American records, made of a blue material called "Empedite." They had a trademark showing an Indian listening to an external horn phonograph and the motto, "Music Hath Charms." Perhaps some of the Sterling cylinders Turner recorded in England were made even earlier. During the 1906-7 period, Sterling, as will be shown later, claimed Turner as an exclusive artist for all types of records, disc as well as cylinder, but perhaps this "exclusive" stipulation applied only to the British Isles and he was at liberty to sing for as many companies as he liked on his periodic visits to the United States.

I knew before I began work on this series that the name of Turner was one of considerable distinction in British musical circles. At the period (1906-7) when Alan Turner was beginning to win widespread popularity through his records, there was a tenor, Bernard Turner (could he have been Alan's brother? Probably not for they made no duets together) who, as set forth in the *Talking Machine News* of November 1, 1907, had succeeded "the King's favorite tenor," Ernest Pike, as soloist of Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, Chelsea. He was a prolific recording artist, and, T. M. N. said, sang some of his Homophone discs in London, but had to go to Berlin to make others. Only one of Bernard Turner's records appears to have been current in the States—his solo of "Angels Guard Thee" (the Lullaby from "Jocelyn"), which was combined on Columbia A760 with Elise Stevenson's "A Little China Doll." The Turner side, of course, was made of matrices imported from England. I have never seen a photo of Bernard Turner, whose English records were perhaps as numerous as the baritone Turner's,

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## OPERATIC LIST

NUMBER			SIZES
31765	Belle of Brittany, Gems from the	Victor Light Opera Co.	12
	Chorus, Act I.—"Two Giddy Goats"—"Daffodil Time"—"Little Country Mice"—"Stepping Stones"—"The Old Chateau"—Finale, "All Roads Lead to Church."		
5776	Belle of Brittany—Stepping Stones	Marsh-Macdonough	10
31761	Bohemian Girl, Gems from (Balfe)	Victor Light Opera Co.	12
	Part of Overture—Chorus, "In the Gypsy's Life"—Chorus, "Come With the Gypsy Bride"—Entre Act Waltz—Chorus, "Happy and Light"—"Then You'll Remember Me"—Finale, "Oh, What Full Delight."		
2980	Bohemian Girl—I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls (Balfe)		
	Elizabeth Wheeler	10	
31285	Bohemian Girl—I Dreamt I Dwelt (Balfe)	Corinne Morgan	12
4567	Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bow'd Down (Balfe)	Turner	10
	2756 Bohemian Girl—Then You'll Remember Me (Balfe)	Macdonough	10
31757	Broken Idol, Gems from		
	Victor Light Opera Company	12	
	"A Little China Doll"—"Love Makes the World Go 'Round"—"Marie"—"Signs of a Honeymoon"—"Alabama."		
5721	Candy Shop—Medley (With Vocal Selections)	Victor Orchestra	10
5376	Carmen—Toreador Song (Bizet)	Turner	10
	This always popular "Toreador Song" is given a spirited and vigorous rendering by this sterling baritone.		
31788	Chimes of Normandy, Gems from	Victor Light Opera Co.	12
	Chorus, "Silent Heroes"—"Just Look at This, Just Look at That"—"Cold Sweat is on My Brow"—"That Night I'll Ne'er Forget"—"Bell Chorus," Finale.		
4074	Carmen—Toreador Song (Bizet) (In Spanish)	Francisco	10
60012	Chocolate Soldier—My Hero (Straus) (Price 75c.)	Marsh	10
31780	Chocolate Soldier, Gems from A	Victor Light Opera Co.	12
	Opening Chorus—"That Would be Lovely"—"Letter Duet"—"Thank the Lord the War is Over"—Finale, "My Hero."		
58334	Dinorah—Si, carina caprettina (Yes, My Beloved One)	Huguet	12
31783	Dollar Princess—Ring o' Roses	Marsh-Macdonough	12
31751	Dollar Princess, Gems of	Victor Light Opera Company	12
	"How Do You Do"—"My Dream of Love"—"Ring o' Roses"—"Tennis Dance"—"Hip! Hip! Hurrah!"		
58399	Don Pasquale—Pronta io son (My Part I'll Play) (Donizetti)	Huguet-Badini	12
52458	Don Pasquale—Quartet, Act I—E rimasto la impietrate (He Stands Immoveable)	Brambilla, Corsi, Pini-Corsi and Scipioni	10
58351	Don Pasquale—Signorina in tanta fretta (My Lady, Why This Haste?)	Corsi and Pini-Corsi	12
52430	Elisir D'Amore—Io sono ricco e tu sei bella (I Have Riches, Thou Hast Beauty) (Donizetti)	Passari, Pini-Corsi and Chorus	10



TURNER

FAMILIAR PHOTOGRAPH. — This picture of Alan Turner is from a page in a 1910 Victor record catalog. It continued to be reproduced in each yearly Victor catalog through 1924.



but have long imagined him a fairly large man with a felt hat pushed somewhat back on his head, talking with another man at a street corner and smiling broadly while he clutched a cigar between his teeth. The chances are this imaginary scene does him an injustice, however, because, as a singer who needed to take care of his voice, he probably didn't smoke. I have never imagined Alan Turner smoking anything.

Another recording tenor was named John Turner and a Maurice Turner appears in a July, 1913, record list. S. P. Turner was the business manager of the Pathe Company's British branch, and it is worth recalling that Maud Powell, the legendary American violinist, was the wife of H. Godfrey Turner. I don't however, know whether Godfrey Turner was a musician. And Walter James Turner (1889-1946) was one of the most important English music critics of his time.

Most important of all, however, of all the musically accomplished English Turners was the great operatic soprano, Eva Turner, who is still living. Eva Turner was born in Oldham, a city on the outskirts of Manchester, Lancashire, on October 10, 1898, just 25 years, four months and nine days after Ada Jones, destined to be the most popular of American recording comedienne, came into being there on June 1, 1873. Like the great English comedienne of World War II days, Gracie Fields, who was born in Rochdale, Eva Turner had a father who was superintendent of a cotton mill.

Was Eva Turner, soprano, related to Alan Turner, baritone, who probably was born some twenty years before her? At this writing I don't know. However, Quentin Riggs, who kindly provided the photo of Miss Turner that I have submitted, with one of Gracie Fields, for reproduction with this article, knows a man who is a close friend of Miss Turner, and says he will ask that gentleman to talk with the soprano and find out if she is kin to the baritone or whether she knew him during his singing days. If he reports his findings, I'll include them as this narrative progresses.

Regardless of relationship, there was a certain community of interest between the two Turners. When Eva was a child of, say, about ten, her father took her to a performance in Bristol by the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company (it was authorized to include the word "Royal" in its title after giving a number of command performances for Queen Victoria) and, says *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, after hearing whatever opera was presented in English that day, she decided to make operatic singing her career. (If the performance she witnessed took place in the 1907, '08 or '09 period, Alan Turner was probably one of the members of the cast.) A few years later the girl was sent to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music, first under Edgardo Levy and later under Richards-Broads. She obtained a licentiate and fellowship, but left the R. A. M. and joined the Rosa company as a member of the chorus to gain practi-



**FAMOUS LANCASHIRE SOPRANO.** — Eva Turner, the celebrated operatic diva, was born, like Alan Turner, in the area dominated by the great cotton manufacturing city of Manchester. Her father was a cotton mill superintendent.

cal operatic experience. (This probably was during the first World War, when I doubt, for reasons I'll explain later, that Alan Turner was in England.) Before long she was permitted to sing leading parts, such as Leonora in "Fidelio," but not being satisfied with her English experiences, went to Italy to study. This led to her later scintillating successes.

Regardless of whether Eva and Alan Turner were related, it's intriguing that he was a star baritone of the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company and that she gained her first operatic experience with the same organization.

(Continued on page 127)



## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WANTED

OLD FLUTES—Wood, Metal. Description, manufacturer, photo. — Kornblit, 902 Frostwood, Houston, Texas jcl2639

USED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS — Bought — Sold — Iammarino, 9265 S.W. 43rd St., Miami, Fla. 33165 d3802

## PHONOGRAPHS

PHONOGRAPHS repaired: New spare parts for Edison phonographs. Send stamp for list. Phone: (201) 748-8046. — Gerichten, 23 Waldo, Ave., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003 jly124851

"DIRECTORY OF Phonograph and Record Collectors," lists 250 collectors and their wants. \$3.50 postpaid, satisfaction guaranteed. Two stamps for free list of antique phonograph catalogs, books, magazines. — Allen H. Koenigsberg, 3400 Snyder, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11203 mh66921

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

### II More Facts and Fancies

When I reached this point I received a letter from the ever helpful Quintin Riggs telling me he has a photostatic copy of part of an article about Alan Turner that appeared in the June, 1907, issue of the *Sterling Recorder*, a "house organ" published nearly 70 years ago in London by the Russell Hunting Record Company, then makers of Sterling cylinders. Quintin said the photostat was sent to him some years ago by Ernie Bayly, of Bournemouth, England, publisher of the *International Talking Machine Review*, and that Ernie could let me have a facsimile of the complete article. Although I was "as sick as a dog" the day Quintin's letter arrived, I compelled myself to write a letter to my old friend, Ernie, and to dispatch it by air mail. I asked him to send me as soon as he possibly could a copy of that article, together with any other information he had found dealing with Alan Turner.

I shall not, however, hold up this installment by waiting for the mail from England, for I am eager to start the Turner series as soon as the one about William J. Halley ends. Whatever information Ernie sends me I'll work into a later part.

Quentin told me a couple of interesting things: One, that Turner, according to the *Recorder* article, was born in Manchester and began his formal music study in, or about, 1898 with the distinguished concert baritone, Andrew Black, who made Gramophone records in 1902. Assuming Turner was 19 or 20 when the studies began, this makes his age about what I have estimated and gives the probable year of his birth as from 1877 to 1879.

The news that Alan Turner was born in Manchester also increases the possibility that he was related to Eva Turner, whose birthplace, as I have already mentioned, was Oldham, seven miles to the northeast of the larger cotton manufacturing city. Perhaps before this series ends we shall have some word from Miss Turner as to whether she knew her masculine namesake and whether they were related.

### III Turner's American Stays

Circumstantial evidence appears to indicate that the Manchester native took one or two trips to the United States each year, beginning in 1905 or 1906 and continuing through 1914, to make records the majority of which were for Victor. I suspect that in this country he was exclusive after about 1910 to Victor for lateral-cut discs, but was permitted to sing for small companies, such as Operaphone and Rex, which made hill-and-dale records that Victor would hardly have considered sales competition. Then, in 1913 or 1914, he became for a time a member of the Philadelphia-Chicago Opera Company.

Beginning with the January, 1912, record catalog, Victor published a



"A LASSIE FROM LANCASHIRE." Gracie Fields, the brilliant English music hall comedienne and recording artist, was born in the cotton mill town of Rochdale, 10.5 miles north-northeast of Manchester. She and Eva Turner both had fathers who were mill superintendents.

brief sketch concerning Turner, but it gave no biographical information. In the May, 1914, issue, however, this was altered by the addition of a third paragraph of one sentence. The augmented annotation read:

"Mr. Turner has become a great favorite with Victor customers through the fine series of standard songs and opera airs he has made for us. This baritone's range is a remarkable one, his upper notes being particularly pure and clear."

"The selections which this singer has made—Irish ballads, English patriotic airs, sacred songs and opera songs in English—are all rendered with dignity and artistic finish."

Mr. Turner has just paid a brief visit to America to fill a short engagement with the Philadelphia-Chicago Opera Company, and his fine impersonations of Valentine and the Toreador were much enjoyed by opera goers."

In succeeding editions, the third paragraph was altered to "Mr. Turner was a member of the Chicago Opera Company during its final season," with Philadelphia" being deleted, and still later "final season" was changed to "a recent season." This continued through 1924. The notes were dropped in the 1925 catalog, but the list of his records was still extensive.

You have observed that the May, 1914, catalog, said Turner paid "a brief visit to America," but I am wondering if he returned to England or was still here when World War I began in the summer of 1914. A puzzling thing is that he apparently made no records in England during the entire four years the war was being fought, but his records continued to be listed regularly in Victor supplements. His name does not appear in English record publications of that period. This seems to indicate that he remained on this side of the Atlantic, living in the States or perhaps in Canada, and possibly singing as a member of some minor opera company. Had he gone back to England at the conclusion of his Chicago operatic engagement, he would hardly have risked returning to this country each year with Germany pursuing a

policy of unrestricted submarine warfare.

The roles which Turner is mentioned as singing during his Philadelphia-Chicago appearance, were from "Faust" and "Carmen." I imagine he must have rendered them in French, for he would hardly have been permitted to sing in English while the remainder of the cast was heard in the language in which the operas were originally written.

### IV Back In London

Alan Turner's last American records (by which term I also include those he did in Canada) were made in 1918. The war ended in November, and I assume he returned to England soon afterward. He then disappeared from view—at least from my view—for some 16 years.

When, however, I was well into compiling notes for this series, I began to think I had a vague recollection of an item having appeared in *The Gramophone* magazine, published in London by the novelist, Compton Mackenzie, and his brother-in-law, Christopher Stone (both are dead now), mentioning that Alan Turner was the organizer and manager of a company of amateur performers singing operas in English. Obviously, such a reference deserved to be included here. My recollection was that it appeared at some time before I left Marion, Va., in October, 1934, to work for a newspaper in Johnson City, Tenn., and I thought it probably was in a set of 1924 issues which I acquired shortly before changing my address. I decided to search for it, and that proved an almost heartbreaking task. First I went through the 1924 copies, searching each page for a mention of Alan Turner, but found none. I continued doggedly over a period of several days, looking intently at thousands of pages, but nothing turned up. When I reached the 1931 volume I desperately assumed that perhaps the mention of Turner had been published in 1923, the *The Gramophone* first appeared, but the result there also was negative. I began to think that, after all, the missing item, if it ever existed, might have been printed after I left Marion, but I kept going through 1932 and 1933, with the same lack of results. Then, when I came to 1934, I turned through the pages, until, in the February number, under the heading of "Trade Winds and Idle Zephyrs," I suddenly saw the magic words, "Alan Turner," in bold, black-face letters and realized I had reached my goal. Here is what I read:

"It is not too late for Londoners, at any rate, to go to Rudolf Steiner Hall . . . in order to witness what is claimed to be the first amateur production of Strauss' 'Die Fledermaus,' or 'The Bat' (for it is sung in English) by the Alan Turner Operatic Company. The full operatic version, including the ballet, is used. The opening performance on Tuesday night was in aid of the Middlesex Hospital (and will be) followed by nightly performances at 7:45 for other worthy objects till the end of this week (February 3)."

"The producer and manager, Mr. Alan Turner, is one of our most faithful readers and has records to make up 14 'complete' opera programs, which he plays to a circle of congenial friends."

I think I did pretty well to remember that short mention of Turner after more than 40 years, even though

(Continued on next page)

I did mistakenly believe it was published 10 years earlier than it actually appeared. And I wonder how many of Turner's own records were included in the "complete operas" which he played for his friends. That note, written by Christopher Stone, didn't mention Turner having been a distinguished opera singer, but in the following month there was a follow-up by P. G. Hurst, who conducted the Collectors' Corner for lovers of early "classical" vocal reordings. My old friend, P. G., who once referred to me in *The Gramophone* as "the prince of letter writers . . . who always has something interesting to say," wrote:

"Almost simultaneously with my discussion of 'The Heart Bowed Down,' by Alan Turner, I read in the editor's notes that Mr. Turner is a regular reader of *The Gramophone*. His records of 1906 are justly accepted as historical (Hurst thought no records issued after 1907 were worthy of mention—J. W.) and are included in the 'Who's Who.' His record of the Prologue from 'Pagliacci' comes chronologically after that of Scotti and is sung in superlative style. Indeed, it may be said without fear of contradiction that his fine, virile style of delivery and faithful traditional phrasing were those of an operatic singer of the first rank. I heard him as Telramund in a really notable production of 'Lohengrin' which I heard twice in the course of a week, and he remains uppermost in my memory among exponents of this role."

My research does not indicate that, aside from the "Evening Star" number, Turner ever recorded any arias from Wagnerian operas, and I wonder if he sang in German in the "live" "Lohengrin" productions which the late Mr. Hurst attended.

Coincidence has played a striking part in my work on this article. After I found the two items I have just quoted I received a letter from my friend, Milford Fargo, a member of the faculty of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N. Y., who is the foremost authority on Ada Jones, asking for the address of a record collector with whom I corresponded briefly a good many years ago. I couldn't recall where the man lived, but got out some of my old diaries and went through the address columns in the hope that I might have jotted that information down. I didn't find the address, and still haven't, but I was startled to see in one diary the name of Alan Turner and a reference to an item about him in *The Gramophone* for March, 1935. I at once went in search of that paragraph, which I had entirely forgotten, and here it is—but if it hadn't been for Milford's asking for an address I didn't have, it would still be lost to HOBBIES readers.

"The Alan Turner Opera Company has plenty of pluck. Johann Strauss' 'Gipsy Baron' is an ambitious work for an amateur company to tackle, and we note that their next efforts will be 'Cavalleria' and 'Pagliacci.' The five performances of 'The Baron,' beginning February 12, benefitted several deserving charities, and delighted large, enthusiastic audiences. 1,200 pounds has been raised since 1927. Applications for membership in this excellent company should be sent to Northdown House, Northdown Street, N. 1. Amateurs only, of course."

I imagine Alan Turner sang the principal baritone roles in all the operas produced by his company—and here I may mention that some American collectors down-grade Turner's artistic achievements and his standing as an operatic artist because his records were virtually all sung in English. In England, though, he is accepted, the way P. G. Hurst rated him, as one of the important artists

of his time.

About a decade and a half ago, when Quentin Riggs was living in Australia, he learned that Alan Turner had been a subscriber to *The Gramophone* and wrote to the publishers, asking for Turner's address. (Quentin retains a faint hope that Turner is still living.) The reply was that a man named Alan Turner took the magazine and occasionally wrote letters to the editor, and his address was supplied; however, when Quentin wrote to the gentleman he received a friendly answer to the effect: "Sorry, but I'm not THE Alan Turner." There is no doubt, though, that THE Turner was a *Gramophone* reader in the 1930's.

That March, 1935, paragraph is the latest reference I have found to Alan Turner—and that was 40 years ago. Next month we'll begin to consider his recording career in detail, and perhaps, if I hear in time from Ern'e Bayly, I may also be able to include some fresh biographical notes.

(To be continued)



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**HOBBIES Magazine**

## SMALL THEY MAY BE BUT BIG THEY THINK

The Hempstead (N.Y.) Bicentennial Committee reports that children may be small in stature but where the Bicentennial is involved they think big.

The Committee tells us that when John Ryan, the principal of Milburn Elementary School suggested to students that making a flag would be a suitable project for the Bicentennial observance, they didn't think of just any old flag. "Not the massive minded Milburners," says the Committee.

The children decided to recreate the original "Star Spangled Banner," the

## Nada Convention, 1975

Monterey, Calif., will host the 1975 Annual Convention of the National Association of Dealers in Antiques, Inc., September 29 through October 2.

The program is highlighted with appropriate lectures and tours through many historical sites. Dr. Robert Haas, Director of the Arts and Humanities Department at the University of Los Angeles, will lecture on Oriental rugs. Arthur and Grace Chu will speak on "Oriental Collectibles." Mr. Chu is a graduate of China's National Central University and Mrs. Chu holds a doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley. Both have written for many periodicals and they collaborated on a book, "Oriental Antiques and Collectibles — A Guide."

Charles and Leila Lyons will speak on prints. The Lyons, both college professors, began collecting Japanese prints while in our government's service in the Orient. They now own and operate one of the largest graphic arts studios in the West. Their stock numbers over 100,000 prints engravings and lithographs. Their lecture will display many rare and unusual examples of these art forms.

Hal Dietzel, a noted authority, will give an illustrated lecture on clocks.

Tours will include the famous, scenic "17 mile drive" along the rugged coast and visits to several missions. An adobe tour, conducted by the Monterey History and Art Association, will be taken by bus and will include visits to eight adobe homes. Some of these are private residences which will be opened solely for NADA Conventioneers. Luncheon on this day will be in the Memory Garden and will feature a typical Western chicken barbecue dispensed from a huge keg on an ox-cart.

Non-members are invited to the convention each year. The \$50 registration fee includes two dinners, two luncheons, all museum entry fees and bus transportation on the tours. Annually an auction is held and will be closed to the public this year with only the registrants being allowed to attend.

For further information contact Lewis Scott, Convention Chairman, P. O. Box 5696, Carmel, California 93921.

flag that flew over Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 and inspired Francis Scott Key to compose the national anthem.

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## ALAN TURNER

PART II

By JIM WALSH

### I Early Victor Records

Your conrite correspondent has to confess that he made a boo-boo in an earlier portion of this series. He — meaning, I — wrote that Alan Turner's first record for a company in the United States appeared to be his American disc of "The Letter Song" from "Veronique," and that his Zonophone, came next. By a trick of memory I had been led to believe that Turner made Zonophone records before he recorded for Zonophone's parent, Victor, and had assumed he was given a "try-out" on the lesser known brand before it was decided he could be a successful Victor artist. My hazy recollection at the time I was writing placed Turner's Victor debut early in 1907.

But I was exactly a year off the track. I have just gone through old supplements and find that the British baritone's first Victor records were announced in February, 1906, a month before the American disc and two months before the first Zonophone. Apparently then (but any statement of this sort is always subject to change on the basis of later evidence) Turner's first American records were Victors, and he must have been in this country late in 1905 to make two discs that were listed in the February supplement.

Here, before beginning to quote Victor's monthly booklets concerning the Turner records, I pause to wonder just how did it happen that Alan Turner elected to visit the States and seek work as a recording artist? Did he engage an agent to obtain engagements for him before he crossed the Atlantic or did he personally visit the different recording studios and arrange a series of "dates?" If he followed the latter course he must have had remarkable powers of persuasion to induce virtually every American recording laboratory to include him among its artists and, especially, to talk them into letting him sing the same numbers over and over. It is of course possible that his Victor and Zonophone records made such a good impression that competing manufacturers felt he was an artist whose services they could advantageously use, and asked him to name his terms, even though there was no lack of capable American recording baritones, such as Frank C. Stanley, James F. Harrison and Percy Hemus, who sang the same type of compositions as Turner.

As to why the competing organizations engaged him to record such things as "The Heart Bowed Down" and "In Happy Moments," which he had already sung for Victor and Zonophone, perhaps he was asked: "What would you like to sing that you think would be a good seller for us?" and Turner replied: "Well, I made 'The Heart Bowed Down' (or some of the others) for Victor and it's been a steady seller ever since it came out. Don't you think your catalog needs a rec-CORD of 'The Heart Bowed Down'?" Presumably there would be a nodding of heads and agreement that every record catalog was regrettably incomplete without an Alan Turner rendition of the favorite, if hackneyed, baritone aria from "The Bohemian Girl."

When Turner's first two single-faced Victor records were announced to a receptive public, one was 10-inch and the other 12. The 10-inch was his unflinching war horse, "The Heart Bowed Down," which he must have whipped into recording condition at least a score of times for that many different companies. I believe it was the number he recorded more often than any other, although I haven't bothered to make an exact count. Anyone who wishes to do so may call his computer into action and tally the totals when my comprehensive, but probably not complete, list of Turner recordings appears at the end of the final part of this symposium. Anyway, here are the supplement comments:

"1567. The Heart Bowed Down. Balfe. A dignified and finished rendering of Balfe's favorite 'Bohemian Girl' number. Perfectly sung with a most distinct enunciation."

If practice makes perfect, the gentleman with the sky-tilted mustache should have been able to sing "The Heart" with "most distinct enunciation."

"31481. I'll be Waiting in the Gloaming, Sweet Genevieve. Helf. One of the best rustic ballads of the season, which is meeting with much success. Mr. Turner has given us both verses of the song."

The Victor dealers' order blank phrased the description of the 12-inch record somewhat differently, saying:

"A very popular ballad of which both verses are given by Mr. Turner. As you know customers frequently prefer two verses of a ballad on a record. This is often impossible on the 10-inch, but with the new prices there should be a good trade for 12-inch ballad records."

(The reference to "new prices" was made because Victor at the beginning of 1906 had reduced the price of

single-faced 10-inch Black Label records from a dollar to 60 cents, and of 12-inch from \$1.50 to \$1.00.)

Preceding the foregoing descriptive comments was this general introduction:

"BARITONE SOLOS BY ALAN TURNER with orchestra. A new singer who is certain to be a Victor favorite. Although listed as a baritone, Mr. Turner's range is so remarkable that he can almost be called a tenor. His upper tones are of a very beautiful quality."

There was no mention, you observe, of Turner's being an Englishman.

Edison issued the "Genevieve" song as a tenor solo by Byron Harlan and as an ocarina number by the flute virtuoso, Eugene C. Rose, who told me he had never tried to play an ocarina until three or four days before he made the cylinder.

Now I come to a personal admission. I have never been an unqualified admirer of Alan Turner's singing, although I admit the fine quality of his voice and enjoy hearing him, or did, before my inner ear imbalance turned listening to almost any music into something less than a pleasure. But it seems to me his vocal style was marked more by strength and forcefulness rather than sweetness and subtlety. (That seems to be a characteristic of English baritones.) As a boy of perhaps ten years of age I took what I now know to be an unjustified dislike to his singing when a lady played for me her Victor record of Turner's singing "Annie Laurie." He rendered it somewhat differently from the version by the Columbia Quartet which my family owned — naturally, the arrangement for a soloist would differ from that for a male ensemble — and I indignantly proclaimed that he was "singing out of tune" — which he really wasn't. But I, in my infantile assumption, thought otherwise.

I have Turner's record of "I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming," whose refrain echoed the music of the much earlier "Sweet Genevieve," and I also have it sung on a Columbia record by Albert Campbell. I have always thought the Campbell interpretation much the better. There is a sweetness and expressiveness about Al Campbell's lyric tenor rendition that, to my hearing, Turner's style does not equal. Nevertheless, I consider that in baritone arias suited to him he was one of the finest English-language artists of his time.

Our British friend's next appear-



ance in a Victor list was in June, 1906, when he sang another of the stock numbers of his repertoire, Ethelbert Nevin's "The Rosary," which he must have liked but which I detest, and a 12-inch version of "The Letter Song," which had previously been issued by American. Presumably these discs had been recorded several months earlier and held for later release — unless, of course, Turner was making an extended stay in the States:

"Nevin's songs, which have won a wide popularity, are noted for beauty and originality, but the most widely known is this sad, but exquisite 'Rosary,' which has attained a vogue larger perhaps than any (other) song by an American composer. Mr. Turner's rendering is most adequate, and the accompaniment is beautifully played.

"The Letter Song. This is the gem of Andre Messager's delightful opera, Veronique, which has made such a great success both in England and America. The words are especially beautiful, and Mr. Turner delivers this appeal of the heart broken Veronique with all the pathos which it requires."

A month or so earlier Victor had issued a 12-inch record by Turner of "The Village Blacksmith," but I have been unable to find it in a supplement.

In October, 1906, another 12-inch Turner record was issued — one of his comparatively few religious offerings, Gounod's "There is a Green Hill Far Away." The supplement annotation said "Turner sings this fine Gounod number in the impressive manner which it demands."

The baritone's next Victor appearance was in the January, 1907, record list, a few months before a great panic set in and so drastically reduced American business — the talking machine industry included — that it took Victor five years to build its record sales back to what they had been in the more prosperous part of the de-

pression year. The 10-inch selection offered this time was a "chestnut" that may have ranked next to "The Heart Bowed Down" among Turner's standby recording arias. It was "In Happy Moments," from "Maritana." Supplement Editor Sam Rous wrote:

"'Maritana' is one of the brightest and most melodious of all modern English operas and contains several beautiful and expressive ballads, notably this favorite 'Happy Moments.' Mr. Turner being an English baritone of wide experience in opera, is quite at home in these ballads, and sings this number in the finished style familiar to those who have heard him in his beautiful rendering of 'The Heart Bowed Down.'"

This was the first time Victor patrons had been told that Turner was English and had had "wide experience in opera." "Happy Moments" probably was the last remaining record of those he had made for Victor during his 1905-06 American incursion. Eleven months had passed since the first was issued, and in that less than a year the baritone had become established as a Victor recording stalwart. True, his discs didn't sell in the huge quantities of "run-away" song hit discs by such artists as Billy Murray, Ada Jones, Henry Burr, Harry Mac-Donough, Collins and Harlan and Bob Roberts, but neither did their sales slow to a crawl as the more pronouncedly "popular" types often did after their novelty wore off. They continued to be steady, if modest sellers, and most remained in the catalog year after year, even after many were combined into double faced couplings.

Not only did Turner's opera arias and old standard ballads, together with an occasional popular song such as "Genevieve," do well, but he won

a good personal following. Some record buyers considered him their favorite singer. During one of my visits to New York City at some time in the 1940's, many years after Turner had ceased recording, I met one of his admirers when I went into a second-hand store. As I looked through racks and stacks of old records I stood beside an elderly man who proudly showed me two Columbia records by Alan Turner which he had just found. (His Columbias seem harder to come by than his Victor's.) "Been looking for these for years," he said, "but never came across them until just now. Sure am glad to get 'em. Alan Turner is my favorite singer." No doubt there were many others who rated Turner equally high.

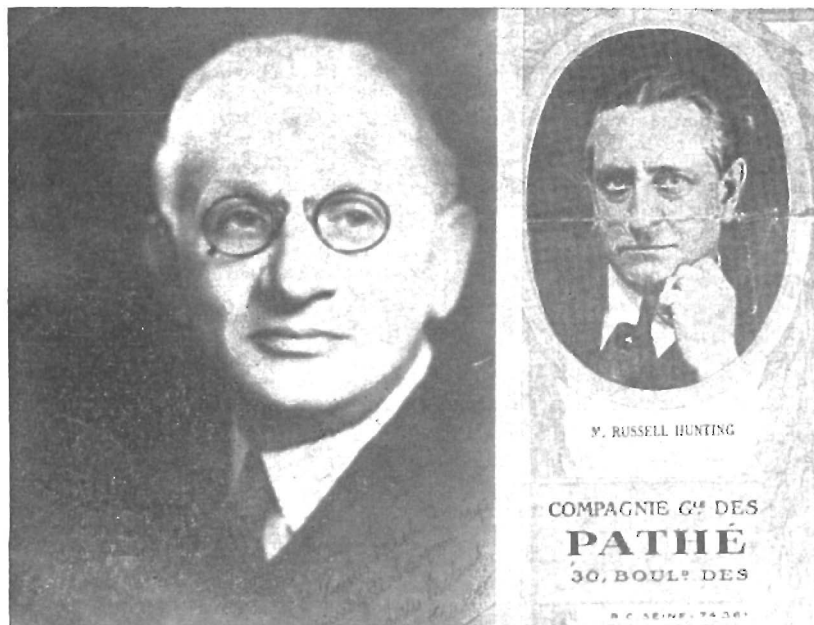
## II Later Single-Faced Victor's

More than a year elapsed before Alan Turner's name again was seen in a Victor record list. It reappeared in February, 1908, exactly two years after his initial pair of discs had been issued. During this period the makers of Sterling cylinder records in England advertised that Turner was exclusive to them for all types of talking machine work, but, as I have already speculated, this may have referred only to the British Isles. However that may have been, Sterling, which had enjoyed good sales for a couple of years, was on the verge of bankruptcy at the beginning of 1908. Its downfall resulted chiefly because Thomas A. Edison's National Phonograph Company had reduced the English price of its two-minute cylinders from a shilling and sixpence (about 38 cents in American money) to one shilling (a quarter), in order to meet the competition of Sterling, Edison Bell, Pathé and other companies which undercut Edison. Since Edison cylinders were much better recorded and had smoother surfaces than any other brand, it was impossible for most English companies to compete successfully against the American product, after prices were equalized. When the February, 1908, Victor supplement said Turner had "just made a flying visit to America," the reference of course was to his traveling by ship, not plane:

"Mr. Turner has just made a flying visit to America for the purpose of making a series of records for the Victor. This engagement resulted in some very fine impressions, the first three of which are now offered. Ernest Ball's new ballad is delivered with much expression, both verses being sung, and the exquisite 'Evening Star' is given in English in a manner which shows Mr. Turner to be a finished singer.

"In wide contrast to these numbers is a manly and spirited rendition of the famous 'Rule Britannia,' the stirring words and martial melody of which make it a favorite not only with our English and Canadian friends but with many others. The number is given with a rousing male chorus which makes it doubly interesting."

The "rousing male chorus" almost certainly was the Hayden Quartet, and I wonder if "Bill" Hooley, the quartet basso, who was an embattled professional Irishman, consented to sing it with the Englishman. The late John Bieling told me that when the Quartet went to England in 1902 it gave a number of concerts, and Hooley obdurately refused to sing "God Save the King."



WAS HE "EXCLUSIVE"? During the period in which Alan Turner's single-faced Victor records were made, he supposedly had an exclusive contract with the Russell Hunting Record Company, of London, which produced Sterling cylinders, but the contract probably applied only to the British Isles. The cylinder firm was founded by two Americans, Louis Sterling (left) and Russell Hunting, "The Original Michael Casey," right. After it was liquidated, Hunter became head of the French Pathe Company's world-wide recording activities, and Sterling eventually rose to be top official of the English Columbia organization. This photo was taken in his old age, when the one-time boy from the East Side of New York City was a millionaire many times over and had presented so much money to charity that he was knighted and given the title of Sir Louis Sterling.

The "new Ball ballad" was "As Long As the World Rolls On." After Ball wrote one of the sensational ballad hits of all time, "Love Me and the World Is Mine," he and his lyricist, Dave Reed, Jr., decided to continue working such a productive vein and collaborated on a series of "world" songs. I don't think I can name them all, but among them were "To the End of the World With You," "Roll On, Beautiful World, Roll On" and one that extended the subject matter from the world to the universe and issued one of the tallest orders ever specified in a popular ballad: "Turn Back the Universe and Give Me Yesterday." In 1912 Turner recorded another Ball ballad, "Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold," which was written for a bass voice, and it became one of his best sellers.

Ernie Ball really was a melodic genius. John McCormack, for one, said his gift of writing beautiful melodies was akin to Franz Schubert's. "The Evening Star" of course was one of the popular operatic arias that Turner recorded over and over, but "Rule Britannia" seems not to have been among the favorite numbers in his repertoire.

In March, 1908, Turner was back with three offerings: "The Bravest Heart May Swell," from "Faust," which he recorded repeatedly; the Prologue from "Pagliacci," which he did not record so often, although his superb interpretation of the number had added greatly to his reputation, and a then new popular ballad, "Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye,"

(Continued on page 127)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 37)

which was destined to become one of his most overworked numbers, ranking almost on an equality with "The Heart Bowed Down," "In Happy Moments" and "The Evening Star." All three records were 10-inch, which means the Prologue was somewhat abbreviated, with a large cut being made in the introductory orchestral passages. Of the "Faust" aria the supplement said:

"Valentine's noble air in the second act of Gounod's Faust, and one of the most enjoyable numbers in the whole baritone repertory. Mr. Turner renders it most effectively, singing with emotion the pathetic lines referring to Valentine's sister, and infusing much spirit into the martial strain which closes the aria."

### Of the Prologue:

A finished record of the famous Pagliacci number, sung in English in an admirable manner by this accomplished baritone. . . . The "Evening Star" from Tannhauser, issued last month, has been greatly admired. Many persons prefer to hear these airs in English but they are seldom sung so that the text can be plainly understood. The Victor has been fortunate in the selection of artists who pronounce the words very distinctly."

After I began this article I was visited by Albert Via, of South Boston, Va., and I played for him, this 10-inch Prologue, which I had only recently obtained, on an Orthophonic Victrola. "Jack" was amazed and almost spellbound at the beauty and expressiveness of Turner's voice and the marvelous realism with which the 67-year-old record was reproduced. Alan Turner seemed to be in the room with us, and my friend said: "I just couldn't have believed that a record made that long ago could have such volume and realism. Alan Turner was a great singer and that is a great piece of recording."

One thing about Turner's Prologue amuses me. At the end he sings of course the famous closing lines: "Ring down the curtain!" but instead of pronouncing "curtain" to rhyme with "certain," he shouts "Cur-TAIN!" as though it rhymed with "pertain," which, according to the rules of orthodox English pronunciation, it doesn't. But perhaps it was easier to get a clear, ringing tone by slightly distorting that one word.

As to "Good Bye, Sweetheart, Good Bye," the supplement said, and still says:

"Not the familiar old song by (J. L.) Hatton, but a new ballad by Arthur Lamb and Albert Von Tilzer, which is meeting with great success. It is a really beautiful song, which Mr. Turner sings with admirable taste. Both verses are given."

I wonder why the baritone became attached to this song and why in succeeding months he recorded it so extensively. He was not much accustomed to singing the current popular songs of the day, but he latched onto this sentimental effusion with both hands and a full set of vocal chords and during 1908 recorded it for any number of companies, most of them in England. He may be said to have "owned" it, as Arthur Collins was sole possessor in this country of "The Preacher and the Bear" for vocal recording purposes. I can't recall that any other singer made a record of "Good Bye, Sweetheart." I have a copy



DISGUISED ZONOPHONE DISC. Quentin Riggs was startled a few years ago when he found this single-faced Zonophone record by Alan Turner with a "Standard" label superimposed on it. He had previously believed that all Standard records were made by Columbia, unless some were made for a short time by Leeds and Catlin, but this disc shows that around 1907 or 1908 the Standard firm was buying to some extent from Zonophone.

of the Victor version, but probably hadn't played it for more than 30 years and had not the slightest recollection of what it sounded like when I put it on the Orthophonic to try to ascertain why Turner had considered it worthy of so much attention. To me it seems an ordinary popular love song of its period except that the music calls for considerably more range than the average Tin Pan Alley production. At some points Turner's voice rises to a tenor and at others he descends to bass. Perhaps he liked the ballad and talked companies into recording it because it displayed the unusual flexibility and compass of his normally baritone voice. When I was operating the mythical Walsh Talking Machine Company at the age of ten and for a few years afterward, I didn't list Turner as one of my imaginary artists. That was because of the dislike I had taken to his Victor record of "Annie Laurie." But for another singer, a baritone with good high notes, I originated the descriptive title of "baritenor," a combination of baritone and tenor. Perhaps "baritenor" is what Turner should have been called.

### III Last Single-Faced Victors

In 1908 the heyday of Victor Black Label single-faced records was drawing to a close, although some would be issued in diminishing quantities for another half dozen years. But when Victor reluctantly began to produce double-faced records in the fall of 1908, the eventual doom of the single-faced type had been decreed.

Alan Turner continued to make them, however. In April came two more of the most frequently recorded numbers to which he was addicted — Tosti's "Venetian Song" and the Toreador Song from "Carmen." He recorded the Toreador Song almost as often as he did "The Heart Bowed Down" and "The Venetian Song" was not far behind in his personal popularity poll. Of the "Venetian Song," the supplement said:

"Mr. Turner sings it in a finished manner, and with the sympathetic and well balanced accompaniment it will prove to be one of the most pleasing vocal records of the year."

This was the description of the Toreador Song:

"The fifth of our Grand Opera records in English, a series that is attracting much attention. This always popular 'Toreador Song' is given a spirited and vigorous rendering by this sterling baritone, whose new records are in great demand."

The May records included another of Turner's perennial favorites, Teresa Del Riego's "Brown Eyes" and, in 12-inch, an old song which I don't recall his having recorded elsewhere, "The Colleen Bawn" from Benedict's opera, "The Lily of Killarney." It probably was one of Turner's poorest selling Victors, although my guess is that the worst seller of all was "The White Squall," issued on double-faced No. 16006, with for its coupling "The Standard o' the Braes o' Mar," by Harold Jarvis "Brown Eyes" was described as:

"One of the most beautiful records we have ever issued. Mr. Turner sings this fine Del Riego song admirably, and an exquisite accompaniment is furnished by Mr. (Walter B.) Rogers. Altogether the record is a remarkable example of the perfection attained by the Victor in the reproduction of the voice and orchestra."

The supplement writer said Turner had often appeared in "The Lily of Killarney" in England, "and no one has ever filled the role of Hardress quite as well as this fine baritone." This is more evidence that he had had ample training and experience in operatic singing.

In July Turner recorded the British national anthem, "God Save the King," as a companion to his earlier "Rule Britannia." Again I quote the supplement:

"In response to many requests . . . for a record of this noble old melody with the words used in Great Britain, we have requested Mr. Turner to sing it. This favorite baritone is a loyal British subject and delivers it spiritedly and from his heart."

No male chorus was introduced, so "Bill" Hooley was spared the indignity of being asked to sing along with a "Limey" baritone in his spirited rendition of the Hooley-hated "God Save the King."

During this period our baritone friend recorded another patriotic number, Canada's "The Maple Leaf Forever." This was one of a series of records not intended for nation-wide sale, but prepared for regional distribution only. In this instance, the selling probably was confined almost entirely to Canada, but perhaps some copies were disposed of in States adjoining our good neighbor to the North.

Came October, and Turner was represented by one of the prime favorites in his recording repertoire, "The Tempest of the Heart," from Trovatore:

"The famous air from the first act of Trovatore, which as 'Il Balen' has long been a favorite Red Seal record, is now given in English by Mr. Turner; and his splendid singing, together with the fine accompaniment furnished by the orchestra, combine to make the record one of the best in the popular-priced grand opera list."

Next in numerical order came my once detested "Annie Laurie," but I cannot find a description of it. In December, after the first list of 100 double-faced Black Label discs had been introduced, Turner was represented by a 10-inch and a 12-inch single-faced, in both of which he had

the assistance of the Hayden Quarter, presumably including Mr. Hooley. The smaller size was "Here's to the Girl!" from "The Girls of Gottenburg" and we are told that Mr. Turner sang this light opera number "with spirit and the refrain is given by the quartet in lively fashion." By way of contrast, the 12-inch was "Some Day," which was even then considered an old-time song. The supplement said it was "a favorite ballad with very many persons, who will be delighted at the opportunity of obtaining such a fine record of this dear old song. Mr. Turner sings the verses with much expression and just the right degree of pathos, while the refrain . . . is effectively given by the quartet, the arrangement used being a most beautiful one."

I have now found a description of "Annie Laurie" which was belatedly issued in the June, 1909, supplement, together with the 12-inch "Thy Sentinel Am I." There is an interesting statement in this paragraph:

"Two more fine records by this favorite baritone, who has just returned to England to fill an operatic engagement. Mr. Turner's exquisite singing of 'Annie Laurie' and his spirited delivery of Piusotti's famous old song cannot but be admired by all."

Obviously, the baritone had sailed to England to appear with the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company, for we have already seen a letter which a man living in Kent, England, wrote to the Sound Wave, telling of having heard Turner sing with the Rosa organization in 1909 and asking for Amberol four-minute cylinders of his renditions of the favorite "Bohemian Girl" and "Maritana" arias. But you will remember the supplement said early in 1908 that Turner had paid a "flying visit" to this country to fill a Victor engagement. Had he stayed over here throughout most of 1908 or had he returned to England, then come back to the States to do still more recording? The later is more likely, for 1908 seems to have been his most active year of making records for English companies. All his Pathés, for instance, were made that year.

Subsequently we shall have something to say about his double-faced Victors, but not in the detail with which his single-faced have been discussed.

#### IV Zonophone, Edison and Columbia

Space limitations do not permit giving extended analysis of Turner's Zonophone and Columbia discs and Edison cylinders, which were contemporaneous with his Victors. Nor is such detailed reference necessary, since the selections he sang for the other companies more or less paralleled what he did for Victor. (A complete list will be found in the concluding installment of this article.)

It is worth noting, however, that the baritone's first Zonophone record, in April, 1906, was "I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming, Sweet Genevieve," which he had already made in a 12-inch size for Victor. The Zono supplement said:

"Mr. Turner is a singer new to our catalog. He has a magnificent voice with wonderful range and power. We feel sure his records will become very popular. He



**BOTH SANG "GENEVIEVE."** — Albert Campbell (above) and Alan Turner made competing recordings of "I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming, Sweet Genevieve." Jim Walsh considers this photograph of "Clancy" Campbell, which probably was made in 1915, to be the brightest and clearest he has ever seen of the pioneer tenor. It was found by Miss Pamela Ochojski, of Monsey, N. Y., in a "flea market," and she kindly lent it to Jim for him to have this copy made.

—Photo from Quentin Riggs

has rendered this ballad in a most excellent manner"

In the same list was good old "In Happy Moments," which brought this comment:

"In this selection from 'Maritana' we hear Mr. Turner's voice at its best its soft and low tones and shading effects are excellent."

Passing on to Edison, we find that Turner made his first appearance in a monthly Standard two-minute cylinder list for July, 1906. The description of the record in The New Phonogram mistakenly calls him a tenor, and — could you guess it? — his initial selection was "In Happy Moments":

"Mr. Turner makes his formal bow to the Phonograph public in this well known ballad from Wallace's opera, 'Maritana.' That Mr. Turner's splendid tenor voice will make him a favorite cannot be doubted. In this record Mr. Turner embellishes the finale with a special passage which shows off his voice and artistic style to perfection. 'In Happy Moments' is Mr. Turner's first record in the monthly list, but he has made over for us No. 7010, which has already appeared in our catalog."

"No. 7010" was "Love's Old Sweet Song," which also took high priority in the number of times Turner recorded it. Perhaps Edison's engaging him to remake this cylinder, which had earlier been recorded by two other baritones, gave him the idea that he could do well singing it for a variety of companies. He made only two other Edison two-minute cylinders, the omnipresent "Queen of the Earth" and "Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye." Both came out in 1908. He also did a four-

minute Amberol of another of his favorites, "For All Eternity," and Blue Amberols of the inevitable "Toreador Song" and "Venetian Song." His list of Indestructible cylinders was longer. It consisted almost entirely of his favored standbys, but in 1918, surprisingly enough, he sang for Indestructible "There's a Long, Long Trail" and "When the Great Red Dawn is Shining." He also made the latter for Victor.

The first Columbia record by Turner appeared in January, 1909, shortly before or after he had returned to England to join the Rosa Company. It was — of all things! — "The Heart Bowed Down" and was rather incongruously coupled with a Theodore Morse ballad, "I Love You as the Roses Love the Dew," sung by Frank Staney and Henry Burr. Concerning "The Heart Bowed Down," the supplement said:

"Alan Turner has a splendid conception of the requirements of the song and renders it with rich flowing tone, admirably adapted to the spirit of the well-loved composition."

Indubitably, it was one of which he should have had "a splendid conception"! Columbia's few remaining Turner records, issued in ensuing months, were largely of titles he recorded prolifically for other companies.

(To Be Continued)

### VICTORIAN HOUSE IN MINIATURE

(Continued from page 121)

longed to my paternal great grandmother. It has been said that the chairs were brought by her via covered wagon from New Hampshire to Michigan but were carried by my great grandfather on his back the last hundred miles for there was only a path on which to travel.

"Building the house was a labor of love. The only outside help I received were the balusters for the staircase and the wrought-iron cresting for the top of the tower roof made by Al Atkins.

"The interior of the house has an entrance hall, parlor, dining room, butler's pantry, kitchen, utility room and pantry on the first floor. Upstairs there are four bedrooms, a dressing room, sewing room and bath. All of the bedrooms have closets except one child's room. I changed that one so it would open into the upstairs hall for a linen closet. Access to it, besides the hall, is through a door on the back of the house. It is made to blend in with the rest of the house so it hardly shows. There is a maid's room in the attic with a window seat. There are four fireplaces plus the enclosure for the kitchen stove.

"The period is Victorian, of course, but would be about 1885 since the bathroom fixtures and kitchen sink are of a later date than the time the house was designed. Perhaps the doll family who live in the house modernized the bath and kitchen. The furnishings are mostly Victorian or at least I have tried to keep them all of that period."



# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## ALAN TURNER

PART III

By JIM WALSH

### I. Research in England

Last month's portion of this Alan Turner story was devoted mostly to discussion of his early American cylinders and the single-faced discs he made for various companies, with the Victorians considered most important. Consideration of his double-faced discs, chiefly for Victor, must be postponed until another time. For the present, we must cross, in spirit, the Atlantic, to Turner's native England, and chronicle the results, mostly negative, of research undertaken there.

Let us then call on the celebrated opera soprano, Dame Eva Turner. In an earlier section I expressed belief that this renowned lady might have known Alan Turner, since they had appeared, at different periods, with the Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company. I even thought that, because both lady and gentleman were born in Lancashire, they might have been related.

This surmise, however, was wrong. Quentin Riggs, who never tires of helping in my investigatory activities, settled that by writing to Dame Eva and asking if she had known the baritone whose last name was the same as hers. She replied that she could not recall having ever heard of him. In a letter dated July 25, 1975, Miss Turner said:

"... I note all you tell me concerning a friend of yours, Jim Walsh, who is doing research on the operatic and concert baritone, Alan Turner. I must confess that I really don't know anything about this man. You say that from 1927 to the mid-1930's he had his own company. During that period I was out of this country and living in Italy, making my own career, and I know nothing about the opera company of which you speak. I regret I am not able to help you further and I am somewhat at a loss as to whom you could contact for further information, alas! I do hope that both you and your wife are well and cheery and that everything progresses in the best way possible for you. With kindest thoughts and all blessings, Sincerely yours, EVA TURNER."

So now we know that Miss Turner never sang with Alan Turner and that, although they were born a few miles apart, but with 20 years or more difference in age, they were not, so far as Dame Eva knows, related. I appreciate nevertheless the great lady's interest in this research and intend to send her copies of HOBBIES containing the Alan Turner series.

Another English lady who has been graciously helpful is my dear friend by correspondence, whom I wish I could meet in person, Miss Marjorie

Pillars, assistant secretary of the Dickens Fellowship at the Dickens House in London. Marjorie came into the picture when Quentin told me that a man named Alan Turner was listed in the London telephone directory and that the directory showed him living in that part of London in which the quarters of the Alan Turner English Opera Company used to be. I didn't think it likely that the man in the phone book could be the erstwhile baritone, Alan Turner, who must now be close to the century mark if still alive (I am almost certain he isn't, for George Baker, another baritone who is still living and active, though past 90, has informed Quentin he believes Turner is dead), but it occurred to me that he might be a son or other relative of the singer. So I wrote to Marjorie, requesting her to phone to the gentleman whose number appeared in the directory and to reply by air mail, for "time was of the essence."

The day Marjorie received my letter she made the call and she reported the result of her efforts in a reply written that same day, Aug. 7:

"Dear Jim: Regarding the Alan Turner business. I telephoned today and a man with a very nice elderly speaking voice answered (and I thought 'this is our man!'). Though very polite he was not the singer and no connection, and knew nothing about singing or recording. So that's that. At least we can eliminate him."

"Enclosed is a photostat of all the (A) Turners in the London telephone directory. A Roneoed circular letter to all of them might bring some information. But he might well be living in the country outside London or any other town in the U. K. — or the world! In the meantime, I will keep a bright look forward and let you know if anything turns up!"

Well, it was worth being disappointed for the sake of receiving such a charming letter. By "Roneoed" I presume Marjorie refers to a British equivalent of Xerox or other duplicating methods known in the States, but I'm afraid I couldn't undertake to circularize the approximately 200 Turners, first names beginning with A., who are listed in the London telephone directory. The Alan Turner to whom Miss Pillars talked lives at 62 Northchurch Road, N1, and his telephone number is 01-226-2053. I assume that since he knows nothing of the baritone whose name he shares, nobody on the American side of the Atlantic will pester the gentleman by undertaking a long distance phone call. My warmest thanks to Marjorie for her sympathetic cooperation.

And now let's abandon the negative and accentuate the positive by quoting a rare document that tells something about Alan Turner as he was nearly 70 years ago.

### II. A Rare Biological Sketch

In 1905 two young American men who had decided that England would be a profitable field for their talents decided to form a partnership and go into the phonograph record business. One was Louis Sterling, a Jewish native of New York City's East Side, who had come to Great Britain to become manager of the International Zonophone Company's operations in London. The other was Russell Hunting, who had won fame in the States for his "Casey" talking records. He had an excellent recording voice and was an expert in all the phases of record making which had then been developed.

Hunting and Sterling joined forces and the result of their efforts was the formation of the Russell Hunting Record Company, which began to produce a cylinder called the Sterling, thus publicizing the names of both men. Their advertising boasted that some Sterlings were 4 3/4 inches long—half an inch longer than the ordinary wax cylinder and that the added length gave more music — perhaps 15 or 20 seconds more — than the ordinary two-minute "roller." Sterling cylinders sold for a shilling, then the equivalent of the American 25 cents.

Hunting and Sterling had some ingenious advertising ideas and for a couple of years their business prospered, although there was a great deal of cut-throat competition in the cylinder field. The prosperity came to a halt when, in order to meet lower-priced competition, Edison records, which sold for a shilling and sixpence — about 38 cents — were reduced to a shilling. Since Edison recording was unmistakably better than that of any competing firms, Sterling, Edison Bell, Pathé, Columbia and others found their cylinder business rapidly declining. Some, in desperation, reduced their prices to the unprofitable figure of ninepence (18 cents) in an effort to undercut Edison. But that's getting ahead of the story.

The August, 1906, issue of the *American Talking Machine World* told of one of Hunting and Sterling's

successful advertising schemes. They sent up a balloon, from which 5,000 coupons were dropped. Each entitled the finder to any Sterling cylinder of his choice. Within three days 3,500 of the coupons had been returned and a record claimed, by Alan Turner or some other Sterling artist. The *World* said, "Each recipient of a record gave his name and address and thus many valuable names were added to the list of prospects." The English *Talking Machine News* published one picture of the huge balloon taken while it was preparing to ascend, and another, depicting it high in the air.

Just as, in the States, Victor published *The Voice of the Victor* as a trade organ for its dealers, Columbia issued *The Columbia Record* and Edison, *The Edison Phonograph Monthly*, so Sterling had a monthly publication called *The Sterling Recorder*. My interest was great when Quentin Riggs wrote me that his friend and mine, Ernie Bayly, who publishes a record collectors' magazine, the internationally circulated *Talking Machine Review*, had sent him a picture of a page from the June, 1907, issue of *The Sterling Recorder*, which contained the first part of an interview with Alan Turner! He said that Mr. Bayly, who lives at 19 Glendale Road, Bournemouth, BH6, 4JA, England, would, he was sure, send me the remainder of the extremely rare interview — so rare that probably no American collector had ever seen it — if I requested it. I made the request, and Ernie obligingly did.

With the second half of the article, Ernie sent a letter, saying:

"Dear Jim: Here is what I think to be the part of the Alan Turner article which you lack. The first part included his picture. I have no idea how long the magazine, 'Sterling Recorder,' ran. I have seen only a few copies of years 1907-08. It could not have lasted much longer, because Louis Sterling sold to Columbia (his discs) and Edison Bell (his cylinders) in November, 1909. I seem to be the only one who has heard of the magazine outside the man having only three issues. It listed Sterling cylinders, Fonotipia and Odeon discs, Linguaphone discs and cylinders, for all of which Louis Sterling was agent. His old premises were destroyed in World War II and a new warehouse smolders the site. . . Best wishes, ERNIE."

As Ernie's letter indicates, Hunting and Sterling, besides manufacturing Sterling cylinders expanded within a year or so to representing the Italian Fonotipia company, which made mostly "classical" records by famous opera singers, and the Odeon Company of Germany, which was affiliated with Fonotipia. The pair also, recorded, in London, English artists whose records were listed under Odeon disc label. This is referred to in the Turner interview. That article, incidentally, is couched in the most roundabout style of writing — one that was extremely common 70 years ago and which I call "going all around Robin Hood's barn." The writer, perhaps paid by the line, used five words where one would be better. His article could profitably be rewritten and condensed, but since it is so extremely rare I have decided to quote it with all its stylistic oddities. It was said to be Number Eight in a series called "Stories of Successful Artists."

(To be continued)

286 THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS.

# WINNERS.

Some of the 51 Double Records  
OF THE  
SEPTEMBER ISSUE.

See Record Supplement for Full List.

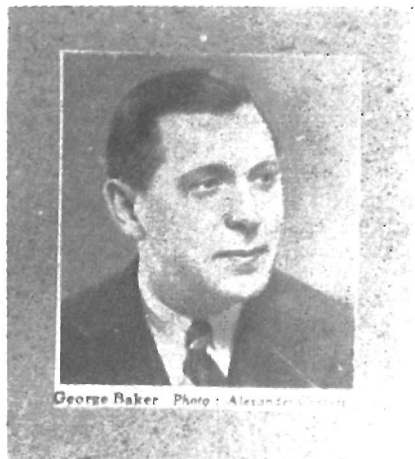
	2391 Have you seen our John? (Comic) Jerry Jeremiah	H. Cove T. Yorke	
<small>HERR GOTTLIEB, Conductor of the Royal Orchestra at all great British Festivals.</small>	2392 My German Lily (Yodie Song) (The Old Windmill)	Bert Terrell	
	2393 The Flash of Steel (Two-step) Pattering Feet	Gottlieb's Orchestra	
<small>GWYNN WOLEY, The celebrated Welsh Tenor.</small>	2394 The Trail of the Lonesome Pine (Comic) (Oh you Wonderful Girl)	H. Cove Chief Kawhawgan	
	2395 A Telephone Story (Talking) The Whistling Stammerer	Owen Marston G. H. Snazelle	
<small>D. BRAZELL, The Favorite Welsh Baritone.</small>	2396 Hey ho! can't you hear the Steamer? You're my Baby (Ragtime Song)	H. Cove & T. Yorke	
	2397 My Old Dutch Flo (Yodie Song) Permission from Farber	Bert Terrell	
<small>D. BRAZELL, The Favorite Welsh Baritone.</small>	2398 Take me in your arms and say you love me Dance your troubles away	T. Yorke	
	2399 My Queen Waltz Secrets, Intermezzo	Royal Court Orchestra	
<small>D. BRAZELL, The Favorite Welsh Baritone.</small>	2400 Marche Lorraine National Emblem March	Royal Guards' Band	
	2401 A Hunting Scene A Sailor's Life	Descriptive	
<small>D. BRAZELL, The Favorite Welsh Baritone.</small>	2402 Plant y Cedryl (Welsh Duet) Blodwen (Welsh Duet)	Gwynn Woley & David Brazell	
	2403 Y Idiau Forw Y Idiau Arwr	" "	
<small>D. BRAZELL, The Favorite Welsh Baritone.</small>	2404 The Land of I-dunno-where The Songs my Mother sang	Robert Carr	
	2427 Even Bravest Heart (Faust) She alone Charneth my Sadness (Remde Saba)	Alan Turner R. Carr	

## YOU KNOW THEM—THEY WIN EVERY TIME.

Every Respectable Agent and Dealer in the Country sells them.

THE WINNER RECORD CO., LTD., WILLOWBROOK GROVE, CAMBERWELL.

FEATURED—Alan Turner is one of the featured artists in this advertisement of Edison Bell Winner records, published in the September, 1913, *Talking Machine News*.



**VETERAN BARITONE**—George Baker, who began making records in London in 1911, is still living, though past 90. He recently told Quentin Riggs he believes Alan Turner is dead. Baker made many more records than Turner and had one of the longest careers of any recording artist.



**SHE MARRIED A TURNER.**—This photo of Maud Powell, distinguished American violinist (1868-1920), was taken in London. Miss Powell, whose Victor records were popular for many years, married an Englishman, H. Godfrey Turner. Turner was an important musical name in England, but it is not known whether Alan and Godfrey Turner were related.

# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## ALAN TURNER

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

### III. The Alan Turner Interview

"One of the chief characteristics of our popular artist, Mr. Alan Turner, is his enthusiasm. It is, of course, not suggested that other artists are not enthusiastic, but few yield such *prima facie* evidence of a confidence in the future of their art as does Mr. Turner. Few impress one as he does with a desire to surpass previous achievements, to go one better today than yesterday.

"It may be thought that this is but a trivial point to bring out as a personal attribute of a singer, but in reality it is the secret of the true artist's success, and especially so when the artist sings for posterity. The success of the operation of making a record lies in the artist's hands, so to speak; all the skill and mechanical appliances of the recorder are useless if the owner of the voice does not do his part. So, the more enthusiastically the singer enters into his work the better the record, and the more satisfying for the public. And if an artist be content today with his standard of yesterday, of what avail is all the progress on the manufacturing side?

"It is artists of the calibre of Mr. Alan Turner who, with their never-ending determination to do better, make the endeavors of those engaged in the mechanical improvement of records worth while.

"When Mr. Alan Turner entered into the glorious company of those whose mission it is to satiate the craving for home music, it was a day of days for music lovers. And how it came about is worth relating in due season. First a word as to our subject's career.

"Gifted with a love of every form of music, Alan Turner found pleasure in singing — found pleasure, though little if any pecuniary profit. At last he made up his mind to take a course of tuition, but at the same time formed a typical determination that he would not do anything of the kind except under one who came up to his definition of a good singer. Eventually, and this was about nine years ago, he went to the College of Music at Manchester, and there studied for a short time under Mr. Andrew Black. Beyond this tuition, Alan Turner can claim to be practically self-taught.

"Soon after this, the young singer came to London for the first time — he was a Manchester man by birth — and found but little difficulty in securing an engagement in comic opera. He toured on more than one occasion in 'The French Maid' and then accepted an offer to play principal baritone parts in the Moody-Manners Opera Company. Successive engagements took him to the Alhambra, and through both grand and comic opera. After his return from a South African tour with the Moody-Manners Opera Company, 1904-05, Mr. Alan Turner found it more profitable to devote his time to oratorio and concert singing, and was obliged to decline further contracts with the Moody-Manners Company, as well as to refuse an offer from the Carl Rosa Opera Company. That briefly is Mr. Alan Turner's stage career, except that we may add, in allusion to his versatility, that his scope extends from grand opera and arias down to the simple home ballad, his services being in constant demand for all three of these styles.

"What is your experience of recording?" we asked.

"Well, my experience has made it very easy. To sing in the way one would in public is, of course, not quite possible. While singing on the stage or concert platform, an artist can get whatever effects he feels are necessary for the proper interpretation of his song. But while singing for recording one must alter the manner of vocal production to suit the capabilities of the instrument and secure a record free from blasting. Then, though the actual art of recording is practically easy to me, the task itself is pretty hard work — at least I find it so. It takes more out of me than singing in the concert room or on the

opera stage. When I have made, say, ten records I feel as if I had done as much work as would be required in a stiff role in grand opera. I make strong voice records, and when I have finished I feel I don't want any more singing."

"You are very emphatic, Mr. Turner," we said, as he paused.

"Am I? Perhaps it is because I have frequently observed the difference between singing to an audience I can see and one I cannot see. In the theatre one can feel what part holds the sympathy of the audience, and the feeling is such a decided incentive to taking pains. In making records there can be no encouragement except the cheque at the end. Seriously, however, the sympathy of the audience, which is so helpful to a public singer, is lacking in the business-like atmosphere of the recording room. Then the placement of the voice, which may sound so well in the theatre, may go wrong on a record. Mezzo-voice parts, of which I make a great point in my singing, cannot be given the same value in a record; their volume must be sensibly increased.

"Do you feel that your audiences are familiar with your work through the records you have made?" was our next question.

"Undoubtedly. Only a week or so back, a gentleman, in the course of conversation, remarked that he had heard me singing in Scotland a few days before. As I was not within a hundred miles of Scotland at that time this puzzled me, until it dawned upon me that he must be referring to some of my records. My best record? Let me see — well, in my own opinion, and from an artistic point of view, I select my Odeon record of 'In Happy Moments.' It is a simple ballad; still, as a work of art, I consider it the best I've done. 'For All Eternity'? No, your choice does not coincide with mine. 'For All Eternity' is a plain, straightforward piece of music, good of course, but without any scope for the expression of the singer's own individuality. 'Happy Moments,' on the other hand, offers scope for artistic handling, and from a singer's standpoint it is unquestionably the better record of the two."

"Does that selection also stand as your favorite in your entire repertory, Mr. Turner?"

"No, I think that of all I sing I like the Prologue from 'Pagliacci' as well as any. That essentially is one that enables an artist to infuse his own personality into his work."

"You record for both cylinders and discs. Which do you prefer for results?"

"An awkward question to answer. My Sterling cylinders are very natural and quite unmetallic in tone, while the Odeon discs undoubtedly yield results of power, brightness and vim. Perhaps discs are better suited to my voice, and I must say that the Odeon records are some of the best I have ever done, particularly the later ones. My opinion of talking machines? Well, they have come to stay, of that there can be no question. Indeed, it was because I at first believed it to be a passing craze that I resolutely declined to make a record until twelve months or so ago."

"Have you any suggestions to offer, Mr. Turner?"

"Suggestions? On the mechanical side of the talking machine — no, I must leave that to those whose business it is. Perhaps I may say a word to dealers on the speed at which they run records. Most of my records, for example, are intended to be run at a slow speed, but many dealers, unwittingly, no doubt, speed them high, which ruins them. It is a huge mistake to run all records at the same speed. It alters the colour and character of slow records, and in the dealer's own interests I would like to see this fact carefully impressed upon him. As a baritone my records should be played so that they sound like a baritone. I do not think I have anything to add to that."

"Mr. Alan Turner has made the following 'Sterling' and 'Odeon' Records, and others will

of course be listed, month by month. Both cylinders and discs by Mr. Turner are good stock, and it is a noteworthy fact that once a customer has purchased these baritone records he is continually asking for more like them."

So ends the 68-year-old interview. I am not copying the list of Turner's Sterling and Odeon records, for the same information will be provided in the comprehensive list of his recordings which will end this series. However, Ernie Bayly added a footnote, which should be included:

"If the same song appears on both Odeon and Sterling, they would appear to have been made both at the same session, for Louis Sterling was at that period boss of Sterling and Chief English Agent for Odeon, so, once having the artist in the studio with the accompaniment, he made the most of the opportunity! I have checked several artists out where the song is the same, and the accompaniment sounds the same, as is the overall acoustic property. The duration of the song is often different, though."

Who wrote the Turner interview? Perhaps the author was Russell Hunting, who for a few years had edited and published an American talking machine trade paper, *The Phonoscope*, before leaving somewhat suddenly for England in 1899. No doubt, whoever the writer was, he has been dead for years. But, whatever his faults of style, I regard his interview as a treasure, for it reveals Alan Turner as a living, flesh and blood man, rather than a lifeless stiff-as-starch photo in ancient record catalogs. For this reason I am truly grateful to the unidentified author. At the same time a few points in his article appear to call for comment.

For instance, there is the reference to Turner's having taken vocal instruction from the famous Scotch baritone, Andrew Black, who preceded him by a few years as a prolific recording artist. Black was born in Glasgow January 15, 1859, and died in Sydney, Australia, where he settled in 1913, on September 15, 1920. He was a Gramophone and Typewriter Company recording standby from 1902 through 1906. Robert Bauer, who lived in Italy and compiled in the 1920's a reference book of vocal records that he considered historically important, listed 40 of Black's Gramophone discs.

Bauer also gave four of Turner's G&T records historical accreditation, though it is hard to see why he thought them more significant than discs of the same songs that the baritone had made for many other companies. They are: "In Happy

Moments," "The Toreador Song"; "The Heart Bowed Down," and the 12-inch Pagliacci Prologue. He dates them all as being recorded in 1906.

The reference to the Moody-Manners Opera Company's touring South Africa makes me wonder if it returned by way of the United States and may have been responsible for Turner's visiting America in 1905 and beginning to record for one company after another. Possibly the troupe played some American engagements. The mention of Turner's having begun his stage career in comic opera reminds me that he was not a comedian and that, aside from taking part in a few Gilbert and Sullivan operatic excerpts, humor was alien to his repertoire, unless a couple of songs of World War I, which he recorded in 1918 for Victor's Canadian branch, may be considered in the comic category.

Another field in which Turner was sparsely represented is that of duet singing. He recorded just a few duets with English male singers and only one or two women. When singing in America, he did no duet work at all, (perhaps American and English accents would not have blended well!) but had the assistance of a male chorus in two or three of his Victor discs. It is amusing to have his opinion of the relative merits of "The Heart Bowed Down" and "Forever and Forever," both of which he must have recorded to the point of boredom, and it's good to know that he considered the Prologue one of the best numbers for the display of his artistic attainments.

Turner's statement that records should not all be played at the same speed would be wrong if all discs and cylinders of the various companies had been taken at identical speed, but it happens that he was right. British companies were more honest in this respect than American. The Gramophone Company, for instance, indicated in its catalogs when a selection had been recorded at other than 78, but Victor for many years advised customers to set their speed regulator for 78 revolutions and never to change it.

"You will, of course," the Victor catalogs said, "meet the man who insists on . . . changing the speed with each record he plays. Don't imitate him. He is wrong. Only at a speed of 78 can you hear the actual tones of the singer or player, just as they were recorded."

The truth is that until Victor adopted 78 as a standard speed in 1908, most of its records had been made at 76 or slower, and hundreds of the 76RPMs remained in the catalogs for years after the change-over. Moreover, in spite of all the later pious talk about 78 being the one right speed, individual artists were recorded differently. Billy Murray, for instance, told me that when he recorded the turntable was nearly always slowed to run at 75 or 76. Played at 78, the records he made at the slower speed sound flat and nasal. Run as they should be, his fine tenor

voice emerges as its natural self. Therefore, Alan Turner knew what he was talking about and his advice to the dealers should have been heeded. And, although the interview said Turner declined an offer from the Carl Rosa Opera Company, we know that he was a member of that group in 1909.

#### IV. More Sterling History

In August, 1906, just as Alan Turner was beginning to be widely known as a recording artist in both England and the United States, the *Talking Machine News* published an article saying:

"Mr. Louis Sterling is to be Managing Director of the new Sterling and Hunting Company, Ltd. . . . An entirely new building will be erected in City Road to house the two companies (Sterling cylinders and Odeon discs), so that they may be under one roof. The new premises will be twice the size of the present ones. . . . The coming together of the two companies will mean the addition to the Odeon Repertoire of such artists as Eli Hudson, Harry Dearth, Ernest Pike, Hamilton Hill, J. C. Doyle, George Alexander, Will Terry, David Brazell, Mark Sheridan, W. G. Webber, Albert Whelan, Albert Pearce, Ben Albert, Harrison Latimer, Ernie Chester, and Misses Florie Forde, Gladys Roberts, Marguerite Broadfoote, Sheila McNeill and Madame Pasquali."

In the same issue, a review of Sterling cylinders said: "Among the vocal records will be found some of exceptional merit. This especially applies to Alan Turner, whose voice is full and clear with a charming, sympathetic ring."

It is a surprise to see the American baritone, George Alexander, listed as a Sterling artist, or artiste, whose services would now be available to Odeon, but Alexander, whose real name was Clifford Wiley appears to have gone to England on a record-making expedition, just as Turner periodically visited the States. I suspect, perhaps wrongly, that Marguerite Broadfoote was the Brooklyn-born operatic contralto who later became known as Eleonora De Cisneros, for I recall reading somewhere that the diva's family name was Broadfoote. During this same period a Sterling advertisement announced: "We have . . . English opera records and ballads by Mr. Alan Turner, the renowned operatic baritone."

In the September issue of the *T. M. N.* was published, under the heading of "A Correction," this letter from Louis Sterling:

"Sir: In your issue of August 1, page 275, you mention a number of artistes who will be added to the Odeon catalog, and amongst them are several, namely Ernest Pike, Hamilton Hill, Will Terry, Albert Whelan and Miss Florie Forde, who have exclusive contracts with the Gramophone and Typewriter, Ltd. We wish to explain that we can only add to the Odeon catalog artistes with whom we hold exclusive talking machine contracts, not exclusive cylinder contracts—namely Eli Hudson, Harry Dearth, David Brazell, Alan Turner, Ella Retford, etc. Yours truly, RUSSELL HUNTING RECORD CO., Ltd., Louis Sterling, Managing Director."

Again, it is puzzling to see Turner listed as exclusive to the Russell Hunting firm for all types of records, considering the fact that he had already done, and was to do, considerable singing for Victor and other American companies and, in England, for Gramophone. However, I believe I

have previously suggested that the term "exclusive" may have applied only to his work in the British Isles and left him free to record for any or all companies in the States.

As was previously indicated, things went well with the Hunting and Sterling partnership for a couple of years, but then the Sterling cylinder met its death blow when the price of Edison two-minute cylinders was reduced, to be followed by introduction of the four-minute Amberol, and other firms cut the price of their "rollers" to ninepence.

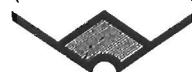
In the November, 1908, *Talking Machine News*, two dealers, Herbert W. Holmes and G. Bowron, advertised they had bought the manufacturer's entire stock of 500,000 Sterling cylinders and were offering them, according to length, at five and six shillings per dozen. In December a news story said that Hunting had gone to Paris to take charge of Pathé recording activities, and Sterling had founded the Rena Record Company. (Rena discs were manufactured for Sterling by Columbia from that company's masters, but had different couplings than the Columbia and in some instances the names of artists were changed. They sold for two shillings and sixpence against Columbia's three shillings, but were the same quality, as the record buying public soon detected, to Columbia's damage. After a couple of years Columbia and Rena consolidated, and Sterling eventually became head of the English Columbia organization.)

The end of the Sterling Company's complex, troubled affairs was told in the *T. M. N.* for July, 1912, under the heading, "The Last of a Famous Company." I skip some uninteresting details of the proposed final settlement with creditors to quote:

" . . . The position of affairs will be placed before creditors at a meeting to be convened in a few week's time, and we understand that the final wind-up of this company will then soon follow. Reflection carries us back to the palmy days of 1905-06, when . . . the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd., was incorporated. The prime movers were Mr. Louis Sterling, now British manager of the Columbia Phonograph Co., Genl., and Mr. Russell Hunting, whose sphere of activity is mainly on the Continent as recording director for Messrs. Pathe Freres, Ltd. As a cylinder record, the Sterling . . . from the start made a pronounced success, and during the first two years of the company's existence handsome dividends were paid. Following on the reduction of the Edison record from 1s. 6d. to 1s., and the introduction of 9d. cylinder records, business declined so appreciably that the company were forced to consult their creditors."

Many of the Sterling artists, perhaps including Turner, had bought stock in the firm and were losers by its bankruptcy. As Ernie Bayly said, rights to the Sterling name were sold to Edison Bell, which issued some Sterling cylinders of E. B. manufacturer for a comparatively short time. Sterling's going out of business, of course, left Alan Turner free to record for all other English companies, and 1908 probably was the most active year of his record-making career.

(To be continued.)





# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

## ALAN TURNER

PART V

By JIM WALSH

### I. Turner's Records Reviewed

With a long list of Alan Turner's discs and cylinders waiting to conclude this series, I shall not undertake

a comprehensive discussion of his English recordings or of the records he made in America for Victor after the introduction of the double-faced

type. I shall especially avoid extended analysis of the English productions, since no matter what company he worked for, his recorded repertoire consisted largely of the same stereotyped songs.

Instead of giving endless detail about the various records, I shall quote reviews from English publications to indicate how highly he was regarded by the critics of his time. These comments should be of particular interest to American readers who believe that because of his relatively few operatic recordings Turner was not a singer of high artistic accomplishments.

But before quoting from the *Talking Machine News* and the *Sound Wave*, a few notes seem called for.

It is odd that Turner seems to have made no H. M. V. Gramophone records after 1908, his most active recording year, although he continued occasionally to sing for the lower-priced Gramophone affiliate, Zonophone, and, of course, made double-faced records consistently from 1908 through the early part of 1918 for the Gramophone Company's American associate, Victor.

His Pathé records were all made not later than 1910. Turner discs issued by Pathé's American branch were all taken from the original English matrices.

It is intriguing to find the "baritenor" in a 1913 list of Marathon records, although there are only two titles to his credit. Marathon was a hill-and-dale record with narrow grooves, played with a steel needle. It was the first real long play record. Running at a speed of 80, some of the 12-inch discs played for slightly more than eight minutes a side. I have the remains of one which, unfortunately, I broke, that played, counting both sides, for 16 minutes and 25 seconds. On one side Tom F. Kinniburgh, the Scottish basso, sang "True to Death" and "In Cellar Cool," for an aggregate of eight minutes and 25 seconds. On the other face, Kinniburgh favored with "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" and "In Sheltered Vale" for exactly eight minutes. The basso also made a 10-inch Marathon of "The Bell-ringer" and "The Village Blacksmith," which played, respectively, six minutes and 40 seconds and five minutes and 45 seconds. The reproduction on the 12-inch I broke was excellent, with plenty of volume despite the fine cut.

### VICTOR BOOK OF THE OPERA—IL TROVATORE

#### ACT I

#### SCENE I—Vestibule in Altafiera Palace

As befits a tragic work, *Il Trovatore* opens in an atmosphere of romance and mystery. The retainers of Count di Luna await the arrival of their master, and to beguile the time Fernando relates the history of the Count's childhood and the loss of his brother.

#### Abbiotta zingara (Swarthy and Threatening)

By Torres de Luna and La Scala Chorus (In Italian) \*62416 10-inch, \$0.75

The brother, as an infant, came under the evil eye of a witch, who was seized and condemned to the stake. This witch had a daughter, who determined to avenge her mother's fate, with the result that the Count's younger son disappeared; and after the witch's burning there was discovered upon the pile of charred embers the bones of a child. This story is told in the *Abbiotta* to a fierce rhythmical tune, expressing all shades of horror.



ALAN TURNER AS THE COUNT  
(COVER ARTIST: GUSTAVO, MILANO, ITALY,  
OPERA, CHICAGO OPERA, IL)

In the second part *Ferrando* concludes his narrative, which is mingled with the comments of the listeners, who tell of the reputed appearance of the witch in ghostly shape.

#### Sull' orlo dei tetti (As a Vampire You May See Her)

By Torres de Luna,  
Basso, and La Scala  
Chorus

\*16655 10-inch, \$0.75

To the voice of the narrator is added the awe-stricken whispers of the chorus, which afterwards swell into a cry of fierce denunciation. The foreboding bell and an instru-

FERRANDO:  
With two sons, heirs of fortune and affection,  
Liv'd the Count in enjoyment;  
Watching the younger for his safe protection  
A good nurse found employment.  
One morning, as the dawn's first rays were  
shining,  
From her pillow she rose—  
Who was found, think ye, near the child  
reclining?  
(Impressively.)  
Sat there a gypsy hag, witch-like appearing;  
Of her dark mysteries, strange symbols  
wearing.  
O'er the babe sleeping—with fierce looks  
bending,  
Gaz'd she upon him, black deeds intending!  
Horror profound seized the nurse at that  
dark vision;  
And the dark intruder was soon expelled.  
Soon they found the child was fading,  
Coming darkness appal'd him,  
The hag's dark spell enthral'd him!  
(All appear horrified.)  
Sought they the gypsy, on all sides turning,  
Seiz'd and condemn'd her to death by burning.  
One child, accursed, left she remaining,  
Quick to avenge her, no means disclaiming.  
Thus she accomplished her dark retribution!  
Lost was the Count's child; search unavailing!  
But on the site of the hag's execution  
They found, 'mid the embers,  
The bones of a young infant,  
Half consumed and burning!



LARGE IL TROVATORE ACT I, SCENE II

\*Double-Faced Record—See page 530

520

IN OPERA COSTUME—Photos of Alan Turner enacting operatic roles appear to be scarce. The one shown here is taken from the 1915 edition of the Victor Book of the Opera and depicts Turner as the grotesquely garbed Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*.

Since Tom Kinniburgh has been brought into this, I believe it well to mention that Quentin Riggs has learned from an English friend, George Frow, that the basso is still alive, living in Hampshire on the Southern coast of England, and sometimes goes to London to visit the Savage Club, for members of the theatrical profession. The December, 1910, *Talking Machine News* said that the then young singer had "seen only 24 summers," which, according to my arithmetic, means he is now 89. He had a long career and I am sure could be made the subject of an interesting article.

Back to Alan Turner: Although his recording activity in England tapered off after 1908 without ending completely, many discs sung by him were issued, on low-priced labels, from 1912 to 1914 by a conglomerate of German firms that were trying to take over the English record market by unscrupulous methods. They appear to have obtained matrices, some badly worn, of records Turner had made years before for other companies and represented them as new recordings. These German-origin records constitute much of the latter portion of the list of his discs.

Now let's turn to the reviews of Turner's Sterling cylinders of the 1907 period. The *Talking Machine News* said of "I Fear No Foe": "Powerful and impressive. A faultless record," and of "The Old Lock": "His tenor (!) rings out clear and pure." "Ora Pro Nobis" was described as "without a fault" and "Thy Sentinel Am I" as "A fine record. The strong even tone of the singer and the passionate fervor with which he renders some of the passage makes this record equal to any operatic cylinder we have heard."

A year or so later Turner's Columbia record of "The Rosary" was said to be "impressively sung . . . Mr. Turner, who was a success from the start as a maker of records, may be considered one of the best of our baritone vocalists." Of a Columbia double-faced coupling of two Turner standbys, Schubert's "Serenade" and Tosti's "Venetian Song," the critic observed:

"Alan Turner, baritone, is responsible for two particularly fine records . . . Lovers of good vocalization will appreciate the splendid timbre of his recording of the Serenade, whilst the Venetian Song is given with a verve which it would be difficult to excel."

Concerning a Pathé double of those perennial Turner war horses, "The Heart Bowed Down" and "Forever and Forever," the verdict was: "His fine baritone voice was never heard to better advantage than in these."

In October, 1910, the *Sound Wave* said of Turner's Beka record of "The Toreador Song":

"Mr. Alan Turner, one of our foremost English baritones, gives a spirited rendering of this, the most famous vocal number in 'Carmen' — that is to say, in the aspect of popular appreciation. He is recorded in a splendidly vigorous manner."

In the January, 1913, *Talking Machine Review*, Turner's Edison Bell Velvet Face coupling of "The Distant

Shore" and good old "In Happy Moments" drew this eulogium:

"Mr. Turner needs no trumpeter nowadays. Just listen to the familiar air from 'Mariana' and mark the finished vocalist that is shown there. His resonant baritone voice is equally well suited to both of these popular ballads. When he bids his sweetheart to be of good cheer in the former title, the words would carry comforting conviction to the most callous heart of maiden; and the reminiscently effective words from Wallace's opera are cleverly sung. Both standard titles, and both worthy of any phono collection, in our opinion."

Then, to conclude this brief review of reviews, in March, 1913, the *T. M. N.* although again referring to Turner as a tenor, said of his Marathon discs of "John Peel" and "The Farmer's Boy" — two much less hackneyed songs than he usually sang:

"In these old-world favorite songs, Mr. A. Turner gives us an intelligent interpretation that will give him a hearty welcome to lovers of the old ballads."

In March, 1913, referring to his 12-inch Velvet Face record of "The Wolf" and "The White Squall," the comment was:

"Mr. Turner sings with spontaneity of feeling and reliance which places him in the foremost rank of baritones."

Within another year came World War I and, as I said earlier, I have been unable to find that Turner made any British recordings during that four-year period or was even in England. My unconfirmed belief is that he probably stayed in the United States and Canada for the duration of the conflict.

## II. Double-Faced Victors

Turner's double-faced Victor records may be dismissed with a minimum of verbiage. His first, which was announced in the October, 1908, list of the first 125 Victor double-faced discs, was No. 16006, "The White Squall," which we have just seen the *T. M. N.* writer reviewing in its Velvet Face form. It was coupled with "The Standard o' the Braes o' Mar," sung by Harold Jarvis, the Detroit tenor. Both these British numbers were unfamiliar to the great majority of Americans, and the disc was probably Turner's poorest selling Victor record. It stayed in the catalog through 1912, but I have never seen a copy of it and don't know of anyone else who has.

Following "The White Squall" came a long list of other double-faced Turner numbers issued in 1909-10, but these were all couplings of his earlier single-faced records until "The Yeoman's Wedding Song" was issued in 1912. And then, for the next few years, appeared a long list of standard titles in the Turner repertoire—such things as "Oh, Promise Me," "For All Eternity," "Forever and Forever," "I Fear No Foe," "The Rosary" and "The Evening Star." The two latter titles, formerly single-faced, were coupled on No. 17446 and the record was a consistently good seller. In 1924, however, Victor had Royal Dadmun remake it under the

name of Ralph Crane — the only Turner record to be done over by another singer.

In 1917, the British baritone sang an Irving Berlin song hit written in slow waltz time, "How Can I Forget (When There's So Much to 'Remember?)" and in 1918 he recorded two popular numbers of World War I, "There's a Green Hill Out in Flanders," and "When the Great Red Dawn Is Shining," which someone has said is "the perfect title for a popular song." I was startled when I observed that he had also recorded "There's a Long, Long Trail" and "Red Dawn" for the Long Trail and "Red Dawn" for the small Federal company, which was still making Indestructible cylinders, although they were sold almost entirely through mail order catalogs. During this final period of the war, he seems to have been doing more recording for Canadian Victor than for the parent company in the States, and virtually all his Canadian discs were of a type not usually associated with the Turner name; for instance, "Hit the Trail to Mother," "When the Bonnie, Bonnie Heather is Blooming," "Up in the Air Over There" and "Good Bye—ee!" After that, so far as new records were concerned, Alan Turner's name disappeared from record lists, both here and abroad.

When electrical recording took over in 1925, all Victor Turner recordings were dropped, even though most had been excellent sellers. Two years later, however, Victor had received so many calls for the return of favorite acoustically recorded numbers to its catalog that it issued a booklet of records of Historic and Personal Interest . . . restored to the public by the public's own demand." It seems very scarce nowadays. The following were "restored" and remained available through special order for a year or two, although they were not reinstated in the yearly record catalog: 16404, "Kathleen Mavourneen"; 17536, "O Sole Mio" and "La Paloma"; 17564, "Crossing the Bar," and 18352, "How Can I Forget?" "The Rosary" and "The Evening Star" also came back, but in the Ralph Crane version.

While I was busy upon an earlier portion of this Alan Turner story, I received a letter from a New Hampshire HOBBIES reader, Robert B. Stone, who had learned that I was writing about the baritone. Unfortunately, I can't find that letter, but I recall that Bob expressed his pleasure at the prospect of reading about Turner, whom he praised as an operatic singer of high rank. I remember too, he said that Turner had deserved to be a Victor Red Seal artist as much as "Emilio De Gorgonzola" — a statement with which I agree.

When I replied, confirming the report that I would soon have a Turner series ready to publish, Bob wrote again, with a quoted comment of something so amusing that I feel I must get it into print before saying farewell to Alan Turner, the man and the musician:

"... Except for the photograph in the Victor catalog, the only picture of Turner I have ever seen is in the Victor Book of the Opera. In the role of the Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*. In an article on how not to stage *Trovatore*, Bernard Shaw writes:

"There is only one costume possible for the Count di Luna. He must wear a stiff violet velvet tunic, white satin tights, velvet shoes, and a white turban hat, with a white puggaree falling on a white cloak. No other known costume can remove its wearer so completely from a common humanity. No man could sit down in such a tunic and such tights; for the vulgar realism of sitting down is ten times more impossible for the Count di Luna than for the Venus of Milo."

Then Mr. Stone comments:

"Turner must have read that description and taken it literally, for that is a perfect inventory of his costume as the count, except that the puggaree is dark. Meanwhile, I await your articles with ill-concealed impatience."

After that, I'm going to have to consult the dictionary and find out what the heck a puggaree is! I found the photograph of Turner of which Bob Stone speaks in the 1915 Victor Book of the Opera and am submitting it in the hope that it can be reproduced herewith.

I also trust this series has interested some HOBBIES readers in the life and recordings of Alan Turner, and I especially hope that if any reader in England, or anywhere else, knows anything about him that I have been unable to learn, he will write and tell me, so that the information may be shared later with other Turner admirers. Next month we will print the list, as comprehensive as I was able to make it, of the Alan Turner recordings.

— 0 —

Since this article was submitted, Quentin Riggs has written to Tom Kinniburgh, but his letter, I am sorry to report, was returned, marked "deceased." I had hoped the venerable basso was still living.

And Dame Eva Turner has written me that there were "quite a few errors" in the references to her in a preceding installment. She says her birthday was March 10, 1892, and not October 10, 1898, as it was printed. Her teacher was Edgardo Levi, not Levy, and her maestro was Albert Richards-Broad, not Broads. She also never studied in Italy.

"I went to audition in 1924," she says "at La Scala, for Mon. Toscanini, Panizza and Gui, the conductors at that time. I was engaged for the following season at La Scala. I was never a licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music, but I am a Fellow, as I am of the Royal College of Music and an Honorary of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama."

I apologize to Dame Eva for the errors, which were not primarily faults of my own. The erroneous statements were taken from Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, supposed to be the most authoritative work of its kind, and from a book of musical biographies, but I sincerely regret them.

(To be continued)

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# Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

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## ALAN TURNER

PART VI

By JIM WALSH



**TURNER SUCCESSOR** — The late Royal Dadmun, famous American baritone, made over in 1924 one of Alan Turner's most popular discs, which combined "The Rosary" and "The Evening Star," from *Tannhauser*. Dadmun's re-make was issued under the assumed name of Ralph Crane.

### VICTOR SINGLE-FACED

(All records 10-inch, except those with numbers beginning with 31, which are 12-inch) (also made in 8-inch.)

- 4567 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down
- 4676 The Rosary.
- 4903 Maritana—In Happy Moments.
- 5336 Tannhauser—The Evening Star.
- 5342 Rule Britannia (with male chorus.)
- 5350 Venetian Song.
- 5351 Goodbye, Sweetheart. Goodbye.
- 5359 Pagliacci—Prologue.
- 5376 Carmen—Toreador Song.
- 5413 Brown Eyes.
- 5428 The Maple Leaf Forever.
- 5479 God Save the King.
- 5564 Trovatore—Tempest of the Heart.
- 5610 Annie Laurie.
- 5611 Girls of Gottenburg—Here's to the Girl (with Hayden Quartet)
- 5658 Kathleen Mavourneen
- 31481 I'll be Waiting in the Gloaming. Sweet Genevieve.
- 31495 The Village Blacksmith.
- 31565 There is a Green Hill Far Away.
- 31690 Faust—The Bravest Heart May Swell.
- 31693 As Long as the World Rolls On.
- 31699 Lily of Killarney—The Colleen Bawn.
- 31718 Some Day (with Hayden Quartet).
- 31719 Thy Sentinel Am I.

### VICTOR DOUBLE-FACED.

(All are 10-inch except those numbers beginning with 35, which are 12-inch.)

- 16006 The White Squall. Reverse: Standard o' the Braes o' Mar (Harold Jarvis).
- 16134 Rule Britannia. Reverse: God Save the King.
- 16157 Pagliacci—Prologue. Reverse: Brown Eyes.
- 16289 Dorothy—Queen of My Heart. Reverse: Come Back to Erin (Hayden Quartet).
- 16404 Kathleen Mavourneen. Reverse: Tenting on the Old Camp Ground (Hayden Quartet.)
- 16407 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Trovatore—Home to Our Mountains (Corinne Morgan and Harry Macdonough.)
- 16417 Venetian Song. Reverse: The Wanderer's Night Song (Frank C. Stanley and Henry Burr).
- 16521 Carmen—Toreador Song. Reverse: Trovatore—Tempest of the Heart.
- 16552 Maritana—In Happy Moments. Reverse: Faust—Kermesse Waltz Scene. (Arthur Pryor's Band.)
- 16675 Annie Laurie. Reverse: Roses in June (Reed Miller.)
- 17182 Yeoman's Wedding Song. Reverse: Song of Steel (Wilfred Glenn.)
- 17189 Robin Hood—Oh, Promise Me. Reverse: Dearie (Elsie Baker.)
- 17190 Arrow and the Song. Reverse: The Lass With the Delicate Air (Olive Kline.)
- 17234 For All Eternity. Reverse: The Rosary (John Barnes Wells.)
- 17273 Thy Beaming Eyes. Reverse: When I Know That Thou Art Near (Elsie Baker and Frederick Wheeler.)
- 17288 Forever and Forever. Reverse: My Laddie (Sue Harvard.)
- 17301 Absence. Reverse: Ritournelle.
- 17304 The Maple Leaf Forever. Reverse: Canadian National Airs Medley March (Sousa Band).
- 17422 I Fear No foe. Reverse: Thy Sentinel Am I.
- 17446 The Rosary. Reverse: Tannhauser — The Evening Star.
- 17473 Bedouin Love Song. Reverse: In Old Madrid (Frederick Wheeler.)
- 17536 O Sole Mio. Reverse: La Paloma.
- 17564 Crossing the Bar. Reverse: One Sweetly Solemn Thought (Elsie Baker.)
- 17933 Juanita. Reverse: 'Tis Not True.
- 18352 How Can I Forget? Reverse: Just As Your Mother Was (Henry Burr).
- 18411 There's a Green Hill Out in Flanders. Reverse: Say a Prayer for the Boys Out There (Peerless Quartet.)
- 18415 When the Great Red Dawn is Shining. Reverse: When You Come Home (Elizabeth Spencer).

- 5100 In Happy Moments. Reverse: The Heart Bowed Down.
- 5383 I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby. Reverse: I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming. Sweet Genevieve.
- 5384 Yeoman's Wedding Song. Reverse: Love's Old Sweet Song.
- 5442 Let Me Love Thee. Reverse: Tannhauser—the Evening Star (Thomas Chalmers).
- 40112 Pro Peccatis. Reverse: Il Profeta—Sopra Betra. l'amor mio (Orazio Cosetino, tenor).

### PATHE RECORDS ISSUED IN AMERICA (11½-inch, 1914.)

- 937 Maritana—In Happy Moments. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down.
- 961 Star Of My Life. Reverse: Let Me Love Thee.
- 963 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Good Bye. Reverse: Carmen—Toreador Song.
- 5175 The Distant Shore. Reverse: The Irish Emigrant.
- 5176 The Rosary. Reverse: O Lovely Night.

### PATHE RECORDS (1918.)

All 12-inch except 10027, 10-inch.

- 10027 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye.
- 30062 Star of My Life. Reverse: Let Me Love Thee.
- 30063 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye. Reverse: Carmen—Toreador Song.
- 30073 The Distant Shore. Reverse: The Irish Emigrant.
- 30074 The Rosary. Reverse: O Lovely Night. (NOTE.—The second group of recordings is evidently the same as the first except that the numbers have been changed. "In Happy Moments" has been dropped, and "Goodbye, Sweetheart," issued in two sizes.)

### EDISON TWO-MINUTE STANDARD CYLINDERS

- 7010 Love's Old Sweet Song
- 9291 Maritana—In Happy Moments.
- 9843 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye.
- 9876 Dorothy—Queen of the Earth.

### EDISON FOUR-MINUTE AMBEROL CYLINDER

- 246 For All Eternity.
- EDISON FOUR-MINUTE BLUE AMBEROL CYLINDERS
- 1640 Venetian Song.
- 2227 Carmen—Toreador Song.

### INDESTRUCTIBLE TWO-MINUTE CYLINDERS (1908-10)

- 685 For All Eternity.
- 686 Maritana—In Happy Moments.
- 951 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye.
- 975 Beauty's Eyes.
- 999 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down.
- 1007 Carmen—Toreador Song.
- 1029 O Promise Me.
- 1071 Dorothy—Queen of the Earth.
- 1218 Let Me Love Thee.

### INDESTRUCTIBLE FOUR-MINUTE CYLINDERS (1918)

- 3412 There's a Long, Long Trail.
- 3421 When the Great Red Dawn is Shining.
- COLUMBIA 10-INCH SINGLE FACED (1908)
- 3947 Love's Old Sweet Song.

### COLUMBIA 10-INCH DOUBLE FACED (1909)

- A607 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: I Love You as the Roses Love the Dew (Frank C. Stanley and Henry Burr).
- A609 Love's Old Sweet Song. Reverse: Elfin Dance (Jaroslav Kocian, violin).
- A659 For All Eternity. Reverse: I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby.
- A669 Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind. Reverse: Venetian Song.
- A671 Serenade (Schubert.) Reverse—Attila —Praise Ye (Metropolitan Mixed Trio).

### IMPERIAL 10-inch single-faced (1907-08)

- \*45545 Maritana—In Happy Moments
- \*45553 For All Eternity

- 35062 Pagliacci—Prologue. Reverse: Come Into the Garden, Maud (Jarvis.)
- 35010 The Village Blacksmith. Reverse: Song of a Heart (Percy Hemus.)
- 35011 As Long as the World Rolls On. Reverse: I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming.
- 35049 The Lost Chord. Reverse: There is a Green Hill Far Away.
- 35061 Anchored. Reverse: Aida—Celeste Aida (John Finnegan.)
- 35259 Till the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold. Reverse: Beautiful Isle of the Sea (Frank Combs.)
- 35310 Anchored. Reverse: The Diver (Wilfred Glenn.)

### CANADIAN VICTOR (1914-1918)

- 17565 We're from Canada. Reverse: Strike for the Grand Old Flag.
- 216020 Take Me Back to Dear Old Blighty. Reverse: Sussex By the Sea.
- 216026 Hit the Trail to Mother. Reverse: When the Bonnie, Bonnie Heather is Blooming I'll Return, Annie Laurie to You.
- 216037 Up in the Air Over There. Reverse: Good Bye-ee!
- 216040 My Ain Folk. Reverse: Mickey (Henry Burr).

### AMERICAN (March, 1906)

- 031306 Veronique—Letter Song. 10-inch single faced

### 10-INCH AMERICAN ZONOPHONE (1906-08)

- 411 I'll Be Waiting in the Gloaming. Sweet Genevieve
- 413 Maritana—In Happy Moments
- 449 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down
- 469 I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby
- 533 Give Me Thy Hand, Love
- 598 Yeoman's Wedding Song
- 946 Love's Old Sweet Song
- 1209 Let Me Love Thee
- 12594 Stabat Mater—Pro peccatis (sung in Latin)

### AMERICAN ZONOPHONE 10-inch double-faced (1903)



45556 Tannhauser—Star of Eve.  
 45560 Carmen—Toreador Song  
 45561 I Fear No Foe  
 45575 Let Me Love Thee, Mary  
 45585 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye  
 ("accompanied by Imperial Symphony Orchestra")  
 45604 The Rosary  
 45605 Forgotten  
 45607 Out on the Deep  
 (Records marked \* were described as unusually loud and "specially made for outdoor use.")

#### LEEDS 10-inch single-faced

4170 Tannhauser—Evening Star.  
 4171 Still As the Night. (It is not certain these are by Turner.)

#### PURITAN (PARAMOUNT) 10-inch double-faced (1920)

9021 Oh, Promise Me. Reverse: Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming (Peerless Quartet).

#### INTERNATIONAL 10-inch single-faced (1906)

3026 Down the Vale  
 3027 Schubert's Serenade  
 3028 The Heart Bowed Down  
 3029 Oh, Promise Me  
 3126 Love's Old Sweet Song  
 3127 Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep  
 3128 The Village Blacksmith  
 3172 I Fear No Foe  
 3173 Toreador Song  
 3174 Bedouin Love Song

#### OPERAPHONE 8-inch double-faced hill-and-dale (1916)

1055 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Melody in F (cello solo by Altschulter).  
 2009 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Celeste Aida (Charles Harrison).  
 1050 The Bandolero. Reverse: Thais—Meditation (Fred Landau, violin).  
 1057 Maple Leaf Forever. Reverse: One Wonderful Night (O'Connell and Bliss).  
 1064 Banjo Song. Reverse: Overture Isabella (Concert Band).  
 1077 Pagliacci—Prologue. Reverse: Tannhauser—Evening Star.  
 1080 Lost Chord. Reverse: Venetian Song.  
 ROYAL 10-inch double-faced (1908)  
 140 The Soldier's Song. Reverse: unidentified number by Peerless Quartet.

#### REN 10-inch hill-and-dale (1916)

5291 Bedouin Love Song. Reverse: When Shadows Gather (Charles Harrison).

#### STERLING CYLINDERS (1906-1908)

507 In Happy Moments  
 508 Love's Old Sweet Song  
 525 Schubert's Serenade  
 526 The Heart Bowed Down  
 534 Toreador Song  
 535 Star Of My Life  
 555 For All Eternity  
 556 O, Promise Me  
 568 Queen of the Earth  
 601 Bid Me to Love  
 602 Soldier's Song  
 645 Star Of My Soul  
 673 Rose Of My Heart  
 674 Killarney  
 767 Let Me Love Thee  
 772 I Fear No Foe  
 813 The Old Lock  
 831 Some Day  
 832 Colleen Bawn  
 857 The Irish Emigrant  
 858 Thy Sentinel Am I  
 865 Blow, Blow, Thou Wintry Wind  
 878 Ora Pro Nobis  
 879 Maritana—My Courage Now Regaining  
 889 Goodbye, Sweetheart  
 894 Brown Eyes  
 908 A Dream of Paradise  
 909 Face to Face  
 912 Dream Faces  
 938 Close to the Threshold  
 950 Pinafore—The Englishman's Song (with Harry Dearth and Chorus)  
 968 Mona  
 971 At the Ferry  
 998 A Dream of Paradise  
 1003 River of Years

#### ODFON 10 1/2 double-faced discs (1907-10)

A379 Maritana—In Happy Moments. Reverse: The Geisha—Star of My Soul (Sidney Jones)  
 551 Queen of the Earth. Reverse: Star of My Life.  
 563 For All Eternity. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down.  
 564 Serenade (Schubert). Reverse: Oh, Promise Me.  
 636 Bid me to Love. Reverse: Killarney.  
 A405 The Irish Emigrant. Reverse: The Old Lock.  
 672 Honor and Arms. Reverse: The Deathless Army.  
 A244 I Fear No Foe. Reverse: Thy Sentinel Am I.  
 A168 Let Me Love Thee. Reverse: Venetian Song.  
 611 A Soldier's Song. Reverse: Carmen—Toreador Song.

#### H. M. V. GRAMOPHONE

10-inch single-faced (1906-08)

3-2453 Maritana—In Happy Moments.  
 3-2455 Carmen—Toreador Song.  
 3-2477 Bohemian Girl—The Heart Bowed Down.  
 3-2785 Love's Old Sweet Song.  
 3-2945 Venetian Song.  
 4455 Waltz Dream—Piccolo. Piccolo (duet with Eleanor Jones Hudson).  
 4456 Waltz Duet from "The Waltz Dream." (with Ernest Pike).  
 4473 Pinafore—Now Give Three Cheers.  
 4477 Pinafore—Never Mind the Whys and Wherefores (with Eleanor Jones-Hudson and Thorpe Bates).  
 4479 Pinafore—In Uttering a Reprobation.  
 12-inch single-faced (issued February, 1907)  
 02081 Pagliacci—Prologue.

#### 10-inch double-faced

B340 Waltz Duet from "A Waltz Dream" (with Ernest Pike). Reverse: Trovatore—Miserere (Jones-Hudson and Pike).  
 B437 Pinafore—Now Give Three Cheers. Reverse: Pinafore—Chorus.  
 B439 Pinafore—Never Mind the Whys and Wherefores (with Jones-Hudson and Bates). Reverse: Things Are Seldom What They Seem (Amy Augarde and Thorpe Bates).  
 B440 Pinafore—In Uttering a Reprobation. Reverse: Kind Captain (Peter Dawson and Thorpe Bates).

#### ENGLISH ZONOPHONE

10-inch single-faced (1908)

X42641 For All Eternity.  
 X42654 Hearts of Oak.  
 X42655 For All Eternity.  
 X42746 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye.  
 X42748 Brown Eyes

#### ENGLISH ZONOPHONE

10-inch double-face (1913-14)

3 Queen of the Earth. Reverse: Star of My Soul.  
 509 For All Eternity. Reverse: Hearts of Oak.  
 510 In Happy Moments. Reverse: Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye.

#### TWIN 10-inch double-face (1908)

22 Revenge. Reverse: A Father's Love.

#### ENGLISH COLUMBIA

10-inch single-face (1908)

26427 The Rosary.  
 26430 Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind.

#### ENGLISH COLUMBIA

10-inch double-face (1908)

D105 Schubert's Serenade. Reverse: Venetian Song.  
 D214 Oh, Hear the Wild Wind Blow. Reverse: Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind.  
 D252 Beauty's Eyes. Reverse: The Rosary.  
 D272 For All Eternity. Reverse: The Heart Bowed Down.

#### REGAL 10-inch double-face (1914)

G6295 Love's Old Sweet Song. Reverse: The Heart Bowed Down.

#### RENA 10-inch double-face (1908)

1038 Serenade. Reverse: Venetian Song.  
 1039 Oh! Oh! Hear the Wild Wind Blow. Reverse: Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind.  
 1130 Love's Old Sweet Song. Reverse: The Heart Bowed Down.

#### PATHE 8 1/2-inch double-faced (1908)

1468 Star of Eve. Reverse: For All Eternity.  
 1489 Star of My Life. Reverse: Let Me Love Thee.  
 1490 Thy Sentinel Am I. Reverse: O Promise Me.  
 1491 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye. Reverse: Toreador Song.

#### PATHE 10 1/2-inch (October, 1908)

961 Let Me Love Thee. Reverse: Star of My Life.  
 962 Thy Sentinel Am I. Reverse: O Promise Me.  
 963 Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye. Reverse: Toreador Song.  
 S002 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: For All Eternity.

#### PATHE 10 1/2-inch, (February, 1918)

20835 The Rosary. Reverse: O Lovely Night.

#### DIAMOND double faced, vertical cut (Jan., 1915)

067 The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye

#### MARATHON 12-inch hill-and-dale "Packman" cut (February, 1913)

204 Auld Lang Syne. Reverse: Miner's Dream of Home (F. Gregory)  
 226 John Peel. Reverse: The Farmer's Boy

#### FAMOUS 10-inch double-faced (1914)

320 Mother Machree. Reverse: It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary (Jack Charman).  
 324 Irish Emigrant. Reverse: Soldier's Song.  
 325 Venetian Song. Reverse: For All Eternity.

#### HOMOPHONE 12-inch double-faced

(October, 1913)

2052 Queen of My Heart. Reverse: In Happy Moments.

#### HOMOPHONE 10-inch double-faced (1908)

409 Oh, Promise Me. Reverse: Venetian Song  
 410 Annie Laurie. Reverse: Love's Old Sweet Song  
 414 I Fear No Foe. Reverse: Brown Eyes  
 415 There is a Green Hill Far Away. Reverse: Land of Hope and Glory  
 416 Tannhauser—Star of Eve. Reverse: Toreador Song  
 417 Out on the Deep. Reverse: Lost Chord  
 418 Glorious Devon. Reverse: Hear the Wild Winds Blow  
 425 Excelsior. Reverse: Life's Dream is O'er (Duets with Fred Wilson)  
 433 Let Me Love Thee. Reverse: Bohemian Girl—Heart Bowed Down (Harry Thornton)  
 437 Friendship. Reverse: Love and War (Duets with Fred Wilson)

#### HOMOCORD (In July, 1914, 11st)

G4005 Annie Laurie. Reverse: Loch Lomond (Leo Stormont.)

4225 Land of Hope and Glory. Reverse: Star of Eve.

#### LYCEUM 10-inch (October, 1913)

079. The Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Toreador Song.

#### PELICAN 10-inch (October, 1913, 11st)

P43. Until. Reverse: Your Eyes Have Told Me So.

P47. O Star of Eve. Reverse: In Happy Moments.

#### PIONEER 10-inch double-face (1913)

B11 Your Eyes Have Told Me So. Reverse: When the Convent Bell is Ringing (Robert Carr).  
 B13 Until. Reverse: Queen of the Earth.  
 B18 She is Far From the Land. Reverse: Love's Old Sweet Song.  
 B20 Toreador Song. Reverse: Yeoman's Wedding Song.  
 B22 Star of Eve. Reverse: In Happy Moments.  
 B24 Star of Bethlehem. Reverse: The Rosary (Carr).  
 B25 For All Eternity. Reverse: When Dull Care (Tom F. Kinniburgh).  
 B28 For All Eternity. Reverse: My Dreams (Gwilyn Richards).  
 B35 Venetian Song. Reverse: The Irish Emigrant.  
 338 Queen of My Heart. Reverse: O Promise Me.  
 POPULAR 10-inch, double-faced (1913)  
 141 She is Far From the Land. Reverse: In Happy Moments.  
 322 A Soldier's Song. Reverse: A Joviah Monk (Glandon Lewys).  
 326 Tempest of the Heart. Reverse: Semele—Where'er You Walk (Albert Watson).  
 388 Toreador Song. Reverse: Simon, the Cellarer (Harry Thornton).  
 392 Queen of the Earth. Reverse: Rigoletto—Le Donne e Mobile (Wilfred Virgo).  
 393 In Happy Moments. Reverse: The Merry Maiden (Miss H. Mulligan).  
 394 The White Squall. Reverse: Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind (J. H. Scotland).  
 403 Thy Sentinel Am I. Reverse: Love, Could I Only Tell Thee (Thomas Jackson).

#### EDISON BELL WINNER, double-faced, .. lateral cut (1913)

2381 The Distant Shore. Reverse: Anchored.  
 2382 In Happy Moments. Reverse: O Promise Me.  
 2427 Even Bravest Heart. Reverse: She Alone Charmeth My Sadness (Robert Carr).

#### EDISON BELL 12-inch, lateral cut (1913)

602 The Bridge. Reverse: For All Eternity.

#### EDISON BELL 10-inch velvet face (1913)

1196 Even Bravest Heart. Reverse: She Alone Charmeth My Sadness (Carr).  
 1209 O Promise Me. Reverse: The Arrow and the Song.  
 1210 The Distant Shore. Reverse: In Happy Moments.

#### BEKA 10-inch single-faced (1908)

G40351 The Soldier's Home (possibly a mistake for "The Soldier's Song.")  
 G40355 Tempest of the Heart.  
 G40356 Toreador Song.  
 G40357 Messiah—Why Do the Nations?  
 G40362 Elijah—It Is Enough.

#### BEKA 10-inch double-faced (1908)

40352 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Beauty's eyes.  
 40353/40355 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Tempest of the Heart.  
 40357/40362 Why Do the Nations? Reverse: It Is Enough.

#### BEKA double faced 10-inch (1913)

130 Soldier's Song. Reverse: Toreador Song.  
 132 Heart Bowed Down. Reverse: Tempest of the Heart.

- 133 Forever and Forever. Reverse: My Dreams (Phillip Rittle).  
 342 Beauty's Eyes. Reverse: The Bell Ringer.  
**CLARION** 10-inch double-faced discs (1908)  
 1006 In Happy Moments. Reverse: The Irish Emigrant.  
 1007 For All Eternity. Reverse: Love, Could I Only Tell Thee (Vincent Hards)  
**DIPLOMA** 10-inch double-faced (1913)  
 B51. Love's Old Sweet Song. Reverse: Queen of My Heart.  
 B52. Until: Reverse: Your Eyes Have Told Me So.  
 B53. Yeoman's Wedding Song. Reverse: In Happy Moments.  
 B58. Oh, Star of Eve. Reverse: She is Far From the Land.  
 B67. Irish Emigrant: Reverse: Soldier's Song.  
 B68. Venetian Song. Reverse: Bedouin Love Song.  
 B77. Toreador Song. Reverse: The Trumpeter (Archle Anderson)

P. S. Since this list of Turner records was compiled and submitted to HOBBIES some months ago, I have obtained additional information about some Sterling cylinders as well as discs of Pathé origin from Ernie Bayly and from Len Watts, of Twickenham, Middlesex, England. Because inserting the numbers and titles in their proper places would involve extensive type resetting, I am simplifying matters by adding this postscript.

The Sterling list should include No. 895, "My Courage Now Regain-ing," from "Maritana." There is also a listing of "Brown Eyes" as No. 994. My list shows it as 894. It is unlikely that two versions were offered with almost identical numbers, so I suspect I made a typographical error in preparing my listing. About 1920, Pathé No. 963 was reissued in 11-inch size as No. 5246, and No. 5176 as 5446, with paper labels.

In my Diamond Double Disc listing I did not include No. 0182, "Carmen—Toreador Song" (again!) and "O, Lovely Night."

During the World War period, around 1917-18, Pathé reissued some of its older records under 11-inch "Rooster label." No. 20633 included "Goodbye, Sweetheart" and the "Toreador Song"; No. 20634, "The Distant Shore" and "The Irish Emigrant"; and No. 20635, "The Rosary" and "O, Lovely Night."

I thank my English friends for their help. Alan Turner, however, was such a prolific recorder there almost certainly are other records by him that this research has not brought to light.

—Jim Walsh.

— o —

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# "Cowboy Song" Recordings

PART I

By JIM WALSH

### I. "The Dying Cowboy"

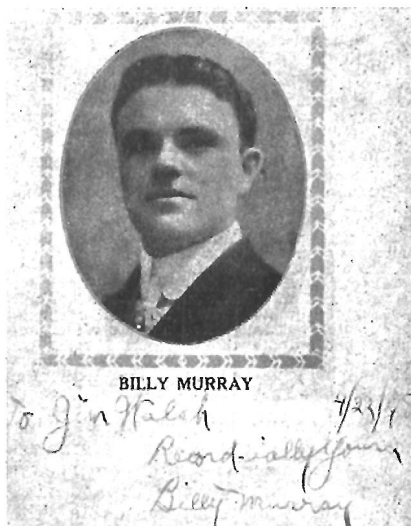
When I was a boy I hated school. I felt I was wasting time in a classroom when I could be adding to the record catalog of my imaginary Walsh Talking Machine Company.

But a cherished memory from my school days recalls a few minutes of happiness. One cold winter morning the heating system refused to function properly and the only fairly warm place in the building was the second floor auditorium. To keep us pupils from freezing, all grades were instructed to march upstairs. No effort was made to hold classes, but boys and girls from the first grade through the fourth year of high school were given the opportunity to mount the rostrum and "entertain" their shivering fellow students.

I speculated as to what was about to happen when a tall, gangling, unprepossessing looking boy slowly walked to the raised platform and offered to oblige with a recitation. When he said that the title would be "The Dying Cowboy" I hugged myself with anticipatory glee, for I was pretty sure of what was coming. The teen-age lad, who was charitably described around town as "not exactly bright," was locally noted for his addiction to dime novels, "poetry" and anything else in printed form that glorified the cowboys and Indians of the old West. He couldn't master any other subject, but his fund of misinformation about pioneer Western days was unequalled.

As soon as the youth solemnly began speaking his piece I knew that my expectations would be realized. My father never belonged to any fraternal order, and neither have I, but a few months before I had found in the post office a discarded copy of a magazine issued by a well known organization, and it had contained the doggerel that "Savannah" was intoning now.

The poem told a sad story that brought tears to the eyes of some of the easily affected students. It described a cowboy, who had been mortally wounded in an accident, lying on his deathbed while his solicitous fellow cow-punchers grouped about him, offered rough and ready sympathy. The dying man expressed the conventional pious wishes that he could once more see his sister, sweetheart and, most of all his dear old mother. Knowing a meeting couldn't be arranged before "death's dark angel" came, he said he hoped to meet them in "the great round-up in the sky." Then he told his comrades he was



"DENVER NIGHTINGALE."—Billy Murray, who lived in Denver until he left home when he was 16 to join Harry Leavitt's "High Rollers" show troupe, had a near monopoly of recording "Cheyenne" and other cowboy songs.

dying in peace of mind, because he was insured in the Woodmen of the World, and his relations and friends wouldn't have to shell out for his funeral expenses. His breath came fainter and fainter, but with his dying gasp he told the weeping cowpokes that if they wished to be at ease when their time came, "follow my example, boys, and join the Woodmen of the World." Having said which, he said no more.

This "verse" had struck me as deliciously ludicrous when I first read it, but it seemed 10 times more so now that the slow-witted boy had painfully committed it to memory and stood now reciting it with the utmost seriousness to a large audience of boys and girls. The idea of ending a "pathetic" poem about a cowboy's death with a sales pitch for a secret order's insurance program was, to me, almost unbearably funny. It didn't, however, seem to strike any of the other listeners that way.

In spite of my best efforts a few unholy snickers escaped me, and I heard one boy ask another: "What's the matter with Ulysses, laughing at that sad poem that way?" The disgusted reply was, "Aw, you know he's crazy!" And "Savannah" finished his tear-jerking recitation to generous applause.

I mention this long gone incident because it shows how, generations

after the cowboy had ceased to be an important figure in the American West's expanding economy, the average boy—and man—still had a nostalgic yearning for the days when cattle were driven in huge herds across the plains. And that longing still prevails, as witness the popularity for the past 60 years and more of the novels of Zane Grey and other Western story writers and, most of all, the attraction that cowboy movies never lose for millions of viewers.

Probably this preoccupation with the Old West was even greater back in 1906 when two young fellows, who had worked their way to the top in Tin Pan Alley's galaxy of song writing stars, decided there would be money in a song about the love life of an old-time cowboy.

### II. "Cheyenne" Sets the Pace

The hard working, gifted, ingenious and successful young men were Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne. Williams, who wrote the words of the hundreds of songs the pair originated was born in Faribault, Minn., on August 29, 1879. After being educated in public and military schools, he met Van Alstyne, and they traveled for a time with a circus. Going to New York in 1900, they began writing songs while living on Van Alstyne's small salary as pianist for a music publisher—probably the J. H. Remick Co., which distributed most of their songs. After the team became successful, they toured in vaudeville both in the United States and abroad.

Williams and Van Alstyne worked in partnership for more than 10 years. Then Williams founded his own music publishing business. When it proved unsuccessful, he went to Hollywood to be a movie director. He died in Oakland, Calif., of tuberculosis, on May 15, 1922.

"The ASCAP Biographical Dictionary" says Egbert Anson Van Alstyne was born March 5, 1882, in Chicago, where he died July 9, 1951, but I believe this birthdate is wrong. Sigmund Spaeth's "History of American Popular Music" gives the year as 1878 and the birthplace as Marenco, Ill. (It's hard to find two reference books that agree on places and dates!) In my opinion, 1878 is the right year, for it would make Van Alstyne 25 or 26 when he wrote his first, hit, "Navaajo," and 26 or 27 when he composed the immortal "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree." By the ASCAP account he would have been only 18 when he went to New

York after having attended Chicago Musical College and Cornell College, in Iowa, traveled with a circus, and been a pianist and director for traveling musical companies. His musical career had begun at the age of seven when he played the organ in a Methodist church at Marengo. I now serve notice that I am planning to pay Van Alstyne a centenary tribute in *HOBBIES* for March, 1978.

The composer's mother, by the way, was something of a personality in Chicago. For years in the 1930's, she conducted a physical fitness program from radio station WLS and was known to listeners as "Aunt Em." She must then have been in her 80's.

Williams and Van Alstyne had already proved their versatility when they began looking for a new subject in 1906. They had written a fairly successful comic "coon song," "Back, Back, Back to Baltimore"; had turned out a great "Indian song" hit with "Navajo"; had written a ballad, "Why Don't You Try?" with the Atlantic City boardwalk as its locale, and had produced what may have been the biggest hit in history, the already mentioned "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," which is the favorite sentimental ballad of many famous singers. (I am not a singer, but it is also mine.) In later years they were to prove their mastery of comic numbers with "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark," "I Used to be Afraid to Go Home in the Dark," "It Looks Like a Big Night Tonight" and "What's the Matter With Father?"; ragtime, with "Oh, That Navajo Rag" (a follow-up of their Indian song of 10 years before) and "That Slippery Slide Trombone"; and they contrived "When I Was 21 and You Were Sweet 16," the theme of which was almost a dead ringer for Percy Wenrich's "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet," even to the clip-clop of horses' hooves. (Through a mix-up, the label of the Victor record, as well as the catalog, credited the music of "When I Was 21" to Harry Von Tilzer, instead of Van Alstyne.) But now they felt the time had come for something new. The result was "Cheyenne."

Despite the long run of "Indian songs," the cowboy had not heretofore been successfully celebrated in American popular music. There had of course been songs dealing with the hard-riding herdsmen of the plains, but they had largely originated among the cowpunchers themselves—such now accepted classics of "Western country music" as "Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," "The Dying Cowboy," "When the Work's All Done This Fall," "Git Along, Little Dogies" and "Jesse James." I will discuss such typically lugubrious effusions briefly toward the end of this article. But so far as I can find, no Tin Pan Alley artisans had come through with a successful musical depiction of bygone life on the Western plains before "Cheyenne" made its advent. The nearest approach to a cowboy recording before Williams and Van Alstyne busied themselves probably was Columbia disc No. 1548, issued in January, 1904, and called "Cheyenne Joe's Tavern." The brain

child of Len Spencer and Charles A. Prince, it was played by the Columbia Orchestra, directed by Prince, narrated by Spencer, and was described as "a representation of the Rocky Mountain Tavern at the Pan-American Exposition" of 1901-02.

Another somewhat similar descriptive sketch with a "trace of cowboy" was "Down the Pike," played by Arthur Pryor's Orchestra and issued by Victor in November, 1904, as 10-inch M. 4059 and 12-inch 31301. Here is the amusing description:

"Echoes of a stroll down the celebrated 'Pike' at the St. Louis Fair. We are first conscious of the confused babel of voices from the thousands who are thronging the Pike; then the leather-lunged yarker is heard picturing the attractions of the Blarney Castle, while the Irish Band strikes up a rollicking air. A little farther along, picturesque Fair Japan is reached, and the Mikado's musicians play a characteristic strain. Next, we reach 'Old St. Louis!' 'See the cowboys and cowgirls picking up money while riding at breakneck speed!' The Cowboy Band is heard, accompanied by wild yells from the performers. It is Michigan Day, and a party of jolly college boys give their college yell and are heard pathetically singing, 'How Dry I Am,' concluding with 'We Want! Beer!' The baby incubators come into view, and amidst the feeble wails of the infants, a rural voice is heard to ask if 'them be the same babies I saw at the Pan American Exposition?' Amid the laughter of the crowd we pass along to the Oriental section, where a lecturer is picturing the delights of the 'Sun Dance,' as performed before Anthony and Cleopatra, while seductive Oriental strains come from the Turkish Band."

No writer's credit is given, but this sounds like something that originated in Len Spencer's fertile brain. I'd like to find copy of the 12-inch version of this historically valuable skit.

In writing "Cheyenne," Williams and Van Alstyne gave lovers of popular music something that, in its unassuming way, is a masterpiece. I consider it, from the standpoint of harmonious wedding of clever words to an irresistible melody, the perfect popular song. From my boyhood, although I was never, unlike the gangling boy who recited in the school auditorium, a devotee of Western dime novels and have never been able even to read Zane Gray with patience, Billy Murray's Victor version of



"CHEYENNE'S" COMPOSER—Egbert Van Alstyne, above, wrote the first successful cowboy popular song, "Cheyenne." He also composed the music of "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," "Navajo," "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark," "Memories," and scores of other great hits, and deserves to rank as one of the greatest American song writers.

"Cheyenne" has had a stronger tug at my heart strings than any other old popular record. Its popularity seemed to insure its staying in the catalog forever, which made me weep when it was dropped and the space it had occupied was filled by Paul Whiteman's fox trot version of "Chicago (That Toddling Town)," which I considered trash. A few years later I rejoiced when it was included in the Victor catalog or records of historical and personal interest.

The interesting points of "Cheyenne" are many. It tells what came to be the familiar tale of a cowboy and his sweetheart riding away to be married, and is perhaps the first song in which a reluctant girl is told "you will, or you'll walk home!" ("Shy Ann," the heroine of "Cheyenne," had traveled on horseback, and not in a car, but she was "beneath the little church's dome" when she began to doubt whether she was wanted to wed.)

Since the copyright expired years ago, I think it will be permissible to quote the words, in which Williams maintained a high standard as a lyric writer:

"Way out in old Wyoming long ago,  
Where ky-oats lurk while night winds howl  
and blow,  
A cowboy's lusty voice rang out, 'Hello!  
And echoed through the valley down below.  
Then came back a maiden's answer, sweet  
and clear.  
Cowboy tossed his hat up in the air!  
Said he: 'I've come to take you right away  
from here!  
Cheyenne, they say, is miles away, but  
they've a preacher there!'  
Then she just drooped her eye—she was so  
very shy—so shy,  
oh my!

And then he made reply—'Oh! Oh! Oh!'  
(REFRAIN)

"'Shy Ann, Shy Ann, hop on my pony!  
There's room here for two, dear, but after  
the ceremony  
We'll both ride back home, dear, as one,  
On my pony from old Cheyenne!"

They rode that night and nearly half the day.  
Cheyenne was sixty-seven miles away.  
But when at last they galloped up the street,  
The cowboy's pride was really hard to beat.  
On his arm his future bride a-carrying,  
But beneath the little church's dome,  
She said: 'I feel like turning back—  
not marrying!'

His face got red and then he said: 'You will  
or you'll walk home!  
'If you ride back today you'll honor and obey!'  
'I will!' she cried; then he was heard to say:—  
(REPEAT THE REFRAIN)

Perhaps a comment or two on the lyric will be in order. "Ky-oats" was the average cowboy's pronunciation of "coyotes." Since the couple had already ridden 67 miles to Cheyenne to be married and apparently intended to return to the ranch as soon as the ceremony was performed, the thought intrudes that they probably were suffering from saddle sores by the time they reached home!

"Cheyenne" had a sub-title, "Shy Ann," and it appears obvious that the shy characteristics of the heroine were suggested by the name of the cattle town. The song began to be a hit as soon as it was published. Most phonograph companies lost no time in issuing it, but Columbia was first. In June, 1906, it came out with 10-inch disc 3389 and cylinder No. 32944, both sung by Billy Murray. The Columbia list said "Cheyenne" was sung in a musical comedy, "The Earl and the Girl." When Columbia

(Continued on page 130)



that the people who sold him the stuff are no longer around, and conventional stamp dealers, whom he would have been wise to have contacted in the first place, are not at all interested.

The ads for these tempting contrivances are seldom in the collectors publications. Those readers are generally too smart to fall for them. Instead, they are sometimes in the catalogs of the mass mail order houses. For example, one mail order house offers 50 U.S.A. stamps for \$2.49, including one over 100 years old. That supposed rarity is a 3c green, which still wholesales for about 20c per 100, and every one of the others can be found in a dealer's penny box. Retail for the 50 stamps is at most \$1; how much of an investment is this at \$2.49?

Collecting first day covers is a popular branch of the hobby. The American First Day Cover Society has carried on a campaign against the overpriced covers offered sometimes by prestigious publications. They ask as much as approximately \$20.00 for a dozen or so covers, sweetening the brew with a \$2 album, and an impressive certificate—as if possession of the covers were not enough. Sometimes similar deals can be obtained from a professional first day cover dealer for a fraction of that sum.

There is a book, happily once again available, that pulls no punches in trying to show newer collectors how they can get more out of philately pleasurewise; and also how they can

build up a nest-egg that at some later day can prove as useful as a bank account. And in fairness, we must add that when we first saw the need for a book of this kind a decade and a half ago, our publisher suggested to us that we should write it . . . and we did.

"Fun and Profit in Stamp Collecting" is the book's name, and the first printing sold out in a matter of weeks. The second and third did not last much longer. The fourth printing was on book dealers' bookshelves until two years ago. Now, Hawthorn Press, specialist in paper backs, has taken over the rights from the original publisher, Meredith Press, and a card cover edition is available.

The book has been brought up to date with an appendix summarizing market conditions for every phase of United States collecting, and for various countries of the world. And in the 10-chapter text, the suggestions and conclusions, true as they were 14 years ago, are even more so now, since they have been tried and tested by the experience of the 30,000 collectors who have bought the book.

As a service to readers of HOBBIES, we have a supply of the book, and we will be glad to supply them at the regular price of \$3.50, postpaid, to all who wish them. If autographed copies are desired, it will be a pleasure to oblige. We have conducted this column in HOBBIES for more than a third of a century, and we are happy to regard its readers as special friends.

As Helmuth Conrad wrote in the Chicago Tribune "... the most sensible, useful and lively book ever written on the myriad ins and outs of stamp buying and selling."

Another prominent stamp writer said in reviewing an earlier printing, "... surely the finest book of its kind, for the experienced collectors, intending stamp dealers, or the person knowing nothing at all of the hobby who wishes to get maximum education in minimum time."

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

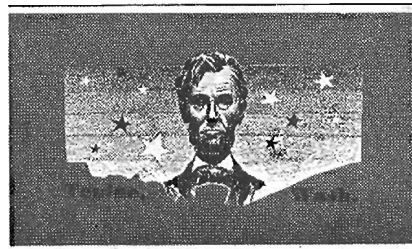
introduced its "A" series of double-faced discs in 1908, "Cheyenne" became No. A319, coupled with "Little Girl, You'll Do," sung by Albert Campbell.

Victor's single-faced version came along a month later, in July, 1906, as No. 4719, and was in every respect a superior record to the Columbia. The recording, complete with cowboy "yips" and the sound of a trotting horse, was better, and Murray's singing improved on his Columbia effort. The Victor supplement described its offering as:

"A jolly 'cowboy' song telling of the wild ride of the cowboy and his sweetheart to Cheyenne, sixty-seven miles away, in search of a preacher to marry them. At the threshold 'Shy Ann' has a fit of shyness and proposes to go back. 'If you do you walk,' says Mr. Cowboy, and at the thought of a sixty-seven mile tramp the lady blushing consents. Splendidly sung by Murray, with descriptive effects by the orchestra."

In the same supplement and numbered 4720—just one digit higher than "Cheyenne's" 4719—was perhaps the most popular "descriptive specialty" ever recorded by Ada Jones and Len Spencer — "Peaches and Cream." When Victor followed Columbia's 1908 example of beginning to make double-faced discs, "Cheyenne" and "Peaches and Cream" were coupled as No. 16102, and because both sides were so attractive the record sold steadily for many years.

(To be continued)



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And the more it took a licking  
The better it would stick.  
Let's all be like the Postage Stamp  
In playing life's rough game;  
And just keep a sticking  
Though we hang our heads in shame.  
The stamp stuck to the letter  
Till it saw it safely through;  
There's no one can do it better  
Let's keep sticking and be true—

Author Unknown

## LINCOLNIANA INTEREST GROWS

Each year, February 12, is well-remembered as the birthday of one of the world's greatest humanitarians. And February 12, 1976, was no exception. Educational institutions and the press gave generous attention to the celebration of Lincoln's birthday.

Among the collectors groups honoring Lincoln's memory was the Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, Ill. The annual Lincoln day program started at 1:30 p.m., on February 12 in the Hall of Representatives of the Old State Capitol. Listed on the program were papers to be presented by Professor Emory M. Thomas of the University of Georgia and Professor Phillip S. Paludan of the University of Kansas.

Clyde C. Walton of Northern Illinois University was the moderator.

Following the imposing afternoon session, members and other visitors gathered for a dinner meeting at 7:30 p.m. At this meeting, the program listed the following:

"Lord Longford of Great Britain—a former Oxford don and government minister, champion of social welfare causes, head of a famous literary family, and chairman of the prestigious London publishing house of Sidgwick and Jackson—will speak on "Lincoln and Kennedy." Lord Longford is author of several books, including "Abraham Lincoln" (1974), a biography to which the perspective of distance and time lends interest and charm."



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# "Cowboy Song" Recordings

PART II

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., who read it in manuscript and looked forward eagerly to seeing it in print. Unfortunately, that was not to be, but Fred will long be remembered as a loyal friend and for his dedicated research concerning old records and pioneer recording artists.)

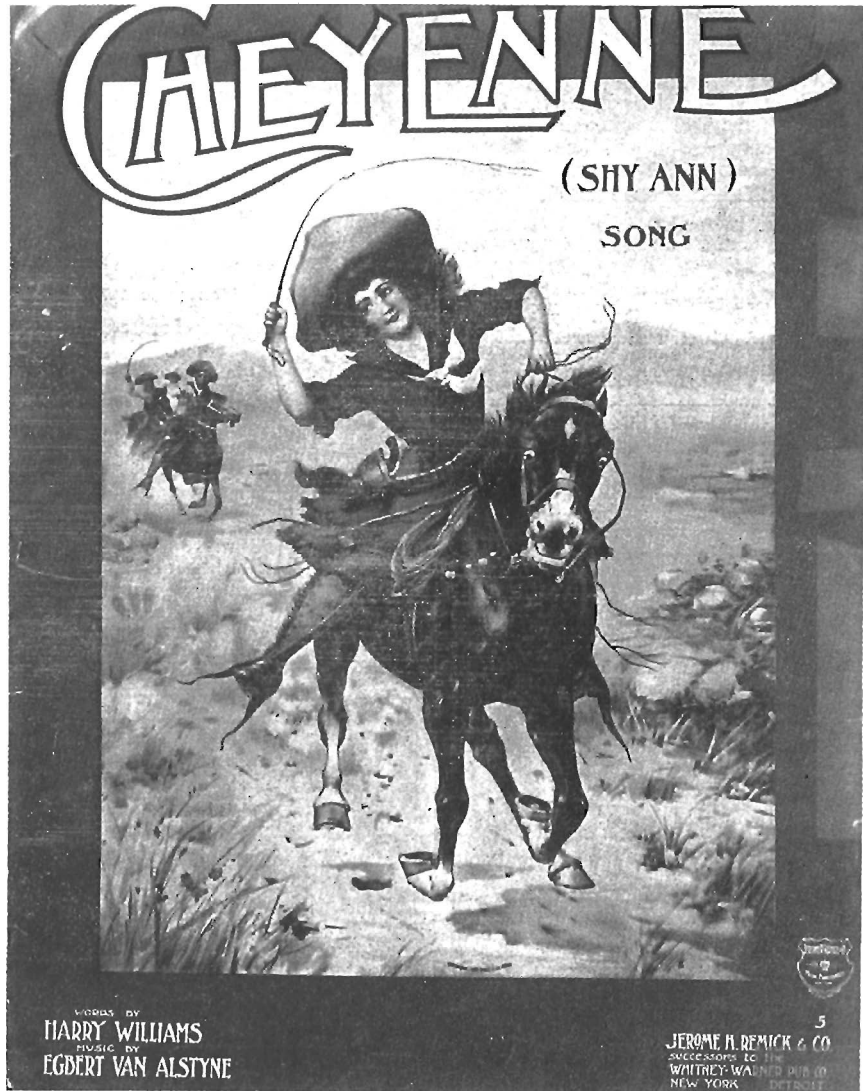
By Aug. 1906, the breezy Western song "Cheyenne" had gained so much popularity that Leonard W. Lillingston, the editor of the *Talking Machine News*, published in London, was chiding English record manufacturers for not issuing it. "How is it," Lillingston asked, "that we have no records listed as yet of 'Cheyenne,' the cowboy love song, which is booming so well in the States just now?"

Back on this side of the Atlantic, Edison missed out on the "boom." It never did announce a cylinder of "Cheyenne" as a complete song. Such short-sightedness seems unbelievable, but perhaps Mr. Edison didn't like the number! In August, the same month in which Mr. Lillingston published his complaint, American Zon-o-phone issued No. 503, a single-faced disc called "Cheyenne — Medley March and Two-Step," which was played by the Zon-o-phone Concert Band, and conducted by Fred Hager. Besides the name song, the medley included "Why Don't You Try?" and "The Little Chauffeur."

Trailing badly, Zon-o-phone in October placed a vocal version on sale. It was No. 565 and was sung by Murray. This was coupled in 1908 with Murray's rendition of Williams and Van Alstyne's great comic hit of that year, "I'm Afraid to Come Home in the Dark."

I do not now have access to a 1906 catalog of Imperial records, which were made by Leeds & Catlin, but I formerly owned one. It was sent for binding to the Library of Congress in Washington, and apparently was lost there, for it has never been returned. I have an impression that it contained a record of "Cheyenne," sung by Arthur Collins, but my memory may be tricking me. If Collins did not sing such a record, then, so far as I know, Billy Murray was the only artist who made "Cheyenne" as a vocal solo.

In fact, "The Denver Nightingale," who was just then surging into his



—Music from Lillian and Dulcinea McNeill BIGGEST "COWBOY SONG" HIT. "Cheyenne," whose cover is reproduced here, was published in 1906 and, owing largely to records by Billy Murray, became the first and greatest hit dealing with romance on the Western plains. It is still well remembered, and Jim Walsh terms it "the perfect popular song."

enormous popularity as a recording artist, came to have almost a monopoly of American recordings of cowboy songs. This perhaps was only appropriate since, although he was born in Philadelphia, he was taken as a baby to Denver and spent his boyhood there. In consequence, he had a thorough knowledge of the Old West. His nickname was acquired when Sam Rous, the Victor catalog editor,

asked if he could suggest some amusing tag by which he might be identified. Billy facetiously replied that it might be appropriate to call him a "Rocky Mountain Canary" — a name by which the braying donkeys of that area were known. Instead of adopting this proposal, Rous, with Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale" in mind, changed it to "The Denver Nightingale," and referred to Murray

by that term in a good many supplement write-ups. From personal experience, the "Nightingale" was well acquainted with both Indians and Cowboys.

Some years ago, I have just recalled, I played the Victor record of "Cheyenne" for Donald L. Leavitt, now assistant chief of the Library of Congress' musical division in Washington, D. C. Don, a skilled musician, was much impressed by both the song and the singer, and pronounced Billy Murray to have had "the perfect voice for recording by the acoustic method." He termed Billy "the Caruso of comic songs." It is often said that Caruso, of all operatic singers, had the perfect recording voice and so, on a different plane, did Billy Murray, in Don Leavitt's opinion.

Mr. Murray, having made a smashing success with "Cheyenne," was called on to record a "Cheyenne Parody,"

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which was issued in 10-inch size on Victor 4974 in February, 1907, and under the same number, as an 8-inch, in March. This was in the days when Upton Sinclair's "muckraking" novel, "The Jungle," had focused nationwide attention and aroused widespread indignation because of the insanity and inhumane conditions under which animals were slaughtered in the Chicago stockyards. One half of the parody must have been inspired by the book. To those of us who love animals the thought seems gruesome rather than funny, but the words told of an agent for the "beef trust" buying, for 30 cents, "a sick old pony named Shy Ann", and exulting:

"Shy Ann, Shy Ann, you sick old pony,  
We'll take you and make you and bake you into bologna.  
And the fools who eat you won't know  
You're that pony from old Cheyenne."

No doubt that is very funny — if you look at it the "right" way.

This, incidentally, was not the only parody Murray recorded for Victor. I have often wondered who

(Continued on page 127)

## GREAT NEWS!

### "The Old Record Box" Programs Now Available

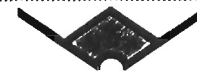
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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

wrote those "take-offs" on popular songs, for no author's name was given, but I didn't think to ask Billy for the information when he was available for questioning. His other parody discs included 4385, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," and No. 5006, issued in March, 1907, "Parodies on Three Popular Songs" — "Why Don't You Try?" "Dearie" and "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie." The "Dearie" parody was made available separately on eight-inch No. 5065, while the other two were included in eight-inch 5066. The one on "Dearie" is particularly amusing. It tells of how a young man rode 90 miles on an Erie Railroad train (even in those days the Erie had a reputation for lack of speed) and developed whiskers that touched his knees by the time he reached home. When his friends inquired, "Where did you get the fungus?" he replied:

"On the Erie, the Erie!  
That's how my whiskers happened to grow.  
Going from New York to Buffalo!!  
On the Erie, the Erie,  
And now I believe that Adam and Eve built  
the Erie!"

(To be continued)

## OBITUARY

### DOROTHY ROSE

Dorothy Rose, a longtime antique dealer in New York City, passed away suddenly on February 27. According to her husband, Murray, she had been contemplating a visit westward with a stopover to greet old friends at HOBBIES Magazine in Chicago.

Mrs. Rose had been a display advertiser in HOBBIES for almost 20 years, starting when she had an open shop at 49 East 12th St., New York City.

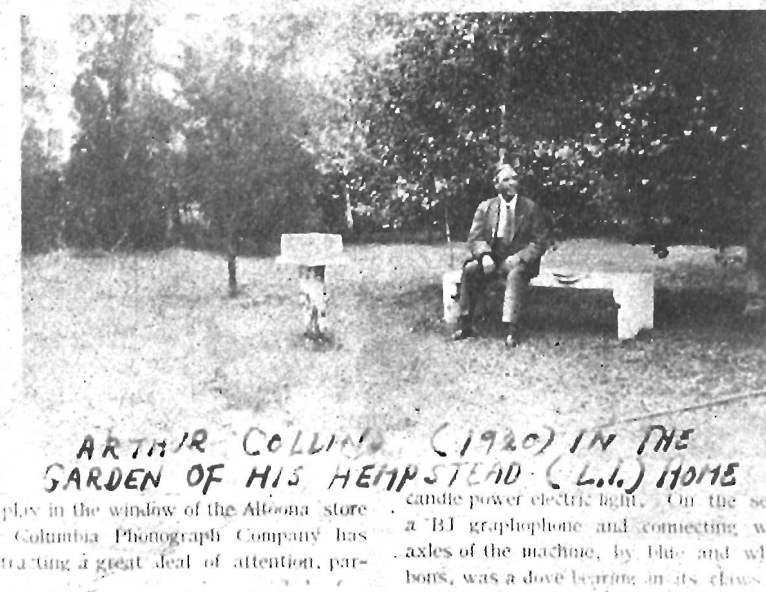
She specialized in a general line of art glass when her early ads appeared in HOBBIES. Her first listing offered "a Daum Nancy vase, 16" high, 4" at base, black base, amber brown background, slender and tapering, carved leaves and trees, \$40; Daum Nancy vase, 13" high, 4½" top and bottom, shaped like hourglass, representing bark of tree, gold carved autumn leaves, top has one-fourth gold band, \$65; Galle vase, 14" high, 3" at base, 2½" at top, purple base shading into orchid, carved leaves and irises, tall and slender, \$40."

Although the years have passed, these descriptions are passed along in the hope that the present owners will read this and feel a tinge of nostalgia while enjoying the artistry of their treasures.

In later years, Mrs. Rose has dealt almost exclusively in glass paperweights.



ADA JONES AND LEN SPENCER (1906)



play in the window of the Altona store a Columbia Phonograph Company has attracting a great deal of attention, par- a BI graphophone and connecting w axes of the machine, by blue and wh bones, was a dove bearing in its claws

"COWBOY" RECORDERS. — Len Spencer and Ada Jones (above) recorded a Western sketch, "Broncho Bob and His Little Cheyenne." Arthur Collins (below) made a U.S. Everlasting cylinder of "The Last Shot Got Him" and may have made an Imperial disc of "Cheyenne." This snapshot, taken in 1921, shows Collins in the garden of his home at Hempstead, Long Island, N.Y.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# “Cowboy Song” Recordings

PART III

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., who read it in manuscript and looked forward eagerly to seeing it in print. Unfortunately, that was not to be, but Fred will long be remembered as a loyal friend and for his dedicated research concerning old records and pioneer recording artists.)

### III. “Broncho Bob and His Little Cheyenne”

We are not yet through with “Cheyenne.” The song came to the favorable attention of that versatile genius, the great Len Spencer, who was always alert for novelties to be used in the amazingly clever “vaudeville sketches” he recorded with the legendary Ada Jones. These sketches were marvels of skilled compression. Running from two to four minutes, they really constituted miniature plays.

Len saw that a skit built around “Cheyenne” had excellent possibilities, so he wrote one, which he called “Broncho Bob and His Little Cheyenne.” It amounted to a dramatization of the action described in the song, with Bob riding down to meet his girl friend, and persuading her to mount his broncho for their nuptial trip to Cheyenne. A “cowboy band” strikes up the music of “Cheyenne”, and “Shy Ann” sings the refrain before joining Bob on his mount and riding into the sunset toward Cheyenne.

By popular song standards the Williams-Van Alstyne number was fairly old when Leonard Garfield Spencer honored it with his attention, but Victor and Columbia issued the sketch in December, 1907, and so did Edison, which thereby atoned somewhat for its earlier neglect of the parent song. The description in Edison's *New Phonogram* is entertaining:

“A highly original diverting Western sketch, which is crowded with human interest and will certainly be a big seller. The scene opens with the whinny of a horse, and Cheyenne (Ada Jones) rides into camp, her horse blown, to marry Broncho Bob (Len Spencer), who carries her off to the parson on his own horse to the accompaniment of the cowboys' band, which plays ‘Cheyenne,’ a verse of which is appropriately sung by Miss Jones at the earnest request of her lover. This record is out of the common, and is going to make a big hit.”

Which brings up the question: If the Edison experts were so sure the

sketch would be a “big seller” and “a big hit,” why hadn't they recorded the song in the first place?

The Edison cylinder was No. 9720. The 10-inch Victor record was No. 5286, and it was issued in January, 1908, under the same number, in the eight-inch size. It was not taken into the double-faced catalog. The Columbia single-faced disc was No. 3734 and the cylinder, 33206. The disc was combined in double-faced form on No. A432, with Steve Porter's “The Laughing Spectator.” Somewhere along the way, the sketch was issued as Indestructible cylinder No. 651, and Zon-o-phone made it as a single-faced disc, but I can't find its number. In double-faced form it was on Zono No. 5405, coupled with “Peaches and Cream” — the same Jones and Spencer specialty that was doubled with Victor's “Cheyenne.”

### IV. “Lyster and Cooke”

We still have not done with “Cheyenne,” which appeared too early for the author, composer and publisher to profit from sales of its recordings. Had Williams and Van Alstyne waited three years longer to write the song, they would have had the benefit of the copyright act of 1909 and shared royalties with the publisher.

The “cowboy songs” vogue came at a time when the cylinder phonograph was still more popular than the disc, and Edison was sometimes obliged to refrain from issuing any new records for a month in the hope of catching up with unfilled orders. By 1912 the cylinder was in decline, but in 1906-07 it was still riding high, cowboy style.

In the *Talking Machine World* for February 15, 1906, as an example, there is a statement that Knoxville, Tenn., then a city of a little more than 30,000 population, contained 4,000 cylinder phonographs within its corporate limits but only 15 disc instruments. Frankly, I find this disproportion incredible. It seems unlikely that a community of 30,000 would possess 4,000 talking machines of any description, and the ratio of 4,000 to 15 simply seems too high to be accepted, even though there can be no doubt that the cylinder instrument 70 years ago still was more popular than the higher-priced disc. The article added, however, that Memphis and Nashville, Tenn., were, unlike Knoxville, “distinctly disc towns.”

Perhaps some of the English re-

cording companies acted on Leonard Lillingston's scolding suggestion that they should make vocal records of “Cheyenne,” but I have not found any mentioned in the pages of the *Talking Machine News*. However, toward the end of 1907, English Pathé, which by this time had abandoned cylinders in favor of discs (one indication of how the tide was slowly turning), issued a “Cheyenne Medley,” played on “silver chimes and organ” by “Lyster and Cooke,” and coupled with “My Old Kentucky Home.” This record stayed popular for years and was listed in the 1915 American Pathé catalog as No. 956. A renumbering system went into effect in 1916 and it became 30061. In January, 1908, the “Cheyenne Medley,” played by the same artists, was issued on Clarion two-minute cylinder No. 88. Lyster and Cooke may perhaps have also made it for other British companies, since they recorded for nearly all the British-based firms, but I have not found references to it if they did.

I have the Pathé record. It begins with a rather familiar sounding tune, but which I have not so far been able definitely to identify, although it reminds me of “Coming Home From Coney Isle,” which was used by Ada Jones and Len Spencer in some of their skits. The second number is George M. Cohan's great 1905 evergreen hit, “Give My Regards to Broadway.” “Cheyenne” concludes the disc. The music is charming and brilliantly recorded with that “larger than life” effect that Pathé's methods sometimes gave.

The *Sound Wave*, a rival to the *Talking Machine News*, contained in its April, 1910, issue the following reference to Lyster and Cooke:

“Messrs. Lyster & Cooke, who have made some excellent records for the Jumbo Company, will shortly be appearing at the Tivoli. We append a list of the Jumbo records of these high-skilled performers on the bells and silver chimes: 158. ‘Will You Love Me In December As You Do In May?’ and ‘My Old Kentucky Home.’ 183. Two Hymns — ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’ and ‘Nearer, My God, to Thee’; 184. ‘Almost Persuaded’ and ‘Abide With Me’; and 282. ‘Cupid's Garden Intermezzo’ and ‘Selection of Waldteufel's Waltzes.’”

It is obvious from the use of “Messrs.” that the *Sound Wave* thought “Lyster and Cooke” were two men, but the truth is that the chimes and bells player was an Australian, Alfred Charmion, using the stage name of Lyster, and “Cooke” was his wife, who had been Violet Cooke before her marriage. They toured in vaudeville and music halls throughout the English-speaking

world and appear to have made several visits to the States before they finally decided to settle in this country.

I have forgotten how I learned that "Alfred Lyster," otherwise Charmion, was living in Belpre, Ohio, but the news may have come from Joe Belmont, the world famous whistler, who was a friend of Charmion's, and whom I had talked with in 1947 and 1948. At any rate I wrote to Charmion and received an interesting pencil-written reply, dated March 4, 1949. He was then operating the Belcraft Studios at 105 Main St., Belpre and, his letterhead said, did furniture refinishing, upholstering, cabinet work and repairs. It began bluntly, "Jim Walsh," then continued in an informative vein:

"Your letter came as a bombshell, but a welcome one at that. I am on the sick list at this time so please forgive me for not answering in detail, as I will later. I would

like a record of the chimes I did if it is possible . . . The enclosed is just a jumble, but if you can get a story out of it so much the better . . . Violet Cooke died 10 years ago.

"I had learned all about recording from Hausman of Columbia, and went to London, England, and showed them how to make records. I had the technique of Vic and George Emerson, and that was something in those days.

"I was living at 12B Holland Road, Brixton, London, S. W., time about 8 a.m., a knock at the door. I open it. Who stands there but Joe Belmont. (Belmont lived in England for a few years, before returning home to the U. S. A.—J. W.)

"What are we going to do, Joe?" "We are going to make over my whistling records and make over the Albert Campbell-Belmont duets — 'The Whistler and the Bird,' 'The Robin and the Wren,' etc." Says I: 'I never sang a duet in my life.' Joe: 'Here's where you do.'

"And we did, with a 60-piece Grenadier Band as a background. My alto was lousy. That was a Columbia record. George Brookes (a dramatic actor) was then manager for Columbia records. A Mr. Heise was manager for Edison Bell (cylinder). (Note. — This was "Teddy" Hesse, Edison Bell recording manager, who died in January, 1933.—J.W.) Bill Johnstone was manager of Clarion Records (cylinder.)"

Mr. Charmion then went on to say that in this country he had made blue American records for Hawthorne, Sheble and Prescott of Philadelphia. He had also recorded for Leeds and Catlin, and American Columbia. In England, Zon-o-phone and Gramophone & Typewriter were among the companies for which he made records. He said he didn't believe he made any Sterling cylinders in England for Russell Hunting and Louis Sterling. American musicians whom he said he had known included Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, the band leader; Frank P. Banta, Edison pianist and father of the recording star, Frank E. Banta; Charles D'Almaine, violinist; Fred Hager, violinist, band and orchestra leader and composer; Elizabeth Spencer, soprano; Marguerite Newton, early Edison recording soprano; Billy Murray, Will Oakland and Byron G. Harlan. His statement that he knew Gilmore

puzzles me, for the band leader died in St. Louis, Sept. 24, 1892 — a long time ago. Gilmore's death had occurred more than 56 years before Charmion wrote to me, which would seem to render it impossible that they had met or automatically put my correspondent into the extremely elderly class.

I have never heard from Alfred Charmion since he wrote 1949 letter and doubt that he is still alive, but I thought it sufficiently interesting to interrupt the flow of the "cowboy songs" narrative and include it. Now, back to Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne, and their next "cow-punch" composition, "San Antonio."

#### V. "San Antonio"

Being enterprising young men,  
(Continued on page 116)

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Williams and Van Alstyne were not the type to let any grass grow beneath a Western broncho's feet. "Cheyenne" having set the nation to singing about romance on the plains, they decided a sequel was imperatively needed. So they "thought up" another cowboy song, "San Antonio," and records of it began to appear within less than a year after "Cheyenne" first came to public notice. Up to that time, no other song writers had begun to get into the Western act, or if they had their efforts were not recorded.

"San Antonio" was in the same pattern as "Cheyenne," though hardly so good a song. There was one "switch" of plot in Williams' lyrics, however. This time the cowboy's sweetheart didn't swing up behind to go and marry him. Instead, although she mounted a pony, she rode away, on her erstwhile lover's steed, with a "tenderfoot" named Tony. (Writers of Western songs liked the name of "Tony," because it rhymed so easily with "pony.") She was as faithless as "Shy Ann" was demurely staunch.

For comparison and contrast, here are the words of "San Antonio":

"Just as the moon was peeping o'er the hill  
After the work was through.  
There sat a cowboy and his partner, Bill.  
Cowboy was feeling blue.  
Bill says: 'Come down, pal; down into town.  
pal. Big time for me and you!  
Don't mind your old gal; you know it's  
cold, pal. If what you say is true.  
Where is she now?' Bill cried:  
And Cowboy just replied:

### REFRAIN

'San Antoni-Antonio! She hopped upon a pony  
And ran away with Tony!  
If you see her just let me know  
And I'll meet you in San Antonio!

'You know that pony that she rode away —  
That horse belonged to me.  
So did the trinkets that she stowed away —  
I was the big mark-ee!  
I don't resent it; I might have spent it.  
Plunging with Faro Jack;  
If she's not happy there with her chappie.  
Tell her I'll take her back.  
No tenderfoot like him  
Could love her like her boy, Jim!"

### REPEAT REFRAIN

If Williams' lyrics for "San Antonio" fell beneath the standard of "Cheyenne," they were still better than those of the average "pop song." Rhyming "Tony" and "pony" was not so trite then as the efforts of Williams' imitators later made it, but "I was a big mark-ee" is weak. I'm not sure what it means, unless Cowboy Jim was telling Bill that he had been an "easy mark" for his fickle girl friend. On the other hand, the young lyricist scored a brilliant stroke by rhyming "rode away" and "stowed away."

One thing that impresses me in the "story" told by Williams' rhymes is the remarkably forgiving nature of Cowboy Jim, who didn't resent the girl's stealing his pony as well as unspecified trinkets. He was willing to forgive and forget, even to the extent of taking her back, if she was "not happy there with her chappie" —

another weak rhyme — in San Antonio. According to legend, the average cowpoke would have been more likely to strap on his .44 and go hunting Tony and the girl.

The reference to "Faro Jack" probably means that Jack, whoever he was, operated a gaming house in which Jim would have lost his money. About a year after "San Antonio" became popular, Williams and Van Alstyne produced another number which was not really a cowboy song, but had a Western flavor. It was called "My Rosy Rambler" and was sung by Billy Murray on double-faced Victor No. 16035, as well as being introduced in minstrel records. One of its principal characters was a professional gambler — "Big Jim" Wheeler, the "faro king." He loved a guitar — playing "Spanish maid" who lived in a canyon far below his gambling joint, but their romance came to grief when somebody who objected to cheating detected Big Jim trying to "hide an ace." The words are of the serio-comic type, purporting to be serious, but with a touch of humor intermixed:

"Way out in Arizona there lived a Spanish  
maid.  
She sang the 'La Paloma' while her guitar  
she played.  
Far up above the canyon, Big Jim, the faro  
king.  
Sighed for a sweet companion, so ev'ry eve-  
ning to her he'd sing:

### REFRAIN

My Rosy Rambler, climb up to me.  
If you're a gambler I'll play with thee;  
You draw a heart and my hand you'll see —

My Rosy, Posy, Rosy Rambler!  
Somewhere a faro dealer sleeps in a lonely  
place.  
It's said: 'Here lies poor Wheeler. He tried  
to hide an ace!  
Each night a dark-eyed scrambler climbs up  
the canyon wall.  
And as she plants a rambler above her  
gambler, you'll hear her call:

### REPEAT REFRAIN."

Williams was seldom guilty in his versifying of resorting to assonance — using two words that sound alike but don't really rhyme. He did it, however, by coupling "Arizona" with "La Paloma." And, since "la" is Spanish for "the," the effect is awkward when he says the Spanish maid played "the 'La Paloma.'" "Dealer" and "Wheeler" sound contrived, and I don't like the intrusion of the archaic "thee," which seems out of keeping with the flavor of the song. "Canyon" and "companion," though, are excellent and so is the picture of the "dark-eyed scrambler" climbing up the wall to plant a rambler on the gambler's grave. On the whole, it is an excellent, out of the ordinary song, although it did not make a big hit.

Returning to "San Antonio," its first appearance on records seems to have been in April, 1907, when it was introduced into Zon-o-phone and Columbia records made by the Rambler Minstrel Company, composed of Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Billy Murray and Steve Porter. The Zon-o-phone disc was No. 720 and the monthly supplement described it as a "selection of mirth and melody. Opens with 'In the Good Old United

States,' by the entire company, followed by bright jokes, concluding with the song, 'San Antonio,' by Billy Murray and Quartet." This was called "Rambler Minstrels No. 1." It was combined with No. 2 on double-faced disc No. 5135.

(Parenthetically, Porter was always the interlocutor in the Rambler Minstrel records while either Murray or Collins sang the featured solo. Harlan had little to do except occasionally joining in the joke telling and singing in the choruses.)

The Columbia cylinder was called "Record E" and was No. 33104. It differed from No. 3531, which was "Record E" in the disc series, for in that Murray sang "Crocodylle Isle." Columbia did, however, issue a "San Antonio" Minstrels" in single-faced form, but I have been unable to find the listing. It was combined in double-face on No. A459, its companion being Harlan's famous rendition of "Where the Morning Glories Twine Around the Door." Columbia also made available a 12-inch "San Antonio," Medley March and Two Step," played by Prince's Orchestra. Its mating, by the same ensemble, was "Valse Caressante."

In May, Edison issued, on No. 9547, cylinder of "San Antonio," sung by Murray and a chorus. It was described as the "new cowboy song by Egbert Van Alstyne (music) and Harry Williams (words), that has rapidly achieved popularity from coast to coast. As a record it is exceptionally entertaining and tuneful."

That same month, Victor offered, on No. 5098, "Christy Minstrels No. 2," in which Murray obliged with "San Antonio." (The Christy group was composed of Murray and the Haydn Quartet of John Bieling, Harry Macdonough, S. H. Dudley and William F. Hooley.)

Not only was the minstrel version listed, but on No. 5099 Victor also presented "San Antonio" as a Murray solo. It was strangely enough, made only in the eight-inch size. Even stranger this small record contains two verses and two refrains, and plays for two minutes and 40 seconds — as long as the average ten-inch, with no apparent loss of clarity or volume. This seems to indicate that virtually all ten-inch Victor records could have been compressed into the smaller size, if the company had wished.

So far as my research indicates, Billy Murray was the only American singer who made a record of "San Antonio," and I haven't come across any by British artists.

## VI. "The Last Shot Got Him"

By way of making a comparison and pointing out a contrast, I shall now interrupt the chronology of this narrative by five years and move up to 1912, for discussion of a highly amusing ditty, whose expressive title was "The Last Shot Got Him." It was known during the days when it was popular as "The Great BLOOIE Song."

It probably will surprise most

readers to learn that this hard-boiled cowboy concoction was the work of two black song writers—Richard C. McPherson, who used the pen name of Cecil Mack — and Chris Smith. McPherson was born in Norfolk, Va., Nov. 6, 1883, and died in New York, Aug. 1, 1944. He received medical training at Lincoln University in Lincoln, Pa., but found writing song lyrics more to his taste. After becoming associated with Bert Williams and George Walker, he was active in song writing and set up his own publishing house.

Smith, born in Charleston, S. C., October 12, 1879, was by trade a baker. He died in New York Oct. 4, 1949. As a boy he learned to play the guitar and piano, then began to compose songs. Between them, Mack and Smith wrote such successes, nearly all with a "coon song" flavor, as "Good Morning, Carrie," "Shame On You," "The Right Church But the Wrong Pew," "He's a Cousin of Mine," "Down Among the Sugar Cane," "Beans, Beans, Beans," "There's a Big Cry Baby in the Moon," "I've Got My Habits On," "Please Go 'Way and Let Me Sleep," "All In, Down and Out," "In the Shadow of the Pyramids" and that evergreen dance favorite, "Ballin' the Jack." Mack, I should add, did not write the words of all these songs. The lyrics of "Ballin' the Jack," for instance, are by Jim Burris.

"The Last Shot Got Him" was a successful change of pace from Mack and Smith's usual blackface comedy numbers. It was combined in June, 1912, on Victor 17071, with "Lingering Love," which was sung by Ada Jones and Billy Murray. The artist who rendered "the Great Blooie Song," was, in my opinion, one of the best of all recording comedians, Eddie Morton, "The Singing Policeman," whose life story was told here in September, October and November, 1952. Nobody else could have done it better, but Arthur Collins probably also did a good job of singing it on U.S. Everlasting cylinder No. 483.

Mack's words tell of a falling-out between a "cowboy named Tony; cow-girl named Mona, 'way out west in Arizona." Mona caught Tony flirting with an Indian squaw and, full of outraged indignation, objected. She thereupon drew her weapon and took off in pursuit of the faithless cowboy, with these results, narrated in the first refrain. "Mona" is speaking:

"My first shot BLOO-IE! missed him by a nose.  
And my next shot BANG! tore right through his clothes!  
When he saw I meant it and was mad as sin,  
Lord, he started 'cross the prairie like a gale of win!  
But my fourth shot BING! grazed him on the cheek,  
And my fifth shot BOOM! scared him for a week,  
But my last shot got him, that friend of mine,  
Right between his breakfast and his dinner time!"

The song is punctuated by the crash of cymbals wherever "BLOO-IE!" "BANG!" and the like are heard.

In the second stanza, Tony, having recovered from the free course in

ventilation which he had received at the hand of Mona, discovers that another young man has been making love to the gun-toting lady. In righteous indignation, he goes after the interloper who had "sperled his plans for matrimony," as Morton sings it. "Ev'ry cowboy bet his pony that the winner would be Tony," and he was. The second refrain quotes his account of what he did to his rival, in the same words as those already uttered by Mona, except that the last two lines are changed to:

"But my last shot got him that afternoon,  
Right between his pantry and his dining room."

Mack is guilty of the sin of assonance in the concluding lines of both versions of the refrain, but this can be forgiven, perhaps, for the sake of the humor involved in the phrases, "between his breakfast and his dinner time" and "between his pantry and his dining room." "The Last Shot," since it subordinates sentiment for humor, is certainly one of the most amusing cowboy songs.

In 1925 Okeh issued an instrumental version of a foxtrot number called "The Last Shot Got Him," recorded in Dallas, Texas, and played by "Chenoweth's Cornfield Symphony Orchestra." Despite the title, it is an ordinary hill-billy style dance number, and I can find no resemblance between its music and that of the Mack-Smith masterpiece.

Next month we'll take another trip into the long gone past and consider more cowboy songs.

P. S. Since writing this article I have been surprised to find I have a 16-inch radio transcription, made in the 1940's on which Aileen Stanley, the favorite recording comedienne, sings "Cheyenne" and a number of other songs. Another interesting transcription is one on which Irving Kaufman is heard in several fine songs, including Teddy Morse's classic "Down In Jungle Town" and "By the Beautiful Sea."

(To be continued)



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**HOBBIES MAGAZINE**  
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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# “Cowboy Song” Recordings

PART IV

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., who read it in manuscript and looked forward eagerly to seeing it in print. Unfortunately, that was not to be, but Fred will long be remembered as a loyal friend and for his dedicated research concerning old records and pioneer recording artists.)

### I. “In the Land of the Buffalo”

Last month's discussion was devoted largely to the compositions of Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne, whose “Cheyenne” gave “cowboy songs” their first surge of popularity throughout the English-speaking world.

This month the work of other writers who followed in the broncho tracks of Williams and Van Alstyne will be considered. There still remains, however, another successful Williams-Van Alstyne production to which attention must be called.

What appears to have been the last cowboy song by these skilled writers was “In the Land of the Buffalo,” which Victor issued in September, 1907, on 10-inch single-faced disc No. 5196. It came out in October on Edison two-minute cylinder No. 9668. Both were sung, as you should be able to guess, by Billy Murray. Victor and Edison seem to have been the only two important American companies that recorded the song. The Victor supplement described it as:

“A semi-pathetic cowboy song which seems to possess all the elements of a popular success—some breezy Western humor, a touch of pathos and a pretty melody.”

The Edison supplement said:

“The latest ‘Cowboy Song’ by the writers of ‘San Antonio.’ . . . It has all of the elements that give a song wide popularity . . .”

“The Land of the Buffalo,” unlike “San Antonio” was not incorporated into minstrel recordings and miscellaneous medleys. This may have been because the story told by the lyrics is complex from a popular song point of view and if only part had been sung the “plot” would have been left dangling in mid-air. Williams' words described a grizzled cowpuncher going to a presumably distant city and meeting an old friend, who seems to have been a ranchman at one time, but who departed for the city, accompanied by a young lady known as “Flo.” When the old-timer inquires about this lady, the city dweller



COWBOY SONG'S NAMESAKE—Prof. Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D., Jim Walsh's intellectual cat, is known to friends and admirers as “Pony Boy” because he looks like a tiny gray and white pony when he trots down the street.

makes it clear he has parted from her and doesn't care about seeing her face again. His friend then reveals that “Brother Lou” had loved Flo all the time and is still grieving for lack of her. If the city chap knows where she is now, the old-timer will gladly pay her fare to the place where Brother Lou is sorrowing. It isn't made clear, not, at least, on the Edison cylinder, whether the offer was accepted, and Flo and Lou eventually became man and wife.

Once more it seems worth while to quote the words of a now almost forgotten Williams and Van Alstyne song:

“See that old time ranchman as he saunters from the train.  
Oh, oh, what glad surprise!  
See that hearty handshake as he greets his friend again.  
Tears dim his beady eyes!  
‘Lord, them lights do shore look pretty!  
Long time since I've seen the city!  
Where's that gal you brought away with you?’  
City chap says: ‘Don't mind her! I don't want to ever find her!  
Cowboy, tell me where's your brother Lou?’  
He swelled his chest, brushed his vest,  
pointed West!”

#### REFRAIN

“‘In the Land of the Buffalo, where the western breezes blow;  
Where the goodnight kiss of sunlight sets all the plain aglow—  
It was there you discovered your Flo.  
In the days of long ago,  
But you never knew Brother Lou loved her, too.  
In the Land of the Buffalo!’  
“‘He's alone out there tonight, and pal, he's getting gray!  
You know the reason why.  
Where the howling Ki-oats seem to laugh at him and say:  
‘Oh, oh why don't you die?’  
She to him was eighteen carat, but he

says he'll grin and bear it,  
That perhaps the girl was meant for you;  
But as long as you have thrown her and you say that you don't own her,  
Can't you find her for my Brother Lou?  
I'll pay her fare, on the square,  
‘way out there!’”

#### REPEAT REFRAIN

Somehow I have a feeling that Brother Lou should have left well enough alone and contented himself with being deprived of “Flo's” companionship!

Although there are weak spots in the words, Williams achieves some brilliant effects, as with “he swelled his chest, brushed his vest, pointed West.” There is a genuine touch of poetry, too, in “Where the goodnight kiss of sunlight sets all the plain aglow” although it is completely out of character, coming from the lips of a rough-and-tough old ranchman, who has already spoken naturally by saying, “Lord, them lights do shore look pretty!” On the other hand, the line about “she to him was eighteen carat” seems painfully contrived, and “I'll pay her fare, on the square, ‘way out there” appears dragged in just to make a triple rhyme. But who am I to be discussing an old-time Tin Pan Alley song about the long gone “Wild West” as if it were a contribution to American literary history!

“In the Land of the Buffalo” was only moderately successful and if Williams and Van Alstyne wrote any more cowboy songs afterwards I can't recall them.

(Continued on next page)

## II. "Ida-Ho!" and "Broncho Buster"

In order to consider successively the Williams and Van Alstyne cowboy songs, "In the Land of the Buffalo" was discussed slightly out of chronological order. Now, let's go back to March, 1907, by which time Harry Von Tilzer, then considered the top

American song writer, had invaded Harry and Egbert's cowboy songs monopoly and written "Ida-Ho!"

The Von Tilzer number was not destined to be a smashing success, but in March, Zon-o-phone issued it (on No. 683) not as a vocal number, but as a "march and two-step" played

by Fred Hager's Orchestra. Said the supplement:

"Breezy catchy two-step typifying the wild free life of the Western cowboy. The clatter of the Broncho's hooves and the yells of the Cowboys make this indeed a realistic number."

When the double-faced records were introduced, Zon-o-phone coupled "Ida-Ho!" with "My Kickapoo Queen," by the Zon-o-phone Orchestra, on No. 5279. Perhaps it should be mentioned that the name of "Hager's Orchestra" was dropped when the double-faces came out, and Zon-o-phone Orchestra was substituted.

In April, Edison announced a cylinder, No. 9520, of "Ida-Ho!" sung by Billy Murray, who was holding on to his cowboy songs monopoly, but assisted by the Edison Male Quartet, which was known as the Haydn on Victor discs. The New Phonogram, in describing the cylinder, quoted the refrain. It certainly doesn't make intellectual reading:

"A Western song called the 'Melodious Cyclone,' that has been sweeping the country and is now popular from coast to coast . . . The chorus runs thus:

"Ida-Ho! whoa! don't go so fast, dear;  
My horse won't last, dear, so please go slow  
My Ida-Ho, I'll kiss you if I catch you—  
Won't you stay, dear? Don't run away,  
dear—  
My Ida-Ho!"

Columbia also issued "Ida-Ho!" on two-minute cylinder No. 33113, sung, of course, by Billy Murray, but if the number appeared on a disc I have not been able to find a reference to it. Victor passed it by.

In October, 1907, another tenor was given a chance to relate the adventures of a dashing cowpuncher, when Victor issued No. 5224, "Broncho Buster," which was sung by Harry Tally, lead tenor of the famous Empire City Quartet. This record has puzzled me, because the Victor catalog attributed its composition solely to "Madden." Edward Madden was well known as a lyric writer for Theodore Morse and Percy Wenrich, but I had not heard of his composing music.

Yet in this instance he seems to have done so. The ASCAP Index of Songs written by its members says Madden contrived the music of "Broncho Buster" and Dorothy Jardon, who was his wife, the words. This is rather surprising, because Dorothy Jardon had a successful career as an opera and concert singer. I doubt that she ever appeared with the Metropolitan, but she sang soprano roles for the Chicago Opera Company. She was also one of the first Brunswick recording artists. The name Jardon, doesn't sound Hebraic to me, but the singer probably was Jewish, for she recorded "Eili Eili" and "Jahrzeit." With this background it is at least intriguing to find her writing the words of a cowboy ditty, whose refrain begins, "Broncho Buster, why don't you trust her?" then continues: "She's no shy goose—jump on your cayuse, carry her off to Denver town!" (Those last two words, "Denver Town," may have suggested the title of a song which will be discussed later.)

The words tell of how the bashful

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(Continued on page 117)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 36)

Broncho Buster at the urging of his fellow cowboys kissed a seemingly puritanical cowgirl who drew her .44, made him convey her on the cayuse to Denver, and then compelled a parson, at gunpoint, to marry them. One of the rhymes is, "Go on and lasso her; somebody else will woo her," showing that the author pronounced "lasso" as "lass-soo." We shall meet this pronunciation again.

"Broncho Buster" did not fare particularly well as a solo recording, for only Victor seems to have made it so available. It was used, however, as the "opening chorus" of "Victor Minstrels No. 9," issued in March, 1908, as No. 5363. The principal song in this miniature minstrel offering was "Pride of the Prairie," whose turn is coming to be considered in detail. This record was by the group known as the Rambler Minstrels on Columbia and Zon-o-phone records—Murray, Porter, Collins and Harlan—and the supplement said:

"A new aggregation of comedy talent which introduces itself with a bright, witty and musical three-minute minstrel entertainment. These 'condensed minstrels' are among the most popular records in the whole Victor list."

In April, an eight-inch version was offered, with the same number, and the ten-inch eventually became one side of No. 16763, when it was coupled with "Victor Minstrels No. 8." Zon-o-phone issued "Broncho Buster" as part of Rambler Minstrels No. 9, combined with No. 10 on double-faced disc 5139, and the song was the opening chorus of the Edison "Model Minstrels," No. 10135, announced in May, 1909.

Madden's "Broncho Buster" was not the only composition of that name. In the autumn of 1908 Victor issued a "Broncho Buster March" as one face of No. 16308. The composer was Albert C. Sweet, a gifted musician who made cornet records for Edison from about 1899 to 1902, and who for many years had his own band, which traveled extensively as a feature of Chautauqua programs. The coupling was another instrumental number, "A Terrible Turk," composed by our familiar friend, Egbert Van Alstyne. Arthur Pryor's Band played both sides of the Victor disc.

Somewhere around the same time, there appeared on an Indestructible cylinder a march played by the Indestructible Military Band. The title is given in the late Dr. Duane D. Deakins' listing of Indestructible cylinders as "Broncho Bill," but the doctor was guilty of a great many typographical errors, and I suspect this should have been "Broncho Buster" and that it was Sweet's brain child. The number was 1021.

In the years that have followed there have been several others of the same or similar names, including "Broncho Bust," by Don Gillis, and two numbers called "Broncho Busters," one written by Louis and Howard C. Applebaum, and the other by the distinguished "brother act" of Ira

and George Gershwin. There has also been a "Broncho Charlie," by Walter Melrose.

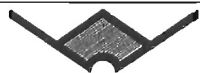
After having done fairly well with "Ida-Ho!" Harry Von Tilzer hit the Western trail again with "Sacramento," which Harry Tally sang in November, 1907, on Victor 5260. For the same supplement Tally recorded on No. 5258 another Von Tilzer number, "Bye-Bye, Dearie," a ballad that was especially popular as sung by the Empire City Quartet. A photo of the quartet appeared on the sheet music cover. "Sacramento" sold well enough to be taken into the double-faced catalog as No. 16156, combined with "The Stars, The Stripes and You," by Harry Macdonough, but its popularity was short-lived and it was cut out after 1911.

I have not found that any company except Victor made a record of "Sacramento." In June Victor came through with still another cowboy song, No. 5448, "When It's Moonlight on the Prairie," credited to S. R. Henry (his real name was Henry R. Stern and he was born in New York City, June 23, 1874, and died in Dallas, Tex., March 13, 1966, just a bit short of his 92nd birthday) and sung by Harry Macdonough and the Haydn Quartet. The supplement described it as:

"A breezy Western love story set to music and sweetly sung by this favorite Victor tenor, with quartet refrain."

Mr. Macdonough and the quartet had another ballad in the same listing—the amazingly popular Ernest Ball classic, "Love Me and the World is Mine." It far outsold "Moonlight on the Prairie."

(To be continued)



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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# “Cowboy Song” Recordings

PART V

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., who read it in manuscript and looked forward eagerly to seeing it in print. Unfortunately, that was not to be, but Fred will long be remembered as a loyal friend and for his dedicated research concerning old records and pioneer recording artists.)

### IV. “Pride of the Prairie”

We come now to a special favorite of mine — one of the best of all cowboy songs. Musically, it is the equal of “Cheyenne.” The melody may be even a bit more haunting. The words, however, are not the equal of Harry Williams’ clever composition, and this alone keeps me from rating it on a par with the earlier number that obviously inspired it.

The lyric of “Pride of the Prairie” was by Henry J. Breen, who was not above indulging in assonance, such as matching “own” with “home,” and using such hackneyed rhymes as “home” and “roam.” The tune was by George Botsford, a composer with a thorough knowledge of music, who for several years wrote the arrangements of songs recorded by such popular male quartets as the Peerless, American and Haydn. (John Meyer afterwards did the Peerless arrangements.) One thing that gives the “Mary” song its ear-arresting quality is that it is mostly written in a minor key. Incidentally, Breen was not the only lyric writer to whom the idea of combining “Mary” with “Prairie” had occurred. In 1907 somebody named A. Trevelyan came out with an unsuccessful effort called “Mary of the Prairie.”

I have particularly personal associations with “Pride of the Prairie” because when I was a tiny tot visiting my grandparents, my aunt Ruby Wrenn, who was my mother’s half-sister as she cooked supper would lustily sing the cowboy ballad, which she had learned as a girl. I can see her now, singing and occasionally lifting one foot to kick the oven door shut. I was so small that when she caroled, “Out on the wild and woolly prairie . . . there lived a little girl named Mary,” my imagination brought before me a female child about two years of age and wearing a red dress. I certainly didn’t imag-

ine Mary being old enough to run away and marry a cowboy.

Let’s set down the words of “Pride of the Prairie” for comparison with “Cheyenne”:

“Out on the wild and woolly prairie,  
Not far from old Pueblo town,  
There lived a little girl,  
Blue eyes and tresses of brown.  
From o’er the plains there rode a cowboy  
Who said, ‘Please name our el in’ da’.  
She bowed her head and whispered, ‘Now,  
boy!’ Then on their broncho they rode away.  
They rode away, one summer’s day.”

#### REFRAIN

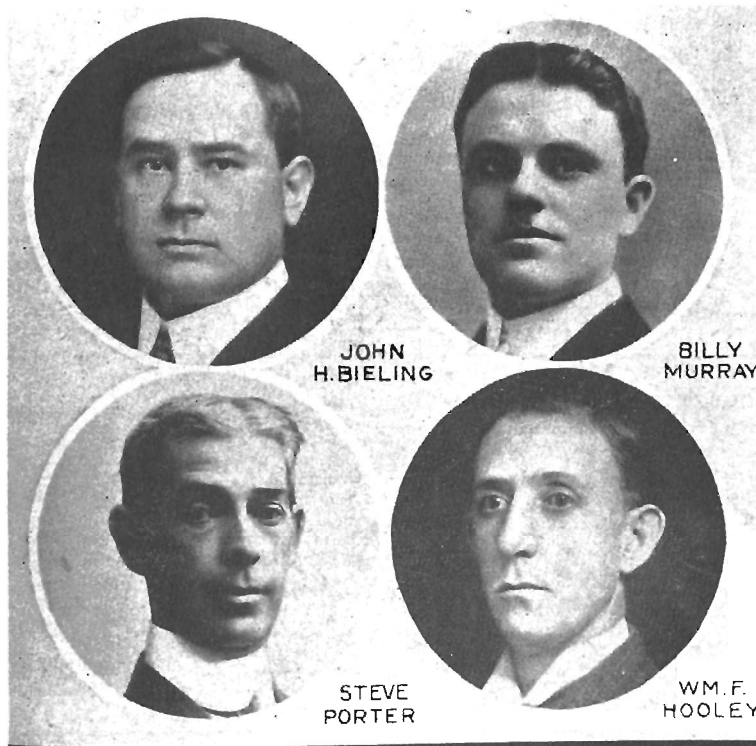
“Pride of the Prairie, Mary, my own,  
Jump up beside me, ride to my home!  
My heart’s been lassoed, no more we’ll roam  
Pride of the Prairie, Mary!”

For a brief analytical disquisition concerning the lyrics, I will point out that the second line, “not far from old Pueblo town,” is metrically defective. To keep the rhythm going the singer is obliged to pronounce the name of the town in three syl-

lables as “Pyou-EB-lo,” when the correct pronunciation, as Billy Murray, who grew up in Colorado, certainly knew, is “Pweb-lo.” On the other hand, Billy oddly pronounces “lassoed” as “lassooed,” as Harry Tally, had in “Broncho Buster,” although Webster’s New International and other dictionaries give “lass-so” and “lass-sowed” as the only approved versions. I wonder if there was a time when some Westerners said “lass-soo,” or whether it simply “sang better.”

Perhaps Breen’s best touch is matching “cowboy” and “now, boy.” The “own,” “home” and “roam” business is certainly weak, but John Howard Payne was guilty of rhyming the latter two in “Home, Sweet Home” and thousands of other scribblers have committed the same offense, often with “foam” thrown in for un-

(Continued on page 53)



### PREMIER QUARTET

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INITIAL RECORDING — “Denver Town,” a cowboy song by George L. Botsford, was the first song waxed by this group, known as the Premier Quartet on Edison records and as the American on Victor.



## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 34)

wanted good measure. The "plot," of course, is a "steal" from "Cheyenne" — the same old cowboy riding up on a bronco, asking the girl to marry him, obtaining her shy consent, and their riding away together in search of a man of the cloth to cement their union.

Victor seems to have been ahead of any other company in recording "Pride of the Prairie." It, however, was not issued as a separate selection, but as part of the already mentioned "Victor Minstrels No. 9," with the verse sung by Billy Murray assisted by a chorus in the refrain. As was said when discussing "Broncho Buster," the 10-inch size came out in March, 1908, and the eight-inch in April.

Columbia's versions by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet, with the solo taken by Frank C. Stanley, were announced in the quarterly record supplement for June, July and August, 1908. The cylinder was No. 33227 and the disc, 3769. The description boldly proclaimed the number to be the best cowboy song thus far published. It said:

"The best song of the Western plains that has been produced. It is full of the fine, broad swing of 'cowboy' music, which is rapidly becoming the leading feature of the big musical successes. It is strong, tuneful and lively."

The single-faced version was made available just before double-faced Columbia records were introduced, and was soon combined on A433 with Arthur Collins' inimitable rendition of George M. Cohan's "coon song," "If I'm Goin' to Die I'm Goin' to Have Some Fun."

The Peerless also sang "Pride of the Prairie" for Zon-o-phone, and it was listed in August, 1908. Proclaimed the supplement writer:

"1124 . . . A little love episode of the Western prairie, splendidly presented, the several voices being clear and distinct."

Zon-o-phone's "Pride" was combined on No. 5424 with "Tenting On the Old Camp Ground," also sung by the Peerless. The quartet likewise recorded the number on Indestructible cylinder No. 748.

Zon-o-phone included "Pride of the Prairie" in No. 1172, "Popular Chorus Medley No. 3," issued in October 1908, just before double-faced records came in. The medley includes the refrains of a Teddy Morse song, "Santiago Flynn"; "New Tipperary," "Pride of —" as a bells solo; "My Dream of the U. S. A." and "All She gets From the Iceman is Ice." It was combined on 5292 with "Isle of Spice Medley."

Edison did not offer a cylinder of George Botsford's bewitching Western tune until October, 1908, when it took its place in the list as No. 9968, sung by Billy Murray and Chorus. The following appeared in The New Phonogram:

"The past summer brought out some clever popular songs, but none to take the public fancy more than 'Pride of the Prairie.' It

is just the stripe of song that sets the gallery whistling. Billy Murray and chorus sing it with a whirlwind flourish that rivals the speed of the broncho on which Miss Mary and her cowboy lover rode away."

### V. English Versions

English record companies did not as a rule go in strongly for recording "cowboy songs," but they let down the barriers when "Pride of the Prairie" came along. Far more than its counterparts, it became a British hit and remained a favorite for a surprising number of years, long after its American vogue had died. Such things happened fairly often to American songs in England. As an example, after Richard Gerard and Harry Armstrong composed the immortal "You're the Flower of My Heart, Sweet Adeline" (usually referred to by the last two words of the title), they wrote a successor a couple of years later for which they hoped equally good things. It was called "You're My Heart's Desire, I Love You, Nellie Dean," but the name for obvious reasons was shortened to "Nellie Dean." Unlike "Sweet Adeline," this ballad never became more than moderately successful in the States, but it was a big hit in England and remains a favorite today.

The same thing was true of "Pride of the Prairie." It was more popular in the British Isles than in the States, and more extensively recorded.

No doubt there were English records of Botsford's Western tune that I haven't discovered. The first detailed reference I have unearthed was in the *Sound Wave* for January, 1910, when Zon-o-phone No. X42962 was reviewed. This interpretation of "Pride of the Prairie" was sung by Ernest Pike under the assumed name of "Herbert Payne." Pike was then the most popular tenor making records in England, as Henry Burr was over here. The review went:

"Out on the wild and woolly prairie . . . there lived a little girl named Mary. Hardly needful to remark that the 'Fairly Prince' in due course entered the enchanted Palace — of her affections — in guise of a Cowboy (on a mustang, we presume, though not mentioned.) The verses are set to a distinctly ear-arresting tune, 6-8 time, in the minor mainly. Sung with much taste and excellent reproduction. It can hardly fail to be as great a 'record' success with the public as in the now-running 'pantos.'"

The latter sentence may be interpreted for American readers as meaning that the song was a great success in that peculiarly English form of entertainment known as "the pantomime." The reviewer must not have listened closely or he would not have referred to a "mustang" not being mentioned. True, that word was not used, but the cowboy was mounted on the broncho upon which he and Mary rode to be made man and wife.

I was interested to note that in February, 1910, an English comedian, Fred Vernon, sang "I Want to Go to Idaho," which was for many years a favorite with the late G. H. Elliott, "The Chocolate - Colored Coon," as he styled himself, who frequently recorded it. I am not fa-

miliar with the words but the name at least suggests some cowboy association. Another favorite song in England, which mentioned Idaho, was Leslie Stuart's "Little Dolly Daydream." "Dolly" was "the pride of Idaho," just as Mary was "the pride of the prairie." Is it possible that "Dolly Daydream" helped to give Breen and Botsford the idea for their "Prairie" song, which seems so closely modeled, thematically, on "Cheyenne"? Other English records of "Pride of the Prairie," included Homophone 700, sung by Vernon and coupled with "Put On Your Old Green Bonnet"; Columbia 26791 by another popular British comedian, Harry Fay, and combined on Rena 1311 with Fay singing, "Meet Me Where the Lanterns Glow"; and HMV 1505, pairing a rendition by an unnamed "vocal quartet" with that beloved old "chestnut," "Silver Threads Among the Gold." No doubt "The Pride" was first made available in single-faced form, for there were no double-faced HMV vocal records when it first came out.

But perhaps the most interesting version was the one on Zon-o-phone double-faced record No. 72. It had originally been issued on the short-lived "Twins" record and was taken into the Zon-o-phone catalog when the Zono and "Twins" labels were combined. Described as a "solo and quartet," the disc was sung by Misses Mary Evans and Florence Saville and Messrs. James Bell and Arthur Gray — presumably soprano, contralto, tenor and baritone or bass. No indication is given as to who sang the solo. On the reverse side was "Comrades in Arms," by the "Twins" Male Quartet, concerning whom I have no information. Apparently the single-faced version by Payne was dropped from the Zono catalog in favor of this. And it is possible that the "vocal quartet" that made the HMV record was the same as the "Twins"—Zono group.

English pantomime and music hall audiences are proverbially faithful to veteran performers and continue to applaud them as long as they are able to stand. The same thing seems to have been true of record buyers. That mixed quartet rendition of "Pride of the Prairie" remained in the Zon-o-phone catalog for more than 20 years and was still there, half a dozen years after electrical recording took over. And then what happened? Why, instead of discontinuing "Pride of the Prairie," the company had it re-made electrically by the Zon-o-phone Concert Quartet, composed of Esther Coleman, Megan Thomas, Herbert Thorpe and Foster Richardson. It was issued in the new form in March, 1931 as No. 5821. By that time it had been close to 20 years since "Pride of the Prairie" could be found in any current American record list. The coupling remained "Comrades in Arms," and was also sung by the Zon-o-phone Concert Quartet, which was, or who were, described as "wireless favorites." Presumably the electric re-make remained in the catalog as long as the Zon-o-phone, or

(Continued on next page)

Regal-Zon-o-phone, label was still being used for 78RPM recordings.

## VI. "Denver Town" and Others

By the time "Pride of the Prairie" appeared the "cowboy song" vogue was passing its peak, but was not yet over. In July, 1908, Edison issued a Standard two-minute cylinder, No. 9882, of a song called "Topeka," sung by Frederic H. Potter, tenor, and a male quartet, but, despite its name, this dealt with an Indian brave and his lady love rather than with, as I imagined, a cowboy and his girl heading for Topeka, Kansas, with wedlock in mind.

In November, 1908, Edison came through with a song which had been written to give Western ditties a humorous twist. The number was 9984, "I'm a Yiddish Cowboy," with words by Edgar Leslie and music by Halsey K. Mohr and Al Piantadosi, and it was sung by Edward Meeker on No. 9984. The New Phonogram remarked:

"A dandy new cowboy song with Indian effects galore. Among them—the tom tom, cowboy chorus, cowboy and Indian yells, hoof beats etc. — and all so plain and realistic that one can almost smell the alkali. . ."

Songs in Yiddish dialect were seldom popular with record buyers, and "Yiddish Cowboy" was no exception. It flopped. I know of no recording of it other than Meeker's.

The first four-minute Edison Amberol cylinder whose title suggests that it falls into the cowboy genre was issued in July, 1909. It was No. 157, "My Rancho Maid," composed and sung by Mabel McKinley Baer, who was a niece of President William McKinley and called herself Mabel McKinley for stage purposes. She was the composer of the great Indian song hit, "Anona," and also wrote other successes, including "Karama — a Japanese Rhapsody" and "Golden Rod." Quoting from *The New Phonogram*:

"Another of Miss McKinley's own compositions and as pleasing in words and melody as her others. Her rendition of this song is as charming as that of 'Golden Rod' and 'Anona,' given in the May and June lists. . ."

In an old scrapbook I found a picture of Mabel McKinley. It apparently had been clipped about half a century ago from some newspaper's Sunday rotogravure section. How long that old clipping has remained quietly there, I do not know! "My Rancho Maid" fell far short of being a hit.

Shortly before Miss McKinley's record was announced, Breen and Botsford had decided that since "Pride of the Prairie" had done so well it should have a follow-up. So they gave vent to a variant—the already mentioned "Denver Town" — whose title must have been suggested by the last line of the refrain of "Broncho Buster," "carry her off to Denver Town." The refrain of the later song concluded: "Tell your pony that your heart is lonely. He'll take you flying into Denver Town." The indebtedness appears obvious.

As for the "story" of "Denver



Mabel McKinley Baer, niece of President McKinley, "who sang at the American Memorial last Sunday."

"GIT ALONG LITTLE DOGIES." Victor's first recording of a traditional cowboy song was "Whoopie Ti Yi Yo," announced in the monthly supplement for July, 1923. It was sung by the eminent basso, Wilfred Glenn, and a male chorus.

Town," it tells of a "cattle king" who "lived alone in his glory." Then a maiden from Denver invaded his neck of the prairie. Her pony fell as she neared the ranchman; they fell in love; eventually rode to Denver to be married, and "now there's a little cattle king," to whom his father sang the refrain of the song. I hope he apologized to his son for Mr. Breen's bad rhyme of "pony" and "lonely," though perhaps some would find this a relief as a switch from "pony and Tony."

Although "Denver Town" fell short of the success of "Pride of the Prairie," it was recorded by Victor, Edison, Columbia and U. S. Everlasting, and has a bit of historical importance as the first record made by the male voiced ensemble that was known as the American Quartet on Victor records and the Premier on Edison cylinders. (Victor revived the American Quartet name, which had been used from about 1900 to 1902 by another group consisting of Albert Campbell, first tenor; W. T. Leahy, second tenor; S. H. Dudley, baritone, and William F. Hooley, bass. The new American Quartet was John Bieling, first tenor, Billy Murray, second tenor; Steve Porter, baritone, and Hooley, bass.)

"Denver Town" was announced in the Victor supplement for May, 1909, in these words:

"A new organization of male voices which makes its bid for favor with a 'cowboy' number now quite in vogue. No praise for this new quartet is needed here, as the record speaks for itself, the voices being well balanced, the words distinct and the music sung with spirit and precision."

Soon afterward it was proclaimed that the American Quartet made discs only for the Victor. This was true because Murray, Bieling and Hooley

all were under exclusive Victor contract for the "flat" records. Porter was at liberty to free-lance. A year or so later "Denver Town" was combined on double-faced record No. 16524 with the old favorite descriptive specialty, "A Night Trip to Buffalo," which had been re-made by the American group. Do you suppose "The Denver Nightingale" felt homesick when he recorded the song about his "old town"?

Edison's two-minute cylinder, No. 10155, came out in June, and The New Phonogram writer seems to have been guilty of an odd slip in saying:

"Another cowboy song, telling how a cowboy wooed and won his bride. It is sung by a new combination of artists, including WILL OAKLAND, John H. Bieling, (Sic!), Billy Murray and W. F. Hooley. . ."

Surely the annotator meant to say Steve Porter instead of Will Oakland, for who ever heard of a male quartet consisting of a counter-tenor, a first tenor, a second tenor and a bass? I haven't heard the Edison cylinder, but Porter instead of Oakland certainly sings in the Victor disc. And the combination that included Porter made the Premier Quartet cylinders for the next five years, until Bieling's place was taken by John Young.

Columbia's version of "Denver," sung by the Columbia (Peerless) Quartet, was listed in June, 1909, coupled with "Dancing Sunshine," sung by Henry Burr and Frank C. Stanley, and described as "the best Indian song since 'Rainbow.'" Concerning "Denver Town" the supplement said:

"A rollicking cowboy song with the breezy spirit of the West shining from its every note. After a few preliminary shouts which punctuate the orchestral introduction, the 'cow-punchers' gather and set a lively pace to the end of the selection, which is in quartet form throughout."

The U. S. Everlasting cylinder, No. 218, was sung by William H. Thompson, a baritone who was prominent in musical productions and a prolific recorder in the early days of the phonograph. He served briefly as recording partner for such singers as Albert Campbell, Frank M. Coombs and Will Oakland. Will told me that his duets with Thompson were not especially successful, because Thompson's voice was too heavy to blend well with his high counter-tenor tones.

(To be continued)



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# "Cowboy Song" Recordings

PART VI

By JIM WALSH

(This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Fred Harrington, of Traverse City, Mich., who read it in manuscript and looked forward eagerly to seeing it in print. Unfortunately, that was not to be, but Fred will long be remembered as a loyal friend and for his dedicated research concerning old records and pioneer recording artists.)

### VII. "Pony Boy" and "Ragtime Cowboy Joe"

Many cowboy songs, of course, were written but not recorded. They, however, are not being much considered in this survey. And by the time 1910 arrived the torrent of cowboy tunes had slowed to a trickle.

Even so, late 1909 brought a real hit in "My Pony Boy"—nearly always referred to simply as "Pony Boy"—the words of which were written by Charlie O'Donnell, and the music by Bobby Heath. I have a peculiarly personal association with this composition, because my intellectual cat, Prof. Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D., (see illustration, July issue of HOBBIES) is familiarly known to his friends as "Pony Boy." They say he looks like a little gray and white pony when he comes galloping down the sidewalk after going up the street to call on his friend, "Siamese" Marshall. ("Siamese's" given name is Ming).

I'll guess that Columbia was first with a "Pony Boy" record. My file of 1909 Columbia supplements is incomplete, and I don't have one in which the song is listed, but its number, A713, appears to indicate it came out in, or about, September. The coupling was "Good Night, Moonlight," one of Theodore Morse's melodious march numbers, and both sides were sung by the Columbia Quartet. At around the same time, "Pony Boy" was made by the quartet on Indestructible cylinder No. 1198.

Edison's four-minute Amberol cylinder version, by Ada Jones, came out in October, 1909. "The New Phonogram" termed it:

"A cowboy song with all the characteristic effects. The song gives Miss Jones another opportunity to display her wonderful versatility. A chorus of male voices adds to the attractiveness of the record."

Victor's "Pony Boy" was No. 16356 and was announced in November. It, too, was by Ada Jones and a male chorus, and its mating was "When



**POPULAR HARMONIZERS**—This greatest of very early recording quartets was known as the Haydn on Victor discs and as the Edison Male Quartet on Edison cylinders. For Victor it sang a cowboy song, "When It's Moonlight On the Prairie."

"I Marry You" Medley," by the Victor Orchestra. The supplement's description was brief:

"A new cowboy song, given by Miss Jones with quartet chorus and incidental effects, doubled with a lively medley of four popular song hits, given in this order: 'When I Marry You,' 'I Wish I Had a Girl,' 'Take Me Out for a Joy Ride' and 'My Wife's Gone to the Country.'"

"Pony Boy" today is better remembered than most of the cowboy songs that preceded or followed it.

Next, in our procession of cowboy songs and skits, we resurrect the unforgettable Len Spencer, who in 1907 had written "Broncho Bob and His Little Cheyenne," and in 1910 elected to have another crack at the cowpokes. In November that year, Edison issued a four-minute Amberol record of Spencer's sketch, "A Cowboy Romance," in which he had the assistance of Ada Jones and the Premier Quartet. "The New Phonogram" gave it an enthusiastic send-off:

"A descriptive record, reproducing with the aid of clever effects, an episode of the prairie—an exciting race in the moonlight for the hand of an Idaho maid. Leading up to the

thrilling climax, which is made wonderfully realistic by the clatter of hooves, the whinnying of horses and the 'yippling' of the cowboys, there is a bit of comedy, some male quartet work and a serenade song (tenor) with banjo accompaniment . . ."

The record has the group of imaginary cowboys racing against "Ida," the ranchman's daughter (Miss Jones), with the understanding that if anyone overtakes her she will marry him. Billy Murray is cast as "Bill," the winning suitor, and Spencer gives details of the race as it progresses. The late John Bieling told me that the sketch had to be done so many times before a satisfactory record was produced that he acquired a throat irritation from the repeated "yippling" and was hoarse for several weeks. He said he attributed the beginning of the voice ailment which caused him to give up record making in 1914 to the strain put upon his throat in making this cylinder.

"A Cowboy Romance" remained in the Edison catalog until the Blue Amberol cylinders were introduced

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## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

(Continued from page 35)

late in 1912, then was dropped. But, seven years later, Edison dug out the old moulds and the skit appeared in the December, 1919, Blue Amberol list. Probably, seeing Len Spencer pop up in the monthly supplement, a good many Edison fans wondered if the stories they had been hearing for years, about his having died in December, 1914, were false. They were not. Spencer was dead, but a number of his old cylinders were dusted off and remade.

Cowpunchers and cowgirls descended from their bronchos in the popular songs of 1910-11 and took a back seat in the ranch house or elsewhere. Almost nothing with a cowboy flavor was recorded. In August, 1911, Edison issued an Amberol, No. 748, of a talking specialty by Murry K. Hill, "Back to Arizona," but I can't tell from the description whether it had anything to do with traditional cowboy topics.

Then, as a sort of expiring gasp, there came, in 1912, one of the best of the cowpoke tunes—a comic number which is still popular with Western style and "hill-billy" string bands—"Ragtime Cowboy Joe"—written by those veteran Broadway Westerners, Sam M. Lewis, Lewis F. Muir and Maurice Abrahams. The latter became the husband of Belle Baker, the vaudeville singing star. Victor's version of the song about the "rootin', tootin' son of a gun from Arizona," was issued as No. 17090 in July, 1912, and was sung by Bob Roberts, whose recording popularity by that time was in decline. Roberts, by the way, when "Cheyenne" started the craze for cowboy songs in 1906, was baritone of a popular vaudeville attraction, the Big City Quartet. He must have had a busy time, singing in vaudeville as well as making records for all the important American phonograph companies. He also sometimes competed in automobile races.

After "Ragtime Bob" had made scores of Edison cylinders and had been one of the company's most popular singers, he tried out late in 1914 or early in 1915 for a place on the Diamond Disc recording staff. In January, 1915, Mr. Edison turned him down with the surprising verdict: "No! Can't interpret; can't sing." Yet Roberts had given satisfaction on Edison records for many years previously.

With all due respect to Thomas A. Edison, I emphatically disagree with his verdict and consider Bob Roberts, like Eddie Morton, to have been one of the best comedians who ever recorded.

The Victor record of "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" had "That Slippery Slide Trombone," sung by the American Quartet, for its companion. This was the work of our inexhaustible friends, Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne, and came just before the end of their partnership. It is an extremely amusing and catchy number, with some wonderful work for the slide trombone and it, so far

as I can judge by his purrs, is the favorite record of Professor Plum Duff Walsh, Ph.D. The supplement said:

"Here is one of the funniest numbers Williams and Van Alstyne have ever written, and being just suited to the American bunch, they simply cut loose and sing the number as though they really enjoyed it. On the other side, Bob Roberts gives a new cowboy song, which looks like another 'Pony Boy.'"

Edison seems to have issued an Amberol cylinder, No. 1140 of "Ragtime Cowboy Joe," sung by Edward Meeker, but it was announced in October, 1912, the same month that Blue Amberols were introduced, and can have had only a negligible sale. It was not taken into the Blue Amberol list, which means that it was discontinued almost before it was catalogued. This was strange treatment for so popular a song. It seems that it would almost automatically have become a Blue Amberol big seller. Another surprise is that Columbia didn't issue a "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" record. Among 1912 versions, the Victor stands virtually alone, and Bob Roberts sings it as well as anybody could.

It amuses me that in 1926, Al Bernard and Sammy Stept wrote a song called "Yodelin' Cowboy Joe," which was openly modeled on the ragtime cowboy of 11 or 12 years before, although Joe the Yodeler lived in Idaho instead of Arizona. Bernard and Frank Kamplain sang "Yodelin' Cowboy Joe" on Okeh record No. 40793 to Stept's piano accompaniment. The other side, "We'll Go Up in Dose Mountains," was another rendition by, and composition of, "The Record Boys," as Bernard, Kamplain and Stept were known. Kamplain did the yodeling on both sides.

A facetious item in a 1926 "Billboard" asserted that the principal pastime of the Record Boys was arguing on every conceivable subject. The writer jokingly said that he was putting Kamplain's name before Bernard's and Stept's because he knew that would touch off a violent discussion as to why the yodeler had been mentioned first. Perhaps this alleged arguing was the reason why the trio broke up late in 1927, shortly after "Yodelin' Cowboy Joe" was issued, and was reorganized with Kamplain as manager. The two new members were Lew Cobey and Tom Ford, who was better known on records as Lester O'Keefe.

"Ragtime Cowboy Joe" having proved a smash success, Maurice Abrahams decided on a follow-up. This time the lyricists were Edgar Leslie and Grant Clarke, and the song — not exactly a cowboy song, but built around a related theme — was "At That Bully Woolly Wild West Show," which Victor issued in February, 1914, on No. 17514, by the Peerless Quartet. The back-up was "The Pussy Cat Rag," by Ada Jones and the Peerless, who also made it for Columbia discs and Edison discs and cylinders. The cat ditty was more popular than its companion, which never acquired hit stature, and was not widely recorded. Pathé, just beginning its American



COWBOY COMEDY — Eddie Morton, known in vaudeville as "The Singing Policeman," made a fine record of a cowboy comic song classic, "The Last Shot Got Him."

activities, issued it, however, on B5040 as a one- or two-step by the Pathé Dance Orchestra. This was an 11½-inch disc, with "Do They Love It?" as its coupling. There was also a 14-inch, B8018, by the same orchestra, with "Peg o My Heart" for its teammate. In 1915 or 1916 the record numbers were changed to 30178 and 70091, respectively.

At about the same time as "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" came out, a number of other cowboy songs were published but not recorded. I seem to remember one, in a 1912 William W. Delaney Song Book, written by some little known person and called "Alkali Ike." There was also an effort by a feminine composer, whose name I can't be sure of now, and I can't find the old song book to check. The writer may have been Edna May Williams, but I have a vague feeling that Blossom Seeley was involved. Anyway, the title was "Texas," and I remember the refrain rhymed "Texas and solar plexus"—something about "Texas, beneath my solar plexus there's a heart that's beating —" (The accuracy of this dimly remembered quotation is not guaranteed.) Of course there were hundreds or thousands of other unsuccessful efforts to perpetrate cowboy song hits.

Among them, Harry Von Tilzer published in 1912 a song called "Missouri Joe," whose name sounds as if it might have had a cowboy theme, but I am not familiar with it. Then, in 1929, Bob Miller, the Jewish composer of hill-billy tunes, recorded on Columbia 15529, under the name of Bob Ferguson and His Scalawaggers, an effusion also called "Missouri Joe." Miller gets credit on the label for writing the song, but I wonder if he may have revived the old Von Tilzer number. However, his record deals with the exploits of a Western hold-up man instead of a cowboy.

## VIII. Traditional "Cowboy" Songs

This light-hearted survey was not

(Continued on next page)



begun with the intention of dealing extensively with the songs that arose among the cowboys themselves, but rather with the Tin Pan Alley epidemic that Williams and Van Alstyne inaugurated by writing "Cheyenne." Neither was it intended to deal with the "Western" music of the 1930's and 1940's, which was made popular by such singers as Gene Autry and remains popular today — things like "The Last Round-Up," "Leaning On the Old Top Rail" and "Don't Fence Me In." Names of similar outpourings could be listed indefinitely, but I have neither time, inclination nor space.

Nevertheless, there should be at least a bow in the direction of the traditional cowboy songs. These became popular with buyers of "country style" music when they were electrically recorded in the 1920's by such artists as Vernon Dalhart, who grew up in Jefferson, Texas, and knew ranch life at first hand.

Research shows that the cowboy's ancient enemy, the American Indian, received recognition on records long before the cowpuncher's own mournful, nostalgic tunes were recorded. This was true also of popular music, for many songs with an Indian theme — "Hiawatha," "Anona," "Navajo," "Tammany" and uncountable others — were highly popular and widely sung before "Cheyenne" appeared. The Indian vogue lasted to some extent into the World War I period and beyond. There were even songs, such as "Indianola" and "Big Chief Killahun," about heap big chiefs enlisting in the American army and going abroad with the announced intention of tomahawking "old Kaiser Bill." I don't recall any about cowboys planning to rope and brand the Kaiser, but there may have been some. Of course, the country was flooded with compositions about black men volunteering to help make the world safe for democracy, and there was even one about "Bobby, the Bomber," a baseball pitcher who used his hurling skill to lob explosives at the "Huns."

In 1904 Victor issued a dozen seven-inch single-faced discs by Ho-Nü-Ses, an Iroquois brave, on which he sang Indian ceremonial songs. In 1914 the Glacier Park Indian singers made a few Victor records, and Geoffrey O'Hara, a composer as well as student of Indian music, recorded a sung and spoken Victor disc and an Edison Blue Amberol cylinder of the red man's tunes. Concert arrangements of native Indian themes by such composers as Charles Wakefield Cadman and Thurlow Lieurance were extensively recorded, some of them by Princess Watahwaso, a daughter of a Penobscot Indian chief. The princess died March 20, 1969, in a hospital in Bangor, Me. She was 86. Such "concertized" songs included "By the Waters of Minnetonka," "From the Land of the Sky Blue Water," "The Moon Drops Low," and "The White Dawn is Stealing."

In February, 1920, Columbia issued, on 12-inch disc No. A6131, two orchestrated versions of native Indian

music arranged by Charles Sanford Skilton. One side contained the "War Dance" of the Cheyenne Indians and the other the "Deer Dance" of the Rogue River tribe. Both were played by the Columbia Orchestra. This was followed in October by A3092, on which Os-ke-non-ton, described as a Mohawk, sang a "War Song" and an "Every-Day Song," to drum accompaniment. The chief must also have recorded for Canadian Victor (he was a native of Canada), for HMV in England announced two recordings by him on No. B2083, apparently made about 1926. They were "Invocation to the Sun God" and "Peyote Drinking Song." HMV called Os-ke-non-ton a Navajo. A group of Hopi Indians made some electrically recorded Victors in the 1920's. These are merely characteristic examples and not a complete list.

The first disc of "handed-down" cowboy songs appears to have been issued by Columbia in September, 1919. It was No. A3085, and contained Bentley Ball's renditions of the time-honored "Jesse James" and "The Dying Cowboy." Mr. Ball was versatile. He also sang on A3083 some Omaha, Iroquois and Ojibway Indian songs, and on A3086, three Negro songs of the antebellum era — "Go Down, Moses," "O Graveyard" and "Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells." The supplement description of these records is worth quoting:

"Probably the most authentic collection of genuine American Folk Songs ever collected, and certainly ever recorded, is the following list of Columbia records by Bentley Ball. Mr. Ball has traveled over the entire country, collected these songs at their sources, and has sung them in his 'Song-a-Logues' throughout the United States. Mr. Ball is a singer of fine talent, a student of American Folk Songs, and the following records will have unusual interest to every American, whether young enough to be thrilled by 'Jesse James,' Indians and cowboys, or old enough to enjoy the genuine Negro spirituals and old minstrel songs. . . . The songs of our border days are less known but even more interesting than the songs of our Indians. 'Jesse James' and 'The Dying Cowboy' are genuinely thrilling 'ballads' of cowboy life in frontier days."

As best I recollect, Mr. Ball sang the two cowboy numbers more as a concert artist interpreting "art songs" than in the true rough and ready ranch house vein.

Victor's first authentic cowboy recording was not sung by a cowhand but by the eminent basso, Wilfred Glenn, assisted by the Shannon Quartet. It was issued on 19059 in July, 1923, and had the better known levee song, "I've Been Workin' on de Railroad," harmonized by the Shannon Quartet, for its backing. The Glenn side was called "Cowboy Song — Whoopee Ti Yi Yo," which most of us today probably know better as "Git Along, Little Dogies," but which a vast number insist on calling "Git Along, Little Doggies." Supplement Editor James E. Richardson's description was, as always, felicitous:

"Victor educational policies don't contemplate the over-loading of the juvenile—or the adult—brain. These are educational records, yes, but one is a genuine cowboy song, such as few Americans ever have heard of, much less heard; the other is a Mississippi work song. They are not products of the music markets, they belong with the sea-chantey and the 'come-all-ye'; as such, they are true American folk songs, and no American, born or adopted, has a right to ignore them."

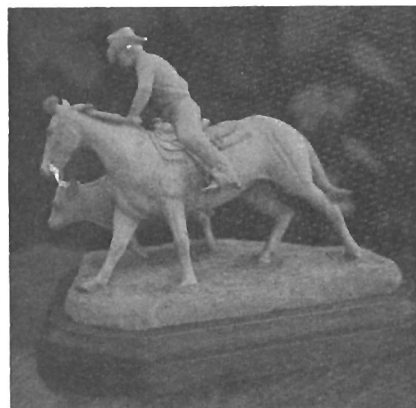
"Whoopee Ti Yi Yo," arranged by Henry

S. Sawyer, has a curious galloping rhythm, as though it had actually been composed in the saddle at the lope. (Its) harmonies are unusual to the ear long fed with compositions written to order from fragments of older ones. The "Levee Song" is comparatively simpler—though there is nothing complex or obscure in either; how could there be? These are true 'hundred per cent' American songs."

I have an album labeled "Cowboy Songs," which contain some representative specimens of the traditional, as opposed to the popular, tunes. It does not include my records by Vernon Dalhart and other highly popular singers whose discs are filed elsewhere under the artists' names, but the following will give you an idea of the names of some of the songs: "Home On the Range," "The Days of Forty-Nine," "The Zebra Dun" and "The Gal I Left Behind Me," by Jules Allen, "The Singing Cowboy"; "Jesse James" and "The Dying Cowboy," by Bentley Ball; "The Lavender Cowboy" and "The Cowboy's Lament," by Ewen Hall; "The Cowboy Minstrel"; "Cowboy Love Song," "Following the Cow Trail," "The Cowboy," "Cowboy's Prayer," "O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," "The Cowboy's Dream," "Bad Companions" and "When the Work's All Done This Fall," all Victors by Carl T. Sprague. Then there is Okeh No. 45057, "Pistol Pete's Midnight Special" recorded 49 years ago in St. Louis by Dave Cutrell, accompanied by "McGinty's Oklahoma Cowboy Band," and coupled with "The Cowboy's Dream," by the same band directed by Otto Gray. Most of these indigenous cowboy tunes are morbidly mournful and I shall probably infuriate folk music purists by saying that, personally, I'd much rather listen to "Cheyenne," "Pride of the Prairie," "The Last Shot Got Him" or "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" than to "The Dying Cowboy!"

(The End)

P.S.—The Rev. John A. Petty, of Rutherfordton, N. C., reminds me that at least one English recording was made of "Cheyenne." In April, 1907, it was issued on White cylinder No. 163, sung by Peter Dawson. I had known of that cylinder, but forgot it in writing this series. Dawson was a consummate singer, but songs such as "Cheyenne" were not his metier, and I doubt that his rendition was half so effective as Billy Murray's.



## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Addison Dashiell Madeira

PART I

By JIM WALSH

(This biography of A. D. Madeira is dedicated to my old friend, Quentin Riggs, of Huntington Beach, Calif., without whose painstaking, ingenious and enthusiastic research efforts it would have remained unwritten.)

### I. An Unfamiliar Name

Eyes, I imagine, will be blinked and eyebrows raised at sight of the words, "ADDISON DASHIELL MADEIRA," in large letters running across the top of this page. A typical comment of the average reader is likely to be:

"Who is he? I never heard of him."

It is true that the name of Addison Dashiell Madeira — always called A. D. Madeira in record catalogs is known to only a small percentage of the many thousands of present-day collectors of old-time phonograph records, but in his time—which was more than 75 years ago—Madeira was a reputable and respected baritone who made many Edison cylinders and Victor discs. Obviously, however, in those days of comparatively small sales he could not win a huge personal following like that of some of the other performers who had longer careers. By contrast with the extended recording spans of such singers as Billy Murray, Henry Burr, Arthur Collins and Byron G. Harlan, Madeira's period of activity was brief. He appears to have begun making records in 1899, but by 1902 had retired from the competition. In the March, 1902, edition of *The Phonogram*, issued to publicize Edison cylinder records, the editor, Herbert Shattuck, who was Edison's advertising manager, wrote:

"Many people have asked me lately, 'Where's Billy Golden? What has become of Mr. Madeira? Why don't we hear Mr. Albert C. Campbell's melodious voice any more on Edison records?'"

"My friends, I will tell you all I know. Billy, I believe, is running a typewriter's hotel in Washington, D. C., and Madeira is in the typewriter business in St. Paul, Minn., while Mr. Campbell's voice—well, to speak in baseball parlance, he has a 'glass arm.'"

By saying that Campbell had a "glass arm," the *Phonogram* editor evidently meant that Al's delicate throat had suffered from the strain of making too many records and was, for the time being, not in good condition. It was this sensitive quality that eventually led the man with the



ENTERING MIDDLE AGE — This photo shows A. D. Madeira in his early forties, after he had begun making Edison cylinders but had not yet sung for Victor discs.

beautiful lyric tenor voice to give up making solo records and to confine himself to duets with Henry Burr and harmonizing as first tenor of the Sterling Trio and Peerless Quartet. "Clancy" Campbell did not abandon solo singing, however, until around 1908-09. Meanwhile, in the June, 1902, *Phonogram*, Mr. Shattuck retracted to a considerable extent his "glass arm" remark:

"A correspondent writes, 'I was very sorry to read in a recent number of the *Phonogram*, that Mr. Madeira had gone out of the business of making phonograph records. The other man's 'glass arm' can continue for all I care.' To which I reply, 'Tut, tut.' Mr. Campbell came in to see me recently, and his melodious voice is certainly in very fine condition. He tells me that he has never been so busy in his life making records for the different talking machine companies. Such of my readers as want any of his records can easily procure them, as records by him are listed in many record catalogs."

It was, incidentally, Shattuck's mention of Madeira's being in the typewriter trade in St. Paul that led to Quentin Riggs' tracking down the baritone's long past activities nearly three quarters of a century later and making it possible for me to write this article.

Quentin, then a teen-aged strip-ling, was with me when I called on the famous pioneer recording artist and whistler, Joe Belmont, in September 1947, at his bird shop on the concourse of Radio City in downtown New York. During an engrossing chat Joe recalled many of his former recording associates, and for years I have seemed to remember his saying that A. D. Madeira was of Spanish Jewish descent and was born on the Rock of Gibraltar. My memory must have tricked me, however, for when I published an article about Belmont in *HOBBIES* for March, 1948, I said:

"He (Joe Belmont) told us that a briefly popular male quartet some 40-odd years ago was the Big Four, composed of Arthur Collins, Byron Harlan, A. D. Madeira and Joe Natus. Madeira was a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota."

I wish I could find the notebook in which I recorded Joe's remarks so I could tell more of what he related about Madeira. Apparently, he didn't say the baritone was Jewish and from Gibraltar. But he did tell me that about somebody, and who was the artist I have confused with Madeira?

Incidentally, the Madeira family was of Spanish descent.

A survey of old catalogs of Edison cylinder records shows that five two-minute records by the Big Four were issued, from March through May, 1901. (Madeira's first Edison solos, it will be revealed later, came out in November-December, 1899.) First of the quartet records was "Goodbye Dolly Gray," No. 7728. Then followed 7765, "My Charcoal Charmer"; 7766, "There's Where My Heart is Tonight"; 7767, "Ben Bolt," and 7781, "Cornbread."

I know of no Big Four records for other companies, but perhaps the quartet did some vaudeville work and stayed together longer there than in its Edison association. That, however, is mere speculation. And why did it break up? I suspect the answer lies in Madeira's decision to quit singing in favor of being a business man and leaving the quartet to start that typewriter business in Minneapolis - St. Paul.

These quartet cylinders, like Madeira's solos and discs, were made before Thomas A. Edison had devised a system of producing a permanent "master," from which moulds could be taken and result in the production

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

of a virtually unlimited number of salable copies. Madeira, like other artists who recorded as the Nineteenth Century gave way to the Twentieth, must have worked by the "round" and been paid a dollar or so for each time he sang a selection. Usually about 40 "rounds" of a song were made in order to provide enough cylinders for copying by a pantographic method. As Billy Murray once remarked, "When you had sung forty times you had made all of \$40!"

Whatever the reason for the short life of the Big Four Quartet, the active span of its records was equally brief. None of the five was made over in gold moulded form and they were all gone by the time Edison published the record catalog dated "fall, 1902."

### II. Madeira's Edison Solos & Duets

Until I buckled down to writing this article, I thought I recollected that every one of Madeira's Edison solos and duets also was gone by the time that fall, 1902, cylinder catalog appeared. I was wrong, however. True, all the solos were out, but a number of his duets with Byron G. Harlan remained. These likewise, were not long lived. They appeared for the last time in the list for April 1, 1903. In July, 1903, some of the titles were still there, but they had been remade by Harlan and Frank C. Stanley, whose popularity as a recording artist was greater than Madeira's had been. Probably the moulds from which the cylinders were made had begun to have defects and it was necessary to make them over. With Madeira half-way across the continent, in Minneapolis, another baritone had to be found to sing with Harlan, and Stanley was the obvious choice.

I believe it would be as well to give what I hope is a complete list of Addison Dashiell Madeira's Edison cylinders and Victor discs before proceeding with the story of his later years, as brought out of obscurity by Quentin Riggs' intelligent, dedicated research. Toward the end of 1899 Edison began issuing two-minute solo cylinders by Madeira, and this continued until June, 1901, when his total stood at twenty. In numerical order they were:

7288 Last Night. 7289 Thursday. 7290 The Postilion. 7291 Celeste. 7292 Maritana — In Happy Moments (a number that a few years later was a favorite offering of the English baritone, Alan Turner). 7363 Old Jim's Christmas Hymn. 7400 You're It. 7437 The Sun Will Shine Again. 7481 Beauty's Eyes. 7513 I'd Rather Be Poor With You. 7547 Polly and I Were Sweethearts. 7579 London Bridge. 7650 The Fog Bell. 7658 Beyond the Gates of Paradise. 7695 Russian National Hymn. 7701 Little Tin Soldier. 7777 Resurrection. 7778 Jerusalem. 7793 Arise, Marie. 7817 Trovatore—Tempest of the Heart.

You will observe that four of Madeira's Edison solos were of Christian hymns, which militates against my former impression that he was a Spanish Jew. Not only that, but in



**DEDICATED RESEARCHER AND PAL.** Shown here is Quentin Riggs, whose diligent efforts made it possible for Jim Walsh to write the life story of A. D. Madeira, with his pet cat, "Bo." Mr. Riggs took the picture himself with a timing device that allowed him to set the focus, then get into the scene.

its place it will be shown that his father was a Presbyterian minister. Little comment need be made upon Madeira's Edison solo records. Mostly, they were of a "standard" nature — the sort of thing that Alan Turner and other baritones were to record prolifically years later. There were few, if any, songs that can be identified today as turn of the century popular tunes. "Beauty's Eyes" is, I suppose, the well known Tosti ballad. I wonder why it was felt there would be a demand for the Russian National Hymn in English. Some of the titles are virtually forgotten now — among them "Celeste," "You're It," "The Sun Will Shine Again" (how many ballads have been written on that theme?) and "I'd Rather Be Poor With You," which does have a Plebeian "popular" flavor.

I have never heard any of these Edison solos, which were made on the soft brown wax records, so cannot attempt judgement on them. Undoubtedly, few, if any, copies remain. In fact, whether on discs or cylinders, Madeira's must be among the rarest of all records of 75 years and more ago.

Madeira's Edison duets with Byron G. Harlan were less numerous than his solos. There were fourteen:

7343 He Carved His Mother's Name Upon a Tree. 7346 Sweet Antoinette. 7347 In the Shadow of the Pines. 7382 While the Leaves Came Drifting Down. 7383 My Old New Hampshire Home. 7475 Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom. 7475 I Left Because I Love You. 7540 Baby's Prayer. 7603 Sweet Antoinette. 7611 A Picture No Artist Can Paint. 7676 Medley of Popular Songs. 7896 A Bird in a Gilded Cage. 7792 When We Parted at the Gate. 7823 Little Black Me.

Until I refreshed my memory by doing research for this survey I had the impression, as I have already

mentioned, that all the Harlan and Madeira duets were discontinued when gold moulded cylinders were introduced. I was, however, wrong. Six were carried over in the new style. These had a brief life in gold moulded form: "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down," "Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom," "In the Shadow of the Pines," "I Left Because I Love You," "Baby's Prayer" and "Sweet Antoinette." These titles remained in the catalog for July, 1903, but in new versions by Harlan and Stanley. They obviously were good sellers, for all kept their places until December, 1908, when "Sweet Antoinette" was dropped.

No doubt, by the way, you will have observed that Harlan and Madeira made two records of "Sweet Antoinette," No. 7346 and 7633. The latter was the one remade by Harlan and Stanley. I have done some puzzling as to why "Sweet Antoinette" was offered under two different numbers and reached a conclusion, which may be wrong, that one was with piano accompaniment and one with orchestra . . . No, apparently I was wrong, for the version with the higher number would be the more likely to have orchestra backing, but the fall, 1902, catalog says No. 7633 has a piano accompaniment. By February, 1910, "I Left Because I Love You" had received its comeuppance, but the other four were still hanging on. "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down" went into outer darkness in September, 1911, but the other three continued to be available until two-minute cylinders were discontinued in the autumn of 1912. This looks as if Harlan and Madeira, or the Edison recording experts, knew how to select sentimental ballads that would sell steadily over a long term of years.

I'd almost forgotten that Madeira made seven of the large "concert" or "grand" cylinders that had some vogue before the introduction of the gold moulded record. These were supplemented by five duets with Harlan. The solos were all of Protestant gospel hymns and were of selections not duplicated in the small standard records: B256 "Let Us Stand Up for Jesus"; B257 "The Shepherd True"; B258 "Come Home"; B259 "I Am Redeemed"; B260 "The Comforter Has Come"; B261 "I Need Thee Every Hour," and B262, "Rescue the Perishing." The Harlan-Madeira duets in concert size duplicated five of their popular standard records: B423 "He Carved His Mother's Name Upon a Tree"; B424, "In the Shadow of the Pines"; B425, "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down"; B426, "My Old New Hampshire Home" (which was later made in gold moulded form by Albert Campbell and James F. Harrison), and B427, "Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom."

Undoubtedly any Edison cylinders sung by A. D. Madeira are scarce since an average human lifetime or more has passed since they were made, but this does not mean that they are extremely valuable and worth a lot of money. I mention this

to prevent readers from writing to me, saying they own one or more Edison or Victor records by Madeira and asking whether they are worth a small fortune or a large. I have nothing to do with buying, selling, estimating the value or finding a purchaser for old records and dislike to receive letters from would-be sellers, for I hate to dash their extravagant hopes.

This I can say, however: Quentin Riggs, who obtained most of the information for this article, is a Madeira enthusiast, and will be glad to hear from anybody with one or more Madeira records for sale at a reasonable price. His address is 21171 Greenboro Lane, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646.

### III. Madeira's Victor Solos & Duets

As I put together this attempt to tell A. D. Madeira's life story a thing that puzzles me is: Why did he record duets entirely with Byron G. Harlan for Edison and with only Harry Macdonough for Victor? There seems no reason why he should not have used Macdonough's help as much on the cylinders as he did on the discs. Macdonough's first Edison engagement had been on October 17, 1898, when he was an employee of the Adams Express Company, and, by the time Madeira began recording, the Canadian tenor, whose legal name was John Scantlebury Macdonald, was being called on for more solo work than any other Edison artist and should have been available for duets.

The best I can do after all these years is guess, with no way of knowing whether my surmise is correct. Harlan's first Edison cylinders, and apparently his first records for any company were No. 7218, "Stories That Mother Told Me" and 7219, "Please, Mr. Conductor, Don't Put Me Off the Train," better remembered today as "The Lightning Express." It is fabled that the tenor-comedian was the manager of a theatrical troupe that appeared at an Orange, N. J., theater, in which Thomas A. Edison was one of the audience. If this story is to be credited, Edison was impressed by Harlan's singing, thought he would have a good recording voice and invited him to come to his laboratory and make tests. I question this legend, because Thomas A. Edison was not a theater-going man. He was the sort who would prefer to make experiments in his laboratory rather than attend a public entertainment. Not only that, he was so deaf it would have been virtually impossible for him to hear a man on the stage well enough to know whether he sang well or didn't.

Whatever the truth of the story, Harlan did do some experimental Edison recording. The two cylinders just mentioned were issued somewhere around September 1, 1899, and as the years went on the portly tenor, his wife and daughter became close friends of Thomas A. Edison and his family.

Very well, then. Harlan's first records appeared two or three months before Madeira's. Isn't it likely that George Byron Harlan had something to do with obtaining a recording engagement for the baritone? Perhaps they were old friends and stage associates and Harlan recommended Madeira as a baritone with probably a good recording voice. They sang together a little later, you will remember in the Big Four Quartet.

But, assuming this to be true, why didn't Madeira make Victor duet records with Harlan? Why was Macdonough used instead? One answer is that Madeira didn't begin working for Victor until after his Edison engagements had begun, but that was still at a period before Harlan had sung for any Victor discs. He made none, in fact, until after Madeira had journeyed to Minnesota in the hope of finding fortune, if not fame, as a dispenser of typewriters. (I wonder what brand and whether they were "invisible" or "visible.")

Perhaps Harlan had an exclusive Edison contract from the time he began making cylinders in 1899 until 1902, when he formed his partnership with Arthur Collins, who had preceded him as a Victor artist. If he was unavailable for Victor discs in 1901, the obvious thing to do was to substitute a tenor whose services could be had, and Harry Macdonough admirably filled the need.

Turning to the Victor record catalog for February, 1902, I find on page 30 that A. D. Madeira is listed as a bass, which he wasn't, for his rather high baritone lacked the basso profundo quality. There were nine solo discs to his credit. Four were offered only in seven-inch: V754, "Little Tin Soldier"; V757, "You're It"; V758, "Old Jim's Christmas Hymn," and V759, "Celeste."

Two of Madeira's Victors were available only as 10-inch Monarchs: M3298, "The Lost Chord" and M3302, "Polly and I Were Sweethearts." That leaves three which could be had in either size: No. 755, "Calvary"; 756 Alan Turner's later favorite, "In Happy Moments," and 760, "My Drowsy Babe."

On page 38 the ardent researcher finds eight duets by Macdonough and Madeira. I have two of these and gave another to Quentin. All are announced by Madeira, and I suppose he "emceed" all eight. He probably also announced the Harlan-Madeira cylinders. None of the eight was issued only in seven-inch, but three were solely in ten-inch Monarchs: M3308, "Little Black Me"; M3310, "Lost, Proscribed," from "Martha," and 3311, "Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom."

The remaining five could be bought in both seven and ten-inch: No. 761, "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down"; 762, "In the Shadow of the Pines"; 763, "Medley, 'Those Are the Songs I Love'"; 764, "Baby's Prayer," and 766, "I Left Because I Love You."

And that, so far, as I know, constitutes a complete list of Madeira's

cylinders and discs. I imagine you have noticed that his Victor repertoire bears a close resemblance to the Edison, and that his duets with Macdonough are in some instances the same songs he sang for Edison with Harlan.

Have you also observed that the numbers of the baritone's Victor records come in such close numerical sequence as to suggest they were made within a few days of one another? This impression, however, might be misleading. Scrutiny of the 1902 catalog makes it clear that Victor at that time was using a "block system," as Edison had done for a few years — that is, assigning a certain block of numbers to records by a given artist and numbering them within that sequence. The Victors which were made in two sizes begin with 761 and continue through 766, except that 765 is missing. I wonder what record No. 765 was — whether it was an unissued Macdonough-Madeira or what? After turning through the catalog I have not found any disc with that number. And I wonder, too, if Victor's "Medley — 'Those Are the Songs I Love'" is the same as Edison's "Medley of Popular Songs," which I should much like to hear. Madeira's solos began with 754 and continued through 760.

When Addison Dashiell Madeira gave up the recording ghost, Victor apparently divided higher numbers in the block that had been given him between Macdonough and S. H. Dudley, an operatic baritone who succeeded Madeira as Macdonough's duet partner. He had however, been singing with Macdonough in the Haydn and Edison Male Quartet, before the tenor and Madeira started working together. Number 769 was given to Silas Leachman's "coon song," "I've Got Money Locked Up in the Vault."

Now, here's an odd thing: Just beneath the list of the Macdonough-Madeira duets is one of eight by Macdonough and Dudley, and this duplicates some of the titles by Macdonough and Madeira. No. 1075 is "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down," which, in double-face, stayed in the catalog through 1922, and 1076, is "In the Shadow of the Pines." Why have Dudley and Macdonough duplicate records by Macdonough and Madeira but keep both in the catalog? The question is academic, for when the August 31, 1904, catalog was issued, Madeira's name had vanished and none of his solos or duets were available.

Meanwhile, you may be wondering, what had happened to A. D. Madeira while his records were taking their place among the "lost books" of the earth? Had he prospered in Minneapolis-St. Paul or had he betaken himself to other presumably greener pastures? And what is known of his family background and history?

Those are matters to be brought forward when next we meet. It should be made clear at this point, how-

(Continued on page 130)



will notice that the stamp is canceled with a meter marking which resembles a cancel. It is a Spanish meter of course, and it is the meter that has paid the postage on the letter.

Unsuccessful revolutionaries have issued stamps to finance their operations. This is nothing new. Following the Spanish-American War in 1898, a revolutionary named Emilio Aguinaldo in the Philippine Islands turned from fighting the Spanish to fighting the United States, seeking the independence he thought the Islands would get when the war ended. It took the Americans weeks to defeat the Spanish but several years to defeat Aguinaldo. During that time, his government occupied large portions of the country, set up a post office, issued stamps, had its own currency. But ultimately the Revolution failed, and a Government more acceptable to this nation was installed in Manila.

Examples of Aguinaldo stamps properly used on cover during the Philippine Insurrection are both rare and valuable. There is no reason why these are not listed in the Scott Standard catalog, as unused examples are relatively common and often encountered. But the Government was not a legitimate one, at least from our standpoint, so the stamps are not listed. (They can be found in an abbreviated listing in the Scott Specialized United States Catalog, but no idea of their scarcity properly used on cover is given in the catalog user.)

Other countries often found with purported issues of stamps which are not catalog-listed since their legitimacy is questioned are the Principality of Thomond (reputed to be part of Ireland); Atlantis (there have been several of these); Tanna Touva (some of whose issues are listed), and Indonesia, which has issued many legitimate stamps, but which also provided many illegitimate ones during its Revolution following the close of World War II.

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## HISTORICAL TAPE RECORDINGS

(Continued from page 60)

she ever did, here's my favorite. This is a Savitt classic, made even more so by Carlotta Dale's fine vocal. Here's Carlotta to sing: "The Weekend of a Private Secretary."

SAVITT ORCH: WEEKEND OF A PRIVATE SECRETARY. Bluebird B7493 (3/18/38)

GIVENS: From the original Bluebird, no less. That's circa 1938. Carlotta Dale. I had a partner, Jack Pyle, when I was at KYW, Philadelphia, myself, and he, too . . . he just liked to say the name, Carlotta Dale. (pauses) Beautiful guy. All right, Carlotta Dale with Jan Savitt and the Orchestra. We've met now the staff side of the vocal roster. And, in just 30 seconds, we'll meet one of the all-time greats, the man by the name of George Tunnell. You know Mr. Tunnell by the name of Bon Bon. (COMMERCIAL)

(The recording dates, which appear next to the label number, were not as easy a reference mark prior to 1975 when Brian Rust's AMERICAN DANCE BAND DISCOGRAPHY appeared. We credit Bill Givens with having to do it the hard way. But you must remember, Bill had been involved with the big bands for a good number of years. And he remembered these statistics.)

GIVENS: And we turn from Carlotta Dale to George Tunnell. He was a cousin of the former New York Giants football player; but you probably don't recognize the name George Tunnell. On the other hand, I'm sure you do recognize the name Bon Bon. This man was always one of my all-time favorite, big band vocalists. He was, without question, the Jan Savitt band's prime attraction. Bon's true name, as I say, is George Tunnell. But even today, if you check out the Philadelphia main-line phone directory, you'll find the listing in Yeaton under the name of Bon Bon Tunnell. He's a representative of the Miller Brewing Company—High Life—and, as a matter of fact, his territory includes parts of Western New York; you may know who he is . . . you may not, Murray Bloom, who is the Decca distributor out of Buffalo, tells a story that—on occasion, when a distributorship holds a dealer meeting or a party of some kind—it's not unusual that they have strolling musicians and Bon will set the key and all of a sudden from out of literally nowhere you'll hear the very fine voice of George Tunnell singing "720 in the Books." "It's a Wonderful World." . . . and, an

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 128)

ever, that the singer was Addison Dashiell Madeira II (or Jr.) and that his minister father was A. D. Madeira, Sr. In his turn, the baritone had a son who was Addison D., the third. I don't know why Addison was chosen as a family name, but Dashiell came from the maiden name of the Rev. Mr. Madeira's mother.

Addison III died in France of influenza during World War I. Dashiell, as in the name of Dashiell Hammett, writer of mystery novels, is pronounced "Da-sheel."

Incidentally, I am not sure whether that middle name should be spelled as "Dashiel" or "Dashiell." The death certificate of the singer's venerable father gave it as "Dashiel" and, as I have just mentioned, said that was his mother's family name before marriage. On the other hand, the baritone's death certificate spelled it "Dashiel," and so did a newspaper obituary notice. After anxious consideration, I have decided to go along with "Dashiell," but to disavow responsibility if I have chosen the wrong version.

(To be continued)

enjoyable and very pleasant surprise for the people gathered. Possessed of one of the finest personalities I've ever encountered, this is one beautiful, beautiful man. And, again, George T. Simon cites as particularly noteworthy Bon's efforts on "It's a Wonderful World." "Vol Vistu Gally Star," and "720 in the Books," all of which will be included between now and 6 p.m. in Rochester, but I thought as our vocal lead-off for Bon Bon this, sure to be recognized by the true Savitt buffs, is perhaps Bon's all-time classic. His great 'skit-scal' version of "Paper Picker."

SAVITT ORCH/BON BON: "PAPER PICKER." DECCA Blue label #2738 (Recorded 8/29/39, NYC)

GIVENS: That, in addition to being one of Bon Bon's classics, is considered to be among the best of the Big Band flagwavers . . . of its kind, of its type for that particular era. Drums of Russ Isaacs and, of course the vocal of Bon Bon. A classic! No question about it. There's Bon and . . . "Paper Picker." He was very versatile, was this stellar vocalist and fine person. And . . . we'll go to the ballad side, having gone from the rhythm side . . . the skit-scal side of Bon Bon; the ballad side of George Tunnell in just 60 seconds. (COMMERCIAL) A WHAM documentary in sound and holiday treat for you; our first Sunday of the month of September . . . tribute to the Big Bands and the good music they play . . . and this weekend, a tribute to Jan Savitt.

From this point I shall paraphrase Bill Givens ad lib remarks and list the recordings he played.

He refers to the ballad style as "absolutely superb" in calling upon the Bon Bon vocal to "Last Night." (NO commercial recording listed indicating this probably was taken from a radio transcription.)

Next, Bill introduces a March 18, 1938 recording for Bluebird featuring "a good vocal group" . . . the Three Toppers (Charlotte Kaye, Dorsey Anderson and Jack Carlton). "Stop! And Reconsider." (Bluebird B-7493) (The "flip" side of "Weekend of a Private Secretary.")

Bill refers to the last time this particular documentary was presented on WHAM. That was August 1, 1970. He says he has added new material for this broadcast. His theme, "720 in the Books" appears to be that recorded for Thesaurus transcription service, a division of NBC. (I'm preparing a story on the radio transcriptions for you. I hope to have material from collectors including Larry Kiner of Redmond, Wash., Roger Paulson of Needham, Mass., from a new reader at the University of Ohio and from Cathie Heinz and Joyce Lockwood at the Broadcast Pioneers Library in our nation's capitol, as well as Howard Brenner.)

Bill mentions that with this broadcast, he begins his fifth year on the series "Music for a Sunday Afternoon," and thanks those who have taken the time, over the years, to correspond with him.

He says:

" . . . I would be most remiss if I were not to thank so many of you who have taken the time to correspond, to offer comments, suggestions, criticisms. You've been a very fine audience; I enjoy a very great empathy with all of you. And it's been very gratifying for me, over the past four full years to have had the association with you, my audience . . . my listeners . . . and I've enjoyed it very, very much to know that you have enjoyed the series. Thanks enough from me. And I hope we can continue for five more years on this WHAM's program of "Music for a Sunday Afternoon."

(Please turn back to page 119)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Addison Dashiell Madeira

PART 2

By JIM WALSH

### I. In Quest of the Obscure

As was emphasized in a preceding installment, I have been able to write this biographical sketch of A. D. Madeira only because of the intensive research of Quentin Riggs, who did not rest until he had found out all about the turn of the century baritone that it seemed possible to learn. The part of this article already published dealt primarily with listing Madeira's Edison and Victor records. Now it becomes time to make use of Quentin's genealogical spadework and relate what there is known about the man, his father, and other members of his family.

But first, may I say that Quentin Riggs is fascinated, as he seemingly is by nothing else, at the thought of artists who made records 75 years or more ago, but whose personalities today are virtually unknown? The longer ago a singer made records and the less known about him or her today, the more Quentin wants to know and the harder he works to pierce the veil of mystery resulting from the obliterating effects of time. Mention such names as Minnie Emmett, Mina Hickman and Roger Harding and his eyes light up. Recently he has been preoccupied with a desire to learn something about the mysterious Fred Rycroft, who for a brief period sang first tenor in the historic Haydn Quartet, and the even more baffling Charles Belling, who held the second tenor post in or around 1900.

They long have been top-ranking mysteries although a National Gramophone record list dated December, 1899, said:

"Since our last catalog two new tenors have been added to the Haydn Quartet. The comedy and lighter records are still sung by the old Quartet, but the sacred and standard selections are sung by Messrs. Rycroft and Belling, tenors of Trinity Church Choir, and Messrs. Dudley and Hooley, basses."

I assume that "the old quartet" was composed, besides Dudley and Hooley, of John Bieling, first tenor, and Jere Mahoney, second. Harry Macdonough was second tenor longer than anybody else, but he didn't begin making records until October, 1898, and probably had not begun his Haydn association when the 1899 catalog was issued. He succeeded Mahoney when ill health compelled the latter to give up singing. To me this is strange: I knew John Bieling personally and corresponded with Dudley and Macdonough before their deaths—



**MYSTERY MELODRAMA.** Evil doings seem afoot in this scene from an unidentified light opera or musical comedy in which Addison D. Madeira appeared, presumably after his recording career ended. He is the short, stocky man to the right. Identity of the bewhiskered character, who seems to be holding a bomb, is unknown. If any reader can say from what production this scene was taken, Jim Walsh and Quentin Riggs will be grateful.

—(Photo from William M. Peters)

voluminously with Dudley - but not one of those three surviving members of the quartet ever mentioned Rycroft or Belling to me.

Within recent weeks, however, Quentin has discovered that in the early 1900's and probably for some years earlier, Rycroft was the professional manager of the Witmark music publishing company and was responsible for "Sweet Adeline" being introduced to the public and be-

coming one of history's greatest song hits. A book, "From Ragtime to Swingtime," by my old friend, the late Isaac Goldberg, tells of a male quartet, the Quaker City Four, coming into Witmark's and asking to have some new songs demonstrated. One number after another was played, but none suited the vaudeville singing group.

Then "Sweet Adeline," which had

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## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

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been written by Richard Gerard and Harry Armstrong more than a year before, occurred to Rycroft. The song had been languishing on stockroom shelves because it was considered "too slow and too old-fashioned," but, nearly desperate at being unable to please the Quartet, Rycroft called to Armstrong, "Harry, you may as well go and fish out 'Sweet Adeline.'" Armstrong produced this song from the top shelf, played it, and Harry Ernest, manager of the group, exclaimed at the end, "Why, that's just the song we have been looking for!" What happened after that is history. The Quaker City Four sang it in Vaudeville, and "Sweet Adeline," though with no alcoholic connotation, became the booze-fighters' close-harmony national anthem.

Quentin writes: "Rycroft is also mentioned in connection with a moving picture made of a minstrel show. The performers were the Spooks Minstrel Quintet, which Geoff O'Hara told me was the same group that recorded the Edison two-minute cylinder of 'The Rosary' as the Knicker-

bocker Quintet. Rycroft helped rehearse the performers for this project."

A few days ago my California friend asked me if I could tell him who wrote the mournful old-time song, "The Letter Edged in Black," which Vernon Dalhart made popular on records in the 1920's. I replied that it was composed in 1897 by a woman named, or who called herself, Hattie Nevada. She also wrote one of the numbers Madeira recorded, "While the Leaves Came Drifting Down." I felt sure I would receive Quentin's undivided attention when I added that I believed Hattie's husband was the operator of the Kansas City Talking Machine Company, one of the small cylinder record manufacturing businesses of the 1897-1900 period, and that she recorded 25 or so soprano solos for that firm. I'm betting that even now Quentin is writing to his Kansas City library friends, who, as you will see, were so helpful to him in his A. D. Madeira research, and asking them to send him all the information they can find about Hattie Nevada.

And, speaking of Kansas City, that seems our cue to return to the story of A. D. Madeira.

## II. Madeira in Minneapolis

Addison Madeira was not a youngster when he began his career as a recording artist; rather, he was just entering middle age. He was born in the autumn of 1858, about two and a half years before the first shots were fired in the American Civil War, and he became 40 in the year in which the Spanish-American War was fought. He was almost 41 when he sang for his first Edison records.

In a group photo of 42 Edison artists taken near Thomas A. Edison's West Orange, N. J., laboratory in the summer of 1900, Madeira appears as a seemingly somewhat short, man holding a straw hat and whose hair has begun to thin. It looks, but I am not sure, as if he has a small mustache. His duet partner, Byron Harlan, is standing behind him, and Senorita Maria Godoy, who, like Madeira, had Spanish forbears, is sitting to his right. Also within touching distance is Frank S. Mazziotta, the piccolo player. Madeira was approaching his 42nd birthday when this picture was taken by a photographer who did a good job, but whom I have never seen identified. And he was 43, or not far from it,



TURN OF CENTURY "TALENT." This photo of 42 men and women who made Edison cylinder records was taken in 1900 near Thomas A. Edison's laboratory in West Orange, N.J. A. D. Madeira is No. 33, at the extreme left of the front row. This reproduction was made from Madeira's copy of the original print, kindly provided by his grandson, William Peters. Another copy of the photo was published in January, 1971, HOBBIES, and readers wishing the names of all the artists may obtain that information by referring to the 1971 issue.

when he decided to give up living in New York and engaging in a musical career to move to Minneapolis and enter the typewriter business.

Over and over I have speculated as to how and why this came about. What made Madeira think he would be better off as a Middle Western typewriter salesman than as a singer? How did he come to select Minnesota as his new "stamping grounds?" Had he perhaps, in his travels with theatrical companies, met some typewriter company representative who assured him he would be a whiz at selling writing instruments and that there were especially good opportunities in Minneapolis and its sister city, St. Paul? I don't know the answer and I doubt that anyone now alive does. If Madeira were still living I'd ask him, but he'd now be about 120 years of age and hardly competent to elucidate.

Whatever the reason, to Minneapolis he and his family went at some time after he made his last record in 1901.

And here I shall begin to quote freely from the results of Quentin Riggs' research. Quentin took his first giant step toward solving "the Madeira Mystery" when he wrote to the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul and asked if there was any information in its files or in Minneapolis-St. Paul city directories about A. D. Madeira, a one-time noted singer and recording artist who turned typewriter dealer after going to Minnesota.

On April 23, 1975, Patricia Harpole, the Society's assistant chief librarian, replied that she had found no record of an obituary notice for Madeira, but he was listed in the St. Paul section of the 1902 directory as manager of the General Typewriter Company, with his residence in Minneapolis.

Similarly, under Minneapolis for 1902, he was recorded as manager of the General Typewriter Company, with his business at 405 Dayton Building. He and members of his family were living in flat six of an apartment building at 1508 Third Avenue, south.

Other Madeiras, all with the same address, were Fay L.; Fred R., who had the title of secretary of the typewriter company, and Pauline L.

Now here we are confronted with more Madeira mysteries. Since her name comes second to Addison's, it would be logical to assume that Fay was his wife, but on his death certificate and in newspaper obituary notices, to be quoted later, Mrs. Madeira's name is given as Callie W. Yet this is a name that never appears in Minneapolis and Kansas City directories of the Madeira family. Fay's name is present only for the year 1902. So what happened? Were Addison and Fay husband and wife, and did she die during their first year in Minneapolis? And did he many years later take Callie as his second wife? This question has me scratching my head and guessing.

Fred Madeira I know was the singer-typewriter man's brother. As

for Pauline, I don't know. She may perhaps have been one of his sisters or daughters.

In 1903, A. D. apparently had had enough of typewriters. He was listed as a music teacher at 409 Dayton Building, two doors from his former writing machine address. He was now living at 1803 Tenth Avenue, south. (The Madeiras, like many other families in large cities, seem to have moved almost every year.) His brother Fred was in charge of the typewriter business, but at 616 Bank of Commerce Building, and his home was not with Addison, but on the same street, at 1827 Tenth Avenue.

In 1904, A. D. was still a music teacher, but now was conducting his classes in the Lyceum Theater building. His home address was flat C, at 209 South Twelfth Street. The only other occupant of the flat apparently was his son, who is listed as Addison Jr., but should have been Addison Madeira III. Presumably, he had just become old enough to rate a directory listing. Fred continued to have his typewriter business in the Bank of Commerce building, but was now living at Excelsior, Minn.

The next year, 1905, Addison was again a music teacher, but at 412 Evanston Building. He and Addison III were still together in the flat on Twelfth Street. The boy, previously designated as a student, is now called an actor.

Since he obviously was so young there is room for speculation as to what kind of acting he was doing or hoped to do.

In 1906, the directory reported that Addison D. Madeira had moved to Kansas City, Mo.

Quentin was exultant when, thanks to Ms. Harpole's helpfulness, he received this information, for it now became possible, he hoped, to find out something about Madeira's life and activities in Kansas City. Up to that time he and I had not known that the singer had a Kansas City association. Now, with the benefit of hindsight, it becomes evident that he returned to Kansas City because his father was a prominent minister there and because he, the son, had lived there as a boy. What induced him, however, to become involved in a slate manufacturing business is something else. But that was still some years in the future.

### III. Research in Missouri

The long gone baritone singer would, I am sure, be both startled and flattered if he could return to life and learn of the great amount of energy and effort such a researcher as Quentin Riggs has expended in an effort to learn more about him. He no doubt would find pleasure in knowing that although he has been away from this world for almost half a century he is not forgotten and there are still admirers of his voice as it is preserved by recordings of 75 to 80 years ago.

In August, 1975, Quentin wrote to the State Historical Society of Missouri at Columbia, and asked for any

information concerning Addison D. Madeira and his family that might be found in the Kansas City directories. With promptness that was as gratifying as surprising, the reference specialist, Karen M. Duree, replied on August 14 in a letter of more than two pages:

"In response to your letter received August 12, I found several entries for Addison D. Madeira and his family in the Kansas City Directories." She then proceeded to list the entries from 1907 through 1917 - a feat of considerable good will. The singer was mentioned in 1907, with "music" given as his profession. He was living at 2715 Olive, with his son, again called Addison D. Madeira, Jr., but which correctly would have been III. No other Madeira was listed at that address, but Fred R. also had left Minneapolis and was manager of the Superior Carbon and Ribbon Company at 406 Century Building. He lived at 16 East 35th Street. As in Minneapolis, Addison III was identified as an actor.

The story was much the same in 1908, only now the musical father and his actor son were living at 2928 Brooklyn. Fred was still handling typewriter supplies, but perhaps not the machines, and had moved from 406 to 415 Century Building. His home was 811 Linwood Boulevard.

When the 1909 directory appeared, Addison Jr. and III were still "singer" and "actor," respectively, but had moved to 2010 Linwood Boulevard. Fred was yet at 811 Linwood, but apparently had married, for Eleanor Madeira appears for the first time at that address. His office remained at 415 Century.

In 1910 Addison, Jr., was no longer termed a singer. Instead, he was called a "collector for Baker and Lockwood Manufacturing Company," and his namesake son was a "vocalist." They were still at the Linwood Boulevard address. Fred and Eleanor's address was also unchanged, as was that for Fred's business, but he now called himself a "manufacturer's agent."

The following year the Madeira men had entered upon a business enterprise in which, a grandson of the baritone singer has told Quentin Riggs, his grandfather "lost his shirt." This was the National Slate Company. The 1911 directory identified Addison, Jr., as this concern's sales manager; Addison III as a salesman, and Fred as its treasurer. All were still living at their 1910 addresses, but their place of business was 320 Reliance Building.

By 1912 Fred apparently had withdrawn from the firm and left Kansas City, for he and Eleanor are not in that year's directory. Addison, Jr., had now become the slate company's treasurer and Addison III remained as a salesman. For the first time the directory listed the elder Madeira's daughter, Harriett, whose son, William Peters, made the comment about his grandfather's losing heavily in the slate business. In 1913 Addison Jr. was still living on Lin-

(Continued on next page)



wood Boulevard, with Harriett, but Addison III had disappeared from the volume.

A year later, in the 1914 edition, Addison Jr. was both president and treasurer of the National Marble Company (a change of name for the slate company?). He and Harriett I. still abode in Linwood Boulevard, but his place of business had been changed to "49th, northeast, corner of Cole Avenue."

Came 1915 and the father of the family was the only Madeira still listed. Perhaps Harriett had married and Addison III had taken to the stage. Addison II was now president, but not treasurer, of the National Marble Company, the address of which had changed to 40th and Cole (with Leeds in parentheses.)

In 1916 Addison II was still president of the marble company, with the same business address, but his home was at 6139 Brookside Boulevard. Addison III was back and listed as a sales manager, but the book doesn't say of what.

We come now to 1917 and the last year in which Addison D. Madeira II appeared in a Kansas City directory. He was still at 6139 Brookside Boulevard, but with no occupation mentioned. Addison III of the same address was once more a "sales manager."

Ms. Duree ended this series of directory listings by writing:

"I quit looking for Addison D. Madeira after the 1917 directory. At that time he had not been mentioned for some years. (This is confusing, because she had just quoted his name as being in the 1917 directory. Perhaps 1917 is not the year she meant to write.—J. W.) If you could establish the date of death of Madeira it may be possible to find an obituary for him in the Kansas City newspapers. We have some of the Kansas City papers on microfilm here in the library, but we could only check two or three papers for a specific date. If you would like to have someone perform an extensive search for you, I suggest you write directly to Mrs. Fred Meinershagen, 1103 Falcon Dr., Columbia, Missouri 65201.

"I was unable to find any more information about Madeira or his family. The 'Yellow Pages' of the Kansas City Directories did not seem to list Madeira as a singer, vocalist or music teacher in the years I tried."

Madeira must have bought the home on Brookside Boulevard, for it was still his address when he died. It is puzzling, however, that his name ceased to appear in directories after 1917. My guess is that Ms. Duree, became confused between the Rev. Mr. Madeira and his son, who was being listed as a business man rather than as a singer, and that it was the father's name that ceased to appear after his death in 1915.

#### IV. Madeira's Father and Daughter

On September 12, 1975, indomitable researcher Riggs was able to write to me and report some genuine progress. He had not yet learned when A. D. Madeira, the baritone, died, in order to try to obtain his death certificate, but had obtained that information concerning the singer's father, who had lived into prolonged old age, and his daughter, Harriett. Quentin's letter expressed unbounded gratitude to the library

and historical society workers in Minneapolis, Columbia and Kansas City who had so obligingly assisted him. I shall quote from it:

"Dear Jim: I am enclosing copies I have typed of three articles from Kansas City newspapers Xeroxed and sent to me by the Kansas City Public Library. They are obituaries of A. D. Madeira's father and his daughter, but they couldn't find an obit of A. D. himself. . . . Virginia M. Wright, of the Library, wrote: 'He was listed in the 1909 city directory as a singer and actor, then as working for the National Slate Company, and in 1917 as the president of the National Marble Company, evidently retiring in that year. We could find no obituary for him, or any articles about his music. We tried tracing the grandchildren through the city directories and through people connected with the Peters Serum Company. One contact person told us there was only a stepson (this should have been grandson—J. W.) living, Bill Peters of Kansas City. Therefore we are enclosing a list of the Peters in the current telephone directory in case you would wish to write to him. It just might be that he would have scrapbooks or other information about Madeira.'"

Quentin commented happily: "I am overwhelmed by the kindness of the people in Minneapolis, Columbia and Kansas City I have contacted to request information about Madeira. Several people have been very helpful and have turned up some valuable information. I shall try to get in touch soon by phone with the son of Madeira's daughter. For years Madeira was just a name to me and a face in the group of Edison artists whose photos were taken in 1900. But when you sent me that record of his I got an urge to learn more about him. I can't believe I have turned up so much information simply by writing a few letters to some newspapers, libraries and historical societies in Minnesota and Missouri. Hope I can get some specific information about the baritone's death in the near future. Your pal, QUENTIN."

Such specific information was nearer at hand than Quentin then realized. Meanwhile, what was learned about A. D. Madeira, Sr., and his granddaughter, Harriett, was interesting in itself. In particular, there were some surprises in details about the life of baritone Addison Dashiell Madeira's father. It's a shame to keep you waiting another month to read them, but with space running out I fear that's the way the record spins. Next time, then, you shall be enlightened concerning Grandfather Madeira, Harriett and, finally, A. D. Madeira II himself.

(To be concluded)

#### MORE ABOUT RUFFO

(Continued from page 37)

soned *diva*. Filled with admiration for his courageous youthful partner, Ruffo presented her with a warmly inscribed portrait of himself. The success was complete, the *debutante* immediately embarked upon a brilliant career, starting in provincial opera houses. In 1908, her association began with Moscow's Bolshoy, which lasted for many successful years. Her roles were as numerous as they were varied. For example, she did equally well Judith and Carmen, Aida and Amneris, Musetta and

Isolde, Amelia and Marina, to mention but a few. Following a long career, she remained active in the capacity of vocal coach. It appears that in 1913 Balanovskaya recorded for Pathé selections from "Sadko," "Tannhauser," "La Gioconda," "Tristan und Isolde," "Un Ballo in Maschera" and "Aida." I'd love to hear them all, the "Gioconda" *Suicidio* in particular.

#### Bicentennial Celebration Offering

As a sequel to my June "America, the Beautiful," O.A.S.I. promptly released a Long Play disc with old-time favorite singers honoring this year's Bicentennial celebration. The record came out before July 4, and I wrote this article soon after. I'm sorry it took so long to appear in print, but that's "writing biz."

However, the year is not over yet, and neither is the spirit none of us will again experience in our lifetime. O.A.S.I. 619 is a lovely disc to listen to and treasure as a remembrance of our Nation's most solemn holiday. I'm glad my suggestion had something to do with the record's production, and on every patriotic occasion from now on, I shall open my windows wide and treat my neighbors to a unique concert, appropriate for the event. This LP may be ordered from William Violi, 1231 60th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11219. Price \$5.50 plus 75c for packing and postage for U.S. orders.

#### Bicentennial Celebration Offering

(1776-1976). O.A.S.I. 619:

Side A — 1. LUCY MONROE: Star Spangled Banner (Scott Key-Arnold) VE17815-A. 2. JOHN McCORMACK: The Battle Hymn of the Republic (Howe Arr. Johnson) HMV DA1808. 3. MARY LEWIS: Dixie (Emmett) VE1345-B. 4. JOHN CHARLES THOMAS: Home on the Range (Gulon) VE1525-B. 5. LOUISE HOMER: America, the Beautiful (Bates-Ward) V1074-B. 6. LUCY MONROE: America (Carey) VE17815-B. 7. JOHN McCORMACK: God Bless America, (Berlin) HMV DA1808. (All electric, except band 5.)

Side B — 1. GERALDINE FARRAR: Star Spangled Banner (Scott Key-Arnold) V87247. 2. MABEL GARRISON: Dixie (Emmett) V64637. 3. RICCARDO STRACCIARI: There's a Long, Long Trail (Elliott) C149517. 4. ROSA PONSSELLE: Keep the Home Fires Burning (Novello) C19585. 5. ENRICO CARUSO: Over There (Cohan-Delamarre) V87294. 6. EMILIO DE GOGORZA: The Unknown Soldier (Johnstone-O'Hara) V1107-B. 7. ERNESTINE SCHUMANN-HEINK: Taps (adapt. Pasternack) V87299. (All acoustic.)

The major part of the program consists of selections I had in my June article. The added numbers are: Thomas' "Home On the Range," Stracciari's "There's a Long, Long Trail," Ponselle's "Keep the Home Fires Burning," Caruso's "Over There," Gogorza's "The Unknown Soldier" and Schumann - Heink's "Taps."

It seems to me that Caruso's "Over There" hardly belongs over here. Had he recorded "The Star Spangled Banner" (something surprisingly he failed to do during World War I), it would be the main attraction on this LP. Incidentally, a dealer in antiques, long ago, swore high and low that he sold a test-

(Continued on next page)

## Favorite Pioneer Recording Artists

Conducted by JIM WALSH

# Addison Dashiell Madeira

PART 3

By JIM WALSH

### I. Singer's Father and Daughter

Addison D. Madeira, Sr., attorney at law turned Presbyterian preacher father of pioneer recording artist A. D. Madeira, Jr., was born a long, long time ago and has been dead a long time, after having lived into advanced old age.

The death certificate which Quentin Riggs obtained for the patriarchal Madeira reveals that he was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on April 21, 1828 — something like 150 years ago. His father was Jacob Madeira and his mother's maiden name was Mary Yellott Dashiell, a sufficiently unusual one, but one which provided a succession of Madeira men with their middle names.

His father was born in Pittsburgh and his mother in Baltimore.

When he died at 5 a. m. on June 23, 1915, the minister was 87 years, two months and two days old. His length of residence in Missouri was given as 46 years. Death occurred in his home at 3829 Broadway, in Kaw Township of Kansas City. The attending physician reported that pulmonary edema was the cause of death, with senility and a recent fall to the floor as contributing factors.

Both the *Kansas City Star* and *Journal* published news stories about the aged minister's life and death. On June 23, 1915, under a heading of: "THE REV. A. D. MADEIRA DEAD—VETERAN PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR LEAVES A WIDOW AND SEVEN CHILDREN," the *Star* said:

"The Rev. Addison D. Madeira died this morning at his home, 3829 Broadway. He had been in a dying condition several days. Failing health was hastened by a fall he suffered at his home several weeks ago.

"Dr. Madeira was born in Cincinnati 87 years ago. He was educated at Shurtleff College, Alton, Ill., and was graduated with honors. He studied law and at the age of 21 was admitted to the bar. He was the first city attorney of St. Joseph, Mo. He studied theology under the guidance of the Rev. W. J. Worrall of Covington, Ky., and at 32 years was ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church. His first call was to Keokuk, Ia. From there he went to St. Louis, remaining there for several years. From St. Louis he came to the Central Presbyterian Church of this city. . . . He organized the Westminster Alliance and was its president ten years. Twenty-seven years ago he was called to the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church of Independence & continued there 14 years.

"For the last thirteen years Dr. Madeira has lived in retirement in this city. He is survived by his wife and these children: A. D. Madeira, Jr., a business man of Kansas City, who is well known as a singer; Frederick, living in Minnesota; the Rev. Earl E. Madeira, rector of an Episcopal church at St. Petersburg, Fla.; Mrs. Leander J. Talbot, Mrs. John C. Sherwood and Mrs. Price Bryant of Kansas City; Mrs. W. M. White-



MORE MYSTERY. Another scene from an unidentified offering in which A. D. Madeira points an admonitory finger at two of the other characters.

law of New York; and Mrs. Charles A. Carroll of Independence."

The *Journal's* obituary notice appeared a day after the *Star's* and contained much the same information, though with some variety in the details. For one thing, it gave the impression that Frederick R. Madeira, instead of being in Minnesota, as the *Star* said, was living in Kansas City, and the name of Mrs. Price Bryant was changed to Trice Bryant. And it included one unexpected and surprising piece of information that I found fascinating. Here are excerpts from the *Journal* article:

"Dr. Madeira organized the Minister's Alliance of Kansas City and was the presiding member for a term of ten years. At Independence, Mo., where he conducted his last pastorate before retiring from the active ministry, he organized the Ministers' Alliance of that city also. His life work seemed to be that of harmonizing and amalgamating the different church forces into a working body, and wherever his ministry took him he formed alliances and unions

in the religious world. . . . He was at different times pastor of the Choctaw Presbyterian Church of St. Louis and of the Mt. Kisco Presbyterian Church of New York City. Shortly after the Civil War Dr. Madeira was called to the Central Presbyterian Church of Kansas City, where he remained for 13 years. Later he occupied the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church of Independence, Mo., which he held until his retirement."

Now here comes the surprise to which I referred:

"AT THE TIME OF THE OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR DR. MADEIRA BECAME PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL (ULYSSES S.) GRANT. ALTHOUGH HE HAD A BROTHER IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY.

"As an early pastor of Kansas City he officiated at many of the weddings of Kansas City's business men of today, and later performed

(Continued on next page)

## FAVORITE PIONEER RECORDING ARTISTS

(Continued from page 35)

the marriage ceremony for their children. Funeral services will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood, 100 East 38th Street, tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock."

I found it startling, but most interesting, that the senior A. D. Madeira had been private secretary to General Grant. And I wonder if, while he was preaching in Independence, he knew a small, cocky boy who was to grow up and become Harry S. Truman, president of the United States.

The statement that Dr. Madeira's father was born in Pittsburgh and his mother in Baltimore seems to dispose effectually and finally of the impression I had somehow brought away from my meeting with Joe Belmont that the Madeira family was from Gibraltar and that A. D. Madeira II had been born there. It is obvious that, on both the paternal and maternal sides, they had been domiciled in this country long before A. D. Madeira, the pioneer recording baritone, was born.

Now we have for consideration a clipping from a newspaper, which was found by the Kansas City library staff, but the name and date of the paper are unknown. The article tells of the death of Mrs. Harriett Peters, daughter of A. D. Madeira II, the singer, and the heading goes: "MRS. WILLIAM PETERS. HER LATE HUSBAND WAS A SERUM MANUFACTURER. A GRANDFATHER WAS A PRES-

BYTERIAN MINISTER AND HER FATHER WAS A METROPOLITAN OPERA BARITONE".

"Mrs. Harriett Madeira Peters, 60, wife of William G. Peters, president of the Peters Serum Company, and a daughter of the late Addison D. Madeira, a baritone with the Metropolitan Opera Company and one of the first singers to make phonograph records, died last night at her home, 6758 Pennsylvania Avenue. She lived in New York when a girl and returned to Kansas City when her father retired from the opera about 1910. She had resided here since.

"Her grandfather, Dr. Addison D. Madeira, was pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church from 1869 to 1881 and was later pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Independence. Part of the family belongs to the Episcopal Church, not the Presbyterian, and Mrs. Peters was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church here. An uncle, the Rev. E. E. Madeira, was a composer of sacred music.

"As a widow, she was married to Mr. Peters 32 years ago. A son by her first marriage, Robert M. Nourse of the home, survives. The Peters Serum Company also has a place in the history of Kansas City, for the late Mason S. Peters, father of William G. Peters, was the first manufacturer of hog cholera serum. The father, a former congressman, was instrumental in demonstrating to the industry the value of the serum.

"Besides the husband, Mrs. Peters is survived by another son, William M. Peters of the home, and a sister, Mrs. John J. Flood, Fort Worth,

Tex. A brother, Addison Madeira III, died of influenza in France while serving as a member of the A. E. F. in World War I."

Although this notice is undated, it is obvious that Mrs. Peters died after World War II began in 1939, for up to that time the 1914-18 conflict had been referred to merely as "the World War," not World War I.

## II. Madeira of the "Met"

Research Specialist Quentin Riggs was as much startled at reading that A. D. Madeira, the turn of the century Victor and Edison recording artist, had sung at the Metropolitan Opera as I was on learning that his father had served as secretary to Ulysses S. Grant. He immediately began an investigation of the opera singing report.

The progress Quentin made in this research, as well as in his efforts to learn when Madeira died may be interestingly traced in excerpts from his letters to me during the next few weeks, beginning with one dated September 15, 1975:

"Dear Jim: I have just written to the Division of Vital Records at Jefferson City, Mo., in hopes that they can locate A. D. Madeira's death certificate. After getting the obituaries of his father and daughter the other day I feel that we are on the right track.

"The singer's daughter, Harriett, first appeared in the Kansas City directory in 1912, so she was probably about 18 years old then. That means she died around the 1950's. I shall write to the librarian who kindly sent me the clippings to see if she can give me the date of Harriett's obituary. The article said that Harriett was survived by a son from her first marriage, and a sister. Will check out these people in the telephone books of Kansas City and Fort Worth, Tex. I was surprised to see in the article that Madeira sang at the Metropolitan Opera. I have checked a reference book about the history of the Metropolitan, but there is no reference to Madeira. Perhaps he sang in the chorus when he first began his career."

On September 28 I again heard from the enthusiastic and dedicated investigator:

"Dear Jim: This afternoon I had a long conversation with A. D. Madeira's grandson, Bill Peters. He seems extremely friendly and good natured, but couldn't supply very much information about his famous grandfather. He mentioned several times that A. D. sang at the Metropolitan Opera, but under an assumed Italian name. Unfortunately, he couldn't remember the alias. If he had I could have checked it out in some of the reference books on the history of the Met at the library.

"He said that Addison was 70 or 75 years old when he died. Bill's aunt, who lived in Fort Worth, Tex., is dead. He said she had some of her father's records and effects, but wouldn't share them with other members of the family.

"Bill who is a bachelor and a lover of cats, especially blue Persians, said he has some old photos of his grandfather down in the cellar, and I hope he will let me borrow them to copy. He remembers one of Addison in costume as Koko in 'The Mikado,' which he sang on the stage with the Andrews Opera Company. I promised to send him a tape of the one Madeira record I have as well as a copy of the 1900 photo of Edison artists in which he appears."

Notes Quentin took during the telephone conversation quote Mr. Peters as saying that he was somewhere between five and ten years of age when his grandfather died, and that the singer turned business man had a great deal of family pride and was rather formal in his manners. Mr. Peters recalls his grandmother as being between 80 and 85 when she

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WHAT GOES ON HERE? Another scene from an unidentified melodrama, light opera or musical comedy in which A. D. Madeira appeared at some time, somewhere, during his career. The photo was graciously lent by his grandson, "Bill Peters," of Kansas City. Is the top-hatted character with the glasses down on his nose holding a horseshoe? And is the woman about to snatch it and hurl it at Madeira, to the left? Jim Walsh suggests the possibility that the play may have been "The Geisha," "San Toy" or "A Chinese Honeymoon," but would appreciate specific information.

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(Continued from page 36)

died. He couldn't recall the exact year. She was sensitive about her age and wouldn't tell anybody just how old she was. He said that Harriett, his mother, died 20 years or so ago, around 1955, and had a fine sense of humor. His grandfather, he has heard, was "perfect" as *Koko* in "The Mikado." He sang in a production of "Pagliacci" with an operatic Company. In one performance the lead tenor was so drunk he was unsteady on his feet and Madeira held him up while he sang "Vesti la giubba."

The following is quoted from a letter Quentin wrote October 1:

"Bill said that Addison sang at the Metropolitan under an Italian name, since you had to have an Italian name to get anywhere in opera in those days. I checked some reference books with no success. There was an Alfonso Mariani who sang at the Met during the 1894-95 season. The initials are A. M. and there are the same number of letters in Mariani's first and last names as in Madeira's. However, that may not mean anything . . ."

Doubtful, but hoping that Mariani and Madeira might have been the same baritone, Quentin wrote to the Metropolitan and asked if its archives confirmed his guess.

I now divert from the chronological order of his letters to quote one written November 29 in which he told of hearing from Mrs. John DeWitt Peltz, the Met archivist, and being gently rebuked for his presumption in thinking the two men might be the same:

"Dear Jim: I finally heard from the Metropolitan Opera, and they have nothing at all in their files about Madeira. I mentioned in my letter that a bass named Alfonso Mariani sang at the Met for one season and suggested that might have been a likely disguise for Addison. The letter I received was obviously written by an English woman, judging by her handwriting and the letter's layout. She wrote:

"In answer to your letter of October 18, I must protest that to guess at the identity of Alfonso Mariani just because his name has the same number of letters and the same initials as Addison Madeira seems to me ill-advised. Mariani sang the King in *Aida* at his debut, November 23, 1894, and later was heard as *Pistola* in *Falstaff*, *Ferrando* in *Trovatore*, *Lodovico* in *Otello* and *Sparafucile* (in *Rigoletto*). Perhaps these roles ring a bell with your Mr. Walsh. Regretting that I cannot be of more assistance, I am, Faithfully yours, MARY ELLIS PELTZ (Mrs. John DeWitt Peltz, archivist.)"

Quentin commented: "I don't believe that Madeira was Mariani, but I just suggested the possibility so the archivist could check out Mariani."

Now I'll backtrack to October 14, and quote from an interesting Riggs letter:

"Dear Jim: I got a letter from Bill Peters the other day . . . Saturday I was delighted to get a large box containing a bunch of photos that Bill sent me. Addison looks quite a bit older in them, so I imagine they were taken after he went back to Kansas City. There are several of them in Japanese costume in scenes from a play of a comic opera. Bill said that he appeared as *Koko* in 'The Mikado,' but I have seen 'The Mikado' several times and am sure these photos are not from that opera. There was also Madeira's own copy of the 1900 group photo of Edison artists, mounted on a large piece of cardboard and all the artists' names were printed at the bottom.

"Madeira was of Spanish descent, and his daughter was quite proud of the Madeira coat-of-arms, which she displayed in her home . . ."

Here, for the moment, I cease quoting to make some comments of my own. I am submitting some of the photos which Mr. Peters sent to Quentin to be reproduced with this article. I agree with him that the scenes are not from "The Mikado," but suggest that perhaps they may be from two musical comedies by Sidney Jones, which were sometimes called "the successors to 'The Mikado.'" One was "The Geisha" and the other "San Toy." Both were first produced in the 1890's. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the music or the plots of these productions and have not obtained much information from reference books.

There was also a popular musical comedy called "A Chinese Honeymoon," which may be a possibility. The character in some of the pictures who looks as if he is threatening to toss a bomb appears more Chinese than Japanese to me, and more French than either. And Madeira, though he appears to be wearing a kimono, has a hair-do that might have been intended for a pigtail. Can any reader who knows something of "The Geisha," "San Toy," and/or "A Chinese Honeymoon," enlighten us as to the possibility of the photos being from one of them?

I agree with Quentin that the pictures must have been taken after the end of Madeira's recording career. In the 1900 Edison group picture his hair appears to be thinning, but he seems almost bald in the other photos. The Edison has already been reproduced in HOBBIES for January, 1971, but since the copy that Quentin made for me from Madeira's original is clearer than any other I have seen I am sending it to be used again.

### III Finally, the Facts about Madeira

The climax of Quentin Riggs' "Madeira madness" was near at hand. On October 20 he wrote to tell me that the baritone's death certificate at last had been found:

"Dear Jim: I was delighted to receive a copy of A. D. Madeira's death certificate today! . . . Madeira's grandson, Bill Peters, was mistaken when he said his grandfather died in 1934. It was really 1930. And his middle name was Dashiell. You were right when you said you thought Madeira was 40 or 45 when the Edison photo was taken in 1900. He was 41 or 42.

"Bill said that he was not very successful in business, and lost his shirt in the marble business he was involved in after he went back to Kansas City. He probably was unsuccessful in Minneapolis with the typewriter company, since he stayed with them only one year. I imagine he used his initials on records because his full name might be easily misunderstood as announced on the wax cylinders of the 1890's . . ."

The death certificate, of which Quentin sent me a copy, revealed that Madeira died October 8, 1930, at his home, 6139 Brookside Boulevard, Kansas City. His age was 71 years, 10 months and 23 days. His wife, as has already been mentioned, was Caddie W. Madeira. His birthplace was given as Covington, Ky., and his occupation as "retired." His mother, Louise Izette Versailles, was a native

of Kentucky. The attending physician's statement said that he had attended on Madeira from January, 1928, to the day he died, and that his death occurred at 10:30 p.m., October 8, 1930. It was attributed to uremia, from which he had been suffering for three days. Arteriosclerosis of five years duration was cited as a contributing factor. Burial was on October 10 at Elmwood Cemetery. Information on the certificate was provided by the singer's son-in-law, John J. Flood.

### IV. In Conclusion

Quentin's thirst for information, however, was not satiated, as is shown in his letter to me of November 14:

"Dear Jim: I recently wrote to the Kansas City Librarian, Virginia M. Wright, to express my gratitude for the help she has given me in tracking down information about A. D. Madeira, and also to express my surprise that she was able to send me newspaper articles reporting the deaths of the singer's father and daughter, but not of the baritone himself. I was delighted to hear from her again yesterday and to learn that she has found the singer's obit at last!

"One obvious error in the obit is the statement that Madeira was born in Kansas City. His death certificate says he was born in Covington, Ky., and his father's obit confirms that the family was living there at the time of his birth. The obit also says he was a Metropolitan Opera artist for 15 years. That would mean he was with the Met from about 1885 to 1900 . . . This article said he returned to Kansas City '20 years ago' (1910). Of course we know he returned there in 1906.

"I was interested to learn that Addison attended Westminster College at Fulton, Mo., where Winston Churchill made a historic speech during, I think, the 1950's. My brother, Richard, went to school there for a year or two . . ."

Quentin enclosed a copy of an article from an unspecified newspaper, but probably the *Star*, telling of the singer's death. It was headed: "ADDISON D. MADEIRA DEAD . . . FOR FIFTEEN YEARS KANSAS CITIAN WAS A METROPOLITAN BARITONE," and the remainder of the news story went:

"Addison D. Madeira, 71 years old, former baritone of the Metropolitan Grand Opera Company (Sic), died last night at his home, 6139 Brookside Blvd. He was widely known in musical circles here and in the East.

"Mr. Madeira, son of the late Dr. A. D. Madeira, pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church here, had been ill some time. He was born in Kansas City, and had lived here all his life, except for the 15 years he was with the Metropolitan Company in New York. He retired about 20 years ago and returned to Kansas City.

"After receiving his grade and high school education here, Mr. Madeira attended Westminster College at Fulton, Mo., and William Jewell College at Liberty, Mo. He was the first student to enroll in the Woodland School, 8th Street and Woodland Avenue. He later was one of the first singers to make phonograph records . . . Funeral services will be held Friday at the Stine & McClure Chapel, 3235 Gillham Plaza. His only son, A. D. Madeira III, died of influenza in France while he was serving as a member of the first A. E. F. unit."

I have omitted the list of Madeira's surviving three sisters and his brother, who have already been mentioned in his father's death notice.

And so we have arrived at the conclusion of Quentin Riggs' successful efforts to learn as much as possible about the life and achievements of the baritone singer, Addison Dashiell Madeira. I am grateful to my friend for sharing his knowledge and mak-

(Continued on next page)



# THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

Glass is to Toledo, Ohio, a busy midwestern industrial city densely populated with factories, what beer is to Milwaukee or steel is to Pittsburgh. A good percentage of the city's 350,000 citizens derive their livelihoods from the manufacture of glass, and a good many others work for the many companies servicing the glass industry.

Toledo is the "home town" of three giant American glass manufacturers — Owens-Illinois, Libbey-Owens-Ford and Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation; and the city proudly proclaims itself the "Glass Capital of the World."

But in Toledo, glass is more than just a product. It also represents in the world-famous glass collections at The Toledo Museum of Art an important cultural heritage.

The Toledo Museum of Art opened its new John D. Biggers Glass Study Room, in September. It now has one of the finest and more comprehensive collections of glass in the world. The more than 5,000 pieces of glass contained in its collection span the entire history of glassmaking — from the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome through the Renaissance and Age of Enlightenment

into modern times.

The Museum has a rich collection of European glass, and the room contains important examples of glass from Belgium, France, Germany and Central Europe, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. There are many contemporary European works including some glass crafted in Israel.

The American glass shown in the Room includes historical flasks and paperweights. Arranged alphabetically by state, within each state category it is sorted by factory or area of origin. Among the examples of glass objects made in Connecticut, Massachusetts (New England Glass Company and the Boston and Sandwich Glass Company), New Jersey, New York (Tiffany and Steuben), Ohio (Libbey) and Pennsylvania (Stiegel). Three cases are devoted to the display of Libbey Glass, which was made in Toledo after 1888.

The most important examples of glass in the Museum's collection are housed in its dramatic Art in Glass Gallery, a two-story "museum within a museum" containing more than 1,800 objects of glass. The gallery, which attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year, was opened in 1970. It was the gift of the late Harold Boeschstein, the Museum president and chairman of Owens-Corning Fiberglas, and his wife.

Museum International Glass Center  
The Toledo Museum of Art has

been recognized as an international center for the creative exhibition and study of glass since it was founded 75 years ago by Edward Drummond Libbey—a man who found fortune in glass-making. Much of the Museum's ancient glass collection was given by Mr. Libbey who avidly collected both glass and paintings (which he also gave to the Museum).

The Museum also was the pioneering force behind the revival of glass craftsmanship in this country, and it organized a series of seminars and special exhibitions devoted to this art form during the 1960's and early 1970's. Many of today's leading glass craftsmen, such as Harvey Littleton and Dominick Labino, first learned their skills in Museum seminars. They and other glassmakers gained national recognition through Museum-oriented exhibitions such as the American Glass National series which circulated throughout the United States.

The Toledo Museum has also organized a number of important historical exhibitions on glass including two covering the output of the New England Glass Company and its successor the Libbey Glass Company and most recently an exhibition of Steuben glass which also traveled to eight other American museums including the Smithsonian Institution, the Corning Museum of Glass and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

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(Continued from preceding page)

ing it possible for me to write what, in my opinion, is one of the most interesting articles I have produced for HOBBIES — an opinion that I hope some readers will share. I concur, too, in his gratitude to the helpful historical society and library workers in Minneapolis, Columbia and Kansas City, who provided much of the information on which this biographical sketch is based, and to Mr. Madeira's grandson, Bill Peters, for his generous aid. (By a coincidence, Bill lives at 9340 RIGGS St., Shawnee Mission, Kan. 66212!) Without their help the life story of A. D. Madeira could not have been written — and, especially, if it had not been for Quentin's burning interest it still would be an untold tale.

### The End

Postscript. — Since this article was completed, William Peters has told Quentin Riggs that Fay Madeira, who appeared in the 1902 Minneapolis city directory, was A. D. Madeira's eldest daughter, who married John J. Flood and died in Texas around 1946. He is unable to identify Pauline Madeira, who was also in that directory. His mother, Harriett Peters, was born in 1894 in Trenton, Mo. As a child she appeared on the stage with her father in "The Bohemian Girl." Mr. Peters believes that "Caddie" was a nickname for his grandmother, but says he doesn't know her real name. She has been dead 30 years or thereabouts, and was "somewhere between 80 and 85," he believes, when she died.



This footed, cut glass punch bowl is one of the treasures in the world-famous glass collections of the Toledo Museum of Art. This fine production was made about 1902 by the Libbey Glass Company. It is cut with "geometrical rosette motifs," and has a diameter of 14½ inches, and a height of 12¾ inches.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward G. Kirby gave the piece to the museum.